President Jeff DeGraaf and his wife, Jan, wish to extend a warm MICA invitation to you to join them as our association engages in “Working Together to Improve our Industry”. One of the key benefits of belonging to MICA is your ability to work with fellow members to improve your business acumen and to better your industry. Come and participate as we share ideas at our annual convention this June 17 – 20, 2012, at the four-star, four-diamond Omni Interlocken Resort, in Broomfield, Colorado. Our 55th Annual Spring Convention will be a special event, and one that you do not want to miss!

Indulge yourself in luxury at the Omni Interlocken Resort. Come prepared for some special pampering during your stay. We have reserved a block of rooms at the Omni. Our convention rate is $159 per night plus tax, single or double occupancy. It is highly suggested that you book your hotel reservations now! Call the reservations office at 800-843-6664 and ask for the Midwest Insulation Contractors Block, Reference Number 15300035702. Please note that we have blocked a limited number of rooms. If you wait until the last minute to reserve your room, you run the risk that our block will be filled, and the hotel will not have any additional rooms available. As we have stated in the past, if you reserve your hotel room now, you can always cancel it later, but you may not be able to reserve a room if you wait too long. We will be monitoring our block and making room adjustments accordingly. Our block of rooms will be released on May 15, 2012, but if you wait until May 15th, the block of rooms will be filled, and we may not be able to accommodate your needs.

The Board of Directors is most excited about the technical topics and speakers for the spring convention. The topics and speakers were selected to help educate and inform you on a variety of industry topics pertinent to our current business climate. A list of presentations and speakers is as follows:

- “NIA Update”, by Mr. Rick Smith, NIA President 2012 - 2013.
- “Corrosion on Jacketing”, by Jim Young, ITW Insulation Systems.
- “Vapor Retarders” – by Gordon Hart P.E., Artek Engineering, LLC, Shrewsbury, MA.
- “Rigid Cellular Plastic Insulation – Application & Methods”, A Panel Presentation by Associate Members of MICA.
- “Leadership – an FMI Perspective” – by Senior Consultant Rusty Sherwood, FMI, Denver, CO.
- “OSHA Update and Pending Legislative Bills in Congress”, by Mr. Gary Auman, MICA Legal Counsel, Dunleavy, Mahan, & Furry, Dayton, OH.

We will have three concurrent forums dealing with member issues. We will have a union contractor forum, an open shop contractor forum, and an associate member forum all running simultaneously. This approach allows more of the members to participate in craft issues without being part of a formal committee.

In June, we will recognize those companies that participated in our seventh annual “Best Practices in Safety” Award. This award was established to formally recognize our member firms’ efforts in safety and safety practices. This year, we have made significant changes to the “Best Practices in Safety” Award program. We are no longer going to recognize a winning com-

(Continued on page 4)
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

TO: THE MICA MEMBERSHIP

I have been very involved with MICA for many years now. I have spent the time and resources, listened to the speakers and participated in some of the committees. As a result, I have been able to learn valuable items that I could bring back and use in my company business. I know I’ve preached continually that if you become involved, you will reap many benefits. It has been many years since ‘my first conference’, and I know that I need to increase my awareness on the benefits of attending professional conferences for new attendees.

Last week, I attended the NIA spring conference. I have only been to NIA one time before, about 24 years ago, so I figured this trip would be the same as being a first timer. Though I knew several people at the event, through MICA and the MICA associate members that call on our company, I’d never met the majority of the contractors. I also had no real responsibilities to attend certain events or chair a meeting. I could have skipped the meetings to play golf or go sightseeing with family and friends having a good time but not really experiencing the benefit of the conference or the value of this organization.

Even though NIA is not an inexpensive conference, I read through the agenda and made sure to attend the meetings. NIA held a “first timers reception”, where I was introduced to the organization and other new contractors and vendors. This was an excellent way to begin the conference, and MICA has a similar reception at our meetings. For the next three days, I sat through multiple meetings and classes, all were valuable, and I would like to share just a couple of the things I learned with you.

I attended a presentation on “Factors Influencing the Likelihood of Surface Condensation on Mechanical Systems Insulation”. One of our company’s specialties is ammonia refrigeration systems, yet I learned that using painted aluminum, instead of shiny aluminum, reduces the necessary thickness of the insulation underneath. We do a lot of cold work, and I don’t remember ever hearing this information before. Normally, I would never advocate less insulation, but how often does a customer ask you to “value engineer” a project. If you can reduce the thickness and still provide the same condensation control, perhaps you can save your customer some cost and have the edge to be awarded a contract.

I also sat in on a Social Media class. Until now, I have avoided social media because I didn’t have time to read about trivial items like “what you had for breakfast” and figured you probably don’t care “who my new best friend is”. Instead, I learned how to use media like Twitter as an effective business tool. Imagine the resources available to you by linking with a group of like minded contractors and vendors that can instantly respond when you need advice or support. At the same time, you can provide pertinent information to them, for example, “if you install painted aluminum on your cold system, it requires less insulation thickness to achieve the same condensation control”. Both of these classes were worth much more than the cost of the conference.

All that to say this; MICA has our spring convention this June. We have many good topics and excellent speakers. If you have not made up your mind on attending this year, I would like to encourage you to come. I realize that our economic times can influence your decision, but if you bring back just one nugget of information that helps you land a project, then you have paid for the trip many times over!

Hopefully, I will see you in Broomfield, Colorado, in June.

Sincerely,

Jeff DeGraaf,
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company’s safety program. Rather, as a way of encouraging greater participation so members can reap the benefits of the awards program, we will be using a grading system that recognizes each applicant’s achievement in developing a quality safety program. With this new system, companies will not compete against each other for awards. Instead each applicant will try to achieve the highest award level where multiple applicants can receive the same award level. This change in the award level will not change the judging process.

The Board of Directors feels that each presentation will add value to your understanding of the technical topics discussed. You will come away from the convention more informed and better prepared to successfully manage your business. The registration fee is $450.00 for the first attendee from a member company. Registration for a second attendee from a given company is reduced to $425. Registration for all additional attendees is $400 per attendee. The registration fee is $825.00 for the first member and spouse registered from a member company. Registration for a second registered couple from a given company is reduced to $800. Registration for all additional registered couples is $775 per couple. This year we have included a children’s registration for the Welcome Reception and Farewell Brunch events only. The fee is $75.00 per child. The Board is delighted to offer this new incentive for multiple attendees from member companies. The benefit of joining an association comes from participating in association activities.

The fourteenth annual “Mick Van Horn Memorial Golf Tournament” is set for Monday afternoon, June 18, 2012, at the Omni Interlocken Golf Club. We have a lunch cookout beginning at 12:00 p.m. followed by a shotgun start at 1:00 p.m. Enjoy golf as it was meant to be played at this stunning, links-style course. This year’s fee is $150.00 per golfer, which includes a lunch, cart, green fees, complimentary use of practice and range area, and of course, prizes. Please read the golf registration carefully. Payment for golf must accompany the registration fee. Please complete the golf portion of the registration form as fully as possible, especially the handicap information. This is essential for us to properly match the foursomes. You need to register for the golf tournament by May 25, 2012.

The program also affords you ample time for fun and relaxation and to interact with your fellow contractors and distributors. We have the traditional opening evening Welcome Reception. This year’s reception is sponsored in part by the contributing associate members. We will feast on hors d’oeuvres, libations, and friendships. We will honor Ray Stucken-schmidt with Systems Undercover, Inc. with the “William R. Heaston Outstanding Member” award. Ray exemplifies the virtues reflected in Bill Heaston and of his selfless service to MICA and the insulation industry. The recognition ceremony will take place during our Tuesday evening gala.

You received a formal spring convention registration packet earlier in March. Your cooperation in completing the preregistration material early and making your hotel reservations

(Continued from page 4)
Your promptness helps us to plan a better, more efficient and effective convention for you. We ask that you complete and mail your registration material along with payment to the MICA office no later than May 25, 2012. It is MICA’s policy to refund 90% of your registration fee if we are notified prior to June 1, 2012. Make plans to bring your family to the MICA convention and extend your business to include some quality family time. Now is the time to plan for your participation at MICA’s 55th annual spring convention. Make your hotel reservations today by calling the Omni reservation line at 800-843-6664. Please join Jeff, Jan, the entire Board of Directors and fellow MICA members in Colorado, June 17 – 20, 2012, for our annual spring convention and be a part of “Working Together to Improve our Industry”.

MICA SAFETY PROGRAM REVIEW AND AWARD

This article was written by Gary Auman, MICA Legal Counsel, Dunlevey, Mahan & Furry

MICA has always understood the importance of safety on the job site. As a result of this, MICA implemented a safety award program seven years ago. The MICA Board asked me again to prepare some comments for your consideration as to the value of participating in our safety award program. If you don’t have a good plan for getting a job done, the outcome is going to be less than satisfactory. I believe, as you should that this applies to safety - good safety performance starts with a good safety program.

I titled this article as I did because this is more than a safety award program, it is a safety program review. Try to analogize having your safety program reviewed annually to other things that you do in your life to ensure that your company’s equipment operates as intended. For those of you who passed your fiftieth birthday, I am sure that you have been advised by your family physician to have an annual or bi-annual physical. Your doctor recommends this, because he is aware that as you get older you become more prone to some of the physical problems that are connected with aging. You take a physical to make sure you have an early warning of anything that needs to be addressed before it becomes a significant problem.

In your business, I would be surprised if any of you do not perform preventive maintenance on the equipment that you depend on to be successful as a contractor. In addition, you most likely perform other preventive maintenance such as tire rotation, etc., in order that you can avoid any significant problems.

Well, your safety program is also an integral part of your business. It too can deteriorate with age and lack of use. It too needs preventive maintenance to avoid catastrophic failure. When a safety program fails you, someone can get seriously injured or killed. Or, you can be confronted with an OSHA inspection and find out through the citations issued that your safety program is not what you thought it was and is not as effective as it needs to be.

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MICA safety program review and awards opportunity, you can have portions of your safety program reviewed, and receive written comments from individuals who have a wealth of experience in dealing with safety issues. You will receive valuable feedback from the reviewing panel with regard to those aspects of your program which are in the competition, and you will receive recognition from MICA for your achievement in developing a quality safety program.

When you look at the MICA safety program review and awards opportunity, you have to agree that there is absolutely no reason why you should sit on the sidelines while other members of MICA, some of whom are your competitors, take advantage of this MICA member benefit. Take a few minutes, pull out the application, complete it, and send it in to MICA’s general counsel with your check so that it is received in time for the review committee to take a look at it and provide you with their valuable comments concerning the effectiveness of your safety program.

REMEMBER — The application submittal deadline has been extended to May 4, 2012. Your completed application form must be received by the end of the business day on May 4th. The application form is available from the MICA office. Just call or e-mail us, and we will send you another a copy of the application form.

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES NEW PARTNERSHIP ON UNCONVENTIONAL NATURAL GAS AND OIL RESEARCH

Three federal agencies announced a formal partnership to coordinate and align all research associated with development of our nation’s abundant unconventional natural gas and oil resources. The partnership exemplifies the cross-government coordination required under President Obama’s Executive Order released earlier this month, which created a new Interagency Working Group to Support Safe and Responsible Development of Unconventional Domestic Natural Gas Resources. This new partnership will help coordinate current and future research and scientific studies undertaken by the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of the Interior – better positioning the Obama administration to ensure that continued expansion of natural gas and oil production happens safely and responsibly as part of an all-of-the-above approach to American energy in which science plays a guiding and critical role.

As the President has made clear, domestic natural gas and oil resources will continue to play a key role in America’s energy future. Already, technological advancements like hydraulic...
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FUTURE MICA MEETING DATES


Fall 2012 FMI Day-long Seminar — October 16, 2012, Embassy Suites Downtown, Omaha, NE.

Fall 2012 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 17 & 18, 2012, Embassy Suites Downtown, Omaha, NE.


Fall 2013 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 16 & 17, 2013, Embassy Suites Downtown, Omaha, NE.

MICA MEMBER ADDRESS/INFO. UPDATES

Be sure to inform the MICA office of any changes or corrections to your listing for either the MICA Directory, e-mail correspondence or mailing address. Even if you update your company listing on the MICA website, please inform the MICA office of the changes. We try to be as current as possible with your help.
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fracturing – innovation supported by public research – have allowed development of previously uneconomic natural gas and oil deposits. In fact, since 2008, U.S. oil and natural gas production has increased each year. In 2011, U.S. crude oil production reached its highest level in 8 years, increasing by an estimated 110,000 barrels per day over 2010 levels to 5.59 million barrels per day. And U.S. natural gas production grew in 2011 as well – the largest year-over-year volumetric increase in history – easily eclipsing the previous all-time production record set in 1973. Overall, oil imports have been falling since 2005, and oil import dependence declined from 57 percent in 2008 to 45 percent in 2011 – the lowest level since 1995.

As the United States continues to expand domestic natural gas and oil production, it is critical that the public have full confidence that the right safety and environmental protections are in place – guided by the best available science. Leveraging each agency’s core competencies and strengths will enhance efforts to explore the significant new resource development opportunities made possible in recent years by hydraulic fracturing and other new technologies, and meet high-priority challenges in a coordinated and common-sense way.

“Science, research and innovation continue to play a vital role in our efforts to further expand oil and gas production in the United States and make sure it’s done safely and responsibly,” said Department of the Interior Deputy Secretary David J. Hayes. “Improvements in technologies like hydraulic fracturing are responsible for greatly increasing our capacity to develop America’s abundant unconventional resources in recent years. Through a close collaboration across the government that reduces redundancy and streamlines our research, we are positioning the Obama administration to best meet the critical need of increasing public understanding and public confidence of these critical technologies so that we can continue safe and responsible exploration and production for many decades to come.”

“The development of American shale gas resources is having a transformative impact on the U.S. energy landscape, helping to improve our energy security while spurring economic development and job creation around the country,” said Acting Under Secretary of Energy Arun Majumdar. “The Energy Department remains committed to the safe and responsible development of this American resource, and continued cooperation between government and private industry partners under President Obama’s all-of-the-above approach to American energy.”

“We are moving into a new era of American energy, one that has the potential to create jobs, strengthen our energy independence and security, and cut pollution. President Obama has created this interagency working group to ensure that these energy innovations happen safely and responsibly, without compromising the environment or the health of the American people,” said EPA Deputy Administrator Bob Perciasepe. “We will continue to rely on the best available science to oversee the responsible development of these energy sources.”

A primary goal of this effort will be to identify research topics where collaboration among the three agencies can be most ef-

(Continued from page 10)

(Continued on page 22)
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Revised Specification Writing Section.

Reinsertion of Key Items – Clearances, Scope of Work, etc.

The hard copy manual is available for purchase from MICA’s website at www.micainsulation.org. The manual sells for $125.00 per copy plus shipping and handling. There is a discount for MICA members of $25.00. The cost to MICA members is only $100.00 plus shipping and handling. Quantity discounts are available for when purchasing in quantities of 17 or more manuals. Contact the MICA office for details.

The committee has worked diligently to develop an electronic version of the manual with interactive plates. Committee Chair, Ray Stuckenschmidt demonstrated the functionality of the interactive plates during our 2011 Fall Business Meeting, and Peter Gauchel demonstrated the functionality of the plates in a presentation at the National Insulation Association’s annual convention on April 21, 2012.

The electronic version of the manual and the 66 interactive plates are also available to the industry. A single user license for accessing the electronic version of the manual and the 66 plates sells for $195.00 ($155.00 for MICA members) with an annual renewal (subscription) fee of $50.00. The annual fee will allow you access to any new or modified plates that will be developed annually. The technical committee has developed the electronic version of the manual to be a “living” document with updates to the manual being made annually.

The discount pricing is available to MICA members only. To receive the discount, members need to enter the discount code when ordering the manual from the MICA website. The discount codes for the hard copy and e-version are available from the “Members Only” portion of the MICA website.

ASA SUPPORTS SIMPLIFIED APPLICATION PROCESS FOR SBA-GUARANTEED SURETY BONDS

On April 5, the American Subcontractors Association submitted written comments to the U.S. Small Business Administration expressing its support for a proposal designed to improve access to surety bonding for small construction contractors.

SBA had sought public comment on its proposal to streamline the regulations for the operation of the SBA Surety Bond Guarantee Program. Under the regulatory changes proposed by SBA, and supported by ASA, the paperwork burden associated with participation in the SBG Program would be reduced. Specifically, SBA is proposing to create a new “Quick Bond Guarantee Application and Agreement” that would be applicable to
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construction contracts with an award value of $250,000 for which a small business was seeking the SBA to guarantee 90 percent of the amount of the surety bond needed by the small firm to be able to win the contract.

“Paperwork burdens have real dollar costs that can deter participation in any federal program, especially for smaller dollar value transactions, which magnify the costs associated with the paperwork burdens,” ASA told SBA. “The proposed ‘Quick Bond Guarantee Application and Agreement’ effectively reduces such potentially deterring paperwork burdens. The proposed SBA Form 990A (Quick Bond Guarantee Application and Agreement) will combine two existing forms, the SBA Form 994 (Application for Surety Bond Guarantee Assistance) and the SBA Form 990 (Surety Bond Agreement).”

“The SBA’s proposal for simplifying the paperwork needed to make use of its Surety Bond Guarantee Program for a contract of $250,000 or less is a good example of what bureaucrats can do when they are willing to spend some time thinking about how to reduce the burdens imposed on small businesses by government programs,” said 2011-12 ASA President Kerrick Whisnant, Cornerstone Detention Products Inc., Tanner, Ala. “This is a small example, but every thoughtful reduction in paperwork burden needs to be recognized and encouraged.”

ASA noted in its letter that “SBA’s proposal follows existing surety industry practice which is constantly attempting to minimize the administrative costs associated with smaller dollar value contracts without compromising the rigor of the process for the evaluation of the bond applicant.”

The SBA proposal also eliminates a regulatory reference to an obsolete form. “Elimination of such obsolete paperwork requirements also contributes to making the SBG program less daunting to a small business construction contractor who may be considering, for the first time, to avail itself of the assistance available through the SBG program,” ASA told SBA.

Access to surety bonds is essential for construction contractors in many markets. Often, to get a contract, a contractor must be able to provide a performance bond and a payment bond. The performance bond assures that the contract will be fully performed in the event of the contractor’s default. It protects the purchaser of the construction services, either a private owner or a government body. The payment bond assures that subcontractors and suppliers will be fully paid for the services and products they furnished to the construction project.

Getting access to surety bonds, a form of credit, can be difficult for small contractors without an established record. To assist small businesses, Congress authorized the SBA’s SBG program. Under the program, SBA guarantees 80 percent or 90 percent of the bond issued to a small business concern by a pre-approved corporate surety on a contract with an award value of $2 million or less. The SBG program has two components, the Prior-Approval SBG Program and the Preferred SBG Program. Under the Prior-Approval program, the participating surety must seek SBA’s approval for the guarantee on a contract-by-contract basis. To make the program work more like the regu
lar surety bond market, Congress created the Preferred Surety Bond Guarantee Program under which a pre-approved corporate surety is empowered to grant the SBA guarantee against a total bonding line set in an agreement between the participating surety firm and the SBA.

CONSTRUCTION PUT IN PLACE FORECASTED TO INCREASE 5 PERCENT FROM 2011

FMI, the largest provider of management consulting and investment banking to the engineering and construction industry, released the first-quarter, 2012 Construction Outlook Report. FMI’s forecast for total construction put in place in 2012 is a 5 percent increase compared to 2011, or $826.3 billion. The last time construction put in place was at this level was 2000-2001.

Economic Indicators:

Despite slow growth projections and rising gasoline prices, the GDP is still growing and consumers are still spending, reflected in the Conference Board’s Consumer Confidence Index® increasing to 70.8 in February compared to 70.4 a year ago. Along with the Federal Reserve's intervention, these factors have served to keep growth slow and inflation in check.

Residential Construction:

In order for residential construction to achieve the 8 percent increase projected and top $264.4 billion in 2012, a number of factors still have to fall into place:
- Reduction in the current inventory of homes
- Lenders willing to lend on reasonable terms
- Steady improvement in hiring

Nonresidential Construction:

Projections indicate a 4 percent increase in nonresidential buildings for 2012, topping $341 billion, with slightly higher growth in 2013 to $361 billion. Nonresidential contractors are facing many of the same problems as residential contractors. In addition, competition is fierce, with low price still the name of the game. Project owners who are ready to restart their building programs are expecting hungry contractors to submit very low bids. One of the keys for growth will be the return of private investment in construction. Additionally, federal, state and local government construction have been dialed back until budgets are in better repair and tax revenues return to levels that are more normal. Research indicates that there are signs this is starting to happen.

OSHA REACCREDITED AS AN AUTHORIZED CONTINUING EDUCATION PROVIDER

WASHINGTON – The Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s Directorate of Training and Education (DTE) has been reaccredited by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) to continue providing Continuing Education Units (CEU’s) for work-related injury and illness prevention training.

DTE, which includes the OSHA Training Institute, offers a wide selection of courses and programs to help workers and employers broaden their knowledge of how to recognize, avoid, and prevent safety and health hazards in their workplaces. OSHA also offers training and educational materials to help businesses train their workers and comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

“OSHA education programs train over 850,000 federal and state compliance officers, state consultants, federal employees, employers and workers each year,” said Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health David Michaels. “Our training, in critical job-related skills, ensures that our compliance officers, workers and employers stay on the cutting edge to prevent worker injuries, illnesses and deaths. Our IACET reaccreditation demonstrates OSHA’s commitment to lifelong learning and high standards for all of our education and training programs.”

To achieve Authorized Provider accreditation, the OSHA Directorate of Training and Education completed a rigorous application process. IACET is the only standard-setting organization approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) for continuing education and training. The ANSI/IACET Standard is the core of thousands of educational programs worldwide.

The IACET accreditation applies only to classes conducted by the OSHA Training Institute in Arlington Heights, IL. It does not apply to classes offered elsewhere by safety and health professionals who have completed an OSHA Outreach Training Program course to conduct occupational safety and health classes for workers or by the OSHA Training Institute Education Centers.

IACET President Francenia Johnson said, “OSHA’s Directorate of Training and Education joins nearly 650 organizations around the globe that have had their programs vetted by third-party experts in continuing education to ensure the highest possible standards are met.”

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