
Newsletter

Words From the Prez**Pete DeRosa**

Since our January general membership meeting, your Board has been busy working to accomplish the objectives set forth for the year. As many of you know, we have gone a long way to facilitate the communication among members with the introduction of our website (www.SiemensWestinghouseRetirees.org), as well as the creation of a group page named "Siemens & Westinghouse Retirees" on www.facebook.com. Each of these has the ability to make our association more interactive and useful to each of us. I urge all to take advantage of them. They have no value to us as an organization unless we use them.

With the web site up and running, we have enabled a tool that can identify the various community service and volunteer organizations our members are involved with. This fits into one of our stated goals. The intent is to improve the awareness of the opportunities for community service and to provide a "member contact" already involved with a particular organization. That "member contact" can provide information on what the organization involves and how to join it. To make this a benefit to all, I am asking those engaged with a service or charitable group to contact us so that we can put the relevant information on our website. It will appear in the website page titled "Community Service"

To address our goal to "improve the interface with Siemens Energy," several of us have been meeting with various members of Siemens management. Siemens would like to better prepare employees transitioning to retirement. We would like to make those same employees aware of the SWRA and the benefits that come with learning from those of us that have gone through the retirement process. The end result is a smoother transition for all involved and potential new members to our group. Several of us have volunteered to participate in roundtable discussions with those employees, sharing our experiences and answering any questions that arise. Our objective is to make this a win-win for all involved. Should anyone like to make them self available to participate, let us know.

Finally, any organization's strength, relevance and value depend on the interest and participation of its members. It is my belief that purpose and participation are necessary ingredients to vitality and fulfillment. I sincerely hope to see you at our next meeting and hear from you with your suggestions and feedback.

Treasurer's Report**Joe Pankowiecki**

The Association would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following new members:

Mary Maynard marp86@gmail.com

Charles Sloan charlysloan@aol.com

Joe Yarusinski jyarusinski@cfl.rr.com

The audit of the FY2008 Treasurer's Report was held on February 9, 2009. The audit committee consisted of Wayne Myers, Jim Martin, and John Morgan. Pete DeRosa was also in attendance. The audit concluded with no negative findings.

The Association membership currently stands at 243. Dues for 2009 are now due. Please make check for \$10 payable to the Siemens Westinghouse Retirees Association and send to:

Joe Pankowiecki
1081 Nodding Pines Way
Casselberry, FL 32707-5915

Thanks to all of the members who have already sent in their dues. Currently 58% of the members have done so. Some members prepaid their dues last year. If you are unsure whether you have paid dues for 2009, give me a call or send me an e-mail.

2010 Census Bureau Job Opportunities

Should anyone be interested in earning some spare cash, check out the following website. The US Census Bureau is looking for people to work in gathering the 2010 Census. The pay is competitive and the hours are flexible. Details are provided in the website <http://2010.census.gov/2010censusjobs/>

Investment Group**George Baker**

The next meeting will be at 10-12 am on Monday March 30 in the Enrichment Center of St Stephens Church on Tuskawilla Road in Winter Springs. Our guest speaker will be **Mr. Don Kirkendall** who will give us a briefing on **Medicare** after which he will then take questions. Any remaining time will be used to finish the session on

Getting the Most for your Money we started last meeting. For information contact George Baker at gbaker6335@cfl.rr.com

Fantasy of Flight Outing Joe Pankowiecki

The weather was beautiful on Feb. 11 as I was joined by Pete DeRosa, Dave Berrong, Marty Schlatter, Gil & Lee Hyde, Lee & Bernadine McLaurin, Frank Artusa, Heiner Moers, and Jean Ronat at our SWRA outing at Fantasy of Flight. This attraction, located in Polk City, FL., between Orlando and Tampa, gives you the chance to stroll among the world's largest collection of flying vintage airplanes dating from the early 1900s, including World War II standouts like the rare P-51C Mustang featuring red tail colors of the Tuskegee Airmen and the B-26 Marauder, which saw combat in the South Pacific and over North Africa.

Behind the scene tours showed how craftsmen, working in both wood and metal, are meticulously restoring aircraft such as the Curtiss JN-4 "Jenny" and Seversky P-35 to flying condition. Many of the aircraft have been restored after suffering damage from hurricane Andrew in 1992 when the collection was located in Miami. The newest aircraft that was restored and sat outside the display hanger was a Grumman TBM "Avenger" WWII torpedo bomber of the type flown by former President George H.W. Bush.

A highlight of the visit was the daily flight demonstration, when one of the collection's aircraft is flown. During our visit, a WWII German liaison aircraft, a Fieseler "Storch" (stork) was flown which amazed the

audience with its amazing short take off and landing capabilities. The pilot who demonstrated this aircraft was one of the stunt pilots for the 2006 movie "Flyboys" and has also built and flown replicas of the 1903 Wright Flyer.

For additional photos of the outing visit the group name "Siemens & Westinghouse Retirees" at www.facebook.com. Hope to see more of you at our next SWRA outing.



Frank Artusa & Dave Berrong check out a B-17

Member's Letter (Jim Dunmire)

Jim retired from Westinghouse in March 1998 after a 24 year career. He began his industrial career as a welder for the Baldwin Locomotive Works in Eddystone, PA in 1951 and graduated from Widener College in 1974 with a B.S. Jim joined Westinghouse Heat Transfer Division in August, 1974 as Welding Engineer in their Weld Development Laboratory.

While retirement was not yet in my consciousness in early 1995, I occasionally had random thoughts about what I might do with the rest of my life when retirement time came. I did not have a well thought-out plan for what I might like to do, but I absolutely rejected the concept of becoming a "couch potato!"

One day, I came across an article in the AWS Welding Journal, March 1995 issue about an Artist-Blacksmith, Greg Leavitt in Glen Riddle, PA. The article captured my imagination! The photographs of a variety of his large, beautiful works of art, his description of what he does and the satisfaction he finds in the creative process excited my imagination, and I began to feel that this just might be something that I would need to explore and learn more about.

I also realized that with my entire career devoted to welding and fabrication of metals, much of the knowledge and skills that I had learned and used as both welder and Welding Engineer could very likely be applied to Blacksmithing as well. In addition, the idea of being able to study, learn and develop some level of artistic skills and capabilities had an appeal that was irresistible. To make a long story short, I wrote to Greg, introduced myself, presented my background and

credentials and asked if he would teach me the Blacksmithing business. After some discussion, and a trip to Philly to meet him, he felt we could probably work something out and I should keep in touch with him as I got closer to retirement. Upon retiring in early 1998, Jan and I leased our home in Chuluota, moved up to the Princeton, NJ, area and I apprenticed myself to Greg Leavitt at his Upper Bank Forge in Glen Riddle. Each day, I drove down I-95 to observe, learn and practice in my new career. The apprenticeship that I had thought of as such a grand opportunity, almost immediately morphed into questioning what I had gotten myself into. I found I couldn't do much of anything that would be of value for the many art pieces that were being worked on in the shop. My self confidence dropped to zero. Fortunately, Greg had taken on other apprentices over the years and he understood the frustrations and self doubts that all students encounter.

Greg taught me how to safely light the forge, shear some light gauge sheet steel and then make various leaf shapes and stems, over and over and over. He would critique my efforts and have me practice hammer control, hitting the same spot, again and again until there was only a single hammer mark after 3 straight hits. Slowly, my skills improved to the point where I could be trusted to make small components for the numerous commissions being made in the shop.

Because Greg had so many pieces underway, he forced me to learn how to heat and forge a variety of carbon steel, copper, aluminum and bronze materials. I also was taught how to bend, shape, vein, carve and the unusual methods of pushing metal out from the backside - called chasing and repousse. I also was taught about the many, many finishing methods for the various metals, ranging from the expected acids, oils, waxes, paints, patinas and hammered textures, to the unexpected, liquid shoe polish and bees wax and turpentine! While repetition was a major part of the learning process, it wasn't all manual, physical, watch, learn, then go and do. In the early stages of my days at Greg's studio, while looking at the vast array of amazing and diverse art pieces that my mentor was "effortlessly" producing, the thing that troubled me most was, "what happens if I have no artistic capability at all"? Will I ever be able to create art that satisfies my needs and expectations? Will others see beauty and value in my work and want to own something that I had made?

I posed these questions to Greg and his response was: He had the very same questions 30 years prior. But, through association with other Artist-Blacksmiths and observing their work; from attending classes at the many schools that teach Blacksmithing; and from working at the forge, heating metal, hammering it, shaping, and trashing the piece when it doesn't please you, then starting another piece. Then, next morning, or next week, find the pieces you trashed and carefully look at them all again. Be assured, the artistic skills will build and build until they become an integral part of you. You stay with it; you evaluate what you like in your work and what you don't like. Change your routine, modify your technique, spend more time reading trade journals, visit more art galleries. Sign up for a weekend work shop where Blacksmiths are working on a joint project. Immerse yourself in the craft you have chosen and your understanding and comprehension of how to differentiate between what is and what is not artistically pleasing will develop and grow.

Eventually, Greg included me in design brainstorming meetings where customer expectations and inputs were revealed. Occasionally, sample models were developed and presented to clients prior to starting a commission. I was included in the planning and installation of both small and large estate gates and other sculptural commissions for corporate and private clients in the Philadelphia and Wilmington, DE areas. All things considered, the time I spent at Greg's studio was a learning experience of unbelievable value and satisfaction. It was extremely hard, physical work but also an enormous blast! Oh yes, I also was the designated go-fer, the welder, the grinder and the sweeper, of note.

During that time, I also began my search for tools, equipment and materials that would be needed to establish and develop my shop-of-the-future. I had the good fortune to acquire a band saw, a complete oxy-acetylene burning outfit, an AC/DC stick welder, and a drill press with many high value drill bits of all sizes, all from the sale of a welding business owner who had retired. A great start at bargain basement prices! Then I realized that all this stuff had to be moved back to Florida.

We will continue this interesting article in the next issue...along with pictures of Jim's work.

Reminder...

The next membership meeting is **9:30, Tuesday, April 14th**, in **Quad 2** cafeteria. Our speaker will be Neta Villalobos from the University of Florida. The topic is 'Florida Friendly Landscaping'. This should be of interest to all including spouses...so bring them. Coffee and donuts are provided while they last...so, get there early!! Mark your calendars now!!!

Just think...half of the people you meet are below average.

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