



## CHAIR'S CORNER

### Alvin Langstaff

As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, I would like to share a few highlights from the most recent ASQ World Conference. The keynote speakers this year were Alan Mulally, President and CEO of Ford; Robert Stevens, Founder of Geek Squad; and Terry Jones, Founder of Travelocity. Each of these gentlemen offered insight into their respective businesses and a number of pithy thoughts. Here are a few that I found particularly interesting.

Alan Mulally was an excellent choice for the start of the first day as his enthusiasm and easy manner set the stage for the remainder of the day. After a few opening remarks he spent the rest of his time taking and responding to questions from the audience. (In fact, I believe a video of his talk is available at the ASQ homepage). Two practices I thought particularly noteworthy. All Ford functional and product managers participate in a weekly two and 1/2 hour teleconference meeting (on Thursday, not Monday, which to me is a good practice by itself) to review their performance metrics. This next point is key - it's okay to be red. One problem Ford was having prior to Mulally's arrival was that problems weren't surfaced early - nobody wants to be red and have to explain and get yelled at. However, by letting it be okay to reveal bad news, it became a lot easier to fix things sooner rather than later and, the collective wisdom of the organization could be brought to bear on the issue. Mulally gave an example of the hydraulic lift gate on the new Ford Edge which was not working the way it was intended, and the rollout of the vehicle was in danger of falling behind schedule. The manager who brought this to the table was able to get help on the solution immediately and the Edge team got back on schedule.

Robert Stevens talked about the importance of "branding", that is, distinguishing your organization from the crowd. As you've probably noticed when you're in a *Best Buy* store, the Geek Squad wears white shirts and skinny black neckties. Stevens got the idea from the movie *Apollo 13*, where the Houston mission control guys were all dressed in a similar fashion. Stevens said he realized that those guys were the "ultimate" geeks.

Finally, Terry Jones offered a few quotable (or at least, paraphraseable) thoughts. The "Dope-ler" effect which he defined something like "stupid ideas seem smart if they come at you rapidly." And "2 pizza teams"; if your special project team is large enough that it takes more than two pizzas to feed, then it's too large.

That's probably enough for this month.

- Alvin

## VICE CHAIR'S CORNER

### Jo Haberstok

I hope you are all enjoying your summer. As I write this article, it just happens to be one of the "hotter" weeks of the summer here in the Tri-Cities area. The hydroplane races are barely over (always sure to bring with them hot weather), so I'm hoping now the weather will realize it's okay to cool down a bit. (Hello, Weather, are you listening?)

I was unable to attend the Leadership/program planning meeting on June 30, but from what I've heard (and been "assigned" in my absence to recruit a special speaker) I can tell you that the tentative plans look like we will have some diverse topics and very interesting programs this year. Since they are not all confirmed yet, I can't give out many details, but there are plans (hopes) to visit or hear from a couple of manufacturing companies, and of course we will try to sneak in a visit to check out the quality at a nearby brewery or winery later in the year as well.

Sometimes when talking with others on the Leadership Team about potential speakers or site visits, the whole idea of contacting places/people and firming up plans seems rather daunting. Maybe it's because every year we know that we need to or at least want to be able to provide our members with nine months of interesting topics. But what I find most interesting (and so great!) is that every year there seems to be more and more new businesses springing up in our section area and thus even more places and people to consider for our meetings.

I don't subscribe to the local newspaper, as I find I never seem to have time to read it every day, and I usually hear the main news on the radio or television or just by word of mouth at work. But I'm always surprised - in a good way - when I buy a Friday paper (because I figure I can get through the whole paper one day a week and I also like to find out what's happening at various venues on the weekend). In looking through the Friday paper, I almost always end up learning about a new company or two that's now open for business. And I also enjoy reading about people who have recently been promoted in the workplace. (Candidates for ASQ membership also, perhaps!)

So, although we don't have the programs all confirmed for the coming year just yet, I'm confident that the 2010-2011 ASQ 614 section year will be another exciting and fun one.

Be sure to check the section web site from time to time for updates as they are posted, and ... see you in September !!

- Jo

## SECTION 614 MEMBERSHIP

As of July 25, 2010, we have 92 members in our Section.

## 2010-2011 SECTION 614 OFFICERS

2010-2011 SECTION 614 LEADERSHIP TEAM	
<b>Section Chair (and Programs &amp; Publicity)</b>	Alvin Langstaff
<b>Vice Chair (and Programs &amp; Publicity)</b>	Jo Haberstok
<b>Treasurer</b>	Barbara Gillespie
<b>Secretary (and Programs &amp; Publicity)</b>	Deborah Coffey
<b>Division Liaison and Section Historian</b>	Dennis Arter
<b>Certification/Recertification</b>	Howard Rew
<b>Audit</b>	Clark Beus
<b>Webmaster</b>	Phil Crook
<b>Education</b>	Laura Suddath
<b>Newsletter (and Programs &amp; Publicity)</b>	Robert Boykin

## PUBLICATION INFORMATION

This newsletter is published on a regular basis to inform members and potential members about Section 614 activities and other news/information that might be of value to quality professionals. To be considered for the next newsletter, input must be received by the 15th of the month.