



# President's Report

Bob Moelter, *President of the Missouri Valley Ice Manufacturer's Association*



*“Thankfully, even the perfect storm can be weathered.*

*Hard times favor those who are prudent, prepared, imaginative and focused.”*



Ask a group of icemen and women the most important factors influencing their success. Ranking near the top of the myriad of answers you'll find weather, the cost of energy, and the economy's effect on recreation and tourism. Throw any one of these things askew and the iceman faces a real threat to his success. Throw them all completely out of whack and you have the perfect storm, a threat to his very livelihood.

Throughout much of the country, especially the Midwest, this first half of 2008 has been cool (the average temperature in our home town was twelve degrees colder in May than a year ago). When I think of complaining about that I remember those that have been dealing with deadly tornadoes and flooding.

An analysis of our electric bill shows a 20% increase in electricity rates from a year ago, a figure that pales in comparison to the 90% increase in the cost of diesel fuel. The cost for the average family to feed, shelter and transport themselves is rising at a rate far greater than their household income; resulting in fewer dollars left in the budget for recreation. For the iceman and others like him, it's the perfect storm.

Most other businesses are running for cover right now; cutting production, reducing inventory, and laying off workers. But not the iceman. He presses ahead. He orders more bags than last year. After all, he doesn't want to be caught short when this thing turns around. He increases production output,

stockpiling bags of ice like a squirrel building his cache of walnuts. Freezer warehouses swell with inventory but as long as there's room for one more bag the baggers keep churning. He's gonna need every bag when this thing turns around.

Sales compared to last year dip even further. The iceman hires two more drivers. Gotta have them trained and ready when this thing turns around.

Late at night, the iceman lays awake wondering, "Is this thing going to turn around?" Sleepless nights in the summer used to come from a whole different set of reasons. He would count bags of ice in his head like an insomniac counts sheep, worrying, "Is there enough to get through this heat wave?" He used to get up twice a night to go to the plant and check that compressor that's been running hot or the sensor that goes haywire when a storm blows through because not a moment of production could be lost.

Now the sleepless nights are spent searching for ways to stimulate stagnant sales and cut expenses; protect his livelihood and the livelihood of his employees.

Thankfully, even the perfect storm can be weathered. Hard times favor those who are prudent, prepared, imaginative and focused. Here are just a few things we're doing at our company to ease the effects of hard times.

- **Focus on what we can control.**  
We can't control the weather, fuel prices or the economy so worrying about them is not productive.



## President's Report (continued)

- **Find new ways to save energy.**  
Glean an advantage from the cooler weather by cycling compressors to control electric load and reducing the number of defrost cycles per day. Shift more production and electric load to off-peak hours when rates are lower.
  - **Find ways to modify delivery routing without cutting service.**  
Use the telephone more to pre-sell and check customer inventories.
  - **Communicate with customers.**  
Make them aware of your changing needs to remain profitable and show genuine concern for theirs.
  - **Make sure your selling prices protect your profit margin.**  
Too many small businesses ignore this basic rule and lose money because they are afraid to raise prices.
  - **Instill profit-based thinking in your employees.**  
Measure cost saving activities and share the savings with them in the form of incentives. Slow sales may mean fewer hours for them but it doesn't have to mean smaller paychecks.
- The final piece of advice I have to offer is strengthen your ties within your industry. Now is the time to read

publications like Ice World Journal and participate in associations like the MO Valley. Many would consider a trip to the MO Valley convention an expense to be cut during hard times. I prefer to think of it as a resource more valuable to my bottom line than ever. What better to help you weather the perfect storm than a combined thousand years (give or take a decade or so) ice industry experience in the same room? If you have questions or concerns about the challenges you face in business these days, drop a note to Tom Howat or me. We'll help you tap into all that industry experience at our Town Hall Meeting this fall. Don't miss it! ■

### News And Notes

#### Fall 2008

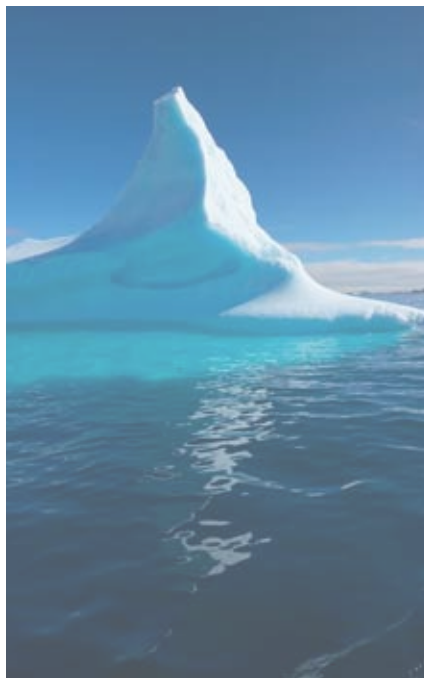
October 12 - 14 at The Plaza Hotel  
Eau Claire, WI  
*hosted by American Ice Co.*

#### Spring 2009

March 1 - 3 at The Truman Hotel  
Jefferson City, MO  
*hosted by Hilke's Ice Co.*

#### Fall 2009

Tinley Park, IL  
*hosted by Tinley Ice Co.*



#### MO Valley news and comments for the Ice World Journal can be sent to:

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*Don't forget to check out the MO Valley's website at [www.movalley.homestead.com](http://www.movalley.homestead.com)*

#### Items or ideas for the website? Contact our Webmaster:

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# Secretary's Notes

Tom Howat, Secretary of the Missouri Valley Ice Manufacturer's Association



*"Have a great summer and come see us in Eau Claire."*

As I write this, gasoline just went to \$4 per gallon. Is it time for another price increase yet? I have no idea where this will end. It seems like it took quite a while, with many ups and downs, for the price to go from \$2 to \$3. But once it broke that \$3 barrier it got up to \$4 in a heartbeat. Hang in there!

Well, maybe summer is finally here. We just had the first rain-free weekend I can remember in a long time. The temperature was in the nineties and the humidity was high. I hope it is a harbinger of things to come.

I would like to remind our members, and anyone else who may be interested, that the Missouri Valley fall business meeting will be held in beautiful Eau Claire, WI at the Plaza Hotel from October 12 to 14, 2008. Please mark your calendars and watch your mail for the registration forms. President Moelter is putting the final touches on another fine meeting for us.

Well, the phone is ringing (I hope it's an order) and I have to go. Have a great summer and come see us in Eau Claire. ■

## FOR SALE

### Turn Your Unwanted Equipment Into Money In Your Pocket By Posting Your Ad Here!

MO Valley members looking to buy or sell items can contact Tom Howat at (800)235-9088 to be included in the next issue of Ice World Journal.

#### FOR SALE

six Leer model 30 coldwall, glass door merchandisers. Call Earl at (608) 754-6619.

#### FOR SALE

Several used slant front ice merchandisers. Call Chris Giocondo at (816) 365-1632

#### FOR SALE

1997 GMC w/14' body. Low temp cold plate w/driver, curb side and rear doors. Automatic transmission - good tires - great shape. Clinebell model B 56 block maker w/two condensing units - good condition. Hamer 125 head only. Call Mike (573) 686-6666.

#### FOR SALE

1994 stainless steel Turbo Tigar 25, remote, ammonia ice maker - low side only. Call Craig at Myers Ice Co. (620) 275-5751.

#### FOR SALE

Two Hytrol HD roller/belt conveyors - 26' and 42' - good condition. Three 12' Hytrol model A conveyors. Carving quality 10"x 20"x 40" crystal clear block ice, packaged and ready to ship. Call Bob (636) 225-6011.

#### FOR SALE

60 ton (in the bag) mini tube ice plant. Includes Mycom and Frick compressors, BAC evap condensers, control centers, s/s drying belts. Cd's of the plant are available upon request. For sale by owner. PRICED TO SELL! Call Chris Giocondo at 816-365-1632

#### FOR SALE

(2) New Era mini palletizers with film. Assorted old style Starrett low profile ice merchandisers. Call Tim at (618) 234-3080

#### LOOKING TO BUY

Model B56 block maker and fill device. Call Andy at (573) 446-1915.