IN MID-JANUARY THE STLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS completed the second of its four annual meetings. We met at the Omni Hotel in Dallas, site of our 2015 Annual Meeting & Exhibition. This new Omni Hotel is very modern. I hate to use the word chic, so let’s say the interior is contemporary and very nice, and I was impressed by the hotel’s facilities as well as the meeting space. There are plenty of areas within walking distance of the hotel where you can dine and entertain colleagues and customers, and the hotel itself is adding an extension with even more options.

But I’m getting ahead of myself. Our next STLE Annual Meeting & Exhibition is May 18-22 in Lake Buena Vista, Florida at Disney’s Contemporary Resort, another excellent convention site. On our Website, STLE has posted a registration brochure with the entire technical agenda. Included are titles for some 400 technical presentations and the lineup of our 12 one-day education courses, each taught by world-class instructors. The exhibition and Commercial Marketing Forum are selling briskly, and we have plenty of sponsorship opportunities still available for those organizations seeking a higher profile at our meeting.

You can view the brochure, register for the event and make your room reservation at the Contemporary at www.stle.org. We also have additional housing at Disney’s Grand Floridian Resort and Spa. I urge you to go to our Website now and start confirming your annual meeting plans. We’re expecting about 1,400 of your peers at the event.

One of the benefits of being president is that I am a moderator or facilitator and no longer work on specific projects, but hear reports of the progress made by our volunteers and staff. This was the case in Dallas where our directors reported on the excellent progress they are making on projects that will result in greater member benefits and extend the society’s international outreach. We are already reaping the results of the strategic plan we created just last year!

We have a lot of work going on in many important areas. One area that impressed me was the work being done by director Paul Hetherington (Petro-Canada Lubricants Inc.) and his team to develop an STLE body of knowledge in different subject areas. This is a huge task, but when it’s complete we will have a peer-reviewed learning path in these subject areas. Paul’s team started with four subjects: basic, advanced, condition monitoring and synthetics. When these are complete, more will follow.

The group has identified key subject areas and is currently reviewing appropriate reference books. Once the books are done, they will move on to Webinars, education courses and industry references. Their goal is to complete the Certified Lubrication Specialist area by summer 2014.

STLE’s director of professional development Dr. Robert Gresham reported on collaborative efforts to expand contacts between the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the tribology community. Members of STLE and other organizations had expressed concerns that NSF was shifting focus and funding away from tribology. STLE and the ASME-Tribology Division are working together to organize a May workshop with NSF to emphasize the current and future benefits of supporting tribology research.

On the global outreach front, STLE has established a European office in Brussels, which is staffed by Interel Association Management. In China, STLE has established local representation through Kellen Co., a leading association management company. The affiliation with Kellen provides for legal and administrative support, management of an advisory group and expansion of local business contacts.

These activities will provide opportunities for global corporate membership, education and certification activity overseas and establishment of a digital footprint in Europe and Asia. The longer-term goal is the possible creation of conferences and educational events to serve the technical community in these areas.

As president, I no longer work on specific projects but hear about the great work done by others. That makes me smile—for several reasons.

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