From the President

About a year ago I made a commitment to start exercising regularly. I have wanted to do this for several years and finally took the step to join a gym. Despite paying them monthly, I haven’t used the facility more than a few times since making the initial financial commitment. After this failed first attempt, I got honest with myself. Although I liked the thought of losing weight and generally feeling better, I had not made the physical and mental commitment to eliminate the excuses that would get in my way. They are all good reasons, at least in my head; I need to get more done at work, I need to get home for dinner, I can’t leave my office in the middle of the day because the world would implode. You know the excuses!

A few months ago I joined a new gym. One wasn’t enough! This time I chose one that was more convenient for me (right next to my Starbucks), but also made a stronger commitment to make the needed changes to see it through. It had finally become important enough to override all of the excuses. With newfound energy, I planned my first morning workout. My plan was to get to the gym at 5 a.m. with full work attire neatly in tow on hangers. Toiletries. Socks. Shoes. Just like I was at home. As I was dressing after my workout, I became aware of the little things I had not packed for my gym excursion that I typically grabbed off of my dresser or kitchen counters at home. I found myself muttering about the inconvenience of exercise and realizing this was why my initial commitment had been weak. Because it is a hassle! It takes planning and commitment and being inconvenienced and maybe even inconveniencing others to succeed, but because the experience is good for you, sometimes you have to overcome the hassle of making it happen. You know you need it, and you know it will change your life for the better!

I feel the same about the PDCA Residential Forum’s AST 15 July 18-19th in Denver. There are a million excuses we can all make about why it is a hassle to attend. Costs a little money. It takes a little time. You need to get home for dinner or for a baseball game or whatever. And surely your business would implode without you there to keep it going. These are all just excuses, not legitimate reasons. Attending AST 15 simply requires commitment. It has been thoughtfully planned with your business in mind. The speakers and networking will be good for you and it very likely will change your life! All it requires is you making the commitment to not let the excuses stand in the way of you attending. Sign up today! The registration is included in this very edition of the Painters Rag.

And if you are wondering if I made it back to the gym a second time and continued to show up and stick it out this time around, I’ll show you……in DENVER!

Scott Lollar
Precision Painting and Decorating
Editor’s NOTE:
By Mike Kelly, mike@crestwoodpainting.com

With Advanced Shop Talk 15 fast approaching we thought it best to more directly encourage Forum members to actively work on their businesses for a weekend – right smack-dab in the middle of Busy Season. Yes, everybody is crazy busy right now, but if you’re putting out fires a little high-level planning and feedback might be just the ticket.

My first AST was 2009 in Portland. The people were friendly and approachable, they did exactly the kind of work I did and most had already solved the problems I was having at the time. I left Portland having met people that freely gave of their knowledge and I knew they would answer when I called. The trip paid for itself; I resolved to not miss the next.

Thankfully, our business has different problems today than it did in Portland (or even last year); I’m confident that some of this year’s problems will be solved in Denver. Yes, we’re already super busy, but it would be crazy to miss an opportunity to solve problems, move the business forward and bounce ideas off some top-notch business owners.

See you in Denver!

What AST Can Teach You...

With the schedule booked out three months in advance, Accounts Receivable at an all time high, several crews who don’t require any leadership/supervision, a brand new fleet of trucks, $100 bills spilling out of my pockets, extensive conversations with my CPA regarding excessive profits, and four tee times booked this week….it must be June!

Either that or I just became the new Wolf of Main Street!

Okay, I might be exaggerating a bit…. (Actually, a lot).

2014 represents an important year for us. Our goals, aspirations, and expectations are at an all-time high (and it feels good). As a fifth generation painter, I understand the importance of education and rejuvenation. Advance Shop Talk (AST) is around the corner, and I cannot wait!

Over the last five years, I’ve attended three Advance Shop Talks and always walked away with more knowledge and things to improve, but more importantly- a shared passion for what we do. The first AST I attended, I brought home a new time-clock system and implemented right away. My trip has been paid for ever since.

As my grandfather (original Owner) explained to me at an early age, experience is something that cannot be taught. It is learned over time. The next best thing is getting all of this experience in a central location to discuss first-hand the issues, struggles, and successes we ALL face as painting contractors. This 3-day seminar is a chance to put aside the daily grind and focus on you and your business. Yes, the short educational seminars are worth the trip in itself; however, I tend to remember the invaluable conversations with other contractors over a beer or coffee.

See you there!

John Busick
Bob Kunst Painting, Inc
In 1999 I attended my first PDCA Advanced Shop Talk event in Chicago Ill. There were not a lot of people there, which surprised me a little…I was expecting something akin to National’s Expo, but what really surprised me was the caliber of the people I met. Since then I’ve attended a dozen AST events, seeking that nitrous boost that it provides and looking forward to reconnecting with my colleagues and friends. I always bear in mind the title of this event, the reason the word “Advanced” is in the title, it’s not just shop talk. This is top shelf experience, advanced knowledge for managing and growing in this business…but the best of the best is the little things you pick up along the way; during the breaks or over dinner, chatting with fellows – that’s where intimate personal experiences are shared, which is a perspective not often conveyed in roundtables or presentations - or even written content – and that's really inspiring. It's good to have friends in business, the very finest men and women in this time honored trade I have come to know through this annual event – and they are the reason why I keep coming back to AST.

Advanced Shop Talk 2006 in Jackson Hole, Wyoming was the first forum I attended. At that time I was probably doing 250k in sales and I can remember riding up the chair lift with another contractor who was doing 700k. At the time I couldn’t imagine doing 500k let alone 700k or 1 million. This past year I almost broke 700k and now I’ve got my site set on 1 million. If I hadn’t attended that Shop Talk back in 2006 and since surrounded myself with the positive and successful role models of the residential forum, there is no way I would be experiencing the positive, profitable growth I’ve had over the last eight years. If you’re looking to take your business to the next level then AST 15 in Denver is the place to be!!!!!

Dan Brady
Dan Brady Painting and Wood Restoration
One Tuesday I’ll never forget……

I received a call at the office on Tuesday morning from what seemed like an elderly man.

“Bob Kunst Painting, How can I help you?” I said.

“I’m looking for Bob. Is he around? I need an estimate today…. Not tomorrow or the end of the week. Today!” he spouted impatiently.

I went through my typical probing questions to figure out what type of estimate and possible client he might be. When someone calls asking for “Bob” (my grandfather who retired well over 15 years ago), I know they are in desperate need of painting. Meaning- 15+ years without painting….. well, you get the picture.

“I didn’t catch your name, sir.” I said.

“Bill,” he murmured.

“See you in an hour and thanks again for the call.” I hung up.

As I pulled down the quiet San Rafael Street where Bill lived, memories of my grandfather (Bob- who we call Papa) filled my mind. Papa’s van smelt like a combination of dirty paint thinner and the remnants of a Wendy’s cheeseburger. I can still hear his suitcase full of 4, 6, and 8 inch block brushes sliding back and forth. “You know John, if I can give you one piece of advice… You should be your own boss. First one hired; Last one fired!” Papa said.

The narrow and tree-filled street Bill lived on wasn’t anything to write home about. It was in need of major repair as the sidewalks were a skateboarder’s worse nightmare. I turned my truck engine off, grabbed my clipboard, business card, and measuring wheel from the passenger seat and headed towards Bill’s single story, 4-bed, 2-bath home (which was painted in some sort of barn red). I couldn’t really make out the color of the exterior due to the 15+ years that had passed since the last paint job. The sun and elements had nearly worn right through every bit of color. It was patchy and looked like some college kid vomited red wine all over the siding.

I was ten feet from the entrance and the door swung open.

“You John?” he asked.

“Yes Sir. That would be me.” I said with a calm smile.

“You look like your grandfather, only younger…..and taller.” Bill said in a hurried manner.

At this point, my mind was still stuck in memory lane with Papa. What did this Bill guy want, I thought. Obviously, he needed a paint job (10+ years ago). Why was he in such a hurry all of the sudden?
As Bill walked me around the outside of his house, he pointed out several mishaps and flaws that needed to be addressed mixed with stories of his kids growing up and playing in the backyard. When we reached the back patio, Bill slowly sat down in what seemed like “his chair.” The four-legged mustard yellow chair looked as old as Bill, yet comfortable and sturdy as a grandfather’s chair should.

“Bill, just curious- What’s the hurry? Why did you need me hear by mid day?” I asked. “It’s not like the house is going to fall down.”

“John, you seem like a nice young man….. BTW your grandfather was the nicest man, so I’m already leaning towards liking you” he said with a smirk.

I grinned, thinking this old guy is a hoot!

“I’m in a hurry because I woke up today, willing for the first time, to pull the trigger…..to make a change. I’ve been coming out here since before you were born; mostly to watch the birds eat my fruit trees. They like those apricots the best! My house hasn’t changed in 20 years! Not since my son died.” He said with crackle.

My eyebrows lifted as I heard Bill begin to open the flood gates. I was fascinated by Bill. Actually, most old people fascinate me, but something about Bill caught my attention and I yearned to know what this man was about.

“It’s time I fix this place up a bit. I come out here every day and reminisce. I’m 79 years old and most of my family has either died or moved away. Since my son died of leukemia 20 years ago, I’ve fixated on the memory of him and I painting this old place and wish we could do it all over again.”

My heart sank as I sat down next to Bill, the padded chair creaked as it hadn’t been sat in for quite some time. Emotions ran through my body faster than my heart could pump blood. Tears began to build as I looked at Bill. “I understand, Bill. My four year old son has leukemia…..diagnosed November 12th. There isn’t an hour that goes by that I don’t think about him, the disease, and the affect that it has had on our family. I couldn’t imagine losing him.” I said with a heavy throat.

My eyes were burning…..

We walked the rest of the house and chatted about how far the medical field has come in the last 20 years, the chemo treatments, the blood work, the bullshit. I shook Bill’s hand and he pulled me close- “Cherish the moments you have together and get a brush in that boy’s hand; It was the best thing I ever did.”

I got in my truck and left. As I drove back to the shop, I thought of my Papa again and what Bill just said. If it weren’t for Papa’s advice back then, I would have never met Bill and heard his story. Jack - Get out the brush!
The Denver Magnolia Hotel rests in the heart of downtown Denver within walking distance of more than 100 restaurants and entertainment venues and is just 32 minutes from the airport. It is within a stone’s throw of the 16th Street Mall and Coors Field and is surrounded by the retail and commerce that makes Denver a great city.

While staying at the Denver Magnolia Hotel you will enjoy high speed internet access throughout the entire hotel, a full American hot breakfast buffet, an evening reception featuring complimentary beer and wine and their signature bedtime cookie buffet!

The hotel dates back to 1929. The First National Bank building (1929) was 17th Street’s first "skyscraper," being the first to exceed 9 stories. Its facade was covered with cement in the 1960s to "modernize" it, and then it sat vacant in the 1980s. After a full restoration started in 1993, it is now the elegant Magnolia Hotel. The Denver Magnolia Hotel is located in the landmark First National Bank/American National Bank building, and is recognized as a downtown Denver historic property. The building was meticulously restored to reflect the appearance of the original structure, including terra cotta details and the addition of a replica corner clock.
Reflections On My First AST

I attended my first AST in Annapolis, Maryland the summer of 2007. I was still pretty new to the painting industry (especially compared to many others in the room) and, to be honest, was a bit overwhelmed by all of the information coming at me. I made a point of sitting at different tables throughout the day and listened in on lots of interesting discussions on a myriad of topics, but didn’t chime in very often. I’ll never forget what Mario Guerten said to me as the conference was winding down. We were sitting at a roundtable together and when session wrapped up, her turned to me and said – “I can tell you’re a good listener.” If only he knew the true reason for my silence that weekend – fear of putting myself in the spotlight and confirming to all in attendance how green around the gills I still was.

Fast forward seven short years and I’ve now got a half-dozen AST presentations and two years as the president under my belt. If you told me then that I’d be saying that now, I would have called you crazy. So how did I do it, you might ask? I attended AST every year since then, paid attention, learned more, shared more, put all of my newfound knowledge to good use in my own business, and got tricked into joining the board with a fast track to the top. In all seriousness though, becoming fully engaged in the Residential Forum and attending AST every year like clockwork has catapulted my learning curve and taken years off of what it would have taken for me to amass the knowledge I now have of the industry.

As a biology major with a concentration in photography, very little of what I learned in college applied to my new position in the family business. Organizations like PDCA, Residential Forum, and On Target have really helped to shape my understanding of the industry. The best part of all though, is that I didn’t learn it from a teacher standing at the front of the class, but rather from my peers who have actually lived it and can truly speak from experience (no offense to teachers, I come from a long line of them on both sides of my family). I am now proud to be considered one of those worthy of sharing and “teaching” and it feels good to no longer be the newby in the room.

If you’ve never been to AST, or if it’s been a while and you’re thinking “but it’s just too busy to be away for a few days in our busy season”, I promise you that no one who has ever attended AST has said they regretted the trip. Aside from being well fed over the course of the weekend, and being surrounded by peers who will encourage and support you, I guarantee you that you will not leave without at least one ah ha moment and a handful of “to do’s” that you can implement on Monday to make your business run smoother and your life less stressful. So do yourself a favor, book your hotel, send in your registration, and you can thank me in person come Saturday afternoon (along with the rest of the board and the amazing AST planning committee, of course.) We look forward to seeing you at the table and hearing what you have to add to the conversation.

Suhaiba Neill
John Neill Painting
PDCA RESIDENTIAL FORUM PRESENTS

AST 15
"THE ASCENT TO THE TOP"

Join us for 2 full days to network with your peers as you work both IN and ON your business.

When: July 18-19, 2014
Where: Magnolia Hotel
818 17th Street
Denver, CO 80202

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<tr>
<td>3:00 pm - 5:00 pm</td>
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<td>Registration Open</td>
<td>Continental Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welcome Reception sponsored by Sherwin Williams - Lime Cantina</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 am – 8:00 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welcome and Opening</td>
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<td>Dan Brady, presenter</td>
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<td>10:30 am – 10:45 am</td>
<td>“Short” - Scheduling</td>
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<td>Morning Break</td>
<td>John Peek, presenter</td>
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<td>10:45 am - 11:00 am</td>
<td>Tips, Tricks, &amp; Timesavers</td>
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<td>“Short” - Marketing</td>
<td>Tony Kozak, facilitator</td>
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<td>Bill McKinney, presenter</td>
<td>Refreshment break</td>
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<td>11:00 am – 12:30 pm</td>
<td>Action Planning</td>
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<td>HR &amp; The New Workforce</td>
<td>Conference Wrap Up</td>
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<td>Amy Shoemaker, guest speaker</td>
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<td>12:30 pm – 1:30 pm</td>
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<td>1:30 pm – 1:45 pm</td>
<td>“Short” - Hiring Part II</td>
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<td>“Short” - Hiring Part II</td>
<td>Mike Kelly, presenter</td>
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<td>1:45 pm - 3:15 pm</td>
<td>Panel Discussion - Technology in the Workplace</td>
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<td>Scott Lollar, moderator</td>
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<td>3:15 pm – 3:30 pm</td>
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<td>3:30 pm - 4:15 pm</td>
<td>Role Play - Selling Your Services</td>
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<td>Scott Lollar, moderator</td>
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<td>4:15 pm – 4:30 pm</td>
<td>Action Planning &amp; Wrap Up</td>
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<td>4:30 pm - 5:15 pm</td>
<td>Optional Session for Key Employees</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 pm - 8:30 pm</td>
<td>Networking Reception sponsored by Benjamin Moore - Maggiano's Little Italy</td>
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### REGISTRATION COSTS
(includes all materials, breakfast, lunch and snacks)

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**PDCA Residential Forum**
Membership - Join Today!  $95

**TOTAL DUE**

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**PAYMENT OPTIONS**

To register online and pay with a credit card go to:
[www.pdcaresidentialforum.org](http://www.pdcaresidentialforum.org)

To pay by credit card, fax completed form to Tony Kozak at: (716) 844-8174

To pay with check make check payable to PDCA Residential Forum and mail payment and registration form to:
PDCA Residential Forum
63 Marne Road
Buffalo, NY 14215

*Early Bird Pricing Through May 15th*

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**Hotel Reservations:**

Call the Magnolia Hotel directly at **1-888-915-1110** and ask for the special **PDCA Residential Forum Group rate of $169 on Thursday evening and $149 on Friday and Saturday evening.** Or make your hotel reservations on line. Simply click on the following link to book your hotel reservations. [https://resweb.passkey.com/Resweb.do?mode=welcome_ei_new&eventID=10788700](https://resweb.passkey.com/Resweb.do?mode=welcome_ei_new&eventID=10788700)

Hotel reservations must be received on or before 5 pm (Mountain Standard Time), Tuesday, June 17, 2014.

**Getting to the Magnolia Hotel from the Airport**

The preferred Airport Shuttle Company is [http://www.supershuttle.com/Locations/DENAirportShuttleDenver.aspx](http://www.supershuttle.com/Locations/DENAirportShuttleDenver.aspx). Simply click on the link to make your reservation prior to your arrival at the Denver Airport.

**How to Get to SuperShuttle After You Land**

Follow the signs to Level 5 Baggage Claim and collect your luggage. Proceed to the SuperShuttle ticket counter to speak with a uniformed Customer Service Representative. The ticket counter is located between the women’s restroom and the ground transportation booth on the southwest side of the terminal. The ticket counter is staffed from 6:00 AM to 11:30 PM daily. If for any reason you need assistance locating a representative, or if you have any questions, please use the courtesy phone located at the ticket counter to connect directly to dispatch for further assistance.

**Questions?** Please call the Residential Forum office at **(716) 844-8174 Office hours 8:30 am – 4:30 pm EST**
or email **tonykozak@pdcaresidentialforum.org**
Thinking Outside of the Marketing Box - Dan Brady

In our opening session, Dan Brady will share his traditional marketing plan along with some creative marketing ideas that have been instituted in his company to brand himself as the “go to painter” in his community and helped set him apart from his competition.

Dan began his painting career as an apprentice to a Master Painter while attending high school. After being accepted at Central Michigan University, he created his own painting company to pay for his education. Dan graduated from CMU with a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration in 1995. In 2000 Dan and his brother Scott formed Brady Specialty Coatings, which focused on refinishing bathtubs, kitchen countertops and kitchen cabinets with acrylic urethane coating. Combining the skills he learned working with specialty coatings and his experience painting, in 2002 Dan established Dan Brady Painting & Wood Restoration.

HR & The New Workforce - Amy Shoemaker, Guest Speaker

In this session, Amy Shoemaker will share the basics for establishing a compliant HR operating system for your business. She will also share proven strategies for coaching employees for optimal performance and overall company success.

Amy Shoemaker utilizes more than 25 years of business experience in human resources and training to provide executive coaching and leadership development, merger and acquisition leadership integration, and strategic human resource consulting. Her extensive education includes participation in an Inclusive Workplace conference at Cornell University.

Ms. Shoemaker appreciates being able to help clients develop their leaders full potential and partnering with CEOs to reach their business goals. “We create Leadership Development Programs which are specific to the culture of a company and drive performance. Clients consistently tell us our programs improve leader performance, productivity and efficiency.”

The New Age of Technology - Panel Discussion facilitated by Scott Lollar

Whether we like it or not, we now live in a technology driven world. In this session, a panel of Residential Forum members will share tips and strategies for introducing technology in the workplace to create smoother operating systems for all.

Closing the Sale - Role Play facilitated by Scott Lollar

Test out your sales techniques and see what your peers are doing to differentiate themselves and close more deals. This will be an interactive role play activity, so come prepared to stand up and participate.

Key Employees (Optional Session) - facilitated by Scott Lollar & Suhaiba Neill

Join us for an open discussion regarding the challenges and opportunities you face as the second leader in command of your company.

*Please note, this session is for key personnel only (ie – estimator, salesman, project manager, key foreman, etc.) and we ask that business owners do not attend to ensure a free and open discussion.
Business Systems & Successful Implementation

Is your business fully systemitized with clear procedures for optimal production? Could this be what’s holding you back from breaking through the next barrier in growing your business? In this session we will discuss the evolution of a business, the many advantages of implementing formalized systems, and a fellow member will share lessons learned along the way to growth and success.

“Round Robin” with our Sponsors

Through roundtable discussions, our loyal forum sponsors will share updates and developments with their respective products and also ask for feedback from the painter’s perspective. This will be an open discussion, and is a great opportunity to ask questions and learn about the changing technology in the painting industry.

Tips, Tricks, & Time Savers

Do you have a great painting, prep or clean up tip? Know a short cut to getting certain tasks done quickly and more efficiently? In this session, we will share our tips and tricks of the trade via roundtable discussions, and then share what we’ve learned with the rest of the group. Put on your thinking caps now and come prepared to contribute as well as to learn some new secrets of the trade.

Hiring Strategies Part II - Mike Kelly

You have a pool of potential hires, and now you have to screen them to see who would be a good fit for your company. Mike will walk us through his process and how it has affected the way he hires.

Scheduling - John Peek

See how a fellow member tackles the challenging job of scheduling multiple projects and crews. John will share a sample of the scheduling system he uses to stay on top of it all.

Action Planning

“The most effective way to do it, is to do it.” – Amelia Earhart

Support is often the true key to success, so we will dedicate the end of each day to action planning. Putting together a workable action plan while your ideas are fresh will lead to greater success with implementation upon returning to your business.

We will also be checking in periodically following the conference to encourage continued commitment to your plan over the months that follow.

Save The Date

PDCA Expo 2015
March 4-7 ~ Charleston, SC
Embassy Suites and Convention Center

Back by Popular Demand

“Shorts”

A 10 minute “quick hit” on hot topics and systems/ suggestions to address these common issues.

Marketing in the New Era - Bill McKinney

Stay in the know with updates in the ever-changing world of marketing. From internet to digital, Bill will update us on the coming trends and what they’ll mean for our industry.
Thank You to Our Sponsors!

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