



President's Message



I hope jobs have been plentiful in 2005 for your companies in the US, Canada and the rest of the world – especially where IASM members are domiciled. Fortunately jobs have been plentiful in our neck of the woods here in the midwestern part of the United States. Before you make plans to relocate here, however, structural movers in this area feel we can adequately handle all available projects.

Just before the Mid-States Annual Meeting in South Sioux City, NE, my company had the good fortune to be awarded a contract to move the largest steam locomotive ever built. It was Big Boy engine 4023, owned by the Union Pacific Railroad and moved from Durham Western Heritage Museum to a new location called Kenefick Park. The engine weighed 350 tons, however the overall load, including transportation equipment, was permitted by the City of Omaha, NE at 420 tons. We moved the load prior to the meeting but actually placed the locomotive after the meeting was concluded. In fact several movers traveled to Omaha on Sunday following the meeting for a first hand look. Two weeks later we also had an opportunity to move the largest diesel locomotive ever built. Engine 6900 was called the Centennial since it was built on the 100th Anniversary of the Union Pacific Railroad. The engine weighed 264 tons and was moved to the same location in Omaha. We moved two 42 ton trucks under the engine separately making the overall permitted weight 220 tons. If you are traveling in the area you can see both engines from Interstate 80. Use 13th street exit to visit the park. (You can see some of the move at Website: <http://www.uphs.org/4023movehtml>.)

I mentioned the above not to boast but to share with you a viewpoint I believe to be extremely important and valuable to structural movers everywhere but especially to companies that are members of IASM. My company and many more IASM member companies are now beneficiaries of work available to us not merely because there may be a healthy economy. We are being offered opportunities to bid on bigger and more profitable jobs because of our qualifications. Of-

ten we are awarded jobs even without going through a bid process.

But it was not always that way. In the early days of the association many “movers” joined IASM and their only equipment was a single flatbed truck with a winch. (I suppose that’s where the term “shack dragger” originated). Where did we receive the necessary information to become more qualified? Through educational opportunities offered during annual conferences of IASM.

To my knowledge there are no “structural moving” courses offered at high schools, trade schools, Jr. Colleges or Universities that would qualify anyone to have the necessary expertise to safely move structures. Most employees of this industry are family members, relatives or close friends of the company’s owner. Many employees are second, third and even fourth generation. Expertise, originally, was learned through “on the job” training. But by attending educational sessions at IASM Conferences personnel of member companies began learning more sophisticated methods to move larger, longer, heavier and taller structures. They saw, learned about and purchased newer technology that made their tasks easier and potentially more profitable.

Obviously we want to always be safe in the movement of all structures. But there is another motive for being in business in the first place and that is profitability. Conducting business in today’s commerce requires business skills most “small business” companies do not possess. It is not the responsibility of another company to help you succeed in this or any other business. That’s known as competition. But IASM offers sessions where you can learn about contracts, insurance, equipment, dollies, steel, personnel and many more topics that will help one become a better “businessman” as well as a structural mover. Only IASM offers educational opportunities structural movers need to become sufficiently qualified to do any structural moving job. Ultimately movers that do not choose to expand their education, expertise or embrace technological advancement tend to remain small or lose out altogether. I encourage you to take advantage of what your membership in IASM offers you. Have you checked out the 12 free Reports from The Business Library available to you on our website: <http://www.iasm.org>?

P.S.– Had I not become a member of IASM and attended educational sessions I would not have learned about power dollies and their capabilities that allowed me to bid on the locomotive projects mentioned above. It was also through IASM I met fellow member Phil Jonassen who provided the necessary technical dolly expertise for the moves.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Jonassen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.