



# Recognizing Where We Are, Why, and What We Can Do About It

### Where Are We?

For 23 years this Association has described itself as “Representing the World’s Oldest and Largest Recycling Industry.” The slogan, to a degree, hints at what members of the industry do: Recycle. So, is that our image, a bunch of recyclers? Does the general public, as a whole, even know we exist? Does it matter whether they do or not? You bet. Why? The general public is collectively composed of individuals. Attitudes of individuals matter because it is individuals who make decisions that can positively or negatively affect companies working in this industry. A permit officer, law enforcement officer, city clerk, town mayor, city councilman, Congressman or Governor can all have an affect – positively or negatively – depending on their attitude toward this industry. What do “they” think about us? In their eyes are we just a bunch of recyclers who block traffic, pull down utility wires or cut down trees unnecessarily? Is the image we wish to project being adequately presented?

### Why

In November 2001 when I agreed to become the Staff Executive responsible for the management of the Association I was continually advised, house movers are “different.” I won’t list some of the specific terms used however the “different” individuals engaged in this industry, as a whole, tend to have conflicting images. Most appear to be conservative yet the structures they move project great risk. They mostly dress informally. While some do not have a graduation certificate from a high school, others have degrees from universities; however, the average education level appears to be at the high school level. Socializing with others of similar interests seems very important yet participation in efforts to collect data important to the Association and beneficial to members is extremely low. Only 50% of Conference attendees attend educational opportunities that provide specific information vital to their professional and financial success. (See *President’s Message* in this issue). Minimally required equipment using basic geometric/engineering principles, often manufactured by the mover, accomplishes feats unimaginable to the average and learned citizen alike. Simultaneously, vendors using similar principles manufacture sophisticated equipment usable by high school educated individuals. Do we have, or can we develop, an attitude necessary to adapt to needed changes?



Grandsons Jackson (6) and Jacob (4½), with Granddad, give “Thumbs Up” to an exciting issue.

### What Can We Do About It?

Increase professionalism in our character, education, work, appearance and social manners. Determine to participate in research requests, opinion gathering, educational opportunities, recruiting new members, mentoring and conferences. Lack of certifiable data about the industry and its issues is a glaring deficiency. We don’t know answers to basic questions such as the number of structural movers, number of structures moved annually, the average number of structures a member moves annually, what is the gross economic contribution to the nation’s economy, how many trucks, dollies, jacks and specialty equipment exists? This list could go on and on because very little historical data exists. What’s more movers are reluctant to provide such information even when there is no apparent downside to do so. The Association is not an arm of any governmental agency. Any information that may be collected is always homogenized and even officers and directors do not have access to any individual member data. When representatives for the Association interact with local, state, province and national officials it is absolutely imperative they are adequately able to describe the size of the organization they represent, its economic contribution, problems that exists and recommend solutions. Such data can only be collected from members of the Association. More and more the Association is being contacted by news media and others for information about the industry to include in articles but the Association doesn’t have it.

The Purpose of the Association as described in its Bylaws is IASM – “is committed to providing information, products & services to all members seeking to lawfully, profitably and safely lift and transport structures of any size.” Will you help the Association help you the next time you are asked?