Dear Members,

As we approach the second anniversary of BMSA, I can’t help but think what an eventful couple years it has been for our five-state association.

In 2014, we merged to become five states, rewrote the association’s by-laws, activated committees and undertook the development of a three-year strategic plan. All those things laid the groundwork for BMSA to have a successful 2015.

With most members experiencing a growth in sales this past year, that spilled over to BMSA through increased attendance and sponsorship of events. Both our 2015 Building Products Show and our Summer Conference experienced a 25% increase in attendance. Sponsorship of both events by our exhibitors was greater than the prior year. We certainly saw more smiles than frowns on members’ faces this year.

One of the highlights of the year was the inaugural meeting of BMSA’s Emerging Leaders/Next Gen roundtable. Our new roundtable brought together employees from eight noncompeting companies to learn a broad range of leadership skills. The curriculum, designed to be spread over six meetings, covers topics ranging from sales management to improving operational standards, from margin management to purchasing. This first roundtable meeting focused on talent recruitment and development. It was exciting to see these men and women so engaged and excited about bringing all they were learning back to their companies. When I looked around the room during the roundtable, I couldn’t help but think the future of our industry is in good hands with these young people!

While there seemed to be a greater spirit of optimism among both Dealers and Associates alike in 2015, there are still some gray clouds in our skies. The housing market has not recovered enough in many segments of BMSA’s territory. Increased government regulation continues to make conducting business difficult. Labor shortages mean members are stretched thin and finding it difficult to find good employees. For all those challenges and more, BMSA will be here to help you in 2016.

Lynn Schwarz
President
Highlights of the Year

Membership

More companies have joined the BMSA family and added strength to our numbers. We were pleased to welcome these new members in 2015.

Active (Dealer) Members:

- Christmas Lumber

Associate Members:

- Century Group
- Cosella-Dorken Products
- Emery-Waterhouse Co.
- Epicor
- LiftOne, LLC
- NCS
- Newcomb Enterprises (Red Bolt Promotions)
- Nucor Steel
- Royal Building Products
- Superior Plastic Products
- Universal Forest Products
- V & H Trucks, Inc.

We are stronger together than individually!

Education & Training

BMSA took further steps to secure its position as the resource of choice when members need to develop employees by partnering with Greg Brooks’ Building Supply Channel to offer BMSA members a branded, online training tool. At www.bmsatraining.org, members will find over 150 courses covering topics on sales, operations, estimating, purchasing & inventory, computer skills, customer service, supervisory skills and much more. Some courses may be accessed at no charge; others require a paid subscription. Members continually tell us that training employees, especially new employees, is one of their biggest challenges. Through BMSA’s online training, you can ensure your employees get the training they need to do their job well. A quiz accompanies each course so that you can track your employees’ progress.

With the valuable direction of the BMSA Education Committee, we continued to offer quality in-person programs and webinars in 2015.

Peer to Peer Learning Groups

There is a reason BMSA continues to offer roundtables – roundtables are one of the best forums for owners, managers and others to learn how to improve their company’s overall performance. By setting aside 2-4 days a year to concentrate on their business without distraction, BMSA dealers learn best practices from their peers that they can take back and immediately begin applying in their businesses.

BMSA offered three owner/financial roundtables, a CFO roundtable, a sales managers roundtable and an installed sales managers roundtable in 2015. AND we introduced a new roundtable to develop the next generation of leaders in the building supply industry.

Annual Building Products Show

We returned to Hickory, NC for our Annual Building Products Show and were thrilled to have an increase of 25% in dealer attendance over the prior year! In addition, thanks to the generosity of our Exhibitors, sponsorship was also up over 2014.

Highlights of the 2015 Building Products Show included:

- Huttig Building Products - Best of Show (2015 Booth Award Winner)
- Stier Supply of Irmo, SC - 2015 Dealer of the Year
- ECMD of North Wilkesboro, NC - 2015 Supplier of Year
- George W. Miser, of Lumber Service, Inc., Carrollton, OH - Grand Prize Winner

Summer Conference

With Exhibitor space selling out in record time, we knew enthusiasm was strong for our 2015 Summer Conference at Virginia Beach. The increased number of exhibitors and attendance overall left us bursting at the seams. But, oh, what fun it was! Fun is what you get when you mix 67 kids, sunshine, sand, hospitality suites and the best members any association could ever want!

Amidst all the fun, important business took place. Dealers got an economic update from Dr. Ed Siefried, learned how to use social media to advertise their businesses and heard from panelists on how to operate a successful installed sales business. No doubt about it -- ideas were shared, knowledge gained and friendships formed.

RefCheck Employment Screening Services

Members have begun hiring again after years of downsizing. To aid members in making good hiring decisions BMSA partnered with RefCheck, an affordable and thorough background and reference checking service. BMSA’s members receive a 15% discount off RefCheck’s standard fees. Among the searches that RefCheck can do are: driving records, employment history, reference interviews and nationwide criminal records database including sex-offender registry. Because RefCheck customizes services to each client, BMSA members only pay for the services they want. This is a valuable tool in BMSA members’ hiring arsenal – the more you know, the better hiring decisions you will make.

Ohio Student Scholarships Awarded

The Ohio Student Scholarship program continued with $1,000 scholarships awarded to two outstanding women:

- Cheri Baer – An employee of Gerber Lumber & Hardware in Kidron, Ohio, Cheri is a business major at Hesston College in Hesston, Kansas.
- Erica Bettac – Erica’s father Paul works at Boise Building Materials Distribution facility in Marion, OH. She is a Dean’s List student at the University of Findlay majoring in psychology.

Communication

With the hiring of Jesse Norman, BMSA’s Communications Manager, we were able to step up our communication endeavors in 2015. Jesse spearheads our three monthly online publications: BMSA Bulletin, The Cutting Edge & Safety First.

BMSA also publishes the quarterly printed newsletter, TimberTalk, featuring pictures of our many events and member profiles.

Advocacy

This year was certainly a busy one on the regulatory front. In the summer BMSA alerted members to the Department of Labor’s (Wage & Hour Division) proposal to increase the exempt status salary threshold, likely resulting in required overtime pay to most salaried workers earning less than an estimated $50,440.

Also of concern on the regulatory front was the interpretation of employee vs. subcontractor classification and OSHA’s announcement of fine increases for 2016.

BMSA will continue to work closely with NLBMDA to make sure our members’ concerns are addressed and to try to eliminate or reduce these burdensome regulations.
Snapshots of the Year
2015 – By the Numbers

127 Number of individuals participating in BMSA sponsored educational programs
40 Number of companies who took advantage of BMSA educational programs
275 Number of attendees at Summer Conference
72 Number of different companies represented at Summer Conference
13 Number of new BMSA members
473 Number of people at the 2015 Building Products Show
43 Number of BMSA members whose businesses increased enough to move up to a new Dues Level in 2015
67 Number of children under 16 attending the 2015 Summer Conference
14 Number of days old of the youngest attendee at the Summer Conference
1 Number of new staff members added to BMSA
42 Number of years BMSA staff member Cindy Hartley has planned the Summer Conference
105 Number of individuals who participated in our fall and spring roundtables
55 Number of companies who participated in BMSA roundtables
13 Number of BMSA roundtables conducted in 2015
4 Number of BMSA staff working on YOUR behalf

2016 Calendar of Events

February 1 Introduction to Building Material Sales Seminar, Hickory, NC
February 2 BMSA Executive Committee & Board of Directors Meetings, Hickory, NC
February 2-3 Blueprint Reading, Material Take-off & Estimating Seminar, Hickory, NC
February 3-4 BMSA’s 2016 Building Products Show, Hickory, NC
February 4 Advanced Blueprint Reading/Estimating Seminar, Hickory, NC
February 17-19 Emerging Leaders Roundtable #2, Charlotte, NC
March 15-17 Installed Sales Roundtable, South Bend, IN
April 4-6 NLBMDA Legislative Conference, Washington, DC
April 20-22 CFO Roundtable, Charleston, SC
April 20-22 Sales Manager Roundtable, Asheville, NC
April 24-26 Roundtable 1, Atlanta, GA
May 4-6 Roundtable 3, Olympia, WA
May 15-17 Emerging Leaders Roundtable #1, Roanoke, VA
May 18-20 Roundtable 7, Charlotte, NC
July 28-31 BMSA’s Summer Conference, Virginia Beach, VA
October 25-27 NLBMDA ProDealer Industry Summit, Charleston, SC

Looking Ahead to 2016

We are not resting on our laurels. Look what we have planned for you in 2016!

In Remembrance

In 2015, we said goodbye to some dear colleagues and friends who contributed to our industry and enriched our lives. We remember these individuals with fondness:

Edgar Alton Buck, Sr.
Eddie Buck was chairman of Charleston, SC based Jupiter Holding Company and Buck Lumber Company. He passed away on December 3 at the age of 74. Buck graduated from East Carolina University with a bachelor's degree in business administration. He served in the Coast Guard before going to work for Carolina Mortgage Company. In 1975 Eddie Buck and his wife Margaret purchased a small building supply company on James Island and grew it into today's successful Buck Lumber Co., which is the hub of Jupiter Holdings, a diversified portfolio of Buck family-owned businesses employing some 400 people.

Berlin G. Myers Sr.
Myers passed away of July 8 at the age of 98. He was the founder of Berlin G. Myers Lumber Corporation in Summerville, SC. As an Army Sgt. in WWII, Myers landed on Omaha Beach during the Normandy Invasion. He earned four bronze stars for his service. He spent his entire business career as a lumberman and celebrated the 75th anniversary of his company in 2014. Myers served as president of the Carolina Building Material Association in 1975. Myers also served 10 terms as Summerville's mayor, making him one of the longest serving mayors in South Carolina history.

Alan F. Montgomery
Alan Montgomery of Granville, OH passed away on September 3. He was 66. Alan was a fourth generation lumberman. While a student, he worked summers in the timber mills of Oregon and then later was associated with the family business, Montgomery Lumber. Following the closure of Montgomery Lumber in 1991, Alan worked at Cellar Lumber and later at Granville Lumber where he retired in 2013 as vice president.

Mary Claire Roper
Mrs. Roper passed away on July 11 at the age of 88. She was preceded in death by her husband LeRoy Roper (Roper Brothers Lumber Company).

Mary Ann Siewers
Mrs. Siewers, of Richmond, VA, passed away on January 6. Born October 8, 1933, Mrs. Siewers is survived by her husband of 58 years, Freddie Siewers, Jr. (Siewers Lumber), five children and sixteen grandchildren. While her family was her primary focus, Mrs. Siewers found time to volunteer weekly for over 40 years with her Arts and Crafts group at the Little Sister of the Poor.

Junius Boyette (J.B.) Surles III
J.B. passed away on April 8 at the age of 71. He was a former Vice President and partner with Home Builders Supply in Greenville, NC for over 40 years. During his career, J.B. founded IBSA (Independent Builders Supply Association) and was its first president.

Harold “Dean” Talley
Talley of Reidsville, NC passed away on August 27. He was 49. He worked for Builders Mart Inc. in Eden, NC.

Jean Taylor
Mrs. Taylor was the wife of former VBMA Past President Robert “Bobby” Taylor (Taylor Brothers, Lynchburg, VA). She passed away on July 8 at the age of 88.

Thank You!

Thank you to all the BMSA members who gave so generously to the Association in 2015. It is because of you that 2015 was such a great year! We consider it a privilege to serve you.

Lynn Schwarz, President
Jessie Norman, Communications Manager
Cindy Hartley, Vice President
Jane Gillespie, Administrative Assistant/Office Manager