

Training Council elects board, sets parameters for the future

IRVING, Texas—The Engine & Equipment Training Council named a board of directors and set the education committee on its way to meeting the organization's goal of addressing the critical shortage of technicians in the outdoor power equipment industry during the

EETC's first official meeting held here.

More than 100 people, representing a broad cross section of the industry's educational and technical leadership, attended the May 5-6 meeting. They elected Andrew Kuczmar, director of National Service Training

for Echo Inc., the Council's new president.

Other executive officers elected at the meeting included Vice President Paul Scholten, manager of service and technical publications for the Kohler Co.; Secretary Chuck Bontrager, product training and education

manager for MTD Products; and Treasurer Bruce Radcliff, director of customer education for Briggs & Stratton Corp. Advisor to the executive board is Tom Kane, assistant director and national training manager of Kubota Tractor Corp.

Rounding out the board are

general members Clifford Kurkowski, president of Anoka Hennepin Technical College; Larry Case, national advisor and chief executive officer, agricultural education/FFA liaison, national FFA Center; Jerry Bernhardt, director of career and technology education, Windham School District, Texas Department of Criminal Justice; Tim Lawrence, director of business and industry partnerships, VICA; Dave Krueger, technical manager outdoor power equipment, Sears, Roebuck & Co.; Dan Wallace, instructor, Outdoor Power Equipment Excellence Center, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology; dealer representative Glen Whitt, Plano Power Equipment; distributor educator representative Larry Frogge, Grayson Co.; and distributor representative Jim Starmer, Dixie Sales Co.

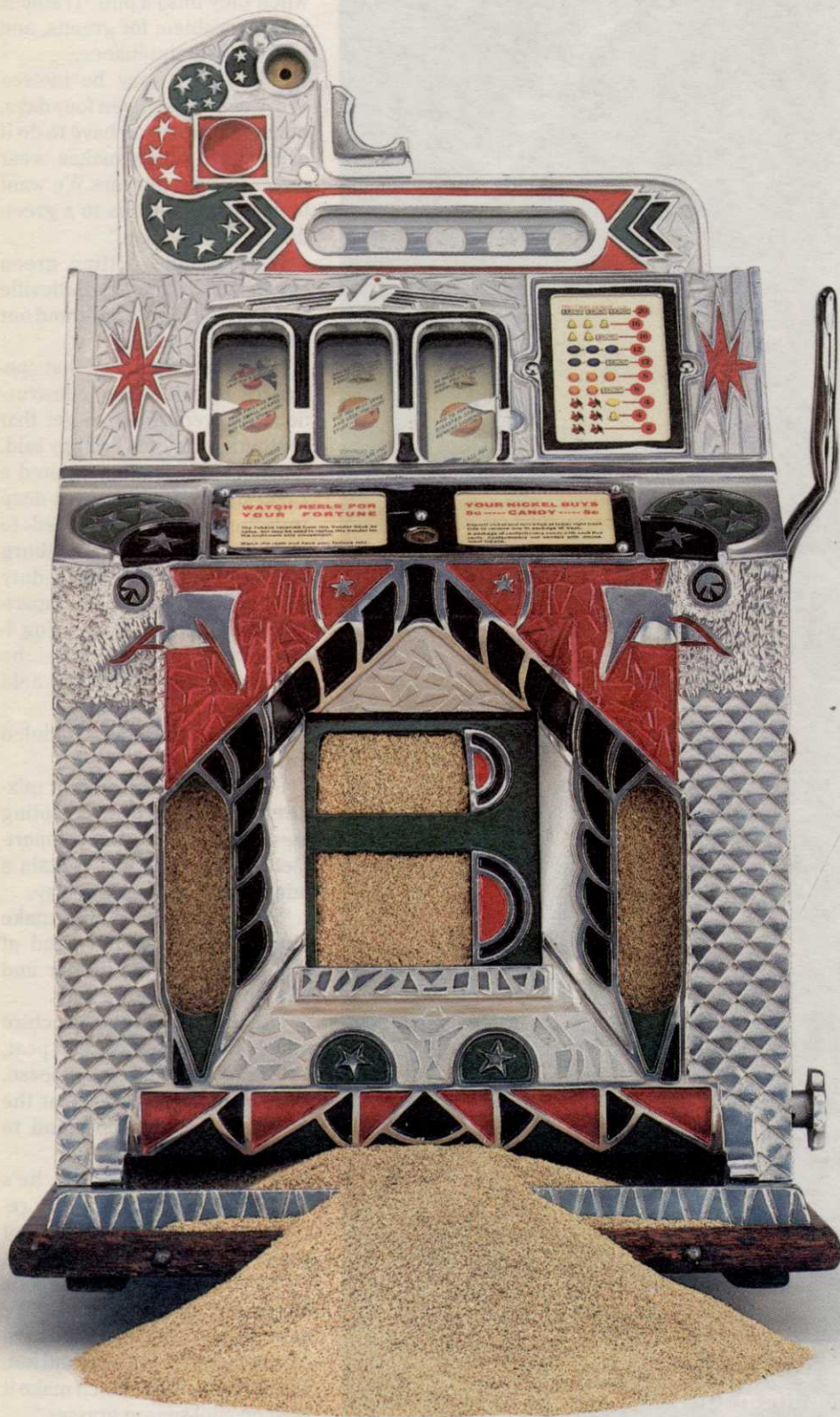
Other industry board members include Brad Beck, supervisor, service publications and training, commercial products division, The Toro Co.; Mark Erenz, technical service coordinator, Generac Corp.; Paul Jergens, director of customer service, Exmark Manufacturing Co.; Randy Richard, training specialist, John Deere Lands & Grounds Care Division; and Ralph Sylvester, manager, service training, Jacobsen Division of Textron.

During the meeting, Dave Zerfoss, president of Husqvarna Forest & Garden, said of the technician shortage "...recognizing the problem is only one very small step in what needs to be a major industry-wide push for improvement in the service department of our business.

"Improvement in wages, benefits and working conditions. Improvement in shop management, productivity and profitability. Improvement in training and recruitment efforts by dealers, manufacturers, associations and vocational schools. And, above all, improvements in the image and professionalism of the service department and the service technician."

Added Zerfoss: "We must also realize that training is a necessity in our industry, not a luxury. The biggest reason for this is the changing technology. Just like ignition point systems giving way to electronic ignition systems, we will see other operating systems become obsolete as they too give way to more advanced technical advancements."

For more information about the EETC, contact Virgil Russell, EETC, 1946 S.IH-35, Ste 100-A, Austin, TX 78704-3693; telephone 512-442-1788; facsimile 512-442-1789; e-mail address opecert@io.com.



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