



Society of Plastics Engineers, Inc.
Promoting the Scientific and Engineering Knowledge of Plastics

800-798-1241
706-238-9101

SPE Plastics Environmental Division

P.O. Box 441
Lindale, GA 30147
www.spercycling.org

About the Conference

GPEC® 2007 was a tremendous success. If you were not able to attend, then you will have to make your plans now to attend in 2008. Our program was received by participants who attended like none of the other GPEC's in the past. Attendance was up 23%, marking the fourth straight year with an attendance increase of over 20%. This year's 343 attendees (plus another 56 individuals that were present to view the exhibits only) bore witness to tremendous presentations of the single, best plastics environmental conference in the world.

The bio-based technical presentations were so well attended that there was standing room only for the vast majority of all of the sessions. The tremendous interest in these tracts emphasized to all the growing needs to incorporate bio-based materials in our world's long term plans for these materials as alternatives to fossil-based fuels.

A presentation by Eric Koester demonstrated the tremendous potential for dollars to be invested by the Venture Capitalist establishment. This presentation was judged to be one of the best at the conference as a source of information on how monies can be obtained by companies for their development and expansion. As a consequence, the Plastics Environmental Division Board of Directors will be investigating these areas for the next conference.

As Chairman of this year's conference, I was so pleased to have so many of this year's sponsors and exhibitors come up to me and express their appreciation and pride for being associated with this year's conference. We had several of these companies agree to become Division Sponsors for our future endeavors. There is no doubt that this conference has become stronger over the past few years and will continue to do so in the future.

GPEC® 2008 will again be held in Orlando, FL from March 9 -12, 2008. I am pleased to say that Dennis Denton will be leading the charge as the conference chair. Dennis is President of Denton Plastics and brings many years experience to the position. He will be amply supported by Sue Kozora, GPEC technical chair who continues to bring the strongest technical conference in this arena. Her tireless efforts do not go without notice on the part of attendees and her fellow board members.

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info@spercycling.org www.spercycling.org

The PED will continue to be led by Tim Kettering bringing his well hewed knowledge and skills to the cause for yet another year. Larry Koester is our VP of Communications to let all of you know of our future endeavors and he does a tremendous job. Subu will continue his role as Award Chair and Gwen Mathis as our Conference Coordinator. I would also like to thank Dr. Klementina Khait, our Educational Chair, for her work and we hope that her health improves to allow her to continue her association with our conference. Since you are reading this newsletter, you know the high quality and professionalism that is reflected on every page. For this, you can thank Ewa Lebert. She is our newsletter editor extraordinaire. Her talents go beyond what I can state in but a few sentences.

Thanks for having me serve as the conference chair for GPEC® 2007. It was my honor to do so and I look forward to serving the PED in the future. Don't miss GPEC® 2008. We guarantee another fabulous technical conference and networking opportunity.

Sincerely,

Mike Montpetit
GPEC® 2007 Chair & Sponsorship Chair

Chairman's Report for Newsletter, April 6, 2007

GPEC® 2007 can be summed up in a single word, WOW! Conference performance measurement in all categories surpassed 2006, which in its own right was very successful. From a numbers perspective, GPEC® 2007 experienced growth in number of exhibitors (+10%), number of sponsors (+20%) and number of papers (+18%) all of which contributed to an attendance gain of 25+%.

Response from attendees was overwhelmingly positive. Of the many comments received, most if not all enjoyed the expanded technical program. And feedback from those that attended the awards dinner described the event as an elegant affair. But I would have to say that the single overwhelming comment shared by both myself and other attendees was "it's great to be in Orlando". Obviously, Orlando provided a welcome respite from the winter doldrums in the North.

Of the many talks that took place, one talk I found particularly intriguing was a presentation entitled "Future Trends" given by our keynote speaker, Howard Rappaport. This enlightening talk focused on the economic forces affecting the domestic plastics industry both today and into the future. Mr. Rappaport explained that polymerization facilities in the US are based on a natural gas feedstock platform. These same facilities that are in the process of being displaced by polymerization sites located closer to the natural gas wellhead. The trend here calls for polymerization facilities to eventually be based in the Middle East. The reason for the displacement can be summed up simply as a lower delivered cost basis of natural gas

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feedstocks to the end user or in this case, polymerization plants. And Mr. Rappaport added, the displacement will accelerate in the future. When asked what alternatives exist for the domestic plastics industry to stem this shift in asset relocation the response was disruptive technology, technology such as bioplastics and greater use of recycled resins, topics well discussed at GPEC® 2007.

For myself, GPEC® 2007 stood out above previous conferences. Exemplified not only in the “conference numbers” but also in an overall higher level of networking and attendee enthusiasm. I believe this enthusiasm is due in large part to the heightened level of environmental interest in the marketplace today. In effect “green is in”.

In closing I want to recognize and congratulate the GPEC® 2007 Conference Committee on a job well done. The hard work and determination put forth by this dedicated group of volunteers resulted in a first rate conference event.

But the work does not stop. As with events such as GPEC®, efforts are already underway for 2008. The Division’s expectation for next year’s conference is to be even better than it’s predecessor.

Sincerely,

Tim Kettering
Division Chairman of Environmental Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers