

# Chairman's Letter

## A Brief Farewell to Office

I suppose it's natural to try to sum up one's year as chair of the board. But I'll resist the temptation. Reviewing the year's accomplishments as though they stand alone runs the risk of overstating my role. The tally would suggest a beginning and an ending when, in truth, much of the progress made by PPAI in 1999 began long before my term and will continue long after I depart.

May it suffice to say that the significant strides made this year were the result of the inspired input of members, the courage of this and prior boards of directors to make tough decisions and stand by them, and the continuing dedication of staff and volunteers (new and veteran) to turn those decisions into effective action.

This combination will always be the enduring strength of this Association, regardless of who occupies the chair.

However, I would like to share a few things I've learned this year:

- My father was right when he told me long ago that you can't please everybody.
- Trying to please everybody is an easy excuse for doing nothing.
- In general, people dislike change.
- Change (adaptability) is essential to the survival of PPAI.
- As much as I loved it, the industry will never be the same as it was 20 years ago, and trying to make it so is a naïve and dangerous exercise.

Also, with your indulgence, I have two predictions:

- Twenty years from now a chairperson writing this letter will be remarking on the relatively placid times in our industry at the turn of the millennium.
- The first chair of the new millennium will be better than the last one of the old.

Finally, it was a privilege to represent the members of PPAI. Thank you for giving me the opportunity.

I've always believed that the best farewell is a brief one, so here's mine:

It's been said that the key to leadership is knowing how to make other people more effective. I hope my leadership had that effect on some good people. It's not a bad goal for a chairman—or an Association.



*Michael Woody*

BY MICHAEL WOODY, CAS

PPAI CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD