

January/February 2002

Print Edition Vol. 2/No. 1

Screw Machine World

www.screwmachineworld.com

The Third Generation Of Leadership

PMPA President Dave Knuepfer On The Future Of The Precision Machined Products Industry

Plus:
Highland Products—
Lights Out. Clean Hands.
The Shop of the Future?

The Internal Buzz on
External Threads

Stand and Deliver—An
Anti-Fatigue Mat Guide

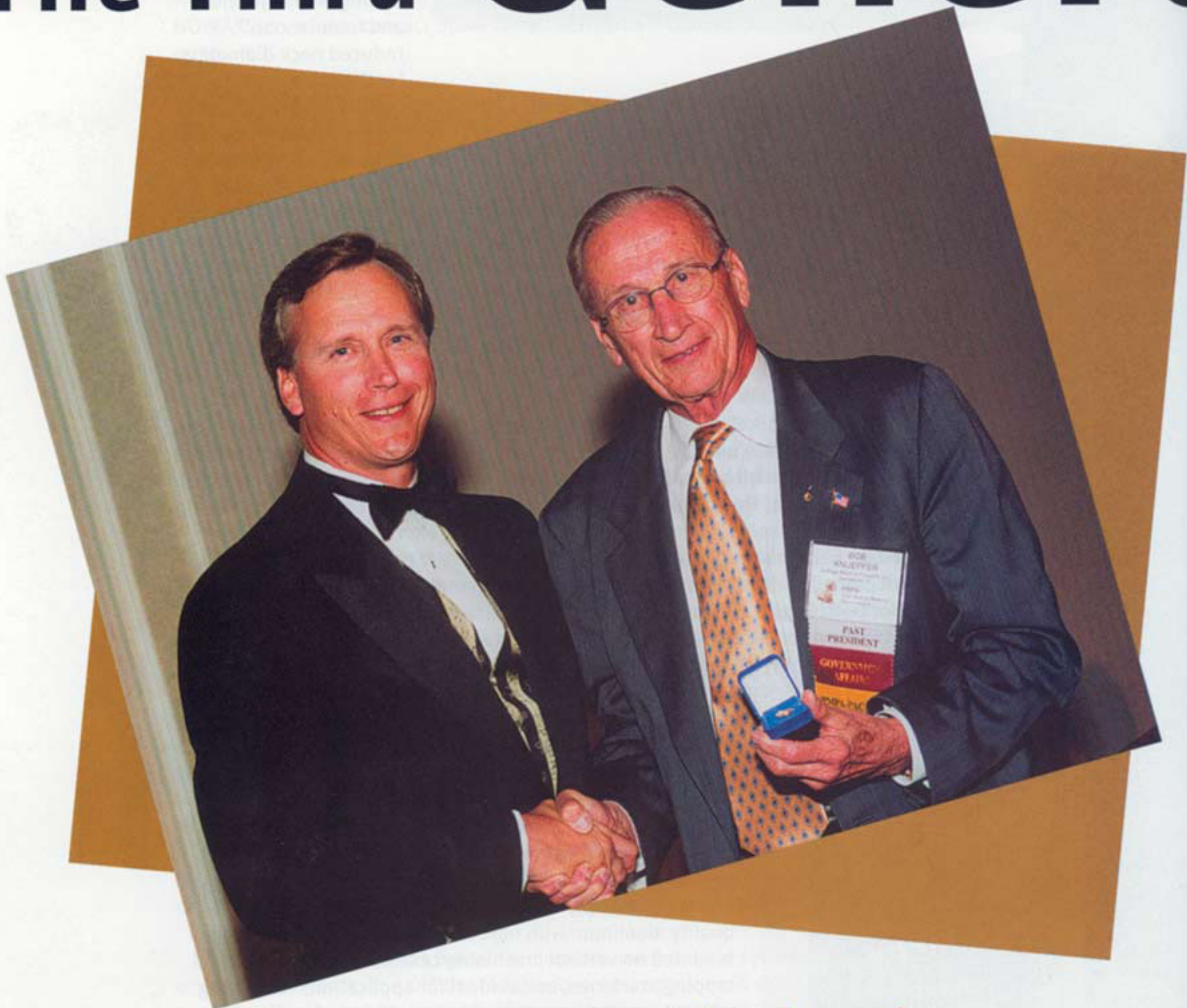


Screw Machine World Magazine
4235 W. 166th St.
Oak Forest, IL 60452-9979

PRST STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #649
Liberty, MO

\$4.95 US \$6.95 INT'L

The Third Genera



An Interview with **Dave Knuepfer**

by **Lloyd Graff**

tion of Leadership

At 47, Dave Knuepfer is President of DuPage Machine Products, a large screw machine job shop in the Western Suburbs of Chicago. He is also President of the Precision Machined Products Association. He has been involved in both almost from birth. His Grandfather, Claude, was one of the founders of the Association, and started the family screw machine business in 1923. Dave's father, Bob, was also a President of the Association. Dave is immersed in his company and the PMPA. He continually works long hours, which he states is typical of many others in the industry, and enjoys golf and skiing in his rare leisure time. The last book he read was *Band of Brothers* by Stephan Ambrose, and the Reagan biography *When Character Was King* awaits him. One of the things he is most proud of is the "family atmosphere" at DuPage Machine Products, with several 40-year employees. Although the Company rewards its' employees for every five years of service, at 25 years employees are rewarded with an all-expense paid trip for the employee and his/her spouse to Hawaii, and, at 40 years, an all-expense paid trip to anywhere in the world.

LLOYD GRAFF: It's January 2002, Dave. How did you arrive at this point in your career?

DAVE KNUEPFER: First of all, I'm a third generation. I'll tell you a little about me and the PMPA. Back in the 1920's my grandfather started getting together with three, four, or five companies in the Chicagoland area. One was John Meaden Sr. of Meaden Screw Products and another was Bert Wallace of Machinery Products that comes to my mind. They started meeting for lunch casually and discussing things. At that time they probably discussed things you can't discuss today. But out of these talks came the PMPA in 1933. That was...the bottom of the depression. It was decided that the organization would be headquartered in Cleveland, but initially there was some talk that it might be headquartered in Chicago. But it is quite a nice headquarters. It's in Brecksville, Ohio. PMPA owns the building. There is staff of about 17. My father, Bob Knuepfer, came along soon after World War II. Dad went off to college and then spent four years with Uncle Sam over in the Philippines and then came back and finished up his college career. He then went to work for his father in the late 40's. And I came along in 1976, a few years after DuPage began, and I've been in the business ever since.

LG: Did you go to college?

DK: I did. I went to the University of Iowa and majored in accounting and finance. I don't have an engineering degree.

LG: When you were growing up, what was the talk around the dinner table?

DK: There was no talk whatsoever about coming into the family business.

LG: But was there a lot of talk about machinery and about the business?

DK: No! My father was a guy who put in a lot of hours, but he didn't bring the work home. My wife complains about that about me. Maybe I've had enough after 10 or 11 hours that I want a different outlet.

LG: She would like to know more...

DK: Yes, for example we'll be out with someone for dinner and someone will say something about the business that I have related to that individual and she'll say, "gee, I didn't know that." It's not that we don't have a good relationship, or that we don't talk, it's just that I don't really talk about the business much at all. Marcia, my wife, has been very supportive and understanding, as she was raised in a family business as well. Anyway, my dad never talked about any of us coming into the business. My grandfather died in 1969, when I was a freshman in high school. My dad never really talked to us about going into it. So, when I got out of school, I started interviewing. At that time I was going to work for one of the Big 8 accounting firms. I thought that was the thing I wanted to do, to go through somebody's dirty laundry, and I think my dad got wind of that and said, "hey, you know what, maybe I better talk to him." It would have been Christmas 1975 my senior year in college, and he took me down to the basement and explained to me the ways of the Screw Machine Business. I remember the conversation. He gave me the good and the bad. He was very candid and frank about it. So I decided that, okay, I think I'll do that.

LG: Had you worked summers?

DK: I would work every summer. I started out spinning chips and sweeping floors. Another summer I started out stocking up the machines and learning how to check parts. By the end of the summer I was learning set-ups. And when I say set-ups I was doing service set-ups; putting all the cams and gears on, roughing out the tools, but I certainly wasn't proficient enough to set up the jobs.

LG: But you had never been involved in the business part of it.

DK: None whatsoever. My dad pretty much kept it at work and didn't bring us in.

LG: Do you have children?

DK: I do. I have four. They are 18, 15, 12, and 9. Two boys and two girls.

LG: You haven't talked to them much about the business?

DK: I haven't talked to them about it. My oldest son is a senior in high school and he wants to major in engineering, and although I haven't talked to him about it I think that he has an interest in coming into the business. He's applied to six or eight different schools; all engineering schools.



*"My dad's train
just 'drop me in*



program was
e water.' ”

LG: Does he come around to the business?

DK: Yes, he worked here last summer. He actually likes it. He likes the camaraderie. You know, he's like all kids. They're a different generation than we were. I imagine if your dad told you to jump into a bottom of a machine and scrub and clean it, you wouldn't have asked any questions. You would have just done it. Kids today are a little bit different. They say "do I really have to do that?" But he's a good kid and I think that there is a possibility that he'll come into the business. If that is what he wants to do. Lloyd, I really haven't encouraged it and I haven't discouraged it. I want my kids to do what they want to do. I don't want him to be shackled to a business if he wants to be a news reporter.

LG: Right. A lowly profession.

LG: If your son wants to work summers, would you have him spinning chips?

DK: Probably not. And the reason is, I don't know what he would learn from spinning chips other than the experience of starting at the bottom and doing the grunt work. But I don't think it would help him in learning parts of the business. I would probably, with his engineering interest, put him in quality assurance or engineering or even on a piece of equipment, just so that he could understand what we do.

LG: I ask you because I think it goes to the essence of what the PMPA is about. The PMPA is so much a family business association. You have a lot of second and third generation people now who are running the PMPA....

DK: But they're not technical guys necessarily. You have the entrepreneurial sort who started the company, and he generally was a technical guy. And now a new generation comes in and it is quite common to have that individual be more of a financial person, and not necessarily a technical person. So you have a group of people who are now running companies that aren't necessarily your technical group, and I think that is borne out in some of the conferences we have at PMPA. For example, Management Update has grown significantly over the years as opposed to the technical conference, which has grown, but now has become a conference for plant employees and not necessarily managers. Your managers are more financially oriented. I probably wouldn't start my son out in spinning chips. But I will tell you one thing about my experience with my dad. My dad's training program was just "drop me in the water." My dad is a technical guy. He's a degreed engineer. My dad did all of the estimating, did a lot of scheduling, all the machine tool acquisitions, was involved in everything technical, but did nothing financial, and had absolutely no interest in the financial side.

LG: Not surprising. And what's always shocked me about the industry is generally the lack of interest in selling. It's almost a disdain.

DK: Right.

LG: Selling is for reps, it's for sales managers if you're big enough. It's for other people.

DK: Right. You're absolutely right on that. And most of these entrepreneurial sorts don't want to do that. My dad did, interestingly enough. He was involved in sales and he had one or two accounts that he handled, but it started out from a technical side and then he got to be buddies with the CEO.

"I can't say I would do it any differently if m

LG: So where would you peg yourself?

DK: Most definitely I am a business guy with a financial background with a sales interest and a "quasi-engineer." And I don't claim to be an engineer, but I've learned on the job. For example, I handle the machine tool purchases and acquisitions. Yes, I consult with our engineering group and I don't just make all of the decisions myself, but I'm actually the key person in the process of a purchase. That is where I would put myself.

DK: But I started to tell you about my dad; on the financial side I walked in here in 1976. The easiest thing I think, maybe, was the first six months I worked in the plant. It wasn't any two-year apprenticeship or anything, but I remember I worked in quality assurance. I did various jobs in the plant for maybe six months and then I came up into the office and obviously the natural thing was to get me involved in financial issues. That was great. Here it is, *boom!* No training, no nothing. Figure it out. And I figured it out. And in 1978, I hired an assistant, Jayne Tucci, to work with me, to help me through this, and she's still with me today. I can't say I would do it any differently if my son came in. The one thing that I really appreciate about my dad's training was he dumped a lot of responsibility on to me immediately and I grew up quickly because of that. I was filing payroll tax returns and corporate taxes; I was doing it all. And I was a kid.

LG: I understand that you are one of four children?

DK: I have an older brother, Robb. He is a partner in a large law firm downtown in Chicago. Baker and McKenzie, I believe they are the largest international firm in the world. He's been with them for about 20+ years. I have a younger brother, Jim, who is involved in the company. He handles our information systems. And I have a younger

sister who is living in Minneapolis.

LG: How was your father trained? Sink or swim?

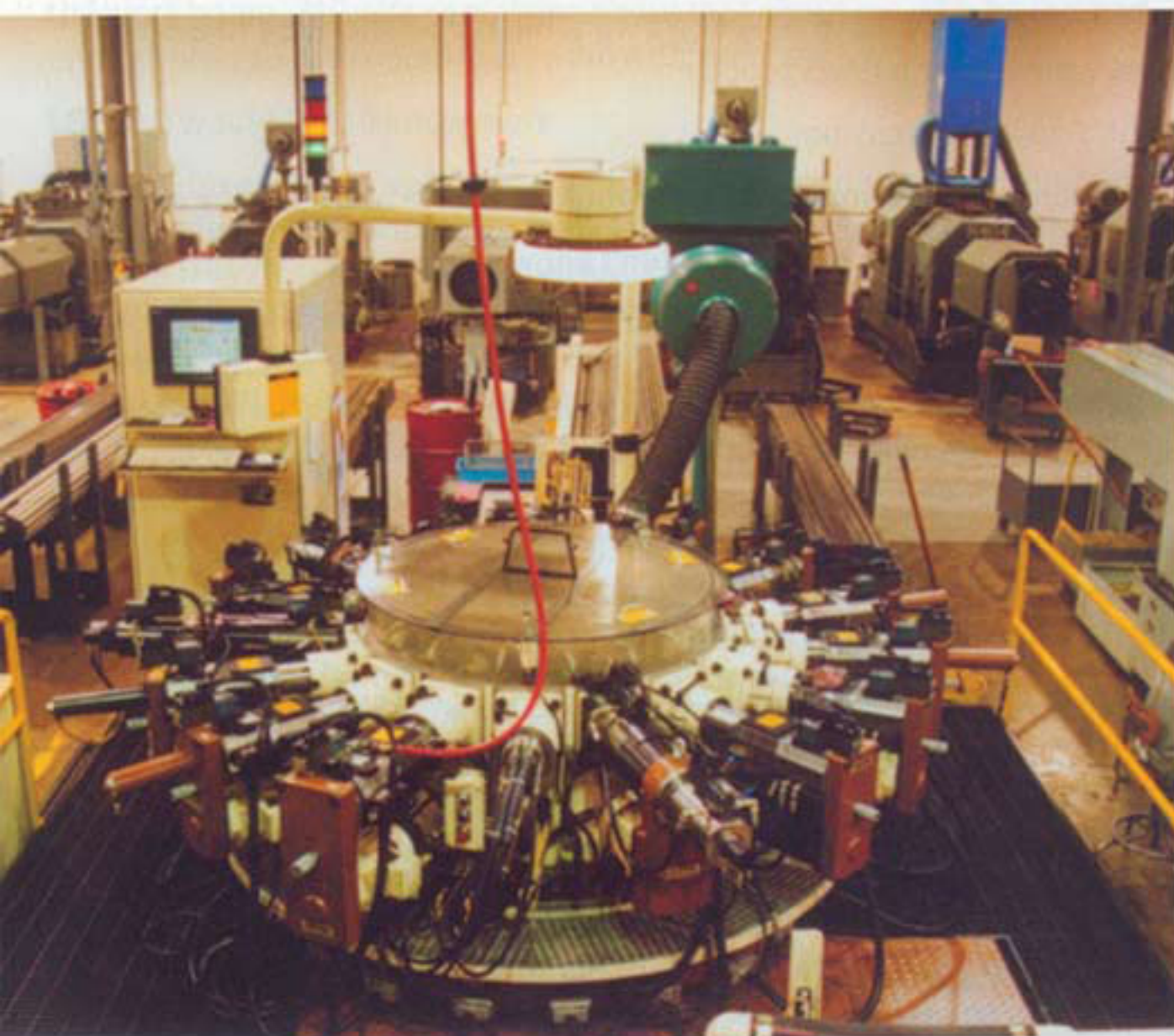
DK: He was trained strictly on the technical side, because my grandfather was a technical guy. My dad had his brother, Jack, who was with him at the time, and they were a natural. Jack had an MBA in finance and my dad had a degree in engineering, so it was natural that Jack stayed up front and my dad was back in the plant office doing estimating and troubleshooting. He was strictly a plant guy. So, as I think through it Lloyd, that is why he's never had any interest in the financial side. He was never exposed to it.

LG: But then your father and Jack split up.

DK: Yes, well they decided to split up the businesses.

LG: They split up right around the time you came in.

DK: That's correct.



DUPAGE HAS INVESTED HEAVILY IN NEW TURNING EQUIPMENT—14 EUROURNS AND A 16 STATION HYDROMAT. HE SAYS "YOU CAN'T DO THAT CHARGING \$22 AN HOUR FOR MACHINE TIME."

son came in.”

LG: Was that one of the catalysts?

DK: It was. It was determined that the next generation was coming in. You know how it is in family businesses. The thinking was it might be time to look at splitting the companies and actually, if I remember correctly, I don't think my uncle had a problem going either way. It was General Engineering Works and DuPage Machine Products. DuPage Machine Products was a handful of multiples in the back of General Engineering Works. General Engineering Works did the selling, the administration, everything. DuPage was a division that no one knew about. So, my dad came to me and we decided to go with DuPage Machine Products. I can tell you that the revenues of DuPage at the time were very small. So, we built it up to this over the years. My Uncle Jack took General Engineering, and we took DuPage.

LG: Were the brothers close?

DK: They were and they weren't. They grew apart, I guess. At one time, yes. I think they were very close, but I think they grew apart and I think they each had a different idea of how they wanted to run the business.

LG: But it brings up an important issue. Is the PMPA going to continue to be an organization of family businesses? Or, as the machining business becomes more sophisticated and demanding, knowing the difficulties of keeping family businesses together, is that identity of the PMPA as a family organization going to end with our generation?

DK: It is possible. And in answer to your question, I hope the PMPA remains a family business organization. I really do. But you know as well as I do that it is “rags to riches to rags” in three generations. There are very few third generation companies within the association. I know I'm the first third-generation President. And I know of one other company that's a fourth generation in the Association. But there are very few third generations for all the obvious reasons. You know, grandpa starts it, junior comes along and says “Gee, I want to carry the torch for Dad because he started this thing” and then grandson comes along and does not have the same commitment as the first or second generation.

LG: So, which way is the PMPA going?

DK: Well, I think the PMPA, due to the consolidation that is happening, will find it more difficult to be a family business type organization. But I sure hope it remains that way because it adds a special character and charm to it when you have that and you can sit and talk with another person. The beauty of the PMPA really, in my opinion, is the networking and the sharing of information and ideas. And when I can sit across the table from someone like you who is struggling with the same problems that I have, whether the next generation is coming along, or how I'm doing my estate planning or whatever, there is a lot of comfort in that.

LG: From what I have gleaned this openness that you are talking about, the sharing and the networking is something fairly new with the PMPA.



DUPAGE IS JAMMED WITH MACHINERY, PROMPTING THE MOVE TO A NEW FACILITY. HE HAS CHOSEN TO BUILD NEARBY TO KEEP THE CONTINUITY WITH HIS PEOPLE.



“Over 30% of our business has some value added to it.”

DK: I don't think so. I don't agree with that. I've been involved in the PMPA since 1976 and I can tell you back in 1976 when I first came aboard, my dad had a group of cronies within the organization that he is still friends with today and there was a tremendous amount of sharing. We have a group in Chicago that meets quarterly where we share information, and stories, and trade information. I've picked up a lot of things from these members that I've put to use in my own business.

LG: You have a video about your plant. You invite competitors in. You and your predecessor, Bern Bertsche, have been very open.

DK: Yes, I would say the communication has improved in that area, Lloyd. The listserve has been marvelous, probably the single most important thing that has come through the PMPA in the last several years. The communication that it provides is unbelievable. I made a video about my plant and I've gone around to all the districts. At the end of March, my tour of the districts will be over with, but because people have allowed me to come in and see their plants, I feel they ought to be able to see what I'm doing. So I give them an opportunity to see our plant. It is not a view from 150 ft. away. I get right inside the machine, and I explain what we're doing. I say "here is a Servo attachment on a multiple. Here is some assembling we are doing." I have nothing to hide in that regard. I will say that there have been a couple of people who have not allowed me to come into their plants and I respect that. I'm disappointed because I don't go into their plant to try to steal something, and I consider some of these people to be friends of mine, but they just elected not to have me enter. And I understand that. The same thing has happened to my predecessors, and I guess I understand that, but I prefer the more upfront approach. Anyway, my plant is always open. I have nothing to hide. If there is something that is sensitive I'll tell you about it and maybe I won't take you over there. But I just had a meeting at DuPage. I had six of my competitors in here. It was a PMPA task

force meeting and at the end of the meeting we spent 45 minutes walking through the plant and we could have spent 2 hours if they wanted to. So, that's the openness that I bring and I think that is what we all need to do. We're not the enemy. Our competition isn't driving these price reductions and price cuts, sourcing parts offshore. It's our customers that drive that, and that is certainly their prerogative, but I think we as an association can work together. I want to elevate the industry. I really want to elevate the industry.

LG: What do you mean elevate the industry?

DK: For example, there are all kinds of programs out there that our customers expect like Kan-ban, just-in-time type programs, consignment, and there are less sophisticated companies that aren't really playing along with some of these new things. Yet our customers want all these great things from us, and we as a larger company at DuPage go along with them because we are looking at future opportunities. Yet, you'll have another guy who is a small but less sophisticated shop that the customer sticks with because of a price thing. And these guys that are less sophisticated don't understand their cost. I can tell you that. And they are happy with, maybe it is a new car every year for example, but at DuPage we are in this business to build the business and we have to

charge so we can buy new machine tools, so we can buy Hydromats. We recently purchased a Hydromat, and it cost us a million, four. And you're not doing that charging \$22.00 an hour for machine time. Yet, there are smaller guys out there that are charging lower amounts and they're happy. But it is not doing the rest of the industry any good. But it is not giving them the opportunity to buy new machine tools. I always hear them complain they never make any money. That's my favorite.

LG: I've seen a couple of converging trends in the industry, which you alluded to. One is the desire for more and more sophistication, which forces you to keep investing in equipment, quality. But you also have the continuous erosion of prices. You also have seen the development of what I would call micro-shops, a very tiny successful shop. You see the trend towards more centralization, more consolidation, and then you also see the enormous development of brand new businesses too. Do you agree with that view, and how do you see that affecting the PMPA?

DK: When customers go to "just-in-time," and they ask you for five day lead time or five day turn around, anybody who thinks we are setting these parts up in five days and grinding them and plating them, heat treating them, and inspecting them is crazy. We're stocking their inventory. Now they are moving to consignment programs where we make the inventory, but we keep it on their floor so we don't have to worry about freight issues. They'll never run out because it is on their floor, and they'll pay for it when they use it.

LG: Oh, I haven't heard that.

DK: It's around. If you haven't heard about it, it's not just coming, it is here. And then the off shore threat is for sure a real threat and people who think it isn't a threat have their heads in the sand. Those things scare me, certainly. If you produce commodity type parts, you're certainly vulnerable to China. We may still make some commodity type parts, but we try to swedge it or braze it with something, or assemble it here. Over 30% of our business has some value added to it. It has a value added process- some sort of assembly, private labeling, packaging. One comes to my mind. We have a large customer that has various warehouses all across the country. We used to make ten or twelve different screw machine parts and ship them to our customer's main location, in large volumes of 50,000 pieces. We now assemble the parts, as well as purchase other parts that we assemble with these parts, such as o-rings and washers. After assembly, we then individually package the parts, and ship to their various warehouses across the country. We now ship in smaller quantities, and have allowed our customer to eliminate their assembly operations, while helping manage their inventory. This allows us to add some value, and hopefully makes us less vulnerable to offshore sourcing or even sourcing within the U.S.

LG: However, why not this model; a five-man shop running brand new Citizens in Lewiston, Idaho doing only lucrative niche medical work? Why not that business plan?



QUALITY AND DELIVERY ARE A GIVEN.

“You can say what you want about quality, delivery, but today it’s all price.”

DK: I know what you are referring to because it is going on out there right now. I can’t find fault with it. It is just not the plan that we have at DuPage.

LG: Would those members fit in the PMPA?

DK: Yes, they would. Let me talk about that too for a minute. Because this is something that’s been important to me. Several years ago we changed the name of the Association from the National Screw Machine Products Association to the Precision Machined Products Association, and the logic behind that was initially to bring the name up-to-date. But more importantly it was to really reflect what we are doing as members. We are precision machining folks, we are not just screw machine people. We want to attract other members that aren’t just screw machine guys. I think that we’ve done a poor job as an Association in attracting those members.

LG: What do you offer them?

DK: Well that’s it. We can’t offer them the networking and the camaraderie right now because we don’t have enough of those members. We’ve got some programs that we’re talking about with some training that we would hope to be able to offer them, but

we’ve done a poor job of attracting them. I would like to see us build the Association on those types of members as well. Because that is where the future is, not World War II Acme’s, at least in my opinion. But the Idaho thing is of some interest to me. We’re building a new plant. We’re building it down the street here.

LG: Perhaps putting a hundred thousand square foot plant in the suburbs of Chicago is the wrong idea.

DK: It might be. You know, it’s worked for us. I hope I’m right, but what you say has a lot of merit to it. Five guys in a shop in the middle of Idaho, flex time, I can see them

on flextime. They could be trout fishing or setting up machines. Five Citizens or 10 Citizens, whatever it is. Order comes in boom, boom, boom, knock out 500 or 1200 and away we go.

LG: Right, and then the question is, do you look for jobs that aren’t going to be bid on FreeMarkets? Maybe those are jobs that lend themselves to the Citizens or Tornos, or Stars, or whatever.

DK: Yeah. Well these are great machines. And as I travel around I can see more and more of them. I see the decline of secondary departments. More machining centers certainly replacing secondary departments, whether they be something as simple as a drill and tap machine to start out with, or a vertical or horizontal machining center.

LG: One could argue that North American manufacturing was being hollowed out in the 90’s primarily by sourcing offshore, and it was all masked by the telecommunications bubble.

DK: You’re right about that. The telecommunication guys that I’ve visited are down like

70 to 80% right now.

LG: I wonder if that bubble, which was probably 10 years work compressed into three, disguised what was going on in the industry?

DK: It is possible.

LG: Because it soaked up all the extra capacity and brought new capacity. I would guess that 1/3 to 1/2 of the new Hydromats that were bought in the past five years were bought for telecommunications work.

DK: Well, that's a nice theory. There might be some truth to it. I think there is a lot of potential for our company to grow. I'm certainly concerned about the threat. What we are doing now by adding these value-added services is we are holding people off. But I'm not foolish enough to think that the Chinese couldn't do the same value-added services that we are doing. That's a good point on the telecommunications. I never thought about that until you just mentioned it today. Could be.

LG: It doesn't mean that telecommunications won't come back, but they borrowed a lot of sales from the future because they made a mistake on the increased usage of broadband, which hasn't come yet.

LG: Another subject. Clearly the relationship side of the business has deteriorated?

DK: Yes. I think so. I think in probably your father's generation as well as mine, it was more relationship selling. You know, you had your word, and if I was comfortable working with you, you had my business because I trusted you. Today, you can say what you want about the quality, delivery, it's all price. For the larger companies, it boils down to price. And that's why you have all these concessions. It doesn't take a genius to figure out if you can save a few bucks on a purchased part, what that does to your bottom line.

LG: So, if it is all price, it has to make it a tough business.

DK: It is tough. I think it is a very tough business and I think it is going to get even a little more difficult. I enjoy it. I like what I do. I get discouraged when I hear of some guy saying he wants 15% off or something like that. You try to work with these people. You're not going to stall them off. They want an answer. If they don't get an answer they're going to move on it. I'm not saying we couldn't compete with some offshore sources, but when customers come back to you and they want a 15 to 20% price reduction, we don't have the margins to begin with.

LG: In the last magazine, I wrote a piece about how you develop a brand for a job shop. I make the argument that every company has to have a brand or an identity, otherwise, they're only competing on price. Now you say you feel you're only competing on price on everything that you do?

DK: I think so.

LG: Do you think a brand doesn't mean anything?

DK: Well, I'm not sure exactly what you mean by a brand. When we went with PMPA...when we changed the name we wanted to have the logo as a symbol of reliability. And we wanted that to be kind of your UL approved logo. In other words the buyer would say, "Gee, they're a member of PMPA, that's who I want to deal with."



"We want to attract other members to the PMPA who are not just screw machine guys. The future is not World War II Acmes."



LG: Right.

DK: Okay. But if what you're meaning about a brand is something that distinguishes us from somebody else, I think you may know that our company is quite good on hydraulics. In the hydraulics business people have come to us because they know that we have some expertise in that area, and our customers have helped us gain that expertise. But the point of the matter is, when it comes right down to it, it's price. And that does bother me. The deliveries are a given. You're going to quote that the parts are going to be there on December 1st, that's assumed. It is assumed that the part is going to be to print and it is going to be shipped on time, so the only thing left is the price. People expect all these quality systems and delivery systems, but they're

not willing to pay extra for it. They want it at the lowest possible price. They are telling us that China is 20-50% lower than us, maybe it's more, but let's say for argument sake it is 20%. They're using that as a negotiating chip to try to get us to drop our price. We as an industry get scared, and we'll give up 10%. And the next thing you know a guy is running the part for nothing.

LG: Why do you want to be in a business if it is just about price?

DK: I don't. But that is the way the industry is going. I don't want to be in a business that is just about price. That's why I've tried...as I talked to you earlier... creating some value, doing some things differently than other people, so maybe I can get a little bit more for my product. I still need to be competitive certainly, but I can add some value so I can get some more for it. I don't like the price situation, but if you're a realist about it, it's all about price, Lloyd. It's what it's all about right now. The thing that I find interesting is when we were booming two years ago we couldn't raise prices either. When you quote a price today, you're locked in at that price. We, as an industry, need to become more efficient to remain competitive.

LG: I'm asking you these questions because you're also my client at Graff-Pinkert.

DK: But look at what has happened to the industry now. We're flat. We've come off of five years of explosive growth, couldn't raise our prices, now we're flat and we're cutting them. Where are we going to be when it turns?

LG: That is the question I'm asking you. I'm very worried that this is a no growth business in deflationary times with powerful demands for increased quality, which pushes a company to buy new equipment. That sounds like a lousy business to be in.

DK: Well, what is a good business today?

LG: A business that has pricing power.

DK: Well, now you're talking about a product. Now, you're talking about maybe having your own product. Well, my opinion is you're either a jobber or you have your own product. It is difficult to do both. Because if you have your own product and you're a



jobber and there is a tie, you know who's going to win on that one. It is a little bothersome to me to be totally dependent upon what comes in the door. You know, your future is based on the whim of a buyer as opposed to being able to develop your own product and then go out and market it and sell it. We are at every little whim of that particular buyer. Long-term contracts have helped that a little bit. But yes, it is tough being in the jobbing business, not knowing what to expect.

LG: Does the PMPA have a recognizable brand at this point?

DK: I think we do. I feel that we represent most of the players. Though there are still some big operations that we don't have that we'd like to have.

LG: I mean, do people leverage the PMPA membership in any way as far as getting business?

DK: I don't think so.

LG: That's what I meant as a brand.

DK: No, I don't think they do. I think, as I said to you earlier, as part of our strategic plan, we wanted that to be the case where it was a Good Housekeeping seal of approval or the UL, but I don't think we've done that.

LG: So, that's not an argument to be in the PMPA. What is the primary argument for a potential member to join the PMPA today?

DK: Well, there is a wealth of information that the member can receive such as financial ratios, cost comparisons, which I think are very important. For example you can stack your company up to the best earners within the industry. You can see where you fit with your selling and administrative expenses or your labor. There are also governmental issues. PMPA represents our interest on governmental issues. And then what I alluded to as far as the networking, and the idea exchange...you can't put a price tag on that. I can tell you there have been members in PMPA who have decided to build new buildings for example. They pick up a telephone, they make four or five calls and in an hour they've got six plant visits scheduled. I've gotten information on customers through PMPA. And there is quite a bit of business being done amongst PMPA members. Basically it is the networking and the information sharing and the shoulder to cry on or lean on when you need it. I've seen tears. I've seen fathers pass away; second generation comes in. They're green. They don't have an idea of what is going on. Somebody takes them under their wing and helps them. I've seen guys go into their plants and help them. I've seen them help them with financial issues. I mean it's been kind of a family arrangement. So, I think that is really our strength. You can't put that in a brochure. You can't go out and sell it.

LG: Why not?

DK: Because until you experience it you don't understand.

LG: I don't agree. I think what you've just explained to me is the best argument I've ever heard for being a member.

DK: Well, I've given that argument to a couple of people and they've kind of scratched their head about it. But the hook is, get the guy to come to a meeting, take him under your wing, spend a little time with him, maybe take him out to dinner, introduce him to the fraternity. When they experience the camaraderie they love it. And now you've started to develop a member for life. That's the strength of the Association.