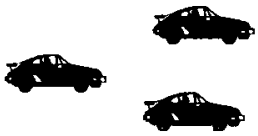
Artisan Addenda

Issue #15 **Since 1964** *December 1996*

Ponderings On The Parkway . . . . . .(perpetually perplexed)

by JOHN J. SEKORA



Like so many New Jerseyans, I have an hour+ commute both to and from Artisan (ATM) each day. Here are some of my commuting notes that I'd like to share with you. . . . . .

⇒ Is the only new construction in NJ on the highway ? - and why is it only on the road I'm traveling ?

⇒ I know there is only one surefire way for me to double my money - fold it in half when I put it back in my pocket.

⇒ Sitting in a long traffic jam one day, I watched a young boy going through the motions of winding up and pitching an imaginary baseball. I thought to myself, if business remained slow - I could be catching his curve ball one day soon.

⇒ Seeing a rainbow on a recent commute I was reminded of a quote from one of today's famous philosophers "The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain". (Dolly Parton)

⇒ Why does the other lane always move faster?

⇒ A road map will tell you everything you ever wanted to know- except how to fold it up again.

⇒ It's easy to go to work everyday- I treat it like a game and I go to have fun.

⇒ I read or heard this (I can't remember where)- 'You may be disappointed if you fail, but you are doomed if you don't try'.

⇒ Sometime ago on the way to work, I started to write down what I thought would be a long list of all the possible ways I could help motivate my Artisan family to do better work. I wrote 'friendly praise' - the rest of the page is still blank today.

⇒ If plumbers have pipe dreams, what do tilelayers have?

⇒ I believe how much we ENJOY what we have is more important than how MUCH we have - it's the capacity to enjoy life that brings contentment.

Have a Marble-ous Tile-idy Season!!!!

A new word to start the new year (thanks to Bill the Barrister)

NASCENT.....

ie: beginning to grow, start, form or develop

FEATURE STRIP

"Mr. Persistence"

A special salute this month to our own Paul Vigna. Artisan has been fortunate to have Paul on it's staff for the past several years sharing his 33+ years of experience. We are proud to therefore announce Paul's recent promotion to President of our Stone Division.

Paul built his academic foundation attending St. Vincent's College in Latrobe, PA, Rider College and Mercer County College in NJ. His fields of study ranged from cost accounting to architecture.

Starting as a helper back in 1963, Paul eventually went into business for himself ten years later. Along the way he has worked for other large tile and stone contractors, including Avalon Tile.

Married for 35 years to his lovely wife, Judy, who enjoys a fulfilling teaching career. They are the proud parents of three children; Christopher, Michael and Debbie.. Judy and Paul also enjoy time with their three grandchildren; Jessica, Alexander and Marisa.

Photo by Doris Sekora

Paul Vigna and his wife, Judy, accepting Artisan's 12th First Place Masonry Award at the recent IMI Award Dinner at the Brunswick Hilton.

Paul has proven himself to be a valued addition to the Artisan family and we hope for a very long time to be able to say; "when it comes to stone, Paul's the man to talk to".

Congratulations Paul!

Special thanks to my friend Bob Michielutti,Jr.for the following insights on 'persistence';

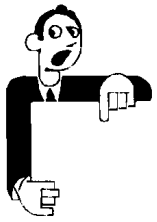
- Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence
- Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent
- Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb
- Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts

PERSISTENCE
AND DETERMINATION ALONE
ARE PARAMOUNT IF ONE IS TO
SUCCEED!!!

Artisan Wins 12th Masonry Award

Artisan Tile proudly announces their 12th Masonry Award in as many years! The 1996 NJ Golden Trowel Masonry Awards were recently held at the Brunswick Hilton in East Brunswick. These awards recognize outstanding achievements in architectural masonry design and construction. We are very pleased that the distinguished judging panel selected the AT&T Learning Center in Basking Ridge for Best in Category - Interiors. Artisan was contracted by Turner Construction to supply and install this challenging project. It was described by the jury as a "showcase for masonry products" due to the extent and variety of tile and stone used throughout. Stone was imported from around the world, joining with American made ceramic tile. This created an intricate layout and installation which truly sets a new standard in the use of hard tile and stone. Thanks to all involved for their 'Artisan' efforts in making this project an award winning success.

T I L E CUTS

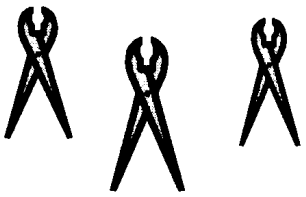


At the recent 88th Annual Convention of the Tile Contractors' Association of America, our own CEO, John Sekora, was re-elected to the Board of Directors. The convention was held this past September in Seattle, Washington. Directors elected to the TCAA Board have the obligation and the opportunity to act as the voice of America's ceramic tile and stone contractors. America's specifiers and owners know that TCAA speaks with the considered and collective voice of union shop contractors that guarantee their work.

The reputation of the TCAA Board is the source of the great influence that TCAA contractor members exercise in the tile marketplace. We congratulate John and hope that his term will be rewarding and fruitful for all parties involved.

PS to the boss: T-shirts and souvenirs from future conventions would not be refused.

Tile Nippers:



Michelle: (John's youngest) With a new job and a new fiancee, life is certainly keeping her busy - she and Scott are planning a '98 wedding. Congratulations!

Nancy: After a successful total knee replacement operation (just in time to chase daughter Jessica in toyland) Nan is back at the ATM estimating office.

Matthew: Our 'nascent' ATM estimator is still attending college (and is learning to spell ALLISON) while keeping his pencil sharp in the office.

Kenneth: Fresh from the 'Indy' (Pa.) race course, he is now racing around for daughter Samantha's 2nd Christmas.

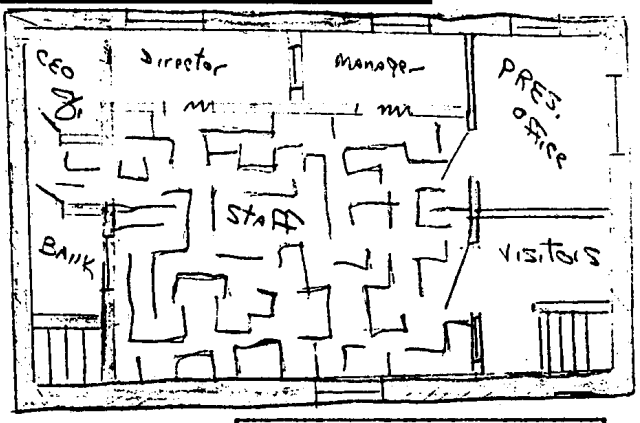
Carol: Our resident computer wiz is now trying to set up and teach us our new accounting system (we hope she's having better luck with son and daughter-Michael and Nicole).

Wedding bells will be ringing for Maryann's daughter, Dana and fiancee Matthew (Millar) this coming December '97 - we wish them all the best!

CELEBRATION TILE '97

Don't forget to mark your calendars! Next year's tile convention will be held at the Marriott Seaview Resort in Absecon - April 4-6, 1997

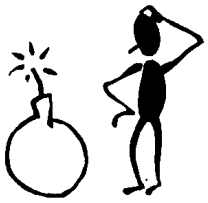
Come Visit Our New Offices:



DON'T MISS OUR NEXT ISSUE FOR HELPFUL TIPS ON HOW TO HANDLE COMMON BUSINESS ISSUES SUCH AS:

'MEDIATING INTEROFFICE RELATIONSHIPS...'

Tile In Turmoil:



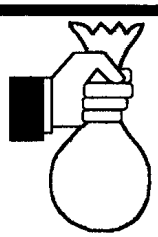
The past year has found the ceramic tile industry in a state of turmoil. The following is a letter we have been sending out constantly to our general contractors to explain why, for reasons out of our control, we have had problems servicing their accounts.

Since the beginning of 1996, when DAL Tile bought out American Olean Tile and started closing factories and warehouses, there has been a continuous shortage of tile. Items that should be standard stocked sizes, patterns, etc. are being discontinued. Normal non-stocked materials are taking twelve weeks plus to obtain. Backorders are the norm, not the exception. All factories are effected.

We strongly recommend that ceramic tile color selections be expedited to insure availability as you require.

Very truly yours - John J. Sekora - CEO

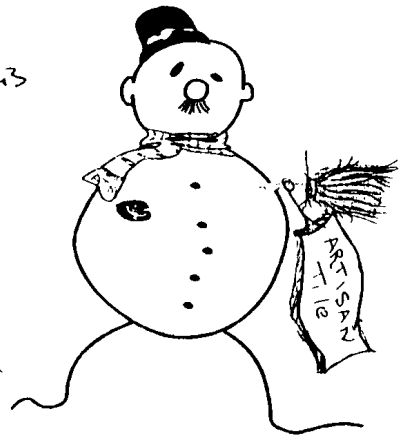
We have seen little change since I first wrote this letter, let's hope the new year will bring improvements that will benefit us all.



-REWARD-

Help! Artisan Addenda Issue #9 (Fall/Winter 1990) is missing from the company library. Help me replace it before the boss finds out! A reward to anyone who sends me a copy !

-the librarian.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS From Artisan Tile

Last Words.....

by John J. Sekora

Looking back on this past year, I can't help breathing a sigh of relief that it's over. As usual, it went by too quickly (that's the 'older you get, the faster time goes by' thing kicking in) - this year marked Artisan's big move to a new location this past March. Looking around, I think we've settled in fairly well - certainly nothing that a few thousand decorating dollars couldn't fix. For the time being those dollars will be directed to a new computer program we are installing (nothing that a few bottles of Aspirin won't fix).

This March also marked an incredibly successful tile convention in Atlantic City, a success we hope to repeat and expand on next year. My goal is to actually attend this time, instead of hearing about it from others. For those of you who remember my bout with pneumonia that kept me from attending the convention - rest assured I've had my flu shot and have a wide array of vitamins to get me through this winter. I will be there this time! Hope that you will too.

To our general contractors who supported us this past year, and to the men and women in the field who did their best for us all year - thank you! To my Artisan staff, my gratitude for your hard work and extra efforts to keep the company going during the move and through the year that followed.

My best wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year to you all! *Enjoy!*

Artisan

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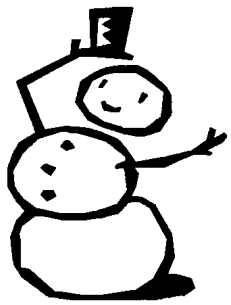

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Holiday Issue

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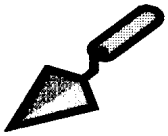

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS:
We are still receiving mail at our old Highland Park address - please change your records to reflect our new Somerset location

The first issue of Artisan Addenda was published in September of 1989

** see Page# 4 for urgent request from Artisan's librarian!!!!*