THANK YOU SPEECH

FOR

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I once heard an expression that states, “I am part of all that I have met.” This expression is so true for me when I think of all of the wonderful people I’ve met and all of the growth I’ve experienced thanks to my involvement with the ARA. Let me express my thanks and acknowledge the ARA and some very special people who have inspired me throughout my tenure as Director of the 7th district. I want to say how proud I am to have been recognized by this fine organization and the past 3 years have been an inspiration on so many levels.

The ARA provides a great context and forum for the construction rental industry, but a context and its function are only as good as the people that, pardon the pun, “drive the machine.” I have met some really fine people who are the true foundation of this business and I would like to acknowledge them. Aside from meeting and having the privilege of working with an experienced, capable and dedicated team, I also am fortunate to have solidified true lifelong relationships and friendships.

I want to thank Hal Roe for getting me involved in the ARA. I appreciate his vision for this organization and his faith in me. I can’t imagine having a more capable man to guide all of us as the Chairman of this organization. I am thankful to Hal for recognizing the potential I had to serve within this association and my participation has really opened my eyes and renewed my dedication to my business and this industry. For anyone who may be thinking of participating at a higher level in this group, I mean it when I say that my time here was invaluable and I definitely got so much more out of my commitment than I put in.

This group would not be as powerful as it is without its wonderful staff and I am honored to have worked with them. These people provide essential back office support to the small guys, and believe me; I can imagine how thankful they are for all of the work done on their behalf. I’d like to thank all of the ARA employees and give a special thank you to Chris Wehrman, our CEO, for her exceptional leadership skills, Kathy Schwartz, our CFO, for her steady voice, infinite knowledge and willingness to be the “backbone” of the group, and Kathy Nicoletto, who, as Special Assistant to the CEO, keeps **EVERYTHING** organized and running smoothly. I would also like to acknowledge Ruth Bloom. As the Director of state and local leadership, Ruth has the distinction of directly supporting all of the state presidents. I also have to say that John Mc Clelland, our Vice President of Government Affairs, has to be one of the smartest people I have ever met. John bears the distinction of being “the Smartest Person in the Room…**ANY** room,” and let me just say, he’s been in rooms with some really smart people!! Of course, no acknowledgement is complete without a very special “thank you” to Ted Cook. Ted is an extraordinary leader and in fact, his management style astounds me! When Ted talks, EVERYONE pays attention! And the best part…and what makes Ted so successful, is that he’s an even better listener. I am proud to have called Ted our leader and I’m even more proud to call him my close friend.

There are so many worthwhile initiatives supported by the ARA and the great thing about the organization is that it is **organic** and always willing to stretch and grow along with the demands of a constantly morphing industry. Each year’s Rental Show allows us the chance to come together, review what worked based on last year’s performance, and discuss prospects for an even brighter future. The mission of any successful and viable group is to acknowledge the work that’s been done and formulate a plan to experience even more growth in the future. The ARA has developed and honed such great support tools like RM Magazine and the important area of market metrics. Everything this organization does is designed to improve everyone’s individual businesses and **OUR** industry.

There are people out there just waiting-whether they know it or not, to be tapped as supporters and contributors to this fine organization. The hallmark of a successful company or industry is to build a strong foundation by having the best tools to build that infrastructure. There are many untapped resources to be called upon in order to continue to grow and strengthen our field. Let’s think of the process as peeling an onion. Hal approached me and inspired me to contribute to the ARA as a director. Now that my official tenure is coming to a close, let’s go to the next layer and find those people out there who might be ready to explore their opportunities to further advance the causes of our chosen industry.

As my term as a Director has been winding down to completion, I’ve spent some time thinking about what the past 3 years have been like. What did I learn? What advice did I receive or give that really worked to improve the functioning of the organization and my district? What advice would I want to receive if I were just starting a new term?

**My advice to the board would be:**

* Promote the success of our members and advance the growth of the equipement rental industry
* Be a voice for the members and be a voice in the board room
* Ask the questions that need to be asked, work hard to come up with new ideas, tackle challenges and be a part of the solution
* Find the balance between “what is best for the members AND what is best for the association.

**And to the ARA, here are some of my thoughts:**

* Continue to be “relevant” to the small companies, the large companies, the Nationals, and the Associate Members. Every member has a unique vantage point and can learn from and teach our constituents.
* Take a larger role and bear even more of the responsibility to support the Rental Industry on a global basis. Our roster is growing, but there are so many other people, companies and geographic locales to be included. Think of it as a growth opportunity!!
* Congratulations on the success of what I believe to be ARA’s most significant accomplishment, The Rental Market Metrics… Take that project even further, and continue to take on challenges of that magnitude.
* Enhance the culture of “Selling” with regard to the staff. The direction that Rental HQ is going in will be a huge tool to assist so many of our current and future members. Keep pushing it! Rental HQ has the potential to offer tremendous support to all areas of our industry. The most important point is to believe in the concept and organization, get the word out, and expand the ARA’s presence throughout the country and the world!

I want to congratulate the new Director of the 7th District, Beth Hoff-Blackmere, and wish her the best of luck in her tenure as Director. The most valuable advice I have to give to the new directors and participants is to stick to the strategic plan, but have the courage to modify as needed. Remember the resources you have through Rental HQ and always keep in mind that you are part of a team, the ARA, whose goal is to support you, your company and the entire industry. This organization thrives on its HUMAN resources-the staff and senior leaders for their knowledge and dedication and to the new members and directors who will infuse exciting and fresh ideas that will allow the ARA to provide the support essential to maintaining a healthy and nationally recognized resource.

Thank you all for all that you have given to me and I look forward to seeing quantum progress in the ARA and this industry for years to come!