

## Happy Holidays ...

by WPMA CEO, Gene Inglesby



*The holidays remind us to be thankful for the blessings we have* - the past successes, our current challenges which help us to be stronger, the present opportunities and the future rewards we all seek. The closing of a year is a great time to structure our plans for the upcoming year to meet our goals or simply redefine them to meet our needs, so we can get the most out of life.

I know a lot of you probably do the same thing this time of year - to look back and then to look ahead to see where you are going. The same is true for WPMA; we just concluded our annual Strategic Planning Meeting to define what we expect of WPMA in the next three to five years. At this meeting we identify, define, and envision what the committee wants and needs WPMA to be to our members in the future. The committee is made up of the WPMA Executive Committee and the Past Presidents of WPMA. The knowledge and experience these individuals bring to the meeting are invaluable to me and to your association.

At this meeting we try to look forward to the future; to meet the members' needs and to keep the association a valuable resource for your companies, to help keep you more efficient and profitable. The Association and the members are reliant on one another to become successful. I believe the success of one will increase the success of the other, and it is imperative to keep looking for ideas to help each other accomplish our goals. There is a good rock and roll song by Boston titled "*Don't Look Back*" that helps me with planning for the future. I think it is important to know where you have come from and how you got where you are, but it is a mistake to look back because that is not where we are going.

Reflecting on the past year, I have been fortunate to travel to all the WPMA states and talk to many of our members about their business, and the successes and the challenges being faced by our industry. Some of these challenges are the negative effects of oil speculation, increased strains on credit, ever-changing federal and state regulations, and numerous mergers and acquisitions. I believe challenges make us stronger and more efficient. They make us review what we are doing and help us play at the top of our game to give us a competitive edge.

Challenges are opportunities to grow, and we should be thankful we have them, so we don't become too complacent, letting life pass us by. Life is a journey to enjoy with no defined destination but the one we envision. Too many times we focus on the result (which is important because it meets our goals), but we tend to look back at the end and wonder how we got here. We should enjoy the journey as we go.

At WPMA, the progress we have made this past year has come through the support of our great members. I have never seen an industry with such fierce competition, yet with such camaraderie between individuals as I have seen in the petroleum industry.

I would like to wish you, your families and businesses a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

