



## Human Resources by Carolyn Carlin

In July 2004, we made the decision to purchase new payroll/HR software. The new system has many capabilities such as benefit accruals and more detailed information printed on the check stubs. Sandra Willis was promoted to Payroll Administrator for all locations. She has been working closely with our payroll vendor to ensure we are using the new system to its fullest potential.

Over the past year, we have been working with all supervisors and managers to make sure that all employees have a yearly review. Monthly reminders are sent out to help them keep track of pay information, review dates, job description revisions and anniversaries. Your annual review provides both you and your supervisor the opportunity to discuss your past performance and future goals with the company. However, please make sure that you address any issues, thoughts or concerns with your supervisor when they arise so that they have the opportunity to work with you throughout the year.

Two Supervisor Lunch and Learn sessions were held this past year for each location. The first, held in the spring 2004, was centered around educating supervisors on our new safety program. The second was a review on past training topics, which included best hiring practices, employee reviews and safety. These sessions continue to be successful by providing valuable feedback from each location. Our goal is to continue to reward our current workforce and hire new employees that will both compliment and benefit our company and fellow employees. Training topics for this year will include interviewing techniques, new employee orientation procedures, as well as ongoing safety initiatives.

No changes were made this year to the company benefits. However, as health care costs continue to rise, we continue to look at ways to enhance our benefits. If anyone has questions concerning insurance, I can be reached at the Atlanta office at (404) 214-4719.

*Life is a grindstone. Whether it grinds us down or polishes us up depends on us.*

— L. Thomas Holdcroft, writer and theology professor

### GIA President's Award

Tom Barfield recently received the President's Award at a luncheon for the Georgia Industry Association. This award is given at the discretion of the president to a member that he feels has made significant contributions to the success of the organization over a number of years, and has provided service beyond the call of duty to the president during his term. As Jim Jones, GIA President, said, "Tom meets and exceeds those criteria and it has been a pleasure working with him." Congratulations, Tom!



Hardwoods, Inc. gets a new "temporary" office.

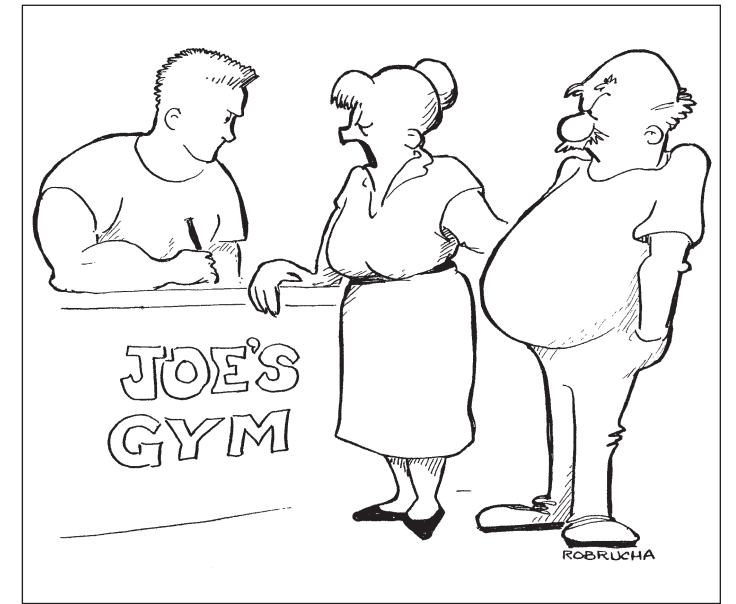
Of course, in Alabama, this is uptown!

## "I Just Have to Outrun You"

It's disturbing how many people are willing to become conscienceless gladiators pursuing blatant "me first" life philosophies. People who think winning is everything usually are willing to do anything to win. Integrity, respect for others, compassion, fairness all become obstacles. But as Lily Tomlin said, "The problem with the rat race is that even if you win, you're still a rat."

Our task is to control and discipline our selfish instincts in honor of moral principles like love and caring for others. This doesn't mean we always have to put others first or live our lives in a complete state of self-sacrifice, but it surely demands that we are willing to do so occasionally.

*Excerpt taken from Michael Josephson, Character Counts! Network*



"He wants to see about trading in his keg for a six-pack!"



**Tune in to TLC on Saturday, March 5th, at 9 pm for a special edition of Trading Spaces. Nace Austin and AWPC are featured on the show!**

## Study Finds Wood Is More Eco-friendly

According to a recent press release issued by the Consortium for Research on Renewable Industrial Materials (CORRIM), a non-profit corporation of 15 research universities in the United States, wood is one of the most environmentally-sensitive building materials for home construction.

The research indicates that wood uses less overall energy than other products, causes fewer air and water impacts, and does a better job of the carbon sequestration that can help address global warming. The research shows that wood framing used 17 percent less energy than steel construction for a typical house built in Minnesota and 16 percent less energy than a house using concrete construction in Atlanta.

The \$1 million study was recently published in the Journal of Forest Products and is the first major update on the topic since a 1976 report by the National Academy of Science.

James Wilson, a professor of wood science and engineering at Oregon State University and vice president of the consortium, says, "There's a significant consumer movement and even some voluntary standards that are interested in green, or environmentally conscious construction methods. We need to have a good understanding of the overall effects that different types of construction have."

The database created in the study is freely available to anyone, researchers say. More details about the study can be found at [www.corrin.org](http://www.corrin.org).