

Final 2004 Seminar Draws Record Attendance

By Traci Matt
STAFF WRITER

Rebuilders turned out in record numbers for the final Electrical Rebuilder's Association (ERA) "Keep It Current" seminar of the year, hosted by Portland's Northwest Regulator Supply on October 2. In addition to 52 paid attendees, 20 supplier representatives got in on the latest technical information provided by Joe Davis of Joe Davis Enterprises.

"The Northwest historically has good attendance at these events," said Northwest Regulator's Alan Melton. He attributes this to old-fashioned "badgering" and encouraging rebuilders to forgo even sacred hunting trips to attend. One rebuilder made the drive from Tucson, Ariz. Another drove 10 hours and does so every time Melton hosts a tech seminar.

"Joe has added more day to day stuff that you can use in your business," said Melton. "He has more technical tips outside the standard starter and alternator stuff. He covered a new way of doing voltage drop testing, and talked a lot about the 6G alternators that are giving people problems."

Melton said one of his pet peeves is people asking questions on the Internet which Davis addresses at each of his seminars.

"All they need to do is go to a seminar to get their answers," he said.

Another benefit of the "Keep It Current" events is the personal networking which takes place. Angela Hoffman of Hagemeister Auto Electric, Lebanon, Ore., helped man the ERA table and sign up three new members.

"I really enjoyed getting to meet and greet people in our industry. It was also very nice to finally put faces with the voices that I talk to almost daily. Everyone was very enthusiastic about the seminar. Joe Davis did a fantastic



Always on top of his game, Richard Vensel can be found busy at most all industry events.



Rebuilders and suppliers mingled during the year's final "Keep It Current" seminar which included table-top displays.



Seminar host and ERA Vice President Alan Melton visits with Larry Hagemeister.

job with keeping it current. I did not see one head nod,” said Hoffman.

In addition to the ERA, those hawking their wares on table-top displays included host Northwest Regulator; Wrangler; Inland Technologies; Lester Catalog Company; ASE Supply; Romaine Electric; Vensel Enterprises; Apptrak Computer Software; SS Batteries; and Wagner Alternators and Supplies.

Dick Vensel of Vensel Enterprises said there were many “first timers” at the seminar. He was impressed with the Chevy half-ton pickup hybrid that a local Chevy dealer provided for the rebuilders to experience for the day.

“Many got to see and touch their first hybrid vehicle and were shocked by the low gas mileage it got. Most who got to ride in it did not even notice that the engine was shutting off when the brake was applied,” said Vensel. Melton, who played chauffeur, said the vehicle got 17 and 19 miles per gallon.

Another first for some was the eruption of Mount St. Helens, which began while the Vensels were flying in.

“While Barb and I were flying between Seattle and Portland the pilot came on the speaker and said ‘If you want to see history being made, look out the left side. Mount St. Helens is erupting.’ The smoke and steam had just started heading up from the crater,” Vensel said. The volcano didn’t cause any significant travel problems.



Man of the hour, Joe Davis, makes his final “Keep it Current” presentation to a rapt audience in the shadow of Mount St. Helen’s activity.