

The President's Hotline

Forming a Vision

**COLUMN BY JIM THOMAS
ERA PRESIDENT**

My name is Jim Thomas, I'm owner of Smith Auto Electric, in Yakima, Wash., a 75,000-resident farming community located in eastern Washington



state. Our main crops are cherries, apples, hops, mint and recently some of the best wine grapes grown in the world. Of course great grapes make for great wine and we have award-winning vineyards popping up all around our area.

I have owned the business for 23 years and the business enjoyed 40 years before me under the guidance of the Smith family. I have seen the market change in these past years in a way most could not have imagined and I see many more changes coming for this industry—some good, others not. It's for these reasons and more that I have decided to become involved and try to give back as much as I can to this unique niche of the automotive industry.

My vision for the future is rebuilders helping rebuilders through this portal called the Electrical Rebuilders Association (ERA). The growing list of methods of providing information and sources of information has been a source of pride to all who volunteer our time and efforts to make these things possible.

I can only hope that all of our present and future members realize the money that is paid to the ERA is being used to provide all of the following services:

- The ERA Web site with all of the tech library and forums that make it a wonderful source of information.
- *Electrical Rebuilder's Exchange* article archives from 1999 to the most current edition, available online and totally searchable.
- Twelve issues—ERE newspaper.
- Discounts on publications and training DVDs.
- Discounted membership to a buy-

ing group to help save you money on a long list of business services.

- A great Webmaster to help get your business on the Web through our newest service—Web site design handled by somebody that knows this industry.
- Two free tickets to the annual ERA Trade Show.
- Rebuild helping rebuild via the Web forums with professionalism the key word.

Please feel free to help me “think outside the box” by e-mailing or faxing any ideas that can help grow the ERA to make it a better organization to serve our industry.

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