Written by Jane Alexander, Editor-In-Chief
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Sucka'! That's what I am when it comes to a certain blue-eyed 5-year-old in Alabama. Smart, sweet, beautiful, amazing and full of just the right amount of p & v (just like his daddy), he is—*how can I say this without sounding like a braggart*—
a really cool kid. Furthermore, if you've not yet figured it out, he's also the apple of my eye.

His 2010 Christmas wish list could be summed up in two words: airplanes and robots. With the help of some great pre-Black-Friday retailer discounts and free shipping offers, I began working early on filling it. Thank goodness for the sharp minds that turn out products like Transformers and what appears, at least to me, to be an almost infinitely programmable, multi-tasking, gee-whiz gizmo named Prime • 8, sold under the I Love Robots brand. Wrapping and packing these gifts for shipment down to Auburn (after trying to do a little test-driving of 'em myself), I marvel at the way they're supposed to work and, I hope, inspire my grandson's own creative juices to flow even more than they already do. Once again, I find myself thinking about the never-ending cycle of innovation...

Which brings me to some news I touched on in my last column . Like product development in the area of toys, for example, we know the capacity-assurance arena is a hotbed of innovation. Failure is not an option for mission-critical equipment and processes. That said, we want to hear about what you're doing to keep your operations up and running against all odds—and honor the most innovative among you.

Next month, Applied Technology Publications (parent of this magazine, Lubrication Management & Technology and MARTS) will launch the " Maintenance & Reliability Innovator of the Year Award "
competition. We'll roll it out in conjunction with a new series by contributing editor Ken Bannister, entitled "Don't Procrastinate...Innovate!" that starts in January. In a nutshell, we'll be seeking innovative solutions and strategies in a number of categories, and judging them based on criteria such as:

- **Practicality**: *Can the innovation be utilized or adopted by many? Could it be*

manufactured or sold?

- **Simplicity**: *What does the innovation cost to implement?*
- **Impact**: *What does the innovation save, reduce or increase? Does it positively impact energy efficiency and/or the environment?*

Look for more details about the "Maintenance & Reliability Innovator of the Year Award" in the January and February issues of our magazines. In the meantime, please get going—*unleash your inner innovator and let those creative juices run free*
. We're looking forward to reading about your award-winning ideas in 2011. By the way, we thank you so much for your support in 2010.

On behalf of Applied Technology Publications, I wish you a very happy and prosperous New Year! But now, I have a most important package to send out...**MT**

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