Written by Jane Alexander, Editor-In-Chief
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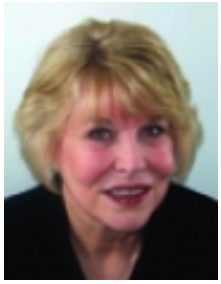

That's right: Applied Technology Publications (ATP), the parent of Lubrication Management & Technology and its sister publication, Maintenance Technology, is going all in on innovation with the "2011 Maintenance & Reliability Innovator of the Year Award." While we'll roll out this program with a big bang at our upcoming MARTS event (www.MARTSconference.com) the last week of April, here's a preview of how you can participate and what's in it for you if you do:

Starting in May, you can submit your innovations (one entry per person) for judging through a special Website set up solely for this purpose. (Full details on this and what to include in your submission will be published in the May/June 2011 issue of this magazine and on www.LMTinfo.com .)

Your innovation must be original—*not plagiarized from other sources*. You'll also need to sign a publication release that will allow us to share your idea with the public at large. If your innovation is in use at your facility and/or if you have an employment condition requiring you to disclose all ideas to your company, you'll also need to provide a publication release from your employer. Ideally, your submitted innovation should be capable of being used by others.

The judges will expect you to explain why you came up with your idea; what it does; and what impact it has in terms of reliability, uptime, availability, throughput, safety, environment, efficiency, etc. Innovations will be categorized into one of three groups: (1) devices, gizmos and gadgets; (2) processes and procedures; and (3) innovative use of outside resources (i.e., third-party tools, including software).

We'll accept entries from May 1 to December 31, 2011, and score them based on practicality, simplicity and impact. Don't wait until the last minute: There's too much on the line. For one thing, starting this summer and running through December, we'll be picking six monthly "Innovator" winners from all entries that have been received.

Why bother to enter? In early 2012, you might be named as a category winner (see above), or even find yourself honored as the grand-prize “2011 Maintenance & Reliability Innovator of the Year”—*and enjoying the bragging rights and other things that come with it.* (Award ceremonies and prize presentations will be at MARTS 2012.) As for WHAT prizes, you’ll have to wait until the official award program rollout at this year’s MARTS to learn more. Let’s just say that ATP and several very innovative sponsors (including Inpro/Seal) have some great things up our sleeves! **LMT**