



Setting the Standards in the  
Natural Stone Industry

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Redford, Michigan – 2004

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – 2006

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**Robert Stasswender**  
Austin, Texas – 2003

*Executive Vice President*

**Garis F. Distelhorst, CAE**  
Cleveland, Ohio

January 8, 2004

Mr. Richard Booms  
Booms Stone Company  
12275 Dixie  
Redford, MI 48239

Dear Rich:

Thank you for your leadership and all of the contributions you made to MIA and the industry during the past several years and, in particular, this past year – my first full year.

As association presidents come and go, the staff often reflects upon the contributions that a particular president makes to MIA and to the industry. Your contributions were awesome! When we look back on Rich Booms' term in office, we will always be reminded that you really made a huge difference as it relates to the value of MIA to its members. Although you gave credit to others, including the staff, it was your leadership and guidance that led to the growth and development of our "value proposition" as we increased the resources available, improved our level of member service, and added to our stable of member benefits. Your guidance in this arena was very much appreciated and will be remembered for a long time to come.

Communications with members improved this year. The MIA monthly newsletter, *Through the Ages*, with your interesting columns has been well received by members. Your openness to members who called or wrote to you signaled integrity and honesty that members appreciate. Surveying members to get their feedback on new services or programs also sends the right kind of message that MIA cares what its members think. Reaching out to architects is another major initiative with your fingerprints all over it. Tackling a project like the revision of the Design Manual required a lot of advice and counsel, and we could always count on you for the advice and/or information we needed.

There are many other things that you contributed to MIA and the industry in addition to those mentioned above. Regular communication and meetings of the Executive Committee allowed projects and programs to move forward between Board meetings is but one example. In fact, the list of accomplishments that I presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting in Atlanta was really testimony to your leadership and support. That list was even a mild surprise to us when we pulled most of the organization's accomplishments together in one place. As you review that list you can see those same Booms fingerprints on many of those programs and activities.

I also appreciate all of the support and encouragement that you gave to the staff during this past year, and Jim, Helen, Jena, and I will not forget it.

Again, thank you for your leadership, your commitment, to MIA and the industry. Please rest assured that your year as President "did make a difference"! Helen and I will always value our friendship with you and Amy.

Sincerely,

Garis F. Distelhorst