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The NRHA Convention was filled with fun family activities for all ages such as a whale-watching tour.

Corporate sponsors for the event included: EazyPower, Stihl, Vermont American, Fluidmaster, Hyde, AHMA, Cooper Hand Tools, 3M, Scotts, Wooster, NCB, Purdy, Channellock, Energizer, Little Giant Ladder Systems, Moen, Louisville Ladder, Rayovac, Creative Homeowner Press, Vaughan & Bushnell, Liquid Nails and Gorilla Glue.

Getting the Agenda Started

Admittedly, there were a lot of fun things to do at the resort, but business was at the top of the agenda during the three-day event. On Monday afternoon, NRHA's Legislative Leadership Council met to discuss ongoing business and future projects for 2009. The recently published, *Human Resource Handbook: A Desktop Guide to Effective Employee Management*, was an initiative that was spearheaded by the council. The handbook is currently available for NRHA members to review or download at nrha.org.

That evening, everyone relaxed during the Young Retailer of the Year Awards program dinner. The awards were sponsored by the American Hardware Manufacturers Association (AHMA), Cooper Hand Tools, The Scotts Company and 3M.

Seven young innovators were commended for their commitment to independent retailing. Attendees had an opportunity to learn more about each of the honoree's business operations by watching a video and hearing from each individual during the presentation. The winners of each category are as follows:

Over \$2 million in sales:

- Maurice Chevalier, owner of Morinville Home Hardware, Morinville, Alberta, Canada
- Jeff Johnson, owner of Del's True Value Building Supply, Myrtle Creek, Ore.

Under \$2 million in Sales:

- Todd Kirschner, general manager of Trio Hardware, Plainview, N.Y.
- Terry Byers, co-owner of Town Center Hardware, Harrisburg, N.C.
- Jeff Bettendorf, owner and general manager of Isanti Hardware Hank, Isanti, Minn.

Multiple-Store Operations:

- Shawn Roehr, vice president of Arrow Lumber and Hardware, Buckley, Wash.
- Eric Hassett, president of operations, Palo Alto Hardware, Half Moon Bay, Calif.

Business and Pleasure

The breakfast session held on Tuesday morning officially opened the convention, as Hammond presented a report on the state of NRHA. He discussed events of the past year, additions to the association's staff and Bill Lee's new role as his successor as managing director. Hammond said that the association is strong and will be in good hands under Lee's leadership.

Following Hammond's presentation, comedian Buzz Sutherland entertained the crowd with his off-beat sense of humor. He joked about his family and