

# Member Profile:

## John Maliszewski Retires As CEO of Reliable Plating

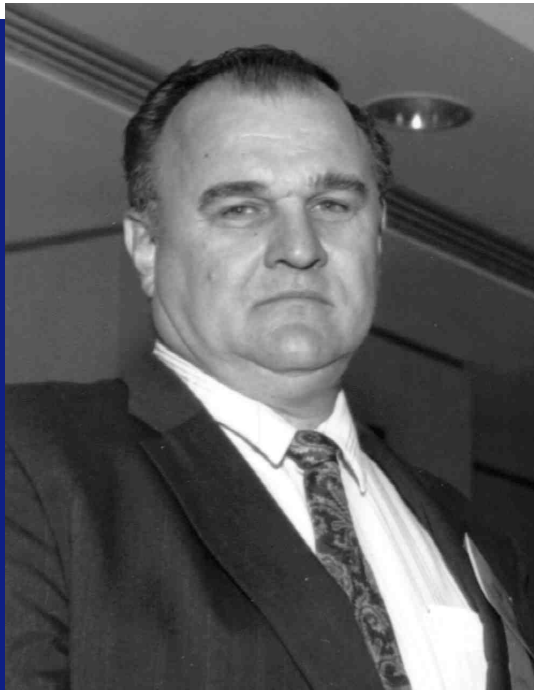
After 47 years with the company, John J. Maliszewski has retired as chief executive officer of Reliable Plating Works, Milwaukee, WI. He will continue to serve as chairman of the board.

The announcement was made by Jaime Maliszewski, president of Reliable Plating Works, who now serves as CEO for the company.

John Maliszewski started working part time for Reliable Plating in 1953. He became a full-time employee in 1958, shortly after becoming a member of the AESF Milwaukee Branch. Starting out sweeping floors, John worked his way up in the business, serving in a variety of positions. He was promoted to vice president in 1970. When his father, Julian Maliszewski, passed away in 1976, John became president of Reliable Plating. He became chairman of the board and CEO in 1980.

In his early career, John hand-racked parts and hand-dipped them to plate with copper, nickel and chromium. A few years later, it was John who first recognized the benefits of automation and what it could do for the company. At his urging, Reliable Plating added its first fully automated plating line in 1967. The shop now has three fully automated lines and plates about 2,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of metal per hour, running two shifts a day.

As the primary decision maker for Reliable Plating, initiating programs for protecting the environment was a major challenge during John's career. Under his leadership, the company began recycling in the early 1970s, long before there were federal mandates to do so. As a certified metallurgist, John realized that it would be easier to treat an unmixed waste stream, so he decided to eliminate copper, cadmium and zinc from the plating lines. "We thought it was good citizenship," he said. "We



were ahead of our time then, and we still are. We now have systems in place to prevent pollution, decrease water usage and to completely recycle all solid waste from the plating operations."

Under John's leadership, Reliable Plating Works was the first Wisconsin manufacturer to run a nickel/chrome production line at "zero discharge," which earned the company the Wisconsin Governor's Award for Hazardous Waste Reduction, and a leading position in the ranks of environmentally conscious industries.

Looking back over the years, John said he is most proud of "the way my sons have followed in my footsteps in the business. They are good, responsible businessmen, and I couldn't be more proud of them."

Currently, the Reliable Plating operations are headed by John's three sons—Jaime, president; John "Jack," executive vice president, production; and Jeff, vice president, quality control.

John also credits his wife of 41 years, Betty Maliszewski, with much of the success of the company. "She's

been my partner at home and work. She always referred to Reliable Plating as her part-time job, and she has been working at her part time job since 1976," John said.

Reliable Plating Works is now more than 50 times larger than when John started with the company. The shop finishes parts for some of the nation's best-known manufacturers, including Harley-Davidson, Briggs & Stratton, Broan and Fort James (formerly Fort Howard and James River). The shop finishes a variety of parts, some as small as a quarter and some as large as parrot cages measuring 25 in. by 25 in. by 54 in.

Involvement with other surface finishing professionals is among John's most cherished memories of his career. "In the AESF, the Milwaukee Branch stands out from all the rest," he said. "The branch includes my friends and competitors—Ed Weiss, Bob Steuernagel and John Lindstedt.

"One of the most amazing things about this industry," he continued, "is that we not only get along with each other, we share knowledge, cooperate with each other, and sometimes work together. In short, even though we are competitors, we are friends. I've never heard of a tighter knit industry than ours."

John and Betty now spend most of their time in Bonita Springs, FL, where he fishes the Intracoastal Waterway, plays golf and is trying his hand at gardening. They try to travel back to Milwaukee about once each month, where John continues to assist in the business on a consulting basis. He also devotes a great deal of time lobbying on behalf of the surface finishing industry in the nation's capitol.

AESF and the Milwaukee Branch are fortunate to have John Maliszewski as a member and supporter. P&SF