**President’s Message:**

To begin, I would like to express my appreciation to Tom Durham, the Rocky Mountain Coal Mining Institute (RMCMI) Board and Judy Colgan for the guidance and leadership they provided during this past year in preparation for the 2014 RMCMI Convention. Furthermore, we wish to recognize the efforts of various Committee Chairs and many volunteers for planning and executing a very successful 2014 Convention.

The theme for the 2015 RMCMI Convention will be ***Coal-Powering the Way***. Although our industry continues to be closely scrutinized, coal continues to provide 40% of our nation’s power and is essential to help maintain our national energy and economic security. It goes without saying, or maybe we should be saying it louder and more often, that coal is our most abundant and cost efficient source of fuel that is available for energy consumption. As a transition fuel, it delivers a reliable and economically viable base that provides the opportunity for other forms of energy to build upon creating a balance between coal and the environment. This is why coal will continue to be the fuel that will continue to power the way providing the base for other energy sources to build.

 It is not speculation, but rather fact that the closure of the plants, mining Although the Clean Air Act, as it is being applied to coal-fired power plants, has resulted in the closure of several plants throughout the United States it will soon become evident that the more we shift away from coal which yields $40 per megawatt hour (MWH) as compared to other sources of energy production such as natural gas ($70 per MWH) or solar ($280 per MWH), the more of a negative impact it will have on consumed energy prices and power availability throughout the country. Even though there will be fewer plants, coal production is expected to remain fairly constant at or slightly above the one billion ton/year rate. The remaining power plants will need to run at peak capacity on a consistent basis to try and maintain the integrity of the power grid as the other sources of energy are not sufficient enough to offset the loss of the power generating capacity. Potentially, the grid could be negatively impacted, particularly at peak season power consumption that could result in rolling power blackouts in some areas of the country.operations, etc. will result in fewer jobs, higher energy prices, decreased production of consumer goods which obviously will negatively impact our economic environment, energy security and ultimately, our way of living. Therefore, I would be remiss in my duties if I did not remind everyone to get to the polls in November and elect responsible individuals that want to work toward win-win solutions, particularly in the energy area and eliminate the extremes we have been experiencing.

During our recent fall RMCMI Fall Board meeting, we discussed several methods that we need to incorporate into our education efforts and naturally we agreed that we need to use them all. Facebook, Twitter, e-mail, telephone, good ole’ face to face conversation etc. Take opportunities to speak about our industry, the Institute and our partner, Friends of Coal West. For those who have not joined Friends of Coal West, we invite you to join or send us your contact information and we will register for you. Additionally, ask others to join FOCW and together we will work to promote and educate others about our industry. As a result, *Coal Will Power the Way* and we move forward. To assist with your communications, visit the RMCMI web site, www.rmcmi.org where current articles and statistics can be found that are specific to our industry.