



# aef/fyi

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"America's  
Favorite Newsletter"

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TEAM AEF



Anthony E. Fasolino 1922-2005

Our 41st Year

## CONTENTS:

*This issue of aef/fyi is a tribute to the life and career of the founder of AEF Sales, Tony Fasolino.*

*For those of you who knew and worked with Tony over the years, we hope it will bring back fond memories. If we've done our job right, those of you who did not know Tony personally will wish you had.*

### LEAP OF FAITH

*A 42 year old Tony mortgages the house and starts a new business.*

### SERGEANT TONY

*A brief look at Tony's time in the Marines during WWII.*

### FLORIDA YEARS

*Friends, family, golf, tomatoes, and Mickey Mouse made Tony's retirement years sparkle.*

## Good Bye, Tony

*"And now the end is near, and so I face the final curtain,  
My friends, I'll make it clear,  
I'll state my case, of which I'm certain,  
I've lived a life that's full,  
I've traveled each and every highway,  
And more, much more than this --- I did it my way."*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *This has been the toughest issue of aefffyi we've ever had to put together. For some reason the monitor keeps getting blurry, and the writing has required more than the usual amount of Jameson's.*

*In a world gone mad we usually try to keep our newsletter on the light side. Not this time. This time we look back, and look around, at life, and time, and all the sad and joyful and terrible and wonderful things that make up our lives.*

*We promise that in the next issue we'll go back to being smart alecks. Maybe we'll even talk about electrical equipment. But not now. This one's for Tony.*

*One thing we have definitely figured out: Eighty-two years is a long time, and it's nowhere near long enough. When you get home tonight, hug your kids. And call your parents.*

*Ciao Babbo. A presto.*



In April of 2004, Tony Fasolino drove up from Florida to be the guest of honor at the 40th Anniversary of AEF Sales. On a beautiful clear evening, surrounded by family and friends, Tony sailed around Manhattan. The skyline glittered with buildings and projects he had helped to design and build, a fitting tribute to a long and successful career. It would be

Tony's last trip to New York.

Days before he drove north, he had been diagnosed with a rare and serious blood disorder. Only he and his wife Lucy were aware of the diagnosis; no one else on board knew, or could have guessed, that anything was amiss. Tony lost the battle on January 12th.

Tony often remarked that, having survived World War II every day thereafter was a bonus. That was the way he lived his whole life, and the last year was no



*Tony and wife Lucy on the AEF 40th Anniversary Cruise.*

exception. He fought the whole way; there were times when it even seemed that somehow he could beat this thing. During the up times he resumed his whole routine, and managed to work in two trips to Disneyworld, the last one in November with Lucy and his son Peter and his wife. He loved it there. The last hurrah was Christmas Eve, spent with family, remembering the good times, eating aglio e olio.

The road came to an end on a hilltop at St. Mary's Cemetery in Port Chester NY, on one of those freezing cold days we had in January. Some of Tony's grandchildren had made arrangements for him to have a Marine Corps Honor Guard. They were waiting, out in the wind and the cold, in those great dress blue uniforms, to pay a final tribute to a fellow Marine.

Tony would have loved that. Semper Fi, Bro.

Miserere, miserome; pero,  
brindo la vita.

Andrea Bocelli

Everyone in the world has  
an interesting history, and  
that is why your mother  
told you to be kind to  
everyone you meet.

Because there is more to  
the world than you know.

Garrison Keillor

Do not marvel at this,  
because the hour is  
coming in which all those  
in the memorial tombs will  
hear his voice and come  
out.

John 5:28-9

Now and then for no good  
reason a man can figure  
out, life will just haul off  
and slam him agin the  
ground so hard it seems  
like all his insides is  
busted. But it's not all  
like that. A lot of it's  
mighty fine, and you can't  
afford to waste the good  
part fretting about the bad  
--- that makes it all bad.

Jim Coates

Each decade goes  
exactly twice as fast as  
the decade before.

Dave Barry

When I went to Rome they  
would sit down, and they  
would have a two hour  
lunch with three full  
courses and a good wine.  
They never got anything  
done, but they knew how  
to live.

That's important: to know  
how to live, in the little  
time we have.

G

## A Word from Peter Fasolino

We are devoting this issue of *aef/fyi* to a celebration of the life and achievements of my father, Tony Fasolino. He started AEF Sales back in 1964, and we proudly carry his initials today.

I think one of his greatest accomplishments may have been that of all the people who have worked with him over the years --- the men under him when he was a sergeant in the Marines, the people in his group when he was the Chief Electrical Engineer at Foster Wheeler, the people here at AEF Sales and the principal companies that we represent, the customers we have worked with over the last 40 years, consulting engineers, contractors, electricians in the field --- I have only heard of one person who seemed to have an axe to grind with him. That's an astonishing track record.

Over the years, and over the last few months, I've heard stories from so many people with fond memories --- electrical foremen and project superintendents who were apprentices or journeymen back when

they first worked with Tony, guys who knew him when they were young men starting out at the drafting tables who later became senior engineers. They remembered, years later, and with affection and appreciation -- that he always had time to work with them and share his friendship and experience. "Graciously knowledgeable" is how one person put it. It's something we still strive for as a company.

Hearing all these stories about my father reminds me that running a successful business over the long term is about much more than how you take care of customers. It's about how you treat people.

After the funeral in New York, I went back to Florida with my mother, to try and help her get a little organized, sorting through papers, pictures, clothes. Going through a closet, I asked for a tie my father had with the Marine Corps insignia



1954 - Dad

embroidered on it. Later we came to the shoes and sneakers lined up on the closet floor.

"What about shoes?" my mother said. "Can you fit in his shoes?"

Well, Mom, I'm not sure, but I'll do my best. We all will.

## Sergeant Tony Fasolino, USMC

You didn't have to know Tony very well, or very long, to know that the 42 months he spent in the Marine Corps was a time of great importance in his life. The training and experiences left a deep impression, and friendships formed in those years lasted a lifetime.

Tony enlisted in the Marines and was shipped off to Parris Island in September of 1942. After basic training he was sent to telephone school at Camp Lejeune, where he met Larry Mussino and Vince Noreko and found himself 'adopted' by 'Mom and Dad' Roland.

The Rolands offered friendship and home cooking to young Marines, away from home and facing perilous and uncertain futures. Their generosity and kindness were never forgotten.

After Tony finished the school, they made him an instructor, and there he stayed till August of '44, when he shipped out to Guadalcanal as a Corporal, and Wire Chief for the 29th Regiment of the 6th Marine Division. There he met up with Don Gibbs, who years later took Tony on his first

trip to Disneyworld (see page 4), Rivington Winant, and George Bissell. While on Guadalcanal a care package from home caught up with Tony: a box of spaghetti and home-made sauce. Tony cooked the spaghetti in his helmet, using his tool kit blowtorch to boil the water. Over fifty years later, after a dinner together in New York City, Rivy presented Tony with a WWII vintage helmet with sergeant's stripes painted on it, and a can of Chef Boyardee, just in case. That helmet (and the can of spaghetti) are sitting on a shelf full of Marine memorabilia today.

On April 1, 1945 Tony was part of the landing on Okinawa, where he and his team struggled ashore over 150 yards of coral with their packs, gear, and 80 pound spools of wire. On June 6, Tony and Don Gibbs were wounded, and after some hospital time on Saipan, and a brief tour of duty in Mainland China, the war was over for Tony.

In January 1946 he returned home, older, heavier, and tougher. He had a new appreciation of just how precious a gift life is; and he was determined not to waste it. We figure he did all right.



1942 - Proud Marine



## AEF Sales - A Leap of Faith

Although AEF Sales wasn't started until 1964, the AEF Story really began back in 1941, when Tony got his first job within the IBEW, working for Ben Offen at Code Electric in Stamford CT. Code was a good place to learn, since Ben was a perfectionist: every connection was made with solder and tape (no wire-nuts for Ben!)

At first Tony rode his bike from his home in Port Chester to Stamford, a one way trip of about eight pre-I-95 miles. But by 1942 Tony was making a hefty four dollars a day, and he traded up to a spiffy 1935 Plymouth convertible. (ESOTERIC NOTE: Yes, this was the same convertible whose rag top was subsequently pierced by Joe Richen's head, when he jumped that time that Nicky Carlucci --- but we digress.)

Later in 1942 Tony enlisted in the Marine Corps (see article on page 2), and when the war was over he got the opportunity of a lifetime: the GI Bill allowed him to enter Rensselaer Polytechnic



1964 - Looking pretty relaxed for a guy who just bet the ranch.

Institute in Troy NY, and in 1950 he graduated as an electrical engineer. Years later he said: "The thing I like about engineering is that there is no room for baloney. Sooner or later somebody is going to push a button and something had better work." That attitude stood him in good stead, and after graduation he went to work for Foster Wheeler, where he eventually became their first Chief Electrical Engineer.

**Leap of Faith.** By late 1963 Foster Wheeler had decided to relocate from midtown Manhattan to Livingston, NJ. Staying with the job he had loved for fourteen years would have meant uprooting his family, and family came first. The opportunity to work as a Sales Rep for Nelson Electric came up. Tony thought he could do it, so he mortgaged the house and took the leap. But there was a big question: A 'No Baloney' engineer was a good thing, but who ever heard of a 'No Baloney' salesman?

Strange as the concept was, it took hold, and took off. People actually seemed to like the idea of a salesman who knew what he was talking about, who meant what he said, and who kept promises.

And the No Baloney engineer never really left the scene. Years later, at the advent of plastic field-jacketed heater cables, the standard heater cables all had a plastic jacket --- a metal overbraid was optional. Optional everywhere except AEF Sales. Every heater cable AEF ever supplied included the braiding, simply because it was the right way to do it. The Gospel according to Tony: "Besides providing mechanical protection for the cable, there are issues of safety for maintenance personnel. The small premium for braiding represented a cheap insurance policy." It's interesting to note that the NEC eventually came to the same conclusion, changing the code in 1996 to require braiding.

Another heating cable issue also got the AEF Treatment. When plastic heating cables first came on the scene, it was standard practice to 'spiral' cable around the pipe to get the right amount of heat. For example if a pipe required 6 watts per linear foot, a 4 watt/foot cable would be used, spiraled around the pipe, using 1.5 feet of cable per foot of pipe to supply the needed heat.

The problem was that while it seemed like an answer, and it looked swell on paper, it was impossible to actually do in the field. And once a pipe was covered there was no way to tell whether the spiral had the right pitch, until the pipe froze and told you it didn't. In 1996 the IEEE published a study recommending against spiral wrapping, catching up (after fifteen years) to the AEF Way. At that time we asked Tony (an IEEE member since 1956) why during all those years AEF didn't ever design with spiraling, even though it's competitors were. According to Chairman Tony: "We always figured, when something is wrong, let's point it out so people will know that we're thinking."

**AEF: The Next Generation.** We now leap ahead to 1999, and another milestone: Pietro Fasolino (Peter's son, Tony's grandson) joined TEAM AEF. Pietro had the effect of forcing AEF and our customers to confront the swift passage of the years. The foreman on one jobsite Pietro went to was more than slightly taken aback: "I worked with your grandfather." (Editor's Note: The foreman actually used more colorful language.) Pietro's take on it at the time reflects the thoughts of all of us on today's TEAM AEF: "It's nice to know how many people remember working with him, and how highly they thought of him." Amen, brother.



1999 - Three Generations

*This is a small industry we're in. People move from one place to another. If you've treated them right, you'll have a friend every where they go. If you've treated them badly, you'll have a black eye wherever they go.*

Tony Fasolino

*It's not wise to lie in bed at night asking yourself questions that you can't answer.*

Charlie Brown

*If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold it would be a merrier world.*

J.R.R. Tolkien

*The more grateful we are for what we have, for the simple, wonderful fact of life itself, the less we will yearn for what we do not have.*

Eric Riss

*Even though the World of Tomorrow is advanced in civilization, the same human traits will be desirable. A person who is honest, ambitious, and thrifty is bound to make good, be it the world of today, or tomorrow.*

Tony Fasolino

From an essay 'The World of Tomorrow', May 1939

*And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.*

Revelation 21:4



*On the Links - 2002*

## Florida Years

Tony loved Florida from the first time he went there in 1975, to visit an old Marine buddy, Don Gibbs. Work and family responsibilities kept him from visiting often, but when circumstances permitted it he became a part-time resident, and he finally a full-fledged Floridian in 1994.

Besides the weather (and the tomatoes), Tony loved the golfing. In his New York years, except for infrequent trips to the driving range, golf just wasn't in the cards. There was no time.

Florida was a different story: free time, and good buddies to play with --- he was hooked, usually playing twice a week, often with Foster Wheeler alumni Henry Madruga and Len Portnoy. He never actually got good, but he enjoyed the hell out of it.

A long-dreamed about trip to Italy finally came off in 2001, and included Venice, Rome, Naples, Capri and a visit with cugini in the tiny southern hill-town of Calitri.

Another big thing for Tony was Disneyworld. He was a late bloomer as Disney fans go. He had reluctantly gone there on his first trip to Florida, and was surprised how much he liked it. But the next Disney moment for him came in 1982, when he decided that his grandson Chris, then two years old and recovering from a hospital stay, should go to Disneyworld. He sent Chris and his parents there, and they became rabid Disneyheads, as did Mr. Pete and his gang. Tony was the last convert, but once he started he made up for lost time. He and wife Lucy went often, staying in Old Key West, where he was a member. Sometimes just he and Lucy would go, but often enough there were children, grandchildren, and friends along.

No doubt about it that his hard-earned and well-deserved years in Florida were a real joy for him, and made a lovely last chapter.



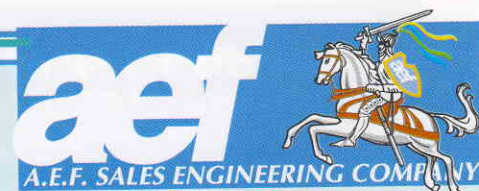
### A Slight Disclaimer

*As we read what we have written in this issue, we believe we have painted an accurate and loving portrait of an old-school gentleman, a man of principles. But we would be remiss if we did not mention that at times those principles had rather volcanic manifestations.*

*Once Tony attended a job meeting at the request of the electrical contractor, to help straighten out some thorny problems on a large snowmelting system. The big shot at the meeting, a well-dressed ignomamus, was abusive to everyone present. He got away with it till Mount Tony had heard enough, and put him in his place in no uncertain terms. It was a scene we've seen in a thousand movies, where the pompous bully gets his comeuppance.*

*Years later, we ran into the gent who was the contractor's representative at that meeting. 'You know', he told us, 'I've got that meeting on tape; I still like to listen to it once in a while.'*

*So John, if you read this, give us a call. We'd like to hear it too.*



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## Thanks

*There were many kindnesses extended to Tony and his family over the last year. We'd like to use this space to say Thanks.*

#### - At Bethesda Memorial Hospital -

Noel on the 4th Floor

Matthew and all the other ICU nurses who cared for Tony during the last week

Kim and Mary at Dr. Koo's office, and Dr. Koo

Sue, Carole, Kate, Jana, Josee, Becky and Tammy at the Bethesda Infusion Room. Tony spent a lot of time there over the last seven months, and the care shown him as a patient and as a human being was a big help.

A special thanks to you guys for all coming to his hospice room to say goodbye. It meant a lot to all of us.

#### - At Brighton Gardens Nursing Home -

Thanks to all the staff there, who helped build him up so that he was strong enough to get his life back. Your efforts gave him a 'bonus round', which he really enjoyed. Special thanks to Virginia and Lowell.

#### - Cox & Graziano Funeral Home -

Thanks to Vinnie and Jennifer for making a difficult time a little easier.

#### - United States Marine Corps -

Thanks for the Honor Guard at the cemetery.

#### - Friends and Neighbors -

Thanks to all of you who were able to be with us, and to all of you who sent a card, flowers, prayers.