

THERMOFORMER OF THE YEAR

2025 NOMINATION FORM



The Awards Committee is now accepting nominations for the next THERMOFORMER OF THE YEAR. Please help us identify worthy candidates. **The deadline for submissions is October 18th, 2024.**

This prestigious honor will be awarded to a member of the industry who has made a significant contribution to the thermoforming industry in a technical, educational, or managerial aspect of thermoforming. Nominees will be evaluated and voted on by the SPE Thermoforming Division Board of Directors.

Things to check before submitting a nomination:

- My nominee knows they are being nominated.
- My nominee is willing and able to attend the SPE Thermoforming Conference.
- My nominee has not previously won this award.
- Are you willing and able to submit the biographical information laid out below?

Required Biographical Information

- Nominee's experience in the thermoforming industry
- Nominee's education (include degrees, year granted, name and location of university)
- Prior corporate or academic affiliations (include company and/or institutions, title, and approximate dates of affiliations)
- Professional society affiliations
- Professional honors and awards
- Publications and patents (please attach list)
- Evaluation of the effect of this individual's achievement on technology and progress of the plastics industry (To support the nomination, attach substantial documentation of these achievements.)
- Other significant accomplishments in the field of plastics

Examples of this information have been provided on the following pages (3-7)

Commonly Asked Questions:

- Is my nominee required to be an SPE Thermoforming Division Member? – NO
- Does it matter if they are a part of the supply chain or processors? – NO
- Does my nominee have to have a minimum number of years in the industry? – NO
- Can someone be nominated more than once? - YES

FORM ON THE NEXT PAGE

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Before you nominate someone, please confirm the following by checking off the boxes:

My nominee knows they are being nominated

My nominee is willing and able to attend this year's conference to receive the award

NOMINATION FORM (part 1)

The total submission, including this application page, must not exceed four **(4) pages, including this form.**

Person Nominated: _____

Title: _____

Firm or Institution: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

NOMINATION FORM (part 2)

Individual Submitting Nomination: _____

Title: _____

Firm or Institution: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the information provided for the Thermoformer of the Year nomination form and agree to all of the terms.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ALL NOMINATIONS MUST BE SIGNED. Please submit nominations to:

Juliet Goff, Kal Plastics
2050 East 48th Street Vernon, CA 90058-2022
323-581-6194, ext. 223
Juliet@kal-plastics.com

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION EXAMPLE 1

Barry Shepherd – Shepherd Thermoforming & Packaging Inc. (Brampton, Ontario Canada)

Barry was born in Kent, England in 1945 and grew up on the shores of the North Sea on Canvey Island just east of London. In 1957 his family decided to follow Barry's older brother Dennis and move to Canada. Barry and his parents moved into the Greater Toronto Area where he and his wife Denise reside today. Barry and Denise were married in 1965. Denise gave birth to their first son Todd in 1968 and Mark was born in 1970.

Throughout the 1960's Barry worked for several different companies in sample making and design. In 1970 he joined Kodak and began designing packaging for cameras, film, and related products. One of Barry's first plastic projects was slide packaging for the slides that go into slide projectors. This was one of the early groundbreakers of thin wall injection molding.

Through the mid 70s and early 80's Barry worked for several corrugated packaging companies in positions ranging from Sales, up to President but he always stayed involved in his passion the design and development side of the business. In the early '80's Barry was introduced to the Alloyd Company which specialized in medical and consumer packaging and sealing equipment. Intrigued by plastics and blister packaging, Barry began representing Alloyd in Canada while maintaining his role in the corrugated business.

At that point Barry had his entrepreneurial spark and approached his boss and asked if he could rent a 10x10 office as he was moving on to plastics. So In 1985, Shepherd Packaging was born, first employees Barry and Denise.

In the beginning Shepherd was simply a sales agency for promoting plastic blisters, trays, clamshells, sealing equipment and sometimes corrugated to put it in. However in 1987 Barry made the decision to purchase a blister sealing machine and get into contract packaging. Several pieces of equipment later Barry was beginning to realize a life long dream of operating a successful business as Shepherd Packaging revenues reached \$1,000,000 annually.

In 1991 Barry saw the need to move in another direction and purchased Shepherd's first in-line thermoformer. This enabled Shepherd Packaging to grow through this economically weak time period and 2 more thermoforming machines were added before the turn of the century.

Barry's willingness to try just about anything when it came to forming fueled this growth. Johnson & Johnson was looking for someone who would provide a unique toothbrush package for its new Reach toothbrush and Barry's innovative spirit made this possible. The bend on the Reach toothbrush required a non-planar parting line, which difficult in itself also required special sealing equipment. Barry's experience in sealing equipment enabled him to help J&J modify their equipment and a flashy new package was born. This pushed Shepherd's sales to new heights.

In 1997 an opportunity to enter into the heavy gauge thermoforming industry presented itself. Lear seating was looking for an alternative to heavy awkward custom metal pallets that they used for transporting automotive seats. Shepherd presented a custom thermoformed plastic pallet that was very well received and has multiplied into several different designs. Shepherd now supplies many of Lear's plants throughout North America. Although the heavy gauge forming is a newer enterprise, it's given the company the kind of marketing range that says if it's thermoformed, chances are we can make it.

Barry Shepherd – CONTINUED

In order to differentiate Shepherd from the competition Barry decided to bring design and tool making in house. So when this became a reality in 2002 and Shepherd had established itself as one of the premier custom non-food Thermoformers in the world.

As the markets shifted toward recycled materials Shepherd pioneered a shift toward more environmentally responsible materials and took the opportunity to expand the RPET market. This attracted companies like Blackberry maker Research in Motion, Procter and Gamble, Clorox and other blue chip companies. While most companies mentioned having the capability of running RPET Barry actively promoted the material regardless of the struggles the rest of the industry was having with bringing the material to market.

Barry often talks about how he started the business based on jobs that no one else wanted certainly created challenges in the business. With his open “we’re in this together” manner, customers and employees helped create a unique teamwork approach. This “shared responsibility” created a drive and willingness for everyone involved to achieve difficult goals, and created many technological achievements. These include pre-print forming inline, steel rule floating dies and the gravity hinged mechanical undercuts, leading to numerous awards and presentations for SPE and other associations.

Envisioning a technical centre (focusing on design, prototyping, testing and tool making) second to none in the custom thermoforming industry moved Barry to purchase its very own facility in 2006. Today Shepherd Thermoforming & Packaging Inc. operates 7 Thermoformers in this state of the art facility Near Toronto Canada.

Although retired now, Barry’s passion for research, design and development has kept him involved in research and development projects at Shepherd. He spends his “off time” on photography, fly-fishing and golf.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION EXAMPLE 2

Rich Freeman: Bio

When I was asked to put together Rich Freeman's Bio, I had many offers and submissions of letters of recommendation. Rich has the respect of many of his colleagues on the Board. The hard part was writing the actual Bio, partly because Rich has been active in our industry, but not in the "traditional" documented way. In other words, Rich is an independent free thinking, thermoformer who has always gone his own way.

Richard Freeman has been involved in Plastics and Design for over 40 years, the last 36 with Freetech Plastics in Fremont California. His experience providing Pressure Formed products in the close tolerance, technically demanding, and highly competitive, environment of Silicon Valley has led to a number of process and design innovations. It also gives him a unique perspective on Production, Quality, Marketing, and Design Issues.

Rich's Articles, Company, and Products have been featured in Plastics Engineering, Appliance Manufacturer, Innovation, Machine Design, Plastic News, Mechanical Engineering, and International Designer publications. He has spoken on many issues important to Designers and manufacturers over the years. He is considered one of the founders of the West Coast Style of Thermoforming. He's been regularly featured on Thermoforming and IDSA Conference programs, both in the USA and in Europe.

Freetech's products have won numerous industry awards including the 1996, 1999 and 2004 People's Choice Awards, and many other of the Thermoforming Industry's Top Prizes. Freetech has provided the Pressure Formed parts for 11 ID/IDEOI Innovation Magazine award winners and has participated in the design of hundreds of products. Rich spent 21 years as a SPE Thermoforming Division Board member, where he helped in the development the Thermoforming Conference, as well as building the SPE Thermoforming Division Web page and starting and managing the Machinery Grant program (AARC). Freetech has had a long relationship with University of California At San Jose State and provide Plant tours and education days for the Engineering School, the School of Packaging Design, and the School of Art and Industrial Design. The machines provided through the TD AARC matching grant program have been used at the school to produce hundreds of student designs, many which have gone on to win awards in national venues. Some of these are featured on the division web page. Rich has also provided support for the Industrial Design programs at the University of San Francisco and the San Francisco Academy of Art.

Additionally Rich has been and IDSA member since 1999 and has spoken at several IDSA National and regional conferences. He has also been a sponsor of both national and regional conferences since 2000. He currently serves as the Materials and Processes Section Chairman for IDSA, Member of Advisory Board for Silicon Valley Chapter of IDSA and Sponsored IDSA Student Part Competition, with Freetech plastics awarding student scholarships.

Recommendations:

I understand Rich Freeman is a candidate for the honor of **Thermoformer of the Year 2013**. In my mind we could not select a more qualified recipient.

I have known Rich for over 20 years now and the respect I immediately recognized continues today. Rich has been one of our most productive board members providing a strong voice for the advancement of thermoforming education through his leadership of the AARC (Asset Allocation Review Committee). While we did not always agree you could be sure that Rich's position was always well thought and with true loyalty to the Thermoforming Division.

Rich Freeman: Bio - CONTINUED

Rich took our division and thermoforming to the forefront of industrial designers providing exposure to another opportunity for growth of our process. His support of students involved in design and opening their minds to thermoforming has been evidenced by the conference support from San Jose State University through attendance and parts competition entries. -Roger Kipp

My Recommendation: Rich Freeman 2013 Thermoformer of the Year

I can't remember exactly when I met Rich but I know it was at Pam Pro Plastics in the Bay Area of California in the early 1970's - possibly 1973. Rich was a Machinist and Engineer then. Besides his plastic machining work at Pam Pro he would operate: a Comet, an Auto-Vac and a Stan Rosen – Tronomatic - Thermoformers. I recall his also being at Plastic Technologies and Plastic Products after Pam Pro and before he started Freetech Plastics in the late 1970's.

Rich has always been full of questions, eager to learn and quick to pass-on, explain and teach "Plastics" to all who would ask. There are many Plastic Professionals in this world taught by Rich Freeman. Rich's search and demand of excellence has been evidenced by his many designs, engineered, formed and fabricated plastic parts. We see only a few examples of what he has worked on and produced for many customers. His many awards from SPE Thermoforming conferences, Innovative Magazine and IDSA attest to such application of his Plastic Forming Art!

Rich Freeman has definitely given of himself to advance Thermoforming, in research, application, education and promotion - - our Mission.

Some of you may only know a little about this man from the 20 or so years helping the SPE Thermoforming Board as he is quick to respond yes when asked to help. Thank You- Jim Armor

I would like to Recommend Rich Freeman for 2013 Thermoformer of the Year. This is not an honor that I feel should be bestowed without serious consideration to the candidates' contributions to our industry. This goes beyond the day to day running of a business, it goes to the heart of what our SPE Division is all about. It is not a popularity contest, but looks back to our mission: **To facilitate the advancement of thermoforming technologies through education, application, promotion and research.**

Rich has actively promoted Thermoforming through his work with San Jose State Students and his chairing of the ARC committee. He is vocal and passionate that we bring up the next generation into manufacturing and thermoforming. His location in Silicon Valley has given Rich the access to creative and progressive thinkers, allowing Freeman to push the envelope in heavy gauge processes.

Freeman has been willing to share his knowledge as both a speaker and Moderator in our Annual Thermoforming conference. Not always an easy task. Freetech Plastics has been a regular participant in the Parts competition. He has also been instrumental in arranging cross pollination of ideas by the inclusion of other professional organizations such as the IDSA in our conference, to SPE Thermoforming's benefit.

He was a Key in dragging our division into the internet age by getting our website up and running, informing us about how many hits we were getting when many of us did not know what that really meant. He made sure the latest Quarterlies, our video, contest and grant recipients were listed and what the Division was up to before the other SPE Divisions were active on the internet.

To me, Rich Freeman, has contributed greatly to both Thermoforming and our Division and as such, be considered for the 2013 Thermoformer of the year. – Sincerely, Laura Pichon

Rich Freeman – CONTINUED This submission included photos

