

# Inventors COUNCIL

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## OF MID-MICHIGAN

PO Box 311, Flushing Michigan 48433

Web Site: [INVENTORSCOUNCIL.ORG](http://INVENTORSCOUNCIL.ORG)

The Inventors Council is an independent, non-profit 501 C-3 corporation formed to help inventors pursue their dreams of bringing new and innovative products to market. Our goal is to help fellow inventors succeed in the most efficient and least costly manner possible by providing education and business networking.

Founded by Robert (Bob) Ross in 1995

We meet monthly at Walli's Restaurant, 1341 South Center Road Burton, Michigan. Just Two blocks south of I-69, Exit 139

VOLUME NINETEEN

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY January 08, 2015 7:00PM

NUMBER ONE

### Thursday December 11 2014 Meeting

We served all 2014 members and visitors a fish dinner, salad bar, coffee, soft drink, and dessert at the meeting.

We had a very short ICMM business meeting and then a networking with all the members and visitors.

We had a great turn out and even added some new members for 2015.

### 2015 Dues and Election

You can pay your 2015 dues at the door or send a check to ICMM at PO Box 311, Flushing Michigan 48433

Yearly dues are \$55.00 per year or (\$50.00 if paid on /or before January 8, 2015.

We will be asking for candidates of Board of Directors posting for January elections. You need to send an email to Michael Ball@turbousa.com stating that you would like to run for election to the Board of ICMM for 2015. These are two year terms this time. Apply and help us with the direction of ICMM in the next two years.

### ICMM Membership Meeting January 8, 2015

We will be electing members for the Board of Directors. We have 3 openings on the ballot. We will be having the election the first half of the January meeting. I will be putting the names on the white board before the start of the meeting so everyone can fill out their ballot at the meeting.

Be there and vote.

### Thanks, recognition, and philosophy

These are some (as well as others too numerous to list) behind the scene members that contribute their talents and time to ICMM that I would like mention.

**Roger Stolpin** is on the board as head of Membership. He also helps with sound, video, set-up, equipment selection and other things that he is far better at than me.

**James White** is our web site guy and also serves on the Review Board. He is an author, inventor, consultant, and web site advisor, among other things. All those talents go into keeping us organized and modern.

**Ron Kilponen** is our attorney (or an engineer with a law degree as Ron likes to be known) on the board and is always available via email or phone call if we need him. We send people to Ron because he is honest and gives honest advice, even if it may not be what an inventor wants to hear sometimes.

ICMM  
Home of the Happy Inventors



## MARKETING

Hints from the Fog

by Mike Ball, President



**Rick Mason** –is our Vice President and leads the Product Evaluation team. He still works for GM and has successfully launched his own inventions following our training to a “T”. He has also launched a “kickstarter” process on new product and documented and shown the ICMM Members the exact costs and steps it takes to actually do the total process. Rick agreed to take this on as Marty Sovis and Mike Ball did for the Amazon sales of their products and shared all the hidden costs and frustrations with our ICMM members.

**Marty Sovis** - Marty is our Secretary/Treasurer and also sits on the Product Review Team. Marty, like Mike Ball, used to lead the Review team, but was too much with his business and other work he does. Marty is also on the E-Team for Genesee County along with Mike Ball and interfaces with Mott Fab Lab and the Veterans affairs. Marty is really the leader of the club and has been instrumental in writing our procedures and handling our bank and payment system. He and Mike Ball established the two signature system on any expenditure that requires ICMM Funds. We have check and balances on everything all the way to Board or Directors of membership approval.

### ICMM direction and discipline.

We now have all our own equipment for our meetings. Projectors, sound system, Skype, laptop, White Board, Markers, microphones, internet access, etc. All of our equipment is owned by ICMM and cared for by board members. ICMM is full voluntary club with no one being paid. We pay the expense we approve, like Jump Start, printing, signs, etc. We have operated in the black for the last four years. We account for every penny.

We are focused on the invention process of design, engineering, manufacturing, and distribution. We do not try to sell our members products, they do that, we only support and advise them. We share all of our experience with members so they do not have to relearn everything again. We probably have the best sharing and networking of any club we have seen.

Mike Ball is our president and will be 70 years old on his next birthday. His background includes being a tradesman, engineer, inventor, businessman, soldier, magician, mechanic, and many other jobs. It is hard to trick an old dog and he does not tolerate fools lightly. He will ask where is the data, design, drawing, mock-up, prototype, packaging, and other real things. It is easy to be a critic, but not a cook. We review, not imagine things.

Our club has many tradesmen (current and retired) with many practical skills. We know the process and don't lead people on, if they are wrong. We do not make judgments on the success of an invention, only on the actual list in the Product process. Have you done the research, idea development, design, engineering, testing, marketing, packaging, administration, and a manufacturing formula to make certain the invention (product) will be profitable before you try to produce it? The difference between an invention and a product is doing all the calculations before you produce anything to make sure it will make money if you sell the product. An invention is not a business unless it produces cash flow.

We have been told that our methods are too hard. We say that losing money is easy, but making money is hard. Why produce something if it loses money?

We do not tell people what they want to hear, we tell them what they need to hear, The TRUTH. We do not trust opinions only cold hard proven facts. We have been told that other clubs do not have the skill sets to operate this way, but we think they do. It takes a lot more work, instead of looking for only ideas, someone in a club can go sell and make money on from an inventor's idea.

ICMM may not be large but we are honest and accountable for what we teach others. We will stay the course and stick to simple processes that work.

## Invention Review Panel

For objective evaluation and priceless feedback, share your invention ideas with an educated group of inventors, business owners, engineers and authors!

Our Panel will sign a non-disclosure agreement to guarantee your ideas are kept secret while we provide you with the input needed to make decisions, no matter what stage of the invention process you're at!

There's a \$25.00 Donation for a Review. The Panel meets at 6:15pm before each meeting. Call Panel Chairman Rick Mason at 810-659-7935 for an appointment.

Review Panel Members  
Marty Sovis Rick Mason  
Jim White

**Bob Ross 1919 - 2004**  
*Inventors Education Column*

## *Inventors Resources*

**Michigan Inventors Clubs**  
**Inventors Council of Mid-Michigan**  
[Inventorscouncil.org](http://Inventorscouncil.org)

**Muskegon Inventors Network**  
[Muskegoninventorsnetwork.org](http://Muskegoninventorsnetwork.org)

**Grand Rapids Inventors Network**  
[GRinventorsnetwork.org](http://GRinventorsnetwork.org)

**Jackson Inventors Network**  
[Jacksoninventors.org](http://Jacksoninventors.org)

**MidMichigan Innovation Center**  
[www.mmic.us](http://www.mmic.us)

### Officers and Directors

Mike Ball *President* 810-245-5599  
michaelball@turbousa.com  
Roger Stolpin *Membership* 248-634-2129  
Finite-007.att.net  
Ron Kilponen *Legal* 248-344-7132  
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Rick Mason *V-Pres* 810-659-7935  
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Andy Burlager *Director* 810-695-5752  
andyburlager@Gmail.com  
Marty Sovis *Sec/Treasr* 810-659-6741  
Msovis@comcast.net  
Kenneth Yee *Director* 586-596-4137  
gmadesign@comcast.net

A 501-C-3  
All-Volunteer  
Corporation

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