

Eyelash extensions are getting lots of attention, and I chatted with **Sophy Merszei**, the founder of **NovaLash**, whose company is one of the leading brands in the category. Doing demos in their booth, the company stressed that what separates its brand from the pack is the fact it use pharmaceutical grade material in its glue formula and it is manufactured in the US and not imported. Sophy had these comments about CPNA, "Our experience of this year's show was mixed—better in some ways, but a little off in others. For example, the show seemed to be bigger, with more companies exhibiting, and appears to be getting a little closer to catching up with Cosmoprof Bologna. On the other hand, there seemed to be fewer attendees. Now that might have been because the show floor was more spread out, or that there were more international distributors. We saw a lot fewer cosmetologists this year. One of the positives was a huge influx of distributors from Africa. We had a lot of interest from African countries looking for new products." Reach Sophy at 713-520-5848 or smerszei@novalash.com.

You have heard of an American in Paris; how about in Italy? **Tommy Padula** and his wife, **Gail**, lived in New Jersey, and he worked for **Emiliani Enterprises**. Early this year, they moved to Senna, Italy, where Tommy has set up a network of 24 distributors who cover Italy, calling on salons throughout the country. Tommy has become an exclusive distributor and master importer for U.S companies. At Cosmoprof Bologna, he made arrangements to take on **Moroccanoil**. AT CPNA, BIR had the pleasure of working with Tommy and introduced him to a number of companies that are seeking to do business in Italy, including **Paul Brown Hawaii**, **NovaLash**, **New York Streets** and **Tassi**. If you have a product line that you are looking to export, contact BIR at mike@bironline.com and I will put you in touch with Tommy.

After a long day on the floor, it was off to the cocktail parties hosted by the PBA. The VIP event started an hour before the official welcome cocktail party. At the VIP event, I got into a brief discussion with **Conair Corp's Lee Rizzuto, Jr.** on product diversion. Lee told me about his start in the beauty business, "As a 10-year-old when I first started coming to work, my father told me, you can do any job you want, but at end of the day, be sure the job is com-

pletely done. For each job that I took on, I applied that philosophy. With product diversion, that job is not done." We both agreed a good solution to product diversion is not even close at hand. After an hour, it was off to the PBA Get Together to talk with the friends and acquaintance who make our industry special. They are what fuels my energy of working and playing in the wonderful beauty business world.

Our next stop was The Hotel and the beautiful MIX Restaurant. If you have not enjoyed this restaurant or the bar with its spectacular view from top of The Hotel, put it on your to do list. Watching a sunset and seeing the Las Vegas lights come on is a special treat. The BIR duo enjoyed a wonderful dinner with Spanish hair care company **LAKME** executives, **Daniel Contreras** and **Pablo Corominas**. Mrs. BIR and I first met our friends six years ago at Cosmoprof Bologna and then accepted their invitation to visit the company headquarters in Barcelona the next year. At the time, I vowed to find them the right partner to bring their outstanding line to the US salon market. Five years later, that happened with an introduction to **Carmen DePasquale** and **Joe Mastalia**. **DePasquale Companies** started a new division, **LAKME USA**, and at this year's CPNA, they exhibited jointly with the parent company. The event made our dinner a reason to celebrate.

Cosmoprof North America officially opened on Sunday morning with PBA's Annual Business Forum & Breakfast. It provided attendees with an overview on how PBA is shaping the beauty industry and fulfilling member needs through the launch of a consumer and retail study in 2009 and an online learning center, **Beauty University**, in the last quarter of 2008. PBA also recognized outgoing Leadership Council members: **Bob Peel, Jr.**, **Gary Udell**, **Jack Storey** and **Eveline Charles**, as well as incoming members: **FJ Liguori**, **Gary Call**, **Renee Shakour** and **Scott Buchanan**. Keynote speakers, **Mary Matalin** and **James Carville**, explored the intricacies of the race to the White House, provided insight into the current election year's effects on the beauty industry and discussed how professional associations, such as PBA, can best represent their members.

Then, BIR was off to the floor. **Ofer Tal**, the co-founder of **Moroccanoil**, had scheduled meeting with potential distributor candidates to

fill the balance of the US salon market. When the closing bell sounded three days later, the Montreal-headquartered firm not only filled the domestic market distribution voids but had commitments from a number distributors from the international market. Due to Moroccanoil's meteoric rise, there were a flock of knock-off products. Ah, the pro beauty biz with its innovators and copiers. According to Ofer, the company plans to aggressively protect its registered trademark and has engaged Los Angeles law firm, **Conkle, Kremer & Engel**, to take the necessary legal actions.

After a full day of working the floor, it was a rush back to the hotel to get ready for the **North American Hairstyling Awards Red Carpet Reception**, which provided the fuel for those attending the **19th Annual North American Hairstyling Awards**. This year's honorees were **Martin Parsons**, who was recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award, and **Jack Storey**, president of **Scruples**, who was inducted into the Hall of Leaders. It was ironic that the two would both be awarded at the same time, as it turned out the Jack gave Martin his first professional beauty gig. BIR comment: In addition to talent, both of these gentlemen are just that and terrific human beings. Big props to both!

This year's NAHA winners are Master Stylist of the Year: **Alain Pereque**, **Salon Pure**, Montreal; Hairstylist of the Year: **Charles Price**, **Click Salon**, Denver; Salon Team of the Year: **Capello Salon**, Milwaukie, OR; Editorial Stylist of the Year: **John Donato**, **Donato Salon and Spa**, Toronto; Student Hairstylist of the Year: **Chelsea Vittorio**, **Aveda Fredric's Institute**, Indianapolis; Makeup Artist of the Year: **Janell Geason**, Eden Prairie, MN; Avant Garde: **Nicholas French**, **Matrix Global Academy**, New York City; Contemporary Classic: **Maureen Anlauf**, **Juut Salon Spa**, St. Paul; Fashion Forward: **Maureen Anlauf**, **Juut Salon Spa**, St. Paul; Haircolorist of the Year: **John Simpson**, **Lewis Salon**, McDonald, PA; Salon Design: **Osgood-O'neil Salon**, Dallas; Texture: **Shirley Gordon**, **Strands Hair Studios**, Weaton, MD.

A couple of new hair care brands debuted at CPNA. **Colure True Color Care's** CEO/founder, **David Paris**, and COO/president, **Tony Case**, said their CPNA experience was excellent! Working out of **Gerry Udell Inc.**, the



North East territory Rep organization's booth, they met with distributors and media personnel, as they laid the groundwork for Colure's hard launch in 2009. If the names sound familiar, David spent years with **Jim Markham** building both the **ABBA** and **PureOlogy** brands. Tony was the entrepreneur who put the **Lumiére Light Thérapy** brand on the map. After building Lumiére in both skin care and tanning, the English technology manufacturer that made the red light devices (**Photo Therapeutics**) bought the company from Tony in late '07, freeing him up to go full-time with Colure. Colure has done a credible job of building and supporting its customer base in California, Arizona, Oregon, Florida, Virginia, Delaware and Maryland. Reach David or Tony at 888-265-8731.

BIR popped over to the Four Seasons to find out about **Bureau Number 4's** new hair care collection. **Number 4 High Performance Hair Care** was founded with the mission to develop a creative, high performance hair care line that runs parallel to fashion, science, art, music and multimedia—essentially any and all creative cycles. It is a consortium of products from shampoos and conditioners to styling products that range from \$30-\$65. The line addresses four areas—hydration, volume, styling and essentials with four product collections. Bureau Number 4 LLC was founded by a collective group of individuals representing the best of the best in the professional beauty industry: **Rick Hough**, CEO/founder (Bureau Number 4 is a division of **Cosway**, a Southern California-based contract manufacturer); **Toni Wells**, vice president of sales and marketing, has worked for some of the biggest brands in the professional beauty industry, including **Redken**, **Sebastian**, **Joico** and, most recently, **PureOlogy**; **JC Obando**, creative director; **Doug Smiley**, CFO; and **Tommy Dionisio**, environmental operations specialist. Reach Toni at 800-507-6250 or visit www.number4hair.com.

LAKME USA made its CPNA show debut. The Spanish hair care company that is being distributed in 70 countries and **Depasquale Company**, which has become the exclusive importer and master distributor for LAKME, here exhibiting jointly at CPNA, offering a full range of permanent and demi permanent hair color with **K-Therapy**, a new range of treatments, and **K-Style**, a new natural defense styling sys-

tem with grape seed antioxidants. **Joe Mastalia**, Depasquale Company's president, said, "Our booth was jam packed for most of the show with prospective distributor meeting from all over the US. The meetings were conducted with **Daniel Carreras**, the owner of LAKME, who came over from Barcelona, and **Pablo Coromina**, export director, to explain the history of Lakme and the brand's strong international presence." Reach Joe at 800-724-4247 or joem@depasqualeco.com. Also making a splash at the Depasquale exhibit was **New York Streets**, fresh off an incredible show season that included **Cosmoprof Bologna**, **New York's IBS**, and **Premiere Orlando**. New York Streets, ECRU New York's newest hair culture collection, played to rave reviews from salon professionals to distributor principals. New York Streets will be popping up in salons throughout the US. Distributor opportunities are still available. To find out more, reach national sales manager, **Mark DePasquale**, at 800-724-4247 or mdepasquale@ecrunewyork.com.

No one must have told the flock of companies exhibiting flat and curling irons and hair dryers that the sales bell curve for the category might have peaked. At CPNA, there seemed to be exhibitors in every aisle of Pavilion D showing styling tool lines. Plus, every other booth in the China Pavilion seemed to have hair dryers and/or flat irons on display. Of course, stylists are always willing to try something new and different, so time will tell how each does.

Debating at CNA was **Create Ion**. This new line from Japan's leading manufacturer of ion technology infuses its special patented blend of 32 natural ion minerals into the materials of its dryers, flat and curling irons and brushes, so the benefits last for the lifetime of the appliances. Because the company stands behind the quality of its appliances—a benefit stylists are really going to love—it offers a 1-year no-questions-asked guarantee. The line will be sold through exclusive, full-service distributors. With its sleek look, this line is a winner. Interested distributors can contact **Warren Peskin**, Create Ion's vice president of sales, at 626-450-5377 or wpeskin@createionusa.com.

BIR stopped at the large **Helen of Troy** exhibit and chatted with **Scot Hagstrom**, vice president of sales for the professional division, and he had this to say, "The relevance of Cos-

moprof seems to be changing with the current business environment in the professional beauty industry. Gone are the days of writing millions of dollars of business at the show. Distributors look and tire kick, then go back and place orders 7 to 14 days after the show. There are fewer distributors, and the large liquid lines have all but abandoned the event. Helen of Troy is still one of the busiest booths on the floor with multiple meeting rooms, and distributor appointments stacked on top of each other. Having said that, we had fewer appointments scheduled this year than last year. I am not sure what the actual drop was, but it was probably about 10% lower than last year. However, each and every meeting with our customers seemed productive and our new items were very well received. I received some very positive feedback from a number of our distributors regarding our participation in the show. They said that Helen of Troy was one of the few companies that made the show worth their while. We were there in force with all of our reps, as well as about 20 of our office staff and sales managers. Our president and even our chairman and founder were there to greet customers. If I were to judge the show based on the customers' reaction to our new items, then we had a grand slam of a show." **Terri Tarrico**, HT vice president of marketing, was a show casualty. She set up the booth, conducted a sales meeting and then went directly to local hospital ER to have her appendix removed and spent the next three days convalescing at the Four Seasons so she could fly home. You can't keep a good woman down; Terri is back to work.

Taiff salon appliances are manufactured in Sao Paulo, Brazil by the **Ikasaki** organization and are one of the largest manufacturers of professional hair dryers in the world. BIR checked in with company's sales consultant, **Horacio Lira**, who has been instrumental in bringing the brand to the US market. Horacio has this to say about Cosmoprof, "This year was TAIFF's first time as an exhibitor, and it was a tremendous show for us. We realized that every major distributor and buyer visited the show and this is definitely the B2B show in America. We had previously made appointments and scheduled meetings with potential distributors who had heard of TAIFF, and the show was the perfect timing and environment to develop relationships. TAIFF will add a few distributors to its

