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Plastics Industry Veteran of 44 Years Announces Retirement

HOUSTON, TX – April 5, 2006 – Valéron Strength Films, a leading manufacturer of moisture management products for the construction industry, today announced that Chris Barnes, senior development and technical support engineer, will retire at the end of April this year after nearly a half-century with the company. Barnes, 61, has served as senior development and technical support engineer for Valéron since 1998. A native of Southern England, Barnes is looking forward to community service work and a life of travel after his retirement.

“It has been a pleasure to be a part of Valéron for the last 44 years,” said Barnes. “This company values innovative thinking and creative solutions; values that I share as well. I am proud to have seen the Valéron cross-lamination process develop over the years from an invention to a successful commercial venture. I look forward to retirement but look back with pride,” continued Barnes.

Chris Barnes’ tenure credits include researching the raw materials during the early phase of the Valéron cross-laminated process, the patenting of multi-angled Valéron Film and the development of barrier co-extruded cross-laminated films.

Barnes plans on enjoying his enthusiasm for teaching as part of his endeavors in community service in the months to come.

Barnes, whose hobbies include fishing, travel and spending time with his children and grandchildren, plans on exploring the Southern Hemisphere with his wife beginning in May, 2006. “We wish Chris and his family the best,” said Ron Luce, general manager for Valéron, “his expertise and knowledge of our manufacturing process will be missed, but we hope to have him stop by every now and then.”

More about Chris Barnes

Barnes began his career with Valéron, formerly Van Leer Flexibles, in 1962. After graduating with honors from City University in London, England in 1969, Barnes moved to Essen Belgium and began work in the Plastics Development Department at Van Leer as a process engineer. After relocating to Houston, TX, in 1979, Barnes was promoted to production superintendent for Valéron Film and was credited with improving screw designs, film stretching consistency, and the introduction of dual lip air rings. In 1989, Barnes moved out of direct production and into production systems for Valéron. He also led the team that obtained plant-wide ISO certification in 1993, initiated the use of Information Technology systems at Valéron and encouraged the application of statistical techniques for process control, and quality improvements.

About Valeron Strength Films

Valéron Strength Films is a world leader in the production of unique cross-laminated strength and specialty films under ISO 9001:2000 registration at its Houston, Texas and Essen, Belgium facilities. Valéron Strength Film can be found in quality building products manufactured by industry-leading companies including; roof underlayment, flexible flashing, underslab barriers, vertical drain membranes and radiant barriers. Valéron Strength Film can also be found in Child Resistant Packaging, Shipping Sacks, Tags and Labels, Outdoor Banners, and Industrial Packaging. Valéron Strength Films is a Division of Illinois Tool Works Inc. (NYSE: ITW), a *Fortune* 200 company based in Glenview, Illinois with net sales of \$12.9 billion USD and more than 50,000 employees worldwide. For more information, visit www.valeron.com.

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