



Publisher's Message

Death, Taxes & Difficult People

by Libby Maurer

This issue deals with how to work with your employees and maintain a safe plant.

Managing personnel issues may or may not be your cup of tea. But chances are, you are in a position where you don't have a choice. Even in the age of technology, you still need raw manpower to operate saws, drive forklifts, answer phones, place orders with vendors, sit down with customers and respond to email. And this means you have to deal with people, and lots of them.

One of my favorite episodes of *Seinfeld* is when Jerry and George are talking about being forced to deal with difficult people. (Not that the two of them aren't difficult, but that's for a different issue.) Jerry says, "People: they're the worst." There's a message for us in their ridiculous exchange: no matter who you are or what position you hold, you will encounter "difficult" people in your daily life who think, act and work differently than you. It's as certain as death and taxes! And it's probably not the best idea to adopt the *Seinfeld* approach to dealing with them. So that's how we arrived at this issue's common thread: examples of people and companies taking small steps to address workforce and safety challenges. Here's a preview.

Remember: small steps yield big results.



Ron Coons, safety director at Northeast Panel & Truss, traveled to Washington, DC in November 2006 to meet with OSHA and give a presentation about the company's success with safety.

Northeast Panel and Truss isn't afraid of OSHA. In fact, they've built quite a relationship with their state inspectors in the last few years, and even sent safety manager Ron Coons (pictured left) to Washington, DC to meet with federal OSHA officials in December. After being placed on OSHA's "bad boy" list a few years ago, Northeast began a long and involved process to rectify its patchy safety record. Turn to page 50 for the full story. Remember: small steps yield big results.

In line with the safety theme, in this issue we bring you an article that considers how much the industry's automated equipment has been designed and re-designed with not only efficiency in mind, but operator safety too. Don't miss an article by Jerry Koskovich on page 38.

What more can you say about fire safety? Check your alarms and extinguishers every month and communicate the evacuation plan to every employee, right? Take it from Scott Arquilla of Best Homes whose plant was destroyed by a fire in 2003...there's a lot more to protecting your facility and employees from fire than that! Take 15 minutes to check out Part 2 of Safety Scene and commentary from Arquilla on pages 14 and 16. Someday, you may be glad you did.

Finally, we turn the spotlight on a workforce development program that is benefiting one community and our industry at the same time. Last summer, Molly Butz visited ISUS (Improved Solutions for Urban Systems High School) in Dayton, OH, to learn about the program that is taking misguided kids off the streets and teaching them a whole lot about building components. Again, progress in cultivating a skilled workforce for the industry is not immediate, but sometimes the biggest changes occur in small increments.

I think they're called baby steps. **SBC**

at a glance

- ❑ A big part of personnel management is learning how to deal with all different personalities—even the difficult ones.
- ❑ Find out how Northeast Panel & Truss teamed up with OSHA to improve their safety record.
- ❑ Learn about automated saws that are designed with your safety in mind.
- ❑ Read about a charter high school in Ohio that rehabilitates troubled teens by teaching them how to design and build components.

The Dawn of a New Age for the Structural Building Components Industry

Construction is progressing at a steady pace on WTCA's SBC Research Institute, the structural building component industry's research and testing facility in Madison, WI. The 5,730 square-foot facility is scheduled to officially open later this year and advance the industry's goal of developing a fresh body of knowledge that will add new value to the industry and lead the next generation of growth.

The SBC Research Institute will give the industry the ability to test:

- Individual components from 8' to 90' long
- Component systems from 8' to 90' long, 2' to 20' wide, and up to 20' high
- Loading applied in 3 axes simultaneously, to simulate both construction and environmental loads
- Standard design and drag or shear loads on a single component
- Standard design loads on a component system
- Drag and shear loads on a component system both parallel and perpendicular to the components
- Unbalanced and bidirectional wind loads
- Simulated wind uplift loads
- Cyclic loading at application points from the foundation to the peak of the roof



Thank you to our SBC Research Institute sponsors for helping foster this new age for the industry.

Alliance TruTrus, LLC – Tolleson, AZ
 Automated Building Components, Inc. – Chetek, WI
 Automated Building Components, Inc. – Sharon, WI
 Automated Building Components, Inc. – Montrose, MN
 Best Homes, Inc. & the Arquilla Family – Hazel Crest, IL
 Blenker Building Systems, Inc. – Amherst, WI
 California Truss – Perris, CA
 Carpenter Contractors of America, Inc. – Belvidere, IL
 Computrus, Inc.
 Dow Chemical
 Finnforest USA-Engineered Wood Division

iLevel-Truss Joist Commercial
 International Paper Company – Memphis, TN
 Nelson Truss, Inc. – Edgerton, WI
 Kelly & Stan Sias
 Simpson Strong-Tie
 Stock Building Supply, Inc.
 Sun State Components, Inc. – North Las Vegas, NV
 Tri-County Truss, Inc. – Burlington, WA
 Tri-County Truss, Inc. – Longview, WA
 Truss Systems, Inc. – Oxford, GA
 USP Structural Connectors



6300 Enterprise Lane • Madison, WI 53719
608/274-4849 • 608/274-3329 (fax) • www.sbcindustry.com • wtca@sbindustry.com

For reader service, go to www.sbcmag.info/wtca.htm

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS™

THE FUTURE OF FRAMING

www.sbcmag.info

Dear Reader:

Copyright © 2007 by Truss Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. For permission to reprint materials from **SBC Magazine**, call 608/310-6706 or email editor@sbcmag.info.

The mission of **Structural Building Components Magazine (SBC)** is to increase the knowledge of and to promote the common interests of those engaged in manufacturing and distributing of structural building components to ensure growth and continuity, and to be the information conduit by staying abreast of leading-edge issues. SBC will take a leadership role on behalf of the component industry in disseminating technical and marketplace information, and will maintain advisory committees consisting of the most knowledgeable professionals in the industry. The opinions expressed in SBC are those of the authors and those quoted solely, and are not necessarily the opinions of any affiliated association (WTCA) .



6300 Enterprise Lane • Suite 200 • Madison, WI 53719
608/310-6706 phone • 608/271-7006 fax
www.sbcmag.info • admgr@sbcmag.info