

THE

FIRST SHOT



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER DEVOTED TO THE PEOPLE OF EMPIRE DIE CASTING

FALL 2003 NUMBER 20

Expansion to the European Market

On September 2, 2003, Mr.'s Palivec and Foley returned from a customer/sales representative venture in Germany. Their objective was not just to put on a good face, but to out shine some 21 other companies from all corners of the world. The client was Bosch Rexroth, and the preparation prior to the trip was fierce. Foley had only a couple of weeks to identify a Manufacturing/Engineering support partner. The European group he secured is "Intensa", a full service provider of Mechanical Engineering solutions. Intensa's services include manufacturing support, tooling, prototyping, CAD/CAE engineering, consulting, sales and purchasing services. The Empire TEAM developed a "Bosch" power point presentation in which they invited the Intensa team to participate and incorporate slides of their own right into the Empire presentation. The intent was to create a seamless and powerful teaming arrangement between our newfound German partners and us. Foley next invited Intensa to physically participate, shoulder to shoulder at the Bosch Rexroth Symposium. The three intense interview sessions were concluded with a Sr. Engineer's comment, Empire in our (Bosch's) view compared to all the other participants here, is seen as the "Ferrari of Die Casters".

This same Sr. Engineer went on to make clear their intent to present Empire to the renowned "Robert Bosch Group" direct, in late September, mid October for new and difficult R&D projects.

None of this would have been possible without the help of Dick Wyatt and his TEAM of dedicated professionals. Special thanks go out to Dick Wyatt, Sharon Wyatt, Katie Thomas, Paul Head and Tara Goode.

To all of the TEAM at Empire, this is a WIN worth remembering!

Empire Partners with Maynard Research

At the beginning of September, Empire Die Casting partnered with a firm called Maynard Research to help evaluate the incentive system that is currently in place, and help us improve or replace it. Maynard Research has been helping companies, both large and small, improve operations since 1934.

The current incentive system in place for employees is based upon the rate of production jobs. We are now looking at incorporating other elements such as ability, quality and overall company performance.

In addition, Maynard will be assisting Empire in developing and implementing lean manufacturing practices throughout the facility. Such practices will include set-up reduction, systems efficiency and inventory reduction.

With the help of Maynard Research, Empire is optimistic that together we can create a system to benefit all employees.

STATE OF THE COMPANY ADDRESS

By *Rick Rogel*, President/CEO

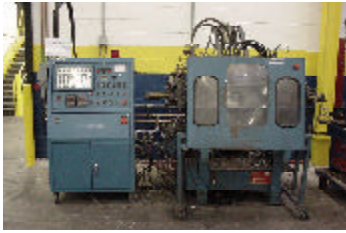
Whew! Another year has passed. The end of September marks our 55th year in business. Far from our best year, and definitely the most challenging. Many, many new faces, many new customers, many new countries and thankfully hundreds of new part numbers.

For 2004, the theme is lean manufacturing practices and world sales ventures.

Hey, the lights are still on!!
Buy American!!

Rick

Expansion in the Zinc Foundry



Above: Installed Technmire Machine

Technmire is the new name in the zinc foundry. With the addition of the 60 ton miniature die cast machine, Empire is expanding its capability in zinc alloys. With this machine, multi slide technology can be implemented to produce castings up to a half pound. Along with expanded size capacity, the Technmire delivers flash free parts, decreased cycle times, lower part to gate ratio, and more efficient use of energy for melting alloy. It's obvious size does matter when it comes to producing the best possible part!

Look for more
to come in



In the next couple of weeks, the zinc foundry will be welcoming yet another piece of machinery.

The new machine is a 450 ton Prince die casting machine with a Rimrock extractor. This machine will allow for more flexibility in scheduling/slotting of the die cast machines and will therefore improve our on-time delivery performance. The new machine is expected to be online as of November 1st.

Productivity Profile - Metal Man

The job of a Metal Man begins each shift by consulting the "Die Operating Record Card" located at each machine. This card contains the type of alloy that is to be used at a particular die casting machine for a given day. The Metal Man then fills out a log known as an "Alloy Sheet". This sheet lists each die casting machine, along with the appropriate alloy to be used in that machine. To help eliminate any confusion, all alloys are color coded. This enables the Metal Man to keep these alloys separate and avoid any possibility of mixing different alloys. Such an error could have tremendously negative effects.

If the metal being used at a particular machine is of "basic requirements", the Metal Man pours the metal directly from the main reverb furnace into a mobile bull ladle. He then transports this hot metal, by towmotor, to the die casting machine where it is poured into a holding furnace for use. If a particular machine requires a specialty alloy, the Metal Man transports bars of ingots (cold metal) to the die casting machine furnace where it is then melted. On average, the Metal Man makes approximately 30 trips for metal every 8 hours.

The Metal Man is also responsible for maintaining the main reverb furnace at 1250 degrees and making sure the furnace remains 3/4 full at all times. The reverb must be fluxed (chemicals added to purify) twice a shift and then skimmed for dross (metal impurities). He also skims the dross from each die casting machine furnace once a shift. Each bull ladle is degassed in the Amcor Flux Injector to remove impurities in the metal before it is delivered to the holder furnaces at the machines. His duties also include keeping track of and re-melting clean foundry scrap as well as cleaning and disposing of the oily, non-usable scrap around the die casting machines.



Marcuss Burgess replenishes metal at a die casting machine.



SUPPLIER SALUTE

Walker Heat Treating has been a valued supplier to Empire for over forty years. They are solely responsible for heat treating our tool steels, such as die cavities and trim shears. Walker provides the "seal" which ensures our die life is nearly doubled with every tool. Our sincerist kudos to all the staff at Walker Heat Treating!

Walker Heat Treating
10601 Briggs Road
Cleveland, OH 44111-5329
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EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Konrad Wyszynski began his employment with Empire Die Casting in April 1973. He presently works as general labor under the maintenance department.

Konrad currently resides in Garfield Heights with his wife Mariana and two daughters, Agatha, 14 and Emily, 12. He spends a great amount of time keeping up with one daughter in highschool and the other in middle school.

Konrad enjoys spending time listening to music, particularly the oldies, watching television and movies, relaxing and occasionally participating in old fashioned dancing, like polka, waltzing and tango with his wife. His favorite movies are all of the 007-James Bond movies and war films from World War II. Much thanks to Konrad for being a steadfast company man for 30 years.



CONGRATS!!!!

Congratulations to **Chris Daniel** and **Sebastian Bakalarczyk** on earning their Journey person's Certificates. Chris Daniel completed his apprenticeship at Polaris Career Center in June 2003 for his Journey person's Certificate as a Millwright. Sebastian Bakalarczyk completed his apprenticeship at Cuyahoga Community College in May 2003 as well for his Journey person's Certificate as a Die Maker.

The apprenticeship program consists of four years of on-job training as well as classroom training and requires personal commitment and effort on behalf of the apprentices.

RETIRING



Jerzy Stanicki will be retiring as of December 1, 2003. He has been with Empire Die Casting since October 10, 1983 and has been a perfect attendance award recipient. Jerzy originally started as a degator, then became a trim set-up

man and now currently works as a material handler for the aluminum foundry.

After retiring, Jerzy, his wife, Jolanta, and son David, 21, will be taking some time out to rest and will probably be planning a trip to Poland to visit Jerzy's mother and other family members. After gaining plenty of rest and relaxation, Jerzy plans on working a part time job until he can fully retire.

On behalf of Empire Die Casting Co., Inc., we would like to thank Jerzy for twenty years of dedication and wish him and his family good health and much happiness!!

Six Sigma Training at Empire

Earlier this year, Akron University held Six Sigma quality training at Empire Die Casting. Six members of Empire's staff attended the training along with five employees from two other companies. Empire attendees were **Bob Boldt, Jeff Atchley, Les Queisser, Matonda Smith, Mike Spicel, and Tim Tennant.**

Six Sigma is a quality system focused on the reduction of waste in an industrial environment. It focuses on process improvement and variation reduction. Its purpose is to improve the profit and efficiency in any firm or organization through an overall improvement in business methodology. The Empire employees who attended the training are currently working on three projects that will save Empire over \$100,000.00 if fully realized. The three projects are Set-Up Reduction, Trim Defects and Dross Loss Recovery. The Six Sigma principals can be utilized throughout our company and will be applied to other improvement projects in the future. Good luck to the Six Sigma Team!



Pictured: T. Tennant, M. Spicel, J. Atchley, B. Boldt, L. Queisser & M. Smith

Annual Holiday Luncheon

BON APPETIT....The Annual Holiday Luncheon is an event enjoyed by approximately 200 employees of Empire Die Casting Company. Held in December, it is a "GRAND BUFFET" with over 100 food selections from appetizers to dessert. In the past we have had 99% participation with food and miscellaneous items.

ALL employees are encouraged to participate by bringing in a food item for the luncheon and sharing the holiday spirit. Watch for updates on the employee bulletin board.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

1st Shift Tammie Stevens - Safety Director
2nd Shift Rich Surlas - 2nd Shift Material Handler

TRADE SHOW TRAIL



PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR
UPDATED TRADE SHOW
INFORMATION
www.empiredie.com

The First Shot is written and published quarterly by the employees of Empire Die Casting Co., Inc., an Employee-Owned Company.

Editor
Katie Thomas

"TONGUE IN CHEEK"

A Japanese doctor says, "Medicine in my country is so advanced that we can take a kidney out of one man, put it in another, and have him looking for work in six weeks."

A German doctor says, "That is nothing, we can take a lung out of one person, put it in another, and have him looking for work in four weeks."

A British doctor says, "In my country, medicine is so advanced that we can take half a heart out of one person, put it in another, and have them both looking for work in two weeks."

The Texas doctor, not to be outdone, says, "You guys are way behind. We took a man with no brain out of Texas, put him in the White House for two years, and now half the country is looking for work."

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