

Building the A Team

The A game, the A list, the A personalities all make up a solid business foundation. While character is no guarantee of success, leaders cannot succeed in the long run without it. Lack of character will show through, and then the real challenge of leadership is to maintain character in the face of success. Consistently managing success is considerably more difficult than initially achieving it. In writing this piece, my thoughts turn to the very supportive, communicative and dedicated staff Empire has assembled.

I sincerely believe every attempt is being made to build TRUST, to COMMUNICATE positively and openly, to GIVE RECOGNITION, to be APPROACHABLE and to make employment at Empire a POSITIVE experience for us all.

I do fully admit that this past economic decade Empire failed to make it FUN, due to no fault of our own. But, we never missed payroll! My sincerest apologies, but players who were not team players have abruptly left, or been let go. This current manufacturing company base of those of us left standing should be very proud and very humbled by these tough times. I am.

I am very pleased with most of our employees and through numerous hiring challenges; we have sought to hire employees who are brimming with energy, integrity, enthusiasm and talent. This current team compliments our Empire philosophy and provides the glue for our company ideals. As I always say, "The name of the game is employee efficiency and direction for overall organizational health."

For almost five decades of surrounding myself with team players better than myself. I have hired, developed, retained, and most importantly - redeveloped the right people for the right jobs. I can safely say my unwavering dedication, integrity and business intuition have brought me a most rewarding career.

That being said, I feel comfortable in sharing my intentions with you. I hope to semi-retire with three key dimensions of well being; health, happiness and prosperity. For this final one third of my life, my demands will be just for the desserts - a reward for a job well done. My sincerest best wishes to you, my A team, and may all our futures be bright!





WHAT EVIL WEB WE WEAVE.....

By Bob Hopkins, President

There are some pretty cool things going on in this country right now. First of all, Jeffrey Immelt, CEO from GE recently announced that they plan to move the company's healthcare segment manufacturing to China, while reporting a net income for the second quarter of \$3.76 billion, up from \$3.11 billion in the period a year earlier. GE managed to pay ZERO in corporate taxes last year and Mr. Immelt was selected by our President to advise the current administration on job creation.

Regarding the shortfall that all pensions are experiencing across the U. S., I read with interest a few weeks ago in Cleveland's newspaper that many public employees' pension plans are underfunded as well. However, many of the State and Local governments have provisions that even if the pension funds are underfunded, the State and Local governments have something in their charters that never allow public employees to be shorted when it comes to their pension. They can either raise taxes or basically do whatever it takes to make these plans whole.

We now hear of threats of higher taxes for the 1% of folks that already pay 35% of all of our taxes. This sounds great to the 48% of the population that pays NO TAXES and still gets to vote. Might this be a vote-getting opportunity for 2012 or are we dealing with a national crisis?

Here is a hot idea!! Try a two year jump start – no corporate taxes! Congress can help to increase the investment dollar flow by lowering or eliminating the corporate income tax. We are not competitive with our foreign trading partners. Our current high corporate tax rate does more to discourage foreign and domestic investment in the United States than it does to fund our government. The corporate portion of revenues has been declining and was only 12% of government receipts in 2008. We need a new system that takes money policy out of the hands of politicians – FLAT TAX!

In Europe, they have witnessed a gradual shift... towards a massive introduction of regulation from above; an ever expanding welfare system; new and more sophisticated forms of protectionism and continuously growing legal and regulatory burdens on business. Sound familiar?!!

Our only way out of this mess is a return to the growth policies that made the boom of the 1980's work. We have got to put people back to work and reward the job creators. All of us need to be part of the solution, not part of the problem!





10 Tips For Dealing With Change In The Workplace

By Paul Head, Executive Vice President

As the summer season ends and fall begins, Empire has rapidly had some changes thrown our way unexpectedly. This has caused some strain and confusion on all of us, and can seem to be overwhelming. Some of us have been impacted right away, while others within the organization will feel the effects later as we go forward.

Changes come in many different forms. But, don't forget, the most important human quality we possess is the ability for all of us to accept, adapt, and make sure the changes become positive. We as an organization need to support and make these changes a success, because I am sure there will be more changes around the corner.

To help everyone out, I am reprinting the 10 tips for dealing with change in the workplace:

1. Recognize that change does happen
2. Be aware of your surroundings
3. Recognize the stages
 - a. Shock and denial
 - b. Guilt
 - c. Anger
 - d. Acceptance
4. Communicate with others
5. Do a self assessment
6. Be flexible
7. Continue to do your work
8. Be positive in your actions and attitude
9. Maintain your network
10. Try to see the Big picture



Change can be frightening and disruptive. However, with the right attitude and actions, you can find opportunities in that change. Empire has witnessed and overcome many obstacles in the past, and we will continue to do so in the future.

Our future is bright, and we are all in this together.





New Furnaces Arriving at Empire

By Greg Godic, Industrial Engineer

Over the past few months, you may have noticed some changes in the aluminum furnace room. Thanks in part to an ARRA federally funded grant, the Empire team will be replacing many natural gas fired furnaces with new, high efficiency electric models. The Empire team will bring in nine new pieces of equipment, including three holding furnaces, two melting furnaces, two transfer ladles, and two transfer ladle-heating stations.



These new state-of-the-art furnaces will allow Empire to reduce operating costs, while increasing furnace efficiencies and because no natural gas is used, our carbon footprint will decrease significantly. Melting aluminum electrically will reduce the amount of dross and allow the foundry to cast cleaner metal and with cooler operating temperatures, the furnaces will be much easier to work around. We are excited for these new pieces of equipment to enter production and improve our day-to-day operations.

The-News-Leader.com

Business booms for Macedonia foundry

by ERIC MAROTTA | EDITOR

From the August 31, 2011 Edition

\$835,000 grant pays for new equipment, firm hires 11 workers

Macedonia -- A local firm says it was able to hire 11 full-time workers and will be saving at least \$250,000 per year thanks to more than \$800,000 in federal funding that helped pay for new foundry equipment.

Empire Die Casting is one of 19 Ohio public and private entities sharing \$11.8 million in industry efficiency grant awards funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's State Energy Program.

The company provides aluminum and zinc castings to various industries including medical equipment, automotive, home appliances, sports and recreation, among others.

It was awarded \$835,000 last year for an advanced electric aluminum melting, distribution and holding system that operates at a higher level of thermal efficiency and lower melt loss at its East Highland Road foundry.

According to Empire President Bob Hopkins, the company pitched in more than \$400,000 in cash and in-kind investments to match the grant.

The new equipment is in the process of being installed and should be in place by November, said project engineer Greg Godic.

Godic said the new equipment will replace natural gas equipment and should cut the amount of energy needed to melt aluminum by 80 percent.



Godic said the system is quieter, safer and can be remotely monitored.

Godic said the new production equipment not only cuts the amount of energy needed to store the molten metal, it will cut the loss of material due to oxidation that occurs when direct flame is applied to the melt tank.

"With these new furnaces, we're going to be casting much cleaner metal," he said.

Godic said the upgrade allowed Empire to hire eight full-time production workers and three full-time administrative staff, for a total of more than 200 workers at the plant.

"We are one of the industry leaders now," Godic said, adding the recent recession hit the die-casting industry especially hard.

"This grant helped us get our name back out there," he said. "We were able to keep over 200 people in Ohio and we were able to keep the doors to a manufacturing facility open."





Empire Employee, Jim Parmertor, Rides for a Cause



The-News-Leader.com

Bikers rendezvous in Macedonia for three-day ride benefiting first responders

by Eric Marotta | Editor

From the August 24, 2011 Edition

Macedonia -- About 100 bikers from around Northeast Ohio started their weekends early Aug. 18 when they departed on a 10th anniversary tour of the Sept. 11, 2001, crash sites.

“The first stop is where Flight 93 came down,” said John Wheeler, of Brunswick. “There’s an emotional ceremony in the field there, with a lot of family members ... there’s a sense of seriousness about what you’re doing. It makes you proud to be an American.”

“It’s very humbling,” added his wife Mary, who was riding along as a passenger to the crash site about 25 miles outside of Somerset, Pa.

According to the National Park Service, which operates the Flight 93 National Memorial, 40 passengers and crew on the United Airlines jet overpowered Al Qaida terrorists, who crashed the plane only 20 minutes away from the U.S. Capital.

Starting from the Bob Evans restaurant at the corner of Highland Road and Route 8, the Ohio group rode for about five hours to join more than 2,000 other motorcyclists who converged on Somerset for the kickoff of the America’s 911 Foundation 11th ride honoring the memory of those who perished during the terrorist attacks 10 years ago.

The non-profit foundation raises money for programs to support the families of first responders.

Since its inception eight weeks after the attacks 10 years ago, the foundation has given more than \$500,000 to first responders, their departments and families. That includes \$180,000 in college scholarships to children of active duty first responders.

Following a ceremony at the Flight 93 Memorial, the group celebrated with food and music at a nearby Harley Davidson dealership.

Following their departure the next morning, the 10-mile procession made subsequent stops at the Pentagon Memorial Aug. 19 and at “Ground Zero,” in New York City Aug. 21.

According to the Department of Defense, 64 passengers and crew and 125 people inside the Pentagon were killed when American Airlines Flight 77 crashed.

Including deaths linked to respiratory disease following the collapse of the World Trade Center, 2,753 died in New York City.

The Ohio contingent included riders from Mentor, to North Canton, to Michigan and was escorted by uniformed police officers from Cleveland, Olmsted Falls, Mentor-on-the-Lake and Willoughby.

Rocky River Police Chief Kelly Stillman said the ride would be escorted by law enforcement officers all the way to New York City.

“It’s like one big parade,” said Allen Poling, of Sagamore Hills. “You’ve gotta be there to get the full effect.”

Jim Parmertor, of Mentor-on-the-Lake, didn’t have far to go from his job at Empire Die Casting in Macedonia.

A life-long biker, Parmertor was traveling with Clayton and Trudy Barker, of Tallmadge.

Parmertor, who in addition to paying his \$130 fee, said he collected even more money from friends, co-workers and his employer for the cause.

The Barkers said they have just started going on motorcycle runs -- this being their second. Their first was in June in memory of Lance Cpl. Daniel “Nate” Deyarmin Jr., a Tallmadge native who died in Iraq in 2005.

Clayton said Trudy knits while he drives.

“She’s knitting red, white and blue socks,” he said, adding “I block a lot of the wind.”

Jeff and Cindy Goglin, of Mentor-on-the-Lake, were celebrating their honeymoon. Like many of the bikers who gathered in Macedonia, the couple are members of the Christian Motorcycle Association.

Jeff said he has been driving a motorcycle for about 18 months and wants to spread the word about Jesus.

“I don’t want to own a motorcycle to just ride around. I want to be involved,” he said. “I believe there are a lot of bikers out there who are tired of the bar scene.”

Firefighter Fred LaPoint, from a small town near Traverse City, Mich., said he grew up in New York and had two friends working as firefighters in New York when the terrorists attacked. One of his friends died.

His wife, Sue, organized their first ride for the America’s 911 Foundation to celebrate their first anniversary a couple of years ago.

“Being the 10th anniversary, it’s extra special,” he said.

THE EMPIRE FAMILY

Congratulations to each employee who celebrates their anniversary July, August & September 2011:



Phyllis Mitchell, 5 years
 Andrzej Siwik, 5 years
 Nick Bruening, 5 years
 Clifford Morgan, 15 years
 Walter Wasiluk, 28 years
 Michael Stephan, 35 years

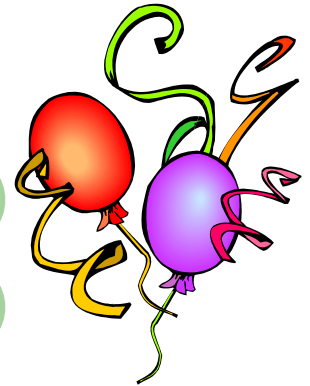
We would like to introduce and welcome this quarter's new additions to Empire:

Dorothy Antos, Purchasing
 Jeff Burns, Customer Service
 Gary Fox, Die Maker
 Leander Bigham, Degator

Wanda Santa, Secondary Finishing, will bid Empire farewell on 9/30/2011 after 19 years of service.

WE WISH WANDA THE BEST OF LUCK AND A HAPPY, HEALTHY RETIREMENT!

Best Wishes



CONGRATULATIONS!



The award for "Employee of the Quarter" was presented by Piotr Bogielski, Foreman (pictured right), to Warren Wright (pictured left). Warren has 38 years of service at Empire.

Warren is married to wife Susan of 33 years and lives in Aurora. He has 3 children (all boys). Warren enjoys coin collecting and target shooting.

Supplier Salute

Standard Tool and Die, Inc.
 2950 Johnson Road
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Standard Tool and Die, Inc. is committed to providing world-class molds, dies, trim dies, and service, on time. Formed in 1983, we have proudly achieved an accomplished reputation based on those attributes, and have dedicated ourselves to the concept of continuous improvement. As a result, we have recently upgraded our ISO 9001 certification to include the QS 9000 Tooling and Equipment Supplement. Through this endeavor, we continue to yield results that benefit our customers, our employees, and our suppliers.

With our commitment in training, technology, and tooling, our process capability provides consistent on-time quality, today and tomorrow. Through continuous improvement, our future for quality is a focused one.

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Standard Tool and Die, Inc. offers the latest 2D and 3D design technologies ensuring design specifications that meet or exceed your expectations.

Our commitment to customer satisfaction can be seen in all areas of operations. From the control of documents and data to high-precision inspection, Standard Tool and Die has the quality tools to shape your success, time and time again.

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL WHOLE GRAINS MONTH

Whole Grains Made Easy

By Sandy Martin, Health and Wellness Coordinator

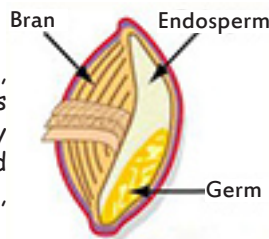
In the past, whole grains were thought to provide nothing more than fiber. However, new research reveals that whole grains offer vitamins and minerals, plus high levels of antioxidants and other healthy plant-based nutrients.

Whole grains contain protective antioxidants in amounts near or exceeding those in fruits and vegetables. They also provide some unique antioxidants not found in other foods. Corn, for example, has almost twice the antioxidant activity of apples. Wheat and oats almost equal broccoli and spinach in antioxidant activity.

Research continues to turn up new evidence on the benefits of whole grains. We've known for years that the fiber in whole grain helps promote digestive health. More recently, studies have shown that eating more whole grains may help reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. New studies published in 2005 and 2006 show that whole grains may lower triglycerides, improve insulin control, help with weight management, and slow the buildup of arterial plaque.

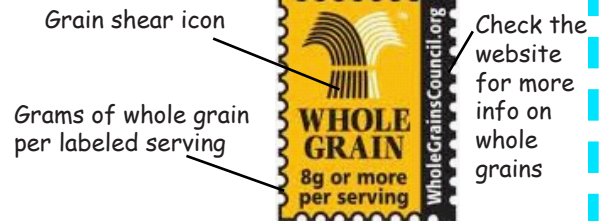
What is a Whole Grain?

All grains start out as whole grains. If, after milling, they keep all three parts of the original grain - the starchy endosperm, the fiber-rich bran, and the germ - in their original proportions, they still qualify as whole grains.



The Whole Grain Stamp

The "Basic" Stamp

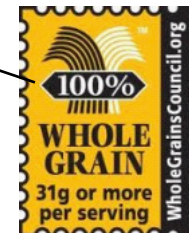


- **Your challenge for the month is:**
- Buy 3 different loaves of whole grain bread
- taste them all and see which you like best.
- Serve bulgur or brown rice instead of potatoes one night this month.
- Look for the Whole Grain Stamp every time you shop.
- Try some whole wheat pasta.
- Make or buy a pizza with whole wheat crust.
- Serve hamburgers with whole wheat buns.

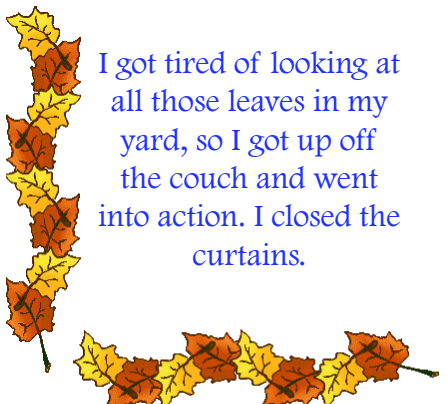
The number of grams of whole grain ingredients per serving, 16g equals one serving. You will never see a number below 8g or half a serving, the minimum requirement of the program

The "100%" Stamp

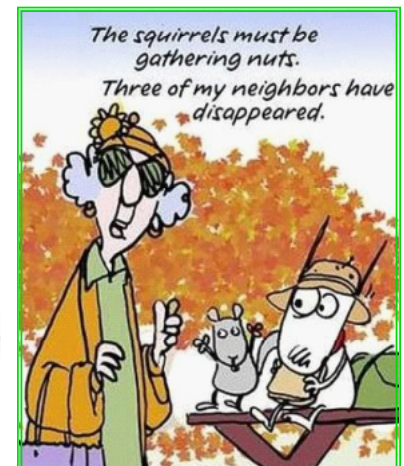
- 100% mark added, if all the grain* is whole grain; there is NO refined grain
- You're aiming for three or more servings, with each serving consisting of 16g or more of whole grains. This means you need to eat 48g or more of whole grain daily.



FALL Into Some Fun!



I got tired of looking at all those leaves in my yard, so I got up off the couch and went into action. I closed the curtains.



Tradeshow Trail

*Agriculture Expo ❖ Moultrie, Georgia
October 18th - October 20th*

*International Hobby Expo ❖ Rosemont, Illinois
October 20th - October 23*

*AAPEX / Spec. Equipment Auto Show ❖ Las Vegas, Nevada
November 1st - 4th*

*FABTECH International ❖ Chicago, Illinois
November 14th - November 17th*

*Performance Racing Show ❖ Orlando, Florida
December 1st - December 3rd*

*Power-Gen International ❖ Las Vegas, Nevada
December 13th - December 15th*



The First Shot is written and published quarterly by the employees of Empire Die Casting Co., Inc.

Compiled and Formatted by:
Emily Hoscilowicz

THE
**FIRST
SHOT**

