

NEWSLETTER

Volume 1 Issue 2

MINERS' HEALTH SAFETY & TRAINING

July 1996

BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

From The Director's Office

There is an old saying, "no one hears their own dog bark."

At home when it seems that our neighbors are doing things that irritate us, we get upset. At times, we think they do it deliberately. Most of the time, however, they are not acting maliciously, but are simply insensitive to our concerns.

We also at times get annoyed or downright irritated by our co-workers. It may be something said, something they have done, or it seems they are invading our space, so to speak. If we assume it's not done with intent or the co-worker doesn't know we are concerned, then by stating our concerns we can get the problem put to rest without conflict.

Keep in mind once relationships turn nasty they become more difficult to straighten out and often only get worse.

Let us strive to treat each other with respect just as we would want to be treated.

Stephen F. Webber

What's In A Name?

Several suggestions have already been sent in to name our newsletter. We are going to keep the contest open until August 15, and then a winner will be selected. The name selected will appear on the September issue. So, write down your ideas and send to the attention of the newsletter staff at the Charleston address.

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TQM Update

TQM (Total Quality Management) works through a series of teams that addresses problems and through a consensus achieves results. All teams have a team leader and a team facilitator. A team leader's prime concern is the decision-making content of the meeting. A team facilitator, while not a team member, is responsible to see that the team moves effectively forward and keeps the team's efforts focused. The facilitator is not an expert on the subject matter of the meeting, but has special training and is chosen because of their skills in group work processes.

Some facilitator skills are:

Active Listening - paying attention to group members and their ideas.

Traffic Directing - seeing that one person speaks at a time and that everyone participates.

Regaining Focus - making sure the group discusses only the topic at hand.

Encouragement - acknowledging team members who make important contributions.

Pushing - trying to direct the team to consensus in the time allowed.

Reinforcing - supporting and acknowledging appropriate and effective use of problem-solving and team-building skills.

Your Facilitators are:

- Don Dickerson
- Terry Farley
- Tina Estep
- Shelia Propst
- Mike Rutledge
- Eugene White
- Sandy Bailey
- Clark Gillian

Who Ya Gonna Call?

Q. Does a piece of your inspection equipment need replaced or repaired?

A. Contact Terry Farley at 558-1425. The exception is your CMX270 or 310. They need to be taken to your regional office for repair.

Q. Did you find discrepancies in your accumulated leave statement?

A. Contact Marti Sigmon in the Charleston Office (558-1425).

Q: Is there a WV state employee handbook, and if so, how do I get one?

A. Yes, there is a state employee handbook and you can receive one by contacting the personnel office in Charleston at 558-1425.

Q. When will we receive our increment pay?

A. The increment paycheck will be included with the July 31st payday as a separate check.

Do you have a question you would like answered here? Send your questions to the address shown on this newsletter.

Agency Accomplishments

The agency now has two inspectors who are trained to examine elevators. Electrical inspectors Paul Brown, Oak Hill office, and Randy Smith, Buckhannon office, attended training at the Mine Academy last year. This rigorous training included four days in March and seven days in August. The students studied night and weekends while staying at the Academy.

Our inspectors were part of a class of more than thirty which included federal inspectors and state inspectors from Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. The classes in March were taught by MSHA Inspector Wayne Fetty. The classes in August were taught by Taylor Technologies Group from Roanoke, Virginia.

Topics covered in the class included electric elevators, hydraulic elevators, escalators, dumbwaiters, material lifts, wheelchair lifts, and moving walks. The students also received on-the-job training at the U.S. Steel Mining Co., Inc., No. 50 Mine near Pineville. The class included a tour of the mine elevator, the elevator machine room and pit, and the back-up power generator.

Suggestion Box

Hello again, this is your "voice". Why not use me! The suggestion box hasn't been swamped with your ideas and comments.

Remember, this is your newsletter and it can be a useful tool to help create an agency that is well-informed and better equipped to help us and the coal miners of the state. The intent of the newsletter is to keep us informed concerning events, policies, and work practices within the agency. We look forward to your "Letters to the Newsletter". For your benefit, send all comments and suggestions to:

Miners' Health, Safety & Training Attn: Newsletter Staff 1615 Washington St., E. Charleston, WV 25311
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This is YOUR Newsletter, so please help us make it a success.

Up Close and Personal

Melanie Belcher graduated in June from Mt. View High School as one of the top ten students of her class. She is the daughter of Diane Belcher, Office Assistant, in the Welch Regional office.

Recently the 5th annual WV Public Employees' Golf Tournament was held at Twin Falls State Park. Randall Kidd took first place in the Low Gross and won the contest with a score of 76 on a par 72 course. There were 105 participants in the tournament. Our congratulations go out to Randall!

Recently several state vehicles were damaged by severe hail in the Boone County area. State vehicles driven by Region 3 employees Harry Linville, Val Hoffman, and William E. Bentley were affected. Damage consisted of numerous dents on the roof and hood sections of the vehicles.

Gary Ball, Inspector-at-Large of the Region 3 office, while fishing in Summersville Lake with his cousin, landed an 3 lb. 9 oz.

smallmouth bass that was 19 inches long. Gary caught this prize using a nightcrawler as bait and plans to have the fish mounted.

Wayne Ashby, Roof Control Inspector in the Region 3 office, killed a 43 1/2 inch rattlesnake while four-wheeling in the Boone County area.

Did You Know?

- Assessment conferences with Randall Kidd are now being held only in the Welch and Oak Hill regional offices.
- You can get a mine profile printout through our computer (S.I.S.) system. This gives a quick overview of a WV mine permit or MSHA ID site. Check with your office assistant for this feature.
- The percentages to be deducted from increment pay are 28% federal tax, 4% state tax, and 7.65 % FICA (social security tax).
- Effective June 1, 1996, the amended Title 36, Series 19 Regulations concerning the reporting of mine accidents became effective.
- Roof bolting was not practical until after World War II with the introduction of tungsten carbide cutting bits.
- Approximately 3 to 7 feet of compacted plant material formed each foot of bituminous coal.
- Effective January 15, 1996, all preparation plants, surface areas of underground mines, and shop areas using 120 volt AC circuits, must protect these circuits with ground-fault interrupting devices.
- Coal is found on every continent of the world.