



MINER DETAILS



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BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

From the Director's Office

Director Conaway recently brought to my attention the fact that November was a dangerous month for miners in 2001. We suffered three (3) fatalities during this time last year. Be sure to talk to our inspectors, and have them talk to all operators, miners, and contractors about not having a repeat this time around. Just last week, a dozer operator was seriously injured in Webster County after falling from the cab of a dozer. The accident is being investigated at this time.

CA Phillips, Deputy Director

Agency Accomplishments

Employee of the Quarter

The winner of the 2002 third quarter is Barry Fletcher. Barry, an inspector out of the Fairmont office, has over 10 years with the agency. His name will now automatically be nominated for consideration of the Agency Employee of the Year Award, which will be awarded March 2003.



Fairmont Inspector at Large, Brian Mills awards Barry Fletcher Employee of the Quarter money award and certificate.

Did You Know?

G.I.S. Geographic Information System

MHS&T recently purchased and installed a GIS workstation in the Charleston office. This system will

be used with the Mine Map Archives and GIS files from the WV Geological Survey. This system should provide better access to mapping data for anyone interested in mining in West Virginia.

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PEIA Health Incentives

PEIA has a new program called *Pathways to Wellness*. It is hoped that programs such as this may help keep health care costs in check. As we are all very aware, the cost of health care is skyrocketing and therefore anything we can do to lower or control those costs is important. The Pathways program includes health screenings, grants and intervention programs for those at high risk. There are incentives such as pedometers for the 10,000 step-walking program, as well as nutrition information and a tobacco cessation assistance. MHS&T has applied to become a member of the program. In the coming months you will hear much more about the Pathways program and we hope you will choose to become involved.

Roof Support

Our roof control inspectors have asked us to remind the inspectors to be sure kettle bottoms are secured with straps or plates, but not with bolts drilled *into* the kettle bottom. Also, be sure any rider coal seams

are secured with metal or wood straps *in addition* to the regular bolt pattern.

For Your Information

Retirement Questions

With several of our employees approaching retirement eligibility at age 55, we attempted to answer several common questions. What we found out is that each retirement is unique. For example, the items and amounts held out of a retirement check vary from one person to the next. We did find out that F.I.C.A. is not withheld after your retirement. The bottom line is that when you are speculating on retiring, start early and do your research. Contact this agency's personnel office, and the state personnel office, their website is: www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel. Also, contact the Social Security Administration for any questions regarding Social Security payments.

Water From Ice and Snow.

If something happens to your water supply in the winter such as a broken or frozen supply and water is needed, melt ice rather than snow. Ice produces a greater volume faster for less heat: twice as much for half the heat. If forced to heat snow, place a little in the pot and melt that first, gradually adding more to it. If you put a lot of snow into the pot, the lower level will melt and then be soaked up into the absorbent snow above it, leaving a hollow beneath which will make the pot burn. Deeper layers of snow are more granular than that on the surface and will yield more water.

West Virginia Mining History

The following poem comes to us from Sandy Bailey who recently retired from our Welch Office. She

received it from John Meadows, of the Fairmont Office. The poem was given to John's father-in-law, Ralph Dado of Pittston Coal in the 1950's by a state mine inspector named Hubert Wall of McDowell County. If anyone has additional information about the source of the poem, it would be greatly appreciated.

Mine Inspector Sounds Off

*submitted by John Meadows,
author unknown*

An Inspector's life isn't one of ease,
He does his work on his hands and knees.
His knees get sore clear down to the bone,
How to keep them from swelling is not yet known.
The whistles wake him at half past four,
And he gets ready for his daily chore.
He gets to the portal still half asleep,
Where all the bosses he's got to meet.
The bank boss tells him the mines O.K.,
That he'd never run it any other way.
To keep it safe, he will not shirk,
He'd do a lot better but his men won't work.
The Super comes, and he hates like sin,
That he's so busy he can't go in.
But the mines alright, the Super knows,
'Cause all his bosses are on their toes.
The Inspector goes in and he starts to sweat,
The roof isn't brushed, and the roadway's wet.
Posts in the clearance, dirt in the track,
And the lead he's carrying 'bout breaks his back,
He finds loose slate, and unsupported brow,
He begins to use his notebook-and how!
The bends are off, the trolley wire loose,
And it's no wonder they have no juice.
The doors are leaky, the air not locked,
No throws on the switches, and all half cocked.
No fuse for the pump, no guard for the gears,
And it's been that way for years.
He tries to measure air, but the thing won't turn,
And a cable down the entry begins to burn.
The Boss says, "Hell, it's not quite clear,
Why such things happen when the Inspector's here."
He goes on up to the working face,
He tests for gas and he finds a trace.
They're 200 feet ahead of air,

No dates by Fire Bosses marked in there.
The top is drummy, the posts not set,
He wonders why the miners ain't dead yet.
Dust on the ribs, and and on the floor too,
Two hundred feet to the last break through.
The wire's not guarded, and it's too darn low,
The trap door's dragging on the rails below.
Mine cars are blocked with chips of wood,
And a welder working without a hood.
A shot goes off, and it's loud and clear,
A cable is short, and the miner's too near.
The Inspector didn't hear the miner shout "Fire",
He was vainly searching for a grounding wire.
Now the mantrip is ready at 3 p.m.,
With five cars to haul about fifty men.
He gets in a car and he grabs his hat,
As he rides four miles in six minutes flat.
His hands are shaking as he gets on top,
His knees are weak, and his nerves are shot.
His feet are wet, and his back is weak,
And the things he's thinking he can't repeat.
The Super meets him with a great big grin,
And he calls the score, though he's never been in.
He seemed surprised when the Bank Boss said,
"The Inspector's book is marked all red."
Then the Super raves and the Bank Boss lies,
And they can't get together on alibis.
Then they both calm down and each one agrees,
To straighten things out 'fore the Inspector leaves.
They'll get busy the Inspector knows,
They'll make a big noise before he goes.
Though the Bank Boss lied and the Super raved,
Some posts were set, maybe some lives were saved.
The Inspector's friends are far apart,
Everyone says that he has no heart.
But still when he gets to bed at night,
He dreams that he'll find a mine that's right.
Where the track is clean, and the rock dust's on.
And the mines of his dreams will meet his test,
If the roof's high enough to give his knees a rest.

Mining Term

Kennel Coal: A coal that can be ignited with a match to burn with a bright flame. Also known as candle coal and cannel coal.

Up Close and Personal

Sandy Bailey of the Welch office is retiring and goes off the payroll 1/1/03 however, she has already turned in her key and is enjoying her free time. Sandy has 25 years service with our agency. Have a great retirement Sandy!

Bob Porter is currently recuperating at home under his doctor's care taking a much-deserved rest. Our thoughts and prayers are with you Bob. Hurry back!

We would like to welcome several new employees to the MHS&T family:

Steven Cox, Safety Instructor in Danville; **Johnny Kinder**, Underground Inspector in Danville; **Alan Landers**, Safety Instructor in Fairmont; **Danny Cook**, Underground Inspector in Welch; **Jeffery Bennett** Underground Inspector, Fairmont; **Phillip Adkins**, Safety Instructor in Oak Hill; and **Monte Heib**, Engineer working out of the Oak Hill office.



Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

*This newsletter is published bimonthly by
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Visit the agency's website at:*

www.state.wv.us/mhst

