

# MINER DETAILS

Volume 1 Issue 3 MINERS' HEALTH, SAFETY & TRAINING SEPTEMBER 1996

## BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

### From The Director's Office

Elsewhere in this edition of our newsletter you can read about the successes of the agency's T.Q.M. program. I commend all of those who have been active in these efforts, and those who are currently working on team projects. I also want to commend and give my personal thanks to staff members who have shared their ideas which are the starting points of these projects. I encourage everyone to participate in our T.Q.M. program, if not by serving in some team capacity, then by sharing your ideas.

I recently read the following poem which I believe to be more of an encouragement to the staff than anything I could say.

Stephen F. Webber

#### IT COULDN'T BE DONE

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,  
But he, with a chuckle, replied  
That maybe it couldn't, but he would be one  
Who wouldn't say so 'til he tried.  
So he buckled right in with a trace of a grin—  
If he worried, he hid it.  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that";  
At least no one ever had done it.  
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,  
And the first thing you knew he'd begun it.  
With a lift of his chin and bit of a grin,  
Without any doubting or quiddit,  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you it can't be done,  
There are thousands to prophesy failure.  
There are thousands to show you, one by one,  
The dangers that wait to assail you.  
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,  
Just take off your coat and go to it.  
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing  
That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.

— Edgar Guest

### What's In A Name?

Thanks for your many responses to "What's In A Name?" There were 36 suggestions submitted. The names were voted upon without knowing who submitted the suggestions. The name chosen, *Miner Details*, was submitted by Doug Conaway.

#### Inside this Newsletter:

- *From the Director's Office*
- *TQM Update*
- *Who Ya Gonna Call?*
- *Agency Accomplishments*
- *Suggestion Box*
- *Up Close and Personal*
- *Did You Know?*
- *Extra! Extra!*

### TQM Update

Remember, TQM (Total Quality Management), is our management system. This is the "new" way corporations and agencies manage their internal affairs. The old system where one person rules is a management style of the past. TQM is a management concept built upon employee

empowerment. Everyone's input is encouraged, appreciated, and needed.

The first charter team, the Newsletter team, continues to be a success. The newsletter is a needed tool our agency uses to help combat the problem of intra-agency communication. The Newsletter will continue to evolve and grow with your help.

The second charter team has been created, and is to tackle the problem of Permit Extension violations. District inspectors spend numerous man hours every spring writing and delivering Permit Extension violations. This team will study, and hopefully implement, new ways of handling these violations, thus saving man hours. Team Members are: Dave Kessler - Team Leader, Dennie Ballard, John Collins, Brian Mills, John Meadows, Shelia Propst, Margie Mayhew, Bill Tucker, Don Dickerson - Facilitator, and Sandy Bailey - Facilitator.

Two additional teams have recently been chartered. One is to revise the agency's certification procedures. The other team is to develop the agency's policy for maintenance of battery-powered equipment. Details will be provided in the November issue of *Miner Details*.

### Who Ya Gonna Call?

Q: An operator is having a problem with assessments, who in Charleston can help him?

A: Call Margie Mayhew in the Charleston office, 558-1425.

**Q:** My turnpike card was rejected by the toll-taker, how do I get a replacement?

**A:** Contact Barb Hunter in the Charleston office (558-1425).

**Q:** I need a new set of Mining Law books, who can help me?

**A:** Call Dave Kessler in the Charleston office.

**FYI:** For replacement of "State Car" license plates, contact Dave White at WV State Agency for Surplus Property (766-2626).

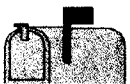
## Agency Accomplishments

A more stringent accident-reporting regulation became effective on June 1, 1996. The rules and regulations governing written reports of accidents (Title 36, Series 19) have been changed in several ways. Previously, there were thirteen items listed to define the term "accident", now there are twelve. A new term called *Serious Personal Injury* is given in section 3.3 of the regulation.

One important change occurs in section 4.1 which now requires an operator to immediately report accidents *and also* serious personal injuries.

Another change occurs in section 6.1 where the Inspector-at-Large is given the option whether or not to investigate. He must promptly inform the operator of his decision, and has up to 24 hours to start the investigation.

Finally, language concerning a "disaster" has been removed from section 7.1 and Department of Energy is now changed to Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training.



## Suggestion Box

This is your Newsletter. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

West Virginia Office of Miners'  
Health, Safety and Training  
1615 Washington St. East  
Charleston, WV 25311

## Up Close and Personal

Fred Stinson reached the **BIG** "5-0" on September 6th !!!

Congratulations to Don Dickerson for becoming a "grandpa". Casey Lee Bradbury was born June 25.

Kandi Vance, daughter of Ronnie Vance, district inspector in the Region 3 office, was awarded scholarships in excess of \$20,000 from the University of Charleston and A.B. Scaggs scholarship funds for academics and softball. Kandi will be majoring in biology in the fall.

Jennifer Vance, daughter of Boyd Vance, safety instructor in the Region 3 office, graduated in June from Man High School as valedictorian with a 4.0 G.P.A. Jennifer was awarded the Alice Lloyd Memorial Scholarship amounting to \$45,400 and plans to attend Alice Lloyd College in the fall.

We wish Val Hoffman, district inspector of Region 3, a speedy recovery from his recent illness.

## Did You Know?

- The first Mine Foreman Certificate was issued in 1910.
- The earliest Mine Foreman Certificate on file is number 7!
- Historically, 50% of all applicants fail the Mine Foreman examination.
- The first commercial mining of coal in the United States was in 1750 near Richmond, VA.
- The United States has at least 1/5 to 1/6 of all the coal reserves in the world.
- Approximately 62 of the 117 coal seams identified in WV have been mined.

**M H S T**  
**O E O O**  
**T L L G**  
**I P U E**  
**V F T T**  
**A U I H**  
**T L O E**  
**I N R**  
**N S**  
**G**

## EXTRA! EXTRA!

Earlier this year, a mine known as Oasis Contracting, formerly Birchfield Mining, was the site of two underground ignitions within a six-week period. This large, underground mine in southern WV has been idle with the fan in operation. The mine has 48 seals, and it was behind these seals that the ignitions occurred. Both ignitions occurred when thunderstorms were moving through the area indicating that perhaps lightning was the ignition source. Lightning strikes were confirmed on the surface in the area contained behind the seals.

The first ignition disintegrated several seals but caused little other damage. After the second ignition however, the main return air shaft began liberating more than 1000 ppm carbon monoxide in an air quantity of 200,000 cfm. Carbon monoxide (CO) could be measured 1/4 mile from the air shaft and was approaching several private residences. The atmosphere was monitored in case evacuation was necessary.

At this point, mine management chose to turn off the main fan because of the continued accumulation of CO at ground level. Birds were observed falling out of the sky because of the CO accumulation.

State and Federal officials continue to monitor this dangerous situation.