



Publisher's Message

Safety & Personnel

"It is one of the worst of errors to suppose that there is any path for safety except that of duty."

—William Nevins



by Libby Maurer

Welcome to *SBC Magazine's* annual personnel and safety issue. We've dug deep to bring you stories ranging from understanding the industry's skilled labor dilemma to a new twist on light duty work. Thanks to the manufacturers who contacted us with questions that served as the basis for these articles.

WTCA member Casmin, Inc. of central Florida is serious about safety, but the company hasn't always operated under the "Safety First!" mantra. When the company decided to put a special emphasis on developing a safety culture in 2002, some drastic changes took place. Three years later, Casmin's safety record had improved dramatically. Turn to page 42 to read Molly Butz's story of safety salvation.

The industry has faced a skilled labor shortage for many years, which will not likely come as a surprise to anyone reading this column. However, you may be wondering just how we managed to get to this point, and why it seems to be a growing trend. "Working for Your Workers?" (page 52) explores the "why" of the industry's skilled labor shortage. This article serves as an introduction to a new work force column debuting in the next issue of *SBC*.

Without a doubt, safety is critical in the truss plant. But how often do you consider safety inside the office? Although there may not be heavy machinery and equipment or sharp objects in the office, "Preventing 'Uh-Oh' in the Office" reminds you that office safety is no less important than shop safety.

And, no matter how hard you strive to build a culture of safety, you'll still have the occasional injury to handle. If you're like most manufacturers, when the doctor prescribes light duty, you hand injured workers a broom. In fact, a recent *SBC* poll reports that almost 80 percent of manufacturers use janitorial work to bide injured workers' time. For an in-depth look at the psychology behind light duty and a fresh new list of ideas for workers placed on light duty, don't miss Marisa Peters' article, "Light Duty, Weighty Subject," on page 60.

In the September/October issue, we brought you the history of the Wood Truss Council of America, as told by the early leaders of the organization. WTCA Past Presidents shared thoughts on their respective terms, their victories and the memories that helped to shape the future of the association. In "What Lies Ahead: Presidents Foresee Technology, Software in Industry's Future," we've asked them to dust off their crystal balls and share their predictions for the future.

Attending the BCMC Show each year can leave your head spinning, especially when it comes to the varying degrees of automation available to you. To help you sort it all out, we've asked industry veteran and automation giant Jerry Koskovich to enlighten us with a series of articles focused specifically on this important topic. In his first installment, Koskovich explains why automation can be so complicated and how automated equipment can improve efficiency and productivity. Whether you are looking to automate one area or your entire facility, read Koskovich's recommendations on what to consider before making your decision.

Good luck in your personnel and safety endeavors this year! **SBC**

at a glance

- This issue of *SBC Magazine* is devoted to topics relating to personnel and safety.
- The cover story reveals what Casmin Inc., a Florida component manufacturer, did to make a major league turnaround in the company's safety record.
- One feature article explores the "why" of the industry's current shortage of skilled labor, for both truss plants and design departments.



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