

# above & beyond

Winter 2011  
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## EMPIRE INCENTIVE PROGRAM & RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

by Jim Schweinfus & Amy Bettis

In December 2010 Empire employees received bonus checks from the incentive plan established the previous year. Our incentive program is directly tied to our lost dollar percentage.

The employee committee, led by Autum Jacobs, determined how the program was to be executed. During each fiscal year 1.5% of our sales, minus lost dollars is deposited into the incentive program fund, where it accrues interest. At the time of dispersal half of the fund is divided up amongst employees, and the remaining half stays in the account to earn additional interest.

A fiscal year runs from October of a given year through to September of the following year.

As determined by the committee, full-time employees, who have worked at Empire 1 year or more are eligible. An employee's portion of the incentive is determined by various factors. How long has a given employee worked for Empire, and total amount of hours worked during the fiscal year.

Employees have an opportunity to share in Empire's earnings. With such an opportunity

comes many different challenges. The biggest challenge we face is keeping the lost dollar percentage at 1.5% or lower. That percentage can only be kept to a minimum if we do three things, first, stay alert and focused on your job. Second, learn to work smarter not harder, always look for more efficient ways to manufacture jobs. Third, set attainable goals, and have a plan in place to work towards improvement.

All employees need to realize profits and lost dollars are directly tied to their actions. Speaking up with new ideas, asking the right questions before beginning a job, obtaining proper training for a

given task, taking the extra time to recheck paperwork, following established procedures... the list goes on and on.

We faced the same challenges when the Workman's Compensation Incentive Program and the Safety Committee were implemented. Look at how we have reduced insurance costs and are maintaining a superior safety record. Employees have the control to effect change with the incentive program at Empire, and it is up to you to make it happen.



*Incentive checks were distributed in December 2010.*

# SAFETY AWARENESS NEWS

## NATIONAL SAFETY OBSERVANCES

### January

**Cervical Health Awareness Month**  
National Cervical Cancer Coalition  
(www.nccc-online.org)



### February

**American Heart Month**  
American Heart Association  
(www.americanheart.org)



### March

**Workplace Eye Health & Safety Month**  
Prevent Blindness America®  
(www.preventblindness.org)



### March 14th

**National Organ Donor Day**  
(www.organdonor.gov)



### March 22nd

**American Diabetes Awareness Day**  
American Diabetes Association  
(www.diabetes.org)

## Don't Lose Sight of Safety by Amy Bettis

Eye injuries in the workplace are very common. More than 2,000 people injure their eyes at work daily. About 1 in 10 injuries require one or more missed workdays to recover. Of the total amount of work-related injuries, 10-20% will cause temporary or permanent vision loss.

Experts believe correct eye protection can lessen severity or prevent 90% of eye injuries. Common causes for eye injuries are: flying objects (bits of metal, glass), tools, particles, chemicals, harmful radiation or a combination of these hazards.

There are three things you can do to prevent an eye injury. One, know the eye safety dangers at work, and complete an eye hazard assessment. Two, eliminate hazards before starting work. Three, utilize proper eye protection, machine guards, and work screens.

You should wear safety eye wear whenever there is a chance of eye injury. Anyone

working in or passing through areas that pose eye hazards should wear protective eye wear. Safety eye wear protection includes: non-prescription and prescription safety glasses, goggles, face shields, welding helmets, full-face respirators

The type protection you should wear depends on workplace hazards. If you are working in an area that has particles, flying objects, or dust, you should wear safety glasses with side protection. If you are working with chemicals, you should wear goggles. If you are working near hazardous radiation (welding, lasers, or fiber optics) you must use special-purpose safety glasses, goggles, face shields, or helmets designed for that task.

Assess your safety behavior at work. Do you always follow safety guidelines and wear protective gear? Check out enclosed workplace safety quiz to make sure you don't lose sight of safety.

## safety committee

### Safety Coordinator:

Randy Hoff ..... Plant Engineer

### Committee Members:

Lee Vieth ..... Plant Manager

John Johnson ..... Operations

Coordinator

Roger Henderson ..... Insurance Agent

Amy Bettis ..... Art Department

Keith Cook ..... R&D

Steve Nelson ..... Die Making

Brian Searle ..... Maintenance

Deb Wolfe ..... Level 3

## Crock Pot Wild Turkey Breast

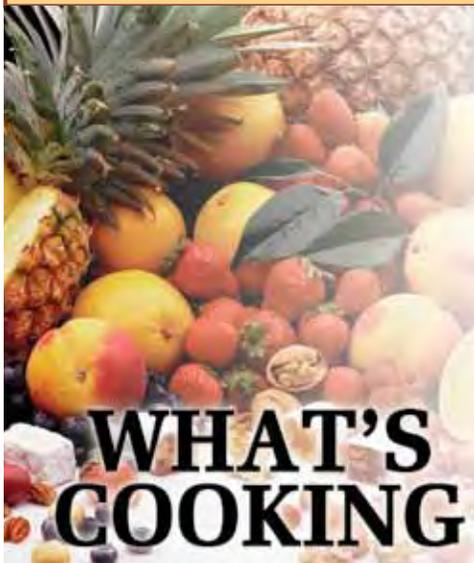
*Submitted by Pete Fauske, Machine Shop*

### Ingredients:

- 2 Large Turkey Breasts (Can use Chicken in place of Turkey approx. 6 lbs.)
- Spices: Emeril's Seasoning, Paprika, Black Pepper, Rosemary, Thyme, Winter Savory, and Tarragon (Season to taste)
- Olive Oil approx. 1 Tbsp.
- 2-10 oz. Cans Cream of Celery Soup
- Dried Parsley
- Flour
- Butter approx. 1-2 Tbsp.
- 2-10 oz. Cans Cream of Chicken Soup
- 1/2 Cup Water
- Splash of Red Wine (optional)

Cut breasts into 1" chunks, brown in olive oil and butter, season with above spices while browning, reserve drippings. Place meat into crock pot. Add soup, dried parsley and 1/2 cup water. In the frying pan used to brown meat add flour and water to deglaze pan and make gravy, then add gravy to crock pot. Adding a little splash of Red Wine to the crock pot is good also. (It doesn't hurt the cook either!)

Cook on low for 7-8 hours. Serve with buns or over pasta.



## WHAT'S COOKING

# Workplace Safety Quiz



211 West Wacker Drive, Suite 1700  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
1-800-331-2020  
[www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org)

***Nearly one million Americans have lost some degree of sight to an eye injury. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 2,000 workplace eye injuries occur each day, and these eye injuries cost an estimated \$1 billion each year. Nearly 100,000 of these injuries will be disabling, resulting in temporary or permanent vision loss. Learn more about protecting your eyes by taking this quiz.***

1. Safety glasses can be bad for your eyes. T F
2. Using a computer terminal won't damage your eyes. T F
3. Safety glasses that have scratches or pits do not need to be replaced. T F
4. Contact lenses provide enough safety in a work environment so you don't need safety glasses. T F
5. Face shields by themselves offer adequate eye protection. T F
6. Industrial safety glasses can be made with your own prescription. T F
7. All eyeglasses sold in the U.S. are required to be impact resistant. T F
8. The differences between glass, plastic and polycarbonate lenses are minimal. T F
9. Proper occupational safety eyewear is available outside the workplace. T F
10. Serious eye injuries usually happen only at work. T F



over ↘

# Workplace Safety Quiz Answers

## Safety Quiz Answers

1. FALSE: Safety eyewear is made of optical-quality glass or plastic. Looking through them, even for long periods of time, will not affect your vision.
2. TRUE: There is no clinical evidence showing that video display terminals (VDTs) can damage your eyes.
3. FALSE: Protective eyewear with scratched, pitted lenses or damaged frames are less resistant to impact and should be replaced. Safety eyewear should be regularly cleaned, inspected, repaired and, if necessary, replaced.
4. FALSE: Contact lenses can be used in the workplace but ONLY when worn with other appropriate eye protection.
5. FALSE: A face shield provides adequate protection only when used together with the right safety glasses or goggles.
6. TRUE: Industrial lenses can be made to fit most prescriptions.
7. TRUE: But, there's a catch: while all eyeglasses must be impact resistant, they are not impact-proof. Industrial-type safety eyewear (both lenses and frames) must meet more stringent standards than regular eyeglasses or sunglasses. Protective eyewear that meets the industrial standard, ANSI Z-87, must be marked with the manufacturer's logo on each lens and with "Z-87" on all component parts (frames, temples, etc.).
8. FALSE: Polycarbonate lenses are by far the strongest and most impact resistant. Plastic and polycarbonate lenses are lighter, protect against welding splatter and are not as likely to fog. Glass lenses provide good scratch resistance and can withstand chemical exposure.
9. TRUE: Hardware stores, home care centers, safety equipment suppliers and optical shops are good places to start. Protectors for home use must have the ANSI Z-87 mark on their frames. Sports protectors should indicate that they have been tested for the appropriate sport.
10. FALSE: There are also many home activities that require industrial-grade eye protection and sports that require special sports protectors. Not wearing protective eye gear may cause serious eye injuries.



As the cold/flu season unfolds, there's much you can do to lower your risk of getting sick. Assess your vulnerability by familiarizing yourself with the signs of impaired immunity. Adopt the following strategies, to boost your immunity, and fight off colds and flu.

**1. Fight back with food:** Research shows that adding certain foods to an already healthful diet can increase your ability to fend off colds and flu this season. Here's what to start eating now:

**Yogurt with probiotics** stimulates infection-fighting white blood cells. Look for yogurt that contains *Lactobacillus acidophilus* as well as *Bifidus* and *L. rhamnosus*. They are more effective when combined.

**Garlic**, people who take a garlic capsule for the 12 winter weeks were two-thirds less likely to catch a cold. Garlic contains allicin, a potent bacteria fighter, and other infection-fighting compounds. It's even more effective in food form. Add one to three cooked cloves to your food each day.

**Black or green tea**, drinking 5 cups a day for 2 weeks can turn your immune system's T cells into "Hulk cells" that produce 10 times more interferon, a protein that battles infections, according to a Harvard study. If you can't stomach drinking that much, you can still get added protection with fewer cups.

**Mushrooms**, contain more than 300 compounds that rev up immunity, by escalating the production of infection-fighting white blood cells and making them more aggressive. Shiitake, maitake, and reishi varieties contain the most immune-

boosting chemicals, but plain old button mushrooms will also do the job.

**Fatty fish** like salmon, mackerel, herring, contain omega-3 fatty acids, which benefit the immune system at the most basic level, enabling cell membranes to efficiently absorb nutrients and remove toxins.

**2. Shield yourself from germs.**

**Wash often and well.** If you can't get to a sink, a hand sanitizer will effectively remove cold germs and help protect against the flu by dissolving the outer layer of the virus.

**Befriend paper towels.** At home, replace bathroom and kitchen towels with disposable ones during flu season. At the office, use paper to open the office fridge and microwave, turn off a bathroom faucet, and exit the restroom.

**Wipe down with disinfectant surfaces you touch everyday.** Your phone, computer keyboard, and desktop, TV remotes etc... all harbor more harmful germs than the average toilet seat.

**Observe the 5-foot rule.** Maintain at least 5 feet of distance between you and a coughing or sneezing co-worker. Gravity forces the droplets that carry germs to fall rather than land much farther away.

**3. Buy supplements.** If you don't like fish... try omega-3 fatty acids. You get the same protection with a daily dose of purified fish oil capsules. If you don't get enough sunlight, try vitamin D. People who take vitamin D daily have 70 percent fewer colds.

**4. Play hard, then get some rest.** Exercise and sleep are powerful natural immunity boosters. **Moderate exercise, around 20 to**

**30 minutes a day**, increases blood flow, speeding nutrients to your cells, and decreases stress hormones, which dampen immune response. It also lowers your overall risk of upper-respiratory infections.

**Snooze for at least 7 hours a night.** A single night of sleep deprivation can depress your immune system.

**Party on — moderately.** People who are socially active get fewer colds, even when intentionally exposed to the cold virus. Researchers postulate that frequent socializers tend to be more positive and maintain high-quality emotional ties, both of which strengthen immunity.

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS CALENDAR

Jan. 22 - Feb. 2, 2011

**La Crosse Winter Rec Fest**

Don't let cold weather slow you down, celebrate what winter has to offer in the Coulee Region!

[www.cityoflacrosse.org](http://www.cityoflacrosse.org)



February 4-5, 2011

**Westby Snowflake Ski Jump**

Timber Coulee, Westby, WI

[www.snowflakeskiclub.com](http://www.snowflakeskiclub.com)



March 5, 2011

**Polar Plunge for Special Olympics**

Pettibone Beach, La Crosse, WI

Come & watch members of Team

Empire make the plunge

[www.specialolympicswisconsin.org](http://www.specialolympicswisconsin.org)

## Community Corner

### Empire Making Tracks to La Crosse Children's Museum by Doug Billings

Empire was proud to print and donate dinosaur footprints for the Children's Museum of La Crosse. The footprints were used to test sidewalk material as well as entice people to visit the new exhibit. Four fiberglass dinosaurs, 18-ft and 4-ft triceratops, a 6-ft stegosaurus and a 4-ft velociraptor, have taken up residence at the Museum as part of an exhibit patrons have requested since the museum opened in 1999. The dinosaurs, part of an exhibit that opened in late October, are



Donated dinosaur prints courtesy of Empire Screen

accompanied by a maze that will take visitors through the Jurassic Period. A camp for future paleontologists - or those who simply want to explore - will be added before the end of the year. The museum raised funds for the \$50,000 exhibit through the Mud Run in October, and grants from the La Crosse Community Foundation and a private, out-of-town foundation. Empire is proud to sponsor this great resource for our kids. The Children's Museum of La Crosse is our region's first and only hands-on learning environment for children ages 1 to 12 years and their adult companions. Open since February 28, 1999, the Children's



Doug Billings and Jen Schloesser installing decals on site at the La Crosse Children's Museum.

Museum of La Crosse celebrates the value of play via three floors of hands-on exhibits plus related programming and more. Empire is proud to sponsor this great resource for our kids.

# CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT

## Future Empire Website by Amy Bettis

Empire has had its own website for years. Our first website was very basic and did not have a lot of style, but it got our point across. During the early years, we maintained the website internally, but as technology moved forward Empire needed more advanced web design and code to stay competitive. Our website was outsourced to a company that specialized in web hosting.

The current generation of our site was a step in the right direction. We now have a site with visual impact and interest. However, making updates and changes was not easy, or cost effective going through a third party. Every time the site was updated, fees were assessed.

Empire's website has come full circle, it was decided that we needed to get the website design and control back in Empire's hands

to reduce the expense of maintaining the site. This decision required a lot of effort on our part. Empire artists needed to update their skills. Some artists had limited web experience. For the last year, a few artists have been completing on-line training to learn web programming and development, much of which was done on their own time.

A committee was established in the Art Dept. to begin the process. A lot of thought went into exactly what we wanted. Rather than change the existing site, the committee decided to completely redesign the site from the ground up. This gave us the freedom to be creative and functional.

The design of the new site has been spear headed by Amanda Kuehl. It is her knowledge and creativity that is driving the look and feel of our future website. Other artists are



Home page of current Empire website

working on copy writing, supplying images and providing technical support. It is an exciting challenge to create and maintain a new website. The new site is scheduled to go live this summer.

Now that the control is back in our hands, we will have a dynamic website that can adapt to the market as needed, so that Empire can stay ahead of the competition.

### Employee Announcements

#### Employee Incentive Program Fund

Dec. Sales: \$1,573,814.23

1.5% Incentive: \$23,607.21

Lost Dollars: \$14,642.82

Current Fund Amount: \$8,964.39

Don't forget to sign up for the Empire Chili Cook Off on **Wednesday, Jan. 26, 2011**

Contact **Jen Schloesser (Art)** if you would like to register.

Please see **Chad Ellickson (Marketing)** if interested in participating in the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics on **March 5, 2011**. Empire is establishing a team to make the PLUNGE! Watch for info and sign ups by the time clocks.

Have a special announcement, or one of life's milestones, post it in the newsletter.

Just send it in an envelope marked 'Newsletter' to the Art Dept. with your name and department labeled.



#### QUALITY POLICY

Empire Screen Printing has an ongoing commitment to fully satisfy our customer. Through continual improvement in all aspects of our business, we supply the best product and service in the screenprinting industry, in the most efficient and professional manner possible.

### Employee Anniversaries

#### JANUARY

- Kathy Cuellar..... 38 yrs.
- Dawn Adamson ..... 25 yrs.
- Steve Nelson..... 24 yrs.
- Randy Hoff..... 22 yrs.
- Fred Baures..... 18 yrs.
- Tina Karaffa ..... 15 yrs.
- Chris Mikunda..... 13 yrs.
- Jen Schloesser..... 11 yrs.
- Jennifer Gammons .... 6 yrs.
- Richard Ebner ..... 5 yrs.
- Kayla Mashak ..... 5 yrs.
- Merlin Meyer\* ..... 5 yrs.
- Mai Khang..... 4 yrs.
- Amanda Kuehl..... 4 yrs.
- RaeAnn Hansen ..... 4 yrs.
- Vanessa Fox\* ..... 4 yrs.
- Eric Wienkes..... 3 yrs.
- Shawn Brush ..... 2 yrs.
- Diane Fitzpatrick..... 1 yr.
- Mary Gallagher ..... 1 yr.
- Matthew Deshler ..... 1 yr.
- Nicholas Wolfe ..... 1 yr.
- Tiffany Montellano..... 1 yr.

#### FEBRUARY

- Colleen Matthews... 37 yrs.
- Dave Taube ..... 32 yrs.
- Shane Hulbert..... 17 yrs.
- Guy Gregerson ..... 15 yrs.
- Jason Harnisch..... 10 yrs.
- Doug Billings ..... 8 yrs.
- Jordan Coleman ..... 8 yrs.
- Angie Meistad..... 7 yrs.
- Kelly Ginther ..... 6 yrs.
- Ron Vian ..... 5 yrs.
- Scott Gates ..... 4 yrs.
- Burt Kendrick ..... 4 yrs.
- Michael Parker..... 4 yrs.
- Ryan Oliver..... 4 yrs.
- Tim Tollackson ..... 4 yrs.
- Stacie Boisen ..... 4 yrs.
- Justin Ross ..... 3 yrs.
- Leanna Klotz\* ..... 3 yrs.
- Dan Poff ..... 2 yrs.
- Anthony Herold..... 1 yr.
- Amanda Johnson ..... 1 yr.
- Alyssia George ..... 1 yr.
- Shelly Kendhammer... 1 yr.

- Todd Phillips ..... 1 yr.
- Diane McMahon\* ..... 1 yr.
- Jenna Lavery\* ..... 1 yr.
- Paula Anderson\* ..... 1 yr.

#### MARCH

- Clark Martin..... 22 yrs.
- Jeff Gierok ..... 18 yrs.
- Sherrie Vinson ..... 18 yrs.
- Jessica Kamrowski.. 15 yrs.
- Petra Vogel..... 14 yrs.
- Lu Ebersold..... 10 yrs.
- Jon Severson ..... 6 yrs.
- Terry Swenson ..... 6 yrs.
- Ellie Grotelueschen ... 5 yrs.
- Andy Kiedrowski ..... 5 yrs.
- Robin Patrow ..... 1 yr.
- Renae Mitchell..... 1 yr.
- Gabriel Shegonee\* ..... 1 yr.
- Jennifer Kuster\* ..... 1 yr.
- Donald Weber\* ..... 1 yr.

\*Part-time employees

### Welcome New Employees

- Janet Meyer
- Jacey Stoddard
- Sylvester Kendrick
- Avery Gerstenberger\*

<b>Coordinators:</b> ..... Doug Billings	<b>Contributors:</b> ..... Amy Bettis
<b>Layout Design:</b> ..... Cathy Buttell	..... Jim Schweinfus
<b>Photographers:</b> ..... Jen Schloesser	..... Doug Billings
<b>Proofreaders:</b> ..... Clark Martin	..... Pete Fauske
..... Laura Snodgrass	..... Chad Ellickson

All articles and announcements can be submitted to: Doug Billings (2311) or Amy Bettis (2371)

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER: March 28, 2011**