



ABOVE & BEYOND | FALL & WINTER 2019



PIP 2020 EXPO

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PARTNERS IN PRINTING 2020 EXPO BY: DOUG BILLINGS

It is no secret that Empire Screen Printing is devoted to people. We value everyone who has a part of making the company a success. This dedication is not reserved for our staff, but extends to our customers, vendors, sales reps, competitors, and the community. We celebrate this bi-annually by holding our national sales meeting and vendor expo. The Partners in Printing Expo will take place July 21-23 in 2020. As always, our marketing team is going above and beyond continuing to raise the bar on what our vendors and guests can expect.

We kick off July 21 with the celebrity golf outing. This charity fundraiser is designed to give back to the community. While we can all agree a round of golf is a great place to be on a sunny, summer day, it is even better when you sprinkle in some famous faces and the knowledge

that the money you are spending is going to help those within our community.

On July 22, we will get you fired up with our professional learning seminars, where we lined up five well-known speakers who will surely provide insights on topics pertaining to the future of business. Our speaker line-up includes: Barry Cooper, Ann Kerian, Gene Marks, Tracy Spears, and Tom Thibodeau. Barry Cooper of Cooper Tea Company will talk about his 55+ years in business. Ann Kerian will provide consulting and coaching on generations. Gene Marks will tackle the political, economic, and tech trends. Tracy Spears will guide us through developing a personal and professional brand. Lastly, Tom Thibodeau will show us the positive power of servant leadership.

(Continued on page 5)

NOISE SURVEY UPDATE—CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

BY: AMY BETTIS

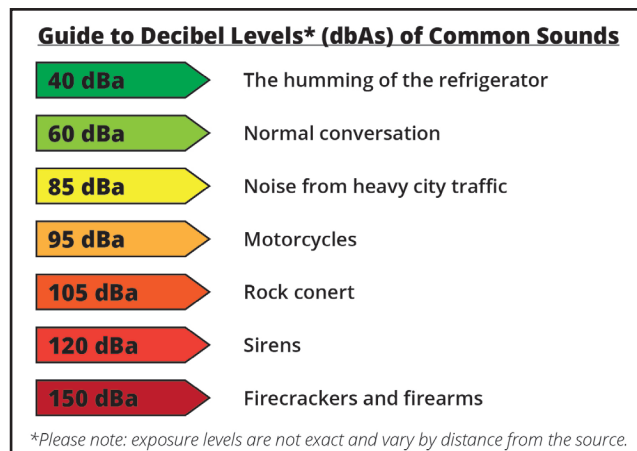


Tinnitus is the name of a symptom that affects 50 million adults in the United States. It's that constant ringing you hear after leaving a rock concert or working near loud machinery. It's important to understand that tinnitus is not a disease. It's a symptom that is the result of noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). Damage to your hearing can be prevented, but once permanent noise-induced hearing loss occurs, it cannot be cured or reversed. That's why it's important to wear the proper personal protective equipment (PPE).

On October 30-31, Empire safety committee conducted an industrial hygiene noise survey in LVS 40x61, 40x56, and in hard tooling areas. The purpose of this survey is to determine if noise exposure limits exceeded OSHA action guidelines.

To date, the only employees required to participate in Empire's hearing conservation program are screen making employees. Past noise surveys indicated an OSHA action level of 92 dB TWA. To help mitigate NIHL, affected employees must abide by OSHA guidelines: wear mandatory PPE, engage in hearing conservation education, and undergo annual auditory testing.

Senior Risk Manager, Paul Klein at M3 Insurance, made the following assessment from the data collected by Empire's safety committee. The estimated eight-hour time weighted average (TWA) noise exposures were below the OSHA action level of 85 dBA in monitored areas. Based on the results, these areas and their affected employees do not need to be included in Empire's hearing



SAFETY COMMITTEE

SAFETY COORDINATOR

Keith Cook.....R&D

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kathy Vaughan.....Human Resources
 Amy Bettis.....Human Resources / Marketing
 Nancy Gilbertson.....Customer Service
 Curtis Johnson.....I.T.
 Tom Donaldson.....Digital Manager
 Theresa Antony.....Small Value Stream Operator
 Shane Hulburt.....Doming Supervisor
 Bob Fischer.....Small Value Stream Operator

conservation program. However, this does not mean that hearing protection should be ignored in these areas. Employees should use the 3-Foot Rule in areas when unsure if current activity exceeds safe decibel levels to prevent NIHL.

3-Foot Rule: When a sound level meter is not available, stand about an arm's length (3 feet away from your co-worker). If you have to raise your voice to be heard at that distance, assume that the sound level is at or above 85 dBA. During these times PPE is recommended and encouraged.

Thank you to the employees who wear the hearing monitors during their shift. Your cooperation helps ensure a safer work environment at Empire.

SAFETY MEAL / \$20 WINNERS

On October 2, 2019, Empire employees celebrated 1,365 days with no lost-time accidents. With the catered lunch, 100 lucky employees also won \$20. The winners were:

- McKenzie Adank
- Dawn Gorniak
- Jeff Meyer
- Diane Simonson
- Candy Amann
- Guy Gregerson
- Debbie Michel
- Randy Smith
- Brad Ames
- Brenda Hansen
- Desiree Mierow
- Sam Sokolik
- Nenita Anderegg
- Sarah Haskins
- Chris Mikunda
- Walt Staff
- Ginger Anderson
- Teri Herold
- Teresa Mills
- Becky Stark
- Joann Anderson
- Charles Hills
- Crystal Monn
- Arik Steele
- Paula Anderson
- Rita Howe
- McKenly Moua
- Tammy Stephans
- Rick Auterson
- Brian Hundt
- Analiese Mueller
- Troy Stockers
- Charles Beck
- Kathy Inglett
- Deanna Murphy
- Terri Sullivan
- Amy Bettis
- Steve Johnson (QC)
- Carina Olson
- Lori Taube
- Robert Bialecki
- David Johnston
- James Owsley
- Alexander Taylor
- Becci Bosworth
- Aaron Jurjens
- Kim Page
- Jory Thorson
- Eric Coleman
- Jessica Kamrowski
- Mary Parris
- Nick Tomlinson
- Keith Cook
- Jacob Kane
- Chase Penkalski
- Matt Vanderloop
- Jacob Deschaine
- Chris Kendhammer
- Gregory Peterson
- Kathy Vaughan
- Megan Caacbay-Dickerson
- Russ Kuehn
- Dan Poff
- Sherri Vinson
- Tom Donaldson
- Jenny Ledman
- Paula Price
- Cody Volden
- Dylan Ebersold
- Sandy Loken
- Lance Reichgelt
- Kong Vue
- Brock Eckert
- Traci Low
- Steve Remen
- Isaiah Wakeen
- Pamela Eddy
- Kevin Mason
- Karina Richards
- Joshua Walske
- Kiecila Fruetel
- Lisa Massoth
- Sharon Ronnie
- Michael Wolfe
- Keith Gaarder
- Kaylynn McDowell
- Mike Rowlands
- Nicholas Wolfe
- Scott Gates
- Anthony McDowell
- Francis Schmitz
- Laura Wright
- Jeff Gierok
- Cathy McMahan
- Maria Selezneva
- Moly Yang
- Deb Gilbertson
- Dan Metz
- Angie Severson
- Jay Yehle





BUILDING A SAFETY CULTURE: ATTAINING A COMPANY MILESTONE BY: AMY BETTIS

Empire Screen Printing has reached 1,465 days no lost-time accidents and counting. This four-year milestone is a significant achievement that should not be taken lightly and seen as an example of what other similar companies can achieve.

Prior to 2005, Empire production never exceeded 100 days without lost-time accidents. The cavalier attitude that safety was secondary was outdated, and it resulted in an exceedingly high insurance mod factor and numerous worker's compensation claims. These associated costs negatively impacted everyone at Empire. Something had to be done. This realization was the catalyst behind the employee safety committee and safety incentive program.



In 2005, our longest safety record was 122 days. By 2006, this was doubled at 244, then 365 days with no lost time, a goal we thought unreachable at the time. In 2010, we reached 1,095 days no lost-time, the first time in company history. In 2011, we surpassed that milestone at 1,275 days. Now our employees consistently maintain a two-three year period with no lost-time. The impact of our safety committee and employee efforts has exceeded our past accomplishments. We have exceeded the four-year mark of no lost time as of December 19, 2019.

We would not be able to build a prominent safety culture without help. It is critical to take advantage of resources at hand, such as local, state, and federal government, trade organizations, business partners, etc. Our employees teamed up with a variety of government agencies and business partners such as the Onalaska/Holmen Fire Departments, Summit Companies, WisCon Industrial Hygiene Lab, Specialty Graphics and Imaging Association (SGIA), Walmart, American Red Cross, and M3 Insurance. It shows a deliberate, proactive approach, embraced by our employees and our partners to create a work environment we want to maintain and improve. As a whole, we take pride in our current safety culture.

"M3 is pleased to partner with Empire Screen Printing. Empire's proactive commitment to quality and safety certainly go hand-in-hand for organizational success. Empire understands a proactive and responsive safety culture is a part of your quality business. The engagement and communication with employees are evident when going out into the plant, along with participating in safety committee."
Maureen Anderson, RN, MSN, COHN-S, Risk Manager at M3 Insurance

Developing strong partnerships is important to Empire's success. It is our duty to the print industry to help others achieve similar milestones. If you need guidance regarding our approach to building a successful safety culture, please reach out to us via our website. We are your partner in printing.

PARTNERS IN PRINTING 2020 EXPO (CONTINUED...)

While Empire finds change invigorating, we do believe if you have a good thing going, keep it going. The backyard BBQ will continue to follow the sales meeting and this year, we will bring the event back to John's backyard. The fun does not stop there as Empire is providing the comedic entertainment of James Ervin Berry.

The event rounds out with the Partners in Printing Expo on July 23. This expo will give our partners a chance to build their customer base while increasing market position. As we learn during training, this is a great time to promote your brand by showcasing expertise and building a database to market in the future. The vendor expo is a must-attend event for anyone who wants to focus on building partnerships and strengthening the print industry for future generations. With additional support from SGIA, we will be taking the expo up the road to the beautiful La Crosse Center. The space gives us the room to offer more vendors, which will provide ample opportunities to build customer relationships, promote specialties, and enhance your company profile.

A new and exciting networking addition to the 2020 expo is our concert series. The concert serves a few purposes in meeting the expo's mission of promoting the industry and its suppliers. The concert will feature three national acts and will be open to the public. This allows us to highlight and share to the local community the rich printing heritage in Wisconsin. Besides printing, La Crosse, WI, is home to one of the largest Oktoberfest celebrations in the United States. We have formed a partnership with La Crosse Festivals, Inc. to utilize the Oktoberfest grounds for concert goers to enjoy a night of country, rock, and pop music along with food and fun. The acts performing for the 2020 concert have over 25 top ten hits between them.

ANNUAL REPORT REVIEW BY: CATHY BUTTELL

It's that time of year when our EMS Annual Report is due to the Wisconsin DNR for our Green Tier certification. Normally, we are required to submit this report by the end of December, but this year upper management has made some changes to when our management review and objectives/goals for the upcoming year will be decided. This normally happens in October, but will now take place in December after the previous fiscal year has been completed, and we had time to review and reflect on where we will want to proceed as a company. In addition, Green Tier metrics will be a part of any future decisions, helping us incorporate sustainability into the decision making process. Keep an eye out for the completed report in the next newsletter!



GREEN COMMITTEE

- Jennifer Schloesser.....Creative Director
- Amy Bettis.....Human Resources / Marketing
- Cathy Buttell.....Project Manager
- Keith Cook.....R&D
- Jeff Gierok.....Electrical Technician

HALLOWEEN BY: ELLEN KLUG

Halloween at Empire was filled with four different events in 2019. We had a company-wide pot luck, a costume contest, a candy guessing game, and a murder mystery. Here are the results and photos from the events!



The candy guessing game consisted of three jars of candy: Reese's Minis, Trolli Gummie Worms, and Skittles. Employees would look at the jars and submit their guesses for the specific candy. The winners got to keep the jars of candy.

- **Reese's Minis:** There were 54 candies in the jar. Two employees got the answer exactly right and split the candy. The winners were **Debbie Michel** (customer service) and **Ashleigh Kidd** (LVS).
- **Trolli Gummie Worms:** There were 176 gummie worms in the jar. **Theresa Antony** (SVS) was the winner with a guess of 175.
- **Skittles:** There were 713 Skittles in the Jar. **Paul Fanning** (Kammann) was the winner with a guess of 713.

The murder mystery was written by Rebecca Burg from the art department. This year, Ron Livesmith was brought back to life only to be brutally murdered one more time. Employees who answered the murder mystery correctly were gifted with a pizza party! The winners of the murder mystery this year were:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| • McKenzie Adank | • Karina Richards |
| • Teresa Johnson | • Jordan Bott |
| • Senchio Saetern | • David Johnston |
| • Carol Tollefson | • Nicole Abbott |
| • Deanna Murphy | • Arik Steele |
| • Rick Burg | • Cathy Buttell |
| • Cory Krajewski | • Emily Syring |
| • Derrick Johnson | • Eric Wieknes |
| • Patty Wells | • Becci Bosworth |
| • Richard Cornforth | • Ellen Klug |
| • Allie Pedrin | • Jeff Gierok |
| • Johanna Wanie | • Maria Selezneva |
| • Dee Norling | • Jennifer Schloesser |

This year, there were 40 entries in our Halloween costume contest. Employees voted in four different categories: most creative, funniest, scariest, and favorite overall. \$25 went to each of the winners. Check out the next page for the individual costume entries.



Amy Bettis
Fruit Fly
Most Creative

Karina Richards
Dead Rocker Chick
Scariest

Rose Chamoun
T-Rex
Funniest

Theresa Antony
Mother Theresa
Overall Favorite



HOLIDAY PARTY BY: ELLEN KLUG

Empire hosted a holiday party for employees at the La Crosse Center Banquet Hall on Saturday, December 7, 2019. Every employee was invited to the party with the option to bring a guest. The meal was catered by the Radisson, and the music and photos were supplied by Unforgettable Entertainment.

At the beginning of the night employees were asked to register for prizes. There were 13 prizes and 34 monetary prizes ranging from \$20 - \$100. Employees names were drawn randomly to play Klinko (off-brand Plinko) for the chance of a prize or cash. All other employees whose names were not drawn were also gifted \$10. Here's the list of the Klinko winners and their winnings:

- Tammy Stephens (SVS) - \$20
- Joe Piper (Engineering) - \$20
- Alex Taylor (Stockcutting) - \$20
- Karina Richards (LVS) - \$20
- Kristen Corriveau (SVS) - \$20
- Jessica Kamrowski (Art) - \$20
- Dawn Kehr (SVS) - \$20
- Amy Bettis (Customer Service) - \$20
- Levi Adank (SVS) - \$20
- Deanna Murphy (Job Out) - \$20
- Keith Cook (R&D) - \$20
- Coral Owen-Routledge (SVS) - \$20
- McKenly Moua (Digital) - \$20
- Tessa Fimreite (Job Out) - \$20
- Jeff Gierok (Electrical Technician) - \$20
- Jacob Kane (LVS) - \$20
- Arik Steele (Job Out) - \$20
- Laura Wright (SVS) - \$20
- Alex Remen (Stockcutting) - \$20
- Anthony McDowell (Screenmaking) - \$20
- Kong Vue (LVS) - \$20
- Steve Johnson (Quality Assurance) - \$50
- Brandon Eckert (LVS) - \$50
- Steve Nelson (Machine Shop) - \$50
- Donnie Weber (Stockcutting) - \$50
- Brian Subjek (Maintenance) - \$50
- Roman Kamrowski (Screenmaking) - \$50
- Sam Sokolik (I.T.) - \$50
- David Johnston (Job Out) - \$50
- Brock Eckert (LVS) - \$50
- Angela Severson (Digital Art) - \$100
- Chyanne Klotz (SVS) - \$100
- Robert Fischer (SVS) - \$100
- Dalton Johnson (LVS) - \$100
- Rob Wellnitz (LVS) - Xbox One
- Amie Miller (SVS) - PS4
- Samantha Morehouse (LVS) - 65" TV
- Theresa Antony (SVS) - 60" Roku TV
- McKenzie Adank (SVS) - 50" TV
- Liam Murphy (Stockcutting) - 50" TV
- Petra Vogel (Doming) - 50" TV
- Mike Rowlands (I.T.) - 50" TV
- Teresa Johnson (Hardtool) - Smoker
- Bonnie Anderson (SVS) - Power Pack
- Steve Limpert (Accounting) - Keurig
- Charlee Moua (LVS) - Speaker
- Jake Deschaine (LVS) - Fire-pit

At 10:00 there was a mystery prize handed out. The winner was drawn from the RSVP slips. The mystery prize was \$100 and a day of paid vacation. The winner of the mystery prize was Ana Mueller, ink department.





NEW PLANT MANAGER BY: ALEXIS MARSH

Please join Empire Screen Printing in welcoming in our new plant manager, Mike Wakeen. Mike joined the Empire team in November as the plant manager following the retirement of Lee Vieth.



Mike brings with him 25 years worth of knowledge in the screen printing industry. Over the course of Mike's career, he amassed a vast collection of formal and on-the-job training in areas of lean, project management, employee-related training in conflict resolution, and diversity. Mike's previous roles gave him the opportunity to apply these trainings within various projects, and the Empire team looks forward to working with and learning from these experiences.

Mike has a passion for the outdoors. You can find Mike hunting, fishing, golfing, or out with his dogs. Mike is family oriented, spending his down time with his family. While he enjoys the time outside, he is not opposed to a friendly game of cards or pool indoors.

We are excited to see Mike embrace the Empire culture and go full steam ahead in standardization, process improvement, and employee empowerment. With Mike's guidance, we envision our production team continuing to grow and overcome barriers for a better future.

WHO'S WHO IN PRINTING BY: ELLEN KLUG

Printing Impressions has named Empire Screen Printing one of the top 400 leading printing companies in the United States and Canada. We ranked 178/400.



If you are interested in seeing what other companies made the list, check out: https://piworld.tradepub.com/free/w_prid19/

WI MOTY NOMINATION BY: ELLEN KLUG

We have been nominated for the Wisconsin Manufacturer's of the Year Award again. The winners will be announced on Thursday, February 20 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



JETRION BY: DOUG BILLINGS

On December 15th, Jeff Gierok, Steve Nelson, Jeff Meyer, and I began the 800-mile journey to Columbia, Tennessee, to acquire a Jetrion 4950LX LED label press. The Jetrion is a high-speed digital label press that continues our mission to convert to LED curing across all value streams. The press can print on a variety of substrates including paper, films, foil, tag, specialty, and heat-sensitive films. One of the areas we see this press being of value is with finishing capabilities. It has the ability to perform high-speed laser die-cutting, varnish/laminate, and supports the raw material in, finished product out concept.



The guys worked long days disassembling the press and all of its components, building crates, and getting everything ready to be shipped to Empire in three days. To put this in perspective, it takes a solid two to three days with two trained people from the company to assemble the press. The crew had three days to prepare and load not only the Jetrion, but an entire production facility before the Thursday morning deadline. By the time we started our journey home late afternoon on Thursday, we had an entire semi filled and a production facility completely empty. This was a team on a mission and through hard work, determination, and long hours, all of our goals were achieved and the new press is now being prepared for assembly in January of 2020.

Pick-up in Tennessee:



Arrived at Empire:





ANNIVERSARIES

SEPTEMBER

Jim Brush.....	59 years
Steve Stenberg.....	41 years
Dee Norling.....	28 years
Randy Smith.....	28 years
Nancy Gilbertson.....	22 years
Mike Rowlands.....	15 years
Kim Page.....	12 years
Fawn Marsh.....	11 years
Jared Papenfuss.....	7 years
Penny Segura.....	5 years
Paula Anderson.....	4 years
Brandon Eckert.....	4 years
Ginger Anderson.....	2 years
Becci Bosworth.....	2 years
Brock Eckert.....	2 years
David Johnston.....	2 years
Joe Piper.....	2 years
Kong Vue.....	2 years
Anthony Carpenter.....	1 year
Paul Fanning.....	1 year
Desiree Mierow.....	1 year
Tammy Stephans.....	1 year
Alexander Yaeger.....	1 year

OCTOBER

Lisa Slonka.....	34 years
Eileen Utsby.....	25 years
Cathy Buttell.....	24 years
Laurie Arentz.....	14 years
Charles Hills.....	13 years
Benjamin Bakken.....	9 years
Dylan Ebersold.....	5 years
Dawn Kehr.....	5 years
Traci Low.....	5 years
Troy Hanson.....	4 years
Amelia Otteson.....	2 years

Robert Bialecki.....	1 year
Sandy Loken.....	1 year
William Moline.....	1 year
Charlee Moua.....	1 year
McKenly Moua.....	1 year
Liam Murphy.....	1 year

NOVEMBER

Jim Weber.....	34 years
Keith Cook.....	28 years
Roman Kamrowski.....	25 years
Dawn McGrath.....	25 years
Marcia McFarlane.....	22 years
Candy Amann.....	19 years
Morgan McDonah.....	17 years
Theresa Antony.....	15 years
Kevin Gerstenberger.....	13 years
Jonathan Schubert.....	13 years
Christine Kendhammer.....	12 years
Rick Auterson.....	11 years
Bonnie Anderson.....	10 years
Dustin Maule.....	7 years
Jason Koopmann.....	5 years
Dalton Johnson.....	4 years
Jacob Kane.....	4 years
Todd Lejeune.....	4 years
Alex Remen.....	4 years
Donny Vue.....	4 years
Analiese Mueller.....	2 years
Francis Schmitz.....	2 years
Dawn Bentzen.....	1 year
Josh Walske.....	1 year
Annie Wolfe.....	1 year

DECEMBER

Kathy Vaughan.....	31 years
Dave Collins.....	25 years
Steve Johnson.....	24 years
Rita Howe.....	23 years

Steve Vinson.....	20 years
Eric Coleman.....	15 years
Kathy Inglett.....	14 years
John Yehle.....	14 years
Richard Cornforth.....	2 years
Pamela Eddy.....	1 year
Melissa Oldenburg.....	1 year

NEW EMPLOYEES

Jacky Vue
 Derrick Johnson
 Ma Lee
 Senchio Saetern
 Sara Suchorski
 Tyler Jensen
 Mike Wakeen
 Chris Stenberg
 Tessa Fimreite
 Nathanyal Hale
 Hannah Bennett
 Dakota Schindler
 Amber Brown
 Christopher Gengler

CALENDARS FOR SALE

If you are interested in purchasing a 2020 Empire flip calendar for \$3, please contact Jennifer Schloesser.



Deadline for the next
 newsletter: 03/15/2020

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