

# THE RUSTY NAIL

Alert today, alive tomorrow.

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Issue #3

## WHAT'S NEW?

Halloween now behind us and a month away from Thanksgiving: is it possible that once again we're approaching the holiday season??? This time of year, not only do we have to worry about suffering through allergies and making sure we can still button our pants after every meal, we also need to watch our stress levels.

I came across some tips for stress relief that I thought were practical and potentially helpful if we don't let ourselves get too stressed to keep them in mind!

- **Listen to Music** – Listening to relaxing music can have a positive effect on the brain and body, can lower blood pressure, and reduce cortisol, a hormone linked to stress.
- **Call a Friend** – A reassuring voice, even for a minute, can help put things in perspective.
- **Talk Yourself Through It** – Don't worry about seeming crazy, just tell yourself why you're stressed out and what you have to do to complete the task at hand.
- **Eat Right** – Healthy food choices can help keep stress levels in check. Try incorporating more fruits, vegetables, and omega-3 fatty acids into your daily diet.
- **Breathe Easy** – Deep breathing oxygenates blood, which helps to center your body and clear your mind.
- **Laugh It Off** – Laughter releases endorphins, which improve our mood and decrease stress hormones. Why so serious?
- **Try Tea** – Too much caffeine can stress us out. Keep warm with green tea, which is packed with antioxidants and theanine, an amino acid that calms the nervous system.
- **Exercise (Even For a Minute)** – A short walk around your work area or taking the time to stretch your muscles throughout the day can offer immediate stress relief by releasing endorphins.
- **Sleep Better** – Sleep deprivation can cause stress, which keeps us from sleeping! Turn the TV off a little earlier and shoot for the doctor recommended 7 to 8 hours of sleep nightly.

While you're out there staying safe, please also try and stay sane!!

Kari Evely  
Safety Coordinator

## HEALTH TIP

Recent studies show that walking 30 minutes a day will reduce your stress and anxiety levels, in addition to lowering your risk of heart disease. So lace up your tennis shoes and keep your excuses to yourself!

## TALES OF TREACHERY

Featuring: Dave "The Destructor" Smith

As a small boy (and let's face it, even as a grown man), Dave was always getting into some type of mischief or other. Growing up on a farm in the middle of nowhere requires creativity when it comes to developing sources of entertainment, and Dave and his two older siblings never ran short in this area.

One sunny afternoon in the great state of Kansas, two brothers could be seen scurrying from one hiding place to another, each carrying a loaded BB gun, and stopping to take aim at one another when the risk for getting shot oneself seemed unlikely. The entire day could have been spent in this type of agonizing bliss were it not for the event that came next in the battle.

Like every other shot, Dave took careful aim at his brother and squeezed the trigger, but he did not figure a fateful ricochet into the equation. After the bounce, the BB came to rest on the backside of his opponents eyeball. Screaming and crying ensued, though it would have been difficult to decipher which belonged to the victim and which to the sniper.

Even after arriving at the hospital and having the BB safely removed (which required no small amount of debate as to how this could be accomplished), the little shooter could not get over the idea that he had shot his brother's eye out, and his internal anguish proved severe enough that his parents decided it was the only punishment he required. Oh, to be young again...

## APPLAUSE

Great job this month on working safely, everyone!  
And special recognition to Ryan Nelson, Ramon Ruiz, Kevin Kelton, Jim Henderson, and Sandy Ralsten, who all aided in the prevention of some majorly hazardous situations. Thanks, guys!!!

Prepare and prevent, don't repair and repent.

~Unknown



# ADVENTURES OF A GREENHORN

## IN WHICH KARI GETS HER BOOTS DIRTY

Do you remember the first time you got behind the wheel of a 24-foot truck, turned the key in the ignition, took an extremely deep breath, and tried to play it cool, like you'd driven something big enough to annihilate a small village of peasant folk a hundred times before? Well I do, because my first time was a few weeks ago when I was headed to my first glass drain at Pittsburgh-Corning in Port Allegany, PA.

It's funny how once you master one fear you start to feel pretty tough and cocky, like you've figured out the mysteries of the universe. But that feeling only lasts until you're faced with an even bigger fear, and in my case, the high of driving around in that giant truck with my hair in a pigtail and grinning down at people's confused reactions to seeing me up in that seat was soon squashed by the remembrance that I was on my way to work within reaching distance of molten glass.

Arriving at the Mid-Town Motel minutes before midnight (the truck wouldn't drive over 55-mph going downhill on the interstate, and would drop to 30-mph going uphill), I exhaustedly dropped into bed, only to be rudely awakened by my alarm at 5:30am; a new day begun too soon.

But a friendly face was waiting outside my door when I emerged at 6:00am, and together Dave Smith and I joined Karl Burger and Steven Collins for breakfast at the only diner in town, aptly named, The Diner. After our communion of coffee and eggs, we headed to the plant to begin setup. Being a rookie, I wasn't really sure what the term "setup" entailed and how I would fit into the process, especially considering I was a greenhorn AND a woman. As it turned out, getting ready for a drain requires all hands on deck experienced or no, and once I hid my hair in a hard hat and pulled on my orange Hotwork jacket, it was pretty hard to tell Steven and I apart.

The next two days were a whirlwind of preparation. Putting the yellow pipe together was one of the tasks I was entrusted with, and although it got a little cold and rainy at times, the good nature of the plant workers playfully taunting my ratcheting skills (they were just jealous!) from nearby kept me smiling.

I suppose the most mind-altering aspect of the setup process for me was the idea that nothing is stationary. That's not to say that I'm a stranger to deconstruction. In the past, I've been a party to tearing down walls and rebuilding them for another purpose; a solid wall becomes a bay window, a doorway is reframed to promote a wider opening.

Through these experiences, I have learned to look at walls as merely 2x4's and drywall, just waiting to be rearranged. However, metal is another story all together. It's dependable and steadfast, strong and stationary...isn't it?

After watching Wayne the welder manipulate a metal staircase to accommodate our drain pipe, along with beams that seemed like they were probably supposed to be supporting something structurally important, my view of the world changed. NOTHING is permanent; it can all be altered if need be.

On day three, I woke up a little nervous, but more excited than anything else. The time had come to put our setup to the test, and to come head-to-head with 2500°F glass. I sneakily watched Ted Drach and Dave to figure out how to attach the face shield onto my hardhat, not wanting to admit that I had never done it before. I'm not above creeping to find out what I need to know!

Since there were four of us on shift, each person only had to stand at the hole for 15-minutes at a time. As fate would have it, my first 15-minute watch resulted in a hopper overflow when one of the side water jets got clogged. How terrifyingly spectacular that a stream of liquid glass can go from exquisite to life threatening in no time flat. I cranked the ball clockwise as quickly as was physically possible, and then stepped back to let the experts handle the freezing and breaking portion of the show.

The rest of the day went smoothly for the most part. In terms of body temperature, I was uncomfortable all day, not because of the heat as I expected, but rather, from the cold that gripped me whenever I wasn't next to the glass. Each time I approached the hole to begin a new 15-minute shift, I was glad to be headed towards temperature relief. Upon completing my first 12-hour drain shift, I was happy to get back to the motel and take a hot shower, curl up under my covers, and finally feel warm and comfortable.

Yet another surprise to me was how quickly a drain site can be disassembled. What had taken us two days to set up took us about an hour to break down, although part of that can probably be attributed to my increased ratcheting skills after so much practice!

Let me just say that I have a much greater appreciation now for the engineering that goes into draining a glass furnace, and a respect for the lengths that our technicians go to to make sure that they are doing the job as safely as possible.

I'd like to thank Dave Smith, Karl Burger, Ted Drach, Steven Collins, and Jeff Fuqua for letting me be a part of their team: you guys are awesome!!