

By now, you should all be aware that Shane Bennor was the recipient of the “Smitty Award” for 2012. Congratulations to Shane. Shane told me that the picture used for the announcement “sucked” so he has graciously produced a more appropriate picture for use on the plaque in the office. Here he is:



We are blessed to be busy with lots of work right now. Sometimes it doesn't feel like a blessing with all of the uncertainty, date changes, scope changes, and unexpected requirements that seem to be sprung on us. Adding to the mix are late breaking international emergencies and an especially nasty flu season. I appreciate all of the extraordinary actions taken to deal with this ever-changing and often ill-defined scenarios presented to us by our clients. We're in the service business so we have to be good at facing all of these challenges.

We have had a number of very successful jobs recently and some great customer feedback. We have also had a couple that were not pretty. I always try to relate the problems to you so that we can all learn from it and try to prevent reoccurrences. That doesn't mean that I don't appreciate all of the successes – I certainly do.

We did a project on a coke battery that had very tight space constraints. It was initially a hold hot in the sole flues followed by a heatup in the ovens. Aardvark burners were used for the hold hot and benjis for the heatup. Due to the space constraint, the decision was made to use the “gray box” fuel trains with 1” gas piping. In retrospect, this was not a good decision. These boxes were touchy on lightoff and we spent a good portion of both the hold hot and the heatup trying to keep the temperatures down and not get ahead of schedule. For the heatup, our procedure required notification to the client before relighting. One Tech decided to relight without notifying the client. During the relight, a very rough ignition occurred and the bulkhead was blown out of the oven. There were people on a scissor lift on

the bench in close proximity to the bulkhead and a serious accident was barely avoided. As a result of this incident, one of our Techs was banned from working for this client (at all their locations). New procedures were implemented involving an extended purge before relight and detailed notification requirements. Our internal communication was poor and all crew members were not made completely aware of all of the new procedures. Another relight was needed and the notification procedure was not followed exactly as agreed. The client considered this another incident even though some notification was made. As the heatup progressed, we became gas constrained and were having trouble achieving temperatures. The client was asked to install an additional gas supply. After that was completed, we were still gas constrained. Eventually we discovered that the regulators that we installed were restricting the supply of gas. We eventually completed the project but only after numerous self-inflicted wounds.

We are not going to use the gray boxes with 1" gas lines anymore. We must do a better job on the pre-plan and understand the capabilities of the regulators that we specify. Our communication, especially of corrective actions to an incident, must be detailed and include everyone. And if we have a written procedure saying that we will inform the client (and wait for an "all clear") before relighting a burner, we must follow it.

On another project in Japan, a glass furnace was successfully drained. It was a complicated setup with an extended trough but the crew reported a successful project. We were very surprised to receive a letter of complaint from the Executive General Manager of the client. He thanked us for the successful drain but said that our crew displayed a bad attitude and refused to cooperate on a number of occasions. We are still trying to understand exactly what happened but I suspect that cultural differences, personalities, and communication styles had a lot to do with it. We work with all kinds of people in all kinds of plants in many different countries. When we communicate with an old buddy at a construction contractor in Gary Indiana, we may use a different language and style than would be appropriate in some other cultures – especially if it's people that we're meeting for the first time. There are many difficult aspects to being a Hotwork Technician but on top of everything else, our Techs are also the company ambassadors. This letter is a good reminder to all of us that we are in a service business and we have to show respect and be polite – even sometimes when delivering an unpopular message.

I have mentioned before an ongoing lawsuit over a refractory spall that happened in 2010. Recently a number of us gave some testimony in that case during a deposition. When dealing with an event that old, the job file is a critical piece of documentation. I want to stress again how important it is that accurate and clear records are generated during the job. Simple things like dating the forms, labeling the channels, doing a drawing of burners/TC locations, and good yellow sheet notes, make a tremendous difference. I also want to recognize and praise some of the exceptional jobs that I've seen done on job records – both hand written and computerized. It is clear that we can produce highly accurate and effective records when we set our mind to it. These are much appreciated.

Paul Monismith had a health issue recently and is now recovering from surgery. Best wishes to Paul for a speedy recovery.

We received word today that one of our regular clients experienced an unexpected death in the family. The details on the passing of Chuck Mace's father are included below for your information.

Happy Valentines Day – don't forget your sweetheart.

Tom

## **Charles Roy Mace, 61**

*Feb. 12*

thestarpress.com

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REDKEY - Charles Roy Mace, 61, of Dunkirk, IN, passed away at 8:30 a.m. Monday, February 11, 2013 suddenly following an auto accident on I-69 at St. Vincents Hospital, Indianapolis, Marion County.

Charles was born in Chicago, IL, on July 10, 1951, a son of Bonnie (Mackey) and Andrew Jackson Mace, of Muncie, IN.

He was a member of First Freewill Baptist Church, Dunkirk, IN 47336.

Chuck was an avid outdoorsman enjoying hunting, fishing, golfing, softball, coaching Little League and spending time with his Loving family.

He was previously employed as a Plant Engineer at Kerr Glass Dunkirk and was Owner operator of Mace Construction Co. Dunkirk, IN.

Chuck was a 1970 graduate of Delta High School and had graduated from Ivy Tech Community College.

He was the husband of Paulette Mace who survives.

Chuck is also survived by two sons, Charles Roy Mace II, husband of Janay Mace, of Portland, IN, Shawn A. Mace, husband of Angela Mace, of Carmel, IN; seven grandchildren, Madison Mace, Savanna Mace, Lucy Mace of Portland, IN, Morgan Mace, Carson Mace, Mariah Mace and Dominic Mace of Carmel, IN. Charles is also survived by his mother, Bonnie "Mackey" Mace and father, Andrew Jackson Mace of Muncie and step-mother, Betty Shewmake of Livingston, TN; a sister, Ronda, wife of Brian Currie, of Saline, MI; two brothers, Jack Shewmake, of Redkey; Rick Shewmake husband of Becky Shewmake, of Carmel, IN.

Funeral services will be 11:00 a.m. Saturday, February 16, 2013 at First Freewill Baptist Church, Dunkirk, IN with Pastor Delmar McCowan and Pastor Marion Donathan officiating.

Friends are invited to call from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Friday, February 15, 2013 at MJS Mortuaries Dunkirk Chapel.

Graveside services will follow in Gardens of Memory Cemetery Muncie, IN.

Arrangements have been entrusted to MJS Mortuaries Dunkirk Chapel.