



THE MELTMINDER

A PUBLICATION BY BENTON FOUNDRY, INC.

3rd Quarter 2024

Web Site: <http://www.bentonfoundry.com>

Congratulations - Employees of the Quarter



Congratulations to **Bob Little** (above), Benton Foundry's 1st shift Employee of the Quarter. Bob works in our Core Room as a Forklift Operator. He is a dedicated employee with over 31 years of service and has won this award in the past. Bob lives in the Hughesville area with his wife Mary and spends his spare time wood working, working on cars and doing construction projects.

Congratulations for a Job Well Done!

Congratulations to **Jeff Garrison** (below), Benton Foundry's 2nd shift Employee of the Quarter. Jeff works in our Grinding Room as a cage grinder. He has been employed since 2019. Jeff is a dedicated and efficient worker who was nominated for this award by two supervisors! He lives in Shickshinny, and he enjoys collecting fossils, cool rocks, and glass when he isn't working.

Congratulations for a Job Well Done!



Annual Company Picnic at Knoebels

Benton Foundry held its 28th annual company picnic on Saturday, August 10th at Knoebels Amusement Resort. It was a perfect summer day with lots of sun and fun. We had a nice turnout with over 275 attending. There were lots of great prizes, many of which were donated. We enjoyed each other's company, good food, games and rides. A wonderful time was had by all and a huge **thank you goes out to all** that participated in making this event possible.



Knoebels Picnic



Knoebels Picnic



Knoebels Picnic



Knoebels Picnic



Benton Foundry History

Third Generation

BF History Part 7:

Our last article took us through the mid 1990's, with the largest expansion in Benton Foundry history. The new 10-metric ton furnaces were a focal point at the Cast Expo in Philadelphia celebrating the AFS 100th anniversary. Once these furnaces were installed, Benton had melt capacity to pour up to 300 tons per day (running the two 4-metric ton furnaces plus the two new 10-metric ton furnaces). Shortly after completion of this expansion, in July of 1997, Modern Casting Magazine recognized Benton Foundry as one of America's Best Induction Melt Shops. In fact, Inductotherm patterned their "Melt Shop of the Future" video using the Benton Foundry footprint. Truth be known, the concept originated as a hand drawn sketch on a napkin during a lunch meeting. Regardless, this honor was a key milestone in putting Benton Foundry on the map, but there was still work that needed to be done. Although the melt department could melt 300 tons of iron a day, the supporting departments could only process around 125 tons per day.

Under Fritz's guidance, Benton began using successive 5-year plans that began in 1975. By the late 1990's, this tool proved to be instrumental in developing a long-term vision where all departments were able to meet a 300-ton per day production level. With this goal in mind, Benton was able to identify the steps required and the necessary sequencing to address each of those production constraints in the facility. This 5-year planning tool continues today. Benton is currently in its 9th successive 5-year capital expenditure plan.

With the long-term vision in place, incremental improvements began to take place. The sand system was upgraded and the roof was raised. This allowed Benton to add molding lines, including the World's first DISA Match 130 and a second new DISA Match 130 that followed 6 years later. Benton began robotically grinding parts in 2007 with their first Foxall Robotic grinding station. In 2008, a second Simpson 100B-250 muller was added, the shakeout conveyors were streamlined and the World's first DISA Match 2832 was installed. An office addition, cafeteria, and shower rooms were added in 2012. These were designed to be outside of the production footprint of the facility. This addition also included the Benton Foundry Discovery Center. This museum-like atrium displays the basics of the casting process, materials used, the history of Benton Foundry and industries that Benton serves. The Discovery Center was Fritz's vision, gained national recognition and was sadly the last of the projects that Fritz completed. In December of 2012, Fritz was diagnosed with Pancreatic cancer and passed away in April 2013.

Smoothly transitioning a family business from generation to generation is not an easy thing, as Fritz and Butch had experienced first-hand with the passing of their father in 1974. Fritz had a saying that many families go from shirt sleeves to shirt sleeves in 3 generations. Fritz was very determined not to make those same mistakes. Life insurance, buy-sell agreements and plenty of liquidity were all part of his plan. When he passed away, the ownership of Benton foundry passed to his kids, Jeff and Kim within 8 weeks. Jeff Hall was now the majority owner and the new President. However, this tremendous loss and change in ownership did not result in a change of direction. In fact, vestiges of Fritz's influence live on to this day.

In 2013, Benton exited manual molding and became a fully automated grey and ductile iron foundry. Additional robotic grinders were added in 2014. In 2015, a 12,000 square foot maintenance addition

was added to get it outside of the production footprint. A new green sand silo was added in 2016. A new lab and pattern shop were completed in January 2019. In 2021, Benton broke ground on the largest expansion in their history. New construction plus renovated space totaled 71,600 square feet of manufacturing space. This included a new, properly located core room that could produce upwards of 10,000 tons of core per year. All the casting cleaning machines were replaced with new BCT units. The grinding room was streamlined. With 8 robotic grinders, over 80% of all products shipped are now robotically ground. This expansion also included the creation of new wetlands, rain garden, bioretention area and a vegetated swale with over 1,700 new plantings of native trees and shrubs.

As a result of these various additions and improvements, Benton Foundry was awarded the 2022 American Foundry Society Green Foundry "Sustainability & Stakeholder Engagement Award" as well as the 2023 "Metal Caster of the Year." Benton can now pour upwards of 200-225 tons of iron per day and has more expansion plans on the horizon.

Our next edition will explore this vision and the measures being taken to ensure sustainable growth.



Jeff Hall and Kim Hall Kindler

AFS William J. Grede Award

The American Foundry Society, North America's largest metalcasting trade association, honored three metalcasting industry leaders with major awards at the recent Foundry Leadership Summit in Colorado Springs, CO on Monday, September 23, 2024.

The William J. Grede Award is presented for major contributions in the fields of Management, Marketing or Education, which has resulted in expanding the effective use of metal castings. This year the Grede Award was bestowed upon two leaders in the metalcasting industry, Tim Brown and David Weiss.

Brown, the Vice President of Benton Foundry in Benton, Pennsylvania, has been exceptionally generous in sharing his knowledge with those in the foundry industry and beyond. All admire his steadfast efforts to guide and mentor future foundry professionals. His leadership in finance and technology has guided Benton Foundry to an excellent record of success. Tim volunteers countless hours in the advancement of technology. His 45 plus year career has centered around pushing the envelope in foundry's use of technology, computerization, activity-based management and fair trade. Tim is also a past Board member of the American Foundry Society. Tim's speech centered around the past winners of this award and the future of Benton Foundry, Inc.

Weiss, the President of Vision Materials in Manitowoc, Wisconsin,



Tim Brown receiving the William J. Grede Award from Cathy Potts, Senior Director of Human Resources at AFS

sin, has served as the chair of the AFS Aluminum Division, Magnesium Division, Research Board as well as the AFS Technical Council, and as a member of the AFS Board of Directors during his many years with Eck Industries. David has given numerous lectures in academic, industrial and conference settings on a number of topics. David has been a prominent advocate of sponsoring meaningful undergraduate research in the form of senior projects. Many of these students graduate into employment in the foundry industry.

The Keating Award, named in honor of James P. Keating of Neenah Foundry, is given for significant contributions to the foundry industry and active participation in the fields of Government Affairs, Human Resource Management, Safety and Health, or Education.

The Keating Award was presented to JB Brown. Brown is the leader of BCI Solutions, serving as CEO and Chairman of the Board. JB's groundbreaking management approach has created an employee-based culture, focusing on employee health, well-being, and success. It has redefined manufacturing operations and led to new corporate achievements. He works tirelessly to make elected officials aware of the challenges of the metalcasting industry. In addition, he speaks on a regular basis to various media outlets about the foundry industry. JB remains a passionate and outspoken advocate, continually furthering the metalcasting industry. JB's father, Jim was a friend of Tim's, Jim was known for his touring with Ted Nugent of the "Cat Scratch Fever" fare.



David Weiss, JB Brown, Tim Brown

AFS CEO Doug Kurkul comments, "Each year, the Board of Awards selects highly respected industry leaders to receive these two national awards. This year is no exception. Tim Brown, David Weiss, and JB Brown have made our industry stronger and inspired countless others to pursue rewarding careers in metalcasting."

Retirees

Congratulations to **Glenn Cregar** on his recent retirement. Glenn worked with us for over 33 years in various capacities. He worked in our core room for 30 years, he was the assistant supervisor and over the core assembly area for many years. The last three to four years he transferred to our Production Office ordering core and helping with the scheduling of outside vendors. We wish Glenn a long, happy and healthy retirement! Congratulations Glenn!



Happy Retirement



Congratulations to **Lori McAndrew** on her recent retirement. Lori worked in Order Entry for the last seven and a half years, she also printed Bills of Lading for all shipping and various other duties. Lori has a “Bucket List” of adventures which include sky-diving, swimming with dolphins, going to Hawaii and on an African Safari. She is also looking forward to relaxing and spending more time fishing. Lori lives in Elk Grove PA with her husband Jeff. We wish Lori a long, healthy and happy retirement! Congratulations Lori!

Enjoy Your Retirement!

Victaulic Visits

Victaulic the world’s leading manufacturer of mechanical pipe joining, fire protection and flow control solutions recently purchased the former Hitachi Foundry in Lawrenceville, PA, just south of Corning, NY.

Victaulic currently operates two foundries in the Easton, PA area, plus other foundries in Mexico, Poland and other countries.

The Lawrenceville site is adding a \$100 million dollar expansion. Victaulic wanted to review what Benton Foundry has done with regard to our baghouse collection, VFD’s (Variable Frequency Drives), and other energy conversion projects. Rocco Barra of Victaulic is heading up the project and is a product of the Penn State Foundry Program. He has spent his whole career in the foundry industry, previously working at Wilton Armetale.

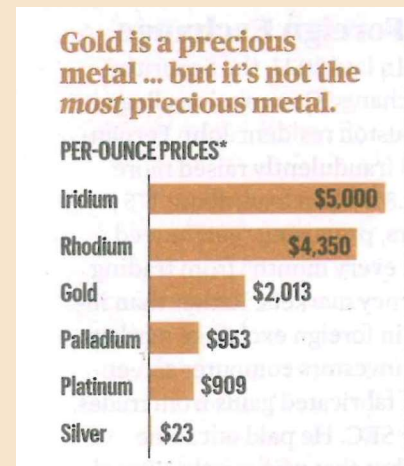
Kevin Trychta led the tour for Benton Foundry. After the tour, the group went over any additional questions in the multi-hour meeting. Benton was happy to share our knowledge in this area with a fellow foundry.

GOLD Hard Facts

When people worry about the economy, their thoughts often turn to gold. Check out these nuggets of truth.

Is gold a solid defense against inflation?

- SOMETIMES, YES**
As inflation soared from 1976 to 1980, gold’s purchasing power nearly tripled.
- MORE RECENTLY, NO**
As inflation took off between May 2020 and June 2022, gold’s purchasing power fell 9 percent.



AARP The Magazine
Niamb Rowe

Good Job!

Congratulations to **Ryan Keeler** for successfully completing the AFS Supervisor Training.

Good Job to **Gabe Keller** for his design and fabricating of the new furnace safety guarding.

Good Job to **Sabina Lopez** on both the Small Shell Machines and Stationary Grinding.

Good Job to **Cindy Newhart, Francisco Rocha** and **Kurtis Hunsinger** for very good productivity on the Laempe LL20 Core Machines.

Good Job to **Hunter Hardy** and **Katherine Miron** for training on the Foxalls.

Good Job to **Ramiro Pomares** for learning new responsibilities in the Lab and for helping in the Core Room as a Forklift operator when needed.

Congratulations to the following personnel for the 3rd Quarter 2024.

Eric Barnes - Highest Grinding Efficiency

Yordi Garcia - Greatest Foxall Run-Time Percentage

Otilia Miranda - Highest Core Operator Efficiency

Myriam Mayorga - Highest Assembly Efficiency

Tom Foust - Lowest Molding Scrap Rate

David Straub - Highest Molding Efficiency and Highest Molds per Hour

Thank You!

Thank you for all the help from the Core Room, the Molding and Melt Departments in the Grinding Room, which was very productive.

Thank you to **Annette Brown** for pulling off another successful Knoebels picnic.

Thank you to **Jim Tumolo** for taking on the additional responsibility of 2nd shift forklift operator training.

Thank you to **Ben Hatch** for taking on the additional responsibility of aerial lift training.



Natural Gas

The natural gas sector supports 123,000 Pennsylvania jobs, generated \$40 billion in a year of economic activity, and contributed more than \$6 billion in royalties to landowners and government entities, according to an MSC (an apolitical entity) analysis conducted last August.

Natural gas also has led to historic air quality gains in the state, as well as other significant environmental benefits.

For instance, Pennsylvania remained the country's top electricity exporter while simultaneously reaching a new low for carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from electricity generation in 2023, according to the latest analysis from the Pennsylvania Independent Fiscal Office.

Additionally, May analysis from MSC found that the increased use of natural gas for power generation has delivered between \$450 billion to \$1.04 trillion in public health benefits by slashing the state's power sector CO2 emissions by 47 percent from peak 2005 emission levels.

Pennsylvania Business Report



Trivia Question???

Can you identify five different industries that you will find our products in?

Answer will be in the 4th Quarter 2023

2nd Quarter Question & Answer:

Who are the three current longest running employees?

Tom Foust, Ed Whitmoyer & Nate Foust

Birthdays

November

Mike Newhart
 Angela Rodriguez
 Yesslan Ruiz
 Stanley Shuleski
 Irlanda Aviles
 Franklin Ventura
 Gene Burkhart
 Aaron McHenry
 Pat Packer
 Edwin Ramirez
 Rob Feliciano
 Mike McDonald
 Steve Fritz
 Ed Gill
 Carlos Moreira, Jr.
 Terry Whitmire
 Pete Gowin
 Jose Machado

December

Bill Simback
 Gene Eckroth
 Billy Green
 Dave Buma
 Ben Hatch
 Maria Higgins
 Greg Woodside
 Gustavo Taveras
 Jeff Garrison
 Donna Remley
 Joe Tabor
 Jose Martinez
 Wilmer Sanchez

January

Otilia Miranda
 Jason Karcher
 Gabe Keller
 Lesbia Vargas
 Dave Hetler
 Wilberth Lopez
 Aric Strauch
 Tim Miller
 Cassandra Shoemaker
 Jacqueline Artero
 Teo Grigas



Happy Birthday!



Oxymoron
Impossible Solution

\$ Want \$
\$500?

Company Referral Plan

Refer a Potential Employee to Morgan
 (Before They Come In)

If Hired,

After 90 days of Employment

You Get \$250.

After 6 months of Employment

You Get Another \$250.

IRONY



iStock

“The Wisdom Well”

“Sometimes people don’t want to hear the truth because they don’t want their illusions destroyed.”

~ Friedrich Nietzsche

