

Lincoln Diesel Shop News



FEBRUARY | 2008

Celebrating success

A Chinese political leader once said any form of exercise, if pursued continuously, will help train one in perseverance.

Taking this to heart, Lincoln Diesel Shop employees train to go the distance by daily practicing safe work habits and proper procedures. Their emphasis on details has already produce results, enabling them to record 130 injury-free days as of Feb. 21.

"We are off to a tremendous start," said Bruno Soto, shop superintendent.

Commemorating their safety success, the shop held a safety dinner Feb. 13-14. During the 100-day celebration, employees were treated to roasted chicken, barbecue pulled pork and all the fixings including peach and apple cobbler.

"This is just the first of several milestones that we hope to celebrate this year," Soto said.

The shop's safety committee, which met Feb. 21, also praised employees for the phenomenal start to 2008 and noted employees are on track to finish the year injury free.

"This is our No. 1 goal," they said.

Soto thanks each employee for their efforts to become more engaged in the shop's safety programs and encourages them to keep up the good work.



Lincoln Diesel Shop employees perform final inspection on the 6090.

If they can't fix it at Lincoln Diesel Shop, you can scrap it!

While the shop may not specialize in wrecks and fuel tank repairs, two of its employees, Boilermaker Dave White and Machinist Efren Barajas, are renowned for their ability to repair locomotives that should have been sent to the boneyard.

"We work together well," White said. "We read each other, know what each other needs next and know how to work safely."

Barajas and White have worked together since May 2006. While working on Line 5, they do alternator and engine changeouts and repair safety appliances to ensure Federal Railroad Administration standards.

Putting their skills to the test Dec. 10, Barajas and White were faced with the challenge of repairing 6090, an accident-damaged GE Evolution Series locomotive. While this type of work is typically

sent to Topeka, Lincoln Diesel stepped up to the plate to ease their workload.

When 6090 rolled into the shop it had a broken coupler, bent pilots, and front-end damage up to its ditch lights. After ordering the parts from Topeka, Barajas and White installed a new draft gear and draw bar. They also cut off the pilots and sent them to Havelock's Fabrication Shop for straightening.

White said the project was challenging, requiring numerous overhead and vertical welds.

"We knew this box has to pull 126 cars of coal and that our welds had to hold up," he said.

White has kept a diary of all the wrecks he has done since 2002.

According to his journal, he and Barajas repaired 19 wrecks in 2007, returning them to revenue-generating service. Records also show that White, who has worked at the shop since 1997

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Robbins welcomed

Typical conversations with your neighbor often leave you well informed about a particular sporting event or the weather, but for Jason Robbins, electrician, it gave him insight into a new career.

“It is like everyone has told me it is going to be,” he said.

Robbins, who joined BNSF Jan. 14, said his interest in railroading developed during lengthy conversations with his neighbor, a 32-year Maintenance of Way employee.



Jason Robbins, electrician

“He put that bug in my ear,” he said.

Born in Saint Joseph, Mo., Robbins worked in a variety of locations, including Las Vegas, before joining the railroad. He has primarily worked as a commercial and industrial electrical contractor, but also worked four years as an electronics technician for Altec’s Midwest Operations.

Robbins said he looks forward to meeting new people at the shop and learning from the seasoned employees.

During his free time, Robbins participates in a variety of sporting activities, especially golf. He also enjoys home remodeling.

Keeping an eye out for safety

Work Practice Observations create a process to identify practices that pose an increased likelihood of accident or injury. By observing the activity of a portion of a work group, a prediction can be made concerning the performance of an entire group.

The program puts more eyes and ears in the work place.

To conduct Work Practice Observations, participants with work sheets in hand observe work underway. They watch activities ranging from walking, to climbing stairs and boarding equipment, to removing material, stepping over rail, unwinding hoses and preparing to grind.

No names are associated with the observations. The practice is not intended to involve names, only data. The more samples of each activity, the more accurate the data.

About 100 observations of a particular activity serve as a baseline from which improvements can be noted.

Observations of people walking, ascending or descending stairs, boarding or exiting locomotives and forklifts provide a wealth of data used for discussion, education and safety briefings.

The goal is to be able to document 95 percent compliance with recommended safe behavior. Mechanical personnel use a shop’s Safety Action Plan to identify activities associated with the highest risk. Activities targeted for risk reduction include walking, boarding or de-boarding locomotives, and operating cars and utility vehicles.

WPOs work best when everyone contributes to the effort.

Save it from the scrap yard

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and has more than 20 years experience as a boilermaker, is also one of the shop record holders, repairing 27 wrecks in 2004 with his co-worker Steve Loos.

Barajas and White said they enjoy working on damaged or wrecked equipment. They noted it presents the challenge of fabricating new parts and putting locomotives back together.

“At the end, we get to see what we’ve accomplished,” he said.

Thanking their co-workers for a collective effort, Barajas and White said they helped them perform the final touches including rewriting, drawbar installation, traction motor work and final inspection.

Overall, the project took less than one month to complete before 6090 was back in operation.



Dave White makes the final welds to repair 6090.



Thanks to Boilermaker Dave White, Machinist Efrén Barajas and their co-workers, the 6090 was back in operation in less than a month.

Soaring to new heights

Line 4 and 5 employees reaped the benefits of their year-long efforts for GE Feb. 8-9 with the installation of a 10-ton Demag crane.

“They should put these guys’ names on it,” said Bill Meyer, GE shop manager. “The shop received this crane thanks to their productivity.”

Meyer said the crane purchase was the direct result of Lincoln Diesel Shop employees’ extraordinary 2007 work on GE’s Liner O-ring Modifications, repairing 598 power assemblies.

Crane America Services began assembly Feb. 8 at 8:30 a.m. They began lifting it at 3 p.m. perpendicular to its final resting place. It rested in place by 4:35 p.m. Shop maintenance crews observed the installation to gain first hand knowledge of its components and construction. Final touches, including wiring, were completed by 1 p.m. Feb. 9.

“Everything went off without a hitch,” Meyer said.

Meyer noted GE and BNSF collaborated throughout the project to install equipment that will benefit both parties. He credited Bruno Soto, shop superintendent, and several BNSF employees for their collective efforts to ensure a flawless installation.

The crane, which will be used to complete repairs on more than 1,100 power assemblies, also will benefit the shop’s overall operations.

Since Line 4 and 5’s 30-ton crane hangs too low to remove car bodies, it required moving a locomotive to Line 3 and then back to Line 4 or 5 before engine changeouts could be performed. Once the changeout was completed, it was moved back to Line 3 to replace the car body.

“Instead of moving the locomotive three times, all of the work can take place in the same spot, taking dozens of hours off its cycle time,” Meyer said. “It’s productivity they’ll have forever.”

Meyer noted the crane also will be used to unload trucks or



Crane America Services crews operated a forklift Feb. 8 to install a new 10-ton crane on Line 4 and 5.



Crews check for every minute detail as they installed the trolley.



A crew member helps guide the 63-foot crane into place. Extensions were added to the crane’s body to ensure its ability to lift car bodies from locomotives.

lift combos into the drop pit.

Since Lincoln Diesel Shop employees routinely completed the modification in half the time of other system shops in 2007, Machinists Josh Smith and Kelly Green were called upon to teach the shop’s Liner O-ring Modification process to the employees of Murray Diesel Shop in Kansas City, Mo.

“These employees are taking the money-saving principles they’ve learned to other facilities, helping them to improve their efficiency,” he said.

Lincoln Diesel Shop has doubled its production since 2007 and now performs four Liner O-ring Modifications per week. They aim to complete the project by September.

Taking action to get everyone involved in safety

Shop Superintendent Bruno Soto unveiled the 2008 Safety Action Plan Jan. 28-29, informing employees of the shop’s aspirations.

“There is no doubt in my mind that we can go without an incident in 2008, but it’s going to take everyone’s effort,” Soto said.

Soto believes the keys to the shop’s continued success will, as always, involve focusing on the Seven Safety Absolutes and employees’ daily participation in risk assessment.

“If we’re going to continue to move

forward as a group we need to get everyone involved in safety,” he said

During the remainder of the year, the shop will reanalyze its job safety analyses, reviewing them step by step. Soto said each of the shop’s 30 supervisors will attempt to review one JSA per month, analyzing and addressing potential risks.

Proper stretching will be another daily focus point as the shop will practice more active stretching to reinforce proper lifting techniques.

In recognition of employee ac-

complishments, the shop plans to hold group recognition celebrations when milestones are met and recognize employees individually for outstanding accomplishments such as 20 years of injury-free service.

Soto encouraged employees to actively participate in Work Practice Observations to help enhance overall operations in the shop.

“We’ve already been successful in a number of WPO areas,” he said. “When we utilize this process as a tool it benefits the entire team.”

Kretz glad to be working closer to home

Ever driven “a hundred miles of bad roads?” Electrician Jeremy Kretz sure has as he daily commuted more than 150 miles round trip from Lincoln to Columbus, Neb.

Prior to hiring on with BNSF Jan. 14, Kretz worked one year for Wilmar Electric Ltd. on his hometown’s ethanol plant construction project. Kretz, who possesses an electronics engineering degree from ITT Technical Institute, also was part of Jacobs Engineering Group Inc.’s efforts to build a coal-fired power generation plant. Kretz performed a portion of the projects’ heating and air conditioning work.

Now employed at Lincoln Diesel Shop, Kretz is

happy to get out of the car and into a more family-friendly work schedule.

“I am excited,” he said. “I think it is going to be a good experience.”

Kretz hopes his new career will free up more time to spend with his girlfriend, Crystal, and his daughters Alisha, Abby, and Tabitha.

He spends his free time playing with his children or on the golf course.

“I’ve tried to combine the two, but all the kids want to do is drive the cart,” he said.

Kretz is eager to learn about the interworkings of locomotives and looks forward to gaining hands-on experience with the new GE technology.



Jeremy Kretz, electrician



Dawn Prella, wife of Machinist Doug Prella, prepares canned goods for her family.



Dawn’s tropical tasting Hawaiian cookies are just one of several recipes she devised for D&D Kitchens.



Doug Prella, machinist, stands next to one of his registered quarter horses.

Couple cook up cookies and more

While his elementary school days of trading his lunch may be long behind him, Doug Prella, machinist, still attracts a lunchtime crowd as his Coleman cooler often contains a bounty of baked goods made by his wife, Dawn.

“It’s rewarding to hear people comment on her pies or a batch of her cookies,” Prella said.

Dawn, who is a manager of post office operations by day, and Doug enjoy spending their downtime baking everything from white chocolate macadamia cookies to peach pies.

“It is something that we enjoy doing together,” he said. “Besides, I get to eat all the imperfect cookies.”

Although Dawn’s baking began as a fun pastime to treat friends and family, word of her delicious Hawaiian cookies, apple spice cake and pumpkin bread quickly spread, prompting Dawn and Doug to create D&D Kitchens, a small-scale bakery and catering business.

“I can’t possibly eat everything that she has the desire to bake so we thought this was a good solution,” he said.

When Dawn is not overseeing 104 post offices within the 687 and 686 zip codes, she enjoys creating in the kitchen.

In addition to their growing list of homemade cookies, pies and cakes, the Prellas plan to expand their selection by

offering an assortment of canned goods including dill and bread and butter pickles. They hope to sell these homegrown items at venues similar to Lincoln’s Farmers’ Market.

In preparation for these new products, Dawn and Doug will renovate their 1923 Sears Modern Home kit house, which sits on 22 acres near Unadilla, Neb. They plan to install a commercial grade dishwasher and refrigerator, double stoves, a large sink, and preparation and staging area for the canning process.

When they’re not baking up a storm, Dawn and Doug also raise registered quarter horses. They have three mares and one gelding.

MORE POWER

Step into Machinist Brian Husa's 1,600-square-foot garage and one cannot help but emit a Tim Taylor-esque primordial grunt as it contains more horsepower than the Kentucky Derby.

"When I first saw 'Home Improvement' I thought this was the show for me," Husa said.

Keeping in the spirit of "Tool Time," Husa is all about creating "more power" in his machines. In true "Tool Man" fashion, he has even modified his Toro Snow Pup snowblower by milling the head to raise its compression. It now runs on two-stroke oil and racing fuel.

"I figured if a little power is good, a lot has to be great," he said.

Husa, a self-described gearhead, has been interested in customizing and modifying since his youth. As a child, Husa said he even customized his toys to make them bigger, better and faster.

During high school, Husa's fascination with speed and power led him to purchase a 1978 Camaro. Since buying it in



Brian Husa stands next to his customized 1978 Camaro.



Machinist Brian Husa sits on his 1982 Suzuki GS, which he rebuilt with a salvaged GSXR 750 front end and a GSXR 1000 rear end.

1984, he has installed a 12-point full roll cage, a performance 355 Chevrolet V-8 engine with 13.5:1 compression ratio, a Manual Turbo 400 transmission, a Ford 9-inch rear end and tubbed rear wheels.

Prior to joining BNSF in October 2006 as a fourth generation railroader, Husa worked as machinist and engine builder for Big A, Clover and Engine Dynamics, where he did crank grinding for Lewis Automotive.

He also worked a 18 months as a Auto Tech Service Center mechanic for and was a performance parts salesperson for Raceland. After working 12 years as a technical representative for Auto Body Supply, specializing in color matching and problem solving for high-dollar paint jobs, Husa also worked part-time for Hinkle's Wild Rides.

While Husa's work has been featured in Car Craft, Hot Rod, Show Stopper and V Twin Motorcycle magazines, he said his favorite project was restoring a 1967 El Camino with his father.

In keeping with their appreciation for speed, Husa and his wife, Kari, also foster retired racing Greyhounds and Italian Greyhounds on a small acreage southwest of Lincoln.

Can you hear it now?

In order to comply with Federal Railroad Administration regulations governing the use of locomotive horns, BNSF will soon begin testing locomotive horns at Lincoln Diesel Shop.

Under the FRA rule, railroads are required to test the decibel levels of locomotive horns to ensure that they meet a minimum of 96 decibel and maximum 110 decibel levels. The regulations require that all locomotives are checked by Jan. 24, 2010.

Locomotive horns will be tested as locomotives are overhauled.

The measurements will be recorded when ambient temperature is between 32 degrees and 104 degrees Fahrenheit; relative humidity is between 20 and 95 percent; wind velocity is less than 12 mph and there is no precipitation.

As part of the test, each of the two horns on a locomotive is required to be sounded at least six times for a

duration of 10 seconds and achieve a standard deviation of less than 1.5 decibels. The microphone will be located 100 feet forward of the locomotive's front knuckle.

Written reports of the locomotive horn testing are required to show horn type, date of testing, place, manner of testing, and air flow and sound level measurements.

Tests will be conducted during daylight hours.



Tom Paprocki, first line supervisor second shift, is prepped to donate blood by Kellie Aguilar, American Red Cross collections lead.

Donations give back

Giving the gift of life, Tom Paprocki, first line supervisor, celebrated his 35th birthday by participating in Lincoln Diesel Shop's first American Red Cross blood drive.

"It's a great opportunity for community service," Paprocki said.

During the shop's January blood drive 16 employees generously donated during a four hour period.

"It was a good turnout for the first time event," said Lisa Gladney, BNSF field manager for medical and environmental health and drive coordinator.

Gladney said one unit of blood – which takes less than 45 minutes to donate – can save up to three lives.

"When else to you have the opportunity to save three lives in 45 minutes?" she said.

Gladney noted of all the eligible people that can donate, less than 5 percent actually do. They supply the blood for the entire population.

"It is so important for eligible donors to volunteer," she said.

She noted eligible donors can donate as many as six times per year.

Gladney, BNSF and the American Red Cross thank those who donated during the January blood drive.



Lisa Gladney, BNSF field manager for medical and environmental health, helps Jim Gardner, machinist, sign up for the blood drive.

CLASS IN SESSION

Lincoln Diesel Shop employees will soon stream into the classroom, settle into a seat and wait for Safety Certification Training to commence.

The annual classes, which start March 3, will feature informative PowerPoint presentations that review the shop's rules and regulations.

"It emphasizes the importance of safety and proper procedures," said Peter Hopwood, machinist and second shift Safety Certification trainer. "It's a valuable tool."

Once notified of their allotted time and date, employees will participate in training that features topics such as environmental awareness, ergonomics, and hand and power tool safety.

"It keeps employees up to date and informed," he said.

Hopwood said Safety Certification classes are a process that the shop has utilized for years to reemphasize safety.

"We want to remind employees how to reduce or eliminate risk and make sure they don't become complacent with everyday tasks," he said.

Hopwood believes the classes have helped heighten focus on safety and thus contribute to the overall reduction of injuries and incidents.

FAREWELL MUELLER

Retirement may have snuck up on Jim Mueller, machinist, but after 32 years service for the railroad, he is ready to close that chapter of his life and start a new one.

Mueller joined the railroad in Havre, Mont., as a laborer. Within three months, he began working as a machinist helper. He worked in Havre until 1992 when he transferred to Lincoln. The switch to a different shop was easier than he thought.

"I remember everyone being very friendly and thought it was a well put together shop with people that really cared about one another," he said. "I enjoyed my time here and will miss the friends I have made."

For those just beginning their careers, Mueller encourages them to enjoy the job, work hard and take care of co-workers.

The free time Mueller now has on his hands will be well spent with his family. He and his wife, Marcia, have been married 37 years. She works as a nurse at Bryan LGH East Medical Center.



During his retirement celebration, Jim Mueller, left, is joined by his wife, Marcia, and grandchildren, Anthony and Justice.

The couple have a son, Michael, and two daughters, Heidi and Heather. They also have three grandchildren: Justice, Anthony and Ava.

Mueller plans to take life one day at a time and looks forward to traveling and working in his flower garden.



Mechanical Department safety assistants and other employees gather in Overland Park, Kan., in February for their annual Safety Certification meeting.

SAFETY CERTIFICATION MEETING HELD

With 15 years of experience working for Exxon Mobil, Charlie Morecraft knew all of the shortcuts associated with his job — and he paid a dear price for taking them.

Morecraft spent five years in the hospital recovering from an on-site truck explosion ignited by a chemical leak, an incident he could have prevented. He suffered severe burns that left terrible scarring, particularly on his forearms, which he noted would have been protected by his flame retardant sleeves had he not rolled them up for momentary comfort. Though his physical scarring was traumatic, the deepest scar was left on his family. Following the incident, Morecraft slipped into depression and alcoholism, leading to divorce and years of counseling for his two daughters.

Morecraft knows this chain of unfortunate events could have been avoided had he not lost focus, not succumb to complacency and not taken shortcuts.

“You need to take care of your family. That’s why safety is so important,” he said. “Safety is all

about going home at the end of the day, kissing your wife and seeing your kids. Every decision you make at work effects you and your family. BNSF will always be here; where will you be?”

These powerful words set the tone for the 2008 Mechanical Safety Certification sessions held Jan. 5-7 in Overland Park, Kan. The video telling Morecraft’s moving story reminded those in attendance of why they were gathered, and instilled a heightened resolve within each individual to uphold safety. More than 80 mechanical safety assistants from across the system received valuable information and materials they will use to spread the word about safety and educate co-workers at their individual work locations.

After reviewing systemwide safety statistics and changes within the mechanical safety rules, Safety Manager Bill Wallish guided attendees through the day’s proceedings and introduced speakers:

- Safety Manager Todd Dodgin: Mechanical Department Occupying/Fouling Track Form.

- Manager of Industrial Hygiene Dan McCaskill: Industrial Hygiene.
- Manager of Environmental Operations Don Girard: Environmental Awareness Training.
- Director of Occupational Safety/Environmental Health Lawrence Fleischer: Mechanical Ergonomics.
- Manager of Hazmat Response Brock Lowman: Hazardous Materials.
- Wallish: Work Practice Observations.

Attendees listened attentively to enhance their understanding of safety and to implement valuable techniques and impart information during their own training of others.

The company stance continues to be all injuries are avoidable and no injury is acceptable, and Safety Director Ron Hennessey reminded those in attendance that this applies at all times, even during safety successes. Though staying injury free for a substantial period of time is an exceptional feat, it certainly should not foster complacency.

“You can go injury-free for one year, but that does not mean you have safety licked,” Hennessey said. “Safety is ongoing. It’s constant; it’s everyday.”

“You need to take care of your family. That’s why safety is so important. Safety is all about going home at the end of the day, kissing your wife and seeing your kids. Every decision you make at work effects you and your family. BNSF will always be here; where will you be?”



UPGRADE

Employees will be able to study in style while participating in the shop's Computer-Based Training.

Lincoln Diesel Shop's Computer-Based Training room is undergoing renovations. New tables and chairs are on order for the training facility and an additional cubicle has been added to handle additional trainees.

The room, which features new computer monitors and a projection screen, is scheduled to receive a fresh coat of paint and new ceiling tiles.

The CBT is used by shop employees to participate in a number of training programs offered through Johnson County Community College's technical training program, as well as locomotive engineer's recertification classes.

Lincoln Diesel Shop News appears under direction of the shop superintendent. For news coverage, contact Jacob at the newsletter office by phone at BNSF 458-7342, 402-475-6397, fax 402-475-6398, mail information to 1845 S. 11th ST., Lincoln, NE 68502-2211, or e-mail jacob@newslink.com. This material is intended to be an overview of the news of the shop. If there are any discrepancies between this newsletter and any collective bargaining process, insurance contracts or other official documents, those documents will govern. BNSF continues to maintain and reserves the right, at any time, to alter, suspend, discontinue or terminate all plans and programs described in this newsletter. This newsletter is not an employment contract or any type of employment guarantee.

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Building for tomorrow

Renowned for her Bob Vila-esque home-building expertise Beverly Meis, training coordinator, now applies her skills to helping new hires build a strong foundation.

Meis, who began her responsibilities Jan. 7, heads the shop's training program and works in conjunction with Safety Assistant Gary Hughes to bolster safety in day-to-day operations.

Joining the Burlington Northern Railroad Nov. 9, 1976, Meis draws upon a wealth of experience, which stems from her pipefitter apprentice days at the Lincoln Diesel Shop. She also relies on the skill sets she learned from Kearney State College, where she graduated in 1975 with a bachelor's degree in industrial arts and home economics.

Meis has worked as an assistant coordinator-shop methods in West Burlington, Iowa; supervisor-mechanical maintenance control in St. Paul, Minn.; and car foreman in Springfield, Mo., before she returned to Lincoln Diesel Shop in 1986 as a pipefitter.

In addition to providing a change of pace, Meis said her new role provides an opportunity to share the knowledge and experience she has gleaned through three decades of railroading.

Meis enjoys spending time with her daughter, Nicole,



Beverly Meis, training coordinator

and her four grandchildren. She also enjoys helping Nicole renovate her 100-year-old home in Oakdale, Neb., rebuilding it from the ground up.

"You name it and we are doing it," she said.

Meis attributes her house-building skills to her father. She said their first project together dates back to 1971 when they built a house in Kearney, Neb. That is where she learned how to do everything from plumbing to duct work.

In addition, Meis said her favorite pastimes include reading. As a self-described avid reader, Meis jokingly said she reads almost everything from magazines to cereal boxes.