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NEIGHBORS

A SERVICE OF ASH GROVE CEMENT COMPANY – FOREMAN PLANT | FALL 2011

Ash Grove Hits \$20 Million Energy Reduction Goal

This August Ash Grove plants throughout the country achieved an ambitious goal to reduce energy costs by \$20 million – 15 months early, another Ash Grove energy management (AGem) success.

“Chuck Wiedenhoft always described the goal in terms of a three legged stool –reduce emissions, improve efficiency and reduce costs,” said Andy Lippert, Ash Grove corporate energy director, of the company’s then president and chief operating officer who died in 2010. “He got this started in 2007 and we set a five-year time horizon to make it happen.”

To prepare, Lippert said that a team went through all the plants, five years of operating data and did some benchmarking.

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The new vertical finish mill.

A NOTE FROM CAREY AUSTELL, PLANT MANAGER



Carey Austell, plant manager

The first half of 2011 has been quite the roller coaster ride. While the economy has yet to do its part to get things back on a healthy path, our employees are more than doing their part to make our plant successful. Our employees continue to learn and gain confidence in their abilities utilizing the state-of-the-art equipment and technology that has made the Foreman plant one of the most environmentally friendly and energy efficient cement facilities in the world. We value our facility and the employees who work so hard in ensuring the smooth operation of the plant. The transition to the new process has been difficult at times, but our group of experienced employees has met every challenge head on.

The transition to the new facility hasn’t been the only change that Ash Grove has experienced. In addition to the solid group of experienced employees here at Foreman, over the past several months we have welcomed many new faces to the Ash Grove Foreman family.

One of the new faces is Ted Jennings. Ted joined us at our Foreman plant in November 2010 as our new production manager. Ted is originally from Bismarck, N.D., and previously worked as a process engineer at Ash Grove’s Chanute, Kan., plant and most recently worked as a process engineer at Ash Grove’s corporate office in Portland, Ore. As our new production manager, Ted is using his experience to take our production department to the next level. Ted is doing an excellent job in his new position, and we are taking every opportunity to draw from his vast wealth of knowledge and experience.

Also joining the Ash Grove family as our new human resource and safety manager is Blake Aubrey. Blake was born and raised right here in Foreman. His father has worked at Ash Grove for 38 years and his grandfather began in the cement industry in the late 1950’s. Blake is proudly

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Health and Safety Audit Adds Layer of Prevention

Corporate Health and Safety Director Steve Minshall led a health and safety audit this summer at Ash Grove Cement Foreman. These two-to-three day audits involve a close physical inspection of the plant, looking not only at situations that might

violate a regulation, but also at those that might cause a person to be injured. “At the end of the audit we do a close-out meeting with the plant manager and safety manager, go over our written findings from a health and safety process evaluation and review a PowerPoint presentation of the physical plant inspection, giving our recommendations

on what is needed to fix any issues,” said Minshall. “The third thing we do is evaluate for potential trips, slips and falls.” These corporate health and safety audits are done with each Ash Grove plant every few years as another avenue to raise awareness, and to check a plant’s compliance with the company’s health and safety policies and procedures. ■

New Silos Under Construction to Support Increased Plant Capacity

Construction on two, 12,000-ton cement silos and three new truck loading lanes is well underway at the Foreman plant. The 16-month, \$14.3 million project will increase storage to accommodate the reconstructed plant's capacity, which grew to 1.5 million tons from 1 million.

"This will improve customer service, and with the new technology that automates product loading, the time it takes to load will decrease," said Aaron Bufmack, corporate engineer and project manager for this undertaking. In the most recent stage of the project, the silos were slip formed, moving from ground level with a continuous 24/7 vertical pour until it reached 175 feet. On completion in late summer 2012, Ash Grove staff and drivers will be trained to operate the new technology, which loads the cement to the desired weight onto each truck automatically. ■



Foreman plant

ASH GROVE AND GRANT SPRUCE UP FOREMAN CITY PARK

The City of Foreman was the fortunate recipient of a \$70,000 grant from the Arkansas Economic Development Commission awarded for improvements to our Foreman City Park due, in part, to the good work of a local former state senator, the city manager's vivid description of the park's need and the community investment made by Ash Grove Cement Foreman.

According to Theresa Woods, Parks and Recreation director, Ash Grove Cement Foreman employees contributed to several of the improvement projects. "Ash Grove employees are pouring slabs for lighting on the walking trail and for the concession building, which also serves as an electric room at the park," she said. "They're designing a sign and installing flag poles and fencing made from aggregate concrete. Plus, they are giving their time to clean up the debris from the various projects so the public will not be inconvenienced."

Woods said all the improvements make the park more welcoming, attractive and visible. ■

Ash Grove Hits \$20 Million Energy Reduction Goal

(continued from front cover)

Then he joined Chuck, Ash Grove Chairman Charlie Sunderland, Vice President of Manufacturing Services Fran Streitman in meeting with senior staff and plant managers to design the program. In early 2008, the team held meetings at every plant with supervisors and hourly staff to talk it through and roll out the program.

"Employee suggestions have been gratifying," Lippert said. "Everything from turning on a conveyor belt only when it is moving material to putting motion detectors on lighting to installing heat exchangers and reclaiming heat off the clinker cooling process. We still are receiving ideas good enough to implement companywide."

The company already has begun writing goals and procedures for 2013 and beyond to continue to conserve energy and natural resources by improving the efficiency and performance of the plants. ■

A Note From Carey Austell

(continued from front cover)

carrying on that tradition. Before coming to work for Ash Grove, Blake was employed with the company that oversaw the construction of our new facility here in Foreman. This provided him with valuable experience and knowledge we are now using to ensure that Ash Grove Foreman is a safe and employee-friendly place of employment.

Phil Teintze, his wife, Breanna, and their three children joined the Ash Grove Foreman family in March after Phil accepted the process engineer position. Previously, Phil was employed as the process engineer at Ash

Grove's plant in Montana City, Mont. Phil has been instrumental in optimizing the software programs required to operate our plant. Phil also has played a huge role in ensuring that our plant achieves its goal of becoming certified under ISO 14001, an international standard for environmental excellence. Phil is quickly becoming a valuable part of our team, and was recently promoted to production superintendent.

There are a couple of employees who may not be new to Ash Grove Foreman but have certainly taken on new and important roles.

Steve Lewis and Chris Gualdin each have been promoted to maintenance supervisor positions after many years working as hourly employees. Previously, Steve worked as a control room operator, and Chris worked as a multi-craft repairman. Both have been valuable additions to our team.

With the solid base our tenured employees provide and the new ideas our welcomed new additions provide, I feel we at Ash Grove Foreman have assembled a team that is more than capable of not only surviving the economic downturn but thriving in the midst of it. ■

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

John Gathright



John Gathright

As a maintenance repairman with Ash Grove for more than 20 years, John Gathright knows how to reclaim and repair all kinds of equipment, and he has

taken that skill to world-class levels outside the plant.

For clients across the country and overseas, Gathright is a “luthier,” a person who makes or repairs stringed instruments.

“When I was younger, I wanted to play the fiddle and quickly realized that I didn’t have what it takes,” he said. “I always loved to do woodworking with my grandfather, a woodworker and my personal idol. I made cabinets and furniture, but after awhile grew bored with that. One day, a guy approached me to do some repair work on a mandolin so I gave it a try. From that point, I began to repair and build them and have been doing so for the last 25 years.”

His son, professional musician Jake Gathright, shares a love of mandolins as a performer. Jake plays bluegrass and country music locally and in 47 states so far. Father and son have matching arm tattoos of the head of a mandolin with “The Gathright” as a testimony to their shared passion and family name.

John Gathright makes and repairs the instruments, but doesn’t play them. Jake Gathright plays them but can’t repair or make them.

“I start from a piece of raw wood and from there customize each piece to the needs of my buyers,” the senior Gathright said. “They all want something a little different,” he said.

He has sold his pieces as far away as Adelburg, Germany. “I once sold a piece to a young man in the U.S. Air Force from Georgia who was overseas at the time. Someone saw the mandolin and liked it so much that they called me to have one made.” All his luthier business is word of mouth, never needing to place an advertisement.

“People often ask me, ‘How can you build mandolins without playing one?’ I always say, ‘Well, they can play them but they can’t build them.’” ■

Boy Scout Troop 54 Does Its Best For Ash Grove

Boy Scout Troop 54 of De Queen, Ark., participated in two activities with Ash Grove Cement Foreman this summer. As we moved into our reconstructed plant facility, we installed flag poles in front of our new administration building and invited the troop to help us host a flag raising ceremony. Members of the troop, in full color guard, came and did a beautiful job raising the first flags to fly at our new home.

As part of the June Southern Sportsmen Foundation Outdoor Extravaganza event, members of the Boy Scout troop were able to earn a merit badge they would be unable to earn anywhere else, for learning about outdoor activities and safety. The Scouts participated in the event’s outdoor education, teaching visitors about outdoor sports and recreational skills. ■



Photos left to right: Boy Scout Troop 54 raises the flag at Outdoor Extravaganza; Foreman Elementary School 6th-grader Kylie Cowan, winner of the annual Foreman T-shirt contest (third from left). Pictured with her father, Zon Cowan, laborer at the Foreman plant; mother, Sonja Cowan; and sister, Kenzie Cowan.

Local Sixth Grader’s Environmental Artwork Inspired by Ash Grove

Kylie Cowan, 6th grade student at Oscar Hamilton Elementary School and daughter of Ash Grove Foreman Laborer, Zon Cowan, came up with the winning art work in a t-shirt contest hosted by the plant and the school. The contest, involving art work and a slogan, challenged the school’s sixth grade students and Cadense Environmental Energy lab employees to come up with creative ideas that would capture the story of Ash Grove Cement Foreman’s commitment to the environment. ‘Ash Grove: Cemented with Nature,’ was the winning slogan, submitted by Cadense Lab Manager Jason McMillan. Kylie’s and Jason’s winning work was printed on t-shirts distributed to employees at the Foreman plant. ■

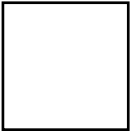
Foreman’s International Environmental Certification for 2011

Bill Dugan, Ash Grove Cement Foreman waste fuel supervisor and site ISO champion, said the plant is on track to earn its ISO 14001 certification by November of this year. After completion of the plant’s reconstruction, Foreman’s Environmental Management System team developed new environmental objectives for the plant. These were reviewed and approved by Vice President – Manufacturing Midwest Ed Pierce, and the plant’s progress on the objectives underwent a corporate audit in June by Corporate Environmental Managers Scott Nielson and Bob Vantuyl as well as the Chanute, Kan., plant’s Environmental Manager Mark Ward. “We have a certification timeline with all the milestones we needed to achieve prior to the ISO-certified third party coming out to evaluate us, and we meet monthly to stay on schedule,” Dugan said. “This is a plant-wide effort and we give training to every employee on the company’s environmental stewardship goals. Everyone is on this team.” ■



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FOREMAN HOSTS OUTDOOR EXTRAVAGANZA

The Foreman, Ark., plant welcomed an estimated 250 outdoor enthusiasts from across the region in June when they hosted the Southern Sportsmen Foundation Outdoor Extravaganza. The event featured 12 stations, many staffed by Ash Grove Cement Foreman employees, to educate participants about outdoor activities including hunting, fishing, camp fire cooking, trapping and outdoor safety. These programs were offered at no cost through state and local agencies that specialize in educating the public in outdoor activities and safety.

“This was our opportunity to give back to the community with a free event, show the local youth aspects of the outdoor world as well as partner with Ash Grove.”

Mike Cranford, founder of the Southern Sportsmen Foundation, was in attendance for the festivities. “This was our opportunity give back to the community with a free event, show the local youth aspects of the outdoor world as well as partner with Ash Grove,” Cranford said. “We hope to make this an annual event and increase attendance each year.”

The Southern Sportsmen Foundation is a not-for-profit organization based in Foreman dedicated to fostering a passion for the outdoors among individuals with disabilities, including children and veterans. Since its inception in 2004, the foundation has helped dozens of hunters with disabilities. ■

Eley Talley, a biologist from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, talks about gators.