No pipe dream for Potter and Clabough

Two BWXT Y-12 apprentice construction pipe fitters placed in the Tennessee State Pipe Trades Apprenticeship contest held recently in Nashville. Chester Potter took first place in the welding division and advances to the regional contest in South Carolina. Billy Clabough took second place in the pipe fitters division and is listed as an alternate for the regional competition.

Both men are happy about the opportunity to participate in the apprenticeship program at Local 102 Steamfitters in Knoxville and credit on-the-job learning for their skill level. “You’re learning how to weld,” said Potter, “but you still have to pass all the welding tests a journeyman has to. It’s a good experience.”

Clabough likes the variety of pipe fitting. “It’s not the same job over and over,” he said. “You do a variety of hands-on jobs and you meet different people day in and day out.”

Clabough competed against seven other apprentice pipe fitters at the contest. In addition to three challenging written exams, he completed two hands-on projects, including a rigging test. Potter’s project was to build a pipe hanger from a piece of plate metal.

Potter chose a career as a welder because he grew up with it. “It’s what my dad does,” he said. “He’s been welding for probably 25 years now.”

Clabough made the decision to try a career as a pipe fitter at the urging of friends. “They talked to me back in September 2002. I said I’ll give it a shot.” Safety is an important part of Y-12’s apprentice program. Potter said welders wear fire retardant coveralls when they weld or do hot work. He also wears a welding hood. When welding stainless steel, he wears a respirator. Clabough wears safety glasses, a hardhat and gloves.

“When we do elevated work, we wear a five-point safety harness and have to be tied off to an approved area,” Clabough said.

Besides allowing apprentices to demonstrate their skills, the pipe trades apprenticeship contest awards prizes. Potter received $300 for his first-place finish. “I don’t know what the prize is at South Carolina,” said Potter, “but they’re giving away a new truck in the Nationals.”

Placing in challenging contests such as this one has other benefits, according to Clabough. “It means a great deal, like in confidence and motivation. It’s a good learning experience,” he said.

Holiday options for salaried employees

Many salaried employees working 4/10s asked for an alternative to making up the two hours of holiday time during the last holiday week of the year. To meet those requests, APlus, Y-12’s internal timekeeping system, has been reconfigured to allow the eight-hour holiday time to be entered for an alternate holiday.

With supervisory approval, employees can choose which holiday they use for eight-hour pay and then make up the remaining two hours. For example, employees may enter their eight-hour holiday on Labor Day and make up the remaining two hours during Labor Day week or, if monthly, employees will have the entire business month to make up the remaining two hours. If employees have less than eight hours available for the last holiday of the year (typically due to changing from the A shift to the B shift, from an eight-hour shift to a 10-hour shift, etc.), employees can enter into APlus the hours they have remaining on the last holiday of the year. If employees have excess hours available on that last holiday (e.g., 12), they will be able to enter the two excess hours on another scheduled work day during that last week. Future APlus updates include a feature allowing employees to view their remaining holiday hours.

If you have any questions about these changes, please contact Employee Relations at 576-8426.

More shutterbug winners, pg. 6 * “most extraordinary...experiment in history,” pg. 6
Two Y-12 employees recently received special honors. Gloria Mencer, Socioeconomic Programs manager, was a featured advocate in Bechtel’s Small Business Advocate eNewsletter. Brenda Hunter, Internal Audit division manager, was named one of the 2007 National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education’s (or NAFEO) distinguished alumni.

In her daily duties, Mencer works to improve business not only at Y-12 but also in small businesses located in surrounding communities. “Y-12 is known for protecting our nation’s interests, but what many people don’t realize is that Y-12 helps small businesses in this area and throughout our country,” she said. Y-12 has the honor for holding the most mentor-protégé agreements—currently 20—in the Nuclear Weapons Complex.

A highlight of Mencer’s job is working with the Mentor-Protégé Program and small businesses. The Mentor-Protégé Program strives to foster long-term business relationships between Y-12 and small businesses. During the process, both the mentor’s (Y-12) and the protégé’s (the small business) goals are enhanced.

“Our Y-12 mentors who work with those protégés are sharing their expertise and knowledge,” Mencer said.

The two Y-12 women of fame are somewhat connected in their achievements. Hunter was nominated to NAFEO by her alma mater, Alabama State University—one of Y-12’s protégés. “I’m proud to say I’m a graduate of ASU, and it makes me even prouder to see that ASU is working with government agencies like Y-12 and gaining business experience,” Hunter said.

ASU, a Historically Black College or University, nominated Hunter to the NAFEO because she is “distinguished in [her] profession, community and the nation for excellence and altruism.” Asked how she achieved the accomplishments she has, Hunter said it was due to picking peas on her family farm in Alabama.

“I compare each goal I strive to reach to picking peas. It’s is hard work. You have to reach out for those little gems. Each one you get is a success. Then when you put them all together you have a bigger success. My goal each day is to be the best at what I do.” Hunter believes her keys to success are hard work and a positive attitude; she attributes these two characteristics to her mother. “She instilled in us [Hunter and her siblings] the thought that whatever you want to do, you can do.”

If you encounter Mencer or Hunter, be sure to congratulate them on their successes. They are great role models who offer a lot to all Y-12 employees.
Y-12 presents $300K to foundation

Y-12 has presented the Oak Ridge Public Schools Education Foundation with a check for $300,000, representing its pledge this year of $200,000 toward the rebuilding of Oak Ridge High School and an additional $100,000 contribution for the Education Foundation’s endowment.

“We made a commitment in 2004–2005 that we would support the fund-raising campaign for the high school because we value education,” said George Dials, president and general manager of BWXT Y-12. Dials presented the check on Friday to Thom Mason, chairman of the Education Foundation board.

BWXT Y-12 has committed to a contribution of $1 million during the Education Foundation’s five-year campaign. The $200,000 contribution represents the third-year contribution, while the additional $100,000 is a new contribution, over and above the pledged amount.

—Condensed from The Oak Ridger, May 8

Campers to examine debris from space shuttle Columbia

Area high school students will get a chance to experience real-world science applications during the 2007 Materials Camp in Oak Ridge.

“Students will have a chance to use state-of-the-art equipment, including Y-12’s large-chamber scanning electron microscope, to solve a real-life failure analysis,” said Jaret Frafjord, a metallurgical engineer at Y-12.

During camp, students will examine debris from the space shuttle Columbia, which disintegrated during re-entry to the Earth’s atmosphere Feb. 1, 2003. These pieces, provided to the camp by NASA, have never been studied before.

—Condensed from The Oak Ridger, May 21

Uranium Center of Excellence: more than just a fancy name?

George Dials, general manager at the Y-12 National Security Complex, is pushing the plant’s designation as the Uranium Center of Excellence.

During a recent visit to the News Sentinel, Dials said that role—as outlined in the government’s Complex 2030 plans for nuclear weapons work—is an important part of Y-12’s future.

Naming Y-12 as the Uranium Center of Excellence would seem to state the obvious, since the Oak Ridge plant has been a hub for uranium work since the World War II Manhattan Project.

Dials said Uranium Center of Excellence is more than just a designation, although he offered few details. He indicated the work will become increasingly international, including nonproliferation projects, and he emphasized the plant’s research capabilities. He said announcements in regard to that work would be forthcoming.

Meanwhile, he said construction of the Highly Enriched Uranium Materials Facility is now 52 percent complete, and he expressed confidence that the high-security storage facility would be completed within the current cost estimate of $549 million, more than double the original price tag.

Dials also confirmed that the cost of the Uranium Processing Facility, a proposed manufacturing center for Y-12, could reach $2 billion—double the earlier estimate of about $1 billion.

The general manager said the current estimate is between $1.4 billion and $2 billion. He said the biggest factor in the cost increase is meeting the Design Basis Threat, the standard to counter terrorism.

Dials said the schedule for building the production facility, which will be next door to the uranium storehouse, is slipping significantly as officials await the next step.

That’s not good news from the Y-12 perspective, obviously, but Dials did manage to find a positive. He suggested the stretched-out schedule for UPF could improve the chances of getting such a big project funded through Congress.

—Condensed from Knoxville News Sentinel, May 9
New, improved APlus time card for weekly, hourly employees

APlus

An upgraded APlus time card has recently become available for weekly and hourly employees. The new interface is part of the same SAP system upgrade that implemented changes to the APlus time card for exempt employees last October.

“We’re just bringing it up to the contemporary technology,” said John Hagen (Chief Financial Officer). “What’s really driving this is that SAP is going through an upgrade later this summer. We can’t have the old technology time card. It’s incompatible.”

Hagen said that the upgraded APlus interface has a better look and feel, “but fundamentally it doesn’t change the way they enter time, and none of the business rules change so everything remains very much the same.”

Hagen said that the new interface makes better use of space and will contain the same set of links as the time card for monthly employees. “If you want absences, you click on absences. If you want a burden code, click on burdens.”

Some things have been moved. “The facility to add a charge number is now near the top of the card. The right-hand side of the card now has an assortment of useful links, including absences, attendance, burdens, and specialty pay. There is even a link for a temporary shift change.”

Hagen said the upgrade affects all weekly employees as well as everyone who enters time for hourly employees.

Target Zero: It is attainable

While Target Zero has been Y-12’s goal, some may think it’s unattainable. It was not surprising when Lorry Ruth, Emergency Services manager, received some skepticism when he challenged his employees to attain Target Zero, but ES personnel recently achieved 250,000 hours without an injury.

Ruth credits his managers for “walking the walk” and notes that managerial, personal and internal commitment is necessary to achieve Target Zero. He said, “You have to not only commit to not being injured—you have to commit to ensuring your co-workers are not injured.”

When addressing some ES employees, President and General Manager George Dials praised them as a “great example to others.” The value of that example cannot be underestimated since ES employees perform some of the most inherently dangerous work on site. Think about it. While fighting fires, transporting injured or ill personnel and working in full radiological gear, these employees worked a quarter of a million safe hours.

According to Larry Lewis, Fire Safety, “Just learning to do the job (firefighting) can be very hazardous. Across the industry, a tremendous number of injuries occur during training.” That training includes fighting fires, cutting into vehicles and other dangerous activities with many possible hazards.

Lewis, who is relatively new to the organization, noted the individual commitment demonstrated throughout the organization as well as the role of Y-12’s Safety department. He said, “Safety has the programs in place to enable organizations to avoid injuries—we just need to use them.”

Dials praised the employees’ efforts to “step up to the mark and say ‘we’ll start here.’” If ES personnel can complete 238 emergency responses without an injury, other organizations should be able to replicate their success.

This achievement exemplifies “what you do counts,” according to Dials. One thing for sure: 250,000 hours is a fairly tremendous count.

The 401(k) Company will become the new recordkeeper for the Oak Ridge 401(k) Savings Program effective July 1, 2007. For more information, visit www.401kaccess.com/oakridge.

The 401(k) Company

That’s for Us!
What you do counts

It’s difficult to imagine a job with more responsibility than the one Dolph King, a technical information analyst with the Technical Information Office, has. One of King’s major responsibilities is to decide whether information can be publicly released. Determining that is not always immediately clear, however.

“The fact that information is unclassified in no way ensures its suitability for release,” King said. “There is a broad spectrum of unclassified sensitive issues that must be considered by subject matter experts and TIO before information is determined to be releasable.”

All Y-12 scientific, technical and operational information for external or public release passes through King’s office. He must review the material and make a decision on its final approval. Employees share some of King’s responsibility. Individuals requesting the information be released are responsible for ensuring approval has been granted prior to release.

Failure to obtain review and approval of the information can have catastrophic results for Y-12, from loss of patents and related royalties and violation of federal laws, such as the Copyright Act, to loss of congressional confidence and possible reductions in funding levels.

King reviews journal articles, theses or dissertations, engineering drawings, bulletins, photographs, videos, and other information products. He even reads the BWXTymes and The Y-12 Report before they are released.

“I’m on the front end and I get to see everything before it’s released,” said King. “It’s interesting to be able to review that information.”

The 33-year company veteran said that the most rewarding part of his job involves positive customer feedback. “It is the customer appreciation and thank you for providing guidance and feedback to management, authors and technical support personnel,” King said.

Congrats to WSI–Oak Ridge

Wackenhut Services Inc. was awarded contracts worth $549 million from the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Nuclear Security Administration. WSI–Oak Ridge has provided protective force and guard services to Y-12 and other Oak Ridge facilities since 2000.

P2 recognizes winners

The Pollution Prevention Program recently recognized the winners of the Y-12 Pollution Solutions awards for FY 2006 activities.

The Y-12 Pollution Solutions awards program was developed to recognize Y-12 employees and organizations that demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship and waste reduction (i.e., reducing pollution). Jan Jackson, Pollution Prevention Program manager, said, “Y-12 employees make my job, Aprell’s [Patterson] job and Lori’s [Cappiello] job easier. By integrating employees’ ideas into Y-12 activities, we increase our recycle rate and perform work more cost effectively.”

Many of the winning teams also were recognized by the National Nuclear Security Administration and the U.S. Department of Energy for their award-winning ideas.

Deputy General Manager of Operations Darrel Kohlhorst told the more than 200 recipients, “What you do counts, and nowhere is that more important than with the environment. I’m amazed at the innovative ways Y-12 employees continue to find to recycle and reduce the amount of waste we create.”

Source Reduction Awards
Y-12 Improves Film Processing Methods to Reduce Hazardous Waste Team
Y-12 Paper Reduction Initiatives Team

Recycle/Reuse Awards
Mercury-Containing Equipment Recycling Initiative Team
GMO Aluminum Recycling Initiative Team

Non-Routine Waste Reduction Awards
Chiller Retrofit and Removal Team
Electrical Switches Replacement Team

Sowing the Seeds for Change Awards
Solar Energy Conservation Activities Team
Building 9995 Materials Reuse Efforts Activity

Sustainability Systems Awards
Y-12 EMS-Driven Continual Improvement to Streamline the Kathene Waste Management Process Team
Sustainable Soil Reuse for Land Conservation and Improved Wildlife Habitat Team

Environmental Preferability Awards
Innovative Integration of Environmentally Preferable Products in the Y-12 Fire Training Tower Team
Expanding Use of Alternative Fuels in Y-12 Vehicles Team

Organization Award
Facilities, Infrastructure and Services
The May BWXTymes highlighted Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson’s 1945 visit to Oak Ridge. Stimson was the person President Franklin D. Roosevelt had charged with the responsibility of the overall atomic bomb effort. Stimson, highly respected for his government experience and World War I service, understood the international implications of World War II. He disapproved of the fire-bombing of Japanese cities and removed the cultural city of Kyoto from the atomic bomb target list. He provided President Harry S. Truman information for discussions with Joseph Stalin at the Potsdam Conference. General Leslie Groves communicated the success of the Trinity test to Stimson. This bolstered President Truman’s confidence in negotiations with Stalin. So you see, Stimson was a key individual during the entire Manhattan Project.

In his April 11, 1945, diary entry, Stimson wrote about his trip to Oak Ridge (source Yale University Library archives). “I returned from my trip to Tennessee cheered up and braced up by the change of work and scene. I was there confronted with the largest and most extraordinary scientific experiment in history and was the first outsider to pierce the secrecy of its barricades and to have explained to me the tremendous development which has been going on not only in scientific experiment but in the creation of an orderly and well-governed city, in size the fifth largest in the State of Tennessee.

“General Groves, who went with me, is the man who has done the job, and a marvelous job it is. It has this unique peculiarity: that, although every prophesy thus far has been fulfilled by the development and we can see that success is 99 percent assured, yet only by the first actual war trial of the weapon can the actual certainty be fixed.”

President Roosevelt died April 12, 1945, while Stimson was visiting Oak Ridge and touring the facilities. It has not been confirmed which three buildings Stimson visited while at Y-12. If you know anyone who might have this information, contact Ray Smith (srd; 576-7781). Smith would also like to hear your suggestions for future stories of Y-12’s unique history.
Gertsen emphasizes Uranium Center of Excellence at DU conference

John Gertsen, Engineering division manager, spoke at the recent Depleted Uranium Users Conference in Knoxville. The two-and-a-half-day event—to discuss processing techniques for depleted uranium—was an opportunity for Y-12 to publicize its exciting new Uranium Center of Excellence.

“The combination of NNSA [National Nuclear Security Administration] consolidation, investment in Y-12 and increased collaboration is powerful, and it creates significant new opportunities for Y-12 and our partners,” Gertsen told the attendees.

His presentation emphasized the opportunities companies will have to partner with Y-12 to exchange expertise in uranium research and technology. The Uranium Center of Excellence’s success depends on the expanded capabilities to come with the new uranium storage and processing facilities and the upgrade of related facilities, as well as on attracting specialists in uranium to Y-12 via collaborative agreements.

Gertsen stressed tapping into the talents of local companies, participants in the extensive Mentor-Protégé Program and Oak Ridge National Laboratory to establish an exceptional situation where the possibilities in materials research are limitless.

Of the more than 90 people attending the conference, more than 30 represented organizations at Y-12. Speakers besides Gertsen from Y-12 or the Y-12 Site Office included Eugene Bird, Bob Bridges, Louis Powell, Ed Ripley and Roland Seals (all members of Applied Technologies) and Becky Eddy (NNSA-YSO).

Attendees came from organizations such as Los Alamos National Laboratory, Savannah River Site, ORNL, U.S. Army, Purdue University, University of Tennessee, General Atomics, Aerojet Ordnance Tennessee, Nuclear Fuel Services, Pro2Serve and Magenta Inc. Overseas companies represented included the Atomic Weapons Establishment and Safeguard International Solutions in the United Kingdom and Gesellschaft für Schwerionenforschung mbH in Germany.
Watch YSource, YLights, The Y-12 Report and the BWXTymes for more construction and move updates.

Did you know?

After several years of planning, negotiations, paperwork, waiting and construction, Y-12 is finally at project completion. The Jack Case and New Hope centers are finished, and the Mega Move of 1,400 Y-12 employees will begin in late July. Have you prepared? Are you ready to move? The Mega Move website contains the most current construction- and move-related information; visit that site to answer your last-minute questions.

- On the first day of your scheduled move week, a welcome and orientation session will be provided in the auditoriums of the new buildings. You will receive maps and other pertinent information to acquaint you with the new space.
- The move contract has been awarded, and boxes for people moves will be delivered by mid-June to the lobby or entrance area of each building (10 boxes per person).
- There are 140 badge readers in the two buildings.
- Employees occupying off-site leased space or buildings to be demolished have been scheduled to move first.
- PC users should check out the computer move instructions available on the Mega Move website. Helpdesk and IT staff will be available for assistance as needed.
- New telephones will be provided, and your telephone number will be transferred.
- Visit the Mega Move website for details about the classified material move.
- Special moves of people and equipment are scheduled to allow time for installation of electronic vertical storage files and readiness of vault-type rooms.
- Some group moves have been split to minimize disruption of services (e.g., Printing and Reproduction).