



Before & After- Associating Finishing updated our lighting throughout the entire plant in August. As you can see, it has made a huge difference. We were also able to get a rebate from the Center of Energy & Environment, which will give us a quick return on our investment.



Happy Anniversary!!!

The following employees celebrated milestone anniversaries and were honored at our GROWTH Meeting on October 15, 2009. Congratulations to all of them. Each employee received gift certificates to participating local Mankato businesses of their choice.

Together they total 100 years of service at AFI. Thank you!

5 years

Ann Austad (Human Resources & IT)

Terry McMichael (1st shift Lead racking/packing)

Stan Voelkel (trucking)

10 years

Connie Kump (powder painter)

15 years

Curt Sieg (powder painter)

Tom Wanta (silk screening)

20 years

Scott Niss (estimating/sales)

25 years

Larry Olfert (powder painter)



Left to Right: Larry Olfert, Terry McMichael, Scott Niss, Connie Kump, Ann Austad, Tom Wanta.
Stan Voelkel, Curt Sieg (Not pictured)



PANCAKE FEED

On September 15, 2009, owners John and Ted made breakfast for all of the AFI employees. There was a bit of competition between the guys on whose pancakes were better!

Please pass the syrup!

KAIZEN: The AFI Lean Steering Committee implemented another Kaizen event from May to July & August to October. Employees were encouraged to challenge themselves to improve on how they do their jobs. We received twenty-three Kaizen entries, with two winners receiving \$100.00 cash for their ideas. Winners were Tom Wanta, silk screening department, and Mary Lynn Devens, orange line painter.

Congrats Tom and Mary Lynn!!!



Trivia Question: How much do you think manufacturers in the U.S. spend each year on pollution prevention and waste treatment?

Answer: Believe it or not, more than 26 billion dollars!



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We welcome quotes - e-mail to: quotes@associatedfinishing.com
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How well do you know AFI's employees? This is the last of the our series featuring 15 of our employees who have unique hobbies or interests. This newsletter will feature our last four. How many did you get right? See the complete answer chart below.

- 1. **Volunteer of the Year—Evelyn Adams is a match.** Evelyn was nominated for Modern Woodman of America's National Fraternalism Volunteer of the Year Award. Evelyn has been a member of Modern Woodman for over 21 years. Evelyn leads a youth service club in Mankato, and plans the activities each month for the 13 young members. She donates time on Saturdays to hold bake sales at our local Farmer's Market. In addition, Evelyn is a camp secretary of two other Modern Woodman Camps for adults in Mankato. Evelyn received her award July 2009 in Hersey, Pennsylvania. Evelyn has been married to Don for 32 years. They have four grown children. Evelyn likes working at AFI because of the variety of jobs she works on and she also likes the people she works with.
- 2. **Drummer—Ann Austad is a match.** Ann has been playing drums since she was in 6th grade. She also self taught herself to play a "trap set" for church. She was never in a band but had some barn revivals. She plays mostly for Sunday worship. Ann is our HR and IT expert at AFI. She has been working at AFI for 5 years. Ann's husband is currently deployed to Iraq. Their family misses him, but they are counting the days for his return. Ann enjoys bowling, golfing, fishing, gardening, and baseball. Ann has been married to Tim for 29 years and they have three children and four grandchildren.
- 3. **John Deere Tractor Collector—John Kapsner is a match.** John grew up on a small farm with 7 brothers and 1 sister. He has many fond memories of riding on the John Deere tractors with his Dad and working the land. John was around 7 years old when he began driving the tractors. John's dad worked as a bookkeeper at a business that was a John Deere distributor. John is sure he had every John Deere tractor or piece of equipment that was ever made. He was either playing baseball or playing with his John Deere tractors. John only collects the tractors and equipment that he remembers as a child. He has about 20 tractors, and is working on collecting the equipment. The pieces he has collected are all 1940's, 50's or 60's vintage. John's favorite pieces are a 420 John Deere Tractor and a 14T baler and hay rack. He has been at AFI for 21 years. John has been married to Donna for 32 years. They have two grown sons and two beautiful granddaughters. John says the most drastic changes he has seen at AFI are customer demands, turn time, quality demands, and keeping the work in America instead of overseas. The reason he likes working at AFI is by far the people.
- 4. **Chicago Boy—Tony Senese is a match.** Tony was born and raised in the Chicago suburb of Wooddale, about 10 minutes from O'Hare International Airport. Tony's family owns Senese's Restaurant located in Oaklawn, Illinois. They specialize in Italian and American Cuisine. Tony recommends eating there if you are planning to be in the Chicago area. His favorite memories about growing up in Chicago are the blizzard of 1979, and going to watch the Cubs at Wrigley Field. Tony has two children, Corina 12 and Cameron 9. Tony has worked at AFI for 23 years and likes working with the people and the steady workload. The most drastic change he has seen is all the liquid military paint verses powder painting that AFI is currently doing.

We have now featured all of our 15 employees in the present and past newsletter. Below they are all matched up with hobbies or interests.

Most Seasoned Painter	Larry Olfert
Owns TopShelf Karaoke Business	Chrissy Sather
Owns Obligato Recording Studio	Mike Reinarts
John Deere Tractor Collector	John Kapsner
Owns a Furniture Refinishing Business	Al Baer
Bear Hunter	Gene Hoffman
Vintage Scooter Enthusiast	Reggie Williams
Glass Blower	Bob Doring
Veteran Honor Guard	Eugene Johnson
Drummer	Ann Austad
Chicago Boy	Tony Senese
Dart Player	Shari Small

Tuba Player	Ted Schreyer
AFI Mascot	SoCo
Volunteer of the Year	Evelyn Adams

AFI HONORS OUR VETERANS

AFI honored their veterans by presenting each of them with Honor Casting Bookends manufactured by Dotson Company of Mankato. Dotson supplies AFI with the castings. In exchange AFI powder-coats the castings. Dotson also provides AFI with a name plaque and a felt bottom to prevent scratching. Thank you Dotson for making this possible.



RESPIRATOR FIT TESTING- On 9-17-09 Ann Austad performed our Respirator Fit Testing. She tested 25 AFI employees. They were tested with respirators if they paint liquid, or with dust masks if they paint powder. This is a yearly required training performed at AFI.



Our Veterans: (standing left to right) Eugene (Tiny) Johnson, Cal Schultz, Ken Wikre, Jimmy Newsom, Tony McMichael, Ann Austad. (Kneeling) Bill Muldoon and Ted Schreyer. (Not pictured) Alan Baer, Kristi Ouellette, and Tom Wanta. Thank you for your service to our country. We are proud to honor you!

Merry Christmas!!

As new owners of AFI, the past year has been full of "firsts" for us. Another "first" is our first chance to address you with our Christmas Greeting in our AFI newsletter. At AFI, we do say "Merry Christmas" and we feel we can celebrate the birth of our Savior without offending our non-Christian friends.



The past year has been full of ups and downs but through it all, we have strived to maintain the same quality and service that we have been known for. The economy has been particularly tough on many of our customers but our employees have gone the extra mile to "step-it-up" and make sure we all get through the economic challenges together. Even in this down economy, we have been fortunate to thrive and remain strong in our services to you, our customer. We thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

In this Christmas season, we also want to take a moment to thank those who are serving us in military service. We are particularly proud of our employees in uniform. While we celebrate the holidays with family and friends in comfortable surroundings, they are in the field of battle defending our freedom. Although our current congress and administration seem to want to remove many of our basic freedoms, we still live in the greatest country and have the right to speak out and vote for our beliefs. We appreciate our soldiers for defending this right.

We look forward to the new year ahead and appreciate the business and relationships we share. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!

Ted & John

Pizza, Tacos, Donuts, and BW3's

Because of the heavy work load at AFI, we have had crews working Saturdays and Sundays. Management has been providing breakfast/lunch. One supervisor at AFI commented that this has really helped relieve the stress of getting work out for our customers and built a very strong team. Thank you to all the employees for their extra efforts.

YOU ARE GREAT!!!!!!





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*Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year
from all of us at Associated Finishing, Inc.*