



# ASSOCIATED EXPRESS



320 Mallard Lane, Mankato, MN 56001 Phone: (507) 345-5861 Fax: (507) 345-5828 April 2008

## AFI FEATURED IN A NATIONAL MAGAZINE!!!

The April issue of Products Finishing Magazine features a glimpse of AFI's national exposure. The article is found on pages 38-42. Jim Destefani, editor of Products Finishing Magazine, contacted our V.P. of Operations, Ted Schreyer, asking him to spend a day interviewing and observing AFI's approach to the changing finishing climate. "It started out as a story about Zirconium", Schreyer explained. "Zirconium is becoming a much more effective and environmentally friendly pretreatment to use on parts prior to finishing. It gives better corrosion protection without the hazards associated with phosphates. They wanted to talk to us because we have some of the most diverse experience with Zirconium in the country."

Products Finishing, one of the most respected trade journals in the paint and coatings industry, has been documenting new coating technologies since the 1930's. We feel honored to have been chosen for a feature article. As the interview progressed, Destefani realized that coaters would benefit from the creative improvements AFI has made that go beyond Zirconium. Alan Baer and Kelly McCabe were brought into the interview to discuss our Lean Manufacturing program and energy reduction efforts. Baer commented, "It's exciting to be interviewed and featured by a magazine we've been reading for years."

To read the entire article online, visit AFI's website at [www.associatedfinishing.com](http://www.associatedfinishing.com), click on the large red icon to hyperlink to Products Finishing online magazine or visit [www.pfonline.com](http://www.pfonline.com). Thank you to Products Finishing for the great article featuring AFI.



### What will you find on AFI's Employee Communication Center?

- Sales reports
- Upcoming meetings
- Birthdays
- Anniversaries
- Kaizen winners/prizes



### Communications Committee Formed at AFI



This committee will help improve our communication efforts at AFI, making AFI a better place to work for everyone! The first action item was a communication tool that all employees could use. We have installed an Employee Communication Center in our break room. (see picture at left). We are looking at installing another one in the near future. Every employee is encouraged to submit better ways or ideas that will improve communication. This includes communication to each other about AFI events to special instructions from a customer on a particular order. Our Sales and Marketing Manager, Christine Doering, has added a "RAVE REVIEW CORNER". This corner hosts e-mails or phone conversations from our customers on jobs well done by AFI. Our management team hears and reads these customer comments, but we want to make sure these comments make their way to ALL employees. It is important to share good comments and help all employees take pride in their work. This communication tool is vital for good customer service.



She said yes!



**Congratulations to Sarah Weatherford and Abraham Fatty recently engaged and getting married on May 24th 2008!**



**Congratulations to Grandpa John and Grandma Donna Kapsner on becoming first time grandparents!!!!!!**

**Proud parents: Paul & Mandy Kapsner**

Anna Jo Kapsner

Born 1-8-08

7.8 lbs ~ 19 1/2 inches long

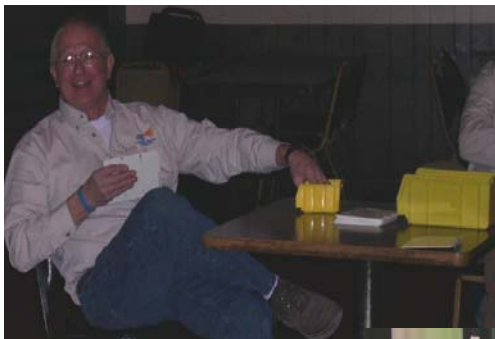


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# MORE LEAN ~ GREEN IDEAS AT ESOP MEETING



AFI's February ESOP meeting was attended by 54 employees. Al Baer, AFI's Process Engineer, gave several very visual trainings in all areas of the plant. These short training snips helped employees see the benefits of our Lean journey at AFI and how to better ourselves as a company. (Pictures at left and bottom)



## Training Within Industry presentation

Ryan Kapsner, Operations Assistant at AFI, presented a TWI (Training Within Industry) overview that will be implemented at AFI in the next few months. TWI trainings will be presented at AFI throughout the year on selected topics. TWI trains employees to follow the same methods on similar tasks, to assure continuity in all our processes at AFI.



## The Luck of the Irish—Kaizen Winners

Teresa Stevens **December** winner received a \$25.00 gift certificate to Olive Garden (top right). Isaac Helget won a 1/2 hour body massage at The Healing Touch in **January** (bottom right—massage not from Chuck). **February's** lucky winner was Jake Sukalski winning an oil change from Snell Motors (top left). **March** winner of a \$25.00 gift certificate to Gander Mountain was Jarrod Schreyer.

**Keep up the great work!!!**



How well do you know AFI's employees? Below you will see a list of some employees who have unique hobbies or interests. Match them up and see how many you get right. Answers will be in our next AFI newsletter.

- Most Seasoned Painter
- Owns TopShelf Karaoke Business
- Owns Obligotto Recording Studio
- John Deere Tractor Collector
- Owns a Furniture Refinishing Business
- Bear Hunter
- Dart Player
- Vintage Scooter Enthusiast
- Glass Blower
- Veteran Honor Guard
- Drummer
- Chicago Boy
- Tuba Player
- AFI Mascot
- Volunteer of the Year

- Shari Small
- Al Baer
- Tiny Johnson
- Larry Olfert
- Bob Doring
- Evelyn Adams
- Ted Schreyer
- Ann Austad
- Chrissy Sather
- Gene Hoffman
- SoCo
- Reggie Williams
- Mike Reinarts
- John Kapsner
- Tony Senese



**Left:** AFI's mascot.  
**Bottom:** A scooter AFI painted for an employee.

