Successful Season for Roofers

By Sydney Franklin

As soon as warm weather arrives in Indiana, the sheet metal staff begins working diligently on the substantial list of large roofing projects. The projects begin in April and typically last until September. One of the workers, Josh Cornett says this summer’s weather has not been the best at cooperating with their schedule. “It’s either really hot because we’re out on a roof in the sun or it’s raining so we have to figure out ways around that,” Cornett said.

Despite this, Cornett says he loves working at the Physical Plant because of the camaraderie of the group. Supervisor Greg Spaulding agreed, saying the projects would not get done as fast and efficiently without his employees’ solid work ethic. “I can’t be out there all the time, so I count on them to get the job done and they do. They have great teamwork,” Spaulding said.

Spaulding says there are seven roofing projects to be done this season. There are 7-9 workers on those particular projects daily, while two others are taking care of jobs that are called in. Things get hectic when there are several emergency jobs and the group is trying to stay on track with time and completion. Spaulding says part of that has a lot to do with Mother Nature. “If she doesn’t cooperate, nothing happens. If it’s too cold or wet, the glue won’t adhere,” Spaulding explained.

But even if the weather is bad, it can’t seem to stop this group from finishing strong. Spaulding says it is because they keep busy doing other things if they cannot use the glue. This is one of the things his employee, John Kiser says he loves most about the job. “Honestly, it’s about the variety for me. Our jobs are constantly changing and we do all sorts of things. No other sheet metal group does roofing, except us and I love that!” Kiser said.

Whether they are climbing up steep slate roofs lugging belts and boxes filled with tools or fixing a leak, the sheet metal workers are proud of their job. “There’s always going to be a roof and there’s always going to be someone that needs you to fix it,” Cornett said. Spaulding nodded in agreement. “It’s like my old boss Don Summit used to say, ‘if you know how to fix a roof, you’ll never go hungry.’”

Sheet Metal workers Brian Lackey and John Taylor restore the roof at the CHP.

Most roofs last approximately 15-20 years. IUB has 556 roofs on campus.
The Physical Plant Service Building has a refillable water station that has saved 9,844 bottles so far!

**Refillable Water Stations Keep IU Hydrated**

Earlier this year, the Physical Plant saved the landfill from collecting 43,500 more plastic bottles when we replaced them with American-made aluminum bottles. Now, the staff continues to support a clean and healthy campus by taking care of its environment.

The Plumbing group installed refillable water stations in several buildings this year, including Assembly Hall and Indiana Memorial Union. Assistant Director of Building Maintenance and Operations, Bill Haines, says they were meeting the needs of the community.

“The refillable stations are in high demand from students and employees, so it just makes sense to replace the old fountains with the new ones when they need to be replaced anyway,” Haines said.

Since January 2011, Plumbing has installed 48 refillable water stations. Ten of those water stations were funded by Healthy Change, a program through Healthy IU that supports wellness initiatives. Healthy IU’s Director of Health Engagement, Patty Hollingsworth, coordinated the funding saying the stations are a “win, win.”

“We drink more water, hopefully less surgery drinks, and reduce waste. It’s just a little thing, but the volume adds up.” Hollingsworth said a School of Public Health masters student calculated over 31,000 bottles were saved from just four of the refillable stations during the Spring of this year. The Physical Plant used the calculations to estimate approximately 155,000 bottles saved from Healthy IU’s 10 stations in the past 8 months.

Each station has a number display that tracks each 16 oz bottle saved per amount of water used. Using a reusable water bottle saves your money - tap water can be as much as 1000 times cheaper than bottled water.

The IU Health Center organized a four week program in February called IU ENERGY! to educate students on health and wellness. The first week’s itinerary titled “Drinking Healthy Beverages” stated drinking one soda daily adds up to 14.7 pounds. Plus, energy provided from water lasts much longer and keeps your body’s systems working properly.

Building Maintenance and Operations Craft Coordinator, Bob Wetzel, agrees that the refillable water stations are both healthy and beneficial.

“Everybody wants to use their own bottle and carry around their water,” Wetzel said. “And it’s healthier because the station is hands free. The water is clean and tastes good!”

Read more on the benefits of drinking water at http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/

**Physical Plant Staff Steps into Fitness**

Here at the Physical Plant, we’re thinking about getting fit. Over 60 employees signed up for the 12-week Step into Fitness walking program hosted by IU Recreational Sports.

Divided into five teams, the Physical Plant has made getting fit fun and challenging. As competition heats up, Team Captain of the self-titled Tough Striders, Beth Parker, says she’s been sending motivational emails to keep her team going.

“I send pictures or quotes or just funny things. I try to keep it all humorous and I think they like it!”

Beth’s team is currently in the lead with over 6 million steps, but teams Step Up and Physical Plant Pacers are right on their heels. Since the program started in late May, altogether the Physical Plant has tracked over 19 million steps. That is the same as walking to Mexico City and back to Bloomington twice!

Participants were given a pedometer to track the number of steps taken daily or weekly. Beth and other participants have said the pedometer makes it much easier to see how little or how much physical activity is being done each day, so goals can be set accordingly. If you would like to learn more about the program or other ways to obtain a healthier lifestyle, visit http://iurecsports.org/ or www.iu.edu/~welliu/.

Team Captain Beth Parker is excited about getting fit.
Traveling Back in Time...

The Physical Plant Then and Now

Recently the Physical Plant’s Human Resources Manager, Jamie Gayer, discovered appointment data cards dating back to the 1940’s. An appointment data card keeps record every time an employee is promoted, gets a raise, or changes classification. The earliest dated card was that of Morris Preston Burch, an electrician who began working at the Physical Plant in 1943 (shown below).

Times were extremely different in the 40’s not only for the Physical Plant but, for the world. In 1943:

• Gas was $0.15 per gallon
• America was involved in WWII
• The Great Depression ended
• Average cost of a new car was $900
• Average salary was $2,000/year

Burch earned a starting salary of $1,380 in 1943. Now, a person starting out as an electrician would receive over 35 times that amount with a starting salary of $48,360. That’s not to say we are all living lavishly now, as pay rates tend to follow living trends. According to the Money section of USA Today.com, the average cost of a new car in 2013 was $31,252 and continuing to rise.

Incomes and prices of materials are not the only things that have increased in the last 70 years. In 1939, just four years before Burch was employed, the IU Physical Plant staffers 88 Service Maintenance employees. Now, there are 397 Service Maintenance employees. As the number of employees increased, the appointment data cards became an inefficient source of records. Everything is done electronically now and Payroll Manager, Kathy Sherman, says it’s much easier.

“With the appointment data cards, you could easily erase and rewrite things which could cause many things to be inaccurate.”

With the benefit of technological advancement, Sherman says this progression better protects files.

“This way is more accurate and it’s sustainable because it saves paper!” Sherman said.

Take a look at the newly designed Honor Board to see other employees that have celebrated many years of service.

Safety Spotlight

IU Physical Plant employees continue to prove their commitment to safety and accident prevention by their impressive number of days without a lost time injury. Back in 2012, accident free boards were given to several Physical Plant departments to record the amount of days a department goes without an injury or illness.

Since then, the Physical Plant as a whole has become greatly engaged in the challenge to keep the number on the board from falling back to zero. Supervisor of Utilities Production Teddy Scales is especially proud of his staff and their 913 days accident free.

“In this industrial environment with the work performed, that is an amazing achievement for our staff. Without their dedication to thinking safe and working in a safe manner, that achievement wouldn’t be possible,” Scales said.

Besides the accident free board, Scales has shown his appreciation for his group’s safe practice by having safety stickers made for their hard hats and plaques for certain milestones. He and his co-workers have also cooked lunch for their staff.

Scales says his employees commit to working safely by wearing the required apparel (hard hat, safety glasses, earplugs.) They also make sure to stay proactive by meeting once a month to discuss any staff safety concerns or other issues that need to be addressed.

“We can only give direction. We can talk about it. We can be proactive. We can address their concerns as they bring them to us. But, in the end they have to think safe and work safe and they do a fantastic job at doing that.”
Top Left: Carpenter, Mike Baker takes out nails holding the material down so the team can rip it up.

Top Right: Isaac Hawkins and John Taylor prep for adverse weather. Brian Lackey adheres the flashing.

Bottom left: The Sheet Metal group works together to pick up loose pieces after tearing them off. (from left: Brian Lackey, Mike Baker, Isaac Hawkins, John Taylor, Tim Hyde)

Bottom Right: John Taylor and Tim Hyde use glue and flashing to secure the material around the corners and edges.