

Safety First

H. Gordon Myrick, Inc. is recognized as an industry leader in construction safety

This past fall brought welcomed news for HGM, which earned a .84 Experience Modification Rate (EMR) for the 2007/2008 insurance plan year. This means HGM's safety record is 16% better than the industry average, which is 1.0. The National Council on Compensation Insurance calculates the rating for businesses and industries based on the prior year's safety performance.

Emphasizing the importance of safety is a top priority of HGM's management. A low EMR is an indication that the company is succeeding in its effort to provide a safe working environment. An excellent safety rating also results in lower insurance premiums, savings we can pass on to our clients and our employees.

We are happy to report, at present, no lost time accidents! Congratulations to everyone at HGM for an outstanding safety record. It's a win-win situation!



Ronnie Miller, HGM's third quarter Safety Award winner.



Project Update:

Seemann Composites in Gulfport, Mississippi, shown under construction in October.

Completion is scheduled for this February.



For The Record

I want to share some of my thoughts regarding our area and the storm that ravaged our coastline two-and-a-half years ago. I am continually asked the question, "You all about got it back together on the coast?" The answer is, "No, we don't!" Yes, we have made great strides in rebuilding the coast. We have had a continuous flow of volunteers who have been so important to our rebuilding efforts, and we are encouraged as we are beginning to see proposals for future development along the coast. But give us about ten years and then ask if we've about got it back together. The devastation of this country's worst natural disaster was just that...devastating.

Most people who don't live on the coast are not aware that people here are still suffering. Take a short visit to south Mississippi and you'll see for yourself.

The rebuilding is moving forward, and every day brings signs of renewal and rebirth. The people on the coast continue to join together and work hard on the rebuilding effort with a great spirit, a strong commitment, unbelievable determination, solid leadership and generous hearts. We choose to not look back, but rather to look forward and upward! We thank all of you for your generous support and thank you in advance for your continued prayers.

—H. Gordon Myrick, Jr.

Time Management Tips For Busy People

Need to manage your workload? According to Robert Half International (www.roberthalf.com), you need to take the following steps to manage your work life:

- **Organize and get rid of the clutter.** Make two piles...important and unimportant. Deal with everything in the important pile that you can, and set aside some time to tackle the lower priority papers that still need to be dealt with.
- **Set task priorities.** Consider each task that needs to be done and ask yourself whether it needs immediate attention or can wait until later in the day.
- **Break large projects into smaller tasks,** then prioritize them as above.
- **Use tools that can help you save time and energy.** Don't choose electronic programs or devices that are complicated to learn or hard to use.
- **Get focused and refuse to become distracted.** Once you enter the flow of work, you might be surprised at how quickly you can get the work done.

Warning: Smoking Is Hazardous To Your Wealth

A study has found that smokers take almost eight extra days off per year than their nonsmoking colleagues. The results were published in *Tobacco Control*. The study analyzed work records for more than 14,000 workers in Sweden between 1988 and 1991.

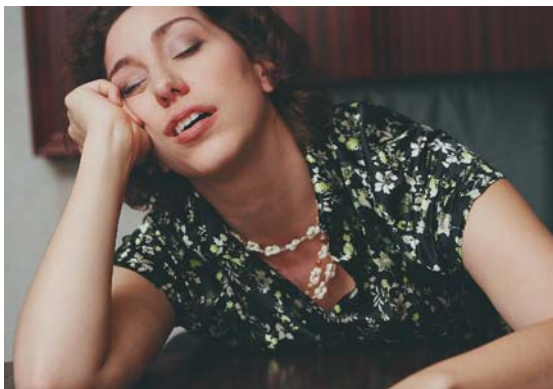
Feeling Blue?

If life is getting you down, it might be time for a quick fix. A sure way to change these kinds of feelings is to set your sights on another. Pick a person and make him or her the recipient of a random act of kindness. Small acts often work wonders. Give a compliment, offer help to someone struggling with a task, or give an inexpensive treat you know will be enjoyed. You'll likely lift the spirits of the other person as well as yourself.

Preventing The Dreaded Afternoon Slump

Dr. Jerry Teplitz, author of *Managing Your Stress: How To Relax and Enjoy*, offers these suggestions on how to avoid the dreaded afternoon slump:

Drink water. Drink at least eight glasses a day, and keep a water bottle at your desk so that you can sip throughout the day.



Avoid sugar and simple carbohydrates. You might get a quick boost from a candy bar but, over time, it will make things worse. Instead, choose lunch and snacks with whole grains, fruits and protein.

Eat small meals. Your body has to work hard to digest food. Instead of three meals, spread out six small meals over the course of the day.

Avoid standard fluorescent lights. If you can replace the bulb in your office with a full-spectrum fluorescent tube, you may find yourself feeling less tired in the afternoon.

Move around. Take a walk outside for 5 or 10 minutes a day to get your blood circulating, or at least run up and down the stairs for two minutes.



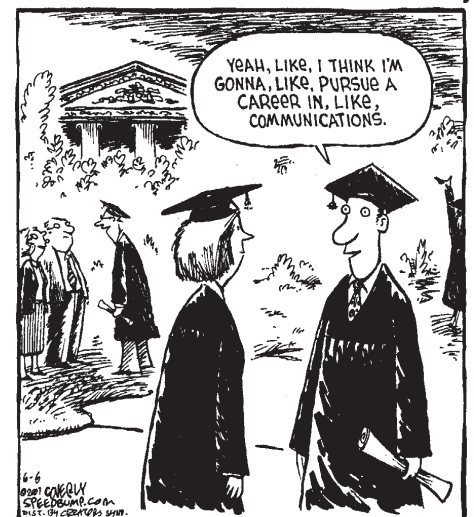
Now, That's A Snowman!

According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, the world's tallest snowman was built on February 19, 1999, in Bethel, Maine. It stood 113 feet, 7 inches and was made out of 200,000 cubic feet of snow. Its carrot nose was constructed out of six feet of chicken wire; it had pine wreaths for eyes; six tires for a mouth; three tires as buttons; two 10-foot pine trees for arms; as well as a 20-foot fleece hat and a 120-foot knit scarf.

It took the town of Bethel 15 days to construct the snowman, which they named Angus, King of the Mountain, after Angus King, then governor of Maine. The town also held a raffle to guess the date when the snowman would be completely melted; 22 winners split the prize with a correct answer of June 10, 1999.

SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly



Just How Much Do You Know...?

- 1) What state has executed more than 350 criminals since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976?
 - a) Florida
 - b) Texas
 - c) New York
 - d) Colorado
- 2) In Roman numerals, "CD" represents which of the following?
 - a) 150
 - b) 400
 - c) 550
 - d) 900
- 3) Better known for its food items, what conglomerate introduced the Wonderbra in 1994?
 - a) Campbell Soup Co.
 - b) General Mills
 - c) Hershey
 - d) Sarah Lee
- 4) Since 2000, which of these nations has exported the most passenger cars to the U.S.?
 - a) Germany
 - b) Canada
 - c) South Korea
 - d) Japan
- 5) What NFL team won a record 18 consecutive games in 2003-04?
 - a) Indianapolis Colts
 - b) Pittsburgh Steelers
 - c) New England Patriots
 - d) Green Bay Packers
- 6) Charles Lindbergh's famous solo transatlantic flight in 1927 took him from New York to:
 - a) London
 - b) Paris
 - c) Glasgow
 - d) Madrid

—from *mental_floss*

Answers: 1) b (During the past 30 years, the Lone Star state has executed nearly four times more prisoners than any other.) 2) b 3) d 4) b 5) c 6) b

Up, Up And Away

The earliest balloons were inflated animal bladders, intestines and stomachs. It wasn't until 1824 that scientist Michael Faraday invented the rubber balloon, which he used in his experiments with hydrogen at the Royal Institution in London. Faraday cut two circles



from sheets of rubber and dusted the centers of the circles with flour to keep them from sticking together. Then he pressed the sticky edges together to seal the sides, and inflated the balloon with hydrogen.

According to Balloon Headquarters, an organization of balloon enthusiasts, by 1825 people were making their own balloons using a kit marketed by British rubber manufacturer Thomas Hancock. By 1889, pre-made imported balloons were available in the U.S. The Montgomery Ward catalog sold them for four cents each or 40 cents a dozen. In 1907, The Anderson Rubber Co. began manufacturing balloons in the United States.

The modern-day latex balloon was developed in 1931 by Neil Tillotson, a chemical engineer from New England. His first model was shaped

like a cat's head, with pointed ears and printed whiskers. Tillotson founded the Tillotson Rubber Co. Its Dipco division still makes balloons today.

The Hardest Change An Organization Can Make

How many projects does your organization have underway? If your answer is too many, you might want to consider making a difficult, but extremely effective, change: reducing the overload on your workers.

Why? Because, according to *Chaco Canyon's Point Lookout* newsletter (<http://Chaco-Canyon.com/pointlookout>), overloaded people just can't focus long enough to do anyone or anything much good. If everyone is working beyond capacity all the time, they're not going to feel like they can exercise the luxury to explore, experiment or take risks. And if your people aren't doing those things, it's unlikely they're going to have a breakthrough.

Why Do We Say It?

Do you know where these common expressions come from?

- **Barking up the wrong tree** originated with hunting dogs that would bark at the bottom of a tree where they mistakenly thought their quarry was hiding.
- **When you can't hold a candle to someone**, you can't measure up. This comes from the practice of apprentices holding a candle so their masters could see what they were doing. If an apprentice couldn't even do that, he was obviously inferior.
- If your temper gets out of control and you **fly off the handle**, you're like a loose axe head that flies off its handle.
- **Stealing one's thunder**: this phrase originated in 1709 when John Dennis, an English playwright, invented a new method of simulating the sound of thunder on stage that used metal balls rolling around in wooden troughs. Dennis's play was not successful but his technique was, and when he realized it was being used in a later production of *Macbeth*, he purportedly accused the director of stealing his thunder.
- **A flash in the pan**, something with great promise that doesn't come to fruition, dates back to Gold Rush days. A miner might see a flash in his pan that didn't turn out to be gold. Similarly, something doesn't **pan out** when it doesn't meet expectations.



New Year's Thoughts

The holiday season has once again come and gone. While we frantically rushed around to buy gifts, attend parties and church services, and carry out our normal business and personal obligations, we made a point of stopping to take a few moments to reflect.

We are fortunate and grateful for all the blessings bestowed on us. We are grateful for our many business associates, friends and fellow employees. In our gratitude, we hope that it leads us to a resolve to live a life more unselfish. As we are blessed, we should bless others.

For those whom we have had the privilege to be your contractor, we thank you. To those that have been our partners in building, we also thank you. You are the heart and soul of our company, without whom our success would not be possible.

All of us at H. Gordon Myrick, Inc. hope you had a safe and healthy holiday and wish you a year ahead filled with happiness, promise and opportunity.



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