

# BEHLEN update

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**BEHLEN**  
Made Strong

## Greeting from Sean Lepper, Vice-President and General Manager at BEHLEN

BEHLEN has had an amazing year of growth. From manufacturing the largest convex-style frameless steel building in the world in Russia, to opening a new office in Moscow, to beginning installation of new detailing software in our engineering department and the modernization of the factory, the last 12 months have been busy and rewarding.

As we look to the future, we see more exciting opportunities on the horizon which will lead to additional growth and stability for the company. We are working on expanding many of our departments, and I'd like to personally welcome the new hires who have joined our team.

Now more than ever, we will test the results of our Redefining our Potential project, which looked at ways to increase our efficiency as a company. We have seen improvements take place in customer service with reduced steps to enter, huddle boards in many departments and the training of new green belts to support the changes.

As we move into what will surely be a very busy period for our company, we can all be confident about the future and our place in it as Canada's largest steel building manufacturer.

Sean



## PROFILE:

# Jeff Pujo, Welder

There are many employees at BEHLEN who have grown roots at the company and form the backbone of experience and knowledge that BEHLEN needs to succeed. One of those is Jeff Pujo, a welder who has worked at BEHLEN for nine years. Pujo was born and raised in Brandon and worked in various welding shops before settling at BEHLEN after completing school to become a journeyman welder.

Pujo's daily tasks typically include work on BEHLEN's Rigid Frame buildings, interpreting various blueprints and fabrication and performing his duties as a shop steward with United Steelworkers and as a member of the health and safety committee.



As an experienced journeyman welder, he also has a big hand in training BEHLEN's new hires.

"I like to try to lead by example and help out others where need be," he said. "I find training rewarding because I get to see the strength that individuals acquire over time. I see them gaining skills in everything from learning how to read a blueprint to how to operate a crane and I know I had a part in developing those skills."

Pujo and other experienced welders at BEHLEN are currently putting their training skills to work with a group of new hires out of Thunder Bay. The new workers will fill a welding bay that BEHLEN recently developed and opened. With a larger area and more welders, BEHLEN will be able to take on more work and bigger contracts.

The welders will also be experiencing some changes in their process. BEHLEN has been working on an automation project which will allow some of the repetitive work currently being done by hand to be completed by robots.

In terms of safety, Pujo says he can see the automation project is taking a step in the right direction. He expects that the project will require some big changes in the department as welders learn how to work with the machines and make sure work quality is up to BEHLEN's standards.

With the automation project in place, and more workers on the floor, there may also be an oppor-

tunity for BEHLEN to further diversify its offering.

"We've really diversified and opened up to new markets in the last years," said Pujo. The welding department has worked on projects for Manitoba Hydro and SaskPower that have been outside our usual scope of work. I think that will be something that will continue."

The work at BEHLEN can be challenging and Pujo likes the test of figuring out the best way to complete a project. With larger buildings and complex projects comes more complicated and skillful welding work.

Since he started at BEHLEN nearly a decade ago, Pujo said there have been many positive changes at the company and there is a very positive attitude among the workers and management. Part of that comes from a strong company focus on keeping workers employed and busy.

In the last years, there have also been changes on the floor, with an even stronger focus on making sure proper safety procedures are followed. With his work on the health and safety committee, Pujo and other committee members are involved in developing many of these procedures first-hand with input from employees.

"BEHLEN has a culture of employees taking a big role in determining safety procedures," said Pujo. "It's a bottom up approach to safety. Many of the ideas that are put in place come from workers."

# Building a Better BEHLEN Brand

*A note from Rosamalia Villamizar, Marketing Manager at BEHLEN*

I hope you are enjoying our BEHLEN company newsletter. As time goes on, we hope to use this format to tell the stories of BEHLEN staff, partners and customers. The newsletter isn't the only new marketing tool we're implementing in 2014. We've developed a number of initiatives that will refresh our look and help us connect with each other and with our customers.

## **Consistent Brand Communication**

It's important that all the materials we send out from BEHLEN work in harmony with one another. That's why we developed a new marketing communication strategy that makes sure we're using consistent voice and branding in all of our marketing materials.

## **Dropping the Jargon**

We want to speak the same language as our customers and help them see how a BEHLEN building can fulfill their needs. That means dropping some of the jargon we use internally including the terms CORR-SPAN and FLEX-SYS. We are now referring to our two building types as Frameless and Rigid Frame, which is much easier for our customers to understand when they're planning their next project.



## **Updating our Look Online**

I'm sure you noticed that BEHLEN has a new website. The updated site is easier to use and understand and works in harmony with our other marketing materials. It also gives us a place to put our first corporate video! You'll notice there are links to our social media accounts on the site as well. We're using Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram to engage business influencers.

## **New Product Material**

We recently launched our new product brochures, making sure we presented the options associated with our Frameless and Rigid Frame buildings in a way that will be easy for our audiences to understand. The brochures have a clean, professional look and better show us as a cutting-edge, large and versatile company.

## **New Advertising Strategy**

We're developing advertising strategies that will help us connect with architects and engineers. We're working on sharing our design flexibility, quality and expertise in a visual, clear and appealing way.

*“We want to speak the same language as our customers and help them see how a BEHLEN building can fulfill their needs.”*

# What's New at BEHLEN

The BEHLEN/Westman Family Fun Day took place on Saturday, May 31. Employees brought their family and friends to the fun-filled event which included a barbecue and plant tour. The kids enjoyed a row of bouncy castles that were brought in specially for the day.



Juraj Karcak, a production welder with BEHLEN, was the winner of the Spruce Woods Provincial Park 100 Mile Trail Run. Juraj completed the run on May 9 - 10, with a time of 19 hours, 43 minutes and 42 seconds - an hour before his closest competitor.



## BEHLEN sister company opens state-of-the-art facility

At BEHLEN we recently had the opportunity to tour WGI's new plant in Cambridge, Ontario. The state-of-the-art facility includes an automated system that manufactures material for our sister company, Canada Culvert. The modern technology in the plant will increase productivity, expand WGI's capacity and show some of the latest innovations available in today's steel industry.

The new technology in the plant allows robots to complete much of the work that was in the past done by hand, saving time and freeing workers for less repetitive jobs. Not only will the facility create more than 100 new jobs, the workers will be trained on some of the latest equipment and be given the tools to be efficient and productive, spurring further expansion for WGI and creating a stable and profitable company.

Innovation is an important part of growing. WGI has a history of investing in innovation to promote progress and development, which is part of the reason for the company's long-term success. The investment that WGI puts into its facilities now, will pay back with shorter lead time, increased quality, safer work and more capacity—all things that will benefit our customers and our business.

BEHLEN is also currently completing an automation project in our Brandon plant. We are adapting software and installing equipment to automatically weld some of the beams we use in our Rigid Frame buildings. We expect to have the system in place in the fall.

WGI, or Westman Group Inc., is our parent company. It is comprised of BEHLEN, Canada Culvert, Frontier Laser, Meridian Manufacturing Inc., and Westman Steel Industries. The 140,000 ft<sup>2</sup> facility in Cambridge will create 120 new jobs. Ontario is a growing marketing for WGI and the new plant is a big step toward expansion in the area.

As we expand, so does our reach, capabilities and our ability to serve our clients. The Westman Group currently operates manufacturing, sales and distribution facilities in 29 centres across Canada and the US, maintains dealer networks throughout North America and has a worldwide customer base.

