



THE BASELINER

February 2005

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED TODAY?

We go through life bouncing off the walls of knowledge, but many times don't take the time to wrap our arms around this opportunity. The same thing has happened to me. What is stored away in your head for future use can never be taken away. It will pop up all the time to help you make a decision on a perplexing problem. Take advantage of the people around you and the knowledge you come in contact with. The ability to reason is based on this fact. You can be a weak, mediocre or a strong inspector. **The choice is yours!**

VERIFORCE TRAINING! GETTING IT DONE!

As we wrap our arms around the NCCER Operator Qualification (OQ) requirements, we know we're not finished. We have clients that only use the Veriforce organization as proof of certification for OQ. We will start the process of getting our technicians qualified to this organization this month. We will be sending several people to Houston to train as "Evaluators" to train, test and audit this program. It is expected that within the next couple of years this won't be necessary as the new standard B31Q is implemented. It seems strange that our organization have met the rules of ASNT-SNTC-1A, AWS-CWI, API-510, API-570, API-653, NACE CIP and NACE CP, but are still required to meet other requirements. **Irregardless, we will enthusiastically work at getting it done!**

ALTERNATING CURRENT FIELD MEASUREMENT (ACFM) TRAINING

We have just received the results of the ACFM training and certification of six "Baseliners." They were Chris Chavez, John Ralls II, Juan Hernandez, Greg Gerald, Sammy Morales and Trinity Thevenot. They completed a one week course in Houston, TX December 7th, 2004. The course was a very difficult one, but they all passed. ACFM is a method by which surface discontinuities such as cracks, overlap, porosity and other discontinuities can be detected on any material without the costly and time consuming task of removing coatings and oxides. It takes the place of liquid penetrant and magnetic particle testing on most materials. It is a faster examination with the capability of detecting the same anomalies. If you have interest in having this inspection performed, please contact J.W. Ralls or our coordinators at (361) 643-3400.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Well the results are in and we have new API-510 and API-570 inspectors. The following people have received their certifications: Steve Fey-API-570, Don Nava-API-510 and Juan Hernandez-API-510. Not everyone passed, but that's okay because they tried their best. We have two day-time and two night courses planned for the API-510, API-570 and API-653 test in 2005. In addition, we have five CWI Preparatory courses planned for 2005. These courses can be viewed on our Webpage @ www.bldata.com under training.

The Ground Penetrating Radar unit is in, but classes have not been scheduled. These classes will take place on the eastern seaboard and we are planning on sending four people. Once these people are up to speed, then we will start accepting work for this unit. Some of the engineering houses are already showing interest. This will be the only unit of its type in the area, the nearest being in Houston, TX.

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What's an API Inspector?

Submitted By: Terry Files

What's an API inspector? Just someone who passed a long test & has an expensive certificate? NO! It's much more. It's someone that is recognized by the API Codes and is assigned the responsibility to make specific decisions that are important to the health of our pressure equipment! Don't take your code-ordained decisions lightly. Because ... decisions do matter! Here's a true-life story about the consequences of poor decisions. Could this happen to you?

In the mid-1800s, in the hills of Pennsylvania, a 75 ft high dam was built to create a large lake. The lake was needed to provide water for a canal system (like the Erie Canal). Appropriate engineering practices were used to select construction materials and design the dam. During construction, engineering and inspection personnel closely followed the job activities. To control the lake level, large discharge pipes with slide valves were installed at the base of the dam.

But by the time the dam was finished, the lake was not needed. Railroads had become a cheaper form of transportation and canals were being phased out. Since the lake was no longer needed, most of the water was drained from the lake and the dam was not maintained. Over the years, the central portion of the un-maintained dam failed around the discharge pipes.

Years later, the old dam and surrounding areas were purchased to be developed as a hunting & fishing resort for the rich and famous. This was a big project. The dam would be rebuilt, the roads improved, trails created, and a lodge constructed. The resort's managing group was responsible for all decisions, including those about the reconstruction and maintenance of the dam.

Let's review some of their key decisions.

Decision #1: The large discharge pipes were abandoned and not repaired. A spillway was created that allowed excessive water to overflow when the lake was full. Without the discharge piping, the lake could not easily be drained for repairs. The bottom of the spillway was about 7 feet lower than the top of the dam.

Decision #2: Some of the repair materials were inferior. Instead of following the original specifications, the failed section of the dam was filled with readily available materials. (Even tree stumps were used.)

Once the dam was completed it took a couple of years for the lake to reach full height. The new lake was now 3 miles long. The lodge and vacation homes were built overlooking the lake.

Decision #3: Once the lake was full, some of the lake's fish escaped downstream through the spillway. A screen was placed across the spillway to keep the fish in the lake.

Decision #4: The road going to the vacation homes crossed the dam, but was only wide enough for one car. This was inconvenient, so the dam height was low-

ered a couple of feet making a wider road. The spillway height was not lowered.

Decision #5: Within a few years, the center section of the dam sagged about a foot, probably the result of the inferior construction materials. The center section of the dam was now only about 4' above the bottom of the spillway and was the lowest part of the dam. Since the dam had worked well for the last few years, the sagged section was not repaired.

All was well until Memorial Day weekend 1889. Unusually heavy rains began to fall. The inlet streams to the lake became torrents. The lake level rose and water overflowed through the spillway. But the fish screens trapped leaves and debris, significantly reducing the "relieving capacity" of the spillway. The heavy rains continued and the spillway was not keeping up! The lake was rising about 1" every 10 minutes.

Tremendous last minute efforts were made during the downpour to keep the water from cresting the dam. But it was too little, too late. Since the sagged center portion of the dam was only 4' above the bottom of the spillway it was just a matter of time. At 3:10 p.m. the water crested the center section of the dam. Rapid erosion began and soon the entire center section catastrophically failed. In just 40 minutes, the 3-mile lake would be entirely gone!

Once the dam failed, a wall of water up to 70 feet high rushed down the canyon at speeds up to 40 mph! Small towns along the riverbank were totally washed away. Downstream about 20 miles was a large steel-milling town, Johnstown. That afternoon, the small river through town was out of its banks and many townspeople were helping those in the lower sections of town move belongings to upper floors.

Late afternoon, the townspeople heard a train whistle coming from up-valley. This was unusual because the whistle just kept blowing. Those curious went outside and heard a deep rumble in the distance, a rumble that was rapidly increasing in volume. Coming toward the town was a wall of debris backed by a 35-foot wall of water. Many ran for hills, some made it, but many were engulfed by the wave of debris. Those too far from the hills gathered loved-ones and ran upstairs and into attics. The tidal wave crushed many houses and swept others off foundations. People still alive in attics, chopped holes in the roofs to gain access to the top of the house.

But this story has yet one more unexpected disaster. Oil from upstream businesses and homes floated on the surface and covered much of the debris. Fired materials floating from up-river flooded steel mills floated to the debris pile, and the rubble caught on fire. Hundreds who lived through the flood, died by the fire while trapped in the debris.

Portrait of an Employee

I have known this young man for many years. I use to watch him and Ronald Ralph build “Lego” displays and have seen him spend endless hours on a shrimp boat, culling through the day’s catch. I won additional respect for him when I watched him and my son tear down a lower unit on a outboard boat motor. They replaced the broken parts and put it back together. It worked great! He has all four of his National Certifications such as the CWI, API-510, API-570 and the API-653. He has many years of experience in AutoCAD, UltraPipe and PCMS. His talents are quite often under-used. He has worked numerous turnarounds, but because of his strong computer skills, he tends to be stuck in the job of document-

tation. If you want to talk about fishing, you will find him more than enthusiastic. He currently works at EquiStar in Corpus Christi, TX. He has enough hours for a four year degree, but they don’t line up in one particular curriculum. I will continue to encourage him to work on the requirements for his degree. I am very proud of this young man and he has passed my test for being a “Baseliner.” I want to thank him for representing the company well and continuing to service the needs of our clients. Thank you Russell Hogg for your continued hard work and loyalty. The company needs the dedication of people like you.

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The final tally: over 2200 dead, about 100 families entirely gone, 100 children lost both parents. But why? The obvious answer is simple, the large upstream dam catastrophically failed. But why did it fail? The answer to that question is important to all inspectors & engineers. OUR DECISIONS DO MATTER!

Hundreds floated downstream hanging on to debris or perched on top of floating houses. Miles of barbwire from an upstream wire-mill entangled individuals in the water and the debris. At the train bridge west of town, the entangled debris lodged, creating a huge dam. Hundreds of townspeople were entombed in the rubble. Hundreds more were alive but trapped by the debris and wire. Stunned rescuers quickly started freeing those trapped.

How does this disaster apply to your job as a Pressure Equipment Inspector or Engineer? If this dam had been an API piece of equipment, would you have prevented the same poor decisions? What roles are assigned by the API Codes during inspection, repairs, alterations & rerates?

Alterations: During the dam rebuild, the discharge pipes were abandoned. These pipes probably would have allowed the excess water to be drained without cresting the dam. *“API says, All repairs & alterations must be authorized by the authorized inspector and engineer.”*

Repair Materials: Inferior materials were used to repair the dam. *“API says, All materials must be approved by the authorized inspector....”*

Rerating: The dam height was lowered to allow 2-way traffic. But the spillway elevation was not lowered. This significantly reduced the maximum relieving capacity of the spillway. *“API says, During a rerate, the relieving device should be checked to assure it has appropriate capacity for the new conditions. And ... the rerate is acceptable to the authorized inspector.”*

Management of Change: Installing the fish screen at the spillway was just a “minor alteration”, but one that would

have major impact on the “relieving capacity” of the spillway. Do we solve one problem, only to create another? Maybe create an even bigger problem? *“API implies, With any change, get the right people involved in the decision. Make sure you understand the complete potential consequences.”*

In-service Degradation: The center of the dam sagged a couple of feet. The center should have been the highest part of the dam. *“API says, An external inspection shall be performed by the authorized inspector. All NDE data shall be evaluated and accepted by the authorized inspector.”*

Bottom line: If this dam had been an API piece of equipment AND if the engineers & inspectors were following their API designated responsibilities, this failure would not have occurred.

But there is one more side to this story. There was a new engineer assigned to the club, but this was his first job, and he didn’t want to do anything that might anger his new employers. So he turned a blind eye to all that was wrong at the dam. Despite the heavy downpour, the engineer was confident that the rain would let up, and the already high level in the reservoir would not be a problem. But when the rains continued, he discovered that he had been wrong. He did make valiant last minute repair efforts, but it was too late. He is also remembered for his efforts in issuing a last minute warning about potential dam failure.

This dam failed partly because the engineer was not willing to challenge the Owner’s poor decisions! As an API inspector or engineer, are you more concerned about fulfilling code-ordained responsibilities or pleasing the Owner-User? Most of the time, we please the Owner-User by fulfilling our code-ordained responsibilities. But when there is a conflict between the Code’s requirements and the Owner’s desires, always stand with the Code, because *Our Decisions Do Matter.*

PHASE ARRAY ULTRASONICS A NEW TOY!

It's probably not correct to call this unit a toy. This new RTD instrument is a highly sophisticated, complex unit that will provide a permanent record of its inspections using the phase array ultrasonic module. It will perform all of the different angle inspections in one pass. It will perform C-Scan, Time of Flight Diffraction and Phase Array Ultrasonic examinations. With another module added on, it will even do Phase Array Eddy Current. We have not bought the Phase Array Eddy Current module, but we already have a client requesting this service. The Phase Array Ultrasonic Instrument should be in within the next couple of weeks and then we start our training. Please call, if it can be of service to your work.

I HAVE FAILED!

These are difficult words, but must sometimes be said. I have tried to influence people in a positive way. Too often, I believe I come out like I am preaching and at times even criticizing them. That's not my intent, I just want them to be the very best that they can be. I see so much ability around me that if it was focused, wonderful things could be accomplished. There is still so much to accomplish. The vision of Base Line Data, Inc. is to be the very best inspection company, have the best inspectors and provide the most diverse inspection coverage around. Along with that, we have to have integrity, the best equipment, a sincere loyalty to our employees and the ability to motivate employees in the same way. They have to be convinced that it is a team effort and as a team we succeed or fail. Too often, all I see in some people is "what's in it for me." Greed kills the enthusiasm needed for performing a job well. All of this starts with a vision and a lot of hard work. It's nurtured by encouragement to acquire more knowledge of the inspection disciplines that we provide. National certification in itself means nothing unless you can perform the work in the field in a conscientious, ethical and professional manner. Reports must be generated in a quick, comprehensive format and submitted to the client. They must tell the engineer at the other end, what he needs to know and give him a visual image of the condition of the equipment. I don't believe that I have accomplished this. I might give out, but I will never give up trying to effect this change.



GROUND PENETRATING RADAR A LOOK BEYOND!

Base Line Data, Inc. has invested in a new ground penetrating radar unit. No longer do you have to x-ray or perform core drilling to determine the thickness or location of components in your concrete foundations. This unit will locate rebar, conduit, pipelines, post tensioned cable or other artifacts inside a concrete composite. It is being used to locate voids underneath the soil and for measuring the thickness of asphalt to make sure that the contractor has lived up to expectations and specifications. The FBI has used it to locate human bodies underneath the ground

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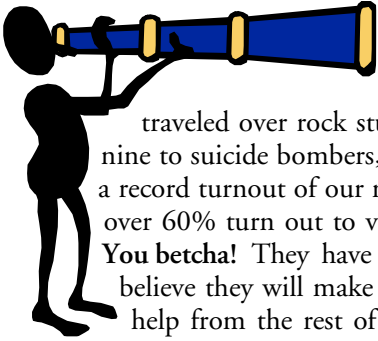
and, in fact, it was used to locate Saddam Hussein in his "little hidey-hole." Pipeline companies have used it to determine the depth of soil cover over their high-pressure underground lines. There are many other uses that lend themselves only to equipment of this type. Within the next few weeks, a group of technicians will be traveling up north to receive their formal training. Once the formal training is complete and the technicians can perform to our expected level, we will be ready to service your accounts.

THE NEW SILVERING TANK CRAWLER AND MUCH MORE

It crawls up the side of a piece of pipe, vessel, or tank raster, scans an area six (6) inches wide, and knows where it has been. It doesn't use water, but rather a dry transducer. It has a one-hundred and sixty (160) foot reach. It can be used for scanning horizontal lines, vessels or previously mentioned vertical surfaces. It can gather the shell thickness of un-insulated tanks and provide readings from remote locations. It has superior adhesion power and uses the same controls as our Physical Acoustic C-Scanning unit. A program will be written to adapt its readings to our R-Streng program. It's not here yet, but will soon become part of our ever expanding, in-house support units. We will always spend our profits on providing superior technology for our clients.

YOU HAVE SEEN A MIRACLE, BUT MAY NOT HAVE RECOGNIZED IT!

After fifty years, elections have been held in Iraq. They said it couldn't be done. They said people wouldn't participate because the insurgents had given "death threats" to all that would cast their vote. Guess what? You were wrong! They traveled over twenty hours without sleep, they traveled over rock studded roads and lost twenty-nine to suicide bombers, but they still came. We had a record turnout of our registered voters, but Iraq had over 60% turn out to vote. Do they want freedom? **You betcha!** They have a tough road to travel, but I believe they will make it. They will still need some help from the rest of the world, but their citizens have spoken. Let's help them and make this a safer place for their children and grand-children and our own. I congratulate the citizens of Iraq for making a statement. **Let Freedom Ring!**



ORIGINAL THOUGHT

Get your head into the game. I have written on this before, but I don't believe we are there yet. I worked a turnaround a month ago and had an opportunity to watch our people in action. They had quite a bit of material to carry to the jobsite, so first they used a spreadsheet that I created for the job. They started gathering the tools. They went through the list and started carrying things to the grey van. They threw things into the back and most of it was piled on top of other items. No thought to organizing it or what they would need

first was put into the thought process. They arrived at the jobsite and started pulling everything out. The stuff remaining in the van was in total disarray. You tried to find something and you had to look through everything. About fifteen minutes was spent on organizing the material and it then became easier to find what was needed. Original thought would have organized it from the beginning. The job was completed and everything was thrown back into the van. It was time to go home. It was 03:00 p.m. and the hands didn't want to be "whistle-bit."

Nothing was cleaned, but that was okay, Gail could clean it up before it was put up. Naturally at the cost of Base Line Data, Inc. It didn't happen! Everything was taken back out of the van and each cord and item was cleaned up like it should have been in the first place. It was placed neatly back in the van. The guys didn't like it, but that's okay. That's the way it should have been done in the first place. Original thought is when you use your head to plan, organize and work the job. That's what we're all getting paid for!

THANK YOU VALERO FOR CONTINUING TO SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE!

Sometime things are thought, but never said. It needs to be said, so I will. What has been happening in the industry in the last ten years is that everyone wants an inspector that can walk on water and not get their feet wet. This eliminates having to direct, manage or support the next generation of inspectors. The senior inspector can now sit back and do less. It all sounds good, but if this trend continues, there will be a shortfall of seasoned inspectors in the future. We must all take an interest in this new group of young people. They need us to guide them. If not, it takes years for them to finally be able to perform an adequate inspection. A lot gets overlooked during this process. None of us learned by ourselves. There was always someone out there that took the extra time to explain, show and demonstrate the right way. Valero has been great in getting this new crop of inspectors involved in the process. They take a group of young inspectors each shutdown and mold them into their work. They make sure that there is always someone there to learn from. When I first started in the business, everyone of our clients had this same approach. Now I find, clients wanting resumes, even on the entry level "on-streamer". Base Line Data, Inc. trains all of its people, including much of the competition. We spend hundreds of thousands of dollars each year on training. Almost all of our people have AutoCAD, UltraPipe, PMI, MT, PT and UT thickness training. They are taught to sketch and write field reports. They are strongly encouraged to take National Certification tests. Their field experience must come from the progressive clients in the industry. Valero has been a leader in funding United Way and other community projects. They have been great at growing the next generation of young inspectors and we appreciate it. I want to personally thank their organization for investing in the future of the next generation of inspectors. **THANK YOU VALERO!**

STOPPING THE SPREAD OF GERMS AT WORK

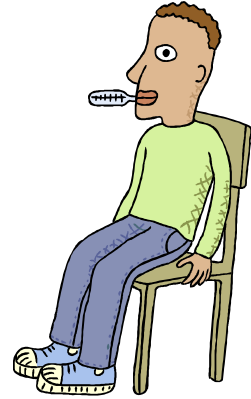
How Germs Spread

Illnesses like the flu (influenza) and colds are caused by viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. The flu and colds usually spread from person to person when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

How to Help Stop the Spread of Germs

Take care to:

- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.
- Clean your hands often.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick and check with a health care provider when needed.
- Practice other good health habits.



Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.

Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away. Cover your cough or sneeze if you do not have a tissue. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.

Clean your hands often

When available, wash your hands— with soap and warm water— then rub your hand vigorously together and scrub all surfaces. Wash for 15 to 20 seconds. It is the soap combined with scrubbing action that helps dislodge and remove germs.

When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used. You can find them in most supermarkets and drugstores. If using a gel, rub the gel in your hands until they are dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in the gel kills germs that cause cold and the flu.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches their eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs can live for a long time (some can live for 2 hours or more) on surfaces like doorknobs, desks, and tables.

Stay home when you are sick and check with a health care provider when needed.

When you are sick or have flu symptoms, stay home, get plenty of rest, and check with a health care provider as needed. Your employer may need a doctor's note for an excused absence. Remember: Keeping your distance from others may protect them from getting sick. Common symptoms of the flu include:

- Fever (usually high)
- Headache
- Extreme tiredness
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle aches, and
- Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea (much more common among children than adults).

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food. Practicing healthy habits will help you stay healthy during flu season and all year long.

RADIOGRAPHIC FILM INTERPRETATION CLASS (RTFI)

I must be Superman because I can see through metal!



Base Line Data, Inc. has completed the Radiographic Film Interpretation (RTFI) class held February 7th, 2005. The class was taught by Ron Van Arsdale with Itac. The classes were held at 206 Lang Road in Portland, TX. The following people were in attendance: The outside people included Brandon Palmer-PetroChem, Michael McCowen-PetroChem and Waco Ware. The "Baseliners" were Don Nava, Moo Adkins, Orlando Pina, Misty Ralls, John Ralls II, J.W. Ralls, Juan Hernandez, Mike Rouquette, Jerry Seay, Rick Garcia, Robert Quinones, Howard Mauch, David Fricks, Chris Beardsley, Todd Edwards, Johnny Grimes Sr. and Johnny Grimes, Jr. We sincerely appreciate the enthusiasm and effort shown in this class.

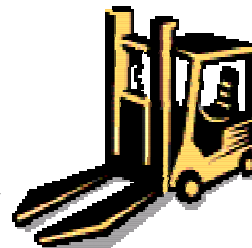
The Client Bill of Rights

Base Line Data, Inc. supports the "Bill of Rights" of all companies that we provide service to. We realize the reason we are successful in business is because of your loyalty and our continued performance. You are the lifeblood of our company and we are committed to meeting your expectations. You have the right to use any service provider that you desire. You have the right to expect that each inspector performs his/her task in a professional and efficient manner. You have the right to expect clear, concise and prompt reports. You have the right to measure our cost by

comparing it against the cost of the competition. Total work produced against the full invoicing amount is a normal method. You have the right to expect the latest technology in equipment is being used and that the technician is properly trained in its use. You have the right to utilize only inspection companies that have a sincere commitment to safety. You have the right to expect and demand ethical behavior from companies that provide services. You have the right to give positive or negative feedback. We appreciate hearing both, whereas we can make the adjustments to your needs. With Base Line Data, Inc. we realize that all companies have a Bill of Rights and we will do everything to support it.

FORKLIFT TRAINING

On the week of January 24th, 2005, Base Line Data, Inc. contracted with Equipment Depot to teach a Forklift Operator class for Don Nava, Misty Ralls, John Ralls II, Mike Rouquette, Robert Quinones and Moo Adkins. The instructor was Karen Estes. Because of the safety hazards associated with forklifts, the only people approved to operate our forklift are the ones that took this training and passed the test. If the need arises, we will qualify other operators in the future.



UPCOMING FIRST AID TRAINING!

Have you ever been in a situation where someone was in medical distress and you would have liked to have done something, but you had no formal first aid training? It could have been your child, a parent or a kid that lives down the street. Don't be helpless! Take the time to prepare yourself for what will eventually happen to all of us. I was blessed in that I was taught in the U.S. Army how to re-



spond in the case of an emergency. We have currently contracted with Rick Moses to teach a one day first aid class. The class is scheduled for Friday, February 25th, 2005 from 08:00 a.m. to 05:00 p.m. Please call Tim Martinez, Juan Hernandez or J. W. Ralls at (361) 643-3400, if you are planning on attending.

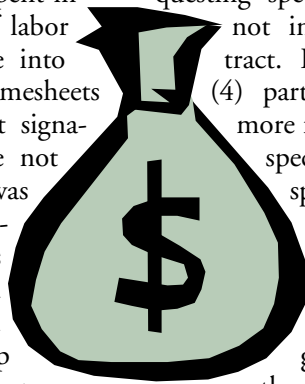


SURE! WE'LL FINISH THE JOB!!

During World War I, there was a poster that advertised for the war effort. As I read it, it reminded of all the tasks that we have accomplished throughout the years. We have taken many difficult jobs and furnished information that was vital to the engineers in making sound decisions influencing the safe operations of their facilities. This poster had an American worker with his sleeves rolled up ready to take on any job to help win World War I. I feel our workers are very much like this aged old gentleman. They will take your job, determine the best way to perform it, assess the safety issues and roll up their sleeves and perform the work. There has never been a job that we started that has not been completed. We have gone in behind other contractors when their equipment broke or when the client was not satisfied with their accomplishments and finished the job. I know these things, but rarely ever mention them. We don't have to brag or criticize our competitors. I consider these things unprofessional and have nothing to do with the job that we have been asked to do. If you have a tough job and are uncomfortable about who should perform it, consider Base Line Data, Inc. ***SURE! WE'LL FINISH THE JOB!***

THE HIDDEN LOSS OF PROFITS!

In operating a business, you have to audit all parts of your operating cost to make sure that there is no waste. Things that cost us and should be billable back to the client is the labor & cost spent in safety training, hours of labor spent on getting people into the plants, running timesheets out to the client to get signatures because they were not around when the job was complete, getting equipment and consumables together to perform a job (mobilization and demobilization), clean up of tools after a job is complete, reconciling issues that are not the result of a Base Line Data problem, corporate monthly safety meetings that spend non-invoiced man-hours, generating special invoicing for a select group of clients and more. The clients will tell you that all of this is part of your operating cost. That's true enough,



but much of this is added after the contract is signed and was never figured into the labor dollars to support the workforce. A contract is signed, then the client starts requesting special things that was not included in the contract. For an example: four (4) part personal monitors, more frequent drug testing, special safety lanyards, special safety training, and so much more. Although you can make a profit out of your labor, you can give it all away by these hidden costs. We are starting to quantify these costs, so they can be added into the true operating cost. Think about what you put on the timesheet to be signed because things left off cannot be invoiced. Good clients are generally fair provided that information is placed on the timesheet.

WELCOME BACK!

In a few weeks, an employee that left us for his own personal reasons, will be back with us. He is an excellent inspector and has represented us well. He carries National Certifications as a CWI, API-570 and a commission as a NBIC inspector. I would mention his name, but I will wait for him to make that announcement. When he left, I regretted seeing him leave, but am very happy to see him return. There have been some that search for "greener" pastures on the other side and some that we help with their departure. We consider their reason for leaving "confidential" and will not discuss it. Many have tried to come back, but very few get that opportunity. We want a committed, loyal employee, with good work ethics and the right attitude. We do not support people with tardiness, attitude or drug problems or those that think that by just showing up they deserve compensation. This individual does not fit that profile. He gives it his all. With all of that said, I am welcoming him back and thanking him in advance for wanting to be part of a truly committed and ethical company. **Welcome back!**

WE CAN DO IT!

A TRIBUTE TO WOMEN!

Have we forgotten? The United States was ill prepared to fight a war in 1941. Its army was small, its weaponry was obsolete and its Navy was almost completely destroyed at Pearl Harbor. Its difficulties were much the same as World War I. No one wants a war, so few are ever prepared for one. One thing that is consistent about change is nothing ever changes. The same issues exist that existed prior to World War I. The world is at peace and we should not get involved in these other conflicts. It would be wonderful, if we could spend the billions of dollars that go into our defense programs and spend it instead on education, infrastructure and the well being of our people. How naïve! Naïve-ness breeds un-preparedness and if we're going to be unprepared, we better start learning a foreign language.

Back to the real story. During World War II, a true patriotism existed in this country. Young men and old couldn't wait to join up for military duty. Yes, there was a draft, but many men didn't wait to be called up, they joined. They left in the millions from every occupation and status of life. This left very few skilled men to support the war effort. Riveters, welders and other skilled craftsmen were stripped out of the American manufacturing facilities. Ships, planes and other war needed equipment had to be built or we would lose the war because of these shortages. Finally, with some hesitation, America woke up and realized that they had only been using about half of its resources and 75% of its brains. The American woman came to the rescue. By the end of the war women outnumbered the men by 3 to 1 in these jobs. Their average wage was \$31.21/week as compared to the \$54.65/week paid to men. "Rosie the Riveter" became a national icon that motivated the female to do their part. "We can do it" became a National poster. The women of this country did do it. Ask your great-grandmother if you have any doubt. None of this was without cost. At the end of the war there was 210,000 women permanently disabled and 37,000 that lost their lives. All of this was because they stepped up and made a difference. The biggest benefit to women was that they now had earned new freedoms. Men had to accept the fact that there was very few things that men could do that women couldn't do. A special thanks needs to go out to these women for helping preserve the freedoms that we enjoy from men and women alike. **THANK YOU!**



GET "R" DONE!

I started seeing this slogan during the high school playoffs and it really didn't mean much to me at the time. The more I think about it, the more I like the implications of this statement. In a company like Base Line Data, Inc. that has multiple employees, it would be nice to think that everyone performs their work equally. It would be elating, if that was the case, but it isn't. The task that I'm talking about is reports or office type work. Field inspectors are great at performing field work and they perform this work with zeal. Put them in the office and the boys are separated from the men. That is to say, that you should be able to give a job to anyone and with all the enthusiasm of a new inspector, they perform the task efficiently. These are the "Get-R-Done" employees. Some will take a task and work

at it hard until it's completed. Others will see how long they can stretch it. These are the ones that think the only important part of a job is the field work. I believe they have missed the boat. Clients need the information promptly and in a comprehensive report so informed decisions can be made. The "Get-R-Done" employees realize that a job is never completed until the paperwork is done and the report is submitted to the client. Base Line Data, Inc. has many "Get-R-Done" employees and some "prima-donnas" that don't think that the office work is important. Those employees are only half of what they should be. There is hope in the fact that you can become a "Get-R-Done" employee, if you are willing to make the change. **I want to thank that special group of people that does it all!**

CONGRATULATIONS !

Todd Edwards, Larry Yell and J.W. Ralls just completed testing for NCCER on the Operator Qualifications (OQ) program for Operator Maintenance. All three successfully passed. This program allows them to perform covered task at pipeline facilities using NCCER for their OQ evaluation program. Their next hoop will be the Corrosion Technician part of the program. This will conclude the necessary testing for that program. The pipeline industry and the Federal government requires that all personnel performing covered task on pipelines be trained and tested for competency. Base Line Data, Inc. has made a huge investment in this testing.

Character Decline Is Usually Gradual

Submitted by: Chris Beardsley

A prominent white-collar featured on a “Focus on the Family” program described how his life of crime began. He traced it to a single incident during his youth. At 14 he held a part-time job as a rug cleaning assistant. One of his tasks was to treat the carpet with stain resistant after it had been shampooed by his boss. One day he forgot to bring the stain resistant spray bottle, so he asked the boss what to do. The boy was told to find an old spray bottle in the truck, fill it with water and spray that on the carpet; the homeowner would not know the difference.

Although the assistant carried out the command, he felt considerable guilt in doing so. The next time he had to perform the same unethical task he felt a little less guilt. Each subsequent time he felt less guilt until he felt none at all.

A person’s ethical decline typically does not occur suddenly but over a longer period. A. Thomas Young, former president and chief operating officer of the Martin Marietta Corp., has likened the typical ethical decline to the technique a boa constrictor uses to devour its prey: The process is gradual and the victim unwittingly participates in its own demise. The snake does not crush its victim instantly; instead, it coils its body loosely around the victim’s body. Each time the victim exhales, the snake simply takes up some of the slack. Eventually, the victim suffocates.

Applying Young’s analogy, each time we participate in some unethical activity, we contribute to our own ethical decline.

The “Focus on the Family” story illustrates the need for a device that will assist someone facing an ethical dilemma.

A number of such devices exist. Here are three simple yet widely used tools. They’re effective because they require people to stop and think before acting.

Golden Rule Test

The rule simply asks people facing an ethical dilemma to place themselves in the position of the other people involved. How would the rug cleaning assistant feel if someone cleaned his rug in such a manner? Assuming he would feel badly about the situation, the Golden Rule would tell him not to do it to someone else. Although, this rule seems overly simplistic, it is the response most people will give when asked what device they rely on when facing an ethical dilemma.

Front Page of the Newspaper Test

This tool asks a person facing an ethical dilemma to anticipate how he or she would feel if the action were published as headlines on the front page of tomorrow’s newspaper. How would the rug cleaning assistant feel seeing his action in headlines?

Blanchard-Peale Test

This technique, named after the men who developed it, involves answering these three questions before performing any questionable action:

1. Is it legal?
2. Is it balanced?
3. Does it make me feel comfortable?

If the answer to any of the three is no, then find another, better way.

**AND THEY’RE
OFF AND
RUNNING!**

The vehicles pulled out at 06:30 a.m., Monday morning on the 7th of February, 2005 for a trip into Louisiana. Paul Westbrook, Jesse James, Clay Ford and Lee Marsh went to inspect two gas facilities in North Louisiana. The trip took about ten hours and they were back in about twelve days. They worked everyday until the job was complete. The job consisted of field sketching, generating AutoCAD drawings and building circuits at night. Ultrasonic thickness measurements were taken of each established TML. Previous data and documentation created by others was cleaned up and a final correct copy was turned over to the client. Louisiana gas facilities are audited by the Louisiana Environmental Agency for state compliance with regulatory requirements. The previous audit did not fare well. I want to thank these “Baseliners” for making the trip and representing the company in a professional and efficient manner. I had no doubt that the job would be done well. Thank you!



Training:

CERTIFIED WELDING INSPECTION COURSE

The next course begins February 21st, 2005 Mondays and Wednesdays from 5:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. The location is Base Line Data, Inc., 206 Lang Rd., Portland, TX. The exam date is April 16, 2005 @ the same location. There will be a pre-math tutorial offered for those students needing a little brush up. If you are interested or know of anyone interested, please contact J.W. Ralls or Juan Hernandez at (361) 643-3400. All AWS applications are due by March 5, 2005.

All preparatory courses will start approximately 8 to 10 weeks prior to the examination date and applications must be submitted to the American Welding Society 6 weeks prior to the examination date. These courses will be conducted in the evenings.

More CWI Tests Held at Base Line Data in 2005

<u>TEST DATE</u>	<u>APPLICATION DEADLINE</u>
April 16, 2005	March 5, 2005
May 21, 2005	April 9, 2005
July 23, 2005	June 11, 2005
December 17, 2005	November 5, 2005

2005 API-510 TEST

Applications are due 6 to 8 weeks before the exam. The next API-510 exam will be June 1, 2005. A daytime course will be taught by O.T. Lewis May 9th to May 13th from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The API Application Deadline for the June exam is March 29th, 2005. The nighttime course will be taught April 4, 2005-May 30th, 2005 from 5:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m.

2005 API-570 TEST

Applications are due 6 to 8 weeks before the exam. The next API-570 exam will be June 1, 2005. A daytime course will be taught by O.T. Lewis May 23rd to May 27th from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The API Application Deadline for the June exam is March 29th, 2005. The nighttime course will be taught April 4, 2005-May 30th, 2005 from 5:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m.

2005 API-653 TEST

Applications are due 6 to 8 weeks before the exam. The next API-653 exam will be March 23rd, 2005. A daytime course will be taught by Ron Van Arsdale February 21st to February 25th from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. The API Application Deadline for the March exam was January 30th, 2005.

BERWANGER ULTRAPIPE COURSE

Another Berwanger UltraPipe course will be conducted in the first quarter of 2005. This will be an entry Level UltraPipe course. The course will last three days from 08:00 a.m. to 05:00 p.m. The instructor will be Joe Schomette from Berwanger.

RTD OMNI-SCAN TRAINING

With the new RTD OMNI-Scan unit coming in, we are starting to plan a class for all of our UT technicians. The training will consist of two days and is tentatively planned for March 15th and the 16th. The intent is not to accept any UT shearwave work during this period of time to allow all of our UT people to go through this training.

We are starting to create the 2006 Base Line Data calendar. Everyone is encouraged to submit photos. A \$50 gift certificate to Academy or Wal-mart will be awarded to the participant with the best photo. Please submit photos to jpyles@bldata.com.

SCHEDULING INFORMATION

All classes will be held at 206 Lang Road in Portland, TX unless otherwise noted. Please contact J.W. Ralls or Juan Hernandez @ (361) 643-3400, for pricing information and applications on all classes. **Base Line Data, Inc. applications must be submitted three weeks prior to the start of the classes or examinations.

Happy Birthday! Willie Vickery, Marcus Guerrero, Ronald Rios, Jerry Henke, Austin Chambers, Darrell Riley, Joey Dominique, Leighia Ardoin.

Congratulations to Ruben Gonzales for winning a gift certificate to Academy. Ruben submitted the article, “*Throw Away Your Grudges.*”

Congratulations to Jesse James and his wife, Ashley on a beautiful baby boy. Hayden Tyler James was born at Spohn South Hospital January 20, 2005 @ 8:28 p.m. He weighed 8 lbs. 6 oz. and measured 22 inches long.



I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S GOING ON THREE AND IS SO SMART!



Already, he can manipulate his mother, father, grandmother and absolutely his “Pepa.” He is so smart. He might not know his A, B, C’s, but he can recognize almost all major earth-moving equipment. You can be driving down the road and he will point out all of the equipment that he sees. He doesn’t miss much. He is a “John Deere” man. He has the hat and shirts to promote this product. His toys consist of many replicas of earth moving equipment.

We play a game where he is “Superman.” His Pepa throws him up and catches him. For a short period of time, he is airborne. He’ll come up to me and pull on my sleeve and say “Superman” Pepa. There is no doubt he wants to go flying. Mother sits quietly by and prays I don’t drop him. I won’t! I love him very much and would never do anything to hurt him.

He likes to place things on his head. Anything that fits can end up on his head. The other day he even put a colander on his head and took on the role of “cone” head of the clan. He’ll love all of the pictures that I have taken when he’s about sixteen years old, sitting on the couch with his girlfriend and these pictures come out. I really love the one with him fighting a fire on the back porch of our house at the lake.

Next year, I expect to spend more time with him teaching him the ways of life. There’s all kinds of things that a grandfather can teach his grandson that is not allowed to be taught by a parent. **I can’t wait!**

“Sometimes it’s enough simply to try hard. Sometimes our skill is perseverance. Sometimes the simple act of not giving up is both a skill and a virtue. We can be good at trying, and if we are, we need to honor our effort.”

“Don't be afraid of pressure. Remember that pressure is what turns a lump of coal into a diamond.” Unknown

“Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is the probable reason why so few engage in it.” Henry Ford

We Want to Hear From YOU!!! Every employee is encouraged to submit information for publication in the newsletter. Each month a \$50 gift certificate to Academy or the Home Depot will be awarded to the participant with the best monthly article. Information can address: safety, recognition, updates, corporate news, labor relations issues, special events, etc. Please submit information to lralls@bldata.com or Fax us @ (361)643-8442.