

LINKS

Your Link to Lifelong Learning

Vol.12 No.2 Student Publication of the Bernard Kleiman JobLink Learning Center Dec, 2007

Why Certify?

By Tom Zmigrocki, Machine Shop

Certifications are one of the most basic ways a person can show his understanding and competence in different areas. Because more people are becoming interested in getting certified we asked previously certified students to share their reasons for getting certified.

Rich Coy, who has the distinction of being the first person from our program to pass the IC3 exam, feels this certification assures a future or current employer that you know your stuff when it comes to computers. Having recently retired and moved to Texas, Rich expects to be highly employable thanks to this and several other computer related certifications he received through JobLink.

Jerry Torres who has received the House Wiring Certification says "I took this certification course for a couple of reasons. Obviously, the certification was important. I believe the certification

gives me an option for future job prospects. The fact that this course was condensed from 20 to 10 weeks was also a selling point, even though that meant we met twice a week. The course gave me a solid foundation of wiring skills in addition to some NEC exposure."

Tim Spanos, who teaches the electrical courses at JobLink, had these comments about the wiring certifications. "Once the person takes the course, they become certified - no test. But most take it just to learn about residential wiring. The majority of students take the class to learn how to work on their own homes. This certification is really a stepping stone to becoming a licensed electrician."

In fact, once students finish Tim's class they are eligible to become part of the National Registry of Home Builders." They post their resume, including their home wiring certification, on the National Association of Home Builders website (www.nahb.org/careers)

and it is possible to get work from someone who needs electrical work done.

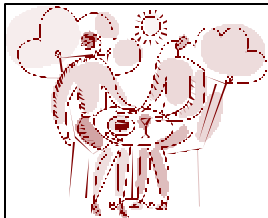
I personally took the A+ certification because I wanted to see how I compared to the national average. I felt confident that I had a good understanding and mastery of the subject, but I still wanted to know how I compared to the other people who had taken the test. I really took it for the personal satisfaction.

As you can see, the reasons for getting certified are as unique and varied as the people seeking them. Regardless of the reason, remember this - JobLink can help you achieve your goal.

The next time you ask yourself if you should get certified, you know the answer—Why Not!



Today was a good day By Betty Pompy, Mechanic #5 Galvanized



Somewhere I read, "Life is something that happens to us while we are busy making plans." My plans changed three years ago when my mother, in her seventies, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. As a child I thought forgetfulness was a normal part of getting old. But there is a big difference between my mother forgetting that my name is Betty and not knowing that I am her daughter. My mother suffers from high blood pressure and diabetes; alone each disease is bad but the three together cause a triple threat to the health of the brain.

Alzheimer's appears to affect the brain's information highway turning it into a traffic jam, sometimes letting the information through and other times losing it altogether. The disease hasn't changed my mother's personality; she is still spicy, carefree and independent. We didn't take notice of her memory loss until after my father passed. She has good days and bad days. On a bad day she is confused about her surroundings. One day she was sitting on the patio drinking coffee and the next two minutes she was wondering down the street not knowing where she was. Other times she would wake up at night and call me to come pick her up not realizing she was at home. I've watched as she examines a simple item not connecting its function. My mother knows there

(Continued on page 3)



From Diane's Desk

*Diane Lentz
JobLink Coordinator*

**So what are you doing at JobLink that will keep your Brain Healthy?
The JobLink committee looks at keeping brains healthy.**

You probably take classes at JobLink and only think about what content you are learning. So your concerns revolve around understanding the technical part of what is being taught. This is the usual concern of anyone attending classes.

However, there is another layer of benefits that you are experiencing that is just as important, but so hidden that you are not cognizant of it. By taking your class, you are probably **improving the health of your brain**. Why is that important? As we age, we want to retain our brain's health so that we can continue processing information and put off dementia as long as possible. Let's see what some experts had to say on this topic:

According to Small who wrote, The Memory Prescription "The next big fitness movement is the brain fitness movement, "We can modify a lot of the risk factors for brain disease in the same way that we can reduce the risk factors for, say, heart disease." She offers several memory workouts based on scientific data. One of them is: Learn something new. "Mastering activities you've never done before, such as playing the piano or learning a foreign language, stimulates neuron

(Continued on page 4)

...Viewpoints...

*Steve Wagner
Local 1010 Representative*

Think About IT!

I'm sure that you have heard the phrase "If you don't use it, you will lose it". We've all had memory lapses at some point in our life. Those of us that used to do crossword puzzles and quit, just can't pick one up and be good at it from the start! When was the last time you did math using fractions and decimals? Do you solve Sudukos?

It is important as we get older to keep that brain working. It really doesn't matter whether you're reading, writing or doing math, it all helps us maximize **brain function** and **brain health!**

What we all can do to maintain a healthy brain is:

- Stay or get physically active.
- Engage in learning throughout life.
- Keep socially engaged with friends, family and in your community.
- Develop a positive attitude.
- Manage stress.
- Eat brain-healthy foods.
- Get enough sleep.

(Continued on page 4)



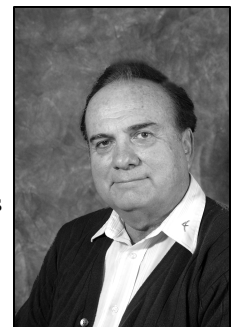
*Tim Kinach
Management Representative*

A New Buzz Word!

There is a new buzz word floating around. It's called *neurobics*. It means to exercise your brain. And it's applicable to all of us. Let me explain.

The average age of the workforce here at the Harbor Works is right around 50, even with a number of recent, younger new hires making up part of that average. There are also a significant number of people employed here that are in their 60s, and some in their 70s ! In fact, society as a whole is recognizing that, as the general population ages, many older Americans are doing much more as they get older than did their parents. And speculation has it that this trend will continue.

But as we mature and get older while continuing to keep active, our thinking ability and memory can change, and our brain may not be able to keep up with our activity. We need to keep our brains healthy. Simply put, placing our brains into "playback" mode all of the time in a replaying of the skills we have already learned and are good at, is not enough. The brain wants you to exercise it through learning. In people of all ages, learning new things improves memory, concentration and problem solving, and these neurobics effectively slow mental decline, which people



(Continued on page 3)

Links is a student publication of the Bernard Kleiman JobLink Learning Center
Student Editor: Tom Zmigrocki Assistant Editor: Joe Woessner Editor: Marcia L. Taylor
JobLink Subcommittee: Diane Lentz, Tim Kinach, Steve Wagner

Tuition Assistance for Retirees

By Steve Wagner, Vice President Local 1010

Beginning January 1, 2008, we will have available limited Tuition Assistance Funds for recently retired Local 1010 Members!

The Institute for Career Development (ICD) has announced that the Governing Board has approved Limited Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) Benefits for recently retired members.



Effective January 1, 2008 recent retirees may use limited Tuition Assistance Funds for up to one year following their retirement date. Please note that this is a major change from the current ICD policy on expenditures for retired members. This pilot program is limited to the unspent TAP Funds under the 20% cap from the previous year...2007. The good news is that our Local Joint Committee has agreed to participate.

The guidelines for this pilot program are:

1. Retirees will be allowed to use up to \$1800 in Tuition Assistance for a **period of one year following their retirement.**
2. Funding for this retiree TA benefit will come from Joblink's approved but unused TA funding from the previous calendar year. (Example: if JobLink budgets \$25,000 for TA in 2007, but expends only \$15,000; \$10,000 is then available to be spent on retiree TA in 2008, provided that the total amount spent on retiree TA in 2008 does not push the 2007 amount spent on TA over the 20% limit.)
3. Since there is a natural limitation on funds, retiree requests will be met on a **first-come/first served basis.**

More details will follow...check in plant informational flyers and the Joblink website for procedural information.

(Continued from page 1) On A Good Day

is something wrong, that she is forgetting a lot lately, but she blames it on getting older. My mother lives in an apartment upstairs from me, and on a good day she can function living alone, but there are days she needs lots of help.

My mother sometimes is afraid to stay in the apartment alone and I'm afraid to leave her also. I'm afraid that she may leave the stove on, the water running in the tub, or walk away from home again and there is no one at home to stop her. Once the caregiver, she is now the one in need of care. My youngest brother and I work together caring for our mother. When neither one of us is home, I have to find someone to sit with her. Medication slows down the progression, but we understand that as time passes my mother's condition will only get worse.

We go through life not thinking this could happen to us. The exact cause of Alzheimer's is not known but a combination of genetics and other factors does cause Alzheimer's to develop. I know I can't change my genetic make up. However, by attending classes on memory at JobLink, I have learned to exercise my mind, to practice stress relief and to work on changing my lifestyle with diet and exercise. I need to stay on my toes to care for my mother, and hopefully, everything I'm doing now will help me avoid the disease myself.

(Continued from page 2) Tim Kinach

used to take for granted and accept as they got older just a few, short years ago.

Besides retaining a positive attitude and staying physically healthy, "...the brain requires change, and that change requires that you acquire new skills and abilities, new hobbies, and activities that require the brain to remodel itself..."*

An excellent way to practice neurobics is to take advantage of services, classes, and tuition assistance offered by the local United Steelworkers Bernard Kleiman JobLink Learning Center and the Leon Lynch Career Center. These offer a plethora of training and skills people can use to keep their brains active and healthy. I hope that all employees take a look at the catalog and lists of classes these programs offer, and sign up for one, or more, of these great, educational opportunities. Your brain will thank you by rewarding you with a participative, quality life up through those golden, senior years. *AARP web site

Kudos to our window box winners:

First Place: Yolande Sobkowicz
Jerry Torres & Juan Camarillo
Second place winner: Peter Szaszko
And many thanks to everyone who helped beautify JobLink !



activity.” (Mind Aerobics: 10 ways to get your memory in shape By Susan Jacoby February, 2005)

"We can make the brain work better simply by accumulating more knowledge, which builds more networks of connections in the brain," says James McGaugh, PhD, a Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives member at University of California, Irvine.

Brain experts are convinced that engaging in active learning throughout life will help maintain brain health in our later years. "The brain wants to learn," says Michael Merzenich, PhD, a neurobiologist at University of California, San Francisco.

"It wants to be engaged as a learning machine." ("Engage Your Brain" in AARP Magazine)

As seen in an AARP article by Phil Scott, "As for a mental workout, a study published in 2003 in *The New England Journal of Medicine* analyzed 469 people at least 75 years old who answered a questionnaire about physical and mental activities, ranging from crossword puzzles to dancing. Within a median timeframe of five years, 124 had developed dementia, *though the frequent dancers showed a reduced incidence*. According to the study's lead, Joe Verghese, MD, assistant neurology professor at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, *dancing was the only physical activity* tied to a lower risk of dementia." The article went on to say, "Dancers must memorize intricate steps and movements, master timing, and coordinate movements with a partner — the type of mental acrobatics that hold off memory loss and dementia." (This article first appeared in NRTA Live & Learn, Spring 2007)

This is just a sampling of information available about maintaining a healthy brain. The "experts" seem to be telling you that classes at JobLink are not only good for you now, but are also making you a healthier senior as time goes by. So don't just take my word for it, listen to the **Brain Experts**. Start exercising your brain today at JobLink!

(Continued from page 2) Steve Wagner



- Seek appropriate treatment for any health problems. JobLink can help with many of these activities.
- Don't let any more time pass before you utilize your union negotiated educational benefits. **Stop by JobLink and keep that brain healthy!**

MORE HELP FOR THE BRAIN!

As of January, JobLink will have a software program available to exercise the brain. Come in and try it out!

Also, sign up for "Keep Your Brain Healthy", a telecasted class also in January.

Go online for more information and to sign up for a free newsletter. Very interesting brain research written for the layman is available at dana.org.



Joblink Reminder



Our center will be closed for the
H o l i d a y s
Beginning December 24th.
Classes resume January 7th!

Words To Remember

The human brain starts working the moment you are born and never stops until you stand up to speak in public.

George Jessel

Staff News

Who's Doing What at JobLink?

Milan Opacich By Rick Barna, #3 Cold Strip

As his beloved Tamburitza music plays in the background of our story, Milan Opacich looms larger than life in my mind's eye -- NEA Master Artist, National Heritage Fel-

lowship Award winner, luthier, author, Tamburitza Hall of Famer, curator of the Tamburitza Music museum at St. Sava's, a sage and keeper of the flame -- and now JobLink teacher! This humble soul feels mightily refreshed at the meeting and verily honored and privileged to be a grateful guest.

Approaching the house, the JobLink gypsy spies two Saturns in the driveway, and a prima on the post in front of the house. Go with the Force, Rick! This must be the right place. It's just before nine o'clock. I ring the doorbell and am greeted by Milan, the Obiwan Kenobi of Tamburitza music. Entering the workshop to the magical aroma of sawdust, we see musical instruments, guitars, mandolins, primas, braches, in various stages of construction as well as parts of old instruments. Nothing is wasted that might possibly come in handy sometime later.

Kiln dried, aged wood are the raw materials, rosewood, and close-grained Balkan spruce. There are tools of the trade: a buffer, router and drill press bought from Ivan Lad when Mr. Lad closed down his shop. Milan took up the luthier trade, setting up shop in the garage in 1950 after marrying his beloved Rosalyn. He took the baton and kept running with it for about fifty-seven years.

Although Milan is a fairly common Slavic name, in this particular case for an uncommonly terrific personage, Milan Opacich, Lew Wallace Class of '47, was named after the city. His father traveled across the Adriatic to Milan, Italy and worked at La Scala, cultivating a deep love for opera. Hence the easy transition from Old Country to Grand Old Opry. As I write, I am listening to a CD which was recorded at the #8 Fire Station, great acoustics there!

The Opacich home is richly luxurious with golden memories and much love. The family worked hard to realize the American Dream, making ends meet, raising and educating their daughter, a Ph.D., on a fireman's salary with beloved Rosalyn working for years at a doctor's office. Milan also worked as a tool and die maker for eleven years. He retired from performing for about a year now to devote his time to sharing the legacy with the steelworkers. This legacy is vibrantly alive and well. It is all about giving it away to keep it. Gotta go now, they're playing my song!



Vista

By Bill Needles



Have you heard about Vista? Have you already been converted or is it "hasta la Vista, baby" for you? Well, Vista is the latest desktop operating system from Microsoft. Vista was released in January this year and will eventually replace Windows XP. XP will be around for many years (just like Windows 98 was), but sooner or later you'll want to start learning about Vista and how it is different from XP. As a matter of fact, if you buy a new computer at retail these days you will probably be buying it with Vista preinstalled.

Vista comes in four primary releases while XP just had three. The four are: Vista Home Basic, Vista Home Premium, Vista Business and Vista Ultimate. Most personal computers are being sold with the Home Premium version. Vista Home Basic can be found on the least expensive computers and offers very few new features over XP. Vista Business edition most closely matches the features found in XP Professional, while Vista Ultimate adds multiple new features not previously found in XP.

Early feedback from classes at JobLink and students with Vista based computers is mixed. It seems that there have been many issues with hardware compatibility (printers, cameras, graphics cards, etc.) and those are slowly being worked out by Microsoft and third party hardware manufacturers. On the plus side, most users like the new 3D user interface and some of the new features like voice commands, ReadyBoost, Integrated search, Windows Media Center and Photo Gallery.

If you are considering upgrading your existing system to Vista, there are some important minimum hardware requirements your existing system will have to meet. You will need a minimum of a 1 GHz processor, 512MB of RAM, 20GB of free hard drive space and a modern graphics card. JobLink had a Vista introduction class that started the same week Vista was released. New Vista classes are open for signups right now. Taking a class at JobLink is a great way to get started with your own Vista experience. See you in class soon!

Bernard Kleiman *JobLink* Learning Center

Mittal Steel Indiana Harbor
3210 Watling Street (7-200)
East Chicago, IN 46312

PRESORT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GRIFFITH, IN
PERMIT # 24

JobLink Friends:

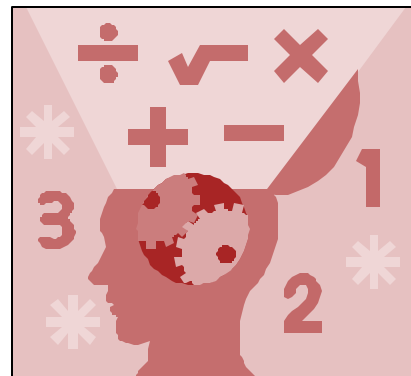
Rick Barna	[3 C/S E 80" Tandem]
Ken Bogucki	[Utilities 5A/C]
Jaime Calderon	[#2 Cold Strip]
Tom Christman	[80" Hot Strip]
Jesse Flores	[Plt. 4 Maint.]
Linda Golden	[#1 Slab Caster]
Julian Gonzales	[MHSH]
Bob Guevara	[Plt. 1 Galv.]
Randy Hendrix	[Plt. 2 Electrician]
Herman Loyd	[Retiree advocate]*
Ed McHaskell	[Coke Energy]
Mike Nelson	[4BOF Mech Turn]
Gail Richardson	[3 Cold Strip West]
Phillip Rodriguez	[5 AC/Utilities]
John Shultz	[3 Cold Strip West]
Genfu Tai	[R & D]
Jerry Torres	[MEU]
Nick Valle	[Union Hall]
Dan Vertucci	[3 Cold Strip, Mechanical]
John Walker	[#4 S.P.]
Joe Woessner	[Plt. 1 Machine Shop]
Tom Zmigrocki	[Plt. 1 Machine Shop]

* Available through email: hermanloyd@yahoo.com

Mental Gymnastics

DIRECTIONS: Be prepared to time yourself as you try to answer these questions. Find solutions to the brainteasers, writing your answers on the lines provided. Once you are done, record your time and check your answers.

- A. Circle the two words that are *closest* in meaning:
change, stereotype, delete, pigeonhole, identify
- B. Circle the two words that are the *furthest* in meaning:
irrational, privy, reasonable, pleasing, perceptible
- C. Find the next number in the sequence:
1, 4, 10, 19, 31, _____
- D. Find the next number in the sequence:
15, 12, 16, 11, 17, _____



How long did it take you? _____ Now check your answers below.

If you answered all correctly in 3 minutes or less, you're Mental Olympics material.
If you answered all correctly in less than 4 1/2 minutes, your brain as agile as Nadia.
If you answered some correctly in about 5 minutes, keep that brain limber.
If none of the above, come to JobLink and get some stretching and flexing!

A. computerizes/pigeonhole B. irrational/reasonable C. 46 D. 10