

Dear Readers,

This issue marks the beginning of *Inspection Trends*' seventh year of publication. Hard to believe, isn't it? It is for me, and I was there seven years ago in Publisher Jeff Weber's office with the rest of the *Welding Journal* editorial and production staff kicking around ideas about what should be included in this brand-new publication the American Welding Society was preparing to launch. The magazine has come a long way in those seven years, and I think it's time to take a close look at what we offer you in each issue. I want to make sure that every feature article and every department offers valuable information that you can put to use in your professional life. If there are departments that aren't as useful as they once were or topics we're not covering regularly that we should, I want to know about it.

A few weeks ago, I got the opportunity to speak about *Inspection Trends* with some veteran CWIs who were taking a nine-year recertification course here at AWS headquarters. I'd like to thank them again for giving up some of their valuable class time and sharing their ideas with me. Their input will help me in planning upcoming issues. For instance, they said they don't like it when an issue concentrates on only one topic and they'd like to see more articles on the petrochemical and pipeline industries.

Now I'm asking you to let me know what you like or dislike about *Inspection Trends*. Is there a topic you believe has been overworked and you just don't want to read about any more? What subjects can't you get enough of? What's your favorite department in the magazine? Your least favorite? Take a close look at this issue and send me your comments. Try to be as specific as possible. Your input is invaluable.

I think the class of CWIs I talked to will find the variety they like in this Winter 2004 issue. It contains five feature articles on five different subjects. In "Inspecting Welds with Liquid Penetrants," Robert Siegel presents a primer on this well-established NDE method. I've written a profile on the NDE program at Southeast Community College in Milford, Neb., and Steve Snyder helps you answer the question "Is That Welder Qualified?" In the second article in a four-part series, Ray Shepard explains the world's most commonly used steel production method: the basic oxygen furnace. In "Solving UT Weld Inspection System Problems," Gordon Smith and Uwe Aschemeier provide insight into the problems associated with UT equipment, the variables that exist, and how to reduce them.

I'd like to take this time to wish you a happy and healthy new year and to thank you in advance for your help in making *Inspection Trends* an even better, more useful magazine in 2004.

Sincerely,

Mary Ruth Johnsen
Editor

Reply to mjohnsen@aws.org
or (800) 443-9353 ext. 238.



Inspection Trends

Editorial Staff

Publisher

Jeff Weber
jweber@aws.org

Executive Editor

Andrew Cullison
cullison@aws.org

Editor

Mary Ruth Johnsen
mjohnsen@aws.org

Associate Editors

Susan Campbell
campbell@aws.org
Ross Hancock
rhancock@aws.org

Graphics and Production

Production Editor

Zaida Chavez
zaida@aws.org

Advertising

Director of Sales

Rob Saltzstein
salty@aws.org

Advertising Sales Promotion Coordinator

Lea Garrigan
garrigan@aws.org

Advertising Production

Frank Wilson
fwilson@aws.org

Subscriptions

Leidy Brigman
leidy@aws.org

American Welding Society

550 NW LeJeune Rd.

Miami, FL 33126

(800) 443-9353

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