Great Grizzly Times

NORTH CENTRAL INDUSTRIES, INC. MARCH 2007 VOLUME I, ISSUE 8

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32nd Season!

Stacey R. Smith
General Manager
14th Season!

Lori Y. Crespo
Editor/Drop Shipments
3rd Season!

Nicole E. Werner
Graphic Designer
3rd Season!

LuAnn Teter
Accounts Payable
2nd Season!

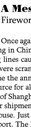
Jesse Barrerra
National Sales Manager
3rd Season!

Charlie Phipps
Warehouse Manager
22nd Season!

Sean Alexander
Warehouse Asst. Manager
10th Season!

Jack Miller
Production Manager
20th Season!

Brenda Said
Production Assistant
11th Season!



A Message From The President, Richard B. Shields:

Fireworks Issues in Mainland China

Once again since my last newsletter I have been to China on four occasions. Situations are always occurring in China that quickly gets the attention of U. S importers. Last spring a fire aboard one of the shipping lines caused several shippers to halt all shipments of fireworks to the USA. As factories and exporters were scrambling to find new shipping lines to replace those no longer carrying 1.4G fireworks. Then came the announcement that on November 1, 2006 the Port of Sanxui would close. This port is the major source for all shipments coming to the USA. Many importers scrambled to find new shippers out of the Port of Shanghai. Fortunately our Great Grizzly buying group had already secured a source and space for all our shipments from Hunan and Jiangxi. We ordered early and have the major portion of our inventory in house. Just recently the China government was convinced by many agencies and exporters to reopen this port. The Port of Sanxui will open again sometime in March, 2007.

In addition the Chinese currency called RMB is now floating against the HK and US dollar. This is sure to raise fireworks prices both short term and long term. The good news is that prices still are not what we usually paid in the 1980 or 1990's. Quality products are still very reasonable in cost and the largest impact for price increases are low profit and low cost products such as bottle rockets. Competition among exporters and factories continue to keep our increases to a minimum.

We continue to travel to China often looking for new high quality products. Our GG Group Manager in China, Mr. Freddie Chen visits our suppliers often and keeps us knowledgeable on all pertinent issues. For example the domestic market in China is much stronger than recent years as the new China Presidents allows fireworks use in all the large cities such a Beijing.

...continued on page 4

Dear Boomer,

(A Table of Contents with a twist)

Stacey gives her review of last year
READ THE UPDATES IN HER ARTICLE ON PAGE 2!

A traveling summary
READ ABOUT IT IN LORI'S ARTICLE ON PAGE 2!

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READ HER ARTICLE ON PAGE 3!

How is LuAnn doing after her first season?
READ HER ARTICLE ON PAGE 3!

Are you addicted to the sudoku craze?
TEST YOUR SKILL ON PAGE 3!

What are the HOT new items?
FIND OUT ON PAGE 4!

Upcoming Industry Events

Indiana Fireworks Distributors Association IFDA
Dues are being accepted for 2007 membership. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact IFDA/ IFDA Executive Director Steve Graves @ (800) 535-7477.

International Symposium on Fireworks Society
The 10th International Symposium on Fireworks is scheduled to be held in Montreal, Canada on October 15-19th. For more information, please visit their web site at *www.isfireworks.com*

Pyrotechnics Guild International (PGI)
2007 Convention
The PGI annual convention "Fargo Firestorm 2007" will be held from August 4-10th at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds in West Fargo, North Dakota. For more info, please check their web site at *www.pgi.org*

National Fireworks Association Trade Exposition
The NFA's 2007 Expo will be held on September 5-8th at the Holiday Inn, Cincinnati Airport in Erlanger, KY. For more information, please check their web site at *www.nationalfireworks.org*

American Pyrotechnics Association (APA) 2007 Conference
The 59th annual APA convention will be held in Dallas, TX from October 1-6th. For more information, please contact the APA at (301)907-8181 or visit them online at *www.americanpyro.com*

Year in review

By: Stacey Smith

Hello to all my customers & friends! Another year has passed and it's time to prepare for another fireworks season ahead! Last year was a year of change. First of all it was a busy fireworks season for our customers here in Indiana as the State of Indiana passed the law to make all Class C fireworks legal (with certain restrictions). Although there are issues that still need to be ironed out, for the most part, last year went off without a hitch!

After the fireworks season was over I traveled to Nashville with Richard and our office staff for the annual APA Convention. Nashville was a very warm and friendly town. Everyone we met was extremely polite and they LOVE fireworks so we love them! We had 2 fireworks demos that were held at the Tennessee Titan's football stadium and these shells were definitely the cream of the crop! The entertainment by Lorrie Morgan and Tanya Tucker was spectacular. Oh, and I can't leave out the fact that they have a HUGE mall about 15 min. from downtown that was awesome! We only got to walk through about ¼ of the mall before heading back---you know us women shoppers, we MUST go in every store

Another change had to do with the ocean freight and the shipping companies that we use to import our fireworks. Be sure to read Richard's article to find out all the details as this has impacted the industry tremendously!

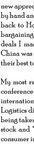
I am now proud to report that Richard promoted me to General Manager! I want to thank him for his recognition of my achievements and as always, I look forward to the additional responsibilities.

I also want to express my gratitude and sincere thanks to the best set of office girls in the industry! I could not perform the day to day operations without Lori, Nicole and LuAnn giving me 110% each and every day. Nice job ladies!

Last but not least, we just returned from the annual APA Winter Conference in Las Vegas. As I'm sure you all remember, I'm am a big fan of the "one arm bandit." In the past you could always find me seated in front of a Jackpot Party machine and this year was no exception. My staff and I attended several informative meetings as well. We enjoyed a welcome breakfast followed by an amazing guest speaker, Mr. Michael Mezmer. Mr. Mezmer is a renowned hypnotist and actually performed hypnosis on several of the APA members. This was a truly fun event! We also enjoyed an evening of talking with old friends and fellow professionals at the annual cocktail reception. Along with attending the general membership meeting our staff also attended a workshop on EX numbers and LuAnn successfully completed the 8-hour Hazmat Training Course to become certified! Congratulations LuAnn!!

All in all it's been another fast paced "off season" and hard to believe that in about 3 or 4 months July 4, 2007 will be history. This industry is ever-changing which makes it such an amazing industry to be involved in! Best wishes to you all for a safe and successful season ahead! I look forward to talking with you all real soon!

God Bless Us All,
Stacey



Pictured - left to right: Freddie (China office) JB (Guangzhou Fireworks) Richard Shields Nicole (NCI) Richard (NCI President)

Planes, Trains, & ..Fireworks!

By: Lori Crespo

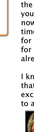
Hello everyone! This coming year is sure to be just as exciting, if not more, than the last! Going into my 3rd year here I have recently taken on more responsibilities and I'm being trained on the accounting side of things. I am still handling the drop shipments, full truck load freight, maintaining our website, and producing this newsletter you are reading among other things. I will be handing over the administrative duties for the IFDA to LuAnn as well as the LTL shipping, so if you have questions regarding either you may contact her. All of the staff here at NCI work very hard to give you the best customer service possible!

In September 2006 I had the pleasure of attending the APA convention in Nashville, TN filled with meetings, the trade show, sightseeing, and great demos.

In October 2006 Richard gave Nicole & I the great privilege of visiting China with him. This trip was amazing, I've never visited so many different places in just a few days and it was quite a whirlwind. We started the trip off in Hong Kong but did not waste much time before taking a train to Guangzhou and a short flight to Beijing where we visited the Great Wall and the Forbidden City. I was in awe that whole day, absolutely beautiful! Then it was off to Changsha where we visited a factory to see a demo & the firework items being made and packaged right in front of us. It gave me a new appreciation on All of our products to see how everything is assembled by hand and how much time goes into just producing one piece. Then it was back to Hong Kong before the 13 hour flight home. In Hong Kong our bargaining skills were put to the test at the ladies street market. With all the deals I made, I walked away with some nice & inexpensive souvenirs! China was quite a culture shock but everyone was so welcoming and did their best to make us comfortable, I hope to visit again in the future.

My most recent traveling experience was in February for APA's annual conference located in Las Vegas, the city that never sleeps. During the international transportation meeting Bengt Hendrickson from Quality Logistics discussed the shipping concern in China and what measures are being taken to alleviate this issue. Fortunately NCI is sitting pretty well on stock and "stocks on wood" hasn't had as many problems as some other consumer importers may be facing.

Feel free to contact me with any questions you may have about orders, items, shipping, etc. I'm here to help you make this your best season yet and I look forward to hearing from you all!



Take Care,
Lori

Pyrotechnics by Design

By: Nicole Werner

Where to start?! Well, I will soon be approaching the two year mark here at North Central. This year happens to be my third season. I will continue to work on the Insurance and Driver qualifications. I receive a great deal of phone calls throughout the season about Insurance so I look forward to hearing all of your familiar voices.

Last season was very different from my first season; I'm assuming this year will have its changes also. I enjoy experiencing new things so the variations from year to year are quite pleasing. We have a good team at North Central; we work well together and always manage to overcome any obstacles we may face.

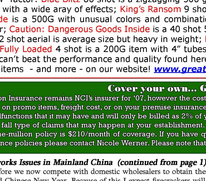
During the off season I have kept busy with various Graphic Design projects. I've created new artwork for items such as the Bad Ass Ballistics (#948) and Terminator 24 (#1569). I've also revamped and created the artwork for several of our promotional items. I am particularly excited about our new Fireworks Coming Soon Banner (#1434). This banner is very large (7'x7') and bright. It is sure to catch the attention of any onlookers' eye! Lately, I have been keeping busy with the New Items Brochure and DVD. The DVD is a very time consuming project, it also happens to be my favorite. I really enjoy editing and setting the fireworks to music!

This past year, I also traveled to both Nashville and Las Vegas for the APA Conventions. The APA staff is such an organized group of individuals. The dedication they put forth to provide an informative convention is always apparent. I always leave the conventions with a better understanding of the current state of the fireworks industry.

On top of all that, Richard blessed Lori and I with the opportunity to travel to China! We visited Hong Kong, Guang Zhou, Beijing, Changsha, and Liu Yang. We witnessed three firework demos and were able to take a tour of the Asia Pyrotechnics, Inc. factory. What an amazing experience! Prior to visiting China, Richard would try to explain his trips over there. I feel as though it is something you have to experience for yourself to truly understand. The trip really opened my eyes!

I had an amazing year with North Central. I'm looking forward to the upcoming season. 4th of July will be here before we know it! I will be here to take your orders and to answer any questions you may have!

Nicole



SUDOKU

Each 3x3 square needs numbers 1 - 9 and that number occurs only once. Each column and row of the larger grid must also have number 1 - 9 used only once. These puzzles are a favorite little stress reliever of Stacey and LuAnn's! Solution on page 4. No Cheating!

	6			1		4	5	
		8	3		5	6		
2								1
8			4		7			6
		6				3		
7			9		1			4
5								2
		7	2		6	9		
	4		5		8		7	

Last But Not Least!

By: LuAnn Teter

Hello! Well it has been more then a year now and I made it through my first season. I must have done okay because I now have customers calling and asking for me. I love it, I really like talking to the customers, and a lot of them are really friendly and were great at working with me for my first year. Some made me laugh which always made my day easier!

I have had a chance to go to two of the conventions and I have learned a lot at both but I would have to say that my favorite was the Las Vegas convention. I came back broke from Vegas but I had fun losing it all! It was my first time in Vegas and I wanted to see everything, but unfortunately I was not able to see it all. I still was able to get some great pictures though.

I am still handling accounts payable but I do have some new duties to add to my responsibilities, I am now doing the IFDA so if you call in please ask for me so I can help you. Also, all the LTL shipping for our customers orders now go through me. I handle getting the paperwork on time, paying for the freight and scheduling the containers for delivery and I can tell you that our inventory is great for this time of year. We have a lot of our inventory in already and will be able to get those orders ready for you.

I know more than last year on our products but I also find that there are new things to learn here everyday. I am excited on the new season coming soon and will be here to answer your calls.

LuAnn

THIS IS WHY IT'S HOT

Each year we get many calls into the office asking, "Which of your new items are the best?" Well I'd be lying if I didn't say that ALL of our items are great, but there are a few that lead the pack in the "wow" factor: Blue Blitz 80 shot is a zigzagging 500 gram item; Pyro Generation 45 shot is a 500G item with a wide array of effects; King's Ransom 9 shot has 3" tubes that pack a good show; Hell of a Ride is a 500G with unusual colors and combinations; 18's Hot Club is a 500G item unlike any other; Caution: Dangerous Goods Inside is a 40 shot 500G that packs a dangerous punch; Let's Get Lit 12 shot aerial is average size but heavy in weight; Night Time Frenzy is a hot little 20 shot aerial and Fully Loaded 4 shot is a 200G item with 4" tubes! Not only does the packaging look sharp but you can't beat the performance and quality found here at NCI. Don't forget to check out our new items - and more - on our website! *www.greatgrizzly.com*

Cover your own... Get Insurance!

Drayton Insurance remains NCI's insurer for '07, however the costs have changed. As we have mentioned in the past, we have been bulled on promo items, freight cost, or on your premise insurance policies. **Production** or manufactures that may have and not yet be billed as 2% of your fireworks purchases. **Promo** insurance will cover a trip & fall type of claims that may happen at your establishment. For premise **Premise** insurance will cover a the one-million policy is $210 month of coverage. If you have questions regarding the rates or any other insurance policies please contact Nicole Werner. Please note that policies cannot be back dated, starting now!

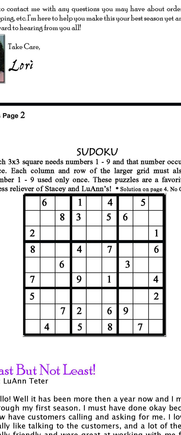
Fireworks Issues in Mainland China (continued from page 1)...

Therefore we now compete with domestic wholesalers to obtain these goods especially around Chinese New Year. Because of this I expect firecrackers will become more and more difficult to acquire each season. Obviously other items will also be affected by the domestic competition.

We continue to use our long time China partners and suppliers to acquire the best products at the lowest possible cost. These suppliers know the market and are quickest to respond when some glitch in the market occurs. This market is changing each and every year. It will continue to change and we must be ready to change with it.

I look forward to giving you my inside views of China each year in this Newsletter or for updates year round visit us on line at www.greatgrizzly.com.

Richard



SUDOKU SOLUTION