Darrel Kohlhorst, deputy general manager (second from right) presents firefighter Donald McGuire (second from left) with his new uniform. They are joined by J. R. Russell (left) in one of the new uniforms and David Fahey.

Where there’s smoke, there’s fire … or, at Y-12, some extremely hard-working fire fighters.

Hard work has enabled Y-12’s Fire Department to meet 98 percent of its performance incentive measures for the last four years, while maintaining the lowest fire loss (less than $1,000) in the U.S. Department of Energy Complex.

Those distinctions are a testament to some proactive planning, and the new uniforms are just one example. The existing uniform was showing signs of wear, and personnel transporting patients were often mistaken for hospital staff. When the need for a change was determined, the team evaluating options considered Y-12-specific factors, such as the use of rank patches instead of pins to facilitate clearing the metal detectors.

According to Captain David Fahey, while performing an exhaustive search of uniform manufacturers and considering laundry needs, they learned of a unique rental program. Aramark, an international Department on fire with improvements uniform and career apparel service, offers rent and lease options in addition to direct purchase. Fahey noted that this program saves Y-12 money in many ways. The company does not have to purchase or store the uniforms, and worn or ill-fitting uniforms are simply switched out at no cost.

The new uniforms are only one example of many improvements over the last 12 months. Additional changes include full automation of the test, maintenance and inspection program, a new decontamination tent and deployment of larger self-contained breathing apparatus tanks.

Future improvements include implementing a wide-area radio system, which will significantly improve radio communications, and developing specifications for the planned purchase of a new pumper truck—designed by one of the department’s own.

From choosing new uniforms to designing an ideal fire engine, Y-12’s fire-fighting professionals work proactively to ensure the Complex’s safety.

Y-12 breaks ground

The Y-12 National Security Complex broke ground Dec. 1 on two state-of-the-art privately financed buildings that will enable Y-12 to vacate and tear down a large number of obsolete, 1940s-era facilities.

U.S. Reps. Zach Wamp, John J. Duncan Jr. and Lincoln Davis joined Steve Liecle, acting general manager of Y-12, and Bill Breamen, Y-12 site manager for the National Nuclear Security Administration, at the ceremony where dirt was symbolically dug.

The new buildings, the New Hope and Jack Case (production interface) facilities, will house nearly 1,500 employees. Total square footage for both buildings will be 560,000.

The buildings will include laboratory and conference space, a visitors center, occupational health center, badging office and public displays.

Jerry Paul, principal deputy administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration, said, “This facility is the cornerstone of the [Y-12] modernization efforts.”

The project is expected to increase the tax revenue for Oak Ridge and Anderson county governments because the new buildings will be included in the local property tax base.

“The offices that will be built here … truly represent the ‘new hope’ of the community,” Liecle said.

Oak Ridge Mayor David Bradshaw declared Dec. 1, 2005, as “New Hope Building and Production Support Facility Day.”

Wamp concluded, “This day represents renewal, reform and responsibility. We are renewing ourselves for the future. This is a great day for Tennessee.”

Up to 5,000 construction-related jobs will be utilized over the course of the project. Construction is expected to last 18 to 20 months with occupancy to begin in mid-2007.
Mentoring Program co-workers aid hurricane victims

Martha Foye and Sheri Somers know all about lending a helping hand. As part of the Mentoring Program, they’ve used their skills to help others. They recently took the program’s credo to heart and volunteered for a 10-day stint with the American Red Cross.

When Somers, a mentor and local American Red Cross member, asked Foye, a mentor, if she’d be interested in supporting the Appalachian Chapter of the American Red Cross in its Gulf Coast hurricane relief efforts, Foye didn’t have to think twice about it. As Somers recalls, “The only response was, ‘What do I need to do, and when do they need us?’”

Before long, Foye and Somers, both of Planning and Integration, were headed to New Orleans to serve as co-workers at a distribution center in New Orleans.

“When we first heard our assignment would be in the Big Easy … well, we were pretty uneasy,” said Somers. “But we never once felt threatened. People were so thankful.”

Helping people was just part of their assignment; helping homeless pets was also a “heartbreaking” experience. “A fellow volunteer from Colorado and I bought bags of dog and cat food, cases of water and bowls,” said Somers. “When we saw an animal that looked like a stray, we put out fresh food and water and called Animal Rescue with the location.”

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To volunteer with the Appalachian Chapter of the American Red Cross, call 489-5644.

5 new Black Belts join PPI

What’s a good way to boost your value to the company? Become a Six Sigma Black Belt.

Kathy Gerth, Chris Murphy, Mike Ratledge, Paul Sooter and Tim Talley are the newest arrivals to Y-12’s Productivity and Process Improvement group. They will spend part of the next four months in training classes to obtain their Black Belt certification.

Most of the new Black Belts got involved because they see opportunities to make improvements and want to help their problem-solving and leadership skills. This group’s time at Y-12 varies from three years to 30 years, and their backgrounds and experience cover a wide range.

They share an ability to think critically, an aptitude for analyzing data and good organization and people skills. “We have an academically strong, well-balanced and seasoned team,” says Ratledge. “The mix of youth and experience gives us the energy and depth to be especially effective.”

During training they’ll be working on projects to reduce Y-12’s administrative procedure cycle time, raise machining productivity, improve tooling design, increase operability of chemical processing equipment and lower overtime costs at the Oak Ridge Metallurgy Center.

The assignments in PPI extend for two years. These new Black Belts believe they’ll have even better skills to offer when they transition back into the general plant population.

Y-12 knows its ‘ABCs’

“ABC—easy as 1, 2, 3 …” or so the song goes. Y-12 and its employees once again used their ABCs—aluminum beverage cans, that is—to contribute to six area charitable organizations.

At the ceremony held recently, Deputy General Manager Darrell Kohlhorst presented $200 checks to the organizations. These organizations serve East Tennesseans in many ways—from providing clothing and emotional support to providing fire and other emergency services.

In his presentation of the checks, Kohlhorst described the Y-12 family as “…a very generous group of people—we want to do our part to make our neighbors as comfortable as possible.”

Since the program began, $69,800 has been funneled back into our communities.

Most recent organizations benefiting from the ABC Program

- Livestock and Food Pantry at Beane County
- John B. Jordan Inner-City Community Employment Center of Knoxville
- Center of Hope in Knoxville
- Oak Ridge Ecumenical Storehouse
- Year-Round Santas in Mascot
- South Roane County Volunteer Fire Department in Kingston

December 2005
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U.S. Navy rank: Chief Petty Officer
Where stationed: Fallujah, Iraq, for four months and Al Asad, a former Iraqi air base in Al Anbar Province, for the last two months
U.S. Navy job: I served as a convoy escort as part of the Navy Sealbees, a naval mobile construction battalion. I provided personal security mainly to engineers supervising the rebuilding—schools, hospitals and clinics—of Fallujah.
Most challenging part of assignment: Dealing with the heat. We always wore heavy equipment, and we were not allowed to roll down windows in a vehicle. We could never get away from the heat. We got used to the possibility of someone being blown up. It didn’t really rattle me because I’ve dealt with situations like that as a fireman.
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Why I’m in the Navy Reserve: I have a personal obligation to serve my country; it’s just something I had to do.

Where did I park my car?
You thought parking at the mall could be a challenge, right? Y-12 will now rank up there as we continue modernizing. We all will have to adjust to some changes, and one of those changes is parking. During construction of the Jack Case and New Hope buildings, parking will be at a premium on the east end of Y-12. To support the loss of parking spaces, all spaces in the North Portal, Biology and East Portal parking lots will be used.
The North Portal shuttle service will be moved to the S-5 Parking Lot, where more than 200 spaces are not being used. Those employees who use the shuttle will now be picked up near the S-5 Lot and driven to Post 1 and 10 just like before.
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When completed, most of the space lost to construction activities will be returned, and a new lot will be constructed on the site of the former administration building.
Your patience and respect for your fellow workers will be greatly appreciated during this phase of revitalization.

Park-and-ride to work
Park your car in West Knoxville and ride to work. Sound too good to be true? Y-12 is working with Knoxville Area Transit, who will provide the service funded largely through a U.S. Department of Transportation grant, to make this a reality. Stay tuned to YSource for further information in January.
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4 tips to reduce holiday stress
Holiday stress sets in when you try to do it all, so reassess and prioritize your lists. Stress is an emotional reaction to circumstances that you feel are out of control.

• Delegate!
  Set each family member be responsible for a chore.
• Don’t give in to the “gimmes”
  “I want, I want!” Your familiar phrase can wear parents (or yourself!) down, but giving in to your child’s every want can cause financial distress.
• Be realistic about relatives
  When the holidays roll around, have realistic expectations for the short term. Don’t try to solve past issues with family members over the holidays. If going to a certain relative’s house every year causes a lot of stress, decide if you really need to do it. Maybe you can go every other year instead.
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From left to right are photos of some of Y-12’s troops who have recently returned home. Far left is Staff Sergeant Dwayne Beaty of Manufacturing. Second from left is First Lieutenant Todd Williams of Environment, Safety and Health with Staff Sergeant Monty Fritts of Manufacturing. Second from right is Lieutenant Colonel Carla Decker of Applied Technologies and Monty Fritts of the 27th Regimental Combat Team. Far right is Sergeant Terry Long of Environment, Safety and Health. Several other returning soldiers were contacted for this story, but information was not received at press time. As their stories come in, they will be posted on YSource.
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