



Welcome to

# THE PSS EDGE

Winter 2005 - Volume 7, #1  
Copyright ©2004

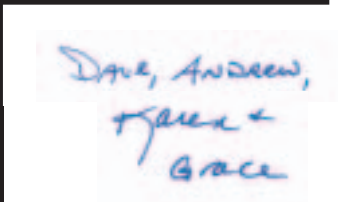
Plastic Safety Systems, Inc.

A NEWSLETTER FOR CUSTOMERS AND FRIENDS OF PLASTIC SAFETY SYSTEMS, INC.

## Happy Holidays from the Cowans



**Holiday Tip  
#37**  
Shop early to avoid the confusion.



**Newton's 4th Law of Motion: A Shopper stays in motion until  
1) All sale items are gone or 2) All credit cards are maxed out.**

### IN THIS ISSUE

- Bruce Owens  
Named to Advisory Committee .....1
- John N. Heltzel recognized  
by ARTBA .....2
- "One for the Thumb"  
Dave McMaster & team go on  
to Softball Victory .....3
- PSS Mission Statement .....3
- ATSSA Convention & Expo .....4

### ***Bruce Owens Named to Advisory Committee***

Bruce Owens, Vice President of Sales for PSS, has been named a member of the Cleveland State University Work Zone Safety Institute Advisory Committee. The intent is to create a modern curriculum to educate students who will serve as a vital source of engineering talent for the regional heavy highway industry.

With construction zone injuries in the year 2000, ranging in the 37,000 number, plus 1,000 killed, curriculum has recently been developed at Cleveland State University, that when fully implemented, will graduate engineers that will aid the heavy highway construction industry to increase safety without sacrificing efficiency.



# JOHN N. HELTZEL

## *Top 100 Transportation Design & Construction Professionals of the 20th Century*

by: Mike Heltzel, Customer Service Manager

**MY GRANDFATHER, JOHN N. HELTZEL**, was recently recognized by ARTBA as one of the Top 100 Transportation Design & Construction Professionals of the 20th Century. While starting out as a boilermaker apprentice in his early teens, he was amazed that “as a full fledged, banged-up boilermaker”, he could earn \$10.00/week at a factory in York, PA in the 1890’s!

At the age of 18, in order to “penetrate the excessive thickness of ivory overhead”, he burned the midnight oil and took an engineering class at the Maryland Institute and then “started out to take advantage of our great American free enterprise system”. He met his wife while working for the Erie Railroad Company in Erie, PA and then moved to Streator, IL.

My Aunt Mary Alice Timmins, his only daughter, told me recently that when he was washing the dishes with his wife in Streator, he looked out the window and watched some men setting up and pouring a concrete sidewalk. He told his wife, “There has got to be a better way to do that!” Before she knew it, her hat boxes were missing only to become prototypes for the steel forms that he would design for sidewalks as well as road building!

A short time later, in 1911, on the last day of a trade show at the old Madison Square Gardens in New York City, a trade association showed his steel forms as the “future of roadbuilding”. Overlooked by the huge industrialists at the time, “Little Johnny carried the patent in his pocket” with him to show potential customers that this was truly his idea and design. While he was “threatened to be sued for selling merchandise without facilities to manufacture and deliver” he returned to Streator with orders and did

deliver the first orders for the first of his patented steel forms. Thus, the beginning of Heltzel Steel Form & Iron Co.

He started manufacturing Heltzel patented steel forms in Streator but was “lured to Warren, OH by steel executives and the prospect of manufacturing a shiny new metal, tin,” which was recently rolled in Warren. He sold his interests in IL and moved to Warren in 1913. He purchased the then-present Heltzel Steel Form & Iron plant, enlarged it several times to only have it burn down in 1922. He rebuilt the plant with improvements from time to time.

In addition to the steel form business, he designed road paving machines, concrete batch plants as well as the first portable batch plant, which was advertised that rubber tires were an additional change. He received 101 patents during his lifetime.

He was also known as the only person “who had a peanut tree on the shores of Lake Erie”, as he would place peanuts in the forks of the trees without the children knowing. He would call them over to the trees and, as they were looking up and shaking the peanuts out of the trees, other adults would spread extra peanuts on the ground for the children. This was one of his favorite tricks!

A few months ago, Drew Kramer of National Capital Industries in Maryland, told me that he remembers purchasing steel forms from Heltzel Steel Form & Iron. While many knew it as Heltzel Steel, I was amazed at how smoothly Drew recited the complete company name, like it was yesterday. It is truly a small world!

**YOU DON'T QUIT PLAYING BECAUSE YOU GROW OLD,  
YOU GROW OLD BECAUSE YOU QUIT PLAYING.**

# One for the Thumb



Dave McMaster, PSS Sales Representative, and his teammates on the HMR 55's Softball Team were successful in winning the 55 & Over Senior Softball World Championship in Las Vegas, NV, on October 7th through the 10th, this year.

There were a total of 28 teams entered in the 55 plus division from all over the United States, and the HMR 55's played a total of 12 games in 3 days, (5 games on the final day) to win the crown.

This makes a total of 5 National Championships for the HMR Senior Softball Team since 1998 with the nucleus of players, all from the Pittsburgh area. (Senior teams are allowed to recruit players from their state and all bordering states.)

This championship was especially satisfying because they accomplished this feat with a "skeleton crew" of 12 players, a base coach, and a team trainer nicknamed "Magic".

The creed of senior softball players throughout the United States is:  
**"YOU DON'T QUIT PLAYING BECAUSE YOU GROW OLD,  
YOU GROW OLD BECAUSE YOU QUIT PLAYING".**



**Plastic Safety  
Systems, Inc.**

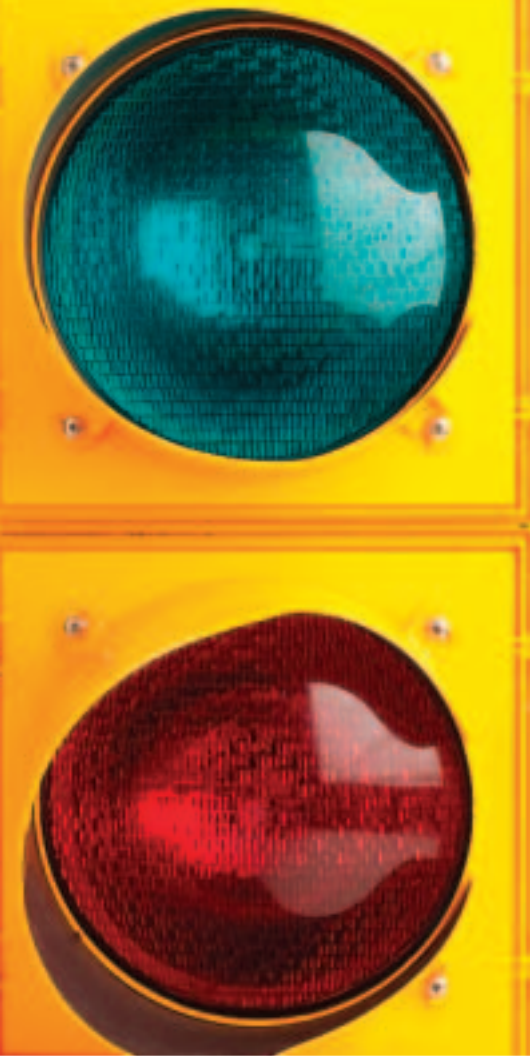
## Our Mission

Provide the best temporary traffic control products in the world and maintain our customers for life.

*"On the Roadway for Safety"®*



*Bruce Owens and Tim Cox  
attending the 2004 ARTBA Annual  
Convention in Boston, MA,  
September.*



# 2005 ATSSA CONVENTION & TRAFFIC EXPO

## 35th Annual Convention & Traffic Expo

**Convention: February 25-March 1**  
**Traffic Expo: February 27-March 1**

**Phoenix Civic Plaza**  
**Phoenix, Arizona**

# SEE YOU IN PHOENIX AT PSS BOOTH #511

Welcome to the Winter 2005 **PSS EDGE** Newsletter  
Volume 7, # 1



2444 Baldwin Road  
Cleveland, OH 44104  
800.662.6338 / 216.231.8590  
Fax: 216.231.2702  
Plastic Safety Systems, Inc.  
[plasticsafety.com](http://plasticsafety.com)

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
CLEVELAND, OH  
Permit No. 1723