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CUSTOMER PROFILE: PARAGON D&E

## AERO-DYNAMIC PARTNER

*Mold and machining company uses CA material to help it diversify into the skies*

The materials and methods that mature industries like mold manufacturers and tool and die makers use would seem as unchanging as the earth and sky. Steel. Aluminum. Drill. Grind. Assemble. Polish. Repeat.

But a Clinton Aluminum customer in Grand Rapids, Mich., may well be at the forefront in turning a beleaguered segment of blue-collar work into a recession-flouting enterprise.

Paragon D&E (Die and Engineering) started in 1957 as primarily a die cast company, eventually turning toward plastic injection for the automotive industry.

But over the last several years, it has hung its hat increasingly on the aerospace market. The key is carbon fiber.

"Everybody's trying to make things lighter, so if you can replace an aluminum or other material with a composite, there's significant weight savings," says Dave VanRooyen, contract machining and composite tooling sales representative who's been with Paragon for 22 years.



**Bill Smits, a bench hand at Paragon D&E, sands a mammoth aluminum mold part. Smits spent about 200 hours sanding down rough edges on the part, which will eventually be used to create a carbon fiber airplane engine shroud.**

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What do you think?/4**

**INSIDE**

**Employees of  
the Month/3**

## PARAGON

### from cover

That would seem to bode ill for companies like Clinton. But Paragon relies significantly on the robust composition of aluminum for its molds, machine parts and prototype work.

"One thing Clinton does is a super slab that no one else in the country can make," says VanRooyen. "So, that as well as service and the relationship that we've built up" will keep the partnership going long past the decade or so it's been going, he says. Paragon purchases about \$1.5 million in Clinton material each year.

The super slab that VanRooyen speaks of could be a 120-by-100-by-42 inch piece weighing close to 25 tons that they could use for many things, though about 25 percent of Paragon's business these days is for the aerospace industry.

And it's flying high. VanRooyen says that 2008 was a record year and 2011 is on pace to better that. Only in 2009 was Paragon off pace — a far cry from the fate of many in its sector.

"I wouldn't know there was a recession unless I watched the news," he says. "We've done a great job of diversifying our product line and it's taken out the highs and lows."

Paragon, and by extension Clinton, is currently working with an aviation partner to help create molds for engine shrouds, the protective covering that most people see when looking at an aircraft from any angle but directly in front of it.

The part pictured on the cover is comprised of six pieces of CA material carved out and combined. Carbon fiber is then molded by the "doughnut," as VanRooyen calls it. The material is about a third lighter than aluminum and about 20 percent stronger, he says.

VanRooyen grew up in the Grand Rapids area and attended Grand Valley State University, working toward a teaching degree.

"My father was in tool and die, and he thought it might be a short-term solution to a lack of a teaching job," he says. He started as a general machinist and "I've been here ever since."

## CHECK IT OUT

**\*Get your fill:** Boy Scout Troop 118 is holding an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast from 7:30-11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 22, at Manchester United Methodist Church, on the corner of Manchester and Center roads. Price is \$6 for adults; kids 12 and under and seniors are \$5. On the menu are pancakes, eggs, sausage, hash browns, sausage gravy and biscuits, and coffee and juice. The troop is also selling popcorn. Contact Amy Morris

at ext. 137 for prices and details.

**\*Grandkid!** Dave Bressler is a grandfather again. Jamison David weighed 8 pounds, 4 ounces, and was born Sept. 23.

**\*Another grandkid!** Peggy Hansen is a grandmother again. Keirsten Ann Scott (at right) weighed 6 pounds, 5 ounces and was born Sept. 21.

*If you would like the newsletter and future surveys e-mailed to you, please provide Abby Yankovich with a personal email address.*



**Keirsten Ann Scott**

## OCTOBER MILESTONES

### BIRTHDAYS

Patricia <b>Bidinost</b>	Oct. 2
Steven <b>Glissendorf</b>	Oct. 3
James <b>Diehl</b>	Oct. 6
Matthew <b>Brudos</b>	Oct. 7
Donald <b>Testa</b>	Oct. 7
William <b>Stevenson</b>	Oct. 8
William <b>Shull</b>	Oct. 9
Kenneth <b>Bowlby</b>	Oct. 20
James <b>Ambrass</b>	Oct. 23
Joseph <b>Fye</b>	Oct. 27
Larry <b>Goddard</b>	Oct. 28

### SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

Brian <b>Baker</b>	13 years
Troy <b>Harp</b>	11 years
Michael <b>Maurer</b>	11 years
Tim <b>Morris</b>	11 years
Robert <b>Stults</b>	11 years
Edwin <b>Harper</b>	10 years
Lawrence <b>Fye</b>	8 years
Steven <b>Hostutler</b>	8 years
Dena <b>Earich</b>	5 years
Anthony <b>Negrelli</b>	4 years
Jeremy <b>Timm</b>	3 years
Charles <b>Minnick</b>	1 year

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realize the irony at play here. Part of what makes CA stand out as a company is the employees' relative shyness toward recognition.

"That's just about how most of the people here are: 'I'm just doing my job,'" says Morris. "This is a little something extra about them that month that someone else has noticed."

EOM winners get \$100 (not to mention their mini-life story chronicled on Page 3 of this newsletter) and honorable mentions get a \$10 McDonald's gift card.

Truth be told, there's some recognition due to team members. Smer cited Mark

Awad, who works outside sales but still manages to make it in for the monthly meeting and contribute. And Kevin Gisewhite, from third shift, got a shout-out from Andrews.

"There's days where he comes in and hasn't even gone to bed yet," she says.

The team seems to think that August's company picnic, held this year at Sluggers & Putters in Canal Fulton instead of at Clay's Park, went well. And Smer says there's an 80 or 90 percent chance that there will be a Christmas party this year — which, of course, could always use input as it ramps up.



# EMPLOYEE *of the* MONTH

Billy Dorsey is a competitive guy. You name the sports league, chances are he's involved in it. And sure, he's grateful to have won Employee of the Month and worked hard to earn it. But that's pretty much gravy. What keeps him motivated at work goes much deeper.

It's called fantasy football.

But seriously, like most everyone at CA, Dorsey has been putting in more hours to handle the workload the company happily takes on, working 50-hour weeks as foreman of the Kasto department on first shift.

"I really don't have time to think about it," he says of what earned him the honor. "Maybe they were running out of people. I've been working a few more hours and a little harder."

Dorsey says he handles anywhere from 10,000 to 40,000 pounds a day, but at least it's all in one spot. Prior to CA, where he's been for about eight years, he was a field machinist for six years on call for Mac-Tech, traveling across the country and to other countries, like Jamaica and Mexico. He was on the road 70 percent of the time.

"I had a son and the traveling was too much for me," he says. His son Carter, 8, is playing contact football for the first time this season. Carter gets his interest in athletics honestly.

Dad wrestled and played football for Norton High, graduating in 1989, and to this day competes in softball in the fall, golf in the summer and billiards in the winter. But fantasy football may be his first love.

His team, Heavy D, won the title last season in one of two leagues involving the guys at Clinton. He's the commissioner of the day league and George Jones, the waterjet guru, runs the night league.

"He's all upset because he made the trophy at the waterjet and couldn't keep it," Dorsey says.



**Billy  
Dorsey**

The only thing that the humble Bob Stults can figure is that the pickings may be getting pretty slim when it comes to Employee of the Month.

"Bob (Smer) said something about there was a rumor that I won it," says Stults, celebrating his 11th anniversary with CA this month. "I said, 'How did that happen? They must be running out of people to give it to.'"

If that's the case, then maybe they should try outside his department. Stults, on second shift, and Billy Dorsey, first shift, made it a sweep for Kasto, the saws that typically cut the biggest stock in CA's inventory.

The why behind his award will sound familiar.

"I just try to work hard and do what I have to do," says Stults, who lives in Clinton and graduated from Northwest High in 1980. "It's just staying busy, working through lunch and trying to get everything done.

"It's crazy busy all the time here lately, which is good. It's better than not having anything."

Before Clinton, Stults laid carpet for many years and put up fence, and also had a stint with Aluminum Warehouse on Waterloo Road.

Outside of work, you might find him hunting someplace or at Luna Lake, about three miles or so south of the plant, fishing or running his beagles and coon dog. One of the beagles, Blaze, was a champion at field trials running rabbits a few years ago. Stults hits the outdoors with his sister's son, Howard, and a buddy, Stan.

Stults is single and has two younger siblings who also live in Clinton. His sister works in Barberton and his brother in Massillon.



**Bob  
Stults**

## HONORABLE MENTION

**Byron Maag** and **Kyle Horton**

They each received a \$10 McDonald's gift card.

# @ Employee Profile

**Name:** Debbie Cockburn

**Occupation:** Inside sales representative

**With CA since:** About a month ago

**Lives in:** Orangeville, Ontario

**High school:** Graduated 1982

**Fun facts:** Married 22 years to Dave, an electrician ... 21-year-old son Jeff lives and works in Calgary ... daughter Jaymie will soon be 20 and attends Sheridan College near home ... Has worked inside sales her entire career, at Schmolz-Bickenbach and A.M. Castle

& Co., both in the metals industry ... Came to the CA job through Colin Docherty, whom she knew through sales channels ... Likes the variety of her job's tasks ... Rides snowmobiles in the winter and in the summer does dock diving with their dogs, a 3-year-old German shepherd and a 1-year-old German shorthaired pointer-Newfoundland mix



... the youngest one's best jump (dock diving is typically a 20-foot run and leap into a 40-foot pool after a toy tossed in by the owner) is 18 feet ... Enjoys reading and knitting and has made blankets and Christmas stockings.

**Quotes:** On snowmobiling: "Straight from my driveway, hon. That's the beauty of living north. I can go straight from my driveway to hitting the trails."

# THE POWER OF SUGGESTION

*The Employee Recognition Team makes it all work, but wants you to tell them a thing or two.*

If the Employee Recognition Team at Clinton Aluminum were a car, it would be powered by pure suggestion. When it first got started, the input it received made it NASCAR-worthy.

Now, it's more like a fuel-sipping hybrid.

But the seven-person team really isn't complaining. After all, the crew does just fine mining for employees of the month and deciding the logistics of the company picnic and other get-togethers.

They've been doing it for 22 months and have plenty of juice left.

"To me, it's something that people are really aiming for," says vice president of operations Bob Smer of the EOM honor. Smer headed up forming the team after a brainstorming-type company meeting late in 2009. "I think a lot of people are glad we



**The Employee Recognition Team is (front row from left) Ashley Andrews and Amy Morris; and (back row from left) Mark Awad, Bob Smer, Mark Scarpino, Kevin Gisewhite and Paul Long.**

initiated it. It sheds a light on what the employees are accomplishing."

If you're glad — or mad, for that matter — Ashley Andrews and Amy Morris just wish you'd express that a little more. The two are the go-to duo on the ERT.

"We starve for suggestions," says Morris, like Andrews a founding member of the team and a volunteer when it was announced. She has always

worked somewhere with a similar undertaking. Being on the team "sounded like it would be fun."

Morris is also many times the person who brings the good news to the winning employees each month — sort of like a grin reaper.

"Some never thought they'd receive the award," Morris says. "It makes me happy to be able to prove them wrong."

"The hardest thing is

just getting feedback," says Andrews. "Are they liking what we're doing or would they like us to do something different?"

Andrews said early in 2010 when it all got rolling, things were different.

"We got a big response, and it was hard to make a decision every month. Since then, it's diminished," she says.

Both Andrews and Morris

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**Clinton  
Aluminum**  
**& Stainless Steel**