

NORTHERN LIGHT

Page one

New Growth
on Sturdy Roots

Page two

Letter from the COO
Paul Bretting

Brett Fredericks
A Steady Force in Engineering

Page three

Duly Noted
Andrea Ludtke

Nurses Corner
Carrie Alajoki, RN

Page four

Darren Fredericks
Ultimate Tour Guide



Contract Manufacturing representatives: (l to r) Ben Taddy, Spencer Sundeen, Jeff Marsland, Larry Buerger, Tom Casey

New Growth on Sturdy Roots

In the early 1990's, C. G. Bretting Manufacturing knew that diversity was important for the long term success of the company. The goal of being diversified was as simple as returning to the roots of what made Bretting a success in the first place, providing Contract Manufacturing Services (CMS) to various industries like mining, logging, farming and ship repair. Today we have added to our base of industries with food processing, power generation, defense, heavy equipment and aerospace to name a few. We knew that as much as things changed one thing stayed constant - customers need good service and a wide range of capabilities - things we have provided, no matter what the industry. We had a loyal base of local customers that liked what we could offer, enjoyed working with us and valued our services. A plan was put in place and acted on to grow our local business and offer our services throughout the tri-state area of Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan. Throughout the 90's Bretting continued on its path of growing CMS each year. Some of our current CMS customers started with us during the 1990's and remain viable and loyal business partners today.

In early 2001, Bretting decided to focus and commit additional resources to CMS with the expectation of growing a larger customer base across new industries. At the same time many of our current customers needed additional hours of machining and were growing as well. With the addition of staff and continued investment in new machine tools and processes, CMS has grown to its current capacity to help with the growing demand of our customers. Today CMS is a nearly \$4,000,000 business, serves over 100 different customers in over 15 different

industries. We are a World Class LEAN company and currently are recommended for ISO Certification at the beginning of 2010. We are committed to quality and service 24/7, 365 days a year.

At Bretting we believe our people make the difference. To be at our best, our people are creating solutions with state of the art equipment, using the latest tooling and technology with modern processes all aiming to be World Class. Some of the largest machining centers in the Midwest are located at Bretting and are considered to be some of the best in the industry. Fabricating and welding are completed on modern equipment and are the latest in technology. CAD and CAM is routinely performed on the latest CAM packages and computer hardware. We take pride in specializing and providing solutions on highly engineered projects. One of our main strengths is working with customers in need of low volume production and/or precise parts that are technically complicated; this is where we excel as a company and a team.

The Bretting team can quote and manage a project, program, tool, set-up, and run every part as specified to assure that quality is held to print. Our team consists of two groups. One group is our inside/outside sales, support staff and manufacturing engineering. The second group of the team is specific to each project. That group consists of supervisors, programmers, tool crib attendants and most importantly the machine operators, assemblers and fabricators. We strongly believe

in getting input on projects from day one of the quote process. Those performing the actual machining are in the know when it comes to meeting every customer's exacting standards. Many of our customers visit and work with various team members on a one to one basis to develop processes and methods for each print or project. Our outside sales people travel to customer sites and also bring customers to Bretting as needed to work on projects. We also like to offer tours of our facilities to show the extent of our manufacturing capabilities.

For years, Bretting was the great company that no one knew about. We are committed to providing great service and investing for the customer to sustain and grow business together. Since our focus on CMS began, word has gotten out about our dedication to our customers and the services we provide, but we still remain humble in our approach, we say what we do and do what we say. Service is the backbone of Bretting and our CMS team is always available to listen and look at any and all opportunities.



(l to r) Ryan Leinon, Alan Conley, Scott Kretzschmar, Andy Gustafson, Tim Hartle, Ron Hmielewski, Dale Berg, Rich Tutor, Rick Lunda, Gary Johanik, Don Nevala, Jeff Klobucher, Glenn Jackson, John Augustine.

Greetings from Ashland

As we continue along our LEAN Journey we've created an opportunity to become ISO 9001:2008 certified. LEAN and ISO as management systems mesh together very well with a focus on quality, standardization, and continual improvement. We are excited to become ISO certified to serve our customers at World Class levels. As we develop more cohesive systems we will be able to meet the needs of our external and internal customers more accurately and in less time. We are recommended for certification by the lead auditors with a January 31, 2010 completion date.

Brothers Brett and Darren Fredericks have been a couple of every-day fixtures here at Bretting. Brett has been in our Engineering Department since his hiring in 1991 and is now a Team Lead for the STM department. He brings many years of knowledge

and innovative thinking when working on projects. Darren has worked in different capacities since his start in 1993 and his knowledge of Bretting equipment is well rounded. Currently as an Inside Sales Coordinator, Darren uses all of his experiences and knowledge of Bretting equipment every day. As different as these brothers may be, they are an example of how well our different departments work together to get the job done...and done right.

Our Contract Manufacturing Services (CMS) department has been busy lately. Since the beginning of Bretting Manufacturing way back in 1890, we have always performed contract work, helping area businesses with their needs and working with various industries. After getting back to our roots in 1990, we refocused our efforts to utilize our machine shop to the fullest and the CMS group has grown from two

full time members to six in-house members and one external sales representative. We have been able to continuously expand our service areas to new regions in the U.S. every year since then.

It's been gratifying to see Bretting refocus on the business Bretting started in 1890. We think of ourselves as one company focused on many different businesses and offering great services. We are a company that works with customers and develops relationships to help them out by building quality products. We always look forward to working on new, interesting and challenging projects...give our CMS department a call!

Paul Bretting
Vice President & COO



A Steady Force in Engineering Brett Fredericks

also changed during his tenure. "We used to have one engineering manager and worked on complete machines, and now we have the team leader level of management and Sectionalized Engineering." Brett also believes that the implementation of LEAN practices has had a positive impact on the Engineering Department.

Currently there are 13 engineers and designers in the STM group. The last year and a half he has been co-leading the team with Bruce Honkala. He feels it has "enhanced the leadership of the team."

Brett doesn't feel there is a typical day's schedule that he follows. "Communication and efficient meetings are important. A major part of my job is resource planning and work assignments. We work hard to assign tasks appropriately. We want to have people work on things they are familiar with, yet providing the opportunity for expanding their knowledge. General day-to-day operation of the section includes making sure everything is on schedule," he says.

"After the sales staff meets with the customer and has acquired their needs and requests, they create a proposal; and when the sales proposals move to a certain point on the schedule, we do an engineering evaluation to make certain that the proposal meets the needs of the customer, contains all of the correct machine components and that we have a good understanding of the project," Brett says. "We also provide assistance to customer service questions, both internal and external. I enjoy the relationships we've

built with customers over the years. It's gratifying when we can help them improve their equipment through upgrades or help them out over the phone when they are in a bind."

Some customers like to be involved in the design phase, so his team prepares customer design reviews for them to look at. He explains, "When we're working on something developmental there may be more of this, but most people trust in Bretting and know they'll get what they want and need at check out."

Brett is involved in standard equipment as well as more developmental projects. "I have to step up my involvement in the engineering intensive Level 1 machines. There is continually some research and development (R&D) going on. We currently have three major R&D projects and a few smaller, more localized R&D tasks as well. It's always a challenge to balance our time in R&D versus ongoing projects. R&D is important to the company. A lot of it is customer driven, but as a company we're trying to be more proactive to develop machinery the customer will need in the future."

"In the late 90's we didn't see many changes in the industry. But in the last few years the need for technology change has been more drastic. Customers want to differentiate themselves. They want machines to be more efficient, faster, and run with fewer operators. It's been a lot more challenging and demanding environment."

continued on pg. 3

As the Mechanical Engineering Team Leader--Separators, Transfers and Material Handling (STM) Brett Fredericks has seen many transitions in both the company and the equipment he works on. The road to his current position has been fairly straight forward. "I've been here 18 years, starting out as a mechanical designer in the napkin bander and overwrapper area. As I became more familiar with the equipment and processes, my responsibility increased and I gradually worked my way into the team leader role," Brett says. As the company evolved and the structure of the Engineering Department has changed, so have Brett's responsibilities.

He has seen many changes in Bretting Engineering in his career. "Throughout my years here the changes in drafting software from a primitive CAD system through four iterations of drafting packages has been significant. We basically went from drawing boards to state-of-the-art, three dimensional modeling software," cited Brett. The Engineering structure has



Nurses Corner

It's that time of year again!

Were you thinking holidays, family time, and fun winter festivities? Actually, I was referring to influenza, holiday weight gain, shorter days, and seasonal depression

(not to mention the fact that Favre is doing awesome in Purple). Ouch, it doesn't sound like a very fun time of year!

On the bright side, if we are aware of winter health issues we can curb them before they become problematic. Winter does tend to become monotonous and often times we take the "easy way out".

- When it's cold outside it's easier to grab drive-through fast food, but make the time to go to the grocery store for healthier options.
- While bypassing exercise for a "better" option like getting in that extra hour of work or "catching up on news", you need to be moving and taking care of yourself.
- During this busy time of year, sleep may seem like a luxury with "so much to do", but it is essential that your body gets the rest it needs to be strong and cope with stress better.
- Reminding yourself to drink water might be the last thing on your mind, but drinking water flushes out toxins and is essential for health and in most cases is free.

Little shifts and being mindful of how you are treating your physical body will enable your emotional body to stay strong and resilient. Let's face it – Wisconsin winters can be long. But there will also be gorgeous days filled with snowflakes and fresh air that will take your breath away. Try to focus on the beauty this winter rather than all the negative things that give Wisconsin winters a bad rap.

Take care and Stay Healthy,
Nurse Carrie

Duly Noted

by Andrea Ludtke

■ Babies

Brad Gierczic and Cassie Leino, a girl
Zach and Shae Hilton, a boy
Trent and Michelle Meske, a girl

■ Weddings

Henry and Desiree' Niemann
Joe and Jennifer Bradle
Dick and Patty Dufek

■ ABC Raceway Results

We have some talented and brave co-workers who enjoy racing on summer weekends at our local dirt track. Congratulations on your year-end finish!

Super Stocks

Roy Pumala – 12th place
Ron Hmielewski – 13th place

Street Stock

Dennis Groom – 2nd place

Midwest Modifieds

Steve Stuart – 1st place
Chris Bretting – 16th place

Six Cylinders

Chuck Hawkinson – 3rd place
Patrick Beeksma – 7th place

Pure Stocks

Tammy Bretting (40ish-Milanowski/
Bretting Team)

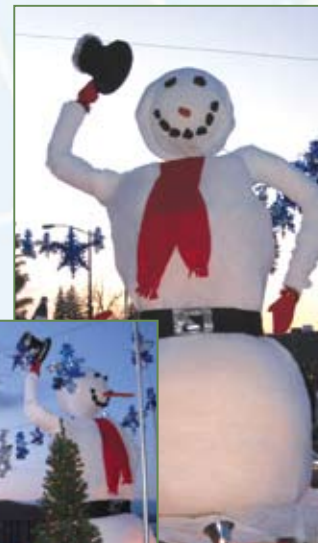
■ Upcoming Trade Shows

Tissue World Americas 2010
24 – 26 March 2010
Miami, FL
Stand #900

Asian Paper 2010
21 – 23 April 2010
Bangkok, Thailand
Stand #N6

■ Christmas Float

We took first place again in the Ashland city Christmas parade. Winter Wonderland was our floats theme and featured two snowmen enjoying outdoor winter activities and one large snowman greeting everyone by tipping his hat. Thanks for all the help with the float – it looked great! Congratulations!



Brett Fredericks continued from pg. 2

Regarding the older machine hand drawing work he did at Bretting when he started he explains, "It was within the last two years that the vault of board-drawn prints has been scanned and filed electronically. It was scary to see those original hand-drawn prints disposed of. For machines that have been in the field a long time, we still can manufacture parts from those scanned board-drawn prints. But there are probably some younger designers and engineers in the building that have never seen a hand drawn print."

Brett is from Drummond, WI and after high school attended the Milwaukee School of Engineering. He received a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering. Bretting was his first job out of college. "I started here back in the days when Tad Bretting was still part of the interviewing process. It was intimidating going in, but that was unwarranted. He was a very polite and friendly man," he says. Brett still lives in Drummond with his wife Jodi and two dogs. "I enjoy hunting and fishing, the outdoors, and spending time with family."

Brett appreciates the family environment at Bretting also. "It is something that I hear isn't very common in most work places and it's a good fit for me. You're not just a number here."

Ultimate Tour Guide

Darren Fredericks

Darren Fredericks has the dubious achievement of having conducted more tours of C. G. Bretting Manufacturing than any other staff person—"I've given several times more tours than anyone else in the building." But he does far more than that. In his words, "I like to refer to myself as the person who helps people and helps make their jobs easier and more efficient."

Darren has been involved with several departments in his 17 years at Bretting. His main focus now as Inside Sales Coordinator includes proposals, the proposal generation system software package, pricing, job costing, and everything else it takes to get a proposal ready for the customer. He works with both the world sales team (anything outside of North America) and the North American sales team coordinating incoming requests and outgoing proposals. "Upstairs in sales we do proposals for items that receive serial numbers. This can be anything from a set of folding rolls or a machine section to complete converting lines," he says.

He explains the proposal generation system as, "An automatic configurator that requires us to answer a series of questions that are linked to engineering approved standard write-ups that allow us to maintain our consistency in our proposals. It also generates the proposal and some supporting documents with a push of a button."

"The two main goals of the proposal generation system are to provide our customers with an accurate and timely proposal that is consistent with our engineering efforts and to generate the machine specifications which are handed off to the Engineering Department and Project Managers," he says.

Darren started at Bretting in 1993 working as an Audio Visual Specialist creating many of the sales and training tools used by Bretting salespeople and their customers. "Before corporate communications existed, we did all the animations, sales tapes, training tapes, high-speed video trouble-shooting, brochures and trade show setups. These tasks allowed me spend time in other areas of the building and working with different people all the while learning our product lines from the order to shipping. It was a great foundation for me to build on," he states. Today the organization and the tools in use are totally different and he still enjoys filling in when it is required. "It is interesting to see the changes in technology and software from the early 90's to today. We went from our in-house darkroom, Exacto knives, and rub on letters to all digital photos and Photoshop; from half inch VHS tape with A/B roll editing

to completely digital video and editing. It really is kind of interesting to follow the changes and learn the new ways to complete the same tasks. It really is more efficient and flexible."

Throughout his time spent at Bretting Darren also spent time working in many capacities. He spent time with the Technical Publications team creating operation manuals, did several projects as a Market Analyst and Researcher, continued in the Marketing Department as a Market Services Representative and was also the European Services Representative while Bretting operated a company in Germany. "I have had the opportunity to wear many hats and I have enjoyed them all as they provided me the opportunity to learn different facets of the industry and to work with a diverse group of people," he says.

Darren looks at one major turning point in his life at Bretting, "Everything changed when we adopted world class LEAN in October of 2004. I got in on the ground floor, so I was very fortunate. I was one of the LEAN leads and went through some intense but very educational and interesting training. I had the opportunity to be a part of several different 5S events, as both a facilitator and a team member, and various Kaizen events to continually improve a variety of areas. I've been on teams that have mapped processes and found some of the non-value added touch-points and worked to reduce or eliminate them all together. We have also been tasked with locating different types of waste in our area and finding ways to eliminate them. Through the use of many standard work documents and process improvements we as a team have been very successful in increasing our overall efficiency and throughput. These enhancements have considered our upstream, downstream, internal and external customers and have ultimately bettered our customer response."

Darren grew up in Drummond, Wisconsin, which is about 30 miles away from Ashland. He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota - Duluth with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and minors in Journalism and Political Science. Darren began working at Bretting shortly after college graduation. He has been married to Theresa for 13 1/2 years and they live in Ashland. They have two sons--Joseph 12, and Anthony 7. His sons are both into hockey, soccer, baseball, and violin. Anthony has also taken up the drums and Joseph has started playing both the acoustic and electric guitar. "We really enjoy spending time with family; whether it is hunting or fishing with Uncle Brett (Brett Fredericks is featured in the other story in this issue), relaxing at the cabin, taking weekend trips or just sitting around visiting. We are usually with other family members," he states. Theresa is the director of Tree

Darren Fredericks



Top Day Care Center and Pre School. Darren has been pictured in this newsletter multiple times on softball teams. He also enjoys racquetball, coaching and managing his sons' teams and various aerobic activities. "Bretting provides an in-house aerobics instructor that comes in four days a week to help facilitate wellness. We are fortunate that the company takes an active role in our wellness, whether it be the having a nurse on site or friendly competitions (with rewards) to encourage us to get up and be active or eat right; there is usually something going on."

As far as a work environment goes Darren believes that Bretting has to be one of the best places to work in the area. "I have given many tours to people from all walks of life and they have always been impressed with our facility, our people, our relationships and the opportunities we have at Bretting."

"Throughout the years there have been many people that I have had the occasion to work with and I would like to personally thank Jerry Kasper, Jim Kucinski, and Bill Saari for not only teaching me in the early stages of my career, but leading by example and making Bretting as positive of a work experience as possible," he says with a smile.

C. G. Bretting Manufacturing Co., Inc.
3401 Lake Park Road • Ashland, Wisconsin 54806 USA
Tel: 715.682.5231 • Fax: 715.682.4138
E-mail: cgb@bretting.com • www.bretting.com

Copyright C. G. Bretting Manufacturing Co., Inc.
January 2010.
Printed in USA.