

GMF Quarterly

The Historic Side to GMF



In this day and time of high-rises and ultra modern structures it is important to keep our ties to the past. We at GMF maintain our ties to the days gone by through ensuring historical buildings will always be around for the generations to come. One of our upcoming projects at the historic Harris County 1910 Courthouse in Houston, TX demonstrates our efforts to keep the past current. Here is a brief history of this at-tested building.

The Harris County Courthouse opened in 1910. In 1954 the courthouse was drastically renovated leaving little of its original interior. In 2006 the civil courts moved out of the 1910 courthouse and into a new building on Caroline Street in downtown Houston. The building is currently being renovated to restore it to its original appearance.



As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. - Proverbs 27:17

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American Institute of Steel Construction Update

By: Gene Martin, PE,
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The market share for structural steel construction in Florida has been on the rise since 2005. More designers are realizing the cost, schedule, and quality benefit of steel construction. With steel prices on a downward trend and material readily available, now is an excellent time to consider structural steel framing on your next project.

Two other factors that have positively influenced the national market share of structural steel to record high marks is the trend towards sustainable construction and the use of building information modeling. The electric arc furnace production of structural steel shapes yields a product with 93.3% recycled content. This is definitely a benefit for projects that are pursuing LEED certification. The steel construction industry has been using 3-D modeling software for over ten years and is the perfect choice for projects that will

be delivered using Building Information Modeling (BIM) technology.

September 18th is SteelDay 2009, hosted by AISC, and is the first planned annual national event dedicated to providing the AEC community with accessibility to the latest happenings in the structural steel industry. SteelDay is a unique chance for participants to receive hands-on education about the latest advances in the structural steel industry and witness new technologies first hand. During SteelDay, participants will gain hands-on knowledge about structural steel's key benefits and features such as sustainability, availability, speed and cost. They can also observe how design affects production and efficiency, advances which have resulted in high-performance projects that minimize construction's impact on our planet while also saving time and money.



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Driving Tips

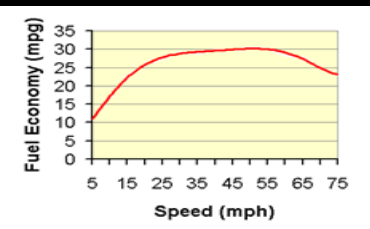
Three Easy Ways to Improve Gas Mileage

1.) Drive Sensibly

Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gas. It can lower your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and by 5 percent around town.

2.) Observe the Speed Limit

While each vehicle reaches its optimal fuel economy at a different speed (or range of speeds), gas mileage usually decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph. You can assume that each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional \$0.24 per gallon for gas.



3.) Use Cruise Control

Using cruise control on the highway helps you maintain a constant speed and in most cases, will save gas.

AISC from page 1

To announce SteelDay 2009, AISC recently launched a new web site and portal, www.SteelDay.org, which features information and resources on where all of the action is taking place, including a map of the event locations and how to attend or host an event. The American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC), headquartered in Chicago, is a not-for-profit technical institute and trade association established

in 1921 to serve the structural steel design community and construction industry in the United States. Membership includes over 800 structural steel fabricators and over 25,000 architect and engineer design professionals.

Gene Martin, P.E.
Senior Regional Engineer
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Stick to the Basics

By: Andy Norman
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There are stories of the late Vince Lombardi walking into the Green Bay Packers locker room after a loss. He would hold up a football and say "gentlemen, this is a football." As simple as this may have sounded, he understood that the most important part of being successful was thoroughly understanding the basics.

In this challenging economic market we all face, his philosophy is paramount for success... "Stick to the basics."

Coach Lombardi's philosophy has been our beacon at GMF Structural as we navigate through these economic challenges.

Two years ago when we identified that the market was in the process of making a downturn, our management team sat down to discuss and identify what were our best assets as a company. We needed to identify our qualities that would keep us viable through the forecasted economic woes.

After much deliberation, we identified the "Basics of Customer Service," front loaded -

due diligence, scheduling, quality partnerships with our clients, zero punch, and safety were what we did well. These elements of business had pushed GMF to become a leader in the structural steel industry through the past 25 years.

Now, two years later, our strategy has proven to be successful. When many companies discounted their price, reduced or eliminated their sales and estimating departments and cut corners on quality we increased ours. GMF has become stronger and more capable to withstand this harsh economic environment through the accelerated focus on our Quality Control and Business Development departments, continuing education for our staff and continued delivery of complete and competitive bids.

GMF Structural strives to be on the cutting edge of technology through our equipment, facilities and software programs. However, all that is moot without the basics.

Once the economy upturns we will continue to apply these valuable lessons to our business model. We will continue to work to be the most technically advanced company with the best facilities, but more importantly we will continue to strive to perfect "the Basics."

Quarterly Recipe



Grilled BBQ
Potato Skins

Ingredients

- 3 russet potatoes, scrubbed
- 4 slices cooked bacon, crumbled
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 3/4 cup Cheddar
- 1/2 cup barbecue sauce, warm
- 1/2 pound pulled pork
- Sour cream, for topping
- 2 tablespoons snipped chives, for garnish

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Bake potatoes on middle rack until fork tender, about 1 hour. Remove from oven and let sit until cool enough to handle.

Bake 4 strips of bacon on a small sheet pan in the oven for 15 minutes. Crumble bacon when it's cooled.

Preheat grill to medium heat.

Cut potatoes in half, lengthwise, and spoon out the flesh, leaving a half inch shell.

Melt the butter in saucepan and add minced garlic. Brush potatoes with the butter and garlic mixture. Flip over and butter the bottoms.

Place potatoes on grill and cook until crisp, about 4 to 4 1/2 minutes on each side and remove from grill.

Divide the cheese, barbecue sauce and pulled pork among the potatoes. Top potato skins with sour cream, crumbled bacon and chives for garnish.

Views of A Salesman

By: Walt Tart
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In my travels throughout Florida, Texas and the southeastern U.S. I find that most contractors face the same issues. Not enough projects reach contract and those that do, seem to be at a price affording little or no profit. And let's face it ... we are all in business to make money. I often get in the conversation with a contractor during my sales visits regarding the state of the economy. We often conclude that it will be at least the end of this year before it begins the upward turn. When it does ... the number of projects available should be more than enough to get everyone back to comfortable position. The Texas market seems to be in a better position than the majority of the country. Texas for the most part fairs better than the average when the economy slips as it has. We are, however, beginning to see more projects out to bid in the Florida market which is a vast improvement from just a few months ago. Florida is often a economic barometer, so maybe this is a good indication for the rest of the country.



The Southeast U.S. is beginning to see greater numbers of projects bidding reflecting what we would all like to believe as the beginning of better times. We can only hope that the banks and developers start shaking hands and releasing valuable capital to work its magic.

GMF Structural Division has been blessed in that we have several active projects and a few in our backlog. We are excited about the future and are making every effort to insure we will be ready. Through the addition of new machines to continued education for our skilled labor, we look forward to a stronger economy for us, our clients and our country.

A Word from H.R. - Be Safe This Summer

Heatstroke is the most serious and life-threatening heat-related illness. In certain circumstances, your body can build up too much heat, your temperature may rise to life-threatening levels, and you can become delirious or lose consciousness. If you do not rid your body of excess heat fast enough, it "cooks" the brain and other vital organs. It is often fatal, and those who do survive may have permanent damage to their vital organs.

Heat illness is avoidable. With knowledge, preparation, fluid replacement, and prompt emergency care, there is no need for heat illness to affect people working in warm weather.

Follow these guidelines:

- Keep as cool as possible
- Avoid dehydration (drink 8 oz. of water every 20 minutes)
- Wear appropriate clothing
- Rest frequently
- Avoid alcohol & caffeine



Sports Talk

Office Rivalries

By: Patrick McCallister
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With college football opening day around the corner, September 3rd to be exact, things are starting to heat up around the office. The GMF crew is made up of a whole pile of Seminoles, a few Hurricanes, one Lucky Leprechaun, one WAR EAGLE, and one lonely Crimson Elephant.

I will start off with the Noles. FSU had somewhat of a disappointing season last year with a 5-3 conference record and a 9-4 overall record. FSU hopes to make it a better season this year, but there are a few challenges in the way. They have a pretty tough schedule ahead of them this year. Look out for an upset against South Florida and maybe even UNC.

Next, I'll jump into Miami, what a mess!! After a really disappointing 4-4 conference record and a 7-6 overall last year, Miami is really looking to reclaim their dominance in the ACC. Unfortunately, I do not see it happening with Florida State, Oklahoma, Virginia Tech, and South Florida on their schedule. I feel we could see an even worse record this year than last season. My projection is 6-7 for the season.

Now, I move over to Notre Dame. Where do I start? You need a new coach and a new team. With a 7-6 record last year Notre Dame is looking like the "U". The Fighting Irish have about 4 games they could lose which include both Michigan teams, USC, and Boston College. We are looking at an 8-4 record if they are lucky, I bet Ole Coach Wise is hoping that Irish luck kicks in this year.

Next, we take a look at Auburn. They are a mess as well with a 2-6 conference, a 5-7 overall and a whole new coaching staff this year. I am not sure how things will end up. Of course Auburn has their tough battles against Bama, Ole Miss, UGA, Tennessee, and West Virginia. I am predicting another losing season this year, probably looking at another repeat record of 5-7, good luck Tigers.

Lastly, we have Bama, with a very impressive season last year at 8-0 in the conference and 12-2 overall. The tough games I see in Bama's future will be the opener against Virginia Tech and that is about it. I think Bama will have a very similar record to last years.

We here at GMF are looking forward to a great football season and will enjoy the friendly and not so friendly rivalry around the office.

Please email me and let me know what your favorite college team is. We will include your team in the next newsletter.

The Games To Watch

FSU

9/07 [Miami \(FL\)](#)
9/19 @ [Brigham Young](#)
9/26 [South Florida](#)
10/22 @ [North Carolina](#)



Miami

9/17 [Georgia Tech](#)
9/26 @ [Virginia Tech](#)
10/03 [Oklahoma](#)
11/28 @ [South Florida](#)



Notre Dame

9/12 @ [Michigan](#)
9/19 [Michigan State](#)
10/17 [USC](#)
10/24 [Boston College](#)



Auburn

9/19 [West Virginia](#)
10/03 @ [Tennessee](#)
11/14 @ [GeorgiaTBA](#)
11/28 [Alabama](#)



Alabama

9/05 [Virginia Tech](#)
10/10 @ [Mississippi](#)
10/24 [Tennessee](#)
11/07 [LSU](#)



Random Facts

This section of our newsletter is dedicated to the random things in life.

We have accumulated several random, interesting facts for you to share around the office.

Even Antarctica has an area code. It's 672.

There is one slot machine in Las Vegas for every eight inhabitants.

Koalas are excellent swimmers.

In 1659, it was illegal to celebrate Christmas in Massachusetts.

The U.S. founding fathers' name for the American Revolution was 'The War with Britain'.

A lump of pure gold the size of a matchbox can be flattened into a sheet

By law, in Bourbon, Miss., one small onion must be served with each glass of water in a restaurant.

The average city dog lives three years longer than the average country dog.

During his lifetime, artist Vincent Van Gogh only sold one of his paintings.

Spiders have transparent blood.

It's illegal in Alabama to wear a fake moustache that causes laughter in church.

The Atlantic Ocean is saltier than the Pacific Ocean.

A rat can fall from a five story building without injury.

Airports that are at higher altitudes require a longer airstrip due to lower air density.

It takes 17 muscles to smile, 43 to frown.

Medical studies show that intelligent people have more copper and zinc in their hair.



This Quarter's Q&A Technology Tips

Q: What is a quick and inexpensive way to speed up my computer?

A: Most computers slow down due to temporary internet files, unused documents and full trash boxes. A quick cure for this is to run the "Disk Clean-up." First, click the Start menu and go to all programs. Then, go to accessories and select system tools. After you have done this click on the "Disk Clean-up" icon and it will run. After several minutes (more if you have not run this in a while or ever)



or ever) A box will pop up that will let you know how much space you can free up. Select the boxes that correspond to the items you would like to remove (I remove everything). You should be able to see a difference in the speed of your CPU. However, if this does not help you may need to replace your Memory/RAM which can be bought at most local computer stores, Staples, Best Buy, or Office Depot. For more ways to speed up your computer go to <http://www.microsoft.com/atwork/>

The Greener Side

Why Go Green?

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Every workplace has what I call a "green guru." They grumble at you for using too much paper, have the "consider the environment" tag at the end of their emails and are obsessed with new ways to save the environment. As crazy as these people are there is some sense to the madness.

In 1994 the USGBC (The U.S. Green Building Council) introduced their LEED (Leadership in Energy and Design) program. It grew from one standard for construction to six interrelated standards covering every part of construction and development.

The Construction Industry saw a dramatic spike of interest in LEED Certification in 2007. The appeal was the long term benefit of higher rents, stronger relationships with the tenants, and better sales value. However, the long term benefits have been overshadowed by the lack of new development within the Industry.

Soon, interests in LEED Certification switched from long term benefits to the short term. With green cleaning techniques, integrated PET management, sustainable landscaping and managing the indoor environment, companies remained focused on LEED Certifications.

No matter the incentive to "go green" we should all be a little more conscious about our contributions to global pollution.

