

THE SHELL MAGE

DEER PARK

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1997

JUNE 22 HAD NO SHORTAGE OF HEROES COVER



COKER GETS GO-AHEAD ON NEW EGRESS UNIT PG 4



SERVE VOLUNTEERS HOST BINGO NIGHT PG 5



SCORA CAMPERS PLAN WEEKEND AT LAKE LIVINGSTON PG 6



JUNE 22 HAD NO SHORTAGE OF HEROES

It was a big fire that erupted at OP-III on that Sunday morning back in June. And, the only thing more obvious than the searing heat was the professionalism, courage and conviction displayed by the hundreds of Shell employees and emergency personnel who responded. Their heroism is worth noting.

It wasn't any single act or event that merits their recognition. It was the combined and cohesive team-effort of all who were there that quickly accounted for all co-workers, secured the unit, and contained the fire, keeping the number of serious injuries at zero.

This amazing fact from such a major fire is a direct reflection of the preparedness and committed effort of these men and women. Their bravery and judgement continues to command the admiration, respect and appreciation of all Shell employees and their families.

Ed Hawthorne, in charge of emergency response command, says the emergency response was exemplary and deserves our highest praise. "It was a very, very big fire, and the courageous efforts from the operators, emergency response and CIMA quickly contained the fire and helped minimize its damaging effects."

"When it's all over and we know the safe outcome, it's easy to underestimate how brave these men and women actually were. But remember," Hawthorne adds, "no one at the scene knew what would happen. They faced a wall of fire that was surrounded by flammable materials. It takes real courage to stand there and rely on your training and fellow employees, and that's what each of these men and women did at OP-III."

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Within minutes of the fire's onset at OP-III, Shell's volunteer fire department respond. Here, crew members with Engine-1 begin initial hose layouts.

COKER GETS GO-AHEAD ON NEW EGRESS UNIT

After much research, planning and design, the \$2.5 million needed to begin construction on the Coker Egress Project – a new emergency escape stairway for the refinery coker unit, has been approved.

Spearheaded by the Coker Departmental Health & Safety Team more than 16 months ago, the Coker Egress Project was inspired by the Coker fire in July of '95. While no one was injured in the incident, one of the control stations was impacted by the blaze and raised questions of safety.

Shortly thereafter, the departmental health & safety team began exploring alternatives to the present egress unit that only offers one escape.

After examining the egress units of other companies (which included everything from none to elaborate slides) and following structural factors (like hurricane-speed wind-resistance,

and OSHA guidelines), it was agreed that the new egress unit will include two stairways – one on each side.

Enrico DeSalle, coker department, health and safety team leader, said that many of the employees who work atop the unit are looking forward to the added safety offered by the new stairways.

DeSalle says the new stairways will be suspended out and away from the coke drums. This will give added protection in the event of a fire by allowing an evacuation that is at a safer distance. The framework will also be adaptable for a projected coker expansion in the coming years."

Materials for the Coker Egress Project are due to arrive later this month and construction of its foundation is scheduled to begin in mid-October. The projected completion date is in the first quarter of '98.

DEER PARK REFINING MAINTENANCE SETS SAFETY RECORD

As of August 22, Refining Maintenance achieved a zero OSHA recordable rate for a full year. This outstanding safety milestone has never been attained by Shell Deer Park Refining employees and can be largely attributed to the development of departmental health and safety teams and the added efforts from all personnel in refining maintenance.

Jim Niklas, central maintenance manager, refinery, says the development of the health and safety departments have played a major roll in reducing the injury rate to such a low level. "Over

the last year, we've seen some real changes with the health and the safety teams. They've increased everyone's awareness levels and involvement in safe practices."

Niklas added that all of refinery maintenance has been examined and improvements have been made to every process. "We've made changes from the craft level down to individual ergonomics, and it's paid off."

This new record of zero surpasses their already low OSHA recordable record of 1.0 achieved in January of this year.

SERVE VOLUNTEERS HOST BINGO NIGHT FOR SENIORS



Shell SERVE volunteers recently held two Bingo games for the San Jacinto Manor Nursing Home in Deer Park on Tuesday, July 22 and Sunday, August 3.

Eight SERVE members and four Explorers from Post # 9999 organized the games for the elderly citizens that included an assortment of refreshments and prizes.



Shell SERVE volunteers and Explorers from Post 9999 pose with seniors from San Jacinto Manor Nursing Home after a night of bingo games.

The volunteers drew the bingo numbers, helped elders with their cards, cheered residents on, and passed out prizes that included picture frames, photo albums, stationery supplies, greeting cards, writing tablets, postage stamps, and cash.

Patti Bezdek, senior administrative associate in administration, refinery, and a member of SERVE for more than 10 years, said the games were a huge success and very well received by the residents.

"Everyone had a wonderful time playing. And, what's just as wonderful is that we enjoyed helping and cheering them on as much as they

enjoyed playing," Bezdek says. "Most of these seniors are very limited in what they can do and, many times, their routine doesn't change and this was a great way to have fun and get them involved."

The food and refreshments were supplied by Scott Hartner, manager of the Euresst Dining Service at Shell Deer Park, who also made extra packages of sugar-free cookies for the seniors to keep and enjoy later.

The gifts provided for the bingo prizes were made possible by donations and special discounts from Walgreen's and K-Mart.

Bezdek added that the bingo night was so successful that SERVE members are already looking forward to hosting another one in early '98.



SERVE volunteers and Explorers assist seniors with their bingo cards.

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Steven Guidry, operator, OP-III, was investigating a reported leak at the time of the explosion. At first, his shift team figured it was just a steam release. However, Guidry says it seems like the moment that he actually smelled the hydrocarbon, it blew. He was only 50 feet from the blast.

Amazingly, after being knocked back more than 30 feet, he immediately began searching for his fellow employees and taking steps to secure the unit and extinguish the fire.

"I felt like it was my own house that was burning," says Guidry. "Our initial reports said some of us were missing, so we went back in to search.

"It was an awful feeling to know that we were looking for our friends and expecting the worst. However, we were quickly relieved to know that all were accounted for. We began setting up the first fire monitors and resetting the isolation valves. I felt a lot better once I saw the fire engines roll up.

It's nice having such a rapid response."

John McElroy, reaction operator, EPON 5, chemical, is a fire engine operator for Shell's volunteer fire department. He was at his post the morning OP-III rocked Deer Park and says the blast lifted him out of his chair. He jumped into his truck and headed toward the blaze, even before the whistle blew.

McElroy says that his, and everyone's, first and biggest concern was for the safety of the employees. "It was more fire than I had ever seen in my life. From the size of the blast and fire, we were all afraid for the personnel's safety. When we pulled up, we saw two helmets on the ground and feared the worst. All of us had a very bad feeling that there may have been many injuries.

"We were quite relieved when the first reports showed everyone was accounted for," McElroy recalls. "As soon as we knew that, our entire focus was on controlling the fire, and cooling the surrounding

vessels in order to prevent it from spreading and igniting any further explosions."

"All of us fought long and hard that day," McElroy says. "We owe a lot to the operators who were on

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duty. They did an outstanding job of locating the supply points and shutting them down. I'm also really thankful for all the training that Shell has been giving us. It definitely paid off in this situation."

Myron Matula, operator Alky/MTBE, refinery, and crew captain for the fire department, was the working foreman at the fuels West Control Center when he heard the explosion. "It's a very sickening sound — especially at a plant," Matula says. "And, when I found out where it occurred, my stomach just dropped, because I used to be an operator at OP-III and still have many friends working there."

However, it wasn't until his team was in their fire truck and heading toward the fire that he had a moment to really survey the damage and consider the people he knew were working inside. "I was

really scared for their safety and said a short prayer. Because of the size of the fire and the damage from the explosion," he continued. "it was hard to believe when we got the word that all were accounted for. What a relief!"

Matula added that the fire's intensity was greater than any he had ever dealt with. "When we arrived on the scene, the roaring was so loud we had trouble communicating. We couldn't hear anything over the fire."

Matula went on to say that, even with the help of three 5-inch hoses and a 6,000 gallon-per-minute water canon, the blaze seemed unstoppable. "Because of the direction and intensity of the fire," he says, "it was hours before we felt like we were gaining any headway."

Billy Stidham, operator, chemical, and captain of the fire department, was at his home in Crosby when the blast occurred. He was notified by phone and was in his truck headed for Shell before being radioed by the fire department. "When I came over the bridge on the north side, I could see the fire,"

he says, "and it was the biggest I had ever seen."

Stidham says that, by the time he arrived at Shell, he and his crew had been notified that all employees had been accounted for. "From there," he says, "most of our tactics were defensive protecting the non-damaged equipment and keeping the fire confined.

"It's an interesting feeling when you're there and in the middle of it all. You're not really sure what's going to happen," he says. "I don't work in OP-III, but I understand that there's a lot of product in those vessels, and it's always in your mind that there could be another explosion. It's imperative that you stay focused and do your job for your safety and everyone's."

At one point, Mike Boaze, emergency response coordinator, took Stidham's team in a small truck, equipped with hoses, down through an alley and in between the structures to the blaze. "We were actually inside the framework and at the fire-front," says Stidham.

"We established fire monitors there and kept it from spreading further inside. In my opinion, this decision from Boaze was one of the most equipment-saving maneuvers we made.

"We continued to supply water to the monitors and hooked up new ones on the south side. We were out there a total of about 12 hours. Some of us stayed even longer into the night. What a day!"

More than 350 people responded to the fire at OP-III. They included operators, craft personnel, foremen, Shell fire department, and emergency response members. Also at the scene were more than 200 CIMA members, who brought additional heavy, fire-fighting equipment. Extinguishing the blaze took almost 11 hours of collective efforts from everyone involved. They are all heroes who did what was necessary, preventing any serious injuries — thankfully.



Once the fire was extinguished, fire fighters began surveying damage at OP-III and assessing further needs of the ground monitors.



Deluge-60, a water canon capable of pumping water at 6,000 gallons-per-minute, continues cooling the pipe rack area west of OP-III fractionator.

SCORA CAMPERS PLAN WEEKEND AT LAKE LIVINGSTON

 Grab your sleeping bags, tents and fishing gear! The SCORA campers are packing up for an exciting weekend of outdoor life at Lake Livingston, and you're invited.

The SCORA camping trip will be held the weekend of October 24 through 26 at Wolf Creek Park on Lake Livingston. This beautiful park offers swimming, fishing, miniature golf, and lots of relaxation under the tall pines. Also, Cape Royale golf course is just around the bend, so bring your clubs.

The cost is only \$18 per night. SCORA will furnish barbecue brisket (a la Jim Repp). All we ask is each family bring a side dish for supper on Saturday.

So, grab your camping gear and the kids.

The fall weather should be upon us by then and the camping will be perfect. There are only 15 spots reserved, so please call the SCORA window at 713/246-6975 to sign up. See you there!



What's The Scoop?



Do you have a Shell-related story or announcement that needs to be in the *Shellegram*? We're interested!

Simply give us a call on the *Shellegram* Hotline at 713/246-6372. We'd like to hear about any newsworthy events, milestones or achievements from both Refinery and Chemical.

PROCESS ENGINEERING TAKES A MORE BUSINESS-LIKE APPROACH



The Process Engineering Projects Department at Shell Deer Park Refining Company recently shifted its focus from being task- and job-oriented to a more business- and profitability-minded team.

Led by its (now former) departmental manager, Mike Sohmer, the re-alignment came after the entire department held an all-day, off-site workshop in March that was aimed at improving its efficiency and goal management.

After much hard work, brainstorming, and study that considered current situations, barriers to success, rules, norms, and team roles, the department agreed on a "vision" or directive that reads:

The purpose of the Process Engineering Projects Department is to improve the safety, environmental, and financial performance of SDPRC by developing and tracking to completion, required and profitability projects and engineering studies.

This directive was added to a departmental contract that included a business model for the department and a boundary analysis.

The motivation for the re-thinking came after many of the department members wanted to better demonstrate how process engineering could add more value to the refinery.

In order to do this, a Microsoft Access database was created which contained all of the current projects and activities. This information was then crossed with all unassigned and proposed projects.

This project database was named ValuTime and is now used to optimize the most profitable projects first. Doing this improves efficiency and the overall profitability of the refinery.

John Swank, process engineer, refinery, says the new business-minded directive has made a big difference in achieving departmental goals. "Our old way of doing things would

require us to work on projects that were assigned according to obvious economic impact, experience, or 'squeaky wheels' – more of a 'reactive' type of decision making.

"Now, we choose the projects we are going to do from an optimized, most profitable, project

list. This gives us far more control over our work," Swank adds. "And, it's already having a great impact on the profitability of the refinery."

Process Engineering also spent time developing a list of eight departmental "value drivers" designed to measure how efficiently and effectively the department is doing its job. By monitoring how these measures are doing from month to month, the department can try to make adjustments to improve performance.

"This new direction will need some fine-tuning as we learn more about the new procedure," Swank says. "We'll have to measure how well our value drivers are working and modify them from our experiences as we move forward," he says. "We're planning to develop the Managerial P&L for our department. However, we feel that we have already come a long way this year."

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THE SHELL DEER PARK SHELLEGRAM



Editor's Note: Shell Deer Park supports these initiatives: Responsible Care, through the Chemical Manufacturer's Association, is a continuing effort to improve the industry's responsible management of chemicals; STEP, through the American Petroleum Institute, addresses public concerns by improving our industry's environmental health and safety performance.



SHELL DEER PARK: GOOD NEIGHBORS CARE

Shell Deer Park

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All inquiries should be addressed to SHELLEGRAM, Shell Deer Park, P.O. Box 100, Deer Park, Texas 77536

Editor:

Jay Love
713/246-6372



Milestones

CHEMICAL WELCOMES

A. E. Howell
Business Services-OPNS Bus. Supt.

C. L. Wilcox
PE/CS/QA

C. C. Boyd
Health and Safety

J. A. Blair
PE/CS/QA-Admin

J. M. Flores
Tech-Engng Support-Mechanical
Equip-Central

E. M. Garcia
PE/CS/QA-Qual. Assur-
Phenol

M. D. Garza
PE/CS/QA-Qual. Assur-Envir

R. Gaspar
PE/CS/QA-Qual. Assur-I&S

J. Gonzalez
PE/CS/QA-Qual. Assur-
Phenol

A. F. Hussain
Heavy Olefins/Olefins-Support

V. Medina
Resins-Phenol Acetone

J. Munoz
PE/CS/QA-Qual. Assur-
Olefins

G. Ontiveros
Forms/Records Administration

E. Pena
Distribution Cust. Services

J. M. Rhodes
PE/CS/QA-Make Change Base
Chemical

CHEMICAL WELCOMES

K. L. Roberts
PE/CS/QA-Qual. Assur-Admin.

B. L. Stienert
PE/CS/QA-Qual. Assur-I&S

L. I. Trevino
Resins-Major Resins

G. A. Marino
Tech-Engineering Support

R. M. Pierce
Facilities-CMAT/TAS-Welder #1

CHEMICAL RETIREMENTS

H.B. Butler
Resins-Major Resins

REFINERY WELCOMES

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PE/CS/QA-Proc Engng-Projects

J. F. Jacobs
Bus. Management-Programs

T. I. Nygaard
PE/CS/QA-Proc Engng-Projects

E. P. Haloulos
Human Resources

P. W. Reed
Hydroprocessing-Operator #1

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Lubricants-Lube Log

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