GIMCO Ltd. has reached a milestone that only a handful of companies attain. This year, 2009, the firm is celebrating 50 years of quality service. “Our 50 years of success is based upon excellent customer service and our ability to adapt to a continually changing market,” said GIMCO President, Don Capotosto. “Our commitment to our customer base is most important to us.”

The mechanical contracting firm began operations in April 1959 in a facility at 39 Mitchell Ave. in Toronto. The company’s name originated from the three founding partners – Jim Gerrard (G), John Innes (I) and Rollie MacKenzie (M) – resulting in GIMCO.

Innes took over the helm in 1973 when he bought out his two partners. Twenty years later, in 1993, Don Capotosto became a shareholder in the company. In 2004, Innes retired leaving Capotosto and Bruno Rossi as the sole owners. Since 2004, the company has grown in sales by 40 per cent and operates out of a 4500 sq. ft. facility at 43 Ferrier St. in Markham, Ont. The company employs between 18 and 40 individuals at any one time.

What makes GIMCO unique is the niche it has created for itself within the market. GIMCO specializes in complex mechanical retrofit projects. Unlike new construction, where the equipment and piping layouts are done from a clean slate, retrofit projects require extensive ex-

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president’s message

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experience, planning, logistics and project management to ensure the owner’s operation is not adversely affected and their downtime is kept to a minimum.

In many cases, projects are completed without drawings or specifications. The customer communicates their requirements leaving GIMCO to fill in the pieces, budget the project, install it, commission and start it up.

GIMCO offers turnkey projects in the replacement or installation of new chillers, cooling towers, boilers, air handling units and process equipment. The company is one of the first Toronto contractors to attain the TSSA Certificate of Authorization for B31.1, B31.3 and Repairs and Alterations. The company also specializes in chemical process pipelining and welding for both carbon steel and stainless steel systems.

With a business philosophy of “doing the job right the first time,” the medium-size firm works diligently to satisfy its customer base in order to secure repeat business. Additionally, personalized service from initial conception to scope of work, pricing and implementation ensure 100 per cent, single-source accountability.

Up until a few years ago, the majority of GIMCO’s business was completed in the industrial/manufacturing sector. However, due to the strong dollar and increased globalization, many of the company’s customers in that sector have moved, shut-down or down-sized their operations. As a result, GIMCO has had to remain flexible and gradually shifted its focus on the institutional and commercial markets. Today, the firm has completed a variety of projects in hospitals, schools and commercial facilities.

GIMCO is currently completing a chiller / cooling tower and steam boiler replacement at the St. Joseph’s Health Care Centre in Hamilton. Phase 1 of project included the installation of two, new 1000 ton chillers and three, two-cell cooling towers. The company is now working on Phase 2 of the project, which involves many challenges which gave way to new opportunities. The MCA Toronto man-hours remained fairly stable even though the economy tanked. The water filtration plants, sewage plants, high-rise commercial towers and tenant retrofits which follow, as well as pharmaceutical, institutional facilities, co-generation facilities and a steady flow of industrial work all played a major role in exceeding our man-hour projections.

The contractor members whom I have chatted with over the past few months believe the fall, winter and spring of 2010 will provide sufficient work to maintain our man-hour budget for the next year. All indications are that the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) has bottomed out of the recession and, from here on, we only foresee positive things for the future.

Another highlight of the past year, is our renewed and strengthened relationship with our Industry Partners at the United Association. Additionally, MCA Toronto’s working partnership with the Construction Safety Association of Ontario (CSAO) has assisted all as we work towards a safer environment for everyone. We also have excellent Contractor representation at the Technical Standards & Safety Authority (TSSA) and the Council of Construction Associations (Coca) / Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) as we work with provincial politicians and administrative staff to assist our contractors on various industry issues.

In this past year we lost a founding father of the MCA Toronto and Ontario with the passing of Mr. Fred Sayers of Sayers & Associates. Fred was a “marketing and sales” individual who played a pivotal role in promoting the Mechanical Contractors industry and the importance of our partners. Mr. Fred Sayers will be missed by all and we want to thank you for your support over the years and I look forward to seeing everyone at the 2009 Annual General Meeting – Sep. 18 to 20, 2009 – at the Deerhurst Resort in Huntsville, Ont.
Confined Space Regulation Revisited

By CRAIG HAWKINS,
Inspector, Boilers and Pressure Vessels Safety Program

It has been 21 months since Confined Spaces Regulation 632/05 has been in force under the Ministry of Labour (MOL), and it warrants an important review.

A confined space is defined as a fully- or partially-enclosed space that is not designed or intended for human occupancy and may contain atmospheric hazards. Atmospheric hazards may be due to its design, construction or location, materials or substances within the space, or work activities being carried out inside or outside the space that could potentially change the atmosphere. Once a space is determined to be a confined space, facility inspections performed by a TSSA inspector shall follow the guidelines as stipulated in the appropriate regulation. Examples of confined spaces may include underground or aboveground storage tanks, process vessels, pits, silos, vats, boilers and pipelines.

MOL’s Confined Space Regulation 632/05 requires the owner or user to have a confined space entry program, which shall include as a minimum:

- identification and documentation of confined spaces in the workplace;
- written hazard assessment of each identified confined space;
- appropriate equipment including personal protective equipment (PPE), gas detection and extraction equipment;
- specific entry procedures for each identified confined space;
- entry permit procedures;
- training for affected personnel;
- rescue plans; and
- record keeping of hazard assessments, training and entry permits.

TSSA also has the same obligation as other employers under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations. As a result, TSSA will be expecting an increase in the requirements of BPV customers during inspections of items defined as a confined space. This level of assistance will relate to providing a hazard assessment of the confined space; a specific training plan; a competent person to act as an attendant for the inspector; prior notification of specialized personal protective equipment; and a written rescue plan with appropriate rescue equipment.

If any of the above requirements are not provided, the inspector must follow TSSA’s confined space program, which may result in post-inspection and rescheduling of the inspection with TSSA providing the resources to complete the inspection appropriately. At a minimum, two people are required for a single confined space entry. With proper cooperation between parties performing the confined space entry, the inspections can proceed efficiently and in a timely manner for the success of all.

The potential hazards within a confined space must be taken seriously. Without a proper program or procedures in place, and without proper training, workers in a confined space and those outside who attempt a rescue in the event of an emergency, can quickly be overcome and deaths can occur. For more information about the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations, please refer to www.labour.gov.on.ca.

For more information regarding confined space procedures, please contact TSSA toll free at 1-877-682-TSSA (8772) or via e-mail at customerservices@tssa.org.

- Reprinted from the Spring 2009 issue of TSSA’s Update newsletter.

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Challenge To Change

letter, which was mailed through the UA Canadian Office to all the brothers and sisters in Canada. The letter was encouraging to me as the Canadian Director, and now my office has a solid mandate, not from me, but from the members on the job. Together we are going to grow the UA by creating a better image of the UA, by making our members accountable, by dealing closely with our fair contractors to increase our market share and work opportunities, and delivering on our promises and guarantees. Together, we can move our organization forward and secure the future of the UA for those members who have gone before and those who will follow.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank General President Hite for his participation and support of this survey and the “Moving Forward” campaign, President Hite, after looking at the survey and the results, suggested that a Canadian Strategic Planning Committee be appointed to deal with the issues brought forward by the members.
**15 Things Supervisors Can Do To Prevent Falls**

**FIVE THINGS TO DO TODAY**

1. **Ask workers one question** – Ask them “How many workers died from falls in Ontario construction in 2008?” The answer is 10. Your workers need to know that the problem of falls is serious.

2. **Check for missing guardrails** – Guardrails are often the best form of fall protection because they keep workers away from the edge. Keep an eye out for missing guardrails on scaffolds and floor edges. Ministry of Labour inspectors will be looking out for them too.

3. **Look out for ladders** – This year, the Ministry of Labour is focusing on how workers use ladders. A lot of injuries involve ladders, but we use them so often that we get desensitized to the danger. Look for workers doing things that increase the risk of injury, such as leaning outside the rails, working off a ladder, or carrying something while climbing. There’s a ladder poster in this issue – put it up on your site.

4. **Check for floor openings** – Too many workers have died after walking backwards into a floor opening. Use a sturdy cover and write on it with spray paint to make its purpose clear. Alternatively, install guardrails around the opening and put up a sign. Use the floor-cover poster (on page 19 of the Summer issue of CSAO’s Construction Safety Magazine) to broadcast the message.

5. **Give a safety talk** – The Construction Safety Association of Ontario recently published a safety talk on the inside front cover of its current Construction Safety Magazine. There are more at www.csaao.org. Even better, talk to workers for five minutes about the specific hazards and fall-protection equipment used on your site. Walk the site with them, or meet in an area where you can see several fall hazards. Explain what you and your company expect.

**FIVE WAYS TO SUPERVISE**

1. **Show that you mean it** – More than anything else, your actions demonstrate your commitment to fall protection. Inspect your site every day. Point out the hazards. Suggest safer ways to do a job (e.g., using an elevating work platform instead of a ladder).

2. **Plan your work** – You and your company should consider ways to avoid work at heights. For example, assemble roofs on the ground and hoist them into place; order pre-fabricated wall frames or trusses; use extension handles on tools to do painting or window-washing from the ground.

3. **Train your workers** – A competent person must train your workers on fall-protection basics, as well as the specific fall protection situations and equipment on your project (CSAO’s Basics of Fall Protection kit is not enough. You need to address the specifics of the work you’ll be doing).

4. **Enforce the rules** – Enforce the rules. “Catch” workers doing something wrong and does not have adequate protection. If workers are ignoring the rules, explain the consequences of ignoring them again. Don’t be afraid to take disciplinary action when necessary. Your company can’t afford to tolerate workers who continue to put themselves, other workers, and the business at risk.

5. **Reward good behaviour** – Recognize workers who follow the rules. “Catch” workers doing something right and thank them for it. A small token of appreciation can make a person’s day and reinforce good behaviour.

**FIVE THINGS TO TELL YOUR WORKERS**

1. **Do it right every time.** ‘It will just take a minute’ or ‘I have done this a hundred times before’ can be a worker’s last words. Your employees are paid to be professionals. That means doing the job safely each time, every time, and all the time.

2. **Look out for other workers.** You expect them to fix a problem that endangers other workers – but they need to know that. They should feel comfortable reporting a missing guardrail or a floor-opening cover, even if it’s not in their work area.

3. **Use the right equipment.** Your workers need to know that wearing the equipment you require is not an option. It’s mandatory.

4. **Tell me about the hazards you see.** The law requires workers to inform their supervisor of any hazards that can affect them or other workers. They should feel comfortable calling you if they face a confusing situation or can’t control a hazard. It’s in your best interest to find out before any injury happens – so you can prevent it – rather than afterwards.

5. **Know your rights.** If a worker faces a fall hazard and does not have adequate protection, the worker has the legal right to refuse the work. It’s better for everyone not to get to this situation in the first place.
Is The Worst Over?

The Canadian economy remains in the grip of “strong slowdown” despite the first baby steps of growth appearing in other parts of the world. According to a new report from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, China is leading the world in a potential rebound from the world’s most severe slump since the Great Depression, with the United Kingdom, France and Italy also showing signs that the economic slide is bottoming out.

Canada’s economy will likely remain in recession for most of this year with real GDP expected to contract two per cent in 2009. However, many economists think the worst behind us. In addition to less ‘bad’ indicators, a number of positive indicators are starting to emerge. Although, the economy continued to shrink in February, the rate of decline is easing. Even with this easing, the first quarter contraction will be one of the largest quarterly declines on record.

It is not expected that Canada, and Ontario, will see any positive growth until the fourth quarter of this year... and an uptick in U.S. demand, start to kick in. Ontario’s economy will see a significant boost from $33 billion of infrastructure spending over two years, about six per cent of the province’s GDP. However, the recovery will be held back by soft exports to a restrained U.S. consumer. As an exporting province and nation, our recovery is largely dependent on the recovery of our trading partners.

Despite the fact that the Canadian economy likely produced the worst quarterly contraction on record in the first quarter of 2009, it managed to add 36,000 jobs in April. This unexpected jump follows five months of massive job losses with a total of 321,000 losses since October. The national unemployment rate remained at a seven year high of eight per cent in April, up 2.2 percentage points from its low in the beginning of 2008. Ontario lost 3000 jobs in April, but managed to hold its unemployment rate at 8.7 per cent.

Of course the devil is in the details; the rise in employment was largely the result of a 37,000 jump in self-employed workers. It is probable that a large portion of these self-employed workers are those who were laid off and forced into self-employment, a trend that was also noticeable during the 1990s recession. The rise in employment was also focused in the 55 and up age group, as more retirees re-entered the job market, likely the result of deteriorating wealth related to the stock market correction.

Ontario’s construction industry lost 6000 jobs in April and a total of 37,000 jobs since last November when construction employment hit an all time peak of close to 450,000 workers. Most of the job losses can be attributed to significant declines in residential construction activity. First quarter residential permits are down by $1.1 billion from 2008, whereas the value of ICI permits remained constant.

There is growing optimism that the worst is behind us. However the recovery will be slow and the economy of tomorrow will look and feel different then the pre-crisis economy.

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MCA America Association Executives Council (AEC) 2009 / 2010 Executive Committee (from left) includes: Mr. Gary Fowler, Tucker, GA, chairman; Ms. Marsha Babcock, Omaha, NB, vice chair; and Mr. Dana Taylor, MCA British Columbia, program chair.
MCAT’s Annual Golf Classic took place Jun. 18, 2009 at the Kleinburg Golf & Country Club. Approximately 216 golfers played a scramble format with a shot gun start. A good day was had by all.
Calendar of Events

August 28 – Master Insulators’ Association of Ontario Inc. 11th Annual Golf Classic, Kleinburg Golf & Country Club, Kleinburg, that raises monies for Mesothelioma Early Detection and Research at Princess Margaret Hospital.

September 18 to 20 – MCA Toronto Annual General Meeting – Deerhurst Resort, Huntsville, Ont.

September 21 to 23 – Ontario Construction Secretariat Conference – Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. For more information, contact James Wright at (416) 620-5210 ext. 226 or e-mail: jwright@iciconstruction.com.

September 26 to 29 – MCA Canada Annual General Meeting – Marriott, San Francisco, California.

October 30 – MCA Toronto Project Management Course
   Module 1 – Oct. 30 and 31
   Module 2 – Nov. 20 and 21
   Module 3 – Dec. 11 and 12
   Module 4 – Jan. 8 and 9
   This course will be held at Accubid Systems in Concord.

December 2 to 4 – Construct Canada Trade Show, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, South Building, MCA Toronto Booth#641.

* Courses / seminars will be held in MCA Toronto’s classroom located at 30 Acadia Ave., Suite 302, Markham, (Warden & Steeles).

For more information regarding the above, contact: The Mechanical Contractors Association of Toronto (MCAT), Tel: (416) 491-9004, Fax: (416) 491-9007, E-mail: McCabe@mcat.on.ca.

GIMCO Ltd.

includes the installation of a 1500 hp high pressure coil-tube boiler system to replace the existing conventional water-tube boiler system.

Additionally, GIMCO is also in the final stages of a complete boiler room upgrade at Jarvis Collegiate for the Toronto District School Board in the downtown core. This project includes the installation of three, low pressure cast iron sectional steam boilers.

Having taken large strides over the past 50 years, GIMCO is geared to proceed strongly into the future. With a goal of remaining a mid-size firm, Don Capotosto said the company has its sights set on increasing sales 10 per cent each year by offering its customer base quality service and follow-up to ensure systems are working as anticipated.

With controlled growth within its targeted markets, GIMCO plans on remaining strong well into the future.

For more information, contact GIMCO Ltd. at 43 Ferrier St., Markham, Ont. L3R 3K6. Tel: (905) 473-2920, Fax: (905) 473-8249 or e-mail: gimco@idirect.com.