

Future Shines Bright for Specialty Steel Inc.



Paul Garbes, President of Specialty Steel Inc. watches as Ron Wood demonstrates a heavy drill press in action.

By Linda Harrington

Tucked away on a quiet stretch of Dakota Road is a unique business, steadily growing in size and production over the last 28 years.

John Garbes began Specialty Steel Inc. back in 1983, with only 4 or 5 employees; they started out making fish barrel rings. His son Paul began working alongside his father when he was just 14 years of age, and they worked together until John's retirement this past November.

The company has grown to employ 17 employees with many large corporate clients and a lengthy list of products and services. "If it is made out of metal, we can build it," says Paul Garbes, President of Specialty Steel.

Customers keep coming back to Specialty Steel. "We started off being able to do anything the customer required. We used our ingenuity and were not afraid to try anything," says Garbes. "This resulted in a lot of repeat customers." He says they also like to give customers a fast reaction time so they are not kept waiting.

A new laser cutter was added last May, a big boost to production, resulting in less waste and a more efficient process. "This machine we used to cut out parts of equipment for Pearl & Daisy Natural Soap Company," says Paul. "The design is drawn on a computer screen and then the individual parts are cut with the laser. It is the type of machine we wish we had years ago."

A tour of the shop shows a vast array of products in various stages of manufacturing. Paul says it would take him all day to list the numerous items his business has produced over the years but one of the longer runs has been the manufacturing of gas tank straps for hundreds of makes and models of vehicles.

One large section of the shop has an assembly line process devoted to making these straps and here you find Debbie Lindsay, an employee for at least 26 years. (There is some bantering back and forth between Debbie and Paul over her actual number of year's employment.) "We getting along like brother and sister," says Debbie, obviously enjoying her work.

Customers often call up with a very basic idea of what they want and it is up to Paul and his design team to bring it to life for them. He says it can be a simple improvement to an existing



Quality workmanship by devoted employees is essential in today's business market. Here Debbie Lindsay works a heavy press.



Adam Fisher demonstrates one of the computer controlled manufacturing machines at Specialty Steel Inc. in Debert, NS.

item or an entirely new piece of equipment, "We have designed whole kitchens, aluminum water treatment plants and specialty trailers but if you look over there you will see a truck grill. Nothing is too big or too small."

The future looks favourable for Specialty Steel with several major contracts in the works.

"We are experiencing rapid growth right now with some exciting things on the horizon," says Paul with a positive outlook. "Diversity has saved our skin over the years and we have not been adversely affected by the recession. I hope we might be able to hire a few more employees in the near future."

Thinking About Starting a Business or Improving the One You Already Own? READ ON – WE'VE GOT LOTS OF IDEAS

By Alan Johnson

The Colchester Regional Development Association, also known as CoRDA, is proud to be able to support our small business community every day of the year. We, along with our provincial and local partner agencies, including the Chamber of Commerce, Northern Opportunities for Business, Open Doors, many private business partners and more, are getting ready for an exciting series of Small Business Week events from

October 16th to 22nd. We're so enthusiastic, we've even scheduled a few events before and after that official time-frame.

We'd like to stimulate your brain with ideas about starting your own small business, or sharpening up the ones we're so proud to say are already a part of Truro-Colchester. Here are just a few of the events we have planned for our budding and building entrepreneurs.

We know that small busi-

ness is the backbone of our economy, and it's our greatest job generator. With the right help and advice by approaching people at these events or scheduling an appointment with us, you could be on your way to business independence. We hope you'll come out to meet us, and make use of these important networking, idea-generating and sales-boosting events. Together, we are a stronger business community, and a greater place to live, work and play.

Truro Chamber of Commerce October Events

September 30

• Business over Breakfast

With Cumberland-Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley MP Scott Armstrong. Mr. Armstrong will discuss recent Federal Government initiatives dealing with business. Time will be allotted for Q & A with those in attendance. \$25 (Tax included) per person. Tables of 8 are available for \$175.00 (Tax included)

Reserved seating available with purchase of table only.

Please check www.trurochamber.com for more information or to register for an upcoming event email events@trurochamber.com

October 1st

The public is invited to enjoy Oktoberfest at the Truro Farmers' Market between 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. and then head over to the Civic Block (at the corner of Prince and Young Streets) for live multi-cultural entertainment, exhibits, demonstrations and activities from 12 noon to 3:00 p.m. There will also be a children's story time with tales from other countries at the Truro Library. All afternoon events are free of charge.

DRUM to perform as part of new EMBRACE Truro festival

Tickets are available through the Marigold Cultural Centre box office at the cost of \$18 each; performance will be at the Cobequid Educational Centre. Tim Tucker Executive Director of The Truro and District Chamber of Commerce will be the emcee for the event. Show starts at 7pm.

Colchester County Events to Celebrate Small Business Week®

Saturday Oct 15th

• Home Based Business Trade Show, Colchester Legion Stadium, 9-3 open to public admission by donation the Colchester Food Bank. For vendor information email events@trurochamber.com

Monday Oct 17th

• Workshop 9-Noon Truro and District Chamber of Commerce Boardroom, 605 Prince St. Topic Bizpal what can it do for my business facilitator Paul Gérin of Canada Business /Nova Scotia. No cost. Please pre-register limited number of seats.

Tuesday Oct 18th

• Workshop 9-Noon Truro and District Chamber of Commerce Boardroom, 605 Prince St. Business Development Bank of Canada - How to finance a business? No cost. Please pre-register limited number of seats

Wednesday Oct 19th

• Small Business Week® Award Luncheon. Best Western Glengarry noon 'til 1:30 awards will be given out to New Business, Business of the year, Business Achievement, and Exporter of the year \$25.00 for members and \$30.00 for Potential Members plus tax. To reserve email events@trurochamber.com

• Reverse Trade Show hosted by Corda 9 - 11:30am for more information contact@corda.ca

Thursday Oct 20th

• Workshop 9-Noon, Truro and District Chamber of Commerce Boardroom, 605 Prince St. Employment Law - How does it affect your business? Facilitator Patterson law. No cost. Please pre-register limited number of seats.

Friday Oct 21st

• Workshop 9-Noon, Truro and District Chamber of Commerce Boardroom, 605 Prince St. Neil Parry from NOBL will help you develop your business plan, from the ground up. No cost. Please pre-register limited number of seats.

Friday October 28th

• Community Flavours Tasting Feast, 6:30 - 9 pm NSCC Cafeteria, Celebrating Colchester farmers, producers and chefs and the local food and Beverages They provide for us. Vote for your favorite Appetizer, Main Course and Dessert. Guest Speaker Lil Macpherson, Owner Wooden Monkey. Tickets available at the Chamber office, the Truro Farmers Market and CoRDA Cost is \$50/person only 150 spaces available.

Small Business Week EVENTS 2011



Friday, Oct. 14TH

• Effective Business Writing Skills, 12:00 noon – 1:00 pm - CoRDA

Saturday, Oct. 15TH

• Home Based Business Trade Show, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Legion Stadium

Truro & District Chamber of Commerce events@trurochamber.com or 893-0140

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday

Oct. 17TH, 18TH & 20TH

• Workshops, 9:00 am - 12:00 noon, Truro and District Chamber of Commerce

Wednesday, Oct. 19TH

• Small Business Week® Award Luncheon

Best Western Glengarry, 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm

Truro & District Chamber of Commerce events@trurochamber.com or 893-0140

• Reverse Trade Show hosted by CoRDA

9:00 am - 11:30 am, NSCC Truro Campus, Salon C

• Community Flavours Tasting Feast

6:30 pm – 9:00 pm, NSCC Truro Campus, Cafeteria Building

Friday, Oct. 21ST

Call CoRDA at 893-0140 or use contact@corda.ca

See our editorial story on page 16 of The Shoreline Journal for more details on these and even more Small Business Week events!