

Ideas & Information You Can Build On

# Breaking Ground



*In August of 2020, a large fire destroyed a good portion of Metro Auto Recyclers' facility at 2155 W Lincolnway in Valparaiso.*

## An Extremely Aggressive Schedule For This Fire Restoration Project

**O**n the evening of August 18, 2020, a large fire destroyed a good portion of Metro Auto Recyclers' facility at 2155 W Lincolnway in Valparaiso. Firefighters from Washington Township, South Haven, Boone Grove, Liberty Township, Union Township, and Morgan Township assisted Valpo with multiple tankers. On arrival, crews dealt with heavy smoke and flames that resulted in extensive damage to the company's offices and part of its warehouse.

Owner Steve Dykstra contacted Metro's insurance company, which obtained estimates from various contractors to begin the extensive reconstruction process.

"Each contractor had items they would do and items they would not.

After a few instances of 'who is handling this?' we asked our insurance company if we could get a quote from an all-inclusive contractor," says John Leegwater, Operations Manager of Metro Auto Recyclers. "They were hesitant at first, but after our meeting with Hamstra's Project Manager, Kevin VanderMolen, and his confident answers of, 'Yes, we will take care of that,' and 'Yes we can meet that goal,' the job was awarded to Hamstra Group.

"The insurance company set a very aggressive three-month goal for completion," notes VanderMolen. "Despite days of snow and sleet, we managed to meet the scheduled completion date—thanks to the teamwork of all our trades, especially our plumbing, mechanical, electrical and carpentry partners."

*continued on page 4*







## Test Your Knowledge

1. Which city hosted the first Olympic Games of the modern era in 1896?
2. In which British city would find the Serpentine Gallery?
3. How many sides does a heptadecagon have?
4. What does the last name “Singh” mean when translated into English?
5. In which century was William Shakespeare born?
6. What is the square root of 1,521?
7. The Mariana Trench, the deepest location on Earth, lies within which ocean?
8. What is the Roman numeral DLXVII?
9. Brelau Tumbler, Saxon Monk, and Jacobin are all types of what?
10. Genuphobia is the fear of what part of the body?
11. Ichthyology is the study of what?
12. After how many years would you celebrate an emerald wedding anniversary?

*1. Athens; 2. London; 3. 17; 4. Lion; 5. 16th Century; 6. 39; 7. The Pacific Ocean; 8. 567; 9. Pigeons; 10. The knees; 11. Fish; 12. 55 Years*

—BuzzFeed

# Minimize Workplace Stress With These Four Techniques

Work can be stressful, and too much stress can have a negative impact on your physical and mental health as well as your career. The BioSpace website recommends these tactics for keeping stress under control before it cripples you:

- **Practice meditation.** You don’t need an elaborate ritual. Just spend a few minutes every day clearing your mind, focusing on your breathing, and letting your thoughts flow without focusing on any one thing. Meditation can ease depression, high blood pressure, and other side effects of stress.
- **Adjust your work/life balance.** Don’t let your job become your whole life. Be sure to take the time off you’re entitled to so you can relax and refresh. Leave work behind at the end of the day and focus on your family and friends. No matter how busy you are, devote some time to enjoying life without worrying about what’s happening at the office.
- **Get organized.** Stress can result from not managing your time effectively. Set priorities so you know where to focus your energy for the best results. Create a filing/storage system so you don’t have to waste time and increase your stress looking for important items. Establish some personal rituals for the day—meditation and a cup of tea in the morning, for example, deep breathing in the afternoon and don’t forget to get up and stretch your legs throughout the day.
- **Ask for help.** Don’t try to do everything yourself. Be honest about your strengths and gaps, and don’t be afraid to ask for assistance when you need it—it’s better than making a mistake because you weren’t willing to reach out. On a personal level, don’t try to handle your stress on your own. A therapist or life coach can offer tips and techniques for managing problems effectively, freeing you up to focus on what you want.

*“People don’t buy what you do. They buy why you do it.”*

—Simon Sinek

## Not So Dumb After All

A young boy enters a barber shop, and the barber whispers to his customer, “This is the dumbest kid in the world. Watch while I show you.”

The barber puts a dollar bill in one hand and two quarters in the other, then calls the boy over and asks, “Which do you want, son?”

The boy takes the quarters and leaves.

“What did I tell you?” said the barber. “That kid never learns!”

Later, the customer sees the same young boy coming out of an ice cream parlor. “Hey, son! May I ask you a question? Why did you take the quarters instead of the dollar bill?”

The boy licks his cone and replies: “Because the day I take the dollar, the game is over!”





# Finding Your Sweet Spot

Some people know exactly what they want to do with their lives at an early age. Not author, journalist and motivational speaker, Rebecca Stephens.

The first British woman to summit Mount Everest came to mountaineering in her late 20s, after graduate school and years of working as a journalist.

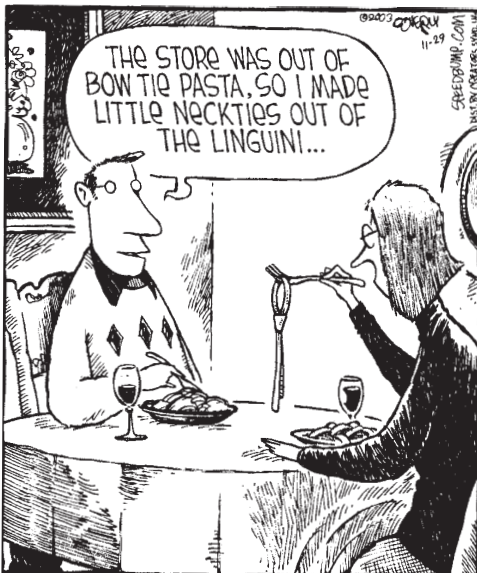
A magazine assigned her to cover an expedition to the Himalayas. There she realized that her true goal in life was to climb to the peak of the highest mountain in the world. So she quit her job and spent years working to fund a climbing expedition. The fear of dedicating herself to such a goal without a job, during a recession, and with a mortgage to pay was daunting, but she didn't let it stop her from pursuing her dream.

Since reaching the peak in 1993, Stephens has gone on to summit the "Seven Sisters," the highest peaks on every continent. Her advice to people still looking for their calling?

"Don't panic. It's okay to explore. It's okay to try different things," she tells the *Insider* website. "It's a question of finding the sweet spot. But quite often if you follow what it is that really fulfills and interests you, the rest falls into place."

**SPEED BUMP**

**Dave Coverly**



# Manage Your Younger Workforce With Care

Today's youngest workers are smart and energetic, but often they have some rough edges that need to be softened. If you're in charge of one or more twentysomethings, follow this advice from the Society for Human Resource Management:

- **Let them fail.** They'll mess up because they don't have experience, but don't lose your temper. Let them know that failure happens and it's not necessarily fatal, as long as they're making a good-faith effort—and as long as they learn from it.
- **Be patient.** Remind yourself that your young workers are just starting out. They don't have the knowledge or experience that you've gained over the years. Keep your expectations realistic, and avoid discouraging them as they're learning.
- **Tailor your training.** Don't try to cram every worker into the same training program, especially younger ones. Assess their experience level. Get a good idea of what they know, and design training that fills in their gaps and reinforces their skills.
- **Take advantage of their strengths.** Find out what they're good at, and start off with assignments that use their talents effectively. They'll gain confidence, you'll look good, and together you can work on expanding their skills so they can advance.
- **Give lots of feedback.** Veteran employees usually know when they're doing a good job and where they need help. Younger employees may not. Keep an eye on them and give them lots of feedback, both positive when they perform well and constructive where they need improvement. When they know you'll hold them accountable, they'll try harder to succeed.
- **Ask for their opinions.** From time to time, ask young employees if your approach to training and management is working for them. They may spot areas you could pay more attention to, or things they want to learn that you've neglected. They'll improve and will realize that you trust their point of view.

*"What I do for my work is exactly what I would do if nobody paid me."*

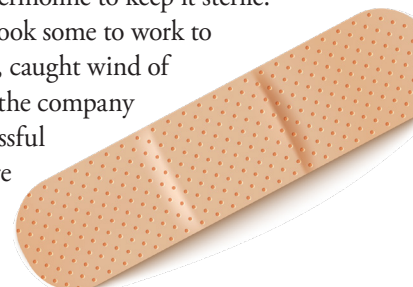
—Gretchen Rubin

# Putting A Band-Aid On It

The adhesive bandage is commonplace in medicine cabinets and first-aid kits around the world.

It was invented in 1921 by Earle Dickson, an employee of Johnson & Johnson. Dickson was concerned for his wife Josephine, who suffered frequent cuts and burns in the kitchen. They originally tried to wrap Josephine's wounds in gauze and adhesive tape, but the dressing usually fell off in a short time. Dickson tried placing some gauze in the center of a piece of tape, and covering the whole thing with crinoline to keep it sterile.

The invention worked so well for his wife that Dickson took some to work to show to his colleagues. The company owner, James Johnson, caught wind of the idea, asked for a demonstration, and ultimately decided the company should manufacture them. Dickson went on to have a successful career at Johnson & Johnson, becoming vice president before his retirement in 1957.





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— Kevin VanderMolen  
Project Manager



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## Fire Restoration Project...

*continued from page 1*

"The Hamstra Group made the process very easy for me as the facility manager," says Leegwater. "I dealt with Superintendent Ryan Klemp and Kevin VanderMolen on everything. There was no second guessing who to consult with," he added. "We are very appreciative of the job that was done, the courtesy of all employees that were on site, and especially Kevin and Ryan who always made time to ensure what we wanted was done."