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1-800-414-4661 P.O. Box 3547 Johnson City, TN 37602 www.GeneralShale.com







#### MESSAGE

FROM CHARLES SMITH, PRESIDENT AND CEO

As we approach the end of the third quarter of 2014, I want to share with you that our sales for the year have shown definite improvement over 2013. However, our sales are below our budget's expectation levels. My goal is to meet or exceed our budget expectations each year. Thus, much of our effort for the remainder of the year will be to identify ways to reduce our costs while building an even stronger platform for growth for our future. Here is where you can help.

I believe that we can achieve greater sales while lowering our costs by focusing on continuous improvement in our plants, our administrative functions and our sales organization. Because our employees are scattered across North America, I know that identifying ways to continuously improve cannot rest on the shoulders of our senior management alone.

I am convinced that if we are to build General Shale to its true potential there must be a consistent effort to drive strong performance at every location. No matter where you work, your perspective on ways to drive down costs while making smart investments can be the important difference that we all are looking to achieve.

We have achieved much together already to retool General Shale. I pledge to do my part to meet or exceed our expectations. I need your help by sharing your own insights that can make your location more efficient while growing our potential for sales.

I ask that you start today. Share your insights with your local management team or through our SUCCESS PROFILE Program. Together, we can achieve much.

Thanks to all for your hard work. Let's build an even better General Shale.

Charles Smith

# Impressions

THE GENERAL SHALE EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

# **WE STILL NEED YOUR** PROFILE IDE

It's been nearly two years since Wienerberger implemented the Success Profile initiatives companywide. These are seven areas in which employees submit valuable input to help the company with its goal of continuous improvement. We'd like to highlight one valuable idea about the Success Profile Initiative itself. It comes from the High Touch Team.

"In the interest of sustaining momentum for the entire Success Profile, one of our members suggested a reminder message would be beneficial," says Scott Clark, District Sales Manager in Charlotte. "Every employee should be mindful of its importance, but it may lose prominence with the pace of summer business."

This is a great idea. So at this time we'd like to remind you about the importance of helpful suggestions from each of these areas.

In each of the seven areas there have been ideas implemented or considered that have been insightful and valuable. Mark Kinser says the company welcomes all ideas. "I can't say enough that no idea is a bad idea. We may not be able to implement them all due to cost or timing, but we consider all of them," Kinser says.

There are several ways to go about making a Success Profile suggestion. You can log on to the General Shale website and submit an idea through the employee communications section (password is SUCCESS). Or drop a suggestion in the suggestion box located at all General Shale locations by using a page from the pocket guide or a page from the booklets located near the suggestion boxes.

**PROFESSIONALS** 

Hearing from all employees about ways the company can improve is important to the success of General Shale.

LEADER IN ENERGY

**EFFICIENT TECHNOLOGY** 

If you are a new employee and are not familiar with the Success Profile Initiative, don't be afraid to ask your direct supervisor for more information.

**BUILDING WITH A** 

**CLEAR CONSCIENCE** 













# INTERNAL APP GETTING RAVE REVIEWS FROM SALES FORCE

The new internal iPad app for the General Shale sales force is getting great reviews from employees who have had the chance to use it. The app, which is secure and can be accessed only through designated iPads with passwords, is a valuable resource to enhance the customer and sales rep experience.

The app will be introduced in phases. The first phase will be useful to the outside sales reps as it replaces the use of Dropbox, but Rita Catron, General Shale's IT Director, says it's much more advanced.

"In the past, sales reps had to email or call the plants to tell them what they needed.

Now it will be easier to get the information needed and also enhance the customer experience," explains Catron. "Outside sales reps can show the customer the material. But as part of phase 2 they will then add it to the shopping cart and send it directly to SAP, where the inside sales rep will complete the order right from the iPad."

Here are just a few of the reviews from General Shale employees.

#### JOANNA GLOVER - OUTSIDE SALES REPRESENTATIVE

"This app has been a great tool and a time saver as well. I am very excited about the order entry addition to the app, and I anticipate it helping in time management too."

#### PAUL ELDER - SALES REPRESENTATIVE

"The new app, with its easy-to-use order entry system, will be a huge time saver for both the outside sales reps in the field and for the CSR/inside salespeople. This time savings will give us all greater opportunities to reach new customers, as well as time to service our existing customers more effectively."

#### : GREG SPRY – OUTSIDE SALES REPRESENTATIVE

"I think the new sales app will be very beneficial to the sales team and will also help the inside sales team by not having to enter so many orders."

#### **BENEFITS OF THE NEW APP:**

- Simplifies the order entry process
- Revolutionizes sales order processes
- Efficient way to communicate sales orders
- Flexible and effective
- Unlimited potential
- Next phase will offer a more visual experience for customers

# EMAIL ADDRESSES NE DE D

The General Shale marketing team has implemented a strategy of sending external e-blasts to more than 1,000 thin brick customers with great success. The monthly e-blasts have been sent to both prior customers and those who have expressed interest in the product, says General Shale Marketing Communications Specialist Luke Guinn.

Guinn says it's an affordable and measurable way to communicate to customers. Each e-blast can be tracked to see how many were delivered, opened and read.

A great example of a successful e-blast came after the very first one in January, which was sent to the current Thin Veneers customers informing them of the benefits of using thin brick. It also highlighted two new thin brick color options. After the blast, a long-time customer immediately responded, asking how to purchase the new products for an upcoming job.

For that e-blast in particular, these are the measurable stats:

- E-mails Opened: 718
- Total Clicks (e-mail links): 141
- Unsubscribes: 22
- Delivery Rate: 91%
- Open Rate: 40%

While these numbers may seem unimpressive to an average person, those who understand typical e-blast results know these are great numbers. According to Mail Chimp, a popular e-blast service, these are the average

rates for a construction-based e-blast in the industry:

- Open Rate: 22.67%
- Total Clicks: 2.40%

As you can see, the General Shale e-blast open rate is nearly twice the national average for construction.

Thus far, the topic of the emails has focused on the Thin Brick line, but plans are to soon expand the marketing effort to several other products.

Email addresses are being gathered from former customers as well as walk-ins to retail showrooms.

"We are setting up databasecollecting customer emails," says Guinn. "We're asking sales representatives to organize their email contacts and submit them to marketing. We plan on sorting them according to their potential interests and sending them only information that we think they'd be interested in."

The topics of future e-blasts are:

- Money-Saving Opportunities
- New Products-Commercial
- New Products-Renovation
- New Products-Outdoor Living
- New Services

• New Literature

Eventually the General Shale website will also have an application to collect email addresses of those who submit their information.

# THIRD EDITION OF GREAT HORTH AMERICAN AVAILABLE SOON

Some great examples of how brick is being used can be found inside the latest edition of General Shale's exclusive Great North American Homes magazine that will be available this fall in all General Shale retail locations.

The award-winning coffee table-style magazine is not only a testament of how General Shale products are being used across North America indoors and out, but it's also a great sourcebook for construction and decorating ideas.

This edition of Great North American Homes features the 2014 home of the year as well as other magnificent homes with interesting and unique uses of brick and stone. Read first-hand how the homeowners chose their particular style of brick to build their dream dwelling.

The magazine offers large, colorful photographs of the homes and features many products like the Alfresco Kitchen series, the newest addition to General Shale's Outdoor Living collection.

Also in the Great North American Homes magazine, you'll find great resources on the best tools to use in your outdoor kitchen and delicious recipes to try at home.

The magazine also features interviews with Johnny Hagerman, the artist behind General Shale's Masonart®, an overview of General Shale's social media effort, an article about the latest trends in outdoor living, a preview of the new "How Brick is Made" video and an interview with CEO Charles E. Smith.

2

# NEW TO THE SHARESITE... WE LOOME ARRISCRAFT\*\*

Arriscraft is an important product in General Shale's mission to offer the most complete line of building materials available.

There is plenty of collateral material available for order from Arriscraft on the General Shale sharesite including:

- Brochures of all products, including the newest U.S. Residential Building Stone. Others include Arriscraft's commercial offerings of Renaissance<sup>®</sup>, Adair<sup>®</sup> and Thin-Clad.
- Complete selection of Building Stone photo samples. They
  are available individually in packs of 25, or the complete set is
  also available in a binder; one binder for the Cambridge product
  offering, and one for the Fort Valley product offering.
- The new Architectural binder is available in paper or eBinder format. The entire full-bed and thin-clad selection are also available in one binder.

### EMPLOYEE PROMOTIONS & NEW HIRES

General Shale would like to extend a welcome to our newest team members and congratulate and recognize our existing employees for their hard work and recent promotions.



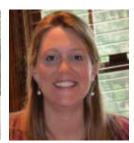
AIMEE CENTANNI, CHATTANOOGA, TN Sales Representative, promoted from Madison ISR



BETH ANDERSON, CHARLOTTE, NC Sales Representative



BRENT SHEPHERD, ARRISCRAFT Sales Representative



CARSON GREIF, CHARLOTTE, NC Sales Representative



CHARLIE WATTS, ATKINS, VA Plant Manager



DOUG STANLEY, CORPORATE OFFICE Credit Manager



DUSTIN DEAKINS, SPRING CITY, TN Assistant Plant Manager, promoted from Roanoke Supervisor



GENE GUETZOW, MIDWEST Arriscraft Sales Representative



JENNIFER GORE, SPRING CITY, TN Coordinator



LEE WENNERSTROM, MOORESVILLE, IN Supervisor



LEE ANN BIGGERS, DENVER, CO Sales Representative



LOUIE BOLD, PINEY FLATS, TN Assistant Plant Manager, promoted from Piney Flats Supervisor



MARTA ZONNEVELD, ARRISCRAFT Marketing Manager, promoted from Marketing Coordinator



CORPORATE OFFICE A/P Supervisor



STEPHANIE BULLOCK, PINEY FLATS, TN Inside Sales Manager, promoted from Inside Sales Rep. / Tri-Cities



STEVE MATLOCK, SPRING CITY, TN Supervisor



At General Shale, we are proud to be constantly innovating and coming up with new products to offer our customers.

#### **NEW COLORS FROM ARRISCRAFT**

Arriscraft has released two bright, new colors as part of Shadow Stone<sup>®</sup> Building Stone and Contemporary Brick. The colors are Avalanche and Blizzard.

The new colors allow homebuilders and architects to create crisp, remarkably modern exteriors. The rugged and ledged Avalanche Shadow Stone® provides designers a fresh option for contemporary designs in both residential and commercial applications. Arriscraft developed the coordinating Blizzard color in Contemporary Brick as an ideal complement, allowing designers to continue a lighter color scheme throughout a project.

If you have any questions about Blizzard Contemporary Brick or Avalanche Shadow Stone®, please contact Glen Frankling, Vice President of Sales & Distribution - Arriscraft. For pricing information, please contact your Regional or District Sales Manager.









# CLEVELAND COUNTY PLANT SPOTLIGHT

A new, recurring feature of the General Shale newsletter will spotlight one of the company's plants each quarter. For the first installment, we'll take a look at the Cleveland County Plant (CCP) in Grover, N.C.

The plant was acquired as part of the purchase of Cunningham Brick Company in late 2013. The family-owned company became available when the Cunninghams decided to retire from the business after more than a century. It was an important purchase for General Shale because the Cunningham plant adds unique products and exclusive colors, sizes and textures to the General Shale product line in the architectural and commercial markets.

The CCP is known for the light-colored bricks it produces, Cascade White being the most popular. The CCP produces bricks using a local source of kaolin, a white clay that is often used to make china. The light-colored brick that is made from kaolin is popular with commercial builders and in architectural design.

The brick made at the CCP has a unique rockface texture that allows architects to change from a traditional brick texture to a chiseled stone texture without changing body color. It is also the same fired-clay body, so any expansion and contraction movement will be the same in the brick courses despite the texture.

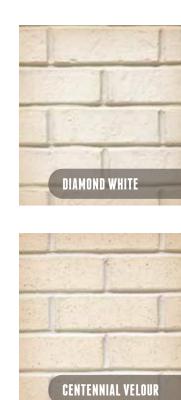
Some high-profile projects that have used bricks produced at the CCP include the Raleigh Convention Center and the Human Resources Building at Fort Knox. But the Barclay Tower project in New York City may be best known. This project, developed by Donald Trump, is 56 stories of Silverstone brick and it is currently the 52nd-tallest building in New York City.

The CCP manufactures brick in an assortment of colors and eight sizes to offer an architect the freedom to create interesting projects with a variety of sizes, textures and colors.

The Cleveland County Plant is certified by Bishop Labs at Clemson University for recycled content, which is a result of the United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design program, or LEED. This is a national building program designed to encourage design focused on lowering energy consumption, increasing recycled content and lowering construction's impact on our environment. The Cleveland County Plant was the first plant in the U.S. to receive this certification and allows architects to design with eco-friendly products without spending time investigating each building product themselves.









TAUPE GRAY VELOUR



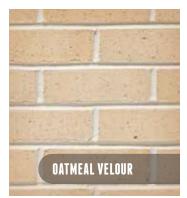




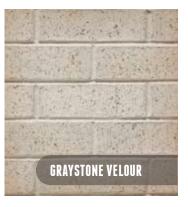






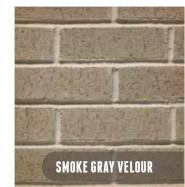




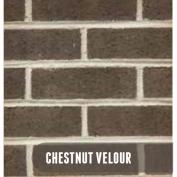












# JOHNSON CITY CARDINALS' HISTORY & HEROES NIGHT WITH GENERAL SHALE



Any great community is built one brick at a time, and General Shale teamed up with the minor league baseball team in Johnson City to honor some of the most influential contributors to the Johnson City community, where General Shale is headquartered.

At the Johnson City Cardinals' History and Heroes Night on Aug. 7th nine city residents were recognized for their substantial effort to improve the community. Each was given a custom award sculpture carved from General Shale brick and was recognized by the announcer at the game.

"Every person, if you look at them, their whole life has been dedicated to giving back to the community," said Dawn Henning, the Director of Marketing and Retail Sales at General Shale. "There are a lot of people who are dedicating their entire lives to making our city great and wonderful, and it's only right to recognize those people who dedicated their whole lives to doing that."



The heroes were:

**RAB SUMMERS**—Chairman of the Board and CEO of Summers-Taylor, the largest heavy and highway construction company in the Northeast Tennessee-Southwest Virginia region, which brought cutting-edge paving technology to the area with its offering of porous asphalt.

**MITCH COX**—Founded in Johnson City in 1979, Mitch Cox Companies is a full-service real estate solutions company offering development, architectural, construction, brokerage and commercial property management services. On nearly every street corner in our city, you will find a Mitch Cox creation.

**GUY WILSON, JR.**—Guy inherited his family-owned Wilson Pharmacy, which was founded in 1936, and over the decades of his career, leveraged his roots into a regional powerhouse in medical and pharmacy services that reaches across our state through several companies, employing nearly 200 people.

**VALDA JONES**—Along with her husband, Tim, Valda has played a major role in the revitalization of downtown Johnson City. Valda recently opened Paxton Place apartment complex at the corner of South Roan St. and State of Franklin Road. That project represents a \$2 million investment in downtown.

**REV. LESTER LATTANY**—Lester serves as President and CEO of the United Way of Washington County, Tenn., which supports 17 agencies providing aid and assistance to our area in times of need and disaster.

**MELISSA STEAGALL-JONES**—A Certified Public Accountant and a partner at Blackburn, Childers and Steagall, Melissa serves as the treasurer of our United Way and our Chamber of Commerce's Foundation. She is also a member of the board of directors of the Northeast State Community College Foundation.

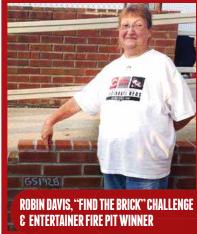
**DR. PAUL STANTON**–ETSU President Dr. Stanton was a key catalyst in the development and funding of the start-up of the Bill Gatton College of Pharmacy and led ETSU through an unprecedented period of growth. He continues to be very involved with the medical, educational and civic communities.

**LOTTIE RYANS**—Vice President and General Manager of CenturyLink's services in Western North Carolina and Tennessee, Lottie is also a member of our city's school board and past chair of the local Chamber; she is also on the board of the ETSU Foundation and Frontier Health's Work Force Board.

**GARY MABREY**—As President and CEO of the Johnson City/Jonesborough/ Washington County Chamber of Commerce, Gary is also heavily involved in our community, including the ETSU Foundation and Bill Gatton College of Pharmacy's Board of Visitors. He has been inducted in the ETSU College of Business and Technology Hall of Fame.

This was the first time for the History and Heroes Night, but it was such a hit, there are plans in the works to repeat the event next year.





## WIENERBERGER HABITAT HOUSE

By now you've heard of the Habitat for Humanity House built in Johnson City, Tenn., with donated material and labor from General Shale. It was a successful project that positively impacted everyone involved. But the reach of this partnership between brick manufacturer and charity does not end in Tennessee or even in North America.

In Kostinbrod, Bulgaria, the Kostinbrodski family was the beneficiary of a home built by Habitat Bulgaria with donated material and labor from General Shale's parent company, Wienerberger. Chad Wilkinson, General Shale's Plant Manager from Fort Valley, Ga., helped with the project.

Wilkinson and a group of 14 other volunteers—including Wienerberger employees from 11 countries—took part in the construction of the Kostinbrodskis' home this past July. And just like in the U.S., one of the main requirements for families is to have them also participate in actively building their future homes.

"It was part of a Wienerberger project called 'Ready 4 Excellence,' " says Wilkinson. "We all came from different backgrounds and it was just very inspiring for us all. These are people who could never afford this housing otherwise. It was such an eye-opening experience to see what poor conditions they were living in."

Previously, the Kostinbrodski family, in which the husband is a cable technician and the wife is a teacher, lived in a small two-room home. In the winter they all slept in the same room to conserve energy.

The Kostinbrodskis' new home is one of four being built in that area for low-income families. Wienerberger and its subsidiaries supported the project by providing ceramic blocks for the construction as well as financial and professional support, such as training in masonry.

Wilkinson says the home was a simple design but adequate for the family.

The construction process is a little different there than in the U.S. "They use a structural brick where the inside and outside are coated with stucco; here in the U.S., we use a facing brick on the exterior. Their structural brick is a very energy-efficient brick."

Both the blocks and clay tiles for the home were provided by Wienerberger.

Wienerberger and Habitat for Humanity are in the midst of a three-year partnership agreement to support families from Romania and Bulgaria involving financial support and expertise as well as professional support.

"Our collaboration with Habitat went even higher for this latest project," says Gerhard Koch, Head of Corporate Sustainability at Wienerberger. "While in the past two years we were able to donate in the form of building materials, today we are happy to contribute with expertise, knowledge and labor."

Just like the energy-efficient Endurance RS4 that was used for the Tennessee Habitat home, with the use of Wienerberger's energy-efficient building materials, the families in Bulgaria will save on utility costs each year as well.

"The implementation of the project in Kostinbrod is living proof that with the support of businesses and dozens of volunteers it is quite possible to build affordable houses such as these," said Mincho Benov, National Director of Habitat Bulgaria.

Wilkinson was actually in Bulgaria over the 4th of July holiday. Although the American holiday isn't recognized there, Wilkinson says there was still much celebration of independence.

"The family was so appreciative of what they were given—the freedom to live in their own home," he explains. "The little kids would come in and work with us, and they were so excited to see their new home. It was just great."











## TIPS FROM CIGNA



#### Look for the Cigna Care Designation to find top-performing\* doctors

Choosing the right doctor is a big decision – one where you might want:

- A doctor you can trust with your health but can also afford
- A doctor you can choose for reasons that matter to you, not just because the office is nearby
- A doctor who comes with a thumbs up from a trusted source.

That's why we're using what we know to create better decision-making tools that put your needs first – tools like the Cigna Care Designation on **myCigna.com**.

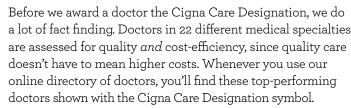
#### Quality care at a cost-effective price.

By knowing which doctors excel in providing quality, costeffective care, you can more confidently choose a doctor that's right for you. Compared to other doctors, these top-performers\*:

- Have treatment costs that average 10% less¹
- Are 14% less likely to have patients readmitted to the hospital after an initial hospitalization<sup>1</sup>
- Are more compliant with meeting national clinical standards for diabetes care and managing high cholesterol.<sup>1</sup>

**GOYOU**®

#### What's the Cigna Care Designation mean?



#### How does a doctor earn the Cigna Care Designation?

Here are the steps we take every year:

#### Quality comes first.

- We identify the primary and specialty care doctors in the Cigna network who have treated at least 30 Cigna customers in one of the 22 specialties.
- We check their education and board certifications, as well as if the quality of their care has earned recognition from within the medical industry.
- (The American College of Surgeons and the National Council for Quality Assurance are two well-respected organizations that have approved "quality" recognitions we consider.)





- We review claims information to see what doctors are charging for various treatments and services.
- We look at everything from office visits and lab tests to prescriptions and x-rays to determine if the treatment is cost-effective.
- We examine the results of the doctor's services and the costs related to those services.
- In the end, we want to see if this doctor consistently works to keep costs reasonable while delivering care that focuses on improving your health.

We study all of this information. We test it. Then those doctors with top results in both categories earn the Cigna Care Designation to give you an unbiased evaluation of quality and cost that you can trust.

#### Where do I find these doctors?

To find a top-performing\* doctor, go to **myCigna.com** and select "Find a Doctor or Service." Once you're on our online directory, look for the Cigna Care Designation symbol. ©



Need help choosing a hospital?

Look for the Centers of Excellence designation.

To help you choose an in-network hospital that's right for you, we review how successful a hospital is in treating 27 common conditions. Our ratings are based on actual patient outcomes, average lengths of stay and average costs we gather from outside sources. Hospitals that deliver better health outcomes at lower costs earn our top rating – the Cigna Centers of Excellence designation. See our hospital ratings on myCigna.com.



#### Primary care doctors and specialists included:

- Allergy/immunology
- Cardiology
- Cardiothoracic surgery
- Colon and rectal surgery
- Dermatology

- Ear, nose and throat
- Endocrinology
- Family practice
- Gastroenterology
- General surgery
- Internal medicine
- Hematology/
   oncology
- Nephrology
- · Itepinoio
- Neurology
- Neurosurgery
  - OB/GYN
  - Ophthalmology
- Orthopedics and surgery
- Pediatrics
- Pulmonology
- Rheumatology
- Urology

<sup>\*</sup>Top-performing doctors are those identified as having top results based upon Cigna's quality and cost-efficiency methodology.

1 — \*Cigna analysis of Cigna Managed Care and PPO claims processed between January 2011—December 2012 for the 22 specialties reviewed, July 2013.



The information provided here is intended to be general information on how you can get the most out of your health care benefits. Center of Excellence and Cigna Care Designation ratings reflect a partial assessment of quality and cost-efficiency and should not be the sole basis for decision-making (as such measures have a risk of error). Quality designations and cost-efficiency ratings are not a guarantee of the quality of care that will be provided to individual patients. Individuals are encouraged to consider all relevant factors and consult with their physician when selecting a health care professional or facility. Participating health care professionals and facilities are independent practitioners and are solely responsible for the treatment provided to their patients. They are not agents of Cigna.

All group health insurance plans and health benefit plans contain exclusions and limitations. For costs and complete details of coverage, see your plan documents.

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