



The Staffer Hall of Fame

Honoring Those Who Lived to Serve

by Clark McCann

Wahpeton, North Dakota (pop. 8,432) will be home to the world's first "Staffer Hall of Fame." Brainchild of deputy mayor Arnie Pinkerton, himself the former aide to fertilizer magnate C. P. Fricke, the museum will "celebrate the careers of underpaid, overworked staffers who labored in obscurity for the greater good, selfless men and women who always put the needs of others ahead of their own and were invariably rewarded by being passed over for promotion."

With the gala opening set for July 2006, the Hall of Fame is expected to revitalize the Wahpeton economy by drawing tourists from nearby Tewankon, Haupt, and Fargo. Construction is nearing completion in the central gallery of the town's abandoned sulfur mine. "I wanted the museum built below ground," Pinkerton says, "without windows, adequate lighting or proper ventilation. This unique design will reflect both the humility of these corporate heroes and the trying conditions in which they typically worked until retirement or death, usually the latter."

Nominees for the Hall of Fame are still trickling in from around the world, but the judges have settled on three outstanding candidates as the first laureates.

Shirley Hunsaker (1954-2004). Shirley disproved the medical myth that *no one ever died from lack of sleep*. After pulling 27 consecutive "all-nighters" to provide her CEO boss with briefing materials for a critical board meeting for which he was woefully unprepared, Shirley expired at her desk. Sadly, her boss didn't notice she was dead until she failed to respond to his repeated shouts to bring him his morning coffee. His irritation with Shirley's untimely end was quickly assuaged, however, when he discovered that she'd completed a 175-page briefing book that included a brilliant new plan to boost company profits. After pitching the plan to the board as his own, which they readily endorsed, her boss netted over \$16 million at year's end

in stock options and bonus pay. Though unable to attend Shirley's induction ceremony because of a yachting vacation in the Seychelles, her boss phoned in a tribute that will be inscribed on the urn containing her ashes. "She was a great gal—and made one hell of a cup of coffee."

Sam "jam-man" Gebrke (1963-2002), was famous for his uncanny ability to free any jammed piece of office equipment in seconds. He once fixed 11 printer, 16 stapler, and 18 copy machine jams in less than nine minutes. Rumor has it that he also rescued the inept CFO from a potentially lethal zipper jam in the executive washroom. Even more remarkable, Sam volunteered to be on call 24 hours a day and would sprint from his desk/residence in the basement to field every request, no matter how small, as a top priority. Although senior management acknowledged Sam's talent and team spirit, they concluded he was far too valuable in his menial role to promote. As a result Sam never earned more than \$12.50 per hour during his 17-year career, which ended tragically when he died in the freak explosion of an overheated fax machine.

Alan Leppke (1909-2005) was the legendary personal assistant to nine consecutive CEOs at the Alkemun Corporation. Contrary to the popular cliché that "No one on their death bed ever wished they'd spent more time at the office," Alan was putting in heroic hours from intensive care at the age of 96. Though it was clear to Alan and his doctors that his time had come, he asked to be kept on life support until he could put the finishing touches on the itinerary for his CEO's annual golfing vacation to Scotland. "Only Alan could have gotten that 8 a.m. Saturday tee time at St. Andrews," his boss gushed in his moving eulogy. As per his final request, Leppke's ashes were mixed with mulch and distributed evenly among the potted palms in the executive suite.