

PUBLISHER
Ann Wiest Kielinski

GENERAL MANAGER
W.M. "Woody" Kielinski

EDITORIAL

Editor-Matthew T. Patton mpatton@merion.com
Assistant Editor-Kerri Penno
Editorial Assistant-Kelly A. Montgomery
Editorial Consultants-Cornelia J. Ellner, MS, Mary Ann McLane, PhD, CLS(NCA), Linda D. Lemery, MBA, MT(ASCP)DLM, Diana R. DeHoyos, BS, MT(ASCP), Donna R. Kirven, BS
Web Content Coordinator-Jennifer Montone

ART & PRODUCTION

Vice President, Director of Creative Services-Susan Basile
Art Department Manager-Lisa Pinder
Design Director-Walt Saylor
Multimedia Director-Todd Gerber
Art Director-Marcos Bari
Graphic Artist-Brendan Echelmeier
Illustration Manager-Chris Wofford
Medical Illustrator-Jennifer Schoerke
Recruitment Ad Design Manager-Laura Ley
Recruitment & Web Ad QC Manager-Eleanor Kuchma
Calendar Ad Design Manager-Cheryl Drotar
Macintosh Technology Manager-Michael Galban

ADVERTISING

Director of Marketing Services-Christina Allmer
Production Manager-Carla Frehn

EVENTS

Public Relations Director-Maria Lowe

ADMINISTRATION

Vice President, Director of Human Resources-Jaci Nicely
Director of Information Systems-Ken Nicely
Director of Marketing-Kathleen Lawler
Circulation Manager-Maryann Kurkowsky
Subscriber Services Manager-John Graves
Billing Manager-Christine Marvel

RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING

Sales Director-David Gorgonzola
Group Manager-Christina Schmidt
Senior Account Executives-Steve Stepelevich, Ellen Hartz, Christine Egan, Mike DiMascio, Terri Klein, Mary Lisa Della Porta, Kara Nocek
Account Executives-Heather Ott, Tracy Tesfaye
Sales Associates-Kristen Ricci, Jody Sodano, April DeRose

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Sales Director-Amy Turnquist
Area Sales Manager-Erik Maroney
National Account Executive-Clark Celmayster
Senior Account Executives-Thomas Neely, Jeffrey Cieszkowski
Account Executive-Bernadette Poiesz

CALENDAR ADVERTISING

Sales Manager-Jaron Taaffe
Senior Account Executive-Chrissy Hudak

HOW TO REACH US:

Merion Publications, Inc.
Advance for Medical Laboratory Professionals
2900 Horizon Drive Box 61556
King of Prussia, PA 19406-0956
610-278-1400
www.advanceweb.com

For a FREE subscription: 800-355-1088

Looking for a Job? Call our Job Hotline: 800-355-6504

For information about a Product or

Sneak Peek: 800-355-6504

To order Article Reprints: 800-355-5627, ext. 1446

To place a calendar, display or recruitment ad, or to contact the editorial department: 800-355-5627



Workplace Safety: A Single Accident Alters Lives



BY MATTHEW T. PATTON

In the days ahead, families of the deceased miners employed by the International Coal Group in Sago, WV, will grapple for answers that may never come. They'll share one question, in particular, that will remain forever unanswered: Why?

I know, because I've been there.

It was 12:30 a.m., Aug. 20, 2002, when the phone rang. I sat straight up in bed; when the phone rings at that hour, it's usually never good. It was my sister, Jenny, and she was hysterical—screaming and crying twisted together with a hint of a few shrill, unintelligible words.

"Mickey's been in an accident," she finally managed to get out. Mickey's been in an accident. Five words now burned into my memory.

"What kind of an accident?" I asked. "A car accident? What? What happened?"

Now I had to struggle to compose myself.

She said she didn't know, but she was on the way to the hospital in Madisonville, KY. I told her to take her cell phone and call me as soon as she got there. I tried to get back to sleep, but I knew this had to be something much worse than a fender bender. I got out of bed and searched the Internet for Madisonville hospitals. I called the first one that came up.

Share Your Thoughts

■ Send your Letters to the Editor to mpatton@merion.com.

"I'm not sure, but I think my brother may be there," I said to the operator. She confirmed that he was and connected me to ICU, where a

nurse said my parents were both there. "If they are both there," I immediately thought to myself, "then he must be dead." My parents hadn't spoken since 1995.

Sure enough, Mom was so shaken that all she could muster was a whimper. Dad took the phone and simply told me to get to the airport as soon as possible.

"But he won't be here when you get here,"

he said. "It's a matter of minutes before he's gone." I fell out of the chair into a fetal position on the floor. I couldn't breathe. It was too much to comprehend.

Before the day was over, I was staring down at my hometown from Flight 329 ... numb and in a sleep-deprived daze.

When I arrived at my mom's house, I

“Yet another citation ... is a meaningless shred of paper when tragedy occurs.”

didn't bother to say hello. Her eyes were all but swollen shut from the tears. She seemed much smaller than I remembered as I held her in my arms and rocked her frail body back and forth.

A government report later recounted the details of that night. A "rib roll," (essentially a roof collapse) occurred in the developing underground belt slope of Warrior Coal LLC's Cardinal mine. My brother, a 29-year-old supply man with approximately 2 months total mining experience, was gathering tools and placing them in the material-hoisting car when he was struck and killed by a boulder in the resulting rock slide.

As you can imagine, news of the mine explosion and subsequent collapse in West Virginia really hit home. My brother was stolen away from us that night, and it has changed who I am and significantly impacted who I've become.

The common denominator in both of these mine accidents is that the mining companies were cited for numerous safety violations. Yet another citation for a mine that continues to accumulate ultimately unaddressed violations is a meaningless shred of paper when tragedy occurs.

Workplace safety—whether you're in a lab, an office or a coal mine—is a serious, potentially life-altering matter. ■

Matthew T. Patton is editor of advance. He can be reached at mpatton@merion.com.