



**WEEKS of July 24 – August 4, 2006 (Double Edition)**

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## INDUSTRY WATCH

### **Airgas --- (NYSE:ARG)**

- Airgas, a producer of welding products, [reports strong growth in sales and earnings in 2006.](#)

### **AK Steel --- (NYSE:AKS)**

- The Houston Chronicle reports that [AK Steel will be raising prices by 6%](#) starting August 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **DaimlerChrysler --- (NYSE:DCX)**

- [DaimlerChrysler reports doubled profits for 2nd quarter 2006.](#)

### **ESAB**

- A detailed article from the EveningSun discusses the [ESAB union strike](#) with quotes from both management and striking workers. ESAB has hired replacement workers, and according to local news station WGAL, [the two sides have still not reached a contract agreement.](#)

### **Ford --- (NYSE:F)**

- The New York Times reports the surprising news that [Ford plans to retire the Lincoln Town Car in 2008.](#) Although Ford plans to have a 2007 Lincoln Town Car, the company appears to be planning to end production of the Lincoln Town Car and possibly also the Ford Taurus. In related news, the Virginian-Pilot notes that [Ford is actively working with state officials to provide job placement assistance to 2,275 employees scheduled to be laid off in 2008, when Ford closes its Norfolk plant.](#)

### **General Motors/Nissan/Renault --- (NYSE:GM)**

- [Bloomberg.com analyzes the possibilities of the potential alliance between General Motors, Nissan and Renault.](#) Bloomberg notes that Carlos Ghosn, chief executive of Nissan and Renault, has a forceful leadership style that has done well for Nissan and Renault, but quotes many observers who are suspicious of the deal. Meanwhile, General Motors [posted a \\$3.2 billion loss in its second quarter.](#) The Houston Chronicle notes that the loss can be attributed to corporate restructuring and an employee buy-out plan.

### **Lincoln Electric --- (NASDAQ:LECO)**

- Company press reports note that [Lincoln Electric's profits jumped 33% in the second quarter of 2006.](#) Nonetheless, at least one analyst [downgraded Lincoln Electric to "hold"](#) over concerns that the company had posted earnings ahead of estimates.

### **Lockheed-Martin --- (NYSE:LMT)**

- According to the Washington Post, [Lockheed-Martin believes that increased foreign sales will compensate for declining domestic demand.](#)



### **Murex**

- ManufacturingTalk reports that [Murex, producer of the Saffire nozzle mix gas welding and cutting system, is celebrating 50 years of success.](#)

### **Rexam**

- According to Azom.com, Rexam, a leading consumer packaging company, [is opening a new factory in Poland.](#) Among the factory's new features: plastic welding.

### **Swift-Cor**

- The Wichita-Eagle reports that [Swift-Cor, an aircraft supplier, will be opening a new plant in the Wichita, Kansas area.](#) The news comes at a welcome time for the region, which faces [a potential sale](#) of local large employer [Raytheon Aircraft.](#)

### **Thermadyne --- (OTC:THMD.PK)**

- After much delay, Thermadyne has finally [announced its unaudited results for the first three months of 2006 and audited results for 2005.](#)

### **Tower Tech Systems --- (OTC BB:TWRT.OB)**

- According to a company press release, [innovative welding machines from Lincoln Electric have allowed Tower Tech Systems to double its annual production capacity](#) of structures used to support the growing wind power industry in the United States.

### **United Airlines --- (NasdaqGS:UAUA)**

- The Chicago Tribune reports on the turnaround of [United Airlines, who posted its first profit in six years for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2006.](#)

## **CAREER WATCH**

### **New Rail Brings Jobs to Orlando, Florida**

- The Orlando Sentinel reports on [plans for a \\$491 million light rail commuter project in the Orlando area.](#) Scheduled to open in 2009, the project should bring an increase in construction and welding jobs to the area.

### **Skilled Welders are Tough to Find in Cincinnati**

- The Cincinnati Enquirer notes that the United States [is facing a national shortage of workers, causing problems for firms, such as Enfarb,](#) a privately held company with annual sales approaching \$350 million, which is sitting on a nearly half-billion-dollar backlog of business over the next couple of years.

### **Calling All Ship-repair Workers**

- Faced with a shortage of skilled ship-repair workers, Hong Kong's Maritime Industry Council [launched a ship-repair welding training program.](#) The news, from a government press release, adds that a previous program was extremely successful.

### **Pennsylvania Officials Address Skilled Worker Shortage**

- [Mercer County government is offering free welding training for local businesses.](#) According to the county's local business journal, the workforce development program was developed to address the county's severe shortage of trained, certified welders.

### **Moms Turned Welders... and Other "Manly" Jobs Too**

- [A training program places single mothers in non-traditional jobs, such as welding,](#) according to the Billings Gazette. The CLIMB Wyoming program, an effort by the nonprofit Our Families Our Future group to train single mothers in such nontraditional jobs as construction, truck driving and welding, is helping women to earn livable wages and make it on their own.



## INNOVATION WATCH

### **"Heating Up" Automated Brazing and Soldering**

- [Induction Atmospheres introduced a new induction heating system for industrial brazing and soldering.](#) IA President Steve Skewes states in the company's press release, "This new brazing system will truly facilitate continuous flow manufacturing. With the AB-1, our customers can move their brazing process away from a centralized work area, directly into the manufacturing cell."

### **Army Employs Nanotechnology to Strengthen Body of Vehicles**

- The EETimes reports that the [U.S. Army plans to use nanotechnology to improve brazing/soldering methods used to create body armor on vehicles.](#) "Reactive multilayer joining" of silicon carbide and titanium is said to significantly improve existing soldering and brazing methods that would be used to attach armor to Army vehicles.

### **It Isn't Easy Being Green**

- Engineering Times reports on the challenges of [using lead-free soldering techniques in electronics equipment.](#)

### **Safety Innovation Moves to the Battlefield**

- [Welders create shields to protect the Humvees of the U.S. 101st Airborne Division,](#) according to the Leaf Chronicle.

### **Automated Welding Causing Production Woes**

- [Welding robots slow production at DaimlerChrysler plant,](#) reports the Rockford Register Star. A company vice president blamed software problems for frequent shutdowns at the auto plant.

### **Glass Bridge at Grand Canyon Plans to Offer Visitors a Bird's Eye View**

- [Steel welders are helping to create the first-ever cantilever-designed glass bridge over the Grand Canyon.](#) According to a company press release, the bridge will dangle 4,000 feet over the canyon and is scheduled for placement by mid-September.

## FINANCIAL WATCH

### **Surging Nickel Prices Cause Havoc for Chinese Stainless Steel Market**

- Reuters reports on [the surging price of nickel](#) is causing Chinese manufacturers to avoid stainless steel products and to use cheaper materials.

### **"Very Light Jets" to Become the New Air Taxi**

- Aviation experts expect the [FAA's approval of mini jets](#) to spur production in the aviation industry, reports CNN. The mini jets, designed for executives, can carry five to six passengers, are cheaper to operate than the executive jets now available.

### **Climbing Inflation and Higher Interest Rates Weakens Economy**

- [The U.S. economy slowed in the second quarter while inflation rose.](#) The Washington Post quotes economists who note that higher oil prices and a slowed housing market are slowing consumer spending.

## PEOPLE WATCH

### **Welder Helps Troubled Youth with Art**

- The Local News Daily reports on a [welder who uses art and education to help homeless and transitional youth.](#)

### **Welder Earns Cash in Ultra-Niche Market**

- Worcester Telegram reports on a [welder who stays cool while earning extra cash in an ultra-niche dunk tank](#) market.



### **Pro Cyclist Undertakes a New Kind of Journey to Success**

- The Jackson Hole Star Tribune covers a story about [Kirk Frameworks, which uses silver brazing to create customized bicycles for discriminating cyclists](#), giving a former professional bicyclist a market niche and world-class reputation.

### **Welding Finds a Home in West Indian Culture**

- Barbados' Nationnews.com explains how [West Indian immigrants use welding to achieve success in New York](#).

### **Fence Design a Niche for Welders**

- [Custom-made fence building isn't only a good business, it's also good art](#), reports the Sentinel.

### **Welder with Options**

- Newport Times reports on former Navy Seal whose [30 years welding has lead to freedom, success and job prospects](#).

## **SAFETY WATCH**

### **Bangladesh Ship-breaking a Risky Business**

- Monstersandcritics.com reports on [highly risky working conditions for ship-breakers and welders in Bangladesh](#). The article alleges that Bangladesh ship-breaking companies hire unskilled workers and do not provide safety equipment.

### **Business Back on Track after Fire**

- [A fire sparked by a welding torch destroys a section of a Jackson, Missouri family-owned truck equipment company](#). With no one hurt, the 23-year old business expects to reopen its doors within a few days while making repairs to the company's job shop, which could take three months, reports the Semissourian.

## **LEGAL WATCH**

### **Pending NLRB Rulings Could Limit Workers Union Eligibility**

- [Unions focused on the definitions of supervisor and employee](#). The Wolters-Kluwer group, specialists in human resource law, examines the legal cases and issues facing the National Labor Relations Board. The Board will soon rule on several cases that could limit workers eligibility to join a union under the NLRB Act.

## **AWS NEWS**

- 8/3/06 - [AWS AND RWMA Resistance Welding School Comes to Booming Southeast Auto Industry](#)
- 725/06 - [North American Manufacturing – A Look Into The Future; NAM president John Engler will kick off opening day of the 2006 FABTECH International & the AWS Welding Show with a keynote presentation](#).
- 7/24/06 - [Automotive Steel Welding Moves into Fast Lane at FABTECH International & the AWS Welding Show](#)

## **AWS IN THE PRESS**

- The Cincinnati Equirer reports on the [shortage of skilled welders](#) in a 400-employee stainless steel tank company that makes large stainless steel tanks for the brewing industry and other industrial uses.
- The Chicago Tribune reports on a new welding "boot camp" to fill [a need for welders in McHenry County in Chicago](#).



- The Sun reports on the importance of training welders post the 2002 Memorial Day I-40 bridge collapse in Webbers Falls, Oklahoma. The Eastern Oklahoma County Technology Center was chosen as the site for statewide certification testing for welders. Welders must pass the AWS D1.5 Bridge Test in order to qualify.
- The TownOnline reports on a sophomore studying metal fabrication who has been deemed the first vocational day student to have passed AWS' Shielded Metal Arc Welder Performance Qualification Test in the school's forty-year history.