

GREAT GRIZZLY TIMES



#24 APRIL 2017

North Central Industries

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



FIREWORKS PRODUCTION IN CHINA

Perceptions vs Reality

I am sure most fireworks dealers in the USA understand that China is the dominant producer of fireworks supplied to the U.S. With that being said, I am not sure that most dealers understand the true reality of the production landscape in China.

Simply, most fireworks are produced in Hunan and Jiangxi provinces. Guangxi Province, once a significant producer, has had a lot of factory closings and most production from there has been moved to the above named regions.

If you attended the NFA trade shows, you will believe that there must be a significant number of suppliers in China. You might even believe that the number is growing. The reality is that the China government is aggressively closing factories and requiring improvements and updates that many smaller suppliers are simply unable to afford. Therefore each year the number of factories producing for the export market is being reduced. The undoubtable fact is that it is going to affect the production capabilities going forward.

Behind the scenes we have been told by every supplier that getting enough factory workers is a problem in the rural areas of China. Many factories have been using seasonal workers from other provinces to keep up with demand. There are literally no new production workers coming into the fireworks industry from local labor. Younger workers are moving to bigger cities with higher wages and better working conditions.

Another obvious fact to the supply of goods from China is the government intervention

into the factory work schedule. Factories are closed several weeks each summer due to heat restrictions. Work stoppage for explosions, safety inspections, holidays, and governmental conferences continue to negatively affect the number of work days that factories can produce inventory.

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Corporate Office
1500 E. Washington St.
Muncie, IN 47305

Production Facility
2627 S. Walnut
Muncie, IN 47302

Phone 765-284-7122
800-800-2264

Fax 765-284-5788

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and other firework fans on
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Don't forget our website, where
you can check out videos and
descriptions of your favorite
products!

www.greatgrizzly.com

NEWS FROM KURT



CELEBRATE SAFELY MY FRIENDS!

Hello to all of my good friends and thank you for taking the time to read the semi-annual Great Grizzly Times newsletter. In an off-season that was jam-packed with challenges, changes, and future opportunities, the 2017 fireworks season is rapidly approaching and one thing is for sure, we are really excited! There is so much to talk about that it is hard to just choose one topic to cover, but I'm going to do my best to stay on course. While it is routine and generally fun for me to talk about the new products we've sourced and the new effects that are available, I am going to talk about something else that is new and shiny but is a little more large scale or big picture as opposed to something that might fade over time.

NCI has been a long-time, proud member of the American Pyrotechnics Association (APA). We travel to their annual conventions as well as the winter education conference whenever we are able. The association is made up of Importers,

Wholesalers, and Retailers from the consumer fireworks industry as well as members that produce and execute display fireworks shows all over the world. The APA also has exporters & regulatory members. Working together, the APA has been able to promote & protect fireworks sales & use in the US since its inception. Getting to the new & shiny part, myself and other members of the NCI staff have been a part of a committee that was formed in 2011 billed "Next Generation American Pyrotechnics" with the task of coming up with an initiative, or plan of action on something that would make a difference for the fireworks industry as well as fireworks users in a positive way. Like all things, this did not happen overnight. The committee went a few different directions at first but after a few years it was decided that we needed to focus on safety education, and we needed to start that education at an early age.

Once that decision was made, the newly formed American Pyrotechnics Safety & Education Foundation (APSEF) was formed. I was appointed to the Board of Directors to this foundation and it is my honor to serve on this organization to this day. Since formation, the APSEF has created curriculum kits, learning standards, & a series of short videos featuring Professor Sparkz for grades 4-12 that educators may use in the classroom to instill in young people an understanding of how consumer fireworks should be used appropriately, discourage the misuse of fireworks, and decrease the number of fireworks-related injuries in the U.S. The APSEF has also formed partnerships with key individuals & organizations to promote these materials. The work is done, the content is created, and now we are trying to get the word out about this tremendous resource. If you are in the fireworks industry then you will benefit from getting this information in front of local educators with the ultimate goal of educating children from a young age on the safe and proper use of fireworks.

Beyond that, the resources are also available for you to use directly to educate your customers by using FREE materials available on the APSEF website. I encourage you to take a few minutes and view the foundation website and think to yourself how you could help us to promote and get the word out in your community about Celebrating Safely!

Visit & Share: <http://www.celebratesafely.org/>



Best Wishes,

Kurt Comuzzie

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**2017 DEMO
SATURDAY, MAY 13
2PM CASH & CARRY, 7PM DINNER,
FIREWORKS AT DUSK**

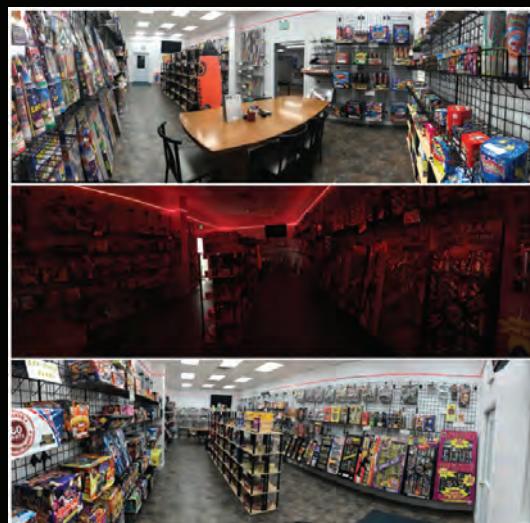
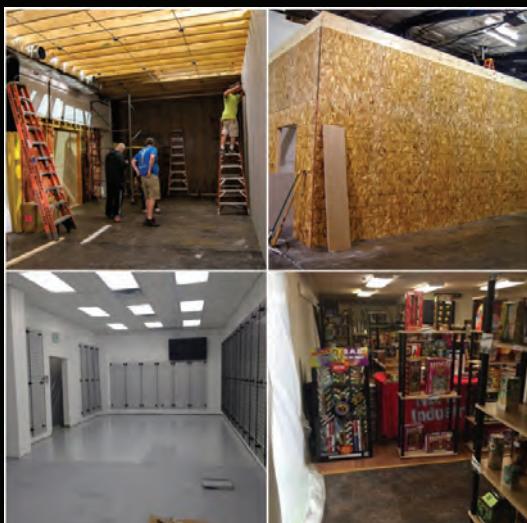


Credit Card Authorization Policy

North Central Industries, Inc. will be enforcing our credit card authorization policy in order to protect our customers as well as ourselves from fraudulent transactions. For in person transactions be prepared to show ID. Phone transactions will require a Credit Card Authorization Form as well as a copy of your ID. These can be faxed or emailed. If you have any questions prior to ordering please contact Kim Reynard, Office Manager, in order to prevent a delay in shipment.

OUR NEW SHOWROOM

Some of you may remember hearing about or even seeing our new wholesale showroom being built. Well now it's COMPLETE! New, improved and MUCH bigger than before! We are so excited to have it ready to go for the 2017 season. In the last few years we have pushed our total number of offered items to over 700. We are proud of our large selection and with that came our expansion. Take a look at the transformation below!



FEATURED PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

BANNERS & PENNANTS



A. #1435 - Vinyl "Fireworks" Banner (4'x30')

C. #1401 - Banner "Fireworks Sold Here" (7'x7')

B. #1410 - Plastic Pennant Strings (60')

D. #1398 - Vinyl "Fireworks" Banner (6'x60')

*Also available in 5'x20' Item # 1420

SHIRTS



A. #1426 - Brother's Polo

B. #1424 - Megabanger

BAGS



C. #1830 - Small Bag (11.5"x15")

D. #1840 - Large Bag (20"x27")

PROMO KIT



E. #1399 - Promotional Kit

**Includes several different posters, banners, decals, and other items.*

DISPLAY ITEMS



F. #1400 - Retractable Sign (80"x30.5")

G. #1415 - Inflatable Rocket (76"x30")

NEW PRODUCTS

GREAT GRIZZLY



A. #2914 - Predator XL Canister Shells

C. #2504 - Head Hunter 55 Shots

B. #2506 - Full Boar 42 Shots

D. #2484 - Thunderstruck 84 Shots

BROTHERS



A. #2803 - Rainbow in a Box 19 Shots

B. #2490 - Blackjack Candles 5 Shots

C. #2505 - Shockwave 36 Shots

D. #2501 - Suspended Animation 25 Shots

BRIGHT STAR



E. #1124 - 4th of July Skydive 12 Shots

F. #2818 - Rounders 25 Shots

G. #2817 - Double Whammy 9 Shots

H. #2815 - Sublime 30 Shots

INTRODUCTION

AJ BURNS

GENERAL MANAGER, GA



My name is A.J. Burns; I have gladly accepted the position of General Manager in the Georgia market. I will be operating full-time out of the Forest Park Superstore and future wholesale warehouse.

I have an extensive background in sales, most recently with the Coca-Cola Company for 10 rewarding years. My experiences as an Account Manager and District Manager will serve me well as I transition into my new role in Georgia. Over the past 6 years NCI and the Great Grizzly brand have assisted my own family in our endeavors to operate our brick and mortar fireworks location. Tri-State Fireworks is based out of Northern Kentucky and is 100% family owned and operated. Our family has sincerely enjoyed being customers of NCI and becoming friends with Richard, Kurt, and the entire NCI staff.

Through our relationship, I have had the opportunity to work in the Kentucky tent market for the last two seasons. Success in the temporary tent locations has led to my involvement with the Georgia Great Grizzly Superstore. I've spent the last six months working side by side with many dedicated NCI employees to revamp the Great Grizzly Fireworks Superstore. At 18,000 square feet, it is a true Pyro Enthusiast's DREAMLAND. In addition to my experience with NCI, I was able to spend the 2016 season working for a 1.3G display company in Cincinnati Ohio. Over half a million people watched the Labor Day show in person on the banks of the Ohio! I am excited to share my fireworks knowledge, experiences, and passion, in a brand new market.

I look forward to bringing the Reliability and Quality of Great Grizzly Fireworks to the Georgia market and continuing to serve our loyal customers and friends.

Sincerely,

A.J. Burns

Continued from page 1 FIREWORKS PRODUCTION IN CHINA: Perception vs Reality

Additionally, any weather related slowdowns are typical and unavoidable due to spring rains during the peak production times. Essentially, orders coming to the U.S. need to be completed by May 1 at the latest. Otherwise, they will not arrive in time to be used in our markets.

The perception continues that most people think that production and supply in China is robust and supply is plentiful. The reality is that we have avoided shortages to our market because droughts have cut the needs and demands of the U.S. market. A couple of reasonably good seasons in the U.S. could change this situation quickly. The reality and likelihood of product shortages is very real! It has been obvious to importers for some time that factories have a planned agenda to produce more expensive products first. Generic and lower priced goods have a lesser value to the production process. These goods are being produced last and with less urgency than more profitable items. Therefore it is extremely likely that cheaper less expensive product items will be the items most affected.

The perception is that fireworks production is immune to these market conditions. The reality is that it will happen. China's production simply is not reliable enough to avoid the inevitable.

Sincerely,

Richard B. Shields
President

OUR TIME AT THE APA CONFERENCE



As we finish up conventions for this off-season I had the pleasure of attending the APA Winter Educational Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. This was my first time being in Vegas and I was not disappointed. We were able to make it to the strip a couple times and get in on all of the action. Although I did not come away from the casinos money ahead, I did enjoy the sightseeing. One of the most interesting things that I came across was the Botanical Gardens at the Bellagio. The theme while we were in town was the Chinese New Year. The display contains over 20,000 flowers, silk-lanterns, a 10' tall rooster with 10,000 feathers, and LED fireworks. It was an amazing sight to see and couldn't be more appropriate for the fireworks industries leaders to be in town.

APA always puts on a great convention and this year was no different. Some of the highlights from this year's convention included Amy Carnevale's insight into President Trump's transition into office. Amy covered issues that have the potential to affect the fireworks industry such as EPA department cuts, regulatory freezes, and the executive action requiring 2 regulations to be removed for every 1 that is added. The biggest take away from her speech was that this is a time of change and nothing is off the table. Now is the time to get involved in your local government to improve laws and regulations.

Finally, one of the most interesting speakers of the week was Matt Heller. His topic was "How to recruit, train, and motivate staff". We discussed the difficulties in requiring staff on a temporary basis, motivating year-round staff, and training. The comment that had the biggest impact on me was the need for leaders to find ways to share their passion and motivation. It shouldn't be something that you have to create but something you have to share.

Sincerely,

Steven Irvin

Did you Know?



During the 4th of July, Americans light about 175 million pounds of fireworks, which is equivalent to about 100,000 lightning bolts.



On July 3, 1776, John Adams wrote his wife, Abigail, that he thought fireworks should be used to celebrate America's independence from England. Americans have been celebrating their independence with fireworks ever since.



While gunpowder has been a traditional part of fireworks, Disneyland uses compressed air, rather than gunpowder, to launch its fireworks.



The Philippines is home to the World Pyro Olympics, a yearly fireworks competition. Competitors from around the world gather to determine who can create the best fireworks display. (this is featured in the PASSFIRE documentary available on amazon!)



Thirty years ago in the U.S., a typical firework display lasted an hour. Modern shows rarely last more than 20 minutes.



INSURANCE

BILL

Are you covered?

NCI offers additional insured certificates
for product & premise!

Contact Nicole for more information.
nicoleb@greatgrizzly.com

Indiana Firework Distributors Association

The IFDA works to support your industry,
become a member today!
Contact Executive Director
Steve Graves (800)535-7477
www.friendoffireworks.com
www.facebook.com/friendoffireworks

Pyrotechnics Guild International

2017 Convention "Kaleidoscope of Fire"
Red River Valley Fair, West Fargo, ND
Aug 5-11th, 2017
For more information on PGI:
www.pgi.org

National Fireworks Association

NFA Expo, Erie, PA
Sept 5-9th, 2017
For information on NFA's Expo:
www.nationalfireworks.org

American Pyrotechnics Association (APA)

2017 Annual Meeting & Convention
San Diego, CA
Oct 2-6th, 2017
For more information call (301)907-8181 or
www.americanpyro.com

International Symposium on Fireworks

16th International Symposium on Fireworks
Omagari, Japan
April 25-29th, 2017
For information on the Symposium:
www.isfireworks.com

ROLL CALL!

YOUR NCI STAFF:

RICHARD B. SHIELDS

PRESIDENT/OWNER - 41ST SEASON

CHARLIE PHIPPS

WAREHOUSE MANAGER - 32ND SEASON

JACK MILLER

PRODUCTION MANAGER - 29TH SEASON

BRENDA SAID

ASST. PRODUCTION MANAGER - 20TH SEASON

SEAN ALEXANDER

ASST. WAREHOUSE MANAGER - 19TH SEASON

KURT COWGILL

OPERATIONS MANAGER - 11TH SEASON

KIM REYNARD

OFFICE MANAGER - 2ND SEASON

NICOLE BURNETT

CUSTOMER SERVICE REP. - 3RD SEASON

ANGELIC WOOD

CUSTOMER SERVICE REP. - 3RD SEASON

STEVEN IRVIN

NATIONAL SALES DIRECTOR - 1ST SEASON

JOSH MAHONEY

REGIONAL SALES DIRECTOR - 2ND SEASON

MIKE PYLES

REGIONAL SALES DIRECTOR - 1ST SEASON

A.J. BURNS

GENERAL MANAGER, GA DIV. - 1ST SEASON

FREDDIE CHEN

CHINA AGENT - 12TH SEASON