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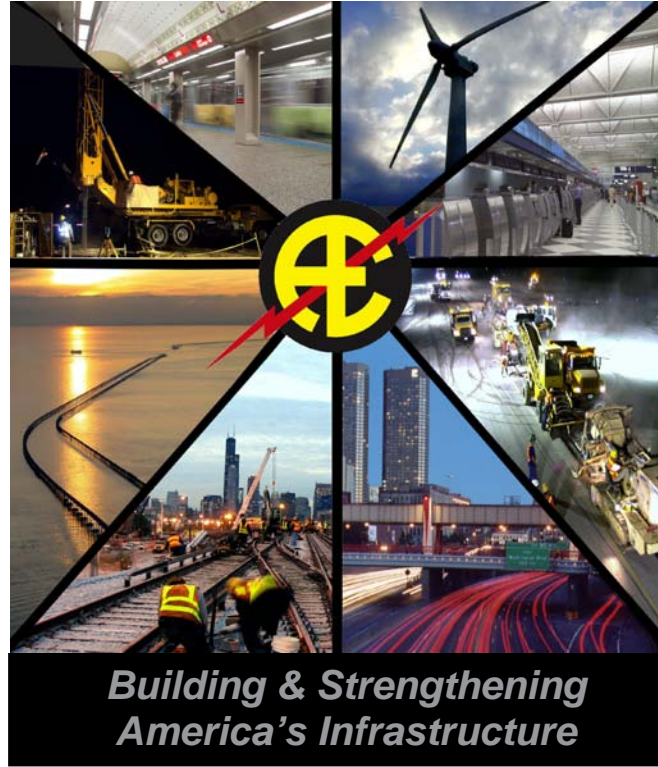
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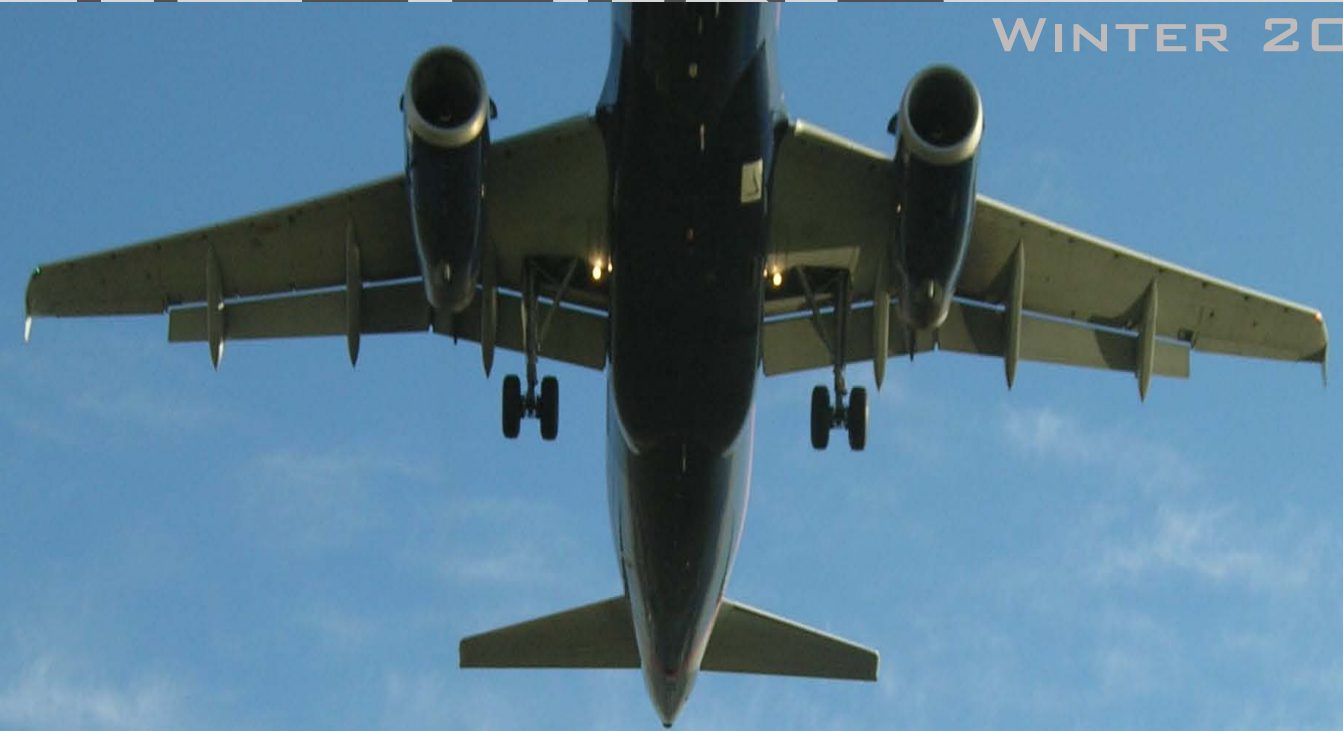
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# ALDRIDGE ELECTRIC'S PIPELINE

WINTER 2008



2007: A YEAR IN REVIEW  
SAFETY IN THE FOREFRONT  
FLEET'S ANNUAL TURKEY FRY  
ALDRIDGE WALKS FOR JDRF  
TRENCH RESCUE TRAINING

## From the desk of Ken Aldridge

October was “safety month” here at Aldridge, the time for fall meetings. It is an opportunity for me to talk to all 600 employees in a series of 7 safety breakfasts that we host every spring and fall. From Chicago to Wausau to Syracuse, NY, we meet for an early breakfast and *Update, Celebrate, and Collaborate*.

We “*update*” the employees on what has been happening over the past year, major incidents, accidents, new procedures in hazard analysis and prevention. A work overview is presented of major projects under construction and in our backlog .

We “*celebrate*” our safety accomplishments, reviewing the hard work undertaken to make the workplace safer, new tools implemented and the improvements in our benchmarks. Our OSHA rating is down to .39. Our workers compensation experience modification factor (MOD) is down to .71. These are results we are all proud of.

We “*collaborate*” on how we are going to “raise the bar”. We strive to set the standard in safety for the construction industry, and this requires continuous improvement in jobsite safety.

In this issue of the Pipeline you will read about several of these new initiatives, such as the Daily Task Analysis and Method of Procedure (MOP). We also worked with the Chicago fire Department in hosting a trench rescue training program at O’Hare Airport.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue. Wishing you a safe and happy 2008,

- Ken Aldridge



## 2007: Looking back, looking forward, looking good!



The year 2007 has been a great one and a green one, as in wind power. It has seen Aldridge Electric build strategic partnerships nationally while also taking one of its most important local business relationships to a new height. It’s been a year of opening sidewalks and shortening runways. It’s been a year of growth and, well, more growth!

Wind power is a short-list priority for the U.S. government and the power industry, which seeks to generate 20 percent of its total energy from green sources. Not surprisingly, wind power is also a target market for Aldridge. In 2007, the Power Division completed work on the Camp Grove Wind Farm near Peoria, Ill. Aldridge made it possible for 100 wind turbines to deliver 150 megawatts of

power to a transmission grid, providing enough juice for 60,000 homes. This involved constructing a 138kv inter-connection switchyard and a 34.5/138kv step-up substation.

Our nation’s growing demand for more and greener power means vast miles of transmission line development. As one of the nation’s leading drill teams for this work, the Aldridge Drilling Division has been in vigorous growth mode, adding personnel and equipment to meet increasing demand for its unique services. As division manager Ed Kutschke explains, “Our specialized equipment, highly skilled labor force, and work load capacity make Aldridge an obvious choice for the challenging projects with most rigorous schedules.” Aldridge has a reputation for taking on the toughest terrains; where the grades are hilly, the rocks are stubborn, and the winters are cold.



But the Drilling Division can also handle the delicate jobs, those that require tiptoeing through unspoiled lands with sensitive ecosystems. Aldridge’s clearing services must meet the demands of nature as well as those of the customer.

“When you dig holes, you have to take away what you dig out. You can’t just leave it there,” says Ed. “You have to preserve and protect whatever landscape you go into. If you’re running transmission line through a wetland, you may have to worry about a certain native bird that might be having its mating season.”

When called for, the matting services provided by this division lay down 20-foot-wide, two-ton, hard-wood mats ahead of its path upon initial entry into natural environments. Each mile requires 1000 of these mats. It’s a formidable undertaking, but worthwhile, as it prevents damage to the terrain and keeps vehicles from getting stuck.





The Highway Division also has its share of challenging projects, but in a more urban setting. In 2007, the City of Chicago named Aldridge the general contractor for the Wabash Avenue renovation in the Loop. This massive capital improvement entails installing new streetscape lighting, refurbishing the support structure for the elevated trains, and replacing all vaulted sidewalks. Opening sidewalks along Wabash between Wacker and Congress requires diverting and managing the flow of heavy pedestrian traffic, making sure that customers can still access all the stores in the area, and working around the “L” track structures that rumble right over Wabash. Ed, who also manages the Highway Division, says that Aldridge has leveraged its formidable project management brainpower to become the general contractor on a number of big projects involving major electrical work.

Away from Chicago streets, the Highway Division is also a major player in ISTHA’s Open Road Tolling project. Aldridge is converting toll plazas to work with the I-Pass Open Road system. Part of this work includes installing fare collection and violation enforcement system that utilizes a fiber optic network for data transmission.

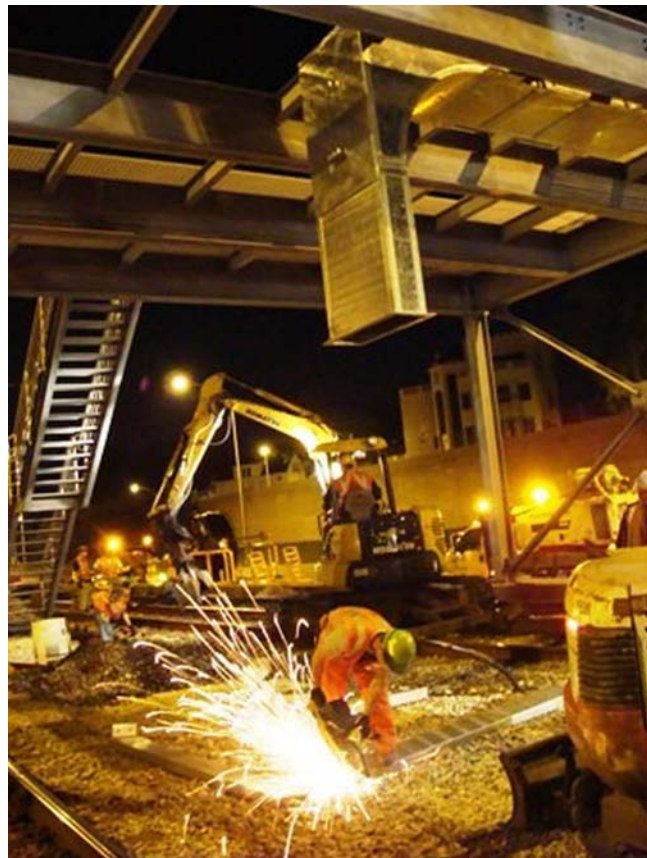
Of course, not everybody drives. In fact, more people these days are taking the train to work. Aldridge’s National Transit Division is riding the momentum of increased demand for public transportation. According to Vice President Keith George,



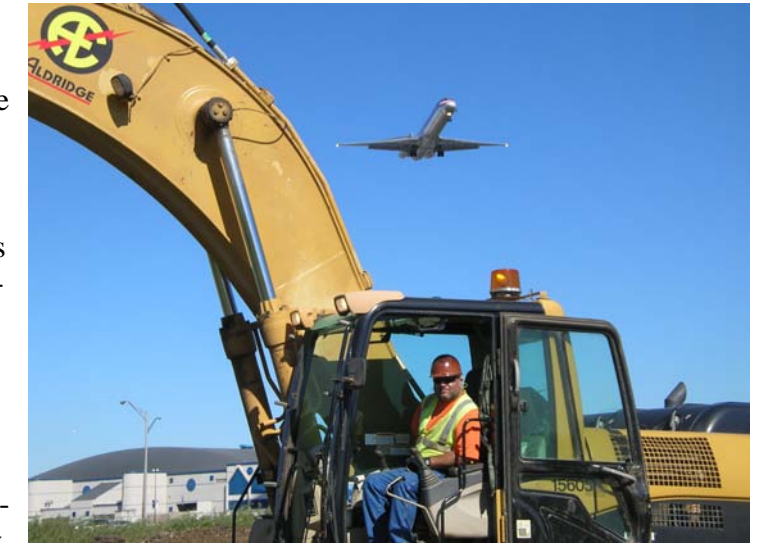
George, who manages National Transit, agencies are seeing a 10-to-15 percent surge in ridership, especially in faster-growing cities, such as Denver. The spike in gasoline prices and a “greener” mindset are major catalysts for this increase. With this trend comes the need to revamp and expand urban infrastructures. The tragic collapse of Minneapolis’ I35W Bridge in August has underscored the urgency.

Aldridge Electric is aggressively positioning itself as a premiere national company with the capabilities and experience to take on this challenge. Keith himself has more than 25 years experience with 20-plus transit agencies and \$2 billion in projects. Key strategic partnerships with transit agencies and other contractors around the country are strengthening Aldridge’s position. Current projects include the extension of the North Star Corridor light rail system in Minneapolis.

Locally, the Chicago Transit Division is the general contractor on the \$174 million Chicago Transit Authority Dearborn project. This project includes rehabbing much of Chicago’s Blue and Red lines by installing a new bidirectional signal system, and upgrading the traction power within the subway tunnels.



From ground travel to air travel, the Airport Division finished shortening Runway 14L, a critical phase of the massive \$6.6 billion O’Hare Modernization Project (OMP). The completion makes way for the installation of new runways due to open in November, 2008. The scope of work for the 14L phase was formidable enough: Aldridge dramatically altered the ground topography, relocated navigation devices and approach lighting systems, and moved three entire Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) buildings. What’s really impressive is that they did all of this without ever closing the runway! The crews started work at 10 p.m. nightly, well after the last scheduled flight of the day had taken off or landed on 14L. They labored through the wee hours under powerful lights with planes taking off and landing on nearby runways. By 6 a.m., the crews had 14L ready for more take-offs and landings—*every day*.



The OMP is a notably green enterprise. Among its initiatives are the use of low-sulfur fuel in rolling equipment, the installation of green roofs on certain structures to lower energy demand in these buildings, and the implementation of energy-efficient lighting.

Aldridge is also busy inside O’Hare airport. The Cook County Industrial Division has leveraged the company’s related expertise and added baggage systems veteran Billy McEvelly to their team to make Aldridge extremely competitive within O’Hare’s terminals. Recent jobs include the American Airlines Admiral’s Club, Hudson News Stands, Sky West support systems, and baggage handling systems.

Cook County Industrial is taking another key relationship to a new level and, indeed, new heights. The division is now ComEd’s electrical contractor of choice. ComEd entrusts Aldridge with some of its most challenging projects—on a fast track and under worldwide scrutiny. Aldridge is in charge of energizing Trump Tower and the Chicago Spire, just to name a couple of these high-profile ventures. ComEd also has Aldridge retrofitting high-rise buildings for single-unit ownership, which requires each individual floor to be metered separately.

“We’re handling all the turnkey jobs—from conceptual design to construction to commissioning,” says division manager Guy Niedorkorn.

ComEd has good reason to trust Aldridge, according to Guy: “We have on board well over 250 cumulative years of serving ComEd between our employees.”



The Lake County Industrial Division has had a big year, too, with the completion of Takeda Pharmaceutical’s headquarters in Deerfield, and its ongoing work and structural rehabbing of the Great Lakes Naval Base. Development is on the rise in Lake County, and the division is gearing up for a number of new commercial building projects. Fueled by young, aggressive management and building on its growth momentum of the past three years, the division looks forward to more growth in the years ahead.

That outlook is shared throughout Aldridge Electric.

## Solid fundamentals and new programs keep safety in the forefront

Aldridge Electric is vigorously competitive on all fronts. Safety is no exception. In 2006, the company boasted an enviably low OSHA safety rating of .039. OSHA's 2006 national industry average for electrical contractors' safety ratings was 3.50.

"We're drastically below the norm," says O'Brien Mills, Director of Occupational Safety and Health at Aldridge "but looking toward a goal of maintaining zero injuries takes constant safety vigilance."

An outstanding safety record is more than a point of pride with Aldridge. It's good business. A low number of accidents means a low experience modification rate, (MOD) which is an important safety benchmark. It's important because it directly impacts a company's insurance premium. A MOD rating below 1.0 is considered very good, and it keeps insurance costs down. Aldridge's 2007 MOD rating was 0.71.

Aldridge's safety programs grow and evolve right along with its project portfolio. Two initiatives that were rolled out this year, the Daily Task Analysis (DTA) and the Method of Procedure (MOP), guarantee that every step on a project is taken with safety in mind.

The DTA is a preplanning worksheet that a supervisor fills out before starting a day's work. The supervisor details each of the day's tasks, potential hazards, and any circumstances that have a potential impact on safety. Afterward, the supervisor discusses these items in a pre-work mini-conference with each crew member. That way, everybody in the field starts the day with eyes wide open.



Another component of the DTA ensures that those eyes stay open throughout the day. If field conditions change, or the scope of work changes, the supervisor must document this by writing a new DTA. For example, the morning may be sunny, but the afternoon may bring rain—and a whole new set of safety-related conditions. This change warrants a new analysis. The supervisor must also complete a new DTA with every shift change. According to O'Brien, this discipline has significantly raised safety awareness in the field.

The MOP is a safety planning tool specifically for projects involving live electricity. Before starting a procedure, a supervisor documents every planned step, identifying personnel, listing equipment that will be used, and describing all work phases and associated risks. Additionally, the supervisor must outline a back-out plan, which provides workers with detailed steps for stopping a project in an orderly, safe fashion if they encounter unexpected problems. The MOP has been a big success at Aldridge, and O'Brien says it's "years ahead of OSHA standards." It has worked so well that Aldridge hopes to use it with other high-risk projects, such as those that involve rigging, hoisting, or any critical lift.



The back-out feature of the MOP proved valuable on a project in which field personnel updated two substations for a customer. These substations were highly similar, and the MOPs reflected that. However, upon completing the first substation, contractors discovered that the second substation had been very differently maintained, resulting in a number of red flags. Thanks to rigorous preparation, they knew enough to turn around, and they had a plan to do so. This underscores a fundamental safety principal at Aldridge: It is never acceptable to proceed casually with a project if changes in conditions are apparent.

Aldridge later met with the customer to explain why the decision was made to back out, and the customer appreciated their position. The message that safety is a priority isn't just an internal one at Aldridge; it goes out to customers, too.

"We definitely appeared better for it," says O'Brien.

Aldridge safety programs develop through the constant gathering and sharing of field information. In the Safety Person of the Month program, a designated Aldridge executive ventures out to audit current projects and note potential safety issues. The executive presents findings to the Aldridge safety committee, which meets on the final Thursday of each month to review safety-related incidents that may have occurred within the company and elsewhere in the industry. The Daily Task Analysis and MOP were both crafted in these monthly meetings.

Every Aldridge employee undergoes 16 hours of division-specific safety training annually. In 2007 alone Aldridge trained 380 field employees, for a total of 6080 hours. Customizing each employee's training to the unique needs of their division makes the most of every hour. For example, training in traffic control is specific to Aldridge's Highway Division, while low-voltage safety training is specific to the Industrial Divisions. Each employee who drives an Aldridge vehicle takes a defensive driving course. Aldridge supplements these 16 hours with "hot-topic-issue" training on an as-needed basis, such as when the company implemented the DTA and the MOP. Classes in First-Aid, CPR, and other important fundamentals round out the regimen.



Despite a superb safety record, O'Brien and the safety committee are always looking for ways to improve awareness and "not rest on laurels." In that spirit, they brought in 3rd party consulting firm to assess Aldridge's safety culture. As part of the assessment, the company distributed a survey in which employees could rate their company's safety policies and how they are put into practice.

In a further expansion of its safety program, Aldridge plans to add four new safety engineers. All of them, of course, will have high standards to live up to, as Aldridge continues to protect its most important assets—it's employees.

# Turkey Fry a big success...and getting *bigger*

Aldridge Electric employees pride themselves on accomplishing the most daunting projects. No matter how great the scope of work, they get it done with meticulous planning, creative problem solving, and, most importantly, terrific teamwork. That's how shop foreman Bobby Burandt and 18 volunteers from the Fleet Department managed to feed 300 people during the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Aldridge Turkey Fry on November 15.

This hallowed Aldridge tradition is, of course, an early Thanksgiving celebration; but it's also an opportunity to show appreciation to vendors and customers, who happily lined up for helpings of succulent turkey and a bounty of mouth-watering sides. Aldridge employees look to the turkey fry for a chance to relax and visit with co-workers for a few hours in the afternoon. The only problem is that they have to smell the feast cooking all morning. This was not at all easy to do, given the tantalizing aromas.

Bobby is quick to emphasize that a project of this scale could only succeed as a concerted group effort. It involves transforming part of the Fleet Department work area into a giant kitchen, and converting the Training Room into a dining hall.

Workers cleared off three repair bays in the Fleet Department, where they then set up food prep stations. Five deep fryers started heating up at 5 a.m., and the first turkeys went in an hour later to cook for 45 minutes each. The biggest advantage to frying the turkeys, aside from how juicy they turn out, is that they're done quickly. Cooking six turkeys in sequence per fryer, the Fleet Department chefs turned out 30 tasty birds by lunchtime. The trick was to keep them warm until serving time. Leave it to the guys in the Fabricating Shop, who custom-built a 6-foot-tall, 3<sup>1/2</sup>-foot-wide electric oven, just for this purpose.

Meanwhile, kitchen helpers in chef jackets made mashed potatoes, prepared turkey dressing, and cooked all sorts of vegetable dishes in a giant wok. All told, the spread included 110 pounds of vegetables, 110 pounds of potatoes, 100 pounds of stuffing, and 40 pounds of ham, in addition to the turkeys. Not wanting to show up empty-handed, a few vendors kicked in pies bringing the total pie count to about 40—apple, cherry, pumpkin...you name it! What about drinks for 300 people? Bobby and co. took an all-terrain utility vehicle, on loan from a vendor, filled the dump with ice, and kept the beverages cooling in it.

The food prep went "like clockwork" thanks to careful planning and scheduling. The process seems to improve every year, so that what used to take the Fleet Department six weeks to prepare, now just took a few days. Their routine involves buying certain supplies on each of the three days before the turkey fry, saving the most



perishable items for last. On that Wednesday, they pick up the turkeys, having ordered them few weeks earlier. The seller makes sure the turkeys are half-thawed at pick-up time, so that the Fleet Department chefs can clean them, inject them with a butter-Creole marinade, and put them on ice overnight.

Every detail matters, whether it's making sure that people stay clear of the fryers for their own safety, or getting the right kind of Chinette plates that hold up for seconds. Where the details really pay off is in the flavor of the food itself. The Fleet Department uses only turkeys that weigh between 13 and 14 pounds. "That weight comes out a nice, golden brown," says Bobby.

If the organization of the turkey fry is impressive, the food itself is unforgettable. This year's menu of vegetable sides boasted carrots with glaze sauce and dill, green beans with bacon bits, asparagus with balsamic sauce, and everybody's favorite—

cauliflower with chopped leeks and garlic. Employees were not satisfied merely to eat the dishes; they're now after the recipes. Bobby has received several e-mail requests for his turkey dressing recipe in particular. He acknowledges the culinary influences of his parents, who are, in fact, indirectly responsible for the turkey fry coming into existence

"My Mom and Dad used to make turkey for me to bring to the guys at work," says Bobby. "Things just started expanding from there."

Expanding is the right word. When this year's turkey fry was in full swing, Bobby stood at the head of the line, wearing a turkey-shaped hat and greeting vendors. From his vantage point, he could not see the end of the 125-foot line, which wasn't single-file, by the way. All he could see were the stacks of Chinette plates getting lower and lower. But neither the plates nor the food served upon them ran out before everybody ate their fill. And there weren't many leftovers. All in the planning.



Past successes may compel the Fleet Department to up the ante. Next year, they expect 400 people, leaving Bobby to wonder, "What are we going to do *then*?"



## Aldridge Electric and JDRF walk for a cure

Juvenile diabetes hits families hard, but families are hitting back. Aldridge Electric's annual walk for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF), an offshoot of the Ron Santo Walk for a Cure has decidedly become a family event, judging from the number of children who were among the walkers this year.

All in all, 170 pairs of feet—big and little—hiked the 5K path through the Independence Grove Forest Preserve in Lake County on October 14. JDRF held four other walks on that Sunday in the Chicagoland area. Annually, the foundation plans 200 walks throughout the U.S. for a projected total of 500,000 walkers.

Those who strolled through Independence Grove enjoyed the vivid reds and golds of autumn leaves, but they were particularly eager to see a lot of green. They were not disappointed, as their fundraising efforts yielded \$93,000 this year. Generous contributions poured in from Aldridge employees and vendors, as well as company CEO Ken Aldridge, who has chaired the event for the past two years.



Ken Aldridge & Ron Santo

Raising that kind of money takes a lot more than just walking five kilometers. It requires licking envelopes and dialing phone numbers. As the date of the walk approached Aldridge project manager Debbie Wolff kept it on the RADAR of employees and vendors with phone calls, e-mails, "paycheck stuffers," and frequent mention at company meetings. Debbie also was in charge of keeping track of the funding. Happily, that job gets more difficult each year, as there is more and more funding to keep track of.

JDRF doesn't mind seeing those dollars stack up either. Last year, JDRF donated more than \$122 million to support diabetes research initiatives, such as stopping the immune system response that causes type 1 diabetes, restoring autoimmunity in new-onset patients, controlling metabolism, and creating therapeutics for predicting, preventing, and reversing complications.

Diabetes research is a serious enterprise, but the Aldridge walk was festive and fun. As Debbie points out, it was the type of event that brings the company together. Children were given vendor-donated basketballs, toys, and games. There was also a raffle and prizes were awarded for top fundraisers. After working up an appetite on that 5K trek, the walkers tucked in at Austin's Bar and Grille for the traditional brunch.

The JDRF walk has grown substantially each year, both in the number of participants and the dollars raised. Debbie recalls a year when the total number Aldridge walkers was seven, a far cry from 170. In his speech to kick off the walk, Ken Aldridge expressed a poignant wish. This father of a diabetic daughter said he hoped that next year there would be no walkers present, as none would be needed—by then, hopefully diabetes would be cured.



## Bringing trench rescue training to O'Hare

Trench cave-ins occur all too often at construction sites. OSHA statistics place the fatality rate for trench work at 112 percent higher than the rate for all other construction work. Aldridge employees are well trained in proper trench construction, which makes trenches as safe as possible. Now, with the help of Safety Engineer Tom Taff, the company is taking trench safety a step further.

Tom oversees safety for the Aldridge Airport Division, where he has made trench safety a priority. A former Chicago firefighter, Tom has plugged Aldridge Electric into the Chicago Fire Department's annual, intensive trench rescue training program. Aldridge field personnel watch firefighters perform a simulated rescue in a field setting with dummies. This exercise takes place in a trench on O'Hare property, which Aldridge laborers dug and maintain specifically for this purpose. They even buried pipe in the trench for added authenticity.

Trenches are often a part of Aldridge projects, and each trench must be inspected every day. Certain weather conditions like rain soften the earth, making trenches more likely to collapse. Heavy equipment traffic creates an additional hazard. Trenches range in depth from 3 to 14 feet, and a worker trapped in a collapsed trench can be buried waste-deep or completely covered, depending on the looseness of the earth.



Mike Fox, chief of special operations for the CFD, warns that construction workers should not, under any circumstances, jump in and attempt a rescue if one of their own is trapped in a collapsed trench. Doing so can make things worse by causing a secondary collapse, which is often bigger and more dangerous than the first. Also, 65 percent of deaths in these situations are actually the would-be rescuers. Trying to dig a victim out exposes them to risk of further injury. That said, there are many things that workers can and should do. These actions are covered in-depth in a special two-hour class that CFD holds for Aldridge personnel and contractors.

Tom's quest to raise trench safety awareness goes beyond his concern for his own coworkers and the impeccable safety record of his company. He wants all contractors who work at O'Hare to participate in the CFD training program, regardless of who employs them. The OMP was so pleased with the program that on December 7, 2007 they recognized Aldridge with a Contractor Safety Award. Aldridge is very proud of Tom Taff and his efforts.

