

# REINFORCER

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## ***Going Global***

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Rebar Industry*** **page 6**



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If you would like to ask a question, share an interesting rebar story, or just say 'Hello,' please send us an e-mail at [reinforcer@asaHQ.com](mailto:reinforcer@asaHQ.com), and you just might see your topic in a future issue of the *Reinforcer*.

## New Markets, New Software

It has been a challenging year for many companies and quite successful for others. At aSa, we are somewhere in between. While steel prices and industry consolidations here in North America have had a negative impact on our growth locally, we are starting to see more interest in our products internationally. And, while things are a little quieter than usual on the sales front, we are busy designing, developing, and testing new aSa rebar software.

### New Markets

We are pleased to announce the opening of our new aSa office in Australia. In June, aSa employee Steven Selig, Director, aSa Australia, moved to Brisbane to help launch our new office there. Steven is helping with sales as well as implementations, training, and customer support for Australia, New Zealand, and other nearby territories.

Later this year, look for a new aSa office in Dubai, UAE (more information about this in our next issue of the *Reinforcer*). Next year, we are planning to open offices in Europe and South America. We believe that we can best serve new markets by establishing a local presence. This will also

help us understand the unique requirements of each region.

When we expand into other territories, aSa products become even more comprehensive as we address the needs of new markets. These enhancements are rolled into our core products, which then benefit all of our customers, including those in North America.

### New aSa Software

The much-anticipated aSa v6.4 is complete and will be available very soon! Take advantage of enhancements throughout the system. The biggest change relates to an improved Shape Manager, allowing for easier definition and calculation of rebar bend types. Partly because of steel prices, there is also renewed interest in aSa Production solutions, including aSa Shearing, Opto-Shear Consoles, Scheduling, Bundle Inventory, Load Tracking, and Material Tracking.

If you have any questions about our direction, please contact me. As always, it is our pleasure serving you – thank you for the privilege!

Best regards,

**Scott D. Leib**  
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### Need Help?

Whether you have a quick question or one that is more involved, our sales and consulting teams are ready to assist you and help resolve your problem.

**1.800.CALL.ASA**

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Murrysville, Pennsylvania 15668

Toll Free: 1.800.CALL.ASA  
Phone: 724.733.8700  
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## aSa News

### Upcoming Webinars

Clients enrolled in our subscription plan can take advantage of free web-based training. For a list of upcoming webinars, visit [www.asarebar.com](http://www.asarebar.com). Click News > Events Calendar.

The webinars are one-hour training classes free to clients enrolled in our software subscription plan. The sessions begin at 11 a.m. ET. To sign up, log into our Support website at [www.asarebar.com/support](http://www.asarebar.com/support), then click Webinar Sign-up.

### aSa Version 6.4 Release

aSa e<sup>x</sup> v6.4 is complete and will soon be available to all customers enrolled in our subscription plan. Clients will be notified by e-mail when the release is ready to ship. Version 6.4 will be available on DVD only. To request the DVD, log into the aSa Support website, then click the Distribution Request Form link.

Version 6.4 includes many significant improvements to help boost productivity in every aspect of your rebar business. The Winter 2008 issue of the *Reinforcer* featured a story highlighting the enhancements in our newest release.

### Big 5 and Big 5 PMV — November 23-27



Middle East fabricators: See aSa rebar solutions in action at the largest construction industry trade show in the Arabian Gulf. The Big 5 and Big 5 PMV events, held November 23-27, 2008, in Dubai, U.A.E., encompass more than 2,000 exhibitors and 50,000 visitors.

Visit us at **Stand B5!**

### World of Concrete 2009 — February 3-6



Meet our staff, and see our newest lineup of software, hardware, and equipment interface solutions at World of Concrete 2009. Next year's event will be at the Las Vegas Convention Center, February 3-6, 2009. Make plans to visit us at **Booth N3009**.

World of Concrete provides an important marketplace for attendees and exhibitors. *Tradeshows Week* magazine includes World of Concrete on their list of the Top 50 Fastest-Growing Tradeshows\*.

\* [www.tswfastest50.com](http://www.tswfastest50.com)

Like the new look of the *Reinforcer*?

Let us know:  
[multimedia@asaHQ.com](mailto:multimedia@asaHQ.com)

Mark your calendar for World of Concrete 2009

**February 3-6, 2009 • Booth N3009**

### aSa Software Forum

*You're on the roster.*

Don't miss the aSa Software Forum — *Spring Training 2009*. Mark your calendar to join us March 16-19, 2009, at the Sheraton Station Square in Pittsburgh.

*Get in the game.*

- Boost your skills at dozens of aSa training sessions.
- Give us your feedback ... help design the next generation of aSa software.
- Learn about shop equipment and rebar accessories at the Industry Expo.
- Preview the newest solutions from aSa.
- Get motivated by our keynote speaker.
- Enjoy entertainment, hospitality nights, and a special dinner.
- The full forum schedule and online registration will be available on our website [www.asarebar.com](http://www.asarebar.com) soon.



► **Eliminate Missing Bundles.**

*aSa Load Tracking validates each bundle as it is loaded for shipment. In addition to recording the loaded status of each item, the scanners (or TouchTracker unit) provide helpful prompts to the user. For example, the scanner displays a "Load Complete" message when the last bundle on an order is scanned at trailer loading. It also beeps and displays a warning message when an item is being loaded onto the wrong trailer. With aSa's built-in validations, you can be sure the right steel is on its way to the jobsite.*

► **Unparalleled Integration.**

*Combine the following aSa modules for even more shop productivity:*

- Scheduling
- Bundle Inventory
- Material Tracking
- Load Tracking

### Learn more about aSa Load Tracking

**Call us:**  
1.800.CALL.ASA

**Web:**  
[www.asarebar.com](http://www.asarebar.com)  
Then click Solutions >  
aSa Rebar Software >  
Load Tracking

## The Right Bundles on the Right Trucks

New aSa module uses barcode scans to verify trailer loading.



The new aSa Load Tracking module uses wireless barcode scanners to validate each bundle of steel as it is loaded for shipment. In addition to recording the "loaded" status of each bundle, the system has built-in checks to prevent material from being loaded onto the wrong trailer. It also prevents trailers from leaving your shop before all bundles have been loaded.

As a bundle of steel is loaded for shipment, the employee responsible for loading the item scans its barcoded production tag. Instantly, the system validates that the material is being loaded onto the correct trailer. If it is, the item is marked as "loaded" in your database. If not, the scanner displays a warning. At any time, you can view a list of bundles remaining to be loaded onto the current trailer. The scanner notifies

the operator when the last bundle from a bar list has been scanned.

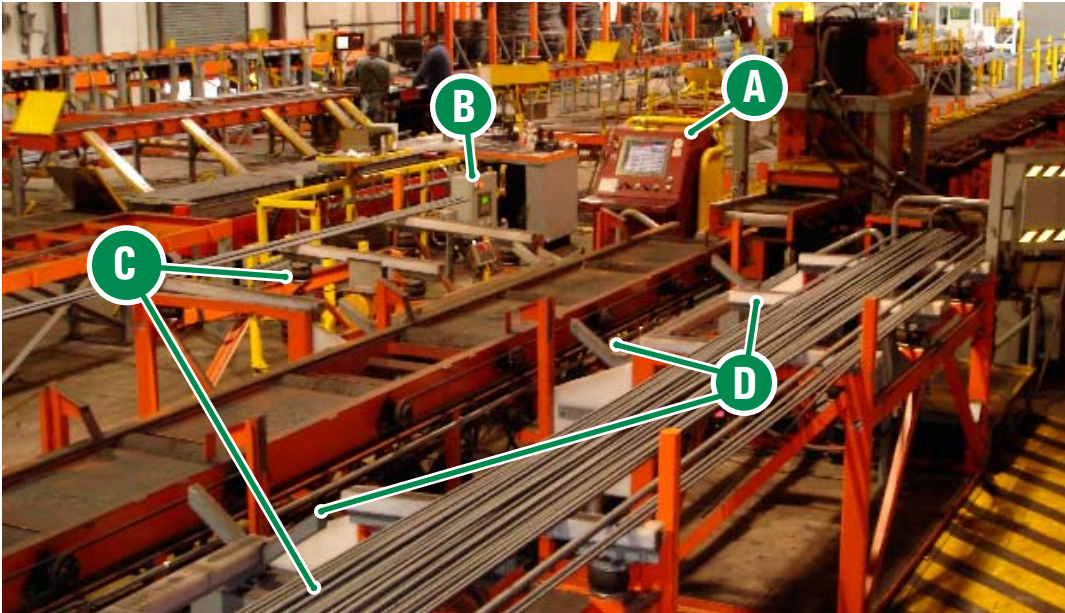
The system uses heavy-duty portable Wi-Fi scanners to communicate in real-time with your aSa database. Based on your needs, mounted TouchTracker units, featuring touch-screen color monitors, may also be used. Both units take advantage of wireless technology and contain built-in processors.

In previous versions of aSa, load validation was incorporated into Material Tracking, which uses barcode scanning to verify fabrication steps such as shearing, bending, and end preparation. To provide fabricators with a more affordable and easier-to-implement solution, trailer loading functionality is now contained in the new Load Tracking module, which can be loaded independently. ☐



## The Shakeout Man's Job Just Got Easier

New system uses aSa controls and a special scale to automatically count stock bars.



◀ *Shop Layout. Photo of Boman & Kemp's shop with the typical layout of the new shakeout system.*

- A** aSa Opto-Shear Console
- B** aSa Counting Control Box
- C** Bar Prep
- D** Scales


**B**oman and Kemp Manufacturing, Inc., a fabricator in Ogden, Utah, recently developed a system that automatically counts bars as they are shaken out onto the stock table. This allows the shakeout man to focus on shaking out bars ... not counting them.

The system uses a scale by Rice Lake Weighing Systems attached to a special control box developed by aSa. The scale counts the bars by weighing them as they are shaken out. Special tolerances are built into the system so that the count is correct even if the weight is slightly higher or lower than the counting mechanism expects.

The scale, scale control box, aSa Opto-Shear Console, and annunciator (lighted message

board) are all connected and integrated. For example, the annunciator shows how many bars have been shaken out and how many remain for each load. Additionally, the scale control box blinks and automatically updates the shear console when stock bars are ready to be dumped to the feed table.

The shakeout system is available now and can be easily adapted

to nearly any shearline and stock table. Contact aSa to learn more about this new shop innovation. 

*“With the price of steel today, how can anyone justify miscounting bars? Our stock weighing system provides an economical, practical, and user-friendly way to ensure accurate counts on the shakeout. Plus, it can be easily retrofitted to work in virtually any shop.”*

*— Ken Shinaut, General Manager  
Boman and Kemp Manufacturing*

## Concrete Trivia From the Land Down Under

- *The Sydney Opera House is constructed with precast concrete shells and supported by 588 concrete piers. The venue hosts over 3,000 events each year, with more than 2 million attendees.*
- *The Sydney Harbour Bridge is the world's tallest steel arch bridge, measuring 430 feet from the water level to the top of the structure. Constructed using a single-arch steel frame, with concrete decks, and concrete and granite pylons, the bridge was formally opened on March 19, 1932.*
- *The William Jolly Bridge in Brisbane was built using a steel frame arch and a concrete veneer, in art deco style. The bridge was completed in 1932.*

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## Going Global — aSa Opens Australian Office

Expansion into Australia strengthens aSa's worldwide commitment to the rebar industry.



aSa has been growing outside its North American client base for many years. We now have customers in England, Ireland, Poland, South America, and Australia. It became evident that aSa needed a new office in a different part of the world. With a growing economy and infrastructure, Australia's East Coast fit the bill perfectly. Almost a year in the making, the move has gone smoothly. Steven officially opened the aSa Australia office in June; the move should help ensure consistent and excellent customer service to aSa clients around the globe.

The new office has obvious benefits for aSa and our customers, but there was also the underlying question for

When Steven Selig joined aSa three years ago, he could never have imagined where the job would lead him and his family. This occurred to him as his plane touched down in Brisbane, Australia, which he, his wife, and two young sons would now call home.

Steven, "How do you move a family with two young children to Australia?" He explains, "Very patiently!" The decision to make this move was well planned and anticipated. "It was sad to leave our family and friends behind, but exciting to think of the adventure that lies ahead. The first month has gone very well with getting our aSa office set up and finding a permanent place to live," says Steven. He continues, "The fabricating market here is experiencing its own difficulties. There is a severe shortage of stock steel — even for those companies that produce their own rebar. However, the demand for product in the region is staggering! Some fabricators have to turn work away simply because they know inventory will be an issue. There is some real opportunity here to help companies improve their operations and become more efficient with their material handling. This will save them

thousands of dollars in the short- and long-term." Steven notes, "In the mean time, I will continue to learn the local culture, drink my flat whites, play with the kiddies, and keep to the popular saying here ... No Worries Mate!"

While Australia has several world-famous monuments featuring concrete construction, such as the Sydney Opera House and the Sydney Harbour Bridge, it is the consistent everyday building projects in Australia and New Zealand that drives the region's rebar industry. Steven looks forward to learning the culture and the terminology of the region better — we already know that "scheduling" actually refers to what North Americans call "detailing."

From his office in Brisbane, Steven is serving the entire region, including Australia, New Zealand, and Southeast Asia. ☐

## Focus on aSa Industrial Controls

Knowledge and experience are built into every aSa Opto-Shear Console.



*aSa Industrial Controls team.  
(Left to right) Shawn Titus,  
Kevin Hall, A.J. Guarino,  
Alan Grus, and Elliot Greenman.*

Look around your office. How many things have been there since your company was founded? There probably aren't many. Over the years, things become obsolete. They slow down or break. They get replaced. People, however, become more valuable over time. Such is the case with aSa Vice President Elliot Greenman.

Alan Colker, Jim Leib, and Elliot Greenman were aSa when it was founded in 1969, though Alan left shortly thereafter. Elliot often recalls, "Jim would tell the customer, 'Sure we can do it.' Then, he would come back to the office and tell me what I needed to do. Seriously, though, Jim came up with an optimization algorithm for our shearing

program in 1970, which is still a part of aSa Shearing today."

"As the company started hiring other people, I found that I didn't have to do everything. Different people could actually specialize in things. I began specializing in any unusual projects, including the graphic interface for the DOS system.

Eventually, I began working primarily on the shear controllers and the Opto-Shear was born."

Elliot comments on his semi-retirement, saying, "We tried a couple of different things, which didn't work out. I guess it takes time to replace 40 years of knowledge.

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### Opto-Shear Console Advantages

- **Maximizes Shearline Potential.** Older, manual shearlines reach new levels of productivity when automated with the aSa console.
- **Improves Production Rates.** Easy-to-follow instructions pace the entire shearing operation, regardless of crew experience.
- **Reduces Cutting Errors.** Information loaded from computer-generated instructions or scanned from barcoded tags eliminates the potential for erroneous entry by the operator.
- **Easy to Use.** Clear and accurate message prompts and simple, integrated design get you up and running quickly.
- **Touch-screen Technology.** The controller features a large color monitor. Data and options are entered using the console's touch-screen.



## Service is Key to Magnolia Steel's Success ...

... and the reason they rely on aSa to help run their business.

► **Magnolia Steel Co., Inc.**

*By focusing on customer service, Mississippi-based Magnolia Steel has grown to become one of the largest independent fabricators in the southeastern United States. Pictured, Magnolia Steel: from the yard, to the shop, to the jobsite.*



Employees at Magnolia Steel pride themselves on being responsive to their customers' needs. They value the same kind of responsiveness in their rebar software provider.

"Working with aSa for several years, what I've really grown to like is the fact that aSa employees have a great sense of pride in their jobs. We don't have to ask aSa staff to go the extra mile, they want to," says Magnolia's IT Director Joey Beeman.

Magnolia Steel is a family business that has been fabricating rebar for more than 45 years. Owner Cecil Crowe founded the company at age 22 and still runs the business. "Through our expertise, longevity, and

highly motivated personnel, we are able to maintain a quick response to our customers' needs," he says. Shop Foreman Tim Grice adds, "If you call today and say you need steel tomorrow, we can get it. We're set up to be responsive to our customers."

Joey emphasizes that experience is one of the key factors in the company's success: "We've been here since 1962, and we're here to stay. We pride ourselves on providing material on

our customers' terms." Dave Pankiewicz, the company's Engineering Manager, talks about Magnolia's approach to customer service. "The way we do business is very personalized. We've got a lot of repeat business," he says.

Located in Meridian, Mississippi, Magnolia is one of the largest independent fabricators in the southeastern U.S. Although the company's primary coverage area is the Southeast, Magnolia provides steel for projects all over the country.



Magnolia implemented aSa Estimating, Bar List, Shearing, Tagging, and Rebar Financials modules in 2002. Dave explains, "Our primary reason for going with aSa was because it goes all the way through to financials — from order input on one side to the invoice on the other."

Joey says that the transition from older systems — some manual and some software-based — was "a challenge at first, but with a lot of patience on aSa's part, and on our part, we worked through it."

With three shearlines, 18 cranes, and more than a dozen benders, Magnolia's shop is a busy place. Tim, who oversees all shop operations, says he "really relies on aSa reports to help make production decisions." Specifically, he uses the Statistical Summary, Production Summary, Remnant, and Stock reports to help him do a "quick time" — a snapshot of a production plan that he uses to determine whether the shop can handle the day's planned workload.

"Moving to aSa shear consoles was definitely an upgrade," says Tim, noting

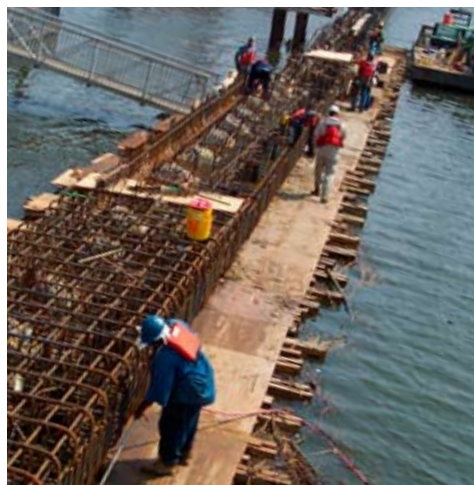
that the console's direct connection to the network provides an advantage over removable data storage devices. Magnolia replaced the original consoles on their three main shearlines with aSa Opto-Shear consoles in 2005 and 2006.

Tim says he likes the fact that the aSa consoles allow his shear operators to "interrupt" optimized automatic-mode fabrication to quickly produce a "tags only" walk-in order. "For tags only items, they use the console's different modes (Manual, Pause, or Toggle). They each have one they like best and are most comfortable with," says Tim.

Numerous aSa consultants have traveled to Magnolia to provide on-site services, and many more have helped Magnolia employees over the phone. Dave notes that aSa consultants are "responsive and cooperative." He says when he calls to talk about a new feature that would benefit Magnolia's operation, the

consultants understand the importance of the issue, and, in many cases, the new functionality is implemented in future versions of the software. "It's nice to know we have the same goals," he adds.

In addition to providing Magnolia's rebar software, aSa also supplies file servers, workstation PCs, notebook computers, and printers to the Mississippi fabricator. "Because aSa is such a strategic partner for our business, it only makes sense to buy our hardware from the same people who provide our rebar software. (Purchasing computers from aSa) eliminates the question, 'Who should I call?' aSa is a one-stop shop for software and hardware support," says Joey. □



“Our primary reason for going with aSa was because it goes all the way through to financials — from order input on one side to the invoice on the other.”

— Dave Pankiewicz  
Engineering Manager

#### ◀ Choctaw Point Terminal.

The Choctaw Point Terminal and its general cargo and bulk facilities are located at the Port of Mobile (Alabama) with immediate access to two interstate systems, five Class 1 railroads, and nearly 15,000 miles of inland waterway connections. Magnolia Steel provided reinforcing for the project.

## Need a Support Login?

The Support area of our website contains numerous downloads and resources that are available only to clients that participate in the aSa Software Subscription Plan. If you are a supported client, you will need a username and password to log into the site.

To register, browse to: [www.asarebar.com/support](http://www.asarebar.com/support), then click the Register button.



## Q&A with aSa's IT Staff

### DO IT YOURSELF

## Exporting Reports From Rebar Financials

### To export a report as a file:

1. Open the report in aSa Rebar Financials and select your report criteria.
2. Click **Print Preview** on the Report Selection screen.
3. Click the **Export Report** button on the Print Preview screen.  
The Export screen displays.
4. Click the **Format** dropdown list and select one of the following export file formats:
  - **Adobe Acrobat (PDF)** - export as a PDF file
  - **Word (Exact) Format** - export as a Microsoft Word document
  - **Excel X.0 (XLS)** - export as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet; where X.0 is the version of Excel you are using
5. Click **OK**.  
The Export Options screen displays.
6. Select **All** or enter a page range to be exported, and click **OK**.
7. Browse to the location where you want to save your file, enter a name in the File Name field, and click **Save**.

**Backups seem so confusing, and I just don't have time to learn about them. What does aSa recommend for stand-alone computers and small networks?** We can help make this critical process as easy as 1-2-3. aSa has developed a practical and relatively inexpensive solution for backing up your data. By configuring an external hard drive and Symantec Save and Restore software, our IT staff can make sure that your system is set up to create daily and monthly backups – automatically! Then, if you experience a problem such as a virus or spyware, accidental file deletion, corrupted data, or a complete hard drive failure, you can be back up and running within hours. With our backup system, you can restore data as new as yesterday, or as old as several months. Contact us today at 1.800.CALL.ASA to learn how easily aSa can help you prevent costly data loss.

**I know that Microsoft Word uses .doc in the filename, but what is a .docx file that someone sent to me? And, how do I open it?** The default file extension in Word 2007 is .docx. Previous versions of Word cannot open a .docx file. However, the .docx documents can be opened, edited, and saved after installing the Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack. This free download enables you to work with 2007 versions of Word, Excel, or PowerPoint files in Office 2000, Office XP, or Office 2003. The Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack is available as a free download at <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads>.

**WELCOME FABRICATORS and SUPPLIERS**

Australia

**Mesh & Bar Pty. Ltd.**  
Redbank, Queensland, Australia

**Rebar PreFab**  
Laverton North, Victoria, Australia

**ReoMart Quality Reinforcing Products**  
Canning Vale, Western Australia

North America

**Addison Construction Supply, Inc.**  
Tacoma, WA

**CMA Supply Co., Inc.**  
South Bend, IN

**CMA Supply of Louisville, Inc.**  
Louisville, KY

**CMC Coating of Nashville**  
Nashville, TN

**Fortress Steel Service, Inc.**  
Newark, DE

**Hatch Building Supply Co, Inc.**  
Madison, WI

**JR Construction Services, Inc.**  
Marysville, WA

**L & M Steel**  
San Antonio, TX

**MJ Associates**  
Philadelphia, PA

**Nuway, Inc.**  
Riverside, CA

**Prairie Supply, Inc.**  
West Fargo, ND

**Rebar International**  
Edgewood, WA

**Re-Steel Supply of WVa**  
Berkeley Springs, WV

**Southern PAN Services Co.**  
Lithonia, GA

**United Rebar**  
Sacramento, CA

**White Cap Construction Supply**  
Indianapolis, IN  
Las Vegas, NV

**WELCOME CONTRACT ESTIMATORS and DETAILERS**

Australia

**Reo Sketch Pty., Ltd.**  
Perth, WA, 6100 Australia

North America

**Advanced Rebar Applications**  
Akron, NY

**BDS Steel Detailers**  
Tempe, AZ

**Bixby Detailing Services**  
Stacy, MN

**Burns Palmer Professional Services**  
Apollo Beach, FL

**Fabrication Technical Services, Inc.**  
Coeur d'Alene, ID

**Huffman Engineering, LLC**  
Poplar Bluff, MO

**Master Construction of South Florida**  
Hialeah, FL

**Premier Reinforcing**  
Murrieta, CA

**Springs Steel**  
Calhan, CO

**Trinity Detailing Services**  
Edmond, OK



# Focus on aSa Industrial Controls

< *continued from page 7*

When Kevin (Hall) first came in, I thought to myself, this guy either really knows his stuff, or is completely full of it. It didn't take long to recognize that he really knew his stuff. He is very sharp, and he understands the technical aspects of both the engineering and software sides of the Opto-Shear. Now I know that I can leave my life's work in good hands."

Kevin came to aSa last summer with more than 25 years of experience in control systems and more than 20 years programming in a variety of development languages. His experience in both engineering and programming have been invaluable in his transition to replace Elliot as the lead developer for aSa industrial controls. Kevin has spent a lot of time in the office and in the field learning the specifics of the rebar industry and rebar shops. Although having Elliot in the office with all of his experience has been a huge benefit, nothing can replace in-the-field experience. What Kevin enjoys most is "seeing how



*Changing of the guard. Kevin Hall (left) and Elliot Greenman take time for a photo while discussing future development plans of the Opto-Shear console.*

different companies solve the challenges of the industry." Developing a system that suits them all is a daunting, but worthwhile endeavor. "First and foremost," continues Kevin, "understand the needs of our customers. It is their needs that will drive our improvements."

Kevin has begun working on a new shear console design and improving integration with other aSa products. While he is taking care of the development side of shearing console solutions, there is plenty of work to be done building, installing, and developing the hardware side. That is where the rest of the IC group, Alan Grus, Shawn Titus, and A.J. Guarino, come in. Alan, who has been working with aSa for nine-and-a-half years, is a Senior Industrial Controls Technician. "Alan began working at aSa building and installing shear controllers. Over the years, he has developed an excellent understanding of the shop floor and is a major contributor to the design

of new shear controllers," explains Elliot.

Shawn, a Senior Industrial Controls Technician with aSa for three-and-a-half years has also been helping to design the new shear console. He explains, "The next step for industrial controls is a new console design, which incorporates new user-friendly menus and updated hardware components through a Windows or Windows-like environment."

A.J. joined the IC department right out of high school one year ago. While he is currently building the consoles at aSa's headquarters, he looks forward to completing on-site customer installations. Time spent training new employees on aSa products and the rebar industry, in general, is essential to aSa's vision of excellent customer service. A.J., who recently began fielding console-related calls, explains that he enjoys "the interpersonal relationships that build with every call." □



*Inside the box. A.J. Guarino wiring an Opto-Shear for a new customer.*

## Rebar News: Now Coming to You

You can now subscribe to the aSa Rebar News RSS feed. Subscribing to an RSS news feed is a lot like subscribing to your favorite newspaper or magazine. With print media, you have the option of going to the newsstand and buying one newspaper, or subscribing and getting it sent to you every day. Internet news works the same way. You can either go to a website and manually check to see if something is new, or you can subscribe to a feed and automatically get updated when something is new. This saves you time.

When you subscribe to an RSS feed, your information displays in a piece of software called a feed reader or aggregator. This can be a service that runs on your computer all of the time and immediately notifies you when something new has appeared; it can be a web service, which you check at your leisure (like web-based e-mail); or it can even be built into your web browser. Yahoo!, Google, and NewsGator are a few of the most popular feed-reading services available.

For more information, click the orange RSS icon on any aSa web page or contact José Amayo at aSa.

