

PITTSBURGH
BUSINESS TIMESMANUFACTURER of the YEAR
LARGE: 51 - 99 employees

WINNER: HALL INDUSTRIES

Bridge fire put parts company on clock

After the fire on the Liberty Bridge earlier this year damaged the steel beam and closed it to traffic for several weeks, the contractor, Joseph B. Fay Co., turned to Ellwood City-based Hall Industries Inc. to manufacture replacement parts.

Hall specializes in a number of products used in the construction and refurbishment of bridges. So while making the parts wasn't a challenge, the timeline was going to be extremely difficult, according to Jonathan Hall, the company's president.

The contractor needed the parts as fast as possible, which meant employees needed to work 12-hour shifts.

"We were working 24 hours, seven days a week getting that resolved. That was hand to mouth," he said.

At the time, Hall was flying back and forth from Europe for other business. But he knew that everything was under control because of the open lines of communication that remain a hallmark of the company.

"We didn't miss a beat. I had no time to really spend with it," he said. "And that's why it is so nice to have family. They understood what was needed. I didn't have to say much and they took the ball and ran."

Hall's not surprised the company was able to pull off the Liberty Bridge project and do it well. He attributed the accomplishment to the work ethic and dedication of the employees.

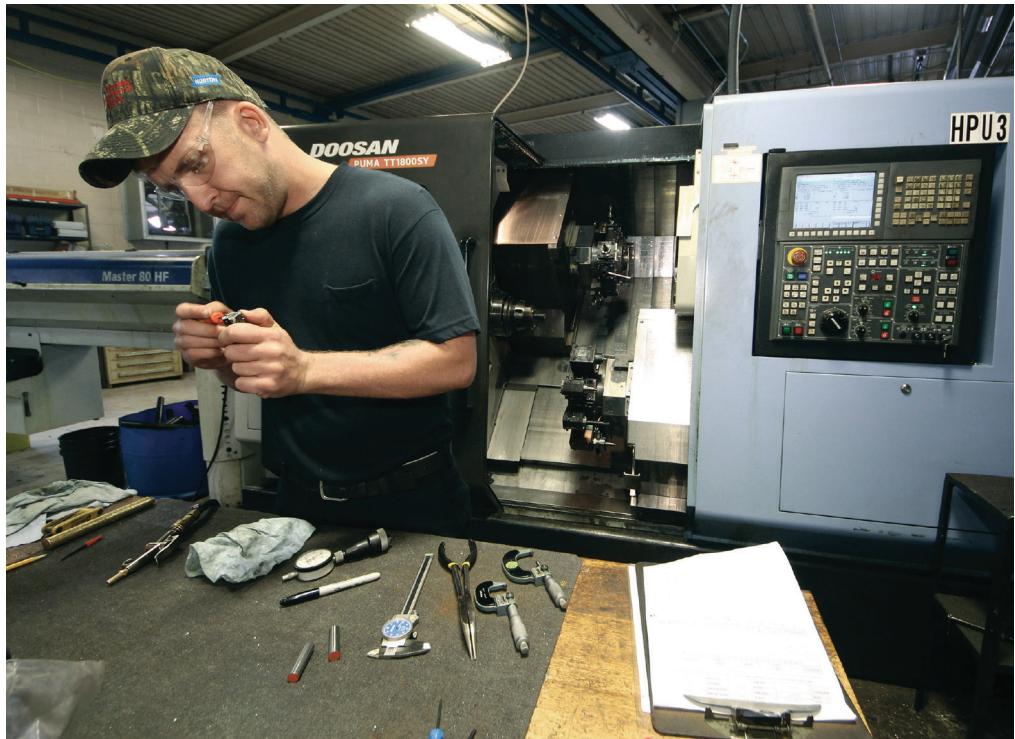
"It's always like that. What was exceptional was that we performed virtually the same under 12-hour shifts," he said.

Over the years, Hall has learned that working in a family-owned-and-operated business comes with many advantages. Transparency is one. At Hall Industries, no one keeps secrets, he explained.

"It's absolute transparency and trust. Everybody comes from the same background, has the same set of rules and priorities," he said. "You know each other's thoughts. Half of our knowledge has nothing to do with business. We can always predict what others think of each other."

The company, founded by Hall's father Harold in 1966, started as a contract screw machine shop for steel companies.

Today, Hall provides automated machining and milling and services and support for a number of fields, including aviation, transportation,



JOE WOJCIK

Keith Keller inspects a part machined on a screw machine at Hall Industries in Ellwood City. The company was a subcontractor for the repair of the Liberty Bridge, which was recently damaged by fire.

mining, steel, electrical, energy and construction.

When Jonathan Hall took over the business, he ushered in a more-defined corporate structure.

"He's first generation and he's the founder [but] we needed to reorganize in an organizational, chart-type fashion," Hall said. "It became more of a corporate business structure than a family business."

Despite the change in structure, the strong relationships and communication continue at Hall, and that helps the company remain successful.

"You have to have a strong relationship basis," he said. "There is no rivalry within our group at all. That's a blessing. It is a very supportive group."

The company has been on an aggressive growth path for more than 40 years.

In 1975, Hall Industries purchased Standard Tool & Machine, Raymond Brass Co. and Metaline Corp., mov-

► CLOSER LOOK

HALL INDUSTRIES
INC.

- **Based:** Ellwood City
- **Top officer:** Jonathan Hall
- **Employees:** 75
- **What it does:** Contract CNC machining, milling and related services
- **Key products** Aviation towbars, replacement belt loader rollers, inlet adaptors, bridge products
- **Long-term growth plan:** Expand global reach by producing high-quality machined metal parts and products
- **Website:** www.hallindustries.com

ing the operations to Ellwood City and renaming the group Hall Industries

Equipment Division.

This purchase added strong fabrication and large conventional machining capabilities to the company's service offerings.

In 1990, Hall purchased Standard Tool in Greenville, S.C., adding additional CNC machining capabilities as well as a broader geographical reach.

Twelve years later, Hall Equipment Division became certified to work with structural steel and qualified for PennDOT work, which brought the company into bridge repair.

That same year the company moved into its current home in Ellwood City, a much larger, single-story facility that enabled it to lower costs and increase productivity, Hall said.

In 2009, Hall Technical Services LLC was formed to provide facilities maintenance services to airports and airlines.

- Meghan Holohan