



Tales from a Career in Corrosion Control

NORM MORIBER

Considering the assortment of books, magazine articles, audiotapes, and video games on the subject, this is certainly the era of self-awareness. Nevertheless, many individuals are unacquainted with their own true identities—even some corrosion engineers. While the simple fact that you read *Materials Performance* is a strong indicator (virtually all corrosion engineers are NACE members who read *MP*; however, not all who read *MP* are corrosion engineers—it's sort of like that rectangle/square thing they tried to teach you in grammar school, and don't get me started on the rhombus), there are more definitive tests for corrosion engineerishness. For example, you just might be a corrosion engineer if...

...you named your first-born son Peabody (the middle name Sherman represents appropriate reverence for "The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle").

...you named your first-born daughter Peabody (middle name Sherman represents unnecessary cruelty).

...you buy lottery tickets every week and play your lucky number of -0.850.

...you prefer to ski down a Tafel slope.

...you never fret about stress corrosion cracking but experience severe stress over fretting.

...you have had your company vehicle pulled out of the mud by a train.

...you know the complete composition and electrochemical behavior of at least a dozen alloys from which you have never seen anything made.

...you are unable to wrap leftovers in plastic without wondering where they would rank on the 10-point system.

...your favorite sandwich is the Pourbaix.

...you emphasize the second rather than the fourth syllable of "certification."

...you understand that Catholic protection relates to religious freedom rather than to the preservation of underground metallic structures.

...you know which was the composer and which the lyricist in the team of Stern and Geary.

...you can tell which end of a platypus is which (similarly, you also know which end your butt is on).

...you know that anodes are not those things in the back of your throat that the doctor removes along with your tonsils.

...you know that MIC is not the beginning of a Disney theme song.

...you can name the last year in which the Boston Red Sox won the Galvanic Series.

...you know that impressed current is not necessarily more effective than totally indifferent current.

...you know that the Wenner Four-Pin Method is not a technique for securing a cloth diaper to a newborn.

...you ingest rust and excrete steel.

...you know the correct proportions for mixing hydrated gypsum, bentonite, and anhydrous sodium sulfate (a near certainty if you know what either gypsum or bentonite is).

...you face east to bow toward Houston even when you're in Florida.

...you think copper sulfate crystals are precious gems.

...you consider Iron Butterfly to be a classic blunder of material selection.

...you know that coke breeze is not the latest Starbucks concoction of Coca Cola, French Roast, and crushed ice.

...you fascinate the passengers in your car by pointing out locations of buried pipelines as if they were tourist attractions.

...you know that an electrolyte has one-third fewer calories than a regular electro.

...you have at least three strategies for avoiding observation while relieving yourself by the side of a busy highway.

...you remember what the acronym "NACE" used to stand for.

Norm Moriber is the Engineering Manager at Mears/CPG, LLC, San Ramon, California. He works in the areas of cathodic protection, transit-related stray currents, and failure analysis. A 21-year NACE member, Moriber is Chairman of the Public Affairs Administrative Committee, received a 1998 NACE Distinguished Service Award, and is a registered professional engineer in California. If you have an unusual career-related story to share in "Out of the Norm," please contact Moriber at e-mail: nawmm@aol.com. **MP**

