

## Victor Bertucci

"I WORK ON JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING WITH AN ENGINE"

"I work on just about everything with an engine," stated my father, Fran Bertucci, as he started telling me about his twenty year career in iron mining for Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company.

My father was born in September of 1949, in Ishpeming Michigan. He had a fairly large family of three brothers and three sisters. Many of his uncles, nephews, and cousins worked for Cleveland Cliffs.

My father started working for Cleveland Cliffs in 1974, after the mechanics training he took following graduation from Ishpeming High School.

My father is currently using his knowledge as an automotive mechanic. Through out his career at CCI he has been: a laborer in the pit, laborer in the plant, involved in operating, and some maintenance. He uses many types of large equipment such as: hydraulic wrenches, cranes, and many types of special equipment. The reason he needs to use this big equipment is because "all the equipment keeps getting bigger and bigger, your duties as a mechanic fixing it become more and more strenuous because of the fact the parts are getting bigger and bigger." When I asked him what the most challenging part of his job was he said, "The most challenging part of my job is trying to figure out what is wrong with something," he explained.

The thing that my father likes about being an auto mechanic is "The fact that it is different from day to day, you work on

different things." He can also get into some dangerous situations because of the size of the equipment he works on.

The size of the equipment brings up a large safety issue. Many safety regulations are necessary with such equipment. The bigger it gets the more safety standards you need. You also need to "learn to trust your partners to do the job safely and take care of themselves and you just like you try to take care of them and yourself."

My father has been in the United Steelworkers Union the entire time he has worked for Cliffs. He has also experienced several strikes some of which were very long. A strike is actually a labor dispute between the company and the union. One or the other is making demands the other will not meet. If they do not agree by contract date, there is a strike.

According to my father, "a picket line shows support for the negotiating team that is trying to negotiate your contract. It also monitors traffic that goes in and out of the property."

It is very important that when a strike is over the two teams put their differences behind them and work together to make the future promising.

Although I learned a lot from this interview, I feel that the best advice my father gave was working together in the future after a strike.