

2015
summer issue

4 THE owners' manual

Let's do the Happy Dance:
BL Companies wins two
ESOP Association Awards



2015
Annual Award
for Communications Excellence
BL Companies

THE Owners' manual

issue 4. summer 2015

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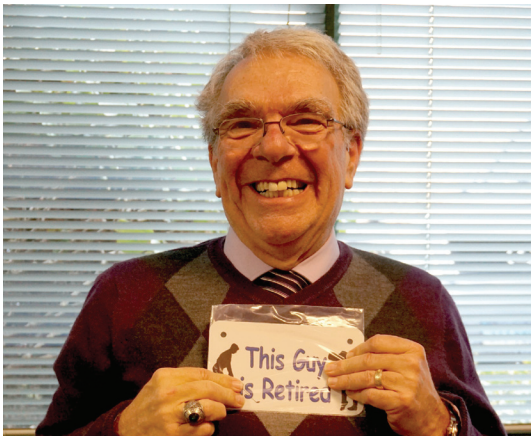
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Guy LaBella retired to sunny Florida in April. The Environmental Group got together to celebrate - which wouldn't have been complete without Guy's favorite signature outfit staple: suspenders



The Wellness Committee in Meriden hosted a nut butter tasting in honor of Earth Day.

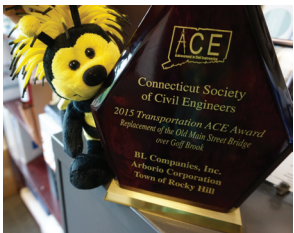
The Camp Hill office was one of over 30 local teams to participate in the MS Walk in April. Over 20 walkers represented BL to support this important cause.



The Canton office had a First Aid training day - congrats to the 14 employee-owners who became Adult First Aid/CPR/AED certified!



BL BUZZ: WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AROUND BL?



On June 2nd Jen Marks accepted PWC's Woman of Achievement Award. She gave a shout out to her BL Family in her acceptance speech. Congrats, Jen!



Bob Blickley and Mike Lozanoff proudly stood by BL's displays at the ICSC Las Vegas Show.



BL Companies won a 2015 Transportation ACE Award from the Connecticut Society of Civil Engineers for the Rehabilitation of the Old Main Street Bridge in Rocky Hill, CT. Congratulations!!



Mark Heeb presented at the ULI Midyear Capitol Market Real Estate Trends Symposium with Tom Richey (Third Mountain Consulting) and Harold Brandt (Carlisle Events)

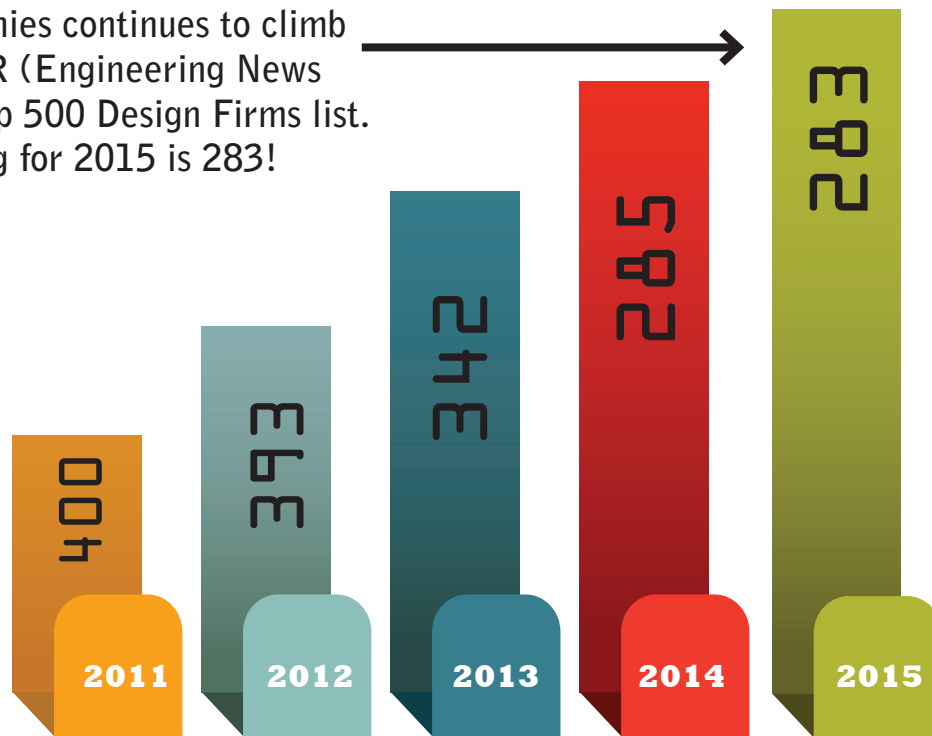


Back to School

On April 30th, Cristy Shamus and Kim Lesay rounded up a group of 50 third grade students at William M. Strong Elementary School in Plantsville, CT. Students eagerly listened to two presentations, one about environmental science and one about vernal pools, asked tons of great questions, and listened to the sounds of several types of frogs and toads from New England. Cristy and Kim had the students classify different types of soil, measure water into real sampling containers, put on personal protective equipment, and identify the life stages of salamanders and frogs from local vernal pools.



BL Companies continues to climb on the ENR (Engineering News Record) Top 500 Design Firms list. Our ranking for 2015 is 283!



NEWS FLASH

Good news travels! BL Companies made *national news* ([USA Today](#)) for our Southington (Connecticut) Senior Center project. Cool!





GET TO KNOW YOUR CFO

ANN ISELEY

Chief Financial Officer

(203) 608.2540

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welcome!

On Monday, June 1st, Ann Iseley joined BL Companies as our Chief Financial Officer. As noted in her announcement, Ann joins the Senior Leadership Team as we continue to position BL Companies for growth opportunities. We could tell you about her wealth of experience, like how Ann is the former CFO of JCJ Architecture where she served nine years on their Executive Management Team and provided financial and operational oversight. Or we could mention that throughout Ann's career she has been involved in other industries such as real estate, insurance and investment management, with companies valued at or with assets under management of over \$1 billion. But really, we thought it would be more fun to ask her the hard hitting questions like the following. >>>>>>>>>>>>>

GET TO KNOW YOUR CFO

What's the #1 most played song on your iPod?

My iPod lives in my car with songs running the gamut from classic rock, country and pop, to show tunes, big band and classical. I'd say I listen to them equally often.

What is one of your favorite quotes?

Attitude determines altitude.

What's your favorite indoor/outdoor activity?

Travelling. It gives you the opportunity to experience other cultures and broaden your

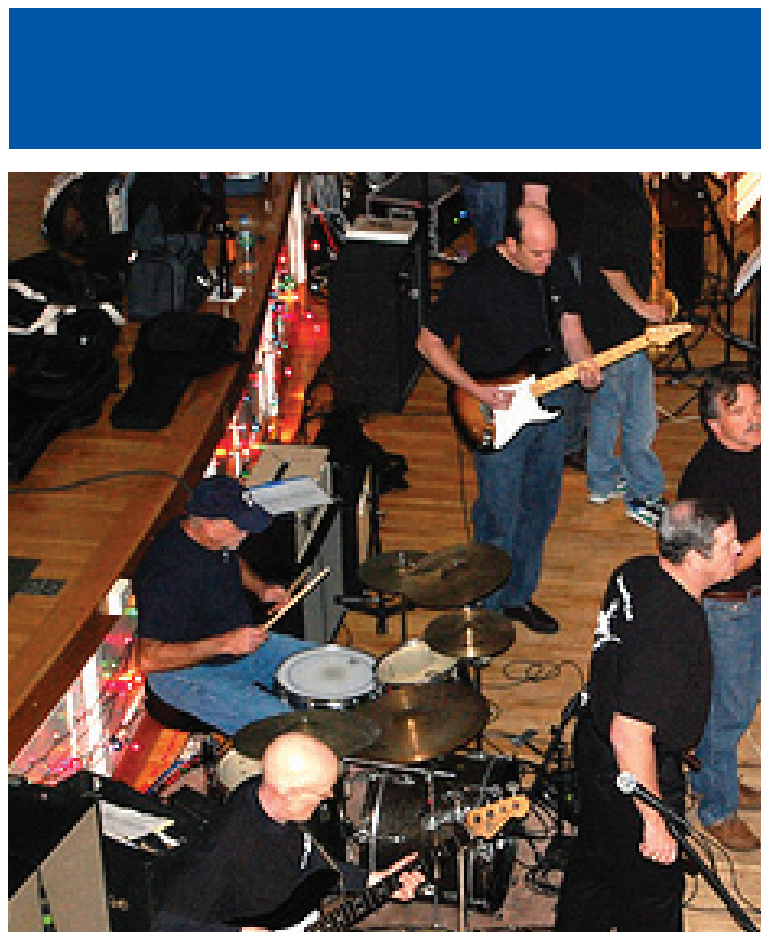
mindset. I've been really lucky and have had some interesting trips. Many years ago I won a vacation for two to the Galapagos and was hooked. After that, there was the Amazon, Thailand, Hong Kong, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Sicily, and hopefully more interesting places to come.

What is your favorite form of exercise?

Working with a trainer who motivates you to do more than you thought possible.

If you could throw any kind of party, what would it be like and what would it be for?

My husband, Chuck, plays in a classic rock band called Crossroads that has been helping charities with fundraising since 1992. They've worked with organizations ranging from Wounded Warrior Project and Toys for Tots to Channel 3 Kids Camp and a little girl with brain cancer. On May 16, they performed to benefit Dog Gone Recovery and Dog Star Rescue. If I were to throw a party, it would be where Crossroads could play.



If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?

Play golf really well. Wish I had learned as a kid. I took lessons and played for a few years as an adult, but never invested the time. It's a great skill for anyone in business. You can play it forever and use it as an excuse for traveling to interesting locations.

Who is your favorite teacher/mentor? Why?

Mr. Ferree, my math teacher in 11th and 12th grades, was soft-spoken with a good sense of humor. His teaching inspired me to major in math in college, and to go into finance after graduate school.

When you have 30 minutes of free time, how do you pass the time?

If I'm home, I'll walk around the yard to enjoy the changing seasons. I start off thinking I'm just going to see what's blooming, but end up trimming, weeding, and spending a

lot more time than planned.

What's the hardest thing you've ever done?

I took classical piano as an adult for eight years until 2013. This included master classes where students perform for each other. The anxiety of having to memorize and play in front of talented musicians was extremely high, making piano the most difficult thing I've ever attempted.

What do you miss most about being a kid?

I'm from Winston-Salem, North Carolina. My mother grew up on a farm in the western, more mountainous region (think Andy Griffith's Mayberry), and my brother, sister and I spent a fair amount of time on my grandparent's farm where they grew or raised everything they ate – crops, cows, chickens, and pigs. We grew up eating fresh-churned

butter, unpasteurized milk and southern cooking. During summer vacations, we would go to the coolness of the mountains (highest on the east coast), or the hot, action-packed Carolina, Georgia, or Florida beaches. Fond memories.

What is something you learned in the last week?

I bought an Apple Sports Watch and have been learning how to use it, particularly for health and fitness. I think most people will eventually have a smart watch of some sort.

What made you decide to join BL Companies?

I've known Carolyn Stanworth for several years, and have always been impressed by her dedication and belief that BL employee-owners can do great things. When I interviewed (through the 'Who' process), I was able to understand why.



SAFETY TOPIC: **Pool Safety**

Secure your pool with appropriate barriers. Completely surround your pool with a 4-foot high fence or barrier with a self-closing, self-latching gate.

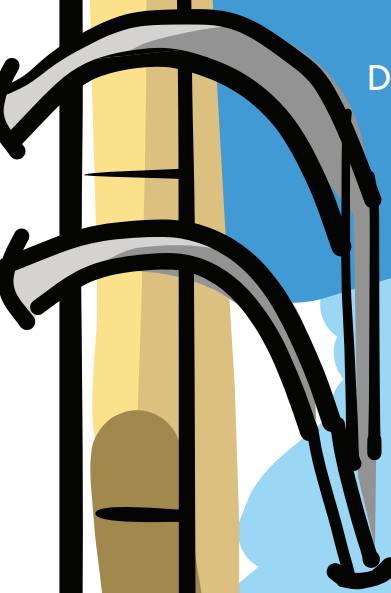
Keep the pool time fun and safe by following these safety guidelines:

In addition to the fence, door alarms, locks and safety covers create a barrier of protection around the pool.

Be sure all pool users know how to swim. Teach your children to swim as early as possible. Have young or inexperienced swimmers wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket.

Develop a buddy system — don't swim alone or allow others to swim alone.

Keep children under active supervision at all times. Stay in arm's reach of young kids.



Summer is just around the corner and a dip in the pool is a great way to stay cool.

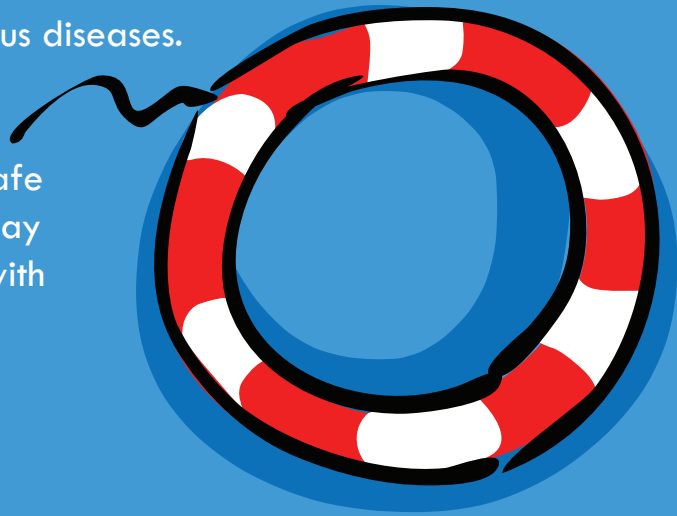
Don't allow glass bottles or other potential hazards into the pool area.

Keep radios, CD players, blow dryers, and other electrical devices away from the pool.

Keep your pool or hot tub water clean and clear. Maintain proper chemical levels, circulation and filtration. Regularly test and adjust the chemical levels to minimize the risk of earaches, rashes or more serious diseases.

Establish and enforce rules and safe behaviors, such as "no diving," "stay away from drain covers," "swim with a buddy" and "walk please."

Keep a first aid kit, ring buoys and reaching poles near the pool in case of emergency.





You may have heard about the birth of our new Project Plan in early May. This has been a joint effort involving the Project Management Committee, QA/QC Committee, PDIT, SLT and several other employee owners. In looking at our old plan, we knew we had good project managers, and good project management tools and resources; however we learned our Project Management Plan was “broken” and was not being utilized to its potential, or worse yet, not being used.

The main goal for re-vamping the Project Plan was to enhance Project Delivery and Integration to promote our company goal that 100% of Project Managers understand and use the Project Management process and tools. At the same time, we believed quality assurance and quality control could be enhanced.

PM Update

by Jim Lampkin

Last fall, the Project Managers were asked why they thought our former Project Management Plan was not as effective as it should be, and heard feedback that could primarily be grouped into three main issues:

- ① Data Entry – Data needed to be entered repetitively in multiple locations
- ② Data Mining – Finding data was challenging and finding project management tools and resources could be cumbersome
- ③ Data Management – Data was separate and disconnected

Our new Project Plan addresses each of these issues by populating project data as you

progress through the plan, collating and bringing the project data together into one place, and linking project documents through one source. Importantly, the new Project Plan uses existing project management tools and resources already in place, and allows all project team members (not just project managers) the ability to easily access project files and data with increased efficiency to help realize our company goals.

The new Project Plan can now be found within the Project Management section of the BL intranet. Thank you to all who have provided and continue to provide invaluable feedback to the Project Management Committee in support of our mission to enhance Project Management.

What profession did you want to be when you grew up?

1



My destiny as an architect was solidified as a sophomore in high school. One day, a week or so into the school year, I was skipping a class, which I had become somewhat notorious for. As I was walking down the corridor on my way out of the school, I heard a lot of light-hearted banter and sensed the energy coming from one of the classrooms. The teacher saw me in the hall, looking curiously through the door and rather than turn me in, he asked me if I'd like to sit in with his class. I walked into the room to discover it was architectural drafting. The teacher was totally engaged and seemed to be dreaming up the curriculum as the class progressed based on the interests of the students. I was hooked. I walked out of the class, into the principal's office and dropped auto shop so I could enroll in architectural drafting instead. By the end of the first year, I had designed my first building - a ski chalet - and got to work with the teacher that summer to build it. From that point forward, I knew I would be an architect. That teacher is still one of my closest friends and most influential mentor 42 years later.

- 1 Rai Muhlbauer
- 2 Ann Iseley
- 3 Kathy Rodo
- 4 Deb St. James



2

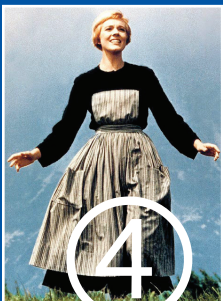
My family always had animals, particularly dogs – chihuahuas, a beagle, a cocker spaniel, poodles, shih tzus. When I was young I wanted to raise and train dogs.



3



Growing up, I wanted to study Marine Biology. I was fascinated with marine animals and watched every Jacques Cousteau special that was on tv. I even saved up my allowance money and would send it to Greenpeace so I could help them save the baby harp seals. I now go to every aquarium I can in different cities since the marine animals still fascinate me.



4

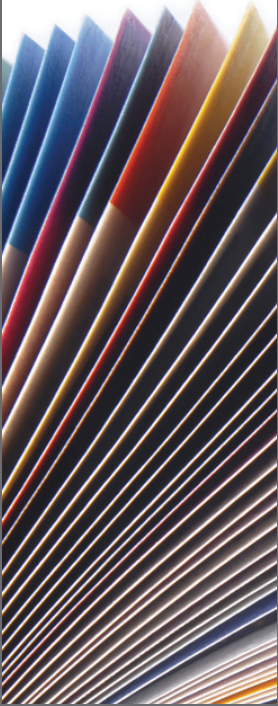
In high school I researched becoming a nun. I was always fascinated by this. My mother was a devout Catholic and made sure that we attended CCD until we were confirmed and made it to Mass every weekend, even in the summer when we were in vacation at our Grandparents home in the Midwest. Even though Mom was devout, she knew me pretty well and convinced me to go to college before making the decision to enter the Life. Good thing I listened to her.



Legal Brief

By the Legal Dept.

Practical advice based on BL's policies and procedures as well as things that might be helpful in your life outside BL.



Every employee working on a project understands the value of a kick-off meeting. The schedule is distributed, the fee is discussed, the scope and contract terms are explained. Nuances about the client, the jurisdiction where the project is taking place, the challenges in collecting receivables are all discussed. The Job Safety Analysis is shared.

So what does this have to do with the Legal Department? By getting all of the BL employees working on a project in one room and communicating all of the important project-related details at one time, everyone hears the same message. That means that everyone starts at the beginning of a project together and that reduces risk. Why? Because the kick-off meeting is a great place to ask questions,

get clarification, understand roles, see who's on the team and understand how one piece fits into the whole. By gathering everyone in the same room or on the same call at the same time, the risk of someone on the team missing a crucial piece of information evaporates. Conversely, the entire group benefits from everyone's input and the risk of one person not sharing what he or she knows also goes away.

From a **risk management** stand-point, the Legal Department would like to commend all PM's who consistently hold kick-off meetings and those team members who consistently show up. Now, don't forget to do your meeting minutes and circulate them to the team. It's a great reminder of the important information that was discussed.



Once you have the app, it's easy to use!

- >> Tap **Touch Time** for Deltek Vision.
- >> In your initial login, the application prompts you to accept Terms and Use of service. Tap the corresponding buttons.
- >> Enter BL's Touch Server URL:
<https://BLCompanies.deltekfirst.com/BLCompanies/Time/>
- >> Tap Connect.



And the ESOP Award Goes to...



BL Companies was awarded an **Annual Award for Communications Excellence (AACE)** by The ESOP Association.

The ESOP Association is the largest employer sponsored advocacy and education association focused on retirement savings in America, is a national non-profit membership organization, with 18 local Chapters, serving approximately 2,800 employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) companies, professionals with a commitment to ESOPs, and companies considering the implementation of an ESOP.



Members of The ESOP Communications Committee were present during The ESOP Association's Annual Awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. the night of May 6 when we won our communications award. The committee is proud to have received this award on behalf of all BL Companies employee owners and the committee is committed to continue communicating our ESOP with our employee owners, our clients and our communities.

BL Companies won the award in the category of **Printed Materials** which includes all printed informational material used to communicate our ESOP to employee owners, clients and our communities. Some of the material that was included in our submission included The Owners' Manual (Newsletter), the new employee owner Orientation package, our ESOP Month Calendar and Event programs, and our Employee Handbook. In addition to being awarded first place in the Printed Materials category, we also were awarded Runner-Up in another category, Total Communications. The Total Communications category recognizes excellence with all communications used to promote and explain the ESOP.

What you may not know...

This 2015 AACE award was BL Companies 3rd top prize for the annual awards program offered by The ESOP Association. We won our first AACE Award in 2008 for the category of Young ESOP, recognizing a newer company to the ESOP landscape. Our second AACE Award came in 2010 for the category of Series of Special Events, recognizing our popular ESOP Month. Our third AACE Award was won this year, 2015, and provides some concrete reinforcement that we, BL Companies, are dedicated to building our ownership culture and to communicating the details of the ESOP with our employee owners, clients and our communities.

TOUR OF THE TROPHY

To celebrate our newest award, The ESOP Communications Committee is presenting the **Tour of the Trophy**. We will be sending our three AACE Award Trophies on a road trip through all of our offices. Each office will receive one of the trophies for a day or two. While the Trophy is in your office we encourage all to touch it, take a picture with it, take it out to lunch, take it into the field, use it as a pointer during a presentation, whatever you like. The Trophy will be yours for the day. The Trophy tour will commence on Friday June 5th and end on Friday June 19th.

Please take photos!!!

We want to see what the trophies will be doing in all of the offices. Have fun with it and take pictures! We would like to post pictures from the road trip during an upcoming ESOP meeting for all to enjoy.

What did the ESOP Communications Committee do in DC?

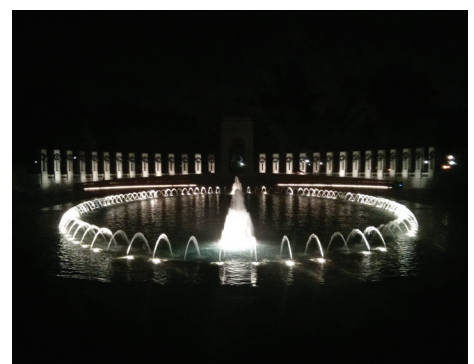
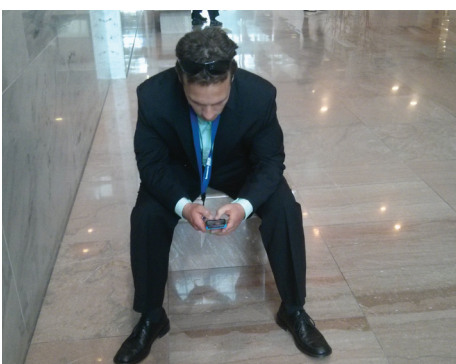


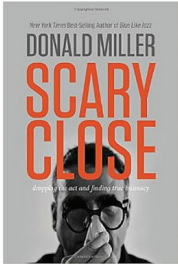
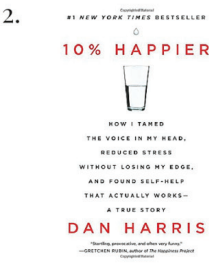
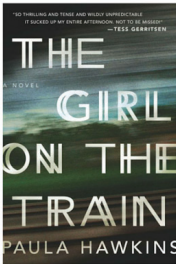
Accepted our ACE Awards!

Spoke with Connecticut's State Representatives (well...their staff at least)



Had a little fun in our downtime



1.  1. **SCARY CLOSE**
DONALD MILLER
A Novel
"A deeply funny and touching story of discovery."
2.  2. **10% HAPPIER**
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
HOW I TAMED
THE VOICE IN MY HEAD,
REDUCED STRESS
WITHOUT LOSING MY EDGE,
AND FOUND SELF-HELP
THAT ACTUALLY WORKS—
A TRUE STORY
DAN HARRIS
"Harris is generous, and that very funny."
—GRETCHEN BRYAN, author of The Happiness Project
3.  3. **THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN**
NOVEL
PAULA HAWKINS
"The first novel with three and wholly unforgettable
a reader of my kind, and I'm glad to be wrong."
—TESS GERRITSEN

CURRENT FAVORITES

4.  4. **ZERO TO ONE**
NOTES ON STARTUPS, OR
HOW TO BUILD THE FUTURE
Peter Thiel
WITH BLAKE MASSAROS
5.  5. **I'm Drinkin' to That**
A LIFE IN STYLE WITH A THIRST
Betty Halbruech
WITH REBECCA PALLEY
6.  6. **ALL THE LIGHT WE CANNOT SEE**
THE HANDBOOK OF THE YEAR
ANTHONY DOERR
7.  7. **Make it HAPPEN**
SURRENDER YOUR FEAR
"TAKE THE LEAP"
LIVE ON PURPOSE
LARA CASEY
8.  8. **The 4-Hour Workweek**
ESCAPE 9-5, LIVE ANYWHERE,
AND JOIN THE NEW RICH
EXPANDED AND UPDATED
TIMOTHY FERRISS

SUMMER READING LIST

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Have an idea for the newsletter? Please reach out to Heather Halotek.

Please send questions, comments, story ideas and photos to:
hhalotek@blcompanies.com

< Any plans to spend some time
< relaxing on the beach this
< summer? Try checking out some
< of these books!

Happenings

JUNE
22-30 ESOP Year in Review Presentations

JULY
2-3 Offices Closed
4 Independence Day
17 ICSC Boston
25 Summer Picnic (CT, NY, MA)

AUGUST
6 CPBJ Real Estate Symposium
11 Board Meeting
11 ICSC Columbus

SEPTEMBER
7 Labor Day (day off!)
23 MA Hwy Annual Expo
24 SNEAPA Conference



Did you know...
Birthdays and BL anniversaries can be found on the Intranet!



Architecture
Engineering
Environmental
Land Surveying

Employee owned. Client driven.

Issue 4: Summer 2015

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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