

## **Frank J. Bertak Safety Committee Award**

By Mark E. Hurliman, CSHM

**Frank J. Bertak** was a local leader in workplace health and safety back when the Southern Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Conference started in 1990. Frank was the Plant Manager at Medford Corporation's Stud Mill in White City. Frank was recruited to be the President of the local ASSE group when it was a Section of the Cascade Chapter, and was instrumental in attaining Chapter Status for the Southern Oregon Chapter of the ASSE. Frank served on the Conference committee several times, and served again as President in 1993/1994, when the Chapter first gave out safety recognition awards.

A bear of a man at 6'7", Frank was hard to miss in a crowd. He became a staunch safety advocate in the late 1980's after some training and coaching by Dan Miller. Frank is remembered for his great sense of humor and humility. He turned a very embarrassing hunting incident into an award winning speech at his Toastmasters club. (I can still remember his speech, he went into great detail about his first bow hunt, his preparation, the advance scouting he did, getting up early in the morning, the drive to the site, the stalk of the majestic buck, and finally, the moments leading up to the shot. He then proceeded to tell us how he slipped on a log as he shot, and how his first successful "kill" was his own leg!)

All that aside, Frank was another natural leader, and that is why the Chapter chose to name the Safety Committee Award in his honor after we lost Frank unexpectedly in 1995.