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Jim Christina, vice president and general manager of Gerdau's Cartersville steel mill, is pictured with the facility's new logo on his hard hat and shirt. The new branding coincides with the company's 110th anniversary.

Cartersville steel mill reveals new name

BY MARIE NESMITH

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Formerly known as Gerdau Ameristeel, the Cartersville steel mill and its employees currently are embracing the company's new moniker.

Along with all of its parent corporation's North American long steel and special steel operations, the local facility now is going by the name Gerdau. Effective May 17, the new branding coincides with Gerdau's 110th anniversary.

"It gets us all under one common umbrella in the name," said Jim Christina, vice president and general manager of Gerdau's Cartersville steel mill. "Over the years, the company has grown tremendously. The steel industry consolidation has led us up to this point so we've acquired several

different organizations. And it's nice to move ourselves into a common name, a common theme, to get everybody under one name. When you look at our company, we're across 14 countries [with more than] 43,000 employees and over 350 locations right now."

Started as a small nail factory in Brazil, Gerdau has expanded to now being North America's second largest mini-mill producer, employing about 8,000 individuals in the U.S. and Canada.

"For more than a century now, we have grown and diversified our business along steel's value chain with profit in every year, always striving for efficiency in our operations and continuous improvement of services for our customers," said Gerdau's Chief

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FROM PAGE 1A

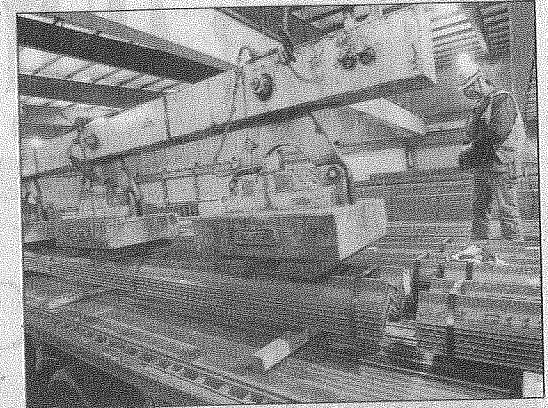
Executive Officer André B. Gerdau Johannpeter in a news release. "A pursuit of excellence and passion in everything we do, besides a strong commitment to people and the environment, is what makes up our corporate culture. This is what drives Gerdau and gives us the energy to celebrate our first 110 years."

Formed in 1975 by Atlantic Steel, the Cartersville steel mill was acquired by Birmingham Steel in 1996 before being obtained by Gerdau Ameristeel in 2002.

"In our industry, we're known as a mini mill," Christina said. "We basically recycle discarded metals, and we'll take that scrap metal and melt it down and cast it into an intermediate product called a billet or bloom. Then we'll take the intermediate product and roll it into the finished good products that we produce. We make angle products, channel products and MC channels, which are known as miscellaneous channels. And we make standard I beams and wide flange beams, and then we're a maker of an assortment of different flat producers as well.

"Our beam products would be our predominate finished good we manufacture. They're used in a variety of end products [like] construction and civil works, such as bridges and things of that nature. ... The steel industry in general was impacted quite a bit by the downturn. Here, we weren't excluded from the slowdown, but we were able to weather it very well based on our operational practices and cost control measures [that were put] in place. It also was a lot in part to do with the high quality of people that we have here within Cartersville and the corporation."

As of Dec. 31, Cartersville's facility at 384 Old



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Shane Waters, a Gerdau logistics crane operator, loads steel on a customer's truck at the Cartersville steel mill.

Grassdale Road employed 344 individuals and contributed \$37.08 million in total wages and benefits. While a small amount of its steel products are used in residential construction, the vast majority are for civil construction projects, such as building bridges and roads.

The local site's employees also were recently recognized for their charitable work with Advocates for Children. On behalf of their efforts with the Cartersville nonprofit, the steel mill won a community involvement award from the Steel Manufacturers Association May 10.

"The vision and dream of the founders of Gerdau have enabled the company to successfully grow itself from 1901," Christina said. "This facility became a part of that in 2002 — a part of that company — and it's enabled us to grow and develop as well by utilizing the core values that they believe in and instill across the corporation."