

THE BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE DISTRIBUTION CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION



DCA NEWS

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**2023
Convention
Recap**



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(l to r) Rob Darden, Gary Lawson

DCA 2023 Annual Convention Wrap-Up

The weather was perfect in Miami Beach as gas contractors and industry support members arrived at the world-famous Fontainebleau resort for the 2023 DCA Convention on Monday, February 20. The legendary hangout of such luminaries as Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra and the Rat Pack, and James Bond served as the backdrop for the 62nd annual gathering, dazzling members with its pristine beaches, blue skies, and mid-century modern architecture. It was obvious within the first 30 minutes of the afternoon registration party that this convention would have an excellent turnout as members gathered on the Ocean Lawn for cocktails and hellos.

Tuesday, February 21

Tuesday's business started at a leisurely 10:30 a.m. with the Membership Committee, which was quick to mention that a record 62 convention first-time attendees were in attendance.

Much of the discussion at the Membership meeting centered around re-engaging lapsed members via the Strategic Vision Committee's Membership Reinstatement Project. Executive Vice President Rob Darden noted that of 40 members who had joined and then left since the start of COVID, 36 of them had never participated in any DCA events.

Vince King pointed out the importance of communication with these members, and another committee member noted that it's even more effective if a fellow member reaches out to these folks rather than the DCA staff. It's also important to get more than

one person from each company to participate, as this decreases the chances of lost contact if someone moves on. Attendees were also reminded that prospective contractor members can attend as guests without membership in a "try before you buy" program with approval from the staff. Finally, the committee urged more members to take the equipment survey, as the current 41% participation rate is inadequate for associate members to predict future equipment needs.

Next, Darden opened the Town Hall and Business Session with the Treasurer's and Membership reports, along with a recap of recent DCA activities and a new BuildWitt video. DCA President Kevin Parker then recognized retiring members from the Board of Directors, followed by the presentation of the Arthur T. Everham Safety Awards by Bill Colson and Randy Bunch, co-chairs of the Safety/Risk Management Committee.

Shared Accountability

Next, speaker Sam Hall, Vice President of the Common Ground Alliance's (CGA) Damage Prevention Institute (DPI), presented on "The Next Generation of Reducing Damages Through Shared Accountability." DPI is intended to create voluntary accreditation standards and a system for true peer review between equivalent companies while using transparency of results in place of punitive performance penalties – low performers don't lose accreditation, but publicly available results show you who they are. The majority of DPI members are excavators; the number of excavators vastly increased



with CGA's recent acquisition of Gold Shovel, which involved onboarding 800 new members. All members are required to submit damage data to the organization's DIRT database, and all resulting data products are shared with all members. The peer review process is still in development but is expected to launch in 2023.

The Town Hall concluded with a panel discussion on PSMS moderated by Ashley Donnini of Lola Link Consulting. Noting that most of RP 1173's "shall" statements are aimed more at operators, the panel discussed the differences with PSMS as it relates to contractors, misconceptions about it, and advice for how best to implement it.

Powerful Truth

The Safety/Risk Management Committee delivered the most powerful moment perhaps of the entire week with speaker Eric Giguere's "The Buried Truth, Uncovered." Giguere is living, breathing proof of what can happen when companies take little shortcuts on safety to save a few minutes of time here and there.

In October 2002, when Giguere was 27, he was invited to work on a water line installation crew — despite having no experience with water lines. The supervisor, who had 30 years of experience with no major incidents, was adamantly "old school," mostly only paying lip service to safety procedures; an attitude which spread to his crew.

As the work went on, the trenches were gradually getting deeper. Then, on October 4, a water spill occurred while Giguere was kneeling in an unsecured 6.5-foot trench by himself cleaning up. In less than a second, he was buried under more than a ton of dirt. There was no one in sight to help him; although another worker was close enough to hear something and raise the alarm, he hadn't seen where Giguere had disappeared.

While the other workers faced hard decisions about

where and how to dig without risking even more serious injury to Giguere, or endangering themselves in the process, Giguere lay buried for ten full minutes, and was clinically dead when they found him. It was just six days after his wedding and one of his coworkers had to notify his wife.

Although Giguere was successfully revived, he suffered severe trauma, PTSD, years in therapy, and lost his wife to divorce when he could no longer be the man she married. He still experiences lingering effects to this day, 20 years later. Giguere reminded everyone that people don't think accidents can happen to them, and that he got buried because he had a terrible attitude about safety and wasn't man enough to speak up when things were unsafe. His life was changed forever in less than a second, all for the sake of saving a few minutes. His story was an unforgettable reminder of why DCA's relentless focus on safety remains perpetually vital.

A Cuban Air

The welcome dinner that evening was a casual affair on the lawn with a cool, light ocean breeze accompanying the Cuban band on stage. Amid moon globes and tropical décor, guests dined on Cuban food and gathered around the mojito bar to wile the night away with conversation.

Wednesday, February 22

Before the keynote speaker took the floor Wednesday morning, the DCA warmed up the crowd with a humorous video ode to "The Man from Michigan," Kevin Parker, and his year as president. Parker, a dyed-in-the-wool Wolverine, and convention chair Brad Heck, a

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dedicated Ohio State Buckeye, took turns razzing each other about their unlikely friendship.

Doing his best to follow that comedy act, Lt. Col. Dan Rooney introduced the audience to his charitable organization, Folds of Honor. As a decorated F-16 fighter pilot (USAF), father of five, author of *Fly Into the Wind*, and a PGA pro golfer, Rooney had quite a variety of interesting stories to tell. From meeting Tiger Woods in college to combat missions in Iraq to taking a bawdy Irish sportscaster up for a high-G ride, Rooney is clearly not a man with a boring life. He spoke of lessons learned from a philosophy professor about volition, from his F-16 instructor about staying ready so you don't have to get ready, and from his own experience flying above a sandstorm at night that comfort and courage can't coexist, but God is always around you even though you're not looking. Rooney said that when he resumed a more normal life after combat, he noticed how "parasitic drag seemed to be holding him back from serving a greater purpose. Ultimately it was a commercial flight with the remains of a fallen soldier that inspired him to create Folds of Honor, which provides scholarships to the children of veterans wounded or killed in service to their country.

After years of trying, he succeeded in making Folds of Honor the official charity of Anheuser-Busch and the charity has since given out more than 44,000 scholarships worth over \$200 million. After a rousing round of applause, Rob Darden presented Rooney with a \$50,000 donation to Folds of Honor in the DCA-LMCT Trust's name.

Trenchless Updates

Dr. Sam Ariaratnam opened the Trenchless Committee meeting with an update on his activities as a member of the Gas Pipeline Advisory Committee (GPAC) under the Department of Transportation (DOT). GPAC is a statutorily mandated advisory committee that provides recommendations to the Pipeline and Hazardous

Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) and the DOT Secretary regarding proposed standards for gas and liquid pipelines and facilities.

GPAC is also currently involved in a lawsuit against OSHA over banning pipe wrenches on directional drilling sites. When asked if the committee felt pressure from the Biden administration to "kill gas," Dr. Ariaratnam answered, "Not directly."

Next, Grady Bell of Bell Trenchless introduced the new HDD Association to the audience then Trenchless Committee co-chairs Nate Eastway and Alan Goodman reviewed the new HDD guidelines publication and upcoming events in collaboration with AGA, NASTT, and more.

The meeting wrapped up with a meaty question for the group: How can we bring up the standards of non-DCA-member contractors? The consensus answer was to drive demand for higher standards from the top down, starting with owners, utilities, and the people writing the paychecks.

Auction Success

In the afternoon, members scattered off to various activities around the Miami Beach area before reconvening in the evening for the annual auction. A wide array of drilling equipment and supplies was spiced up with offerings of spectacular jewelry, sports tickets and outdoor trips, hunting gear, and an extra special dinner at next year's convention in Hawaii. The silent and live auctions raised a grand total of \$632,000 for industry scholarships, industry events and staff support. This year, continuing the auction's rebound toward pre-pandemic levels.

Thursday, February 23

After the DCA announced the recipients of the Dale R. Michels and Curtis Allen scholarship awards, which totaled \$145,000 this year, and debuted a BuildWitt video, the



Kevin and Tari Parker



Ray and Jill Swerdfefer

rest of Thursday morning's breakfast was devoted to Gary Lawson, the association's newest Honorary Member. The crowd was treated to a hilarious video of "The Grumpy Old Pipeliner," a character Gary created that has the cranky enthusiasm of a badger with hemorrhoids. Gary's best friend, Jack Gabrielse, who could not be present, congratulated him by video, leading into the short but insightful film, "Who is Gary Lawson?" Lawson's humor and humility were on full display as he accepted the well-deserved honor to a standing ovation.

Gas Versus Green

Eben Wyman kicked off the Government Relations Committee meeting with a recap of 2022 activities and 2023 goals. The committee's top priority remains the Pipeline Safety Reauthorization and pushing for criminal penalties for criminal protesting; there has been some debate over including penalties for damage to equipment. The committee continues to push for three things: incentivizing use of GIS mapping, opposing mandates for SMS, and keeping the focus on damage prevention.

Wyman then yielded the floor to Frank Canavan of the American Gas Association, who spoke on the current status of fuel choice versus gas bans. Most bans currently affect new construction, but some, such as New York state's, are trying to expand to sunset old gas appliances as well.

Despite this, there are lots of exemptions for energy-intensive industries. Washington state enacted the only total future ban on gas through the building code when legislation was unable to pass, sparking widespread public opposition. A test case against another sneaky ban, in Eugene, Oregon, is currently in the works. The New Jersey legislature recently introduced a fuel choice bill to counter executive action from their governor. Canavan noted that the vast majority of places with gas bans don't have much new construction anyway, so the bans are mostly symbolic. Ironically, despite California's

well-documented opposition, the state is second behind only Texas for most new gas customers.

The key to gas's popularity with the public is its reliability, and Canavan stressed that it is important for groups like the DCA to convey to the public that gas versus green does not have to be an all-or-nothing battle. Brad Heck then gave an update on the OQIP project, promising that data from the pilot programs would be posted soon. Wyman then wrapped up with a few notes about the new Republican Congress, the May 14-16 celebration of construction on the National Mall, and efforts to organize the next D.C. fly-in for June.

Friday, February 24

The second keynote speaker of the week was a familiar face to DCA members — Jason Dorsey of the Center for Generational Kinetics.

To keep things from being repetitive, Rob Darden had specifically asked Dorsey "not to talk about generations" this time. Instead, he asked the audience to think about the best and worst advice they ever heard, then posed the question: How do you tell the difference between good and bad advice? All the answers came back to one common theme — experience.

As Dorsey pointed out, people assume that with experience comes wisdom, but experience can hold you back as well. As proof, he cited examples of how differences in both quantity and quality of experience between older and younger workers affects everything from the job market to perceptions of getting a driver's license. Executives and entrepreneurs will have different answers to whether you need to go to college to be successful, each based on their experience. Dorsey told his own story of dropping out of college to write a book and start a research firm based on what he saw his peers going through. The rest of the talk connected back to

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the recruiting process, touching on how job postings are perceived, changing workforce expectations, competency versus mastery, communication habits, and passing on experience. Dorsey concluded with this advice: If you want to get more job applications, meet people where they are — allow them to apply by text message if that's what it takes to get their attention — separate recruitment from retention, and show rather than tell people what you expect of them to get their best performance.

Skills For Success

The final business meeting for the week was the Workforce Development Committee. New co-chairs Stephanie Krabbe and Matt Dvorak charted out the goals for 2023: to introduce the second BuildWitt video series, encourage engagement with SkillsUSA, participate in the next DCA/AGA panel, and hold a Leadership Development conference.

For the next SkillsUSA Techspo, June 20-22 in Atlanta, Krabbe has written a guidebook for getting involved locally and has plans to write a participation guide for the event. The committee is still looking for contributors to help develop a heavy equipment operator competition as well.

Next, the committee detailed the contents of the Leadership Development Program, which will debut with two sessions in October and November targeting employees who are moving up in responsibility. Session 1 will focus on exploring and leading different behavior styles, while Session 2 concentrates on emotional intelligence, improving performance, driving difficult conversations, and unleashing your potential

After a brief review of the upcoming DCA & AGA Utility Contractor Workshop and the "Success Looks Like This" marketing campaign, the idea was put forth to start a Job & Career Fair Subcommittee. The subcommittee would be responsible for handling requests for presence at fairs and working with members to make sure DCA is well represented.

Rat Pack Returns

Finally, after a long week of important business, it was time to party.

Forgoing the usual banquet hall format, this year the DCA staff pulled off the impressive feat of renting out the entire world-famous LIV nightclub on a Friday night. Located just off the main lobby of the Fontainebleau, the club was founded in 1954 and became one of Frank Sinatra's favorite hangouts. Sinatra and Dean Martin impersonators emceed the evening's events while the best dinner in an exceptional week for food was served in the wings downstairs. Kevin Parker turned over the DCA presidency to Ray Swerdfeger in the only formalities of the evening, and then the music kicked into overdrive. Dazzling light displays and a "money" drop punctuated a killer playlist with something for every generation, and the floor was hopping.

The evening ended with a boisterous singalong to "Don't Stop Believing" and "Sweet Caroline" before moving the after party down to the Arkadia Pool. It was a spectacular end to the week in Miami Beach that won't soon be forgotten.

The DCA will convene next for the Mid Year Meeting at The Lodge at Spruce Creek in Stowe, Vermont, July 24-27. Next year's convention will be held in Hawaii. ▲

2022 DCA Arthur T. Everham Safety Award



Safety excellence was recognized for several DCA contractor members for the effectiveness of their respective programs in 2022. The DCA established the Arthur T. Everham Safety Award in 1986 to recognize contractors with exceptional safety programs. The revised and updated judging criteria includes: the number of OSHA lost workday cases, number of OSHA restricted duty days, number of fatalities, the presence of a documented safety management system (SMS), the use of a drug-testing program, and the company's root cause analysis (RCA) system.

The award is highly coveted as recipients are recognized and honored by competitors. For 2022, the categories awarded are:

Under 200,000 Hour Category:

- **First Place – (a 4-way tie)**
 - Atlas Trenchless LLC, Rockville, MN
 - Brotherton Pipeline Inc., Gold Hill, OR
 - Hanging H Companies, Burlington, WA
 - R&R Pipeline, Newark Inc., OH
- **Second Place** – The HDD Company, El Dorado, CA

201,000 Hours to 700,000 Hours:

- **First Place** – Blackeagle Energy Services, Berthoud, CO
- **Second Place** – AGI Construction, Smithfield, RI

701,000 Hours to 1.7 Million Hours:

- **First Place** – Michels Utility Services Inc., Brownsville, WI
- **Second Place** – Vector Force Development, Westminster, CO

Over 1.7 Million Hours:

- **First Place** – ARB Inc., Lake Forest, CA
- **Second Place** – Q3 Contracting Inc., Little Canada, MN

SAVE THE DATE

DCA Mid Year Meeting – July 24 – 27, 2023
The Lodge at Spruce Creek, Stowe, Vermont



Committee News



2023 Convention

The DCA Board of Directors and the working committees met at the 2023 DCA Convention, Feb. 20-25 in Miami Beach, Florida.

2022 Board of Directors

The 2022 DCA Board of Directors met for the final time on Monday, Feb. 20. Board members reviewed the 2023 convention schedule, convention sponsorship, the auction, and the safety award recipients. The board also reviewed the results of the 2022 Impact Purchasing study that will be published in the 2022 DCA annual report, *Benchmarks*. Board members reviewed the status of the Strategic Vision committee projects and newly formed Future Leaders committee.

Outgoing board members Ben Nelson, Michels Pacific Energy; Kevin Miller, Miller Pipeline; and Scott Cooper of Caterpillar, were thanked for their time and contributions to the board.

Leadership Council

The Leadership Council also met Monday, Feb. 20. The council reviewed actions of the Board of Directors from their earlier meeting. Each DCA working committees' chair briefly outlined the topics their committee would discuss in their individual meetings.

The Leadership Council is made up of the elected chairs and vice chairs of each of the committees, the president and vice president of the board, and the executive vice president. The purpose of the Leadership Council is to coordinate the strategic direction of the DCA, as directed by the Board of Directors.

Membership Committee

The Membership committee met Tuesday, Feb. 21. The committee reviewed the list of inactive contractors and noted that there are only a very small number not participating in the DCA in some way.

- **Membership summary** – Attendees reviewed the membership report presented to the Board of Directors. Since the October meeting, five new contractor members and five new associate members have joined DCA. Two contractors and eight associate members have been dropped, resigned, or merged with other members. As of the meeting, current membership was 88 contractor members and 113 associate members.
- **Prospective and resigned members** – The chairs noted that the pandemic and the resulting economic conditions have hurt the associate members. Attendees were asked to reach out to members who have dropped and encourage them to rejoin the DCA. Chairs will also be contacting prospective members about membership benefits and the July 2023 Mid Year meeting in Vermont.
- **New member mentorship** – Attendees were asked to wear a blue “hospitality ribbon” on their name badge and try to reach out to all first-time attendees at events. DCA members who have been active in the association for more than a year were asked to mentor first-time attendees to make them feel welcome.

The charge of the Membership committee is to actively solicit and evaluate potential DCA members and make recommendations on member programs and awards to help recruit and retain members in the association. The

vice-chairs are Mike Aydt of MP Technologies and Brad Everett of Caterpillar.

Safety/Risk Management Committee

Motivational Safety Speaker Eric Giguere presented "The Buried Truth Uncovered" at the Feb. 21 Safety/Risk Management committee meeting. Giguere shared his story of how he was buried alive while working in a trench, including the circumstances and events that led up to his accident and the profound effects it has had on him and his family. A special thanks was given to United Rentals for inviting Giguere to speak.

The committee announced that the 2023 Safety Congress will be April 17-19 at the Royal Sonesta New Orleans. Registration for the event is open and everyone is encouraged to attend or send their safety personnel.

The Safety Director and Safety Person of the Year awards will be announced at the Safety Congress. Nomination forms have been sent to DCA contractors. Jason Baker of Mears Group and John DeVito of The Hallen Construction Co. are co-chairing the 2023 event.

The 2022 Arthur Everham Safety Awards were presented at the DCA Business Session held earlier in the afternoon. The questionnaire was updated and revised by a member subcommittee to incorporate current pipeline safety management system (PSMS) requirements. A list of the Everham Safety Award recipients can be found on page 13.

The committee thanked Bill Colson of PreTec Directional Drilling for his three years of service as vice-chairman of the committee. Caleb Scheve of Price Gregory Int'l will be the new vice-chair.

The charge of the Safety/Risk Management committee is to review all information concerning safety in the industry and safe jobsite practices. The committee also has oversight for the Arthur T. Everham Safety Award and the Annual Safety Congress. Randy Bunch of Aaron Enterprises and Caleb Scheve of Price Gregory Int'l are the vice-chairs.

Workforce Development Committee

The Feb. 24 Workforce Development committee meeting updated attendees on efforts since the October Fall Meeting.

- **SkillsUSA** – The 2023 SkillsUSA Conference will be June 19-23 in Atlanta and will include a heavy equipment operator competition. DCA has reserved a block of 10 booths at the event and there is one booth remaining in the DCA section. Contact the DCA office or Jeri Lamerton of Lamerton Strategic Communications if your company is interested in renting the booth space.
- **2023 DCA Leadership Development Program** – The two-part DCA Leadership Development Program is scheduled for Oct. 2-5 and Nov. 6-9 in Dallas and will focus on leadership essentials, strengths finder, situational leadership, crucial conversations, emotional intelligence, and leadership legacy. The event will be open

to 25 participants who are moving up in responsibility at their companies. The registration fee will be approximately \$2750 and cover both sections and will need to be completed by Aug. 15 for participants to complete the pre-event homework. Registration will open in mid-June.

- **Workforce Panel at DCA & AGA Workshop** – Dave Wisniewski of Vermeer Corp. will be moderating a panel on Leadership Development Training at the March 27-29 DCA & AGA workshop in Chicago. The panel will discuss how they are navigating and applying innovative solutions associated with the challenges of recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding a new age workforce. Others involved with the panel are Karla Vos, Vermeer Corp.; Stephanie Krabbe, InfraSource; Todd McDonald, ATW Training Services; Jill Mancini, Zenger Folkman/Extraordinary Leader; and Nicole Fondren, Spire.
- **BuildWitt – Sponsor companies have received copies of the videos.** A "Success Looks Like This" marketing campaign targeting Gen Z and millennials and including the videos will be ready for distribution soon.
- **Job Fair Sub-Committee** – A sub-committee is being formed to coordinate DCA job fair opportunities. Volunteers will work with the DCA staff to secure booth space and to staff booths at student job fairs across the U.S. Contact Stephanie Krabbe of InfraSource for more information.

The charge of the Workforce Development committee is to develop, coordinate, and implement strategies to support the growth of the expanding work force within the industry. The committee accomplishes this through the promotion of the industry as a career by using the vast knowledge and leadership of the DCA membership and promoting coordination with other industry professionals and national organizations. Dave Wisniewski of Vermeer Corp. and Pete Fojtik of Michels Utility Services are the retiring vice-chairs of the committee. Stephanie Krabbe of InfraSource and Matt Dvorak of Groebner are the 2023 vice-chairs.

Government Relations Committee

The Government Relations committee received updates on several pertinent topics at their Thursday, Feb. 23 meeting. For more details about the following topics, please see the *DCA Insights* section of the DCA News.

- **Permit Reform for Infrastructure Projects** – The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) made permit reform a bipartisan issue, as more than a half trillion dollars of new investments in American infrastructure will need an expedited permit reform process. Reform proposals will apply to all projects, including fossil fuels and clean energy.

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- **Climate Initiative** – House Republicans on the Energy and Commerce Committee have introduced a range of commonsense energy proposals, including a 'Sense of Congress' measure that supports states overseeing hydraulic fracturing policy and repealing the 'methane fee' included in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).
- **OQ Integrity Process (OQIP) Update** – The three pilots in Michigan, Washington and New Mexico have been completed and the White Papers on each have been published and are on the OQIP.org website. Participants will discuss the status of each pilot during a panel discussion at the DCA & AGA workshop, March 27-29, in Chicago.
- **"Celebration of Construction"** – DCA is participating in the May 14-16, 2023 "Celebration of Construction" event on the National Mall. This event will build on last year's "Demo Day" event to showcase construction technologies to 40-50 OSHA representatives. Twenty national associations and 20 corporations are involved, making this a big event for the pipeline industry. DCA is reaching out to members interested in participating.

The charge of the Government Relations committee is to target specific regulatory and legislative items and report their findings through the following publications: *DCA Insights*, *DCA News*, and the DCA website. The vice-chairs are Andy Miller of Alex E. Paris Contracting and Brad Burris of National Equipment Dealers.

Trenchless Committee

The Trenchless committee received updates on discussion items at their Feb. 22 meeting.

- **USDOT Gas Pipeline Committee (GPAC)** – Dr. Sam Ariaratnam of Arizona State University updated the committee regarding leak detection, gas distribution, hydrogen, carbon capture, as well as a lawsuit against OSHA over banning pipe wrenches on directional drilling sites. The committee, composed of 15 individuals representing public, industry, and government entities, makes recommendations to stakeholders, giving guidance on the laws and regulations that protect and advance the nation's pipeline infrastructure. Ariaratnam represents the public sector and is serving a three-year term on the committee.
- **HDD Association** – Grady Bell of Bell Trenchless consulting gave a brief presentation on this new organization, its goals, and potential collaboration. The HDD Association is a Texas-based group that will focus on safety, best practices, and training. It will represent small and large drillers, promote standards and guidelines, and provide education and training. Organizers are looking for more feedback before the website is launched.

- **Collaborative Initiatives Update** – Committee chairmen provided updates on several industry items, including the HDD Good Practices Guidelines that can be purchased through NASTT; the AGA Trenchless Workshop, Feb. 28-March 3 at the Loews Hotel in Atlanta, GA; and the DCA Trenchless microsite located at www.dcatrenchless.com.

The charge of the Trenchless committee is to support safety, training, technical developments, and voluntary operational guides that sustain professional practices and contractors in the trenchless industry. The 2022 vice-chairs were Rob Hotz of Laney Drilling and Dustin Kraft of Vermeer Corp. The new vice-chairs are Nate Eastway of Gabe's Construction Co. and Alan Goodman of HammerHead Trenchless.

Future Leaders Committee

The newly formed Future Leaders Committee held its first face-to-face meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 21. The committee is an offshoot of the Strategic Vision Committee and will work to encourage junior level company managers and younger people to get involved with the DCA. Committee members crafted a mission statement and 2023 goals.

The mission of the Future Leaders Committee is to cultivate and engage a community of emerging leaders within the gas distribution industry. Through networking, outreach, and professional development opportunities, the committee aims to equip members with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in their current roles and advance their careers, and to advance the culture of the DCA. Committee vice-chairs are Elizabeth Michels of Michels Corp. and Sarah Mahlik of TT Technologies.

2023 Board of Directors

The 2023 DCA Board of Directors held their first meeting Friday, Feb. 24. President Ray Swerdfeger welcomed new board members: Director at Large Andy Miller, Alex E. Paris Contracting; Bill Colson, PreTec Directional Drilling; Chad Davis, Miller Pipeline; Rob Hotz, ECI Contracting; Past President Director Kevin Michels, Michels Corp.; and Junior Associate Member Director Sarah Mahlik, TT Technologies.

Board members were updated on and discussed the 2023 DCA budget, the 2023 calendar of events, improvements to the DCA convention and committee meeting structures, and how subcommittees can report to the board. The directors also discussed their 2023 goals and the objective of getting more 40-and-younger company employees involved with DCA.

The next board of directors, leadership council, and committee meetings will be in conjunction with the 2023 DCA Mid Year Meeting, July 23-27 at The Lodge at Spruce Creek, in Stowe, Vermont. ▲

If you are interested in becoming an active member of any of the working committees, please contact the DCA office.



Kevin Michels



Heather Brown

DCA-Dale R. Michels Scholarship Recipients Announced

Ten students were given a financial boost when they were selected by the scholarship committee as recipients of the 2023-24 DCA-Dale R. Michels Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship was founded in 1998 in honor of DCA Honorary Member and Past President Dale R. Michels from the proceeds of the DCA's Annual Auction. The committee is pleased to announce that with DCA Members' generous support of the DCA auctions, that \$105,000 of scholarships to both students starting college and people who are returning to college has been awarded. The recipients for the 2023-24 academic year are:

- Daniel Bailey, Caterpillar Inc. - \$4,000
- Isabella Cable, Michels Utility Services Inc. - \$10,000
- Tyler Cullen, K. R. Swerdfeger Construction LLC - \$12,000
- Cassandra Dos-Santos, Feeney Brothers Utility Services - \$10,000
- Nora Evanto, Precision Pipeline LLC - \$15,000

- Sierramarie Fossati, The Hallen Construction Co. Inc. - \$10,000
- Connor Keenan, InfraSource LLC - \$4,000
- Isabela Moreno, ISCO Industries - \$10,000
- Kyle Schoenwalder, Michels Utility Services Inc. - \$20,000
- Matthew Sigl, Miller Electric Mfg. - \$10,000

The 2023 DCA-Dale R. Michels Scholarship committee was comprised of DCA President Kevin Parker, Mears Holdings LLC; DCA Treasurer Mark Albert, AGI Construction Inc.; Past President Director Kevin Miller, Miller Pipeline; Associate Member Director Scott Cooper, Caterpillar Inc.; Ben Clark, Derrick Corp.; Dave Hammond, Finn Corp.; Andrew Miller, Alex E. Paris Contracting Co. Inc.; Kelsey Moreland, Precision Pipeline LLC; and Matthew Patterson, Sharewell HDD. Kevin Michels of Michels Corporation sits permanently on the committee.

DCA-Curtis Allen Scholarship Recipients Announced

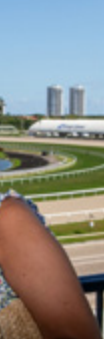
Eight students were selected as recipients of the DCA-Curtis Allen Scholarship. The scholarship was founded in 2010 in honor of the Curtis Allen and emphasis is given to students entering a vocational, trade or technical school. The scholarship receives funding from the DCA auctions and Halliburton. The recipients for the 2023-24 academic year are:

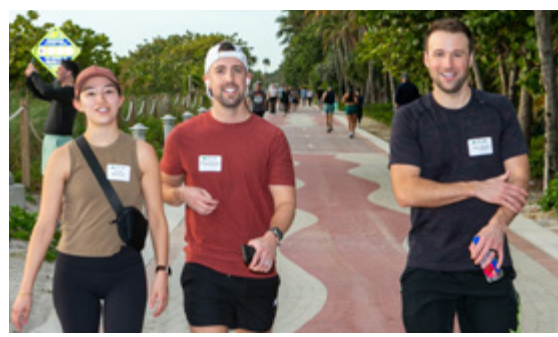
- Gatlin Bunch, Aaron Enterprises Inc. - \$8,000
- Evan Emery, National Equipment Dealers - \$1,500
- Samantha Hansen, KS Energy Services LLC - \$1,500
- Kevin Llanes, MasTec North America Inc. - \$5,000
- Alberto Lopez Jr, Bentonite Performance Minerals LLC - \$10,000

- Michael Ortega, The Hallen Construction Co. Inc. - \$5,000
- Ryan Robbins, Miller Electric Mfg. - \$5,000
- Jaida Spielvogel, KS Energy Services LLC - \$1,500

The 2023 DCA-Curtis Allen committee was comprised of: DCA Vice President Ray Swerdfeger, K.R. Swerdfeger Construction Inc.; DCA Director at Large Chad Davis, Miller Pipeline; DCA Associate Member Director Randy Rupp, Ditch Witch and Eric Van Dusseldorp, Vermeer Corp. Halliburton Representatives Chris Bower of Bentonite Performance Minerals and Clint Pitman of Drilling Mud Direct sit permanently on the committee. ▲









SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE THIS.

GAIN SKILLS YOU CAN TAKE ANYWHERE.

Everyone wants an exciting, fulfilling, and well-paying career. The problem is, there are too many options and a lot of competition. Then there's the cost of education to throw in the mix. But what if there was a clearer path to building a successful career?

Gas distribution contractors provide our nation with access to essential resources through natural gas and underground utility work. That's right, pipelines. What most people don't know is, careers in this industry are high-paying, highly rewarding, and you get expert on-the-job training—so you don't have to fork out an arm and a leg in college tuition to get started.

You can send emails and fetch coffee, or you can start building an incredible career right now. It's time to redefine success.



BENEFITS OF WORKING IN THE GAS DISTRIBUTION INDUSTRY



MAKE BANK

Average wage for key industry jobs is \$75,000. Many pay much more.



LEADERS IN SAFETY

\$91 million invested in enhancing safety everyday.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Be a part of building our country's infrastructure. We power America by empowering you.

Stat sources: Center for Energy Workforce Development, AGA

LEARN MORE at DCALetsGetToWork.com



'This Is What Success Looks Like'

DCA Campaign Promotes Distribution Industry Careers

Today's jobseekers have tended to overlook job openings in the distribution pipeline industry as a great first step toward their dream career. An alluring new workforce initiative – 'Success Looks Like This' – now makes it difficult not to.

The Distribution Contractors Association (DCA) officially launched its 'Success Looks Like This' initiative in February. A host of sponsoring companies have been promoting the campaign individually and posting the overall message on their own social media sites since December 2022.

The campaign's intended audience ranges from high school students and college graduates about to enter the workforce, to non-traditional candidates with large gaps in their work history or training in a completely unrelated field, to employees just looking for something more rewarding than their current job.

It also provides campaign guidance for employers, sharing insights with them on the psychology of today's diverse workforce and what candidates are looking for in a job.

A Need to Educate the Workforce

The 'Success Looks Like This' campaign is DCA's proactive response upon discovering what influences Gen Z and Millennial career choices.

Most candidates tend to prioritize financial success, as well as the potential to have a positive impact, contributing to a worthy cause. They also place high value on working in a friendly and supportive work culture that supports a healthy work/life balance.

However, many Gen Z and Millennial jobseekers had one or more misconceptions about pipeline-related jobs. Among these were fear of failure, believing that the jobs required skillsets they did not possess or could not acquire. For some it was a false notion that pipeline work is low-paying, dirty, harmful, or dangerous work.

Inspirationally Educational Resources

The 'Success Looks Like This' campaign materials use a humorous tone and bold language to connect with the audience, resetting any misperceptions about the underground utilities industry.

The materials show what industry roles entail, their function and the opportunities for training, professional development and personal advancement.

Participating companies have access to fliers, posters, and thousands of photos for use in their own social media, all featuring real-life industry professionals at their jobs in friendly, safe, and orderly work environments.

The sponsoring companies of this campaign included Centuri, United Rentals, Ditch Witch, Wyo-Ben, Vermeer, Artera, ISCO, Charge, Pipe Strong, ECI Contracting, Primoris, Intren, and Vacuworx.

One of the strongest resources in the campaign is a suite of videos, each featuring underground utilities professionals whose various roles span all levels of the industry:

- Laborer
- Executive
- Backhoe and hydroex operator
- Drill and locate operator
- Welder and fuser
- Safety director
- Office executive/coordinator
- Foreman

Let's Get To Work

Campaign materials lead jobseekers and employment providers alike to the DCA workforce development microsite, DCALetsGetToWork (DCALetsGetToWork.com).

Site navigation is intuitive and easy to use. Employers can post their jobs at the site and find resources that educate them about the various strengths of each diverse subculture within the pool of candidates. Candidates in turn can easily search through job openings, apply for DCA scholarships and upload their resumes. Uploading their resumes on the sites currently gets them in front of more than 230 industry employers for consideration.

'This Is What Success Looks Like' On The Road

Promotional materials including the videos are available on the DCA website and its social media platforms. They will also be available in DCA and member booths at select industry tradeshow and exhibitions. These include such events as the SkillsUSA TechSPO in Atlanta (June 19-23), ASCA in Atlanta (July 15-18), and Utility Expo in Louisville, Kentucky (Sept. 26-28). ▲

Safety

Safe work practices are guidelines and procedures adopted for carrying out specific tasks that ensures workers' exposure to hazardous situations, substances, and physical agents is controlled in a safe manner. The site will foster awareness to safety and risk within the construction industry. **Meaning of SAFETY** is the condition of being **safe** from undergoing or causing hurt, injury, or loss. (Merriam-Webster)



DCA Launches 'Be Safe' Microsite

DCA has dedicated a new Be Safe auxiliary microsite ([dcabesafe.com](https://www.dcabesafe.com)) to foster risk awareness and mitigation within the construction industry. The site gives construction industry professionals a user-friendly, single point of access to guidelines and procedures that reduce the potential for damage, injury, or loss while performing specific workplace tasks.

The Be Safe site is subdivided into sections: videos, updates, resources, training, safety recognition, and events. Each section emphasizes the need to prioritize safety above all to help ensure everyone goes home safely each and every day. They include guidance and best practices from manufacturers, training programs, and agencies throughout the underground and construction industries.

Be Safe is the fifth microsite the DCA has launched to achieve its overall goal of making education, training, and recruitment tools easily accessible throughout the underground industry.

DCA officially launched its workforce development worksite, Let's Get to Work ([dcaletsgettowork.com](https://www.dcaletsgettowork.com)), in October 2020, the result of a partnership between DCA and Mike Rowe.

Two more microsites were launched in 2021 – Trenchless and OQIP. Trenchless ([dcatrenchless.com](https://www.dcatrenchless.com)) is dedicated to minimally invasive pipe installation, maintenance, and repair techniques. OQIP ([oqip.org](https://www.oqip.org)) is an industry coalition created to develop a process framework to elevate the integrity of Operator Qualification which relies on many provisions found within ASME B31Q. Voluntary actions overseen by OQIP will increase consistency and standardization by "raising the bar" above and beyond current regulations and serve as a guide for continuous improvement for the operator and contractor.

A DCA Government Relations ([dcagovrelations.com](https://www.dcagovrelations.com)) microsite also went live in 2022. Its objectives are to educate members on regulatory and legislative issues the industry is currently facing and to explain the actions it believes its members should take at state and national levels. ▲

Calendar

DCA & Industry Events

2023

MAY 1-4

AGA 2023 Operations Conference & Biennial Exhibition
Gaylord Texan Resort
Grapevine, Texas
www.aga.org

MAY 14-18

Pipe Line Contractors Association of Canada (PLCAC) Convention
The Fairmont Empress
Victoria, British Columbia
Canada
www.pipeline.ca

JULY 24-27

DCA Mid Year Meeting
The Lodge at Spruce Creek
Stowe, Vermont
www.dcaweb.org

SEPTEMBER 11-15

IPLOCA 2023 Convention
Hilton Hotel
Vancouver, British Columbia
Canada
www.iploca.com

2023 (cont.)

SEPTEMBER 26-28

The Utility Expo
Hilton Hotel
Kentucky Exposition Center
Louisville, Kentucky
www.theutilityexpo.com

OCTOBER 23-25

DCA 2023 Fall Meeting
Fairmont Olympic Hotel
Seattle, Washington
www.dcaweb.org

2024

JANUARY 30 - FEBRUARY 3

2024 PLCA Convention
Grand Hyatt Baha Mar
Nassau, Bahamas
www.plca.org

ATTENTION ALL DCA MEMBERS!

So you do not miss out on future meeting and event notices, please have your company's IT representative whitelist all emails from dcaweb.org. If you have any questions, please contact Teri Korson at tkorson@dcaweb.org.

Insights



House Approves Broad Energy Package, Focuses on Permit Reform

After taking control of the U.S. House of Representatives in January, Republicans made it clear that a top priority will be to roll back some of the destructive climate change policy that was included in recent legislation backed by the Biden White House, and to reinstate commonsense policy that would lower energy costs for American families. In mid-March, House Republicans rolled out a major energy package that included legislation from multiple committees. The main goals highlighted by House leaders were to increase domestic energy production; reform the permitting process for all industries (both fossil fuel and renewable energy projects); reverse “anti-energy” policies advanced by the Biden Administration; streamline energy infrastructure projects and exports; and boost the production and processing of critical minerals.

The “Lower Energy Costs Act” (HR 1) was sponsored by Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-La.) and includes a large slate of energy policy proposals collected from

leaders of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Natural Resources Committee, and Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The measure includes proposals aimed at speeding up the country’s approval process for energy production and transportation as well as curbing states’ ability to block energy projects that run through their waters.

Specifically, many longstanding goals held by the energy and construction industries are pursued by a range of policy proposals by the above mentioned committees, including provisions that would:

- Prohibit President Biden from banning hydraulic fracturing and leave fracking policy largely to the states
- Prevent states from blocking interstate infrastructure projects
- End the abuse of the water quality certification process by streamlining the permitting process under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act and limiting review to only impacts on water quality

- Reform the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) permitting process to streamline federal reviews for all sectors of the economy, including at international borders
- Set deadlines for completion of NEPA reviews at one year for environmental assessments and two years for environmental impact statements
- Provide certainty by imposing a 120-day deadline on filing litigation on final agency actions concerning energy and mining projects
- Repeal all restrictions on the import and export of natural gas, including LNG
- Repeal President Biden's \$6 billion natural gas tax
- Disapprove of President Biden's canceling of the Keystone XL pipeline
- Require the Department of the Interior to resume lease sales on federal lands and waters

"I am proud to announce that I will be introducing our H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Costs Act, to cut red tape and increase energy production here at home to lower energy costs and stop our reliance on hostile foreign dictators for our energy and minerals," Majority Leader Scalise said while introducing the bill. "With the introduction of the Lower Energy Costs Act, we will put a stop to the war on American energy, become energy independent again, and lower costs for families who are struggling."

In late March, the bill was approved by the House on a 225-204 vote, was immediately declared a non-starter in the Senate and was under a real veto threat from the White House.

The bill represents House Republicans' latest offer on permitting reform, a goal shared by Senate Democratic leadership and the White House. HR 1 would enact into law Trump administration changes to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by setting a two-year time limit on environmental reviews and limit litigation and exempt a host of activities from reviews, and mandate more oil and gas lease sales, would make it harder for states to block construction of interstate pipelines that cross their borders and make it easier to permit mining, drilling, and other energy projects.

Of course, not everybody in Congress is looking to expedite pro-energy infrastructure projects. "It's almost as if you gave a pen to an oil lobbyist and wrote down everything they'd want," Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), said about the legislation in remarks on the House floor. Needless to say, her sentiments are shared by many Democratic colleagues in the House.

DCA was invited to multiple exclusive meetings with House leadership staff and a select few industry

organizations to garner support for the measure, and DCA's executive vice president Rob Darden provided statements that focused on the need to reign in state authority that has been used to block energy projects for too long. "Reforming the outdated permitting process for infrastructure projects remains a top priority of DCA and has become a bipartisan issue on Capitol Hill – Section 401 of the Clean Water Act remains especially problematic," Darden said. "While the intent is to ensure that states can more effectively regulate local land and infrastructure, several states use this authority as a method to delay or create cost-prohibitive roadblocks to getting important energy projects off the ground. We appreciate inclusion of provisions to combat that problem in HR 1."

While all aspects of HR 1 will not cross the finish line, many provisions in this milestone legislation stand a much better chance in the 118th Congress, now that permit reform has become a bipartisan issue. In the wake of enactment of recent laws with unprecedented investment in a wide range of American infrastructure, lawmakers of all stripes are suddenly interested in updating the permit process. DCA appreciates that many former opponents are starting to see the light.

DCA Takes Lead in Pipeline Safety Debate for Pipeline Contractors

DCA members interested in the association's government relations platform know that pipeline safety is a big issue, and one where jurisdiction is shared by multiple committees in Congress. As House committees put together legislation to reauthorize the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) and the nation's overall pipeline safety program, DCA has already weighed in with letters to all oversight committees in the House and Senate and is making scores of personal visits with committee staff and member offices.

The next Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety (PIPES) Act will see at least some action this year, and DCA is encouraging consideration of a few key issues.

Penalties for Physical Attacks on Critical Infrastructure

Pipeline sabotage is a problem that remains in the pipeline industry, and one that is not given enough attention. The threat of attacks on natural gas and oil pipelines like the ones suffered by the Dakota Access Pipeline only a few years ago remains, albeit without the same level of media attention. While most media coverage is given to attacks on the power grid as well as cyber attacks such as the one on the Colonial Pipeline

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in 2021, criminal protesting activities are still going on, potentially with devastating consequences. Throw in unfortunate movies such as "How to Blow Up a Pipeline," which makes the case that destruction of pipeline infrastructure should be considered a valid tactic in the pursuit of environmental justice, and there is ample fodder for overzealous and even criminal protesting activity.

DCA has endorsed legislation in the past that would create criminal penalties for damaging or destroying a pipeline facility, and we are an early supporter of the Pipeline Sabotage and Accident Prevention Act (HR 1484), which would establish a criminal penalty for interfering or tampering with the operation of a pipeline. Under HR 1484, any person who knowingly and willfully causes (or threatens to cause) a defect to a pipeline that would affect its integrity or safe operation would be subject to fines and/or imprisonment of not more than 10 years. Importantly, to address bogus claims that efforts to restrict any protesting activities violates rights to free speech, the language states that nothing in this bill "abridges the exercise of rights guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States."

Support for this measure will bolster its chances of being attached to the next PIPES Act. During visits to Capitol Hill offices, DCA has encouraged consideration of including vandalism conducted at construction jobsites within the scope of this provision. For example, setting construction equipment on fire near a natural gas pipeline can be as dangerous as turning a valve.

In a press statement DCA put out with our allies at the United Association (UA) in advance of a House pipeline safety hearing, DCA's Rob Darden made the point that "pipeline facilities under construction should be included within the scope of this provision. While interfering or tampering with the operation of a pipeline would clearly compromise pipeline safety, vandalism and destruction of nearby equipment used to build a pipeline can be just as dangerous," he said.

The pipefitters union agrees. "United Association members are the best trained and most highly skilled craftspeople in the industry – and we work tirelessly to provide reliable and affordable energy to millions of Americans. Sadly, physical attacks on pipeline infrastructure itself and even our equipment and jobsites compromise our shared goals and put the safety of our members at risk," said Mark McManus, General President of UA. "Strong bipartisan action to hold perpetrators accountable, and to curb future attacks, is essential to protecting our members on the jobsite and ensuring we can meet our shared energy goals."

DCA and industry allies will continue to garner support

for the standalone bill toward the goal of attaching it to broader pipeline safety bill as the issue advances through the legislative process.

Damage Prevention and GIS Mapping

DCA was pleased to see that the PIPES Act of 2020 included language that would require operators of gas distribution pipelines to identify and manage traceable, reliable, and complete records, *including* maps and other drawings. Accurate mapping of underground facilities is essential to accurate and timely locating, and use of geographic information systems (GIS) is the most effective way to identify and document a wide range of data about the underground infrastructure in a given area.

GIS can create, manage, visualize, analyze, and map different layers of data by creating maps and scenes related to underground facilities. GIS connects data to a map, integrating location data with a range of limiting information regarding the subsurface facilities in that area, and it allows for layering of data tied to geographic points. Rather than restricting the user to limited features on a static map, GIS mapping allows for viewing customizable combinations of data layers in a single dynamic tool.

DCA believes ensuring the use of readily available GIS mapping technologies would be the most efficient way to identify and document the exact location of underground pipelines (as well as other subsurface infrastructure). This precise mapping system is increasingly utilized to ensure the accurate locating and marking of underground facilities.

While there is interest in the pipeline construction industry in requiring use of GIS mapping, DCA recognizes that a federal mandate would be problematic for certain pipeline operators, particularly for small operators and operators of pipelines subject to new or pending federal regulations. However, PHMSA offers funding opportunities that focus on a range of pipeline safety issues, including those that encourage the development of new technologies and help municipality and community-owned utilities improve and maintain safe pipeline infrastructure.

Both DCA and the UA believe increased use of GIS is the most effective method of mapping underground facilities, including natural gas pipelines. "Accurate mapping of underground facilities is a fundamental part of accurate and timely locating," Darden said in the joint DCA/UA statement. "Ensuring the use of GIS should be considered a priority as pipeline safety legislation is developed and considered."

Pipeline Safety Management Systems

The pipeline industry continues to instill a “culture of safety” through implementation of pipeline safety management systems (SMS). SMS is a top-to-bottom, cyclical approach to safety that requires buy-in from senior management and a commitment to pursuing continuous improvement, along with several other elements. Although DCA and most in the pipeline construction business have embraced voluntary SMS approaches in the pipeline industry, we believe mandating the use of SMS would be shortsighted policy.

The PIPES Act of 2020 required PHMSA to provide a report to Congress on the effectiveness of pipeline SMS that have been implemented. In 2021, DCA released a template for pipeline contractors to refer to when developing SMS programs or improving existing SMS approaches in their construction operations. Soon after, DCA was invited to participate on the Pipeline SMS Industry Team, led by the American Petroleum Institute and consisting of representatives from several

associations representing pipeline operators, contractors, and other service providers, with input from PHMSA and state government entities.

Ensuring a safety culture in a pipeline company must be the responsibility of the operator, just as contractors must be responsible for implementing and maintaining SMS in construction operations. Therefore, DCA will continue to fully embrace the goals and concepts of SMS, and its increasing adoption in the pipeline realm. However, we will also continue to oppose any and all efforts to mandate SMS as part of the pipeline safety regulations, which we believe would prove to be unenforceable and counterproductive to achieving the very goals SMS strives to achieve.

Other issues DCA is addressing in the next pipeline safety reauthorization include preserving cost-benefit analyses required in PHMSA regulations, and opposing an official role for the Environmental Protection Agency in the PHMSA rulemaking progress. ▲



Eben M. Wyman
Principal
eben@wymanassociates.net

Member News



Kevin Miller Named NASTT Hall of Fame Recipient

Kevin Miller, Senior Advisor for Miller Pipeline in Indianapolis, IN and DCA Past President, has been named one of the 2023 NASTT Hall of Fame recipients. The NASTT Hall of Fame honors members who have made outstanding accomplishments and exceptional contributions to the advancement of the North American trenchless industry and NASTT. The nominee must be a current or former member of NASTT for a minimum of 10 years and are age 50 or over. Kevin will be officially inducted during the No-Dig Show in Portland, Oregon in May.

Kevin started working in the natural gas distribution industry in the mid-seventies for Miller Pipeline and worked in nearly every capacity with the company over the years. He served as president and chief operating officer from 2004 until June of 2020, when he transitioned to the role of Senior Advisor for Miller and its parent company, Artera Services.

Miller plays an active role in the industry and has served various positions on the Board of Directors for DCA including President in 2010. He is currently serving on the board of directors for the Gold Shovel Association, working to continuously improve excavation safety

awareness and procedures in the industry. He is also a member of the HDPE Municipal Advisory Board for the Plastic Pipe Institute (PPI), having served as chair of their training committee.



Forbes Magazine Names Vermeer Corporation One of America's Best Mid-Sized Employers

Vermeer Corporation was recently recognized as one of America's Best Mid-Sized Employers by Forbes magazine. Forbes partnered with market research company Statista to survey over 45,000 Americans working for businesses with at least 1,000 employees to determine top employers across the United States.

Vermeer Corporation was identified in an independent survey based on direct and indirect recommendations from respondents who were asked to rate their willingness to recommend their own employer to friends and family.

"With people at the center of everything we do, we are so proud of our growing company and team doing the important work around the world," said Vice President of Human Resources Kate Guess. "Thank you to our team members who made this award a reality."



McElroy

McElroy Announces New Broken Arrow Campus

McElroy, the world's leading designer and manufacturer of thermoplastic fusion equipment, announces the addition of a fourth campus, to be housed in the recently purchased facilities occupied by Baker Hughes in Broken Arrow, OK.

"Our 68-year-old, second-generation family business has been blessed with significant growth since our last expansions in 2005 and 2013. Our existing campuses are operating at near or full capacity, and over the last 18 months our company leadership has worked toward acquiring a new facility to address our market growth while maintaining our commitment to this great community where we live," said McElroy President and CEO Chip McElroy.

In 2005, McElroy made a long-term strategic decision that all their manufacturing facilities would remain in northeast Oklahoma, and they have not wavered on this commitment. Currently, McElroy operates with approximately 300,000 square feet of plant and office facilities covering 47 acres across three McElroy campuses, all in the Tulsa area. In the last decade, numerous product evolutions, along with product expansions, mean additional facilities are needed to support manufacturing and final assembly operations.

"We are excited to announce McElroy expanding to Broken Arrow. They have a strong and longstanding reputation in our region for being dedicated employers and for providing innovative quality products. This is definitely a win for Broken Arrow and we are thrilled they will continue their upward trajectory in this facility. We believe they will be incredible partners with our community," said Jennifer Conway, President and CEO of Broken Arrow Chamber and Economic Development Corporation.

This new facility will provide an additional 193,000 square feet of space for McElroy operations, including a planned showcase assembly operation responsible for roughly 40% of McElroy's annual business. The extensive office space available at the new Broken Arrow Campus

will allow McElroy to relocate all customer-facing departments while providing for future growth needs as well. Other McElroy facilities at 5124 South 100th East Avenue and the legacy facilities at 833 North Fulton will be repurposed to support other product families in the growing product line.

"Broken Arrow is a great city to do business in and we welcome McElroy. Our city continues to see growth and economic development thanks to announcements like this" said Michael Spurgeon, Broken Arrow City Manager.

"This acquisition will pave the way for our growth over the next decade," McElroy said. "It's exciting how well this industrial facility fits our needs, and we are equally proud to be increasing our investment and commitment to the greater northeastern Oklahoma region. We are passionate about this business, and care deeply about creating a great work home for the approximately 370 employees that we consider part of our extended 'family' and who make McElroy what it is today."



HammerHead Trenchless

HammerHead Opens New CIPP Order Fulfillment Center in Florida

A new HammerHead Trenchless Order Fulfillment Center (OFC) located in West Melbourne, Florida, is now fully operational. Cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) installers throughout the Southeast United States are receiving their orders for consumables faster.

The West Melbourne OFC is made possible through a partnership with Florida Warehousing and Storage, a leading third-party logistics company in Florida's East Coast region. Florida Warehousing and Storage offers multiple logistics services and warehouse solutions with over 75,000 square feet of storage space it owns and operates.

An earlier OFC established in Greencastle, Pennsylvania, in mid-2022 serves customers from Ohio to Massachusetts and south to North Carolina. For those

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who prefer to collect their orders directly from the OFC facility, both OFCs also offer prescheduled pickup.

Paul Waskow, HammerHead Inventory Control Manager, said the OFC concept ensures reliable, quick delivery of consumables by shortening shipping routes. Shorter routes not only reduce time in route but also a shipment's exposure to the potential for mid-route delays that can impact delivery time, such as weather.

The West Melbourne location began operations in November 2022, starting with trial runs and increasing the size of loads. Short said the OFC is now fully operational and capable of meeting anticipated increases in product demand and accommodating Hammerhead Trenchless installers overall.

Martin Short, HammerHead East U.S. Sales Manager, said giving CIPP installers close access to HammerHead consumable solutions can make a huge difference. One is the ability to confidently take on spur-of-the-moment jobs as they come up. "Many CIPP installers just don't have the ability to keep sufficiently large supplies of product on hand," Short said. "The OFC means they don't have to."

HammerHead customers served by the new West Melbourne OFC will not notice any change in their

ordering experience. "The only difference," Short said, "is in more reliable availability and quick delivery times, knowing they'll have what they need when they need it."



James (Jim) Summers

**James Joseph Summers (Jim)
January 15, 1949 - March 12,
2023**

James (Jim) Summers, 74, of Fulshear, TX passed away on Sunday, March 12, 2023 in Houston, TX after a courageous battle with cancer.

Jim was born on January 15, 1949 in Kane, PA to the late Erma Lou Summers. He married

Margaret (Peg) Mix on February 23, 1974; she preceded him in death in June 2007. He then married Mary Filson in November 2017; she survives.

Jim worked his entire life in the pipeline industry getting his start with Utility Constructors in Linesville, PA and was most recently employed by Snelson Companies, Inc. He was currently serving as President of the Board of Directors of the Pipe Line Contractors Association (PLCA) where

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Nick Ritchie, Sales & Commercial Director;
nick.ritchie@sealforlife.com

**Visit the online DCA Member Directory:
www.dcaweb.org/page/MemberDirectory**

he was a member of the Board since 2016. Jim enjoyed hunting, fishing and spending time with friends and family, especially spoiling his grandkids. He was kind and generous, never met a stranger, loved good food, and telling tales.

In addition to his wife Mary, Jim is survived by his daughter Jaime Kingsley (Stephen) and their children Camden and Dylan of Harrisburg, NC; a son Kyle Summers (Holly) of Bozeman, MT; step-daughters Jamie Bielich and her daughters Kira and Gina; Molly Weston and her son Calvin all of Henderson, NV.

A Memorial Service was held on April 18th at 1pm at Parkway Fellowship in Richmond, TX. A Celebration of Life will be held on June 10th in Conneaut Lake, PA with additional details announced at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations be made to one of the following organizations: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Educational Fund or the American Cancer Society.

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Ditch Witch

Ditch Witch Introduces AT120 All Terrain Directional Drill

To enhance underground construction operators' productivity while working in tough ground conditions, Ditch Witch has introduced the AT120 All Terrain (AT) directional drill — the largest AT system from Ditch Witch to date.

The AT120 gives operators the power and stability needed for efficient fiber, pipeline and utility installation through hard rock. Ditch Witch said the new machine also

enables maxi-rig drill operators to move down a class size to meet jobsite constraints without compromising jobsite productivity.

The AT120 features 15,500 ft.-lbs. of rotational torque and 3,000 ft.-lbs. of inner rotational torque — a 50 percent increase over the AT100. With 120,000 lbs. of thrust and pullback, the AT120 allows operators to take on a wide variety of projects, as well as move through longer bores and larger diameter installations more efficiently.

The drill is powered by a 280-hp Cummins Stage V diesel engine that meets European emissions standards for cleaner job sites.

"Anyone drilling through hard rock needs a machine that has the brawn to push through," said Jeff Davis, Ditch Witch HDD product manager. "The AT120 delivers the exceptional power that these jobs require. And as our largest AT drill yet, the AT120 pushes Ditch Witch users to larger-scale jobs that typically run maxi-rigs, which means maxi-rig operators can bring less equipment to the job site, maximizing cost savings and boosting jobsite uptime." ▲



DCA MEMBERS - SEND US YOUR NEWS!

DCA would love to publish your company news in upcoming issues of the DCA newsletter and on the DCA web site. Please send news items, press releases, images or videos to cgreen@dcaweb.org.

Featured DCA Member Websites



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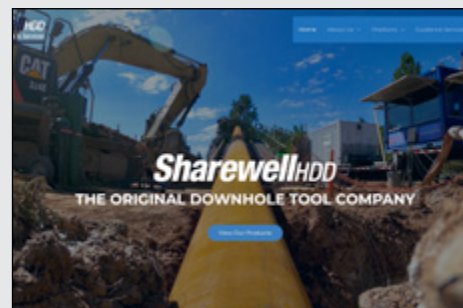
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