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DCA NEWS

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**2022
Convention
Recap**

Chihuly in the Desert at Taliesin West



CONTENTS

04 2022 Convention



09 DCA-Arthur T. Everham Safety Award



10 Committee News

13 Scholarship Recipients

14 Convention Photos

21 Government Relations Microsite



22 Insights

24 Industry Calendar

25 Mid Year Meeting



26 Member News



DCA 2022 Board of Directors

DCA 2022 Annual Convention Wrap-Up

The February weather was flawless as DCA members gathered for the 61st DCA Annual Convention in Phoenix. Cloudless blue skies and mild temperatures reigned the entire week over the beautiful art deco grounds of the Arizona Biltmore, a landmark hotel designed by legendary architect Frank Lloyd Wright and opened in the final days of the Roaring 20s.

With the global pandemic waning, at least for now, over 400 guests made the trip to bring the convention back to numbers rivalling those before the lockdowns began, and the stage was set for a spectacularly successful event.

Friday, February 18: Membership, Mentorship, and Mingling

Membership

The Membership/Hospitality Committee reported that membership was down slightly from 2021, in part due to consolidation and mergers. Vince King of McElroy Manufacturing and chair of the Strategic Vision Committee (SVC) addressed how the SVC was taking consolidation into account for their future plans.

In new business, discussion turned to the mentorship program, which had been proposed by a first-time member at the 2021 convention. So far, the program has 10 volunteers, half contractors and half associates, and numerous requests for mentors have been received. Vince King discussed experiences so far. The committee solicited proposals for new ideas, such as a junior membership, and said that over the next 12 to 18 months they

would be pushing a membership drive targeting young professionals. The committee also asked for a stronger response to the equipment survey.

The committee later hosted 39 first time convention attendees at an afternoon coffee hour befitting the Prohibition-era setting.

Welcome to Phoenix

The registration party Friday afternoon welcomed folks on the manicured lawns of the Biltmore amid palm trees, desert landscaping, and art deco buildings. As always, Vacuworx raffled off unique and useful gifts as members dined on sliders, nachos, pretzels, and finger foods. Hats and sunglasses were in abundance in the bright afternoon sun.

Caterpillar employees dressed 20s-style in suspenders, bowties, and boater hats hosted the evening welcome reception and dinner, with entertainment by a violin trio performing popular tunes. The desert evening chill drove conversation toward the warmth of the gas fire heaters as the night went on.

Saturday, February 19: Education, Insight, and the Big Auction

Safety/Risk Management

The busiest day of the convention began with the Safety/Risk Management Committee meeting, with Randy Bunch of Aaron Enterprises being welcomed as a new vice-chairman of the committee.

Chad Lindsley of United Rentals presented "More

to Know than Just the Standard,” highlighting ways to improve safety and compliance in the literal trenches. Lindsley’s primary focus was on shoring versus shielding, making the important distinction that shoring prevents cave-ins while shielding protects workers if a cave-in happens. He discussed the various types of equipment for each purpose and their benefits, engineering requirements, and what not to do if you want to remain compliant with regulations. The committee announced the safety award winners (listed on page 9) and asked for volunteers to join a new subcommittee being formed to review and update the safety award questionnaires.

Workforce Development

The Workforce Development Committee packed a full itinerary into their one-hour meeting.

The committee reviewed their 2022 goals, noting that while no single initiative is a silver bullet, the BuildWitt (is this the correct word BuildWitt) video series is currently the capstone project. Feedback on the videos has been excellent. Ten volunteers have stepped forward to make more videos which will feature industry jobs from equipment operator to executive. Randy Blount of BuildWitt presented an overview of the company and its rapid growth to “make the dirt world better.”

Turning to DCA’s efforts with the Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD), the energy industry is now being recognized as a career cluster in the academic world, which could lead to energy curriculum being more readily taught in classrooms. The committee also announced the CEWD’s virtual career fair coming in April.

In SkillsUSA news, DCA will have one booth at the national show in June. Elizabeth Michels of Michels Corp. talked about her company’s participation in SkillsUSA events, which she described as being more about education than recruiting at this point. She added that events such as Michels’ pipe fusion demo offer a chance to start a conversation.

DCA is planning to host a two-day Workforce Summit in the Dallas-Fort Worth area later this fall. The committee requested suggestions for topics and recommended that companies send not only their HR personnel but management as well. Dave Wisniewski of Vermeer Corp. proposed that DCA should sponsor a booth at the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) 2022 Annual Conference in Austin in July, which attracts thousands of counselors and offers a good opportunity to interface with people who can steer students toward construction. Finally, Mary Kelly of Strata Tech Education Group showed a promotional video for infrastructure skills training and discussed the Million Dollar Pledge to Get Americans to Work program. Strata Tech will offer 100 matching scholarships for half-off tuition for DCA member employees enrolled at any Tulsa Welding School or The Refrigeration School in the country.



Peter Zeihan

Keynote – Population Dynamics and the Future

The opening keynote lunch started with a Star Wars-themed tribute to 2020-21 President Ben Nelson’s life and DCA career. Nelson then shared stories about his past conventions and the hard lessons he learned after forgetting his wife’s birthday one year. After thanking Convention Chairman Jon Heinen, the keynote speaker, strategist, futurist, and author Peter Zeihan took the stage.

Zeihan said that during the pandemic the U.S. economy switched from mostly service-based to mostly goods-based almost overnight. Zero tolerance lockdown policies in Asian countries have been good for manufacturing by limiting the spread of infection, allowing quicker reopening, but they can’t keep doing it—one infected trucker caused the Chinese government to shut down the world’s biggest port for a month, Zeihan said. Yet because the Chinese vaccine is not very effective, they must keep locking down.

Zeihan also explained how the fallout from the one-child policy means China doesn’t have enough children to replace the enormous aging workforce. Zeihan predicted that the People’s Republic of China could collapse in the next decade under economic and political failures, and China could lose almost half its population by 2050 as the older generations die out.

Much of the rest of the world is not in much better shape in terms of population dynamics as birthrates have fallen over the last few decades, creating a ripple effect. For example, as Mexico’s birthrates continue to decline, it will likely lead to fewer workers immigrating to the U.S. in the coming years. That said, the U.S. is in better shape than most, but with huge numbers of Baby Boomers retiring, there are not enough Gen-Xers to replace them in leadership positions. At the same time, Millennials and Gen Z are underachieving due to the economic strife of the last two decades, which will create labor issues for years to come as they struggle to climb the ladder.

(continued on pg. 6)



Zeihan expects the children of Millennials to eventually rebuild the workforce by around 2045.

Zeihan also observed that the U.S. holds the cards by being a net producer of oil and gas, while China must import from the Middle East and could be easily cut off in case China follows its historical pattern of lashing out when it feels cornered. Zeihan believes that ultimately the U.S. is the only country that can maintain the global economic structure over the next few decades, but with our own internal problems we are also likely to be the greatest source of global instability in the coming years.

Auction Time

The DCA Annual Auction was Saturday evening. Silent auction bidding coincided with an outdoor buffet on the ballroom lawn. Once the live auction began, the crowd was ready for action. Diamonds, front-loaders, fishing trips, football tickets, truck rentals, vacuum excavators, tool packages, shotguns, and more all went quickly as the excitement ramped up. By the end of the evening, the live and silent auctions combined to raise \$607,000 for 90 items, topping last July's sum and bringing the total one step closer to pre-pandemic levels.

Sunday, February 20: A Living Legend and the Town Hall Keynote – Lessons from the Ocean

During Sunday's group breakfast, DCA formally presented the winners of the DCA-Dale R. Michels and Curtis Allen scholarships (see page 13 for a list of the recipients). Randy Rupp of Ditch Witch then introduced probably the most anticipated speaker of the convention, legendary oceanic explorer Dr. Robert Ballard.

Recognized for finding famous shipwrecks like the Titanic and the Bismarck, Ballard is known to nearly everyone from decades of National Geographic covers and specials. His talk began with his own unlikely origins, born in landlocked Wichita, Kansas, growing up with a dad who flew with Chuck Yeager, and starting his military

career in Army intelligence. Nonetheless, his early inspiration from the movie "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea" drew him toward the ocean and got him a scholarship from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. That eventually led to him being plucked from the Army to join Navy intelligence at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, home of the famously deep-diving Alvin submarine.

Ballard said his early experiences with dyslexia had prepared him well to rely on imagination, which is critical to working in the deep darkness of the ocean floor. He described how his work helped to rewrite geology, chemistry, and biology textbooks as his dives to mid-ocean ridges helped prove the theory of plate tectonics and discovered whole new realms of life at "black smokers"—boiling springs on the ocean floor that teem with unexpected life. Ballard pointed out that humans had already set foot the moon before we ever laid eyes on the ocean floor, and we remain a long way from fully exploring our own planet. He then described what it was like to go on a dive, and the proper way to haze graduate students in a tiny submarine.

Ballard's search for the Titanic served as cover while successfully searching for the lost nuclear subs U.S.S. Thresher and Scorpion. This led Ballard to go on a binge of historical discoveries that would rewrite the history books as well and made him famous. After President Ronald Reagan signed the Law of the Sea Convention in 1983, which doubled the size of U.S. offshore waters, Ballard was commissioned to explore the new territory much like Lewis and Clark had explored land centuries earlier. Along the way, Ballard invented telepresence—he claims he has been "Zooming" for more than 20 years—and underwater robotic vehicles.

Ballard also talked about his belief in the Gaia Hypothesis, which proposes that the Earth itself is a living creature. He emphasized the necessity of diversity in getting all Americans involved as we face foreign adversaries like China, and the importance of the visual arts in a



technical education—STEAM, not STEM. He wrapped up with a lively Q&A session that wandered through topics ranging from vacations and imagination to global warming, sea level rise, and staying non-political in a divided country. The consensus in the room afterward was clear: that was cool.

Town Hall

Up next was the only business of the day: the Town Hall and Business Session. Rob Darden gave the Treasurer's Report, which showed some lost revenue in 2021, but Darden noted that the situation wasn't particularly bad. Membership was also down, but not worryingly so. Darden briefly reviewed the growing family of DCA websites and outreach programs, as well as the locations of future meetings. DCA honored outgoing president Ben Nelson and retiring BOD members Shepard Poole, Mike Hickey, and Woody Ferrell, and Safety/Risk Management Vice Chair Bill Colson of PreTec Directional Drilling presented the Arthur T. Everham Safety Awards (see page 9 for a list of the winners).

Christina Sames, Senior Vice President for Safety, Operations, and Security at the American Gas Association (AGA), stepped to the podium to talk about safety developments, energy regulations, and innovation.

Sames said that pipeline safety regulations already in the works include valve install/minimum rupture detection standards and the Q2 2022 mega-rule for gas transmission; proposed regulations include rulemaking on leak detection and gas distribution pipelines in response to the Merrimack Valley incident. Sames said the AGA is committed to implementing Pipeline Safety Management Systems (PSMS) within three years, including assessments, recommendations for member companies, a risk data committee, and promotion of damage reduction.

Sames also said that as part of ongoing efforts related to climate change, the AGA is actively pursuing initiatives on Net-Zero emissions and energy resilience while exploring the implications of policy-driven electrification

(banning gas in cities). She believes that net-zero is possible, but only if natural gas is part of the solution. For the future, she advocates accelerating R&D and modernization, plus more research on renewable natural gas (RNG) and hydrogen.

Sames reminded attendees that local elections matter in making policy and said a recent trust survey indicated that local business leaders have more influence than politicians and lobbyists. She ended her talk with a few thoughts on the possible end to "obligation to serve" rules that could impact utility installation.

The remainder of the afternoon was dedicated to activities under the cloudless Phoenix sky. From the annual golf tournament, hiking, kayaking, and off-roading to museum visits, architectural landmarks, or just chilling by the pool, members had their pick of ways to relax and enjoy the beauty of the Valley of the Sun.

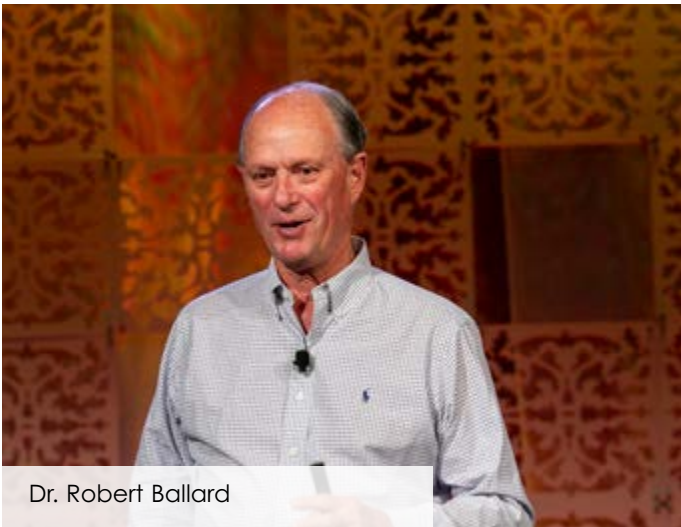
Monday, February 21: Trust, Government, Engineers, and Gangsters

Keynote – The Value of Trust

Following the announcement of the golf tournament winners Monday morning, sponsor Newman Tractor introduced the final keynote speaker of the convention, trust researcher and author of *The Trust Edge* David Horsager.

Horsager's basic premise is that everything of value is built on trust. He defined trust as a confident belief in a person, product, or organization, and said the cost of distrust in both time and money is massive. Horsager said the number one reason people decide to work for a company is trust in the leadership, and asked attendees to think about how the lack of trust costs their teams. Horsager said there are eight pillars of trust: clarity, compassion, character, competency, commitment, connection, contribution, and consistency. Each pillar is important, he said—failure of any one can undermine all the

(continued on pg. 8)



Dr. Robert Ballard



David Horsager

others. Each pillar also has counterforces that actively work against them, but it is never, ever, ever a communication issue—it always comes back to one of the pillars. Horsager illustrated his lessons with stories about bailing hay on the farm with his father and bear attacks (not at the same time).

Horsager's number one recommendation to increase workplace retention was simple: keep promises. He added that:

- Little things done consistently make the biggest difference.
- Atrophy is guaranteed without intentional action.
- If you want trust, do the work.

Government Relations

The Government Relations Committee always has plenty to report, and this year was no exception. Jumping into federal legislation first, Eben Wyman of Wyman Associates noted that in President Biden's infrastructure bill certain things like carbon capture are likely to benefit the industry. He believes the narrowly defeated "Build Back Better" bill is likely to be broken up into parts to pass it piecemeal, meaning we haven't seen the last of some of its more harmful provisions to the gas industry.

On the state and local level, DCA is continuing the fight for "fuel choice" laws in the wake of news that Maryland wants all-electric new construction by 2024—the most aggressive proposed ban in the country—and New York City is in discussions over a gas ban as well. The committee urged members to sign up for the DCA's Muster system and contact their lawmakers. Wyman also discussed the possibility of organizing the first fly-in to Washington, D.C. in three years, to take place this summer.

Gold Shovel has successfully transitioned into the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), and members were encouraged to get involved at the upcoming AGA workshop. Brad Heck updated activity on the OQIP project,

which will be presented to the AGA and other groups in upcoming months. Legislators are getting on board, Heck said, with some state regulator sites already showing DCA's OQIP process.

Locating issues—the "811 Emergency"—came up next. The committee said the biggest loss is economic and urged members to read a full report on the issue at dca.govrelations.com. In a couple of final notes, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is now requiring a climate change impact statement for all permit requests, and the next pipeline safety bill has been delayed by more than a year. New committee co-chairs will be coming on board at the next meeting.

Trenchless

After approving their updated mission statement, the Trenchless Committee convened a panel on engineering issues and solutions. Panelists Rob Tumbleson, ECI Contracting; Dan Carson, Carson Corp.; John Bentley, InfraSource; and Chad Davis, Miller Pipeline said the most common problems they encounter are inadequate site surveys, inconsistent quality of geology and geotechnical reports, and lack of clarity on why things are engineered a certain way. In general, they believe those issues relate to lack of pre-planning, aiming for the least expensive rather than best engineered solution, Geotech reports not going deep enough, and insufficient chemical analysis.

The panelists also discussed workspace and access issues, including lack of space for equipment in designs, engineers not understanding the capabilities of rigs, and work restrictions on hours, noise, etc. made without consulting contractors. They also noted that designs don't always have proper depth of cover or allow for proper location of utilities, settling, or what will be built on top after it's all covered over. Contractors struggle with what level of risk to take on, liability issues, bid process restrictions, and requirements that don't always save money as advertised.

With respect to permitting and specifications, con-

tractors face more restrictions on disposal of drilling fluids created without proper knowledge of them, disallowed materials "because they think it's bad," more effort required for fluids and solids management, and overpaying for disposal. The panel concluded that most of these problems require the same solution: education, education, education. They also suggested having drillers sit in on design and highlighting success stories where money or labor was saved through written case studies.

The audience was enthusiastic in adding suggestions, starting with not preaching to the choir—talk to the engineers, not just other contractors. Other recommendations included reaching out to engineering organizations, submitting white papers, contributing to good practices courses at the North American Society for Trenchless Technology (NASTT), promoting workshops to clients, bosses, etc., and sponsoring the creation of tutorials on things to avoid.

President's Dinner – A Night at the Speakeasy

With business finally wrapped up for the week, Monday evening it was time to party at the President's Reception and Dinner. The theme was the Roaring Twenties, and DCA members turned out in their best Prohibition-era style. As a band played jazz and standards on the stage, guests gathered at the art-deco style bar next to a vintage Ford Model A wearing all manner of fedoras and other hats, flapper finery, gangster suits, feathers and

fringe, vests, bowties, argyle socks, and newsboy caps. At least one 5-cent shoeshine boy found his way into the rich-looking gathering, and a tommy-gun-shaped liquor bottle was spotted by spying feds.

Ben and Katie Nelson were escorted to the stage by "cigarette girls" for his final presidential address, where he highlighted success stories of employees who overcame hardships. Incoming president Kevin Parker of Mears Holding then took over and recalled his journey to this point and his number one goal: don't mess up. He also stressed the importance of following through on current projects and planning diligently for the future. Dave Wisniewski followed with a history lesson on the 1920s and the Biltmore Hotel, observing how history makes things go from "cool to special." He urged members to get to know the history of the DCA and see just how special it is as well.

After dinner, the band kicked back up and the cigarette girls and waiters put on a surprise dance show as photos from the 20s flashed on screens around the room. Then it was the members' turn to hit the dance floor, and they quickly showed that they knew how to party like it's 1929 as the band played on.

The next meeting will be the Mid Year Meeting, July 18-21 at the Coeur d'Alene Golf & Spa Resort in northern Idaho, next to a lake described by National Geographic as one of the most beautiful in the world. Come see what the DCA staff has in store for you next time! ▲

2021 DCA Arthur T. Everham Safety Award



Safety excellence was recognized for several DCA contractor members for the effectiveness of their respective programs in 2021. The DCA established the Arthur T. Everham Safety Award in 1986 to recognize contractors with exceptional safety programs. Judging criteria includes: the number of OSHA lost workday cases, number of OSHA restricted duty days, number of first-aid cases, number of fatalities, the presence of a documented safety program, the use of a drug-testing program, and the company's Experience Modification Rate.

The award is highly coveted as recipients are recognized and honored by competitors. For 2021, the categories awarded are:

Under 150,000 hour Category:

- **First Place – (a tie)**
 - Brotherton Pipeline Inc., Gold Hill, OR
 - R&R Pipeline, Newark Inc., OH
- **Second Place** – Atlas Trenchless LLC, Rockville, MN

151,000 hours to 300,000 hours:

- **First Place – (a tie)**
 - NuLine Utility Services LLC, Belle Chasse, LA
 - Loy Clark Construction, Tualatin, OR
- **Second Place – (a tie)**
 - Laney Directional Drilling, Waller, TX
 - Pipe Strong LLC, Schaumburg, IL

301,000 hours to 750,000 hours:

- **First Place** – AGI Construction, Smithfield, RI
- **Second Place** – Hanging H Companies, Burlington, WA

Over 1 Million hours:

- **First Place** – Michels Utility Services Inc., Brownsville, WI
- **Second Place** – Q3 Contracting Inc., Little Canada, MN

Committee News



2022 Convention

The DCA Board of Directors and the five working committees met at the Feb. 17-22, 2022, DCA Convention in Phoenix.

2020-2021 Board of Directors

The 2021-2022 DCA Board of Directors met for the last time on Thursday, Feb. 17 after serving an unprecedented two years. Board members reviewed the 2022 convention schedule, convention sponsorship, the auction, and the safety award recipients. The board also reviewed the results of the 2021 Impact Purchasing study that will be published in the 2021 DCA annual report, Benchmarks. Board members discussed and approved a subcommittee to review the two scholarship applications and the scoring process.

Outgoing board members Mike Hickey, The Hallen Construction Co., Inc.; Shepard Poole, The Hallen Construction Co., Inc.; and Woody Ferrell, Vermeer Corp. were thanked for their time and contributions to the board.

Leadership Council

The Leadership Council also met Thursday, Feb. 17. The council reviewed actions of the Board of Directors from

their earlier meeting. Each DCA working committee chairmen briefly outlined the topics their committee would be discussing in its 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 Friday, Feb. 18. The committee reviewed the list of inactive contractors and noted that there is a very small number that do not participate in the DCA in some way.

- **Membership summary** – Attendees reviewed the membership report presented to the Board of Directors. Since the October meeting, one new contractor member and one new associate member have joined DCA. Three contractors and six associate members have been dropped, resigned, or merged with other members. As of the meeting, current membership was 88 contractor members and 127 associate members.

- **Prospective and resigned members** – The chairmen 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. Chairmen will also be contacting prospective members about membership benefits and the July 2022 Mid Year meeting in Idaho.
- **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 be mentors to the 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-chairmen are Mike Ayd of MP Technologies and Brad Everett of Caterpillar.

Safety/Risk Management Committee

Chad Lindsley, Regional Product Development Manager & Marketing for United Rentals Trench Safety presented to attendees at the Feb. 19 Safety/Risk Management committee. His topic, More to Know Than Just the Standard – Improving Safety & Compliance Through the Proper Use of Protective Systems, included information on:

- Shoring versus shielding.
- Special considerations when using protective systems.
- When and where site specific engineering is required.
- Resources.

The committee announced that the 2022 Safety Congress will be March 28-30 at the Hyatt Regency Austin, Texas. 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.

The 2021 Arthur Everham Safety Awards will be given out at the Sunday, Feb. 20 Business Session. A subcommittee to review and update the current questionnaire and scoring process is being established and anyone interested in serving on the committee was encouraged to contact the DCA office.

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. Bill Colson of PreTec Directional Drilling and Randy Bunch of Aaron Enterprises are vice-chairmen.

Workforce Development Committee

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

- **BuildWitt** – Randy Blount of BuildWitt presented a brief overview of the company, which provides marketing, training, and other services for the construction industry. DCA has a 2022 contract for BuildWitt to produce 10 promotional videos. They will feature a diverse group of men and women from member companies with specific roles such as a driller, welder, executive, and so on. Members interested in becoming involved with the project should contact Dave Wisniewski or the DCA office.
- **Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD)** – The CEWD EnergyCareers 2022 will be held virtually on April 28. DCA is a co-sponsor of the event. Contractors were encouraged to join CEWD, attend the summit, and become involved with the organization.
- **SkillsUSA** – After a three-year hiatus, the SkillsUSA Convention will be June 20-24 in Atlanta. DCA will be a sponsor and host a booth, and DCA member companies are encouraged to have booths as well. Tentative plans are being made for a pipe-fusion demonstration like the one in 2019.
- **Workforce Summit 2022** – Plans for a Workforce Summit in October are underway. A survey will be sent to members to determine the content they are interested in. DCA member companies are encouraged to send human resources personnel as well as management representatives.
- **Strata Tech Education Group** – Mary Kelly of Strata Tech Education Group presented a promotional video for infrastructure skills training. She also discussed the Million Dollar Pledge to Get Americans to Work program, which will provide half-off tuition scholarships to students sponsored by DCA member employees who are enrolled in a training program at any Tulsa Welding School or The Refrigeration School campus. StrataTech Education Group has committed to awarding up to \$1 million dollars in combined scholarships. Interested DCA members should visit <https://www.stratatech.com/dca> for more information.

(continued on pg.12)

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 vice-chairmen of the committee.

Government Relations Committee

The Government Relations committee received updates on several pertinent topics at their Monday, Feb. 21 meeting. For more details about the following topics, please see the DCA Insights section of the DCA News.

- **Development on Employer Vaccination Mandates –** The committee was pleased to see the Supreme Court stayed both mandates related to Covid vaccinations subject to employers. However, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has indicated that the agency is moving forward to develop a final rule. DCA will continue to monitor OSHA's future actions regarding Covid mitigation rules.
- **Status of State-Level Advocacy (Natural Gas Bans versus Fuel Choice legislation) –** DCA continues to participate in the ad hoc "Natural Gas Bans Coalition" to promote fuel choice bills and oppose mandated electrification. Twenty states have enacted fuel choice laws, and four other states have bills somewhere in the legislative process. While only a handful of states have enacted laws mandating electrification, several states are moving in that direction.
- **OQ Integrity Process (OQIP) Update –** The OQ Integrity Coalition is working to reinstate pilot projects conducted to test the OQIP. Pilots in New Mexico, Washington, Indiana, and Michigan are either up and running or will be in a matter of months. The coalition will hold a meeting at the end of March to discuss the status of the pilots, and a panel presentation providing an update will be held at the DCA & AGA Workshop, April 11-13 in Chicago.

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 2021 vice-chairmen of the committee were Mark Albert of AGI Construction and John Lamerton of Wyo-Ben. The 2022 vice-chairmen are Andy Miller of Alex E. Paris Contracting and Brad Burris of National Equipment Dealers.

Trenchless Committee

The Trenchless committee received updates on several discussion items at their Feb. 21 meeting.

- **Trenchless Committee Mission Statement –** In October 2021, the HDD Committee changed its name to the Trenchless Committee. Attendees reviewed the updated mission statement that substituted HDD with the word trenchless.
- **Panel Presentation on Engineering Issues and Finding Solutions –** Panelists Rob Tumbleson, ECI Contracting; Dan Carson, Carson Corp.; John Bentley, InfraSource; and Chad Davis, Miller Pipeline discussed the most common engineering issues: site surveys and geology and geotechnical reports have inconsistent quality; not enough pre-planning is completed; least expensive versus best engineered requirements; geo tech reports do not go deep enough; and more chemical analysis is needed. The panel also discussed workspace/access issues, design obstacles, contracting issues, and permitting/specification issues. The panel recommended talking to engineers, but not just engineers—reach out to AGA, NASTT, ASCE, and submit white papers.

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 vice-chairmen of the committee are Rob Hotz of Laney Drilling and Dustin Kraft of Vermeer Corp.

2022 Board of Directors

The 2022 DCA Board of Directors held their first meeting Monday, Feb. 21. President Kevin Parker welcomed new board members: Director at Large Chad Davis, Miller Pipeline, Pete Fojtik, Michels Utility Services.; Past President Director Kevin Miller, Miller Pipeline.; and Junior Associate Member Director Randy Rupp, Ditch Witch,.

Board members received updates on and discussed the 2022 DCA budget, the 2022 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 2022 goals and objectives of getting more under-40-year-old company employees involved with DCA.

The next board of directors, leadership council, and committee meetings will be in conjunction with the 2022 DCA Mid Year Meeting, July 18-21, at the Coeur d'Alene Golf & Spa Resort in Idaho. ▲

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

Eleven students received a financial boost when they were selected by the scholarship committee to receive the 2022-23 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 Annual Auction. This year, scholarship funds totaled \$105,000.

Scholarships are presented to students starting or returning to college. The recipients for the 2022-23 academic year are:

- Laith Almhimedawy, Mears Group, Inc. - \$10,000
- Alexander Cook, Hanging H Companies, LLC - \$21,000
- Marista Fraley, Miller Electric Mfg. - \$10,000
- Xavier Giron, KS Energy Services LLC - \$10,000
- Liberty Hunsberger, Michels Pipeline/Corp - \$10,000
- Kristina Ihlen, Michels Utility Services Inc. - \$2,500
- Olivia Langley, Utility Line Services, Inc. - \$10,000

- Sophia Pribyl, MP Technologies LLC - \$10,000
- Gretchen Resch, ECI Contracting - \$6,500
- Alexis Schaffer, Price Gregory International, Inc. - \$10,000
- Jeovany Torres, MasTec North America, Inc. - \$5,000

The 2022 DCA-Dale R. Michels Scholarship committee included DCA President Ben Nelson, Michels Pacific Energy Inc.; DCA Treasurer Ray Swerdfeger, K.R. Swerdfeger Construction Inc.; Past President Director Shepard Poole, The Hallen Construction Co. Inc.; Associate Member Director Woody Ferrell, Vermeer Corp.; Brad Burris, National Equipment Dealers; Jessica Fox, Wright Traffic Control; Dustin Kraft, Vermeer Corp.; Robert Merritt, Price Gregory Int'l; Randy Rupp, Ditch Witch; and Trevor Zimmerman, ECI Contracting. Kevin Michels of Michels Corporation sits permanently on the committee.

DCA-Curtis Allen Scholarship Recipients Announced

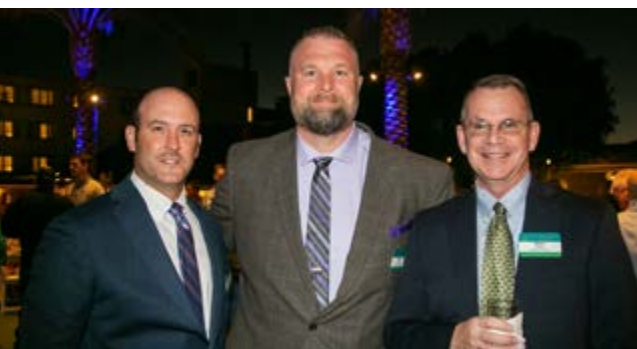
Ten students received the DCA-Curtis Allen Scholarship, given to students entering a vocational, trade, or technical school. The scholarship was founded in 2010 in honor of Curtis Allen and is funded by the DCA auctions and Halliburton.

The recipients for the 2022-23 academic year are:

- Kadeon Broome, Mears Group, Inc. - \$6,000
- Gavin Delrow, Miller Electric Mfg. - \$4,000
- Aaron Fuller, InfraSource LLC - \$1,000
- Sara Galante, Upsco, Inc. - \$1,000
- Jaden Hoppe, KS Energy Services LLC - \$4,000
- Logan Merschman, Minnesota Limited LLC - \$6,000
- Anthony Rios, MasTec North America, Inc. - \$6,000

- Houston Rude, KS Energy Services LLC - \$4,000
- Kaitlyn Sarmento, InfraSource LLC - \$1,000
- Jessica Simon, Oz Directional Drilling LLC - \$1,000

The 2022 DCA-Curtis Allen committee included DCA Vice President Kevin Parker, Mears Group Inc.; DCA Director at Large Doug Reeves, Primoris Services Corp.; DCA Associate Member Director Scott Cooper, Caterpillar Inc.; and Randy Bunch, Aaron Enterprises. Halliburton representatives Chris Bower of Bentonite Performance Minerals and Clint Pitman of Drilling Mud Direct sit permanently on the committee. ▲













Two of Three DCA Trusts Hold Annual Meetings



Trustees of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LiUNA)-DCA Trust and the National Distribution Pipeline Industry Communications & Productivity Fund (NDPIC&PF) held their annual meetings in February. The Feb. 9 LiUNA-DCA Trust meeting was on Zoom; NDPIC&PF trustees met in person Feb. 17 at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix.

LiUNA-DCA Trust

Trustees reviewed and approved several items, including:

- The 2020 financial audit and IRS Form 990.
- Donations of \$50,000 each to two veterans' groups. The Helmets to Hardhats donation is from contributions collected in prior years and will be issued immediately. The donation to Folds of Honor, from 2022 trust contributions, will be made at the 2023 convention in Miami.

The LiUNA-DCA Trust is a joint labor-management cooperative trust established in 1990 under the provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act. Its goals are to improve communications; expand work opportunities; promote safe, efficient work conditions and sponsor seminars, conferences, and meetings concerning the industry; facilitate a network for the exchange of information; resolve problems; and advance mutual interests relating to the industry.

Trustees are Pete Fojtik, Michels Utility Services Inc.; Anna Hillebrandt-Neve, InterCon Construction Inc.; Ray

Swerdfeger, K.R. Swerdfeger Construction Inc.; Terry O'Sullivan, LiUNA; Rocco Davis, LiUNA; and Terry Healy, LiUNA. DCA Executive Vice President Rob Darden serves as Executive Director of the trust.

NDPIC & PF

Trustees of the NDPIC & reviewed and approved several financial documents including an annual grant to DCA to be used in for publications, annual convention, industry relations, and education/research & development.

The NDPIC & PF is a joint labor-management cooperative trust between the DCA and United Association (UA) to improve communications and the collective bargaining relationship between labor and management; study ways of eliminating potential problems that reduce competitiveness and inhibit the economic development of the distribution pipeline industry; engage in public relations and public education programs; and research and develop programs to improve the distribution pipeline industry.

Trustees are Dale Anderson, Miller Pipeline; Rick Klumb, KS Energy Services LLC; Jay Osborn, Q3 Contracting Inc.; Mike Mikich, UA; Matthew Lienen, UA Local 25; and Chad Gilbert, UA. DCA Executive Vice President Rob Darden serves as Executive Director of the trust.

The third trust is the DCA Advancement Fund, established in 1998 between the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) and the DCA. Pat Michels of Michels Corp. serves as trustee. ▲

DCA Government Relations

DCA Government Relations targets specific regulatory and legislative items along with reporting their findings through the legislative watch section of the *DCA News* and DCA Web page. We are charged with presenting to the board those issues we believe our members would benefit by advocating for or against. The goal of this site is two-fold:

- Educate and inform DCA members on what is going on and why DCA is doing certain things
- What do we want the members to do on the national and state levels.

DCA Government Relations Microsite Empowers its Members

Distribution Contractors Association (DCA) has launched a new Government Relations auxiliary microsite. It joins three previously launched sites that went live last year; DCALetsGetToWork.com, DCAtrenchless.com and www.OQIP.org. The new site keeps members abreast of regulatory guidance and proposed legislation with rationale for advocating or opposing those items most relevant to the industry.

The Government Relations site features a new Muster program — an online mobilization platform enabling DCA to call its membership to action, such as initiating grassroots messaging campaigns.

The site also hosts a library linking members to nine years of select DCA literature.

The goal of the DCA microsites is to provide underground industry professionals access to key resources such as education, training, and recruitment tools from a single, user-friendly location. Future microsites, such as Safety/Risk Management, are currently in development.

For more information: www.DCAGovRelations.com. ▲

Insights



At Long Last, CGA Moves to Absorb Gold Shovel Association

In 2016, DCA members were blindsided by a new industry program that threatened effective partnerships between gas utilities and their contractors known as the “Gold Shovel Standard” (GSS). Shifting the focus of “shared responsibility” promoted by the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) to GSS’s punitive and coercive approach of monitoring, ranking, and scoring excavation contractors with little oversight and a lack of process to ensure program integrity.

GSS began as an internal program overseen by a large natural gas distribution utility but evolved into a standalone entity pitched as a certification and monitoring program intended to reduce damages. Almost immediately, many in the excavation construction community banded together, claiming that GSS would only create a new layer of training, reporting and information sharing requirements.

While leaders took several steps to make GSS more viable, and the organization gained nonprofit status as the “Gold Standard Association” (GSA), questions

remained unanswered for several years and the excavation community in general never bought in to GSS approaches to damage prevention.

Excavators were very concerned that GSS would lead to a “blacklist” of contractors who experienced facility hits without regard to root cause or other important factors. DCA and other groups representing excavation contractors have widely supported CGA and expressed that the new program only undermined the spirit of shared responsibility and suggested that measuring performance should be under the CGA purview.

In early April, CGA announced that the GSA would become part of the CGA, establishing the “Damage Prevention Institute.” The Institute’s mission will be to take the damage prevention industry to the next level by consolidating the robust data and resources of both organizations to generate powerful insights and efficiencies to reduce facility damage rates to buried infrastructure. Building on CGA’s Best Practices and data from the Damage Information Reporting Tool (DIRT), along with GSA’s metrics development, the Institute will

be structured around a metrics-focused, peer review-based model of shared responsibility.

"We believe CGA's new Damage Prevention Institute is a gamechanger for the industry, and we are pleased that the Gold Shovel Association shares our vision in this effort," said Sarah K. Magruder Lyle, CGA president and CEO. "By focusing on shared responsibility through a peer review process, and consolidating data and metrics to establish industry-wide benchmarks, the Damage Prevention Institute will increase engagement from all stakeholders and help us get a much clearer picture of the system's inefficiencies and how we can address them."

"The Damage Prevention Institute's focus on data-gathering across the industry is a natural extension of the GSA's work establishing excavation and pre-excavation metrics," said Cheryl Campbell, vice chair of the Gold Shovel Association board of directors. "We are very excited to integrate these metrics with CGA's decades of research, consensus-based Best Practices, and industry-leading DIRT program. The Damage Prevention Institute will have the insights to truly move the needle on reducing damages across the U.S."

The Institute will essentially become a new arm of CGA governed by an advisory committee that will include members of both CGA's and GSA's boards of directors. The goal will be all about metrics development – including excavation and pre-excavation metrics, as well as establishing a multi-stakeholder, peer-reviewed accreditation process. The peer review component will facilitate all stakeholders increasing engagement and embracing their critical roles in the damage prevention process.

Since the GSS was rolled out six years ago, DCA has consistently stated that our members are not afraid of metrics, and our track record of safety and damage prevention speaks for itself. Establishing metrics and measuring performance of all key damage prevention stakeholders is critical to progress, and DCA fully supports the establishment of the Damage Prevention Institute.

We applaud leaders of both CGA and GSA for their dedication to continually "move the needle" toward reducing underground facility damages. CGA's recent announcement can only be received as good news for all damage prevention stakeholders in a true spirit of shared responsibility.

Supply Chain Issues Continue to Plague Construction Industry, No End in Sight

Last year, because of the prolonged Covid-19 pandemic, global supply chains have slowed considerably, causing worldwide shortages, and affecting consumer patterns. Causes of the economic slowdown are attributed to both workers contracting Covid-19 as well as mandates and restrictions affecting the availability of staff.

Especially problematic has been cargo ships held stagnant at port - again due to staffing shortages. At the end of 2021, an increased amount of economic spending combined with the spread of the "Omicron" variant further exacerbated the already backed up supply. While many manufacturers were hoping supply chain disruptions would start winding down this year, delays and shortages have only seemed to get worse. At this point, it's anybody's guess when things will get back to "normal."

While the recently passed infrastructure package should help generate new construction activity, sourcing materials and equipment may prove challenging for the foreseeable future.

"Gen X" labor, which has been the bedrock of the skilled labor workforce for some time, seems to have been displaced in record numbers during the pandemic. While technology is one answer to help in the short term, the construction industry needs to attract a new generation of workers while competing with almost every other industry that has found itself facing shortfalls, as well.

While federal funds from last year's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) are begging to be allocated, actual construction will ramp up slowly. Highway and bridge projects are expected to initiate the soonest, but the largest percentage increases are likely to commence over time to water, sewer, and broadband projects that have not received much federal funding in the past.

The supply chain remains unstable with very unpredictable production and delivery times at a time when unprecedented federal funding will be entering a range of markets. DCA will continue to encourage policy that will alleviate the situation to the extent possible while avoiding federal overreach. ▲



Eben M. Wyman
Principal
eben@wymanassociates.net

Calendar

DCA & Industry Events

2022

MAY 2-6

Pipe Line Contractors Association of Canada (PLCAC) Convention
Hyatt Regency Maui Resort & Spa
Maui, Hawaii
www.pipeline.ca

JULY 18-21

DCA 2022 Mid Year Meeting
Coeur d'Alene Golf & Spa Resort
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
www.dcaweb.org

SEPTEMBER 19-23

International Pipe Line & Offshore Contractors Association (IPLOCA) 2022 Convention
Hilton Hotel
Prague
Czech Republic
www.iploca.com

OCTOBER 24-26

DCA 2022 Fall Meeting
Amway Grand Plaza
Grand Rapids, Michigan
www.dcaweb.org

2023

FEBRUARY 7-11

Pipe Line Contractors Association (PLCA) 2023 Convention
Grand Hyatt Kauai
Kauai, Hawaii
www.plca.org

FEBRUARY 14-16

Global Excavation Safety Conference
Tampa Convention Center
Tampa, Florida
www.globalexavationsafetyconference.com

FEBRUARY 20-25

DCA 2023 Convention
Fontainebleau Hotel
Miami Beach, Florida
www.dcaweb.org

MARCH 14-18

CONEXPO-CON/AGG 2023
Las Vegas Convention Center
Las Vegas, Nevada
www.conexpoconagg.com

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.

DCA Mid Year Meeting – July 18-21, 2022
Coeur d’Alene Golf & Spa Resort, Coeur d’Alene, Idaho

Registration opens early May!

For more information visit:
www.dcaweb.org/page/MidYearMeeting



Member News



Reed Manufacturing Celebrates 125 Years

Reed Manufacturing located in Erie, PA is celebrating 125 years of supplying industry with the highest-quality pipe tools and vises for the professional trades.

Carl Reed, scion of one of Erie's pioneer families, along with three partners, started the business in 1896. REED started by manufacturing pipe wrenches and plumbing supplies, as is still the case, but also scales, bicycles, and laundry machinery.

In 1902, Reuben Wright of Westfield, NY (35 miles from Erie), who had created his fortune by selling supplies to forty-niners during the Gold Rush and added to it with lumber interests, bought Reed Manufacturing and installed his sons to run the business. His great-great grandsons Scott (Company President and Chairman of the Board) and Mark (Retired and a Board Member) are actively involved with REED to this day.

REED tools were used in the construction of the Panama Canal. Subsequently in 1915, REED bench vises were awarded a gold medal and REED pipe

dies received a bronze medal at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.

A distantly related pair of Wright brothers, Orville and Wilbur, used a REED vise in their Dayton bicycle/aviation shop. REED was a defense contractor during both world wars, turning out stocks, dies, and pipe cutters in the Great War and wrenches, turbine buckets, and airplane engine mounts for World War II.

Additionally, the REED Shaw Machine for pressing collars was installed in all Navy ships and could be found in most commercial laundries across the United States. REED was exporting from early in its existence with relationships in Europe and beyond.

Today REED sells into over 100 countries. Still housed in the historic building at 1425 West 8th Street, REED remains an Erie landmark.

From the company's beginning, REED associates have invented tools that continually become industry standards, including the Quick Release™ Tubing Cutter, various tools for plastic pipe, vises, plus Hinged Pipe Cutters and Rotary Pipe Cutters.

Each year REED makes end-user driven improvements and refinements to existing tools. Recent tool additions include Pump Stick® water transfer pump, Clean Ream Extreme® fitting reamers, Bevel Boss™ pipe beveler, Bear Hug™ squeeze tools, along with continuous improvements to long-standing tools. REED takes pride in manufacturing high quality tools that provide tool solutions.

The secret of REED's continuing, increasing success can be attributed to its corporate culture of excellence and the quality of its company associates, who are individually committed to exceptional performance and service.

Over the past century and a quarter, Reed Manufacturing tirelessly has worked for the betterment of Erie County, through the United Way and its predecessor the Community Chest. REED and its employees have supported dozens of organizations in categories from the arts to scouting to reducing poverty to medical causes. REED people, products, and service will continue to excel. REED is forward-thinking and will continue to improve its customer offerings throughout each of its next 125+ years.



Mindi Vanden Bosch

Mindi Vanden Bosch to Lead Operations at Vermeer

Vermeer Corporation has announced that Mindi Vanden Bosch, a third-generation employee of the family business, has been promoted to Vice President of Operations. The company, based in Pella, Iowa, has been family-owned and operated

for nearly 75 years.

Vanden Bosch has held leadership roles in marketing, finance, human resources, continuous improvement at Vermeer. She most recently served as the managing director for the Forage Solutions Product Group.

“Vermeer is a part of who I am. I love the people, I love the product we build, I love the impact our equipment makes,” said Vanden Bosch. “Having watched Vermeer grow as an organization through the leadership of my grandfather, my uncle, my mother, and now my brother, I’m excited to take the experiences I’ve had to help lead the team and the important work they do.”

Prior to joining Vermeer in 2008, Vanden Bosch held roles in continuous improvement at Cascade Engineering and treasury management at Fifth Third Bank.

“Mindi’s passion for people and her love for problem solving bring important qualities to our operations. Personally, I’m proud to have my sister take this role and oversee such a critical part of our business and lead a large, important part of our workforce,” said Jason Andringa, Vermeer President and CEO.

The Vermeer family and Vermeer leadership have built intentional succession plans for family members who want to be a part of the business. Both Andringa and Vanden Bosch have worked extensively with the board of directors, company leadership, and family office to meet the leadership requirements.

“Operating a family business requires incredible intentionality. The Vermeer family saw that early on and implemented important steps to help build a successful business while maintaining healthy family involvement. Having Mindi move into this role demonstrates the forward thinking of those involved in business planning,” said Brian Gardner, chair of the board at Vermeer Corporation.



Illinois Truck & Equipment Joins Sunbelt Rentals

Illinois Truck & Equipment Co., Inc. joined the Sunbelt Rentals family Dec. 17, 2021.

Illinois Truck & Equipment (ITE) has been a regional heavy dirt equipment rental provider since 1989. The business primarily supports the needs of commercial, infrastructure, and energy contractors through its fleet of excavators, wheel loaders, backhoes, and other earth moving equipment. Backed by an expansive national network and a fleet in excess of \$11 billion, Sunbelt Rentals is North America’s premiere equipment rental company and services a variety of customers, including commercial, residential, industrial, and specialty contractors, through a highly diversified mix of rental equipment.

The addition of ITE enlarges the Sunbelt Rentals footprint in the greater Chicago market and provides the ITE customer base with access to a more diverse product and service offering.

“In 1989, I left my father’s implement dealership as a mechanic with \$8000 in my pocket to create my own legacy,” ITE owner Rolf Helland said. “Little did I know that 32 years later we would have equipment on rent in 35 states, and that pipeline would be such a large part of our business.”

ITE veteran Adam Salinas is now District Manager for Sunbelt Rentals Earth Moving Solutions. Helland said Salinas would, “guide Sunbelt into the heavy dirt world and implement the ITE culture and know-how.”

(continued on pg. 28)



Caterpillar

Caterpillar Launches Bigger, More Competitive Global Operator Challenge

Caterpillar Inc. invites machine operators around the globe to take on the world in the 2022 Global Operator Challenge.

The challenge tests the skills and precision of equipment operators as they prove their excellence in operating Cat machinery and their ability to master any

piece of construction equipment safely and efficiently.

"More than 80 Cat dealers will host local, one-of-a-kind competitions, celebrating equipment operators and enabling them to showcase their exceptional skills in fun and dynamic ways," said Tony Fassino, Group President, Construction Industries, Caterpillar Inc.

During each portion of the Global Operator Challenge, participants execute a variety of tasks, such as digging a trench, loading a precise amount of dirt, and hauling or maneuvering the equipment through a variety of obstacles. Scoring is based on the operator's skills and efficiency, as well as his or her competence in using integrated technology to enhance the machine's performance. To make this year's competition even more challenging, Caterpillar has added the requirement that every event must feature three different challenges on three separate pieces of equipment. Therefore, operators must master a broad assortment of equipment to qualify for the next round.

"Whether their expertise lies in digging a trench, moving aggregates, or managing demolition, our Global

small,
YET MIGHTY.
MEET THE NEW CAT® 306 CR MINI EXCAVATOR

Mini machine, huge difference. Get the job done and more with these industry-first features:

- » Stick steer
- » Cruise control
- » Full-color LCD monitor with Bluetooth

Supporting DCA members is what we do.
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Welcome New Members

CONTRACTOR MEMBERS

Outback Contractors

P.O. Box 1035
Red Bluff, CA 96080
(530) 528-2225
www.outback-inc.com

Trevor Hammam, General Manager, trevorh@outback-inc.com
Garrett Rice, Superintendent, garrettr@outback-inc.com

Operator Challenge will be demanding for even the most experienced operators. We can't wait to see what they can do with our machines," Fassino said.

Sixty-seven Cat dealers hosted local competitions in the 2019/2020 challenge, and operators from 30 countries participated. The 2022/2023 competition will be Caterpillar's largest construction industry event of its kind.

Calling All Operators

The first round of the Global Operator Challenge consists of local qualifiers, hosted by Cat dealers from March through September 2022.

Those who qualify in the local dealer events will then move on to regional semifinal competitions in October. Nine finalists will emerge from the regional semifinals and participate in the global finals competition in Caterpillar's outdoor Festival Grounds exhibit F4455 during ConExpo-Con/AGG in Las Vegas, March 2023. The winner of the competition will receive an all-expenses-paid trip for two to one Caterpillar facility worldwide.

For more information, visit www.cat.com/operatorchallenge.



John Deere

John Deere Showcases New Wheel Loader with Technology Advancements

John Deere is bolstering its wheel loader lineup with the highlight of the 904 P-Tier Wheel Loader, showcased for the first-time at World of Asphalt and AGG1, Nashville. Available soon, the new 904 P-Tier is a two-pass loader solution that provides the durability and reliability to take on processed aggregate stockpiles and more efficiently load trucks or rail cars all day long.

Based on proven components and designs, the new 904 P-Tier offers obstacle intelligence features, such as the Advanced Vision System — an industry first for loaders.

(continued on pg. 30)

This allows increased visibility to sides of the machine by integrating two digital cameras on the rearview mirror platform and combines views into a dedicated single display in the cab. The 904 P-Tier also offers an improved rear object detection system. This feature overlays a projected vehicle reversible path within the same dedicated monitor, enhancing the operator's experience and situational awareness. These features, coupled with premium cab comfort options, ensure operators remain productive throughout the day.

Designed to do the heavy lifting, the rugged 904 P-Tier comes equipped with 7.5- and 7.1-cubic meter (9.8- and 9.3-cubic yard) material-handling buckets with integrated spill guards and curved side cutters, and seat-mounted hydraulic controls for easier and more intuitive operation. High-capacity, heavy-duty axles with standard axle cooling filtration deliver durability in difficult conditions compared to previous models. With its large tilt cylinders and impressive hydraulic pressures, engine power and torque, the 904 P-Tier provides the muscle for operators to work comfortably. With advantages, such as fuel-efficient

engines, lockup torque converters and a dedicated steering pump, operators can do more while burning less fuel.

"The 904 P-Tier is built off the success of the 844L Aggregate Handler. It's equipped with key features, like increased horsepower, breakout force, hydraulic pressures, and bucket offerings. The 904 P-Tier is purpose-built for the rugged demands of the aggregates industry, and the new model identity supports this approach," said Luke Gribble, solutions marketing manager for loaders and aggregates at John Deere Construction & Forestry. "We wanted to advance our machines technology offerings by adding features that improve the experience of those who operate these machines."

In addition, the 904 P-Tier is JDLink compatible, providing real-time machine data and alerts, leveraging a suite of dealer and factory tools to deliver increased productivity, uptime and lower daily operating costs. JDLink is now available without a subscription and at no cost. ▲



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 Web sites



Blackeagle Energy Services

www.blackeagleenergyservices.com

Exceeding client expectations since 1986, Blackeagle Energy Services is a premier provider of services to energy companies who want their projects done safely, on time, and in budget.

The company specializes in building and maintaining the nation's energy infrastructure; pipeline and facility construction, integrity management, field maintenance, and fabrication.

They operate from the Rocky Mountains, to the Gulf States, and across the Great Plains and into the Northeast.

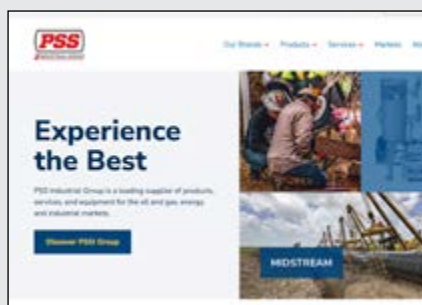
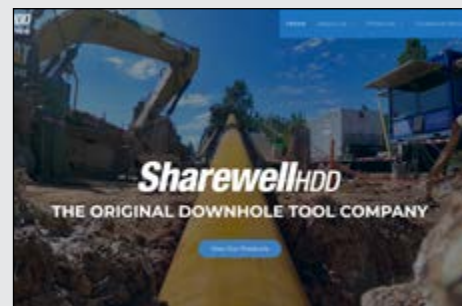
Sharewell HDD

www.sharewellhdd.com

Sharewell was founded in 1984 utilizing downhole technology from the oilfield to become the first service company in the world dedicated solely to servicing the horizontal directional drilling (HDD) pipeline and utility industry.

Sharewell is the leading supplier of downhole drilling tools, guidance systems, and services for the Horizontal Directional Drilling industry.

With 200+ years of directional drilling experience, Sharewell has served the HDD Industry for many years.



PSS Industrial Group

www.pssigroup.com

Headquartered in Houston, Texas, with over 30 locations across the country, PSS Industrial Group is committed to provide quality products, equipment, services, and expertise specific to your every business requirement.

Over the past three decades PSS Industrial has substantially expanded both its product breadth, supply chain logistics, and end market diversification by creating strategic partnerships with leading manufacturers and completing multiple acquisitions to further expand its capabilities in the full energy value chain.



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Candace Green
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