



CONSTRUCTOR

The Voice of the Kansas City Construction Industry

SPRING | SUMMER 2007

A Word From the President Building the Road to More Record Years

"Drive thy business or it will drive thee." — Benjamin Franklin

In April, I had the pleasure of meeting and talking with many metro-area traffic reporters at a luncheon the Heavy Constructors Association sponsors for them.



John O'Donnell
HCA President

We held the first one last year, and it was such a hit with these folks that we decided to make it an annual spring event.

We bring together the traffic reporters with engineers from KDOT, MoDOT and Kansas City, Mo., to give the reporters a better idea of what kind of projects will be happening in the heart of the construction season. Like last year, this one will be busy. (In 2006, HCA members logged almost 4.5 million work hours, the most in the history of the Association. That's 1.2 million hours, or 28 percent, more than in 2005.)

We host the luncheon for a couple of good reasons. The first is that the information helps the reporters do their jobs better – and that ultimately helps the drivers who are paying for all that roadwork. The second reason

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Sharing Funkhouser's Focus and Findings

'Everything is Economic Development,' Mayor Tells HCA

Kansas City's new mayor, Mark Funkhouser, has long been an outspoken advocate for increased spending on deferred maintenance. In his 18 years as city auditor, he was critical of both the level of funding being allocated to the backlog of deferred maintenance needs and how the money was being used.

His campaign pledged to turn Kansas City into a "City that Works." Now that he's switched from the watchdog to the top dog, what can we expect?

To find out, the Heavy Constructors Association conducted a recent telephone interview with Funkhouser, which shed light on the mayor's priorities.

Change, By Committee

His transformation of the City Council's committee structure shows Funkhouser's serious about making infrastructure a priority. He created a committee to deal solely with transportation and infrastructure, chaired by Second District At-Large veteran Councilman Ed Ford.

Transportation and Infrastructure has absorbed the functions of the previous Operations and Aviation Committees, but Funkhouser sees its responsibilities as far-reaching: everything from aviation to streets and bridges to bike paths and light rail. It is also interesting to note that the former Planning, Zoning and Economic Development Committee is now simply Planning and Zoning.

At a Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce luncheon shortly before his

inauguration, Funkhouser explained his reasoning for the change: "Everything is economic development. If a water main breaks, that's an economic development issue."

Capital Improvements Top Priority List

The mayor also is giving precedence to renewing the City's one-cent sales tax for capital improvements. Right after his election, he told the Association that the renewal was "at the top of the list" of issues he wants to tackle. He said he personally supports the recommendation of



the Chamber of Commerce report on deferred maintenance to dedicate up to 50 percent of the tax to deferred maintenance.

He also said he agrees with another recommendation in the report: Return to the City's short-lived policy of taking money from the general fund to boost deferred maintenance funding. He'd like to see the rate steadily

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CONSTRUCTING THE FUTURE

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Long-term Problems Take Time, Effort to Solve

By Ed DeSoignie, HCA Executive Director

Since the new year began, the Association has been heavily involved with the City of Kansas City, Mo., on the renewal of the Minority Business/Female Business Enterprise Subcontracting Program and a new minority/female workforce ordinance.

With each issue, we were faced with proposals by city staff to enact seemingly simple solutions to what are complex, historical circumstances. It didn't take long to realize that what was being proposed simply wasn't going to work and would, in fact, drive construction companies away from bidding city work.

The final result, hammered out over the course of many months with other construction stakeholder groups and community organizations, will affect positive changes over the long term and will be workable for our member companies. Time will tell whether the new Workforce Ordinance will produce the desired results. Why?

There is a larger-scale problem facing the future of the construction industry.

A survey conducted by the national office of the Associated General Contractors of America found that construction craft work is viewed by most high school students as only slightly more appealing than commercial fishing, the lowest-ranked occupation on the list. The study also found that construction as a career choice was appealing to students at the middle-school level, but by high school it dropped dramatically. Faced with this information on the attitudes of our youth toward construction, the Heavy Constructors Association has for a number of years supported education of area students on the positive aspects of a career in the construction industry.

On May 3, the National Institute for Construction Excellence held its iBuild event at Bartle Hall. More than 1,500 high school and middle school students from the metro area had the chance to experience construction "hands on." Just as important, they had the opportunity to talk face-to-face with people who have made successful careers out of construction.

The goal is to give the kids a positive perception of construction and hopefully encourage them to stay in school and pursue the math and science skills they'll need to enter the industry.

The Heavy Constructors Association was a proud sponsor of the event. We would like to also thank the following members who pitched in by providing equipment and manpower for the "hands-on" portions of the event: Kissick Construction Company, Clarkson Construction Company, Musselman and Hall Contractors, LLC, Roadbuilders, Custom Truck and Equipment and United Rentals Trench Safety. Please take a look at the photos from the event pictured below.



Ed DeSoignie
HCA Executive
Director



Clarkson Classic Casts New Shadow, Sets Attendance Record

The eighth annual Don Clarkson Classic golf tournament took on a new venue this year – Shadow Glen, The Golf Club in Olathe.

The new location helped boost attendance to record levels: 60 golfers in the morning and 140 in the afternoon. For many of our members, this was their first chance to enjoy the beauty and challenge of Shadow Glen. We heard plenty of positive comments about the course ... and not just from the winning teams!

Morning Flight Winners

Ralph Box

(Custom Truck and Equipment)

Lloyd Kissick

(Kissick Construction)

Chris Ross

(Custom Truck and Equipment)

Jim Ross

(Custom Truck and Equipment)

Score: 67

Afternoon Flight Winners

Chandler Cullor

(Cretcher-Lynch & Company)

Bo Govea

(Cretcher-Lynch & Company)

Steve Nicholson

(Cretcher-Lynch & Company)

Ryan Rink

(Cretcher-Lynch & Company)

Score: 59

Skills Competition Winners

Longest Drive: Jeff Shoemaker

(Holland Corporation)

Longest Putt: Max Irsik

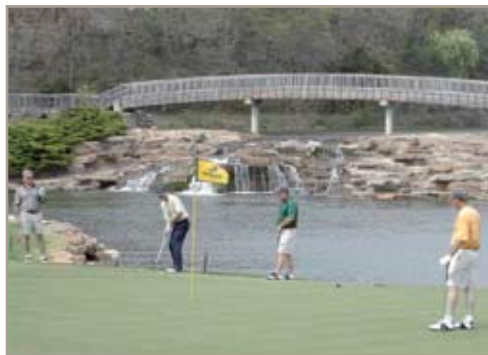
(Bank of Blue Valley)

Closest to the Pin:

Brent Kramer

(George J. Siebers & Co.)

Thanks to all who came out for the event, and we look forward to seeing many of you at the next golf event: the HCA Affiliates' Golf Tournament, scheduled Monday, Sept. 24, at The National Golf Club in Parkville, Mo. ■



Shadow Glen, The Golf Club



Clarkson Classic 2007 Afternoon Flight Winners

Scholarship Winners Named

Each year, the Heavy Constructors Association awards its Industry Advancement Fund Scholarships to deserving college students working toward careers in heavy construction. The HCA Education and Scholarship Committee reviews the applications and recommends recipients to the HCA Board of Directors, which then must approve each recommendation.

This year, the scholarship amounts were increased to a maximum of \$4,000 per academic year from the previous \$3,000. Congratulations to the following students who have been awarded scholarships for the 2007-08 academic year:

\$4,000 Scholarship Recipients

Matt Anderson*, University of Missouri-Kansas City, junior, Civil Engineering

Michael Carpenter, Pittsburg State University, senior, Construction Management

Bryan Connell*, University of Missouri, junior, Business Management

Cody Cook*, Pittsburg State University, sophomore, Construction Engineering Technology and Construction Management

Brian Glynn, University of Missouri-Kansas City, senior, Civil Engineering

Kelly Heitmann, Kansas State University, senior, Construction Science and Management

\$2,000 Scholarship Recipients

Abbey Evert, Baker University, freshman, Business/Accounting

Kyle Quigley*, Missouri State University, senior, Construction Management

Kendra Rose, Pittsburg State University, freshman, Construction Management

Joshua Wetzel*, Kansas State University, senior, Construction Science

\$1,000 Scholarship Recipients

Josh King, University of Kansas, freshman, Civil Engineering

*Previous scholarship recipient. Grade level and school of attendance are for fall 2007 semester.

Member Profile

Zebra Values HCA Membership

Heavy construction equipment takes a serious beating as HCA member companies build and repair the metro area's vital infrastructure. During peak times of the season, contractors can't slow down the work for even one hour. Equipment problems can stretch their own mechanics and welders too thin, and the last thing a company wants is to spend the time and money getting a rig back to the shop.



Zebra Contractor Service, Inc., is there to answer the call. Owner Gary Wilbers and his crews operate a mobile welding and equipment repair service designed to keep heavy equipment cranking and reduce or eliminate downtime on the jobsite.

The company is a signatory to the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 101 and has served area contractors in heavy construction since 2001. Zebra entered the business in response to a growing need for onsite equipment repair in a pinch. Wilbers has been in the business for close to 30 years, previously (and still) serving the commercial foodservice and plant maintenance markets, and other stainless steel-intensive businesses.

"I thought about entering the construction market for about three or four years before we got into it," Wilbers says. "I finally realized how much they needed something like this, and business has been very good."



"Gary Wilbers and his crews operate a mobile welding and equipment repair service designed to keep heavy equipment cranking ..."

"During peak season, with their own mechanics stretched thin, contractors might be forced to choose between welding a generator onto a piece of equipment or welding a bucket. We come in to handle whatever they can't fix right then and there."

Business has been so good for Wilbers that, until last year, Zebra wasn't even in the Yellow Pages. Instead the business most depends on word-of-mouth referrals and HCA membership.

"Our best customers are our best references," Wilbers says. "HCA is a focused group. Every single member has welding needs, and we knew we needed to show our support. I'm really proud to be associated with a group whose membership is so important to not only my business, but everyone's." ■

Sharing Funkhouser's Focus and Findings

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increase until the deferred maintenance program reaches an annual level of \$80 million. Not coincidentally, \$80 million per year is what the City estimates it needs to adequately fund deferred maintenance.

Neglect No More

The mayor is only one of 13 votes on the council. Does he think he'll get the support he needs? "I suspect there won't be a lot of conflict," he said in the post-election interview. "Many of the council people ran on a pro-neighborhood platform. What the neighborhoods need are good streets and sewers. Pro-neighborhood is pro-infrastructure."

The first City Council Business Session seemed to bear out Funkhouser's assessment

and underscore his commitment to getting the tax renewed. Although all council members agree the tax must be renewed, there is sure to be plenty of wrangling over how to best divvy up the money from the tax. Some council members want a greater percentage dedicated to neighborhoods, while others see that as damaging the City's ability to leverage federal dollars for major road improvement and flood control projects.

Light rail lurks as another potential ballot issue. When voters approved the Clay Chastain plan last November – complete with eliminating the streets in Penn Valley Park and putting in gondolas to Union Station – they gave the green light to a plan that was not only wholly unworkable and woefully under-funded, but one that in 2009 takes

away the 3/8 cent sales tax now dedicated to the Kansas City Area Transit Authority. Mayor Funkhouser said this is second on his list of tax issues to be addressed, because those 3/8 cents fund about 40 percent of the KCATA's bus service. Exactly how it will be addressed, or the timing for any new ballot issue, remains to be seen.

Mayor Funkhouser is fond of saying, "Since the time of the Romans, development has been driven by two things: infrastructure and education. In Kansas City, we have neglected them both."

No doubt that he'll be giving them both plenty of attention and looking for answers. The question over the next four years will be how well he can convince the council and voters to share his focus and his findings. ■

HCA Members Shine at Concrete Pavement Awards

HCA member companies were well represented among the award winners at the 27th annual Missouri/Kansas Portland Cement Concrete Paving Conference, held in late February in Kansas City.

Loch Sand and Construction took home four awards:

- Missouri's *Commercial and Military Airport* category for the Runway 1-19 reconstruction at Charles B. Wheeler Airport in downtown Kansas City, which was designed by TranSystems Corporation.
- Missouri's *Country Roads* category for the Polk Road Improvement project, phase two, in Maryville, Mo.
- Missouri's *Smoothest Day Paving* category for the Runway 1-19 project.
- Kansas' *Parking Areas* category for the Hy-Vee store at 199th and Ridgeway in Olathe, designed by Shafer, Kline and Warren.

J.M. Fahey Construction Company took top honors in Missouri's *Municipal Streets and Intersections Greater Than 20,000 Square Yards* category for phase two of the KC Live street improvements project in Kansas City.

Ideker, Inc., won Missouri's *State and Primary Roads* category for the Route 13 new alignment in Ray County.

Also recognized at the awards ceremony were winners of the National Excellence in Concrete Pavement Awards. APAC-Kansas, Inc., Kansas City Division, received a Silver Award for the reconstruction of Nall Ave. from 135th to 143rd St.

Frank Keeling, president of Precision Tractor and Equipment, was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Missouri/Kansas chapter of the American Concrete Paving Association (see photo).

Congratulations to all winners!



'Audible' Leads to Winning Play at HCA Banquet

Teamwork was the name of the game in the moments leading up to the Heavy Constructors Association annual banquet in February. Former journeyman golf pro and current PGA Tour commentator Gary McCord was scheduled to be the event's featured speaker, but he became seriously ill the day before the banquet.



HCA President John O'Donnell with Don Shula, the winningest coach in NFL history.

Association event organizers had to quickly change the game plan. With the help of Leading Authorities, the company that helps us book guest speakers, we ended up with a fantastic replacement in the form of legendary football coach Don Shula.

More than 400 people were on hand at the Downtown Marriott to hear Coach Shula talk about how "everyone is a coach" and how to apply some fundamental coaching principles to achieve success in life. Shula certainly knows a thing or two about coaching and success. In his 33 years in the game, he won more than any other coach in NFL history. His 1972 Miami Dolphins remain the only team to finish with an undefeated season. His teams competed in six Super Bowls, winning two of them.

Shula spoke of being "audible ready," the ability to be flexible, to adapt to changing circumstances and adjust your plan when necessary. We certainly had the opportunity to put that lesson into practice in the 24 hours prior to the banquet, and we're glad our own "audible" led to such a huge score in the clutch. Our thanks go out to Coach Shula and all our members who came out to enjoy the event. ■

Mark Your Calendar

KDOT Bid Lettings

Wednesdays, June 20, July 18 and Aug. 15.
All at 1 p.m. in the 4th floor auditorium of the Eisenhower State Office Building, 700 Harrison St., Topeka. For the latest bidding information, visit www.ksdot.org/burconsmain/lettinginfo.asp

MoDOT Bid Lettings

Fridays, June 29, July 27 and Aug. 31.
All at 10 a.m. at the Missouri Department of Transportation General Headquarters, 105 West Capitol, Jefferson City. For the latest bidding information, visit www.modot.org/business/contractor_resources

Missouri Highway and Transportation Committee

- Wednesday, June 13
- Wednesday, July 18
- Wednesday, Aug. 8

HCA Events

- HCA Night at Kauffman Stadium, Saturday, June 30, 6:10 p.m. – Royals vs. Chicago White Sox.
- 16th Annual HCA Affiliate Golf Tournament, Monday, Sept. 24 – The National Golf Club, Parkville, Mo.

HCA Helps City Rebuild for the Future

On May 4, a devastating tornado ripped through south-central Kansas and completely wiped out the town of Greensburg. Within two weeks, Heavy Constructors Association President John O'Donnell and Vice President Greg Kaaz presented a \$50,000 donation to the Greensburg Rebuilding Fund. The fund was established solely to help the town rebuild and will be administered by Greensburg city officials. One of the fund's first target priorities is the reconstruction of basic infrastructure.

"The HCA understands the need for clean water, sewer connections, electricity and functioning streets," O'Donnell said. "These people have shown extraordinary courage, and this donation is our way of recognizing their remarkable spirit and helping them achieve their goal of rebuilding the town they love."

Much-needed additional donations to the Greensburg Rebuilding Fund can be sent to Greensburg Rebuilding Fund c/o Greensburg State Bank, P.O. Box 787, Greensburg, KS, 67054.



This aerial shows the extent of the damage caused by the F-5 tornado that ripped through the town the night of May 4. Ten people were killed.



The twister may have wreaked havoc, but it couldn't destroy the spirit of the town's residents.



The tornado carved a mile-wide swath of destruction through the town. Two weeks after the storm hit, the town still had about 250,000 cubic yards of debris to haul off.



From L-R: Rep. Dennis McKinney; HCA President John O'Donnell; Greensburg, Kan., Mayor Lonnie McCollum; Greensburg City Manager Steve Hewitt; HCA Vice President Greg Kaaz



The Greensburg High School was severely damaged. Seniors held their graduation on the municipal golf course two weeks after the tornado struck.

On a Billboard Near You

The Heavy Constructors Association's latest billboard contains an eye-catching, impactful message to communicate with the industry's ultimate customer – the metro-area driver!



Drives Gridlock to Early Retirement.

www.ConstructingTheFuture.org

Association Salutes Leawood Director

Congratulations to Joe Johnson, public works director for the City of Leawood, Kan., on being named one of the American Public Works Association's 2007 Top 10 Public Works Leaders. Johnson has been public works director in Leawood since 1996 and has worked with several HCA members in the past decade. Way to go, Joe!

Building the Road to More Record Years

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is we frame the information with our own message: Orange barrels mean progress. If a few of these reporters pass along that fact just once or twice in their reports, it will help spread the message.

I bring this up because it's an example of a central benefit your Association offers: projecting important messages on behalf of our members. The way we accomplish that varies, of course. Sometimes it's through public relations campaigns and radio, TV and billboard advertising. Other times it's through events like the traffic reporters' luncheon. Sometimes it's working with local chambers of commerce. Sometimes it's carrying the message to lawmakers and public officials at all levels of government. Sometimes it's supporting candidates who understand the need to provide adequate funding for road, bridge, sewer, water and other public infrastructure projects or backing campaigns for taxes or bond issues to fund those projects. But always it's about projecting our core message: We make it better and want to continue doing so.

You don't hear a lot about many of these efforts. Such was the case recently when the Association worked with the Kansas City, Mo., City Council to enact a reasonable minority workforce ordinance. Without our prior involvement, a harsh, unworkable ordinance would have been enacted. We didn't do it with a lot of fanfare, just solid hard work over many months. Now we have an ordinance that will help everyone move forward.

I mentioned earlier that we broke the record last year for hours worked. I firmly believe a major reason for that is the work your Association does driving our message home. All of these efforts create opportunities for all of our members. Not just in public work, either.

“Public work generates private work. We have always said that good infrastructure is a prime driver of economic development, and we have always been proven right.”

Public work generates private work. We have always said that good infrastructure is a prime driver of economic development, and we have always been proven right. I could fill pages with examples, but to name a few: downtown Kansas City, Mo.; development around Wyandotte County's Kansas Speedway and Village West; the growth of Lee's Summit; and myriad places in Johnson County.

I'd like to say there's no magic involved in last year's record amount of work, but I think sometimes the stars do align just right. Or maybe we make our own luck. But there is no question fortune smiled on us last year.

But now the stars are shifting and we are at one of those junctures where major changes can occur. Here's what we're facing:

- The current Kansas Transportation Program ends in 2009. We have already started our work for a new program.
- MoDOT's construction program “drops off a cliff in 2010,” to use MoDOT Director Pete Rahn's phrase, from the current \$1.3 billion to \$569 million. That's slightly less than pre-Amendment 3 numbers. We are holding discussions on what a new highway program for Missouri's roads would be.
- The Capital Improvements Sales Tax in Kansas City, Mo., expires in December 2008. We must get it renewed before that date.
- The federal transportation legislation, SAFETEA-LU, expires in 2009. We must work to get a new federal program in place.

We will have to muster all our forces to make sure these ingredients don't coalesce into a “perfect storm” that tears apart future funding for public infrastructure. We need to make sure the resources are available so that we can continue to make it better for the communities we serve. By driving toward that goal, we just might drive toward some more record years, as well.

John O'Donnell
HCA President

Winning Safety Awards Is No Accident

The 2006 Heavy Constructors Association Safety Awards were presented April 30, following the Don Clarkson Classic Golf Tournament at Shadow Glen.

In recognition of their outstanding safety records, certificates were awarded to the following companies:

- Class A (More than 300,000 work hours) – APAC-Kansas, Inc. – Kansas City Division (Overland Park, Kan.)
- Class B (200,000 – 299,999 work hours) – W. A. Ellis Construction Co. – Independence, Mo.
- Class C (100,000 – 199,999 work hours) – Loch Sand and Construction – Maryville, Mo.
- Class D (50,000 – 99,999 work hours) – Leavenworth Excavation and Equipment Co. (LEXECO) – Leavenworth, Kan.
- Class E (10,000 to 49,999 work hours) – Pyramid Excavation and Construction, Inc. – Shawnee, Kan.

Award winners in Classes B, C, D and E all had zero incidents!



Jaimie Loch accepts the HCA award for Loch Sand and Construction.



LEXECO's Greg Kaaz displays the company's certificate.

While not winning the award for their class, the following HCA members also achieved zero incidents in 2006:

- Amino Brothers Company, Inc. – Kansas City, Kan. (Class C)
- Musselman and Hall Contractors, LLC – Kansas City, Mo. (Class C)
- The Holland Corporation, Inc. – Lenexa, Kan. (Class C)



Dan Jones of APAC Kansas, Inc. accepts the company's safety award.



Brian McCrary receives the HCA safety award for Pyramid Excavation.

Congratulations to all of our members who make it better by making the workplace safer! ■

www.constructingthefuture.org



Want more information on Constructing the Future?

Check out our Web site:
www.constructingthefuture.org
for the latest information
on the campaign.

This newsletter is brought to you by the Heavy Constructors Association. For additional information, contact Ed DeSoignie at (816) 753-6443 or erdes@swbell.net.



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