



“CONSTRUCTING A WAY FOR A BETTER FUTURE”

ECA NEWSLETTER

JOHNS SOAPBOX



The Usual Disclaimer-this section is an opinion piece, and it is John’s opinion, not reflective of any ECA position or action or any ECA member’s position.

Soapbox #1:

Dues Renewals are Out and I urge you all to watch this very nice promotional video sponsored by Trans Tech Consultants and Sound Ideas as to why it is so important to belong to, and participate in the Northern California Engineering Contractors Association:

Here is the link, please enjoy the very short but well done video! Click [HERE!](#)

Soapbox #2:

Remember-this is an op-ed piece and I do not speak for the ECA or any of its members in this “Soapbox”. These are just my ramblings that hopefully you find thought provoking.

Make us Aware!

It is my humble opinion that one of the critical things the ECA does is to recognize our history and to honor our presence by choosing award winners for Contractor of the Year, Affiliate of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, Golden Hardhat (boots on the ground award), and of course, our Hermsmeyer Hall of Fame Inductees each year.

Why do I believe this is critical? The history of building infrastructure in northern California is an incredible story. The story is one that could, and should, inspire young people to do extraordinary things in their careers. When we are, every day, exposed to news articles of government handouts, questionable moral decisions by hard-workings leadership, and a pervasive criticism of how this country became a beacon for freedom and opportunities for immigrants and hard working families, it is refreshing to embrace the local accomplishments of our own engineering and contracting leaders who paved the way for our current and future success. Recognizing and sharing the traits of successful people in our industry helps form our own contracting morality and sense of fairness. The more we can honor those traits that set our award winners apart from the “mainstream”, the more we gain strength from doing things the right way.

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I often said that my co workers made hundreds of small decisions every day that affected our company. As a business owner, I tried to lean on company culture, stories from our employees and their parents and partners, and values that gave my co workers a sense of right and wrong so their hundreds of decisions they made each day gave the firm the best chance of preserving and enrichment of our success and company values. Over and over, I wanted my staff to know and understand the core beliefs that had been handed down from past experiences, successes, and yes-even some failures so they made correct decisions on their own.

Kind of like parenting combined with making a profit, right?

To me, I wanted everyone in my firm to know the traits of successful people in our industry. I wanted to learn how the Ghilottis, Soilands, Dowds, Trappes, and others made their mark and built their businesses. The more we know about successful business people's habits, decisions, and values, the more likely we are to learn something useful and "success begets success".

With that in mind, it is time for our Nominating Committee to meet and discuss nominees for our ECA awards. We can use your help. Please take a look at this link [HERE](#) so you can see who has won the various awards over the years and think about who has not been honored that should be honored at this point. Keep in mind, we are looking for nominees who have made years of contributions to our industry, and not necessarily just the ECA. Years ago, we decided to shift away from giving thanks to ECA contributors and broaden our honor recognition to industry contributors-our feeling is that the ECA flourishes from a strong industry, and vice versa. So we want to honor those that have made significant contributions to the engineering contracting industry.

If you want to send me a text, email, or phone call on who you would like to be considered for an award. please do so as our committee (led by Walt Turner) will be meeting for our first discussion on Monday, 7-17-23. The process goes like this:

The committee meets and discusses Contractor of the Year, Affiliate of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, and Hall of Fame possible nominees (one living, one posthumous). The committee will look at whether a person or firm has never won an award, and/or if it has recently won an award. We will pick 1-3 nominees to discuss in August and make our final recommendations to the Board of Directors in either September or October. Once the Board decides, we call the nominees and ask if they would be able to attend the Installation Dinner in early February 2024, and if they would be willing to participate in a video honoring the nominee. If "yes", we schedule, if "no", we go to the 2nd choice and keep the first choice at the top of the discussion for next year (sometimes there are scheduling conflicts with family wanting to attend, etc.).

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So please think about it and let me know your thoughts. We can and will learn from successful people and we appreciate all of your accomplishments-sometimes we need to be reminded or made aware of them!!! Make us aware!

It is time for consideration of these recognitions.

That's All Folks!

John

NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. **Governor Newsom unveils plan to speed up projects on infrastructure projects-click on this link [Governor Newsom Unveils New Proposals to Build California's Clean Future, Faster | California Governor](#)**
2. **In three long-awaited decisions released on June 29-30, the Supreme Court has altered the legal landscape between an employer and its employees.**
 - A. One decision concerning affirmative action and the use of race-based decision making will require employers to review their hiring and diversity initiatives. [20-1199 Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College \(06/29/2023\) \(supremecourt.gov\)](#)
Many employers have formal or informal affirmative action practices, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives to enhance diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Employers should review their affirmative action and DEI practices to ensure they are in line with the guidance from the Supreme Court in the SFFA cases.
Another will have an immediate impact on the analysis employers utilize for determining religious accommodations in the workplace. [22-174 Groff v. DeJoy \(06/29/2023\) \(supremecourt.gov\)](#)
 - B. As a result of *Groff*, employers should consider all aspects of how different religious accommodations may impact the nature and costs of their particular businesses. Employers should be cognizant of this change going forward because a failure to abide by these new procedures could render Title VII liability.
 - C. The most recent case clarifies freedoms business owners maintain but could cause stumbling blocks for unwitting employers. [21-476 303 Creative LLC v. Elenis \(06/30/2023\) \(supremecourt.gov\)](#)
 - D. As business owners, this case may reassure employers that no state government may require them to express messages and ideas that do not comport with their own beliefs. Nevertheless, employers should be cautious when considering the employment implications of this case. Employees are still entitled to numerous workplace protections under many state and federal laws. By no means is this case an avenue to avoid those protections.

Ain't it fun to be a business owner??

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Click [HERE](#) for more information on the Tractor Pulls!

This year's event will be even better! West Coast Diesel's is proud to announce that the event will be hosted by West Coast Fundamentals, a non-profit that is geared towards helping young people get better access to the trades.

We will be using funds from sponsors and donors to help young people into auto mechanics and other trades.

For the event, we will be adding a dyno.

The event is on September 9th! The dyno will be opening at 9a due to the excess demand! The Show and Shine will be open at 12p and the Tractor Pulls will start at 5:30p.

Please email/call us with any questions or if you'd like to be part of the show.

Email: info@westcoastdiesels.com—Phone: 707-595-3026—Donation and Sponsorships will be tax deductible!

COMMITTEE NEWS & INFORMATION

The ECA Golf Tournament ~~The ECA Golf Tournament~~ is happening on July 21 from 11am to 1pm (1 pm is the shotgun start, but you do not want to miss the putting contest and lunch that precedes teeing off!!)

Thanks to our sponsors and all that have signed up to play. [Sponsor Flyer](#)

ECA Spec Committee-chaired by *Dale Smith of RCX and Casey Wood of Ghilotti Brothers Inc.* will meet on Wednesday, July 19, 2023, from 4:00pm to 5:30 pm at NCBE Board Room. Topics will include encroachment permit discussions, relations, and requirements for successfully getting a fire permit (private and public works), and grading permit discussion for public and private works.

The ECA Days of Wine and Dozers Auction Committee has been busy and is gearing up for the auction night on Saturday, September 16, 2023. We need auction items, and we thank you for those that have stepped up and donated a vacation rental or dinner or special ECA item like "Blast and Brews". We need those items, and we need you to invite some friends to attend that have a checkbook!

Thank you to Engelke Construction Inc. for their Gold sponsor and BoDean for the live auction Blast and Brews!

To sponsor click [HERE](#)!

ECA 2023 UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, July 21

ECA Golf Tournament

Windsor Golf Course, Windsor, CA — [Sponsor Flyer](#)

SOLD OUT!



Thank you Sponsors!

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[Ghilotti Construction](#)—Showcase Sponsor

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[Peterson CAT](#) - Award Sponsor
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Saturday, September 16,

ECA WINE & DOZERS DINNER & AUCTION

Graton Rancheria

Thank you to our sponsors:

[Engelke Construction Inc](#)—Gold Sponsor

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WORKER'S COMPENSATION

Worker's Compensation Endorsement By ECA-

HELLO!!! HAVE YOU ASKED YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES PERSON TO CHECK OUT THE WORKERS COMP PROGRAM ECA HAS ENDORSED? Everybody likes to save money, don't they? Doesn't cost you a thing to consider this as an option! Jeff Okrepkie at 707-360-4338.



George Petersen Insurance Agency

FIRE CLEAN UP LIST:

The Sonoma County Environmental Health Department, Transportation and Public Works, and James Gore's office are utilizing the ECA as a resource for debris testing, and debris cleanup for fire victims from the Kincade Fire. Please review the list that has been provided to the fire victims and the County, of ECA Firms that are interested and listed in various categories as being helpful in the fire aftermath. This is another benefit for ECA members and if you want to be included on the list, and are not, please contact mary@nceda.org. There is no charge for this. You can access the list by clicking [HERE](#)

EMERGENCY RESPONSE MANUAL

The updated 2023-2024 Emergency Response Manual is now available online!

In the event of an emergency, we have put together this manual to help our community receive quick service from our members.

Thank you to our sponsors for helping to get this manual completed. It is sent to city and county agencies in case of an emergency so they will know who to call for services, equipment and materials.

Click [HERE](#) for the manual.

IMPORTANT INFO:

Get Prepared Now! Here are some very useful tips from CalFire to get your own house/property "in shape" for fire season. [link](#)

Pocket Guide for CALOSHA For Contractors: Click [here](#) for the pocket guide you all need!

Roadwork in Sonoma County - Check out the County website for road info [here](#)

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From the Desk of Jim Persons

Successful Safety Toolbox Talks for Construction

When it comes to workplace safety, having a toolbox talk is an essential part of any safety program. Toolbox talks are short, informal safety meetings that are held on a regular basis to discuss specific safety topics. They provide an opportunity for employees to ask questions and discuss potential hazards in the workplace. While toolbox talks can be beneficial, they can also be ineffective if not done correctly.

Click [HERE](#) to read more.



Expert COVID-19 Safety info Available at a Discount

The Shelter in Place Orders issued by County Health Officers in Sonoma, Napa, and Mendocino - as well as the Governor, have highlighted for the building industry the need for all contractors to have an up-to-date written COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan.

This should be an addendum to your IIPP and safety meetings for COVID-19

Jim Persons, SafetyPride, an ECA member who serves as a consultant and safety instructor for ECA, is offering his services to our members and they will receive a 40% discount on his regular rates if you are a current member of ECA.

Contact Jim if you are interested in getting his help on COVID-19 related issues or other health and safety programs. email: jimpersons@safetypride.com or phone: 707-889-0881



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SPECIAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

1. Nominating Committee meeting at 4:30pm at NCBE small conference room on Monday, July 17, 2023.
2. ECA Exec Meeting to be held July 18 from 11-12
3. ECA Board of Directors Meeting to be held July 18, from 12-1:30 pm., special Affiliate presentation by Kent and Gustavo of Stevenson Supply and Tractor
4. July 18 the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors will be discussing and voting on a revised Project Labor Agreement Policy. The link to their agenda will be located on this [link](#).
5. Congrats to the Construction Corps program which just completed a two-week internship for 30 high school students in the NBCC boot camp project. Their project is one we discussed last year for YWCA building a shed at their facility for women and kids trying to move on from domestic violence situations.
6. The Mike Hauser Algebra Academy hosted an event with about 20 ninth graders attending the NCBE two weeks ago, and I was asked along with Casey Wood of GBI to talk to the students about how math and algebra are regularly used in our careers. Casey was nice enough to bring his GBI drone and show the students how the drone can be used for site quantity takeoff work. I spent some “tough love” time telling the students what it will take to be hired in the future: show up early, be engaged, be in good health, and remember the name of the person you are interviewing with!! All in all, a small “giveback” to help our young people. Thanks Casey and GBI! Thanks Ananda and Lisa Schaffner for the opportunity to connect with these young people.



Northern California Engineering Contractors Association

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