



September 18, 2023

“CONSTRUCTING A WAY FOR A BETTER FUTURE”

ECA NEWSLETTER

JOHNS SOAPBOX



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.

What is Really Destroying This Country?

Most of you are too young to remember who said this, but some of you, like me, can say “I miss the old guy, don’t you”?

Of course, I am talking about Andy Rooney. For years, he was able to do a segment on “60 Minutes” that was part comedy, part social commentary, and largely satirical questions and views on everyday life.

If you recall the segment that preceded “A Few Minutes with Andy Rooney” as “Point/Counterpoint” with Shana Alexander and James Kilpatrick, you are at least as old as I am. Rooney replaced that segment in 1978 and kept ending 60 Minutes until 1 month before he died in 2011.

Here is Andy on Daylight Savings Time- Click [HERE](#)

In my tribute to Andy Rooney, I’m thinking I have the answer to why half the country feels entitled, and half the country wants entitled folks to fend for themselves. It all boils down to TIPPING!

Here goes:

Tipping has gotten out of control. Not only is it ridiculous to tip your barber (in my opinion) for cutting your hair (like, if he did a crap job would he lower the cost from \$25 to \$15 for you?), I think tipping is symbolic of the socialist tendencies taking over our country.

For example, how is it that illegal immigrants are being housed in nice hotels in New York, and they are trashing the rooms and complaining about their accommodations? They feel ENTITLED not only to the room they are in, but they deserve an upgrade apparently. Just like my freaking barber-he gets a fee to cut my hair, but because he cut my hair, he feels entitled to an upgrade as in “give me a tip you cheap bastard!”

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Continued from page 1

Budget overruns, the huge deficit, paying for homeless folks to get free needles, free haircuts, and free housing. Fix the USA, stop tipping altogether. See what happens! All the other stuff will stop too!

Should we consider tipping your gardener? I mean, some gardeners are better than others. I would say rather than tipping a good gardener, you compliment them, and when they raise their fee to you, you gladly pay it. But don't tip them. If you tip them, the word gets out to the person who cleans your windows, and the snowball just keeps rolling downhill. That's how the entitlements got out of control!

While we are on the tipping issue, another thing that bugs me is the little screen they turn around at you when you pay your bill at the coffee place every day. Tipping should be for extra personal service, and somehow, I am losing the personal part of that when somebody shoves a machine at me that literally demands I pay 15% 20% or 25%. There is no conversation, there is nothing like "can I get you something else". Nope. It is "pay me an additional 15, 20 or 25% for me doing my job". Like there is no other choice? How about this for another choice-NO!

Ok, one more. I went out with a friend and bought takeout dinner at a well-known restaurant in downtown Santa Rosa that shall remain unnamed (rhymes with Lo NoNo). On the receipt, and not a voluntary "tip or choice by me", is something that says "Living Wage 4.5% = \$1.80 for a \$40 meal. Are you freaking kidding me? Rather than pay his employees a living wage quietly and privately and raising the price of my spaghetti dinner \$1.80 to accommodate his questionable choice to pay higher than scale for his dishwasher, he has to involve me in a social discussion and choice? What's next? A fee for hiring a replacement chef? We could add another line item on the receipt for "Just in Case My Chef Decides He Is Worth More Than a Living Wage Fee-2.5%".

Holy Moly, where does it all end?

Keep in mind, you heard it here first-Tipping is Destroying this Country. Stop tipping. Watch the Country fix itself!

That's All Folks

John

We want to highlight a member each week. What we need from you is a short paragraph on what is happening at your company. New employees, new logo, a new move, exciting new equipment! What ever you want to share about your company with our members.

Email mary@nceca.org with your spotlight information and send in photos if you have them!

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JOBS OPENING

THE CITY OF SANTA ROSA IS NOW HIRING CIVIL ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS TO JOIN OUR TEAM IN PROVIDING CRITICAL SERVICES TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY! JOIN A KNOWLEDGEABLE AND MOTIVATED TEAM WHO TAKE PRIDE IN DOING QUALITY WORK

This recruitment is being conducted to fill vacancies in Transportation and Public Works - Capital Projects Engineering (CPE) Division, as well as any future regular or limited-term vacancies Citywide during the life of the eligible candidate list. If you are interested in this position or a possible future Civil Engineering Technician position at the City, should one become available, including transfer opportunities, you are strongly encouraged to apply now. The City of Santa Rosa is committed to building a workforce reflective of our community and establishing a lasting culture of equity and belonging within our organization. Our collective talents and expertise contribute to high-quality public services that support a vibrant, resilient, and inclusive City for our community and visitors. We celebrate a diverse workforce and welcome all qualified candidates to apply.

[Civil Engineering Technician I, II, III | Job Details tab | Career Pages \(governmentjobs.com\)](#)

Construction Technician I/II

Brelje & Race Consulting Engineers has an immediate opening for a Construction Technician. Experience should include underground utility, asphalt paving and/or water/wastewater treatment plant projects. The individual will be responsible for field engineering and construction monitoring at sites in Sonoma, Lake and Mendocino Counties. This on-call position is seasonal, with nearly full-time hours when active.

Responsibilities include contract compliance monitoring; observation and reporting of construction activities; coordination of quality control testing; tracking and coordinating project schedule; and maintaining client goals and expectations. Office duties may include assisting with contract administration services such as reviewing submittals, responding to requests for information, and maintaining construction contract logs and files.

Compensation: \$55 to \$75 per hour depending on experience, education, and licensure/certifications

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ECA 2023 EVENTS

RAT PACK GALA!

ECA WINE & DOZERS DINNER & AUCTION

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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.



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 Kincadee 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.

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](#)

The banner features a blue background with white and yellow text. At the top center is the 'North Bay Job Fair' logo with the website 'northbayjobfair.com'. Below this is a yellow banner with the text 'We have TWO Job Fairs coming up soon:'. Underneath, two columns of text provide details for the events: 'Wed, September 20' from 2:00-4:30 at Luther Burbank Center for the Arts in Santa Rosa, and 'Wed, October 4' from 3:00-6:00 at Elsie Allen High School in Roseland. A yellow button at the bottom says 'Register below', and a small email address 'email Bpell@mysonomamedia.com with questions' is at the very bottom.

[North Bay Job Fair | Amaturio Sonoma Media Group](#)

From the Desk of Jim Persons

Driver Safe Work Zone

Unexpected traffic delays can be avoided by following specific guidelines at the Traffic Control Zone.

click [HERE](#) for the rest!



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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EVENT NEWS & INFORMATION

1. **The ECA Days of Wine and Dozers** was held at the Graton Event Center Saturday night. Many thanks to the 170 or so attendees who seemed to have a great time at the event! To all of those that bought seats, tables, silent auction items, bid and/or got live auction items, donated silent auction items or live auction items, sponsored, and purchased beads for the “heads/tails” game and/or the 52-card give-away game-THANK YOU! To our Sustaining Member Firms-THANK YOU!! To the Volunteers-THANK YOU! Although the final expenses will not be exact until Graton sends us the invoice, we have a pretty good idea where the expenses will land. This was a big “gamble” on the part of the ECA to hold the event at a more expensive venue, and the ECA President, Antonio Mencarini and his Board of Directors, deserve credit for choosing to upgrade the experience. The preliminary income vs expense for the event shows we hit our budget or beat it and that is a tribute to the generosity of all those mentioned in my comments above! We hope you all had fun and bought some Christmas gifts for key employees or family members!!
Without your support, we could not exist, and we appreciate you!
2. **The Annual General Membership Meeting is** our last event of 2023 and will be held November 16, 2023, at Charlies at Windsor Golf Club, from 4:30-6:00pm. The topic will be “Where’s Our Dam Water?” and guest speakers will include James Gore via video, David Rabbitt, Grant Davis (head of the Sonoma County Water Agency, Janet Pauli (Redwood Valley Water and Ag expert) and Pam Jean of the Sonoma County Water Agency who put together the latest proposal to the FERC for water diversion and dam removal. This is a huge issue to all Sonoma County residents, and you should find the meeting very informative indeed!



Santa Rosa Fire Foundation Event

The When is Friday, October 13, 2023

The Time: 6:00-8:00pm

The Requirement: Your Presence at the Santa Rosa Fire Foundation Dinner and Live Auction Location at The Kunde Family Winery.

The [Santa Rosa Fire Foundation](#) is excited to share our second annual fundraising event to support the Santa Rosa Fire Department and commemorate the 2023 fire season coming to an end. The Foundation was formed in the wake of the devastating wildfires in Sonoma County as a way to inspire the generosity of the community to strengthen and expand the services of the Santa Rosa Fire Department by providing resources not otherwise available. Funds raised at this event will be used to help the Santa Rosa Fire Department institute innovative enhancements in the areas of wildfire resiliency, health and wellness of our first responders and building the next generation of firefighters in our community.

Come and enjoy a fantastic evening of great food and craft wine at one of Sonoma County's Premier wine country destinations. We would love for you to join us along with Congressman Mike Thompson, State Senator Mike McGuire and former San Francisco Giant Rich Aurilia in supporting the important work of the Santa Rosa Fire Foundation and celebrate the end of the 2023 fire season.

[Seating is limited so purchase tickets now.](#)



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COMMITTEE NEWS

1. **ECA Government Affairs Committee**-the GAC, led by Art Deicke, will meet with Mark Stapp (City of Santa Rosa Councilman) on September 19, 2023, at 1:30-2:30 pm in the small conference room at NCBE. Other issues to be discussed will be the recent submission for a \$1,500 PAC donation by John to the PG & E group.
2. **ECA Specification Committee**-the ECA Spec Committee, led by Dale Smith and Casey Wood, have cancelled tomorrow's meeting due to heavy workloads for our chairs. The ECA Spec will reconvene on November 15, 2023, from 4-5:30 pm at the NCBE main Board room.
3. **ECA Executive Committee Meeting**-next meeting is on Tuesday, 9-19-23 at 11:00 am. Topics will include the final recommendations for the 2024 Board of Directors, the 2023 ECA Award nominees, and the Officers for 2024. We will also review the 2024 proposed budget and calendar of events for 2024.
4. **ECA Board of Director Meeting**-next meeting will be held 9-19-23 from 12-1:30pm. Agenda with topics including: A. hearing the Nominating Committee (led by Walt Turner) recommendations for ECA Board of Directors and Officers for 2024, as well as Award nominations for 2023 Award winners, and B. The Board has final say on these items. And B. a summary of the big Auction event held Saturday night, and submission of the 2024 ECA Proposed Budget and Calendar of Events following vetting and tweaking by the Exec Committee.



NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. New City in Solano-I understand why folks are pissed- [For CEO behind a plan to create Solano city, business is personal \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)
2. Did you think there was ever going to be a \$21 million estate for sale in Lake County? There is now- [Vintner Jim Fetzer's Lake County estate up for sale for \\$21 million \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)
3. More oversight and training for contractors in California-good for consumers? [Newsom signs legislation that aims to improve contractor oversight \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)
4. Energy Dept. targets \$300M for transmission projects States and tribes as well as local governments stand to benefit from \$300 million in grants to be distributed by the Energy Department for transmission and other qualifying projects. The goal is to step up construction of infrastructure needed to meet the goal of 100% clean energy by 2035. Full Story: Engineering News-Record (tiered subscription model)
5. Choo Choo Double Down? Las Vegas-to-L.A. rail could break ground this year
Brightline's high-speed rail line linking Las Vegas and Los Angeles is expected to begin construction by year-end if federal funds are forthcoming. Taylor Lane gives a rundown of what to expect from the project, which could start service in 2027. Full Story: Las Vegas Review-Journal (tiered subscription model)
6. Do you know Brookfield Properties? You better get with it! [Concord City Council unanimously selects developer for former naval station site – NBC Bay Area](#)

Northern California Engineering Contractors Association

The ECA, and its Board of Directors, has been the voice of the engineering construction industry for over 40 years.

The foundation of the ECA has been to address local needs and issues.

The purpose and goal of ECA and its staff are to provide services to the members that help them run their businesses safely, efficiently, and in compliance with the many rules and regulations and mandates of government.

The working committees are the heart and soul of the ECA. The committees are comprised of ECA members.

The committees promote events that enable the ECA to fund community projects that include: Fathers Day "Show & Shine" Car Show, Public Officials Night, the Golf Tournament, and, the "Days of Wine & Dozers" Auction Dinner.

If you would like to join a committee, please email mary@nceca.org ~ We would love to have you!

Northern California Engineering Contractors Association

John Bly, Executive Vice President
email: john@nceca.org

Mary Kennedy Cabrera, Member Services Director
email: mary@nceca.org

Cheryl Long, Bookkeeper
email: cheryl@nceca.org

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