

PCAV: 10 Years Old!

Begun in 1991 and incorporated in 1992, the Precast Concrete Association of Virginia is still a dynamic, influential organization.

Membership has grown significantly, integrating not only producer members but also associate and promotional partner members. Growth issues were addressed during Scott Crumpler's presidency (1999-'01) when the board undertook rewriting the articles of incorporation and bylaws for the group.

"We brought our associate members and our promotional partners into full voting status on the board of directors," says Scott, who is GM at Americast. "We wanted them to be more active participants in our organization. However, producers will always maintain the majority on the board," he says. "Jim Fullerton, PCAV General Counsel, was instrumental in helping us make that work out."

"We have grown significantly, become more structured, organized and professional, but we are still doing the same things ... fighting the same battles," says Bill Tichacek, president of Americast, PCAV's first president (1991-'93) and one of the organization's founders. "This organization has been more effective in promoting our markets than the national organization has," he says.

"We started PCAV with the understanding that we all—pipe and precast—were in the concrete business and if we promoted concrete products, it would be better for the industry," says Kirby O'Malley, now president of Garden State Precast in Farmingdale,

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Precast Concrete Beats Corrugated Metal

The Rotondo Precast plant in Fredericksburg, Va. was recently successful in competing against a corrugated metal arch bridge with its OmegaSpan bridge system. The OmegaSpan is an open bottom three-sided bridge structure with monolithic footings cast at the same time as the

place endwalls on the upstream end could be precast, no beams were needed along each side as was needed on the metal arch, and that select fills were no longer needed, Interstate Construction decided to go with the OmegaSpan.

It was decided after reviewing hydraulics that ten eight-foot sections of an 18' x 8' OmegaSpan would work. The OmegaSpan was a little taller so that the footings could be buried well below the stream elevation to offset scour concerns.

Upon presentation of the idea to the engineer and the City of Richmond, there was no apprehension about replacing the metal arch with the concrete OmegaSpan. It helped eliminate the maintenance and longevity issues that always come along with the metal products.

As of the time of this article, this specific project had not been installed,

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The OmegaSpan is a three-sided bridge structure that requires no cast-in-place footings.

rest of the structure so cast-in-place footings are *not* needed.

The project, Magnolia Street Phase II, is in the city of Richmond and it called for 80 feet of 19'-4" x 5'-6" corrugated metal arch. The contractor, Interstate Construction, contacted Rotondo Precast wanting to know if a precast concrete option was available and could it be competitive. After proposing the OmegaSpan, and learning that no footings would be needed, the contractor was very interested. Then, after comparing pricing, and realizing that in addition to no cast-in-place footings, the cast-in-

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Precast Wins

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but in a previous project, 40 feet of 18' x 8' OmegaSpan was set in less than three hours, and the contractor had finished his backfilling by the end of that same day. Now, the same engineer has decided to place a 24-foot OmegaSpan in place of another corrugated metal arch on an upcoming project in Henrico County, thus giving precast another win over corrugated metal.



The OmegaSpan is quick to set and lasts longer than the corrugated metal arch.

The OmegaSpan is offered in spans from 12 feet up to 24 feet, and can be as tall as 12-feet high. It can also be cast without the monolithic footings if cast-in-place footings are desired. The structure has been used as a water crossing as well as a pedestrian/vehicular tunnel.

VDOT has been very positive in its reaction to the OmegaSpan. Some feedback received from VDOT is they find that the shape of the OmegaSpan is hydraulically better than the arch type shapes. Also, they like the idea of being able to go up to a 12-foot inside height to help with varying field conditions. All who have seen the OmegaSpan agree that because of the monolithic footings, the installation and backfilling time frames are greatly reduced.

The OmegaSpan has been a very good option for engineers and contractors since it was introduced. Now we are glad that it gives us an option that we can go after and compete against the corrugated metal arches that are so often used on projects just because of their costs.

Past Presidents Remember

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N.J. He was a founding member of PCAV and its third president (1995-'96) until a job transfer cut his involvement short. He's happy to see that PCAV's views have recently been adopted by the national organization.

"Our relationship with VDOT and our efforts to create a standard within the specifications has helped the industry," says Don Anger, operations manager at Americast and PCAV's fourth president (1995-'96). "As an organization, we will continue to develop relationships with more municipalities to standardize products for the precast industry."

Right from the beginning PCAV forged a relationship with VDOT to work on specifications, says Jim Richmond, division sales manager for Americast and PCAV's second president (1993-'95). "We wanted to work with VDOT to get their specifications in line with all the precasters in the state," he says.

Over the years, the organization has worked to communicate better with its members, partners and with other associations, says Richard Rotondo, VP/GM of Rotondo Precast and PCAV's president in 1997-'99. During his reign, PCAV created its website and developed the newsletter. "We brought in the marketing consulting group and began to align ourselves with other associations."

So, what's next for PCAV? Several past presidents said that plastics, corrugated metal and innovative new materials present a continued threat to the market. Therefore, educating engineering students and continuing precast concrete promotional efforts will be critical to the industry's future.

"We need to hire a full-time promoter to work with the specifiers and engineers to help promote our products. This would take a strong financial commitment by the members. The promoter would also work with the engineering schools to make sure that precast products are included in the curriculum," says Bill. "It would be a step up, raising the bar another notch."

Education Committee Cruising Along

By Patrick Rodgers

The Education Committee has been busy the past few months, looking for ways to collaborate with engineering schools in Virginia to reach future engineers.

In November Ann Couwenhoven (CSR-Hydro Conduit) was guest speaker at the American Society of Civil Engineers continuing education seminar. (See related article on page 4.)

Then, on December 11 during the Education Committee meeting, Carissa Alexander (Hanson), Aurelia Hamel (Contractors Precast), Ann Couwenhoven (Hydro), and Patrick Rodgers (Contractors Precast) brainstormed scholarship program ideas. Everyone had already been working on how to set up a PCAV scholarship program and raise funds, so many great ideas were presented.

We all felt that tremendous progress was made. A basic outline for the program and ideas for several fund-raising events were established.

The committee also discussed what we can do to promote the precast concrete industry to students as a excellent choice for employment. Many ideas were discussed—from a promotional video to summer work programs.

Thanks to Ed Page (Hanson), an active member on the committee, we will soon find out what our members think about the scholarship program, fund raisers, work programs and educating students. Ed is developing a members' questionnaire and it should be ready to mail out soon. We hope you will all take just a few minutes to fill it out and return it.

If you would like to learn more about how other associations work with students, check out these great reference articles: Virginia Road and Transportation Builders Association, newsletter *Bluetop*, January 2002, pg 1, "Thank You"; *ACI, Concrete International*, January 2002, pg 17-18, "ACI Launches Student Fellowship Program"; Virginia Road and Transportation Builders Association's flyer, "It's All About What You Want!", attached to January newsletter.

The committee is in the next phase—developing a plan of action, incorporating our scholarship, education and outreach ideas. Members' ideas will be included in this plan.

In April several PCAV members will attend the American Society of Civil Engineers Regional Concrete Canoe Contest and Concrete Bowling Ball Contest as judges. This year's event is being held in Charleston, West Virginia. (See related article, this page.)

The Education Committee will meet again at the next general meeting in May before lunch. We welcome and encourage members to get involved and become part of the committee. For details contact me: 540.972.6677 or prodgers@contractorsprecast.com

Tracking Trends

by Lois Carter Fay

According to a report by NECSA, PCAV is one of four partner groups that have increased the value of their producer surveys by changing the way that the statistics are gathered.

In the past when surveys were taken, all of the statistics were included. However, it was determined that the identity and number of producer members completing the surveys varied from year to year, skewing the resulting statistics.

Consequently, NECSA suggested that the groups adopt an approach used by the retail industry—that of comparing "same store sales." This means that a group of common respondents (those answering the survey each year) are identified and only their responses are included in the results, significantly reducing the variability. This method of reporting provides a more accurate picture of product usage trends.

NECSA applauded PCAV for its "cooperation and vision in setting a strong precedent for product usage measurement."

Sure... You Can Canoe, But Can You Bowl?

by Patrick Rodgers

Another event has been added to this year's American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Regional Concrete Canoe Contest ... bowling. No, it's not underwater bowling, or bowling from the canoe. It's the "Concrete Bowling Ball Contest."

Both concrete contests will be held from April 27 to April 29, 2002 in Charleston, W. Va., where the host school, the West Virginia Institute of Technology, has put together an excellent program for all the events at this year's conference. Last year's events were: design paper, oral presentation, display, final product (where the boat had to float full of water) and race competition. Similar events are expected this year.

As in the past, the Concrete Canoe Contest will draw teams from the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, West Virginia University and the West Virginia Institute of Technology, as well as others. Using the latest in computer boat design software and lightweight concrete, the canoes are generally surprisingly light, stable and maneuverable.

Each team competing in the new Concrete Bowling Ball Contest will build a concrete bowling ball, using a durable concrete mix. Then on a concrete sidewalk, the team will bowl down concrete pins. The team with the biggest piece of concrete left or the least number of cracks in their ball, wins.

We're happy to say that PCAV members have already stepped forward to act as judges for this year's concrete canoe and bowling ball contest. And we've had suggestions for future contests. Next year we'll work on solving problems for the Jimmy Hoffas of the world ... concrete shoes! (Just kidding.)

To attend or for more information about this year's competition, please contact me at 540.972.6677 or prodgers@contractorsprecast.com.

2002 Calendar of Events

DATE	EVENT
April 3	HRUHCA Showcase '02 "A Salute to America" 3-8 pm, Holiday Inn Chesapeake, Va.
April 11-12	Contractor/Engineer Conference (VDOT-VRTBA) Norfolk, Va.
April 27-29	Concrete Canoe Contest W. Va. Institute of Technology Charleston, W. Va.
May 7	VRTBA Scholarship Golf Tournament, Hanging Rock, Salem, Va.
May 23	PCAV Board of Directors Meeting & Associates Dinner Boars' Head Inn Charlottesville, Va.

PCAV Past Presidents

Bill Tichacek, Americast	1991-1993
Jim Richmond, Americast	1993-1995
Kirby O'Malley, Garden State Precast	1995-1996
Don Anger, Americast	1996-1997
Richard Rotondo, Rotondo Precast	1997-1999
Scott Crumpler, Americast	1999-2001

PCAV Mission

The Precast Concrete Association of Virginia is dedicated to the growth of the precast concrete industry. We will educate specifiers and end users as to the advantages and proper utilization of products and systems, and we will represent the industry in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Couwenhoven Speaks for PCAV

By Patrick Rodgers

Ann Couwenhoven, CSR-Hydro Conduit and co-chair for the PCAV

Education Committee, was one the speakers at the continuing education seminar for engineers last November. She was invited to present by Professor Lesley Rosier of the West Virginia University Institute of Technology and the Regional Representative for the American Society of Civil Engineers. Professor Rosier is PCAV's liaison for the concrete canoe contest.

The event, held at the WVU Institute of Technology, was attended by 271 specification engineers plus students. Ann's topic, proper storm drain design and installation, must have been smashing, because she has been invited to be a speaker at several more continuing education seminars.

Ann tells us she also spoke with the president of the American Society of Civil Engineers about their scholarship program and plans to have a follow-up meeting with him to get more information. Great job, Ann!



Ann Couwenhoven with award for guest speaking at the American Society of Civil Engineers continuing education seminar.

Hard Facts is a publication of the Precast Concrete Association of Virginia for its members. Submissions, story ideas, member kudos, letters to the editor and comments are welcomed. Contact the editor, Lois Carter Fay, APR, at 757.259.9650 or sbp@visi.net.

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