Legislative session. The Alcohol and Drug Testing Act, which became effective July 1, requires contractors who bid public improvement projects to have a specified alcohol and drug testing program.

C Awv roles out promotional video
The C Awv Public Relations Committee developed and launched a promotional video this year. The video interviews C Awv members about what makes the association so important to their businesses. Members discussed the association’s legislative and lobbying program, committee functions, networking opportunities and association publications. The Public Relations committee debuted the video at the Midyear Meeting held in July at The Greenbrier. The video is available for viewing on the association’s website at www.cawv.org.

joint coop addresses many issues
The C Awv/WVDOD/FWA Joint Cooperative worked on many issues this year, including specification revisions and special projects. Eleven member firms are involved in a WVDOD pilot project that will help deliver full implementation of electronic bidding in 2009. Another task force is helping develop the next generation of design-bid-build policies and procedures for highway construction in West Virginia. The Section 108 Task Force continued work on a complete rewrite of the section, while a special Staff Task Force submitted a proposed steel escalation specification to the WVDOD for their consideration. A new Pavement Smoothness Specification went into effect this year after several years of development by WVDOD and industry. The C Awv and Asphalt Pavement Association of West Virginia also worked closely with the State Auditor and WVDOD on the expanded use of the Purchasing Card (P-Card) for payment of materials and services procured through WVDOD purchase order contracts. The Joint Cooperative monitored the work of eight subcommittees and several task forces.

C Awv Scholarship Foundation expands educational outreach
The C Awv Scholarship Foundation contributed a total of $12,500 to institutions, students and the National AGC of America Scholarship Foundation in 2008. The Foundation awarded $7,200 to nine engineering students representing Marshall University, West Virginia University Institute of Technology, Fairmont University and West Virginia University. This year’s $4,000 winner was Ken Hacker, a civil engineering student at Fairmont State University. In addition, three local vocational schools received $500 each to assist their construction trades program. The National AGC Scholarship Foundation was awarded $1,000.

WvCac activities
The West Virginia Crushed Aggregates Council submitted comments to the U. S. Department of Labor, Mine Safety and Health Administration, regarding its proposed Alcohol and Drug-Free Miners Rule. The WVCAC is concerned that the rule could create a significant safety risk by prohibiting mine operators from terminating employees who violate the mine operators policy and test positive for alcohol or drugs. The WVCAC commented that the proposed rule prohibits owners from enforcing established “zero tolerance” drug and alcohol policies, which weakens an employer’s safety program.

Expo another success
The 29th edition of the WV Construction and Design Exposition (Expo) attracted nearly 6000 attendees from 30 states. The two day show at the Charleston Civic Center offered attendees the opportunity to visit 286 exhibitors with 500 indoor booths, plus several outdoor displays. The show also featured 98 Honor Exhibitors, 50 quality seminars and meetings and a 76-page program. More on the event and the 2009 show can be found at www.wvexpo.com.
Tough times are not new to West Virginia construction industry. This is why the Contractors Association of West Virginia works year after year to ensure fertile funding for highway, building and utility construction projects. West Virginia's need for the basic infrastructure and the state must improve the economic downturn could make face over the next few years. Although our bottom lines may be affected in the short term, the CAWV has positioned the construction industry in West Virginia to weather the economic storm.

This year, the CAWV worked with Governor Joe Manchin and the School Building Authority to pass legislation that will provide an average of $70 million per year through 2025 for new school construction and renovation projects. This is the first time in modern history that there is a perpetual funding mechanism for school construction.

The CAWV has been working to build public awareness of the need for clean water and sewer infrastructure. These efforts will continue in 2009. In conjunction with the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of America, Penn State University has produced a documentary titled "Liquid Assets: The Story of Our Water Infrastructure." The 90-minute presentation explores why water, sewer, and stormwater systems are essential to the nation's public safety, economic development, basic sanitation and quality of life. Many of these systems have gone without maintenance for more than 100 years and are crumbling beneath our communities.

The CAWV will sponsor the showing of "Liquid Assets" on West Virginia Public Broadcasting, along with a roundtable discussion, "West Virginia: Assets - Infrastructure in the Mountain State." The discussion will highlight the issues facing the state's environment, clean water source and utility. The state's unique topographical challenges and the $3 billion needed for wastewater and stormwater systems.

AGC and The American Road and Transportation Building Association (ARTBA), the CAWV's two national associations, were hard at work this year on the federal level to promote contractors and the industry.

Leo Vecchillo Jr., president and CEO of The Vecchillo Group, completed a successful year as ARTBA’s chairman. ARTBA led the development of a plan to push for passage of SAFETEA-LU, the federal-aid highway funding bill. The legislation was enacted by October 1, 2009. The CWA will continue to work with the ARTBA to streamline the design and construction of School Building Authority-funded projects. To further streamline contract administration, the CWA plans to use a computer training and certification program to build highway projects.

Additionally, the CWA has announced Spring Mills Elementary School in Martinsburg will be built with a capital program that would increase funding for West Virginia’s schools.

SCHOOLS BUILDING AUTHORITY STRENGTHENS PROGRAM

School construction has a significant impact on West Virginia, adding over $1 billion to the state's economy every year. Accordingly, sister organizations have worked to ensure a new board was appointed to CWA to ensure funding for the construction industry. As a result, the CWA has been named the "Builder of the Year 2009" by the school board for their efforts to improve the state's infrastructure.

In 2009, the CWA will continue to advocate for increased funding for school construction, with a focus on ensuring that every child has access to a quality education in a safe and healthy environment.

BUILD UP BRINGS CONSTRUCTION INTO THE CLASSROOM

The CWA Education Committee has focused on building the first phase of the AGC of America's Construction Future's program. The program, which is active in 16 classrooms in 11 West Virginia counties, is designed to enhance the curriculum with a focus on the construction industry through coordinated educational and community service activities. The Education Committee's efforts include holding workshops and the program into 25 classrooms in 2009. Build Up provides a comprehensive look at the construction industry to thousands of teachers, 3rd to 5th grade students and their parents throughout the country.

JOINT UTILITIES COMMITTEE WORKS TO EXPEDITE PROJECTS

The Joint Utilities Committee has met regularly with federal and state water and sewer funding agencies and public service commission officials to study more efficient and cost-effective measures to bid and complete projects. The committee's efforts have resulted in significant cost savings for water and sewer projects across West Virginia.

WVUCA CONTINUES WORKING TO BRING WATER TO ALL OF WEST VIRGINIA

The West Virginia Utility Contractors Association held its quarterly meeting on September 30. The meeting featured an update on federal funding measures for water and sewer construction along with WV American Water President Wayne Frees. The association also discussed the 2009 construction program.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG TESTING PROGRAM EFFECTIVE JULY 1

The CWA held regional educational seminars in 1998 and 1999 that focused on the new mandatory alcohol and drug testing law passed during the 2008
Tough times are not new to West Virginia's construction industry. This is why the Contractors Association of West Virginia works year after year to ensure our state is future-proofing funding for highway, building and utility construction. "Our mission is to help cushion the negative economic downturn construction may face over the next few years."

Although our bottom lines may be affected in the short term, the CAWW has positioned the construction industry in West Virginia to weather the economic storm.

This year, the CAWW worked with Governor Joe Manchin and the School Building Authority to pass legislation that will provide an average of $70 million per year through 2025 for new school construction and renovation projects. This is the first time in modern history that there is a perpetual funding mechanism for school construction.

The CAWW has been working to build public awareness of the need for water and sewer infrastructure. These efforts will continue in 2009. In conjunction with the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of America, Penn State University has produced a documentary titled "Liquid Assets: The Story of Our Water Infrastructure." The 90-minute presentation explores why water, sewer and stormwater systems are essential to public safety, economic development, basic sanitation and quality of life. Many of these systems have gone without maintenance for more than 100 years and are crumbling beneath our communities.

The CAWW will sponsor the showing of "Liquid Assets" on West Virginia Public Broadcasting, along with a roundtable discussion, "West Virginia Water: Infrastructure in the Mountain State." The discussion will highlight the issues facing the supply of safe, clean water throughout the state, including our unique topographic challenges and the $3 billion need for wastewater and stormwater systems.

AGC and The American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), the CAWW's two national associations, were hard at work this year on the federal level to promote contractors and the industry.

Leo Vecellio Jr., president and CEO of Vecellio Group, completed a successful year as ARTBA chairman. He led the development of a plan to push for passage of SAFETEA-LU, the federal-aid highway funding bill, which was introduced by October 1, 2009. He also led ARTBA's efforts to provide for reasonable environmental regulations for highways and highway construction projects.

AGC of America, and its 96 chapters, were presented with the National Building Museum's 22nd annual Honor Award at the museum's mentoring program, which also recognized many important contributions. The award was presented to the CAWW for its significant impact on the field of construction and leadership in shaping, defining, and advancing the industry. Your CAWW leaders attended the May 21 awards ceremony which honored AGC in recognition of their 30 years of service to the nation's construction industry.

AGC and ARTBA promote and protect CAWW members' interests in our nation's capital. Your CAWW will be very active this year as they work with a new administration and many new Congressional leaders.

The CAWW will work this year with the new senators and delegates elected to the West Virginia Legislature. Our committees will continue their work to develop future goals and an action plan to achieve the association's long-term vision of creating a good climate for construction in West Virginia.

As we face an uncertain economy, one thing is certain: The CAWW is working to ensure a healthy construction industry in West Virginia.

June's CAWW-organized "Workforce Week" report is just a sample of how the CAWW and our members are "Hard at Work" every day building a better West Virginia.

Sincerely,
Mike D. Osmint
President

LEGISLATIVE SESSION SEEKS SOME MAJOR WIN FOR CONSTRUCTION

The CAWW's legislative efforts, an essential membership service, in 2008 saw major wins for the state's construction industry. The CAWW worked with Governor Joe Manchin and the WV Legislature to pass bills leading to increased construction funds and an improved business climate in West Virginia.

SB 297 allows the School Building Authority to use their annual $19 million pay-as-you-go funding for debt service on bond projects that are not associated with school construction (see related story). SB 682 provides $78 million for community and technical college projects throughout the state. The bill creates a special fund known as the "Community and Technical College Capital Improvement Fund" and authorizes the Higher Education Policy Commission to allocate $5 million annually in state lottery funds for debt service on bonds.

This year also saw passage of H.B. 447, the Public-Private Transportation Facilities Act. This bill gives the state of West Virginia the ability to utilize public-private partnerships to build highway projects, but maintains state control over tolls and mandates that no State Road Authority/entity may be used, only a General Authority, to issue Funds or federal funds specifically earmarked for a project.

SB 466 authorizes the Water Development Authority to provide assistance for the development of wastewater and stormwater systems in the state. The bill provides a loan program designed to bring deficient dams in West Virginia back to compliance.

Bills defeated during the 2008 Session included a mandatory health insurance bill, mandatory sick leave bill and the very controversial captive auto insurance bill, which would have placed restrictions on an employer's right to discuss business issues with employees. In the final days of the session, legislators passed a supplemental budget bill that included an additional $25 million for the WV Division of Highways spring paving program, bringing it to $50 million.

SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY STRENGTHENS PROGRAM

School construction has a significant impact on West Virginia, adding over $1 billion to the state's economy in the past five years, according to a study conducted by the West Virginia University Bureau of Business and Economic Research. The CAWW will continue to work with the School Building Authority (SBA) of West Virginia and the CAWW to enhance the program. Governor Joe Manchin introduced a bill that allows the SBA to use the $13 million it receives annually from the State Excess Lottery Fund for pay-as-you-go construction projects on debt service on approximately $200 million in bonds. The bill allows the SBA to stagger bond issues, thus providing $86 to $75 million for construction per year through 2025. This creates a consistent funding level so contractors will know exactly how much school construction will be performed annually.

In June, the SBA finalized their "Quality and Performance Standards" document for school construction. The new standards are a necessary step to be used when designing and building schools throughout the state. The Joint Architecture Committee must review these guidelines with the SBA throughout the process to develop a document that will streamline the design and construction of School Building Authority-funded School Water State-Rebuilding Fund (SWF) and opposition to a proposed change to the Clean Water Act which would remove the current fee for the discharge of waters controlled by the U.S. Corps of Engineers 404 permit.

SBA WINS AGRICULTURAL RELATIONS AWARD

The CAWW accepted an award for "Best Infrastructure Awareness Campaign" for the "West Virginia is Better Together" (WVIT) program from the AGC of America at their Annual Convention in Las Vegas. This is the fourth AGC public relations award the CAWW has won. The award was for "Best Infrastructure Awareness Campaign" for the "300 Million Clean Water jobs bond amendment in WV" and "Best Community Service Project" for the "Pavement at Charleston's Riverfront Park" project.

Alcohol and Drug Testing Program Effective July 1

The CAWW held regional educational seminars during 1998 and 1999 through the new mandatory state alcohol and drug testing law passed during the 2008
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