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West Virginia's highway transportation system is large and the available revenue is falling critically short of fulfilling needs. With over $400 million in additional funds required each year just to keep up with maintenance, there will be rough roads ahead.

Inside, see facts and figures on West Virginia's highway system, the efforts of West Virginians for Better Transportation, the impact that infrastructure can have on a community, and a profile of member company ACCAD Corporation. The Transportation Issue begins on page 6.

The Contractors Association of West Virginia is a nonprofit trade organization representing the building, highway, heavy and utility contracting industries in West Virginia. Its services include establishment of a close working liaison with state and federal agencies; worthwhile educational and informational programs; the regular dissemination of pertinent information to its members; strong legislative and media relations; as well as all other activities deemed necessary and proper to promote the general welfare of the construction industry. The CAWV is a certified chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America and the American Road and Transportation Builders Association.

West Virginia Construction News, the official publication of the CAWV since 1937, is published bimonthly. Advertising and editorial deadlines are on the first of the month preceding the month of publication. Material may be reprinted only with the permission of the editor. Advertising and editorial offices are at 2114 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Charleston, WV 25311, telephone (304) 342-1166, Fax (304) 342-1074, Web Site www.cawv.org, Email: cawv@cawv.org. Yearly subscription rate to CAWV members, $7; non-members, $8; single copies, $1.50.

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ASSISTANT EDITOR

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ASSISTANT EDITOR
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West Virginia’s roadways are the state’s pathways to prosperity. Roads create jobs - first when they are built and then by bringing economic development to an area. Without roads, residents cannot access opportunities for employment, education or recreation.

A Federal Highway Administration study found that for each $1 billion of federal spending on highway construction nationwide, nearly 28,000 jobs are generated annually. This includes approximately 9,500 jobs in construction, 4,300 jobs in industries supporting construction, and 14,000 induced jobs in non-construction related sectors of the economy.

Unfortunately, both West Virginia’s roads and its funding systems are in a sad state of disrepair.

Roads in need of maintenance cost the average West Virginia driver $273 per year in added vehicle repair and operating costs - $372 million a year total, according to a The Road Information Program (TRIP) analysis of West Virginia’s surface transportation system. Unfortunately, the money for maintenance and repair of the state’s vast 36,000 miles of roads and 6,850 bridges is shockingly insufficient.

“At the current funding levels, the money available to repair and build the state’s roads and bridges is $15 billion over the next 25 years,” Department of Transportation Secretary Paul Mattox said. “A thorough analysis of the deficiencies of the system revealed that $39 billion will be needed over the next 25 years. That is an extra $1 billion per year that we need to construct and maintain a safe and modern road system.”

West Virginia’s secondary roadway system is currently operating on a 22 year paving cycle, up from a 32 year cycle, but still sorely shy of the optimum 12 year cycle. The average bridge in the state is 50 years old and rapidly reaching the end of its designed life span. The Interstate Highway System was 50 years old in 2006. All these aging systems result in dire maintenance needs throughout the state, for which there is not enough money.

“Just to maintain our current road system would require an additional $400 million per year,” Secretary Mattox said.

TRIP, a national transportation research group, in late 2011 released facts revealing the crisis facing West Virginia’s highway system.

- One-third of West Virginia’s bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. A bridge is structurally deficient if there is significant deterioration of the bridge deck, supports or other major components. Structurally deficient bridges are often posted for lower weight or closed to traffic. Bridges that are functionally obsolete no longer meet current highway design standards, often because of narrow lanes, inadequate clearances or poor alignment.

- 36 percent of West Virginia’s major roads are in poor or mediocre condition. Roads rated in poor condition show signs of deterioration including rutting, cracks and potholes. Mediocre roads show distress, but can be fixed by repaving.

- 5 percent of West Virginia’s major urban roads are congested during peak travel times. The average U.S. commuter loses 34 hours each year to traffic congestion.

- Roadway conditions are a significant factor in approximately one-third of traffic fatalities. West Virginia’s traffic fatality rate of 1.82 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel is higher than the national average of 1.14. Motor vehicle crashes cost West Virginia $1.2 billion per year, $701 for each resident.

Despite a clear picture of the needs, funding is stagnant or declining as a result of inaction at both the state and federal level. The federal surface transportation program, which expired in September 2009 and has been functioning on continuing resolutions for the past two years, is an essential source of funding for the construction, maintenance and improvement of West Virginia’s system of roads, highways and bridges.

“Our system is not expanding,” Secretary Mattox said. “We are using our money to pave roads and paint, clean and repair bridges.”

The largest source of revenue for the
State Road Fund is the gas tax which has two components. There is a flat 20.5-cent-per-gallon excise tax which hasn’t changed since 1993. The second component is a sales tax equal to 5 percent of the average cost per gallon wholesale which legislators enacted in 1983. In FY 2011, gas taxes generated $397,749,000 in revenue for the West Virginia Division of Highways. Other revenue sources include license, registration and litter fees.

The Highway Fund represents an annual budget of about $650 million per year. Of that, roughly 80 percent is contracted out for construction and maintenance. The difference is used to operate the program and perform maintenance by highway crews.

According to the West Virginia University Bureau of Business and Economic Research (WVU BBER), the total dedicated tax revenue entering the State Road Fund is equivalent to a decline of nearly one-third in the real value of total dedicated tax revenues.

“Since FY 1987 there has been a growth in total real dedicated tax revenues until FY 1994, when the peak real value was reached,” said Dr. Tom Witt, director of the WVU BBER. “Since FY 1994 the real total revenue has ranged from highs of around $874 million in FY 1999 to lows of around $797 million in FY 2001. From the latter fiscal year real revenues increase to a high of $886 million in FY 2004 and have since fallen to a two decade low of $605 million.”

The WVU BBER has performed a variety of studies examining the state’s highway system. Among issues studied, the following factors influence infrastructure financing:

- The fuel efficiency of passenger cars has gone from 13.8 miles / gallon in 1976 to 22.5 miles / gallon in 2007. Vans, pickup trucks and SUVs’ fuel rates have also climbed during the period while there has been a slight increase in efficiency for trucks.

- The number of vehicle miles traveled per vehicle has increased steadily over the period 1975 to around 2005; however, since that time the vehicle miles traveled has fallen.

- The increased fuel efficiency in vehicles overall has offset the vehicle miles traveled, leading to a decline in the fuel use per vehicle for all vehicle classes except trucks.

- Inflation in highway construction has increased, reaching a peak in 2008, and eroding the purchasing power of the highway fund.

“Travelers and businesses have come to expect a level of service, reliability and convenience that is now threatened by deterioration in parts of the system,” Dr. Witt said. “The local portion of the system will continue to deteriorate given the funding outlook. It goes without saying that chronic underinvestment in the state secondary road system will lead to increasing amounts of deferred maintenance, resulting in escalating costs for highway construction and maintenance in future roads,” Dr. Witt said. “Deficient roads and bridges with structural defects result in sizeable expenses to the motoring public when vehicles are damaged.”

Legislators have explored a variety of programs to create alternative funding sources for the construction of highway projects. Design-Build and public-private-partnerships for highway projects are currently available through pilot programs. The Community Empowerment Transportation Act (CETA), passed in 2011, allows for user fees and bonding for transportation projects.

Efforts so far have resulted in band-aid attempts to fill the funding gap between what is needed and what is available for construction and maintenance of the state’s roadways. Transfers from the state’s General Fund, attempts to raise DMV and registration fees, and potential revenue from oil and natural gas exploration have all fallen far short of fulfilling the needs.

Deficiencies in the highway system are stopping economic growth, hindering business development and exports and hurting the state’s residents.

The needs are clear. The reasons are clear. The solution is a different story.

By Lindsay Stephens
West Virginia’s crumbling, insufficient, neglected, dangerous and decaying highway infrastructure was thrust into the spotlight on January 12 by over 200 West Virginians for Better Transportation (WVBT) coalition members who joined together for Transportation Day at the Capitol. Contractors, labor union leaders, truckers, highway authorities, tourism groups, trade associations and chambers of commerce descended upon the Capitol to bring the message that “Roads = Jobs” to lawmakers.

State and federal lawmakers know the highway system statistics: West Virginia maintains the 6th largest highway system in the nation - 36,000 miles of road and nearly 7,000 bridges – but ranks second to last in capital investment per state-maintained mile. Funding has not been increased since 1994, while the purchasing power of the money available for construction and maintenance has decreased significantly.

As groups, such as the Contractors Association of West Virginia, have worked to end diversions to the State Road Fund and officials have made internal adjustments to the Department of Transportation to maximize spending, the figures have become common knowledge. WVBT was organized in 2006 to ensure that both the state’s decision makers and public were aware of the crisis facing the continued construction and maintenance of a safe and modern transportation system.

“West Virginians for Better Transportation has organized a coalition that represents nearly every facet of business in the state with the goal of presenting a unified message that something must be done to provide long term funding for transportation,” said William H. Hilborn, Jr., chair of WVBT. “The amount of money available to keep our
roads maintained and to build new roads is stagnant or declining. This has a tremendous impact on public safety and economic growth. Also, inflationary pressures and high raw material prices are increasing the costs of repairs and new construction. Moreover, the state Division of Highways has said that West Virginia will need an additional $400 million a year to keep up with road, bridge and highway maintenance and construction.”

As attendees filled the Senate and House galleries in their reflective vests, legislators passed a resolution in both chambers noting the importance of fully funding a safe and modern transportation system and acknowledging the challenges facing the continued construction and maintenance of the state’s highways and bridges.

“The time for talking has past,” Hilborn said during a press conference held outside the Senate chamber. “Now is the time to react.”

Lawmakers were receptive to the message and joined WVBT, speaking to attendees and the press about the need for funding the state roadway system.

In addition to Hilborn, Senate President Jeffrey Kessler (D-Marshall), Chair of the Senate Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Senator Robert Beach (D-Monongalia), Chair of the House Roads and Transportation Committee Delegate Margaret Anne Staggers (D-Fayette), AFL-CIO President Kenny Perdue, West Virginia

Transportation Day was designed to start the process of making transportation investment and improvement a major campaign issue during the 2012 state and federal election cycle and 2013 Legislative session. The goal of the event was to educate leaders about the economic and employment benefits that result from investment in surface transportation infrastructure. WVBT shared information about federal highway funding and reauthorization, system needs, budgetary erosion, funding challenges and the jobs impacted by funding levels.

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President Kessler, who was followed by Sen. Beach, pledged his support to finding a solution to the problem, going so far as to suggest the issue could be addressed during this legislative session.

“We know the importance of a good transportation system and we will work together to find a solution,” said President Kessler. “West Virginia’s finances are in order and now is the time to move our state to a greater level. Highways are more than bricks, mortar, stone and steel, they connect our state and communities. As a legislature we need to make sure our transportation system is fully funded so our people have opportunities to make the state everything it can be.”

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Chairwoman Staggers also vowed her support to finding a long-term funding mechanism for highways, stating, “I am with you 100 percent.”

The business and labor communities vouched for the importance of a good highway transportation system for attracting businesses and creating jobs.

“A good transportation system is half the battle of attracting businesses to a location,” said Roberts. “Companies consider quality of life when deciding where to locate. The state has great things to offer the business community, but they have to be accessible.”

Roberts quoted statistics from the Federal Highway Administration that each billion invested in highway construction and maintenance creates nearly 30,000 jobs.

“Unemployment has reached record high levels in the highway and road construction sector,” said Perdue. “The state is facing many challenges and needs a true commitment from the Legislature to invest in our people and build roads. These are good jobs with high wages and full benefits. The workers spend money in the community and retire here, but they have to leave to find work. Projects are ready, and if the funding were
available, 5,000 people are ready to work now.”

With a lapel sticker reading “Roads = Jobs,” CAWV President Gene Thompson thanked the attendees for taking the time to participate in Transportation Day and make the message visible to lawmakers.

“Three years ago the construction industry employed 40,000 West Virginians,” said Thompson, vice president of Ahern, a division of Kokosing Construction Company, South Charleston. “Today, that number has dropped 20 percent. All of our jobs and the state’s economic activity is created by construction money,” he observed. “Businesses cannot locate in an area without roads. We are here today to show that there is united support within the business community for a long-term solution for funding our roads, bridges and highways ... and for a secure transportation funding source not only for maintenance of the existing infrastructure but also for new construction and expansion.”

Quotes from the press conference were used by media outlets throughout the state. From Martinsburg to Wheeling, Huntington, Charleston, Beckley and Bluefield, WVBT generated a plethora of radio, television and print media about the event, fulfilling their mission of informing the public about the looming crisis and the need for a long-term solution. Generally, however, media outlets focused on an announcement made by Transportation Secretary Paul Mattox during a joint hearing of the House and Senate transportation committees which followed the press conference.

“Is it time to revisit a road bond amendment?” Secretary Mattox asked committee members. “Perhaps it is time for the citizens of West Virginia to consider new funding measures that would support a road bond amendment. These are questions that are best answered in true democratic process by a vote of the citizens.”

The Secretary offered seventeen projects that could be completed with a $1 billion bond, noting that with $1.5 billion Corridor H could also be finished. Secretary Mattox discussed a revenue stream for the bonds, including increasing vehicle and drivers’ registration fees, a bill which was passed last year and vetoed by the governor. It is anticipated that the DOH would need about $65 annually for debt service for a $1 billion bond amendment and about $90 million for a $1.5 billion amendment.

“The needs facing our transportation system are great,” Mattox said. “The total cost to maintain our system at the current level is $24 billion over 25 years. That is a 70 percent increase per year just for maintenance. Road funding is not expected to increase as the nation struggles. Revenue sources are expected to decrease. The federal government is tightening its belt and encouraging states to figure out how to fund road construction and maintenance. Now is the time to consider new measures.”

Dr. Tom Witt, director of West Virginia University’s Bureau of Business and Economic Research, told lawmakers during the hearing that the crisis facing the continued construction and maintenance of a modern and safe transportation system is growing.

“Fuel efficiency is increasing and people are driving less both because of age and cost. These two factors are causing less to be collected in taxes even though the rate is higher,” Dr. Witt said. “Fees, such as those charged by the DMV, have stayed constant with no increases.”

Dr. Witt supported Secretary Mattox’s bond proposition noting that rates are at a historic low but cautioned that the process must be incentivized.
“Stop kicking the can,” Dr. Witt said. “Failure to invest will stop economic development, and that is a cost we will all bear for years.”

Jan Vineyard, representing both the West Virginia Business and Industry Council and the Motor Truck Association, noted that everyone agrees that highways are important to the state’s economy.

“Exports have increased 42 percent since 2008,” she said. “Without trucks, West Virginia stops. We must have good highways to work.”

She noted that trucking companies must bypass bridges and travel on unsafe roads, increasing maintenance needs and the cost of doing business in the state.

“This is West Virginia’s time to shine. We have financial stability, have shored up unemployment and workers’ compensation funds, Corporate Net Income Taxes are down, food tax is down … roads are the last piece of the puzzle,” Vineyard said.

As the coalition joined in Charleston to address the issue from a state perspective, West Virginia’s Congressional representatives are working on authoring a reauthorization of the federal Highway Trust Fund. Unrest at the federal level on how to fund highways has been ongoing since 2008 when the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) expired in September 2009. The nation’s highway system has been funded through a series of short-term extensions since then.

West Virginians for Better Transportation addressed the issue with the Congressional Delegation during a Transportation Conference held at the Embassy Suites in Charleston on Monday, November 14, 2011.

Congressman Nick Rahall, who reiterated his support for a long-term federal highway funding bill as a means to improve the economy and prevent further deterioration of the nation’s infrastructure, opened the WVBT Transportation Conference on November 14, 2011. Rep. Rahall is the ranking member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, which is working to author the transportation extension. Photo by Malone Consulting Services.

Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito, (R-WV), reiterated her support for fully funding the nation’s highway infrastructure and discussed the merits of the reauthorization bills being discussed by both the U.S. House and Senate. Rep. Capito took time before her address for interviews from media outlets. Photo by Malone Consulting Services.

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nation’s infrastructure, opened the conference.

“It all comes down to funding,” said Rep. Rahall, the ranking member of the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. “All available funding options should be on the table. It will take everyone working together to find a solution. We need to set aside finger pointing and sound bites and work in the middle for the good of the nation’s transportation system.”

Rep. Shelley Moore Capito reiterated his sentiment, stating that there is no easy solution and that they are working on doing more with less money. Rep. Capito, who also serves on the House T&I Committee, indicated several options for funding a new highway bill are being considered.

“Increasing TIFIA funding, streamlining bidding and regulatory procedures to prevent delays, and evaluating making Transportation Enhancement Funds nonmandatory are all on the table,” she said.

Rep. Capito touched on reauthorization of a six-year bill being considered by the House of Representatives versus the two-year bill being considered by the Senate.

“Two years beats six months, but still leaves a lot to be desired,” Rep. Capito said. “I’m not convinced that in two years we will be in better economic shape and that you’ll get a better deal,” she said. “A six-year bill gives the biggest bang for the buck.”

Rep. David McKinley, serving his freshman term in the U.S. House, indicated the he is only one of two engineers in Washington.
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“Construction is comfortable to me,” he said. “This industry is the heartbeat of economic recovery. Contractors assemble what others make and that has a huge ripple effect on the economy. History shows that in the 1930s construction brought this nation back to life and in the 1950s President Eisenhower’s Interstate System put people to work.”

Both the U.S. House and Senate are working to get transportation reauthorization bills to their respective floors, but work to pass a bill is far from over. A highway and transit authorization bill must be passed in Congress and signed into law prior to the expiration of the current extension on March 31, 2012.

The representatives were joined by Senator Jay Rockefeller in a video address to attendees of the conference.

“Our surface transportation system provides the physical foundation that is critical for our economy. Everybody knows that,” Sen. Rockefeller said. “But nobody seems to be doing anything about it. We are trying. Of course, in this economic environment, the question that Congress ultimately has to face is how to pay for what we are going to do. We now do that with the existing tax on gasoline, which is substantially less money than what is needed to meet our needs. We need a new, long-term solution for sustainable and sufficient funding source for our transportation program.”

Senior Prezioso, on the other hand, discussed the success his district had in passing a user fee.

“Fairmont’s roads were in deplorable condition,” Sen. Prezioso said. “But the City Council made some courageous decisions and were able to pass a user fee to address roads.”

Also joining the November Transportation Conference was a panel of West Virginia legislators, including Senate Finance Committee Chairman Roman Prezioso, House Finance Committee Chairman Harry Keith White and Sen. Beach, who presented the state perspective on the transportation funding crisis.

“Political courage is needed to really tackle the infrastructure funding gap,” Sen. Beach said. “As legislators, we receive calls all the time about maintenance needs from our constituents. Any legislation that is crafted needs to put maintenance at the forefront and include people in the process.”

The Monongalia County Senator discussed an attempt made in his hometown, Morgantown, to pass a user fee for construction, but noted that “sometimes you have to try 20 different ideas until you find one that works.”
Sen. Prezioso, who hails from Marion County, talked about the improvements made in the area’s infrastructure and expressed to members that he was encouraged about West Virginia’s future.

“Our state has had many great legislators through the years with vision for the future,” he said. “The need for safe and modern roadways has always been a part of that vision.”

Delegate White commended the Department of Transportation for their efficient use of state funds and before giving attendees some insight on West Virginia’s finances.

“West Virginia is ranked in the top five states in the nation for fiscal security,” he said. “This didn’t happen overnight. Our security is the result of years of well managed budgets. Severance taxes are strong and we expect to be able to meet all of our obligations without stimulus funding.”

Delegate White explained that as health care reforms take effect, states will be required to pick up more Medicaid costs. Projections show $3.5 billion will be needed over the next two years.

“In addition to Medicaid, Other Post Employment Benefit (OPEB) and PEIA funding is outstanding,” Del. White said. “We have laid the groundwork to be a business friendly state, but we do have some long-term funding issues looming. We all want to fully fund highways and I am open to any and all suggestions for strategies to make that happen.”

State and federal officials have openly and repeatedly pledged their support for solving the transportation funding puzzle. On both levels, leaders are exploring the use of natural gas exploration fees as a funding source for highways. Governor Earl Ray Tomblin has gone so far as to propose dedicating half of any budget surplus to the State Road Fund. He has not, however, announced support for a road bond.

National leaders continue their quest to pass legislation to fund highways. At press time, bills were moving through the committee process in both houses of Congress. Through the work of WVBT, elected officials are fully informed of the need for finding a long-term funding solution for highways. The coalition has worked tirelessly over the past six years to ensure the issue will not be overlooked.

“Without safe and modern roads, the state cannot grow,” said Hilborn. “West Virginia is a lightly populated rural state with a huge network of roads and highways which need constant maintenance. Yet the highways system is now funded at about the same level as it was 16 years ago. Now is the time for action. This issue cannot continue to be ignored. With a traffic fatality rate nearly double the national average, indecision is literally killing our residents, preventing economic developing and adding to the state’s unemployment rate.”

By Lindsay Stephens
2011—2013 STRATEGIC PLAN

Goals and Objectives

- Make transportation investment and improvement a major campaign issue during the 2012 state and federal election cycle.

- Continue educating elected leaders, the media and the public about the economic and employment benefits that result from investment in surface transportation infrastructure ... and the negative consequences on jobs from continued underinvestment.

- Share information about federal highway funding and reauthorization ... and quantify the impact of cuts in funding, changes to the highway allocation formula and continued budgetary erosion.

Strategy

- WVBT’s campaign will culminate in concentrated efforts during a six-month period (August 2012 to January 2013). Efforts coincide with the November 2012 General Election and the critical 2013 legislative session.

- Statewide education, media / public relations campaign will publicize the financial challenges and needs facing the states surface transportation system. Educational efforts will also call attention to jobs impacted by funding levels.

- Campaign efforts will “highlight” possible solutions while remaining neutral. Efforts are focused on keeping transportation funding an issue so that elected leaders can discuss solutions.

Challenges

West Virginia’s transportation system needs an additional $700 million each year to just to maintain the current system and return to a regular repaving cycle.

West Virginia is one of only four states that takes care of both state and county roads and is the sixth largest state maintained highway system in the nation.

Although West Virginia leads the nation in percentage (94%) of miles that are state maintained, it ranks second to last in the country in capital investment per state maintained mile - $7,594 compared to the national average of $23,967 per lane mile.

Roads in need of repair cost each West Virginia motorist an average of $280 annually in extra vehicle operating costs - $371 million statewide. Costs include accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear.

The time has come to focus efforts and activities on AGGRESSIVELY highlighting the problems facing the state’s roads, bridges and highways. We must also increase awareness and build interest in long-term solutions.

Support WVBT and “Keep West Virginia Moving”

www.keepwvmoving.org
Elkins is a typical small town in West Virginia. Historical architecture, West Virginia hospitality, a quaint downtown district, artisans and farmers all make visitors feel welcome. Today, Elkins has a booming tourism industry, enviable economic growth and is seeing increases in timber and mining.

It wasn’t very long ago that the community, nestled in the heart of West Virginia, was fighting to maintain their success in an era where most small towns are losing business and population. Industries had come and gone, scaring the community with reminders of days long past and infrastructure long forgotten.

Then a railroad bridge was built.

Similar to the success that founded the community during the turn of the century, the railroad brought with it economic development, employment, business growth, recreation and tourism.

Except it wasn’t 1906, it was 2006, yet the rules haven’t changed. If you build it, they will come. Residents and leaders in Elkins knew the rules, played the game and won the jackpot.

State leaders purchased a railyard in the middle of Elkins long abandoned by its thriving railroad industry. The community rallied together and fought for a national grant to build a rail bridge that would allow trains to enter the town. Despite stiff competition, they won the grant and got money for the bridge.

That relatively small bridge, built by MEC Construction, Inc., Bridgeport, for $1.5 million, generated unexpected success for the entire community.

“Allowing the railroad access to downtown Elkins brought the whole area back to life,” said Delegate William G. Hartman, D-Randolph. “It is amazing what trains can do for an area. Because of that bridge, Elkins is a tourism destination, industry is growing and businesses are thriving.”

A nationally acclaimed theater, restaurant, hotel and tourist-related train excursions are just the beginning of the economic development that was brought to the area by construction of one 350-foot-long rail bridge.

“One once the bridge was built, the area came together very quickly,” Del. Hartman said.

The Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad leased the depot, which had been recently renovated, for their excursion trains, the New Tygart Flyer and the Cheat Mountain Salamander. Passengers arrived. Businesses grew.

“It was like seeing the seasons turn from Spring to Winter,” said John Smith, president of the Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad. “Investment poured into the area. There has easily been $25 million in investment in the area because the rail bridge was built.”

Properties were renovated and merchants adjusted their schedules to
accommodate tourists. Public spaces, including a town square, walkways, stage and bus parking, were built.

“All the development goes back to the bridge and getting the locomotive into the yard in the center of town,” said Harold Elbon, a local entrepreneur. “The project has been a lot of fun and the area is now a showplace for the city. Only the confines of our imagination can hold us back from what we can do with the area.”

Warner Brothers, the iconic American entertainment company, echoed Elbon’s sentiment and produced their holiday classic, The Polar Express, in Elkins. The story takes a young boy, grappling with doubts about Santa, on an amazing train ride to the North Pole. The company used the Durbin and Greenbrier Valley trains and rail lines to make holiday magic for 5,800 people in 2011, and will do the same for 9,800 people in 2012.

“The Polar Express surpassed our wildest expectations,” Smith said.

Delegate Hartman agreed, noting that despite stringent contract requirements and a significant upfront investment, “it was the best thing we have ever done.”

There are several Polar Express recreations around the nation. The Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad has a three year contract with Warner Brothers to produce the Christmas train ride.

“Everything was full every night,” Smith said. “The tickets sold out faster than we could have imagined and we doubled the capacity for 2012 to accommodate more people.”

The event used the Elkins-based Old Brick Playhouse theater group as actors and took passengers on a magical trip to the Belington City Park, which was decorated as the North Pole, where they met Santa. The entire route featured world class decorations, just as one would expect from a Warner Brothers production.

The tourism the rail line has brought into Elkins spreads throughout the region, as visitors who come to the area frequent Canaan Valley, Blackwater Falls and Snowshoe resorts.

“The entire project has had a high profile and has been a lot of fun,” Elbon said, noting that there are 200-300 new full time jobs as a direct result of bringing the rail lines into the downtown district that did not exist five years ago.

“This area has grown exponentially as a result of one bridge,” Smith said. ”We are expanding now by adding a steam engine and increasing industrial rail transport. Plans are also in the works to incorporate a Civil War re-enactment in Beverly along the rail line.”

Once a brownfield site, the heart of Elkins is now a tourist hub. The Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad attracts visitors to the area which has created jobs and economic growth for the region. Photo by Mark William Branciaroli.
The Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad offers a variety of rail adventures and five different trains that wind through various areas of West Virginia. Excursions include dinner and mystery voyages, castaway adventures, special holiday rides and star gazing excursions. Passengers enjoy meals, desserts and beverages while seeing West Virginia’s unspoiled scenery.

The Elkins area has capitalized on the tourism the train has brought to the area by offering various festivals such as Ramps and Rails and the Mountain State Forest Festival. From a brownfield site to a tourist hub, a $1.5 million bridge changed the city of Elkins.

“When we were going through the public hearings, as we were trying to get the bond money, everyone had a bigger or better project,” Delegate Hartman said. “We didn’t think we had a shot at winning, but we did.”

The goal of the railroad bridge was to bring tourists into downtown Elkins. It has done just that, but so much more. The result is an improved economy, job development, business growth and revitalized community.

Smith announced plans in February for a $20 million project expected to bring 150,000 tourists and $50 million to the state during the first year of operation. The project would include constructing new or rehabilitating existing railroads and rail-trails in six Potomac Highlands counties, creating a 90-mile loop of railways. The loop would connect points of interest in eastern West Virginia, including the Greenbrier Resort, Snowshoe Mountain Resort, Cass Scenic Railroad State Park and the 900,000-acre Monongahela National Forest.

“This is a whole lot different than the standard tourist rail excursion,” Smith said of the planned expansion. “We would have not only the most unique tourist rail excursion, but we would have the most unique rail-trail excursion we think anywhere to be found. Instead of just having a scenic tourist rail excursion, we’re going to try to make this a network.”

As Smith positions his business to continue growing, he is positioning both residents of Elkins and the state of West Virginia will grow as well. Investments in the area will continue to create economic development for the region for years to come.

“Years ago the West Virginia Central Railroad sat empty and unused, but somebody felt it was worth saving,” Smith said. “Now it is the focus of job creation in the area and is generating money for the entire state. There were no losers in this deal. Everyone has won.”

Job creation is a natural result of infrastructure investment. A $1.5 million rail bridge revitalized Elkins, bringing $30 million into the economy and numerous jobs. With proper highway funding, only imagination can limit the opportunities available for West Virginia residents.

By Lindsay Stephens
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The state of West Virginia, although certainly feeling the impact of a national economic recession, has retained a steady economic environment through uncertain times. The WV Legislature's actions throughout the years have put West Virginia in better fiscal shape than nearly any other state in the nation. The same can be said for our construction industry. Due in large part to efforts made over many years by the Contractors Association of West Virginia, our industry has avoided crushing downturns seen in other states and is forging ahead by showing signs of recovery.

West Virginia was the site of a national Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) news conference in September because the Charleston Metropolitan Statistical Area had the fifth highest growth in the nation, a fifteen percent increase between July 2010 and July 2011 (2,300 jobs). We joined our national association to explain that it is clear that public investments in water, sewer, roads, bridges and schools will put thousands to work.

While the structures West Virginia construction workers build are sturdy, the jobs they have remain fragile. With federal, state and local budgets tight, and growing tighter, there will be a lot of short-sighted temptation to cut investments in public buildings and infrastructure. This is something this association will continue to work hard to avoid; it will put people out of work, hurt our economy and cost taxpayers more. That is because these public sector jobs aren’t just creating new construction jobs, they are giving a much needed boost to the broader economy.

Needless to say West Virginia has not been completely immune to the national downturn in the economy. Statewide, construction employment has declined over 19 percent during the past three years. That is why the CAWV continues to advocate for increased funding for the Division of Highways, School Building Authority, Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council, Department of Environmental Protection and all other agencies that will stimulate demand for new construction.

The Contractors Association of West Virginia will continue to focus on those issues that will grow our industry. It is imperative for us to continue to support HUB/PAC, our political action committee. Our PAC is our collective voice to political leaders. Not only do our leaders need to understand our unemployment problem, they also need to focus on our deteriorating infrastructure.

With tomorrow’s workforce in mind, the association must increase our outreach to students to elevate the construction industry as a career choice. In 2011, the CAWV Scholarship Foundation voted to increase its efforts to attract a sustainable workforce to our industry. The amount of the annual top award was increased to $5,000 and investments in vocational and technical schools were continued. Additionally, we are working to attract the most qualified applicants for the annual award. As we visit college campuses seeking the best and brightest while promoting our industry, we extol the variety of challenging careers available within the construction industry and the intrinsic reward of being part of building something, be it a bridge, school or waterline.

As we prepare for the future, our industry no longer has to plan for compliance with the onerous 3 percent withholding mandate which was to become effective in 2013. By the end of 2011, it was clear that during a year of a struggling economy, the power of the association was more important than ever. The influence of CAWV members on our West Virginia congressional delegation was obvious. The same can be said for members of AGC chapters nationwide. The bill to repeal the mandate, which would have required 3 percent be withheld from all government contracts as a means to prevent tax evasion, was supported by all of the state’s Representatives and Senators and signed by the President in late November. Repeal has been a top priority at the CAWV Congressional Fly-In to Washington for many years.

It was the focus of members, AGC chapters and AGC national staff applying constant pressure over the last few years that lead to the final, overwhelming votes for repeal. The legislative victory shows what’s possible when our industry and members work together to address an issue. I am proud of the work of AGC of America and the CAWV and its staff on behalf of our members.

The CAWV has always planned for the future, a strategy which is paying dividends to our members and the state’s entire construction industry today. Solid public investment programs have become reliable parts of many members’ bidding profiles over the years. Our work is never done and our industry is not out of the woods yet. Work continues through the association’s committees to streamline bidding procedures, increase projects out for bid, promote understanding and co-operation between owners and contractors and keep an ever watchful eye on legislation at the state and federal level. For these reasons the membership in the CAWV remains strong.

Despite having different specialties within the industry, all of the CAWV’s efforts share the same ultimate goal: Building a better West Virginia, now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Genie E. Thompson
President

CAWV LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ADVANCES MEMBERS PUBLIC POLICY INTERESTS

CAWV continues its policy to play a lead role on behalf of the construction industry in state government affairs. Public officials and lawmakers regularly seek CAWV’s support or consult its members and staff for their expertise and resources on construction, transportation and infrastructure issues. In the 2011 legislative session, CAWV had several significant victories and opposed many bills that would have been detrimental for contractors.

The association actively participated in a coalition that successfully supported additional bond authorizations for construction of $225 million worth of wastewater treatment facilities in the state’s Eastern Panhandle. The improvements are needed to meet new, stringent pollution limits imposed by the U.S. EPA for the Chesapeake Bay Restoration program. During a special legislative session, a bill was passed that gives coal producing counties a greater share of coal severance tax revenues and dedicates the dollars to economic development projects and infrastructure improvements.

To advocate for infrastructure investment, the CAWV met with leadership in the House and Senate to successfully advance a bill to increase WV Division of Motor Vehicles fees, which would have generated $42 million in additional highway revenues. Unfortunately, the bill was vetoed due to a proviso that was inserted in the bill late in the legislative process. During an August special session, Governor Tomblin introduced, and legislators approved, a $15 million transfer from the general fund to boost the secondary road paving program.

CAWV successfully opposed several anti-business measures including bills which would have required separate prime bids on contracts over $500,000; a mandatory penalty for failure to complete a public works project by the stated completion date; requiring every worker on public works projects over $1,000 to complete the OSHA 10-hour safety program prior to starting work; and allowing the state Purchasing Division to use reverse auctions for commodities such as aggregate, equipment and asphalt.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY FUNDING DEBATE BEGINS IN WEST VIRGINIA

U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Rep. John Mica, along with Ranking Member Rep. Nick Rahall and committee member Rep. Shelley Moore Capito, kicked off a series of hearings and listening sessions in West Virginia in February. The meetings set the stage for the committee to draft a new highway bill. CAWV officers and staff joined other transportation system stakeholders to discuss the dire need for a long-term funding bill and increased investment. The Senate has released details on a two-year reauthorization, and the House has announced it is working on a five-year bill which includes provisions for increased energy exploration.
ENVIRONMENTAL VICTORY PROTECTS CONTRACTORS’ BOTTOM LINE

To address the challenging regulatory environment, the CAWV submitted comments to the U.S. EPA that have led to new stormwater discharge limits being put on hold indefinitely while it considers new data. For more than a decade, U.S. EPA has been trying to limit the amount of dirt in stormwater running across active construction sites. The CAWV joined AGC in arguing that a “one-size-fits-all” limit exceeds Clean Water Act requirements, would be impossible to meet, and would increase litigation against construction projects. The CAWV told the U.S. EPA that the rule would require costly monitoring and reporting, increasing contractors costs, project costs, endangering businesses and stunting employment growth.

CAWV COMMITTEE WORK ENHANCES, IMPROVES CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

CAWV committees are the lifeblood of the association. Members work with state and federal officials to streamline bidding processes and strengthen procedures to ultimately increase competition and improve the health of the industry. It is this work, throughout the years, that has provided West Virginia’s construction industry some insulation from the economic downturn.

The association’s Joint Architects Committee has worked closely throughout the year with the School Building Authority and National Guard. Efforts with the National Guard led to streamlined bidding procedures for their construction program. The School Building Authority is revising their square-foot allowances and is currently working on an employment status verification procedure.

The Joint Utility Committee continued working throughout 2011 to ensure projects with funding go to bid promptly. Working with various public owners including the Water Development Authority and WV Infrastructure Council, the committee has expedited projects and streamlined bidding processes. The committee has also worked with the Tax Department to revise and simplify procedures for claiming the Consumer Sales Tax exemption for public projects.

Highway Division members have seen a reorganization of the Joint Cooperative Committee. After meetings with the WV Division of Highways and the Federal Highway Administration, the committee was refocused into subcommittees, making the best use of both members’ expertise and their time. Issues are now being studied more thoroughly, reported to an executive committee and acted upon promptly.

The CAWV Safety Committee has reformulated the annual Safety Awards, increasing the reward options and inspiring additional members to apply for the prestigious honor. Members are now being given rewards they can share with their teams, allowing the CAWV to recognize the company and the employees who keep safety paramount every day.

MEMBERS HELP SPREAD SAFETY MESSAGE

CAWV members continued working to promote work zone safety issues. In April, the association joined with WVDOT and FHWA to promote safety for the public traveling through and around construction zones. The theme of the 2011 National Work Zone Awareness week, held in April, was “Safer driving. Safer work zones. For everyone.” CAWV members attended the event and provided interviews with local news outlets, garnering statewide attention for work zone safety.

ASSOCIATION BENEFIT PROGRAMS SAVE MEMBERS MONEY

CAWV members rely on the association for a full range of customized services and resources to increase their competitive edge. Programs have been designed to best serve the group and are available to all members.

- BrickStreet Safety Program - Contractor members with a three year loss ratio of 65 percent or less may be eligible to receive a discount on their workers’ compensation premiums
- Enterprise Fleet Management - Discount pricing on fleet vehicles and comprehensive fleet management programs
- Petroleum Products - Wholesale pricing on fuels, and access to fleet fuel tools and controls
- Staples Advantage - Reduced pricing, online ordering and overnight delivery
- Verizon Wireless - Contractor members can receive 22 percent off monthly fees, discounts on equipment and accessories

Full details on all the money saving programs are available on the CAWV website at www.cawv.org. In addition, further savings are available through AGC of America. Information about AGC’s programs is available through its website at www.agc.org/member_discounts. The programs include discounts on new cars, trucks and vans from General Motors and Ford, discounts on FedEx shipping as well as money saving programs from Dell, HP Direct, Red Roof Inns, Computer Guidance Corporation, William Scottsman, BP, Hertz, Avis and many more.

YOUNG CONTRACTORS FOCUS ON LEARNING, NETWORKING AND GIVING BACK

This has been a busy year for the association’s young contractors. The group began with a Day at the Legislature, where members met with their senators and delegates and witnessed a floor session. For the third year in a row, the CAWV Young Contractors participated in Constraction, a competition where groups build huge structures out of canned food. Their entry, a bulldozer, pro- provided nearly 2,000 pounds of food for Covenant House’s food pantry. Also this year, the group toured Greer Industries underground limestone quarry. The young contractors were taken nearly one mile underground to witness the quarrying process.

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TELECONFERENCING CAPABILITY BRINGS OPPORTUNITIES TO MEMBERS

The CAWV installed state-of-the-art teleconferencing equipment in 2010 and has been making use of the technology throughout 2011. Seminars have joined members with national experts to explore topics such as safety, construction law and environmental regulations. Members have also participated in committee meetings from remote locations and linked with our national associations for updates on legislative issues.

WV CRUSHED AGGREGATES COUNCIL ELECTS CHAIRMAN

Doug Canterbury, Boxley, Lewisburg, was elected chairman of the West Virginia Crushed Aggregates Council. He succeeds Ed Treadway, Pounding Mill Quarry Corp., who served as chairman since the organization’s inception in 1999. The WV Crushed Aggregates Council protects the interests of the state’s quarries. The Council, which meets periodically throughout the year, voted to support West Virginians for Better Transportation with a $5,000 donation.

32nd ANNUAL EXPO IN THE BOOKS

The 2011 West Virginia Construction and Design Exposition, held March 23 and 24 at the Charleston Civic Center, featured 278 exhibitors with 423 indoor booths, plus outdoor exhibits; 83 honor exhibitors; a 72-page program and professional directory supported by 85 advertisers; 62 seminars and meetings and nine After Hours sponsors. The yearly event brought more than 5,000 individuals to the show from 30 states. The 2012 show will be held March 21 and 22.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS PROTECT MEMBERS IN WASHINGTON

The American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) has worked throughout the year to promote the need for increased infrastructure investment. The federal highway funding bill, Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization, stormwater regulations, Abandoned Mine Land reclamation funding and repeal of the 3
percent withholding mandate have been on their legislative agenda this year. ARTBA has remained in contact with Senators and Representatives, diligently watching and commenting on efforts to fund the nation’s highway system.

Joining ARTBA, AGC has kept members’ interests from being overlooked in Washington. Together, the construction industry stakeholders have fought for funding, appropriate regulations and prevented harmful legislation from impacting the industry. The groups were successful in getting a mandate repealed that would have required 3 percent be withheld from all payments to contractors at the local, state and federal levels. Repeal has been a top priority at the annual CAVV Congressional Fly-In to Washington for many years.

In an AGC survey, 100 percent of CAVV members responding indicated that the tax would have a negative impact on their business, with 39 percent saying the withholding mandate would cause them to hire fewer workers, 78 percent saying they would have to cut back on equipment purchases and 28 percent stating they would have difficulty continuing to operate.

CAWW’S NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES OFFER PRIME TIME FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

One of the premier services of the Contractors Association is its ability to bring members of the construction industry together to improve the climate for doing business in the state. Members of all CAVV divisions get together throughout the year for networking opportunities with their peers.

The Annual Meeting, held at The Greenbrier, was well attended this year. As were the Midyear Meeting, Spring Meeting and State Meeting, which attracted association members looking to spend time with their peers. Business sessions are coupled with social events, providing an unparalleled opportunity for professional growth. The association also offers family-friendly events designed for fun such as the Summer outing to Kings Island and the Car Show. Events are announced through the Newsletter and are available on the events section of the website at www.cawv.org.

The Asphalt Pavement Association of West Virginia has been working with the West Virginia Division of Highways over the last few years to create and launch a new technician certification program for asphalt paving. The new certification, Asphalt Field Technician, will ultimately be required for one or more persons on a paving crew. The WVDOH has not yet identified a date when the new certification will be required, but it is referenced in the current spec book and material procedures. The new class is now a part of the annual CAVV / WVDOH technician and inspector courses.

APA ENDOWS SCHOLARSHIP IN MEMORY OF DEAN BLAKE

The Asphalt Pavement Association, with support from the WV Crushed Aggregates Council, has formed the Dean Blake Memorial Scholarship. In 1979, Blake founded the Flexible Pavements Council of West Virginia, now known as the Asphalt Pavement Association. He passed away in 2011. The $50,000 endowment will support student education at West Virginia University’s College of Engineering and Mineral Resources.
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ACCAD Corporation, Ivydale, is building toward the future on a foundation set solidly on values. With family and safety first, officers Carrie Samuels and Todd Dunmire are working together to build quality structures and diversify the business.

Family influence brought both Samuels and Dunmire into construction, and it is their devotion to their own families that fuels their passion for the industry.

“I was raised by contractor parents,” said Samuels, the company president. “My dad, Ronald Haynes, owned M&H Concrete Structures, Inc., and built bridges and other concrete structures for over 30 years. He eventually sold the company’s assets to Bilco Construction and later retired. My mom, Marie Haynes, was initially a partner in SMH Construction before selling her shares.”

Dunmire credits summers spent with his father as the influence that led him towards the industry.

“My Father, Harry Dunmire, is a licensed engineer who worked in the construction industry when I was in my teens,” said the company vice president. “The time I would spend with him during the summer brought me towards a career in construction.”

A certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), the company has found a solid foothold building a variety of concrete structures, bridges, drainage structures and retaining walls.

“Watching talented people create extraordinary structures, I believe it was inevitable that concrete would be in my blood,” Samuels said.

The company was incorporated in 1994 as P&G Construction. It was later changed to C.L. Belt Construction, Inc., and is now ACCAD Corporation. The most recent name change better reflects the devotion of the shareholders to their families.

“ACCAD is an acronym for our children,” Samuels explained. “The name stands for Alexis, Caitlin, Cameron, Allison and David. And, since there can be no greater representation of our devotion to family and livelihood, we hope there will be no more name changes.”

Established solidly in their family roots, ACCAD Corporation makes safety
ACCAD Corporation recently completed the Big T Bridge in Crystal Springs, Randolph County, for the Division of Highways. The steel truss bridge required a 350 ton crane to set, and included over 200 CY of concrete in each abutment. The bridge was renamed the Tim Belt Memorial Bridge by the West Virginia Legislature in memory of company officer, Tim Belt, who passed in late 2011.

“We work to provide a safe work environment for all employees to earn a living, including ourselves,” she said. “We ask that everyone bring their very best to work each day so that ACCAD can provide quality work for our customers.”

The company has worked in nine of the ten districts of the West Virginia Division of Highways as both a general contractor and subcontractor. ACCAD Corporation employs approximately 25 people and focuses on projects from $1 million to $5 million.

With over fifteen years building structures in West Virginia, Samuels notes the recently completed Big T Bridge in Crystal Springs as the most unique and challenging structure tackled by the company. It was also the last project completed by ACCAD Corporation / C.L. Belt Construction Company Vice President Tim Belt before his untimely death. The bridge, located in his hometown of Elkins, was re-named by the West Virginia Legislature in 2012 as the “Tim Belt Memorial Bridge.”

“The substructure for the Big T Bridge was 10 feet below the top of the stream with over 200 CY of concrete in each abutment,” she said. “The steel truss bridge required a 350 ton crane to set and the concrete overhang design and deck placement were unique within the design of the truss.”

The company has completed many bridges in the state. Samuels and Dunmire have also dedicated their time to improving the industry. Samuels serves as chair of the CAWV Public Relations Committee and Dunmire chairs the Joint Cooperative Committee.

“Consistent funding levels from the West Virginia Division of Highways has had a positive influence on the business,” Dunmire said. “Funding levels aren’t keeping pace with needs, but we have an open dialogue with the Division of Highways and are working on issues that will streamline construction and strengthen the state’s economy.”

Both Samuels and Dunmire are striving to strengthen and diversify the company’s position in the industry, “so the next generation has a stable cornerstone to further build upon.”

Their devotion to the association has opened up networking that has had an immeasurable impact on the business.

“CAWV gives companies the opportunity to socialize among peers and further their opportunities,” she said. “It also provides a platform for companies to work towards improving the industry. Strength in numbers provides more positive results.”

ACCAD Corporation is working to diversify their business and recently announced the addition of light grading, drainage and asphalt paving to the company’s services.
ACCAD Corporation begins pouring a concrete deck on a bridge located along Davis Creek in Kanawha County. Workers with ACCAD Corporation keep their focus on safety, quality and performance.

“We are set to begin construction of an asphalt plant, Yellowstar Materials, in Jackson County, where four to five people will be employed full time, with a road crew of ten,” she said. “We are very excited to pursue this new endeavor.”

Dunmire will serve as president of Yellowstar and Samuels will serve as vice president.

“Yellowstar will service clients from construction companies down to individual farmers who want to patch holes,” Samuels said.

“We will produce asphalt for commercial, residential and Division of Highways projects,” Dunmire added.

With their feet firmly planted on family values, ACCAD Corporation takes pride in their work, employees and performance.

By Lindsay Stephens
Whether your job is to get the grit and debris out of the sewer system or to safely excavate for buried utilities, if it says VACTOR you can work assured. Vactor has been harnessing the power of vacuum and pressurized water for over 45 years - and put it to good use. The new Vactor 2100 Plus combination sewer cleaner is an all around smart partner for your sewer cleaning needs. It is now quieter, more powerful, more productive and more fuel efficient than ever before. The Vactor HXX HydroExcavator uses the power of water to quickly cut through even the most compact soil, to safely excavate and expose buried utilities, watermains, and gaslines - with minimal surrounding disruption. To learn more about this trusted industry leader contact West Virginia Tractor, the authorized Vactor dealer for West Virginia.

Productivity at your Fingertips
Cheryl Clark Joins CAWV Staff

The Contractors Association of West Virginia, effective January 18, named Cheryl R. Clark as staff assistant / planroom administrator. Clark, a Charleston native, will be responsible for helping with the CAWV Newsletter, gathering project and bid information and maintaining the CAWV Physical Plan Room and Internet Plan Room. In addition, she will answer the telephones and greet members and guests to the association.

Prior to joining the CAWV, Clark was a certified Respiratory Therapist and Pulmonary Function Technologist and coordinated the office functions of two physicians. A graduate of Fairmont State College, West Virginia State College, the University of Charleston and West Virginia College of Graduate Studies, she lives in Charleston with her son, Austin, a sophomore in high school.

“We are pleased that Cheryl has joined the CAWV family,” said Executive Director Mike Clowser. “She brings attributes to our staff that will be of benefit to our members and organization. Clark has an extensive background in medical management and is excited to become a part of the construction industry. We encourage all members to call and welcome her to the association.”

To contact Cheryl, please call (304) 342-1166 or email her at planroom@cawv.org.

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Toyota is planning a $45 million expansion of its plant in West Virginia that’s expected to create 80 jobs. The expansion will increase the Buffalo plant’s annual production capacity of 6-speed automatic transmissions from about 400,000 to 520,000. Since it was established in 1996, Toyota has invested more than $1.2 billion in West Virginia, making it the largest industrial investment in the state in the last 50 years, and the Buffalo plant has expanded seven times.

“This announcement is great news for Toyota’s workers, the company, and all of West Virginia,” said U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller. “The relationship between Toyota and our state is unique and it has produced unimaginable results over the years. We should all thank the workers at Toyota – they are the reason that the company continues to expand, and it’s their dedication and hard work that makes such growth possible.”

U.S. Senator Joe Manchin also thanked Toyota and the workers at the Buffalo plant. “This announcement speaks to the strength of the Toyota brand, and is a testament to West Virginia’s tremendous workforce. Over the past 15 years, Toyota has learned that West Virginia is home to some of the hardest working men and women in America – you have put your faith in us, and in turn, we have embraced you, too.”

Work on the expansion is expected to begin in November and be finished by July 2013. It will increase the plant’s work force to about 1,200 employees. The transmissions are produced by Toyota Motor Manufacturing West Virginia, Inc. for the Avalon, Camry, Lexus RX350, Sienna and Venza ...

Members of the Cabell County Board of Education received a pleasant surprise when they opened bids for the new Huntington East Middle School. Bids for general trades, plumbing and HVAC, and electrical all came in under budget, allowing Assistant Superintendent of Operations Mike O’Dell to recommend several additions to the school. Paramount Builders, LLC, St. Albans, submitted the lowest bid for general trades at $9.151 million. That...
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In addition, the firm is engaged in a diversified civil practice and represents clients from all areas of the business community. Daniels Law Firm is a member of the following organizations:

- Contractors Association of West Virginia
- Associated Builders & Contractors, Inc.
- West Virginia Coal Association
- National Utility Contractors Association
- West Virginia Rural Water Association
- West Virginia Society of Certified Public Accountants
- American Arbitration Association
enabled the Board of Education to include polished concrete floors for $372,000 and additional traffic lanes for $135,700, among a few others enhancements, for a grand total of $9.7 million ...

* The West Virginia Economic Development Authority gave preliminary approval for a nearly $17 million loan for construction costs at the I-79 Technology Park Research Center in Marion County on in February. Vertex Non-Profit Holdings, a Fairmont-based holding company that operates the research center, plans to renovate a building that will house the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The project is expected to create 20 jobs in the next three years, according to the WVEDA. NOAA will rent the space from Vertex Non-Profit Holdings, WVEDA Executive Director David Warner said ...

* The Big Sandy Arena in Huntington has received $4.6 million bond for renovations. Among some major renovations, $700,000 is budgeted toward the heating, ventilation and air conditioning units which will more efficiently heat and cool the arena. The most expensive renovation the arena is undergoing is new telescopic seating. This seating will allow chairs to fold away and make room for a variety of events at the arena. Included with the new seating will be an exclusive section for the arena’s Club Lounge. The dressing rooms also underwent extensive reconstruction. The conference rooms have been selected for a complete overhaul as well. All renovations will be completed by September 2013.

**CORRECTION:** The Gerrardstown Middle School’s estimated cost was incorrectly reported in the November / December issue of *West Virginia Construction News*. The Berkeley County school is estimated to cost $16,213,754 and bid in July 2012. The School Building Authority of West Virginia’s 2012 Bidding Forecast totals $193,358,072.
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