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Cover Photo: Oregon State University Student Experience Center
Manufacturer: NorthWest Precast

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Dear Fellow Precasters, associates and professionals,

Together with my colleagues at the APA, I wish you all a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year! I truly hope that your New Year is off to a great start.

I am humbled, honored and privileged to assume the role of President of the Architectural Precast Association (2018-2019). I am deeply grateful to my predecessor, Dino Diana, for his leadership and outstanding contributions to the APA during his presidency, and to the members of the Executive Committee and Board. I am inspired by their commitment and all of their achievements. Indeed, the growth of the APA has been propelled collectively by these individuals and all the past presidents and past members of the APA Board and Executive Committee. I look forward to continuing this important work towards fulfilling the mission of the APA.

In this endeavor, I am joined by my colleagues on the Executive Committee – Tim Michael (Vice President), Nick Carosi IV (Secretary/ Treasurer) and Dino Diana (Past President) as well as all of the 2018 Board of Directors who represent the major regions of North America.

With their continued support and that of the APA Executive Director, John Ricco and Program Manager/ Meeting Planner, Lisa Collier, I am confident that we will be steadfast in addressing the pressing challenges of our industry, and in the next two years our accomplishments will be many.

I encourage every member of the APA to become as involved as your time will allow. The APA puts on an amazing Spring Workshop and memorable Annual Convention in the fall. This is the start of a deeper involvement with the APA. I can still recall, the first convention that I attended in Dallas, TX. This is where I first met our past president Dino Diana. We shared a common passion for the precast industry as well as everyone else that I met there. From there, I went to as many workshops and conventions as I could get to. I was hooked! I enjoyed talking to all the other precasters and realizing that we all had the same issues that we were dealing with. We learned from each other. This is what makes an organization like the APA great, we learn and grow together. If you have not sent anyone to any of the APA functions, please do so this year. You will be amazed at what you will learn. Together we grow.

Collaboration and communication, these are the key to our future success.

As we head into the beginning of 2018. I wish continued success to each and every one of our fellow producer members, all of our associate members and to our professional members.

Yours sincerely,

Mario Forlenza

2018 APA SPRING WORKSHOP
April 28-30, 2018
The Worthington Renaissance Fort Worth Hotel
Fort Worth, Texas

REGISTER TODAY
BOOK YOUR ROOM
APA Twitter Feed – Articles of Interest

Concrete: A Hard Material Engineers Hope to Make Harder
*By David Templeton, Pittsburgh-Gazette*

The automated loading facility at the University of Pittsburgh repetitively applies 9,000 pounds of pressure, testing concrete and dowel rods. (Peter Diana/Pittsburgh Post-Gazette/TNS) - Bulletin

For thousands of years, people have built civilizations with concrete made from readily available local materials. Just mix and heat, add some sand, stone and water and put it where you want it. Of course, give it time to harden — that is, after you have left your hand print or initials.

So it’s no surprise that concrete is the world’s most widely used building material. [READ MORE…](#)

First Road-Legal Truck Drives Length of Highway 99 tunnel
*By Mike Lindblom, Seattle Times*

The Highway 99 tunnel construction project moved into a new direction this week. North bound. The upper, southbound deck is almost finished, which clears enough room beneath for assembly to begin for the lower deck that will carry traffic north from Sodo to South Lake Union.

A total 1,152 concrete panels, each as heavy as a transit bus, will be trucked in from Tacoma and fastened atop internal ledges, 7 feet above the bottom of the tube that former tunnel boring machine Bertha left behind. [READ MORE…](#)

Researchers Discover Why Roman Structures by the Sea Are Waterproof
*By GN Feature Story*

We became curious once about the secret of Romans in building sturdy structures. It is indeed a wonder that even the concrete structures built more than 2,000 years ago, like the Cloaca Maxima, the Colosseum, and the Pantheon, are still standing tall today. Discovered by geologists, archaeologists, and engineers, Roman concrete is said to have “phenomenal resistance” over time. This means that it has durability against the elements.

And what is the key ingredient of the Roman concrete? [READ MORE…](#)

13 Instagrams That Prove Concrete is Cool
*By Lauren Ro, Curbed*

During these dog days of summer, it’s important to remember that concrete is cool. So for a little respite from the heat, duck into a concrete monolith, and bring your body temperature down a bit while appreciating that versatile, oft-maligned material.

In the event that that’s not possible, here’s a roundup of some of the world’s chilliest examples of concrete architecture we found on Instagram, from the brutal to the way far-out. [READ MORE…](#)
SAVE THE DATE

2018 APA ANNUAL CONVENTION

SEPTEMBER 21 – 24, 2018

Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center

National Harbor, Maryland
FMLA AND WORKERS’ COMPENSATION

At Seay Management Consultants, we have seen several situations where an employee has been absent for some extended period of time, due to a Workers’ Compensation injury. The company has kept the employee on the roll and, in some cases, has continued his health insurance. One day, the employee shows up and is ready to return to work. He has a doctor’s release, with or without accommodation. Since he’s been absent so long, we’ve filled his position and don’t have a place for the employee. What do we do? Here’s the answer...

The first thing to do is determine if you are covered by the Family and Medical Leave regulations. In most cases, you are covered if you have 50 or more employees within 75 miles of each other. The next thing to do is determine if the employee is eligible for FMLA. In most cases, the employee is eligible if he or she has been employed for a year and has worked at least 1250 hours within that year.

If you are covered by FMLA, and if the employee is eligible, you must place the Workers’ Compensation employee on FMLA. FMLA requires the employer to (1) provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave, (2) continue the health insurance on the same basis as before the leave and (3) upon return from leave, reinstate the employee in the same position he left, or an equivalent one.

Workers Compensation leave is, by definition, Family and Medical Leave. If we do not place the employee on FMLA, he or she always has the FMLA in his backpack, ready to pull out and use at any time. It’s important to place the employee on FMLA and get the FMLA clock ticking.

If you are not covered by FMLA, then you should apply your regular Leave of Absence policy, which is usually not as restrictive on employers as FMLA. The key point to remember is that we must place the employee on some kind of leave – either FMLA, if you are covered and the employee is eligible, or Regular Leave of Absence, otherwise. There is no such thing as “Workers’ Compensation Leave,” standing alone.

If you have a current employee who is absent due to a Workers’ Compensation injury, we recommend that you place him or her on the applicable Leave of Absence immediately.

Very best regards,
THE SEAY MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS STAFF

Remember, if you have an employment issue or challenge, and you need an answer right away, and you want the very best Human Resources Management advice available, you need to call The Seay Team!
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THE WORTHINGTON RENAISSANCE FORT WORTH HOTEL
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An Interview with Tim McGourty, President of Northwest Precast

Tell us a little bit about yourself and your business.

Northwest Precast was established when I purchased and merged with an existing precast company previously named Master Precaster. The previous owner had been in business for 16 years and in architectural precast for over 30 years. He is still employed at Northwest Precast. A primary reason for my interest in being in the architectural precast business was to supply precast to my commercial masonry business. After acquiring the company which had 4 employees I invested over $4 million in equipment and facility improvements. The company expanded the type of precast produced and grew to over 35 employees over the next 5 years. The Pacific Northwest and Idaho are our primary markets.

What are some of the challenges you are facing as a precaster?

Architectural Precast is an enormously challenging business. After over 40 years in the commercial masonry contracting business I believed producing precast would be very achievable. The two biggest challenges are the precision required and the inability to get design through the review system in a timely manner.

Starting with the challenge of having to be precise, there are four or five people who have to touch the process of making a piece of precast. Starting with the drafting of each piece, the quality control of the production tickets produced by drafting, the form builders, and the deck crew assembling molds, placing reinforcement,
and embeds in preparation for casting. If any one of the individuals along the process makes even the slightest mistake and it is not caught by the quality control process than thousands of dollars are lost. If a 30’ 6 3/8” spandrel is off by as little as ½” it is not usable. There are so many details involving reveals, pattern alignment, and structural embed locations, and more, that every process along the way has to be exact.

The second biggest challenge is to get general contractors and design teams to understand we have to be involved on the front end. The coordination of the precast to the building structure is critical. Too often general contractors are more concerned with buying out excavation, concrete, steel, and other trades that they often leave the precast procurement until after construction has commenced. Design, engineering, and detailing on large projects can take well over a year. Casting schedules when hundreds of architectural panels require another year. When early design assistance is provided by an architectural precast producers, that can save an enormous amount of time, money, and effort.

What are some situations you have been through or projects you have worked on that have made you become a better precaster?

All large precast projects add to the learning curve of this business. The production of molds and methods used in casting can always be improved on and with each year we get better at what we do. The radius stair project we did a number of years ago challenged our abilities as mold producers and how to orientate the casting of the pieces. When completed it was viewed as an accomplishment by the plant and gave us more confidence to take on difficult projects.

How has being a member of the APA helped you in challenges within the industry?

Being a member of the APA has been one of the best decisions I made after purchasing the company. The ability to contact members and discuss problems is a great resource. Members are very willing to share knowledge and experience in an effort to make all of us better producers.

What, in your opinion, are some of the most important aspects that the APA provides to you, as well as to its members?

Overall the APA provides a structure to enforce quality control for its producers. A number of the producers are long established architectural precasters and have developed good quality control procedures over the years. The benefit to a new producer in the APA is the development of an inspection process and requirements that promote the casting of high quality architectural precast. The resources within the group are broad and have helped Northwest Precast to become a well-respected architectural precast company.
Welcome back, in this edition of the APA Precaster we are covering how to improve the overall appearance through brush washing. There will be a new article in every new edition covering the art of repair and cleaning of architectural precast concrete and cast stone.

Cleaning of Precast Concrete and Stone

By Kiley Marcoe, Metro Precast & Stone Services, Inc.

One of the easiest way to improve the overall appearance of architectural precast concrete is to use chemical supplemented fiber brush wash. Brush washing will correct splotchy appearance, blemishes, efflorescence, texture and color differences, and wand damage from power washing.

It is important to choose the correct commercial cleaning agent, use a muriatic acid to alter the texture and color of precast. To remove blemishes, splotchy areas and efflorescence use a phosphoric acid, a phosphoric acid will not alter the exposure of the precast.
Pressure washing equipment should only be used to expedite the saturation and rinse processes never used to perform the actual cleaning or stain removal. In many cases, cleaning with pressure washing equipment will damage the precast or create wand marks.

continued on the next page
Brush washing with a commercial cleaning agent can be used not only on new precast projects but also to restore older precast.

Before

After

Before

After

It is important to neutralize both the treated precast and the runoff waste water to render the cleaning agent safe. Cleaning agents such as muriatic and phosphoric acid can easily be neutralized. Apply a neutralizing rinse of 2 ounces baking soda to 1 gallon water. Saturate and leave solution on the surface 3 to 5 minutes. Apply the final rinse of clear water.
THE TOM CORY SCHOLARSHIP

Tom Cory was a founding member of the APA and in his honor, the APA developed the Tom Cory Scholarship. This $2,000 scholarship is awarded annually to one deserving student in an architecture program. This is a fantastic scholarship opportunity for college students who are majoring in Architecture.

HELP US SPREAD THE WORD TO COLLEGE STUDENTS BY SHARING THIS LINK!
APA MEMBER BENEFIT:
HR & EMPLOYMENT HOTLINE

As valued association members of the Architectural Precast Association, you have unlimited access to a complimentary HR & Employment HOTLINE through our partnership with Seay Management Consultants. This HR & Employment HOTLINE is available to you at NO COST and will provide answers to your human resources, personnel management and employment related questions.

Hundreds of employee questions arise in day to day business and almost every one of them can be different – questions about COBRA, FMLA, EEOC, ADA, and so many others. Sometimes a simple question can turn into a complicated or costly concern if it’s not handled properly.

When you have a question and need an accurate, straight forward answer, simply contact Seay Management Consultants and identify yourself as an APA member.

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