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Cover Photo: Spring Workshop Cover Art
Whoever said “may you live in interesting times” certainly never envisioned the nationwide quarantine and toilet paper hoarding that we are currently experiencing. I hope that you, your families and employees are well during this time of national and global emergency. It seems like for the most part the construction sector is relatively steady and has not experienced significant supply chain issues as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. I hope you have been receiving and reading the APA alerts on COVID-19 and the measures you can take as employers to protect your businesses and employees. I look for us all to come out of this event stronger and better prepared for emergencies.

The APA had a great Spring Workshop in Ft. Worth in March just before the pandemic-related travel shutdowns and restriction started to take effect. We had some great educational sessions, plant tours and takeaways that will help all of our members be better producers.

We are moving full-steam ahead for the 2020 Annual Convention in the hope an expectation that by the time September arrives this tragic time in our history will be long behind us and our producers and suppliers will be ready to get back to some sense of normalcy, kick back and enjoy Nashville. Our Education Committee is working on a great educational programming, fun activities and plant tours. Please mark your calendars for September 25-28. The hotel room block is open and you can make reservations through links on the APA website. Get your room NOW before they are sold out.

Despite the rocky start to 2020 that the pandemic has caused, the APA came out the gate quickly and is working on some new initiatives to increase membership and serve you better. For example, we are currently working on color and finish technical bulletin that will help you in educating architects, project owners and others on the various factors that affect the color and finish of cast stone, architectural precast and GFRC.

I look forward to a better second half of 2020 and to seeing you in Nashville!

Tim Michael
2020 Spring Workshop Report

We hope you were able to attend the Spring 2020 Spring Workshop in Fort Worth, Texas. The Spring Workshop offered valuable information to its attendees. Attendees enjoyed speakers and took away new innovations with insights to take back their plants.

The APA would like to thank Tim Michael from Advanced Architectural Stone, Inc. for his help in hosting this year’s workshop and for being a part of the Plant tours. We would also like to thank Carl Hall with Speed Fab-Crete Corporation for making their plant available for the plant tour as well.

*Check out the photos from this year’s sessions and tours.*
Mark your calendar for the 2020 APA Annual Convention!
The convention will provide excellent speakers, a showcase of industry products and services, golf tournament and other great networking opportunities. You don’t want to miss this event!

For more information on the APA Convention as it becomes available, please continue to visit the APA website at www.archprecast.org or contact the APA office at 850.205.5637.

ABOUT THE RENAISSANCE NASHVILLE HOTEL
611 Commerce Street, Nashville, TN 37203
www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/bnash-renaissance-nashville-hotel

The Renaissance Nashville Hotel is a luxury haven in legendary Music City. The Hotel is located in the heart of downtown, conveniently attached to Fifth + Broad and moments from attractions like Bridgestone Arena and Music Row. Redesigned to reflect the storied history and modern spirit of the city, Renaissance Nashville Hotel invites you to discover the difference!

HOTEL RESERVATIONS
Make reservations directly with the Renaissance Nashville Hotel by calling 615.255.8400. Be sure to state you are with the APA to receive the reduced room rate of $269 plus taxes per night.

The Renaissance Nashville Hotel will only be able to offer this reduced rate to the APA until Thursday, September 3, 2020. Please note the APA can only reserve a certain number of rooms at the discounted rate. Once the room block is sold out, even if that day is prior to the cutoff date, a higher prevailing room rate will apply. Make your reservations today!
An Interview with Jesse Thompson
Northern Design

Tell us a little bit about yourself and your business.
Northern Design has been supplying architectural precast & cast stone trim for the New England market for over 25 years. We are a family run business with an incredible crew of loyal, talented employees that get amazing things done on a daily basis.

What are some of the challenges you are facing as a precaster?
We are always busy, so meeting aggressive schedules and paying attention to detail are probably the most challenging aspects of our daily operation. Things need to happen quick, so clear communication and internal productivity are important aspects to our ability to minimize overall lead times. Quality control procedures act as the safety net to catch any potential mistakes as early in the process as possible. Making the molds and pieces right the first time is the challenge of any project. Mistakes increase our lead time while decreasing margins, productivity & reputation. In the end, we’re only as good as our people … so having a competent, engaged team will minimize risk on even the most difficult project.

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

We get involved with all different types of projects. Decorative trim work, site hardscapes, small panel veneer systems, tricky restoration replacements and the like. We like to think that every job makes us better and teaches us something. Our experience is what gives us the confidence and know how to tackle the most difficult projects. We have made our share of mistakes, and we still do! Each mistake is a lesson learned and we do our best to find the positive in those mistakes and use them to our advantage moving forward. We certainly are not perfect, but we show up every day with a high level of pride and effort. This allows us to collectively be our best, which allows our products to consistently meet or exceed expectation.

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

The APA has taught us that you cannot become complacent in this industry. This Industry is ever changing, so you must roll with the tide and react to those changes in order to remain successful. Having the ability to see other precast /cast stone operations and become friends with some of the best precast producers in North America is certainly an irreplaceable advantage. We have created life-long friendships and we always look forward to seeing everyone at the annual workshops and conventions. The APA also provides a certification program that demands excellence from our employees and requires all producers to stay on their toes. That internal responsibility ultimately provides our customers with a higher quality product and more positive experience with precast / cast stone products.

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

I believe that APA members are held to a higher standard and because APA offers constant opportunity to get involved our team is able to continue to learn and get better at what we do. For example, the Spring Workshops are a vital resource for our guys. We’ll send them around the country in order to spend time with people who hold the same position at another plant. Each plant tackles things differently, so these workshops offer an opportunity to see what you do well and open your eyes to where there’s room for improvement. Northern Design takes full advantage of the Annual Conventions as well. The educational and motivational sessions that are provided at these events help to reinforce the drive and passion that myself and our upper management has to make our business strive. We’re proud to be an APA member and we would not be where we are today without the influence & support of this great Association.
Seay Management Report
By Sandy Seay, President

2020 HR MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

The year 2020 did not start off the way many of us had anticipated. The month of January was pretty typical, new starts, resolutions made, some broken . . . Then February arrived and there was talk a virus threat from China and we all know happened since then. Our lives and businesses have been in whirlwind ever since. The early part of each year, despite what is going on around is a good time to take stock of our “HR toolkits” to make sure that we have a solid foundation to support our employees and our businesses in good times and bad. Below are facets of that toolkit that you should be reviewing annually.

The Seay Management Consultants HR Checklist ensures that you implement “best practices” in terms of policies, procedures, manuals, and documents to hire and retain employees and motivate them to superior performance.

Online Application and Job Postings – Consider having employees complete the application form online, through your website, rather than in person. This can be a more efficient and less expensive process and may quickly identify those applicants who might be good candidates for your open positions.

Review Application and New Hire Packet – Ensure your hiring procedures are compliant with applicable regulations.

- All applicants must fill out an application form and sign it. Incorrect information provided on the application form can be immediate grounds for termination.
- Remove request for a social security number on the application form.
- Some states and localities have restricted employers from inquiring about a candidate’s compensation history.
- “Ban the Box” regulations in several states and municipal areas prohibit having questions on the application pertaining to criminal backgrounds or records.
- Keep background check authorization documents separate from the application form.
- Include a job description in your new hire packet for signature and acknowledgement of expected job duties.
- Written authorization for any deductions should be contained in the new hire packet. Remember, employers are not permitted to deduct from an employee’s pay without advanced written authorization, in compliance with FLSA regulations.

Administer Personality Tests – To ensure you hire employees that are the best “fit” for the job and the work culture, consider administering the DISC profile, which is a measure of working style. Seay Management Consultants offers this service online.

Submit New Hire Reports – Regularly submit your New Hire Reports to the state employment agency database.

Job Descriptions – We recommend ensuring that you have detailed job descriptions for every position, in compliance with ADA, EEOC, and Generally Accepted Principles of Human Resources Management. Employers who are covered by the Affirmative Action regulations are required to have job descriptions. In addition to helping us manage

Very best regards,
THE SEAY MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS STAFF

Remember if you have an employment issue or challenge and you need the right answer, right away, take advantage of the APA’s FREE HR Hotline for APA Members. The Seay Management Team gives the best HR advice available.

Call them at: 888.245.6272
Welcome to the twentieth installment of architectural precast repair, in this installment will learn proper preparation of the repair area.

Preparation of a Repair

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

Preparation is the most important aspect of a repair even more so than the repair color. There is no need to install a repair, regardless how good it looks, if it is going to fail. There are four steps to preparation of a repair area. The mechanical texturing and shaping of the damaged area, application of a topical bonding agent, installation mechanical anchors or reinforcement bars, and form to maintain all sealant joints.

Step 1- Mechanically work the repair area to remove all loose and fractured material and to thoroughly texture. Then, shape the area to eliminate feather edges and to create a void beyond vertical to create keyed pocket.

Failure to thoroughly texture the repair will result in bond failure of the repair material. In the below images are repairs where the repair material bond has failed, and is peeling away from the surface due to lack of mechanical texturing.

Eliminating feather edging will prevent the halo effect around your repair such as the halo in the below repair.

If you eliminate the feather edging the repair will not have the halo effect and will be much less conspicuous as in the below repair.
Step 2- Repair areas the size of a golf ball or larger will also require an application of the topical bonding agent.

Step 3- Repair areas the size of a softball or larger will also require mechanical anchors or epoxy set rebar. This will not only improve the physical bond of the repair material it will also ensure a repair will not fall out if bond failure ever occurs. The rule of thumb is if the repair is large enough to cause physical damage or bodily injury install mechanical anchors.

Step 4- Maintain all sealant or mortar joints, never bond a repair to two or more substrates.

Until next time,
Kiley Marcoe

Metro Precast & Stone Services, Inc.
http://www.metroprecast.com/
Forthcoming Certification Changes
At the APA Board’s most recent meeting a few changes were made that all APA Certified Plants should be aware of:

PLANT CERTIFICATION
The date windows of the APA’s plant certification periods and inspections have been pushed back one month. This change will help inspectors avoid cold weather related air travel delays and cancellations in the north which adds expense to the program. Beginning in 2021, certificates will expire April 31, 2021 with inspections generally taking place in the March/April time window. The first certificates issued in 2021 as a result of those inspections will expire October 31, 2021, with inspections generally taking place in the September/October time window.

PERSONNEL CERTIFICATION
The board recently add another re-certification option for those who hold the APA’s QCI, QCII or BPO designation. In lieu of the current continuing education (CE) requirement, certificants who wish to, may opt to re-take these respective exams instead of meeting the CE requirements. Those wishing to retest must submit their request for testing no later than February 1 of the year they wish to test to allow for proper time to plan for test administration and proctoring.

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.

HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIAL MANAGEMENT PROJECTS*

Employee Handbooks
Affirmative Action Plans
Equal Employment Opportunity
Resolving Discrimination Charges
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Wage and Hour Analysis
Employee Opinion Surveys
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Developing Job Descriptions
Americans With Disabilities
Employee Conflict Resolution
Sexual Harassment Prevention
Wage and Hour Investigations
HR Workshops and Presentations

*Special Projects will be offered at a reduced hourly rate for clients of APA.

HR & EMPLOYMENT HOTLINE
Email: admin@seay.us
Toll Free: 888-245-6272