

The LICA NEWS

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The Land Improvement Contractors of America

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Deputy Under-Secretary Speaks to LICA



↑ From left: NLICA Chairman of the Board Harry Hauschild, USDA Under-Secretary Merlyn Carlson, and NLICA Executive Vice President Wayne Maresch

LICA was honored to have Deputy Under-Secretary Merlyn Carlson speak to the assembled members in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina during our convention. He spoke of the thrusts of USDA to deal with the agricultural problems of our time and to promote U.S. agriculture products to the world, thereby improving the market for U.S. farmers.

The 2007 Farm Bill is now being put together and Mr. Carlson asked that any input

that LICA members would like to make be sent either to him or to the LICA National Office, to be forwarded to the team crafting the bill.

Mr. Carlson responded to questions about wetlands determination procedures hindering conservation practice installation. He said he saw no reason why recently imposed procedures should not be delayed until after the spring work season. Those procedures would have virtually cut off any work this spring. He also accepted questions about Technical Service Providers and the installation of permanent conservation practices on land due to come out of the Conservation Reserve Program. Hopefully, positive actions will result from these questions, as well.

Mr. Carlson is the highest ranking USDA official to speak to the LICA convention in recent memory. We were certainly honored by his presence and appreciate his contribution to our cause.

[Editor's Note: After Mr. Carlson returned to Washington, the latest wetland determination requirements were rescinded.]

Myrtle Beach ... What a Huge Success!

The 55th annual National LICA convention in Myrtle Beach was a success on all fronts. The pre-tours, seminars, exhibits and the entertainment were all first class. The committees, delegates and board members were busy and productive taking care of the LICA business.

The historic Charleston tour was well attended, giving a flavor of the old South. A carriage ride, market visit and cruising the Charleston harbor with a stop at Fort Sumter were just a few of the highlights. Walden and Peggy Graham were kind enough to have a group tour the Walden's mine. Contractors spent their time enjoying equipment demonstrations after a "Pig Pickin" barbecue. The latest technology in GIS/GPS and a vacuum truck demonstration of locating and working underground utilities held everyone's interest.

The seminars were also varied. From employee recruiting to retirement planning; OSHA 10 hour training to fleet management safety; GPS applications to repairing pond dam pipe spillways. These are just a few examples of the education offered.

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The LICA NEWS



The Land Improvement Contractors of America

THE LICA NEWS is the official publication of the Land Improvement Contractors of America, dedicated to the professional conservation of soil and water. LICA was founded in 1951 and is today comprised of twenty-four chapters across the continental United States.

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THE LICA NEWS welcomes letters, subject to editing for accuracy and brevity. THE LICA NEWS also welcomes articles relevant to the land improvement industry. Include your name and daytime phone number for verification purposes.

Deadlines are the twenty-first of the month preceding issue date. All unsolicited material must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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A Message from the President *Darrell Birge*

A great convention! I want to take the time to thank everyone involved with this year's convention. Paul Sandefur, for pulling it together, and Walden and Peggy Graham, for hosting us at their facilities.

We had a lot of good presentations from our associates. I thought there were a lot of good topics. I can't say enough about the skid steer donated by John Deere and Jane Deere (Xenya Mucha), the laser donated by John Downey of Trimble, the gift certificates donated by Charlie Schafer of Agri Drain and the cash prize donated by the Norman Spencer Agency - all in support of our raffle.

I want to thank all of the associates who helped sponsor our meal functions. I want to thank Bill Esposito for arranging the golf outing. For you guys that didn't win, you have all year to get better. I want to thank Harry and Geri for holding things together through difficult times.

I want to thank everyone for giving me the opportunity to be your President. I think, with everyone working together, we can make this a great organization, once again.

This will be a transition year for us and I can't begin to tell you how much Wayne has meant to this organization. I want to close this message with Wayne and Anna in our prayers.

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Darrell Birge".

Darrell Birge
National LICA President

Myrtle Beach *(From page 1)*

All speakers were informative and entertaining. The biggest complaint was that there was not enough time to attend them all!

The exhibit hall was bustling with activity; giving contractors a chance to visit with associates and see what products they offer. The whole crowd enjoyed watching the "Newlywed Game" where a few brave couples tried to guess what their spouse would answer.



The John Deere Luncheon ↑ *Swapping stories with our Associates in the Exhibit Hall.* speaker, Thom Summey, did a great job of entertaining the group. After a busy morning in the Delegate's Meeting, and with the Board Meeting ahead, the group needed the break. Four lucky people got more than lunch when their names were called as winners in the 2006 raffle.

The Caterpillar Awards Banquet had non-stop entertainment. During dinner, we enjoyed the Radford University Cloggers, including Madelynn and Sandy Gulick's daughter. Some of the LICA members got into the act and tried their "feet" at clogging. The national awards were presented and the changing of the guard occurred as President Harry Hauschild passed the President's pin to Darrell Birge. After dinner, attendees were transported through the decades courtesy of "Memory Lane." The show started with Marilyn Monroe and ended with Tina Turner, In the middle, there was laughter and dancing, as the group sang music from the 50's,60's,70's and 80's.

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Wayne's World

Wayne F. Maresch
LICA Executive Vice President

Now Hear This!

For some years, now, young people have been subjecting themselves to "music" so loud that it is almost painful. The fact is that while they may not feel it yet, it will hurt them in the long run. In many cases, the damage they have done to their hearing does not stop getting worse when they stop listening to the loud music. Many of these people have entered the construction field as equipment operators, laborers, etc. What risk do they bring with them when they join your work force?

We are aware of the requirement to protect employees' hearing while they are on the job. However, if their hearing is already impaired

and still deteriorating when they come on board, does this put you at risk for compensation when they claim the loss of hearing as a job injury saying they are unable to work anymore? Barring that, do they pose a hazard to others on the job?

We all know that heavy machinery makes a lot of loud noise. So, it is imperative to make certain that all workers around noisy equipment protect their hearing. It is not macho to go without hearing protection. It is pure foolishness. Just as construction helmets make sense, so does hearing protection.

Generators

Here in Washington, we just experienced the worst winter storm in the last few years. Yes, in many parts of the country our weather would be considered mild. But here, 10 to 15 inches of snow in one 24 hour period with winds up to 50 miles an hour is not the norm. Fortunately, it happened on a weekend, so traffic was not as snarled as it would otherwise have been. However, since it happened over Saturday night, it did cause the closing of nearly all churches on Sunday and nearly all schools and colleges on Monday. The biggest problem the storm caused was the destruction of electric power lines.

As in other storms in the past, there was an immediate run on generators. People had refrigerators and freezers in which food might spoil if power was off too long. Of course, one should weigh the cost of the food that might be lost against the cost of a generator and the expected frequency of such occurrences. With many people on wells and without heat, the equation takes on a new dimension. We are just not accustomed to such inconveniences. Be that as it may, problems occur when someone inexperienced with generators gets one and starts to use it.

Connecting a generator into house wiring without disconnecting the incoming power lines from the electric company in the service box, or not having a relay that does that for you, can have dire results when commercial power is restored. Running a gasoline powered generator indoors can be lethal to anyone in the building. And, operating it in any other poorly ventilated space can likewise cause similar problems.

There was a case here where a home owner set up his generator in the back of his van because of the inclement weather, and left the back hatch open for ventilation. He then set a plastic container of gasoline near the generator to be handy for refills. Unfortunately, the generator produced more heat in the nearly enclosed space than anyone expected and warmed the gasoline in the plastic container causing it to spew out through a pin hole in the side and spray onto the hot generator. As luck would have it, he spotted the problem before it could catch fire and explode, killed the generator and moved the container. The value of the food in his freezer would hardly have equaled the cost of a new vehicle plus the generator.

The lessons here are: Always have a professional electrician put in the connections for a generator if you are going to use one; make sure the generator is placed where it will be adequately ventilated and where the heat generated will not cause a problem; keep gasoline and other flammable items away; and be sure that the power output of the generator is adequate for the job.

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CNA has helped manage the unique risks of land improvement contractors for nearly 40 years. Our partnership with LICA enables us to go beyond standard claim processing and provide high-quality claim administration services based on your needs. And with more than 100 years of experience providing Claim services, we're there.

To find out more about CNA, call your local independent agent or visit www.cna.com.



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Myrtle Beach *(From page 2)*

Besides education and entertainment, there was work to be done. The Delegates passed a new By-Law which defined a new category of membership - the Secondary Membership. This non-voting membership would be for relatives or employees of existing members, giving them a subscription to *The LICA News* and listing in the *LICA Directory*. Doug Hey was elected as the new LICA Vice President. The pros and cons of additional By-Law changes were discussed in a lively debate, with the end result being to keep the present By-Laws intact.

The Board members received the committee reports. The Certification Committee reviewed Illinois's certification program and will make the format

available to other state chapters. The Insurance Committee is reviewing the present term-life benefit program and looking at a more economical way to offer this benefit. The Legislative Committee defined the issues to present in Washington, DC. The Long-Term Planning Committee recommended a re-structure of the By-Law Committee. The Safety Committee reviewed the pamphlet "Basic Safety Rules for Construction" for employee use and will have it available for members at the LICA Summer Meeting. The Safety Committee will also begin work on a new safety manual.

The minutes from the Committee, Board and Delegate meetings will appear in full in the next *LICA News*.



Left: Members of the Radford University Cloggers show their stuff.

Bottom left, from left: Chairman Harry Hauschild and newly-elected LICA Vice President Doug Hey try their "feet" at clogging!

Below: At the Caterpillar Banquet, "Marilyn Monroe" serenades Bob Colburn.



Above, from left: Reta Bodwell, NE; Don Loken, MN; and Julie Peters, IA dance their way through the 60's!

Congratulations to Our Winners!

Top State - Nebraska LICA
Contractor of the Year - Fuzz Haile, KS
Contractor Wife of the Year - Kathy Malone, NE



Above: Harry Hauschild and Patti McArdle proudly display the Top State Award; Below: Doug Hey, left, presents Fuzz Haile with the Contractor of the Year Award



Myrtle Beach Golf Pros!

Thanks to Bill Esposito, coordinator, and the sponsors of the 2006 Myrtle Beach Scholarship Golf Outing ... we raised over \$1,800!

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8. Accord
9. Wisconsin & Indiana LICA

Winners

- Longest Drive, Hole 2 - Stuart Anderson
Closest to the Pin - Tom Salmon
Longest Drive, Hole 8 - Steve Miller
Low Gross (Man) - Darrell Birge
Low Gross (Ladies) - Coretha Rozendaal
Low Net - Brad McArdle
Honest Golfer - Tom Ervey

We've Thanked Them ... Now, It's Your Turn!

The following is a listing of LICA Associate Members who were sponsors of the LICA Winter Convention in Myrtle Beach. Please take a minute to write a note or send an email and thank them for their continued support!

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2006 LICA Raffle Winners



Joni Hey, NY
Grand Prize Winner

- Grand Prize:** John Deere 320 Skid Steer Loader
Winner: Joni Hey, NY
- 2nd Prize:** Trimble/Spectra Precision Laser - Model 1242
Winner: Eddie Gilmore, MO
- 3rd Prize:** \$500 Agri Drain Product Gift Certificate
Winner: Linda Pruss, NE
- 4th Prize:** \$500 Agri Drain Product Gift Certificate
Winner: Lofthouse Excavating, NY
- 5th Prize:** \$200 Cash from Norman-Spencer Insurance
Winner: Sandy Gulick, VA



Eddie Gilmore, MO
2nd Place Winner

We'd like to offer a special "Thank-You" to our raffle sponsors and all those who bought tickets

Tech Corner

Submitted by: David Cantrell
LICA Technology Committee Chairman

Tech Tools: Security Does Matter

Take Steps to Keep the Bad Guys Out

By Ricardo Harvin

E-mail Questions for Tech Tools to rharvin@uschamber.com.

Still don't take computer security seriously? Then you're vulnerable to having your systems hijacked, your every keystroke recorded and sent silently to thieves, and all your information stolen or simply destroyed.

Any of these could cause you to lose money and could even wipe out your business. But there are steps that you can take to reduce the chances of this happening. The threats to your systems are constantly evolving. If you want to maintain control of your assets, you need to keep your software current, stay alert, and remain suspicious.

Update Your Software

To remain protected, you must have the most recent version of your operating system, anti-virus software, a strong firewall, and an anti-spyware program. Once you have obtained all these components, take an inventory and establish a regular routine to keep all your software updated with available security patches. Some software can do this automatically; for other software, you have to perform these checks and downloads manually.

With office productivity software (word processors, spreadsheets, etc.), a monthly check should be sufficient, but more frequent updates may be available. Operating system and Web browser software should be checked weekly. Anti-virus and anti-spyware programs should be set to check for updates daily, which most can do automatically.

Stay Alert and Remain Suspicious

After you update your software and maintain a regular update schedule, you're still not done. You also need to avoid self-inflicted infections of malicious software. This requires a healthy amount of common sense and suspicion when using e-mail or installing unknown software.

Never click on a link or open unrequested attachments in an e-mail -even if it appears to come from someone you know. Copy e-mail links directly into your browser's address bar so that you can see exactly where it's going to take you; then decide if you recognize the link as legitimate. Unless you're expecting a specific file, avoid opening attachments that you receive-no matter who they're from.

Any piece of malicious software can make your computers completely unusable and nearly impossible to repair. Consider the cost of that scenario alone if you think these steps just aren't worth the trouble.

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LICA to Sit on the CONEXPO-CON/AGG 2008 Advisory Committee

By Jerry Biuso

National LICA was asked to become a member of a select group of sixteen companies and associations that form the CONEXPO-CON/AGG 2008 Advisory Committee.

The first one-day meeting was held in Chicago, February 23, 2006 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. The meeting was scheduled the same time as our national trade show in Myrtle Beach. Timing of the meeting was the worst possible but a true feather in our cap to be selected. After attending the meeting, I had to catch a 7:30pm flight to Myrtle Beach arriving 11:30 pm. A special thank you to Bruce Barnhart of Iowa for meeting me at the airport.

A great deal of information was distributed at the CONEXPO meeting and I was able to share some of this information with both the LICA Membership Committee and the LICA Trade Show Committee in Myrtle Beach.

Eleven associations participated with CONEXPO 2005 and out of the eleven, LICA ranked number four in total attendance. We established a very positive image and helped to distinguish LICA as a true force in the industry. The decision to hold our 2008 Winter Meeting in conjunction with CONEXPO I believe is a very positive move. It will help to project our image and have us identify with CONEXPO. This was the largest indoor/outdoor show in Las Vegas history. The 2008 show promises to be even larger.

The next scheduled meeting of the Advisory Committee was to be July 18, 2006 during our summer meeting in New Jersey. I was able to have it change to July 24, 2006, the day after our meeting. This will be a two-day meeting covering such topics as hotels, transportation, and educational seminars.

Just a little side note: If you walked the entire 2005 show, you walked 41 miles!!!



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