ASCC NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

- Executive Committee - Gratitude
- Executive Director - "Concrete Can't Make Itself!
- Concrete Construction Specialist - Estimating for Concrete Contractors ... #2 in a series
- Concrete Polishing Council - Managing Expectations
- Decorative Concrete Specialist - Humidity, Dew Point & Sealing
- Decorative Concrete Council - Take Some Time to Learn Something New
- Safety & Risk Management Council - It's that Time of Year (Again)
- Concrete Industry Management Program Seeks Donations for 2022 WOC Auction

INDUSTRY CALENDAR

World of Concrete
Education January 17-20, 2022
Exhibits January 18-20, 2022
Las Vegas, NV
ASCC Schedule

Kick Off Bash
January 17, 2022
The Westgate
Registration
Sponsorship Information

Concrete Executive Leadership Forum
July 14-17, 2022
The American Club
Kohler, WI

Annual Conference
September 29 - October 2, 2022
Hilton Cleveland Downtown
Cleveland, OH

Welcome New Members
- Precision Floor Care, Wetumpka, AL
- Preferred Construction Supply, Davidson, NC
- Starling Concrete Resurfacing, Hoover, AL
- Vermac, El Paso, TX
**Ballots**

All ballots were sent out by email on December 2 to company delegates. Each ballot was sent in a separate email: ASCC Board & SRMC Board; DCC Board; CPC Board; and MAC Board. If you are a delegate and did not receive a ballot, please reply to this email. All ballots must be submitted by December 31, 2021.

**Message from the Executive Committee**

**Gratitude**  
**Chris Klemaske, vice president**

The benefits of practicing gratitude are nearly endless. People who regularly practice gratitude, by taking time to notice and reflect upon the things they are thankful for, experience more positive emotions, feel more alive, sleep better, and express more compassion and kindness. It even helps your immune system! A friend of mine recently shared what I think is a great idea, creating a gratitude jar. Write down one thing you're grateful for every day, no matter how large or small, and put that note into the jar. On New Year's Day, open the jar and reflect on those blessings.

I want to use this column as the year comes to an end, to express my gratitude to this organization. Thank you to the board and their leadership and for keeping us relevant in our industry, for keeping us on task and always looking forward. Thank you to Bev Gamant, our executive director, and her staff for all of their hard work. Their professionalism and attention to detail is one of the reasons ASCC is one of the most respected organizations out there. Thank you to all of the committees and their members that donate so much of their time, treasure and knowledge to keep us always on the cutting edge and leaders in our trade. And last but not least, thank you to all of the members of ASCC, your continued participation, support and dedication to keeping ASCC in the forefront of the concrete industry helps us grow our businesses and “Enhance the Capabilities of Those Who Build with Concrete.”

I look forward to seeing everyone at the World of Concrete. Wishing you and yours a very blessed holiday season and Happy New Year.

**Executive Director’s Message**

“In Concrete Can’t Make Itself!”

**Bev Gamant**

When I read the article written by Phil Kresge, senior v.p., local paving, NRMCA, “Concrete Can’t Place Itself!” in The Winter 2021 issue of Concrete InFocus magazine, I thought it important to share his thoughts. Though the producer/contractor relationship is an ongoing bone of contention, over the last few years I’d come to believe that it had approved as both sides grew to understand that a stronger allegiance between the two parties made for more successful and less stressful projects.

Obviously the divide is still a significant hindrance to a smooth concrete construction process. NRMCA’s Paving Division recognizes this, as Phil urges their membership to acknowledge they will profit by a trusting partnership with the contractor. We need to do the same – Concrete Can’t Make Itself!

Please read Phil’s article and consider how your company might do a better job of working alongside your producers.

**ASCC/NRMCA Resources**  
[Paving Tool Kit, a product of the NRMCA/ASCC Joint Paving Committee](https://www.nrmca.org/education-and-training/paving-tool-kit)  
[NRMCA Paving Boot Camps (offered to contractors)](https://www.nrmca.org/education-and-training/paving-boot-camps)  

**Concrete InFocus – Pave Ahead™ Suite**  
Winter 2021 Edition
Concrete Can’t Place Itself
Philip Kresge – NRMCA Senior Vice President, Local Paving

Technology today claims to be making life easier. Voice assistant software agents conduct internet searches for us, and can even turn on lights, play music and adjust room thermostats on command. Cars tell us when we’ve veered out of lane, when we are approaching an object, and when to brake. Some cars can even parallel park themselves. Perhaps the ultimate is the driverless vehicle.

I started in the concrete industry in the 80’s at a small, family-owned ready-mix company in central New York state. At that time, the company was one of the first in the area to have automated batching. Looking back at the system we had then, it is almost antiquated, compared to the systems in use today. GPS and laser-guided equipment help contractors place concrete more efficiently, and within tighter tolerances, than ever before.

But no matter how advanced technology may be, one thing is still true – concrete can’t place itself. And unlike our competitors, concrete pavement is not a one-stop shop material. The alliance of ready-mix producer and concrete contractor is key to expanding our market. But, ironically, that alliance is a rarity in our industry.

I think back to my days as Promotion Director for the Pennsylvania Concrete Promotion Council (PCPC). From the start, we included a contractor membership level and, at one time, actually had more contractor members than producer members. We knew the importance of including contractors in our promotion efforts. When pitching the concept of a concrete pavement, having the contractor on board to answer specific questions about procedure and cost was invaluable.

While at this year’s ConcreteWorks, I had the opportunity to participate in the NRMCA State Affiliate / Promotion Team Meeting. Representatives from numerous state ready-mixed concrete associations were joined by staff from NRMCA’s Build with Strength and Pave Ahead teams to discuss topics of importance to the industry. With my associates Jon Hansen and Donn Thompson, I facilitated the group discussing Contractor Partnerships.

Throughout the discussions, there were some recurring themes. First, we need “boots on the ground” to implement a successful target market campaign. Secondly, alliance with the contractor is essential. Thirdly, the only way to get the industrial pavement market is to put the ready-mix producer and contractor together.

The consensus was that we can’t do anything without the contractor. The contractor has the relationships with the owners and developers. The producer needs a good relationship with the contractor to be able to maximize the opportunity.

There were also what I thought were some disturbing comments. “As producers, the contractor is our customer but not always our ally.” “We need to change our mindset and move our relationship from adversarial to alliance.” And my favorite – “We cooperate, but we don’t cooperate.”

Open lines of communication are important to maintaining a good relationship. Too often, the contractor does not know what the producer has to offer, particularly with regard to mix design opportunities. Likewise, it is just as often that the producer does not know the true capabilities of the contractor, such as how many square feet of pavement can they place in a day.

At NRMCA, we understand the importance of the contractor/producer partnership and we’re fully supportive. The Pave Ahead program is all about these partnerships. We have a seat at the American Society of Concrete Contractors (ASCC) Concrete Pavement Committee, where we’ve helped developed the Concrete Parking Lot Tool Kit. Our Boot Camps teach our partners the best practices that have we know have worked. Our Design Assistance Program (DAP) provides the pavement designs that equalize the playing field between flexible and rigid pavements.

The most successful contractor attendees of our Concrete Parking Lots Boot Camp have two things in common: a dedicated market development person and open communication with their ready-mix producer. Working together, they have expanded their market share to the tune of millions of square feet.

On the contrary, I can cite several large projects where concrete pavement was never, really, an option because the contractor was not willing to present a concrete alternative, for fear of jeopardizing their bid to the owner. A strong partnership could have reinforced the contractor’s
Another word that popped up frequently in our discussions was Trust. Historically, our industry was not very trusting. But slowly we’ve made headway in changing our ways. Going back to the days of the RMC 2000 movement, we learned that our opposition is not the contractor or even the other producer down the street. Trust is key to a solid partnership. And partnerships are what will move us forward.

Because concrete can’t place itself!

**Concrete Construction Specialist**

*Estimating for Concrete Contractors ... #2 in a series*

Jim Klinger

**Full disclosure:** It’s 17 July 1982, just about first light. I’m beachcombing barefoot along the pristine Ocean City shoreline. Up ahead, I spot a lone surfercastor working the incoming tide. Several species of highly prized sport fish are running along the Jersey coast now, and I can see straightaway this guy has hooked into one of them. The angler finesses the fish in past the first breaker and then through the surging pull of ocean backwash and drags it safe to dry sand. It’s a striper, a real beauty. By and by, we exchange pleasantries and get to talking. As it turns out, he’s an engineer who retired just yesterday after a career based in the Philadelphia construction market. I tell him my first engineering classes get underway in a few weeks at university and ask if he has any words of advice for a young guy just starting out. “That’s easy”, he says, “never fool yourself into thinking that you know it all in the concrete business, even up to the day you retire”. Looking back on it after all these years… boy, was he right.

Despite tremendous pressures brought to bear on the concrete construction industry by the pandemic, the ASCC Technical Division staff nearly doubled in size in 2021. Over the past year, this staff fielded several hundred concrete construction issues submitted by contractors taking advantage of the ASCC Hotline and Email Forum. And, true to the fisherman’s advice recounted above, we managed to learn something new with almost every issue or inquiry. Our jobs have been made much easier thanks to generous member participation in ASCC Technical Committee and Constructability Committee meetings and related activities. We are a non-profit organization that thrives on members helping each other navigate the concrete construction business, and it is especially bragworthy to see competitors leave their helmets and party affiliations at the door and lend a hand to fellow members.

Last month, we presented sample bid “inclusion and exclusion” proposal line items that could help minimize risk in an upcoming project. For this issue, we spent several hours sifting through past Hotline and Forum issues in an attempt to flush out examples that featured conflict and financial exposure that might very easily have been mitigated at bid time by using another valuable concrete estimating tool: contract scope allowances. As it turns out, there were several such issues that jumped out.

No one up and down the project food chain wants to get blindsided with late or seemingly unsubstantiated requests for cash money in the form of backcharges or proposed change orders. Nasty surprises - even if they are valid - can be some of the quickest ways to wreck a perfectly fine business deal. As concrete contractors, the best we can do to avoid unsavory conflict is to alert the owner of potential extra cost items up front at bid time, with suggested allowances (also sometimes called contingency or reserve sums).

(N.B.: Industry Standard ASTM E2168-10(16) is titled Standard Classification for Allowance, Contingency and Reserve Sums in Building Construction Estimating. The significance of the three commonly used estimating terms (e.g. allowance, contingency, reserve) is described in Section 4.1 as follows: “When preparing construction, project, and program cost estimates, it is often necessary to make monetary provisions for change or risk, or both, or other exigencies where information is incomplete).”

In some cases, project allowances may have been anticipated by the owner and the design team, typically appearing in MasterFormat Division 1 “Section 01 21 00: Allowances” or similar. In most of the specifications we reviewed, the projects were large public works-type, and allowances were only specified for work scopes related to Division 6 and higher; structural concrete wasn’t even mentioned. This is why it is so important for the concrete contractor to exercise due diligence,
scour the construction documents, and rely on past experience for guidance when preparing each bid.

Classic scope allowance items that typically carry risk of financial exposure to the unwary concrete contractor are as follows:

1. Crack repairs not clearly quantified at bid time
2. Grinding, filling of floors to suit follow-on trades
3. Lean concrete foundation backfill to replace unsuitable soils
4. Concrete needed to compensate for metal deck deflection
5. Concrete needed to compensate for misplaced subgrade
6. Concrete needed to compensate for misplaced shoring
7. Ice in concrete readymix due to weather
8. Incidental and/or accidental trade damage done to our work by others
9. Incidental and/or accidental trade damage done by our crews.
10. Rework required at architectural concrete mockups
11. Testing/inspection costs (e.g. early breaks, etc.) for PT, stripping, and so on
12. Costs associated with breaks in the supply chain
13. Costs associated with COVID
14. Time-related maintenance/repair issues, PT movement, Curling, Deflections

We have seen cases this year where the customer just plain didn’t know that elevated concrete slabs typically deflect after we remove the shoring, that PT structural concrete might move over time, and that reinforced concrete parking structures really do require owner maintenance budget attention over the life of the structure. There are some savvy structural engineers who include a section in their General Notes titled “Special Notes to Owner,” or similar statements meant to alert all stakeholders that unquantifiable costs are likely to be incurred, presumably handled through owner allowance budget line items. But there are other cases when it behooves the concrete contractor to raise allowance red flags early, either via pre-bid RFIs or carefully crafted proposal language.

In Part #3, we will consider certain interesting and amusing concrete estimating terminology, such as “Should Costing”, “Upset Fee”, “SWAG numbers” and “PIDOOMA budgets”.

Best Wishes for a Great Holiday…from the ASCC Technical Division.

**Concrete Polishing Council**

**Managing Expectations**

Scott Metzger, council director

What do politicians and polishers have in common? Keeping their jobs requires managing expectations. Unless you work for the USPS or the local cable company, overpromising and under-delivering is a sure path to losing a job. In the spirit of discussing the management of expectations, I wanted to update our members on some CPC activities you may not be aware of.

Roy Bowman, Solid Care Solutions, and Mike Payne, Payne & Associates, are heading a task group to improve and/or clarify our Aggregate Exposure Chart. This has been a fantastic tool for many polishers when speaking with designers about desired aesthetic design in a polished floor. Unfortunately, some in our polishing community have found their work subject to debate about whether their Class B floor truly has 85-95% fine aggregates and 5-15% blends of fine and course aggregate in some or all areas. The intent of this task group is to further clarify that these are general guidelines, not guarantees – and that what is achievable is very much subject to the placement and finishing methods used when creating the canvas to be polished.

Continuing along our managing expectations journey, another task group led by Bob Harris, Decorative Concrete Institute/Structural Services, and Ryan Klaaking, Slurry Monster/Syncon, just completed a round of testing and troubleshooting in polishing concrete floors with embedded glass. Again, after getting reports from members about issues in performing this scope of work, the board felt it important to research the subject with the hope of creating some helpful guidance to contractors. These may be a best practices paper or an article that can be used to help manage
expectations with designers, and pre-plan repair or mitigation strategies that might be acceptable to fixing common problems in these jobs.

Lastly, I wanted to remind you all that we are in the midst of our first electronic board election. Voting closes December 31. We made this change hoping to increase participation and make the process more expedient. This is a competitive election as we are blessed to have more candidates wanting to join the board than we have open seats. I encourage all members to reach out to the candidates to vet them and to give careful consideration to those who best represent your voice. I also hope that those not elected this time will continue to stay involved by joining a subcommittee or participating in other ways. We will continue to build a great community and I look forward to seeing what the future brings. Happy Holidays to all of you and your families and I hope to see you all at the World of Concrete in Las Vegas in just a few weeks!

**Decorative Concrete Council**

**Humidity, Dew Point & Sealing**

Chris Sullivan, decorative concrete specialist

Most sealers and coatings require a “dry” surface prior to application. What exactly does dry mean, and how do I know if the surface is truly dry? Most straightforward is a visual examination of the surface to be sealed. Does it look dry? In almost all cases concrete will be darker when wet. A dark substrate is usually an indication of moisture. The less obvious and often missed moisture intruder is humidity. Humidity is the measure of moisture in the air, measured in percentage. Along with humidity, dew point is a critical measure to be aware of. Dew point is the temperature at which moisture (in the form of vapor) comes out of the air and changes from a gas to a liquid, sticking to solid surfaces. A great way to get a handle on the concepts of humidity, dew point and condensation is to look at your bathroom mirror the next time you shower. Run a hot shower for 10 minutes with the bathroom door closed, and the bathroom fills with steam i.e., water as a gas, high humidity. That hot steam hits the cold mirror and condenses (dew point), forming liquid water on the mirror surface.

This same process happens every day, both inside and outside, based on temperature and humidity. Damp or closed environments will hold more moisture and pose a bigger potential sealing issue. Instead of a hard mirror, water lands on cold concrete, which acts as a sponge. Many times the concrete does not appear dark or wet, but in reality the surface contains a lot of water. In addition, the surface can be open to the air for hours, even days, looks dry, and shows no outward signs of moisture. Applicators go ahead and seal, trapping that moisture and causing the sealer to turn white or hazy.

So how should we deal with humidity when sealing concrete? First, this phenomenon is more common in the shoulder seasons (fall and spring) when there can be significant temperature swings. Second, pay attention to the dew point and avoid sealing when the air temperature or concrete surface temperature is within five degrees above the dewpoint. Third, be prepared to adjust when you seal, depending on the season. During shoulder seasons, humidity and condensation are most often higher in the morning. Consider sealing in the evening or late afternoon after the heat of the day has driven off some of the moisture. Lastly, consider the sealer or coating you are using. Does the product contain a high concentration of moisture sensitive solvent(s) that are prone to discoloration when moisture is present? Air movement also plays a role. Stagnant or no air movement will prolong how long moisture holds in the concrete. Even a slight breeze can help dry out concrete in a higher humidity climate. No matter what you do, always refer to the product technical data sheet and become comfortable with how the product performs.

I encourage you to utilize all the technical hotlines provided by ASCC. These are a valuable benefit available to members only. You can reach the ASCC / DCC Decorative Hotline via phone at 303.570.7374 or by email at csullivan@ascconline.org.

**Take Time To Learn Something New**

Jeff Eiswerth, DCC council director
As I sit down to write this month’s article, I can’t help but recall how quickly this year has gone. Here in the Midwest we had a great summer and fall. Now the cold is starting to set in and it’s a matter of time before the snow flies. My hope is that each of you had a great year. Hopefully you have, or currently are positioning yourselves and your companies for a strong 2022.

You know what they say. The early bird gets the worm. It’s never too early to start planning. Most exterior decorative projects are wrapping up in my area and will start back up mid to late Spring. Most decorative contractors will be taking time off, traveling or heading south for work, maybe both.

I would encourage everyone to learn something new this winter and holiday season. None of us is ever too old to learn. Being more efficient and effective in your personal or professional lives also never hurt.

My hope is that I will be in Vegas to see everyone in a few short months. Wishing nothing but the best to you, your family, friends, and co-workers.

Safety & Risk Management Council

It's That Time of Year (Again)
Joe Whiteman, director of safety services

As we adjust to the cold, whether that be rain, snow or, in here in the Southwest, a little forecasted shade, the holidays are not far behind. Typically this month I write about holiday safety and focus on safe driving, proper ladder use while hanging Christmas lights and general safety concerns synonymous with the holiday season. This year I want to focus on a topic that is not so transparent, and often goes unnoticed or unspoken- mental health.

As the song by Andy Williams suggests, “It’s the most wonderful time of the year.” The holiday season can be a fun, heartfelt time with friends and family. For many, however, it is often overwhelming and stressful. This is especially true of those with mental health challenges. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) did a study that showed that 64% of people with mental health challenges reported the holidays make their conditions worse. For many, the holiday season is a stressful time riddled with depression, anxiety, and stress.

With many unknowns and challenges - - whether family, work, financial or health related - - along with the challenges from the effects of the pandemic, maintaining one’s mental health can be extremely challenging. I would like to encourage everyone to keep that in mind when interacting with neighbors, friends, family and strangers. Be kind to yourself and others, have a little more patience, engage in conversation.

A cordial discussion can be a big relief for some, and may provide the opportunity to help identify those who need a little help. Understand that a simple gesture can go a long way for those feeling down. If that person is you, or you know someone experiencing mental health challenges, know that you or they are not alone. Excellent resources are available through the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the National Safety Council (NSC) and the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide prevention (CIASP) to name a few. I also recommend seeking out local resources for a situation that may require quick intervention or response. With that, I want to wish each of you and yours Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!

CIM Announces Donations of Signature Items for WOC Auction

The Concrete Industry Management (CIM) program is pleased to announce two signature items for their annual auction at World of Concrete. The first is a truck-mounted 38M concrete pump donated by Alliance Concrete Pumps, NORCAL Kenworth and Kenworth Truck Company. The second is a 2022 Mack® Granite® mixer truck donated by Mack Trucks and equipped with a McNeilus® FLEX Controls™ Standard Mixer donated by McNeilus.
Alliance Concrete Pumps, NORCAL Kenworth and Kenworth Truck Company donate a 38M truck-mounted concrete pump to 2022 CIM Auction!

Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2022
www.concretedegree.com

Mack and McNeilus donate mixer truck to 2022 CIM AUCTION!

www.concretedegree.com
Support Our Associate Sustaining Members

Follow us on social media

American Society of Concrete Contractors
2025 S. Brentwood Blvd., Ste. 105
St. Louis, MO 63144
314-962-0210 or 866-788-2722
ascconline.org