



To: All HRUHCA Member Firms
From: Jim Stepahin, Executive Director, HRUHCA
Subject: What HRUHCA did for you in 2015
Date: 12/1/2015

On behalf of the officers and board of directors of HRUHCA, I want to thank you for supporting your industry association in 2015.

I. Preparing to Take HRUHCA To The Next Level

There is an old saying that goes: “A good problem” is still a “problem.”

In the middle of this year, I sat down with HRUHCA President Danny Johnson and said that it was my feeling that we had reached a “milestone” in the association’s growth. We had “a good problem.” The growth of our association was taxing the ability of the current staff to keep up with the increased numbers of our events, our growing training classes and our ability to introduce and maintain new programs and services.

Danny agreed and from that conversation a “two-pronged” plan was developed. The first part of the plan was the recognition that a full-time assistant was needed to keep up with the work load. After much searching that part of the plan was realized with the hiring of Ms. Stephanie Rogers.



HRUHCA Executive Assistant Ms. Stephanie Rogers is now on board with HRUHCA as of December 1st. You can reach her via email at: srogers@hruhca.com.

Stephanie has three years of previous industry experience working with HRUHCA member firm WB&E Construction. She comes highly recommended from Vice-President Witt and I am very excited about having Stephanie on staff as my new full-time assistant.

The association honored Ms. Janet Read, our executive assistant for her three years of service at our November 18th annual business meeting.

The second part of the plan was to develop a long term strategy that the association could use as a roadmap to continue the success that we have enjoyed over the past six years.

The HRUHCA Board hired Ron Lambert, founder of Yukon Group, Inc., a Virginia-based company to conduct a one day strategic planning session. Ron and his firm have conducted numerous strategic planning sessions for firms that include M&M Mars, Wyeth, and General Electric.

The members of the HRUHCA Board met at the Riverwalk restaurant in old historic Yorktown on Thursday, November 19th. Using the “SWOT” analysis method (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) and with Ron Lambert as facilitator, a comprehensive strategic plan was developed.

The strategic plan will soon be “rolled out” to the membership so that each and every member can “get on board” and help the Board continue to advance our association in order to make HRUHCA a model for all construction trade associations in the Commonwealth.



HRUHCA Vice-President Bill Witt and President Danny Johnson share their thoughts and enjoy some good fellowship at the HRUHCA Board strategic planning session on Thursday, November 19 at the Riverwalk Restaurant in Yorktown, VA..

HRUHCA President Danny Johnson, board member Lee White, facilitator Ron Lambert, and board member John Chambers share some ideas.



HRUHCA Board Members Shawn Howell, Brad Fussell, Erica Viola, John Saintsing, Rob Hicks, and Chris Safrit listen to facilitator Ron Lambert.



Greg White and Lee White of HRUHCA member firm Draper Aden Associates attend the Virginia State Corporation Commission's annual Damage Prevention Conference at the Virginia Beach Hilton Oceanfront Hotel (May 31st thru April 2nd).

II. Miss Utility

HRUHCA is very involved in the Miss Utility process in Virginia. HRUHCA has held a spot for years on the Miss Utility Advisory Committee, a group of industry stakeholders that hears reports of underground damage cases at the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC) and levies fines for those who violate the Virginia Underground Damage Prevention Act. (The Miss Utility Law).

In addition, HRUHCA monitors the monthly meetings of the Virginia SCC advisory committee in an effort to stay abreast of current issues and/or cases that may impact our members.

Mr. Bill Witt, owner of HRUHCA contracting firm WB&E Construction is currently a member of the Virginia State Corporation Commissions Miss Utility Advisory Committee as an excavator member.

When Verizon determined in early 2015 that they were spending too much money having their contract locator find non-digital lines, they developed their own alternate call center and made their own determination as to whether or not to respond. HRUHCA worked with industry partners and the State Corporation Commission to stop this practice and make Verizon accountable for every ticket using the traditional one-call system. In addition, HRUHCA helped to develop an emergency procedure to help speed up Verizon in cases where they did not respond on the first ticket.

HRUHCA is soliciting the help of the SCC to help us convince the City of Norfolk that citing our contractors criminally for accidentally damage underground gas lines is a bad practice and has to stop.



The Virginia State Corporation Commission's Miss Utility Advisory Committee meets monthly to review damages to underground utilities and access fines to those who violate the Virginia Underground Damage Prevention Act. Bill Witt, HRUHCA Vice-President and owner of WB&E Construction (third from left) sits on the Advisory Committee as a member.



III. VDOT

HRUHCA along with other construction trade associations has been participating in a series of meetings with VDOT on the topic of VDOT changing their road and bridge specification manual. Recent proposed changes by VDOT are potentially very damaging to our industry. These specification revisions and changes alter the traditional “shared” responsibility of projects by shifting a large amount of liability and responsibility onto the contractor.

HRUHCA continues the discussion with VDOT and has submitted letters to VDOT pointing out these issues and VDOT has changed some of the wording but many of these questionable specifications are still unacceptable to the industry.

We will keep the membership apprised of the situation. VDOT wants to implement these changes at the beginning of 2016 but due to continuous “push-back” from our industry they are still reviewing a number of proposed changes and it is uncertain if they will meet their goal.



IV. The New HRUHCA Website

The board asked HRUHCA Staff to develop a website “in-house.” After much hard work, the results will soon be “rolled-out” to the membership in late December or early January of the new year. We are very excited about our new website. It was developed in WIX and you will be privy to much more industry information, events, activities, and news. So get excited and look for our launch announcement soon!

The HRUHCA Political Action Committee (HRUHCA PAC), which was “re-established” this year, made 3 political contributions to three Tidewater state politicians: Senator John Cosgrove of Chesapeake (Left), Virginia Beach Senator Frank Wagner (Center), and Suffolk Delegate S. Chris Jones (Right).



V. Legislative Action

The HRUHCA Board of Directors determined on the advice of our lobbying group to re-establish our State Political Action Committee (PAC). This was accomplished in 2015 as the Virginia Department of Elections approved our application to re-establish our PAC.

Thanks to everyone who answered the call at the end of 2014 and wrote a check to the PAC, we were able to help three established industry friends with contributions; Senator John Cosgrove of Chesapeake, Senator Frank Wagner of Virginia Beach, and Delegate S. Chris Jones of Suffolk. All three of these legislators were successful in their re-election campaigns this fall.

HRUHCA had honored Delegate Jones in 2014 with our newly established “HRUHCA Legislative Leadership Award” for his leadership in the passage of the landmark transportation funding bill as well as his bill that established the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission.

HRUHCA continues to employ a full-time lobbying group to monitor Virginia General Assembly and we continue to promote industry friendly bills that help our members and work to kill those bills that are not business nor industry friendly.

We are monitoring an Executive Order signed by the Governor that requires safety inspectors from the Virginia Department of Labor to check construction firms for workers status as “independent contractors” vs. “employees” on job sites that they visit. We believe that this is counterproductive for safety and compels safety professionals to delve into areas that are outside of their expertise.

HRUHCA’s lobbying team is now reviewing hundreds of industry related bills on your behalf that have been filed in advance of the 2016 legislative session in January.

VI. Safety and Industry Certification Training

HRUHCA is involved in providing our members with important industry training and certification classes. We sponsor lunch and learn seminars. We hold regular training classes in VDOT Erosion and Sediment certification (VDOT ESCCC Certification Class) and VDOT basic, intermediate, and advanced temporary work zone certifications (Work Zone Traffic Control Training Program, WZTCTP). To meet the special needs of member firms, we offer private classes in a number of safety training topics. All of our classes comply with existing federal and state safety requirements. HRUHCA partners with member firms such as Virginia Utility Protection Service (VUPS, the Miss Utility “one-call” center) to offer web ticket entry classes.



(front left clockwise) HRUHCA members Kevin Morello (Basic Construction), Jonathan Holt (Allan Myers) Mike McGourty (T.A. Sheets), Walter Groesbeck (Corman Construction), and E.V. Williams Del Baker and Brian Evans listen intently to Vandeventer-Black Attorneys John Lockard and Pat Genzler as they review the many changes that VDOT have made to the new Road and Bridge Specification Manual at a recent December lunch and learn.

Students work in a group exercise to design a lane closure on a road diagram at a recent VDOT intermediate work zone class.



VII. Events, Activities, Programs

HRUHCA continues to improve it's offerings of monthly meeting topics, social networking events, industry programs, and activities that allow our members to network with potential sub-contractors and allow them the pass along industry information and keep current with "what's going on" around our area.



VDOT Commissioner Charlie Kilpatrick poses with HRUHCA Executive Director Jim Stepahin at the first annual VDOT Transportation Career Fair . The event was held at the Hampton Coliseum on Wednesday, October 21st. HRUHCA exhibited at the event and spoke to hundreds of high school students about considering a good paying career in construction.

E.V. Williams President Jay Oppenshaw poses with E.V. Williams Training Coordinator Carie Carley at the annual Pruden School Rodeo. E.V. Williams is a supporter of the Pruden School and their efforts to teach high school students in heavy equipment operation. HRUHCA Executive Director Jim Stepahin participated in the event as a judge of one of the rodeo contests.



Mr. Mathew Frazer (Left), President of New HRUHCA Member Firm Virginia's Staffing Choice hosted a reception in January for all HRUHCA members at the famous Virginia Beach Waterman's Grill on the Oceanfront. HRUHCA members enjoyed the Waterman's signature "orange" drink and networked in the restaurants upper lounge. Over 125 members attended the event.

VII. Events, Activities, Programs (continued)

HRUHCA continues to improve it's offerings of monthly meeting topics, social networking events, industry programs, and activities that benefit our members.



2015 HRUHCA Memorial College Scholarship winners pose proudly with their certificates of achievement.



The HRUHCA Safety Committee annually presents safety awards to those contracting firms who display outstanding safety records in the previous year of operation. Executive Director Jim Stepahin presents a HRUHCA Safety Award to C.A. Barrs President Steve Barrs. C.A. Barrs was one of six HRUHCA member firms who received HRUHCA Safety Awards in 2015. The other recipients were: Branscome, Inc., Corman Construction, Gaston Brothers Utilities, Henderson, Inc., and WB&E Construction.



HRUHCA holds a spring and fall golf tournament every year to allow our members to have fun and network with friends. Branscome President Stewart Patterson "takes dead aim" to sink a putt at the HRUHCA Spring Golf Tourney.



Frankie Bridgeman of T.A. Sheets won the Chili on the Chick corn hole tourney. Crenshaw Ware and Martin managing partner Ryan Snow throws a bag in the foreground.

VII. Events, Activities, Programs (continued)

HRUHCA holds its annual field party and networking event “Chili on the Chick” on the banks of the Chickahominy River at the Brickyard Property in Lanexa, Virginia. Attendees listen to great bluegrass music, enjoy beautiful weather, play some corn hole, and enjoy a delicious buffet of shrimp, chili, hot dogs, grilled oysters, and beverages. Attendees also have a chance to win valuable raffle prizes.



HRUHCA held a joint mixer with the Associated Builders and Contractors in August at the beautiful Fort Monroe Paradise Ocean Club Pavilions

HRUHCA hosts its annual holiday gala celebration to ring out the old year and ring in the new one. Member firms enjoy an evening of dancing and socializing and bid on items at a silent auction. In addition, HRUHCA has announced that they will be hosting a new activity that will allow member firms to participate in a “wine pull” to raise funds for the HRUHCA Memorial College Scholarship Foundation. The Grassfield High School string orchestra plays music at the pre-function cocktail reception.





The 2015 HRUHCA Board of Directors

(Top, Left to Right) President Danny Johnson, Vice-President Bill Witt, Secretary Rob Hicks, Treasurer Jamie Fuqua, Immediate Past-President Shawn Howell, Corporate Counsel Jack Rephan,

(Bottom Left to Right) President-Elect John Saintsing, Past-President and Board Member Brad Fussell, Board Member John Chambers, Board Member Erica Viola, Board Member Lee White, Board Member Chris Safrit.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, I thank you once again for your support of HRUHCA in 2015 and I urge you to stay the course and renew your dues for 2016.

We continue to grow the association and it is my goal to “push” our membership to over 100 member firms in 2016. Increased membership makes our voice more important to those we seek to influence on key industry issues.

I am confident that with a proactive board of directors, a new full time assistant, and a clear direction thanks to our recent strategic planning session, we will continue to move forward and make HRUHCA a more active and hard-working industry voice.

Please take time to stop by to visit us at the office if you are in the area. My door is always open.

Sincerely,

Jim Stepahin, Executive Director, HRUHCA,
jstepahin@hruhca.com