

## Richmond Area Municipal Contractors Association

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### GENERAL ASSEMBLY STILL UNABLE TO RESOLVE BUDGET

At the March General Membership Meeting of RAMCA, members heard a comprehensive review of bills affecting RAMCA members considered at the 2004 session of the Virginia General Assembly. But the overriding legislative issue discussed was the failure of the General Assembly to produce a two-year state budget, and the sudden evaporation of all meaningful transportation-funding proposals as part of the budget process.

As of this writing, state lawmakers continue to be miles apart on the formulation of a state budget, and there continues to be little, if any, real relief being offered to address Virginia's indisputable transportation funding crisis.

The ongoing budget standoff places Virginia in uncharted territory. Never before in the history of the Commonwealth has there been such a breakdown in the legislative process. The continuing budget battle could lead to a shutdown of state government if resolution cannot be reached by June 30<sup>th</sup>. While that seems implausible, to date no real progress on a budget has occurred. One can only hope that statesmanship will rise above bickering and legislators will shortly complete their constitutional duty to present the Governor with a 2004-06 state budget.

In the meantime, there is little hope that whenever the state budget mess is resolved, it will contain a long-term fix for meeting, even minimally, the transportation infrastructure needs of Virginia. Nonetheless, RAMCA continues to talk with legislators in an effort to lobby for some meaningful relief, and there are some new ideas being quietly passed around as the heat of a clearly irritated citizenry becomes more intense.

RAMCA members need to be especially aware of the passage of House Bill 408. This bill requires contractors who use steel plates in conjunction with any temporary or permanent road repairs to apply a reflective substance to the plate to improve visibility. The orange 3M tape currently used on some highway construction projects for temporary pavement marking would be a safe choice in terms of compliance with this new law.

Be advised that effective July 1st of this year, and through July 15th of 2005, use of some form of highly visible reflective tape is required by state law. Depending upon what comes out of the VDOT study referenced in the last paragraph of this legislation, this practice may become a permanent practice or be discontinued. A copy of House Bill 408, as passed by legislature, is attached.

A matrix of all legislation tracked by RAMCA during the 2004 legislative session is available via email to members. Contact the RAMCA office to request this report. Be sure and provide your

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## MISS UTILITY VICTORY

RAMCA and the three other organizations that comprise the Virginia Utility & Heavy Contractors Council (VUHCC) scored a huge success recently before the State Corporation Commission (SCC).



As a result of Virginia moving from two regional notification centers to one statewide center, VUHCC argued that the two seats on the Commission's Miss Utility Advisory Committee reserved for notification centers should be reduced to one, and that the newly freed seat should be permanently reallocated for an excavator representative. Our damage prevention partners – Virginia's utility representatives – argued strongly against awarding this new seat permanently to a contractor. The issue ended up being decided by the three SCC judges, who adopted the VUHCC position.

As a result of this favorable decision, contractors now have four dedicated seats on the SCC Advisory Committee: RAMCA member David Ward with Ward & Stancil; David Hazel of Wm A. Hazel Inc. from northern Virginia; Charlie Adams with Suburban Grading in Norfolk; and a representative from the State Board for Contractors.

## PRESIDENT APPOINTS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN



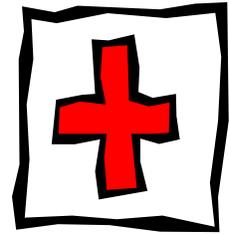
RAMCA President Jim Patterson (F.G. Pruitt) has made committee appointments for his 2004-05 term. They are:

Management Conference	Bill Howard (G.L. Howard)
Finance	Mike Todd (Keiter Stephens)
Joint Cooperative (Specifications)	Monty Gatewood (Shoosmith Bros.)
Golf	Kenny Tyree (Sovereign Paving)
Legislative (PAC)	Wilson Whitehurst (Whitehurst Paving)
Membership	Lee White (Draper Aden)
Program	Dave Cosby (Sovereign Paving)
Safety	Jamie Accashian (Safety Consultants, Inc.)
Scholarship	Chris Shelton (Shelton Corp.)
Underground Damage Prevention	David Ward (Ward & Stancil)

RAMCA congratulates these newly appointed committee chairmen and thanks them for their willingness to serve in these important positions. The real work of RAMCA occurs at the committee level. Any member desiring to assist in these efforts is encouraged to contact the appropriate committee chairman.

## SAFETY SEMINARS WELL ATTENDED

RAMCA's winter training sessions are now over and once again the programs offered an excellent and cost-effective training option for employees of RAMCA firms. More than 75 attendees participated in these informative training seminars covering such topics as competent person, emergency egress, confined spaces, general first aid, and CPR. Certifications were issued to a large number of participants.



RAMCA would like to thank one of our members, Mr. Jamie Accashian- President of Safety Consultants, Inc., for serving as the instructor for these sessions. Jamie's programs are always extremely well rated by attendees and Jamie is available to provide follow-up services to RAMCA members interested in improving their current safety programs. He can be reached at 350-5650.

## RAMCA AWARDS 04-05 SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarship Committee Chairman Chris Shelton (Shelton Corp.) and committee members Mike Harcum (Carter Machinery) and Ken Creasy (Superior Excavating & Construction) reviewed nearly a dozen RAMCA scholarship applications last month before recommending three applicants to the RAMCA Board of Directors for approval. The Committee utilized a "blind selection" process whereby all applications are reviewed and determined without any information as to the name of the applicant or the sponsoring company. This year's George Bickerstaff Memorial Scholarship recipients are:

- S. Curtis Smith – sponsored by Lewis Smith Constr. and attending Hampton Sydney College;
- Wadsworth Bugg, IV – sponsored by Shoosmith Bros. and attending Virginia Military Institute;
- Kimberly Mullins – sponsored by Carter Machinery and attending the University of Virginia.



Congratulations to these outstanding young Virginians. The RAMCA scholarship program is another solid benefit of RAMCA membership, allowing member firms to recognize deserving students whose families are part of the RAMCA family. Watch for next year's scholarship applications, which will be sent to all members in January of next year.

## INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS' BANQUET - ANOTHER HIT

RAMCA's Annual Installation of Officers' Banquet remains the premier social event on the RAMCA calendar. This year over 160 members, employees, spouses and guests convened at the Sheraton South on January 10<sup>th</sup> for a big night of socializing, dining, dancing, and just plain good times.

In addition, RAMCA's 2004 Board of Directors (see 12/03 RAMCA Newsletter) was introduced to the membership, and outgoing board member Lee White (Draper Aden) was presented a plaque in recognition of his board service. Outgoing President Monty Gatewood (Shoosmith Bros.) received the RAMCA Past President's Plaque and much deserved praise for his leadership and accomplishments as RAMCA President in 2002 and 2003. And Johnnie Barr with Ward & Stencil received the 2003 RAMCA Contractor of the Year Award for his commitment to the association, particularly in the areas of underground damage prevention and local ordinance issues.



## MEMBERS IN THE NEWS



Rain for Rent was recently honored to have President George W. Bush visit the company's corporate headquarters in Bakersfield, California. The President recognized the company's phenomenal growth as benefiting from his small business tax policy.

Fred Kozak with the law firm of Rick & Kozak will be hosting an *Advanced Construction Law in Virginia* seminar in Richmond on June 10<sup>th</sup> at the Richmond Marriott West. Fred and three other construction attorneys will bring you up to date on legal issues affecting project delivery methods, extras and change orders, defects in performance, contract protests and a number of other areas of interest to contractors. For more information contact Fred at 598-8315.

The law firm of Sands, Anderson, Marks & Miller will host another in their series of *Hot Topics* programs on May 6<sup>th</sup> at The Place at Innsbrook. The topic will be the *Anatomy of a Discrimination Lawsuit* and the session will focus on defense strategies. For more info call 783-6781.

Mike Todd, with the firm of Keiter, Stephens, Hurst, Gary & Shreaves, has prepared some helpful tax memos for RAMCA members. Included with this newsletter is one entitled *Bonus Depreciation Summary*. For more info on this and other tax matters contact Mike at 273-6207.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!!!



RAMCA is proud to welcome the following new members to our 40-year tradition of industry representation:

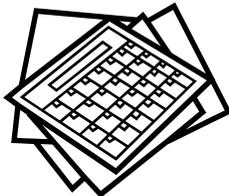
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|---------------------|---|
| Contractor Member - | Baldwin Contracting & Development Inc.<br>Rick & Teresa Baldwin |
| Associate Member -  | Alltel Communications<br>Bill Massey & Carter Brown             |

Welcome! We look forward to your active participation in the many activities of RAMCA.

## DUES NOW PAST DUE!



RAMCA 2004 dues are now past due. If you have not already renewed your commitment to RAMCA, please take a moment to do so now. Your investment in RAMCA is needed and appreciated. Unsure of your dues status? Contact Karen at the RAMCA office. Unclear as to why you need to renew? Read the attached *Highlights of RAMCA's 2003 Accomplishments*.



## UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

May 20<sup>th</sup> – George Bickerstaff Memorial Golf Outing – Brickshire  
June, July, and August – No Meetings. Enjoy your summer!