What’s Our Golden Age

While scrolling my Facebook feed I stumbled across a June 4, 2019 article on forconstructionpros.com. The headline, Medan Age of US Construction Workforce Increases to 42¹ made me pause. Since I recently celebrated a birthday that put me one more trip around the sun closer to that 42 mark, I was intrigued both personally and professionally.

The article, based on analysis by the National Association of Home Builders of the most recent America Community Survey study from 2017, indicated that the increase in median age from 41 to 42 happened in only a two-year period, 2015 to 2017. If the data stays on trend, we may very well be at a median age of 43, but might not know it until 2021.

Pennsylvania, Illinois, New Jersey, Wyoming and about five other states record the highest median age at almost 45. Texas, Utah, and Nebraska record the lowest at 38.

A map showed numbers comparing each state’s median construction worker age with that of the overall workforce. Kentucky is the big winner with an average median age four years older than that of the overall labor force. Illinois, Arizona, and two other states have a three-year older labor force. Only three states came in below the median age of the overall workforce: Delaware (-2 years), Texas (-1 Year), and Nebraska (-1 Year).

A third data breakdown shows median age by job. The job classification with the oldest median age belongs to equipment operators (except paving), approximately 45. Construction trade helpers came in with the lowest median age of approximately 27. Classifications near and dear to our hearts fall in between: cement masons/concrete finishers – 39, construction laborers – 39, carpenters – 41, steel workers – 41. So, what does this mean for the future?

Personally, it means I need to absorb as much as I can from our extremely knowledgeable and talented workforce before they hang up their tool belts. At the same time, I need to listen to the next generation, asking them questions, finding out what motivates them, and adapting what has gotten me to where I am so we can reach the next destination together.

As an industry we need to do the same. Provide the next generation the opportunity to learn, ask, and be asked questions. Find out what motivates and attracts the new wave of workers. Take the generation that has grown up with the world at their fingertips and harness that technology to use it to our advantage. Don’t resist the change - embrace it.

Reference:

Executive Director’s Message

Bev Garnant

It’s almost summer, the season when someone has decided that we all have time to kick off our shoes, grab a cold drink and read lots of books. While I know this is not the truth of most ASCC members, I give you (anyway) my recommendations for your summer reading list:

“Alone On the Wall,” Alex Honnold and David Roberts

Whether or not you care anything about mountain/rock climbing, I encourage you to try this account of legendary climber Alex Honnold’s free solo of El Capitan.

Welcome New Members

Concrete Decor, Junction City, OR (rejoin)
Concrete Pros, Greenbrier, TN
GH Phipps Construction Companies, Greenwood Village, CO
Helix Steel, Ann Arbor, MI
M&C Concrete, Indianapolis, IN
Pacific Decorative Concrete, Inc., Sacramento, CA
Paul Norman, Dayton, OH
Specialized Construction Services, Inc., Waterloo, WI
Stoney Hill Concrete LLC, Myerstown, PA
“The Impossible Climb,” Mark Synnott
If you like the first one, read this one to dig deeper into the sport of climbing.

“Start With Why,” Simon Sinek
No offense to Simon, but honestly, the title says it all. Before you start a new business initiative, program or system, you must understand why it is you need/should/want to do this. There’s more good stuff in the book too.

“The Library Book,” Susan Orlean
If books and libraries intrigue you, read this true story of the fire and aftermath of the Los Angeles Public Library in 1986.

“Beautiful Boy: A Father’s Journey Through His Son’s Addiction,” David Sheff
If you know a young person with a drug or alcohol addiction, or you just want to better understand this unexplainable disease, this true story of how a father’s attempts to save his son became his own addiction will blow you away and provide tremendous (if devastating) insight into this consuming problem.

Decorative Concrete Council
Chris Sullivan, Decorative Concrete Specialist
A DCC hotline call last month made me think of the old saying, “Cleanliness is next to Godliness.” A lone footprint showed up on a concrete floor after stain was applied. “What caused this, and how do I fix it?” was the question. It was not there before the stain was applied, but it became larger than life after the stain dried. A few questions later, the best we could figure was one of the contractors who walked on the floor between finishing and staining had something on their shoe. I have seen oil, grease, soda, chewing tobacco, cement dust, paint and coffee, to name a few, wreak havoc on otherwise perfect concrete slabs. Whatever it was, it left a permanent mark on the concrete. The interesting thing about this stain, and so many others, is that when the concrete is dry or uncolored, you don’t see it. Add water, color or a sealer and it shows up. Depending on what made the stain, and how old it is, cleaning may remove it. If possible, match the type of cleaner to the stain for best results. In some cases cleaning has no effect. That is when hiding becomes your best option. A great trick I learned many years ago for hiding imperfections on stained concrete is spray paint. The can has a built-in spray tip for light misting application, it is available in colors that match the stain pallet, and the paint is compatible with most sealers and coatings that are used to protect stained floors. While it’s not always realistic, the best way to avoid these issues is to keep everyone off a stained floor until it is sealed.

Concrete Polishing Council
Shawn Halverson, CPC Council Director
Safety Equipment: Who Needs It? We All Do!
As an industry we must make a point to lead in job site safety. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is clothing, helmets, goggles, steel toed boots, and other garments and equipment designed to protect the wearer from injury or infection. Hazards addressed by protective equipment include physical, electrical, heat, chemicals, biohazards, airborne particulate matter, and more. PPE is all about the laborer and the supervisor. It’s personal; it must be important to us and each of them as well. We sit around and tell war stories about things that have happened to us, and how lucky we are; inhaling cement dust while mixing self-leveling materials, flying particles when grading or cutting, wet cement slurry causing cement burns, dropping something on our foot, loud noises from generators or vacuums. That list is just from today’s conversation with one of my supervisors about being unprepared back in the day. We laughed and joked about it. What fools. We survived but pay for it daily. As I get older I realize my mistakes and I pay for it with pain and physical issues that will haunt me the rest of my life. Each item of PPE is designed for a specific purpose. Don’t just make your employees wear it. Make them understand what each piece does and what can happen without it. Most polishing videos show an operator wearing little to no PPE. That sets a bad example to those in the industry. Let’s all buckle our steel toed boots, cover our eyes, wear ear protection, put on hardhat, wear appropriate gloves, zip up our safety vest, pull on the long pants and get to work!

It’s Official: Shotcrete Included in ACI 318-19 Building Code
Bruce Suprenant, Technical Director
Historically, shotcrete provisions are contained in the International Building Code (IBC) and prior to that in the Uniform Building Code (UBC). IBC indicated that if ACI included shotcrete into 318, and the provisions were acceptable, that they would remove shotcrete from the IBC. ACI made a three year effort to work on this with assistance from Charles Hanskat, Executive Director of the America Shotcrete Association, Terry Holland, concrete consultant and Chair of 318A and myself. ACI 318-19 proposed shotcrete provisions and IBC made the decision in May 2019 to accept those provisions in ACI 318-19.

ACI handles code provisions differently than IBC in that ACI references ASTM standards. The ASTM standards shown below have been included in ACI 318-19.

- C 1140 Standard Practice for Preparing and Testing Specimens from Shotcrete Test Panels
- C 1141 Standard Specification for Admixtures for Shotcrete
- C 1385 Standard Practice for Sampling Materials for Shotcrete
When Should I Replace My Hard Hat?

I give the safety orientation for all our new employees and I find myself spending a lot of time on hard hats and expiration dates. Why? Because hard hats with stickers from tons of jobs represent years of working in construction. Often there are so many stickers on a hard hat you would think that is how it was made. As employers, we must educate our employees on when it is time to hang up their hard hats.

When should I replace my hard hat?

- Manufacturer’s guidelines indicate that replacement of hard hats is recommended after four to five years of use, regardless of appearance.
- Colored zip ties can be placed on the back of the hard hat to indicate expiration date.

How do you know your hard hat expiration date?

- ANSI Z89.1-2009 requires particular information be permanently printed inside each hard hat, including the date of manufacture. The manufacturer’s name, ANSI standard designation, and the appropriate ANSI class designation (Class G, E, C or bump hat) are also required.
- If a hat is not visibly damaged, you can calculate the expiration date by checking the date of manufacture.

Inspect your hard hat for wear

- Even if you know your hard hat hasn’t reached its expiration date, inspect it for damage before each use.
- Check the shell to see if it’s faded or chalky. This may indicate signs of aging.
- If it is dropped on a hard surface, or you receive a blow to your head, inspect before wearing.

Other

- Most hard hats are replaced before they wear out to provide maximum protection.
- Employees who work in the sun for long hours may have to replace their hats after two years.
- Manufacturers recommend changing the suspension inside the hard hat every 12 months.
- Clean your hard hat according to manufacturer’s recommendations.
- Never use paint on a hard hat as this can shorten its life.

Bottom line, some hard hats should be retired even when they may look to be in good shape. Having a system such as colored zip ties helps ensure employees have the maximum head protection at all times.
**Remembering George Lombard**

George Lombard was a board member when I was first involved in ASCC. In 1956 George and his dad started the M.A. Lombard Company of Chicago. George’s dad, Roger Corbetta, and Bill Avery are credited with the start of ASCC. I was always impressed with George, most by his demeanor. He listened a lot and spoke only when he could make a difference. That always impressed me and others on the board. He was a man of great integrity; we all knew that. Most though, he was a great mentor to us who were taking the reins and leading ASCC in a different direction. His guidance was always welcomed. He was a builder of concession. Most of all he was steady and encouraging when he spoke, we listened. At his funeral three of his sons spoke. One spoke of his business ethics, a handshake was his bond, he was fair, he was consistent. One spoke of family, the way he treated his seven children, his many grandchildren and great grandchildren and his marriage of 67 years to Betty, one of our ladies auxiliary founding members, also one of ASCC’s brightest lights. The third spoke of his Catholic upbringing, how while in high school he wanted to try the line of a Catholic Brother. All the children thought it was great he changed his mind. He talked about his generosity and how he shared his treasures, his education, and his experience as a builder. Two years ago, while headed to a MIX Group Orientation, Rocky called George and said we wanted to stop and say hello. We visited George, his son, Mike, and the precast plant. We had lunch and left with a book by his dad. So thankful for that day. Those of us that were privileged to serve with him and Betty at ASCC, we were the lucky ones.

**Libby Fuchs Promoted to Learning Officer**

Libby Fuchs has been promoted to learning officer of the ASCC. Her duties have been expanded to include oversight of all educational programming. Most recently Libby traveled to Detroit for a meeting with ASCC contractors and representatives of the National Center for Construction Education & Research (NCCER). The contractors are serving as subject matter experts as NCCER rewrites its concrete craftsman and crew leader training curriculum. Libby was director of education with the National Painting & Decorating Foundation before joining ASCC.

**ASCC Partnering with NRMCA**

At the invitation of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA), three ASCC member contractors joined NRMCA at this year’s International Conference of Shopping Centers RECon Conference in Las Vegas. The contractors were from K&M Concrete Construction, MN; PROCON, VA; and McGuire & Hester, CA. NRMCA’s booth focused on concrete overlays of asphalt parking lots. To close the loop on providing concrete lots to interested attendees, NRMCA invited ASCC contractors to join them at the show. “With the contractors working the booth and representing the Western, Midwestern and Eastern sections of the U.S.,” said NRMCA’s Jon Hansen, “we were able to immediately connect most of the interest to contractors who can do the work.”

**The Fall Networking Event is the single best way to meet the most students from our School.**

Register today and be part of the first tier of invited employers. Open registration for all employers will begin the last week of June.

**SCHOOL OF CCM NETWORKING EVENT**

Wednesday, October 2, 2019
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Tennessee Room | James Union Building | MTSU Campus

This event filled over capacity last year with 71 employers and a waiting list. This year we are limited to 60 tables! Reserve your table today ($100/table).

Website: www.concretedegree.com/

**HOT LINE QUESTIONS**

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<th>CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION</th>
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<th>SAFETY &amp; INSURANCE</th>
<th>DECORATIVE CONCRETE</th>
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<td>800-331-0668</td>
<td>844-923-4678</td>
<td>833-281-9602</td>
<td>888-483-5288</td>
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<td>Bruce Suprenant</td>
<td>Chris Sullivan</td>
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ASCC members have access to these toll-free numbers for assistance.

**Webinars begin at 3:00 p.m. CST**

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<tr>
<th>July 10, 2019</th>
<th>Concrete 101 for Polishers</th>
<th>Tom Binkowski, Barton Malow Co.</th>
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Members no charge. Non-members $35; MC, Visa, Amex only. Call 866-788-2722 to register.