

MLICA Scoop

LAND IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTORS ~ MICHIGAN CHAPTER

2023 ISSUE 1

2023 MICHIGAN LICA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Nate Payne
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Soil & Water Mgmt. Systems, St. Johns

Scott Everett, Government Relations
Frasier Law Firm

In-Coming Lead Plow, Russ Talaski, President MLICA

Good day to everyone, Russ Talaski I am looking forward to this year. here. As your newly elected President of MLICA, I am proud to tell you that we have started the 2023 year with a great Board. We held an in-person board meeting in mid-February where we looked at our chapter needs and future, talked about having a field day in August, discussed our 2024 state convention location and the recruitment of new members. Our younger board members are coming up with new ideas to help promote our organization.



Out-Going Lead Plow, Adam Cook, Chairman MLICA

It's incredible to sit back and think upon what has happened these past few years as my term as MLICA President comes to a close. Within 2 months of being elected, COVID hit and threatened every small business owner, as well as, every employee, and their families that I know through LICA. I remember backing up to a connection hole, waiting for the excavator to complete the hole and get out of the way so I could set in. My phone got an urgent push notification, saying effective immediately Governor Whitmer issues a stay at home order for everyone in the state. I opened the news bulletin stating that "essential workers" could continue, but there was no explanation to what that meant at the time. By then my employees knew the news as well and were asking if we were supposed to all go home. I quickly made a call to Scott Everett and his exact words were "no one knows what this means, there's

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FEATURES

DIARY OF AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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NATIONAL HAPPENINGS: NATIONAL LICA ANNOUNCES 3 NEW SAFETY BENEFITS

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TROY WARWEG OBITUARY

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Out-Going Lead Plow, Adam Cook, Chairman MLICA

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nothing to go off, and I don't know what to tell you". After a few more of my unanswerable questions he said, "let me call Mike Perry and see what I can get for you..." Within the hour he called me back and said "I don't know how we did it but Mike says you have the green light, you're good to go, you're Ag related". The next day Mike Perry had a document out to all MLICA members in case anyone, law enforcement or otherwise, questioned why we were out of the house. Within a couple days, he had "permission slip" forms for us. Later that year we put on one of the best field days I remember, with a complete water reclamation and recycling system on 20 foot grid spacing for over 100 acres. Still with COVID regulations, it's the only field day where every attendee got to have their own acre of land. I'm very proud of how well the board, helping members, and sponsors put together that event.

During my time, we also changed hands for secretary/treasurer roles from my Dad, Mike, to the combination of Sarah Cook and Nikki Payne. We also held our first 2 golf outings, which were a great success, and also moved convention sites each year. These things also took some good work and planning by the board, and I couldn't be more proud of the way things worked out. It's been a wild 3 years and I'm happy with the direction MLICA is going. I don't know for sure exactly what the future holds for me but I'm sure you will all be hearing from me again. It truly has been an honor to be a 3-term President, but it's definitely time for someone else to take a turn. I'm happy to hand the Presidency over to Russ Talaski for the next term, and I can already tell he's going to do a great job. I have a lot of respect for Russ and view him as one of my own mentors. Who knows if I ever would have known him if it weren't for MLICA, which compels me to encourage each of you to think about expanding your involvement in LICA. There is a long list of benefits, but the biggest benefit is the family type network you inherit of friendly, helpful contractors that have your back. If you can, attend the winter meetings, this summer's field day, and the National meetings. I promise you that you will take something away from each of them!

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Larry Protasiewicz, P.E. 989.928.8013
Paul Forton, P.E. 989.529.8612

Diary of an Executive Director

Whew! This was the first year that I took the lead on planning our winter convention and annual meeting... I faced several challenges beyond my control and learned a lot about the nitty-gritty details. While our convention location did not turn out to be ideal due to delayed renovations and cramped parking, I feel like we still made the best of it and enjoyed lots of great comradery. It was great seeing all of you that attended!

Immediately following convention, Nikki and I began searching for convention sites. With members spread out throughout the lower half of the state, the Lansing area really is the most central location to all of our members. After visiting 2 different sites, I requested proposals from those 2 sites, as well as the Crowne Plaza where we held our 2020 and 2022 conventions. In mid-February, at our in-person board meeting, I presented Board Members with

all 3 options. Board Members voted to contract with Okemos Event Center and Comfort Inn Okemos.

During our in-person board meeting, there was also discussion regarding our convention days and schedule. Our associate board members communicated starting on Sunday takes time away from their families, so we are taking that into consideration and will be switching our schedule for 2024. Stay tuned for more info in the coming months.

As Adam and Russ both mentioned, we have begun planning a field day for this summer. Board members decided to forego a golf outing so we can put our efforts towards the field day. We are looking forward to having another field day and hope to see you all there!

Please reach out to me with any newsletter content ideas and have a safe spring!

UPCOMING EVENTS

2023 NATIONAL SUMMER MEETING

The Graduate Hotel
141 N. 9th St., Lincoln, NE 68508
July 11 - 15, 2023

MLICA 2023 FIELD DAY AUGUST 8-9, 2023

MLICA 2024 WINTER CONVENTION & ANNUAL MEETING Okemos Event Center January 8-9, 2024

2024 NATIONAL WINTER CONVENTION Virginia Beach, Virginia February 13 - 17, 2024



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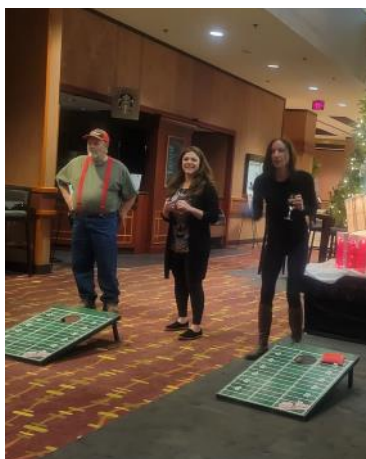
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2023 Convention Highlights

While there were many last minute challenges with this year's convention, attendees still enjoyed the comradery and gave lots of feedback for planning next year's convention. Thank you to all our associates! Enjoy the photo highlights!



Pictured to the left: Morgan Cook taking her turn at tossing with Grandpa Mike Cook playing with his teammate on the boards next to her.



Pictured to the right: Dave Franks playing against National LICA's Caroline Krug. Allison Hack of National LICA playing with her teammate beside them.



Michigan LICA's cornhole tournament in the lobby area of the Radisson downtown by the Capitol. Associates and Members enjoyed gathering and chatting with each other.



Pictured to the left: First place winners Matt Carter and Casey Potts holding trophies graciously donated by MLICA retired member Chuck Braje.



Pictured to the right: Second place winners Tony Cain (National LICA Region III VP) and Rebecca Bushey holding trophies also graciously donated by MLICA retired member Chuck Braje.

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2023 Convention Highlights



Pictured left, above & below: Attendees sitting in on the educational sessions offered.



Allison Hack and Caroline Krug presented National Benefits during our lunch. Associate exhibits set up around the perimeter of our meal space.



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MEMBER HIGHLIGHT: JED BUSHEY | BUSHEY FARM TILING



Bushey Farm Tiling began back in 1978 with Louis Bushey and his older brother Maurice with a Terex 82-40 dozer and a Krac plow. Before tiling, they farmed and sold used combines. Louis had 5 sons that grew up around the drainage business. Three sons (Jeff, TL, and Mike) carried on the legacy of the family farm growing it many times over the original size. Over the years, Louis and Maurice maintained a 3-5 person crew. Maurice retired in 2000 from the tiling company and Louis continued on until his grandson Jed purchased the business from him in 2017.

Jed began helping Louis in the tiling business semi-full time in 2012 when he was a senior in high school. However, Jed put his first 4" lateral in under the watchful eye of his grandfather at the age of 12. After high school, Jed attended Michigan State University for 4 years and obtained a Bachelor's degree in agri-business management with a minor in crop science. Every weekend during college, Jed would return home to assist with the workload



on the farm and tiling business. Jed first attended a MLICA convention with his grandfather in 2015. He appreciates the camaraderie of LICA and knowledge he can glean from other experienced members.

Since purchasing the business from his grandpa, Jed continues to work in Huron, Tuscola, Sanilac, and northern Lapeer Counties. Bushey Farm Tiling currently employs 3 full-time employees in addition to other seasonal help. 75% of the drainage work that the Busheys do is retrofitting existing systems (i.e.: splitting existing laterals and upsizing mains). The remaining 25% would be installing new systems on untilled ground. Jed utilizes a Bron 450 plow, two JCB backhoes, and a John Deere 160 excavator.

Beyond the drainage work, Jed also got involved with installing steel seawalls to control erosion on the shores of Lake Huron and Saginaw Bay. He found that it was another way to utilize some of the equipment that he already had and was able to complete most of the work in the winter months.

In addition to the tiling business, Jed also manages the day-to-day operations on his family's 2,000 acre cash crop farm located near Caseville. They produce sugar beets, dry edible beans, corn, and alfalfa.

Jed is married to his wife Rebecca of 5 years. T.L., Louis' second oldest son (Jed's dad), a CPA and CFO by trade, has always kept in close ties with the drainage and agricultural industries. T.L. was the first to teach Jed how to locate tile and take measurements with a Lenker rod and Laser. Jed has a younger brother, Jake, that is a district sales manager for Golden Harvest corn and soybean seed. When time allows, Jake helps on the farm and drainage business.



Jed is a member of Farm Bureau and has just completed the 15 month Farm Bureau ProFILE young farmer leadership program. He is also a board member of the Michigan LICA chapter. He enjoys snowmobiling and playing drums in his church's band.



Mike's Story

After college, I wasn't too happy working in the surveying industry. In 1979, I was offered a job at the Hancor Bad Axe installation facility doing designs and customer relations. In 1981, I transferred to Findlay, Ohio as a "contractor input" for product development working under Jim Fouss. Little did I know then that the Arch Pipe was part of that. Out of that, believe it or not, on board reels and the pipe cutter were developed... why? With a "MILE" of pipe being on a maxi, and the difficulty threading the Arch pipe down the boot, the idea was "make it easier for the contractor." During the 1985 grain glut & commodity price drop the Arch pipe was discontinued and I thought was out of a job. Not so, grain aeration & subirrigation were next on the list. I spent the next two years traveling the country promoting subirrigation & doing designs. Good times had to change though. Leaving for a two-week trip out west, Nate had snuggled into my suitcase to go since he was told Hancor wouldn't buy him a ticket. In 1987 I purchased MLICA member Gene Platte's drainage business and joined MLICA as my own contractor business.

A good memory at Hancor. In 1985, Hancor made major layoffs. I was instructed to represent Hancor at the national LICA winter convention that year, and take some 50 contractors out for an "unlimited" supper function. I was surprised it wasn't prepaid, and didn't have enough credit to pay...had to borrow money from Dad & Don McCabe...heard about that one for a long time.

Russ's Story

In August of 1985, Hancor decided to open up the Bad Axe yard to stock inventory produced from Findlay, OH and Chesaning, MI to meet the needs of local tiling contractors. I was hired as a yard person, cold call sales and delivery driver. I would haul tile from the Chesaning plant to the Bad Axe plant or directly to the fields for the contractors. On those trips I would call on contractors like John Kemp, John Cook, Dave Auernhamer, Gene Clancy, Dick McEachin and many others, I have a lot of memories of the stories and conversations.

Hancor introduced a dual-wall tile that had a locking system on its ends call SURELOCK that didn't have to use couplers. I drew a few pictures of reducers and reducing tees that I thought would help this product line and sent them to Findlay, Ohio...I found out later that Bill Altermatt Vice President of Marketing threw my drawings on a table during a meeting and said this is drawings from our yard man in Bad Axe. That fall of 1986, we received over 7 inches of rain in the thumb area so farmers didn't get crops off and orders for tile were canceled, resulting in a decision to close the Bad Axe yard. The manager was let go and I was called down to Findlay, Ohio to interview with Bill Altermatt to see if I was interested to come down there and work with Mike Cook to gather field information so Mike could spend more time designing sub-irrigation as a service to Landowners and Drainage Contractors. I agreed, driving to Findlay on Monday mornings and coming home on Fridays.

One time, Mike and I, with our wives, drove to Amana, Iowa to survey about 3500 acres of land to design a sub-irrigation system for the Amana Colonies (an organized co-op created by German settlers when they moved to the United States). I would survey, bring Mike the information, and Mike would put the data on the computer in the hotel room while Kitty and Joann shopped and toured the town. In the spring of 1987, Mike left Hancor to start his business while I stayed on, continuing to design sub-irrigation and assist Dr. Harry Ford of Florida on the study of the effect of iron ochre on Hancor's Channel Muck tile. In late fall of 1987, I decided that all the traveling I was doing was too hard on my family and decided to leave Hancor and stay home. The education I received from Hancor and Mike Cook helped me to become the person I am today and I would do it again in a heartbeat.

After reading both Mike and Russ's stories, I wondered what Mike meant by installation facility...Mike and Russ both elaborated to say in the 1970s a group of contractors (including Mike's dad, John Cook) had partnered together and opened a manufacturing facility in Bad Axe, MI. In response, Hancor offered installation based out of their Bad Axe facility. When ADS bought out that group of contractors, Hancor closed the installation facility. Then in August of 1985, Hancor opened the Bad Axe yard to stock inventory.

NATIONAL LICA ANNOUNCES 3 NEW SAFETY BENEFITS

National LICA recently announced 3 new safety benefits for LICA members. The most fundamental reason for having a safety program in place is getting your employees home safely. The best companies think about their employees' safety first. Beyond that, safety equals fiscal savings and credibility in your industry. Implementing a safety program is truly one of the best things you can do for your company. We have brought our contractors 3 new Safety Benefits that will help you "work smarter, not harder."



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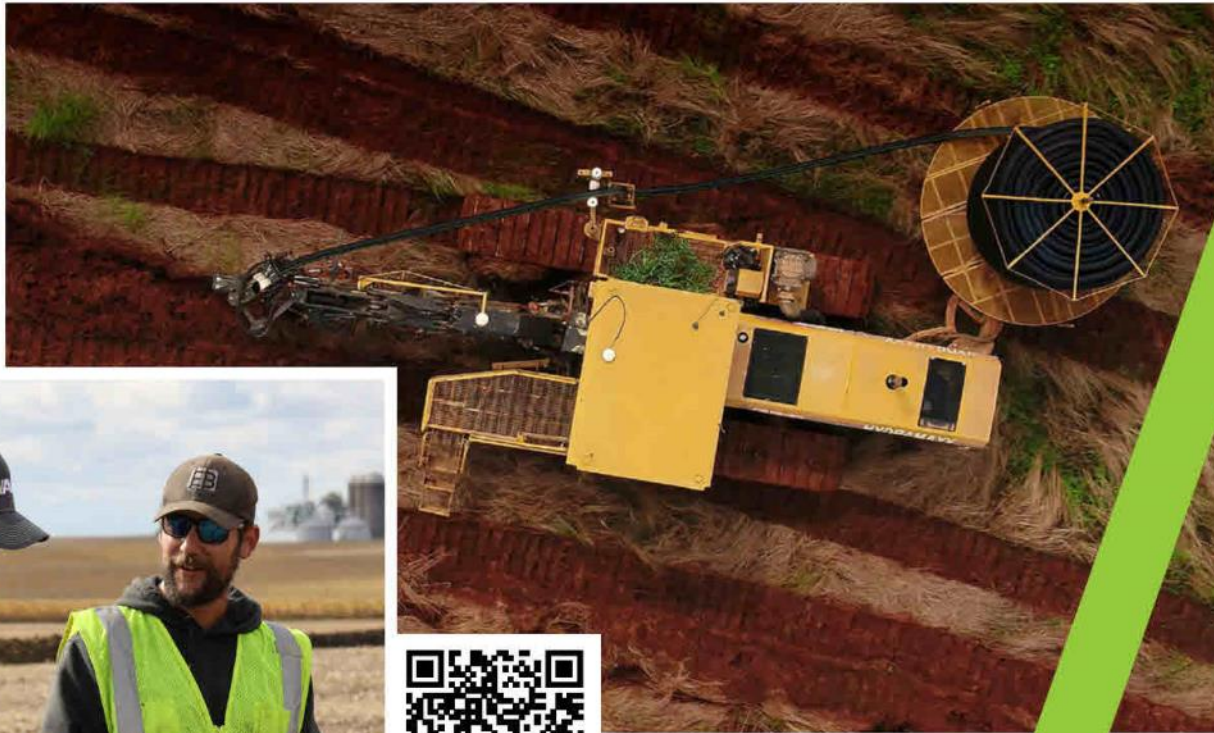
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Excavation Site Safety Practices

Each year, trench collapses are one of the leading causes of injury and death on construction sites. Of these incidents, most of the victims were new employees who lacked training and guidance prior to entering the job site. Sadly, most accidents were preventable.

Whether you are new or a seasoned employee, it is essential that you adhere to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations to ensure the safety of the entire work crew.

Trench Requirements

- Trenches 5 feet or more in depth require a protective system.
- Trenches that are 4 feet or more require a safe means of entrance and exit.
- Trenches that are 20 feet or more require an exit system designed by a registered professional engineer.

Protective Systems

The designated competent person should inspect the area and determine which protective system will suit the job site and soil most effectively. This is essential, as equipment movement, underground utilities and vibrations can cause a surcharge load on the sides of the trench, forcing it to cave in on the workers inside. The following are the most commonly used protective systems:

- **Sloping:** Protects workers by cutting back the trench wall at an angle inclined away from the excavation
- **Shoring:** Protects workers by installing aluminum hydraulic supports to prevent soil movement

- **Shielding:** Protects workers by using trench boxes to prevent cave-ins.

In addition to one of these three safety measures, a low-traffic zone must be designated around the trench allowing only essential equipment to enter. This will minimize the amount of vibration to which the trench is exposed.

Avoiding Accidents

Excavation accidents can occur if the underground utilities are not located and removed prior to digging a trench. Contact your local one-call system to locate all of the utility lines. Then, label or remove them to prevent injury.

Trench accidents can also happen if safe entrance and exit routes are not present or adequate for the situation. Workers may slip back into the trench as they are trying to climb up a ladder if it is unsupported, placed on a steep slope or is poorly built.

To prevent injury while entering and exiting a trench, only the designated competent person should approve the structural device used. Workers should also place the ladder in a trench shield while trying to enter and exit to avoid a cave-in.

By complying with OSHA regulations and following these safety precautions, the risk of injury at your job site will be greatly reduced. Michigan LICA wants everyone on our team to keep safety in mind! For more safety tips, talk to your supervisor.



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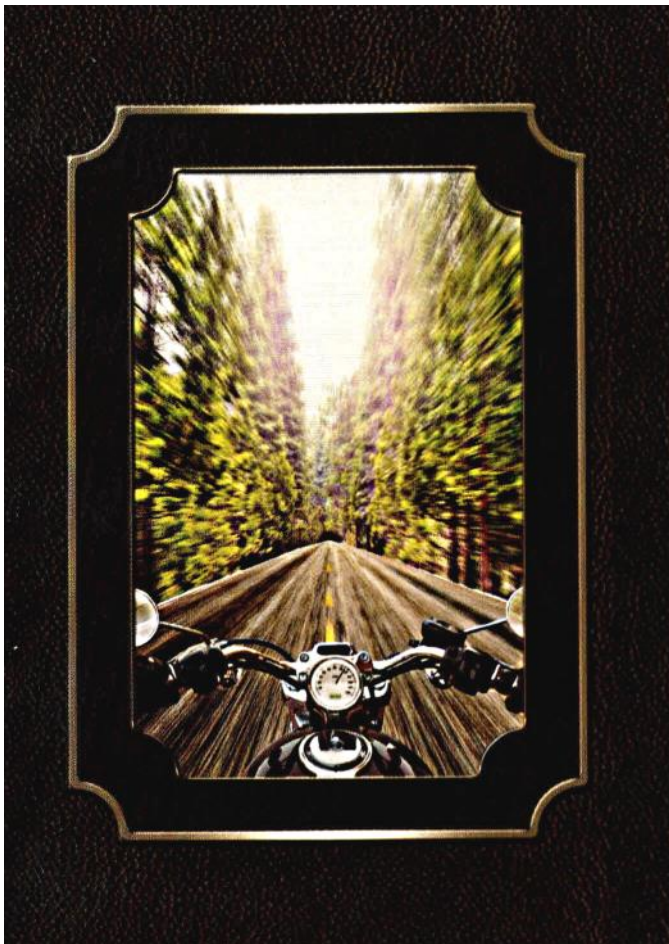
Troy William Warweg, 62 of Ocklawaha, Florida died Tuesday, February 7, 2023 surrounded by family and friends. Born in Mankato, Minnesota and raised in Waseca, Troy is a 1979 graduate of Waseca High School and a Member of the American Legion Post 228 and The Moose Lodge.

Troy lived to feel the wind in his hair, whether it was while piloting an airplane, driving his boat out on Clear Lake, cruising in an American sports car, or riding his Harley Davidson down country roads, he lived for adventure. Troy traveled the country as a long-distance truck driver and then found a career selling heavy machinery. He looked forward to the social engagements of tradeshow and any opportunity to arrange a meet up with friends and family in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Minnesota, and South Carolina.

Troy is survived by his wife of 13 years Julie Warweg of Ocklawaha, FL; his father William "Bill" Warweg of Ti-

tusville, FL; his brother Tim (Beth) Warweg of Wethersfield, CT; his children Joshua (Luke) Barnett of Sarasota, FL, Nickolas (Kendall) Hiebert of Clover, SC, Devon Lara (Albert) of Peoria, AZ, Jacquelyn (Cole) Ryan of Titusville, FL, Kimberly (Adam) Hill of Hollister, CA and Brandon Hicks of Waseca, MN; daughter; grandchildren AJ Ryan & Esme Beyer, Ethan Beyer, Amelia Hill, Niko Hill, and Juniper Lara. He is predeceased by his mother Carol Warweg.

Troy's life was celebrated at 1:00 pm on Sunday, February 12, 2023 at North Brevard Funeral Home.



*During a time
like this
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*The family of
Troy Warweg*

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