Tractor Times

A publication for and about Tractor & Equipment Company customers

2011 No. 2

ON THE JOB

The Komatsu D51 is preferred dozer for contractors in northwestern Alabama

See article inside . . .

Greg Hovater, Owner Hovater's Metal Works

Truman Sutton, Owner S&S Excavating

KOMATSU®

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dan Stracener

Always looking for ways to improve your bottom line

TRACTOR & EQUIPMENT Company

Dear Valued Customer:

The construction season is fully upon us, and we at Tractor & Equipment hope you're off to a good start. We're prepared to help in any way we can, whether it's equipment purchase or rental, parts or service.

We've said it many times: we're proud of the equipment manufacturers with which we associate ourselves. All are among the leaders in the construction and mining industries when it comes to production, efficiency and reliability.

For example, Komatsu continues to set the pace in hybrid machinery. It was the first — and still the only — manufacturer in production of a hybrid excavator. Before others even have their first such excavator on the market, Komatsu is introducing its second-generation model, the HB215LC-1.

You've also heard a great deal in the past year about interim Tier 4 standards that went into effect January 1. Komatsu did more than just put in new, lower-emission engines. It added standard features that make its new models more efficient, allowing you to get the same or better production with less fuel, less soot and lower NOx emissions.

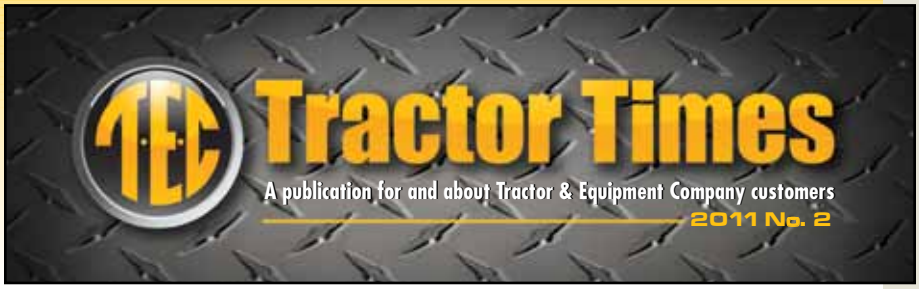
Komatsu is about more than just the machinery. It's always looking for ways to improve your bottom line with new technology, such as KOMTRAX, and has worked to make many new machines "plug-and-play." That means they're equipped so that all you have to do is bolt on your GPS system and activate it.

This issue of your TEC *Tractor Times* has some informative articles that will give you insights into the new machines and technology Komatsu has to offer. As the economy continues to improve, and you begin to look for new equipment, we hope you'll consider these machines. Keep in mind, bonus depreciation and additional expensing are still available for tax savings in 2011.

As always, we're prepared to support the new machines, as well as any machinery in your current fleet. Contact one of our branch locations to learn how we can be of service to you.

Sincerely,

Dan Stracener
President



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KOMATSU®

A SALUTE TO A TEC CUSTOMER

ON THE JOB

The Komatsu D51 is preferred dozer for contractors in northwestern Alabama

When it was introduced a few years ago, the Komatsu D51 dozer won design awards and quickly became a favorite machine of North American contractors from coast to coast. The D51 features the highest power in its class (130 hp), a "super-slant" nose for improved visibility to the blade, and a cab-forward design that improves both visibility and machine balance.

A number of Tractor & Equipment Company customers own the D51. In northwestern Alabama those customers include S&S Excavating in Tuscumbia and Hovater's Metal Works in Russellville. Here's a look at how those two firms use their D51 dozers.

S&S Excavating

Truman Sutton got his start as a contractor in the early 1970s by setting up mobile homes with the business name of T&B Mobile Home Parts and Service. In 1993, he started S&S Excavating so he could do his own site work for the mobile-home business. Since then, S&S' focus has expanded into other excavation-related fields such as digging ponds, building logging roads and, more recently, tornado cleanup.

(L-R) S&S Excavating Owner Truman Sutton, TEC Decatur Service Manager Tim Kohlenberg, Operator Buddy Harville and TEC Technician Jeromy James pose in front of S&S' newest D51 dozer.

"Basically, we'll do anything our customers want us to do for them," said Sutton. "Many of our clients are repeat customers who come to us because they know us and know they can count on us to treat them fairly and honestly and do a good job for them."

S&S recently purchased its second Komatsu D51. "We've had many different dozers through the years and the D51 is definitely the most comfortable dozer of all of them. My primary dozer operator, Buddy Harville, says he likes the comfort and visibility of the D51. It also has plenty of power and is the perfect size for our jobs. We have a brush-rake attachment that's great for clearing and for our tornado cleanup activities."

Sutton says the support he gets from the TEC Decatur branch is important to him. "Branch Manager Don Burgreen is a good salesman and excellent to work with. TEC's service, from both PSSRs and technicians, is also top-of-the-line."

"We appreciate Truman's business," said Decatur Service Manager Tim Kohlenberg. "All of us at TEC are committed to providing him, and all our customers, with the best product support in the industry."

Hovater's Metal Works

Greg Hovater started his general contracting business in 1998. In the beginning, Hovater's Metal Works put up metal buildings. If the job required site work, he subbed that out. More recently, however, Hovater started doing his own site work in conjunction with the metal

The Komatsu D51PX dozer is a 29,000-pound, 130-hp machine that features a "super-slant" nose for excellent visibility to the blade and a cab-forward design for better stability as well as added visibility.

buildings, as well as other work customers wanted him to do.

"Most of our work comes to us by word-of-mouth," said Hovater. "We work almost exclusively within about a 50-mile radius of Russellville, which, if you have a good reputation, is an advantage because everyone knows you. My goal is to always do quality work. I'm my own worst critic. If I'm happy with a job, I know it's a good job and I know the customer is going to like it."

Hovater says he's been very pleased with his D51 dozer as well as a Komatsu PC160 hydraulic excavator, both purchased from TEC. "The D51 is great because it's small enough to get into some tight places yet has the power of a larger dozer. In addition, visibility to the blade is outstanding, so I can see exactly what I'm doing. I also love my PC160. We have a thumb on it for handling brush, and it does a great job loading trucks."

Currently Hovater's Metal Works has jobs putting up a vehicle maintenance building at Russelville High School, building two large structures at the Church of God in Hackelburg and doing cleanup work in the devastated community of Phil Campbell, Ala., where a dozen people died in an April tornado.

"The tornado was a real blow to this part of the state," confirmed Hovater. "A tragedy like that makes you thankful for what you still have. We're pleased to be in an industry where we can be part of the effort that helps put things back together." ■

(L-R) Hovater's Metal Works Owner Greg Hovater is with his son Jarrett Hovater and TEC Decatur Branch Manager Don Burgreen.

"The D51 is great because it's small, yet has a lot of power," said Hovater Metal Works Owner Greg Hovater. "I also love my Komatsu PC160 excavator, which does an excellent job loading trucks."

A SALUTE TO A TEC CUSTOMER

CHARLES KELLEY CONSTRUCTION

Blairsville, Ga., firm is working to clean up and redevelop the Copper Basin

Charles "Bill" Kelley, President

In 1843, copper was discovered near Ducktown, Tenn., just across the Georgia state line about 30 miles west of Blairsville. Throughout the next century, many mines opened in the region, which became known as the Copper Basin. During its heyday, from the late 1800s to about 1970, the Copper Basin provided employment for thousands of miners; produced tens of millions of tons of copper ore; and was the site of a 3,000-foot vertical shaft, thought to be one of the deepest in North America.

Unfortunately, during this period of mine activity, the site was denuded of trees and vegetation. By the time the last mine closed in 1987, much of the Copper Basin was impacted.

This photo illustrates the remediation work done in the Copper Basin, where grasses are now growing in a former tailing pond.

In 2001, the remediation plan for the area was formalized under an agreement between Glenn Springs Holdings, Inc., the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"Interesting and important work"

Charles Kelley Construction of Blairsville is one of the companies working at the site, helping to remediate and redevelop the Copper Basin. The company has done cleanup work, soil erosion containment and runoff control.

"We've been out here for six or seven years now," said company founder and President Charles "Bill" Kelley. "Our first assignment was to hydroseed to get some grass to grow. Then one thing led to another and we started doing some bigger work on the project."

Charles Kelley Construction's work has included putting in approximately six miles of safety fencing at the property. The company also removed tailings.

Much of Charles Kelley Construction's work in the Copper Basin has centered around water. The runoff-control work at the site may be the largest mine-drainage system in the world. The effort has been highly successful.

"We've developed an excellent relationship through the years," remarked Kelley, "and we are trusted to do the job well and do it in the most cost-effective manner."

"This has been a very good job for us," added Charles' son Jason Kelley. "Not only

Charles Kelley Construction uses a Komatsu PC200LC-8 to load an HM300 articulated dump truck as part of the work in the Copper Basin near Ducktown, Tenn.

has it provided us with a fairly steady work load, but it's been interesting and important work. It's a project we're really proud to be associated with."

Everybody pitches in

Charles Kelley relies on a trusted group of employees to help work jobs like the Copper Basin remediation. In addition to his son Jason, his wife, Janice, has been involved in the business for many years. In the beginning, she helped Charles out in the field with the hydroseeding. Today, she primarily keeps the books. Other regular hands include Scott Dease, Anthony Bohannon and Jimmy "Jimbo" Rogers.

"We have a really good crew," stated Kelley. "We don't have much turnover. In fact, we've had the same guys for years. Jason's been working with me since he was little, always doing something. I think Scott was a teenager the first time he worked here and he's been with me off and on — mostly on — ever since."

"We're not a big outfit, so everybody has to be versatile," noted Jason. "Everyone, including my dad, runs equipment almost every day. We can all run multiple machines. Everybody pitches in to do whatever needs to be done. We take a lot of pride in our work and always want to give our customer a good job for a fair price. I'd say we're known for doing quality work. That's what we hang our hat on and it's why we have many regular customers who typically give us first crack at their jobs."

Charles Kelly Construction's fleet of Komatsu equipment working at the Copper Basin site includes these PC300 and PC160 hydraulic excavators. "I've been sold on Komatsu excavators since I bought a used PC200 back in 1994," said Charles Kelley. "Through the years, they've been reliable and highly productive."

Dependable Komatsu equipment

Charles Kelley Construction has a fleet of mostly Komatsu machines to do its work in the Copper Basin, as well as other projects it's completed in north Georgia. The company has five Komatsu hydraulic excavators (a PC300, three PC200s and a PC160), as well as a WA320 wheel loader, a D51 dozer and an HM300 articulated haul truck.

Continued . . .

Hard work is key for Charles Kelley Construction

. . . continued

"I've been sold on Komatsu equipment since I bought a used PC200 back in 1994," said Kelley. "It was an excellent machine. We got good production out of it so when we needed another one, we went back to Komatsu and Tractor & Equipment Company. One of the best things about Komatsu machines is their dependability. We come out in the morning, turn them on and go to work. That's what we want out of a machine, and it's what we get from our Komatsu units.

Charles Kelley Construction's primary crew consists of (L-R) Scott Dease, Jason Kelley, Charles "Bill" Kelley, Anthony Bohannon and Jimmy Rogers.

"Obviously, we like the Komatsu track hoes — we have five of them," he noted. "But one of our favorite machines is the D51 dozer. It's as good a dress-up dozer as you'll find. Visibility to the blade is outstanding, which allows an operator to really see what he's doing and be more productive."

"Beyond the equipment itself, the service we get from Tractor & Equipment Company has been really good," said Jason. "We do our own maintenance and try to do repair work in-house as well. But we know we can always call TEC's Calhoun branch and they'll help us any way they can."

Optimistic about the future

While much of the remediation at Copper Basin is complete, Charles Kelley Construction remains at work at the site.

"There's still work to do, and we plan to be here for a time yet," said Kelley. "Down the road, this is certainly a project we'll look back on fondly and we'll be proud and grateful that we had a hand in it."

Beyond the Copper Basin work, Kelley says he's optimistic about the future of Charles Kelley Construction.

"We're a small company and we're fine with that. It's never been my goal to have a large company that has to bid on everything that's out there to try to stay busy enough to keep our head above water. We have a number of good customers in and around Blairsville. They watch out for us and we watch out for them. We like our niche. We do a little bit of everything and stay close to home. We work for people we know and people who know us. As long as we continue to work hard and give our customers a good job at a fair price, we're optimistic that we'll continue to have enough work to keep us busy." ■

This Charles Kelley Construction operator pushes dirt with a Komatsu D51 dozer. "The D51 is one of our favorite machines," said Charles Kelley. "It's as good a dress-up dozer as you'll find."

MISPLACED PRIORITIES?

AED says administration's transportation funding should focus more on highways and roadways

In his 2012 fiscal-year budget, President Barack Obama proposed a six-year, $556 billion surface transportation package. The amount represents a substantial increase in transportation funding and includes an immediate $50 billion cash infusion to create jobs, a proposed national infrastructure bank and a heavy emphasis on expanding high-speed rail.

The $556 billion proposal is nearly double the $285 billion package authorized in SAFETEA-LU, the last highway bill, which expired in September 2009. Legislation to establish a new, multi-year investment highway blueprint has languished in Congress for the past two years.

The call for such a substantial increase continues the administration's recent focus on transportation investment as a way to create jobs and ensure America's long-term economic competitiveness — even as it raises questions about misplaced priorities. The president's proposal would allocate $53 billion for high-speed rail and $30 billion to establish a national infrastructure bank over the next six years. Yet the mainstay of our nation's transportation network, roads and highways, are largely neglected beyond vague promises of support.

Also conspicuously absent from the president's budget are new funding mechanisms. User fees, the most viable option for providing guaranteed, long-term funding for surface transportation, have been dismissed as a non-starter by the president. Instead, Obama's proposal seeks to find funds by consolidating highway programs and hoping for a congressional bipartisan funding mechanism.

In sum, the president's transportation budget document is long on rhetoric, short on the details, and, in some respects, appears divorced from the new political realities in Washington. For example, despite broad public support for smaller government, Obama has proposed spending increases without making tough choices to pay for them. And despite the fact that many Republicans oppose high-speed rail, the administration made it the centerpiece of its transportation program.

AED shares the administration's belief that substantial investments in surface transportation are needed to ensure our long-term economic competitiveness. However, we have a clear difference of opinion about priorities.

With all that said, keep in mind that this is just the first salvo in a long battle. The highway reauthorization story will continue to develop in the weeks ahead, as the House and Senate hold additional hearings and roll out their own proposals. Stay tuned. ■

This article is from the Associated Equipment Distributors, a trade association representing companies in the distribution, rental and support of equipment. Its members account for more than $15 billion of annual sales of construction equipment and related supplies and services in the U.S. and Canada.

The Associated Equipment Distributors (AED) says the president's proposal doesn't put enough emphasis on surface transportation, such as roadways and highways.

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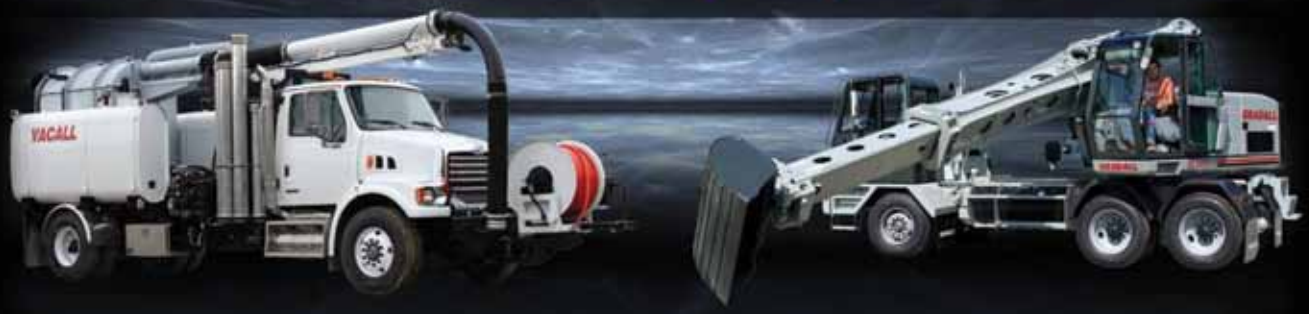

TEC is now adding Vacall's high-performance sewer cleaning equipment to its diversified line up. Vacall equipment was first introduced in 1951, and since 2006 it has been designed and built by Gradall in their New Philadelphia, Ohio plant.

Over the years, TEC's customers have come to trust the reliability and quality of Gradall and...

Since 1943, TEC has always "Put The Customer First".

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NEXT-GENERATION HYBRID EXCAVATOR

Komatsu makes significant improvements to what remains the world's only hybrid excavator

Last year, Komatsu introduced the industry's first hybrid hydraulic excavator to the North American market. This year, it's releasing the HB215LC-1, an updated hybrid that features significant improvements over the original model.

"The original hybrid model is an excellent machine — a good digger that's approximately 25 percent more fuel-efficient than the traditional PC200," noted Komatsu Excavator Product Manager Armando Najera. "We learned a lot from our first hybrid model. We now have more than a million operating hours in the field with that original hybrid. The information we gained and the feedback we got from customers led to significant improvements in the second-generation HB215LC-1."

Key improvements include:

- A service valve to power hydraulic attachments;
- An enhanced monitor panel;
- Improved serviceability;
- A five-year/7,000-hour warranty on hybrid powertrain components.

The HB215LC-1 delivers fuel savings that average 25 percent compared to a similar-size, non-hybrid excavator. And, on jobs where there's lots of swinging, fuel savings can be much higher than that. It's also a huge step forward from an environmental standpoint, reducing CO_2 emissions by almost 17 tons annually (based on operating 1,500 hours per year) compared to a conventional PC200.

"The phrase 'win-win' is over-used, but in this case, it's exactly what users get," said Najera. "The new hybrid provides the same performance with lower fuel costs and less environmental impact. As fuel costs continue to go up, the owning and operating costs of the HB215LC-1 become more and more favorable."

For more information on the Komatsu HB215LC-1, including an explanation of Komatsu hybrid technology, call your sales representative or our nearest branch location, or go to www.komatsuamerica.com/hybrid. ■

Armando Najera, Komatsu Excavator Product Manager

Brief Specs HB215LC-1 Hybrid Excavator		
Operating Weight	**Power**	**Bucket Capacity**
47,530 pounds	139 hp	1.57 cu. yd.

www.TECTractorTimes.com

NEW! online video

The HB215LC-1, Komatsu's second-generation hybrid hydraulic excavator, has a service valve to power attachments and is 25 percent more fuel-efficient than a similar-size conventional excavator.

TIER 4

From Komatsu—The Engine Experts

The new **Tier 4 engines** from Komatsu are designed and built by the experts who have set the standard for dependability, long life, low operating costs and fuel efficiency.

Dependability
- Hardware and control systems designed and built by Komatsu

Operator Ease
- Diesel Particulate Filter regenerates automatically with no action required by the operator

High Performance
- Engine acceleration is noticeably faster due to Komatsu Variable Geometry Turbocharger
- Automatic emission controls maintain same performance levels during regeneration

Robust controls
- Hydraulic actuators provide trouble-free, precise control of Exhaust Gas Recirculation and Komatsu Variable Geometry Turbocharger

Low Maintenance Costs
- Identical drain intervals
- Only two new maintenance items: Closed Crankcase Ventilation and Komatsu Diesel Particulate Filter

KOMATSU®

www.komatsuamerica.com

TIER 4 EXCAVATORS

Added features help your bottom line while meeting new interim standards

Low emission standards don't have to equate to decreased production or efficiency. Komatsu proves that with its new PC240LC-10 and PC290LC-10 excavators, which feature interim Tier 4 engines that reduce particulate matter and NOx emissions while making you more profitable.

"Users won't sacrifice any production with these new machines," said Product Manager Doug Morris. "What they will see is better efficiency, with up to 10 percent less fuel consumption compared to the Tier 3 models they replace."

The PC240LC-10 replaces the PC220LC-8, while the PC290LC-10 takes the place of the PC270LC-8. Both new machines are powered by Komatsu's interim Tier 4 engine technology that features a Komatsu Diesel Particulate Filter (KDPF), Variable Geometry Turbocharger and Cooled Exhaust Gas Recirculation, among other technologies that reduce emissions and add efficiency. Both have increased horsepower and operating weight compared to previous models.

Komatsu didn't simply replace the engine and model numbers with the PC240LC-10 and PC290LC-10. The new excavators use advanced hydraulic-matching techniques to better optimize the engine and hydraulic performance.

"With low-speed matching, higher displacement pumps can deliver a higher flow amount at lower engine speeds," explained Morris. "In addition, the machine can adjust the engine speed based on the flow output for better efficiency."

Improved in several ways

Working modes on the new excavators are set through a new easier-to-use, high-definition, seven-inch monitor panel that also has a new Eco Guidance feature, which provides operational information and advice for maximizing economy. It also keeps the operator aware of KDPF condition, as well as offering enhanced maintenance monitoring.

"Along with the other new features, these excavators come with Level 4 KOMTRAX that has additional information compared to its predecessors. They have a whole host of other new features, including a new reach boom and arm on the PC290LC-10 that offer an additional one to two feet of working range," noted Morris. "The cabs are improved, and we made them easier and quicker to service and maintain. So, we went well beyond just adding a new engine in order to provide machines that are not only better for the environment, but better for the bottom line." ■

Doug Morris, Product Manager

Brief Specs on Interim Tier 4 Excavators

Model	Operating Weight	Horsepower	Bucket Capacity
PC240LC-10	55,256 lbs.	177 hp	1.85 cu. yd.
PC290LC-10	66,756 lbs.	196 hp	2.13 cu. yd.

Komatsu's new interim Tier 4 excavators have low-speed matching, allowing users high flow even at low speeds. They are also more fuel-efficient without sacrificing productivity.

NEW! online video

www.TECTractorTimes.com

LOADERS

From Komatsu - The Loader Experts

Komatsu Wheel Loaders deliver high productivity, low fuel consumption, easy maintenance and superior operator comfort. The WA200PZ-6, WA250PZ-6 and WA320PZ-6 feature Komatsu's electronically controlled Hydrostatic Transmission (HST) with Komatsu's PZ (Parallel Z-bar) linkage.

- HST delivers high power, excellent response and low fuel consumption
- The PZ linkage provides parallel lift, high breakout force and high lift capacity
- Variable Traction Control with S-Mode reduces tire slippage
- Dynamic braking eases operation and extends wet-disc brake life

KOMATSU®

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NEW D65-17 DOZERS

Komatsu's list of productive features doesn't stop with Interim Tier 4 engines

When Interim Tier 4 standards went into effect, Komatsu wasn't satisfied with simply putting a compliant engine into its new D65-17 dozers. While the three new models all meet the EPA interim Tier 4 requirements to reduce soot and NOx emissions, they have additional features that make them more efficient while maintaining productivity.

Last year, Komatsu rolled out its Tier 3 D65s that increased horsepower to 205, while lowering fuel consumption by as much as 10 percent compared to previous models. The new D65-17 models built upon that efficiency by lowering fuel consumption an additional 5 percent while maintaining horsepower with a new automatic transmission with lockup torque converter. It automatically transfers engine power to the transmission, offering greater powertrain efficiency.

"Users understand that new standards are inevitable, but they don't want them to affect performance or uptime," said Product Manager Bruce Boebel. "They can be confident the new Komatsu D65-17s will not only produce like previous models, but do it with less fuel consumption."

Operators can select from two gearshift modes — automatic and manual — to fit the appropriate application: automatic for general dozing offers a choice of four forward and reverse speeds, while manual for dozing and ripping rough ground offers three. The automatic transmission shifts to the optimal gear range based on working conditions and load.

An excellent combination

Komatsu's innovative SIGMA blade, which is designed keep more material to the center for 15-percent better productivity compared to a Semi-U, is available for the standard EX and wide-track WX models. Customers can equip those models, as well as the low-ground-pressure PX, with a power angle tilt (PAT) blade, which can be adjusted six ways for added versatility and productivity. A new toggle switch allows the operator to easily angle the blade.

Komatsu also redesigned the joysticks for maximum control, offering a relaxed posture and superb fine control to minimize operator fatigue. A newly designed cab is larger, with an operator's seat that's three inches higher and four inches closer to the blade for excellent all-around visibility. A new seven-inch, high-resolution LCD monitor displays all machine information and is integrated with the interim Tier 4 technology.

"These dozers are at the top of the class, not only because of the new features, but also the proven systems we integrated," said Boebel. "The D65-17s are a great combination of new technology with the best of the previous models, and they're cleaner and greener." ■

Bruce Boebel, Product Manager

Brief Specs of the Komatsu D65-17 Dozers

D65EX-17
44,355 lbs.
205 hp

D65PX-17
47,335 lbs.
205 hp

D65WX-17
45,945 lbs.
205 hp

The new D65-17 dozers have several new features, including an automatic transmission with lockup torque converter that automatically transfers engine power to the transmission for greater powertrain efficiency.

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PEORIA MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS

Komatsu's mining-truck plant focuses on quality haulers that meet the toughest standards

Early this year, Komatsu's Peoria Manufacturing Operations (PMO) surpassed the 1,000-unit mark for production of its popular 930E electric mining truck. It's a major accomplishment, especially considering the massive size of the 320-ton haulers, which are approaching their 15th year on the market and have become the best-selling, ultra-class mining trucks in the world.

It's even more impressive considering that PMO produces more than the 930E at the Peoria facility. Each day, more than 600 employees do everything from design and engineering, to assembly of five truck models — the 200-ton 730E, the 240-ton 830E, the 280-ton 860E-1K, the 930E and the 360-ton 960E-1K — which are shipped to some of the world's largest mines.

Globally, the demand for these trucks continues to climb as coal, copper, gold and other types of mines ramp up production. In turn, Komatsu's PMO is looking to increase its capacity. Currently, the PMO produces one to one-and-one-half trucks per day. Soon, it plans to up that to two trucks per day. As part of the effort, it's in the process of expanding with a new 20,000-square-foot addition in the works.

"We've developed our processes to the point of being able to assemble a truck in about half the time we did a decade ago, and with demand up, that's very significant," said Jerry Potter, who oversees the process of putting the trucks together as Manager of Manufacturing Operations. "With the expansion, I'm confident we'll be able to meet our production goals."

In addition to expanding the facility, PMO is in the process of hiring new staff members to join an experienced team that's focused on quality, especially considering the mining trucks it produces frequently run 24 hours a day, seven days a week and routinely rack up more than 100,000 hours during a lifetime.

"Next to safety, quality is our utmost priority," said Doug Springer, Manager Product Quality. "We have 14 inspectors who oversee everything but, technically, everyone in the assembly line is an inspector. Anyone who believes there's a potential quality issue can stop the manufacturing process until it's resolved. Our goal is always zero issues that would affect performance, reliability and longevity of Komatsu mining trucks."

Welding is critical

Springer notes that welding is one aspect that's especially critical during the fabrication of the truck frames, which are considered the backbones of the trucks. Three shifts a day with about 60 welders on each shift are used to put up to 1,000 pounds of welds into a truck. Each welder must meet exacting standards.

Continued . . .

Jerry Potter, Manager of Manufacturing Operations

Doug Springer, Manager Product Quality

One of the critical aspects of building a Komatsu mining truck is superior welding of the frame. Each weld is ultrasonically tested and thoroughly inspected before a frame moves into the assembly process.

Quality components go into Komatsu trucks

. . continued

"We do a lot of training for new hires, and we are constantly evaluating," said Theresa Kline, Superintendent of Welding. "We ultrasonically test welds to ensure they pass before a frame moves on for assembly."

Senior Welding Engineer Ed Spadoni added, "Proper welding is critical because if not done right, it affects the structural integrity of the truck, which in turn affects its life and function. Our mining customers work around the clock to meet production goals, so any extra bit of downtime is detrimental. We work with them to ensure we're meeting their strict standards."

Quality components

While welding is taking place on truck frames, truck components such as hoists, cylinders, rear and front suspension and brake systems are assembled. PMO produces its front suspension systems in house, but works with suppliers for other components.

"The mines rely on us for quality equipment and that starts with quality components," said Mark Schatsiek, who recently moved into the position of Superintendent of Logistics after serving as Superintendent of Components for several years. "Just as the mines have exacting standards for us, we have stringent requirements that our vendors must meet. When a truck goes into production, we start by putting all the necessary components into a kit that's brought to the assembly area where our staff puts it together. We're running two shifts a day."

With those components and the frames ready, the rest of the truck heads to another assembly area where it really takes shape. During the course of a few days, the electrical assembly, cab, deck supports, fuel tanks, control cabinets, hydraulics and other related items come together into a final product.

"Once we have it all put together, we thoroughly test a truck for proper function," explained Mike Drew, Superintendent of Assembly. "Then we disassemble it because a truck is too large to ship as a unit. The pieces are put on railcars or trucks to be shipped to their destination." ■

Theresa Kline, Superintendent of Welding

Ed Spadoni, Senior Welding Engineer

Mark Schatsiek, Superintendent of Logistics

Mike Drew, Superintendent of Assembly

Once the frame meets PMO's stringent standards, the truck is moved to assembly where it takes shape with installation of the cab, electric assembly and control cabinet.

Quality components make up the truck, including the wet-disc brakes which are assembled at PMO.

A SUCCESS STORY

MACHINE MONITORING PAYS OFF

Clearing contractor relies on Komatsu excavators with KOMTRAX to maintain productivity

Because Jaski Inc. covers such a large territory, Owner Luc Tremblay says people often think the company is much larger than it is. Founded in 2001 as a forestry contractor — Tremblay now focuses on land clearing, mainly for power companies — Jaski, Inc.'s territory is about 300,000 square miles, but Tremblay has only five Komatsu PC78 and PC138 excavators equipped with brush cutters in his fleet.

"People see our machines on the side of the road clearing brush away from power lines or for better visibility on the roadways and assume we have about 200 machines," said Tremblay, who made the transition to land clearing and brush cutting about six years ago. "In truth, we're all over the place, covering such a large territory to ensure we take care of our customers. Our projects range anywhere from a few acres up to 100."

In most cases, Jaski has only one machine working on any given project. Despite hundreds of miles distance between jobs, Tremblay has confidence jobs will get done quickly and efficiently. Part of the reason is a group of experienced operators. The other is that those operators are using late-model Komatsu excavators equipped with KOMTRAX, Komatsu's remote machine-monitoring system.

"Obviously, there's no way I can get to every job, so I have to trust my operators and my equipment," said Tremblay. "Neither lets me down. The reliability of the Komatsu excavators has been a vital part of our success. The first one I bought was a PC78 because it had an extra hydraulic pump and offered continuous flow-on-demand to operate the brush cutter. I haven't looked at another brand since."

KOMTRAX a "must have"

Each time Tremblay buys a new Komatsu excavator, he works closely with his Komatsu distributor to equip the excavators for brush-cutter attachments. The distributor also tracks his Komatsu machines using KOMTRAX, as does Tremblay. The system comes standard and is free for the first five years on nearly every new Komatsu machine.

"It's a must-have for us," stated Tremblay. "KOMTRAX helps me track maintenance and stay up-to-date with it, which is vital to me. I can also track fuel consumption and per-hour production. Having that information allows me more accurate bidding compared to doing it manually. The combination of the Komatsu excavators and KOMTRAX has really helped make Jaski a more efficient, reliable and profitable company." ■

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Komatsu's KOMTRAX system lets users track critical machine information, even in the most remote locations, from their computers. It's standard on nearly all new Komatsu equipment, and available as a retrofit for older machines.

A WINNING COMBINATION

Komatsu dozers and Topcon 3D-MC^2 put you to grade in fewer passes

If you could be four times more productive with your dozer and potentially eliminate the need for an additional grading machine, would that be an advantage? It's possible when your Komatsu dozer is outfitted with Topcon's 3D-MC^2 machine-control system.

"Traditional finish grading without any machine-control system generally takes multiple passes at low speeds," said Komatsu Marketing Engineer Jason Anetsberger, noting that Komatsu worked closely with Topcon to optimize performance of Komatsu dozers with Topcon machine-control systems. "Standard 3D technology typically allows users to double their speeds compared to a manual dozer. The 3D-MC^2 system doubles the speed again."

Komatsu dozers equipped with Topcon's 3D-MC^2 machine-control system can help you get to grade up to four times faster compared to a manual dozer. Most new Komatsu dozers can be ordered Topcon "plug-and-play" equipped, meaning they are ready for the user to simply bolt on a Topcon system.

The 3D-MC^2 system uses the same easy-to-use interface as previous Topcon 3D machine-control systems, according to Anetsberger. It allows operators to get to grade in even fewer passes, decreasing fuel usage and machine wear, while improving per-yard costs and profits.

"It's as easy to use as any previous system," noted Anetsberger. "Customers tell us that even the newest operators are able to grade nearly as well as skilled veterans of the 3D-MC^2 system. It works really well with our efficient dozers to cut the time it takes to reach grade. That's a huge advantage for their bottom line."

"Plug-and-play"

Most new Komatsu dozers can be ordered Topcon "plug-and-play" equipped, meaning all the user has to do is bolt the Topcon 3D-MC^2 system onto the machine, calibrate, and it's ready for use. The system uses Topcon's GX-60 control box, GPS+ antenna, MC-R3 receiver and a new 3D-MC^2 sensor, all paired with advanced controlling software to provide position updates up to 100 times per second. The MC^2 sensor combines a gyro, compass and inertial sensor to measure the X, Y & Z position as well as the roll, pitch and acceleration of the dozer.

"No matter how you look at it — either as four times faster production over a manual dozer or two times better than existing 3D technology — the 3D-MC^2 system improves efficiency and can have a significant, positive impact on the amount of materials you push and/or place," explained Anetsberger. "Because it's that much faster, in essence, the user is getting the production of two machines in one, and it may even replace the need for a motor grader." ■

NEW FORESTRY SERIES

Upgraded features provide increased durability in XT models

Strength and durability are essential to production in the forest. That's why Komatsu designed its new XT series of feller/bunchers and harvesters with increased durability and added productivity features.

Komatsu's new models, the XT430-2, XT430L-2, XT445L-2 and XT450L-2, replace its former Valmet brand FX/FXL series. Leading the upgrades on the new XT series is an improved undercarriage that increases track system durability. Among the new features are roller guards extended to the front and back with better track-shoe-support-plate clearance to reduce track-chain side loading on uneven ground.

Further upgrades include cutouts added to the track frame, which reduce debris packing and improve roller maintenance; better track drive sprockets with mud/snow relief to reduce packing; new, full-length track slider plates that provide a larger surface area for extended life; two additional bottom track rollers on the XT430L for better weight distribution and improved roller and track link life; and a 20-percent-increased idler recoil spring preload on the XT430L to maintain better track tension and positive sprocket engagement.

Komatsu also enhanced the swing systems with a swing drive that now runs in a sealed grease bath for better pinion lubrication. In addition, improved gears with better hardening provide longer life. An updated swing bearing with dowels and swing-machinery pilot hole provide better swing gear alignment and easy adjustment when servicing. An added grease fitting to the swing drive case helps extend bearing life.

The XT series — built at Komatsu's Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation — is designed for simpler servicing, including a relocated engine oil filter to make it easier to change and relocated swing-bearing lubrication points for easier access. ■

Forestry products will now bear the Komatsu name

Komatsu forestry products will now carry the Komatsu name after years of being branded as Valmet. The Komatsu forestry line consists of a wide range of products, including feller/bunchers, harvesters, forwarders and heads.

"With the strength of the Komatsu brand, we will provide excellent value and service support to our forestry customers and dealers," said Norio Kido, Executive Vice President, Forestry Products. "We understand our customers' needs, and our dedication to technical innovation, combined with Komatsu's industrial tradition, manufacturing technology and quality assurance, means we can deliver the best the forestry industry has to offer." ■

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BETTER DAYS AHEAD

Komatsu's Ed Powers sees continued growth and optimism in construction industry

QUESTION: As we all know, the construction industry has been hit hard the past several years. Where does it stand now?

ANSWER: Many have referred to the past few years as the "Great Recession," however, we're optimistic that recovery is in motion. Throughout our entire 2010 business year, the construction equipment market grew an average of 32 percent in North America, compared to 2009. Another key indicator, tracked monthly, is our North American hour utilization. Our 2010 per-month utilization, tracked through our 23,000 KOMTRAX-populated machines, exceeded 2009 and 2008. In some cases we are comparing the hours to an all-time market low in 2009, but it's positive and deals are being made. We're expecting the same level of recovery throughout 2011 and beyond.

In speaking with contractors at CONEXPO in March, the majority were very optimistic, indicating that business had been picking up steadily and asking, 'When can Komatsu deliver?' There remain some lagging indicators, such as our housing market and unemployment, but the worst is behind us. We can attribute a good portion of our 2010 recovery to Uncle Sam's tax incentives, such as the extension of the Depreciation Bonus, accompanied by Sec. 179. What's encouraging is that this incentive is extended through 2011 with even larger matching dollars.

QUESTION: Often, as recovery happens, businesses start buying equipment. As users begin adding to their fleets or replacing older machines, why should they choose Komatsu?

ANSWER: After the recent wake-up call this industry experienced the last three years, we've all become much more after-market cautious. Today, the customers' primary focus is their after-sales efficiencies, as well as their owning and operating costs. This creates a perfect opportunity

Continued . . .

This is one of a series of articles based on interviews with key people at Komatsu discussing the company's commitment to its customers in the construction and mining industries — and their visions for the future.

Ed Powers, Vice President and General Manager, Construction Equipment Division

After graduating from the State University of New York in 1988, Ed Powers started at Komatsu in the finance department, which included collections.

"The goal was always to find a way to help customers keep their machines. That may have meant restructuring a payment schedule or some other method that allowed the user, who may be behind, to continue using that machine until things turned around. During the economic downturn the past couple of years, Komatsu has kept the same philosophy with positive results."

April 2011 marks the start of Ed's 24th year with Komatsu, including the past three as Vice President and General Manager, Construction Equipment Division. His prior responsibilities included Vice President of Construction Equipment Sales, West Region Construction Equipment Manager, Director of North America Sales Utility Division, Region Manager of Rental Services, Deputy Regional Sales Manager and Finance Field Representative. During his career, he also earned his MBA at Keller Graduate School of Management in Chicago, Ill.

"I've had a very well-rounded experience throughout my career with Komatsu. This has helped me see the equipment industry from all perspectives, but primarily from the customer's point of view. Seeing things from customers' perspectives, and listening to their needs has made me a better decision-maker and emphasized the value of relationships."

Ed and his wife, Berta, will soon celebrate their fourth wedding anniversary and their daughter, Joselyn's, first birthday.

Komatsu technology leads the way

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for Komatsu, as the world's most technically advanced manufacturer of earthmoving equipment, to step up, stop talking about it and prove that we manufacture the most reliable and lowest cost-per-hour products in the industry.

As most know, we don't spend a lot of money advertising our brand. We'd rather put those dollars into research, development and being the leader in innovation. As a result, we were the first to introduce a hybrid excavator, which has been shown to be as reliable and efficient as our traditional excavators, with 25-percent to 40-percent fuel savings. We are already rolling out our next generation of hybrid models before most OEM's even introduce their first.

When it comes to telematics, no other OEM has Komatsu's experience with remote asset management. With more than 200,000 machines reporting globally, Komatsu knows about a customer's technical problem before the operator does. Between Komatsu customers and our highly engaged dealer network, we are using KOMTRAX information to improve machine utilization and reduce owning and operating costs.

Komatsu's investment in research and development has given us another opportunity to show our strength as a leader. We are excited to be launching several interim Tier 4 products this year, with engines ranging from 175 to 750 horsepower. Once again, our engineers have not only met stringent governmental emissions regulations, but also improved machine performance and fuel efficiency. As this industry continues to introduce Tier 4 technology, two key concerns lie in the marketplace — the cost of maintenance and its reliability.

How is Komatsu going to differentiate itself from the competition? We are so confident in our technology and our distributors' service capabilities that we are going to offer a three-year complimentary maintenance care package for all Tier 4 products. A key component to the servicing and reliability of our Tier 4 products will rely on KOMTRAX, which will help customers manage required maintenance and provide constant preventive support. That is peace of mind!

QUESTION: What else is Komatsu doing to benefit customers?

ANSWER: It's all about the relationship and the after-market support. You can't have one without the other. Komatsu's strongest asset is its dealer network, with more than 300 locations across North America. Of those, 70 percent have been in business for more than 50 years. As a manufacturer, our job is to provide our dealers with ongoing support, training and the tools they need to earn credibility and establish lasting relationships.

The key word is "earn." Today it's not only about premium parts and service, but preventive maintenance practices (KOMTRAX), financing, used equipment, resale value and overall value propositioning. It's not just about closing the deal, but knowing customers' short- and long-term aspirations and how Komatsu can assist in achieving those aspirations. The relationship doesn't end when the machine is delivered. Rather, it continues to grow.

Today's technically advanced products and our customers' level of sophistication require a team effort between the dealer and manufacturer. The quality of the OEM is reflected in its dealers, and our customers recognize and expect it. That is what differentiates a manufacturer — its dealers, the quality of their people, and their commitment to product support. I am confident that Komatsu offers those qualities, so now instead of simply asking customers for their business, we can ask for the opportunity to earn it.

The bottom line is — we can manufacture the most technically advanced machine in the world, but if we can't support it, it's worthless. ■

Komatsu's second-generation hybrid excavator, the HB215-1, was introduced at CONEXPO. In 2011, Komatsu will also introduce excavators, wheel loaders, articulated trucks and dozers that meet interim Tier 4 engine standards.

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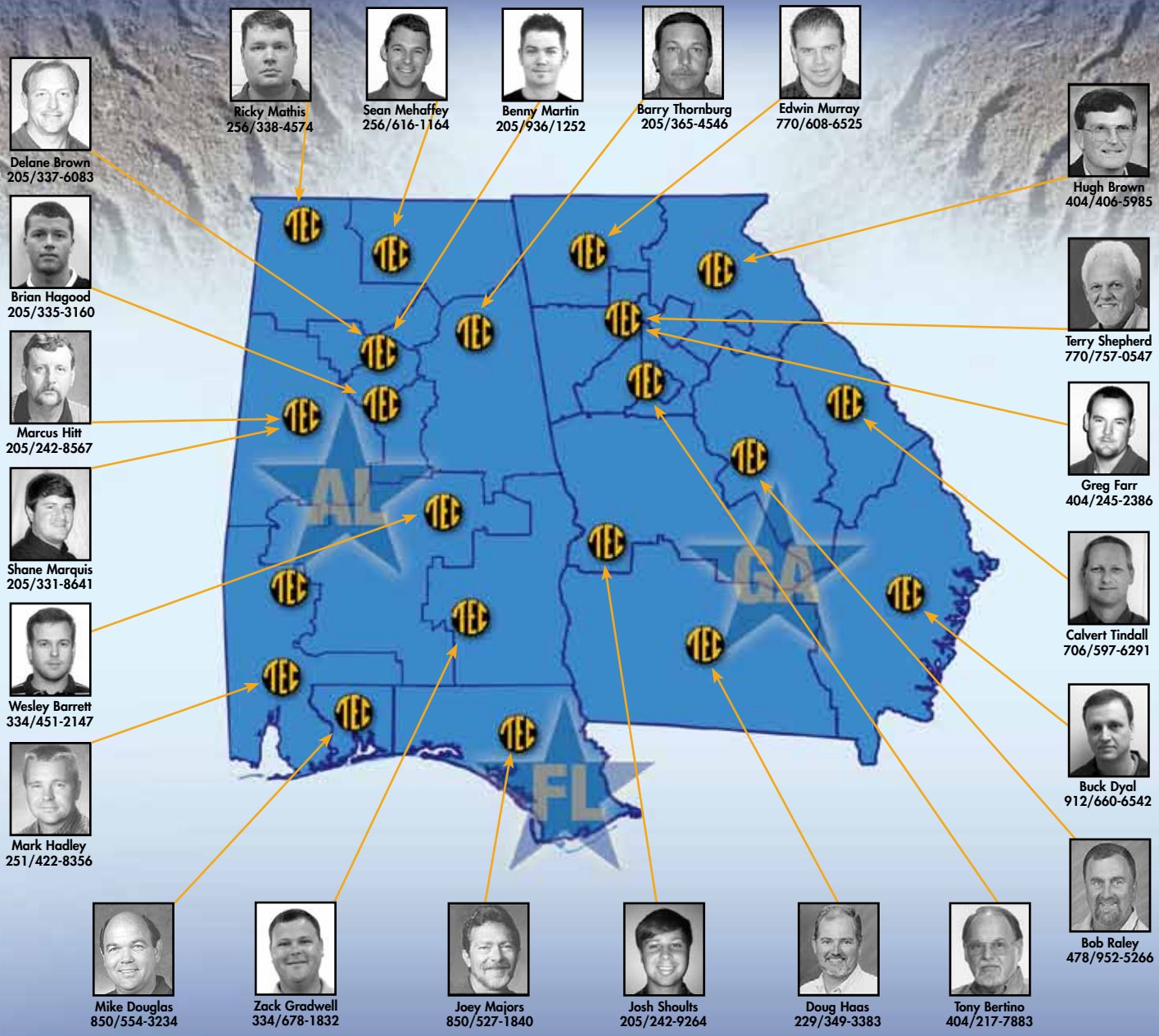

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CUSTOMER APPRECIATION

TEC Savannah branch hosts first annual open house event to thank its customers

TEC's Savannah branch open house event featured a display of the full array of equipment the branch offers.

Cleve Foskey (center) of R.B. Baker Construction in Savannah got a warm welcome from TEC's Dan Stracener (left) and Steve McCondichie.

Guests at TEC Savannah's customer appreciation open house enjoyed a catered lunch of barbecue wings and side dishes.

For the staff at TEC's Savannah branch, a simple "thank you" to customers just didn't seem like enough to express their appreciation. So, on April 15, the branch teamed up with manufacturers to host its first annual open house and customer appreciation event.

The team at the Savannah branch welcomed approximately 250 contractors and guests to its location on Highway 80 in Pooler, Ga. There, everyone enjoyed a lunch of barbecue wings and side dishes. There was plenty of time for customers to mingle with each other and with TEC personnel. On display were machines from Komatsu, Wirtgen, Sennebogen, Tramac, Superior Broom, Schwarze Industries, Vacall and other manufacturers. In addition to TEC staff, representatives of Komatsu, Wirtgen, Sennebogen, Tramac and others showed up to visit with customers, answer questions and help with the event.

During the day, TEC held a number of prize drawings and giveaways, including the grand prize, a Vizio 37-inch flatscreen TV, won by Madison Elliott from Southern Metals Recycling of Savannah.

"We are very pleased with the turnout we had at this new event," said TEC Savannah Branch Manager Frank Dabbs. "It was a great way to say thank you to our valued customers and give them the opportunity to network with each other and talk to manufacturer representatives. We look forward to doing it again next year." ■

Information and photos for this article courtesy of Construction Equipment Guide.

(L-R) Sennebogen Regional Sales Manager Len Lawrence discusses the features of a Sennebogen 821 material handler with Scott Rogers and Joel Coble of Pinova Inc.

Steve Ricke of Wirtgen (far right) provides a comprehensive walk-around of a new Vögele Vision 5203-2 paver for (L-R) Ricky Sikes of Sikes Brothers Inc. and TEC's Mike Copeland and Frank Dabbs.

Looking over a display of directional boring tooling are (L-R) Buck Dyal, TEC product support and Josh Walters and Rusty Fredrich, both of EFM Underground. Fredrich holds the Daiwa rod and reel he won at the open house event.

Gathered in the parts warehouse are (L-R) TEC Savannah Parts Manager Brad Formby, Marvin Doyle of Newell Recycling, TEC Parts Operations Manager Mark Shoults and Tramac & Geith District Manager Stephane Giroudon.

(L-R) TEC's Mike Copeland, Vincent Morris of Carroll & Carroll Inc., and Wirtgen District Sales Manager Steve Ricke talked about the Hamm line of compactors on display at the open house.

TEC Savannah Branch Manager Frank Dabbs (right) presented a new flat-screen TV to grand prize winner Madison Elliot of Southern Metals Recycling as staff from Hooters, which catered the lunch, looked on.

REMEMBERING HOWARD SHEPPARD

Founder of Howard Sheppard, Inc. leaves legacy to his company and community

When Howard Sheppard Sr., founder of Howard Sheppard, Inc., passed away earlier this year, it left a void that was felt throughout the hauling industry. But while his presence will be missed, he left behind the legacy of a company that grew to service customers nationwide and in Canada. In addition, Sheppard was a philanthropist who generously supported a number of charitable organizations in and around his home in Washington County, Ga.

As a young boy, Howard Sheppard was always fascinated with trucks. In 1943, at the age of 18, he bought his first truck to haul sand and gravel and founded Howard Sheppard, Inc. Soon, he was able to purchase another truck. In 1950, he married Barbara Holmes, and with her help, the company began to grow. As the kaolin business in the "clay belt" grew, so did Sheppard's hauling business. Howard Sheppard, Inc. diversified, hauling for many other industries, including a large portion of paper, paint and rubber manufacturers. The company's fleet is also equipped to handle crude ores, liquid, dry bulk, package freight and containerized freight. Its familiar orange trucks can be seen in every state except Hawaii.

Howard Sheppard Sr. was the founder of Howard Sheppard, Inc., a large, nationwide trucking company.

Howard Sheppard shared his success with the local community, volunteering his time and providing financial support for worthwhile causes. He donated the land for the Broken Shackle Boys' Ranch, served as Sandersville fire chief, raised money for a new gym at Sandersville High School and was active in the Lions Club.

Today, Sheppard's son, Cliff, carries on the family tradition, presiding as president of Howard Sheppard, Inc. Cliff's sons also play a part in the company, as Trey serves as vice president of the Crude Clay Division and Mitch is the vice president of the Container Division.

In his last interview with The Sandersville Progress, Howard Sheppard credited his success first to God, then to his wife, family and employees. "We have been blessed in Washington County," he said. "So many people have helped me in so many ways."

Certainly Howard Sheppard helped so many in return. ■

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Report shows $80 billion needed for airport upgrades

A new report shows airports need an estimated $80 billion during the next five years to update and expand runways, terminals and other infrastructure. The report was based on information gathered from 107 U.S. airports.

Nearly 50 percent, $39.9 billion, of the work is needed at large, hub airports. Terminal work makes up the largest chunk of overall need at $22.7 billion. Increasing capacity would take $14.5 billion, while reconstruction projects would cost about $13.4 billion.

This comes on the heels of another report by the Federal Aviation Administration that showed flight delays cost the U.S. economy about $33 billion annually. The study highlighted the need for more investment in airport and runway construction to relieve congestion. ■

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Komatsu PC50MR-2, 7087, 2006, 1,539 hrs $32,500

Komatsu PC200LC-8, A88120, 2007, 1,740 hrs.....$100,000

Komatsu PC200LC-8, C60449, 2006, 1,561 hrs.....$120,000

Komatsu PC228USLC-3, 40727, 2007, 2,302 hrs. $120,000

Komatsu PC300HD-7EO, A86072, 2007, 5,000 hrs $137,500

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Komatsu D39PX-21A, 2430, 2008, 1,621 hrs $72,000

Komatsu D61PX-15, B40146, 2005, 6,397 hrs $75,000

Komatsu D61PX-15EO, B46113, 2009, 2,128 hrs. $165,000

Komatsu D61PX-15EO, B45156, 2007, 2,707 hrs. $125,000

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