

INDEPENDENT'S DAY

A VISIT WITH 2016 AMERICAN CONCRETE PIPE ASSOCIATION CHAIRMAN BO GOSSETT III

Appointment to the American Concrete Pipe Association Executive Committee three years ago put A.C. "Bo" Gossett, III on track to become 2016 chairman, where he sees an opportunity to advance an industry of which his family has been a part for 70-plus years—and speak on behalf of what remains a critical membership component.

"People know I am a hands on guy, not one to sit behind a desk," says the third generation head of Gossett Concrete Pipe Co., Inc. in Greenville, S.C. "We are family business. When considered for the ACPA officer slate, and ultimately chairman, I was asked if I would have time to spend in the position and do it right. A chance to represent our segment of the concrete pipe industry, independent producers, was instrumental in accepting the appointment."

He picked a good year to carry the flag for independent *and* major concrete pipe interests. In addition to year-over-year market improvement, members are seeing deliverables from across the ACPA national and regional spectrum. Topping them are programs or dividends emanating from 2015 Education, Government Affairs and Marketing Committee agendas: Inaugural ACPA Pipe School/Pipe Show; federal codification of common sense drainage system engineering; and, Concrete Pipe Week launch.

"Business is good," says Gossett. "Members report steady growth and feel like the near term will bring stability and additional improvement in the economy. Participation in 2016 ACPA Pipe School (January 4-8) set a positive tone for the year. We had more attendees than in 2015; more people returning to association activities and interested in technical and industry education; and, more producers purchasing equipment—aiming to meet higher market demand by bringing plants up to speed after years of putting capital improvements on hold."

FAST ACTION

Association leadership and staff were prepared to close 2015 finalizing the program for the 2016 Pipe School/Pipe Show, the first staging of the annual school with an ACPA-managed, pipe-specific trade exhibit. An urgent matter arose the first week of December as Congress expedited passage of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST), a five-year (2016-2020) successor to the MAP-21 federal highway program, which passed in 2012.



Bo Gossett III

While offering moderately inflation-adjusted funding mechanisms for a key concrete pipe market, FAST entered its final stage with an amendment resurrecting onerous procurement policy that MAP-21 had reversed. Federal Highway Administration guidance on that policy—as written into the 2005 SAFETEA-LU bill—left some state departments of transportation the impression that pipe and culvert selection was to be based on purchase price alone.

MAP-21 AT A GLANCE
HOW IT WORKS

CONGRESS HAS NOW ACCEPTED TO REMOVE REGULATORY BURDEN ON SELECTION OF CULVERT PIPE MATERIALS

MEMBER STATES CAN CHOOSE WHICH PIPE SUITS THEIR NEEDS

ENGINEERS - NOT LAWMAKERS - CAN MAKE INFORMED CHOICES

AND THE STATES SAY...

75% APPROVE OF THE MAP-21 PIPE PROVISION

25% WERE NEUTRAL OR SAID NO OPINION

CONGRESS HAS EMPOWERED THE BEST ENGINEERING MINDS IN EACH STATE TO NOW DECIDE WHAT PRACTICES AND MATERIALS WILL BEST SUIT THEIR STATE'S SPECIFIC NEEDS.

AND ENGINEERS AGREE

CONCRETE PIPE & BOX CULVERTS
— ARE THE BEST CHOICE FOR OUR HIGHWAYS —

Ahead of rallying to sustain common sense procurement in the FAST Act, ACPA apprised agencies of MAP-21 provisions guaranteeing their drainage structure specification authority.

"Federal highway program reauthorization often includes changes in policy or regulations not working as intended," Gossett explains. "A SAFETEA-LU provision caused unforeseen specification problems for concrete pipe producers and potential engineering challenges for their customers. ACPA and allies sought to educate elected officials. Through MAP-21 provisions, Congress unanimously restored states' ability to select their preferred drainage structure type, based on prevailing conditions and engineers' opinion. Lawmakers and the FHWA recognized that states are most qualified to determine what constitutes safe, sustainable drainage infrastructure."

MAP-21 Section 1525, State Autonomy for Culvert Pipe Selection, directs the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary to ensure that states have the autonomy to determine without federal interference the type of culvert material to be used within their borders. Through FAST, Gossett notes, plastic pipe interests attempted to weaken or eliminate the 2012 language giving states the authority to select culvert pipe materials for federally funded projects; a revised amendment they advanced would have required the DOT to "study" state culvert pipe procurement.

"ACPA producers and staff were instrumental in persuading Conference Committee members—some representing states or districts with concrete pipe plants—that the amendment was ill conceived," says Gossett. "Consequently, MAP-21 Section 1525 will remain the law of the land unless Congress reverses course. ACPA will vigorously defend the drainage pipe and structure material selection process because it puts the decision back in the hands of state transportation engineers, where it belongs."

CONCRETE PIPE WEEK

Following the FAST success, ACPA Government Affairs, AASHTO and Technical Committee members have maintained a regular schedule of Washington, D.C., visits to update lawmakers and agency officials on drainage infrastructure matters plus funding and legislation impacts on engineers.

Members, ACPA regional engineers and state concrete pipe associations will mirror federal government outreach in state capitols. In 2015, they approached governors on the premier National Concrete Pipe Week (August 16-22), and compelled related proclamations in

states representing about 25 percent of the population: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Missouri, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Wisconsin.

"Proclamations were accompanied by public endorsements, news releases, social media posts, plus local events that included concrete pipe plant tours," says Gossett. "Concrete Pipe Week activities are designed to educate communities and leaders on the importance of buried concrete pipe and precast drainage structures. ACPA and state allies are seeking additional proclamations for 2016 Concrete Pipe Week, August 14-20. We are promoting it as an opportunity to recognize the contributions of employers and employees who provide quality products to public and private entities that design, build, plan, operate, and maintain the transportation, water supply, wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal systems, and other structures and facilities essential to our economy and way of life."

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AMERICAN CONCRETE PIPE ASSOCIATION AT-A-GLANCE



WISCONSIN SITE PHOTO: County Materials

Established in 1907, ACPA serves as the voice of the industry, a nonprofit organization of concrete pipe and box culvert producers, equipment or material manufacturers and suppliers and service providers related to the industry. Members companies are located throughout the U.S., Canada and 40-plus overseas countries. The association provides a wide range of research, technical and marketing support materials to promote and advance the use of concrete pipe and box culverts for drainage systems. ACPA's www.concrete-pipe.org site archives, coupled with social media network, funnel a wealth of free information, knowledge and document downloads.

ACPA members account for 90 percent of concrete pipe shipped in the U.S., while investing millions in plant equipment and upgrades; advancing knowledge of concrete drainage structures; and, delivering education programs focused on all aspects of pipe and drainage structures. ACPA's annual Pipe School is oriented to member company staff plus drainage system engineers and other stakeholders at the federal, state and local agency level. The school is rigorous in content delivery, characterized by concrete pipe and precast box courses, training and certification for graduates, member-hosted plant tours, and quality sessions. Course developers are especially mindful of the mechanical, electrical and computer competencies that managers and production employees need to maintain and operate modern concrete pipe plants.

Ongoing education for ACPA members and their customers or prospects continues across the calendar through webinars on technical, marketing and sales topics. ACPA regional engineers and state association counterparts deliver additional education and training to agency personnel and drainage system specifiers. Unified training solves local issues quickly and galvanizes communications of all forms at state and local levels.

2016 CHAIRMAN A.C. "Bo" Gossett, III

Chairman
Gossett Concrete Pipe Co., Inc.
Greenville, South Carolina

IMMEDIATE-PAST CHAIRMAN

Michael Kusch

Director of Technical Marketing
Sherman-Dixie Concrete Industries
Nashville, Tennessee

VICE CHAIRMAN

Brian Rhees

Oldcastle Precast, Inc.
Great Plains Region-West
Littleton, Colorado

PIPE SCHOOL/SHOW

ACPA did not need to move far into the calendar to confirm the makings of a good 2016: The first week of January ushered the inaugural ACPA Pipe School/Pipe Show, staged at the University of Texas, Arlington and adjacent Arlington Hilton. The four-day event brought record school attendance and accreditation. Total participation in courses, plus the 30-booth manufacturer, supplier, and service provider exhibit and individual producer-exhibitor Business-to-Business program meetings exceeded 700. UT Arlington's civil engineering lab enhances Pipe School experiences, and affords first hand observation of ACPA-sponsored research.

Open to state department of transportation officials, designers, specifiers, regulators and contractors, the Pipe School ensures broad and deep education and training for core influencers of drainage pipe and box culverts. Nonmember guests are enlisted for lectures, panel discussions and keynote presentations. ACPA members encourage their production staffs to attend, then return to plants with certificates attesting to competence in modern production techniques and topics: reinforcement, concrete mixing, batching and transport; self-consolidating mixes; conventional mix vibration and consolidation; post-pour inspection; pipe and box culvert curing; and, fundamental calculations.

Along with a new education watermark, the 2016 Pipe School/Show made way for a record ACPA Foundation auction of plant equipment, pipe and drainage product accessories and materials, plus cement loads. Proceeds nearing \$150,000 will be directed to research & development projects, among them long-term performance monitoring of concrete pipe in a range of climates and load

conditions; a multiple-phase fiber reinforced concrete pipe investigation; and, forthcoming work to support concrete pipe and box culvert field performance and competitiveness.

The 2017 ACPA Pipe School/Pipe Show runs January 3-6 at the Arlington Hilton and UT Arlington's E.H. Hereford University Center. Companion events will include another ACPA Foundation fundraising auction and pipe or precast plant tours.

QCAST

ACPA's Quality Cast Plant Certification (QCast) is the U.S. concrete pipe industry's recognized quality assurance standard. It covers inspection of materials, finished products and handling, and storage procedures, as well as performance testing and quality control documentation. Plants are certified in storm sewer and culvert pipe; sanitary pipe; box culverts; three-sided structures; plus, manholes and precast structures. Plants in each category scoring 95 percent or higher in annual audits are recognized with QCast Awards.

"Engineers, specifiers, DOT officials and contractors have learned they can count on QCast-Certified Plant product to meet the most rigorous quality criteria," says Bo Gossett, whose plant is one of South Carolina's four QCast operations. "The concrete pipe industry has learned it can be very successful if it maintains a robust program of production, education and safety. QCast Certification scores and (companion) QCast Quality School grades foster friendly competition between members, leading to knowledge sharing, greater production efficiencies, and safer workplaces."

GOSSETT CONCRETE PIPE CO. AT-A-GLANCE

A.C. "Bo" Gossett, III represents a third generation of founding-family ownership. His grandfather launched the Greenville, S.C., business in 1944, running it for 11 years. AC. Gossett Jr. took the helm in 1955, handing the reins to his son upon retiring in 1991. Joining Bo Gossett III in day-to-day management is son-in-law David Marchbanks, vice president; 2015-2016 Carolinas Concrete Pipe & Products Association president; ACPA Marketing Committee member; and, former professional baseball pitcher (Florida Marlins, 2003-2006).

Gossett Concrete Pipe's present three-plant operation began to take shape in the mid-1990s, owing to product demand from a BMW of North America assembly operation plus major (Charlotte-to-Atlanta) Interstate 85 upgrades. Public and private contract opportunities drove replacement of a 40-year-old packerhead machine with a McCracken PH 48, which recently gave way to an automated Besser BiDi Advantage A-60 machine as the Plant #1/medium bore workhorse. In 2008, Gossett Concrete Pipe added Plant #2, its new Advantage A-36 machine geared for 15- to 36-diameter product. Plant #3 was completed in 2014, its Vibro-Mac supporting production of large bore pipe and gasketed box culverts up to 120-in. diameter and 12-ft. square.



Steady plant investment under current leadership has positioned Gossett Concrete Pipe for value-engineered solutions, including gasketed box culverts. The producer recently shipped 3,000 feet of 5- x 4-ft. boxes for a City of Columbia (S.C.) storm sewer, and convinced the project engineer to approve pre-lubricated rubber gasket joint in lieu of the originally specified combination of butyl joint sealant, joint wrap and steel bands for each connection.