



## Construction News & Views

Vol. 10 No. 12

[www.saca-az.org](http://www.saca-az.org)

November 2014

### A message from your President

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result.

Although there has been a bit of good news lately concerning water and Fort Huachua, and the fact that the Post has started hiring again in some areas, that has not translated into good news in the building community. Yes, some home builders have seen an up-tick in new housing starts, and remodeling seems stronger, but with approximately 300 vacant rental units and well over that in homes for sale, it could be a long time before we see the return of a strong construction industry in the greater Sierra Vista area.

Many of us in the industry have made sacrifices and cuts to streamline our business to stay competitive and solvent. Some of us have eliminated services and partnered with other contractors that do that select service better and less expensive than we can do ourselves. This is not to say that some of our members have done very well in the last few years

**President** continued on page 4



Wayne Gregan

### Member Profile: Clark Information Systems

Clark Information Systems is a technology solutions and service provider based in Sierra Vista, Arizona providing network design, installation, and support services as well as high speed broadband Internet services for companies located in Sierra Vista and surrounding areas. CIS also provides IT project outsourcing, contracting, and managed services. CIS is in its 13th year of providing computer and network support to residential and commercial customers in the Cochise County area. In 2005, CIS brought fiber to its datacenter and started up its High Speed Broadband Internet service to the area. CIS Broadband provides high speed broadband Internet services to government, commercial, and residential customers from northern Whetstone to the edge of Mexico.

CIS works on complicated computers and networks every day. This equates to speed, reliability, and current technology in their ISP network. This is a real Internet Service Provider owned and operated by real qualified computer professionals that is locally owned and operated in Sierra Vista.

The owner and President, Steve Clark, has worked in the technology field for over 20 years and has a BA in Information Technology and an MBA in Information Technology Management. CIS helps companies take advantage of day-to-day management of servers, systems and other network devices. Their managed administration services and managed security solutions help their customers achieve a healthy return on investment and enable them to concentrate on running their core business while leaving the hassles of their information



*Information Technology Services*

technology infrastructure to them. CIS can solve your business systems problems, and create a more competitive advantage for your company through the use of technology. For small businesses, they take the load off of your information technology worries. By focusing on business technology services, and not on sales of hardware and software, they are able to make unbiased appraisals and recommendations of how their customers can best use their valuable resources in their IT infrastructure.

The touchstone of CIS's excellent reputation is personalized and responsive customer service. "We choose manufacturers and other service partners who share our values and belief that quality and honesty are the keys to long-term business success. Our service and dedication to our customers is our main priority, as we provide our clients with a customized one-on-one solution, unique to their situation. While there may be many computer/IT service companies out there, our customer service, experience, and dedication separate us from the rest. CIS provides a variety of services to help you succeed in your business and get the most out of technology for your company, including network

design and implementation services, contracted employees, managed services, and high speed Internet service."

In today's fast paced business environment, information technologies can make or break your business. At CIS, they have the resources, experience, and know-how to make your information systems work. "We are a service provider - we provide solutions measured by improved productivity, not product markups. Business owners and home office users can't afford the hassle and loss of productivity associated with bringing a computer to our repair center - that's why business owners and home office users turn to Clark Information Systems every day to handle their computer service needs. But CIS does more - our goal is to work with our customers to offer recommendations and to design solutions that improve their business. After all, we don't succeed unless our customers succeed."

Clark Information Systems is located at 1840 South Highway 92 in Sierra Vista. For more information, please visit their websites at: [www.clarkinfosys.com](http://www.clarkinfosys.com) or [www.cis-broadband.com](http://www.cis-broadband.com) or call 520-458-0293.

## 2014 SACA Board of Directors & Committee Chairs

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## SACA November 2014 Calendar of Events

**General Membership Meeting Wednesday, November 19**  
**Time: 11:30 a.m. • Luncheon \$15 at door, Please RSVP**  
Location: PDS Country Club, St. Andrews Dr., Sierra Vista, AZ

***SACA is proud to present our speaker for the November General Membership Meeting, Colonel Tony Boone, Commander, United States Army Garrison, Fort Huachuca***

**Col. Tony Boone** was born at Mac Dill Air Force Base in Tampa, FL. He holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Baylor University, Master of Science degree in Administration from Central Michigan University, and a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College. COL Boone's previous commands include Headquarters Command Battalion at Fort Meade, MD from 2009 to 2011 and 524<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion in Yongsan, South Korea from 2005-2006. Col. Boone was commissioned from Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, GA and has served as a Military Intelligence Officer for 20 years. His operational deployments include Operation Iraqi Freedom in Baghdad (2006-2008) and Operation Enduring Freedom in Kabul (2011-2012). He is a perpetual member of the Military Order of the World Wars. His awards and decorations include: Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Award, Army Achievement Medal and Parachutist Badge. COL Boone currently resides at Fort Huachuca, AZ with his wife Stephanie and two children Emily (16) and Evan (13).

### Government Meetings

Cochise Cty Board of Supervisors	Every Tues., 10 a.m.	County Buildings, Bisbee, AZ
Sierra Vista City Council	2nd & 4th Thurs., 5 p.m.	City Hall, 2nd Floor
Benson City Council	2nd & 4th Mon., 7 p.m.	City Hall
Bisbee City Council	1st & 3rd Tues., 7 p.m.	City Hall
Willcox City Council	1st & 3rd Mon., 7 p.m.	City Hall

## ATTENTION SACA MEMBERS!

The SACA newsletter is looking for members' business stories to publish. Do you have a story about your business that you'd like other SACA members and the general public to hear? Please contact us at (520) 458-0488, or email us at [admin@sacaseo.qwestbusiness.net](mailto:admin@sacaseo.qwestbusiness.net)

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## Construction News & Views



Construction News and Views is published monthly for the **Southeastern Arizona Contractors Association**

### Contractor Contacts

**Registrar of Contractors (Phoenix)**  
1-877-692-9762  
[www.rc.state.az.us](http://www.rc.state.az.us)

**Registrar of Contractors**  
400 W. Congress, #212  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 628-6345

**Southeastern Arizona Contractors Association**  
197-B, E. Fry Blvd  
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635  
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**Email:**  
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## Membership has its Benefits!

**A Powerful Voice** as the unified voice for Southeastern Arizona's construction industry, we support our members through our involvement in:

**The Arizona ROC Advisory Committee**- providing our local contractors with a voice.

**Building Code Technical Committee**- creating an open forum of communication with the building code authorities and our local contractors.

**City Liaison and Stakeholders**-Advocating our industry's needs through communication with city and county officials.

**Advocating for our Community**- SACA continues to fight to protect the future growth of our community.

**Safety Training** SACA provides our members with the knowledge and resources to keep themselves and their employees free from harm, and stay ADOSH compliant.

**A Competitive Edge** Through industry representation, educational programs, and valuable member-to-member contacts and business opportunities.

**Marketing** Promoting our members through the SACA website, the Construction News and Views" and events that are held throughout the year including: lunches, fundraisers, and other special activities.

**Building a Stronger Community** SACA partners with members to support many local charitable agencies and offers an annual scholarship.

**Discounts** SACA Members receive considerable discounts on ADOSH safety training, Home & Garden Show vendor booths, and insurance discounts.

AND Let's face it! We do business with people we know!

Our monthly membership meetings provide valuable networking opportunities with a delicious lunch and an informative speaking presentation.

**We invite you to join our SACA family and help make a difference!**



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## Letting Go of Overhead

*This article reprinted from the October 20/27, 2014 issue of ENR.*

Too many construction organizations become slaves to their overhead, their general and administrative expenses. Increased overhead usually equates to increased capacity and is common and appropriate during growth periods. Unfortunately, these expenses are much easier to put in place than to get rid of, and in a cyclical market they become a burden and create losses. This is especially true now that we have such a weak and slowly developing business upswing.

A common reaction in a declining construction market is to search for work in unfamiliar markets – new geographic areas and types of projects –

in order to hold the gradually built organization together. This combination often cuts profits or leads to losses. A declining market obviously poses risk for a construction organization, but dealing in unfamiliar markets simply magnifies the risk. And it's dangerous to combat risk by taking on more risk.

Think about how missing just a few consecutive ideal projects, which can happen even in a growth market, plus delayed project starts, can weaken your finances. Contractors are often tempted to look in other markets to maintain volume rather than cut overhead. Some have said they were forced into unfamiliar territory, when **Letting Go** continued on page 7

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**President** continued from page 1

for one reason or another.

During all this time, SACA has seen a decrease in membership of roughly 40% from the 'hay days' of 2005, and yet the cost to operate has increased - just as it has for all of us in business today.

During the coming year, I will be asking the board to look hard look at what SACA does well and what we don't do well. What services we can streamline and what services we can deliver in a less expensive way without sacrificing service. During these discussions, I will be asking the questions of what services are truly a service to our members today and what can we do without in our current business environment. This is not to say that in the future those services might change again once we see a need. These are all things any smart business, or association, does to adapt to the times at hand.

Looking at the budget today, I can see the membership dues do not cover the cost of rent for the SACA office and pay the office administrator, Barbara Nichols, who I believe is one of the best things to happen to SACA since I have been a member. These are hard facts that we cannot ignore. One way to help solve this problem is to increase our membership, but this is something hard to do to in our current economy.

This short fall of funds has turned the Board of Directors in to fulltime

fundraisers to keep SACA's doors open and has taken away from working on things that really make a difference to SACA's mission.

Here are a few of the things I will be asking the Board to consider:

- Can we deliver a 'plans service' in a different way?

- Should we reduce the amount we give to local charities, or reduce the number of charities we give to?

- Do we continue to supplement the printing of the monthly newsletter?

- Do we continue to supplement the 4H picnic?

Given the fact that I got no response from my little tickler I inserted in last month's newsletter, I am not sure many will ever see this article. Regardless, these challenges are real and they need to be addressed. I am sure there are a select few that will say that I am the problem for the drop in membership, and yes, I can site a few cases where that would be correct, but as I began this article with, "**The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result**", I believe things must change in order for our association to survive.

I also know that SACA's members should be proud of their Board of Directors and have the confidence that they will guide SACA through these tough times to become a stronger and more viable organization in the future.



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# Adopt a Highway program continues to keep Arizona beautiful

PHOENIX – Nearly 7,000 miles of Arizona highways take motorists on a journey through a variety of environments, from desert landscapes to snow-covered highlands to bustling urban settings. Keeping this wide-ranging system of roadways free of litter is no easy task, yet more than 12,000 volunteers and hundreds of sponsor groups beautify Arizona's roadways and support the efficient use of state transportation system resources.

Since its inception in 1988, the Arizona Department of Transportation's Adopt a Highway program has offered an opportunity for individuals, organizations and businesses to perform litter clean-up activities on two-mile sections of the state's highway system.

Each year, Adopt a Highway volunteers typically collect around 63 tons of litter and provide ADOT with a current statewide labor value of \$2.3 million. The Adopt a Highway program is active in all 15 counties in the state along approximately 2,000 miles of roadway.

More than 1,500 volunteer groups and several hundred sponsor groups collect litter. In rural areas, volunteer groups are asked to clean up their designated section of highway at least twice a year. An ADOT acknowledgement sign recognizes the volunteer group's section after their first cleanup. In the Phoenix and Tucson metropolitan areas, sponsor group organizations pay an ADOT-approved

professional landscaping company to remove litter on a section of freeway.

The cost to taxpayers for the program is minimal. ADOT's costs include vests and trash bags for the volunteers, and the production of the acknowledgement signs. A single ADOT staff member is responsible for managing the statewide program with operational and permitting support by ADOT field offices.

"The Adopt a Highway program promotes civic responsibility and community engagement," said Patricia Powers-Zermeño, Adopt a Highway program manager. "Picking up litter is a way for someone to have a positive impact on the appearance of their community with just a few hours of effort."

It is community spirit that attracts volunteers to the Adopt a Highway program in appreciation of Arizona's natural beauty. Ron Curtis and his family volunteer on a section of the Arizona State Highway System in the Navajo Nation. "It's a tradition," said Curtis. "The earth is our mother and nowadays it is up to us to take care of mother earth. It brings us together and we send a message out."

Richard Martin rides a motorcycle and says it's important for him to give back. "We use these highways all the time. I encourage motorcyclists to participate," said Martin.

Barbara Ricca is a 10-year volunteer in southeastern Arizona. She likes being

outdoors and began participating in the Adopt a Highway program to introduce her family to community service. "My girls are grown now, but the satisfaction of working in the community is still strong," said Ricca. "Right before my daughter Amanda moved to Scotland last year, I asked her what she wanted to do and she said volunteer with the Adopt a Highway program one more time."

Not only do volunteers feel a sense of satisfaction cleaning up the environment, periodically they also find some entertainment in the things they pick up along Arizona's roadways: a metal sculpture of a roosting bat, articles of clothing from head to toe, cans of food, geocache items and sometimes small bills or coins.

To learn how to participate in the ADOT Adopt a Highway volunteer program, visit [azdot.gov/Highways/AdoptaHwy/Index.asp](http://azdot.gov/Highways/AdoptaHwy/Index.asp).

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# Water Wise: California's Great Drought and Arizona

California has been experiencing one of its most severe droughts in history, but more are predicted in the near future. Although California has implemented conservation practices for many years, state officials are now preparing for ongoing water shortages. In addition to rising temperature and climate shifts, by 2025 scientists predict 25% less snowpack in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and less water for Californians ([www.water.ca.gov/climatechange](http://www.water.ca.gov/climatechange)).

What does this mean for Arizona? Arizona and California are tied together by Colorado River water. In addition to Mexico, Arizona and California are two of seven U.S. states that receive water allocations from the Colorado River Compact. The Compact specifies how much annual water each member state receives. But there is a problem. When the river water was allocated, unknown to the water wheelers and dealers, the river was flowing at higher than historic levels. This resulted in over-allocation and states have grown on their undependable water allocations. Some states (e.g. California) are taking their full allocation and unused water from other states (more wheeling and dealing). Now, the river has diminished flows, and diminished snow packs in the mountains are ex-

acerbating the situation. What was feared is now looking like a reality – river managers say there is a 50% probability that a river shortage will be declared in 2016. California is in a pickle. But not Arizona – yet.

Arizona was the last state to ratify the Compact. The Compact was created in 1922 but Arizona dragged its feet on ratification until 1944. As a result, Arizona is at the bottom of the Colorado River priority list. Knowing how precarious this position was, about twenty years ago Arizona began preparing for river shortages. Arizona was concerned that if a water shortage was declared, water managers would prohibit extractions beyond current levels. This means if a state wasn't using all of their allocation at the time of the shortage declaration, too bad. You don't use it, you lose it.

What did Arizona do? The Central Arizona Project (CAP) – the canal that supplies river water through Arizona - took its full allocation whether entities along the canal used it or not. Excess water was legally hoarded with a program called Arizona Water Banking Authority (AWBA). This program has put over 3 million acre-feet (an acre-foot is approximately 326,000 gallons – the amount of water needed to fill a football field one-foot deep in water) of water in storage for a not-so-rainy day. Arizona has also

been storing water for Nevada, a state with a very small Colorado River allocation (rumor of a 1922 back-of-the-napkin bar deal when Nevada calculated its water need based on agriculture. They didn't anticipate Las Vegas. Oops).

Because of the AWBA, river shortages will be mitigated to some degree for Arizonans on CAP water with the biggest impact felt by agriculture. However, as Director of the University of Arizona Water Resource Research Center Sharon Megdal writes in her article, "Shortage Projections May Inspire Changes in Thinking," (Arizona Water Resource, Fall, 2013), we shouldn't think just about today. We need to plan for a more secure water future and not simply respond to uncertain water supply and demands.

Water will become more expensive. Desalination either using brackish water and/or ocean water will become part of our water portfolio. Treating effluent to drinking water standards and use is also on the table. Increasingly efficient farming and irrigation strategies will become more economical (locally, farmers are beginning to use electronic irrigation sensors to fine-tune water applications). Crop types will change from water intensive to drought tolerant varieties (less alfalfa and more vineyards?).

This is a hay-day for engineers and

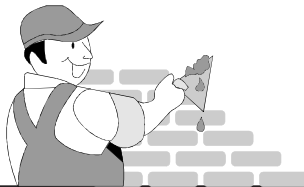
designers who love challenges. Create new stuff and configure buildings so we use less water but don't have a clue that we are. Of course it does come down to the user – that's us. Are we ready for toilets to tap? Are we ready to accept that high quality drinking water shouldn't be used on vegetation? Are we ready to adopt a Net Zero Water approach (a balanced supply and demand water budget) as the U.S. Department of Defense has? Are we ready to drink more wine? I'm in.

The Water Wise Program is a University of Arizona Cochise Cooperative program whose sponsors include Cochise County, the City of Sierra Vista, Ft. Huachuca, the Upper San Pedro Partnership and Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative. For more information visit [waterwise.arizona.edu](http://waterwise.arizona.edu)

Cado Daily, M.A.  
Water Resources Coordinator  
Water Wise Program  
UA Cochise County Coop. Extension  
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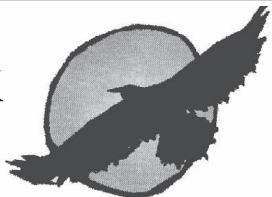


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# Safety: A Little info on Fall Protection

There are many myths in the construction industry about fall protection such as: “*Worker’s very seldom fall from the roof*”, “*In most cases, workers do not get hurt if they fall, don’t tense up, and usually land correctly*”, “*It takes a considerable height for the fall to be fatal*”; “*Older more experienced people don’t fall.*” These are just a few misconceptions, but this last one is the most ridiculous: “*The fall protection methods are not safe and they could cause me to fall instead of preventing me from falling.*”

Let’s look at a comparison: A baseball player is trying to hit a ball coming toward him at 85-90 MPH, at a distance of 53.5 feet with .44 of a second of reaction time. Strike to ball ratios is about 65% in the major leagues. The baseball players are not accurate enough to hit the ball 65% of the time. The speed of falling is 32 feet per second. A typical first story eave is 8 feet, so the reaction time of fall is .25 of a second - half the reaction time of a baseball flying through the air. This is not enough time to say “Oh, heck”, before you hit. If you slide a little off a roof and then drop, it will

give you a little more reaction time to try to miss the debris around the building and try to land properly, but doubtfully the time to react properly will be there.

The average age of victims of fatal falls is 47 years old. Each year, half of roofing-related deaths are due to edge related falls. Fifty percent of construction fall-related deaths are from 21 feet of height or less, so a higher distance is not needed for the fall to become fatal. Falls also include changing levels of surfaces, such as trenches or landings.

When an employee has different working surfaces or a lower level of 6 feet, fall protection of some sort must be used. Federal OSHA states “*Unprotected sides and edges.*” *Each employee on a walking/working surface (horizontal and vertical surface) with an unprotected side or edge which is 6 feet (1.8 m) or more above a lower level shall be protected from falling by the use of guardrail systems, safety net systems, or personal fall arrest systems.*”

The following list provides many ways to prevent falling from one surface to another

- *Using the correct barriers to cover a trench.*

- *Use a fencing system to keep people out of the area of a hole and be six feet from the hazard or leading edge.*

- *Cover a hole with a material which withstands twice the weight of employees, materials and equipment which may be imposed on the cover and visibly mark “HOLE” over the hole.*

- *Use a guard rail system with 42” top rail, 21” mid rail and toe boards on any transition of a building where someone could fall.*

- *Do not use a balance beam to cross trenches, and walking paths across a trench needs handrails.*

- *Use a personal fall arrest system.*

- *Place guard rails across wall openings when a fall could occur if the window ledge is less than 39” high, guard rails need to withstand 200 pounds of lateral forces and 150 pounds of downward forces.*

- *Low sloped roofs may use a warning line system and a monitoring system.*

More information is available about fall protection regulations on the OSHA website: [www.OSHA.gov](http://www.OSHA.gov) in the “construction” tab under “1926 subpart M”.

**BE AWARE:** ADOSH is adopting all of the federal OSHA fall protection mandates in the near future.

**Note:** The ADOSH allowance from the SC 1441 which allowed constructions workers to not have fall protection on structures with an eave height of 15’ or less will be void when ADOSH adopts the 6’ eave height requirement for fall protection.

Fall Protection is the safety training topic at the SACA ADOSH training in the first quarter of 2015. Please plan to be there to hear any changes from ADOSH. Fees are \$5 for members and \$45 for non-members. Information on the date and time will be posted on the SACA website: [www.saca-az.org](http://www.saca-az.org) and emails for this training event will be broadcasted to those that are subscribed. (if interested, visit the SACA website to sign up for event notifications) *This will be a 4 hour class.*

Be aware and be safe.

**Letting Go** continued from page 3 the reality is they never considered reducing volume (and capacity) to adapt to market realities.

A far superior and much less risky strategy is to chase and produce work within the organization’s proven track record. When that type and location of work declines for any reason, reduce overhead in order to maintain continuous profitability. In this way you can manage your risk to achieve success rather than react to changes. I fully realize this is a huge paradigm shift from the often-heard standards: “If you’re not growing you’re going backwards” or “I have got to keep my organization together for when the market comes back.” My answer is, “At what cost?” This recent sustained, lengthy and painful down market has shed light on the reality that excess overhead costs have weakened nu-

merous construction companies, which does little to prepare the company for when the market returns. The current weak recovery is just making it worse.

## Flexible Overhead

The answer to this problem is a new strategy I call “flexible overhead.” Some companies already use it although not necessarily under that name. These are firms that are smaller (in some cases a lot smaller) than they were four or five years ago, but have remained profitable. They obviously do not earn as much money as when they were larger, but they do not give any back either. There is a much larger group of firms that have lost money.

What I am proposing is not nearly as painful as downsizing. Under my concept of flexible overhead, contractors should engage a percentage of all overhead costs in such a manner that they can be turned off and the expense

ceases in a week or less—in some cases, in a day. They are not taken on as permanent expenses but as rentals, temporary personnel, interim office space, etc. The percentage range varies up to 25% because each organization is different.

I have already heard complaints that this is impractical and too expensive, that temporary personnel are less qualified and it is cheaper to own equipment than to rent, and so on. To this criticism, I say that the market we deal in is cyclical. Continuous growth in sales as a business model is impractical, high-risk and dangerous. A concentration on growth in profits rather than sales makes more sense. When maintaining size is the chief motivator, overhead tends to grow. When growth in profits is the primary focus, selection in projects shifts from a desperate need for sales to what the organization

does best. Team members still have job security because flexible overhead will preserve the company and its staff. A company that concentrates on profitability, not size, has a totally different understanding of the market and its place in it. It still enters new markets, but with careful attention to how much it attempts, what the risks are and whether it can afford the learning curve. A new definition of the successful contractor of the future has evolved.

Thomas C. Schleifer, Ph.D., is a management consultant, research professor at the Del E. Webb School of Construction at Arizona State University and author of the new book, “Managing the Profitable Construction Business.” He can be reached at [ttschleifer@q.com](mailto:ttschleifer@q.com) or 480-945-7680.

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