



# ILICA

# NEWS

## Land Improvement Contractors Of America · Illinois Chapter

### May - June 2020

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#### Area 8

Tom Beyers  
Norm Kocher

David Randolph  
*Associate Director*

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### Upcoming Events:

**Board of Directors Meeting**  
Teleconference  
May 16, 2020 - 9 am

**National LICA Convention**  
Niagara Falls, NY  
July 7-11, 2020

## 2019 ILICA AWARD RECIPIENTS



(page 16-18)

## AREA 6 GOLF OUTING & TRAP SHOOT JUNE 19, 2020



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- ▶ **Coronavirus Relief for Businesses** (page 6, 12-13)
- ▶ **Litwiller Named ADS Conservation Contractor of the Year at LICA Convention** (page 9)
- ▶ **State Convention & Members' Mtg. Recap** (page 14-15)

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# The ILICA News



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The *ILICA News* is the official publication of Illinois Land Improvement Contractors Association, Inc. at 112 Exchange St., Ste. 2, Galva, IL 61434. (309) 932-1230.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



“What in the wide, wide, world of sports is a goin’ on here?”

There was a moment where the Curtis Household toilet paper stock pile hit record lows, and we were unsure if we were going to be able to recover! The Curtis Home School Program has had

one teacher quit, and the other is asking for an increase in her salary. The one and only student of the program has been given several 1 day out of school suspensions (for lessons with Dad) and is very close to having to repeat 1st grade (No, not really, but don't tell Kane that...it keeps him motivated)!

In all seriousness (even though I don't utter those words often), these are unusual times. Hopefully by the time this hits the presses we are seeing some sort of normalcy return to America and Illinois. We have all had to make sacrifices, and most of us have taken it in stride (not me). I would like to commend Ryan and Michelle for their ongoing persistence to keep Illinois LICA running as smoothly as possible during this. Some of our summer activities are still being planned, but we are unsure as to how all of those might fall into place with the

new restrictions. Please bear with us as this is going to be a learning process for us all.

Stay Safe and Well! Let us know if you need anything.

Sincerely,  
Grant Curtis

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# NEW MEMBERS

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**Matthew Decap**  
**Phoenix Corporation of the Quad Cities**  
 1006 Rosehill Road  
 Port Byron, IL 61275  
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 Email: mdecap@phoenixcorp.org

**Max Hammond**  
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## Associate Members

**Maatuka, Al-Heeti Emkes, LLC**  
**Kyle J Emkes**  
 2101 Windsor Place, Suite B  
 Champaign, IL 61820  
 Ph: 217-356-9500  
 Email: kyle@maelaw.net

2020 BOARD MEMBER MTG. ATTENDANCE						
A = absent		P = present		C = cancelled meeting		
Area / Director	Feb	Mar	May	Aug	Sep	Nov
<b>Pres:</b> Grant Curtis	P	P				
<b>VP:</b> Steve Anderson	P	A				
<b>1st VP:</b> Eric Layden	P	A				
Area 1 - Brian Brooks	P	P				
Area 2 - Stuart Anderson	A	P				
Area 3 - Wes Litwiller	P	P				
Area 3 - Joe Streitmatter	P	P				
Area 4 - David Kennedy	P	A				
Area 4 - John McCoy	A	A				
Area 5 - <b>Vacant</b>	-	-				
Area 6 - Scott Day	P	P				
Area 6 - Bill Dean	P	A				
Area 7 - <b>Vacant</b>	-	-				
Area 8 - Norm Kocher	A	A				
Area 8 - Tom Beyers	P	A				
Associate Dir: D. Randolph	P	A				

## BOARD & MEMBERS' MEETING SCHEDULE

Unless changed by the Board during the year, the ILICA business meetings are scheduled as follows:

**May 16, 2020 - Regular Meeting of the Board:**  
 Teleconference

*Exact location, meeting times & other details will be published in the ILICA News and sent to members via mail and/or email.*

# CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FOR BUSINESSES

To be a business owner now, during the coronavirus pandemic, is to be in serious financial straits. That is, unless you're in the business of selling groceries, medicine, other essentials or streaming services. With most of the country under stay-at-home orders, Main Street has had to cut hours if not close completely. The lost revenue, for big and small businesses, is unprecedented, as is the number of people filing for unemployment (22 million first-time claims filed in a month!). To help you get through the crisis, SmartAsset has put together this guide to all relief programs available to small business owners, including what's in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act. While staying in business has never been harder, billions in federal and state aid are available with lower-than-usual barriers.

## **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loans**

Allocated \$349 billion by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act, the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) has run out of funding, the White House announced on April 16, 2020. Despite its bumpy start, the program had approved more than 1.5 million applications from distressed small businesses in less than two weeks. As a result of the funding shortfall, the Small Business Administration (SBA) is telling lenders that it will no longer take applications.

Both the House and Senate agree that the PPP needs more money, so funding should be forthcoming. The question is when. Given the dire straits many of the nation's 30 million small business find themselves in, hopefully it'll be soon. In the meantime, some banks will continue to accept applications for when the pipeline opens again. Others may tell small business owners just to have their applications ready.

With most Americans under some form of lockdown and businesses across the country shuttered, PPP loans are a much needed lifeline. They can be for 2.5 times payroll costs, up to \$10 million, and feature a streamlined application process and fewer requirements. Most significantly, PPP loans can be forgiven, fully or in part, depending on if borrowers maintain head counts and payrolls at pre-pandemic levels and use their loan for permitted expenses.

If you were going to apply for a PPP loan, which the SBA classifies as a 7(a) loan, you should still get your paperwork ready.

## ***Who Qualifies for a PPP Loan?***

Any small business with 500 or fewer employees may be eligible. This includes small businesses, S corporations, C corporations, LLCs, private nonprofits, faith-based organizations, tribal groups and veteran groups. Self-employed individuals who file an IRS Schedule C with their Form 1040, such as independent contractors and sole proprietors, are also eligible. (Partners who report self-employment income, however, are not eligible as self-employed individuals.)

Restaurants and hospitality businesses may qualify if they have 500 or fewer employees per location. Details on the size standards and exceptions are on the SBA website.

Ineligible businesses include those engaged in illegal activities, owners more than 60 days delinquent on child support obligations, farms and ranches, sex businesses, lobbyists and gambling establishments.

## ***Do Venture Capital-Backed Startups Qualify for a PPP Loan?***

Startups, by definition, tend to have far fewer than 500 employees. But in the existing framework of the SBA's 7(a) program, startups backed by venture capital firms may be required, in their application for a PPP loan, to count both their own employees and those of the VC firm and its other portfolio companies. That could push the employee count of the startup's PPP loan application over 500 – effectively disqualifying it. As a general rule, though, such “affiliation rules” only apply if the VC firm owns more than 50% of the startup or if it exerts operational control over the startup.

But what if several VC firms own a combined 50% or more of the startup? Would that count as an affiliation? Existing SBA rules were not clear, but the Treasury released a modified set of rules for the PPP on April 3, 2020. You can read the new guidance here, but generally, it says no: several VC firms owning a majority of a startup's equity does not make the startup their affiliate. In this situation, a qualified startup is eligible for a PPP loan. For more information, the National Venture Capital Association (NVCA) has issued detailed guidance on the question for its members.

## ***Terms of a PPP Loan***

The government's efforts to help businesses has resulted in generous terms for PPP loans. Borrowers can receive two and a half times their average monthly payroll costs (excluding compensation in excess of \$100,000 per employee) incurred 12 months before the date the loan is made (some lenders are simply using 2019 numbers). For example, if your monthly average payroll (excluding compensation in excess of \$100,000 salaries) in the last 12 months is \$10,000, you may borrow up to \$25,000. Additionally, you can include as payroll costs: payment for vacation, parental, family, medical and sick leave (that is not covered by another emergency loan/grant); payment for dismissal or separation; payment for group health care coverage, including insurance premiums; payment for retirement benefits and payment of state and local taxes assessed on employees' compensation.

Also, you can add to your total loan amount the outstanding amount of any Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) made between January 31, 2020 and April 3, 2020, less any “advance” that is forgivable under an EIDL COVID-19 loan. The maximum any business can borrow is \$10 million.

The money can be used for payroll (no more than \$100,000 annual salary per employee) as well as benefits (including paid sick leave and insurance premiums) and taxes on compensation. Up to 25% of the loan may be used by the business to cover mortgage interest, rent, utilities and interest on pre-existing loans.

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See Rick's story at [ads-pipe.com/stories](https://ads-pipe.com/stories).





# ILICA Ladies Page

Like many families, you and your relatives may have made plans to get together this summer. What a great opportunity for sharing stories and family history. Give one of these 10 fun family history activities a try at your next family reunion to get people talking, sharing and having fun.

## Memory T-Shirts

If you have more than one branch of an extended family attending your reunion, consider identifying each branch with a different colored shirt. To further incorporate the family history theme, scan in a photo of the branch's progenitor and print it out on an iron-on transfer with identifiers such as "Joe's Kid" or "Joe's Grandkid." These color-coded photo t-shirts make it easy to tell at a glance who is related to who. Color-coded family tree name tags offer a more inexpensive variation.

## Photo Swap

Invite attendees to bring their old, historic family photos to the reunion, including pictures of people (great, great-grandpa), places (churches, cemetery, the old homestead) and even previous reunions. Encourage everyone to label their photos with the names of the people in the photograph, the date of the photo, and their own name and an ID number (a different number to identify each photo). If you can get a volunteer to bring a scanner and laptop computer with a CD burner, then set up a scanning table and create a CD of everyone's photos. You can even encourage people to bring more photos by offering a free CD for every 10 photos contributed. The rest of the CDs you can sell to interested family members to help defray costs of the scanning and CD burning. If your family isn't very tech-savvy, then set up a table with the photos and include signup sheets where people can order copies of their favorites (by name and ID number).

## Family Scavenger Hunt

Fun for all ages, but an especially good way to get the kids involved, a family scavenger hunt ensures plenty of interaction between different generations. Create a form or booklet with family-related questions such as: What was great-grandfather Powell's first name? Which Aunt had twins? Where and when were Grandma and Grandpa Bishop married? Is there someone born in the same state as you? Set a deadline, and then gather the family together to judge the results. If you wish, you can award prizes to the people who get the most answers correct, and the booklets themselves make nice reunion souvenirs.

## Family Tree Wall Chart

Create a large family tree chart to display on a wall, including as many generations of the family as possible. Family members can use it to fill in the blanks and correct any inaccurate information. Wall charts are popular with reunion attendees as they help people visualize their place within the family. The finished

product also provides a great source of genealogical information.

## Heritage Cookbook

Invite attendees to submit favorite family recipes—from their own family or one passed down from a distant ancestor. Ask them to include details on, memories of and a photo (when available) of the family member best known for the dish. The collected recipes can then be turned into a wonderful family cookbook. This also makes a great fundraising project for the following year's reunion.

## Memory Lane Storytime

A rare opportunity to hear interesting and funny stories about your family, a storytelling hour can really encourage family memories. If everyone agrees, have someone audiotape or videotape this session.

## Tour of the Past

If your family reunion is held near where the family originated, then schedule a trip to the old family homestead, church or cemetery. You can use this as an opportunity to share family memories, or go a step further and recruit the clan to clean up the ancestral cemetery plots or research the family in old church records (be sure to schedule with the pastor in advance). This is a particularly special activity when many members are attending from out-of-town.

## Family History Skits and Reenactments

Using stories from your own family history, have groups of attendees develop skits or plays that will retell the tales at your family reunion. You can even stage these reenactments at places that are of importance to your family such as homes, schools, churches, and parks (see Tour into the Past above). Non-actors can get into the fun by modeling vintage clothing or ancestral outfits.

## Oral History Odyssey

Find someone with a video camera who is willing to interview members of the family. If the reunion is in honor of a special event (such as Grandma and Grandpa's 50th Anniversary), ask people to talk about the guest(s) of honor. Or, ask questions on other select memories, such as growing up on the old homestead. You'll be surprised how differently people remember the same place or event.

## Memorabilia Table

Set up a table for attendees to bring and display treasured family memorabilia—historic photos, military medals, old jewelry, family bibles, etc. Be sure all items are carefully labeled and the table is always hosted.

## Fun Family History Activities for Family Reunions





# LITWILLER NAMED ADS CONSERVATION CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR AT LICA CONVENTION

The Annual National LICA Winter Convention was held in mid-March just days before CONEXPO in Las Vegas, NV. Despite growing COVID 19 concerns, LICA's Convention was well attended, while CONEXPO attendance was down a small percentage.

One of the most exciting pieces of news to share from the event, which runs a condensed agenda during CONEXPO years in the US, involves one of our very own Directors. Member Wayne Litwiller was awarded the ADS Conservation Contractor of the Year Award! Those that know Wayne can attest that he is the perfect recipient for the award, whose winner meets the following criteria:

- Actively utilizes practices that enhance water quality and minimize soil erosion and sediment loss
- Installs drainage and/or water control systems that are environmentally sound
- Works closely with local authorities to insure proper installation of all conservation practices

- Promotes the utilization and proper installation of conservation practices and assists in educating fellow contractors and the general public
- Active in LICA
- Operates in a safe manner
- Runs a profitable business
- Seeks change to improve the profession
- Promotes proper maintenance assistance
- Good community leader



Be sure to give Wayne a well deserved congratulations next time you chat with him. And don't forget the National Convention minutes/reports can be found in the last issue of National's *The LICA News* or by contacting National direct. They are full of great information and updates from our chapters nationwide. The National LICA Summer Convention this July will be held in Niagara Falls, NY. We hope to see you there!

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**GOLF OUTING  
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2. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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4. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My preferred foursome is: \_\_\_\_\_  I do not have a preference

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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**TRAP SHOOT REQUIREMENTS:** Shooters are encouraged to bring their own gun and the correct loads for their gun(s). Lead shot is acceptable.

## CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FOR BUSINESSES (CONT.)

The covered expenses have to be incurred from Feb. 15, 2020 through June 30, 2020. Businesses have to have been in business by Feb. 15, 2020.

Any portion of the loan that is not forgiven will carry an interest rate of 1.0% and is due to be paid back within two years. However, payments for the first six months can be deferred. There's no pre-payment penalty.

### ***PPP Loan Forgiveness***

Borrowers will have their loans forgiven if they use the money for designated expenses. Participants are eligible for loan forgiveness for the amounts spent on authorized expenses over the eight weeks after receiving the loan.

The total payments for payroll over the eight weeks after the loan is disbursed may be forgivable. Mortgage interest, rent and utilities are also forgivable, up to 25% of the PPP loan.

To get the entire amount of the loan forgiven (assuming that at least 75% is spent on payroll and the rest on permitted expenses), you must meet two criteria. First, the full-time employee headcount cannot decline from average monthly levels during 2019 or during the past 12 months. If your business launched in the second half of 2019, you can use average headcounts from January 1, 2020 to February 29, 2020. If your business is seasonal, you can base your monthly averages on numbers from February 15, 2019, or March 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019.

Second, for loans to become full grants, employers cannot cut salaries or wages. If they do, the forgiven amount will be reduced. Employers who already let workers go have until June 30 to re-staff.

The SBA has yet to issue guidance on how a smaller staff or payroll will reduce the amount eligible for forgiveness. Accounting firms and law firms are offering different interpretations online. We will publish this information as soon as the SBA releases it.

Another provision of the program allows borrowers who already have disaster assistance loans to defer payments through Dec. 31. This is an automatic deferment. Borrowers don't have to do anything to qualify for it.

### ***When and How to Apply***

Banks, primarily community banks, began accepting PPP loan applications from small businesses and sole proprietorships on April 3. Independent contractors and self-employed individuals, including freelancers, could apply starting April 10. The program ends June 30, though borrowers are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

Borrowers can apply to any SBA-approved lender, including participating commercial banks and credit unions. A list of approved lenders can be found on the SBA website. Note that many lenders are limiting eligibility to those businesses with whom they have a pre-existing relationship, such as previous loans or a business checking account.

The program also provides for waivers that would normally be applied to SBA loans. Those include waivers for fees charged to borrowers and lenders, as well as prepayment fees. A requirement that borrowers also have credit elsewhere is likewise being waived for this program. There are no requirements for collateral or personal guarantees.

Business owners must submit applications to a participating lender, who in turn sends them to the SBA for approval. As said at the beginning of this article, however, the SBA is not accepting new applications at this time. It also is not accepting new lenders into the program. Once the program gets more funding and the SBA starts accepting applications again, it evaluates them the same day they are received.

You must submit your loan application to a lender, but you can find a sample application at the SBA website. The SBA estimates the application process should take about two hours and 10 minutes. However, this is assuming all required documents are available. It may take a few days to gather the necessary paperwork. Additionally, due to the high volume of applications, lenders are struggling to process applications in a timely manner. Indeed, many banks are asking for customer patience on their websites.

### ***Employee Retention Tax Credit***

The Employee Retention Tax Credit, or ERTC, is one of many tax provisions included in the CARES Act to encourage small businesses to keep employees on staff instead of furloughing or laying them off. The credit is equal to 50% of qualified wages paid to an employee between March 12, 2020 and Jan. 1, 2021, including qualified health plan expenses. The maximum amount of qualified wages that can be claimed is \$10,000, which means the maximum credit for any one employee is \$5,000.

The ERTC is fully refundable, and it is applied to the portion of payroll taxes paid by the employer. The IRS has developed a plan to allow eligible businesses to receive an advance payment on their credit. This is designed to alleviate liquidity concerns held by many businesses claiming the ERTC.

### ***Who Is and Isn't Eligible for the Employee Retention Tax Credit?***

Unlike other, more broadly applicable provisions mentioned in the CARES Act, the ERTC is only available to certain qualified employers whose businesses have been affected by the coronavirus pandemic. These may include most types of businesses, except for self-employed individuals and governmental employers.

There are two ways to qualify for the ERTC as an eligible employer. According to the IRS website, you either need to:

- Fully or partially suspend operations at any point during 2020 due to a coronavirus government mandate.
- Show a significant decline in gross receipts during a calendar quarter in 2020. To qualify under this requirement, gross receipts of any given quarter must be less than 50% of the gross receipts of the same quarter in 2019.



# CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FOR BUSINESSES (CONT.)

If a business has fewer than 100 employees, all employees are eligible. If a business has more than 100 employees, only those who are being paid but not providing a service due to coronavirus-related cutbacks are eligible.

Note that any employers who receive a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan are not eligible for the Employee Retention Tax Credit. In addition, employers cannot double-claim employees and their wages in relation to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit.

### How Much Can You Claim Through the Employee Retention Tax Credit?

The Employee Retention Tax Credit can be applied to \$10,000 in wages per employee. The time frame for the credit is any wages earned between March 12, 2020 and Jan. 1, 2021. Since it only covers 50% of wages per employee, this gives employers a total credit of up to \$5,000 for each employee they retain.

You cannot combine this tax credit with any others. For example, the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA) requires employers to provide certain affected employees with paid sick and family leave due to COVID-19. The FFCRA includes a similar tax credit, so wages cannot be counted for both. This could limit how much an employer can receive through the ERTC program.

Employers are not required to take advantage of the Employee Retention Tax Credit, and some may choose instead to lay off or furlough their employees rather than pay qualified wages and claim the ERTC.

### How to Claim the Employee Retention Tax Credit

To claim the ERTC, eligible employers must report their total qualified wages and any related credits on a quarterly basis. These federal returns are typically completed through Form 941, Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return. Through this filing, businesses will report their income, as well as the Social Security and Medicare taxes that were withheld from employees' paychecks. The employer's portion of the Social Security and Medicare taxes must be reported too.

Eligible employers should expect to receive the credit, so they can use the funds that would normally be withheld to cover employees' qualified wages. Businesses can also try requesting an advance from the IRS.

\*To read the full article & learn about other relief programs visit: <https://smartasset.com/financial-advisor/coronavirus-relief-for-businesses>

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## STATE CONVENTION & MEMBERS' MTG. RECAP

Tasked with orchestrating the largest Illinois LICA event each year, the Convention Committee works tirelessly throughout the year constantly evaluating and reanalyzing venues, presenters, entertainment, and layouts for the two-and-a-half day event. The 2020 Illinois LICA Convention & Members' Meeting was structured around a game night theme: "Maintain Your Competitive Advantage." For the second year in a row, deliberate changes were made to the event platform with the hopes of improving attendance and the "fun factor" of the event.

Regular convention attendees noticed a number of changes to this year's event including the shifting of the Awards Banquet and sponsored entertainment up to Thursday evening and the extension of the trade show to a full 1.5 days. These changes accomplished a couple things important to the committee. Moving the banquet up earlier on the schedule allowed Associate members and other trade show exhibitors the opportunity to help us recognize those award recipients that have given so much to Illinois LICA over the past year. With the banquet traditionally the evening after the last day of the trade show, many exhibitors were already back on the road in years past, missing not only congratulating award winners but excellent entertainment, like comedian Jeff Jena who was phenomenal this year! Coupling the opportunity to display large equipment on the trade show floor with Associate member survey feedback requesting more exhibit time, extension of the trade show hours brought more value to exhibitors' efforts and added more time for in-house games and entertainment in the trade show area (a lot of extra work on the convention committee's part, but a lot of fun). In exchange, there was a noticeable lack of education sessions this year, with the exception of the septic CEU training one morning. Other new additions to the event this year included a tour of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum, an indoor equipment rodeo, a bean bag toss tournament that was the highlight of Friday evening's game night entertainment in the exhibit hall, and a "bucket"

auction in lieu of a live auction where every entry of a purchased ticket into an auction item bucket was a chance to win!

Averaging over 120 attendees during the first two days of Convention, attendance was down roughly 14% from last year's average, while the number of trade show exhibitors grew by 8%; begging the age old question, "why?". Was it the weather, location, agenda, date, economic climate? After reviewing survey feedback from the event, the committee decided it was... time to invest in a crystal ball! In all seriousness, though, this is what makes being a convention committee member so challenging. Despite having top-notch programming and entertainment, like we regularly do at the event, sometimes attendance just isn't where you'd hoped it would be; could be a simple snow storm; could be a missed registration deadline; could be a dismal financial year; could be an already booked day on the calendar. What ever the circumstance, foreseen or unforeseen, I can tell you few ILICA committees are more dedicated to figuring it out and planning as best as they can than the convention committee. Please be sure to thank the committee members the next time you see them for another job well done and for going above and beyond with this year's agenda and new event additions at the new venue.

All things considered, the 2020 ILICA Convention at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield, IL was as noticeably different as it was noticeably successful. The 2021 ILICA Convention will again be held at the Crowne Plaza on February 24-27, 2021. And it's a guarantee that you will see continued changes to the event as the committee analyzes current feedback, new methods, and new approaches of increasing member engagement at this great event.

Thank you to all this year's Convention sponsors and donors for your generosity and support, making the 2020 ILICA Convention another valuable event!







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## 2019 ILICA AWARD RECIPIENTS

On the first evening of the 2020 ILICA Convention, the Awards Committee recognized the most outstanding individuals and partners in 2019 for their contributions to ILICA. Based on membership nominations, the award winners were:

### Merit Award

For their lead roles in the evaluation, planning, and execution of Illinois LICA's numerous field demonstration projects in 2019, Jon Seevers & Brian Brooks were recognized as Merit Award recipients. From mid-March through the end of August, Illinois LICA demonstrated the installation of two saturated buffers, one wood-chip bioreactor, an one acre constructed wetland, and 35 acres of subsurface tile drainage as part of separate, open-to-the-public field day events across the state. Illinois LICA also demonstrated what not to do, for the first time during a demonstration, with the unforgettable Farm Progress Show mock-utility line strike event. Each demonstration requires hours of planning and preparation beginning months in advance of the first shovel of dirt being moved. Things like meeting and working with partners, holding conference calls, evaluating potential project sites, bidding projects, lining up equipment and materials, and organizing volunteer workforces are demanding tasks that require a substantial amount of personal time and forethought to accomplish on a deadline. Yet, these merit award recipients somehow got it all done and both individually led the two largest field demonstrations of the year for the Association. And even though they may not have physically assisted at every Illinois LICA demonstration in 2019, it was all of their hard work and leadership behind the scenes that helped lead these projects to success.

For her role in leveraging partners to bring public awareness around utility line safety during the 2019 Farm Progress Show, the largest outdoor farm show in the nation, Gina Meehan-Taylor with Ameren Illinois was a Merit Award recipient. Start-



**Merit Award:**  
Jon Seevers, with wife,  
Veronica



**Merit Award:**  
Brian Brooks, pictured  
with Awards Committee  
Chairman, Bill Dean

ing with Ameren back in August 1988, she has worked various jobs in her career such as Gas Regulator Technician, Gas Crew Leader, Training Supervisor, and Regulatory Specialist. In her current role as Supervisor Public Awareness, she is a very effective spokesperson not only for Ameren but for all utilities' public awareness and damage prevention efforts. She is extremely passionate about her work and about things near to her heart. She has served terms on her local YMCA Board, and she organizes a golf tournament in memory of her father with all proceeds benefiting the Alzheimer's Association. Living in Canton, IL with her husband, Dan, and sons Jordan, Gerad and Justin, Gina enjoys traveling and fishing in her spare time.

For her efforts and contributions towards the longevity of the Association, Amber Bosma of Prins Insurance was a Merit Award recipient. She brings her passion and knowledge of Association management and strategy to many of the organizations of which she is apart. At National LICA Conventions, she has shared her experiences and led Executive Director education sessions that inspire and continually drive state LI-



**Merit Award:**  
Amber Bosma, pictured with  
Prins Insurance Team mem-  
bers, Jim Jansen & Bruce  
Mosier

CA chapters to remain relevant and successful. Amber volunteered her time to help Illinois LICA complete strategic planning that will guide the Association into the future with more direction and clarity. And for those that know her and her "team," Amber and Prins Insurance have been regular supporters of LICA in so many ways at the state and national levels.

### Shiny Shovel Award

Bringing recognition to those members and partners that have consistently supported Illinois LICA in every, or almost every, event throughout the year (i.e. financially, physically, and promotionally), Shiny Shovel Award recipients are highly engaged, supporting ILICA at the numerous functions held every year. Their shovel never sets down long enough to acquire rust, but instead is shiny from its continual use. Being a state-wide association with functions spread throughout the state, Illinois LICA is a very active chapter and in 2019 held 6 business meetings, 3 education workshops, a golf outing, a trap shoot, a member picnic, 4 summer demonstration projects, countless conference calls & industry partner meetings, and an annual meeting. This year's Shiny Shovel Award recipient earned this recognition for devoting his personal time, finances, manpower, and experiences to nearly every activity listed for this year. A long-standing member of Illinois LICA where he con-



## 2019 ILICA AWARD RECIPIENTS (CONT.)



tinues to provide leadership and service to the Association, just like he has during the past 30 years of membership with Illinois LICA, Steve Anderson was named the 2019 Shiny Shovel Award recipient.

### Mr. Contractor Award

Wes Litwiller was named 2019 Mr. Contractor of the Year for his active involvement within the Association, his community and his family life. The oldest of 8, Wes was raised on a dairy farm with a strong Christian upbringing, where his dad was always a song leader within the church. Early on, Wes's dad gave him chores on the family farm. Eventually, Wes had saved enough of his own money and bought a few hogs and independently raised them, buying his own feed and showing them at the local fairs. He even came home with champions and grand champions several times. Wes was an accredited athlete in baseball, basketball, and track and field growing up. He was also very active in his church, youth groups, FFA and 4H. Over the years, Wes had many off the farm jobs including bailing hay, pumping gas, and many other odd jobs. He met his wife in high school and married her in 1972.

Wes and his family have been a member of ILICA for many years. He has served on committees for several years and has donated many hours to ILICA projects. He is someone you can go to for technical advice with any dirt moving project. While very humble about it, Wes has always been there anytime help is needed on a conservation expo, wetland event, or any other project our Association undertakes. Being a member of ILICA has placed him at the cutting edge of soil conservation and brought him new experiences, opportunities, and wisdom of fellow contractors who dedicate themselves to the preservation of one of our greatest resources. Wes truly loves his profession and has been blessed with safety as he travels many miles over the state hauling any equipment needed for his work. Excavating has brought him a lifetime of opportunities from running a shovel to operating any piece of equipment where a skilled operator is required. Comments from customers, fellow contractors, and our own members include: No one better



**Shiny Shovel Award:**  
Steve Anderson, pictured with Awards Committee Chairman, Bill Dean

than him; We want him and only him on my job; He seems to work magic; He's a natural at it. Wes's response to this: Do a good job you can be proud of while being humble doing it and give credit to all those involved. Wes has given his cousin great credit for shaping and molding him into the person he is today. Partnering with him, he says, is the 3rd best decision he ever made. (You'll have to ask him what #1 and #2 are.) Wes's #1 passion is his one and only granddaughter. He has even sold all the hogs to have more time with her and his family.

### Leadership Award

By dictionary standards, leadership is the action of leading a group or organization. In practice, leadership is the art of motivating a group of people toward a common goal. Over the years, ILICA has benefited from the leadership and mentorship of several members, and Joe Streitmatter was recognized as one of those leaders by being honored with a new award for 2019 from Illinois LICA: The Leadership Award. There are many skill sets and competencies that Joe possesses and that his peers would agree with: loyal and dedicated member; willing to share his knowledge with others; professional and always having the best interest of the association in mind with any decision or conversation he has; patient and the list goes on. Joe has led the association as past president during challenging times; served on several committees as both a member and a chair (notably, his efforts on the nomination committee selecting people to lead the organization are based on his ability to see future leaders); received numerous merit awards and a shiny shovel award; leadership for the shows. Whether as chair or a participant, his peers describe him as an individual who works from the ground up; the go-to person with boots on the ground. Starting with implementation of the engineered designs to his earth moving expertise, Joe's operating skills are top notch, and he always leads the show team through completion. A leader in the Association for 23 years, Joe was also awarded Mr. Contractor 2004.



**Mr. Contractor Award:**  
Wes Litwiller, with wife, Susan



**Leadership Award:**  
Joe Streitmatter, with wife, Jackie



## 2019 ILICA AWARD RECIPIENTS (CONT.)

### Lifetime Membership Award

Lifetime Membership is a way to recognize those individuals who have continuously shared their time, talent, and knowledge with Illinois LICA. These individuals are, from that time forward, perpetual members of the organization as a sign of our appreciation for all they have done. Lifetime Membership is not awarded on a yearly basis, yet Illinois LICA awarded three outstanding individuals with the honor for their years of service to the Association.

Lifetime Membership recipient Stan Seevers has worn many hats over the past 50 years: business owner, ILICA member, and volunteer and community leader. He started his own business in the mid 70's during a time when Springfield Plastics would pay for a membership within Illinois LICA if a contractor purchased a semi load of plastic tile. So, in 1975, Stan joined the association and has held many leadership positions in our state chapter. He has also been recipient of a Merit Award and Shiny Shovel Award; represented our association as Mr. Contractor in 1985; served as National LICA Region IV Vice President. Outside of the Association, Stan is equally involved in serving his community and church in the following ways: local school board member and past board president; 32nd degree mason – being a member for 60 years; member of the 100 Million Dollar club in support of Shriner's Hospital; volunteer fireman on two different local fire departments and a trustee; past board member of the IL Association of Fire Protection Districts and a Kenny Long Award recipient for service and dedication to that association; a member of his local church for 64 years serving on multiple committees throughout the years. Stan and his lovely wife of 64 years have belonged to several dance clubs and always enjoy a good twirl around the dance floor. He's a family man who still goes to the office every day, even after selling the business to his son. Three generations can be found in the office at times since his granddaughter has started working there. Their company will be celebrating the business's 45th anniversary this June with a large customer appreciation party. Stan is currently on to a new adventure by presenting "What's It" sessions for other civic and church organizations. And he calls himself an antique accumulator, not a collector.

Lifetime Membership recipient Xenya Mucha, affectionately referred to as "Jane Deere," of John Deere graduated from

Temple University in Philadelphia with a BA in Sociology and Journalism. After graduation, she worked for Kohler Company and Gehl. She started with her current company November 1, as a Product Manager for the Solid Waste Market, working with product lines and with corporate business accounts. She was also very active with the Solid Waste industry by leading a "Woman in Industry Group" where she was often referred to as "The Queen of the Heap". On November 1, 2007, she became the Shows and Events Manager. For the past 13 years she has been planning and executing trade shows and customer events around the world. During this time, she also managed the Customer Fly-In program to their various factories in Davenport, Dubuque, and Kenersville, NC for construction and forestry customers. Some of the shows she has helped plan and execute include many, many regional shows throughout the years; World of Concrete (annually); American Rental Association (annually); Demo International (large forestry show in Canada every 4 years); ConExpo (every 3 years); Bauma (world's largest trade fair in the construction industry – Munich, Germany 2019). Xenya has worked with LICA nearly the whole time she has been with her company. She and her husband live in LeClaire, IA, where she enjoys working in her timber, cooking, traveling, photography, and reading.

Lifetime Membership recipient Richard Anderberg started his business in 1962 doing earthwork, site prep, road work, waterways, and farm buildings. He added tiling and farm drainage in the mid 70's. Dick served on many committees in ILICA over the years and worked on many projects for the Association. During his working years, he was also involved in his local VFW and Oddfellows Lodge. He and his wife traveled to many of the National conventions in their motor home. After officially retiring in 2004, Richard and his wife still traveled to some of the winter conventions, including one in Orlando where they took some members to see a space shuttle launch. They enjoyed spending time with their daughters, Nadine and her children Sheena, Shannon, and Lia; and Michelle and her children Andrea and Mikhal. Since his wife's passing in 2016, Richard still winters in the southwest and also enjoys keeping in touch with ILICA by working the booth at the Farm Progress Shows. One funny story about Richard is that he went to an equipment auction in Mexico, Missouri and purchased a scraper. No one knows why, but he decided to drive the scraper back to his hometown of Galena, IL, approximately 310 miles away!



**Lifetime Membership Award:**  
Stan Seevers, with wife,  
Miriam



**Lifetime Membership Award:**  
Xenya Mucha, pictured with  
Ryan Arch, ILICA Executive Director,  
& Veronica Seevers,  
Awards Committee



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Illinois

### Board of Directors Meeting

May 16, 2020

Board Meeting: 9 am

Zoom Teleconference:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9759547353>

Meeting ID: 975 954 7353

(312) 626-6799

### Area 6 Golf Outing & Trap Shoot

June 19, 2020

McKillip Farm - Lerna, IL

Meadowview Golf Course - Mattoon, IL

Trap: 9:30 am      Lunch: 12 pm      Golf: 1 pm

Hotel block at Quality Inn - Mattoon, IL

## National

### 2020 LICA Summer Convention

July 7-11, 2020

Sheraton Niagara Falls: Niagara Falls, NY

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## SAFETY FEATURE: FIRE SAFETY

Fires are a serious risk for businesses of all types. It's up to you to take the proper precautions to keep yourself and your co-workers safe from fire hazards.

### Lower the Risks of Fire

There are some simple things you can do to prevent fires at your company:

- Always comply with regulations.
- Obey "No Smoking" signs.
- Dispose of cigarettes and matches in the proper receptacles after ensuring they are completely extinguished.
- Watch for frayed electrical cords and overloaded circuits.
- Dispose of flammable wastes and scraps by placing them in metal containers.

### Combustible Storage

Always store combustible materials in a safe area. Fumes can travel a considerable distance and become ignited by a furnace, stove, electrical equipment or even a lit cigarette. If you need to dispose of flammable liquids, do not pour them down the drain. Educate yourself on the proper method of disposal.

If you have to burn wastepaper, make sure it doesn't contain explosive materials, such as aerosol or paint.

### Inspect Equipment Regularly

Proper maintenance procedures are important to fire safety. If you use electrical equipment or tools, inspect them regularly to make sure they are working correctly. Keep mechanical equip-

ment properly lubricated to avoid excessive friction. Keep spark arrestors on exhaust systems.

### Preparing for a Fire

- Become familiar with the location and operation of fire-fighting equipment.
- Learn where fire extinguishers are located and what types of fires they are to be used on.
- Participate in periodic fire drills to practice fire response procedures.
- Become familiar with the different types of alarms used in your workplace.
- Establish an employee meeting place.

### When a Fire Breaks Out

- If the fire alarm rings, always treat it as a true emergency unless you are told ahead of time it is a drill. Just because you do not see smoke or flames does not mean a fire is not present.
- Always use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- If the room fills with smoke, stay low to the ground and get out as fast—but as safely—as you can.

Every day you're on the job, take note of potential fire hazards and report them immediately to your supervisor. Always put safety first!

*Safety Matters Toolbox Talks - From Prins Insurance LICA Portal*



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