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MINING AND THE MODERN FAMILY

Jacob Young, Jayco Construction, Denny Kingsley, Texas Westmoreland Coal Co., and Weston Kingsley, Johnson & Pace Inc., are father, son, and son-in-law. They represent one of the mining families in this issue of Texas Mining magazine. Source: Larry Jones.

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ON THE COVER
Mark Russell, Larry Russell and Jana Russell-Whitehurst represent a family of miners in Texas.

Source: Graham’s Photography

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Our feature theme for the Summer 2015 issue of Texas Mining magazine is “Mining and the Modern Family.” When reflecting on this topic and what to write about, it seems that mining has run in my family tree since before I was born. Today, the modern mining family’s well-being is under attack based on proposed federal regulations that will affect all of us in America. It is for this reason that organizations such as TMRA are here to ensure that our way of life is not negatively affected by these poor decisions. Our membership realizes that to survive as a nation and provide economic and reliable energy, all sources - and not just those from fossil fuels - are necessary in order to continue living our modern lifestyle.

Growing up in Northeastern Pennsylvania, the anthracite coal capital-of-the-world, many of my family members were in the coal industry as far back as the pre-World War II era when anthracite coal production was at its prime. There were no reclamation and safety laws back in those days as we all know. One of my grandfathers was killed in an underground mining accident, and several of my uncles died from “black lung” or pneumoconiosis. These were some of the reasons I chose to become a mining engineer and make a difference. I wanted to prove to people that coal mining could be accomplished while protecting our environment and maintaining a safe working atmosphere for employees.

Another personal anecdote that has stuck with me today is something a college professor said during an introductory mining class. He said the main reason he enjoyed being in the mining industry is that it was like being a member of one big happy family. The industry is small enough that you could run into previous acquaintances years later and start a conversation as though no time had passed. My career has taken me to work in seven states for two coal companies, and I have found that statement to be so true. Attending events such as National Mining Association Conventions or association annual meetings over the years, I have run across so many people that I get a chance to visit with, tell stories to and catch up on what has been going on in their careers as well as mine. There are several articles in this issue focused on mining families, and I’m sure you will enjoy each one.

We recently had our second TMRA Support Member Day which was held in conjunction with the Rocky Mountain Coal Mining Institute’s Texas Regional meeting at the beautiful Horseshoe Bay Resort May 6 – 8, 2015. TMRA had great participation from our owner-operator members, but for me it is our support member companies which truly make the difference for our organization. If it were not for their attendance and tremendous sponsorship of our various events, these functions would not be the success that we have come to enjoy over the years. A personal “thanks” goes out to all our support member companies for what you do. It was a pleasure meeting with those of you who stopped by our table and visited with us about what your companies have to offer the mining industry. As always, Ches, I, and the other executive committee members are open to suggestions regarding ways in which we can have our support members become further engaged in our organization.

A few other quick notes to mention: We hosted our Sine Die celebration on the evening of June 1, 2015. The Long Center for the Performing Arts was a beautiful venue with the Austin skyline in the background. The food and music were fantastic, and it was a great way to thank the legislators and staff members for their service this past legislative session. Thanks again to all of our sponsors.

Our five Summer Teacher Workshops will be kicking off shortly, and a special thanks goes out to Francye Hutchins and Robert Gentry for their time and leadership in organizing and directing these learning experiences. Thanks also to those member companies who host the various sessions at their mining operations. Finally mark your calendars now for October 25 – 27, as we have started preparations and planning for the TMRA Annual Meeting to be held once again at the Hyatt Lost Pines Resort. In closing, continue to be active in TMRA, become more involved and enjoy your summer.

—Mike
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“Mining and the Modern Family” is both our Summer 2015 Texas Mining magazine topic and what TMRA stands for, supports and promotes. Our association goals and our success MUST be focused on meeting the needs of the modern family. We must have affordable, reliable energy recovered and utilized in ways that meet those needs while respecting our environment. Our mining industry in Texas meets each of these.

Quoting from a speaker at our recent RMCMIMinerals Support Member event held at the Horseshoe Bay Resort, Alex Epstein, in the introduction to his book titled “Fossil Fuels Improve the Planet,” writes “We believe that human beings have the untapped potential to radically improve our lives by using technology to improve the planet across a multitude of industries: mining, manufacturing, agriculture, chemistry and energy. Every individual has the potential for a longer, happier, healthier, safer, more comfortable, more meaningful, more opportunity-filled life.” Fossil fuels, for now and the foreseeable future, should be allowed and encouraged to provide reliable and affordable energy to both the more developed parts of our world, like the United States, but also to those parts of the world and families still without basic necessities like electricity used for lighting, cooking, refrigeration, assuring clean water and promoting a healthy environment.

This issue of Texas Mining highlights a very strong and important aspect of our industry - the family. Importantly, and I think telling, are the number of mining “families,” meaning families where fathers, daughters and sons, spouses, uncles and aunts, grandparents, are or have worked in our industry. You will note from the profiles that these are smart, conscientious, dedicated people who understand and respect each other, those with whom they work, their corporate goals and objectives which always include both safety and protection, even enhancement, of the environment. They are a proud lot, and rightfully so, as they work together for all of us. These families highlighted are only the very tip of the iceberg as our industry is well represented by families working together and/or over generations. Send me your stories, and we’ll highlight others in coming issues.

TMRA and its members have been busy, and that is just fine. Our TMRA Lunch and Learn was held at the Capitol on March 26. There we provided lunch to legislative staff while giving just a taste of what TMRA promotes and supports through presentations by Chairman Mike Altavilla and the chairs of our industry committees. Just a note on this, I won’t say we drafted Matt Hallmark of Trinity Construction Materials, Inc. to be our Industrial Minerals Committee Chair, but we certainly “encouraged” his volunteering to take on this role. Thanks, Matt! Jeff Mason handled the lignite committee overview and Craig Wall the uranium committee. While the legislative staff was already very busy for their bosses, with some coming and going quickly, those able to stay for the presentations learned from them. The event was well worth the effort. Those involved in planning are already considering a similar event in 2017, perhaps as a breakfast to allow for broader participation.

Following the TMRA Lunch and Learn, the next event was our outreach to both TMRA support members and our friends in the Rocky Mountain Coal Mining Institute. This event was held at the Horseshoe Bay Resort from May 6-8, with the RMCMIMinerals Regional Meeting leading off, followed by our TMRA Support Member Day. Some 100 attendees made this a very successful event. For TMRA, our goal was to provide another avenue for “value” to our support members by giving them the opportunity to meet one-on-one with our owner/operator members. This small group setting worked. I’m hoping those who participated will provide feedback on how we can provide these opportunities in an even more effective way. One other point on this event: It was successful only because we had great owner/operator support, both attendees and members willing to take the time to meet with our support members. Thank you so very much!

Finally, TMRA had its Sine Die celebration on June 1 at the Long Center here in Austin. This THANK YOU to legislators and staff is always well attended with 1,000 or so of our closest friends.

Our next Texas Mining issue will allow us to focus on “Innovation in Mining” and showcase our education and outreach efforts including the TMRA Teacher Workshops.

—Ches
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As bulk material handling machinery designs become more powerful and increasingly efficient, braking system designs must also progress to satisfy the demand to control speed and stop machines in routine and, most importantly, during emergency stopping events.

Brakes are no longer straightforward on or off mechanical devices. Sophisticated Smart Brake deceleration controls with system status monitoring, fault acknowledgement, and feedback are required to maintain system integrity under all stopping conditions. This is particularly crucial on belt conveyor systems, where tension management and personnel safety are of paramount importance.

With these considerations in mind, Hilliard has developed a line of power units capable of controlling braking systems for a multitude of scenarios and applications.

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Hilliard’s line of overrunning clutches is economically priced and ideally suited for backstopping and gearbox applications. Custom designs and rapid prototyping are available.

**Magna Torque (MTR) for Clutch Couplings, Dual-Drive & Turning Gear**

Roller-Ramp design for increased reliability and longer life.

An integral part of many Hilliard motion control products is our roller-ramp design. The use of hardened cams and precision-machined rollers maximizes service life. There is almost no wear during freewheeling operations because rollers are free to rotate between the outer member and the inner cam. When the rollers are engaged, the load falls at random positions on the rollers. The result is superior service life and reliability. The MTR is similar to the MT design except the cam surface is reversed allowing it to be used in multi-speed/dual drive applications.

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The Texas House and Senate convened in January for the 84th Texas Legislative Session. Over the interim, Texans voted for multiple constitutional amendments to help fund water and transportation projects across the state. There were many new faces in the legislature including, 24 freshmen representatives in the House and eight freshman senators in the Senate. Republicans held a majority in both chambers gaining two seats in the House and one seat in the Senate. Among other prominent issues, lawmakers considered proposals to modify taxes, consolidate health and human services agencies, improve low-performing schools, manage groundwater resources and fund highways, higher education, and border security operations. TMRA will provide a more detailed report in the Fall issue.

TMRA Members Celebrate Sine Die

TMRA hosted its biennial Sine Die Party on June 1, 2015, at the Long Center for Performing Arts in Austin, Texas. Enjoying the music of Alpha Rev, Burnzie and the Spazmatics on a superb evening was a perfect way to celebrate the end of a successful 84th Legislative Session. Many thanks to the sponsors of this year's event!

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Russell & Sons has been a member of TMRA since 1995, and is celebrating its 70th anniversary of business. We asked Mark Russell, the current CEO, to tell us how the third generation brought the company’s mine reclamation services to Texas and about life in the family business.

Mark started his story in a joking manner, “the short story is that in 1979 my older cousin Larry jumped at the chance to come to Texas and do his ‘own thing.’ I initially came down to ‘help out’ after college with the grand idea of saving some money and then traveling around Europe until the money ran out. By 1987 my sister Jana had joined the company to help with development of the company’s rapidly growing business management and administrative needs.” It wasn’t long before the third generation of leadership was performing large coal/lignite mining reclamation projects in five states (Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Arizona and Louisiana).

“Our company has been blessed with talented and dedicated employees,” Mark said, “and there is a pervasive sense of ‘family’ within our company. I think that culture is really a tribute to our Grandfather, his sons, and a few good employees who helped start the company in 1945.”

“A lot has happened over the years” says Vice President Larry Russell who manages the company’s assets and large heavy equipment fleet. “We could never have done all this without great employees and the trust and work ethic that comes with a family business.”

Jana Russell-Whitehurst, who still oversees the financial aspects of Russell & Sons, is president of another independent company named FlexSource which also provides services for TMRA members. When asked what she enjoys most about the business she said, “I enjoy the people, the ‘can do’ attitude of the people in our industry, and the amazing diversity of talent and skills it takes to perform our work.”

“There are many components that have contributed to our success,” Mark said laughingly. “For example, I doubt any of our customers know Russell & Sons was writing computer programs for mine reclamation in 1986. That’s the same year my college buddy published his last version of Atari. It’s amazing how far we’ve all evolved since then.”

Mark added, “We have a great deal of pride in our role of environmental stewardship, and the working relationship we have with our TMRA customers.”

Denny Kingsley is President and General Manager of Texas Westmoreland Coal. His son Weston is an MIS Specialist at Johnson & Pace Inc., a TMRA support member. Denny’s son-in-law, Jacob Young, is President and CEO of Jayco Construction, another TMRA support member.

Denny, Weston and Jacob are very proud to be in the coal mining industry. When asked about the industry Denny said, “I truly believe
Mike Maxson has been involved, as a geologist in both exploration and production, with the uranium mining industry for the last 46 years. Because of the vagaries of the mining industry and uranium in particular, he has worked for several different companies, in several different positions in most of the Western states and some foreign countries. Currently, Mike is the operations manager for Mesteña Uranium, LLC.

The family has had its horizons expanded by living in several different states. When possible, dad would take one of the kids out while doing field work. While on road trips, the family was immersed in lectures pointing out various geologic features, the geologic history of the area and the role geology plays in the siting of cities, highways, the type of agriculture, etc.

Some of this must have sparked an interest because his daughter, Heather, has ended up, with her father’s discouragement, as a geologist in the same industry. Over the last ten years, Heather has worked in South Texas for URI and then RGR. Her stint with RGR also took her to Australia for some time. While in Texas, she worked with Francye Hutchins on the uranium teacher workshops. She then went to work in Ur-Energy in Wyoming, where she met her husband, Chris Pedersen. Chris is Ur-Energy’s radiation safety officer. One result of this marriage is that Mike became a proud grandfather to who he hopes will be a future miner.

Additionally, Mike’s brother-in-law, Heinrich Graul, now retired, is a geologist who worked for Urangesellschaft mbH. UG is an international uranium trading company. Mike’s daughter-in-law is not in mining, but is a geologist for the United States Department of Agriculture. When the family gets together there are conversations among the geologists present that drive the rest of the family out of the room, or even the house. This can get expensive as shopping is one of the activities that the non-geologists use as a getaway excuse.

Coal mining is an essential service to our country. Our people are hard-working, loyal, trust worthy and ethical. I would encourage my grandkids to join the business because our industry is committed to safety.”

Weston echoes Denny’s feelings: “Coal mining as a whole is already a family even without the blood bond. Working with family is a blessing. We balance things well and always keep the lines of communication open.”

Jacob and the Kingsley family agree that holiday get-togethers are fun. Sometimes they talk about work but it doesn’t feel like work. Everyone understands the lingo. Jacob said, “for example, if I say I was triple hauling dirt today my father in law knows what I’m talking about. It’s neat to have those conversations with family.”

Denny said, “I truly believe coal mining is an essential service to our country. Our people are hard-working, loyal, trust worthy and ethical. I would encourage my grandkids to join the business because our industry is committed to safety.”
Jennifer & Scott Taylor

The mining industry is a very tightknit community, the kind where everybody knows everybody, and may even know your mother, grandfather or uncle! That’s why companies like HOLT CAT are known for having generations of family members serving customers across industries, especially mining. For HOLT CAT Mining Solutions Service Coordinator, Jennifer Taylor, this feeling of a family bond is stronger than most. For Jennifer and her family, HOLT CAT and Luminant are not just where she’s worked, it’s where her whole family works. For 34 years, her father, Stanley Berry, was a mechanic, supervisor, and maintenance manager for Luminant, before starting his own rental company, Top Line Rental, which is now a CAT Alliance rental store. Taylor’s husband, Scott, started his career as a hauler operator and is currently a bulldozer operator for Luminant and served as the chairman of the Tatum BBS Committee promoting employee safety and safe working environment programs for mining workers. When asked about her cousins, uncles, father and husband all working in mining, Jennifer said, “By having family members in the mining industry, basically everything you do day-to-day becomes a family affair.”

Jennifer’s own career began in 2008 when she became an administrative assistant for Luminant Mining in Tatum. She quickly moved up the ranks to administrative superintendent after only five years. She gives credit to the knowledge that her father had given her throughout the years, which aided in having a better understanding overall of the industry. Jennifer left Luminant in 2014 and when she saw an opening to work for HOLT CAT, she jumped at the opportunity to work for the family-owned and operated heavy equipment and engine CAT dealer. Now back in the mining business as the service coordinator, she feels that family bond more than ever.

Joel Trouart & John “Tooter” Trouart

Joel is the corporate environmental manager and brother John is the safety manager at the Red Hills Mine in Mississippi employed by North American Coal Corporation.

This brother and sister duo can talk the lingo to one other. We can call each other for advice in our respective areas. We can share funny stories or odd things that happen to us and understand it. We know that we are both working in a safe, well-paid job along with some of the best people you will ever meet.

We are very focused on energy and its impacts. Joel’s sister is well known by her elected officials because she is constantly emailing them about coal and its role in energy (and she is not in the coal industry). Joel’s son is focused on what is going on with the coal/energy business and stays very informed regarding it. They understand the industry and certainly have no problem sorting the fact from the fiction in today’s media. Joel’s husband is a retired geologist and spent many years in the coal industry so he understands coal quality, reserves, coal mining, etc. The friends she has made working at a coal mine are some of her best friends and are good friends with the family. She says, “the people you work with become life-long friends: I have a group of friends I have lunch with annually called “the old miners,” they are all retired, and we keep up with each other via the lunches and email.”

Joel’s three sons grew up telling their buddies that their mom had the biggest Tonka toys in the biggest sandbox of all! They used to draw pictures of the dragline for her and label them “draglions” because that is what they thought she called them. The Trouart’s have a phrase the entire family uses when eating and get full before finishing the plate. “We’d say ‘time to high-grade’ which is a mining term that means it’s time to just eat the good stuff or our favorite food off the plate and leave the rest.”
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It is not every day that a dragline changes hands and moves from one place to another. It is even less common for that dragline to travel nearly 1,300 miles to its new home, be totally refurbished and upgraded, and put into service below budget, well within time schedule and with no major safety issues.

Cabot Corp. and North American Coal Co. (NA Coal), in partnership with the mining division of industrial construction and fabrication firm CCC Group, has done just that with a 7.5-million-lb Page 757 dragline. After hundreds of thousands of man-hours, the freshly overhauled unit, Carmen, was dedicated in November 2014 as Cabot Corp.’s first dragline.

The massive machine was originally constructed in 1978 and spent its first 27 years at the Bridger Coal complex in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Cabot, which purchased the dragline and worked with NA Coal and CCC to begin the dismantling process in the last quarter of 2012, made quick work of what would become a two-year upgrade process conducted simultaneously with preparation work for its new Marshall mine in Harrison County, Texas, due west of Shreveport.

The Plan
The Cabot Marshall mine, operated by NA Coal’s subsidiary business unit Caddo Creek Resources, was developed as a new supplier for the Cabot Activated Carbon Plant in Marshall, Texas. With an expected mine life of about 50 years, it is certain to fit that bill. The site for the new mining project was within a reserve that had not previously been mined; land acquisition, planning and permitting for the operation work began in 2009 and mining permits were approved in 2012 and 2013.

With the U.S. in the midst of landmark regulatory changes related to mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants, known as the Mercury and Air Toxics Standard (MATS), set to go into place this April, it promises to alter the way coal is used for power generation for the foreseeable future. Additionally, the regulations are expected to significantly boost demand for activated carbon, as many coal-fired utility companies...
will utilize it to capture mercury and reduce these emissions by up to 90%. The lignite from the Marshall mine is the primary raw material for Cabot’s nearby activated carbon plant, and while the product is used extensively for a variety of air purification applications, from industrial processes to landfills, it is also widely used in water purification and food and beverage purification.

Making the Move From Wyoming to Texas

Before the dragline could take its first pass, the entire machine needed to be transported from the western coalfields of Wyoming to eastern Texas and be completely restored. The Page 757 is no lightweight — powered by two 3,500-hp synchronous motors, the unit features a 57-ft diameter roller circle and a 320-ft boom with a 290-ft operating radius at a 38˚ angle; the bucket has a 62-cubic-yard capacity and the unit as a whole checks in at a little less than 7.5 million lb.

Walking the machine to its new Texas home was not a viable option. So, Cabot and NA Coal teamed with San Antonio-based CCC Group to begin a 554-day dismantling and rebuild project. It took 180 truckloads, the heaviest weighing in at a little less than 7.5 million lb.

Cold weather played a part in the disassembly in Wyoming, but CCC was careful in their planning such that only two days were lost due to weather. In east Texas, rain and wind were the biggest weather factors, but CCC worked well to accommodate these situations as well.

About Cabot Corp.

Boston-based global specialty chemicals and performance materials company Cabot Corp. serves the transportation, infrastructure, environment and consumer industries. For more than 130 years, it has provided products such as rubber and specialty carbons, cesium formate brines, activated carbon, aergel, fine cesium chemicals, fumed metal oxides, graphenes, inkjet colorants, masterbatches and conductive compounds.

With a staff of 4,600 worldwide, Cabot is committed to sustainable business practices that ensure the well-being of its employees, customers and the communities in which it operates. Cabot Norit Activated Carbon offers a variety of activated carbon products for air, water and other fluid purification and solutions for flue gas treatment and mercury control applications.

Cabot officials noted they had not previously worked with CCC. They, however, found that the collaboration was mutually beneficial from the start.

“In any rebuild project, cost is a key consideration, and the combined teams were very thorough in the equipment inspection process and Caddo Creek Resources, based on their past history in maintaining draglines, developed a very thorough and efficient budget that fully addressed the restoration needs of the dragline,” Davies said.

He also noted that the mine plan always had assumed that a dragline, particularly a pre-owned and rebuilt unit, would be at the heart of its operations. “An economic analysis showed this to be the lowest cost option over the life of the mine,” he said.

“We also found our primary goals and the safety culture of our teams were closely aligned. Both Cabot and NA Coal treat safety as their first priority and it was refreshing to see such a strong cultural fit between the two partners.”

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Based on the equipment history and changes made to the dragline by former owner Bridger Coal, Cabot Project Manager Travis Mileur and Caddo Creek Resources Project Manager Spencer Thompson elected to do a number of upgrades that would aid in the productivity and efficiency of Carmen at Marshall. These included a new truss, which incorporated an improved design to minimize cracking at the high stress points, as well as an onboard transformer.

“In this application it was less costly and more reliable to install an onboard transformer with 25 kv cable feeding from...
the substation to the dragline,” Mileur said.

Donald Jean of CCC subcontractor Drives and Controls Services (DCS), retained to assist with the electrical upgrades on dragline projects, said the onboard transformer upgrade was necessitated by the change in the power system of the dragline from 8 kv to 25 kv; 25 kv is preferred due to increased line efficiency on the grid.

“The revolving frame deck was expanded with ‘transformer extensions’ on the left and right sides of the machine behind the propel girders,” he said. “This allowed for the additional square footage needed to accommodate the transformers.”

He also noted that the ballast of the machine was recalculated to account for the difference in weight after the upgrades were complete. DCS accomplished all the electrical engineering needed to connect the transformers.

Other changes included the rebuild of all gear cases that selectively replaced gears, along with all of the bearings and seals, with the work completed by Joy Global. Thicker base plates were installed on the unit beneath the hoist and drag drums at the recommendation of Joy Global, which noted some buckling in the floor. A hoist drum lock was also added to improve bearing life. Ultrasonic testing was conducted on the boom, along with a thorough review of past boom issues. Because of its I-beam design, the team determined that cracking was not a significant issue.

Interestingly, Cabot opted not to do an AC upgrade, instead choosing to rebuild all of the DC electric motors and generators. “Variable AC was evaluated, but with the anticipated production schedule and the general recondition cost, it was financially better to rebuild existing DC equipment,” Mileur said.

CCC noted that several modifications were also made to Carmen to assist with ease and efficiency of use as well as operator health and safety. These included an entirely new upper superstructure, an enhanced operator cab with state-of-the-art operator chair and larger viewing windows, a modern anteroom, and all-new electrical upgrades such as LED lighting, a complete PLC operating system and new elevated floor plates for the unit’s cabling. New hoist and drag pads were added to the dragline’s infrastructure, as was an extended rear section of the revolving frame.

**Walking Off the Pad**

Post-rebuild, both Cabot and NA Coal have nothing but positive feedback on their collaboration and the support of CCC. While neither will discuss specific dollar figures, one celebratory factor of the enormous project was the ability for both to bring it to a close both under budget and well within anticipated timeframes. Both companies attributed that to the resources and technical expertise brought to the project by CCC. Cabot and NA Coal are happy to talk about another significant positive: more than

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**About CCC Group**

Moving and construction service firm CCC Group previously completed more than 70 dragline rebuilds or new builds prior to the NACCO project, as well as more than 1,000 other mining-related projects in 30 U.S. states for some of the nation’s largest operators.

CCC offers clients in-house fabrication, machining and hydraulic repairs services, specialty engineering related to dust control and material transfer technologies.

The company, which has core competencies in civil, concrete, structural, equipment setting, piping, electrical, instrumentation and fabrication, started as a family-owned business in 1947 and is now an employee-owned firm with 10 regional offices and two international offices.
200,000 man-hours from start to finish with no major safety issues, recordable incidents or lost-time injuries.

“The project was accomplished with only four minor incidents,” Mine Manager Gene Beener said. “This achievement was accomplished by conducting daily safety meetings every morning along with a constant presence of Caddo Creek Resources safety personnel initiating site and equipment inspections throughout the day.”

“Cabot has a strong safety culture, and we worked well with Caddo Creek Resources and CCC to make sure the job site was safe and still got the productivity on the rebuild. CCC provided weekly updates on progress besides our own analysis, and we met weekly to make sure we stayed on task, addressed problems and reviewed costs.”

CCC officials also noted that its safety achievement would not have been possible without a close client-contractor relationship focused on safety, from an organized and clean work site to a combined crew that took ownership in the pair’s safety standards — particularly with regards to the rigorous federal MSHA requirements in place for such a project.

Carmen began moving overburden in November 2014 and the mine went into full production on January 1. Since production started, there has been no looking back for the team at the Marshall mine; officials report all is going well at the lignite reserve, where 33 employees currently work. Eventually, Caddo Creek Resources said 42 will be on the payroll at the operation. All workers, both production and maintenance, work on two split crews covering an 80-hour-per-week schedule consisting of 10-hour shifts (eight shifts on and six shifts off) with two shifts each Thursday.

“Caddo Creek Resources will use standard North American Coal maintenance practices that are used at the other NAC mines,” Davies said of the plan to keep its dragline going strong for the long haul. “Caddo Creek Resources will also have a core group of employees from other NA Coal mines to ensure consistent operating and maintenance procedures.”

The lignite reserve, a single seam that averages 3.6 ft thick and 60 ft deep, will be uncovered at Marshall with a simple dig-and-side-cast method, then drilled and sampled for the implementation of a loading plan that meets the Cabot plant’s quality requirements. The lignite will then be loaded with a Wirtgen 2200 surface miner directly into Cabot’s 25-ton OTR trucks, which will transport the lignite 23 miles to the activated carbon plant.

Carmen’s spoil will be graded to approximate original contour and covered with 4 ft of suitable plant growth material, Cabot officials noted.

In remarks at the opening ceremony, Cabot Corp. CEO Patrick Prevost called the newest mine is its portfolio “a significant milestone” for the company.

“We see this as not only a great opportunity for Cabot, but also an opportunity for regional development,” noting that lignite coal has been an ingredient in the high-quality activated carbon production chain since 1921.

“The new mine and dragline extends our leadership position in the mercury emission control segment, [and] as a leading supplier of activated carbon, Cabot is well positioned to be a strategic partner to coal-fired power plant owners and operators in mercury emission control.

Cabot is the only activated carbon manufacturer with multiple manufacturing sites dedicated to this application in North America, and NA Coal is the largest lignite producer in the United States with multiple surface operations totaling more than 35 million tons annually in combined production.
AUSTIN, Texas – April 15, 2015 – According to testimony provided by TMRA representatives at an EPA-led public meeting in Corpus Christi yesterday, justification for EPA’s proposal to revise current groundwater protection standards at facilities that extract uranium using the in-situ recovery process, i.e. Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 192, is without foundation, and would have significant negative impact on Texas’ uranium mining industry, which provides a safe, reliable fuel source for power production.

EPA claims that the intent of the proposed regulations is to conserve naturally contaminated groundwater for future use as drinking water, however, the proposed revisions would drastically expand the permitting process and lengthen the reclamation process by decades, based only on unsupported assumptions and, if anything, lead to a greater consumption of groundwater with no environmental benefit.

Currently, effective regulations for restoration and stability monitoring are in place and enforced by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. These regulations have evolved over the past 30 years, along with the in-situ uranium mining industry, and have successfully prevented the migration of mining fluid to adjacent aquifers.

“EPA proposes new regulations under the veil of environmental protection and conservation, but fails to recognize or consider that the groundwater in question does not currently meet EPA’s own drinking water standards before any mining has occurred, and will not meet EPA’s drinking water standards despite additional restoration and stability measures,” said Ches Blevins, executive director of TMRA. “But, regardless of whether mining or decades of stability monitoring has occurred, the treatment required to make naturally contaminated groundwater suitable for human consumption is, and would remain, identical.”

Following review of the comments provided by TMRA and other members of the public, the agency will make a final decision on the proposed rule, which is expected by the end of the year.

Miners at North American Coal – Sabine Mine are accustomed to more than 47 inches of rainfall per year, but it has been challenging to manage more than 30 inches of rainfall in the first four and a half months of 2015. So far, 38 days out of 135 days in 2015 have had rainfall, with ten days receiving rainfall events greater than one inch. For us, our five-year drought has come to an end.

The challenges that our mine faces during these wet periods are many, and when the periods between rainfall events do not allow for adequate drying, the challenges are persistent. Sabine has many strategies for dealing with wetter periods, but our primary focus is preparation. Our workforce understands and excels at being proactive rather than reactive. Our strategies include placement of berms to prevent flooding of pits and installing miscellaneous flow diversions to reroute natural drainage patterns. In-pit water management consists of key ditching and strategically locating sumps to maximize capture and pumping of water. Other preventative measures include maintaining an all-weather road infrastructure effectively sealing coal stockpiles to assure a high-quality fuel source to our customer, American Electric Power.

Sabine also uses drones for aerial reconnaissance of inaccessible areas. Pit and spoil areas are flown twice weekly to help us better understand our water management challenges, assess the extent of standing water and formulate a plan to most effectively move the water. Our pumping crews use the information to determine progress and to prioritize pumping needs while our dragline crews use the information to locate muddy areas, determine digging techniques, and assist in bench preparation.

Despite the rainfall-related challenges, we have been very successful in maintaining a safe and productive operation. To conclude on a positive note, at least May 2015 did not include plans to walk another dragline across the Sabine River like we did in May 2012.
Save Uranium Mining from United States

By Dick Messbarger, Secretary, Kingsville Area Industrial Development Foundation

Originally published in the Corpus Christi Caller-Times, May 12, 2015

What’s missing in the brouhaha over the book release of “Clinton Cash” is the issue of Russia’s effort to control the world’s uranium production – and it has a small South Texas flavor to it.

Regardless of your opinion of by whom and how money was “contributed” to the Clinton Family Foundation, action by Rosatom in acquiring Uranium One gives pause to some. Rosatom is the state-owned Russian corporation currently building 37 percent of the world’s nuclear reactors, from Turkey to Vietnam, and gaining control of the world’s uranium production.

But Russia’s partner in securing domination of the global uranium market is none other than the United States government. Uranium One once operated the Palangana Uranium Mine in Duval County and owned the uranium processing plant in Karnes County. It sold both to a U.S. company before Rosatom acquired the lease assets of Uranium One.

According to the New York Times article that publicized the connection between the Clintons and Rosatom, Uranium One owns 20 percent of the uranium reserves in the United States. Rosatom is arguably one of the largest uranium mining companies in the world, particularly when you include its mining operations in Kazakhstan, where mining is the least expensive and deposits are largest in the world. Kazakhstan is the Saudi Arabia of uranium mining.

So why should we be concerned with a Russian company purchasing an American uranium production company and potentially cornering the global uranium mining industry? Energy is the mother’s milk of industrial development, and nuclear energy is cheap, reliable and 98 percent carbon free.

Uranium is the feedstock for nuclear energy; thus, control of the uranium mining industries is control of nuclear energy – and the Russians are moving fast to control both the feedstock and construction of nuclear plants around the world – particularly in India and China where nuclear plants are outpacing development of fossil fuel facilities at an amazing rate. In the 1970s the United States led the world in uranium production and was a net exporter.

Today the United States imports 85 percent of the feedstock to fuel the 100 nuclear plants here, with the federal government providing another ten percent. That leaves just five percent of domestic production consumed by American nuclear plants.

So why am I pointing the finger at our federal government as a culprit in handicapping the domestic uranium mining industry? First, our government dumped millions of tons of enriched uranium on the spot market, driving the price down below production costs (from a high of $140 per pound to less than $40). The U.S. government was joined by the Russians who did the same thing with their excess uranium supplies.

I’m not saying the government should subsidize uranium production (like it does with the solar and wind industries), but it shouldn’t compete with private industry like American-owned uranium mining companies have experienced.

The second blow has been administered by the federal government’s Environmental Protection Agency with a series of regulations that now make it near impossible to permit a uranium mine, let alone a nuclear plant. In addition to layer after layer of bureaucratic regulations, the EPA fails to recognize state primacy in regulation matters – forcing the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to file suit against the EPA for over-regulating.

In Texas, we believe our state regulatory agencies do a better job of regulating Texas businesses and industries than the federal government. Two weeks ago the EPA conducted a hearing in Corpus Christi about a new groundwater standard to in-situ mining, and both Kingsville Mayor Sam Fugate and I spoke in opposition to the proposed rule change. We have monitored the Kingsville Dome Uranium Mine southeast of Kingsville since 1985 and there has never been an excursion or documented evidence of wells in the area of the mine being impacted.

The history of uranium mining in the United States is one of not only compliance, but positive economic impact, but because of federal government interference the industry has gone from supporting 40,000 domestic jobs to just over 400 today.
RMCM & TMRA
Joint Texas Regional Meeting

On May 6, 2015, RMCMI and TMRA held a three-day, joint Texas Regional Meeting in Horseshoe Bay, Texas. This event provided the opportunity for members, prospective members and others in the industry to network and golf. The event included speakers including Denny Kingsley, president and general manager of Texas Westmoreland Coal; Judy Colgan, executive director of the Rocky Mountain Coal Mining Institute; and Alex Epstein, president of the Center for Industrial Progress. A technical session featured Michael J. Nasi, partner at Jackson Walker, LLP; David Evans, safety manager at Texas Westmoreland Coal; and Ches Blevins, executive director of TMRA. The event concluded with TMRA Support Member Day which provided a unique opportunity for support members to have one-on-one meetings with lignite mining company executives, purchasers, and maintenance personnel.

Photos courtesy of: Larry Jones

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TMRA SPECIAL EVENTS

**OCT. 25-27**

**Annual Meeting**
Hyatt Lost Pines, Bastrop, Texas

TMRA QUARTERLY MEETINGS

**AUG. 7**
Education Committee

**SEPT. 9**
Environmental Committee, Task Force Lunch & Meeting

**SEPT. 10**
Lignite, Uranium and Executive Committees

**OCT. 24**
Education Committee

**DEC. 2**
Environmental Committee, Task Force Lunch & Meeting

**DEC. 3**
Lignite, Uranium and Executive Committees

INDUSTRY SPECIAL EVENTS

**SEPT. 30-OCT. 2**
Texas A&M University Reclamation Workshop
College Station, Texas

TEACHER WORKSHOPS

**JULY 6-10**
Industrial Minerals
Round Rock

**JULY 12-17**
Lignite
Jewett Mine

**JULY 26-31**
Uranium
Corpus Christi
**TMRA LEADERSHIP**

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Rick Ziegler, North American Coal Corporation

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**EDITORIAL CALENDAR**

**Texas Mining Magazine**

**Fall 2015: Innovation in Mining**
This issue will explore innovation including unique reclamation projects, technology initiatives, interesting hiring/staffing/training philosophies, etc. We’ll profile the TMRA Teacher Workshops and include special reports from our Environmental and Safety Committees.

**Winter 2015: Year in Review and Philanthropy in Mining**
This issue will recap the year as well as feature philanthropic and civic projects invested in by owner/operators and support members. We’ll demonstrate the ripple effect of how a sound industry impacts so many other areas of the state from the arts and sciences to education and beyond. We’ll include special reports from the Planning Committee.

**ADVERTISING DEADLINES**

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- Dragline bucket replacement, rebuilding or repair
- Dragline parts manufacturing
- Emergency repairs