



# Connection

A publication for and about Kirby-Smith Machinery, Inc. customers

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## URBAN INFRACONSTRUCTION

Nepal native comes to America to study, stays to build one of Fort Worth's fastest-growing contracting firms



Anup Tamrakar,  
Owner/CEO



KOMATSU®



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Ed Kirby

Dear Valued Customer:

We hope your year is off to a good start. With renewed optimism, we look forward to better things in 2021 and beyond. Although there is still a bit of uncertainty in some markets, many experts are forecasting positive results. One thing you can count on, however, is that we at Kirby-Smith Machinery will continue to offer around-the-clock sales and service support.

This issue of the Kirby-Smith Connection spotlights our customer Southland Holdings and how they continue to be one of the largest full-service contracting firms in Texas. Each company utilizes various Komatsu equipment from PC490LC-11 excavators to WA470 loaders. Komatsu equipment checks all the boxes because it is competitively priced, performs day in and day out without causing significant downtime, and it lasts.

There are always questions whenever the term 2.0, 3.0 or any other update is mentioned. Is this new version really an upgrade? Will it improve my operations and make us more productive? When it comes to Komatsu's intelligent Machine Control (iMC), the answer is a resounding, "Yes!" Komatsu was the first to bring integrated GPS grade control to the market, and we are excited to show you how iMC 2.0 dozers and excavators build on the originals. Look inside this issue of your Kirby-Smith Connection magazine to learn more.

The first iMC 2.0 dozers, the D51i-24 and D61i-24, were recently recognized as top products; however, they were not the only Komatsu machines to earn that designation. Several standard and specialty products also made the list. Komatsu is also at the forefront of technology to make your overall operations more efficient. Its innovative Smart Construction suite of solutions helps your business improve operations across all steps of the construction process. They can digitally transform your job site and potentially make you more profitable. Read more about one solution, Smart Construction Remote, inside.

We are committed to remaining open and transparent as we continue to partner with you in the months and years to come. As always, if there is anything we can do for you, please contact us. We are always here to help.

Sincerely,

H.E. Kirby, Jr.  
President, Kirby-Smith Machinery, Inc.



# Connection

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# URBAN INFRACONSTRUCTION

## Nepal native comes to America to study, stays to build one of Fort Worth's fastest-growing contracting firms

Anup Tamrakar epitomizes a newcomer living the American dream. The Nepal native arrived in the United States as an international student in 2003 to study construction at North Lake Community College in Dallas and ended up owning and operating an ever-growing contracting firm.

"My father is a civil engineer, and my sister is an architect in our home country," said Tamrakar, who transferred to Texas A&M Commerce and completed his degree after graduating from North Lake. He has since earned an MBA from the University of Dallas. "I grew up around construction, and it's really the only career I ever considered. In Nepal, the industry is mainly centered on residential



Anup Tamrakar,  
Owner/CEO

housing. I wanted to get into bigger projects, and I believed here was the best place to do it."

That has proven true for Tamrakar, who owns and operates Fort Worth-based Urban Infraconstruction. He describes his heavy civil company as a three-legged stool that mainly focuses on

large bridge construction, roadwork and water/wastewater projects. It works throughout the state of Texas, and occasionally beyond, with a staff approaching 200.

"I want to be diversified, but not so much that we can't keep up," explained Tamrakar. "The idea is to be in multiple markets. If one takes a downturn, we can ramp up in another to compensate. It's a balancing act, and I feel like we have a good handle on it."

An Urban Infraconstruction operator moves dirt with a Komatsu D37PX dozer on an interstate project in Waco. "Across the board, Komatsu gives us great production without excessive downtime," said Owner/CEO Anup Tamrakar. "The first machine proved it, and we have continued to add Komatsu to our fleet."

### ► VIDEO



Urban Infraconstruction works as both a general contractor and as a sub. In each case, the firm self-performs nearly every aspect of its assigned scope of work. Depending on the project, that can include moving dirt, building walls, removing old pavement, preparing subgrade, forming and pouring concrete, and more.

### From sidewalks to major undertakings

Tamrakar built Urban Infraconstruction to its current level in just over five years. The growth has been fast and furious for a company that started out doing small concrete jobs.

"Some friends I worked with were so busy in their paving business that they converted their flatwork crew to handle the workload," said Tamrakar. "They were leaving sidewalk projects behind. I thought that would be a good opportunity for me to go out on my own. I picked up a lot of jobs, which gave the business a solid start."

When he started Urban Infraconstruction, Tamrakar left the company he had been working for since his graduation from Texas A&M Commerce. He credits his former employer, Architectural Utilities Incorporated (AUI), for helping him stay in the United States and for the ability to start his own business.

"They assisted me in getting a green card and work visas," he acknowledged. "I owe them a great deal of gratitude, not only for that but also for giving me a chance to work with them as a contractor. We did civil and foundation work for them on a wind farm in Washington State not too long ago."

Closer to home, Urban Infraconstruction is working on several high-profile projects, such

as the Interstate 35 expansion in Waco. As a subcontractor, the company is building seven bridges and constructing the mechanically stabilized earth retaining walls that are part of the bridge approaches.

It's one of more than a dozen undertakings the company has in various stages of development. They include 19 bridges along Interstate 10 in Sealy, 17 more on a highway project in Fort Worth and new walls on Grand Parkway in the Houston area. Street restoration jobs are ongoing in Carrollton, Plano and Little Elm. Urban Infraconstruction was recently awarded a water/wastewater treatment plant project as a general contractor.

### High production with Komatsu, Kirby-Smith

To keep pace, Tamrakar has invested heavily in a mix of new and previously owned equipment, including Komatsu excavators, dozers and wheel loaders from Kirby-Smith Machinery. Territory Manager Bill Hitchcock assists with purchases and rentals.

"Bill, and Kirby-Smith in general, are excellent," stated Tamrakar. "Before we got our first machine, a used PC360, he took the time to make sure he understood the business and our goals, so that we had the most productive machine for our needs. We still use that original excavator and have since added another PC360. They have excellent power and are perfect for larger jobs where heavy lifting or mass excavation are required."

Urban Infraconstruction's additional mainline production machines include seven tight-tail-swing PC138USLC excavators. "Our job sites are often in the middle of or right next to traffic,



Urban Infraconstruction relies heavily on Komatsu tight-tail-swing PC138USLC excavators. "Our job sites are often in the middle of or right next to traffic, so having excavators that give us high production in a smaller package is a great advantage," said Owner/CEO Anup Tamrakar. "Because the cab stays within the tracks' footprint, operators can swing without the fear of a counterweight hitting something. We equip them with thumbs for better control when holding large pieces of concrete or asphalt. For their size, they have exceptional power."

so having excavators that give us high production in a smaller package is a great advantage," said Tamrakar. "Because the cab stays within the tracks' footprint, operators can swing without the fear of a counterweight hitting something. We equip them with thumbs for better control when holding large pieces of concrete or asphalt. For their size, they have exceptional power."

Tamrakar added that Urban Infraconstruction gets versatility from its wheel loaders, which have quick couplers for fast changes from buckets to forks. It utilizes dozers for

mass and finish grading and installing base material.

"Across the board, Komatsu gives us great production without excessive downtime," said Tamrakar. "The first machine proved it, and we have continued to add Komatsu to our fleet."

He and his staff track all Komatsu machines with the Komtrax telematics



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*Continued . . .*

# Komtrax saves on fuel costs

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systems, looking for information such as usage, idle time, production, hours and more. "I'm all about data," Tamrakar shared. "It drives nearly every decision we make, and Komtrax gives us loads of valuable, actionable information. For instance, if we see excessive idle time, we can address that to save fuel costs and avoid unnecessary hours. Another example is maintenance. We do it

in-house, and Komtrax lets us see the hours, so we know how close a machine is to a service interval. Of course, we use parts and filters from Kirby-Smith."

Urban Infraconstruction also turns to Kirby-Smith as needed for assistance. "They respond quickly," said Tamrakar, who uses HAMM rollers from Kirby-Smith as well. "Bill

continues to make sure each machine is the right fit and helps with rentals as needed. He checks in on a regular basis, and I like that. I also want to acknowledge (Product Support Sales Representative) Phillip Hearrean, who has helped us from a parts and service standpoint."

## Growing in selective markets

Tamrakar said he did not plan for nor foresee Urban Infraconstruction reaching its current level when he started. Now, however, he has his sights set even higher.

"We recently completed our largest project as a general contractor, and we want to do more as a prime," he said. "I believe we can grow the water/wastewater side and have a bigger footprint in the municipal market. We're peanuts in those areas now but continue to build resources to have a bigger presence."

Tamrakar is committed to doing that responsibly. "I want to keep pushing and adding more value, but not at the expense of quality or the long-term stability of the company and the people who work for it. I feel I have an obligation to help them succeed and build good careers, so they can take care of themselves and their families. I believe together, we can do that." ■



Kirby-Smith Machinery Territory Manager Bill Hitchcock (left) meets with Urban Infraconstruction Owner/CEO Anup Tamrakar. "Bill, and Kirby-Smith in general, are excellent," stated Tamrakar. "Before we got our first machine, a used PC360, he took the time to make sure he understood the business and our goals so that we had the most productive machine for our needs."

An Urban Infraconstruction operator moves wall panels with a Komatsu WA320 wheel loader. "If you equip them with quick couplers to switch back and forth from buckets and forks, they offer a great deal of versatility," said Owner/CEO Anup Tamrakar.



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# NEW WACO BRANCH

**Location creates stronger presence by expanding capabilities to reduce customer downtime in a fast growing market**

**K**irby-Smith Machinery has long enjoyed a presence in the Waco area. "However, without a physical location and on-site personnel, its ability to serve customers in the city and surrounding counties was somewhat limited."

That changed with the opening of a new branch in Hewitt, on the south edge of Waco's metropolitan area. Like the company's seven other locations in Texas, it offers complete sales, rental, service and parts capabilities.

"We're here to be a one-stop shop for customer needs, and that includes having a strong inventory of equipment readily available," said



Trey McNeil,  
Territory Manager

Territory Manager Trey McNeil. "Komatsu, WIRTGEN GROUP, Takeuchi, Terramac, Sullair – we have it all. From moving dirt, to paving, to lifting, to power generation, it's covered."

That's significant for a municipality and surrounding region that has seen substantial growth during the past decade. The 2010 census pegged the city of Waco's population at 124,805. By 2019, it rose to nearly 140,000, and the greater metropolitan statistical area, which includes McLennan and Falls counties, topped 273,000. Expansion translated to additional need for housing, commercial and retail properties, as well as infrastructure.

"This area is thriving," stated Rental Sales Representative Colton Watson. "That means lots of construction,

*Continued ...*



T.J. Iannacone,  
Service Manager



Colton Watson,  
Rental Sales  
Representative



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Kirby-Smith Machinery's new Waco location carries a large inventory of Komatsu, WIRTGEN GROUP, Takeuchi, Terramac and other manufacturing lines.

► **VIDEO**

# 'We are dedicated to minimizing downtime'

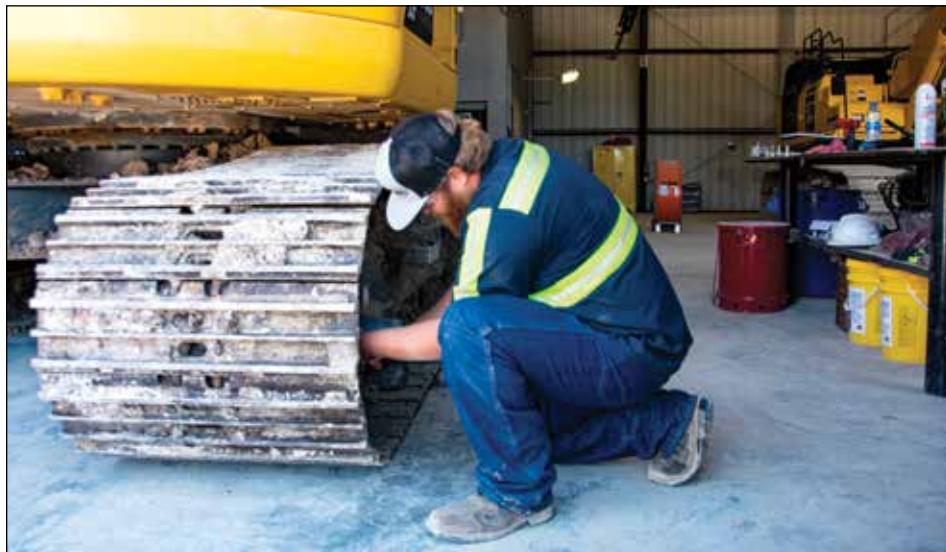
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which, in turn, requires equipment. Our large inventory of machinery is readily available, both for purchase and rent. We have several pieces on hand for rental, both on long-term and short-term bases. If a situation does come up where we don't have what a customer is looking for, in most instances, we can have it to them relatively quickly by getting it from another Kirby-Smith location."

The Waco branch can also do the same when it comes to parts. It carries

a sizeable and growing inventory of common parts and consumables on the shelf for pick up or delivery. If an item is not in stock, it can often be available the next morning when a nightly run from the Dallas and Fort Worth stores brings new supplies.

"We are dedicated to minimizing downtime," said McNeil. "Parts and service play a big role in that. We continue to assess the machine population of the area and build our inventory based on that and other factors."



Service from the Waco branch can be done either in-house or at customers' locations.



Service technician Cody Bass prepares for maintenance on a Komatsu excavator in the Waco shop. It has three service bays and a wash bay. "This facility gives us the ability to respond much faster," said Service Manager T.J. Iannacone. "It's cutting customer downtime significantly."

## Faster service

Service from the Waco branch can be done either in-house or at customers' locations. Kirby-Smith Machinery currently has a shop technician and two field techs, and it is actively seeking more. The shop has three service bays and a wash bay.

"In the past, we dispatched service trucks from our Dallas and Ft. Worth locations, which is about two hours away and maybe more, depending on exactly where the technician was located when they got the call," explained Service Manager T.J. Iannacone. "This facility gives us the ability to respond much faster. It's reducing customer downtime significantly."

That's having a positive impact, according to Iannacone. "Customers love it. They especially appreciate getting more production with increased uptime, since the costs associated with servicing their machines are reduced due to shorter travel to get to their sites."

Customers such as John Miller of Big Creek Construction, which is located just down the road from the branch, knew Kirby-Smith's move to Waco would benefit both companies. Big Creek uses Komatsu and WIRTGEN GROUP products.

"It's great for us and other contractors in the area," said Miller. "It provides faster access to parts and service, which minimizes downtime. We believe it will further strengthen our relationship."

That was the idea behind coming to Waco, according to McNeil. He added that the current branch at 415 Enterprise Boulevard in Hewitt is a temporary placeholder.

"This existing facility gives us an established location," said McNeil. "However, we are on the lookout for property to build a larger, more permanent home that further expands our capabilities and serves the area even better." ■

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# ADDED CAPABILITIES

## New iMC 2.0 excavator delivers greater accuracy, comfort and versatility for increased productivity

What if you could dig basements, footings or utility trenches without worrying about overexcavating? How about using the same machine to accurately excavate slopes and finish grade ponds with limited movement? What if you could do it all with little or no need for a finish dozer, stakes or surveying?

According to Komatsu Senior Product Manager Andrew Earing, Komatsu's new intelligent Machine Control (iMC) 2.0 PC210LCi-11 excavator with integrated GPS lets you do all of those tasks and more. Earing noted that testing showed the latest-generation machine improves production by



Andrew Earing,  
Komatsu Senior  
Product Manager

up to 33% and efficiency as much as 63% compared to conventional excavation and grading methods.

"The new iMC 2.0 PC210LCi-11 has added additional satellite systems, improving satellite coverage and ability to work in more challenging areas, such as near woods or on urban job sites," said Earing.

### Bucket angle hold, new monitor

With iMC 2.0 comes bucket angle hold. When activated, it automatically holds the bucket to the design surface during arm-in operation.

"It's less fatiguing for operators, which makes them more productive throughout a shift," said Earing. "It

A new feature of the latest-generation PC210LCi-11 intelligent Machine Control 2.0 excavator includes bucket angle hold. When activated, it automatically holds the bucket to the design surface during arm-in operation. "It's less fatiguing for operators, which makes them more productive throughout a shift," said Komatsu Senior Product Manager Andrew Earing. "It also produces a better finish-grade surface, so there are multiple benefits."

also produces a better finish-grade surface, so there are multiple benefits."

Additional new features include a smaller, slimmer 10.4-inch monitor with more memory and a faster processing speed. It has pinch-to-zoom and swipe functionality similar to a smartphone or tablet.

"Customers told us they wanted a more streamlined monitor," said Earing. "This is intuitive and easier to use, so there's decreased downtime navigating through it and more time producing."

### Options up versatility

Earing added that users can boost efficiency further with optional features such as automatic tilt bucket control. Using an add-on inertial measuring unit, it allows machine control to

*Continued . . .*



# 'Useful on projects with varying contours'

...continued

manage the angle movement of a tilt bucket to dig and grade surfaces that are not perpendicular to the machine. Users provide their choice of bucket.

"While excavating a deep trench, you can slope the sides back without moving the excavator," explained Earing. "It's also useful on projects with varying contours, such as swales and ponds. Operators can sit in a fixed position and shape those transitions. Less movement saves time and wear and tear on the machine and the operator. We believe most contractors will want to take advantage of this."

"Another feature is optional pressure and flow control for plus-one piping," he continued. "This lets you fine-tune hydraulic pressure and flow on attachments such as hammers, vibratory compactors, processors

and more for improved control and versatility."

## Semi-automatic functions

The iMC 2.0 PC210LCi-11 maintains the main functions of the first-generation iMC excavators, including the ability to switch from manual to semi-automatic modes.

Among a host of standout features is an exclusive control function that goes beyond simple guidance to semi-automatically limit overexcavation and trace a target surface. Once the target elevation is reached, no matter how hard an operator tries to move the joystick to lower the boom, the excavator won't allow it. This reduces wasted time and the need for expensive fill materials.

Productivity and efficiency features include:

- In semi-automatic mode the boom adjusts the bucket height to trace the target surface and minimizes the chance of digging too deep.

- Auto stop control halts the working equipment when the bucket edge reaches the design surface to reduce design surface damage.

- Minimum distance control regulates the bucket by automatically selecting the point on the bucket closest to the target surface.

- The facing angle compass shows the operator the facing angle in relation to the target surface, allowing the bucket edge to be accurately positioned square to the target surface.

"Existing and new technology in the iMC 2.0 excavators has proven to increase production and efficiency while reducing costs," said Earing. "We encourage anyone looking for those attributes to contact their distributor and test one for themselves." ■

**The new intelligent Machine Control (iMC) 2.0 PC210LCi-11 maintains the semi-automatic features of the first-generation iMC excavators, including auto stop control, minimum distance control and a facing angle compass to limit overexcavation.**



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# ELITE EQUIPMENT

## Six machines named to magazine's list of best products deliver improvements driven by in-the-field customer conversations

**W**hat does a new intelligent dozer, two excavators of vastly different sizes, a specialty pipelayer and two mid-to-large-size wheel loaders have in common? For one, they were named among the Top 100 products by Construction Equipment magazine. More importantly, they were built with new efficiency and production features driven by customer input.

Among the prominent machines on the list are intelligent Machine Control 2.0 D51i-24 and D61i-24 dozers with integrated GPS technology that is proven to boost production by as much as 60%. They feature proactive dozing control that lets operators cut and strip like an experienced operator from first pass to last. (See related article on page 21 for additional features).

### Large, small excavators

Earthmoving companies of all sizes appreciate a basic digging machine that's easily transported from job to job. They like it even better when the machine offers fast cycle times, deep digging

capabilities and high production, such as the new PC130-11, according to Andrew Earing, Komatsu Senior Product Manager.

"Mobility is a real asset with the PC130-11," said Earing of the 28,660-pound excavator that digs more than 17 feet deep. "When a contractor finishes one job, they can quickly load this excavator and be on the way to the next site. When they get there, it's a matter of minutes to unload and start digging. That increases production time."

He added that the PC130-11 is built with steel castings in the boom foot, boom nose and arm tip for exceptional durability. It is available with plus-one piping as an option, so you can run attachments for a wide range of applications and potentially boost profits.

The much larger 200-ton class PC2000-11 mining excavator is built for high-volume digging and can move up to 17.9 cubic yards of material in a single scoop.

"Customers told us they want better multifunction performance and

productivity than the previous model and the competition," said Joe Sollitt, Komatsu Senior Product Manager, Mining Support Equipment. "With more available engine horsepower, we were able to increase pump absorption and re-engineer the engine-pump-control logic. In combination with a more efficient hydraulic system, the PC2000-11 can load out more material per shift."

Sollitt emphasized that Komatsu designed the 1,046-horsepower excavator for greater reliability and durability with thicker, stronger boom plates and castings that are highly resistant to bending and torsional stress. The center and track frame were strengthened, and it has larger diameter carrier rollers for extended service life. He added that a ground-level service center is standard, and the power module that service personnel grew to love was maintained.

### Loaders prove more productive

Komatsu incorporated next-generation technology with considerable benefits to make its new WA475-10 wheel loader an ideal fit for quarry, waste, infrastructure, forestry and non-residential applications. Feedback received in the field guided improvements, which made it 30% more fuel efficient than its predecessor, leading to savings that can potentially make you more competitive and profitable.

The WA475-10 has 18% greater horsepower but achieves increased fuel efficiency with its Komatsu hydraulic mechanical transmission. Contributing to better economy and productivity is the independent work equipment control that simplifies operation by separating the accelerator pedal from the speed of the work equipment.

To further boost productivity, the boom lift force was bolstered by 20% and breakout force increased by 8%. A new bucket design improves pile



Earthmoving companies of all sizes appreciate a basic digging machine that's easily transported from job to job. They like it even better when the machine offers fast cycle times, deep digging capabilities and high production, such as the new 28,660-pound PC130-11.

*Continued . . .*

## New iMC 2.0 dozers increase production up to 60% with the ability to use automatics from grass-to-grade



Intelligent Machine Control 2.0 D51i-24 and D61i-24 dozers feature patent-pending proactive dozing control that automatically cuts and strips from existing terrain like an experienced operator – 100% of the time, from grass to grade. The dozers also have improved automation with patent-pending lift layer control, tilt steering control and quick surface creation.

Jon Jennings,  
Komatsu Product Marketing Manager

**W**hen experienced operators retire, they take with them their knowledge about how to move dirt as productively and efficiently as possible. That could potentially slow down your operations. What if it could be faster for your new or less-experienced operators to become as productive as those who left? It's possible.

One of the key attributes of Komatsu's new intelligent Machine Control (iMC) 2.0 dozers is patent-pending proactive dozing control that automatically cuts and strips from existing terrain like an experienced operator – 100% of the time, from grass to grade. This technology increased production by as much as 60% compared to the first-generation dozers, according to Komatsu Product Marketing Manager Jon Jennings.

"The ability to use automatics from first pass to last, instead of just during the finish grading, significantly reduces the time it takes to reach target elevation," said Jennings. "Proactive dozing control logic decides the appropriate action, such as whether to cut and carry material, spread or fill that material or whether it should finish grade."

The system provides the real-time position of the dozers to the job site to create a highly accurate elevation for it to drive the blade to the precise grade needed. During operation, the dozers measure the terrain as they track and use the track-level data to plan the next pass.

### New automation, satellite systems

Improved automation is also part of iMC 2.0, including patent-pending lift layer control, which automatically spreads fill from existing terrain with the press of a button. Much like proactive dozing control, this feature tracks the terrain and uses the data to plan the next pass, which doubles production and achieves consistent layers for quality compaction.

Additional automation features include tilt steering control that automatically tilts the blade to maintain straight travel during rough dozing, reducing the need for operator steering input by 80%. Quick surface creation produces a temporary design surface with one press of a button without the need for a complex 3D model.

Other upgrades include a second GPS antenna, which Jennings noted will aid in side-slope work. The new machines also gain access to three additional satellite systems.

"The biggest advantage is greater overall accuracy," he said. "More satellite systems increase production through the ability to use GPS in places where it may have been a big challenge before, such as at the edge of a wooded area or close to buildings on an urban project."

In addition to the new D51i-24 and D61i-24 models recently touted by Construction Equipment magazine as top products, the D39i-24 and the highly anticipated D71i-24 that was introduced last year at CONEXPO will soon be available.

"We had numerous orders for these machines before they were available because customers realized how much the new dozers will increase their production," said Jennings. "We encourage anyone looking for the same in their business to contact their distributor for a demo, more information or to add one to their fleet." ■



# New features improve cycle time

... continued

penetration and better retains material in load-and-carry applications.

"Additional conversations with equipment users also led to an improved operating environment that includes an updated cab with floor-to-ceiling glass, ergonomically designed switch layouts and a fully adjustable five-axis console for enhanced operator comfort," noted Bruce Boebel, Komatsu Senior Product Manager.

The WA800-8 wheel loader also has a new bucket shape that incorporates an increased radius and floor inclination to make it easier to fill and retain material.

The spill guard was adjusted to give operators improved visibility to the pile, and sweeper wings on either side protect the front tires. In larger quarry, aggregate and mining applications, the 254,700-pound machine is an ideal match for 60- to 100-ton trucks.

The loader features new, key automatic and semi-automatic systems that assist operators and contribute to productivity and efficiency. The three features can be used together or separately to automate the work phases when V-cycle loading, one of which is

automatic dig to optimize bucket load. This actuates the bucket and lifting operations by sensing the pressure applied to the work equipment.

A semi-automatic approach raises the boom automatically when reversing out of the pile. The lift arms elevate until reaching the upper setting of the boom positioner, allowing the operator to focus on the travel path of the loader.

Semi-automatic dump raises the lift arms automatically and dumps the bucket with the push of a button. After dumping, it levels the bucket and returns the lift arms to the lower boom positioner setting; however, the lift arms will not lower until the bucket has cleared the truck.

"We also responded to customer requests by introducing a modulation clutch for optimal tractive effort and throttle lock that improves cycle times by maintaining high work-equipment performance and saving fuel with auto deceleration," said Komatsu Product Marketing Manager Robert Hussey.

## New pipelayer designed for exceptional stability

Komatsu worked closely with pipeline companies to develop its new D155CX-8 pipelayer that has an oval design nine-roller track with 12 feet, 10 inches of track on ground for stability. It also features 32-inch track shoes.

Heavy final drive components are close to the ground, which lowers the center of gravity. The rollers are fixed suspension and don't oscillate like a dozer for greater ground contact.

With a 170,000-pound lift capacity, the D155CX-8 can handle up to 36-inch steel pipe. It has a K170 pipelayer package with a standard 24-foot boom length. An optional 28-foot boom is available.

"It's essential that we get feedback from the contractors who will ultimately use a pipelayer like our new D155CX-8," said Chuck Murawski, Product Manager, Dozers. "One item they recommended was a larger steering motor, so we incorporated one into the machine to give it better displacement and more torque." ■



Komatsu incorporated next-generation technology with considerable benefits to make its new WA475-10 wheel loader an ideal fit for quarry, waste, infrastructure, forestry and non-residential applications. It's 30% more fuel efficient, has 18% greater horsepower, 20% more boom lift force and a breakout force increase of 8% compared to its predecessor model.



The new D155CX-8 pipelayer has an oval design nine-roller track that features 12 feet, 10 inches of track on ground for stability. With a 170,000-pound lift capacity, the D155CX-8 can handle up to 36-inch steel pipe. It offers a K170 pipelayer package with a standard 24-foot boom length.



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# PAVING CORNER

## A Conversation with TXAPA Executive Vice President Harold Mullen

**H**arold Mullen is the Executive Vice President of the Texas Asphalt Pavement Association (TXAPA), a position that he has held since 1995. In this capacity, Harold oversees the considerable activity of the largest state asphalt pavement association in the nation, including a recently expanded and renovated two-building campus located on I-35 in Buda, Texas just south of Austin. This state-of-the-art facility contains labs and classrooms for training and certification programs, multiple meeting areas, huge display and social gathering areas, a broadcast facility and generous office space.

Over the last few decades, I have had the pleasure of witnessing firsthand the growth and expansion of TXAPA under Harold's skilled leadership. Kirby-Smith Machinery has been active in the associate affairs of the association and a long-time supporter of the association's mission. Recently, Harold took some time out of his busy schedule to share his thoughts about recent challenges and present conditions in the asphalt pavement industry – including the industry's outlook from TXAPA's perspective.

**GARY CORLEY (GC):** Harold, in your 26 years as Executive Vice President of TXAPA, I know that you have seen considerable upheavals in the industry, but the challenges brought about by COVID-19 have taxed our professional and personal ways of life to the extreme. What are some of your observations from the past year?

**HM:** The past year has clearly been a journey – we have added new terms to our vocabulary like "global pandemic" and "Zoom meetings" that were unknown to most of us before last March. As uncertain as

things have been, it's gratifying to see that our industry has trended to the positive. Thank God, we were able to continue working and to take care of our families. The industry really has done a great job of overcoming adversity and achieving success. Our frontline heroes have performed well, with 70 projects already submitted for nomination for our TXAPA/TxDOT Quality Asphalt Awards – so we have maintained quality.

COVID-19 has also heightened our awareness of safety – there has been an increased focus on keeping our most valuable asset, our teammates, safe and healthy. One of the best stories of the past year has been how adversity has shined a new light on partnering and enhanced our cooperative spirit. These times have brought new ideas, methods and processes to the forefront – e-ticketing is a good example of this. In turn, these developments have created more opportunities for online training and education.

All the challenges of the past year have just reaffirmed my long-held belief that the people in our industry are truly resilient.

**GC:** With the improvement in the COVID-19 situation due to the advent of vaccines, 2021 could be the year that TXAPA returns to some degree of normalcy with meeting schedules. Of course, being able to hold the annual meeting in September would be the crown jewel – how does that look now?

**HM:** Things are looking very positive. The COVID-19 situation is improving, and the rapid deployment of vaccines should have us in a good position over the next few months. Our President, Craig Odom, has shown a lot of



**Harold Mullen,**  
Executive Vice President  
Texas Asphalt Pavement Association (TXAPA)

leadership in this area and has directed that planning move forward for our September meeting to take place with our normal events and functions intact. With Governor Abbott opening businesses to 100% capacity and six more months of vaccinations, we should be well prepared for a great meeting in San Antonio in September. The entertainment this year will be Wade Bowen and Randy Rogers, with their "Hold My Beer and Watch This" show. There is great anticipation on the part of the membership, so I think we will be back to setting records for attendance and scholarship fundraising soon.

**GC:** Our new facility and broadcasting capabilities seem to have been both a lifeboat and a tool for growth in our training programs in 2020. Do you see continued expansion in this part of the association's mission?

**HM:** Without a doubt. Over the past year we have redoubled our efforts at outreach to the membership as well as to our

*Continued . . .*

# Providing service to our members through training

...continued

TxDOT partners. We have also done a lot of custom training and education to meet the specific needs of individual members, be it in person or online. As an example, TxDOT specification changes went into effect last February at the outset of the pandemic, and we were able to develop customized specification training to meet individual contractor needs regardless of content or audience size. It was a large undertaking, but it provided a great service to our members.

Jim and Jenna continue to develop our technical and digital capabilities that enhance our member services and education outreach. In 2020, that included 118 YouTube videos, 48 TXAPA live broadcasts (reaching over 2,000 attendees), and 13 specification education consults.

Yes sir, expansion will be the operative word for our future in this critical area.

**GC:** Kirby-Smith has always placed a high value on our membership in TXAPA, but even more so today given the changes and complexities of the industry. From your unique perspective as Executive Vice President, what are your thoughts?

**HM:** Changes and complexities – Gary, I love your descriptions. Strong, participating team members are the life blood of TXAPA and Kirby-Smith certainly fits that description. We are fortunate to have them as a member, and, Gary, we are grateful to you for your many years of service to TXAPA and for telling our story. Team members like KSMI

help the industry stay abreast of emerging technologies and maintain a competitive edge.

**GC:** Harold, I have always treasured our 30-plus-year friendship. Thanks for your time, your continued great work in TXAPA and your service to the industry.

**HM:** When you get to work with outstanding people like yourself, it makes the time go by much faster. It is hard for me to believe that 30-plus-years have flown by since we started working together. I cannot wait to continue sharing our friendship and partnership for the next whatever-time I have left. I appreciate your dedication to quality and your steadfast support of TXAPA. ■





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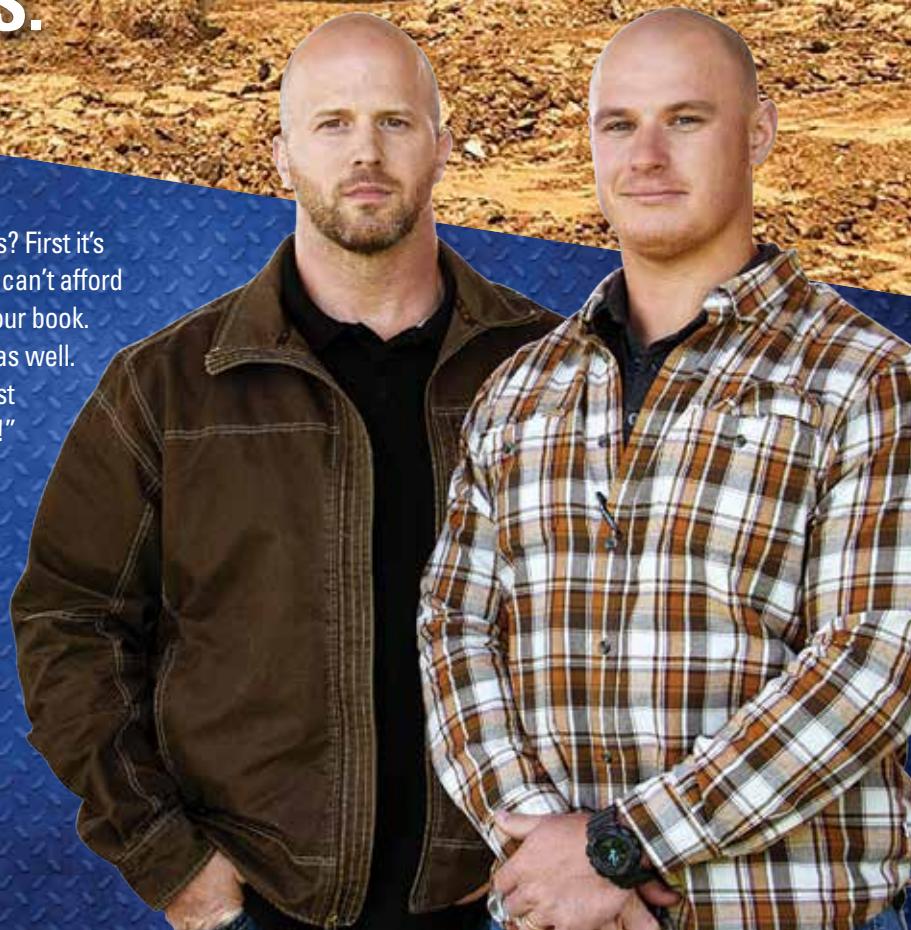


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# BUILT BY CUSTOMERS

## User feedback on new Grove GRT9165 rough-terrain crane drives improvements

The best way to know your products fit customer expectations is to get their feedback. That's what Manitowoc did to ensure its Grove GRT9165 rough-terrain crane had the features and reliability that owners and operators demand.

The GRT9165 has the longest reach and highest capacity – 165 tons – of Grove's rough-terrain lineup and was built to help increase efficiency and maintain low ownership



Rickey Bailey,  
Vice President,  
Crane Division

Grove's GRT9165 features 165 tons of capacity and a 205-foot, six-section MEGAFORM boom with TWIN-LOCK boom pinning system. The design gives it exceptional strength-to-weight ratio.

costs. It has a 205-foot, six-section MEGAFORM boom with TWIN-LOCK boom pinning system. The design gives it exceptional strength-to-weight ratio. A 58.4-foot manual or hydraulic swingaway jib is available to boost overall reach and can be extended further by adding a 26.2-foot lattice insert. Either jib can be offset up to 50 degrees for added versatility.

Four steering modes increase job site maneuverability and make crane positioning easier. Getting to the site and ready to work is quick and easy with the crane's compact transport height and self-rigging, removable components. A wireless rigging remote aids in fast, convenient setup.

Grove said on the GRT9165 introduction that it "represents the latest advances in Grove's technology, including features that have been developed specifically in response to customer demand. The GRT9165 continues our trend of offering class-leading advantages on large-capacity cranes. The crane's longer reach in particular will help lifters to bid for and complete more jobs with a single crane, increasing their capabilities."

### Exceptional comfort

User input also led to a wider, full-vision cab that provides exceptional operator comfort, visibility and productivity. Redesigned armrests and 20-degree cab tilt maximize the operator experience. Additional comfort features include electronic seat adjustments, a high-output heating and cooling system, and a tilt/telescoping steering wheel.

Like other Grove models, the GRT9165 has the innovative Crane Control System (CCS) that offers a user-friendly interface, two full graphic displays mounted independently for easy adjustment, and an arm rest jog dial for convenient navigation and data input. The system allows the electronic controllers to be programmed by the operator for specific speed and reaction. ■

*"The GRT9165 represents the latest advances in Grove's technology."*



# SMART CONSTRUCTION REMOTE

New solution saves time, expense by delivering design changes directly to machines, eliminating travel to job sites

If you manage construction projects, you know design changes come with the territory. You also realize that delays in updating plans could adversely affect production and your profits.

"It's critical to communicate new information as quickly as possible," stated Bryce Satterly, Komatsu Smart Construction Solutions Manager. "Technology is making that virtually instantaneous. Our Smart Construction Remote solution is a good example. It allows users to send design data to machines in the field and remotely support operators without traveling to the job site, reducing costly downtime."

Smart Construction Remote lets you log into target machines, pinpoint their location, view the machines' monitors and upload or download files at anytime from anywhere. Smart Construction Remote also provides distanced troubleshooting capabilities.



Bryce Satterly,  
Komatsu Smart  
Construction  
Solutions Manager

Managers can log into target machines, pinpoint their location, view the machines' monitors and upload or download files at anytime from anywhere, according to Satterly. He added that updates can be transferred to multiple machines with one click.

Smart Construction Remote's software is compatible with Komatsu intelligent Machine Control dozers and excavators as well as with select aftermarket grade control systems. It's one of several Smart Construction solutions created to help you more efficiently plan, schedule, manage, streamline costs and optimize processes remotely.

## Distant troubleshooting capabilities

In addition to project design file updates, Smart Construction Remote provides distanced troubleshooting capabilities. Offsite personnel can view what operators are seeing in the field, and even operate the machine control monitor, through their connected devices.

"The operator, survey manager and others can communicate remotely in real time, and resolve issues faster," said Satterly. "Not having to make that trip to either update a machine or troubleshoot it saves time and reduces fuel costs and emissions associated with driving to the site. Those are added benefits." ■





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# A MORE VERSATILE SOIL ROLLER

New dozer blades for HAMM H Series soil rollers let you move and distribute more material with one machine

**S**oil rollers are typically considered one-dimensional machines. They compact dirt. What if you increase their versatility and potentially your profitability by using that one machine for multiple tasks? How much could you save in time and operating costs?

"Adding a dozer blade allows you to push material, compact dirt or do both simultaneously. The recently introduced blades for our H Series line give you an excellent option," said Richard Evans, Vice President of Sales for HAMM. "They move and distribute more material, while special skid shoes prevent the blades from digging into the ground. Applications include landfills, trench construction, light earthwork, distributing, plus stripping and/or compacting loose debris."

Blades are available for most HAMM soil rollers ranging from the

compact H 5i to the 46,096-pound H 20i CP. All are moved with a single cylinder. For larger compactors, the standard blade width is more than 97 inches wide and 32 inches high. Evans noted that extensions are available for some models.

"The larger dozer blade works particularly well on the H 13i C and CP machines," said Evans. "These models are fitted with larger drive motors and gearboxes for high climbing capability and increased pushing power."

Operators can raise or lower the blades easily using one button on the central control unit joystick. Another button activates the floating position.

## Clear line-of-sight

Dozing is more productive when the operator has a clear line-of-sight

to the front of the blade. The standard H Series blade has a high-visibility cross member that provides an unobstructed view, and a position indicator that gives the operator visualization of the blade's position in relation to the substrate.

HAMM built the robust blade for long life. The hydraulic cylinder is centrally located behind the blade to protect it against material deposits. The wear edge is exchangeable and can be quickly swapped out for a new one.

"Our experts and dealer partners can guide customers to the right blade, or the blade and add-on combination that best suits their needs," said Evans. "We encourage anyone who compacts soil and wants increased production from one machine, to try out an H Series machine with a blade." ■

HAMM's new H Series dozer blades allow you to push material, compact dirt or do both simultaneously, which increases productivity and efficiency, according to Richard Evans, Vice President of Sales for HAMM. "They move and distribute more material, while special skid shoes prevent the blades from digging into the ground."



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# NEWS & NOTES

## Researchers to establish National Institute for AI in Construction

The National Science Foundation and Discovery Partners Institute awarded grants to support researchers at the University of Illinois (UI) and Carnegie Mellon University in the establishment of the National Institute for Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Construction. The goal is to identify key areas for the highest impact of AI design,

construction and operation of the built environment, according to an article on UI's website.

It added that researchers hope the initiative will advance both the application of AI in construction and the science of AI in general. More than 40 industry partners from architecture, engineering, construction, technology providers and venture capital

firms will join the researchers in this multidisciplinary effort.

"Machine learning and AI are in the national spotlight because they can solve important problems," said Derek Hoiem, Co-Principal Investigator and Associate Professor of Computer Science at UI. "We believe applying AI methods to construction problems will produce a seismic shift in AI research." ■

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All machines are not available at all locations.

# Observation, recommendations lead Justin Ashlock to Kirby-Smith as Product Service Manager in Abilene

Justin Ashlock knew something good was going on with Kirby-Smith Machinery simply by taking a look around him. When he asked a few customers what they thought, the answer was obvious.

"I was working for another dealer as a technician. When I went out to job sites, I could see that there was more and more equipment from Kirby-Smith, and there was less and less of ours," recalled Ashlock. "Customers told me that Kirby-Smith had great machines and even better support. They said it would be a great place to work."

Ashlock contacted Kirby-Smith about potential employment. Within a short



Justin Ashlock,  
Abilene Product  
Service Manager

time, he was onboard as a field service technician.

"Kirby-Smith certainly lived up to its reputation," said Ashlock. "The leadership is amazing. It is invested in employee success and helping you move up in the company if you want. For instance, when I first came here, I was focused on dirt equipment. They encouraged me to learn the paving side and sent me to several training sessions."

## Quickly promoted

Learning that area of the business played a role in Ashlock's promotion to Product Service Manager at Kirby-Smith Machinery's Abilene location about a year ago. He oversees the shop and assists field technicians as needed.

"I love this position because it gives me more time at home with family," said Ashlock. He and his wife had their first child about the same time as when he earned his current job. "Kirby-Smith understands how important that is, and that's another great aspect about working here."

Ashlock is a native of Abilene. After graduating from high school in 2006, he went to Texas State Technical College in Sweetwater where he studied diesel technology. His coursework built upon the skills he gained growing up working on cars and trucks.

Today, woodworking is one of his passions away from the job. Ashlock also enjoys family time, especially visiting national parks. He also likes to hunt and fish. ■

## Kirby-Smith adds full line of Global street sweepers in Oklahoma

**K**irby-Smith Machinery now carries the full line of high-quality street sweepers from Global Environmental Products at its Oklahoma locations. The line includes tough, purpose-built, heavy-duty sweepers.

"Kirby-Smith Machinery is excited to add Global sweepers to our product lineup," said Vern Gunderson, Kirby-Smith Machinery Vice President of Road Construction and Materials. "Chuck Riddle (Governmental Sales Manager) and I met with Global throughout 2020 to discuss a partnership. Both groups decided it was a good fit and are looking forward to bringing Global sweepers to Oklahoma in a big way."

Several mechanical and regenerative air sweeper models are available in three-wheel and four-wheel designs, including diesel and electric-hybrid models. They can also be customized

to run with alternative fuels such as compressed natural gas.

"We are thrilled to add this top-tier dealer to our network and are proud to call Kirby-Smith Machinery our partner," said Chad Bormann, Director of Sales – Global Environmental Products, Inc. ■

Kirby-Smith Machinery is now the authorized dealer for Global street sweepers in Oklahoma. The line includes tough, purpose-built, heavy-duty sweepers. Several mechanical and regenerative air sweeper models are available in three-wheel and four-wheel designs, including diesel and electric-hybrid models.



# The original leader in construction sweepers



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# THE FACES OF KIRBY-SMITH

## Rental Sales Rep Jacky Miller maintains his drive to help customers find the right machinery to increase their profitability

**J**acky Miller knew he wanted to join the Kirby-Smith Machinery team before he even was offered a job.

"I kept an eye on Kirby prior to it gaining a presence here, when its footprint was still just in Oklahoma," said Miller, Rental Sales Rep, at the Fort Worth branch. "I told myself that if they ever came to Texas, I would love to work for Kirby-Smith. When it took over the Komatsu dealership in this area, I applied right away."

Kirby-Smith Machinery hired Miller in 2009, and he quickly saw that the organization lived up to his lofty expectations.

### Team environment with everyone working toward a common goal

"It's a great family atmosphere," stated Miller. "We genuinely care about one another and have been there for each other through good and bad times. It's a team environment, and we are all working toward a common goal of providing customers with great experiences, whether that be in parts and service, sales or rentals. I tell people all the time – customers, potential employees, current employees, people on the street – that Kirby-Smith is the best, and I really mean it."

The Texas native's career in the rental industry began nearly three decades ago when he took a job as a rental coordinator. He did a stint as a dispatcher for a trucking company before moving back into rentals as a manager. He decided to focus on rental sales 17 years ago.

"I love it because I enjoy talking to people and getting to know their business," emphasized Miller. "I wake up every day ready to go to work and find ways to



Helping customers work more productively with the right machinery drives Jacky Miller. "I wake up every day ready to go to work and find ways to make customers more profitable. Kirby-Smith maintains one, if not the largest, rental fleets, so rarely do I come across a situation that I don't have a solution to. That goes for dirt work, paving, pipelining, clearing, lifting and any other industry we serve."

make customers more profitable. Kirby-Smith maintains one of, if not the largest, rental fleets, so rarely do I come across a situation that I don't have a solution to. That goes for dirt work, paving, pipelining, clearing, lifting and any other industry we serve."

"I believe in going the extra mile, too," he continued. "If a customer needs parts and I can pick them up and deliver, I'll do it to save them a trip of coming into the store."

Even after nearly 30 years, he still puts together new and interesting machine combinations. "I recently rented out a Komatsu excavator with a Fecon mulching head for a clearing project. It was unbelievable how fast it worked. The customer was impressed!"

### Passion for equipment, hot rods began early on

Miller learned about equipment from a young age, as his father and grandfather owned a general contracting business. "I always knew that working around machinery was my calling. I still have the same passion for it that I did growing up."

He also maintains his enthusiasm for hot rods. He got his first one while in high school. "It came with a lot of speeding tickets back then," he chuckled. "Fortunately, I matured. The incidents dropped to zero, but I have never lost interest."

Miller also enjoys spending time with his family, which includes his wife, two grown children and a grandchild. ■

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# THE FACES OF KIRBY-SMITH

## Fort Worth Master Product Support Rep Philip Hearrean shares his customer-first mantra while mentoring new employees

Philip Hearrean's interest in working on equipment goes back to his youth. Even before he was old enough to drive, he spent his free time tinkering on trucks and cars.

"My brothers used to do a lot of street racing, and I helped them with their cars," shared the Master Product Support Rep at Kirby-Smith's Fort Worth branch. "I wanted to be an aircraft mechanic and went to school for that; but then I decided I wanted to work on tractors instead. I've always been impressed; and actually, really amazed by the big stuff."

After starting his career as a truck mechanic, Philip realized that dream of working on the big stuff when he landed a job at international Harvester servicing farm equipment. From there, he progressed to construction machinery. Hearrean also spent several years working in the parts department of another heavy equipment manufacturer. Then, a decade ago and after three years of an initial job offer with Kirby-Smith – he joined the team; a decision he's glad he made.

As a Master Product Support Rep, Hearrean does a "little bit of everything," working with customers as well as the Kirby-Smith parts and service personnel. "I call on customers, try to keep the service and parts departments busy and train the parts people," he said. "I love the freedom of being able to make my own schedule to get out there and help customers."

### Mastering his craft

Hearrean earned the Master portion of his title over the span of nearly 10 years by completing several Komatsu courses covering topics such as customer service, parts, sales and more. Now he's focused on sharing his accumulated knowledge and experience as he mentors newer

members of the Kirby-Smith product support team, especially on how to serve customers.

When asked to reveal his customer-service philosophy, Hearrean responded, "It's all about taking care of people. I'm always personally delivering parts; sometimes customers will call me at 2:00 a.m. However, if there's an issue, I want to take care of it as quickly as possible.

"I love Kirby-Smith; the people are great here," he continued. "I've known many of my co-workers for decades – this industry is a small family. You stay in it long enough, you'll meet a lot of people over and over again and become friends with many of them."

### Unique pastime

Away from the job, Philip enjoys spending time with his family, which includes three young granddaughters. He is an avid Dallas Cowboys fan and makes riding his motorcycle a priority. Aside from those interests, he enjoys an unusual hobby – taking part in Civil War battle reenactments as a member of a cannon crew.

"It takes six people to man a gun, and I work the front of the cannon," Hearrean shared. "We are historically accurate, using cannons from the Civil War era. The only difference is we don't use cannon balls – we only have one and don't want to chase it." ■



Fort Worth Master Product Support Rep Philip Hearrean (left) shares advice with Parts Warehouse Supervisor Patrick Winchester. Hearrean enjoys mentoring newer members of the Kirby-Smith team, especially when teaching them about his philosophy on customer service. "It's all about taking care of people. If there's an issue, I want to take care of it as quickly as possible."

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## Mike Weaver

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