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OCRC awarded for innovation at APWA Roadeo



Ottawa County Road Commission innovation and ingenuity was recently recognized at American Public Works Association (APWA) Midwest Michigan Branch Annual Snow Plow Roadeo and Equipment Show.

The OCRC's new under-guardrail

cleaner, dubbed "The Undertaker" by our maintenance crew, was given the 2019 Innovative Idea award at this year's Roadeo, which took place Oct. 9 at the city of Kentwood Department of Public Works.

"The Undertaker" was fabricated in-house by the OCRC's own Dylan Lemke. The device is a tool that attaches to the front of a Bobcat. The attachment allows for the easy cleaning of compacted sediment, dirt and debris from the area underneath guardrails along area roads. This sediment and debris can build up over time, and if not cleaned, it can cause a drainage hazard along roads.

In addition to being a hit with the Roadeo judges, "The Undertaker" was also a hit with event attendees, who stopped to observe the unit on display, and watch an informational video showing the device in action.

Other 2019 Roadeo highlights

Our drivers also performed well at the Roadeo's truck obstacle course.

Each city/county is allowed one team of two drivers for each garage facility. The OCRC had competitors from all four of its facilities at this event.



The obstacle course is designed to simulate actual snowplowing operations. Drivers are timed and scored for accuracy, safety and speed. The competition -- which also includes an educational component -- requires each team member to complete the course independently and the scores are combined for a team total.

Of the four OCRC teams participating in the Roadeo, three placed in the top 10 out of 39 teams (Coopersville, Grand Haven, and North Holland). And out of the individual drivers, the OCRC had two place in the top 10 out of 78 competitors (John Gappa and Gerry VanHouten).

The OCRC is proud of all of our teams' and drivers' accomplishments at this year's Roadeo!

Paint-a-plow event allows for creative expression



The Ottawa County Road Commission recently participated in a great community project that resulted in a fantastic looking painted plow for the Grand Haven garage.

The paint-a-plow event took place at the recent Hispanic Heritage Fiesta held at Central Park in Grand Haven, an event that included live music, cultural dance performances, vendors and a variety of authentic food and beverages.

West Michigan artist Erik Picardo designed the artwork on the plow blade, and local children attending the event helped to color in the design.

"We were honored to work with the Road Commission, artist Picardo and the Hispanic Heritage Fiesta Committee on this exciting snow plow art project," said Loutit District Library Director John Martin.

Martin noted that the library has been the single source for displays of children's art during the annual Art Walk art exhibition in Grand Haven.



"With the inaugural Hispanic Heritage Fiesta taking place in downtown Grand Haven's Central Park during Art Walk, it seemed to be a natural collaboration to encourage a public art creation (snow plow blade painting) in the library's parking lot, which is located across from Central Park," Martin said.

The Road Commission appreciates being able to be a part of this wonderful community project!

Remember: This fall, don't veer for deer



Fall is one of the seasons when the deer population is most active here in Michigan.

Each year, there are nearly 50,000 reported vehicle-deer crashes in Michigan, with roughly 80 percent of these crashes occurring on two-lane roads between dusk and dawn. The most serious crashes occur when motorists swerve to avoid a deer and hit another vehicle or a fixed object, or when their vehicle rolls

over.

Here are some tips to avoid a crash:

- Stay aware, awake, and sober.

- Vehicle-deer crashes occur year-round, but be especially alert in spring and fall.
- Signs are placed at known deer crossing areas to alert you of the possible presence of deer.
- Deer are herd animals and frequently travel in single file. If you see one deer cross the road, chances are there are more waiting.
- Be alert for deer, especially at dawn and dusk. If you see one, slow down.
- Don't rely on gimmicks or deer whistles, flashing your high-beam headlights at a deer to try and get it to move, or honking your horn to deter deer.

If a crash with a deer is unavoidable:

- Don't swerve. Brake firmly, hold onto the steering wheel, and bring your vehicle to a controlled stop.
- Pull off the road, turn on your emergency flashers, and be cautious of other traffic if you exit your vehicle.
- Report the crash to the nearest police agency and your insurance company.

Remember to buckle up, as seat belts are motorists' best defense in the event of a crash.

Important Dates:

November 7, 2019 | 9 a.m. | Board Meeting

November 11, 2019 | Closed for Veterans Day

November 20, 2019 | 9 a.m. | Board Meeting

November 28-29, 2019 | Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday



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616-842-5400 | Office Hours: Monday-Friday; 7:30AM-4PM

The Ottawa County Road Commissioners:

Tom Bird | Tom Elhart | Betty Gajewski | Tim Grifhorst | Jim Miedema

Managing Director

Brett Laughlin