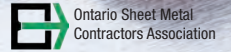


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CROSSFLOW

SPRING 2023

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ONTARIO SHEET METAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION



New Technology Answers Contractor Prayers

LightWELD hand-held laser welder lands in Ontario

Sheet metal employers have been crying out for skilled welders, who are high in demand but depleted in supply. To answer this cry, a new technology has landed in the Ontario marketplace, and it has both contractors and trade training professionals very excited.

The LightWELD hand-held laser welder, manufactured by IPG, is designed to enable “dramatically faster” welding with higher-quality, consistent results across a wider range of materials and thicknesses than MIG or TIG. Easy to learn and operate, the tool also prom-

ises minimal distortion, deformation, under-cut or burn-through.

“If the industry doesn’t jump on using this type of technology, they’re foolish,” said Scott Wood, director of training at Ontario Sheet Metal Trades Training

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New Technology Answers Contractor Prayers

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Centre (OSMWTC) in Oakville. “There are some safety precautions that are required, but the main thing is the speed of what it gets done and the strength of the welds are unbelievable.”

George Brown, owner of John C. Rogers Sheet Metal in Whitby, concurs, stating that the tool welds “two-and-a-half times quicker than a regular weld.”

“The LightWELD welds a lot faster and with no heat distortion,” he said. “We can even weld lighter gauge and dissimilar metals – like aluminum to copper – where you couldn’t before.”

The LightWELD hand-held laser welder came to the OSMWTC following discussions with the International Training Institute (iTi), the U.S. counterpart of the OSMWTC. According to Wood, OSMWTC is looking to better align itself with iTi, and one of the benefits to OSM members are discounts on equipment.

“In our conversations with iTi, representatives suggested they come to the training centre to do a demonstration to showcase what this tool can do,” Wood explained. “They brought it, set it up and when they completed the demonstrations, they turned to us and said ‘we’re leaving this here for you guys.’ It was a very nice gesture.”

Wood said at first he was somewhat skeptical about the welder’s capabilities because it’s not much larger than a typical welding unit. But once he saw it in action, he quickly became a believer, stating that “its capabilities are pretty amazing.”

In need of a new welding unit, John C. Rogers Sheet Metal purchased the

hand-held laser welder last fall after seeing a demonstration at a trade show in Toronto. Although the price tag to purchase the tool is much higher than a standard welding package, the payback is quick because anybody can use it.

“Finding good welders is really difficult,” Brown said. “But with this tool, you don’t need to be a welder. You just point and shoot, and the tool does all the hard lifting.”

Preloaded with optimized welding parameters for the most common thicknesses and materials, users can also adjust the power up or down to match travel speed and desired penetration. All of these settings can be saved and recalled as required.

Compared to MIG and TIG welding, either of which can take a lifetime to master, LightWELD is easy to learn and allows new users to make high-quality welds in merely a few hours. Although there is a small learning curve to understand the workings of the LightWELD, Brown said that the non-welders find the tool easier to use than the seasoned veterans.

“A good welder knows how to manipulate the gun, the handle and the speed,” he said. “With the LightWELD, these are all computer settings. You just turn the machine on and go.”

If you’re welding quarter plate to quarter plate, Brown added users simply change the wobble to quarter plate and the gun does all the manipulation with light rather than the user whipping his/her hand back and forth.

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Wood agrees with the tool's ease of use, saying that he is also not a master of the skill, but can weld if the situation arose.

"I ran a line with the LightWELD and it took maybe five seconds. It was absolutely perfect," he said. "If I would have had to do that TIG welded, the process would have been so much harder. Anybody can use this tool because all the welds look the same. It's just so simple."

Aside from the added use of specialty goggles, there aren't many additional safety precautions required to utilize the laser welder compared to standard welding practices.

"You're still wearing protective equipment and a welding mask, you just need some special glasses," Wood explained. "And, even though there are some sparks, there's far less smoke that comes out of it."

For the applications required by John

C. Rogers, Brown said that the LightWELD is set up in a booth within their facility, which includes special glass and door sensors, so viewers can safely watch the welding process from outside the booth.

"I can stand outside of the booth and watch the welding without issue," Brown said. "But as soon as I open the door, the connections we have installed will automatically shut the tool off."

According to Wood, although the LightWELD is relatively new to the marketplace, he feels the technology will quickly become an industry norm in the not so distant future.

"It's such new technology and our industry has to take advantage of this now," he said. "Those companies that have adopted the technology are quite happy and see the tool's advantages quickly."

After taking the technology route to solve the issue of poor welding skills, Brown agrees that the decision to purchase the hand-held unit has paid for itself in the fact that anyone can use it effectively after some training.

"We paid a little more for the machine, but now anyone can use it," he said. "So far, it's worked quite well and we're pretty happy with it."

To learn more about the LightWELD hand-held laser welder, visit <https://lightweld.net/>.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Wally McIntosh Scholarship Applications Now Available



The Ontario Sheet Metal Contractors Association is currently accepting applications for the 2023 Wally McIntosh Scholarship Award. Applications are available at the [OSM web site](#).

OSM is now offering four, \$2500 scholarships to children of OSM member firm employees who are graduating from high school, and entering college or university studies.

Additionally, a \$1000 award is presented to the sheet metal apprentice who obtains the highest average mark for basic, intermediate and advanced day school while attending the Ontario Sheet Metal Workers Training Centre.

This year, the winner of the 2023 Wally McIntosh Apprentice Award is Dakota Sampson. Sampson is employed with Dakota Sierra Environmental Inc., which is owned by his father Robert. Sampson's average mark for all his day school programs was 95.3 per cent.

For more information, please contact the association office at (905) 886-9627 or email dramirez@osmca.org.

Message from the Executive Director

Most of you have probably heard the term “scuttlebutt,” but perhaps don’t know the word’s meaning. Here is a tidbit from Merriam-Webster explaining where the word scuttlebutt derives from:

Scuttlebutt, the Water Cooler Talk of 19th Century Seafarers

When office workers catch up on the latest scuttlebutt around the water cooler, they are continuing a long-standing tradition that probably also occurred on the sailing ships of yore. Back in the early 1800s, the cask containing a ship’s daily supply of fresh water was called a scuttlebutt (from the verb scuttle meaning “to cut a hole through” and the noun butt, “cask”); that name was later applied to a drinking fountain on a ship or at a naval installation. In time, the term for the water source was also applied to the gossip and rumors generated around it, and the latest chatter has been called “scuttlebutt” ever since.

Here’s another tidbit: What’s the origin of the phrase, “Straight from the horse’s mouth?” I found this explanation on phrases.org.uk:

“In horse racing circles, tips on which horse is a likely winner circulate amongst punters. The most trusted authorities are considered those in closest touch with the recent form of the horse, that is, stable lads, trainers etc. The notional ‘from the horse’s mouth’ is supposed to indicate one step better than even that inner circle, that is, the horse itself. The phrase originated around the turn of the 20th century.

An early printed version of the phrase is from the London newspaper Reynolds Newspaper, June 1896: *“As the great British nation takes far more interest in horse racing than in politics, the exchange of rulers would be delightful, because, look you, we’d get all our tips straight from the horse’s mouths, instead of being deluded and swindled every day by their lordly owners.”*

So, the scuttlebutt is that I am leaving the Ontario Sheet Metal Contractors Association (OSM) and the Toronto Sheet Metal Contractors Association (TSM).

Well, now you can hear it from the horse’s mouth. I am.

The duration of collective bargaining has been the major factor in my decision of when to end my tenure as Executive Director of OSM and TSM. If I were to remain in my role for the 2025 bargaining round then, effectively, I would be committing to remain well into 2026. That timeline is beyond my plans for retirement. I then gave consideration for my successor. Many of our veteran directors and labour relations representatives are approaching their retirement years. I feel that my successor would benefit from gaining corporate knowledge from these veterans before they, too, retire.



Of course, my primary consideration was the best interests of our membership and allowing for a smooth succession of a new Executive Director well in advance of the next round of collective bargaining. All things considered, this brought me to the decision to conclude my tenure on December 31, 2023. As such, I provided my notice of resignation to the OSM and TSM Boards on March 2, 2023.

Now you’ve heard it from the horse’s mouth and not from hanging around the scuttlebutt.

I still have a few months before I depart from my post, but I want to close by saying that I will be reaching almost 40 years in this industry. I have worn many different hats throughout my journey and learned so much along the way. It has been an honour to serve as Executive Director of OSM and TSM. This experience has been wonderful and I hope, in some way, that I have made a positive contribution to our industry and the associations.

I thank you all for providing me the opportunity to serve as your Executive Director.

– Darryl Stewart, OSM Executive Director

SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE



Naloxone in the Workplace

The Ontario government is launching a new program that will make free naloxone kits and training available to workplaces where there is a risk of an opioid overdose.

“Ontario, like the rest of Canada, is in the middle of an opioid epidemic made worse by a toxic supply of recreational street drugs,” said Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Monte McNaughton. “That’s why the Ontario government is the first in North America to require naloxone kits be accessible in at-risk workplaces by June 1, 2023, to raise awareness for those struggling with addiction, reduce stigma and save lives.”

Approximately 2500 people died from opioid-related causes between March 2020 and January 2021, and of the victims who were employed, 30 per cent were construction workers, by far the most of any industry impacted.

“While Ontario’s workers have been there to support us before and during this horrible pandemic, it’s just as important that we are there to support them,” said Michael Tibollo, Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. “By ensuring access to life-saving naloxone kits where and when our workers need them, our government is helping to protect more Ontarians struggling with addiction from preventable deaths and taking decisive action to address the challenges of the opioid crisis.”

Naloxone is a medication that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose and allow time for medical help to arrive. Requiring businesses in high-risk settings to have naloxone

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RECOGNITION



Bob Felbel

Retires from OSM Board After Over 15 Years of Service

Long-time Ontario Sheet Metal Contractors Association (OSM) labour relations council and board member Bob Felbel is stepping down from the association executive this May to pursue a new chapter in life – retirement.

Having started in the industry in 1975 at the age of 18, Felbel was always invested in the sheet metal trade. After completing his apprenticeship, Felbel remained on the training side of the business to ensure the quality of apprentices coming into the trade were the best they could be.

“After I finished my apprenticeship, I was a night school instructor in Thunder Bay for over 10 years,” he said. “I was always interested in the apprentice side of the business and making sure the training would meet the highest standard possible.”

Felbel took his first leap into the

business sector when he and his good friend Bill Adamson created Elite Custom Hoods, a firm that specialized in the fabrication and sale of copper and brass custom range hoods. However, after a few years in that market, it was time for Felbel to begin a new journey in his career path.

In 1993, Felbel along with his business partner, Glen Major started a sheet metal fabrication company – Nu-Tech Metals Sales & Service.

Through the business, Felbel became exposed to OSM in 1998 and began attending the association’s annual general meetings, which connected him with like-minded industry colleagues. In 2006, he began his tenure on the OSM Labour Relations Council, a position he held until 2012 when he was appointed to the OSM Board of Directors. Here, Felbel served as treasurer (2013-2015), vice

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Naloxone in the Workplace

kits on hand will help reduce the stigma around opioid abuse, raise awareness about the risk of accidental overdoses, and potentially save hundreds of lives a year.

For up to two years, the Workplace Naloxone Program will provide at-risk employers with free training for up to two workers and one nasal spray naloxone kit for each eligible workplace.

For more information on program eligibility or access to naloxone kits and training, please visit Ontario.ca/workplacenaloxone.

COCA’s Prompt Payment and Adjudication Tool Kit Helps You Get Paid On Time

Legislation that’s designed to speed up payment in the construction industry came into force on October 1, 2019. There are now provisions in the Construction Act, referred to as “prompt payment and adjudication” that prescribe specific timelines for payment and a process to resolve disputes around payment quickly and inexpensively.

Whether you are a homeowner, a project owner, a general contractor, trade contractor or anyone else involved in construction, you should be aware of these prompt payment and adjudication provisions, and be prepared before a dispute arises.

In order for the process to work for you, you must be ready. For details, access the Council of Ontario Construction Association’s (COCA) Prompt Payment and Adjudication Tool Kit by clicking [here](#).

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Bob Felbel

Retires from OSM Board
After Over 15 Years of Service

president (2015-2017), president-elect (2017-2019) and finally president (2019-2021), where he helped steer the association through not only the pandemic, but a two-month labour strike as well.

Although his decision to retire from the business came well before the pandemic, Felbel remained active in both the business and with the association in the role of past president. Fortunately, with sons following closely in their fathers' footsteps, Felbel and his partner were well out in front developing a succession plan many years before even considering retirement.

"There were a number of years planning the succession for sure, because nothing ever goes as planned," he said. "You're passing on your sweat and blood from over the years, so you want the company to succeed, and you want the right people in place to make sure it does. It was important for all the pieces to fit together so it would work and everyone would be happy."

It some took time, but in 2021 both Felbel and Major felt confident handing the reins over to their sons Kyle Felbel and Trevor Major, and a third partner Mark Leutri, who continue the company's success story in Thunder Bay today.

Since then Felbel has been actively turning a summer vacation property his family purchased on Lake Superior in 2000 into a permanent retirement home. He said that when they first purchased the property, it was covered in thick trees and bush. In the early years, they parked a trailer on the property and would spend their summers slowly clearing the wood and building up the space.

"We always wanted to move

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Dakota Sampson (left) with OSM Executive Director, Darryl Stewart.

FACES OF THE TRADE

Dakota Sampson

2023 Recipient of the Wally McIntosh Apprentice Award

Determined. Hard-working. Dependable. These descriptors may be associated with the family business bearing his and his sister's names, but they are also accurate characteristics of this year's Wally McIntosh Apprentice Award winner – Dakota Sampson.

"When I graduated from high school, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do," said the 28-year-old. "My family has always been in the trades either in plumbing, electrical or sheet metal. Since I have always been good at building things and working with my hands, I decided to join my father in the sheet metal trade."

Started by his father Robert in 1996, Dakota Sierra Environmental Inc. was ground zero for Sampson's journey into the sheet metal trade. And it wasn't long after starting there that he knew he had made the right decision.

According to Sampson, when people think of the trades, "they think of plumbers and electricians, and not necessarily sheet metal." He feels the trade is sometimes over-looked by many and should have more of a spotlight placed upon it for the fulfillment it brings as a career.

"I really love this trade," he said. "I love the work, I love the process, and I love the way you feel after you finish a

job and see it completed. In this line of work, there is always something new so it never gets old."

When it comes to particular specialties within the trade, Sampson doesn't limit himself to one particular area. With a canny ability to easily learn new techniques and skills, Sampson said he is always looking at trying new things in order to become a better, more rounded, skilled tradesperson.

But his expertise doesn't stop at the job site. Even in his off-hours, when he's not dirt-biking or spending time with his friends, Sampson enjoys building things. In fact, he can be described as the "go-to guy" when it comes to weekend warrior projects.

"I like working on my house, building decks, finishing basements, and things like that," he said. "I even like building little side projects for my family and friends."

Although the completion of his training was somewhat delayed by the pandemic, Sampson was finally able to complete his training at the Ontario Trades Training Centre in Oakville. The Wally McIntosh Apprentice Award is a \$1000 prize presented to the sheet metal apprentice who obtains the highest average mark while attending the OSMWTC. Sampson

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SMACNA UPDATE

Inside SMACNA's 2023 Strategic Plan

SMACNA's CEO discusses the new strategic plan and how it will strengthen SMACNA's position with key stakeholders

By **AARON HILGER**,
SMACNA CEO



I am proud of the effort our strategic planning committee put into the development of SMACNA's 2023 strategic plan (thank you to all who participated). The plan was approved by SMACNA's Board of Directors in January, and we are beginning to lay out the actions necessary to achieve the four planks outlined in the plan.

SMACNA's strategic plan puts in motion a set of four important objectives for the organization to accomplish over the next several years. When achieved, these objectives will strengthen SMACNA's position with key stakeholders, including our labor partners, our members and our chapters.

Our first objective is to continue to develop our relationships with our union partners, making sure our members have a strong, progressive relationship with their local counterparts. Workforce demographics, mega projects and work changes due to technological change are placing new demands on contractors, and together SMACNA and SMART must respond to the changing environment on the national and the local levels. Contractors must also be more entrepreneurial and willing to enter new markets and/or engage in new ways with markets once lost. Confidence in our labor partner at the local level is one of the keys to our growth.

Our second objective is to expand and strengthen SMACNA's educational offerings while delivering them in ways both contractors and their staff can fully utilize. This may include virtual programs for those who don't have time to

travel, combined with abbreviated in-person events. It also includes offering educational, in-person events in more locations. Lastly, SMACNA needs to make sure people can easily locate, register and attend a variety of education programs through SMACNA's website.

Our third objective is to increase engagement with members at every level of the business by offering valuable services and information that helps members run their businesses more effectively. We will be looking at ways to increase engagement from simple interactions like reading content or browsing the website, to higher level engagement like attending conventions or volunteering to be on a committee or task force. Being able to quantify what is working and areas of improvement is imperative to developing highly valuable products and services for members.

And last but certainly not least, our fourth objective is to strengthen SMACNA chapters and chapter executives. Tip O'Neill famously recognized that all politics are local. While he was talking about congressional elections, he could have also been talking about SMACNA chapters. Virtually all of SMACNA's members come through local SMACNA chapters. The SMACNA member experience is driven by local chapter interactions. Stronger, more skilled chapter executives will help our contractors become more successful.

These four objectives are complex, long-term projects that will require a lot of cooperation, change, improvement and commitment across multiple stakeholders, but I am committed to making them happen and improving the value that SMACNA brings to members.

Aaron Hilger is CEO of SMACNA, bringing more than two decades of executive association leadership to this role. Hilger is focused on building a stronger, more competitive environment for all SMACNA contractors.

INDUSTRY EVENT



SMACNA 2023 Annual Convention

SMACNA's premiere event of the year will be held from **October 15 to 18, 2023**, at the JW Marriott Phoenix Desert Ridge Resort & Spa in Phoenix, AZ. Join fellow SMACNA members, chapter executives, and associate members for four days of education, networking, amazing views and unforgettable memories at one of the most elegant resort destinations in the country.

The 2023 SMACNA Annual Convention is a yearly highlight for members, chapter executives and associate members wishing to network with peers, see old friends, learn important trends and new skills, and discuss business topics with leading service providers and manufacturers. In addition, SMACNA offers wonderful opportunities to socialize and attend great social functions like the Meet & Greet Reception, PAC Reception and Dinner, College of Fellows Golf Outing, and the Closing Dinner and Show.

SMACNA recently announced its roster of world-class speakers for this year's event. These include the following:

Anirban Basu is chairman and CEO of Sage Policy Group Inc., an economic and policy consulting firm. He serves as chairman of the Baltimore County Economic Ad-

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Bob Felbel

Retires from OSM Board After Over 15 Years of Service

here, but not until the kids were in university,” Felbel explained. “It’s quite a way out of town and we didn’t want our kids to be bussed an hour into town and back to go to school.”

In 2016, they did make the move and having stepped away from the business over a year ago, Felbel has been diligently working at finishing off the landscaping around the property to make the house a true home.

Now, following the conclusion of his two-year term as OSM past president this May, Felbel is ready to focus his full attention on retirement.

What’s first on his bucket list? Although very grounded and not one for having a “bucket list” per se, Felbel said he and his wife are looking forward to a 31-day cruise they have booked this fall, which will take them from Vancouver to San Francisco, Los Angeles, Hawaii then to the Polynesian Islands and Samoa, and finally Australia and New Zealand. Aside from that, he said he is most looking forward to “puttering around” on his property and spending time with his wife and their five grandchildren.

Bob Felbel has served OSM for over 15 years, and the association extends a heart-felt thanks for his dedication and the best of wishes as he begins this new chapter in life.



The Ontario Sheet Metal Contractors Association (OSM) reminds members that the numerous business and human resource materials offered by TwoGreysuits (TGS) are readily available at their fingertips. [Click here](#) to learn more.

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SMACNA 2023 Annual Convention

visory Committee. He also serves the chief economist function for the Construction Financial Management Association, the Modular Building Institute, the Maryland Bankers Association and several others.

With two Guinness World Records, The Iron Cowboy, **James Lawrence**, and his family attempted to do something every person deemed impossible – 50 full triathlons, in 50 states, in 50 consecutive days. *Sports Illustrated* ranked James in the top 50 fittest freaks. He has redefined the definition of impossible and shares his journey with audiences around the world.

Judi Holler is a keynote speaker, best-selling author, podcaster and entrepreneur who imagines a world where the word regret has been eliminated from the



conversation.

Judi has built an enterprise that includes a robust keynote speaking business, a top four per cent podcast on iTunes and a publishing arm that has created a line of personal development products.

Registration for the 2023 Annual Convention is now open. For more information, please visit the [SMACNA website](#).

Dakota Sampson

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2023 Recipient of the Wally McIntosh Apprentice Award

achieved an outstanding 95.3 per cent, once again reflective of his hard-work and dedication.

“I was surprised that I won the award but, at the same time, I worked really hard to complete the training,” he said. “It was a great experience, and the instructors and the curriculum are really amazing.”

Sampson was recognized for his achievement at a presentation ceremony held at the training centre on March 22. Ontario Sheet Metal Association Executive Director, Darryl Stewart, presented Sampson with the \$1000 prize and trophy, and placed Sampson’s name plate on the Award Plaque which hangs in the training centre lobby.

According to Dakota’s father and President of Dakota Sierra Environmental, Robert Sampson, everyone at the company is proud of Dakota’s accomplishments over the last seven years.

“Dakota has grown so much from when he started working here as a first-year apprentice to now being a

certified journeyman with the knowledge and experience to price and run jobs independently,” Sampson Sr. said. “He always gives it 100 per cent at work, as well as in school, which is reinforced by his high marks and winning the 2023 Wally Macintosh Apprentice Award. It has been an honour having him on our team, and we look forward to his future taking over the business and sharing this journey with his own children.”

What’s next for Sampson?

“I started my career at Dakota Sierra Environmental and, hopefully, that’s where I’ll end it,” he said. “I hope that one day I will be in a position to take-over my father’s company and continue to work hard to be the best sheet metal company out there.”

The company may not be the biggest in size, but when it comes to hard-work, determination, and reliability, those are the traits that have been instilled within Sampson by his family, and those are the traits that will see his continued success.