

## EGCA's 2011 HONOREES

# AN INDUSTRY SAYS THANK YOU TO DON HUBBARD SR & JR

The words on the commemorative plaque presented to Don Hubbard Jr. in honor of his father's—and his own—selfless contributions to the San Diego construction industry said it best. As read by the evening's master of ceremonies, former EGCA executive director Joe Mansolillo, the text read:

"EGCA proudly honors Don Hubbard Sr. and Don Hubbard Jr. for a lifetime of outstanding achievement and contributions to our community and to the San Diego construction industry."

In thanking EGCA for the honor, Don Jr. singled out for thanks "John Arrieta who in 1988 called me and said, 'Don, why don't you just come and sit on the EGCA board and see what you think? Maybe it will work out, maybe it won't.'

"I guess it worked out as I've been on the board ever since," Don said. Thanking past executive directors Jim Burton and Joe Mansolillo, as well as current Executive Director Debbie Day and her staff, Don noted, "It has been great being involved with the EGCA because of the people. I have made a lot of friends through the years because of the EGCA. That is the main thing about this organization—being involved with some really

great, great people."

The tributes paid to The Hubbards from a variety of sources are noted on these pages. Among the speakers was Susan Hight, executive director of the Magdalena Ecke Family YMCA, who told the audience about the generosity of both Hubbards to that facility over the years.

Adding some anecdotal humor to the occasion was Dave Crimi, Don Sr.'s nephew and Don Jr.'s cousin. Dave spoke from a family perspective, sharing with an appreciative audience a few of the Don Sr. legends, and Tom Hogarty, speaking for

Lloyd Holt, a retired contractor and public works official, who saw the Hubbards from both perspectives (See pages 12-14).

Don Hubbard Contracting Company observed its 64th anniversary in business this year, and is an example of the American success story. Also, it should be reported that when master of ceremonies Joe Mansolillo called Don Hubbard Jr. to the platform to accept the award—the lights went out—completely—and stayed out for several seconds.

None of the past award recipients can make that statement.



Above, Don Hubbard Jr., center, and Don Hubbard Sr., right, with Manuel Arrieta back in 1990: Don Jr. with his familiar moustache and Don Sr. with his always present hat. Left, Don Jr. at the June awards ceremony where EGCA recognized his father and him for their many contributions to the industry. Don Sr. was not able to attend due to health reasons. Pictured with Don Jr. is Joe Mansolillo, former EGCA executive director and the master of ceremonies for the event that included EGCA's annual scholarship awards (See pages 8-9).

NOTE: These are excerpts of remarks prepared for delivery at the Hubbard tribute by Lloyd Holt. Lloyd has had the advantage of seeing Don Hubbard Contracting Company as a contractor as well as a city engineer and, later, as a water district general manager. Unfortunately, Lloyd broke his hip a few weeks prior to the June 15 event and was unable to deliver his remarks personally. Scholarship Committee member Tom Hogarty delivered them instead.



**Scholarship Committee member Tom Hogarty delivers Lloyd Holt's remarks about the Don Hubbard Contracting Co.**

## Don Hubbard Contracting Co. is a company that exemplifies the value of consistency & integrity

*By Lloyd Holt*

I became aware of Don Hubbard Contracting in the early 1970s when I was city engineer and public works director for the City of Escondido. At that time, Hubbard was located in Encinitas and doing a considerable amount of work in the county. I was not aware of any work that they had done in Escondido or vicinity...or with the quality of that work.

In the mid 1970s, the City of Escondido put out to bid a large sewer improvement project—which I believe was one of the last clay pipe projects built in the city because I—like many other city engineers—were not smart enough to switch to plastic. This was a difficult job due to the size and depth of the lines as well as the soil conditions—and being a clay line did not help either. Don Hubbard Contracting Co. successfully bid and was awarded this contract. I left the City of Escondido in 1976 and became a general engineering contractor, but I still had some interest in the Hubbard project since I was involved in putting the project together. From the grapevine—and also from sharing the same material supplier with the Hubbard Company—I became aware of how difficult the project had become.

I don't think that the City of Escondido ever realized how lucky they were to have Hubbard work through all the issues—some big and costly—and finish the project in a quality and timely manner.

My first real contact with Don Senior was when I started running into him at equipment auctions—the difference being that Don was a buyer, and I was a looker. In fact, I think if you talk to Donnie now, he has some stories about some of those purchases. A few of those “too-good-to-pass up” items may still be in the Hubbard yard.

After 15 years in the construction business I became the city engineer for the City of Encinitas. I came in contact with Donnie and obtained first-hand knowledge of the Hubbard Contracting Co. and their personnel as they did a number of projects for the city. We called on them in emergency situations on a number of occasions. In all cases, the work was consistent, and a quality product was the result.

After being a public works inspector, a general engineering contractor, and an administrator of many large public works projects, I have dealt with many contractors with a wide range of ability as well as integrity. I feel I am very qualified to make this judgment: They were a real contractor. They did it right.

In the year 2000, I became the general manager for the Santa Fe Irrigation District. Hubbard had been doing work for the district for many years. In the four and a half years that I was at Santa Fe, they continued to provide quality service.

About three years ago—after I retired—I was in San Marcos and I stopped by to talk to Don Jr. to see what was going on. As I was leaving, Don Senior—who up to that point I really never knew that well—invited me to “sit down a minute.”

That “minute” turned into a long and enjoyable visit where we shared old construction stories as well as stories that Ronald Reagan had shared with him when Don spent time with the former governor and president at the Reagan ranch.

I had shared with Don that my wife was fighting a battle with cancer, and we discussed it at length, and he had shared some advice and I believe real concern to the point that he had his family members give me a follow-up call to check on my wife's progress. That day I got a small look into the life of the man who founded the Don Hubbard Contracting Co. and why it has withstood the test of time.

At the EGCA June Meeting and as part of the tribute to Don Hubbard Sr. and Jr., Dave Crimi entertained the audience of EGCA members and guests, educators, and scholarship awardees and their relatives with a few of the humorous stories that made Don Sr. somewhat of a legend. Dave is Don Sr.'s nephew and "Donny's" cousin.

## Remembrances of Don Hubbard Senior

*Recalled Dave Crimi:*

"I went to work for Don Hubbard Contracting in January 1973, and as I got to know him, it was clear to me that my uncle Don and I shared one thing in common. We both loved adventure. I would like to share some of those Don Hubbard adventures with you. I was a part of many of them."

The first adventure Dave told his audience about was the yarn about how Don Sr. purchased his first motorcycle following World War II. Don received his honorable discharge in New Orleans, and he was looking to purchase a motorcycle to transport him back to his San Diego home. The thing of it was: he didn't know how to drive it. Don found a seller, but asked that he show him how it worked. One test drive around the parking lot was all Don needed. Moments later he was off to San Diego!

Soon into his new adventure, Don picked up a hitchhiker who was also headed for San Diego. Things were going along nicely until the boys came to a sharp turn in the road, and off the motorcycle and its two passengers went into a ditch. Slightly bruised but otherwise unhurt, the two climbed out of the ditch. The hitchhiker asked Don how long he had been driving a motorcycle. Don asked him what time it was. At that point, the hitchhiker made other plans.

Twenty-five years after that, Dave Crimi was present for a 1970's adventure on the island off Bora Bora in the South Pacific. The Hubbard families were there on vacation and had planned a pleas-

ant family dinner in their hotel's elegant restaurant. A few minutes before dinner, Dave and a friend discovered an outrigger canoe near the restaurant that could be used by hotel guests. They decided to jump into one and paddle around til dinnertime. Don Sr. arrived on the scene, liked the look of that never-before-experienced adventure, and suggested to his brother, Bob (Dave's dad) that they try out another vacant outrigger. Dave's dad demurred, saying he didn't want to get his brand new and expensive shoes wet. Don Sr. asked: "What can possibly go wrong with an outrigger canoe?"

So out they went in the canoe and soon found out the answer as they provided a slowly growing and appreciative on-shore audience with a few laughs. The cheering onlookers shouted words of encouragement as the two grown men, both standing, tried to keep their "ship" afloat. Alas, the outrigger capsized, soaking both occupants. So much for that expensive pair of new shoes.

Dave's third and final Don Sr. adventure story came from the 1980s, shortly after Don purchased a 100,000-acre cattle ranch in the northeast corner of Oregon. Don Sr. fell in love with that place and quickly adapted to the life—albeit part-time—of a cattle rancher. He even had his own mule, a star animal in its own right. The mule, Jeannie, was the same mule that the character Festus rode in the popular "Gunsmoke" TV series.

Don and the mule went off for a ride one day. "He went off by himself," Dave said, "which was not a good thing for my



**Above, Dave Crimi recalls stories involving his uncle Don Hubbard Sr., pictured below in 1998.**



uncle to do." Along the solitary trail, Don spotted a coyote not far in front of him. "Jeannie's ears were really sensitive," as Dave tells it. "My uncle had a pistol with him, and he decided he was going to scare off the coyote. So he drew his gun and fired it overhead. He pulled the trigger, and all he saw was sky. The frightened mule reared back, threw Don, and made its way back to the barn alone. As soon as the ranch hands saw the riderless Jeannie, they saddled up and started a mini search for my uncle. It took a while. They finally located him, dazed and walking the wrong way along the pathway. But that was my uncle. He loved adventure. He was a great guy to work for. He was a lot of fun, and I have had a great time being part of the Hubbard family."

The following is an excerpt of the tribute Susan Hight, executive director of the Magdalena Ecke Family YMCA (right), presented during the well-deserved tribute to Don Hubbard Sr. and Jr. during the June EGCA Scholarship Awards presentation.

## YMCA Tribute to Don Hubbard Sr. and Don Hubbard Jr.

*Susan Hight said:*

Don Hubbard Senior was a founding father of our YMCA, and pioneered to build a strong foundation for youth and families in the community. He was a leader who selflessly gave back and shared his talents and dreams to benefit others.

In 1964, he reached out to his construction friends to build our first pool. The cost to the Y was \$5,000. In 1969, he again approached his friends and declared they all needed to start a fundraiser for the Y to raise money for capital projects. They called the event Roof Raisers. Forty-one years later, with \$3.8 million dollars raised, it's still going strong.

He understood the strength of passing along his philosophy to his son, Don Jr., and together, they have forged a legacy.

I have had the privilege of working with Donnie over the years, and I will tell you there is no one more humble, or more genuine in his commitment to make a difference.

At first glance, he may appear a bit casual, fun loving and free spirited. And we love him for that. But underneath is a passionate, earnest, hard working individual who takes no credit for the countless projects he has done for us at no cost. Or the thousands he has spent at Roof Raisers treating his guests and spending his own money to secure good auction items.

For years, both dad and son donated a week at their cattle ranch for our auction,



bringing together attendees who still claim it as the best week they have ever spent.

Nor will he take credit for the hundreds of hours he has given as a faithful volunteer both on the event committee and serving on our Board of Managers since 1985.

What began 50 years ago as a dream now stands 20,000 members strong. Father and son, pioneer leaders who forged our existence and defined our mission, we thank you, and we honor you.

---

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

---

*Continued from page 4*

these other funds, however, is that DIR has determined this program is not subject to annualization. This provides a tremendous advantage to those contractors who participate in the EGCA IAF as they are exempt from complicated annualization schedules or formulas and relieves these contractors from the need to be concerned with the concept of annualization at all. Contractors simply make monthly contributions to the IAF and then reap the benefits of being a participant.

The primary benefit is the EGCA IAF gives **all contractors** a seat at the table to voice concerns regarding public works policy in San Diego and throughout California. You will be seeing a lot more about this program in the future, but I encourage all contractors to inquire about the EGCA IAF as it is not limited to EGCA members. If you would like more information, please contact Debbie Day or anyone in the EGCA office at (619) 692-0760.

This program will be big for all of us!!

For advertising  
information  
and rates,

please contact  
Tom Hogarty

tom@hogartycommunications  
or call (760) 739-8805