

INSIDE TRACK



WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

You help keep the world running by providing the infrastructure we need, putting a roof over our heads, and keeping us all connected. We're grateful to you for doing your part. No matter the challenge, you find a way to get your job done. But in these uncertain times, it hasn't been easy. That's why we're committed to keeping you up and running.

In order for you to get the equipment you need to do your essential work, we've kept our factories running while safeguarding our employees. Our efforts to provide a clean, safe work environment exceed Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC™) and health-department quidance. To further show support for our customers and ease financial concerns, we offered no-payment/ no-interest financing for 90 days on all new John Deere equipment until June 30. And when customers needed help with existing payments, John Deere Financial has been there to help.

In addition to keeping you going with equipment and financing, we've pulled together with our dealers so there is no disruption in service and support. Your dealer may offer online portals for ordering parts and scheduling service from a distance, along with curbside pickup of parts orders. You can also order new or used equipment online. And if you need information on a product, your dealer can provide walkaround videos and other materials electronically. Or they can arrange FaceTime, Zoom, or other virtual meetings to answer any of your questions.

During this time of social distancing, remote support and telematics are even more critical. Through a JDLink™ connection, John Deere Connected Support™ enables remote machine monitoring so your dealers can identify issues often before they cause costly downtime. They can even perform diagnostics and update software remotely without a technician visiting the jobsite.

As things begin to open up again, we're seeing projects restarting and other positive signs. And as you continue to overcome challenges and build the world, we remain committed to keeping you going. Because even as we maintain a safe distance, we'll continue to stand behind you. We're proud to provide the equipment and solutions you need as we all forge ahead.

David F. Thorne

Senior Vice President, Sales & Marketing Worldwide Construction & Forestry

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Bucket after bucket of abrasive, granulated metal keeps this independent contractor ready for work 24/7.

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Find out all the ways the latest additions to our L-Series lineup can power the productivity of your operation.

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John Deere wheel loaders and dealer support have helped a British Columbia sawmill owner succeed after he lost a previous facility to a fire.

STEADY GROWTH

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Hard work and a can-do attitude form the foundation of this diverse Palmetto State contractor.





experience, but turning around provides a contrasting view: the miles-long industrial landscape of Gary, Indiana, unfolding to a legion of dense, abrasive material. It's like a mechanized-postapocalyptic scene out of Mad Max, and the Central Teaming Company crew is working unceasingly in it.

"We're a service contractor that supports a 24/7/365 steel-mill operation," Smykowski says. "Recently I got a call from one of the supervisors at 6:45 on a Saturday morning. He needed our John Deere 844 models immediately, so we got the crew together and worked around the clock for two weeks straight."

WE'RE A SERVICE CONTRACTOR THAT SUPPORTS A 24/7/365 STEEL-MILL OPERATION. RECENTLY I GOT A CALL FROM ONE OF THE SUPERVISORS AT 6:45 ON A SATURDAY MORNING. HE NEEDED OUR JOHN DEERE 844 MODELS IMMEDIATELY, SO WE GOT THE CREW TOGETHER AND WORKED AROUND THE CLOCK FOR TWO WEEKS STRAIGHT."

- Bill Smykowski, Operation Safety Manager, Central Teaming Company



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Bill Smykowski,
 Operation Safety Manager,
 Central Teaming Company

And he really means around the clock: The three Deere 844K Wheel Loaders logged over 500 hours between them in the 14-day span. To help meet the mill's all-day, everyday operation, uptime is the difference between having a job and not.

But it's business as usual for Central Teaming. Its fleet of two 844J Loaders and three 844Ks fill their buckets each day with dense, granular material that is so abrasive, it smooths every bucket down to the bare metal.

DINNERTIME

The primary facility Central Teaming works for requires the company to handle about 12 different materials that it layers with motor scrapers across an area the width of about 60 yards. With 3,000 to 4,000 tons of material — upwards of 40 layers total — being layered per day, the Central Teaming crew has come to know this whole process by a simple, delicious name.

"We affectionately call it 'the lasagna," says Smykowski, using a term coined by the late Jim Sieracki, former Central Teaming president. "After we get it ready, the mill comes by and loads it into its equipment and hauls it to go through the melting process. It's basically a big, glorified recycler, so instead of having the material leave the facility and not be used for anything, it gets remelted and the mill gets the iron content back out of it."

The Central Teaming crew has practically perfected its main operation — 1,320 bucket loads a day, one day at a time. "We've been doing this process the same way since the mid-1970s," says Steve Sieracki, president of Central Teaming.



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FAMILY FRONTED

Central Teaming has been around for over 100 years, from its beginnings in the early 1900s delivering coke to steel mills by horse and wagon to its current steel-mill support. Sieracki considers this a family company: His father joined the business in 1951, purchased it with partners in the mid-'70s, and Steve and his brother Jim joined in 1991.

Sieracki's father stayed active in the company up until his passing, even after relinquishing the presidency to Jim. Upon Jim's passing in 2012, Steve took over. Numerous relatives have also worked for the company, from Steve's aunts filtering in and out of office positions to secondgeneration operators out in the field. Bill McKenna, Steve's brother-in-law and Central Teaming corporate secretary/treasurer, started running the company's corporate office in 1992. In fact, Steve and Bill are

cousins, yet another familial link within the company.

"We are a hardworking group with very good employees," Sieracki says, noting the importance of everyone working together. "People know when they call us to do a job, they're going to get what they're asking for in a timely manner."

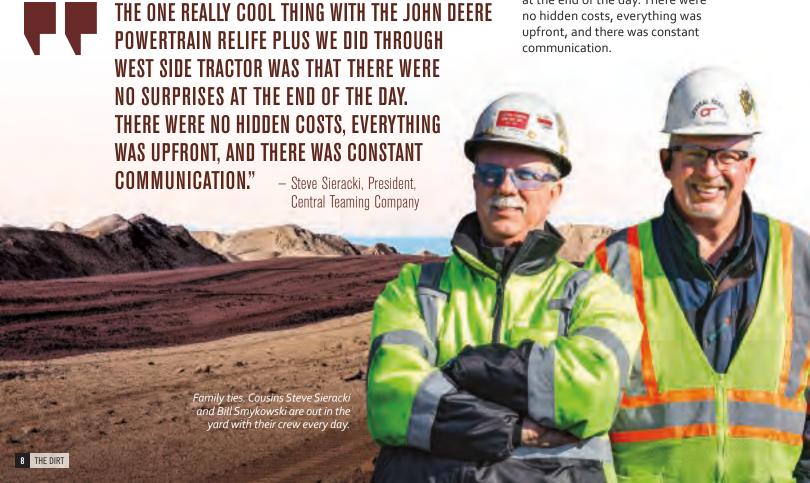
Even though he's the president of the company, Sieracki is out in the field on a day-to-day basis looking for any problems and being ready with solutions. "I would be in the office sitting behind the desk looking at a computer, but I enjoy being out here. Besides, it's not like I'm any better than the guys who work for us."

Central Teaming has several operations going but prides itself on its versatility around the mill. Longtime employees of 10–15 years can be pointed in the right direction and they're going to get the job done.

REMANNED AND RELOADED

That trust and familiarity extends to Central Teaming's dealer as well. "West Side Tractor is also a big family-oriented group, and the people are great," Sieracki says. "I like them so much, one of my sons works for them!" In fact, Central Teaming considers its relationship with West Side Tractor critical to its operation and a big reason why the company relies on John Deere equipment. One of the biggest projects Central Teaming did with West Side Tractor was six years ago when a John Deere Powertrain ReLife Plus was done on one of its 844J Wheel Loaders with 15,000 hours.

"I could put the machine anywhere in our operation and not question if it's still capable of handling the day-to-day work," Smykowski says. "The one really cool thing with the John Deere Powertrain ReLife Plus we did through West Side Tractor was that there were no surprises at the end of the day. There were no hidden costs, everything was upfront, and there was constant communication.





"As they progressed through, they would always update us on what's going on and if there were any other challenges we needed to consider."

"It was like ordering off a menu," says Sieracki. "Any options for extras we needed done, if it was center pins, borings on the pins, or any of that stuff, we knew what it would cost. It was a significant savings."

The 844J now has almost 27,000 hours on it, with over 775,000 cycles. The original hydraulic pumps and the original frame are still in amazing condition.

"We didn't have a whole lot of extras done," says Sieracki.

TRIANGLE OF SUPPORT

Due to the harsh materials and the working environment, Central

Teaming is engaged in a "til death do us part" situation with its equipment. When it gets a new machine, it runs that equipment forever, however long that may be. To maximize the idea of forever, the company goes to John Deere.

"The manufacturer, the dealer, and the customer all have to have a working relationship," says Smykowski, referring to what he calls "the triangle" of effective support. "And we all succeed at that."

Smykowski believes there's opportunity for business to get even better — for everyone. "In the steel-mill environment, there's the common misconception that all the equipment deals with is hot slag. There are probably over 200 pieces of heavy equipment operating in our facility daily, and maybe only 10 percent deal with hot slag. I think John Deere could become a staple in the steel-mill world."

He proudly recounts a story about having dinner with a pair of John Deere executives at one of the manufacturer's Signature Customer events. In the discussion during dinner, Smykowski revealed that Central Teaming was using a competitor's parts on its Deere equipment, to which both executives started making phone calls and sending emails, putting a resolution immediately into motion.

Sieracki confirms, "They reach out to everybody — it's not just the big guys, it's the little guys like us. You get to know people on a first-name basis. It's a great thing."

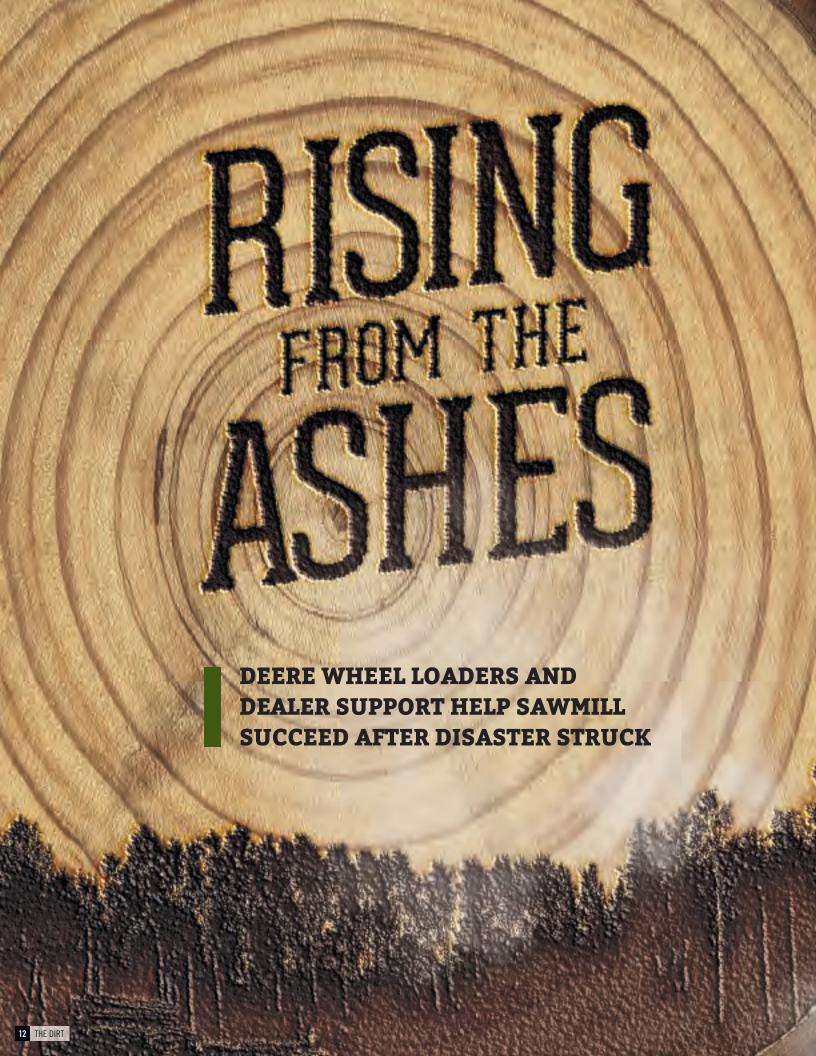
Central Teaming Company is serviced by West Side Tractor Sales Co., South Holland, Illinois.



Check out the video at: JohnDeere.com/TheDirt

INTRODUCING THE 700L AND 750L DOZERS Delivering increased horsepower, LOOK FORWARD TO **GOT YOU COVERED** MORE PRODUCTIVITY New 161-inch-wide blade option comfort, and reliability over Completely redesigned cab offers on the 750L allows you to cover previous K-Series models, the better visibility, more spacious larger jobsites in fewer passes. 700L and 750L Dozers help you comfort, and less noise than Integrated welded-on spill sheet take on more. The cab is quieter its K-Series counterpart, along on the 700L increases blade and roomier, offering more with options such as automatic capacity up to 24 percent storage and better visibility to temperature control (ATC) system, compared to 700K blade options. premium heated/ventilated seat, the blade. The SmartGrade™ and rearview camera. Ready including Slope Control option helps you achieve finish WON'T LET UP OR grades with less effort, fewer LET YOU DOWN corrections, and minimal blade The 700L and 750L have been beefed up with thicker sheet adjustments. Plus simplified metal; larger doors and hydrohydraulic and electrical routing static pumps; a sealed engine is exceptionally reliable, for compartment; a simplified, dependable productivity. heavier-duty mainframe; and a more robust c-frameto-mainframe joint (750L only) than previous models. 10 THE DIRT







Born in England, Laing originally moved to British Columbia at the age of 10 and later received her degree in forestry at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. She worked in Mozambique as a forester for CUSO International, the Canadian equivalent of the Peace Corps, before traveling the world. As she approached retirement age, she was looking for a new challenge. "I wanted to find an environmental project where I could keep moving physically, but also use my forestry and administration skills."

Laing found the physical and administrative work she was looking for. As the mill was being built, she did most of the painting. She has also helped strip the wood of bark, stack lumber, and tag and strap pallets before they were loaded onto trucks. And that's in addition to running the weigh scales and keeping the books.

Laing also found environmental work that would employ her forestry skills. "We cut only decadent wood, the dried-out balsam that big companies leave behind or burn," explains Thompson. Leaving the wood behind causes a fire hazard, while burning it causes air-quality issues. "The 644K is very responsive. It has the stability to pick up both long logs and short logs with ease. And it's maneuverable, so it can help out around the yard."

— ANDY THOMPSON, OWNER, SEATON FOREST PRODUCTS

Instead, Seaton Forest Products found the perfect market for this wood — China. "We cut the wood into square cants, so it maintains its integrity," explains Thompson. "We send all this product to China. They'll use it for scaffolding, pallets, crates, and 'dragon bone,' which is placed between drywall and concrete walls."

In addition to benefiting the environment, the mill also helps the local community. One of Seaton Forest Products' missions is to employ mostly indigenous workers. "Eighty percent of our workers are First Nations people," says Thompson. "That's about 20 jobs for local families here. They are excellent workers who take a great amount of pride in their work. It's a privilege to have so many First Nations people."

TRUST IN DEERE

John Deere loaders play a critical role in keeping the mill's production line going. As Thompson hauls pallets and loads trucks with the 624K, a 724K Loader with a 10-cubic-yard bucket loads woodchips into a chip truck. The 724K can load the 20-ton trailer in approximately 20 minutes. Meanwhile a 644K with a log grapple keeps the mill's two infeeds full of logs at all times.





Andy Thompson and Kirsteen Laing are very "hands on," working closely with the First Nations people they employ.

"The 644K is very responsive," says Thompson. "It has the stability to pick up both long logs and short logs with ease. And it's maneuverable, so it can help out around the yard."

Thompson and Laing are both extremely hands-on, always willing to jump in with their employees on any tasks, many of which require hand labor. But Thompson would probably say his favorite job is operating the 624K Loader. The Brandt-branded RTF200 comes equipped with a special forklift attachment capable of handling up to 30,000 pounds of payload, making it perfect for loading pallets of lumber onto trucks.

"When I opened the mill, I ran a competitor's forklift that was becoming unreliable," recalls Thompson. "We called our local John Deere dealer, Brandt Tractor, and they brought out the RTF200, which stands for 'rough terrain forklift.' Well, our yard is pretty rough, so I fell in love with the machine right away. It's got lots of power to lift what I need it to. It's smooth and has great clearance. I think it's the best machine for the job."

Like his other Deere loaders, the RTF200 has been extremely dependable. "We've never had an I'm shut down. This machine starts in weather up to minus-30-degrees Celsius, and it runs great. Our sawmill is dependent on moving logs in and shipping lumber out. A key part of that is our John Deere equipment. It does the job well, and I know I can trust it."

Seaton Forest Products Ltd. is serviced by Brandt Tractor Ltd., Smithers, British Columbia.



Check out the video at: JohnDeere.com/TheDirt







ituated on a pine-forested ridge along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean, Charleston, South Carolina, is home to a bustling tourism industry and, more recently, a host of Fortune 500 companies.

Once considered a hidden
Southern gem, the area has seen
its population — and its popularity
— grow significantly over the last
decade. Towns like Summerville,
25 miles northwest of Charleston,
are now at the center of this steady
expansion.

"Three years ago, this was all woods," says Steven Murray, Jr., operations manager of Carolina Contracting Solutions, LLC, a Ridgeville-based mechanical, residential, and commercial contractor. "Timber companies harvested pine here in Summerville for a long time. Most of the older people grew up hunting on this land. Now it's houses, apartments, hotels, and shopping centers. I can remember as a little boy going into a restaurant and my father would know everybody. When I walk into a restaurant today, I might not know anybody. That's how much this place has changed. After the shipyard closed in 1995, a lot of people left, but the work has come back and it's growing fast."

Murray and his family have served this community for generations. "My father used to work in the shipyard, but he left to start a contracting business with my grandfather. At the time they had five employees. When my grandfather died in 1999, my father found a new partner and

they continued to grow the business. Ten years later, they had 50 employees. He bought out his partner and, since then, he's grown the business to 150 employees."

But Murray's path to his current position hasn't been as straightforward. "Coming out of high school, I worked at a grocery store and moved my way up to a supervisor role. I started going to college and made some money, but I decided pretty quickly that college wasn't for me, so I came to work with my father. I made minimum wage digging ditches and jackhammering concrete. He worked me to the bone to let me know that this is what life is like when you quit school. After a while, I got burned out on the whole idea of him teaching me lessons, so I left to work for the railroad. I stayed there for seven or eight years, building and maintaining railroad tracks. I worked hard every day, but wasn't happy doing what I was doing, so I put in my notice and I've been with my father since 2011."

When Murray rejoined the company, he was introduced to another member of the team who now leads the general and sitework division of Carolina Contracting Solutions: Rich Jeffers, vice president of Carolina Site Logistics, LLC.

– continued

TRONGER TOGETHER

"I came in 10 years ago when Carolina Contracting Solutions was a 50-person company," says Jeffers, "The industrial division took off, we got some people in who could grow the commercial side of the business, and then we started doing site development to support commercial. Eventually, we branched site development into Carolina Site Logistics, and it's grown consistently over the years."

The relationship between Murray and Jeffers was a bit rocky early on, but they soon developed a respect for one another built around hard work and a can-do attitude. "When we started out, I didn't know him and he didn't know me," says Jeffers. "But Steve is just like a brother now. We go out on the boat together, and we go to dinner. We don't talk every day, but we know we've got each other's backs. It's a really good partnership."

WE'RE RUNNING ALMOST 40 PIECES OF EQUIPMENT RIGHT NOW, BUT THERE'S STILL PLENTY OF ROOM TO GROW.

- Rich Jeffers, Vice President, Carolina Site Logistics

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

According to Jeffers, it takes all kinds of partnerships to succeed in this business. "Flint Equipment Company, our John Deere dealer, has really stepped up and given us everything we need. Just last week, we had a few machines that needed to be serviced, and they came in after hours to get the job done. We're running almost 40 pieces of equipment right now, but there's still plenty of room to



PUTTING IN THE WORK

"I grew up working on a tobacco farm. We had corn, soybeans, trees, and a five-acre yard, so we did nothing but work and hunt. That's how we were brought up, and that's how I live my life. Every day, we go as hard as we can for as long as we can."

> - Rich Jeffers, Vice President, Carolina Site Logistics



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

"We've got 150 busy employees and their families counting on us – and our suppliers and vendors, too. This business feeds a lot of people, so it's up to guys like my father, my co-worker Rich Jeffers, and me to make sure we're always hustling, always getting work, always answering the phone, and always answering emails. We're the first guys up in the morning, and we're the last guys to go to sleep at night."

- Steven Murray, Jr., Operations Manager, Carolina Contracting Solutions, LLC

grow. We had a large project where we needed more excavators, so we called up Flint and they sent us three 350G LC Excavators in one clip, no hesitations. Last year, I called because a hurricane was coming up north. I needed three more loaders, and they unlocked the dealership gate for us after hours so we could head upstate and do what we do. You really can't ask for better support."

Jeffers also appreciates what his Deere machines can do on a jobsite. "The 350Gs are great. You can run them on 48,000 yards of muck, just the nastiest conditions you've ever seen, and they'll run all day. Plus, the cabs are comfortable and they've got solid air conditioners, which is a big thing for us because it gets hot down here. We've been hitting 115 degrees for the last three months, so it's nice to jump into a cool machine and get some real work done."

After all, it's on Jeffers, Murray, and the rest of their team to help the Charleston community grow. "Everywhere you go, you see our signs. You see our trucks when you drive by the paper mill, the carbon plant, or the medical office we're building down the street, laying 40-inch storm drain 25 feet deep. We're working hard to build the next library, fire station, or apartment complex because nobody gives you anything in life. We've got to grow this business on our own — for our families and for ourselves. That's what we're all about. At the end of the day, we're a small family operation, but we're making things happen."

Carolina Contracting Solutions, LLC and Carolina Site Logistics, LLC are serviced by Flint Equipment Company, Ladson, South Carolina.



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