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community since 1979

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Community Newsletter

WINTER 2021

What a difference a year makes!



The last time we had the opportunity to send out this newsletter, we had just recovered from a serious cyber-attack, and then shortly after, the whole world plunged into a COVID-19 pandemic that affected us all in many ways. It was a one-two punch that stretched and truly tested the resourcefulness and resilience of Omya and its employees. I am glad to say that we have weathered the storm, and looking back at the past year, it has certainly been a significant and decisive time for our operations and activities. The pandemic defines a time when our business and markets clearly changed, and Omya had to respond accordingly to remain competitive.

As the pandemic took its course, Omya managed workplace safety and our response to various COVID-19 challenges extremely well. I believe we have come out the other side in a much stronger position. Business has improved better and sooner than initially expected. We have seen a definite shift and increased demand for our dried and treated products. This has allowed Omya to invest in projects to meet the demand. In this newsletter, you'll find an article that describes some of the new investments and products we have added to our portfolio. Although these are busy times, they are also exciting and rewarding as Omya invests in the Florence facility and prepares for the future.

The pandemic has prevented us from having too much fun. As a result, we had to cancel once again the Middlebury Quarry Open House that is typically planned for September of every other year. I'm happy to share that we've scheduled it for September 17, 2022. Maybe this third attempt will be the charm!

With travel becoming more common and vaccination rates increasing, we are receiving our fair share of visitors at the plant. We plan to restart our Community Stakeholder Team meetings and participate in more outdoor and community events this coming year. It is refreshing to see glimpses of normality return to our lives and we are looking forward to an exciting 2022.

We want to thank each of you who are receiving this newsletter for your support and interest in our operations and activities. We are proud of our operation and enjoy sharing some of our experiences with you. I hope you find this newsletter informative. Please free to contact us if you have specific questions or have any ideas how we can make it even better in the future. You can always reach me at wayne.wilmans@omya.com or directly at 802-770-7617.

On behalf of all employees at Verpol, we wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope you remain safe and are able to spend some quality time with your friends and families as we come out of this pandemic and approach the start of yet another new year.

Best Regards,
Wayne Wilmans
Plant Manager



For more information about Omya's North American and International Operations visit www.omya-na.com and www.omya.com/vermont.

Seeing Promise in New Product Development

The past year has brought some new and interesting developments to the Omya Vermont product profile. The Region Americas MDI (Market Development and Innovation) group has worked hard to design new products and gain business with existing products through applications in new markets for both the slurry and dry.

The Vermont plant is one of the more complex Omya operations within Region Americas. It provides a high level of flexibility in processing that allows for the testing and creation of new products on a full commercial scale while using existing equipment and assets. Our onsite process engineering group makes these ideas come to reality by providing the resources to execute new product trials and process reconfigurations in coordination with a fully operational production facility.

Over the past few years, we've seen a substantial shift in demand from slurry products to dry products. This shift is a direct result of the slowly declining paper market which is the end use of the majority of Vermont's slurry product lineup. That said, there are still opportunities for optimization and new business growth within that market segment.

In 2021 a new slurry product line was launched for this facility. This required some new capital investments including the resurrection of some old equipment which hadn't been used in more than twenty years.

The new product is a high opacity product aimed at competing with applications currently using PCC (Precipitated Calcium Carbonate). The goal is to provide a cost competitive product that can mimic the end use value provided by the PCC products. To date, Vermont has achieved a promising level of sales with anticipated growth over the next couple of years. Other promising slurry applications include waste water treatment applications in which the product is utilized as a pH buffering solution.

On the dry side, innovation has come from the addition of new applied treatments to the calcium carbonate powders. These new additives provide enhanced processing abilities and improved technical characteristics in their end use products. Applications are typically within the construction and polymers markets, with end use products such as recycled plastics and breathable films.

Within the past couple years, two new product lines have been developed, trialed, application tested and approved by customers using this new applied treatment process. The sales department is working hard to get these new products out into the markets and achieve additional growth. At the plant level, construction and expansion has taken place to be ready for the new sales. With much of the business shifting toward the dry products, this is an exciting area of potential growth with many more projects currently in progress and more in the queue.

Omya Welcomes Engineers

Omya is excited to welcome three engineers to the Verpol team: Maggie Cahorshak, Lucas Tremblay and Jessie Thornton.

Maggie Cahorshak is one of the newest members to join Omya's team at the Verpol Plant as a project engineer for the PreGrind area. She graduated from Clarkson University in May of 2021 with a B.S. in Chemical Engineering and began her professional journey at Omya in late June.

In her short time at the Verpol plant, Maggie has learned much about both the operations and her fellow co-workers. She is eager to continue expanding her knowledge of the fine ground calcium carbonate process and hopes to build long lasting relationships with the Omya team. Her long-term goals are to grow within the company as an engineer and drive process improvement, while living the Omya values both professionally and personally.

Lucas Tremblay also started with Omya in June 2021. Lucas has a B.S. in Bioengineering from the University of New Hampshire, where he graduated in 2020. Lucas is also an Otter Valley graduate and previously interned at Omya for three summers while in college. Before coming to Omya, he worked a six-month contract at Lonza Biologics.

Lucas enjoys problem solving as part of

a team and looks forward to learning as much as he can. He hopes to continue his education in the future and earn a master's degree. In his free time Lucas likes to snowboard, fish, hike and paddleboard.

Jessie Thornton relocated back to Verpol in June 2020 to assume the role of process engineer with a focus on product development. He first started at Omya in the summer of 2014 working as an intern in the maintenance department after graduating from Vermont Technical College with an Associate's Degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology.

Jessie was previously an intern with the Verpol Dryer group team in 2015 and PX group in 2016. He was hired full time in the PX area as a project engineer/engineer in training in May 2017 after graduating from the University of Vermont with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. In June of 2018, he relocated to Omya's Lucerne Valley, CA plant as a project engineer where he completed dozens of capital and expense projects.

Jessie says that the best part about working at Omya is getting to work with people who have been with the company for a long time and are willing to teach and pass on years of knowledge. Outside of work, Jessie enjoys hiking, camping, working on classic cars and spending time with friends and family.



Jessie Thornton, Lucas Tremblay, Maggie Cahorshak

Middlebury Quarry Solar Project Update

Two Middlebury Quarry energy projects currently underway will significantly reduce onsite diesel-based power generation in 2022. The first project involves constructing a 500 kW array of solar capacity in the southwest corner of the property near Foote Street. The second will connect the quarry to grid power in conjunction with net metering. These initiatives will help Omya to attain a more sustainable source of electrical power.

The September 2020 solar project Certificate of Public Good application included a revised site plan. It showed a new preferred three acre proposed site in the southwest corner of the quarry property behind 383 Foote Street and north of the Foster Brothers Farm's heifer sheds. This

followed discussions with adjacent landowners. The site is located in a former barnyard and pasture with wooded boundaries. While close to Foote Street, its existing screening and access, in addition to proposed northside screening, will limit public view.

Omya received a Certificate of Public Good for the preferred site in February 2021 with a condition for further archeological work to determine that no historic properties will be affected by the project. Omya is currently working with Green Mountain Power and the Public Utilities Commission to plan the grid connection. Omya subsequently anticipates construction starting in January 2022 with completion by June.

167 Years of Service

For a combined 167 years, we have enjoyed the service of six people: Bob Kilburn, Darren Socia, Gary Raymond, Robert Treworgy, Jim Morale, and Wayne Wilmans. We appreciate these fine colleagues spending so many years with us and we are sorry to see them leave.

Bob Kilburn began his career in 1986 and worked as a maintenance technician for 35 years. He is also a race car driver, and he and his wife are active members of the RAVE Car Show. Bob retired in October 2021.

Darren Socia devoted 34 years with Omya. He began his career in 1987 and spent many years serving as a production specialist. Darren retired in July 2021 and looks forward to spending time camping and hunting.

Gary Raymond began his venture at Omya in 1988 as a maintenance technician, and in 2011, moved into the maintenance coordinator position. Gary retired in November. He plans to spend time enjoying his family, hunting, and riding his motorcycle.

Robert Treworgy retired in July 2021 from his position as the automation manager. He began his career with Omya in 2006 and helped navigate through the cyber-attack in August 2019. Robert is looking forward to traveling, hiking, and, most importantly, spending time with his family.

Jim Morale has spent over 26 years with Omya. Jim started as a mechanical engineer and then moved into a process engineering role. Jim also served as production manager, production superintendent, PX area manager, and Dry area manager. Jim also served as the plant manager at the Omya Arizona plant. Jim plans on doing a National Park tour out west and doing some volunteer work possibly tutoring students in math and science. Jim will retire at the end of January 2022.

Wayne Wilmans, Verpol Plant Manager, will also retire in January 2022. Wayne has served in a variety of management roles across the USA, including PCC Operations Manager and Plant Manager of the Hawesville, KY and Superior, AZ facilities, prior to joining the Vermont team in 2013. Wayne is looking forward to pursuing some neglected hobbies as well as doing some traveling. Taking over for Wayne is John Schell, currently Plant Manager in Perth, Ontario Canada. John will be relocating back to Vermont in early December.

We want to congratulate Bob, Darren, Gary, Robert, Jim, and Wayne for their collective 167 years of service with Omya, and we wish them the best in their retirement.

New Electric Substation Comes to Florence in 2022

Omya is reprinting the article below that originally ran in the June 30, 2021 edition of *The Brandon Reporter* on behalf of VELCO. We want to alert our Florence neighbors and community stakeholders of this upcoming 2022 project taking place in our backyard. The VELCO replacement of the existing 40+ year-old electric substation will improve overall reliability to their Florence customers.

Florence substation to be refurbished, construction to start May 2022

(Reprinted with consent from The Reporter)

By: Ariadne Will

PITTSFORD — The town of Florence will receive a new electric substation next year, though the benefits may not be obvious.

“It’s just a refurbishment,” said Dan Poulin, program manager at VELCO. “We’re not going to increase the capacity of the substation at all.”

Poulin told *The Reporter* that the upgrade will help provide more reliable power to Florence residents. This means updating the configuration of the transformers and breakers, which Poulin said is what will make the new substation more reliable.

The proposed Florence substation will feature a ring configuration of transformers and breakers. Poulin says this means that if one of the substation’s breakers stops working, the substation will continue working and the power will stay on.

“In the ring bus, there’s two breakers on each side,” he said. “If one of the breakers was to trip, (the power) is able to feed from the other way.”

The new substation will completely replace the existing one on Whipple Hollow Road, which was constructed in 1978. And the new substation’s construction – scheduled to begin in May 2022 – will not be invasive to residents.

“We won’t be closing any roads,” Poulin said of the project.

He said that the new substation will be constructed alongside the existing one. That means residents will continue to have power during construction, which is expected to wrap up in December 2022.

“As soon as that (new substation) next door is ready, we’ll transfer over and remove the old one,” he said.

Poulin said building this way will be more convenient for VELCO, too, as the company won’t have to build a temporary substation.

The new substation is expected to cost around \$15 million and will be approximately 40,000 square feet. The current substation is 25,000 square feet, Poulin said. The project will also purchase three acres from Omya.

The replacement is part of a statewide substation upgrading project by VELCO. It is the seventh substation upgrade the company has begun since 2013. Four substation upgrades – in Newport, St. Albans, Barre and Berlin – have been completed. Substations upgrades in Sandbar and Irasburg are still in progress. A substation upgrade in North Rutland is also scheduled to begin in 2022.

Reporter Ariadne Will is at news@brandonreporter.com

Collaborative Efforts on the Kendall Hill Road Bridge Project

Pittsford’s Kendall Hill Road serves as the officially designated truck route for loads coming in and out of the Omya Verpol plant and its quarrying operations. The Kendall Hill Road bridge, which spans Otter Creek, is therefore of great importance not just to the Town and Omya, but also to the entire region’s economy.

The Town recently became aware that the bridge’s concrete deck had several potholes that increased the concussive effect of trucks passing over the bridge. Town and Omya officials met with their partners from the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTTrans) to evaluate the bridge’s condition. They developed a game plan to seek bids from construction firms with solid experience and expertise in bridge repairs. With financial support from Omya, the Town hired Daniels Construction to perform the needed deck repairs while also keeping the bridge open at all times.

While these repairs were necessary in the short term, the entire bridge deck will eventually require replacing. The Town, Omya and the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, will continue to urge VTTrans to prioritize this critically important project.



Fire Station Land Closure

To improve logistics and fire truck storage, the Town of Pittsford acquired 2371 West Creek Road from Omya and will use the property to house a new fire substation. Currently, the Pittsford Fire Department substation resides on the Omya site located along the haul truck road.

The relocation of the substation will reduce the potential for truck or railroad traffic from delaying firefighters' access to the fire truck or other equipment, as well as any traffic delays when leaving the Omya property.



Pittsford Fire Department substation currently resides on the Omya site located along the haul truck road



Thinking and Working Together: Omya Engineer Volunteer's at STEM Summer Camp

This past summer, Mallory Ezequelle, one of Omya's process engineers, spent a week at Stafford Technical Center leading an engineering summer camp. Omya has long been a supporter of Stafford Technical Center and recognizes the value of imparting excitement for technical fields at an early age.

"As a middle schooler, I regularly went to camp in the summer, trying everything from canoeing to backpacking to engineering," said Mallory. "When the opportunity arose to join students for a fun week and teach them about engineering, I was on board!"

The intention of the camp was to give the students an overview of different engineering aspects and specialties, and also an introduction to the engineer's way of thinking.

"Being an engineer is not about getting good grades, being able to do complex math or understand tricky science concepts; it is about a pattern of thinking and working together," explained Mallory. The students spent the week working in small groups to tackle engineering challenges, such as: designing a tower from straws to hold the largest water balloon, launching a candy from a catapult, fabricating a waterproof box for a tea bag, making ice cream, creating a water filtration system, and constructing a bracelet from metal.

The emphasis was on the engineering process: to identify the problem, explore, design, create, try it out, make it better, and design again.

"It was the discussions of what went wrong and what to try again that gave the students a sense of what engineering really is," said Mallory.

Remembering Cecelia

On June 19th Omya and CDP Electric lost a good friend and co-worker, Cecelia Mason. You may not recognize her name; however, Cecilia was the co-owner of CDP Electric, Omya Verpol's premier electrical contractor since 1987. CDP Electric's highly skilled electricians provide quality craftsmanship and maintain a strict regard for safety. Cecelia started with CDP Electric in 1988 and eventually became co-owner in 1999.



Cecelia was an extraordinarily caring and compassionate person and an active member of the community. She volunteered at the Pittsford Food Shelf, The Mentor Connector, and the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility. She was always willing to help all who were in need or anyone who just needed a friend. Cecelia loved yoga, hiking, kayaking, and camping with family and friends. She was also a great cook.

Cecelia will not only be missed by her family and friends but also by her co-workers and community.

Middlebury Quarry Open House is on for 2022!

We're excited to share that our next quarry open house is September 17, 2022, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Visitors can take bus rides into the quarry, talk directly to geologists, collect rocks, and so much more!

If you and your family have not yet had a chance to visit the quarry, you won't want to miss out on this opportunity! If you've visited before, it's the perfect time to come back and see us.

We typically hold this biannual event in September. Unfortunately, due to uncertainties regarding COVID-19 and the need to exercise caution, Omya postponed the event in 2020 and 2021.

The open house is always a free event and open to all ages. For more information and directions, please visit our website at www.omya.com/vermont or call us at 802-770-7500. We hope to see you there!



Employee Appreciation Luncheon

Omya held an employee appreciation luncheon on Wednesday, July 21st to recognize the hard work put forth by all employees this year. Employees on first and second shifts came out to enjoy a BBQ lunch catered by Jon Keith from Keith's Country Store. Jon returned the next day for the third shift employees and cooked them a breakfast of scrambled eggs, bacon, ham, and toast. Thanks to everyone for their continued hard work and effort.



Proctor Skating Rink

For many years, the Proctor Skating Rink has been used by the community as a place for ice skating. Omya was happy to continue supporting the rink in the spring of 2021, when the rink raised \$6500 towards the purchase of roller skates to open its first roller rink. The roller rink opened on July 4th weekend and it was a success! Volunteers Brian and Meagan Cannucci operated the rink all while managing the hectic sports schedule of their four kids.

For more information, check out the Facebook page Proctor Skate Rink for winter and summer hours and come out to support your community!



Rutland BenchART! Community Street Art Project

Omya was proud to be a supporting sponsor of an exciting new project this past year. The Rutland BenchART! Community Street Project showcased local creative talent while fostering the economic vitality of our communities through the artistic creation of forty-two public benches.

Many of the benches are to be permanently placed in locations throughout Downtown Rutland and the surrounding area. This will build on and enhance the current art installation of murals and sculptures and promote Rutland as an artist and art enthusiast's destination. The project also serves as a marketing tool to bring in visitors, showcase the Rutland region as a place to live and locate new businesses, as well as a fun activity to do with family and friends.

Telescope Casual Furniture made the Bazza benches and they were retrofitted by Brookside Woodworking with a wooden back for talented local artists to paint.

As part of the project, a new historic property walking tour will also be created. This brochure will also include the benches, murals, the marble sculpture trail, the Rutland Art Ramble, and previous community art projects, including painted hearts and trains. People can use the brochure along with the new app from the Downtown Rutland Partnership to enjoy a wide range of local art.



Greening Up in 2021

On Friday, April 30th Omya employees were able to beat the rain and take part in Green Up Day. Fourteen employees came out to clean up along the roads of Depot Hill, Kendall Hill, West Creek and Whipple Hollow. A total of thirty-four garbage bags and four tires were collected.

The next day, on Saturday, May 1st, Vermonters throughout the state volunteered for Green Up Day. Omya worked closely with the Pittsford Recreation Department and residents to help make the day a success. Bradley Keith from BK Services supplied a trailer for garbage to be transferred. Jon Keith, of Keith's Country Store, and his daughter, Jonah, set-up at the Pittsford Town office serving hotdogs, chips, water, coffee, and cocoa.

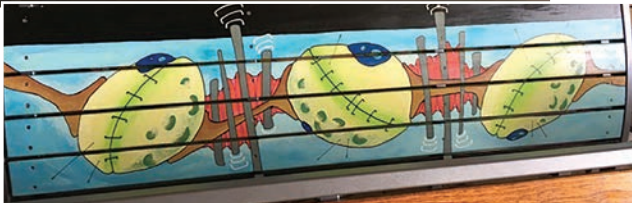
Thanks to fifty Pittsford and Florence residents, a total of one hundred and sixteen bags of trash and nine tires were collected.

Academic Scholarships

Omya is pleased to once again provide financial support for deserving students through our Omya Academic Scholarship Program. The program was designed to offer incentives for the development of Vermont's future workforce and to encourage area students to pursue degrees in math and science. Students chosen for the scholarship awards demonstrate a commitment to learning, leadership and community involvement.

2021 Scholarship Recipients

- Proctor High School** – Rachel Stuhlmueller
- Otter Valley Union High School** – Mallory Lufkin
- Mount Saint Joseph Academy** – Savannah Perry
- Mill River Union High School** – Izabella Racine
- Stafford Technical Center** – Jed Nop
- Rutland High School** – Alicia Caputo
- West Rutland High School** – Noah Davis
- Fair Haven Union High School** – Isabella Carabino
- Mt Abe. Union** – Eliana Ginsburg
- Middlebury Union** – Kaitlyn McNamara



Giving Back

At Omya we feel it's our civic responsibility and privilege to support local efforts which benefit our community and neighbors. In the past year, we have made donations to the following organizations and community groups:

Adaptive Martial Arts
Chaffee ART Center – Street ART Benches
Friends of Ripton School
Girls on the Run - Vermont
Green Up Vermont
Maclure Library
Middlebury Area Land Trust (MALT)
Otter Valley Football Club
Otter Valley Union High School – Walking Stick Theatre
Paramount Theatre
Pittsford Day – Band
Pittsford Food Shelf
Pittsford Village Farm

Rutland Blooms
Rutland County Humane Society
Rutland Economic Development
Rutland Regional Medical Center - Green Mtn. Gala
Sheldon Museum of History
Town of Chittenden – Grange Hal
Town of West Rutland - outdoor movies
Town on Brandon -Summer Concert Series
Town Brandon – Independence Day Parade
Town of Pittsford – Memorial Day Flag
Town of Proctor – Little League Baseball
Town of Proctor – Roller Rink (Roller Skates)

You can make donation requests by mail or through our website. Simply click on “Community” and select “Donations” and choose “Donation Request Form” in the drop down menu. Mailed requests can be sent to: Omya Verpol Facility at PO Box 10, Whipple Hollow Road, Florence, VT 05744. Donations are reviewed monthly.



Schedule Your Plant Tour Today

The Verpol plant is the largest of the Omya operations in the United States – and is the third largest Omya plant in the world! Here, Omya quarries marble which is ground, milled, and purified to produce a finely ground calcium carbonate.

Don't miss the opportunity to visit our facility and see what we do. Schedule a private tour or come as a group (school groups fourth grade and higher are welcome) and discover for yourself how our highly skilled employees use state-of-the-art processes to produce the high-quality calcium carbonate products which are used in thousands of consumer applications including diapers, paper, paint, plastics, duct tape, vinyl siding carpet, PVC pipe and more!

For further information, please contact Jill Blanchard 802-770-7500.

Contact Us

Do you have a comment or suggestion? We want to know. Call our Community Feedback Line at 802 770-7644 with any issues, comments or questions you may have – and we'll listen. The Omya Community Feedback Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also reach us through our website at www.omya.com/vermont. Simply click on “Contact Us” tab and select any one of the contacts listed or fill out the online comment form.

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