



Town gets a \$56,000 gift from Carolina Management Team *Company comes up with 'give back' program and Burnsville is first recipient*

By Jody Higgins

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There was cake and a celebration – and a very big expensive gift for the Town of Burnsville – and all the town council had to do was accept the unbelievable offer. In fact, the council was suspicious that strings might be attached to the offer and even weary that it could be some kind of scam.

On further investigation, they learned that the good fortune that had come to the town was real and being delivered by some very nice folks who want to give back to communities because of the success they have had with their family-owned business.

The town council and some local officials, town staff, and state officials with the Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources, and of course, the presenters of the nearly \$56,000 gift were there to celebrate on

Carolina Management Team (CMT) rehabilitated Burnsville's aging two million gallon water storage tank that has been storing water for the community since it was built in 1972.

Marsha Lunsford came up with the idea about a year-and-a-half ago while watching a show on TV. She presented the idea of doing what the company does – rehabilitating water facilities – to her son and daughter, David Van Zee and Wendy Banks, who own and operate the business.

Banks said they feel blessed to have become successful during their 10 years in business. CMT, an industrial paint and protective coatings company, repairs and rehabilitates the water infrastructure of towns and cities across North Carolina.

CMT, with offices in Asheville and Hickory, has



CMT delivered a water tank shaped cake with the \$56,000 gift to the town.

grown steadily and has gone from two to 28 employees since business was founded in 2003. CMT offers industrial coating solutions that allow communities to repair steel and concrete rather than replace expensive buildings, tanks, piping and other equipment. This innovative approach solves maintenance problems and saves municipalities thousands of budget dollars.

To celebrate its 10-year anniversary, CMT wanted to find a way to give back to the communities that have supported the company throughout the years. The result is a new initiative called "CMT Gives Back" that provides deserving communities with infrastructure rehabilitation at no cost. Starting this fall, municipalities across North Carolina will have the opportunity to participate in an application process to be selected as the next beneficiary.

But Burnsville is the first recipient. And for the town, it's a dream come true. The water tank rehab was on a list of badly needed projects to tackle in the town's master plan but the deterioration had increased dramatically over the course of several bad winters with the freezing and thawing of already degraded concrete, according to Anthony Hensley, the town's public works director.

"This was very high on our priority list and it was a high dollar project we would have to save money to do and couldn't see getting it done in the near future.

The company approached the town earlier this year with the proposal of being the first recipient of the "CMT Gives Back" initiative. And the water tank, restored to its former glory, sits overlooking the town, gleaming white through the trees.

"The town of Burnsville has truly scored a home run by being chosen to participate in CMT Coatings community give back program," said Mayor Danny McIntosh. "CMT came to the rescue with their program to give back to our community a part of their success as a company. The tank is now refinished and the town could not be more proud of an imposing structure on water tank hill that has been restored to its original magnificence."

"Growing up in Western



Pictured (l-r) DENR engineer Kimberly Midkiff, CMT's Wendy Banks, David Van Zee and Marsha Lunsford, Randall Wilson, Ron Powell, Bill Wheeler, Anthony Hensley, Willoree Jobe, Judy Buchanan and Ruth Banks. Photo by Jody Higgins



Deterioration on top of the water tank was severe when CMT began work earlier this year.



The town's water plant supervisor Randall Wilson with CMT's Marsha Lunsford, who came up with the idea.

North Carolina, it was very rewarding to help restore and preserve Burnsville's water infrastructure," Van Zee said. "It has been a pleasure working with everyone in Burnsville on this project as the inaugural recipient of CMT Gives Back."

Van Zee said when his company looked at the town's water tank three years ago and gave a quote on the work, the damage was one inch deep over a 30-sq. ft. area and when they began doing the work a few months ago, the depth of repair was three inches over a 100-sq. ft. area.

"We're a small company that works for government and gives back to government," said Banks of the new initiative. "We are pleased that Burnsville is the first recipient, although the weather this year was our biggest challenge and almost got the best of us."

Kimberly Midkiff, a DENR engineer, said the state agency has warned the town that the tank was in serious disrepair for several years and was pleased to help celebrate the completion of the project.

She praised the town's water plant supervisor Randall Wilson, who is the operator in charge of surface water distribution and for cross connection and back flow prevention. Midkiff said Wilson is a conscientious worker and has done a remarkable job in responding to DENR's efforts to help improve the town's water operation. For the past two years – and the first time in its history – the Burnsville's water system has been honored for surpassing federal and state drinking water standards by the N.C. Division of Water Resources' Public Water Supply section.



A CMT employee works on the exterior of the town's two million gallon water tank.



CMT's David Van Zee and Wendy Banks cut the cake.



DENR engineer Kimberly Midkiff with Randall Wilson and Anthony Hensley, the town's public works director.