In the Limelight is NLA's way of highlighting NLA's lime-producing members and Associate Members on a rotating basis.

In the Limelight with Pete Lien & Sons

Pete Lien & Sons, Inc. is an integral part of many communities across the USA, and they are the subject of this edition of "In the Limelight."

Pete and his sons, Chuck & Bruce, purchased a ranch and small quarry on the outskirts of Rapid City, South Dakota, in the 1940's. They began a business with the tenacity and grit required of soldiers from WWI and WWII to boast their early marketing motto, "If you need a little or a lot, call Pete Lien & Sons."



The company has grown over the last four generations and remains privately held by members of the Pete Lien family committed to serving the employees, customers, and communities throughout the multistate region. Pete's grandson and namesake, Peter C. Lien, has led the company as president since 1996.

Throughout the history of the company, the Liens' core business has been acquiring key agricultural lands and enhancing some by harvesting additional resources, primarily limestone, sand, and gravel, to grow the business into land management and mining. The original quarry that Pete bought from his supplier has been mined and reclaimed. The company has purchased thousands of acres, mostly ranches, while accumulating hundreds of years of mineral reserves and currently has active mines in northern Colorado, western South Dakota, and eastern Wyoming.

Today, Pete Lien & Sons operates lime plants in Rapid City, South Dakota; Laramie, Wyoming; and Frannie, Wyoming. The company employs fewer than 500 talented men and women, supplying a wide range of products and services, including: quicklime, hydrated lime, NutriLien-HQ food grade hydrated lime, decorative rock, crushed stone, gypsum, iron ore, sand and gravel, precast concrete, calcium carbonate, ready mix concrete, concrete pumping, specialty products, and agricultural services including land management and ranching.

Building Strong Communities



Pete Lien & Sons' commitment extends beyond its operations and into the communities where its employees live and work. The company participates in Community Touch-A-Truck events and the Parade of Lights, hosts first responder team training on PLS property, and brings employees and their families together through PLS Site Family Days.

The company also hosts a company chili cook-off, with South Dakota Governor Larry Rhoden serving as a recent event judge.

These activities reflect the company's longstanding connection to its employees, their families, and the communities surrounding its operations.

A Generational Approach to Sustainability

Sustainability plans work best if they're generational. As an NLA Lime Producer and family-owned company, Pete Lien & Sons supports the current NLA plan for sustainability. Efficiencies and new technology get much of the credit for advancement in sustainable operations, but without getting future generations excited about carrying out processes and improvements, communities will lose touch with the natural resources they need to sustain themselves.



Arbor Day has become an annual sustainability celebration at Pete Lien & Sons. Employees, their families, and local youth groups are invited to participate in the activities. The day kicks off with an introduction to the mining reclamation process, a safety talk, and a tutorial on proper tree planting technique. The attendees are then divided into smaller tree planting groups, which are assigned to someone from the mining team to answer questions, lead, and assist them in tree planting.

Over 600 pine trees are planted each year on land that is being concurrently reclaimed by Pete Lien & Sons.

During years when the tree planting is on Forest Service property, the company coordinates efforts with local Boy and Girl Scout troops. These groups make regular requests directly to the Forest Service for permission to plant trees but are denied because of the complex permitting process required. With an approved Plan of Operation already in place for reclamation, Pete Lien & Sons can allow these kids the opportunity to plant a tree in a national forest.

Pete Lien and Sons Arbor Day Celebrations wrap up with live music, food trucks, a sandbox full of natural treasures for the little ones to “mine,” a coloring contest, and a sweet treat. Winners of the coloring contest have their art displayed on local billboards and wrapped on mixer truck barrels for the whole community to see.

Supporting Employee Health and Safety

Pete Lien & Sons has also been encouraging good habits that result in healthier employees through Fit2Lift.

Fit2Lift is a doctor-driven mobility program that changes working-class culture from the inside out. This is a system focused on helping the PLS team stay physically capable of the full arc of their life, not just until Friday.

NLA Leadership

Representing Pete Lien & Sons as the Vice President of the NLA Board of Directors is Chief Operating Officer Brian Tideman.

Tideman was promoted to COO in 2023 after spending time in all facets of Pete Lien and Sons, including roles as Executive Director of Mining and Mineral Processing; Executive Director of Engineering, Maintenance, Procurement, and Logistics; and Operations Manager. He originally joined Pete Lien & Sons in 2005 as a Sales Engineer after graduating from the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering.



NLA’s Colleen McNickle, U.S. Representative Harriet Hageman (WY), Pete Lien’s Danielle Wiebers, and Brian Tideman

Former Chief Operating Officer Joel Brannen has also been a pillar of Pete Lien & Sons’ involvement with the National Lime Association. Through his years of leadership and service to NLA, Joel played an important role in the association’s work and served as a valued mentor to NLA Executive Director Bill Herz, providing guidance and insight throughout their years of working together.

From its beginnings with a ranch and small quarry outside Rapid City to its operations across a multistate region today, Pete Lien & Sons remains a family-owned company committed to its employees, customers, and communities, all while continuing to invest in the resources, land, and people that will sustain those communities for generations to come.



NLA Staff at Pete Lien's Rapid City Lime Plant

NLA had the opportunity to visit Pete Lien & Sons impressive Rapid City plant on October 28. We appreciated their warm hospitality and the opportunity to tour their operations while taking in the beautiful South Dakota landscape. The diversified production facilities focus on circularity and minimizing waste; these revitalization projects represent a commitment to environmental stewardship and responsible land management. As an example, mine remediation occurs only a year or two after mining, with their cow herd grazing on pasture that could have been mined only a few years before. After the tour, we had great conversations about the future of the industry and important issues that impact Pete Lien directly. Thank you to Danielle Wiebers, Brian Tideman, Pete Lien, Holly Lien, and everyone at Pete Lien for making our trip so worthwhile.

If you would like to read more about Pete Lien and Son's history and initiatives, please visit their website. You can also keep up with Pete Lien and Sons on LinkedIn and Facebook.

To read the last edition of "In the Limelight" with Barr Engineering, please click here. To view all past editions, click here.