

## **Innovation of the Year**

HPF Manufacturing Inc. (HPF) has been in business for over 30 years under the leadership of its President and Chief Engineer, Wendell Malmberg. HPF's primary business has been designing, developing and manufacturing heavy equipment attachments. Over the past six (6) years, HPF's key product development is a series of undercarriages built for converting standard Caterpillar®-style excavators to fuel efficient, multi-functional machines that can move quickly on and off railroad tracks. These hybrid machines, called Rail-X® Excavators, utilize retractable rail-wheels equipped with fuel-efficient drive motors that enable an excavator is able to run bi-directionally and independently along the rails by a single operator to a maintenance site, without a locomotive, for the purpose of maintaining the country's existing and expansive rail infrastructure. HPF also designs, develops and manufactures attachments for the Rail-X® Excavators, including the Roto Gripp® Bucket, which serves to replace multiple equipment and accomplishing multiple tasks.

HPF has set the bar in the railroad maintenance and construction industry, integrating state-of-the-art controls and implementing enhanced electronic upgrades compatible with the latest computer systems. HPF's recent innovation is in the development of trestle machines equipped with a custom widened undercarriage for extra stability and Roller Rail Clamps to keep the machine secured to the rails during bridge work, allowing the operator to safely and quickly perform the necessary maintenance directly from the operator's cab.

Mr. Malmberg's innovative genius in the manufacturing industry has not gone unnoticed. A year ago, Tony Beets, a legendary Klondike gold miner and reality TV star of Discovery Channel's "Gold Rush" invited Mr. Malmberg to design and fabricate custom parts for the Clear Creek bucket line dredge in the Yukon. Mr. Malmberg was on location during filming of Season 7, where he inspected the dredge to assess maintenance needs and identified areas for improvement. Last month began the filming of Season 8 of "Gold Rush," where Mr. Malmberg was on site working on modernizing the dredge, originally built in the 1930's, with new hydraulics and electronics, bringing the dredge into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. HPF will be similarly modernizing the Thistle Creek dredge in future episodes. Mr. Malmberg's technological innovation has reshaped the mining industry as HPF leads the way as the only manufacturing facility in North America that is repairing and modernizing bucket line dredges.

HPF's entrepreneurial spirit, customer dedication, and commitment to business excellence is the culture that drives its success in the evolution of products that brings to the table unmatched innovation and a competitive advantage in the manufacturing industry. Such an accomplishment merits the 2017 Innovation of the Year Award.