Update

A Monthly Newsletter of the Common Ground Alliance

CGA™
Common Ground Alliance

June 2015

Victor Espinoza
...Making History

Photo: Evers Photo

Victor Espinoza Makes Triple Crown History

811 became a part of history as jockey Victor Espinoza became the first Triple Crown winner since 1978 at the Belmont Stakes on June 6, following his 811-sponsored victories in the Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes earlier this spring.

Between the Derby and the Preakness, more than 27.8 million viewers watched Victor take first place twice while wearing 811 on his boots and saddle – not to mention his iconic 811 hat worn in pre- and post-race interviews. In total, 811's exposure during Triple Crown coverage was valued at **$11.5 million** and earned more than **200 million** media impressions.

As a direct result of 811's spring media exposure, site visits to call811.com on the Derby and Preakness days in 2014 and 2015 were up **139 percent** compared to the same days in 2013 and 2012, while traffic from search engines soared **185 percent.**

The unprecedented spotlight that shone on 811 this spring through the sponsorship with Victor is a testament not only to the incredible partnership of the CGA members who financially sponsored the effort, but also to the members across the country who helped spread the word. The CGA-created member communications toolkits were visited more than **2,000 times**. Members took over social media, and Sunshine 811 even aired the Victor Espinoza PSA on NBC affiliates in Florida during the Derby broadcast.

This tremendous exposure for 811 and damage prevention was made possible by a collaborative effort by nearly 40 CGA members, including: **Alabama 811, Atmos Energy, Avista, Baltimore Gas & Electric (BGE), Colorado 811, ConEd, Dig Alert (Underground Service Alert of Southern California), Dig Safe System, Dig Safely New York, Duke Energy, Enbridge, Enterprise Products, Georgia 811, Iowa Pipeline Association, Kentucky 811, Kinder Morgan, Magellan Midstream Partners, Miss Utility of Maryland/D.C., Montana 811, Nebraska Pipeline Association, New York 811, North Carolina 811, One Call Concepts, Oklahoma 811, Ohio Utilities Protection Service, Pacific Gas and Electric, Pennsylvania 811, PPL Interstate Energy Company, Premier Utility Services, Rhino Marking and Protection Systems, Shell, SoCalGas (Southern California Gas Company), Sunoco Logistics, Sunshine 811, Texas811, UGI Utilities, USA North 811** and **Virginia 811.**

While Victor's third attempt at a Triple Crown victory made it cost-prohibitive for CGA and its members to continue 811's sponsorship of him during the Belmont Stakes, we are extremely grateful that he wore 811 goggles during the Belmont, and for the opportunity to once again work with Victor this year as he rode 811 to glory at both the Derby and Preakness.

CGA and our members will continue to reap the benefits from being associated with the Triple Crown winner in more than 300 additional races this year in which Victor will wear the 811 logo on his pants and on his hat both pre- and post-race, with the exception of the Breeders' Cup, races in which logos aren't permitted, and those in which the horse owners or trainers have rights to the jockey's attire.

Thank you to our sponsor-members for making this effort possible, and to all members who helped spread the word in advance of the Derby and Preakness.

811 Runs Taking Place Across the Country on 8/11Day

8/11 Day is fast approaching, and once again stakeholders are busy planning 811 Run/Walks in multiple locations across the country to remind homeowners and professionals about the importance of calling 811 before digging this summer.

Kansas
Kansas 811 and several sponsors are hosting its first 811 Run/Walk on Aug. 11 in Wichita, Kan. The official race time for the 8.11K run is 8:11 p.m., but an 811-foot kids race and a 1.5-mile fun run/walk will take place earlier in the evening. The $8.11 registration fee includes a free T-shirt. Proceeds will be donated to a local charity. Visit http://ks.811run.com for more information.

Minnesota
Minnesota will once again host an 811 Run/Walk at 8:11 a.m. at Lake Calhoun in Minneapolis, Minn. The official 5K will be followed by a kids fun run, as well as an awards ceremony, prize giveaway and family safety fair. All proceeds from the 811 Run will go to Firefighters Operation Warm, an organization that provides warm winter coats to children in need. Last year, Minnesota's 811 Run donated over $14,000 to **Operation Warm.** If that's not enough reason to join, consider that all runners and walkers receive free locates for life! Infrastructure Resources/Rhino Markers and Protection Systems are sponsors along with a host of others. Visit **this link** or contact Whitney Price at **wprice@rhinomarkers.com** for more information.

South Carolina
South Carolina 811 is joined by multiple sponsors as it hosts its second annual an 811 Run/Walk at Memorial Stadium in Columbia, S.C. on Aug. 8. The 5K run/walk registration is $8.11, will begin at 8:11 a.m. and will feature 811 T-shirts and awards for top finishers. Strictly Running of Columbia, S.C. is a partner. Visit SC811.com/run or email Charleigh Elebash at **celebash@sc1pups.org** for more information.

Download 8/11Day tools from the Communications Plan today!

Visit the **811 Toolkit page on CommonGroundAlliance.com** to download 8/11 Day tools, including:

Media outreach templates and sample social media messages. The 8/11 Day section fo the 811 Toolkit hosts a customizable press release, media advisory and other templates that your organization can use to remind the public about the importance of calling 811 before digging. You can also find sample social media messages and internal communications templates to help you spread the word this 8/11 Day.

A guide to organizing an 811 plane flyover at a local beach or another highly-populated public space. Information about how to execute an 811 plane flyover at a beach or community event can be found in the 8/11 Day section of the 811 Toolkit.

Send 811 cakes or cupcakes to local radio and media outlets. Delivering 811 sweets to local media outlets is a great way to remind members of the media about damage prevention at a time of year when it matters most. For cake designs and information about executing an 811 cake drop, download the tools in the 8/11 Day section of the 811 Toolkit.

Miss Utility of Maryland and Washington, D.C. Sponsors Touch a Truck Day and Awards First-Ever Scholarships

Miss Utility of Maryland and Washington, D.C. promoted the call before you dig message by sponsoring a baseball event and awarding the first-ever Miss Utility Scholarships.

Miss Utility partnered with minor league baseball team the Bowie Baysox to host Touch a Truck Day at Prince George's Stadium in Bowie, Md. Families observed and explored more than 35 vehicles and heavy equipment, which were brought by utility-owner companies and contractors from the region.

The Touch a Truck event was followed by a baseball game, and Miss Utility worked with the Baysox to offer $8.11 game tickets for member companies. Miss Utility was able to promote 811 throughout the entire day, from the Touch a Truck event to in-stadium mentions, to remind baseball fans and homeowners alike to always call before digging for home improvement projects.

Miss Utility of Maryland and Washington, D.C. also awarded Miss Utility Scholarships to five graduating high school students to help them pursue degrees in the construction field or another related industry that requires excavation at a college, university or technical school. These students received $1,000 single-year scholarships based on essays that demonstrated their desire to work in the industry and a deep understanding of why it is important to contact 811 before digging for projects in their future careers. For additional information about the scholarship program, please visit **missutility.net/scholarship.**

Scholarship recipients include:

Monica Grosh,
Iowa State University

Danielle Hill,
Virginia Tech

William Hogan,
College of Southern Maryland

Emily Samick,
Texas A&M University

Juwan Whitehead,
Morgan State University

Miss Utility congratulated Monica Grosh and Danielle Hill and presented big checks to them during Washington County Technical High School's Scholarship Ceremony in Hagerstown, Md.

The Making of the Texas811 "Gangster" PSA

Texas811 covers a state that is larger than France. Getting the word out about safe digging can be challenging, to say the least! Texas811 already has 23 Damage Prevention Councils and five Damage Prevention Managers to work the safe digging message in the state, which is great for contractors and excavators and other professionals. However, the organization wanted to reach out to the average Texan who might break ground and might be unaware of the "call 811 before you dig" law and message. So Texas811 decided to produce its own PSA.

First was the search for a topic and a face to get the message across about safe digging. Texas811 took advantage of the its Director of Damage Prevention, JimBob "Diggin' with JimBob" Sims for some acting talent. Looking around the building, Texas811 also saw Rick Pollard, "Wagon Hoss," who is responsible for driving and towing and cooking in the S'wagon Wagon. These two gentlemen brought to mind a couple of characters that eventually led to the PSA concept.

Texas811 Media and PR Manager Scott Finley, who has more than 30 years' experience in broadcast and corporate communications, wrote the 30-second PSA script about two goodfellas out in the woods to bury a "package" but who have failed to call 811 first – and calling 811 is THE LAW. Dejected, the mobsters toss their shovels back in the car, slam the doors and prepare to speed off – as the trunk deck lid lifts and a man inside says "Thanks, Texas811!" The man in the trunk is Randy Wright, a friend of JimBob's who came along on the shoot with the car that we used.

Costume rental? Nope. Both JimBob and Rick had suits, JimBob has his signature white cowboy hat, and Texas811 borrowed a fedora for Rick. Cheap sunglasses came from CVS pharmacy. Friends at Atmos Energy identified a rural site to shoot the video where Texas811 would be undisturbed for approximately the four hours of shooting time needed.

Daniel Penz of Penz Productions was the videographer/editor. Daniel is a two-time Emmy winner for work done in television, and is a former editor for the Dallas/Fort Worth CBS-owned television affiliate. He and Scott tweaked the script on location, and then Daniel took over, framing the shots and shooting take after take after take with Scott handling the boom mike.

After editing and producing the final PSA, Daniel created an FTP site for clean video downloads and Scott went to work with Texas TV stations to get it on their PSA playlists.

To date, the PSA has been accepted in house in the following markets and stations: Dallas (**KTXA MeTV** and **KTXD** independent), Austin (**KTBC FOX**), Weslaco (**KRGV ABC**), Temple (**KCEN NBC**), Odessa (**KOSA CBS**), San Antonio (**KSAT ABC**), Tyler (**KLTV ABC, KYTX CBS**) and Houston (**KTRK ABC**).

Additionally, the PSA has already come up a winner in the Telly Awards, a national competition for video excellence, winning FIVE awards for:

Commercial
Local TV & Local Cable - Public Service

Commercial
Local TV & Local Cable - Not-for-profit

Commercial
Regional TV & Multi-Market Cable - Not-for-profit

Commercial
Regional TV & Multi-Market Cable - Public Service

Commercial
Regional TV & Multi-Market Cable - Use of Humor

Other Telly winners have included the Discovery Channel, Disney, E! Entertainment, BET, The Weather Channel, ESPN and FOX Sports Networks.

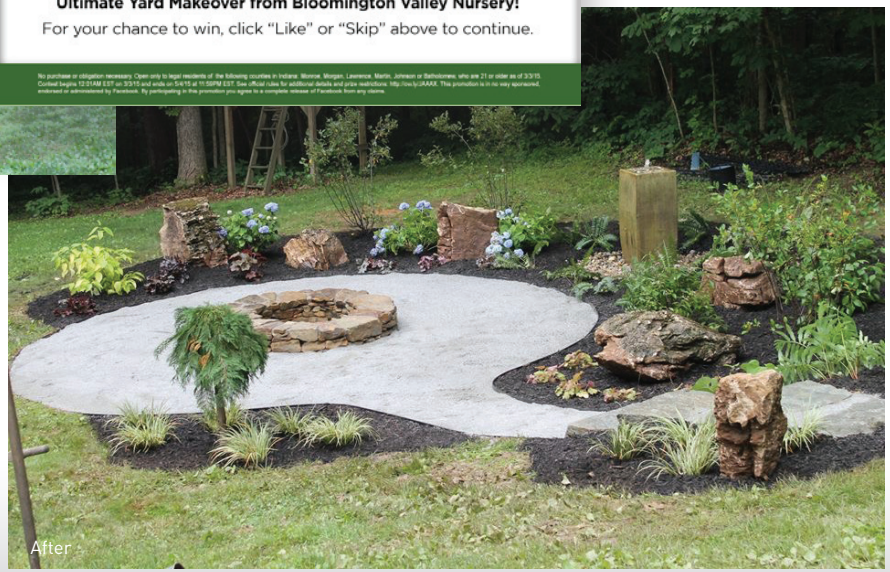
Is there another PSA in the works? Texas811 is going to DIG for that answer – but first, we're going to call 811, because it's the LAW!

Vectren Spread the 811 Message through its Ultimate Yard Makeover Sweepstakes

What would you say to a complete transformation of your home landscape, compliments of Vectren and the call before you dig number? More than 10,000 people in Indiana and Ohio signed up for a chance to win just that as a part of Vectren's Ultimate Yard Makeover Sweepstakes.

This spring, Vectren worked with MGH to create a social media campaign that reached more than 285,000 homeowners and professionals with the call before you dig message through unique social media partnerships with landscaping companies in three regions: the Indianapolis area (central Indiana), southern Indiana and Dayton, Oh.

In each region, Vectren worked with a landscaping company to promote the Ultimate Yard Makeover Sweepstakes through the landscapers' Facebook pages. By selecting companies that had an established social media following and dedicating some budget funds to Facebook ads that enhanced the pages' number of "Likes," Vectren displayed call before you dig messaging more than 1 million times to people across Indiana and Ohio during March and April of this year – a time when many are starting to plan spring digging projects.



The transformed yard after the Ultimate yard makeover.

Homeowners and professionals entered Vectren's Ultimate Yard Makeover Sweepstakes through a simple form on the landscaping partners' Facebook pages, and in early May, three lucky winners were selected to receive $5,000 worth of professional landscaping services to transform their yards courtesy of Vectren.

Pictured are before and after shots of the yard makeover received by Tanya Konerman of Bloomington, Ind. and delivered by Vectren's partner, Bloomington Valley Nursery. Vectren Damage Prevention and Public Awareness Manager Tracey Bryant and Public Awareness Specialist Kelli Martin met with Tanya and Bloomington Valley Nursery to plan the yard makeover and were also on-site to remind both the landscapers and Tanya to always know what's below before digging as a part of the prize package.

Vectren secured media coverage for the Bloomington yard makeover, the sweepstakes and the call before you dig message in the Herald Times newspaper and on its website, further extending the reach of its social media campaign.

For more information about Vectren's Ultimate Yard Makeover Sweepstakes, contact Tracey Bryant at **TJBryant@vectren.com.**

News Briefs

AEGIS Insurance Services Hosts "Bring Your Child to Work" Event

In Newark, N.J., AEGIS Insurance Services hosted a "Bring Your Child to Work" event that featured an 811 safety-themed program. Youngsters viewed the CGA Pirate video as part of their exercise. UGI provided each child with an insulated lunch bag with its logo, the 811 logo, and filled with a number of damage prevention goodies. Vice President and Loss Control Division Head Howard Somers explained the Pirate video to the kids.

CPG recognizes Maryland student with CGA Safety Community Service Award

Columbia Pipeline Group (CPG), in partnership with CGA, recently recognized Sammy Walling for considering safe digging practices while conducting her Future Farmers of America (FFA) gardening project through Northern Garrett High School.
In recognition of Sammy's FFA project and its safe completion, CPG presented her with the CGA Safety Community Service Award and a $200 charitable donation to the Northern Garrett High School FFA.

During the presentation, students listened to a video from Alabama farmer David Wilson who missed a catastrophe by only six inches when he failed to call 811 before digging on his farm. Students were also educated on the 811 process and reasons to avoid pipeline damages.

New York 811 at Mets Stadium on 8/11 Day

New York 811 will make a splash at Mets Stadium on 8/11 Day with a comprehensive sponsorship that will remind game attendees to always call before digging. New York 811's extensive sponsorship package will feature logo signage on the upper home plate display, a New York 811 booth and sign in Mets Plaza along with an informational and giveaway table on the concourse, in-game billboard displays, reads on the Spanish radio broadcast and more!

Registration NOW Open!

March 8-10, 2016 / Las Vegas, NV

CGA EXCAVATION SAFETY 811 CONFERENCE & EXPO

Call for Papers

Benefits

- Direct involvement in industry issues and discussions
- Recognition as an industry expert
- Networking with colleagues and industry professionals
- Public exposure for you and your organization

Requirements

- Final presentation is 45 minutes
- Presentation must align with the goals and vision of the CGA 811 Excavation Safety Conference & Expo
- Abstracts must contain a brief description of the presentation, define the scope of the message and identify the stakeholder group(s) targeted
- ABSTRACTS DUE AUGUST 1, 2015
- Submit to scott@emailir.com
- Acceptance decided by September 1, 2015

CGAconference.com / 866.279.7755

CGA Safety Materials Available for Ordering

CGA Best Practices 12.0 and 811 Safety Education Videos

To get your copy of the Best Practices 12.0 **click here** and look for the Best Practices button to order.

To order any of our videos please **click here**.

VAULT

Online Resource for Managing Damage Prevention

VAULT is a comprehensive, easy-to-use directory of technologies, solutions and contact information for the Damage Prevention industry.

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