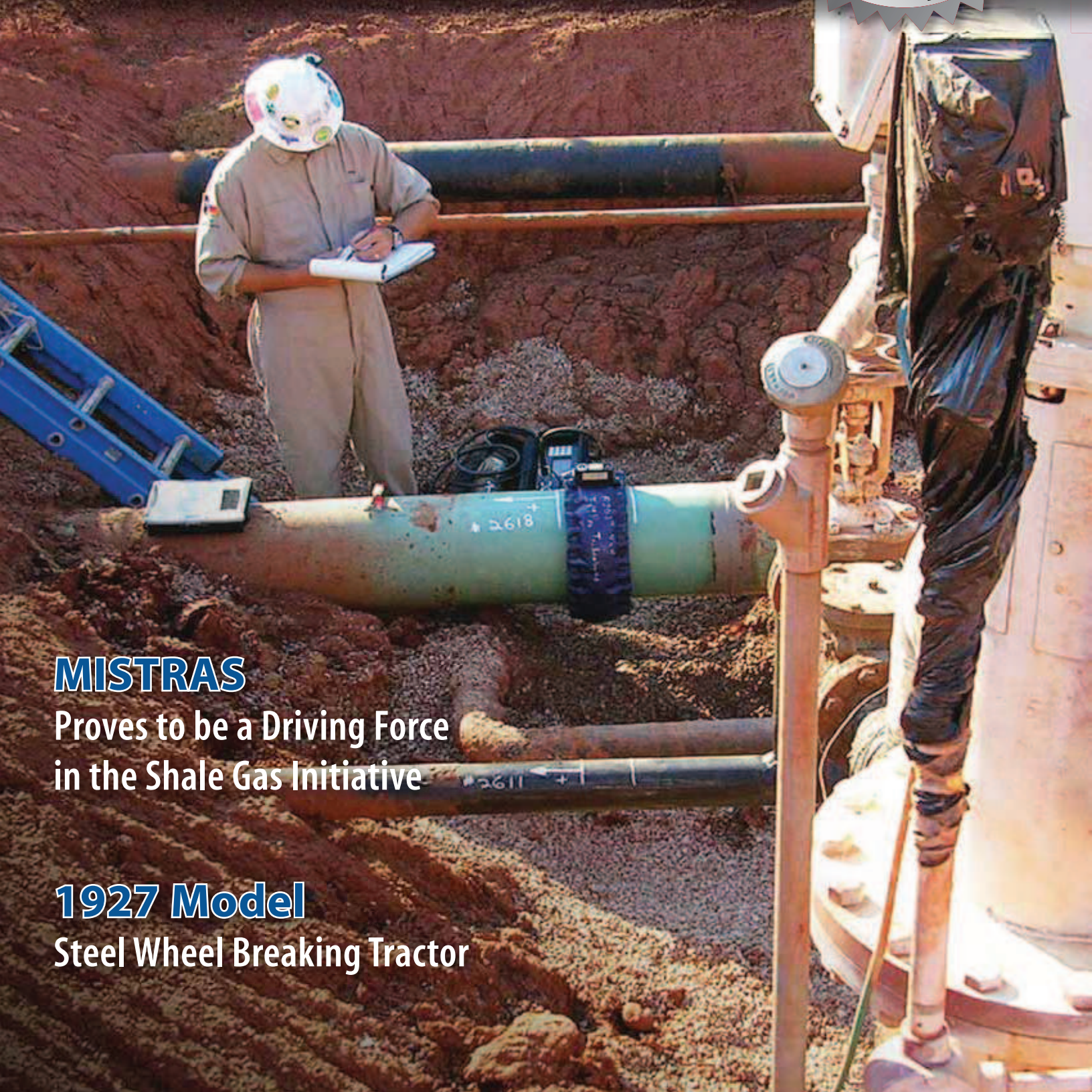


PIPELINERS

HALL of FAME NEWS



MISTRAS

Proves to be a Driving Force
in the Shale Gas Initiative

1927 Model

Steel Wheel Breaking Tractor



MISTRAS

Proves to be a Driving Force in the Shale Gas Initiative

MISTRAS CEO & Founder Sotirios J. Vahaviolos has fond memories of his early years with **MISTRAS**, spending endless hours building his venture from the bottom up; he wasn't going to stop until he held a top spot in the Non Destructive Testing (NDT) industry.

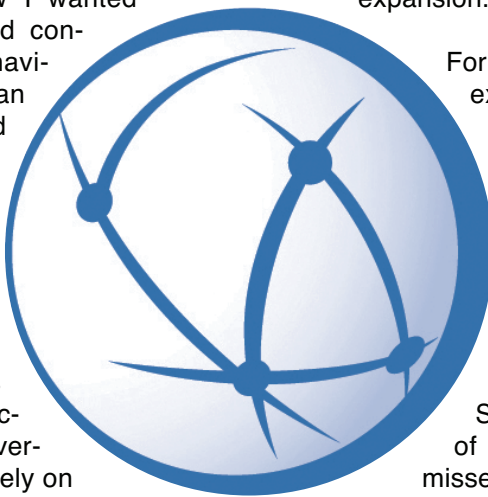
"From the beginning, I always knew I wanted **MISTRAS** to be a company that had constant growth and longevity," said Vahaviolos. "We worked hard to develop an organization that had the strength and technology to go against some of our top competitors. We wanted to prove to everyone in the industry that we weren't the type of business that would fade into the background - we were here to stay."

At that time, **MISTRAS** Group, Inc. was an unknown engineering and manufacturing company tucked away in the university town of Princeton, NJ, focusing solely on the design and development of acoustic emission (AE) products.

But a lot has changed since those nostalgic days of 1978.

After letting crucial opportunities in the pipeline industry pass him by, Vahaviolos decided he needed to expand and make a major change to the **MISTRAS** structure. In 2003, he acquired CONAM Inspection and Engineering Services, a well-established NDT company with an extensive background in the servicing and constructing of pipelines, and **MISTRAS** Services was formed.

"Before CONAM, **MISTRAS** was a small east coast regional company with only one focus," said Michael J. Lange, CEO of **MISTRAS** Services. "The opportunities that CONAM gave us were unparalleled. Not only were we going to get an increase in technology and services, but the geographical coverage we were going to gain would be the main ingredient in our plan for physical and technological expansion."



For 8 years, **MISTRAS** worked on their expansion, gaining new companies and positioning themselves in vital locations across the United States and the world. With each new location, came new technology and services to increase their visibility in the pipeline industry. This development would prime them for their ultimate endeavor: the Shale Gas movement.

Shale gas is a new and abundant source of natural gas, that for years, was dismissed because of the challenges and price that went along with extracting the resource from the ground. As new technology emerged, the process for releasing the gas became easier and a more promising solution to the nation's energy needs was evident.

As shale resource plays started to pop up across the country, it became clear to **MISTRAS** that shale gas was the natural gas of the future and something they needed to get involved with. "Over the years we have watched the progression of technology associated with shale gas advance and we finally felt that the timing was right for us to get involved," said Lange. "We aren't just the acoustic emission company that



we once were; we are a single source provider that has the equipment and manpower to service any size pipeline in the world, putting us up against some of the top players in the pipeline industry.”

Positioning their locations around two prominent plays – Marcellus on the east coast and Eagle Ford in Texas– gave **MISTRAS** a crucial advantage over other service providers. They have access to hundreds of technicians that could employ their valuable combination of internal capabilities (Gamma Radiography and X-Ray Crawlers) and external inspection capabilities (Traditional Gamma Radiography and Automated Ultrasonic Systems) at any given moment.

“Our multiple locations provide the pool of talent needed to implement traditional radiography on these gathering lines, tie-ins and compressor stations,” said Tom Bull, Business Development Manager for **MISTRAS’** midstream pipeline sector. “In addition, our internal radiographic crawlers and automated ultrasonic systems increase productivity as compared to conventional radiography for main line pipe weld inspection.”

This unique blend of technology and **MISTRAS** locations strategically placed in close proximity to these areas have led to competitive advantages resulting in success throughout the bidding process within both the Marcellus and Eagle Ford plays.

“Showcasing our unique internal crawler and gamma radiography techniques have led us to the substantial work we are doing with one of the top exploration companies involved in Marcellus,” said Bull. “Two crews of weld technicians from our nine surrounding locations move along the gathering lines of 8 to 24 inch pipes, using gamma radiography to inspect the welds and ensure the weld complies with API 1104 code of construction requirements.”

The three **MISTRAS** locations supporting the Eagle Ford play are having similar success with a leading North American provider of midstream energy services as they expand on their pipeline system. **MISTRAS** pipeline inspection experts are inspecting gathering lines made up of 8 to 30 inch pipes with similar radiography methods their crews at Marcellus are using.

As the work continues on both of these high profile agreements, the praise and success **MISTRAS** has received in accordance to each of them has led the NDT company to a ground breaking contract with a major gas transmission company in the Marcellus play.

The current project consists of 128 miles of natural gas transmission pipeline being constructed to service the East Coast markets. Broken up into three different spreads, **MISTRAS** will use their top of the line radiography techniques to inspect 30 inch pipes along 60 miles of the route. They will also be responsible for monitoring two compressor stations used to keep the product moving efficiently along the pipeline path.

“This project alone has the ability to expand natural gas capacity within the entire Marcellus network and better serve many major metropolitan areas on the east coast,” said Bull. “**MISTRAS’** involvement in a job of this caliber is an opportunity for our technicians to showcase our talent and technology and the chance to open the door for many other projects throughout the country in the future.”

Bid after bid and project after project, the Shale Gas movement will continue to expand and gain momentum across the nation, and over time, so will **MISTRAS**.

“The effect the Shale Gas initiative has had thus far on **MISTRAS** and other service providers is a telling sign of how this resource will change the way natural gas is provided in the future,” said Lange. “This development will have a giant impact on not only the way **MISTRAS** does business in the pipeline and gas industry going forward, but the countless opportunities that come with this endeavor are unlimited.”

As their supporting locations multiply, their diverse size grows and their variety of services expand, it looks like **MISTRAS** is on their way to conquering one of the biggest natural gas initiatives to date. And after 33 years, **MISTRAS** has shown it has the strength and foundation to maintain its status as the worldwide leader in Non-Destructive Testing.

By: Celia Scarlata, Marketing Services Associate for **MISTRAS** Group, Inc.