United Rentals stakes claim on SW side

Fisher Heck Architects heralds 20th anniversary

Equipment dealer United Rentals is expanding operations and plans are underway to open its second San Antonio location. The proposed site of the branch is in the southwest corner of the city, where growth is mounting.

“We had planned on opening a store on the south side even before Toyota announced its plans for a truck manufacturing facility,” said branch manager Tommy Taylor. “It’s been my observation that most cities grow in a northward pattern, as San Antonio has done, and then they start developing in the south. I could see the writing on the wall and a lot of activity is surfacing on the south side. It’s the next major boom area.”

When San Antonio Construction News asked Tommy if the two United Rentals operations would compete against one another, he said they would not. “We don’t want to have one new store and kill the other one. The new store and the existing North Loop store will work closely back and forth, and if it’s done right, it will be good for both stores.”

Tommy anticipates a November opening for the new United Rentals location. Meanwhile, until negotiations and plans are finalized, the exact address will remain undisclosed.

GARCO Contracting completes historic Gift Chapel

B uilding #2200 on Ft. Sam Houston is the historic Gift Chapel. Erected in 1907, the two-story domed chapel was built with donations from area residents, thus receiving its unusual name.

“Without giving up the method we developed,” David added, “this presented a challenge at first.”

As well, the existing chill water and hot water supply system piping, and all other utilities, had to be relocated and reconnected to allow for the excavation and installation of the piers in the rear of the building, while keeping the controlled air inside the building. After completion of the piers, the utilities and chill water systems were reconnected. According to specifications, a French drain was also added to the entire perimeter of the existing foundation at a depth of 10 to 14 ft.

Adding to the difficulty of the project, the exterior grade beams were all required to have three coats of hot asphalt applied to the face of the beam from a depth of 10 ft up to the finish ground level.

“This presented a challenge at first,” David added, “because today’s waterproofing firms do not use heat-applied systems any more.”

GARCO had to find a roofing subcontractor, one willing to learn how to apply this system without exposing the work crew to unnecessary heat risk hazards.

“Without giving up the method we developed,” Bob emphasized, “it turned out to be easier than we thought. Although it was very time consuming and used much more material than anticipated. The waterproofing had to be coordinated with the installation of the French drain system and proved to be one of the most taxing portions of the project.”

There were six phases to the roofing portion of the project and, according to the contract, work could not commence on the chapel’s interior until the structural piers, repairs, and roofing were complete and all of the mass excavation was replaced.

When the outside work was wrapped up attention turned to the task of restoring the interior of the chapel.
**Howell’s 350-ton crane arrives**

Howell Crane & Rigging, Inc. has acquired the largest crane in this area. In late May, the Martinez-based 21-year-old crane company purchased a Grove 350-ton GMK hydraulic crane and put it into service on Memorial Day, May 26th.

San Antonio Construction News spoke with the company’s vice-president, Audie Howell, who said businesses that need a crane capable of the longest jobs in the industrial, commercial and highway construction settings, “It’s for the heaviest of the heavy

Howell Crane’s fleet of 22 cranes ranges in capability from 15-tons to 350-tons in hydraulics, and 65-tons to 200-tons conventional. With safety a constant priority, Audie said his company, which employs 35 personnel, 22 of whom are licensed crane operators, strives to maintain its superlative safety record. “Many of our operators have 20-25 years of experience, and they are cross-trained to operate various sizes of equipment. I have seven operators who can operate the new 350-ton GMK, which can be extended to 380-ft. and will reach a maximum radius of 210-ft. It features a mega-lift which mounts to the main boom, letting the crane pick up 15 to 18 percent more weight within a specified radius.”

Howell Crane & Rigging does business in Central and South Texas. Audie’s three sisters, Lisa Moore, Melody Justice, and Cindy Oates, assist him in the company’s operations. The company is proud to be affiliated with American Subcontractors Association (ASA), Associated General Contractors (AGC) and Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC).

**STEJATC grads exude pride**

The South Texas Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (STEJATC) heralded the long-awaited graduation of 29 5th-year apprentices on Thurs., May 22nd, from 6:30 to 10:30 pm, at the Ft. Sam Houston Golf Club.

Approximately 140 graduates, guests and industry leaders gathered for a social hour, which preceded the seated dinner and graduation ceremony.

Representatives from IBEW, NECA, the Electrical Board, the STEJATC teaching staff and the Committee all honored the graduates for their accomplishments. San Antonio Construction News spoke with STEJATC training director, John Gray, who said, “Every single graduate of the STEJATC 5-year program already has his City of San Antonio journeyman’s license.” John is tasked to make sure training materials are delivered to the students in the appropriate manner, ensure compliance with all state, federal and Department of Labor guidelines, to maintain the program’s integrity, and enforce the rules and Committee policies.

“Our graduates,” he continued, “are highly-skilled, well-trained wiremen who are able to step right into working on large scale projects. They have the knowledge, skill and ability to do anything from basic residential to industrial and commercial electrical installations. There’s no doubt they can do that!”

The 2003 5th-year apprenticeship graduates are: William H. Anders; Du-stan B. Baker; Stephen M. Casanova; Guadalupe G. Chavez; Garry W. Coonts, Jr.; Keith C. Foy; Reuben H. Ford; John H. Frieda; Robert L. Garza; Brian A. Herbes; Oliver D. Lagguit; Eric Lowe; Oliver M. Mangaanging; Ross A. McGill; David A. Montalvo; John B. Mount; Jacob P. Ortiz; Jeffrey G. Peggard; Gregory A. Padalecki; Daniel Rey-nero; Adam D. Rodriguez; Mark A. Scholl; Martin A. Soria-Quinones; Or-lando R. Soto; Ovideo C. Suarez; James W. Tomerlin; Daniel Vaquera, Jr.; Rob-ert E. Watts and Harold D. Williams. The Class of 2003’s top academic graduate is William Anders. FISK Electric. The Class’ stalwart instructors are Vic York and A.J. Halbardier.

The 29 graduates represent approximately 14 different union contractor employers.
Masons nominate projects for industry competition

On Wednesday, June 25th, the San Antonio Masonry Contractors Association (SAMCA) will host the 2003 Golden Trowel Awards competition to recognize the outstanding design of architects and the brilliant craftsmanship of the masonry contractors of San Antonio.

The Golden Trowel Awards program seeks to extol outstanding architectural design with masonry, along with the craftmanship required to translate a superior design into reality.

Qualifying projects must have been constructed by a SAMCA member, completed within the past two years, and must be located in Texas. Winning entries will be selected in each of the following five categories, with the masonry product being the dominant building material: Brick, Stone, Concrete Masonry Unit (CMU), Publicly Funded Schools K-12, and Other. By recognizing innovation, creativity, and excellence, architects are encouraged to use masonry in their designs.

Award plagues will be presented to the Masonary Contractor for workmanship, the Architect for design, and the Materials Supplier for quality products, which are all key ingredients for a successful project.

Project nominations by the following masonry contractors include:

- Wallace Masonry Co., Inc.
- Zachry Corporation Headquarters Building and Rob-Carr Pet Resort.
- J.T. Masonry

Shavano Park City Hall and Police Station.

Shadrock & Williams Masonry, Ltd.
SBC Center Arena; City of San Antonio Development and Business Services Center (One-Stop Center); Silverado 16 Cinema; UTSA Recreation and Wellness Center; Humane Society of Bexar County; Kathleen C. H. Hall Best Western Hotel; Barracks #250 at Ft. Sam Houston; and Incarnate Word University Natastionary.

Curtis Hunt Restorations, Inc.
Our Lady of Grace Church and Presa St. Linkage.

Grosbeck Masonry, Inc.: Medical Center Ophthalmology; Conn’s Shell Building; Good Shepherd Catholic Church; and Foster-Road Elementary.

Rudd & Adams Masonry, Inc.
Gary Job Corp Office; Home Office for Southwestern Texas Synod ELCA; Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center; Retama Amphitheater; Hays High School Expansion, Field House and Stadium; The Vineyard Shopping Center Phase II; and 300 West 6th St.

C&G Contractors, Inc.
4-B Development Office Building.

DJM Masonry Enterprises, Inc.
Texas MedClinic; Alamo Rent-A-Car; Al-len & Allen Showroom; and Block Distribu-

A jury panel consisting of three arctitects and two masonry contractors who are not competing in the competi-

Putnam Construction News is published monthly by Construction News Ltd., dba San Antonio Construction News, and distributed by mail to construction-related companies of record in Bexar and 7 surrounding counties. Additional distribution is provided at 92 material supplier locations serving the construction industry.

All submissions should be mailed to our editorial offices. We reserve the right to edit any materials submitted. No fees for materials, copy or photographs submitted will be due unless agreed upon in advance in writing. Submissions will be published at our discretion on a space-available basis.

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Putnam Construction News

Page 3

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"Where SA's Construction people meet to eat"
Tours highlight One-Stop’s Open House

Architects, engineers and general contractors were invited to attend an Open House for the City of San Antonio Development and Business Services Center, 1901 South Alamo Street, on Wed., May 14th, from 4:30 to 6:30 pm.

Members of American Institute of Architects (AIA), Professional Engineers in Private Practice (PEPP), and Associated General Contractors (AGC), some of whom helped design, engineer and build the One-Stop Center, gathered in the lobby area of the new facility where they enjoyed hors d’oeuvres and non-alcoholic beverages.

San Antonio Construction News spoke with PEPP executive director Diane Hoskins, who said members of the three associations are an integral part of the design and construction success of any project. PEPP, she explained, is a subset of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers (TSPE).

“The people who are here today especially want to make sure the new Development and Business Services Center gets off to a good start,” Diana explained. “The community has been looking forward to the completion of this facility for a long time. The architecture and the engineering communities have a committee that meets monthly with the development services department to work out and refine the kinks in the procedures and processes.”

Development Services department staffers Terry Kannawin, Andy Gomez and Gloria Garcia escorted groups of 15 to 20 on staggered facility tours. The tour included a complete walk-through of the bold painted two-story facility and explanations of each department’s function. Clearly, the facility offers multiple services, which are enhanced by state-of-the-art equipment and technology. The Open House presented a wonderful opportunity for members of the three professional associations to acquaint them with the One-Stop Center.

ACCA and OSHA form Alliance

The Air Conditioning Contractors of America (ACCA) formalized an Alliance with OSHA to address worker safety and health issues. Key to the Alliance is the agreement to ensure ACCA members and others are armed with information related to safety supervision, equipment and material handling, driver and vehicle safety, ladder and lift use, and lock-out/tag-out issues.

OSHA and ACCA agreed to work together to identify available resources and stimulate the development of new training programs and materials.

Cross training of OSHA personnel and industry safety and health professionals is also on tap, as is participation in forums and round-table discussions on multi-employer worksite issues to raise construction industry safety awareness.

Both organizations will develop and disseminate information through various media, including OSHA and ACCA websites, and will increase access to safety and health information and training resources, including Spanish-language material.

OSHA will look for opportunities to speak, exhibit or appear at national ACCA conferences, and will also encourage ACCA members to participate in the agency’s cooperative programs including the Voluntary Protection Program, and the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program.

College scholarship awarded to Clark grad

At the May 8th meeting of the Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors - San Antonio Chapter, the focus of attention was turned to college student Clayton Saliba. Clayton was awarded a two-year, $1,000 scholarship by PHCC-SA to help him pursue his studies in the plumbing-heating-cooling industry.

The monies were accumulated by PHCC-SA as a result of its fundraising efforts, which included golf, fishing, and sporting clay tournaments.

Clayton, the son of George Saliba, George Plumbing Co., is a 2003 graduate of Clark High School. Planning to attend Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, he will be further assisted with a $2,000 scholarship awarded him by PHCC-Texas.
Contractor/supplier opens Boerne operations

T he first Decorative Concrete Warehouse is open for business at its new 6,000-sf retail, office and warehouse center in Boerne, on IH-10 West.

Owner Gary Walden conceived the new business, which offers retail and contractor pricing. Gary also owns Commercial Concrete of Texas, a concrete and decorative concrete installation company currently involved in several residential, commercial, city and state projects throughout Texas.

San Antonio Construction News spoke with estimator Jerry Birchard, who is helping spearhead the Boerne operations. He said the increased popularity of decorative concrete is resulting in more contractors and do-it-yourselves taking on the challenge.

“We are the exclusive Increte distributor in South Texas,” Jerry explained, “and we have 15 decorative concrete stamp sets available for rent to individuals or contractors. In addition, we sell acid stains, color hardeners, integral colors for concrete, custom colors, liquid and powder release agents, clear and stain sealers, epoxies, and all of the accessories one would need to complete a project. Our full-service supply house provides all of the materials necessary for contractors and individuals.”

When customers need a little help, the company offers consulting service, from the office or directly on the job site.

“We also sell contractor packages,” Jerry added, “for people who are interested in becoming Increte installers. From the man who only needs one gallon of stain, to the man who wants to start his own business, we can help them.”

Two S.A. firms make ENR’s Top 500 Design list

A s published in the April 21st issue of Engineering News-Record (ENR), two of San Antonio’s engineering design firms are among the nations “Top 500.” Companies were ranked according to revenue for design services performed in 2002.

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In 1878 work began on San Antonio’s first mule-drawn streetcar line to run from Alamo Plaza to San Pedro Springs, and the foundation for San Antonio’s Water Works’ pump house on the river was built, a water system began its development.

Engineering is San Antonio’s History by Douglas Steadman, PE.
Shooters, chefs, kids at home on the range

S
hooters and pit crews from Air Conditioning Con- tractors Association-San Antonio (ACCA-SA) and Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors-San An- tonio (PHCC-SA) joined forces on Fri., April 25th for the 6th Annual Sporting Clays Tournament & Bar-B-Que Cook-off at Cedar Ridge Range.

A hive of activity, this action-packed event is a ma- jor fundraiser for both organizations. In keeping with their commitment to industry and community, execu- tive directors Heidi Trimble (PHCC) and Jack Lappeus (ACCA) presented a check for $500 to San Antonio Construction News’ publisher Buddy Doebbler. For the sec- ond year, ACCA and PHCC are the first trade associations to donate a generous cash contribution to Construct a Kid’s Christmas 2003, which benefits the foster children of Bexar County. Thinking ahead, organizers planned this special event on a day when their kids were out of school - Battle of Flowers Day – freeing over 20 youngsters to par- ticipate in the under-16 “Kids 22 Rifle Shoot.” In addition to enjoying the thrill of competition, each youthful shooter received professional coaching on safety and technique, and a souvenir T-shirt.

Kids ’22 Rifle Shoot winners:
1st Place: Cody Koutz
2nd Place: Kalub Freund
3rd Place: Coltin Bolin

Mounted Scope:
1st Place: Shane Quintero
2nd Place: Matt Quintero

The Sporting Clays Tournament benefited from good weather conditions and a robust turnout of 133 shooters.

Sporting Clays Team winners:
1st Place Team: Carrier South Texas - Terry Wieland, Frank Poland, Neil Hunt, Al Gabrysich, and Ronnie Klepac
2nd Place Team: TD Industries - Nick Koleffel, Matt Engbrock, Marc French, John Irle, and Frank Dooley


Sporting Clays Individual winners:
1st Place: Mark Tschirtz
2nd Place: Jeff Jackson
3rd Place: Richard McNatt
4th Place: Jeff May
5th Place: Mark Hickey

The Jeff Berry Award:
John Freund, Michelle McNatt
Jeff Standley
David Palacio and Lee Rosenberg

Meanwhile, back in the no-shooting zone, 17 BBQ cook-off teams (a record number) sent smoke spiraling upward from their massive pits and grills. Teams subm- itted samples of brisket, wild game, side dishes and desserts for the judges who graded them for their most important attribute – taste!

Bar-B-Que Cook-off Winners:
Brisket
1st Place + $100: Quincy Electric Inc
2nd Place: Century Maintenance Supply
3rd Place: G.D. Interiors

Chicken
1st Place + $100: Hilibig Services
2nd Place: Century Maintenance Supply
3rd Place: INSCO Distributing

Wild Game
1st Place + $100: Ferguson Enterprises
2nd Place: Priority Design
3rd Place: Carrier Total Line

Best of Show
1st Place: Century Maintenance Supply
2nd Place: Johnson Supply - West
3rd Place: Quincy Electric, Inc.

 Mandatory ear and eye protection for the junior shooters.

First donation of the year for Construct a Kid’s Christmas 2003 L-R: Buddy, Heidi and Jack.

Design teams reinvigorate San Antonio River

The challenge of transforming un- der-utilized portions of the San An- tonio River into viable areas for public recreation, wildlife habitat and commercial development is in the hands of two architectural firms with long histo- ries of high-profile projects in San Anto- nio. Ford, Powell & Carson Architects & Planners, Inc. and Carter & Burgess, Inc. were selected to oversee the preliminary design phase of the San Antonio River Improvements Project. The 10-year, $140 million project concentrates on 13 miles of the San Antonio River, including the four-mile Museum Reach, which is north of the downtown area, and the nine-mile Historic Mission Reach, which is south of downtown.

San Antonio-based Ford, Powell & Carson Architects & Planners, Inc. will oversee the redevelopment of the Museum Reach, which extends approximately four miles north from Lexington Street to East Hildebrand Avenue at Brackenridge Park, Other members of the Museum Reach design team include HDR Engi- neering, Inc.; Inter-Fluve, Inc.; Arias & Kle- zar, Inc.; UTSA Center for Archaeological Research; Project Cost Resources; Ed- wards Aquifer Research Center, N.Y.L.A/ Marek-Hill; Garza Consulting; Buck Group; Kaplan Partners Architectural Lighting; and Rodriguez Engineering. Mike Johnson of HDR Engineering, Inc. serves as Museum Reach design team project manager.

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Carter & Burgess, Inc. will guide the improvements to the nine-mile Historic Mission Reach from South Alamo Street south to Mission Espada just below Inter- state Loop 410. The Historic Mission Reach design team led by Kevin Cornes of Carter & Burgess includes Sprinkle Robey Architects; Inter-Fluve, Inc.; Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center; Raba- Kistner, Inc.; UTSA Center for Archaeo- logical Research; Overby Descamps Engi- neering, Inc.; Arias & Kezar, Inc.; Garza Consulting; Accutech Consultants, L.L.C.; and HDR Engineering, Inc.

The San Antonio River Improvements Project represents a 10-year, $140 million city, county, and federal invest- ment in flood control, amenities, envi- ronmental restoration and recreational improvements to the river.

Bexar County and the City of San Antonio are providing local funding with the federal project components funded through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE). The San Antonio River Authority provides project and technical manage- ment and overall project coordination. Steve Graham of the San Antonio River Authority serves as the overall Project Manager.

Source: Bexar County online

During 1879, Mr. William Loyd and Mr. George H. Kaltoyer found a site con- taining just the right raw materials to produce Port- land Cement. Thus, in 1880, the San Anto- nio Portland Cement and Roman Cement Co. was chartered to become the first Port- land Cement Co. west of the Mississippi. Cement from the plant was used to “build” San Antonio as well as the State Capitol (1888) and Driskill Hotel in Austin.

Engineering in San Antonio’s History by Douglas Steadman, P.E.
Women in Construction honored

San Antonio’s first street pavement, with mesquite blocks, was of Alamo Plaza in 1889. A notice in the July 26, 1894 national weekly “Engineering News” reported that San Antonio was “considering the construction of a sewerage system.”

Engineering in San Antonio’s History, by Douglas Steadman, P.E.

The San Antonio Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) paid homage to three of its members on Wed., May 7th, when the chapter celebrated Industry Appreciation Night, an annual event.

In the presence of the chapter membership and guests, President-elect Karen Santino, Hunt Building, invited Deborah Drumm, AIA, ERO International, to help her with the memorable presentation. The trio of industry women who were recognized for their semi-centuries of membership and dedication to NAWIC, each has served selflessly as officers, committee chairs and consummate volunteers.

When Deborah presented a 25-year pin to Diana De Los Santos, Samuels Glass, she reminded her colleagues that Diana’s dedication to the organization’s scholarship program for over 20 years has made it what it is today.

“I was a scholarship recipient when I met Diana,” Deborah recalled, “and I know for a fact that she has made a difference in my life. She was supportive when times were tough, she encouraged me to never give up, and to stay involved. Diana introduced me to NAWIC, and I truly feel that I would not be where I am in my architectural profession today, if I had never met Diana, my friend and mentor.”

Karen presented 25-year pins to Judy DeWeese, Mouse Construction Corp., and to Scotty Stanley, SashGlass Contractors, Inc. Judy has served in almost every chapter office (multiple times in some cases), chaired every chapter committee, served as NAWIC National Secretary, and as Regional Director of Region 7. As well, chapter vice-president Scotty has served in almost every chapter office including President, has never taken a vacation from her NAWIC membership, and provides exceptional monthly programs and speakers.

Each recipient received a bouquet of long stemmed red roses and their 25-year pins.

San Antonio-based Holt CAT has sold its Ohio subsidiary, Holt Co. of Ohio, to Ohio Machinery Co., a Caterpillar equipment and power systems dealership in eastern Ohio. Terms of the sale were not disclosed.

“Holt CAT decided to sell its Ohio operations after it was given the opportunity to acquire Dallas-based Darr Equipment Co.,” said Holt spokesman Howard Hicks. “In order to acquire Darr, Holt CAT had to make a sacrifice. The Darr purchase is expected to result in an increase in the company’s work force and better results on its assets.”

Ohio Machinery Co. has renamed Holt Co. of Ohio as Ohio CAT and it will serve essentially all of Ohio and portions of northern Kentucky and southeastern Indiana that surround metropolitan Cincinnati. Before the acquisition, Ohio Machinery Co. served 25 counties in eastern Ohio, and Holt CAT served 64 counties in western Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. Combined, the dealership will serve an 89-county area that contains approximately 12 million people.

In the May 19th issue of Engineering News-Record (ENR), three San Antonio general contractors are ranked among its “Top 400” list of construction contractors. Companies are ranked by construction revenue in 2002, including prime construction contracts, shares of joint ventures, subcontracts, construction portion of design-construction contracts and construction management “at risk” contracts when the firm’s risks are similar to those of a general contractor.

They include:

#23 Zachry Construction Corporation
#245 CCC Group, Inc.
#248 Bartlett Cocke General Contractors

Three S.A. companies among ENR’s “Top 400”
Scholarship Golf Classic boasts record turnout

Silverhorn Golf Club hosted a joint venture when the American Institute of Architects – San Antonio Chapter, the South Texas Section of the Texas Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, and Acme Brick staff invited representatives of their allied professions and industries to participate in the 2003 Scholarship Golf Classic as sponsors and players. The tournament has been ongoing for fourteen years.

San Antonio Construction News spoke with Acme Brick’s top golf enthusiast Rick Dunn, who said, “Acme Brick is the primary sponsor of the tournament. We have a great history with the AIA, and we’re glad to support this event.”

According to tournament organizer, Jeff Fetzer, AIA, Ford Powell & Carson, the Scholarship Golf Classic attracted 135 players, a record turnout in the history of the annual event.

Immediately following play, members and guests enjoyed dinner and an awards ceremony. The winners of the 4-player scramble were:

1st Place Gross #2: Mike Slay, Madeline Slay, Rob Reyes and George Vaughn

1st Place Net #7: George Campbell, Joe Trinidade, Jake Trinidade, and Dan Newberry.

2nd Place Net #8: John George, Marka Wanke, Dave Cummings and Don Weiss.

3rd Place Net #8: Jeff Dallenbach, Robert Lozano, John Franklin and Shane Davis.

Closest to the pin #5: Ken Fowler

Closest to the pin #7: John Green

Closest to the pin #13: Danny Newberry

Closest to the pin #16: Scott Tak

Longest Drive #18: Chris Davidson

Longest Put #9: John George

The winners of the 4-player scramble were:

1st Place Gross

1st Place Net

2nd Place Net

3rd Place Net

The winners of the closest to the pin were:

Closest to the pin #5

Closest to the pin #7

Closest to the pin #13

Closest to the pin #16

The winners of the longest drive were:

Longest Drive #18

The winners of the longest put were:

Longest Put #9

The parking lot at United Rentals was ablaze with activity as customers, vendors and business associates arrived for the company’s 9th Annual Bar-B-Que, on Thurs., May 15th, from 11 am, to 1 pm. After signing-in and placing their cards in a bucket for a door prize drawing, guests headed for the buffet line.

In preparation for the big day, branch manager Tommy Taylor recruited Grady’s Bar-B-Que to cater the feast, which drew 350 to 400 hungry hard-hats to the lunchtime repast. The line formed at the rear for a plate of good old Texas brisket, sausage, beans, cole slaw, potato salad and iced beverages.

Under the shade of an oversized canopy, about twenty draped tables accommodated the diners, who, when finished, sped across the parking lot to examine the tools and equipment at several vendors’ booths.

“We have some good vendors here today,” Tommy said, “and there are lots of new products to look at. I hope everyone takes a few minutes to examine our displays. In our air-conditioned showroom, where the women-folk are hanging out, we’ve stocked up on a lot of merchandise and tools we never carried before. Everyone is invited to look around!”


Chuck Frost with portable, self-contained Shark TR35100 Trailer Pressure Washing System.

United Rentals

Jack Westbrook, NORTON, demonstrating his concrete slicing blades.

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L-R: Christopher Kimen, West East Design Group; Terry Tucker, Acme Brick; Charles John, AIA, Charles A. John Architect Extraordinaire; and Rick Dunn, Esquire, Acme Brick.

L-R: Gary Hall, Project Control; Paul Lampe, Raba-Kistner, John Rinehart, P. E., Pape Dawson Engineers; and Travis Wilshire, Shelton, Travis Tile Associates.

L-R: John Keverline, Wayne Cooper, and Frank Piotrak, demonstrating his concrete slicing blades.

L-R: John, AIA, Charles John Architect Extraordinaire; and Travis Wilshire, Goetting and Associates.

Conserve Your Capital!!

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Chuck Frost with portable, self-contained Shark TR35100 Trailer Pressure Washing System.

In preparation for the big day, branch manager Tommy Taylor recruited Grady’s Bar-B-Que to cater the feast, which drew 350 to 400 hungry hard-hats to the lunchtime repast. The line formed at the rear for a plate of good old Texas brisket, sausage, beans, cole slaw, potato salad and iced beverages.

Under the shade of an oversized canopy, about twenty draped tables accommodated the diners, who, when finished, sped across the parking lot to examine the tools and equipment at several vendors’ booths.

“We have some good vendors here today,” Tommy said, “and there are lots of new products to look at. I hope everyone takes a few minutes to examine our displays. In our air-conditioned showroom, where the women-folk are hanging out, we’ve stocked up on a lot of merchandise and tools we never carried before. Everyone is invited to look around!”


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ASA’s Subfest 2003 a hill country hit!

The fun-loving membership of the American Subcontractors Association San Antonio Chapter hosted its Annual Subfestival at the historic Anhalt German Hall in the heart of the Hill Country on Fri., May 2nd. As guests drove down the meandering country lane toward the party, the pastoral sounds of chirping birds gave way to the rhythmic, foot-stomping beat of live music.

Teased by the scents emanating from the smoking pits of BBQ pro’s Nathan Altermann Electric, Daussin Electric, Holes of San Antonio, and Sweet Meat Concrete, the promise of great food whetted appetites and caused more than a few mouths to water. In fact, 350 subcontractors and their guests stood in line for their plate of hot and steaming victuals.

As the band played, the subs danced and danced, taking momentary pauses to check their Silent Auction bids. Later in the evening, the featured Live Auction drew raucous and some-times competitive bidding as subs forked out the dough in support of the greater cause. From dove hunts to artwork, together the Live Auction and Silent Auction raised $18,000.

Food line forms at the rear!

Dallas and Karen Cloud hone in on a Silent Auction item.

The crowd awaits chance to bid on Live Auction offerings!

Austin News

To read these and other stories in full, go to our Website at www.constructionnews.net.

Browning Construction provides ‘new light’ for HRC

Browning Construction Co. led the $10 million renovation effort, along with Lake/Flato Architects from San Antonio, for the University of Texas at Austin’s Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, renowned for its massive cultural archives, one of the largest in the country. The project consisted of more than 40,000 sf of newly constructed public space.

Capt. Hook is five and still lifting

Rolling and hauling company, Capt. Hook, celebrated its fifth anniversary this past Apr. The company, a member of the Austin Remodelers Association (ARA), has found work providing small rolloff boxes for contractors throughout the Austin area.

ACC Metal Framing class opens doors

A new class, Metal Wall Systems, at Austin Community College (ACC) was formed this year to address the need for a larger skilled workforce for the residential steel industry.

RSS steps up

Though he says it was never his plan for his business to grow very large, Don White, owner of Reinforcing Steel Supply (RSS), celebrated his company’s recent expansion with an open house Apr. 15, 2003. The event allowed customers a peek at the company’s new 18,000-sf facility, which is a step up from its former 3,000-sf office in north Austin.

Falcon Storage takes flight

Since opening their business this Jan., Stephen Shang and Brian Dieringer, owners of Falcon Storage, have found a broad market for temporary, on-site storage units.

CANstruction teaches youth, feeds community

Imagination and design principals united on Apr. 27, 2003 for CANstruction, a benefit competition adopted by the Society of Design Administration (SDA). The event allowed children from the Austin Jewish Community Day School to work with Austin design professionals to build enormous structures strictly out of canned goods. In addition to exposing children to design principles, the event also benefit-ed the Capital Area Food Bank.
Finance gurus finesse Republic for good cause

Lathered in sunscreen and dressed handsomely for a day on the links, members and guests of the Construction Financial Management Association San Antonio Chapter (CFMA) gathered for their 1st-Ever Golf Tournament on Mon., April 28th. Hosted at San Antonio’s newest public course, The Republic Golf Club, 72 players comprised 18 teams for the tournament, a major money maker for the organization’s scholarship fund.

San Antonio Construction News spoke with CFMA board member and tournament coordinator Bill Dawley, Harding Conley Drawert Tincher Insurance, who said the event’s proceeds would supplement the Cindy P. Dennis Scholarship Fund.

“This is one of the major fundraisers for our scholarship fund, which supports college students majoring in construction and business fields. To date, CFMA’s Cindy P. Dennis Scholarship Fund has awarded over $58,000 in scholarships. Thanks to the generosity of our members and sponsors, we’ll be able to award another $15,000 to deserving students this year.”

A 1:30 pm shotgun start marked the beginning of the Florida Scramble, and win or lose, each player was rewarded with a delicious dinner at day’s end.

The winners of CFMA’s 1st-Ever Golf Tournament were:

1st Place: Tony Ridout, Milton Barrett, Lynne Grix, and Steve Whitener.

2nd Place: Richard Garza, Clark Fresher, Alfonso Sanin, and Eddie Daly.

3rd Place: Joe Lozano, Gonzalo Ornelas, Billy Knox, and Steve Schultz.

Women’s Long Drive: Michelle Seward.

Men’s Long Drive: Jim Miller.

Closest to The Pin: Michelle Seward.

David Goetz, James Deaven, and Clark Fresher.

Congratulations!

The story of Dyer Mechanical begins with its owner and founder, Harold L. Dyer. After active service in the U.S. Marine Corp, Harold returned to his hometown, Austin, TX, where he secured employment as a truck driver for Waste Management.

“I loved the job but the hours were too long. My wife, Spring, and I sat down to determine what I could do with my high school education. I ruled out the electrical trade because I’m afraid of electricity. Water doesn’t agree with me, so I ruled out plumbing. We decided on air conditioning sounding pretty good.”

The former Marine attended Austin Community College, where he earned an Associates Degree in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration, and another Associates Degree in Electronics. Harold began working for a local air conditioning contractor as a Carrier heavy equipment mechanic.

“Asked to explain what motivated him to start his own company, Harold said, “After seven and a half years, I thought I could do a better job.”

Harold and his family moved to San Antonio in 1988. With his savings, he bought a truck and went into business that year. The vision of a pot of gold was the lure that propelled Harold to establish Dyer Mechanical Services, an HVAC service and sales company.

“I also went back to college,” Harold continued, “commuting to Southwest Texas State at night, on weekends, and during the summers. In 1990 I earned a BS in Mechanical Engineering. It hasn’t done a lot for me but it looks good on the wall.”

A decade and a half later, Dyer Mechanical Services has seven employees and five trucks. A Carrier dealer, Dyer Mechanical performs commercial retrofits and residential new installations, change-outs and service. A self-admitted conservative, as his company prospered Harold put every dollar back into the company.

“Despite the economy, last year was one of our better years, so we expanded to a bigger shop. I credit our survival to having a ‘don’t quit’ attitude. In the last couple of lean years, when other small shops were going out of business, we remained solvent.”

When San Antonio Construction News asked Harold to describe his biggest challenge, he said it was transitioning from technician to business manager.

“One of the most significant obstacles I faced at one point was getting out of the field. I had to quit turning wrenches and concentrate on building a new business. I was a hell of an AC mechanic, if I did say so, and every time a problem arose, I would want to rush over and get in the middle, instead of relying on my people to work through it. I adapted, but it was tough.”

Harold is quick to credit two men, Lee Rosenberg, former owner of Metra Tech, and Bill Mairs (dec’d), Mission Mechanical, with helping him succeed.

“As mentors, they both unselfishly and enthusiastically helped me analyze situations and become a better business man,” Harold concluded. “I have tried to emulate their formulas for success. They were the most influential people, and I owe any measure of success I’m enjoying directly to them.”

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Texas, the state that brought the world the modern petroleum industry with Spindletop a century ago, is now pioneering the future of American energy by becoming the nation’s new leader in sustainable energy. The Lone Star State’s new status as a leader in renewable energy is attracting visionaries and activists from across the country to six major energy events taking place over the next six months. This is the first time so many national sustainable energy events have been held in a single state in a single year.

To take best advantage of the convergence of events to cement Texas’ reputation as a sustainable energy innovator, a group of state, municipal, non-profit and clean energy organizations have come together to form the Texas Sustainable Energy Network (TxSENet) and promote new opportunities for consumers, businesses and the government.

The series of meetings started in May with the American Wind Energy Association annual conference in Austin and continues through November in Austin and central Texas with the American Solar Energy Society annual conference, the National Association of State Energy Officials annual meeting, the Renewable Energy Roundup and Green Living Fair, the U.S.-Mexico Border Energy Forum and the 16th National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) Industry Growth Forum.

The wind conference, which took place May 18-21, was slated to be the world’s largest meeting of wind energy professionals to date, bringing more than 3,000 people to Austin.

Much of the progress in renewable energy in Texas can be attributed to the Renewable Portfolio Standard signed into law in 1999 by then-Governor George W. Bush. The standard mandated that Texas add 2,000 megawatts of renewable energy by 2009, enough energy to power approximately 800,000 average homes. By the end of 2001, the state was already halfway to that goal. Nearly 20 percent of world wind power installed came from Texas in 2001. The 915 MW of newly-installed wind generation capacity was more than was installed in the entire country in any previous year. If Texas were a nation, it would be third in the world in creating new wind power. Texas also is the only state in the nation with a legislative mandated efficiency goal.

Spindletop, the name of a small knoll just south of Beaumont, startled the world when it erupted on Jan. 10, 1901, to start producing more than 80,000 barrels of oil a day. Today, wind prospectors cross the state looking for land for giant wind farms the way wildcatters once crossed the state searching for oil.

“The American Wind Energy Association conference in Austin, the nation is recognizing Texas’ leading role in the growth of renewable energy,” said Walter Hornaday, president of Austin-based Cielo Wind Power. “We hope this is just a starting point for launching the next wave of renewable energy development in Texas.”


For further information, please contact: ewhalen@texaswind.com or http://www.txsen.org

Photos of the Llano Estacado Wind Ranch, White Deer, TX, courtesy of Cielo Wind Power.

Support urged for AHP legislation

Representatives from the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) traveled to the Rio Grande Valley to meet with Congressman Ruben Hinojosa (D-15th District, Mission, TX) in mid-May to discuss HR 660, the “Small Business Health Fairness Act.” Andy Rittler, ABC Region 3 Government Affairs representative, Patrick Williams, SpawGlass Contractors, Inc., and Steven Schultz, ABC-South Texas Chapter President, traveled to the Rio Grande Valley to meet with Congressman Hinojosa and Patrick Williams.

“With the American Wind Energy Association conference in Austin, the nation is recognizing Texas’ leading role in the growth of renewable energy,” said Walter Hornaday, president of Austin-based Cielo Wind Power. “We hope this is just a starting point for launching the next wave of renewable energy development in Texas.”


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Photos of the Llano Estacado Wind Ranch, White Deer, TX, courtesy of Cielo Wind Power.

From oil to wind, Texas takes energy lead

by Erin Whalen
Douglas Steadman, P.E. was born in the county on the south-eastern edge of Ft. Worth on October 12, 1926. The eldest son of native Texas parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lillian May Sanders Steadman, Doug rose to become one of the most respected structural engineers in the City of San Antonio. Now retired, he still maintains an office and continues to embrace civic engineering projects with an undeterred passion.

Doug’s father was in high school when his father died of a heart attack at age 32. Assuming the role of family wage earner, Homer managed to graduate from high school with honors.

“My dad was named class valedictorian, but after personally calculating that another young man was one-tenth of a point above him, he honorably relinquished his valedictorian status. As a result of that, he received a scholarship for college, but he didn’t go. He married my mother, and went to work for the largest lumber company in Ft. Worth, Bucy Ingdam. Dad was a yard foreman during his early years, and after he left the lumber business, he worked for a general contractor as a superintendent.”

Devoted Christians, Doug’s parents founded an orphanage, now known as Christ Haven Home, on 100 acres in Keller, TX. When Doug and his younger brother were in high school, Homer and Lillian adopted two little girls.

“Their hearts were set on taking care of children who might grow up without a mother and father. The last cottage that was opened was named The Steadman Cottage in honor of my mother and father. Always an inspiration, Dad’s motto was ‘Nothing happens by chance. As I tell you for sure, he believed it and emphasized it with my brother and me.’”

When Doug was young, he and his family were often surprised when homeless men would knock at the back door for food. A young victim of the depression, the Steadman’s shared with them what they could.

“Fortunately, our father had a good job. We ate a lot of pork and beans, and we had a cow, chickens, fruit trees, and a spring and fall vegetable garden. My brother and I had to take care of the cow, but my dad did the milking. We grew a little bit of hay for the cow and cut it by hand. Of course, everything was done by hand then. Incidentally, Byron Nelson and his family lived in our neighborhood back then, and he got his start at Glen Garden Country Club, a few blocks from our place.”

Doug met his future bride and lifetime companion, Jurene Nicholson, in kindergarten class at Glen Garden Elementary School.

“My mother told the story that I came home from my first day at school saying ‘I found my girlfriend. But, Jurene and I didn’t start going together until we were seniors in high school. We attended Polytexnec High School, and I would go out of my way in between classes to catch a glimpse of her.”

Recognizing his innate potential, Doug’s math, chemistry and physics teachers encouraged him towards an academic path in engineering. After graduating in 1943, he enrolled in the two-year engineering program at North Texas Agricultural College in Arlington, which later evolved to become Arlington State, and is now UT-Arlington.

“Every school day I hitch-hiked out to NTAC from southeast Ft. Worth, and I was late only once. We had a contingent of Marines who were studying at NTAC, which meant we had a football team that was good enough to beat Texas A&M. I was active in the ROTC program, and then joined the Navy in January 1944, enrolling in its V-12 program at the University of Texas in Austin. In January of 1946, I earned my degree in civil engineering, received my commission at age 19, and married Jurene in July.”

Doug served primarily on a cruiser in the post-war peacetime waters up and around the eastern seaboard. Following his active duty experience, he remained in the reserves and pursued a Master’s degree in nuclear engineering at UT-Austin. Meanwhile, Jurene went to work to support her brilliant young husband and their many young wives of her generation.

“Fortunately the war was over. Doug was looking for employment. At the suggestion of Professor Phil Ferguson, who was world-renown for writing the textbook on concrete design, Doug sought employment with Mr. Willard Eastman Simpson, P.E. Simpson was a pioneer in establishing the structural consulting engineer profession in Texas, Mr. Simpson (1883 – 1967) and his brother founded the engineering-construction firm in 1909. In 1919, the company became a consulting firm specializing in structural engineering. The firm’s reputation for solving difficult problems was well established, and a good fit for an eager engineer like Doug.”

“I had a few other job offers that didn’t really appeal to me. About two weeks had gone by, and we interviewed with W.E. Simpson and I was waiting to hear back. Finally, I made a long-distance call from Ft. Worth to speak with Mr. Simpson. I was later told that while I was on hold, he polled the office as to whether or not he should hire me. I joined the firm in 1948 when there were only six of us, including our secretary Mabel. I earned $50 a week for a minimum of three weeks without so much as a coffee break.”

Under the direction of Mr. Manfred Gerhardt, the chief engineer, Doug spent the first two years as a draftsman, learning how to produce thoroughly lettered and detailed structural drawings.

“They then let me do a little designing by myself, gaining experience and drafting.”

In his early days at W.E. Simpson, Doug worked on the O.R. Mitchell Dam and Lake, and later developed mutual, professional respect for H.E.B’s O.R. Mitchell construction, Bob McDaniel, which led to a long-term relationship spanning almost four decades.

“Most of our work then was done for architects, who took full responsibility for the design, engineering and construction of a project.”

In 1955, Doug received his registration as a Professional Engineer. His salary skyrocketed to $150 a week, minus fringe benefits, and two weeks vacation if he could squeeze them in between the staggering workload. Doug was content with the prestige attached to those two titles, and a day or two to do by hand. The computer reduced that time to minutes or seconds. Computers were expensive and ologies, but I still have that original slide rule that I had in school.”

In the early 1980s, Doug’s responsibilities include an inevitable turn from design to administration. Doug was the structural engineer for Churchill High School, an exciting project in a cow pasture. He was the project engineer on the Lila Cockrell Theater, which he said had some interesting structural issues to work out. The executive vice-president of the firm when it undertook work at the San Antonio Airport, Doug had to make decisions and make calculations, although he did not work on the design. One after another, the list of projects Doug worked on throughout his fifty years with W.E. Simpson is seemingly endless.

When he formally retired from management and ownership at the end of 1992, in lieu of a party, the firm established the Steadman Fellowship in Structural Engineering at the University of Texas School of Engineering. A self-admitted workaholic, Doug continued to work full-time before he tapered off.

In January 1998, HDR Engineering bought W.E. Simpson and Doug believed it was a project which had prevailed for 89 years. Doug still maintains an office there, which is cluttered with membership plaques, awards, plaques, awards, and stacks of paper and photographs.

Doug was a member in having Houston’s Gulf Building, which at the time of its erection was the tallest building west of the Mississippi, designated as a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. As well, Hanger 9 at Brooks Air Force Base received the same notable designation as a result of Doug’s tireless efforts. His latest project is the Hayes Street Bridge, which with its labors has garnered the Texas Historic Civil Engineering Landmark designation.

A member of the Bexar Chapter of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers, Doug has served as its president and was named TSPE’s Engineer of the Year in 1996. The Texas Society of Professional Engineers Foundation voted him a Distinguished Engineer in 1990. A past president of the Texas Section – American Society of Civil Engineers, Doug worked through ASCE on the Historic Civil Engineering Landmark designation.

H. Douglas Steadman, P.E. has in deed had a distinguished career as a structural engineer, and is today a venerable and respected ‘elder’ of his profession.
Masons advance on The Republic

The heat and humidity was thick enough to slice on Thurs., April 30th, when the San Antonio Masonry Contractors Association (SAMCA) hosted its 7th Annual Golf Classic. Seventy-six members and their guests competed at The Republic Golf Club for tournament honors and bragging rights. Prior to the 1:30 pm shotgun start, players enjoyed a hunger-busting sandwich buffet and, as a reward for their support, SAMCA provided complimentary drink koozies and signature golf towels to each participant.

Approximately 200 members came, and business managers, proprietors, and professional associates networked to their hearts content. Gourmet finger foods were tastefully arranged throughout the airy, spacious hall. The structural and forensic engineering firm invited numerous clients, vendors, neighbors, professional associates, friends and family for a festive luncheon. Bold colors, sparkling confetti and bright decorations complemented the mouth-watering buffet menu, which included chicken and beef fajitas, tamales, rice, beans, guacamole, queso, and a bevy of desserts and beverages. Caterer Charlene Nino deserved every compliment she received for providing the cheerful décor and a divine meal.

When San Antonio Construction News asked principal Tana M. Koudelka, P.E. if the firm had met its projections from two years ago, Tana affirmed that it had.

“We have been well-received in the community and for that we are grateful. In addition to serving new clients, we are growing as a result of client referrals and repeat business. We’re honored when a client recommends our work to someone else,” Tana added.

Two years ago the AES staff included Tana, James Jones, P.E., business manager Bob Condit, financial manager Tracey Winslett, and engineering technicians Chris Scow and Curtis Hastings. Since then, the firm added Shannon Casey as administrative assistant, UTSA engineering student and part-timer Martin Herndandez, and engineer-in-training Randy French.

Tana spoke of two notable projects in which AES staff were proud to participate.

“Over the holidays, our staff collected gifts and funds for three families in support of the Angel Tree Project. We all felt very good about sharing our bounty with others who are comparatively less fortunate.”

On the professional front, the City of San Antonio hired AES when the Karolien Building’s facade collapsed last December in downtown San Antonio.

“We were honored that the City trusted us to conduct forensic investigations on its behalf,” Tana said. “It’s work that we’re very capable of performing.”

Advanced Engineering Solutions markets its engineering services to commercial contractors, homeowners, insurance companies, homeowners, and municipal entities. Happy birthday, AES!

---

Builders mix it up ‘Big Easy’ style

T homes of homeowners and associate members of the Greater San Antonio Builders Association gathered at Morrison Supply Company on Thurs., May 21st, to enjoy an after-hours membership mixer. With temperatures hovering in the 80’s, guests were more than happy to mix it up indoors, amid the New Orleans-themed Bourbon Street atmosphere. A special ‘Builder Drawing’ sponsored by Stone Appliance Gallery, Bosch and Thermador, for a possible $900 cash prize, sweetened attendance numbers. Approximately 200 members came, ate, drank, met new friends, renewed old acquaintances, and networked to their hearts content. Gourmet finger foods were tastefully arranged throughout Morrison’s luxurious mood-defining showroom, where a plethora of high-end kitchen, bathroom, and wet bar appliances and hardware are expertly displayed.

Kevin, Jerry and Michael

San Antonio Construction News spoke with Morrison’s new branch manager Darin Mueller who said this was the first GSABA membership mixer his company has hosted.

“It’s exciting to have everyone here!” he exclaimed. “This is a great opportunity to show off what we’ve done.”

Asked if he thought the event would bring him a lot of business, he said, “That’s what I’m banking on!”

A special congratulations is extended to the winners:

1st place: Dennis Freisenhahn, Craig Freisenhahn, Mike Marsch, and Russell Syma, Wallace Masonry Co., Inc.
2nd place: Rhett Morrow, Pat Kiddler, Steve Johnson, and Jeff Windham, Alamo Cement Co., Ltd.
3rd place: Mark Petrikat, SSJ; Mackey Welch, One State Contractors; Michael Hunt, Curtis Hunt Restorations; and Brian Schwab, Chemtex.

Straightest Drive #1: Scott Martin, Safway Services.
Longest Drive #1: Rhett Morrow, Alamo Cement Co. Ltd.
Closest to the Hole #1: Brian Schwab, Chemtex.

Scott Martin hit the straightest drive on #9!

Bringing rights belong to the 1st place team!

2nd Place finishers!

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Fiesta Open House marks firm’s 2nd year

In celebration of its 2nd anniversary, Advanced Engineering Solutions hosted a “Fiesta” Open House on Wed., April 30th, from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm. The structural and forensic engineering firm invited numerous clients, vendors, neighbors, professional associates, friends and family for a festive luncheon. Bold colors, sparkling confetti and bright decorations complemented the mouth-watering buffet menu, which included chicken and beef fajitas, tamales, rice, beans, guacamole, queso, and a bevy of desserts and beverages. Caterer Charlene Nino deserved every compliment she received for providing the cheerful décor and a divine meal.

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Viva Fiesta at the AES Open House!

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L-R: Dennis Shelly, Shelly Flooring Inc., John Freisenhahn, The Key Companies, Nancy Ince, Jaime Marmolejo and Hike Jackson, Ince Distributing.

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If the general contract is for a stipulated sum, the contractor should have performed a thorough evaluation in performing the estimate and left room for surprises. Remember the contractor will be required to perform any work that falls within the scope of work as defined by the contract.

In regard to the scope of work provi- sion, the contractor will want the clause to be drafted as narrowly as possible. For instance, it would be preferable for it to be defined as the “work as described in the contract documents” without the added phrase “and work that can reasonably be inferred as necessary to complete the project.” The broader the lan- guage, the more room for disagreement and having to perform work not included in the bid calculations. If the owner is adamant about including a broad scope of work clause, the contractor’s bid price may need to be adjusted to offset the in- creased risk.

Other important provisions are the commencement and completion dates. The contractor should make sure that the commencement date is truly the date when the contractor will be prepared to begin the work. The owner will normally be anxious to begin the work and it may be tempting for the contractor to make promises to begin work sooner than possible. Remember, if the contractor does not begin working on the commencement date, it could loss the amount of time to complete the project, which may result in delays. In regard to the completion date, it should be a specific date at the end of so many calendar or workdays. If “workdays” are used, the term should be clearly defined in the contract.

This brings us to delay damages, which can quickly offset and even super- sede the contractor’s claims for payment. Obviously, the contractor would prefer a damages clause. This may even be beneficial to the owner in that it can possibly allow the contractor to bid the work at a lower price. The next best thing might be to negotiate a liquidated damages clause setting a fixed amount to be paid for each day the project is de- layed. This is beneficial to the owner who may otherwise have a difficult burden in proving these damages and to the con- tractor who can fix the amount of dam- ages and in turn reduce the risk.

The contract should also allow for extensions of the contract time for delays caused by forces beyond the contractor’s control. These forces can include weather, labor strikes, and material shortages. The contractor should also permit the contractor to suspend and, if necessary, terminate the work if payment is wrong- fully withheld. At least this way, the con- tractor can stop the bleeding.

These are only some of the important provisions in the general contract that can affect payment rights. The general contract is often presented by the owner or the architect to the general contractor. A thorough review of this contract and necessary changes by the contractor may save the contractor a substan- tial amount of money in the long run.

San Antonio Chapter

ASA holds monthly member’s meetings at the Barn Door. For more information on how to join our efforts or to be placed on the mailing list for upcoming events - write, call or email:

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June is Garage Door Safety Month

W hat makes garage doors safer?

Farm weather and sunny skies naturally turn one’s thoughts to home improvement and gardening projects. The International Door Association has declared June to be Garage Door Safety Month. “Often overlooked but ever-important, garage doors and their openers deserve regular close examination,” said Randy Oliver, president of Hollywood-Crawford Door Co. and a member of the Safety and Insurance Committee of IDA.

1. Check the condition and operation of the garage door and opener. A properly operating garage door will be “balanced” to stay in place when stopped in any partially opened position.

2. Check to see that the garage door opener’s force and limit settings are adjusted according to manufacturer’s instructions.

3. Check the garage door opener owners’ manual for any instructions on testing the safety features.

4. Inspect garage doors and operation of the door opener every 30 days to verify that the system is functioning properly.

5. Install the wall switch in the garage as high as practical above the floor to restrict children’s use of the automatic garage door.

6. A reputable garage door profes- sional should perform all spring and cable repairs.

When shopping for a new garage door, Oliver suggests, homeowners should:

1. Ensure that the company they deal with is reputable.

2. Ask how long the company has been in business and not just for years of experience.

3. Use a company with a showroom location with fully functioning dis- plays for a clear look at product selec- tion and quality.

4. Ask for a free in-home estimate for replacement garage doors. Be suspicious if the repair estimate exceeds $300 – that’s the average cost to replace a single garage door with a standard steel garage door.
**ACCOUNTING**

**Tax benefits of putting children on the payroll**

By Marcia Frederick, CPA

Now that summer has officially begun, business owners should be aware of the tax benefits of putting children on the payroll. It can save family income taxes as well as payroll taxes if self-employed. By taking advantage of this opportunity, business owners can turn high-taxed income into low-taxed or even tax-free income to benefit the children. In addition, retirement plan contributions for the children can be made to begin planning for their future. Certain key tax considerations to be used in making this decision are:

- Shifting high-taxed income to tax-free or low-taxed income. By shifting some of your business earnings to a child as wages for services performed by him or her, some of your high-taxed income can be converted to tax-free or low-taxed income. The work performed by the child must be legitimate and the amount of money they receive as wages must be reasonable for your business and the work performed.
- For example, a business owner of a corporation hires his 16-year-old son to help with backing up computer files during the summer and part-time in the fall. His son is paid wages of $4,000 during the year and doesn’t have any other earnings from other sources. If the business owner is in the 35% individual tax bracket for 2003, the individual business owner saves $1,400 (35% of $4,000) in income taxes on their personal income tax return while completely sheltering his son’s earnings tax-free. The son will have no tax cost, as he can use his standard deduction for 2003 to wipe out his entire income tax liability.
- Additional income taxes of $1,050 (35% of $3,000) could be saved by the individual business owner if his son’s benefits. The “kiddie tax” only causes a younger der 14 can also achieve this tax savings. The “kiddie tax” only causes a younger child to pay income tax on his wages if his income is over $10,000 (in 2003) and the child has no other earnings from other sources. If the child is self-employed, the child will not pay self-employment tax on the income up to the maximum earning amount. By shifting wages to a dependent child, the child’s income will be taxed at the child’s marginal tax rate, which is usually lower than the parent’s marginal tax rate. This rule has no impact on the child’s wages, as earnings by a dependent child can be sheltered by that child’s standard deduction.
- Income tax withholding. The business owner will still have to withhold federal income taxes on the child’s wages. Usually, an employee can claim exempt withholding status if they had no federal income tax liability for the previous year and expects none in the current year. However, an exemption is not allowed if 1) the child’s income exceeds $750 and includes more than $250 of unearned income (interest), and 2) the child can be claimed as a dependent on someone else’s return.

Retirement benefits. If your business has a retirement plan, your child can participate in the retirement plan. The child’s participation in a retirement plan won’t prevent the child from making tax-deductible IRA contributions as long as the child’s adjusted gross income is below $40,000 (in 2003) for a single individual.

Social security tax savings. Social security taxes still must be paid by an individual business owner. However, if you are a self-employed business owner, social security taxes can also be saved because social security taxes are not imposed on wages paid to a child under 18 years old, as long as the child is employed by a parent.

Please keep in mind that some of the rules about employing children change from year to year, such as the maximum amount they can earn tax-free. This may require a shift in strategy as well. You should consult your tax advisor for any related question or exception. It may be more beneficial to switch your child to independent contractor status. The key is to understand the rules and use them to your advantage.

By Walter Benson

**INSURANCE**

**Discontinued operations**

By Walter Benson

S o, you’ve decided to retire after 40 years in the construc- tions business and all the fun you could stand. After closing up the business, you move to South Padre and enjoy your golf, grandchildren and fishing.

Bodily injury and property damage liability. We’ll pay any amounts any protect ed person is legally required to pay as damages for covered bodily injury, property damage or premises damage that:

- HAPPENS WHILE THIS AGREEMENT IS IN EFFECT (emphasis added) and is caused by an event (an event means an accident, including continuous or repeated exposure to substantially the same general harmful conditions).

The preceding highlights a common misconception about an occurrence CGL policy— that the “occurrence” or “event” takes place at the time of construction when in this instance, the brickwork was inadequately installed. However, the failure of the brickwork occurred after the policy period had expired and coverage was therefore denied.

Discontinued operations coverage is sometimes available from your CGL carrier upon your retirement or the cessation of your operations. If your CGL carrier is unable or unwilling to provide the discontinued operations coverage, there are other markets that have this type of policy available. The premium is usually based on your prior year’s general liability premium and this premium amount will decline as the years pass.

This discontinued operations coverage should be considered a necessity for most contractors. It is wise to discuss this with your insurance agent prior to your retirement. Our agency has one contractor that has maintained this discontinued operations coverage for over 15 years. He and I both sleep better at night.

Walter E. Benson, Partner, Simpson-Benson-Douglas Insurance Agency Ph: 210-342-9451 Email: wmben@aol.com

Somewhat later, an owner for whom you, the contractor, had built an office building five years ago calls and says the brickwork on the front of the building has fallen, crushing two cars and slightly injuring one person. A claim was filed against the contractor and he was surprised when his prior insurance carrier denied coverage. He had carried a commercial general liability occurrence form policy and thought he was covered into the future for all of his previous work.

At this point, the stunned contractor and his insurance agent reviewed the CGL occurrence policy that was in effect when the office building was constructed. A careful reading of the coverage section of the policy reveals the following wording:

“Insuring agreement (ISO CG 00 01 07 98) - We (the Insurance Company) will pay those sums that the insured becomes legally obligated to pay as damages because of bodily injury or property damage to which this insurance applies. We will have the right and duty to defend the insured against any “suit” seeking those damages. However, we will have no duty to defend the insured against any “suit” seeking damages for bodily injury or property damage to which this insurance does not apply. We may, at our discretion, investigate any occurrence and settle any claim or “suit” that may result and this insurance applies to bodily injury and property damage only if:

- The “bodily injury” or “property damage” is caused by an “occurrence” that takes place in the “coverage territory”; and
- The “BODILY INJURY” OR “PROPERTY DAMAGE” OCCURS DURING THE POLICY PERIOD. (emphasis added)

The wording in other CGL occurrence policies is sometimes available from your CGL carrier upon your retirement or the cessation of your operations. If your CGL carrier is unable or unwilling to provide the discontinued operations coverage, there are other markets that have this type of policy available. The premium is usually based on your prior year’s general liability premium and this premium amount will decline as the years pass.

This discontinued operations coverage should be considered a necessity for most contractors. It is wise to discuss this with your insurance agent prior to your retirement. Our agency has one contractor that has maintained this discontinued operations coverage for over 15 years. He and I both sleep better at night.

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Many men and women in the South Texas construction industry share a common interest that may not be as popular in other parts of Texas. They love to shoot skeet and sporting clays, plans many of their organized activities around those competitive events.

San Antonio Construction News contacted key people at a few of our area shooting ranges to find out more about their facilities and what types of services they offer the shooting public.

**Cedar Ridge Range**

Cedar Ridge Range is located at 7110 FM 1863, 3.5 miles east of Hwy. 281 North. Seated on 60-acres of rugged Hill Country, Cibolo Creek marks the northern border of the property. Developed as a shooting range in 1984, it is managed by Greg Ferris, a shareholder and president of the corporation that owns the range.

If your facility features nine rifle and pistol bays, as well as 5-Stand and Sporting Clays for shotgun enthusiasts, Greg explained. “Within one year we’ll have a skeet field in full operation. Right now about 55 positions can be occupied at once on the rifle and pistol range. Additionally, about 200 shooters can run through a sporting clays course, with 80-100 shooters on the 5-Stand course, on an average day.”

Cedar Ridge Range has facilities for corporate functions, private parties, or for those who want to incorporate a type of shooting with some other activity. Professional instruction in the use of firearms, including rifle, pistol and shotgun, are available.

“We also offer the Texas State Certifying Course for Concealed Handguns,” Greg concluded. “I am a gunsmith and I hold a Federal Firearms License, which enables me to legally order firearms and accessories for our clients.”

**San Antonio Gun Club**

Founded in 1930, the San Antonio Gun Club is one of the oldest sport shooting facilities in this area. Located just south of the airport, the Club is centrally situated on 70 acres and is easily accessed.

General manager Dennis Gates discussed the club’s facility and services, emphasizing that the San Antonio Gun Club, as part of the City’s park system, is open to the public.

“An air conditioned, rustic clubhouse accommodates about 50 seated guests and houses the gun club’s small retail operation,” Dennis explained. “Another 150 people can gather under the covered patio, and there is ample parking for large events.”

The San Antonio Gun Club has a 16-member staff and features eight skeet and trap fields and a 5-Stand. While the public is always welcome, the gun club offers family memberships. The non-member fee is $7.50 per round. However, members can shoot for as little as $3.25 per round. Corporate events, which should be scheduled in advance, are all ways welcomed and the club can handle up to 250 shooters.

For beginners and competitive hopefuls, three licensed instructors use the premises to conduct individual or group classes.

“We host Ladies League on Tuesday evenings and about 40-45 women participate each week,” Dennis continued. “During the summer we have an Adult Junior Program, for little kids who are big enough to hold a shotgun, to tees. In most cases, their parents have an interest in the sport and want their youngsters to enjoy it safely.”

With over 200 acres devoted to shooting, Prairie Moon Ranch is located at 980 FM 1343, just west and south of Castroville, two miles south of Hwy. 90. Owned by Craig and Corly Portec, San Antonio Construction News spoke with consulting manager Jamie Foote, who said Prairie Moon Ranch was the home of the famous Remington School, which was discontinued by the rifle manufacturer some years ago.

Prairie Moon Ranch specializes in sporting clays, Jamie noted, “including the French style of sporting clays which is known as FITASC. We have over 50 automated traps and over 24 shooting stations. Our 100-ft. duck tower is equipped with four automated machines, to simulate a dove or duck in high flight.”

The facility also features 24-ft., 20-ft., and 12-ft. towers, a skeet field and a trap field, which overlap, and a 5-Stand field. Asked if the ranch offers pistol and rifle shooting, Jamie said it does not.

“As a contractor and a competitive shooter, I refer pistol and rifle shooters to Cedar Ridge Range, which in my opinion, is the safest run range in San Antonio for that purpose.”

Prairie Moon welcomes and depends on corporate and association events, and has handled up to 300 people at one time. In addition, experienced instructors are available for individual or group classes. Among them is Wes Halton, Prairie Moon’s foreman, who is a certified instructor for entry-level students.

“We feel it’s important to bring young people into the sport,” Jamie add ed, “and Prairie Moon recently joined with Ducks Unlimited in sponsoring ten tent students in a competitive tournament.”

**TX Supreme Court urged to protect subs**

On April 17th, the American Subcontractors Association (ASA) filed a brief in a case before the Texas Supreme Court arguing that construction subcontractors should be able to pursue claims for damages that are caused by construction owners. The case is significant because a federal appeals court earlier found that Texas law is undecided on the permissible remedies for owner-caused damages when the owner is at fault, such as requiring the subcontractor to sue the general contractor for owner-caused damages. ASA argued: “Not only does a lawsuit requirement between the subcontractor and general contractor force an unwanted adversarial relationship upon them, it unnecessarily drives up legal expense.” Source: ASAOnLine press release
It happens every year about this time. That is, unless we have just had an early season hurricane. Most of our notable storms—at least the ones whose names you can remember—seem to happen later in the summer, with one every now and then hitting in the fall.

So, if you want to smell the salt air, hear the gulls and take your chances on probably the best saltwater fishing alongside America, head south, now. There are countless charters available out of every port—some that will take you offshore for king, ling, mackerel, snapper and shark. Many more—we like Capt. Steve Shultz (see next page) —that will lead you to the flats for trout and reds.

We fished out of Rockport in April. My wife may have told you. We went with Jim Friebele, an accomplished saltwater naturalist who is practically a professor of fishing. He’s also a heckuva fishing guide.

This wasn’t our first Friebele session that would have banned using croakers as bait. Like a lot of bills this time, it bogged down in the process and, unless revived by legislative chicanery at the last minute after this goes to press, it sleeps, with the fishes. The proponents of the bill felt like large trout, which seem to become more fish-eaters than shrimp connoisseurs as they age, could be spared if croakers were prohibited. It’s a known fact that trout hate croakers due to their egg predation, and fiercely attack any that come near them. That makes trout easier to catch with croakers—even for me. This time, though, I wanted to give the trout more of a chance. It worked.

Actually, I just enjoy fishing artificial lures. I threw a variety of lures, including a Berkley Topwater “Frenzy,” that walks across the surface, a Berkley 5-inch Power Jerk Shad in “New Penny” color, a beautiful Nichols “Hologram” soft plastic that looks good enough to eat and the new Mister Twister “Exude.” The latter is so scent emitting, so slimy that I lost the first one trying to put it on the hook when it spurted out of my wet fingers. Using this assortment, I had a wonderful day, and two strikes. Vicky, on the other hand, hung close to Friebele, and asked what he was using after he strung a couple of quick trout. When he told her a “Devil-tail Corky,” she whimpered out that she didn’t have one of those. He bit, and quickly remedied her deficiency, and that’s why her picture is here with a fish, and not mine. It’s her personal best. At trout fishing, not win-ning.

A new regulation effective on September 1 says you can only keep one trout over 25 inches long, and the guide cannot keep fish or give them to his clients in addition to their limits. On this trip, even had it been after September 1, we wouldn’t have had to worry about either of those. Vicky’s fish, however, placed third in an outdoor writers’ tournament held that day. And she at least let me take its picture.

Jim Friebele’s Guide Service can be contacted in Rockport at (361) 729-5876. Berkley and Mister Twister lures can be found in almost any tackle shop.

Nichols “Hologram” lures can be purchased at Tackle Town in Rockport or over the Internet at www.nicholslures.com.

Corky lures can only be purchased from the manufacturer at www.corkylures.com.

A Corky (top) and a Devil-Tail Corky (bottom), both proven trout-takers.

A nice trout caught on a Devil-tail Corky.

Vicky Jefferson with 22-inch Corpus Christi Bay trout.

A  nice trout caught on a Devil-tail Corky.

Vicky Jefferson with 22-inch Corpus Christi Bay trout and guide, Jim Friebele.

John Jefferson is the past president of the Texas Outdoor Writers Assn., and former executive director of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Summer fishing heating up on the coast

Article and Pictures by John Jefferson

Jim Friebele, an accomplished saltwater naturalist who is practically a professor of fishing.
Fishing improves in the Coastal Bend
By Capt. Steve Schultz - Baffin Bay Charters

Fishing the Laguna Madre and Baffin Bay System was very sporadic the first few months of the 2003 fishing season. High winds, low tides, fog and hazy skies from fires in Mexico were just a few of the obstacles we faced on any given day on the water, not to mention crowds on the weekends.

Some things have changed and some remain the same. While we did receive a good strong tide last week and the fog seems to be gone for a while, the hazy skies remain. Fishing really picked up last month and has only improved on a daily basis. Shrimp action has been heavy in the Intercoastal Waterway several miles both north and south of the JFK Causeway. Trolling the west edge of the ICW yielded great action with JFK Causeway. Trolling the east edge of the ICW yielded great action with shrimp and Alameda rattling corks. Top-water action was just as productive without the hassle of baiting hooks. As the mornings progressed and shrimp buried themselves in the grass, trout moved to the flats.

Since the beginning of May and the arrival of Croaker, fishing strategies have changed. Grass beds and potholes are areas that need to be keyed on. It is very important when approaching these areas to use a trolling motor or push pole. Anchoring up on edges of grass and sand areas can be very productive on spawning trout.

During the summer months here in the Coastal Bend anglers can find some of the best fishing along the entire coast. Our bays are loaded with resident fish and tide runners, which constantly are arriving from the Gulf. With school being out for summer and the weather getting better everyday, it can only mean one thing. Boating and fishing pressure will be one of the most important factors for not being able to find a large quantity of fish or stay on those fish once you have a bite going. That is why I emphasize so much that the best fishing is usually during the week instead of on a weekend. Another alternative to getting away from the heat and crowded bays is late evening fishing and night fishing.

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Fishing late into the evening and into the night during the full moon can get you out of everyday crowds and into some of the more popular fishing areas without being hassled by novice boat operators and impatient anglers. I have experienced all aspects of these people trying to move-in on a set of rocks or a sand pocket you are catching fish from and scare all the fish away. It has reached a point where you have to do some homework and really think about how you will go about catching fish on any given day.

One of the most important tools I use when planning a night fishing trip besides the moon phases are the Vector Tables, which can be found in most hunting and fishing magazines and some newspapers. Using the vector tables can narrow down major and minor feeding times and in essence save you a lot of time in fishing. Moonrise and moon set times are also very important factors in planning a night fish trip.

Whether fishing days or nights, always be courteous to other fisherman and waders. If you would like to book a fishing trip, I can be contacted at 1-888-724-3474. Good luck and good fishing.
"Take a Kid Fishing" trip nets TP&W whoppers

In a departure from previous years, the participants in the Chanty Fun Shoot’s “Take a Kid Fishing” trip headed for a new destination on Sat. May 3rd. Chaperones accompanied the 57 Downtown Youth Center boys and girls, ranging in age from 8 to 15, to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Hatchery at Flour Bluff, TX for a day of fishing, fun and food.

San Antonio Construction News spoke with Doug Niznik, Niznik Concrete Contractors, who said the trip’s success was a direct result of generous sponsorship and enthusiastic volunteers.

“in the past we made arrangements to take kids fishing on boats, and it was very difficult to coordinate 10 guys with boats to meet on the same day in May,” Doug explained. “It also limited the number of kids who could be involved. This year I was approached by members of SEA (Saltwater-fisheries Enhancement Association), who suggested an alternative way to raise money for the Youth Center and for SEA. At the Fun Shoot, instead of auctioning the “Take a Kid Fishing” trip, we asked companies to sponsor one child for $250 each. Some of them sponsored as many as four children. The funds were divided evenly between the two non-profit organizations, and SEA picked up the tab for the 57-kid fishing trip to TP&W’s hatchery.”

The Flour Bluff hatchery features several indoor tanks full of giant redfish and trout. Outside, where several tanks are also fully stocked, the kids fished, caught and released some of the finest specimen of redfish and trout. SEA members provided and distributed customized T-shirts to each youth and treated them to a post-fishing hamburger and hot dog feast.

Among the SEA volunteers who helped the kids bait their hooks and untangle lines were Brian Potts, Lynnwood Building Materials; Capt. Steve Schultz, Baffin Bay Charters; Kevin and Delores Murry, Mesa Equipment; Steve Neal, Ardwork Pest Control; Mike Maule; Chase Bradford, Concrete Pumps of Texas; and Mike and Doug Niznik. SEA members provided the kids with fishing poles and advice to help them along.

K.W. Whiteley, W.W. Equipment, donated the transportation costs by providing four vans for the Friday night drive to the coast. Upon arriving in the Corpus Christi area, two local churches opened their doors to the kids and their chaperones where they enjoyed a slumber party atmosphere before the big day. Of course, the boys stayed at one church, the girls at the other. On Sat. morning they all spent some time at the beach before heading to the hatchery, where they fished from 10 am to 2 pm. SEA members provided and distributed customized T-shirts to each youth and treated them to a post-fishing hamburger and hot dog feast.

Many thanks to the following companies and individuals for sponsoring one or more children this year: Aaron Concrete Contractors, Inc.; Ardwork Pest Control; Bill Hall, Jr.; Bob Harper; Concrete Pumps of Texas; Dillan Bar & Grill; Ez-Bel; G.W. Mitchell; Hardcore Concrete; Hooker Contracting; International Strand & Steel; Joers, Inc.; Liberty Properties; James Lifshutz; Lynnwood Building Materials; M&M Contracting; Martin Marietta Materials; Medina Concrete Pumping; Mesa Equipment; Olmos Equipment; Mike Maule; Schultz Concrete Pumping; Sheplers; Capt. Steve Schultz; T&D Moravits; Urban Concrete; Venco and Vulcan Materials.
To all of our friends and vendors,

Alice and Mike Clayton would like to take this time to extend their thanks and gratitude to all of you who participated in “Shoot for the Miracle of Life,” the recent benefit for Chance Turner and the Turner Family.

Due to the tremendous support from our friends and vendors, the benefit was an enormous success, raising in excess of $14,000. The generous cash donations will assist us in achieving our ultimate goal…extending the life of Chance Turner.

Words cannot describe the raw emotion we all felt as we witnessed Chance and his father shooting side by side. It was a moment that will be committed to memory for a long time. The success of this event will contribute to the opportunity for Chance to live a joyous life, and time for him to fulfill his dreams.

Once again, thank you for your efforts, and may God bless you and the Turner Family. Mike and Alice applaud each one of you for your concern and support.

Sincerely,

Mike & Alice Clayton

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of the Dream.”
San Antonio Construction News • June 2003

Highway Heavies take flight at River Crossing

River Crossing Golf Club hosted a PAC golf tournament for Associated General Contractors of Texas Highway Heavy Utility and Industrial Branch, on Thurs., May 15th.

In spite of the hot and steamy temperatures, smoke from South-of-the-Border was literally blown away thanks to a lively north breeze, resulting in the first big blue-sky day seen in weeks.

Eighty players enjoyed a deli-style lunch prior to the shotgun start, which launched the spirit of competition on the beautiful Hill Country course.

A delicious barbeque buffet dinner welcomed the hot and tired golf ball chasers as they returned from their 18-hole excursion, followed by an awards ceremony, which spotlighted the best of the best.

And the winners were:

1st Place: Austin Helmle, Aaron Concrete Contractors; Billy Ferrell, Martin Marietta Materials; David Dahse and Paul Fredericksen, SMi-Texas.

2nd Place: John Harris and David Sietz, Frost Bank; and Bryce Maryfield, Arrow CABINETRY.

3rd Place: Mike Lehmann and David Kopp, TxDOT; Jerome DeSalme and Gary Botkin, Capital Excavation.

Longest Drive and Closest to Pin: Bryan Moore, Insurance & Bonds.

One-Stop’s Contractor Nights extended

San Antonio’s new Development & Business Services Center has extended its “Contractor Nights” to every Tuesday, May 20th through June 24th, from 4 pm to 6 pm.

Contractors can sign up to use the City’s on-line permitting system at the One Stop Counter on the 1st floor; learn how to navigate the system in Training Room 249A; and ask the experts questions in Training Room 249B.

To help in the creation of a user account for the on-line permitting system, the City requests that its customers bring (1) their AC number, if available, and (2) a list of all individuals who will be authorized to pull a permit or schedule an inspection.

Please contact Jo Ann Cervantes at 210-207-8237 to register. Class size is limited to 50. The Development and Business Services Center is located at 1901 South Alamo Street.

Swanstone Kitchen Sinks

Steve Mechler & Associates, Inc.
10737 Gulfdale
San Antonio, Texas 78216
210-545-0084

* Authentic solid surface. Color and texture run all the way through and cannot wear away.

* Virtually indestructible. Boiling water, hot pots and dropped kitchen objects will not harm.

* Large bowls and offset drains increase workspace in sink and storage under it.

* Wide variety of styles and solid & granite colors.

* Same sink can be installed as drop-in or undermount.

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As we all know, successful companies and associations continue to flourish when details-oriented people are in positions of responsibility. A driving force behind the success of Associated General Contractors, Julie Howard is a key member of the team.

A native of the panhandle community of Fivona, TX, and graduate of Fivona High School, Julie received an Associate of Science degree from South Plains College. After moving to San Antonio and securing a job with AGC four years ago, Julie attended the University of the Incarnate Word, where she received her BBA in Marketing in Dec. 2001. San Antonio Construction News spoke with Julie to find out more about her relationship with the local construction community.

“I don’t have a background in construction. However, my first job at AGC was as the assistant plan room manager,” Julie confessed. “I learned a lot about the construction business in that position. Later, when it became available, I was offered and accepted the position of member services director.”

As member services director, Julie is responsible for writing, soliciting advertising and publishing six newsletters annually, as well as organizing and hosting numerous mixers and two golf tournaments. She communicates with AGC members and prospective members to encourage retention and respond to their inquiries, prepares flyers and direct mail items, maintains the database, updates the AGC website, and a multitude of other activities.

“I coordinate most all of the events we sponsor, except for the Safety Fair, which our Safety Committee members handle,” Julie added. “Others have told me that I do a lot for the association, but it’s my job and I do enjoy it. I especially enjoy working with the members.

My greatest challenge lately is securing a solid advertising base for our newsletter. Members want their name out there, but the economy has forced some of them to remain cautious.”

Julie continued to say that it gives her great satisfaction to see members at events networking and becoming reacquainted with one another. “With the help of everyone on staff and our members, there’s no way that we could succeed and provide the level of service that we do.”

Four years ago, AGC executive vice president Doug McMurry interviewed and hired Julie. He said Julie has an excellent rapport with the members, enjoys coordinating events and working with folks to facilitate networking.

“Julie does an exceptional job in the area of public relations,” Doug added, “membership retention, and networking events. I value her contributions and she is one of the secrets to AGC’s success. We would be lost without her!”

Vendors featured at KB Home’s Cook-off

KB Home headquarters was transformed on Fri., May 9th, in preparation for the 2nd Annual KB Home Vendor Appreciation Party and Chili Cook-off. Attended by 1,050 people, the festivities continued from 4 pm to 8 pm.

KB Home’s Gerry Brawner said the vendors’ chili cook-off was reinstated last year. “This is a way for us to have some fun with our vendors and thank them for the work they do with us,” Gerry said. “They began setting up and decorating 21 booths early this morning, started cooking at noon, with the preliminary judging beginning at 5 pm. The celebrity judges made the final selections in a blind taste test, and of course, they selected the winners of the Showmanship awards.”

Door prizes were awarded to lucky ticket holders every 15 minutes throughout the evening, and ample parking and security was provided.

KB Home used the event as a kick-off to an annual $500 scholarship to be awarded to a graduating high school senior who has been a Construction Technology student.

“The fundraising will come from a special recipe book of the chili recipes in this competition,” Gerry added. “I’ve asked all of the vendors to share their recipes with me, and we’re already pre-selling copies of the recipe book.”

Regional Awards for Customer Service:

East S.A. - Embry Heating & Air Conditioning

West S.A. - Hayden Contracting, Inc

Central S.A. - R & R Trim, Hart Lumber Co.

Northwest S.A. - Jose Guerrero.

Regional Awards for Construction:

East S.A. - Felix Chavez

West S.A. - Joe Ramos Painting

Central S.A. - G.E. Drywall, Customers of the Showmanship:

Best Chili: ABC Supply Co.

Best Overall Construction: Thompson’s Tub Repair.

Best Supplier: Williams Insulation.

This month in FOCUS, San Antonio Construction News spoke with several local electrical contractors to discuss the nature of their companies, how the tight economy has impacted business, the challenges facing their industry, and the rewards that keep them motivated.

In 1913, FISK Electric Company opened its doors in Houston TX to focus primarily on residential electrical service. They have expanded throughout the U.S., U.K., and Australia, and owning a resume full of prominent commercial construction projects, FISK celebrated its 90th anniversary in May 2003. FISK’s San Antonio branch has a staff of 95 employees with a majority of its work performed in Central and South Texas.

San Antonio Construction News spoke with Orvil Anthony, general manager of FISK’s San Antonio branch, who said FISK is a multi-faceted company.

“We have the ability to do virtually anything in the electrical market, including commercial and industrial construction, voice/data copper and fiber communications, conveyor and environmental controls infrastructure, security, network integration, telemcom and service work.”

As FISK has implemented any internal changes in response to the sluggish economy, Orvil said it is expanding its territory.

“We’re looking for new market segments in which to tap additional revenues. In the recent past we were able to stay very busy within our comfort zone. Now, we are searching outside those market segments because there are fewer opportunities. We are expanding our footprint and bundling our services to offer a single source of contact for everything. This helps streamline the administration/management staff for the project thus cutting cost and saving the Owners money.”

Internally, the biggest impact on operations is the cost of healthcare. Orvil said supplying healthcare to his employees and their families has had a huge impact on FISK’s and every contractor’s ability to control costs in the marketplace.

“There doesn’t seem to be a ceiling on that cost,” Orvil remarked, “and it remains one that we can’t control.”

New electrical codes that mandate less electrical consumption in public and private construction have also opened up market possibilities for contractors.

As Orvil pointed out, “One of our marketplaces has to do with retrofitting existing facilities with new energy-saving ballasts, occupancy sensors, and dual level lighting in order to control electrical costs.” Typically, the cost of retrofitting an energy-efficient solution is only 8 percent of the operating cost over the life of the product.

In the electrical industry, what you don’t know can hurt you, and if you don’t stay up with the current market, you’ll get left behind.

“With that in mind, education is ongoing and constant,” Orvil emphasized. “It’s vital to stay involved, monitor what is current in the marketplace, and if you don’t know enough about the subject, take a course upgrade. The learning process never ends.”

What is the primary challenge facing the industry? Orvil said finding ways to control new costs is just one challenge. “The other is finding labor-saving methods to do every type of activity in our market segment. Efficiency is the name of the game, and being able to maximize productivity on any job is where I feel the most pride.”

With 15 years of experience estimating, management and constructing auto plants throughout the country behind him, he has optimistic aspirations of being the electrical contractor of record for the Toyota Plant. Orvil hopes FISK will play a key role in the project.

“I think it’s going to be a real boon to the local economy,” he concluded, “enabling us to correct the current sluggishness and drag us back in to the positive mode.”

Following the footsteps of his father, Tim Smoot started working for his dad’s former electrical contracting company, Calhoun Electric, when he was only 14 years old. Today, the Master Electrician is the president/owner of Tim Smoot Electric Co., Inc., which he launched after his dad sold Calhoun Electric.

The 14-year-old company operates from one San Antonio location, currently employs 125 personnel, and performs the bulk of its work in San Antonio and Bexar County. Targeting new and remodel commercial and residential projects, Tim said “In today’s economy, our company performs 70 percent new residential, 10 percent new commercial, and 20 percent service and remodels. Our service department is available 24-hours a day.”

As recently as April of this year, the company initiated activity in a couple of additional niche markets.

“We added home security system installations, structured wiring and home entertainment equipment, and light fixture packages to homebuilders. We cover every trade in the electrical market, including commercial and industrial construction, voice/data copper and fiber communications, conveyor and environmental controls infrastructure, security, network integration, telemcom and service work.”

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With four Texas locations, and more throughout the country, TDIndustries is a complete mechanical, electrical, and plumbing contractor. The San Antonio branch of its 125 TDIndustries locations performs the majority of its work in Bexar County and surrounding counties.

Tony Antone Construction News spoke with senior electrical estimator Bob Ford, who said the company serves the commercial, retail, and institutional construction markets, as well as providing service to the same market base.

“About 85 percent of our work we don’t tap is residential,” Bob reported. “We try to contract all three MEP disciplines whenever possible.”

To streamline its efficiency, TDIndustries finds a clear advantage in being able to offer the complete MEP service under one house, thereby providing one point of contact for a major portion of the work, one billing, and eliminating coordination problems to an owner or general contractor.

“From our perspective, it’s a method to share expenses and reduce administrative costs,” Bob added.

In its 43rd year of business, Jerry Rentz, Sr. who is now retired, founded Rentz Electric in 1961. Today, the electrical contracting company is owned and managed by his two sons, Jerry Rentz, Jr., president, and Kirk Rentz, vice president. Operating from one San Antonio location, the company employs 40-50 employees and does the bulk of its work in Bexar County and surrounding counties.

Working in the private and public sectors, Rentz Electric targets small to large projects, including retail, office, church, medical, and other. About 60 percent of its work is design/build and the balance is public bid.

San Antonio Construction News spoke with Jerry, Jr. to find out what impact, if any, the sluggish economy has had on business. He said an effort to reduce overhead while maintaining the same capabilities in the field resulted in adjustments in the office staff.

“Kirk and I run the entire office with the assistance of one estimator. Kevin Moses,” Jerry explained. “We keep the books, purchase equipment and supplies, maintain the schedule, bid on jobs, and everything else. Rather than sacrifice our workforce in the field, we’re taking on more responsibility at the office, with fewer people. Rolando Castaneda is my field supervisor and he does a great job.”

One of the greatest financial impacts on his independent business is that of healthcare costs. He said, “The costs went through the roof, and we shop for competitive prices. If our cost goes up 20 percent, how do we justify it up-front in a bid? The market determines the successful bid, and competition is a lot stronger than it has been in the last four to five years.”

In response to the sluggish economy, Dausin Electric has downsized slightly, shifted responsibilities among its staff, and streamlined operations to reduce overhead.

“Most of our people are cross-trained, to fill one job or another. We do work as far away as Laredo, Corpus Christi, and Sabi- nal among others, to broaden our scope of work.”

Facing tougher competition in this economic climate, the Dausin Electric staff is working harder for its share of the market.

“Compared to better days, we’re bidding more jobs and winning relatively fewer contracts,” Ronnie admitted. “In January of this year, we bid over $16 million in jobs, and probably received $1 million out of that. I would imagine other contractors are experiencing similar issues.”

As a member of the Electrical Board, Ronnie is in a position to see and review first-hand many of the regulatory and product issues that are being submitted to the City for approval.

“That gives me a pre-emptive glimpse into industry changes. At Dausin Electric, we stay on top of the information highway by being involved with our suppliers and manufacturers. The Internet is a tool we utilize for additional information on new technologies that are coming into the market.”

Ronnie’s opinion, one of the greatest challenges facing his industry is the attitude and capabilities of young people who are entering the trade.

“From paper, to estimating, to installation, to the final walk-through, it’s very rewarding to see a good project and the impact it has on the community.”

“The relationships I’ve built and continue to build, with customers, employees and business associates, are my greatest reward.” Jerry concurred. “Old faces leave, new faces surface, some are positive, some are negative, but we learn from everybody. I enjoy the trust our customers have in our performance, starting and finishing a project as it was designed. I can see and feel the whole picture. That’s what I do and I love doing it! Conversely, if I had to go out and hard bid every job, I probably wouldn’t be in this business.”

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In his opinion, Bob agreed that the electrical contracting business has changed with advances in technology, but not as fast as the electronics industry. The biggest changes he’s observed are in the lighting controls segment, and to stay on top of the information highway, recurrent training remains a top priority.

“There are times when the specifier, the electrical engineer, will generate a need for information updates or discussion, to make sure everyone is on the same page.”

The greatest challenge facing the local electrical industry, in Bob’s opinion, is the economy.

“In the majority of our businesses, the economics of the market are what drive the market. It’s a great job. I enjoy doing it. I probably wouldn’t be in this business if I had to go out and hard bid every job.”

“From our perspective, it’s a method to share expenses and reduce administrative costs,” Bob added.

“For me, it’s strictly personal. I enjoy the work and the people I work with.”
Voices from the electrical industry

As a special FOCUS feature, San Antonio Construction News contacted members of the Electrical Industry who are not electrical contractors. They include a supplier, an electrical engineer, an electrical apprentice, and a manufacturer's representative. As vital members of the industry who contribute to every contractor’s success, they were each asked one or two questions about their own niche. Their responses follow.

E dward M o naco is the president of an electrical contractor and has been immersed in the trade in a variety of capacities since he was a young boy. He holds an MBA in addition to his degree in Electrical Engineering. Licensed in 1985 to practice his profession, today Ed is an independent electrical contractor.

San Antonio Construction News posed the following question to Ed, which he answered readily.

How do electrical engineers stay on the cutting edge of high-tech information highway?

"Ironically, I was pondering that same question just recently. Although the technology in my business doesn’t change a whole lot, products do change. Manufacturers are constantly introducing new products that have an impact in the marketplace and keeping abreast of their uses and applications is a formidable task.

"As an electrical engineer I read trade journals, use the Internet when possible, and lean on suppliers and manufacturers reps for information. It’s never-ending, and the better-informed one can be, the better service one can offer. Under the right circumstances, I will engage my peers in conversation that results in a learning experience."

What is the nature of competition these days and what measures do you take to ensure your market share?

"Research and Development is generated from ideas coming from the field. Users and contractors have several relatives who are in the electrical industry, and in looking at their careers and where they were going, I felt it was a good decision. I also had an opportunity to meet and talk to some journeyman electricians at a jobsite, and they directed me to STJATC. After testing and interviews, I was a candidate for admission, and here I am today, ready to finish up my last year.

Do you aspire to become a Master Electrician?

"I have been thinking about it quite a bit and will possibly pursue that track. Otherwise, I’ll be destined to work for other people or companies. For now, I’m concentrating on my fourth year and on taking the journeyman’s exam."

Do you envision owning your own electrical contracting company one day?

"Never say never! At family gatherings my grandmother always tells me and my cousins that we should go into business for ourselves. But so far, no one has ever said take this money and go hang up a sign!"

Gary Aiken is a fourth-year electrical apprentice, affiliated with South Texas Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committees. He has been employed at Corbo Electric Co. since he began his apprenticeship training.

What was the motivating force that attracted you to an electrical journeyman apprenticeship program?

"Of course, the union pay structure was attractive to me, as well as the health and pension benefits," Gary began. "Being on the job and working on a project from start to finish is a great reward. I have several relatives who are in the electrical industry, and in looking at their careers and where they were going, I felt it was a good decision. I also had an opportunity to meet and talk to some journeyman electricians at a jobsite, and they directed me to STJATC. After testing and interviews, I was a candidate for admission, and here I am today, ready to finish up my last year.

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Scott Shaver is the manager of Bell & McCoy. A Manufacturer’s Representative in the electrical industry, responsible for marketing and selling electrical products for a number of different manufacturers in a specific territory. Instead of hiring their own sales force, a manufacturer will hire companies like Bell & McCoy to take their products to the market for them.

What is the nature of competition these days and what measures do you take to ensure your market share?

"As a manufacturer’s representative, we are fighting the price erosion by adding value to our company with the addition of a “Product Specialist”. This is a person that spends his time calling on engineers and contractors, not to quote a price, but to introduce new products into the industry. We have found, if the contractor asks for specific products, his suppliers will buy and sell that product. This has helped us fight the manufacturer’s we compete against that have like products and it helps our customers move the products off of their shelves."

Is a need identified in the marketplace before Research and Development commences, or does R&D create the need within the marketplace?

"Research and Development is generated from ideas coming from the field. Users of a product will have a need for a new item and the idea gets to a specific manufacturer and he in turn will have his R & D department design a new product. Then there is some R & D generated straight from the manufacturer. They will look for better product installation methods to reduce labor costs by time, or the ease of installing a product."

continued from Page 24 - Ronnie Daution

"The issue is one of work ethics. This is one of life’s basic lessons and I see very few youngsters in whom a strong work ethic was reinforced when they were growing up, and it’s not taught in schools. Don’t get me wrong, there are a lot of great people, but there seem to be more and more coming into the trade who are simply in it for the paycheck instead of embracing their opportunities to learn and grow. They also require more supervision and looking-after. It takes longer to teach them, because they aren’t coming off the farm or haven’t worked with their fathers. They are a generation of indoor people who watch TV and play video games in the comfort of air conditioning, and aren’t used to the physically-demanding aspects of skilled labor."

Being able to work with the people who work for him to meet, their challenges and their goals is a great personal reward for Ronnie.

"I’m also rewarded by giving our customers a good product for the money they pay us in return," he concluded. "Delivering a quality job, on time and on budget, is a win-win situation for everybody."

F O C U S

Electrical Industry

Building History

San Antonio Construction News • June 2003
SURVEY

This month we are highlighting the Electrical Industry.

The response was 15%.

13% considered their company "small" with less than $2 million in sales.
40% considered their company "medium" with $2 - $5 million in sales.
47% considered their company "large" with $5+ million in sales.

5 companies were involved in a lawsuit in the last 12 months.
None of the companies were audited by the IRS in the last 12 months.
None of the companies are woman or minority owned.

1=Strongly Agree 2=Agree 3=Neutral 4=Disagree 5=Strongly Disagree

Results are measured in percentages

PERSONNEL

Our company employs a full-time Safety Director position:........ 27 13 27 13 20
Employees are requesting more pay and benefits than
those provided:.......................................................07 20 40 26 07
We're fully staffed and are not currently hiring:.....................13 20 27 27 13
Current workload requires overtime for our employees:............07 27 33 26 07

INTERNAL OPERATIONS

We have outgrown our current facility:..............................00 07 13 33 47
Computer technology streamlines management/field
communications:...................................................13 40 34 13 00
Insurance premiums rose substantially in 2002:.....................47 33 07 13 00

CONTRACTOR RELATIONSHIPS

Contractors are pushing harder to reduce our prices:...............47 13 40 00 00

We want to work with GC's who are new to the area:..............07 33 40 07 13
Receiving payment for draw requests from general
contractors remains a problem:................................20 53 20 07 00
Conflicts over plans and specs are increasing:......................20 60 13 07 00

PRODUCT SUPPLIERS

Staying on top of the new product information highway
is overwhelming:.................................................00 33 47 20 00
World events have slowed down product deliveries:...............00 27 33 33 07
We prefer to buy electrical products Made in the U.S.A.:.........33 47 20 00 00
American-made electrical component costs are on the rise:.....14 33 53 00 00

JOB ISSUES

Project coordination/planning/scheduling is tougher than ever: 13 61 13 13 00
Jobsite theft is becoming commonplace:............................07 47 33 13 00
Project supervision by GC's has deteriorated over the last 12 months:......................................................33 27 27 13 00

FINANCIAL/LEGAL ISSUES

More banks are soliciting our business:..............................33 33 27 07 00
We are projecting an increase in business in 2003:...............13 61 13 13 00
Availability of short-term and long-term financing is scarce:....00 07 66 20 07
Making a reasonable profit is easier than one year ago:..........00 07 46 40 40

PERSONAL

Business demands have reduced time with my family:............20 53 20 07 00
We are very active in a trade association:.........................27 40 20 13 00
I still have time to play:.........................................00 40 47 13 00
I generally work on Saturdays:..................................13 20 47 13 07

COMMENTS SUBMITTED:

Address problems with the “new” City of San Antonio Development Services opera-
- tion - relating to securing permits, inspections, plan approval, etc.

City of S.A. Permit Dept & new computer system is a mess! Call Central Records
and see how long you hold!

Dawson Electric Company

Family Owned and Operated
Residential — Commercial — Service
24/7 Emergency Response

2002 Specialty Contractor of the Year by AGC

Thanks To All Our Employees and Customers:

H-E-B Wal-Mart Coca-Cola Home Depot BxTx AGC IEC ABC Huber M.G. Builders NSISD Kunz Construction

Baptist Health Systems Pepsi Cola Larry Carlile Construction Zachry Tapatio Springs Sam’s Club G.W. Mitchell Bartlett Cocke Holt ACCD NEISD

Metropolitan Joeris Quail Browning MIC T.M. Davis F.A. Nunnelly Doug Brown Construction Wade Construction Laredo ISD Carrizo Springs ISD

210-661-6736
IEC promotes National Electrical Safety Month

National Electrical Safety Month was celebrated in May 2003. The Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) promoted electrical safety with the creation of two home safety videos. Members from IEC-Chesapeake, Texas Gulf Coast Chapter IEC, and IEC National assisted in the filming for the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) on April 10th, and for DuPont on April 28th.

The first ESFI video depicts IEC member Robert Krebs, Hawkins Electric Service, Inc., leading a tour through an older home, pointing out all of the electrical problems associated with many older homes. The second video featured Harvey Hammock, Integrated Electrical Services, Inc., who led the film crew through an older home, pointing out emergency escape routes in case of fire and identifying good places inside for families to meet after evacuating the home. Other IEC members demonstrated safe electrical practices, and discussed ground fault circuit protection.

“Every homeowner should know how to properly test Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) and should do so at least once a month and after every major electrical storm,” said John Masarick, IEC National Manager of Codes and Safety Standards.

According to the latest statistics from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), on average 111,400 home fires per year are caused by faulty electrical distribution systems, electrical appliances and equipment, or heating and air conditioning systems. These fires claim an average of 860 lives, injure 3,785 more people and cause nearly $1.3 billion in property damage.

The ESFI recommends the following suggestions for ensuring a safer home:

• Check outlets and extension cords to make sure they are not overloaded.
• Examine electrical cords to make sure they are not frayed, damaged or shorted.
• Make sure that the proper wattage light bulbs are being used in light fixtures and lamps.
• Consider installing ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) if they are not already installed.
• Test smoke detectors frequently, and replace smoke detector batteries annually.
• Follow appropriate safety precautions and manufacturer’s instructions.

The IEC recommends visiting the ESFI homepage at: http://www.nesf.org to find valuable free resources.

Electrical outage tips

In the event of a power outage, there are a few simple tips to protect your equipment and keep your business running smoothly.

Pay attention to sensitive equipment. If the power goes out, shut the equipment down, and start it up again carefully after power has returned. A sudden rush of restored power into unprepared equipment could cause high voltage fluctuations, damaging power supplies and other components.

Keep your costs down. If all your equipment starts up at once when power is restored, it could create artificially high demand and temporarily increase your power costs.

Protect 3-phase equipment. If you use 3-phase equipment at your business, know that it can burn out more easily, and at a lower voltage level, than other equipment.

To prevent the possibility of damage, be sure you have the proper surge and single-phasing protection measures in place if you decide to use 3-phase equipment.

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Editor's note: Curtis Hunt is the vice-president/owner of Curtis Hunt Restorations, Inc. We met at his property, south of San Antonio, where his home, office and masonry contracting operations are headquartered.

SACN: Curtis, how many generations of Hunts have lived in Texas?
CH: Five. My name is Henry Hunt II, my great-grandfather, came to Texas from Kentucky when he was a young adult. My (father) was born in 1923, and my father and I are all named Curtis. There are two more generations of Hunts.

SACN: Was Henry a mason?
CH: Yes, and I’m a fourth-generation mason contractor. My grandfather told me Mason is a thing of beauty, and has been over 2,000 years.

The trade was passed down from father to son. My dad and his brother Mason both became masonry contractors.

SACN: Where did you grow up and go to school?
CH: I went to elementary school about six miles from here, and I graduated from East Central High School in 1970.

SACN: What did you do after high school?
CH: About two days after graduation I went to Red River, NM, to help build a fire station. When I came back home, I moved in with my grandfather and went to work in the oil fields. My grandfather and great-grandfather both died in the oil fields.

SACN: How many months or years did you work in the oil fields?
CH: That ended after one year. I was burned after hitting some electrical lines, and when my dad came to the hospital, he told me to forget that nonsense and come back to work for him.

SACN: Was it during that time that you fell in love and married?
CH: I’ve known my wife, Dotty, since the eighth grade. We started dating in our sophomore year and married when we were both 19 years old.

SACN: Did you have a big South Texas country wedding?
CH: Not really. I was married after hitting some electrical lines, and when my dad came to the hospital, he told me to forget that nonsense and come back to work for him.

SACN: How long was your first masonry job?
CH: It was a 10-months, Joshua is seven and Kend-
Scout Their Turf

Visiting the site of your competitor’s store, subdivision, development or model home is perfectly legitimate. Phantom shopping, as it is sometimes called, is an excellent way to view first-hand what your competition is offering. For example, an on-site visit by you to their model home will give you loads of information. What new products are they offering? What added value services are presented to potential buyers? Which amenities do they promote to the buying public? How are they promoting these amenities and what is their real dollar value? What are the sensory stimulants they use to make a visitor feel comfortable? Pick up as many flyers and brochures as possible while visiting their site. Observe your first impression as you walk up to the site. Likely it will be the first impression of most visitors. There are so many details that you could notice. Take mental note of these and then immediately make written notes when you get back to your car.

Next, talk to their staff or marketing representative. What is their first impression? Is rapport built instantly? Likely, they will be trained to ask qualifying questions to see if you are a potential buyer. Mentally prepare an answer to explain your presence. There is no need to play your hand, but you can give an honest, “I am just looking at their product” explanation. Then, notice the way the representatives communicate with other visitors. Be as objective as possible. Look for the good things about what your competitor is doing and do your best to do things the same way as that of a potential buyer. Make your employees and sales staff aware of what is required to conquer the competition. This should be done in a positive way by emphasizing what is good about your competition and how you intend to make your product better.

By keeping this information on the upbeat side, your staff will know how to overcome buyer objections with a positive answer rather than a lambasting of your competition.

Show Time

It is now “game time”. Since you have created systems for the improvement of your product or service, the process will go more smoothly. As you begin to execute your plan, notice what is working and what needs refinement. There must be a commitment to constant improvement. In case you haven’t figured it out yet, your competition is likely scouring you. It may require that you have a “secret play” in your book. Perhaps you have a supplementary incentive with your financing. You may, at random, give away an extra feature with your product just to keep your competition guessing. Or maybe, you choose not to give away anything for a while. This could cause your competition to be less flexible than usual, opening the door for you to lure more buyers with new incentives. You may need to create alliances with new vendors to have incentives to offer. You may need agreements from your trade contractors to add value to their service in order to pass it along to the consumer. There is any number of ways to perform at show time. By scouting your competition, you will come up with new ideas. It may seem cagey at times, but it is all done in the spirit of gaining the competitive edge.

Conquering your competition is fought one battle at a time. Each new product or service that you roll out may require a whole new scouting report. To Scout and Conquer requires diligence and creativity. Rest assured that your competition is scouring you. Just hope they haven’t read this article too.

Paul Montelongo is the author of 101 Power Strategies; Tools to Promote Yourself as the Contractor of Choice. Paul is a nationally-recognized speaker and consultant to the construction industry. www.ContractorOfChoice.com and register for a free E-mail newsletter to receive tips, strategies and concepts to help you grow your business and increase your profits. Paul has owned and operated his own multi-million dollar construction company for over 23 years.
Looking for an inexpensive form of entertainment? With the cost of dinner and a movie for two in excess of $50, and dining and dancing about the same, couples are opting to stay at home more and more.

Fortunately, we live in an area that has inexpensive entertainment not found in most other areas of the state. The entertainment I’m talking about is bowling. No, not that expensive ten-pin version of the game that most of us are familiar with. I’m talking about Nine-Pin Bowling. It is the original form of bowling from which ten-pin was derived.

The history of bowling, the first sport in recorded history, is both twisted and colorful. Developed by German religious leaders in the 3rd Century, A.D. monks used a pin called a “kegel” to represent the devil, and evil in general. The congregation was called upon to hit the target, thus showing themselves to be pure and free of sin. Failure proved you wicked, and only regular church attendance (and more practice!) could purge you of your evil.” As the game became popular outside the church, Martin Luther, creator of the Protestant movement, undertook a study to standardize the game. The number of pins was fixed at nine, and bowling became an important part of German culture. As bowling spread throughout Europe, however, its purity was tainted. Bowling became places to unlawfully assemble and plot against the government. The sport also attracted gamblers and other less acceptable members of society. Bowling was declared illegal and denounced by Puriitanical religious leaders as a path away from righteousness, quite opposite from it’s beginnings in the German cloisters.

Bowling came to America with the Dutch and the Pilgrims, only to fall into the hands (and pockets) of unscrupulous gamblers and crooks. Nine-Pin bowling was once again declared illegal but, to get around the law, ten-pin bowling was invented. Today, bowling is the largest participation-sport in the world. An estimated 50 million bowlers exist in the U.S. alone.

This area has three counties in which there are numerous Nine-Pin bowling clubs. One-year memberships are typically $3 to $5 per person and drinks range from $1.25 to $1.75. You do the math; a couple can get three hours of entertainment and exercise for under $20.

From the German monks to “your area nine-pin bowling clubs”, the legacy of the world’s oldest sport lives on! So grab your ball, put on those funky shoes, and BOWL!


Bexar Bowling Alley & Social Hall: Just off I-10 East on Bexar Bowling Rd., Marion, 830-420-2512.

Bracken Bowling Club: 18397 Bracken Dr., San Antonio, 210-651-6945.

Bulverde Community Center Bowling Club: 1747 E. Averna Rd, Bulverde, 830-438-3005.

Cibolo Bowling Club: 601 N. Main St., Cibolo, 210-658-2248.

Fischer Bowling Club: Hwy. 32, Canyon Lake, 830-935-4800.

Freibert Bowling Club: FM 1101, New Braunfels, 830-625-0372.

Germania Bowling Club: Zuehl Rd., Marion, 830-420-2675.


Marion Bowling Club: E. Klein, Marion, 830-420-9219.

Martinez Bowling Club: FM 5156 at E. Houston St.


Solms Bowling Club: N. Solms Rd, New Braunfels, 830-606-9691.

Spring Branch Bowling Club: Hwy. 281, Spring Branch, 830-885-4613.

Turner Club: 1209 9th Street, San Antonio, 210-227-4412.


Entertainment can bowl you over

By Butch Evans, Survey Manager
Hallenger Engineering, LC

The design and construction requirements of the Fair Housing Act apply to all new multifamily housing first occupied after March 13, 1991. Covered multifamily dwellings are: (1) all dwellings unit in buildings containing four or more units if such buildings have one or more elevators, and (2) all ground floor dwelling units in other buildings containing four or more units.

REQUIREMENT 7, Part B: Usable Bathrooms:

“…covered multifamily dwellings with a building entrance on an accessible route shall be designed and constructed in such a manner that all premises within covered multifamily dwellings units contain usable … bathrooms such that an individual in a wheelchair can maneuver about the space.” Fair Housing Act Regulations, 24 CFR 100.205

Recommendations for Increased Accessibility

While the builder or developer of multifamily housing is not required to address all the design concerns faced by people with disabilities who may live in a development, there are certain aspects of bathroom design which should be considered when selecting fixtures.

Handles, Faucets, and Controls

Many people have difficulty using faucets and controls that require grasping and twisting of symmetrical shapes such as round, cylindrical, or square handles. It is preferable to install lever or blade handles which can be used without gripping or twisting. If a faucet can be operated with a closed fist and requires less than five pounds of force to operate, then it is a usable control for most people with disabilities.

Control location also greatly improve ease and safe use of the fixture. When bathtub controls are offset toward the outside of the bathing fixture, the need to bend and stretch to reach the controls from outside the fixture is greatly reduced–a help for any user with limited flexibility.

Auxiliary Handles at Doors

One enhancement frequently highlighted is the installation of auxiliary handles on bathroom doors. Not required by the Fair Housing Guidelines, this additional hardware works well for many people with mobility impairments who have difficulty closing doors. With the installation of a second handle (such as a 4-inch loop handle similar to those used on drawers and kitchen cabinets) on the pull side of the door, near the hinge edge, the user is provided with an additional, and often easier, method of closing a door.
Two concrete basement stairs were removed and replaced, as were GARCO employees who performed the demolition and concrete work.

"The classically-designed chapel features large architectural windows and doors," Bob continued, which were painted as the entire interior of the chapel. Many areas of cracked plaster were chiseled out and repaired, and where pre-made cast plaster frizzles and moldings were cracked or missing, they were repaired or replaced. Also, several interior archways required additional structural support and the carpet was replaced to give the Chapel a finished interior product.

Outside, a portion of the front cur- lar driveway and concrete curb were replaced, as well as all of the sidewalks around the perimeter of the Chapel. Fresh landscaping marked the comple- tion of the project.

"The project appeared to be com- pleted to everyone's satisfaction," Bob concluded, "as the Fort Sam Engineering Department blessed the project when it was complete."

Construction Professionals on the Gift Chapel project included: Mr. Ron Need, KMNG & Associates, Inc., project consulting engineers.

Primary Construction Subcontractors on the Gift Chapel project included: Dud- erstadt Foundation Co.; Curtis Hunt Restorations, Inc. (masonry); Cabana Mechanical Company (HVAC removal); Prime Plumbing Company; McNeil Roof- ing (waterproofing); Pro Roofing Systems Co.; Delta Structural Technology (roof); Lambert Plaster; and Maldonado Nurs- ery & Landscaping.

GARCO Contracting Co., Inc. was founded in 1994 with a commitment to professional construction contract management and quality workmanship. The company's principals, Richard and Kathy Garza, have an extensive background in the general contracting/construction business, particularly federal and state government contracting.

With over eighty full-time employ- ees, GARCO is certified with the Small Business Administration as an 8(a) HUB-ZONE contractor, and also certified with the State of Texas as a HUB.

Based in San Antonio, the company maintains a field office in San Angelo for its West Texas operations. GARCO was Randolph Air Force Base’s Minority Enter- prise Development Week’s 2001 Honor- ee, and chose as Lackland Air Force Base’s 1998 and 1999 Base Construction Contractor of the Year. The company was awarded the U.S. Small Business Adminis- tration’s Award for Excellence in 1999, 2000, and 2001, and named the Con- struction Firm of the Year for 1999 for the Minority Business Development Program sponsored by the University of Texas.

Luna Middle School for Northside ISD 202,000 sf.

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Women challenge the fairways, survive the heat!

On Fri., May 16th, the National Association of Women in Construction hosted its annual golf tournament at The Republic Golf Club. Prior to the 1:30 pm shotgun start, members and their guests enjoyed a boxed lunch and beverages, storing up energy for those long drives and accurate putts.

San Antonio Construction News spoke with tournament spokesperson, Dana Calonge, Nathan Alterman Electric, who said 52 players would be participating.

“Today’s tournament will benefit our NAWIC scholarship fund. We are doing a Split Pot Raffle, and whoever wins will get half, with the remaining monies going to our scholarship fund, which typically benefits two students each year.”

A buffet dinner and awards ceremony followed play.

And the winners were:

1st Place Team: Nathan Alterman Electric - Barry Murray, Kevin McKinney, Jeff Froboose, and Rose Terrazas.

2nd Place Team: Ridout Barrett & Co. - Tony Rodout, Milton Barrett, Ray White, and Dan O’Connor.

Last Place: Rexel, Inc - Ryan Hasbrook Scott Shaver, Brian Sisneros, and Todd Sparrow.

Longest Drive:

Men’s - Gary Hall.

Women’s - Dana Calonge.

Closest to the Pin:

Men’s - Dan O’Connor.

Women’s - Lynne Grix.

PS: The Split Pot Raffle was won by Rose Terrazas, who donated her winnings back to the chapter as a donation to the NAWIC Scholarship Fund.

FYI

The United States uses 38 percent of the energy consumed in the world. In 2000, seven percent of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product ($567 billion) was spent on energy purchases ($2,500 per capita). One hundred and nineteen billion of this was for oil imports. Given the projected increases in energy demand under current practices, energy expenditures are expected to increase to $887 billion by 2020.

Source: Metropolitan Partnership for Energy
Sunday Brisket Cook-Off tickets were $20 and included a delicious, full-course dinner of brisket, beans, coleslaw, cornbread, and a dessert.

Members of the Independent Electrical Contractors gathered once again at the Helotes Festival grounds to compete for top honors in its annual two-day BBQ Cook-off. Steamy temperatures pervaded the festivities on Fri., May 16th, when the annual two-day BBQ Cook-off.

Bexar Electric's Bexar Bones!

**BBQ Winners:****

*1st Place: Bexar Electric.
2nd Place: Central Electric.
Open Division: 2nd Place: Central Electric.*

**Open Division:****

*2nd Place: Central Electric.*

**Pork Ribs Division:****

*1st Place: Bexar Electric.
2nd Place: Central Electric.*

**Chili Division:**

*2nd Place: Bexar Electric.*

**Gumbo Division:**

*2nd Place: Central Electric.*

**Frame Sail:****

*1st Place: Bexar Electric.
2nd Place: Central Electric.*

**Open Division:****

*2nd Place: Bexar Electric.*

**Shrimp and Grits:****

*1st Place: Bexar Electric.**

**Bringing it home…****

*1st Place: Bexar Electric.*

**Bringing it home…****

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**Bringing it home…****

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DAY

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In 1900 only 160 million people, one tenth of the world’s population, lived in cities. By 2006, half the world (3.2 billion) will reside in urban areas. Even though cities comprise only two percent of the earth’s surface, their inhabitants consume the bulk of natural resources. About 78% of carbon emissions from fossil fuel burning come from metropolitan areas and 60% of the planet’s water that is tapped for human use goes to cities.

Source: Metropolitan Partnership for Energy

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In 1900 only 160 million people, one tenth of the world’s population, lived in cities. By 2006, half the world (3.2 billion) will reside in urban areas. Even though cities comprise only two percent of the earth’s surface, their inhabitants consume the bulk of natural resources. About 78% of carbon emissions from fossil fuel burning come from metropolitan areas and 60% of the planet’s water that is tapped for human use goes to cities.

Source: Metropolitan Partnership for Energy

Visit our website at: www.texasmedclinic.com
Curious citizens flocked to Maverick Park on Sat., May 17th for Solar Fest 2003, a renewable energy and sustainable building event sponsored by Solar San Antonio. Staged outdoors, over 1,000 people visited the free event, which was open to the public from 9 am to 4 pm, and featured approximately 45 exhibitors.

San Antonio Construction News spoke with Solar San Antonio executive director Dominick Dina, who said the event garnered twice as many exhibitors as last year. “We have exhibitors who represent the wide spectrum of renewable energy and sustainable building materials, as well as governmental entities that promote and/or enforce energy-efficient and environmental issues. TCEQ, TREIA, Texas Solar Energy Society and our own homespun governmental entity, the Metropolitan Partnership for Energy, are represented here today. This is an educational and informational forum, with a lot of hands-on opportunities. We want to make the public aware of alternative energy, energy efficiencies and a way to improve their individual quality of life and keep their money in their pocket.”

According to SSA’s chairman of the board, William Sinkin, solar is being used increasingly and the word is getting out. “Change, like anything, is slow. It’s like turning a great battle ship around one step at a time.

Solar Fest was one the last events included in Alternative Energy Week, a collaborative effort by Solar San Antonio, City of San Antonio, Bexar County Commissioners Court, CPS, SAWS, AACOG, VIA, Metropolitan Partnership for Energy, the Metropolitan Planning Organization and Keep San Antonio Beautiful.

Linda Stone, executive director of Metropolitan Partnership for Energy.
The hottest parking lot party in construction was heavily attended on Thurs., May 22nd, at The Builder’s Exchange of Texas, from 5 to 8 pm. Hosted by The Builder’s Exchange of Texas (BXTX), Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), American Subcontractors Association (ASA), and Associated General Contractors (AGC), “Summer Sizzle 2003” drew 450 to 500 members. The host associations also invited members from the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) and the Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors – San Antonio (PHCC-SA). Mother Nature cooperated this year by providing an umbrella of clouds.

The boys from Dausin Electric broke a sweat over their massive barbecue pit on which they grilled a superb batch of fajitas for the crowd. Ironically Ronnie Dausin, of all people, won a Weber backyard BBQ grill in the raffle drawing. As the DJ kept pumping out top hits, he paused play intermittently to announce door prize winners. Lots of folks went home with excellent door prizes and smiles on their faces.

Kudos to ASA members who were encouraged by their lovely executive director, Heidi Davis, to bring an early gift for the industry’s charity…Construct a Kid’s Christmas.

San Antonio Construction News wants to know…were you there?