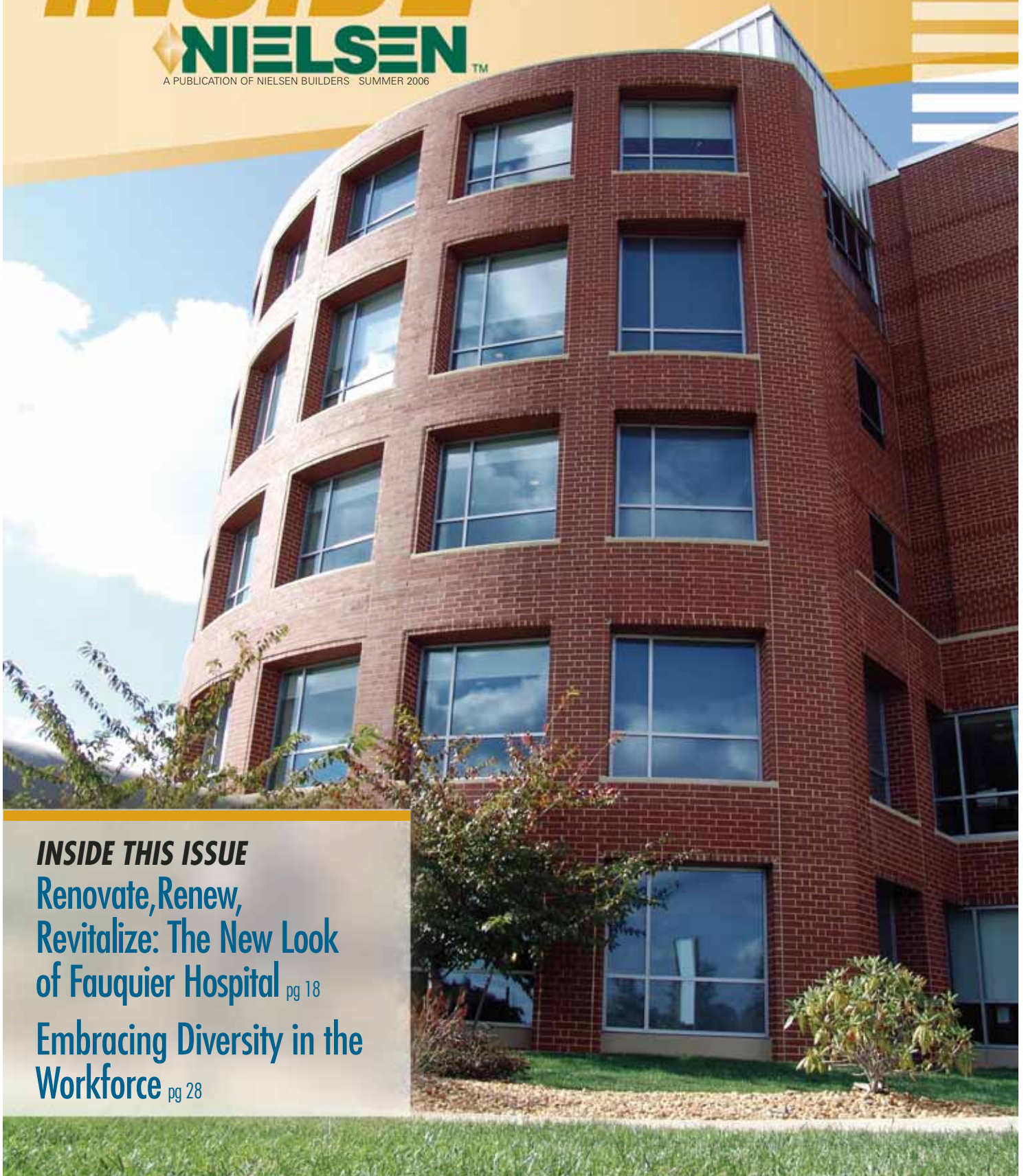


INSIDE

NIELSEN™

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Renovate, Renew,
Revitalize: The New Look
of Fauquier Hospital** pg 18

**Embracing Diversity in the
Workforce** pg 28



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A MESSAGE TO OUR READERS



Welcome to the second issue of our newest publication, *Inside Nielsen*. We are proud to present this publication to our employees, our clients and our community partners. We appreciate the advertising support provided by preferred partners. Your support has made this publication possible.

This issue focuses on our work in senior living and health care, with articles on major renovations at the Massanetta Springs Campus of Sunnyside Communities, as well as additions and renovations to Fauquier Regional Hospital in Warrenton. The Sunnyside project included the addition of a new chapel, a new entrance and extensive renovations to the health care facility, as well as enhancing the homelike environment for the residents in assisted living.

The Fauquier Hospital project was our first venture into the Warrenton market. We worked for almost four years to complete this complex health care project, as Nielsen allowed hospital staff to continue uninterrupted care to patients during the multiple construction phases. The Fauquier Hospital project was one of the largest jobs ever completed by Nielsen.

We are poised for future growth. We have several projects pending, and we are continuing to pursue an aggressive work program for our firm. We will work with our clients to consistently provide the best quality project on time and within budget. We value our clients and strive every day to deliver the best service.

We hope you enjoy learning more about the company. Please feel free to contact us with questions or comments.

John N. Neff
President & CEO

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NIELSEN

Corporate Mission Statement

Nielsen will be recognized as a premier construction organization with a commitment toward optimal performance in serving clients within the Commonwealth of Virginia. We will achieve this by consistently "striving for excellence" in providing professional building services.

People

Nielsen recognizes that our people are the critical element in achieving our vision. We will support a team approach through open communication among all employees. We will promote the growth and empowerment of our people and commit to human resource practices based on standards of excellence, safety awareness, fair treatment and equal opportunity.

Total Client Satisfaction

Nielsen will build on our reputation and commit to exceed the expectations of our clients by maintaining the highest level of skill and responsibility in providing professional services. We will deliver a superior price/value relationship in providing quality construction services with a profit objective at a fair level.

Leadership

Nielsen is committed to being a leader in the construction industry through innovative construction techniques and product development. We will strive to be a caring corporate citizen in enhancing the community and environment in which we do business.

Quality Assurance

Nielsen's commitment to quality assurance is based on responsible craftsmanship, leadership, innovation, safety awareness and employee satisfaction. Our guarantee to furnish our clients with a total quality product is the heart of our company's existence.



John Smith (right), seen here at a job site with fellow employee Jerry Mitchell, has played crucial roles in many education projects.

SPOTLIGHT on John Smith, Project Superintendent

Project Superintendent **John Smith** has been with Nielsen for more than 20 years. He started working for the company in 1973, left for several years to work for another company, then returned. His responsibilities include directing all activities on the project site in accordance with pre-established policies, schedules, budgets, plans, specifications and procedures. He is responsible for lines, grades, control points and quality of workmanship. Mr. Smith participates in pre-construction planning, scheduling and cost development.

Mr. Smith has worked extensively on education projects. His most recent job was the new Harrisonburg High School in Harrisonburg, Virginia. This \$37.5 million job is a true showpiece. The 280,000-square-foot building includes academic classrooms and administrative areas, science labs, two gymnasiums, a 1,200-seat auditorium, kitchen and cafeteria, commons areas, library and a greenhouse. Furnishings include casework, food service equipment, lockers, and ath-

letic and stage equipment. Exterior facilities include a 600-space parking lot, site lighting, fencing, irrigation system, traffic signals, football, track, baseball, soccer and softball complexes, tennis courts, practice and physical education fields, and concession and field house buildings.

Mr. Smith also worked on the new Broadway High School, several buildings on the campus of James Madison University, and the new Baker Butler Elementary School in Charlottesville, Virginia. Other projects include the Shenandoah's Pride building in Mt. Crawford and the Riddleberger Brothers building in Mt. Crawford.

Mr. Smith and his wife, Erma, have two grown children, Donnie, 26, and Lisa, 29. When not working, Mr. Smith enjoys riding his Softail Custom Harley in the country. He also likes to play guitar and banjo. Nielsen is proud to spotlight Superintendent John Smith.

EMPLOYEE NEWS



William Johnson

William Johnson, Kevin Willis Earn American Society for Healthcare Engineering (ASHE) Healthcare Construction Certificate

William Johnson and **Kevin Willis** recently earned certificates in health care construction from the American Society for Healthcare Engineering (ASHE). Mr. Johnson has 21 years of construction experience and has been with Nielsen for five years. He was the project manager for the Fauquier Hospital additions and renovations project and the Martha Jefferson Hospital Reproductive Technology Laboratory, and he is currently managing several projects on the Culpeper Hospital campus. Mr. Willis has 12 years of construction experience and has been with Nielsen for six years. He was the senior project manager for the Fauquier Hospital additions and renovations project, and he has managed several projects at both the UVA Health Sciences Center and Martha Jefferson Hospital.



Kevin Willis

Mr. Willis earned his undergraduate degree from UVA and his MBA from James Madison University. He is a member of the American Society for Healthcare Engineering, the Associated General Contractors of Virginia

Piedmont District Executive Committee and the Design and Challenge (Youth Learning Academy) Advisory Board. ASHE created the Construction Certificate Program in response to members' requests for specialized training in topics related to health care construction. The certificate program is oriented toward health care construction managers and contractors, but is also of value to architects, engineers and health care facility managers. Emphasis is placed on examples and case studies. The ASHE Healthcare Construction Certificate program involves a combination of e-learning and a two-day seminar. The certificate, valid for two years, may be renewed annually through additional instruction and classes.

President and CEO John Neff notes, "We are dedicated to creating quality structures. Our employees are proactive in enhancing their knowledge and skills. Kevin and William have demonstrated their commitment to continuous improvement by earning the Healthcare Construction Certificate. We applaud their efforts."



Jeff Horridge

Jeff Horridge Joins Team

Nielsen Builders, Inc. is pleased to welcome **Jeff Horridge** as a project manager for the Charlottesville/Albemarle area. Mr. Horridge most recently worked as a project manager and estimator for Artisan Construction. Prior to that, he worked for Simpson Weather Associates in project management. Mr. Horridge earned his Bachelor of Science degree in biology from James Madison University. As project manager, Mr. Horridge will oversee all aspects of building projects from initial consultations with the customer to completion of the project.

Gary McBride Joins Board of Directors

Nielsen Builders, Inc. is pleased to welcome **Gary McBride**, project manager, to its board of directors, effective April 5. Mr. McBride has been with the company for six years, serving first as director of human resources, and next taking on the role of project manager. In his capacity as director of human resources, Mr. McBride was responsible for performing administrative human resources functions for 280 employees, including handling employee benefits questions and recruiting, interviewing, and hiring new staff.

Currently, Mr. McBride is a full-time project manager. His projects include the JMU Financial Services Building, Harrisonburg High School and the new elementary/middle school in Harrisonburg City Public Schools,

which is scheduled to open in the fall of 2008. As project manager, his responsibilities include coordination of major subcontractors, adherence to schedule, quality control, project coordination, and cost control and accounting. Mr. McBride also reviews the weekly schedule and coordinates weekly progress meetings for all team members.

The board of directors is charged with oversight of operations and strategic direction for the corporation. Other members of the board and related entities include the following: Tony E. Biller; Monty H. Cox; James D. DeLucas; William J. Fisher; Don A. Hicklin; Dick Holsinger (emeritus); J. Thomas Moomaw, Jr.; Joseph R. Miller; John W. Morsch; and John N. Neff.



Gary McBride

Patricia May Joins Company

Nielsen Builders, Inc., is pleased to welcome **Patricia May** as business development associate. Most recently, Ms. May worked as director of corporate support for WMRA National Public Radio. Before that, she worked as public affairs coordinator for Merck in Elkton. Ms. May also worked many years in the poultry industry, working for Rocco Enterprises, Inc., then for Cargill Turkey Products as director of public relations. In the role of business development associate, Ms. May will help with marketing and sales efforts for Nielsen. Ms. May earned her undergraduate degree from Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia, and her MBA from James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

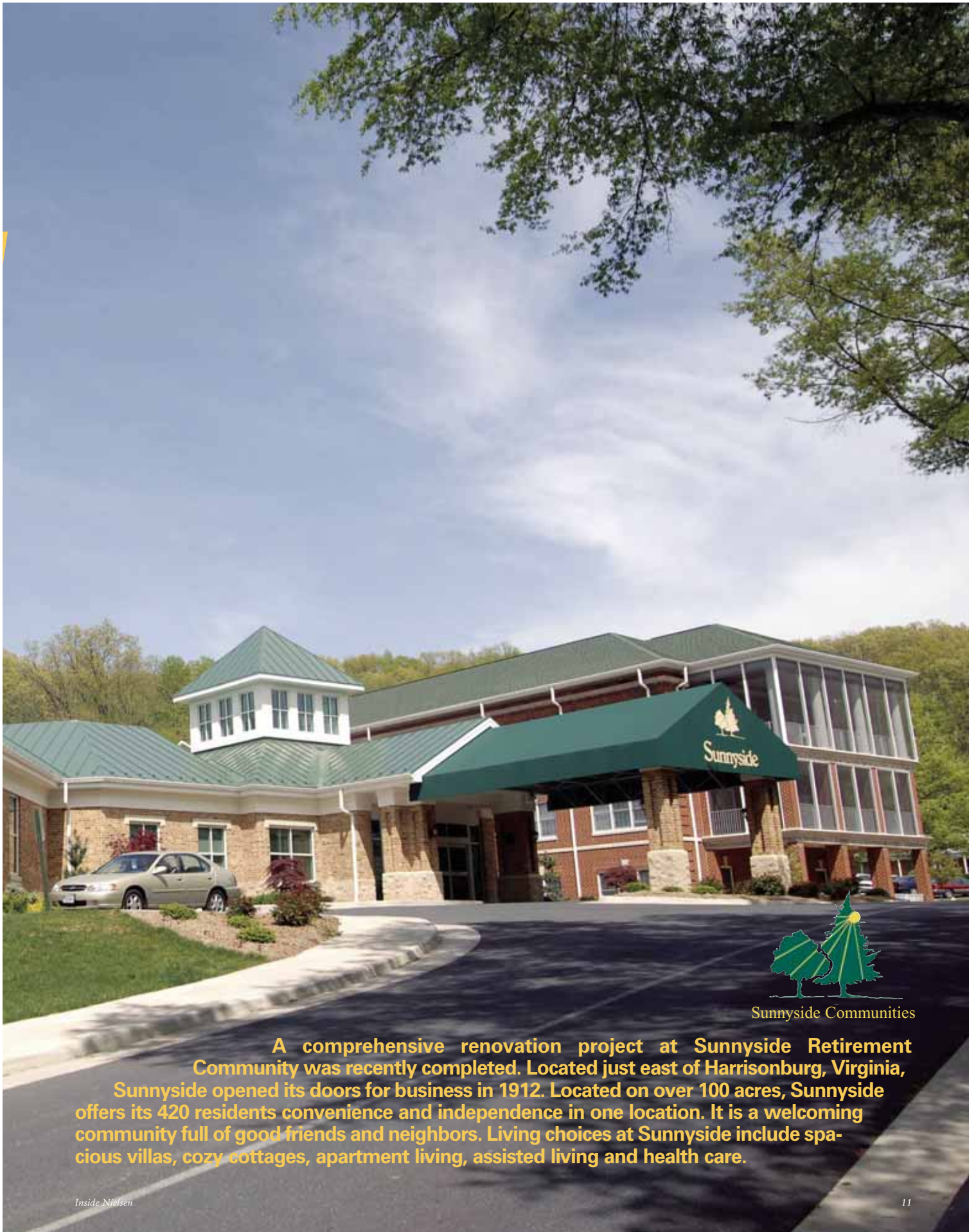


Patricia May

Impressive Renovations Completed at Sunnyside Retirement Community

by Patricia L. May





Sunnyside Communities

A comprehensive renovation project at Sunnyside Retirement Community was recently completed. Located just east of Harrisonburg, Virginia, Sunnyside opened its doors for business in 1912. Located on over 100 acres, Sunnyside offers its 420 residents convenience and independence in one location. It is a welcoming community full of good friends and neighbors. Living choices at Sunnyside include spacious villas, cozy cottages, apartment living, assisted living and health care.



The Sunnyside project's focal point is the light-filled, spacious new entrance-way and reception area. A beautiful new chapel added dimension and definition to the entry area, while at the same time keeping the timeless elegance of the previous façade.

The extensive renovations included moving the Terrace, a residential section for persons diagnosed with dementia and Alzheimer's, from the 2nd floor of health care to the 1st floor of assisted living, thus allowing for protected outside access for the residents. The new section has an activity room and multiple dining areas and includes 14 resident suites.

The Adele Dillard Pannill Health Care Center formerly had several dining areas for all residents. The renovations included creating a small, intimate dining room on each floor. In the health

care building, installation included a new ceiling, wall covering, carpet and air handling system. Additionally, two new nurses stations, medication room and kitchen areas were added.

Project Overview

Project Manager **Monty Cox** notes that the project was actually done in three phases. Phase one, which took about a year, focused on the renovations to the health care building, new Meredith Chapel and Corson lobby entrance as well as installing an elevated walkway. The second phase included renovating the central section of the Adele Dillard Pannill Health Care Center assisted living section and moving the Terrace section, and took about ten months. Phase three included demolishing the north section of the Eiland Assisted Living Center and renovation of the remaining assisted living apartments.

The renovation project involved remodeling the second and third levels of assisted living apartments. The rooms and bathrooms were enlarged, so that there were actually fewer rooms after the renovation. The toilets were relocated, which required all new plumbing. Amenities include a large walk-in closet and a kitchen in each room. A new truss system, shingles and cupolas were installed. A portion of the wellness center was renovated, and a new elevator was installed. Assisted living was given a general, all around facelift.

The 3rd floor was renovated to include guest rooms and a conference room. The Sunnyside board of directors meets there occasionally. The guest rooms are perfect for overnight visitors who want to be close to loved ones.

An elevated walkway was built to route people from health care to the dining



area. This way, the front of the building was closed for renovations and allowed staff and residents to avoid the renovation work areas. Now the walkway is used for service personnel.

Phase one started in July 2003. Finishing touches on the Bethesda Theater/Community Room include installation of new heating, cooling and lighting systems. The room will be rented out for special events like weddings and family reunions. In fact, all the residents of Sunnyside can fit in that one room, which measures 30' by 90'.

Mr. Cox notes, "The project went well. We had regular meetings with the administrative staff and enjoyed good cooperation. The staff was great to work with. The project went relatively smooth for a remodeling project. It was enjoyable. We had good folks and good subs to work with." He adds, "This was a very challenging

project, especially the first phase, because we were working in so many different areas at the same time. The only way we could do it was to have access to all three levels at the same time. We had to take out floors to put in elevators; we needed to cut out thick concrete to create new door openings. The project created dirt, dust and noise. We tried to keep things as normal as possible during the project."

During the remodeling phase, residents could literally sit and watch the activity. Mr. Cox says, "It took lots of coordination and cooperation among residents, staff and our crews."

Mr. Cox notes that the traditional delivery system was rerouted to ensure that ambulances could get in and out easily. Care was taken to ensure that residents could get around efficiently during the project. Other key employees

who worked on this project include **Rick Spencer** and **Roy Spitzer**.

Sunnyside Comments

Sunnyside President and CEO **Dick Lyons** notes, "Sunnyside is very pleased with the renovation work recently completed. In addition to the renovations, there were new additions that are working well. We are very satisfied."



He went on to say, "The renovations have contributed to improving the residents' daily lives. They have larger spaces and modern conveniences. We have minimized their travel distances, and maximized their ability to remain longer in their suites."

"Everything went very smoothly because of the way Nielsen was able to work with the residents and staff throughout the project. They understood our lifestyle and what we were trying to accomplish."

- Tony Cooper

Mr. Lyons is pleased to recommend Nielsen to other communities planning to expand. "We continue to value Nielsen as a partner in helping us to realize our visions," he adds.

Project Particulars

Client: Sunnyside Retirement Communities

Location: Harrisonburg, Virginia

Architect: Mather Architects

New construction: 10,475 square feet

Renovated space: 132,620 square feet

Total: 143,095 square feet

Contract cost: \$10.9 million

Completion: Summer 2006

Sunnyside Administrator **Tony Cooper** notes that Sunnyside was pleased with the project. He says, "Everything went very smoothly because of the way Nielsen was able to work with the residents and staff throughout the project. They understood our lifestyle and what we were trying to accomplish."

Mr. Cooper adds it was a challenge to continue the work without disrupting residents and staff.

"It was like remodeling someone's home," Mr. Cooper says. "The residents needed to go about their daily activities, while Nielsen needed to keep everyone happy and stick to deadlines and timeframes."

He notes, "I would recommend Nielsen to anyone in the continuing care retirement community business. I could tell that Nielsen was used to working in our environment. They were sensitive to the needs of our residents and staff, which was extremely important to us."

"The most noticeable aspect was leadership," Mr. Cooper continues. "Nielsen really understood us. The communication was great. They always kept us informed during all aspects of the project," Mr. Cooper adds.

Nielsen is proud of its continuing partnership with Sunnyside Retirement Communities.



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Inside Nielsen



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Fauquier Hospital Addition

Harrisonburg High School

JMU Athletic Performance Center

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JMU College Center

RMH Cancer Center Renovations

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Stonewall Jackson High School

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Why Use Geothermal Heat Pump Systems?

by Ethan Graham, Riddleberger Brothers, Inc.

What is a geothermal heat pump system?

The earth absorbs more than 50 percent of the sun's energy and remains a nearly constant temperature of 50°F to 70°F, depending on the geographical location. A geothermal heat pump system is a heating/cooling system to connect an indoor heat pump to a series of underground pipes called a loop, which exchanges heat from the ground. The loop pipes carry a fluid that absorbs the ground's heat. Once this fluid is pumped inside, compressors and heat exchangers concentrate this heat in order to warm the space. A well-designed duct system delivers that warmth throughout your house or business. In the summer, the process is simply reversed to cool the space.

So why use geothermal systems?

There are a lot of good reasons why geothermal systems are beneficial:

- **Reduced Operating Costs.** Geothermal systems help homeowners and businesses reduce their operating costs by 30 to 70 percent in heating costs and 20 to 50 percent in cooling costs over conventional systems. On average, the initial cost of the geothermal system is recovered in three to five years. In short, spend a little now, save a lot more down the road.
- **Lower Maintenance Cost.** With geothermal systems, there are no boilers or chillers to service or maintain. Geothermal heat pumps are located inside the building structure, which shields the units from the elements and potential vandals. Most units come with factory-sealed refrigerant circuits that prevent the introduction of potentially harmful contaminants.
- **Durability.** Geothermal systems are constructed to be highly reliable. They experience less wear and tear because, unlike traditional heat pumps, geothermal systems do not experience "defrost cycling," which fatigues air-to-air heat pumps. The American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers published information that the typical life of a geothermal heat pump is, on average, 4 years longer than that of a comparable air-to-air rooftop heat pump.
- **Comfort.** Geothermal systems heat and cool in a fashion that eliminates hot/cold spots. In the heating season, geothermal systems do not generate hot air, which dries the air. They generate warm air that heats the space with-

Ground-Coupled System



out over-drying the air. This allows the space to stay at a comfortable level of humidity.

- **Fossil Fuels.** Geothermal systems limit the use of fossil fuels, which pollute the air and have recently skyrocketed in price. Hot water or steam boilers are no longer needed. Geothermal systems are an insurance policy against volatile oil and gas prices.
- **Renewable Fuel.** Geothermal energy is a renewable resource. The ground acts as an infinite energy source that is replenished through the earth's natural cycle.
- **Quiet Operation.** Geothermal systems do not have outdoor units that can be unsightly and noisy. You won't be able to tell when it's on.

- **Space-saving.** Geothermal systems are built to be compact and efficient. For aesthetic purposes, the units are almost invisible.
- **Safety.** With geothermal systems, there are no pilot lights, no combustible fuels, no carbon monoxide and no odors — no problems.

Geothermal systems are not just a passing fad. They are here to stay. With today's rising oil and gas prices and environmental and noise restrictions, we are likely to see more and more geothermal systems being installed from residential to commercial applications.

Riddleberger Brothers, Inc., recently installed a geothermal heat pump system for the Kenwood Estate, which is part of Thomas Jefferson's estate, Monticello, in Charlottesville, Virginia. Monticello Director of Buildings John Houghton says, "I managed the first geothermal systems commissioned (at Monticello) in April of 2002. The geothermal systems at the Kenwood campus are reliable, neat, quiet and efficient. We perform only routine maintenance with virtually no down time. The system's overall performance helped in our decision to use it in our new visitors' center."

If you have further interest in learning about or applying geothermal systems to your home or business, please contact Riddleberger Brothers, Inc., and ask for Ethan Graham.



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Renovate, Renew The New Look



ew, Revitalize: ook of Fauquier Hospital

by Patricia L. May

Patients and physicians alike are relishing their new surroundings. Completed in October, 2005, the renovation and renewal of Fauquier Hospital has made a huge difference in the lives of hundreds of community members. An active staff of 118 physicians and more than 50 additional consulting doctors and allied health professionals provide medical care at the hospital. With 850 employees, Fauquier Hospital is the largest private employer in Fauquier County.

Fauquier Hospital Background

Located in Virginia, about 40 miles southwest of Washington, D.C., Fauquier Hospital is an 86-bed acute-care hospital serving a rural/suburban community. Established in 1954 by a group of community volunteers, Fauquier Hospital is a not-for-profit community hospital fully accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO). It remains independently operated and is governed by a volunteer board of trustees.

As the only hospital in the county, Fauquier Hospital is the central hub of medical care in the area. The present facility was built in 1957 and has grown with several expansion projects. To continue to meet the growing needs of the community, in 2001 Fauquier Hospital embarked on a \$50 million hospital-wide renovation project, which includes this project.

Project Overview

The architect on the project was SmithGroup, Inc. This firm ranks as the nation's 8th largest architecture and engineering firm (*Building Design & Construction*, July 2005) and employs 850 people. SmithGroup is composed of client industry-focused practices serving the science and technology, health care, learning, workplace and urban design and planning markets. Established in 1853, SmithGroup is the longest continually operating architecture and engineering firm in the U.S.

The project started in November 2001 and was completed in October 2005, with a new six-story addition, a three-story vertical expansion, and comprehensive renovation of existing spaces. The addition was planned to house various hospital administrative functions, clinical departments, patient beds, and other patient care functions. The project included 86 private beds, consolidated outpatient treatment functions, provided a new patient education center, expanded the lobby, and improved patient access and circulation.

Additionally, the emergency and surgery departments were reconfigured and expanded. The hospital now houses a new 10-bed ICU/CCU, outpatient procedures department, cardio/pulmonary gym, infusion center, conference center, health resource center, chapel and gift shop. The

construction is structural steel bearing, with exterior metal studs and brick veneer, as well as a unique stainless steel exterior wall panel system on the upper floors.

The project also involved the construction of a new central energy plant to house electrical distribution equipment, generators, chillers and cooling towers serving the utility needs of the hospital with provisions for a boiler addition to be added at a future date.

The most notable changes occurred with the opening of the five-story tower addition in January 2004 and the J. North Fletcher Wing vertical expansion in March 2005. All inpatients now enjoy private rooms with Internet connections and overnight accommodations for a guest. The new Bistro on the Hill restaurant serves a wide assortment of freshly prepared food items and is open around the clock, seven days a week, for the dining convenience of both visitors and employees. Construction concluded in October 2005 with the completion of renovations to the cardiology, radiology, nuclear medicine, and emergency departments.

Additional work included installing new parking areas and reconfiguring access roads, along with providing a pleasantly landscaped surrounding. Two existing wings were demolished to accommodate current and future construction needs.

Nielsen also helped to orchestrate various "Hospital Moves" by partnering with Fauquier Hospital and KLMK (the hospital's program manager) to ensure that everything was ready for the move. By working with the hospital staff to make sure that everything went well, the partners ensured there were no last minute issues to address.

Project Personnel

Some of the essential members of the project team included the following: Senior Project Manager **Don Hicklin**; Project Manager **Kevin Willis**; Project Engineer **William Johnson**; Superintendents **Danny Beasley** and **Rick Wooddell**; Assistant Superintendent **Tim Shenk**; Foremen **Rick Spencer**, **Travis Spitzer**, and **Bobby Alley**; and Lead Man **Ray Leap**; as well as many other talented and dedicated Nielsen personnel, including the invaluable assistance of **Amy Wooddell** in handling the many administrative needs of the field office.

Project Manager Willis says, "We want to thank these folks for their time and dedication to the project. After Danny became ill and couldn't travel that far anymore, Rick was asked to take over as superintendent. He not only agreed to do so, but also relocated his entire family to Fauquier County to better serve the needs of the project. It's unfortunate that Danny didn't live to see the completion of the project, since he played such an important role in the success of the hospital renovation."

Mr. Willis notes, "This was a very challenging project of lengthy duration. It was a complex addition to an occupied health care facility and will make a good addition to the résumé of health care projects." He also points out that the project expanded the company's geographic reach by going into a new market area, adding, "This is a project that we can take great pride in. It is a very high quality project and can be considered a Nielsen showpiece. Nielsen was pleased to partner with Fauquier Hospital on this renovation project, and we look forward to continuing our relationship with the hospital in the future."

Nielsen's Chief Operating Officer **Bill Fisher** echoes Mr. Willis's remarks, emphasizing the fact that the Fauquier Hospital project helped the company to become more established in the Piedmont region. He added that this project was the largest negotiated project ever. Competition for the job included several large national construction firms.

Hospital Comments

Fauquier Hospital President and CEO **Rodger Baker** is very pleased with the work. "This project represents a huge change in terms of



what we had prior to the renovation. We basically replaced the hospital in place. We didn't go off to a new site during construction. The project took about four years. We built a new tower as well as going to the old areas and stripping and gutting them. Right now, 90 to 95 percent of the hospital is new or renovated."

He goes on to say, "The new spaces are so nice. When we tour folks through the facility, they can't believe this is Fauquier Hospital. They are impressed with the level

of finish and quality of construction. This is a physical facility that we can all take pride in. It is so gratifying to me to hear the positive comments from the staff.” Mr. Baker goes on to describe the benefits of providing private rooms for the patients. “The patients are so appreciative of the new private rooms. Prior to the renovation, we had semi-private rooms. They weren’t really large enough to accommodate family and friends. Having all private rooms is a wonderful benefit for patients. The rooms also offer a pull-down bed for family members who want to spend the night.”

He adds, “In the past, our nurses encouraged patients to invite their family members to stay, but it was very difficult due to the lack of space. Now we can be more proactive and ask family members to come in and serve as care partners. By entering into a healing partnership with the patient, the family member can be in the room when the doctor visits, and hear the doctor’s advice and counsel. The care partner can also learn how to treat the patient after he or she is able to return home. We feel this is a godsend, especially for pediatric patients.”

Mr. Baker says, “You can provide good customer service in a bad facility, but it’s much easier in a nice facility. We now have adequate space and more room for our support staff. Before the renovation, people were on top of each other.”

In the most recent employee survey, employees answered in the 90th percentile when asked about the quality of work environment. One year prior to the project, employees answered this question in the 50th percentile. Employees are delighted with the “new” hospital, Mr. Baker says.

Several doctors have mentioned that Fauquier Hospital is the nicest hospital that they have ever worked in. Mr. Baker says, “We are a lot more visible in the community now. The staff seems to be revitalized after the new construction. The medical staff can see that Fauquier Hospital is serious about improving quality and relationships with customers. This renovation has given employees and medical staff a real incentive to do better.”

Mr. Baker notes, “Nielsen does a great job and produces a high quality product. I think we got a great deal. Initially, we were going



to interview three builders. Because of RMH President Carter Melton’s recommendation, we decided to talk to Nielsen, and we selected them as our builder. It was hard to keep services going while working on such a large project, but Nielsen did a remarkable job. I am happy to recommend Nielsen to another hospital looking for a builder. In fact, anyone interested in speaking with me can call me at 540.349.0531 for more information.”

Project Particulars

Client – Fauquier Hospital
Groundbreaking – November 2001
Location – Warrenton, Virginia
Architect – the SmithGroup, Inc.
New construction – 100,000+ square feet
Renovated space – 80,000+ square feet
Shell space – 27,000+ square feet
Contract cost – \$36.5 million
Completion – October 2005

Subcontractors

AAC Cleaning
ABG Caulking
All Virginia State Pest Control
Apple Door Systems
Architectural Systems of Virginia, Inc.
Brock Contract Services
Cardinal Concrete Company
Carolina Door Controls, Inc.
Commonwealth Door & Hardware
Commonwealth Interiors
Con Cor of Virginia, Inc.
Davenport Insulation of Fredericksburg, Inc.

Davenport of Manassas
E & C Insulation
F. D. Neal Construction, LTD.
Gaithersburg Cabinetry & Millwork Co., Inc.
Glass & Metals, Inc.
Greencrest Contracting
Hardscapes Construction
Heartwood Corp.
Inner Finish Systems, Inc.
J. D. Long Masonry, Inc.
James C. Pemberton Corp.
Koroseal Wall Protection Systems
Liphart Steel Company
M. P. Barden & Sons, Inc.
McDaniel, Inc.
Modern Door & Equipment Sales, Inc.
MTR Tile, Inc.
Old Dominion Firestopping
Old Dominion Tile & Stone
Omega Drywall, LTD.
Partners Excavating Company
Pettit’s Landscaping, Inc.
Riddleberger Brothers, Inc.
Rochester Flooring
Rockingham Steel
Shencorp
Stonhard
Sun Control Systems
ThyssenKrupp Elevator Corporation
Trumbo Electric, Inc.
USA Remediation Services, Inc.
Virginia Sprinkler Company, Inc.
Wickes Direct



John Paulson uses fall protection.

Commitment to Safety Yields Benefits

by Patricia L. May

The construction industry has inherent risks, and construction companies spend more on workers' compensation insurance than any other industry. Accidents are preventable with a comprehensive safety program that includes the following elements:

- Ensure that safety is a top priority by securing support of senior management,
- Establish clear accountability,
- Involve all employees at every level of the organization in the safety initiative, and
- Evaluate effectiveness of the program and adjust it as necessary.

Safety in the work environment is a tradition. Safety Director **David Hall** works every day to help educate and inform employees about safety in the workplace.

"Safety is everyone's responsibility," he says. "Each employee is encouraged to become aware of their surroundings and report any unsafe working conditions."

Focus on safety is part of the culture. All new employees receive safety training as part of new employee orientation. Additionally, specific safety training is given on each job site. Both the project superintendent and foreman receive safety training that they then share with their employees on-site. In addition to ensuring that all employees have participated in safety training, the firm also ensures that its subcontractors are well versed in safety. The standard contract requires the subcontractor to comply with the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Act. Non-compliance with the act can be considered a breach of the contract.

Safety Tool Box

Other safety initiatives from the "Safety Tool Box" include weekly safety talks that are conducted at every project site. A specific safety topic is presented and an attendance roster is maintained. The company encourages employees to participate in the safety meetings by offering special incentives such as shirts, hats and tote bags displaying the company logo. A discount on workers' compensation insurance is given because of the proactive stance in promoting safety in the workplace. Safety posters are prominently displayed in the office and throughout all the project sites. The company newsletter features articles on off-the-job safety because safety is important both in the workplace and in the homes of employees. The company routinely performs pre-

employment drug screenings for job candidates. Random drug screening occurs throughout the year. For the first time this year, the safety department will randomly screen 100% of employees. Prior to this, only one-quarter of the workforce was randomly screened. Post-accident drug screens are also conducted.

First-aid and CPR training are offered to interested employees. About one-fourth of the workforce is currently trained. The company's goal is to have at least two trained people on each project site. CPR/first-aid training came in handy for operator **John Mell** in early June. Three days after he had completed his training, he was able to help an elderly woman who had fallen and cut her head. Mr. Mell kept her calm until help arrived.

He says, "When I heard the call for help, I rushed over to see what was wrong. I asked her if she was experiencing pain, and I checked for bleeding. I stayed with her until help arrived. I knew what to do in this emergency thanks to my first-aid training."

Safety Training

Each quarter, the job superintendents undergo safety training on a specific topic. The most recent topic taught them how to spot the warning signals of drug use. Help and support is provided to employees with drug and alcohol problems. Through a partnership with Rockingham Memorial Hospital, employees have access to an employee assistance program if they need outside help for personal problems.

Mr. Hall says, "We are very proud of our safety record. We know that safety is important to everyone. This focus on safety may even give us an edge when we compete for new jobs."

He adds that safety and quality go hand-in-hand.

"The company reputation rests on delivering the job on schedule, providing the highest possible quality, and finishing the job within budget. Our emphasis on safety adds value to each and every project," Mr. Hall notes.

By visiting each job site at least once a month, Mr. Hall helps to raise awareness of the importance of safety at all

times. The company also works closely with the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry's Occupational Safety and Health Division (VOSH), and takes advantage of VOSH's voluntary consultation services, in which a VOSH consultant visits the project sites and notes areas that need to be changed in some way to make the workplace safer.

Subsidiary Legacy Cabinets enjoys an excellent safety record. Each year, the group has received the highest possible safety score from the Architectural Woodwork Institute. Mr. Hall also noted that the Virginia Contractors Group Self-Insured Association has named Nielsen Builders, Inc. the outstanding general contractor for the second year in a row. This honor is a testament to the focus on safety.

Active participation in the Virginia Chapter of the Association of General Contractors of America Safety Alliance program is ongoing. **Kevin Willis** is a member of the Piedmont District alliance steering committee, and Mr. Hall is the chairperson of the Valley District alliance steering committee. The company has been recognized for outstanding safety achievement by the AGC for a number of years.



Tom Wright uses personal protective equipment.



Jose Cruz and Scott Smiley inspect equipment.



Injury Prevention Requires Statistical Knowledge

by Patricia Vernon

"If you want to dramatically cut workers' compensation costs, follow the numbers, not the headlines," notes Dr. Tom Leamon, director of the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety, who presented the 2004 Liberty Mutual Workplace Index findings at the National Workers' Compensation and Disability Conference in November 2004. "Understand why your employees get hurt and address these sources, rather than the latest safety fads. The top causes of injuries identified by the index may not make the front page, but they're probably driving your costs."

The 2004 Liberty Mutual Workplace Index analyzes combined data from 1998 and 2002 from workers' compensation information from leading global insurer Boston-based Liberty Mutual Group, the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics and the National Academy of Social Insurance.

"Identify the injuries that drive your workers' compensation costs, using the index as a starting point. Prioritize the ones you want to address. Set clear targets for reducing each injury. Put in place the tactics and training that will prevent these injuries. And regularly track performance and update the plan," Leamon said.

Highlights from this study that crosses all industries indicate that overexertion, falls on the same level and bodily reaction were the top three injury cases, representing 50 percent of the total cost of serious workplace injuries in 2002. This cost employers about \$25 billion a year, or \$500 million a week. These top three injuries are increasing in incident numbers along with the cost, which rose 3.8 percent, 5.9 percent and 11.8 percent respectively between 2001 and 2002. The study also reports that between 1998 and 2002, costs for each of these types of injuries rose 16.4 percent, 25.7 percent and 28.7 percent respectively. Serious work-related injuries, which fell 0.7 percent in 2002 from 2001, cost employers almost \$1 billion per week in 2002 in payments to injured workers and their medical care providers. As serious work-related injury numbers fell, the cost of that care rose from \$46.1 billion in 2001 to \$49 billion in 2002.

According to information released in March 2005 from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington, D.C., construction and manufacturing, mak-

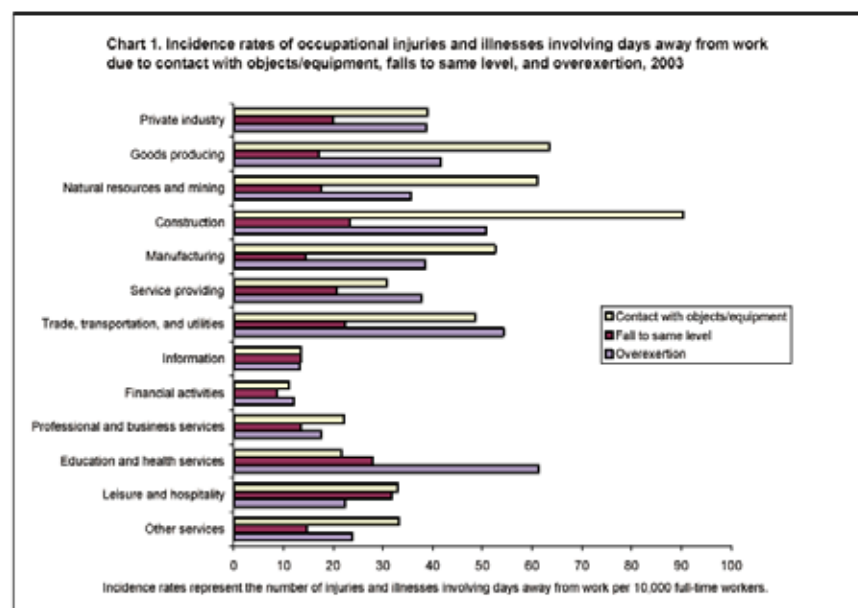
ing up 21 percent of private industry employment, accounted for 31 percent of the injuries and illnesses requiring days away from work, with "struck by an object" being the most prevalent event. The second highest incident rate was overexertion, which was the leading cause of injury and illness for service-providing industries. Falling to the same level was indicated as the third most prominent incident. Only leisure/hospitality and education/health services had a higher number of these incidents than did the construction industry. (See Chart 1.)

The demographic characteristics reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated that, across all industries, men accounted for 65 percent of the total cases with days away from work (1.3 million), which is higher than their share of hours worked (59 percent). Injuries and illness to workers aged 25 to 54 accounted for almost three-quarters of all injured

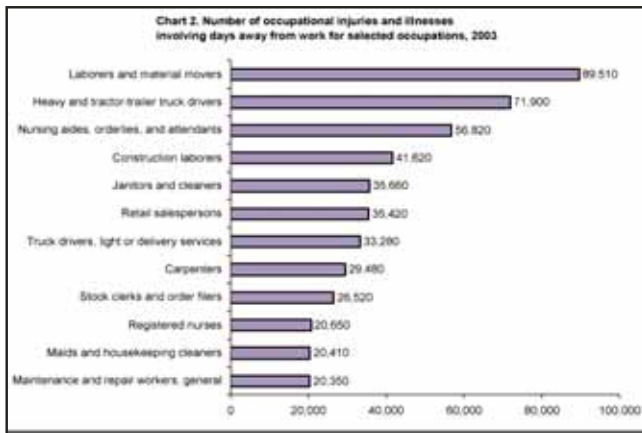
workers, about the same as their share of hours worked in 2003 (74 percent). Employees with one to five years of service with their employer accounted for 37 percent of all injuries and illnesses sustained, higher than their 31 percent share of employment. Transportation and material-moving occupations experienced more injuries and illnesses with days away from work than any other major occupational group (259,920) in 2003.

To stem the tide of accidents and keep the workforce safe, every company must effectively communicate safety as a core business value throughout the corporate structure. This is especially so in the construction industry.

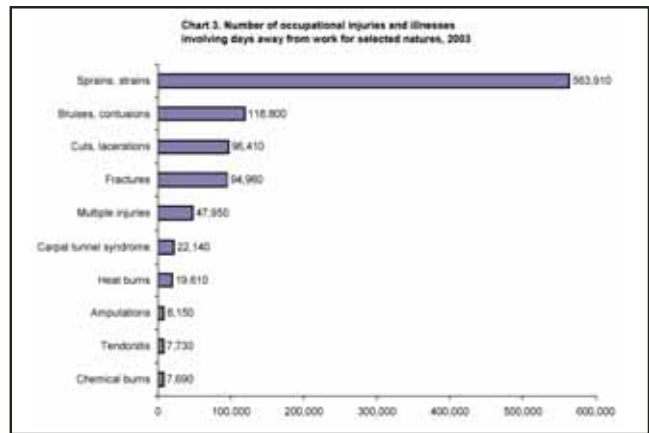
"The employer must focus on the basics and have an effective and comprehensive safety program in use. Ensure that your safety program is dynamic, living and breathing and not kept in a binder that sits on the shelf,"



Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor • March 2005



Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor • March 2005



Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor • March 2005

OSHA Training Officer Joe Gates said. "An effective program takes buy-in from the management but also needs to be properly communicated to field supervisors, who should also identify and have the authority to eliminate the hazard when they see it."

But according to the June 2005 issue of *Industrial Safety & Hygiene News*, only half of employees said their direct supervisor takes the time to explain policy and procedure, and less than half of these workers said senior leaders have good listening skills. One solution may be to approach the communication of a safety culture like an advertising agency would a product they wanted to market — thinking of safety as a product and the employees as potential customers.

Active listening skills are most important to learn what internal customer needs and issues are regarding the success and failures of a company's safety culture, which directly impacts employees, their income and their careers.

Demonstrating that the safety culture is in the best interest of the employee and how low losses can help meet professional and personal goals is a good way to get buy-in. Safety managers who take on the role of advisor, researcher and a resource while being highly visible and accessible to employees can reinforce this positive, two-way communications environment. Setting a good example also reinforces your message. Knowing, following and enforcing the rules fairly and consistently will earn loyal support and cooperation from employees. Just as any consumer can tell you, messages need to

be timed correctly and be repeated in a variety of creative ways and mediums, such as the Web site, newsletters, e-mails and Web conferences, for example.

Skanska, a global construction services company, uses high-quality advertisement posters to communicate their zero-tolerance safety culture, and employees follow "stretch and flex" exercise regimens to reduce soft-tissue injuries. Skanska gives the authority and control to all workers by employing a policy that anyone on site is able to stop unsafe work. Known for their creative approach to safety, Skanska used an innovative team approach on their high profile project, the construction of Gillette Stadium in Foxboro, Massachusetts.

According to Skanska, this project became the largest construction job and the only sports facility to be covered by a partnership agreement with the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The agreement formalized a commitment to safety by all parties involved in building the 68,000-seat stadium for the New England Patriots. According to Skanska, "Indeed, the partnership has resulted in an unusually low lost-time incident rate. With more than 1.2 million hours worked, the incident rate is 2.1, less than half of the national construction industry average, based on statistics developed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics."



In July 2005, labor, management and regulators partnered in Boston, Massachusetts, to take another innovative, industry-wide, team approach to stopping falls on construction job sites. Meeting at the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety, firms, unions, regulators and safety equipment manufacturers committed to joining the fight to battle this leading cause of worker deaths at commercial building sites. The group agreed as a team to improve the equipment that prevents falls and identify the best ways to promote and sustain worksite safety. Each team will regularly meet to report on the interplay of several vital factors: individual worker skills and perceptions; the worksite layout and equipment; management motivation and commitment; owner's expectations and more.

"Finding the best ways to keep construction workers safe takes partnership and process," notes Bobby Banks, Northeast Ironworkers/Management Progressive Action Cooperative Trust (IMPACT) director and former Ironworkers Local 7 president. "This initiative gets everyone focusing on the same goal and following a clear path towards a safer site."



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Embracing Diversity in the Workforce

by Patricia L. May

The construction industry in general is facing a shortage of employees and is looking to the immigrant population to meet the need. According to *FMI Quarterly*, Issue 4, 2004, one of the top challenges in the construction industry is language barriers. With more non-English-speaking people in the workforce, improving communications becomes critical. Many work-related injuries among the Hispanic population come from an inability to speak and read English, which results in not understanding verbal or written warnings.

Nielsen's 230 employees come from a wide range of backgrounds. In 1998, new hires included employees who had moved here from different countries. Currently, almost twenty percent of the workforce is Hispanic. Overall, the immigrant population in the Harrisonburg/Rockingham County area is about 20 percent, with most of those folks coming from primarily Spanish-speaking countries. More than 30 different languages are spoken in Harrisonburg City Public Schools.

In order to meet the challenge of improving communication, a former office assistant worked with human resources to develop a Spanish curriculum to help employees learn conversational Spanish. She also created an English class to teach native Spanish speakers some conversational English.

Human Resources Director **Jean Hieber** thought that the workforce had changed to a point that it would make sense to offer language classes. She says, "We had lots of requests for Spanish classes. As our workforce changed, it became more and more difficult to communicate on the project site. Superintendents were asking for classes. We decided the time was right for the classes."

She adds that having a bilingual person on staff made it easier to offer the classes. Ms. Hieber notes that a past partnership with a local adult education center enabled the company to offer Spanish classes to supervisors several years ago, but they didn't work out as well as anticipated. Classes that focus on con-

versational Spanish rather than classes that focus on grammar would be more relevant to the workforce.

Ms. Hieber adds, "Holding the classes during the day still presents a challenge. Sometimes it's hard for employees to leave the job site and come into the office for the classes. It's difficult to find the right time that will work for most employees."

The 10-week classes started in April 2006. The instructor says, "Our immigrant population was gradually increasing. There was some frustration out in the field because workers couldn't communicate with each other. I was being called out more and more to translate."

For example, an immigrant subcontractor employee who worked on the James Madison University Financial Services Building didn't understand the protocol of picking up trash and debris on the job site at the end of the day. When the bilingual employee met with him and explained the procedure, the

employee understood, and the problem was solved. "When we realized how easy it was to resolve the situation, we thought offering Spanish and English classes to our employees would be a step in the right direction of helping to improve communication," she says.

Spanish, English Classes Started

The Spanish classes started out with an enrollment of 19. Enrollment dropped off over time because it was difficult for employees to attend. These classes included four field workers and six office employees, with two females and eight males. The English classes had an enrollment of 12, with only one person dropping out. The employees who attended these classes all come from Mexico.

The employees in the English class all come from Mexico. The students, all male, range in age from 19 to their early

40s. The Spanish classes include four field workers and six office employees, with two females and eight males. The ages range from late 20s to 60s.

The student feedback has been very positive. Student **Ernesto Cruz-Ibarra** says, "It's important for us to come. Even if we only learn two or three words, it will help us communicate." Student **David Bazzle** says he has used Spanish in the field, and it has helped him to communicate with Spanish-speaking employees.

Ms. Hieber says, "It's important to continue this type of training in the future. If we hire people who don't speak English, it's incumbent upon us to provide them the opportunity to learn English. It is particularly important from a safety perspective. We have been very proactive in this area. Offering these classes is a testament to the company's commitment to improving and enhancing employee communication and safety."

A second set of Spanish classes, under the direction of Instructor Danny Heiber was recently started. These classes focus on conversation and terminology used in the construction industry.

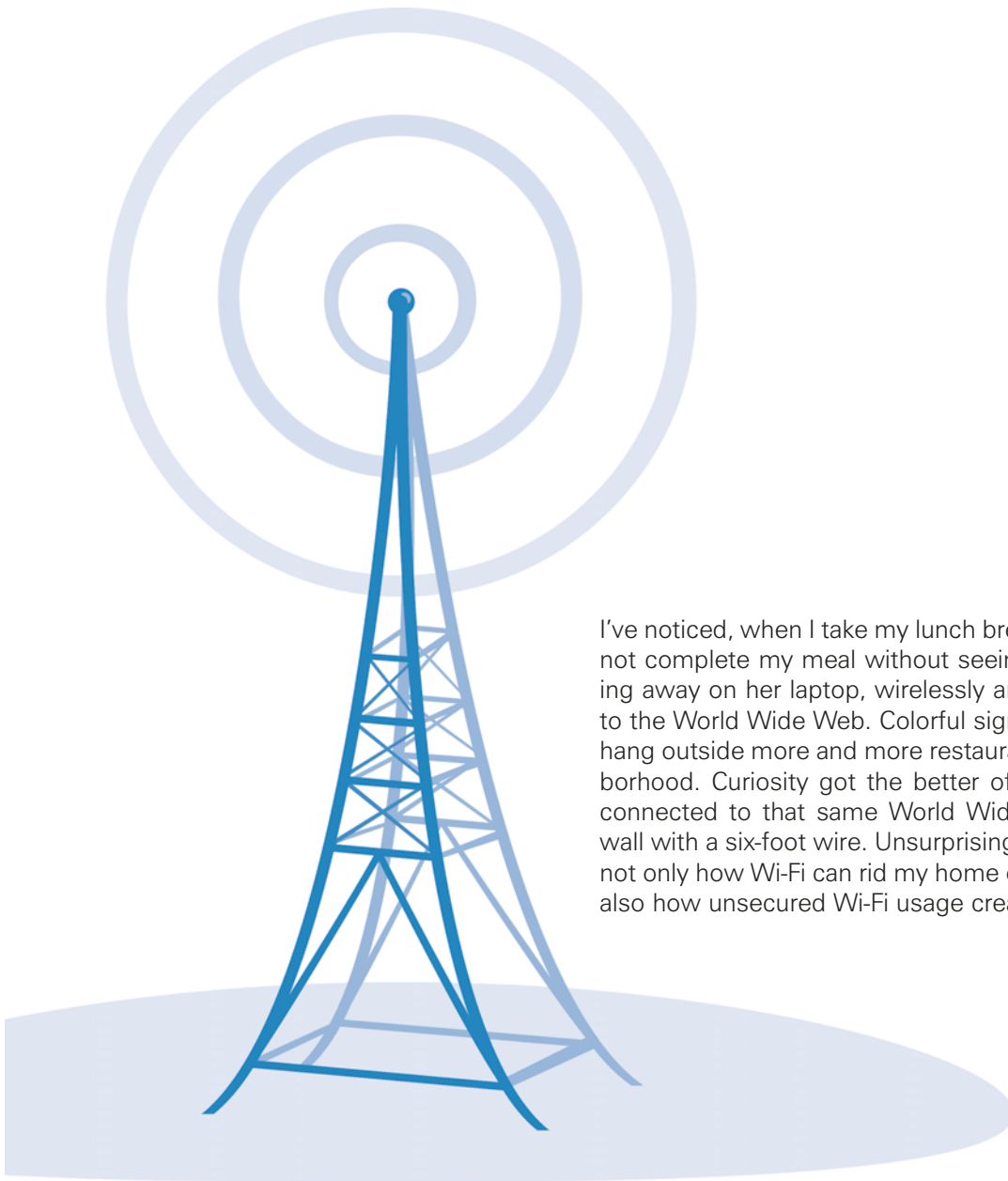
"It's important to continue this type of training in the future. If we hire people who don't speak English, it's incumbent upon us to provide them the opportunity to learn English. It is particularly important from a safety perspective."
- Jean Hieber



Jim Ketterman and Dick Holsinger learn new Spanish vocabulary.

What Is Wi-Fi?

by Shannon Patterson



I've noticed, when I take my lunch breaks at Panera Bread, I cannot complete my meal without seeing at least one person typing away on her laptop, wirelessly and miraculously connected to the World Wide Web. Colorful signs boasting "Wi-Fi Access" hang outside more and more restaurants every day in my neighborhood. Curiosity got the better of me when I found myself connected to that same World Wide Web, anchored into the wall with a six-foot wire. Unsurprisingly, many Web sites explain not only how Wi-Fi can rid my home of pesky Internet wires, but also how unsecured Wi-Fi usage creates a cause for alarm.

To say a computer is programmed for Wi-Fi basically means it is compatible through a Wi-Fi certified radio to connect anywhere a Wi-Fi wireless standard is available, according to the Wi-Fi Alliance. A Wi-Fi standard is an unlicensed radio spectrum set by the Wi-Fi Alliance and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. Wi-Fi allows consumers to get online at any public place outfitted with a Wi-Fi hot spot. It also opens the door for homes and offices, so everyone can share one printer and network without wires.

There are currently four Wi-Fi standards: 802. 11b, 802. 11a, 802. 11g and, the newest, 802. 11n. Not all of the standards are compatible with each other, and they all have their own conveniences and inconveniences.

The newer the standard, the quicker the processing. 802. 11b was the first standard and still is the most popular, but it has the lowest bandwidth. 802. 11a came next, and it is not compatible with 802. 11b or 802. 11g, which came third. 802. 11g and 802. 11b are compatible, but they both interfere with home appliances. 802. 11n is scheduled to become a standard Wi-Fi in late 2006 or early 2007. It is supposed to be compatible with both 802. 11b and 802. 11g. Companies try to include all standards in products in order to cut down on compatibility issues.

While the high-speed levels and the ability to surf the Internet at countless locations sounds like a dream, Wi-Fi certainly has its drawbacks. Hackers can hone in on my Wi-Fi signal and steal it for themselves. Whether or not they plan to search through the contents of my hard drive is another problem all together. Without certain security features, it is very difficult to detect an intruder on an Internet connection.

Identity thieves can also set up a second Wi-Fi hot spot in public places, with the intention of stealing personal financial information from computers. If I forget to disable the automatic Wi-Fi connection while carrying my computer in public, my computer may connect to a bad hot spot, against my will.

Despite the downfalls, Wi-Fi for computers is an innovative idea that is becoming more and more popular as restaurants, universities, companies and households equip themselves with wireless capabilities. As security updates become effectively available, this new technology will certainly untangle more issues than my Internet cables.

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Is Your Web Site Really

A study focusing on how architects, engineers, contractors and their clients use technology reveals some surprises. Learn how to structure a better Web site from the client's perspective and improve your image.

Working for You?

"We need to upgrade our Web site," says the savvy marketer in your organization who has completed a review of your competitors' Web sites and decided your company takes last place in the competition. Is your first reaction positive, and do you jump on board the bandwagon, or do you consider this a battle cry of the brave and walk away from that heretic?

Although Web site enhancements and upgrades represent wise investments essential to remain competitive, many still aren't certain where to start. Notice I wrote "upgrades" and "enhancements"; that's because almost 98% of the professional service firms responding to the survey had a Web site or were planning to launch one — your first benchmark indicator — how are you doing so far?

The first step in upgrading or enhancing your site is to determine your objectives. What are you trying to accomplish with the upgrade? Has your company repositioned itself? Have you added or deleted service areas? Do you want a site that has project management capabilities for clients along with more general information for prospects who may or may not know you? Whatever reasons you have, you can begin undaunted by following a few guidelines for developing content.

How important are the bells and whistles? Prospects aren't evaluating how well you design your site; they are evaluating your professional design services. Creating interest with flashing

lights or zooming fireballs may be interesting but not essential to a well-designed site. Research indicates that the critical first impression of your company often occurs in cyberspace. How can you maximize their experience and entice them to contact you? Clients in the study disliked Web sites that are slow-loading, contain outdated information or ones that are difficult to navigate; therefore, evaluate how these design elements affect your site from the reader's perspective.

Are you trying to "level the playing field?" According to the findings, readers are most concerned about geographic location from the standpoint of trying to contact you. Often companies have a tendency to downplay details perceived as being negative, such as location or size; however, visitors often access Web sites to quickly locate you and prefer to see your telephone number, e-mail contact information and geographic location on the home page. Don't lose opportunities by burying this information.

What are the important sections to include? Consider your Web site as you would a brochure. Research indicates visitors want to see information on a company's history, operations and do read sections titled "About Us." Don't downplay the importance of this background information in connecting with the reader.

Cut-and-dry or detail-oriented? Arguments for both are strong; however, clients in the study wanted to see as

much information as possible on the Web site. Listing current and past project information, product information and project photographs, and having access to different types of project information were very important to clients. Including a client list and employee profiles followed in importance to clients. What matters most is that the information is well written and written in a Web-friendly style.

The visual appeal of a professional service firm's Web site reflects the company's professionalism and image and is important in enticing prospects to look further into a company. Three out of four clients responding to the survey believed Web sites are accurate reflections of the professionalism and image of an organization. Therefore, in upgrading an existing site or creating a new one, remember: visual appeal, easy navigability and a professionally presented Web site will go a long way toward creating the first and best cyber impression that can lead to more opportunities.

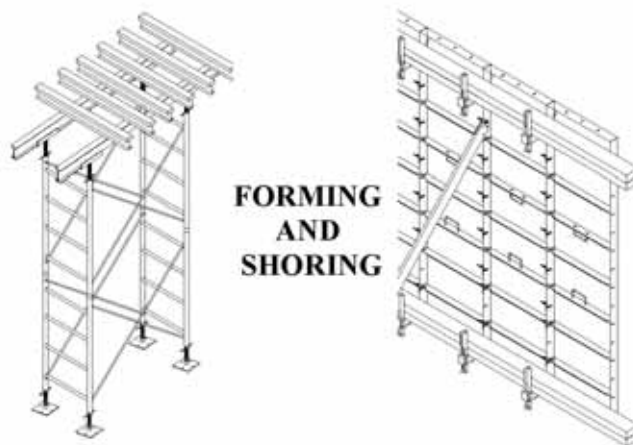
Research was commissioned by the National Foundation of the Society for Marketing Professional Services, Alexandria, Virginia, and conducted by SRA Research Group Inc. and Kienle Communications, Ltd.

Access to the complete study is available on the SMPS Web site at www.SMPS.org.

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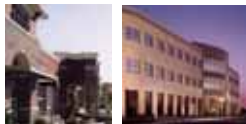


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