

The Commonwealth Quarterly

News from around the circuit.

Summer 2007



Commonwealth Electric Company
of the midwest

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How Do You Define Success?

Thomas M. Price – Chairman of the Board/CEO

July 1, 2007 marks the twentieth year that Commonwealth Electric has been in business. I am very proud of the accomplishments this company has made during this period of time. It has grown from less than \$6,000,000 in volume in 1987 to over \$75,000,000 in 2007. Commonwealth Electric is literally a no debt company.

CECM is in the list of the top 50 Electrical Contractors. Along the way it has won such awards as business of the year, the cornerstone award, entrepreneur of the year, and to the Better Business honor role to name a few. One of the best awards and achievements this last year was that the company went the whole year without a lost time accident – now that is really exciting!

As I reflect on our organization these last twenty years, I get excited about this company's future. Not only do we have the management in place for the next twenty years, I believe we have it in place for the next 30 and maybe 40. This company has expanded to six locations and has made great strides in coordinating and communicating its operations between those locations.

I am pleased to be part of this dynamic organization now and for years to come. Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest has been, is, and will be a moving force in the electrical construction industry thanks to all of you.

As you all know, I love this company and its people. We have been like a family these past 20 years and will still continue to be so in the future.

I had my midlife crisis at 24 when I found out that I didn't like being a CPA; so I got into construction and have never looked back. I have



Tom Price

also never stopped looking forward, and I am excited about what the next 20 years has in store for all of us at Commonwealth Electric Company.

The success of our relationships with our clients, employees, and suppliers has been very simple: Ethics. We treat everyone that we deal with the same way as we want to be treated. We incorporate our client's goals as our own and we focus on getting the job done correctly on time.

Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest is truly "COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE".

Commonwealth Acquires New Office

Gary Demmel – Vice President

Commonwealth has a new office in Columbus, Nebraska with the purchase of Industrial Electrical Contractors (IEC). IEC was started and owned by Steve Kaup who will remain as the Branch Manager for the Columbus Office. This new office will continue to operate as IEC, a division of Commonwealth Electric.

Steve started IEC in 1997 and has ADM as the principal customer at their corn processing plant in Columbus. We will continue to do work at the ADM plant which is in the beginning stages of a very large expansion. They will be adding a new dry grind ethanol facility and a cogeneration plant besides other minor additions. IEC currently has about 16 electricians working in the field. Besides Steve in the office, Christine Kiene will remain as the Office Manager.

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) has worked with us to initiate a new Local 22 "Area B" agreement for the Columbus area. This contract will approximately cover the geographical area north of Highway 92 and west of Highway 77.



Gary Demmel, Vice President; Steve Kaup, Branch Manager and Christine Kiene, Office Manager

This agreement has wages and benefits that reflect what is required to compete in the Columbus and surrounding area. Our plan is to concentrate on ADM initially and then build our customer base from there. We believe that there is a lot of potential with the many industrial and commercial customers in this area. These opportunities should allow us to grow and be the major electrical contractor for this region.

We would like to welcome all of the current IEC employees and we look forward to a successful future working together.

Polly Rosenbaum State Archives and History Building

John Silvas – Project Manager

CECM was recently awarded the Polly Rosenbaum State Archives and History Building by Mortenson. This is the fourth project within the past two years which we have teamed with them.

The state of Arizona was in need of a storage and preservation facility to house its collection of archives, museum collections and artifacts, historic documents and rare books. In October of 2006 Mortenson was awarded a CM @ risk \$32.3M contract to construct such a facility, the Polly Rosenbaum State Archives and History Building. Construction began in January 2007 on the 140,000 sq ft facility, and the grand opening will be on May 30, 2008. The building is located in downtown



Polly Rosenbaum State Archives and History Building

Phoenix on 19th Avenue between Jackson and Madison Streets.

This facility is unique in that it contains special climate controls and protections from environmental and mechanical hazards, such as fire, floods, gaseous and particulate air pollution, UV light and pests. The facility

also contains a state-of-the-art laboratory for repair and conservation of historic items, a treatment room (for blast freezing/fumigating to exterminate pests), an audio-visual room, public hearing rooms and other public areas.

Mortenson awarded CECM the \$2.1M subcontract in February for the electrical systems including fire alarm, security and emergency power (UPS and diesel generator). CECM began underground conduit work at the site in late March. John Silvas is the Project Manager and Joe Amavisca is the Project Superintendent.

Omaha Safety Award

Ruben Bera – Corporate Safety Director

On May 17, 2007 the Omaha branch received the award of Bronze Honor for Superior Safety and Health programs from the National Safety Council, Omaha Chapter. This award was given to first year recipients that achieved outstanding safety results. Although this was submitted through the Omaha office, this award was given as a result of all of our location's safety achievements.

The presentation was held at the Omaha Qwest Center. There were many city and government officials on hand to honor those in the Omaha and Council Bluffs, Iowa area who have demonstrated commitment to employee safety and health and have the numbers to back up their claim. David Firestone, C.O.O. and Omaha Branch Manager, Gary Demmel were in attendance as well as Cheryl Keyes, Omaha

Office Manager, Omaha Project Manager's Chuck Fintel, Neil Davidson, Eric Hoge and Mark Ross. Jennifer Harris, Safety Administration did the legwork to gather all the required information and was also on hand.

This award will be displayed in the Omaha office but the award belongs to all those who came to work everyday and displayed good safety judgment in a field that can be dangerous and ever-changing. Everyday each of you are faced with decisions that can affect not only the crew but the entire project. Your actions are the reason we at Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest receive recognition for not only a quality job done on time but a job done safely. More and more general contractors and owners are requiring sub-contractors to have total commit-

ment to safety and to demonstrate their commitment. With the support of upper management and from all the branch management, I believe we have done just that. As I travel to all of our locations, I am encouraged at the commitment all of our field and office personnel have shown towards keeping our people safe.

As we take a moment to congratulate the Omaha branch and celebrate May, the National Electrical Safety month, let's not forget to give all of us a pat on the back for a job well done. Awards are nice to receive but they do not reflect what it takes to achieve these awards. It's the worker making the difference in their actions. We need to stay focused and keep our minds on the task at hand.

Think Smart – Work Safe



Gary Demmel – Vice President, Ruben Bera – Corporate Safety Director, David Firestone – President/COO



Omaha Safety Award

Foreman Training In Omaha

Ed Gable – Omaha City Superintendent

The Omaha branch is providing foreman training for its electricians. The foreman training program is being structured as part of my role as City Superintendent. I am responsible for setting up and presenting training to our leaders in the field. Our goal is to improve efficiency on all our projects.

The idea is to bring management and labor together as a team. We discuss the importance of sharing ideas with one another, and how we can improve and build on what we currently have in place. Ideas like 7:00 am daily morning meetings with all crew members is an example of an idea that came up as part of foreman training. The crew meeting at the beginning of the day is to set goals for that day, give direction as needed and bring up any issues before they affect our productivity. We have also implemented job specific foreman meetings. The Project Foreman, City Superintendent and Project Manager attend this meeting. It is set up weekly or bi-weekly depending on the project. In this meeting we discuss schedule, manpower, material, and equipment needs. This gives everyone on the job a chance to plan for upcoming activities on the job sites.

Over the past year we have met with foremen on the job sites to provide training and lunch. Through these meet-

ings, we have developed lists of “Best Practices” for activities such as cable pulling, conduit, and lighting fixture installation. We share these lists with other job sites and review them before starting new activities.

In January, we started having foreman training and dinner at Farmer B’s restaurant once a month with 8 to 10 people. We believe this is a step in the right direction to build team relationships at Commonwealth Electric. We structured the program so that there is a mixture of new and experienced foremen, journeymen, and apprentices, along with a different project manager each month. Gary Demmel, Neil Davidson, and I also attend and participate in the discussions. We meet and have open discussions. The feedback we get has been excellent. This has been a very effective means of communication by getting input for the field and office. After two hours of open discussion, a Power Point presentation and feedback, we all sit down for dinner and closing comments. We have found it to be a great way to overcome challenges we are faced with every day and come up with opportunities for our industry to gain back market share and for success at Commonwealth Electric.

Des Moines Donates Time and Materials for First Assembly of God Church Free Clinic

T. Michael Price – Vice President

Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest joined The Iowa Clinic and Ryan Construction to perform a renovation makeover for the First Assembly of God Church Free Medical Clinic. During the weekend of April 27th, 28th and 29th, the free clinic was given an entire face lift including new light fixtures, cabinets, countertops, under cabinet lighting, telephone and data cabling, paint, doors, and a new drop ceiling.

Commonwealth donated the electrical materials and our employees donated their time for the electrical part of the project. The Commonwealth employees who donated time over the weekend were:

Nate Findlay	Mark Ramsey	Mike Duffy
Michael Price	Trevor Schmidt	Jim Olson
Michael Madden	Ron Saf	Keith Marshel
Shawn Hauf	Jason Lane	



Des Moines Volunteers

The above employees joined employees of Ryan Companies, The Iowa Clinic, The Baker Group, and The First Assembly of God Church to staff the makeover renovations nearly around the clock. The makeover was a great success and the church is very happy with the new clinic.

The Future Looks Bright

Dan Shannon – Branch Manager

The Expo Division is having a fantastic year filled with many success stories. The future looks bright for both the Phoenix and Tucson markets.

It has been confirmed that the Tucson Convention Center will be adding a brand new arena and convention space. This \$130 million dollar project will give the entire Convention Center a new face and add additional convention space which will make the Convention Center one of the premiere facilities in Arizona for trade shows, conventions, and special events. The project will begin immediately and looks to be complete in 2010. As the exclusive provider of electrical services since 1995, we are very excited about this as it will certainly add to our many years of success and great relationships with the Convention Center and the City of Tucson. Speaking of Tucson, as of this past February, Jennifer Willer is celebrating 10 years with Commonwealth Electric. Jennifer is the heart and soul of our Tucson office and is directly responsible for our many years of success. Congratulations Jennifer!!!!!!!!!!!!

Tucson is not the only place that's growing here in Arizona. As mentioned in a previous newsletter, the Phoenix Convention is well into Phase 2 of the \$600 million dollar project which will triple the amount of convention and meeting space offered in Phoenix. It is absolutely amazing to watch this tremendous facility literally changing the face of the city skyline. The Expo Division is gearing up for the



Phoenix Convention Center Looking East



Construction of Phase 2 of Phoenix Convention Center

opening of this, the final phase, in January of 2009. This is truly a state-of-the-art facility at which many new and much larger events will choose as their destination.

I am proud to say that we continue to look for, and purchase, the latest and greatest equipment out there to provide the best possible service for all events. I will be traveling to Las Vegas in June along with our General Foremen, Jeff Willer and Arlen Roland, to The Nutech Industries' plant so that we can see first hand what state-of-the-art equipment is available to us. Nutech is the premiere provider of temporary power equipment in the United States.

We are also on the cusp of introducing our new computer system which will make our operation much smoother and efficient and allow both our Phoenix and Tucson offices to link together and be able to communicate accounting func-

tions as well as show a live look at both operations simultaneously. The system will also provide all of our clients the ability to order our services on line. This truly puts us on the front line of customer service which, in our industry, is most important. Also for the first time ever, our home office in Lincoln will also be able to have a live look at the expo division as it pertains to show performance. This, again, will make all offices involved, more informed and efficient.

Many new and exciting things coming up the pike for the Expo Division! I look forward to reporting our successes in our next newsletter.

Oakland Foods Microwave Expansion

Eric Hoge – Manager of Engineering Services

Oakland Foods in Oakland, Iowa is expanding its microwave bacon capacity again! Last year, Oakland installed a six lane microwave oven to meet increased demand for pre-cooked bacon. This year, they are adding two new microwave lines.

Microwave lines use a substantial amount of electricity. Each of the new lines has ten 75kW transmitters so

that each transmitter will require over 100 amps at 480V. To supply this much power, Commonwealth Electric is installing a new 3000A service to supply not only the transmitters, but also the front end slicing and packaging equipment.

This project is being designed and installed by Commonwealth Electric. Eric Hoge is providing engineering and

project management out of the Omaha office. Bruce Burnham is the on-site foreman. The project team is responsible for coordinating the new 3000A service with the local utility, procuring and installing switchgear, installation of OEM supplied microwave control panels, and the connection of all power and control wiring. This project will be completed at the end of July.

Intercollegiate Athletic Facility Additions and Renovations at the University of Arizona

Jay Hoobler – Branch Manager

The Tucson Branch recently started work on a new project located at the University of Arizona. The project is comprised of three distinct elements that will enhance the quality of training and competition facilities for several athletic programs. As part of the ICA long-term plan to upgrade facilities, the project will enhance training facilities and



Intercollegiate Facility

improve the University's ability to recruit top level student athletes and coaches.

The three elements that constitute the project are:

- Indoor Practice Facility will alleviate over scheduling of McKale Arena by basketball and volleyball teams and summer camps and reduce the demand on student recreation facilities.
- Gymnastics Training Facility Expansion will allow ICA gymnastics program to train on apparatus that are consistent with those used in competition.
- Hillenbrand Aquatic Center Diving Pool will allow the ICA dive program to train and compete in facilities that meet National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) Championship requirements.

Adair County Memorial Hospital – Addition & Renovation, Greenfield, Iowa

Matt Masters – Project Manager

As the summer of 2007 approaches, Commonwealth Electric Company's Des Moines location goes to work in Greenfield, Iowa at the Adair County Memorial Hospital. The project consists of two main phases including a 21,600 square foot addition and a roughly 27,000 square foot renovation.

The project includes new site lighting, interior lighting, devices, branch circuit wiring, fire alarm system, low voltage conduit systems and a new 250KW generator that will provide emergency power for both the new addition and the existing facility. Additionally, the project includes a new 1200Amp 277/480V Service that will feed the thirteen new patient rooms on the second floor and the patient family

The project consists of 28,100 square feet of new indoor practice facilities for the men and women's basketball programs and a new diving complex along with renovations to existing swimming and gymnastics facilities. The new facilities will be constructed just east of the McKale Arena in the heart of the U of A campus. An extensive amount of excavation will be required as a large portion of the project will be constructed below grade. This job will undoubtedly be a high profile project because of its location adjacent to the "mall" area on campus. This area is used extensively by the student population but the prominent use is for tailgating parties during football season. There will be plenty of outside observers to watch over the project come fall when football season starts.

We are excited to be returning to the University campus. It has been a couple of years since we have performed any work at the University. The ICA Facility is one of three projects that we are currently working on at the University with local general contractor, Lloyd Construction. This project is being managed by Tim Beatty and will be supervised at the field level by Robert Ervin.

The project was started in April and is scheduled to be completed in August of 2008. Due to the extensive amount of site work required it will be several months before we are fully mobilized and on-site on a full time basis.

Commonwealth Electric is looking forward to being involved in such a prominent project for the University and we are excited to be a part of the continuing success of the University of Arizona athletic program.



Adair County Memorial Hospital

clinic on the first floor.

Russell Construction Company is the Construction Manager

on the project. Mike Van Der Hart is Commonwealth Electric's Project Foreman. Mike is supported in the office by Project Manager Matt Masters. Dianna Merritt originally estimated the project. Commonwealth Electric looks forward to working with Russell Construction Company and providing both Russell Construction, and the people who work and use the Adair County Memorial Hospital, a quality electrical installation.