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FROM THE SPONSORS

Dear In Business Las Vegas readers,

Contractor members of the Associated General Contractors (AGC), Las Vegas Chapter are responsible for creating one of the most famous skylines in the world. They have built impressive highway, water, education and telecommunications infrastructure that has transformed a desert way station into the living city we are proud to call home.



But they've done much more than that. That is why AGC is excited to announce the third annual Skill, Integrity and Responsibility (SIR) awards, and to bring to light the local construction industry's phenomenal accomplishments.

The contractors and business partners that comprise the 650 AGC member companies and partners are proud to do busi-

ness in Southern Nevada, and they're proud to contribute to the quality of life we all enjoy.

It is that spirit of community, camaraderie and corporate citizenship – beyond the workaday world — that the SIR Awards recognize.

These awards epitomize the characteristics that AGC contractors share and were introduced by the Northern Nevada AGC chapter. They have since been adopted by several of AGC's 100 chapters nationwide. The Las Vegas version has quickly become the most coveted recognition in the construction industry.

AGC is recognized as the choice and the voice of the construction industry.

Steve Holloway
Executive Vice President
Associated General Contractors



Dear In Business Las Vegas readers,

The contractor members of the Associated General Contractors, Las Vegas Chapter, are responsible for creating the most famous skyline in the world. They will also be responsible for changing this skyline over the next half decade.

We are proud to be sponsoring an event for all of the contractors and business partners that comprise the AGC's companies and partners that do business in Southern Nevada.

The SIR Awards recognize the outstanding performance each contractor has achieved. While all of the great work



cannot be awarded by anything more than a large check, the best of the best are being honored by the AGC with these SIR Awards.

Innovation and outstanding performance together with Skill, Integrity and Responsibility has set each member of this amazing chapter of this organization above and beyond the rest of the country.

Congratulations to all of the award recipients.

Jonathan Fine
President
Sting Surveillance



IN BUSINESS Las Vegas

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Firm of Mead and Pezzillo show dedication, passion

By Deborah Roush
Contributing writer

Attorney Leon Mead likes being involved with the construction industry so much that he rents space from the Association of General Contractors (AGC) above their office on North Durango Drive.

But his connection is much stronger than that, which is why Mead's firm — Mead and Pezzillo — won the Skill, Integrity and Responsibility Affiliate of the Year Award from the Las Vegas chapter of the AGC. The award recognizes non-contractor AGC members who make significant strides in political and community relations on behalf of the association and the construction industry.

Mead, who sits on the organization's Government Affairs Committee, uses his legal skills to "champion the cause for the contractors and protect the industry," according to Greg Korte, president of the Las Vegas division of The Korte Co., a design-build firm, and incoming president of the AGC. For example, for the most recent legislative session, Mead helped renegotiate the mechanics' lien laws and the Prompt Payment Act, two hotly debated issues.

"Leon did a great job of sorting through all the issues and focusing not only on what was best for the general contractors, subcontractors or developers, but on what was best for the industry as a whole," Korte said.

Korte describes Mead, who works on any legislation that affects the contractors and the AGC, as unbiased and fair. "He looks at the issues from the standpoint of what is morally and ethically right, and I feel he does a great job of towing that line. He's not trying to come up with lavish legislation for the industry that ignores the rights of the consumers. He's trying to find equal ground across the board," he said.

Mead, who has been a member of the AGC for the past decade and a member of the Government Affairs Committee for six years, said he enjoys the pro bono work he does for the group. "Ninety eight percent of the work I do with my law firm comes out of the construction industry, and it's worthwhile to go in and give something back," Mead explained.

It's also an outlet for educating others about construction law, he added.



Brian Pezzillo, left, and Leon F. Mead II are winners of the Affiliate of the Year award, and specialists in "builder law" as the truck's vanity tag shows.

"To get the law applied properly there is a constant need for education — of judges, of contractors and the public. Part of my role in representing contractors is to educate how the law is to be applied and how to protect yourself," he said.

Mead said he is one of only a handful of attorneys in Las Vegas who work fulltime at representing contractors. "A lot of people say they are construction lawyers,

but they're really defect lawyers. We approach things from the contractor's perspective as opposed to the construction defect industry," he said. To that end, Mead spends his days tackling issues related to contract claims, mechanic liens, arbitrations, construction delays and impact claims.

"There are people who work with contracts daily and need

help with them. I work on revising bids, bid protests on public projects, and delays and how to deal with them. I'm familiar with dealing with unions and what happens when unions start picketing you," he said. "I work with contractors on a daily basis and know what their problems are. What happens, for example, when the steel erector goes bankrupt," he added.

That Mead is passionate about his work is evident when he describes his job and the day-to-day details that go along with it. "I love what I do. I wouldn't do anything else, at least in law," he said.

Mead is quick to credit the team of five attorneys and other staff at Mead and Pezzillo with his success — "and the time to go out and do pro bono work," he said.

Calling Brian Pezzillo his "right hand man," Mead said his partner is the "nuts and bolts guy who gets the work assigned and out the door in time. He makes so much of it work. He shoulders the burden in the firm, managing the work, and I'm the face-man of the firm," he said.

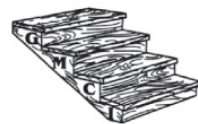
Mead is proud, too, of the work accomplished by the AGC. "They're good people and good lobbyists. They work very hard to achieve consensus when they can," he said. "They come up with solutions to make things happen and do an exceedingly good job of bringing groups together that normally would fight about issues," he said.

Korte said he appreciates Mead's dedication to AGC. "He's 100 percent committed to the organization and his commitment stretches beyond that — to the greater good of the construction industry," he said.

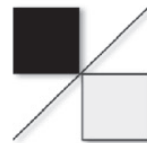
"He's 100 percent committed to the organization and his commitment stretches beyond that—to the greater good of the construction industry,"

Greg Korte
President, Las Vegas division
The Korte Co.

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Home-grown company enjoys stellar reputation

By **Damon Hodge**
Special sections writer

To appreciate how far Penta Building Group, ranked one of America's top 250 general contracting firms by Engineering News Record (No. 242, to be exact) has come in five years, consider this: six years ago, there was no Penta Building Group.

Armed with 65 collective years of experience in the construction industry, founders Ken Alber, Jeff Ehret and Blake Anderson — all expatriates from another top-250, nationally recognized firm, Perini — launched Penta in 2000, with the goal of being a great medium-sized company.

"We wanted to create a culture based on the employees, and to be a company where people wanted to come to work everyday and where we gave our employees a stage to excel on," Alber said. "We recruited and attracted people to build a culture of Penta. It's a family-type atmosphere, where employees know each other's kids. We now have 90-plus salaried employees and we maintain that culture. I hear frequently (from people outside the company) that this is a great place to work, that we're doing it right."

Melding the principals' local connections with an employee-friendly environment has created a carryover effect that has seen Penta's revenues explode—\$200 million in 2004 — and its resume of work continually expand.

On the gaming side of things: The Grandview Vegas for Eldorado Resorts,

a porte cochere entrance and convention center expansion at Caesars Palace, and construction of the Agua Caliente Spa Casino Resort in Palm Springs, California.

On the restaurant side of the resume: remodeling the 7,000-square-foot Sea Blue in the MGM Grand and the tri-level, 27,000-square-foot Mar-



Shops.

Since 2000, Penta has completed more than 12 truck freight-distribution projects in nine states, including the Santa Fe central-plant expansion and relocation for Station Casinos.

What's most telling, Alber said, is that much of Penta's growth occurred after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. "After

support of the Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation, the Women's Development Center of Nevada and DJs for PJs, an annual event benefiting Child Haven."

Mention Penta in construction circles and high praise seems universal.

Greg Korte, senior vice president/division manager of The Korte Co. said: "A lot of companies take a long time to go from zero to \$300 million. Penta has a great reputation in town for treating subcontractors, clients and employees right. They (Alber, Anderson and Ehret) are former Perini employees — essentially some of the top breadwinners for Perini. They were endeared to a lot of Perini clients, many of whom stayed with them. Penta is also very involved in the industry from the AGC standpoint."

AGC Safety and Training Director, Linda Gibson, holds the company up as a standard bearer on the issue of safety: "Any company in the state with more than 10 employees must have a safety plan. For a general contractor, this has to cover everything from saw protection to scaffolding to electrical to personal protective equipment, etc. There's a lot of responsibility. Penta is a very good company in the safety department. They've been acknowledged a couple of times on different sites. There's a top-down commitment to safety at this company."

Alber said "we're a homegrown company for the most part," and credits the personal relationships he, Anderson and Ehret built with subcontractors and building departments over the years, and working with the AGC, with fast-tracking Penta's success.

Alber serves on the AGC board, Ehret on the group's labor relations committee. "Our growth is a reflection on the AGC," Alber said. "The AGC really watches out for the contractor and subcontractor, particularly (recently) with state Senate (involvement) with construction-defect issues and lien-law reform."

Penta is equally committed to making inroads in the civic arena, Alber said, supporting such causes like the United Way; employees can

have money withdrawn from their paychecks to contribute to the United Way and its various causes.

Last year's inaugural Penta Charity Golf Classic raised \$38,000 (\$24,000 from Penta) for the Women's Development Center, a nonprofit program providing affordable housing programs and social services designed to move clients into self-sufficiency. Being a responsible corporate citizen, Alber said, is as important as earning recognition for industry accomplishments.

"The three principals have been here for a long time. We intend to retire here. Our roots are here, our families are here, our kids attend schools in local neighborhood," he said.

"We don't have great ambitions to move up ENR's (Engineering News Record's) list. But we may be forced to with how busy we are." ■



The top management at the Penta Building Group include, from left, Ken Alber, Jeff Ehret and Blake Anderson.

garitaville in the Flamingo, and building a restaurant for eponymous chef Bradley Ogden in Caesars Palace.

On the retail side of the ledger: overseeing a complete demolition and remodel of the FAO Schwarz store in Caesars' Forum

9/11, it took us about six to nine months to recover. So this (our growth) is really based on three and a half years," he said.

During the past five years, Penta's founders have also taken on leadership roles in Associated General Contractors (AGC), an industry trade group, and embarked on a mission to be equally committed corporate citizens, raising thousands of dollars for worthy causes.

Penta has been named AGC's Contractor of the Year. The group's most prestigious honor, contractor of the year "acknowledges a general contractor's service to AGC through marketing, advocacy, political involvement and support of the association's events and programs. The winner will also have exhibited a commitment to the community, sound business dealings, longevity and a commitment to skill, integrity and respect."

A nomination submitted for Penta summarizes its qualities: "In its fifth year in business, Penta continues to grow and be recognized as one of the most successful companies in Las Vegas, with a projected revenue in excess of \$300 million in 2005.

"The three principals lead the firm with unparalleled industry experience, guided by the highest ethics ... Clients return again and again, project after project, due to Penta's unique, all-encompassing approach that ensures quality projects are completed on time and within budget.

"With its headquarters in Las Vegas, Penta has created hundreds of jobs, both internally and with its subcontractor partner firms. Penta is further dedicated to the community, as demonstrated by its sizeable donations and

"After 9/11, it took us about six to nine months to recover. So this (our growth) is really based on three and a half years..."

Ken Alber
Founder,
Penta Building Group



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AGC has big plans, goals for 2006

By Lisa McQuerrey
Contributing writer

The Associated General Contractors (AGC) Las Vegas chapter has had a busy and successful year furthering its collective goals, both in the legislative arena and within its own ranks.

With more than 650 member companies in Southern Nevada, the AGC is the largest contractor association in the state. The nonprofit association is run by contractors for the benefit of its building, highway, heavy industrial, municipal and utility construction contractor members. The AGC represents both union and nonunion businesses and has several levels of membership, including general contractors, associate "specialty contractors" (subs and suppliers), union companies and affiliate members. Members must be Nevada-licensed contractors in good standing in the community.

Lobbying role

The AGC has taken a lead role in lobbying on behalf of the construction industry at the local, state and federal levels. According to AGC Executive Vice President Steve Holloway, during the 2005 legislative session, the organization was involved with 70 different pieces of legislation that could have potentially impacted the state's construction industry. The chapter opposed 37 bills, 21 of which were defeated and 14 of which were "favorably amended" (and subsequently passed) by an industry coalition led by AGC and the Southern Nevada Home Builders Association (SNHBA). Of the 20 bills initially supported by the AGC, 11 passed, two were amended into other bills that passed, and one was withdrawn upon request by the AGC. The AGC tracked, but took no position on, an additional 13 pieces of legislation.

Most notably, the AGC was the driving force behind legislative issues related to design-build, prompt pay, stop work for non-payment, lien law reform and construction defect reform. According to Holloway, three Senate bills introduced by the AGC were of particular importance.

Senate Bill 219

"Senate Bill 219 addressed problems with over-sized loads," explained Holloway. "The main problem was that every entity in the valley was requiring separate permits for moving oversized vehicles and equipment. We now have one permit, which will result in the savings of millions of dollars that was lost before in terms of time and manpower."

Senate Bill 300

According to Holloway, the AGC also introduced and passed SB300, which strengthened prompt-pay stop-work laws of the state, limited withholdings and set forth procedures for handling change orders.

Senate Bill 343

A third piece of legislation, SB343, addressed lien law. "The bill established that publicly owned land leased for private use is subject to lien," said Holloway. "For example, the airport leases a lot of land for private use. The lien can apply to what's

built on the land and the land itself."

Construction-defect Law

Probably the most significant issue addressed by the AGC in the 2003 and 2005 legislative sessions is the construction defect law. While the group made some progress in 2005, the issue is sure to be a hot topic at the 2007 session, as continued litigation is significantly impacting the cost of housing in an already skyrocketing market. "Right to repair" is not working," said Holloway. "We're still getting blanket claims. We're looking at what can be done to do away with frivolous lawsuits."

According to Holloway, construction-defect class-action filings in the Eighth Judicial District Court have doubled in the past year. At issue for the AGC is the way in which defects or perceived defects in new homes are being addressed.

"Legislation that was passed in 2005 is not doing what it should," explained Steve Hill, president of Silver State Materials and chair of the AGC's Government Affairs Committee. "Legislation should provide an opportunity for contractors and subcontractors to fix real problems in houses without resorting to lawsuits to resolve the issue. What happens is that these claims go to settlement, and often, the houses still don't get fixed."

According to Hill, between 2003 and 2004, more than \$600 million in construction-defect suits were settled. Hill said the current law has an "extrapolation provision," which essentially means if a problem is found in five, six or seven homes in a subdivision, an assumption can be made that the problem exists in all of the homes.

"We need a mediation process that works before a lawsuit is filed," explained Hill. "Otherwise it's creating a situation that drives up the cost of housing. Contractors end up having a difficult time getting insurance. It's just bad public policy. We would certainly like to see a situation where we can get back to dealing with customers one-on-one to fix real problems."

2007 Legislative Topics

The AGC is already gearing up for the 2007 legislative session. Gary Milliken is president of GEM Consulting and a contract lobbyist for the AGC for the last 10 years. "A lot of it (lobbying) is education," explained Milliken. "Explaining the differences between legitimate and nonlegitimate cases. Now we've got mixed-use high rises bringing commercial into the picture. We're going to be playing some defense."

Milliken said part of his role involves keeping legislators and various committees informed about potential issues during the "down time" between legislative sessions so everyone is up to speed when the legislature is in session. "There are a lot of technical issues, some of which are very detailed," explained Milliken. "It goes back to education."

Holloway and Hill both believe there will be some standout topics to be addressed in 2007: continued issues related to flaws in construction-defect law and issues related to affordable housing. Holloway said government impact fees are having a serious

effect on the price of housing, with \$50,000 of every \$200,000 in home building costs going to cover fees for water connections, sewer fees and other building permits and hook-ups.

AGC will also tackle the way in which Bureau of Land Management land is released and will address issues related to government-imposed stipulations on density, building size and open space requirements. Holloway said with the current rate of development, land availability in the valley would be exhausted within nine years.

"The legislature has an interim committee looking at the issue of affordable housing," added Milliken. "We're at a point now where businesses are having problems attracting and retaining employees because there is no attainable housing available."

The issue of how public works construction projects are handled is likely to be a hot topic as well. Currently the "Construction Manager at Risk" process is used in all but six U.S. states, including Nevada. The AGC supports bringing back the concept by where a general contractor reviews public works architectural plans before a contract is put out to bid, ensuring the project is actually buildable.

Programs and services

Besides its lobbying efforts, the AGC provides a myriad of programs and services for its members. The organization offers health care and workers compensation insurance coverage; safety, supervisory and craftworker training; labor relations; networking opportunities; community service and industry advancement. The AGC also presents a number of comprehensive training programs that focus on workplace and jobsite safety issues, as well as several professional development opportunities, including seminars on everything from computer software training to estimating.


Community involvement

AGC is heavily involved in the community on a number of levels. The organization supports Opportunity Village's Magical Forest and recently renovated a local residential facility for battered women and their children. It has incorporated AGC of America's "Build Up!" curriculum into its campaign to educate and promote the merits of construction industry fields to school-aged children. AGC is also part of "Operation Desert Clean-Up," which educates the public on the issue of illegal dumping, and involves members in donating time and equipment to cleaning land designated for parks, schools and public service facilities. The AGC's annual "House of Cards" tournament, which is presented in association with the UNLV-AGC student chapter, challenges middle- and high-school students to design and construct structures from ordinary playing cards and drafting dots. The program is another way the AGC reaches into the community to provide information on various aspects of jobs within the industry. AGC also follows through with training and educational programs for college students, young professionals, trades people and construction executives. ■



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Honesty, commitment best policies for Nelson Framing

By **Damon Hodge**
Special sections writer

Faced with an atrophying construction industry in southern California, Jerry Nelson heeded a friend's advice and decamped for Las Vegas in 1991. The opening of the Mirage two years prior hailed the Strip's megaresort era, kindling never-before-seen interest from Wall Street, and a growing-by-the-minute population was beginning to put housing construction and, thus, construction workers, into hyperdrive.

Having been in the construction industry since 1983—when a move to Santa Barbara for college turned into jobs at a gas station, delivering soft water salt and, finally, remodeling expensive homes and businesses — Nelson built patio covers upon arrival.

During the next 12 years, he added semi-custom homes (for a framing company) and commercial projects (for several developers) to the resume. At Tradewinds Construction, Nelson served as foreman in charge of building custom homes in Summerlin's tony Tournament Hills neighborhood, oversaw various commercial construction projects and, later, worked as a field superintendent overseeing the wood-frame division, where he handled bidding, estimating, negotiating contracts, setting budgets and securing materials. After parting ways with the company in 2001, he planned to strike out on his own, a dream that was temporarily deferred by a too-good-to-be-true opportunity that turned out to be, well, too good to be true.

"I had about a year hiatus after that and then I decided to get my own license," Nelson said. "I had lots of contacts and a reputation for honesty, hard work and good quality. Since I've opened,

things have taken off. There's not much down time around here."

Backed by 20 years of construction industry experience and 12 years of local kudos and goodwill, Nelson Framing, a subcontracting company specializing in commercial wood framing, has been beaverishly busy, completing 22 projects in 2004 alone. The company's fingerprints are all over town: built the Aliante Fire Station, the Southfork Pointe Retail Center in Henderson, an addition to Mountain View Lutheran Church on West Cheyenne Avenue, as well as the Summerlin-area corporate headquarters for Astoria Homes. The 20-employee firm often hires as many as 40 workers to assist with a stable of projects.

As if the rigors of entrepreneurship weren't time consuming-and-energy-sapping enough, Nelson also does yeoman's work as one of the construction industry's most ardent proponents, leading the local Framing Contractors Association (FCA), quarterbacking caucuses on how to improve the industry, and championing trade-specific legislation in Carson City.

For his all-around involvement in the industry, Nelson was named the Associated General Contractor's (AGC) Associate of the Year Award, an honor doled out to subcontractor members. The award recognizes "political, reg-

ulatory and industry advancement efforts, along with support of the association's events and programs and community improvement."

What's keyed his company's growth, Nelson said, is an Oakland Raider-esqe "Commitment to Excellence" and a belief in unwavering honesty.

"Honesty and commitment play the most important roles of all," Nelson said. "I'm accessible to all my clients. I'm a technical, hands-on type of person. You can always find me on the job site. If there's a problem, I drop what I'm doing to troubleshoot and do what I have to do to get the problem solved. I've really just been honest with all my clients. If it can't be done, I don't lie about it and say I can do it."

Nelson Framing has done substantial amounts of work for The Korte Co., a design-build, design-build-furnish and construction management company — all of it quality, according to Greg Korte, senior vice president/division manager. "(Nelson Framing) really strives to do what's right and to do a quality job," Korte said. "And still Jerry finds time to be active in his trade group—he is president of the Framing Contractors Association — and with the AGC board. (On both ends) He is doing what he can to improve the Las Vegas construction industry."



Jerry Nelson

Seconding that opinion is Mandi Harding, executive director of the FCA, an AGC-affiliated trade group proactive in backing industry legislation in areas such as construction-defect reform: "Jerry has been in the industry for a long time. He went out on a limb two years ago with starting up his own business and has really made it happen. (Even with a full plate), he still supports the AGC and FCA both financially, and with other means and ideas. Everyone knows Jerry is a good guy. He builds long-lasting relationships with the companies he works with."

As for the man himself, Nelson takes the kind words in decent stride, teetering, it seems, on the point of what's-all-the-fuss-about. Probe more and he's slightly more effusive. Doing well in business, he says, and stumping for the greater good don't have to be mutually exclusive.

"It's really important to be active in the community because as big as the town is, it's still small, so to speak," Nelson said. "I believe that working together — all the subcontractors and all the general contractors — we can all make it work. It doesn't have to be a battle, and we can look out for everyone's best interests."

"This is my home, I don't plan on going anywhere," he continued. "I want to improve the atmosphere in any way that I can, whether it be in employee relations, negotiations, politics, laws. I'm very passionate about a lot of the legislation with the AGC. Unfortunately we didn't quite get everything together for the 2005 Legislature, so we're getting ready for 2007 Legislature ... I'm excited." ■

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Charities' 'first-responder' shares expertise nationally

By Deborah Roush
Contributing writer

LVI Environmental of Nevada considers its relationships with the construction industry so important that someone from their company drops by the Association of General Contractors (AGC) office at least twice a week. That's because, through AGC, LVI finds ways it can use its specialization in demolition and environmental cleanup to help the community that has made it so successful.

"We've done most of the major implosions of the big hotels including The Sands Hotel, the Aladdin, El Rancho and Desert Inn. Currently we're working on the old Showboat, or Castaways," said Las Vegas company President Joe Catania describing the nature of LVI's business.

"We do the environmental cleanup of older buildings, complete demolition and site preparation for new construction," he added. That line of work requires being up-to-the-minute in laws that deal with environmen-

tal hazards — an area of specialty for LVI, which according to Catania utilizes state-of-the-art technology in its work.

In the past year especially, company employees have been equally busy using their expertise to help the disaster stricken around the country and the less fortunate in Southern Nevada, said Randi Graber, the company's business development manager.

For example, Catania said LVI has made an impact working with the AGC to coordinate the rebuilding of Safe Nest, an older home that is a local women's shelter for victims of domestic violence. Graber has been a point person in organizing the efforts of many businesses in the construction industry to reconstruct the shelter where women can go to take advantage of a litany of services, Catania said.

"She is really leading the way on that," he added. Mandi Harding, AGC's membership director, agreed. "(Graber's) not the chair of the committee, but she's my right-hand person with Safe Nest," Harding said.

"The demolition and asbestos abatement that LVI donated would have cost tens of thousands of dollars. Their commitment to the AGC and to the community at large cannot be underestimated," she added.

"Randi Graber has also been instrumental in finding a volunteer project manager to head up scheduling. She has been fearless in getting donations and things the shelter needs that are not related to the project."

For instance, because LVI was working on the demolition of Castaways, Graber secured donations of many items on the shel-

ter's wish from the hotel owners before it is demolished. "We got so much stuff — chairs, blankets, pillows, tables, pots and pans, and televisions," Graber said.

It's not only Safe Nest that LVI has stepped in to help. "We'll donate equipment or labor, or sponsor certain events for AGC. For the annual desert cleanup they organized, we donated a front loader," Graber said. They've done the same when land for schools or the local YMCA needed to be cleared.

For their ongoing efforts, LVI was awarded the AGC's Pioneer Spirit Award.

Ironically, Graber, whose efforts are a large part of the reason her company won the award, was worried she might not be in Las Vegas for the award ceremony. That's because she had been dispatched by the company to Mississippi to help in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina.

"We were here faster than FEMA," said Graber from her hotel in Gulf Shores, where LVI had set up camp with satellite telephones, tents, cots and food delivery service. "We have about 2,400 people down here."

With 28 offices throughout the country and thousands of employees, LVI is the company that businesses turn to for massive cleanup efforts. Employees are dispatched from all of the company offices, Graber said.

"We were the first responders on 9/11 where we oversaw the decontamination of the Verizon building," Graber added. They responded to the typhoons in Guam and the hurricane disasters in Florida last year.

"We're able to respond at the drop of a hat. It's awesome to have the kind of company with the power and pull to do that," she said.

LVI works through the AGC because the company likes what the organization represents, Graber said. "They're very in favor of the contractor. They'll go to bat for you. They have a labor-relations person to help with union disputes and a great health care program. They want to give back to the community. They want to put a better taste in people's mouths as to what the construction industry is all about," she added.

The relationship is beneficial, too, for LVI. "We get good exposure and feedback about it from our peers, competitors and general contractors," Graber said.

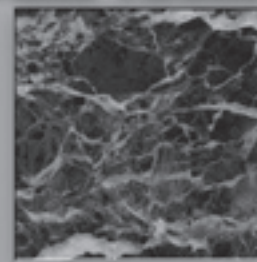
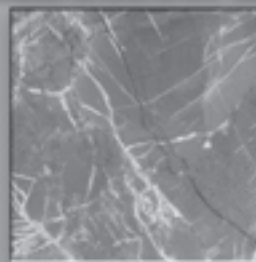
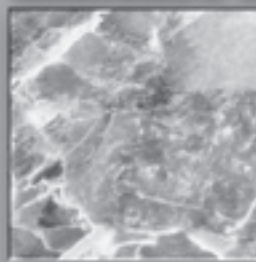
It's a win-win connection the company plans to continue, she added.

And that is good news for AGC, Harding said. "A committee meets once a month, but it's the follow-up between those meetings that's so helpful, and that's where Randi Garber steps in. She's in our office all the time." ■



Executives at LVI Environmental include, from left, Bob Springs, Roland Savage, Joe Catania and Chad Maddock.

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County's Wilson-Pappa: 'I'm just doing my job'

By Allen Grant
Special sections writer

All set to begin construction on his client's project, Greg Korte and his general-contracting firm ran into a concrete wall — so to speak — with Clark County's permitting processes.

Korte's situation is a common one for contractors and individuals looking to build on their own property. Many projects can be delayed by incomplete or late submittals and even county code compliance changes. Zoning reviews along with traffic and drainage studies also tend to slow projects. In Korte's case, the project stalled in the off-site grading process.

When Korte and other general contractors need to resolve a problem to jump-start their project, more often than not they turn to Colleen Wilson-Pappa at the Clark County Department of Development Services. "She's the catalyst that gets things done," Korte said. "She gets into the heart of the situation to improve the situation."

A board of director member at the local Associated General Contractors (AGC) chapter and incoming 2006 president, Korte said even during the worst construction-permitting situations, Wilson-Pappa keeps a bright outlook. "Always cordial, she embodies the true spirit of working as a team between the construction industry and (the county)," he said.

Wilson-Pappa, the department's administrative services manager, said communication is important to resolve many of the problems.

"We're here to coordinate projects and improve the processes," she said. "When the (permitting) processes run smoothly, it makes it simple for our customers and our staff. I analyze the problems and make determinations on how to fix them. (The department) helps those projects get off the ground a little quicker."

Korte, president of The Korte Company Las Vegas Division, specializing in design-build and construction management, nominated Wilson-Pappa for the 2005 Quality of Life Award.

"We were trying to get our project started, and we were going nowhere," Korte said. "(Wilson-Pappa) made the difference. She took note, gained a better understanding and then spearheaded a new procedure to allow for early grading periods."

With rising construction costs, Korte said the result is his company's ability to begin projects faster and finish sooner.

"Time is money," he said.

Wilson-Pappa said confusion and limited coordination surrounding off-site grading, including curbs and sidewalks, led to the situation. Now, she said the county is turning the off-site grading situation into a long-term positive by conducting a pilot process.

"We decided to get a group together including a few customers and review the process," she said. "We discovered all the review checks were occurring at (the) grading (stage) and it really wasn't necessary at that point. The intensity of the review was the concern."

The result led to a probable code change in the county's off-site grading process for next year.

"(The code change) will remove some of the things that we were looking at during zoning review because we already look at them at during the site review," she said. "It will eventually reduce the time spent during the grading review by eliminating duplicate submittals through combining a few."

Based on her efforts and in recognition for her foresight and fiscal responsibility in initiating projects that make southern Nevada a better place to live, Wilson-Pappa was named the 2005 recipient of the SIR Quality of Life award.

"I'm just doing my job," she said. "I make a band-aid fix and determine if we need long-term considerations for a change. Our whole (department) deserves credit."

Monica Caruso, director of public affairs at

the Southern Nevada Home Builders Association (SNHBA), worked with Wilson-Pappa for a stint at SNHBA, and said she has a great knowledge and understanding of government affairs.

"She's a wonderful asset, very analytical and a real professional," Caruso said. "She's also a great problem solver and has the ability to coordinate many different types of people."

A leader in providing state-of-the-art services to enhance the built environment, Clark County Development Services' mission is to provide timely, progressive and effective plan review. The agency also oversees the permitting and inspection of construction, ensuring the compatible and safe development for Clark County citizens and visitors.

"Our job is to make sure these (construction) projects comply with code and streamline these projects to make it better for everyone," said Wilson-Pappa, who manages major projects at Mountain's Edge, Summerlin, Southern Highlands, Coyote Springs and more.

Working the civil engineering, administrative and building departments, Wilson-Pappa said she typically handles a handful of customer-relation situations each day.

According to permit records, Clark County has more than doubled its total issued permits from 45,287 in 1995 to 94,760 permits in 2004. The Clark County Development Services department could issue nearly 100,000 total permits in 2005 including building, plumbing, mechanical, grading and electrical permits. ■



Colleen Wilson-Pappa

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Cashman's perseverance has been key to success

By Lisa McQuerrey
Contributing writer

MaryKaye Cashman is the third generation of Cashmans to run the family business.

Under her direction as CEO, Cashman Equipment has grown to become the largest woman-owned business employer in Las Vegas. The company has eight locations in Elko, Henderson, Las Vegas (2), Reno, Winnemucca and Round Mountain in Nevada, and Mammoth Lakes in California. The company employs 550 people.

Cashman is known for her perseverance and her genuine caring nature. Earning a degree in nursing in 1982, she started her career as a registered nurse at University Medical Center. In 1988, Cashman joined Sunrise Hospital, a nursing post she held until 1995, when her husband, Jim Cashman III, passed away at 45.

MaryKaye Cashman had never worked because she needed the money. After all, her husband owned a highly successful equipment company. Yet, she had a fulfilling career of her own — one that took a decidedly different turn at her husband's death.

In 1995, Cashman took over her husband's role in the company, even though others told her the company couldn't and shouldn't be run by a woman.

"There was a lot of disbelief," said Cashman. "There was an expectation that my involvement would be temporary and there were always rumors that we'd be selling the company. That created a difficult atmosphere for employees."

Cashman said it took about five years — and a good deal of Irish stubbornness — before people came to accept that she was there to stay. "I was raised in an environment where my parents told me I was capable of doing anything I wanted to do," she explained. Today, Cashman is one of only two female owners of Caterpillar dealerships in the world.

Cashman Equipment is Nevada's Caterpillar construction equipment dealer. Founded in 1931 by James "Big Jim" Cashman, Cashman Equipment was established to provide Caterpillar tractors to the crews building Boulder Dam. Today, the company provides new and used equipment for sale and rent, and provides parts and services to the construction, paving, mining, logging, truck engine and power systems industries throughout the state.

MaryKaye Cashman said her early train-

ing in nursing taught her the nuances of non-verbal communication; an insight she said helps her dramatically in her business. "When you boil it all down, it's all about people," she said. "The key is in conveying respect and dignity to everyone you deal with."

In 1999, 2001 and 2003, Cashman Equipment achieved "World Class" certification for its mining rebuild facility, making it the first dealership in North America to receive the recognition from Caterpillar. Cashman has also been recognized as one of the best component rebuild operations in the world. MaryKaye Cashman credits her team for the company's success.

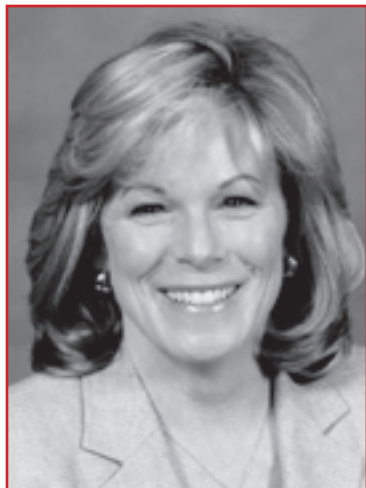
"I don't know how to fix tractors, but I have learned I'm a pretty good judge of character," she said. "Fortunately, many skilled and talented people have come to work for Cashman Equipment. These are people who know the key to success is to be responsive to the customer."

While the Cashman family is well known for its philanthropy, MaryKaye Cashman has taken a personal interest in supporting children and education. Cashman Equipment recently introduced Nevada students to a program called "ThinkBIG," a nationwide student technician program. The program is a joint effort between Caterpillar, Cashman, Empire Southwest and Mesa Community College that encourages students to complete an Associate of Applied Science degree along with Caterpillar Dealer Service Technician training and credentials.

The two-year "ThinkBIG" curriculum combines classroom education with hands-on internships and mentoring at Cashman Equipment locations. The company recruits people with high school educations and reimburses the cost of books and tuition. The company also provides student housing.

Cashman serves on the boards of a number of professional and community organizations, including the Nevada Test Site Development Corp., Mackay School of Earth Sciences and Engineering (formerly Mackay School of Mines) Advisory Board at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), McCaw Elementary School of Mines Foundation Board, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Foundation Board of Trustees, and the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce Advisory Board and Government Affairs committee.

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MaryKaye Cashman

"I don't know how to fix tractors, but I have learned I'm a pretty good judge of character..."

MaryKaye Cashman
CEO,
Cashman Equipment

SNHBA recognized for efforts in the industry

By Allen Grant
Special sections writer

In an era of individualism and go-it-alone attitudes, the Southern Nevada Home Builders Association (SNHBA) has made significant strides in fostering partnerships with the overall goal of bridging the gap between the construction and home building industries.

One of its chief partners in recent joint ventures has been the local chapter of the Association of General Contractors (AGC), a non-profit group representing building, highway, heavy industrial, municipal and utility construction contractors.

With rising gasoline and housing prices, communities around the country are focusing on energy costs. The Las Vegas Valley has long been an energy conscience community, including local builders' implementation of the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star program — designed to identify and promote energy-efficient projects including homes.

Thanks to the work of two key construction-industry organizations, residents and business owners alike can benefit from the adoption of the 2003 International Energy Conservation Code — a strict, energy code governing the construction industry.

According to Irene Porter, SNHBA executive director, the organization assisted with the successful roll out of the new energy code, making it applicable in southern Nevada based on the area's building conditions.

"New energy codes have increased requirements in windows and doors and the way we construct homes," she said. "For residents, it helps power and utility bills, saving energy for the entire community."

Steve Holloway, executive vice president of the Las Vegas chapter of the AGC since 1996, acknowledged the SNHBA and its efforts. "They partnered with the AGC and local government on the new energy code (implementation) and it's going to make a difference (in the community)," he said.

The SNHBA was awarded the AGC's Skill, Integrity and Responsibility (SIR) Cornerstone Award, because of its recent and long-lasting commitments to finding better ways in the construction industry. Recognizing a civil servant, elected official, government agency or other construction industry partner's foresight and fiscal responsibility in initiating projects that make southern Nevada a better place to live, the Cornerstone Award exemplifies SNHBA and its eagerness to develop collaborations and improve construction-

industry legislation, said Holloway.

"(The SNHBA's) leadership and its association with the rest of the construction industry has earned them the Cornerstone Award," he said. "They're partnering more with the rest of the industry, and it's creating a positive results. There's strength in numbers."

"(The SNHBA) has really made an effort to develop a better relationship between itself and the construction community," said Scott Smith, AGC public relations director.

The SNHBA joins forces with several local construction and home building groups to promote joint-effort legislation including the Board of Realtors and the Associated Building Contractors (ABC). The association is also part of the Coalition of Fairness in Construction with includes the AGC, ABC, Nevada Subcontractors

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Irene Porter



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SNHBA

From page 11A

and the Home Builders Association.

While the Energy Star program pushed Las Vegas' energy conservation efforts up a notch, industry experts said they believe this new energy code can help the community take another step in the right direction.

"Because of Energy Star, many builders have been building above code for years, but this code brings it up a little further," Porter said. "Another significant part of this code is on the commercial construction side. On the commercial side, they had no Energy Star program. This (new code) will now make a big difference for commercial projects."

Holloway said the new code creates improved construction on a variety of proj-

ects. "For the community, it's going to result in some (energy) conservation and better-built facilities," he said. "We're now building with a more efficient use of energy."

Porter, whose association is dedicated to enhancing quality of life by meeting the housing and community development needs of southern Nevada, said the joint-operating venture created an ideal result helping two different construction elements. "Our association formed a joint committee with the AGC and shared comments about energy codes," she said. "With our expertise in the residential market and their experience on the commercial side, we implemented new energy codes to help the entire (construction) industry."

Porter said this is not the first time the groups have collaborated. "We've worked together on other local codes and legisla-

tion," she said. In fact, the groups recently collaborated to change a construction-defect code and a lien law designed to protect construction companies and compensate them in a timely manner for completed projects. "(The lien code change) protects many in the industry including subcontractors and suppliers to ensure they are compensated for their work," said Porter.

Founded more than a half century ago, the SNHBA has 750 members, making it the largest trade group representing residential construction in Nevada. Designed to support the home building industry, the association represents all facets of the industry including builders, subcontractors, suppliers, mortgage companies, apartment and condo submarkets, and single-family homes.

Covering Clark, Lincoln and Nye counties, the SNHBA designs several education-

al programs and operates various committees dealing with local government. The association lobbies for various industry issues from codes and community planning to safety and national quality assurance. SNHBA's executive director for nearly three decades, Porter said the committee usually reviews around 150 bills each legislative session.

She also serves as the Nevada Home Builders Association executive director. Her responsibilities include serving as chief executive and manager of the organizations and their special programs. She also lobbies on behalf of the associations and the industry dealing with local, state and federal governments on issues impacting builders.

The SNHBA mission statement includes a clause for combining individual talents and resources to provide leadership in addressing challenges affecting its industry. That includes lobbying for the home building industry, said Porter.

"We have a very active legislation program," she said of the association's political action committee. "We lobby at many different levels."

According to Porter, joint ventures like the ones with the AGC are positive signs for the valley's future. "The real significance is we (the SNHBA and AGC) are working together," said Porter. "Two major components of the construction industry working together is key. We're appreciative of each others insights and keeping our industry alive and vibrant." ■

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CASHMAN

From page 11A

A strong advocate for diversifying Nevada's economy, Cashman is involved with a number of business organizations. She has devoted three years of service to the Board of Directors for Nevada Power/Sierra Pacific and has a 15-year association with the Young Presidents Organization. In addition, she is a member of the World Presidents Organization and a member of the Nevada Development Authority.

In an ongoing effort to support education and ensure a qualified future workforce, Cashman founded the James Cashman III Endowment Scholarship at the UNR Mackay School of Earth Sciences and Engineering. She also supports local organizations that she feels are making a significant, positive impact on the community. Past recipients of her generosity have included Boys & Girls Clubs, Christ the King Catholic Community, Bishop Gorman High, UNLV and UNR.

"When an organization inspires me with its mission and purpose, that's when I become involved," said Cashman.

While Cashman devotes a good deal of time and financial resources to children and education, she also has a strong commitment to maintaining Nevada as a good place to do business. She said she sees strides being made in the areas of economic diversification, noting a continuing need to keep Nevada attractive as a place for expanding and relocating businesses.

"If we do these things well," said Cashman, "We'll provide a greater stability for our state." ■