



People Building Value Award Announced

When you talk about openness, fairness and integrity, you are talking about Denny Heer. He handles a great deal of responsibility with precision and efficiency. It is for these qualities that Denny received the Helm Group People Building Value Award and a \$3,000 travel voucher.



Denny Heer
Senior Project Engineer

Denny is very knowledgeable about IDOT work and the asphalt profession. Over the past 22 years, he has become proficient at scheduling and organizing asphalt projects for Civil Constructors. He is well respected by his peers and IDOT which fosters open collaboration. This helps to increase efficiency and get the work completed on schedule. With his expertise and planning, the asphalt crews not only finished their 2009 projects ahead of schedule but were able to get a jump on projects for 2010.

The Road Division has successfully completed two of the best years in the history of the company and Denny played a large part in that success. I can't think of a more deserving person for this award."

-Todd Curry

"Without Denny's experience and perseverance, Civil could not have completed all this work on-time and on-target for profit while ensuring our future market."


-Paul Wilson

After receiving his BS degree in Civil Engineering from SIU-Carbondale, Denny worked for IDOT for 8 years as a Resident Engineer in District 2. He began his career with Civil Constructors in April of 1988, just two days after getting married. Unfortunately, his first project was no honeymoon. He was put in charge of a very difficult project which consisted of two bridges

(Rt 173 & Rt 20) over the IL Tollway. The micro-silica overlays provide a lot of challenges during one of the hottest summers on record in northwest Illinois. Denny credits much of his success at Civil to Bruce Helm and Gene Nott. He said "they were very instrumental in providing great leadership and guidance over the past 20 years."

As a Senior Project Engineer, Denny coordinates the daily activities for the Road Division. He works directly with their customers to first understand the project and then to complete the necessary paperwork, project buyouts and coordinate scheduling and trucking on

the projects. He then collaborates with Todd Curry for manpower on the various projects and Eric Helm to ensure production at the asphalt plants can meet the project needs. This has been no small feat as the last construction season was the largest and most time-sensitive asphalt program ever experienced by the Road Division. The division produced and placed 285,000 tons of mix. This included projects bid at very low margins to ensure our success against new competitors. The Federal Stimulus Projects provided extremely tight schedules for the completion of paving. Throw in the wet weather we experienced last summer and the project schedule became even more challenging. Denny did a fantastic job of organizing and communicating the daily and weekly schedules that made it possible to orchestrate all this work.

Denny resides in Lena with his wife Debbie and his two sons, Collin (17) and Evan (15). He enjoys watching his children in sporting events and squeezes in a few fishing trips. At this point, he hasn't convinced Deb where the next trip should be but he is looking forward to enjoying the travel award with his family. 

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As we recognize the winner of our People Building Value award in this issue of our newsletter, I am reminded of all of the outstanding employees we have throughout our company. It was only about five years ago that one of our greatest weaknesses as a company was the shortage of skilled young foremen in the field. We have always been a company that relies on experienced employees to build our projects and most of our foremen had been with us for 15-20 years. What we lacked, was a large number of employees in their 20s and 30s that could add depth to the company and gain the experience to be our future foremen. My fear was that over the next 10 years, as our veteran foremen and superintendents retired, we would not have experienced employees to fill the void that was left. The actual result, however, is that we have had a large number of younger employees step up to leadership roles in the field. Our employees at all levels have worked hard to identify, train, and promote young aggressive apprentices and journeymen that are taking on a lot of responsibility for us. Now, in some areas, we

have almost as many foremen under age 35 as we do over age 35. It is extremely important that we continue this internal recruitment and training effort. We want to be a company that promotes from within so that our jobsite leaders run work the way our people taught them, not the way our competitors taught them. We think we have better systems and methods than anyone else, so the best employees are home-grown. Continuing this process of recognizing and training young emerging talent will make the Helm Group successful for many years to come. 



*Brian Helm,
Helm Group CEO*

Civil Builds Value for Warren Infrastructure Improvements


by Nate Simonton

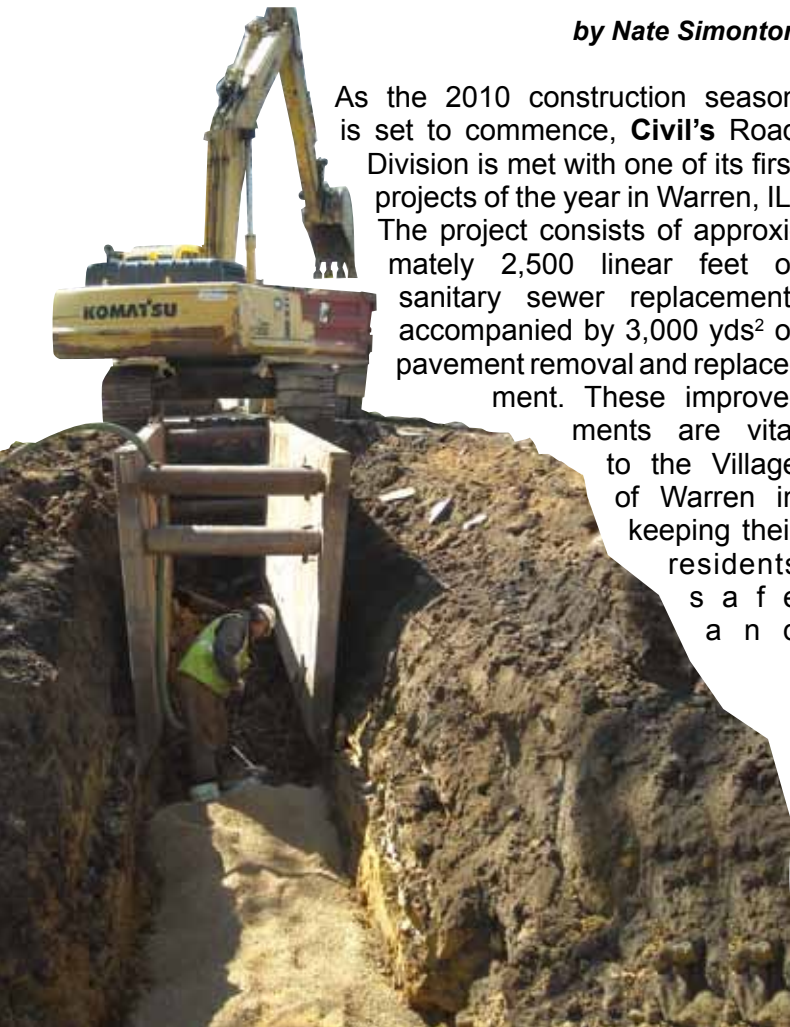
As the 2010 construction season is set to commence, **Civil's** Road Division is met with one of its first projects of the year in Warren, IL. The project consists of approximately 2,500 linear feet of sanitary sewer replacement, accompanied by 3,000 yds² of pavement removal and replacement. These improvements are vital to the Village of Warren in keeping their residents safe and

eliminating further home damage, due to unnecessary sewer back-ups.

When the original bids were opened, Civil was announced as low bidder at the public opening. As it turned out, Civil's low bid was higher than the engineered budget number established prior to the bid opening. The uncertainties incorporated with rock excavation and water table elevation, increased the risk involved to the contractor and drove up the cost of the bid. It was then proposed by Civil, to work with the owner on a new design to fit the budget.

This opened the opportunity for Civil to work with engineers at Fehr-Graham & Associates and the Village of Warren to come up with a solution that lowers the cost of the project, while still attaining the desired result. Through open communication and practical ideas, we were able to use value engineering as an effective tool to stay within the budget.

Specific portions of the sanitary sewer were re-routed and elevation changes were made to lower the risk of abrupt costs incurred by Civil throughout the project. Adopting our philosophy of "People Building Value" has benefited everyone in making this a successful project for all parties involved. 



College of DuPage – BIC and SRC Renovation and New SSC

by Selena Worster-Walde

The College of DuPage campus in Glen Ellyn, IL is the third largest single campus community college in the nation. The campus is currently undergoing a \$300 million dollar renovation that started in 2006 and is scheduled for completion in 2013. Some of the projects in the renovation are the 400,000 sq. ft. Berg Instructional Center (BIC), the main classroom building, and the Student Resources Center (SRC). In addition a 90,000 sq. ft. Student Services Center (SSC) is being added on to the north side of the BIC.



Mechanical, Inc is playing a key role in the campus renovation. Mechanical, Inc was awarded the HVAC sheet metal, piping, and plumbing for the BIC and SRC renovation and the new SSC, a two and a half year project that started in January 2010 and is scheduled for completion in the Spring of 2012.

full 3D using Navisworks. These buildings were only scheduled to be coordinated in 2D, but CAD felt that using a 3D model was so effective on other projects they pushed to use it on the renovation.

The 400,00 sq. ft. BIC building is being completed in phases to allow the college to continue to use half of the building for classroom space. The interior demolition of the West half of the building is complete and the installation of the new sheet metal, piping, and plumbing is underway. At the same time the new SSC structure is underway with the steel erection starting on 4/19/10.


The renovation project is one of three new large projects where Mechanical, Inc is internally responsible for the sheet metal, piping, and plumbing. The incorporation of all three scopes is still a learning experience for most of the foreman and project managers. At the College of DuPage project all three foreman are working extremely well together and have come up with a plan to lead the construction project and drive the schedule.

Just some of the key employees who are making a difference on this project are:

Anthony Andrews	Scott Reidner
Brad Harkness	John Statfield, Jr
Ed Pauley	James Velazquez
Todd Penticoff	Randy Warkenstein
Kevin Rakowska	

The other challenges for the team is a very demanding construction manager and also the LEED Silver requirements. To meet these challenges, Mechanical, Inc. hired Anthony Andrews as a project specific safety officer and they are having one foreman act as a construction coordinator to help the team. The team structure allows the sheet metal and plumbing/piping foremen to focus on the field work, instead of having to constantly respond to the construction manager's comments/questions.

Mechanical, Inc has the largest scope of the contractors on site and is leading the coordination effort with the other MEP trades. The CAD department has been working more hours than they would like to count to meet the accelerated coordination schedule, which includes the complete coordination of one area per week. This translates to the coordination and sign-off of one full size 1/4 scale drawing per week. In addition, the CAD department suggested the value added alternative of coordinating the existing BIC and SRC in

The LEED requirements are something that the team has to constantly keep in mind, especially with the material handling/protection and indoor air quality. Thus far, the suppliers and field have done an outstanding job of wrapping or sealing the ends of the sheet metal and also protecting the existing systems from damage or contamination. The indoor air quality will continue to be of concern as the existing air handling units are used for temporary cooling in the building. The team is working together to develop a plan to protect the newly cleaned duct work and air handling units from contamination by construction debris during their temporary use. 

People Building Value Awards

On April 16th, a luncheon was held to recognize several outstanding individuals who were nominated for the Helm Group People Building Value Award. Many nominations highlighted the personal and professional attributes that align directly with our corporate values. Ultimately, Dennis Heer was presented with the People Building Value Award. Four projects were also recognized for their dedication to performance excellence.



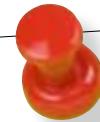
The People Building Value Award went to Dennis Heer. Dennis is a 20-year veteran of Civil Constructors and coordinates projects for the Road Division.



Civil's Commercial & Residential Paving Division was honored with the Customer Value Creation Award. Nearly 55% of the surveys returned from their customers awarded them with a perfect satisfaction score. Pictured above (from left to right) are Brian Helm, Bill Schmelzle, Duane Schurch, and Todd Curry.



The Chairman's Award went to Civil's Ramp G Project at I-90/I-39 in Cherry Valley, IL. This project earned national recognition for Civil in being named #7 of top Ten Bridges in Road & Bridge Magazine. The Illinois Tollway Authority also named Civil Constructors "Contractor of the Year" for their work on this project. Pictured here (left to right) Ken Schrock, Project Managers Jon McClelland & John Schneider, Carpenter Foreman Doug Dawson, President Art Snyder and Bruce Helm. (Ironworker Foreman Doug Diddens was absent.)



A special thank you to all employees who submitted nominations for this year's People Building Value Award.

The interest & excitement about this annual award continues to grow. We receive more and more nominations each year and are pleased to recognize these individuals. Thank you for recognizing a fellow employee for their outstanding efforts.

Recognition Luncheon 2010



Margin Variance Award was awarded to Mechanical's Sherman Hospital Project. Their best-in-class performance is a direct result of effective job planning, innovation and improved productivity. Accepting this award on behalf of the projects team is Project Manager Darrin Smutzer and Project Executive Larry Voss.




This year's winner of the Helm Group Safety Award was Civil's East State Street Bridge Project in Rockford, IL. This project not only achieved a zero accident frequency rate in 2009 but it also had no near-misses, auto or liability incidents on this heavily traveled project. Receiving the Safety Award from Brian Helm is Project Managers, John Schneider and Jon McClelland.

New Production Equipment at Conmat

Conmat took delivery of a new screening plant in March, and has a new crushing plant arriving in May. The screening plant consists of two 8-foot by 20-foot Cedarapids 3-deck screens mounted on a single chassis. The new plant will increase the capacity of our main crushing spread, and decrease the time and expense of moving from one quarry to another. The crushing



plant is Cedarapids 550 MVP cone crusher. The plant was purchased to reduce the amount of fines produced in the crushing process, allowing us to produce a higher percentage of high value product.

The crews are currently working in shifts to meet project needs. 

Mechanical Builds Value in Waukesha

by Dale Cox

Mechanical Inc has been in Wisconsin for over two years and we are systematically growing in offerings as well as areas that we serve. The operation started with Steve Hinshaw setting up shop near Milwaukee and was followed shortly thereafter with the acquisition of ProMech, a company owned by Dale Cox. Both Steve and Dale are former Mechanical Inc employees who were happy to be back with Mechanical.

As it turns out, the decision to expand into Wisconsin coincided with the recent national economic downturn that we are all aware of. As a result of this condition, the customer base had to be evaluated to determine where our best opportunities were in both the short and long term. It became apparent that traditional projects in health-care, office development, automotive and other types of markets that rely on private funding were not going to do much for a while. With this in mind, we focused on public sector projects such as the university systems and municipal water treatment. At the same time, we continued to grow our owner-direct accounts in areas that were doing well.

As a result of this effort, we have been successful in performing numerous projects with the UW system at many of their campuses (Madison, Milwaukee, Kenosha) and several projects for

Dennis Prudhomme works inside a trenchbox.




Tom France of Mechanical's Waukesha office meticulously inspecting work.

the Metro Sanitary District and the water purification plant. We also pay special attention to private customers in the way of Miller Brewing, Ball Container Corporation, Metal Container Corp, P&H Mining, Western Envelope and others.

Recently, the office added several members to promote plumbing work. Jim Legina heads up the plumbing efforts along with Kevin Pillar and Jason Mahler. This provides backlog in the way of several projects in retirement communities, high-rise multi-use installations and similar projects. We are excited about this growth.

We plan to add a dedicated service group in the next few months to continue to round out our services.

As we pursue market growth and regional recognition, the Wisconsin office also benefits from the support of the entire Mechanical organization. Manpower management, back office functions, IT, shop fabrication, cost estimating and engineering support have all contributed at different times. 

Fall Protection . . . Does it Really Work?

by Shawn Meier



When utilizing a horizontal lifeline system for fall protection, there are a lot of links that need to work together to prevent failure. The key word in that sentence is "system". In a system, every part has a specific duty and must function correctly every time or the whole system could fail. Just as in a length of chain holding up a piece of equipment, if one of the links is damaged or weaker than the rest of the links, the whole chain will fail and the equipment will fall to the ground.

fall. Anchor points, wire rope, clips, intermediate stanchions, lanyards, and harnesses are just a few very important parts of the system that must work together to protect you from a fall.


Recently, a request was made by Ironworker Superintendent Doug Diddens to proof test a horizontal lifeline system that was installed on two separate bridges under construction. A rescue manikin (named "Phil") weighing 185 pounds was strapped into a standard



Crew members inspect a lanyard for evidence of damage after testing the fall arrest system on March 19th at a bridge on Beltline Road in Rockford. Pictured here are Gene Woodley, Curt Ihrig, John McClelland, Shawn Meier and Brian Balles.



fall protection harness with a lanyard attached to both the manikin, and the horizontal lifeline. The manikin was dropped off the bridge beam and to everyone's surprise, the lifeline broke apart and Phil fell to the ground below. When the system was inspected several areas of improvement were identified. When overlapping two sections of wire rope, the rope must overlap 24 inches and 6 "Crosby" clips must be used, spaced 4 inches apart, with 3 clips on the topside section of the rope and 3 on the underside section. When wire rope is "dogged" or looped back to form an eye, 3 "Crosby" clips must be used, spaced 4 inches apart, for a total length of 12 inches of tail rope laid back on top of the live rope. Do not use any other wire rope clips than the "Crosby" brand. Several clips of unknown manufacture failed and were damaged during this test.

After re-clipping and inspecting all sections of the system, 3 other tests were conducted. This resulted in all components working correctly. Just remember, fall protection is not just a harness and lanyard. Inspect and verify all parts of the entire system before hanging your life from it. 

Just as in a length of chain holding up a piece of equipment, if one of the links is damaged or weaker than the rest of the links, the whole chain will fail and the equipment will fall to the ground.

We typically utilize these types of systems on bridge beams and new building construction where the walls are not installed on the floors on which we are working. Every part of the system must be designed to withstand the potential forces that could occur in the event of a



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Plowing Forward

by Rich Lower


Heavy Equipment Services, Inc. is expanding their products and services to the agricultural area in the Spring of 2010. With over 300 Agricultural vendors to choose from, Heavy can now offer customers OEM new, aftermarket, rebuilt and used parts for agriculture equipment including AGCO, Allis Chalmers, Case, Ford, International, John Deere, Massey, New Holland, Oliver, and White.

Heavy has also expanded current vendors such as Interstate batteries, Fleetguard filters and Parker hydraulic hoses to include all makes of agricultural products.

Big or small we work on them all. Heavy will repair all makes and models from 5hp to 500 hp, repairs

including minor tune ups, maintenance, transmission, rear end and major engine overhauls.

Our new website is coming soon with easy online ordering anytime of the day or night from home or office.

We are excited about this new addition to our business and looking forward to all of the new customers and existing customers we can service. 

Who are the people building value on your project? Tell us what you and your coworkers are doing to build value for customers. We'll bring the spotlight, all you have to do is stand there and blush. Send your contributions, story ideas and comments to hr@helmgroupp.com or call 815/297-8688.