

# On the Level



Mason Contractors' Association • Vol. 6, Winter 2007

## MCA Contractor Showcase Monte Costella & Company

### Company Information:

Monte Costella & Company  
25005 Trans X Drive  
Novi, MI 48376  
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www.montecostella.com

**Start Date:** October 2006

**Peak Manpower:** 14

**Square Footage:**

54,000 sq. ft  
4 stories

### Biggest Obstacles:

- Working through winter conditions
- Enclosing the work area
- Extremely tight job site and material storage area
- Dealing with the corner of a high traffic intersection
- The project was completed with virtually no disruption to surrounding businesses in the central business district

### Building Type:

- New Construction
- Limestone, brick and mortar
- The exterior is composed of mostly brick and stone in order to fit the surrounding historical structures. The building is to appear as if it had always been on the site and feature significant upgrades and improvements in the structure.
- 4 ft. base is all limestone and continues up with split face limestone banding

**Project:** Monroe Bank & Trust,  
Downtown Monroe, Michigan

### Design/Build Firm:

Thompson-Phelan  
Group  
Anchorville, MI

*The Monroe Bank & Trust building was designed with several bump outs rather than straight aligned walls, which made the building foundations difficult and time-consuming to make sure the structure was plumb.*

*The building is a three sided pie-shaped structure. The front entrance of the building is composed of a striking four-level circular rotunda feature.*

*One of the most interesting features is the fourth floor outdoor terrace on the north and east sides of the building that face the street. A height variance was granted to add the 4<sup>th</sup> floor as the surrounding structures only have three floors, which complies with the city height ordinance at that time.*

*The huge limestone cornice caps were installed on the third floor level.*





## Elvis and Santa Both Take Center Stage at MCA Holiday Ball

On December 2, 2006, members of the Mason Contractors' Association gathered at St. Mary's Cultural Center in Livonia for their annual Holiday Ball.

142 people came to this year's event, a gala affair that gave members a chance to relax, have fun and enjoy a year's worth of hard work.

This year's theme of a Casino Night did much to generate that good feeling, as attendees were able to play Blackjack, Let It Ride Poker, Texas Hold 'Em, Craps and Roulette. Thanks to The Casino Company and its owner Gary Englehart for providing the games, and a special thanks to Dick Turner, Director of Michigan LECET, for the generous contribution to the festivities.

Aside from the games, the evening's lucky members took home raffle gifts such as a 7-inch portable DVD player, a massage cushion, an electric shovel and broom set, a Delphi satellite radio home and car kit, an audio rocker and a 44-quart stainless steel turkey fryer.

Amid the holiday meal, music and dancing, "Elvis" provided the star power by thoroughly entertaining the crowd for much of the evening. Yet it was Santa Claus himself (aka MIIM's Dan Zechmeister) who stole the show and loved every minute of it, calling on MCA's entire Executive Board to sing along to the "12 Pains of Christmas" with him on stage (Shh, don't tell. Their singing could use a little work).

In keeping with the spirit of the season, MCA donated a number of toys to Toys for Tots via three Marine Corps personnel. MCA also gave \$250.00 to the Make-A-Wish Foundation to help give an ill child his or her Christmas wish.

a message from MCA Executive Director Tony Darkangelo

## Information, Industry and Mr. Ed

The Industrial Age. What a time in history. It gave us the automobile, the television and even pensions. Are you excited yet? Where would we be without the television? The television was a way for millions of people to stay connected, from the Nightly News to I Love Lucy. Really, if you were not able to get information to make a difference in your life from I Love Lucy you probably did not have a pulse. Memory lane! What a great place to visit, (emphasis on visit; you wouldn't want to live there).

We now live in an age where kids in their pajamas are making billions (no typo here) and the most sophisticated company names they can come up with is Yahoo or Google. "What we don't know can't hurt us?" Sometimes success or continued success is hindered by our inability to replace the old information in our minds with new information. Most of those capitalizing on the Information Age did not live in the Industrial Age.

Although they may be as uneducated about the Industrial Age as Mr. Ed, they do understand the Information Age. Did I say billions? The point being what worked in the past are typically not the things that will work in the



MCA's Tony Darkangelo

future. Don't get me wrong the education of the past becomes invaluable as it helps lead us but it alone is no longer enough. Things change, people change, and systems change.

Masonry systems are not exempt from this change. Think about it. Although we may want to, we cannot build our walls like our predecessors did. Sure it worked for them, but will it continue to work for us? What would your father have done if you told him you wanted to leave the company business so you could bottle water and sell it? Did I say billions? Get my point.

Our industry is changing and we must adapt to survive. The masonry industry provides continuing education 24/7, networking through industry meetings, and unlimited knowledge at your fingertips. We must understand the value and invest in our future.

As stated by one of the prolific fore thinkers of our time, Rocky Balboa, "If I can change, and you can change, everybody can change." Our industry requests your participation in providing information resulting in increased productivity. Are you ready? Did I say billions?

a message from MCA President Kevin Ryan

## 2007: A New Opportunity for Us All

2007 is here, everyone.

To me, the New Year is a time to both reflect on past accomplishments and the new opportunities life will certainly bring. As the president of the Mason Contractors' Association, I would like to express how honored I have been to serve you this past year. This industry has always provided well for my family, and I have always been eager for my opportunity to give something back in return.

I have been a contractor now for 29 years, and I am amazed at how quickly time has gone by. It appears to be true that when you love what you do, it doesn't really seem to be a "job". I have been extremely fortunate to have spent an entire career working with people whom I enjoy spending time with, many of which I am proud to call my friends.

Throughout 2006, I did everything in my power to serve the members of our organization. Yet I could not have accomplished anything without the wonderful staff at MCA, especially Executive Director Tony Darkangelo. His optimism and energy for the industry were a daily inspiration.

Looking ahead, we have an excellent opportunity to reinvigorate the masonry community. There is a revived spirit of



MCA's Kevin Ryan

cooperation between our partners, the Bricklayers and Laborer Unions, as well as the Masonry Institute of Michigan, Michigan Mason Contractors' Association and the International Council of

Employers.

The New Year presents another wonderful opportunity: a chance to throw everything from your desk onto the floor and revisit how we have done things in the past. My objective is to keep doing what we do right and look at what we can possibly do better from our successes, both in 2006 and years past. As history tell us, you will not go anywhere unless you know what has already been done.

In 2007, I encourage and reach out for your participation and your support. My objective is to bring this industry closer together and work for one common goal to increase the market share of masonry. Please do not hesitate to call me if there is anything you would like to see changed or something I can do to serve you better. Our continued success depends on our organization's cohesiveness, and it is everyone's job to foster it. Let's get 2007 started off right.

## Committee Update

The MCA's committees are already hard at work in early 2007. Let's thank those who volunteered for committee assignments. Though volunteering can sometimes be thankless, the results the volunteers achieve help all of us.

**Membership Committee:** Under Chairman Steve Dudek, the Membership Committee is focused on pursuing new members and planning the 2007 General Membership and Contractor Meetings.

**Golf Committee:** Under Chairman Mike Rupp, the Golf Committee has already planned the 2007 MCA Golf Outing. This year, the outing is set for July 17 at Bay Pointe Golf Club in West Bloomfield. There will be contests, prizes, cocktails and an excellent dinner provided by Bay Pointe.

**Educational Committee:** Under Chairman Brad Leidal, the Educational Committee hosted Temp-Air Technical Field Representative Paul McCarthy on December 7, 2006. McCarthy stood before an audience of 23 MCA workers at the Local 1 headquarters in Warren and explained how to properly install natural and propane gas heaters. He also elaborated on the dangers associated with incorrect fitting and placement during installation. Many Temp-Air products are used on MCA jobsites everyday during the winter months to provide heat to temporary construction enclosures, and the Educational Committee wants to ensure its workers know how to properly use them for peak job site safety.

The Social Committee has been meeting and formulating its plans for 2007. The next newsletter will contain short reports from all of the MCA Committees.

# Rebuilding the Wall: Dan Tollis and Election 2008

Is everybody ready for 2008?

Dan Tollis, Baro Contracting, Inc., Clinton Township, sure is.

Tollis is already working 23 months in advance until the November 2008 elections for the Michigan State Legislature. He has good reason, too.

"In reality, these campaigns never end. Technically, I shouldn't have to start thinking about campaigning until 2008, but that's not realistic."

Tollis should know. He ran against incumbent Democrat Fred Miller for the District 31 seat in 2006. In the election results, he lost the opportunity to represent Clinton Township, Fraser, Mount Clemens and the construction industry in Macomb County. After the setback, Tollis had a choice: let the political and economic issues he cared about fall unabated into someone else's hands, or get ready to campaign again and work to change the landscape where he lives and works.

He chose the latter. As a mason contractor, changing the landscape around him is what he does everyday.

"After the election, I just had to pick myself up, dust myself off and commit to doing it again. I gained a lot of experience and knowledge in the process, and now I can start the campaign process fresh. I won't have to go through the growing pains like last time."

#### President

Kevin Ryan, Masonry Developers, Inc.

#### Vice President

Dan Tollis, Baro Contracting, Inc.

#### Secretary

John Robovitsky, Robovitsky, Inc.

#### Treasurer

Brad Leidal, Leidal & Hart Mason Contractors

Tollis' two main campaign issues from the 2006 election were the potential ergonomic standards on workers and high business taxes, including the extremely unhealthy single-business tax.



Dan Tollis

The ergonomics standards would be put in place to prevent repetitive motion injuries by limiting the amount of work contractors could do per day. For example, mason contractors could only lay about 450 bricks per day under the law, seriously affecting business output and helping to bring one of Michigan's most viable industries to its knees.

The taxes are the same story. Under Granholm, there is a projected \$28 million increase in taxes, another crippling blow to a state that has set records for unemployment in five straight years.

"There is so much waste in government," Tollis said, adding, "The money we give to the government is consistently misused and overspent. To find success, we need to cut the waste down. The business landscape in Michigan won't change until we do."

If you would like to support Dan Tollis for State Representative in 2008, please contact him at Baro Contracting, Inc., 586-792-0831.

#### Directors

Sal Biundo, Giannola Masonry Co.  
Charles Costella, Monte Costella & Co.  
Ed Davenport, Davenport Masonry, Inc.  
Steve Dudek, Navetta Mason Contractors, Inc.  
Mike Rupp, Rupp Masonry, Inc.

### the 2007 MCA Board

## Getting Technical: Education with MV-Tech Online

Staying current with masonry education and techniques can be difficult for many – not only for masonry companies, but also general contractors, design professionals, building officials, industry craftspersons, inspectors, architects, engineers and others in the building trades.

MV-Tech Online is an easy-to-use, masonry awareness solution that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The interactive and engaging continuing education programs for masonry available from MV-Tech Online allow you to enhance your life-long learning in producing a satisfactory masonry system.

MCA encourages you to take full advantage of the MV-Tech courses and their value to your customer relationships.

With a large selection of training videos online, com-

panies have the freedom to let individual employees learn proper techniques at their own pace.

For more information and to see how to bring education back to the forefront of your business, visit the MCA website of your membership discount or log on directly at [www.mvtechonline.com](http://www.mvtechonline.com)

**MV-Tech ONLINE BEYOND EXPERIENCE**

Masonry Education has never been so easy to deliver, track and manage.

**MASONRY KNOWLEDGE ON DEMAND**



Mason Contractors' Association

# Management and Labor Working Together

No longer is it us against them or them against us. If we are to move forward as an industry we must combine our resources and expertise to provide our customers with the best possible product available. The MCA continues to partner with both the IMI and BAC Local 1 to bring continuing education to the IMI Training Center in Warren scheduled for eight (8) times this year. Each of these awareness sessions will not only bring practical information and hands-on applications but will also bring safety awareness for everyday practical applications.

December 7, 2006 kicked off our awareness sessions with "Cold Weather Masonry Construction" and safety information about the use and handling of

propane. Many of the participants appreciated the format as we focused on industry standards and how they impacted the daily operations on the site. As indicated by one of the participants "THIS WAS NOT A WASTE OF MY TIME".

With the knowledge of Pete Loughney, Jack Love, and Curt Colo of the IMI along with the support of Ray Chapman and Charlie Colo of BAC Local 1 and the experience of Skip DiGiovanni, this program will continue full steam ahead in our battle to regain market share.

We encourage our business owners to get, at minimum, your supervisory personnel to these awareness sessions and look forward to seeing you there.

## Masonry Awareness Upcoming Dates

All start times are 3:30 at the IMI Training Center

Date	Topic	Safety Topic
January 18, 2007	Masonry Lintels	Foot Protection
February 15, 2007	Tooling	Personal Protective Equipment
March 15, 2007	End Dams	Fuel Safety
April 19, 2007	Control Joints	Hard Hats
May 17, 2007	Flashing Inside/Outside Corners	Ladder Safety
September 20, 2007	Expansion Joints	Unsafe Jobsite Conditions
October 18, 2007	Air Barriers	Saw Safety
December 20, 2007	Differential Movement	Repetitive Motion Injuries

## events calendar

Date	Location	Information
January 23, 2007	MCA Office	Board Meeting
March 1, 2007	Fox & Hounds 39560 Woodward Ave. Bloomfield Hills	Contractor Meeting
March 13, 2007	MCA Office	Board Meeting
April 5, 2007	Laurel Manor 39000 Schoolcraft Rd. Livonia	General Membership Meeting
May 1, 2007	MCA Office	Board Meeting
May 2007	Comerica Park	Sports Day – Detroit Tigers
July 17, 2007	Bay Pointe Golf Club 4001 Haggerty Rd. West Bloomfield	MCA Golf Outing
July 24, 2007	MCA Office	Board Meeting

## Why be an MCA member?

### Networking

Find networking opportunities with your friendly competitors.

### Government

Pushing for the laws that promote us all.

### Education

Continuing masonry education through speakers, seminars and 24/7 online components.

### Communication

Updating you with our newsletter, website and Marketing Committee.

### Collective Bargaining

Fighting for the wages and contracts you deserve.

### Safety

Forming specialized safety programs specifically for masonry workers.

### Business

Answering your questions about workers' compensation, safety regulations, tax information and employment practices.

### Social

Giving you enjoyable venues and events to relax, have fun and build solid relationships.

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MASON CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

