

# On the Level



Mason Contractors' Association • Vol 7, Spring/Summer 2008

**"Contractor in the Spotlight"**

**Navetta Mason Contractors**

**Navetta Mason Contractors, Inc**

***Celebrating 50 Years!***

Navetta Mason Contractors celebrates their 50th anniversary in 2008. The company was founded by Mike Navetta in 1958. Throughout his career Mike's goal was to develop good masonry practice through knowledge of material, details and installation. He emphasized hands-on experience along with good engineering practice for the design and construction communities. Mike was passionate that masonry can be promoted through performance.

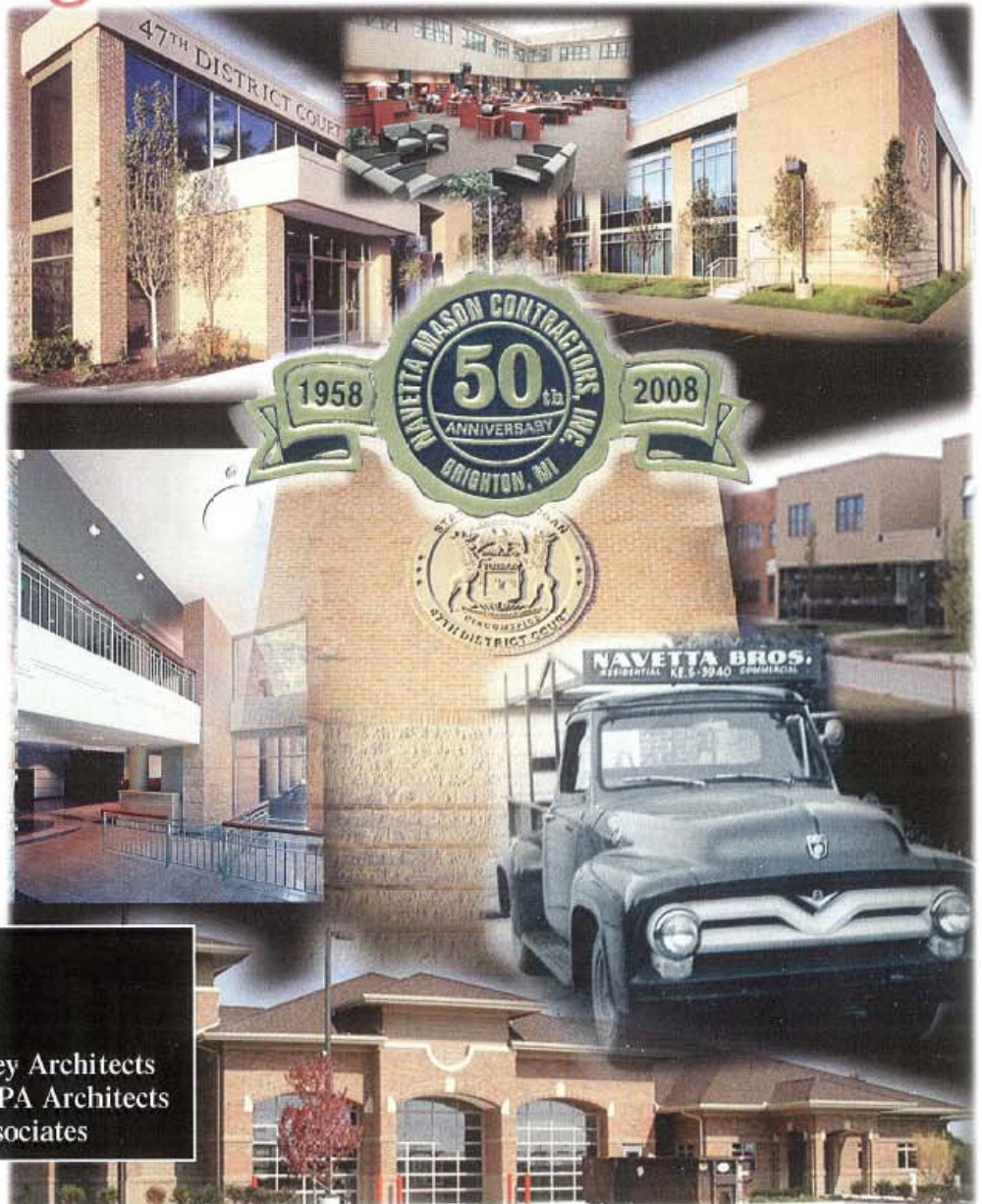
His quality workmanship has carried on thru his son-in-law Steve Dudek—President and daughter Laurie. Steve is active in the masonry industry with the Masonry Institute of Michigan (Past President) and with the Mason Contractors Association (currently serving as Vice President).

"I believe as a current Mason Contractor in these times we need to regain respect and accountability to regain market share, contractor certification and continuing education is a must," Dudek said.

Navetta's reputation is outstanding with the Architects, General Contractors/Construction managers and Owners serving in the Michigan area for the past 50 years.

Dedicated to our industry, Navetta Mason Contractors looks forward to serving this industry for many years to come.

"Workmanship is our primary interest!"



## **Navetta Mason Contractors**

12264 Emerson Dr., Brighton, MI 48116  
Phone: 248.486.6258 • Fax: 248.486.9165

### **Projects:**

Novi High School – Fanny Howey Architects  
Van Buren Fire Station #2 – CDPA Architects  
47th District Court – French Associates



## MMCA Update

The MMCA held their annual winter meeting at the World of Concrete/World of Masonry show in Las Vegas in January. Over 60 people from 30 companies attended this year's reception and meeting. Jeff Buczkiewicz, the Executive Director for the Mason Contractor's Association of America, spoke at the meeting on the MCAA's new direction including teaming up with Hanley Wood to create the premier masonry show at the World of Concrete.



Brad Leidal, MMCA Chairman (right) with Jeff Buczkiewicz, Buczkiewicz, the Executive Director of the Mason Contractors Association of America at the World of Concrete/World of Masonry show in Las Vegas in January.

## Directors Report

From the desk of

Anthony D. Darkangelo

"In business as in war, success is often given to the best disciplined, the toughest, and the most prepared." H.W. Crocker III does a great job in "Robert E. Lee on Leadership" of explaining how the mastery of self-discipline was a basic requirement that made Lee a leader. It is important to note that Lee did not lecture on leadership - he practiced it.



A successful business leader must be self-disciplined. He needs to put hard work before leisure; to put the desires of his customers for high-quality, low-priced product ahead of his own desire for a cheaply produced, high-priced product. He needs to lead by personal example that inspires employees rather than by a personal convenience that makes them cynical and ready to trim corners or cut and run to another employer. He needs to understand, as a plaque on Ronald Reagan's desk in the Oval Office read, that "There is no limit to what a man can do or were he can go if he doesn't mind who get's the credit."

Like Robert E. Lee, we must know what we fight for. Lee fought for the Confederate State of America for a new nation breaking away from the United States. The contractors of the MCA fight for a collective bargaining agreement that provides a safe and profitable work place for both organized labor and management. Providing a fair days pay for a fair days work seems trite but I do not know of an MCA contractor who believes the men are over paid (take home) however, they believe they over pay (total per hour). Lee knew that the fight was for a higher responsibility then self as should we. We must be aware that those you deal with will consider their advantage and not ours. So we must continue to be fair and just, but must not neglect our interest.

The MCA contractors must also continue to show financial responsibility as it is merely another duty that a good man must happily and dedicatedly accept. Success comes not from self-indulgence but from self-restraint and probity. It is my hope that we continue to never exceed our means. Financial responsibility is a true sign of character and integrity. Although we may not have to bleed like the men of Lee, others must know that your character and integrity will not be compromised.

It is said that history repeats itself and the more I read the more I believe it to be true. As in the war of the states both the Confederates and the Union (no pun intended) were fighting for their convictions, we must continue to fight for ours. The following lessons that Lee left us with over 100 years ago are proof that although strategies may change, principles never do.

- A leader who earns the respect of his adversary can save himself battles.
- A leader does his own reconnaissance (there is no substitute knowing the ground or for knowing the realities of the marketplace).
- A leader must keep hope alive.
- A leader knows when to put himself on the front lines to inspire his people.
- A leader must have the endurance to out-think and outlast his opponents.

One can not lead a nation who can not lead a country, one can not lead a country who can not lead a state, one can not lead a state who can not lead a city, one can not lead a city who can not lead his home, and one can not lead a home who can not lead himself.

As MCA continues to provide the leadership needed in our industry, we encourage you to get involved. We all have unique talents that will help our industry move forward. Your input is not just requested it is needed. Please visit [www.mcamichigan.org](http://www.mcamichigan.org) for a schedule of all our meetings and events.

## MCA Builds Basement for Habitat for Humanity

With a goal as big and as bold as eliminating poverty housing worldwide, Habitat for Humanity cannot rely solely on hammering nails. It also must hammer home the message that substandard housing affects everyone—the families struggling to survive in such housing, and, just as surely, the broader communities in which they live.



DAN TOLLIS  
Michigan  
Representative

Several members of the Mason Contractors Association with a goal-participated in a build for a Habitat for Humanity home in Clinton Township in Mid-May.

Participating in this build was: Dan Tollis, Baro Contracting, Inc. of Clinton Township who provided coordination, inspection and labor; Skip Di'Giovanni, Central Masonry and Cement, Inc. of Rochester also provided coordination, inspection and labor; Kevin Ryan, Masonry Developers, Inc. of Rochester provided labor; Louis DiPonio, DiPonio Construction Co. of Trenton also provided labor; Matt Hicks, Hicks Masonry Co. L.L.C. of Shelby Township provided equipment; Jeff Snyder, MASONPRO Inc. of Northville provided accessories; Jim Gendron, National Block and Ready-Mix, Inc. of Westland provided the blocks; Ed Brown, Michigan CAT of Novi provided machines; Kathy Brzys, Essroc Cement Corporation of Canton provided mortar and cement which was delivered to the build site by Sebastian Builders Supplies; Theut products supplied Masonry sand; Al Morino, Sorento's Pizza of Mt. Clemens supplied lunch.

"I've been on the board for the building trades program at the high school for years," Tollis said. "They got involved with Habitat for Humanity a few years ago.

"We've been talking about doing this build for Habitat for a few years. They called, they asked and we were ready to deliver. I got a great response after I sent out the fax requesting help. I can use the talent God gave me and I feel so good it is unbelievable. That is my reward, the happiness."

## Spring Training Schedule Michigan Laborers Training of Apprenticeship Institute

Classes are available to members in good standing. Please have your employees contact their local union to sign up for classes.



Jim Hale, Mason Tenders Industry Steward

## 2008 Leadership Series Topics

All scheduled meetings located at  
Local 1/IMI Training  
21031 Ryan Rd., Warren, MI at 3:30pm

July 9: Communication Skills  
August 13: Reinforced Masonry  
September 10: Masonry Cavities  
October 8: Material Storage  
November 12: Air Barriers  
December 10: Wire Reinforcement

1. There will be a safety topic at each module.
2. Take attendance to apply Credit Education Units.

For additional information, contact:  
'Skip' DiGiovanni • Cell: 586-484-4752

## MAD UPDATE

(Masonry Alternate Design)

The Masonry Institute of Michigan's Executive Director Dan Zechmeister points out the concerns of the mason contractors and designers as the masonry market share has decreased.

We have to instill in the engineers the confidence the industry can deliver a quality-built project. We also have to give the architects and engineers the proper tools they need to design masonry. The MAD program for 2006 and 2007 added an additional \$46 million dollars to the market place. This is equivalent to adding over 5 million square feet of wall, over 6 million 8 inch CMUs, over 314 thousand cubic feet of grout, over 197 thousand sacks of mortar, over 352 thousand bricklayers hours and over 193 laborer hours. The MAD program is going to be promoted in 2008. In convincing our customers to design with masonry the following information is available or soon will be:

- 1 component design software
- 2 system design software
- 3 masonry details
- 4 masonry specification
- 5 special inspections

The importance of having quality workmanship enhanced by continuing education through:

- 1 bricklayer certification
- 2 foreman training classes
- 3 workshops
- 4 online continuing education
- 5 quality assurance consultant

## Message from the President

Abraham Lincoln said, "You can't escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today".

In the near term, we must prepare our businesses to reflect today's economy. We have all built our business models on volumes that we probably won't see for years to come. We must learn to cope and exist on much less revenue than years past.

I spent some time with my accountant the last few weeks, and he said, "What the heck is going on?" I said, "I don't know let's see, take 20% of your volume away this year and 20% away next year and I will come back in 2 years and ask you the same questions and see what your answers will be."

Damain Lang, EZ Grout Corporation, says when things are bad, make cuts as soon as possible before the ship goes down. If the ship is taking on water it's the captain's responsibility to throw everything that isn't absolutely necessary to the mission overboard.

Cash planning teaches debt control and if you don't control debt it won't matter how much you understand the rest of your business. Don't take work for no profit. Don't let the owners or G.C.'s trick you into a price that does

not make sense. Sometimes the right thing to do is sit tight and wait for better days. Don't take risks with what little capital you still have left. Let the other guy work for free, he can't continue along with that mentality.

Fringes and withholding taxes are not our piggy banks; the union has a fiduciary responsibility to collect that money in a timely manner. They have no choice but to get tougher on collections. It's in our best interest that they work with us, but still be firm. Whatever

money doesn't get collected by Company "A" gets spread out and the rest of us will have to pay. Right now it is hard enough to pay my own bills, I don't even want to think about helping you pay yours.

On a much brighter note, the Ram-Bently software program is on its way, foreman training and bricklayer certification is in the works. The degree of cooperation exists today like I have not seen it in the last 30 years.

Good things are still taking place in our industry. Plan to stick around; it's always darkest just before the sun comes out.

See you at training classes.

Kevin Ryan  
President MCA



President of the Mason Contractors Association

## Woman of the Year Award

Nancy D. Marshall, President CEO of Aluminum Supply Company, Inc., is named a winner two years in a row of the 2008 Enterprising Women of the Year Award. Nancy ranked in the third category with an annual sales volume ranging more than \$5 million and up to \$10 million. MCA Affiliate Member, Aluminum Supply is a fabricator and distributor of architectural metal building products who is celebrating their 60th year in business.

## Democrat of the Year

Beverly Cowan, "The Picture Lady," the mother of the MCA Industry Steward, James K. Hale was recently honored with "Democrat of the Year Award" for over forty years of service by the Midtown Dems of Detroit.



## Major Issues in 2008 Election

2008 is a big year in Michigan and across the Country, for elections and legislation. WE must educate ourselves on the major issues that pertain to the construction industry and effect job opportunities for our members and signatory contractors.

Some major topics to know are:

1. "Right-to-Work", which could be called "Right-to-Work-for-Less-and-Bust-Your-Union"
2. "The Employee Free Choice Act", which guarantees a workers right to join a Union.
3. Prevailing wage laws which guarantee

that construction workers receive fair wages and benefits

4. Health Care Reform which doesn't choose or take away our right to choose doctors or force us to choose between decent care and basic life necessities. Please educate yourselves on these issues so we may make an intelligent choice in the voting booth by electing leaders and enacting legislation which will benefit the construction industry. *fraternally*

Mark King  
Financial Secretary, BAC Local 1



## MCA Contractor Member

Akins Construction, Inc  
Baker Construction Co., Inc.  
Baro Contracting Company, Inc.  
Brazen & Greer Masonry, Inc.  
Brend Contracting  
Brend Masonry, L.L.C.  
Burde-Laws Contractors, Inc.  
Central Masonry Inc.  
D.S. Building Contractors, Inc.  
D'Aloisio Masonry & Construction, Inc.  
Davenport Masonry, Inc.  
DiPonio Construction Company, Inc.  
Dixon Masonry, Inc.  
Giannola Masonry Company  
Held & Held Inc.  
HMC Mason Contractors  
King Masonry, Inc.  
Koch Masonry, Inc.  
Leidal & Hart Mason Contractors, Inc.  
Masonry Developers, Inc.  
Monte Costella & Company  
Mosser Construction, Inc.  
Muirhead Construction, Inc.  
Navetta Mason Contractors, Inc.  
O'Neill Masonry, Inc.  
Orlando & Sons, Inc.  
P & M Masonry, Inc.  
Pomponio Construction Inc.  
RC Nowak & Company  
Robovitsky Incorporated  
Terra Construction Company

### **Mark Your Calender**

General Membership Meeting;  
Thursday, November 6, 2008 at 6:00 pm  
Club Venetian in Madison Heights  
Open Membership

## MCA Affiliate Members

ACE Cutting Equipment & Supply, Inc.  
AIS Construction Equipment  
Alpha Foam Insulation, Inc.  
Aluminum Supply Co., Inc.  
Architectural Masonry Products Inc.  
Arlington Transit Mix, Inc.  
Belden Brick Sales Company  
BeneSys, Inc.  
Best Block Company  
Cloverdale Equipment Company  
Cougar Sales & Rentals, Inc.  
Detroit Brick and Stone  
Detroit Diamond Drilling Inc.  
Downriver Masonry & Supply Inc.  
ESSROC Cement Corporation  
Fendt Builders' Supply Inc.  
Fraco Products  
General Shale Brick  
Giar & Sons Equipment Co.  
Gibraltar National/Spec-Mix Corp.  
Glass Block Sales, Inc.  
Grand Blanc Cement Products  
Griffin, Smalley & Wilkerson, Inc.  
Guy, Hurley, Blaser & Heuer L.L.C.  
Holcim (US) Inc.

### **Thank You!**

To all my friends in the Masonry Industry,

Due to my illness, myocarditis, (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (fluid build up around the heart) on February 1, 2008, I was admitted to the cardiac care unit at the University of Michigan hospital for 10 days.

Thanks to their expertise and the

KLM Masonry Services Inc.  
Klochko Equipment Rental  
Lafarge North America  
MASONPRO, Inc.  
National Block  
Northwest Propane Inc.  
Oakland Companies  
Prairie Lakeside L.L.C.  
Rea & Shoemaker  
Redford Building Supply Co.  
Royal Stone  
Smede-Son Steel & Supply Co.  
St. Marys Cement Inc. (U.S.)  
Superior Materials Co. Inc.  
Swad & Company, CPA  
Team Equipment Company  
The Belden Brick Sales Co.  
Theut Products, Inc.  
TNT Equipment Co.  
Thyssenkrupp Safway Services, Inc.  
Universal Weatherstrip & Building Supply  
Valenti, Trobec, & Chandler  
VanWyk Risk & Financial Management  
Williams Products, Inc.

prayers of you my friends I am forever grateful. You all gave my family and I a gift that science cannot deliver on any level. The outpouring of love from all of you has been overwhelming and we will never forget this.

*Sincerely,*

**Don Hunson,  
Masonpro**