



**A newsletter for our employees and friends
Fall 2003**

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PAVING THE WAY TO SAFETY ALONG I-80 IN THE HIGH SIERRA



*Just one of the difficult ramp configurations,
8% supers and as tight as 30M radius,
were not a problem for the paver.*

ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR AND CHALLENGING DRIVES IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA IS ON THE WELL-TRAVELED I-80, north of Auburn leading into the majestic mountains of the Sierra Nevada.

Considered the gateway to the Tahoe Basin for summer and winter travelers, this stretch of concrete and asphalt bears up under the weight and abuse of millions of vehicles each year. It is subject to heat, cold, snow, salt and chains — conditions that contribute to rapid roadway deterioration and keep Caltrans workers busy year round.

Currently under way is a four-year, \$86 million project to improve an 11-mile stretch of

I-80 near the California/Nevada state line, between Prosser Village and Floriston, in Nevada County.

In mid-March 2003, after a paving sub-contractor was unable to continue its portion of the job, the project's general contractor, Granite Construction, and the bonding company put that portion up for bid. In mid-April 2003, they awarded a labor and equipment contract, valued at \$6.5 million, to R&L Brosamer, Inc., to construct the PCCP (Portland Cement Concrete Pavement) pavement for six-miles of I-80 roadway, at four different locations, from the Fibreboard undercrossing to the Acid Flat Bridge east of Truckee.

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"We were contracted to begin paving work in mid-April, with a completion date of October 15, 2003," says Project Manager Dale Breen. "But we got off to a late start; a winter's accumulation of 200 inches of snow delayed the project until mid May. Still, everybody pulled together to recover the lost time.

"There's been a real concerted effort between Granite, Brosamer and all the other subs. We made up the month's lost time between July 1 and September 1 by switching to a night schedule that allowed longer hours and reduced the impact of summer vacation traffic. So, we stayed on schedule to complete the job on October 24."

Joining Breen on Job 42 were Kyle Park, field engineer; Clark Benjamin, general foreman, Jesus Gonzales, finisher foreman, Jerry Powell, labor foreman, and master mechanics Paul Juhl (paver) and Dave Doud (fleet). Rusty Hoseley, area manager, and Idy Wilson, area office manager provided home office support.

The office and batch plant were located in the old Sha-Neva Quarry, five miles east of Truckee, where Granite Construction produced and supplied all the aggregate and cement for the job.

"The purpose of this work was to rehabilitate the old road and make a new 40-year roadway," says Dale. "We also improved the old asphalt shoulders by overlaying them with concrete, which will give them a greater lifetime; they won't deteriorate as quickly with the cold, snow and chains."

"When it's completed," says Dale, "this portion of I-80 will require less mainte-



Double twelve plant at the quarry, the newest addition to our fleet of batch plants.

nance year round and will be a much smoother and safer ride for travelers."

Working section by section, Granite Construction first performed excavation and asphalt leveling. Then, the Brosamer team came in to do its work, which included putting down bond breaker (a white wax cure that prevents the concrete from bonding to the asphalt), laying out joints and spreading out metal dowel baskets.

The use of load transfer dowel baskets, long employed in airport runway construction, was introduced to roadway construction about five years ago, and is now the standard in order to get longer life out of the concrete. The dowel baskets in the pavement transfer the load from one panel to the next to keep the panels from moving up and down from one another. After spreading the dowel baskets, Brosamer

crews paved over the top with PCCP using Brosamer's own 850 Gunnert Zimmermen Paver. Finally, they sprayed a curing compound using a Gomaco Cure and Texture machine.

Following this work, another sub-contractor, Diversified Concrete Cutting, sawcut joints over the baskets to control cracking, and sealed the joints to prevent moisture and potential rust. Then, Brosamer crews came back in and measured surface smoothness with a prophilo-graph. Diversified Concrete Cutting did any remedial grinding needed to meet state specifications.

"On a good day," says Dale, "we got in 2,700 cubic yards of paving, which translates to about 3,500 feet."

In total, the crew poured 100,000 cubic yards of concrete, of which 3,000 cubic yards was repair and replacement concrete on the work done by the previous sub-contractor. Since work was being performed at four locations, the crew had to move the paver 20 times and make 12 paving width changes.

"Every time we had to change the paver — that is, modify the width of the paver — we lost time," says Dale. "But we were so productive that we've made up that time in other ways."

One of the biggest issues the Brosamer crew faced was the strict demands of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and its Stormwater Pollution Prevention (SWPP) program.

"Lahontan is charged with protecting the quality of the Sierra waters and Lake Tahoe. Even the smallest discharge into lake waters are

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met by fines,” Dale says. “The paving was the easy part compared to making sure everybody abided by the SWPP plans, and that we put forth our best practices to prevent discharges into the rivers or watershed.

“For everyone else around the state and the country, these quality protection measures are the wave of the future on all work around water. But up here, it’s especially sensitive because of the ‘Keep Tahoe Blue’ efforts. All it takes is for one guy to do something or not to do something - like clean up a little grease on the ground — and the ramifications are significant. We were as conscious of the environmental controls as we were of production and quality.”



Our dedicated team, taking a short break for this photo. FRONT (L-R): Jesus (Chuey) Quintero, Charlene (Charlie) Shoemaker, Jesus Gonzales, Kyle Estes, Elliott Gear, Isidoro Aguilar, David Eisenman REAR (L-R): Jack Cowell (Caltrans), Brandon Rapolla, Santos Aguilar, Jose Garcia, Tony Ramirez, Clark Benjamin (Foreman), Tomas Guerrero, Rich Perkins, Stacie Benjamin, Mike Karvonen and Kenny Brewer.



Inserting tie bars on the first of four paving passes, slipping a lane and shoulder on the outside.



Dale Breen (project manager) discussing the days work with Clark Benjamin (paving foreman).



Installing dowel basket “on the fly” in front of paver.



Paving a five-mile stretch on I-80 in the Sierra, just east of Truckee.

HOW OUR ESTIMATING DEPARTMENT DOES IT

LONG BEFORE R&L BROSAMER PROJECT MANAGERS UNROLL NEW CONSTRUCTION PLANS AND CREWS TAKE UP THEIR TOOLS AND HARD HATS,

PUBLIC works jobs are put up for bid and awarded to the lowest responsible bidder.

How does a job go from an advertised listing to the blueprints taped to the field office wall? This is the work of the Estimating Department, a group of talented people who are responsible for putting together a competitive bid that accurately reflects what they're expecting from a job, outlines all costs related to all bid items and supports R&L Brosamer's work history and corporate culture.

Based in Brosamer's Alamo headquarters, the highly qualified estimating team includes estimators Deane Allin, operations engineer; Sami Saddik, chief engineer; and Dale Criswell, senior estimator; and support personnel Jonathan Reid, senior bridge engineer; Farid Saddik, I.T. director; Pamela Shirley, sub-contract administrator; and Joan Fuss, administrative assistant.

They work the numbers that translate into bottom-line time and dollar figures, keeping one eye on the competition and the other on profits. This requires teamwork, attention to detail and a keen desire to win the contracts that fit the profile of the kind and quality of work R&L Brosamer is known for.

Finding the Job

Our long and impressive history of construction jobs includes roadways, bridges and canals. Finding those jobs begins by scouring trade journals, such as the Daily Construction Service, for upcoming projects, typically advertised four to six weeks prior to the scheduled bid date.

Additionally, says Deane, "We keep in touch with the decision-makers of Caltrans, Northern California cities and transit authorities with whom we've done business." "We hear of jobs by word-of-mouth through industry contacts, and we check local owner web sites for information about upcoming jobs."

After Bob Brosamer and the estimators find a job that looks appropriate,



L-R: Dale Criswell, Bob Brosamer, Charles Wall, Deane Allin (plaid shirt), Farid Saddik, Sami Saddik and Jonathan Reid, taken after a successful bid.



LEFT: Farid Saddik inputs bid numbers; RIGHT: Beverly Archie works the phone on bid day.



Pamela orders the owner's plans and specifications.

"If we decide, after reviewing the specs, that the job fits our capabilities and resources, and we agree to proceed, then the estimating team goes to work," Deane says.

Estimating the Job

"In order to estimate any job," says Sami, "you have to know what you are doing - and that means quantity. How much quantity of material is involved in completing this job? So the first thing we do is quantity take-offs. We carefully study the job specs and calculate the various quantities of material involved in completing the job in order to price

it accordingly."

Sami does most of the structures estimating, Dale does the earthwork and underground and Deane does the concrete paving and helps as needed in other areas.

Jonathan is often called in to assist in quantity take-offs; he also assists in estimating jobs with significant engineering aspects.

"I'll study the engineering ahead of evaluations so we can better estimate what's going to be required," Jonathan says.

Next, the estimators look at labor, equipment and materials needed.

HOW OUR ESTIMATING DEPARTMENT DOES IT

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"We look at the items of work that we'll perform ourselves, such as concrete structures, concrete paving, earthwork and underground jobs, and we estimate how much labor and equipment are required to complete the job," says Deane. "Finally, the subs give us a price for their own work and we put that into our estimate."

"All companies do quantity take-offs and estimate direct labor, equipment and sub work. We all get the same price for the rebar, the cement, the ready mix," says Sami. "So where are we different? We're different in how we engineer, or build, the job. We always look for a better scheme, as we call it, or a better method of building the job — methods that are not detailed in the contract drawings — so our bid price will be less. That gives us a chance of being the low bidder; it's not that we're the cheapest, it's that that we have better, more innovative methods for performing the work and completing the job."

Farid assists in pre-bid scheduling to determine how much overhead will be needed and for how long.

"I study the project staging and help them schedule the time it will take to complete the project," he says. "We talk about different methods for performing the work, looking for those clever and creative schemes that could save us overhead time and give us a competitive edge in the bid."

One vital aspect of the estimating process is the obligation to make a good faith effort to recruit disadvantaged business enterprises, DBEs, for sub-contracting work. This is Joan's contribution.

"In most cases, owners specify the percentage of the total job they want performed by DBEs," Joan says. "We have to do everything we can to reach out to DBEs and encourage them to participate in the bid to make that goal. I send letters to all DBEs that provide the kind of sub work we're looking for with information about the job and a request for quotes. I follow up my letters with phone calls, finding out if they're going to bid or not, and offering help in the bidding process. I make notes on each DBE detailing whom I've

talked with and what their comments are; if they're not bidding, I include their reasons. We are absolutely held accountable for our actions, so this documentation is our proof to the owners of our good faith efforts to maximize DBE participation."

Meanwhile, Pamela provides ongoing support and updates.

"I get the estimators anything they need that's pertinent to the project — additional reports, cross-section plans, for instance," Pamela says. "I route the spec book to the people in HR, insurance and good faith compliance who need to review the requirements." She also deals with the bonding agent to obtain bid bonds required for the bid.

Finally, prior to the frenzy and excitement of bid day, Pamela assembles the actual bid package, which includes the list of bid items with a bottom-line dollar amount (typically left blank until moments before bid submission), the bid bond, various certifications, a list of sub-contractors and sometimes a job history or resume of key people expected to work on the project.

Bid Day

The big day is the day and time set by the owner when sealed bids are accepted, not a minute later. As bid runner, Pamela has the responsibility of hand-delivering the sealed bid and waiting with other bid runners while bids are read and low bids announced.

Pamela leaves the office hours before bid time in order to reach her destination safely and on time. After she finds the bid room and settles in, she calls back to the Brosamer office where Bob, the estimators and support team are anxiously working the phones, faxes and computers with last minute unit prices, lump sums and finally, the bottom-line number.



Pamela Shirley on location, receiving bid numbers.

"They're always glad to hear that I made it to the bid room okay," says Pamela. Then, the Brosamer conference room clock is synchronized with the owner's official bid clock.

"Pamela leaves with the original bid package, but it's not complete," says Deane. "Several bid items are blank because we're waiting for last-minute sub and supplier quotes; they don't want to give their prices out too early."

Communication and timing are key.

"During the last two or three hours, as we get sub-contractor and material numbers in, we close the items, one by one," Deane says. "The whole time we're on the phone with Pamela, reading her unit prices and total prices, slowly filling in the blank spaces. Fifteen minutes before the bid is due, it gets crazy. We're getting quotes by fax and both faxes are going full time."

"I'm grabbing the faxes, doing the math on the low bidders, plugging those numbers into our bid and telling the guy at the com-



Joan Fuss celebrates a winning bid.

puter if we have cuts and adds as far as money is concerned," says Jonathan. "The most exciting part of the process is bid day. We have the potential to get something at the end of the day that's beneficial for everyone at the company — so there's a lot of edge-of-the-seat excitement in all that."

As the bid is about to close, Pamela writes down the final numbers, hand delivers the sealed envelope and sits down to await the results.

"Public works always go the lowest responsible bidder, so, in almost all of the jobs we bid, we know the day of the bid who the apparent low bidder is," says Deane. "It's very exciting, for all of us when Pamela shares the news that we got the job."

MESSAGE FROM BOB BROSAMER



THIS QUARTER'S HIGHLIGHT IS THE CONCRETE PAVING OPERATION ON INTERSTATE 80 EAST OF TRUCKEE.

Slipform concrete paving has always been a company strength. The majority of our senior staff are graduates of the "Blevins Academy" of high production concrete.

The lessons learned on high production paving project carry over into all facets of the work. We start with material control. The costs of the raw materials are so high that small overruns on the grade can wipe out the entire profit.

Wet batch trucking often exceeds \$1,500 per hour. This cost, coupled with a plant and street cost of \$1,400 per hour, means any down time costs \$50 per minute.

The penalties for low strength concrete can exceed \$100,000 for a single day's production. A few days of thin slab deductions can wipe out the entire job's margin.

In short, high production concrete paving is not for the faint of heart.

The Truckee project is one of five P.C.C. paving projects that will be done by the company this year. We started 2003 paving taxiways at Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield. Travis

was followed by a work-through-the-winter program to complete Highway 101 in South San Jose.

The assumption of the Truckee contract conflicted with an earlier commitment to pave two parking aprons at the Lemoore Naval Air Station. We were forced to split into two crews. The split crews will be merged back into a single entity to pave the overnight aprons at the San Jose Airport in December.

The traveling gypsies that make up our paving crews have done an outstanding job. My thanks to every one of you.

We've added five new jobs to our backlog in the last three months.

- We were low bidder on the Fourth Street ramp to I-80 in San Francisco with a bid of \$17,876,106.
- We then had our proposal to replace sections of both the taxiways and aprons at Travis accepted by the prime contractor, Vintage Paving of Winters. This work should exceed \$14,000,000.
- On September 23, we were the successful bidder on a proposal to widen Highway 4 near Pittsburg. Our winning bid of \$30,687,688.50 was less than one percent below the next three bids.
- We have already started the \$3,092,000 concrete lining of the Pond-Poso Canal near Wasco. This is the third one of the fast track winter shutdown jobs done by our forces.
- On October 29, the estimating team added another Caltrans job to our backlog. Our bid of \$22,572,488 for a complex ramp rebuilding on Interstate 80 near Roseville takes our backlog to a comfortable level in this time of uncertain funding.

We continue to focus on having the safest working conditions in the industry. Use the safety hotline if we're missing something! Again, watch your partner's back and be sure he's watching yours.



**OUR FREEDOMS ARE THE
RESULT OF MANY SACRIFICES**

R&L Brosamer salutes all the servicemen and servicewomen who are protecting our freedoms all over the world. Thank you for your courage.



**AIR FORCE CAPT. RICHARD CAO (RIGHT),
A LONGTIME FRIEND, ON PATROL IN BAGHDAD.**

THE SAFETY ZONE

WHEN DISCUSSING SAFETY ON THE JOB IT HELPS TO PLAN AHEAD. **OVEREXERTION, STRUCK-BY, FALLS,** and **CAUGHT** in or between equipment, are the major types of Workers' Compensation injuries. Plan safety meetings to help recognize these hazards.



OVEREXERTION

OVEREXERTION injuries are the leading Workers' Compensation injuries in terms of frequency and cost. More than 30% of Workers' Compensation injuries are caused by overexertion,

which includes sprains and strains. Helping watch your buddy's back, prevents overexertion, this includes helping your co-worker with a load or helping with house-keeping. Newly hired employ-

ees are often casualties of this type of injury. Backs, knees, shoulders and ankles are the parts of the body most commonly affected. These injuries are caused by physical overload, when lift-

ing (too heavy a load or lifting improperly), straining, over-reaching, bending, and twisting.

STRUCK BY

Being **STRUCK BY** an object is the second leading cause of worker injury. The best way to prevent this type of accident is to stay alert

and to wear proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE — hardhats, eye protection, and gloves). Be aware of your body and the space around

you. Whip checks on air hose connections, toe boards on scaffolds, secure loose objects before flying loads and wear safety glasses when

working with power tools, these practices prevent **STRUCK BY** accidents.

FALLS/CAUGHT

FALLS to a lower level comprises 10% of WC costs. At R&L Brosamer, many of our projects have falls to a lower level exposure. Proper fall protection and fall arrest

procedures and equipment are key in preventing this type of accident. With a commitment to be tied off 100% of the time, this type of claim can be prevented.

CAUGHT in or between equipment comprises 5% of WC costs. At R&L Brosamer, this type of injury claim has historically been higher than average. Planning, alertness,

housekeeping, communication and looking out for your "buddy" can all help prevent **CAUGHT** in or between equipment-type injury claims.

CALL OUR TOLL FREE NUMBER 1-888-SAFETY4U (1-888-723 3894) TO REPORT UNSAFE ACTS OR CONDITIONS. ANONYMOUS MESSAGES MAY BE LEFT 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK.

NEW IDEA FOR NEW EQUIPMENT

A new Bobcat Model T180 was purchased for the Guadalupe River Project. This track Skid Steer loader is very maneuverable in the mud.

In addition to the front loader capability, a new concrete mixer attachment was purchased. The attachment will mix up to a CY of concrete, turning the machine into a "moving" portable concrete mixer.

Charlie Douglas and **Shawn Otheim** came up with the idea to use the attachment for filling the grout seams between the Concrete Cellular Mats (CCM).

POURING CONCRETE?

Plan ahead so the crew has rubber gloves and rubber boots to prevent concrete burns. Also, plan ahead for the changing weather — make sure you have the right PPE to deal with it.

EMPLOYEE NEWS

R&L BROSAMER WELCOMES ITS RECENT NEW HIRES

Rob Brosamer joins the equipment department team in Alamo. He previously worked for the company in the field. In his free time, Rob enjoys working on the computer. He has previously analyzed game programs for companies as well as built computers. Rob is married with four children and resides in Alamo.

Charlie Tasto is our new Safety Manager. He previously worked at Homer J. Olson in the same capacity, where he crossed paths with R&L employees on VTA projects. Charlie enjoys building and flying glider planes. He is married with three children and resides in Pleasanton.

FIVE YEAR AWARDS SALARY EMPLOYEES

Beverly Archie, Front Desk, Alamo.
Jose Escobedo, Equipment Manager and EEO Officer, Alamo.
Idy Wilson, Office Manager, Oakland, Truckee, Lemoore and San Jose Airport.

STATISTICS

At the week ending December 14, 2003, R&L Brosamer had 238 employees.

MARRIAGES

Congratulations to **Rob Brosamer**, who married his wife,

Wendy, on June 28.

Congratulations to **Roger Giles**, who married his wife, Janeen, on August 16.

BIRTHS

Congratulations to **Paul Juhl** on the birth of his daughter, Hayley Jeanette, on

October 7. Paul has been working on the Truckee job.

Please e-mail employee news to cindyl@brosamer.com or call Cindy at Alamo extension 238.

BROSAMER COMPANY CORNER

THE FAMILY OF JOHNNIE CASTRO WOULD LIKE TO CONVEY ITS GRATITUDE TO ALL who contributed and supported the family in its time of need. At the Queen of Heaven Cemetery in Lafayette, located outside the Mausoleum of the Angels, is a memorial bench that honors our late co-worker. It is a beautiful place to seek solace.

R&L Brosamer proudly recognizes the good citizenship and otherwise good guy deeds of **Santiago Herrera, Mark Petty** and **Scott Norgren**.

Santiago's sharp eyes and quick response helped us recover our stolen company pickup truck. One Saturday, he spotted the stolen truck in Oakland and contacted Mark. Mark called the police to report it. Scott got an extra set of keys to go pick up the vehicle. The truck was towed to Santiago's house, where Scott picked it up and returned it to our job. Well done, fellows, and THANK YOU for your teamwork in recovering company property.

On September 20, the company spon-

sored a picnic at Shadow Cliffs Park in Pleasanton. Those who attended had a fun time. The BBQ was great. Bounce house, water balloon toss and a piñata kept the kids entertained. We also had games and a raffle.

This is the one time we get a chance to meet our co-workers from various jobs and get to know their families. It was a beautiful day and a wonderful way to spend time in a relaxed setting. There were grandparents and grandchildren, dads and moms and kids of all ages. It made all the planning and organizing worthwhile. Be sure to join us next year.

Special thanks to **Beverly Archie** and **Rita Bustos** for their creativity and coordination of this event.

The third annual R&L Brosamer, Inc. houseboat trip was held at the New Melones Reservoir on the weekend of October 4 and 5. R&L managers, superintendents and engineers had a chance to bond in a relaxing and festive setting. Activities included boating, wakeboarding, jet skiing and tubing. **Mark Petty's** 100+ mph speedboat was "scary fun" for those who braved it. The event was memorable.



FROM R&L BROSAMER, INC.