

# The Commonwealth Quarterly

News from around the circuit.

Spring 2004



**Commonwealth  
Electric Company**  
of the midwest

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## New Lincoln Branch Building

Mike King – Branch Manager

On February 12, 2004, the Lincoln Branch moved to its new home at 1941 Y Street in the former Kingery construction building. Prior to our move, with the help of many office and field personnel, the office underwent a complete remodel, with the addition of some new offices and a conference room. Along with some innovative purchases and many hours of work, we now have a very unique and convenient office to work in.

We appreciate the fact that those of us in the Lincoln branch have been somewhat spoiled all these years housing with the corporate office. Having some amenities being with corporate has now fallen on our shoulders. Our staff has taken on many new challenges which we once had the luxury of corpo-

rate doing for us. We appreciated what corporate did and are still doing to assist us. Everyone in the Lincoln branch is fairly well settled in and we invite anyone who would like to take a look to stop in sometime.

Thanks again to all of those in the corporate office, the Lincoln branch and the field who helped our new location become a reality.



## Hilton Hotel

Neil Davidson – Project Manager

Commonwealth Electric was selected to provide design assistance and installation of the electrical and data communication systems for the new Omaha Hilton Hotel and Convention Center. This was a unique project due to the fact that Commonwealth was brought on board during the design phase of this project. Commonwealth provided early budgetary estimates



Omaha Hilton Hotel and Convention Center

and design assistance to the General Contractor, Landmark Construction, and the Electrical Engineer, Leo A. Daly, to help control the project cost. Commonwealth reviewed the drawings during the design phase and provided cost saving ideas that were then incorporated into the design to bring the project within budget.

The project is a new 8 story hotel connected to the new Omaha Qwest Center by a sky bridge. This hotel has 450 guest rooms, meeting rooms, a ballroom, parking garage, and a restaurant. The completion date for this project is March 24, 2004, and reservations are being accepted for April 1, 2004.

Eric Hoge was involved early on with the design assist portion of this project. Eric worked very closely with the Electrical Engineers at Leo A. Daly to keep the project within budget. Keith Burnham was the Electrical Superintendent, Craig Langfeldt was the on-site Assistant Project Manager, and Dan Maca was the Foreman for the low voltage systems. This project had a very aggressive schedule. Everyone involved has done a fantastic job of getting this project done.

## Commonwealth Electric Supports Local Youth Activities

Michael Duffy – Service Manager

Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest continues to support the local youth programs in our areas. Des Moines Commonwealth continues to support local youth in scouting programs, 4-H programs, academic programs and various sporting programs. The Des Moines branch continues its support of the local high school hockey program through its donations of time, storage space, advertisements and sponsorships to the Des Moines Capitals. The Capitals represent seven different local high schools in our area.

The Capitals will be hosting the 2004 Iowa High School Hockey League Varsity State Tournament February 27, 28 and 29th. Teams from Des Moines, IA, Lincoln, NE, Omaha, NE, Kansas City, MO, Sioux City, Mason City, Waterloo, Ames, Cedar Rapids and the Quad Cities in Iowa are all competing for eight play off spots. Commonwealth is adding their support to this tournament as they did for the junior varsity tournament last year.



*The Des Moines Capitals Board of Directors would like to thank Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest for their support, without it some players would not be able to participate.*

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## Back To School 2

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**Pat Klausen** – Project Manager

No, this is not a remake of the Rodney Dangerfield movie.

Currently the Lincoln Division is in the process of doing a complete fire alarm upgrade/renovation to the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, College of Engineering, Nebraska Hall Building. Several of the employees of Commonwealth Electric have attended classes through UNL Engineering College which meant that they would have spent a considerable amount of time in Nebraska Hall.

Since the Construction Management Department is located in this building, I find this project to be a “near and dear” issue to myself since I graduated from this department. You could say that this department is close to all of Commonwealth Electric since several other graduates from this particular department are working within the company at various levels. This would include our COO, Dave Firestone and Des Moines Branch Manager, Michael Price along with several others within the company.

The building is requiring a major fire alarm overhaul that incorporates many changes to the current fire alarm system. These changes and upgrades are necessary in order to meet current compliant regulations as directed by both the NFPA and ADA.

The current fire alarm system is a conventional fire alarm system that is being upgraded to an addressable fire alarm system. This new system will incorporate new smoke, heat and duct detectors, interface devices for the existing sprinkler flow and tamper switches along with new speaker/strobe indicat-

ing units with voice evacuation.

This is a challenging fire alarm project, to say the least, since the current system needs to stay operational while implementing the new system that will consist of roughly 1,200 devices that cover 6 levels and over 400,000 square feet of building.

This project is being led onsite by both Mike Vollertsen and Steve Wilkens who also led the many Commonwealth Electric employees that were instrumental with the successful construction at the Lincoln Electric System Salt Valley Generating Station which is at the final completion stage. Several other electricians that are working on this project were also associated with the L.E.S. project.

This current project is very important to insure the life safety needs of our future engineering professionals and also it is another important stop along the way in the travels of Commonwealth Electric in order to continue our goal of “Committed to Excellence.”

The next stop for this team will be the construction of the 246,000 square foot UNL Husker Village–Student Housing Complex that will house 526 students in the fall of 2005.

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## Wellmark Connects with Fiber

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**Ron Saf** – Project Manager

Commonwealth has been selected to install a 2000’ fiber optic system that extends from the Wellmark Ruan Center 12th floor to the Wellmark Walnut Building in downtown Des Moines. This project was originally estimated back in 2000 for concep-

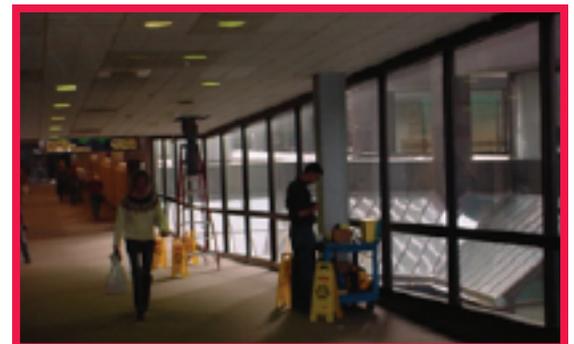


Wellmark Fiber Terminators

tual ideas that involved different routing paths through the downtown skywalk system to connect Wellmark’s remote site at the Walnut building to the Ruan Center computer room. The installation involved coordina-

tion with building owners, skywalk tenant businesses, Des Moines Sky Walk Association and Commonwealth’s safety director, to insure a public friendly working environment during the installation of the cable sup-

ports, wall penetrations, and finally the pulling of the fiber optic cable through the public skywalk system. We would like to thank Danny Roberts, Dave Terrill and the entire Commonwealth crew for their attention to safety and coordinating the work process.



Des Moines Skywalk

# Safety Training

Ruben J. Bera – Corporate Safety Director

One of the most important parts of an effective safety program is the training that is provided to ensure all employees receive not only basic safety but specialized safety training.

Last August, Glen Moss and I attended an insurance meeting. On the agenda was a gentleman named Bob LoMastro of LoMastro and Associates. Bob gave an excellent presentation on the safety requirements of NFPA-70E Electrical Safe Work Practices. The program was so good that we both agreed that we needed to get Mr. LoMastro to our locations.

To date, Bob has provided electrical training at the Omaha, Lincoln, Phoenix and Tucson offices. Des Moines is scheduled for early April. This training was well received and certainly opened a lot of eyes. It showed everyone the hazards that

are present when working with electricity. In addition, it also showed how to protect you from an unnecessary electrical injury.

There was plenty of time for interaction and participation. Hats off to those who volunteered to help demonstrate different potential hazards. Bob kept everyone's attention. The class was not only informative but entertaining as well.

As a result from these classes, Commonwealth Electric is making efforts to providing the right personal protective equipment to protect our employees. Understand that providing the equipment is just a part of the program. Making sure employees know when and how to use the equipment is the most important part.



Bob LoMastro

Electrical hazards will always be a challenge to Commonwealth Electric. How we prepare for these potential hazards will be the difference between us and the “other” guy.

We stand committed to ensuring a safe work environment and we stand committed to “Excellence.” In the coming months, we hope to repeat this specialized training for all employees.

Remember, a trained electrician is a safe electrician.

**Think smart. Work safe.**



Omaha Training



Tucson Training



Lincoln Training



Phoenix Training

## Younkers Comes Home with a New Store in Des Moines

**T. Michael Price** – Branch Manager

Commonwealth has started on a two-story, 160,000 square foot Younkers store at the new Jordan Creek Town Center in Des Moines, Iowa. The project started in late August of 2003 and is scheduled to be completed in August of this year.

The project is an electrical design build consisting of service equipment, power distribution, lighting,



emergency generator, energy management, phone and data cabling, fiber optic cabling, audio visual systems, and loss prevention systems

## Born to be Wild

**Ron Saf** – Project Manager

The next time you get out on the highway, looking for adventure, keep your eyes open wide along I-80 and 2nd Avenue looking to the North is the new “Hog Barn.” This 45,000 square foot “Zook’s Harley Davidson” building is very unique in design with a barn shaped structure, and a complimentary concrete silo used as an elevator to the mezzanine level. The interior show room has an incredible 45’ faulted ceiling with exposed wood beams, wrapped wood columns, and wood wrapped horizontal structured beams.

In the fall of 2003, Graham Construction selected Commonwealth Electric to their design and build team to provide the new facility with electrical design and construction services including main electrical service, lighting installation of over 708 light fixtures from Hi-Bay fixtures to track, sconces, scoops, and display lighting, power distribution equipment, and special systems installation of fire alarm, card access, security cameras, motion detectors, door sensors, door mag-locks, telephone cabling, data cabling, and low voltage lighting control.

The Commonwealth team partnered with Graham Construction and Simmonson & Associates to make Tom Zook’s vision of a new Harley Davidson store a reality.

including CCTV and electronic article surveillance. The store design is a departure for Younkers, incorporating many new features not seen in previously constructed stores. These new features include items such as textured concrete floors, a storewide audio visual system incorporating video projection on the exterior of the building, and a more open, versatile retail plan.

Roy Lamb is our Project General Foreman on site. Roy has been teamed with local foremen Robin Pearson and Mike Keiler. Roy is familiar with Saks Incorporated projects as he was the general foreman at the Eau Claire, WI Younkers; the Great Falls, MT Herberger’s; and the Peoria, IL Bergner’s Store.

*“Roy and the Des Moines crew are doing a great job. The schedule has been, and continues to be, very fast paced. It is nice to*

*have one of our Saks projects come home to Des Moines. We are all very excited about this project!”*

Michael Price -Project Manager

The project design team is made up by Dean and Dean Architects, Johnson Design, Posko Mechanical Engineers and Commonwealth Electric. The Younkers construction project team is made up of JESCO, Incorporated; general contractors, FL Crane; framing, dry-wall and EFIS, AJ Allen Mechanical; plumbing and Corn States Mechanical on the duct work and sheet metal.

The electrical design has been a challenging process and construction promises to be even more challenging. However, we are very excited about the project and working with the project team.

The Commonwealth project team consisted of:

|                                  |                              |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Branch Manager Michael Price     | Electrical Foreman Jim Smith |
| Project Manager Ron Saf          | Special Systems Foreman      |
| Project Estimator Dianna Merritt | Nate Findlay                 |

*“The project is very impressive. After experiencing how passionate people are about Harley Davidson and Zook’s, we want to strive for the same excellence in our business. Although I don’t think we can convince our customers to get the Commonwealth logo tattooed on their arms.”*

Ron Saf - Project Manager

*“The project has been challenging and fast paced. The project team has been great to work with and I couldn’t have asked for a better crew.”*

Jim Smith –Project Foreman

Thanks to all the electrical journeymen and apprentices who brought their skills and craftsmanship to this project. Thanks to the many Commonwealth subcontractors and suppliers whose coordinated efforts helped us achieve our project goals.

