

# The Commonwealth Quarterly

News from around the circuit.

Winter 2005



**Commonwealth Electric Company**  
of the midwest

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## Year End

**David F. Firestone** – President/COO

As we close the books on 2005, I want to thank all of you who had a hand in making this past year our biggest volume year ever. CECM finished the year at \$70.5 million dollars in revenues. This was the most work we've performed since 1999 when we topped out at \$67.7 million dollars.

On another high note, this past October was the largest billing month since the inception of our company. The total billed was \$7.8 million dollars!

Again, thanks to all of you who made this possible.

Now let's see if we can top these two achievements in 2006!



David F. Firestone – President/COO

## CECM Awarded Old Spanish Trail Marketplace

**Jay Hoobler** – Branch Manager

T.L. Roof Construction recently awarded the subcontract for the electrical work on the Old Spanish Trail Marketplace in Tucson to Commonwealth Electric. This major commercial project will have over 200,000 square feet of retail space when finished. The retail center will be the new home to several major tenants which include Office Max, Bed Bath & Beyond, Ross, Petco, Party America, and Famous Footwear.

In addition to the electrical work for the scheduled tenants, CECM will also be performing the site distribution and parking lot lighting for the complex. With future retail pads included in the design, there is a strong possibility that the work scope may be expanded to include additional tenants as they are brought on board.

This will be an exciting project due to the fast track nature of the construction. Most of the retail tenants are scheduled to be open for business prior to Thanksgiving of this year. Due to

the scheduled simultaneous construction of multiple stores, our location will have several project managers involved in the administration of this contract. Tim Beatty will be responsible for site work for Famous Footwear, Party America, and the strip mall portions of the project. Chuck Lewis will oversee the Petco and the Bed, Bath & Beyond Stores. Clay Gideon will be project manager for the Office Max and the Ross Stores. A genuine team effort will be required to keep this project on track.

T.L. Roof is a reputable contractor in Southern Arizona. They are also one of the first contractors that we worked with in the Tucson market. We are looking forward to an exciting and successful project with this long-time customer.

## The Rec Room Relocates in Omaha

**Eric Hoge** – Project Manager

The Rec Room is a retailer of all things recreational. Everything from bar stools to hot tubs to pool tables is available. In fact they have so many available items, that they need a larger space than their present location in the Westwood Shopping Center. Fortunately, a large retail space was available across from Oakview Mall that Best Buy had occupied for several years before relocating.

Sampson Construction was hired to erect a demising wall to split the retail space into two areas. Golf Galaxy took over the west half. Sampson expanded the east half even further to the east to create a large retail space for The Rec Room. Sampson hired Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest to split the existing electrical service for both tenants and then to design interior space of The Rec Room on a design/build basis.

Modifying the existing service required some ingenuity and discussions with the local inspector. There was an existing exterior service entrance that had to be reused to keep cost to a minimum. Eric Hoge worked with the foreman, Chuck Paskach, to design a custom tap box that was connected to the existing service and allowed for the splitting of the service at the exterior.

The interior work presented its own challenges. This project fell under the new state regulations for automatic lighting

shutoff. We used a Hubbell Building Automation Simplicity 8 to program the metal halide fixtures to come on thirty minutes before business opening and to cycle off an hour after closing.

The new facility will showcase bar vignettes with barstools and cabinetry as well as pool tables, dart boards, and foosball tables. There are also connections for six hot tubs to be displayed as functioning units. In addition, an enclosed room with a fiber optic star field in the ceiling will showcase two more hot tubs under the “stars”.

If you are in Omaha and looking for new recreational supplies, stop by The Rec Room to check out the wares and Commonwealth’s design/build capabilities!



The Rec Room Plus – Omaha

## Commonwealth Finishes the Newen’s Lofts Project in Des Moines

**Mark Ramsey** – Project Manager

Commonwealth recently completed the Newen’s Loft project near Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. The project consisted of the conversion of the historic Newen’s Dairy barn in loft style apartments. A total of 12,000 square feet was converted to 11 loft apartments ranging in size from 647 to 1289 square feet.

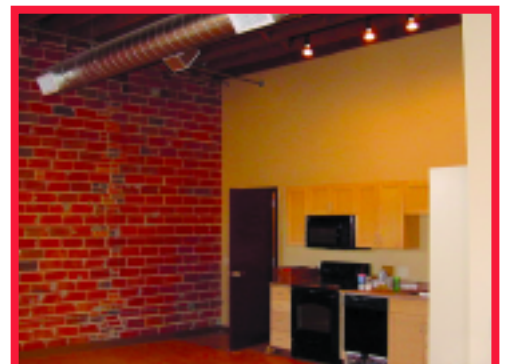
The project was a fast paced, design build project consisting of new power distribution, metering, lighting, branch circuit wiring, fire alarm system, intercom system and exterior lighting. Construction was a challenge due to the historic nature of the Newen’s Dairy building. Many of the architectural features had to be preserved including the old cattle ramp which

now serves as the rear entrance to the lofts. Much of the electrical conduit was installed exposed on historic masonry walls.

Regency Commercial, the project’s general contractor, contacted Commonwealth in early December to begin work on the electrical design for the project. The design was completed within a few days and we were on the job beginning work within a week. Mark Ramsey was Commonwealth’s project manager. Steve Hansen was the project foreman. Jeff Gero designed the project and completed the CAD work to produce our drawings.

The project continues with the construction of several retail shops on the

first floor. With the completion of the lofts and the new retail shops, the Newen’s Loft project will provide a unique living and shopping environment for the Drake University students and neighborhood residents.



Newen’s Lofts

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## Expo Division

**Dan Shannon** – General Manager

The expo division has been around since 1995 when the business was purchased from Tomack Electric. At that time Tomack was the exclusive provider of temporary electrical services from the Phoenix Civic Plaza, the Tucson Convention Center, and also worked in several other hotel and resort properties in both the Phoenix and Tucson areas. Since that time, we have successfully retained both of the contracts at each convention center and continue to grow our business in other convention and trade show facilities.

Whenever we are asked what it is we do, we explain that we provide temporary utilities to exhibitors and show managers of conventions, tradeshow, and special events. Inevitably 9 out of 10 people ask, “Do you do the Auto Show?” The answer to that question is “yes” but what most people don’t realize is that there are so many other events and literally a trade show for just about anything you can think of. We have provided service on the largest trade shows held here in Arizona as well as concerts held in several different arenas.

Unlike the field, our electricians are not installing permanent service. Everything we do is based on temporary service. This can literally mean running tens, even hundreds of thousands of feet of power cords and cable for any particular event. Our entire

staff can deal directly with hundreds of clients on a daily basis, each having individual needs and their own idea of how it should be done. For this reason, we have to be very versed in customer service as well as have a great deal of patience. This can sometime be trying when working long hours. One thing that our electricians will tell you is that you either love this business or can do without it. Although there are many aspects of the job that are challenging, perhaps the most challenging is the long hours. Many events are being constructed or torn down in the early morning hours as well as late into the evening. There really is no such thing as 9 to 5 in this industry. One of our most impressive stats is that with as many hours as we have put in, we have not had a work related injury for over ten years. This is proof that our people take pride in what they do and continually have safety in mind.

As the General Manager, I think the thing that I am most proud of is my staff at Expo. In Phoenix, our staff consists of LeAnn Whitehead, Tania Kemp, and Charidy Mackintosh as utilities coordinators and Arlen Rowland and Fred Moore are our full-time electricians. In Tucson, Jennifer Willer and Candee Wyman are the utilities coordinators and Jeff Willer and Brian Badet are our electricians. All of these folks are very dedicated and all have the “whatever it takes” attitude to provide

the best service possible for every event. Both offices work well together and are willing to help each other out in any way they can even if it means traveling to each other’s city and spending a few days to make the event successful. One of the great advantages of being part of the Commonwealth family is that both the Phoenix and Tucson construction offices are always there to provide additional labor to Expo when needed on an event. Many of the people that work in the field enjoy working at Expo because it is truly completely different from what they do in the field and like the change for a few days.

I have come to find out that although we are very different from other divisions, most people find what we do to be very interesting and sometimes even fun. The support that I have received from our Phoenix, Tucson, and home office in Lincoln is nothing less than outstanding and is truly appreciated. I look forward to future newsletters where I can provide more insight and exciting news from the expo office.

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## Welcome Jack Harris – Tucson Service Manager

**Jay Hoobler** – Branch Manager

Jack Harris has been added to the Commonwealth Electric team as the Service Manager for the Tucson branch. Jack has been working in the electrical industry for over 40 years and brings with him a great deal of knowledge and experience. Jack and his wife Cathie recently relocated to Tucson from Northern California in order to be closer to their son Joe, who is

studying at the University of Arizona and also a member of the football team. Jack was president of Harris Electric in Campbell, CA. He sold his business in 1999 but returned to the electrical industry in 2003. We are excited to have Jack as the newest member of Commonwealth Electric in Tucson.



Jack Harris

## Pfizer Inc.

**Paul Claus** – Project Administrator

Pfizer Inc., located in Lincoln, is in the process of a new Veterinary Medical Research & Development Production Development, otherwise known as VMRD Production & Development. We started the project in January of 2005 and will finish in March of 2006. The approximate value of the project is \$800,000, most of which is labor and we have very little equipment to supply.

We were able to successfully negotiate the instrumentation side of the project and this has been an experience for myself and the two job-site foremen. Steve Layton has been the General Foreman and Dennis Mohlman came aboard when we received the instrumentation portion of the project.

What has made this interesting is that the engineering firm that did the development prints was let go shortly after the project was bid. The prints were not complete and the ones we did have were very poor. We have had a lot of pricing of change as to the scope-of-work from bid date to the present and a few arguments as to what we and the owners saw as our scope-of-work and what had been bid.

At present, we are starting to work on all the Process



Pfizer VMRD



Rick Egger working at Pfizer

Equipment that the owner has purchased and some that the General Contractor supplied.

One of the major things that are very stringent is safety at Pfizer. There are weekly job-site inspections; in attendance at each inspection are the General Contractors Safety Inspector, two Pfizer employees, and one person from the Subcontractors, we rotate on a weekly basis. I think this is a very good idea, even if we are found to occasionally have something wrong. It sure keeps safety in the minds of the men when we see an active role by all of the other trades.

The job is to be substantially complete by the end of March. This includes commissioning and punch list. The job has been an interesting experience for me and the men. Something new and challenging is always a good learning experience.

## Bass Pro Shop – Council Bluffs, Iowa

**Neil Davidson** – Project Manager

Commonwealth Electric was selected as the electrical contractor for the Bass Pro Shop recently built in Council Bluffs, Iowa. This is a 130,000 square foot outdoor super store that features two levels of retail space, restaurant, art displays, 15' waterfall that flows into an 18,000 gallon aquarium and many wildlife and fish displays. The store also has a live archery range, rifle arcade, 8,500 square foot marine and boat center, and a Starbucks.

This was a very challenging project due to the short time frame given to construct the building. Of the total hours worked on the project, 80% were worked in a four month period. Everyone involved in this project put in a tremendous amount of time during those 4 months. Other challenges included mounting the large chandeliers, installing devices in giant log tim-

bers, and working with Bass Pro Shop's artisans to light all the wildlife displays and artwork.

An interesting item on this project was the purchase of a pre-manufactured main electrical room. This unit came in as a modular enclosure with the switchgear, transformers and panels already mounted, piped and wired. The enclosure was set in the building with a crane over the conduit stubs already installed in the slab. Our electricians finished the feeds to the other electrical rooms along with the branch circuits for a very quick installation.

The store opened on time in November 2005 and has been very busy since. We are finishing the restaurant which is scheduled to open in early March 2006. Thanks to everyone involved in making this a successful project for Bass Pro Shop and Commonwealth Electric.



Bass Pro Shops



Premanufactured Electrical Room



Saint Mary's Clinic



VA Hospital



Tucson Fire Maintenance Facility

## Safety Spotlight on Tucson

Ruben Bera – Corporate Safety Director

Our Tucson Branch of the Commonwealth family is a small branch yet very big on safety. Ask any safety professional where safety begins and they will all tell you, at the top of management. Total management support along with dedicated field foremen is the key to Tucson's safety success.

DL Ryberg is our field general in Tucson. In addition to his many duties, he also visits the job sites daily and reminds our workers on the importance of working safe and following our safety rules. Our Branch Manager, Jay Hoobler supports DL in his efforts.

As with all of our other locations, certain jobs in Tucson have made great progress in reducing injuries on the job.

- Raytheon Missile Systems is a site we've done work for many years. Since 1991 and before, **no accidents.**
- St Mary's Clinic was a 10 month project. **No accidents.**
- VA Hospital – Work off and on for the past 3 years. **No accidents.**
- City of Tucson Fire Maintenance Facility – 8 months. **No accidents.**
- Three M&I Banks. **No accidents.**

Some of the key foremen that help Tucson achieve safety success include Tony Doar, Matt Merrymans, QT Tran, Tom Barnes, Robert Ervin, Steve Harrell, James Luper, Kevin Tamayo and Bruce Wiebenga. These foremen, along with their crews, have demonstrated good safe work practices.

DL conducts periodic safety meetings with all foremen. During my visits, meetings are routinely held and specific training is provided such as arc flash and many others. PPE requirements are met, provided and constantly updated.

Lucy Leyva and Iris make sure the field has all the necessary paperwork and tracks all the safety activities from the office. A job that many over look but a very important part of a successful safety program.

Good job to all in the Tucson location. From the estimators to the people making deliveries, Safety is a team effort. The success they have achieved helps make our company not only a leader in our industry but a leader in safety.

## Sunrise Assisted Living Project

Gene Hayes and Tom Campbell – Project Managers

GRAYCOR based in Chicago, IL has awarded CECM Phoenix a subcontract of \$946,500.00 for the electrical installation of the new Sunrise Assisted Living project in Chandler, AZ. The project consists of the building of three separate, single story structures of wood construction. Construction is to begin in late February and is to be completed by mid-December of 2006.

When completed, the three units will total approximately 57,000 sq ft, containing 75 assisted living units. One complete unit is dedicated for the housing of persons requiring care for Alzheimers disease. The CECM Project Manager is Gene Hayes and the jobsite foreman is Glen Eversole.

MW Builders Inc based in Overland Park, Kansas awarded CECM the first Sunrise Senior Living in July 2005. The subcontract value was \$705,000.00 for the electrical installation. This work includes the telephone, data, communications, fire alarm and security system. The facility is 3 levels consisting of 78 units totaling 61,071 square feet. This facility is constructed of structural steel framing.

The project is scheduled for completion in October 2006. The CECM project foreman is Jason Turner and the project manager is Tom Campbell.