

THE FIRST WORD

February, 2008

2007 Engineering Excellence Awards

Wallace Engineering Wins 2007 Grand Conceptor Award

Wallace Engineering of Tulsa received the 2007 Engineering Excellence "GRAND CONCEPTOR" Award at the January 24th ACEC OKLAHOMA General Membership Meeting.

Wallace Engineering received the award for the Wanda L. Bass Music Center at Oklahoma City University.

The Wanda L. Bass Music Center is a three-story, 113,000 square

foot facility. The project houses 60 practice rooms, 38 new teaching studios, seven high-tech music labs, six ensemble rehearsal rooms, and a black-box theater, all wrapped around a soaring, 75 foot tall atrium featuring Gothic-inspired exposed steel frames.

The Bass School of Music fits tightly within OCU's urban campus, abutting the Kirkpatrick Fine Arts Center, a 75-year-old building that houses the school's auditoriums.

The architectural and structural designs of the Bass Center were developed around the concept of creating bright, open, acoustically-tuned public spaces along with multiple, isolated, acoustically-sensitive practice and performance rooms. Acoustic issues required multiple isolation breaks in the structure, dividing the building into seven structurally, and in most cases acoustically isolated, independent areas.

The Wanda L. Bass Music Center is a great success, not just architecturally and structurally, but for Oklahoma City University as well. The Bass Center allowed the University to expand its enrollment capabilities for the music program, which is recognized as one of the best in the nation.

Mark Parker, dean of the OCU Music School, put it this way: "The Bass Music Center is an unprecedented creative collaboration between musicians and acousticians, architects and network

designers, craftsmen and visionaries. This synergy has created a place inspired by a dream to build the world's finest facility for teaching music. The Bass Center is an inspiration built to inspire. It is a finely crafted instrument in its own right."

BWR, Guy Engineering, and Garver Take Honor Awards

BWR received a 2007 Honor Award for The Sixth Street and Interstate 235 Gateway Entrance into the heart of Oklahoma City's downtown area. Due to the tremendous success of recent redevelopment projects and growth in the Bricktown entertainment district, the City realized the need to improve access

to the urban core from the north.

The project included improvements to Walnut Avenue and a 5-legged intersection and entrance at 6th Street/Harrison/ Walnut



Avenue. Additionally, funding provided for enhanced landscape and beautification, including the relocation of 168 memorial crepe myrtles at the 6th Street Intersection. The project was



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completed in two phases in order to allow for portions of the project to proceed while plan revisions were made to incorporate the 6th St. enhancements.

The 6th Street & Interstate 35 Gateway Entrance provides a safe and beautiful entrance into the hear of Oklahoma City and highlights the success of blending transportation function with landscape and memorial plantings which enhances downtown economic development by providing access and natural components in an urban setting.

Garver Engineers received two 2007 Honor Awards; the first for the 18th Street and Shundi Road project in Grove, and the second for the Deep Fork River over State Highway 18 in Lincoln County.

Garver was selected by Grove to design improvements for 18th Street and Shundi Road to realize a vision of the City's look into the future for a growing community.



Garver originally contracted with the City to design the widening of 13th Street between Main and Shundi. However, this was limited by adjacent residential property which raised concerns about the traffic volume along this residential section of roadway. A look at traffic patterns in the area indicated that a new route to connect the northern part of the city, Highway 10 to commercial development, and Highway 59 to the south, would be in the best interest of the community.

Looking into the future, the City and Garver determined a four-lane road would be the ultimate need for 18th Street. With this ultimate design in mind, the project was designed with right-of-way for the future four lanes, building two-lanes with a 10-foot-wide asphalt bike path paralleling the roadway for this 1.1 mile project.

ODOT selected Garver to design the challenging and time-constrained State Highway 18 realignment and bridge replacements over the Deep Fork of the Canadian River in Lincoln County.



Garver had just over 6 months to completely design 1.3 miles of state highway to be realigned along with two new bridges. In

addition to being a challenge from a hydraulic standpoint, the new alignment was significantly offset from the existing alignment and had wetland issues. The existing alignment, three bridges, and an abandoned railroad overpass were removed while one bridge was constructed over the Deep Fork and one over its overflow channel.

Garver stayed on schedule with ODOT through intensive planning, coordination, and communication with all parties involved, and met an extremely compressed schedule on this project.

Guy Engineering Services, Inc. received a 2007 Honor Award as the lead consultant on the design team and responsible for the coordination Elm Creek 6th Street Drainage Project.

First and foremost, the project charge was to design a storm water detention facility. Working collaboratively with citizen groups like the 6th Street Task Force and Central Park seniors, city planners, landscape architects, and engineers developed designs



to satisfy both the functional needs of the Master Drainage Plan and the need to retain and enhance the attractive features of the neighborhood park.

The project provides 58 acre-feet of storage and includes a lake fed by a recirculating stream and ADA-accessible walking trails. The layout and alignment of the wall and stream prevented disruption of some mature trees, and the new natural looking stream is completely manmade with rock-lined edges, riffles and pools providing aeration for the lake. Design constraints of a new Senior Center with parking, existing utilities and mature trees reduced available area for detention. The constraints were met by excavating vertical slopes and constructing walls with large natural stones. The construction method achieved the required storage needs and provided a canyon-type atmosphere. The outlet structure, resembling a traditional fishing dock, maintains normal water surface elevation with a sharp-crested weir hidden under the cantilevered dock.

The net result was a project that was far more than just a storm water detention basin. It became a neighborhood project involving multiple objectives and many hands. The 6th Street Task Force (now called the Pearl District Association) continues to play a key role in helping new private-sector investors understand how they too can play a part in the "reinvention" of the neighborhood.

ACEC OKLAHOMA thanks all of our entrants this year. The five entries received this year was an all-time high. For a more detailed description of the projects and additional pictures, go to our website at www.acecok.org.

2008 Legislative Session Set To Begin February 4th

Turmoil of Recent Days Leaves House Without A Leader

The 2008 Legislature opens at Noon on Monday, February 4th, with many challenges facing both the House and Senate.

As with last session, the Senate is evenly split 24-24 with Co-Presidents Pro-Tem Mike Morgan (D-Stillwater) and Glenn Coffee (R-Oklahoma City) sharing the duties of leading the Senate.

Much to everyones surprise, the Senate "power sharing" agreement worked very well last session and there is little to indicate that this year will be any different. Sure, there will be differences on issues and in philosophy between the two leaders and their caucus members, but if we learned anything from last session its that these will be worked out behind closed doors and not on the Senate floor.

The House.....well, that's another matter. While the Republicans have a large majority in the House, as this is being written, they are without a leader.

Speaker Lance Cargill (R-Harrah) resigned his Speakers position last week after he came under fire from the media and his own caucus members regarding tax filing issues and other things. (Note - Cargill did not resign his seat, just his leadership position. He is still a member of the Legislature.)

Then Speaker Pro-Tem Gus Blackwell (R-Goodwell), who was believed to be the leading candidate to succeed Cargill, withdrew from the Speakers race due to tax filing issues. He remains the Speaker Pro-Tem, at least for now, and will probably be in the "Chair" when the House is called into session on Monday.

That leaves three announced candidates for the Speaker position: Susan Winchester (R-Chickasha), Dale DeWitt (R-Braman), and John Wright (R-Broken Arrow). Also, House Minority Leader Danny Morgan (D-Prague) will be nominated by the Democratic Caucuses, but Morgan concedes if is doubtful he can gain enough support from Republicans to actually win the Speaker position.

LATE UPDATE -- Chris Benge (R-Tulsa), Chairman of the Appropriations & Budget Committee, confirmed late Friday afternoon that he will enter the race for Speaker. This had been rumored for a couple of days, and is now official.

Monday will be an interesting day around the Capitol, but before the day is over the House will, in all likelihood, have a new Speaker.

As for bills which ACEC OKLAHOMA will be watching and working as the Session kicks off, there are several

interesting issues which we will be closely following during the 2008 Session. Here's a quick overview of the issues:

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING - A number of bills have been introduced to continue addressing the ever increasing needs of Oklahoma's transportation system at the State, County, and Local levels.

Probably the biggest issue the Legislature will face with regards to Transportation Funding will be whether or not to eliminate or reduce the "trigger" for full funding of ODOT.

As you will remember, two years ago the Legislature passed a massive funding bill to add \$200 million per year into ODOT. However, in that bill, a "trigger" mechanism was inserted which only allowed for full funding (\$50 Million) if the state's growth revenue exceeded 3% in any given year. If the 3% "trigger" wasn't reached, ODOT would only receive \$17.5 million in additional funding that year.

In each of the last two years, the 3% "trigger" has not been reached, and there is going to be a strong effort to make sure that the "trigger" is changed to allow for full funding of ODOT in coming years.

Also, there will be an effort to either raise the \$200 million cap to \$500 million, or completely eliminate the cap.

DESIGN/BUILD & CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT AT RISK -- As reported last month, there was an interim study regarding Design/Build and Construction Management At Risk. Two bills have been introduced addressing these issues, and ACEC OKLAHOMA will be watching them closely as the session progresses.

"GREEN" BUILDINGS -- A bill has been introduced to require the state, when building a new facility or renovating facilities, to have the facilities "designed, constructed and certified" to, at minimum, the LEED Silver Standard. This requirement would also include public schools and higher education.

PE/LS BOARD - The State Board of Licensure is proposing several "technical" changes to the state licensing law.

The only major change would be allowing the Board to develop Rules to allow for the use of "Electronic Signatures" in lieu of the traditional "wet" signature on plans and reports.

As the session progresses, ACEC OKLAHOMA will keep you up-to-date on these and other issues which may surface.

Just When You Thought It Was Safe To NOT Backup Your Computers.....

We saw this on Fox News.com a few days ago, and wanted to pass it along.....might want to review your back-up procedures as well as access your employees have to all of your computer files.

Call it a tale of revenge gone wrong.

When Marie Lupe Cooley, 41, of Jacksonville, Fla., saw a help-wanted ad in the newspaper for a position that looked suspiciously like her current job — and with her boss's phone number listed — she assumed she was about to be fired.

So, police say, she went to the architectural office where she works late Sunday night and erased 7 years' worth of drawings and blueprints, estimated to be worth \$2.5 million.

“She decided to mess up everything for everybody,” Jacksonville Sheriff's Office spokesman Ken Jefferson told reporters. “She just sabotaged the entire business, thinking she was going to get axed.”

It didn't take Steven Hutchins, owner of the architectural firm that bears his name, much time to figure out who'd done it — Cooley was the only other person who had full access to the files.

Police arrested Cooley Monday evening and charged her with causing greater than \$1,000 damage to computer files, a felony. She was bailed out the following afternoon.

Hutchins told one TV station he'd managed to recover all the files using an expensive data-recovery service.

As for the job, Cooley originally wasn't in danger of losing it. The ad was for Hutchins' wife's company.

The firm told FOX News.com that Cooley no longer is employed there.

Have You Made Your ACEC/ PAC Contribution Yet?

On January 16th, all ACEC OKLAHOMA members received a letter from Chairman Darold Davis regarding our national political action committee, ACEC/PAC.

If you haven't already sent your \$100 contribution, please do so as soon as possible so that ACEC OKLAHOMA can be one of, if not the first, to reach our national goal.

An Open Letter from ACEC OKLAHOMA President Jim Sullins

ACEC OKLAHOMA Chairman of the Board Darold Davis mentioned this at our January 24th General Membership Meeting, and I followed up with a point of "personal privilege", but I also wanted to take this opportunity to share this with the entire membership.

February 1, 2008 marks my 20th Anniversary with ACEC OKLAHOMA.

I began my tenure with ACEC OKLAHOMA on February 1, 1988, when I could barely spell "engineer" much less know much, if anything, about the profession.

It has been a very interesting 20 years....we've had a lot of challenges and many successes.....and I know there are more of both yet to come.

In reflecting on the past 20 years, it is interesting to note that some of the issues we faced in 1988 are issues which we still face today.....and will probably face 20 years from now. Issues such as drawing high school students into the engineering profession; tort reform; highway funding; protecting QBS; and, professional business practices for firms to remain profitable while producing efficient, quality plans for their clients, just to mention a few.

It's been a great 20 years and it is truly a privilege to work for and with such a great group of professionals. You have given me a tremendous opportunity to represent a great organization and great profession.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing me and my wife, Nancy, the opportunity, resources, and support to raise our two kids in this wonderful state. Through your support and kindness to our family, we were able to provide them the opportunities, skills, and security for them to receive a great education and many life-skills which they take with them as they begin their professional careers -- Eric as a structural engineer with a firm in Kansas City, and Erin as a 3rd grade teacher in Edmond.

Now, don't get this wrong.....this is not good-bye! It's simply an opportunity to say "Thanks" for the first 20 years. While I'm not guaranteeing another 20 years, I'm not planning on going anywhere.

So, THANKS for the first 20 years, and I look forward to many more years of serving you, your firm, and this great organization!!!!

