



FORUM

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Volume 15 Issue 1

For the Progressive Concrete Forming Contractor

Winter 2005



A supporting role for a CA foundation

What does an Emmy-nominated television show have to do with concrete construction? If you tune into ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" this January, you just might see Bob Simmons along with the company he owns, California-based RJS & Associates, helping make another family's dream home come true.

If you're unfamiliar with the show, imagine having only 7 days from demolition to final decorating touches to drastically change a home both inside and out. And don't forget you'll have to work around the television cameras, production crew, and multiple trades working at once in the same small space.

But how do you get involved with such an ambitious and high profile project?

"A customer of ours was chosen to be the prime contractor for this job in Martinez, California," says Mike Muhlena, General Manager of the RJS & Associates Midwest office. "He then selected us to do the demolition, mass excavation, and structural concrete work on the home. For some reason, that contractor had to pull out of the project before we started, but the replacement realized that we were the only company that could be relied on

to complete the job correctly and we remained part of the team."

Aside from the time line and television presence, the project presented a variety of challenges from the beginning. The site was an existing residential lot, and not a large one. Luckily, a lot next to it was vacant and the entire house was simply "pushed" off of its foundation to that lot during the demolition.

A hillside, poor soil, and an area of solid bedrock complicated the new foundation work. To combat the hill, plans called for a retaining wall. Drilling concrete piers on the downhill side solved the soil problem. A 3' overdig provided room for soil stabilization fabric, backfill, and the final compact. Careful excavation tamed the bedrock

uphill. The foundation was styled as a walkout basement with a 12" reinforced matt foundation slab, interior walls, and the concrete exterior retaining wall.

"Filming really got started on the first day around 10:30 AM. Due to the television direction, there were a lot of starts and stops to get the right shots for the show," says Muhlena. "We were finally able to begin continuous demolition work at noon in an atmosphere of orchestrated mayhem. By 2 am the next day, we were already doing the pours. All of our work – demolition, mass excavation, pier drilling, form setting, and pouring – took only 14 hours."

How did it all get done?

With no time to lose, many projects happened simultaneously. The excava

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Although the middle-of-the-night pour was hard to photograph, you can see how the foundation works with the framing. And note how large the crew is to complete this project on time!



In this 2:00pm photo on Day 2, notice how the basement was already complete with windows and siding while the first floor was still being framed.

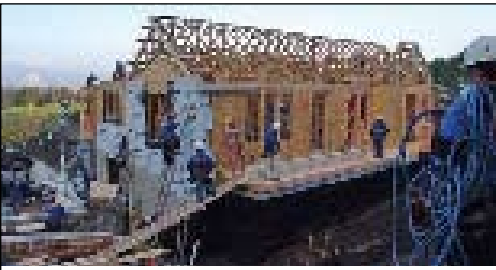
Extreme...

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tion alone called for three excavators, bulldozers, a backhoe, and forklifts in the same area at the same time the pier drilling was going on. Plumbers, electricians, and other trades also worked on their projects during this time. Ironworkers set the interior rebar and tied it to the outside walls while the retaining wall was still being formed. Thanks to an early high strength concrete mix containing many accelerators, the interior walls were being formed with 45 minutes of the slab pour!

Framers were already working on the exterior walls when work began inside. For the interior of the foundation, Muhlena's crew used 2' x 9' Western Forms Flagship® panels to set 90' of wall in only 20 minutes. Super plasticized self-consolidating concrete with plenty of accelerators meant that four hours later, the interior walls were already being stripped.

"Even though we do mostly commercial work," says Muhlena, "our existing panels were ideal. They offered a good, flat finish for the home."



Just 4:00pm on Day 2 and the home has really taken shape!

When the show airs, viewers will meet the family who will call this home. Their story, and the effects that RJS & Associates and all of the crews, companies, and people involved with the project have on their lives, make it all worthwhile.

"This was for a good cause," says Muhlena. "Despite the aggressive schedule and unique challenges, I'd consider doing it again. Maybe!"

To learn more about the project and the techniques used during the process, contact Mike Muhlena at 515-202-9870.

Dairy Farm Delivers

Poured walls are ideal for agricultural applications

Many Western Forms contractors build homes for humans, but in New Brunswick, Canada, dairy cows are treated to the same well-built walls when André Lavoie Construction Ltd is called for the job.

Using the same principles as those applied in residential foundations, poured walls make sense when constructing large-scale agricultural applications. Materials, time savings, and quality construction are just as important to



The dairy farm structure begins to take shape.

these customers and the structures need to be solid to withstand everyday use and exposure to chilly winters.

"Ashworth Farms Ltd is a very large dairy farmer in our area," says Yvonne Lavoie, co-owner of André Lavoie Construction Ltd. "Many of the smaller farmers incorporate poured walls, but use plywood forms to achieve them. Our customer needed something more cost-effective and efficient for such a big project."

Work began on the dairy farm in June of 2004. Allowing for some breaks in the schedule for additional projects the company had committed to elsewhere, the final building measuring 100' x 504' was completed a few months later in September.

"This is the largest project we've ever done!" continues Lavoie. "If you took all of the walls we poured and lined them up straight, they would stretch over a mile. But, it's the kind of job we'd like more of. It was so nice to not have to travel and we save time and labor doing one big project than many smaller ones."

The pours went just as planned and the dairy farm owner is quite pleased with the finished results.

The company started 32 years ago pouring foundations for a friend's new housing development. Since then, they've explored other forming opportunities and forming technologies.

"We started with plywood forms," says Lavoie. "Then, we moved to the Duraform and finally made the switch to aluminum forms. We take good care of our forms and they are in top shape. They will last many more years!"

In fact, the entire dairy farm project was completed with Western Forms panels that André Lavoie Construction has owned for 15 years. Using only 8' and 4' panels, the crew can still form a variety of wall heights and get to be creative with fillers.



Each crew member at André Lavoie Construction Ltd is cross-trained in a variety of skills.

The forming panels aren't the only things that are versatile in this company. There are only around 10-15 employees on a regular basis and they do it all whether it's working in the company's ready-mix plant, setting footings, or pouring walls. Having the cooperation and input of everyone at each stage helps keep the



Over a mile of poured wall went into the final structure.

operation running smoothly.

For more information on the challenges and opportunities involved in expanding to agricultural applications with poured walls, contact André or Yvonne Lavoie at

New and Improved

A quick recap of new products in 2004 and a peek at the first product news of 2005

This past year saw a variety of new and redesigned Western Forms products hit the market. If you missed some of the excitement last year, here is a quick recap of what's now available:

Step Riser Form

This new aluminum form eliminates the time, money, and forms wasted on drilling holes when forming a ladder. Cones inserted into the pre-drilled holes make the perfect indentation in the concrete to accommodate step runs. Eliminates misaligned holes, the threat of hitting rebar, and extra labor required to form ladders.



Redesigned Precast Items

The Haunch Corner, Pallet Corner, Header Corner, & Header received a design makeover in 2004. The introduction of the revised precast line yielded more flexibility over a wider range of sizes and configurations utilizing many of the same basic subparts in modular assemblies.

EZ Control Joint

The PVC-constructed EZ Control Joint creates a specified point to control where cracks occur instead of taking chances with random failures. An offset design keeps the control joint straight, avoiding ties and eliminating the risk of concrete seepage behind it for easier removal. An additional break point allows Vertex™ Brick pattern forms to work easily with the EZ Control Joint. Oval holes create less tolerance, reducing the risk of the control joint pulling away. The materials are light for easily handling and durable for longevity.



Quick Start Wedge

The Quick Start Wedge incorporates a narrow design and rounded edges to create a new wedge design. This new wedge provides enhanced grip with ratchet action and deeper insertion possible in pin slot. Its narrow style works in both tight places and open areas and the rounded edges reduce risk of injury to workers and damage to form panels. Plus, it's less likely to spring into the



air during stripping. Lighter than current wedges, the Quick Start Wedge is also easier and faster to set. Available in straight and curved, the Quick Start Wedge replaces the other wedges formerly offered by Western Forms.

And, here is a sneak peek at the first redesigned product of 2005:

Durable Nylon PinLock™

This new generation of PinLock is constructed with tough, durable nylon composite housing. Pin and lock portions remain sturdy steel. The new construction helps to repel the concrete from the outside of the hardware housing, keeping it lightweight and ready to use. An improved internal mechanism makes this generation of PinLock easier to use and its housing is more durable than before. With proper maintenance, PinLock is self-cleaning, helping to extend the life of the O-Ring.

To learn more about the products you may have missed in 2004, or to make sure you are the first to hear about exciting product news in 2005, contact your Regional Manager. A listing of your local contacts can be found online at www.westernforms.com.

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Published by Western Forms, Inc.
6200 Equitable Road
Kansas City, MO 64120

We welcome your ideas, suggestions, and comments concerning this publication. Please mail your contribution to:

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Attention: Lisa Crawford

MCPX 2005

Make room in your schedule to attend MCPX 2005 in Indianapolis, IN from 2/11-2/13. Stop by the Western Forms Booth (#2530) to learn more about precasting opportunities with Western Forms equipment.

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