



HARDHAT DIGEST

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Construction at the TMC bus manufacturing plant in Roswell, New Mexico was fast-tracked and completed in November 1987.

Boom And Bust In The 1980s by Hap Richardson

We hope you are enjoying President Hap Richardson's look back at our company history. Part III takes us into the 1980s. If you are just joining us on our journey, our previous articles are located on our blog at www.richardsonrichardson.com.

So, what *were* the mysterious bones we found in the bottom of Carlsbad Caverns? They appeared to be from a large bird, or maybe from a few ancient bats that died there. We even wondered if a small flock of birds somehow made their way into the Caverns and couldn't find their way out.

Well, the truth was much simpler—after speaking with some old folks that had been early visitors to the Caverns, we figured out they were chicken bones. In the early days, the lunchroom served fried chicken and when finished with a piece, people would just heave it over the rocks into the darkness!

The late 1970s were pretty tough for construction. The country was in a recession, all the manufacturing in the Midwest had cratered, and interest rates skyrocketed to 13-15% (good if you have money, not so good if you borrow to build). We managed to get a few

clients during this time that we were very fortunate to work with for many years. One was Southwestern Public Service (SPS, which became Xcel), for whom we built a facility in Carlsbad. SPS would prove to be a good client for us for the next several years.

Another was The Western Company of North America (WCNA), an oil field service company based in Fort Worth, Texas. Western was Halliburton's main competition in fracking and acidizing oil wells, and we completed all sorts of projects for them throughout the southwest, including rebuilding a rail off-loading tunnel and conveyor that had collapsed in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Western was a very ethical company with a real character of a leader (more on that in the next issue).

The 1980s opened with a bang—oil was booming and things were good... until the bust. The oil bust of the 1980s for the Southwestern U.S. was far worse than the Great Recession—companies went bankrupt literally overnight. OPEC had flooded the market with oil and shut down the entire domestic oil industry in a matter of weeks. Our company was forced

to revert to any kind of project, no matter the size.

We managed to survive these times completing projects for GTE (telephone) and Mountain Bell (U.S. West). In 1987, we awarded a contract for a 230,000-square-foot addition to the TMC bus manufacturing plant in Roswell, New Mexico. Our connection to Southwestern Public Service played a big part in this, as their engineering group designed the plant. TMC had purchased a city bus manufacturing operation owned by General Motors and moved it to Roswell. The project had a very fast timeline for construction—we started in May 1987 and the plant was enclosed and equipment being set in November of that year. This contract was one of the largest in New Mexico that year.

1988 marked a big year for Richardson & Richardson. In August, we opened our office in Albuquerque, primarily to handle U.S. West (now Century Link) and AT&T telephone projects. We also got a new customer in El Paso Natural Gas Company, who we completed projects for all over New Mexico and in Arizona. These clients proved to be long-term customers for us.



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Way To Go, Janet!

It seems like not long ago that we were congratulating our Contracts Administrator, Janet Jordan, on completing the first part of her Business Administration program at Central New Mexico Community College. In addition to working full-time at R&R, Janet is also



one of our main coordinators of the annual Pete Leyva Memorial Golf Tournament, and she also served on the AGC New Mexico committee that developed their Women In Construction program. In her free time, Janet enjoys gardening, travel, and spending time with family, friends, and her two dogs. Here is a little bit about her experience from Janet herself:

"I began the Business Administration program at Lewis University in July 2018, and in May 2020 received my Bachelor of Science with high honors. With the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, all graduation commencements were postponed, so I have not had the privilege of walking across that stage in cap and gown, but look forward to it later this year.

The BA program is designed specifically for working adults, with half of the courses online and the other half on the Albuquerque campus.

I was looking for a non-traditional Bachelor's degree program that fit into my busy life and work schedule. With the many challenges of finding time for family, work, and school, this was ideal for me. The program covers core business disciplines such as accounting, economics, finance, marketing, management, leadership, information technology, and quantitative decision-making.

I am truly grateful for the support of Richardson & Richardson, my family, and friends who supported me in reaching this long-awaited achievement."



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All Saints Orthodox Church Project Breaks Ground

We were honored to observe a beautiful ceremony for the All Saints of North America Orthodox Church's new building in Albuquerque's North Valley. We have really enjoyed working on this design-build project as it's such a unique job.

On June 21st, with social distancing and masks in place, Reverend Father Nikolay Miletkov and the Most Reverend Alexander, Archbishop of Dallas performed The Order of a Groundbreaking of a New Church. Following a blessing, R&R President Hap Richardson and Vice President Brandon McCutcheon helped parishioners move the first shovel of dirt.



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