



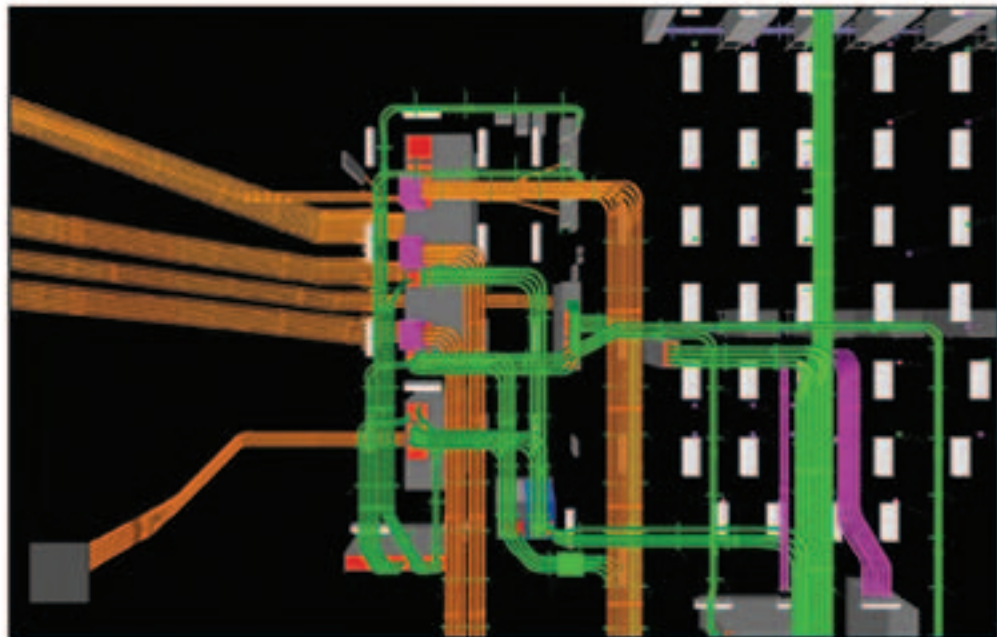
# The Block Connection

Customer Delight  
Since 1920



ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS & DESIGNERS

Winter Issue 2013



**Plan View –New Switchgear Room.** The use of Building Information Modeling (BIM) involves the computer-aided virtual construction of a facility prior to its actual physical construction in order to reduce uncertainty, improve safety, resolve problems, and stimulate and analyze potential impacts.

## FEATURED PROJECT: BMO Harris Bank— Naperville

Under the supervision of Project Manager Mike Arvesen, General Foreman John Leyden and Computer-Aided Design (CAD) Team Leader Jessie Geiger, Block Electric has once again employed the use of cutting-edge Building Information Modeling (BIM) technology to successfully complete another project—BMO Harris of Naperville.

The BIM concept involves virtual construction of a facility prior to its actual physical construction in order to reduce uncertainty, improve

safety, resolve problems, and stimulate and analyze potential impacts. Sub-contractors from every trade can input critical information into the model before beginning construction, with opportunities to pre-fabricate or pre-assemble some systems off-site. Waste can be minimized on-site and products are delivered on a just-in-time basis rather than being stock-piled on-site. The resulting building information models become shared knowledge resources to support decision-making

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## President's Message



What started out to be a slow lackluster year has changed dramatically in the second half of 2013. We have work through the end of 2013 and beyond. While I am not optimistic enough to say that I can predict an end to this awful recession, I am seeing some signs of a construction recovery.

The economy in general is still lackluster. How did we get so lucky to have had a great summer when our competitors were still struggling? I don't think it was luck. It boils down to having great relationships with customers. That again comes right to having great people serving these customers in a "High End" capacity over the years. **Customer Delight!** I have heard the story repeated to us several times. Our customers tried other contractors and we were the ones who gave them the best value for the services we rendered in the past. We continued to do what we do best—**Service, Safety, and Quality.**

What is it going to take to keep moving forward in the right direction? The faces of business are changing. Every business has changed over the past five plus years. In order to keep up we have to fit right in with what they have come to expect. Businesses have elevated their own company's standards of quality and service. They expect the same out of their suppliers. The levels of service are increasingly higher and if we can't perform to these new standards there are many other contractors to choose. We are a small fish in a big pond and with a diminished work load there are many of our direct competitors just waiting for us to stumble and take our place. So what's the answer? First, we have to make higher demands of ourselves than we have ever done before. Those demands have to be executed and become the new standards. Second, we must have an action plan that will "Delight" our customers much greater than before. Third, we must continue to work in a manner that least infringes on our customers—solve our own problems, coordinate our work for maximum efficiencies and profitability, and above all work safely. Always keep in mind that if we don't perform to higher levels with an ease of doing business there is plenty of competition to take our place.

We have struggled too long and hard to give up now. Customers are ours to lose. Everyone must pitch in to keep up positive plans and "Customer Delight". This is a new era of Service, Quality and Safety. It's a new era of "Customer Delight". Each quarter our newsletter has featured projects that have produced "Customer Delight". I want to see everyone's projects in the future featured issues. Customers are starting to come back. Let's make sure we are so superior they never want to leave.

—JACK BLOCK



## Housekeeping is safe-keeping at work

"You never get a second chance to make a good first impression." Never has this phrase been so true as when it comes to housekeeping at work. The negative impressions and implications of poor housekeeping can affect you and co-workers for a long time to come. Morale is lowered for most people who must function every day in a messy, disorderly work environment, although they may not be aware of the cause.

Safety is the key issue connected to housekeeping. If your housekeeping habits are poor, the result may be employee injuries, citations by OSHA (or another regulatory agency), and even difficulty in securing future work. How can such a "minor" issue have such serious consequences?

### Here are some poor housekeeping practices:

- Injuries, when employees trip, fall, strike or are struck by out-of-place objects.
- Injuries from using improper tools because the correct tool can't be found.
- Lowered production because of the time spent maneuvering over and around someone else's mess, and time spent looking for proper tools and materials.
- Times spent investigating and reporting accidents that could have been avoided.
- Fires due to improper storage and disposal of flammable or combustible materials and wastes.
- Substandard quality of finished products because of production schedule delays, damaged or defective finishes, ill-equipped employees, etc.
- Lack of future work due to a reputation for poor quality.
- "Wall-to-wall" OSHA inspections due to the "first impression" of the compliance officer.

### General housekeeping rules to remember:

- Clean up after yourself. Institute a routine cleaning schedule.
- Keep your work area clean throughout the day.
- Dispose of combustibles and flammables properly.
- Remove protruding nails and other sharp objects or hammer them flat to prevent someone from stepping on them or snagging themselves.
- Stack materials and supplies orderly and secure them so they won't topple.

*A properly maintained workplace shows respect for those who work there. Help keep it that way!*

## FEATURED PROJECT: BMO Harris Bank—Naperville

*(Continued from Page 1)*

about a facility from earliest conceptual stages through design, construction and its operational life. BIM is changing the way project teams work together to communicate, solve problems and build better projects faster.

From its beginning in May of 2013 through its completion in October 2013, the BMO Harris job involved a series of collaborative steps among Mike, John, Jessie and their crew.

Initially John physically routed all the pipe runs according to the BIM plans. He then laid out all the switchgear in the correct locations. Next Jessie converted the pipe runs and pipe sizes to match the CAD file and cross-checked the switchgear sizes prior to the final layout of the gear. The conduits were then added into the gear in the CAD file, followed by the rack heights being adjusted after coordination with the other trades. After all the dimensions were checked with Block's team and the other trades, the fabrication process began.

The unistrut racks were the first to be fabricated after checking the CAD for heights, spans and rod length. Next the Trimble unit was constructed and all the racks and boxes were set to the proper locations and height.

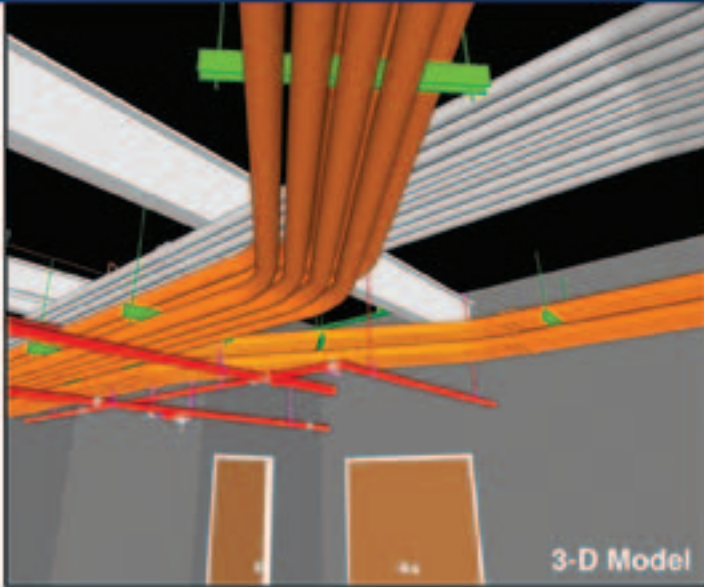
Meanwhile, back at the Shorewood shop, all the conduit was being bent according to the CAD drawing dimensions. Each conduit was marked

for location and direction. Since this project had no floor space for all the conduits to be stored, BIM was extremely useful here and allowed John to coordinate the delivery of conduit on a day-to-day basis, making it very easy to control and coordinate. BIM helped in the weekly planning since many locations could be installed at once. More importantly, John was able to change where he worked and allowed for the flexibility to move to a different area based on where other trades were working at any given time. He also could have multiple crews installing at one time without them having to wait for bending, cutting or threading.

BIM was also used for the underground work, allowing all the PVC underground feeders to be bent prior to installation. The use once again of the Trimble system allowed for a quicker and more accurate installation.

Block first began using BIM during the Silver Cross Hospital renovation project, which began in November of 2009 and was successfully completed two years later in November of 2011. Aside from being Block's largest job to date, Silver Cross Hospital was unique because it was the first time Jessie and his CAD crew were able to digitally model the entire project through the use of BIM and 3D Modeling technology prior to beginning any work. That project was so successful that 3D software design company Navistar

**BIM is changing the way project teams work together**



3-D Model



Prefab Shop



featured the CAD photos of Silver Cross Hospital on their 2012 Auto Desk software box.

Although the concept of the BIM system goes back to the earliest days of computing, contractors took the lead as the driving force behind BIM technology in 2012. Nearly 75% of contractors used BIM in 2012 compared to 70% of architects, marking the first time BIM use was higher in construction than design. Almost half of BIM users have been using it for five or more years. All BIM users report increased profits, more accurate documentation, less rework, reduced project duration, fewer claims and the ability to



Field Installation



Prefab Shop

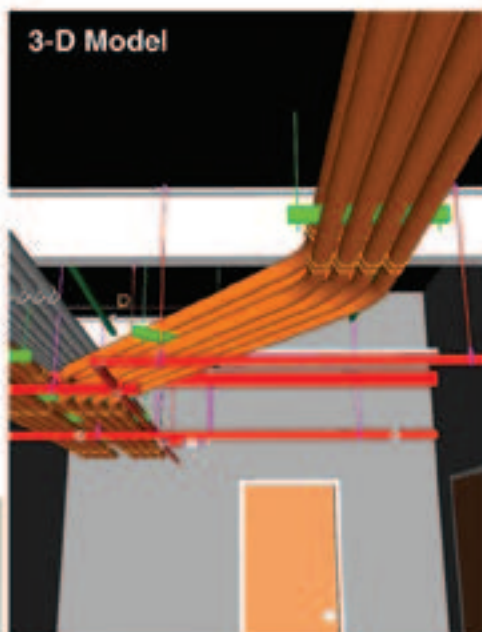
offer more services, according to McGraw-Hill.

More than 70 percent of North American contractors, owners, architects and engineers used BIM in 2012, a dramatic increase from

49% in 2009 and 17% in 2007, according to McGraw-Hill Construction. Of all users, 40% are committed to using BIM in 60% of their work, compared to 44% of their work in 2009.

together to communicate, solve problems and build better

3-D Model



Field Installation



## Spotlight On: Leo Keigher

### GENERAL FOREMAN

General Foreman Leo Keigher has spent the past three years working on the Silver Cross Hospital replacement project, which he said was "a great experience and a highlight" of his 38-year career at Block Electric. Currently Leo and his crew are finishing up 6 new much-needed ICU rooms at Silver Cross.

Leo's dream of becoming an electrician dates back to his grade school years when his parents built an addition on his childhood home. Leo said the addition was needed since he was the oldest of ten children. "After watching all the different trades at work I thought the electrician had the best and most interesting job," Leo said. "That's when I decided that I wanted to be an electrician. It's all I have ever done."

After high school Leo attended an electrical trade school and immediately applied for an apprenticeship upon graduation. Apprentices were in high demand at the time and were needed to man the growing industrial boom of the 1970's.

While his career at Block Electric obviously plays a big role in his life, outside of work Leo loves spending time with Debbie, his wife of 41 years; his children Kelly, Keith and Carrie; and his seven grandchildren who range in age from 13 months to ten years. "You can find us babysitting the younger ones or cheering on the older ones at baseball, soccer, football, basketball and cheerleading events," Leo said. "We also live on a small acreage in an old farmhouse we have remodeled so there is always something that needs to be done. I also serve as a trustee of a little but growing country church with plenty of ongoing projects. We are also blessed to still have both sets of parents and love to help them out when we can."

Leo also has many hobbies that he shares with his wife. "My wife and I are fortunate that we like doing the same type of things such

as hiking, biking, jogging, all of which would be rather lonely

if you didn't have someone to share it with," he said. Leo has run 13 marathons, including four Boston Marathons, and many half marathons. Leo and his wife also enjoy traveling and recently returned from a 10 day African safari. On their way to Africa they had the chance to visit Paris, Brussels, and Amsterdam.

While his recent travel itinerary was diverse, Leo pointed out that the most unique aspect of his career is that the majority of his 40 years as an electrician has been spent in hospitals. Leo has worked at St. Joe's Provena-Joliet, Riverside in Kankakee, Mercy in Aurora, Central DuPage-Winfield in Morris and Adventist in Bolingbrook. "The majority of the last 33 years has been at Silver Cross Hospital in Joliet and now the new Silver Cross Hospital in New Lenox," he said.

When asked which customer experience he was most proud of, Leo recalled a 1996 Joliet-area flood. "Silver Cross was hit hard. There were cars floating in the parking lot and water running in the front door. We lost both Com Ed feeds and then the pump that refilled the generator day tanks went under water," he said. "It looked bad for a while, but just before the hospital had to start transferring patients to other hospitals, Com Ed restored power. Then I and a team of electricians went to work pumping out, drying out, and cleaning switch gear and restoring services through out the hospital. It was a long 2 days and nights."

"Other than that, most of my service has been like most of Block employees. Just showing up everyday and doing your job to the best of your ability," Leo said. "We don't make headlines but it works and people keep inviting us back."



## STEM Academy wins 2013 LEED Platinum Award



The new Sarah E. Goode STEM Academy (formerly known as the Southwest Area High School project)

was awarded the 2013 LEED Platinum Award for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. The certification was awarded in July, 2013. This is the first high school in Illinois to achieve LEED Platinum.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a suite of rating systems for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of green buildings, homes and neighborhoods.

Started in 1998, LEED standards have been applied to more than 7,000 projects in the United States and 30 countries, covering more than 1.501 billion square feet (140 km<sup>2</sup>) of development area.

Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), LEED is intended to help building owners and operators find and implement ways to be environmentally responsible and resource-efficient. Proposals to modify the LEED standards are advanced and publicly reviewed by the USGBC's almost 20,000 member organizations.

Block Electric did their part to help achieve LEED Platinum. Block's Team, led by Mike Benninger, installed over 100 different types of light fixtures. Block installed a building-wide lighting control system that utilized daylight harvesting and dimming control to help lower the building energy usage.

The school's distribution panels are metered and are monitored by the building automation system. The metering allows the school to calculate how much energy the building is using at any given time.

## Block makes \$5,000 donation to aid Coal City following November 17 tornadoes

Block Electric made a \$5,000 donation to aid in disaster relief efforts in the Coal City area following the devastating tornadoes of November 17.

On November 26 Jim McCormick and Doug Henline of Block Electric delivered a \$5,000 check to representatives of the Coal City United Methodist Church, which has been coordinating donations and volunteer efforts in the area through its Disaster Response Team.

Block Electric has a strong connection to the Coal City community, with many of its employees residing in the area.



Block Electric's Jim McCormick (left) and Doug Henline (right) present a check for \$5,000 to Coal City United Methodist Church to aid in disaster relief efforts.

## MEET OUR NEW 2013 JOURNEYMEN

Congratulations to the following Block Electric Journeymen who completed their apprenticeships this year:



**RYAN BARNARD**  
Journeyman: 9/17/13



**TOM DIMOPOULOS**  
Journeyman: 6/18/13



**KEVIN GONZALES**  
Journeyman: 6/18/13



**RAMON GONZALEZ**  
Journeyman: 3/19/13



**ROXANA HERNANDEZ**  
Journeyman: 6/18/13



**MELISSA KHOMUTOVA**  
Journeyman: 9/17/13



**ROBERTO MORALES**  
Journeyman: 6/18/13



**BILL RAUSCH**  
Journeyman: 5/24/13



**JOE ROPPOLO**  
Journeyman: 9/17/13



**BILL ROSALES**  
Journeyman: 7/22/13



**KEN RYAN**  
Journeyman: 9/17/13



**ROBERT SCHAFFNIT**  
Journeyman: 4/9/13

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*The*  
**Block**  
*Customer Delight*  
*Since 1920*  
**Connection**



Block Electric Company is an Equal Opportunity Employer

*During the Holiday Season more than ever,  
our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our progress possible.  
And in this spirit we say, simply but sincerely*

*Thank You and Best Wishes for the Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!*

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