



2012 Commonwealth Concrete Award Ceremony

By Hank Keiper and Hessam Nabavi

Hank Keiper, Area Manager with TheSEFA Group, is the awards chairman for the Virginia Chapter of American Concrete Institute. At the 2013 concrete conference in Richmond, Hank presented the awards for great concrete works in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Criteria

The Criteria for the Excellence in Concrete Awards program are as follows.

- Project must be substantially completed in 2012.
- Concrete must be a substantial part of the project, and the project must be located in the Commonwealth.
- Arlington, Fairfax, Loudon, and Prince William counties are excluded since they are serviced by the National Capitol Chapter.

This year ACI had decided to simplify the process and the presentation ceremony and only introduce the award winning project.

Honorable Mentions

Before introducing the winner, Hank talked about two Honorable Mention projects.



The first project was the bridge replacement on Route 250 over the Buckingham Branch rail line in Shadwell, Virginia. The original bridge was built in 1939 and consisted of one three-span, rolled, continuous beam unit spliced together. The total bridge length is 176 feet. The existing reinforced concrete deck was in an advanced stage deterioration requiring the department to post the bridge for legal loads. Sections of the underside were missing 100% of the rebar cover exposing the bottom mat of

steel, and the overhang on span B was spalling large chunks of concrete onto the ground below.

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Award *continued from page 1*

The key to this bridge replacement was to minimize the total time of closure since Route 250 is a major artery in the area and carries heavy traffic. To meet the 60 days of allowed closure time, the contractor chose to modify the substructure while still in service, then rebuild the superstructure with a combination of high-early strength cast in place concrete and precast concrete box beams.

The bridge was closed to traffic on May First of 2012, and the entire superstructure was removed in 6 days. By May 15, the formwork was stripped to accept the precast box beams with the parapet wall already cast in place. By May 25, the wingwalls and closure pours were complete, and by June 10, the latex overlay was curing and, fencing was being installed on the parapets. On June 16, 2012, the bridge was reopened to traffic after only 45 days of closure. This was 15 full days ahead of the schedule.

The project team included VDOT's Culpeper District, Whitman, Requardt and Associates, Fairfield-Echols, and Wilson Ready Mix.

The second project was the US Army Reserve facility located on Fort AP Hill in Caroline County. Fort AP Hill has been a key training center over the last 10 years for National Guardsmen and Reservists to hone their skills just prior

to their deployments in support of the global war on terror. The 60,000 square foot Army Reserve facility serves as a soldier readiness center and heavy vehicle maintenance facility. The project includes tilt-up concrete walls and 81,000 square feet of concrete paving. The total concrete used in this important facility was just over 3,300 cubic yards. The project team consists of the US Army Reserve, Korte Construction, Century Concrete, and Chaney Enterprises as the ready mix supplier.

The Winner

The third and final project was the Commonwealth Award winner for 2012. The 2012 commonwealth award winner was the residence of Lynn and Preston Simms known as Lantern Hall.

This 10,300 square foot masterpiece is located on 42 acres in King George County and incorporates passive solar, insulating concrete forms, and a cast in place concrete deck to make an extremely energy efficient home with an attractive, modern design. The back of the home faces south so the 1,500 square feet of triple pane windows can collect the winter passive solar heat, and give the owners a wonderful view of the property. To prevent too much heat gain in the summer, the soffit overhang was carefully calculated to provide shade in

the summer but allow heat gain in the winter. Both basement and main floor walls are constructed of ICF or insulated concrete forms.


The basement slab and elevated main floor slab have 4,000 lineal feet of radiant heat tubing cast in the concrete. Once the floor slabs are heated to 70 degrees, the 400,000 pounds of thermal mass and extremely tight insulation maintain room temperatures for 24 hours with virtually no additional energy. The basement ICF walls are 13 inches thick and main floor ICF walls are 11 inches thick. Including the 15,000 square foot concrete driveway, this home has over 400 cubic yards of concrete.

After giving this brief description of the project, Hank called on the members of the project team, and Chuck Starnes, past president of Virginia Chapter ACI presented them with the Commonwealth Award.

Here are the members of project team for Lantern Hall. Accepting award were the owners, Lynn and Preston Simms; the builder, David Phelps, owner of Innovative Property Developers; the structural engineer, Ray and Pauline Freeland of Freeland Engineering; the ICF formwork supplier, Dave McIlwain owner of Creative Building Products; and the concrete supplier James Murray of Chaney Enterprises. 

Austrian Jeweler Wins Prize for Concrete Rings

Concrete in central Europe is more usually associated with ugly, slab-sided Soviet era buildings, so it comes as something of a surprise that the material has been used to produce delicate, award-winning rings by an Austrian jeweler. Using spray-layering techniques developed at the Vienna University of Technology, Thomas Hauser of the Viennese jewelry house Atelier Allure has won the international Red Dot awards for his concrete rings. Johannes Kirnbauer, a construction engineer at the Vienna University of Technology who developed the process, adapts mixes to meet a range of different technical requirements. Depending on the size of the individual particles in the concrete, the material will have different physical properties and a different visual appearance. "One major challenge we faced was getting the viscosity of the concrete right," comments Johannes Kirnbauer. "It needs to be sufficiently low viscosity to flow well, but also viscous enough to ensure that a sufficiently solid layer adheres to the ring."

In Mr. Hauser's designs, a skeleton of precious metal palladium is spray-coated in concrete. Concrete of different particle sizes is layered on to create a shell under a millimeter thick. The concrete is then glazed and polished: "We don't want to lose the distinctive visual appearance of the material," Mr. Hauser says in the University press release. The price of an individual ring is € 4,800. 

Article courtesy of the Wall Street Journal.


Don Sipher Promoted to Chief Operating Officer

Froehling & Robertson, Inc. is pleased to announce that Donald J. Sipher, PE has been promoted to the position of Chief Operating Officer. In this position, Mr. Sipher will be the corporate officer with direct responsibility for overseeing the successful management and growth of all branch operations.

During his three decades with F&R – as a staff engineer, senior engineer, branch manager, and most recently a regional vice president—Mr. Sipher has demonstrated the ability and willingness to mentor individuals at all levels of the company and lead teams towards successful outcomes. His managerial and technical expertise, combined with the skills and business acumen of our regional vice presidents, will allow F&R to continue to grow the company and overcome any challenges that may arise in the future.

“I would like to personally congratulate Don on his promotion,” said CEO Samuel Proctor. “I have every confidence that he will be as successful in this new position as he has been in every job F&R has asked him to undertake in the past.”

Don Sipher has over 35 years of geotechnical and construction materials testing experience, and has served as a geotechnical engineer managing subsurface exploration, geotechnical engineering, geological reconnaissance, and field and laboratory soils testing services. Furthermore, since his student engineering trainee position with the USDA's Soil Conservation Service, he has been involved with the design and construction of earth dams.

With this reallocation of management responsibilities, President Sam Kirby, PE will now be able to focus his time and energies on issues related to overall company performance, improving administrative functions, and directing long term strategic planning for the corporation. 

NVCAC Presented with “The Analysis of the NRMCA Industry Data Survey”



By Hessam Nabavi, Director of Industry Services

Andy Faulconer presented “The Analysis of the NRMCA Industry Data Survey”. This month at the NOVAMarch Business Meeting, Andy Faulconer spoke about the analysis of the NRMCA Industry Data Survey conducted in 2011. Andy has 30 years of experience in construction materials supply. He has been with WR Grace for 20 years, focusing on concrete admixtures and other additives to improve the performance of concrete. Prior to joining WR Grace, he worked in operations and technical service management for a ready mix supplier with locations in Virginia and West Virginia for 7 years.


Andy’s focus of this presentation was to touch on the severe downturn in the construction industry over the last several years, and the impact on producer profits and operating efficiency. More importantly he discussed what the focus should be at the present time and in the future to regain a profitable footing. Andy suggested that, the most important lesson learned from the recession is how to manage risk.

Here are some of the key points of

risk management that were mentioned:

- Do not add to long term debt in the next boom, reduce it.
- Expand cautiously.
- Protect your financial resources, keep your balance sheet strong.
- Be wise on capital expenditures and acquisitions.
- Review all mix design.
- Review your line items for reducing costs.
- Define the value of products and services that you are offering.
- Develop a strategy to grow your business.
- Be alert on new technologies to increase productivity.

He said the biggest risk that we are facing as an industry is “Positioning our Industry for Profitability, aligning our costs structure with the reality of prices in our market”.

In conclusion he mentioned, sometime in the foreseeable future, expect shortages in raw materials, rolling stock, and equipment essential for the next growth cycle. By 2015, we expect close to full recovery, with accelerating growth due to built up demand. 

Lynchburg Ready Mix Hosts Local Engineers

By Bob Nablo,
Director of Industry Services

Bob Neal of Lehigh Cement Co. has created an excellent new presentation on concrete parking lots, and this month he partnered with Lynchburg Ready Mix to offer a lunchbox seminar to local civil and structural engineers. Robert O'Brian of Lynchburg R/M and Neal performed the majority of the legwork, personally visiting engineering offices to invite them to the presentation, which was held in the conference room of Hurt & Proffit Engineers. This proved to be a very successful approach, as twenty-six attendees representing seven different engineering offices came to the seminar. Not only were several companies represented, but attendees also came from the City of Lynchburg and Liberty University. O'Brian later noted that every engineer who said he or she would attend in these personal conversations actually did attend the seminar.

As always, Neal did a fine job explaining a fairly technical subject. Be-



cause this was an audience of engineers and designers he focused on concrete mix designs, traffic and strength calculations and soil considerations. He made strong suggestions that welded wire, rebar and load-transfer devices were not necessary except in unusual circumstances, and that subbase stone is completely unnecessary if the soil has sufficient CBR values and is properly compacted. He made a point of showing how a small increase in concrete thickness could make a large

difference in load carrying capacity.

The Southwest Virginia Council has a stated goal of attracting more municipal engineers to various presentations, and this was a good step in that direction. The Council also hopes to get Bob Neal in front of several additional audiences with this presentation because concrete parking areas are a good target market and concrete can be very competitive in certain circumstances. 🚚

A Letter to Our Members from Keith Beazley

Thank you for your support with your cards and letters, flowers, and prayers during my recent hospital stay and operations. I am able to now resume activities on your behalf and I am on the road to full strength. I am fortunate to have experienced no permanent damage from my operations or illness other than some scars. God has taken very good care of me during this very serious illness. We should to remember to be thankful for each day He has given us.

The Advisory Councils have been very busy in my absence. I understand attendance has been very good and a number of very good programs have been presented by guest speakers.

- The Hampton Roads Council will host the ACI Concrete Technician Course in a new location with the City of Virginia Municipal Department. This is the a change for the course to be offered on the South Side and should be well received. The dates are April 16, 17 and Examination on April 18th.
- The Hampton Roads Council will offer a NRMCA Pervious Certification Course in the Tidewater Community College on April 26th with Bill Denison teaching the course. The VRMCA is the sponsor for the course.
- The Hampton Roads Golf Tournament will be held on April 23rd with Charles Malbon, Chairman. The tournament funds a special scholarship each year to an Architectural or Engineering student.
- The Central Virginia Council is working with the City of Richmond on the new Redskins Training Facility behind the Virginia Science Museum.
- The Richmond Council is also working with an architect and developer on a new subdivision featuring concrete streets and roads. A series of meetings have taken place for the development of plans.
- Richmond Golf Chairman Glenn Webb is holding meetings to finish plans for the Fall Golf Tournament at Hunting Hawk on October 3rd.

I hope to see each of you at the upcoming events. Thank you, again, for your support during my illness and I am looking forward to the rest of the year. 🚚

Plan Now to Attend the VRMCA Spring Convention

The VRMCA Spring Convention is coming up soon at The Greenbrier Hotel in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia May 19th through the 21st. Spring Convention topics and speakers will include:

- **The State of Our Industry: A Look Back at the Past, and What Lies Ahead**— Pierre Villere will present his views on the construction materials recession of the past five years, as well as his thoughts on the current recovery and the outlook for the next few years. He will also share highlights of the NRMCA Industry Data Survey for 2012.
- **VDOT Update**—VDOT Commissioner Greg Whirley has been invited to speak.
- **MIT Life-Cycle Assessment and Sustainability**— Dr. Franz-Josef Ulm, George Macomber Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, will discuss work being done at the MIT Concrete Sustainability Hub, LCA analysis and it's effects on the concrete industry.
- **Keynote**— Former New Hampshire Governor John Sununu will deliver the keynote address on Tuesday.

Meeting registration materials will be available soon. The hotel is now accepting reservations in the group block; single-occupancy rooms are \$375.00 and



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double rooms are \$517.20 per night plus applicable taxes and resort fees. The room rate includes accommodations, breakfast and dinner at designated restaurants on the Modified American Meal Plan. The VRMCA room block will be available until April 3, 2013 or until the group block is sold-out, whichever comes first. Please mention

the Virginia Ready Mixed Concrete Association when you call to book your rooms— 1-800-624-6070, press 2 when prompted.

For more details, please contact Sherry Whiting at 434-326-9842 or sherry.whiting@easterassociates.com. Please check the VRMCA website for more details. 🚚

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Construction Employment Increased in 34 States and DC Between December and January

Construction employment expanded in two-thirds of all states in January as the industry showed signs of emerging from a six-year slump, according to an analysis by the Associated General Contractors of America of Labor Department data. Association officials cautioned however that the industry's recovery remains fragile and that current and looming federal budget cuts threaten to drag down construction employment in numerous states.

"These results show that contractors are finding work in more parts of the country than they have for many months," said Ken Simonson, the association's chief economist. "Further gains appear likely but could be derailed if lawmakers continue to make indiscriminate cuts to key construction and infrastructure programs."

From January 2012 to January 2013, 24 states and the District of Columbia added construction jobs, 25 shed workers and one—Wisconsin—had no change. D.C. jumped to the top ranking for percentage of new construction jobs (9.4 percent, 1,200 jobs); followed by North Dakota (9.0 percent, 2,500 jobs); Hawaii (8.0 percent, 2,300 jobs); Alaska (7.2 percent, 1,200 jobs) and Washington (6.0 percent, 8,200 jobs). Texas (28,500 jobs, 5.0 percent) added the most new construction jobs over the past

12 months, followed by California (17,600 jobs, 3.0 percent) and Washington.


Among states losing construction jobs during the past year, Arkansas lost the highest percentage (-10.5 percent, -5,100 jobs), followed by Rhode Island (-8.0 percent, -1,300 jobs); Montana (-7.2 percent, -1,700 jobs) and South Dakota (-6.4 percent, -1,400 jobs). Illinois lost the most jobs (-9,800 jobs, -5.0 percent); followed by Virginia (-7,500 jobs, -4.2 percent); Ohio (-5,200 jobs, -2.8 percent) and Arkansas.

Simonson noted that 34 states and D.C. added construction jobs between December and January, while employment slipped in 14 states and held steady in two states. Wyoming had the largest percentage increase (4.6 percent, 1,000 jobs); followed by New York (4.2 percent, 13,000 jobs). New York added the largest number of jobs, by far—probably reflecting recovery work from Hurricane Sandy. Alaska and South Dakota had no change in construction employment over the month, while 14 states lost jobs, with Arkansas having the steepest percentage drop (-5.0 percent, -2,300 jobs); followed by Kansas (-4.0 percent, -2,200 jobs). Arkansas lost the largest number of jobs for the month; followed by Kansas and Pennsylvania (-2,200 jobs, -1.0 percent).

"Construction spending has been


rising for two full years but contractors have been cautious about adding workers until they knew the upturn would last," Simonson explained. "In 2013, both residential and private nonresidential construction should rise enough to offset a further slowdown in public work, and contractors will be looking for more workers."

Association officials said the cuts in federal funding for construction triggered both by the so-called sequestration that took effect earlier this month and by spending bills now advancing in Congress would fall hardest on construction employers in states that have a large federal government presence. They urged lawmakers to address out-of-control entitlement spending instead of making disproportionate cuts to funding for essential infrastructure and military projects.

"Canceling construction investments will ultimately worsen the deficit by undermining the nation's growth and competitiveness," said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association's chief executive officer. "Meanwhile, the burden falls unfairly on states that host large military facilities, as well as states with extensive federal lands, research and energy installations." 

Article courtesy of agc.org.

Concrete Furniture to Beautify New York City Streets

What do the powers that be in midtown Manhattan do when their foot-wear citizens need a place to sit down in the middle of a street? Why they turn to concrete, of course. Tired walkers striding along Broadway can soon rest their tired feet along a two-block stretch where the Fashion Center Business Improvement District has unveiled 20 cast-concrete furniture pieces. The chairs and tables are simple cubic and cylindrical pieces. When they're rolled again later this month, they will be placed atop a repainted plaza between West 39th and West 40th streets through April. 

Article courtesy of DNAinfo.com.



Photo credit: DNAinfo / Alan Neuhauser



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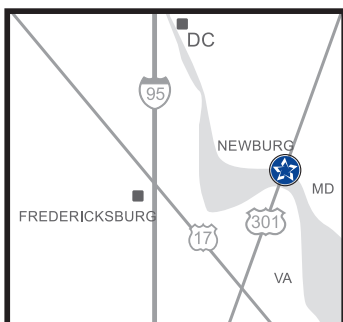
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Family and Medical Leave Act: Recent Developments and New Poster Requirement



By John G. Kruchko and
Kathleen A. Talty

February, 2013 marked the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") into law by President Clinton. In recognition of that event, the United States Department of Labor ("DOL") released the results of a survey that it conducted on employer opinion of the FMLA. The conclusions reached by the DOL as a result of the survey were that:

The study shows that employers generally find it easy to comply with the law, and misuse of the FMLA by workers is rare. The vast majority of employers, 91 percent, report that complying with the FMLA has either no noticeable effect or a positive effect on business operations such as employee absenteeism, turnover and morale. Finally, 90 percent of workers return to their employer after FMLA leave, showing little risk to businesses that investment in a worker will be lost as a result of leave granted under the act.

The DOL also found that 85% of the

employers reported that complying with the FMLA was very easy, somewhat easy, or has no noticeable effect. Further, the DOL stated as a result of the recent survey that employers reported that misuse of the FMLA by employees was rare.

The conclusions reached by the DOL differ significantly from a 2007 survey that was conducted by a national personnel association which found:

- 63% of human resources professionals found it "very difficult" or "somewhat difficult" to comply with the FMLA.
- 73% of human resources professionals reported it "very difficult" or "somewhat difficult" in determining whether an intermittent medical condition should be protected by the FMLA.
- 39% of human resources professionals stated that they have had to grant FMLA requests that they perceived to be illegitimate because of the DOL regulations and interpretations.

While the 2007 survey is five years old, the results from that survey, in contrast to the recent DOL survey, would appear to represent to most Human Resources personnel the actual reality of administering the FMLA.

Another development in February, 2013 was the DOL's issuance of its Final Rule implementing expansions of the FMLA as it relates to the military leave provisions and airline personnel. The revisions now expand the availability of leave for qualifying exigencies to include members of the Regular Armed Forces, and not just members of the National Guard or Reservists as previously stated in the FMLA. A further condition, however, was added to eligibility of the covered military member's use of the leave. Now, the deployment of the military member upon whom the eligibility for the leave is based must be to a foreign country.

The Final Rule also revised aspects of the existing list of circumstances that qualify as exigency leave under the

FMLA. For example, the period of time for Rest and Relaxation leave is now extended from five days to fifteen days. A new circumstance for qualifying for military leave was added in February, 2013. The new condition for emergency leave now allows eligible employees to take parental care leave to provide care for the parent of a military member when the parent is incapable of self-care. Additionally, the definition of covered serviced member was expanded to include veterans who were active members of the military within the five-year period before the eligible employee first takes military leave. Further, the definition of a serious injury or illness for a current service member is expanded to include injuries or illnesses that existed before the beginning of active duty and were aggravated by service in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces.


As a result of the issuance of the Final Rule, employers will need to revise their FMLA policies to incorporate the changes noted in this article, as well as other revisions stated in the Final Rule. Moreover, as of March 8, 2013, employers must begin using the updated FMLA notice and certification forms, which are no longer included as appendices to the regulations. The new forms are available on the DOL web page. Finally, employers must post the new FMLA poster by March 8, 2013 to ensure compliance with an employer's obligation under the FMLA. The new FMLA poster is also available from the DOL web page.

In addition to revising the organization's FMLA policies, using the updated FMLA notices and certification forms and posting the new FMLA poster, employers should also consider providing training to their supervisors on the FMLA and when leaves of absence requests are covered by the FMLA. A recent court case illustrates

the monetary consequences to a company when an employee's request for FMLA leave was ignored by the company.

In *Hurley v. Kent of Naples*, a employee suffered from depression and anxiety for a period of time. While his conditions were monitored by his physician for a number of years, there was minimal improvement. Eventually, the employee's physician recommended that the employee take a leave of absence. Although the employee couched his request for a leave with the statement that his medical healthcare provider recommended that he take a leave of absence, the request was denied. The employee persisted and candidly told his supervisor that he was diagnosed with depression and needed time off to address the condition.

The supervisor responded to this information by telling the employee that "we've had a great run together, but it is time to part ways." He then terminated the employee. The supervisor's response was not only callous, but completely contrary to the law. After the employee's termination, he immediately filed a claim under the FMLA, alleging interference and retaliation. Not surprisingly, the discharged employee prevailed at the jury trial and he was awarded a substantial amount of damages, which was estimated to be in excess of One Million Dollars, in the form of back pay, front pay, liquidated damages, attorney fees and interest.

To minimize such situations from arising, supervisors need to be alert to situations which may implicate the FMLA and to alert the Human Resources Department that an employee may need FMLA leave. Effective training will provide supervisors with this necessary guidance. 

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John G. Kruchko is a Partner with the Management Labor and Employment Law Firm of Kruchko & Fries in Tysons Corner, Virginia. Kathleen Talty is a Senior Counsel with the Firm. For more information, please contact Mr. Kruchko at (703) 734-0554 or Ms. Talty at (410) 321-7310 or JKruchko@KruchkoandFries.com, or KTalty@KruchkoandFries.com. This article is published for general information purposes, and does not constitute legal advice.

On the Horizon Calendar of Upcoming Events

APRIL 9, 2013

HRCAC Business Meeting

11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Surf Rider Restaurant
Virginia Beach, VA

APRIL 11, 2013

NVCAC Business Meeting

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Manassas, VA

VTTI Smart Road Public Open House

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM
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APRIL 16, 2013

CVCAC Business Meeting

11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Meadowbrook Country Club
Richmond, VA

APRIL 17, 2013

SWCAC Business Meeting

8:00 AM - 9:30 AM
Roanoker Restaurant
Roanoke, VA

APRIL 22, 2013

VRMCA Truck Rodeo

The Meadow Event Park
Doswell, VA

APRIL 23, 2013

HRCAC Golf Outing

Kiln Creek Golf Course
Details to come.

APRIL 30 - MAY 2, 2013

ACI Concrete Field Testing Seminar and Examination*

Chandler Concrete of Virginia
614 Norfolk Avenue, SW
Roanoke, VA

*PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Please visit the online calendar
for an up-to-date list of events.
www.VRMCA.com/calendar



WHEN SO MUCH IS RIDING ON
YOUR CHOICE OF CEMENT,
MAKE THE **RIGHT** CHOICE

THE **RIGHT** PRODUCT & SERVICE
IN THE **RIGHT** PLACE
AT THE **RIGHT** TIME

Roanoke Cement has supplied ready-mix producers and the construction industry with consistent, dependable, high quality cement for over 50 years.

A superior product, backed by excellent customer service, the latest technology, and reliable distribution shows our commitment to serve our customers.

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The Smart Road bridge, at 175 feet tall, is Virginia's tallest bridge. Approximately 9,647 cubic yards of high-strength concrete were used to construct the 2,000-foot long bridge.

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