



Houston

CONSTRUCTION™

NEWS



The Industry's Newspaper

www.constructionnews.net

(281) 657-0511 ★ Home Ofc: P.O. Box 791290 San Antonio, TX 78279 (210) 308-5800 ★ OCT 2006 ★ Vol. 4 ★ No. 10

Water works



L-R: Josh Peltier, Mike Giles, and David Giles

TerraFirma Earth Technologies Ltd. was co-founded by **David Giles** and **John Peltier** in January 2004. The company is a specialty subcontractor that designs and installs pumping systems to remove groundwater that impedes underground construction.

Subsurface construction for any underground structure is not as simple as digging a hole, carving out a space and pouring concrete. Any time a building has a multi-floor underground addition, such as multi-tiered parking garage, it is common to hit underground water. When this occurs, the water must be removed before construction can begin. That is where TerraFirma comes in.

"Underneath the ground you'll find

layers of clay, sand and silt," said Giles, who acts as managing partner and also helps the company. "When you dig a hole without a proper dewatering system installed, once you hit these wet sands, you can dig all you want but your hole doesn't get any deeper, it just gets wider and wider."

TerraFirma's pumping systems turn this groundwater (similar to the consistency of beach sand) into dry dirt, making it possible for a structure to be carved out and concrete poured.

"When the contractor has a groundwater problem, we get facts that typically include the length, width and depth of

continued on Page 14

Power couple



Glenn and Carol Pitman

If you ever need to hear a joke, just come to Glenn. He always has one ready to tell.

That's what **Carol Pitman** says about her husband, **Glenn Pitman**, owner of **Pitman Construction**, a commercial interior/exterior drywall company.

As the Office Administrator, Carol runs the day-to-day operations for the office.

Pitman Construction began in October 1988. The company started just doing tenant finish but now has expanded to ground up projects.

Carol said, "Most of our field employees have been with us for several years."

Randy Belt is Pitman Construction's project manager.

"We owe most of our success to our employees and repeat customers," she said. "Word of mouth and reputation is what has kept us in business for 19 years."

And counting. This energetic couple has no plans for slowing down. This summer, the company has been involved in retail projects like the Conroe Market Place for **McPherson Development Co. Inc.** Pitman Construction is doing the exterior framing and interior build-out of TJ Maxx, Ross Dress For Less and PetSmart. The company also worked on the Tamborlo dentist office for **JRW Builders/Contractors**, and renovated the façade of

continued on Page 14

Furniture fiesta

Comanche Contractors has just completed construction of the new Famsa Furniture Store located on I-45 and West Road.

The project was commissioned by **Read King Commercial Real Estate**, who owns the establishment and leases it out to Famsa Furniture. The retail chain originates in Mexico, and represents a growing trend of establishments exclusively targeting the Hispanic market.

Project Manager **Chris Parrack** collaborated with the owner's design team, which consisted of local and out of state companies to provide a building that fit Famsa's store profile and Read King's budget.

Superintendent Gordon Holm oversaw the project to completion.

According to Parrack, one aspect that helped the Famsa Furniture project run smoothly was the history Comanche



shares with Read King.

He said, "Having worked with Read King on several previous projects and knowing how their development team works helped speed the design process and get the construction underway quickly."

The primary obstacle the project faced was a challenge presented to the civil engineers, **WLB Associates**.

Originally, the site consisted of two separate properties. Combining the two sites together was essential for the success of the location's development. It was up to WLB Associates to create a design plan that merged the two properties, and to come up with a solution that did not jeopardize the intended completion date.

WLB met the challenge. The \$2.5

continued on Page 14

Covering the Industry's News



San Antonio ★ Austin ★ Dallas/Fort Worth ★ Houston

P.O. Box 791290
San Antonio, Texas 78279-1290

PRSRT. STD.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DALLAS, TX
PERMIT #1451



©2006 Texas Mutual Insurance Company

Watch for falling premiums.

IN CONSTRUCTION, THE GOAL IS TO SEE SOMETHING GO UP. BUT IT'S JUST AS EXCITING TO SEE YOUR WORKERS' COMP PREMIUMS GO DOWN. THE TEXAS MUTUAL® TCA PURCHASING PLAN OFFERS GROUP DISCOUNTS AND POTENTIAL DIVIDENDS. ELIGIBLE POLICYHOLDERS MAY ALSO RECEIVE AN ADDITIONAL PREMIUM DISCOUNT WITH WORKERS' COMP HEALTH CARE NETWORK COVERAGE. AT TEXAS MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY, WE PROVIDE THE TOOLS YOU NEED TO BUILD A HEALTHY BUSINESS.

HERE FOR TEXAS. HERE TO STAY.



Texas' leading provider of workers' compensation insurance

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT LOWERING YOUR WORKERS' COMP PREMIUMS, ASK YOUR AGENT OR CALL GINA JONES, PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR, AT (512) 330-9836, EXT. 24.

continued from Page 1 — Water works

the excavation," said Giles. "The contractor has also hired an engineer to go out there to bore and describe the soils. We'll take that information, dissect it and come up with a proposal to remove their problem."

TerraFirma recently installed the dewatering system for the Bayport Container and Cruise Terminal being built by the Houston Port Authority.

In addition to designing and implementing groundwater pumping systems where the wells are removed after the structure is complete, TerraFirma also

maintains permanent dewatering systems. Maintenance involves pulling the pumps in order to clean and flush the wells.

Both the Toyota Center and Texas Children's Hospital have permanent pumping systems maintained by TerraFirma.

TerraFirma is a small, hands on company consisting of four other employees. For projects, they contract out local help, but handle much of the work themselves. TerraFirma also has construction sites in Louisiana, New Mexico and Arizona. —sn

continued from Page 1 — Power couple

the Crighton Theater in Conroe's downtown historical district for **Diamond Commercial Construction Inc.**

Both Glenn and Carol are actively involved in the community, as well.

Glenn is the chairman of the Board of Trustees at St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield. He is also the chairman of the church's Holy Smokes BBQ cooking team.

Carol works with the church's youth group. This month they will begin working with Habitat for Humanity where they will participate in building five homes for the organization.

Carol also serves on the board of the **American Subcontractors Association (ASA).**

Glenn enjoys hunting in Trinity and visiting Lake Livingston where he owns a

lake house.

Carol comes from a musical family. She attributes her interest in music to her Polish background. She played clarinet as a child and has just acquired a piano she is teaching herself to play.

"My dad played saxophone in a band called the Polish Eagles while I was growing up, so my mom carried my brothers and me to all the Polish dance functions. I learned the polka, two-step, Chicken Dance, and the Paul Jones, which you know if you have ever been to a Polish dance or wedding," she said.

The Pitman's 24-year-old daughter, Jamie Hoot, is following in the family's footsteps, as well. She has just started working for **Acoustical Materials Supply**, one of Pitman Construction's suppliers. —sn

continued from Page 1 — Furniture fiesta

million project began at the beginning of April 2006 and was completed on schedule the end of September.

The tillwall structure offers 30,361 sq ft of retail space.

The Grand Opening is scheduled for Saturday, September 30, and there will be much fanfare.

Comanche Contractors' area of expertise includes single and multi-tenant retail facilities. It focuses on construction of auto dealerships as well as industrial,

commercial and distribution facilities.

"Being diverse within the commercial construction market has worked to our advantage through the years," said Parrack.

Current projects include a 615,000-sf distribution facility and office expansion for Academy Sports and Outdoors.

Comanche has been the project lead for a number of other chains as well, including Men's Warehouse, Michael's and auto dealerships like Southern Ford and Ron Carter.

"We have been fortunate enough to work in this community for almost three decades and watch this city grow," said Parrack. "We have a lot of repeat clientele, and it is nice to help them expand as their companies grow." —sn

Subcontractors who contributed to the project:
 WLB Associates
 Berger Electric
 Regency Plumbing
 Demac
 R. Light Service Company
 W/Studio3 Architects in California



Andrews Myers Coulter & Cohen PC was recognized as a leading construction law firm in Texas, receiving a top two ranking in the latest edition of the prestigious legal directory, *Chambers USA, America's Leading Lawyers for Business*. Chambers also recognized firm attorneys **Bill Andrews** and **Eric Cohen** as leading construction lawyers. —mdo

ON THE SPOT What is the most interesting costume you've worn on Halloween?

Soon after my son was born, my mother-in-law made us costumes as Dr. Evil and Mini Me from the Austin Powers movie. I shaved my head but just couldn't bring myself to shave his.

Patrick Desporte, Walk On Art

I shredded my old Little League uniform and went as a zombie baseball player.

Scott Pollan, Texas Exterior Systems

I play in a band, and we played on Halloween in a black light party. I went as Tron, complete with memory disk and glowing lines.

Carrie Carter, Associated Builders and Contractors

I usually go as a vampire with white contacts that make your eyes look completely white.

Marie Harrington, H&E Equipment Services

When I was in college, I was a tampon.

Jim Bob Brent, Certex

A pregnant nun.

Webster Bailey, H&E Equipment Services

I went as Paulie Shore in "Son in Law" when he wore a cowboy hat and a pair of chaps with nothing else on.

Craig Simmons, RSC Equipment Rental

I went as a flasher one year. It was a great costume. It looked very realistic, but no part of me or my skin showed!

Brianna Boudreau, American Subcontractors Assn.

Last year my girlfriend and I went as characters from the Wizard of Oz. She was the scarecrow. I went as Dorothy. My girlfriend says the lip gloss really brought out my eyes.

Sam Siefers, Bobcat

Reliable Equipment • Responsive Service



Waukesha-Pearce Industries, Inc.
Construction Machinery Division
Komatsu Distributor

Komatsu's Compact Construction Equipment



7 Backhoe Loader Models
Digging depth 14'6" – 18'5"



6 Skid Steer Loader Models
Operating capacity 1,350 – 2,200 lb.



10 Hydraulic Excavator Models
Digging depth 4'11" – 13'8"



7 Wheel Loader Models
Bucket capacity .52 – 1.8 yd³



2 Crawler Dozer Models
Operating weight 8,710 – 9,220 lb.

NEW Komatsu Track Loaders

2 Track Loader Models
Operating weight 9,546 – 10,053 lb.



Reliable Equipment

Like all Komatsu equipment, our new track loaders are reliable and built to last. They are ideal for sandy or muddy areas and deliver a smooth ride over rough terrain.

Responsive Service

Waukesha-Pearce Industries is ready to provide parts and service at the job site or in our state-of-the-art facilities. Parts are available within 24 hours. Sign up for our preventive maintenance program to keep your equipment operating in top condition.

Call the WPI Location nearest you

Houston 713-551-0506	Corpus Christi 361-884-8275	San Juan 956-787-4231
Austin 512-251-0013	Kilgore 903-984-2011	Tomball 281-351-9016
Beaumont 409-721-5305	San Antonio 210-648-4444	

Waukesha-Pearce Industries, Inc.
Construction Machinery Division
12320 South Main Street • Houston, TX 77035
Phone: 713-723-1050 Fax: 713-551-0798
www.wpi.com