FEATURED PROJECTS

Mukilteo Presbyterian Church
Mukilteo, WA

Pioneer Pacific College
Springfield, OR

Three Rivers Convention Center
Kennewick, WA

The Assistance League of Everett Thrift Store
Everett, WA

Northwest Concrete Masonry Association, helping put concrete masonry to work for you.
Compared to December of 2004, the Mukilteo Presbyterian Church is the first of what will someday be a “village” of buildings surrounding an interior plaza. This impressive structure is a study in the versatility in variations of color and depth of texture offered by concrete masonry.

This social hall building is being used as a place of worship until the permanent church is built on the other side of the plaza. More than just a place of worship to its congregants, it serves as a community gathering place and a center of activity as well as a sanctuary. The architects chose concrete masonry construction for the new building with these many functions in mind, as well as for its low-maintenance and durability.

When the members of the Church were ready to build their new home, they chose Becker Architects of Kirkland. According to Project Manager, Tanja Kroeger, Associate AIA, the “main design concept was to create a contemporary version of a stone meeting hall.”

Historically, church buildings have been constructed of stone, a material that is out of the price range of most modern congregations. Concrete masonry is a material that offered the functional and structural versatility, the aesthetic value and the durability of stone, while remaining a high quality and economically-viable choice.

“We have used single wythe insulated concrete masonry construction over the years for many of our projects,” said Bob Becker, AIA. “The majority of our clients are looking for envelope solutions that are low-maintenance and durable. CMU not only meets these criteria, but also gives us the advantage of carrying the structural elements into the interior of the buildings and being able to add warm colors and various textures to the walls. We have not found another exterior structural system that gives us these advantages and is more cost effective.”

For this project Becker selected split-face khaki block, with ground-face sandstone accents. Concrete masonry was used structurally for the walls, providing the stone look both outside and throughout the interior. Becker’s signature use of exposed heavy timber roof members provides a nice contrast with the CMU interior.

Recipient of an Honor Award from the Masonry Institute of Washington 2005 Excellence in Masonry Design competition, the Mukilteo Presbyterian Church successfully applies the timelessness of masonry to a modern design to create a distinct and practical building for generations to come.

**Credits**

**OWNER** Mukilteo Presbyterian Church, Mukilteo, WA

**ARCHITECT** Becker Architects, Kirkland, WA

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER** CT Engineering, Seattle, WA

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR** The Construction Ministry, Edmonds, WA
The first phase of the Sports Way Business Park in Springfield is a 20,000 square foot $1.8M building housing offices and educational facilities for Pioneer Pacific College, Lane County Branch, a Portland-based company that provides alternative educational opportunities for adults.

From a distance, the building’s clean and contemporary lines and looming two-story entrance dominate the design. Upon closer inspection, the contrasting colors and finishes used in the concrete and brick masonry reveal a finer tactile detail.

Project architect Eric Hall, AIA, of Eric Hall Architects, said owners, Chambers Development Corporation, wanted “a clean and simple design with classic lines and integral color – a timeless building that would never go out of style, which was also low-maintenance, cost-effective, and reduced traffic noise.” Hall provided the owner with several options to choose from for the exterior of the building, and was pleased they selected concrete masonry.

“One of the things that is fabulous about working with masonry,” added Hall, “you can create light variations quite easily. In modern times, some of the skill in creating depth in masonry has been forgotten. Masonry can really give movement and relief to the face of a building’s skin.”

Complementary colors and block textures were used by Hall in creating this “movement.” According to Marty Goddard of block manufacturer Willamette Graystone, they provided 10 inch wide split-face block in natural gray and black, 8 inch wide split-face block in cocoa for the building’s “belly-band,” and black clinker brick for added detail.

The structure is somewhat unusual in that it combines a two-story structural steel system with exterior concrete masonry bearing walls. The walls were up before steel was used on the inside, allowing for an efficient and timely construction schedule of eight months from start to finish.

“Using a CMU exterior wall system on the project cut down the construction duration enabling the tenant to move in quicker,” said Brian Erickson of project general contractor, Chambers Construction Company.

The building also needed to be flexible for future use by different tenants. To accommodate for such potential needs other than those of the existing school, Hall incorporated a large two-story atrium for the foyer, proving a dramatic entry and a sweeping stairway to the second floor. “It is nice to do a multi-level building that feels like open space,” Hall said.

CREDITS

OWNER Chambers Development Corp., Eugene, OR
ARCHITECT Eric Hall Architects, Eugene, OR
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER Endex Engineering, Corvallis, OR
GENERAL CONTRACTOR Chambers Construction, Eugene, OR
The Three Rivers Convention Center, an anchor attraction for the Kennewick Public Facilities District’s developing entertainment area, is a very special structure. Named for its location in the Tri-Cities at the confluence of the Snake, Columbia, and Yakima rivers, the dramatic building is a symbolic expression of the area’s geography, weather, and economy.

Dean Strawn, Board President of the Kennewick Public Facilities District that owns the Convention Center, said that they asked designers, ALSC Architects, to incorporate these qualities into the building. “First of all, we were interested in a high-quality appearance that reflected the culture of the Tri-Cities – desert colors, wineries, farming, sun and water. We also wanted it to blend in with the existing structures in the development.”

According to Strawn, concrete masonry was selected as a primary construction material because of its structural integrity, versatility, richness, and permanence. “The look of a solid stone building is one of long-lasting solidity - and the CMU is also cost-effective.”

“We decided to use a material that would look indigenous to the area and be easily maintained,” said Rustin Hall, AIA, principal at ALSC Architects, of the award-winning project. The design team agreed that concrete masonry units (CMU) met their requirements for a material that is economical, durable, aesthetically-pleasing, and versatile in color and texture. They also appreciate its permanent interior and exterior finishes, structural capacity for vertical and shear loading, and good thermal performance. “There was simply no material other than CMU that offered all the attributes we wanted,” added Hall.

So far, the 81,000 square foot Three Rivers Convention Center has garnered three design awards: a Special Mention in the 2004 AIA, Spokane Chapter awards; an Honor Award in the 2005 Excellence in Masonry Design Awards from the Masonry Institute of Washington; and a “Best on the Block” Merit Award from the 2005 Robert Fraser Excellence in Masonry Awards.

“Rustin and the entire design group were great to work with,” Strawn concluded. “We are all extremely happy with the facility and couldn’t ask for a better building to serve as a community center to attract more businesses to the district.”
The Assistance League of Everett’s new building is a nod back to the day of the prominent downtown department store. A nostalgic arched sign in an old-fashioned serif font adds to clean lines, vertical “column” elements, and contemporary window awnings to create a classic retail landmark.

The 26,000 SF facility, completed in 2003, is a multi-purpose space. The building houses a thrift store, a 300-person meeting and event space, office space, and a separate area for “Operation School Bell,” a special place where children can pick out new school clothes. The proceeds from the thrift store fund “Operation School Bell,” so it is important to the success of the program that an attractive and accessible building attract a steady stream of customers.

Project Architect, Chris Thome, AIA, of Botesch, Nash & Hall Architects, said “the use of concrete masonry units as the primary component allows the facility to be low-maintenance and economical, which is important when the income you are generating needs to go towards charitable causes and not for building upkeep.”

The ease of construction associated with using concrete masonry units (CMU) was also a factor in choosing a primary building material according to Thome. Walls can be constructed quickly providing cost savings and early building occupancy. “The use of colored concrete masonry units allowed us to provide an attractive building and still maintain the Assistance League’s construction budget.”

Combining the smoother look of a ground-face finish in CMU, with rough split-face block in a variety of shades and accent colors, makes the exterior of the building visually compelling. The CMU materials in the Assistance League building are utilized structurally rather than as an aesthetic veneer. Since the walls are solid masonry, the CMU is carried partially through to the interior of the building, enhancing it with the look of exposed ground-face block.

Assistance League of Everett’s new home is a triumph in structure and function - and most-importantly, in its mission to create a positive difference in the lives of those it serves. Botesch, Nash & Hall succeeds in its design of a high-end building to serve the needs of Everett’s neediest children.

CREDITS

OWNER Assistance League of Everett, Everett, WA
ARCHITECT Botesch, Nash and Hall Architects, P.S., Everett, WA
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER DCI Engineers, Everett, WA
GENERAL CONTRACTOR Gaffney Construction, Everett, WA
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