Proud to Have Served

For more than seventy years, men and women have joined America’s military and then returned to O&G’s ranks to work in careers for which their training prepared them well.
On behalf of O&G’s Vice Chairman, Raymond R. Oneglia, I am honored to open this Veteran’s Edition of the O&G quarterly newsletter. Those of us who have donned the uniform of our nation are intimately familiar with the sacrifices of our military men and women. We have run the course, walked the patrol and stood the line. But we’ve also raised the families – at fort, station, or base. And when our call was done, we brought those families back to our communities to ensure our nation stays strong in other ways. Those men and women make up the employees of O&G.

Our Nation’s fortitude and security is not simply measured by the number of troops or number of carrier strike groups. It is derived from all our citizens contributing to our collective success – be it in uniform walking a flight line or in a safety vest on a construction site. President Dwight D. Eisenhower defined security as, “…the total product of our economic, intellectual, moral and military strength.” We all play a part in our Nation’s security and success, and we are particularly grateful to those who have contributed in both their public and private lives.

I thank all those at O&G who have served in our Nation’s great military…those who have switched a military service cap for the O&G hard hat. And I applaud O&G. We need more companies to recognize the value of hiring veterans and prioritizing their employment.

I wish all the employees of O&G a wonderful and prosperous rest of your year. We are one nation, fortified by patriots working the factory, the office, the community and those forward-deployed.

All the best,

General Norton A. Schwartz, USAF (Ret.)

fmr. Chief of Staff of the Air Force

Norton “Norty” Schwartz is a retired United States Air Force general who served as the 19th Chief of Staff of the Air Force, responsible for the organization, training and equipping of nearly 700,000 active-duty Air Force, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard and civilian forces serving in the United States and overseas. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Schwartz functioned as a military adviser to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and the President. He is the first Air Force Chief of Staff with a background as an Air Force transport and special operations airplane and helicopter pilot. He participated as a crew member in the 1975 airlift evacuation of Saigon, and in 1991 served as Chief of Staff of the Joint Special Operations Task Force for Northern Iraq in operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.
Through the physical challenges and military drills, they earn each insignia on their sleeve. They are trained for a military occupational specialty, an "MOS." They qualify and become accomplished. Some become experts. Non-combat MOSes, like the building trades that construct and maintain military infrastructure, are where some chose to serve.

It is as much the “tenacious skills” the military develops and hones — persevering, sacrificing, completing a mission, leading a team and being a team player — that are exactly the traits prized by successful businesses. This is true for construction firms, where work parallels military operations: specific projects are planned and undertaken, with specialized equipment, multiple moving parts, logistics and specialized teams deployed to the field.

Since the Second World War men who have worked at O&G have set aside their tools and taken up arms. Brothers Francis, Raymond and George Oneglia, sons of company co-founder Andrew Oneglia, all served in uniform, earning decorations and learning the military way of doing things. Twenty-five years later, their sons Raymond, Greg and Bob enlisted when Vietnam was broiling. In the early 2000s, T.J. Oneglia flew the P-3 Orion for the Navy. They join many at O&G who have served this country.

Many young people join the military seeking direction and purpose. Others join because there is a tradition of military service running through their family. Many enlist for love of this country, or a combination of the above, or something else entirely.

But it is the crucible of military training and service they all must push through that levels playing fields, builds iron-clad bonds, demands perseverance and sets a trajectory for their futures.
“I’d say some of the common attributes are that they’re highly organized, dependable and determined,” says John Gemetro, Vice President of the Heavy Civil Division, thinking about the veterans he has worked alongside. He singles out Larry Doyon, Fred Howe and Jim Nardi as examples. “They’ve always been committed to the job at hand. They worked whatever hours were needed. Over the years they gave up a lot of personal time to make sure we succeeded,” he says. “You could always go to them in times of need and they’d do what it took to get the job done.” Gemetro is sure those traits are due to their military service.

Dan Lourenco was just out of high school and not sure what to do with his life. He enlisted in the Navy, thinking he would learn about electricity and become an EM – Electrician’s Mate. When he was presented with that opportunity he ended up choosing a different path. He was made part of a crew repairing ship hulls in port. “The Navy taught me to become part of a unit. We each had our jobs in the process. We worked efficiently as a unit. That’s probably the biggest thing the military taught me, efficiency. If you’re not efficient, you’re nowhere.” Lourenco, who joined O&G in 2007, worked his way up from yard man to facility manager of the Stamford Mason Yard. “I try to make everyone around me efficient and self-sufficient. Your military experience follows you through life.”

Over in the Building Group is project manager Ray Wiley. Building things has occupied his adult working life, including the 22 active and reserve years he served in the Air Force. Wiley retired as a Major. His final assignment was Director of Civil Engineering at the Combined Air Operations Center in Qatar. He served as a “Prime BEEF” (Primary Base Emergency Engineering Force) Officer throughout his career and would deploy with his engineering company around the world wherever they were needed.

Serving sharpened Wiley’s abilities to lead, to perform jobs correctly, and to get in and get out quickly. (“You’re there too long you start getting shot at,” he quips.) Delivering on schedule was, and remains, at the forefront of Wiley’s mind. “When you’re working in a theater of operations you really can’t negotiate for more time on a job. When you’re hardening a facility you can’t say, ‘I need a few more days.’ If your job isn’t completed and the facility isn’t ready, people can die.”

Like Ray Wiley, Joe Sefcik felt out of place as a young Air Force lieutenant placed in command of career enlisted men 20 or more years his senior. In 1994 Sefcik completed his ROTC commitment at Cornell University where he studied engineering. He had plenty of textbook knowledge of construction management, geotec and concrete but in years of service and practical knowledge, the airmen under him “far outranked me” he admits without reservation. His four years of active duty, split between Lackland Air Force Base in Texas and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in New Jersey, followed by four years in the New Jersey Air Force Reserve, proved time after time that he could respect the skills of the men under him. He carries that respect forward in his civilian work today.

Sefcik has been with O&G for 13 years as a project engineer in the company’s Heavy Civil Division. He talks about translating his military experience into what he does today. “One of my military assignments was to inspect construction in great detail. Now, standing on the other side, I understand the mindset of DOT inspectors on our projects. I also worked in what the Air Force called programming, which is the conceptual part of developing a construction project before it’s designed. We would look long range and anticipate future needs. I know how many details go into getting a project underway.” Which is why, when he hears “shovel-ready project” he knows that it’s more about public relations than fact.

Sefcik continues: “Later I worked as Chief of Readiness. I directed the preparation of our unit to be deployed, like some of our men were after 9-11. All the logistics with getting the right people and equipment into the field, staging them at the right time – that’s all useful experience now as we’re deploying to begin the Charter Oak Bridge project in Hartford.”

Sending someone to boot camp to become a better person is a long-standing American tradition. But it’s not just the process that makes that person a better man or woman, it is also the mission. It’s the sense of identity developed by passing serious tests of perseverance and shared sacrifice. It’s training for a mission that is bigger than oneself. A person’s service can have a positive, multi-generational impact in their family. The sense of mission can make military service a launching pad for the balance of their days.

In 2019 the U.S. construction industry will be looking for about 250,000 new workers to replace those exiting the field. Also in 2019, about 210,000 military veterans will leave the service. “As we continue to develop our workforce, we know that veterans are disciplined, professional, and team-oriented,” notes Beth Dupont, Director of Human Resources and EEO Officer. “They understand the success of a project is a blend of individual and group productivity, they understand and respect the value of a diverse and inclusive workforce, they have a respect for procedures with a safety focus, and have a very strong work ethic. They are a perfect fit for O&G. They do their jobs faithfully and with integrity.”
Dan Andrews  
O&G FACILITY MANAGER  
NAVY, 2000-2005, IC3  
“Being in the service, participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, opened my eyes to the world. Serving made me a better person, I made lifelong friends and I learned how to store six month’s worth of clothes in the tiny ‘coffin’ that was my locker aboard ship.”

Bruce Benoit  
O&G CARPENTER  
NAVY, 1982-1986, OS2  
“I needed to do something after high school and the Navy gave me a very good sense of direction. I did two six-month cruises in the Persian Gulf and Asia doing radar, flight control, missile guidance, I made good friends and we communicate to this day – we just had our 30-year reunion, in Tennessee.”

Len Byram  
O&G ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES  
ARMY, 1964-1968, E-5, PURPLE HEART  
“My Dad and the whole family had served and I wanted to fight communism. When I was in Vietnam in the Air Cavalry infantry as a radio man, I was in six heated fire fights and was wounded in an ambush. About 40 years later incredibly I got back my dog tag that had been taken by the enemy. I wear it every day.”

Glenn Dziedzic  
O&G TRIAXLE DRIVER  
ARMY, 1982-1985, E-4 SPECIALIST  
“I wanted to serve my country and the discipline I learned carried me a long way. I remember Exercise Reforger in Germany, participating in a NATO preparedness exercise for a face-off with the USSR. That’s when you put your training to the test, prove yourself. The military was the best experience for me.”

Carl Ezzo  
O&G MIXER DRIVER  
MARINES, 1979-1980, PFC  
“I wanted to serve my country, I’m an American. I got married on the fourth of July. Tell you what – surviving boot camp at Paris Island was an accomplishment. Serving gave me a totally different mindset, taught me to respect my fellow man and respect for authority. I think everyone should serve at least two years.”

Chris Gust  
O&G HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR  
MARINES, 1999-2003, CORPORAL  
“I enlisted to serve my country. Leadership is the most valuable life skill the Corps taught me. I gained an understanding of the outside world and saw how great we have it in America. I learned respect and discipline and to be grateful for what we have, seeing the cost to have it the way we do.”

Fred Howe  
O&G SUPERINTENDENT  
AIR FORCE, 1977-1982, STAFF SERGEANT  
“I wanted to do my part. Everybody should do a stint in the military – it’s a great learning experience. Getting through all the training builds camaraderie, makes you more confident and independent. What I learned about being organized and respectful has helped me be a better leader at work and in my home.”

Vince Hughes  
O&G MECHANIC  
ARMY, 1984-1988, E-4 SPECIALIST  
“I joined the Army to serve our country and to receive training in mechanics. I look back with pride on my four years there. Serving made me more disciplined. It also gave me a greater attention to detail, made me prompt and dedicated. The rewards of serving outweigh the sacrifices you make.”

Roger Janelle  
O&G ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES  
ARMY, 1968-1971, E-5 SPECIALIST  
“All my family had served. It was my turn at bat. It was a hairy time when I served. The military took the punk out of me and made me a man. I enlisted because I wanted to be a heavy equipment operator, thinking I could work at O&G when I got out. I became a police officer instead but when I retired I finally came here.”

Dan Lourenco  
O&G FACILITY MANAGER  
NAVY, 1999-2003, E-3  
“I didn’t have any plans when I graduated high school. I had to do something so I enlisted. What I learned was discipline and order and putting the unit ahead of myself. Serving makes everyone self-sufficient. It empowers you to make decisions and be accountable. I expect the same of the guys working for me today.”
We attempted to identify and contact all military veterans currently working at O&G Industries for inclusion on these pages. We apologize for anyone who may have been overlooked: know that we honor your service to the country.

**Eric Mallardi**
O&G Laborer
Marines, 2001-2006, Sergeant, Purple Heart

"I learned attention to detail and how to lead people in stressful situations. We saw combat and received a Presidential Medal of Freedom but I’m most proud of reconstructing schools and hospitals in Iraq. I learned to take nothing for granted and the love for my family after I served was like nothing I felt before."

**Jim Nardi**
O&G Superintendent
Army, 1975-1978, Sergeant

"I joined the Army Corps of Engineers because I wanted to teach construction. Being in the service makes you less independent. You had to learn to depend on others and how to work with others as part of a unit. You learn how to stick together, take orders and put up with everything."

**Matt Olshefski**
O&G Superintendent
Army Reserves, 1991-1997, E-4 Specialist

"I enlisted for God and country and an opportunity to serve. I was in healthcare and wanted a career move. I was trained as a heavy wheel truck operator. Serving taught me about the chain of command and gave me perspective and maturity that has benefited me personally and professionally."

**Ray Oneglia**
O&G Vice Chairman
Army National Guard, 1969-1975, E-4 Specialist

"I enlisted and became the company clerk and the General’s driver at Headquarters Company in Hartford. I would encourage young people today to enlist. There are over a million men and women in the military and there is no draft. They are the go-to personnel who protect us. God Bless America."

**Jay Miasek**
O&G Labor Foreman
Army, 1987-1991, E-4 Specialist

"Since I was a kid I wanted to serve. I served in Operation Desert Shield and was a forward observer for artillery in Operation Desert Storm. Serving taught me leadership, teamwork and respect for authority. It taught me how to lead. Anyone who doesn’t go to college should serve – it’s a huge plus."

**Evan Nelson**
O&G Project Engineer
Army, 2010-2012, E-4 Specialist

"You grow up quickly in the military. For the last eight months of my enlistment I was a member of the 82nd Airborne 4th BCT Honor Guard, traveling the country with a team to perform military services for those who died overseas. The impact we had on families and that they had on us, is something I will never forget."

**Greg Oneglia**
O&G Vice Chairman
Army National Guard, 1969-1975, E-5 Specialist

"The military treats everyone equally. When you report to basic training, no matter if you’re a high school dropout or a Harvard grad, the hair comes off and the drill sergeants make you work as a team and look out for each other. If more people could have that experience perhaps today we would all get along a little better."

**Bill Powell**
O&G Haul Truck Driver
Army, 1974-1976, PFC

"I enlisted because I love my country and am proud to be an American. Basic training and airborne training and serving made me a man. You grow up quickly. Learning perseverance was big for me. When everything is against you, your training, your faith in God and perseverance keeps you going."

**T.J. Oneglia**
O&G Vice President
Navy, 1997-2006, Lieutenant

"Seeing the struggles people go through in other countries you learn to appreciate the freedom and opportunity we have in America. I was humbled by the dedication and talents of the men and women I was deployed with and honored to train the next generation of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard aviators."
We attempted to identify and contact all military veterans currently working at O&G Industries for inclusion on these pages. We apologize for anyone who may have been overlooked: know that we honor your service to the country.

O&G HONOR ROLL

Recognizing O&G employees working today who have served in America’s military

Chris Roderick
O&G OPERATING ENGINEER
NAVY, 1983-1987, PO3 OPERATIONS SPECIALIST

“In 1986 I was a radar man and weapons tracker in an operation going after Gaddafi in Libya. That was a high-pressure situation. The military took me to multiple countries. After experiencing them I realized there is no place like the U.S. You appreciate the freedoms and prosperity in this country.”

Rick Rubino
O&G PROJECT ENGINEER
ARMY, 1976-1982, E-4 SPECIALIST

“When I was 18 I got out of the house and grew up. I joined the Army and learned to be a truck driver. I was in Germany for three-plus years doing supply for the motor pool. The military is a great way to make you grow up. You learn to trust other people and work with them, and how to become ready by yourself.”

Frank Scalo
O&G CARPENTER FOREMAN
MARINES, 1962-1965, CORPORAL

“When we finished high school some buddies and I enlisted. I went to the service battalion and kept track of materials. I was always good with people but all the discipline helped me. I was proud to be doing my duty to my country. If any young person doesn’t know what they want, the military can educate them.”

Don Therrien
O&G LABOR FOREMAN
ARMY, 1979-1988, E-4 SPECIALIST

“I followed my Dad’s footsteps and enlisted after high school. I was a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division jumping out of planes. I was trained to work on M551 Sheridan light tanks that were parachuted out of planes. In the military I learned to get along with all kinds of people, do my part and be part of a team.”

Ray Wiley
O&G PROJECT MANAGER
AIR FORCE, 1982-2004, MAJOR

“I served in Just Cause (Panama), Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan). Leading airmen with 30 years’ experience as a young second lieutenant was daunting but I learned to take a team into any situation and complete a project. It doesn’t matter who you are before you enlist, everyone has equal opportunities.”

Roy Rogers
O&G PROJECT ENGINEER
ARMY, 1996-1999, E-4 SPECIALIST

“A highlight was being in South Korea, responsible for our General’s computer program. Serving taught me to take pride in everything I do. It helped me learn to prepare for any task and to be confident in doing it. I’ve encouraged my kids to enlist and my daughter’s joining the Reserves in the near future.”

Bill Saunders
O&G TRIAxis DRIVER
MARINES, 1962-1965, E-3

“I went to the ‘College of Hard Knocks!’ Making it through 12 weeks at Paris Island was a big accomplishment. It made me grow up really fast. When I got home I was a better role model for my younger siblings. I learned common sense for going about life. It would be good if everyone had to enlist for a year or two.”

Joe Sefcik
O&G PROJECT ENGINEER
AIR FORCE, 1994-2003, CAPTAIN

“I joined with a strong desire to serve my country for all it’s done for me. My dad was a 30-year Naval Reserve enlistee and three uncles served in WWII. I gained a greater appreciation for the hard work those under me performed. Serving developed leadership and fitness skills I use as a Boy Scout leader today.”

Lou Trojan
O&G CARPENTER
NAVY, 1973-1975, PO3

“Vietnam was going on and I felt it was right to enlist. The separation from family and friends turned out to be a positive experience I’d never change. The discipline reinforced by the Navy I carry every day and am a better man for it. I learned to think before I react, assess a situation and take time to listen to others.”

Stuart Wiley
O&G PROJECT MANAGER
ARMY, 1989-1996, SERGEANT

“It’s a family tradition to serve this country. I became a paratrooper, then a Ranger, then taught mountaineering. I learned leadership and to push through, understand a mission and take in the bigger picture. One doesn’t need to serve in a combat unit and sleep in the mud to join the military and experience life.”

These pages. We apologize for anyone who may have been overlooked: know that we honor your service to the country.
Just 13 years after the Wright

Brothers first took to the sky in 1903, the military forayed into pilotless flight, in Britain. Another year after that, in 1917, the US Army – there was no Air Force then – introduced a mass producible, unmanned flying machine called the Kettering Bug. And so started the military’s continuous development of “unmanned aerial vehicles,” or UA Vs.

As bits of the technology from military development became available to the public, UA Vs for civilian use – more popularly called drones – came on the scene in the early 2000s. The FAA issued its first two permits for commercial drone use in 2006. Two permits per year were all that were requested through 2014.

That changed quickly.

As of July 2018 the FAA had licensed 100,000 drone pilots. Between now and 2020, Goldman Sachs forecasts the market for military and commercial drones to reach $100B. Drone use across all US industries continues expanding, but especially in construction and engineering, the largest sector just ahead of farming.

Accurately capturing more data, more efficiently and more quickly than conventional survey methods, are the chief reasons. Companies that invest in drones see a return inside a year, according to a report by Blue Research.

Corey Morin, a superintendent in the Building Division, is an FAA-certified drone pilot. He’s out front on advocating for the pluses drones bring to construction and mining. The biggest advantages today, as he sees it from his building perspective, are documenting job site progress and providing logistics support.

“Up-to-date information is priceless,” Morin says. As an example he refers to the ongoing SoNo Collection Retail Development Project in South Norwalk where O&G has been performing all the concrete work. “On a very tight, very busy site like SoNo, conditions can change significantly every day, sometimes a couple of times a day. That’s when having very current photographs is a big help in managing logistics. Seeing time-stamped aerial photos of the changes makes for better management of the work,” he says.

There are additional advantages. Today’s drones, with their geolocation capabilities and precision to half an inch side to side or in elevation, give preconstruction teams a leg up in accurately confirming existing site conditions and using that data to make 3D site models. (Drone “photogrammetry” precisely pictures the landscape and the structures on it and displays vertical surfaces like facades.) This kind of confirmation leads to more accurate bidding and more realistic expectations for designs and schedules. Properly outfitted drones can also quickly measure temperature changes in building exteriors, like heat loss through a roof – useful data when bidding work on existing structures.

Drones also help manage inventories and forecast O&G’s mining assets. The improvements over traditional surveys are several and significant. First is the efficiency of surveying. A large facility like O&G’s Southbury quarry can be mapped, says Morin, in three or four hours, rather than a day or more with one or more surveyors walking the site to make measurements. Gone are the risks associated with walking around high-risk areas like highwalls, haul roads and stockpiles. The ease of use also encourages more frequent inventory cycles each year.

And then there’s the speed advantage. Drones feed back their data in real time. Survey software processes that info and generates maps in minutes.

“There’s no doubt that the time of the drone has arrived,” says T.J. Oneglia, Vice President, Materials and a former Navy pilot himself. “Today’s drone technology allows them to be both user friendly and highly accurate. We’re only seeing the tip of the iceberg in regard to their capabilities. They’ll become an ever more useful resource as we continue finding new ways to utilize the data they provide.”
This past Veteran’s Day O&G opened the halls of its Torrington headquarters to welcome employees and their guests to an inaugural celebration of family and country.

The notion of holding an open house had been on Vice Chairman Raymond Oneglia’s mind for awhile. Given the company’s enduring emphasis on family, an open house was a fitting way for family to see where their loved ones work and meet the people with whom they work every day.

Given, too, the company culture that honors service members and cherishes the principles upon which America was founded, bundling an open house with a Veterans Day celebration made sense, especially so with schools closed for the holiday and children able to participate.

The Oneglia family and the Officers and Directors of O&G are thankful that we live in a country where our freedom is protected each day by the men and women of our military.

Further, we are blessed with 1,000 loyal and qualified employees, many with relatives who have served or are currently serving in the military.

VICE CHAIRMAN RAYMOND ONEGLIA

Oneglia welcomed everyone at the historically rich hour of 11 AM, 100 years to hour since the armistice signaling the end of World War I took effect. With Oneglia at his side, Terry Creighton’s son, Brian, led the Pledge of Allegiance in the lobby. There was face painting, a red-white-and-blue spirit contest and a mini Touch a Truck, with a catered luncheon.

“We’re all about family and country here. Our love of both unites us,” says Beth Dupont, HR Director and EEO Officer, who planned and oversaw the event. She’s quick to say that the open house was a group effort, praising Lydia Babbitt, Rhonda Cote, Terry Creighton, Seth Duke, Tara Grieco, Roger Janelle, Sharon Okraska, Jeff Poole and AnnaMae Weigold along with her daughter Amy for “making it all happen.”

More than 100 hundred employees and 25 guests participated. Dupont is looking at ways to extend Veterans Day family open houses to O&G locations around the state.
Led by Superintendent Dwight Pulica, O&G’s crew recently replaced 21 bus lifts for CTtransit. It was a process that involved removing aging lifts from their concrete bases and installing new systems without disrupting the facility’s normal operations. The new, adjustable-length capability enables mechanics to lift single and articulated buses as well as shorter vehicles. Through inventive preplanning, all work was completed in just eleven months, a full nine months ahead of schedule.

(LEFT TO RIGHT) Another old bay is demolished in preparation for a new lift; Bob Brown from Ray Jurgen tests newly installed lift controls; track with piston (beneath the floor) adjusts to the length of any vehicle CTtransit operates; Superintendent Dwight Pulica.
A CULTURE OF SAFETY #ThinkSafety

SMARTDRIVE®
Q&A with Tom Halpin, Fleet Safety Manager

Tom Halpin is responsible for the safe operation of the 226 heavy over-the-road vehicles in O&G’s fleet. His work includes overseeing Smartdrive video and analytics technology for fleet safety on these vehicles, the first construction vehicles in New England to deploy the system. Last May he was named an Ambassador by San Diego-based Smartdrive Systems for his advocacy.

Why the push to implement video? Video technology is a great tool to put into the cabs so we could actually view how our drivers were driving. But the bigger point was to be able to exonerate our drivers from accidents. In the past, let’s face it, if you don’t have eye witness testimony or video surveillance, it’s ‘he said, she said.’ But when you have video that indisputably shows what happened you can defend against false claims. Or if we’re at fault, we can resolve the incident quickly. In the majority of incidents we’ve been able to exonerate our drivers.

How’s the buy-in been for the drivers? Nobody likes change and nobody likes a camera on them all the time, I get that. But once I was able to show drivers that if they’re following policies and procedures and operating their vehicles defensively, this system can protect them and the company from liability. When it got out that the drivers were being exonerated in different mishaps, the buy-in started coming to fruition. Also, if we spot an unsafe behavior like using a hand-held device while driving, we coach. Smartdrive is a preventative, it isn’t about discipline, although if we need to repeatedly coach a driver for violating company policy, formal discipline does kick in.

How does the system work? Mixers and triaxles both have a camera in the cab looking at the driver and another looking forward. Mixers have a third camera facing the rear. The system triggers with a g-force incident – a hard bump in the road, hard braking, hard turn, a collision. It captures ten seconds of video before and after. I get notified by Smartdrive – they monitor the system. They also tell me of any risky behavior they see so I can coach. Smartdrive also has a great feature our drivers can activate if they’re not sure the cameras captured an incident. They can push a button and record. If we receive a complaint from the public or a customer, we can go back to check. We want our guys to be professional at all cost. We’ve exonerated drivers through Smartdrive. It’s a fantastic tool.

SMARTDRIVE SUCCESS 2016 to 2018

- OSHA recordables fell from 12 to 6
- Restricted days fell from 120 to 42
- Lost time incidents fell from 2 to 0
- Total lost days fell from 193 to zero

Smartdrive is a registered trademark of Smartdrive Systems
**Brian Holmes Retires**

Born a Brit, made a chartered engineer there and then following his father’s footsteps to work in exotic locations (Brian’s choice was Qatar), it was romance that drew him to the US. The girl he was pursuing, St. Louis-born Cynthia, settled back in the States and the die was cast. He came to America and got married. The two raised three daughters of whom he’s quite proud, and they have lived in Connecticut since 1986.

This past Christmas week the tall and congenial Holmes retired from the Building Division, where he had moved from managing projects in the field to preconstruction work and cultivating new business as Assistant V.P. and Manager of Preconstruction and Proposals. Between the qualifications packages and proposals and the presentations to clients Holmes has worked on over the years he’ll tell you it must be up in the thousands. But he’s quick to deflect kudos away from himself to his team – Lorel Purcell, Melissa Corey, Nick Caster, Dean Dziedzic, Lynn Besanceney – and to Aaron Mednick and Ken Biega.

He gets animated talking about people: the good people he’s worked with and for and the clients he’s served. “It’s always the people,” he says, meaning the relationships – the cooperative and productive ones, and even the strained ones.

He tells, for instance, of a particularly adversarial building committee peppered with developers from Manhattan that he had to face in monthly meetings for the life of the project. Holmes never lost his professional demeanor no matter the hammering he absorbed. Sometime after the contract had concluded and Holmes et al. were bidding another similar high school renovation project, the most caustic member of the committee gave O&G and Holmes his highest endorsement for that new project (which they won).

Never feeling micromanaged in his years with the company, Holmes extended that same courtesy to his team. “I was expected to do my job and I expected the people under me to do theirs.” It was a management approach that served him well – which seems fitting, after all, as the way of a proper English gentleman.

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**BETH DUPONT**’s pedigree as the company’s new Director of Human Resources and EEO Officer points to her love of people: 18 years in HR at the Connecticut Hospital Association, followed by a fast and adventurous four-and-a-half years as Chief of Staff for the family-held Club Quarters Hotels in New York City before she joined O&G in the spring of 2018. “Club Quarters was crazy and I loved every minute of it,” she says, but Dupont was ready to work closer to home and have more time with her husband Dan. “There’s such a sense of pride and community at O&G. That’s what I admire and I love the focus heading into 2019 on evolving and innovating here. Evolving and innovating might well be Dupont’s mantra as she helps build the infrastructure to develop what she knows is “O&G’s most essential resource, our people.”

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**PAT DELANY** smiles when he calls himself “the ‘new Brian.’” He’s referring to his role as the Building Division’s Marketing and Preconstruction Director, a position held by Brian Holmes until last December (see above). The personable Delany arrived last July, bringing 21 years of construction administration experience at a large international corporation. He’s been appreciating the different tenor at O&G: “This is a family-held company with traditional family values and that’s important to me. We can still interact with the owners on a daily basis,” he says, something he had not been able to do before. Delany likes the Building Division’s management style. “I’m very supported to the degree I request it. People bend over backwards to get things right and everyone’s been great to work with.”

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Project Manager MATT BELCHER was invited to talk about his on-the-job experiences in a presentation, “Putting Lean Into Action,” at a meeting of the Lean Construction Institute’s Southern New England Community of Practice, held at Central Connecticut State University on November 1. Belcher is drawn to the style of Lean management construction: it codifies and expands many of the methods and, as importantly, the attitudes he had toward building a project as a team. In January, Belcher was elected a member of the Southern New England Lean Community of Practice’s Core Group.
It was the 1990s when O&G built its first “Earth Products Showcases,” creating a customer experience unlike anything else in the region. Visionary Bob Oneglia knew that if visitors could see how striking tile, brick, stone and other materials look when artfully installed in realistic vignettes they would be inspired.

While each O&G showcase has been continually evolving as lines change and new products are brought on board, Kara Oneglia, President of the Masonry Division, recognized that it was time for monumental change. “They were ready for a total facelift and modernization,” she says. So the interior products sections of two showcases – in Bridgeport, the first showcase built, and Stamford – were picked for top-to-bottom remakes that would pivot them to chic, comfortable, open “urban warehouse” presentations.

The showcase makeovers were planned on different levels to meet the needs of every residential and commercial client O&G serves: homeowners, professional designers, architects, builders and masons. Impressively, the remakes were entirely homegrown. In Bridgeport, the floor plans and vignettes, the choice of tile and stone materials, the paint, furniture and accessories, were conceived by sales representatives Sheryl Lentine and Sonia Maldonado, working with Oneglia. “It was a collaborative effort all the way, a labor of love – just fabulous,” says Lentine.

O&G tile craftsmen, carpenters and welders built out the designs. Installing an entirely new LED lighting design played an enormous role in the open, airy statement the showcases make.

Stamford Showcase sales representatives Paulette Brassinga and...
David Klipstein relate their customers’ reactions. “Lots of people have come in looking just for one thing and were pleasantly surprised to find other offerings they were inspired to purchase, like natural stones for their entryways and porcelain tiles for their master bath projects,” says Brassinga. “People are really liking the uncluttered feel and the flair of the displays,” Klipstein relates, “and the new lighting – it’s really fantastic, shows all our product options off well.”

Professionals agree. The Bridgeport makeover earned a HOBI Award from the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut as 2018’s “Best Small Product Showroom.”

O&G showcases are open to the public Monday thru Friday and half a day on Saturday. When you visit we think you’ll agree that the transformation was worth the investment.

SHOWCASE SALES EXPERTS
(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT)
Sheryl Lentine, Sonia Maldonado, Paulette Brassinga and David Klipstein
He had finished all the coursework to earn a business degree but Leo Nardi wasn’t at ease. Worrying that a desk job wasn’t going to work for him, he shelved the degree and took a job with a mason building foundations on Cape Cod. About a year in, guilt got the better of him. “I thought I should get serious about my degree,” he recalls. Half-hearted but feeling obligated, he took a position as an auditor with Hartford Insurance.

Nardi had enough within months. He resigned and worked for two years with non-union builders before coming to O&G in search of a better pathway up, with better pay and benefits (he was now married and had a child). “I started here as a laborer. It paid our bills.” That was 40 years ago. Today Nardi is a VP and the company’s sole General Superintendent. He’s worked in that capacity for the last 26 years.

As General Superintendent, he’s part conductor, directing an orchestra of personnel and machinery in a symphony that never ends. He’s part negotiator, borrowing people or equipment from one project for another, promising superintendents he won’t forget their cooperation. He’s part coach, demonstrating and dispensing the values of O&G’s family business culture to the hundreds of workers he oversees.

His work days usually begin twelve hours ahead of everyone else’s. The night before he checks the distribution of personnel on job sites, moving around the carpenters, laborers, masons and operators for whom he’s responsible. He has multiple projects on his mind, thinking two or three shifts ahead, positioning and reinforcing and rotating people and calling them to let them know his plans. He picks the persons best suited for the job, having not just their skill set in mind but their demeanor and adaptability to a particular project’s needs.

At the same time Nardi knows the company’s heavy equipment: where it is, what it’s capable of doing and the application on any given job so the best-suited machine is delivered when it’s needed. Finding and fixing all that equipment is often an alliance with VP Jim Zambero, who oversees every piece of rolling stock O&G owns. Between Nardi and Zambero job sites get served.

Nardi gives a nod to Mike Ciarlo, a first-seat player in the orchestra he conducts. Ciarlo sits at South Main overlooking an equipment yard, about six feet from the closest thing you could call Nardi’s office—a chair at the end of a communal table that sees everything on it from work schedules to boxes of parts and trays of hot peppers. Ciarlo pulls permits for O&G’s heavy equipment to be hauled around the state. He deals with smaller pieces of equipment and with people. The two don’t discuss work, they banter about it.

Nardi the auditor wants things ordered, scheduled and planned but he often has to function from a reactionary place. Equipment breaks down, people have issues, clients make changes, the weather interferes. “I think like a lottery ball machine. The balls that rise to the top, those are the issues I deal with first.” There have been dramatic emergencies that required Nardi to hastily marshal troops and machines to work weekends and holidays, like the time they repaired a gushing sanitary line on Super Bowl Sunday or the weekend they removed a downed helicopter and repaired the properties it damaged.

In daily contact with men and women in the field, Nardi is often a dispenser of O&G philosophy. It’s up to him to work with people when they face personal issues that effect their ability to perform. “That’s the family culture of this company. We’re concerned about our people.” He knows it’s one reason employees stay with the company and provide him with a dependable workforce: they know they can approach the owners with a request, and requests are usually filtered through Nardi.

With an authoritative bearing, he can be a blunt instrument. But Nardi would much rather collaborate with his superintendents. “I don’t pretend to know as much as you do about the job you’re running,” he says. He’ll ask questions. He’ll listen. It’s then he can draw on his encyclopedic knowledge of manpower and equipment and on decades of experience, to help a project advance. It was only through collaboration with Superintendent Dwight Pulica, for instance, that O&G slashed nearly 50 percent off their schedule at CTtransit’s bus facility in Hartford last fall (see pages 10 and 11). “We fine-tuned it pretty well,” he says, fighting a grin.

In a significant way, being General Superintendent is a relationship game that distills down to something Nardi has built over the years. “The only thing I sell is my reputation. If people can’t trust me, they’re not going to do what I need them to do. You may not like what I’m saying, but you’re getting it straight. It’s my reputation,” he says, and adds with characteristic understatement, “and my word’s pretty good.”
Recognized

According to the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association at their awards ceremonies in Washington, D.C., Ilir Alibali’s life-saving water rescue in Stamford was “overwhelmingly recognized” as deserving their 2018 National Safety Award.

O&G’s Route 175 ABC Bridge Replacement team, along with ConnDOT, represented by Ravi Chandran (second from right) and Don Ward (far right), received the CRBA’s Arthur Gruhn Excellence in Construction / Innovative Construction Methods Project Award.

Engineering News Record has again ranked O&G’s Building Division among the Top 100 Green Contractors in the US, the only contractor to make the list from Connecticut.

VP John Gemetro received the AGC/CT’s GC/CM of the Year Award. Dave Cravanzola (Project Manager of the Year), Corey Morin (Superintendent of the Year) and Mike Ferry (Safety Manager of the Year) were all award finalists. Additionally, John Sterry of Western Connecticut Hospital Network received a Private Owner of the Year Award for the new Tannen Cardiac Rehabilitation Center at Norwalk Hospital, built by O&G’s Special Projects Group.

The Orville H. Platt Additions and Renovation Project garnered its fourth award, this time a New England Best K-12 Education Project Award from Engineering News Record. The Rte 175 ABC Bridge Replacement Project in Newington also earned ENR/NE Award of Merit/Bridges recognition. VP Chris Tuomey, who managed the project, was on hand to receive the award.

For his accomplishments in advancing O&G’s Building Information Modeling capabilities, Nick Castler was honored with an Emerging Young Professionals Award by the Construction Institute at the University of Hartford.

O&G received a 2018 Great Places to Work Award from Connecticut Magazine, and another Top Workplace for 2018 from Hearst Media, the fourth year in a row for that honor.
1 At the Veterans Administration’s Healthcare Complex in Rocky Hill, O&G helped build a Veterans’ Healing Garden by donating site work, asphalt and installation of a walkway. Then-Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman was among those dedicating the garden.

2 In West Haven finishing the VA’s new Fisher House, O&G helped construct an equipment shed by preparing the site, supplying and pouring concrete for the shed’s slab and regrading the site this past fall.

3 In Terryville, after a truck crashed into the American Legion’s Plymouth Post 20, O&G was on the spot the next day with an offer to help repair the damage. O&G donated 22 yards of concrete to the project.

4 Asphalt Division Vice President Brad Oneglia challenged himself on a snowy and raw November day in a “Climb for the Kids” fundraiser at Stratton Mountain in Vermont. The Everest Challenge saw runners and hikers scale the 1750-foot peak, ride a gondola back down and repeat it as many times as possible in 36 hours. Through the KidsPlay Museum’s Angel Membership Fund, the nearly $9,500 Oneglia raised will enable children from Torrington to participate in programming at the museum in Torrington. Oneglia also sits on the KidsPlay Museum’s Board of Directors.

5 Safety Director Mike Ferry, with Corporate Director of Marketing and Communications Seth Duke, organized the Brass City Wine Fest, a fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity held at Waterbury’s Mattatuck Museum this past fall. Safety Department staffers Robin Listorti, Tim Barberet and Tom Halpin volunteered at the event.

6 O&G was recognized with a Community Service Award from the Connecticut Construction Industry Association for “O&G 101,” an activity in which teams of students at Saxe Middle School in New Canaan built Lego buildings using Lean pull planning, just like a commercial construction project. Helping the kids was Saxe Project Manager Nelson Reis (left), Corporate Marketing and Communication Manager Seth Duke (center) and Saxe Superintendent Roger Johnson.

7 Making Strides Against Breast Cancer was held at White Memorial in Litchfield this past fall. It marked the 15th year O&G has participated in American Cancer Society events, this time with a company match raising $5,860 for research and early detection programs.
New Police Headquarters for the City of Stamford

As general contractor for the City of Stamford, O&G is finishing up on “a modern police building for a modern police force in one of Connecticut’s fastest growing cities.” The new, technologically advanced, 100,000SF facility will centralize all of the Force’s departments, something that had not been possible before. It will also provide parking in a new, attached 100,000SF garage. A multi-capability firearms range and 27 new adult, juvenile and psychiatric detention cells (above) are included. The $43M, two-year project is on track to wrap up this spring.

Region 12 Shepaug Valley School New Agriscience STEM Academy  
In Washington O&G is construction manager at risk for this $34M project that will transform the school into a science/technology/engineering/math (STEM) academy centered on agriculture. Approximately 12,000SF will be added to the existing school for shop classrooms, another 28,000SF will be renovated and a 26,000SF large animal/equine building will be built. New AgSTEM classrooms, science labs and teaching shop space will be constructed. Extensive site work and AgSTEM site improvements are included. Completion is projected for December, 2019.

Rehabilitation of U.S. Route 1 Over I-95 (Bridge No. 00037)  
The Heavy Civil Division is in Stamford working on another accelerated bridge construction project for ConnDOT, this one valued at $14.8M. The project calls for two, 1.8-million-pound replacement bridge spans to be built offsite. After meticulous surveying and the demolition of existing structures hours before, the two spans will be rolled into position over two consecutive, intricately planned, 56-hour weekends this June. Interstate traffic will be diverted onto specially built detour lanes. Once traffic is returned, crews will tie in all utilities and the project will finish by late November, 2019.

Oxford Middle School  
O&G Industries and Tecton Architects have been engaged for construction management and design services for a new middle school in Oxford. The 82,000SF, three-story facility will serve 500 students in grades five through seven. An aggressive, 14-month schedule that begins this June will require extended work weeks and intensive coordination and safety measures as crews work between two occupied schools. The design and construction execution of the successful Colchester Middle School project, recently completed by O&G and Tecton, helped Oxford’s Building Committee choose the same architect/CM team.

Wheeler Elementary School Additions and Renovations  
O&G is leading another “occupied phased” school project, this time at Plainville’s pre-K thru 5 Wheeler Elementary. Beginning with asbestos abatement during summer vacation in 2018, crews have been renovating the 51,000SF building and adding a connecting corridor addition. Every area of the school is being upgraded as new, from administrative offices and the media center to classrooms, gymnasium and kitchen. Site work and courtyard improvements are included. The thoroughly revamped school will be turned over in March of 2020. The contract is valued at $22.8M.

Higgins Hall and Annex, Western Connecticut State University  
In a fast-paced, 360-day project in Danbury, two of the University’s older buildings, totaling 85,600SF, are being updated. All of the interior mechanicals and an elevator are being replaced, as are windows, roofing and various offices. New building management, AV, access control and security systems are being installed. The University is maintaining occupancy of the Math Emporium and a pair of lecture halls during renovation. As construction administrator, O&G is the on-site owner’s representative. Work concludes late this coming summer.
we salute the hundreds of O&G employees who have FAITHFULLY served our country in times of CONFLICT and PEACE since 1923