O&G partners to develop 620 MW Kleen Energy Power Plant, the most ambitious venture in company history

Everything about the Kleen Energy Power Plant project is gargantuan. The hundreds of specialized contracts and permits, the massive and highly technical components coming from across the globe, even the price tag at more than three-quarters of a billion dollars – all reflect the expansive vision and investment which the Kleen Energy Systems partnership has made.

The 150-acre site itself, looming on a craggy hillside that rises above the Connecticut River in Middletown, is emblematic of the challenges facing the project. But as the site is steadily tamed and the footprint of the complex takes shape, all the planning and preparation, expertise and old fashioned hard work are paying gargantuan dividends.

The bigger picture

Seven years ago, as this rugged hilltop sat dormant, forces were in motion to develop it in a big way.

In the Summer of 2001, O&G was approached to partner in a development group that would become Kleen Energy Systems, LLC, and the volumes of legal and bureaucratic compliance work unique to building a power plant began in earnest.
At about the same time, the larger energy picture was changing shape in an ominous way. In the wake of an overbuild of electrical generating plants in the 1990s came the collapse, bankruptcy and scandal of Houston-based energy purveyor Enron. This, in turn, triggered an aftershock in the broader energy market and caused banks and investors to become reluctant to pour any more capital into new energy ventures.

Rather than be foiled, Kleen Energy Systems chose to exploit this fallow time. While the business climate for energy development slowly returned, O&G forged ahead with planning, contracting and permitting activities so that the group would be in an optimal position for the time when the market would, inevitably, come back.

Meanwhile, at the state level, lawmakers were revisiting their regulations concerning the production and sale of energy in a post-Enron world. With additional constraints in play, the Connecticut DPUC requested proposals looking for plants to generate 780 million watts (or megawatts, MW) of new energy for the state. They received bids from 15 different groups who proposed 21 different plant designs, and settled on four different plants: Kleen Energy’s 620MW base load plant to supply a steady flow of power, and three “peaters,” smaller plants designed to come on line only at times of peak demand or during outages at other suppliers.

When the way officially opened more than six years after Kleen Energy’s planning had begun, O&G crews were more than prepared to hit the ground running.

Big plans, big job

It was in September of 2007 when land clearing started. By October, with close to 90 acres opened up, excavation began in earnest. By the end of the project in mid-2010, approximately 1.6 million cubic yards – half of it earth, half of it rock – will have been excavated. John Rouleau is a savvy veteran manager in charge of the site work. “The scope of this project amazes me. You’re probably not going to see another one like this, really and truly. You don’t build power plants every day, and even when you do you don’t build them on this kind of terrain.” Up to 65 workers and 14 articulated haulers are doing the excavation.

The site is an old feldspar mine, laced with underground tunnels. Piles of waste from mining, called tailings, are scattered about. Key areas are on grades exceeding 30 degrees.

Matt Tobin is the engineering manager for the project. He and his team of Larry Chatfield, Bruce Thurston and Bob Wetsel are in charge of mechanical, electrical and controls sections. Tobin also acts as the civil engineering manager. “This is a very challenging site. The mine tailings are difficult to deal with because they get suspended in runoff water very easily, so we’ve had to build sedimentation pools to filter the runoff before it leaves the site,” he says.

Tobin also talks about one of the other site-work issues they contend with. “Right underneath where the steam turbine is going to be, the most sensitive piece of equipment here, just happens to be a deep vein of feldspar that the miners chased,” he chuckles wryly. These tunnels need to be removed to avoid future calamity. “So we’re overexcavating the finished grade by 70 feet, and then methodically filling the hole back up with shot rock and compacting it all as we go.”

Torrential late winter rains in February and March also created challenges on this very steep site, both with runoff and slick footing for men and machines that set the schedule back. With drier weather in the weeks and months afterwards, however, Rouleau and crew have pushed the job back on schedule.

Walt Koziol, Vice President, Heavy & Civil Division, led the crew that estimated the job. He calls the project a “major civil challenge.” Says Koziol, “There’s a huge amount of utilities work involved, lots of excavation. Even designing and building ‘laydown’ areas for staging all the components that will be arriving by rail, truck and ship from around the world dwarfs the planning required on typical proj-
Lots of these items are huge. Some of the high-value components weigh as much as 500 tons and some will be 110 feet long. The turbine building alone will be 60,000 square feet, and the primary exhaust stacks will be 215 feet high and 18 feet in diameter.”

Teams have blasted and finished access roads, carefully setting grades and curves that will allow heavy haul trucks to bring in the oversized components. They are also busy preparing the power block and tank farm area, water treatment plant, and switchyard.

The engineering firm of Milone & McBroom has been hired for all the contracts involving water. Almost three million gallons per day are needed to run the plant. They will be drawn from Ranney wells driven deep into the aquifer beneath the adjacent Connecticut River, with no discernible effect on the river’s level, and will be pumped up the hill to the plant. A treatment facility on site will clean the water before discharging it back down the hill to the Town of Middletown for its use.

The project team reflects the scope of the job. O&G has two divisions involved in this multi-disciplined project: Heavy & Civil Division and the Building Division. At peak, 400 tradespeople will complement O&G’s management team of more than 30 construction professionals. Major subcontractors will be pipefitters, millwrights, boilermakers, high-line voltage specialists and electricians.

Lou Kesselman, who directed the UMass power plant project, is the Senior Project Manager. “This is a very aggressive project. It requires a lot of coordination. It’s one heck of an effort.” He describes the engineering work as “just in time” in the early stages.

WorleyParsons is the project engineer and has been working with O&G to put together construction packages for procuring major items and trade contracts. They have been given the responsibility for design of the facility itself, the powerblock which includes the combustion turbine generators, heat recovery steam generators, the steam turbine, and a portion of the 345kV switchyard where electricity generated by the plant will be transferred to the distribution grid that supplies it to consumers.

**The gas-fired, combined cycle power plant**

Older power plants were only able to use a portion of the energy their fuel generates (operating at less than 30% efficiency). The remaining heat from combustion is generally
wasted. In a combined cycle gas turbine plant like this one (and like the plant O&G recently completed at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst) a gas turbine generator makes electricity and the waste heat that would ordinarily be lost is sent to a steam turbine to generate even more electricity. This boosts the efficiency of electricity generation to over 60 percent.

So how will the plant come on line and start supplying electricity? Power generated in the plant will go to “step-up” transformers and to an interconnection to Northeast Utilities’ switchyard (part of this project for the design/build of the Kleen Energy switchyard has been contracted out to Siemens Power Transmission and Distribution. Once the Kleen Energy switchyard is ready, NU will interconnect or “backfeed” between their 345kV line in the area and the Kleen Energy substation. Says Kesselman, “The backfeed is scheduled for December of 2009 – that’s quick. Midsummer 2009 is testing so we can get a jump on startup and commissioning because of the aggressive June 1, 2010 requirement to actually generate power into the CL&P/NU grid.”

The power of commitment

O&G President David Oneglia speaks of the tremendous capability of the Kleen Energy team with pride. “This is one of the most gratifying things I’ve seen in our organization over this past year-and-a-half – the ability of our people to rise to the occasion. Being both an owner and a contractor on this job almost doubles the volume of work required.”

With the exception of some “niche” people hired for specialized tasks such as instrumentat controls and mechanical and electrical systems, it has been long-time O&G staff stepping up to take on these challenges.

While having no shortage of individuals to commend for working hour after extra hour to get the work done right and on time, Oneglia singles out two men who typify the can-do attitude that will make the job a success: Rich Hall, Chief Financial Officer, and Rick Audette, Director, Power and Energy Division. “These guys have been exemplary. Rich stepped up his efforts, put in the time. He came up to speed quickly where needed and got all the ‘contractual ducks’ in a row. There are so many contracts here and they all had to be woven together. Rich made sure that happened.”

On the site and in meetings around the state, Rick Audette brought to bear his technical expertise and his ability to communicate complex information clearly. “Rick’s knowledge of the energy business really demonstrated our credibility and our commitment to the success of this project to the permitting agencies, lenders and partners,” says Oneglia. “Rick is truly a cut above.”

Oneglia also gives special kudos to the dogged determination and accuracy of Walt Kozioł, Bill Gerardi, Chris McPadden and the Estimating Department. “The estimators entered into this $760M job to the permitting agencies, lenders and partners,” says Oneglia. “They have performed exceptionally.”

Cugno Voted DBIA Regional President

The Design-Build Institute of America’s New England Chapter has a new president for 2008 and it’s O&G’s Jeff Cugno. Director of Program Management and Development Services for the Building Division, Cugno has been an active member of the Institute, served as its V.P. in 2007, and is now heading up the chapter.

“I’m flattered, really, to be heading up the New England Region,” says Cugno. “The members are top-shelf: they’re earnest, they’re very good at what they do, they represent a lot of large companies with a lot of integrity. These individuals know their jobs, know how to talk about them, they’re in DBIA for a purpose, they’re driven. It’s an honor to be president.”

DBIA membership represents professionals in all disciplines involved in construction, from architects and engineers to specialty contractors and suppliers to legal and financial professionals, and includes a council of public and private owners – those who would seek to have projects executed. DBIA’s mission is to be a “hub” and integrate the industry’s many parts. “We market awareness of the design-build approach as a way of delivering peak value and job performance for a broad range of projects,” says Cugno.

While quick to say that design-build is not suited to every project, Cugno is an advocate for the design-build methodology that integrates all disciplines into a single team. Key benefits which a design-build package affords owners are not only cost savings and a faster project but the ease of working with a single entity under a single contract – rather than having to chase the details of different aspects of a project under a series of separate contracts. “DBIA is saying, give the contract to a team to begin with, let them do their job, and by the time the project hits the field you have a much better handle on what you’re doing.”

O&G’s association with DBIA began shortly after it was founded in 1993. Delivering construction management, general contracting and low bid projects as well, O&G has been a proponent of design-build for years. Cugno formerly served in a host of governmental positions over a twenty-three-year period, after which he earned a law degree and practiced planning, zoning and development law, and then returned to the construction industry. He has been with O&G since 2003.
Some 70 landscape architects arrived at O&G’s Earth Products Showcase in Danbury at the end of January for a special continuing education program. Jointly hosted by the Masonry Division and the Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (CT ASLA), the six-hour event qualified for four AIA/CES learning units and focused on “Enhancing Design Objectives by Creating ‘Green Rooms’ with Natural Stone.”

“This workshop gives our members a better understanding of how to incorporate locally quarried material into their designs,” said Brian Robinson, Landscape Architect with Keith Simpson Associates and president of CT ASLA. “O&G Industries has been a longstanding partner of Connecticut’s landscape architecture community, and we’re pleased to work with them on this exciting program.”

With such a wide variety of natural stone colors and textures available through the Masonry Division, presenters showed landscape architects how the uses for these materials in environments are virtually limitless. Incorporating natural stone into landscape designs satisfies the consumer’s desire for creative outdoor spaces and “green rooms” that emphasize the beauty of natural materials. The showroom provided the perfect backdrop to illustrate the uses of these materials.

In addition to the Masonry Division speaker, key presenters included Champlain Stone, Ltd., Opeil Flagstone Company and Isokern Fireplace and Chimney Systems.

“We continually strive to offer innovative programs that create value for our customers,” said Craig Alvarez, Assistant Vice President, Sales and Marketing for the Masonry Division. “Networking and building relationships with professional organizations like CT ASLA promotes top-of-mind customer awareness and builds a sustainable competitive advantage for O&G. We are pleased to have members of CT ASLA participate in this program.”

Sales representatives Jim Gallagher and Tony Duarte were asked by over 35 landscape architects to do a follow-up call as a result of the workshop. Many of the attendees were new prospects. Having never visited the Earth Products Showcase showrooms they were impressed with the extensive and beautiful product vignettes on display, the fabrication services and, above all, O&G’s customer service. Jim and Tony hand delivered a Stone Sample Binder kit to each firm. The kit serves as a stone reference guide, useful when selecting stone for a design projects. It was created as an addition for their library, allowing for quick access when showing their clients stone samples for final selection.

According to Anita Parzuchowski, Director of Marketing for the Masonry Division and one of the organizers of the event, “It really was a fabulous day – we were thrilled with the turnout and the quality of the presentations. Our guests all gave it high marks.”

Green-scaping: Some 70 landscape architects enjoyed a day-long CE program at O&G’s Earth Products Showcase in Danbury. Presentations featured creative uses for locally quarried stone in “green room” environments and landscape designs. (top) A full showroom; (left) presenters, CT ASLA members and Masonry Division staff
Ray Oneglia, Sr., ranks it right up there with the most important strategic acquisitions O&G has made in his sixty-eight years with the company. The senior Oneglia, along with his brother George, have been shepherding the modernization and expansion of the quarry, and it is indeed falling into place at a brisk pace.

Bottom line: O&G is closing in on a safe, environmentally friendly facility running the latest in crushing and processing equipment, netting a 20- to 30-fold increase over the quarry’s productivity when purchased in 2006. The plant will produce a host of products but king among them is a high-quality, light-colored sand perfectly suited to numerous commercial and residential uses.

Major, visible progress is being made every week. A new entryway with greatly improved sightlines and attractive landscaping, two lanes for truck entrance and egress, two new truck scales and a new scalehouse were among the first improvements made. A 30-foot-high, landscaped berm was created parallel to the plant’s closest neighbors to buffer the sounds and sights of the operation. The former shed where quarry operations and equipment repair took place has been expanded and enclosed. A new vehicle washing facility is in the works to keep the sites’ trucks in typical “O&G top-shelf appearance.”

But the most impressive changes is the sprawling five-acre plant for processing stone, one of the largest in New England. It looks a bit like an amusement park ride for rocks, with hundreds of yards of yellow-and-black conveyors and rails connecting the hopper and primary crusher (where the “shot rock” from blasting, is fed in and roughly crushed) to the different processing towers where final crushing and screening occurs.

Both George and Ray Oneglia, Sr., are quick to attribute the great success of this project to the team that is making it all happen. These talented senior O&G employees are bringing years of experience to bear.

For instance, early on in the acquisition phase, it was Bill Stanley, VP/Materials Division, who analyzed the geology of the site and gave the company the assurance that there was a very significant lode of stone to mine – that the stone would convert to a high-quality sand and that it was worth the outlay O&G would have to make for acquiring and improving the quarry. Stanley is also confident that the sand, widely used on state projects in New York, will be approved for use on state projects in Connecticut where reserves of high-quality sand are hard to come by.

Other contributors to the quarry purchase were Vice Chairman Ray Oneglia, Jr., Secretary Ken Merz and Chief Financial Officer Rich Hall who were instrumental in successful negotiations for the acquisition.

Also in at the beginning, and continuing to be involved, was Ken Faroni, Planning and Permit Coordinator, who saw to it that all the required federal, state and local regulatory paperwork for mining and reclamation were brought into compliance. He is involved in any permit-driven, land use activities at the quarry. “We’ve got a very good relationship with land use regulators and our neighbors in day-to-day operations. We appreciate the cooperation we’ve received from them. I believe they appreciate our proactive approach at the quarry,” says Faroni. He adds, “We’ve also received quite a few compliments on the entryway aesthetics and sight-line improvements.”

The senior Oneglia brothers also single out the self-effacing division VP, Tony Damiano. Says Ray with a chuckle, understating his appreciation for Damiano, “Tony’s done a pretty good job designing this plant on his drawing board.” He credits Damiano with being a driving force, someone O&G trusts to make things happen. Damiano, in turn, praises his crew: “Our team has done a fine job, it’s absolutely been a team effort. We all do our part. We’re pulling on the same end of the rope and things are proceeding on schedule,” he says. Damiano also appreciates the contributions G&S Electric’s Greg Dalton and Donald Baldwin have made doing all the electrical work involved in the new plant.

Veteran quarryman John Jenkins also contributed to the design of the plant, and is a “go-to” guy on site, guiding development and the installation of the plant. Having overseen
NEW HEART FOR NO. 5

The crushing plant, shown here in March approaching 50% completion, will help crews start churning out 20 to 30 times the current volume of high-quality product this Summer.

operations in the company’s Southbury quarry since 1979, Jenkins was a natural choice for revamping Number 5.

Under the critical eye of Lester Klimaszewski, Construction Superintendent, every grade and every concrete pier and footing fit the equipment like a glove. Equipment installers from plant manufacturer Kemper Equipment had never worked on a job this precisely prepared. “They don’t come any better than Lester,” says Oneglia.

And then there are Dave Guerrera, being groomed to take over operations this Summer, and Bob “Rabbit” Pranulis, who, with Guerrera, have been essential to developing the site. Says O&G VP Leo Nardi, “There were eight carpenters, four laborers and multiple operators on the job at all times and there were no headaches. It’s been going flawlessly.”

Credit also goes to Jimmy Zambero, Vice President/Equipment, who has been planning and outfitting the new vehicle washing facility, ensuring that its size and capabilities match up to O&G’s current and future needs.

The old crushing equipment still churns along at the quarry, but when the new plant comes online this Summer it will process almost three times the quantity of stone an hour. Thanks to the vision of George and Ray Oneglia and Tony Damiano, and the dedication of a small army of skilled, veteran O&G employees, the new quarry will be a far cry from its roots in the 1800s when mule teams hauled wagons of stone through dark tunnels and out to the nearby railyard – and even a far cry from just a few years ago.

Teamwork: (l to r) Dave Guerrera takes the reins this Summer; Barbara Snow runs the new scalehouse; John Jenkins keeps tabs on progress. (bottom, l to r) The team turning plans into reality: Wilton Atkinson, Roger Pereira, Russ Martocchio, Dan Paparazzo, Chester Swieton, Brian Sokol, Construction Superintendent Lester Klimaszewski, Yard Foreman Dave Guerrera, Foreman Bob “Rabbit” Pranulis, Site Manager John Jenkins, Mike Dionne and Joe Suita.
“When I started here I was instructed that the philosophy of the company was to deliver excellence to our customers in quality, service and value,” says Bill Stanley, a 28-year veteran and Vice President/Materials Division who oversees the company’s quality control function, among other things. Stanley remains a standard bearer of that philosophy as he directs his tight-knit group.

Quality control begins long before any of the products and services O&G delivers – aggregates, concrete, asphalt and the means by which they are installed – ever get near a customer’s jobsite. It can begin literally years before, when potential sites are evaluated for mining operations. Says Stanley, “We start with identifying, analyzing and selecting our sources of materials for aggregates. We evaluate the raw land. We drill cores, we dig test holes, we determine if the site is suitable and how it may fit into our system.” With tightening land use regulations, permitting sites for the production of aggregates has become an arduous process, he adds.

Quality is monitored throughout the processing of raw materials into finished products, and extends to both their delivery and installation. Asphalt, for instance, is not only made to specification and tested for compliance but Quality Control provides assistance to ensure it is being laid down properly, being compacted properly, and rolled in the right patterns for optimal installation. When it comes to concrete, from pumping and consolidation to finishing, the installation is monitored.

The construction world grows more complex all the time. Government oversight and regulations, coupled with innovations in engineering and construction, have pushed capabilities – and quality control responsibilities – to new heights. The Quality Control Department has kept pace.

Specifications for new materials that just ten years ago were a push or even impossible are now common: 10,000 psi concrete for high rises; road surfaces that take traffic within hours of lay-down; environmentally friendly pervious concrete that lets water to pass through; self-consolidating concrete that flows like water...
into complex forms; fast-setting concrete that gains strength overnight. Quality Control has kept up to speed with it all, and helped O&G stay on the cutting edge even as it maintains the company’s longstanding, uncompromising commitment to quality.

Stanley proudly points to an ongoing job that typifies providing the latest in materials and installation while delivering superior results for the customer. This large job required the installation of miles of 340kV underground power transmission lines for which O&G supplied the know-how, manpower and special materials. “We needed a special concrete and granular backfill material to draw heat from the line and enhance the flow of electricity. In materials and installation, we are exceeding all expectations.”

One of the routine challenges Quality Control faces is at the company’s recycling operation at the Seaview Avenue facility in Bridgeport where waste asphalt and concrete are given new life. “You never know what the incoming stream of materials is going to be, what the production is going to be. We have to react on a monthly basis, as to what the inventory coming in will be, what value it has, what we can make from it,” says Stanley. For more than a decade O&G has been making recycled subbase for roads, but true to form the company is again at the forefront, investing in ways to turn the salvaged materials into higher value products. “That’s another innovation O&G is pursuing so our guys spend a lot of time involved there. It’s the way to move forward.”

The two men who head up the Quality Control Department are Leighton Davis and Jim Maher. Maher, as Quality Control Manager, handles the Department’s administrative responsibilities. His primary duties focus on day-to-day and job-to-job operations. Maher handles reams of paperwork for jobs, from bid through completion, certifying the commitment O&G makes for products, delivery and installation, getting an engineering stamp on the specifications, and distributing essential information to the producers and dispatchers. He is also in charge of the testing of concrete, asphalt and aggregate out in the field and in the dozen labs O&G maintains across the state.

Leighton Davis is a Materials Operations Supervisor, working out of the Bostwick Avenue facility in Bridgeport. Though his work dovetails with concrete and aggregate quality control, Davis’ chief responsibility is asphalt, and the majority of that is with the State of Connecticut, O&G’s largest asphalt customer. The state requires an inspector at the producing plant whenever O&G is making asphalt for one of its Superpave highway projects. When the need for inspections and tests peaks, as it does when multiple paving jobs are running simultaneously, outside independent testing labs are contracted to work at Leighton’s direction. “I do what I need to do, when I need to do it,” says the 18-year-veteran with a smile, referring to the irregular hours seasonal nighttime paving and other activities bring. “I work whenever I need to and do whatever is needed to keep product going out the gate.”

Reporting to Maher are technicians Mike Smoly and John Kiesel. To many employees on O&G job sites across the state, Smoly and Kiesel are the face of Quality Control. They visit the job sites and plants around the state and beyond in their mobile test vans, armed with the equipment and know-how to conduct field tests that monitor product quality. The pair divides their responsibilities, usually geographically, so all job sites and facilities receive the Quality Control assist they need.

Although primarily involved in sales, Sue Duffy, Assistant Vice President/Materials Division, works with the Q.C. Department routinely. She ensures that the products going into every job are priced properly according to the specifications to give customers optimal value. “It seems like there are no standard specifications any more,” says Duffy, pointing to the variety of technical variations required for concrete and asphalt. Working with Jim Maher, she helps ensure that the products ship to job sites according to specs and that O&G delivers on its commitment to quality, service and value.

The Story Behind the Name

Did you know that this issue of “On the Go” can trace its origins back to 1966? That’s when the Oneglia & Gervasini Construction Company ran a contest looking for a name for their new newsletter. Two young men, John Gemetro (father of John Gemetro, Jr., VP/Heavy & Civil Division) and Richard Gallegos, came up with the winning name, “On the Go,” that this newsletter still carries. Playing off the “O” and “G” of the founders’ names, the pair captured the spirit of the bustling company that was, and still is, always “on the go.” And now you know.
Building and Land Technology, a prominent real estate developer headquartered in Norwalk, approached O&G with a deal: transform their 15-acre hilltop site in Danbury from raw land into a leveled site ready for construction and O&G could have the “run of the hill” – all the stone O&G could extract for its own use in construction.

With the deal offered, Bill Stanley, Vice President, Materials Division, checked out the raw land and determined it would be a win-win situation for O&G and BLT: the hilltop promised to offer a plentiful amount of high-grade stone suitable for processing into a variety of products. And indeed it is proving so.

Getting operations up and running, however, was anything but a run-of-the-mill affair. Head of a three-man team that has been on the hilltop from “day one,” site manager T.J. Oneglia recalls the difficult process of getting the mining operation going. “We had to fight our way in here, beginning in November of 2006. We cleared the trees, drilled and blasted a road up the hill, not much more than a goat path at first, and then worked on a site that was so small it was like working on a postage stamp.”

Unlike the company’s established quarries where lots of space is available for stockpiling processed stone, the hilltop afforded virtually no space at the start, and just barely enough now. The challenge has been working on that “postage stamp” while keeping pace with the crew from Ted Ondrick Company and its portable crusher who churn out as much as 5,000 tons of product a day. Oneglia and company shuffle stone here to make room there, and make this product for that project, and sell stone when stockpiles build up. But like a puzzle with just a few pieces left to fit in, operations are falling into place through careful management, teamwork and a lot of hustle.

Mike Simmons was with Oneglia at the site from the beginning. Simmons runs the scale house and handles the logistics of producing the right types and amounts of processed stone. The two look back on the early days and shake their heads. “Very few employees would do what Mike did,” says Oneglia with a smile, in admiration of Simmons and how he would drive his own car up to the top of the hill and sit in it through the winter as a makeshift office, before there was even room for a trailer and scale house. “Mike would have his cell phone, his Nextel walkie-talkie on the dash, pencils here and there, taking orders, handwriting tickets, calling the plants and dispatchers to move the stone. I can’t say enough about his dedication.”

Oneglia has the same respect for loader operator Ryan Dayton. “Ryan works non-stop loading trucks and stockpiling material. He’s entitled to coffee breaks and lunch but he’ll hardly ever stop moving. Some days he’s handled 5,000 tons of product and loaded 230 trucks, and that’s working in tight, tight quarters, around the crushing crew and incoming trucks, and he’s never had an accident. Ryan makes it look easy.”

The kind of teamwork that overcomes obstacles, complimented by skilled crushing operations from Ted Ondrick, has made the hilltop into a highlight for all concerned. ▲
From 1979 to 2007, **BILL AHERN** operated an O&G asphalt plant. “All I’ve ever done is make blacktop,” he chuckles, minimizing the many responsibilities his position required. Bill looked up to his superiors, both John Leverty and Tony Damiano, and fondly says of Damiano “he’s ‘the Chief’, a real working man’s boss.” After nearly 29 years with the company, Ahern retired this past September. “It was really something to be at O&G so long and see how the company grew and, to be a part of it.” After he retired “Bill Ahern” remained on the job – the senior Ahern’s son is also named Bill and also works as an asphalt plant operator. “When my son came home from ten years in the Navy I felt very comfortable with his security coming to work for O&G,” he says. Bill and his wife Noreen are snowbirds, wintering at their home in Sarasota and returning to Stratford when it’s time to put his boat back in the water for a summer of fair weather cruising and fishing in the Sound. Smooth sailing, Bill!

In 1971 Nixon was still in office, a stamp cost six cents, and, and **REECE HOBEN** joined O&G, fresh out of the Navy and with a new wife and a baby on the way. “Because the company was relatively small back then, I was able to grow with the job as we transitioned to a nationally ranked construction company,” he says of his years in charge of the operational end of the business. He recollects the freedom Ray Sr., Francis and George gave him to do his job (“They didn’t micromanage me”) and the way “spirited discussions” were often the way of arriving at a business decision. Hoben also sees his contribution to the development of the construction management methodology at O&G as one highlight of his long career. “We knew it was the way to go and it took work to convince communities of the benefit.” The Hobens – Reece and wife Gerry – are relocating to Sunset Beach, North Carolina, with a golf course out their back door and an air mattress on the floor as they prepare their new home. Thanks for 36 years of service, Reece!

**PETE LONGO** sat behind the wheel of big trucks for 41 years all told, the last 29 or so O&G trucks, mostly dump trailers and tri-axles out of O&G’s Southbury quarry. “O&G was a good company to work for,” says Pete. “You keep your nose clean, you’ve got a steady job and steady pay.” He remembers the years before coming to O&G when, as part of a family trucking business, driving wasn’t his only responsibility. He didn’t miss all the headaches that went with maintaining the equipment on off-hours and weekends after the driving was through, and appreciated the clean, reliable equipment O&G always provided. Retiring at a relatively young 61 years, Pete’s new motto is, “Life is short.” The call of work often kept Pete working long hours, sometimes seven days a week for weeks on end. Now he relishes time with his wife, Carol, and family members. His new pastimes are helping take care of his new grandson three days a week, toyng with his John Deere and working on his “honey-do” list. Keep the shiny side up, Pete!

He had worked at various auto dealerships, but when a job became available at O&G, **JOE MUCKLE** went for it. “The pay was very good, it was close to home, and the people seemed good to work for.” That was in 1979, and almost 30 years later Joe Muckle has retired after remaining with O&G for the long haul, working on big trucks and mixers in the company’s South Main equipment repair facility. “O&G was great to work for,” he says. “You gave them an honest day’s work and you were paid well for the day.” Joe has not been doing a whole lot special since retiring in December; instead, he’s been enjoying his freedom from the time clock. That, and tackling his wife Sandra’s list of projects. The Muckles will be married 49 years this October (the secret: “I’ve learned that ‘Yes, dear’ is the correct answer for most anything,” he laughs). Having lost one child last year, Joe appreciates time spent with his son and daughter and five grandchildren, including one whom they’ve brought home to live with them. Sounds good to us, Joe!

When a teenaged **SAL RINALDI** joined O&G, JFK was our president and “Beatlemania” was the rage. That was in 1963, and Sal had only been in America for three years, having left his home near Naples, Italy, at 16. After 45 rewarding years (most of it paving roads, the last few years excavating building sites) Sal Rinaldi bid a fond farewell on the first of May. “I want to thank the entire Ongia family – O&G was a great, great employer,” he says. “They were gentlemen and treated me like family.” He recalls how he and his superiors always worked well together. “I never refused to do a job,” he says, remembering the unexpected “little” jobs that would pop up and mean sacrificing weekends off. But he did grow wary of night paving on busy interstates. “I’ve seen a lot of accidents after midnight. I was almost hit myself. Drivers don’t read the signs.” That’s when he switched to excavation. Sal and his wife, Linda, are cooking up plans with daughter Alicia to visit Italy later in the year. Grazie, Sal, for 45 years of dedicated service!

**BRUCE WALPOLE** retired in September after 25 years at O&G. His first assignment was to the Waterbury Water Treatment Plant as a project manager in the field; he then served as a project manager in the Preconstruction Department at the Main Office, working mostly on school and university projects. “O&G is a very sound place for anyone wanting to be in construction. The management very much cares for their employees. You work hard but you’re rewarded for your efforts.” Having left O&G, and Connecticut, the Walpoles moved to Michigan where wife Mary works as a nurse and Bruce works at a hospital in Grand Rapids doing facilities planning and management. The couple purchased land with waterfront access to Lake Michigan, and is now overseeing the construction of their new home. Bruce has his eyes on hitting the links but for now he and Mary are occupied with settling into the area that was their favorite vacation spot for years. Hope you’re building extra rooms for the kids and grandkids!

When you listen to **BERNIE WHITE** talk about his work history, you can’t help but be struck by the wide range of experience: consulting engineer, machine designer, home designer, work for a painting contractor and a drywall contractor and a small construction company. It’s experience that all channeled into the position he held at O&G as an estimator in the Building Division for nearly 17 years where he helped prepare bids for many projects. “If you’re not happy going to work every day you shouldn’t be there. I always wanted to go to work,” he said. He laughs recalling how he would use O&G’s kitchen to prepare Italian lunches with loads of garlic and onions: “They had to install a bigger exhaust fan that really worked!” For the first few months after retiring in December he “went nowhere, did nothing.” Now he’s finding more time to do architectural designs for homes “at my leisure” and enjoying it. His wife, Adrienne, is a registered nurse in New Haven, and the Whites make time to be with their daughters’ families.
A SAMPLING OF NEW PROJECTS AT O&G

The Taft School Dining Hall
Watertown, CT

Construction began in June on this project, which includes the demolition of the Armstrong Dining Hall in the Horace Dutton Taft building and the construction of a 24,000 SF addition to replace it. Remaining areas of the first floor and basement will be renovated in phases and new MEP systems installed. Other floors will be renovated to eliminate code violations. The architecture of the addition matches the existing character of the Taft School campus. The project will be completed in January, 2010 and will be LEED Silver certified. The O&G team includes Project Executive Brian Holmes, Senior Estimator Bill Coyne, Preconstruction Manager Larry Schilling, Project Manager Dan Hetzler, Superintendent Cliff Morin and Christina O. Rossi, Project Engineer. The architect for the project is the Gund Partnership, Cambridge, Massachusetts, headed by Partner-in-Charge John Prokus, Project Architect Eric Svhahn and Designer/ Construction Administrator Matt Formico.

Early Child Magnet School
Bloomfield, CT

The Early Child Magnet School will be a one-story, 46,500 SF preschool serving Bloomfield and surrounding communities. It will achieve a Silver Certification with the U.S Green Building Council LEED for Schools Program. The building facade will feature prefinished white cedar siding and slate shingles. Each classroom will have sloped tectum panel ceilings, while the cafeteria and multi-purpose rooms will feature wood ceilings. Each classroom will have radiant floor heating, and an indoor air quality monitoring system will cover the entire building. There will be a central 7,000 SF open courtyard and greenhouse, parking for 100 cars and a 30,000 SF playground. O&G’s project team includes Lorel Purcell, Preconstruction Manager, Richard Jones, Project manager, David Holcomb, Project Superintendent and Michael Saccoccio, Project Engineer. Tai Soo Kim Partners is the project architect, with design consultants BVH Integrated Services, Fuss & O’Neill, CR3, CCR Pyramid and Steven Winter Associates. The entire building assembly will be commissioned by Strategic Building Solutions. URS Corporation is the owner’s representative.

Iroquois Gas Transmission System Market Access Project
Brookfield and New Milford, CT & Dover, NY

To capture market opportunities, Iroquois Gas is upgrading its transmission stations, including the addition of gas cooling units to increase transmission capacity; pressure-reducing and -increasing facilities to inter-face with other market operators; new station control facilities; and site improvements to parking, access roads and landscaping. O&G’s Project Manager is Ram Parasuman. Superintendents are Burt Lively and Lenny Cortigiano.

Three Rivers Community College
Norwich, CT

This $65M Department of Public Works project is in full swing, with Phase II turnovers expected to begin in late Summer. The Central Utility Plant was turned over to the owner on schedule in early May. Wings 1, 2 and 4 are on schedule for turnover in late September, and Wing 3 in mid-December. Upcoming months will see significant finish work taking place within these wings as flooring and science casework proceed. Superintendents Al Trudel and Brian Pracuta are working closely with Project Engineers Dave Dion and Christina O. Rossi to coordinate the intricacies of these classroom and office spaces. Sitework Superintendent Ray Dzen has been developing parking lots that had been delayed or rephased to meet the owner’s needs. As Phase II nears completion, the owner has asked O&G, with Skanska USA, to look at the possibility of rephasing Phase III so the classrooms can be used while the last wing is renovated.

Environmental Studies Magnet School
Stratford, CT

O&G is nine months into what is expected to be Connecticut’s first public school to attain the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED Silver certification. Tai Soo Kim Partners of Hartford designed the 105,000 SF, 45-classroom building. The school will boast such environmentally friendly features as a garden roof that captures rainwater for irrigation, low-flow plumbing fixtures, a daylight harvesting system to automatically adjust indoor lights depending on the amount of incoming sunlight, a wind turbine, and an ice storage system for peak cooling load reduction. Biofiltration swales and a vegetated open space area equal to the building’s footprint will promote on-site filtration of rainwater runoff from the site’s impervious areas. The school will be clad with high-performance glazing, split-faced block and a cedar rain screen. Fuss & O’Neill of Trumbull, Spiegel Zamecnik & Shah Inc. of New Haven, and BVH Integrated Services of Bloomfield all assisted Tai Soo Kim Partners with the school’s design.

The Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, CT

Flinn Hall is one of two dormitories O&G recently completed for the Hotchkiss School in Lakeville, CT. The building has achieved LEED Silver Certification and is the seventh building O&G has completed for the school.