

# CURRENT connections

Fall 2001

## INTERSTATES

"Providers of Premier Services"

### OUR VISION:

Turning Visions into  
Reality through:

- People
- Adding Value
- Alliances
- Performance

### OUR VALUES:

Building Relationships  
through:

- Dependability
- Integrity
- Trust
- Quality
- Family

### OUR MISSION:

Providers of Premier  
Services

### FROM THE CEO

## Envisioning Our Success to Ensure Yours

Who wouldn't like to see the future? Well, at each of the Interstates Companies, Interstates Electric & Engineering Co. Inc., Interstates Control Systems Inc. and Interstates Engineering, we're trying to do just that. No, we're not psychics and we won't be using a crystal ball, but we're focusing on the future with careful planning, hard work, innovation and a commitment to customer satisfaction.

The companies are participating in Envision Futures. This involves strategic initiative teams from each of the Interstates Companies forecasting the kind of companies we want to be in the next five to 20 years. Envision Futures is a process aimed at strategic thinking and planning meaningful goals.

We'll list our findings on how the companies envision the future in the next up and coming issues of Current Connections.

Our shared vision should be firmly focused on our customers' success because we know that's what our success depends on.

To me, it's best summed up by the old slogan: "Customers are not an interruption in our work - they are the REASON FOR IT."

Our envisioned future is something we never want to lose sight of because it's the key to why we're here.

Best Regards,



Jim Franken  
CEO



Jim Franken,  
CEO

## Taking on a New Role **AGP** Interstates Electric & Engineering takes on Construction Management Role for AGP

**AGP**  
Ag Processing Inc

Interstates Electric & Engineering has taken on the new role of construction manager for an extensive rebuilding project for AGP, a leading grain processor.

An electrical malfunction damaged a portion of AGP's soybean processing plant in Mason City, IA. AGP asked Interstates to take on the new role as construction manager for the rebuild. Interstates Engineering and

Interstates Control Systems rounded out the team for full-service delivery.

"We had recently completed a project for AGP in Hastings, NE, where we took a key role in coordinating and scheduling the project," said Dave Crumrine, Interstates Electric & Engineering vice-

**NEW ROLE** *continued on page 3*

# Doug Post Promoted to President of Interstates Engineering

## Darrel Ramhorst to retire this fall

Interstates Engineering Vice President Doug Post was recently promoted to president of the company.

Doug replaces Darrel H. Ramhorst, who will take on special projects for the Harbor Group, Interstates' holding company, until his retirement this fall.

In his new role, Post will oversee day-to-day operations of the company, which employs 17 engineers, designers, CAD operators and administrative staff.



Doug Post

"I am excited about the promotion and plan to build on the great foundation Darrel has put in place," Post said.

As president, Post said he plans to continue Interstates Engineering's strong customer service emphasis and also develop relationships with new clients.

"Our experienced staff is another building block for us," he said. "We'll be expanding our services to meet our customers needs and to provide opportunities and challenges for our employees."

Post holds a master's degree in electrical engineering from Iowa State University, and is a professionally licensed engineer. He lives in Carmel, Iowa, with his wife, Julie, and daughter, Emily.



Darrel Ramhorst

Ramhorst wishes Post, who he has mentored for the past seven years, well in his new position and duties.

"Doug is fully qualified to take over the company," Ramhorst said.

In July of 1968, Ramhorst began his career with Interstates as its first engineer and went on to become president of Interstates Engineering.

During his tenure, Ramhorst said he has seen many advances in technology, which include industrial-automated systems and computers. He said he graduated from the world of the slide rule, which was improved upon with advanced calculators in the early 70s.

He said he will miss teaching new electricians with a curriculum he developed himself.

Prior to joining the company, he earned a master's degree in guidance and control systems from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology while serving as a commissioned officer in the Air Force.

The 64-year-old said retirement will allow him to do more things, such as vacationing in Arizona for the winter with his wife, Shirley.

"I'm looking forward to it," he said.

Ramhorst and his wife have four daughters and eight grandchildren.

# Interstates Continues Excellent Working Relationship with Milling Company

## Milling Capacity Expansion Project in Colorado Deemed a Success

Interstates has built a tremendous working relationship with Bay State Milling Co. of Winona, Minn. over the years.

This was evident with a recent milling capacity expansion project for Rocky Mountain Milling, LLC, in Platteville, Colo., a subsidiary of Bay State Milling Co.



Excellent customer service and professionalism have always been demonstrated by Interstates, which has completed four different projects for Bay State Milling, said Mike Long, director of milling technology and engineering.

"They take the bull by the horns," Long said. "They have always done a fantastic job for us."

Interstates provided electrical engineering, and hardware and software installation for the Colorado project, which almost quadrupled the mill's operating

**RELATIONSHIP** *continued on page 4*

# STEP BY STEP

## New Project Methodology Makes Success Repeatable

“Reinventing the wheel.” It’s become a familiar phrase in the business world, describing expending unnecessary energy and resources to solve a problem that has already been solved.



Jeff Miller

It’s something Project Management Coordinator Jeff Miller wants to make sure Interstates Control Systems can avoid by using a new 19-step project methodology to codify best practices for

taking a project from concept to completion and beyond.

“It gives our Project Managers a standard method to follow, from the initial steps of a project to archiving the details of the project—so even if a customer calls us two or three years down the road, we can refer back to the details,” Miller said. “It’s a sequence of steps, based on ‘lessons learned’ from both successful and not so successful projects. We can follow them to make any project more successful.”

“A highlight of the methodology is the emphasis it places on working with the customer to develop the control solu-

tion through a high-level design and a user acceptance test plan,” Miller said. “We need to be able to accurately determine the customer’s control needs to better gauge the actual scope of the project. This will allow us to make sure that what we’ll be doing really fits what the customer needs and is in line with their project goals, timeframe and budget.”

The comprehensive system covers every phase of a project from concept to completion from setting up the job, to building the project schedule, to developing the system, to integration and simulation testing of the system, to starting up the system.

Since it was formally implemented in September of 2000, the methodology has proven it’s worth.

“It definitely helped projects to be more successful,” Miller said. “Our projects are becoming more consistent each time we follow the methodology, and through an attitude of continuous improvement, we continue to work to refine the methodology as new projects are completed. If you look hard enough, you can learn something new on almost every project that will help you be more successful in the future.”

## NEW ROLE *continued from page 1*

president. “They had a level of confidence in our ability to perform dependably and drive a project to success.”

Interstates Electric & Engineering began with a project concept and worked closely with the customer, insurer and the customer’s local electrical contractor to plan the project. “Project Manager Orville VanRoekel did an outstanding job in coordinating everyone’s efforts,” Crumrine said.

“We had a very aggressive schedule. The customer needed to have the

plant in operation as soon as possible. We were able to get it up and running ahead of schedule.”

For Crumrine, the real significance of the project wasn’t the addition to Interstates skill set, but in demonstrating responsiveness to customer needs.

“This isn’t something we usually do, but we’ll never hesitate to step up and do whatever it takes to help a customer,” Crumrine said.

# The Traveling Trainer

## Lowell Reith Imparts Training Culture Companywide

Lowell Reith is on a leave of absence from his position as an instructor at the North Central Kansas Technical College in Beloit, KS. He’s traveling around the country, but it’s hardly a vacation. Reith is visiting company locations to train Interstates Electric & Engineering employees in the techniques of training and build a training culture.



Lowell Reith

“It’s all part of our commitment to improving our skills through continuous learning,” said Dave Crumrine, Interstates Electric & Engineering President. “Whether you’re an apprentice, journeyman or foreman, you’re learning everyday and we want to encourage people to share what they learn and what they know. A lot of people think you have to have a teaching degree to be a teacher, but it’s all about sharing knowledge, skills and experience. As a vocational educator, Lowell is going to be delivering the training culture along with tips on how to train.”

The program is designed to enhance Interstates Electric & Engineering’s Career Education Program, an ongoing initiative for career development. Reith’s odyssey began in June and is expected to last 14 months.

“It’s a win/win situation,” Crumrine said. “Lowell can share what he knows about education and see how education works in the field. The college will get back an instructor with new insights into a working construction firm and we’ll have the benefit of enhancing the way we can teach each other on how to do our jobs better.”

# LIGHTENING THE LOADOUT

## ICSI Develops an Automated Feed Loading System for Wayne Farms LLC

Innovation in automation is a hallmark of Interstates Control Systems, Inc. So, when poultry producer Wayne Farms LLC presented them with the challenge of automating its feed loadout system in Guntersville, AL, ICSI's engineers and programmers responded with a custom-tailored solution that was a success.

To appreciate the challenge that faced the ICSI team, it's necessary to know something about how the feed loadout process works. According to Jeff Miller, Project Management Coordinator, it's not just filling up a trailer.

"Feed trailers are divided into compartments," Miller said. "Each compartment could carry feed for a different grower and potentially different

types of feeds that cannot be mixed. There's nothing standardized about it — each trailer might also have different size compartments and a different number of compartments. The challenge was to figure out how to automate the system to accommodate so many different variables."

To design the system, ICSI technicians built a model of the system in their Sioux Center location, using off-the-shelf parts, including a garage door opener.

"We actually used some of the components of the model in the field," Miller said.

In its finished form, the automated loadout system is keyed to individual trailers, which are assigned an I.D. number. When a unit pulls into the

loading bay, it is positioned on a scale by a photo-eye, much like a car entering an automatic car wash. The trailer's code is entered into the control system, and an overhead shuttle delivers the precise load to each compartment on the trailer based on the feed order scheduled for the trailer.

With the system running smoothly in the Guntersville plant, Wayne Farms LLC is considering incorporating it in other locations to save time and to help minimize loading errors.

"We could duplicate it for about any system that uses an overhead shuttle," Miller said. "It's based on our I-Control Feed Mill System, but its been tailored to meet a specific need. We do this kind of stuff all the time. It doesn't matter what the application is, we'll figure out a way to do it."

### RELATIONSHIP *continued from page 2*

capacity to 350,000 pounds a day, Long said.

The Interstates team installed everything that the mill plant would possibly need electrically, said Ken Ciesielski, Interstates project manager.

Because of the company's full-range of capabilities, Long included Interstates Companies in the "Dream Team" of contractors on the project.

"I'm real pleased with the contribution Interstates gave to the expansion project," Long said. "They're very professional."

Just north of Denver, Rocky Mountain Milling, a wheat flour mill which produces both conventional and organic flours, provided Interstates with the challenge of working in a confined area, Long said. This, of course, was no problem for the Interstates staff.

"It was an extra challenge," Ciesielski said.

Interstates hard work helped bring the project under budget and two months ahead of schedule, Long said.

"We at Interstates believe that each customer is due our greatest respect and expertise," said Dave Crumrine, Interstates Electric & Engineering Vice President. "When the project is finished, our goal is to be remembered as an excellent contractor who produced all that was promised—a contractor worthy of our customer's repeat business and positive recommendation."

Bay State Milling Co. is a family-owned and operated flour miller in North America, with facilities located across the U.S.

## TAKE A LOOK AT OUR NEW LOOK!

Visit our newly redesigned website:  
[www.interstates.com](http://www.interstates.com)

What's new? Our website: it's being totally redone with a fresh new look, new content and more! The first phase is complete, so surf on by to see all the changes and keep checking in for more to come!

# Interstates in the Community

- The Recognition & Communication Committee is entering its fourth year of a sponsorship project with Kinsey Elementary and Sioux Center Christian School. The project brings students programs and projects to teach them about engineering and construction. Recently, the ongoing program focused on construction, using Build Up, a tool kit developed by the Associated General Contractors, to foster interest in construction as a career. In earlier programs, students were taken on a tour of Interstates. They learned about electrical safety and built their own bridge models.

- A team from the Northwest Regional Office recently helped build a house for the Moses Lake, WA Habitat for Humanity chapter. The eleven Interstates employees—both office and field personnel—were led by Project Manager Bruce Tridle. The project started on June 30th and completed August 15.

**Proud to be members of**



## INTERSTATES ENGINEERING

# POWERING UP: Interstates Engineering Adds High-Voltage Expertise; Haufschild Joins as Senior Project Engineer

In an ongoing effort to develop new capabilities to serve new markets, Interstates Engineering welcomes Senior Project Engineer Willy Haufschild to the Interstates Engineering team.

In his more than 27 years of experience in the electrical industry, Haufschild has an extensive background in the design, installation and maintenance of medium- to high-voltage electric supply stations.

His career includes supervising an electrical utility division, designing gold and copper mine power distribution systems and consulting for the pharmaceutical, meat packing and food and beverage industries.

Interstates Engineering President Doug Post said Haufschild's experience and expertise will be key to Interstates Engineering's expansion into power generation.

"Recent developments have brought energy issues back to the forefront for many of our customers," Post said.

"We're expanding our capabilities in power generation to offer them a new dimension of service. We can build generator facilities that connect to a utility, stand alone, or serve as a standby/backup power source. Our service won't just include design and build—we'll help them negotiate rates and make sure they're getting the best deals."

As Senior Project Engineer, Haufschild will be leading the team that is developing high-voltage service offerings. He will also be involved in high voltage training, design and compliance.

Prior to joining Interstates Engineering, Haufschild worked with the Winters Company in Tucson, AZ and Schneider Engineering in Omaha, NE. He and his wife, Marylyn, will be moving from Bellevue, a suburb of Omaha, to Sioux Center soon. Haufschild enjoys hunting, fishing, golf and working on classic cars.



Willy Haufschild

## EMPLOYEE UPDATE

# People on the Move

Ben Taatjes has been named Business Development Associate for Interstates Electric & Engineering. He has relocated to our Central Regional Office in Franklin, IN.

Ben joined Interstates as an intern in the Purchasing Department just a year ago. He recently com-

pleted studies at Dordt College, graduating with a BA in Business Administration. In his new role, Ben will be charged with developing relationships with current and new clients.

Ben has moved to Franklin with his wife, Megan, who has a teaching position in an area school. His interests include all sports, fishing, hunting and golf.



Ben Taatjes

## THE INTERSTATES COMPANIES

### Corporate Offices

**Interstates Electric & Engineering Co., Inc.**  
PO Box 260  
1520 North Main Ave  
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250  
712-722-1662  
Fax: 712-722-1667  
e-mail: bdev@interstates.com

### Interstates Engineering

1520 North Main Ave  
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250  
712-722-1664  
Fax: 712-722-1667  
e-mail: eng@interstates.com

### Interstates Control Systems, Inc.

444 12th Street NE  
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250  
712-722-1663  
Fax: 712-722-1693  
e-mail: icsi@interstates.com

### Central Regional Office Interstates Electric & Engineering Co., Inc.

3088 RJ Parkway  
Franklin, Indiana 46131  
317-738-0852  
Fax: 317-738-0856  
e-mail: cro@interstates.com

### Northwest Regional Office Interstates Electric & Engineering Co., Inc.

7976 Andrews Street NE  
Moses Lake, Washington 98837  
509-762-8477  
Fax: 509-762-8476  
e-mail: nwro@interstates.com

### Blair Regional Office Interstates Electric & Engineering Co., Inc.

6500 Industrial Road  
Blair, Nebraska 68008  
402-426-1822  
Fax: 402-426-1877  
e-mail: bro@interstates.com

## IN THIS ISSUE



- **Taking on a New Role — Interstates Electric & Engineering takes on Construction Management Role for AGP**



- **Milling Capacity Expansion Project in Colorado Deemed a Success**



- **Step By Step — New Project Methodology Makes Success Repeatable**

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SEDALIA, MO  
PERMIT NO. 412

"Providers of Premier Services"  
P.O. Box 260 • Sioux Center, IA 51250 • USA

# INTERSTATES