

The World of Masonry

Masonry

CONSTRUCTION

APRIL 2010

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the Bricklayer 500

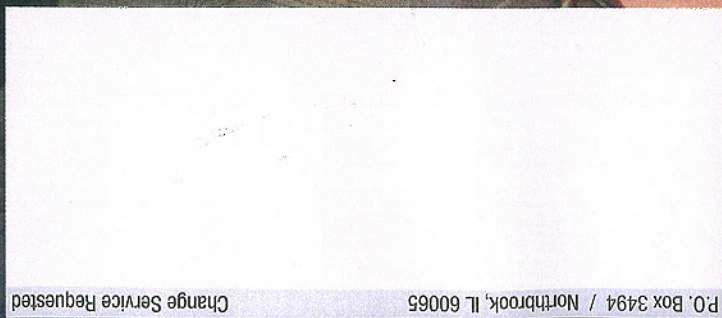
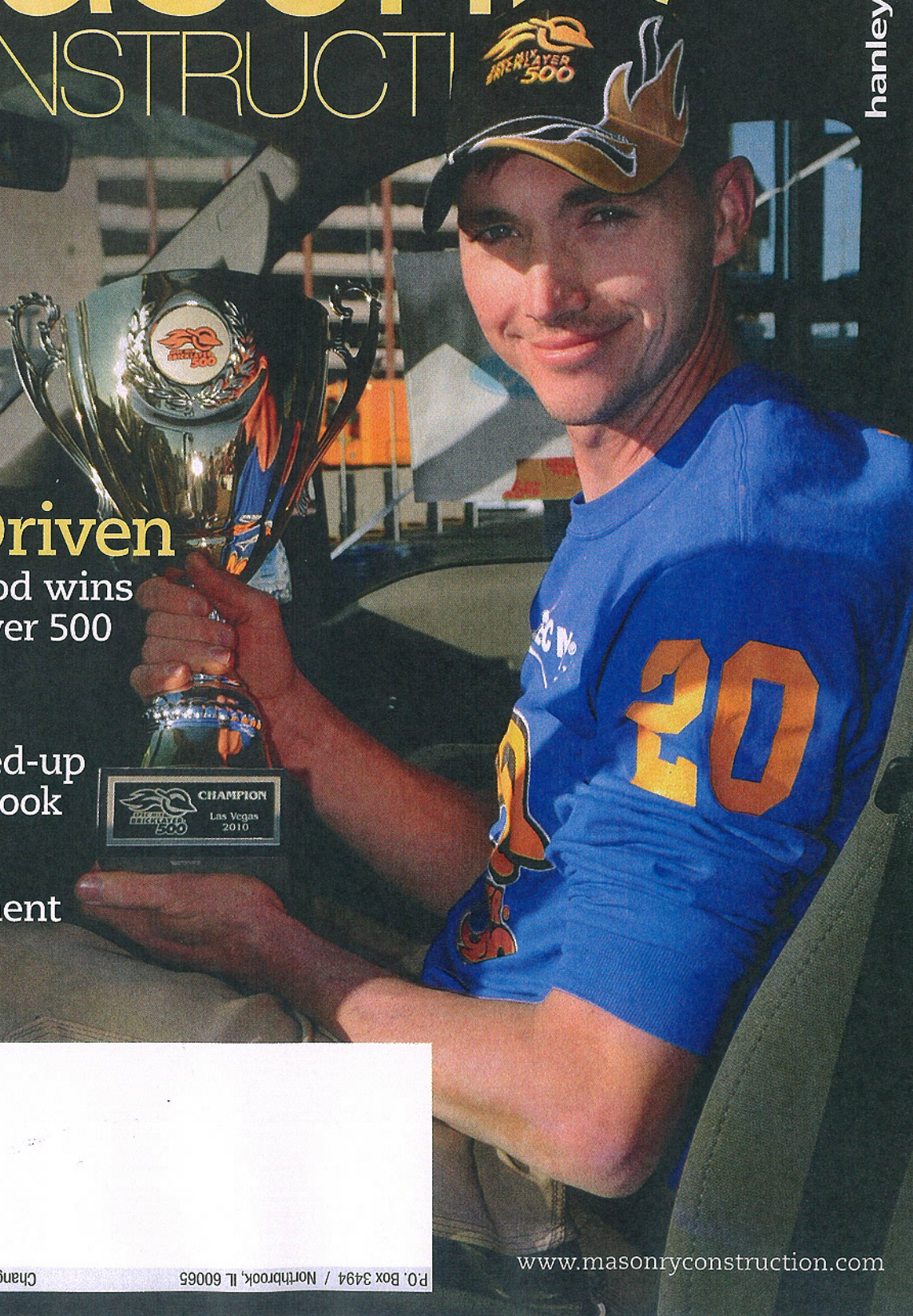
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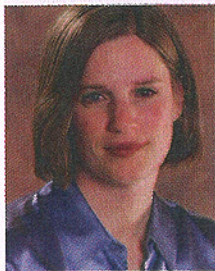
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www.masonryconstruction.com

Certifiably Green

New certification program helps masons earn sustainability credentials.

No matter how efficient or earth-friendly a structure is on paper, it can't live up to its potential unless the people building it know how to make the sustainable vision a reality. This is the concept behind the International Masonry Institute's (IMI) Sustainable Masonry Certification Program.



By Shelby O. Mitchell

Launched in June 2009, it is available to members of the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers (BAC).

Maria Viteri, IMI's director of sustainability and program development, designed the program. Viteri's fellow architects were concerned about the role of subcontractors in green building projects. "The designers wanted to know where their responsibilities left off and where the contractors' began," she says.

At the same time, contractors were asking about LEED when they attended IMI's Contractor College, a series of professional and technical courses for union masonry contractors. They wanted to know how their work could help earn LEED points and how specific sustainability requirements might affect their practices.

In response to these concerns, IMI's Sustainable Masonry Certification Program breaks down all the LEED credits masonry contractors need to understand. Under the current LEED rating system, masonry can help a project earn up to 52 points. The program addresses

subcontractors' responsibilities such as estimating, project management, and documentation. Contractors also learn about sustainable jobsite practices such as site use, material storage, and construction waste management.

One-day training

The course includes a workshop, practice exercises, and discussion. Participants are tested on topics such as ordering materials, documentation, material substitution, and risk management.

Almost 70 masonry firms are considered "certified" by the program, meaning at least one of their masons has completed the training. While owners and chief estimators have made up the majority of participants so far, IMI encourages contractors to certify as many employees as possible. When the contractor bids on a green project, he can document his expertise by including the certificates of team members who have completed the sustainability training.

IMI also offers in-house training sessions. Caretti Inc., based in Camp Hill, Pa., recently requested training for its entire field staff. "We're already seeing that level of commitment," says Viteri. "Contractors understand that what we're teaching is something they can apply the minute they complete the course. The more they know about sustainable construction, the easier it is to integrate it into their practices."

In the future, IMI's regional technical staff will offer shorter "brush-up" sessions to help contractors prepare for specific situations.

Visit www.imiweb.org/greenmasonry and www.masonryconstruction.com.



INTERNET RESOURCES

In the spirit of sustainability, many organizations are saving trees by offering valuable green building resources online. Following are several new tools available to masonry contractors.

CSI GreenFormat

www.greenformat.com

The Construction Specifications Institute and Building Systems Design Inc. offer updated BSD SpecLink specification-writing software. The tool includes links from specifications to green product information that helps contractors, designers, and manufacturers show how specific building materials can meet green building requirements.

BuildSite

www.buildsite.com

This source of product, technical, and procurement information for construction introduces online LEED submittal templates for green building. Product information flows directly into the templates, creating an electronic project record. Submittals generated in BuildSite are compatible with 3D BIM models and project management software.

Concrete Thinker

www.concretethinker.com

The Portland Cement Association offers resources for sustainable development with concrete, including information about masonry's contribution to green building projects and Green Specification Guidelines for Unit Masonry Assemblies.

GREENGUARD Environmental Institute

www.greenguard.org

This independent organization has a new Web site with a blueprint for building mold- and moisture-resistant structures. The site's updated GREENGUARD Product Guide lists low-emitting building materials that can earn sustainable credits. GEI's GREENGUARD Building Construction Certification Program registers buildings that meet national standards for mold and moisture prevention.