Whiting-Turner Contracting is building a new $3.45 million UNLV transit center on the south side of University Road just west of Maryland Parkway. Aggregate Industries is the earthwork subcontractor. The 6,460-sq-ft open-air facility will feature several bike racks and an outdoor waiting area with shelter canopies.

The center will be served by the Centennial Express, transporting passengers to the Bonneville Transit Center in downtown Las Vegas, where they can connect to other transit routes throughout the valley. The project is being built using a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Bus and Bus Facilities Livability Initiative Grant, with local matching funds.

“It is important as our university plans for its next decade of growth that we look for alternative ways for students, faculty, staff and visitors to access our campus,” said UNLV President Neal Smatresk. “This transit center is good for commuting students and staff, but also opens up new opportunities for visitors to campus cultural and athletic events.”

The Regional Transportation Commission’s (RTC) transit service carried more than 60 million passengers last year. Designed by KGA Architects, with G.C. Wallace as engineer, the project is scheduled to finish in August.

“This project epitomizes our commitment to community partnerships,” said RTC General Manager Tina Quigley. “Having the ability to work with UNLV on a project that will encourage the use of public transit to and from the campus and hopefully, alleviate some of the area’s parking needs is something we are incredibly passionate about at the RTC.”
The Las Vegas chapter of the Associated General Contractors and the Nevada Contractors Association wish to thank the following companies for their generosity and continued support as 2013 sponsors.
MGM Resorts International recently unveiled plans to build a 20,000-seat freestanding indoor arena at the northeast corner of Frank Sinatra Drive and Tropicana Avenue. It will be situated on land the company owns behind the Monte Carlo and New York-New York hotel casinos.

MGM is partnering with the sports and entertainment promoter AEG to develop and build the venue. The project will be financed with equity contributions from each of the partners as well as third-party private financing, MGM said in a statement.

Retail shops, dining, entertainment and other enterprises will accompany the arena, MGM said, stretching from the Strip to Frank Sinatra Drive behind the resorts. MGM had initially thrown its support behind a 60,000-seat UNLV stadium proposal. But, the center’s price tag of $800 million to $900 million is too cost prohibitive, MGM said. In addition, the UNLV scheme is partly reliant upon public money.

The MGM-AEG arena will host boxing, concerts and other sporting and entertainment events. Construction should take 24 to 30 months after a late-2013 groundbreaking.

MGM’s Senior Vice President of Construction and Facilities Bill Ham will discuss additional details about the new arena during the Las Vegas AGC/NCA’s quarterly membership luncheon on Thursday, April 18, inside The Orleans hotel-casino at 4500 W. Tropicana Ave. in Las Vegas.

The event takes place from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Tickets are $35 for members; $45 for non-members. For more information, CLICK HERE.

Korte Builds $7 Million Ameristar Casinos Headquarters

The Korte Co. is building the new corporate headquarters for Ameristar Casinos inside the 68-acre mixed-use master-planned Hughes Center at 3980 Howard Hughes Parkway in Las Vegas.

The $6.96 million project will refurbish a 16-year-old, 5-story steel-and-glass Class-A office building inside the 1.35-million-sq-ft business complex between Sands Avenue and Corporate Drive.

The 86,850-sq-ft makeover, designed by Gensler, is expected to finish in 14 weeks.

The Korte Co. is building the new 5-story, $6.96 million Ameristar Casinos headquarters inside Hughes Center at 3980 Howard Hughes Parkway in Las Vegas.
Federal Justice Tower Reaches Milestone

SR Construction held a topping-out ceremony for the 11-story, 140,000-sq-ft Federal Justice Facility on March 27. The Class-A high-rise office tower at 501 S. Las Vegas Blvd. in downtown Las Vegas, across the street from the Lloyd D. George U.S. Courthouse, will house 300 federal employees for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, among other agencies. 10 Nine Design Group is the architect.

The project, on 0.24 acres, includes a six-story parking garage with over 270 parking stalls. Developer SDA Inc. will erect the building and lease it back to the federal agencies for 15 years. The $35 million project will create 450 construction jobs; work is expected to finish in December.

AGC Safe Site Award

March: DC Building Group

DC Building Group is the March AGC Safe Site Award recipient for its work on the 16-year-old M & M World inside Showcase Mall at 3785 S Las Vegas Blvd. The project renovated the 4-story, 31,300-sq-ft retail candy store. The contractor recorded 3,763 man-hours worked without an incident. The $797,253 project finished in March. Dave Teator was the project manager.

February: Martin-Harris Construction

Martin-Harris Construction is the February AGC Safe Site Award recipient for its work on the $60 million, 295,000-sq-ft Switch Communications NAP Data Center at 5225 W. Capovilla Ave. in Las Vegas. The project has seen 230 workers during the peak of building activity. The 45-ft-tall, single-story tilt-wall building, on 8 acres, finishes construction this month. Martin-Harris’ Dwight Webb is the project manager, with Doug Lords as superintendent.
Burke Completes Silver Hills Health Center Expansion

Burke Construction Group recently completed a new rehabilitation wing at the 15-year-old Silver Hills Health Care Center, on 4.19 acres, at 3450 North Buffalo Drive in Las Vegas. The single-story expansion will create 25 to 30 new jobs while giving the Medicare and Medicaid facility 155 beds.

The project was designed by JMA Architecture Studios with Wright Engineers. Burke Construction Group’s Scott Bonebrake was project manager.

The Convent Care center provides 24-hour skilled nursing and rehabilitation services.
Martin Harris Construction recently reached 1-million-man-hour mark for two projects at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms, Calif. The Las Vegas-based general contractor has had 1,000 construction workers onsite without a single case of serious injury. Martin-Harris is partnered with Straub Construction in building two new bachelor enlisted quarters (Package 4 and Package 9). Navy Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) is the project manager.

This is an unprecedented accomplishment of safety, said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Matthew Bedard, resident officer in charge of construction. More than 500 workers, on each of these projects, have been working since 2008 to build new barracks buildings for Combat Center Marines.

Each package potentially houses approximately 1,000 Marines in two-person bedrooms. The barracks feature sports areas, such as basketball and volleyball courts, walking paths, barbecue grills and common areas.

“We’re not looking for safety as a priority because priorities can change; we’re looking for it as a culture,” Bedard said. “So we’re looking to drive it down to that individual guy to say, ‘You’re coming here to work and that’s good but we want you to go home safe every day. We don’t want you to compromise yourself by taking unnecessary risk in the field and compromising your safety.’”

Package 9 was finished in 2011 and is currently called home by hundreds of Headquarters Battalion and Combat Logistics Battalion 7 Marines. Package 4 is scheduled to finish in October.

BIM Course: Technology

The Las Vegas Associated General Contractors is holding a full-day course on integrating Building Information Modeling (BIM) technology into all project phases. The class will examine using BIM from coordination and fabrication to construction scheduling and estimating, among other things. The 8-hour course takes place on Monday, April 29, at 150 S. Durango Drive in Las Vegas. The cost is $375. For more information, CLICK HERE.

Course: Intermediate QuickBooks

The Las Vegas Associated General Contractors is holding a two-hour seminar on the intermediate features of QuickBooks. The course, which runs from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., will cover batch invoicing, bank reconciliation, and cash management, among other things. Julie Booth, CPA, and David Osburn, MBA, will teach the seminar. The cost is $40. The course takes place on Tuesday, April 30, at 150 S. Durango Drive in Las Vegas. For more information, CLICK HERE.
VIEWPOINT

Flawed Immigration Policy Sidelines Economy Recovery

By Sean Stewart

The nation’s immigration policy is fundamentally flawed, unbalanced and detrimental to contractors, placing an undue financial burden on employers while limiting the future of the American workforce. It’s a misconception that foreign-born workers are stealing U.S. jobs. In fact, most construction business owners believe just the opposite: The ability to freely hire labor fuels additional demand for more high-paying, management positions that, in turn, provide more opportunity for domestic employment.

Plenty of undocumented workers cross the border for below-market wages and unsafe, unregulated working conditions. This places law abiding contractors at a competitive disadvantage in an industry where the lowest price gets the job. As a result, honest builders are being unfairly penalized and chased-out of the business by those willing to bypass labor laws and take shortcuts to save a buck.

Making sensible changes to U.S. immigration laws gives legitimate contractors a fighting chance to compete in a fair and balanced marketplace – one based on skill, integrity and experience rather than labor-related cost-cutting. Ultimately, it produces a safer, more responsible business environment that yields better results.

A few easy solutions exist. First, secure the border thereby deterring illegal immigration; at the same time, enable guest worker visas, which give employers the needed flexibility to hire workers as needed. (A guest visa program would also ensure workers return home upon project completion).

Our current system discourages people from legally entering the country. As it stands, the risk of returning home is so great that it encourages illegal residency, thereby creating an undue financial burden through added social services. A more practical alternative calls for a flexible guest worker program that allows skilled individuals from other countries to come and go as needed based upon market need.

America is still the land of opportunity. And several opportunities exist in the construction industry for a variety of skilled workers. Construction is vital to America’s economic stability, growth and future prosperity. It is critical that we use the best people for the job. It’s equally important that they’re well compensated through wages, benefits and a safe regulated work environment. Today’s rigid immigration system, however, works against those principles and punishes responsible builders while rewarding cheaters.

But, a few simple changes can make the difference. Sensible immigration reform can create a pro-business climate that spurs investment and redevelopment while generating new job growth. We encourage our federal officials to cooperate and work toward a bi-partisan solution. The construction industry and America will be better, as a result.
Mob Mixer

The Las Vegas AGC and the Nevada Contractors Association held a Mafia-themed membership mixer on March 28. The event, which attracted 150 people, was held inside the Mob Attraction at the Tropicana Las Vegas. McGraw-Hill Construction Dodge was the sponsor. For more photos, CLICK HERE.