

## CHARLES NABHOLZ

Charles F. Nabholz knows the construction industry from bottom to top because he has been involved at all levels over the past fifty years. In 1953, the year before he finished high school, he began as a construction laborer, working with brothers Bob, Ed and Tom at Nabholz Construction and Supply Company. Three years later, he became supervisor of all home construction for the Nabholz Supply division of the Nabholz Companies.

In 1961, when market conditions suggested that a pre-engineered metal building company was needed to meet Nabholz client's needs, Charles formed Conark Builders. The plan was for Charles to run the company without his brothers' assistance. If he was successful, he would reorganize the company with Bob, Ed, and Tom as his partners; if he was not, he could go back to Nabholz Supply.

Conark began with several custom home and remodeling projects that Charles retained from Nabholz Supply. The first bid project performed was a medical clinic in Conway, which led to several other medical clinics. In 1962, Conark began to perform larger commercial construction, including water treatment plants in Conway, Arkadelphia, Batesville and several cities in eastern Arkansas. The company also performed work for the missile base, and built several low-rent housing projects across Arkansas in Paris, DeQueen, Foreman, Camden, Forrest City, and Stephens until federal funds dried up and such projects ceased.

In 1972, the Nabholz brothers created an in-house carpentry apprenticeship training program in order to build a base of skilled craftsmen. They believed that investing time and money in the training program would help strengthen the construction industry. After receiving certification from the United States Department of Labor, Charles, then president of Conark Builders, assumed responsibility for the program. It was the first certified in-house training program in Arkansas and continues to provide training in Conway and Rogers.

In approximately 1976, Nabholz Construction's workload was low enough that it legally cancelled all relationships with the trade unions and phased into a merit shop general contracting company, too. Conark Builders then concentrated on commercial and industrial construction while Nabholz Construction sought work in health care and institutional projects.

Several notable projects built during Charles' tenure as president of Conark include Parker Cadillac in Little Rock, Allied Telephone, now Alltel, in Harrison, Virco Manufacturing Plant in Conway, miscellaneous projects at Winrock International on Petit Jean Mountain and Kimberly-Clark Conway Mills, numerous projects at Arkansas Kraft now called Green Bay Packaging Company in Morrilton, the first Olin C. Bailey Library on the Hendrix College campus in Conway, and Red Apple Inn in Heber Springs.

One of Charles' most notable contributions to the Arkansas construction industry is his past involvement in the Associated Builders and Contractors. Before there was an Arkansas chapter of ABC, Charles attended a national ABC conference and became a member-at-large. At that time ABC was only active in the eastern United States. He became a member of the Arkansas Chapter-in-Formation steering committee developed to form the Arkansas chapter, and played a major role in its establishment.

Charles is a former president of the ABC Arkansas chapter and has served as a representative on the National Legislative Committee in Washington, D.C., on behalf of Associated Builders and Contractors of America. In 1994, Charles accepted the “Founding Fathers” award from ABC of Arkansas, on behalf of Conark Builders.

After building Conark Builders into a thriving company and assisting Nabholz Construction in the transition from union to a merit shop general contractor, Charles embarked on a new career. In the summer of 1979, he left the company and moved to California where he was involved in commercial land development. Two years later he returned to Arkansas as State Building Services Director, appointed by then Governor Frank White. While State Building Services Director, Charles evaluated design firms in awarding state contracts, directed the construction procurement process, contract negotiations, and managed the closeout and acceptance of state facilities; furthermore, he gained valuable experience in negotiating with municipalities, utilities and governmental agencies.

In January 1983, Charles announced his intentions to leave the State Building Services Director position and rejoin the Nabholz companies. He then founded Conark Land Development with the real estate assets of Conark Builders. The name Conark Land Development changed in 1985 to Nabholz Properties, which he still operates today.

In November 2000 Charles was elected as Chairman of the Board for The Nabholz Group, a capacity in which he still serves. In April 2002, he championed the company through another season of change, when Dan Nabholz retired as CEO and Charles’ brother and Nabholz founder, Bob passed away. He not only chairs the board but is involved in several aspects of the day-to-day operations of Nabholz, such as customer satisfaction, business development and employee relations. Furthermore, Nabholz Construction continues to grow, and in the past two years has advanced into new territories, as offices have been established in Mission, Kansas and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.