

BUILDING WITH BINDER

September 2005



Special UTCA Convention Issue

Issue 29

Featured in this issue:

MIKE JOST EXCAVATING

New Jersey excavating, grading contractor builds a reputation for quality work, tough projects

See article inside...



Kathy Jost, VP/Secretary Treasurer
and Mike Jost, President of Mike Jost
Excavating

BUILDING WITH

Dear Equipment User:

Welcome to this special issue of *Building With Binder*, timed to help celebrate the upcoming 40th anniversary of the Utility and Transportation Contractors Association (UTCA) convention in Atlantic City September 22-25.

As always, this year's convention program will feature a number of interesting guest speakers, such as gubernatorial candidates Doug Forrester and Senator Jon Corzine. It will also honor a number of leaders in the New Jersey construction industry, including George Helmer of G. Helmer Construction, who will receive the William Feather Memorial Award — the UTCA's most prestigious honor. Franklyn Grosso, a founding member of UTCA, will be inducted into the New Jersey Construction Industry Hall of Fame as part of Saturday's dinner program. We would also like to congratulate Frank Posella, this year's recipient for the Larry Gardner Memorial Award. Additionally, we offer very special congratulations to Jack Murphy as the new president of the UTCA.

We are also proud to feature two longtime Binder customers in this issue — Mike Jost Excavating and Puggi Class B Recycling. These two strong family businesses have earned tremendous respect in the industry through their hard work, innovation and quality service. We wish the Jost and Puggi families continued success for many years to come and appreciate the confidence they've placed in our products and services.

In addition, you can read inside about our newly redesigned Web site. Launched in August, the updated Web site was a customer-driven project designed to provide you and other equipment users with quick and easy access to the full range of products, parts and services our company offers. To take a look at the new Web site, go to www.bindermachinery.com. We think you'll like what you find there.

In closing, I'd like to invite you and your family to visit our display during exhibit hours at the UTCA Convention. See you in Atlantic City!

Sincerely,
BINDER MACHINERY COMPANY



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MIKE JOST EXCAVATING

New Jersey excavating, grading contractor builds a reputation for quality work and tough projects

Mike Jost has always had a fascination with heavy equipment. As a child, he was often found playing with Tonka toys and laying imaginary pipe. Today, he's living out his childhood dreams as owner and president of Mike Jost Excavating, one of northern New Jersey's premier private excavating companies.

"I've always liked the business," said Mike, whose company is based in Franklin Lakes, N.J. "I started out digging holes with spoons when I was really little, but I remember being fascinated by equipment. When I graduated from high school, I started working for a local company but quickly decided I wanted to be out on my own. That was 1979 when I was 19 years old, and I've been doing it ever since."

Today, Mike Jost Excavating's 26-year-old business is extremely versatile and can accomplish a variety of jobs from excavating with a "teaspoon" compact excavator to performing demolition or excavating with a 75,000-pound excavator. His business performs

excavating, grading, pipeline and septic system installation, demolition of structures, and rock excavating with hydraulic hammers for foundation excavation in blasting-sensitive communities. He has a reputation of quality workmanship with many area engineering firms and general contractors, which results in many referrals.

Mike Jost's company is a family business, with his wife Kathy serving as Vice President; his brother-in-law Keith Callahan is Chief Estimator; his brother Tom Jost is a jobsite foreman; and Kristin DeHart (Keith's fiancée) serves as a secretary. Son Michael is following in his father's footsteps, but instead of digging with spoons he learned to operate the Komatsu PC27R compactor excavator.

Continual growth

Jost began business with a used dump truck, hauling whatever he could for whoever needed it hauled. After about a year in business, he purchased a used backhoe and a used track loader and began moving dirt. Today, Mike Jost Excavating is a far cry from its humble beginnings. The company has more than 25 pieces of equipment and 30 employees.

Since the beginning, Mike Jost Excavating has experienced steady growth while performing a variety of jobs. Northern New Jersey is densely populated and, for the most part, is all rock.

"Blasting is not an option, so to excavate the rock foundations we have set up all our excavators with JRB quick couplers and plumbing to run our Stanley hammers, all supplied by Binder Machinery Company," Mike commented. "There has been lots of rock work to perform for our customers and, even



The Josts lead their family's excavating business based in Franklin Lakes, N.J. Mike Jost is President of Mike Jost Excavating and his wife Kathy serves as VP/Secretary Treasurer.



Foreman Tom Jost uses the company's new Komatsu D39PX-21A Komstat II dozer to move fill dirt at a new car dealership jobsite in Upper Saddle River, N.J.

though it is difficult and hard on the equipment, we welcome the challenges. As customer demand for our services increased, we continued to buy the equipment needed to satisfy their requirements."

Two big reasons for the company's growth are Mike Jost Excavating's reputation for doing quality work and Mike's willingness to take on most any project. It is why his customers, many of whom are the elite builders in northern New Jersey, continue to call on him.

"We will do whatever it takes to please the customer," Keith Callahan said. "Mike's always willing to take on a job if it will facilitate a customer's needs. There are times when we have as many as 40 active projects in various stages of work. We've always been able to start and finish them on time and do a quality job. Our customers continue to call us because they know what they're going to get, and that's a job that's done right.

"Mike is a perfectionist," Keith continued. "He wants everything to be just right before the job is considered done. When our projects are done, you won't see trash or big rocks on the finished product. That's just one reason our customers continue to call us."

Up to the challenge

Another reason is because Mike enjoys a challenge.

"He's always been willing to take on things that others don't want any part of," Keith continued. "If it's reasonable that we can get it done, he'll try it. There have been times when he's taken on a project and the rest of us thought he was out of his mind, but we've always managed to get them done."

One job the company recently completed involved using Komatsu compact excavators to hammer out a bridge deck for the Sony Corporation in Park Ridge. "It was a challenging



Operator Bob Mendell stockpiles base material with a Komatsu PC128UU.



Operator Ramon Dominguez uses the company's Komatsu PC58UU compact excavator to backfill 160 feet of 12-inch water main at a customer's jobsite in Upper Saddle River, N.J.

job because we couldn't use anything big on the bridge deck, so it all had to be done with the compact excavators."

Mike Jost Excavating also did the site work for an addition to the Colonial Road School in Franklin Lakes. The company excavated for the new addition, did site grading and put in the drainage systems. Mike Jost crews also completed the site grading and drainage systems for another area school that was putting new turf on its football field.

"I think one of the things everyone likes is that the work isn't dull," Mike said. "All our jobs are unique, so my guys don't get bored with doing the same thing over and over again. We did a job not too long ago where we had to dig on the side of a rather large hill. It was a challenge at first, but once we got going and the guys figured out the best way to do it, it went smoothly."

Dedicated to productivity

In order to keep things running smoothly, Mike turns to a dedicated group of employees, many of whom have been with the company several years. He credits them with the company's continued success.



Keith Callahan, Estimator/Scheduler

Continued . . .

Versatile employees wear many hats

... continued

"We have a great group of people working here," Mike emphasized. "They are willing to do whatever is necessary to make a project go smoothly. They are what we call 'cross-trained' and they are very versatile. For example, I don't have just operators. Everyone who runs equipment also knows how to lay pipe, shoot grade, or whatever needs to be done on a job. Many of our laborers are learning to run machinery as well. That kind of diversity on the job helps us stay productive."

Mike credits Keith for keeping things running like clockwork. "He's been a phenomenal help to us," Mike acknowledged. "He has a degree in engineering, so he brings a different perspective to things, plus he has experience working in the field. He's very good at keeping things straight and scheduled so we're always the most productive."

"One of the things I strive for is hiring the best people," Mike added. "I weed through a lot of people to make sure I find the one I think fits best with our company, then we do everything we can to make sure they stay with us and constantly have work. They appreciate that, and it's been a big benefit for us."

Reliable, productive equipment

To maintain productivity, Mike turns to a considerable fleet of equipment, including numerous pieces of Komatsu equipment purchased from Binder Machinery. Mike Jost Excavating recently purchased a new D39PX-21A Komstat II dozer and a PC200LC-7 excavator. The company also owns two Komatsu compact excavators (a PC27 and a PC58); several larger excavators, ranging from a PC128UU to a PC300; two wheel loaders (a WA180 and a WA250); and three other dozers, ranging from D37 to D65. Mike has also purchased several other pieces of equipment from Binder Machinery, including Stanley hammers and compactors.

"From 1985, when I purchased the first Komatsu PC150-1 excavator ever sold in New Jersey, Walt Binder told me he would stand behind the machine and I have been impressed with the product and the support. It was my first piece of Komatsu equipment and I recently sold it, but after using it for 20 years, that says a lot about Komatsu equipment."

"Our operators prefer Komatsu equipment and especially the new D39PX-21A dozer. When I heard about the new Komstat series, I decided to try one. Our operator felt it was smooth and had good power, too. I replaced a competitive machine with this dozer because it was the machine of choice."

Continued . . .



Operator Steve Feaman uses this Komatsu PC200LC-7 excavator equipped with a Stanley MB50EX hammer to break ledge for a swimming pool.



Using an Ingersoll-Rand SD-70 vibratory soil compactor, Operator Bob Mendell prepares an area for a new parking lot for an Upper Saddle River, N.J., customer.



Mike Jost Excavating uses tandem Komatsu excavators (a PC220-6 and a PC300-6) to set trench boxes at Colonial Road School in Franklin Lakes, N.J.

Jost gives customers “the personal touch”

... continued



Tom Jost, Foreman

“We had the same experience with the PC200LC-7. I have owned and operated Dash-1, Dash-3, Dash-5, Dash-6 and now Dash-7 excavators. The PC200LC-7 is the right size to handle our 5,000-ft.-lb. Stanley hammers and has the speed and production needed for excavating. It is doing a good job for us.”

Mike has worked closely with Binder Machinery Company for more than 20 years.

“One of the reasons we have Komatsu equipment is because of the relationship we’ve built over the years with Binder Machinery,” Mike explained. “They’ve always assured me that they would back their equipment and they always have. I remember buying a new piece of machinery and worrying about whether there would be parts available for it. Walter Binder promised me they would have it or he would take the part off a machine in their yard. That’s the kind of service you want from your dealer.

Mike Jost (left) works with Binder VP of Sales Bill Kretschmer and other Binder staff to meet his equipment and product support needs.



“Our mechanics do most of the minor repairs and oil changes, but I use Binder mechanics for the technical repairs and PM tune-ups because they have great experience,” Mike said.

“Binder has been very good about making sure we have maximum productivity,” Mike noted. “We can call their shop anytime to talk to the service department about concerns as well. Many times they will walk us through things on the phone. We’ve also taken advantage of the parts exchange program. Binder’s been very good to us. It’s a nice feeling to have them behind you.”

Michael Jost, a future operator for Mike Jost Excavating, tries out the operator’s seat of a Komatsu D39PX dozer.



Currently, Roy Corriveau, Mike’s Product Support Representative, has been there to provide after-the-sale parts and service support. Roy’s goal is to reduce Mike’s owning and operating cost, and advise him on the most economical repair options to keep the equipment up to Mike Jost’s standards.

Crews at Mike Jost Excavating transfer gravel into the bucket of a Komatsu WA250 wheel loader at a customer’s jobsite.

Personal touch

Those standards include offering his customers a high level of service. It’s what he built his business on and he doesn’t plan on deviating from it. It’s given Mike Jost Excavating a solid reputation with area builders, who continue to call to get a job done.

“The most important thing is to make sure the customer is happy with the job in the end,” Mike said. “We strive for that every time we take on a job. We’re fair and honest with our customers and they appreciate that. We didn’t start out to be as big as we are, but we got to this point by not skimping on quality or being afraid to work hard.

“Now we have to make sure we control our growth,” he concluded. “We’ve always had the personal touch and we don’t want to lose it.” ■

