

# BREAKING GROUND

IDEAS & INFORMATION YOU CAN BUILD ON

WINTER 2018

## The Job of a Lifetime

*Larry Minter and Karl Whitaker Retire After Decades of Stellar Service*

**L**arry Minter was a fresh-faced 20-year-old in 1970 when he started his career at The Hamstra Group. Karl Whitaker was a mere 17 when he was hired as a backhoe operator in 1969. Both of them were deemed old



*Larry Minter began his career at The Hamstra Group in 1970 as a fresh-faced 20 year-old.*

of accomplishments under their tool belts—are retiring from the only company that's claimed their allegiance and benefitted from their years of dedicated service.

"Larry and Karl helped build this company," says Greg Hamstra, president and CEO. "These guys started at the bottom, learned everything there was to know, and mastered the art and science of construction like pros. They helped us build millions and millions of dollars' worth of commercial, industrial, and governmental buildings and facilities. We're going to miss them."

Larry admits he was a novice.

enough to work hard, but not yet eligible to vote (until passage of the 26th Amendment in 1971, the U.S. voting age was 21).

Now both men—elder statesmen at The Hamstra Group with decades

"I was pretty green," Larry laughs. "I started as a carpenter and they were willing to train me. The Hamstra Group invested in me and I wanted to learn everything they could teach me. At the end, I was a foreman directing construction on huge Walmart stores, big commercial facilities, massive steel buildings. I have memories from an amazing 47 years with the company."

Karl went from commanding the backhoe to project management responsibilities on multi-million construction jobs. From Veterans Administration clinics across the country to new Walmart and Menards store projects, he used all he had learned about construction to serve the company's clients.

"For all of us at The Hamstra Group, the driving idea was to serve the client and do the best work," Karl notes. "Whether we were working on a multi-million dollar job or a local retail project, the goal was the same: to do the kind of top quality work that would make them happy and encourage them to recommend us to everyone they knew."

The strategy worked. The Hamstra Group, established in 1958, grew from a small local construction company to a larger firm with projects that expanded its reach from northwest Indiana to

the entire Midwest region and then to major projects in Arizona, Florida, and other farther-flung states.

Both Larry and Karl believe that signing on with The Hamstra Group was the best decision they ever made.

"It's a really good company and it takes care of its people," Larry says. "For decades, I was never out of a job, even through some lean economic times. We worked together to weather any storm and The Hamstra Group treated its workers like family."

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*Karl Whitaker was just 17 when he was hired by The Hamstra Group. He would spend decades in the employ of the one and only company for which he ever worked.*

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**The HAMSTRA Group, Inc**

# Job of a Lifetime... *from page 1*

As for retirement? Larry and his wife Lou, married for 30 years, will spend time with their six children, 15 grandchildren, and new great-grandchild. Larry just bought a new Harley—motorcycles are one of his passions—and he says he might just use that vacation package he purchased some time ago.

Karl plans to enjoy more time with wife Bonnie, to whom he's been married for 45 years, his grandchildren, and the littlest of the Whitaker clan: great-grandson Liam. Karl and Bonnie are perusing maps, considering some places they have always wanted to see and making travel plans.

But expect to see Larry and Karl around from time-to-time. Both live near company headquarters and pitch in to work a punch list occasionally. After all...once in the family, always in the family.



*One of Karl's final jobs was a massive expansion project for Belstra Milling Company, Inc. in DeMotte, Indiana.*



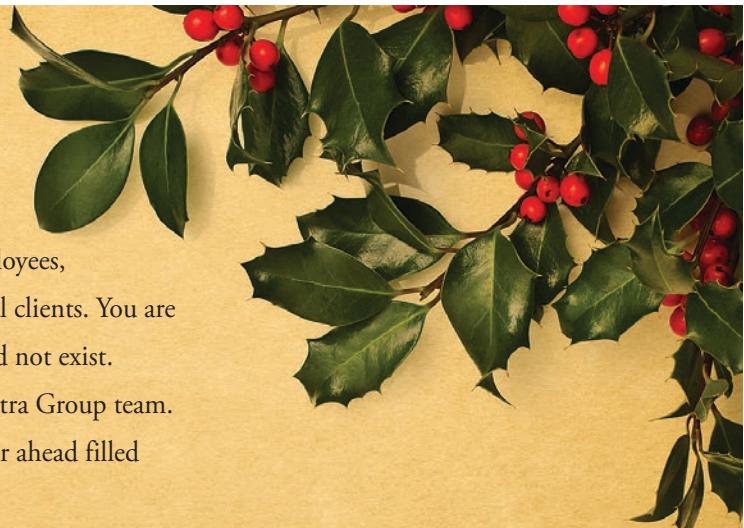
*Larry climbed the ladder, starting as a carpenter and ending as a foreman in charge of multi-million dollar construction projects.*

## Holiday Greetings

The holiday season reminds us to appreciate our

blessings more than ever—our dedicated, hardworking employees, outstanding building team partners, and, of course, our loyal clients. You are the heart and soul of our company, without whom we would not exist.

Please accept a heartfelt thank you from the entire Hamstra Group team. May you be blessed with safe and healthy holidays and a year ahead filled with happiness, promise, and opportunity.



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