

# Senate Masonry Builds Reputation on Family Foundations



**MICHAEL COLEMAN** – The Washington Construction News Special Feature



Senate Masonry, a Bethesda, Md.-based masonry firm, owned by Everett Greenstreet Jr., has deep roots in the Metropolitan area with a history that dates to 1917. Today, the company has a new name and a fourth generation of Greenstreets calling the shots, but the commitment to excellence hasn't changed.

"The thing that sets us apart is the relationships we've formed," says Everett Greenstreet III, the owner's son and business manager of the company. "Our clients know we'll always be accountable for what we do, and they know the job will be done right and on time."

The story of the Greenstreet family's masonry business begins in 1917 when Temple Greenstreet — the present owner's grandfather—parlayed his success as a bricklayer into his own company called TB Greenstreet and Sons that aimed for D.C.-area jobs.

The business survived the Great Depression and World War II, and in the 1950s, TB's son, Everett, opened his own company, calling it Congress Masonry, Inc.

The new company thrived and a couple of decades later, Greenstreet's son, Everett Jr. decided to launch a

masonry business of his own using the master training he learned in the bricklaying trade unions. Senate Masonry was born in 1979 and continues to this day.

Everett III says he is often surprised to realize just how many buildings in the Washington area have had a Greenstreet hand in their construction.

"It's not uncommon for me to drive around with my dad in D.C. and he tells me my grandfather did that building, and that building and that building, etc.," Greenstreet says with a hint of awe. "It's something special."

Greenstreet says the company relies on some of the same personal relationships that the first Greenstreet established, but it is consistently winning new friends in the business.

Sam Oliphant, of the 100-year-old William Lipscomb general contracting company in Virginia, says his company has been hiring Senate and its fore-runner, Congress Masonry, on jobs for more than 50 years. The relationship continues to this day. Senate recently finished a \$100,000 residential masonry job for Lipscomb in Annapolis.

Supreme  
Concrete Block  
BLUE  
2 x 54

# Senate Masonry

Continued from page B5

"They are very professional and their workmanship is top-notch," Oliphant says. "They do their work for a very fair price and they try to resolve any problems as soon as they come up. They are really one of the subs we can count on."

Senate Masonry, which specializes in retail projects such as shopping centers and big block stores, has remained relatively small, but is looking to grow in the next few years. "We've pretty much stayed small because it allows us to keep control of things," Greenstreet says. "We have our hands deep into the business and on everything going on around here."

Greenstreet says Senate Masonry's clients have no trouble getting answers and

accountability on a project. "Our niche is personal attention," he explains. "You can always call here [to the company's Bethesda offices] and get someone."

Senate Masonry currently employs a core group of about 60 workers, many of whom have been with the company for a decade or more. That number will soon balloon to roughly 125 employees for summer seasonal work, Greenstreet says.

The company averages about \$3.5 million in annual sales but Greenstreet hopes to eventually double that figure through controlled growth. He says the firm should be able to hit a \$7 million to \$10 million annual sales target by 2008.

"We want to grow but we don't want to grow too fast or too big," Greenstreet explains. "The larger you get the slower you are and the less control you have over your own operations."

Greenstreet says the company has established

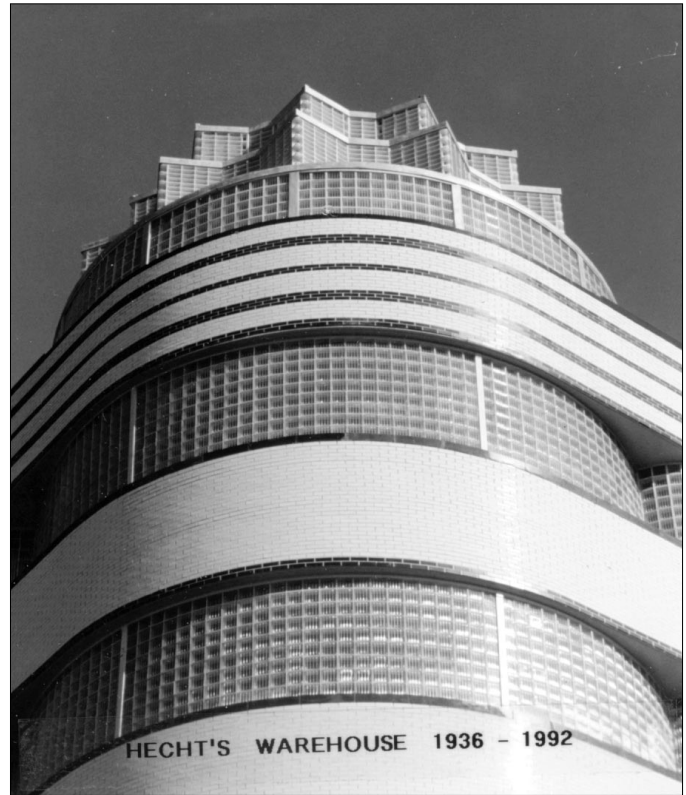
solid relationships with reputable contractors who consistently look to them when they need the best bricklayers in the business. But the Florida State University alumnus says the company's vast experience and expertise could be utilized by a wider array of D.C. metropolitan area builders. He's understandably eager to get the word out.

Senate Masonry has established an attractive and easily navigable website at [www.senatemasonry.com](http://www.senatemasonry.com), and is escalating its marketing efforts.

"We've stepped up the marketing efforts with more signs and the website," Greenstreet says. "We want to create more of a brand name for the company."

Some of the major masonry projects Senate Masonry has completed in recent years include:

- Senate installed brick veneer walls and CMU at the Hecht's department store in Bowie, Md., including the masonry arches that adorn the front of the store.
- Senate also repaired and installed glass block for the art deco crown at the top of the Hecht's warehouse building. It also braced the structure's glazed brick bands.
- Senate installed CMU foundations and masonry veneer walls at the King Farm/Baja Fresh retail space in Rockville, Md. The building also features decorative masonry arches and pre-cast keystones hand-crafted by Senate's crews.
- Senate did extensive masonry work at the Landmark Shopping Center in Alexandria. Greenstreet says the company primarily works



for private developers, but it also gets a significant share of government work. The company completes, on average, about 65 projects per year, with about 35 percent of that coming from local and federal govern-

ment. Greenstreet says Senate Masonry welcomes new customers and enjoys establishing new relationships. But he vowed that the firm will never abandon its family-oriented roots.

"The problem with some of the construction industry is it's so big you don't know who's who anymore," Greenstreet says. "We're a simple, grassroots kind of company, and we want to stay that way."



**Russell Insurance Group, Inc.**  
3 x 36

**Comprehensive Benefits & Planning Inc.**  
3 x 36