



The Inside Scoop

Mike Garduno's high-tech team sees through dirt, concrete, walls to make projects safer

By Duffy Kelly

This story definitely falls into the category of odd jobs. If there's water in your walls, bones in your dirt, cables in your concrete, even holes in your condoms, you might want to know about it.

And you can know. Downtown Sacramento resident Mike Garduno, Inspector Gadget of the inanimate world of product and materials testing, has a test for just about anything under the sun.

With a team of engineers and enough high-tech equipment to fill a warehouse, Garduno is called on to test everything from cemeteries to parking garages to, yes indeed, condoms.

Whether a builder needs to verify the location of pipes or cables, whether historians or cemetery owners are documenting old burial sites, or whether judges need to know how to keep cars from slamming into the courthouse, Garduno is the man. "Sure, we can answer those questions and give data to support our findings and conclusions," he says.

Let's start with one of the more gruesome of inspection jobs: locating buried bodies. Garduno is the go-to guy for cemetery owners throughout the nation.

"Most cemeteries today were founded in the late 1800s when caretakers used to do the record keeping in journals," he says. "They would make hand-written maps of who was buried where. A lot of the headstones were made out of

wood, and since they didn't have lawnmowers they would burn the grasses, sometimes burning the headstones. So today one of the many problems facing the cemetery industry is identifying where these unmarked gravesites are so as not to compromise their integrity.

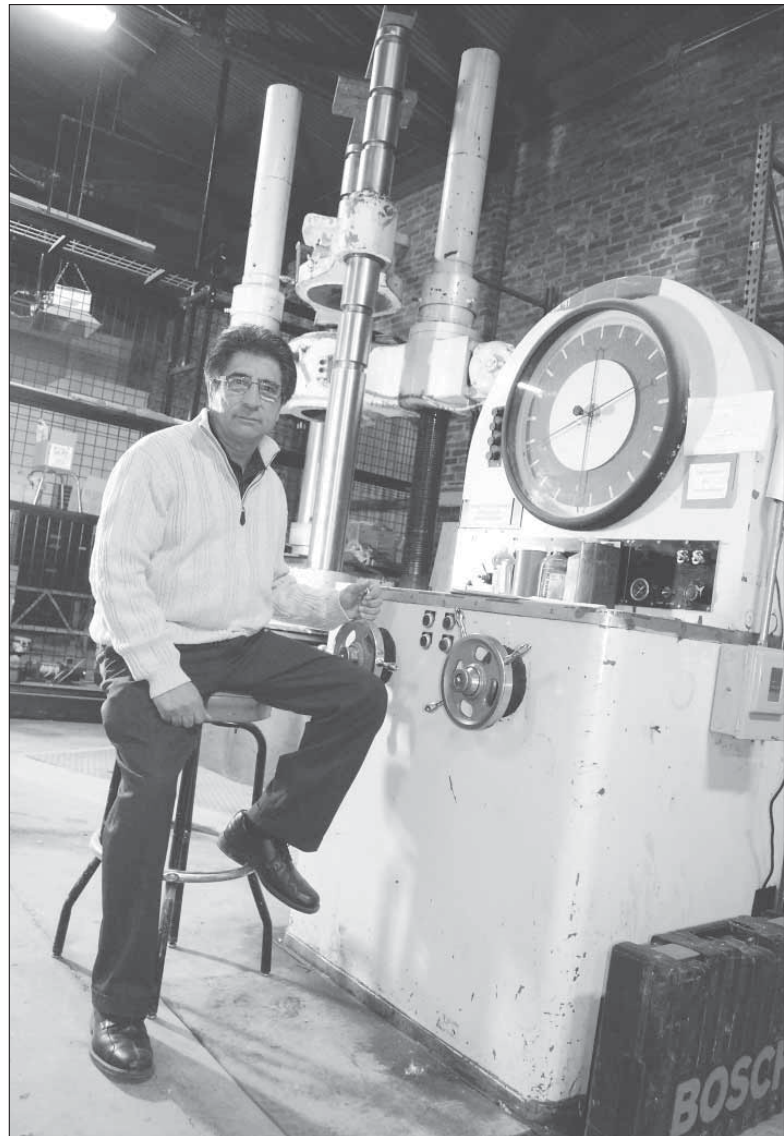
"Years ago they also buried people in rows, skipping a row so they could access a road and move their wagons. As those burial sites became more congested they started burying people in the path, stacking them and sometimes putting them in different directions trying to get as much density in these open areas as they could. It's also very expensive to excavate a burial site only to find it pre-occupied. Sometimes they may exhume several burial sites before they find one open, and that's costly. With the technology of today, we are able to locate identify gravesites."

Using ground-penetrating radar and scanning devices, engineers can take photographs of what lies beneath the ground's surface, developing photos on site in a mobile lab.

"It applies to concrete walls, too, where we can find elements that are embedded in concrete such as rebar, conduit or infrastructure such as utilities and pipes," he says.

Next time you walk past the federal courthouse in downtown Sacramento, take note of the granite panels on the building's exterior and the bollards on the sidewalk. Garduno's team made sure they are strong enough to withstand a number of threats, including automobiles that might attempt to drive into the building.

If you happen to fly out of San Francisco International Airport, rest



Mike Garduno

easy with the relief that your terminal is not going to fall to the ground.

Garduno was born and raised in the Bay Area where, ever the entrepreneur, he started a gardening business at the age of 16 before

embarking on a career with Chevron. His work with that oil company and association with engineers led him to discover the many needs for inspection services.

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Kent Eberle, president of Eberle Remodeling, has helped create the perfect home for 27 years

according to Eberle. Increased communication, budget, trust and confidence, more time devoted to the client, seamless transitions between phases, and the highest class of craftsmanship all help to reduce stress and speed project completion.

Future plans for the remodeling company are to blaze a trail forward with the same quality and consistency that have been engrained in Eberle Remodeling from the birth of the business.

For more information on Eberle Remodeling, call 369-6518 or go to eberleremodeling.com.

Toying Around

Inside Gallery 2110 in the Sacramento Art Complex there is a fine line between nostalgia and the progressive tone of art. Terri Rehg, owner and curator of The Art of Toys, fuses together the mind of the artist and playful whimsy of their creation.

Rehg has created an atmosphere where the art of the toy designer can

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structure—a process by which a homeowner works with one company through the entire remodeling process, which includes three phases: design and product selection, detailed proposal for construction, and the construction phase.

With you from the minute your idea to remodel is planted and transformed into a tangible reality, Eberle Remodeling is thriving thanks to a penchant for quality, partnered with excellent value.

Having been a physical education teacher prior to entering the construction industry, Eberle likens his craft to teaching in a classroom.

“I’ve always looked at remodeling like teaching,” says Eberle, “Like a good lesson plan, you need to have a plan of how to get from point A to point B.”

A resident of Fair Oaks, Eberle employs a team with vast experience and has a high success rate in creating beautiful projects.

“They know what to do,” Eberle says. “It allows me to sleep at night

knowing all of our projects are in great hands.”

Riding the highs and lows of an industry with so much competition, Eberle admits one of his biggest challenges is juggling work time, family time and personal time.

“I work a lot of hours to give our clients the best remodeling experience possible,” he says. “My business motto has always been to ‘do what you say you will do,’ so in order to follow through with that premise, it really demands a lot of time to stay on top of each and every project.”

Eberle Remodeling strives to help the homeowner create a realistic budget from day one, and then works toward staying on budget through the completion of the project, addressing all the details big and small, ahead of time.

With the design-build approach there are several steps to the client/builder relationship that benefit from working solely with one company,

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Art of Toys owner Terri Rehg among T. Oliver Kopian's "Creatures Delight" in her Midtown store

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Bay Area Regional Transit has used his company to help provide seismic retrofitting to buildings and parking structures. Large hoteliers find the answers they need so they don't burst a buried pipe or cut a support major cable when remodeling.

With hard hats, safety glasses and X-ray equipment, Garduno's team winds through high rises that are under construction. They are looking for stuff most of us never knew existed. For instance, installing a new sink in an apartment building might require that holes be drilled for plumbing. What happens if construction crews accidentally cut one of the building's critical support cables? Nobody wants to find out.

"We use a combination of radiography and ground-penetrating radar to obtain images that will allow contractors to drill into the existing concrete without compromising the structural integrity of the location," Garduno says.

As for the condom story, Garduno legend has it that a shipment of questionable condoms from the Orient arrived in a Bay Area port. A semblance of a guarantee is a good thing when it comes to condoms. So, Garduno's team developed some not-so-exciting laboratory procedures to test them.

"A company in California imported the condoms from Taiwan and they were stuck in customs because they couldn't unload them until they were tested in accordance with the Food and Drug Administration testing procedures," Garduno says. "We were called to do tensile testing, elongation tests, hydro tests, abrasion tests. There were thousands and thousands of these condoms. Some women worked in the lab and got a big kick out of it. We had to test so many out of each batch that some of us took them home and put water in them."

Don't worry, Garduno says. The condoms passed the test.

For more information, go to inspections.com or call (800) 870-2997. |

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be displayed, appreciated and sold as art, "inspiring and supporting toy designers, artisans and collectors alike ... providing a resource to network for artists to share creativity, while allowing collectors to see the inspirations and visions of the artist and vintage toy designer."

With a passion for toys dating back to childhood, Rehg has been collecting dolls since she was 5 years old, and growing up she found it more and more difficult to find a quality vintage toy and art dealer all in one location. With a résumé of talent that spans from owning a wholesale independent toy representative group and working as a territory manager for Walt Disney Art Classics, Rehg jump-started her The Art of Toys website in August 2010, with the gallery opening soon after in December 2010.

"I have come full circle and am now combining the knowledge I acquired from all my past positions to promote toy designers and artists and help

share this fabulous art that has had so little exposure in the art world," Rehg says.

One hurdle Rehg has had to overcome is finding collectors who love art in the form of toys. She is hoping that as more and more people visit the official website, she will become connected with other toy-as-art lovers, learn artists' histories, and help buyers to expand their cherished art collections.

"I have come across many gifted artists," Rehg says, "and it is a daily joy to have so many pieces around me in my gallery and be able to share my passion!"

In the future, Rehg would like to expand her gallery and website to provide a larger venue for more artists to show at once, with staff to assist in meeting the collectors' needs, and continuing to add vintage toys as well as new pieces to the collection.

For more information on The Art of Toys, visit artofof.com. The gallery is at 2110 K St. inside the Sacramento Art Complex. |