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Brasili says goodbye after five decades with P.J. Keating Company

LUNENBURG _ Longevity in a job is particularly poignant these days as more and more people are finding themselves without employment. However, that has not been an issue for P.J. Keating Company employee Mario Brasili, who has worked for the company for over 50 years, beginning there on June 30, 1959. Brasili has seen the company through many changes all with a knowledge and wisdom that has made him one of the true assets of P.J. Keating Company, and an inspiration to those who work for the company.

“I was hired by Bob Keating who had enough work for me for three to five days. I took a gamble and took the job and was there for 50 years,” Brasili said, who retired from the company at the end of 2009.

Starting out as a laborer at P.J. Keating Company, Brasili worked his way up to foreman, then paving supervisor, ultimately ending his career as vice president.

“Mario Brasili has been an iconic symbol of the P.J. Keating Company since I can remember,” said John Keating, president and COO of Oldcastle Materials East. “He took me under his wing in my early years and taught me much of what I know today regarding paving practices, construction bidding and customer sales. Most notably, Mario played an integral role in the transition from a family business to a public company when P.J. Keating Company joined Oldcastle in 1994.”

James “Jim” Reger, president of P. J. Keating Company, said it was Brasili who mentored him when he was a new employee back in 1985.

“I fondly remember Mario taking me on my first visit to MassHighway. You would have thought I arrived with the Pope,” Reger said. “Everyone in the building was coming up and saying hello to him. He made sure I met all the key people that day. I look back and realize that what he taught me has allowed me to be where I am today.”

According to Eric Lundberg, vice president of P.J. Keating Company, Brasili opened doors for many of his colleagues both 50 years ago up until present day.

“Mario’s lessons on how to be successful in this business are just as relevant today during these difficult economic times as they have ever been. Fairness, hard work and doing the job right almost always lead to long term beneficial relationships for all,” Lundberg said. “Many of the relationships established by Mario with our customers over his 50-year tenure still endure and continue to provide great business opportunities for us today.”

Just what makes someone stay with the same job for 50 years?

According to Brasili, he attributes his longevity to hard work and working for a good company.

“It’s been an excellent company to work for, very fair,” he said. “There’s a great bunch of people there.”

Brasili said the biggest change for him in those 50 years was when the company went public.

“Going from a family business to a big company was huge. John (Keating) asked me to stay and help out and even though I was thinking about retirement, I said that I would. That was more than nine years ago,” he said with a chuckle.

Last month Brasili was honored by his colleagues with a retirement party during which those who have been touched by Brasili could say thanks.

“It was excellent. These are a wonderful group of people,” he added.

Today what lies ahead for Brasili is a much earned rest and relaxation in Florida.

“It’s been great 50 years,” he said.

Since 1923, P.J. Keating Company’s primary business is quarrying stone, manufacturing Hot Mix Asphalt, and the construction of Asphalt Paving Projects. The company is headquartered in Lunenburg, MA, with locations in Dracut, Acushnet and Cranston, Rhode Island.

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