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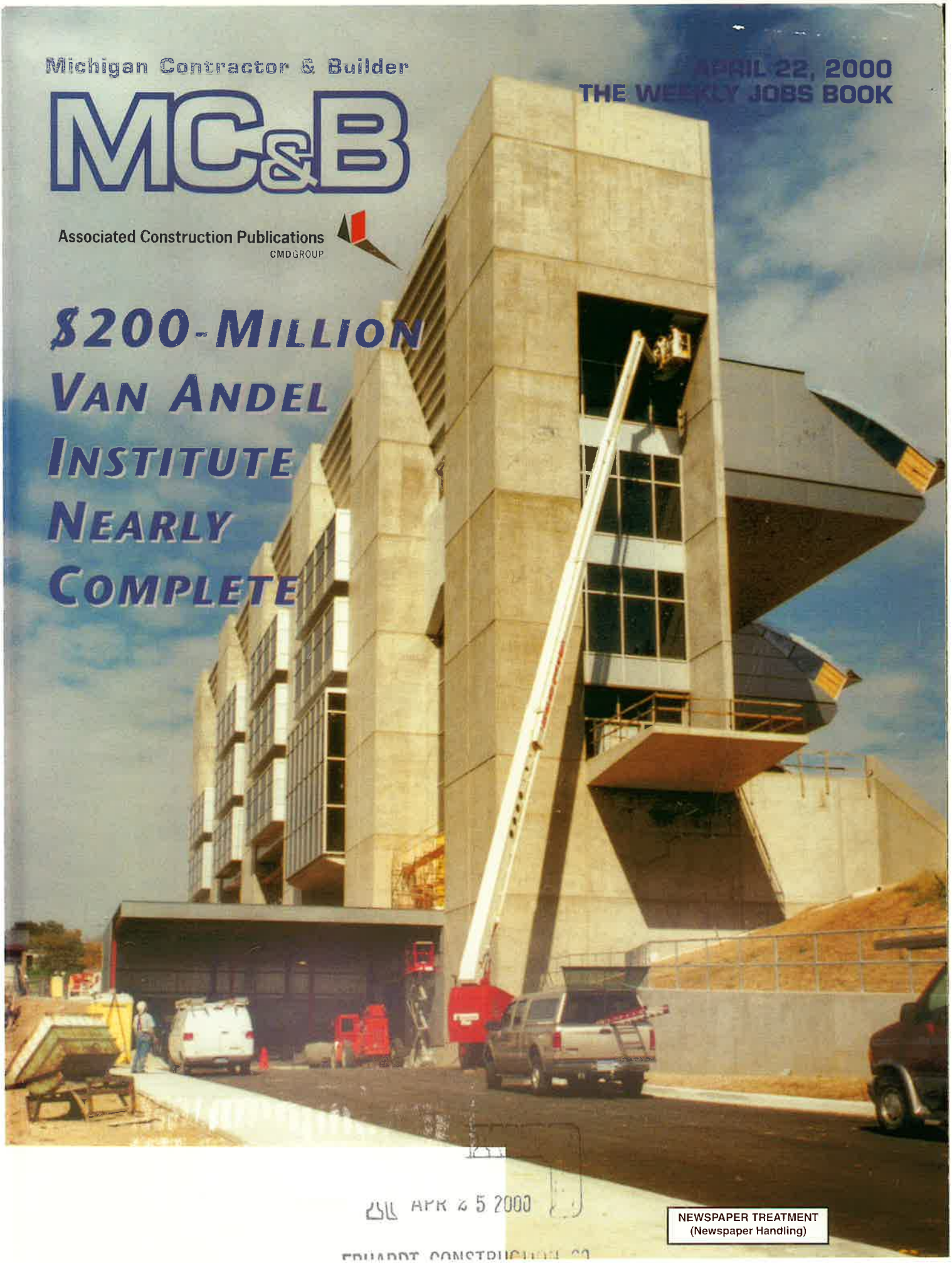
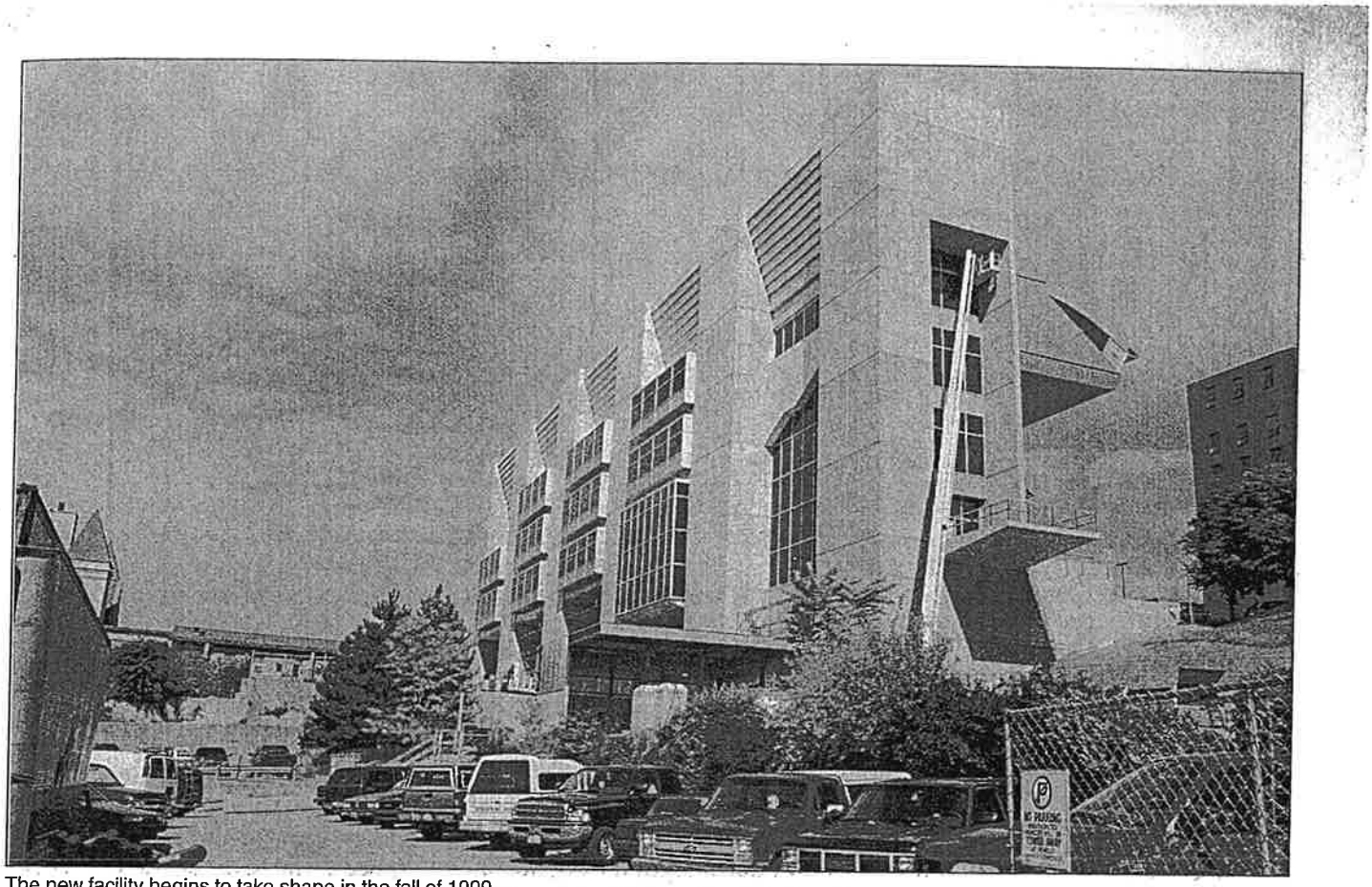




The new facility begins to take shape in the fall of 1999.

$200-Million Van Andel Institute Near Completion

By Dirk C. Bloemendaal

Grand Rapids — Work on the first phase of the $200-million Van Andel Institute for Education and Research is nearing completion. Located high on the slope of Michigan Street and Bostwick Avenue in downtown Grand Rapids, the grand opening is scheduled for May 11.

The medical research building was started in February 1998 and will feature cascading rolls of glass overlooking Division and Bostwick Avenue and is designed to focus on cancer research. The institute is expected to attract pharmaceutical firms, medical research companies and other related businesses.

A model 950F Cat front end loader handles a 2-1/2-cubic-yard bucket for Dykema Excavating in loading out broken concrete on the project. (Note: Part of Spectrum Hospital is seen in the upper background).

Once opened, the institute will employ over 100 people with that number eventually expected to go up to 500 persons. The building will feature soaring tiers of glass and contain laboratories set up for medical research. It not only is expected to change the physical landscape of the city but also the economic landscape of Grand Rapids. Economy watchers foresee the city's newest entity turning the Grand Rapids area into a major medical research center.

Researchers are expected to study and research the pathologies of a number of diseases, with the eventual goal of being able to cure

them. Main research however will be centered on biotechnology and specifically, the causes of cancer and its treatments with the eventual goal of curing the disease.

The first phase of the construction has involved erecting a building covering 162,000 square feet. Once the second phase is built, in six to 10 years, at a projected cost of over $100 million, it will bring the total size of the institute to 400,000 square feet. The second phase will be five to six stories tall (twice the size of the first phase), and will be built just to the west of current construction. The second phase will connect to the first phase by skywalks and a first-floor corridor. It will also feature a large indoor courtyard.

Dykema Excavating of Grand Rapids uses their model 330 Cat backhoe fitted with a 1-1/2-cubic-yard bucket to begin excavation for the new $200-million Van Andel Institute building.

The Phase I construction which has consisted of sloping an unusually shaped site provided a big challenge to the design of the building, according to Rafael Vinoly Architects PC, of New York, N.Y., the architectural firm on the project. The site is extraordinarily difficult and the topographical changes have been enormous, according to their personnel.

The building was designed around the nearby Immanuel Lutheran Church on the southeast corner of North Division and Michigan Avenue. The second phase will eventually require the removal of the church's school and administrative building.

Vinoly designed some 19 different designs for the facility before a decision was made on the final design. One of the major features of the design is the cascading sheets of glass in the structure, which will be in both phases of the building. The glass provides much of the natural light for the laboratories that the building will house.

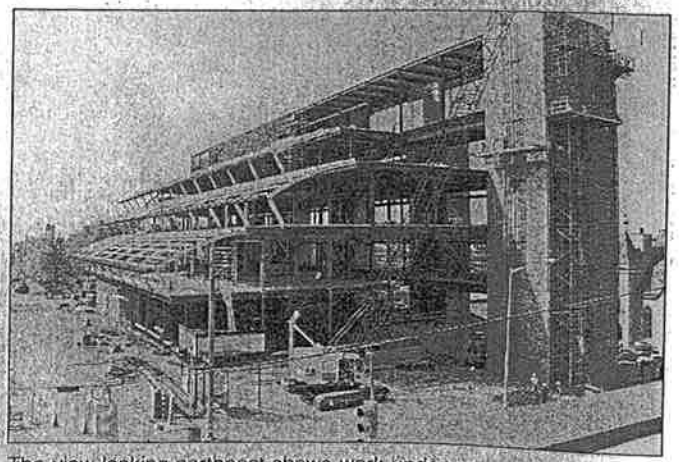
The Phase I building is comprised of a seven-story, three-layer building which measures 352 feet by 122 feet and contains six towers. The towers measure 22 feet by 11 feet by 140 feet tall. Two of the towers contain stairways while the others house the mechanical shafts in their interiors. The basement of the building also houses all of the major mechanical equipment.

Additional floors feature a 34,000-square-foot laboratory on the second floor. The third floor houses the main entrance, a lobby and a 350-person auditorium. The fourth and fifth floors are made up of laboratories, while the sixth floor contains the administrative offices. The seventh floor is where the mechanical area is largely concentrated.

Some of the unusual aspects of the building can be found in the skin of the building, which is composed of a combination of exposed concrete. Other unusual aspects include insulated metal panels and glass; the effects of the slopes of the skylights and the large cantilevered columns found throughout the structure.

Work on the building is being done under a joint venture of Erhardt/McCarthy. Erhardt Construction Co. is from Grand Rapids while the McCarthy Co. is from St.

Erhardt's 75-ton P&H crane at work on one of the two major towers that will anchor the interior of the facility.



The view looking northeast shows work underway on the facility and its major tower structures.

Louis, Mo. Construction costs have been estimated at around $43 million with the overall costs running around $80 million.

Other major players in the construction of the building include Burt Hill Kosar Rittelmann Associates of Butler, Pa., mechanical/electrical work; Dewhurst Macfarlane and Partners of New York, N.Y., structural engineering; and GPR Planners Collaborative Inc., of Purchase, N.Y., laboratory consultants.

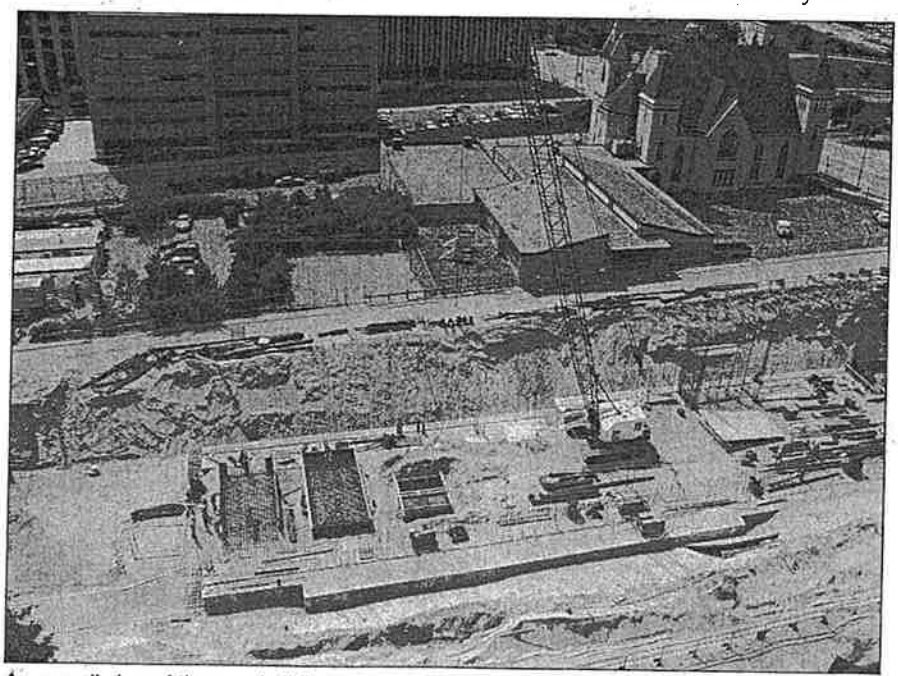
A considerable number of subcontractors are also at work on the facility. These include: Grand Valley Wood, architectural casework; Environmental Concepts, wall and corner guards; Fire Fighter Sales, fire extinguishers and cabinets; IBP, telephone specialties/entrance mats; and S.A. Mormann, toilets/toilet compartments/bath accessories.

Additional subcontractors include: Burgess Concrete, cast in place slab finishes; Bareman and Associates, overhead coiling doors and shutters; Richmond Int., access flooring; Clark Associates, metal lockers; Midwest Visual, projection screens; Morrison Ind., loading dock equipment; Irwin Seating, auditorium seating; Wright and Phillipis, wheelchair lifts; Elevator Service, equipment lifts; and Erhardt Construction, Erhardt labor and material.

Other subcontractors include: Dykema Excavating, site work; Twin Lakes Nursery, landscape; JK Masonry, masonry; Van Dam Iron Works, metals; Harmsen Construction, glass handrails; Newman Brothers, glass handrails; AGM, metal siding/windows/glazing/building enclosure; J&L Roofing, roofing and sheet metal; Bouma, fireproofing/plaster/drywall/ceramic tile/acoustical walls and ceilings/resilient flooring and carpeting/wood flooring; D.C. Byers, resinous flooring; Bolkema Painting, painting; Climate Technologies, lab equipment-walk in coolers; Air Master System; DAI Scientific; Gruenberg; Venture Distribution; Air Energy System; NIC; MT Pitts Machine and Getinge/Castle (all laboratory equipment suppliers).

Additional subcontractors include: NIC, laboratory casework; Midwest Air Balance, testing and balancing); Pitsch, demolition; Schinder Elevators, elevators; Northern Waterproofing, dampproofing; H&G Sales, metal and wood doors; K&K Erectors, Erhardt; Fastdecks Inc., concrete work; Kent Concrete, flatwork; Steel Supply and Engineering, structural steel; Allied Mechanical, mechanical; and Contech, electrical.

Key personnel working on the project include from left, Leon Oosterink, project superintendent for Erhardt Construction, and Eddy Harris, the project manager for McCarthy.



An overall view of the new building site looking west, shows the Emmanuel Lutheran Church at the southeast corner of North Division and Michigan Avenue. Phase II will require the removal of the church's administrative building and school shown near the church. The crane pictured is a 75-ton P&H.

The facility is being constructed on the site of an old school that was removed. The new building will require some 1,300 tons of steel, 11,000 cubic yards of concrete, and 950 tons of reinforcing steel before it is completed.

Key personnel working the project for McCarthy include: Eddie Harris, the project manager; Rick Myers, the mechanical superintendent; Jeff Boyer, the project engineer; and Hugh Renard, the assistant project manager.

Erhardt Construction personnel include Larry Erhardt, the project executive; Tim Jones, the project engineer; Leon Oosterink, the project superintendent; and Dale Oosterink, the foreman of construction. Jim Gray is the project manager for the Van Andel Institute (VAI).

With the construction of the Van Andel Institute, there is little doubt that the future of western Michigan will be greatly impacted by the study of molecular biology that will be carried out at the institute. ✧