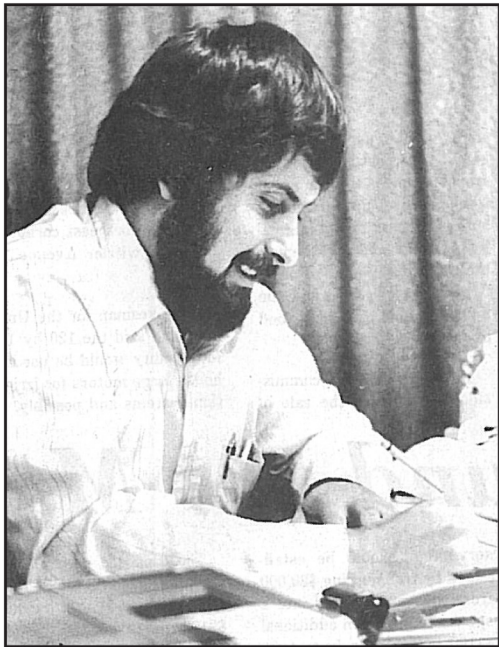


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Tom O'Brien

O'Brien Noted By Building Co.

Out of a state field of 13 competitors, Hermiston's Tom O'Brien, O'Brien Construction Co., has been named Rookie of the Year by the Varco Pruden Metal Building Systems Company. The Rookie of the Year is an exclusive award given to the outstanding first-year builder in 13 Western states.

O'Brien began his Hermiston construction business two and one-half years ago. During his 1976 building year the company erected 22 Varco Pruden steel buildings with a sales value of a quarter million dollars.

"This year we are hoping to surpass the \$1 million mark; that's from the looks of our sales," said O'Brien. The Varco Pruden Company awards sales ranging from a quarter million dollars to \$1 million.

O'Brien Construction's volume of sales jumped 800 per cent from the first to its second year, according to O'Brien. First year sales amounted to \$85,000. In 1976 the total soared to \$650,000. "I anticipate this year may very possibly hit \$2 million," O'Brien said.

Varco Pruden handles large commercial buildings as well as agricultural structures and smaller storage sheds. "I'd say 85 per cent of my business in this area is for commercial construction though," O'Brien stated.

The company has a full-time sales and service representative in Walla Walla and the Tri-Cities. "We are a completely service oriented construction business," explained O'Brien. All faulty parts and buildings will be adjusted free of charge. Damages will be repaired for a fee.

O'Brien received his award during the March Mardi Gras meeting of Varco Pruden in New Orleans. He lives in Hermiston with his wife, Penny and their son.