



Our GravityStone walls are maintenance free and water-tight. Plus, as soon as the GravityStone wall is finished, we can go in landscape.” Falls explains, “As you build a wall you’re doing the backfilling and compacting of the soil. With concrete walls, you have to wait for 28 days for it to cure. That slows everything down, you can’t build headwalls for traffic to travel over, hook up utilities or otherwise open the area for use until the concrete dries. GravityStone is ready to go as soon as it’s installed because you backfill as you build the wall. As soon as you place the last block, you’re ready for landscaping.”

With yet another satisfied customer under his belt, Falls concludes, “We’ve been involved in building retaining walls for about 10 years. The GravityStone system is an amazing product. While cost-savings for materials and labor is huge compared to the pre-cast concrete wall option, the ability to match colors and speed installation puts it over the top.” Adds McDonough, “That’s what drew me to GravityStone: it has both substance and style.”

For more than 50 years, WestBlock Systems has set the standard for innovative, cost-effective and design-driven earth retention and barrier wall systems. Produced by a world-wide network of concrete block manufacturers, our products are sold direct and through dealers to both private and public sectors.

As distributors of masonry building materials since 1947, and manufacturers of concrete block since 1984, it’s fair to say we’ve been around the block a time or two. Our intimate understanding of the various markets, trends, manufacturing technology, product engineering, and installation process make us an ideal partner. We not only talk the talk, we walk the walk. Focused on delivering customer-relevant solutions, our wide range of products reflect the perfect blend of form and function. From patented designs that ease installation and lower costs to unique textures and color options that compliment nature, WestBlock offers an efficient and effective way for customers to either grow their businesses or enhance their surroundings. Add our commitment to quality and it’s no surprise that our products are readily accepted by manufacturers, engineers, contractors, and D.I.Y’ers.

To learn more about WestBlock Systems and how our wide range of high quality products can help you meet your hardscape objectives, please call **800.332.6489**.



WBS



NEWS

Situation:

The Villages, a privately owned planned retirement community encompasses approximately 32 sq. miles of prime Florida living. The self-contained environment features 16 golf courses, including a Nancy Lopez course and an Arnold Palmer course. The professionally designed courses include 20 golf cart paths that tunnel under the roads. The developer was looking for a more flexible, aesthetic and cost-effective option to pre-cast concrete walls.

Challenge:

The contractor faced two challenges in creating the underground golf cart tunnels. 1. The winding curves in the roads required flexibility that he couldn’t get from his current pre-cast concrete wall. 2. The landscape architect required Old-World, time-worn aesthetics. The current pre-cast walls option required excessive preparation, paint treatments and regular maintenance, yet still fell short.

Solution:

GravityStone hybrid retaining wall system from WestBlock Systems. The golf cart tunnel project utilized GravityStone Fat Face, GravityStone Thin Face and GravityStone Anchor blocks.

Results:

GravityStone blocks were used to support 20 golf cart tunnels throughout the 16 different golf courses. Installation of GravityStone versus a pre-cast concrete wall exceeded expectations.

- GravityStone saved the developer \$50,000 per tunnel for a total savings of \$1 million in material costs alone.
- GravityStone provided the aesthetic appeal; the smaller type block and solid construction allowed it to be tumbled for a time-worn finish.
- GravityStone’s hybrid solutions created the flexibility needed to allow the walls to follow the curbs and radius better, coming off back of curbs.
- GravityStone eliminated maintenance costs associated with the pre-cast concrete walls; GravityStone doesn’t require an asphalt seal, paint or pressure washing like pre-cast concrete walls.

DEVELOPER DIGS DEEP, SEES GREEN AND SAVES \$1,000,000.

Associated Construction Products replaces pre-cast wall option with GravityStone Hybrid System and helps put The Villages™ on the road to success.



Build it and they will come. It’s a sentiment the developer of The Villages™ took to heart as he worked to put his dream on the map. Encompassing 32 sq. ft. of prime Florida real estate, The Villages is a privately owned retirement community. With nearly 4,000 new homes going up every year, this self-contained community sports quaint shops, great eateries and peaceful living. But it’s the 16 professionally designed golf courses that beckon residents and visitors to play a round or two.

Including both a Nancy Lopez and an Arnold Palmer course, the well-appointed courses wind throughout the entire community. To help golfers meander the expansive grounds, the developer installed 20 underground golf cart paths.



(From cover)

To achieve structural integrity, he opted for pre-cast concrete to line the walls and headways of the underground tunnels. A choice that quickly proved less than ideal. Tommy McDonough, project coordinator for The Villages, explains, “We hadn’t even completed the first install when we realized we needed a more functional, visually appealing and cost-effective alternative to the pre-cast concrete walls. So, we called in a pro.”

Larry Falls, owner, Associated Concrete Products (ACP), answered the call. “Tommy faced two immediate challenges. First off, the winding curves in the roads leading to and from the courses required a more flexible retaining wall option than what his current pre-cast concrete wall could offer. Second, the landscape architect wanted to create an Old-World, time-worn appearance to match the rest of the development. The pre-cast walls, even with excessive preparation and paint treatment, were still a far cry from the look they were trying to achieve. We convinced Tommy that he needed to take a modular approach and that we had a just the product to get the job done, on time and under budget.”

ACP hits a hole in one with the GravityStone Hybrid System.

It was essential that the walls of the tunnels be built straight vertically with no batter to them. That’s why Falls recommended GravityStone, a hybrid concept which uses a modular base combined with a reinforced wall at the top. Falls explains, “Unlike competitive products, GravityStone’s modular design gives you the flexibility to build with or without batter.” That’s all McDonough needed to hear. “Working with pre-cast walls was like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. We were dealing with 30 ft long tunnels on curvy roadways. Because we were in the radius of the road, the large square-shaped walls weren’t able to match up with our backup curbs, which prevented us from achieving the aesthetics we needed. But Larry was right, GravityStone solved all that,” says McDonough.



Using a combination of GravityStone Fat Face, GravityStone Thin Face and GravityStone Anchor Blocks, ACP installed a total of 20 tunnels with four walls each, ranging in height from 1 ft. to 14ft. To achieve the aesthetics, Falls’ crew tumbled the GravityStone Thin face block until it took on a time-worn look and feel.” I don’t know of any other product on the market you can do that with,” says Falls.



“We take the thin face block, tumble it and make it look aged and Old-World. I don’t know of any other product on the market you can do that with.”

***Larry Falls, President
Associated Concrete Products***



A quick ROI is par for the course

In addition to achieving the structural integrity, functionality and aesthetics for his underground tunnels, McDonough reports that GravityStone helped The Villages realize significant cost savings. “Our GravityStone walls cost 50% less than the \$35 per square foot pre-cast concrete walls, saving us a grand total of \$1,000,000. And that was in material costs alone.” Falls says the savings are a result of the block’s innovative design.” GravityStone’s lightweight, mortar-less design and modular approach makes it easy to install and eliminates the need for heavy equipment and high-cost certified masons.”

According to McDonough, the savings didn’t stop with the install, “Our pre-cast concrete walls required extensive treatment. We had to paint the walls to get the look we wanted, pressure wash them every year and repaint every two years. We also had to apply an asphalt sealant on the back of the concrete units to prevent water seepage.

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