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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Rivergrove Elementary Students Find Lemons Electrifying!**

BEAVERTON, OR—Carolyn Russel’s class of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders were all bright eyes and smiles during their engineering activity on electricity led by Tom Konicke, Operations Manager at McKinstry. As part of National Engineers Month, Konicke showed the Rivergrove Elementary students just how electrifying energy can be!

Konicke taught the students some basic principles of energy using a volt meter to demonstrate how much energy is stored in a common battery. The battery lit a flash light easily. Then Konicke challenged the students to build their own batteries from unusual sources.

They received instructions on how to build two types of batteries. One type stacked pennies, washers and paper covered in lemon juice. The other used lemon slices, pennies and washers pressed into the rind and connected by wires.

“Who would have thought you could get electricity from a lemon?” Konicke asked the classroom.

The students jumped at the chance to create their penny and lemon batteries. When the volt meter showed that their special hand-made batteries actually stored energy, the kids couldn’t have been more excited.



Photo Courtesy of Doug Vorwaller Photography



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Konicke tested one of them to see if it could power a small light. When the light turned on the youngster was ecstatic. “My battery is awesome,” said the student. “I could put this in a toy!”

At the conclusion of the presentation, Konicke explained how he works with energy on a daily basis by making the most of a building’s energy use and by using alternative forms of energy like wind and solar power. He went on to let them know that they can all grow up to be an engineer and work with energy or any other field.

**National Engineers Month** (February) is orchestrated by the **Business Education Compact**, a local non-profit organization dedicated to “make learning real” for Oregon and SW Washington students. In its 17<sup>th</sup> year, the program has enabled more than 325,000 students to have the privilege of interacting with a real engineer in their classroom.

**McKinstry** is a full-service, design-build-operate-and-maintain firm specializing in consulting, construction, energy and facility services. Their innovative, integrated delivery methodology provides clients with a single point of accountability that drives waste, cost, time, and redundancy out of the design/build process. They employ over 200 professional and field staff from their LEED Gold Portland Office and 1600 companywide.

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