

## The Revenue Markets, Inc., a family business

### The small but mighty toll collecting technology business that could

**Chelsea Miller**  
BSP Reporter

One of the joys of living in the Rondout Valley is the abundance of family-owned business. In a day where national news heralds the end of multi-generational business, we as a community are fortunate to be able to point to multiple businesses that have passed through the hands of at least a generation or two. The Revenue Markets, Inc. (TRMI), is one such business. Rounding out their 50th year in business, the company is owned by sister and brother team Steven and Lisa Rosakranse who are carrying on the legacy of their father, Robert Rosakranse, who was among the earliest innovators in the toll collection industry.

The origin story of TRMI begins with Robert Rosakranse, who was born in Ellenville and moved to Accord in 1964. Robert started his career as a carpenter and mason, working for local companies before starting his own business, Rosakranse Masonry. Lisa says that her father was, at heart, a true entrepreneur. "He bought the Hasbrouck House back when it was falling apart, he had a roller rink in Ellenville, he even owned Stone Ridge Orchard for a while," says Lisa. "He would just get involved and see if he could make something of it. He was never afraid to take a chance."

Ever keen to possibility, his interest in innovation was piqued when he learned about his friend Burt Marshall's invention: a four-contact treadle used to count axles on vehicles. Treadles are, for reference, those strips a vehicle drives over to get to a toll booth. The treadle activates when vehicle tires roll forward or backward, triggering the strips sequentially due to their placement and separation providing the information the toll booth agent needs to know how to charge for the vehicle. Part of the technology is providing directional information and security against incidental activations, requiring two strip activations for a complete crossing. Seeing the potential in this product, Robert founded TRMI, initially assembling treadles in his home garage with rubber supplied by Goodall Rubber Company in New Jersey.

Eventually, TRMI had moved to its current headquarters in Accord (just past Saunderskill Farms, if you're coming from Stone Ridge). The move was significant as TRMI acquired rubber processing equipment from



Steven and Lisa Rosakranse, of TRMI Systems Integration

Goodall Rubber Company, allowing for in-house production and assembly of treadles. This acquisition helped TRMI establish its presence in the toll collection systems market. Over the years, TRMI has manufactured over 50,000 treadles, including four and two-contact versions, as well as single strips, with many still in operation across the United States.

In the late 1970s, TRMI expanded its product line to include entire toll systems, covering roadway equipment, collector terminals and back-office administrative services. To give a sense of scope, TRMI supplied the first advanced toll system for the Golden Gate Bridge in 1981.

Today, TRMI's toll systems are installed across the country, from coast to coast and at the Canadian border. Lisa says that they've carved out a niche in the toll-collecting industry. "It's a competitive market and we are a very small company in the scheme of the industry," says Lisa. "We're in competition with large multi-billion-dollar companies and we've managed to find a niche in smaller toll systems." The company values its long-term relationships with clients and places customer support para-

mount, resulting in clients who with TRMI for decades.

All business owners know that businesses have their cycles and in 2014, TRMI was experiencing a down cycle. "It was a scary time," says Lisa. When Robert died in 2015, Lisa and Steven took up the helm of the business. "Right around when dad passed away, we got a few key contracts," says Lisa. "It was like he got up to heaven and started pulling some strings."

Next, Lisa and Steven hired a new CEO, Henry Kroll, who was up for the challenge to getting the business back on track and spearhead expansion. In the ensuing years the company has continued to grow their contracts and even expanded into ground transportation systems, including a system out of LAX airport that manages all incoming ground traffic as well as parking lot and garage management.

As the times have changed (goodbye dear tollbooths) the company has pivoted too, investing in research and design to keep up with industry trends and customer needs. "We're shifting towards a future that it's all going to go electronic, eventually," says Lisa. "We just gotta keep up with it. Things are always changing."

Today, TRMI employs 20 people in the Accord location (some of whom have been in the company for multiple decades) and Lisa says that part of the company's success is due to its' location. "It really benefits us to be here, without the rigmarole of being located in a city or urban environment and we know a lot of the people we do business with locally. We get some of our steel products from New Paltz, sheet metal from Rosendale and Poughkeepsie and these are long-term relationships with these people, which feels really good."

Looking back to look forward, Lisa says that they hope to continue to build the business that their father committed his life's work to. "It's just a company that he took quite a bit of pride in," says Lisa. "Even in the slim days he put all his efforts and financing into keeping it alive and he was very happy that my brother and I took it over. I think he'd be pretty proud about where it is now." **ESP**