

"THE SCOPE"

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Construction Specifications Institute, Inc. Website: www.csinet.org DECEMBER 2011

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DECEMBER 8, 2011

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NFSA MEETING

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2011
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For my last message of the year, I thought it fitting to publish my report presented to the Northeast Region Board Meeting, November 5, 2011. It is a good overview of our Chapter activities, our successes, our membership status quo, and our constant effort to alleviate financial support to the Region from our chapter members who contribute to the Region through their Institute dues.

BOARD REPORT



Northeast Region Board Meeting – November 5, 2011

DATE: October 28, 2011

TO: Northeast Region Board of Directors
 FROM: Elisabeth C. Godden, CSI Buffalo WNY Chapter President and Region Director
 SUBJECT: Report of the Buffalo WNY Chapter Director

A. Report Summary

1. The Buffalo WNY chapter is lucky that its current board members have become more actively involved in recent years and are enjoying an excellent attendance at work meetings, educational programs, as well as social gatherings. The contributions made by our board have afforded us a healthy avenue for communication with members and other leaders. Our oldest board member, Publication Editor and leadership contributor of over 50 years, has brought issues to the table for several years now regarding our finances and the mandatory region contributions that we have finally been able to voice to the Region and receive feedback on how to better our relationship with other Chapters in the Region and with the Region itself in an open and democratic way while improving the viability of our chapter growth and financial stability. The consensus has been that if we were able to keep more of our earnings from membership dues, we would be able to offer more to our members and thus increase membership in the future. This idea is not new to our board, it, however has finally made it out of local discussions into the "ears" of region leadership.

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B. The Report

1. **Summary of Activities since Last Report:** Our May meeting featured a presentation by Gary Wei of Inteplast Group Ltd entitled "Controlling Water Vapor Moisture Intrusion Through Concrete Slab-On-Grade", provided 1 HSW/SD AIA/CES learning credit and emphasized the important aspects of water vapor membranes. Our June meeting was a summer dinner at Root Five restaurant right on the shores of beautiful Lake Erie on a wonderful summer evening and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. July and August were hiatus months, as is our standard. September opened our meeting season with a presentation by Ted Czajkowski, Program director for the Buffalo/WNY Chapter, entitled "Division 01-General Requirements: Untangling the Knots", provided 1 AIA/CES learning credit and was a strictly academic presentation without product base. Our October meeting featured a presentation by Roy Thurston of Honeywell Security Group entitled "What is Video Analytics? It Improves Security, Creates Efficiency and Reduces Cost", provided 1 AIA/CES learning credit and displayed the many ways video surveillance can be programmed to look for specific occurrences. Very interesting.
2. **Status of Current Programs:** Our November meeting will feature a presentation by Deane Fox of ASSA ABBLOY entitled "Aesthetically Designed Architectural Door Openings" and will provide 1 AIA/CES learning credit. Our December meeting will be our traditional Holiday dinner at a location to be determined. The January meeting will feature a presentation by John Kimball of Wausau Window and Wall Systems entitled "Daylighting and Integrated Facade Design" and will provide 1 AIA/CES learning credit. We are endeavoring to add 3 more presentations to make a full afternoon with 4 AIA/CES learning credits. Our other 2012 dates are open.
3. **Problem areas:** The Buffalo WNY chapter has had difficulties in finding and keeping individuals willing to perform Region Director Duties and keeping past Chapters Presidents in active membership. We need to find ways to "divide and conquer" responsibilities in an effort not to burn out chapter leadership.
4. **Success stories:**
 - a. **Program Chair:** Our September meeting presentation was our first as a registered AIA/CES provider, went well and was well attended, with no no-shows (a first) and additional walk-in attendees. We hope to do at least 2 of these strictly academic presentations per year.
 - b. **Editor:** To the editor's knowledge, the Buffalo WNY newsletter, THE SCOPE, is the only hard copy distributed to it's chapter members in the Northeast Region. Advertising in the SCOPE is still \$75 for a calling card ad and \$50 for a sponsor ad. Presently there are 17 calling card ads and 2 sponsor ads. Why is the SCOPE not distributed electronically? First, our members like to receive chapter news the old fashion way, a paper copy to read at their convenience and a constant reminder of meetings. Second, a quote from a long time advertiser, "I read every copy of the SCOPE. If I were to receive the SCOPE electronically, I doubt if I would read it." The SCOPE is produced at a profit to the chapter.
 - c. **Certification Chair:** Since 2006, 1107 people have participated in one of the prep courses (CDT exam prep and CCCA exam prep) offered through Malcolm Pirnie/ARCADIS in conjunction with the CSI Buffalo WNY Chapter.

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Building the Future

5. Schedule of activities prior to next Board Meeting: Certification Chair:

- a. The Buffalo WNY Chapter will again hold a CDT exam prep course and a CCCA exam prep course for CSI's spring, 2012 certification exams; a mentoring program for CCS exam registrants is also available. This program is provided through Malcolm Pirnie/ARCADIS consulting engineers.
- b. A newsletter article advertising the program will be completed and circulated to Chapter members and other Buffalo WNY area entities, including AIA, ASCE, NSPE, the construction contractors' builders exchange, and others
- c. The prep courses are free of charge and feature webinar prep courses and an e-mail "listserver" with "one-a-day" (often two, three, or four-a-day) example CDT test questions, followed by answers with commentary.
- d. The program is open to CSI Buffalo WNY Chapter members and selected others from the Chapter's territory who register for one of the exams and contact the Chapter's certification chair to enroll in the course.

6. Changes in Chapter Membership since last report: The Buffalo WNY Chapter has a constant membership count of 55-60 members on average. Efforts to increase membership have not been successful. On the flip side; we have not had a significant reduction in membership despite the state of the current economy and have been able to add further educational value and participation to our monthly meetings by engaging luncheon sponsors/presenters in recent years. We find our limited budget a drawback to further the value of membership to our members as we would also like to offer events sponsored by the Chapter itself and not dependent on vendors. We do not wish to increase dues as we feel this will hinder membership renewal.

C. Suggestions for the benefit of the Region

The Buffalo WNY Chapter was asked recently to respond to two questions posed by the region. After consideration by our board we feel that they are important enough for inclusion in this portion of the report:

1. Does our Chapter support the idea of reducing Region Directors from 15 (one per chapter) to 4 or 5 so that there will be one region director per "district" for example Buffalo Rochester and Syracuse would have one Region Director? Buffalo WNY: **No we do not support this idea**, reducing the number of region representatives seems like a good idea although the logistics of "districts" needs to be discussed; we do not think we need to add another layer/level of bureaucracy. We also do not wish to dilute our vote, each chapter needs to have their own representative
2. What is ONE thing the region can do for the Buffalo WNY Chapter that would be useful? Buffalo WNY: The one thing the Region could do for the Buffalo Chapter is to **become self-sufficient**; depending only on the contributions received directly from the National CSI to the region while requiring no additional dues from individual chapters. This should be possible given the large reserve the region now has – it has plenty of time to reduce its spending to a budget in line with what it receives from the national institute. We do not recommend ADDED expenses.

Respectfully submitted;

Elisabete C. Godden, CSI
Buffalo WNY Chapter President and Region Director



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Have you heard [read] it? It's out there, more and more obvious and coming from more sources and being more openly and forcefully expressed by more and more people, They all see the same basic situation [in slightly varied forms, but in mutual intent, approach and results]. It is as if there is a growing discussion and buzz; as if a new truth has been discovered-- or, WAIT! Could it be that more people are onto the same conclusion, for the same reason, and it lies in the resurrection of an old principle [not something new; but something old being more fully coming back to mind as reality set in, a problem is being revealed again.

With this, though, the egg not the "chicken" does come first-- the egg? = the drawings! Oops, aren't the drawings the root source of information for, on, in and influencing the specs???? So the "package" we NEED TO ADDRESS is the drawings AND specifications. And the massive "trove" [???] of construction information we need to be able to draw from the deep well of construction knowledge has entered into our minds. [And not all from the internet! CAD/BIM, etc. or the previous work of others] and is essential, from fundamentals to the sophistication of flexibility and adaptive uses to meet varying conditions.

And that ain't in the curricula today-- why not? How can that be? How did it come about? Why? And for heaven's sake why do we continue to ignore the obvious as the expertise of our profession and work? And why is not CSI doing a little something to include a minimum orientation of drawing intent, content [construction info] and their interrelationship to the specs?

It is almost biblical that these two documents are SUPPLEMENTARY AND COMPLEMENTARY! That means they BOTH exist and relate one to the other. In that relationship doesn't it make sense to have equality and a level of information required to solidify the relationship and provide all necessary data to the contractors-- yielding a quality project via our expertise and properly executed documentation?

Recently Ms. O'Sullivan and Mr. Scarborough wrote blog entries regarding production of specifications-- and in something other than mediocre [Mr. Scarborough's word] form. Points well made! In addition, we suggest, you will find that they both address the matter of depth and breadth of construction knowledge. They see this, of course, as a major contributor to quality specs, BUT we would like to add the drawings-- both the concept of the drawings, and the quality of content. The point being, that the two documents exist in a manner that ties them together and hence the same construction knowledge is valid, useable and necessary in both.

Legally and functionally there are three Contract Documents. One we are not trained to fully understand and operate [the Agreement] and the other two that have a strong and important relationship. So how do you do your work or train others to do their work, that lies ahead, when you don't even address the topic or make a minimal [but hopefully productive] effort? Most unfathomable!! And surely CSI can develop a quality program based on the documents it publishes [about drawings] plus suitable augmentation.

Many of us can or are teaching, and I am sure many others with experience can bring construction information and knowledge out into the open. To me, it is not a matter for discussion! It is a matter far too long ignored and excused. By damned!! Architects and engineers doing buildings and construction MUST KNOW what "tools" they have at their disposal and how these can be fashioned to. IT IS A MATTER OF "CAN DO" and more shame on us if we don't [with your head in the sand, where is your other end?]

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Melio and his wife are the proud parents of three children. He is President of the Local Youth Baseball League. He enjoys playing Guitar, Dirt Biking, and Working Out.

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JANUARY 2012 SEMINAR

Our Chapter Program Chairman, Ted Czajowski, has assembled a seminar for January 12, 2012 at the Ramada Inn. Four programs have been signed up for the event and offering four AIA Credit Hours. Reserve this date for an all day seminar.



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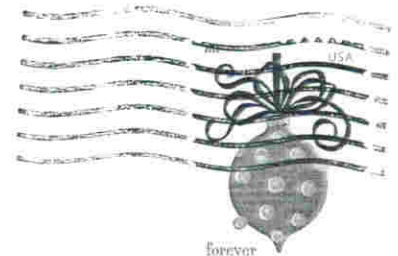
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