

December President' Message

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LEADERSHIP

Whether you are a trumpeting elephant or a dumbfounded donkey you may be having some thoughts about leadership after our nation's recent election. Myself and Terri Sudbrook, Vice-President of SCV CSI both participated in the West Regions Leadership Training hosted at the Embassy Suites Santa Ana on November 4 & 5. Leadership training is a region wide retreat and a chance for participants to share successes, challenges and ponder some of the questions surrounding CSI mission, membership and participation. It was quite interesting that participants were both people who had been members for less than 5 years, as well as members with upwards of 15 years.

CSI is a unique organization in which all construction professionals have equal standing and collaborate together with the common goal of improving the built environment. We offer education, certification, camaraderie and community in which to voice our issues. CSI exists to make construction professionals better at doing what we do. And most of the chapters deliver this benefit fully on volunteer effort! Approximately 40 people representing 12 of the 13 West Region chapters were present to discuss the CSI Mission, tools for success including responsibilities and privileges of board officers, Fiduciary duties and Institute news.

Sue Bowman, from Alexandria Virginia, presented on Institute news. At the Institute level, the Website is now functioning: www.csiresources.org. The Institute is still in recovery mode from the 14 months of data meltdown, but the path is unobstructed now and the tools for operations are in order. ONLINE REGISTRATION is working, and renewal is working as well. Cathy Stegmayer and Sue Bowman are available to respond to questions, and the Institute is proud that customer satisfaction and response time to questions have been getting excellent reception from the membership. Institute's goals for CSI recognition on a nationwide platform include:

- Members have state of the art technical expertise, and CSI is valued at all stages of careers.
- The construction industry recognizes CSI as the leading technical resource for the built environment.
- CSI is the go to association for leading edge tools. CSI standards and formats are integrated into current practice tools.
- Resources can be accessed through a variety of delivery mechanisms.
- Procurers of service seek out CSI members and certifiants.
- Aspiring Professionals join CSI to foster their knowledge.
- CSI credentials are recognized as the gold standard of competence.

In the afternoon, the group broke up into coaching sessions to share ideas on specific subjects such as Programs, Website, Awards, Certification and Newsletter. On Sunday, we again broke up into groups to brainstorm on assessing current Chapter health, examine what we are doing, and question where do we want to go, and how do we get there.

One concept that repeatedly came up was what we called the "Swarm"; which we came to recognize as a group effort without a designated leader. All the chapters reflected that this kind of activity was happening naturally among the volunteers.

MEETING MUSINGS

Santa Clara Valley Chapter was so fortunate in November to be graced with the presence of Gale Bate of Code Resource. Gale is a known code expert in the Bay Area, and he made a presentation on historical fires in the US and how they have affected the building codes. Components including gas lighting, electricity in building, exiting, exit signage, door hardware and operation all came under scrutiny and ultimately oversight by their roles in calamitous fires. Not to mention construction and interior finish materials. From the 1800's right up to current events such as Santana Row Fire, the World Trade Center fire, the Station Nightclub fire and Mission Bay fire of 2014 continue to shape the Building and Fire codes. It was a sobering lesson that every new construction method and material brings with it attendant possible hazards.

HOLIDAY FUN: as the holidays are in full feather now; be safe and enjoy the season of light, take time for family and friends! I hope to see you in January.