

## CONSTRUCTive Criticism

### President's Message

Maia Gendreau, CSI, CDT, AIA

I have to admit I had some concerns when I opened the in-flight magazine and topping the list of "the 10 best things to do in AUSTIN" was "watch the bats fly out of the Congress Street Bridge". Yeah, y'all, about a million of the little buggers live in the concrete arches of the bridge, and at evening all fly out en masse. Austin has the best designed cast iron utility vault covers anywhere, and they are all unique. Food trucks abound, and I was able to walk to not just one, but TWO Vegan trucks from the convention center. If heat and humidity remind you of vacationing in Mexico, the weather is awesome! The river is gorgeous, surrounded by recreation trails right in the heart of downtown.

But the real reason I was in AUSTIN was to go to CONSTRUCT, the CSI National Convention. The Education sessions followed six different tracks, and were offered from 7:30 am until 5:15 pm. Some of the best sessions I went to revolved around waterproofing and "perfect wall" construction.

In Tiffany Coppock's session, "Terminations, Penetrations and Transitions", many different types of waterproofing system components were laid out on tables, along with a substrate: either a wood framed corner, a metal framed corner, a bit of wall with a pipe sticking out, or a bit of masonry wall. First, Tiffany presented on the differences of air and water barriers, and how these might be used in different climate and humidity zones. Wall protection construction variables including Liquid Moisture, Heat, Air and Vapor Moisture were discussed, also touching on Fire and Acoustics. We reviewed ASTM standards, accentuating the differences between material or product standards and wall assembly standards. Pros and Cons of different types of membranes were discussed. Then some basic detailing strategies were presented. After the lecture the real fun began; we worked in pairs on a bit of sample wall to construct the manufacturer's detail using the materials at hand. As an architect, it was illuminating to realize that an "equivalent" product may follow a completely different installation strategy than one you are familiar with! Take away message: be very familiar with the product you are specifying, and how the manufacturer intends it to be utilized!

If the opportunity arises to hear Ed Close and Cheryl Ciecko speak on "Dangerous Buildings, Why Moisture Matters" believe me, do not hesitate! Ed Close opened the presentation with a concise presentation on mold, mold growth and mitigation. Also the bit of knowledge that bleach is no longer a recommended strategy for mitigation, the volatile components of bleach simply evaporate, leaving behind plenty of mold-enhancing water! Ed recommends mold mitigation via Ultraviolet light, and natural aerosols for occupied spaces, and oxides or methyl bromide for unoccupied spaces.

Cheryl then took the floor, and presented on four fundamentals of weather protection; the 4 D's: Deflection, Drainage, Drying, and Durability. She also had a nifty chart that divided the country up into basically four weather categories: Hot-Dry, Cold Dry, Hot-Wet and Cold-Wet. Following some very simple principles of wall system selection, and drainage strategies, Cheryl was able to simplify the concept of perfect wall construction to a level everyone could comprehend. I am confident I was not the only architect in the room enjoying this program!

In addition to the bountiful and unique education opportunities, CONSTRUCT provided plenty of time to meet new colleagues, see and learn about products at the Exhibit Hall and have fun with friends. Mark Dorsey, CEO of CSI, and Board Chairs Lane Beougher, FCSI, CCs, CCCA led the member forum and made a short presentation on what is happening at Institute level. Next year CONSTRUCT will be hosted in Providence RI, September 13 to 16, 2017, it's a great opportunity.

### MEETING MUSINGS

The September meeting, “The Bay Area’s Most Dangerous Buildings”, was presented by Joseph Quilici, P.E. S.E. Joe’s presentation on the hazards of soft story buildings and possible retrofit solutions was entertaining, fascinating and relevant to the Bay Area. Especially interesting was the census on how many of these buildings exist in the counties and cities surrounding the San Francisco Bay. Many thanks to Bob Hemphill, who was instrumental in coordinating this meeting.

#### INSTITUTE INFORMATION

The Institute is rolling out a new website, [CSlresources.org](http://CSlresources.org). The interface may seem familiar to those of you who frequent a social media site that begins with F and rhymes with SpaceNook. I know we will all be glad to see ‘Mr. Headache’ take a hike from the homepage and have better utility. The new website is having a slow rollout, first testing with leaders, then it will open up to the whole membership. The website is planned to be interactive, so the more you put into it, the more interface you will get from it.

Also please be reminded that Institute offers free monthly webinars, which will show on your homepage in the new site. Pre-registration is required, and webinars are no charge!