

Talking Points

In his editorial "Talking Points: Governance," (May 2004, pg. 46) Jeremy Isenberg, President of the SEI/ASCE used his space to advocate a position on a controversial issue within ASCE. In my view, and I am a member of SEI, he is wrong. The "Institute" movement within ASCE is just coming into its own, where engineers and contractors are effectively banding together to get the best job done. As a matter of fact, NCSEA, CASE and SEI are at the heart of one of the most important parts of that movement.

The same sort of coalition of technical interests is occurring at the local level within ASCE geographic sections and regions. This is where Jeremy Isenberg is mis-using his editorial page for his personal interests. STRUCTURE and its Editorial Board should confine such dedicated organization pages to the technical part of the industry and about issues which effect that type of thing. After all, I could have diversity or environmental ethics issues which I might want to editorialize about, and I don't get that opportunity.

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The full text of Mr. Berry's letter can be viewed on the STRUCTURE magazine website - www.structuremag.org/inbox.htm

Editorial May

In mid March, I wrote to STRUCTURE Magazine objecting to the articles regarding the death of SERMC, which is untrue. In the May 2004 issue, another article, this one by Mr. Gary Ten Eyck, continued the series. I continue to object to the implications presented in the articles, as the information is one-sided and not entirely correct. The articles would better be titled OP/ED pieces.

My comments on the most recent article include:

1. The goal of the SERMC organization was never to "better the practice of structural engineering globally".

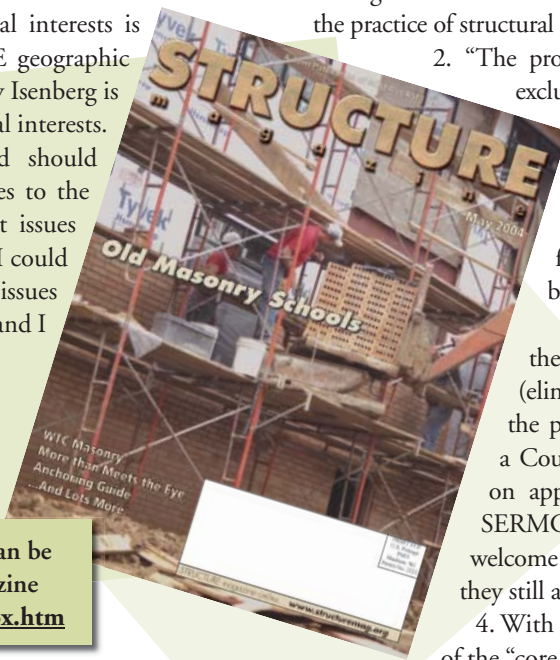
2. "The programs and publications remained exclusive to DPIC insureds." This is a true statement, and everyone involved knew this to be the case from the onset of SERMC. Legally this was required because the program was funded by insurance premiums paid by DPIC insureds.

3. In January 2003, DPIC dissolved the corporate structure of SERMC (eliminating the mandatory funding of the program), but retained SERMC as a Council with an annual budget based on approved tasks. Those involved in SERMC previous to January 2003 were welcome to continue their participation... they still are welcome for that matter.

4. With regard to the August 2003 meeting of the "core group" on alignment with another insurance company, I object to the statement "while there were several attractive proposals, it was felt that this would not be in the best interest of SERMC". This core group did not speak for SERMC, at that time was not involved with SERMC (I as President of SERMC was not at the meeting), and thus could not speak for SERMC. The "core group" had no real ability to deliver the DPIC insureds to another insurance company.

5. SEI, CASE and NCSEA could not "offer to become partners with SERMC" because they did not contact me or DPIC. Offering to partner with former DPIC insureds (the "core group?") is not partnering with the current SERMC.

Respectfully,
John Dal Pino
SERMC President
Degenkolb Engineers



Structural Engineering Certification Board Starts Work

The Structural Engineering Certification Board officially started work with their first meeting on June 19, 2004. The SECB, as it will be commonly referred to, has started raising operating funds, staffing committees and organizing its management staff. The new board will have 7 members, with 6 of the 7 already selected. The four engineer members are James T. Slider P.E., Ronald O. Hamburger, S.E., Sanjeev Shah, P.E., and Marc S. Barter, P.E., S.E. Two of the three stakeholder positions have been filled with the appointments of Carl Meyer AIA and Dan Bradshaw CPCU. At press time, the Board was interviewing candidates to fill the last position. In addition to the Board, the organization will rely heavily on volunteers serving on the various SECB committees. Currently there are several openings on the credentialing, education, marketing and examination committees. Individuals interested in serving on these committees should contact the SECB at secb@bellsouth.net.

As part of the overall effort to get the program going, many of you have received information in the mail soliciting early payment of certification fees; and a great number of you have endorsed the program with your responses. Anyone who did not receive a packet in the mail may download the introductory letter and forms from the SECB web site at www.secertboard.org.

The Structural Engineering Certification Board was formed under the auspices of NCSEA, to operate as an autonomous organization whose sole purpose is to serve the public and the structural engineering profession through certification of structural engineers. The ultimate success of the program will depend on the profession's endorsement through participation.

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