

Specigram

Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Chapter,
Construction Specifications Institute

October 2016



Tour of Matthews Bronze Division October 18

1315 West Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh 15226

THIS MONTH

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Free Parking Available on site.

Tour begins at 5:00 p.m.

Eye and ear protection will be provided.

Dinner following:

Calabria's

3107 Library Road

Castle Shannon, PA 152324

Cost: \$35

RSVP to Marc Zell

MAZell@NationalGypsum.com

(412) 951-8715

President's Message

October 2016

by Richard Strayer
President, CSI Pittsburgh



Dear Chapter Members,

Our October chapter meeting is being moved to October 18th to accommodate a tour of the Matthews International facility. Details of the time, location and other information are in this Specigram. I hope you can make the tour.

Matthews is a global business with three major segments. Everyone knows of the Matthews Memorialization Service segment where funeral, cemetery, and architectural products are produced. This division has expanded to also provide cremation and waste incineration services.

Matthews' Brand Solutions segment works with companies to help develop product awareness for its customers through strategy and product identification/development assistance.

The third segment of Matthews has sophisticated automated technologies to identify, track, and control products. A portion of this service includes sophisticated printing capabilities.

Tours and guest speakers are the backbone of CSI. We use these strategies at our monthly meetings to educate and provide actual business insight to our members and guests. We hope they are also fun in addition to the educational benefits.

Can you find a way to bring a friend to our next meeting? We are always looking for new faces and fresh ideas!

Thanks for your continued support.



Highlights from the Board

October 2016

September 13 at Cefalo's

President's Remarks: V-P Thornton (presiding) noted next year's Institute Convention will be in Providence, RI, Sept 13-15, 2017. Thornton also noted that the Columbus OH Chapter has received a grant to advance the CDT at Columbus Univ.

Treasurer: Bailey needs funds for archiving. Amended budget approved.

Hospitality: Holiday Party: Initial invitations have gone out and 6 vendors are already committed.

Programs: Bailey noted October meeting will be tour of Matthews Bronze on the 18th which requires moving our traditional meeting day (2nd Tuesday of the month) back a week. November still being finalized.

Website: Schuster noted all positions have been updated, and advertising rates are listed again.

Publicity: No postcards went out for September. Brian Trimble indicated he would take over for Miller.

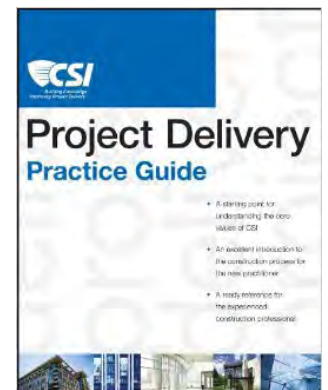
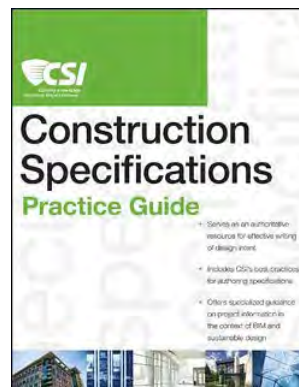
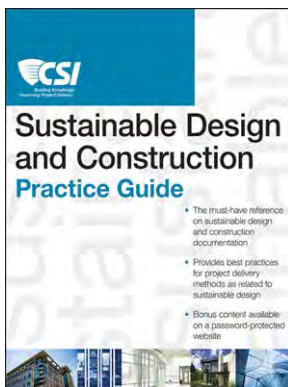
Membership: Carnegie reviewed membership report; asked that if we know anyone up for renewal to please reach out to them.

Certification: Bosco noted exams running Sept 26 - Dec 10. Applications have been cut off.

Awards: Region Awards due Dec. 31.

Golf Outing this Thursday.

MARC 2017 committee meeting next week.



What My CSI Certification Means to Me

October 2016

by Dennis Buirge, RA, CSI, CCS, CCCA

How does one initiate preparation of construction specifications without having any instruction on proper writing protocol?

In my case, after being volunteered to prepare my first project manual in the mid-80s, signing up for Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) Pittsburgh Chapter's specification writing Certification Class was a first course of action. Essentially this was a necessity, since my architectural education centered on design, design, and then more design. At that time, no collegiate course was available on office practice or specifications. Several years later while taking the 5 day, 44 hour Architectural Registration Examination (ARE), a couple of technical questions on specifications were included, but nothing on proper writing protocol.



Therefore joining the Pittsburgh Chapter and attending its Class meant a great deal, learning specification writing basics and more. At that point, initials after my name included RA and CSI.

The amount of information learned in the Certification Class was sufficient to consider pursuing my first CSI Certification: Certified Construction Specifier (CCS). BTW, the current prerequisite Certificate, the Construction Documents Technologist (CDT), did not exist at that time. Shortly after completing the Pittsburgh Chapter's Certification Class, I was sitting at the examination site with questions before me. Upon finishing that four hour examination, it was one of the few tests taken when I knew passing was not an issue ... taking the exam without attending the Chapter's Class would have ended in certain failure. At that point, initials after my name included RA, CSI, and CCS.

After a few passing years, I was volunteered to assist with one of the CCS module classes, specifically on specification writing protocol. Multiple more years passed where my name was included as one of the course instructors. And then, CSI introduced another Certification for those involved with construction activities: Certified Construction Contract Administrator (CCCA). Once again I found myself sitting at another examination site with questions before me, this time for the first year of its offering ... taking the exam ended in failure. With this test being brand new, the Chapter did not yet have a course module on construction administration. Exam results the second year were positive. Having that certification, I was then volunteered to teach the CCCA module of the Chapter's Certification Class. All total, approximately a dozen years were spent instructing parts of the CCS and CCCA modules. At that point, initials after my name now included, RA, CSI, CCS, and CCCA. While remaining active in the design community, retaining those groups of initials after my name will be a continued goal; no additional initials will be pursued.

The remaining CSI Certification relates to those involved in the marketing and sales of construction related products, the Certified Construction Product Representative (CCPR). BTW, any manufacturer's representative holding a CCPR Certification automatically receives first priority when visiting my office and is generally my first call when seeking specific product information. While the CDT certificate is a lifetime award requiring no renewal, the three CSI Certifications mandate renewal every three years with educational credits.

If you are involved in the design community, have you considered obtaining either of those Certifications ... CCS or CCCA? If you are involved in the marketing and sales of construction related products, have you considered obtaining that Certification ... CCPR? If you require additional information on any of the four aforementioned CSI Certifications or their prerequisite Certificate ... CDT, please contact someone holding one of them or one of the Pittsburgh Chapter board members.

Member Profile - *Bruce Pollock*

October 2016

What is your company and what is your position?

I am one of the managing principals of RSSC Architecture. Founded by Jack Ross, RSSC Architecture is located in Wexford and has been in business for over 50 years. In a few months, I will celebrate my 20th anniversary at the firm.

What is your education background? Undergrad? Grad?

I grew up in Louisville, Kentucky and came to Pittsburgh in 1989 to study architecture at Carnegie Mellon University. I have just gone back to school to complete prerequisites for an MBA.



How many years have you been in the industry?

I have been in the industry for 22 years but I have been working on construction projects since I helped my dad by holding his work light and crawling into spots that were too small for him.

If you weren't in your current job, what would you be doing?

I have wanted to be an architect since the 9th grade but my second choice college major was biology.

What was your first job?

My first job was data entry work for a boutique home cleaning company. I did all my work on an IBM Portable computer which was only portable if you could easily lift 30 pounds in a case the size of a carry-on bag.

What year did you join CSI?

1999

What position(s) do you presently hold with CSI?

I have recently been elected to the Pittsburgh Chapter Board of Directors

What part of your job do you most enjoy?

Being there when a client gets to use their building for the first time.

Why did you join CSI?

When I started at Design 3 Architecture Mike Moyta encouraged me to earn my CDT certification. It was one of the most valuable learn experiences in the process of studying for the Architectural Registration Exam. After I passed the registration exam I joined CSI and continued learning through the certification program.

Member Profile - *Bruce Pollock* (cont'd)

October 2016

What do you see as the value of CSI membership?

The technical education and fellowship. There is someone in CSI who can answer any building industry related question.

What CSI certifications have you earned?

I earned my CDT in 1996, my CCS in 2000, and my CCA in 2002.

Tell us a memorable CSI experience.

Touring the North Shore Connector Tunnel before the tracks were installed for the T extension to Heinz Field.

Tell us about your family.

My wife DaMisha and I live in Avalon. We have 5 nieces and 2 nephews.

What are your hobbies?

Home renovation, backpacking and wilderness camping.

What would people be surprised to know about you?

My second summer job was as a backpacking instructor (Ranger) at Philmont Scout Ranch outside of Cimarron, New Mexico. The first was working in the dining hall at Philmont which earned me the chance to work in the backcountry the next year. I have returned four times since then to lead 10 day trips with my Boy Scout Troop and Venturing Crew.

Program Meeting Sponsors wanted!!

**Are you interested in getting your name and face and products
in front of the group?**

Take advantage of our program sponsor opportunities!
For only \$50 you will receive sponsorship credit for the meeting,
3 minutes to address the meeting audience at the podium,
and the opportunity to have a tabletop display if you so choose.

Contact [Bob Bailey](#).

My Experience at CONSTRUCT 2016

October 2016

by Daniel Gowin, M.Arch.

On the 7th of September I attended Construct 2016 in Austin, Texas. Not only was this my first CSI convention but my first convention I have attended while being a part of the design profession. I have been an Architectural Intern at IKM Inc. in Pittsburgh for a year and a half. It's a firm that focuses predominantly on healthcare but my interests are in the educational field. With that context given I hope to illustrate to you, the reader, that everything I experienced at Construct was a learning opportunity.

Over the three-day span in Austin, I tried filling as much time as I could with seminars and touring the city with the hope of cramming in as much information as I could to really get the most out of the trip. I really appreciated that the event maintained a nice balance between informational content and social activity, because I quickly became mentally and physically exhausted drawing in all of this new information.

The social activities created a much needed pause from the action to have some quality interactions from the fellow attendees, most of whom were experienced members of CSI. Being new to the event I was thankful for having special activities for young professionals. At times the amount of content available was intimidating and it was comforting to know other young professionals were at a similar level to myself, still trying to grasp an understanding of the entire design process.

The educational sessions as well as the social events presented a wealth of knowledge. To be very honest, a lot of the information I came across was so detailed that I had trouble equating it to something that I had used in the office. The way I typically learn is by application. And for so many construction components to be displayed in front of me, I glazed over a lot of it. Only a few products really caught my eye because I could compare them to something familiar.

There were a few outstanding booths for me, all for different reasons. I enjoyed the VR demonstration booth for its interactivity and presentation of how the technology can directly influence the design field. Being able to remodel the environment around you at real time and at 1:1 scale was very impressive. A small booth for R-Stud was also intriguing because of its subtle change to a very common product that could make a large impact on noise control in a building. I had fun at the Behr booth just because it allowed me to have a moment to relax and paint a little. The theme for booths that successfully caught my eye were the ones that presented something new and something different that stood apart from the crowd as well as offer some level of interactivity.



Dan relaxing at Maggie Mae's during "CSI Night Out" on the last night of the convention.

CONSTRUCT Experience (cont'd)

October 2016

A similar theme is true for the seminars I chose to attend. I felt fortunate in that I could select from the instructional sessions that better suited my interests. I saw presentations on ARE prep, high efficiency curtainwall systems, and a case study on formwork for cast in place concrete.

While all did offer valuable information, the session that really wowed me was James Benham's Game Changer presentation. The integration of emerging technologies into the construction process and all of the possibilities to make construction management easier fascinated me. I have been pursuing the use of drones in our office as a means of documenting completed projects, but I completely overlooked how it could be applied to the design and even construction phases. It could become a very powerful tool and push the way designers think. To me, that is very exciting.

As helpful as these sessions were, I think the most advantageous part of the entire convention was the networking. Being relatively new to the profession I always marveled at my coworker, Bob Bailey and his ability to know so many people that would come through our office. After attending Construct, I can see how it has come so easily to him. Of the many professionals I interacted with, I was able to build a rapport with a few. But those few will always be available for the rest of my career.

The main point of Construct was making personal connections to others in the design profession. It's not all about learning as much information as possible, it is about knowing those experts that can help you find the information you need. I am thankful I had the opportunity to attend, and make the connections I did.

Help Wanted!!

Do you want to make a difference in this Chapter?

Volunteers are needed!

Please contact Chapter president Rich Strayer if interested.

GBA Liason

The Chapter needs someone to manage and cultivate the relationship with Pittsburgh's Green Building Alliance.

Student Outreach

The Chapter needs someone to manage and cultivate the relationship with local colleges and universities such as CMU, Chatham and The Art Institute.

CONSTRUCT 2016

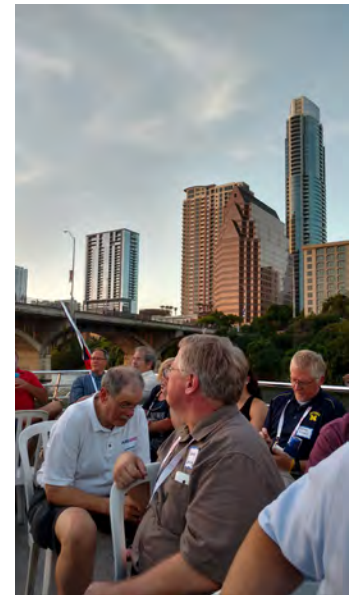
October 2016



Marty Thornton accepts the Outstanding Chapter Commendation for Pittsburgh



Catherine Houska presented with Institute Technical Award



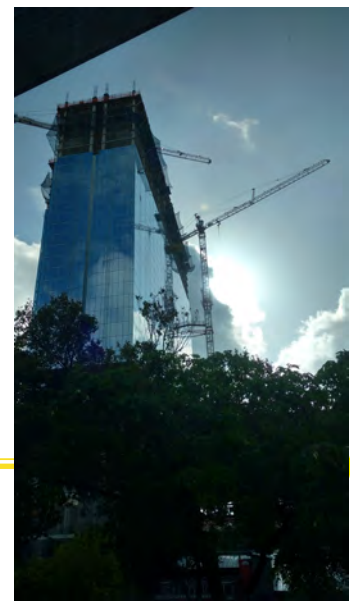
Aboard the PPG-sponsored "Bat Cruise". A colony of 1.5 million Mexican free-tailed bats call the underside of the Congress Avenue Bridge their home, and emerge each evening at dusk. Crowds gather on the bridge.



Bob Bailey presented with Institute Communications Award

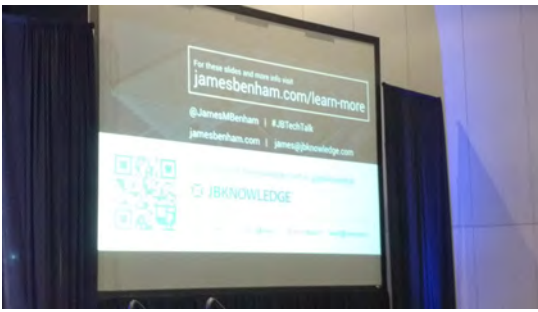


Mitch Miller and Bill Brightbill



CONSTRUCT 2016

October 2016



James Benham's Game Changer presentation was outstanding for its review of new technology that is changing how architects and contractors work.



Catherine Houska and Dave Metzger



"CSI Night Out" at Maggie Mae's



At the general membership meeting.



Austin's party street, Sixth Street was closed to motor vehicle traffic on Friday night.

Last Month's Meeting

October 2016

On September 13, Betsy Ennis Dulin, an attorney and engineer, presented "Controlling Risk Through Information Management."



Mid-Atlantic Region Conference 2017

October 2016

MARC 2017

May 19-21, 2017 Pittsburgh, PA



Conference Headquarters: Sheraton Station Square, south side Pittsburgh.

Primary Participants: CSI members from the 14 chapters that comprise the Middle Atlantic Region: Erie/Northwest PA, North Central PA, Pittsburgh, PA Railroad, Central PA, Allentown, Philadelphia, Northern VA, Baltimore, DC Metro, Central VA, Richmond, Tidewater, Blue Ridge.

Sponsorships are available!

Contact Bob Bailey bbailey@ikminc.com
or Marc Zell MAZell@NationalGypsum.com

Education Sessions
Tours of local High-Tech organizations
Keynote Speakers
Dinner Cruise on the Rivers
and much more!

Region Report

October 2016

By Gail Nagie, CSI Middle-Atlantic Region President

After returning from Construct in Austin Texas the Region is moving forward with a search for new members. Our membership numbers have dropped to under 9000 members. Each chapter is being challenged to increase its membership numbers. How do we do that? We enlighten others to the value of a CSI membership, not to mention the friendships that come to all.

So I challenge each member of CSI to seek out one person in the construction field who currently is not a member. Invite them to a meeting, encourage them to join and become part of the best organization improving construction through a common language.

Maybe you know someone who was a member and allowed their membership to lapse. Invite them back. Remind them of the good things a membership can do for them. Hand them an application to join. Welcome them home and back into the fold. If each member signs up one new member our numbers will grow sharply and we will all gain with the expanded talent within our organization.

Ask a friend to join CSI and let's put Pittsburgh on the top of the growth chart!

Fall Golf Outing



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October 2016

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