

Notes from the Editor's Desk



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If you ever want to have some fun, invite a bunch of structural engineers to a party, give them all a few drinks, and then start expounding on how LRFD is the next best thing to sliced bread.

Just make sure all the sharp objects are carefully hidden.

Seriously, I'm always amazed at how resistant many engineers are to the inevitable switch from Allowable Stress Design to Load and Resistance Factor Design. While some of the ASD adherents have carefully reasoned rationales, most seem simply resistant to change. And to some degree, this latter group has a point. One of the biggest difficulties with the acceptance of LRFD is the problem of how to learn the methodology.

Fortunately, AISC has come up with a solution (which is only fair, after all, since they're the one committed to transitioning the industry to LRFD).

This year's North American Steel Construction Conference will offer a 10-hour tutorial (spread over three days) on LRFD. The goal of the tutorial is to provide practicing engineers and fabricators with all the information about designing with LRFD that they would have received if they had just graduated from school. If your company is considering transitioning from ASD to LRFD, or if you just want to shortcut the learning curve, this course will give you the tools to succeed.

Faculty for the course is Penn State's Louis F. Geschwindner (who mentored two members of AISC's engineering staff) and Kurt Swensson, president of KSi Structural Engineers in Atlanta.

Attendance at the tutorial is free with your regular registration to the NASCC (\$325 for advance registration of AISC members and \$450 for non-AISC members). The course is scheduled so that attendees will also have a chance to attend a few additional technical

seminars, as well as the T.R. Higgins Lecture (which coincidentally was won this year by none other than Lou Geschwindner).

This year's NASCC is scheduled for Las Vegas from February 23-26. If you haven't been to Las Vegas in a few years, you're in for a shock. While the cheap buffets are getting harder and harder to find, extravagant architecture is sprouting like daisies. From a "live" volcano to a full-scale pirate raid to a half-scale replica of the Eiffel Tower, Las Vegas has become a fascinating place to visit—whether you're interested in gambling or not.

In addition to a wide range of technical sessions (from sessions on designing steel joists to discussions of welding issues in steel erection), the conference offers an extensive exhibit hall featuring everything from the latest structural engineering software to innovative seismic systems.

And if you still need another reason for being in Las Vegas at the end of February, then consider who else will be there. The roster of attendees at recent NASCC conferences reads like a who's who of the design community. From Ted Galambos to Jim Fisher, the NASCC is a prime opportunity to meet the industry's leaders as well as to network with other professionals involved in the design, detailing, fabrication and erection of structural steel.

If you don't already have a copy of the NASCC Advance Program, fax 312/670-5403 and AISC will be happy to send one out. Or, if you have internet access, you can view the entire brochure at www.aisc.org.