



Notes from the Editor

Scott L. Melnick

Cars, bicyclists, pedestrians and more cars weave a pulsating tapestry of complex mergers and turnings—that's about the best description I can give of Beijing. As fast as roads are built, they fill with traffic, and traffic signals are all but non-existent. Amazingly, the combination of cars, bikes and pedestrians yield almost no collisions—at least none that I saw (though I admit I had my eyes closed half the time).

But if you have some time off coming, and if you've never been to China, I heartily recommend you plan your next vacation for the Orient. Airfares are low, hotel rates reasonable, and the food is delicious and incredibly inexpensive. Plus, the sites—ranging from the Great Wall (you can see a snippet of it in the background of the picture above) to the Forbidden City—are fascinating. As an added bonus, shopping is fun and the people are uniformly friendly.

I was in Beijing recently to attend the Pacific Steel Construction Conference, which is held every third year in a Pacific Rim country. This year's conference was naturally dominated by Chinese speakers (referring to their nationality, not language, as English was the official language of the conference) and it was intriguing to get a snapshot view of the state of design and construction in Asia. In addition to listening to the speakers, the purpose of my trip was to invite the next conference to the U.S., a bid which was accepted. In 2004 we'll be holding the Pacific Steel Construction Conference in conjunction with the North American Steel Construction Conference in Long Beach, CA.

But before you mark your calendars for March 24-27, 2004, make sure you black out April 24-27, 2002 for next year's North American Steel Construction Conference in Seattle.

In addition to the more than 40 technical sessions (ranging from connection design to welding procedures to crane selection), this year's conference features three short courses, two tutorials and a fabricator workshop where steel industry professionals can exchange ideas. This year's NASCC also has added an entire track on seismic design in addition to the standard engineering, fabrication, detailing and erection tracks.

The conference is also an ideal networking venue. It's an opportunity to rub elbows with some of the leading designers, distinctive fabricators and qualified detailers. Each of the last three conferences has attracted more than 2,000 attendees and filled more than 200 exhibit booths, making the NASCC *the* place for design and construction professionals to meet and learn.

AISC also is encouraging more young professionals to attend. This year the NASCC is offering steep discounts for people who have graduated within the past five years.

For more information on the conference, please visit www.aisc.org/nascc.html or call 312.670.2400.

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