

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR



Scott L. Melnick

Years ago, when I would drive through Long Island with my parents, my dad would proudly point out his “favorite” buildings. At the time, my folks owned a subcontracting firm and my dad’s favorites were always projects on which he had worked.

Of course, there are other reasons that people choose their favorite buildings. Anna Petroski, president of QMC (the company that audits fabrication and erection companies for AISC certification), is enamored with Chicago’s Blue Cross/Blue Shield Building. It’s not just that the building is “light and airy.” She’s also impressed that it was designed in such a way that it could accommodate a vertical expansion—without disrupting the current tenants.

Todd Alwood, one of the AISC Steel Solutions Center Advisors, also takes a structural bent in his attraction to the Boeing Building in Chicago. If you’re not familiar with the structure, it’s the one that “has the cool, exposed-cantilevering trusses, which support the building over the existing railroad tracks.”

Still, I think that for most people in our industry, their favorites are usually buildings on which they’ve worked—and often it’s the one they’ve most recently completed. If you fall into this latter category, consider entering the building into either the Engineering Awards of Excellence or Innovative Design and Excellence in Architecture with Steel Awards (the winners of which are featured in this issue).

Awards are given to both large and small structures (as measured by their price tag), ranging from a cooling plant to a high-rise office tower. While the IDEAS Awards focus on aesthetics, the EAE awards look for innovation. The EAE awards are presented each year



The Blue Cross/Blue Shield Building, 300 E. Randolph St., Chicago, is designed for vertical expansion without disrupting current tenants.



The Boeing Building, 100 N. Riverside, Chicago. The low-rise portion (lower left in photo) is cantilevered over active railroad tracks.

at the North American Steel Construction Conference, while the IDEAS Awards are given at the AIA Show.

Entries are not due until early 2004, but it’s not too soon to start working on yours.

If you’d like more information on how to enter either of these competitions, please email ledonne@aisc.org or visit www.aisc.org.

Clarification

In last month’s discussion of service centers, I used a poor choice of words in my discussion of price advantages that service centers receive in purchasing steel. Mills such as Nucor-Yamato report that they sell steel for the same price to all of their customers. The difference comes only when a small quantity of steel is purchased (when the steel is not ordered in sufficient quantity to make up a “bundle”) and a premium is charged. Since by their nature service centers are set up to warehouse steel, they usually can avoid bundling surcharges.

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