



Steel has its Day

BY CHRIS MOOR

If the question “What are you doing for SteelDay this year?” isn’t familiar yet, it very well may be in the future. This September 18 marks the first annual day dedicated to the structural steel industry.

THE STRUCTURAL STEEL INDUSTRY

OFTEN flies under the radar. Communities don’t always realize there is a structural steel fabricator or service center right in their own backyard, perhaps even their zip code. In fact, when they hear the word “steel,” they think of dirty factories in “industrial areas” spewing pollution into our environment. Of course, those of us in the industry know that this image couldn’t be farther from the truth.

Today’s structural steel industry is a modern, efficient business that uses some of the most advanced and efficient technologies, tools, and processes available. Steel is the most recycled material on the planet, and in terms of environmental friendliness there is no greener building material out there.

Opening the Doors

But oftentimes, people need to be shown something rather than just told it, and this is where SteelDay comes in. If you haven’t heard about it yet, SteelDay is an AISC-sponsored day promoting and celebrating the fabricated structural steel industry. It is a unique opportunity for steel industry players to open their facilities to the public and show them how their processes work, provide hands-on education about the latest advances in our industry, and put to rest any notions the steel supply chain as an inefficient, earth-harming juggernaut. On top of this, SteelDay can serve as an interactive networking day for members of the design, construction, and steel communities. Across the nation, steel fabricators, mills, service centers, galvanizers, HSS producers, bender-rollers, and others will open their facilities, jobsites, and offices, offering tours and inviting the AEC community and

general public to see how the steel industry contributes to building America.

The idea for SteelDay was borne out of AISC’s Industry Mobilization program, an initiative dedicated to aligning the various players in the structural steel industry and promoting the industry on a grass-roots level across the country. As part of this initiative, AISC hosted various seminars and facility tours for architects and engineers showing off steel fabrication plants, service centers, and mills. The feedback from these events was incredibly positive, with many participants requesting tours at other types of facilities.

For example, AISC member Lyman Zolvinski, president of structural engineering consulting firm Zolvinski Engineering in Michigan City, Ind., attended an AISC seminar at a service center last year and hoped to see more fabricator and mill tours become available in his area. “A wealth of information can be obtained by visiting service centers, fabricators, and mills that can’t be put into literature,” he says. “It also keeps one up to date on the latest supply and fabrication techniques and availability.” (On September 18, Zolvinski plans to attend a mill tour at AISC member Steel Dynamics, Inc. in Columbia City, Ind.)

With comments like these, it became clear rather quickly that we were onto something that people found really engaging. Rather than continuing to do ad-hoc events on random days, we decided to try another approach altogether, focusing our efforts into one large, national event: SteelDay.

We spent several months planning, preparing, and sharing the SteelDay idea with our members, and by the time we officially

announced SteelDay on April 22, we had more than 100 events scheduled in 43 states. (As of this writing, we have more than 150 events happening in 48 states.) SteelDay will be a massive event for structural steel and will provide (and is already providing) tremendous exposure to the industry. At a time when the economy weighs so heavily on people’s minds, SteelDay has created excitement and anticipation, and has given the design and construction community something to look forward to—not only on the actual day itself but also as the economy begins to rev up again.

Tours, Seminars, and Presentations

Attendees of SteelDay events will get to interact with structural steel industry professionals, tour facilities and jobsites, and attend seminars and presentations. They’ll learn about the advances the structural steel industry has made toward a sustainable environment and get first-hand knowledge of how design can affect production and efficiency—positively or negatively. They’ll get to witness advanced technology in action—e.g., they’ll see how the steel industry has taken advantage of building information modeling (BIM) for more than 20 years and how this method has streamlined production and increased efficiency. And in the end they’ll go away with new relationships and contacts, and will be better equipped to build high-performance projects that have minimal impact on our planet—on time, on budget, and using steel.

SteelDay events range from the very simple (“come on over and we’ll show you around”) to the very complex (“we’ll take you on a journey spanning the entire supply chain”) and everything in-between.



Photos: Geoff Weisenberger

Chicago's Millennium Park (right photo) will play host to SteelDay's flagship event.

The industry has stepped up to the plate in unprecedented fashion to put our every process on show for the world to see and experience.

Wabash Steel in Vincennes, Ind., for example, is hosting an all-day event for local architects, engineers, contractors, and even students. The AISC-member and Certified fabricator, which pursues work across the Midwest, will be running guided facility tours every half-hour and even serving lunch. Lori Gillett, president of Wabash, emphasizes the opportunity for visitors to see advanced steel fabrication machinery in operation, up close. "They can talk to the employee who programmed our plasma machine or ask the operator who's punching stiffeners how he keeps up with the fully automated Fabripunch," she says. "I promise you that it will be educational."

Brian Smith, general manager/CFO of AISC-member bender-roller Albina Pipe Bending Co., Inc. in Tualatin, Ore., notes that many in the design community "have never had an opportunity to see, first-hand, steel being bent." According to Smith, Albina decided to host a tour to "help educate people in pipe, tube, and structural steel bending in the hopes that attendees will better understand the process and not shy away from working with or designing future projects out of bent steel."

All the way across the country in Fort Howard, Md., Dennis McCartney of AISC member B&B Welding Company, Inc. explains, "We are hosting a SteelDay event to help extol the beauty of steel in construction, as well as the beauty of the interoperability of design, estimating, detailing, and bar-coding software, and state-of-the art CNC fabrication equipment. Architects, engineers, and students should attend our event to have a greater appreciation of the assumed safety, beauty, and utility of the many structures they pass over or pass by during their day's activities." B&B is hosting a facility tour, followed by a celebration and pig roast!

And then there's Texas. Everything is big in Texas, and SteelDay is no exception. When Beverlea Bons, general manager at AISC member Metals USA's Cedar Hill, Texas facility, got wind of SteelDay, her mind immediately kicked into high gear. "When I first heard about SteelDay, I just took the directive to 'be imaginative' and ran," she says. "Steel is versatile, readily available, and eco-friendly, and it's time to get the news out to the construction industry. I wanted to capture not only the start and finish of structural steel, but also some of the many variables in between."

Bons approached Matt Gomez, national sales manager for Fast-Frame at AISC member Gerdau Ameristeel, and together they came up with the idea of the North Texas Integrated SteelDay Tour. The two companies, along with AISC-member fabricator Qualico Steel Company of Midlothian, Texas and Sabre Galvanizing in Alvarado, Texas (a division of AISC member Sabre Industries), have devised a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for attendees to see every aspect of the structural steel supply chain in just a few hours. Starting at Gerdau's Midlothian steel mill, guests will witness the steel-making process before being taken by bus to Metal USA's service center facility. From there, everyone moves on to Qualico Steel's structural fabrication facility before capping it all off with a tour of Sabre Galvanizing's plant. "Through the guided tours of our four operations, we hope to help people learn about aspects of steel projects typically unseen during planning and construction," says Gomez.

And the response has been dramatic, with both professionals and students signing up at a faster-than-anticipated rate. "For all four of our organizations, this is an excellent opportunity to share our story of steel construction as both cost-effective and environmentally friendly in market conditions that demand both aspects," Gomez says.

Steel Benefits

Why attend a SteelDay event? Here are a few reasons:

- You will gain hands-on knowledge of structural steel's sustainability, availability, erection speed, and efficiency
- You may receive free continuing education; many events are offering CEUs
- You can use an event as an opportunity to network/build relationships with local industry peers and facilities whose services you may wish to employ for future projects
- You will walk away with a better understanding and appreciation of what goes into the various areas—or one specific area—of steel-making and the steel supply chain
- You can learn how AISC can help with your projects
- You don't have to travel far; events are currently scheduled in 48 states
- You don't have to pay anything; all events are free!

For a list of events, see below—or visit: www.SteelDay.org/FindEvent



Chris Moor is AISC's director of industry mobilization.

SteelDay Event Locations*

Alaska

ConocoPhillips, Anchorage

Alabama

Saginaw Pipe, Saginaw
Industrial Galvanizers, Birmingham
Independence Tube, Decatur
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Mobile
CMC Steel, Birmingham
O'Neal Steel, Birmingham
Chatham Steel, Birmingham

Arkansas

Nucor-Yamato Steel Corporation, Blytheville
O'Neal Steel, Little Rock
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Prairie Grove
Prospect Steel, Little Rock
AFCO Steel, Little Rock
AFCO Steel, Little Rock(2)

Arizona

AZZ Galvanizing Services, Goodyear
S & H Steel, Gilbert
Schuff Steel Southwest, Phoenix
J.B. Steel, Tucson

California

Fresno Fab-Tech, Sanger
PDM Steel Service Centers, Fresno
Pacific Drafting, Long Beach
Herrick Corporation, Stockton
PDM Steel Service Centers, Stockton
Conxtech, Inc., Hayward
LB Construction, Roseville
PDM Steel Service Centers, Santa Clara

Colorado

North American Galvanizing Company,
Denver
Great Denver Iron, Denver
American Galvanizers Association, Centennial
PDM Steel Service Centers, Denver

Connecticut

Infra-Metals, Wallingford
Topper & Griggs, Plainville

Delaware

V&S Galvanizing, New Castle

District of Columbia

Ironworker International Union/IMPACT,
Washington

Florida

Industrial Galvanizers, Tampa
Infra-Metals, Hallandale
Infra-Metals, Tampa
Chatham Steel, Orlando
Industrial Galvanizers, Miami
Tampa Tank & Florida Structural Steel, Tampa
Advantage Steel, Tampa
Steel Fabricators, Ft Lauderdale

Georgia

Universal Steel, Lithonia
Metals USA, Oakwood
Tekla, Inc., Kennesaw
Chatham Steel, Savannah
Steel, LLC, Scottdale

Iowa

Majona Steel, Waukee
Southwestern Community College, Creston

Idaho

Steel West Inc., Pocatello

Illinois

Peddinghaus Corporation, Bradley
Atlas Tube, Chicago
Infra-Metals, Marseilles
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Peoria
Independence Tube, Marseilles
AISC Special Event, Millennium Park, Chicago

AZZ Galvanizing Services, Dixon

AZZ Galvanizing Services, Joliet

St. Louis Screw & Bolt, Madison

Indiana

Steel Dynamics, Columbia City
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Hamilton
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Muncie
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Plymouth
MacSteel Service Centers, Hammond
Benchmark Steel, Terre Haute
Wabash Steel, Vincennes

Kansas

TECHNI Waterjet, Lenexa

Kentucky

Precision Steel, Calvert City
North American Galvanizing Company,
Louisville

Louisiana

Steel Fabricators of Monroe, Monroe
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Hobson
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Westside

Maryland

B & B Welding Co., Baltimore
Standard Supplies, Gaithersburg

Massachusetts

V&S Galvanizing, Taunton

Maine

Megquier & Jones, South Portland

Michigan

Jobsite Tour, Lansing
Atlas Tube, Plymouth
V&S Galvanizing, Redford

Minnesota

AZZ Galvanizing Services, Winsted

Mississippi

AZZ Galvanizing Services - Jackson, MS
AZZ Galvanizing Services - Moss Point, MS

Missouri

EXL Tube, N. Kansas City
North American Galvanizing Company,
St. Louis
North American Galvanizing Company,
Kansas City
Bi-State Fabricators Association, St. Louis
Atlas Iron Works, St. Louis

Montana

Roscoe Bridge, Missoula
Roscoe Steel, Billings

Nebraska

Design Data, Lincoln
Drake-Williams Steel, Omaha

Nevada

PDM Steel Service Centers, Sparks
PDM Steel Service Centers, Las Vegas

New Hampshire

American Steel Fabricators & Erectors,
Greenfield

New Jersey

V&S Galvanizing, Perth Amboy

New Mexico

Southwest Ironwork, Albuquerque

North Carolina

Buckner Companies, Graham
Chatham Steel, Durham

North Dakota

Fargo Tank & Steel, Fargo
Mandan Steel Fabricators, Mandan

New York

Ironworkers Locals 40 & 361 JAC, Astoria
Stone Bridge Iron & Steel, Gansevoort

Ohio

North American Galvanizing Co., Canton

Kottler Metal Products, Willoughby

AZZ Galvanizing Services, Cincinnati

V&S Galvanizing, Columbus

Oklahoma

North American Galvanizing Company, Tulsa
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Chelsea
W&W Steel, Oklahoma City

Oregon

Albina Pipe Bending Co., Inc.c Tualatin
Valmont Coatings, Tualatin

Pennsylvania

High Steel Structures, Lancaster
Metals USA, Ambridge
Lehigh University, ATLSS Research Center,
Bethlehem
V&S Galvanizing, Jonestown
Metals USA, Langhorne
Acecad Software, Exton

Rhode Island

American Welding Co., West Greenwich

South Carolina

Master Steel, Hardeeville
Industrial Galvanizers, West Columbia
Chatham Steel, Columbia

South Dakota

Dakota Steel & Supply, Rapid City

Nashville

North American Galvanizing Co., Nashville

Texas

Metals USA, Cedar Hill
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Crowley
North American Galvanizing Company, Hurst
North American Galvanizing Co., Houston
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Houston
AZZ Galvanizing Services, Beaumont
Qualico Steel, Midlothian
Gerdau Ameristeel, Midlothian
Central Texas Iron Works, Waco
Sabre Galvanizing, Alvarado
W&W Steel, Lubbock
Ford Steel, Porter
North Texas Integrated SteelDay Tour
Schuff Steel Gulf Coast, Houston

Utah

PDM Steel Service Centers, Spanish Fork

Virginia

Virginia Tidewater Group International,
Virginia Beach
Industrial Galvanizers, Petersburg
Banker Steel, Lynchburg
Gerdau Ameristeel, Petersburg
Infra-Metals, Petersburg

Vermont

Reliance Steel, Colchester
Applied Bolting Technology, Bellows Falls

Washington

Jesse Engineering Co., Tacoma
PDM Steel Service Centers, Woodland
Urban Water Project, Tacoma

West Virginia

North American Galvanizing Co., Benwood
Huntington Steel, Huntington

Wyoming

Puma Steel, Cheyenne

*For the most current list, visit www.SteelDay.org.

The Main Event

While events will be taking place all over the country, the epicenter, if you will, of SteelDay will be in Millennium Park in Chicago, a few short blocks from AISC's headquarters. This flagship event will serve as a unique interactive networking and learning opportunity in one of the city's most celebrated public spaces, in the shadows of the park's now-iconic Cloud Gate sculpture and the (steel-framed) Frank Gehry-designed Jay Pritzker Pavilion. Four education stations will be available at the site: the AISC Certification Education Station, AISC Steel Solutions Center Education Station, Sustainability Education Station, and Millennium Park Education Station (which focuses on the steel-framed structures at the park). In addition, the presentation "Structural Steel's Sustainable Contribution to the Architecture and Economy of Chicago" will be given twice (and is good for one AIA CES hour). And, complimentary lunches will be reserved for the first 300 registrants who arrive prior to 12:30 p.m. (There is a limit of 20 lunches per registered company.) The event lasts from noon until 2 p.m., so it's an excellent opportunity to get away from the office for a long lunch if you work in Chicago or the surrounding area. Visit www.SteelDay.org/Chicago for more information.

So, with events like this happening all over the country, the question remains: What are you doing for SteelDay? You can start formulating your answer (and registering for an event) by visiting www.SteelDay.org. We'll see you on September 18! **MSC**