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## Executive Director's Message



KIRK GRUNDAHL

### "Where We've Been & Where We're Going" by Kirk Grundahl

After surviving the "severe trauma" wrought on us by Y2K, we ought to take a few moments in the first issue of this special new year to reflect on where we've been this past year and to look ahead to what lays immediately before us.

#### LOOKING BACK

There were some bumps in the WTCA road in 1999, created primarily by some misunderstanding. If there are any residual ill feelings remaining, it may help to lay out the fundamental principles we believe in:

1. The goal of WTCA and its management company's staff is to do positive, creative and leading-edge work on behalf of all component manufacturers in concert with the best minds in the industry. Maybe our collective attitude ought to be: If WTCA is doing it, there must be a good and positive reason for it, and we should collectively look for and find ways for each of us in the component manufacturing industry to benefit from the knowledge and information that will be provided to all.
2. WTCA is made up of companies and a staff that are solely focused on component manufacturing interests. It is an organization whose goals, mission and priorities are set by component manufacturers on behalf of all component manufacturers. The work we do by definition will ultimately be in the best interest of all component manufacturers. The goal of all involved is not to tear down an industry but to build it up. There are good checks and balances in place to assure that this will happen.
3. WTCA is in the knowledge dissemination business. One of the *WOODWORDS* columns that has been with us for a long time is "Knowledge Is Power." We believe that this tagline is more applicable than ever before in today's business, which is changing so quickly. The best decisions by a company and by an industry are made where one has the greatest amount of information on which to base those decisions. With reliable and accurate information usually comes an easier decision. It is half truth or misinformation that always gets a person into major trouble.

Some of the nay-sayers in our industry would say that WTCA is controlled by the large companies. Nothing could be further from the truth, given what WTCA does. If the large companies desired to have control they would quit participating within WTCA as they have the

resources they need to have a great deal more knowledge than the average truss manufacturer in our industry.

WTCA is in the business of providing sound decision-making knowledge to everyone in our industry. This provides an equal opportunity to take advantage of that knowledge. The only work on a member's part is to decide whether or not to take advantage of that knowledge.

4. The preceding sentence leads us to the fact that WTCA does NOT force its association's will on any of our members. All of the knowledge we generate can be chosen to be used or chosen NOT to be used. This is a free choice for all members. For that matter, most non-members have access to good knowledge and choices as well; however, they pay a slightly higher non-member cost at times.

Finally, all of us within WTCA believe that great changes are taking place in our industry—all of which are being driven by our customers. Our industry's desire is to be responsive to the needs and demands placed on us. This will result in great opportunities. It seems to make good business sense to listen closely to these customer needs as an industry and then to do everything in our power to work on activities that meet or guide those needs in a way that allows us to serve them even better in the future.

One underlying business reality is that the industry that understands the economic structure of the market stands the best opportunity to have a real positive impact on the future. It is clear that the only solution that ultimately has an impact in the game of business is the economic solution that has the greatest value in solving the customer's problem.

We believe that we are one of the outstanding customer-oriented industries and those that choose to be members of WTCA are the outstanding companies within our industry—the ones that seek the greatest amount of knowledge to make the best, most progressive decisions possible about their future and our industry's future.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

Annually the Board of Directors, Committee Members and anyone else that is interested in the activities of WTCA, has the opportunity to set the priorities that our industry will undertake and our WTCA staff will implement. Each of these priorities is guided by our mission statement that we should always reflect upon when assessing WTCA action.

Using this information, in addition to the knowledge and perspective of our industry members that took the time to participate, the following work priorities were generated:

### **Board Mandatory Priorities Sorted in Order of Importance**

1. Development of the Structural Building Component Manufacturers Council.
2. *WOODWORDS*
3. BCMC
4. Follow through on Smart Components™ Research and Testing Project to its logical

conclusion.

5. Staff attend as many chapter meetings as possible. (Membership Development)
6. Chapter Summits and set Chapter goals for 2000.
7. NAHBRC Certified Carpenter Program.
8. Wage and Benefit Survey.
9. NAHB Research Center—\$25,000 funding to provide NAHBRC support and for HOMEBASE.
10. Wood Solutions Fairs (5 in 2000).
11. Alpine Fire Endurance Assemblies.
12. Fire sprinkler assistance with NFPA 13 Integration.
13. WTCA web site management.
14. Assistance with SETMA educational program and web site.
15. Industry consolidation and meetings with key companies that are purchasing truss plants.

### **Board Priorities Sorted in Order of Importance**

1. Attend the NAHB committee meetings on which we are asked to serve: Building Materials Task Force, Research Committee, Codes and Standards Committee, and Home Builders Institute.
2. Permanent bracing testing and analysis (Research and Testing).
3. Truss Technician Training Programs (12 Programs planned in 2000). 13 completed in 1999.
4. Attendance at TPI Board Meetings by the President and Executive Director.
5. Monitor the Canadian Lumber Quota impact and direction it is going to take at end of 5-year agreement.
6. *WTCA QC* certification implementation (20 plants by end of 2000).
7. Put a Human Face on the Truss Industry—Getting chapters involved in local politics; encouraging grass roots efforts to protect our industry; being proactive on behalf of the truss industry; setting up chapter meetings with local officials to educate them about our industry; conducting plant tours; sponsoring programs for the fire service and local, state and federal government authorities. (Goal of one per chapter - 27)
8. Providing Chapter Assistance to put on Truss Technology Workshops for architects/engineers, building officials and builders. (40 workshops total).
9. Update university research compiled in 1998 (Research and Testing).
10. Individual meetings with key industry-oriented lumber companies. Meet semi-annually with Donohue, IP, GP, Weyerhaeuser, Champion/Weldwood, Shearer, etc. Define the truss industry agenda and develop a plan to champion collective initiatives.
11. Truss Technology for Builders publications (12 new topics).
12. Work with the NAHB-RC on the Housing Affordability through Design Efficiency (HATDE) project. This work is moving toward greater efficiencies in the design process. Interfaces well with Research and Testing.
13. Foster lumber industry participation in WTCA efforts to expand truss use, and therefore lumber use. Active involvement by lumber companies in truss technology advancement and local market educational programs would be most valuable.
14. WTCA 1 to ANSI/TPI 4 Standard finalization.
15. Attend the 2000 NAHB Builders Show.
16. Encourage the lumber industry to do a market survey detailing lumber used in trusses.
17. Determine how best to build on the relationship with NAHB for mutual benefit on key legislative issues.
18. Develop a legislative issue survey form for chapters to use to help WTCA monitor and

assist with legislative issues at the grass roots level.

19. Complete TPI Certification for the *WTCA QC*.

20. HIB bracing revisions.

21. Ask TPI to consider implementing a promotional program of the *WTCA QC* program with TPI licensees.

22. International Building Code Development Code Change Process 2001 Edition and beyond.

23. Create and implement a Third Party Inspector Certification Exam.

24. Undertake testing needed to fill in data gaps to make our industry more competitive. (Research and Testing related)

25. Grow Chapter Administrative Support programs to strengthen chapters.

26. Work with Florida groups to change the sealed engineering process to be more easily applied within the truss industry.

27. Legislative Alerts (6 in 2000).

28. Press Releases (12 in 2000).

29. ANSI/TPI 1 Standard finalization.

30. Determine how best to build on the relationship and work in concert with NLBMDA on legislative issues.

31. Determine feasibility of holding another seminar on the fire performance of trusses at the IFSTA Seminar with Glenn Corbett.

32. Membership development—600 in 1999 (650 total CM members in 2000).

33. Chapter development (3 more in 2000).

34. Chapter fire educational programs (2 in 2000).

35. Create a legislative briefing package for our members with industry policies.

36. Chapter membership development (30 new chapter CM members).

37. Slide program updates—Put into complete digital form; provide projection system and computer for chapters to use to give presentations.

38. Design analog work with ERC taking a lead role in information processing.

39. Increase Associate Membership base—180 in 1999 (210 total Associate members in 2000).

40. Develop a marketing plan for *WTCA QC* that all *WTCA QC* certified plants can use.

41. Fire Sprinklers—Assistance with NFPA 13 Integration.

42. Determine how best to build on the relationship with National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) on legislative issues.

43. Truss Technician Training for Sales People (9 programs planned in 2000.)

44. New industry-sponsored insurance program in 2000.

45. Risk Management Seminars (4 in 2000).

46. Joint publications sales agreement with TPI.

47. Fire testing beyond assemblies currently available.

48. FRT lumber use—Manufacturing with it and providing security for the truss industry in long performance in use.

49. Stronger presence on the Internet for Chapter communication.

50. Internet presence—Grow it by adding a members-only section, building business solutions groups, etc.

51. Work toward having CWTA become aligned more closely with WTCA for mutual industry benefit.

52. Attend CWTA meetings.

53. Work on the process and an outline for our members to become ISO 9000 certified plants.

54. Work on OSHA fall protection standards with NAHB.

55. Meetings of the Product Safety and Loss Control Committee (2 in 2000).

56. TPI dues for WTCA Chapters consolidated.
  57. Florida Code development.
  58. North Carolina Department of Insurance (sealed placement plan issue).
  59. Finger Jointed Lumber Standard.
  60. Safety Seminars (2 in 2000).
  61. Evaluate university research proposals.
  62. Crane operator training and certification.
  63. Rutgers University Education (proposal made).
  64. Hold ERC meetings only in conjunction with TPI TAC meetings.
  65. Hanger testing for the ANSI/TPI Standard.
- Write in:** Meet individually with key supplier companies.
- Write in:** Work to broaden support base for Research and Testing program both financial and otherwise. This is important for final acceptance.
- Write in:** Future format for BCMC shows.
- Write in:** Formalize joint WIJMA/WTCA fire education initiative.
- Write in:** Formalize a business plan to accomplish *WTCA QC* vision.
- Continue to attend AWC, CWC, SFPA, WWPA Lumber Association Meetings? 86% Yes.

These tasks will form our emphasis in 2000. As staff, our goal will be to continue to serve the truss and component industry in as many facets as possible, and at the same time to increase our members' knowledge base through hard work on each of these tasks. At the end of the year, it is our hope that all of our members will have benefited. This will continue to solidify our industry as one that is progressive and that will not become obsolete, an industry that fosters the ability to continually change and evolve. Only time will tell if we are successful. My intuition says it will be a "piece of cake."

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