

# STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

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## President's Message



### Deriving Value from Your Association – It's Up to You to Get Involved by Michael Ruede, 2002 WTCA President

Wow! What a whirlwind the first quarter of 2002 has brought to my life and WTCA. As I stated in my BCMC message this past October, the challenge is to bring WTCA, and all the issues facing our industry today, to the grassroots level of our members. We have to listen and talk about the issues facing our members in every region and convey this information to other manufacturers across the country that may be experiencing some of the same issues.

As WTCA's President, I have been very involved in this process of communicating information from one region, to WTCA members across the country. What I've found along the way is that WTCA members and non-members alike are taking on very important industry issues and battling along many fronts—the implementation of the IBC, the new Florida Building Code, truss fire performance issues, education and legislation, Professional Engineering Regulations, and local/state OSHA, DOT, etc. regulations, just to name a few. Our WTCA Chapters, along with WTCA Staff, have gone into these situations with a good understanding and a well-prepared, strategic battle plan to advance the interests of our members. In every case, WTCA is being asked for input on solutions, not just from our chapters, but also from the very agencies enacting the policies, law or legislative agendas that can unduly regulate or burden our member companies.

As I travel to chapter summits and local chapter meetings, I find that everyone involved in WTCA discovers great benefits for themselves personally, for their company through information learned, and for industry as a whole by having a common bond and working to ensure that there is a bright future. If you are looking for WTCA to give you something without your involvement, it will never happen. I found early on that only when I got intimately involved did I get all the value out of my association. There are too many things that WTCA offers to each of us to fully understand and take advantage of, unless you get close to it. My company finds that we have a significant, strategic advantage over companies that do not participate because we have a greater knowledge of the negative and positive issues surrounding our industry. This knowledge allows us to plan our future much more effectively. It amazes me that more companies don't take full advantage of this very real association value, because behind each WTCA activity there is a business opportunity.

It is my hope that those companies and individuals who are not members of an industry association soon will be, and that they find the same value that our company has found in WTCA over the last 19 years of active participation. As an industry, we can achieve great things when we stand together as a united front. As I've said before: Standing alone you are a voice in the dark, but by joining the other members of the team you will be amazed at what can be

accomplished.

I have really enjoyed traveling to the chapter summits and local chapter meetings over the last few months because they have helped me get to know so many new people. I am also looking forward to attending as many local meetings as possible throughout the remainder of the year. There is a lot of great work going on out there on the local level and it's great to see the positive things being done by all of you.

As always, WTCA Staff is looking for opportunities to help you advance your business and our industry. I hope you enjoy this issue of SBC Magazine. If you've got a story or an experience to share, please send it along. We'd love to share it with our readers. Remember that this is your association; participate and make it the best it can be!

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