

# STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

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## Fruits of Our Labor by Scott Arquilla

Last year, each of our members received a complimentary copy of the [Carbeck Structural Components Institute \(CSCI\)](#)/Houston Fire Department (HFD) CD entitled "The Wood Truss Industry & Fire Performance of Wood Trusses," copyright 2002. This CD, the first production of CSCI, has been extremely well received by the various fire departments who have seen and used it to date. Our industry will gain much by working aggressively to get this tool into the hands of all the fire service members and educators we can. After years of negativity towards wood trusses and components, the fire service now has a very factually based, fire service-backed educational program.

WTCA has endorsed this program and the best way to get it distributed to the fire service has proven to be through a grassroots effort. In order to have the best possible impact, it needs to pass through individual members and our chapters, who will provide the program to the local fire training officer or to the local fire fighter association. WTCA has helped CSCI solicit contributions through the 2002 BCMC Silent Auction as well as through check-offs on member's annual dues payment invoices. CSCI has a strong working relationship with the HFD and at the past Board of Directors meeting, provided a check for \$2000 to the Houston Fire Museum. The check was presented to HFD Captain Tim Neal, with whom we have been working closely. Our goal is to continue our work with HFD on many other fire performance-related projects that have mutual benefit. Your contribution to CSCI will ensure we can continue to fulfill our goals and objectives of enhancing fire service safety whenever a fire begins. Success and progress in this area will truly benefit all our members and our suppliers very directly and positively.

"I enjoyed meeting with the members of the WTCA in Houston. As I was listening to the meeting, I realized that WTCA and HFD have the same basic problem. We are both at the mercy of politics. We try to educate the powers that be to understand the basic job functions without getting lost in the details. We try to explain our needs. We try to help guide them in their decision making. Then we are stuck trying to make things work with the latest restrictions that have been hung around our collective necks.

"The HFD training division recently held their first hands-on safety training seminar and the proceeds from the Carbeck donation will be going toward this year's seminar. This is to be an annual event in November of each year. Seminars like this are held around the country and it is HFD's goal to become one of the premier training seminars. With help from WTCA and Carbeck, this should be an obtainable goal." — Captain Tim Neal, Houston Fire Department.

With each \$100 contribution to CSCI, you will receive five CDs for distribution to your local fire training department or local association. Further, the CDs can be purchased for \$19.95 each.

The Iowa Chapter of WTCA challenged all chapters in the U.S. to contribute \$1000 to Carbeck annually to get as many CDs into fire service hands as possible so that we can truly make a positive difference. So far the following chapters have taken up the challenge:

- Colorado Truss Manufacturers Association
- Iowa Truss Manufacturers Association
- Northwest Truss Fabricators Association
- South Nevada Component Manufacturers Association
- Truss Manufacturers Association of Texas
- Wisconsin Truss Manufacturers Association
- Wood Truss Council of North Carolina
- WTCA-New York

The 2002 CSCI Board of Directors' goal was to get 1,000 CDs into the hands of fire stations throughout the country. Thus far, 625 CDs have been ordered by chapters and individual members for distribution. The goal for 2003 will be to pick up the pace and make sure we achieve 1,000 CDs distributed annually until all fire departments in the country are using this CD as part of their educational curriculum.

This CD is the culmination of over ten years of work and an investment of well over \$250,000 of industry re-sources during that time on this issue. We were fortunate to have the opportunity to work with such an education-oriented and progressive fire department. HFD is recognized nationwide as an innovative fire department, as the first fire department to start an EMS/paramedic service within the fire service in this country. Every fire department now offers this service. We are certain that your contributions to CSCI will help start the fire service thinking in a new direction about wood trusses.

My company feels strongly that CSCI's cause is one that we in favor of supporting. I hope yours decides to do the same. My thanks to those who have supported CSCI from the beginning. I offer my personal welcome to those of you who will contribute in the near future. Your support will give our industry two benefits—solid fact-based training and the ability to develop additional educational tools to advance fire performance knowledge. This is truly a win-win-win proposition.

A recipient of the CD, Capt. Brian P. Kazmierzak, Clay Fire Territory (IN)-Training Officer said, "I got the CD and loved it. I actually ordered 30 more so that every department in my area has a copy of it. I think that is extremely informative and unbiased information. Thank you very much."

Bob Becht, of Chambers Truss in South Florida, wrote: "I gave a plant tour to fire science instructor Mike Gablemann and 18 firefighter students. Mike is a 20-year St. Lucie County fire fighter and 19-year instructor for the Indian River Community College Fire Science Program. The class is studying trusses and Mike quoted Frank Branigan's book challenging me to defend wood trusses. The knowledge I gained from WTCA board meetings and the HFD CD gave me the ammunition to win him over. I gave him a copy of the HFD CD and he was really excited about the knowledge he gained. He said for 20 years he has been hearing that trusses killed firefighters but today changed his mind. He invited me to speak at the college and wants to bring more firefighters to tour Chambers Truss. Mike told me that he was impressed by my statement that I did not want to build a product that hurt firefighters and that I convinced him that I did not build a product that hurt firefighters. Mike was also impressed by WTCA's commitment to firefighter safety. I could not have done it without WTCA. Thank you."

Please join me in supporting the Carbeck Structural Components Institute and getting this

educational program out to as many fire departments as we can. I think the fire service, from the grassroots, will be enlightened and think about our product in an entirely different light. If they do, I feel strongly that we will have begun to turn the tide of negativity in the fire service by having a tool for delivering the clear and simple facts regarding the fire performance of trusses.

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