We look at Quality Control and Manufacturing issues in this issue, two topics that once took up two separate magazines. As the industry has evolved, it seems to make more sense to combine them into the same issue. After all, you can’t have one without the other. We could talk about improving manufacturing processes and efficiency all day, but how can we prove our commitment to a quality product without integrating quality control procedures?

That said, there are some important changes coming your way with regard to the industry’s quality control standard. Currently undergoing revisions, ANSI/TPI 1-2002 Chapter 3, component manufacturers can soon start inspecting trusses using the “new” inspection method. This change essentially combines two old inspection methods: the Tooth Count Method and the Plate Placement Method. This and several other noteworthy changes are being made primarily to improve efficiency in the inspection process and will eventually be part of the 2007 edition of TPI 1.

Also in this issue, we revisit BCMC 2006. Not even a last minute change of venue could prevent the show from being a true success. You’ll see that attendees had overwhelmingly positive feedback about the opportunities available to them. And exhibitors commented that despite their relative uncertainty going into the event (due to a marked slowdown in homebuilding), attendee decision makers showed up in force this year. Relive the highlights of the show starting on page 61.

If there is one topic that affirms my decision to be a career journalist, it’s economics. I’ll go out on a limb and suggest that a healthy discussion about economics could cure masses of insomniacs. However dry and cerebral this subject is, we all have cause to be extremely interested in the sustainability of the homebuilding industry these days. Turn to page 52 for an up-to-date economic picture of the structural building components industry based on several economists’ recent forecasts. Suddenly (I can’t believe I’m admitting this), studying economics doesn’t seem like such a drag.

We continue our series on plant tours, “One Tour at a Time,” with another success story from Illinois. Atlas Components in Rockford opened its doors to a local lawmaker whose understanding of the industry broadened during the one-hour plant tour. You may question the potential impact of hosting a plant tour, hesitate to interrupt operations for a few hours, or share your trade secrets with the world, but as Sean Shields writes on page 28, the time has never been better to forge a relationship with your elected official(s).

Finally in this issue, we debut a lighthearted segment created to recognize the often unrecognized efforts of our peers. Thanks to Don Groom for gifting this idea to SBC staff—a truly fitting contribution in his final month as WTCA president. Please help us recognize the people around us who put smiles on our faces, encourage us to excel, and inspire positive change in our companies by nominating someone for Success Is What You Make It. Turn to page 97 for this issue’s team player. SBC
Dear Reader:

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