



Publisher's Message

Grassroots: Our Past, Present & Future

by Libby Maurer

"Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

—Thomas A. Edison

In preparation for this issue, I thought long and hard about what "grassroots" means. I imagine tiny shoots growing from a tangle of fibrous white root just under the soil's surface. Someone who doesn't interpret concepts quite so literally might recall a political advocacy movement that once started with one person's idea. Someone else might use the words "people power," "teamwork" or "working toward a collective goal" to describe the essence of grassroots.

Wikipedia says the word is thought to have been coined by Senator Albert Beveridge of Indiana in 1912 to describe the emergence of the Progressive Party: "It has grown from the soil of people's hard necessities." Clearly there are many ways to define the concept that has taken this industry from fledgling to flourishing. In the pages that follow, you'll find examples of grassroots efforts happening on every level and all over the country. Here's a preview.

Locally, there is no better example of grassroots than the activities of WTCA chapters. For the two chapters featured in this issue, they've identified a common cause and focused their efforts on a collective goal. For instance, from its inception, the Iowa Truss Manufacturers Association (ITMA) decided that taking the lead in the education process would benefit everyone. To that end, they've developed into a very positive and proactive educational troupe. Mid Atlantic Wood Truss Council (MAWTC) has taken the high road when it comes to bracing education, presenting to more than a handful of different groups from building inspectors to builders over the course of two years. We hope you share their enthusiasm and that we can all spread this into the fabric of our association culture.

For about ten years, component manufacturers in Florida have donated trusses and other building materials to a charitable organization making kids' dreams come true. Find out why Give Kids The World is embarking on a huge expansion project in Orlando, and looking to manufacturers for help.

If you've battled sealed placement diagrams in your state or jurisdiction, you'll understand why Bryan Hill defended the industry's position before a committee of state architects in California. Read about his journey, how WTCA staff assisted, and why he prevailed in the end.

Have you ever wondered about the function of the WTCA membership? What about WTCA staff—what is its role? As with any trade association, one of the secrets to success is striking a balance between members' strategic direction and the execution of tasks by its staff. When you think back through WTCA's past, it's clear that this balance has been critical to the advancement of our industry. And you can bet it will remain a focal point as we forge ahead.

And don't miss the annual WTCA Membership Directory, starting on page 66. Each year at this time, *SBC Magazine* provides you with a complete listing of both component manufacturer and supplier members of this growing organization. It's a great way to get and stay in touch with your fellow industry members from both near and far.

Let's not forget our roots. Our *grass-roots*. **SBC**

at a glance

- This issue of **SBC** includes articles about grassroots activities around the industry.
- Features include the education efforts of the Iowa Truss Manufacturers Association and the Mid Atlantic chapter.
- Component manufacturers in Florida are helping an organization called Give Kids The World.
- Find out how the WTCA Board of Directors provides invaluable direction and strategic counsel to the staff of WTCA.

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