



Society for Design Administration
An Affiliate of The American Institute of Architects

Orange County Chapter

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THE COMMENTARY

October 2009 Edition

A Newsletter of the Society For Design Administration
Orange County Chapter

President's Corner

By Natalie Newman, SDA



I just looked back to our newsletter from one year ago. At that time, we were deciding who to vote for in the Presidential election. We were dealing with the downturn in the financial market. We were mad at the rising cost of gas. And we were all dealing with company lay-offs and closures. Now, one year later, we have a new President, and in my optimistic thinking, I believed that the economy would have turned for the better by now and that the cost of gas would have gone down. Well, it hasn't and now I'm one of the unemployed.

So as I sit here and write this article on a Wednesday afternoon, I think of this little saying "*its hump day... get over it!*" Well it seems there is still a hump in the road, and we are all still working on getting over it. Hang in there baby!

I would also like to take this time to tell everyone what a pleasure it's been working and volunteering in an organization such as SDA. I have so much respect for the women who I stand beside. In the past few months, a lot of our attention has focused on the 2nd Annual Construction Event & Awards Gala and HomeAid's Project Playhouse. And in one weekend, we pulled it all together and got to help feed the hungry and shelter the homeless. So to those Chapter members who unselfishly dedicated their time and efforts to these two community service events... Thank You, Thank You, Thank You. You are priceless to organizations like the Orange County Food Bank and HomeAid.

Now I'd like to wish you all a Happy Holiday Season and to remind you to count your blessings. Until next year...♥

Upcoming Events

Job Board

Did you know that SDA maintains a Job Board? This includes persons looking for work as well as firms looking for qualified personnel in the A/E industry. Most of the positions are for administrative staff, as AIA maintains its own job board for licensed architects. If your firm is looking for a person with certain qualifications or if you know someone who is looking for a position in an A/E firm, please contact Betsy Nickless by e-mail at nickless@integrity.com.

October 2009

October 15 Firm Appreciation Breakfast 7:30 am
"Multi-Generational Workplace:
Challenging By Design" presented by
Mary McKay of McKay & McKay
Wyndham Hotel, Costa Mesa

November 2009

Nov. 5 Business Meeting 5:30 pm
Meeting location will be
announced.

Nov. 19 Luncheon Meeting 11:30 am
Annual Meeting and Election of Officers
"Social Networking" presented by
Angie Weeks of Cal Coast Web Design.
Wyndham Hotel, Costa Mesa

December 2009

Dec. 3 Business Meeting 5:30 pm
Meeting location will be
announced.

**Dec. 6 Annual Holiday Potluck, Installation
of Officers, Ornament Exchange
11:00 am.** Look for formal invitation
to follow.
Home of Wendy and Cal Woolsey.

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**



Looking Ahead

January 1 Happy New Year!

October 1	Wendy Woolsey
October 2	Diana Dubich
October 4	Robert Hutchinson
November 2	Karen Henderson
November 10	Cheryl Mathes
November 24	Betsy Nickless
December 2	Judy Merrill
December 3	Lisa Falcon
December 17	Natalie Newman

This and That

Recycling 101 Refresher Course Just the Facts

There's no denying it. People are using way more bottles and cans than ever before. Recycling them creates new products, conserves natural resources, reduces energy use, and curbs carbon emissions in the sky. Sure beats letting them spend the next few centuries just sitting in a landfill.

Plainly, recycling is more important than ever.

Fortunately, doing the right thing is easy – and it can make you money. There are approximately 2,000 recycling centers that offer cash refunds all across the state. Many communities also have curbside recycling.

Recycling Basics

WHAT – Almost every bottle and can you use can be recycled. Look at the label for the universal recycle symbol and the words CA CASH REFUND or CA CRV.* Containers with these markings are good to go in your curbside bin and will be accepted at the recycling center.

* Other acceptable labels include "California Redemption Value," "CA Redemption Value" or "California Cash Refund." You get the idea.

HOW – It's easy to add recycling to your daily routine. Many Californians have curbside recycling available - if so, you probably already have a bin. Not sure? Contact your local public works or environmental services office to find out. Otherwise, any box or trash can makes an excellent recycling bin. There's no need to wash or crush your recyclables. Just separate your aluminum, glass and plastic containers in different bags or bins, and head for the recycling center.

WHERE – Look for bins anywhere you live, work or play. And there are approximately 2,000 recycling centers across the state that will

redeem the California Refund Value on your bottles and cans.

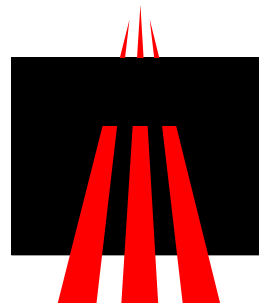
WHY – Because there's money in it for you! In addition to saving energy, natural resources, and preventing carbon dioxide from being released into the air, bringing bottles and cans to the recycling center will put cash in your pocket.

Source: www.bottlesandcans.com

'Word' Helpful Shortcuts

CTRL+A: Selects all text in a document
CTRL+S: Saves the file
CTRL+O: Opens the Open File dialog box
CTRL+E: Center alignment
CTRL+L: Left alignment
CTRL+R: Right alignment
CTRL+J: Justified alignment
CTRL+C: Copies selection to the clipboard
CTRL+V: Pastes the clipboard contents to the current document
CTRL+X: Cuts the selection from the document and stores it on the clipboard
CTRL+B: Toggles on or off bold text
CTRL+I: Toggles on or off italics
CTRL+U: Toggles on or off underlined text
CTRL+N: Opens a new blank document
CTRL+H: Opens Replace dialog box
CTRL+F: Opens Find dialog box
CTRL+P: Prints current document
CTRL+M: Increases indent
CTRL+Y: Repeats last action
CTRL+SHIFT+M: Decreases indent
CTRL+ALT+C: Inserts copyright symbol

Source: <http://functionaloffice.wordpress.com>



SDA's Mission:

To promote the
exchange of ideas
and
educate its members
in the related

Project Playhouse 2009

By Diane Sommerville

Horrah for the volunteer designers and builders for this year's Project Playhouse. Just being there makes you want to be a little kid again with rich parents and a large back yard!

It was a warm day in September with the sun beating down on all of the SDA volunteers as we were trying to keep the little children from crawling through windows to get a better look at their "dream" play rooms. This year, there was even a dog house/play house for someone's special canine.



For a really fun day next year to benefit a really worthwhile cause, don't forget to raise your hand to volunteer for the few hours it takes to assist Home Aid as it raises money to provide shelter for those in need.



Nomination of Officers for 2010

Every October, the SDA/OC begins the process of preparing a slate of candidates for officers to serve on the local board. Do you have some great ideas or want to take your servitude to a higher level? Consider running for a position on the SDA Orange County Board of Officers.

Our local Board is comprised of a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer. The Board's primary responsibility is running the business of our Chapter and continuing our mission.

Check out the "Position Descriptions" on the Nomination Form (next page). Each one details the tasks of each office. The Nominating Committee is seeking candidates to fill these roles.

If you have any questions about serving on the Board, don't hesitate to contact Judy Merrill at msjudym@earthlink.net.

I encourage you to run for an elected position on the 2010 Board. Your participation can benefit you, your career, and your future. It has mine!

Natalie Newman, SDA
Orange County Chapter President
www.sdaoc.org

See Nomination Form on Next Page

SDA Nomination Form 2010



Name: _____
Company: _____
Address: _____
Phone: () _____
E-mail: _____

I WOULD LIKE TO RUN FOR THE 2010 OFFICE OF:

President _____ Vice President _____
Recording Secretary _____ Corresponding Secretary _____
Treasurer _____

PRESIDENT – Presides at all chapter meetings and represents the chapter at higher levels. Informs members of important issues. Coordinates the activities of all Officers, Directors, and Committee members. Serves as Delegate at the National Annual Convention.

VICE PRESIDENT - Assists the President and leads the meeting in the absence of the President. Chair of the Program and Social Committee by implementing current and future chapter programs. Serve as Delegate to the National Annual Convention should the President be unable to attend.

RECORDING SECRETARY - Takes minutes of the meetings, reads correspondence at meetings, and writes correspondence for the Chapter. Maintains chapter records.

TREASURER – Collects all dues, fees, and other income and receipts and deposit funds in the bank. Prepare and submit financial reports. Maintains financial records for the Chapter; writes checks authorized by the budget. Chair of the Finance Committee.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY - Conduct the correspondence of the Chapter and sends out notices as directed by the President. Issue notices of all monthly seminars and keep records for seminar attendees. Serve as Chair of the Membership Committee. Send out Membership Packets to prospective members.

QUALIFICATIONS: You need to be willing to work as a team with other members of the board, eager to learn from training provided, prepared to participate as much as possible in Chapter events, and committed to attend the monthly Business meetings.

And please get participation approval from your company before submitting your name.

I WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE FOLLOWING:

Newsletter Editor _____ Newsletter Committee _____

NOTE: Please print and complete this page, scan, and email to Judy Merrill (msjudym@earthlink.net) no later than October 30, 2009. Voting ballots will be emailed to all Orange County Chapter members beginning November 2, 2009 and your vote will be due upon receipt. Results will be announced at the November 19th Annual Meeting & Seminar.

This and That

Become a Better Manager

If your employees were given the opportunity to fire you, how soon would you be out the door? Bad bosses aren't good for anyone's health. Remember that and you're likely to become a better manager; deny its wisdom and you're likely to fail.

Today's managers must be self-aware, observant, and understanding. Here are some tactics to become a better manager:

1. Praise Your Star Workers

Just because they're doing a superior job doesn't mean you should ignore your best employees. Everyone needs recognition, some more than others. But if you pay attention solely to your problem employees, you could unwittingly build up resentment among those who are fulfilling, and often exceeding, your expectations.

2. Share the Knowledge

One of the best ways to get people on your side (and help them do their jobs effectively) is to let them in on what shouldn't be a big secret: company goals, ways to improve, and other strategies intended to help everyone succeed. By keeping employees informed they'll be more vested in the company's success. Communicating with them about what's going on will also indicate that you value their contributions and suggestions.

3. Schedule Meetings Only When Necessary

Before you schedule recurring meetings, make sure they're absolutely necessary. These get-togethers offer an excellent opportunity to touch base and share concerns or ideas, but if they drone on endless, they become a waste of everyone's time. And if you're always sequestered in management meetings, your staff may begin to wonder if you ever really work, which can lower morale.

4. Engender Trust

If you want to win people's trust, then you must show trust in them. Give your staff additional responsibilities as your confidence in them grows, and be sure to refrain from micromanaging them.

Source: <http://smallbusiness.dnb.com>

WOW – How Prices Have Changed in 50 Years

Campbell's Tomato Soup	10 cents	1957	Peanut butter	29 cents	1952
Coffee	37 cents for 1 pound	1952	T-Bone Steak	59 cents per pound	1950
Potatoes	10 lb bag for 35 cents	1953	Tooth Paste	29 cents	1956
Ritz Crackers	32 cents	1950			

Western States Regional Convention

By Betsy Nickless, CDFA

Diamonds in the Rough Times – theme for this year's Western Regional Conference. And it was carried out from the time we arrived at the Desert *Diamond* Hotel & Casino through the 15 hours of education ranging from Herb Cannon's "Pathway to Profit" seminar through the inspiring post-banquet photo tour through Italy and Greece with Dr. Chuck Albanese. I'm ready to sign up for his next trip!

The SDA Southern Arizona Chapter showed why they received the latest Chapter Excellence Award. Every detail of the conference was so well thought out, and we were very well taken care of during our two days in Tucson.

Here are my "take-aways" from the various seminars:

- From Herb Cannon's *Pathway to Profit*:
 - Try replacing the word "retainer" with "mobilization payment" to expedite execution of the contract
 - Date your invoices the last day of the month. It's the mental equivalent of \$2.99 vs. \$3.00 and should get you paid sooner.
 - Attach a sample invoice format to your contract so the client will know what it is when it shows up in their mail.
 - Timeline for collections: 10 days after invoice, call or email to be sure it was received; at 25 days call again (if new client or major invoice); at 31st day, call accounting department for payment; at 45th day, call the CFO; at the 60th day, send notice of work stoppage; at 90th day, seek legal counsel
 - Biggest reason clients change architects/engineers, is because they don't feel important. Price is 6th most important reason.
- From KOLD13 News Anchor, Dan Marries, check out the movie called *What the Bleep Do We Know?*
- From *Design Liability IQ*, in tough economic times do not go without coverage on your

E & O policy. You will lose coverage for prior acts and possible financial catastrophe. Instead, reduce your limits until times improve.

- Eric Lee Shanock's *How to Secure I.T.* provided us with the different ways our computers and networks can be compromised from IP spoofing, to phishing, to spyware and adware. You should have multiple means of protection including firewall and software.
- Carole Sanderson (current SDA National Treasurer) enlightened us on the possibility of becoming firm owners. She says there are three groups:
 - Managers do things right, improve systems, direct staff, focus on the job at hand, and achieve short-term goals.
 - Leaders do the right thing, create better systems, motivate staff, achieve vision, and focus on long-term effectiveness.
 - Owners work *on* the business instead of *in* the business, are required to have money to invest, need to have good judgment on the firm direction and voting, and understand the risk and reward.
- Alice Templeton spoke on *Professionalism* based on principles from www.goalsinstitute.com which has an assessment tool for you to determine your own level of professionalism. (Look for the 30-question quick test at the bottom of the webpage.)
- *Word of Mouth 101 Marketing* left us breathless with an energetic presentation on out-of-the-box thinking and marketing to prospective clients. The idea is to get people talking about your company – make it easier for them to talk by giving them something unusual to talk about.
- *Making Social Networking Work for You and Your Firm*. Use LinkedIn to establish professional contacts. Establish a presence for your company on Facebook and keep it updated. Social networking is here to stay! Don't be left behind.

Continued on Page 9

WSRC (Continued)

Continued from Page 8

During the course of the conference, the SDA Connections Committee “tweeted” highlights of each seminar to those were unable to attend. We certainly are making great strides in technology, and hopefully those who couldn’t be there in person were able to benefit from the great educational opportunity.

Thank you very much to the Orange County Chapter for the scholarship – I so appreciated the chance to attend the conference, network with other SDA members, and learn more about our industry in these challenging times.

Next year’s Western States Regional Conference will be in Denver – please start planning now and saving so you can attend.

Canstruction Gala Awards Pics



Canstruction 2009

2nd Annual Orange County Canstruction Design/Build Competition

September 5—27, 2009

South Coast Plaza

And the Winners Are . . .



JUROR'S FAVORITE
"Sea The End of Hunger"
RBF Consulting



STRUCTURAL INGENUITY
"Connecting to Environmentality"
Disneyland Resorts Design &
Engineering



BEST USE OF LABELS
"California Can End Hunger"
Suffolk Construction



BEST MEAL
"The Little Red Wagon"
The Planning Center



HONORABLE MENTION
"We Can Heel Hunger One Step At a Time"
Fashion Institute of Design (FIDM)

Canstruction 2009



HONORABLE MENTION
"Wake Up and Smell the Flowers"
Dougherty + Dougherty Architects and



"Banana Split Bonanza"
Fluor Corporation



"Canscrapers"
HMC Architects



"Canformer"
LPA, Inc.



"The Midnight Snack"
Jacobs Engineering

Member Profile—Cheryl Mathes, SDA

By Natalie Newman, SDA

Current Employer: Valleycrest - HRP Studio.

Position & Description of Responsibilities: Branch Controller.

Length of Time at Current Employer: Three Years.

Number of Years as an SDA Member: Eight Years.

Contributions to SDA? Board Member – have held the office of Recording Secretary for four years. Attended National Conventions and Western Regional Conferences. Worked on Various Event Committees (*2006 Host Chapter Party for Los Angeles National Convention, 2007 Western States Regional Conference, 2008 SDA/OC 25th Chapter Anniversary*). Volunteer each year at HomeAid's *Project Playhouse*, and at the 2008 Orange County *Canstruction* Awards Gala and the 2009 Orange County *Canstruction* Awards Gala and Judging.

Favorite Things About SDA? Professional Support in Design Industry; Seminars & Learning Opportunities; Networking; Community Support Programs & Friendships.

Name of Significant Other and How Long Together? Michael Champagne – dating for three years.

If You Could Have Dinner With Three (3) Famous People (Living Or Dead), Who Would They Be? Jesus; Common; Sade.

Favorite Music? Blues, Hip Hop, Reggae.

Favorite Meal or Favorite Restaurant? Italian – Finbars.

Favorite Color to Wear? Brown.

How Do You Keep Your Sanity When All About You Is Losing Theirs? Relaxing with a glass of wine; playing with my parrots; puttering around in the garden.

Personal Interests/Hobbies? Church; Hip Hop Dancing & Music; Gardening.

What Book Are You Currently Reading? *'Good To Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't'* by Jim Collins.

What Music Do You Have In Your CD Player? The Sands.

Most Exciting Place You Have Visited/Toured? Zimbabwe; South Africa.

Any Other Interesting Tidbits Worthy Of Print? Going to my family reunion next month. Can't wait to see my mom.



The Number One Reason to Join LinkedIn...

By Sabrina Heard - Connections Committee Member

Say you've been trying to network with the members of your child's school PTA group, but you can't get anyone to return your calls or emails. Did you know that Carol at work knows the President of your child's PTA, and might be able to personally introduce you? If you were on LinkedIn, you would.

Say you're ready to replace the floor in your kitchen but you don't want to select any random contractor from the Yellow Pages. Did you know that your boss has a relationship with a reputable residential contractor? If you were on LinkedIn, you would.

These connections are easy to come by on LinkedIn. LinkedIn was created as an online business network of people. In this world, it is more and more about who you know that makes a difference. It links your network of people to other people's networks and allows you to make new connections. This is what networking is all about and the purpose of LinkedIn.

LinkedIn is very easy to use. You create a profile and then invite someone that you currently know to join your network. Once you have a network of one, LinkedIn will ask you if you know others. If you invite these people, you are making connections. This is networking online. Basically, it is your online rolodex. It can grow very fast.

If you start with just people in your office, that will give you at least 10 contacts. Then invite 10 of each of their contacts. You now have 100 contacts in a matter of days. You can't possibly make that many contacts in person.

Let's say that you are looking to work for an architectural firm. Who do you need to talk to in Human Resources there? You can look up the firm name in LinkedIn and find the HR Manager. Viola! You have the person's name and their network of people. You notice that the HR Manager knows one of the engineers that you worked with at your last job. You call the engineer and he is able to make the introductions personal. The HR Manager actually calls you back instead of sending you to voicemail. It's about who you know.

LinkedIn also provides the opportunity to keep up with old colleagues, bosses, etc. that you have lost contact with over the years. You might find a well-liked boss from a job from many years past and reacquaint yourself with them. LinkedIn makes it easy to keep up with them and to start talking to them again. Connections are great to have in life and LinkedIn makes it easy to start and maintain them.

The SDA has a group on LinkedIn. This is a way for everyone to keep up with discussions and events that are going on in our organization, as well as the rest of the A/E/C industry. You can find news articles and website recommendations on our group page as well. The LinkedIn page works a little different than the SDA Forums because it allows for more flexibility than a website. You can create smaller member groups for discussions, post articles or news events. If you are between jobs or maybe you couldn't keep up your SDA membership on your own this year- stay in touch with SDA through LinkedIn. The best part is that it is run by the members and the LinkedIn group has the control. A lot of people like online networking for this reason.

There are many reasons to join LinkedIn, and here are just a few. The major reason to join LinkedIn is Connections. The **Connections Committee** would like to invite you to join the network on LinkedIn.

Member Profile—Diana Dubich, SDA

By Natalie Newman, SDA

Current Employer: HMC Architects.

Position & Description of Responsibilities: Administrative Manager: Oversee day-to-day office functions of the Irvine branch of HMC; assist with implementation and upholding Administrative standards and procedures; liaison with Firm's Corporate Department and Office Staff.



Length of Time at Current Employer: Six years **Number of Years as an SDA Member:** Two years.

Contributions to SDA: Attend monthly Chapter Meetings; Participate at Western Regional Conference; Looking forward to traveling to my first EdSymposium in May 2010; Involved Irvine branch of HMC in *Canstruction*; Studying for the CDFA exam.

Favorite things about SDA: Continuing education opportunities; connecting with and learning from professionals across the nation in the same area of work.

Name of Spouse (or Significant Other) and How Long Together: Prince Charming has not yet found his way to my doorstep, but a few frogs have hopped by.

Name/Ages of children: My "child" is a 4 year old dwarf rabbit named Comet.

If you could have dinner with three (3) famous people (living or dead), who would they be? Princess Diana (not because of her name), Michael J. Fox, Phil Keoghan (host of *Amazing Race*).

Favorite Music? Life House.

Favorite Meal or Favorite Restaurant? Bean and cheese burritos or eggplant parmigiana.

Favorite Color to Wear? Turquoise.

How You Keep Your Sanity When All About You Is Losing Theirs? Remembering that all you can do is take one day at a time and every "insanity" will teach a lesson.

Personal Interests/Hobbies? Wine tastings/gatherings with friends; kayaking; spending time at the beach; shoe shopping; organizing (closets, papers, etc.); contributing to no-kill animal shelters.

What Book Are You Currently Reading? Just finished '*Confessions of a Shopaholic*.'

What music do you have in your CD player? Nickelback.

Most Exciting Place You Have Visited/Toured? Wyoming... hailed while white water rafting (yet I loved it), first experience on a true horseback riding adventure, literally got chased by a moose, and a buffalo sneezed through a car window as it was rolling up.

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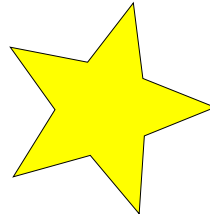
Contact us today to see how we can increase your success.
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And thanks to our fabulous proofreader
and photographer,
Betsy Nickless!



The Commentary

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