My wife and I returned last week from ASCC’s 2014 Annual Conference held in Denver. It felt good to get into the seat of the plane (if that is possible) because I was energized by the things I learned that week. The long flight home gave me time to think about WHY we attend ASCC events and WHY we went to Denver.

HERE IS WHY:

1. **Networking.** It is so beneficial to visit with other contractors in a non-competitive environment. I learned from them and I hope that I was able to contribute to their businesses. It’s all about connecting with other contractors to learn from each other.

2. **Education.** I learned the latest techniques of installing super flat floors, different ways to handle customer service, and about how to communicate during a crisis. There were several other subjects: how to read contracts, how to handle an OSHA visit, managing expectations of decorative concrete, talent development, and others. Do you want to learn about any other aspects of concrete contracting? It was amazing how much you could learn from these seminars and workshops.

3. **Decorative Demos.** ASCC had an incredible demonstration of the most beautiful decorative concrete on the face of the planet. It is fun to watch these talented artists do their magic—they are so gifted!

4. **Committee and Board Meetings.** This is where things get done. These meetings also provide direction for the association. I get a great deal of satisfaction seeing members using their brains and experience to move this association forward.

5. **New members.** There were over 50 attendees that were either new members or this was their first Annual Conference. It was a great pleasure to meet them. I hope that they felt welcomed and that they found an incredible amount of information at their fingertips.

6. **Lifetime Achievement Award.** Denny Ahal received this award at the opening dinner. I would not have missed that part of the event for anything. Denny has given thousands of hours for decades to make our association the best it can be. He is the person who got me involved in the mid 90’s and he made me feel very welcome. Congratulations Denny—this is a well deserved award and thank you for all that you have done for us!
7. **The Fun.** There was flyfishing and golf on Saturday afternoon. I chose golf because fish hooks are too sharp and I would definitely injure myself. Golf is less risky. I play golf poorly but at least I dress like a good golfer.

The Denver Annual Conference was a great event that no concrete contractor should have missed. Everything about this conference was aimed at making us better concrete contractors. If you attended—thank you for taking the time to be there. If you did not attend, seriously consider attending next year’s conference in Dallas. You will be a better concrete contractor because of it!

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**Executive Director’s Message**

Bev Garnant

At its regular meeting in Denver last month, the ASCC board of directors unanimously passed a new – and most ambitious to date – strategic plan. You will see that this plan is about you – making you safer, smarter, more effective and productive.

There are four goals:

1. Increase the Number of Owners Who Truly Demonstrate a Personal Commitment to Safety
2. Increase ASCC’s Influence Within the Industry to Improve Business Outcomes for Our Members
3. Position ASCC and its Members for Changing Demographic Trends
4. Enhance Members’ Competitive Position

**Goal #1:** Safety – The dominance of safety as a core value and fundamental focus of ASCC goes back to its roots, and is demonstrated by our 27 year partnership with CNA Insurance, the tremendous work of our Safety & Risk Management Council, and the emphasis on safety in every ASCC initiative. This goal seeks to raise the bar as we work with owners to make safety their highest purpose.

**Goal #2:** Influence – ASCC’s voice and importance have increased over the years as we’ve become more active and vocal in the concrete construction industry overall. This goal directs us to target companies for membership that have a strong presence in the industry, and to continue to increase our level of participation and effectiveness in ACI.

**Goal #3:** Changing Demographics – Cultural differences in the workforce, the labor shortage, the roles and use of technology in our businesses, initiating incoming leaders; all of these continually face ASCC and its members. We have devised strategies to help the association and its members position ourselves for the future.

**Goal #4:** Members’ Competitive Position – To better acknowledge and publicize the superior credentials and performance of ASCC contractors we will develop a “Proof of Quality” program that will distinguish those that meet the highest criteria.

Though I’ve mentioned the highlights of the new plan, much more is embedded in the strategies and action items that put the “flesh on the bones.” Go to [http://www.ascconline.org/About/GoalsStrategies.aspx](http://www.ascconline.org/About/GoalsStrategies.aspx) to read the plan in its entirety. Comments and assistance always welcome.

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**Decorative Concrete Council**

Paul Schneider, DCC Council Director

**What an Awesome Association**

In September the ASCC held its Annual Conference. In addition to seminars, demonstrations, and recognizing companies for their superiority in safety, there was a great amount of networking amongst peers. Some of the best people and contractors opened up to share stories. We all have room for improvement and these networking opportunities are invaluable in aiding us to be successful.

Under the supervision of Todd Scharich the DCC presented demonstrations of vertical stamped concrete by Nathan Whittington. Renovating and rehabilitating existing stamped concrete was presented by Chris Sullivan and Todd, metallic epoxies were installed by Rich Cofoid and his team, and one of our newest members, Rick Lobdell, and I demonstrated the use of decorative stencils and dyes to create a mockup of a turtle that was installed at our community project. (Refer to ASCC Facebook page for pictures of that project). Thank you to all the presenters and companies who donated time and resources for the betterment of the association.

I want to thank Butterfield Color and H & C Sherwin Williams for stepping up as DCC Consortium sponsors.

Congratulations to Denny Ahal for receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award. The first time I met Denny was at another Annual Conference. I introduced myself and he greeted me with open arms. He made me feel that I was one of the most important people in our association and ever since he has always made it a point to recognize me at our events. Denny is not the only one who does this. A lot of other members have always made me feel welcome. With this culture of respect and caring I take great pride in representing the DCC in meeting others. I try to take the time to answer their questions and show them the respect that others have given me. We all are trying to improve our industry every day.

In the mindset of helping our industry a number of our members represented the DCC with seminars and a panel discussion at the Concrete Décor Show. Thanks to all who assisted in making this event a success. The early feedback was that our presenters added significant value to the education of the attendees. We made contact with a few potential new members and will attempt to bring them in to continue improving our association.

In closing, please look around and see who you can help out.
Unexpected Rewards of Volunteering

A Little Bit of WOW

Todd Scharich, Decorative Concrete Specialist

The Annual Conference demonstrations are presented to reinforce proven techniques, introduce new materials, and showcase the abilities of our outstanding group. Based on the comments of the members that passed through the tent in Denver this year’s demonstrations did not disappoint. A nice combination of useful and utilitarian products were mixed with materials and methods that had a WOW factor.

Contributing to the WOW factor were three demonstrations that had everyone talking. Nathan Whittington produced a stamped and hand carved vertical stone wall, with custom features requested by attendees. His work showcased the speed at which a vertical surface can be textured when compared to natural or cultured stone. Rick Lobdell and Paul Schneider teamed up to create a miniature replica of the sea turtle featured in this year’s DCC Community Project. Stencils, dyes, and stains were used to produce a beautiful work of art. Rich Cofoid completed the artistic side of the demonstrations with a fantastic demonstration of metallic epoxies. Using a combination of colors and application techniques he created pieces that had the members thinking about where it could be used in their upcoming projects.

Chris Sullivan’s demonstration highlighted a couple of new products that can be used to rejuvenate stamped concrete for a very reasonable price. These products allow an existing stamped surface to be recolored and antiqued, giving the appearance of a brand new stamp job. Finally I showed the ability of a couple of products that allow pitted and spalled broomed surfaces to be resurfaced. Using historical job references and explaining the processes, the demonstration give finishers a trusted non-replacement option for deteriorated surfaces.

Thanks to all the DCC members who helped in the demonstrations, and the many who took time out of their conference schedule to visit with us. If there are any questions about the methods, products, or personnel involved in the demonstrations, please reach me at the Decorative Concrete Hotline at 888-483-5288.

Safety & Risk Management Council

Front Hood Blind Spot

Steve Knudsen, SRMC Board and Cory Albano, CEMEX

For years blind spots around a mixer have been a topic of conversation, and there are many of them. Ironically, one of the most dangerous is literally right in front of the driver’s eyes. The area directly in front of the hood presents a very dangerous hazard, as the driver likely cannot see a person walking around the front near the grill.

The reason is twofold. First the height of the hood (in this example) is 72 inches and the driver’s line of sight over the hood makes it difficult to see a person of average height. Secondly, the driver is likely not looking forward most of the time as he/she is receiving directions from the finisher on the chute while discharging. Both of these conditions exist on our jobsites all day every day. It is not uncommon for workers during concrete placement to walk directly in front of a concrete mixer or other commercial truck.

In Picture 1 the hard hat is all that can be seen from the driver’s perspective. Picture 2 shows what it looks like from in front of the cab of the mixer.

Near Miss

These examples of actual Near Miss events by ASCC members are shared courtesy of the Safety & Risk Management Council to help other members prevent accidents and injuries. If you have a near miss story that could help your fellow contractors send Bev a brief write-up at bgarnant@ascconline.org. We will not identify your company unless asked to do so.

A new employee had been hired to work in the warehouse. This is where all materials are stored including cement bags, tools, signs, barrels, etc.

The 18-year old male’s direct report was the firm’s Operations Manager. That day, the Operations Manager was coming in late. As a result, the company owner decided to walk the new employee around to acquaint him with the office staff and his co-workers, review the company’s safety policies, and give him a general overview of his duties.

The owner left the new employee in the warehouse and directed the most senior employee to delegate work for the new employee to do. Soon after, a call came in from one of the Foremen requesting several bags of concrete. The senior employee directed the new employee to stack the bags in a particular area for the Foreman to pick up that afternoon.

The new employee tried lifting one of the bags but it was too heavy. He noticed that there was a forklift nearby, so he decided to use it. Someone had left the keys in the forklift ignition, so the new employee hopped in and started moving toward the section where the bags were located, even though he had no forklift training. He decided to take a short-cut down the aisle in front of the break room. One of his co-workers had just finished lunch and was leaving the break room. The new employee swerved violently to avoid hitting his co-worker. Both men were pretty shaken up by the very close call.

The moral to this story, NEVER leave equipment keys in the ignition on the chance that an untrained or unauthorized person will attempt to operate it. Make sure every employee who will be using a forklift has had proper training. Use the buddy system with new employees. Have a co-worker shadow them until they are familiar with their job responsibilities.
To understand the hazard, it is important to be aware of the driver’s line of sight. Using a 5’8” driver and a 5’8” pedestrian with a hood height of 72” as examples, it would be necessary to maintain a distance of at least 10’ of space between the pedestrian and the hood of the truck in order for the driver to see the pedestrian from the waist up.

It is also important to note that keeping a safe distance from the front of the truck allows both the driver and the pedestrian to react in time to avoid an accident. Mixer truck or otherwise, it is always a best practice to maintain a safe distance from the front of the cab of a truck and utilize the principles outlined above. It is also a great practice to gain eye contact and make sure the driver acknowledges you before you cross.

There are multiple blind spots that mixer truck and other truck drivers have to work around. The most important thing to remember is that if you cannot see the driver most likely he cannot see you!

**What Causes My Concrete to Crack?**

Bruce Suprenant, Technical Director

This has been the most frequent question to the Hotline over many years. Sometimes the cause of the crack can be easily determined but on a few occasions the cause may never be known. The ability of the Hotline to assist in assessing the cause of cracking depends on YOU! Yes, we need information from you to use our engineering judgment in determining the most likely cause for one crack or several. What type of information? We’re glad you asked. Ward Malisch and I have put together our wish list of information that would be useful to have when evaluating crack causes.

The information is important because there are often a number of cracks but they may not all be caused by a single issue. For instance, there could be plastic settlement cracks, plastic shrinkage cracks, and drying shrinkage cracks on the same project—each with a different cause. Ward and I need to obtain, analyze, and evaluate the information to make sure that we address the cause of all the cracks. The information below helps in making that determination. However, we know that it may not be possible to provide all the information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELEVANT INFORMATION TO GATHER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crack Information</strong></td>
<td><strong>Construction Information</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Identify Location (slab on ground, elevated slab, foundation wall, column, etc.)</td>
<td>A. Fresh concrete properties: temperature, slump, air content, density (unit weight)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Determine how soon after concrete placement crack occurred</td>
<td>B. Hardened concrete properties: field- and lab-cured cylinder strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Take crack photos: close up and from a distance</td>
<td>C. Placement history; start time, finish time, curing time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Provide current age of concrete</td>
<td>D. Finishing tools and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Prepare a crack map showing (on scaled paper; a typical bay might be enough)</td>
<td>E. Concrete curing method and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Crack orientation</td>
<td>F. Forming methods including shoring and reshoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Crack widths</td>
<td>G. Batch ticket information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Location of any photos on crack map</td>
<td>H. Early-age loading history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Joint locations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Concrete member (e.g. beams supporting elevated slabs) locations with dashed lines on the map</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Design Information (Specified)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Environmental Information</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Concrete sizes of members and specified concrete compressive strength</td>
<td>A. Weather during placement and before cracks occurred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Bar and post-tensioning reinforcement size and spacing</td>
<td>B. Hot or cold weather precautions taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Joint types and location including joint load transfer devices</td>
<td>C. Rainfall history before, during, and after concrete placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Concrete mixture design (submittals are most helpful)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

We rarely get all of this information, but the more we have the easier it is to identify the most likely cracking cause(s). Establishing causes then helps to assess responsibility among the design and construction team members.
Annual Conference – 2014
The Westin Westminster, Denver, CO – September 18 – 21

Opening night reception

Peter Emmons presents Foundation scholarships to CIM students

Helen Prince, CNA, congratulates a Burr Bennett safety award

Dennis Ahal receives the ASCC’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

Workshop attendees

Rocky’s Business School is always popular

Decorative demonstrators hard at work

Emerging leaders discuss business with more experienced members

We could not do this without our sponsors!

A flyfishing tale

Somehow this doesn’t look like a technical discussion

Mike Poppoff’s granddaughter kicks off the Membership Drive with help from her grandfather

Fun on Saturday night
The Concrete Industry Management (CIM) program - a business intensive program that awards students with a four-year Bachelor of Science degree in Concrete Industry Management - is seeking donations for their tenth annual auction to be held at the World of Concrete. The auction is scheduled for Wednesday, February 4 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. The silent auction will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the live auction begins at 1 p.m.

| Nov. 12, 2014 | ACI 318-14: What Concrete Contractors Need to Know About Chapter 26 | Robert Howell, American Concrete Institute |

Members no charge. Non-members $35; MC, Visa, Amex only. Call 866-788-2722 to register.