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### IN THIS ISSUE

[Chairman's Note](#)

[Upcoming VSEC Events](#)

[Upcoming NCSA Webinars](#)

[Executive Committee](#)

### QUICK LINKS

[VSEC Homepage](#)

[NCSEA Homepage](#)

## **Chairman's Note**

### **Delegated Steel Design Seminars**

17 folks in Tidewater and 27 folks in Richmond attended the seminars on November 3rd and 4th on Steel Connection Design. I have only heard

positive feedback from those that attended and got to hear from two PHDs that work the

majority of their time designing connections for Cives Steel Company. The slideshow presentations from Dr. Bill Thornton and Dr. Pat Fortney are available in the [Members Only section of the VSEC website](#). (The password is "VAstructural" if you forgot.) I personally learned quite a bit from their expertise in this specific area of structural engineering.



### **Volunteers Needed for Important VSEC Work Groups**

There are three opportunities for our members to participate in workgroups tackling important issues that affect our profession of structural engineering. The VSEC Board CANNOT accomplish this work by themselves and needs all interested parties to step up and volunteer. Please let any VSEC board member know of your willingness to help out with any of the following:

1. **Participate in next VUSBC code cycle**  
IBC 2012 is out and starting January of 2012 the Dept. of Housing and Community Development begins to meet regarding its implementation. Of special interest to

structural engineers is how the Commonwealth of Virginia responds to our recent seismic activity in Central Virginia. How USGS map contours change is out of anyone's control, but will there be any prescriptive revisions to unreinforced cantilevered elements like chimneys and parapets? Will renovation work on existing buildings trigger the retrofitting of such items? As structural engineers, we want to make sure that the response of the Commonwealth to the recent earthquake is appropriate in proportion to the threat, and implemented in appropriate parts of the state. We need to stay involved in this code revision process, have a voice, and simply know what is coming down the road. Paul Gagnon with Moseley Architects is the board member who will head this up. Chris Snidow with Henrico County will be helping us get connected.

2. **Structural Engineers and BIM Practices**

Has your firm ever had any issues with varying or increasing expectation levels regarding the model content on a BIM project? What constitutes basic BIM services? What are additional BIM services? This work group will study these issues and start their work by going over a CASE white paper published earlier this year as well as AIA documents on the subject. They will bring forward recommendations regarding a VSEC position on such issues for the Board to approve. We can place this official position on our website for members to refer to. We may speak to other groups about this issue like local AIA chapters. Jeff Davis with DMWPV will be organizing this effort. Earl Inge with Stroud Pence is our first volunteer.

3. **VSEC Position on SER as Special Inspector**

This group will work up a suggested position statement regarding the SER in the role of Special Inspector. We will likely begin work by studying what has been done before in the Hampton Roads area. Many localities in VA do not have their own Special Inspections forms, and some localities have forms that don't make as much sense as they should. VSEC would like to have a set of suggested forms for structural engineers and building officials to use as a resource. Janet Webster with Clark Nexsen will be organizing this effort and Earl Inge with Stroud Pence is our first volunteer.

**Beyond**

VSEC needs your ideas for 2012 programs and classes. Please send to [jdavis@dmwpv.com](mailto:jdavis@dmwpv.com). Jeff Davis and Paul Gagnon also attended the annual national conference of NCSEA and heard reports from member organizations from across the country. Separate licensing for structural engineers was a big topic. At this point in time, 8 states have Structural Engineering Title or Practice Acts. 16 other member

organizations across the country indicated that they were also pursuing separate licensing for structural engineers in their state. The three workgroups listed above will keep us busy for a while, but separate licensing for structural engineers is something we ought to start to sink our teeth into later next year.

## **NCSEA Annual Conference**

In October of this year Paul Gagnon (Vice Chairman) and Jeff Davis (Chairman and Delegate) attended the National Council of Structural Engineers Association's (NCSEA) Annual Conference in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. It was the nineteenth annual conference, and it was hosted by the Oklahoma Structural Engineers Association, with 37 of the 42 NCSEA Member Organizations, like VSEC, represented at the conference.

The conference is open to anyone interested and offered seminars on structural engineering and related topics on Thursday and Friday. Emphasis this year was on leadership and all seminar speakers and most panel discussion members were past presidents of NCSEA. This year's record high attendance exceeded 300. Some highlights included:

- Jim Cagley (1st President of NCSEA) gave the Keynote Address and discussed many of his adventures working on international projects.
- Gene Corley presented a talk entitled "Making Sense of the Rubble Through Forensic Investigation after the Oklahoma City and 9/11 Attacks". The memorial site for the OKC bombing was just a few blocks away from the conference location. Many participants took an opportunity to make a visit.
- Ron Hamburger presented an overview of how the Building Code Process currently operates.
- Bill Bast showed by various examples how his structural engineering practice had branched out into specialty engineering areas like historic cornice support and thin stone veneer panel repair and retrofit.
- Craig Barnes delivered a talk entitled "Investigation, Design & Construction for Renovation Projects are NOT Off-Shore Functions".
- Mark Barter's "How to Make Money in Structural Engineering" was not surprisingly popular.

All of the topics presented were usually followed-up with a panel discussion and a lot of participation from the audience. This was a new format for the NCSEA conference and one that I think

received much positive feedback.

In between seminar sessions, there was ample break time to visit all of the vendors in the exhibit hall. On Saturday, the state member organizations and national committees reported on their activities in the past year. The national committees are very active working on issues such as structural engineering advocacy, code advisory, separate licensing as Structural Engineers, Structural Engineers Emergency Response, and others. More details on the activities of these committees can be found at the [NCSEA website](#).

By attending the conference we hope to bring back ideas and lessons learned from the other conference delegates to use in our planning of this year's activities for the Virginia Structural Engineers Council. In addition, we try to help the national committees as much as possible in accomplishing their goals. If you are interested in any of the topics covered by the committees and would like to get involved, please feel free to contact us for more information. The 2012 conference will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, October 3-6.

### **NCSEA Winter Institute**

The NSCEA Winter Institute will be held February 10-11, 2012 at the Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans, LA. This will include a tour of ongoing construction projects at the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal and the Lake Borgne Surge Barrier. These tours are a unique opportunity being made available to NCSEA.

### **NCSEA Policy Announcement Regarding Separate Licensing of Structural Engineers**

During the NSCEA 19th Annual Conference held in Oklahoma City, October 20-22, the Member Organization Representatives in attendance discussed and unanimously approved the [NCSEA Policy on Separate Structural Engineering Licensure](#). The Policy encourages all jurisdictions to adopt legislation that defines the practice of structural engineering and restricts it to those who have demonstrated competence by licensure as a Structural Engineer. The Policy supports the use of the NCEES 16-hour examination and the [NCEES Model Law Structural Engineer](#) as the basis for licensure of Structural Engineers. Within the Policy, NCSEA also encourages equitable transitioning of engineers currently practicing structural engineering.

### **Membership**

Annual VSEC membership is only \$65 and compared to most professional associations is quite a bargain. If you are not a member, or have let your membership lapse, please consider joining or re-joining. Member benefits include a subscription to monthly Structure magazine which always contains important information for those in the structural engineering profession. In addition, member discounts on seminars during the year make it easy for this membership to pay for itself.

***Jeffrey S. Davis, PE, SECB, LEED AP BD+C***

**Chairman, VSEC**

## **Upcoming VSEC Events**

**December 7**

Board Meeting Conference Call  
Plan 2012 events  
Please share your ideas

## **Upcoming NCSEA Webinars**

**December 1, 2011**

Flatness & Levelness of Floors, Old Specifications / New Methods  
*Mark Cheek*

**January 10, 2012**

Rehabilitation of Timber Structures  
*Paul Gilham*

**February 7, 2012**

Design Considerations for Exterior Wall Interfaces in Steel-Framed Buildings  
*Patrick McManus*

**April 26, 2012**

UFC 4-023-03 Design of Buildings to Resist Progressive Collapse  
*Ron Hamburger*

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