



# SPECIGRAM

Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Chapter, Construction Specifications Institute

December 2013

## THIS MONTH

- President's Message pp.2-3
- Member Profile p.4
- Last Month's Meeting p.5
- Industry News pp.6-7
- Chapter Leadership p.8
- Member Anniversaries p.9

### CSI Pittsburgh Chapter Mission Statement

1. To support and promote the mission and core values of the Institute.
2. To help its members perform their jobs better by providing education and promoting certification programs.
3. To provide an opportunity for networking to facilitate project team building.

*Pittsburgh Chapter  
Construction Specifications  
Institute  
P.O. Box 367  
Wexford, PA 15090*

## 8TH ANNUAL CSI HOLIDAY/ DESSERT PARTY

The Chadwick in Wexford  
6:00 until 9:00 PM  
Tuesday, December 10, 2013

Enjoy specialty dessert or hors d'oeuvres stations while the sponsoring vendors display promotional literature about their company and the products they distribute.

Cocktail reception 6:00-7:00

Trade show 7:00-9:00

**MUSIC BY DR. ZOOT - OPEN BAR - DOOR PRIZES**

Cost is \$35.00

Reservations: Mark Zell 412-951-8715

[mazell@nationalgypsum.com](mailto:mazell@nationalgypsum.com)

5:00 pm - Board Meeting

# President's Message

December 2013

Miki Vargo, Chapter  
President



## It's that time of year again...

Time to bring out the elastic waistbands, because there are too many parties, dinners and overall celebrations for even the most obedient dieter not to feel the pinch. It is also the time that we reflect on who and what we are thankful for. This is what I would like to focus my monthly address on.

*Who am I thankful for here at CSI Pittsburgh?* In my opinion, there are three components that make our chapter successful. The first, is our volunteer committee chairs and board members. Without these individuals, the day to day, month to month activities and programs that make our chapter run would not exist.

**Gail Nagie**, our indentured Treasurer, has been making sure our budget is balanced and funds are available for everything we do, since way before I was a member of the chapter. **Denny Buirge**, Chapter Secretary for Life, is another person who each month records the activities of our board and somehow manages to not only keep up with the madness, but is able to compile it into a rational set of minutes. **David Miller and Kate Schuster** who are the puppet masters behind the digital realm of information distribution. Kate, running the website and making sure the information listed is both current and relevant; David, the visionary behind the program postcards and email blasts. Without the two of them, we would have no idea what is happening in the chapter or when, which leads me to **Bob Bailey**. Mr. Bailey is the mastermind behind reviving our newsletter, the Specigram. Bob decided to take it upon himself to produce, edit, and distribute the Specigram. Great Job, Bob! These are just a few of the many volunteers that make our chapter run, and who I am thankful for.

The second component to our successful chapter, is the programs and events we host. Without the monthly programs, we would have no reason to meet. **Lynn Fulton**, Program Chair, has worked and continues to work extremely hard to find and develop interesting monthly programs that appeal to the overall body of our membership base. **John Bliss**, has recently stepped on to help Lynn with this task. The programs are only one component of our monthly meetings, the second is the location. **Marc Zell**, Hospitality Chair, is the one who makes sure we have a location to hold our meetings, as well as good food to eat and beverages to drink. He is also typically the first smiling face you see when you come to a regular meeting because he is the one that demands your money. One of our special, regular events is the upcoming Holiday Gala/Product Show. **Jim Geist** has been in charge of this event since its inception, 8 years ago. Jim is the one that solicits and secures sponsorships, coordinates table selection, and everything else that is necessary to put on such an awesome event.

*(continued on p.3)*

# President's Message (cont'd)

December 2013

---

In addition to the regular monthly meetings, we also host special events. One such event is our Golf Outing. This year we welcomed a new Golf Committee Chair, **Mark Womer**. Mark's first outing this past August was a huge success and I still hear about what a great time the golfers had. Not a bad start, Mark. Thank you and keep up the good work. The Chapter also hosts separate Technical Seminars. **Phil Dorenkott and Leisa McNamee** are the Chairs of this committee, which is charged with developing programs, more "technical" in nature, that relate to current hot topics in the industry. They coordinate all aspects of the seminars from finding and securing the speaker, logistics of transporting the speaker, finding a location for the seminar, advertising, registration, and continental breakfast, to name a few. Last month, our committee hosted the technical seminar, "Commercial Roofing Materials, Coordination and Trends." Chapter Member and roofing expert, **Kris Kennedy**, was the presenter and did a wonderful job. Thank you Phil, Leisa and Kris for another successful seminar.

We have also been fortunate enough to be able to present programs to students from the local universities. **Mike Moyta**, Student Outreach Committee Chair, has worked painstakingly to develop a relationship with CSI and the local universities that offer AEC programs. This past October, along with our host Carnegie Mellon University's School of Architecture (SoArch), we presented our program, "Spec Writing for Non-Spec Writers." Denny Buirge was the presenter. Although presented at CMU, invitations were sent to all of the local universities including Pitt, Chatham, LaRoche, the Art Institute, ITT, and PTI, along with the AIA's Young Architects. This year, we had about 25 or so students in attendance. Attendees included students from CMU and Chatham University. **Alexis McCune**, CMU SoArch Coordinator of Student Programs, has been a great supporter of our efforts and in CSI, and has helped to coordinate several ventures with our chapter and the students. Those in attendance were also able to receive CEU learning credits. After the program, we hosted a pizza and soda social hour and invited any interested chapter member to come and mingle with the students and answer any questions they may have.

Several members attended this year's program including **Bill Vernon, Matt Lander, John Walker, Patrick Harding, Mike Moyta, Denny Buirge** and myself. Thank you to all of you who came and helped show these young, future professionals what CSI is and who we are.

The last, but most important component to our successful chapter, is you, the members of CSI Pittsburgh. It is the members that drive our chapter and organization. It is the desire to provide educational opportunities to our members that drive us to produce amazing programs and seminars. It is the companionship and networking opportunities that lead us to host golf outing and social hours. It is the desire to mentor and train the future of our field that leads us to reach out to students and emerging professionals. It is the desire to be the best that we can at our jobs, and equipped with the tools and knowledge that make us stand out that has led each one of us to become members of CSI. It does not matter if you are an active or distant member of this chapter; it is because of our members, that we are CSI Pittsburgh.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of CSI Pittsburgh, we would like to wish all of you a Happy Hanukkah, a Merry Christmas, and a Prosperous and Happy New Year!! I hope to see you all at the Holiday Gala.

*-Miki Vargo, Chapter President*

# Member Profile: Kate Schuster

December 2013

**Company and Position:** V.O. George Group. I am the President of our company but I like to think of myself as more of an outside sales position.

**Tell us about your job:** We are a supplier of specialty building products so it is our job to be the liaison between the customer and the manufacturer, which can be difficult at times. We work diligently to get our products spec'd, be competitive on bid day and provide great service. I visit architectural firms, hospitals and contractors on a daily basis to either sell or fix any issues a customer may have.

**What part of your job do you most enjoy?** No two days are the same; my job is different every day and that is my favorite part about it. I enjoy encountering new issues and problem solving.

**If you weren't in your current job, what would you be doing?** Oh probably selling something else. I'd be in some other outside sales position. Certainly not at a desk job.

**What is the funniest/oddest thing that has happened in your professional career?** One of the first times I dropped samples off for a major client my car got towed. I had another meeting downtown right after and had to walk about a mile in the rain. I didn't want to tell anyone that my car got towed so I waited to be picked up until after my meetings.

**What year did you join CSI?** I joined CSI in 2009.

**Why did you join CSI?** I was new to the industry and I was hoping to network with others in the industry and develop relationships with spec writers.

**Did you have a CSI recruiter/mentor?** Tony Emanuele brought me to my first meeting and Bob Bailey was my mentor.

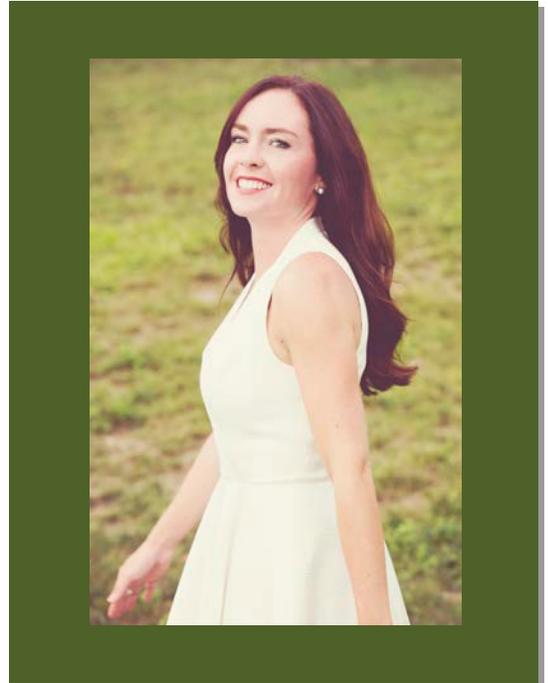
**What is your role in CSI Pittsburgh?** I hold two chairs in CSI Pittsburgh. I am the Publicity co-chair and I am also the Electronic Communications chair. I update the website and send email blasts. David Miller and I take turns. I was recently nominated to be a Director as well.

**What do you see as the value of CSI membership?** Through CSI I have met many wonderful people. Some have become very close friends. On a professional level, I can probably say that I know at least one person in every major architectural firm in Pittsburgh, which has certainly been beneficial as a product rep.

**Do you have a most embarrassing CSI moment that you'd be willing to share?** Probably when I showed up to our first golf outing wearing flip flops.

**What would you want somebody considering CSI membership to know?** I can say that being involved with CSI has been a very rewarding experience.

**What would people be surprised to know about you?** I have 2 different sized feet. One is flat and the other has an arch. They are two different feet altogether. Buying shoes is a nightmare!



# LAST MONTH'S MEETING

December 2013



**Jason Konley** from Pittsburgh Air Systems presented "Making Room For Controls" as part of a joint CSI/ASHRAE meeting.



**ARDEX**  
**AMERICAS**

**Allison Birkmeyer, CSI**  
Architectural Specialist – North East  
Direct: 724-777-2799  
Allison.Birkmeyer@ardexamericas.com  
[www.ardexamericas.com](http://www.ardexamericas.com)

---

ARDEX Tile and Stone Installation Systems  
ARDEX MC™ Moisture Control Systems  
ARDEX PANDOMO®  
ARDEX Substrate Preparation Products  
ARDEX Polished Concrete Systems  
ARDEX ARDIFLO™ System  
ARDEX Engineered Concrete Systems

Make plans now to attend our **January 2014** meeting when the topic will be the AIA-MBA Best Practices Guide, to be presented by Jon O'Brien of Master Builders Associate of Western Pennsylvania.

**Location:**

Cefalo's  
428 Washington Ave.  
Carnegie, PA

**5:00 pm Social Time**

**5:30 pm Board**

**Meeting**

**6:15 pm Dinner**

**7:00 pm Presentation**

**Reservations**

[MAZell@NationalGypsum.com](mailto:MAZell@NationalGypsum.com)

(412) 951-8715

Cost: \$35/person

# INDUSTRY NEWS

December 2013

---

## Will Google let “Genie” out of the bottle?

Google’s secret development department, Google X (which has produced Google Glass) is reportedly working on a new technology that could transform the construction industry and perhaps the field of architecture as well.

This new technology is called “Genie” and is described as a cloud-based collaboration platform with “planning applications to help architects and engineers in the design process, especially for skyscrapers and large buildings. The platform includes planning tools of expert architects and engineers and advance analytics and simulation tools.”

Genie may have the potential to transform the construction industry, which although very profitable is also very conservative as well as very wasteful. Genie could make the construction industry more efficient and environmentally friendly at the level of design, construction, and maintenance. Genie’s development team suggests that the invention could save 30-50% in construction costs and 30-50% of the time spent between planning and market; moreover, it could generate \$120 billion a year.

A successful prototype of Genie has been released and well-received by architects and industry professionals; it is now being developed not under Google X, but under a spinoff company: Vannevar Technology Inc.

With the world’s housing needs expected to double by 2050, Genie seeks to position itself as the answer – not just to meeting the ever-increasing demand for construction, but also to lessening construction’s negative impact on the earth. The construction industry currently consumes more global resources and raw materials (50%) as well as global energy supplies (48%) than any other; it also produces 40% of the earth’s solid waste and 50% of all greenhouse gas emissions. Genie could help mitigate that.

## Koppers Tower sold

New Rochelle, N.Y.-based Rugby Realty has purchased the 34-story Koppers Tower. The price was \$17.2 million. Rugby now owns three prominent and historic buildings on Grant Street -- Koppers, the Frick Building and Gulf Tower. Rugby’s president, Aaron Stauber views them as the crown jewels of Grant Street.

"I love great architecture. To be able to own the buildings that we own, I'm humble and proud at the same time. These architects built the finest buildings in the world. To be able to own these is a real privilege," he said.

Rugby purchased Koppers Tower from Koppers Building Holdings Inc., which bought it for \$13.2 million in 1997. The 360,000-square-foot property currently has a 30 percent vacancy rate. Rugby has a plan to make improvements to the space to boost the occupancy. The plan includes the complete rehabilitation of floors 24, 25 and 27, all of which are empty. Each floor is 7,600 square feet, and Rugby intends to upgrade the space without first securing tenants.

Rugby also will install a new fitness center for tenants, renovate a ninth-floor conference room and add the latest technology to a skyscraper that was completed in 1929. There are also plans for a shuttle service to be shared between Koppers and the adjacent Gulf Tower to take tenants around Downtown. Stauber indicated that a food retailer intends to fill a street-level retail space at Grant and Seventh, a site he said has been vacant for three decades.

The Koppers Tower is still home to its namesake, the Koppers Co.

Rugby purchased 11 Stanwix, the former Westinghouse building, in 2008 when that structure was less than 50 percent occupied and sold it two years ago for \$66.6 million at 95 percent occupancy. When it purchased the Frick Building in 2005, that building was half empty. After various improvements, the structure is now more than 90 percent filled.

# INDUSTRY NEWS

December 2013

## **Are you specifying Phase-Changing Materials (PCMs)?**

A phase change material (PCM) is a substance with a high heat of fusion. PCMs are capable of storing and releasing large amounts of energy by melting and solidifying at a given temperature. PCMs use the energy stored in chemical bonds. The thermal energy transfer occurs when materials change state, or phase, from liquid to solid, or solid to liquid.

PCMs have the potential to reduce the energy needed for space heating and cooling while improving the quality of the space in both residential and commercial applications. Better use can be made of the sun's energy. This melts the waxes which then solidify once the temperature drops, returning the heat to the space when it is most needed. In cooling situations, taking the energy out of the air from solar gain because it is absorbed by the PCMs reduces the cooling load.

-DuPont's "Energain" is a board material of PCM sandwiched between 2 layers of aluminum for application behind dry wall board.

-BASF's "Smartboard," marketed by Knauf, is a dry-line gypsum based board impregnated with BASF's Micronal® PCM, of paraffin droplets micro encapsulated in a non-formaldehyde capsule.

-Dorcken's "Delta-Cool 24" is a packaged PCM suited to retrofit situations, above ceilings, under floors etc.

-GlassX AG's "Glass X" is an aluminum framed window element for installation in the facade with the ability to filter solar gain to seasonal requirements based on the angle of the sun.

-Maxit's "Clima26" is a trowel on internal plaster finish in a gypsum base for wall finishing with added thermal insulation.

## **Nano-tech surface kills germs**

Scientists in Australia described how a dragonfly led them to a nano-tech surface that physically kills bacteria.

The germ-killer is black silicon, a substance discovered accidentally in the 1990s that is now viewed as a promising semiconductor material for solar panels.

The scientists found that, under an electron microscope, the surface of black silicon is a forest of unimaginably tiny spikes that rip open the cell walls of any bacterium which comes into contact.

This is the first time that any water-repellent surface has been found to have this physical quality as bactericide.

The scientists found that cicada wings were potent killers of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* -- a germ that also infects humans and is becoming resistant to antibiotics.

Looking closely, they found that the answer lay not in any biochemical on the wing, but in regularly-spaced "nanopillars" on which bacteria were sliced to shreds as they settled on the surface.

They took the discovery further by examining nanostructures studding the translucent forewings of a red-bodied Australian dragonfly called the wandering percher.

The dragonfly's wings and black silicon were tested in a lab, and both were highly bactericidal.

Smooth to the human touch, the surfaces destroyed two categories of bacteria, called Gram-negative and Gram-positive, as well as spores, the protective shell that coats certain times of dormant germs.

The three targeted bugs comprised *P. aeruginosa*, *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Bacillus subtilis*, a soil germ that is a cousin of anthrax.

The killing rate was 450,000 bacterial cells per square centimeter per minute over the first three hours of exposure.

This is 810 times the minimum dose needed to infect a person with *S. aureus*, and 77,400 times that of *P. aeruginosa*.

If the cost of making black silicon is an obstacle, many other options are around for making nano-scale germ-killing surfaces, said the scientists. They noted that synthetic antibacterial nano-materials that exhibit a similar effectiveness can be readily fabricated over large areas.

# CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

December 2013

## **Officers**

### *President*

Ms. Michaeleen Vargo, CSI, LEED AP BD+C  
Gerard Associates Architects, LLC  
Phone: 412-566-1531  
[mdvargo@gerardassociatesarchitects.com](mailto:mdvargo@gerardassociatesarchitects.com)

### *1<sup>st</sup> Vice President*

Mr. Bill Vernon, CSI  
Renaissance 3 Architects  
Phone: 412-630-9166  
[bjv@R3a.com](mailto:bjv@R3a.com)

### *2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President*

Mr. Richard Strayer, CSI  
Maffei Strayer Furnishings  
Phone: 412-630-9166  
[rstrayer@mstrayerfurn.com](mailto:rstrayer@mstrayerfurn.com)

### *Secretary*

Mr. Dennis Buirge, CSI, CCS, CCCA  
[thespecden@gmail.com](mailto:thespecden@gmail.com)

### *Treasurer*

Ms. Gail Nagie, CSI, CDT  
Phone: 724-622-6301  
[gailnaige@aol.com](mailto:gailnaige@aol.com)

## **Directors**

Mr. Michael C. Bosco, RA, CSI, CCS, NCARB  
412-855-5876  
[michaelbosco74@comcast.net](mailto:michaelbosco74@comcast.net)

Ms. Courtney T. Watson, CSI, CDT  
Won-Door Corporation  
412-548-3375  
[cwatson@wondoor.com](mailto:cwatson@wondoor.com)

Mr. Michael Moyta, CSI  
Design 3 Architecture  
412-373-2220  
[mmoyta@d3a.com](mailto:mmoyta@d3a.com)

Mr. Phil Dorenkott, CSI  
412-389-5931  
[pdorenkott@yahoo.com](mailto:pdorenkott@yahoo.com)

Ms. Leisa Mcnamee, CSI  
McGraw Hill Construction  
412-548-2226  
[leisa.mcnamee@mhfi.com](mailto:leisa.mcnamee@mhfi.com)

Ms. Kate Schuster, CSI  
V.O. George Group, Inc.  
412-367-0910  
[kate@voeorge.com](mailto:kate@voeorge.com)

## **Directors**

Ms. Lynn Fulton, CSI  
CDM-Smith  
412-201-5500  
[FultonLM@cdmsmith.com](mailto:FultonLM@cdmsmith.com)

## **Advisors**

Mr. David Miller, CSI  
Keith Bush Associates  
412-216-0219  
[davidmiller.kba@gmail.com](mailto:davidmiller.kba@gmail.com)

Mr. Robert J. Bailey, AIA, CCS, CSI, LEED AP  
IKM Incorporated  
412-281-1337  
[rbailey@ikminc.com](mailto:rbailey@ikminc.com)

Ms. RonnaLeah E. Prindible, CSI  
McGraw-Hill Construction  
412-330-2207  
[ronnaleah\\_prindible@mcgraw-hill.com](mailto:ronnaleah_prindible@mcgraw-hill.com)

## **Committees**

Electronic Communications/Editor  
Ms. Kate Schuster, CSI  
V.O. George Group, Inc.  
412-367-0910  
[kate@voeorge.com](mailto:kate@voeorge.com)

### **Awards**

Mr. Marty Thornton, CCS, CSI  
WTW Architects  
412-321-0550  
[MThornton@wtwarch.com](mailto:MThornton@wtwarch.com)

### **Membership Co-Chairs**

Matthew Lander  
AVT, Inc.  
412-257-5077  
[mlander@avtinc.net](mailto:mlander@avtinc.net)

Damian Carnegie  
AVT Inc.  
412-257-5077  
[dcarnegie@avtinc.net](mailto:dcarnegie@avtinc.net)

### **Technical/Education**

Mr. Philip Dorenkott, CSI  
724-935-9238  
[pdorenkott@yahoo.com](mailto:pdorenkott@yahoo.com)

## **Committees**

### **Certification**

Mr. Michael C. Bosco, RA, CSI, CCS, NCARB  
412-855-5876  
[michaelbosco74@comcast.net](mailto:michaelbosco74@comcast.net)

### **GBA Liaison**

Mr. Phil Dorenkott, CSI  
412-389-5931  
[pdorenkott@yahoo.com](mailto:pdorenkott@yahoo.com)

### **Golf Outing**

Mr. Mark Womer, CSI  
Assa Abloy  
724-708-6106  
[mwomer@dsstristate.net](mailto:mwomer@dsstristate.net)

### **Hospitality**

Mr. Marc A. Zell, CSI  
National Gypsum Company  
800-646-2458 x6440  
[MAZell@nationalgypsum.com](mailto:MAZell@nationalgypsum.com)

### **Long Range Planning**

*See Advisors*

### **Programs**

Ms. Lynn Fulton, CSI  
CDM-Smith  
412-201-5500  
[FultonLM@cdmsmith.com](mailto:FultonLM@cdmsmith.com)

### **Student Outreach**

Mr. Michael D. Moyta, CSI, CDT, AIA  
Design 3 Architecture, P.C.  
412-373-2220  
[m.moyta@d3a.com](mailto:m.moyta@d3a.com)

### **Product Show Chairman**

Mr. James Geist  
Sherwin-Williams  
724-933-1900  
[jim.l.geist@sherwin.com](mailto:jim.l.geist@sherwin.com)

## **Newsletter Editor**

Mr. Robert J. Bailey, AIA, CCS, CSI, LEED AP  
IKM, Inc.  
412-281-1337  
[rbailey@ikminc.com](mailto:rbailey@ikminc.com)

## Green Building Alliance upcoming sponsored event:

The Inspire Speakers Series Presents: Jim Hartzfeld and Bill Strickland  
**December 12, 2013**

5:30 – 8:00 p.m.

@ Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens  
One Schenley Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15213

\$25 for GBA members and partner members and \$45 for non-members

*This edition of the Inspire Speakers Series will feature two experts on creating a true culture of sustainability. Jim Hartzfeld spent years as an executive at Interface, one of the most sustainable manufacturing companies in the country. And Bill Strickland (a Pittsburgh native!) is president of the Manchester Bidwell Corporation, which is being replicated across the country. Guests can also purchase tickets to enjoy a casual and intimate [dinner with the speakers](#) after the event. [Learn more and register.](#)*



### PITTSBURGH CHAPTER DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company</u>	<u>Year Joined</u>	<u>Anniversary</u>
Jim Gerard	Gerard Associates Architects LLC	1978	35
Brian Trimble	Brick Industry Association	1981	32
Rich Florida	Florida Consulting	1982	31
Phil Dorenkott	Atlas Wholesale Supply	1991	22
Joe Miele	A.G. Mauro Co.	1991	22
Matthew Matlak	VEKA, Inc.	1996	17
Bob Schrock	PPG Industries	1998	15
Bruce Pollock	Ross Schonder Sterzinger Cupcheck	1999	14
Harold Ostrander	TEC Specialty Products, Inc.	2002	11
Steve Nearhoof	Stantec	2003	10
Dawn Danyo	Gerard Associates Architects LLC	2006	7
Miki Vargo	Gerard Associates Architects LLC	2006	7
Thomas Christansen	Adams Rite Mfg	2011	2

### NEW MEMBERS:

Anthony (Toby) Torchia Jr. - Knauf Insulation

Brian Joyce – PPG (Reinstated)