

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE (FORMERLY WOODWORDS)

March 2001

President's Message



MARY PAT KELLER

"Understanding WTCA's Budget" by Mary Pat Keller

No one likes to see a price increase. However, that is exactly what happened to our dues for 2001—they increased. At our January Board meeting, a comment was made that WTCA wouldn't need to increase dues if they didn't spend so much on *WOODWORDS*. The assumption was that creating and producing this professional publication is very expensive and that a substantial percentage of WTCA's resources are required to foot the bill. I'm sure it will come as a surprise to many that quite the opposite is true. Here are some facts to consider:

- *WOODWORDS* actually helps WTCA's budget. In 2000, *WOODWORDS*, which is owned by Truss Publications, Inc. (with WTCA as a 49 percent owner), undertook a great deal of work that was formerly done by WTCA. This work included legislative activities and the publication of educational/promotional articles in other magazines to advance our industry. A few examples of this work include the legislative alerts that WTCA members receive via fax and email, the article on permanent bracing that was published in the December issue of Structural Engineer Magazine and the series of ads running in Professional Builder Magazine that educate builders on the benefits of framing with components. As *WOODWORDS* is a separate, self-sufficient entity of which WTCA is part-owner, no part of WTCA dues go toward publishing this magazine.
- A number of years ago, WTCA's Board of Directors and Past Presidents directed Qualtim (the company that manages WTCA) to increase its staff to handle the demand for services. Qualtim did this with very positive results. At that time, the increase in cost was covered partly by the growth in membership that the additional services attracted—not by an increase in dues. However, when increased services are offered you expect to pay more for them. WTCA has not increased dues since 1989. Think about it. If we as truss manufacturers kept our prices the same for that long while we increased the services we provided to our customers, we would be out of business.
- Before the decision was made to raise dues, many other avenues for generating additional revenue were explored. The CNA insurance program was one of them. In the past, this program provided as much as \$70,000 annually to WTCA as expense reimbursement. When this program was discontinued, the loss of such expense reimbursements severely strained our ability to provide services to our members. At subsequent meetings, the Board directed Qualtim to remove inconsistent items from the revenue side of the budget (such as investment income and expense reimbursement programs) in order to be fiscally responsible. We learned that we must have the means to continue to advance our industry. As members of WTCA we ought to be willing to participate in making this happen.
- Currently, the revenue that BCMC provides and the activities undertaken by *WOODWORDS*

mean that WTCA is still severely dependent on these sources to provide the benefits our members are demanding. The Board's goal is to grow both of these efforts. Doing so will allow us to tackle some of the research and development projects that have been relegated to the back burner due to lack of funds.

As an organization, WTCA strives to be as effective as possible in serving its membership. You can help us to be more effective by letting us know which products and services you want WTCA to provide by contacting WTCA.

Speaking of suppliers, it is important to remember that we need to support all of the suppliers who support our industry organization. The companies that invest in advertising in *WOODWORDS* or exhibiting at BCMC are doing more than simply promoting their businesses. They are making an investment in the future of our industry. Take a good, hard look at the companies you find in the pages of *WOODWORDS*. If you are currently buying from them, thank them for their support. If you are not currently using them as a vendor, seriously consider them the next time you need to make a purchase. We need to be investing our money in the suppliers who go out of their way to support our industry.

In the process of writing this article, it occurred to me that WTCA's budget might not be fully understood by a great many members. Having a handle on our own business's budget can be tough enough without digging into WTCA's budget. WTCA is fortunate to have a very loyal following as evidenced by the majority of you who have already paid your dues this year. We are very appreciative of your continued support. It is clear, however, that many of our members are not as close to the operational decisions as we would like them to be. This is where Chapter representatives can be especially valuable. Please allow some time at your Chapter meetings to discuss the Board meetings that your representatives attend and at the same time try to appreciate the budgetary aspects of your association.

In the meantime, if there is any lingering doubt about the value of your dues dollar, please take a good look at WTCA's 2000 Annual Report, visit [WTCA's web site](#) or call a WTCA staff member for answers to your specific questions. Take a good look at what the 0.018 percent of revenue that many of you pay in WTCA dues is doing for you. And please take advantage of everything WTCA has to offer as this association is being guided and directed by your industry peers. I think you'll be pleasantly surprised.

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