

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

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Parting Shots



This photo was submitted by Jeff Whitesel, President of Truss Tech, Inc. in Mifflintown, PA. Whitesel's company manufactured the trusses for this job in the fall of 2003. The roof dimensions were 64' x 64,' setting up on 9' walls at one time. As is evident in the photo, when the walls collapsed and the roof came down, not a single web was broken or a sheet of steel roofing wrinkled. Obviously, this roof remained in tact because the trusses were properly braced. Three cheers for temporary and permanent bracing!

Remembering What is Important By Carl Schoening

In this day of rushing about engaged in our daily mission, we may easily forget what is important in life. Many times while traveling the country, I find myself thinking about how nice it would be to have a slower schedule and that most people do not have to sacrifice time with family in order to conduct business.

Anyone that travels these days has seen a growing number of travelers in military uniforms either going to or returning from war. In the beginning we would speak to these young men and women and wish them success in their endeavors and show support by telling them how proud we are of their efforts. These days they mostly sit alone in airports or with a few comrades. I am no exception. While I am still very proud and supportive of our military, I have mostly stopped

opening dialogue with them. It seems I always have email to answer or calls to make. All of that has changed.

I recently flew into Spokane on business. I was confident about my mission and looking forward to engaging a prospective client. On board the flight were two men in uniform. As is normal these days they spoke little during the flight. Upon landing I experienced one of the most incredible reunions I can remember. Just outside the gate were the wives and children of these men holding signs that exclaimed "WELCOME HOME DADDY." Since I was seated forward of these men I had the unique opportunity to witness the rush of kids to fathers and hugs that would have surely broken ordinary men. Watching the scene unfold broke me completely. These were no ordinary men; they were American Soldiers returning from a bitter place in the world having experienced things beyond the comprehension of most. For that moment everything they had recently experienced disappeared. The only thing in their minds was the love of their wives and families. From the expressions on the faces of these men it was easy to see that they knew the gift they had just received was more important and more powerful than any amount of money or acclaim. The memories of recent experiences will certainly return, but for that moment the only thing that mattered in the universe was wrapped lovingly in their arms.

Yes, I miss my children when I am traveling on business for a few days and welcome the smiles I receive when I return home. These men had been away from their families for many months with little or no communication. They were doing a job that is far greater than anything I do and they do it for far less compensation. They are away from loved ones for extended periods and do not have they opportunities to call or email that I have.

That reunion did several things. It took me back to my youth when my father, a career soldier, would return from whatever far off place he had been and how we too rushed to meet him at the gate. I had forgotten about that feeling. I won't ever again. I won't ever take for granted those men and women that serve and protect our nation. I will speak to each that I encounter in my travels. I will pray for their safe return and wish for them the same kind of reunion upon their return that I witnessed in Spokane. I will not pity myself for traveling and I will meet my family each time I return with joy in my heart. I will squeeze my kids and my wife everyday and enjoy each moment I spend with them. I will remember that reunion in Spokane and remind myself each day that I have a wonderful life.

Share your stories and photos with us!. Send submissions to partingshots@sbcmag.info.

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