

- American  
- Institute of  
- Architects

# AIA/EIC eastwards

NEWSLETTER OF THE EASTERN ILLINOIS CHAPTER

January 2026  
Issue 1.26  
www.aiaeic.org

## President's Message

by John Benware Jr., AIA, NCARB

Welcome to the new year. I hope that everybody had an enjoyable and relaxing holiday season.

I am writing this before the board has met for its traditional transitional board meeting, where we usually take a look back at the year just completed. We look at our successes and where we need to improve. Then we start planning for the year ahead. I will present a summary of the meeting later this month at our January dinner. It should be a great reason to attend.

The chapter is preparing to host a full slate of events this year. Our baseball outing is already scheduled, with a special addition. In the past the games have featured the southside White Sox. This year, in a nod to our northside Cubs fans, we have scheduled the outing for the Crosstown Classic featuring both teams. There is no excuse for anyone not to sign up and come out to support the Chapter. The pregame tailgate is going to be very exciting.



We will also have our annual golf outing; details are forthcoming. The outing has been growing in popularity and success ever since we restarted it a couple of years ago. Plan to come out and join us for a relaxing day on the links, and to support our scholarship fund.

There will be more opportunities coming this year. A change at the national level to requirements for how chapters provide continuing education has given us more leeway for our meeting presentations. If there is a topic you want to discuss, or an event you would like us to host, then please let us know.

*Continued on next page...*

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### January 28 Chapter Meeting

Program:  
**Terra Cotta  
Rainscreen Design**

Presenter:  
**Jen Marchesani**

Sponsor:  
**Sildan Group**

See page 5 for registration.

# President's Message

...continued



On the national level, the AIA is looking to update and revise their strategic plan. A draft version of the plan is available online, and the period for public comment is open until January 30, 2026. There will also be two live, public comment sessions for which you can register to participate. To download the strategic plan and register for the public comment sessions, go to the AIA website link below.

Stay warm and safe; I hope to see everyone later this month.

*John F. Benware, Jr.  
AIA, NCARB  
EIC President*

**AIA site to register for comment sessions:**  
[https://www.aia.org/review-draft-strategic-plan-2026-2030?utm\\_source=MarketingCloud&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=2026\\_01\\_CE\\_Component+Update\\_8](https://www.aia.org/review-draft-strategic-plan-2026-2030?utm_source=MarketingCloud&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2026_01_CE_Component+Update_8)

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## AIA/EIC CALENDAR

### January

28 Regular Meeting @ Flossmoor Station

### February

25 Regular Meeting  
Cemeno's Pizza, Joliet, IL

### March

18 Joliet Junior College  
Architectural Studies Program  
Advisory Committee meeting (pg 3)  
25 Regular Meeting @ Flossmoor Station

### April

29 Regular Meeting  
Gatto's Tinley Park

### May

15 White Sox vs. Cubs  
summer outing (see pg 3)  
27 Regular Meeting @ Flossmoor Station

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Students and emerging professionals can purchase study materials from PPI/Kaplan with a 15% discount.

Go to [https://aiaeic.org/PPI\\_Test](https://aiaeic.org/PPI_Test) or contact our membership coordinator John Benware for more information.

To view the available catalog products through PPI/Kaplan, go to:  
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# Chapter Corner

items of interest and notable news



## MAY 15 - Summer Outing 2026 Chicago Cubs at Chicago White Sox "Crosstown Classic"

Guaranteed Rate Field  
(Comiskey Park/White Sox Park)  
4:30 pm Tailgate Party / 6:40 pm First Pitch

The 2026 Chicago White Sox game and tailgate outing will be extra enjoyable against the hometown rival Chicago Cubs! Thanks to ASSA ABLOY for planning this popular event *plus* covering part of the costs! Tickets are limited and going fast, so register now.

\$50 value ticket includes Dewain/Assa Abloy's delicious tailgate, raffle ticket, and SPONSORED Seating in Section 155, Rows 26-32. Additional raffle entries for a White Sox jersey and more are also available at \$5 each.

REGISTER HERE before the end of April.  
[aiaaic.starchapter.com/meet-reg1.php?id=136](http://aiaaic.starchapter.com/meet-reg1.php?id=136)

Contact Dewain with questions.  
(see below right) ▷

**Please note:** Wayne Babiak is looking for historical information for "Eastwords" articles. If you have a "remember when..." please contact Wayne at [web44aia@comcast.net](mailto:web44aia@comcast.net) or give him a call at 708-989-6214.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026  
5:00PM - 8:00PM  
U-Building Auditorium  
1215 Houbolt Rd, Joliet, IL 60431

Join us for an inside look at the Architectural Studies Program at Joliet Junior College. Catered dinner, informative presentations, and student networking are included.

For more information, email Maria Anna Rafac: [mrafac@jic.edu](mailto:mrafac@jic.edu)

JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE

"Eastwords" is the monthly publication of the American Institute of Architects/ Eastern Illinois Chapter. Opinions expressed are those of the particular author and not necessarily those of AIA/EIC. For advertising information, contact Edvin Mertdogan, AIA at [emertdogan@yahoo.com](mailto:emertdogan@yahoo.com). Submit all articles to the editor, Roxanne Paukner, Hon. AIA, at [rp.entasis@att.net](mailto:rp.entasis@att.net).

**ASSA ABLOY**

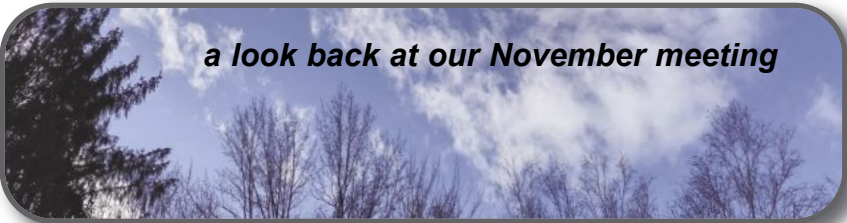
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# Rear View Mirror

REAR VIEW MIRROR



*a look back at our November meeting*

## Innovative Applications of Daylighting

**Presenter:** Miya N. Russell, LEED AP

**Sponsor:** Kingspan Light + Air

November's regular chapter meeting program was valuable and engaging! We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Miya Russell of Kingspan Light & Air for her insightful presentation on Innovative Applications of Daylighting during our meeting, held at Flossmoor Station. We also greatly appreciate Kingspan Light & Air, North America, for their generous support as both our host and sponsor, making this informative session possible. Visit them at <https://www.kingspan.com/.../business.../kingspan-light-air/> or click on the logo below.



Attendees who have not yet received their CEU certificate by email, contact John Benware, AIA.



# Upcoming Meeting ♦ Wednesday, January 28

Program: Terra Cotta Rainscreen Design (1 LU/HSW)

**Presenter:** Jen Marcheasani, VP of Sales and Marketing  
Shildan Group

**Program:** Terra Cotta Rainscreen Design

The Rainscreen Principle is a theory governing the design of the building envelope in such a way as to protect the building from the elements (rain, sun, wind, condensation). The back-ventilated and pressure-equalized Rainscreen System is a version of the Rainscreen Principle that was developed in Europe beginning in the 1960s for various facade materials including: metal, stone, wood, and clay.

**Objectives:**

- The leakage process in exterior facades and how the Rainscreen System can combat the main problem
- History of Rainscreen Systems in North America: Pressure-Equalized versus Back-Ventilated & Pressure-Equalized
- Comparison of Back-Ventilated Rainscreen System to other methods of facade construction
- Benefits of the Back-Ventilated & Pressure-Equalized Rainscreen System
- LEED Benefits, Sustainability, & Healthy Wall Construction
- Details of institutional terracotta Rainscreen projects in the U.S. including a discussion of systems and installation

**Sponsor:** Shildan Group

**Location:** FLOSSMOOR STATION  
1035 Sterling Ave  
Flossmoor, IL 60422

**MEETING IN PERSON**

*Please register at right.*

**Time:** 5:00 pm Board Meeting  
6:00 pm Social Hour  
7:00 pm Dinner and CEU  
Program Presentation

**Cost:** \$30.00 / AIA/EIC Member  
\$35.00 / non-member  
\$20.00 / student or educator



**Reserve your spot!**

**Click here** to register online,  
or for directions and venue web-link go to:  
<https://aiaaic.starchapter.com/meet-reg1.php?id=131>

If you are unable to register online,  
contact **John Benware, Jr., AIA**  
at [jfbjr@jfbjr-architect.com](mailto:jfbjr@jfbjr-architect.com) or  
708-529-8346.

**Certificates will be e-mailed  
to registrants after the seminar.**

The logo for Architectural Building Solutions features a stylized blue and green 'A' shape on the left. To the right of this graphic, the words "Architectural Building Solutions" are written in a blue, sans-serif font.

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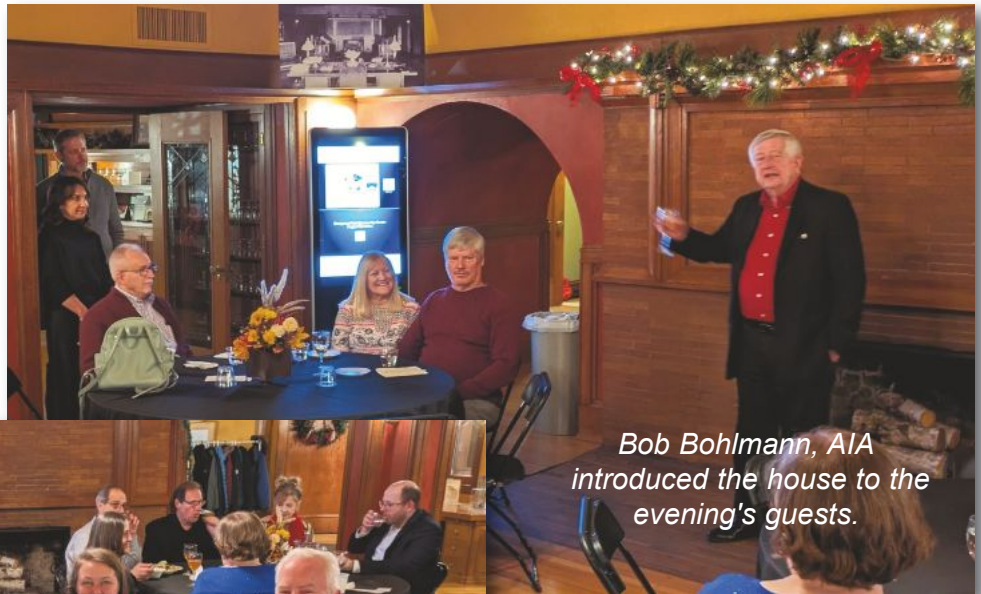
Character and Experience is our design for Excellence

# AIA/EIC Annual Dinner

December 7, 2025



The Annual Dinner was held Sunday night, December 7 at the B. Harley Bradley House in Kankakee, IL. The well-attended event included a tour of the learning center, led by EIC member and Director of the Wright in Kankakee, Robert Bohlmann, AIA. The program also included a catered dinner, enjoyed by members and guests.




Bob Bohlmann, AIA introduced the house to the evening's guests.



Vice-President Scott Piper, AIA, presented our educational scholarship to Leslie Valerio, a student at Joliet Junior College.

As an unexpected bonus, Edvin Mertdogan, AIA, shared his musical talents on the piano, providing dinner melodies. *continued* ▶

**KATELYN WALKER**



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# AIA/EIC Annual Dinner

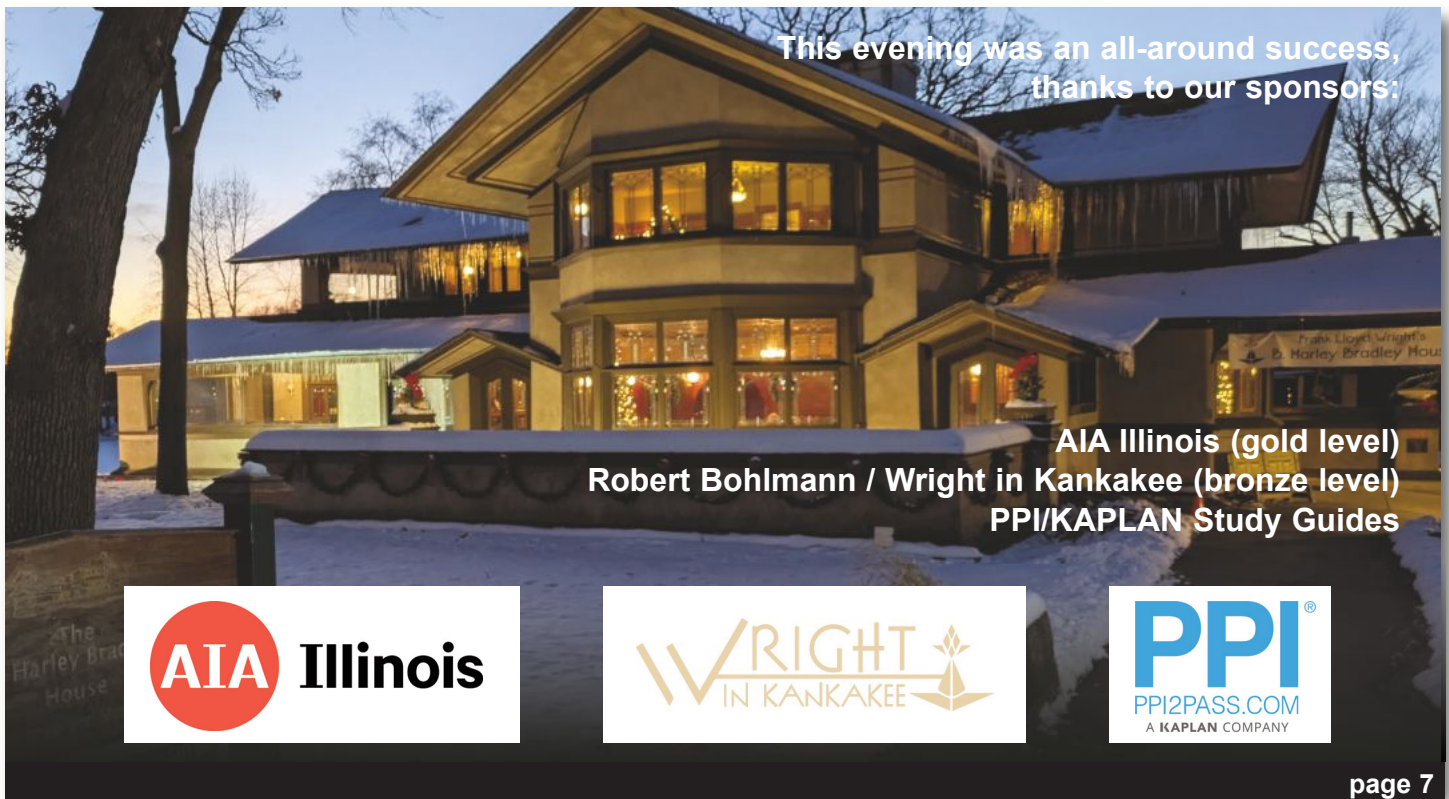
December 7, 2025



Board members L-R:  
Gabe Hocking, Scott Piper, John Benware, KT Walker, Edwin Mertdogan



Cheers to our Scholarship winner  
Leslie Valerio (standing)



This evening was an all-around success,  
thanks to our sponsors:

AIA Illinois (gold level)  
Robert Bohlmann / Wright in Kankakee (bronze level)  
PPI/KAPLAN Study Guides

