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AIA/EIC eastwards

NEWSLETTER OF THE EASTERN ILLINOIS CHAPTER

February 2026
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www.aiaeic.org

President's Message

by John Benware Jr., AIA, NCARB

It looks and feels like actual winter outside my window as I write this month's introductory message. There is actual snow covering the ground, and the temperature has actually dropped below zero, not including the wind chills. Our local groundhog prognosticator seems to think that we will have an early spring, and I certainly hope that he is correct this year.



This month we will be hosting the students from Joliet Junior College at our chapter meeting. We have been doing this for the students enrolled in the architecture program every February for the last couple of years. Part of this is for the students to meet real architects one-on-one, to inspire and encourage them to continue their education. The other purpose is outreach on the part of the chapter to the next generation.

Speaking of outreach, April 12 to April 18 is National Architecture Week. The AIA will be celebrating architecture with a number of events, including some virtual read-alouds of books targeted at K-12 students. In



the past there have been public proclamations adopted by municipalities recognizing the importance of architecture. We are looking for volunteers to have events during Architecture Week. Please get in touch if you have an idea that you would like the chapter

to help bring about. You can visit the National AIA Architecture Week site for more information and ideas. <https://www.aia.org/community/events/architecture-week-2026>

For our associates who are studying for the licensing exam, we have partnered with PrepARE, an AIA East Bay Chapter study program which includes video lessons, practice exams, and one-on-one study
(Continued on next page...)

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February 25 Chapter Meeting

Program:
**Architectural
Precast Concrete**

Presenter:
Joe Lombard

Sponsor:
PCI of Illinois & Wisconsin

See page 7 for registration.

President's Message

...continued

sessions. We have discount codes available to anyone looking to participate.

One last item for this month is about strategic plans. You may have already received some communications from both AIA National and State about their plans to update and revise their strategic plans for the next five years. Well, Eastern Illinois Chapter needs to take a look at our strategic plan which expires this year. I am looking for volunteers to help revise our strategic plan that will guide the chapter for the next five years. It won't take more than half a day of your time and will prove valuable for our future.

Stay warm, and I look forward to seeing you shortly.

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

Chapter Corner

items of interest and notable news

AIA/EIC CALENDAR

February

- 25** Regular Meeting
Cemeno's Pizza, Joliet, IL

March

- 18** Joliet Junior College
Architectural Studies Program
Advisory Committee meeting
- 25** Regular Meeting @ Flossmoor Station

April

- 12-18** National Architecture Week
- 29** Regular Meeting
Gatto's Tinley Park

May

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

June

- 5** Golf Outing (see pg 3)
The Bluffs Channahon (Heritage Bluffs)

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@jjc.edu

ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES PROGRAM





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Chapter Corner

items of interest and notable news



Wayne Babiak, AIA is collecting historical information for “Eastwards” articles. If you have a story or recommendation, please contact Wayne at web44aia@comcast.net or give him a call at 708-989-6214.



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.
aiaeic.starchapter.com/meet-reg1.php?id=136

Contact Dewain with questions.
(see at right) ▷

Mark your calendars for the 2026 AIA/EIC Golf Outing, gather your foursome, and consider sponsoring this Scholarship Fundraising event!

FRIDAY, June 5, 2026

9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

**REGISTER
HERE**



Tickets

\$85 GOLF (Includes 1/2 Cart)
\$40 DINNER

Sponsorship Opportunities

\$50 Par (Advertiser)
\$150 Birdie (Hole Sponsor)
\$250 Eagle (Dinner Sponsor)
\$350 Hole-in-one (Prize Award)
\$500 Double Eagle (Prize Award)

Questions: contact Gabe Hocking
(708) 224-4324 or
gabe.hocking@damsinc.com.

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Chapter History: Honorary Members

by Wayne E. Babiak, AIA



AIA/EIC became a Chapter effective January 1, 1978. The By-Laws for the Chapter, in addition to having full AIA Members and Associate Member categories, also provide for Honorary Affiliate Membership. Over the years, the Eastern Illinois Chapter has bestowed this honor to the individuals listed below.

The By-Laws state the qualifications for Honorary Affiliate Membership: A person of esteemed character, who has rendered the profession of a architecture a distinguished service within the territory of the Chapter, but who is not eligible for membership in the Institute or the Chapter, may be elected to Honorary Affiliate Membership.

JUNE TERP Elected 1980



1980 excerpt regarding June's nomination:

June is a Charter Member of the Women's Architectural League (W.A.L.). She has chaired and worked tirelessly on many W.A.L. committees including the 1979 Women's Program Committee at the state convention. June was W.A.L. President from 1978 to 1980.

Wayne's comment: June passed away in 2005. In addition to the above accomplishments, June was active in assisting in the initial organization of the Eastern Illinois Chapter. She was the wife of the late George Terp, AIA who passed away in 1998. George was a longtime Chapter Member.

CAROLE BREJCHA Elected 1982

1982 excerpt regarding Carole's nomination:

In the past ten years Carole has been most active in the Women's Architectural League (W.A.L.) chairing committees including Program, Membership & Hospitality. Carole is currently President of the W.A.L. She has always been a guiding spirit to W.A.L. and to the Eastern Illinois Chapter, from the first seeds of our new Chapter to her continuing efforts at our Annual Meetings.



Wayne's comment: Carole still lives in Olympia Fields. Carole was the wife of the late Raymond J. Brejcha, AIA who passed away in 2014. Ray was the first President of the South Section in 1966 and also the first President of the Eastern Illinois Chapter in 1978.

ROXANNE PAUKNER Elected 2014

The newsletter publication was originally a volunteer member position, then shortly turned over to someone outside of the chapter. Roxanne began producing "Eastwords" in 1990 when Ted Dunaj, AIA was president. At the time her husband, Dave Paukner, was an intern working for Ben Nelson, AIA in the same Orland Park office building as Ted Dunaj and Ralph (Chip) Rorem, AIA. That's how she became involved as the editor.

Wayne's comment: Over the decades Roxanne has developed our chapter's newsletter from its humble print beginnings to the mutli-page digital-newsletter it is now. Thanks, Roxanne, for your continued tireless efforts!



Rear View Mirror

REAR VIEW MIRROR



Terra Cotta Rainscreen Design

Presenter: Jen Marchesani, VP of Sales and Marketing

Sponsor: Shildan Group

Director and Historical Chairman - Wayne Babiak, AIA, ran the January chapter meeting.

Jen Marchesani of Shildan Group gave an insightful presentation on Terra Cotta Rainscreen Design during Wednesday evening's event at Flossmoor Station Restaurant. Rainscreen is a system, and Jen shared a variety of Shildan Group's product samples. Our thanks go out to her, and to all who attended and participated. It was a valuable meeting.



We sincerely appreciate Shildan Group for their generous support as both host and sponsor. Their partnership was instrumental in making this informative CEU LU session possible! <https://shildan.com/>



**SHILDAN
GROUP**

Anyone interested in hosting future meetings should contact Scott Piper, AIA, at spiper@spmarchitects.com.

Upcoming Meeting ♦ Wednesday, February 25

Program: Architectural Precast Concrete

This is a joint Meeting with Joliet Junior College Architecture Students.

Presenter: Joe Lombard

Program: Architectural Precast Concrete: Materials, Systems, Detailing, and Resilient Design

This interactive course provides architects with a comprehensive understanding of architectural precast concrete as a high-performance building material. Participants will explore the fundamentals of concrete mix design, including the roles and interactions of aggregates cement, water, and chemical admixtures, through practical examples and discussion of real-world formulations. The presentation will cover the principal types of precast panels: solid, insulated (sandwich), and thin, along with their respective applications and performance characteristics. Insulation strategies will be examined, including those integrated during fabrication and those applied post-production, with emphasis on thermal efficiency and building envelope performance. Key detailing considerations, such as joint design and proper caulking/sealant practices, will be addressed to ensure long-term weather resistance and durability. The course will conclude with an overview of precast concrete's inherent advantages in enhancing building resilience against severe weather events, blast loads, and impact forces. Through interactive dialogue and case examples, attendees will gain practical insights to inform confident specification and integration of precast systems in their projects.



Objectives: At the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Describe primary constituents of precast concrete and explain how their selection and proportions influence panel strength, durability, and finish quality.
2. Compare structural and aesthetic characteristics of solid, insulated, and thin precast panels, and identify appropriate applications for each in contemporary architectural projects.
3. Evaluate insulation for precast panels, factory-integrated and field-applied options, and assess effects on thermal performance, condensation control, and overall envelope efficiency.
4. Apply best practices for joint detailing and sealant/caulking installation in precast systems to achieve reliable weatherproofing, movement accommodation, and long-term serviceability.

(Continued on next page...)

A business card for Katelyn Walker. The top half has a blue background with white text. The bottom half is white with blue text and a circular logo. The logo features a globe and the text "KANKAKEE AREA CAREER CENTER" and "Empowering Students For Tomorrow".

KATELYN
WALKER

Kankakee Area Career
Center, Bourbonnais, IL.
ktwalker59@gmail.com
815-258-6259

A business card for Structural mec McCluskey Engineering. It features a vertical purple bar on the left with the word "STRUCTURAL" in white. To the right is the "mec" logo in a stylized font, with "McCluskey Engineering" below it. The address and phone number are listed at the bottom.

STRUCTURAL

mec
McCluskey Engineering
1887 High Grove Lane - Naperville, IL
www.mccluskeyeng.com 630.717.5335

Seth Michael ■ Scott Strnad ■ Andy Eck

Upcoming Meeting ♦ February 25

...continued



5. Assess resilience benefits of pre-cast concrete in mitigating risks from high-winds, blast events, and impact loads, and incorporate these into holistic, safety-focused design strategies.

Sponsor: PCI of Illinois & Wisconsin
www.pci-iw.org



Location: CEMENO'S PIZZA
1630 Essington Rd
Joliet, IL 60435
Website: <https://cemenospizza.com/>

MEETING IN PERSON

Please register below.

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

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Melissa S. Roberts, AAI
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Reserve your spot!

Click here to register online, or for directions and venue web-link go to:

<https://aiaeic.starchapter.com/meet-reg1.php?id=132>

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

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

"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. Submit all articles to the editor, Roxanne Paukner, Hon. AIA, at rp.entasis@att.net.



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