

- American
- Institute of
- Architects

AIA/EIIC
NEWSLETTER OF THE EASTERN ILLINOIS CHAPTER
eastwards

April 2026
Issue 4.26
www.aiaeic.org

President's Message

by John Benware Jr., AIA, NCARB

It's finally spring, and there are a lot of construction projects breaking ground. It keeps us busy in our office. That and the annual March Madness tournament, which shows once again how unpredictable college sports can be.

Last month, we had some great events and interactions with our colleagues. We met with the students and faculty in the architecture program at Joliet Junior College for an update on the program's development and future goals.

I travelled to Springfield to join with architects and allied professionals from around the state to lobby our legislators as part the annual AIA Illinois Prairie Grassroots event. We gathered at the state capital to have conversations with our senators and representatives, to offer our expertise on all aspects of the built environment. If they have questions about affordable housing, building codes, resiliency and sustainability,



they should reach out to architects. We are the best equipped to not only explain the issues, but to offer common-sense solutions. We also expressed our concern about the change to the professional status of the architecture degree, and the need to address

student loans for those pursuing professional degrees in architecture.

Architecture Week is from April 12 to April 18 this year. AIA National has a number of events planned for the week. The Committee on Design is having its Spring Conference during that time here in Chicago.

Continued on next page...

in this issue...

<i>Rearview Mirror</i>	3
<i>Rialto Theatre Tour</i>	4
<i>Upcoming Chapter Meeting</i>	5
<i>Chapter Corner</i>	6
<i>Significant Architecture Guide</i> ...	7
<i>Officers and Board</i>	8

Wednesday, April 29 Chapter Meeting

Program:

***Heavy-Duty Flush Doors for
Commercial Entrances***

Presenter:

Nickolas Shurba

Sponsor:

Special-Lite

See page 5 for registration.

President's Message

...continued



While we don't have anything planned during Architecture Week, we do have a new event coming this month. We have scheduled a tour of the Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet. This is a classic and significant architectural gem, one of the *Illinois Great Places*, and we will have the opportunity to explore the building with students from Joliet Junior College. Everyone is welcome to the tour, and we are working on getting it accredited for learning units. See page 4 for details.

This is just the first of our special events that we have scheduled for the summer. Our annual baseball game is coming up in May. The golf outing is coming in June. See page 6 for information on both. Other events are in the works, so keep a watch on our calendar.

Look forward to seeing everyone at one our events.

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

"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.

AIA/EIC CALENDAR

April

- 12-18** National Architecture Week
- 28** Rialto Theatre guided tour with JJC
- 29** Regular Meeting @ Gatto's Tinley Park

May

- 15** White Sox vs. Cubs
summer outing
- 27** Regular Meeting @ Flossmoor Station

June

- 5** Golf Outing
The Bluffs Channahon (Heritage Bluffs)
- 10-13** AIA Conference on Architecture & Design
San Diego, CA

.....Stay tuned for fall meeting dates.....

December

- 6** Annual Dinner & Design Awards
- Save the date!

GabeHocking

Project Manager

gabe.hocking@damsinc.com
p: 708.224.4324 | c: 815.545.0836
5919 West 118th Street Alsip, IL 60803

ACM & Plate Panel Systems
Sun Control Devices
Grilles & Louvers
Entrance Metal

damsinc.com

PPI[®] PPI2PASS.COM

A KAPLAN COMPANY

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

Go to https://aiaaic.org/PPI_Test
or contact our membership coordinator
John Benware for more information.

To view the available catalog products through PPI/Kaplan, go to:
https://ppi2pass.com/customer/account/login/?partnerid=AIAEI&redi=%2F&utm_source=AIAEIaffiliate

Rear View Mirror

REAR VIEW MIRROR



a look back at our March meeting

Designing Visually Dynamic Facades with Coil and Extrusion Coatings

Presenter: Susan Sienkowski, LEED Green Assoc., Enterprise Account Exec.

Sponsor: The Sherwin-Williams Company



Coil and extrusion coatings can make an incredible visual impact on your building facade. The March AIA/EIC meeting course provided a comprehensive overview of coil and extrusion coatings technology and application methods. We learned how the technologies create visual impact through color and design, as well as key information on best practices for specifying coatings.

Our thanks to Susan Sienkowski, LEED Green Associate for this exceptional session. We gained some incredible insights.



John Benware, Jr., AIA introduces the presenter.



Susan Sienkowski

A special thanks also to the Sherwin-Williams Company for being a fantastic host and sponsor—partnerships like this make high-quality CEU LU sessions possible!

It was wonderful to see a strong turnout at Flossmoor Station Restaurant. Thanks to everyone who joined the conversation!



Attendees from JMA Architects - South Holland, IL

Historic Rialto Square Theatre

Architectural Guided Tour



A special event is planned for this month. On Tuesday, April 28 (one day before our regular chapter meeting), AIA/EIC will join with the JJC Architectural Club for a guided tour of the historic Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet, Illinois. This is a great opportunity to view this architectural gem in our back yard for a nominal \$20. Your company can also sponsor this outing for just \$200.



Everyone should bring a sketchpad and pen or pencil. The two hour function will include a guided tour of the theatre as well as time for architects and students to do some sketching. We are in the process of getting the tour accredited for continuing education units.

The event ends at 6:00 p.m., so afterward attendees may opt to go to dinner offsite to socialize with fellow architects and future architects!

April 28, 2026
3:50 - 6:00 PM CDT

Rialto Square Theatre
102 N. Chicago St., Joliet, IL 60432



Rialto Site: <https://venuworks.com/venues/rialto-square-theatre>

Event info and registration: aiaeic.starchapter.com/meetinginfo.php?id=139&ts=1774414318

STRUCTURAL

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

Seth Michael ■ Scott Strnad ■ Andy Eck

10333 Van's Drive
Frankfort, IL 60423
815-469-7550

Blake Vande Kamp
blakevk@stone-brick.com

3640 Lake Ave.
Wilmette, IL 60091
847-251-5511

cell: 708-541-5125
fax: 815-469-2623

Upcoming Meeting ♦ Wednesday, April 29

Program: Heavy-Duty Flush Doors for Commercial Entrances - 1 HSW LU

Presenter: Nickolas Shurba -Special Lite Sales Representative at S.D. Walker Company

Program: Heavy-Duty Flush Doors for Commercial Entrances

This program was developed specifically for architects and specifiers involved in selecting and installing doors in commercial applications. It reviews common types of heavy-duty flush doors used in commercial and institutional facilities. Attendees receive one Health, Safety & Welfare (HSW) Learning Unit credit.

Initial Cost vs. Lifecycle Cost: Entrances represent a small percentage of total construction cost, but a significant percentage of a facility's annual operating budget. This program will discuss how you can help facility managers control their ongoing maintenance costs by specifying entrance components that reduce lifecycle costs.



Objectives: Attendees will learn

- How an entrance functions as a system of interdependent components
- How a door's operating environment affects performance, durability, and lifecycle costs
- Key design and construction differences among flush door alternatives
- Basic scientific principles and material properties affecting entrance system service life
- How to evaluate door performance criteria to choose the right entrance supplier

Sponsor: Special-Lite is the leading producer of Fiberglass Reinforced Polyester (FRP) flush doors, having pioneered the technology in 1981. They manufacture custom entrance solutions—doors, frames, and panels as well as hardware and vision lites for new construction and retrofit applications.

Location: Gatto's Tinley Park
8005 W. 183rd. St.
Tinley Park, IL 60477
<https://www.gattosrestaurant.com/>

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=134>

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.**

Chapter Corner

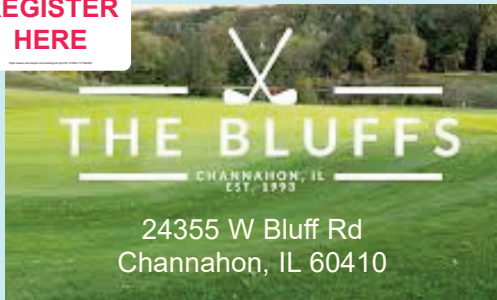
items of interest and notable news

The 2026 golf outing is ready for sponsors and foursomes or individuals to **sign-up** for this **Scholarship Fundraising** event!

FRIDAY, June 5, 2026

9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

**REGISTER
HERE**



24355 W Bluff Rd
Channahon, IL 60410

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.



Chapter members
~ remember to reach out to your vendors for these and other sponsorship opportunities!

[aiaaic.org/Sponsorship Opportunities](http://aiaaic.org/Sponsorship_Opportunities)

AIA26 Conference on Architecture & Design
June 10-13 San Diego

THE INDUSTRY'S CAN'T-MISS EVENT

Visionary keynotes, top-tier CE, architect-led tours, unparalleled connections, and the industry's largest expo.

AIA Conference on Architecture & Design June 10-13
<https://conferenceonarchitecture.com/>



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

Only 5 tickets are left!
Proceeds benefit our scholarship fund.

REGISTER HERE before the end of April.
aiaaic.starchapter.com/meet-reg1.php?id=136
Questions? Contact Dewain Peterson.
630-338-5610 dwpeterson@assaabloydss.com

ASSA ABLOY

Dewain Peterson, CSI, CDT
Regional Architectural Consultant

Door Security Solutions
19532 115th Ave., Unit A
Mokena, IL 60448

Tel 630-338-5610
Fax 847-350-6943
Mobile 630-338-5610
dwpeterson@assaabloydss.com
www.assaabloydss.com

Significant Architecture Guide

update by Wayne Babiak, AIA



As indicated in previous issues of “Eastwords,” Steve Reardon, AIA Member Emeritus has been working on a Guide to Significant Architecture of the Chicago South Suburbs. An article by Steve regarding the background of this project can be found in the October 2025 newsletter at <https://aiaeic.org/news.php?id=27>



Steven M. Reardon, AIA
Member Emeritus

During the meeting, Steve indicated that he will continue to add to the guide, as it is an ongoing “living work.” Additions would include past projects within our chapter territory that have received AIA/EIC Design Award recognition.

The ultimate goal in the future is to have the guide published in book form. However, Steve and the chapter believe that the guide to-date should be released now in a PDF format for on-line previewing. To check out the current version, go to <https://aiaeic.org/Significant Architecture>.

This guide, in conjunction with AIA/EIC celebrating 50 years as a Chapter in 2028, is exciting to say the least! More details will follow.

Once again, thanks, Steve, for your efforts.

Wayne Babiak, AIA

On Monday evening, April 6th, a Zoom conference call took place with Steve to review the status of the guide. Present from AIA/EIC on that call were board members, John Benware, Edvin Mertdogan, Wayne Babiak and K.T. Walker. Our newsletter editor, Roxanne Paukner, also joined in.



These structures are just two of the many listed in the guide. Can you name them and their locations? Check out the link above, and bring your answers to the April 29th Chapter Meeting.



KATELYN WALKER

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

I am collecting historical information regarding our chapter for upcoming “Eastwords” articles and for a celebration of our 50 years as a Chapter in 2028. Send stories, JPEG photos, etc. to web44aia@comcast.net. Thanks...

Wayne

**The American Institute of Architects
Eastern Illinois Chapter
P.O. Box 1476, Homewood, IL 60430**

- President* John F. Benware, Jr., AIA
Vice President Scott E. Piper, AIA
Treasurer Edwin V. Mertdogan, AIA
Secretary Gabriel D. Hocking, Assoc. AIA
Directors Wayne E. Babiak, AIA
Dewain Peterson, AIA/EIC Allied
Phil Traynor, AIA/EIC Allied
Katelyn Walker, AIA/EIC Allied

Illinois Council Delegate Jacob Carlile, AIA

**PROVIDING EXPOSURE TO SUPERIOR
DESIGN AND THE MANY TALENTS OF
AIA ARCHITECTS**



THE GARLAND COMPANY, INC.
HIGH-PERFORMANCE BUILDING ENVELOPE SOLUTIONS

Justin S. Reed
Chicago Area Manager



<http://reed.garlandco.com> p 312.550.5548
reed@garlandind.com

ASSA ABLOY

Moria Vaughan
Architectural Consultant
Door Security Solutions

ASSA ABLOY Opening Solutions
235 Lies Road East
Carol Stream, IL 60188
USA

Mobile +1 319 800 5498
Moria.Vaughan@assaabloy.com
assaabloydss.com



Melissa S. Roberts, AAI
Vice President
Architects & Engineers Division

USI Insurance Services Corporation
234 Spring Lake Drive
Itasca, IL 60143
www.usi.biz
Email: melissa.roberts@usi.biz

Main: 312.442.7200
Direct: 630.625.5222
Fax: 610.537.9270
Cell: 708.476.5113



ROBERT LENTZ, JR., CSI, CDT
ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING REPRESENTATIVE
CHICAGO MIDWEST

HQ | 1000 East Park Avenue
Maple Shade, NJ | 08052
C: 574.229.4388
O: 800.854.0310
rlentz@stonhard.com

www.stonhard.com



9711 Valparaiso Dr., Munster, IN 46321 • 219-924-8400 • 708-474-0104
221 N. LaSalle St., Ste. 3100, Chicago, IL 60601 • 312-332-8400 • 219-924-5082 F