

BEC Corner

AUSTIN

By Keith Simon, AIA, LEED-AP, Beck Architecture LLC; BEC-Austin Chair

It is hard to believe that BEC-Austin is only four months old! There has been tremendous enthusiasm from speakers; members who want to be involved; and companies that want to support us. We already have a very fortunate problem—it's hard to get a seat at our meetings. Our board members and co-chairs have decided to focus our initial presentations on the fundamental knowledge of air, heat, moisture and moisture vapor transport. We are interspersing this "core-skills" series with presentations that focus on systems and technologies. For example, our June presentation focused on using high-mass wall systems for energy efficiency in a hot and humid climate. Our panel of speakers included the owner of EarthCo Building Systems (a local manufacturer of compressed earth blocks); architect Larry Speck, FAIA, who showed historical precedents as well as local designs using high-mass wall systems; and engineers from Wiss, Janney, Elstner, Associates, Inc., who presented their thermal and moisture analysis of local high-mass wall systems.

Next month, we'll take a 180-degree turn with a presentation on the passive house system in hot and humid climates, from high-mass walls to super insulation!

CHARLESTON

By Whitney E. Okon, Applied Building Sciences; BEC-Charleston Chair

BEC-Charleston is flying through its sixth year of bringing building enclosure science and technology to South Carolina. This past winter/spring, we enjoyed presentations entitled, *Next Generation Roofs and Attics*, by Oak Ridge National Laboratory's (ORNL) Bill Miller; *Bugs, Buildings and Change: Termite Control, Moisture Control and New Construction Trends*, by Bert Snyder; *Curtain Walls: Proper Detailing, Installation and Pitfalls*, by Karol Kazmierczak; and *Energy Monitoring*, by Jeff Beck.

BEC-Charleston's effort to fund and construct a net-zero energy house, in association with the East Cooper Breakfast Rotary Club and Habitat for Humanity, is well underway! From the building envelope perspective, the group has successfully installed structural insulating panels (SIPs) and ceiling panels, Henry's Blueskin sheet adhered weather resistive barrier, and Pella high-efficiency fiberglass casement windows. With those components in place, the group undertook a blower door test and reported that the house has 1.46 ACH at 50 Pa. and a leakage area of only 17.7 square inches. These preliminary results are prior to the exterior cladding being installed and spray foam insulation going into the floor system.

As well, Don Easson, a local engineer and regular BEC attendee, put together a consortium of vendors and professionals to provide and install a geothermal heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system. The wells were drilled earlier this year and the equipment is now starting to be installed inside the house. This includes a 2-ton ClimateMaster heat pump and

a RenewAire energy recovery ventilator. Velux and the Muhler Company installed a solar hot water system and the solar panels are already on the roof.

All of this work has taken place with the associated Learning Days for the BEC-Charleston membership. This has been a great hands-on learning experience. We are grateful to those who have donated their time, experience and materials to make this project one of BEC-Charleston's proudest accomplishments to date!

BEC-Charleston has over 200 professionals on our membership list and greets 40 to 50 members at each meeting. For additional info, contact Whitney Okon at wokon@appliedbuildingsciences.com or visit www.bec-charleston.org.

CHICAGO

By Richard E. Fencl, AIA, CSI, LEED-AP; BEC-Chicago Chair

BEC-Chicago will be electing several new officers at the end of 2011. Kevin Kalata (Wiss, Janney, Elstner, Associates, Inc.) will become the new chairperson, succeeding Richard Fencl (Gensler), who is the current chair. Kenneth Lies (Raths, Raths & Johnson, Inc.) has become the new BEC-Chicago treasurer. Elections will be held for secretary and vice chair/chair elect.

Here is a quick synopsis of what's new at BEC-Chicago:

- Membership of our local council has doubled in the past year. We are now 120 members strong and still growing.
- Our "new" website is under development! BEC-Chicago is raising money to improve our current website design to make it more member interactive and a portal for all things envelope. The development site can be viewed at <http://dev.bec-chicago.org>.
- We have an ambitious monthly schedule of programs planned for the remainder of 2011. We are also beginning to plan for the monthly programs for 2012. Our program directors are Jeff Diqui (STO Corporation) and Ken Soch (SCB Architects). Programs this year have included discussions on *Vapor Movement in Roofing, NFPA 285 / Foam Plastic Insulation, Siphonic Drainage* and *Post-Occupancy Evaluations of Buildings*. Upcoming programs will address façade access (Lerch-Bates), brick veneer ties and a program where BEC-Chicago will host a contractor discussion panel facilitated by Steve Nadler (HDR).
- Our September 2011 meeting will be an evening of refreshments, fellowship and a discussion on the advancement of fuel cell technology in buildings.
- Attendance at meetings has risen to 50 people per meeting and the goal is to regularly engage 100 local architects in building envelope issues.
- Meetings are held on the second Friday of the month at the office of Gensler (11 East Madison Street, Chicago).

GREATER DETROIT

By Steve Robbins, The George W. Auch Company; BEC-Greater Detroit Chair

The BEC-Greater Detroit's 3rd annual symposium is scheduled for October 18, 2011, at the Laurel Manor Banquet Center, in