



# President's Message

Greetings and welcome to spring:

As your new President, I first want to thank James Wyatt for his guidance as President last year. 2009 is moving fast and already we are coming to the close of the first quarter. Our architectural community is feeling the economic downturn and making business adjustments to cope with the resulting slowdown. Looking to the future, near and far, I doubt that any of us have a crystal ball with brilliant clarity. The times we are witnessing are so different from past experiences. There are no experts to guide us. Lessons need to be learned anew. For our organization, a guiding tool is available, but it has been sitting on the back shelf. This is our long-range plan. I have two goals for my years as President, the first is to update this plan to fit our times, this document was created in

## From the Executive Directors Desk

1995 and after 14 years its validity to today's circumstances needs updating. A dedicated group of people from all over the state participated in its creation. I would like to ask for volunteers to help update a new long-range plan and would suggest that the bulk of the work occur here in Boise. Once we get a group together, I can work out the time and details with Connie. This document is our roadmap for the next 5 to 6 years. Now more than ever we need a tool we collectively create to represent the direction we want AIA Idaho to head. If you would like a copy, please email me and I will forward a copy.

The second goal is an evaluation of our committees and the committee chair. Are the current

committees reflective of what we need? Are the chairs interested in continuing in their current position? I'd like to hear from everyone on this. The last two years have seen very little participation or movement with the current committees. Perhaps there are other more important topics to track.

Regarding our quarterly meetings, it would be great to have the section presidents' check in with us so we know what is happening with each of you and your groups. Better yet, would be if you could attend the meetings. The next meeting is scheduled, I believe May 1 in Moscow. I will do my best to touch bases with the sections for regular updates that can be passed on. If there are items you would like addressed at the state level, please let me know in advance so we can put them on the agenda.

This year is showing it will be very challenging. Communication that is clear, direct and responsive is important more than ever under the circumstances. Ad the State Board, we represent your interests, your vision and your goals. I will try and deliver your representation with clear, direct and responsive communication throughout the year. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Greg Allen  
AIA



## University of Idaho Faces Cutbacks

The Department of Architecture and Interior Design is currently in the throes of adjusting our program and program delivery strategies due to state budget cutbacks. The faculty and administration are working hard to maximize program efficiencies in an effort to respond to one lost position and the potential layoffs or reassignments of additional faculty. A reduction in faculty members means it may not be possible to accommodate as many qualified students in the future as we do today. Unfortunately, Idaho's very affordable student fees (aka tuition) cannot be used to pay for faculty, so it is difficult to make-up for diminished state funding. So even though enrollment at the University will probably grow next year due to the recession, the Department will be forced to shrink.

Self assessment is an ongoing process at the university and the department's success as a program depends on our ability to get relevant feedback from members of the profession as well as instructors and students. We invite you to join us for our graduate project crits during the last week in April either in Boise or Mos-

cow. Unfortunately the crits in Moscow occur at the same time as the AIA National Convention in San Francisco, but if you don't plan to attend, please consider participating.. However, for those of you in Southern Idaho, you should consider taking the time to provide meaningful feedback to the students on April 27<sup>th</sup> at the Idaho Water Building in Boise. Contact Sherry McKibben (364-4540) for more details.

Finally, the class of 84 will be holding its 25 year reunion in Moscow April 24-25<sup>th</sup>. Anyone who graduated around this time period is welcome to crash the opening reception on Friday April 24<sup>th</sup>. If any of the board members who are U of I grads are interested in holding future class reunions, contact our new Development Officer Bob Stout or Phillip Mead.

Phillip Mead AIA, Program Coordinator

## AIA Idaho Central Section

By: S. Kyle Hamiton, AIA, President

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Like many architects around the nation and the world, those of us on the Central Section Board find ourselves challenged to see our profession and lives from above the storm clouds that obscure our view of the opportunities coming our way. Inspired by our involvement in the AIA and by attendance at regional and national conferences, however, we have been sitting down to formulate a five year Strategic Plan focused on bringing more value to our members.

In addition to expanding our current role as a provider of continuing education, and networking events, we are also looking for ways to inform the public understanding of how working with licensed architects can improve the quality and livability of our buildings and communities, conserve energy, and utilize project resources more wisely. Through a combination of fund raising events, scholarship programs and grants, we believe that we will be able to expand the services we provide to practitioners and the community, over the next several years.

As we have met with the leadership of AIA Components and Chapters from around the U.S. we have been learning ways to use a volunteer organization to provide many of the benefits to our members that chapters with paid staff can provide. Not only are we looking at ways to improve our management systems so that volunteers can become involved with "bite size" chunks of energy and time, but we are also looking into ways that we can capitalize on programs and materials that have already been created by other Chapters. Since much of our effectiveness as a Chapter relates to our ability to raise non-dues related funding, we hope to work more closely with the other Idaho AIA Sections and the Idaho AIA State component leadership to better leverage the resources we have access to individually.

Universally, one of the things that we have all been discovering is that the true benefits of belonging to the AIA are most apparent the more we get involved. Not only does the AIA.org website offer a plethora of resources when we takes the time to really explore it, but there really can be strength in numbers when we unite as a profession.

In conclusion, we welcome your involvement, and as the year progresses, we will be announcing ways that architects in Idaho can unite to meet our common goals and challenges.

## AIA Grass Roots Convention 2009

By: S.L. Palmer, AIA

I recently attended the AIA 2009 edition of Grass Roots in D.C. It was held in a beautiful hotel near the Capitol mall and Chinatown. The main issue this year was to influence our congressmen and senators to maintain the stimulus bill language supporting planning and design of upcoming federal projects. This was not an easy sell, as the stimulus bill is intended to get people working immediately. There are many “shovel-ready” projects that can put more people to work sooner. As we learned later, much of the money initially included for planning and design was removed in the final approved bill. We met with representatives of each our congressional contingents. We were fortunate to spend about an hour with Representative Walt Minnick, who met with us in his office and took us on a tour of the House chambers via the underground VIP tunnel.

The focus of the AIA conference was “Green Architecture and Sustainability”. I attended one session where the question was asked if there is anyone left who does not believe in global warming. I did not say anything, but there are many in eastern Idaho that believe the earth is in a warming cycle that occurs regularly over the centuries. Both sides of this issue can be argued with many available facts and statistics. For example I recently viewed a public television program on the effects of heat islands in large cities. Phoenix, Arizona’s population has exploded since the middle 1960s when air conditioning became available to the general public. The average daily temperature there has increased 15 degrees. The heat generated by the AC condensers and the large areas of pavement and building mass have created this situation. Electrical energy usage has increased dramatically due to the mechanical air conditioning. The heat island effect raises the need for more air conditioning.

In my opinion, the AIA focus should be more on energy conservation in all its forms, from material production through installation and final demolition and recycling. One of the speakers in a general session said that approximately 80% of the US population wants to reduce dependence on foreign oil. Zealous application of energy conservation measures from start to finish can help greatly with this. In one general session it was stated that 66% of US energy consumption comes from buildings. In that regard the Portland Oregon AIA has recently renovated a horse stable to house their operation. They have five full-time staff members, as compared to Idaho’s one part-time person. The building they lease has achieved LEED Platinum rating and is extremely energy efficient. The floor has a grid of air diffusers located on 48-inch centers each way and has an individual duct for each one. If you are in the Portland area, you should drop by and check it out. They have created a large meeting room where they have web-broadcasting capabilities and provide training to the local chapter as well as widely separated components around the state. This is a great example for Idaho and is a goal we should strive for, as we are even further divided by geography and distance.

Another issue that came up in one of the training sessions was the use of electronic media to reduce paper use. There seem to be many legal issues associated with this idea but the AIA National needs to grab this issue by the horns and determine the best course of action, as it is on our doorstep. A paperless project from start to finish is not far distant. Job site computers will become more and more common.

One interesting statistic presented in a political advocacy meeting was that a normal two-year congressional cycle considers 10,000 bills. Of that, approximately 400, or 4%, are passed. Of that 400, 120 (30%) are associated with the renaming of a federal building, bridge or other piece of infrastructure.

### From the Executive Directors Desk

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## Calendar

- **Central Section Meetings**
- The second Tuesday of every month, except June, July & August
- **Board Meetings**
- May 1, Moscow in conjunction with Crits
- September 11, eastern Idaho
- December 11, Boise
- **Future National Convention Dates**
- Apr 30-May 2, 2009, San Francisco
- June 10-12, 2010, Miami
- May 12-14, 2011, New Orleans

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