

The Southern Fried Architect

January 2003 (Scheme B)

(A clear, complete, concise, and mostly correct unofficial report of the MasterFormat Expansion Task Team activities and other stuff)

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Annual subscription: *Priceless: But cash is always acceptable*

Mike Owen, FCSI named *SFA's* Man of the Last Year

At a black tie celebration held in my basement, Mike Owen was named "*SFA's* Man of the Last Year," or MOTLY by the *Southern Fried Architect*, with all the rights and privileges that are accorded the honor. This prestigious award was bestowed after consideration of hundreds of names, which were submitted to the MOTLY Committee.

As we all make our New Year's resolutions, improving one's appearance, vocabulary, or financial position are always good choices, none of which have anything to do with Mike. But in making the selection, the committee noted, "Many times we all need a mentor, a role model, or just someone less intoxicated than us to help us find our car keys. Our choice of Mike Owen as *SFA's* Man of the Last Year, full fills at least one of this criteria." The committee also noted that this was the first time a Yankee has ever received this honor and asked that something be done to prevent such a tragedy from occurring again.

Shadow Institute Update

The Institute continues to face more red ink as the shadow institute headquarters (fishing boat) has run aground during a recent storm. This has resulted in substantial damage to the facility including the Institute President's office (the head). President Phil has suggested diverting funds from the PerSpective relief fund but according to the recently published Institute financial report, these funds are depleted. Oh heck, there goes next year's MasterFormat budget too.

AIA MasterFormat Blue Ribbon Panel meets

On December 16th the AIA MasterFormat Blue Ribbon Panel met in Washington with CSI representatives to discuss the development of this important industry standard and potential AIA endorsement of the document. After a two and half hour presentation, industry representatives were lining up to give their support. Unfortunately, no lunch was being served and you know how hard it is to keep a contractor's attention without food. Everyone agreed to return when the AIA would spring for lunch and discuss the final draft.

Task Team to Review 2 More Proposals

In preparation for its January meeting, the MFETT has received two new MasterFormat proposals for consideration. Code named Proposal C and D, the task team has posted these new alternative schema on the CSI website for review and comment. Proposal C is from the left coast and no more needs to be said. Proposal D is an 18 Division format with 8 digit Section numbers. Competition is heating up as decision day nears.

Creating a Stir: MFETT in the Mags

The "dark side" of the industry contacted us again last month. It seems that *Contractor* magazine is doing another story on MasterFormat. They wanted to know what contractors thought of Draft 2? According to our sources, most contractors found it to be very useful. They are using the document to level the short leg of their desk and with minor deletions of some unneeded Divisions; it does the job quite nicely. We explained that every project is unique and you must "customize" it to fit the needs of your project. My contractor friends tell me that this is the best application of MasterFormat that they have seen in years. This explanation seemed to satisfy the writer.

Tar and Feathering: On the Road for a better MasterFormat

Chapters and Regions are beginning to line up for the New Year and our favorite subject, MasterFormat expansion, is HOT. Dates are filling up fast and if you want to get in on the fun, just pick up the phone and give

us a call. And as always, if we don't return your call immediately, it may be because we don't want to talk to you.

09 Jan	Baltimore Chapter Meeting
13 Jan	Nebraska Chapter Meeting
21 Jan	East Bay Chapter Meeting
22 Jan	San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District
24 Jan	MasterFormat Symposium
25-26 Jan	MFETT Meeting

Got an email in early December from Institute Secretary, Gary Betts, requesting a copy of MasterFormat information for a presentation he and a couple other Chicago chapter members are doing in this month. Despite better judgment, I sent him the information anyway. The last time an EXCOM member did a MasterFormat presentation, a Chapter nearly seceded from the Institute and it took me 8 months to straighten the whole mess out. EXCOM members should do what EXCOM members do best...fish from the shadow headquarters' bow.

The Technical Corner

According to our sources, Rick Green, Chairman of the UDS Program Task Team is sending an email, requesting a meeting of the NIBS National CAD Standard Project Committee to discuss the current problems with the balloting process. This bold move proves that the Chairman does have testicular fortitude after all. Now if Rick can get the rest of the Committee to agree, he might be able to salvage a program, which is losing credibility daily.

In other NCS news, it seems that NIBS has spent about \$80,000 in legal fees, and is asking CSI and AIA to pay the ticket. Negotiations are ongoing, but our spies tell us that CSI is preparing to agree to the ransom in order to get Version 3 published. This just keeps getting weirder by the day.

Henry Berg and the Institute Technical Committee have agreed to join the MasterFormat Expansion Task Team in proposing a new policy for MasterFormat licensing. As the MFETT moves to get industry endorsement of the proposed changes, MasterFormat licensing is the number one hold back of groups. The task teams goals are to protect the intellectual property of the Institute, promote the use of MasterFormat as the industry standard, and make a wad of money to pay the NIBS legal bills. The Board can expect a recommendation when we get it ready.

Can't Sleep at Night

Gary Maylon, CSI of AMICO in Birmingham, Alabama has recently published a new book, "The Metal Lath Handbook: A Guide to Products and Installation, and Their Relationship to Portland Cement Stucco." This fascinating 236 page book will tell you more about the exciting subject of metal lath than a person really cares to know. I keep my copy by my bed stand for nighttime reading. Copies may be ordered from metallathman@yahoo.com. Don't forget to tell them you read about it here and ask for your free gift. Boy, that "free gift" part will come as surprise to Gary.

Quote of the Month

Many people seem to be concern with change. Here at the world headquarters of *SFA*, change is all the money we carry in our pockets, which is also "profit" for last year. We recently spoke on this subject and below is a short quote from that presentation. "The only human beings that like change are a baby with a dirty diaper and Michael Chambers"

SFA Editorial Section

We have received several emails this month, critical of the content of the December issue of *SFA*. It seems that a few folks felt we were hard of some individuals and our comments about the so-called "Draft Bob Movement" were not appropriate for this publication. Despite calls for our resignation, we will not resign or even apologize, who do they think we are, Trent Lott. Below is an excerpt from the response we **wish** we had sent.

“First, just as my wife is missing the “GPS” gene, which does not allow her to understand clearly given spatial information and requires her to constantly stop at service stations for directions, many Yankees and folks from non-southern states seem to lack the “humor” gene. This deficiency in their human make up creates the inability to recognize satire, parity and other sophisticated forms of humor, like the pun.

Second, the *SFA* is on the “biting edge” of journalism. We do not discriminate in whom we poke fun at, except for the non-productive, which only live on the fringe in this industry and feed off the hard work of others.

Third, we like the name “Bob”. It only has three letters, one simple syllable, which is easy to say and type. We plan to spend more time this year poking fun at folks with simple names like Sam and Jim. Why, because it takes less time, than Gregory and I never could pronounce the B word any way. We also plan to work on self-improvement this year and poke fun at folks with more complex names like Phil, Mike, John, Gary, and Tony. We don’t need to poke fun at folks with a name like Edd, they do a good enough job on their own without our help and not just in the way they spell their name either. Speaking of spelling, I recently misspelled “Schafmeister” on the SE Region *Distinguished Service Award* so I am already in the doghouse with Carole. Congratulations Carole!

Fourth, if you don’t like what you read, your computer has a delete button on it. Or you can request to be removed from the e-mail list. A former Institute Director recently made such a request and he was gone from my computer before you could say his three-letter name, which I also removed from my spell check.

Fifth, no one cared what I thought when I was on the Institute Board, why do you care what I think now? However great this publication is, I don’t send it to Henry Kissinger, Colin Powell, or Barbara Walters. Do not expect to see us quoted on the CBS Evening News or CNN. If you think anyone will read it and think poorly of CSI, we will need to kill 98% of the membership of SCIP. Not that that would necessarily be a bad thing.

Finally, you know I love you like an uncle, a Dutch uncle that is. But, you are still kin and terra cotta blood is thicker than...alcohol. I don’t know what that means, but since a little alcohol in the blood is a good thing, you are still OK by me.

After sleeping on this issue over night, I realized that some folks just think differently from others. They have the right to be wrong. They are not bad people, just misguided. As a provider of truth, it is my obligation to help reflect the light from the Southern Cross to enable them to see their way more clearly. This has been my fault. Therefore, the Board must immediately create an educational program on “Southern Humor” which will be required of all members attending CSI University. Phil-boy, I think this has merit. Do you have any money left in the budget?

Task Team Report Sent to Board

As the New Year brings the hope of new things to come, the MasterFormat Expansion Task Team dashes those hopes and submits another dry, boring report to the Board. Of interest, the task team has logged more than 40 presentations, 30 publications, and 40,000 frequent flier miles over the past 6 months. Other interesting facts include, my kids can name all the proposed MasterFormat Divisions in Scheme A, we have had a request to publish MasterFormat in Spanish, and my wife has hired a new divorce lawyer. I think making the kids recite the proposed Divisions really did it.

Epilog

And so ends another edition of the *Southern Fried Architect*. Let us know if you prefer Scheme A or B of the *Architect*, because we don’t intend to produce two versions next month. Speaking of next month, in February we celebrate Martin Luther King Day, Valentines Day and President’s Day, so we are planning something special. We have no clue yet what it might be, but stayed tuned.