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# And Spouses Too

**E**ACH YEAR AT ABOUT THIS TIME— FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS AT LEAST—I GET INTO AN ARGUMENT WITH MY WIFE, JUDY. It all starts with my sitting down with my desk calendar and planning my upcoming travel schedule. Of course, the one event I know I'll be going to without question each year is the National Steel Construction Conference. And each year, I try to talk Judy into coming to the conference with me.

Unfortunately, she's heard me talk so much about the conference that she thinks she'd be bored silly. She knows that sessions start first thing in the morning and go on all day. And she knows that there are usually some sort of work-related events in the evening. She just doesn't know why I'd want her to go to a conference filled with technical sessions. Sure, if she was an engineer she might be interested in a session on "Selection of Bolted Joint Criteria" or "Specifying Steel Joists and Joist Girders." Or if she was an erector, she might enjoy "Connections that Cause Erectors Severe Problems" or "Erection Cost Basis". If she was a fabricator, she'd be jumping at the chance to hear "Architectural Fabrication: What is Involved" or "Welding: Keeping Abreast." Or maybe if she was a general contractor, she'd appreciate "Schedule Reduction and Schedule Compression" or "Materials Management."

But, since she's not actively involved in the fabricated structural steel industry, she's not interested in any of the 30 technical sessions or even the General Sessions (not even the T.R. Higgins lecture!). Nor is she interested in the networking opportunities, the chance to chat with industry leaders such as Stan Lindsey or John Fisher. She's also not particularly interested in visiting the trade show floor and checking out the latest software, fabrication and connection products. And while her profession, occupational therapy, does require CEUs for continuing licensing, our education units are aimed at engineers, not OTs.

But, I argue, we can go down the weekend before and visit the Grand Canyon. And during the conference, she can go on the spouse program and explore a myriad of Phoenix activities, including "Trekking the Desert Mountain Trails" and "Lifestyles of the Southwest."

I've never won this argument yet. But somehow, I think this might be my year. **SM**

*If you want more information on the conference,  
call the NSCC Fax Information Line at*

**800/787-0052, ext. 110.**