

## Notes from the Editor's Desk



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Though only seven years separates my eldest brother from me, in some respects we come from different generations. Most dramatically, he and his friends were subject to the draft. By the time I was 18, America had switched to a volunteer army. More subtly, he was one of the last age groups to learn how to use a slide rule in school. To me it was simply a novelty item.

Robert F. Lorenz, AISC's longtime Director of Education, often had a slide rule on his desk, a keepsake of simpler times not dominated by computerized design. Bob is one of AISC's most recognizable faces. For most of the 1980s and all of the '90s, he crisscrossed the country lecturing to thousands of engineers on everything from economical steel design to floor vibrations.

But like the slide rule, Bob has finally retired after nearly three decades at AISC. In many respects, it represents a changing of the guard. Earlier this year, Lew Brunner, AISC's former Vice President of Membership Services (he previously headed up AISC's regional marketing efforts) retired after two decades of service at AISC and uncounted years at U.S. Steel. And in between, Morris Caminer, AISC's Vice President of Finance and Administration hung up his hat after 14 years at AISC and a long career previously at Inland Steel.

While of a similar age, Bob, Lew and Morrie were quite different in temperament.

I'll always remember Bob for his folksy wisdom. Ask him a technical question and he'd launch into some fascinating story that not only gave you the answer, but also the background as to how the answer was developed. Bob was

the consummate lecturer and was always welcomed by his audience. It made everyone's life easier to know that in a crunch, you could give Bob five minutes notice and he'd give a talk that everyone assumed was months in the planning.

Lew was more of a slick corporate salesman (he'd balk at the politically correct "salesperson"). One of his last roles at AISC involved negotiating contracts for various meetings, including the North American Steel Construction Conference. It was a marvel to watch him play the simple old man and let various vendors fall all over themselves to help him out. What might have taken me hours to hammer out through difficult arguments, Lew could accomplish with a smile and a joke.

Outside of AISC's staff and Board of Directors, Morrie was mostly unknown, but he served the critical function at AISC of keeping us on track. Especially as AISC's staff grew younger, he played the role of responsible elder. Whenever one of us youngsters came up with some hairbrained scheme, he'd ask the questions that made us sit back and take a second look.

But just as the slide rule gave way to the electronic calculator, even the best of men must someday retire. And just as some look back fondly on the slide rule, many of us will long remember Bob's, Lew's and Morrie's contributions.