



Society for Design Administration  
An Affiliate of The American Institute of Architects



San Diego Chapter

# The Advantage

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San Diego Chapter  
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## President's Message



Here we are - already in the second half of the year! Our chapter has been busy providing quality programs, recruiting new members, and some of us were fortunate enough to attend the 2008 EdSymposium in Boston in May. There is a fun picture of our group included in this newsletter and a note from Dana Sather on some of her experiences there. If you were unable to go to the EdSymposium this year, it will be held in San Francisco in 2009 and it will be SDA's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration! Mark your calendars for April 30 - May 2, 2009.

That seems a long way off, doesn't it? BUT - you don't have to wait until 2009 to take advantage of a great opportunity for learning, networking, and having a great time right here in San Diego. Our own San Diego chapter is hosting the annual Western States Regional Conference on September 26 - 27, 2008! The Conference Committee has been busy since last fall lining up accommodations, engaging top quality speakers, and planning a fun and fact-filled weekend for our own members and those of our western region. In fact, all SDA members in the U.S. and Canada are invited. Guests will begin arriving Thursday evening, September 25th, and planned events will conclude Saturday evening. The conference will take place in the beautiful Marriott Courtyard Hotel in the former San Diego Trust Bank building downtown on Broadway. Schedule, seminar topics and speakers, hotel information, and conference registration will be available on-line on July 28th. You won't want to miss this opportunity right here in "America's Finest City!"

With two months to go before the Conference, it's not too late to get involved. If you'd like to find out more about that, contact one of co-chairs: Leslie Gurney - [lgurney@rjcarh.com](mailto:lgurney@rjcarh.com) or Dana Sather - [dsather@sp-land.com](mailto:dsather@sp-land.com).

Hope to see you all in September!

Betty Connell, SDA/C  
Chapter President

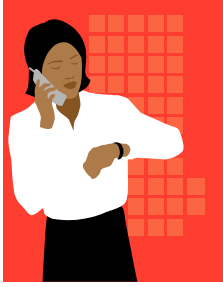


SDA members attend EdSymposium in Boston on page 5.

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## *It's about time....* By Sher Prince



One of the main requirements in an RFQ is usually the ability to deliver the project on time. We all know what happens if that critical deadline is not met. There is always a cost involved - a price to pay for being late. If your credit card or car payment is late, you get hit with a "late charge".

I have found that people prioritize what is important to them. At Christmas when Mervyn's is giving away a snow globe to the first 50 people to arrive, people will get there while it is still dark and wait for hours for the store to open! For the guys, if the first 100 to arrive at a sporting event will get a free cooler... *well you get the picture!*

Being on time is important - not only for you, but for those others that depend on you. People coming in late to church distract others attention as they crawl over or in front of them to find a seat. The receptionist who is always late, while the phones, deliveries or the potential client are left unattended has now crossed over from being inconsiderate, to causing a nuisance that everyone else has to plan on or around.

The real issue is not the person's tardiness - that's just a symptom. There are two potential issues here. One, being the complete lack of consideration and respect for the other person's time and schedule. The other being a lack of "time management" skills.

You usually cannot make a person considerate or respectful of others if that is not one of their core values. However, for the "time challenged" there are tools to help. Unless you work for National Security, you are not expected to be accessible 24-7. You need to structure your time in blocks like appointments and then allow sufficient time for those appointments. It can be unsettling to see *how little* unstructured time we allow ourselves. Having a cell phone and BlackBerry is very convenient, but can also be your worst enemy. They just make it too easy to contact anyone, at anytime. I remember growing up with the rule, *no phone calls after 6:00 pm*. What my mother was doing was creating boundaries that protected our "family time". Not allowing anything (short of an emergency) to interfere with this.

I know much has changed since I was a teenager. Now, it seems everything is an emergency and there are no boundaries. Illnesses, such as cancer and heart attacks, have increased among the younger generation with much more "sick days" being experienced at the work place. The stress related "work overload" is taking its toll. It's time to bring back some of those boundaries. We need to allow some "white space" in our day, because life is full of unplanned and unexpected events. There will always be a traffic jam when we least need it or a flat tire when we least expect it. We can control some of the stress that upsets our day and adversely affects our health. Below are some tools you might find useful.

Time management tools:

Books, such as *The Time Trap*, by Alec MacKenzie

Websites, such as [www.mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com)

Simple beginnings;

Establish a relaxed frame of mind, keep calm, stay focused.

Make a Task List or Activity Log

Stick to a Schedule

Set Limits (learn the word "NO")

Do a reality check, & repeat as necessary



*Remember, time is a precious resource, both irreplaceable and irreversible.*

Let's take on a new mantra - such as; *I can't solve all the problems of the world today, so I'll pick the most important and focus on that one.*

**DESIGN STANDARDS**

The US railroad standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches derived from the original military specifications for an Imperial Roman army war chariot. The chariots were designed to be just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses.



# HR Updates

**Fed on Meal and Rest Breaks: Provide, not Ensure**

Class certification for a meal and rest period lawsuit was denied; a federal District Court found that nothing in California law required the employer to ensure employees took their meal breaks, employers must only supply or make such time available to employees. Employers should note that this federal decision does not impact California law; California courts have held that employers must ensure that their employees take meal and rest breaks. *Brown v. Federal Express Corporation* 2008 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 17125 (February 26, 2008)

**What Should You Do?**

Note that this is a federal court ruling and does not change the current law in California that employers must ensure employees stop working during their meal breaks; providing meal breaks is insufficient. Keep track of this evolving area of the law, and potential new cases that will impact all employers, by reading *HRCalifornia Extra* every other week and sharing it with friends and colleagues.

Understand the requirement to provide meal and rest breaks to nonexempt employees.

If your nonexempt employees miss a meal or rest break, immediately pay them one additional hour of wages no later than the next paycheck.

**Two Years for Multiple Injuries**

Workers' compensation temporary disability benefits for multiple independent injuries are limited to 104 total weeks in a two-year period. Where independent injuries result in concurrent periods of disability, the 104/two-year limitation runs concurrently as well. *Foster v. W.C.A.B.* 2008 Cal. App. LEXIS 556 (April 17, 2008)

**What Should You Do?**

Always immediately report all workplace injuries to your workers' comp carrier. Reasonably accommodate all employees upon return from any disability leave, including a workers' comp leave.

Be sure to give employees a copy of the workers' compensation required pamphlet and physician predesignation forms.

**Sick Leave Mandates Kin Care**

A California appeals court finds that employers who provide sick leave must also provide kin care, as defined in the Labor Code, regardless of what their policy says concerning the use of sick leave to care for family members. Labor Code section 233 requires employers who provide sick leave to allow employees to use up to half of the accrual to care for a close family member. Labor Code section 234 prohibits employers from treating employees who use sick leave for him or herself differently from those who use sick leave as kin care. Companies must therefore treat employees the same regardless of whether the leave is taken for their own illness or to care for a family member. *McCarthy v. Pacific Telesis Group* 2008 Cal. App. LEXIS 775 (2008)

**What Should You Do?**

Enforce all policies consistently.

Review your sick leave policy and ensure you allow for use of kin care as required by law.

Remember, if you provide paid time off in lieu of separate vacation and sick leave, half of the accrued paid time off must be made available for kin care.

**For a full version or additional HR updates: [www.hrcalifornia.com](http://www.hrcalifornia.com)**



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## ALTERNATIVE WORKWEEKS

Don't pay unnecessary penalties to the State!

Like many design firms, we work something other than the usual 9-5 Monday to Friday work week. If you do too, here's some info you need to know...

If your office has a regular schedule for employees that exceeds the usual eight hour work day, the State Labor Department of California needs to know, or you face potential penalties which can go back THREE YEARS! These penalties would amount to all the "overtime" due to employees that worked above 8 hours a day. Upon the proposal of an employer, the employees of an employer may adopt a regularly scheduled alternative workweek that authorizes work by the affected employees for no longer than 10 hours per day within a 40-hour workweek without the payment to the affected employees of overtime rate of compensation.

An example is our firm - our work week is Monday through Thursday 8am to 6pm, and Friday 8am to 12 noon. We still have a 40 hour work week, but exceed eight hour days for 4 of the 5 work days.

Below are the steps we had to follow:

A majority agreement through a written secret ballot outlining the proposed alternative work week (alternative to 5 days a week 9am to 5pm) must be submitted to:

**DIVISION OF LABOR STATISTICS & RESEARCH  
ATTN: ALTERNATIVE WORKWEEK  
ELECTION RESULTS  
P.O. Box 420603  
San Francisco, CA 94142-0603**

A proposal to adopt an alternative work-week schedule shall be deemed adopted only if it receives approval in a secret ballot election by at least two-thirds of affected employees in a work unit. The regularly scheduled alternative workweek proposed by an employer for adoption by employees may be a single work schedule that would become the standard schedule for workers in the work unit, or a menu of work schedule options, from which each employee in the unit would be entitled to choose. Once you submit the results of the written secret ballot to the state, your firm will be listed in their database, which can be viewed here:

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/databases/dlsr/DLSR-AWE.html>

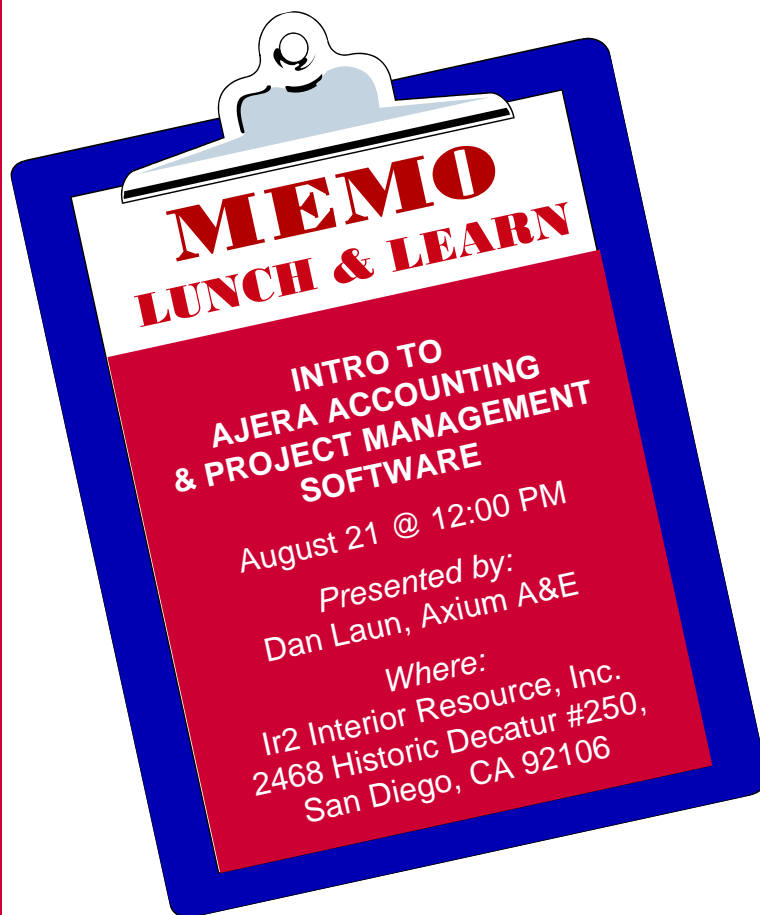
To speak to a DLSR service representative, call (415) 703-4780.

# Job Bank

## PROJECT MANAGERS/ PROJECT ARCHITECTS/ JOB CAPTAINS/ SENIOR DRAFTERS

RJC Architects is a full service architectural, planning and interior design firm located in the Bankers Hill area of San Diego. We specialize in civic, commercial, and industrial projects.

RJC is seeking talented, energetic individuals who are passionately committed to professional excellence and are seeking the opportunity to grow within our firm. We are committed to the idea of architectural internships and continuing education. RJC offers in-house training seminars, flexible hours, great working environment, competitive salaries, and excellent benefits. For detailed information on position requirements, please visit our website at: <http://www.rjcarch.com/employment.html>, or email us at: [employment@rjcarch.com](mailto:employment@rjcarch.com)



### IRS Increases Mileage Rates to 58.5¢

The Internal Revenue Service increased the optional standard mileage rates for the final six months of 2008. The rate increased to 58.5¢ a mile for all business miles driven from July 1, 2008 through Dec. 21, 2008. In recognition of recent gasoline price increases, the IRS made this adjustment for the final months of 2008.



# Firm News



**Society for Design Administration**  
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## *Spurlock Poirier Landscape Architects celebrate their 20th anniversary this July !*

Since our founding in 1988, our drive has been to collaborate with professionals who share our conviction that people deserve environments that matter to them - that touch them, however subtly or deeply. We advocate for a site-conditioned approach to planning and landscape, and for inspired collaborations that transform great ideas into places that people will care about - today, and far into the future.

Our latest achievement is the New Children's Museum and Park, a new outdoor living room for downtown. Immediately across from the Museum and accessible by a mid-block crossing, the new one-acre Museum Park will be part of the city's Martin Luther King, Jr. Promenade. Specifically designed for children, the triangle-shaped park includes three shade-covered play spaces, for both day and evening activities. Landscape architects Martin Poirier and Andy Spurlock, along with our gifted team of designers, include the Getty Museum's gardens in Los Angeles, and the Padres Petco Park as a sample of some of our other favorite projects.

**S P U R L O C K P O I R I E R      L a n d s c a p e   A r c h i t e c t s**

## *RJC Architects awarded Contracts and Expands Office*

The San Diego-based architecture, planning and construction management company, announced it recently was awarded a \$7.5 million Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quality (IDIQ) contract by the U.S. Navy.

Also awarded was a \$14 million contract to design a new lodging facility at Camp Pendleton. In partnership with Bonsall-based RQ Construction, RJC will design and build the structure to have 69 rooms, a courtyard and play area, and picnic site. The 50,662-square-foot, four-story lodge will be adjacent to the existing South Mesa Club where guests can dine and have access to recreational activities, as well as conference and meeting facilities. Construction is expected to begin in July 2008 with completion slated for June 2009.

RJC has done some tenant improvements to accommodate more employees for our growing office. We are currently hiring three new employees, that will bring our staff total to 25.



## *Resort ProSource Finalizes FF&E Procurement Project For Sales Center and Model Unit*

A full-service purchasing company for the high-end hospitality and resort industry has completed the FF&E procurement services for the Sales Center and Model Unit of New Orleans Trump International Hotel and Tower.

Architectural Concepts, Inc, RPS's sister company designed the model and sales center capturing the city's historical roots and multi-cultural heritage with an air of quiet sophistication. Signifying the City's recovery from Hurricane Katrina, the building will be the largest building in the Louisiana.



## *SDA's 2008 EdSymposium*

In May, over a hundred SDA members from all over the country and Canada traveled to beautiful Boston, MA to attend the EdSymposium 2008, SDA National's Annual Conference. Five of our local members were able to make the trip and had a fantastic time networking with other members, attending informative seminars, and enjoying the sites of that wonderful city! Even a rained out Red Sox game couldn't spoil the experience. Next year's EdSymposium will be held in here on the West Coast in San Francisco, April 29-May 2, 2009. Mark your calendars now - the annual conference is one SDA experience that should not be missed!

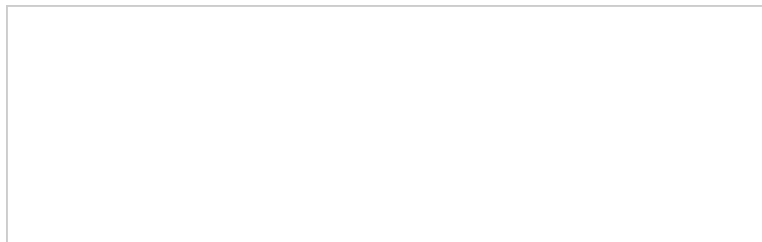
Julie King, Sher Prince, Dana Sather, Betty Connell, Leslie Gurney



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Having fun at the game!



### [2008 Western States Regional Conference](#)

The San Diego Chapter of SDA will host the 2008 Western States Regional Conference on September 26 -28, 2008. Tours will be given to show our visiting SDA members a taste of what makes San Diego *America's Finest City*, and we are lining up some terrific speakers for seminars. Hold the date and plan to attend what will be a great conference! To register for the conference, call the number below or go online to [www.sdasandiego.org](http://www.sdasandiego.org).

The conference hotel is the [Courtyard by Marriott San Diego Downtown](#) in the historic 1920 San Diego Savings & Trust Bank building, where they have vault conference rooms and teller check-in desks. This historic example of architecture once housed a shooting range on the top floor where all tellers were required to practice! To book a hotel room, call Marriott reservations at 1-888-236-2427 and let them know you are with the Society for Design Administration group for a discounted rate of \$189 for single or double occupancy.