



Promoting Insulation in Words and Deeds... and Photos!

It's not about the number of breaths we take, but the moments that take our breath away.

My first-ever trip to the Grand Canyon, Zion, and Bryce Canyon National Parks in Utah last week certainly took my breath away and inspired this month's Industry Message. In my last message, I wrote about an optimistic outlook for the future of insulation. One thing our industry can control is that we are united to support the power of insulation—as individuals, companies, an

association, and an industry. So, what does this have to do with our most treasured National Parks?

My wife Trudy and I had just completed a terrific yet sometimes terrifying venture into the Grand Canyon on the Bright Angel Trail. Afterwards, I was relaxing in our very rustic Maswik Lodge room, which was about 200 yards from the canyon rim. Flipping through the fuzzy channels that barely came through (remember old TVs' fuzzy, scrambled reception?), I found a channel exclusively focused on sustainability efforts that Xanterra—the operator of the South Rim Grand Canyon hotels—employs as part of their “With a Softer Footprint” focus. The content described at length Xanterra's efforts to save water via new, low-flow shower heads—even showing a side-by-side comparison of the old shower heads compared to the newer ones. I saw that they are doing a \$30 million rebuild of the South Lodging complex that will be LEED Silver. I thought “This is great,” but then I wondered about the insulation. How is it that insulation was deemed “sexy” by President Obama in a 2009 speech at a Home Depot in Alexandria, Virginia, but our mechanical insulation industry still is not getting the respect it deserves for its tremendous role in saving energy and reducing carbon footprint? Generally, as many of us in the industry know, our products are out of sight and out of mind.

I wrote last month that many major corporations are embracing energy conservation and environmental impact as they work toward future net-zero greenhouse gas emissions targets. This is good for the future of our industry, as insulation is brought more into the spotlight to address these goals. Hopefully, these corporations are thinking about insulation first, as Michele Jones says. I mean, per 2019 Energy Information Administration data, buildings represent 35% of the total opportunity to reduce greenhouse gases!

I remember Mike Thaman, then the Chairman of Owens Corning, speaking at NIA's 2008 Annual Convention in the Bahamas. Mike spoke of how we need to eat our own cooking—in other words, practice what we preach. He said that Owens Corning takes great strides to save energy and resources. I take that a step a further when I think of what I am doing personally to save on my home utility bills—something that I can control. Since I have reinsulated my home, my low utility bills are the envy of my neighbors. We all talk about the power of insulation—how the cheapest form of energy is what you don't use in the first place. But we as an industry, and the NIA organization, need to pound the insulation story drum through energy appraisals and helping companies reach their sustainability goals. More and more companies are establishing aggressive sustainability goals for 2030 and beyond, and our industry is front and center to help. The terrible recent deep freeze in much of the country makes it clear that insulation needs to be not just part of the conversation, but a priority.

To promote the message of insulation in a fun and interesting way, the picture above shows an energetic Trudy and me at Bryce Canyon in Utah—with our copy of *Insulation Outlook* magazine—before we hiked down into the canyon. I would love to see more insulation professionals share the value of insulation and *Insulation Outlook*. I challenge you to take a selfie with your issue—at home, in front of the insulation at your plant, or on vacation—to promote insulation anywhere and everywhere. Send your photos to editor@insulation.org and post them on social media with #NIAmeets.

Stay tuned for further travels with *Insulation Outlook* as we promote this great industry!

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