



We are now three weeks from the Congress and the wheels are turning. We have (almost) finalized the program. We have finalized training day (Tuesday, October 9). And we're moving into the frantic list of a 1,000 things that have to be done before we open the event. Thanks to Mark Konchar of Balfour Beatty who heads up the Conference Committee (and his trustee sidekick, Tim Wakely) for their tremendous work in all of this. Aimee Fogarty at new corporate sponsor Suffolk Construction has also been instrumental in moving us forward as the titular head of the National Capital Regions Community of Practice. Donna Pemberton has been putting in her unceasing hours to make this work. The Champions Committee of Victor Sanvido (Southland), Bernita Beikmann (HKS), Todd Henderson (Boulder Associates), Brian Day (CCA), Romano Nickerson (also of Boulder Associates) and Will Lichtig (Boldt) faced the challenge of not only selecting the presentations for the Congress but working with the presenters to insure maximum value (learning) and minimum waste (changeover, fiddling with powerpoints etc). We now have a backlog of presentations that I will share with the Communities of Practice on Tuesday when we meet at the Congress and encourage them to use the submitters as speakers in their events.

As I said, training day is developing nicely. We've had demands for a reprise of the Introduction to Lean which will be taking place all day in one of the rooms on Tuesday. The other room will host two planning simulations. The first is the Villageo® simulation presented by Alan Mossman and Andree de Miranda. The flyer for this program will be posted on the Eventbrite signup site as well as the LCI site. What will you learn? Alan reports:

- learn about the five crucial planning conversations in the Last Planner System
  - experience the difference between using them and not using them
  - learn the basics of collaborative planning, learning from experience
- understand the benefits of using the Last Planner System in its entirety
- develop awareness of the importance of creating a system change in project transformation
- learn how Villageo can help you and your project teams deploy Last Planner

In the late afternoon, Ryan Suydam of national sponsor ClientFeedBackTool will present a two hour planning simulation called Planning Poker. This session will introduce a lean planning activity borrowed from Agile Software Development to increase intra-team communication and knowledge transfer.

We have focused on federal and state owner presentations and procurement challenges for presentations at the Congress. Almost all presenters will be Owners or have an Owner on the team. We have initiated a system of breaks that will hopefully allow you to network more with the presenting teams. We have scaled back most of the presentations so that they will be very



fast bursts of relevant information. We are, as we always say, continually improving. To do that, we have to continually experiment. We playing, you're doing and we'll be checking with you to determine adjustments. It's at the heart of what we do.

## Pioneer Awards

An important concept in any culture, any community is celebration. I believe we need to celebrate our origins and the context under which our principles have been devised. In that spirit, I had a chance to visit with Paul Reiser of Boldt, our third recipient of this year's Pioneer Award.



It is tempting to say that Paul Reiser has been a lean believer since he was first introduced to the concepts. But, like Paul himself, it's a bit more complicated than that. In the late '90s, while Paul was still in Wisconsin with the Boldt Companies, he became very interested in the idea of increasing productivity of their construction efforts. He remembers that "someone in the Company returned from a LCI event and put their information on my desk. I remember him saying, 'you should look into this.'" Shortly after that, Paul met Greg Howell at an Introduction to Lean (he admits it took two or three introductions for him to grasp how these concepts might help Boldt). Greg told him "if you just want to increase productivity, we might not be the right guys for you. But if you want to improve overall project performance, you might be in the right place."

That turned out to be the perfect place for Paul and Boldt. After he decided that he would never find the perfect starting point for their efforts, he just started. That is to say they tried Last Planner® on a project and it yielded results. They tried it on a few more and it began to not only deliver results, but make sense. That was the start of the Boldt journey almost 14 years ago.

Once the Last Planner had been installed, Paul started talking to Glenn Ballard about how design and budget were disconnected and therefore, dysfunctional. With Glenn's help, he turned to how target costing and target value design could both improve projects and the collaboration between designer, owner and contractor. He's been using and improving on target value design concepts ever since then. "The basic concepts have stayed the same: we must design to budget and we can never exceed the target cost. But the tools have become much more sophisticated over time."

Obviously Paul has overseen implementation of lean design and construction concepts. But he remembers a time on a smaller project, that someone said "this is a great concept but it's probably designed for larger projects." Not so much later he heard from another project manager of a large project, "this is a great concept but it's probably designed for smaller



projects.” Paul’s conclusion: “The only project that lean doesn’t work on is a project you don’t want it to work on.”

The full development of Paul’s ideas has continued to unfold “aha” moments for him almost every day. “For me, the personal experience is that these principles offer a better way for us to work together—and we get improved performance and reliability.” The satisfaction for Paul is “seeing people empowered to make project improvements.”

He recently returned from the Lean in the Public Sector Conference Greg reported on in his last update. Paul delivered a presentation based on work that Will Lichtig and his colleagues in Sacramento have been doing on built in quality plans. “What made that experience so powerful for me is that this hadn’t been done before. This team had the courage to try something they had never done before, and they had the courage to fail at it. The greatest learning comes from those moments.”

Paul has seen the steady improvement of work and performance at Boldt. “Bob DeCook [Boldt’s Chairman] told me this cannot be a revolutionary change. It has to be an evolutionary change.” Paul is the very epitome of steady, focused lean implementation over the years. Large projects or small, he has infected the industry with improvement challenge. “Our real metric is that we’re better this year than we were last year.” And our lean community is better this year than we were last year, largely based on the contributions of Pioneers like Paul Reiser. Congratulations Paul on your receipt of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual LCI Pioneer Award.