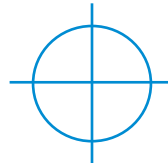


Spring 2020 On the Level

Pacific Northwest Carpenters
Institute



Supporting Carpenters and Industry Partners

End of an Era: John Schraner Retires



John Schraner began his career with the UBC on June 6, 1983. He spent close to 20 years working as a carpenter and pile driver with welding certifications. One of the more memorable jobs he worked on was the Marquam Bridge in downtown Portland. Part of his job was to remove the thin 1/4" "H" beams and replace them with sturdier 5/8" ones. John's walk up to his workstation every day was memorable, because the underside of the bridge deck sits 130 feet above the Willamette River.

As is John's style, he recalls more about the amazing and unique people he worked with rather than the work he did. But, anyone who's worked in construction knows, you don't stay

working if you don't produce. "It's funny; the harder I worked, the luckier I got," a favorite Schraner quote which sums up who he really is.

When John heard about the coordinator position, he applied. Even though he secured the position triumphing over 125 other people, there was a complaint made that the position wasn't publically advertised; a second round of interviews were held. John remained the JATC's top choice and was awarded the position in 2001. He was assigned the Carpenters, EIS, Scaffolders, Pile Drivers, Tradeshow and had to attend the State-wide JATCs. He also had the Millwrights for a bit of time.

As a single parent of two children, John credits the Union with allowing him the flexibility to spend time with his kids and supporting them in their school activities. He remembers taking a tool box project to their school and watching all the kids make a tremendous amount of noise; gleefully hammering the pieces together and proudly taking their projects home. Anyone who knows John, can feel the pride and love he has for his kids. Today, they are both homeowners with children of their own. "I swear, I couldn't have done this (raising two kids) without this job, without the UBC," his gratitude is evident as his voice thickens with emo-

tion with this declaration.

Today, his 19-year career as a coordinator holds a snapshot of history for the WCTC, PNCI and the PNWRCC. John has seen both amazing leaders and short-sighted ones; with some mediocrity thrown in for good measure. In the past, he's witnessed a "wild west" type mentality where there was less accountability then there is today. He watched as leaders stepped in and cleaned up scattered



Above: John Schraner in the first grade.

Schraner Cont.

and disorganized resources; others standing up to architects to do what's right. Regretfully, he's watched talented people leave. "If I could go back in time. I would tell them, sometimes you have to lose the battle to win the war."

His unique position has allowed him to observe and appreciate different leadership styles and their effect on the people around them. John has experienced a career under many Executive Secretary Treasurers for the Council and Executive Directors for PNCI. He likes to say, "Spend time with leaders, not with losers." He doesn't just apply his catchy quotes to his life, he shares them with the thousands of apprentices he's worked with over the years. "I've watched apprentices ruin their life, just from being influenced by the wrong people. I always want to leave the door open for them. I had one apprentice get incarcerated, they came back. Now they have a successful career. I think sometimes they're the most successful."

Guiding, supporting and often times mentoring people is a tall order to fill for anyone. John worked hard at it. His tremendous work ethic acted as an internal compass pointing him to work evenings and weekends. He intuitively understood peoples' lives depend on their ability to navigate the apprenticeship. "I liked giving them good news," he said about one of the favorite parts of his job. If he had bad news to share, he would often tell them, "tomorrow the sun is going to shine again." One time he had an apprentice who got into a car accident on their way to their first class. They called to let him know what happened. He asked, "what do you want me to do?" They said, "come pick me up." John did. This apprentice has since journeyed out and is quite successful in their career. His supportive words and actions hit positive notes with quite a few apprentices as they came back to tell him they made foreman or superintendent.

John has watched the demographics of the carpenter trades change over the years. He has been a champion for women. In his matter-of-fact wording, "All you have to do is give them a chance." He cited a number of talented women who are doing amazing things in their carpentry careers as examples.

John's one-liners like, "all you have to do is work hard," are simplistic and hold a lot of truth. The fact is-- his career cannot be distilled down to one statement, far from it. He's had to adapt to a lot of change throughout the years which corresponded with the exponential growth of the apprenticeship program to the training center move and remodel, not to mention all the technological changes with both administrative tasks but curriculum too. Through all this, John proved himself to be a steady fixture you could almost set your clock to.

the Walls and Ceilings JATC committee commented, "John was always meticulously organized. He had all his paperwork together with all the statistics. He was willing to listen to the more difficult cases, and support both the apprentices and contractors." On a more personal note, "John helped me a lot as I was new to sitting on the committee and didn't understand all the protocols. He taught me a lot."

He expanded his role to training and mentoring new hybrid coordinators, freely sharing his knowledge and experience. He's worked closely with instructors and administrators; all for the shared goal of building and supporting apprentices. John's level of integrity to the mission of PNCI is palpable, it is who he is.

No one with John's provenance should be allowed to leave an organization without adding a few words of advice.

To apprentices: "Don't stop, don't quit, get vested. Then you can always come back."

To staff: "You're fabulous. Never stop trying to make things better. Bring your ideas to your supervisor. Be open to new ideas. Try to get along with everyone. Welcome and appreciate all the training offered, you can always learn something."

Finally, to all: "Listen to leaders both good and bad, no matter who they are. There's always something to learn."

We're listening John. You're a leader. You will be missed. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all your years of service, dedication, integrity, hard work, humor and love. You will be missed.

John's retirement plans: family time, getting his golf handicap to single digits and hang out in the community where he lives.



An industry representative who worked with John on

Your Rights Under OSHA

As a worker you have certain rights provided by OSHA. Click the image to the **right** to go to OSHA's worker's Rights Sheet. OSHA's web site provides numerous resources to help improve safety on the worksite. Know your rights and watch out for your brothers and sisters out there.



Continuing Education Classes

PNCI offers many continuing Education Classes. Check out the schedule. Click on the image to the right to go to our website.



Coming Soon:



PNCI is developing an Introduction to Mass Timber/CLT Installation 16-hour continuing education course.

WoodWorks, Wood Products Council is working closely with PNCI to provide an engineered mock-up to be used as a training aid.

The course is still a few months away, and there's a lot of interest and excitement about this relatively new construction technology.

Share Our Videos

PNCI has a number of videos of apprentices talking about their trade. If you click on the photo below it will take you directly to the page on our website where the videos live.

Carpenters



“The great thing in this world is not so much where you stand, as in what direction you are moving.”

– Oliver Wendell Holmes