2,400,000 BC (10:16 a.m.) — Grog, a primitive man, stacks one rock on top of another, thereby performing the first act of recorded construction.

2,400,000 BC (10:23 a.m.) — Unk, the B.A. from Cave Dwellers Local 369, shows up and claims the work was his.

2,399,999 BC (6:37 a.m.) — Uk, Grog’s neighbor, trips over Grog’s rocks...
while going out for his morning newspaper

2,399,999 BC (6:54 a.m.) — The law firm of Urk, Urk, Wonk and Frug is established, specializing in workers’ comp and liability claims.

1,616,230 BC — Strange man wanders onto job site with an un-natural self-sense of authority and begins handing out astronomical fines for safety violations. In the first days, this intruder is greeted by workers with (and subsequently became known as) “OH SHIIIII...!!" Over the centuries, this label is shortened and becomes simply “OSHA”

60,080 BC — Massive immense comet strikes Earth in the Gulf of Mexico, thus destroying dinosaurs and all other vital, living things on Earth. Only law firm of Urk, Urk, Wonk and Frug survives.

2650 BC — In the first known example of “value engineering,” Egyptian architects leave nose Off of Great Sphinx of Gizeh to save money.

2600 BC — The great pyramids of Giza are constructed. Originally designed as large rectangular structures, Egyptian builders run into stone-supplier strike and run low of product shortly after project begins, thus forcing them to taper down the profile as struc-
ture grows, eventually leading to a point at the top. The engineers are pretty sure nobody would notice.

190 BC — Following the lead of the builders of the Sphinx in Egypt, Italian designers, in the quest of value-engineering, leave arms off Venus de Milo.

751 AD — “Pepin the Short” founds and builds Carolingian Kingdom, invades Italy, and defeats Lombards. A frustrated Mrs. Pepin cannot be reached for comment.

752 AD — Taverns are invented.

752 AD to 1211 AD — No recordable construction occurs. Experts are stumped.

1212 AD — “100 Year War” between England and France is fought for only 87 years, thereby laying basis for determining the architect’s “billable hour.”

1241 AD — Sir Lancelot, fabled knight of the Round Table, files lawsuit against Canterbury Arms, lancemaker, claiming his new lance is too short. Other knights table only point and giggle.

1370 AD — Great tower is erected in Pisa, Italy.
1370 AD — First drug and alcohol program for construction workers is implemented in Pisa, Italy.

1530 AD — Fellow drywallers, after working side-by-side with feared Russian Tsar Ivan the Terrible, decide he isn’t that bad of a guy after all.

1668 AD — Though budgeted for $500,000 Swiss Francs, the Swiss architectural firm of Yenney and Yenney messes up plans and specs and project comes in at $1 million after bids. Y&Y then makes the bold, unprecedented move of charging to revise their OWN screwed up plans, giving them even greater and additional fees for correcting their OWN mistakes. Architects from all around the globe declare, “WOW . . . cool!!”


1752 AD — Great fire destroys most of Moscow. Engineer blames electrician.

1803 AD — U.S. buys all land west of the Mississippi River from Napoleon and France. U.S. later declares it got screwed when it finds there are no sewer and water laterals. Suit is filed. Urk, Urk, Wonk and Frug represent. Case

1810 AD — Beethoven tries in vain to finish symphony but architect won’t sign off on punchlist. Work remains uncompleted.

1812 AD — After downing one too many English ales, cement mason Paul “The Turtle Trowel” Revere acts on a dare from drinking buddies to ride through the city of Boston shouting “The British are coming!! The British are coming!!” A grinning, naked Revere is later arrested.
1869 AD — Transcontinental railroad is completed with the driving of the “Golden Spike” at Provo, Utah. Spike is later removed by a landscaper while mowing and whole thing has to be laid out again.

1889 AD — Laid-off and bored Paris ironworkers complain to French ruler, Sadi Carnot, of having nothing to do. A harried and busy Carnot finally snaps, “Here ... there’s a bunch of scrap steel down behind the equipment shed ... go build yourself a damn tower of something!!”

1906 AD — Massive earthquake topples nearly four square miles of downtown San Francisco’s buildings. Building engineers blame design software manufacturer.

1912 AD — “Unsinkable” British luxury ocean liner is lost in North-east Atlantic. 1,513 lives are lost. Engineer blames painters.

1929 AD — Low-rise jeans invented for plumbers, leading to the citing of many really, really great depressions.

1937 AD — Ervin Feinkhoffen, German dirigible engineer working on the Hindenburg, awakes from a nap during a Friday afternoon meeting and blurts out: “How ’bout hydogen!!”
1959 — In historic “Kitchen Debate,” U.S. Vice President Richard M. Nixon debates with USSR leader Khrushchev at a U.S. trade show in Moscow. Pat Nixon ignores the two blockheads and goes with hickory raised panel doors and gold fleck countertop.

1964 AD — Civil Rights movement leads to ADA. ADA, of course, stands for “Another Dumb Addition” to the cost of construction by politically correct Plebians.

1989 AD — After an exhaustive review of AIA (American Institute of Architects) contracts and documents—most often used by contractors entering into commercial building projects—by an unbiased, third-party analysis team, it’s officially determined that through the wording of the documents and indemnity clauses included in virtually every paragraph, the architectural community has achieved its gentle, sought-after goal of having virtually no responsibility for their actions.

1999 AD — The latest BOCA Uniform Dwelling Code is completed. Six copies are printed and distributed in Cameroon.
2003 AD — While lounging gingerly in his hot-tub on a hot August night, cynical and snotty construction-industry writer, S.S. Saucerman, is beaten to death by a pack of lawyers and architects bearing rolled-up blueprints and briefcases. Local officials can only comment, “and the screwy thing was, he was just wearing flippers and a cape.” After subsequent review, it’s determined that Saucerman deserved it. :-)

About the Author
S.S. Saucerman retired after 26 years in the construction industry. He also taught part-time in the Building Construction Technology program at Rock Valley College in Rockford, Ill., for 11 years. Today he is writing, speaking and consulting on a full-time basis.