AWCI’s 66th Annual Convention promises nearly a week packed with information, education, and fun according to Convention Chairman Vito J. Arsena of Cleveland.

“We have put together both an interesting and valuable educational program,” Arsena told Construction Dimensions, “and the proof of the pudding is going to be in the eating, as the saying goes.”

Arsena noted that the convention will feature two general sessions, a minimum of six industry-related breakout seminars, a special seminar for associate members and another special seminar for residential contractors.

Passport to . . . Success

He also said that the popular “Dialogue with . . .” sessions which were started at AWCI’s Atlanta convention in 1979 will again be featured the last day of the convention in Montreal. These sessions are small give-and-take meetings where the experts are seated in a large room with a crescent-shaped group of chairs around each of them, allowing for the greatest amount of information exchange possible.

“Dialogue with . . .” subjects will include (but not be limited to) the following:

“How I successfully . . . reduced insurance costs”
“How I successfully . . . entered the exterior insulation business”
“How I successfully . . . started a profit sharing plan”
“How I successfully . . . made a drastic reduction in overhead”
“How I successfully . . . moved residential into light commercial”
and “How I successfully . . . increased field productivity”

Energy Crisis Update

AWCI has also had confirmed that Ralph L. Lewis, Jr., Vice President, Corporate Communications, Gulf Gil Company, and one of the most articulate spokesmen on energy in the world will address the second general session. Mr. Lewis is in high demand as a speaker and AWCI was quite fortunate in being able to get him to agree to attend and address the Montreal convention. He will talk on energy and how it affects you as a small businessman. The big energy users and manipulators are causing major changes in the world, both

Arkady Shevchenko

Arkady Shevchenko, Russia’s highest ranking defector in history, has already agreed to be the convention’s keynote speaker. “Mr. Shevchenko is provided a tough security entourage by the United States Government,” Arsaen said, “so there was some difficulty getting permission to allow him to cross the border in order to be with us in Canada. We have been able to overcome this obstacle, and his security people will, of course, accompany him to Montreal. He was hailed by President Reagan as ‘the man who knows more about the inner workings of the Soviet government’ than any other who has come across to the West. AWCI is, therefore, in store for a great opportunity to ‘hear it like it is’ from someone who spent his entire life helping to frame Soviet goals.”

Shevchenko will address the opening session on Tuesday where he will be introduced by AWCI President James E. Biddle.

Top Soviet Defector

Ralph L. Lewis

Ralph L. Lewis, Jr., Vice President, Corporate Communications, Gulf Gil Company, and one of the most articulate spokesmen on energy in the world will address the second general session. Mr. Lewis is in high demand as a speaker and AWCI was quite fortunate in being able to get him to agree to attend and address the Montreal convention. He will talk on energy and how it affects you as a small businessman. The big energy users and manipulators are causing major changes in the world, both
socially and politically. Each and everyone of us is affected by these global moves. We’re very pleased that Mr. Lewis has agreed to be in Montreal and promise you one of the most informative sessions you have ever heard on this subject!

**Educational Breakout Seminars**

There will be a minimum of six concurrent sessions this year, and each of these will be repeated once, giving registrants the opportunity to take in a total of two of these educational opportunities.

Joe Baker, AWCI’s Executive Vice President, said that “providing such an array of educational breakouts causes frustration in many of our convention attendees. They see these important titles and want to go to all of them. Because the sessions are concurrent, however, they are limited to two and the invariably come down on us about this.

“It’s like a college situation, however,” Baker said. “We provide a smorgasbord of topics and you have to choose from this those you want to attend. This is certainly far better than limiting our convention to a series of daily general sessions.” This year, the concurrent sessions now planned include these topics (plus more):

**Computerized estimating.** Harry Carter of the Carter School of Estimating points out that a few years ago, estimating by computer was considered “Buck Rogers stuff,” but today the computerized estimating department is miles ahead of those contracting firms still handling their estimating manually. Harry will have one or two of his computers with him at this session for a hands-on opportunity for those in attendance. Harry will also tell you how to get into computerized estimating for less than $8,000!

**Steel framing backup for brick veneer.** In spite of the fact that tests conducted at Clemson University proved conclusively that L/360 steel framing is good construction for brick veneer, some representatives of the masonry industry are blithely ignoring the test results and telling architects, owners and designers “not to take chances” on steel framing and to go to solid masonry instead. We’ll have key representatives of the Metal Lath/Steel Framing Association on hand to give you the facts . . . facts you can take home to share with your own architects and designers.

**Creative Financing.** Some of our members who attended AWCI’s regional conferences this past year were fortunate enough to hear Atlanta attorney—and AWCI’s counsel—McNeil Stokes review how the new tax laws can be used to get very great advantage to get into rehab work, and to get into it on a grand scale. For the benefit of our Canadian members, Mac will also relate how Canadian laws affect this area of construction. Without a doubt, his presentations at three regional meetings last summer were the highlights of those sessions! Here’s your chance to hear from the horse’s mouth how there is a lot of money to be made through creative financing!

**Taking the mystery out of buying a small computer.** For those members who are interested in getting a small computer system, their heads are swimming with all the literature and advertisements about the micro computers pouring onto the market. We suggest that if you are getting ready to buy a small computer, you delay that decision until you have attended AWCI’s convention and this seminar. We’ll give you a complete set of nuts and bolts information to take home in order to make a proper decision!

**Quality circles in construction.** The Japanese have “borrowed” the idea of participative management from America, and they have improved upon it the nth degree. Now known as “Quality Circles,” the Japanese style of participative management has swept that country and is one of the reasons the Japanese seem to be eons ahead of us in so many areas. Lawrence-Leiter and Company of Kansas City will be sending Jim Morrison to Montreal to share with you how quality circles work and how you can make them productive in your own company. It’s no longer a theory: the Japanese have proved that productivity can be doubled and tripled through this system of management!

**Special Seminars: Residential and Associate**

A full three hours of time will be devoted to “Fundamentals of Business Management” for AWCI’s residential wall and ceiling contractors. AWCI’s Education Committee Chairman, Joseph A. Feldner, McNulty Bros. Company, Chicago, noted that “we got a request from our Residential Contractors’ Committee to do a session on business management for the smaller contractor, especially the fellow in residential drywall and stucco, and that’s what we are going to do. I can’t say that we can get too much ‘in depth’ in three hours, but for the guy who wants to improve his management processes, we’ll have the answers!” And the AWCI’s Distributors /Suppliers’ Committee requested a seminar on materials handling and warehousing. In response to that request, AWCI’s convention will feature a three-hour meeting on just those topics. While this will be open to all registrants, it is specifically aimed at suppliers in the industry.

**All This Plus an Exposition**

And, of course, there is the AWCI exposition. According to Exhibitors’ Co-Chairmen Philip Zinn (Allied Structural Industries, Detroit) and Jim Brunemann of Cincinnati, the Mon-
treal exhibit hall will have **50,000 square feet of space**, 141 booths, and 14 hours of show time. “We knew that we would lose some ‘regulars’ by crossing the border into Canada,” Brunemann told C.D., “but we have also been fortunate enough to pick up some Canadian exhibitors. As a result, we will have a total of 141 booths this year. It is by far the largest exposition in our industry worldwide. A trip to the exposition will make the convention worthwhile even if the contractor registrant doesn’t take advantage of our outstanding educational program!”

“Yes,” replied AWCI’S President, Jim Biddle, “the Montreal Convention is going to be our best ever. I’m proud to be part of this year’s activities!”

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**Registration form**

A registration form is included as part of this issue of *Construction Dimensions*. If you have not yet registered, we urge you to use this form and get your registration in now!