Many of you know the Lecture Hall, and most other building on campus, were built in the 70’s during a time when many public buildings were built in the architectural style of Brutalism. The Lecture Hall itself is what I would consider an extreme version of brutalism. There have been various “trends” in styles of architecture over recent time. There was the Craftsman Style (which I’m very fond of), Post Modernism, Modernism, Deconstructionism, and Brutalism to name a few. Deconstructionism was mostly developed as a philosophy movement. But some architects got into it in thinking it as a way to move on from Modernism and Post Modernism. I was taught that Brutalism was formed on a new-found respect for its socialist principals and was also a celebration of raw concrete. There are good and bad design examples of Brutalism, as well as other architectural styles. Yet Brutalism became very popular from the mid-50’s to the mid-70’s and now is considered to be one of the most vilified architectural styles of last century.

I found an interesting article in The Seattle Times this week regarding the old Nuclear Reactor building at the University of Washington, which is an example of Brutalism. Some people consider it to be a truly, truly ugly structure. Within this article I discovered that a local architecture critic, Larry Cheek, previously described it in the Seattle-Post Intelligencer: “To some of us, it’s the bastard love child of Brutalism and Burger King.” But Cheek now advocates for saving it stating: “We need to save a handful of Brutalist-style buildings to remind us how bad they were and we don’t do that ever again. They are cold, ugly, inhumane.” He should come on down to Evergreen to see that we are doing our share of keeping the Brutalist-style alive. I have not seen the building at UW that he referred to, but I assume it is a bad example of Brutalism. I think the original buildings we have on the Evergreen campus are better examples of Brutalism.

With our Lecture Hall building we are doing a combination of things. We are retaining some of the exterior walls, yet adding a more modern addition to it that will be much more welcoming and properly addressing Red Square. The plan is to clean up the remaining “fluted” concrete walls so they are not so weathered looking. The addition will be more modern in presence being clad in metal wall panels that will in an abstract way replicate the vertical fluted pattern of those original walls.

This week we had another big slab pour of the area that will be Lecture Hall 4, as well as the installation of masonry block walls in Lecture Hall 3 which will support the new floor structure; photos attached. While the weather cooperated on Wednesday we also began the excavation
for the new addition. Metal roof panels and structural steel installation also continued. Next week should be more of the same.

One last thing. Our General Contractor on the Lecture Hall, Absher Construction, reached out to me in wanting to give back to our local community. They informed me their company likes to do so in communities in which they perform work. They wanted to give holiday meals to those less fortunate and wanted a good local source that could benefit from their altruism. The twist is they had perishable items, so it couldn’t just be donating canned food to the Thurston County Food Bank. I told them about Quixote Village and how their program might be a good candidate. If you are unaware of Quixote Village you can learn more here: http://quixotevillage.com/. Anyway, Absher contacted the staff at Quixote Village who were certain open to perishable food donations for their residents. I went along with them yesterday afternoon to help in delivering the meals. We delivered 50 frozen turkeys and 50 bags of food containing potatoes, stuffing, gravy, rolls, green beans, cranberries, and brownie mix. Just writing about all this food is making me hungry! A photo from this delivery is also attached.

Happy Friday to you all,

Tim