“Why don’t you just meet me in the middle?” chants a song by Zedd, Maren Morris, Grey, encouraging us to do just that as ELEVATOR WORLD celebrates America’s Midwest. Bounded by east and west coasts on the sides and stretching from Canada to Texas in the middle, the American heartland is “Cautiously Optimistic” according to Kaija Wilkinson in her Market Trends piece. Dominating the center is Chicagoland, with three of the 10 tallest buildings in the U.S. In other major Midwestern cities, urbanization and downtown revitalization are rampant. Wilkinson had great response, talking to OEMs and independents to get the business temperature in Milwaukee, Moline, St. Louis, Detroit and Minneapolis-St. Paul. Both Schindler and KONE have their U.S. roots in the Midwest and make their North American headquarters there. In addition to our Market Trends article, we had four contributions from companies operating in the area:

♦ “Three Ps” on the Banks of the Mississippi by Wayne Dowty tells the story of KONE Spares’ birth from the Montgomery’s Moline Accessories Co., from where he claims comes the solid Midwestern soul of the company.

♦ Thinking Outside the Box by Lee Freeland is about SCS (originally Stencil Cutting and Supply Co.) in Red Wing, Minnesota. This manufacturer of Braille signage and more started in the 1970s and now has 75 employees.

♦ It’s All Uphill for Marine Innovations by Matt Irvin shows how Frazee, Minnesota’s Marine Innovations designs and builds inclined elevators. Each is different and must be engineered to the landscape. The company was a 2019 finalist in EW’s Project of the Year contest.

♦ Elevators for Your “Country Home” by Kaija Wilkinson: Craig Jones’ company has its showroom and corporate office in Brighton, Missouri, but Country Home Elevator & Stairlift LLC has branches throughout the Midwest.

This issue also has three papers from the recent International Elevator & Escalator Symposium in Istanbul:

♦ Integral Safety Vision by Robert Kaspersma, who has been with Liftinstituut for 23 years, examines the causes of industry accidents and available safety programs to mitigate them.

♦ Remove the Rope, Remove the Limitations by Michael Ridder notes that the number of buildings taller than 200 m tall has tripled since 2000. MULTI by thyssenkrupp is designed to meet the challenge of exploding urbanization.

♦ KONE 24/7 Connected Services Improve Flow of Urban Life by Jean-Paul Bourgeat: partnering with IBM’s Watson Platform allows KONE to anticipate fast-coming changes in traffic and usage.

Also, on the subject of safety, Dr. Lee Gray, our historical correspondent, presents the second in his series Elevator Accidents 1870-1920. Last month’s article focused on statistics, but this month, he zeroes in on the causes of accidents. Most were in industrial settings, where elevators were in open hoistways. Passenger elevators were predicated on enclosed cars and even operators to control speed and comfort.

Several events are also covered, including A17 Code Week by Lee Freeland and the celebration for Wittur’s 50th Anniversary by Carmen Maldacena.

We hope you enjoy our trip to the middle of America!