

RTA Forges Mutually Beneficial Partnerships Through Creative Collaboration

By Nate Irby

The Railway Tie Association is blessed to have great partnerships with a wide variety of industry stakeholders. From associations representing forest products companies to transportation end users and preservative treatment and chemical suppliers, these relationships are powerful and impactful.

Our common goal is the advancement of the usage and stewardship of natural resources to help our nation prosper. The core of our connections is that genuine: We help keep America moving forward. The companies and organizations we partner with help make our collective representation monumental in order to provide value to everyone from a fresh off-the-street industry newcomer to a tenured tycoon.

RTA is a stage for networking, education, advocacy, and research and development for wood cross-ties. The avenues by which that all occurs is bolstered through collaboration with dozens of key partnerships.

Advocacy

On the advocacy front, the Hardwood Federation, Creosote Council and Treated Wood Council, among many others, help streamline our information dissemination and funnel the latest intel back to us for our membership. This is vital to our ongoing success in proactively staying on top of issues and keeping open the lines of communication for the benefit of our industry.

Research & Development

In the technical world, we have key partnerships with the American Wood Protection Association, Southern Pressure Treated Association, Western Wood Preservers Institute, National Hardwood Lumber Association, various hardwood clubs, and so many others. RTA also provides the stage for many research and development projects to be showcased from a host of entities and individuals dedicated to advancing the science. RTA produces *Crossties* magazine and created the *Tie Guide*, the handy *Tie Grading App* and the *Tie Specs Booklet*.

Transportation

Transportation field partnerships with ASLRRA, AAR, NRC, AREMA, ABH Consulting, and more individuals and groups, provide a fundamental conduit to make up-to-date information available for our membership and give us a place at the table.

Market Data

Market information is one of RTA's strong points, and many other associations benefit from data our membership so graciously provides.

To properly summarize the breadth of our partnerships' collaborative outreach and influence is too arduous a task for my ability. Notably, our stance among these fine organizations is sound. Our gains are mutually beneficial, and our relationships are cherished. You can help our collective cause by participating in our association and others through meeting attendance, member-



Judd Johnson, left, editor for *Hardwood Market Report* in Memphis, Tenn., and RTA Executive Director Nate Irby discuss hardwood trends, opportunities and challenges in the prevailing marketplace at the 2021 Railway Tie Association Annual Meeting in St. Louis.

ship drives and even committee/task force involvement.

To learn more about our association's key drivers and others, please reach out to me directly at nirby@rta.org. ■

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