

Crossties



United We Stand

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The Magazine For Producers And Users Of Treated Wood Crossties And Related Products.

THE ROAD AHEAD FOR THE
WOOD TIE INDUSTRY
SEE PAGE 9

One to Remember

RTA 2001 Convention



Special Reports

Industry's Economic
Outlook For 2002
Reviewed

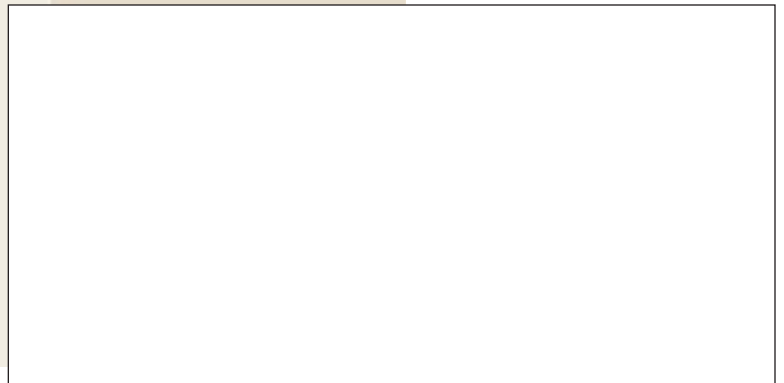
2002 RTA Convention
Highlighted
In Photo Essay

New RTA President
Outlines Challenges &
Opportunities For '02

AWPI, WWPI Host
Successful Meeting

Seminar To Discuss
Formosan Termite

RTA Wins Grant To
Study Methods Of
Upgrading Track For
High-Speed Service



One to Remember

By all accounts, the 83rd annual convention of the Railway Tie Association (RTA) may have been the most exciting gathering to hit San Antonio, Texas, in many years. Informative business sessions, a riveting luncheon keynote speech, excellent social events, and a tremendous finish with one of the most appealing banquet events ever, made this RTA meeting one that will be long remembered by all who attended. This photo essay illustrates some of the business fellowship that is a hallmark of RTA events.



The RTA convention officially kicks off with a President's Reception, where participants are treated to food, fun and time to reminisce with old friends. The BNSF contingent this year included, from left, Mike and Dixie Aarstad and RTA Executive Committee member Dan Pollock, who is pictured here with his wife, Carol.



Bob and Sharon Michel of Kerr-McGee Chemical LLC, right, share a few moments with RTA Executive Committee member Jim Duncan (Monticello Hardwood) and his wife, Joyce.

A Texas-styled feast was enjoyed by all. From left, Becky Mellot, Susan Tomlinson and Brenda Watt partake of the Mexican cuisine provided by the catering department at the historic La Mansion del Rio Hotel.



Glenn and Faby Whitham of Canadian Pacific Railway joined in the festivities...

...as did all those who enjoyed the sounds of the festive mariachi band.



The next morning attendees were up for an early 7:45 a.m. start to business sessions.



Presenters included Dr. Lou Honary of the University of Northern Iowa. This year's general business session centered on the exploration of new technologies that might improve wood tie performance while minimizing inventory costs. Honary discussed the use of bio-based oils for wood preservation.



Dr. Jeff Lloyd, left, of U.S. Borax and Jim Brient, right, of Merichem reviewed alternative preservative work in borates and copper naphthenate, respectively.



Paul Merrick of Trus Joist discussed just-in-time inventory made possible in large timber sizes by the use of Parallam (Parallel Strand Lumber).



Drs. John Watkins, left, and Doug Crawford, above, revealed new emulsion chemistry for creosote that holds the promise of locking this widely used preservative into the wood.



The morning session was followed by the annual RTA business luncheon. RTA Executive Committee members Ken Laughlin of Arizona Pacific Wood Preserving, left, and Gary Ambrose of Koppers Industries, right, discussed the morning's presentations with RTA Attorney Terry Good, center.



Local Boy Scout Pack 351 presented the colors, which was followed by an invocation by their pack leader, Air Force Major David Padilla.



Dr. Jay Lehr of the Heartland Institute gave a riveting keynote speech calling on RTA members to recognize extreme environmentalism for what it really is now—a big business. Dr. Lehr, a leading environmental authority himself, thinks extremists have pushed some businesses to the brink of extinction without good cause.



RTA's highest awards were also presented during this luncheon event. This year's winners were, pictured clockwise, Jimmy Watt (Branding Hammer), Ray Ohlis (Broad Axe) and Terry Reynolds (Silver Saw).



Following lunch, Dr. Allan Zaremski moderated the engineering forum, which began the afternoon session.



This year's engineering forum presenters were Mike Armstrong, Jack Rahmes, Craig Domski and Tim Drake (See accompanying "What They Said" article). Zaremski also presented a technical paper on the newly developed tie usage indices (TUI's) research undertaken by RTA. TUI's may offer railroads a way to use underutilized wood species in specific track applications.



The final afternoon session was moderated by RTA Executive Director Jim Gauntt. Here, presenters from Class 1 purchasing departments discussed inventory management options used by today's modern railroads. Presenters included Gary Hunter of Union Pacific, Dan Pollock of Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Doug Fox of CP Rail, Fritz Horn of CSX, and Ken Jensen of Norfolk Southern. (See accompanying "What They Said" article).



This year's banquet events began with a reading by RTA's Executive Director Jim Gauntt from the new biography "John Adams," and the singing of God Bless America.



After outgoing Executive Committee members awards were presented, from left, to Doug Fox and Jeff Broadfoot, Brett Leake, right, captured the audience with his comedy and special message about accepting change.



RTA staff and members wish to extend their appreciation to all the speakers and guests who made this year's convention one to remember.

What They Said...

at this year's 2001 RTA Convention

Engineering Forum

Jack Rahmes, CSX Transportation



One of our major projects was a jamboree in the corridor between Montgomery, Ala., and New Orleans. The material distribution for the project took three months and consisted of more than 200 cars of ties, 1,000 cars of ballast and the distribution of 10 track miles of rail. This work was accomplished in four days, during which time we installed 100,000 new cross-ties, 10 miles of rail, and performed 300 miles of surfacing, and renewed or replaced 12 bridges.

Tim Drake, Norfolk Southern Railway



We were confident that we could operate a safe railroad with fewer ties, but we knew that it would only be temporary. Although our budget for next year has not been formally and finally approved, it appears that we are going to purchase about 2.7 million ties in 2002, an increase of nearly a million ties over 2001.

Mike Armstrong, Burlington Northern Santa Fe



BNSF tends to push the life of the tie to the extreme. In the future, we're ready to make a cycle up and will see our wood tie numbers increase to 2.1 million and 2.2 million as we move forward.

Craig Domski, Union Pacific Railway



In 2002, we have budgeted 4.5 million ties for our tie program. We will install about a million softwood ties; 3 million hardwood ties; and 350,000 concrete ties. We will also see a little increase in composite ties for our high-decay areas.

Mellott Wood Preserving

7 1/2 x 4 3/4

BW

pu Sept/Oct pg. 11

Purchasing Forum

Gary Hunter, Union Pacific



We are dedicated to the treatment of air-dried ties, however that standing inventory at five timber treating plants throughout the country gets a lot of notice. So, we are looking for ways to reduce or eliminate that inventory. We are aggressively pursuing this challenge and expect further progress on this issue in 2002.

Dan Pollock, Burlington Northern Santa Fe



One thing that has helped us control our inventory is that we have a commitment from upper management to average a 2.4 million tie program. It's a relatively consistent program. Because of this consistency, the inventory is easier to control.

Doug Fox, Canadian Pacific Railway



We have been challenged to deal with a management focused on share prices and on the bottom line. Cost control is a way of life for us; it's a way of life for every railroad. We'll continue to put tremendous pressure on our input costs.

Fritz Horn, CSX Transportation



For the bulk of production, we presently prefer the cost-effectiveness and consistency of an air-dried tie, given the state of today's treating technology. This preference should not be seen as an indication that we are 100 percent pleased with where we are in the areas of wood tie performance and inventory cost. It remains to be seen whether any alternatives will be cost-effective solutions or not.

Ken Jensen, Norfolk Southern Corp.



Currently, we're gearing up our procurement of green ties and production levels at all our supplier locations for a 1.1 million tie increase in 2002. We expect to meet our program level by increasing air stacking as well as increasing the use of our boltonizing.

Northern Woods

7 1/4 x 4 3/4

2C

pu Sept/Oct pg. 13