

Discovering Sierra Gold

Members of the Railway Tie Association gathered in October in the Sierra Mountains on the shores of breathtaking Lake Tahoe for the 95th Annual Symposium & Technical Conference.

The conference was held at the beautiful Hyatt Regency Incline Village. Here,

attendees “struck gold” with new knowledge about trends and developments in the wood tie industry.

On the pages that follow are highlights from the conference. Photos are provided courtesy of Gary Coleman. See a full gallery at <http://colemanphotography.pass.us/rta2013/>.



Seeing Old Friends & Making New Ones

Attendees and guests were able to spend a little time reconnecting with old friends and making new ones, too. Special networking and free-time activities added to the fun.



Ashley Baker, Elijah Colburn & Kenny Dailey



Gary Ambrose & Ian Rauch



Jerry Prock & Doug Delmonico



Casino Tournament Group

Casino Royale Tournament

The Casino Royale Tournament was held in place of the annual golf outing, which was snowed out. Attendees could also enjoy a wine and chocolate pairing or a visit to nearby historic Virginia City.



Bill Moss



Robert Pearce, Mike Goldston & Ted Woerle

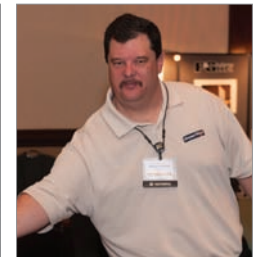
Tournament Winners



Jeff Broadfoot



Phil Myers



David Carmen



Elijah Colburn



Frank Wilson



Tim Ries



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Wine & Chocolate Pairing



Barb & Gary Ambrose with Marshall Allen



Jef Bass & Jim Gauntt stop long enough to check on Susan Gauntt and other attendees at the wine and chocolate pairing event.



Virginia City Tour



Everyone is rounded up to see a Wild West show.

President's Reception



View of the lake from our host's beautiful back yard.

The Annual President's Reception is always a highlight of the conference. This year, the reception was held at the Lake Tahoe Home of A&K Railroad Materials Founder and Chairman Kern Schumacher, who was able to join the group for this and several other events during the course of the conference.



Beth Wyatt & Rhonda Nicoloff of A&K Railroad Materials



Dave & Emma Webb



Ben & Missy Chapman



Tifani & Wes Chandler



Steve Lish, John Heller & Tim Ries



CrossTies Magazine hardworking Editor, Kristen McIntosh, enjoying the beautiful sunset.



Mike Goldston with Paul Cabrol



Mary & Brad Lafavers



Dominic Paolucci of Ruetgers

More President's Reception



Sande Lavino with Buster Julian, Jim Brient and Pattie Parrett



Damon & Melanie Smith



Sarah and Ron Lang



Trish and Tim Tucker



Jack and Debbie Hughes



Joe & Pam Smak



Andy and Joan Thompson



Deb Fox and Mike Smith



Doug & Becky Mellott with Joan Thompson



Rob Churma with Bob Fronczak



Buddy Downey reminiscing with Dick Bowlby



A&K Railroad Materials Founder and Chairman Kern Schumacher, left, graciously hosted RTA for its President's Reception and later a lobster boil.

Thursday Business Sessions & Luncheon

Sessions on Thursday addressed everything from the economy and its effect on the rail and wood tie industries to issues affecting short line and regional railroads and contractors. Attendees were also brought up to speed on the state of the hardwood marketplace, pressing legislative issues and engineering projects being undertaken by U.S. railroads.



Jeff Parrett starts the morning off welcoming attendees.



Kevin Hicks gives the Safety Briefing before sessions begin.



Sparky Hardemann with Mike Hoffman, Tom Mitchell and Rodrigo Elizondo Trevino



Terry Jones, chairman of Kayak.com, discussed how to develop a culture of innovation in our companies during the luncheon address.



Guests listen attentively to the well-received luncheon presentation.



John McGinley gives the annual Resolutions Report.

Annual RTA Banquet & Awards Ceremony

With a theme of “All Black & a Little Gold,” the Annual RTA Banquet & Awards Ceremony was a gala enjoyed by all. RTA’s highly coveted Branding Hammer, Broad Axe and Silver Saw awards were given to very deserving individuals who have made significant contributions not only to RTA but also to the industry as a whole. Awards and a delicious meal were followed by the comedic genius of Comedy Central’s Al Jackson.



Ted Nakanishi with Tad Inami



Barbara and Mike Stacey with Kern Schumacher and Maria Urso



Elaine and Glenn Floresca



Floyd Bowlby enjoys catching up with Grady Brafford and Jeanie Downey.



Carmen Trevizo with Steve Bolte



Tony Chambers with Chuck Emely



Bill Taylor with Arne Arneson



Branding Hammer Award Winner Jeff McCracken with Jeff Parrett



Broad Axe Award Winner Floyd Bowlby with Jeff Parrett



Silver Saw Award Winner Frank Wilson with Jeff Parrett



Outgoing Board Member Lisa Pleasants with Jeff Parrett



Special award for Kern Schumacher presented by Debbie Corallo



Dave Barry listens as Rob Churma shows him how the RTA app works.



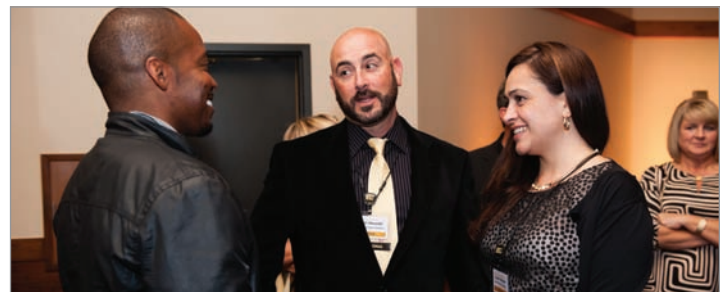
Skipper Beal with Judd Johnson



Comedian Al Jackson



Jim Gauntt presents the \$200 gift card to winner Jane Moss.



Phil and Sarah Heusler meeting Al Jackson

Friday Business Session

Friday's business session focused on a variety of research initiatives related to preservatives, "green" power and more. The final session of the day focused on tie purchases planned by U.S. railroads for 2014.



The group listens intently as Class I railroaders describe their purchasing plans for the coming year.



Attendees are always encouraged to ask questions and/or comment following the presentations. Pictured here are Victoria Schopp and Jason Feagans.



Bill Taylor of DTE Energy



Members of the Railroad Purchasing Forum panel share insight with the audience.



RTA President Jeff Parrett assists Rob Churma of Canadian Pacific as he draws the winning name for a \$300 American Express gift card out of the hat, courtesy of Canadian Pacific. Tony Chambers of Nisus Corp. won the prize.



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Nick Delmonico giving the Vendor-Mercial for Encore Rail.

Reserve tabletop exhibit space for RTA's 2014 Symposium & Technical Conference by calling 770-460-5553 or emailing ties@rta.org



Mike Goldston giving the Vendor-Mercial for Brewco.

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