

Opening New Doors, Exploring New Paths



Walt Disney once said, “We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things because we’re curious, and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.”

Opening new doors and exploring new paths is exactly what RTA members did recently during the 96th Annual Symposium & Technical Conference held at the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress in Orlando, Fla., home of Walt Disney’s legendary resort and amusement parks.

Attendees were treated to a variety of exciting networking

opportunities where they reconnected with old friends and made new ones and heard information on up-to-the-minute developments in the world of wood tie research and development; economic and legislative news and initiatives; railroad engineering and purchasing plans; and so much more.

On the pages that follow are highlights from the conference. Photos are provided courtesy of Gary Coleman. See a full gallery and download as you wish at <http://colemanphotography.pass.us/rta14/>. ■

Hitting The Greens

With weather not an issue in beautiful and balmy Central Florida, golfers enjoyed a friendly golf tournament at the Jack Nicklaus-designed Villas of Grand Cypress Golf Resort.



Geno Huenink, Wes Piatt & Alejandro Autrique



Mike Pourney with Jeff Parrett



Cal Bole, Lee Nall and Ben Chapman



Geno Huenink, John Reaves, Mike Mancione and Mark Huston



Ted Woerle, John Heller, and Tim and Mary Reis



Kevin Hicks, Rhonda & Kenny Dailey, and with Larry Jones



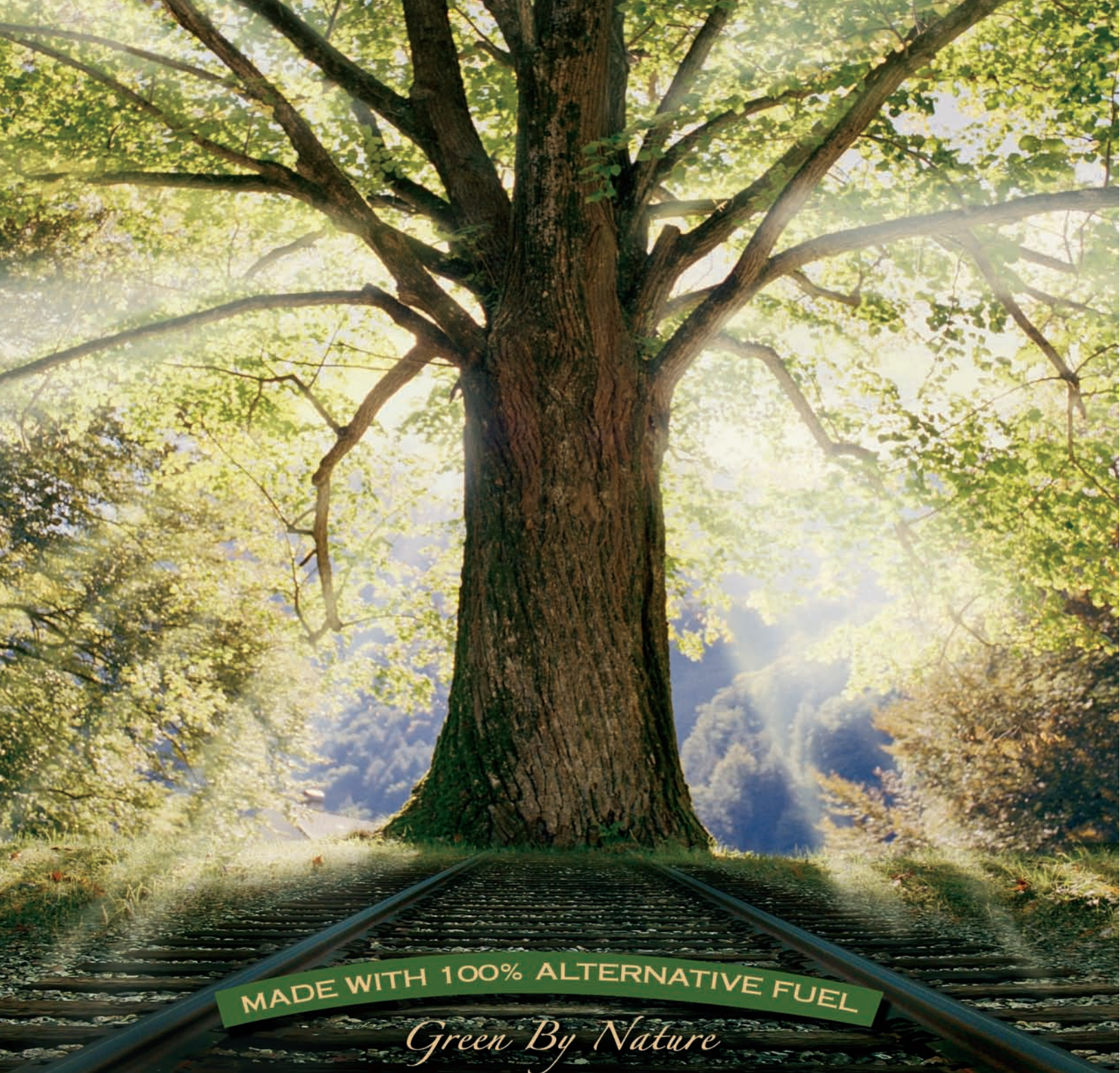
Chris and George Caric with Wendy Whalen and Tom Holmes



Rich Lincoln, Dave Barry, Bill Moss and Dave Koch



Paul Cabrol, Robert Pearce, Dallin Brooks and Frank Wilson



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Green By Nature

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Hats Off To Our Guests

Spouses and guests enjoyed a variety of activities, including making their silly hats for the Annual Banquet, a Walt Disney World Keys to the Kingdom Tour, and a boat ride and tour of scenic Winter Park, Fla.



Patty Ingels with Susan Goldston



Nancy Stackhouse (left) with Missy Chapman



Jeri Huston, Susan Tomlinson and Becky Mellott are hard at work.



Above: Josie Cunningham, Jane Moss & Brenda Watt put finishing touches on their "creations."



Susan Peirson with Vicki Basham and Jeanie Downey



Disney's Keys to the Kingdom Tour was a sell-out!



The ladies of RTA smile for the camera as they take their boat tour around Winter Park.

President's Reception

The Annual President's Reception is always a highlight of the conference. Gathering in the exhibition area, attendees were able to catch up with their friends and visit with vendors at their tabletop exhibits.



Phil Merilli with Connie and Tony Frey



Bud and Mary Bartley



Henry Haupt with George Junkin



Randy Bowman with Larry Etherton



Juan Quintana, Lupe Acosta, Ana Torres-Montes and Saul Gonzales



Gary Hines with Tim Francis



Maxine and Ronald Kazen with Jim Gaunt



Shane Kitchens (middle) with Susan and Mike Goldston



Jack Hughes, Phil Merilli and Kevin Kirkland



Jimmy Watt with Mike Baxter and Wayne Fleming



Pedro Gomez, Domenic Paolucci, Gord Gilmet and Tom Mitchell



Ken and Susan Peirson with John and Sue McGinley



Kathy and Ken Laughlin



David Hatfield (left) with Steve Basham



Beau Van Dyke, Mike Hoffman and Sparky Hardeman



Dallin Brooks with Bror Moldrup



Tim Ries (center) with Vickie and Steve Basham



Paul Cabrol, Buddy Downey and Gary Williams



Jeanie Downey, Debbie Hughes and Jan Williams



Pattie Parrett with Sandy Miller



Mark Huston with Ted Woerle



Nancy and Jeff Ellis



Jan and Gary Williams with Debbie Corallo and Nancy Fulmer

Thursday Business Session & Luncheon

Sessions on Thursday addressed everything from the economy and its effect on the rail and wood tie industries to issues affecting the legislative scene in Washington. Attendees also heard from engineering executives from major Class 1 railroads and were brought up to speed on the state of the hardwood marketplace. The luncheon speaker was FRA Administrator Joe Szabo.



Randy Bowman of Norfolk Southern giving the AREMA Presidential Address.



Opening Session



Wes Piatt with Midori Connolly and Jessica Levin



FRA Administrator Joe Szabo addresses the luncheon crowd.



The presidential gavel is passed down to the new president for 2014-2016, Kenny Dailey of Stella-Jones Corp.

Kris Hedding

Jon Zillioux

Annual RTA Banquet

The atmosphere of the Annual Banquet & Awards Ceremony was festive, with attendees wearing their "silly hats" and enjoying a wonderful meal before the awards ceremony and entertainment.



Tony Helms with Jeff Broadfoot



Sandy and Jeff Miller



Mark and Jeri Huston



Marty Fox and Paul Avery



Howard & Susan Tomlinson with Becky and Doug Mellott



Bill and Jane Moss



Joan and Andy Thompson



Lupe Acosta with Juan Quintana



Delores and Frank Wilson

Photo Booth Fun!

Part of the Annual Banquet was a photo booth setup where attendees were invited to have their picture taken in front of a backdrop of the resort. Smile!



Lyla and Jim Renfroe



Buddy Downey proudly displays his plaque from the Executive Committee.



Gary and Barb Ambrose



Ken and Susan Peirson with Jeanie and Buddy Downey



Michelle and Randy Bowman



The Caric Family – Chris, Sally and George



Damon and Melanie Smith



Kevin Kirkland with Jack Hughes



Mary Jane, Todd and Shana Parris



Ben and Missy Chapman with Corey Plunkett



Jeff and Pattie Parrett



Rhonda and Kenny Dailey



Susan and Jim Gaunt

RTA Awards Ceremony

During the Annual Banquet, RTA President Jeff Parrett announced the recipients of RTA's highly coveted Branding Hammer, Broad Axe, Silver Saw and Award of Merit recognitions. The awards and presentations from the winners were followed by the improvisational antics of the hilarious "On The Spot" acting team.



Jeff Parrett presents the Branding Hammer Award to Marshall Allen.



Dr. Terry Amburgey receives the Award of Merit from RTA's President.



Jeff Parrett presents the Broad Axe Award to Gary Williams.



Kenny Dailey (right) posing with Larry Jones who received the Silver Saw Award.



Rhonda Dailey was the winner of the \$200 AMEX Gift Card sponsored by North American Tie and Timber.



Doug Delmonico won the new iPad given away from a drawing by the folks at Charles City Forest Products.

Friday Business Session

Back to business on Friday, attendees heard from a variety of professionals from the R&D world who shared the latest research related to wood preservatives and testing developments. The greatly anticipated Railroad Purchasing Forum, where the Class 1 railroad executives in attendance share their companies' rail tie purchasing plans for the coming year, followed this session.



Top: Listening to presenters during the R&D Session and the Class I Purchasing Session.



Attendees were able to ask any technology-based question they had during the tech seminars at the conference.



Kenny Dailey, left, incoming RTA president, thanks Jeff Parrett for his service as RTA president for the last two years.



Right: Ken Laughlin and Jeff Lloyd of Nisus Corp.

Tabletop Exhibitors



Dave Barry with Lewis Bolt and Nut speaks with Lupe Acosta.



Gerald Ingle with the folks from Brewco – David Piper and Mike Goldston



Bernard Boulet with BSP Manufacturing



Denny Goshert with Wimer Hurst from Pendu Manufacturing



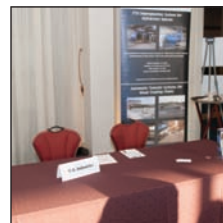
StrikerBilt booth



Arch Wood's display



Taylor Machine Works



C.S. Industries exhibit



Paul Avery with Marty Fox at the Brewer exhibit



New RTA Member, Avista Oil Group, was in attendance.



Henry Haupt with George Junkin at the Charles City Forest exhibit



Encore Rail



Wood Care Systems



National Salvage and Service Corp.



Rocky Mountain Tie and Timber



Wheeler Lumber



Alejandro Autrique and Jamie Escobar with Jeff Lloyd (center) at the Nisus booth

Reserve tabletop exhibit space or your sponsorship for RTA's 2015 Symposium & Technical Conference by calling (770) 460-5553 or emailing ties@rta.org.

Thank you to all of the businesses involved in making the 2014 RTA Conference a success!

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