



# RTA PLANS EXCITING CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE IN SONORAN DESERT LOCALE

By Kristen McIntosh

## Prepare To Network, Share Ideas, Learn & Have Fun!

Registration is now open for the 97<sup>th</sup> Annual RTA Symposium and Technical Conference. Slated for Nov. 2-5 at the beautiful JW Marriott Starr Pass Resort and Spa, the conference promises three days of networking, exhibits, education, the latest purchasing plans by the Class 1 railroads, and more.

To confirm your registration, log on to [www.RTA.org](http://www.RTA.org) and click on the information link at the top of the page. You may also complete the registration form that follows in this issue and email it to [ties@RTA.org](mailto:ties@RTA.org) or fax to (770) 460-5573.

### JW MARRIOTT STARR PASS RESORT & SPA

The breathtaking Four-Diamond JW Marriott Starr Pass Resort and Spa is nestled against the saguaro-covered foothills of Tucson Mountain Park. The resort blends seamlessly into its tranquil yet animated mountaintop setting, as natural as the surrounding desert itself.

The resort combines family-friendly recreation with an array of dining options, three nine-hole desert golf courses, entertaining traditions, free Wi-Fi in the lobby and patio, indulgences such as the Hashanah Spa, and more than 81,000 square feet of event space.

Complementing the natural surroundings is an array of multi-level swimming pools, waterslides, lazy rivers, and dancing fountains. With spectacular views, exciting activities for the entire family, and a landscape laced with nature trails throughout for hiking and biking, you'll make memories that will last a lifetime.

### DAY ONE – RELAX, PLAY & CONNECT

On Tuesday, Nov. 3, you are invited to enjoy a few pre-conference activities designed to allow you to network, relax and reconnect with your colleagues.

Golfers will head out early for the Annual RTA Golf Tournament at the JW Marriott Starr Pass Golf Club.

The Starr Pass Golf Club is less than a mile from the resort. It is a golf lover's haven. The club is a 27-hole Arnold Palmer Signature Golf facility with a double-loaded driving range, rejuvenating 20,000-square-foot clubhouse and top-quality golf shop. You will enjoy your game while admiring the backdrop of natural mountain ranges.

Not a golfer? There are numerous other activities planned, including an optional private Jeep excursion into the Sonoran Desert. Designed to allow you to experience this landscape first hand, the tour will be led by

guides who will show you plants, animals and history that make the Sonoran Desert unique. Along the way, you will learn about the life of the giant saguaro cactus, visit the 1,000-year-old Hohokam Indian occupation site, and see bountiful desert wildlife. The guides will even bring along a critter or two!

Another option is a private "Best of the Barrio Tour." Billed as a "culinary romp through the authentic Mexican cuisine of Tucson," this optional tour will take you aboard a luxury vehicle through Tucson's barrio for an insider's look at each location and their recipe for success. With tastings ranging from handmade pastries/tortillas and more, you will not return to the resort hungry! You will enjoy a combination of cuisine, history and fun as you travel "The Best 23 Miles of Mexican Food." ▶







Once the tours are complete for the day, you may enjoy RTA guest-sponsored hospitality suites and the Annual RTA President’s Reception, including exhibition.

**DAY TWO – GET DOWN TO BUSINESS**

Wednesday, Nov. 4 begins RTA’s business sessions, and spouses may opt to gather for either a light Continental breakfast or have a boxed breakfast on the way to the Sonoran Desert Museum Tour. Attendees will enjoy a personalized guided tour, have lunch and spend the day at the Sonoran Desert Museum while experiencing some of the wonders of the desert, including the Raptor Free Flight.

RTA will kick off the business portion of the conference with a presentation on the economy and its effect on railroad investment.

A session on procurement, resource and utilization will follow with a presentation from Judd Johnson of the *Hardwood Market Report* and other hardwood industry experts.

A working luncheon will follow with a keynote address from Dick Maggiore of Innis Maggiore, a top-rated ad agency. A

noted speaker on strategic positioning, Dick is not content to simply preside over the agency’s business. He rolls up his sleeves and practices what he preaches. He leads the agency’s team of positioning experts. He coined the term “positionist®” and brings that perspective to benefit the agency’s clients.

Following the second session addressing procurement, resource and utilization, an engineering forum will focus on Class I, regional and short line infrastructure partnerships and what these partnerships mean for RTA members.

Once the business concludes for the day, it’s time to head to RTA’s Annual Banquet and Awards Ceremony, where everyone will enjoy a “Trio of Cultures” culinary experience and entertainment from comedian Rocky Laporte, finalist on the hit show “Last Comic Standing.”

LaPorte, featuring an unmistakable accent and hilarious yet enduring delivery, has performed on “The Tonight Show with Jay Leno” and been featured on his own “Comedy Central Presents” special.

He’s opened for the likes of Louie Anderson, Garry Shandling, Drew Carey,

Tim Allen, Hootie and the Blowfish and the Righteous Brothers.

**DAY THREE – FINISH WITH A BANG**

Thursday, Nov. 5 will feature presentations on the latest research and development projects ranging from borates, handling practices, bridge tie design and more.

Later, following a short networking break, Class 1 purchasing personnel will share with attendees their purchasing plans for the upcoming year.

“This year’s conference promises fantastic Sonoran Desert scenery, great golf, fun guest programs and enlightening sessions for all in attendance,” said Kenny Dailey of Stella-Jones, RTA president. “For anyone in the wood tie industry who needs to understand the latest research and development, purchasing and engineering plans, and more, this event should not be missed. We are looking forward to an outstanding conference designed to inspire networking, sharing of ideas, and education.

Log onto [www.RTA.org](http://www.RTA.org) to reserve your spot today.” ■



Follow [@RTAHQ](https://twitter.com/RTAHQ) for all RTA tweets and #rtaxties for 2015 Conference Tweets.

(If you need help learning how to use Twitter, you can watch a video here: <http://youtu.be/VWV74mndNaY>.)

Members will find more info and a conference game (coming soon) in the Events Circle in My Features after login.



Download the Conference App with this QR code and at <http://eventmobi.com/rta2015/>

# SYMPOSIUM & TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

## November 2-5, 2015 | SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE



#rtaxties for 2015 Conference Tweets

### TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

- 8:30 am **RTA GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
JW Marriott Starr Pass Golf Club  
Additional activities for attendees during golf outing – see below
- 3:00-6:00 pm **RTA GUEST SPONSORED HOSPITALITY SUITES**
- 5:30-7:00 pm **RTA PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION**

### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

- 7:45-8:00 am **RTA GENERAL BUSINESS SESSION AND WELCOME**
- 8:00-9:30 am **ECONOMIC SESSION WITH ECONOMIC KEYNOTE ADDRESS**  
**Dan Meckstroth**, Manufacturer's Alliance for Productivity and Innovation  
**Tony Hatch**, ABH Consulting, "Railroad Investment Analysis 2014"  
**Salient MLP Presentation on Crude Oil - TBA**
- 9:30-11:15 am **PROCUREMENT, RESOURCE AND UTILIZATION SESSION I**  
**Skipper Beal**, Moderator  
**Judd Johnson**, "Hardwood Market Report," Production & Consumption  
**Don Finkell**, American OEM & 2015 President Hardwood Federation  
**Jeff Hanks**, Bill Hanks Lumber Company  
**Jeff Edwards**, Edwards Wood Products
- 11:15-12:15pm **NETWORKING AND EXHIBITION BREAK**  
(Lunch buffet opens at noon)
- 12:15-2:45 pm **RTA WORKING LUNCHEON WITH KEYNOTE ADDRESS**  
**Dick Maggiore**, Innis Maggiore
- PROCUREMENT, RESOURCE & UTILIZATION SESSION II**  
**Jack Shannon**, JT Shannon Lumber Company  
**Scott Jones**, Forest Land Owners Association  
**Robert Crosby**, FLOA Member Louisiana

### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4 (CONT.)

- 2:45-5:30pm **ENGINEERING FORUM**  
**Focus on Class 1, Regional & Short Line Infrastructure Partnerships**  
**David Fink**, Pan American Railways  
**Brian Lindamood**, Director Capital Projects, Alaska Railroad - AREMA  
**Walter Smith**, BNSF  
**Philip Merilli**, Norfolk Southern  
**Jim Holder**, Union Pacific  
**Tod Echler**, CSX Transportation

VENDOR PRESENTATIONS WILL OCCUR DURING THIS FORUM

- 7:15 pm **ANNUAL RTA BANQUET & AWARDS CEREMONY**

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5

- 7:45-10:15 am **RESEARCH FORUM**  
**Bror Moldrup**, Advances in Wood Treating Infrastructure  
**Nate Irby/Adam Taylor**, Best Handling Practices for Wood Ties  
**Mark Porter**, PVC Wraps for Ecologically Sensitive Treated Wood Piling and Railroad Applications  
**Jeff Lloyd**, Steam Accelerated 1.5 Step DOT Borate Tie Treatment  
**Bil Bushman**, Bridge Tie Design Services for the 21st Century
- RECYCLING AND DISPOSAL TECHNOLOGY FORUM**  
**Dr. Nicole Labbé**, Recycling Wood Ties via Two-staged Pyrolysis for Fractionation of Wood Preservatives and Bio-oil  
**Stephen Smith**, Torrefaction Processing for Energy Production
- 10:15-10:30 am **NETWORKING AND EXHIBITION BREAK**
- 10:30-12:30 pm **RAILROAD PURCHASING FORUM**  
**Cory Thomas**, BNSF  
**Sheila Gudenrath**, Union Pacific  
**Larry Fenwick**, CSX Transportation  
**Kristine Storm**, Genesee & Wyoming  
**Corey Plunkett**, Norfolk Southern  
**Chris Laddish**, Kansas City Southern (Invited)  
**Bruce Emberly**, Canadian National  
**Rob Churma**, Canadian Pacific



Download the Conference App with this QR code and at <http://eventmobi.com/rta2015/>

### ATTENDEE/SPOUSE (Fee Included) AND OPTIONAL (Fee Not Included) ACTIVITIES:

The Golf Tournament, Desert Jeep Tour and Barrio Culinary Tour are on Tuesday, November 3rd. The Sonoran Desert Museum Tour & Raptor Free Flight Experience are on Wednesday, November 4th (during the Business Sessions). All of these activities are optional and require additional registrations. Minimums must be met for all events to run as planned and maximums may apply in some cases.

#### NOVEMBER 3, 2015

**OPTIONAL - RTA GOLF TOURNAMENT - JW MARRIOTT STARR PASS GOLF CLUB**  
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

**Pre-event Cost is \$195 - At the Event \$225**

The Starr Pass Golf Club legend began more than 120 years ago when Richard Starr crafted a trail through the rugged wilderness of the Tucson Mountains. PGA Tour Commissioner Dean Beaman personally selected the Starr Pass Golf Club site. With the help of renowned golf course designer Bob Cupp and PGA Tour professional Craig Stadler, they created a world-class TPC golf facility. Starr Pass Golf Club hosted the annual Tucson Open between 1987 and 1996. A true desert course, natural elements are used as hazards while showcasing majestic vistas of the Catalina Mountains. Legends such as Arnold Palmer, Phil Mickelson, Payne Stewart and Nancy Lopez have carved their way through this historic golf course.

**OPTIONAL - PRIVATE JEEP EXCURSION INTO THE SONORAN DESERT (MINIMUM 6 - MAXIMUM 36)**  
9:30AM - 2PM

**Pre-event Cost is \$105 - At the Event \$135**

(Boxed or other Lunch Included)  
Experience the desert first-hand! Our knowledgeable guides will lead you through the plants, animals, and history that make the Sonoran Desert unique. On the way you will learn about the life of the giant saguaro cactus, visit a thousand year-old Hohokam Indian occupation site, and see beautiful desert wildlife. Our guides will even bring along a critter or two!

**OPTIONAL - PRIVATE BEST OF THE BARRIO TOUR (MIN. 6 - MAX. 29) A Culinary Romp thru the Authentic Mexican Cuisine of Tucson**  
9:30AM - 2PM

**Pre-event Cost is \$105 - At the Event \$135**

You will ride aboard one of our luxury vehicles through Tucson's Barrio while getting an insider's look at each location and their recipe for success. With tastings ranging from handmade pastries/tortillas, carne asada and Sonoran hot dogs, to chicken quesadillas, you will not go home hungry. This combination of cuisine, history, and fun has already proven to be a winner with visitors and locals alike. This tour is a Tucson Weekly "Best of Tucson" Award winner. In 2012, it inspired Visit Tucson's international marketing campaign, "The Best 23 Miles of Mexican Food," which proudly declares that the "best 23 miles of Mexican food" north of the border is the food in Tucson.

#### NOVEMBER 4

**SPOUSE & GUEST HOSPITALITY "LIGHT" CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST - will only be available to those Spouses & Guests not attending the below Sonoran Desert Museum Tour**  
8:30AM - 9:30AM

**OPTIONAL (RECOMMENDED) - SONORAN DESERT MUSEUM AND RAPTOR FREE FLIGHT EXPERIENCE**  
8:00AM - 2:30PM

(Boxed Breakfast on Bus at 8:00AM - Lunch at Museum also Included!) **Pre-event Cost \$150 - On Site Cost \$175**  
Spend the day at the Sonoran Desert Museum and experience one of the wonders of the desert at the Raptor Free Flight. The Desert Museum is ranked on TripAdvisor.

com as one of the Top 10 Museums in the country and the #1 Tucson attraction. Unlike most museums, about 85% of the experience is outdoors! The 98-acre Desert Museum is a fusion experience: zoo, botanical garden, art gallery, natural history museum, and aquarium.

**The Raptor Free Flight Experience** is THE Desert Museum presentation that must not be missed. Only conducted during certain times of the year, you'll have birds of prey fly so close that you can feel the rush of wind as they whiz by. The birds fly completely untethered, without leg straps, in an open desert presentation you must see to believe. Owls, hawks, falcons and the only raptor species that hunts as a family (like wolves) are featured with 2 separate presentations at 10am and 2pm the day of your visit.

**RTA BANQUET - TRIO OF CULTURES DESERT SOUTHWEST CULINARY EXPERIENCE**  
7:00PM - 11PM ON OCTOBER 16TH

Join RTA in celebration of the three incredible cultures that merge in the US Desert Southwest. Railroads and cowboys opened the American West; our Native American history that once flourished in the desert now enjoys a renaissance of understanding and growth; amigos who have immigrated from South of the Border bring a unique cultural flair of food and experiences. Feel free to dress in appropriate apparel from Western wear (denim, boots, hats, bolo ties, bandanas, etc.), to culturally sensitive/appropriate Native American (native-made jewelry, beaded shirts, dresses, moccasins, shawls, etc.) or Mexican attire (colorful cottons, Puebla dresses, mariachi clothing, serapes, sombreros, etc.) and celebrate the melting pot of food and friendship the three cultures now enjoy in Arizona.



# SYMPOSIUM & TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

## Join Us In Tucson, Arizona | November 2-5, 2015

### Registration For The 97<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

**NOTE: CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES COVER ALL MEETINGS, BUSINESS LUNCHEON, PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION, AND ANNUAL BANQUET.** Please complete both the Registration AND golf form if you want to play in the golf tournament.



Download the Conference App with this QR code and at <http://eventmobi.com/rta2015/>



#rtaxties for 2015 Conference Tweets

#### Reserve Your Hotel:

### JW MARRIOTT STARR PASS

Make your reservations now!

Reserve Online At:  
<http://bit.ly/1c9A3s9>

There is no guarantee of a room beyond Oct. 9, 2015. Make hotel reservations under the RTA Room Block by calling (520) 792-3500.

Room rate \$175 USD.

Early registration ends August 31, 2015

Full refund (minus \$50 admin fee) until 9/9/15.  
Half refund until 9/18/15. No refunds after 9/18/15.

#### Reserve Your Space:

### CONFERENCE REGISTRATION (Golf registration form is at the bottom)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Company \_\_\_\_\_  
TO APPEAR ON BADGE

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
IF PAYING BY CREDIT CARD, PLEASE USE ADDRESS ON CARD

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(Business) Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse Name (if attending) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Please Check All Fees That Apply.

Yearly Membership fees must be paid in advance.

	Fees For Early Reg. (Before 9/1/15)	Fees For Late Reg. (After 8/31/15)
<input type="checkbox"/> Producer, Supplier, Contractor & Consulting Member	\$575	\$625
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate Member	\$345	\$395
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Member—Railroad, Government & Academic	\$575	\$625
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Member—Other	\$795	\$845
<input type="checkbox"/> Spouse Participation (Fee to attend any conference events.)	\$295	\$345

(No additional fee for spouse/guest hospitality breakfast at hotel on Wed. 4th)

#### Optional Events

(Additional pre-event fees are required.)

	Advanced Registration	On Site Registration
<input type="checkbox"/> Golf Tournament - Nov. 3 (Fill out form below.)	\$195	\$225
<input type="checkbox"/> Private Jeep Excursion into the Sonoran Desert - Nov. 3	\$105	\$135
<input type="checkbox"/> Private Best of Barrio Tour - Nov. 3	\$105	\$135
<input type="checkbox"/> Tour of Sonoran Desert Museum & Raptor Free Flight Experience - Nov. 4	\$150	\$175

*Occurs the morning & afternoon of first day of business sessions for spouses and guests. Fee includes transportation, breakfast and lunch*

\*\*\*\*Minimums & Maximums Are In Effect So Advanced Registration is Necessary\*\*\*\*  
Tours are not guaranteed to run if minimums are not met.

**TOTAL PAYMENT** (Include spouse fees & any optional tours or golf fee) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Payment Type:

CHECK  CREDIT CARD

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name On Card \_\_\_\_\_

3 digit CVC on back of card \_\_\_\_\_

4 digit CVC on front of AMEX \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Zip/Postal Code if different from above: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Presenters and attendees who are RTA members need to check the box that corresponds to their membership type and submit that fee.**

### RTA GOLF REGISTRATION PLEASE SUBMIT ONE FORM PER GOLFER

#### JW Marriott Starr Pass Golf Club

Tuesday, November 3, 2015 • RTA Tournament - Shotgun start format (\$195 each player).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Company \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap \_\_\_\_\_

If you have preferred playing partners for main tournament list them below (Each must register separately.)

1. Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Preferred Partner: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Preferred Partner: \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Preferred Partner: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form with all registration fees to:

#### Railway Tie Association

115 Commerce Dr.,  
Suite C  
Fayetteville, GA 30214

(P) 770-460-5553

(F) 770-460-5573

To submit form electronically,  
e-mail to:

**ties@rta.org**



WELCOME TO THE



# WILD WEST



LEARN, NETWORK AND EXPLORE  
AT 2015'S BEST CROSSTIE EVENT:

**RAILWAY TIE ASSOCIATION  
97<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**NOVEMBER 2-5, 2015**

**JW MARRIOTT STARR PASS  
GOLF RESORT & SPA**

TUCSON, ARIZONA



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TIES@RTA.ORG | WWW.RTA.ORG

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#RTAXTIES  
FOR 2015 CONFERENCE TWEETS

## SADDLE UP FOR THE CROSSTIE EVENT OF THE YEAR

The Railway Tie Association 97th Annual Symposium and Technical Conference is westbound for Tucson, Arizona. Get the latest crosstie industry trends and developments. Explore a city steeped in railroad history, and experience a melting pot of Southwest-infused cuisine, entertainment and culture.

### GAIN INSIGHTS FROM INDUSTRY THOUGHT LEADERS:

*The latest research and new ideas for tie markets*

*Tie procurement and resource utilization sessions*

*Insights from major railroad purchasers and engineers*

*RTA Working Luncheon with keynote address from Dick Maggiore, president and CEO of Innis Maggiore, the nation's leading agency in the practice of positioning*

*Economic outlook from expert analysts*

### RIDE OUT INTO THE SUN. Tee up on a historic desert course for the **RTA Golf Tournament**.

Explore the vast landscape on a **Sonoran Desert Jeep excursion**. Taste authentic, award-winning Mexican cuisine on the **Best of the Barrio Tour**. See birds of prey untethered and up-close at the **Sonoran Desert Museum**. Break out your **Western Wear** for a **Desert**

**Southwest-themed multi-cultural-and-cuisine Fiesta**, featuring comedian

**Rocky LaPorte**, a finalist on NBC's "Last Comic Standing."