



DC Energy After Trump Is As Different As

◀ NIGHT & DAY ▶

RR Day Attracts Large Group, Including Many RTA Members



Railroad Day-on-The-Hill was held March 2, with a record number of railroaders, suppliers and customers meeting with Congressional leaders to identify legislative strategies to grow opportunities for rail.

A record 456 participants were on hand for 367 meetings in Congressional offices. “Hundreds of citizen-lobbyists advocated on issues from balanced regulation to sensible tax reform, including permanence of the 45G tax credit that spurs rail investment, to the holding of truck size and weight at current levels,” said Linda Bauer Darr, president of the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. “Short line railroads extend the national rail network by connecting rail service to local economies and building jobs in America’s industrial and agricultural heartland.”

Darr said a key point of discussion for short line railroaders at the event was the Building Rail Access for Customers and the Economy (BRACE). Railroaders said BRACE is in close alignment with the Administration’s stated interest in spurring private investment in infrastructure through tax credits.

Legislation supporting 45G has a 14-year track record of generating strong bipartisan support, Darr said. The BRACE Act was reintroduced in both houses in the 115th Congress (HR 721 and S407). Due to the efforts at Railroad Day-on-The-Hill, the BRACE Act now has 82 cosponsors in the

House and 15 in the Senate as of Monday, March 6.

Darr added that the BRACE Act removes the need to pass legislation every year in support of the 45G tax credit, adding predictability to infrastructure investment planning. The 45G tax credit has been responsible for nearly \$4 billion in private investment in short line and regional railroads since its inception in 2008. The 45G tax credit expired on Dec. 31, 2016.

RTA Executive Director Jim Gauntt along with representatives from RTA’s Executive Committee and member companies participated in the event. “This was the largest RTA team for any Railroad Day that I can remember,” Gauntt said. “I am so very proud of our members for their commitment to come to Washington, D.C., and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our rail industry customers and partners. When we work together as an association we can accomplish so much more than we ever could individually.”

John Giallonardo, vice president of Class 1 sales for Koppers Inc.’s Railroad Products and Services segment, said this was his first time participating in Railroad Day-on-The-Hill.

“I was tremendously impressed by the collaborative effort of everyone involved in making this such a meaningful and successful event,” Giallonardo said. “It was important for Koppers to participate in this

event to show a unified message and vision for the entire railroad industry to the folks in Washington. It was a great opportunity to meet face-to-face with our elected officials and emphasize the value and significance that the railroad industry brings to our country.”

Bill Behan, president of Gross & Janes Co., said participating in this event was a great experience both professionally and personally. “Gross & Janes Co. has participated in Railroad Day-on-The-Hill in the past, however this was my first experience. I was very impressed with the overall organization and detail provided to all participants before the Capitol Hill meetings. The industry lobbyists did an excellent job preparing our group at the breakfast meeting prior to Capitol Hill departure,” he said.

“As a new participant, I watched the early day meetings for form and substance. In the



Rep. Neal Dunn (R-FL), center, with RTA's Jim Gauntt, left, and Chamber, Conlon & Hartwell's Adam Nordstrom, right.

end, the congressional staffers simply want you to be yourself,” Behan said, offering the following advice to future participants. “Unpretentiously tell them your connection to the district, what is important to you and why. This is no different than selling your business products and/or services to your customers.”

Behan added, “Along with the Railway Tie Association, Gross & Janes takes our

role in the industry supply chain very seriously and stresses participating in educating our legislators. Like any prudent business approach, the importance of conveying various industry challenges and solutions rests solely with us.”

Dave Koch, sales manager for Wheeler Lumber LLC and member of the RTA Executive Committee, attended Railroad Day and recommended other RTA members do so as

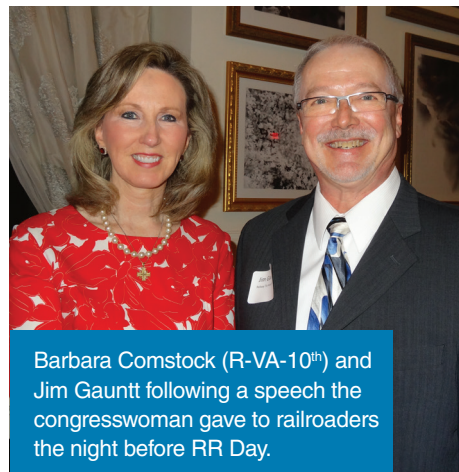
well next year. “Wheeler is proud to be part of RTA’s team on Railroad Day on Capitol Hill to support the industry initiatives that are important for the future prosperity of the railroad industry,” he said. “There is great strength in numbers, which is evident in the success we have had with Railroad Day initiatives. I encourage everyone to be a part of this exciting and extremely important day.” ■



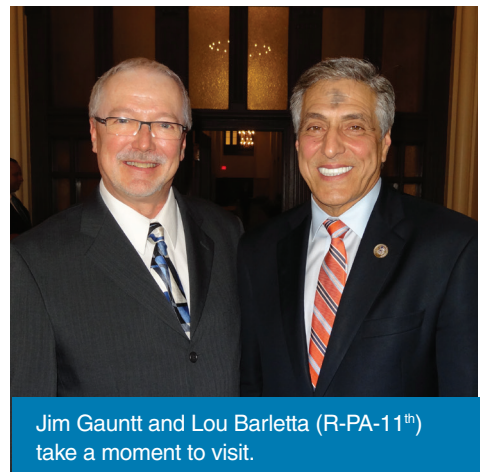
Railroad Day-on-the-Hill attracted more than 456 railroad industry representatives.



Senator Mike Rounds (R-SD) and Jim Gauntt discussed issues related to tie manufacturing in the western states.



Barbara Comstock (R-VA-10th) and Jim Gauntt following a speech the congresswoman gave to railroaders the night before RR Day.



Jim Gauntt and Lou Barletta (R-PA-11th) take a moment to visit.



RTA member Jim Raines (left) of Stella-Jones was among RTA team leaders on the hill.



RTA Members present for RR Day-on-the-Hill included two board members (Dave Dave Koch and Bill Behan) and Chairman of the CLEAR Committee George George Caric.

Building Bridges: The Hardwood Manufacturers Association National Conference

From HMA Staff

Nearly 300 hardwood industry stakeholders recently gathered in Charleston March 22-24 for the Hardwood Manufacturers Association (HMA) 2017 National Conference and Expo. The 2 ½-day event, designed to provide pertinent industry-related manufacturing, marketing, resource and management information, was open to all industry stakeholders and included an industry expo, several networking receptions and the following presentations.

- A panel of human resource experts addressed the challenge of recruiting and keeping good employees in a presentation entitled, “Trends in Talent Management and Leadership Development.”
- American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) Executive Director Michael S. Snow shared information on AHEC’s “Global Promotion and Innovative Uses of American Hardwood.”
- Judd Johnson, *Hardwood Market Report* editor, provided a look at what’s trending in hardwood markets in his presentation, “Domestic and Global Market Trends.”
- Hardwood Federation Executive Director Dana Lee Cole updated attendees on the happenings in the nation’s capital with her presentation entitled, “Politics and Policy in the Trumped up World of D.C.”

- A panel composed of healthcare and benefits experts from Guardian, OneDigital, and United Healthcare addressed the pressing topic, “Employee Benefits & Healthcare Reform – What you are doing and what you should expect.”
- On the dais to provide an economic outlook was John B. Jung Jr., senior managing director and head of BB&T Capital Markets, a division of BB&T Securities LLC.
- Industry suppliers Duncan Ferguson of Sawmill MD, Robert Slater of Stiles Machinery, and Federico Giudiceandrea of Microtec offered insights, information, and solutions regarding “Advancing Your Hardwood Processing Technology.”

Conference participants also had an opportunity to mix and mingle with HMA’s NextGen Leaders Council. Instituted to develop, engage, and mentor up-and-coming leaders from HMA member companies and the hardwood industry, this group of promising, talented and enthusiastic future leaders hosted a NextGen Reception that was open to all conference attendees. The energy level in that room was over-the-top.

Several other evening receptions proved ample opportunity for networking, information exchange, and plenty of industry camaraderie.

RTA Executive Director Jim Gauntt, along with several RTA member company representatives, was among the attendees. “RTA is proud of our connection to HMA and also proud of our members’ support of this important hardwood organization. The conference was one of the best attended ever, and the sold-out exhibition is a testament to the value of HMA’s annual event to sawmills and suppliers alike.”

To learn about the Hardwood Manufacturers Association, visit www.HMAMembers.org, or contact HMA Executive Vice President, Linda Jovanovich, (412) 244.0440, ljovanovich@hardwood.org.



A team from Stella-Jones exhibited at HMA.



Claus Staalner of American Wood Technology



Wheeler Lumber

Committed to performance since 1892

QNAP™

COPPER NAPHTHENATE

Treated Ties & Timbers
Proven oil-borne preservative preferred for environmentally sensitive areas

Engineering and Shop Drawings services available

800.843.8304 www.wheeler-con.com dkoch@wheeler1892.com

- AWPA Standards
- AREMA Approved
- Cleaner Handling
- No Corrosion Concerns
- TPI Certified Facility