



New RTA President Looks Ahead For 2015

Dailey Urges Members To Become Strong Voice For Industry

With the 2014 edition of the Railway Tie Association Symposium & Technical Conference in the books, we asked newly installed RTA President Kenny Dailey of Stella-Jones Corp. to reflect on his work in the industry and look ahead to the coming two years at the helm of the association.

Q Tell *Crossties* readers a little about your background in the crosstie and wood preservation industry...what brought you to this point in your professional career?

I started my career in March of 1978 with Seaman Timber Company. I had the opportunity to work with a growing organization just starting in the railroad supply industry. This experience was invaluable in building relationships with both customers and other suppliers.

Q Your plant in Montevallo, Ala., has recently been acquired by Stella-Jones. Tell us a little about the changes that acquisition has brought.

Stella-Jones purchased Boatright Railroad Products in May of this year. It was evident from day one the commitment to quality, service and safety held by the Stella-Jones organization. The changes made at both Montevallo and Clanton are evident with structure and accountability. Being involved in the marketing aspect of our business, this is reassuring that every product shipped meets or exceeds customer standards.

Q What are some of the greatest challenges/issues the wood tie industry is facing right now?

Green tie supply with a growing demand is foremost a challenge for our customers and us. We survived a brutal last winter and are still playing catch-up. The philosophy that our leadership has placed on us is one of keeping our customers informed and involved on a

regular basis of changes in the market. We believe in a true partnership with our customers.

Q Where are the greatest opportunities?

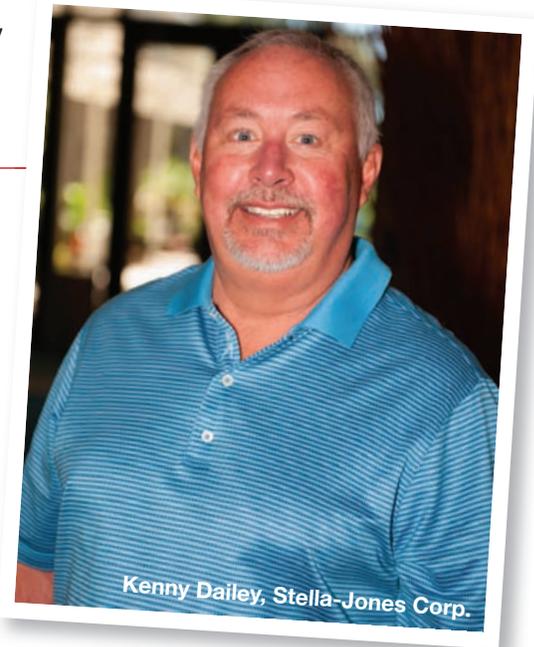
Opportunities are abundant for those willing to stay engaged with customer needs. Borates will continue to take market share. We currently work directly with one of our customers in pre-plating bridge ties. This is how we can and will become more service oriented to the end-user.

Q When and why did you become involved in the Railway Tie Association?

In the early 1980s I attended my first conference in Ponte Vedra, Fla. Since that time I have attended every conference but one. RTA is a unique organization that allows both suppliers and customers working together with a common goal—the betterment of the wooden crosstie.

Q How can RTA members become an even more energetic voice for the industry?

By getting involved. In my opening remarks in Orlando at the conference this past October I challenged the membership to get off the sidelines and get in to the game. As an organization, we have to identify the next generation of leaders, both from the supply segment and the railroad group. When I look back on whom I started with in this associa-



tion, we are now the “seasoned veterans,” to put it mildly. There has to be another group to step up to follow in the footsteps of leaders of this association like George Caric, Gary Ambrose, John McGinley, Jeff Broadfoot, Fritz Horn, Bruce Emberly and Jim Watt.

Q RTA had a great 2014 conference in Orlando, but I know you and the RTA team are already looking ahead to 2015. When and where will the conference be held in 2015? Give us a sneak peek into what attendees can expect.

The 2015 Symposium and Technical Conference will be held November 3-5 at the beautiful Marriott Starr Pass Resort and Spa located in Tucson, Ariz. Jim Gauntt and his staff have already put together a program that will address current industry issues along with timely forecasts of customer requirements. And let us not forget the fantastic November weather associated with that region and, of course, golf! ■