RTA 2007 Conference & Technical Symposium

Great business sessions, a fishing rodeo, a scramble, shelling, tours, manufacturers’ exhibits and a fun-filled beach-fest banquet made the 2007 edition of the Railway Tie Association (RTA) Annual Symposium and Technical Conference quite possibly the best ever gathering of the association’s members. It all occurred in October at the stunning Sanibel Harbour Resort and Spa in Fort Myers, Fla. RTA President George Caric of Tangent Rail Corp. summed it up this way, “We wanted to try and find something for everyone in a sun-filled destination. And even though it’s hard to be everything to all people, RTA really hit a home run with the choice of locales and all the activities. Our thanks go out to all the folks at the resort who made the event work so smoothly.”

So, if you were there, take moment to reflect on the atmosphere and fellowship of your associates and friends. And if you missed it, sneak a peek at the following for an idea of what this conference was all about!

Pictures from the conference were taken by Gary Coleman and can be accessed online at www.colemanphotography.com.

Conference Extras

The conference begins before the first day of business sessions with committee meetings and the President’s Dinner, followed the next day by activities for all and the President’s Reception.

**President’s Dinner**

Left: Dale Ophardt, Joe Smith, Rob Crawford and George Farris. Middle: Jeff Broadfoot, Dave Ferryman, Bill Zimmer and Mike Aarstad. Right: Gene Dodson.

**President’s Reception**

Left: Mike and Karen Neidert. Middle: Dixie and Mike Aarstad. Right: Ann & Gary Hunter.

Tom Mitchell, Joe Delahoussaye and Bruce Hobbs.

Erin Rolstad with Bobbie and Kevin Conkright and Chad Rolstad.

Left: Debbie and Jack Hughes. Middle: Rusty Pfeiffer and Bob Wombles. Right: Pam and Clyde Lobb.
Conference Shots

One and a half days of business sessions are the life-blood of this conference. More than 30 speakers from the railroad, wood treating and sawmill industries came to the podium during the jam-packed interactive forums. You can read some of the comments in the “What They Said” article on pg. 14.
Above: Nancy Flumer and Debbie Corallo. Right: Walt Smith, Craig Domski, Jeff McCracken and Dave Ferryman.

Left: Matt Clarke and Rob Churma. Middle: Preston Germain. Right: Bob Wombles.

Annual Luncheon

Dr. Allan Houston of The Ames Plantation made a moving keynote speech entitled The Ties That Bind at the Annual Business Luncheon.

Left: Tony Helms and Joe Parris. Middle: Gary Williams, Bill Rousis and Janet Seaman. Right: Dr. Allan Houston (lunch speaker).

Banquet

All business and no fun? Hardly! Check out the beach-fest banquet and the wacky entertainment of guest artist Max Winfrey. The banquet also has its serious side with annual awards and the transfer of the gavel from the outgoing president to the next year’s president. This year’s award winners were all deserving of the recognition, and RTA ushered in its first woman president, Janet Seaman of Seaman Timber Company.

Bill Wimmer and George Caric.

Gary Williams (accepting for Mark Franck) and George Caric.

Sam Dunaway and George Caric.

George Caric and Mike Neidert.

George Caric, Jim Gauntt and Gary Hunter.

Gary Ambrose and Jim Gauntt.

Left: Sally Caric and Max Winfrey. Middle: Ed Groves and Max Winfrey. Right: Sally Caric and Max Winfrey.

Max Winfrey juggling tennis rackets.

Above: Jeff and Kathleen Broadfoot. Right: Jeff Hunter and Max Winfrey.
And what would this event be if not for all our sponsors and exhibitors? The sponsors were recognized at the banquet, and exhibitors are pictured here with their tabletop exhibits. Great thanks goes out to all these companies.

RTA would like to give a special thanks to all the exhibitors and sponsors at this year’s conference.
