

# 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](http://www.colemanphotography.com).**



RTA President George Caric with wife Sally.



David Caldwell and Rob Matthews soak up information during conference sessions.



Rob Churma and Jack Hughes join in on the festivities at the banquet.

## 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.



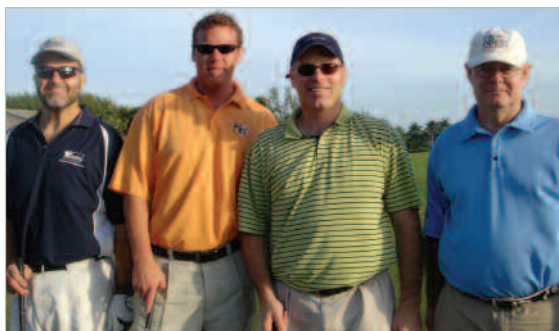
**Far Left:** Bill Moss. **Left:** George Caric and Maggie Kukovich. **Right:** George Caric and Billy McKa. **Far Right:** Tony Chambers.



Shelling is a popular activity.



Relaxing after a hard morning of shelling.



**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 Dinner**



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

**President's Reception**



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.



**Left:** Londa Allen, Barb Ambrose, Ginger Bowzer, Brenda Watt, Susan Tomlinson, Kathy Horn and Becky Mellot. **Middle:** Mandy and David Girouard. **Right:** Gary and Luke Hunter.



**Left:** Phil Bird, Bill and Jane Moss, and Doug Gentry. **Middle:** Stan and Rosalie Thomas. **Right:** Patti Loadman and Tricia Tucker.



**Left:** Londa and Marshall Allen. **Middle:** Jim Gauntt and Bill and Ginger Bowzer. **Right:** Gene and Rhonda Dodson, Mitch Whitmire, Maggie Kukovich and Scoot Sowell.

### 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.



**Left:** Wally Hawthorne and Walt King. **Right:** Bill Rousis with Howard Tomlinson and Doug Mellott.



**Above:** Nancy Flumer and Debbie Corallo. **Right:** Walt Smith, Craig Dowski, 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 side winners were all deserving of the recognition, and RTA ushered in its first woman president, Janet Seaman of Seaman Timber Company.



**Left:** Janet Seaman and George Caric. **Middle:** Steve Bolte with Rich and Nancy Zemencik and Rick Cullinan. **Right:** Heide and Gayle Minkler.



Bill Wimmer and George Caric.



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



Sam Dunaway and George Caric.



George Caric and Mike Neidert.



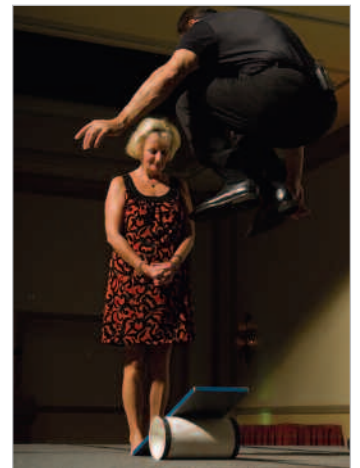
George Caric, Jim Gauntt and Gary Hunter.



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.



**Exhibitors**

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.



SemMaterials.



BFC Gas & Electric Company.



Tight Spike Railroad Tie Restoration.



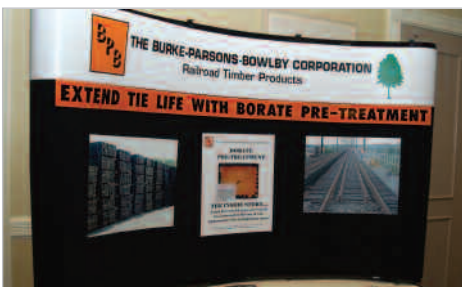
Above: Encore Rail Systems. Above Right: Aboriginal Cogeneration. Middle Right: Burke-Parsons-Bowlby Corporation.



Above: Osmovee. Below: Atlantic & Pacific Rail Supply.



Above: Wheeler Lumber. Right: Brewer, Inc.



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

**Exhibitors:** Aboriginal Cogeneration Corp., Atlantic & Pacific Rail Supply, BFC Gas & Electric Companies, Brewer Inc., Burke-Parsons-Bowlby Corp., Encore Rail Systems, Osmovee Inc., SemMaterials LP, Tight Spike, R-TEC LLC, Wheeler Lumber LLC.

**Sponsors:** Acme Wood Preserving Inc., Arkansas Steel Associates, Burke-Parsons-Bowlby Corp., Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Encore Rail Systems, Herzog Contracting Co., KMG-Bernuth Inc., Koppers Inc., Merichem Chemicals & Refinery Services, Missouri Tie and Timber, MiTek Industries Inc., NRC, Osmovee Inc., Pandrol USA LP, Progressive Railroad, Seaman Timber Co., Stella-Jones Corp., Thompson Industries, Tangent Rail Products Inc., Tie Yard of Omaha.