

NRC CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN



Short Line Conference & Rail Equipment Auction, Spring is Here Folks!

Two recently held industry events, the ASLRRRA short line conference in Orlando and the NRC Rail Construction and Maintenance Equipment Auction in Little Rock, both set attendance records. The rail industry continues to grow!

This year's short line conference, as most of them have over the past few years, focused heavily on safety. Safety is the most important part of what we do on the railroad every day. Tremendous efforts continue to be made to get all employees properly trained, with more attention than ever being paid to the details and processes required to get them thinking clearly when it comes to being safe on the job. Better and more clearly explained job briefings are also getting more employees to more clearly understand their tasks for the day and the protections they do and don't have in place to perform their work safely. These briefings are designed to get all employees engaged; it's working and the employees have a better understanding than ever of how important this process is to keeping them safe on our job sites. Everyone wins when we perform our work safely.

The 2014 safety award winners at the ASLRRRA Conference were as follows:

President's Awards:

Most hours of injury-free operation went to:
Fort Worth & Western Railroad

Maintaining the best safety rate for:

500,000 or more man-hours worked:
Union Railroad Company

250,000 to 500,000 man-hours worked:
Portland & Western Railroad

150,000 to 250,000 man-hours worked:
Fort Worth & Western Railroad

50,000 to 150,000 man-hours worked:
Ohio Central Railroad

Less than 50,000 man-hours worked:
Florida Central Railroad

Safety Person of the Year: Billie Johnson, General Manager of OmniTRAX Inc.'s Newburgh & South Shore Railroad LLC and Northern Ohio & Western Railway LLC

Safety Professional of the Year: Mike Lundell, Vice President of Compliance and Safety for Genesee & Wyoming

Most Improved Safety Record: Buckingham Branch Railroad Co.

Congratulations to these individuals and companies for the well-deserved recognition they received at the ASLRRRA Conference in Orlando regarding safety – great job by all!

The NRC Equipment Auction, hosted by Blackmon Auction at their facility in Little Rock, Arkansas on April 17, has now been over long enough that many

of the pieces bought by contractors are already part of equipment consists working on projects out in the field. This event was well attended and everyone had a good time as usual. I would like to thank the auction committee for another terrific effort. Danny Brown of V&H Trucks is the Committee Chairman, and is supported by Mark Gaffney with Stacy & Witbeck, Jay Gowan with Harsco Rail, Paul Laurello with Delta Railroad Construction, Dean Mackey with Progress Rail Services and Greg Spilker with Encore Rail Systems. These guys work hard and are very passionate about this event. They contribute their time as needed to make this auction a success, and the NRC along with our members greatly appreciate what they do for this yearly event that we hold each spring. I would also like to thank the folks at Blackmon Auctions for their participation, they are a class act! Thomas Blackmon led the auctioneering again, and is a true professional.

A big thank you is in order for Balfour Beatty Rail, Delta Railroad Construction, Encore Rail Systems, and Nordco for the pieces each company donated to this year's auction, thank you to all four of these companies, the NRC greatly appreciates your generosity year in and year out. And a special thank you to Eddie and Barbara Stokes of Railway Equipment Services, which donated 10% of the proceeds of the single biggest piece sold at the auction, a 2008 Fairmont TKO Tie Inserter/Remover.

These donations, and the proceeds from the regular consignments, support the NRC's Safety Training Program and the Education funds, primarily the Safety DVD initiative which is used by most track contractors as part of their overall yearly training programs.

The auction continues to grow:

2010: 200 pieces sold for \$560,000

2011: 150 pieces sold for \$630,000

2012: 200 pieces sold for \$500,000

2013: 350 pieces sold for \$800,000

2014: 250 pieces sold for \$1,000,000

In 2015, 380 pieces sold for close to \$1,200,000!

Finally, please save the date of Thursday, June 4, 2015 for Railroad Day on The Hill. We look forward to a huge turnout in Washington, DC for this event. We are counting on everyone in the industry to get our message across. For more information and to register, go to <https://member.aslrra.org/aslrra/RRDay2015>.

I hope to see many of you in Washington DC - safe travels!

For further information on all NRC planned events, please visit the new and improved www.nrcma.org.

Have a safe day.

By Bill Dorris, *Chairman of the Board of the NRC*



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