

SCENES FROM ST. LOUIS: THE ICRI 2008 FALL CONVENTION

BY DALE REGNIER



Each year, the fall convention gives ICRI members the opportunity to contribute to ongoing committee work, attend technical presentations that inspire and educate, and celebrate the winners of our coveted annual Project Awards. The ICRI 2008 Fall Convention, held October 29-31, 2008, at the Millennium Hotel in St. Louis, MO, once again provided a chance for the best and brightest to gather and proved that membership in ICRI is more important than ever.

We began our convention in the traditional manner with the Welcome Reception on Wednesday evening. Throughout the day, attendees arrived, met up with some friends, and browsed through the offerings of our exhibitors. Exhibitor support is



Exhibitors and attendees mingle, exchange ideas, and peruse all the new products and services at the Welcome Reception



Playing hosts in St. Louis were the enthusiastic members from ICRI's Great Plains Chapter



Convention attendees taking an afternoon break. Seated left to right: Dan Anagnos, Keith Harrison, Linda Harrison, and Tom Ouska. Standing left to right: Jeff Carlson and Robert Pusheck



Enjoying the moment are (left) ICRI Past President Wayne Benitz and 2008 ICRI President Monica Rourke



Along with the social activities, the Fall 2008 Convention included 15 technical presentations



Committees are crucial to moving ICRI forward on every front. This group, from all over the country and many different fields of the concrete industry, just finished its work with the Chapters Committee



President Monica Rourke took time to update attendees on the Institute's various activities during her term



During the Opening Luncheon, Technical Committee Chair Michael Tabassi introduced ICRI's newest Technical Guideline

crucial for the success of any ICRI convention, and we were thrilled with our offerings at this event. Many industry professionals from all over the country thought so as well and dropped by many booths to see what was new and innovative in our industry.

Thursday morning attendees hit the floor running with the "Visit the Exhibits" continental breakfast. Almost immediately, the attendees were off to discover what the members of the Technical Activities Committee brought to the convention with the first set of technical sessions. Our theme this fall, Masonry Repair, allowed for a variety of interesting presentations from durability considerations to successful coatings, strengthening, and grouting. With all the beautiful masonry construction in this midwestern city, St. Louis was the perfect place to showcase the experiences, case studies, and demonstrations provided by ICRI members from across the country.

Our administrative and technical committees meet throughout the convention. These committees

work hard to ensure that ICRI fulfills its mission to be the leading resource for education and information to improve the quality of repair, restoration, and protection of concrete and other structures. All committees focused on their contributions to ICRI's Long Range Plans. We continue to encourage all ICRI members to drop in to any committee meeting of interest to them.

Our Thursday Opening Luncheon and General Session is the perfect place to bring everyone up to date on ICRI activities. ICRI 2008 President Monica Rourke and Executive Director Kelly Page both took to the dais and presented the membership with information on where the association is heading and how much progress has been made to date in many areas of concern to the membership. Special guest Michael Tabassi, Chair of ICRI's Masonry Committee, gave members an update on the brand new masonry guideline, set for release in the next few months.

The Annual Awards Banquet is the most exciting element of the week. The occasion of our 16th

banquet was particularly exciting as we hit yet another record! Attendance continues to grow for our awards celebration as the number of entries and winners grows each year. Mark Nelson from Nelson Testing Laboratories, our emcee for the evening, is Chair of the Awards Committee. He thanked our panel of judges for their tireless efforts reviewing all the entries.

The Awards Banquet provides the opportunity to hear about the challenging work and exceptional achievements needed to be an award winner. Not only did we honor our 2008 Project of the Year, but eleven 2008 Awards of Excellence and 16 Awards of Merit were presented. In true international fashion, winners came from all over the U.S., as

well as Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, and the UK. A special thanks and congratulations to those ICRI award winners for their hard work, not only on the projects themselves, but on the high quality of all the entries we received.

St. Louis provided a central location for another successful ICRI convention. Thank you to all the attendees, exhibitors, presenters, speakers, and award winners for joining us. We hope to see them again, as well as many of you, at the ICRI 2009 Spring Convention in Minneapolis, MN, April 22-24, 2009. Mark your calendars and plan to join us then. If you've never been to an ICRI convention, make the most of your ICRI membership and get involved.



In true international fashion, this smiling group of ICRI Project Award Winners travelled all the way from Venezuela for the banquet



Project Award winner Mo Eshani shows off his company's 2008 Award of Excellence



Award winners (left) Chris Ball, Vector Corrosion Technologies; Stephen Davis, C-Probe Systems; and Jeffrey Wouters, Chiang, Patel & Yerby, show off their plaques



Terek Alkhrdaji (left) and Jay Thomas (right), two award winners from Structural Preservation Systems, stop for a photo after the banquet