AWCl makes headlines in Phoenix

For five days, the wall and ceiling industries were in the public eye

Mid-March in Phoenix, Arizona is not prime season. But for five days this March, the Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industries brought more than 1,500 people, a brace of outstanding speakers, and nightly (and daily) attention to the local television news, radio news, and newspapers.

Press attention focused on the convention helped AWCI members project the image of their industry to a large segment of the public they serve, while at the same time, those members enjoyed one of the most successful conventions, education programs and expositions in the history of AWCI.

The economic and political predictions of Dr. Marvin Cetron, a futurist who predicted the Iranian and energy crises years before anyone else, drew immediate attention from the local press. Likewise, there was a huge scramble for press credentials to cover the convention address of Gerald R. Ford, a presentation on the ERA by Phyllis Schlafly, a product liability session offered by Edward R. Barrett, II, and an asbestos removal discussion by Frank Neuwirth and Bill Mirick.

As heavy as the press coverage was, however, it touched on only a portion of the events of the 63rd annual convention programs. The convention opened Monday, March 16 with a full slate of major committee meetings, as well as a meeting of the AWCI Board of Directors. By the time it wound down Friday, March 21 with a final Board session, members had experienced almost non-stop educational, exhibit and social events in the balmy climate of Phoenix.

In all, the convention set several records during its run. It was the most highly-attended, highly-publicized event in AWCI history. It featured the largest exposition of manufacturer products in the 63-year history of the convention. And, it was preceded by one of the most successful educational programs ever to be staged by AWCI, a weekend short course on panelization that took more than 160 registrants into the classroom and the field to observe one of the hottest construction systems in the business today.

The convention has grown to be so large, it is no longer possible to totally summarize all of its events. But if it can be said that a picture is worth a thousand words, what follows on this and other pages are a few thousand words on the major highlights of the 63rd annual AWCI convention.
AWCI convention brings excitement to Phoenix

Ready for the President's Hall
Paul Stark, right, of U.S. Gypsum Company, presented outgoing AWCI President Robert F. Watkins with his official President’s portrait during the convention activities. The portrait has become a tradition for AWCI. It will eventually hang, with other portraits of AWCI Past Presidents, in the association’s new headquarters building at 25 K Street in Washington, D.C. Plans for the new offices include a display called “The Hall of Presidents.” A fund-raising campaign to defray the costs of renovating the new AWCI office space is underway at this time.

Baker celebrates silver anniversary
Joe M. Baker, Jr. took a new job 25 years ago. A salesman, Baker decided to try his hand at association management, an assignment he took largely because the salary was larger than his sales job’s and one he expected to last only for a short while. A quarter of a century later, Joe is still on the job, and during AWCI’s convention, several events called attention to his silver anniversary. The two major highlights were a party and toast put together by Joe’s friends within the industry, and the presentation of a silver tray commemorating Joe’s 25 years. Participating in the ceremonies were former President Gerald Ford and Cam Baker.

Top speakers
When you want to know something, it’s always best to go to the source. That was the theory behind obtaining expert speakers for each presentation field. The Ceco Corporation’s Bill Franchik can tell you all you want to know about the opportunities for doors, hardware and other profit centers, while Dennis (Gen. Patton) Hopper told short course registrants of the role panelization can play in the war on energy wastefulness.
Floyd tells all on computers . . .

Fails Management’s Floyd McCall gave AWCI contractors a presentation on the fine points of “Computers for Contractors.” Computer use is on the upswing in the construction business. The computer has become a valuable tool for bidding preparation, work schedules and phasing, identification of specific job costs, comparisons of actual expenditures versus estimates, transportation monitoring, inventory control, payroll and numerous other uses.

The ‘ins and outs’ of proper bonding

Bonding is a whole field no contractor can take for granted; the cost of bonding mistakes is simply too high. One of the major educational sessions presented to AWCI members as part of the technical program was a detailed ‘ins and outs’ analysis of avoiding costly bonding mistakes. Here, members follow the computations of presenter William (Wink) Ames, President of the Phoenix-based Corroon & Black-Miller & Ames Company.

A Happy Birthday to Association

The opening event in the expanded exhibit hall in Phoenix was a frontier social. During the festivities, AWCI took time out to join with the Gypsum Association on the occasion of its 50th birthday observance. Taking part in the festivities, which included the cut of a multi-tiered cake, were American Gypsum’s Ted Gayok, Three Rivers Gypsum’s Don Coffey, Grand Rapids Gypsum’s Jim Van Dyke, AWCI’s Bob Watkins, and The Gypsum Association’s Victor Abnee.
Exposition hall activities always lead to fellowship and the support of the industry by the manufacturers who depend on the industry for their livelihood. Although the convention is a staging area for new products and the writing of orders, the associate membership of AWCI often gives back much of what it receives from AWCI. Among exhibitors was International Fastape, Inc., which is marketing a single-step taping product.

Also enjoying the fellowship were Domtar’s Dick Masden, Walls and Ceilings Editor Bob Welch, and an unidentified visitor to the Domtar Gypsum booth.

A mixing of exhibitors included Joe and Joan Grady, Don and Helen Darling, and Howard Tiemann.

The Chicago Metallic booth was a conversation point for Mike Scott, Robert DeSmit, and Ed Thompson.

Honor roll: AWCI’s best in industry for 1979-80

Robert Florence of Topeka, Kansas
AWCI’s Annual Award of Appreciation and Recognition

Gordon C. Scott, Ceco Corporation
Outstanding Associate Member

Jack D. Dillard, Dallas, Texas
Outstanding Committee Chairman for 1978-79

Jack Weber, Denver, Colorado
Wayne W. Vaughn Award as Outstanding Drywall Apprentice

Thomas Urban, Denver, Colorado
Wayne W. Vaughn Award as Outstanding Drywall Apprentice

Charles W. Strawn, Austin, Texas
Honorary Lifetime Member

Robert Moosbrugger, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Honorary Life Member