There’s something unique about an industry convention. The 66th annual convention of AWCI held in April in Montreal, Canada, certainly was no exception to that rule.

You get to feel the pulse of the industry. The consensus: It’s picking up.

You get to see the newest technological developments offered by the industry. The consensus: New products and systems are coming on line at an increasingly faster rate.

You get to talk with fellow professionals and the future is a bit easier to see. The consensus: There’ll be a spate of price hikes in key products, but the industry will grow swiftly and steadily... and small computers will be a powerful aid.

There’s more that the 66th annual convention offered... much more. But AWCI proved again that the entire industry gets together at these conventions and that’s why they grow each year.

Jim Biddle, chief executive officer of The Madar Corporation, Buffalo, NY, who is President of AWCI, was the presiding officer at the Montreal convention. And from the moment he banged down the gavel at the Opening General Session—before a packed house—it was obvious that the nearly 1,200 contractors, manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, spouses and guests were intent on making the convention a successful affair.

The theme of the convention was “Passport to...” It was a passport, too. First there was an outstanding talk on freedom by former Russian Ambassador Arkady Shevenko, the highest ranking Soviet defector in history—who was so elated to meet...
and talk with the construction people that he stayed long after the meeting and chatted, giving his security the shakes.

Then there was a simply superb geo-political analysis of the world of energy and its history, impact and future given by Gulf Oil Company Vice President Ralph Lewis. His incredibly effective performance drew a standing ovation upon its completion.

Special Speakers . . .

Shevenko and Lewis were the general session speakers, but there were more highlights. Utah Senator Orin Hatch, the Republican conservative who took on the entire organized labor and liberal coalition in his recent re-election fight and won, was guest speaker at a WAC/PAC luncheon. Hatch is no beginner on the professional diplomat who couches his thoughts in gentle phrases.

That in short-haired situations he has what it takes.

Besides great, gifted speakers, the convention featured a full schedule of educational programs and seminars. Harry Carter, of Carter’s School of Estimating, spoke about Computerized estimating, while Neal L. Patterson took the mystery out of buying a microcomputer.

Don MacQueen, of the Gypsum Association, told of 101 valuable uses of gypsum board, and the Metal Lath/Steel Framing Association discussed the intricacies of steel framing backup for brick veneer.

Ronald Brady, chief executive officer for E.F. Brady Company, San Diego, spoke on the need and techniques of compensating good people, and Lawrence-Leiter’s Jim Morrison reviewed the new management approach of quality circles in construction.

Two special seminars were also presented. These dealt with residential contractor fundamentals by Irv Chasen of PROOF, and a special seminar for distributors and suppliers on warehousing and materials handling. Gerald Palmer, of Metro Supply, Washington, DC, handled the supplier seminar.

Spouse Program . . .

For spouses attending the AWCI convention, the agenda was likewise chock full of goodies. There were the usual tour arrangements, of course, but the activities were plentiful.

Marie Little, wife of the late Don Little, was named an “Honorary First Lady” by the AWCI Executive Committee and she was guest of honor at the Former First Ladies Tea, an annual event.

Other spouse activities included a fur and jewelry fashion show, a gem cutting session, a seminar on body language, and a Krazy Kard program where newcomers could meet and become acquainted with others in the association.

Combine all these special attractions with the standard business activities of the association and you get a strong idea that things went extremely well in Montreal. At the annual business meeting, the AWCI members approved of two resolutions among other business activities such as annual election of officers.

The industry’s top people were honored at the Awards Breakfast. EIMA (Exterior Insulation Manufacturers Association) and the industry’s association executives both held significant convention meetings.

The international flavor was strong with German AWCI member Karl-Otto Griep and his group of 55 friends and colleagues from the Knauf group, Germany was also represented by the Knauf group, and at least 9 other nations were represented.

Construction Dimensions/June 1983
Throughout the week, the exhibit hall was jammed with people. The seminars were full, and each event seemed to take on a more positive attendance. On the last night, an enthusiastic crowd jammed into the Hyatt Regency’s Hotel ballroom for the annual banquet and dance. Nearly a third of the convention attended the Great Adventures Auction dinner, held in behalf of the Wall and Ceiling Foundation when more than $45,000 was raised in the bidding wars.

Talk about a convention.

Try talking about AWCI’s 66th annual convention—and then, know that the 1984 convention in San Antonio has already sold some 102 booths. That’ll be one to talk about, too.

Rigips Group, Germany, Sends Contingent To AWCI Convention as Part of Study Tour

A contingent of German and European contractors, traveling with the Rigips Group, were on hand for an up-close look at AWCI in Montreal, Canada.

According to Karl-Otto Griep, who arranged and managed the tour, the visit marked the second time that Rigips Group contractors visited North America to learn first hand the development level of gypsum wallboard in this hemisphere.

“In Germany and other countries of Europe,” Karl explained, “we must develop building systems similar to those in the U.S. and Canada—light framing, gypsum board, ease of construction.

“Right now the European market is still largely influenced by the tradition of solid, heavy construction such as brick, mortar and plaster. The interesting thing is that in 1981 on our first trip, steel framing and gypsum board had not penetrated the single house residential market.

“Now,” Griep said, “we can see that the transition from wood to steel framing is underway.”

The German contractors hope to institute a new approach to home building in Europe, particularly in the one-and two-story housing market.

Two Jurisdictional-Type Resolutions Approved at AWCI Annual Meeting

A t AWCI’s annual business meeting, two vital resolutions—both aimed at the union sector of the industry—were overwhelmingly endorsed by the members in attendance.

The first resolution pinpointed the need for ending jurisdictional strife in the plastering and drywall finishing fields. It called on the unions representing these trades to begin merger talks.

The unions involved in these areas of work would be the Operative Plasterers, the Brotherhood of Painters, and the Bricklayers and Allied Trades.

The resolution emphasized the fact that AWCI had earlier played a prominent role in the affiliation by the Lathers with the Carpenters.

The second resolution pointed out the increasing jurisdictional disputes on exterior insulation work and once more identified AWCI’s policy of supporting the concept of contractor assignment.

A major element in the resolution instructed AWCI’s Board of Directors to develop a survey of the exterior insulation industry to determine just what the practices in the field are so far as assigning work is concerned and to then develop a strategy to put an end to jurisdictional disputes.
Sure, there’s plenty of entertainment and conviviality and good times at an AWCI convention.

But what marks the wall and ceiling industry annual meetings is the strong commitment to “I want to learn something new and better when I go to our industry’s convention.”

There was that—and more—at the AWCI convention.

There were nine full-content educational seminars, all designed for a close fit to the educational needs of a modern contractor—and each conducted by an undisputed industry expert. To top that menu, an entire morning was given over to contractors sharing their ideas in the series of “Dialogue With . . . ” sessions. These latter sessions were so attractive that AWCI General Counsel Mac Stokes jumped into the act and threw in a late seminar entitled “How I successfully . . . avoided staying out of court.”

Not only were the business and general sessions well attended, but the spouse programs played to larger audiences than ever before.

Accepted?
You better believe it. Every room was packed with interested contractors—and the special seminar on Sex and Intimacy, by psychiatrist Domenea C. Renshaw had an overflow audience for both sessions.

The general consensus about the educational offerings of the convention was that there was, truly, something for everyone.

If interests ran to technical matters about construction, a convention goer could have attended computerized estimating, with estimating school owner Harry Carter; steel framing backup/brick veneer, with architect Vaclav Kuchar, Inryco’s Jim Williams and contractor Glenn King; taking the mystery out of buying a microcomputer, with Neal L. Patterson; options on use of gypsum board, with the Gypsum Association’s Don MacQueen; quality circles, with consultant Jim Morrison; compensating good people, with contractor Ron Brady; a residential contractor seminar, with PROOF owner Irvin Chasen; materials handling with distributor Gerald Palmer, and competing in a tight labor market, with AWCI attorney Mac Stokes.

The special Success seminars where AWCI members discussed their successes included reducing insurance costs, with Don Larder; getting into the exterior insulation business, with Steve Watkins; starting a profit sharing plan, with Pat Trojanosky; increasing field productivity, with Gene Warren, and starting a mid-life career, with Beverly Thompson.

The 66th convention also featured one of the most substantive spouse educational programs in years. Spouses had the benefit of the usual activity and hospitality rooms, but seminars also highlighted body language, a fur and jewelry fashion show, a gem cutting session, a session on diet, behavior and body awareness, a session on entertaining with ease, a seminar on discovering your own personal color.

SAN ANTONIO
A WINNER, TOO

When AWCI travels next March to San Antonio for its 67th Annual Convention, optimism will be in a Texas-style saddle.

Judging from the reaction of AWCI members and exhibitors, the ride up the famous San Antonio river will be in step with “how sweet it is.”

In Montreal, exhibitors stamped to the sign-up table for booths in San Antonio. With more than 150 booths available, manufacturers snapped up a whopping pre-convention total of 102. That is a record.

Furthermore, contractors indicated that attendance at the convention will be slightly less than frenetic. Nearly everyone was in Montreal—and that included contractors from Canada, Germany, Switzerland, France, Sweden, and many other nations.

In San Antonio, AWCI will take over the Hyatt Hotel and St. Anthony’s Intercontinental Hotel. The exhibit hall will be in the San Antonio convention hall.

Dates for the 67th Annual AWCI convention are March 5-9, 1984.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings held sway in Montreal—and two events set records.

The Foundation of the Wall and Ceiling Industry conducted its annual auction to a filled ballroom and raised more than $45,000. Bidding was hot and hectic despite the fact that under Canadian customs laws, all of the donated auction items had to be returned by AWCI to the United States before they could be distributed to their owners.

WAC/PAC—the Wall and Ceiling Political Action Committee—also enjoyed a successful meeting, thanks to a personal visit from Senate Orrin Hatch, Utah Republican. WAC/PAC succeeded in raising $15,000.
AWCI Honors Its Best
Chicago’s Joe Feldner Takes Pinnacle Award at Annual Awards Breakfast

He’d carried home the industry’s top award for his boss’ father. Then he carried it home for the boss, too.

On Friday, April 22, he got to carry home his own top award—the Pinnacle Award—and there is, like the previous awards he’d carried, nothing higher.

The one doing all the carrying is Joe Feldner, Vice President of McNulty Brothers Company, of Chicago. Joe was named the second winner of the highly coveted Pinnacle Award, the top honor presented at the annual Man and His World Awards Breakfast held at the AWCI convention in Montreal.

The only previous winner is Jack Dillard, of Dallas, TX, who was named the winner last year. Feldner’s award—unlike the others at the award breakfast sponsored by Dryvit Systems—was kept secret until the awards ceremony.

In keeping with past years, the industry’s most “Outstanding” companies and individuals were honored at the special breakfast. They included:

John Wagner Associates, Walnut Creek, CA—Outstanding Associate Member;

James R. Wies, Wies Drywall & Construction Corporation, St. Louis, MO—Outstanding Regional Chairman;

Ben Hogancamp, Lynn Lassiter Plastering Company, Murray, KY—Outstanding Young Member;

Robert C. Knight, Executive Director of Rocky Mountain Association of Gypsum Drywall Contractors, Denver, CO—Outstanding Industry Employee;

Fred Treadway, W. Ralph Whisenhunt Contractor, Richmond, IN—Outstanding Committee Chairman;

Ernest Herzfeld, Special Sections, The Bronx, NY—“Unsung Hero” Award

Donald Mehrer, Seattle, WA—J.D. McNulty Award for outstanding research and development.

Frank Morsilli, chief executive officer, also announced that Hoyle Gilbert, of Knoxville, TN, has been made an honorary life member of AWCI.

Whittle Elected 1983-84 President
AWCI’s Upcoming Officers Elected in Mail Ballot; New Board Members Also Elected, Appointed

Robert L. Whittle, chief executive officer of Niehaus Construction Systems, of St. Louis, a firm with a 50-year member ribbon at wall and ceiling conventions, will assume the office of President of AWCI on July 1, 1983.

He succeeds Jim Biddle, of The Mader Corporation, whose one-year term is up this month.

Whittle, and other members of AWCI’s Executive Committee, were elected by mail ballot which had been sent to all members of the association prior to the convention.

Election to AWCI’s Executive Committee is tantamount to becoming association president ultimately. AWCI works on an “in the chairs” philosophy wherein each Executive Committee member automatically moves up. This provides a top leadership with experience and tenure in association matters, assuring a chief officer with service in each of the essential leadership positions.

In keeping with this tradition, W.C. Scott, President of W.C. Scott Company, Houston, TX, was elected Secretary. He will thus begin his climb up the AWCI ladder to President.

Other Executive Committee members elected for the coming year will be William A. Marek, Marek Brothers Company, Houston, 1st Vice President; Harry J. Vernetti, Mid-States Construction Dimensions/June 1983
Construction Systems, Rockford, IL, 2nd Vice President, and Jimmie U. Crane, F.L. Crane and Sons, Fulton, MS, Treasurer.

P. Kenneth Hampshire, Baltimore, MD chief executive officer of the John Hampshire Company, was elected Chairman of the Continuing Study Council. By virtue of this chairmanship, he will become an ex officio member of the AWCI Executive Committee for the coming year.

James E. Biddle remains on the executive committee in the function of Immediate Past President.

Board Members

In the same mail ballot, several new members to the AWCI Board of Directors were elected. These newly elected Board members include:

At Large, Contractor, C.A. LaFon, Columbus, OH
At Large, Associate, Paul Halsey, Topeka, KS (Adapa)

AWCI President-elect Robert L Whittle, of St. Louis, makes his first official talk to the association board of directors in Montreal. The membership earlier had elected him by mail ballot.

Northeast Conference, Henry Greenstein, Union, NJ; W. James Morrissey, Amherst, NH
Southeast Conference, Nelson Ring, Birmingham, AL
Southwest Conference, James R. Wies, St. Louis, MO

Greenstein has advised AWCI that he will be unable to accept the Board election. Consequently, Northeast Conference leaders in attendance at the convention selected Carmen Paterniti, of Metuchen, NJ, to fill the vacancy. Morrissey is the only one of the above group who was reelected.

In addition to the newly elected members of the Board; two other members were appointed to fill the vacancies. Regional officers in the Northwest Conference selected Philip Ramey, of Woodinville, WA, to take the seat of William Hawken who had resigned the position, and the Mid-Atlantic named Aaron Brown, of Cincinnati, to replace the Board seat of Stanley Thomas, of Pittsburgh, PA, who also resigned from the board.

Scenes From AWCI’s 66th Annual Convention and Exhibition in Montreal, Canada
Scenes From AWCI’s 66th Annual Convention and Exhibition in Montreal, Canada

... after a Canadian welcome...

... before a jam-packed ballroom...

... with a newcomers introduction...

... a Russian defector speaks about freedom...

... educational seminars were crowded...

... for talks on compensation...
and on labor and cash flow.

and on computerized estimating.

while the spouse programs.

were also well attended.

at special presentations.
More Scenes of the AWCI 66th Annual Convention in Montreal
... and answers to get ...

... including committee meetings ...

... and more meetings ...

... with a talk on energy ...

... a forum of Vice Presidents ...
More Scenes of the AWCI 66th Annual Convention in Montreal

... plus a First Ladies' luncheon ...

... while association execs meet ...

... and a visit from a famous Senator ...

... then the awards MC spoke ...

... also with a brave diplomat ...
before the best were honored

and the Pinnacle Award to Joe Feldner to join the industry elite

along with the outstanding
More Scenes of the AWCI 66th Annual Convention in Montreal

... while some spoke of success ...

... then came the auction ...

... in behalf of the Foundation ...
More Scenes of the AWCI 66th Annual Convention in Montreal

... who bid for the gifts ...

... and raised $45,000 ...

... before Board business ...

... gained everyone's attention ...

... on a number of matters ...
More Scenes of the AWCI 66th Annual Convention in Montreal

... with a newly elected president ...

... at the banquet, they arrived ...

... for the head table ...

... then the final banquet ...

... and the final waltz ...