Convention Wrap-Up

The 76th Annual Convention & Exposition of the Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industries—International was held April 1 through 4 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel and Civic Plaza in Phoenix, AZ. The convention, deemed a winner in all respects by those who attended, used as its theme, “Building New Horizons.”

From the opening general session to the final night dinner dance, the convention focused on AWCI’s past triumphs while helping participants prepare for a brighter future. Fine entertainment, moving tributes to award winners, enlightening speakers, a host of worthwhile educational seminars, and the world’s largest wall and ceiling exhibition all made the convention a memorable experience for all in attendance.

A variety of social events complemented the convention’s purpose, providing opportunities for valuable peer exchange in a relaxed setting.

Day One: Thursday, April 1

Educational sessions included “Gaining the Fair Advantage,” “OSHA—Who Are They and How to Protect Yourself,” “Americans with Disabilities Act—Good or Bad,” “Steel Framing—Problems & Solutions” and “Collections and Prompt Pay.” To top off the evening, convention attenders celebrated the grand opening of the exhibit hall with a ribbon cutting ceremony and welcome reception.

Day Two: Friday, April 2

New AWCI members and Convention First Timers were welcomed at a special VIP breakfast. Keynoters Monroe Porter and Mike Ragan spoke at the opening general session.

Exhibits opened and the drywall contest officially began.

In the afternoon, education sessions included “How to Train, Motivate and Retain Employees,” “Firestopping,” the panel discussion on “Partnering Between the General Contractor and the Subcontractor,” “Saving Money on Workers Comp,” and “Ceiling Restorations.”

That evening, some 150+ attended the 12th Annual Foundation Auction/Dinner. Auction Chairman Gabe Reitter and Auctioneer Jackie Coursin were assisted by spotter Mike Boyd in bringing the crowd to a fever pitch.

Proceeds from the event benefit the Foundation’s many valuable programs, including scholarships, technical publications, the Hampshire Memorial Research & Reference Library, and more. Donations from more than 40 companies, chapters and individuals made the event a success, along with the generous bids made by attendees.

Day Three: Saturday, April 3

Attendees were off to a great start with the “For Winners Only” Awards Breakfast, where motivational speaker Don Clark entertained and inspired, then award winners received their awards to

From Top to Bottom: Peter R. Spanos, Esq., James E. Biddle, W.A. “Buddy” Martin, and Lori Ann Olejniczak, Esq., lead “Partnering Between the General Contractor and the Subcontractor,” a lively panel discussion; Secretary Mike Chambers, 1st Vice President James Cassidy and President Bill Bell “take care of business” at the AWCI Board of Directors Meeting; 1992-93 President Bill Bell passes the gavel to incoming president Jim Cassidy at the annual meeting; a drywall contestant at work in the busy exhibit hall; convention social events provide opportunities for valuable peer exchange in a relaxed setting.
Day Four: Sunday, April 4
The Annual Membership Breakfast and Meeting was followed by the AWCI Board of Directors meetings where important business was conducted, led by President Bill Bell.

Next Year: On the Move to Las Vegas!
As 1993 Convention Chairman Joseph A. Feldner put it, in 1994 “our theme in Las Vegas will be ‘AWCI...On the Move!’” It will take an organization that’s on the move with fresh ideas, open communication, a spirit of cooperation and a sense of quality. The same values that have guided us in the past, support us in the present and will enable us to reach the future.

“It’s all part of our constant quest for excellence, our consistent pursuit of perfection, and our intention to rise above the ordinary, to build new horizons by exceeding our own expectations and finding the best within ourselves.”

rounds of enthusiastic applause. The excitement peaked when the Pinnacle Award Winner, a closely guarded secret, was announced in a “This is Your Life” type format. (Read more about Pinnacle Award Winner Max O. Jensen on pp. 34-37 of this issue.)

The exhibits opened, followed by more educational sessions: “Pitfalls of Growth,” “Shop Drawings,” “Mediation,” “Cover Your Assets,” and “Total Quality Management.”

The grand finale was The Farewell Reception and Gala Banquet/Dance.

Here Convention Chairman Joseph A. Feldner shared his view of the association’s future. “In order to reach our goal, we must have a free exchange of ideas and a strong sense of mutual understanding. With this kind of cooperation and communication, we can work effectively together.

“The end result will be a well-organized, ongoing means of bringing the best to our industry and to our association, building new horizons through the tools of our trade: quality, communication, cooperation and the exchange of ideas,” Feldner said.