

1993 TAPPI Engineering Conference program quality leads the way

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The 1993 Engineering Conference held at the Marriott Orlando World Center, Sept. 20–23, presented 34 technical sessions in an engineering career track format to 1167 attendees. Interspersed within the tracks were a multitude of committee and subcommittee meetings and a two-day Trade Fair.

Hot topics

The technical program quality continues to improve. In addition to the more than 140 technical presentations there were several roundtable discussions designed for audience participation and dealing with the hot topics of the moment.

The Maintenance Roundtable brought up safety issues and accident investigations. The Process Engineering Roundtable focused on new pulping and bleaching technologies, always a hot topic with environmental concerns. The product brightness loss impact of the changing technology was discussed but not resolved. This should remain a hot topic. The Engineering Man-

agement Committee presented a program on quality advancement in engineering and construction in their roundtable presented by Jacobs Engineering, a professional management improvement concern. The Total Quality Management (TQM) concept precipitated many questions from mill personnel in attendance. Training and hiring were the subjects of the Engineering in the '90s Roundtable. Excellent presentations by academe as well as engineering firms included the TQM aspects of hiring engineers in the 1990s. Many questions were posed by young interested engineers including "How should I plan my career/hiring track while still in college?" and "What qualifications would make me more hireable?"

Machine operation was highlighted by a roundtable on single-tier drying. Operation at mill sites—Champion Quinnesec and Union Camp Eastover—were described in detail by representatives Wesley R. Urban and Mark Harrison. Startup, operation, problems, and product quality were issues addressed in open, straightforward presentations and answers to questions. The learning curve can be harsh for both operator and supplier, but the bottom line of less dryer section breaks, combined with an improved dried product, indicate this arrangement is the future, as both presenters stated.

* Copies of the 1993 Engineering Conference Proceedings containing the technical presentations may be obtained from TAPPI PRESS via TAPPI's Service Line, 1-800-332-8686 (U.S.), 1-800-446-9431 (Canada), or 1-404-446-1400 (outside U.S. and Canada).

Charles B. Tibbitts (left) receives his check for the Engineering Division Technical Award from Beloit Corp. representative **Robert E. Page**, group vice president.



David L. Chanslor (left), vice president, Rust Engineering Company, presents **Charles E. Guzi** with the plaque for the Engineering Division Leadership and Service Award.



Conference Report

Best Paper of the 1992 Engineering Conference award winners **Terrance E. Conners** (left) and **James R. Burns** (right) display their plaques presented to them by TAPPI President **Ronald B. Estridge** (center).



Conference attendees enjoy learning about the Division's committees during the "Committee Row" reception in the exhibit hall.



Division and committee activities

The Division Council met during the conference to discuss many things, among them two concerns about the future of the conference. The number of mill representatives able to attend is a big concern for the Engineering Division Council. There is the understanding that cost prohibits the mill from sending employees. To address this concern the Council plans to have an entire program track devoted to information sharing of mill operations at the 1994 Engineering Conference. The Division is also exploring multiple booking arrangements in an effort to reduce hotel room costs. Growth is another issue of concern to the Division. When attendance restrictions occur, the audience tends to gray as younger engineers are more likely to target their attendance toward seminars and short courses. With all the committee volunteer work ongoing in industry-related problems and guidelines, a graying society tends to slow the work progress. The Division and its 12 committees will emphasize membership growth and its importance to furtherance of the programs our industry needs—safety, environmental, operations, service, quality—for the 1994 Engineering Conference.

The committee meetings reflected the Division's concerns nicely. In all of the committee meetings the concern for mill-generated material was addressed in keeping with the Division's desire to have a mill operations track in 1994. Much of the committees' time was spent organizing papers for the 1994 conference and working on their different committee assignments. All meetings attended were lively, complete with full-blown debate in some cases. It was definitely a case of committee work at its finest. The attendees were willing to work through whatever came up even if it meant a little controversy.

Awards

The Division presented several awards during the Awards Presentation and Plenary Session held Tuesday morning. Charles B. Tibbits was presented with the 1993 Engineering Division Technical Award, which included a US\$ 5000 honorarium endowed by Beloit Corp. The recipient of the 1993 Engineering Division Leadership and Service Award, which included a US\$ 1000 stipend funded this year by Rust International, was Charles E.

Guzi. For more information on Guzi and Tibbits please see this issue of *Tappi Journal* (p. 208–209). Tibbits also delivered the plenary lecture. The subject of the lecture was "The TAPPI Conference—The Source of Tomorrow's Solutions to Today's Engineering Problems." James R. Burns, Jeffrey D. Lindsay, and Terrance E. Conners were given the Best Paper of the 1992 Engineering Conference Award for the paper entitled "Dynamic measurements of stratified consolidation in a press nip." The paper was published by TAPPI PRESS in the *1992 Engineering Conference Proceedings* (p. 899) and by *Tappi Journal* in the August 1993 issue (p. 87). The award recipients gathered very early on Tuesday morning for pre-event photographs. They exhibited great energy and enthusiasm for the event even before their first cup of coffee.

Also presented at the breakfast was an award given by TAPPI for the Best Research Paper selected from all papers presented at TAPPI's conferences during that year. For 1992 that honor went to M. Cris Asensio and Jamal Seyed-Yagoobi for their paper entitled "Theoretical drying study of single-tier versus conventional two-tiered dryer configurations." The full paper can be found in the *1992 Engineering Conference Proceedings*, available from TAPPI PRESS, beginning on p. 371 and in *Tappi Journal*, October 1992, p. 203.

Other awards given at the conference included special Certificates of Appreciation presented at the 1993 Engineering Conference Officers' Reception and Dinner to the following outgoing chairmen: Paul R. Maguire, Engineering Management Committee; Jeffrey D. Lindsay, Fluid Mechanics Committee; Gene L. Kipps, Material Handling and Industrial Engineering Committee; John M. Kovacik, Steam and Power Committee; Larry E. Butts, Process Engineering Committee; Joseph A. Barsin, Energy Management Committee; and Robert R. Rounsley, Process Simulation Committee.

Network news

Networking occurred continuously throughout the conference as the attendance and interest in the technical sessions and committee meetings remained strong. Question-and-answer periods were lively, discussions continued after the sessions and meetings, and various informal meetings resulted when issues raised prompted

action. The Engineering Conference may be the largest TAPPI conference to promote the networking experience. Indeed, past surveys rate the conference high for networking potential. The break periods offered lively discussion with those of us in the area often commenting on the enthusiasm.

Trade Fair happenings

The Trade Fair was held Monday and Tuesday with over 60 exhibitors sharing their products and services. Monday night the traditional trade fair reception/ice breaker had a new twist called "Committee Row." Along "Committee Row" the Engineering Division committees displayed their books and projects and answered questions about their committees' activities. Very favorable comments were heard about this experiment from both committee representatives and inquiring potential members. It seemed to be a very successful way to get people into the exhibit hall and to break the ice among the attendees and gain new blood in the committees.

1994 Conference

The 1994 Engineering Conference will be held Sept. 19-22, 1994, at the San Francisco Marriott, San Francisco, CA. Anyone interested in presenting a paper at this meeting should contact: Andrew Garner, PAPRICAN, 3800 Wesbrook Mall, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6S 2L9, telephone: (604) 222-3200; fax: (604) 222-3211. For further information on the conference, please contact the Meetings Department at TAPPI headquarters: TAPPI, Technology Park/Atlanta, P.O. Box 105113, Atlanta, GA 30348, Phone: (404) 446-1400 ext. 245. 