

1996 NONWOVENS CONFERENCE AND TRADE FAIR

J. ROBERT WAGNER

*NONWOVENS CONFERENCE DELEGATES GRAPPLED WITH EMERGING
TECHNOLOGIES, COSTS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION, WHILE
NETWORKING IN BEAUTIFUL CHARLOTTE, NC.*

THE 1996 NONWOVENS CONFERENCE AND TRADE Fair, which was co-sponsored by the American Filtration Society (AFS), was held at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Charlotte, NC, on March 11-13. There were about 400 in attendance; and while most individuals were too busy to step outside the hotel to notice, the weather varied from sunny to overcast but yet mild in temperature.

Saturday and Sunday preceding the conference, a Nonwovens Filtration Short Course was held with 40 individuals in attendance. Holding the short course just before the conference permitted some people to maximize their travel budget by attending the short course and the conference for the same air fare.

OPENING SESSION

On Monday Division Chairman Norman B. Scheffel, after opening the conference with a few warm and inspiring remarks, introduced the keynote speaker, Karl M. Counts, technical director of the Herty Foundation. Counts described the different raw materials and processes for making nonwovens with an emphasis given to nonwovens made by the wet-lay process. Flat wire, rotary, and inclined machines were all mentioned. In particular, the advantages of the inclined wire machine with all of the high-performance fibers available and their resultant specific products were discussed.

G. Paul S. Kochar, the conference chairman, introduced TAPPI Vice President Dale R. Dill, who discussed the benefits of being a TAPPI member and the opportunities that it afforded to improve technically, network, and meet people. Dill's comment that TAPPI is not "They" but rather TAPPI is "Us" drove home the point that we as members of TAPPI determine the activities of our organization by being active and involved. As the TAPPI

president's representative, Dill recognized and presented awards to the various individuals for their efforts within the Nonwovens Division.

AWARDS

The Nonwovens Division Leadership and Service Award was presented to Peter D. Wallace, national sales manager of Borden, Inc. He has been an active member of TAPPI since 1980, presenting papers and working his way up to chairman of the Building Products Committee and also the Binders and Additives Committee. Presently, he is chairman of the VOC Subcommittee of the Building and Industrial Mat Committee.

The Nonwovens Division's most prestigious award, the Division Technical Award and Mark Hollingsworth Prize, was awarded to Harold W. Knudson. However, due to illness the award and prize of US\$ 1000 was accepted on Knudson's behalf by Franklin Fry of Hollingsworth & Vose Co. After initially serving as a research chemist for the Naval Research Laboratory, Knudson became H & V's director of research and later vice president of research. In the latter capacity, he was instrumental in developing high-efficiency filter media for military and civilian applications. He has been an active member in TAPPI since 1949 and is listed in *Who's Who in the East, American Men of Science, World Who's Who in Commerce and Industry, Chemical Who's Who, Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors and Executives, American Men and Women of Science, and Leaders in American Science*.

Certificates of Appreciation were presented to outgoing Division officers Amir Famili and David J. LeMaistre, as technical program co-chairman. Certificates of Appreciation for outgoing committee chairmen were presented to Robert C. Bell—Nonwovens Binders and



(L to R) Conference Chairman Paul Kochar, TAPPI Vice President Dale Dill, and Division Chairman Norman Scheffel



Keynote speaker Karl M. Counts



The Division Technical Award and Mark Hollingsworth Prize was awarded to Harold W. Knudson.

Additives Committee; Keh B. Dema—Filtration Media Committee; Michael P. McCarthy—Nonwovens Fibers Committee; and J. Robert Wagner—Product Characterization and Performance Committee. Certificates of Appreciation were also presented to T.M. Singh and Larry C. Wadsworth as co-chairmen of the Filtration Short Course.

The 1995 Nonwovens Conference Best Paper, as determined by a panel of judges, was awarded to M.D. Loewen and J. S. Baumgardner for their paper *Development of a nonwoven filter for separation of serum from whole blood for medical diagnostic applications*. Best Session Papers were awarded to: (1) Paul A. Klett; (2) Maureen Dever, Wayne T. Davis, Andrew Arage, David C. White, and Roberto S. Benson; (3) Jack Boyer; (4) Elizabeth A. Potts; (5) Frank J. Consoli; (6) Anthony C. Shucosky; (7) Stanley Rhodes; and (8) Charles T. Arkens, Robert D. Gleim, and Paul Nedwick.

TECHNICAL PROGRAM

The Technical Program consisted of triple concurrent technical sessions, where papers were presented on Monday through Wednesday, and a technology trade fair and reception during the evenings of Monday and Tues-

day. Counting the keynote presentation, there were a total of 50 technical papers presented during 11 sessions in addition to presentations at some committee meetings. Included was a tutorial on process technology and presentations on high-efficiency and ASHRAE filter media. Both dry- and wet-lay processes were discussed with special emphasis given to melt blowing, spunbonded, and SMS. Other related papers included electrically charged melt-blown composites for improved filtration efficiency and growth markets.

For wet laying, presentations included a test method for dispersion of wet-chop fiberglass and tensile properties of glass microfiber sheets. Other papers on fibers included feather fibers, cardable glass microfibers, improved fibers for hot-gas filtration, cellulosic fiber for specialty papers and nonwovens, cotton fibers with enhanced absorbency, and recycled paper.

There were many papers relating to binders. These included various binders and waterborne resins, formaldehyde-free binders for normal applications as well as high-temperature resistance, environmental friendly high-performance acrylic binders, fermentation-derived polymers, and rheology modifiers.

Papers relating to equipment and processing included sterilization of nonwovens using glow discharge plasma; point bonding; gauging on-line basis weight; hydroentangling; flow-through systems; product and process inconsistencies; calender selection; winding technology; odor control of disposable diaper products; care, handling, and safety as related to nonwovens; and use of tungsten carbide to improve die and wear resistance of parts.

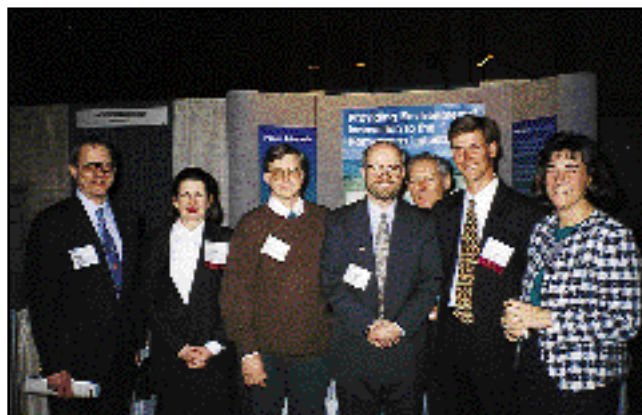
Technical papers involving some form of testing included digital instrumentation testing, absorbency testing, and effect of pore-size distribution on absorbency; use of an image analyzer to characterize nonwoven web



Peter D. Wallace (L) gladly accepted the Division's Service and Leadership Award from TAPPI Vice President Dale Dill.



(L to R) J. S. Baumgardner and M. D. Loewen received the Nonwovens Division's Best Paper award presented by TAPPI Vice President Dale Dill.



Smiling with relief. Those NOT chosen as technical paper judges (that is, with the exception of the one in the back).

structure; evaluation of hospital and clean-room gown linting; and the use of porometry in nonwoven pore analysis.

As usual, the various committee meetings continued to be an essential part of the Nonwovens Division business. It is here that future sessions, research, and business are planned for future short courses and conferences. As an interesting sideline, some of the committees had presentations or roundtable working sessions to stimulate learning and interest in committee work.

TRADE FAIR OBSERVATIONS

Of special interest was the trade fair and reception, which was held Monday and Tuesday evenings. Exhibitors numbered 28, which represented a significant increase over the last few years; 75% of them gave high ratings to the overall show. The reception presented the opportunity to network with exhibitors, clients, and friends. Incidentally, the hors d'oeuvres were exceptional.

1997 NONWOVENS CONFERENCE

Next year the Nonwovens Conference will be held in Memphis, TN, March 17-19. Begin making plans to be there, as we look forward to seeing you again next spring. **TJ**

Wagner is a professor at the Philadelphia College of Textiles and Science in Philadelphia, PA, and TAPPI JOURNAL technical editor for the Nonwovens Division. He is also the Division's newsletter editor.

The 1996 Nonwovens Conference Proceedings are available from TAPPI PRESS by dialing +1 800 332-8686 (U.S.), +1 800 446-9431 (Canada), or +1 770 446-1400. 347 pp., 8-1/2 in. by 11 in., soft cover; Order code: 01051396; ISBN 0-89852-658-2; List price: US\$ 94, TAPPI Member price: US\$ 63, Plus shipping and handling.