

SCENES FROM HOUSTON— THE ICRI 2011 SPRING CONVENTION

BY DALE REGNIER

ICRI's 2011 Spring Convention was held deep in the heart of Texas—Houston, TX, to be exact, and ICRI members and guests were welcomed with open arms and in true Texas style. Thorough committee work, thought-provoking technical sessions, enthusiastic exhibitors, and our annual Recognition Luncheon were all a big part of our expanded 3-day event, held March 16-18 at the Westin Galleria Hotel. Both the Houston and North Texas Chapters joined forces to welcome 233 members and guests, proving that ICRI's strength and relevance are still going strong in the industry.

The convention began on Wednesday morning with our "Visit the Exhibits" continental breakfast, where our exhibitors showed off the newest products and services for the morning crowd. The theme of this convention, "NDE and Structural Health Monitoring," allowed members of the Technical Activities Committee to recruit a variety of concrete repair professionals to address issues such as corrosion assessment, service-life modeling,



evaluation, and a number of other nondestructive and monitoring issues. With the expanded schedule, attendees were able to attend the technical presentations on the first day with no other scheduled meetings competing with the presentations.



The golf coordinator for the Houston Chapter, Keith Knobloch (left), handing out prizes to two BASF golfers



During each convention, ICRI plays host to students from the Concrete Industry Management (CIM) program. The nationwide program includes professors such as (second from left) Mohamed Mahgoub, PhD, PE, from the New Jersey Institute of Technology



There were 12 technical sessions in all, starting Wednesday morning and continuing all day Thursday



The Welcome Reception is the official kick-off event of any ICRI convention

After that, the Houston Chapter, one of our local hosts, whisked a group of golfers off to an outing at the Wildcat Golf Club. Even though our President was certain only Tiger Woods, Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, and Gary Player could score like the winners, it was a beautiful afternoon on the course and everyone had fun (or fell out of the cart trying). That evening, all attendees gathered in the Exhibit Area for the official Welcome Reception. Friends had the opportunity to mingle and chat with each other and the exhibitors before heading off to dinner.

Much of what ICRI does as an industry association comes from the hard work of our technical committees. We broaden our knowledge base and expand the industry by working together in these committees. All our Technical Guidelines and important documents come out of the collaboration of our members in these committees. If you want to know what is happening at any time with any of our committees, you are encouraged to drop by the Technical Committee page of the ICRI Web site to view a description of what is being worked on right now.

The highlight of the Spring Convention is the annual Recognition Luncheon. In addition to recognizing the contribution of ICRI's supporting members and Past Presidents, ICRI honored its newest Fellows: Randy Beard, Don Caple, and Katherine Klosowski-Blatz. Dale Regnier handed

out the 2010 Chapter Awards, honoring the great work of ICRI's chapters. Included was the prestigious Chapter of the Year Award, given to the Baltimore-Washington Chapter, and the Most Improved Chapter, awarded this year to the Arizona Chapter. Current ICRI President Don Ford took to the stage and introduced the 2011 Officers and Board of Directors. The rest of the afternoon included more committee meetings and the last of the technical presentations.



David Rodler (left) and Rick Edelson (right) take time from networking to let us know they are enjoying the event



Guests (from left to right) Aamer Syed, Jim Hadley, Tim Gillespie, and Graeme Jones joined 229 others for a successful spring event in Houston



Pausing to say hello are (left to right) Oscar Valenzuela, Heidi Braverman, Joe Kibelbek, and Christopher Perego



The Welcome Reception is often every attendee's first opportunity to see what the exhibitors have to offer while they grab a quick snack



ICRI's newest Fellows (from left to right): Randy Beard, Katherine Klosowski-Blatz, and Don Caple



The beautiful, historic Magnolia Ballroom in downtown Houston filled with Spring Convention attendees



Crawfish!



Two of the founding members of the North Texas Chapter, Scott Olson (left) and John Striednig (right)



When in Texas, the two-step is a requirement



ICRI President Don Ford and his wife, Linda



From left to right: George Reedy, Alex Somohano, and Scott Harrison enjoying Texas hospitality



Sean Leich (center) and guest with Bud Earley (right) from MAPEI Corporation



From left to right: Bill Light with Tom Ouska and Michael Matthews



From left to right: Barb Sample, Todd Spindler, and Jim Hadley

Thursday's busy schedule concluded with an evening at the historic Magnolia Ballroom in downtown Houston. The North Texas Chapter joined the Houston Chapter to host what turned out to be our largest chapter outing ever! A few Stetsons, some shined-up boots, some music to two-step to, and a Cajun southern crawfish boil and BBQ all added up to a fun-filled evening and belly-filling feast. The open bar didn't seem to go unnoticed either.

The convention closed Friday afternoon, following the final "Visit the Exhibits" continental breakfast and a full day devoted to committee meetings. As you can see, ICRI conventions are packed full of interesting activities and entertaining networking opportunities. We hope to see everyone at the ICRI 2011 Fall Convention in Cincinnati, OH. We'll be at the Westin Cincinnati from October 12-14, 2011. The theme for this event is "Water & Wastewater Treatment Plant Repairs" and you don't want to miss the 2011 Project Awards Banquet and celebration. We are getting things done at ICRI and would like to extend an invitation for you to get involved. Make the most of your membership and come to a convention.