

Minnesota Regional Railroad Association



By Sue Bombeck
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As a member of the Minnesota Regional Railroad Association (MRRRA), TCW participates in the Midwest Regional & Shortline Railroad Annual Conference. Every year TCW selects several employees from various departments to represent TCW at this conference. This year, the following employees were selected to attend the 2006 conference held in Alexandria,

Minnesota: **Eric Handt** (Transportation Specialist), **Bob Wagner** (Track Inspector – MOW), **Shauna Gruber** (Staff Accountant), **Jeff Shurtleff** (Operations Coordinator) and **Tim Jeske** (Dir. Mechanical and Maintenance). TCW also has employees that attend the conference on an annual basis – **Bill Drusch** (CEO), **Mark Wegner** (Executive VP/COO), **Lloyd Host** (VP Marketing and Sales), **Jack Anderson** (Chief Mechanical Officer), **Vic Sargent** (Special Guest of TCW), **Tina Lueth** (Administrative Assistant) and myself.

The MRRRA Conference kicked off on Sunday July 16th with a best ball golf scramble at the Alexandria Golf Club. Following the golf outing, attendees enjoyed a lakeside reception and barbeque on the lake front lawn at the Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center. We all enjoyed a wonderful feast and entertainment performed by Larry O. The highlight of the entertainment was a skit performed by Bill Drusch, Vic Sargent and Cindy Jamieson. If we had known we have such talent in our organization, we may have requested performances at our company functions!!

Monday July 17th was a day filled with learning opportunities which included a warm welcome from Mayor Dan Ness, of Alexandria. We also heard from John Ficker regarding “Freight & the Future of America”. He applauded Shortlines for their approach in asking what we can do, rather than saying what we can do”. We heard from a panel of speakers regarding Department of Transportation in other areas of the country and what they are doing to “Build a Better Railroad Program”. Then we had the opportunity to participate in 3 breakout sessions (The Future Railroad Workforce, Intermodal Options for Out-State MN and Keeping Track Through Technology (RMI)) followed by “Building a Better MRSI Program”. After a day of seminars, attendees headed to Carlos Creek Winery for a tour, reception, dinner and of course wine tasting. Another wonderful experience was shared by all at the winery. Upon returning to the Arrowwood Resort, some of us were privileged enough to experience enter-



tainment by Shauna and Matt Gruber in the lounge. Thanks for sharing your talents with all of us; it appeared that a good time was had by all.

Tuesday July 18th was a half-day seminar filled with information regarding the latest boom in MN Ethanol Economics. We heard from a panel which included our own Mark Wegner on where ethanol stands to date and the preparation and foundations needed to build and maintain the success of an ethanol plant. In addition to this topic, we also received MNDot and legislative updates.

TCW would like to thank John Apitz and Patrick Murray from Messerli & Kramer, P.A. for heading the annual MRRRA conference, a job well done to both of you!