



Slingmakers

Issue No. 102

Fall 2004

Industrial Splicing and Slings, L.L.C.



Letter From The President

The year 2004 is already half over and you have one more opportunity this year to attend one of our general meetings. Our fall meeting this year will be held October 17th - 20th, 2004 at the Westin Horton Plaza Hotel in San Diego, California. If you were unable to attend our spring meeting in Savannah, Georgia, you missed a very informative business program along with the beautiful sites of a historical southern city. We are planning to have another great program in San Diego, for more details go to the AWRP Website.



One of the most important responsibilities of being a member of AWRP is volunteering your time and expertise as a Board Member or an Officer of the Association. Shortly, you will receive a ballot of this year's nominees for the Board of Directors. Please give each nominee your consideration and take the time to vote, your vote counts. We would like to thank each Board Nominee for their willingness to run for office. Member volunteerism is the life blood of our organization and we cannot be successful without it.

The Technical Committee, chaired by Don Pellow recently held a meeting in Kansas City, Missouri to address ongoing programs and set the direction for the new committee work. The new ASME B30.9 sling safety standard has been updated and is being released. Shortly we should have this updated B30.9 document available for our regular members.

Vice President Bob Cushman, of Cascade Rigging, at our July board meeting, masterfully presented the long range plan to the Board of Directors and stated that

with the Executive Director transition period now behind us, we need to move forward and address the current needs of our members. The Association's long range plan focuses on new membership growth, increased communications and controlling operating expenses by more efficiently utilizing our resources.

As part of the Executive Director transition plan we retained Janz & Knight CPA firm to perform an audit of the AWRP financial reporting procedures and controls. For the year ending December 31, 2003, AWRP has been given a clean bill of health in the independent auditors report. Any AWRP member having any questions or concerns about the independent audit report, please contact the AWRP office.

Our industry has been severely impacted by the poor economy over the last two years but we are now starting to see some improvement in many segments of our business. The need for our members to understand the impact of changes in our economy is very important. To that end, we have commissioned Nancy Sidhu, an economist to write current economic articles in Slingmakers magazine.

The Board of Directors and Officers of AWRP had an opportunity in July to visit the new AWRP office in Walled Lake, Michigan. Jeff Gilbert our Executive Director has done an excellent job in setting up this professional business office for our Association. On behalf of the Board of Directors and Officers, I would like to extend a big Thank You to Jeff Gilbert, his family and his staff for the gracious and warm hospitality shown to us at our board meeting.

Mark Metz
AWRP President

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The Difference is **BRIDON** **AMERICAN**

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BRIDON strives to 'set the standard' on both its domestic market and overseas. The achievement of such goals becomes apparent when many OEM's specify and recommend BRIDON products, because *'The Difference is BRIDON.'*

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SLEEVE: Wire rope passed through sleeve.



SLEEVE & PLUG: Strands fanned out to insert plug.



SLEEVE, PLUG & SOCKET: Plug driven in and strands closed to apply socket.



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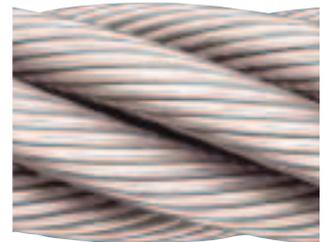
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Nominees for the Board of Directors

Alex Edwards

Paducah Rigging, Inc. • Paducah, KY

Alex graduated with honors from Emory University in 1994 with two degrees, a Bachelors in Business Administration and a Bachelors in Political Science. He went on to attain his J.D. from the University of Kentucky College of Law in 1997 and before he could practice law was offered by his father an opportunity “he couldn’t refuse.” He has been with Paducah Rigging for eight years as Vice-President and General Counsel. He was first introduced to AWRF in 1992 when he was granted one of the first four AWRF scholarships. He has since served on the Scholarship Committee twice as a member of AWRF. He believes in the value of AWRF as a tool all industry players can utilize and benefit from – technically, legally, politically, and socially.



Andrew Hall

Southern Wire Corp, Olive Branch, MS

Andrew Hall is Thirty-Four years old, married (Kiki) and has two children (Anne Marie 3-1/2 and Gracie 2-1/2) and is expecting a new edition in September. He has been with Southern Wire Corp., his Father’s business, since 1985. Andrew’s first few years there were spent in the warehouse where he pulled inventory, ran rope and made slings. During his University years he worked part time in Shipping/Receiving and Customer Service. Upon graduating from the University of Memphis in 1995 with his degree in International Business, Andrew joined the company full time as a Sales Representative. Since then he has earned promotions to Sales Manager, Vice President of Sales and today serves as the Vice President of Sales & Operations. If elected, Andrew will bring a fresh attitude and unique perspective to the board and AWRF as a whole.



David Johnston

Dixie Industries • Chattanooga, TN

David has been a member of AWRF for the last 27 years and has been attending meetings for almost that long. For the past 5 years he has been a working member of the AWRF Technical committee and the chairman of the sub-committee on Load Securement for AWRF. He is also a member of WSTDA and sits on their Tie-down technical committee; He is also a member of CVSA and SC&RA. David is employed by Columbus McKinnon Corp. as a product Manager for the Forge Group.



Jeff Klibert

Lift-All Company, Inc. • Landisville, PA

Graduate of Texas A&M with a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Worked at Lift- All since 1976.

Served as a member of the ASME B30 committee for 15 years and now serves as an honorary member.

Served on the AWRF Technical Committee during its formative years.

I believe Lift-All was one of the original members of AWRF.

President of Lift-All since 1989.



Cindy Morley

Russel Metals • Hamilton Ontario, Canada

Cindy Morley has 17 years experience in the rigging industry. She manages the Chain Division of Russel Metals, which specializes in welded assemblies of all types. She has been an AWRF member for 8 years and attends every meeting. She was nominated by President Jim Fletcher and approved by the board to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Ed Hamilton and has served for one year.



Teresa McGee

President-CEO for Newell Davis Company, Inc. Wilmington, NC.

The Indusco Group (Baltimore, MD) employed her for 20 years. During her employment with them, she enjoyed serving as Vice President/General Manager in Wilmington, Board of Directors (Baltimore) and Managing Director (Jacksonville, FL). After this much experience in the wire rope and rigging industry, it was a natural choice for her and her husband to purchase Newell Davis Company, Inc. on June 6, 2003. She immediately recognized the importance of becoming a member of AWRF and joined the association in July 2003. She attends meetings regularly and Jim Fletcher has nominated her to serve on the BOD for AWRF. For 17 years, she has volunteered her services to the industry in several capacities including Convention Chairman for such national groups as The Steel Erectors Association of America.



Clarence N. Muzechka

Titan Supply Inc. • Edmonton, AB Canada

President & C.O.O.

Titan Supply Inc. Edmonton, AB., Canada

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Calgary, Red Deer, Grande Prairie

Age: 53

Married to Janet, 2 daughters

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Active member of many local associations, and AWRF member for 9 years.



Dennis A. St. Germain, JR

I & I Sling, Inc. • Aston, PA

Dennis A. St. Germain is 43 years old and has been working in the sling industry since he was a teen. He graduated from Penn State University and began working full time at I&I Sling Inc. He is currently a Vice President with responsibility for the Southern facilities of the company. Dennis has hands on knowledge of sling fabrication including wire rope, chain, and synthetics. He attended his first AWRF convention in 1982 in Kansas City and has been a consistent contributor and supporter of AWRF.



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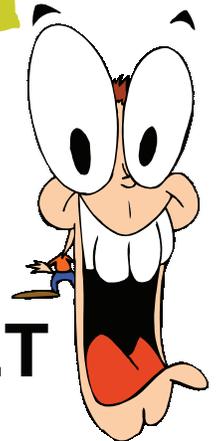
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INDUSTRY TECHNICAL INFORMATION



David Richards
Technical Director

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Phone & Fax: 281.491.2238
Email: drichards@ropecord.com

CORDAGE INSTITUTE UPDATE

The Cordage Institute Technical Committee is presently working on several projects. Each project has a sub-committee chairman and task group.

5 Year Review sub-committee; it is the policy to review each Standard every 5 years. There are several standards up for the 5 year review.

High Strength Fiber Rope sub-committee; last August it was determined that a Sling sub-committee was needed to develop Standards for High Strength Fiber Rope and Roundslings. Dave Richards is the sub-committee chair; this was divided up in 3 sections. Mr. Hank McKenna fiber rope section, Mr. Dennis St.Germain roundslings section, and Mr. Mel St.John testing section. The main purpose of this committee is write a standard on the fabrication of slings that will meet the requirements of ASME B30.9 Chapter 4. The goal is to ensure all rigging shops and manufacturers are able to fabricate fiber rope slings to the same degree of professionalism that wire rope, web, chain, mesh, and roundslings have today.

Reduced Risk Recoil Rope Test Standard sub-committee; this group is tasked with writing a standard to test fiber rope that is made to break in a manner that reduces the chance of snap-back. This standard will replace the method now used by the U.S. Navy.

Marine Grade Nylon Yarn sub-committee; this is to establish a standard requirement to verify yarns have a special overlay that will enhance the performance of the rope in a marine environment.

After the various sub-committees draft the standard it is then sent for an internal ballot of the members. Each member company will then vote with; affirm, affirm with comments, negative, (must be accompanied with comments) or abstain. A 40% return is required for a valid ballot. This procedure takes place until all comments and negative comments are resolved. On some of the standards an external ballot is required; this goes to all known producers that have an interest.

The Technical Committee meets 4 times a year, the next meeting is Aug. 8 & 9, at the Embassy Suites Hotel, located near the Atlanta airport. All of our meetings are open to the public without charge, except the annual meeting. Any one interested in becoming a member is encouraged to contact Pete Lance, Association Headquarters.

Dave Richards
Technical Director

Additional Technical Information on Pg 23

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Crane Blocks
Overhaul Balls
Construction Blocks

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GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS REPORT

By
J. Barry Epperson,
General Counsel and Chairman,
Government Affairs Committee



As fall elections approach in the United States, your Government Affairs Committee (GAC) is pleased to report another season of moderate progress on both the legislative and regulatory fronts. Working independently and with companion business coalitions throughout the spring and summer, AWRP has been instrumental in fostering the advancement of several initiatives vital to the health of the lifting, rigging and load securement industry. Because things move slowly in Washington, D.C. even with a business-friendly Congress and Administration, outright victories are few and far between. Insofar as federal legislation is concerned, the U.S. Senate has the mechanism to derail almost any undertaking due to the requirement of a supermajority of sixty votes to invoke cloture and cut off debate, the anomaly known as the filibuster. Of course, obstructionist tactics can work both ways, and in years when our political agenda is aimed toward the frustration of unfriendly programs, we often find ourselves looking to the Senate as a last resort. Set forth below are the current legislative and regulatory issues confronting AWRP along with our positions and status reports.

Federal Civil Justice Reform

AWRP members live and work in fear of frivolous and unfounded product liability lawsuits. The problem is critical for manufacturers and fabricators who should be investing in research and development, but instead, are forced to budget excessive amounts of money for legal costs. In this litigious climate, business owners must consider liability as an aspect of every decision. Businesses can be held liable for injuries which are not in any way connected with the quality or reliability of their products.

By the summer of 2004 three legislative propositions had emerged from a multiplicity of bills introduced in the House of Representatives. While none addressed the issue of general products liability, each would have contributed to the general reformation of a much-abused tort system by insuring uniformity among the states and limiting the opportunities for abuse.

Medical Malpractice Reform

Throughout the 108th Congress, the Senate leadership has advocated limitations on medical malpractice awards by introducing a series of remedial bills related to specific medical specialties. The strategy of Majority Leader Frist, a physician himself, has been to force repeated votes upon the opposition to drive home the point that health care would be jeopardized in some regions of the country due to an exodus of qualified health care providers. The last attempt at reform which would have limited non-economic damages against obstetricians and gynecologists failed on February 24, when proponents of the bill were unable to muster the sixty votes necessary to terminate debate.

Class Action Reform

Throughout the first half of 2004, the conventional wisdom within the tort reform community was that S. 2062, a bill which would have shifted more class action suits to federal court, was on track to becoming law. However, on July 8, the

bill was filibustered to defeat, lacking 14 votes for cloture. Even had the Senate passed the bill, House prospects were uncertain due to a Senate compromise which stripped away several provisions including one which would have barred additional "bounty payments" to certain plaintiffs.

Asbestos Litigation Reform

Although the effort to remove asbestos cases from the court system to a no-fault trust fund was considered dead for this legislative session, the matter is back on the negotiating table at the request of Senator Daschle. The proposed procedure for payment of asbestos exposure claims from the trust fund would take considerable pressure off of the U.S. tort system. Accordingly, it is a step forward to have both sides of the aisle legitimately interested in compromising the issue of the size of the fund.

State Tort Reform

The following states have adopted tort reform packages in 2004: Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Mississippi (major), Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia and Washington. For details contact the author.

Ergonomics

The U.S. Secretary of Labor, Elaine L. Chao, announced the parameters of a new voluntary ergonomics rule shortly after taking office with the current Administration. If the standard is to be fair to workers and employers alike, the latter must have the flexibility in determining the most cost-effective methods of identifying and treating employees with work related cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs). We must insist upon scientifically generated cause and effect relationships. By adopting a rule requiring the treatment of any possible CTD, a false standard of cause would be established in tort actions. Moreover, by requiring that employers use unproven technologies and practices, having no consensus in the medical community, the incidence of CTDs is likely to increase leaving OSHA inspectors with opportunities to issue erroneous, subjective citations. Your GAC has maintained its vigil to ensure that the new standard remains voluntary. Acceptance must be driven by ideas which employers will logically adopt. Furthermore, any new rule must apply to the industry for which it was devised. "A one size fits all" programmatic approach should be out of the question. As a member of the National Coalition on Ergonomics, AWRP has joined with hundreds of business and industrial groups to assure a fair and balanced application of the new standard.

Sling Safety Standard

Companies in the lifting, rigging and load securement industry typically use slings made of wire rope, chain or synthetic materials to accomplish their mission. The current OSHA standard, nearly thirty years old, is considered by many in the industry to be dangerously outmoded, especially when compared to the new ASME B30.9 standard. OSHA inspectors continue to issue citations to companies for failure to meet their obsolete standard even though they meet the requirements of the B30.9 standard. Although AWRP has made repeated requests to the Department of Labor to issue an updated standard, they have refused to do so. The GAC continues to work closely with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Small Business Administration, the Office of Management and Budget and members of Congress to promote a new government standard consistent with the ASME rule. As the industry leader in this initiative, the GAC of AWRP suggests with cautious optimism that this matter may be on the OSHA agenda in the near future.

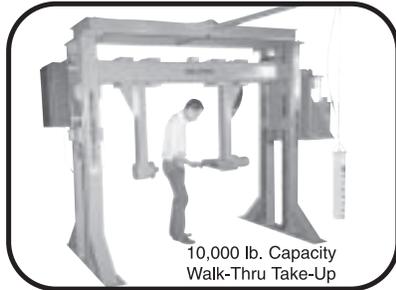
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REEL & COIL HANDLING SOLUTIONS

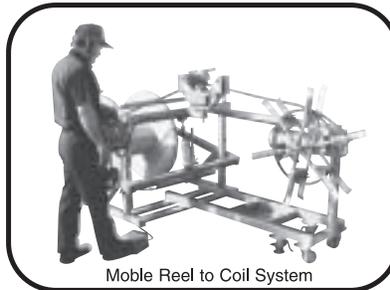
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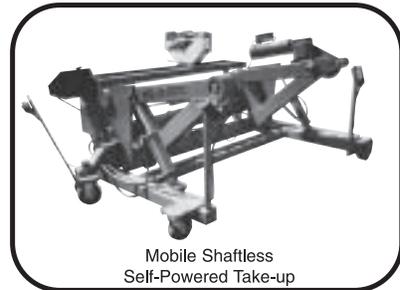
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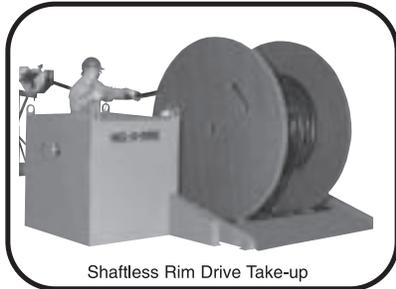
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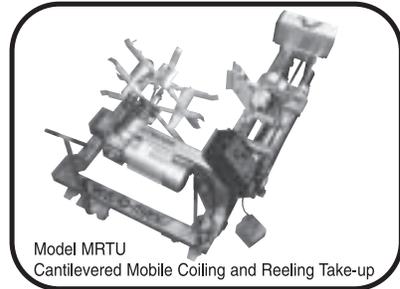
Mobile Shaftless
Self-Powered Take-up



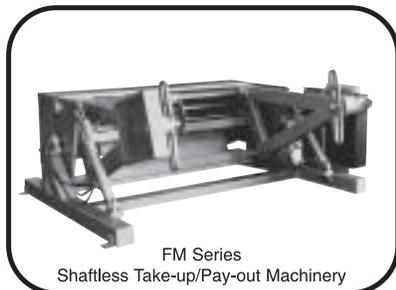
Shaftless Rim Drive Take-up



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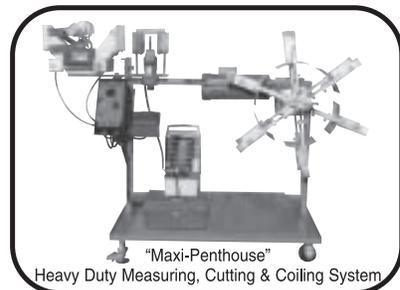
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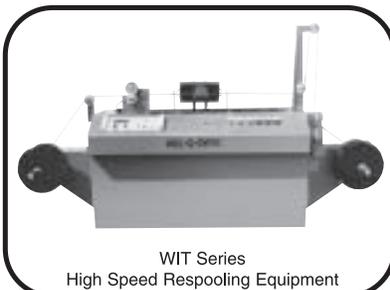
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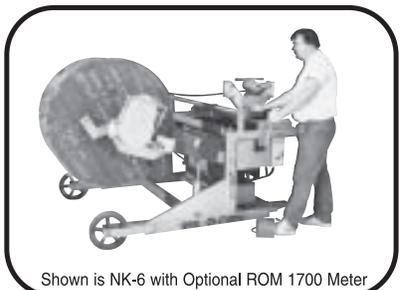
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GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS REPORT

Continued from pg11

Crane and Derrick Negotiated Rulemaking Committee (CDAC)

This July, CDAC reached consensus on language for a revised crane and derrick standard for the construction industry. A wide range of equipment developed over the past 30 years is addressed. The Committee's final draft will be submitted to the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health for continuation of the rule making process. Key provisions of the proposed standard are as follows:

- The hazards of assembly and disassembly must be addressed by qualified personnel.
- Stable ground conditions must be achieved in order to avoid tip-overs.
- To prevent electrocution, employers must choose from a list of approved options to maintain safe distances from power sources.
- Crane operators must be certified by nationally recognized accrediting agencies or approved employer programs.
- Signal persons must meet specified qualification requirements.
- New rules for the following are established: safety devices, operational aids, signals, inspections, wire rope, design, testing, fall protection, equipment modifications, crushing and overhead hazards.

North American Industrial Code (NAIC)

In October of 2003 the GAC submitted a formal proposal to the United States Bureau of Census recommending the addition of a new product code for the lifting, rigging and load securement industry. The objective is to achieve a codification of our industry as an integrated entity in order to stimulate recognition, status and statistical data relevant to the business of AWRF members. For a copy of the AWRF proposal contact the author.

Conclusion

During the second session of the 108th Congress, your Government Affairs Committee has allocated its time and resources between information gathering, monitoring and reporting. In addition we have devoted considerable effort to the advocacy of the Association's government relations agenda. To accomplish the mission of AWRF, we are constantly fine tuning our priorities in light of the war on terrorism and the ensuing national elections. For the remainder of this Congress, the GAC will continue to pursue regulatory, judicial and legislative reforms of significance to this industry. By exercising our right of participation in the political process, AWRF will continue to transport an important influence upon those entities which create and regulate the marketplace where our members conduct their business.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

LIFTTEX

corporation

Committee Update – August 6, 2004



To: AWRF Membership

The Committee is ready to release the winners of the 2004 Scholarship Program. First I would like to give the AWRF members a brief overview of how the program is conducted. The AWRF Scholarship Committee sends out to every AWRF member in North America an announcement of the program in April, along with a sample application, to be filled out and sent back to the AWRF Headquarters. The deadline for this year's applications was June 11th. This year we received eighty applications a record number for the program. As the AWRF office receives the applications they issue a number to the application and the cover sheet with the personal information on the applicant removed and kept at the office. This is done so when the Scholarship Committee receives the applications they have no idea of who or where the applicants are from. Since we no longer issue scholarships to certain regions the committee received all eighty applications at one time, with a number on them for identification. The applications were shuffled and each committee member received sixteen applications to look at and determine one winner. The following people are on the committee and were involved, along with myself, in deciding the recipients for this year's awards.

Bob Downs • C.C. Sharrow Company, St. Paul, MN

John Rauh • Cableworks, Putnam, CT

Mike Gelskey • Lift-It Manufacturing, Corona, CA

Ted Blanton • North American Crane Bureau Group, Altamonte Springs, FL

This year the AWRF is able to give away one additional scholarship for \$2,000.00 due to the generosity of a small group of people within the AWRF. They like to call themselves the "Sixteen Guys" and I have heard they all enjoy the great sport of golf. They have named this one scholarship the "Larry Boekel Memorial Scholarship". Thank you to all of you for your kind contributions to the program.

Speaking for myself it was very difficult in deciding on only one applicant for an award. There were so many deserving applicants that I wish we could have awarded more scholarships. In the end each one of the committee members were responsible for recommending only one recipient.

It is with great pleasure that the committee announces the 2004 AWRF Scholarship winners. The following people have been chosen by your Scholarship Committee to each receive a \$2,000.00 scholarship. We wish them the best of luck with their future educational endeavors.

Jennifer Allison Slusher – Fort Wayne, Indiana

Sponsor – American Wire Rope & Sling

Melody Lynn Hall – Harrison, Ohio • Sponsor – F & M Mafco, Inc.

Brian David Moran – Tulsa, Oklahoma

Sponsor – Gunnebo-Johnson Corp.

Felisha Joyce Johnson – Harrison, Ohio • Sponsor – F & M Mafco, Inc.

Ellen Marie Wolke – Harrison, Ohio • Sponsor – F & M Mafco, Inc.

Please note that Jennifer Allison Slusher was the first recipient of the Larry Boekel Memorial Scholarship, which was created by the "Sixteen Guys" a dedicated group of AWRF members and golfers.

In conclusion I would like to thank all the individuals and companies for their contributions to the Scholarship Fund. This program is one the best reasons for belonging to the AWRF.

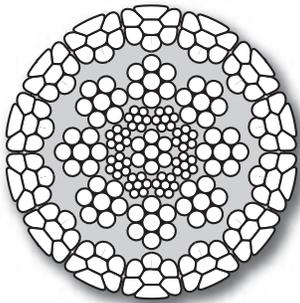
Respectfully,
Mark Kowalick
Committee Chairman



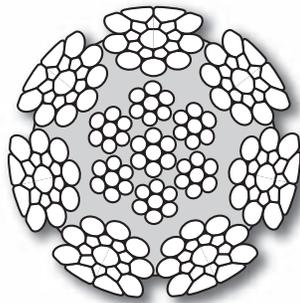
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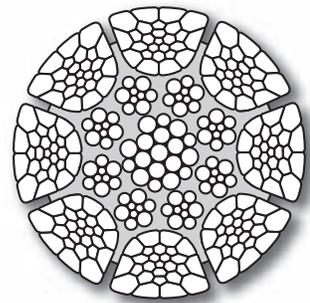
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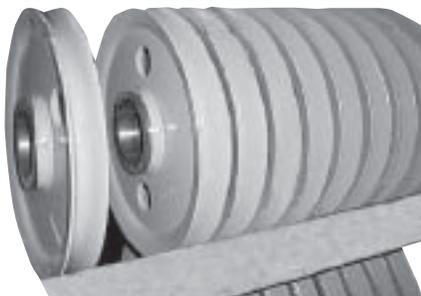
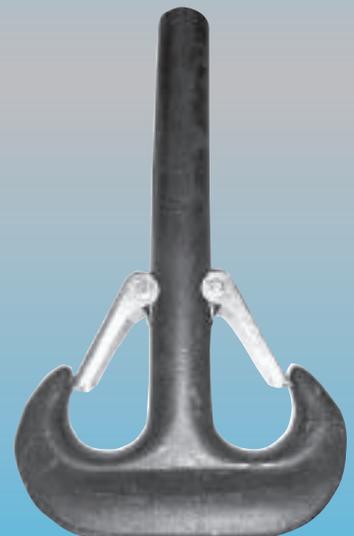


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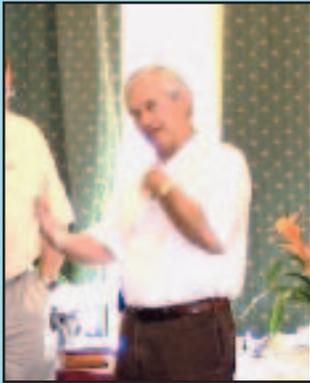


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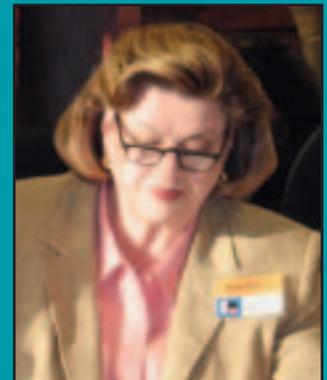
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Dear Fellow Member:

“There are so many benefits to membership in AWRF – this is one of the best tools to actually running a better business.” A long time member and past president at an AWRF board meeting made this comment recently about the service provided by Profit Planning Group. It echoed the sentiments of many of our membership.



The data gathering committee has provided this service to our regular members for 5 years at no cost. Things that are considered “free” tend to have no value attached to them. One founding member commented recently that his accountant would charge his company “In excess of \$900.00” for this service.

This year the response from our membership was about the same as last year. The economy seems to be improving nationwide, but the degree of recovery varies according to the region.

Profit Planning Group collects the data, processes it and provides a concise report with evaluation of the data provided by our member with complete confidentiality. It's done so quietly and discreetly, that many of our members don't realize the existence or the value of this benefit of AWRF membership.

Our committee is seeking your input for ideas for similar tools to have AWRF provide services to help us run our businesses better.

Sincerely,

Kent C. Richards

Chairman, Data Gathering Committee

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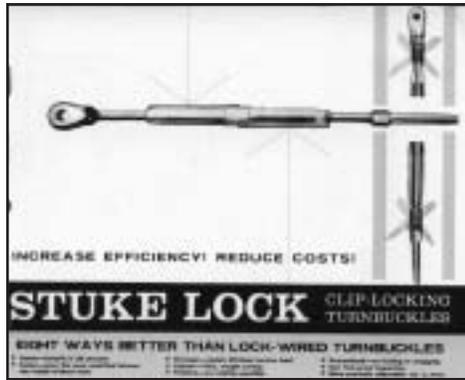
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News from the Preservation Committee...

We have officially begun to accumulate stuff!!! We have been receiving treasures from the membership for the last year. A listing of our archived history is downloadable in a spreadsheet form, from the website "Members Only" section. So far, our earliest catalog dates back to 1924.



The archiving was done in June, and July brought a truckload in to the office. We will continue to update the list as it is archived. We are not just collecting wire rope information, we are also collecting everything else chain, forgings, hardware and memorabilia as well.

I was going through some catalogs (not yet archived,) and found the All Purpose Wire Rope Company. Did you know they are still around today? You'd probably recognize them by their current name - Alps. Or STUKE LOCK, by Bell-Memphis MS33736(ASG)?! It is a locking turnbuckle that was used in the aircraft industry. Bell-Memphis is still around today, but this item is no longer in production. Our "library" may help you - should you have some old military spec or name on a request for quotation. We have all sorts of catalogs like these to peruse. We will be bringing some of them to the Boston PIE so you will have the opportunity to see a portion of our collection.



Thanks for your continued donations.

Kathy Petrick, Don Sayenga, Linda Summers, Barney Dugan
AWRF Preservation Committee

News About Our Members and Our Industry

CERTEX ANNOUNCEMENT

"On July 8th, 2004 the U.S. based assets of the CERTEX Division of Bridon American, an FKI Company, were purchased in a management buy out by CERTEX USA, Inc., an Arizona Corporation. Participants in the buyout included Chris Black and Glenn Evans, former Presidents of the U.S. CERTEX regions, and Dee Schweigert, former Controller. The buyout included 34 branches of the company, located in 14 states in the Southern half of the United States. Bridon Caribbean was not included in the sale of the company.

CERTEX USA, Inc. does approx. \$68m in turnover annually and averages 270 employees, and is the largest privately held Distributor of Lifting Products in the United States, supplying Wire Rope, Rigging Products, Fall Arrest Systems, Training, Testing and Field Services. It is also a distributor for premium brands of Lifting Products, including Bridon, Crosby, and Acco, and fabricates Wire Rope Slings, Web Slings, Roundslings, Chain Slings and other lifting products made to specific customer requirements. CERTEX USA maintains a quality system that meets the requirements of ISO 9001-2000, and was the second Lifting Products Company in the U.S. to achieve ISO approval of its Quality System. It is dedicated to consistently producing top quality goods that meet the lifting needs of its customers, and is a member of the Associated Wire Rope Fabricators and Web Sling and Tiedown Associations."

People Remembered

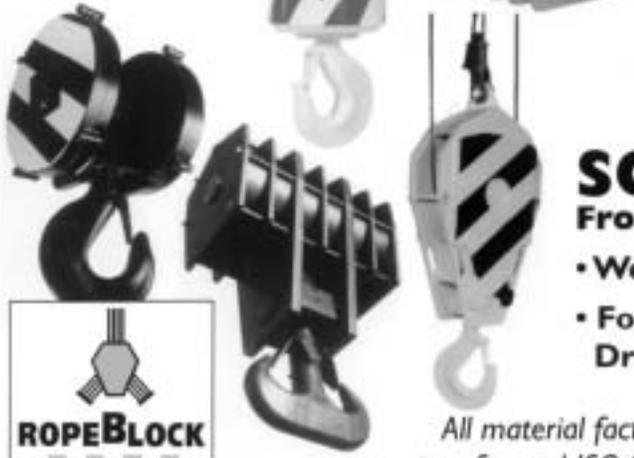
George C Jennings died July 11 in Washington D.C. He was active in the wire rope industry for more than 40 years with Wire Rope Corporation of America and CFI. Previously he had served as a flight instructor in the Army Air Corps; he then enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and served in the Pacific Theater. He is survived by 5 children and 6 grandchildren. The family has suggested memorials to Our Lady of Victory Basilica in Buffalo N.Y. where he formerly resided.

Deborah Sims Fulmer, M.D., wife of Joseph E. Roberts of Roberts Testing Equipment, Inc, died May 25, 2004 at Hospice Savannah, of cancer. She was 54. A teacher for 17 years she then pursued her childhood dream of becoming a physician and received her medical degree from Mercer University School of Medicine in 2000. She worked as a Board Certified Pediatrician with the SouthCoast Medical Group. She was a wonderful mother, a loving wife and a caring friend to all who knew her. Remembrances to Hospice Savannah Inc., P.O. Box 13190, Savannah GA 31416.

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AWRF – LAEDC ECONOMICS CORNER

- The U.S. economy is expanding nicely, with increasing activity in wire-rope related sectors.
- Steel is not alone. Prices of most industrial materials have surged recently. Why?

U.S. Economic Situation

Consumer spending patterns will change over the next two years. Consumer electronics products appear to have the best prospects. Sales of housing related durable goods will follow trends in home sales, which are extremely strong at the moment but expected to ease later in 2004. After two years of sales driven by hefty purchase incentives, automotive manufacturers are trying to reduce incentives while maintaining sales at comfortable levels. This effort hasn't met with much success in 2004 but might be easier in 2005, when employment growth is well established and consumer confidence is higher.

Business spending for new plant and equipment plunged during 2001 and 2002 before turning up in 2003. Profits have increased strongly, reflecting higher sales combined with the maintenance of strict cost controls including reduced hiring. Businesses have been investing primarily to replace worn out equipment and to enhance productivity. Thus, spending for information processing equipment and software is seeing a nice boost. However, spending for other types of equipment has improved as well: sales of construction and agricultural machinery, heavy trucks, and railcars all have increased, for example. Spending for oil and natural gas drilling and production also has risen.

	2002	2003	1q04
Real GDP Growth	1.9	3.0	4.5
Manufacturing Production	-0.5	0.1	3.2
Manufacturing & Trade Sales	1.6	2.6	6.5
Goods Trade Deficit (\$2000)	541.2	588.1	627.1
Vehicle Sales (Mils, SAAR)			
—Cars (Domestic)	5.9	5.5	5.4
—Light Trucks (Domestic)	7.6	7.9	7.7
—Medium/Heavy Trucks	0.3	0.3	0.4
Construction:			
—Housing Starts (Mils)	1.70	1.85	1.95
—Private Nonresid Bldgs	-13.3	-5.2	-1.8
—Gov't Bldgs & Inf' structure	5.2	2.3	2.3
Bus. Equipment Spending			
—High Tech & Software	-6.4	-4.3	3.3
—Other Machinery	-4.4	-1.9	5.3
Freight Transportat'n Index	3.0	2.4	5.1
Oil & Gas Rigs Running	830	1,032	1,118

*Percent change from previous year unless otherwise noted.

Housing starts have peaked. Mortgage rates have risen, and residential building is likely to decline moderately. Nonresidential construction as a whole is near bottom. Expect retail, office, and commercial to lead, followed by industrial. Power plant construction, still in a downtrend, is a notable laggard. Government construction is growing slowly at best, squeezed by state/local budget constraints. Surging prices of construction materials are causing delays in awarding many new construction contracts.

As the economy grows, purchases of imported goods will increase as well as spending for domestic products. Measured in constant dollars, U.S. imports declined during the 2001 recession and grew only modestly during 2002 and 2003. As the economy expands in 2004 and 2005, U.S. imports of foreign-made goods and services will increase, swelling the goods trade deficit noticeably.

With demand for most types of goods on the rise, manufacturing and trade production and sales have been increasing steadily, with a big jump in activity in first quarter 2004. Manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers have been replenishing their inventories in addition to meeting higher demand for their products.

Reflecting the surge in goods related activity, the Transportation Services Index (TCI) for Freight posted a reading of 126.0 in April. This is the all time high record in the fourteen-year period covered by the index. Goods are being transported from the ports and manufacturing plants to distribution centers and then to retailers to meet the demands of consumers and businesses.

PRICES: IT'S THE ECONOMY (OF COURSE)!

Wire rope producers and other US manufacturers have witnessed a striking surge in the price of wire and other steel products. Steel is not alone. Prices of most industrial commodities have soared over the past 12 to 18 months as shown in Table 2. What accounts for this phenomenal rise?

The answer is the recent acceleration in global economic growth. Just 18 months ago, China and the U.S. were the only engines of growth in the world. Today, the U.S. economy is growing at rates last seen in 1998-1999. And China has been growing in the high single digits for several years. The Japanese economy is coming on strong this year, after a decade in the doldrums. Together, these three nations account for almost half of this year's improvement in world GDP.

The change in Japan is important for industrial prices because Japan is a large consumer of industrial commodities traded in global markets. Commodity prices were weak in 2001 and 2002, firmed in 2003 as the U.S. economy began to strengthen, and then exploded late last year and in 2004, as the Japanese economy also began to hum.

Details of demand and supply differ by product, but Table 2 shows that the results were depressingly similar for buyers. Crude oil receives the most media attention, with higher prices blamed variously on terrorist threats (Iraq, Saudi Arabia) and government actions (Russia, Venezuela). As important, however, the increase in global oil demand more than tripled between the spring quarters of 2003 and 2004 (with demand growing by 4 million barrels per day over the year), far outstripping the increase in global supply.

World demand for steel is forecast to increase by 112 million MT (+14%) between 2002 and 2004. China alone will account for 77 million MT, an enormous 41% increase in consumption over just two years. On the supply side, global steel output has increased by a total of 96 million MT (with 6 months left to grow).

	2002	2003	2q04
Iron & Steel Scrap (\$/gt)	93.05	122.93	217.20*
Copper (\$/lb)	0.71	0.81	1.26
Aluminum (\$/lb)	0.61	0.65	0.76
Nickel (\$/lb)	3.07	4.37	5.67
Ethylene (c/lb)	19.5	25.8	28.2
Lumber (\$/Mil Bd Ft)	236.90	268.15	436.54
Crude Oil (\$/Barrel)	26.10	31.14	38.33
Natural Gas (\$/Mcf)	3.33	5.48	6.10

* 1q04 average price.

* Higher steel production has meant increased demand for raw materials. For wire rope producers, scrap is most important because most wire rod is made in electric furnaces using a 100% scrap charge. US scrap exports have soared by about 50% this year. (China was by far the biggest customer, no surprise, but all major customers are taking more.) Scrap supplies are limited, especially in the short term; so prices rose dramatically.

What will happen to prices of scrap and other industrial materials going forward? The need to build higher inventories of industrial materials should moderate in 2005 as production increases. Beyond that, much depends on the world's largest economies. Most forecasters expect growth to moderate in the U.S. and Japan. However, there is no reason to expect China or India to slow much if at all, which will maintain the pressure in commodity markets. From this perspective, Europe holds the key. Overall, European economic growth is slow, especially in Italy, Germany and France. If—contrary to most forecasts—the Euro area economies should accelerate, demand for industrial materials will become more intense in that region, and price forecasts will need to be raised—again.

This material was prepared by the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation:

Nancy D. Sidhu

Vice President & Senior Economist

Candice Flor

Research Project Manager

1 Transportation Services Index (TCI) measures the month-to-month changes in services provided by the for-hire transportation industries, including railroad, air, truck, inland waterways, and pipeline.



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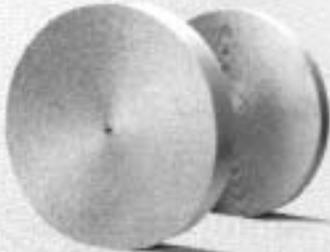
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SUBJECT: ASME B30 Meeting in Philadelphia, PA

I have just returned today from the ASME B30 meeting in Philadelphia which began at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, May 24 and ended at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 25. The meeting was very well attended, and I represented the AWRF in Don Sayenga's absence.

The first day was spent primarily answering letters seeking interpretation of items from the many volumes. To review, there are currently 25 volumes in B30, including the out-of-print B30.15. There are three volumes under development. These are B30.26 Rigging Hardware, B30.27 Material Placement Systems and B30.28 Balance Lifting Units. Day 2 was spent covering the status of each volume.

Two things occurred which have direct impact on AWRF members. First is the completion and acceptance by the B30 main committee of B30.26 Rigging Hardware. The first chapter of this volume had been previously accepted, but the final four chapters were presented at this meeting by the sub-committee chairman Charles Lucas, and received with very little challenge or discussion. This is a great example of hard work and preparation. This volume started from scratch approximately 3 years ago. The members of the B30.26 sub-committee worked very hard and met many times, but the presentation and acceptance of the

complete standard was done in ASME record time. Many AWRF members, led by Charles Lucas of The Crosby Group, participated in producing this volume. Although Joseph Wendler, the ASME Secretary to B30, said that B30.26 should be available to the public in four to five months, my experience makes me guess at one year.

The second item of interest to AWRF members was the presentation by Mike Parnell requesting a new B30 volume covering Industrial Rollers and Air Casters. He was very well prepared and supported by the attendance of several members from that industry. The main committee told Mike to proceed with development under the assumption that there will be a new volume, but that there is a possibility that these items may be included in B30.1 Jacks. Mike's presentation answered questions in advance, even deflecting typically negative positions by the crane manufacturing element.

Both Charles and Mike did excellent jobs, and both deserve a pat-on-the-back from AWRF members.

There was discussion about Don's retirement, and I was questioned about our plans. I told them that we would advise them within the next couple of weeks.

The next meeting of ASME B30 is in Minneapolis on September 13-14. There will also be a B30.9 Slings Sub-Committee meeting at that time.

David J, Bishop
President

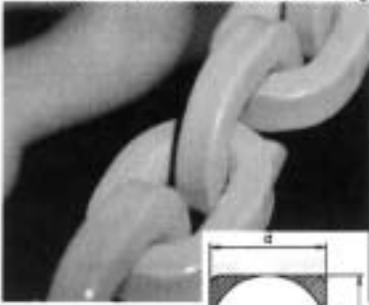


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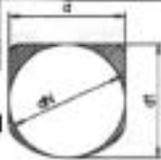
Standing Left to Right: Ken Sellers—Gunnebo-Johnson Corp, Larry Means—Kulkoni, Inc., Gary O'Rourke—Strider-Resource, David Sleightholm—Bridon American Corporation, Paul Boeckman—The Crosby Group, David Johnston—Columbus McKinnon Corporation, Charles Lucas—The Crosby Group, Mike Gelskey—Lift-It Manufacturing Co., Knut Buschman—Unirop Limited, Ron Raymond—J.C. Renfro and Sons, Mark Kowalick—Liftex Corporation Kneeling Left to Right: Don Sayenga—Technical Advisor, Don Pellow—Chairman—Technical Committee, Howard Will—Caldwell Group. Dennis St. Germain—I&I Sling, Inc., Dan Merrill—Yarbrough Cable Service, LLC.

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This photograph was first published in the magazine in June 1906.

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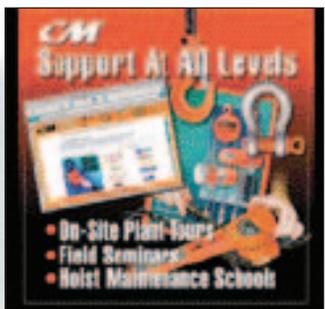


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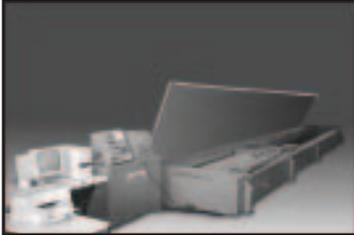
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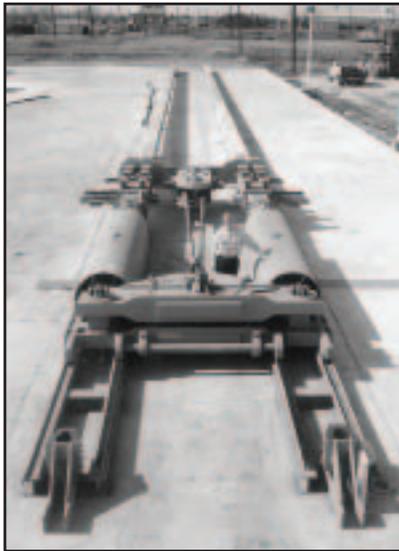
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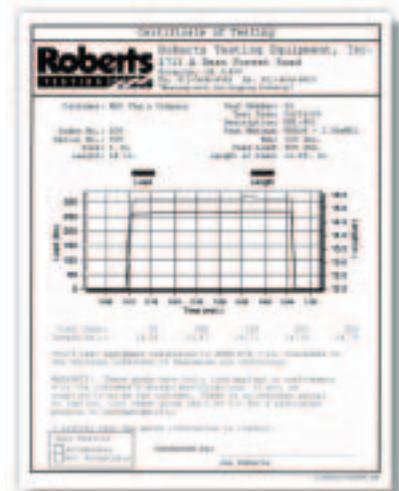
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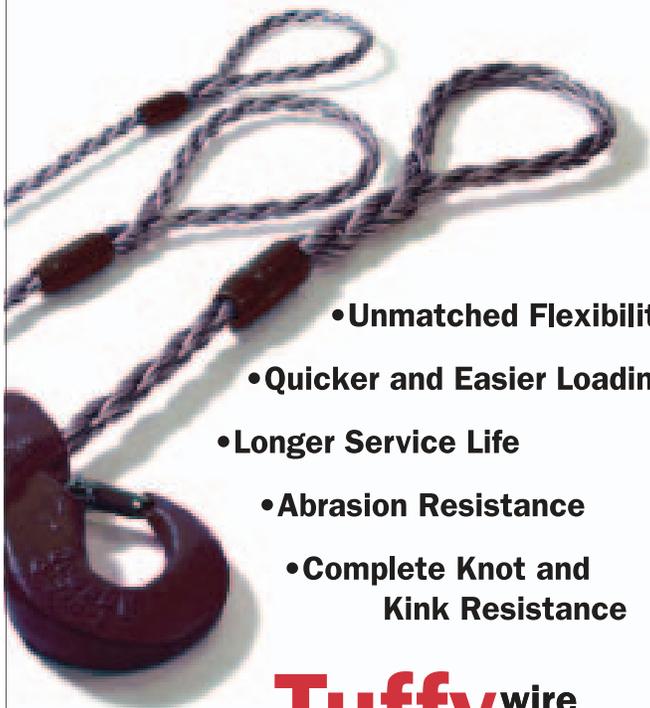
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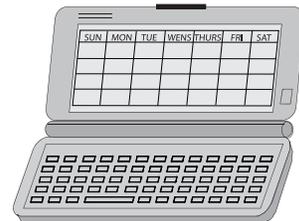
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- October 17-20** AWRP FALL GENERAL MEETING
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- April 17-21** AWRP GENERAL MEETING
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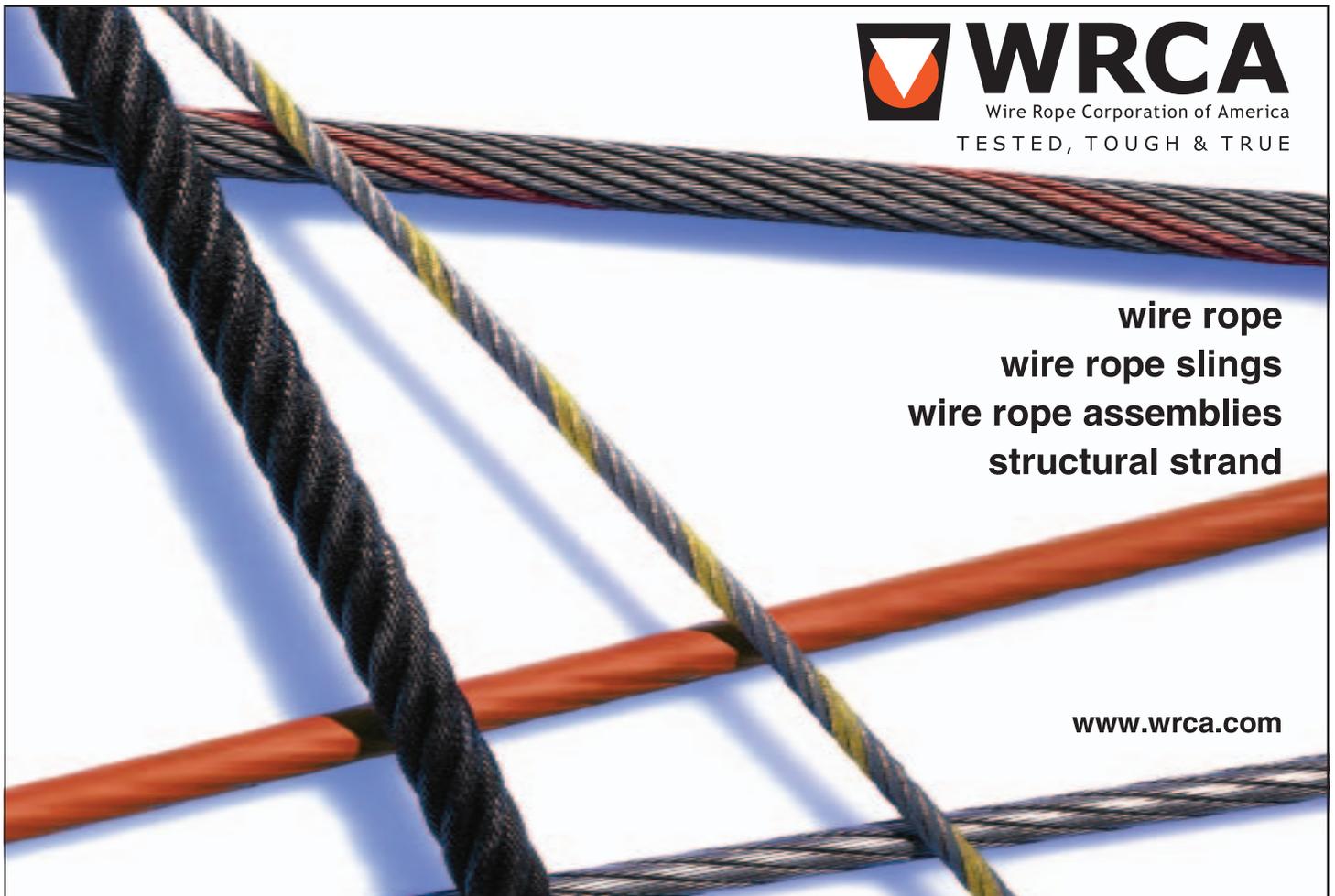
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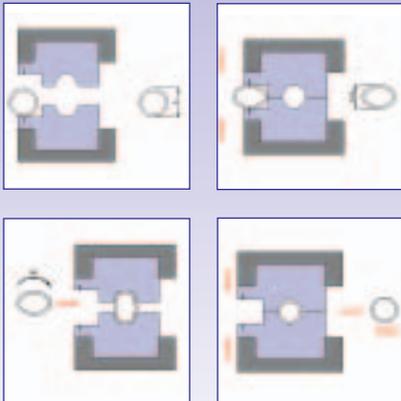


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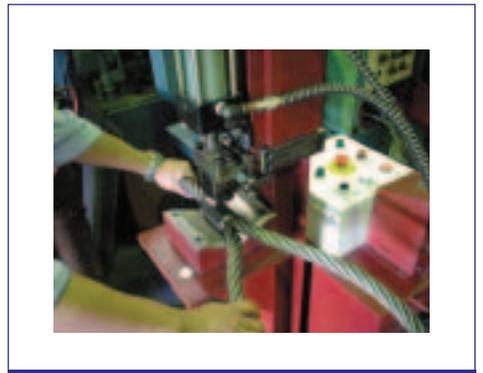
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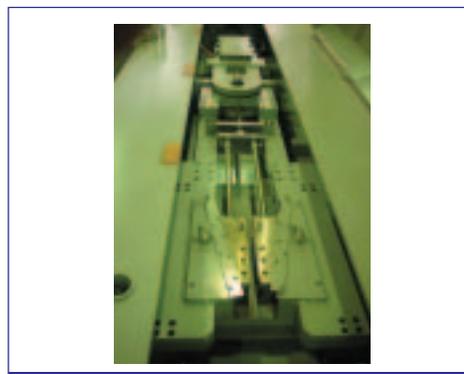
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