



Chair's Message

Tim O'Bryan

Dear Members - RIPA held its first full, in-person conference in 2-½ years last week in Memphis, TN. I am happy to report that attendance was strong, the mood was great, and the agenda was packed with important topics and action items. Additionally, I am happy to report that the association is in excellent financial condition and well positioned to take on the many tasks that lay ahead.



The RIPA staff – Paul Rankin, C.L. Pettit, Rick Schweitzer and Bonnie Cunningham – put on another great event. RIPA's Supplier Members were given special recognition for their support of the Conference.

On the Main Program, several distinguished speakers advised attendees on important business and legislative topics. Mr. Bill Schoonover from U.S. DOT PHMSA gave an overview of his agency's priorities, its methods and its deployment of resources. He offered his predictions on the timing of several critical actions impacting RIPA members: from ultrasonic leak testing to (non)placarding for empty IBCs to steel drum reconditioning. Bill struck an optimistic tone and expressed a personal interest in seeing these matters concluded in a way that facilitated our business operations and at the same time ensured safety.

The program also featured a talk on EPA's interest in VOC emissions from washing operations, including staging areas for opening containers. While members may be familiar with VOC limits for paint booths and drum stacks, washing operations are a new target. And while EPA is currently focused on locations in Region 5 (the upper Midwest), it's safe to assume that their interest will spread. See more on this key issue elsewhere in this edition of *E*News*.

Other talks included: What to expect in a post-COVID economy, presented by Dr. William Fox; and, How to manage compliance with “I 9” immigration issues in the workplace, presented by Dawn Lurie. (See links to presentations below.)

The Board of Directors met to oversee administration, finances, membership, meetings and related matters which included electing Mr. Elliot Pearlman as a new Honorary Lifetime Member. Those persons *not* attending the Board meeting were offered a tour of the legendary *Graceland*, home to the “King”, Elvis Presley.

And it wouldn’t be a RIPA conference if there wasn’t more fun built in. The Supplier Members hosted a Welcome Reception on the Peabody Hotel’s rooftop bar and lounge. The Chair’s Reception the following night was held in the stately mezzanine overlooking the lobby with the famous fountain and the more famous Peabody Ducks.

Speaking of the ducks, it was my distinct honor to be named Duck Master for the day. I was tasked with escorting the ducks for their 5:00 pm daily departure to the elevator and to the roof where their pen is stationed. Down the red carpet, I gently herded them with my scepter (or was it a cane?). The way I herded them into formation, you’d almost think they were trained.



I think that all my small friends that lined up on the red carpet were very excited and impressed to be an official part of our conference! One young boy came up to me afterwards and asked how he could get one of the canes and be a Duck Master, too. I believe that young man has a future in the reconditioning business!

Next up: RIPA’s 79th Annual Conference, October 12-14, at the historic Grant Hotel in the Gaslamp District of San Diego, CA, held in conjunction with IPANA’s Annual Conference.

Conference Presentations Links

[DOT PHMSA’s Bill Schoonover](#)

[A Post-COVID Economy](#) Dr. William Fox

[I-9 and Immigration Compliance](#) Dawn Lurie