

History Meets Progress at Purdue Conference

Industry reflects on its past, looks ahead to future during January's Purdue Pest Management Conference. BY CHUCK BOWEN

The 72nd Annual Purdue Pest Management Conference, held in early January, was a time for the industry to reflect on its past and look ahead to a dynamic, progressive future. Researchers, pest management professionals, manufacturers and other industry professionals traveled from throughout the country to attend the conference.

The past included a video presentation created by David Fincannon that reviewed pesticide use before, during and after World War II. Attendees of all ages enjoyed this video history of the industry's use of products and treatment strategies.

The future included presentations from leading professionals on a variety of hot topics, including "green" pest control, bed bug management and a review of new technologies. It also included an exhibit floor with the latest innovative pest control offerings from leading manufacturers.

WINDLER HONORED. Purdue Pest Management Conference Chair Gary Bennett moderated the conference's opening session and honored Robert Windler, founder of Windler Pest Control, for attending his 50th Purdue show. "He's one of the first persons I met when I came to Indiana,"

Bennett said of Windler. "He's a great guy, and we really appreciate his support over the years."

Windler and his brother, Jack, founded their pest management business Jan. 2,

1959. Jack Windler left the company a few years later, leaving the operations to Robert and his wife, Rosemary.

The company covered large areas of Indiana and Illinois, performing fumigations, termite control and lawn services. Windler also had its own brand of rodent control chemicals. The couple ran the business until 1988, when they sold a majority of it to Fowler Pest Control.

Bennett presented Windler with a black and gold Tiffany lamp with the Purdue griffin symbol.

GREEN IS RED HOT. Jay Bruesch, technical director for Plunkett's Pest Control, Fridley, Minn., kicked off the opening day-technical presentations with a presentation titled "Green-Washing the Industry: It's Not Easy Being Green!" He said the most important part of a successful "green" pest program is communicating to customers that PCOs have been providing green pest management services for decades: They protect the environment, practice Integrated Pest Management and don't just spray chemicals haphazardly in homes.

"Believe it or not, our clients don't know this," he said. "We have to tell our clients we're green. We've been there for 25 years; they just don't know it."



Purdue's Gary Bennett recognized Robert Windler (left) for attending his 50th show. (Photo: Chuck Bowen)