



ENGINEERED WOOD WEEK

NEWS NOTES FROM AITC. THE ORIGINAL TRADE ASSOCIATION FOR ENGINEERED WOOD

September 7, 2007

Glulam Helps Make Branson Even Bigger Destination

Most of the 7 million visitors who come to the vacation destination of Branson, Missouri, each year are families, couples, and groups holding small meetings and reunions. This will begin to change next year as thousands of conventioners attend trade shows at the mammoth new Branson Landing and Convention Center.

The 220,000 SF center is a showcase of long span structural glued laminated timber. It contains a 50,000 SF exhibit hall and a 23,000 SF ballroom as well as spacious conference and meeting rooms. These amenities are tied together with a elegant concourse adjacent to the new 294 room Hilton Hotel. Specifying the prefinished 80 foot glulam timbers over the public spaces saved the contractor hours of time that would have been required for construction and applying finishes. The finished ceiling is glued laminated decking.

According to the facility designers, Thompson, Ventulett, Stainback and Associates, Inc., of Atlanta, "The primary reason for specifying glulam is that the material provided a way to tie the building's appeal to the natural setting of the Ozarks. It created a contemporary and unique building design for the Branson area. The use of wood conveys an honest and warm expression that in a hospitality facility will leave visitors with an inviting and memorable experience. Using a structural system that is also the building's 'image generator' has considerable cost benefits that worked with the modest budget."

The dominant feature of the design is the 25 foot-high curtain wall which protects the concourse. Serpentine in plan, the concourse extends 900 feet along the convention center and hotel. Glulam beams, which support the roof for the concourse, are 8-3/4" wide and up to 31" deep, and span 45 to 80 feet. The beams extend 19' beyond the curtain wall, and are supported on the ends by the V-braces.

Timberweld Manufacturing of Billings, Montana furnished the beams. The 29 sloping V braces march along the curved concourse to support the ends of glulam beams. The V braces are circular turned log poles, 15" in diameter. Atlanta Structural Engineer, Walter P. Moore, says the V brace system fuses two diverse materials into a unified, warm composite with neither material overpowering the other.

