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BRIAN CASSIDY

Under CEO Mike Pourney, Gross & Janes expects \$72 million in revenue this year.

Gross & Janes rolls on with K.C. Southern contract

BY EVAN BINNS
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St. Louis-based Gross & Janes Co., one of the largest suppliers of raw railroad ties in North America, could pull in almost \$50 million over the next three years as part of a multi-year contract with the Kansas City Southern Railway Co.

Gross & Janes already is expected to top \$72 million in revenue this year. Kansas City Southern is a multi-billion dollar railroad company that operates in the United States and Mexico.

Mike Pourney, president and CEO of Gross & Janes, said the new contract was inked thanks to a growing need among railroad operators for cost-efficient transportation.

Gross & Janes manufactures borate pre-treated wood railroad crossties, which reduce the cost and environmental impact of conventional preservative-treated crossties. "KCS sees the added value that non-pressurized borate pre-treatment delivers to their operations," Pourney said. "They are the first major railroad company to have confidence in this new process and in our ability to provide a consistent quality and supply."

The cost efficiencies that are fueling the railroad business mean more business for the \$1 billion railroad-tie industry, said Jim Gaunt, executive director of Railway Tie As-

sociation. There are an estimated 750 million wooden railroad ties in the United States, according to the association. Railroad companies replace about 3 percent, or about 21 million ties, annually. That number is expected to increase about 2 percent annually over the next two years because of new tracks laid, Gaunt said. In addition, the federal government has several high-speed rail projects in the works that call for additional rail lines.

The deal with Kansas City Southern has led Gross & Janes to hire an additional six people at its facility in Taylor, Ark. Gross & Janes is also moving from Fenton into a new 2,800-square-foot office across from the Kirkwood Train Depot. The company currently has 3,900 square feet of space located at 511 Rudder Road in Fenton. Pourney said the decrease in office space was more efficient for the company, which employs six locally and 50 around the country.

Pourney took the helm last June. Prior to joining the firm, he served as head of NuParadigm Systems Inc., a Chesterfield-based computer software development firm.

Founded in 1920, privately held Gross & Janes has processing facilities in Missouri, Mississippi, Arkansas and Texas. John Brown, managing director at Bush O'Donnell Investment Advisors Inc., is chairman of Gross & Janes Co.

Concordia Publishing House wins Baldrige Award

Concordia Publishing House in St. Louis has won the 2011 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the nation's highest presidential honor for performance excellence through innovation, improvement and visionary leadership.

Concordia, led by President and CEO Bruce Kintz, is the publishing arm of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. It is the fifth St. Louis company to win the Baldrige Award. Past winners were SSM Health Care, Nestle Purina, Boeing and Wainwright Industries.

Concordia was one of four organizations to receive the award this year. The other winners are Henry Ford Health System in Detroit; Schneck Medical Center in Sey-

mour, Ind.; and Southcentral Foundation in Anchorage. The award recipients were selected from a field of 69 applicants, U.S. Commerce Secretary John Bryson said.

The applicants were evaluated by an independent board of examiners in the areas of leadership; strategic planning; customer focus; measurement, analysis and knowledge management; work force focus; operations focus; and results. The evaluation process for each included about 1,000 hours of review and an on-site visit.

Named after Malcolm Baldrige, the 26th Secretary of Commerce, the Baldrige Award was established in 1987 to enhance the performance of U.S. businesses.

— Kelsey Volkmann