



Nace Austin, Hardwoods Inc., Columbus, Ga.; David Snidow, Hardwoods Inc., Atlanta, Ga.; and Ed Holley, Eastern Lumber Corp., Orangeburg, S.C.



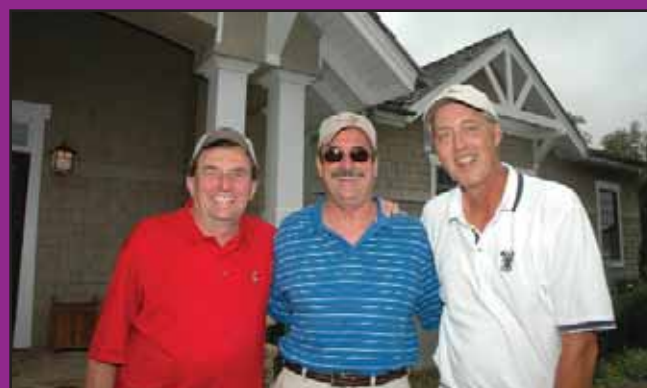
Charlie Robertson, East Ohio Lumber Co., Augusta, Ga.; Donna Bliss, Sitco Lumber Co., Ponchatoula, La.; Donna Stockwell, White County Mouldings, Cleveland, Ga.; and John Smith, Forest Products Inc., Corbin, Ky.



Jim Forrester, Lake Norman Forest Products, Cornelius, N.C.; Joe Williams, Huntersville Hardwoods Inc., Huntersville, N.C.; and Don Ariail, Southern Staircase Inc., Alpharetta, Ga.



Gary Miller, National Hardwood Magazine, Memphis, Tenn.; Lenny Shipley, Inter-Continental Hardwood Inc., Currie, N.C.; and Brandon Walker, Huntersville Hardwoods Inc., Huntersville, N.C.



Bob Bannish, Bannish-Rickard Lumber Co. Inc., Bristol, Tenn.; Dan Caldwell, Atlanta Hardwood Corp., Mableton, Ga.; and Steve Counts, Bristol Hardwoods, Bristol, Tenn.



Hal Mitchell, Atlanta Hardwood Corp., Mableton, Ga.; Rocco Sinisgalli and Randy Bowers, Tioga Hardwoods Inc., Owego, N.Y.; and Scott Lilley, Hardwood Industries, Sherwood, Ore.

Additional photos on page 59

L.A. Lumbermen Host Foundation Benefit

Los Angeles, Calif.—

The Los Angeles Hardwood Lumberman's Club (LAHLC) presented its 8th Annual Golf Tournament recently at the Costa Mesa Golf & Country Club in Costa Mesa, Calif. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Hardwood Forest Foundation.

"This year's tournament was the largest to date with 148 registered golfers and around 65 sponsors," said Charley Fiala, LAHLC Golf Tournament Director and Foundation Board member. "I am impressed with Southern California lumber industry members year after year. Their participation in the tournament shows their desire to support the Foundation's educational efforts, which encompasses the future of the Hardwood indus-

try, as it offers educational information to children."

A dinner and awards ceremony followed the tournament in the



Kevin Trussell of Timber Mountain Hardwoods, Garden Grove, Calif.; Tom Walthousen of National Hardwood Lumber Assoc., Memphis, Tenn.; Peter Elieff, Pacific Western Wood Inc., Los Angeles, Calif.; and Chuck Bartolon, Timber Mountain Hardwoods

Costa Mesa Golf & Country Club Clubhouse. First place winners of the tournament were as follows:

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Deonn DeFord, Ganahl Lumber Co., Anaheim, Calif.; and Scott Fisher, Frank Youngman and Dave Gorham, BlueLinx Corp., Atlanta, Ga.



Bob Mitchell, Mitchell Forest Products, vice president of the Hardwood Forest Foundation and Member of the Los Angeles Hardwood Lumberman's Club (LAHLC); Crystal Oldham, executive director of the Hardwood Forest Foundation, Memphis, Tenn.; and Charley Fiala, LAHLC golf tournament director, Hardwood Forest Foundation board of directors, GMC Hardwoods Inc., Long Beach, Calif.

Former Bronco Inspires At FCL

Washington, D.C.—Approximately 30 members attended the Annual Meeting for the Fellowship of Christian Lumbermen (FCL), which was held recently in conjunction with the 110th Annual National Hardwood Lumber Association's (NHLA) Convention at the Washington Hilton.



Steve Fitzhugh

Headlining as keynote speaker was PowerMoves Incorporated's Steve Fitzhugh, who was highly recruited by the National Football League, and eventually signed with the Denver Broncos as free safety in 1986. A shoulder injury sidelined the 6-foot, 250-pound defensive player just two years into his professional career.

However, Fitzhugh, who offers motivational speeches across the country, minimizes his professional football career when he speaks of his faith. Even on the playing card that bears his story and his photo, Fitzhugh notes, "Beating the Oakland Raiders on Monday Night Football was sweeter than sweet. But the greatest single moment of my life was the day that I discovered my purpose and destiny through a personal faith."

In addition to Fitzhugh's inspiring message, members of FCL heard from association president Chris Martinson of St. Croix Valley Hardwoods. The group also examined the organization's financial report and discussed various topics of business.

The FCL offices are located in Central Point, Ore. Visit the association's website at www.christianlumbermen.com.



Jim Stephenson, Cherry Forest Products Ltd., Guelph, Ont.; Brian Mullins, Mullins Mission, Toronto, Ont.; Pete Lang, Cherokee Wood Products, Upland, Calif.; and Chris Martinson, 2007 president of Fellowship of Christian Lumbermen, St. Croix Valley Hardwoods Inc., Luck, Wis.



Steve Gunderson, Hermitage Hardwood Lumber Sales Inc., Cookeville, Tenn.; Wayde Day, Independent Dispatch Inc., Portland, Ore.; Alex Mullins, Kuhns Bros. Lumber Co., Lewisburg, Pa.; Mark Bennett, Brenneman Lumber Co., Mt. Vernon, Ohio; and Jim Post, Freedom Forest Products, Zeeland, Mich.



Bob Pope, USNR, Montpelier, Vt.; Whit Whitmire, USNR, Waynesville, N.C.; and John Staranko, Baillie Lumber Co., Hamburg, N.Y.



Alex Mullins, Kuhns Bros. Lumber Co., Lewisburg, Pa.; Joe Canale, Heritage Hardwood Inc., Chino, Calif.; and Tony Honeycutt, Mullican Flooring, Johnson City, Tenn.

Orders Pile Up At Tupelo Furniture Market

BY DEBORAH ARMSTRONG

Tupelo, Miss.— Approximately 100 new exhibitors joined returning vendors to sing their praises for the annual summer Tupelo Furniture Market (TFM), held here each August. This year marked a milestone for the event as it turned 20 years old and continued to attract many of the most recognizable names in furniture manufacturing and the upholstery industry.

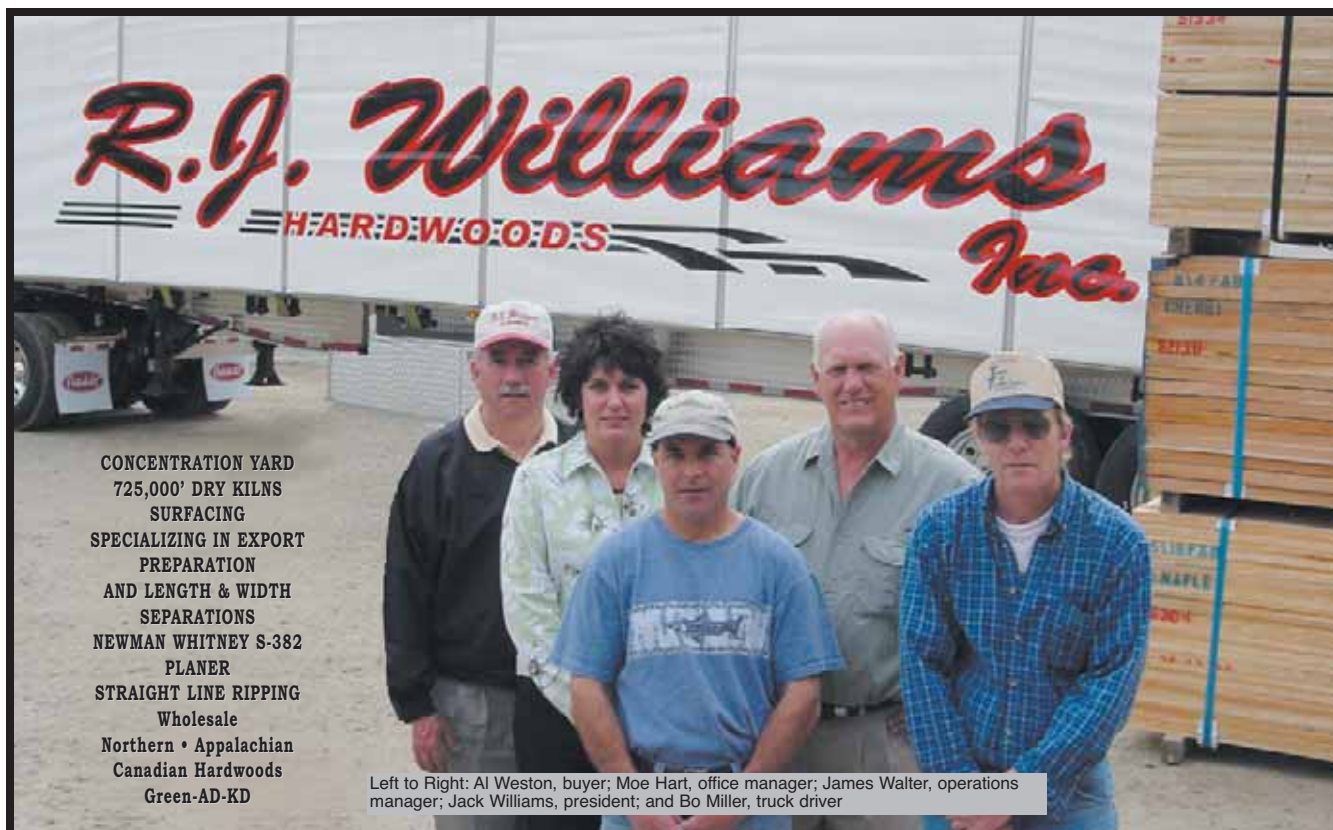
Although the opening morning of the three-day event proved to be slow, traffic increased significantly as the weekend ensued. Exhibitors reported significant interest from buyers of casual dining and entertainment furnishings.

Prior to TFM, many in attendance had voiced concern that perhaps the event was occurring too close to the recently held Las Vegas Market. However, as orders for shipments piled up at the Tupelo Furniture Market, all concerns dissipated. Of the exhibitors polled, all reported

that order writing was “brisk” after the opening day, and the majority stated that Southeastern midsize dealers placed more orders than any other region in the country. Some attendees even reported that at least 75 percent of the visitors to their exhibits filed orders.

TFM attracted nearly 1,000 exhibitors from throughout the world and buyers were represented by all 50 U.S. states and 38 foreign countries.

Overall, the mood was much brighter than during the January Tupelo Furniture Market when attendance was considerably off the mark of past TFM's. Due to that fact, it was reported prior to the recent TFM that in 2008, the Tupelo Furniture Market's winter show has been moved to Feb. 20-24, previously the traditional month for this show. Tupelo's 2008 summer market will begin Aug. 22.



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Left to Right: Al Weston, buyer; Moe Hart, office manager; James Walter, operations manager; Jack Williams, president; and Bo Miller, truck driver

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This Red Oak floor clock was a crowd-pleaser at the Tupelo Furniture Market, held in Tupelo, Miss. The clocks are manufactured by Howard Miller, of Zeeland, Mich.



This handcrafted 6-piece Walnut dining set served as part of the Brooks Furniture exhibit. Brooks is located in Tazewell, Tenn.



A four-drawer curio was a classic example of the versatility of Maple, which was used in the manufacture of this item, by Perdue Woodwork of Rapid City, S.D.

Hickory's strength shines in this bedroom set, displayed by Old Hickory Furniture Co. of Shelbyville, Ind.



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Devin Dearth and Bill Hendrix, Brewco Inc., Central City, Ky.; and Jack Shannon III, J.T. Shannon Lumber Co, Memphis, Tenn.



Jeff Booher, B&B Lumber Co. Inc., Jamesville, N.Y.; Matt Tietz, McDonough Manufacturing Co., Eau Claire, Wis.; Linda Jovanovich, Hardwood Manufacturers Association, Pittsburgh, Pa.; and Bob White, McDonough Manufacturing Co., Fernandina Beach, Fla.



Kevin Williams, Jerry G. Williams & Sons Inc., Smithfield, N.C.; Jim Howard, Atlanta Hardwood Corp., Mableton, Ga.; and Mark Williams, Jerry G. Williams & Sons Inc.



Lee Stockton, Stan Morgan, Roy James, Mike Parker, Chris Ratliff, Benjie Thomas, and Bubba Parker, Anderson-Tully Co., Vicksburg, Miss.

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Chase Hales, Baillie Lumber Co., Hamburg, N.Y.; Bran Futral, Wellborn Cabinet Inc., Ashland, Ala.; Jimmy Jones, J.E. Jones Lumber Co., New Bern, N.C.; and Luke Brogger, Quality Hardwoods, Sunfield, Mich.



Craig Miller, Battle Lumber Co. Inc., Wadley, Ga.; Doug Fikes, Buchanan Hardwood Flooring, Aliceville, Ala.; John Jones, Ward Timber Ltd., Linden, Texas; Jamey French, Northland Forest Products Inc., Kingston, N.H.; Tommy and Thomas Battle, Battle Lumber Co. Inc.; and Matt Weaber, Weaber Inc., Lebanon, Pa.



Charlie Netterville, Fred Netterville Lumber Co., Woodville, Miss.; David Lewis, Lewis Brothers Lumber Co. Inc., Aliceville, Ala.; Chuck Boaz, Corley Manufacturing, Chattanooga, Tenn.; and Jeff Lewis, Lewis Brothers Lumber Co. Inc.



Don Hanafée, Hanafée Brothers Sawmill Co. Inc., Troy, Tenn.; Bill Buchanan, Buchanan Lumber Birmingham, Aliceville, Ala.; and Jack and Jack (III) Shannon, J.T. Shannon Lumber Co., Memphis, Tenn.

Additional photos on next page

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Rod Weaver, Kuhns Brothers Lumber Co. Inc., Lewisburg, Pa.; Phil Mann, Cersosimo Lumber Co. Inc., Brattleboro, Vt.; and Steve Jones, Ron Jones Hardwood Sales Inc., Union City, Pa.



John Wellborn, Wellborn Cabinet Inc., Ashland, Ala.; Norm Murray, U-C Coatings Corp., Buffalo, N.Y.; and Aaron Wellborn, guest



Harry Rogers, Big River Cypress and Hardwoods Inc., Blountstown, Fla.; and Paul Barringer, Coastal Lumber Co., Weldon, N.C.



Jeff and Gary Booher, B&B Lumber Co. Inc., Jamesville, N.Y.; Riley Smith, T.S. Manufacturing Co., Lindsey, Ont.; and Paul Johnson, Johnson Brothers Lumber Co., Cazenovia, N.Y.

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HMA PHOTOS - Continued



Jimmy Jones, J.E. Jones Lumber Co., New Bern, N.C.; Ken Matthews, SII Dry Kilns, Lexington, N.C.; and John Lindeberg, Wellborn Cabinet Inc., Ashland, Ala.



Al Quinney, Kretz Lumber Co. Inc., Antigo, Wis.; Derick Metts, Taylor Machine Works Inc., Louisville, Miss.; Ken Burttram, Morris-Softac, Albertville, Ala.; and Aaron Wellborn, guest

AHMI PHOTOS - Continued from page 45



Gerald Cox, Turman Hardwood Flooring Inc., Galax, Va.; Mark Pierce, Cranberry Hardwoods Inc., Beckley, W.Va.; and Chris Ghiloni, American Woodmark, Winchester, Va.



Will O'Leary and Stuart Norris, Catawissa Lumber & Specialty Co. Inc., West Jefferson, N.C.; and Marty Cornett, Pine Mountain Hardwood Lumber Co., Whitesburg, Ky.

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Lonnie Suiter, Allegheny Wood Products, Petersburg, W.Va.; Jack McCarty and Chris Clear, Coffman Stairs, Marion, Va.; and Dean Alanko, Allegheny Wood Products



Gary Birkett, Ten Oaks Flooring, Stuart, Va.; Cliff McKittrick, J.W. McKittrick Lumber Co., Camden, S.C.; and Gerald Cox, Turman Hardwood Flooring Inc., Galax, Va.



Leslie Criggers, Tarkett Wood, Johnson City, Tenn.; Doug McDaniel, Stuart Flooring, Stuart, Va.; and John Lindeburg, Wellborn Cabinet, Marion, Va.



Mike Hinscher, The Forestland Group, Abington, Va.; and Bill and Candy Hardin, Powell River Lumber Co., Appalachia, Va.



Charles "Lindy" Markland, Vice-chairman; Bob Moore, Chairman of the Board/CEO; and Dave Redmond, President/COO



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Scott Freese, SunTrust Bank, Atlanta, Ga.; John Smith, Forest Products Inc., Corbin, Ky.; Mark Speer, Cox Interiors, Campbellsville, Ky.; and Scott Cathcart, SunTrust Bank



Eric Naustdal, Hardwoods Inc., Mableton, Ga.; and Luke Pickett and Steve Sanchez, Southern Staircase Inc., Alpharetta, Ga.



David Marbut, Toyota Forklifts of Atlanta, Lithia Springs, Ga.; Benji Cox, Cox Interiors, Fayetteville, Ga.; and Bob Driscoll, Toyota Forklifts of Atlanta



Mark Pierce, Cranberry Hardwoods Inc., Beckley, W.Va.; and Doug Muir, Atlanta Hardwood Corp., Mableton, Ga.

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Lee Smith and Preston Harbour, Toyota Forklifts of Atlanta, Atlanta, Ga.; and Ora Nation, Rainwater Construction Co., Atlanta, Ga.



The first place team included: Scott Cathcart, Phillip Nelson, Brandon Downs, and Scott Freese, SunTrust Bank, Atlanta, Ga.



Scott Lilley, Hardwood Industries Inc., Sherwood, Ore.; Lonnie Suiter, Allegheny Wood Products, Atlanta, Ga.; Ken Matthews, SII Dry Kilns, Lexington, N.C.; Chris Cowan, Gas South, Atlanta, Ga.; and Paul Harris, Atlanta Hardwood Corp., Mableton, Ga.



Hank Roberson, Anco Chemical, Macon, Ga.; Terry Griffith, Terry L. Griffith & Associates, West Linn, Ore.; Eric Burchett, Huntersville Hardwoods Inc., Huntersville, N.C.; and Tommy Stepp, DLH Nordisk, Greensboro, N.C.



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Randy Bowers, Tioga Hardwoods Inc., Owego, N.Y.; and Billy Crumpton and Kenny Roberts, Pierce & Pierce Millwork, Norcross, Ga.



Dan Mathews, SII Dry Kilns, Lexington, N.C.; Tim Bowman, Cranberry Hardwoods Inc., Beckley, W.Va.; Mark Vann, White County Mouldings, Cleveland, Ga.; and Butch Fairchild, Stair House Inc., Austell, Ga.



Cliff and Donald Johnsa, Suwanee Lumber Co. Inc., Suwanee, Ga.; Laura Thomas, White County Mouldings, Cleveland, Ga.; and Chris Carroll, North Georgia Hardwood Corp., Cleveland, Ga.



Woody Harvey, Southern Staircase Inc., Alpharetta, Ga.; Ben Manning, BB&T Insurance Services, Atlanta, Ga.; Greg Johnson, Capitol Administrators, Roswell, Ga.; and Randy Williams, guest, Wilmington, N.C.



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Scott Greene is the owner of North State Hardwoods, Inc. and is in charge of lumber sales.

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climbed down, life never
again was to be quite so
simple...yet only then did the
tree get truly appreciated. For
here was food and fuel and shelter.
Then a weapon, a tool, a wheel - and
transportation. And now it's floors, doors,
veneers, piers, baskets, caskets...rubber for
gaskets. It's a handle for brooms, shovels, rakes...
syrup on pancakes. It's paper and paints...
tars, spars, boxes and boxcars...storage bins and
bowling pins. It's toothpicks and matchsticks...even
plastics...material for distillation, lamination, insulation,
windows for ventilation, and a thousand and one other
we-can't-do-withouts. Yet few people look at a tree in the same
way. To the small boy it's a favorite and strategic place...
where you build a treehouse, spot a woodpecker,
cut slingshots and fishpoles, hang old tires and
climb for fun. To the naturalist it's probing a fascinating world of buds,
blossoms, bark, needles, cones and leaves...spectacles of color...
and some 1,035 domestic species. (Yet to a baseball player it's as simple as a
stick of second-growth ash, sized and shaped to "feel like a million.") To the artist
it's inspiration...alone on a windswept hill, timberline patchwork on a mountainside,
thick and verdant in a valley. To the homeowner it's beauty and shade and property
value...also digging, planting, pruning, edging, feeding and a lot of other weekend work.
To the hobbyist and craftsman it's a new bookcase, picnic table, paneled den, plywood
shelves...a chance to become downright "immortal." To the timberman it's a bustling big
business, measured by cords and board feet. But most of all, a tree remains what
it was in the first
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Marijo Wood Sales Manager



FORECASTS - Continued from page 38

gang rip saw that will cut glue line edges accurately in a multiple of sizes so we can expand our strip and straight line rip business. We hope to have this new machine running before year end '07.



Victor Barringer
Coastal Lumber Company
Charlottesville, Va.

The first quarter of 2008 was a pretty tough one for us, but we should end the year with a small profit or breakeven. We do not see any improvements in business conditions anytime during FY2008. Keep in mind, that since January 1, 2000, there have been 314 furniture plant closures with massive layoffs affecting some 69,190 workers. Manufacturers with household names such as Thomasville, Henredon, Broyhill and Century collectively now have only two or three manufacturing plants left in the U.S. As a result, we have lost 38 percent of the Hardwood lumber industry over the last five years. This restructuring, while painful, was necessary as our industry becomes more global. I think we are about halfway through the restructuring of our industry. I believe Hardwood lumber production in our industry will drop to 7 billion board feet before it is all over.

My biggest concern going forward is the loss of loggers along the Appalachian Region. We need to do more as an industry to attract people into this profession.

In 1997, we operated 21 Hardwood lumber and/or concentration yards. We produced and shipped 214 million board feet of lumber out of these 21 lumber operations. In 2007, we operated 18 of these original 21 operations. These 18 lumber operations last year produced and shipped 230 million board feet of lumber with 19 fewer salaried employees. We did all this without adding any shifts. Is the rest of the industry doing the same thing? Has the entire industry become more efficient? If so, this industry should be in decent shape once this global restructuring is complete. We also do not understand why so many people run two shifts just to save a few dollars on costs. Why do this if your actions to begin with are not showing an acceptable gross margin? Times have changed, it used to be where you could put a mill just about anywhere and make money. When that was the case it made sense to run it wide open.

There does not seem to be a consensus among our customers as to what business conditions will be like in 2008. The distribution yards seem to be doing pretty well. The rest of our business segments seem to be off somewhat. We are seeing that the distribution yards and larger secondary manufacturers are aligning themselves with the manufacturers they believe will be here over the long run. Our larger customers are genuinely concerned about future supply of Hardwood lumber.

We do not have any plan to expand our production facil-

FORECASTS - Continued

ities in 2008, but we do plan to continue to make substantial investments in our existing operations in an effort to improve our overall efficiency.

I would like to take this opportunity to get in a few comments about two groups the industry needs to get behind. The first is the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC). The government gives us almost \$9 million dollars to promote U.S. Hardwoods worldwide, and I do not think you will find anyone in the industry that will not agree that exports are the salvation of our businesses. All we have to do for this funding is support a few offices overseas, yet we struggle to collect the funding to keep these offices open. If we blow this opportunity, industry wide production will drop to 6 billion feet. We also need to get behind the Hardwood Federation. It doesn't matter if you are a Republican or Democrat, it gets their attention when you walk into their office and tell them you represent 30 trade associations – when they are used to dealing with just one.

On behalf of Coastal Lumber Company, best wishes to you and your family during the Holiday Season.



Bucky Pescaglia
Missouri-Pacific Lumber Co. Inc.
Fayette, Mo.

Those of us who have lived in the "Walnut World" over the past several years have enjoyed life in our own little protective bubble. The worldwide demand for our products has outpaced production for much of this decade. Now, after years of rising timber and lumber costs, we see that the demand is beginning to slow. As the bubble starts to burst, you will see many people exit the Walnut lumber business. For the past few years, even sloppy operators could make money in the Walnut market.

As markets slow, customers will again focus on suppliers that can produce a consistent, quality product that is manufactured by someone who really knows how to do it right. Missouri-Pacific Lumber Co. has established itself as a major manufacturer of American Black Walnut and we will continue to keep our company specializing in Walnut. Our bubble has protected us from some of the hazards others in the Hardwood industry have been facing, but we are well aware of the state of the industry as a whole.

Asian dominance in the furniture industry will continue to increase. With more North American furniture manufacturers closing their doors, the importance of developing additional export markets for our wood products will be a priority. Having a presence in every possible market will be our focus. Working with quality brokers and agents that can sell more than just price is important to us too. A lack of loggers will add to the high stumpage prices. We will be forced to get more involved in the logging end with

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FORECASTS - Continued

additional employees and equipment. The ever-increasing energy prices will have us trying to find ways to cut our usages where possible. The lack of qualified employees continues to be an issue for our industry. Emphasis on a safe and healthy work environment will help with employee retention. We will also continue to look at scanning and automated material handling equipment to help with the labor shortage. Health insurance rates are nearly out of control. Educating our employees on the costs and benefits of insurance and their personal responsibility for trying to control costs will be more important than ever. Being active in the political process is a must.

As our company begins the transition from second to third generation ownership, I look forward to facing the challenges of the Hardwood industry. History teaches us that hard times force us to be leaner, smarter and more involved operators. I will continue to serve on committees with the National Hardwood Lumber Association and the American Walnut Manufacturers Association doing my part to promote and support our industry. I encourage everyone to get involved this coming year to help keep the North American Hardwood industry strong.



Phil Barnes
Barnes Brothers Hardwood Flooring
Hamburg, Ark.

Next year appears at this time to be more of the same. There seems to be little on the horizon to improve grade lumber demand. Hardwood unfinished flooring remains very competitive.

Flooring customers don't see anything in the near future to get excited about. Better days are ahead, but when? Construction grade lumber is the bright spot.

Major problems remain the same. High raw material costs, high insurance costs, high taxes, and low finished good prices.

We plan to install another waste fired boiler, a new Hammer Hog, a bag house and more kiln capacity. These improvements will hopefully help us be more competitive.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



John Beard
Beard Hardwoods
Greensboro, N.C.

It is the Fall of 2007 and it's time again to try to figure out where we are headed in 2008. What I can say for sure at this point is what a tough market we are in right now. The old adage that when the United States sneezes the rest of the world catches a cold holds true now as it ever has. Our business for the past 15-20 years has been fairly diversified with a good mix of domestic markets and export markets. It

FORECASTS - Continued

seemed that when one market was slow the other one balanced out the sales. This year both domestic and export sales have slowed...a good indication of the world economy that we all live in now.

My forecast for 2008 is somewhat optimistic. There is no doubt that the first six months of the year will be a challenge. I really feel that the last half we will start to come out of the hole and see some growth. The world has grown to enjoy and depend on North American Hardwoods. We have a great story to tell about sustainability and this will keep us going in the future.

When I talk with my customers about business everyone confirms that 2008 will be tough. Our moulding, cabinet, flooring and distribution customers are slow but have seen worse conditions in their careers. Most of our furniture customers are in China and Vietnam now. Unfortunately, in the 10 years we've been selling over there, getting a straight answer about market conditions and forecasting for the future are hard to come by...so your guess is as good as mine.

There are still many problems and concerns for 2008. The expense of the war continues to burden Americans. Health care expenses continue to rise and are major concern and drain on small businesses. We will be looking at alternatives such as HSA's to try to save on expenses while still offering our employees top benefits. The presidential election will be very interesting this year. The outcome could be a major burden on our industry.

Beard Hardwoods will continue to improve our facility here in Greensboro. After a year of putting in a new wood waste boiler and new computer system the upgrades will be small and geared towards being as efficient as we can.

All of the employees at Beard Hardwoods wish to take this opportunity to thank all of our suppliers, customers and our many Hardwood industry friends a Merry Christmas and Happy and Prosperous New Year!



Philip A. Bibeau
Wood Products
Manufacturers Association
Westminster, Mass.

We, like most people in the industry, predict that business for 2008 will be a challenge. There will be business but companies will have to work harder than ever before for a slice of the shrinking pie. As companies go out of business or merge, there will be more competition for fewer orders. We hear many people tell us that they are only looking for truckload-quantity customers. Everyone would like this type of customer, but unfortunately, there are fewer of these customers. The companies that will have business in 2008 will be those that are able to deliver small quantities with extremely fast turnaround times.

Our members predict that sales will be flat or slightly

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Our most recent product that we have manufactured from our own lumber and sell in our local area is plank flooring that is 13/16" in thickness and widths of 3", 4", 5", 6" and 7". We sell our plank flooring in species like Hickory, Elm, Sassafras, Locust, Quarter Sawn Sycamore and other species that we occasionally cut at our mill.



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FORECASTS - Continued

ahead of what they recorded in 2007. They are working harder and shipping faster than ever before. We are not hearing of lead times any longer than 2 to 3 weeks maximum. The companies that can work under these time constraints will have a good year in 2008.

The major challenges that our association will face in 2008 are ways to help increase our members' exposure, and to generate leads for new profitable business. Early in 2008, the WPMA will be announcing a new program that will help members address this important issue. The other major challenge we will face is the need to assist members in improving their bottom line. With profit margins shrinking, companies look to the WPMA to utilize our purchasing power to offer programs and services to help reduce operating expenses. We are excited to announce a new business insurance program with Indiana Lumbermens Mutual Insurance Company (ILM) that offers extremely competitive pricing along with the possibility of a cash dividend.

Other problems that the industry will continue to face in 2008 will be a shrinking customer base and cash flow issues. As business slows down, it is often the supplier that gets put to the backburner when it comes to getting paid. We are hearing more and more sales managers telling us that they are spending more of their day on the phone collecting money than selling. The monthly credit report of delinquent accounts that the WPMA publishes has seen a 112 percent increase in number of accounts and amounts of outstanding debt reported. We encourage companies to use caution when looking for orders from new companies. Remember, it is not a sale until the order is paid for.



Dave Doucette
Rex Lumber Co.
Acton, Mass.

I hate to be a doomsdayer, but 2008 looks to be a challenge to all involved in the Hardwood industry. The glut of unsold homes will certainly take several months to resolve. Speculative builders may add to this glut as their mortgages become too much to bear. The new construction figures for early 2008 should be very disappointing. Financially solid buyers will take advantage of the excess inventories at bargain pricing before considering building a home. Just how large the inventory of unsold homes becomes, remains to be seen, but there will be a lengthy time involved before new construction begins in earnest. All of us, dependent upon a healthy building climate will undoubtedly be affected.

We are still saddled with increasing energy costs, escalating health and benefit costs, environmental pressures, difficulty in hiring and retaining employees and lofty freight costs to name a few. Sawmills must compete for logs from several directions, secure markets for their com-

FORECASTS - Continued

mon grade of lumber with an offshore manufacturing base competing on a global scale. The Asian market is a stretch from the furniture belt of the past. Traditional markets have been drastically altered and will continue to evolve. Companies unwilling to adapt with the changes will falter. Even though 2008 looks dismal, through these difficult times there will be opportunities for growth. Growth will come by way of new and innovative products, by increasing efficiencies, by seeking new markets and by the opportunity created in the market with competitor attrition.

The outlook from our customer base is a bit uncertain. Many will experience tough times, as they are dependent on a healthy construction sector. Others have become more specialized and are expecting no significant downturn. The general mood, however, is somber.

We face challenges in finding strategies allowing us to fully utilize our existing capacities. The supply chain for many new species is lengthy and virtually impossible to regulate. This tends to create a feast or famine inventory level, which makes scheduling of operations very difficult to adhere to. The maintaining of sufficient levels of many different species will be a difficult project for all of us in 2008.

Our plans include adding value to our product mix, as well as our usual upgrades to our equipment and rolling stock. Rex Lumber is constantly looking for methods to increase the efficiency of our operations, decrease our delivery time and supply our customer base with products that will increase their yields and profitability.



Rich Solano
Pike Lumber Company Inc.
Akron, Ind.

I expect 2008 to be a challenging year. The decline in the housing market has brought difficult times for most. Business' associated with housing starts have seen much less activity in 2007. However, many companies have made adjustments to production levels and product mix, while others are trying their luck with export markets. So, with a little luck I think the Hardwood industry may see some improvement (I tend to be "the glass is half full" kind of guy).

Customers are telling us they are trying to find ways to create value for their customers while keeping costs under control. To help our customers achieve this goal, our approach will be to continue offering a broad mix of top quality products, including Walnut and rift and quartered White Oak, while increasing our level of service.

I believe the main problems for many in the sawmill business will be maintaining profitability and communicating the message that our forests are sustainable. FSC and SFI certification is only a marketing ploy that adds cost but no value to the customer. Pike Lumber Company is committed to harvesting timber on a sustainable basis,

Please turn to page 85

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HARDWOOD PURCHASING -

Continued from page 36

Jerry Anton at **O'Shea Lumber Co.** in Glen Rock, Pa., is cautiously optimistic about the condition of the market in 2008. "We are hoping for improvement next year, but not necessarily anticipating it," he said.

O'Shea, which distributes domestic and imported Hardwood

lumber, experienced slower sales this year in comparison with 2006. Anton said the sluggish housing market adversely impacted O'Shea's sales, particularly for products made of Oak and Birch. The fastest movers for the company were comprised of Cherry, Mahogany, Maple and Walnut.

O'Shea's customers include manufacturers of cabinets, furniture,

architectural millwork, flooring and stairs.

The firm purchased slightly less volume of lumber in 2007 than 2006, but it was not a significant decrease, noted Anton, who added that O'Shea did lower its product prices this year to accommodate the decrease in demand.

Lumber purchases have been off by 10 percent this year at **George Guenzler & Sons**, located in Kitchener, Ont., according to **Barry Freiburger** at the company. He added that the decline in purchases has accommodated the slower market that George Guenzler & Sons serves.

"Our market's been a little bit down from 2006," he said, "so we adjusted to it by purchasing less and holding down our inventory level slightly lower than in 2006. However, the slower market did not force us to lower our product prices. They have remained the same."

George Guenzler & Sons manufactures a variety of items, including furniture for the healthcare industry, which has proven to be a strong customer this year. Stair parts and office furniture are also included among George Guenzler & Sons' items that have sold in a healthy manner this year, primarily to large and small contractors as well as stair specialists.

Freiburger noted that the weakened housing market overall has cast a shadow over the firm's sales. Yet he is optimistic about the immediate future for the lumber industry and expects improvement in 2008.

George Guenzler & Sons recorded strong sales this year of Hard and Soft Maple, followed by European Beech. All of its softwood sales were down.

Skeeter Helwig at **Catawissa Lumber & Specialty Co.** in

HARDWOOD PURCHASING -

Continued

Catawissa, Pa., said that sales have been slower in 2007, but not enough to cause the firm to decrease its workweek.

Catawissa Lumber & Specialty manufactures primarily kitchen cabinets and institutional furniture, which, noted Helwig, have been slower to sell for different reasons. Among these reasons, he said, has been the Chinese market's impact on industries domestically.

Regardless, Catawissa Lumber & Specialty has managed to sell significant quantities of products derived of No. 1 Common Red Oak, Hard and Soft Maple and Cherry. Birch products have been the slowest sellers for the company.

Helwig noted that lumber purchases have not diminished significantly for the company in 2007. However, Catawissa Lumber & Specialty have lowered pricing on some products to encourage marketability.

Overall, Helwig expects the industry and the market remain a little slow, but does anticipate that 2008 will yield more sales than 2007. Helwig added, though, "it may take some time to completely turn around current market trends."

Richard Kelly recently characterized the market for cabinet and door manufacturer **Koch & Co. Inc.**, of Seneca, Kansas, as "very good."

Koch & Co.'s customers are comprised mostly of dealers across the country who, this year, showed specific interest in any products made of Yellow Oak. On the opposite end of the spectrum, products made from Ash have been slower to sell.

Although some prices for Koch & Co. products did decrease due to sluggish demand, lumber pur-

chased through 2007 did not diminish, noted Kelly. In fact, lumber purchases rivaled last year's with the firm buying to suit demand.

Inventory levels are slightly elevated, added Kelly, but he expects strong sales through the end of this year to balance out those levels.

Overall, Koch & Co. is optimistic about the approach of a new year,

and anticipates improvement in the overall market.

A 'soft' market has been the challenge presented to **Winterhouse Furniture Inc.** in Dublin, Pa., according to **John Buckman** at the firm.

Buckman addressed the subject with a sense of humor. "We're fash-

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HARDWOOD PURCHASING -

Continued

ionable," he said with a chuckle, "because business is, and has been, a little slow this year."

The custom kitchen market is Winterhouse's



John Buckman

niche, but a downturn in the housing industry over the past 15 months has taken its toll on the company's customers, who are architects and designers. Buckman said that products comprised of Cherry have been the sure-and-steady sellers for the company in 2007. However, items made of Walnut and Oak have struggled on the market this year.

To counter sluggish sales, Buckman indicated that Winterhouse Furniture has kept its inventory below 2006 levels and have not dropped their product prices.

Buckman added that orders picked up slightly during the last quarter of 2007, and he's optimistic that the market will noticeably improve over the next 12 months.

Mason's Mill and Lumber Co. of Houston, Texas, has been distributing Hardwoods and Hardwood products in the Southeast and central Texas for



Eric Boer

about 20 years, noted **Eric Boer** for the company, which managed to avoid any major setbacks in 2007 due to an overall sluggish industry market.

Mason's Mill and Lumber specializes in the manufacture of cabinets, doors and window panels. Boer said that "2007 sales were just as good if not better than 2006. Alder demand in our market has continued to outpace prompt availability, but our relationships with reputable suppliers has allowed us to keep sufficient inventories on hand to complete orders and millwork orders in a timely fashion. Conversely, demand for Red Oak fell noticeably this year."

The primary customer base for Mason's Mill and Lumber is very diverse and includes custom residential and commercial builders, and the various custom trades that cater to that market, including cabinet, door and window manufacturers. Secondary distributors also comprise part of Mason's customer base.

Boer said that the firm's lumber

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HARDWOOD PURCHASING -

Continued

purchases in 2007 were steady and increased to some degree over 2006 due to several factors, including Mason's acquisition of large parcels of imported Hardwoods, including Mahogany, Jatoba and Ipe. Overall inventory levels at the company were maintained in keeping with past practices, and Boer expects those levels to possibly increase in 2008.

"We do anticipate comparable business in 2008," he said, "or, hopefully see a slight increase over 2007 as we continue to expand our customer base into outlying areas and take on new product lines."



CENTENNIAL - Continued from page 41

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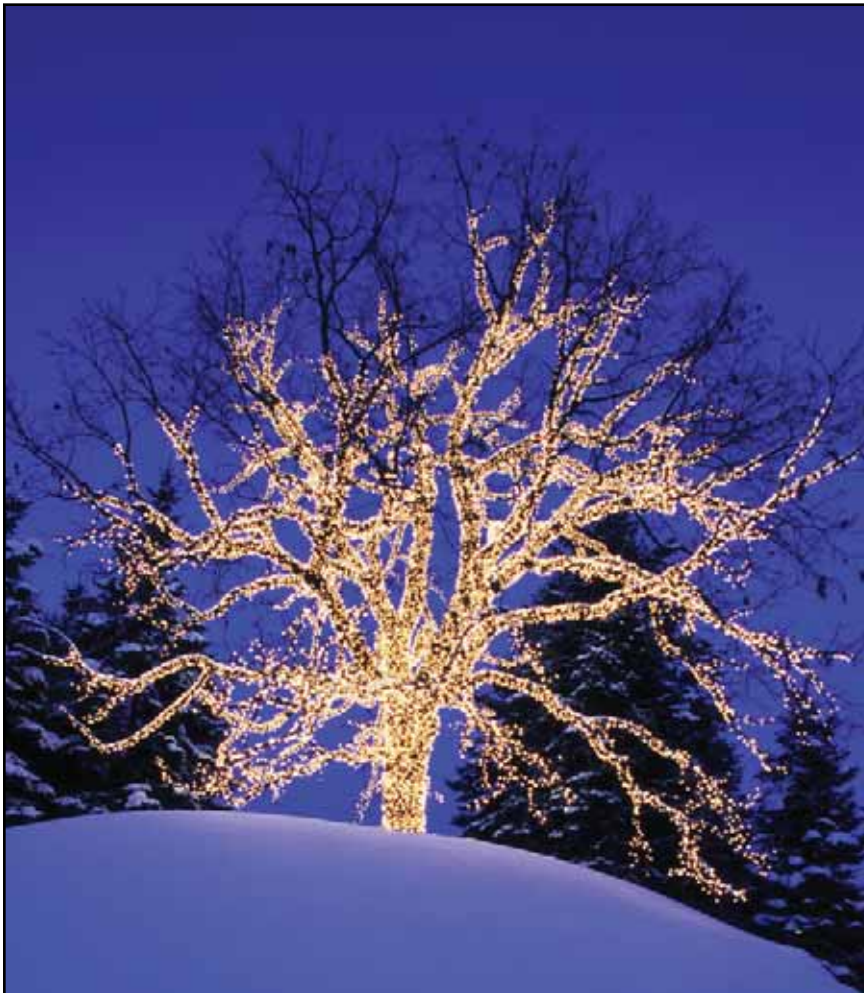
In 1973, John Denver's "Rocky Mountain High" blasted from the radio. Suddenly, everybody wanted to move to Colorado. The cabinetmakers and custom home builders that Dwight worked with were being hired to build million dollar homes for the rich and

Please turn the page



Centennial General Manager Andy Berry uses a wooden board rule to measure wood at Centennial Wood's retail outlet.

Mill Manager Jeff Wright guides a board out of the Raimann gang rip saw in the mill shop.



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Owner Dwight Arithson prepares to run another batch of wood by adjusting the settings on the Weinig C-23 5 head moulder in the mill shop.

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A man with a goatee and a yellow shirt is looking directly at the camera. His head is replaced by a large, rectangular piece of wood with a natural wood grain pattern.

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famous in the ski areas of Vail, Aspen and Telluride. "Back in the 1970s, everything was Oak," said Dwight, "and, we still sell a lot of it today. But, the custom home-builder in Aspen was not interested in just Oak. They wanted other woods, too. They wanted woods with character."

As demand grew, Centennial Wood Company grew, too. It became a distribution yard and Dwight started bringing in more than just Oak. Alder was shipped in from the Pacific Northwest, Maple and Birch from the Great Lakes. Oak and Cherry came from New York and Pennsylvania and Poplar and Ash started showing up from Tennessee. Dwight contacted international importers and began bringing in Teak from Thailand, Mahogany from Africa and Brazilian Cherry out of South America.

Building a Team

Employees come and go, but at Centennial Wood Company, many of the 20 people who work here have been with Dwight for 10, 15, even 20 years. In 1983, he hired a young man as a driver. "Andy Berry was quite a find," Dwight said. "He knew a little about wood-working and our customers loved



Operations Manager Joe Caven loads one of Centennial Wood Company's seven trucks as another shipment heads for the job site.

CENTENNIAL - Continued

him. So, I started grooming him to be our general manager. He is a big reason we have been so successful."

A Highway Runs Through It

As more people moved to the Mile High City, Denver's highways became one big parking lot. In the mid 1990s, a major expansion of I-25 was announced. Unfortunately, Dwight learned that his company was in the bull's eye. "The state walked in one day and told me the highway was going to cut my property in half and the highway was going to run right through my mill shop," Dwight said. "A restaurant is nothing without its kitchen. That mill shop is like our kitchen and losing it would put us out of business. So, I went to court."

It took several years and an army of lawyers, but Dwight finally got the state to see things his way. He received a generous settlement from the state and used it to open a much larger mill in a better location, two miles away.

Room To Expand

Today, Centennial Wood buys more than 700,000 board feet of

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Employee Lupe Guzman feeds FAS Red Oak into the Northtech Double Helical Head Planer in the mill shop.

An 1876-style caboose is now Dwight Arithson's office at Centennial Wood Company in Denver.



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