

IWP -
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car, SUV or truck. Additionally, golfers contributed to the Foundation for Fallen Heroes with proceeds raised during the tournament. Funds collected through this program aids U.S. military families who have lost loved ones in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This annual golfing event is jointly hosted by IWP and East Coast Lumber to show gratitude to their customers, suppliers and business associates. Both companies are headquartered in Climax, N.C., and Industrial Wood Products operates a remanufacturing facility with rail siding. The company has a dry kiln, and offers resawing, cut-to-length, double resaw, panel trims, custom dressing, notching, strapping, grooves and ripping. The firm has more than 1 million board feet of Southern Yellow Pine inventory in various sizes. IWP also has the capability of remanufacturing any species of lumber provided by a customer.

East Coast Lumber Co., a wholesale company, provides lumber, panel, remanufactured lumber products, wood substitute products and related value-added services to customers worldwide, with emphasis on North America.

HANCOCK -
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during the company's fourth annual invitational golf tournament. This year's event was held at Sunday



Charlie Murray, Murray & Dunn Lumber Co., Bangor, Maine; Calvin Biddix, US Lumber, Duluth, Ga.; Wayne Huck, Hancock Lumber Co., Casco, Maine; and Jerry Buteau, None Such Forest Products, Gorham, Maine.



Rick Hoag, West Elizabeth Lumber Co., Elizabeth, Pa.; Angela Teadt, Bueller Lumber Co., St. Claire, Mich.; Anna Russo-Bowen, Hancock Lumber Co., Casco, Maine; and Terry Miller, Softwood Forest Products Buyer, Memphis, Tenn.

River, Bethel, Maine, with overnight accommodations available at Migis Lodge on Sebago Lake and Jordan Grand Resort.

Golf scores were recorded on an individual basis for Hancock customers in order to determine tournament winners. Those winners included: first place, Steve Hadley, US Lumber, Duluth, Ga.; second, Ron Everson, Lakes States Lumber Co. Inc., Aitkin, Minn.; third, Jerry Buteau, None Such Lumber, Gorham, Maine; and fourth, Rick Hoag, West Elizabeth Lumber Co., Elizabeth, Pa.

Many guests also took advantage of two facility tours offered by Hancock, including Bethel Mill and Casco Sawmill.

Native Maine lobster was served for dinner on the first night of the three-day event.

Hancock Lumber is a sixth generation family business that began doing business in Maine in 1848. Hancock's retail yards offer a diverse line of products, ranging from framing lumber to house wrap, roofing to doors and windows, interior millwork and custom kitchens. Hancock produces approximately 62.5 million board feet of Eastern White Pine annually.

West Coast Business Trends

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demand, especially for whitewood products. You just have to grind it out each day and work twice as hard to get half as many orders. There's got to be a culling in the lumber business. Some of the fringe players will go out of business, both on wholesale and mill levels. Our customers are cautious and are not carrying much inventory. When they buy they tell us the tallies they want and what they want

to pay. I would say that comparing the last several years to this one, and using a scale from 1 to 10 this will be an eight, not a bad year."

In Beaver Creek, Ore., Todd Fox, head of sales for Lazy S Lumber, said, "We are still starved for Cedar supply. Logs are very high priced. Demand is average but it is a tight market due to fiber shortage. Cedar prices are extremely high due to shortages, however we are seeing a decent year overall. I'd say that between 1 and 10, our business would be a six. Our margins have shrunk to half of what they should be. Logs have gotten so high and you can't pass along all the increased costs that go with our Cedar business."

Don Dye of Mary's River Lumber, headquartered in Corvallis, Ore., said, "We are extremely busy at our two Cedar mills and our reman plant. The Canadian strike has helped our business. We have the logs we need, but they are expensive. We have focused our production away from decking products and on high demand items like boards and two-inch rough. With the U.S. dollar weakening we have a fair amount of product going to off-shore markets and I see this area getting stronger as time goes on. We are focusing on our program buyers, our regular customers right now, and

there is not much left after meeting their needs. Cedar has been an under valued product for such a long time, but it sure turned around lately." Dye said that higher oil prices have seen prices rise on composite products and that treated material has also seen price increases.

Gene Secco, sales manager for Forest Grove Lumber in McMinnville, Ore., said, "Sales are very strong in our timber business right now. We have shifted our focus away from our commodity items and more on supplying the demand for timbers and this is working well for our sales. I would say our year will be about an eight or a nine on a scale from one to 10. Fortunately customers with money for custom building continue to build even when the general lower-priced home building slows."

Mark Grube, sales manager for Zip-O-Log Mills, Eugene, Ore., said, "We manage to maintain a decent order file for our timbers, though margins are not what we would like. We are doing good volumes, managing to move all of our wood, but prices are not what they were a few months back. Generally speaking, business is tough out there."

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South/Southeast Business Trends



By Gary Miller
Managing Editor

According to regional sources, the housing market continues to adversely affect business in the Southeast. However, contacts noted residential and commercial developments are continuing. An Alabama lumber manufacturer said business is "probably off 25 percent," but orders are still coming in. "I think that the Southeast is in better shape than other parts of the country." The source said the lumber industry's performance mainly depends on how long it takes medium and lower-priced housing to rebound. "That market seems to be where the biggest slow-down is," he said. "I hope during the spring we'll begin to pull out of this thing." The contact said Cypress is

likely the most improved species, as customers choose it in lieu of the much-maligned Cedar.

A source at a Mississippi lumber manufacturer, which mostly handles industrial grade, said that particular market hasn't seen as big a loss.

"If you believe everything you hear and read, it's going to be a bumpy road for the next 6 to 12 months, which will impact all markets," he said. "You don't have to be selling stud grade lumber to be affected by the housing market. It's a ripple effect."

Louisiana, Mississippi See Multifamily Construction Boost

Still suffering from the effects of Hurricane Katrina, Louisiana and Mississippi lead the Southeast in multifamily construction permits, with the two states seeing an increase of 30 percent to over 200 percent respectively. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, this year's permit volumes are over two times higher than those in 2004.

The metropolitan areas of New Orleans and Gulfport-Biloxi are seeing an even more pronounced increase, from 460 to 580 percent respectively. Several wood products industry associations have partnered

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Ontario/Quebec Business Trends



By Doug Knowles
Editor

The Softwood lumber market in Quebec and Ontario continues to struggle as sawmills and wholesalers look for ways to tighten their already cinched belts, and expand markets however and wherever they can.

The owner of one Quebec wholesale operation that specializes in Fir and Spruce says the continuing overproduction by the mills in the western part of the country, combined with weak demand across the United States and Canada, is producing a devastating one-two punch to the industry. He says he continues to operate in the red.

"Business is not good and is not improving," he says. "We are operat-

ing at a loss."

He also points to construction holidays from this past summer and an overall drop in new construction start-ups, as well as the Quebec government.

"(It has) reduced cutting quotas and forced mill closings. It has not redistributed the quotas in whole or in part from these mills to those still operating," he says.

In Ontario, the sales manager at another wholesale operation adds another factor into the mix: the strong Canadian dollar, which has had a serious and severe impact on the exchange rate for wholesalers doing business with United States-based companies.

"There are many causes," he says. "The slowdown in the U.S. economy, the big Canadian dollar, and foreign imports of Softwood."

He cites China, Russia, and South America as being among the new competitors vying for a share of an already tight market. In addition, he says the mills are not helping the situation.

"The mills are just overproducing and are afraid of losing their employees," he notes, adding that prices have come down, but not enough from his perspective. "Our selling price has dropped a lot more than our buying price. It's the lack of demand. There are a lot of days that it doesn't matter how low the price is; you just cannot sell it."

The mills, too, are feeling the crunch. The sales director at one Quebec-based mill says the current slowdown is the worst he has seen in 30 years. He, too, cites overproduction and foreign competition as being among the leading causes.

"There's overproduction from the west and imports from overseas, especially Germany and Europe," he says. "We're squeezed between two crunches and they're taking up our space."

He says his company is doing a lot of remanufacturing, adding that many of the mills he knows about have reduced their shifts from two to one. He adds that his company is down to four days out of every two weeks. Nothing, he says, is moving very fast. "It is all very slow at the moment," he says. "I wouldn't say anything is standing out. Hardly anyone can sell at print. It's all print -5 or -10."

A long time veteran of the Canadian Softwood lumber market, he holds a unique big picture perspective on the situation. Unlike some others in the industry, he sees no imminent promise for a turnaround.

"When there have been bad times in our market, you've been able to see a light," he says. "Not this time. In April and May, production was down 25 percent. It's pretty gloomy."

Several wholesalers note that the U.S. duty on Canadian lumber has not helped the overall picture. As one wholesaler puts it, "It may not be the number one culprit right now, but it has affected us a lot in the last four years."

"It seems to me that all the species have slowed down," he notes, adding that the problem includes prices for Softwood and hardwood. "Our inventory levels are comfortable. The only problem is that they're lopsided. Some of it will move quite well, but that's only about 20 percent of my inventory. The other 80 percent keeps piling up, so the overall inventory is lopsided."

Still, all is not doom and gloom.

"We produce Softwood lumber for the construction industry," one Quebec wholesaler says. "Sales are at a medium level in Montreal and Ottawa. Sales have been weak over the last month, but seem to be improving a bit."

His customers, who include truss

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West Coast Business Trends

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Steve Killgore, head of Cascade Structural Laminators, Eugene, Ore., said, "The American Plywood/Engineered Wood Association has said that the market is off about 25 percent for engineered beams, but since we do a lot of custom, individual applications along with our stock beams, and we are more flexible than most producers, we are seeing fairly strong business. In the market place, no one wants to carry much inventory and we have to work for the business that is out there, however our flexibility makes us pretty competitive."

Darren Duchi, a partner in Siskiyou Forest Products, Anderson, Calif., said, "We are staying fairly busy at our remanufacturing plant here. We make a lot of products using both Softwoods and hardwoods, including Cedar, Redwood, and alder. A lot of what we make is for window and door manufacturers. I think right now there are more positives than negatives as we look at the market place. We are working steadily, keeping our people and machinery busy till we get to the other side of this cycle. I would say on a scale from one to 10 our business for the past year has been a seven. Until a few months ago we were growing steadily, but now we are in more of a holding pattern till things take off again."

"We see wood coming from other countries, such as Chile, Brazil, China and New Zealand costing more with the U.S. dollar weaker. Those products are having a harder time competing with domestic wood products. Importing wood is going to get more and more expensive. At the same time we are seeing export sales pick up. We have started shipping some Redwood into Canada and that is good business for us."

Midwest Business Trends

Continued from page 19

County Payments Law Receives House Approval

The U.S. House of Representatives recently approved the Public Land Communities Transition Act of 2007, which gives supplements to rural counties where timber is harvested from federal lands. The measure, which has yet to go to the Senate, has received approval from lawmakers in Missouri, South Dakota and other Midwestern states.

Home Orders Fall 39 Percent

D.R. Horton Inc., a Fort Worth, Texas-based homebuilder, recently announced a drop of 39 percent in orders for new homes as well as a spike in cancellations. Orders for the fourth quarter fell to 6,374 from 10,430 a year earlier, bringing in approximately \$1.3 billion compared to \$2.5 billion in 2006. The company said it expects tough selling conditions to continue as banks tighten lending standards in the declining housing market.

The U.S. housing market has suffered from high prices and climbing interest rates during the last year or more, which has shut out many potential buyers. Lenders with subprime mortgages going into default has added to the problem.

Many homebuilders have been forced to cut back construction, reduce land holdings and payroll, and even offer discounts or special sales

for those homes already constructed that haven't been sold.

Some Midwest Cities See Growth

In the latest Federal Reserve "Beige Book," several regional Federal Reserve Banks posted growth in commercial real estate and construction. Dallas, Texas, indicated a high level of nonresidential activity, and St. Louis considered the level of commercial construction strong. Construction and real estate markets in Kansas City, Mo., are considered "steady or stable." Kansas City and Dallas also noted some credit tightening in the commercial real estate market.

The "Beige Book" is a summary of informal soundings of business conditions taken by the 12 regional Federal Reserve Banks, which are referenced by their headquarter cities. The report also pinpointed a rise in nonresidential construction. The value of nonresidential construction starts from January through August 2007 climbed 19 percent year-to-date. Architectural and engineering services employment, meanwhile, increased for the 31st straight month and 2.9 percent over last year.

Federal Home Loan Bank Expands Collateral

As a response to credit needs in the

region, the Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines recently began allowing single-family construction loans as eligible collateral for member loans. The Federal Housing Finance Board, which regulates the Des Moines bank, approved the measure, which will accept one-to-four family construction loans as collateral for secured lending to member financial institutions in Iowa, Missouri, North and South Dakota and other states.

With the regulatory approval, the Des Moines bank can proceed in developing specific collateral criteria with the intent of implementing its expanded authority in the near future.

"The collateral expansion is an important signal that the Des Moines bank is making every reasonable effort to support the home mortgage lending of its member institutions, in addition to establishing a long-term foundation for housing production credit availability," said Brian Catalde, president of the National Assoc. of Home Builders (NAHB).

Pending Home Sales Index Drops

According to the NAR Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI), existing-home sales are likely to decline in coming months as mortgage disruptions work their way through the housing market. The PHSI, which is based on con-

tracts signed, fell 6.5 percent to a reading of 85.5, 21.5 percent lower than 2006's index of 108.9. The index in the Midwest dropped 2.9 percent to 78.1, 18.0 percent below a year ago.

The PHSI is based on pending sales of existing homes, when a contract has been signed but a transaction has not closed. An index of 100 is equal to the average level of contract activity during 2001, which was the first year to be examined as well as the first of five consecutive record years for existing-home sales.

South/Southeast Business Trends

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together to form the Wood Products Council (WPC), and are working to bring wood construction solutions to the damaged areas.

The WPC's Gulf Coast program consists of several components including consumer promotion of raised wood floors for mitigating storm water damage; training of builders on raised floor

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Western Business Trends



By Terry Miller
Associate Editor

Sources contacted in the Western region report still being affected by woes in the housing market, with no promise to let up until next year.

An Idaho lumber manufacturer said it's tough right now "finding enough customers" to buy wood. "When you have that much wood being made and such little wood being used, it becomes a real issue," he said. "I don't think we've seen the worst of this yet."

The source said Cedar has performed the best of all species, and sales have been helped by the mill workers strike in Canada.

A Montana siding manufacturer said he expects the market to continue its shift downward, before picking up in 2008.

"I'm not seeing any signs that the housing market is improving," he said. "It will take a year before housing starts to go back up. We're staying pretty busy just because everybody is trying to get their jobs closed before the snow flies."

West Sees Lower Builder Confidence

According to the National Assoc. of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI), builder confidence took another hit recently thanks to substantial inventories of unsold units and the perceived effect negative media coverage is having on potential buyers.

The nationwide HMI dropped two points to 18, its lowest point since the series began in January 1985. The Western region accounted for a large part of the drop in builder confidence, falling four points to 14.

"Builders in the field are reporting that, while their special sales incentives are attracting interest among consumers, many potential buyers are either holding out for even better deals or hesitating due to concerns about negative and confusing media reports on home values," said Brian Catalde, NAHB president.

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Northeast Business Trends



By David Owens
Associate Editor

In the midst of a downturn in the housing market, sources in the Northeast describe the current lumber market as "spotty,"

with orders still moving but not consistently.

A Maine lumber manufacturer said he expected industry sales to remain slow until 2008, when the housing market is expected to begin improving.

"It probably won't get better until 2008 or 2009," he said. "We go through these cycles. It's nothing new to us, but we don't like it. We're getting close to breaking even."

A New Hampshire Eastern White Pine board producer said prices haven't faltered much, despite a flooded market. However, orders are not coming in like they used to.

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"We had orders for months out," he said. "Now, they're ordering product as they move it. When their inventory is low, they put an order in. Before, we had orders in and were working all of the time."

House Passes Homeownership Act

The U.S. House of Representatives recently approved the Expanding American Homeownership Act of 2007, which is designed to help more working families become homeowners. The bill carries an amendment, authored by Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), which enables creditworthy borrowers to purchase a Federal Housing Administration (FHA) insured home in many costly markets.

Current FHA loan limits are too low to allow many potential homebuyers wishing to utilize the FHA program to purchase houses in more expensive areas. The legislation, supported by the National Assoc. of Home Builders (NAHB), also grants the FHA authority to establish greater flexibility in setting down payment requirements for its single-family programs; revise requirements for condominium loans; establish a risk-based mortgage insurance premium pricing structure; extend the maximum loan maturity to 40 years; and insure more "reverse mortgages."

New-Home Sales Boom In Northeast

Despite an 8.3 percent drop nationwide, new-home sales recently climbed 42.3 percent in the Northeast, according to a recent report by the U.S. Commerce Department. The seasonally adjusted annual rate stands at 795,000 units nationwide, 21.2 percent below a year earlier. Turmoil in the mortgage finance system is credited with the overall decline.

The U.S. Commerce Department reported the median price of new homes sold at \$225,700, 7.5 percent below a year ago. Builders, who are slowing construction and working to sell off homes, helped lower the inventory of new homes for sale 1.5 percent to 529,000 units. The equivalent months' supply increased to 8.2 months because of the slower sales pace.

David Seiders, NAHB chief economist, said the report shows the supply-demand imbalance in the single-family housing market is still "quite serious."

"NAHB's forecast shows a trough for home sales in the early part of 2008, assuming that the Fed keeps overall employment and income growth going and that order is restored to key parts of the housing finance system," Seiders stated.

Completed homes for sale were 34 percent of the inventory, while units still under construction represented 50 percent of the inventory and units for-sale that were permitted but not yet started represented 16 percent of the inventory level — essentially no change from the previous two months. The median length of time that completed homes were on the market was 5.9 months, down from 6.0 months.

Based on the estimates, the National Assoc. of Home Builders (NAHB) expects the recovery of the housing market to be delayed until mid-to-late 2008.

Trust To Conserve Northeast Forestlands Expands Efforts

The Maine-based Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands (TCNF) recently voted to collaborate its efforts with other organizations working towards forest harvest practice certification in the region. States currently active in the collaborative effort are Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

Other states looking to join the

Continued on page 38

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Robert Harris, Ellen Thompson and Bob Jordan, Jordan Lumber and Supply Inc., Mt. Gilead, N.C.; and Kevin Diewold, TradeTec Computer Systems Ltd., Parksville, B.C.



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John Dicks, Moulder Techniques, Randleman, N.C.; Ben Harding, Randolph Bank & Trust Co., Asheboro, N.C.; Ryan Hillsinger, East Coast Lumber Co., Climax, N.C.; and Tom Menius, Just-Kris Distributing, Asheboro, N.C.



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Nash and Dick Elliott, Elliott Sawmilling, Estil, S.C.; Mike Redwine, East Coast Lumber Co., Climax, N.C. and Tony Weisner and Brent Richardson, Boise Building, Greensboro, N.C.

Additional photos on page 31

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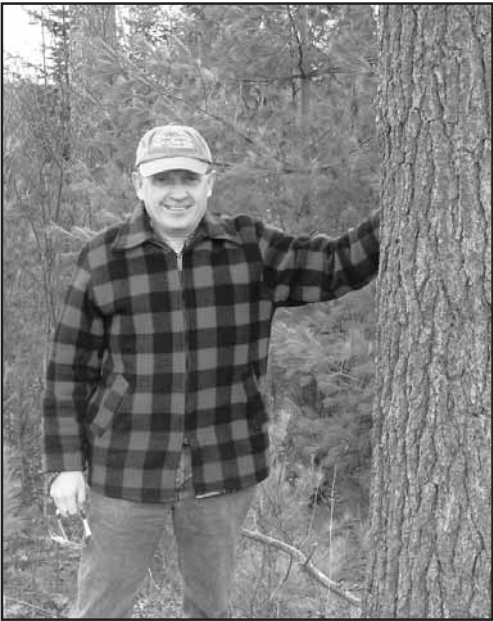
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Ron and Francis Moore and Frank Marsh, Routh Transportation Inc., Climax, N.C.



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Les and Janet Henry, East Coast Lumber Co., Climax, N.C.; Al Hinson, Pallet Resource of NC Inc., Lexington, N.C.; and Bill Smielewski, Williams Smielewski Associates, Monticello, N.Y.



Glenn Hawley, East Coast Lumber Co., Climax, N.C.; and Lorena and Tony Josephs, Industrial Wood Products, Climax, N.C.



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Rick Harris, Tabor City Lumber Co., Tabor City, N.C.; John Sheffield, Riverside Forest Products Inc., Augusta, Ga.; Danny Talbert, Talbert Lumber Co., Roxboro, N.C.; and Gary Easton, Double G Forest Products, Navastone, Texas



Diane Yow, Gail and Rick Crawford and Rick Yow, Metals USA, Randleman, N.C.



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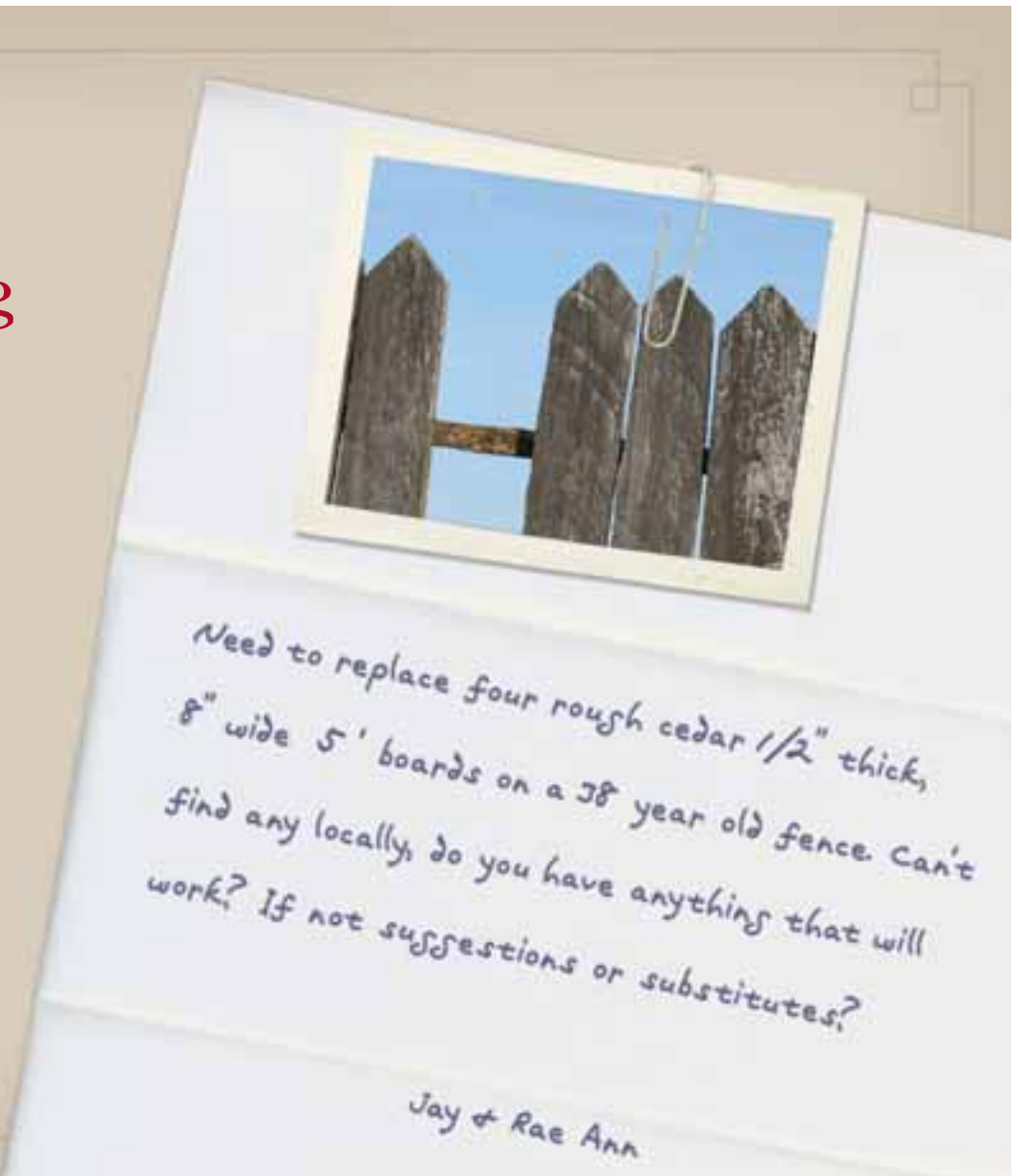
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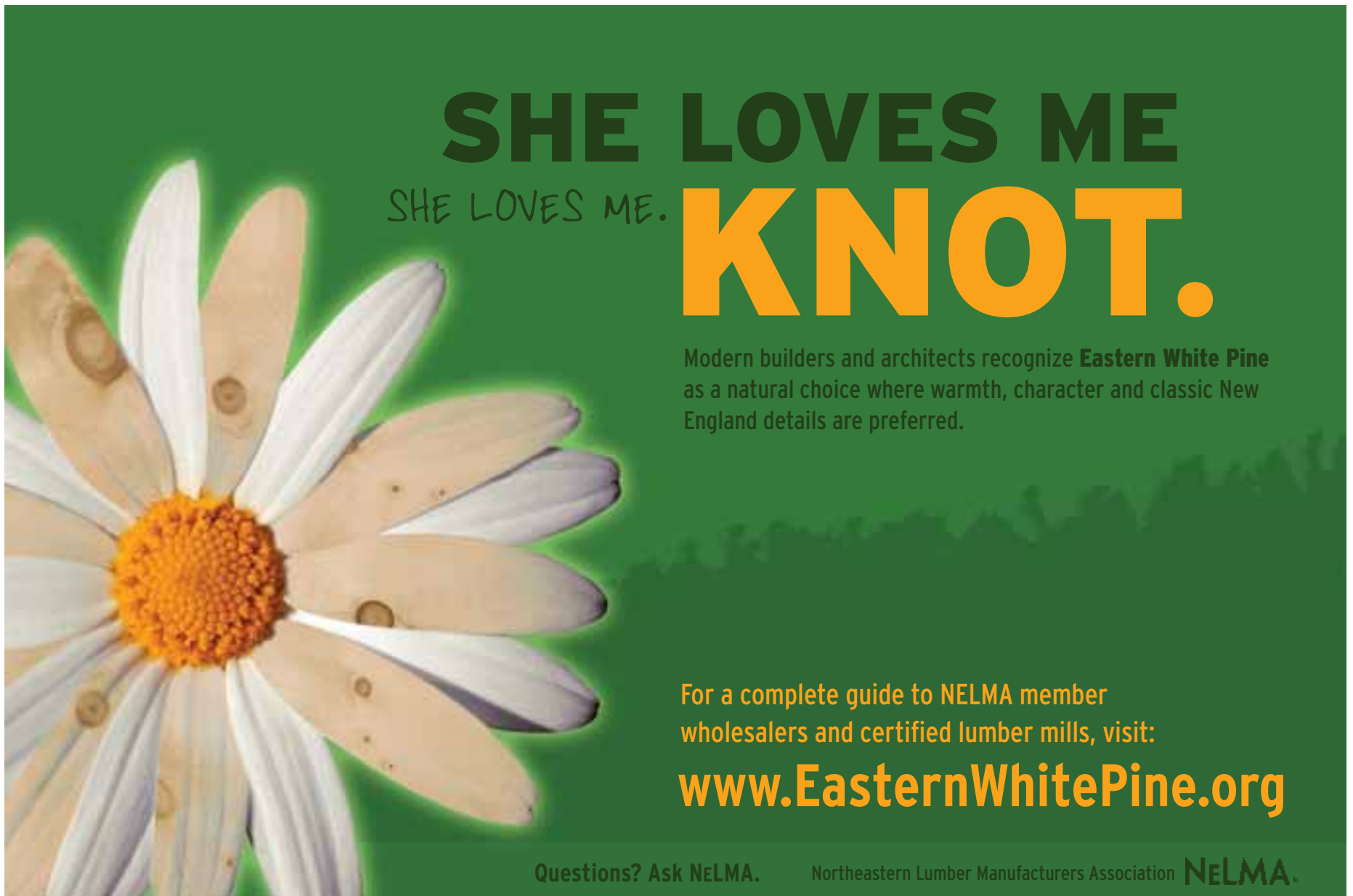
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South/Southeast Business Trends

Continued from page 27

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Mortgage Market Shows Signs Of Growth

According to a recent forecast by the National Assoc. of Realtors (NAR), conditions in the mortgage market are improving for consumers, which will likely help home sales into 2008. Lawrence Yun, NAR senior economist, said widening credit availability will likely help real estate in all regions, including the Southeast.

"There are still a lot of people buying homes," he said. "Markets like Raleigh (N.C.) have been outperforming recently and will continue to do well next year. Other areas will likely move up in the price growth rankings due to very positive local economic developments."

Existing-home sales are expected to total 5.78 million this year and then rise to 6.12 million in 2008, a decrease from the 6.48 million reported in 2006. New-home sales are forecast to close 2007 at 804,000 and 752,000 next year, well below the 1.05 million in 2006. Housing starts, including multifamily units, are likely to total 1.37 million in 2007 and 1.24 million next year, down from 1.8 million in 2006.

Existing-Homes Sales Decrease In Southeast

Due to problems with mortgage availability, existing-home sales recently decreased 2.7 percent in the Southeast region to 2.20 million, 12.7 percent below a year ago. The decline echoed the drop reported nationwide by the National Assoc. of Realtors (NAR). Total existing-home sales decreased 4.3 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.50 million units, 12.8 percent below the 6.31 million-unit pace in 2006.

Pat V. Combs, NAR president, said the mortgage picture is slowly improving with lower interest rates and better loan availability.

According to the McLean, Va.-based Freddie Mac, the national average commitment rate for a 30-year, conventional, fixed-rate mortgage stands at 6.57 percent, down from 6.70 percent a month ago. The median home price was \$224,500, up 0.2 percent from a year ago.

Total housing inventory rose 0.4 percent nationwide to 4.58 million existing homes available for sale, which represents a 10-month supply at the current sales pace. The national median existing-home price for all housing types was \$224,500, up 0.3 percent from 2006 when the median was \$224,000. The median price for homes in the Southeast is \$183,500, which is 0.7 percent below a year ago.

Single-family home sales fell 3.8 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.81 million, 13.0 percent below the 5.53 million-unit level in 2006. The median existing single-family home price was \$223,900, which is essentially even with a year ago.

Existing condominium and co-op sales dropped 8.0 percent to a sea-

sonally adjusted annual rate of 690,000 units, 11.7 percent lower than the 781,000-unit pace a year ago. The median existing condo price was \$228,500, up 2.1 percent from 2006.

Commercial Real Estate, Construction Markets Stable

In the Federal Reserve's latest "Beige Book" summary of informal soundings of business conditions, commercial real estate and construction markets are considered "generally stable to expanding across the Districts." Richmond, Va., and Atlanta, Ga., are among the six "steady or stable" commercial construction and real estate markets.

The 12 regional Federal Reserve Banks, which are referenced by their headquarter cities, indicated low or declining vacancy rates, and modestly rising rents. Richmond also noted some tightening of credit in the commercial real estate market.

Most contractors contacted said they had seen no damage from housing and credit problems. However, some developers added that credit for projects has become unaffordable or harder to obtain.

Ontario/Quebec Business Trends

Continued from page 26

manufacturers, tell him that they are hoping there will be some turnaround in the market before the winter months set in.

Although he says he feels there is a possibility of an economic turnaround for the industry, his company is looking to try to improve its chances for the long term by looking into alternative markets. That, however, comes at a cost as well.

"We are going to survey our customers and are also looking at European markets but they use different dimensions so will have to adapt to their requirements," he says, adding that the company is looking at offering additional added-value products, such as wood for finishing and patio products.

The vice president at an Ontario wood remanufacturing facility says he, too, feels that the market is reaching some semblance of stability. His company, which sells to a mix of retailers and some contractors, is maintaining what he calls "a reasonable inventory for this time of year."

The sales director at a Quebec remanufacturing facility is a little less certain that the market will even out. He says his company has adopted a more aggressive approach, looking for alternative markets wherever they might be.

"We're trying all kinds of stuff," he says, including the Middle East export market. "But everyone's doing the same thing."

One Ontario-based wholesaler says he believes the industry as a whole will need to play a waiting game, and hope that enough vendors can ride out the difficult times.

"I think patience is the only thing we have to hold onto," he says.

Western Business Trends

Continued from page 28

The NAHB/Wells Fargo HMI gauges builder perceptions of current single-family home sales and sales expectations for the next six months as either

Continued on page 38

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Western Business Trends

Continued from page 37

“good,” “fair” or “poor.” The survey also asks builders to rate traffic of prospective buyers as either “high to very high,” “average” or “low to very low.” Scores for each component are then used to calculate a seasonally adjusted index where any number over 50 indicates that more builders view sales conditions as good than poor.

The index gauging current single-family home sales and the index gauging traffic of prospective buyers each declined to two points, to 18 and 15, respectively. The index gauging sales expectations for the next six months, meanwhile, remained unchanged at 26.

David Seiders, NAHB chief economist, said the fact that the index gauging sales expectations remained steady is positive news for the housing market. “Builders believe they are taking the right steps to reduce inventories and position themselves for the market recovery that lies ahead,” he said. “NAHB’s housing forecast indicates that home sales should stabilize within the next six months and show significant improvement during the second half of next year.”

Forest Service Introduces Bark Beetle Mitigation Plan

The U.S. Forest Service recently introduced a bark beetle mitigation plan in seven Colorado counties and parts of Wyoming. The plan covers more than 80,000 acres of bark beetle mitigation projects over the next five years using a variety of treatments.

The current epidemic was triggered by drought in 1997, and has spread to 755,000 acres of Lodgepole Pine in northern Colorado and southeastern Wyoming. The plan focuses treatments on portions of the White River, Arapaho-Roosevelt and Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests in Summit, Eagle, Grand, Jackson and Routt counties and Albany and Carbon counties in Wyoming.

The Colorado Bark Beetle Cooperative includes the U.S. Forest Service; Bureau of Land Management; Colorado State Forest Service; Clear Creek, Eagle, Garfield, Grand, Jackson, Lake, Park, Pitkin, Routt and Summit counties; municipalities; utility companies and water districts; and the environmental community. The Colorado Congressional Delegation provided an additional \$2 million in 2007 to address the bark beetle issue.

West Looks At Raging Wildfires

A group of conservation experts including Jerry Williams, a retired U.S. Forest Service director of fire and aviation management, recently met in Missoula, Mont., to discuss building a restoration economy in the West. Since 2002, six Western states have set records for the amount of acreage burned in a single season.

Williams said today’s wildfires are so intense that firefighters often have to depend on Mother Nature for help. While roughly 99 percent of fires are stopped after initial efforts, the other one to two percent of fires consume 95 percent of the acreage and 85 percent of firefighters’ budgets.

The two-day conference, entitled “Fire in the Woods: Perspectives on Forest Restoration,” also discussed the growing strain on the Forest Service, which will likely spend half of its budget on fighting fires this year. By comparison, that figure was 15 percent in 1990. Williams said the budget constraints are causing cut-backs in such programs as wildlife, recreation and water quality.

So far this year, seven firefighters

The Softwood Forest Products Buyer

have died battling blazes in the Western region, which have destroyed more than 400 houses. John Watson, a Montana-based fire-fighting contractor, said the job has become more dangerous as houses and vacation cabins are built near or inside national forests.

“There’s the frustration of knowing these people aren’t taking care of their home, and why do we have to do it?” he asked. “There isn’t a whole lot that needs to be done to mitigate the threat, but they won’t do it.”

Researchers said wildfires are becoming more catastrophic due to hotter weather, yearlong drought and the spread of weeds.

Northeast Business Trends

Continued from page 28

organization include New Hampshire, Vermont and New York. TCNF is a 501(c)(3) conservation organization driven by a vision to enhance the health of Maine’s forests through exceptional accountability.

Housing Starts See Significant Increase In Northeast

According to a report by the Commerce Department, housing starts recently jumped 45.4 percent in the Northeast, well above all other regions that actually posted declines for the month. Building permits, however, were down 4.1 percent in the region.

Housing starts fell 10.2 percent nationwide to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.19 million units, the slowest rate since 1993. Starts of new single-family homes were down 1.7 percent for the month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 963,000 units. Multifamily housing starts decreased 34.3 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 228,000 units for the month.

“Builders are taking the necessary steps to narrow the supply of unsold units on the market as buyer demand continues to be adversely affected by tightened lending standards and concerns about negative media reports on the housing market,” said Brian Catalde, NAHB president.

David Seiders, NAHB chief economist, said the numbers clearly show builders are pulling back on production until sales improve. “We expect some additional downward movement in housing production going into the next year,” he said.

Total building permits fell 7.3 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual pace of 1.23 million units. Single-family permit issuance was down 7.1 percent to a pace of 868,000 units for the month. The rate of multifamily permit issuance decreased 7.7 percent to 358,000 units.

Leftover Wood Could Be Fuel Source

The New York Department of Environmental Conservation recently began studying ways to convert logging leftovers into biomass fuel. The agency received a \$64,000 grant from the U.S. Forest Service for a 1-year project to evaluate whether producing woody biomass would be worthwhile.

The state is looking for ways to enhance the economic and environmental health of North Country communities. The program could help private forestland owners find new markets for low-grade wood, thus contributing to the economy.

TRADE TALK

Tripp Lumber Introduces New Log Cabin Siding
Missoula, Mont.—Tripp Lumber Co., headquartered here, recently introduced a new assortment of 1x12 log



Dylan Tripp shows off Tripp Lumber Co.'s Grizzly Hewn lumber product.

cabin siding products to the market, including what is called "rough tex" boards.

Dylan Tripp, sales representative for the company, said the "rough tex" boards were originally developed for use in board-and-batten applications, where wide boards are set vertically with their joints covered by narrow strips of wood. Tripp said the new boards are run horizontally with chinking, or mortar, between the logs in the construction of log cabins and other structures. "With our sidings, people are putting in chinking to give it an actual log home look," he said. "It breaks up the total wood look a little bit."

Other new products Tripp Lumber recently introduced includes hand-hewn Grizzly Hewn, rough, resawn or smooth channel, which comes in 1x10 or 1x12 with a chinking gap and various textures on the face. The firm also sends samples of the "rough tex" boards so customers can get a feel for the uniqueness of the product.

With over 30 years in the lumber industry, Tripp Lumber has built its reputation on high quality products, on-time shipments and outstanding service, Tripp said. Tripp Lumber's number one priority is its customers. The company has production capabilities of over 200,000 board feet per day and offers an on-site rail spur and new planing facility. For more information, visit www.triplumber.com.

NELMA To Offer Marketing Forest Products Workshop

Cumberland, Maine—The Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Assoc. (NELMA) will partner with the Blacksburg, Va.-based Virginia Tech University to offer "Marketing Forest Products — Succeeding In Today's Challenging Markets," Dec. 6-7 at its headquarters, located here.

The workshop, based on "A Marketing Guide for Small to Medium Sized Primary Forest Products Processors" by Dr. Robert L. Smith, will explore marketing as it applies to all individuals involved with the marketing of wood products and how to effectively compete in a global marketplace. Workshop attendees will learn about marketing concepts, strategies, marketing methods, ways to locate customers, exporting and international markets, etc.

The registration deadline is November 15 and space is limited. For more information, contact Donna Reynolds at the NELMA office at 207-829-6901 or donna@nelma.org.

Progressive Solutions Sees Record Sales

Richmond, B.C.—Progressive Solutions Inc., headquartered here, recently announced a 3-month record sales order, with over 600 users signing up for bisTrack™ and Lumber Track™

software products. New customers include International Forest Products (Interfor), Manning Building Supplies Inc., Viking Inc., White's Lumber, r.k. Miles Inc., Stone Lumber and Mountain Lumber.

"We've invested a great deal to get the most technologically advanced, full-featured products on the market for the lumber and building materials industry," said Len Williams, president and chief executive officer of Progressive Solutions. "It's paying dividends now, and not only in terms of a growing customer base. Our products are also appealing to develop, sell and implement because of the modern platform and support tools."

Founded in 1989, Progressive Solutions Inc., based in Richmond, B.C., is an international leader in business software solutions for the forest products industry. Its main products, Lumber Track and bisTrack, address the management needs of sawmills, panel mills, remanufacturers, wholesale distributors and building materials/distributors/dealers with domestic and export markets.

Roseburg Acquires Decolam Facility

Roseburg, Ore.—Roseburg Forest Products Co., headquartered here, recently announced the purchase of Decolam Inc.'s laminating facility in Orangeburg, S.C. Allyn Ford, Roseburg president, said the acquisition would "give (Roseburg) laminating capacity on the East Coast, complementing current operations across the U.S."

The Decolam facility employs approximately 80 people, with most remaining in their positions. Founded in 1988, Decolam has grown to be one of the country's largest independent laminators, producing a complete line of laminated products including papers, vinyls, low pressure laminates and thermally-fused melamine. The company provides custom products to the kitchen cabinet, display, wall plaque, tabletop and furniture markets.

Roseburg Forest Products, established in 1936, is a family owned manufacturer of lumber, particleboard, Softwood plywood, engineered wood products and specialty panels with land and facilities in the northwest and southeast United States.

Interfor To Purchase Weyerhaeuser's Kamloops Facility

Kamloops, B.C.—International Forest Products (Interfor), headquartered in Vancouver, B.C., recently announced plans to purchase Weyerhaeuser's sawmill here and associated harvesting rights. The deal, which is subject to approval from Weyerhaeuser's board and regulatory approval, includes annual harvesting rights to 24.7 million cubic feet of public land timber, and is expected to close this quarter.

With more than \$800 million in sales, Interfor is one of the Pacific Northwest's largest producers of quality wood products for sale to markets around the world. The company has four sawmill operations in British Columbia, one in Washington and two in Oregon. Interfor also operates a number of value-added remanufacturing and specialty products facilities in British Columbia and Washington. The firm has a combined manufacturing capacity of 1.4 billion board feet and employs 2,000 people.

California Redwood Co. Celebrates New Name, Purpose

Eureka, Calif.—California Redwood Co., based in Seattle, Wash., celebrated its new name, logo and signage at its Brainard remanufacturing facility here recently. Green Diamond Resource Co., also located in Seattle, purchased Simpson Timber Co.'s California operations earlier this year. Other facilities include a sawmill in Orick, a sawmill and remanufacturing facility in Korbek, and a remanufacturing facility and chip dock in

Continued on page 41

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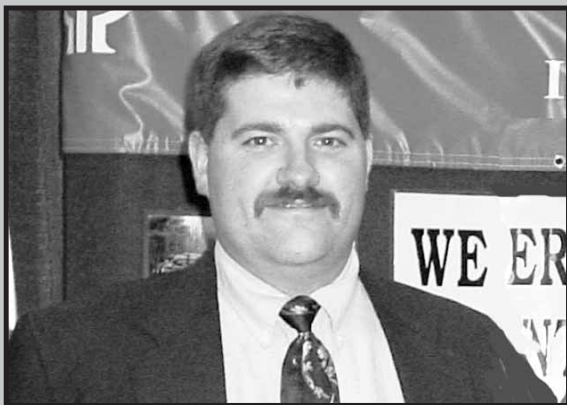
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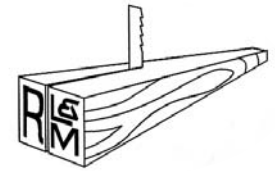
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TRADE TALK

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Samoa.

"While the Simpson name and legacy has served us well over these many years, we wanted to adopt a new name and logo with which to go forward in this rewarding and challenging business of Redwood lumber production," said Carl Schoenhofer, vice president and general manager of California Redwood Co., which will operate separate from Green Diamond.

Burns Receives Distinguished Service Award

Albany, N.Y.—Mike Burns, deputy director of the Empire State Forest



Mike Burns, deputy director of the Empire State Forest Products Assoc., talks to Sally Bogdonavich, a teacher at Smiths College in Paul Smiths, N.Y.

Products Assoc., based here, recently received the Temperate Forest Foundation's Distinguished Service Award.

Burns said the annual Teachers Tour is "one of the most enjoyable parts" of working for the Empire Forest Products Assoc. "I look forward to seeing the change in attitudes and perceptions that takes place when they are exposed to our industry and can use their own judgment as to what is science and what is hype," he said.

The Temperate Forest Foundation was founded in 1989 in Portland, Ore., and is currently located in Beaverton, Ore. The purpose of the Foundation is to gather, analyze, and communicate scientifically credible information to the public on social, economic and ecological issues. The organization presented its first Distinguished Service Award in 1993.

The Empire State Forest Products Assoc. began in 1906, as the Adirondack Lumber Manufacturers and Shippers Assoc., to help track declining inventories of Adirondack Softwood and promote the emerging science of forestry. The name changed three years later to reflect additional members from other regions of the state and a growing statewide interest.

PPG Sells Fine Chemicals Business

Pittsburgh, Pa.—PPG Industries, headquartered here, recently sold its specialty chemicals business for \$65 million to Milan, Italy-based ZaCh System. Charles Bunch, chief executive officer and chairman of PPG, said the move will allow the company to focus on its vision to become the "world's leading coatings and specialty products and services company."

PPG has 125 manufacturing facilities and equity affiliates in more than 20 countries around the globe, and serves customers in construction, consumer products, industrial and transportation markets. A pharmaceutical fine chemicals plant in LaPorte, Texas, and the PPG-Sipsy facility in Avrille, France, were included in the sale.

BBMD Center Moves To Auburn

Boise, Idaho—Boise Building Materials Distribution (BBMD), a business unit of Boise Cascade LLC, based here,

recently relocated its distribution center to Auburn, Ga. The 38-acre facility includes rail service, 155,000 square feet of warehouse space, 18 acres of paved inventory storage and 12,000 square feet of office space.

"The move allows us to be more efficient and to continue growing our sales and customer service in the Atlanta market, and enhances our core value of safety for our employees," said Stan Bell, senior vice president of BBMD.

BBMD is a leading national inventory-carrying wholesale distributor of building materials with 31 distribution branches strategically located across the United States. BBMD offers a broad range of products including engineered wood products, oriented strandboard, plywood, lumber, siding and general-line items such as framing accessories, composite decking, roofing and insulation. Sales in 2006 were \$2.9 million.

Boise Cascade manufactures engineered wood products, plywood, lumber and particleboard, and distributes a broad line of building materials, including wood products manufactured by the company. Boise also manufactures a wide range of specialty and premium products.

Bakerview Acquires Pat Power Forest Products

Abbotsford, B.C.—Bakerview Forest Products Inc., located here, recently purchased Pat Power Forest Products, based in Port Coquitlam, B.C. Established in 1981, Bakerview is a leading remanufacturer of Western Red Cedar, Hemlock and Douglas Fir, shipping over 17 million board feet of its products annually to customers in the United States, Japan, Australia, Europe and throughout Canada.

Bakerview, a member of the BC Wood Specialties Group and Independent Lumber Remanufacturing Assoc., is focused on an innovative and flexible delivery of high quality lumber products to its clients.

Mason Co. Forest Products Relocates Sales Office

Shelton, Wash.—Mason County Forest Products relocated its sales office here recently, adding several new staff members in the process. Dave Ramsey is the general sales manager, while Dan Werst handles cutting sales. Both will be assisted by Dawn Duncan.

Mason County Forest Products, located in the Green Elephant Preserve in western Washington, produces the Titan and Regal line of quality stud products. For more information, visit www.titanstuds.com.

Trubiano Joins Holbrook Lumber

Albany, N.Y.—Tony Trubiano recently joined Holbrook Lumber Co. Inc., based here, as vice president of sales. Holbrook, a 30-year industry veteran, has served in numerous capacities in wholesale distribution including inside and outside sales and product management.

For the past 10 years, Trubiano has served as Northeast Regional Sales and Marketing Manager for BlueLinX Corp. He also previously worked as sales manager for Georgia-Pacific Corp. and Coastal Forest Products.

Since 1911, Holbrook Lumber has served independent retail lumberyards throughout New York and New England, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Products manufactured by the company include dimensional and treated lumber, specialty hardwoods, engineered wood products, and composite decking and railings.



Tony Trubiano

Continued on page 43

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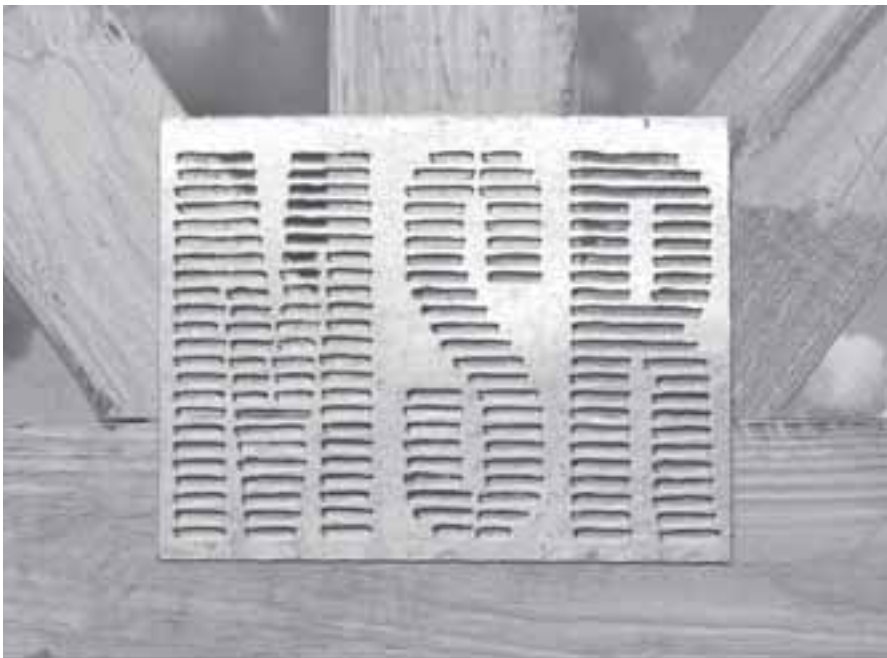
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Richard *Jimbo* Shaver and Chad Shaver handle the Southern Yellow Pine and Hardwood sales for their company.



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TRADE TALK

Continued from page 41

Temple-Inland Sells Timberlands

Austin, Texas—Temple-Inland Inc., based here, recently sold 1.55 million acres of timberland to an investment unit of Campbell Group Inc. of Portland, Ore., for \$2.38 billion. The sale was part of a restructuring effort for Temple-Inland, which includes spinning off financial services and real-estate operations and selling timberland.

The company will net approximately \$1.8 billion from the sale, which will be used to offset debt (\$700 million) and shares distributed to stockholders (\$1.1 billion). Campbell Group also agreed to a 20-year fiber supply agreement for pulpwood, a 12-year fiber supply agreement for sawtimber, and will continue Temple-Inland's conservation efforts. Temple-Inland owns 1.8 million acres of timberland in Texas, Louisiana, Alabama and Oregon.

RONA Answers Greenpeace Accusations

Boucherville, Que.—RONA Inc., headquartered here, recently issued a response to a Greenpeace Article, which claimed Rona and other retailers use trees from Canada's endangered Boreal Forest. The Canadian distributor of hardware, home renovation and gardening products said the accusations were untrue, and all wood consumed is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council or another agency.

"With respect to forest products, the company does not buy any product derived from endangered species and favors the purchase of products that bear Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Canadian Standards Assoc. (CSA) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) as well as ISO 14001 certifications," the statement read. "Furthermore, RONA ensures that all of the goods it procures, whether forest products or other, have been produced in conditions that respect human rights and the environment."

AFA Forest Products Buys Lighthouse Lumber

Bolton, Ont.—AFA Forest Products Inc., based here, recently acquired Lighthouse Lumber Wholesalers Ltd., located in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The purchase completed AFA Forest Products' goal of becoming a national distributor with branches from Vancouver, B.C., to St. Johns, Nfld. John Morrisey, a 20-year industry veteran, will head the new division as general manager. Jean Laflamme, founder of Lighthouse Lumber, will remain on in an advisory role.

AFA Forest Products, in business since 1974, is a privately owned, independent distributor with 13 branches throughout the United States and Canada. The company distributes a diverse variety of commodity and allied products, primarily servicing building supply retailers.

Biomass Gas & Electric To Build Wood-Fired Power Plant

Norcross, Ga.—Biomass Gas & Electric LLC (BG&E), located here, recently announced plans to build a 75-megawatt renewable energy plant, the largest waste wood-fired power-generating plant in the United States. BG&E has signed a 20-year Power Purchase Agreement with Progress Energy Florida to provide the utility with electric power. Other agreements have been signed with the city of Tampa, Fla., and Georgia Power Co.

BG&E's technology uses a two-step process, with the wood biomass first being superheated in an oxygen-free environment to produce a synthetic gas, which powers a turbine to generate electricity. Heat from that process is captured in a second system, which uses the steam to run a generator and pro-

duce additional power. The process, called combined cycle, offers a significant power production alternative that is cost-competitive and environmentally friendly.

Pro-Build To Build Robotic Truss Plant

Denver, Colo.—Pro-Build Holdings Inc., headquartered here, recently announced an agreement with Florida-based TCT Manufacturing Inc. to build the first-ever fully automated roof truss manufacturing plant. The facility, which will incorporate state-of-the-art robotic technology, is expected to dramatically increase labor productivity by a magnitude of five times.

The plant will be located within a major growth market in the southeastern United States and is expected to come on line during the second quarter of 2008. TCT's robotic system is the first system to fully automate all phases of truss manufacturing including cutting, material handling, fabrication and stacking. It is designed to streamline a very labor-intensive process and generate higher levels of production.

Pro-Build is a large supplier of building materials to professional contractors, currently operating more than 500 lumber and building product distribution, manufacturing and assembly centers in 40 states. TCT Manufacturing, a privately held company operating in Mount Dora, Fla., was formed in 1999 and has established itself as a leader in robotics and high-speed positioning technology for the truss industry.

More Than 6,000 B.C. Forestry Workers On Strike

Duncan, B.C.—More than 6,000 members of the United Steelworkers of America recently remained on strike at 32 companies associated with Forest Industrial Relations including Western Forest Products, located here. Western Forest Products is one of the largest firms affected by the strike, which has shut down or hampered many timberlands and manufacturing operations.

The dispute surrounds the lumber companies' ability to change work schedules without consulting workers. The union claims the move has hurt workers' family lives and created unsafe working conditions. Meanwhile, the companies counter that the flexibility is needed to reduce costs associated with a strong Canadian dollar, a 15 percent surcharge on exports to the U.S. market and a slumping U.S. housing industry. The strike is expected to last into 2008.

APA Enters Into Agreement For SILPRO Products

Tacoma, Wash.—APA — The Engineered Wood Assoc., based here, recently entered into an exclusive agreement with SILPRO LLC, located in Boise, Idaho, for the licensing of SILPRO's I CHOICE™ prefabricated rim board products.

I CHOICE includes a series of products called I CHOICE Rim Board, a pre-machined perimeter wood rim board with modular recessed receptacles 8-inches on-center shaped to match the end cross-section of a specific wood I-joist; I CHOICE Support Block, a prefabricated machined I-joist side profiled multi-purpose wood component engineered to provide additional vertical point load support, assure I-joist integrity, increase building assembly performance, increase web support, and serve as an I-joist attachment platform for other building components; and I CHOICE Rim Insulation Panel, a combination structural wood and foam panel insert that is prefabricated, engineered and designed to insulate the perimeter of the floor between the ends of wood I-joists using other SILPRO products.

Comer Brown and Larry Brown, who both have over 35 years of industry experience, founded SILPRO LLC in 2004. APA, founded in 1933, is the leading trade association of the North American engineered wood products

Continued on page 45



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TRADE TALK

Continued from page 43

industry, representing approximately 160 structural plywood, oriented strand-board, glulam timber, wood I-joist, and laminated veneer lumber mills in the United States and Canada.

APA also recently founded a Career Center, which allows user to discover career opportunities in the wood industry throughout North America. For more information, visit www.apa-wood.org/jobs.

STRIKE - Continued from page 1

mandate to move ahead and start rebuilding our industry.”

Shewchuk said the coastal forest industry’s image has been tarnished as a result of the strike, while companies have lost customers.

Twenty major sawmills and innumerable logging operations from Hope to the north coast were shut down in the dispute, the first since a significant number of companies contracted out operations to non-union contractors.

Both the unions and employers say they have lost skilled workers as a result of the contracted strike, and it will be difficult to get them back.



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Association of Millwork Distributors Annual Convention, Colorado Convention Center, Denver, Colo. Contact: 727-372-3665. Nov. 1-6.

Wood Component Manufacturers Assoc. Fall Conference and Plant Tour Event. Grand Rapids, Mich. Contact: 770-565-6660. Nov. 5-7.

APA-The Engineered Wood Assoc., Annual Meeting and Info Fair, Hyatt Grand Champions Resort and Spa, Indian Wells, Calif. Contact 253-565-6600. Nov. 10-13.

North American Wholesale Lumber Assoc. Traders Market (NAWLA), Hilton Anatole, Dallas, Texas. Contact: 800-527-8258. Nov. 15-17.

The Lumber and Building Materials Assoc. of Ontario, 90th Annual General Meeting, Fort Henry, Kingston. Contact: 905-625-1084. Nov. 22.

December

Northeastern Retail Lumber Assoc., Executive Committee Meeting, NRLA headquarters, Rensselaer, N.Y. Contact: 800-292-6752. Dec. 4.

British Columbia Wholesale Lumber Assoc. Fifth Annual Smoker, Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites, N. Vancouver, B.C. Contact: 604-439-0117. Dec. 6.

NAWLA Buyer's School, Hyatt Regency Chicago on the Riverwalk, Chicago, Ill. Contact: 800-527-8258. Dec. 10-13.

January

Michigan Lumber & Building Materials Assoc. Great Lakes Building Products Exposition, Grand Rapids, Mich. Contact: 517-394-5225. Jan. 14-15.

Northwestern Lumber Assoc., Building Products Expo, Minneapolis, Minn. Contact: 763-595-4057. Jan. 20-22.

Northeastern Retail Lumber Assoc., Lumber and Building Material Expo, Seaport World Trade Center, Boston, Mass. Contact: 800-292-6752. Jan. 23-25.



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