

The Import/Export Wood Purchasing News  
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# IMPORT/EXPORT WOOD purchasing news

Vol. 36 No. 6

Serving Forest Products Buyers Worldwide

June/July 2010

## Delegates From 30 Countries Connect At IWPA World of Wood Convention

**Miami Beach, Florida**—The International Wood Products Association's (IWPA) recent convention in Miami Beach, Fla., drew nearly 300 industry leaders from more than 30 countries. Speakers provided detailed information on compliance with the Lacey Act and

new Customs Classification rulings. Attendees also heard detailed economic and market projections for homebuilding, flooring and architectural woodworking. Delegations from Ghana, Guyana and Malaysia made presentations on the extensive ini-  
*Additional photos on pages 10 & 12*

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Guy Goodwin, NHG Timber Ltd., London, England; Zahid Abbas, WoodBois International, Abidjan, Ivory Coast, Africa; Luis Olivera, Dixie Plywood & Lumber Co., Miami, Fla.; Doug Martin, Pollmeier Inc., Portland, Ore.; and Norm Murray, U-C Coatings Corp. Buffalo, N.Y.



Graziano Pasqualetto, Romea Legnami S.p.A., Venice, Italy; Romel Bezerra, Etof Hansson Inc., Suwanee, Ga.; Cindy Bergin, Newman Lumber Co., Gulfport, Miss.; and Scott Roberts, Roberts Plywood Co., Deer Park, N.Y.



Mike Bartz, Robert Gillebaard, Bob Gillebaard and JoAnn Gillebaard Keller, Holland Southwest International, Houston, Texas; and Don, Kenny and Robert McMaster, Argo Fine Imports, Metairie, La.



Tom Lucas, USPLY Trading Co., Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; Sebastian Guarderas and Manuel Dirini, ENDESA-BOTROSA, Quito, Ecuador; and Mary Jane Lucas and Mike Raddick, USPLY Trading Co., Pompano Beach, Fla.

## Interzum Guangzhou 2010 Attracts Southeast Asia Buyers

**Guangzhou, China**—The seventh Interzum Guangzhou was held here recently at the China Import and Export Fair Pazhou Complex with more than 760 exhibitors, including 12 American companies and associations. The fair is considered to be Asia's most comprehensive woodworking machinery and fur-

niture production trade shows and is held in eight halls and more than 80,000 square meters. Exhibitors included furniture suppliers, manufacturers and marketing companies. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Pavilion from the U.S. included company

*Additional photos on page 12*

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Eugene Walters, Rolling Ridge Woods Ltd., Parkersburg, W. Va.; and Lei Zhao, Yoder Lumber Co. Inc., Guangzhou, China



Frank Wang and Echo Liu, Baillie Lumber Co., Hamburg, N.Y.; and Mabel Jiang, American Lumber Co., Hamburg, N.Y.

# Who's Who in Import/Exports



JEAN-FRANCOIS AUDET

**Jean-Francois 'J.F.' Audet** is lumber buyer for **Primewood Lumber Inc.** in Drummondville, Quebec. Primewood Lumber is a wholesaler and exporter, with 95 percent of its lumber dedicated to the export market. Primewood Lumber offers White Oak, Red Oak, Black Walnut, Black Cherry, Hard Maple, Soft Maple, White Ash, Yellow Poplar, Aspen, Basswood, Red Elm, Grey Elm, Hickory and Yellow Birch on an international basis. All

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TERRY ELLIS

**Terry Ellis** is owner/CEO of **T. J. Ellis Enterprises Inc.** of Lima, Ohio, a concentration/distribution yard and exporter of green lumber, saw logs, veneer logs, kiln-dried lumber in all species. The company also offers sap-free Walnut lumber FAS and every species of veneer logs. T. J. Ellis Enterprises is a member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association, the Walnut Council, Forest History Society, Ohio Forestry Association,

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STEVE GUNDERSON

**Steve Gunderson** is on the sales team at **Hermitage Hardwood Lumber Sales Inc.** in Cookeville, Tennessee. His responsibilities include hardwood lumber sales, expansion of existing accounts and development of new accounts and product lines. Gunderson has been in the lumber industry for over 30 years in Wisconsin. His experience includes over five years in his family's sawmill in Wittenberg, five years working in a sawmill in Birnamwood and

Continued on page 14



NICK SKUDLAREK

**Salamanca Lumber Co.**, based in Salamanca, New York, recently announced that **Nick Skudlarek** is now involved with the domestic sales of Salamanca's 4/4 through 12/4 Red and White Oak and 4/4 through 16/4 Cherry and Hard and Soft Maple hardwood lumber. Skudlarek began in the Hardwood industry approximately 23 years ago. "I started at Salamanca Lumber Co. right after high school," he explained. "In the beginning I

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## Lacey Act Begins Amended Phase

According to WoodworkingNetwork.com the initial enforcement of the amended Lacey Act recently took affect for basic information transparency requirements including guitars, revolvers, hand tools, pool cues and certain types of furniture. Amended in 2008, the U.S. Lacey Act makes it a federal crime to trade in illegal wood products. Many sectors, under a phased-in process, also have to declare the scientific name and the country of harvest for any plant constituents of their imported products. This affects all wood product sectors including those importing sawn timber, flooring, and joinery. For example, now an importer of chairs manufactured in Vietnam will declare that the wooden frame is made of Teak from Thailand. Collected by Unites States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), this information will allow the implementing agencies to target enforcement actions and better understand how the U.S. market demand for wood products is affecting forests worldwide. "The declaration requirement of the Lacey Act is a critically important part of achieving greater supply chain transparency and legality, the over-arching goals set forth by Lacey," Alexander von Bismarck of the Environmental Investigation Agency said. "For the first time, companies are required by law to ask basic questions about their supply chains and understand exactly where their wood comes from." Enforcement of the ban on trade in illegal wood has been in effect since the law passed on May 22, 2008. In November 2009, the first public enforcement action

## THE WASHINGTON SCENE

occurred when the government raided Gibson Guitar facilities in Nashville, Tenn. The search of the Gibson plant took many by surprise as the company's top executive, CEO Henry Juszkiewicz, has taken a lead role for at least six years in urging the music industry to use only sustainable wood products. A statement released by Gibson said the company "fully cooperated with agents of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service as it pertains to an issue with harvested wood." Von Bismarck noted that awareness levels appear to be significantly higher among sectors submitting declarations. The form for declaration can be found on the APHIS website. The information can be printed and mailed by importers to APHIS or electronically via an automated broker interface. An electronic interface is said to become publicly available in the future as the U.S. government continues to refine the implementation of the Lacey Act.

### Steve Courtney Elected As Chair

The American Forest Resource Council (AFRC) based in Washington, D.C., recently reported that Steve Courtney of Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) has been elected chairman of the Timber Purchasers Committee. The committee oversees various activities related to timber production on Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) managed trust lands. According to the AFRC these lands return between \$150 million and \$300 million per year to several specific trusts and to DNR's land management funds. AFRC also said that most trust revenues are produced via timber harvest, which provides approximately 600 million board feet annually. Courtney moved from Burney, Calif., when SPI built their Mt. Vernon facility. Prior to joining SPI, Courtney worked for Malheur Lumber in John Day, Oregon.

## AHEC's 15th China And Southeast Asia Convention Heads To Chengdu

For more information on AHEC and the export promotion programs, call (202)463-2720, fax (202)463-2787, or visit the website, [www.ahec.org](http://www.ahec.org).

**By Michael Snow  
Executive Director  
American Hardwood Export Council  
Reston, Virginia**

This year's 15th AHEC Greater China and Southeast Asia Convention will be held at the Shangri-La Hotel in Chengdu, China from June 16th-18th, 2008. The event, with the theme "Sustainable American Hardwood: The Timeless Yet Modern Choice for Furniture and Interior Design" will attract furniture manufacturers, architects, designers, wood processors and traders from all over Asia as well as hardwood exporters from the U.S. Chengdu was selected as a dynamic hub for design and manufacturing, as well as a major economic driver for Western China. The city and outlying Sichuan Province are home to a thriving wood processing industry, and boast more than 3,000 furniture and wood flooring manufacturers—the vast majority of whom produce for the domestic Chinese market. In addition, as home to China's famed pandas, Chengdu provides tremendous opportunities for American hardwoods in the city's exploding tourism infrastructure and rapidly growing housing markets. Keynote speakers from Europe, across Asia and the U.S. will form a program that should have something for everybody. Seminars on using wood for architects and interior designers will be augmented with technical sessions on U.S. hardwood lumber grading and U.S. veneer specifications targeting Chinese and Southeast Asian importers and traders. U.S. delegates will not only have the opportunity to network with the local delegates, but will also enjoy a series of presentations on opportunities for American hardwoods throughout the region from representatives of the wood processing industries of Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam and China.

As with all AHEC events overseas, the environmental credentials of American hardwoods will be a special focus alongside the facts of the resource as a long-term sustainable supply of quality hardwood material renowned for its beauty, performance and acceptability in global markets. For the Chinese there will be the opportunity of networking with delegates from the far corners and for visitors the chance to see the dynamic growth of interior China. Registration materials and further information on the Convention can be found at [www.ahec-china.org](http://www.ahec-china.org) or you may contact our Reston, Va., office at 703-435-2900. The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) is the leading international trade association for the U.S. hardwood industry, representing the committed exporters among U.S. hardwood companies and all major U.S. hardwood product trade associations. AHEC maintains offices in Japan, Europe, Southeast Asia, China, Korea and Mexico, in addition to its Reston, Va., headquarters, to serve the needs of the global community. For additional information on the Convention as well as additional overseas activities, please contact AHEC by phone at 703-435-2900, or by email at [msnow@ahec.org](mailto:msnow@ahec.org).



## Tougher Measures Against Illegal Timber

EU suppliers of timber from illegal sources must pay fines that reflect the real environmental and economic damage done by illegal logging, said Environment Committee MEPs (Members of European Parliament) recently. The committee amended draft EU legislation to stiffen penalties and ensure that all in the supply chain play their part in ensuring that timber sold in the EU comes from legal sources. The proposal is to be put to a plenary vote in July. Financial penalties, to be set by EU Member States, must reflect the degree of environmental and economic damage caused by illegally harvested timber, said the committee, stressing that these penalties must be proportional to the value of the timber products obtained and the environmental damage caused. MEPs called for a clear ban on placing (or making available) illegally harvested timber or timber products on the market. Operators placing timber on the market for the first time should comply with a rigorous "due diligence" system, since they have a particular responsibility for products entering the EU market. To improve timber traceability, MEPs ask that all suppliers provide basic information to identify the



operator who has supplied the timber and to whom it has been supplied. "I am delighted that the Environment Committee has agreed fundamental improvements to the draft regulation on illegally harvested timber. Strong support came from across the political spectrum on key issues including adoption of an overriding prohibition on placing or making available illegally harvested timber on the EU market, extension of traceability requirements throughout the supply chain, and setting of minimum standards for penalties, including criminal sanctions," said Caroline Lucas (Greens/EFA, UK), whose legislative report was approved with 49 votes in favour, 6 against, 2 abstentions.

— Reprinted from Fordaq Network

### Oregon Forest Restoration Hearing

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests convened a hearing on the Oregon Eastside Forests Restoration, Old Growth Protection and Jobs Act of 2009, which was introduced by Subcommittee Chairman Senator Ron Wyden. The result of discussions between members of the eastern Oregon forest products industry and the environmental community, the bill would mandate a significant increase in mechanical treatments on eastern Oregon's national forests with a focus on generating saw logs over the next several years. After this interim period and the comple-

tion of a landscape restoration assessment at least one landscape sized project of 25,000 acres per forest per year will be required. This legislation would also require compliance with several existing regulations including no harvest of trees over 21" in diameter limit, which does not currently exist. The legislation also places restrictions on the building of new roads and requires that any temporary roads need to be decommissioned within two years. The legislation would also waive administrative appeals for projects proposed during the interim period and create a shorter objection process for large-scale projects. Oregon's Senator, Ron Wyden, stated that

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# What A Difference A Year Makes

By **Brent J. McClendon, CAE**  
 Executive Vice President  
 International Wood Products Association  
[www.iwpawood.org](http://www.iwpawood.org)

IWPA's 2010 convention found the importing community declaring, "What a difference a year makes." Optimism is up. Orders are coming in. The industry's economic outlook is on the upswing. Nearly 300 participants and speakers pointed to positive signs, such as the decreased inventory and increased sales.

Education sessions, the "meat and potatoes" of IWPA's convention program, covered a variety of international and national business issues. Industry experts explained their cautious optimism about the economy, availability of credit and financing, improving housing starts and new design opportunities for exotic wood. There were also dedicated sessions addressing the changing legal and regulatory environment.

The convention's success speaks to a larger issue than just the program itself. The coming together of industry importers, exporters and service providers is evidence of the power of professional trade associations. In the words of outgoing IWPA President Scott Beggs, "By working together, joining forces in an association, we can accomplish more than by working independently. IWPA was created to work for the 'little-guy.' Most of us can't afford to have a DC office focused on legislative and regulatory issues, yet we all know what happens in DC does NOT stay in DC. Whether it is the pending national

formaldehyde regulation, or Lacey, IWPA stays engaged to protect the interest of importers. We support legal trade. We support quality products. We support consumer safety."

New this year at the convention was the launch of an awards program. Awards were given in three Environmental Excellence, Aesthetic Design and Innovation to commend the best in corporate social responsibility and environmental leadership.



IWPA proudly recognized several companies and their work as representative of the amazing work being done by IWPA members around the world. The winner for Aesthetic Design


Excellence was Veneer Technologies for their veneer's contribution to the magical Cobb Energy Performing Arts Center in Atlanta, Georgia. Durable Wood Products and their Turada® Wallaba shingles "Class A" fire rated roof system won for Innovative Excellence. They developed a new application for a lesser-known species, providing a roofing system that is environmentally friendly, sustainable, fire resistant, and an excellent untreated alternative for traditional wood shingles and shakes. The



Environmental Excellence Winner Cikel America was recognized for their commitment to corporate social responsibility. In addition to Cikel's 1.2 million acres of pri-

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# KODA: A Leader In Dining Furniture

Photos by Turnstone Singapore

By Michael Buckley



Koda Ltd., located in Singapore, exhibited this furniture made of American Black Walnut at a recent trade show.



Ernie Koh is executive director of marketing at Koda. He oversees many markets for the firm.



Koda's Malaysian plant purchases North American White Oak for use in many of its furniture designs.



This is an example of Koda's craftsmanship, which is evident in this coffee table comprised of North American White Oak.



At the recent International Furniture Fair Singapore, Koda exhibited this piece of furniture of darkly stained North American Oak.



Koda staff assembles all tables by hand.

**Singapore**—Founded in 1972 and backed by a management team with a combined experience of close to a century Koda Ltd, located here, is a leading Original Design Manufacturer (ODM) and possibly the largest dining room furniture exporter in Southeast Asia. Koda's range of products is design intensive and aims at the middle and upper end of international markets, demanding individuality, sophistication and elegance. As a leading member of Singapore's Mosaic generic brand, the company is always at the forefront of furniture industry initiatives.

In his recent National Day speech, Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of Singapore, applauded local furniture makers for converting from a sunset to a sunrise industry. Koda, the largest of all, has been a leader in this success story. With manufacturing plants in Malaysia and Vietnam and production sub-contracted in China, Koda has grown from a small Singapore-based manufacturer to a multinational with 200 trade customers in more than 50 countries around the world. Koda, founded by the Koh family, has led the local furniture industry by participation in many initiatives, for example the initiation and development of the "Mosaic" brand for national recognition, launched in 2008 by the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC). The older Malaysian plant employs

Continued on page 15



Koda styles often combine different species, such as this combination featuring American White Oak and Black Walnut.

Handcrafted design figures greatly into Koda's ongoing success. About 300 people are employed at the firm's Malaysian plant.



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# Six Story Wooden High Rise Has Heads Turning

By Jean-Marc Dubois



The interior construction of the Fondation building.

**Montreal, Que.—**The construction of the Fondation office building in the heart of Quebec City is generating more than passing local interest. The six story commercial structure featuring heavy timber frame construction designed and provided by Nordic Structures, is the first of its kind built in Canada. Made of Black Spruce glue laminated beams, columns and decking, the unique construction technology featured in this project is paving the way for similar alternative building projects across North America.

While wood frame construction has been limited by code to four stories in the past, designing the building with heavy timbers assured local building officials that while structurally equal to steel and concrete construction that is the norm for commercial construction, heavy wood timber construction offers superior fire resistance, acoustic properties and insulation values. An additional bonus for this LEED Gold project is the encapsulation of over 1 million pounds of carbon, locked into the wood for the life of the structure.

Enviro=Lam, a unique small-block layup process exclusive to Nordic Engineered Wood, is evident in all the glulam components comprising the structure. "The Black Spruce trees we harvest take 90 years to achieve maturity, yet still only average 4-1/2" in diameter over their 70' length," explained Albert Renaud, vice president of Nordic Engineered Wood. "It is essential that we utilize all the tree, including the tips, if we are going to extract all the value that is locked in the fiber. Enviro=Lam allows us to get 18 percent more fiber yield than traditionally possible, making it one of the greenest building materials out there."

Nordic harvests on 2,000,000 acres of land in northern Quebec, an area comparable to the state of Connecticut, with extreme attention to the environment. In



Made of Black Spruce glue laminated beams, columns and decking, the unique construction technology featured in this project is paving the way for similar alternative building projects across North America.



The six-story Fondation commercial structure, which features heavy timber frame construction designed and provided by Nordic Structures, is the first of its kind built in Canada.



Nordic's Enviro=Lam used here in the construction of a sports complex. This soccer stadium features 210-foot clearspan glulam arches.


Continued on page 16




Enviro=Lam, a unique small-block lay-up process exclusive to Nordic Engineered Wood, is evident in all the glulam components comprising the structure.

A Nordic logging truck headed to a mill with approximately 900 Black Spruce logs. Nordic has constructed numerous bridges for its own forestry operations and recently completed its first wooden Provincial highway bridge project geared for public use.






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# SHELTER FOREST INTERNATIONAL: Offering Solutions With TigerPLY®

By Wayne Miller



TigerPLY's newest mill and research and development facility that came online in September 2009.



Ryan Loe, president; Glen Anderson, West Coast manager; Whitney LaRuffa, Northeast manager; Rod Loe, production manager, Xuzhou, China; Monica Davidson, Northeast manager; Jock Vondeling, S4S boards and Hardwood parts specialist; and Mike Stringfellow, Southeast manager.



Matt McCoun and Ryan Loe inspecting a load of TigerPLY for shipment.



TigerPLY units prepared and ready for shipment.



TigerPLY's Machine Core Composer used for C9 and TigerLITE Cores.



South Central Manager Matt McCoun inspecting final packaging of a load of TigerPLY's C9.

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**Portland, Ore. —** Shelter Forest International (SFI) manages production for six hardwood plywood mills that produce the company's newest product, the TigerPLY® brand of hardwood plywood. SFI's president, Ryan Loe, said the engineered plywood, TigerPLY, is manufactured primarily from Poplar veneers that are grown on sustainable, and environmentally friendly plantations. "When we looked at global resources for building our products we found a large sustainable supply in Chinese Poplar plantations," he explained. "The cost is low, the forests sustainable and the trees can be harvested on a 10-year rotation. That makes it one of the

Continued on page 16



A high-end furniture manufacturer chooses TigerPLY for drawer sides.



Units of TigerPLY, sub-packed and barcoded for retail markets.

One-year old Poplar trees at Shelter Forest International's plantation nursery, scheduled for harvest September 2019.



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# The Southeast Asian Furniture Circuit 2010 – An Assessment

Photos By Turnstone Singapore

By Michael Buckley  
Courtesy World Hardwoods



This occasional table set in traditional/contemporary style is a design by Kobeke and was an award-winner at IFFINA.



At IFFS, furniture on exhibit showed strong trends towards dark stained woods.



Ambar Tjahyono, chairman of Apkindo-Indonesian Furniture Industry Association, is interviewed by Michael Buckley for *Import/Export Wood Purchasing News*.



The Southeast Asian furniture shows of 2010 shared a common denominator: combining materials to achieve new designs.

2010 could never have been an exciting year for furniture shows, given current market conditions, but as always there were one or two surprises in store for anyone traveling the full circuit. Scheduling dates, with their overlaps and proximity to the spring shows in China, makes visiting eight shows in all six of the ASEAN countries virtually impossible. In the event, there were probably very few brave foreign buyers who ventured into Bangkok among the demonstrators, especially following travel advisories from governments to avoid Thailand in March. The most rewarding surprise for some was the progress that IFFINA in Jakarta has made with registrations of overseas buyers from 107 countries reported to have doubled this year.

The MIFF and EFE shows in Kuala Lumpur kicked off the circuit although buyers tended to go later in order to follow on closer to IFFS in Singapore. That show put on its usual professional display of 434 mainly international exhibitors from 30 countries; and related design events – attracting 17,300 trade visitors (up 10% on last year). Thais were strongly in evidence in Singapore along with the regular huge group from China and extensive pavilions from Taiwan, Indonesia and Vietnam. No surprise that MIFF has still not resolved the prob-

lem of a show held in three different locations and at least one of them not too suitable for an easy tour of inspection. Then followed the two shows in the Philippines (Cebu and Manila) with VIFA in Vietnam and IFFINA in Jakarta overlapping at the end – phew!

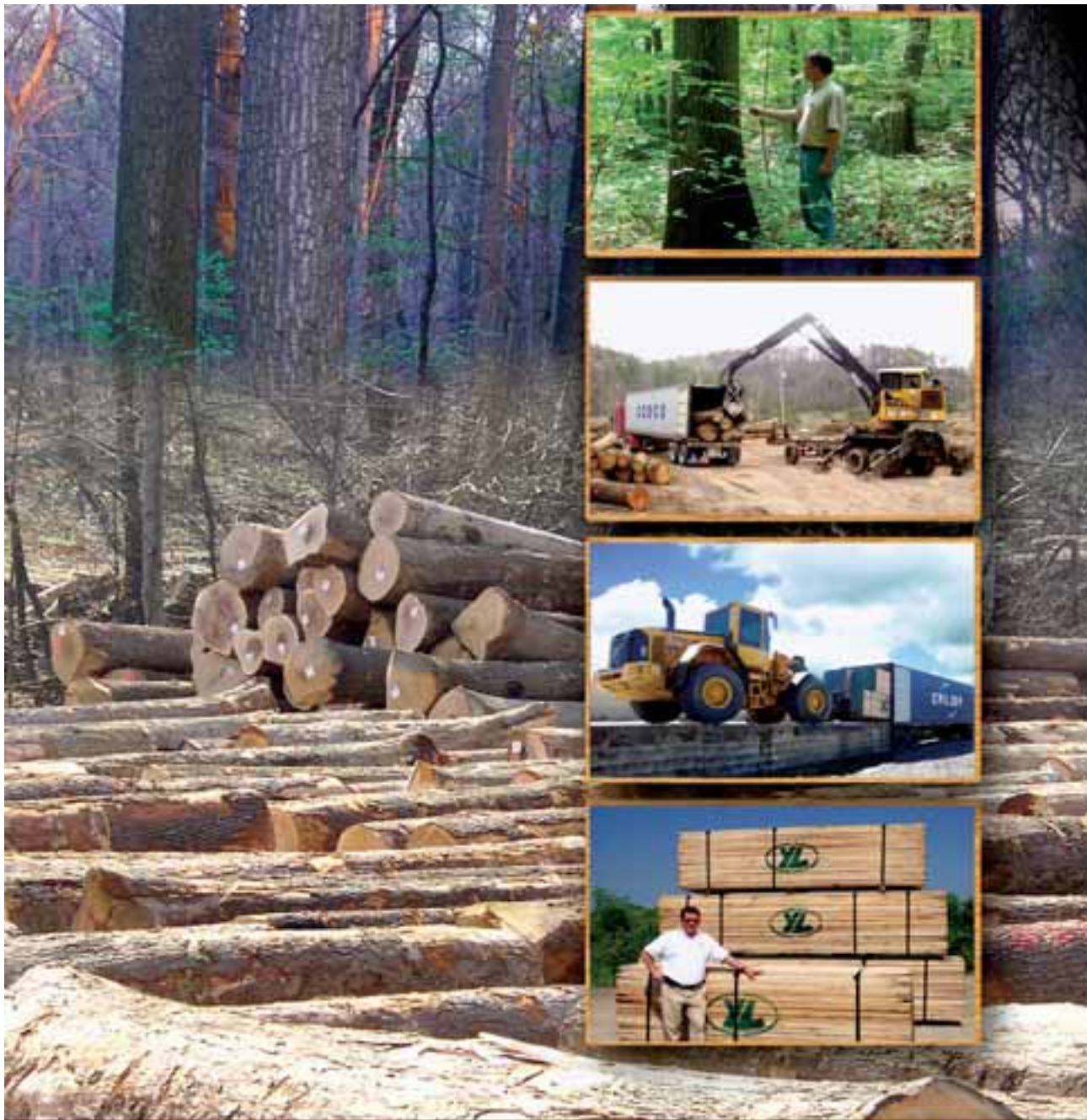
### Rough designs for a tough time

If forced to sum up the trends in furniture, especially of the wooden kind, then "Dark, Rough and Combined with Metal" might be one concise description. Wood furniture internationally has gone much darker in color and the light-colored fashion is all but over. This has seen significant reductions for species such as **Hard Maple** and clear finished **Rubberwood**, for example. Oak remains a dominant species but often stained or limed or otherwise treated. Much more furniture is painted and "black is the new black". Then there is the question of surface, in table tops. Character wood is not so much in evidence but sand-blasted, wire-brushed, gouged or otherwise deteriorated and distressed table surfaces are everywhere. Manufacturers say they are selling like hotcakes, confirmed by distributors, and even by consumers who claim they are not concerned about the difficulty of cleaning a pitted or rough table top after meals. Finally, there is an increasing design tendency to put tables on metal legs, in some cases elegantly or in extreme cases resembling scaffolding such as a collection by Singapore based D-Bodhi Pte Ltd. with their award-winning models. Metal trim on all types of furniture is on the increase to combine the warmth of wood against cold steel. This trend was also very evident with market leaders Koda in several of their collections. Veneered plywood with exposed edges, which has always been around, is now increasingly popular.

### Teak and Walnut

Teak remains an important species and in many cases design in **Teak** is maturing to provide continuing interest for interiors as well as the usual vast array of garden and

See Buckley on page 16



Deputy Minister Thanh Bien visits the Hoa Mai exhibit at AHEC-HAWA joint display at the Vietnam International Furniture Fair.

American White Oak and Black Walnut proved to be a common combination at the International Furniture Fair (IFFS), Singapore.



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2003 Grizzly G0513 Vertical Band Saw, 17" x 17" Table, 2 HP, Blade Speeds 1600 & 3300 RPM, Blade Length 132"  
Mereen Johnson Model 424-DC/SR Gang Rip Saw, Capacity 26" Wide, 100 HP Drive, With Support Equipment  
2003 Re-Tech 4' x 5' Wood Hog, 50 HP Drive, With Support Equipment  
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David Palmer, Aljoma Lumber Inc., Medley, Fla.; Alan Mclvain, Alan Mclvain Co., Marcus Hook, Pa.; Don Thompson, Thompson Mahogany Co., Philadelphia, Pa.; and Wayne Rogers, East Teak Fine Hardwoods, Donalds, S.C.



Jesper Bach, Baillie Lumber Co., Hamburg, N.Y.; and Christian Mengel, VM International LLC, Greensboro, N.C.



Brad McMurchie, Tumas Lumber Co., Portland, Ore.; Rhoda Voth, Saga Forest Carriers, Savannah, Ga.; and David Smith, American Pacific Inc., Holly Springs, Miss.



Michael Wan, Suzhou Zhengxing International, Jiangsu, China; Alexander Bowen, Gallon Jug Agroindustry, Belize City, Belize; and Jorge Guilfo and Diego Castillo, Industrial Maderera Zapote S.A., Iquitos, Peru



Ron Mesa, Maderera DGP, Fort Worth, Texas; Daniel Amprimo and Peter Westphalen, Maderera DGP, Iquitos, Peru; Alfonso Garrido-Lecca, International Specialties Inc., Lima, Peru; and Wayne Miller, Import/Export Wood Purchasing News, Memphis, Tenn.



Gib Mclvain, J. Gibson Mclvain Co., White Marsh, Md.; Norm Roberts, Roberts Plywood Co./Div. of Die Boards Inc., Deer Park, N.Y.; JoAnn Gillebaard Keller, Holland Southwest International, Houston, Texas; and Brian Stordeur, Stordco International, New York, N.Y.



Tom Lucas, USPLY Trading Co., Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; Peter Wolff, Dantzier Inc., Miami Lakes, Fla.; and Mike Raddick, USPLY Trading Co., Pompano Beach, Fla.



Brent McClendon and Annette Ferri, International Wood Products Association, Alexandria, Va.; and John Aufderhaar, Bedford Falls Communication, Watertown, Wis.



Linda Davis-Wallen, C.F. Martin & Co., Nazareth, Pa.; Elizabeth Baldwin, Metropolitan Hardwood Flooring USA, Kent, Wash.; Paula Iague, IPA Wood Flooring, Minas, Brazil; and Thuy Murray, U-C Coatings Corp., Buffalo, N.Y.



Pat Bennett, American Pacific Plywood Inc., Solvang, Calif.; Paul Gosnell, Patriot Timber Products International Inc., Greensboro, N.C.; and John Andl, TradeLeaf LLC, New York, N.Y.



Romel Bezerra, Elof Hansson Inc., Suwanee, Ga.; Warren Spitz, UCS Forest Group, Mississauga, Ont.; and Peggy and Tom Herga, Inter-Continental Hardwoods Inc., Currie, N.C.



Noraihan Rahman and Tham Khaw, Malaysian Timber Council, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and Jason and Heather Miller, Global Wood Solutions LLC, Petoskey, Mich.



S.H. Chang and S.H. Oh, STX Pan Ocean Co. Ltd., Rutherford, N.J.; and Chris Connelly, Wood Brokerage International, Lake Oswego, Ore.



Brian Adams, PSI Inc., Eugene, Ore.; and Gregg Wilkinson, Bridgwell Resources LLC, Portland, Ore.



David Palmer, Aljoma Lumber Inc., Medley, Fla.; and Hugh Reitz, PRS Guitars Ltd., Stevensville, Md.



Chris and Julie Paras, The Penrod Co., Virginia Beach, Va.; John Hedin, Columbia Forest Products, Greensboro, N.C.; and Deann Gade and SiangLian Kong, The Penrod Co.



Fredericus Peijs, UPM-Kymmene Inc., Westmont, Ill.; and Louise and Alain Poirier, Boa-Franc, St-George, Que.



Sergei Kotov, SGK Nordic SIA, Riga, Latvia; Georgiy Krapivne, Woodbridge International Ltd., Moscow, Russia; and Jim Kaiser, Sol Building Materials Corp., El Paso, Texas

## Not All Wood Products Are Created Equal

By C.T. "Kip" Howlett Jr.  
President  
Hardwood Plywood and Veneer Assoc.

The U.S. engineered hardwood and hardwood veneer industries have struggled with today's severe economic challenges in an atmosphere made more challenging by cheaper imports, sagging economic demand in our domestic markets, companies cutting jobs, reducing production, and sadly going out of business. In the last few years, several major U.S. hardwood plywood, engineered flooring, and veneer plants have shut their doors permanently. The permanent loss of good paying jobs, typically in rural communities, and foregone tax revenues to the local, state, and federal treasuries have resulted. Their manufacturing equipment is often sold to Chinese producers.

Here are the shocking macroeconomic facts from 2009:

- The U.S. exported a measly \$7,000 of hardwood plywood to China and imported \$389,000,000 of hardwood plywood from China.

- The U.S. continued to export \$64 million of hardwood plywood; virtually all of it to Canada and the Caribbean.

- Chinese hardwood plywood has a 55% market share of the U.S. market while over 50% of the U.S. production capacity sits idle. Five major U.S. producers are out of business in the last 3 years.

- The U.S. exported \$170 million of non-value-added hardwood logs to China and only \$12 million of hardwood veneer. China slices more veneer from U.S. logs now than U.S. veneer producers do.

- The U.S. imported over \$5 billion of wood furniture from China, up from the previous year. The U.S. furniture industry exported \$575 million to its global markets, down 22% from 2008. Wood furniture is a major market segment particularly for veneer but also hardwood plywood.

- We have a relative even balance of trade of these products with Canada and a \$5 billion trade deficit imbalance with China.

Why? How can U.S. hardwood logs be shipped to China, processed there into veneer, manufactured into hardwood plywood, engineered wood flooring, or wood furniture, then be imported back into the U.S. at 30-40% price advantage to similar U.S. manufactured engineered hardwood products?

Certainly cheap labor and nebulous environmental and workplace safety standards in China give producers there a huge cost advantage compared to their U.S. and Canadian competitors. The long debated

fixed rate rather than floating exchange rates between the Yuan and the dollar is still stalled. Some economists estimate the Yuan is undervalued by as much as 40 percent. Then there are the Chinese government subsidies and strategic VAT rebates.

While it is true that all wood products are derived from the same raw material base -the forest; it is not true that all forest products are therefore created equally. Start with illegally-sourced logs which some economists estimate give a manufacturing company using those logs an immediate 15-20% cost advantage.

Notwithstanding that the Lacey Act requires due diligence for wood products imported into the U.S., traceability of logs to the forest that sourced them is still a major issue. While chain-of-custody programs including third party certification programs such as the Forest Stewardship Council and others are commonplace in



Kip Howlett Jr.

Continued on page 14

## Southeastern U.S. Ports Respond To Exporters' Needs

By T. Jensen Lacey

(Editor's Note: This article was prepared immediately prior to the recent Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.)

While hardwood lumber exporters and their ancillary businesses have been struggling to keep moving forward and even staying afloat in the latest economic series

of challenges, ports in the southeastern U.S. have been working to offer improved services and expanding their facilities.

Import/Export Wood Purchasing News looked into what some of the ports are doing by way of making improvements and increasing efficiency, to ease exporters' efforts in getting their products overseas. Here's what some ports had to tell us:

**New Orleans, Louisiana**—The Port of New Orleans has been a bustling one, and

made a historically-rapid comeback after the infamous Hurricane Katrina of 2005. Although they received damage by way of siltation of the Mississippi Gulf Outlet (MRGO) and the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC), the port was in working

repair and the numbers for shipping hardwoods in 2008 and 2009 were impressively high (more than 100,000 tons of logs and lumber in 2008, more than 71,000 tons in 2009).

At the Port of New Orleans there is a plan in place to ensure continued growth into the next 20 years and beyond. Some aspects of the s o - c a l l e d

Capital Improvement Plan include creating additional terminal capacity and continued reparations caused by the hurricanes of



The Port of Gulfport, Mississippi, embarked on a \$570 million port restoration program to re-develop into a stronger facility. The port's East Terminal, Shed 50, is now ideally suited for handling hardwood exports.

Continued on page 13

### WHO'S WHO - Audet

Continued from page 2

of Primewood Lumber's White Oak from its Pennsylvania yard is pre-dried. The company also offers dimension.

Primewood Lumber is FSC Certified (QMI-COC-001019). The company is a member of the Montreal Hardwood Club, National Hardwood Lumber Association and the Quebec Wood Export Bureau.

Audet has worked in the import/export industry 12 years. He worked as a lumber grader in 1998. He also has worked in lumber sales.

A graduate of Esle High School in Charny, Quebec, he went on to graduate from the NHLA lumber grading school. Audet and his wife of seven years, Valerie Lortie, have two daughters, Lorie and Aimy. In his free time, Audet likes to watch and play hockey and do woodworking.

### WHO'S WHO - Ellis

Continued from page 2

Hardwood Plywood Veneer Association and the American Hardwood Export Association. The company has won the Excellence in Exporting award from the State of Ohio.

Ellis has been with T. J. Ellis Enterprises since 1983, working as owner/CEO the entire time. His first job in the industry was in 1956 when he skidded logs. He also has worked as a buyer for other export companies. Ellis graduated from Highland High School of Anderson, Ind. Ellis and his wife of 30 years, Pamela Ellis, have three sons, two daughters and five granddaughters.

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Buniadi Makmur, APKINDO-Indonesian Wood Panel Association, Jakarta, Indonesia; Conor Jones and Ken Nelson, Richmond International Forest Products, Glen Allen, Va.; and Kur Antono, International Wood Products Inc., Apex, N.C.



Larry Beineke, PFS Corp., Cottage Grove, Wis.; Keister Evans, Tropical Forest Foundation, Alexandria, Va.; and Jessica Zheng and Scott Beggs, American Pacific Inc., Holly Springs, Miss.



Alex Gama, Lionex Brazil, Belem, Brazil; Joao Pereira, Cikel Brasil Verde, Belem, Brazil; Gerald Schappell, Cikel America LLC, Miami, Fla.; Sergio Korn, Cikel America LLC, Beverly Hills, Calif.; and Damiano Evertse, DPW van Stolk Holding B.V., Rotterdam, Netherlands



Ben Donkor, Ghana Forestry Commission, London, England; Brian Stordeur, Stordco International, New York, N.Y.; and Nana Sarpong, SUSTEX CO. LTD., Ghana



Carlos Garcia, Fr. Meyer's Sohn North America LLC, Newport Beach, Calif.; Thomas Johnson, Fr. Meyer's Sohn North America LLC, West Reading, Pa.; Dan Wackerman, John A. Steer Co., Philadelphia, Pa.; and Dave Wozniak, Taraca Pacific Inc., Virginia Beach, Va.



Carlos Orta, Durable Wood Products USA Inc., Miami Lakes, Fla.; Alfredo Hernandez, Medley Hardwoods Inc., Medley, Fla.; Luis Olivera, Dixie Plywood & Lumber Co., Miami, Fla.; and Mike Mora, Medley Hardwoods Inc.



David Weed, Robert Weed Plywood Corp., Bristol, Ind.; and Benedicte and Christian Mengel, VM International LLC, Greensboro, N.C.



Alan and Annie McIvain, Alan McIvain Co., Marcus Hook, Pa.; and Maureen and Warren Spitz, UCS Forest Group, Mississauga, Ont.



Mark Barford, National Hardwood Lumber Assoc., Memphis, Tenn.; Elizabeth Baldwin, Metropolitan Hardwood Flooring USA, Kent, Wash.; Tom Wilson, International Specialties Inc., Collierville, Tenn.; and John Barber, Trout River Lumber LLC, Crewe, Va.



Karl Brown, Weston Premium Woods, Brampton, Ont.; and Charlie Craig, AHC Craig Imports, Collierville, Tenn.



Danny Foster, Ihlo Sales & Import Co., Center, Texas; and Vic Johnson and Dave Wozniak, Taraca Pacific Inc., Virginia Beach, Va.

INTERZUM GUANGZHOU PHOTOS - Continued from page 1



Martin Grome, DLH Nordisk Inc., Denmark; Gib McIvain, J. Gibson McIvain Co., White Marsh, Md.; and Will Thomson, Timberwolf Tropical Hardwoods, Easton, Md.



Parker Boles, Hermitage Hardwoods, Cookeville, Tenn.; Adam Mason, Hermitage Hardwoods, Shanghai, China; Lin Zhu and Yolanda Wang, AC Exchange Timber, Yorktown, Va.



Robert Moss, Gutches Lumber Co., Cortland, N.Y., and Helena Chan, Gutches Lumber Co., Beijing, China



Norm Murray, U-C Coatings Corp., Buffalo, N.Y.; and Fionna Zhu and Walter Zhu, Internet Wood Glue, Guangzhou, China



Kate Li, Industrial Timber & Lumber Corp., Guangzhou, China; and Larry Mether, Midwest Walnut Co., Council Bluffs, Iowa



Jimmy Clay, Parton Lumber Co. Inc., Rutherfordton, N.C.; Brian Goldbeck, American Consulate General to Guangzhou, China; and Jorge Sanchez, Agricultural Consul, U.S. Agricultural Trade Office, Guangzhou, China



Webber Chen and Harry Liang, Anderson Tully Co., Guangzhou, China



Jean Pang, American Lumber Co., Hamburg, N.Y.; Xaiwei Wang, Jim C. Hamer Co., Kenova, W.Va.; Tracy Zheng and Kitty Chen, American Lumber Co., Hamburg, N.Y.



Peter Cadrin and Lillian Lang, C.A. Spencer Inc., Laval, Quebec



Gerry Vanveenendaal, Jessy Liu and Susan Li, Midwest Hardwood Corp., Maple Grove, Minn., and Guangzhou, China



Johnathon Ling, Turman Lumber Co. Inc., Shanghai, China; Xaiwei Wang, Jim C. Hamer Co., Kenova, W. Va.; Tom Inman, AHMI, High Point, N.C.; and CJ Lee, Roy Anderson Lumber Co., Beijing, China

**IWPA -**

Continued from page 1

tiatives these countries have undertaken to provide importers assurances on the legality of forest products from their countries. These delegations were joined by a number of other delegations from around the world that participated actively in networking and question and answer sessions.

Scott Beggs, IWPA president said, "It was a joy to see such great enthusiasm. The large and strong overseas delegations, in total representing more than 30 countries, led to strong business conversations and new business relationships. This convention served as a prime example for how IWPA is an excellent tool allowing importers to expand their business while at the same time staying in tune with changing laws and regulations. I'm pleased so many people took advantage of it this year."

Beggs continued, "A top agenda item for our business meeting was announcing the winners of our new Awards Program. These companies provided stunning examples for how imported wood products are supporting innovation throughout the supply chain, advancing environmental excellence and expanding design possibilities. We have a fantastic story to share for how an architect or designer's specification of imported wood products leads to sustainable forest management in our world's great forests and supports job creation and growth here in the U.S."

Winners of the awards program: Aesthetic Design Excellence: Veneer Technologies; Innovative Excellence: Durable Wood Products; Environmental Excellence: Cikel America.

Beggs as Immediate Past-President handed the gavel to Chris Paras, Vice President Procurement, Forest Products at The Penrod Company, who is IWPA's newly elected President. Joining Paras on IWPA's executive committee are Vice President Alan McIlvain, Alan McIlvain Company; Treasurer Warren Spitz, UCS Global; and two Board Representatives, David Weed, Robert Weed Plywood and Chris Connelly, Wood Brokerage International.

A multitude of topics were addressed in various seminars during the IWPA Convention. These included: The Lacey Act; U.S. Customs Classification; International Trade Finance and Credit Management; keynote sessions about leadership and time management; government affairs update and turning the corner on homebuilding.

During speeches about the economy and the housing industry, Scott Clemmons, of Wealth Management Group, noted that "once the inventories have been re-filled, unless buyers make purchases, it will not be a sustainable recovery for this economy."

He added, "Housing starts are down 80 percent in 2010 from 2002. One positive is that we are adding new homes slower than older homes are being destroyed."

"Personal savings is a very important part of our economic health and recovery. People are saving more now, which is good in the long run."

Clemmons said that inflation is the long-term threat to investors.

In regard to legislation and the Lacey Act, three panelists addressed IWPA attendees. They included Jeff Grimson, Elizabeth Baldwin and Ray Markley.

Grimson recommended, "You should have a company policy in place for how you would respond if government agents showed up at your door."

Regarding specific species and grades of wood in demand currently, various speakers offered their input at the convention. Some sources said Ash, White Oak and Walnut are in big demand for color and texture and American Walnut remains in huge demand on the market. Sources agreed style is trending toward "light in feel and color and texture, and 4-inch plank and 7 to 10-inch wide planks are in demand."

Sustainable wood also is highly popular on the market now, some speakers noted.

Jim Estill spoke on Leadership and Time Management, who led attendees through a seminar on self-improvement toward successful business leadership. He urged, "Be frugal; nurture a network of peers; develop a habit of lifelong learning and be a time management fanatic."

David Carter, Florida Home Builders Association, defined the economic recovery as slow, not robust. "We see 3-1/2 percent growth, not the usual 5 percent. We've seen over 8 million jobs were lost in the last two years of recession. It may take five or more years to reinstate these jobs."

Carter also predicted that mortgage rates will remain below 6 percent through 2011 and that some Southern states will recover faster than others, including Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee.

He added that green building is "a big and growing aspect of home building today."

World of Wood 2011, IWPA's 55th Annual Convention, will be held April 13-15, 2011, at the Loews in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Established in 1956, IWPA is the leading international trade association for the North American imported wood products industry, representing 200 companies and trade associations engaged in the import of hardwoods and softwoods from sustainably managed forests. Association members consist of three key groups involved in the import process: U.S. importers and consuming industries, offshore manufacturers and the service providers that facilitate trade. Learn more about IWPA at [www.iwpaawood.org](http://www.iwpaawood.org)

Weyerhaeuser and the American Hardwood Export Council.

Most reported decent traffic spaces from representatives of the furniture industry throughout China, Indonesia, the Middle East and eastern Europe. A few orders were written and dozens of new leads were generated.

"There were a large number of small companies represented from in and around China," said Tom Inman, AHMI president. "Many of these companies were looking for American hardwoods in Walnut, Red and White Oak, and Poplar."

Guangzhou is well-known in China as well as in the furniture production industry with the Guangdong province as one of the most important markets in the world.

The show attracted more than 50,000 trade visitors and buyers from the DIY (Do-it-yourself) and BIY (Build-it-yourself); furniture manufacturing; furniture wholesale and retail; interior design; institutions; wood and plastic processing; wood and plastic trading sectors.

**INTERZUM GUANGZHOU -**

Continued from page 1

representatives from Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc., Graf Brothers Lumber and Flooring, Hermitage Hardwood Lumber, Parton Lumber Co., Turman Hardwoods, Jim C. Hamer Co., and Roy Anderson Lumber Co. Other U.S. companies displaying at the fair were American Lumber, Baillie Lumber, Midwest Walnut, Midwest Hardwoods,

**U.S. PORTS -**

Continued from page 11

2005 (the latter is being funded in part by the Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA]). Part of the terminal project includes demolishing existing wharves to create new, higher-capacity wharves

with direct, linear access to the container yards. An ancillary project is the addition of three new container cranes; another is to develop an intermodal rail facility to be near the dock operation.

**Gulfport, Mississippi**— Currently ranked as the third busiest container port in the Gulf of Mexico, Gulfport was also hit hard by the hurricane season of 2005. Port authorities learned from that experience, and now have in place long-range plans for their recovery in the event of future storms. The plans include mixed-use development and shipping facilities.

In July 2009, Don Allee, Executive Director and CEO of the Mississippi State Port Authority (MSPA), along with Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour officially launched construction on Phase I of its \$300 million restoration plan with a "Ground-Making" ceremony at the port's west pier. With a nod from FEMA, the port is raising its base ground elevation to 25 feet above sea level. In a press release, Allee said, "This will help protect the port...from future storms. Our plan is also to maximize the potential of the port to meet the market needs of the future."

In an email to *Import/Export Wood Purchasing News*, Don Allee commented: "Prior to the destruction caused by Katrina, the Port of Gulfport was quite involved in the forest products business. As a result of Hurricane Katrina, nearly all of the 700,000 square feet of on-port shed space were destroyed. The lumber clients that had been using the Port of Gulfport were forced to find other ports in the U.S. Gulf of

Continued on page 14


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**U.S. PORTS -**

Continued from page 13

Mexico to handle their needs while Gulfport recovered. The Port of Gulfport has since embarked on a \$570 million port restoration program to re-develop the port into a bigger, better and stronger facility. The port's East Terminal, Shed 50, is now ideally suited for handling either hardwood imports or exports. The port is currently in a position to provide at least 150,000 square feet of shed space that is conveniently served by truck, rail, barge and ocean-going vessel. The weekly liner services of Dole, Chiquita and Crowley offer sailings from Gulfport to ports in Central America capable of handling containerized volumes of hardwood."

**Port of Mobile, Alabama**—Established in 1928, The Port of Mobile is making great strides in both efficiency and security for businesses using their port. On April 21 of this year, Port Authority Director/CEO James K. Lyons signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Panama Canal Authority Administrator/CEO Alberto Zubieta. This MOU has been enacted to jointly help encourage activity between the two ports. Two other improvements to the Port of Mobile have been \$300 million going toward a new dedicated container terminal with an intermodal rail facility and distribution complex. A turning basin at the mouth of the port, expected to be in operation by July 2010, will save time and money by

eradicating the need for container ships to go to the north end of the port to turn around and dock.

Currently the 9th largest U.S. seaport in terms of total volume, the Port of Mobile boasts container, general cargo, and heavy-lift terminals with immediate access to two state interstate highway systems, five Class 1 railroads, four-day rail service to Mexico and just under 15,000 miles of inland waterway connections. With these already in place, the new MOU will certainly make this port even more important to shippers.

**Savannah and Brunswick, Georgia**—The Georgia Ports Authority's (GPA) deepwater ports in Savannah and Brunswick are poised to handle increased hardwood lumber products for import or export. The Port of Savannah has breakbulk facilities at its Ocean Terminal and containerized services at its Garden City Terminal. Already the largest and most efficient container terminal in the United States, Garden City Terminal has yet to reach its full potential. Infrastructure improvements ensure the ports are ready when increased cargo calls on Georgia's ports.

The GPA's on-terminal strategic development plan will expand capacity from 3.5 million twenty-foot containers today, to 6.5 million by 2020. The recent arrival of four super post-Panamax ship-to-shore cranes brought the total to 23 post-Panamax class cranes on nearly 10,000 feet of continuous berthing at the Port of Savannah.

"Our superior services, logistics and facilities have allowed the GPA to grow its market share and further establish Georgia's

ports as a strategic gateway in the South Atlantic," said GPA's Executive Director Curtis J. Foltz. "When the economic climate improves, we'll be ready with additional capacity and infrastructure in place to handle it efficiently."

Through the end of March 2010, the GPA recorded four consecutive months of double-digit growth through its ports. "The increased cargo passing through our ports may signal that consumers are beginning to purchase again," said Foltz. "Our growth in both imports and exports indicates that overall recovery is taking hold."

The GPA's Trade Development team has experienced increased new breakbulk cargo quotes in recent months, and as a result projects an increase in these volumes for the second quarter of 2010. This increase shows the trend seems to be strengthening in the breakbulk market. The GPA also projects that it will experience an upswing in both Savannah and Brunswick markets. Ocean Terminal at the Port of Savannah will see a bigger increase than the other locations. Additionally, more general cargo such as iron and steel, forest products and bagged goods have all shown signs of increasing.

With many economic and social indicators pointing to the beginning of an upswing in the world of business, when it does happen, the ports of the southeastern U.S. will be more than ready.

**HOWLETT -**

Continued from page 11

the U.S. and Canada, the same cannot be said for other regions. The Environmental Investigation Agency highlights trouble spots in Asia compared to the U.S. and Canada which are very low risk environments for these illegal activities. We have too many lawyers and sheriffs. See: <http://www.eia-international.org>

The other issue is the sustainable management of the forest resource itself. Some simple facts about the U.S. and Canadian hardwood forest: there are more trees today than in 1950 and more net growth than harvesting and death from disease and insect infestation. This cannot be said for other forested regions.

Another critically important differentiating factor is third party certification of product performance. The U.S. and Canadian manufacturers have national consensus standards for hardwood plywood and engineered wood flooring that address formaldehyde emissions and delamination which are two major concerns if you are a consumer. With producers in North America who certify to these standards, you manage your risks and satisfy your customers' needs with certified quality products.

There are countless reasons why domestic wood products should remain our favored wood products, and why imported wood has yet to earn a sustainable place in our industry.

To learn more, go to [www.hpva.org](http://www.hpva.org)

**One Success Story After Another...**

"Hermitage Hardwood Lumber Sales, Inc. has advertised in the Import/Export Wood Purchasing News since 2002. I know the value of keeping a presence in a market that is constantly changing and that is why we advertise on a regular basis in "The Wood Purchasing News." Your publications are targeting the markets we are serving worldwide. Therefore, I feel it is a small investment to make to stay in front of those customers and potential customers who have helped make Hermitage Hardwood Lumber Sales, Inc. a growing concern in the hardwood concentration yard business."

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**Hermitage Hardwood Lumber Sales, Inc.** is a hardwood concentration yard with 875,000' dry kiln capacity, Walnut steamer, 5 million feet of dry storage, 4.5 million feet of covered air drying capacity, operating a Newman EPR24 double surfacer, providing straight line ripping and custom width sorts. Marketing Appalachian Red Oak, White Oak, Ash, Cherry, Poplar, Black Walnut and White Hard Maple. Hermitage carries six 1/2 horizontal Ads in four-color in the Import/Export Wood Purchasing News. **They can be reached at P.O. Box 698, Cookeville, TN 38503, Phone (931) 526-6832, Fax: (931) 526-4769 or Email: [info@hermitagehardwood.com](mailto:info@hermitagehardwood.com)**

**WHO'S WHO - Gunderson**

Continued from page 2

19 years in wholesale lumber sales in Wausau.

Hermitage Hardwood serves as a wholesaler and processor of North American hardwoods. The company offers kiln-drying, export prep, straight line ripping and double end trimming. The operation is also equipped with a Newman EPR24 double surfacer.

Species available at Hermitage are: Red and White Oak, Walnut, Hard Maple, Poplar, Cherry, Ash and Basswood. Truckload and container shipments are offered.

The firm is a member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA).

An NHLA Industry Statesmanship Award recipient, Gunderson is a past director of the Lake States Lumber Assoc. In his leisure time, he enjoys music, teaching Sunday school and being a youth group leader and lead elder at his church. His hobbies and interests include juke boxes, MG's and shopping for antiques with his wife, Laurie.

Gunderson and his wife have three children: Mitchel, Stephanie and Marcus. "We have truly enjoyed the move from Wisconsin to Tennessee and are happy to call it home," Gunderson says.

**WHO'S WHO - Skudlarek**

Continued from page 2

was piling boards and operating forklifts along with the dry kilns."

In 1983, he attended the National Hardwood Lumber Association's Inspector Training School and graduated with the 72nd class. Skudlarek left Salamanca for three years and was employed by the Webb Company located in Indiana.

Coming back to Salamanca just three years later, he has been procuring hardwood lumber for the past 16 years.

Salamanca Lumber Company is a distribution/concentration yard. The company's drying capacity is approximately 1.1 million board feet with a 750,000-foot pre-dryer. Association memberships held by the firm include: Penn-York Lumbermen's Club, Indiana Hardwood Lumberman's Association (IHLA), Ontario Forest Industries Association (Home of CLA); and the American Hardwood Export Council.

In his spare time Skudlarek enjoys trout fishing and attending his two children's sports games with his wife Carol.

**WASHINGTON SCENE -**

Continued from page 2

he recognizes the plight of the eastern Oregon forests and the remaining logging and sawmill infrastructure that depend upon them, including the need for more mechanical thinning and more saw logs. Wyden has also signaled his understanding that additional funding will be needed to accomplish these goals and has stated that this will be his highest priority.

**Biomass Initiative Passes Legislature**

Legislature recently passed the Washington State Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Forest Biomass Supply Agreements Bill. This executive-request legislation from Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark has taken the next step towards creating a forest biomass industry from state trust lands.

With just one dissenting vote in the House of Representatives and unanimous support in the Senate the Forest Biomass Supply Agreements Combined Bill 2481 passed with just one dissenting vote in the House of Representatives and unanimous support in the Senate.

The bill, if signed by the Governor, will allow DNR to enter into long-term agreements to supply biomass from overcrossed young forests and after-harvest slash to the biomass energy economy. To date a major obstacle to realizing the benefits of the biomass energy has been securing reliable and predictably priced biomass feedstock.

Incurring no cost to the States General Fund, the bill actually has the potential to generate revenues from state-managed forestland.

"I appreciate the Legislature's support for our Forest Biomass Initiative. It will not only help achieve a greener economy and create rural jobs, but can earn some added revenue for schools and other state trusts," Commissioner Peter Goldmark said. "I look forward to support from Governor Gregoire on this effort."

**USDA Announces Forest Landscape Restoration Committee**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently announced he is seeking nominations from the public for the new Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Advisory Committee.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the committee will inaugurate a new level of collaboration between the USDA Forest Service and the American people in the restoration of forested landscapes.

"About 60 million Americans depend on national forests for clean, abundant water, and all Americans rely on healthy forest ecosystems to mitigate the effects of climate change," said Vilsack. "This committee will help us prioritize the work that needs to be done and empower citizens and the Forest Service to work together through the entire process of ecological restoration work, from identifying needs on the landscape to achieving ecological objectives in ways that provide jobs and protect local communities from wildfire."

The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 authorized the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Advisory Committee. The Act encourages collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority-forested landscapes.

For more information on selection criteria and the application process, please reference the Federal Register Notice at [www.edocket.access.gpo.gov](http://www.edocket.access.gpo.gov)

**KODA -**

Continued from page 4

around 300 people of which about one-third of the production staff are local and about two-thirds are immigrant workers and is heavy on manual work. However, Koda is known to be looking at a phase of reinvestment shortly. Last fall, the company stated, "The Group has not let up on its commitment to continually investing in raising its design standards and new product development."

Production in Malaysia concentrates on the use of solid hardwoods – **American Black Walnut** and **White Oak**, with some interest developing in other species such as **Maple** and European Oak in thicker sections for items such as solid table legs, as well as Rubberwood and Acacia. The newer Vietnam plant is where most of the soft upholstery furnishing production is undertaken as well as solid wood furniture.

Koda's latest collections can be seen at three major Southeast Asian furniture shows each spring – International Furniture Fair Singapore (IFFS), Malaysian International Furniture Fair (MIFF) and Vietnam International Furniture Fair (VIFA) or simply stroll through [www.kodaonline.com](http://www.kodaonline.com).

Koda's mission statement is straightforward: "We must be the most effective value-for-money manufacturer. We must remain design-relevant. We must invest in Research & Development. We must ensure that our products remain affordable and accessible. We must ensure we have the right people with the right skills. We must deliver to our shareholders value and investment comfort."

The recent International Furniture Fair Singapore (IFFS) and other 2010 shows in Kuala Lumpur, Saigon and Guangzhou have served to reaffirm Koda's strong market position simply by virtue of its ever-changing range of quality furniture. Despite employing a team of in-house designers, the commissioning in the past of such international designers as Italian Luigi "Gigi" Garbarino and American John Kelly is another approach.

Koda's product portfolio of over 300 models caters to the mid-to-upper-end customer segments worldwide and is rarely far from the cutting edge of mass-production furniture design. The company's engineers are also regularly involved in the final design process. Production capacity in Vietnam for example, with a staff of 2,000, can be upward of 300 containers a month.


Koda has long been a disciple of American hardwoods with major furniture collections over the years in several U.S. species. Currently White Oak and Black Walnut feature strongly in both living and bedroom furniture. A new trend has been much more combination of hardwood and steel in its "Linus," "Dayton" and "Utah" ranges. Koda

has never been frightened to lead the pack with innovation and was one of the first in Asia to develop character grade contemporary, as opposed to rustic, furniture with all the natural imperfections of wood as a design feature. More recently Koda has introduced "Eco" furniture manufactured in bamboo. These have been important to some of its many European buyers where the inclusion of a green furniture option is essential. Koda's R&D in the past has also focused on recycled Pine and even rail ties as well as coconut wood in an effort to try out new ideas and concepts. However Koda's long term commitment to hardwood is very clear when reviewing its collections for as long as anyone can remember.

James Koh Jyh Gang is Deputy Chairman and Managing Director and spearheads the growth strategies for the Group's operations. With significant experience garnered through the initiation of various industry wide projects in Southeast Asia and China, he has been able to successfully formulate Koda's business expansion strategies, strengthen supply chain management, broach new design concepts and manage international marketing investments. James served as the President of SFIC for two terms. During his tenures he initiated several industry wide projects, most notably the International Furniture Fair Singapore (IFFS) and the Singapore Furniture Industry Park in Kunshan, China. He was also appointed the Chairman of IFFS Pte Ltd and the International Furniture Centre Steering Committee, with the objectives of growing the IFFS as a world class trade show and positioning Singapore as a premier furniture hub for the global market. James also spearheaded the 3-year Local Enterprise Association Development program, a multi-agency program that aims to enhance competitiveness of various industries in Singapore. In July 2009, he was invited to be a member of the Economic Strategies Committee, an initiative by the Ministry of Finance to develop strategies for Singapore to seize growth opportunities as a global city in order to achieve sustained and inclusive growth.

Ernie Koh, James' brother is Executive Director of Marketing. He looks after many markets, of which several in Europe are

Continued on page 16




# Fish or Cut?

To say that in today's economy things aren't biting is no fish story.

**Hermitage Hardwood** knows we are all in the same boat, and that working together with our customers and suppliers is the smartest way to navigate these rough waters. Years of hard-earned knowledge in the *hardwood lumber business* has made Hermitage one of the highest repeat and referral companies in the industry.

Double-surfacing, straight-line ripping, double-end trim, global prep, and decades of exporting experience, combined with a selection of Appalachian oaks, walnut, hard and soft maple, yellow poplar and more, are just some of the products and services we offer. The *time to act* is now. So drop us a line (or call) and *together* we can haul in the big catch.



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**KODA -**

Continued from page 15

extremely important to the company. Koda is usually at the important Guangzhou show and in April this year Koda showed at the Milan show under its well known banner "Redefining Lifestyle."

Commenting recently on the Group's performance, James Koh said, "With the odds inherently stacked up against the global home furniture industry, viz-a-viz deteriorating economic conditions and business-restrictive credit crunch, we couldn't avoid a net loss in the past unless we could accept the heightened credit risk exposure that could easily let us clinch more deals. There were several large potential orders we had to walk away from for obvious reasons; although these would have helped generate some economies of scale," he explained. "The rise in the number of confirmed orders from our major U.S. market has picked up pace over the last two quarters but customers are still continuing their revised buying psychology when the downturn started – confirming orders in much smaller batches and increasingly seeking shorter delivery turnaround time," he added.

The Group has had a good start in its new financial year reporting a strong 47.4 percent sequential rebound in revenue or 2.8 percent higher than the revenue recorded for the corresponding period ended September 2008, before the U.S. financial crisis imploded.

James Koh was also very encouraged by the IFFS in March for "the quality of the products on display and the visitor attendance from the outset." At least in Asia so far Koda is seeing the green shoots of recovery.

**NORDIC -**

Continued from page 5

addition to its ISO 14001 Environmental Reforestation certification, Nordic obtained its forestry certification from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) in February 2009, the first privately held Eastern White Pine (EWP) manufacturer to do so. Nordic harvests roughly 1 percent of this boreal forest annually, ensuring a sustainable source of wood for future generations.

Nordic Engineered Wood manufactures the components in Chibougamau, Que., where it recently completed a \$12 million mill expansion featuring state of the art milling and finishing equipment dedicated to its glulam structures projects.

**More Products in Development**

In addition to redefining glulam technology with its Enviro=Lam process, Nordic is currently developing X=Lam, a cross-laminated timber panel, which offers additional benefits for commercial construction. While similar to the decking used in the Fondation building, X=Lam will allow for greater clearspan floor applications in commercial structures, as well as load bearing walls where lateral resistance to shear is critical. Lighter and easier to work with than steel or concrete, Cross Laminated Timbers (CLT) enhance wood's superior resistance to seismic conditions, making them an ideal building material for construction in earthquake prone areas. CLT's are used extensively in Europe, where commercial wood construction in excess of nine stories is now becoming commonplace. Builders find the lighter weight and workability of CLTs reduce build times and construction costs. Julie Frappier, P. Eng., the director of technical services for Nordic Engineered Wood, is a member of the Engineered Wood Association's (APA) Standards Committee on CLT, which held its first meeting on March 11, 2010. Frappier is working with the APA to create the design standard for CLT's.

For more information visit [www.nordicewp.com](http://www.nordicewp.com) or call 866-817-3418.

**SHELTER -**

Continued from page 6

most sustainable resources in the industry." Loe's brother Rod, production manag-

er of the firms Xuzhou, China office said, "Our goal is to identify any product that we can source globally to bring value to our customers."

Ryan said the development of the TigerPLY product began at the request of customers. "We started out at the request of customers with whom we had done business for many years," he said. "As import plywood became a bigger factor in their requirements, we decided that we could bring some solutions and solve some problems for our customers to keep costs minimal and achieve the quality level they want at the same time."

"We spent several years developing the product," he continued. "It was just in the past year that we've achieved the consistent quality at the production volume that we were seeking. We've accomplished that through partnerships with manufacturers around the globe."

Ryan noted that Rod has used his 30 years of experience in the plywood industry to help foster this effort. "We have utilized the knowledge of my brother Rod, who's been good enough to give us his time and energy," he said. Rod spends about half of his time in the company's production office located in Xuzhou, China, continuing to manage the production and build quality control teams. "Our goal is to build a top-notch, high quality, first rate product," Ryan said. "When you build a brand, you're making an investment of all your time and energy to say, we're signing something that goes in the marketplace. By putting our brand on it, it's our signature that we've put in all of our energy and all of our efforts to be proud of what we made, we're not just trading a commodity. As a result our product is comparable with the highest quality of any production around the world."

Among the many products manufactured by SFI under the TigerPLY brand, one recent offering is TigerLITE®. "TigerLITE comes with an 18 mm, 3/4-inch, 4x8 panel which is an ultra-light 46-pounds per panel," Ryan revealed. "These are primarily used in RV, aircraft and marine applications. Due to the ultra lightweight, we get more panels on a truck and therefore we can offer our distributors higher quality with lower cost. It's just one of the many items we've developed to bring some value to the marketplace."

"Our most recent product catalog features our 2010 'Core Options'. Core Options offers customers a set of core grades and thicknesses," Ryan continued. "We've developed Core Options for 2010 to define how we build a panel. We have a variety of products. We manufacture lumber cores, we do some all-Birch panels, some Eucalyptus panels, and combination cores. We have a product that we developed called C-9, which is a thick veneer. Actually, we've installed machine core compositors to build a panel with the least amount of overlap or voids on the core."

"We're coming out with a new panel, which we call XTR. This hybrid combination core has MDF cross bands for high-end finish work such as cabinetry and furniture. Those applications need an ultra smooth face and we've established that by putting the MDF cross bands on our thicker machine-composed cores. Developing this set of cores has been the foundation of our business." TigerPLY is available in face species of White Birch, Natural Birch, Okume, Obeche, Red Oak, White Maple and Pacific Red Alder. Optional face grades are BB/CC, C-Plus, C, D, and E.

Oregon State University's Department of Wood Science & Engineering tests the TigerPLY products. "We work with Oregon State University and TECO, a third party testing and certification organization headquartered in Sun Prairie, Wisc.," Ryan said.

While SFI has a primary focus on TigerPLY, the firm manufactures many other products. "Shelter Forest International is not just TigerPLY. We do a lot of different things in addition to TigerPLY. A great deal of our focus is in domestic hardwoods," Rod explained. "TigerPLY is one of our main thrusts because we have applied so much energy and effort, with the whole team involved in it's development," Ryan added. "A lot of blood, sweat and tears have gone into bringing high quality to the international level, to building this brand."

In fact, Rod said they often ship mixed containers spanning the range of SFI's panel production. "We've got clients in China that may need Alder or Southern Yellow Pine and we have the ability to manage the logistics of all the products in any direction. We have a number of warehouses with a broad spectrum of products, from which we can mix and match loads,

which just adds to the efficiency," he added. SFI ships products through the Chinese ports of Qingdao and Lianyungang; and primarily to the ports of Portland, Ore., Houston, Texas, and Savannah, Ga., in the United States. Canada is serviced through Vancouver, B.C.

Ryan said, "There are a lot of facets that contribute to our market strength, but the key that ties everything together is state-of-the-art information management, coupled with well-managed logistics and supply chain management. Supply chain management is absolutely essential, especially in developing markets. As our customers are working on smaller inventories today, our service needs to increase. We do more with less, which requires really good information."

This year, SFI developed service teams made up of key employees. Ryan explained, "We actually divided the U.S. into five territories and we've got account management and territory managers for the entire country." These key employees include: West Coast Manager, Glen Anderson; Midwest Manager, Monica Davidson; Northeast Manager, Whitney LaRuffa; Southeast Manager, Mike Stringfellow; and South Central Manager, Matt McCoun.

"We're heavily focused in the retail markets, the big boxes and on distribution partnerships around the country. That's one of the reasons we divided marketing into regions, to ensure our customers get the quality and service they expect and deserve," Ryan said.

"We meet with our managers to discuss any problems that our customers may have," he said. "We deal with highly technical issues that change on a regular basis, so it's important to discuss issues daily. We're making improvements and strides every month. We were the first company in the world to get a No Added Formaldehyde (NAF) exemption from the state of California for the production of Hardwood Plywood, and we're one of the first to invest in small chamber air tests so that we can test for formaldehyde emissions in our labs in China. We've really set some benchmarks in quality, sustainability and environmental stewardship. It's much, much more to us than selling materials. It's about sustainable environmentally friendly products. We're trying to make a difference with what we do."

As for what the future holds, Ryan said, "Our goal is to have steady growth. We're not interested in uncontrollable growth; it's really important to maintain the culture that we've established, maintain the value, and maintain control over the brand management. Certainly we have ample opportunity as we grow for good international traders, and good domestic traders to fit within our team. We have plenty of room to grow and we enjoy the financial strength to support and cultivate growth."

Shelter Forest International is part of The Shelter Group. The Shelter Group is an umbrella company for Shelter Products Inc., Portland, Ore., Gulf Coast Shelter, Daphne, Ala., and Shelter Forest International. For more information and to view Shelter Forest International's current catalog visit [www.shelterforest.com](http://www.shelterforest.com).

**BUCKLEY -**

Continued from page 8

patio furniture. But for natural dark interiors **American Black Walnut** is still very strongly in vogue. At every ASEAN show solid and veneered Walnut are featured in chairs, sofas, beds, dining sets and desks, as well as being emulated by substitute plastic foil laminates. There is now a tendency for Walnut to display its light-colored **Sapwood** rather than disguise it by steaming. Walnut has enjoyed a long fashion run and shows no sign of diminishing yet, which of course may encourage imposters. At one show "Asian Walnut" furniture from Myanmar was on show – actually a species of laurel and almost too heavy to lift. Apart from Kashmir, there is no Walnut native to tropical Southeast Asia.

**"Green" labelling generally absent**

One common element throughout the shows was the general lack of environmental claims for furniture, although it has to be said that there continues to be an ever-growing emphasis on temperate and plantation species and very few offerings in any sensitive tropical species. That is not

to say the "green" issue was ignored, for seminars were held on the subject at several events including "Green Furniture" from Australian Jennifer Curtis at MIFF. At IFFS in Hall 6 Singapore Mozaic – the national generic brand – ambassadors presented a collective showcase featuring specially curated "environmentally friendly" products designed and produced by member companies. One well known supplier of furniture from north China, Singapore-based Haleywood, has recently re-branded with a strong environmental bias in its promotion.

**The late shows**

Vietnam holds VIFA at the end of the show circuit and is the leading exporter in Southeast Asia, definitely benefiting from its new exhibition facility, which however requires only a day – still being a relatively small show. It demonstrates well how little native wood is available in Vietnam, which depends on furniture export production on wood from USA, Europe and New Zealand. It also shows how dependent Vietnam still is on overseas designers, although HAWA the furniture association of Ho Chi Minh City is promoting home-grown design through its Hoa Mai competition sponsored by the American Hardwood Export Council.

**Hoa Mai – 2010**

Hoa Mai is the annual spring "Apricot Blossom" furniture design competition organized by the Handicraft and Wood Industry Association of Ho Chi Minh City (HAWA) which culminates in a display of winners at the VIFA, giving young Vietnamese designers a chance to create new furniture and to gain exposure in the tough commercial world through a free display at the heart of the show.

Hoa Mai 2010 received 281 entries from 210 designers from all over Vietnam – an increase of 34% over the previous entry – one third from young designers, already employed, and the rest from students across the country. While the standard of design is gradually improving, it has to be said that Vietnam lacks design courses dedicated to furniture which exist in such countries as Thailand and Singapore. In a pre-judging seminar, it was suggested that "some technical points in the shortlisted designs should be sorted out at the manufacturing stage", but in reality students always have problems in prototyping, often due to their lack of manufacturing facilities and experience – and this became quite clear on submission of the final projects, where craft quality and material finish were sometimes lacking. Inevitably some designs were a little uncomfortable or impractical and even unsafe. However this is to be expected as part of the learning curve that ultimately leads to successful design. What is essential for young designers is to nurture creativity and engender it with a mixture of reality and commercial appeal. The winner of Hoa Mai was Nguyen Van Truong with a dark stained American Red Oak chair "Dark Diamond" that his employer, AA Corporation, plans to put into commercial production.

Finally IFFINA in Indonesia was the surprise of the circuit, having grown in size and stature under the overall control of ASMINDO the furniture association. 326 exhibitors took space, up 30% for this third show with a brand new Hall D. According to Ambar Tjahyono, its Chairman, Indonesia is seeing a significant recovery in furniture exports, from a drop of 40% in the first half of last year. October to December shipments were high and in January exports were 16% ahead of the same period in 2009. Total exports in 2009 were valued at US\$2.35 billion. "Furniture is important in Indonesia, with 4 million people working directly in the industry and a further 6 million dependent on it in some way," says Ambar. What is now clear is the extent to which many Indonesian producers are turning towards contemporary furniture whilst retaining an element of traditional Indonesian design and craft. Kobeks founded in Central Java in 2000, for example, combines a range of materials in glass and steel with **Teak, Oak, Walnut** and **Maple** in some very contemporary and creative models for the residential and hotel sectors.

All in all these shows, held under the ASEAN Furniture Industries Council banner, came up with as good a display of forward-looking confidence that could have been expected in such a tough year – one in which the next challenge will be to make a profit as costs of labor, freight, money and materials are on the rise again.