

The Import/Export Wood Purchasing News
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Serving Forest Products Buyers Worldwide



December 2012/January 2013

IWPA Hosts Member Meeting During NHLA

Photos By Gary Miller and Wayne Miller

Chicago, Illinois—During the recent National Hardwood Lumber Association meeting held here, the International Wood Products Association (IWPA) held a membership meeting, which updated attendees on organizational business. IWPA Executive Vice President Brent McClendon, along with association chief elect-

ed officer Warren Spitz, of Sierra Forest Products, led a brief program for attendees. They addressed what the IWPA is focusing on in regard to government affairs, marketing and the growth segment of the industry.

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Steve Stoufflet, Robinson Lumber Co. Inc., New Orleans, La.; Jesper Bach, Baillie Lumber Co., Hamburg, N.Y.; and Joe Ventimiglia and Paul Spitz, Sierra Forest Products, Chicago, Ill.



Tom Herga, Olam Wood Products, Leland, N.C.; Fred Coffrin, Inter-Continental Hardwoods Inc., Currie, N.C.; and William von der Goltz, Downes & Reader Hardwood Co. Inc., Greensboro, N.C.

AHEC Offers International Buyers Panel

Chicago, Illinois—The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) has successfully hosted its Annual Membership Meeting and an International Buyers Panel at the recently concluded National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA) Convention, held here at the Sheraton Hotel & Towers recently. Widely regarded as the annual “global gathering of the hardwood community”, over 800 delegates attended the 115th annu-

al convention. The highly anticipated International Buyers Panel hosted by AHEC included a panel of importers from several of the key global markets who collaborated with AHEC members and American exporters to share their thoughts on the export markets and potential for U.S. hardwoods.

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Norm Murray, U-C Coatings Corp., Buffalo, N.Y.; Nils Dickmann and Jennifer Brand, Bridgewell Resources LLC, Tigard, Ore.; and Mark Vollinger, W.M. Cramer Lumber Co., Hickory, N.C.



Grafton Cook III, Missouri-Pacific Lumber Co. Inc., Fayette, Mo.; Belinda Cobden-Ramsey, AHEC – Europe, London; Roderick Wiles, AHEC – Africa, Middle East, South Asia; Singapore; and Criswell Davis, Frank Miller Lumber Co. Inc.; Union City, Ind.

U.S. Delegates Participate In SE Asian Trade Meetings

By Michael Buckley

Southeast Asia—U.S. and Canadian wood trade and industry delegates were on hand to represent North America at a series of meetings in Indonesia and Malaysia recently. “New international developments in the trade of legal timber” and “Boosting

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Brent McClendon, International Wood Products Association, Alexandria, Va.; Warren Spitz, Sierra Forest Products, West Chicago, Ill.; Cheah Kim Huan and Sheam Satkunu, Malaysia Timber Council; and Mark Barford, National Hardwood Lumber Association, Memphis, Tenn., at the International Timber Trade Forum.

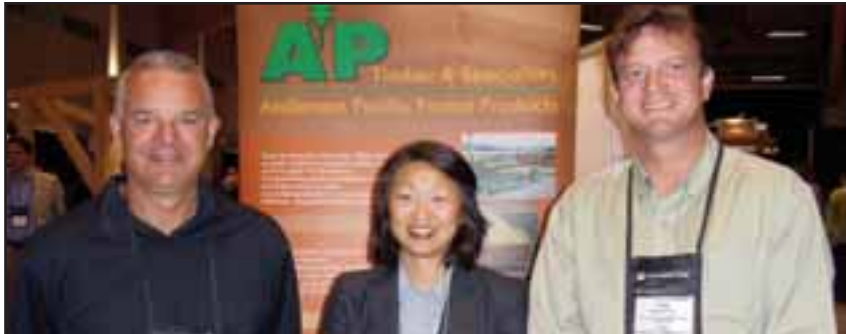
GBM Attendance Surpasses Previous Goals

Photos By Wayne Miller

Whistler, British Columbia—The 2012 Global Buyers Mission (GBM), held at the Whistler Conference Centre recently, welcomed over 700 delegates, surpassing the attendance of the past eight years.

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Archie Rafter, Andersen Pacific Forest Products Ltd., Maple Ridge, B.C.; Kim-Jana Henze, EDO Canada, Vancouver, B.C.; and Ron Andersen, Andersen Pacific Forest Products Ltd.

Who's Who in Import/Exports



NATHAN JOBE

Nathan Jobe is a regional sales representative for **American Lumber Co.**, located in Hamburg, N.Y. **American Lumber Co.** is one of North America's largest hardwood lumber manufacturers, distributors and exporters of hardwood logs and lumber products. Operating since 1953 and currently headquartered in Hamburg, New York, the firm's team of sales professionals services customers worldwide. Imported species

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EUGENE WALTERS

Eugene Walters is general manager for **Rolling Ridge Woods LLC**, located in Parkersburg, W. Va. As general manager he approves all sales and is in charge of log sales. **Rolling Ridge Woods** offers Red and White Oak, Cherry, Walnut, Hard Maple, Red Elm, Ash and Hickory. Value-added services include inspection preparation, waxing and ironing. Walters has been in his current position for 10 years. Previous experi-

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TIM MCGILL

Tim McGill is responsible for sales and IT at **Inter Continental Hardwoods**, headquartered in Currie, N.C. **Inter Continental Hardwoods** offers rough sawn lumber, decking, flooring, flooring machined products and kiln sticks. Species available include: **A f r o m o s i a**, **A n i e g r e**, **B e e c h**, **A f r i c a n M a h o g a n y**, **G e n u i n e M a h o g a n y**, **I r o k o**, **B u b i n g a**, **C e d a r**, **C u m a r u**, **I p e**, **J a t o b a**, **M a k o r e**, **M o v i n g u i**, **P a d o u k**,

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SCOTT WOOD

Scott Wood is responsible for North American sales at **Midwest Walnut Co.**, located in Willow Springs, Mo. **Midwest Walnut** offers Fancy Walnut lumber and dimension blanks from 4/4 through 20/4, Red and White Oak, Hard Maple, Walnut and several other species of lumber, and gunstock blanks. The company produces approximately 14 million board feet annually. Special services and features offered by

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Longshore Union Labor Negotiations Extended

Longshore union leaders and Northwest grain terminal owners have agreed to continue contract talks. According to sources the desired result is to avert a lockout at the Portland, Oregon and Puget Sound ports. Representatives of union locals and an association of grain terminal employers will keep negotiating as requested by a federal mediator stated a recent news release by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, Washington, D.C. "Due to the sensitivity of this high-profile dispute and consistent with the agency's longstanding practice, we will not disclose either the location of the meeting or the content of the substantive negotiations that will take place," the release said. Longshoremen have continued working at the terminals in Portland, Vancouver and the Seattle area since their contract expired. They are prepared to protest on land and in boats if the talks fail and a lockout ensues. Labor negotiations between shipping companies and the International Longshoremen's Association were extended through December 29, 2012, delaying a potential strike that could have impacted ports along the Eastern Seaboard and Gulf Coast.

Log Exports Total 736 Million

Recent reports show log exports from Washington, Oregon, Northern California and Alaska totaled 736 million board feet in the first six months of 2012. A decrease of 25 percent compared to

THE WASHINGTON SCENE

the same time period last year as reported by the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research Station. "China's economic slowdown has reduced that country's demand for log and lumber imports," said Xiaoping Zhou, a research economist with the station who compiled the data. "This is largely responsible for the overall decrease in West Coast exports." The total value of log exports in the first half of this year totaled \$461 million, a decrease of about 32 percent. The total value of exported lumber dropped about 14 percent to \$287 million. Other highlights from the report include: • Log exports to China decreased by 38 percent compared to the first half of 2011, totaling 395 million board feet. • Log exports to South Korea also decreased, by 36 percent, to 95 million board feet. • Japan's log market seems to be recovering, as exports in the first half of 2012 increased by 22 percent, to a total of 231 million board feet. • West Coast lumber exports to China decreased by 34 percent compared to the first half of 2011, totaling 147 million board feet. • Lumber exports to South Korea also decreased by 43 percent, to 4.3 million board feet. "Increasing pressure of Chinese Yuan appreciation and strict real estate control policy have slowed down China's overall importation of forest products so far this year," Zhou said. Zhou compiled the statistics data from the U.S. International Trade Commission and Production, Prices, Employment, and Trade in Northwest Forest Industries, a station publication that provides current information on the regions lumber and plywood production

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Why We Do What We Do

For more information on AHEC and the export promotion programs, call (703)435-2900, fax (703)435-2537, or visit the website, www.ahec.org.

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

At the recent NHLA Convention in Chicago, Illinois, I heard much discussion about promotion for our industry and almost universal agreement on the need for more. What also became very clear to me, however, was the lack of universal agreement on the very definition of promotion itself. I think for too many of us, "promotion" is synonymous with "advertising" while in reality it is a much more complex basket of activities designed to change perceptions and behaviours, often in what are seemingly very subtle or indirect ways. This is particularly true in our industry where to drive increased demand we need to focus attention on our "customers' customers"—the architects, designers and other specifiers who determine what materials are to be featured in their projects or run through their factories. In short, we are very much in the fashion business.

AHEC, and the American hardwood industry have been very fortunate over the years to benefit from the talents of a very creative and dedicated staff of overseas professionals, each of whom are experts in their respective markets and regions. However, the market most closely related to the U.S. domestic market in terms of industry infrastructure, knowledge of the material and consumer spending patterns is without question the European Union. Therefore, I wanted to share with a recent editorial written by AHEC's European Director, David Venables, for the UK Timber Trade Journal, outlining his vision of promotion for the American hardwood industry in Europe. As those of you who are AHEC members are well aware, David and his team in London are the authors of some of the most innovative and successful promotional initiatives in the global wood products industry, and have been pioneers in the development of new avenues to influence the architectural world. I believe that David's answer to the question of why we at AHEC "do what we do" is equally applicable in the United States, and provides a window into what an

increased domestic promotional initiative might look like:

It has been a busy few weeks for AHEC even by our standards. After months of planning and execution we have delivered two very exciting high profile installations in the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) as part of the London Design Festival (LDF). The first working with acclaimed professional designer, Martino Gamper and the other, with Design Product students from the Royal College of Art (RCA). AHEC is no stranger to the LDF and since our first collaboration in 2008 they have introduced us to some very influential designers and architects.

I am often asked why we do these projects and what do they achieve? Our marketing objective is to prove the environmental credentials and performance potential of U.S. hardwoods, challenge perceptions, profile less known species and inspire more architects and designers to specify hardwood. We believe that increased awareness and sharing of knowledge with this target audience can only have a positive outcome for the U.S. hardwood industry and indeed the wider timber industry.

Our shift away from traditional marketing methods of trade shows and advertising has been very successful. Last year's Timber Wave generated unprecedented levels of publicity, well beyond the means of our advertising budget and the exposure gives us much greater penetration into the design community. We have learned that the best way to influence architects and designers is through projects and case studies; that's often how they learn about new products and materials, and the capability of those materials.

With all the projects we sponsor, it is essential for us to be involved from the beginning and develop a relationship

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Research Illuminates Both Challenges And Rewards Of Sustainable Forestry

(Reprinted from Tropical Forest Foundation News)

Both inspiring the work of the Tropical Forest Foundation and illuminating its complexities is research published recently by Board Member and University of Florida faculty member Francis "Jack" Putz.

The first study, published in Conservation Letters, is called "Sustaining Conservation Values in Selectively Logged Tropical Forests: The Attained and The Attainable." It points to the need for a 'middle way' between deforestation and total forest protection. Tropical forests are, according to the study, logged "at about 20 times the rate at which they are cleared," which justifies a focus on managed logging.

The study, conducted by Putz with Pieter Zuidema, Timothy Synnott, Marielos Pena-Claros, Michelle Pinnard, Douglas Shell, Jerome Vanclay, Sylvie Gourlet-Fieury, Brosnon Griscom, John Palmer and Roderick Zagt, reviewed over a hundred publications to assess the impact of selective logging on conservation values. Among the findings were that 76 percent of carbon is retained in once-logged forests and 85 to 100 percent of "species of mammals, birds, invertebrates and plants remain after logging."

The authors point out the unfortunate but widespread assumption that a stand that has been selectively logged is "degraded" and therefore eligible for

conversion to non-forest land uses, like clearing for agriculture or development. The study suggests four initiatives that, in synergy, can conserve managed forests:

- Assure the legality of forest products, which is the intention of the Forest Law Enforcement Government and Trade (FLEGT) program of the European Union and the Lacey Act in the U.S.

- Promote responsible management through voluntary third-party certification that secures or increases market access and prices.

- Recognize carbon benefits from improved tropical forest management through climate change mitigation programs like REDD+ (United Nation's Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation.)

- Devolve control over forests to indigenous communities, employing company-community partnerships when appropriate.

A second study, completed by Putz with Vincent Medjibe and published in the Journal of Forest Economics, acknowledges that whatever the big picture costs and benefits, decisions on the ground ultimately will be made based on economics. "Cost comparisons of reduced-impact and conventional logging in the tropics" begins with the recognition that reliable logging cost data are rare and difficult to compare due to variation in methods, terminology, terrain, diversity or heterogeneity of tim-

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The Power of Free Trade Impacts Industry

I often find myself advocating the merits of free trade as Executive Vice President of an international trade association. My belief in the power of trade is borne out by success stories of countries that have entered into partnerships with U.S. and other developed countries. For example, last year a delegation of wood processors from Ghana attended IWPA's convention. The companies from Ghana found customers that provided financial and technical assistance to strengthen environmental practices and two U.S. businesses found new suppliers of certified wood. Despite the many "win-win" scenarios brought about by free trade, there are times when praise for the merits of free trade gets the cold shoulder. Neighbors who have family that have lost jobs to the recession, domestic industry colleagues who are experiencing declines in membership and members of Congress whose email boxes are filled by angry constituents sometimes mistakenly point to imports as the villain stealing away jobs and wealth from America. "Fair trade" and "level playing field" have dominated discussions on trade relations. Difficult terms to argue against, but should come with a disclaimer for what is often meant by "fair"



and "level." The latest example of how these terms are translated into policy can be found in legislation named, "Making Opportunities Via Efficient and More Effective National Transportation Act of 2009" or the "Movement Act of 2009." The proposal calls for a tax to be placed on commercial cargo being imported into the U.S. The bill is ostensibly intended to improve and secure ports. But tucked into it is a bit of protectionism as it only assigns a tax duty to imports. Presumably these same ports are used for exports, but the cargo on out-bound ships is given a free pass. The author of the measure states the rationale for the bill as: In these increasingly dire economic times where ports are considering individual fee systems from California, to Washington, to New York; it is in the best interest of the Congress to ensure that America develops a nationwide strategy that will protect our competitiveness at home and abroad while maintaining the ability to invest in a coordinated nationwide freight strategy. I do not dispute the need for modern, secure ports. I do take issue with placing the full burden on importers. Certainly this approach does not pass the "fair" trade or "level playing field" test. However unin-

By **Brent J. McClendon, CAE**
Executive Vice President
International Wood Products Association
www.iwpawood.org



tended, this legislation is a short-sighted barrier to trade that would ultimately pass the cost onto Americans in terms of higher costs for goods and jobs. How so?

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FORECASTS 2013



Ahren Spilker
Idaho Forest Group
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Most of what we export goes into Asia, specifically Japan, where 80 percent of our export business goes. We anticipate business in Japan improving in 2013 and demand rising. Their housing starts are pushing 950,000, which will be pretty much on pace with the U.S. But when you consider Japan is the size of California, doing the same as the U.S., that's pretty significant. So there is going to be pressure on the domestic side to keep more wood in the United States. But the demand is still going to be there. We

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Stephen Conwell
Southern Forest Products Association
New Orleans, La.



For 2012, exports of Southern Pine lumber are down about 8% when compared with 2011. The Southern Forest Products Association (SFPA), based in suburban New Orleans, has conducted worldwide promotions of Southern Pine products for more than 20 years. Supported with funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service, SFPA is actively exploring opportunities for the specification and use of Southern Pine materials around the globe.

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Parker Boles
Hermitage Hardwood Lumber Sales, Inc.
Cookeville, Tenn.

We feel the export markets should be equal to or better than 2012. We really have no real basis other than if the markets in Asia should continue at the pace we experienced in 2012. Although we received downward price pressure in the third quarter, we are finding the supply at the moment more difficult than the demand. Further price declines will only remove more product from the market. Our European business should only improve as it has been relatively sparse this year so far.

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Tom Herga
Olam Wood Products
Leland, N.C.



As far as sales are concerned, I would hope things could only get better. Unless housing sales and spending increase, we won't see huge demand for expensive hardwood lumber. On the other hand, overseas supply has been drastically reduced due to the overall worldwide recession, so supply could become very tight given a small increase in demand. Companies in this business will have to decide what to stock and how to market their products. Stocking all species and sizes is not an option in the current busi-

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Robert MacMaster
Argo Fine Imports
Metairie, La.

We are optimistic for 2013 but very cautious about the import market at the same time. I think the elections can play in big favor for or against new business growth for 2013. Business for 2012 for us was steady but with little growth to the bottom lines. 2013 will be a very interesting year for many U.S. importers. With the pending ITC investigation for hardwood plywood from China this will create unprecedented challenges for all importers, as well

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Ron Carlsson
USA Woods International
Memphis, Tenn.



USA Woods has been in business for almost 24 years and our market is 100 percent exports of kiln dried North American hardwoods. While technically wholesalers, we act in the capacity of brokers between our mill base and overseas customers. Our niche in the market is purchasing from sawmills with dry kilns providing consistent quality hardwoods for export at a competitive price. 2012 has been a good year for us and we are mainly shipping kiln dried White

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Rick Burnett
W.M. Cramer Lumber Co.
Hickory, N.C.

In 2013, our exports to the EU will remain at about the same levels as they are this year while the EU countries continue to work out of their current economic downturn and banking problems. The Far East will improve as customers realize shortages have developed in hardwood production and the attempt to buy which should cause

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Importer Looks For Silver Lining For 85-Year-Old WEST HARTFORD

By Bridget McCrea



West Hartford Stairs & Cabinets Inc., of Newington, Conn., purchases an array of imported woods from which to manufacture such items as stairs, balusters, rails and finials.

Newington, Connecticut—Serving the nation’s home-building market isn’t an easy gig these days, what with the real estate market crash, credit crunch, and overall economic malaise. All of these factors have taken a toll on West Hartford Stairs & Cabinets, Inc., located here. The fact that homebuilders, remodelers, and homeowners – the firm’s top three customer segments – are dealing with their own economic and business issues has put the manufacturer in a challenging spot.

At the peak of the construction market in 2005 the manufacturer’s annual sales hit \$9 million. That number has since been whittled down to \$3.5 million – a level that President and Owner Andre Letourneau hopes will begin rising again in 2013. “We’re seeing some signs of improvement in the market, but the last few years have definitely been challenging,” said Letourneau, the fourth generation owner of the firm. “We’ve gone from 85 employees working about 51 hours a week to 44 working 32-40 hours. That’s a pretty significant drop for a company to absorb.”

Specializing in custom stairs and cabinetry – from bookcases to cabinets and vanities to furniture – West Hartford Stairs & Cabinets operates from a 56,000-square-foot facility that includes a warehouse, office, and yard space. Founded in 1927 by a trio of entrepreneurial woodworkers, the company is headed up by Letourneau; Office Manager Terry Letourneau (Andre’s wife); Cabinet Sales Manager Jerry Caron; and Stair Sales Manager Dana Donavan.

West Hartford Stairs & Cabinets buys about 120,000 board feet of lumber annually, mainly in 4/4 through 16/4 of both imported woods and North American hardwoods. Primary imported species include Santos Mahogany and Jatoba, while domestics are comprised of Red Oak, Poplar, Maple, Birch, Cherry, Butternut and Walnut. “We’re pretty much using small quantities of a pretty wide variety of species right now,” said Letourneau. That variety allows the manufacturer to cater to a wide range of tastes, particularly among homeowners who want their abodes to have a special, customized appearance.

All lumber is purchased in rough condition – a feature that allows the firm to control the quality of the millwork. Buying rough also ensures that every single piece of wood is utilized to the highest degree possible. “We try to use everything that we cut,” said Letourneau. “We strive to create the least amount of fall-off possible, and then we utilize that fall-off for other functions.”

All scrap wood, for example, is retained and then used to heat the manufacturing plant during the winter months. Overflow of scrap – typically accumulated during the summer – and sawdust is shipped to BioPellet, LLC, a Connecticut manufacturer of BioBricks. The firm turns the waste into CO2-neutral, renewable, environmentally-friendly briquettes that are used for home and industrial heating. “Our goal is to either use everything that comes into our plant, or find ‘green’ ways to utilize whatever is left over,” said Letourneau.

A 7-person sales team of outside reps who alternate working on the road and in the firm’s office handles company sales. “I also get out there and sell when the time allows for it,” said Letourneau, who also oversees procurement and the plant’s operations. Recent equipment additions in the plant include a Biesse Rover CNC machining center and an Intorex CNX CNC lathe that allows the company to manufacture its own balusters (rather than having to outsource that function).

“Our new equipment allows us to handle



This massive circular staircase began by West Hartford purchasing rough lumber and finding ways to “utilize every single piece to the highest degree possible,” says company President and Owner Andre Letourneau.



West Hartford, a fourth generation, 85-year-old company works closely with clients to match lifestyles with functional, handcrafted cabinets.



In addition to Santos Mahogany and Jatoba, West Hartford purchases North American hardwoods, such as Red Oak, Poplar, Maple, Birch, Cherry and Butternut to incorporate into its woodwork designs.

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WT Hardwoods Group—Two Great Brands Equal One Great Company

By Paul Miller Jr.



According to Weaber’s president/chief operating officer, Matt Weaber, the company is now positioned for significant growth when the building and construction industry comes back.



On a 125-acre facility, Weaber Inc. is among the nation’s leading hardwood lumber suppliers. From forestry to the final product Weaber’s operation is geared towards the needs of their customers.



Committed foresters are dedicated to the conservation and management of Weaber’s renewable Appalachian timber resource.



The company services its customers with small quantities through their distribution center and multiple truckloads from the mill.



Quality manufactured lumber is produced from the highest-grade Appalachian forest logs, known for their clarity and excellent grain.



On 125 acres of land, the company inventories approximately 2 million board feet of logs and 3.5 million board feet of green hardwood lumber.

Lebanon, Pa.—In early 2012, the assets of Weaber Inc. were acquired in an all cash transaction by Resilience Capital Partners, a Cleveland based private equity firm. Resilience currently owns Taylor Lumber Incorporated. Weaber and Taylor Lumber were

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The entire Taylor plant is operated with equipment manufactured by Corley Manufacturing located in Chattanooga, Tenn.





The company uses Hyster brand forklifts and Caterpillar log loaders.



Taylor Lumber has 20 dry kilns, which gives them a total dry kiln capacity of 1.2 million board feet and the company’s annual production is 18 million board feet.

Continuing to change and meet the demands of the market, Weaber offers rough lumber and S4S boards, mouldings and flooring products or finished lumber S4S boards, moulding and cut-to-size products.





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JOHNSON BROTHERS' New Mill Provides Flexibility in Products

By Terry Miller



Paul and Michael Johnson, president and general manager of Johnson Brothers Lumber Co., located in Cazenovia, N.Y.



Key personnel at Johnson Brothers includes (L to R): Allan Morgan, 36 years at JBL, Neal Wilcox, 35 years at JBL, and Kevin Howells, 38 years at JBL.



Johnson Brothers Lumberyard and Kiln Manager, Dan Newton, has been employed by JBL for 29 years.



Heather Mitchell is secretary and Kara Connellan is office manager for JBL.



Sales Manager Joel Struebing, 12 years at JBL.



Steve Bennett, 22 years at JBL, grades lumber at the grading station.

Cazenovia, New York—Established in 1937, Johnson Brothers Lumber Co. (JBL), located in Central New York, took advantage of slower market conditions over the past few years to build a unique sawmill and handling facility that will improve their throughput volume of kiln-dried lumber, as well as increase their production of fresh sawn lumber.

The newly built, one-acre building houses a moveable band headrig made by Wood-Mizer, a fixed Cleereman carriage, Brewco's B-1600 horizontal resaw system, a vertical resaw from Stenner, a Salem edger, and dual grading stations with an automatic trim saw, all manufactured by T.S. Manufacturing in Lindsay, Ontario.

JBL markets its products to end users, distribution yards and many others. "Exporting is driving today's market and we sell to China, Vietnam, Korea, Japan, Israel, Italy, and England, among a few others," President Paul Johnson explained. "We market to wholesalers and direct manufacturers including cabinet, flooring and furniture manufacturers, millwork and moulding processors, as well as low grade buyers. Our goal is to find customers that are a good fit, where the business is beneficial for both parties. We are consistent with our customers and we like to know if we're doing something unsatisfactory."

General Manager Michael Johnson added, "What is nice is that we're a compressed enough company where you can talk directly with the president of the company, at any time, with a direct phone call to sort out issues or get anything ironed out that needs ironing out."

Paul said he believes the new installation of equipment will provide a payback in many forms with recovery being at the

Continued on page 23

Ash is being sawn on JBL's Wood-Mizer 4250 headrig with a Cleereman carriage.



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U.S. Hardwood/Softwood Exhibitors Shine At ‘Global WoodMart’ In Malaysia

Report By Michael Buckley



Toto Robinson, Robinson Lumber Co., New Orleans, La.; Jennifer Brand, American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) vice chairman, Bridgewell Resources, Tigard, Ore.; Mark Barford, National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA), Memphis, Tenn.; and Christian Mengel, VM International LLC, Greensboro, N.C.



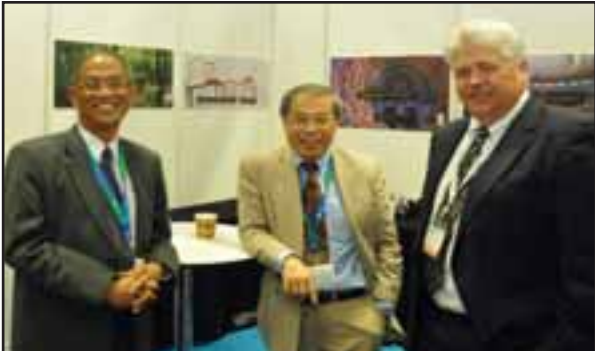
Phil Fenwick, Baillie Lumber Co., Hamburg, N.Y., and guest with Malaysian Minister of Plantations, Bernard Dompok.



Shige Tanaka, Northwest Hardwoods, Tacoma, Wash.; John Chan, AHEC, SE Asia; and Bryan Chua, Northwest Hardwoods



American softwood team Charry Chan from China; Bryan Hayson, Cox Industries Inc., Orangeburg, S.C.; and Joyce Feng, China



Chew Lye Teng, Malaysian Timber Council; John Chan, AHEC, SE Asia; and Mark Barford, NHLA, Memphis, Tenn.



Jennifer Brand, Bridgewell Resources, Tigard, Ore.; Brent McClendon, (executive vice president), International Wood Products Association (IWPA), Alexandria, Va.; Mark Barford, NHLA, Memphis, Tenn.; John Chan, AHEC, SE Asia; Norm Murray, U-C Coatings Corp., Buffalo, N.Y.; and Warren Spitz, (president), IWPA

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Kuala Lumpur–The American hardwood pavilion coordinated by the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) was by far the largest international exhibitor at the second “Global WoodMart” organized recently by the Malaysian Timber Council (MTC). With other exhibitors from the U.S. softwood industry participating as well as several visitors and associations, the U.S. presence was strong. However, the visitor traffic was lighter than had been hoped for and many buyers are thought to have come from overseas rather than Malaysia.

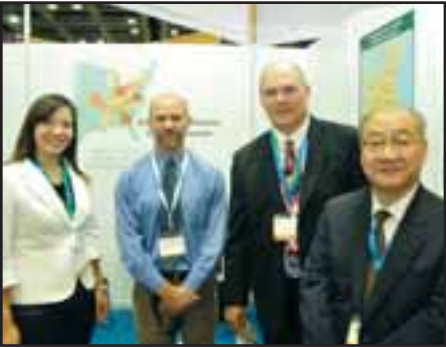
Over 120 exhibitors from 20 countries presented a very comprehensive range of timber and timber products in a highly focused wood show, reminiscent of the French Carrefour, the leading biennial wood show in Europe. Following the inaugural show in 2010, this year the space at the Kuala Lumpur Conference Centre was expanded by 60 percent and included many new exhibitors.

Exhibiting at the AHEC pavilion were: Nina Company, Bridgewell Resources, Sonoking Corporation, Robinson Lumber Company, Northland Corporation, Somerset Wood Products, Missouri Walnut, Snowbelt Hardwoods, Northwest Hardwoods, Baillie Lumber Company, Graf Brothers, Shannon Lumber International, International Wood Products Association (IWPA), Hardwood States Export Group (HSEG) and Anderson-Tully Lumber Company Inc. Visiting the pavilion was Chris Rittgers, Agricultural Attaché at the U.S. Embassy for Malaysia and Singapore. John Chan, AHEC’s regional director based in Hong Kong, and his team were on hand to meet with trade and industry visitors.

American softwoods were on show and a locally based distributor APP Timber exhibited along with a group including American suppliers. Senior officers of U.S. associations were also on hand to meet traders, including Executive Director of AHEC Mike Snow, Executive

Continued on page 24

Regina Todd, State of Mississippi representative; Chris Rittgers, U.S. Agriculture Attaché in Kuala Lumpur; Joel Stopha and David Wong, Virginia Dept. of Agriculture



Malaysian Factories Face Challenges; Reach Out to U.S. Wood

By Thomas Russell

(Editors Note: The following is reprinted in its entirety with permission of Furniture Today in which it originally was published recently.)

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia—Malaysian furniture manufacturers looking to tap into a rebounding U.S. economy are facing other economic headwinds that could impede their competitive edge.

Most are facing shortages and increased costs for raw materials such as Rubberwood, a principal wood used for solid components in bedroom and casual dining.

They also face ongoing labor shortages due to their reliance on foreign workers, who are allowed in the country only on temporary visas. The ongoing need for replacement workers keeps many factories running short of their full capacity and also lengthens lead times on shipments to the U.S. and other markets.

Furniture Today spoke with a number of manufacturers about these and other issues at the Malaysian International Furniture Fair earlier this year. These companies discussed the issues openly in order to communicate their challenges to U.S. buyers, some of whom are seeing price increases and longer lead times for shipments as a result of the Rubberwood and worker shortages.

Case good producer SHH Furniture said the cost of Rubberwood has gone up 30 percent to 40 percent in the past two years. To justify any related price increases to its customers, the company says it has tried to add more value to its product with features such as higher quality finishes. It also is using more imported wood such as U.S. Poplar for its solid components.

Case goods producer Woody Furniture Inds. said it has seen a 30 percent to 40 percent increase in Rubberwood costs over the past year alone. It has tried to absorb most of those costs, which eats into profits.

“Our turnover (sales) is high, but the profit margin is lower,” said company sales and marketing executive Teo Hwee Hoon. “Everybody is trying to survive right now because of the material costs.”

The company has passed along some of the higher costs. Teo estimated that the price of bedrooms has gone up 10 percent in the past year, causing the suggested retail of a five-piece set to jump from \$500 to \$550.

To minimize the effects on the entire line, it too has shifted to other woods like Poplar and Acacia, she said.

Bedroom and dining room producer Len Cheong Furniture also has experienced Rubberwood cost increases and has passed along some of those in the form of

higher prices, ranging from 15 percent to 20 percent on finished goods in some cases, officials said. The increases have been less on some smaller-scaled products.

Like others, Len Cheong has had to deal with labor shortages caused by the expiration of two-year temporary work permits allowed to foreign workers. The revolving door policy keeps the company having to find and train new workers for its factory, which employs 300.

If the company ends up short of workers, lead times can balloon from 60-75 days to as long as 90-120 days. But it tries to avoid that impact on its customer by planning ahead.

In March, bedroom manufacturer



ChuanHeng Furniture Products said it had about 350 workers, 50 short of where it would like to be to reach its capacity of 200 containers a month. The worker shortage has lowered production to about

150 per month, said Lew Choon Hwee, marketing manager. However, he was optimistic the worker shortage would ease in the coming months.

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IWPA PHOTOS - Continued from page 1



Gary Miller, Import/Export Wood Purchasing News, Memphis, Tenn.; John Carpenter, Caterpillar Forest Products, LaGrange, Ga.; Bob Johnston, Tropical Forest Foundation, Alexandria, Va.; and Bill Rogers, Newman Lumber Co., Gulfport, Miss.



Geoff Dodd, AFRICA!, Collierville, Tenn.; John Read, The Rossi Group, Cromwell, Conn.; Lenny Shibley, Inter-Continental Hardwoods Inc., Currie, N.C.; and Wayne Miller, Import/Export Wood Purchasing News, Memphis, Tenn.



Warren Spitz, Sierra Forest Products, West Chicago, Ill.; and Brent McClendon, International Wood Products Association, Alexandria, Va.



Michael Hermen, APP Timber Ltd., Shah Alam, Malaysia; Vince Malfara, Tradelink Wood Products Inc., Greensboro, N.C.; Scott Heidler, Heidler Hardwood Lumber Co., Chicago, Ill.; and Paul Gates, Tradelink Wood Products Inc.



Hugh Reitz, Sierra Forest Products, West Chicago, Ill.; Craig Forester, Rex Lumber Co., Acton, Mass.; Ed Downes, Downes & Reader Hardwood Co. Inc., Stoughton, Mass.; and Mike Snow, American Hardwood Export Council, Reston, Va.



Simon LaRocque, National Hardwood Lumber Association, Memphis, Tenn.; and Lee Jimerson, The Collins Companies, Portland, Ore.



Alexis Sivcovich, Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association, Tyrone, Ga.; Norm Murray, U-C Coatings Corp., Buffalo, N.Y.; and Kathryn Stjernstrom and Ray Markley, Shorepoint Insurance Services, Costa Mesa, Calif.



Lee Robinson, Overseas Hardwoods Co., Mobile, Ala.; and Jack Little, Keiver-Willard Lumber Corp., Newburyport, Mass.



Charlie Craig, AHC Craig Imports, Huntersville, N.C.; and Michael Hilburn, ACES Division of Kuehne + Nagel Inc., Rockland, Mass.



Carlos Garcia, FMS International Logistics, Newport Beach, Calif.; Sascha Lamprecht, FMS International Logistics, West Reading, Pa.; and Gary Swaner and George Swaner, Swaner Hardwood Co. Inc., Burbank, Calif.

AHEC PHOTOS - Continued from page 1



Lee Jimerson, The Collins Cos., Portland, Ore.; James Xu, National Hardwood Council of STTA, Shanghai; and Steve Sievers, C/K International LLC, Durham, N.C.



Andreas Von Moeller, Jacob Jurgensen Wood GMBH, Hamburg, Germany; Michael Buckley, Turnstone Communications Pte. Ltd., Singapore; and Jim Howard and Charlie Craig, Atlanta Hardwood Corp., Mableton, Ga.



Tim Kassis, Kretz Lumber Co. Inc., Antigo, Wis.; Dean Alanko, Allegheny Wood Products Inc., Petersburg, W.Va.; Dana McGregor, Finmac Lumber Ltd., Winnipeg, Manitoba; and Michael Snow, AHEC, Reston, Va.



Paul Miller Jr., Import/Export Wood Purchasing News, Memphis, Tenn.; Takahiro Tsuji, AHEC - Japan, Osaka, Japan; John Brown, Pike Lumber Co. Inc., Akron, Ind.; and Lawson Maury, Hermitage Hardwood Lumber Sales Inc., Cookeville, Tenn.



John Chan, AHEC, Hong-Kong; Ernie Koh, Koda Furniture Pte., Singapore, China; Sharon Shek, AHEC, Shanghai, China; and Paul Dow, Yoder Lumber Co., Inc., Millersburg, Ohio



Rich Conti, Matson Lumber Co., Brookville, Pa.; Len Barker, Elof Hansson Inc., Suwanee, Ga.; and Eugenio Colao, Timtrade SRL, Romano D'Ezzelino, Italy



Tsuji Takahiro, AHEC, Osaka, Japan; and Ryan and Bucky Pescaglia, Missouri-Pacific Lumber Co. Inc., Fayette, Mo



Terry Miller, Import/Export Wood Purchasing News, Memphis, Tenn.; Rick Barrett, Midwest Hardwood Corp., Maple Grove, Minn.; and John Read, The Rossi Group, Cromwell, Conn.



Rick Burnett, W.M. Cramer Lumber Co., Augusta, Ga.; Belinda Cobden-Ramsey, AHEC - Europe, London, United Kingdom; An Di Nguyen, AHEC, Washington, D.C.; and Roderick Wiles, AHEC - Africa, Middle East, South Asia, Singapore



Ted Rossi, The Rossi Group, Cromwell, Conn.; Michael Snow, AHEC, Reston, Va.; and Paul Dow, Yoder Lumber Co. Inc., Millersburg, Ohio

S.E. ASIA PHOTO - Continued from page 1



Craig Brouyette, Pike Lumber Co. Inc., Akron, Ind.; Richard Conti, Matson Lumber Co., Brookville, Pa.; and Melanie Sievers and Brett Cant, C/K International LLC, Durham, N.C.



Lloyd Lovett and Mary Psillou, Transit King City/Northway Forwarding Ltd., Montreal, Que.; and Jason Twigg, Tuscarora Hardwoods Inc., Elliottsburg, Pa.



Patrick Altham, AHC Export Lumber, Huntersville, N.C.; and Maureen Jernigan, Alison Willis and Curtis Struyk, TMX Shipping Co., Morehead City, N.C.



Brady Francois, Snowbelt Hardwoods Inc., Hurley, Wis.; Tom Walthousen, Downes & Reader Hardwood, Stoughton, Mass.; and Bill Seacrest, Graf Bros. Flooring & Lumber, South Shore, Ky., attending the Kuala Lumpur meeting.

Hancock Eastern White Pine

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Tyler Moore, Cedarline Industries Ltd., Surrey, B.C.; and Mary and Michael McInnes, Sourcewood Partners, Beaverton, Ore.



Chad Findlay, West Bay Forest Products, Langley, B.C.; and Joe Petree, Orepac Building Products Inc., Tacoma, Wash.



Aaron Snodgrass, Boise Cascade, Tulsa, Okla.; Tianna Roberts, Boise Cascade, Houston, Texas; and Pat Miller, Boise Cascade, Dallas, Texas



Phillip Floyd, Capital Lumber, Tacoma, Wash.; Paul Mackie, WRCLA, Mill Creek, Wash.; Paula Craig, WRCLA, Vancouver, B.C.; Chris Musselman, Weyerhaeuser Distribution, Tacoma, Wash.; and Jack Draper, WRCLA/WRCEA, Vancouver, B.C.



Patrick Miller, Boise Cascade, Dallas, Texas; Tianna Roberts, Boise Cascade, Houston, Texas; Carlos Furtado, Sawarne Lumber Co. Ltd., Richmond, B.C.; and Aaron Snodgrass, Boise Cascade, Tulsa, Okla.



Russ Nixon, Western Forest Products, Vancouver, B.C.; Dennis Wight and Tyson Palmer, Pacific Western Wood Works Ltd., Delta, B.C.; and John McCarter, Triad Forest Products Ltd., Delta, B.C.



David Frenette, Ontario Wood Products Export Association, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.; Frank Li, Suzhou Straw Nest Wood Ltd., Shanghai, China; and David Milton, Ontario Wood Products Export Association



Aaron Snodgrass, Boise Cascade, Tulsa, Okla.; Tianna Roberts, Boise Cascade, Houston, Texas; and K.K. Sangara, Sawarne Lumber Co. Ltd., Richmond, B.C.



Johnal Lee and Allen Xu, All American Forest Products Inc., Vernon, B.C.; Cameron Cook, Gorman Bros. Lumber Ltd., West Bank, B.C.; and Phil Hsieh, Westminster Industries Ltd., White Rock, B.C.



Tamera Byrnes, Canfor Forest Industries/Canada Woods, Vancouver, B.C.; Bernd Florin, Forestry Innovation Investment, Vancouver, B.C.; and Tong Chow, TZC Education Group, Vancouver, B.C.



Brian Hawrysh and Randi Walker, BC Wood, Vancouver, B.C.; and Wendell McCloud, Thorlyne Pty Ltd., Sydney, Australia



Kent Beveridge, Skana Forest Products Ltd., Richmond, B.C.; and Mike Unger, La Crete Sawmills Ltd., La Crete, Alberta



Curtis McLeod, Capital Forest Products Inc., Hingham, Mass.; Adrian Radovanovich, Santo Hardware, Santo Island, Vanuatu; and Scott Boates, The Teal Jones Group, Surrey, B.C.



Kirk Nagy, The Waldun Group, Maple Ridge, B.C.; Kurt Elmstrom and Bruce Bullinger, Liberty Cedar Inc., South Kingston, R.I.; and Curtis Walker, The Waldun Group



Ron Klementovicz, Mid-State Lumber Corp., Branchburg, N.J.; Jeff Derby, Western Forest Products Inc., Vancouver, B.C.; Kirk Nagy, The Waldun Group, Maple Ridge, B.C.; John Fijalkowski, Mid-State Lumber Corp., Springfield, Mass.; and David Bernstein, Mid-State Lumber Corp., Branchburg, N.J.



Todd McMyn, Fortis Trading Ltd., North Vancouver, B.C.; David Hughes, Woodtone, Chilliwack, B.C.; Geoff Lawler, Geoff Lawler Architecture Inc., Maple Ridge, B.C.; and Mike Pidlisecky and Ben Good, Woodtone



Mohammed Amir, SPF Precut Lumber, Port Coquitlam, B.C.; Brad Flitton, Jeff Derby, Ben Meachen, Ryan Furtado, John Shook and Peter Zhao, Western Forest Products Inc., Vancouver, B.C.



Scott Boates and John Gardiner, The Teal Jones Group, Surrey, B.C.; and Dean Fedoruk and John McCarter, Triad Forest Products Ltd., Delta, B.C.



Skip Dierdorff, Alpine Lumber, Erie, Colo.; Greg Loudon and Douglas Nelson, Capital Lumber, Denver, Colo.; and Dennis Wight and Tyson Palmer, Pacific Western Wood Works Ltd., Delta, B.C.



David Jeffers, PPG Machine Applied Coatings, Pittsburgh, Pa.; and Jake van Van Schothorst and Bill Brown, Prairie Cedar, Lethbridge, Alberta



Graham Picard, Terminal Forest Products Ltd., Richmond, B.C.; Steven Johnson, Coulson Manufacturing Ltd., Port Alberni, B.C.; Ted Fregoso and Terry Gaines, Terminal Forest Products Ltd.; and Tom Barenberg, Split Rail Fence & Supply Co., Denver, Colo.



Christian Owens, Skana Forest Products Ltd., Richmond, B.C.; Scott Lindsay, Skana Forest Products Ltd., Vernon, B.C.; and Don Rees, Real Carriage Store Co., Gig Harbor, Wash.

FOR THE LOVE OF WOOD – A Man On A Mission For AHEC To Extoll Virtues Of American Hardwoods

“I feel so incredibly lucky to work with people who make such amazingly beautiful things from wood.”—Criswell Davis

Criswell Davis’ passion for his job is palpable. He has devoted 25 years of his life to the American hardwood industry.

Currently, he spends a third of his year travelling to countries including Australia and New Zealand lecturing architects and designers on the unique characteristics and benefits of the huge variety of hardwoods that are native to the United States. As specifiers around the world increasingly turn to sustainable solutions in their work, Davis is more in demand than ever. After all, the U.S. has a very strong story to tell when it comes to sustainability.

Few other countries can boast the success America has had in the sustainability of its hardwood forests. For more than a century, selective cutting has been used to harvest only those trees that are at their peak life. “We’ve been taught to believe that cutting down trees is bad for the environment and I see steel and concrete referred to as ‘green.’ The word green has been applied in such inappropriate ways. The hardwood industry has been treated as the destroyer of the environment, whereas we now have data to support the claim that American hardwood is one of the only truly green building materials. To be able to dispel those notions is a great thing for me,” says Davis.

“For every hardwood tree that is felled in the U.S., 1.9 trees take its place through natural regeneration,” he adds. “As a result of this clever management of the forest resource there is more than twice as much hardwood growing in the U.S.A. as compared with 50 years ago. 10 years ago you’d just have to take what I’m saying at face value but now we have Google earth. I urge people to take a virtual flight across the Eastern United States and see how the 4 million plus private forestland owners in the U.S.A. have done a spectacular job of maintaining this ‘legacy crop’ to pass onto their grandchildren, great grandchildren and beyond.”

Davis is enthusiastic about the American Hardwood Export Council’s (AHEC) commitment to providing further scientific data as irrefutable proof of the environmental credentials of American hardwoods. “They are investing in what is probably the largest LCA study ever undertaken in the international hardwood sector,” he says.

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) is a scientific method to measure and evaluate the environmental burdens associated with a product or activity, by systematically describing and assessing the energy and materials used and released to the environment over the life cycle. Even with transportation all the way to Australia, American hardwoods remain not just an entirely renewable resource, but one that is proven to be carbon negative.

The science of LCA is nothing new; the first studies were undertaken in the energy sector in the 1970s. However, LCA is now being given a new impetus with rising interest in

sustainable design and mounting concern for climate change. Some analysis has been conducted in Australia to date, including at the impressive Playhouse Theatre at the Geelong Performing Arts Centre. This study showed the American Walnut lumber used in this project to have a cradle-to-grave “Global Warming Potential” of minus 13 tonnes.

Davis finds his Australian audiences amongst the most receptive to information regarding sustainability. “They are also incredibly nice, inventive and ask tough questions,” he says. “They are protective of their indigenous species which I can totally understand.” He notes that those he speaks to are conscious of the tightening of the domestic industry and also the opportunities that the power of the Australian dollar affords when considering imported materials. “I’m pleased that American hardwoods are doing so well in Australia,” says Davis. “It means that I have reasons to visit

more often.”

Davis is returning to Brisbane, Sydney and Perth in February 2013 for further presentations. If your company would be interested in a complimentary seminar please email oceania@americanhardwood.org for more information.

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 the major U.S. hardwood production trade associations. AHEC concentrates its efforts on providing architects, designers and end-users with technical information on the range of species, products and sources of supply.

Website: www.americanhardwood.org

Criswell Davis acts as Architectural Marketing Consultant to AHEC. He is based in Dayton, Ohio, from where he travels all over the United States and, more recently, the Middle East, India



Criswell Davis, Frank Miller Lumber Co. Inc., Union City, Ind.

and Asia-Pacific. He has addressed countless architects, interior and furniture designers on the opportunities offered by American hardwoods for sustainable design.

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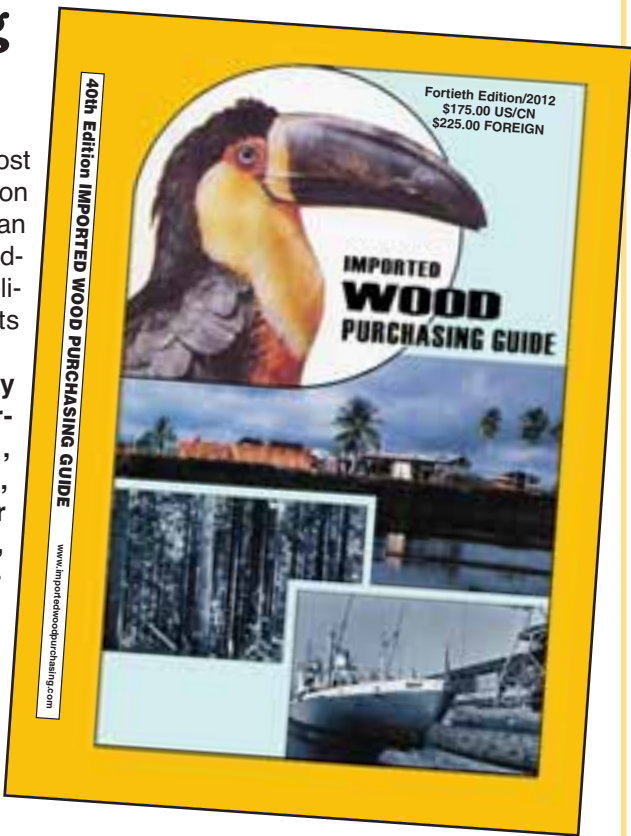
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IWPA - Continued from page 1

McClendon cited statistics from the Forest Products Journal that stated housing starts hit a 50-year low during the same years that the U.S. lost 1.1 million jobs between 2005 and 2009 due to the economic downturn. But while those are sobering figures, McClendon said there is evidence that the industry is on an upswing.

He said overall imports are up this year 10 percent and Malaysian plywood imports by value are up by 70 percent over recent years. That product also increased by 27 percent by volume this past year. He commended attendees for continuing "to push forward" to get past the challenges of the economy.

IWPA has also set dates and location for its upcoming 57th World of Wood Convention, which will be held April 17-19, 2013, at the Westin Bayshore Vancouver in Vancouver, British, Columbia

For more information, visit online at www.iwpawood.org.

AHEC - Continued from page 1

On the export side, the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) organized a well-attended roundtable for a global perspective of the wood products world. One tenet of discussion was that exports account for 40 percent or more of the graded hardwood production in the U.S., highlighting the importance of exports to the U.S. market. Also, while 10 years ago China was re-exporting 90 percent of lumber it bought from the U.S., today it is using 80 percent of those products domestically. Today, most demand in China is for Poplar, Red and White Oak and Walnut. Roundtable participants also discussed how Europe is seeing a "sharp decline" in demand for tropical woods. While Europe remains a White Oak market—80 percent of the species consumed in Europe is made into flooring—demand for Poplar is also increasing there. Lastly, roundtable participants reiterated that U.S. producers will likely see little trouble in exporting to the European Union (EU) after its **Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan** takes effect March 3. This is due to a 2008 report, "Assessment of Lawful Harvesting & Sustainability of U.S. Hardwood Exports," prepared by Seneca Creek Associates LLC—widely regarded as scientific grounds for the assertion that only about 1 percent of the lumber in the U.S. is illegally logged and evidence of "due diligence" here—and AHEC's recent work conducting life cycle assessments (LCAs) of U.S. wood products.

The panel, which was moderated by Mike Snow, Executive Director, AHEC included Ernie Koh, Executive Director of KODA in Singapore; Victor Flores, Maderas La Mision in Mexico City and Guadalajara; Andreas von Moeller, Managing Director of Jacob Jurgensen in Hamburg, Germany; and James Xu, Chairman of the China National Hardwood Council. The topics discussed during the course of the session included the global marketshare for manufacturers of U.S. hardwoods; the European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR) and its impact on American hardwood exporters and global manufacturers; environmental policies and certification; the strengths and weaknesses of U.S. hardwoods and American suppliers relative to competing suppliers; and species trends.

Also, the NHLA elected new leadership during the convention. Scott Heidler, president of Heidler Hardwood Lumber Co. was elected president. He succeeds Dave Redmond, president of Highland Hardwood Sales Inc. Pem Jenkins, president of Turn Bull Lumber Co. will serve as vice president. The NHLA's six

Continued on page 15

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AHEC -

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new board members are: Mark Cifranick, Baillie Lumber Co.; Shane Cook, Midwest Walnut Co.; Charley Fiala, GMC Hardwoods Inc.; Scott Holley, Industrial Timber & Lumber; Steve Jones, Ron Jones Hardwood Sales; and T.J. Rosengarth, Northwest Hardwoods. Those in attendance also heard a keynote address from former NFL coach Mike Ditka, who discussed leadership.

S.E. ASIAN TRADE -

Continued from page 1

exports of Indonesian verified legal timber products” were the two themes of the first - a small, but high level - meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia, organized by the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce (KADIN). The objective was to discuss the progress of the Indonesian Government sponsored timber and timber product export licensing scheme Sistem Verifikasi Legalitas Kayu (SVLK* or TLAS) under the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) already concluded with the European Union. SVLK was launched in 2009 and is the result of a long multi-stakeholder process now nearing completion. (*SVLK is translated as Assurance of Legality of Wood Products.) The meeting was convened by KADIN and attended in person by the U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia, the EU Ambassador to Indonesia and ASEAN, as well as leading figures from Indonesian Government Ministries and trade organizations. The program included presentations from the executive vice-president of the International Wood Products Association (IWPA), Brent McClendon, and his elected pres-

ident, Warren Spitz, who had both just returned from a tour of forestry activities in Sarawak, Malaysia. Their trip through S.E. Asia was very important for IWPA because “the products and species that come out of this region are not grown or made in the U.S., yet large manufacturing industries depend on this resource for their global competitiveness.” McClendon confirmed, “We want to do more business with Indonesian panels and lumber.” The implications for Indonesia’s trade in timber products are enormous. Much hangs on acceptance of the SVLK scheme by key markets in Europe, the U.S. and Australia. The implication for wood imported into Indonesia is that if the trade in Indonesian-made timber and wood products, such as flooring and furniture destined for Europe, becomes easier under the VPA, then the trade in material supplied from “safe” or “low risk countries” such as the U.S. will be assured. Michael Buckley from Singapore representing American hardwood interests was on hand as invited observer. Other representatives from the European Union and Australia were also invited to present their own positions. From the meeting it was clear, that it will be in the interests of all parties to assist in the process of establishing the credibility and acceptance of the SVLK licensing system and both the U.S. and EU Ambassadors said as much. The IWPA representatives gave an update on the Lacey Act Timber Amendment in the U.S., pointing out that Lacey is not based on documentation, and there are no specified requirements that guarantee compliance. It was repeatedly pointed out that the SVLK legality licensing scheme is different from forest certification which is aimed at achieving sustainable forest management. Nevertheless it is accepted by all parties that FSC or PEFC certification is a strong tool in the armoury of importers’ Due Diligence systems. “SVLK will be very helpful to ensure the continuation of Indonesian/U.S. trade,” said U.S. Ambassador Scott Marciel.

“The EU objective is pro-legal and pro-Indonesia,” said EU Ambassador Julian Wilson. During the discussions, the U.S. Ambassador stated that the presence of an Indonesian system will give confidence and so “SVLK will be very helpful to ensure the continuation of Indonesian/U.S. trade.” The Jakarta meeting was closed by the chairman by saying that the three issues for SVLK are those of its credibility, the need for continuous communication and that it be tried and trusted. Two days later in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, an international conference on “Market Requirements for Timber & Timber Products” attracted an audience of 260 delegates to hear how the global changes in timber markets affect the Malaysian Timber industry. This was in the context of governments aligning policies and laws to address the issue of illegal logging. International speakers from Australia, Europe, the U.S. and China each gave a synopsis of their domestic markets. The event was arranged by several European organizations, hosted by the Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) and superbly moderated by Christian Schreiber. McClendon of IWPA talked about the complexity of changing markets and while applauding the current improvement of imports to the U.S. by 10 percent, he acknowledged that they are still down 40 percent from the peak. He gave a view of the U.S. Lacey Act Amendment saying that IWPA is cooperating closely with MTC. In answer to a question during an intense panel discussion about how companies are adapting to market changes Spitz explained that Canada and the U.S. are different - his company being incorporated in both. “Compliance under Lacey is in the U.S. only, but buyers’ confidence in supply is necessary in both countries,” he said. Some people had asked him why not just use FSC but he replied it is not that simple. Asked about small suppliers, McClendon stated that in IWPA, “We have always wanted to support small

businesses on both sides,” and added, “We prefer company-based risk assessment not country-based.” Asked how associations are advising their members, IWPA confirmed that they “communicate through trade relationships.” “The bottom line for IWPA,” McClendon concluded, “is the legality assurance work being done by Indonesia with respect to their SVLK system, and that of Malaysian producers, whether in Sabah, Sarawak and Peninsular Malaysia. They give us strong confidence in the ability of our members to sustainably source from these regions. At a reception following the conference, IWPA and the European Timber Trade Federation (ETTF) jointly launched the International Timber Trade Forum (ITTF) as an informal network designed to exchange information and encourage multilateral discussions to economic, technical and sustainability issues that impact the international timber trade. It is intended to bring together the principal timber trade federations representing regions or countries to focus primarily on strategic, legislative and operational policy and practice. Proposed membership and an operation for the ITTF were circulated and the next step will be to publish terms of reference in December 2012.

GBM -

Continued from page 1

Organizers of GBM thanked its funding Partners this year, including Platinum Partners: Natural Resources Canada Wood Export Program (CWEP) and Forestry Innovation Investment Ltd. (FII); Silver Partners: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and Western Economic Diversification (WD);

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