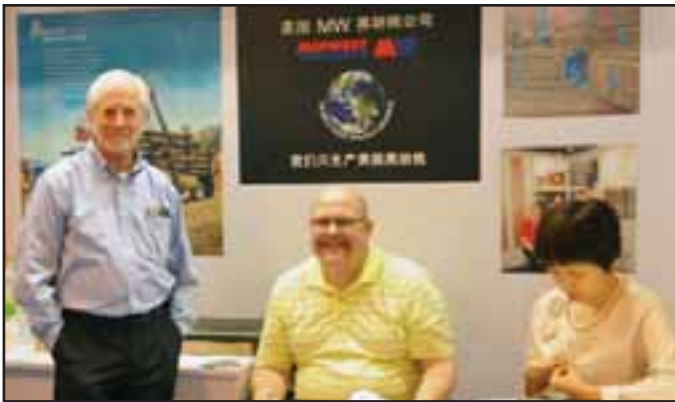




## American Hardwoods Majored At CIFM/interzum Guangzhou 2014

By Michael Buckley

**Guangzhou, China**—AHEC’s American Hardwood Pavilion prominently housed 24 AHEC member companies in Guangzhou recently at the CFIM/interzum (China International Furniture Machinery & Furniture Raw Materials Fair). In addition, a packed reception to welcome AHEC members, traders,



Larry Mether, Midwest Walnut Co., Council Bluffs, IA; Shane Cook, Granite Valley Forest Products, Marathon City, WI; and Kate Li, Midwest Walnut Co.

associations and the media hosted during the four-day show following a seminar on sustainable U.S. hardwoods, conducted by National Hardwood Lumber As-

sociation’s Chief Inspector Dana Spessert.

This year 1,147 exhibitors from 32 countries and regions were expected to meet with over 60,000 trade buyers from more than 140 countries and regions across the 130,000 square meter fair.

Among them, 280 exhibitors were from abroad, and for the first time, the international halls featured nine overseas pavilions from Germany, US/Canada,



Adam Moran, Hermitage Hardwood, Cookeville, TN; John Hester and Li Tao, NHLA, Memphis, TN

Additional photos on page 8

Continued on page 9

## American Hardwoods Shine At DOMOTEX asia/CHINAFLOOR

By Michael Buckley

**Shanghai**—The 16th annual show, DOMOTEX asia/CHINAFLOOR, held recently here, continued its transformation from an international show with sig-



Grace Huang, Jack Shannon III and Andrew Wu, Shannon Lumber International, Horn Lake, MS

nificant focus on flooring exports to a more international show focused on the massive



Russel Kelly, Jon Kelly and Ignatio Olavide, P.J. Lumber Co. Inc., Prichard, AL

Chinese domestic market. The National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA) joint pavilion with the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) was a

Additional photos on page 8

Continued on page 9

## Lumber Suppliers Address Export Challenges

By T. Jensen Lacey

**Washington, DC**—In the deepest months of winter across the U.S., many small and medium-sized exporters (known as SMEs) were asked to be part of a survey conducted by the U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) for the U.S. Trade Representative. The purpose of this survey was to see what SMEs around the country consider as being major trade barriers in doing business with the European Union (EU). The survey was completed in late March 2014; the findings, which are currently on the USITCs website (see Editor’s Note), were published in a 168-page report shortly thereafter.

The result of this fact-finding survey would probably not be a newsworthy item to most SMEs across the country; rather, it is a confirmation of what many already knew. Trade barriers that were reported via the survey in-



Additional photos on pages 11 & 12

Continued on page 10

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## Who's Who in Import/Exports

**Arnie Hogue** is Asian Sales Director for **Anderson-Tully Lumber Co.**, located in Vicksburg, MS.

Anderson-Tully is a sawmill and exporter, producing 50 million board feet per year of hardwood lumber from company owned and managed forest lands. Species include Ash, Basswood, Cottonwood, Cypress, Elm, Hackberry, Hickory, Poplar, Pecan, Red and White Oak, Sycamore, and Sap Gum in 4/4 through 8/4.

The company maintains three offices in Asia (Shanghai, Guangzhou and Ho Chi Minh City) with seven employees providing sales service and customer support.

Hogue graduated from Mississippi College, Clinton, MS, in 2006, with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree. He previously obtained a lumber inspector certification from the National Hardwood Lumber Association in Memphis, TN. He has spent eight years in his present position with responsibilities for all business activities in Asia.

Anderson-Tully is a member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association, Hardwood Manufacturers Association, American Hardwood Export Council and Southwestern Hardwood Manufacturers Club.

Hogue enjoys golf, exercise and spending time with family. He is married to Jamie L. Hogue, and the couple has three sons and one daughter. For more information visit [www.andersontully.com](http://www.andersontully.com). ■



ARNIE HOGUE

**Bill Long** is international sales manager at **Midwest Hardwood Corporation** located in Maple Grove, MN.

Midwest Hardwood Corporation is a fully integrated hardwood lumber and distribution company serving secondary wood products manufacturers and hardwood distributors worldwide. Combined, their eight companies offer forest management services, logs, green and kiln-dried domestic and imported hardwood lumber, plywood and panel products, laminates and hardware.

Long's experience in the forest products industry spans over 25 years in international hardwood lumber sales and sales management. He will be based out of Maple Grove. Long's

experience in a wide variety of overseas markets will be key as Midwest Hardwood continues to diversify to satisfy growing hardwood demand overseas. For more information visit [www.midwesthardwood.com](http://www.midwesthardwood.com). ■



BILL LONG

**Brian Stordeur** is a sales representative at **Downes & Reader Hardwood Co. Inc.**, with yards in Stoughton, MA, and Blakeslee, PA.

Downes & Reader is a distribution/concentration yard offering over 75 species of imported and domestic lumber and plywood.

Additional services include S2S ripping and grade sorting. Stordeur's responsibilities include regional sales within the United States to New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland. He started his career with a focus on African hardwoods, traveling extensively through Africa sourcing supply and grading at the source. In addition to his role in Africa other responsibilities include international sales and shipping.

Downes & Reader is a member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association, Wood Products Manufacturers Association, Hardwood Plywood & Veneer Association, and the International Wood Products Association.

Stordeur currently lives in New York with his wife of 14 years, Karen, and their two daughters.

For more information visit [www.downesandreader.com](http://www.downesandreader.com). ■



BRIAN STORDEUR

**Michael Hilburn** is president of **King City USA**, a forestry freight forwarder located in Pittsfield, MA.

King City USA specializes in exports of North American hardwoods and softwoods to all destinations overseas—especially to Asia. As a full-service NVOCC/freight forwarder, the company is able to handle all aspects of a customer's export shipments, including trucking, rail and ocean transport, as well as all of the required documentation for export shipments.

Hilburn's duties include day to day operations, rate/contract negotiations and sales. He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Appalachian State University and also spent two years in a Ph.D. program of

Economics in Cordoba, Argentina. Hilburn's previous career experience includes positions held with Mediterranean Shipping Company, TMX Shipping, as well as Kuehne + Nagel, before deciding to start King City USA with partners Lloyd Lovett and Michel Berard (owners of King City Northway in Canada).

King City USA is a member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association, Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen's Association, and New England Lumbermen's Association.

Hilburn enjoys sports, travel, and spending time with his family. He has been married to Fabiola for 12 years, and they have an 11-year-old daughter, Florencia. For more information visit [www.kingcityusa.com](http://www.kingcityusa.com). ■



MICHAEL HILBURN

## American Hardwood Environmental Profiles Raise The Bar On Sustainability

By Michael Snow  
Executive Director  
American Hardwood Export Council  
Reston, VA  
703-435-2900  
[www.ahec.org](http://www.ahec.org)



Data has been referred to as the new raw material of the 21st century. Even for a relatively "simple" material like timber, data requirements have been expanding rapidly. Initially focused on technical performance, the demand for information now extends into a bewildering array of other issues such as legality and sustainability of supply, energy efficiency, impacts on air and water, toxicity, social welfare, recycling attributes and disposal at end of life.

The rise of data has gone hand-in-hand with a powerful drive in both industry and government to increase transparency to enhance public trust and the credibility of claims. In fact the ability of suppliers to provide data credibly and efficiently is now almost as important to competitiveness as their ability to deliver the product itself.

Like other material suppliers, AHEC has been wrestling with this issue now for many years. According to AHEC's David Venables, "ever since AHEC was established over 20 years ago, we have been building up a portfolio of scientific data on American hardwoods. The technical performance data is now readily available in on-line species guides and demonstrated by U.S. hardwood conformance to a variety of CEN and ISO standards. Now we want to make the environmental data equally as accessible."

This has been a challenge in the past, partly because of the unique structure of

Continued on page 12



## Washington Scene

### AF&PA, AWC Commend EPA For Issuing Non-Hazardous Materials Rule

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued its Non-Hazardous Secondary Materials (NHSM) proposed rule, expanding the list of materials that are recognized as "non-waste fuels" to include processed construction and demolition (C&D) wood, paper recycling residuals and creosote-treated railroad ties.

With the listing of these materials, paper and wood products manufacturing facilities are one step closer to having the needed assurance that these fuels can be used in industrial boilers rather than having them disposed of through incineration or landfill.

"We welcome EPA's listing of paper recycling residuals and railroad ties as fuels, which provide substantial energy value to our facilities," said American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) President and CEO Donna Harman. "On average, about two thirds of the energy we use is produced on site from renewable biomass, and these additions help reduce our reliance on non-renewable fuel sources."

"Structures made from wood store carbon for a very long time; at the end of their useful life, these renewable construction materials can be used to produce bio-

Continued on page 13

## Myanmar: Aftermath Of The Log Export Ban

(As reported on IHB Network)

**Myanmar**—The export trade for Myanmar timbers became very quiet after the March 31 coming-into-force of the log export ban. A substantial volume of logs purchased for export was not shipped before the deadline and remains in Yangon depots, but the Myanmar Timber Enterprise (MTE) has yet to determine the exact unshipped volume. Observers say that companies with huge volumes of unshipped logs are considering a petition to the authorities.

The MTE is saying it began advising exporters to clear logs quickly once it became clear in October 2012 that the ban would be implemented. Analysts point out that factors such as the weak Indian rupee, high stocks and congested log yards in India and tight financing hindered prompt shipments to India, the main market for Myanmar logs. It was only in October 2013 that export shipment started to rise, peaking in March 2014.

Export shipments of logs for the 2013-14 financial year were around 661,000 cubic meters of Teak logs and 2,013,000 cubic meters of other hardwoods. Analysts say around 50 percent of the years' Teak logs and 46 percent of the total hardwood logs were shipped out in just the last quarter of the financial year (January to March). As the regulations stand at present, unshipped logs will have to be processed locally, after which products meeting the required level of process-

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## Wood - The Ultimate Green Good

By Cindy Squires  
 Executive Director  
 International Wood Products Association  
[www.iwpawood.org](http://www.iwpawood.org)



Canada, China, Costa Rica, Chinese Taipei, the EU, Hong Kong (China), Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Singapore and the U.S. for a new international free trade

Continued on page 14

A new round of negotiations has been launched by 14 World Trade Organization (WTO) member countries to accelerate the trade of environmentally preferable technologies. This effort builds on the 2013 initiative started by the Leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) to explore opportunities in the WTO to reduce tariffs on a list of 54 "green goods" by the end of 2015. This sounds like a great plan until you look deeper and find wood products were not included in the APEC agreed list of environmental goods where member countries will cut tariffs to five percent or less.



The only non-equipment good in the APEC 54 list was bamboo flooring. The environmental benefit cited was "renewable bamboo-based products are substitutions of wooden necessities." The list notes that "since bamboo is characterized by a short growing cycle, these environment-friendly products can save a great deal of water, soil and air resources." While bamboo flooring is a great product, it isn't the only renewable option available. This presented an excellent opportunity to tell the positive story of wood.

Our chance came when the Obama Administration signaled its intent in March to enter into the negotiations for the World Trade Organization (WTO) Environmental Goods Agreement and asked for public comments. IWPA, the National Association of Manufacturers and others urged the U.S. Trade Representative to consider wood from sustainably managed forests as a green good as it is a renewable resource with extremely low life cycle carbon emissions.

The ambitious Environmental Good Agreement brings together Australia,

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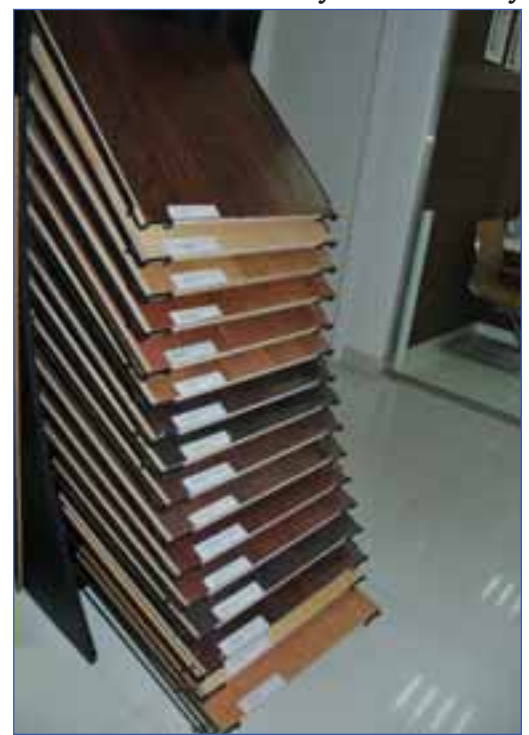
By Michael Buckley



Chabros International Group, of Dubai UAE, exhibits its products at Dubai Wood Show.



Chabros' Marketing and Sales Executive Mira Jabbour.



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**Dubai, UAE**—Chabros International Group is a producer and supplier of wood and veneer and a distributor of a wide range of interior and exterior products that have been specified and used in major high-end projects throughout the Middle East for more than 40 years. The group is focused on catering to the innovative needs of woodworkers, consultants, interior designers, contractors and regularly exhibits at the Dubai Wood Show.

Continued on page 14



Chabros stocks American hardwoods in many species and thicknesses. Species include Red and White Oak, Black Walnut, Maple, Western Red Alder, Elm and Ash.



Chabros' employees pack Maple veneer at the company's Jabel Ali, UAE, facility.

Chabros stocks lumber from all over the world.



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# USA WOODS INTERNATIONAL INC. Partners For 25 Years And Counting

By Wayne Miller

**Germantown, Tennessee**—Exporting North American hardwood lumber is USA Woods International, Inc.'s only business. With a mission to provide consistently superior, export-quality hardwoods at competitive prices, the company offers Red and White Oak, White Ash, Walnut, and Hard Maple in 4/4 through 12/4 for most species. Special services include rough-sawn, quarter-sawn and rift-sawn lumber.

In 2014, USA Woods is celebrating 25 years of experience anticipating and re-



USA Woods International Inc.'s Founder Ron Carlsson has more than 38 years of experience in the export industry.

acting to the needs of the intricate international trade of hardwood lumber. Founder Ron Carlsson has more than 38 years of experience in the export industry.

**“From the standpoint of export lumber I partner with specific mills to do the right thing as far as the lumber is concerned. It wasn't easy finding good sawmills that have the quality standards I was looking for. I found some of the best, which are all a party to my continued success today.”**

**—President Ron Carlsson, USA Woods International Inc.**

51st class of the NHLA's Inspector Training School. “After graduating from the NHLA grading school, I worked for about 15 years with key lumber wholesale and import companies, which allowed me the opportunity to learn the business



Carlsson and NHLA certified grader Greg McClain check the width on White Oak lumber going to Australia.

and cultivate relationships.” Carlsson began his own operation buying and selling hardwood lumber from his home. He rented an office space for two years and then purchased the building that houses USA Woods today. “Nothing that we've done here today would have been possible without the partnerships I developed along the way,” he explained. “From the standpoint of export lumber, I partner with specific mills to do the right thing as far as the lumber is concerned. It wasn't easy finding good sawmills that have the quality standards I was looking for and that my customer base demands. I found some of the best, which are all a party to my continued success today.”

Specifically Carlsson mentioned the now deceased George Hinton of Tuscaloosa Lumber Co., Tuscaloosa, AL, from Carlsson's early days in the busi-

Born in Sweden, Carlsson has spent most of his life in the United States. He maintains dual citizenship after becoming a Naturalized U.S. citizen in 1998.

Carlsson was living in California in 1973 when he decided to move to Memphis, TN, and enter the National Hardwood Lumber Association's lumber grading program. He is a graduate of the

Carlsson began his own operation buying and selling hardwood lumber from his home. He rented an office space for two years and then purchased the building that houses USA Woods today.

“Nothing that we've done here today would have been possible without the partnerships I developed along



(standing from left to right): John Fairbanks and Ron Carlsson; and (seated): Linda Putnam, Susan Carlsson and Daisy the guard dog.

ness and when he went out on his own. “He always said he looked at me as a son in many ways. He used to jokingly tell my customers that he would give me a million dollars credit if I needed it. He was a huge supporter and encourager to me.”



A load of 4/4 FAS White Oak is loaded on a 40' container for shipment to Italy.

Sourcing from Appalachian, Northern and Southern regions, USA Woods has the ability to obtain specific colors and textures of lumber that meet the needs of the most discerning customer. “We have worked very closely with our suppliers



Ron Carlsson works closely with one of his primary suppliers Phil Averitt, Jr. Averitt Lumber Co. Inc., Erin, TN.

throughout the years,” said Carlsson. “We selected them carefully because we rely on them to ship what is expected on a consistent basis.” He also noted he visits his suppliers frequently. “I make regular visits to maintain relationships and to ensure quality.”

Carlsson also visits his overseas customers regularly. “We travel to wherever our customers are. Last year I went to Ireland, Europe and Southeast Asia and this year I visited customers in Australia with two of our main mill suppliers,” he said.

Serving a niche market, USA Woods exports its products 100 percent of the time. The company's relationships span decades. “We have long, loyal relationships because we ship quality products at a fair price,” Carlsson said.

While some of USA Wood's shipments go out of the Gulf Coast, most of the lumber is railed to East or West coast ports for container ship loading. The mountains of export paperwork involved are handled in house.

Carlsson said most of USA Wood's products are used in applications such as hardwood plank flooring, kitchen cabinets, doorframes, moldings, tabletops and custom staircases.

Key personnel at USA Woods include Carlsson's wife Susan who oversees company finances and ‘runs the business,’ Linda Putnam, Logistics and Documentation Specialist, and John Fairbanks who pitches in wherever needed. Carlsson says, “We have a great team and enjoy working together.”

USA Woods International is a member of the NHLA, Lumbermen's Club of

Additional photos on page 18

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## Annual Global Buyers Mission To Celebrate 11th Year



For many years now, the Softwood Buyer has been participating in and reporting on the success of the Global Buyers Mission that takes place in Whistler, BC, every September.



In 2013, the Global Buyers Mission (GBM) hosted over 800 delegates to this invitation-only event, designed to bring together international buyers of wood and value-added wood products, with Canadian manufacturers.

For many years now, *The Softwood Buyer* has been participating in and reporting on the success of this world-class event that takes place in Whistler, BC, every September. The BC Wood Specialties Group is about to launch the 11th Annual event September 4th to the 6th and we thought it was a good time to remind everyone how and why this has become such an important activity for wood products buyers and sellers.

In 2013, the Global Buyers Mission (GBM) hosted over 800 delegates at this invitation-only event, designed to bring together international buyers of wood and value-added wood products, with Canadian manufacturers. Collabo-

**“We go to Whistler to get away from the bustle of the city and relax in the ambience of this world class resort—that is also full of excellent examples of building with wood.”**

**—Randi Walker,  
BC Wood**

rating with the Western Red Cedar Lumber Association, the GBM continues to be a great success for buyers and suppliers alike, with estimates last year of over \$33 million in new business developed.

Organizer Randi Walker from BC Wood said, “We go to Whistler to get away from the bustle of the city and relax in the ambience of this world class resort—that is also full of excellent examples of building with wood. Our job at BC Wood is to connect buyers of wood products with sellers and manufacturers from Canada and we do this by inviting qualified buyers—whether they are from the U.S., Japan, Europe—anywhere in the world that buys or wants to buy wood from

Continued on page 18

Additional photos on page 18

## ROMEVA VENICE Tropical & European Hardwoods Producer and Exporter



Romeva is a family company with over 300 years of history in the processing of timber, our timber history has led us build the right know-how to help our customers find the right timber and solution for their projects, building a long lasting relationship and mutual trust with them. We are specialized in delivering full service and we are flexible to respond to any custom-made enquiry. Our main products are: African Mahogany (Khaya), Afrormosia, Black/White Limba, Bubinga, Chestnut, Doussie, Edinam, Sycamore Maple, European White Oak, Iroko, Kosipo, Shedua, Padouk, Pearwood, Sapele, Sipo, Teak Burma, Wenge, Venetian Walnut, Zebrawood, European Beechwood, and much more.



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INTERZUM PHOTOS - Continued from page 1



Dean Alanko, Brian Killingworth and Yongjie Hu, Allegheny Wood Products Inc., Marble, PA



Debbie Xu, Mark Colwell, Jon Hand and Phil Fenwick, Baillie Lumber Co., Hamburg, NY



Don Liu, Jennifer Chen and Mick Chiang, Sonoking Corp., Amherst, NH



Scott Seyler, Northland Forest Products Inc., Shakopee, MN, and a Chinese interpreter.



Tim Kassis and Alan Long, Kretz Lumber, Antigo, WI



Phil Fenwick, Baillie Lumber Co., Hamburg, NY; Sharon Shek, Jean Li and John Chan, AHEC

DOMOTEX PHOTOS - Continued from page 1



T Wang and Bill Secrest, Graf Brothers Lumber & Flooring, South Shore, KY



Shirmae Lin, Whitson Lumber Co., Clarksville, TN; Jean Pang, American Lumber Co., Hamburg, NY; Rita Mak, AHEC, China; and Yvonne Fang, guest.



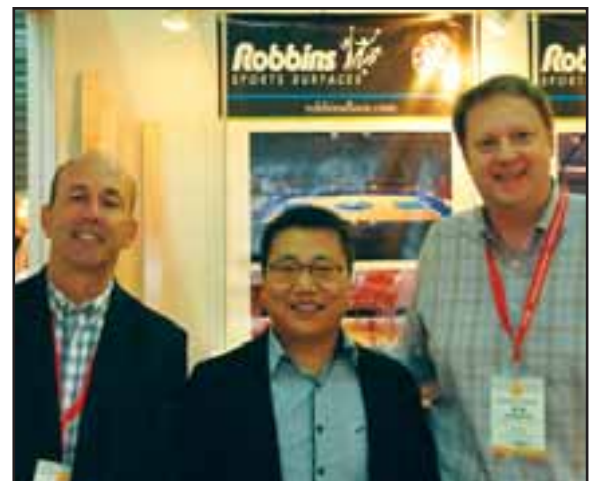
Andrew Richey and Sandy Chen, Ashawa Bay Hardwood Floors, Cook, MN



Josh and Claire Kahle, Hardwoods of Wisconsin, Elkhorn, WI



Koko Thaw and Andrew Lu, Aacer Flooring LLC, Peshtigo, WI



Todd Goodridge with local visitor and John Flicks, Robbins Sports Surfaces, Cincinnati, OH



**INTERZUM** – Continued from page 1

Italy, Turkey, Chile, Spain, AHEC, Canada Wood and Swedish Wood. The first two days were extremely busy but attendance succumbed to a major storm on day three.

AHEC organized a pavilion for participating members each with a booth, located in the hall for international exhibitors. The show provided an excellent platform to meet their existing customers, potential timber users, traders and importers and to promote their specialty products. AHEC staff took the opportunity to network with timber processors and traders, as well as local timber association representatives and to exchange and collect market information.

Attending the show were AHEC Chairman Dean Alanko, John Chan Regional Director of AHEC for Southeast Asia & Greater China, together with Sharon Shek and Jean Lai from AHEC Hong Kong. Also there were NHLA Chief Inspector Dana Spessert, NHLA Director of Membership John Hester and China-based representatives of NHLA, Li Tao and Jonny Wang as well as Roman Matyushchenko, NHLA representative from Russia.

In the pavilion were Bridgewell Resources, Allegheny Wood Products Inc., Kretz Lumber Co. Inc., Muth Lumber Co., Ron Jones Hardwood Sales Inc., American Lumber Co, Northland Forest Products, Missouri Walnut LLC, Northwest Hardwoods, Snowbelt Hardwoods, Hermitage Hardwood, Rolling Ridge Woods LLC, Sonoking Corp., Somerset Wood Products Inc., Midwest Hardwood Corp., Midwest Walnut Co., Hartzell Hardwoods Inc., Anderson-Tully Lumber Corp., J.T. Shannon Lumber Co., TYR Wood Products, W.M. Cramer Lumber Co., Northland Corp., P.J. Lumber Co. and Baillie Lumber Co.

Feedback was very positive with most members saying that it gave them a chance to meet existing customers, not only from China, but from elsewhere

too. Demand for Oak was strong and many reported inquiries for Ash, but there was a strong flow of visitors seeking a wide range of American hardwoods.

Speaking after the show AHEC Chairman, Dean Alanko of AWP, said, "interzum was really well attended by people who intended to buy lumber. My biggest concern however is the lack of offers by our members may give the wrong impression that the trees are not there, which of course is not the case."

John Chan concluded by saying, "the show is extremely busy and the audience was great, many asking help in obtaining Red and White Oak, Ash and Walnut. By the second day the members were very happy and AHEC will be back for the next interzum."

At the end of the second day, AHEC hosted a reception to welcome AHEC members, many traders, associations and the trade media from China and overseas. Guests were addressed by AHEC Chairman Alanko who stressed the long-term availability of sustainable American hardwood despite current temporary shortages and confirmed that the trees are still there for the long term supply. He concluded by thanking the AHEC team for their excellent work in organizing the whole interzum presence of AHEC. John Chan thanked all guests for their support and introduced Wang Ke, Chairman of the Guang Dong Furniture Association, who also addressed the guests.

Wood materials represented a small part of this large and very busy show with a huge diversity of products, materials, machinery and services to the furniture industry. Organized by the China Foreign Trade Centre and Koelnmesse, interzum was introduced into China in 2004 and is now Asia's most comprehensive woodworking machinery, furniture production and interior design trade fair.

Much of the global increase in American hardwood exports in 2013 was due to continuing market development in Asia, and especially in Greater China, where exports of U.S. hardwood lumber were valued at US\$843 million, an increase of 33 percent in comparison to 2012. Much of the future prospects depend on the real estate market in China,

which in turn depends on economic growth and continued urbanization. During the interzum show there was much discussion and comment in the Chinese media about slowing economic growth and a cooling real estate market that could negatively affect the consumption of hardwood flooring, furniture and joinery.

The next interzum Guangzhou will take place from March 28 – April 1, 2015. ■

**DOMOTEX** – Continued from page 1

major attraction in the wood materials hall.

There were exhibitors from many overseas countries, but the only national pavilion in the wood-based halls was the jointly organized NWFA and AHEC with nine corporate members. On stand was Michael Martin, Executive Director of NWFA, who confirmed that Domotex 2014 had been a good event in raising the international profile of the association and NWFA would return to Shanghai in 2015. American companies included Acer Flooring, PJ Lumber, Graf Brothers, Hardwoods of Wisconsin, Midwest Hardwood Corporation, Shamrock Plank Flooring, Ashawa Bay Hardwood Flooring, Robbins Sports Surfaces and Wellmade Performance Flooring. Their feedback was positive.

Apart from wood flooring and carpets, DOMOTEX provided visitors with everything that a flooring industry buyer could want from installation services, surface finishes, adhesive systems, accessories such as skirtings and edging products, underfloor heating and insulation materials, as well as decking and a vast range of bamboo products and the machinery to produce, install and maintain flooring.

Whereas Oak flooring is king in the wood sector in Europe (66 percent) and

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USA (75 percent), at DOMOTEX Oak faced serious competition in flooring from Chinese, Malaysian and Indonesian Acacia, local bamboo, American Hickory and Walnut and a range of tropical species, such as Malaysian and Indonesian Merbau. Oak is popular, but sourced from USA, Europe and especially within the region. So much “Chinese” Oak turns out to be Russian and many Chinese manufacturers now openly admit that Chinese Oak logs are much too small to be commercially useful, so that a significant number of them are actually advertising “Russian” Oak flooring. From April, it is believed the Chinese authorities have restricted the cutting of hardwood forests in Northern China, which could make the sale of “Chinese” Oak and Birch products even less easy.

But species variety is the name of the game in the Chinese market with so much choice of Brazilian Jatoba, Cumuru and Ipe, African and Indonesian Mahogany, American Red and White (as well as European and Russian) Oaks, Walnut, Maple and Cherry. Almost totally absent was European Beech and Ash, although here were some log sellers promoting both. The American pavilion exhibitors were offering both finished flooring and hardwood materials. And although the show focused on Asian-made products, western manufacturers are now playing a decreasing role in the wood flooring sector. Some Chinese manufacturers still seek export orders but mainly they are focused on the domestic market. What has apparently changed in the last couple of years is the disappearance from the show of some of the major Chinese players that now have their domestic distribution networks in place throughout China and see further exhibiting as an expense of diminishing returns.

Urbanization is the focus for the Chinese government’s strategy for the construction industry’s development, according to Wang Man, Executive President

of the China National Forest Product Industry Association, with which DOMOTEX is associated; and this sector has been driving the domestic flooring market.

**DOMOTEX 2014** – Summary: A thinner show for wood than in 2013, with some notable regular exhibitors missing. But operating in an optimistic market, the show was busy. There were again fewer overseas visitors than previously, but in any case the focus of the show was clearly on the Chinese market. Trends in flooring on offer clearly followed the western taste for wider and longer boards, with more character – especially knots and surface variation. The choice in wood flooring products grows ever wider with design increasingly important. Innovations in wood were less prominent this year. Engineered flooring continues to dominate the real wood sector but wood substitutes are an increasing threat to wood, despite the emergence of more environmental awareness in a market that lags behind most of the world on this issue. Bamboo flooring was huge at the show and carried off the coveted top environmental award “Green Step”. However there were far more FSC and PEFC logos for certification displayed than in any previous year, which may indicate changing attitudes.

The whole show covered 140,000 square meters accommodating about 1,200 exhibitors of which about 30 percent were from overseas - mainly in the carpet sector. The key themes this year were “green” and “innovation” for which there were extensive displays in Hall W5. The “Green Step Awards” were aimed at recognizing and promoting those companies and individuals which embody the principles of environmental stewardship in the region. “InnovAction” flooring returned for a second year after its launch in 2013 with a top 20 list of voted products intended to lead the healthy development of the industry, according to the organizers – Deutche Messe AG.

DOMOTEX Shanghai will return March 24-26, 2015. ■

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## LUMBER SUPPLIERS –

Continued from page 1

cluded the cost of compliance with EU’s regulations and procedures, which, while being expensive for large exporters, become prohibitively costly for SMEs.

Logistics challenges were another concern, particularly when it comes to Customs requirements. Other challenges to exporting were inconsistent Harmonized System classifications and the EU’s value-added tax system. Finally, inconsistent application of EU documentation mandates was also cited as a significant barrier to exporting.

Webster’s Dictionary defines “Catch-22” as “an illogical, unreasonable, or senseless situation.” From this survey, we know that the EU wants our lumber and wood-products exports; but the many barriers to such trade causes frustration in the lumber industry. Basically, it’s the EU’s own version of a Catch-22.

The fact-finding survey made no recommendations as to how to improve these barriers for small and medium-sized exporters; thus we at Import/Export Wood Purchasing News decided to do a survey of our clients, asking them: “What do you consider to be your company’s specific problems, or barriers, when it comes to exporting your products to the EU—and what solutions to these barriers do you recommend?”

Here is what survey participants of some wood-products and lumber companies had to say in answer to these two related questions:

• **John Stevenson, Sales, Thompson Hardwood Inc., based in Hazlehurst, GA**, had this to offer. “About two months ago I received a phone call from a company in France wanting to buy some select Cypress. I had the product they wanted and we made a deal to ship them a container. We have always considered Cypress a hardwood species, however, I found out later the EU does not. They consider it as a softwood.

“We loaded the container and sent it to

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**LUMBER SUPPLIERS** – Continued from page 10



**JOHN STEPHENSON**

USDA for inspection so we could get a Phyto certificate as we always do for hardwood species. The USDA would not issue a Phyto certificate for this load because we did not have the packs marked 'KD – HT' (Kiln-Dried, Heat Treated). We are in the Timber Products Inspection (TPI) 'HT' program under TPI for heat treated hardwood industrial timbers, but not for kiln-dried hardwood lumber. We use this program for heat-treated cants (industrial timbers), which are sold green. The TPI HT program requires that green material reach a certain temperature for a certain number of hours."

He added, "The kiln-dried process takes days, not hours, to dry the lumber down to the required moisture content. We were thinking that a kiln-dried process would supersede an HT process, but that is not the case. We had to bring the container back and unload it and figure out what to do next. "We contacted TPI about the problem we had with this container and asked them what we could do about it. They instructed us that our kilns had to be certified by them in order to ship this lumber to the EU. We have done this and now have a TPI HT stencil with our certification number to put on the packs of lumber when it is required."

Stevenson indicated that this added step didn't come free. "There is an added cost for doing this," he said. "I guess our problem was that we were not familiar with shipping softwood to EU countries. We shipped a load of hardwood to Ireland last week and had no problems at all. My suggestion to exporters of lumber would be to call the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and ask them if they have any questions at all about the requirements of the country they are shipping to."

· **Bill Joyce, President and CEO, Middle Tennessee Lumber Co., Burns, TN**, had this to report:

"More specific to the U.S. hardwood business is the inconsistent application of the EU agriculture policies in regard to verified legal sources and additional phyto-sanitary/kiln drying certifications with the adoption by the EU of the Lacey Act, which requires legal

source verification requirements. Some markets such as the UK have gone to the point of having U.S. hardwood lumber exporters



**BILL JOYCE**

basically swear on an affidavit, on an order-by-order basis, that the products covered by the British purchase orders are 100 percent legally harvested and controlled, whereas in other markets, such as Spain, this has not become a requirement."

He added another anecdote: "In Finland recently, U.S. hardwood lumber cargoes were at risk of being rejected entry without the NHLA kiln-drying certificate because the Finnish authorities were under the mistaken impression that the NHLA kiln-drying certificate was supposed to be used instead of the time-honored and accepted USDA phyto-sanitary certificate."

· **Russell Struyk, TMX Shipping Inc., of Morehead City, NC**, offered this challenge he's seen as problematic with lumber exporters:

"In regards to the EU documentation mandates, an obstacle we often run into would be the European Union 24 Hour Advanced Manifest Regulation. In some cases, documentation has to be submitted to the steamship line two days before the cargo cut-off. This means that quite often we have to submit documentation for a shipment when the empty container has not even been picked up by the trucker yet. We then have to submit again once the container has been loaded, which doubles our time spent on a given shipment."



**RUSSELL STRUYK**

· **Lawson Maury, Export Manager, Hermitage Hardwood Lumber Sales, Cookeville, TN**, had this insight to offer:

"Although Hermitage itself has not run into any problems specifically when it comes to exporting to the EU, we have heard of other companies who've had to bring containers back to the U.S. as the packages were not marked 'KD' or 'Kiln Dried.'"

He added, "The NHLA is running a certification program for KD lumber which can be used as a substitute for the USDA Phyto-sanitary Certificate. I think it's likely the EU and China will accept this new certification but it will take time. Once this goes into effect, we can basically issue an in-house document. For any company exporting large volumes it would be a great cost saving vs. the

Continued on page 12

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**LUMBER SUPPLIERS** – Continued from page 11



LAWSON MAURY

per-container fee for a USDA Phyto.”  
 He added that the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) might be problematic for some lumber companies exporting from the US: “As far as when the EAB could impact shipments to the EU,” he said, “it could be any time for us. Once you’re in a quarantined area, everything must be 100 percent square-edged. And for people in states or counties which are quarantined, they are restricted how they can ship their Ash logs and lumber, even within the U.S.”

• **Mark Barford, Executive Director, National Hardwood Lumber Association, Memphis, TN,** offered these comments:

“The NHLA is committed to assisting our members to compete fairly in the world market place. We agree that there needs to be a consistency and clarity of European requirements which will be uniform across all countries. The European Union is a collection of cultures and languages, and sometimes there are misunderstandings that create difficulties.”

He explained, “One example of where the NHLA is trying to assist is with the species Ash. Most of Europe will not accept Ash because of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) which has devastated much of the standing inventory of Ash trees in the United States, and the Europeans want to be sure the EAB stays out of their forests.”

“NHLA has launched a Kiln Dried Lumber Certification program that members can utilize to assure receiving countries that lumber has been dried at a specific temperature, to a designated moisture content, which the insect cannot survive. This program is just now gaining acceptance throughout Europe and we are awaiting the response from governments to determine if they will allow the restriction to be lifted.”

With time, patience and persistence, the small and medium-sized lumber and wood products exporters here in the U.S. will not continue to find themselves in a “Catch-22” situation, and their markets can grow and expand. ■



MARK BARFORD

**Editor’s note: To read the USITC survey results in its entirety, go to: <http://www.ustr.gov/sites/default/files/03142014-TTIP-opportunities-for-SMEs.pdf>**  
**For more information on the USDA and the Emerald Ash Borer, go to [www.USDA.gov/ashborer](http://www.USDA.gov/ashborer).**

**AHEC/SNOW** – Continued from page 2

the U.S. hardwood industry. Certification to standards like FSC and PEFC has been limited in a sector dependent on wood harvested from forests owned by more than four million American families each harvesting only once in a gener-

ation. While such low intensity management is environmentally and socially benign, it is simply not cost-effective for individual owners to certify.

At the same time, many of the strong environmental attributes linked to U.S. hardwood are not covered within the scope of forest certification. Certification says nothing about carbon footprint, a particularly strong environmental attribute of U.S. hardwoods. UN data shows that while the stock of carbon held in the world’s forest soils and trees has declined by around 17 billion tonnes since 1990, in the U.S. it has increased by 2.23 billion tonnes. Much of this gain is concentrated in hardwood forest, which has doubled in standing volume in the last 50 years.

Rather than building an environmental communication strategy around FSC and PEFC certification, as many other wood suppliers have done, AHEC has forged an innovative approach adapted to the particular demands of the sector. The sector has been able to draw on comprehensive forest inventory data compiled regularly by the U.S. Forest Service through their Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program. At the core of the program is a dense network of permanent sample plots across the entire U.S. forest resource. Data on forest condition collected on the ground from these plots at least once a decade for nearly a century is now supplemented with more regular information from satellites and other remote sensing.

Responding to demand for specific data on the legality and sustainability of harvesting, AHEC commissioned the Seneca Creek study in 2008. This was the first independent analysis anywhere to show negligible risk of illegal or unsustainable harvest across a major wood supplying sector. The study, due to be reviewed in 2014, foreshadowed the regional risk-based approach to due diligence now so central both to the EU Timber Regulation and FSC through their National Controlled Wood Assessments.

Most recently, AHEC has been working with sustainability consultants PE International to acquire and compile data on the life-cycle environmental impact of American hardwood in line with international carbon footprint and LCA standards.

Through this initiative, AHEC is now able to model the full environmental impact of

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## AHEC/SNOW – Continued from page 12

delivering U.S. hardwood lumber and veneer to any market in the world. Data can be individually tailored to any one of 19 U.S. hardwoods, which together account for over 95 percent of all U.S. hardwood production.

So the challenge for AHEC is not the lack of data. The issue is how to make the torrent of information generated through these initiatives readily accessible to the industry and their customers. AHEC believes it has found the answer in their new 'American Hardwood Environmental Profiles' or AHEPs. The profiling system is currently being pilot tested by U.S. hardwood exporting companies and was launched across the full AHEC membership before the end of May.

AHEPs are designed to provide credible environmental information specific to individual consignments at point of delivery to the importer in all export markets. This data is delivered quickly and efficiently at near zero cost to either the exporter or importer. This is achieved by building on PE's GaBi Envision software tool originally developed to communicate environmental impacts and integrate LCA into the product design process. Individual U.S. hardwood companies are given on-line access to the software tool to allow preparation of profiles for their own wood export consignments. Data can be quickly adjusted according to key parameters such as hardwood species, kilning efficiency and transport routes and modes.

Each AHEP combines output from the AHEC/PE LCA project with information derived from the U.S. Forest Service FIA and the Seneca Creek risk assessment. The structure and content of each AHEP aligns to the requirements of the EU Timber Regulation and closely follows the European Commission's informal "Guidance Document for the EU Timber Regulation" issued in February 2013. The AHEP provides, for every consignment, access to information on the name of the U.S. supplier, product description, quantity of wood, commercial and scientific species name, place of harvest, and documents demonstrating negligible risk of illegal harvest.

The AHEP also provides access to information on the sustainability of the U.S. hardwood species contained in the consignment, together with quantitative data on the environmental impacts associated with delivering each specific consignment to an individual customer. The data covers most of the environmental impact categories required by manufacturers to prepare formal Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) in line with the EN 15804 standard for environmental assessment of construction materials in the EU (such as Global Warming potential, Acidification potential, and Eutrophication potential).

So where does AHEC go from here? According to Venables "an early objective of the AHEP is simply to assist European buyers of U.S. hardwood to comply with the immediate regulatory demands of EUTR. However, by providing comprehensive data on sustainability and life cycle impacts, we can be proactive in

encouraging manufacturers, architects and government officials to raise the bar on the environment. We can start pushing for full integration of scientific life cycle data into the design and procurement process, for example through widespread adoption of EPDs and BIM. We can do this confident in the knowledge that U.S. hardwood suppliers are able to deliver the data and can challenge their competitors to do the same." ■

## MYANMAR – Continued from page 2

ing could be exported. Analysts anticipate lower log prices in upcoming auctions because of the large volumes that will be for sale. However, once the stock of unshipped logs are utilized, prices will better reflect mill requirements for the domestic and international market. Looking ahead, the plan by MTE's to reduce annual log harvests will likely firm up log prices. ■

## WASHINGTON SCENE – Continued from page 2

based energy," said American Wood Council (AWC) President and CEO Robert Glowinski. "EPA's listing of C&D materials diverts used materials from landfills, allows for capture of the inherent energy value and lessens the reliance on fossil-based fuels. As an industry, we appreciate the clarity today's decision provides for our air regulation compliance strategies."

Manufacturing facilities rely on the NHSM listing to determine whether they are regulated under EPA's boiler maximum achievable control technology rule or under the agency's commercial and industrial solid waste incinerators rule. AF&PA and AWC will carefully review the details of the proposal and provide additional information during the comment period to support and potentially expand the proposed listings.

For more information about AF&PA visit [www.afandpa.org](http://www.afandpa.org) and for further details about AWC visit [www.awc.org](http://www.awc.org).

### Forest Service/Bureau Of Land Management 2015 Budgets

President Barack Obama recently released his 2015 budget request for agencies tasked with managing federal forests. According to sources one of the largest issues on the table was the ever-increasing cost of wildfire funding and the borrowing that has taken place from other programs to cover those costs.

The most significant policy issue included in the Forest Service's budget request was the inclusion of a bipartisan legislative proposal to cap wildfire suppression spending at 70 percent of the ten-year average and treat additional expenditures as emergency spending, similar to how FEMA funds other natural

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## WASHINGTON SCENE – Continued from page 13

disasters. Sources said this would end the annual practice of “fire-borrowing” from other Forest Service accounts to cover wildfire suppression activities. The legislation has been introduced in the Senate by Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Mike Crapo (R-ID) and in the House by Kurt Schrader (D-OR) and Mike Simpson (R-ID). Overall, the Wildland Fire Management budget was raised to \$2.265 billion from \$2.163 billion for an increase of \$102 million from the 2014 level, and a \$396 million increase from the 2013 program as the cost of wildfire suppression continues to rise.

The overall proposed Forest Service budget for 2015 is \$4.77 billion up from \$4.58 billion in 2014. With this increase the agency plans to harvest 3.1 billion board feet from national forest lands, up from the 2013. However, tracking which line items got increases in the National Forest System becomes difficult because five programs; Wildlife and Fish Habitat Management, Forest Products, Vegetation and Watershed Management, Legacy Roads and Trails and Hazardous Fuels have again been proposed for merger into a single Integrated Resource Restoration (IRR) budget line item. Funding for the FY 15 IRR line item is \$820 million, up from approximately \$776 million in 2014. In recent years IRR was applied to only Regions 1, 3 and 4 as pilots. The results from those regions have not been stellar with timber targets not being met, and a high percentage of firewood making up the sold volume.

### DNR Timber Sale

According to the American Forest Resource Council DNR will be working to identify exactly what the arrearage number (the amount of volume to be sold in the decade minus the amount actually sold) will be. The Board of Natural Resources will then need to decide how it will deal with the arrearage number and the new Sustainable Harvest Calculation moving forward to the next decade. ■

## IWPA/SQUIRES – Continued from page 3

agreement designed to accelerate the rollout of clean technologies. The objective is to deliver “global free trade in environmental goods” and work to tackle trade barriers. The future green goods agreement will be anchored in the WTO and based on its principle of Most Favored Nation.

Since the financial crisis, trade barriers are growing around the world, costing jobs, growth and economic opportunity domestically and abroad. The Green Goods discussions are a beacon in the direction of trade liberalization. While these discussions are in the early stages, we hope that bamboo flooring won't

be the only natural product on the list.

One pending trade liberalization agenda item is the renewal of the expired GSP program. The Generalized System of Preferences promotes economic growth in the developing world by providing preferential duty-free entry for up to 5,000 products when imported from one of 127 designated beneficiary countries and territories. Congress didn't renew it when it expired on July 31, 2013. Recently, the Obama Administration announced it would begin the process to remove Russia from the program. This action should remove an obstacle to Congressional renewal. Ukraine would benefit from reauthorization of the program as would the U.S. businesses that rely on this program. IWPA will continue to press for renewal.

If you have a chance, please drop a line of welcome to IWPA's latest addition. We are excited to welcome Joe O'Donnell to our team as the new Manager of Government and Public Affairs (joe@iwpawood.org). He comes to us with 10 years of experience on Capitol Hill working for Senator Lugar. ■

## CHABROS – Continued from page 4

This highly specialized wood-based company is positioned as one of the region's leading suppliers of solid wood and veneer with large stocks of a wide range of products and species. The company claims exceptional service and unique expertise reinforced by an endless list of projects and major references. In the midst of a growing global market, Chabros has established overseas production units and distribution points throughout the Middle East, targeting businesses that are in search of quality products. Its regional distribution center is headquartered in Dubai, UAE, and supplied from a vast global area of forest producers.

The Group has been a regular exhibitor at the Dubai Wood Show and is scheduled to be there again this year, providing an opportunity to showcase the many products and wood species it offers. They read like an atlas of wood – from Africa, Southeast Asia, Europe, South America as well as an extensive range of American hardwoods. Red and White Oak in sawn lumber and veneer feature strongly. American Black Walnut, Hard Maple, Western Red Alder, Grey Elm and Ash from North America, among many others are all in stock. The Chabros website provides comprehensive technical information and images on wood and veneer to assist specifiers in making their choices and offers 30 American species in various options of lumber and veneer in different cuts. A virtual catalogue has been designed to give a glimpse to this range of products in a huge number of species, and physical samples can be requested from the Customer Service Department to ensure that the material matches individual requirements.

The company's slogan is “Powered By Excellence ... Driven By Values” and

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