



Since 1928

The Standard

Monthly Newsletter of APPALACHIAN Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc.

Demand the Appalachian Standard

April 2007



Darker Trend Continues At Furniture Market

HIGH POINT - The trend to medium and darker finishes continues in furniture manufacturing based on introductions at the 2007 Spring International Home Furnishings Market.

For the past three markets, there has been a steady rise in the volume of wood furniture on display with more stain and color, reports Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. President Tom Inman. The darker colors allow a broader mix of species.

"Manufacturers say their research and sales show consumers are seeking rich tones and deeper colors," Inman said. "It was evident in the new product

that was on display and manufacturers said much of it was accepted by buyers."

The Spring Furniture Market in High Point was March 26-April 2. Each market attracts more than 1,200 exhibitors from around the world. Thousands of furniture retailers and interior designers visit these showrooms to see new product and existing goods and place orders for the coming season.

"Overall it was a good market with manufacturers saying attendance was up considerably from last year," Inman said. "High Point is stepping up to counter

(See Furniture Market on page 3)



New Oak Student Design Contest Winner

AHMI's Tom Inman stands with Woo Hyun Lee (center) winner of The Big Idea Student Design Contest at SCAD. Also pictured is Design Department Chair Dr. Thelma Lazo-Flores. See story on page 2.

Appalachian Sustainability To Highlight Meeting

The 2007 AHMI Summer Family Conference will offer an exciting update on the AHMI "Appalachian Sustainability" program that Producer members discussed during the roundtable at Longboat Key. AHMI staff and leadership are developing the latest promotion to share with members. Meeting attendees will also learn about an opportunity gain entrance into new markets in late 2007.

The session is July 22-24 at The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, WV. The resort is completing a \$50 million renovation. More details and registration materials are coming soon but please put the dates on your calendar today.

APPALACHIAN Future Meetings

2007 Summer Family Conference July 22-24

The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, WV

2007 Inter-Industry Meeting - Oct. 16-17

Location to be announced

2008 Annual Meeting - Feb. 20-24

Marco Island Marriott, Marco Island, FL

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The way I see it...

By Tom Inman, AHMI President

...the Spring 2007 High Point Furniture Market (as it is called now) was positive. The High Point Market Authority has done a great job improving transportation and the International Home Furnishings Center has remodeled the main entrances to bring the "big building" into 2007. The crowd on opening day and later in the week was mixed but there appeared to be a steady flow. Most manufacturers were happy with the contacts.

What these buyers saw was truly a mixture of styles, colors, tones and an ever-increasing variety of product. If there is a trend in the furniture industry it is choice. The furniture market in High Point includes more than 12 million square feet of furniture showroom space that is competing for the attention of a retail base that is changing. The "Mom and Pop" furniture store is being replaced by a retailer with three to five stores in a regional market that is being challenged by the furniture manufacturer-owned gallery stores who are going head-to-head with the major import warehouse-style retailer who will finance for 10 years and deliver to your home tomorrow.

What an industry!

They are all trying to cater to a consumer who wants dozens of choices in color, at least four different hardware selections and surfaces, entertainment centers that hide the plasma tv or ones that show off the \$5,000 screen. One manufacturer said consumers are intrigued by furniture that offers one more thing. Designers are working feverishly to stay ahead.

And Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. is keeping the message about our beautiful hardwood and the sustainability of our resource in front of them. It is a challenge in these challenging times but one that we are responding to and maintaining interest.

...Plato was right when he wrote that "everything flows, nothing stands still." There is change in leadership for the Hardwood Manufacturers Association as that organization attempts to fill its vacancy following the death of Sue Regan. HMA leaders have said they hope to have a replacement as soon as possible. A search has also begun for a new executive for the Hardwood Federation as Betsy Ward has announced her resignation to move to the Rice Federation. Both of these women have achieved great work for the hardwood industry and they will be difficult to replace. But "nothing stands still."



Marissa Topping won The Big Idea contest at Georgia Tech with her dining room table design. AHMI's Tom Inman awarded her scholarship

New Oak Completes Two Student Design Contests

The New Oak Partnership has completed two student design contests "The Big Idea" and two others will be held later this month.

New Oak is sponsoring contests at Savannah College of Art and Design, Georgia Tech, Parsons School of Design and North Carolina State University. Contests were completed at SCAD and GT in March with more than 45 entries.

New Oak provided the Red Oak lumber and students competed for scholarships. AHMI President Tom Inman serves as New Oak project manager and directed the contests.

"We were extremely pleased with the number of entries and the wide variety of work these students designed and built," Inman said. "They are very creative and these pieces showcase the beauty of Red Oak and students learned about the characteristics of the hardwood lumber."

Students were required to design a piece of furniture with a majority of the piece built from solid Red Oak. They also had to construct a sample of their design and complete detailed specifications.

The winning designs will be displayed at the Fall 2007 International Home Furnishings Market in High Point. All of the entries will be exhibited on the Partnership's website, www.thenewoak.com.

More information on all of the contests will be published in a later newsletter.

AHMI & HMA Tour Includes PA Sawmills, Plants

A joint meeting and mill tours between Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. and the Hardwood Manufacturers Association is set for June 6-7 in central Pennsylvania.

The Northeast Regional Meeting for HMA and Appalachian tour will include visits to:

Allegheny Wood Products sawmill in Marble, PA
Appalachian Wood Products cabinet manufacturing facility in Clearfield, PA

Matson Lumber Co., Brookville, PA

PW Hardwoods, Brookville, PA

Brookville Wood Products, Brookville, PA

Hickman Lumber Co., Emlenton, PA

"We are very pleased to partner with HMA to broaden the scope of the tours and participants," said AHMI President Tom Inman. "These operations offer innovative approaches to manufacturing lumber and secondary products in the hardwood region."

AHMI / HMA Northeast Regional Meeting Is June 6-7 In Central PA

AHMI Chairman John Crites who owns and operates Allegheny Wood Products invites AHMI members to visit his Pennsylvania operation. AWP purchased this mill from Georgia-Pacific Corp. in 2005 and Crites promises attendees will be intrigued by this facility.

The other stops include sawmills, yards, and manufacturing plants for kitchen and bath cabinets and hardwood baseball bats.

Registration materials will be sent to AHMI members in the next few weeks. There will be a reception and dinner in Clarion, PA, on June 6.

For more information, please contact AHMI at (336) 885-8315.

Furniture Market from page 1

Las Vegas and other market competition and it showed with remodeled entrances, improved transportation and all sorts of entertainment."

It still comes down to the whether the buyer finds the product at the High Point market. The Spring introductions numbered in the hundreds and more manufacturers are competing for what forecasters say may be a flat year.

Consumer spending on furniture is estimated to be \$83 billion in 2007, up 1.6 percent over 2006 while the growth of sales for furniture stores is forecast at 5 percent. New home sales are expected to stabilize in 2007 after declines in 2006.

Long-time furniture analyst Jerry Epperson reports the predictions for the 2007 economy are weak. He said manufacturers must focus on cost management while meeting consumer needs in design, price and availability.

AHMI will conduct its annual Furniture Market Wood Species and Design Survey at the Fall 2007 Furniture Market.

A buzz at the Spring Market was the efforts by furniture manufacturers to go green. The GreenStyle Pavilion was unveiled in one showroom building to showcase eco-friendly products to buyers seeking "sustainable" products for their stores.

The Sustainable Furniture Council was formed recently to promote sustainable practices in the home furnishings industry and raise awareness among



Georgia Tech students tour Stanley Furniture

consumers and buyers. A SFC spokesperson said "the furniture industry taking responsibility for sustainability is particularly imperative because the highest value that these raw materials give is being made into furniture."

Inman said the pavilion offered a reasoned approach to sustainability of wood products. "AHMI and the Appalachian region are shining examples of sustainability at work and we are increasing our efforts to educate furniture manufacturers who are seeking 'green' resources," he said.

"Trees and the wood products that come from them are as green as it gets," Inman said. "Our response from these groups was positive and we will send out more information."



AHEC Promotes Oak At Interzum Show

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. President Tom Inman will participate in the American Hardwood Export Council exhibit at Interzum in May.

AHEC will have a substantial presence in the fair with a large display of American Red Oak. The materials were provided by The New Oak Partnership and will showcased the beauty of Red Oak in residential and commercial uses.

AHEC will also have a grading station in the booth and will have demonstrations throughout the four days of the grades of Red Oak lumber.

"The promotion of Red Oak began domestically by the New Oak Partnership in early 2006 and AHEC has been promoting internationally for months," Inman said. "The emphasis in Europe has been 'Red Oak has landed' and the display will educate European buyers about the many benefits of Red Oak."

AHMI Saddened By Death of Sue Regan

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. is saddened to report the death of Susan M. Regan, executive vice president of the Hardwood Manufacturers Association. She passed away on March 6, 2007 at age 50 following an extended illness.

"Sue has been a tremendous advocate for the hardwood lumber industry," said AHMI President Tom Inman. "Her ability to generate promotion efforts with both the trade and consumer press was exceptional."

Regan lead HMA for 20 years after successful work in newspaper and public relations. She is survived by her mother.

Memorial gifts can be directed to the Hardwood Manufacturers Association Promotion Fund, 400 Penn Center Blvd., Suite 530, Pittsburgh, PA 15235.

Commerce Places Tariff On Chinese Paper

WASHINGTON, DC - The Bush administration announced in March that it would reverse more than 20 years of American policy and impose potentially steep tariffs on Chinese manufactured goods on the ground that China is illegally subsidizing some of its exports.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez announced duties on two Chinese makers of high-gloss paper, one at 10.9 percent and the other 20.4 percent, calculated by adding up the supposedly illegal subsidies. Trade and industry officials say future actions based on the departments new policy could lead to duties on imports of Chinese steel, plastics, machinery, textiles and many other products sold in the United States, if as expected those industries seek relief and the department finds that they are harmed by illegal subsidies.

The American trade deficit with China reached a record \$232.5 billion last year, or about a third of the entire trade gap. Industry and administration officials say that they chose the high-quality paper industry last year to serve as a test case for a sweeping revision of the administrations previous policies, which did not allow for antisubsidy duties for Communist or other nonmarket economies.

USFS Plan Slashes NC Jobs

The U.S. Forest Service plans to cut its budget by \$64 million next year and eliminate 2,100 jobs. The Forest Service in North Carolina already intends to eliminate 21 full-time jobs during the next 18 months.

The workers will transfer or retire, and no layoffs are planned. Congress has not approved President Bush's budget which calls for the reductions. The reorganization will save \$2.3 million for the Forest Service, which controls more than a million acres in Western North Carolina.

The most visible part of this plan is unfolding in North Carolina Highlands, where the Forest Service will close its ranger station and combine the district there with another.

The closure will come this summer and leave one district ranger where once there were two. District rangers oversee everything from fire fighting to law enforcement and recreation. The new district, called the Nantahala District, will cover 251,817 acres.

Lean Manufacturing At VT

BLACKSBURG, VA - Virginia Tech's Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center will be co-sponsoring its eighth Lean Manufacturing workshop on May 7-9, at the Wood Education and Resource Center in Princeton, WV.

Lean manufacturing is a management philosophy of continuous improvement by reducing costs, production time, and other wastes during processing. The workshop has been updated with learning simulations and industry examples applied to primary and secondary wood products manufacturers.

The workshop includes a tour of a local wood products manufacturer facility that has successfully adopted the lean philosophy to improve their operations. The course includes activities and lessons that can help businesses in the wood products industry to identify target opportunity areas for improvement.

Earl Kline, Virginia Tech professor in the College of Natural Resources and co-director of the Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center at Virginia Tech, will lead workshop activities and lessons.

The three-day workshop fee is \$625, which covers registration, instructional materials, continental breakfasts, coffee breaks, lunch, and dinner. Registrations should be received no later than April 23. Registration will be limited to the first 20 applicants.

For online registration information and program details, please visit www.forestindustries.vt.edu/workshop.html or contact Earl Kline at (540)231-8841 or kline@vt.edu.

Senate OKs School Funds

WASHINGTON, DC - The U.S. Senate recently approved a bipartisan plan to extend payments to rural counties affected by declining revenues from logging on federal lands.

The plan was added as an amendment to the \$122 billion emergency spending bill for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The plan is "a lifeboat to keep rural communities afloat," said Senator Ron Wyden, an Oregon Democrat and cosponsor of the plan.

The amendment provides \$2.8 billion to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act through 2011 as well as \$1.9 billion for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, which provides money to state and local governments for loss of tax revenues from federal lands in their state. The law was enacted because of declining timber sales on federal lands.



NC BMP Resource Meeting

RALEIGH, NC - A three-hour forum on the 2006 North Carolina Best Management Practices Manual revisions will be held May 9 from 9 a.m. to noon by teleconference on the N.C. Research and Education Network.

The review began in 2003 and involved a technical advisory committee of people from across the state in forest management vocations and education. The program will offer an overview of the new manual and focus on specific changes that are of interest to forestry.

Pre-registration is required and seating is limited. Upon receipt of registration and the \$35 fee, participants will receive confirmation and teleconference location map. There are 10 locations available across the state.

For more information or to register, visit www.ncsu.edu/feop/forum/forumlist.html. The registration deadline is May 2.

NHLA Offers Hardwood Lumber Grading

RALEIGH, NC - The National Hardwood Lumber Association in conjunction with Wood Products Extension of North Carolina State University and the Southeastern Dry Kiln Club will offer a Hardwood Lumber Grading Workshop on May 22-24 at the Hodges Laboratory at N.C. State University in Raleigh, NC.

The course is designed as an introduction and a refresher on NHLA Rules and will cover the fundamentals of hardwood lumber inspection. Attendees will have hands-on application of the Rules.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Red Roof Inn at 1813 S. Saunders St., Raleigh, NC. The telephone for the hotel is (919) 833-6005 and mention the block B256NCSU.

The workshop has been approved for 18 contact hours in Category 1 CFE credits.

To register, please contact Joe Denig at NCSU Wood Extension at (919) 515-5582 or mail your registration to Joe Denig, Wood Products Extension, Campus Box 8003, Raleigh, NC 27695.

AHMI Forestry Division Plans Annual Tour

MULLENS, WV - The Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. Forestry Division will meet May 22-23 for discussion of flooding in southwest West Virginia and forestry in that area.

Forestry Division Chairman Doug Toothman has called for the program and tour to discuss the flooding litigation and areas impacted in the southern region of West Virginia. Forestry Division members will hear a presentation from Rob Jones of Jim C. Hamer Lumber Co., Kenova, WV, on the lawsuits and rulings. Jones has assisted Jim C. Hamer Co. and other companies in responding to the lawsuits and the appeals process through the WV court system.

Participants will also receive an update from Curt Hassler, program director of the Appalachian Hardwood Forest Research Alliance. This group was founded in 2005 to oversee research throughout the region. Three research projects have begun and Hassler will update participants on these activities.

West Virginia Forestry Association Executive Director Dick Waybright has also been invited to speak on the state of forestry affairs in West Virginia.

The meeting will be held at the Twin Falls State Park in Mullens, WV. On May 22, the reception begins at 6 p.m. with dinner at 6:30 p.m. The business meeting will begin at 7:15 p.m.



On May 23, a tour begins at 8:30 a.m. and will include harvest sites and flood damaged areas. It will conclude with a discussion and boxed lunch at Twin Falls State Park.

Meeting registration fee is \$50 and includes the reception, dinner, & box lunch for the tour. There will also be a golf tournament for those interested on May 23 beginning at 1:30 p.m. The golf fee is \$45.

This meeting is open to all AHMI members and guests. It the annual meeting of the division and an opportunity to see forest management in the field.

AHMI has a room block at Twin Falls State Park with a group rate of \$69/night for single. To reserve a room, call the park at (304) 294-4000 and ask for the Appalachian block.

To register for the AHMI Forestry Division meeting, please complete the form below, detach and mail with your check to AHMI, P.O. Box 427, High Point, NC 27261.

For more information, please contact AHMI at (336) 885-8315 or e mail to tom@appalachianwood.org.

**Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. Forestry Division
Annual Meeting & Tour - May 22-23 at Twin Falls State Park, Mullens, WV
Reception May 22 at 6 p.m., Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Program at 7:15 p.m.
Tour on May 23 at 8:30 a.m.
MEETING FEE: \$50 per person (includes reception, dinner, and tour lunch)**

NAME: _____ BADGE NAME: _____ \$50

NAME: _____ BADGE NAME: _____ \$50

COMPANY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

GOLF on Wednesday, May 23 at 1:30 p.m. at Twin Falls State Park

NAME: _____ \$45

NAME: _____ \$45

Please send payment with registration