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Hardwood

Magazine

"Read By North America's Major Hardwood Purchasing Agents"

ESTABLISHED IN 1927

FEBRUARY 2021



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About The Cover

THE BEASLEY GROUP – SERVING
THE INDUSTRY FOR GENERATIONS
TO COME

The continued growth and success of the Beasley Group is one built on a foundation of quality, customer service and reliability. From its humble beginnings in Hazlehurst, Georgia, the company has become a world leader in the Forest Products Industry. This growth,

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We believe in and understand the importance of investing in our employees and in our communities. Our employees are also leaders in the industry and are our most valued assets. With their knowledge, commitment, and experience - matched with world class operations; the Beasley Group will be serving the industry for generations so come.

For more information contact us at 912 375-5174
or www.beasleygroup.com

National Hardwood Magazine

"Read by North America's Major Hardwood Purchasing Agents"

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The National Hardwood Magazine (NHM) highlights all areas of the forest products industry. In each issue, we include the Who's Who section to shine a spotlight on individuals in the industry who purchase at least 100,000 board feet of appearance grade lumber for their facility or distribution yard.

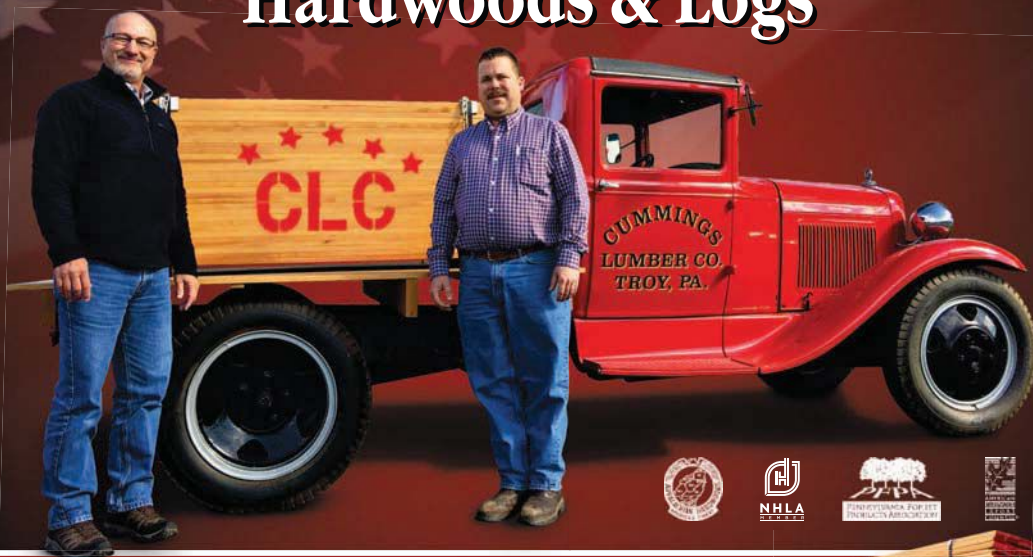
The process is very simple. A form is sent to the designated employee from NHM to complete and return with a pho-

tograph. Upon receipt of the form, the Who's Who article is written and sent to the employee for any changes or edits. As a requirement before publishing, the employee must provide NHM final approval of the article.

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Want more info? Email Dolores at whoswho@millerwoodtradepub.com. ■

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U.S.A. TRENDS

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LAKE STATES

In the Lake States, the health of the lumber market ranges from very positive to not so good, depending on the lumber provider with whom you talk.

For example, in Wisconsin, a lumberman stated, "The markets are, I'd say, very strong." Business is "better," he observed, than it was six months earlier. He sells Red and White Oak, Cherry, Hickory, Hard and Soft Maple and Basswood. "Right now," he said, "I'm selling Red Oak, because it's what I have. If I had Hard and Soft Maple, they would sell just as well."

Customers are "more end users than distributors," he noted. "They're telling me that the market for their products is very strong right now, and they can't really give me a reason as to why. But they're getting a lot of orders."

Transportation, he said, is "not really" a problem.

An Illinois source, who sells industrial Hardwood blocking, stated that "sales-wise the market is down, similar to the industry. It's not taking the same direction as homebuilding by any means." Species he offers are primarily Oak and Maple. Customers are retailers, industrial and heavy construction. "We find transportation very challenging," he observed. "There's a shortage of truck drivers."

Up in Michigan, a lumber supplier judged the market there to be "pretty good." "It's a little better than it was six months ago." He provides Hard and Soft Maple, Red and White Oak, Hickory, Walnut and Cherry in mainly 4/4 to 8/4 widths and No. 3 and Better. "Hard Maple is in great demand right

NORTHEAST

The Hardwood lumber market in the Northeast is good, according to four lumber providers. "It's very good, actually," said a lumberman in Pennsylvania, "but most of the product is going overseas, and it's very hard to get green lumber." Compared to six months earlier, "It's probably better right now," the source stated. He provides Ash, Hard and Soft Maple, Cherry, Red Oak, Poplar and Walnut. "Walnut is our best seller," he remarked. He sells to end users and distribution yards. His customers' business is "good right now," he observed. Transportation, he stated, is not a problem. "It's pretty good, I guess."

A Massachusetts representative noted that the market is good. "White Oak is crazy, and Soft Maple continues to be a good mover," he remarked. "It's probably better right now" than six months ago, he stated. Customers include end users and distribution yards, and their business, too, is good. He noted that transportation is not a problem.

"Lumber's moving very well," observed a source in Connecticut. "The market is very active." Business is "definitely better, no question, across the species," than it was six months previously, he stated. "Some species are more active than others, but everything's up. It's a supply matter. Supply is down, and I think everybody's trying to fill the pipe. Nobody has logs, and it's the first time I've seen it so uniformly across the East. Nobody has logs. I think that COVID and general labor being tight anyway are factors.

"In the previous year and a half, lumber prices were in the

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SOUTHEAST

News about the Hardwood lumber markets in the Southeast is good. In Tennessee, a source stated, "Overall, things have been trending upwards." He added: "Demand for certain species has been very strong or fairly strong. We think that's more supply-driven than anything. White Oak has been in very high demand. Some other species have picked up. Ash, Red Oak and Walnut have picked up. So has Poplar." The market is "slightly better" than it was six months earlier, he observed. Customers are end users and distribution yards. "Their demand has been high, as well," he remarked. Transportation is problematic, he noted. "Trucks have been a little harder to find, a little bit of a challenge from time to time," he stated. "Container shortages and having multiple cutoff dates and equipment issues have been challenging as well."

A Mississippi lumberman said the market there is "good. It's really good." In fact, he observed, the market is better than it was six months ago. Species he sells include Red and White Oak, Poplar, Ash and mixed wood. White Oak, he said, is the best seller. "Red Oak is after that, then Poplar." He sells his products to end users, concentration yards and manufacturers. "They're saying the market for their products is good," he stated. "We've got our own trucks," he noted, so transportation isn't a problem.

The Hardwood lumber market in Alabama is "very good," said a source there. "It's about 10 or 20 times better than it was six months ago," he noted. "We handle most all

WEST COAST

The markets are good on the West Coast with the exception of one state, in which the market is mixed. In Washington, a lumberman stated, "Everybody's busy, so I'd have to say the market is good." However, he noted, the market is "probably not as good as six months ago" due to "the seasonality of it all." On a positive note, he said, "From what we've seen, there's plenty of homebuilding going on." He sells Red and White Oak and Hard and Soft Maple in No. 1 and Better and some No. 2. "Hard Maple's been pretty good across the board," he observed. Customers are end users. "Our customers are doing well," he stated. "They're kind of baffled that business is so good." A great difficulty, he said, is transportation. "It's been a challenge for 90 to 120 days. You can see prices are going up. Container prices are going up. Transportation time has increased. From the East Coast to the West Coast, transport usually takes about a week. One container was 20 days on the rail. That's a long time. It's across all industries."

A source in Oregon remarked, "Parts of the market are very good, and parts of it are not so good. So, it's kind of a mixed bag. We're making the best of the good aspects and trying to make something out of what's not so good. What's not so good is commercial hospitality, with the pandemic going on. The trade show business is not very good, as well. The best part of our business is cabinetry and millwork. Residential cabinetry and millwork are the two best parts of our business." Compared to six months earlier, the

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CANADIAN TRENDS

News from suppliers
about prices, trends,
sales and inventories

ONTARIO

As we move away from the Christmas and New Year's holidays, some contacts reported business picked up during the early part of the year. With U.S. residential construction expenditures being at their highest for a third consecutive month, exceeding \$600B (US), the highest rate in 14 years, according to the U.S. Census Bureau October statistics, this has been a strong driver for demand of Hardwood finished goods. The most recent data available in October noted that total private residential spending topped the previous year by 14.5 percent to \$637B. This is due in part to inventories of new and existing homes being extremely low, with homeowners opting to upgrade their homes because of limited new and existing homes for sale. This has provided some respite for Ontario and Quebec Hardwood producers and secondary manufacturers of moulding, flooring and cabinets, and other products, as sales to the U.S. improved slightly for them. With the demand comes the struggle to ramp up mill output, and tighter supply chains as the country is still going through the second wave of COVID-19. Companies are still experiencing difficulty in finding qualified workers in the forestry and Hardwood sectors. This has also resulted in prices rising higher for a number of species, grades and thicknesses.

Canadian residential renovation has also risen due to COVID-19 pandemic as people stayed home and focused on renovation projects. The housing market is seeing a very active resale market, especially in Ontario and Quebec, where there was a bidding war on sales of homes

QUEBEC

One contact commented that business for them is very strong, both for domestic and export markets, with supplies being tight. They need more logs at the mill, and the cold winter weather that hit in late December and early January was just what was needed to improve that situation.

Other contacts noted that demand from the U.S. had been sufficient to keep inventories low and prices pressured. Going through the holiday period, some contacts stated demand remained steady for most species and it didn't look like markets were going to slow down. It was felt that the pent up demand for housing in both Canada and the U.S. would likely keep new home construction strong in 2021.

Basswood sales are good due to improved home construction and renovation. The kiln-dried inventories that had accumulated have now been worked down. Now, tight supplies and demand are driving price inflation. Sawmills are shipping total green production, but interest is better for upper grades than for the Common grades.

Contacts note that demand for Ash is mixed. The FAS demand is very good, followed by No. 1 Common. A few contacts noted interest in No. 2A is lagging other grades. With the limited live Ash growing stocks, this has decreased the Ash log availability and the volume entering the market. The shortages as well as the slight increase in demand are causing prices to firm.

The shortage of Birch has been a key factor for improved sales. There has been a limited availability of Birch along with Hard and Soft Maple output which pushed end

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An educational course on Wood Anatomy (\$100) will be held off-site on Thursday, May 20. For more information or to register, visit exporichmond.com or https://www.sim.sbio.vt.edu/?page_id=2616

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NEWS DEVELOPMENTS

WILLIAM PENN CABINETRY EXPANDS

William Penn Cabinetry in Freeburg, PA recently announced its plan to hire 150 workers at its manufacturing facility here. William Penn uses domestic solid Hardwoods in its high-end cabinetry products.

Maurice Brubaker founded William Penn Cabinetry last February and in March 2020 also purchased architectural mouldings firm Stanley Woodworking in nearby Middleburg. Then COVID-19 hit and the plant shut down temporarily. However, Brubaker and his staff of 10 at William Penn pressed forward, and the end result is the acquisition of enough work to warrant hiring up to 150 new employees.

In published reports, Brubaker attributes his young company's success to the work ethic of his employees.

Learn more at www.williampenncabinetry.com.

RIVER CITY MILLWORK ACQUISITION SECURED BY RUGBY

Hardwoods Distribution Inc., Langley, BC, announced recently that it has, through its subsidiary Rugby Holdings LLC, purchased substantially all of the assets and assumed certain liabilities of River City Millwork Inc.

River City Millwork, located in Rockford, IL, is a wholesale distributor of interior and exterior doors, custom millwork, and other ancillary products. Products sold are comprised of a wide variety of Hardwoods, including Oak, Cherry, Poplar and Maple. River City's estimated annual sales are \$14 million and they will operate under the Rugby brand name going forward.

Learn more at www.rivercitymillwork.com and www.hdidist.com.

NWFA COMPLETES 52ND HOME WITH GARY SINISE FOUNDATION

The National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA), located in St. Louis, MO, has provided flooring for its 52nd home in support of the Gary Sinise Foundation R.I.S.E. program (Restor-



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NEWS ABOUT NORTH AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL HARDWOOD CONSUMERS INCLUDING MERGERS, PLANT EXPANSIONS & ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

ing Independence Supporting Empowerment). The R.I.S.E. program builds custom, specially adapted smart homes for severely wounded veterans and first responders. The home dedication for Arnold, MO, Police Officer Ryan O'Connor took place recently in St. Louis. Flooring for the project was donated by NWFA member Homerwood, with receiving and delivery donated by NWFA member Ambassador Floor Company.

Officer O'Connor graduated from the police academy in 1997, serving 12 years with the St. Louis County Police Department, before joining the Ferguson Police Department. On December 5, 2017, Officer O'Connor was transporting a burglary suspect when he was shot in the head with a hidden firearm. His injuries resulted in severe brain damage, the removal of part of his skull, and the paralysis of his right arm. He currently is learning to walk again, with assistance.

"Just two months after the shooting, Officer O'Connor was able to speak his first sentence," said NWFA President and CEO, Michael Martin. "He said, 'I just gotta' get my badge.' This clearly demonstrated that while he had a long recovery ahead, his will remained intact. We're honored to partner with Homerwood and Ambassador to provide flooring for his new home."

In addition to the 52 homes already completed, NWFA currently is working with its members to source wood flooring for 16 additional R.I.S.E. homes in various stages of planning and construction. Currently, 141 NWFA member companies have donated product, logistics, and installation services in locations throughout the United States, with a total value of more than \$5.2 million. A list of all NWFA R.I.S.E. participating companies can be found at <http://www.nwfa.org/giving-back.aspx>.

To learn more about the program,

and how you and/or your company can get involved, contact the NWFA at 800-422-4556, or e-mail them at anita.howard@nwfa.org.

The National Wood Flooring Association is a not-for-profit

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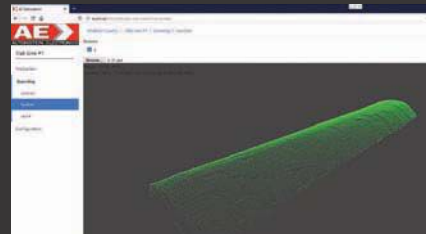
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NATIONAL CONFERENCE & EXPO SET FOR AUSTIN

As announced last month, HMA's National Conference and Expo 2021 is a GO! All roads lead to the Hyatt Regency Austin, March 24-26. And all industry stakeholders are welcome to attend this hybrid event of live and virtual presentations, safe, socially distanced networking events, and a long-awaited Expo comprised of the industry's best suppliers!

We all are coming off an extraordinary year. But, if the Hardwood industry is anything, it is tough! It is resilient! And it is comprised of amazing people who year after year demonstrate the awesome ability "to recover quickly from difficulties." And so, I feel that our Conference theme, "Resilience," couldn't be more apropos. Resilience – such a wonderful word!



As you might expect, COVID safety protocols are somewhat modifying the event. But with the expert guidance of the Hyatt Regency staff, coupled with the spaciousness of the Austin property, I am quite confident that Conference attendees can safely participate.

On the Dais ...

ITR Economics™, no stranger to HMA events, will be with us in Austin. After such a challenging year, we felt it important to once again call upon their expertise to provide insight, analysis, and strategy. So in March, plan on hearing from ITR economist, Connor Lokar.

- In his presentation entitled, "Moving Forward," he'll be exploring all the economic changes that have occurred, and what they mean to our future.

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BY LINDA JOVANOVICH,
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DISCOVERED: **AHEC TEAMS UP WITH WALLPAPER MAGAZINE TO CREATE OUR FIRST-EVER GLOBAL DESIGN PROJECT**

Building on the success of 2020's "CONNECTED" project that featured some of Europe's most well-known and established designers, this year's focus will be on young, up and coming talent from across the globe. AHEC has teamed up with *Wallpaper* magazine to develop *Discovered*, a platform to promote and support design's next generation while educating them about the benefits of working with U.S. Hardwoods.

A total of 20 global designers from 16 different countries have been invited to create a new piece inspired by life in a pandemic world, using a choice of American Cherry, Red Oak, Hard and Soft Maple. Their designs will be produced by four manufacturing hubs in Portugal, UK, Malaysia and Australia. The collection of final designs will be shown through a variety of virtual platforms around the world and physically at the London Design Mu-



seum next June.

This project is an exciting development as it is AHEC's first-ever global initiative, involving AHEC offices in different parts of the world, working together to promote these underused timbers. *Wallpaper* magazine is one of the most important international media platforms for lifestyle and design and is read all over the world, which will help amplify the messaging. The teams have been working intensively over the past two months to kick off the project, together with the four appointed mentors (experienced product designers) who can share their knowledge and expertise with the emerging designers. Joined by the manufacturers taking part, AHEC has already delivered four online technical material workshops in which designers had a chance to learn about the U.S. Hardwood resource and hear from the manufacturers and mentors about their expe-

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BY MICHAEL SNOW,
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Engineered wood floors look similar to solid wood floors when in-use. Their construction, however, differs because they are manufactured using multiple layers instead of one. These layers include the top wear layer, the middle core layer, and the bottom backing layer.

The wear layer is made using a high-quality veneer produced from real wood. The core layer is made using multiple layers of wood veneers or composites. The number of layers in the core varies by manufacturer and by product. The backing layer also is made using a wood veneer or composite, but typically is a single layer. The wear layer is what determines the species of the product.

The layers are bonded together using adhesives. The grain of each layer is placed perpendicular to the layer above and/or below it, which makes engineered wood more dimensionally stable than solid wood.

Because of its multiple-layer structure, the milling process for engineered wood floors is different than for solid wood floors. It involves numerous steps that can vary significantly among manufacturers.

Veneers can be made three ways: sawn, sliced, or rotary peeled.

Sawn veneers are made using raw lumber. The cut is made by sawing straight through the lumber in much the same way as solid wood flooring. For this reason, sawn veneers have many of the same

characteristics as solid wood, but the material produced is much thinner.

Sliced and rotary peeled veneers are made using raw logs. For these cuts, the logs must remain wet until they are ready to be used. Keeping the logs wet is important for the cutting process.

When the logs are ready to be used, the bark must be removed. Once this is accomplished, the logs are placed into a steam bath or pool of water. This process helps to soften the wood fibers, which makes them more flexible and easier to cut into veneers.

There is a different milling process for sliced and rotary peeled veneers, which affects the construction and performance of the veneer.

Sliced wood veneers are made by sawing the log into cants or flitches. The cant or flitch is drawn across an angled blade to produce veneers. Sliced veneers are similar in appearance to sawn veneers. For this reason, sliced veneers

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BY BRETT MILLER,
VICE PRESIDENT OF TECHNICAL
STANDARDS, TRAINING & CERTIFICATION,
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HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM NHLA!

2021 is finally here and the NHLA Management team and staff are already hard at work executing the Operational Plans we developed last fall. So, there is no better time to update everyone on what's "New in the New Year" at NHLA.

I am pleased to report that members are showing interest in sending students to our newly introduced 8-week Inspector Training School class and are busy booking their exhibit space for our next IN PERSON convention in Palm Beach in October. Inspection work is also gradually increasing, and membership retention is higher than previous years. Most importantly, the industry seems to be entering into recovery mode.

We are also focused on expanding our educational value portfolio to supplement the operational focus of the programs introduced in 2020. First on the agenda will be new ed sessions focused on business management issues, including sales. And of course, our in-house NHLA Short Courses taught by our highly skilled National Inspectors will continue. Expect new surveys from NHLA to ensure we are developing customized educational solutions tailored to your business needs.

Success or failure in our industry often depends on how



well sawmill operations are managed. In 2019 NHLA introduced its Yield Analysis/Quality Control programs to help members identify the operational issues that can cost sawmills well over \$400,000 annually. NHLA recently introduced a new pricing model for

the program to reflect the size of each mill reviewed.

What I have provided in this article is just a small sampling of the activity taking place at NHLA designed to help our members prosper. I am blessed to work with a management team with the skills and commitment to do just that.

John Hester, who is the Director of Member and Business Development, is another NHLA veteran. He is responsible for providing our members the opportunity to increase their visibility with existing and potential customers at our Convention and other events. He is the man to contact if you are interested in advertising and sponsorships as well. Equally important is his work with our National Inspectors to recruit new members. He can be contacted at j.hester@nhla.com.

As Director of NHLA's Marketing Communications Team, Renee Hornsby is responsible for developing and implementing all of NHLA's communications strategies. She also manages all facets of the NHLA Convention experience for our members. Renee's work is always evolving, making her

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BY LORNA D. CHRISTIE,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL HARDWOOD
LUMBER ASSOC.,
MEMPHIS, TN
901-377-1818
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Quality Craftsmanship, Family and Value Continue at OakBridge Timber Framing Ltd.

By Michelle Keller

Established in 1986 by Johnny Miller and Levi Hochstetler, the company is composed of three generations of an Amish family.

Loudonville, OH — OakBridge Timber Framing Ltd., based here, pre-cuts and installs timber frame homes. The company purchases 125,000 board feet annually of Hardwoods and 70,000 in softwoods.

In the past 10 years, the company has experienced growth both in employees and production. “My sons have also become partners and are active in the family business,” explained Owner and CEO Johnny Miller. “In 2010 there were only a handful of us. Today, we have nearly tripled the amount of wood we use and a lot has changed since then.”

He continued, “In 2014 we felt like we were at a crossroads. We wanted to move on up the mountain of excellence of service, client experience, quality of product and internal client (employee) experience. So we launched ‘Pinnacle 2014’. We got our suppliers and our associate companies together for a conference to thank everyone for helping us get this far up the mountain. We invited everyone to continue with us, or they had the option to stay at the comfortable heights they were in that would be their decision. The end result was that some decided to drop out and others

joined the exciting climb! It has been a fun and strenuous climb.”

Established in 1986 by Johnny Miller and Levi Hochstetler, the company is composed of three generations of an Amish family.

Miller and Hochstetler began OakBridge Timber Framing from their experience raising barns in their youth. “Timber framing has always been part of our culture,” Miller said. “My father built mortise and tenon structures with his father.”

OakBridge Timber Framing’s custom timber frame homes are constructed from White Oak and Douglas fir. Throughout history Amish and Mennonite people have been recognized for their hard work, attention to detail and true commitment to the craft of constructing barns and other buildings. Much like their Amish ancestors, the skilled craftsmen at OakBridge take pride in their work as they craft each timber with hand tools. Utilizing a traditional draw bore technique with 1-inch pegs, the joiners achieve exact cuts and precision in the joinery of timbers. “We use a draw bore technique,

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“Our mission is
to build dreams
that bring families
together and
enrich lives.”

–Johnny Miller, Owner/CEO,
OakBridge Timber Framing Ltd.



The Millers, who own OakBridge Timber Framing, prefer to use Red and White Oak Hardwood lumber and Douglas fir softwood lumber.



Committed to the environment, OakBridge Timber frame homes are constructed from the highest quality timbers.



At Netterville, the new primary breakdown headrig by Cleereman Industries is pictured.

FRED NETTERVILLE LUMBER CO.: Upholding 70-Year Legacy of Quality Lumber Production

By Paul Miller Jr.

Woodville, MS—Located here in this quaint town of fewer than 2,000 residents and situated due north of the Louisiana-Mississippi border in a state whose most southern boundary empties into the Gulf of Mexico is 70-year-old Fred Netterville Lumber Co. Today, Matthew Netterville, operations manager, and Seth Netterville, represent the fourth generation in the family to build upon the legacy of quality products and successful business acumen set forth by their father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

“We honor our roots as a business,” Matthew explained. “We find ourselves constantly coming back to those roots. We try to be really good at what we know we are good at, and what we are known for.”

What Fred Netterville Lumber Co. is known for is high quality 4/4 through 8/4 grade lumber, industrial lumber and ties, in Southern Hardwoods, with 90 percent of its lumber production in the Oaks, Ash, Poplar and Cypress. The company utilizes its sister company, C&J Timber, to cut and log trees from its own timber tracts, where roots run

“THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR WE’VE BEEN EMPHASIZING IS EFFICIENCY. AS I ALWAYS TELL EVERYBODY IN THIS METAPHOR; WE HAVE THE TOOLS IN THE TOOLBOX. LET’S USE THEM, AND WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THIS INDUSTRY, AS EFFICIENTLY AS WE CAN. IT’S A GLOBAL ECONOMY AND A GLOBAL MARKETPLACE. ANY COMPETITIVE EDGE WE CAN OFFER, SUCH AS THE HIGHEST QUALITY SOUTHERN HARDWOODS GIVES US AN ADVANTAGE. IT’S A STANDARD TO UPHOLD.”

—MATTHEW NETTERVILLE,
OPERATIONS MANAGER,
FRED NETTERVILLE LUMBER CO.



Matthew Netterville, Seth Netterville, Charlie Netterville and Scott Wesberry are proud to represent 70-year-old Fred Netterville Lumber Co., located in Woodville, MS.

deep within the rich, fertile loess soil of the Mississippi Delta. Also, American Timber, owned by Seth Netterville, is responsible for procurement of timber for Fred Netterville.

Matthew knows the timber well, having grown up here in the lumber industry. "This timber has a very good color. It's comparable to Appalachian color with wider widths and lengths of lumber. The loess soil here, I think, contributes to the quality and color of what we mill. Due to better timber management, we are seeing bigger and more quality timber. Over the years, the soil from the West has blown to the East and has built up on the banks of the Mississippi River. We have benefited through generations from this rich soil in the timber we harvest."

In fact, Fred Netterville Lumber Co. produces approximately 15 million board feet of lumber annually and maintains approximately 4 million board feet of inventory at any given time. The company purchases green lumber within a 250-300-mile radius.

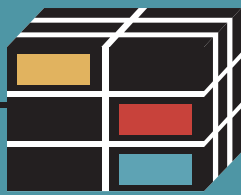
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This is Fred Netterville Lumber's new American Built Machinery timber processing line.

2021

TRANSPORTATION SURVEY



Editor's note: Sources in the transportation industry who handle various aspects of shipping North American wood products around the world shared their insights into how business went in 2020 and what we can expect in 2021.

CURTIS STRUYK
TMX SHIPPING CO. INC.
MOREHEAD CITY, NC

In the first half of 2020, we experienced blank sailings and canceled bookings which lasted longer than expected. The result of the blank sailings was less capacity which made it harder to secure vessel space. This caused three times the work to get the same result. We had to make a lot of advanced bookings to handle our customers' demand only to see these canceled by the ocean carrier the week before the vessel was to sail. By the end of the 3rd quarter, U.S. imports were at a record high, which reduced export ocean freight rates in an effort to reposition equipment for higher paying freight coming back to North America. While reduced rates are attractive, the increase in import demand has caused a bottleneck at some major ports, and equipment is proving difficult to find. We are hopeful the equipment issue is remedied once import demand levels off in February of 2021.

Rates remained at historic lows during most of the 4th quarter, but we do not expect this to continue into 2021. Almost all ocean carriers have announced 1st quarter rate increases in the range of \$200 to \$300 per container, and we expect to see this continue through the 1st quarter.

Overall, we saw a 10 percent increase in export ship-

ments in 2020 as compared to 2019. Much of this can be attributed to a rise in softwood and Hardwood log exports as lumber shipments were still down around 9 percent in 2020.

We are still seeing a high demand for exports; however, it is a challenge to find space and equipment, making it increasingly difficult to meet the current demand.

It will be interesting to see what effect the new administration and COVID-19 vaccine have on the U.S. economy in the coming months. Many are predicting a slow start to 2021 but are optimistic that the economy will rebound in the second half of the year. ➤



Curtis Struyk



LLOYD LOVETT
KING CITY/NORTHWAY FORWARDING LTD.
MONTREAL, QC

I really don't like being the bearer of bad news, but 2020 came to a close with freight rates bouncing off all four walls, vessels being delayed, bookings getting rolled, port congestion, equipment shortage, COVID-19, container rates with 15-day expiration and, last but not least, the lack of service with some Vessel Ocean Carriers (VOC's). As your newly elected President would say, "C'mon man, what the heck's going on?"

I'll do my best to explain the current situation.

King City is in communication, on a daily basis, with practically all the VOC's, so when we started to have some serious issues (as mentioned above), I picked up the phone and started contacting the vice presidents to get their opinions on some of this chaos that we're dealing with on a daily basis.

The consensus was that the vessel capacity and container demand was estimated to increase on average 3.5 percent for 2020. The actual first three quarters of 2020 saw an average increase of 6 percent, which started to put a little pressure on the shipping industry. In the latter stages of the 4th quarter, both container demand and vessel capacity increased up to 20 percent. This was due to the substantial increase in volume of manufactured goods being shipped from China to North America.

The VOC's main objective was to have the container back to China where the demand is through the roof, along with the cost. For example, from Shanghai to Los Angeles, rates have been as high as \$8,000/40'. In the first three quarters of 2020, that same container move would have been less than half that amount. Rumor has it that some companies are paying up to \$1,000/40' to have the box shipped empty from a USA port to Shanghai, just to secure a container for

the Chinese exporter. I'm really hoping this is only a rumor, because this mindset will have serious consequences for our industry.

The other bone of contention that came up in a few of my conversations was the free time, which, in some cases, is as high as 28 days with the average being 21 days. Ten years ago, from New York to Shanghai, the ocean freight was approximately \$1,200/40' and the free time was seven days compared to the first three quarters of 2020, where the price was \$250/40' and free time was 21 days.

One would assume that the Coronavirus would have had a negative impact on imports from China. To the contrary, the last several months, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the demand for home renovations has exceeded all expectations. We all knew that the "To Do List" was going to come out sooner or later (mine was really soon). For many, it was landscaping, painting, renovations or replacing furniture (in/outdoors).

What lies ahead in 2021? The first quarter will mirror the last quarter of 2020. Logic would say that China was behind on their exports in the first two quarters of 2020 because of COVID-19. They made up for it in the last two quarters of 2020, which disrupted the already fragile container and



Lloyd Lovett



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Smaller Crowd, but Festive Spirits at West Side's Holiday Luncheon

Rodger Patterson, Patterson Hardwoods Inc., Des Arc, AR; Dan Sills, Hugg and Hall Equipment Co., Little Rock, AR; Barry Baker, Hugg and Hall Equipment Co., El Dorado, AR; and Steve Bryant, Patterson Hardwoods Inc.

By Zach Miller

Hot Springs, AR—The annual West Side Hardwood Club Christmas Luncheon was held here recently at the exclusive Hot Springs Country Club and sponsored by Hugg and Hall Equipment Company.

The event has consistently drawn roughly 25 members and their spouses each year that participate in a gift swap, happy hour, and lunch. In a sign of the times in 2020, this event's attendance was down to 10 members and although members were in good spirits and optimistic about the coming year, the lack of presence was felt.

The association wished our readers a very Merry Christmas and good fortune to all in 2021! ●



Lynn and Jeff Wilson, Wilson Brothers Lumber Co. Inc., Rison, AR



Keith Price, Corley Manufacturing Co., Chattanooga, TN; and Zach Miller, National Hardwood Magazine, Memphis, TN



Jeff Wilson, Wilson Brothers Lumber Co. Inc., Rison, AR; and David Engelkes, Maxwell Hardwood Flooring Inc., Monticello, AR



David Brazeale, Brazeale Lumber Co., Sparkman, AR; and Keith Price, Corley Manufacturing Co., Chattanooga, TN



HMA Connects Members Via “Live” Virtual Events

Pittsburgh, PA—Regional Meetings have long been a favorite with members of the Hardwood Manufacturers Association, headquartered here. That's because, by touring sawmills, concentration yards and secondary manufacturing facilities, they get to see the latest technology at work; witness working solutions to common problems; exchange information with seasoned counterparts; then participate in discussions on industry issues, forest resource topics, or Hardwood market updates.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has limited such

face-to-face gatherings. And so HMA did the next best thing. They used technology and connected their membership virtually by taking a video crew, complete with a drone, to two HMA member facilities in Northwestern Pennsylvania; documenting the operations; interviewing key personnel; then making that valuable information available to members' desktops and/or mobile devices.

Recently, nearly 60 industry stakeholders got online and made a “virtual” visit to Northwestern Pennsylvania for a tour of Ron Jones Hardwood Sales Inc., Franklin, PA. The tour was narrated



President and Director of Sales, Steve Jones, Ron Jones Hardwood Sales Inc., Franklin, PA, provided live narration of a virtual tour for 60 stakeholders during the recent HMA Regional Meeting.



U-C Coatings was a sponsor of the Ron Jones Hardwood Sales tour, where a staff member demonstrated proper end wax application.



Brian Haskins, kiln operator, took virtual HMA attendees on a tour of the dry kilns at Ron Jones Hardwood Sales. SII Dry Kilns was a sponsor of this tour.

“live” by President and Director of Sales, Steve Jones, who took all attendees through the entire family-owned operation, beginning at the sales office located in Union City, then to the warehouse and dry kiln facilities in Franklin. Industrial

Vision Systems, Inc., SII Dry Kilns and U-C Coatings were sponsors of the virtual event.

On the next day, from the comfort of their offices, over 50 viewers participated in a virtual tour of Matson Lumber

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Much like their Amish ancestors, the skilled craftsmen at OakBridge take pride in their work as they craft each timber with hand tools.

OAKBRIDGE TIMBER FRAMING *Continued from page 18*

which makes for much tighter joints,” Miller explained. “We plane and finish our frames using a lot of techniques to keep our joints as tight as possible.”

The global COVID-19 pandemic has brought about changes. Miller said, “As for frame raisings, we didn’t do very much in the early months of the pandemic. But being classed as essential, and with a good amount of projects booked, we were able to keep pre-cutting and stacking. By the later months our woodshop storage was bulging.”

As for ways the business changed operations he noted, “On the main day of our frame raisings we have a traditional cooked frame raising feast. So this summer, the ladies delivering the food would dish out the food instead of the self-serve. Also we usually invite past and potential clients to the frame raising, but mostly we just had the client and their friends this summer. We feel very blessed to have been able to keep going strong.”

When asked to what he attributes the continued success of OakBridge Timber Framing Ltd., he said, “We have a great team that takes our clients through a well-defined process. We believe the less surprises, overall the better the

experience for the consumer. When it comes to the backbone of our company, I would quickly point to my father that has been with us from the get-go in 1986. He is now 82 and still comes to the woodshop everyday. His mentoring of his grandchildren (third generation) has been invaluable. He loves working with wood and has brought a lot to the table.”

Miller continued, “Also, we believe the values of family, faith and work ethic play a big role in our success. Work was a big part way back in the creation. So, working and accomplishing are divine and that is where part of where our human fulfillment comes from that gives us a sense of purpose.”

The Millers prefer to use Red and White Oak Hardwood lumber and Douglas fir softwood lumber. “Oak has a nice grain pattern and beautiful character. White Oak is rot-resistant,” Miller commented. “We live in the heart of some of the best Oak in the country. Douglas fir also is a strong wood; it’s softer and lighter.”

Miller and his team of 14 employees build an average of 30-plus projects per year. “Our projects are beautiful homes, banks, wedding venues, wineries, outdoor spaces

and museums,” he said. He added that he appreciates the size of his company as it is today, to ensure exceptional quality craftsmanship. “I have been to many old fashioned barn raisings where the frame is raised, enclosed and even the stalls are built in one day by a crowd of several hundred people. But those framers used rough sawn and unfinished timbers and the joints didn’t fit very tight. Our plan is to grow in size slowly, but focus primarily on growing in quality and service.”

A family owned

and operated company, key employees include Johnny Miller’s father, four sons and a daughter, two brothers, three nephews, and a few cousins and friends.



With timber frames now in 27 states, Johnny Miller is still in contact with many of his previous customers. “Our mission is to build dreams that bring families together and enrich lives” he said, referring to the company’s mission statement, which is complimented by the company motto, “Where quality is

Please turn the page

OakBridge Timber Framing Ltd., based in Loudonville, OH, pre-cuts and installs timber frame homes. The company purchases 125,000 board feet annually of Hardwoods and 70,000 in softwoods.



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OAKBRIDGE TIMBER FRAMING

Continued

first, quality lasts.”

Committed to the environment, OakBridge Timber frame homes are constructed from the highest quality timbers. The entire building process is energy efficient and non-toxic to the environment. And in keeping with their Amish culture, the OakBridge facility is run by manpower, pneumatic and solar power.

OakBridge Timber Framing Ltd. is a member of the Timber Framers Guild, Timber Frame Business Council, the Building Industry Assoc. of North Central Ohio, and the Better Business Bureau (BBB).

OakBridge's homes are custom designed for each customer, either from an original design, or starting from a wishlist. ■

To learn more visit them
at
www.oakbridgetimberframing.com.

FRED NETTERVILLE LUMBER

Continued from page 21

Driving Fred Netterville Lumber's lengthy success has been the shared foresight by its leaders to understand when to invest back into the company to spur growth overall. For example, the firm today has 1 million board feet of dry kiln capacity thanks to expansion. In its infancy, the company offered nothing but green lumber until 1978 when it installed a dry kiln with a 150,000-board foot capacity.

Matthew stated, “We realized we needed to expand. From that aspect, we now have three different grading lines here. We have one on which two inspectors grade the majority of our grade lumber, which we can also reman. We built a planer into that system. Then last year, we added another grading line with one inspector, and that line has a Newman 382 planer. That brings our total number of planers to four onsite, including a Newman 282, in addition to the 382, a Yates American B-26 and a Yates American A-20.”

Matthew explained further that Fred Netterville Lumber has two separate gang rip saw lines, “so if we have customers who want specific blanks ripped for furniture or molding parts, we can accommodate that. Our customers receive 100 percent use of the material they order from us when



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- Have 800,000 board feet per charge of dry kiln capacity counting our new predryer/dry kiln and five dry kilns. We also have two fan sheds totaling 500 MBF capacity.
- Have dedicated employees with many years of experience who are getting your orders prepared to your exact specifications.
- Inspect our lumber after kiln drying.
- Offer many services like export prep, mixed truckloads, container loading, dipping our lumber in ISK Biocides' chemicals, S2S, SLR1E, and width sorting.
- Process and sell 18 to 20 million board feet a year of the lumber species we deal in.
- New in 2020—we will be able to surface, straight line rip and rip to width for our customers!



we send it to them, especially if we can go ahead and gang rip it. We do a good bit of that. For example, we have a molding and millwork department in which we make specialized products.

"Our strategy behind doing this is that as trucking has become harder to access through the years, which contributes to elevated freight expense for everyone, the more efficient we can be in giving the product to the customers, then the better it is for them and for us."

Netterville is running a new Cleereman sawmill capable of cutting 8-foot to 30-foot material. The complete installation from Cleereman included the following: a heavy duty log deck, a linear 4-head-block carriage, linear carriage controls, heavy duty log turner, heavy duty modular track frame, 200 horsepower hydrostatic carriage drive, cable tensioner, a sawyer



A load of lumber is ready to roll and be delivered from one of Fred Netterville Lumber's company-owned trucks.

booth, a sub-steel package, pull-back roll case with cant pins, a husk with top saw and Cleereman Controls-motor/starter dispatch.

This facility includes a West Plains resaw and a timber merchandising

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FRED NETTERVILLE LUMBER

Continued

timber sorter capable of 2-foot to 30-foot. “We cut a lot of cross-ties,” Matthew said. “In this mill we have a lot of versatility, which helps production.”

Fred Netterville Lumber’s drying facility is defined by Matthew as “our concentration yard. We buy all green lumber in all species and we specialize in buying White Oak in No. 1 and Better, 4/4 through 8/4, 10 feet or longer. All of this goes to our air-dry yard for 30-45 days. We have about 4 million board feet of dry storage space. After air-drying, we start putting the lumber in our kilns. We sell our No. 2 and lower grades green.”

Matthew estimates that 50 percent of the company’s production is sold green and 50 percent is sold kiln-dried.

Fred Netterville Lumber’s close proximity to major waterways – just 20 miles away from the Mighty Mississippi River, 220 miles from the Port of Mobile (AL) and 120 miles from New Orleans – lends itself to ease of access for export prep. “We sell a significant amount of grade lumber overseas into the Asian and European market,” commented Matthew. “We market our international exports through Hardwoods of America.”

The ability to export lumber was unheard of back in 1915 when Fred Netterville’s father introduced his family to the lumber industry. This occurred after a man came to his farm in Woodville with a portable sawmill to cut lumber for tenant houses. The senior Netterville’s neighbors asked if he would saw some lumber for them, and so began the business. He used a peckerwood sawmill to cut primarily pine until 1945, when he began sawing Hardwoods. He managed to produce between 3,000 and 5,000 board feet daily.

In 1953, Fred Netterville formally established the company that today bears his name. This occurred after he graduated from the University of Mississippi in Oxford and returned home to find his father ill and ready to leave the sawmill business. The senior Netterville offered to partner with his son until 1956. However, Fred bought his father’s share and carried the business forward. At that time, he operated an old diesel engine to power the sawmill. Years later, he switched to electricity. An old straddle car and a fork lift comprised the early equipment that moved Netterville’s lumber.

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In 1956, Fred decided to expand the company. He built a circle mill, which years later burned down. He built another mill, which 10 months later also burned down. Determined to keep his operation afloat, Fred constructed a third mill, which is still operating at the Woodville site today. Fred's son Charlie joined the Netterville team in 1980 and the father-son duo steered the company's success until 2000,

when Fred was fatally injured in a horseback riding accident. Charlie then assumed the reins of the company as president, and today his sons Matthew and Seth represent the fourth generation of leaders at Netterville.

While the industry has changed and machinery has become more sophisticated, the stewards of Fred Netterville

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FRED NETTERVILLE LUMBER

Continued from page 33

Lumber Co. have remained true to the founding father's original mission of paying attention to details in order to grow and succeed.

Matthew echoes that sentiment. "The most important factor we've been emphasizing is efficiency. As I always tell everybody in this metaphor; we have the tools in the toolbox. Let's use them, and what we know about this industry, as efficiently as we can. It's a global economy and a global marketplace. Any competitive edge we can offer, such as the highest quality Southern Hardwoods gives us an advantage. It's a standard to uphold."

Fred Netterville Lumber Co. is a member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association, the Hardwood Manufacturers Association, and the Railway Tie Association. Charlie and Matthew served on the board of directors and Charlie is a past president of the Hardwood Manufacturers Association. Matthew is currently serving on the Board of Directors of the Railway Tie Association. ■

More information about
Fred Netterville Lumber Co.
is available at www.nettervillelumber.com.

2021

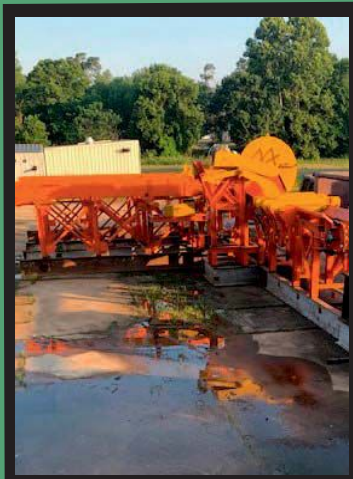
TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

Continued from page 23

vessel capacity. Coincidentally, this was the peak time for North American goods to be exported to China prior to the Chinese Lunar Year. Rates are going to increase while free time at destination will definitely decrease. On December 1, most VOC's gave us rates valid until December 15, subject to General Rate Increase (GRI) as opposed to the usual 30-day validity.

In the past, these GRI's would average \$50 to \$100, but currently, we foresee figures of \$300 to \$500. My humble advice to shippers would be to quote your clients a price for the lumber/logs Freight on Board (FOB) mill, subject to ocean freight at time of shipment. As much as it pains me to say it, VOC's have the big bat, ball and glove. Like one vice president made very clear to me, don't book 50 containers and use 25 because you'll be considered an unreliable partner. I could translate that into my language, but I don't think Paul or Terry Miller would be able to print it.

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In closing, I wish to thank all my American and Canadian friends and companies that have supported King City throughout the years. I wish you all the best in health, happiness and prosperity for 2021.

My yearly quote is from Gary Keller: "Life is a question and how we live it is our answer." ➤

STEPHEN ZAMBO
ALLY GLOBAL LOGISTICS
NORWELL, MA

The last two years have been anything but normal, 2020 especially so. As soon as industries figured out how to navigate tariffs and trade disputes, we were hit with a global pandemic. It's a pandemic that we continue to fight. This

is important for many reasons. In regard to the transportation industry, this is important because it is the beginning of the supply chain "breaking." For years shippers have enjoyed low rates, relatively open vessels, container and chassis availability and a general lack of "challenges."

Over the last four months, all of that has been flipped on its head. At the beginning of the pandemic steamship lines removed capacity from the market by instituting blank sailings. This is when a



Stephen Zambo



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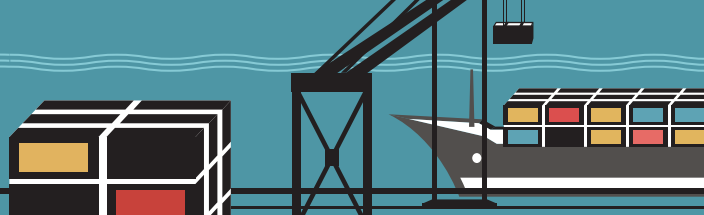
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steamship line will remove a vessel from its rotation, thus trying to balance supply and demand. Little did the carriers know that the soft market we endured for the first five months of 2020 would begin to change mid- to late-summer and would take off like a rocket. That rocket ship has yet to come back to earth. It created many issues that we started to experience in December. Ally has contracts in place with every major steamship line, so we can always move cargo. It is a matter of the cost a shipper is willing to absorb.

Steamship lines make the majority of their money through their imports. Lumber and other heavy commodities are essentially used to reposition containers to Asia for steamship lines. For instance, a move from Shanghai to New York is 10 times the cost of a move from New York to Shanghai. Steamship lines have been moving empty containers over-

seas to capitalize on the increased import demand. They would rather move 10 empty containers weighing a total of 77,000 pounds with no revenue than one or two lumber containers weighing 60,000 pounds with little revenue. The quicker they can turn containers, the quicker they make money. It's similar to a lumber operation. The quicker you can turn your kilns, the quicker you can make money.

Due to an excessive number of empties being exported, we've seen pressure on export rates, and in some areas container availability. The coastal ports have not endured these challenges as much as inland rails have, such as Columbus, Kansas City, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Nashville, Greer, Greensboro, etc. When equipment imbalances come into play, shippers are forced to absorb higher costs in order to move their product, thus pushing the freight rate market upward.



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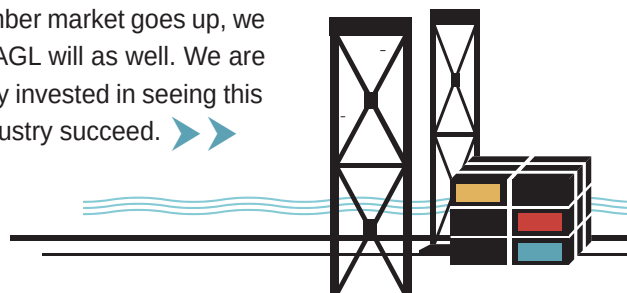
While we've endured space, rate and chassis related issues, one of the largest problems freight forwarders isolate shippers from is the steamship lines' customer service. Carriers have been investing in technology which should be beneficial. However, we have seen them scale back their investment in people. Logistics is a complicated business that requires human interaction. We have had many challenges with steamship lines due to their lack of proper staffing and lack of knowledgeable staff.

We've run into a boatload of problems with our vendors that can negatively affect our clients. While we do what we can to shield our customers from steamship line related issues, it is not always possible. Over the last 30 years, I have never seen such poor service from our vendors.

While the shipping industry continues to endure its chal-

lenges, everything I hear and see points to a strong 2021 for the lumber industry as long as production can meet demand.

At Ally we've continued to focus on the export lumber market and have recently opened up a domestic transportation arm to handle domestic truckloads, flatbeds, and smaller shipments by the bundle(s). Given how the last few years have gone, I have faith that the lumber market will continue to improve. If the lumber market goes up, we at AGL will as well. We are fully invested in seeing this industry succeed. >>



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4

LOG YARDS

2

SAWMILLS

HMA VIRTUAL EVENTS *Continued from page 27*

Company, located in Brookville, PA, a family owned and operated company that has been in the timber and lumber business for more than 200 years and employs over 200 people. Narrated "live" by President Burt Craig, tour partici-



VisionTally by Industrial Vision Systems was a sponsor of the Ron Jones Hardwood Sales recent HMA virtual tour. Pictured is a Ron Jones employee capturing tallies on a load of lumber.



Narrated "live" by Matson Lumber Co. President Burt Craig tour participants viewed the entire sawmill operations - from log yard to debarker, through the mill and eventually to trucks heading for the interstate.

participants viewed the entire sawmill operations - from log yard to debarker, through the mill and eventually in trucks heading for the interstate. U-C Coatings sponsored the virtual tour.

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TS Manufacturing, gave participants ample time to exchange information and catch up.

Coming up on HMA's 2021 agenda is the National Conference and Expo. The hybrid event is being formulated for March 24–26, at the Hyatt Regency, Austin, TX. ■

Located in Brookville, PA, Matson Lumber is a family owned and operated company that has been in the timber and lumber business for more than 200 years and employs over 200 people. U-C Coatings sponsored this virtual tour during the HMA Regional Meeting.

Learn more at www.hmamembers.org.



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In Memoriam

Dana G. Fitzpatrick



Dana G. Fitzpatrick

Dana G. Fitzpatrick, 90, of Ellicottville, NY, passed away recently at Olean General Hospital. He was born on March 24, 1930, in Salamanca, son of the late William F. and Loretto (Kelly) Fitzpatrick.

He graduated from Ellicottville Central School in 1948 where he was Senior Class President and quarterback of the undefeated 1948 ECS football team. He went on to earn his bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Notre Dame and graduated in 1952. Following college, Fitzpatrick was commissioned as an Officer in the Navy and was stationed in Newport, RI from 1952-1954. On December 28, 1955, he married the former Bernice Siebart, who survives.

He served as President, CEO, and Chairman of the Board of Fitzpatrick & Weller, Inc. capping a 66-year career by leading the company to celebrate its 125th year in 2020. Fitzpatrick was a former director of the following organizations: National Hardwood Lumber Association, Hardwood Manufacturers Association, and the American Forest and Paper Association. He served as Chairman of the American Hardwood Export Council and the National Forest Products Association. He was also past Director of the World Trade Center Buffalo-

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Niagara Chapter and the Cattaraugus County Bank, as well as a member of the Holiday Valley Board of Directors for 40 years.

Fitzpatrick was an active member of the Ellicottville community. He was an Ellicottville Central School board member for 20 years, a director of the Ellicottville Chamber of Commerce and the Elkdale Country Club as well as a 70-year member of the Ellicottville Ski Club. He was a member of the Holy Name of Mary RC Church. He loved Holiday Valley where he enjoyed skiing and golfing. He was also a huge Notre Dame sports fan. He especially loved his family, of whom he was very proud.

In addition to his loving wife of 65 years, he is survived by two sons: Daniel (Nancy) Fitzpatrick of Ellicottville, and Gregory (Ann Marie) Fitzpatrick of Ellicottville, as well as three daughters: Marcia (Jim Zaepfel) Fitzpatrick of Williamsville, Kerry (Michael) Allison of Mansfield, MA, and Dr. Sheila Fitzpatrick of Vail, CO.

Also surviving is a sister, Kathleen Widger of Great Valley, and ten grandchildren: Maggie, Stephen (Natalee), Charles, Brendan, Kailey, Annie Meghan, Connor, Melanie, Dana, and Christina, as well as two great grandchildren: Carter and Henry and several nieces and nephews.

Besides his parents, he was predeceased by an infant son, Steven Fitzpatrick, four brothers: Father Bede Fitzpatrick, Gerard "Jess" Fitzpatrick, Joseph Fitzpatrick, and William Fitzpatrick, as well as an infant twin, Daniel Fitzpatrick.

Private family services were held with a Celebration of Life.

Burial with military honors were held at Holy Cross Cemetery in Ellicottville.

Memorials may be made to the Ellicottville Memorial Library or the Lounsbury Adaptive Ski Program, C/O Holiday Valley Resort, PO Box 370, Ellicottville, NY 14731. ■

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Thomas Robert Imm

Wheelersburg, OH—Thomas Robert Imm, 54, of Wheelersburg passed away recently at The University of Kentucky Medical Center in Lexington, KY. Imm was born October 6, 1966 in New London, OH, the son of Nancy Maxwell Imm and the late Robert Ray Imm. Imm is preceded in death by his father and grandparents. In addition to his mother, Nancy, he is survived by his loving wife of 26 years, Keri (Johnson) Imm; the pride and joy of his life, daughter, Chloe Elizabeth Imm; a sister, Laura Imm; sisters-in-law/brothers-in-law, Becki (Neil) Darnell, Chris (Ronita) Johnson; mother and father-in-law, Sandy (Ronnie) Johnson; many nephews and nieces, Collin and Marley Hanzel, Elise Jackson, Dustin and Kaylee Darnell, Lindsey and Mason Johnson, Tracy and Mariah Murray and Austin Pettigrew.

Imm graduated from Portsmouth East High School in 1984 and earned a college degree in Political Science from Ohio University. He was employed as a lumber purchaser at Graf Custom Hardwood and had previously worked in lumber and flooring sales long-term at Taylor Lumber. Imm loved his wife and daughter immensely, enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, taking long Jeep rides and watching The Ohio State Buckeyes. He will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

In lieu of flowers for Imm, the family has asked that donations be made to SOMC front line workers at SOMC.org. Condolences to the family may be made at www.harrison-Pyles.com. ■

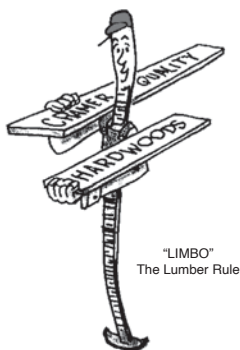
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LAKE STATES *Continued from page 6*

now, White Oak as well," he observed. "Hickory is good. Soft Maple is OK. Red Oak is pretty good. Walnut has gotten good. Cherry is still pretty so-so." Customers for this company are split evenly between end users and distribution. "Most of our customers indicate they're busy, with orders and work to do." Transportation, he stated, "has been a little tough. Rates have gone up some. Availability has been a little tough.

Also, getting enough logs and green lumber has been tough all around. We try to keep a month's worth of logs, and we've been sitting on two-weeks-worth or less-than-two-weeks-worth for a while." ■

NORTHEAST *Continued from page 6*

tank and some lumber mills closed down," he continued. "Now, the market needs lumber, and it will be very difficult to get it. I think the supply is going to remain tight for several months." Species sold include Red and White Oak, Hard and Soft Maple and Birch in No. 3 and Better and dry No. 1 and Better. "White Oak FAS is totally on fire," he stated. "I would say that specie, singularly, is the best. Hard Maple is OK. We sell Red Oak domestically and to China. Prices of Red Oak are working their way up. The lumber we produce has really good markets right now."

Customers include distribution yards, end users and wholesalers. "I think their business is going pretty well," he observed. "Their sales are up now from what we're seeing in the market. I think sales-wise, they're doing pretty well." Companies have worked their inventories down low, he noted, "and now they're trying to refill the pipeline and the lumber's not there. So, the scramble's on." Transportation isn't a problem, he commented, but "it's more expensive. Truck availability seems to be OK. However, the bulk of our customers do their own trucking."

In New York State, a lumber supplier stated that business is "good." Also, business is better than it was six months ago. Species he sells include Red and White Oak, Hard Maple and Cherry, with White Oak being the best seller. He sells to end users and distribution yards. His customers don't mention to him how the market is for their products. "We just go by whether they're buying or not." Transportation isn't problematic at this time, he observed. ■



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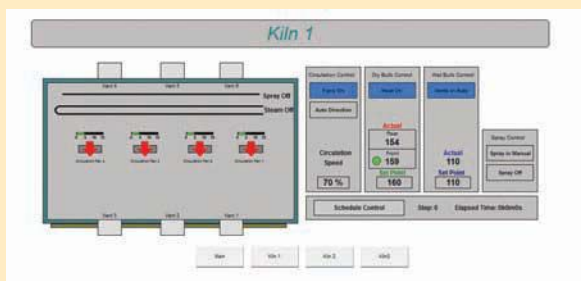
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SOUTHEAST

Continued from page 7

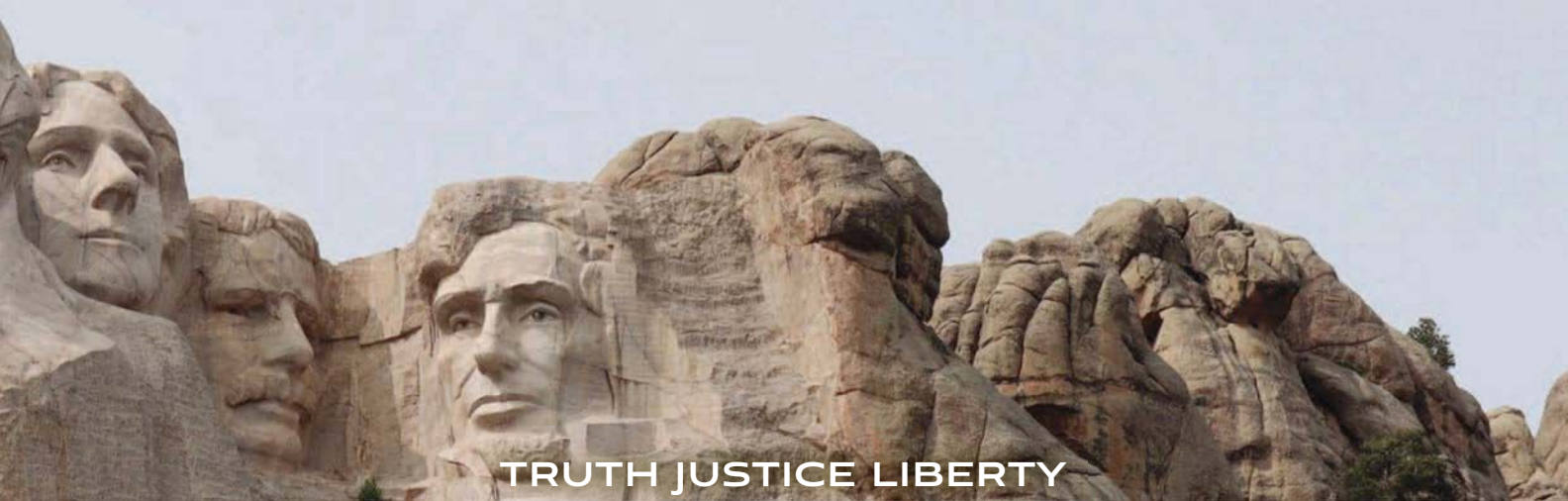
species," he remarked, "predominantly Poplar and White and Red Oak. Right now, they're all selling well. Of course, White Oak is the best pricing and then Red Oak. Pricing has come up to the point that you can make a little money on the Red Oak lumber. Poplar is moving very well; it's very strong. Prices are up some, but it's more of a commodity item. It's a volume item." This lumber provider sells to end users, distribution and concentration yards. "Their business seems to be going well," he stated. "It's probably a result of the strong, strong housing market. Staircase manufacturers, moulding and these types of businesses are as strong as garlic." Transportation isn't a problem for this firm. "Labor would be the biggest issue that we have," he observed. ■

WEST COAST

Continued from page 7

market is "about the same," he noted. "It's trending about the same month in and month out.

"We're a full-line distributor, so we have all of the domestic species and a whole lot of the import species as well. We stock about 40 species of lumber. It's quite extensive. Poplar, domestically, is far and away the best seller,



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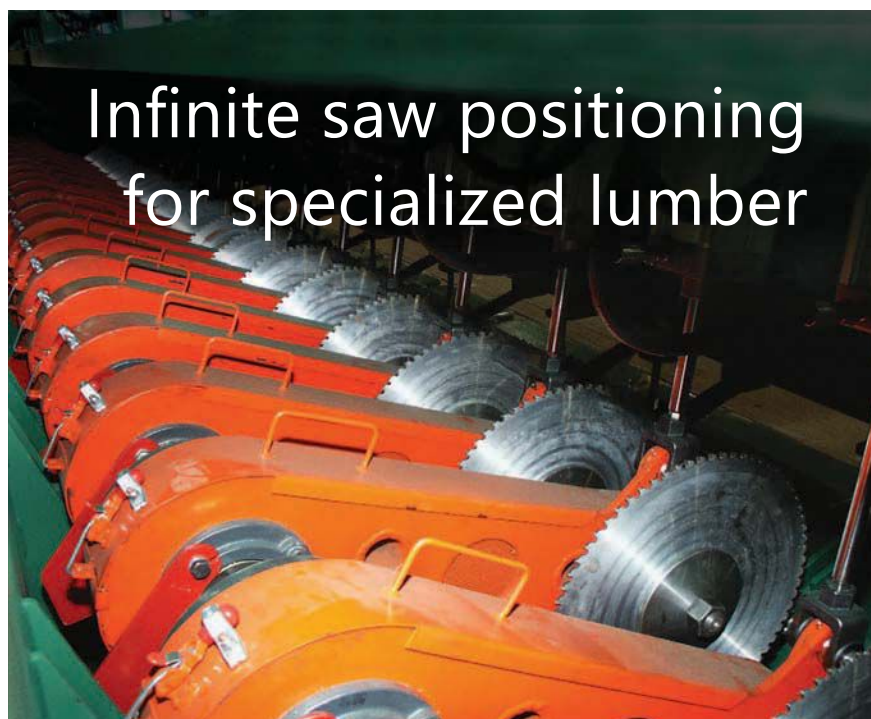
by a ratio of 3-1 or maybe 4-1 over the next closest domestic specie. On import, the best seller is Sapele."

The primary customer base is made up of cabinet manufacturers, store fixture manufacturers and furniture makers. Kitchen cabinet makers are busy. Store fixture companies' markets depend on what type of business they're selling into. If they've got a lot of big box businesses, they're busy. The restaurant trade is down a lot. Small, regional retail is doing OK."

In terms of challenges, "Availability of lumber is probably the biggest issue," he said. "We sell a lot of plywood as well, and we have issues on the panel side. In domestic Hardwood, the hottest species are some of the hardest things to get, White Oak specifically."

"Business has been good," remarked a California representative. However, "I would say business is still order-to-order. Customers don't order until they absolutely need the lumber. I think that's been a trend for the last year. Nobody wants to hang onto inventory. Then again, there's not that much inventory out there. That's what they don't quite realize. If you don't have inventory, you're not going to have a lot of orders." Compared to six months earlier, he estimated that the market is "about the same." He sells White Oak, Walnut and Hickory

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in FAS, No. 1 and No. 2, "all for flooring," he observed. Customers include end users, distributors and retailers. "They say they're steady," the supplier commented. "It's whoever has the inventory who has a chance of getting the order. That's how it is." Transportation isn't an issue, he said.

Another trend he has noticed is that, "People are willing to put money in their houses because of the pandemic. I'd say the remodel market is getting stronger because of that. That's definitely a trend. I see that being solid all through next year, too." ■

going on during the fall and early winter.

As sawmills have focused on other species or on limited log decks, Ash production has not met some buyers' needs, with prices noted as having increased slightly. Demand for this species on domestic and overseas markets has been steady, but the lower mill output are keeping inventories thin for some grades and thicknesses of kiln-dried Ash.

With the colder weather upon us, logging conditions improved. Demand for Birch is solid, caused by a strong domestic housing market in both Canada and the U.S.

Demand for green Birch is readily absorbing developing supplies. Some report that kiln-dried inventories remain low. Secondary manufacturers and wholesalers would like to ramp up their supplies.

Aspen supplies have started to improve in certain areas contacted. Green production increased over late November and December. Some noted there were spot shortages, which kept prices in a firm mode for this species. Kiln-dried inventories were reported as somewhat low relative to demand.

With the improved housing market and residential renovations, demand for Basswood increased for Hardwood finished goods. Demand is keeping pace with developing production resulting in increased prices for certain grades.

Heading into the holiday season, business has been usually disrupted during this time for Hardwood lumber. This has not been so as some lumber shortages kept activity at a high level for Hard Maple. Demand for developing green Hard Maple is reported as strong, with prices rising.

Demand for Soft Maple is also good with demand keeping pace with production. Some contacts commented that supplies were thin for several grades and thicknesses.

Demand for Red Oak across the border from secondary manufacturers and distributors is strong, although according to data, cross border trade is below last year's levels. Demand from

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overseas markets has increased. Kiln-dried inventories are reported to be low. Markets for many grades and thicknesses of green stocks are also solid. Production is barely keeping pace with demand.

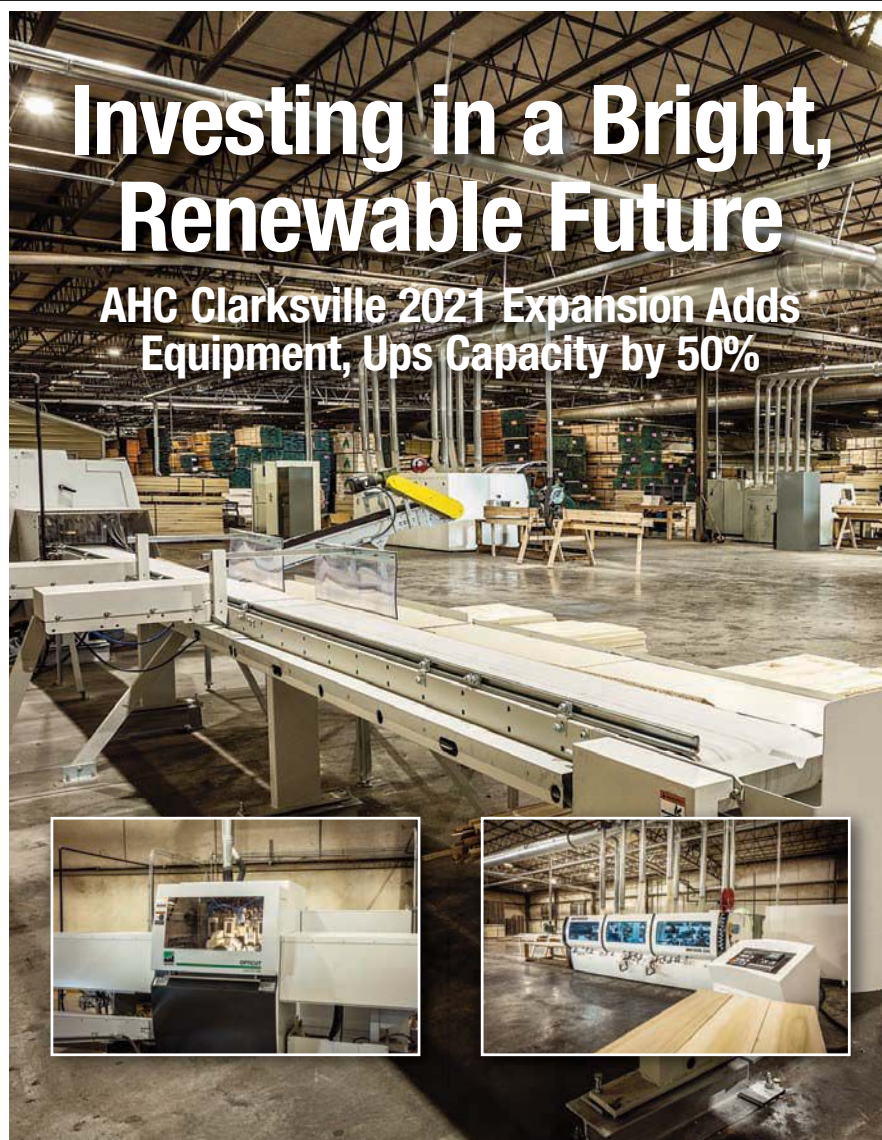
It was noted that there had been an improvement in the demand for White Oak on domestic and export markets since the middle of 2020. With production having been low for a time, kiln dried inventories were down. The strong demand and low supply continue to pressure prices higher.

According to an RBC Home Buying Sentiment Poll, found that while over 75 percent of respondents are concerned about the financial impacts of COVID-19, 31 percent are willing to help their children or an immediate family member pay for a new home. Twenty-five percent of Canadians polled stated they were providing more financial support to their family as a result of the pandemic.

RBC's vice-president of Home Equity Finance, Products and Acquisitions stated that as more people continue to work and spend time at home, many Canadians want to continue on their path to homeownership. Even during these uncertain times, families are continuing to rally around each other and financially support their loved ones as they work towards buying a home.

The poll also found 66 percent of

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Canadians are concerned about how the next generation and their children would be able to afford a home, with over 50 percent thinking affordability will only worsen in the near future. Despite this, 81 percent still believe homeownership is a good investment while 29 percent agree it makes more sense to rent than buy right now.

Despite low interest rates, which the Bank of Canada projects will remain at historic lows until 2023, steady appreciation in house prices is expected to put a dent in afford-



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ability and dampen housing demand next year, cautioned the economist.

The report continued that jobs and incomes were not expected to grow as firmly as previously expected in 2021, while the government's massive income support programs are likely to be wound down. Builders saw a sharp rise in prices for four major building materials in third-quarter 2020, led by skyrocketing lumber prices. Lumber price increases have since eased.

Immigration to Canada plunged during the pandemic, going negative in some provinces and falling from 234,000 in 2019 to a projected 80,000 in 2020, according to Statistics Canada. The economist said the drop in immigration would have a negative impact on housing sales.

The regional outlook, according to Altus Group for Ontario is that the housing starts were on track to close out 2020 significantly higher than 2019, due to a resurgence in single-family and apartment starts since the provincial reopening. Low mortgage rates and a resilient homebuyers' job market will spur housing demand in 2021. For Quebec, despite a COVID recession and low immigration, starts came in stronger than pre-pandemic expectations in every quarter. Housing starts were on track to reach a 10-year high in 2020 but weak new condominium apartment sales point to lower starts in 2021. ■



QUEBEC *Continued from page 8*

users to use alternative species. Buyers' needs are exceeding supplies of Birch, resulting in rising prices. Kiln-dried inventories also remain low.

The regionally important species, Hard Maple, is still reported as the best seller at this time due to home construction and renovation activity that has driven the strong demand for Hardwood finished goods. Hard Maple remains a favored species by consumers and designers. Demand is outpacing supply in many areas. The pandemic continues to cause labor shortages and with poor logging conditions during the end of 2020 have kept mill output low. Kiln-dried prices were being pushed higher by the strong markets and its limited availability.

Soft Maple demand is steady, with shortages being felt for most grades and thicknesses. Demand is best for the upper grades and premium color materials note contacts. Green markets are also performing well. Hardwood wholesalers noted that higher sales are obtained for color designations.

Markets on the domestic and international fronts are solid for Red Oak. Contacts report that kiln-dried inventories of this species are thin with prices continuing to rise. Green Red Oak production improved slightly during the last two months of 2020, with buy-

ers welcoming the additional supplies. Prices remain firm for this species they noted.

There is steady demand for kiln-dried White Oak, with shortages being felt and driving prices.

According to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the trend in housing starts was 231,491 units in November 2020, up from 222,989 units in October 2020. This trend measure is a six-month moving average of the monthly seasonally adjusted annual rates (SAAR) of housing starts.

Please turn the page



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"The national trend in housing starts in November increased," said Bob Dugan, CMHC's chief economist. "Multi-family SAAR starts partly rebounded in November from two consecutive declines, offsetting a decline in single-detached SAAR starts and driving the overall trend higher. Multi-family starts were particularly strong in Vancouver and Montréal in November."

The standalone monthly SAAR of housing starts for all

areas in Canada was 246,033 units in November, an increase of 14.4 percent from 215,134 units in October. The SAAR of urban starts increased by 15 percent in November to 233,106 units. Multiple urban starts increased by 22.5 percent to 177,661 units in November while single-detached urban starts decreased by 3.8 percent to 55,445 units. Rural starts were estimated at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 12,927 units.

With the pandemic being felt on a national scale, Canada's recreational property market is forecast to increase 8 percent in 2021, according to Royal LePage. The real estate company reported that 86 percent of recreational property regions are reporting lower inventory as demand outpaces supply. And, 54 percent of recreational property regions are reporting a significant increase in buyers who are purchasing a new primary residence where they will work remotely.

Fifty-four percent of regions surveyed reported a significant increase in buyers looking to buy a primary residence in a recreational market, enabled by their ability to work remotely.

The number of retirees also purchasing a recreational property increased. The pandemic has spurred demand as retirees advance their plans to improve their quality of life by moving to cottage country, continues Royal LePage. Sixty-eight percent of regions reported an increase in retiree buyers compared to last year.

This is good news for the Hardwood industry as new owners may carry out renovation projects on their recreational property such as kitchen cabinets, flooring, and other projects, increasing the demand of Hardwoods. ■

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HMA UPDATE

Continued from page 12

• He'll also "assess business demand in 2021 and into 2022; present the unintended consequences of the massive stimulus programs that will impact businesses in the years ahead; and present clear, actionable Management Objectives that are right for the coming years, as we adapt to the 'new normal.'"

We'll be hearing from the pros at LastLine Cyber, Inc., because if you think your company is safe from the ever-evolving cyber threat landscape, think again. Every business is at risk. And in the presentation entitled, "The Scary Truth About Cybercrime," LastLine Cyber, Inc. President and Co-Founder, Josh Pribanic, will demonstrate common methods used to defraud organizations; identify what to look for, and ways to avoid these kinds of attacks, and provide guidance regarding implementing a cyber security strategy, even with limited resources.

And industry representatives from the American Hardwood Export Council, the Hardwood Federation, and the Real American Hardwood Coalition plan to participate in the Conference, providing industry and sector updates, and of course, answering questions. Other Conference details – agenda, meeting registration, hotel information, a listing of participating exhibitors, and available event sponsorships – can be found at www.HMAmembers.org.

In closing, a few sentences regarding the hotel and the city of Austin:

• The Hyatt Regency Austin, nestled on the shores of Lady Bird Lake, offers contemporary accommodations, deluxe amenities, resort-like tranquility, and sweeping views of Austin's downtown skyline.

• Austin, Texas' capital city, has it all – trendy shops and quirky boutiques, food trucks, themed bars and restaurants, cool, live music venues, and scenic outdoor destinations. I look forward to seeing you there! ■

AHEC REPORT Continued from page 14

rience working with these materials. All 20 designers have also received a set of samples of the four species and are currently working closely with their mentors to develop their concepts.

For more information on the American Hardwood Export Council and our global promotional programs see our website at www.americanhardwood.org or contact International Program Manager Tripp Pryor in our suburban Washington, DC office tpryor@ahec.org. ■



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Jimmy Kepley, owner, and Bart Jenkins, lumber sales

Sales:

Bart Jenkins

bjenkins@kepleyfrank.us

Jimmy Kepley

jkepley@kepleyfrank.us



The firm manufactures 4/4 through 8/4 thicknesses.

WHO'S WHO IN HARDWOOD PURCHASING



Thomas Hibdon

THOMAS HIBDON works in sales and marketing for **Tropical Forest Products (TFP)**, a wholesaler and distributor located in Mississauga, ON, with sales throughout North America. The firm purchases 25 million board feet annually of more than 30 species of import and domestic Hardwoods and tropical Hardwood decking.

TFP is a one-stop shop that can source customers' import/exotic needs, premium tropical Hardwood decking as well as specialty domestic items. The business also offers planing and milling services. It is FSC-certified and offers FSC products where available. TFP is a member of the International Wood Products Association, the National Hardwood Lumber Association and the Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen's Association.

Hibdon joined TFP in June of 2020. He has worked in the forest products industry for more than 30 years. As a teenager, he worked summers at Hibdon Hardwood – stacking and tallying lumber and keeping things neat and orderly. He says he learned from his father, W.T. Hibdon, the value of a full day of work and attention to detail.

He has worked inspecting lumber at Thomas & Proetz Lumber, inspecting lumber and carrying out sales and marketing at Craig Lumber Corporation, working in the import division of Atlanta Hardwoods and working for Thompson Mahogany. At one time, he was a member of the Memphis Lumbermen's Club and SOWHO (the Society of Woodheads Only).

Hibdon attended the University of Missouri, Columbia and graduated from the National Hardwood Lumber Association's 95th class. In his free time, he enjoys photography, listening to music, camping and hiking. He and his wife of 21 years, Susan, have three sons, a daughter and a grandson.

For more information, you can go to www.tropicalforestproducts.com.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LEADING PURCHASING EXECUTIVES IN THE HARDWOOD INDUSTRY

BROCK HOFFMAN is in inside/outside sales and involved in lumber purchasing at **Boyce Highlands**, a custom architectural millwork manufacturer in Concord, NH. The organization purchases 2.5 million board feet of lumber per year. Boyce Highlands handles a wide variety of lumber, in thicknesses that include 4/4, 5/4, 6/4, 7/4, 8/4, 10/4 and rough kiln-dried. Species include Red and White Oak, Ash, Basswood, Birch, Cherry, Hard and Soft Maple, Poplar, Walnut, Douglas fir, cedar, Hickory, Cypress, Southern yellow pine, Sapele, Eucalyptus, Ipe and others.



Brock Hoffman

Boyce Highlands can match or create nearly any moulding profile imaginable, whether it is a pre-existing profile, drawing or sample. The company staffs an experienced drawing and knife department, plus Boyce offers custom staining and finishing.

Boyce Highlands is a member of the Forest Stewardship Council, the Wood Products Manufacturing Association and the Architectural Woodwork Institute.

Hoffman has been on the Boyce Highlands staff for two years. He spent one year as the rough mill manager and the past year in sales. Hoffman said, "I have the absolute best resources to grow with Boyce Highlands. The owners, John Lentine and Brien Murphy, are among the best millwork professionals in the industry. They provide constant steering to be the best version of myself in sales. Most importantly, I get to work alongside the general manager and one of my best friends Brent Rheinhardt. The information that I have available at my fingertips from these three men far succeeds any forestry bachelor degree I could obtain."

Hoffman's first job in the forest products industry was at age 16 as a yard assistant at Green Hills Lumber Yard in Mohnton, PA. He grew up learning the trade from his father and uncle, both tradesmen in their own right. From 2014 to 2019, Hoffman worked at Coastal Forest Prod-

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WHO'S WHO

CONTINUED

ucts, Bow, NH, in inside sales under the mentoring of inside sales manager Shawn Brooks.

Hoffman graduated Governor Mifflin High School and studied business administration at Lock Haven University in Pennsylvania.

In his spare time, Hoffman enjoys hunting, fishing and camping with his children (son, Ryder and daughter, Lylah) as well as coaching high school wrestling. He also enjoys the time he spends boating or relaxing around a bonfire with some of his closest friends, Megan, Brent and Ken.

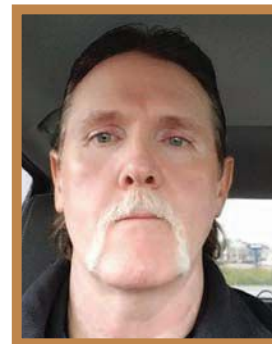
Learn more about this company at www.boycehighlands.com.

JEFF ORTNER is a buyer for **Elipticon Wood Products Inc.** in Little Chute, WI. In his position, he purchases lumber, shop supplies and office supplies. Elipticon is an end-use manufacturer, purchasing one million board feet of lumber per year. Elipticon carries Poplar, Red and White Oak (Select and Better), Cherry (standard and premium),

Black Walnut (standard and premium), Hard and Soft Maple, cedar and pine (radiata and knotty) in thicknesses ranging from 4/4 to 8/4.

Elipticon offers custom wood products such as stair treads and handrails, headers, bar rails and curved products, such as arches and curved jambs, coupled with high quality standard moulding and millwork. The company also will run and stock specific profiles that a customer uses on a regular basis.

Elipticon is a member of the Wood Products Manufacturers Association, Architectural Woodworking Institute, Window and Door Manufacturers Association, Wood Components Manufacturers Association and Forest Stewardship Council.



Jeff Ortner

We at Bryant Church Hardwoods, Inc., located in Wilkesboro, NC, are proud of our modern Hardwood concentration yard facility that we constantly update to better serve our customers with the finest Appalachian Hardwood and Eastern White Pine lumber available. Call us at (336) 973-3691 when we can be of service.



This is an aerial view of our modern Hardwood concentration yard where we process quality Appalachian Hardwood and Eastern White Pine lumber.

Some facts about our company are, we:

- Have a 30 acre Hardwood and Eastern White Pine lumber concentration yard that exclusively represents one sawmill.
- Specialize in all thicknesses of kiln dried Eastern White Pine lumber.
- Deal in Appalachian Hardwood species such as Red and White Oak, Poplar, Ash, Hard and Soft Maple, Steamed Walnut, Cherry, Basswood, Beech and mixed Hardwoods.
- Market our Appalachian Hardwood lumber in 4/4 through 8/4 thicknesses that is green, air dried and/or kiln dried.
- Specialize in mixed truck loads.

- Have 9 steam dry kilns that have a combined dry kiln capacity of 630,000 bd. ft. per charge.
- Own a Newman 382 planer.
- Usually carry about 4,000,000 bd. ft. on our air drying yard.
- Usually carry about 1,500,000 bd. ft. of kiln dried lumber in inventory.
- Offer export preparation, container loading and package tally.
- Offer the service of sorting lumber at special lengths, widths and grades according to customer specifications.
- Use our own trucks and contract trucks for prompt delivery of your orders.
- Have over 75 years of combined experience in the lumber business.



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Ortner will be starting his fifth year at Elipticon in December. He has held his current position for about a year. His first job in the forest products industry was running a skidder for a small logging operation. At Elipticon, Ortner began by driving a delivery truck. He then moved into the shop and ran a moulder until taking over his current position. He attended both the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and North Cen-

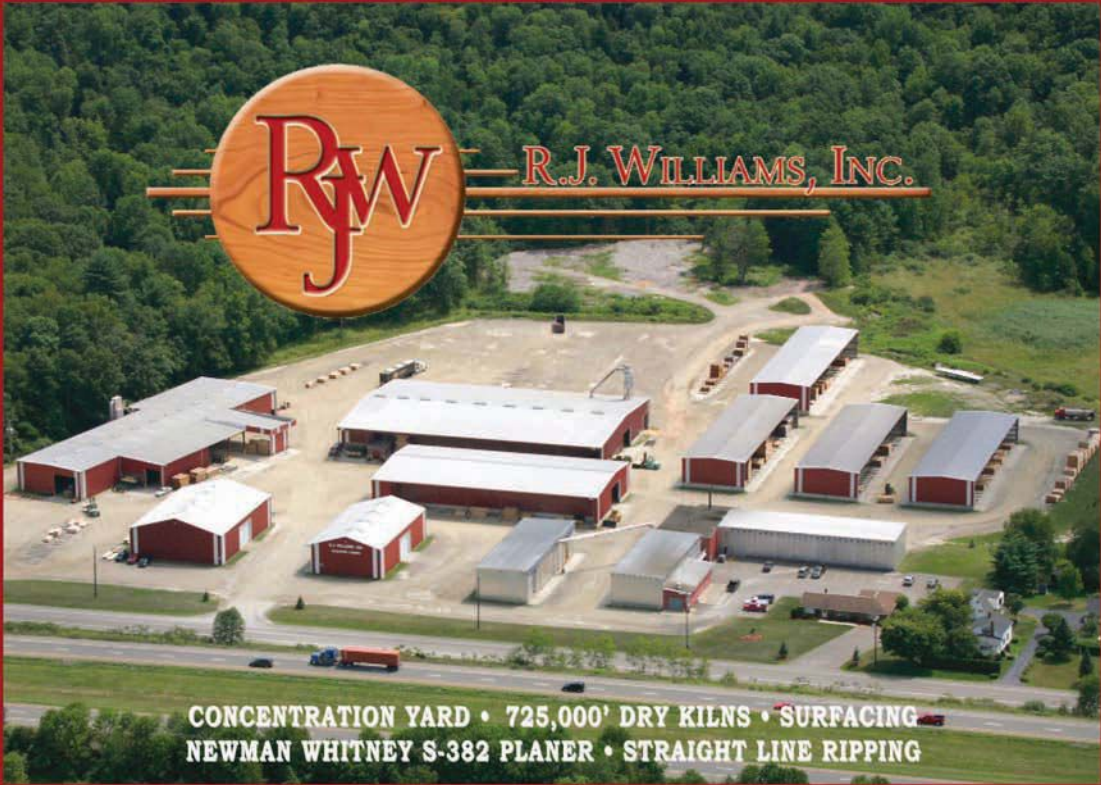
tral Technical College. In his free time, he enjoys golfing, reading, darts, snowmobiling and deer hunting. He and his wife of two years, Donna, have two sons, three daughters, two stepdaughters, three grandsons and three granddaughters.

For more information, go to www.elipticon.com. ■

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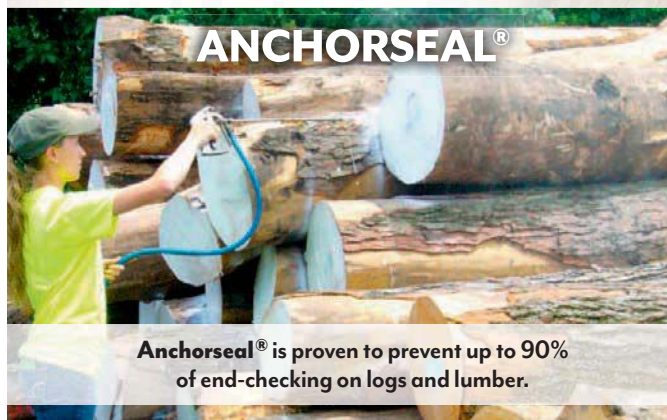
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TRADE TALK



Paul Cleereman



Jim Kepley

NEWALD, WI— Cleereman Industries and Cleereman Controls, both headquartered here, recently installed a new Cleereman LP-42 Linear carriage with Cleereman Controls and Cleereman Sawyer booth at Kepley-Frank Hardwood Co., Inc. in Lexington, NC. The companies also installed a new Cleereman 100 HP Hydrostatic Carriage drive and a Cleereman dual cable tensioner at the same company.

Kepley-Frank has three sawmills and cuts over 15 million board feet a year of fine Appalachian Hardwood lumber in 4/4 through 8/4 thicknesses in mostly Red and White Oak and Poplar as well as Ash and Maple. Kepley-Frank's crosstie mill manufactures about 100,000 board feet per week of crosstie and tie sides in species such as Hickory, Sycamore, Beech, Gum and Elm. Also, through their concentration yard business, Kepley-Frank processes millions of board feet of lumber per year. Recently, Kepley-Frank's Hardwood lumber production has increased from processing 30 million board feet a year to 50 million board feet a year. Kepley-Frank purchases and processes all domestic species in all grades.

Cleereman Controls has now sold over 40 controls systems in its first 18 months of existence. Vice President Paul Cleereman stated, "As always we would like to thank all our loyal customers for their continued support in both Cleereman Industries and Cleereman Controls."

For more information, you can go to www.kepleyfrank.us or www.cleereman.com.

AN UPDATE COVERING THE LATEST NEWS ABOUT HARDWOOD SUPPLIERS/VENDORS

WADLEY, GA— Frances Cooper, CEO of Cooper Machine, headquartered here, has announced the recent installation of another three saw edger project in Denmark, SC at Denmark Lumber Company, part of the Beasley Group. This system includes a drop belt and cant catcher where the cants and boards are separated off the carriage. Then the boards go to a 66-foot rollcase with two sets of jump chains and over to a collection deck and through a 3-inch three saw edger with a self-tailing outfeed, to separate the strips from the boards. Then it's over to a 20-foot outfeed rollcase and kicks off onto a landing deck. Allen Bradley Controls and Starter Panel were included.



Frances Cooper

Cooper Machine also has an improved design for its VSA to make pallet boards. This is part of the slab recovery system Cooper Machine offers. The new design is built more like a vertical edger. According to Cooper, this machine works better optimized, because it shifts every slab to ensure the customer gets no shim boards to jam up the machine and comes out finished lumber. The slabs will travel down a belt and be scanned lineally with a top scanner (JS-25 MX). The raw board data from the scanner will then be inserted into the A&E optimizer where a 3D profiler will optimize the slab to user defined products. The product fit will be based on full length/clear wood products that are set up by the user. The slab will continue down into VSA infeed side rollers. Saw bank is on a linear axis, and this axis will have an MTS temposonic probe with servo valve. The sawing head is controlled by the PLC/Opti system based on the product fit required. Cooper Machine works with A&E on the optimization.

Cooper Machine has recently completed several other repair projects, including an Igus upgrade on their existing scraggs so that they can continue to deliver at peak performance.

Cooper Machine continues to provide custom equipment solutions to fit the needs of its customers, as well as

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TRADE TALK *Continued*

solutions to reduce labor. For more information on Cooper Machine's product offerings, you can call Cooper Machine at 478-252-5885. **Or you can learn more at www.coopermachine.com.**

TACOMA, WA— Northwest Hardwoods, located here, recently announced the following management change.

Jason Gobel, currently Product Marketing Director – East Business Unit, has been appointed to the position of General Manager – Specialty Products Business Unit. Gobel



Jason Gobel

replaces Jim Canter who has acted as interim GM since last year. Canter will remain with the Specialty Products business and has been appointed to the role of Sales Manager – Specialty Products. Gobel will join the Senior Leadership Team and help drive the NWH improvement strategy while specifically holding accountability for the profitability and growth of the Specialty Products business unit.

Gobel's career began with the company in 2004, starting in a North American sales support role. He has held roles of increasing responsibility since joining the company, including International Sales, West Coast Account Manager, Southwest Region Sales Manager, and most recently Product Marketing Director – East business unit. Gobel holds a bachelor's degree in Communications from Slippery Rock University.

For more information, you can go to www.northwesthardwoods.com.

LANGLEY, BC— Hardwoods Distribution Inc., headquartered here, recently announced that it has, through its subsidiary Hardwoods Specialty Products US LP ("Hardwoods"), purchased Aura Hardwoods. Aura has grown into one of Northern California's largest wholesale distributors of Hardwood lumber and related products with six locations across that part of the state: Modesto, Rancho Cordova, San Jose, San Luis Obispo, Fresno and Santa Cruz.



Dan Besen

The Hardwoods acquisition of Aura Hardwoods reflects one component of its long-term growth strategy. Over half of HDI's annualized sales now come from acquired businesses, and over the last two years it has added over \$150 million in annualized sales to the top line. HDI is among North America's largest distributors of architectural grade building products to the residential and commercial construction markets.

"As part of our overall strategic plan for California, we combined two well-established, highly reputable companies – Aura and Hardwoods – to drive accelerated growth," commented Hardwoods Vice President Dan Bessen. "Along with our other recent acquisitions, Far West Plywood (January 2019) and Diamond Hardwoods (March 2020), our combined California footprint of 12 branches provides us a much better platform to be the premier distributor of architectural building products to both the design and millwork community throughout California."

Aura recently opened its doors for business under the Hardwoods brand name, and will operate as part of the Hardwoods Northern California Group led by General Manager Mike Couture. Together with Senior General Manager of California, Nick Smith, they are responsible for optimizing Hardwoods' expanding California business.

For more information, please go to www.hdist.com. ■

NEWS DEVELOPMENTS *Continued from page 11*

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Learn more at www.nwfa.org.

COMMERCE SETS NEW AD/CVD RATES FOR HARDWOOD PLYWOOD & FLOORING

The U.S. Department of Commerce has completed its review of Hardwood plywood antidumping and countervailing duty rates for the 21 Chinese exporters and producers who requested a review. For these 21 companies only, the new combined duty rate is 14.95 percent (first review AD final) plus 23 percent (first review CVD final) plus 25 percent (301 tariffs), resulting in a combined rate of about 63 percent. All other Chinese companies remain subject to the 183 percent antidumping duty rates from the investigation.

The final results of the review of 2017 countervailing duty rates for multilayered wood flooring are Baroque Timber,

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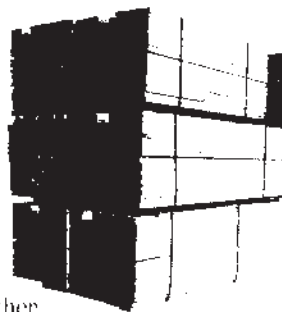
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NEWS DEVELOPMENTS

Continued

14.09 percent; Jiangsu Guyu, 122.92 percent; and all other non-examined companies, 20.75 percent, which will apply to most Chinese producers. The new rates will go into effect shortly and retroactively cover shipments during the 2017 review period. More than 150 Chinese companies are covered by the higher countervailing duty rate.

Find more at www.commerce.gov.

CHESTNUT RESEARCH CONTINUES

Through podcasts and Chestnut Chat, The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) has found ways to continue their research, field work, and outreach goals. Published reports note that TACF staff, volunteers, and members instituted new safety standards, developed a continuation of operations plan, held regular meetings and ensured staff and volunteers can stay motivated and productive while adjusting to life during a pandemic. The most recent meeting looked at the challenges in cloning American, hybrid and transgenic Chestnuts. Last fall, the on-line series covered how the Genome Wide Association Study works.

TACF also conducted a year-end appeal to support its efforts.

To see how you can support ongoing Chestnut promotional efforts, go to www.acf.org.

GABLER ANNOUNCED AS NEW PENNSYLVANIA FOREST PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION LEADER

The Pennsylvania Forest Products Association (PFPA), in Harrisburg, PA, announced recently that State Rep. Matt Gabler (R - Clearfield/Elk) has taken the helm as Executive Director.



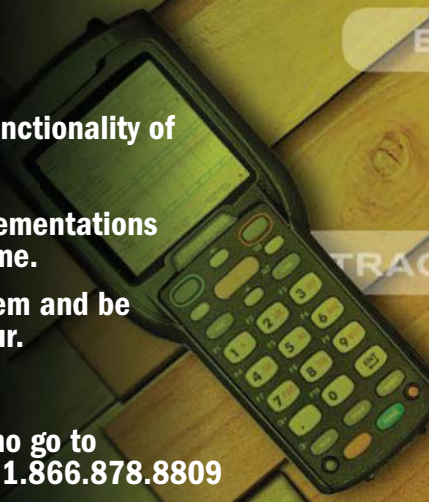
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Gabler has represented the 75th District in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for six terms since his first election in 2008. Earlier this year, Gabler announced his intent not to seek reelection to the State House and to instead seek opportunities in the private sector.

"I am truly honored to be chosen to lead such a well-respected organization representing an important segment of our state's economy," Gabler said. "The forest products industry provides excellent job opportunities in all 67 of Pennsylvania's counties - from our smallest villages to our largest cities. I have always been passionate in advocating for the economy of Rural Pennsylvania, and I see this opportunity as a continuation of that important work that can positively impact every community in our Commonwealth."

The PFPA is a statewide membership organization consisting of approximately 250 entities ranging from timber operators and sawmills to paper and wood product manufacturers and equipment suppliers.

As a member of the State House, Gabler successfully authored legislation that enacted the extension of an agricultural sales tax exclusion for equipment and parts to timber operators in Pennsylvania. He has also extensively worked with the industry to support issues of importance for economic competitiveness.

Learn more at www.paforestproducts.org.

NLBMDA URGES GOVERNORS TO EXTEND 'ESSENTIAL' BUSINESS STATUS AND SUPPORTS SAFETY STAND DOWN FOR COVID-19 WORKPLACE SAFETY

The National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association (NLBMDA) in Washington, DC recently sent a letter to governors of all 50 states urging them to continue to designate lumber and building material dealers as essential businesses during the pandemic. The NLBMDA sent a similar letter last spring to each governor. The NLBMDA said that the latest letter reminds "the governors of this designation and the important role LBM dealers play in the nation's economic recovery."

NLBMDA also recently urged its members to join a multi-industry effort to "stand down" for workplace safety awareness in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. NLBMDA issued the following statement:

"NLBMDA has a long history of commitment to health and safety and that is more important now than ever," said Jonathan Paine, NLBMDA president and CEO. "This stand down will reaffirm our members' dedication to a safe

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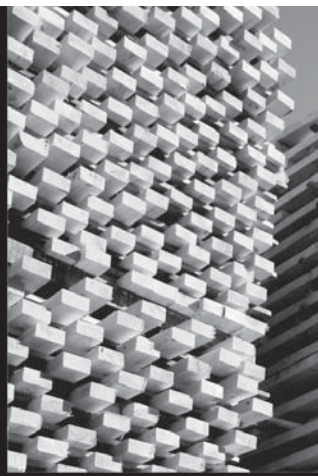
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workplace and ensure that employers and employees are educated on the steps needed to protect all individuals. We are proud to once again join the National Association of Home Builders and others in the construction industry in this important initiative.”

As part of the stand down, NLBMDA members were asked to pause work for at least 10 minutes recently to underscore coronavirus safety precautions, such as maintaining a distance of no less than six feet with other workers at all times, cleaning and sanitizing frequently used tools, equipment and touched surfaces on a regular basis as well as ensuring the proper sanitation of common surfaces/equipment.

NLBMDA has also compiled the important health and safety information in the COVID-19 Action Resource Center, located on the NLBMDA website.

Learn more at www.dealer.org. ■

NWFA REVIEW *Continued from page 16*

will have similar characteristics as solid wood. This method of cutting veneers has thickness limitations, and also can stress wood fibers, which can result in lathe-checks.

Rotary peeled veneers are made by placing the log on a large lathe and spinning the log against a sharp blade. This cut produces very wide and long veneers, with a distinct, repeating pattern. As a result, it does not have the same appearance as solid wood.

Next the veneers are cut to width, which varies by manufacturer and by product. Then they are sorted and stacked in preparation for kiln drying.

Once the veneers have reached the proper moisture content, they are ready to assemble with the other layers. Regardless of the number of layers or the materials used to make them, each layer is assembled perpendicular to the layers above and/or below it, with each individual layer glued together to form a multi-ply product. Placing the grain of each layer at a 90-degree angle helps to increase the dimensional stability of the final product. The top wear layer can be adhered to the core material in several ways: cold-press, hot-press, and nip roller. The assembled layers are called a blank.

Once the blanks are dry, they are ready to receive a final sanding. Next, the material is sidematched and end-matched. A bevel may be added as well, but this varies by manufacturer and by product.

The flooring then is delivered to the finishing line. The boards are lightly sanded to refresh the face before receiving several coats of finish.

After the finish has dried, the flooring is ready for packaging. Individual boards are sorted by length to meet the minimum square footage requirements per box. Each box then is labeled with the manufacturer, product name, species, and square footage per box.

Engineered wood floors have grown in both popularity and in market share during the past few decades, representing more than 50 percent of the total wood flooring market in the United States. This market share is projected to grow further in the coming years.

The National Wood Flooring Association has detailed information about engineered wood flooring available through NWFA University, an online training platform that is convenient and affordable. **More information is available at nwfa.org/nwfa-university.aspx.** ■

NHLA NEWS *Continued from page 17*

work even more complicated. She has a big job, but somehow, she always, always, pulls it off seamlessly. Renee can be contacted at r.hornsby@nhla.com.

Desiree Freeman is Director of Finance and Human Resources at NHLA. Her previous business experience with for-profit companies brings a unique and effective perspective to her work. All who know her agree she is a creative and effective financial strategist, and plays a critical role working with the Board Finance Committee in managing NHLA finances. Her work as Human Resources Director has also been critical to retaining key staff.

Chief Inspector Dana Spessert serves as the head of Inspection Services and the Inspector Training School. For the past several years, Dana, working with NHLA's Inspector Training School and Inspection Services Committee, has focused on developing new, or enhancing existing innovative solutions to members' quality control challenges and educational needs. Dana also serves as a global ambassador for NHLA having traveled to numerous countries with AHEC to discuss the NHLA Rules. Dana can be reached at d.spessert@nhla.com. ■



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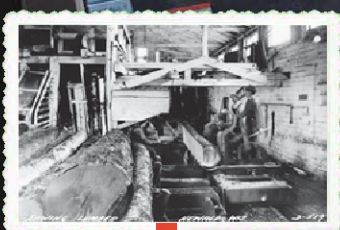
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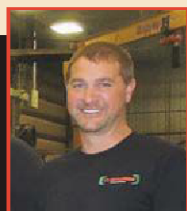


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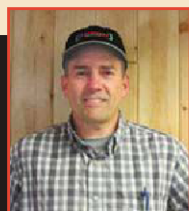
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