

# Center Focus

A Publication from the  
Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management  
Department of Wood Science and Forest Products  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
<http://www.woodscience.vt.edu>

January 2004

## Page 2

Reflections and Directions, continued

Electronic Distribution

## Page 3

Annual Meeting

## Page 4

Calendar of Events

## Reflections and Directions

It is the start of a new year and it is common to reflect upon the many successes and challenges we had during 2003. As a father (who is getting older every day) of two teens, the challenges now are different. They are not better or worse, just different. I remember thinking when my daughter was born nineteen years ago, where are the instructions? Two years later, my son showed up, again with no instructions. So we made our best decisions along the way (many of which they disagreed with) and now they have reached the age to make their own choices. And up to this point, with no extra piercing or body art, good choices. But, I struggle with letting go and watching them make some poor choices also. I assume this is a normal part of fatherhood, but I still wish there were instructions.

When running a business, an association, or a center, decisions are made based upon the best information available (again, no instructions and some assembly required). As markets change, competition increases, products require shorter lead times, and customers demand more, the qualifications of those people making decisions also change. In the past year, the Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management has addressed these needs by introducing students and our industry partners to more management training and research. We are in the process of increasing the number of classes that students will take with a marketing and management emphasis. It is our goal to provide the best educated students to meet the ever changing business environment that they will enter. This public-private partnership has grown to over 70 participating organizations today. These companies provide scholarships, work with students as interns, work with students for class projects, allow faculty and students into their mills on a regular basis and provide continual feedback to us on how to make our program better. Probably one of the more important items that the Center offers is a regular dialog with all facets of the forest products industry. This strong relationship helps students understand the industry needs and allows us to design our program to meet those needs better. As an industry partner, your responsibility is to let us know if we are doing our job well.

The Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management has always been a partnership. Long before the politically correct term “public-private partnership” was coined by someone in Washington, DC, we were practicing it in Blacksburg, Virginia. In 1991 a small number of major wood products manufacturers and associations, along with Dr. Steve Sinclair envisioned and started the Center. In 1997 the membership added an emphasis on management, as well as marketing, into our mission and name. (Continued, page two)



In 1999 some of those same organizations that started with the Center contributed over \$160,000 to meet the needs of the membership by establishing a position for a Market Analyst. We have leveraged those startup funds with research funding to extend this position by another 3 years. I would like to acknowledge and thank those firms that envisioned and participated in this true demonstration of a public-private partnership. They include Atlanta Hardwood Corporation, Georgia Pacific Corporation, The Hardwood Manufacturers Association, Coastal Lumber Company and the S.H. Conger Foundation, J.T. Shannon Lumber Company, Baillie Lumber Company, Columbia Forest Products, Cole Hardwood Inc, Industrial Timber and Lumber Company, and The Virginia Forest Products Association. Since 1999, other members have contributed to this partnership include Granite Hardwoods, Jim C. Hamer Co., Erle P. Anderson Lumber Co., Genwove U.S. Ltd., Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers Inc., Pomeroy Lumber Company, VKW Inc., Rex Lumber Company, U\*C. Coatings, Coffman Stairs Inc., Seemac Inc., T & S Hardwoods, Gutches Lumber Company, SII Dry Kilns, Potomac Supply, and the Hardwood Distributors Association.

We have the natural resources and technology to compete with any country. The U.S. is the largest market for wood products in the world. What our industry needs, and the future of the industry depends upon, is having qualified individuals to lead it. The Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management is committed to providing individuals who will have a positive impact on your organization's profitability.

As you start 2004, one question to ask your organization is why are you not a member of the leading partnership in Forest Products Marketing and Management in North America? On a regular basis members interact with students, receive market/management updates, research updates, research reports and participate in continuing education courses to meet their needs. To learn more about the Center, I want to invite you to our annual meeting on March 15, 2004 in Blacksburg, VA. For more information on the Center or our annual meeting, please contact Joanne Buckner at (540) 231-5876.

## Electronic Distribution

As we mentioned in the fall edition of the Center Focus, the Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management is moving to electronic distribution for this publication. For your convenience, the publication will be available via email and on line at our website. If you did not receive an electronic version of the Center Focus, then we do not have your email address. Please call or email Joanne Buckner if you wish to receive the publication via email. Phone (540) 231-5876 or email to [ctrfpmj@vt.edu](mailto:ctrfpmj@vt.edu). Thank you.



## Center Focus



Published Quarterly By  
The  
Center for Forest  
Products Marketing and  
Management

Department of Wood Sci-  
ence and Forest Products  
Virginia Tech  
1650 Ramble Road  
Mail Code 0503  
Blacksburg, VA 24061

### EDITOR

Clare Hofberg

### CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Joanne Buckner  
Robert Bush  
Dan Cumbo  
Tom Hammett  
Earl Kline  
Bob Smith

### SPECIAL THANKS

Susan Fitzsimmons,  
Chairperson

Patrick Altham  
Membership Committee  
Chairperson



VT/0023/0801/1.7M/220696



## Annual Meeting

The Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management will host its Annual Meeting, reception, and scholarship award's dinner on Monday, March 15, 2004. The event will be held in the Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center on Virginia Tech's Campus. The Annual Meeting is a wonderful opportunity for member companies and friends of the Center to spend an evening together. The meeting provides an opportunity to meet with the students of our department. Interested companies are encouraged to schedule interviews with our students while they are in town. This is also a convenient time for industry members to network with representatives from other companies. Center members and friends will be included in discussions on planning the direction of the Center for the next few years in our evolving industry, and discuss research directions for the upcoming year. We are looking forward to another successful event and hope to see you there. The meeting is open to all Center members and welcomes interested companies and supporters to attend. This is a great opportunity for interested companies to learn about the Center, our successes from this past year, and objectives for the year to come. See you there!

3:00-5:00 pm CFPMM Member Meeting

Conference Rooms D & E

- Status on Membership and Scholarships
- Presentation of Forest Products Certification Consumer Research
- Presentation on Sawmill Costing
- Presentation on Rough Mill Study

6:00-7:00 pm Reception with Company Representatives, Faculty, and Students

Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center, Commonwealth West A & B Rooms

7:00 pm

Dinner

Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center, Commonwealth West A & B Rooms

- Keynote address by Rick Lovorn, "Surviving in a Global Economy"
- Presentation of member sponsored scholarships

If there is a company that you would like to invite to this event, please provide us with their contact information. We will be happy to contact them, and use you as a reference for their invitation.

For more information about our Annual Meeting, to request an invitation, or suggest a guest, please contact Joanne Buckner at (540) 231-5876 or [ctrfpmjo@vt.edu](mailto:ctrfpmjo@vt.edu)

Thank you.



Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management  
Virginia Tech

# *Calendar of Events*

**Department of Wood Science and Forest Products**

**Virginia Tech**

<http://vtwood.forprod.vt.edu>

- March 15, 2004**      **Annual Meeting**  
This event will include the Center's annual meeting, reception, dinner, and scholarship awards ceremony. The Annual Meeting will be held at the Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center on Virginia Tech's campus. It is a wonderful opportunity for our members and students to establish relationships and enjoy networking opportunities.
- April 1-2, 2004**      **Advanced Sales Training for the Forest Products Industry, Short Course**  
Forest products sales people and managers who want to improve their ability to relate to customers will benefit from this course. The course is designed for those who are currently selling forest products and want to understand the importance of improving their communication, time management, and negotiation skills.
- May 6-7, 2004**      **Forest Products Marketing, Short Course**  
Marketing has been called the backbone of successful forest products companies. Yet many small businesses struggle with the marketing concept. Those attending this workshop will learn about the products of wood based industries, marketing as it relates to small forest products businesses and how to gain a competitive advantage in the industry.
- May 2004**      **A Workshop in Lean Manufacturing**  
This workshop will help managers in wood products businesses identify target opportunity areas in their company for lean manufacturing, give a step by step guide for the implementation of lean systems, and show how these steps will lead to significantly reduced manufacturing costs and increased competitiveness.
- June 3, 2004**      **VFPA Educational Program**  
Session #1, 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, International Phytosanitation Regulation of Raw Wood Packing and its Impact on Lumber, Pallett, and Container Manufacturers: The Latest Developments. Session #2, 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Dealing with Today's Lumber Drying Problems.

---

Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management  
Virginia Tech 1650 Ramble Rd. MC 0503  
Blacksburg VA 24061