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# INSIDE VT WOOD

## Reminder...

Remember to submit department news items by Friday 3 p.m. of each week to Will Pfeil at [wpfeil@vt.edu](mailto:wpfeil@vt.edu) for inclusion in Inside VT WOOD each Monday morning. All past issues of Inside VT Wood reside on our department website under the publications link.

## News From Paul Winistorfer

- Congratulations again to Dr. Chip Frazier on being named the Thomas M. Brooks Professor Wood Science and Forest Products. Chip's contributions to our program and students have been many over these years and we look forward to his contributions yet to come!
- The web presence of Dr. Roman's research and her group has also brought our department notoriety in the past week. Congratulations to Maren, and doctoral students Shuping Dong and Fernando Navarro on their research work. You can read about them on the web at <http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/story.php?relyear=2007&itemno=189>
- The department was selected by the Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (CEUT) to pilot the new online assessment tool WEAVE. We will receive a \$5,000 stipend from CEUT for development of assessment tools for the Wood Enterprise Institute over the coming months. This is in preparation for required assessment activities leading the SACS accreditation report and on-campus visit to VT in the coming 18-24 months. This should give us experience with the WEAVE tool and help us develop broader assessment measures and outcomes for our entire department.
- The department is collaborating in hosting a reception for the bioprocessing/biomaterials cluster faculty on April 9th. Department faculty will participate with faculty and administrators from Biological Systems Engineering, Chemical Engineering, and Materials Science and Engineering. The Provost, VP of Research, and the three College Deans will make brief comments at the reception that evening.
- Please see the attached position description for the National Program Director of WoodLINKS USA. I am chairing this search process as we move to appointing a new National Director.
- April 2 marks the last day of VT employment for Dr. Mark White. We are planning a recognition event, in conjunction with the CULD Advisory Board meeting in May and will have information for you in the coming weeks. Please stop by and shake Mark's hand, give him a hug, and be appreciative of what he has accomplished during his career with the department. I will personally miss my interactions with Mark and his keen 'business instincts'. He has brought world acclaim to our department over these years.

## Work Shop on Remaining Competitive in Hardwood Lumber Production

The successful workshop "Remaining Competitive in Hardwood Lumber", organized by Dr. Brian Bond was held at the Wood Education and Resource Center in Princeton, West Virginia on March 21-23. The workshop included fifteen speakers from industry, trade associations, the Forest Service and University. It was designed to present

new information and techniques available to assist managers and production personnel of hardwood sawmills in increasing their overall competitiveness. Over fifty hardwood industry personnel attended the meeting and all expressed their opinion that the workshop was an overwhelming success. The most reoccurring comment was “when are you going to do this again?” Sponsors for the workshop



included: Department of Wood Science and Forest Products, Virginia Tech; Department of Forest Ecology and Management, University of Wisconsin; USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Research Station; USDA Forest Service, Wood Education and Resource Center; and the National Hardwood Lumber Association. Funding for the workshop was provided by the USDA Forest Service, Wood Education and Resource Center.

## VT Wood Faculty Travel to Bolivia for Workshops

Dr. Brian Bond, assistant professor, Omar Espinoza, Ph. D. student and Phil Araman, of the U.S. Forest Service, recently traveled to Bolivia to conduct workshops on solar-heated lumber drying and improving secondary industry processing methods. The workshops were arranged in conjunction with our Bolivian partner, CADEFOR, a non-governmental forestry/forest industry group. Funding for the workshops and travel came from USAID. Both workshops were held at the Private University of Santa Cruz de la Sierra (UPSA). UPSA recently began a new program in wood technology in their engineering college. We had an opportunity to meet the faculty and tour the new facilities. The faculty and the University administration expressed interest in working with Virginia Tech and the Department of Wood Science and Forest Products in the future.



The first workshop covered the design and operation of a solar kiln in Bolivia and was targeted for the forest communities. Dr. Bond presented information about designing, constructing, modifying and operating a solar kiln based on the Virginia Tech solar kiln design ([www.woodscience.vt.edu/about/extension/vtsolar\\_kiln/](http://www.woodscience.vt.edu/about/extension/vtsolar_kiln/)). A publication on the modified design for use in Bolivia is currently being published by the Forest Service. There were over sixty participants, many who had traveled over six hours by train to attend. A model of the solar kiln (prepared by David Jones) (see picture) was provided to CADEFOR at the workshop. The model was used to assist with discussing the various design features.

At the second workshop Dr. Bond, presented information about lumber drying improvements, Omar Espinoza, presented his thesis work regarding a drying improvement program specific to the Bolivian industry and Phil Araman covered secondary manufacturing methods and improvements. An interpreter was used for Dr. Bond's and Araman's sessions. The session was attended by over sixty students and industry personnel. Phil Araman managed to educate

and entertain the attendees throughout the day. News about the success of the workshop reached our partner CADEFOR before we had even finished packing up from the class.

## **Wood Manufacturing Class Tours Stanley Furniture**

By Tim Stiess

Students from Secondary Wood Manufacturing (WOOD 3544) toured the Stanleytown, VA, plant of Stanley Furniture, on Friday the 23rd of March. Kevin Wampler, the Continuous Improvement Coordinator for that Stanley plant, discussed Lean Manufacturing projects that the company is currently undertaking, and gave the class a tour through the facility, from the rough mill to the final assembly.