The Department of Wood Science & Forest Products at Virginia Tech
Volume 1 Issue 26 — Monday, December 4, 2006

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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 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.

Red Alert

Debbie is out of the office Monday December 4, 2006

News From Paul Winistorfer

- My visit on Southside last Monday was productive. Meetings at the Higher Education Center in South Boston and Danville Community College in Danville included many of the public school system superintendents, principals and technology education coordinators. We are finalizing travel plans to visit a new WoodLINKS site in Michigan in early December, or January.
- I visited the Advanced Manufacturing Lab also in Danville while there – this is an outreach and industry supporting endeavor by Danville Community College as well and would like to orchestrate a faculty trip to Danville for us to learn more about these efforts and programming. We should be informed of Southside activities and make them aware of our expertise and interests.
- Our department visit with VT President Steger went very well on Monday. Dr. Steger has recognition of the quality, successes and reputation of our department and is supportive of what we do. Awareness of our program by Dr. Steger is very important to us as a department. He expresses interest in knowing more about our emerging work in nano-materials. Any successes you have in economic impacts in the state are important for him to know about.
- Our manufacturing systems faculty position is 'on the street;' and the search is open. The distribution packaging position is awaiting approval by central administration, as are other positions in CNR and on campus. We expect to move forward in the coming days.
- Please support John Perlin's visit next week on campus. These should be excellent seminar and discussion opportunities. Please see aeminar announcements below.
- Thanks to Dan Hindman, Gi Young, and Christian Heinemann for cleaning and organizing the imaging lab at Brooks – it looks great and will serve the department very well. Thanks for your effort in making this happen.
- We had two students join our major this week – bringing our undergraduate total to 47 students.
- Thanks to Dr. Foster Agblevor, Professor in Biological Systems Engineering, for delivering his seminar in graduate seminar last week on renewables and the opportunities for collaborative work with BSE and our mutual interests.

- Faculty please mark your calendar for our December 19th graduate program working session – 8:30 am at the Brooks classroom – materials will be available before the meeting and will be distributed.
- Jeanette and I welcome faculty, staff and graduate students to our home on Saturday December 9th 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm for Christmas cheer. There are sign up sheets at Brooks and the main office.

Ralph L. Rupert Named Center Director

Rupert a natural fit to continue the legacy of retiring director, Marshall White

Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA (November, 2006): With the impending retirement of Dr. Marshall "Mark" White, founder and director of the Center for Unit Load Design, Dr. Paul Winistorfer, Head of the department of wood science and forest products at Virginia Tech announces that Ralph L. Rupert will assume the directorship on December 1, 2006. Rupert joined the center in 1999 and has been instrumental in supporting the center's mission of developing technologies to support systems based design. In addition to directorship duties, Rupert's continuing responsibilities at the center include managing all center testing/evaluations and teaching continuing education courses.

Prior to joining the center, Rupert worked in plastics for several years before taking a job with Weyerhaeuser in northern Illinois where he managed the containerboard division test lab. He continues to teach classes at Weyerhaeuser. Originally from Ohio, he holds a degree in chemical engineering from the University of Akron. His goal for the center is to continue to expand and apply systems based design across the industry – a concept that fits well with current corporate environmental sustainability initiatives. The transition in directorship should be flawless with Rupert's strong working relationship with current director, Dr. Mark White.

Dr. White will retire on January 31, 2007 after 31 years of dedication to the department, center, and pallet and container industry. Dr. White will continue his affiliation with the center and department on a part-time basis through undergraduate instruction, service on graduate and research committees, and in a continued advisory role to the center. In his new role as CEO of White & CO., a Blacksburg based consulting company that will specialize in packaging and pallet design solutions that optimize supply chain performance, he will use the extensive testing and research services of the Center for Unit Load Design. "I am pleased that Ralph Rupert has been selected to direct the activities of the Center for Unit Load Design," affirms White. "Ralph brings continuity to the transition, while recognizing the importance and opportunities associated with industry and academia collaboration. I am confident that under Ralph's direction, and with the support of industry and the university, the center will flourish in the future."

The Center for Unit Load Design develops information and technologies to optimize the relationship between the design and performance of unit loads and to maximize the efficiency of unit load material handling systems. The center focuses on system optimization in studying the mechanical interactions between containers, pallets, and unit load material handling equipment. The center's team includes experts in packaging, palletization, material handling, and unit load design.

To learn more about the Center for Unit Load Design and the packaging science program visit our website at www.unitload.vt.edu or contact Bonnie Maccubbin at (540) 231-5370 or by email at bjmac@vt.edu. The Center for Unit Load Design is a center in the Department of Wood Science and Forest Products in the College of Natural Resources at Virginia Tech.

Dr. White Visits ENSAM in Angers, France

During November 7 - 18, Dr. Marshall S. White visited ENSAM Ecole Nationale Superieure d'Arts at Metiers, Engineering Institute in Angers, France to help develop a pallet technical institute for European Union Countries. The objective of his visit was to help the EU develop the technical assistance program concerning logistics and pallet design and performance, similar to the program

À Angers, un institut européen... des palettes

Elles sont partout mais on ne les voit pas. Pourtant, sans palettes, pas de transports et pas de produits livrés. Indispensables, n'est-ce pas...

Impayés : l'aide du conseil général et d'EDF

developed at the Center for Unit Load Design in the Department of Wood Science and Forest Products at Virginia Tech. Pictured with Dr. White are Baron, Jean de Vulliod of Director of Eurpal, Dr. Daniel Badie-levet, Professor of Engineering, ENSAM and Florent Joeliveau, Director General, Francepal. The newspaper article describes the official announcement regarding the European Pallet Institute. In the photo are also government representatives.

Following the visit to Angers, Dr. White traveled to Bordeaux, France as head of the U.S. delegation to ISO TC 51 "Pallets for Materials Handling." Dr. White leads the International Organization of Standardization (ISO) efforts to develop standard international pallet testing procedures. He is convener of Working Group 2 on Pallet Testing and convener of Working Group 6 on Slip Sheets. After a long week of difficult negotiations, there was unanimous agreement among all voting countries to advance the Working Group 2 and Working Group 6 documents to draft international standard status. These meetings were perhaps the most successful of Dr. White's 15 year tenure as head of the U.S. delegation to the International Organization of Standardization in Geneva, Switzerland.

Dan Roethle Receives AWI Scholarship Check - November 29, 2006

Paul Winistorfer, head of the department of Wood Science and Forest Products, presents a check for $500 from the Architectural Woodwork Institute (AWI) to student Daniel Roethle. Daniel is a freshman in the department of Wood Science and Forest Products from Rubicon Wisconsin. Daniel participated in the WoodLINKS USA program a Hartford High School in Hartford Wisconsin. Jason Kraus was Daniel's WoodLINKS instructor at Hartford High. The local AWI chapter from Wisconsin is matching this amount from the National AWI organization for a total of $1,000. Congratulations Daniel and thanks to AWI and WoodLINKS USA for your support and recognition of Daniel.

Welcome to the New Microtechniques Lab!

by Dan Hindman

The Microtechniques lab located in the Wood Engineering Laboratory has been recently cleaned and reorganized. The large Zeiss microscope has been located on a larger table with more room for the computer equipment, as well as the Minimat testing frame. The recently purchased stereoscopes have been moved to a cabinet. Much of the laboratory counter space has been cleaned up and can be used for student projects, with adequate room to use the microtome and balance. The cupboards underneath the counters will be used to store faculty equipment, while many of the drawers have been emptied for student project storage. Many thanks to Christian Heinemann and Gi Young Jeong for their help in moving equipment.

Inside the new Microtechniques lab located in the Wood Engineering Lab

Department of Wood Science and Forest Products Highlighted in New Connections Assessment Newsletter

Department of Wood Science and Forest Products Assessment Activities

The department of Wood Science and Forest Products in the College of Natural Resources has been working proactively on assessment of student learning during the past year. Various assessment approaches to student learning in all department courses are being pursued, including the examination of passive and active assessment tools, on-line surveys of current students, investigating e-portfolio tools, and a holistic examination of department-stated learning objectives for all classes.

In one exercise, all course learning objective statements were collected and analyzed, breaking down both the identification of the stated learning objective and its occurrence across all courses. For example, the learning objective verb most commonly stated across all department courses was the term **describe**. This verb appeared sixteen different times in eight different courses and was the most frequently appearing objective statement (15%) when considering all student learning objective statements for all 35 department courses. In total, there were 35 discrete learning objective constructs stated across 26 department courses.

Department Head Paul Winistorfer noted, "We are the leading North American undergraduate degree program in wood science and renewable materials utilization and our most frequently stated learning objective is actually the lowest level of learning in the context of Bloom's Taxonomy, a method of categorizing the level of abstraction of learning objectives. We really need to explore if what we state as our student learning objectives is what we are actually aiming at in the classroom and for student learning. We should be striving for a more appropriate level of higher order learning objectives that include concepts like synthesis, comprehension, and problem solving. Considering all department learning objectives simultaneously with the entire faculty engaged in the discussion is how we want to proceed and we began this discussion at a recent department retreat last June."

Exerpt from Connections Newsletter of the Office of Academic Assessment at Virginia Tech

You are invited to a seminar by John Perlin

Best selling author of

A Forest Journey

The Story of Wood and Civilization

2 PM December 6, 2006

Fralin Auditorium

Reception following in the Fralin Atrium

About the Book: The Story of Wood and Civilization, which recounts how wood, the principal fuel and building material from the Bronze Age through the 19th century, played a major role in the culture, demographics, economy, internal and external politics, and technology of the great civilizations. Harvard University Press has chosen A Forest Journey as one of the Press' "One-Hundred Great Books" of all time.

Sponsored by the Department of Wood Science and Forest Products and the College of Natural Resources

For more information, contact Tom Hammett himal@vt.edu or 231-2716

Everyone is welcome

Join us and the best-selling author John Perlin for

A Forest Journey

The College of Natural Resources, Virginia Tech
has organized a visit and lecture
at the exhibit based on Perlin's book
"A Forest Journey: The Story of Wood and Civilization"

Science Museum of Western Virginia, Roanoke

December 5, 2006

Presentation by the author — 7 PM
Book signing, reception, and tour of the exhibit — 8 PM

Admission is free!

For more information and transportation to Roanoke, contact:
Tom Hammett himal@vt.edu or 231-2716
at the Department of Wood Science and Forest Products
or Brenda Brown 857-4381 at the Science Museum of Western Virginia

Everyone is welcome

General Announcements

Candidates for Virginia Tech Man & Woman of the Year

By Tim Filbert, Assistant Director of Leadership Development

Applications are now being accepted for the Virginia Tech Undergraduate Man and Woman of the Year award, and we would very much appreciate your assistance in getting this announcement out to students, faculty and advisors. The Man & Woman of the Year is the most prestigious undergraduate student award given by Virginia Tech and sets a standard for all Virginia Tech undergrads. The students who receive this award best exemplify our motto, Ut Prosim, through their balanced achievement in scholarship, service and commitment to the university.

Any student graduating in May, August, or December 2007 and has a minimum G.P.A of 3.3 can apply. Applications are available online at www.vtleadership.com, and are due by noon, Monday, January 29th, 2007. The Man and Woman of the Year award will be presented by President Charles Steger at the Founder's Day Student Recognition Banquet on April 14th, 2007.

Please contact the Department of Student Activities at 1-5725, or stuact@vt.edu if you have any questions. You are also welcome to contact me directly. Thank you for your assistance!

Plans under way for IKEA plant–Company hopes to hire its first batch of employees by March and be fully operational by 2008.

DANVILLE - Swedwood, IKEA's furniture manufacturing subsidiary, will begin laying the foundation for its first North American factory in January. By March, the company hopes to hire its first batch of employees.

On Oct. 13, Swedwood announced plans to build its first North American plant in Danville. Over the next several years, the company plans to create 740 new jobs and invest $281 million in the Dan River Region. Officials have not yet worked out a pay scale for the jobs.

Two Swedwood executives met with city officials Thursday morning to explain their plans for the factory.

Swedwood North America Vice President Jörgen Lindquist said that the company hopes to finish grading the site for the 1 million-square-foot factory - a building five times the size of Danville's Wal-Mart - and pouring concrete for the structure by January.

The company hopes to hire its plant manager and human resources manager by January as well, according to Swedwood North America President Bengt Danielsson. Once these executives are in place, Danielsson said the company would hire a core team of 15 to 25 supervisors and key operators for the factory by March.

"It's very important to have teams that can work without supervision," Danielsson said. "It's a process industry rather than a furniture industry."

Danielsson said a number of things would separate Swedwood's manufacturing processes from the traditional style of manufacturing used in tobacco and textiles.

He said the company's production schedules require employees to be able to operate their machinery to make one product and then adjust their equipment to make a different product almost instantly and with little or no supervision.

Danielsson said these processes require a group of workers who could work as part of a team, but also think individually and show individual initiative. Prospective employees also would have to have some experience or training with automated manufacturing systems.

Danville Community College President Carlyle Ramsey said graduates of his school's two-year machining, electronics or general engineering technology programs would make great candidates for the jobs at Swedwood. He also compared Swedwood's manufacturing style and culture with those used at Columbia Flooring and Essel Propak.

Danville Economic Development Director Ron Bunch said applicant interest forms for Swedwood would be available through the Virginia Employment Commission. He said Swedwood would contact people who had filled out these forms when the company was ready to start hiring.

Danielsson said he would send Swedwood's core team of employees to Poland for two to three months of on-site training at a Swedwood facility. This group also would be responsible for installing the Danville plant's equipment, which Danielsson hopes to start shipping over in the spring.

Danville's Swedwood factory is expected to become fully operational by January 2008. Danielsson said he plans to have a total trained workforce of 80 to 100 people when the factory opens and that he plans to hire 10 more employees each month as his business continues to grow.

"We expect to put two or more factories on the same site," he said, describing Swedwood's full growth expectations providing there is enough demand for its products.

Instructor/Coordinator, Center for Advanced Manufacturing in Wood Products Technology

Position #F0023

Position Description: The Instructor/Coordinator, Center for Advanced Manufacturing in Wood Products Technology will serve as the primary instructor in the Wood Products Program and will be given released time to perform the following: (1) provide program development, management, and training services, (2) coordinate instructional and training programs, (3) identify, obtain, and manage grants, (4) provide technical assistance to industry, (5) develop a marketing plan for programs and services, and (6) serve as a regional economic development resource.

Qualifications and Requirements: (1) a bachelor's degree in Wood Technology or related field is required, (2) experience in wood products manufacturing is preferred, (3) knowledge of cabinetry and/or furniture manufacturing a plus, (4) experience in instructing and/or managing wood products training programs desired, (4) teaching experience preferred, (5) must be a self starter with a proven record of accomplishments and the ability to work with diverse groups and individuals, (6) excellent oral and written communication skills, (7) knowledgeable of computer applications, experience in CNC, and robotics applications preferred, (8) must relate to the community college mission, (9) must be effective in working with area manufacturers and economic developers, and (10) must be team oriented.

Salary: Commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Application Process: Interested candidates must submit a letter of interest, a resume, a State of Virginia Application for Employment (DHRM Form 10-012), found at www.dhrm.virginia.gov, copies of all college transcripts, and three professional letters of reference to:

Ann Taylor, Human Resources
DANVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
1008 South Main Street
Danville, VA 24541
(434) 797-8477
The Screening Committee will began reviewing applications 12/01/06.