

SWST Newsletter

January-February 2002

SOCIETY OF WOOD
SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

SWST

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Editor's Note

Dear Readers:

The semester is in full swing at U Maine and the students are currently celebrating winter carnival. We have had a warmer than normal winter, but the snow has been consistent since mid December. I



had a successful ice fishing trip at the beginning of January, and caught the biggest salmon of the group! The skiing has been quite good and I participated in a 14 Km cross country ski race on February 9. I did quite good for a middle-aged man (I.e. old fart).

Of late, the “buzz” around our department has focused on budget cuts, and the phasing out of CCA treated lumber. Looking forward to the Board meeting in sunny Florida. As always, I’m looking for Newsletter items. Thanks to Daryle Layton for the humor!

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Gardner

News Items

Department Name Change at Oregon State University

PLEASE NOTE NEW NAMES effective January 1, 2002:

DEPARTMENT OF WOOD SCIENCE & ENGINEERING
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Corvallis, OR 97331-5751

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The LSU School Adopts New Name: The School of Renewable Natural Resources

The Louisiana State University School of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries became the School of Renewable Natural Resources when final approval for the name change came from the Louisiana Board of Regents on January 24, 2002.

"The new name better explains the mission and scope of the school," said LSU AgCenter Chancellor Bill Richardson. "The school has become a leader in natural resource management, and the teaching, research and outreach programs of the school are more inclusive than reflected in the old name."

The school's director, Dr. Bob Blackmon, said, "the new name will provide the perfect umbrella for the school to grow in new directions impossible with the previous name. Currently on the drawing board are new studies in ecological restoration, human dimensions, forest products, wetland science, and conservation biology. Coupled with existing programs in forest resource

management, fisheries, wildlife ecology, and aquaculture, we are positioning our School is to address and, to educate students to be able to address, resource and environmental issues of the 21st century. So, the change is substantially more than a name change."

The School of Renewable Natural Resources is jointly administered by the LSU AgCenter, which oversees research and outreach activities, and the LSU A&M campus, which oversees the academic program.

"The new name is really about 21st century service to Louisiana and the country. We are building on our past and looking ahead to our future," said Director Blackmon.

Conferences and Events

The 8th International Inorganic-Bonded Wood and Fiber Materials Conference will be held on September 23-25, 2002 by the University of Idaho.

The 8th International Inorganic-Bonded Wood and Fiber Composite Material Conference has been announced for **September 23-25, 2002** in the world class resort of **Sun Valley, Idaho, USA**. **For detailed information and on-line registration please go to:**

www.uidaho.edu/inorganic

This conference brings together over 200 participants from nearly thirty countries to address the innovative technologies and markets for composites bonded with inorganic materials. The conference is highly recognized for addressing innovative topics combining wood, glass and other fibers with inorganic materials such as cement, gypsum and ceramics to produce a family of building and industrial products.

Industrial exhibits which include companies and businesses involved in these technologies are also displayed.

We invite you to attend and network with the world in one location while learning of the opportunities in these promising technologies. The flexible technologies featured in this conference can address multiple markets accessing low cost raw materials and industrial residues to manufacture products for international markets.

This conference series began in 1988 and is held once every two years. For more information you may also contact:

Prof. Al Moslemi
Conference Chairman
Email: amoslemi@uidaho.edu
www.uidaho.edu/inorganic

SWST Annual Meeting Theme 2002 June 23, 2002

The State of the Profession: Reviewing our Accomplishments, Establishing our Breadth and Outlining our Future

An overview of our uniqueness as materials scientists, multiple, short presentations about the status of the profession from around the world and a framework for accreditation in the future.

Visiting International Scientist Report

Visit to Luleå University of Technology in Skellefteå, Sweden

By Earl Kline

Last Year, I was invited to join the faculty at Luleå University of Technology for a research sabbatical. Embracing this opportunity, my family and I packed our bags and moved to Skellefteå, Sweden in January 2001 for a period of 5 months. Skellefteå, a small northern city of 35,000 people, is located on Sweden's northeastern coast about 120 km south of the arctic circle. While in this region, I focused part of my visit to explore and open international exchange opportunities through SWST's International Scientist Program.

Why Sweden?

The Wood Technology Division at the Luleå University of Technology in Skellefteå, Sweden is internationally known for its development and application of high technology systems for wood processing. Their research has resulted in successful industrial technologies that have shaped the way for new innovations in forest products manufacturing. With a research team of over 17 researchers, the Wood Technology Division has a critical mass to do real pioneering work. I joined this team to learn what makes their research program in this area so successful and to open the way for future exchange opportunities.

Why Skellefteå, Sweden in the winter?

If you love snow and winter sports, Northern Sweden is a great place to be in the winter!

Any difficulties with the Swedish language?

While the Swedes speak English almost as well as their own language, I knew I could develop a deeper understanding of the Swedish people and regional culture by learning their language. I thought Swedish was a very difficult language to learn. After noting how quickly my children could learn and retain Swedish words and phrases, I understood, with sobering realization, that the language difficulty was more correlated to my age than anything else! Nevertheless, by taking a regular Swedish language course and participating in stimulating Swedish discussions during coffee breaks, I managed to understand and speak enough of Swedish to be comfortable in casual conversations. Since the Swedes learn English instead of "American", I felt very useful at times when asked to translate some of the latest American jargon.

Did you Teach?

I co-taught an industrial image processing class. The courses seem to be a bit more "hands-on" and self directed but they are delivered and received basically the same as in the US. The students are a bit older and mature than ours, but they still like to have as much fun as our students do in the US.

Coincidentally, there were two US exchange students from University of Idaho's Department of Forest Products studying in Skellefteå, Keith Pratt and Kurt Johnson. I directed Keith in an independent study in wood processing sys-

tems that included some of the latest scanning and optimization technologies. Both Keith and Kurt indicated that they had an excellent education experience in Sweden. One of my goals now that I am back in the US is to promote more of this type of exchange for our undergraduate students.

The Wood Technology Division in Skellefteå has the same problem that we all struggle with in the US: low student numbers. As in North America, Sweden has a forest products industry that is very important to their economy and needs well-educated professionals to sustain this industry. But an education program to support this industry has a very tough challenge to market their program when competing with more glamorous high-tech fields such as engineering and computer science. Sounds like the same old tune, doesn't it?

What was your research focus?

The Wood Technology Division at Luleå University of Technology uses an integrated systems approach to investigate and improve processes from the growing and harvesting of a tree to the final wood product. The Skellefteå Campus has outstanding lab facilities for investigating different measurement technologies and information technologies for their appropriateness in the entire production life cycle. While my specific research focused on developing non-destructive measurement techniques to detect excessive in spiral grain in logs using an x-ray log scanner, this was only one piece of the puzzle that needed to fit together with other research results to improve the overall wood processing life cycle.

I was amazed at how all researchers at the Skellefteå Campus were aware of each other's work and at their keen vision of how all work must fit together to truly help both the industry and society. Even though this campus had 4 main departments or divisions of research, Wood Technology, Wood Physics, Wood Material Science, and Computer Science, I could not tell where the line was drawn. I thought this organization provided a very healthy environment for cooperative research to solve some very difficult problems facing our industry.

One very important observation to note that perhaps facilitates such close coordination and communication of research efforts is the Swede's religious observance of coffee breaks. Every day at 9:30 in the morning and at 2:30 in the afternoon, everyone would stop everything to meet for coffee. When I say everyone, teaching faculty sometimes plan to give their students a short breather in class so they don't miss coffee break. This practice took me some time to get used to because it is very hard for me to force myself away while in the middle of some type of research activity. But I had no choice; peer pressure was tough. What I discovered quickly during these breaks was not that I lost productivity, but actually gained. I could step away from a research problem and objectively discuss it with a captive group of experts over coffee. Do you think we could do this in our own Departments? If we could make a good fresh cup of coffee as the Swedes do, then maybe!

Any Future Plans?

In co-operation with the Luleå University of Technology, I am working on a study abroad program that will allow

students from the US to participate with students from Sweden for a 2-week study of the Swedish wood products industry. Hopefully, we can test this study abroad course with my Swedish colleagues as early as May 2002. If successful, I would ultimately like this study abroad opportunity be available to all SWST accredited undergraduate programs. Please let me know if anyone is interested in working with me on this study abroad program.

Conclusion

During my experience in Sweden, I learned that it is a good group of people who work closely together with a common vision to make a program so successful. It was an honor and a pleasure to be invited by the faculty at Luleå University of Technology in Skellefteå, Sweden. The experience gained and the friendships forged were priceless. I would like to thank Luleå University of Technology for hosting my visit and SWST and Virginia Tech for sponsoring and supporting my visit. I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to Owe Lindgren and Olle Hagman for setting the wheels in motion that gave me this opportunity. Special thanks to Jan Nyström and Eva-Stina Nordlund for helping my family and me find our way during the first weeks in Sweden. Finally, I wish to thank "the whole gang" for their friendship and making my stay in Sweden an outstanding experience.

Positions

Research Opportunities for Engineering and Science Undergraduates

Civil, Mechanical, Chemical Engineering Wood Science Materials Science Computer Science Composite Materials Chemistry Physics Biology

Announcing 10 Summer Research Internships at the University of Maine in the area of Advanced Engineered Wood Composites

The Advanced Engineered Wood Composites Center is a National Science Foundation funded multidisciplinary research group working toward developing the next generation of cost-effective, high performance fiber-reinforced polymer (FRP) wood composite construction materials. Researchers from structural engineering, mechanics, composites materials, and wood science have teamed up for some exciting and relevant research & development projects. Students will receive a \$3,600 stipend plus a \$700 travel allowance for a nine week project period starting June 10, 2002. Underrepresented students are encouraged to apply.

Applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents.
Application Deadline March 16, 2002.

Sample Projects: *Structural systems and component development, testing and modeling*

Characterization and processing of FRP reinforcement systems

Novel wood/FRP adhesion strategies

Environmentally benign manufacturing

Biological decay mechanisms

Microstructural characterization and modeling

Nondestructive evaluation, Advanced instrumentation

The summer program will be conducted at the University of Maine campus in Orono. Free housing is available on campus. There are numerous opportunities for outdoor recreational activities such as hiking, mountain biking, canoeing and sea kayaking. The campus is located a short distance from Bangor, Maine and its international airport. Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park is one hour away to the east, and Baxter State Park, home of Mount Katahdin (the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail) is an hour away to the north.

See our web site for more info: <http://www.umeciv.maine.edu/REU>

Or contact: Professor Eric Landis, REU Program Director

Center for Advanced Engineered Wood Composites
University of Maine

5793 AEWB Building

Orono, ME 04469-5793

(207) 581-2173

(207) 581-3888 (fax)

landis@maine.edu

Assistant/Associate Research Professor and Extension Specialist in Wood Composites

The Wood Materials and Engineering Laboratory (WMEL) at Washington State University announces a faculty opening beginning July 1, 2002. The position will carry a permanent, non-tenure track, 12-month appointment. Responsibilities include extension education (50%) and applied research (50%) duties specializing in wood composite production and application. The appointment will be filled at the assistant/associate professor level in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and WSU Cooperative Extension.

A Ph.D. in engineering, wood science, or related technical field is required with experience in applied research activities of wood composites. Experience in outreach, technology transfer, and industrial research is highly desirable. Specific responsibilities for this position include a lead role in the WSU International Wood Composites Symposium and oversight of industry-sponsored research currently underway at the WMEL.

In addition, the successful candidate is expected to develop synergistic efforts in outreach and continuing education, sponsored research, publication, and other scholarly activities. The position provides excellent opportunities to participate in interdisciplinary research with a variety of faculty currently conducting wood research. Additional information about the Laboratory and Department is available at <http://www.wmel.wsu.edu/> and <http://www.ce.wsu.edu/>.

Review of application materials will begin April 15, 2002 and will continue until the position is filled. Applicants are requested to send a cover letter indicating level of application (assistant, associate), resume, graduate and undergraduate transcripts and names, addresses and phone numbers of five references to:

Dr. Michael Wolcott
Chair, Search Committee
Wood Materials and Engineering Laboratory
Washington State University
Pullman, WA 99164-1806

WSU IS AN EO/AA EMPLOYER

Humor

Courtesy of Daryle Layton

Subject: Today's Groaners

Two vultures board an airplane, each carrying two dead raccoons. The stewardess looks at them and says, "I'm sorry, gentlemen, only one carrion allowed per passenger."

Did you hear that NASA recently put a bunch of Holsteins into low earth orbit? They called it the herd shot 'round the world.

Two boll weevils grew up in South Carolina. One went to Hollywood and became a famous actor. The other stayed behind in the cotton fields and never amounted to much. The second one, naturally, became known as the lesser of two weevils.

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, but when they lit a fire in the craft it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it, too.

A three legged dog walks into a saloon in the Old West.

He slides up to the bar and announces: "I'm looking for the man who shot my paw."

Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused Novocain during a root canal? He wanted to transcend dental medication.

A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?" they asked, as they moved off. "Because," he said, "I can't stand chess nuts boasting in an open foyer."

A woman has twins, and gives them up for adoption. One of them goes to a family in Egypt and is named "Amal." The other goes to a family in Spain; they name him "Juan." Years later, Juan sends a picture of himself to his birth mother. Upon receiving the picture, she tells her husband that she wishes she also had a picture of Amal. Her husband responds, "They're twins! If you've seen Juan, you've seen Amal."

These friars were behind on their belfry payments, so they opened up a small florist shop to raise funds. Since everyone liked to buy flowers from the men of God, a rival florist across town thought the competition was unfair. He asked the good fathers to close down, but they would not. He went back and begged the friars to close. They ignored him. So, the rival florist hired Hugh MacTaggart, the roughest and most vicious thug in town to "persuade" them to close. Hugh beat up the friars and trashed their store, saying he'd be back if they didn't close up shop. Terrified, they did so, thereby proving that: Hugh, and only Hugh, can prevent florist friars.

And finally, there was a man who sent 10 different puns to friends, in the hope that at least one of the puns would make them laugh. Unfortunately, no pun in ten did.

Things aren't always as they appear!

A man named Mr. Smith was flying from San Francisco to LA. Unexpectedly, the plane stopped in Sacramento along the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft, the plane would re-board in 30 minutes.

Everybody got off the plane except one gentleman who was blind. Mr. Smith had noticed him as he

walked by and could tell the blind man had flown before because his Seeing Eye dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of him throughout the entire flight. Mr. Smith could also tell he had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached him, and calling him by name, said "Keith, we're in Sacramento for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?" Keith replied, "No thanks, but maybe the dog would like to stretch his legs."

Picture this: All the people in the gate area came to a complete quiet standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with the Seeing Eye dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses.

People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, they were trying to change airlines!



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SWST is a technical and professional organization for scientists and engineers working in academia, government, consulting and the forest-products industries and is dedicated to providing education and expertise regarding better ways to use and produce wood products

Items for the newsletter may be sent to Doug Gardner, at the above Society address.

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