

## A power suit

SawStop LLC, a Tualatin, Ore.-based saw manufacturer, has filed an antitrust lawsuit in a Virginia federal court against the **Power Tool Institute**, an industry group of power-tool manufacturers that includes **Stanley Black &**

**Decker, Delta, DeWalt, Makita, Milwaukee, Porter-Cable, Ryobi, Skil** and others. SawStop is alleging that the group conspired to boycott SawStop's safety mechanism

by collectively agreeing not to license the technology. In reply, the Power Tool Institute has filed a motion to have the lawsuit dismissed, in part because the group says licensing negotiations were still ongoing after the alleged conspiracy was to have started.



**Sawstop's demonstration of its safety mechanism is a staple at many trade shows as the device is designed to stop a saw at the slightest touch of a finger — or hot dog. The licensing of the technology is now at the centre of a class-action lawsuit.**

## Passing the torch



*Jamison Scott*

The **Wood Machinery Manufacturers of America** (WMMA) has announced the election of **Jamison Scott** as its new president.

Scott serves as executive vice president of **Air Handling Systems** in Woodbridge, Conn., and is considered an expert on the topic of combustible dust. Scott is replacing outgoing WMMA president **John Schultz**.

## Export award

**Super Thin Saws** of Waterbury, Vt., has been selected the U.S. **Small Business Administration's 2014 Vermont Exporter of the Year**. The award will be presented to the company during a formal ceremony in June. According to **John Schultz**,

president of Super Thin Saws, "Super Thin Saws has won a very nice award." With tongue firmly in cheek, Schultz adds, "If one can judge the magnitude of the achievement by the magnitude of the paperwork, we should be very proud indeed. Alternatively, the magnitude of the paperwork might mean that no one else bothered to fill in all the damn forms!"

## Osborne promotion



**Smedberg (left) and c.e.o. Leon Osborne during the promotion announcement.**

**Osborne Wood Products** has promoted **Christian Smedberg** from director of marketing to associate vice

president, where his responsibilities will include oversight of the warehouse and shipping department. Smedberg says one of his anticipated challenges will be "gaining an understanding for and working to optimize the workflow of this key department."

## Not a bleak picture

According to **Statistics Canada**, the total value of building permits nationally was just below \$6 billion, which represents a three-percent decline from February, and follows an 11.3-percent decrease in the previous month. However, the picture is not as bleak as is being generally reported. First, on a non-seasonally-adjusted basis, the value of permits went up: from \$4.8 billion in February to \$5.9 billion in March. In addition, while intentions in the institutional and industrial components went down, the value of permits in the residential sector actually went up in March: a one-percent increase to \$3.7 billion. Specific strength was exhibited in the multi-family-dwellings category, with permits rising by 7.9 percent

in March to a value of \$1.6 billion. Canadian municipalities approved the construction of 15,833 new dwellings, which is 12.2 percent more than in February. Permits for multi-family dwellings increased by 21.2 percent to 10,191 units. Ontario was the hardest hit of all the provinces, followed by Quebec and New Brunswick. The largest increases occurred in Alberta, where commercial building intentions still remain strong.

### A cluster effect

Walkerton, Ont.-based wood-products manufacturer, **Bogdon & Gross Furniture Company** (B&G), has initiated bankruptcy proceedings and has submitted a creditor list amounting to approximately \$2 million in unpaid debts. B&G had been in business since 1927. Recently, the company and its president and co-owner, **Adam Hofmann**, were pillars of the **Bluewater Wood Alliance**, a cluster-based organization designed to pool resources of wood-industry manufacturers in south-western Ontario in order to accrue cost savings and marketing advantages of a larger organization, while maintaining the independence of individual members.

**Mike Baker** is now the group's manager and has been assigned to expand the organization under the oversight of the board of directors. **Andrew Schuster** of **Crate Designs** in Chesley, Ont., is now Bluewater's current president. In a statement, Bluewater minimized the impact that B&G's difficulties will have on the alliance and cited government support in sustaining future growth.

### Taurus Craco hire



**Mazen Badr**

has been working in Taurus Craco's parts and service department since September 2012. Badr is a graduate from the marketing program at Humber College in Toronto, Ont., and brings 10 years of experience in the building industry.

Machinery distributor **Taurus Craco** has appointed **Mazen Badr** as the company's sales representative for eastern Ontario. Badr

### Grass makes moves



**George Pavlov**

Wood-industry hardware manufacturer **Grass** has hired **George Pavlov** as an additional area sales manager for Ontario. Pavlov has more than

20 years experience in commercial and residential millwork and design and will support the company's distribution partners and industry customers.

Grass has also announced a move to a new, larger facility, which is still located in the Scarborough district of Toronto, Ont., but at a new location: 10 Newgale Gate, Unit 7. To accommodate expected future growth, the new facility has more offices, a showroom with show-kitchen, and 70 percent more warehouse space, including a machine room.

### Opportunity awaits



**Angie Goldsmith (left) and Sonia Da Costa of CBSF pitch to students at Conestoga the qualifications needed to work at the store-fixtue company in Woodbridge, Ont.**

Conestoga College held the **Woodworking Industry Expo & Job Fair** at its Kitchener, Ont. campus site on March 18, 2014. The well-attended event gave Conestoga's woodworking students a chance to submit resumes to wood-industry manufacturers and discuss career opportunities in the sector.

According to many of the employer exhibitors on hand, there is no shortage of work available. For example, **Teresa Viscardi**, office manager at **Alliance Fixtures** in Concord, Ont., says, "We recently hired a couple of graduates from Conestoga's woodworking program. They have done very well for us. The learning curve is shorter for these grads than if we hire from the street, which we often have to do." During a question-and-answer session afterwards, students eagerly asked an expert panel about what it took to succeed in the wood industry. According to the experts, it takes a love for wood, patience to work one's way up the ladder, and expectations that don't involve making a quick fortune in order to succeed.