Welcome to Paper2020!

On behalf of the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) and the National Paper Trade Association (NPTA), it is our pleasure to welcome you to Paper2020!

Paper2020 offers unparalleled opportunities to make new connections, renew existing relationships and gain new insight on emerging industry issues. On Monday, the Paper Industry Leadership Session will feature a distinguished panel of executives who will discuss how to meet the challenges of climate change and the circular economy.

Tuesday will begin with an update from Paper and Packaging Board Executive Director Mary Anne Hanson on the five-year impact and accomplishments of the program, followed by seminars from Fastmarkets RISI’s Derek Mahlb urg and Abdulla Zaid on the global market trends for printing-writing papers, paper-based packaging and recovered fiber.

The Paper2020 Luncheon will feature Carla Harris, vice chairman, global wealth management and senior client advisor at Morgan Stanley. She will impart her expertise and wisdom in addressing the importance and power of perceptions in the workplace, nurturing key relationships to ensure success and the qualities of impactful and influential leaders that attract and grow a talented workforce.

During the Luncheon, NPTA will present Mike Graves of Midland Paper, Packaging + Supplies with the Stanley O. Styles Industry Excellence Award.

Throughout Paper2020, networking sessions, suite meetings and various association committee meetings will take place. The Paper2020 Connections Lounge will be open to all registrants to meet, recharge between meetings and plan your day.

Official Paper2020 Suites are open today from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. Your Paper2020 Convention Daily includes a complete list of suites and their locations. Do make sure to contact each company directly to make appointments, as they maintain their own schedules.

Thank you for joining us in New York City. Enjoy your time at Paper2020!

Year-end Trade Deals Offer Hope for the Future

The United States’ use of tariffs as a policy tool and retaliatory tariffs imposed by trading partners on U.S. goods generated strong headwinds last year for international trade around the world. President Trump imposed tariffs — or threatened to do so — on hundreds of billions of dollars of imports from a host of countries, citing adverse trade practices by U.S. trading partners and the large U.S. trade deficit.

Trade tensions between the U.S. and major trading partners directly and indirectly affected the performance of U.S. pulp and paper industry and its exports in 2019. Total U.S. wood pulp exports declined 6.4 percent to $5.4 billion, while exports of paper, paperboard and converted products dropped 8.1 percent to an estimated $15.1 billion. U.S. imports of paper, paperboard and converted products were off 4.4 percent to $16.3 billion.

**U.S.-China Trade Conflict**

The main cause of uncertainty has been the trade conflict between the U.S. and China featuring tit-for-tat tariffs each country imposed on the other’s products. After finding that China violated U.S. trading rights including theft of intellectual property, forced transfer of technology, currency manipulation and massive subsidies to state-owned-enterprise, the Trump Administration during the summer of 2018 imposed additional tariffs of 25 percent on $50 billion worth of Chinese products, including such products as paper and paperboard machinery and parts. China retaliated with 25 percent tariffs on a list of imports from the U.S. that included recovered paper. Following this, the U.S. imposed 10 percent tariffs, rising to 25 percent in June 2019, on another $200 billion of Chinese goods, including paper, paperboard and converted products. China responded with tariffs on more U.S. goods, including 5 percent tariffs on U.S. wood pulp and 5-20 percent tariffs on U.S. paper and paperboard.

The trade war has had a negative effect on two-way trade last year. On a dollar value basis, U.S. exports of wood pulp to China were off 13.7 percent and exports of paper and paperboard were down close to 23 percent, including a 35 percent drop in the exports of kraft linerboard. The value of recovered paper exports to China was down 33 percent after a 21 percent decline in 2018. China’s 25 percent tariffs on U.S. recovered paper — on top of volume and quality import restrictions in place since 2018 — added to the slide. On the import side, paper and paperboard from China, mostly converted products (e.g., paper bags, corrugated and folding boxes, paper plates and hygienic paper goods) were down almost 20 percent.

(continued on page 8)
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JP Gould and all its divisions have rebranded as OVOL USA. This change reflects Japan Pulp & Paper’s vision of creating a global marketing brand built on the foundation of worldwide collaboration. Through our diverse network and reach, we are uniquely positioned to confront the latest challenges of the ever-evolving paper industry.

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We embrace technology as part of our consultative approach. Our global assets include the most advanced technological resources, including predictive market analytics, reporting, and real-time dashboards. These digital systems facilitate swift, critical decision making and deliver positive outcomes for customers. And we continue to explore expansion into adjacent markets to leverage our collective knowledge base and capabilities and apply them in new areas.

The OVOL USA core values are defined by our commitment to integrity, respect for others, and a focus on team orientation.

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Converters across North America depend on WestRock for quality kraft paper products backed by industry expertise. From bags to packaging to industrial applications, our ReliaKraft™ portfolio of kraft paper including FibreGreen®, TEA-Kraft™ and FibreShield®, is engineered for efficiency and performance – helping you deliver the products your customers rely on.

That’s the ReliaKraft™ advantage.
Domtar Corporation in mid-February entered into an asset purchase agreement with Appvion Operations, Inc. to acquire Appvion’s Point of Sale (POS) paper business. The agreement includes the coater and related equipment located only at the West Carrollton, Ohio, facility as well as a license for all corresponding intellectual property. The transaction is expected to close in the second quarter of 2020.

“Domtar is delighted to be working with Appvion to expand its POS business,” said John Williams, President and CEO of Domtar. Graeme Hodson, President of Appvion’s Paper division, noted, “Appvion and Domtar have enjoyed a strong mutually beneficial relationship over the last several years as part of our long term supply agreement. The West Carrollton asset sale builds on that relationship and provides an opportunity for our POS business employees to become a part of a large integrated pulp and paper producer with the capability to leverage the coating asset to its maximum potential. “Appvion will work closely with Domtar to enable a smooth transition of the business and ensure our POS customers continue to receive the exemplary customer service and high quality products they have come to expect,” Hodson added.

Appvion will continue its focus and development efforts on its broad range of products servicing its customers in the Tag, Label & Entertainment markets, the Carbonless & Specialty paper markets, as well as the newly formed Packaging & Specialty Coating Division.

Domtar Agrees To Purchase Appvion Point Of Sale Business

The agreement includes the coater and related equipment located only at the West Carrollton, Ohio, facility as well as a license for all corresponding intellectual property.

Metsä Board Named on CDP ‘A List’ for Leading Effort against Climate Change

Metsä Board has again achieved a place on CDP’s prestigious ‘A List’ for climate change. CDP is a global non-profit environmental disclosure platform that drives companies and governments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, safeguard water resources and protect forests. Metsä Board has been included on the CDP Climate ‘A List’ since 2016.

“We are pleased to be included once again on CDP’s ‘A List’ for our efforts to work towards achieving 100% fossil free mills by 2030 and to continue making progress in reducing our carbon footprint,” says Mika Joukio, CEO of Metsä Board. “Last year we published our target to have 100% fossil free mills by 2030 and the ‘A List’ position confirms that we are working towards this ambitious goal.”

Metsä Board was recognized for its actions to cut emissions, mitigate climate risks and develop a low-carbon economy. It is one of a small number of high-performing companies out of the thousands that were scored. In 2019, over 8,400 companies submitted information to be independently assessed against CDP’s supplier engagement rating methodology.

WestRock Named to FORTUNE’s List of World’s Most Admired Companies

WestRock Company has been named to FORTUNE magazine’s annual list of the World’s Most Admired Companies. It is the fifth-consecutive year WestRock has been named to the prestigious list. The World’s Most Admired Companies list is widely considered to be the definitive report card on corporate reputation. It is based on company surveys and peer ratings from senior executives, directors and analysts on nine attributes considered critical to a company’s global success.

“I am proud of the work our 50,000 team members around the world do every day to connect people to products and to deliver value for our customers and stockholders,” said Steve Voorhees, CEO of WestRock. “This honor recognizes their dedication and commitment to making WestRock the leading paper and packaging company.”
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The most creative ideas for paper
Sappi North America’s Somerset Mill Certified to ISO 22000: 2018 Food Safety Management System Standard

Sappi North America announced that its Somerset Mill in Skowhegan, Maine is certified to the ISO 22000:2018 Food Safety Management System (FSMS) standard. Sappi is considered a Tier 3 supplier in the food supply chain and this new certification applies to all products produced at the mill.

“With this certification we are now able to provide our customers in the food packaging industry with assurance out of the gate that our products meet the strict industry standards for safety,” said Heather Pelletier, Director of Packaging Brands, Sappi North America. “We continue to invest in and improve our mills to make sure our products meet our customers’ needs. This is an important next step in our journey as we continue to set the new standard for paperboard packaging.”

In 2018, Sappi completed a substantial rebuild of Paper Machine 1 at its Somerset Mill. Following the rebuild, the company is now producing a range of paperboard packaging grades, including products for food end uses. Proto C1S is a sturdy, single-ply SBS capable of meeting a breadth of applications with substantial feel at a lighter weight. Proto Litho brings all the benefits of Proto to meet corrugated litho lamination packaging needs. Spectro is a single-ply SBS with enhanced optics, making it ideal for premium applications that call for dynamic and vibrant images.

On other machines at the Somerset Mill, Sappi produces its LusterPrint and LusterCote packaging papers; its Opus, Somerset and Flo graphics papers; as well as its Somerset Synergy ECF premium kraft pulp.

In order to meet the requirements of the ISO 22000:2018 FSMS, Sappi evaluated the production, storage and transportation processes for potential hazards and implemented monitoring and control systems to prevent product contamination.

As part of building the food safety management system, Sappi also followed the guidelines provided in the technical specification ISO/TS 22002-4:2013, Prerequisite Programmes on Food Safety - Part 4: Food packaging manufacturing. As an upstream provider of substrates to packaging converters, this technical specification provides the best operating floor systems guidance for a substrate supplier.
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Verso Completes Sale of Androscoggin and Stevens Point Mills to Pixelle

Verso Corporation on Feb. 10 announced that it completed the sale of its Androscoggin Mill, located in Jay, Maine, and Stevens Point Mill, located in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, to Pixelle Specialty Solutions LLC.

“We are pleased to have completed the sale of our Androscoggin and Stevens Point mills to Pixelle,” said Verso Chief Executive Officer Adam St. John. “After the transaction, we will continue to be a debt-free company with significant manufacturing and financial flexibility, well positioned to enhance our competitive market position, effectively respond to industry trends and take advantage of low-risk, high-return opportunities that should create long-term value for all of our stakeholders.”

Verso President Mike Weinhold added, “With the sale of the Stevens Point and Androscoggin mills, we will now focus on the growth and enhancement of our pulp and packaging products as well as the specialty products produced at our remaining mills.”

The Androscoggin mill has the capacity to produce about 425,000 tons of paper per year while the Stevens Point mill has the capacity to produce approximately 210,000 tons of paper per year.

Catalyst Launches BISTRO OGR Food Service Paper

Catalyst recently launched its new oil, grease resistant (OGR) food grade in natural and bleached, adding to its growing line of food service papers that include bag, waxing and laminating. The new OGR paper exceeds the requirements for smoothness, printability and reliability.

BISTRO food service papers are produced from Catalyst’s FDA-compliant mills located on the west coast of British Columbia. Catalyst supplies a clean, safe, virgin fibre choice for food grade papers and offers customizable solutions for customers.

BISTRO has a recognized sustainable manufacturing profile, with a verifiable, certified chain-of-custody under SFI and PEFC programs. Catalyst is a long-time member of the Sustainable Packaging Coalition.

“We’re proud to introduce OGR food paper to the market,” says Mark Petersen, Vice President, International and Specialty Papers, “and are confident that BISTRO, backed by our industry-leading sales and customer support team, will provide outstanding solutions for our customers’ food service needs.”

Metsä Board to Invest EUR 20 Million to Modernize Finishing Area at Kyro Mill

Metsä Board will modernize its board machine finishing area at Kyro mill in Kyrokoski, Finland. The rebuild includes a new reeler, winder and renewal of the reel broke handling system.

The Kyro mill produces high quality coated folding boxboard and the new eco-barrier paperboard. The mill has an annual production capacity of 190,000 tonnes.

The investment value is EUR 20 million and the new machinery is scheduled to start up during autumn 2021.
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The 2020 elections are underway and—despite a host of uncertainties between now and Election Day—new faces will be entering Washington, D.C., next year. Not only is the control of the White House in flux, but the balance of power in the House, Senate and dozens of statehouses across the nation may change as well.

There are 35 Senate seats up for election: Republicans hold 23 and Democrats hold 12. If Democrats net four seats, they will take control of the Senate; netting three seats would result in a tie and the majority would be decided by the vice president’s party. In the House, all 435 seats are up for reelection in 2020. Democrats are defending their majority after a net gain of 40 seats in 2018 elections, leaving Republicans to net around 18 seats to flip the chamber. Republicans are targeting a list of more than 50 seats and among them are 30 districts that President Donald Trump won in 2016.

Interestingly, Texas may be seeing a slight swing back to Democrats’ favor after decades of Republican control. One-quarter of the state’s GOP House delegation announced their retirement, leaving competitive districts in flux. In the Senate, Democrats are defending their majority after a net gain of 40 seats in 2018 elections, leaving Republicans to net around 18 seats to flip the chamber. Republicans are targeting a list of more than 50 seats and among them are 30 districts that President Donald Trump won in 2016.

AF&PA will support policies that will sustain our industry’s environmental success story and ability to provide consumers with recyclable, renewable and sustainable products.

What’s Going On: An Update from Washington, D.C., and the Campaign Trail

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On the Presidential front, Democratic Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Mayor Pete Buttigieg (D-South Bend) have captured the “progressive” and “moderate” lanes of their party respectively after the first two contests in Iowa and New Hampshire. With Super Tuesday looming at the time of writing, former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s massive war chest and his advertising blitz in these key states could shake up the race’s dynamics midway through the campaign season.

Trump’s reelection campaign is in full swing and is highly organized. He announced raising $46 million in the final three months of 2019 and ended the year with $102.7 million cash on hand. Overall, he has raised more than any other president in his first three years in office.

After winning in 2016 through a sweep of critical electoral states, Trump must mobilize his supporters on Election Day and energize his base in the coming months to match any Democratic momentum. Three regions will comprise the battlegrounds in 2020: the “Rust Belt,” (Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin), the “Sun Belt” (Arizona, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and Texas) and New England (Maine’s Second Congressional District and New Hampshire). These eleven states present dozens of scenarios, but the most plausible path to victory for Democrats consists of retaking the Rust Belt (minus Minnesota), which Trump secured for Republicans for the first time in decades.

However, as the election countdown continues, Congress is still facing a full legislative agenda both in the House and Senate. In the short term, legislators and regulators are eager to complete their to-do lists before the summer and fall campaign season hampers any further progress on their priorities.

Critically, the House and Senate must come to an agreement on infrastructure funding to address infrastructure upgrades and needed policy reforms before the September 2020 deadline. Apart from transportation, a number of tax provisions are set expire at the close of year. Democrats in the House have continued to make climate policy a chief concern, while Republicans in the Senate will look to tackle a series of nominations across the executive branch and federal judiciary.

AF&PA will support policies that will sustain our industry’s environmental success story and ability to provide consumers with recyclable, renewable and sustainable products. Moreover, we are actively supporting our industry’s priorities relating to biomass, paper recycling, regulatory reform and transportation infrastructure.
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Sonoco’s Alloyd Division Introduces All-Paper Retail Blister Package

The Alloyd Division of Sonoco announced the introduction of its first, all-paper retail blister package. The new EnviroSense PaperBlister™ provides an alternative to the more traditional thermoformed plastic blister package that is found prominently in retail outlets around the world.

The EnviroSense PaperBlister is a plastic-free package that is recyclable in the paper stream and is also available with SFI Certification when requested. Because it uses water-based sealing technology, there are no VOC’s connected with the package.

According to Sonoco, in terms of the new blister package’s overall environmental footprint as it relates to transportation and materials, the new paper blister package delivers more efficiency than traditional plastic blister products, which require three times more shipping cartons, leading to increased weight, more packaging material, fewer pack-

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(continued from page 8)

labor unions, the administration agreed, and gained approval from mexico and canada, to several amendments that would enhance scrutiny of mexican labor conditions, increase enforcement of environmental protection laws, strengthen dispute and enforcement mechanisms and reduce patent protections for biologics.

af&pa actively supported the usmca because it preserves duty-free trade in north america for industrial goods, including pulp and paper. in 2018, u.s. pulp and paper exports to canada and mexico exceeded $10 billion and represented about 44 percent of the industry’s total exports. also, the agreement’s environment chapter promotes sustainable forest management and commits the parties to fight illegally harvested wood legal trade in forest products.

the canadian parliament is yet to ratify usmca but that is expected to happen no later than april this year. each country has to check off all requirements specific to the operation of the agreement, so the usmca is likely to take effect in the second half of 2020.

2020 outlook

while last year ended on a positive note in addressing u.s. trade issues with key trading partners, the reciprocal imposition of tariffs and the disruption in international trade flows such measures can cause is expected to be the narrative in 2020 again.

in january, president trump issued an executive order announcing plans to impose 25 percent tariffs on some articles of steel and 10 percent tariffs on some articles of aluminum. these tariffs are intended to stop the surge in imports of these articles following the president’s imposition of the initial steel and aluminum tariffs from certain countries in march 2018 under national security provisions of u.s. trade laws.

relations with the european union (eu) are expected to be more confrontational in 2020. while in 2019 the trump administration withheld imposing national security tariffs on auto and auto parts from the eu, the threat of such tariffs is still in play. if such tariffs are imposed, it would likely lead to eu retaliatory tariffs on imports from the u.s. valued in the tens of billions of dollars.

other unresolved issues between the u.s. and the eu are airbus and boeing subsidies, digital service taxes and the lack of progress on free trade talks, which could further sour the bilateral trade relations.

on the other hand, the administration is keen to reach a free trade agreement with a post-brexit united kingdom, expand on the partial trade agreement with japan and open the indian market to more u.s. goods and services.

(continued from page 8)
Streco Fibres announced the addition of two new professionals to the company — Austin Henry and Clara Saddi. Henry is a native of Virginia Beach, Virginia and graduated from Christopher Newport University in 2019 with a degree in Finance and Business. In addition, he was a four-year college athlete on CNU’s baseball team.

“Austin brings knowledge, new energy and is looking forward to serving both current and new clients in the domestic market,” said John Strelitz, President of Streco.

Saddi is from Goiania, Brazil with an advanced degree in Engineering. She has vast experience in the manufacturing industry and is helping Streco to service its international markets concentrating on Brazil.

“Specializing in sourcing and logistics, Clara is enthusiastic to assist in our customers’ needs and grow our global markets,” Strelitz added.

During PaperWeek, Streco is represented by John Strelitz, Ken Johnson, Ryan Henry, Mike Plunkett, Mike White, Austin Henry, and Streco’s International Division headed by Angelica Campomanes. All representatives are available for meetings at the Lotte New York Palace.

Pixelle Specialty Solutions has named John P. Jacunski as Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of the company.

Pixelle was created in 2018 through private investment firm Lindsay Goldberg’s acquisition of Glatfelter’s Specialty Papers Business Unit.

Prior to joining Pixelle, Jacunski served P.H. Glatfelter Company from 2003 until 2019 in positions of increasing responsibility, including Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, President of the Specialty Papers Business Unit, and Vice President and Controller.

Jacunski earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from John Carroll University and completed leadership and strategy programs at Wharton School of Business.

Oren International’s New Green Deals

Located in sunny Pensacola, Florida, Oren International continues to position themselves as the market leader with a new 135” rewinder and solar panels to power the plant and net meter – sending excess electricity back to the grid.

Oren spent 2019 investing in new paper converting machinery for its industrial and food packaging products. In addition to manufacturing SOM bags, mailing tubes and fiber cores, Oren continues to be a leader in sheeting, slitting/rewinding, coating and flexographic printing. Last year the company added another Jennerjahn rewinder to their facility. The new JLS 135 is coupled with an advanced packaging line to handle finished rolls up to 135” in width with OD’s from 4” up to 18” all fully shrink wrapped and loaded on pallets to be shipped around the world. Capable of slitting/rewinding substrates from 18gsm to 150gsm with its optional tapeless tuckless rewind feature, the new JLS can is one of a kind and can handle specialty coated and uncoated products where layer to layer embossing must be avoided.

Oren also installed a solar power system to energize its entire 180,000 sq. foot manufacturing facility and offices saving the environment over saving 105 barrels of oil per month and a carbon offset of 83,000 lbs./month. The new system has a capacity in excess of 525 kilowatts (“kW”), is comprised of over 1,400 individual solar panels and showcases state-of-the-art data monitoring capabilities.

Oren is committed to mitigating the need for foreign energy and fossil fuels and working towards a healthier environment for us all. Contact us at info@oren-intl.com for more information or to schedule a meeting in NYC or sunny Florida!
UPM Says “Full Speed Ahead” for USD 3 Billion Pulp Mill Project in Uruguay

UPM on July 23, 2019 announced its decision to build a 2.1 million tonnes per year greenfield eucalyptus pulp mill near Paso de los Toros in central Uruguay. Besides the mill, the total investment of USD 3 billion also includes a pulp terminal in the port of Montevideo as well as investments in local facilities in Paso de los Toros.

In December 2019, UPM published the following update on the progress of construction activities associated with the mill project:

“The last few months have also been very exciting for us — since the investment decision in July we have moved full speed ahead to start preparatory work for our new pulp mill in Paso de los Toros. In addition to the new mill, this project includes building a pulp terminal at the Montevideo port as well as other related facilities, such as permanent and temporary apartments and houses for construction employees, and infrastructure.

“There are currently over 700 people working on the mill site preparation, housing construction in the outskirts of Paso de los Toros as well as on pulp terminal construction and dredging at the port.

“Besides construction, several initiatives have been started in line with the regional development plan. These include both professional and complementary training, support for entrepreneurship as well as awareness building — for example on road safety.”

According to UPM, the new pulp mill will grow the company’s current pulp capacity by more than 50%, resulting in a step change in the scale of UPM’s pulp business as well as in UPM’s future earnings.

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Cepi Names Ignazio Capuano of Burgo Group as Its New Chairman

Cepi (Confederation of European Paper Industries) announced that Ignazio Capuano is its new chairman. Capuano is CEO of the Italian firm Burgo Group Spa and Vice President of the Italian paper manufacturers’ association, Assocarta.

Capuano has worked in the paper industry since 1991 as General Manager of Saffa, CEO of Reno de Medici, and his current role as CEO of Burgo Group since 2016. He has also worked in the utility sector as CEO of RWE Italy, in the banking industry with Manufacturers Hanover Trust of New York (now JP Morgan Chase) and in the strategic consulting sector with KPMG.

Capuano holds an Engineering degree and a Master’s degree in Economy from the University of New York.

Capuano will serve a two-year term from 2020 to the end of 2021.

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Sonoco Elects Howard Coker as President and CEO, Succeeds Rob Tiede

Sonoco on Feb. 3 announced the election of R. Howard Coker, as its President and CEO with immediate effect. Previously, Coker served as senior vice president of Sonoco’s Paper/Industrial Converted Products segment.

Coker, 57, succeeds Robert Tiede, 61, who elected to retire from Sonoco after serving as president and CEO since April 2018.

“I’m honored by the confidence the Board has shown in me and embrace this opportunity,” Coker said. “I grew up in this company, so I am deeply connected to Sonoco, its culture and all the people who have helped build it into what it is today. I look forward to working with our strong leadership team, alongside our 23,000 associates globally, to build Sonoco into an even greater company to the benefit of our shareholders, our people and our communities.”
DS Smith said recent figures have increased sharply for sales of paper for shopping bags, as retailers adapt to new attitudes towards single-use plastic.

Last year alone, DS Smith’s Kemsley Paper Mill — the largest paper recycling mill in the UK — supplied enough paper to make around 400 million bags used by major retailers and food takeaway chains.

According to DS Smith, the company continues to see considerable growth from customers. Bag manufacturers require year on year increases in recycled paper to manufacture bags, with orders increasing by 400% over the past three years.

In addition, DS Smith’s e-commerce packaging site, ePack, has seen an increase of 262% in orders of recyclable paper bags in the three months prior to Black Friday.

According to recent studies, the global market for paper bags is booming and is expected to demonstrate further significant growth between now and 2023.

“Over the past three years, we have seen significant interest in sustainable solutions to a variety of packaging challenges, including the shopping bag,” said Ben Jennings, General Manager at DS Smith Kemsley Paper Mill. “Across our network our paper contains over 80% recycled content and across the supply chain, from punnets to bags, we are working with customers to find solutions to remove single-use plastics.”

According to recent studies, the global market for paper bags is booming and is expected to demonstrate further significant growth between now and 2023.

Cascades to Close Tissue Converting Operations at Waterford, NY and Kingman, AZ

Cascades will permanently close tissue converting operations at its Waterford, New York and Kingman, Arizona plants, effective March 27, 2020.

Cascades emphasized that the closures do not involve the Waterford customer service or distribution centers, while the Kingman distribution center will continue to operate until the lease ends in October 2020.

The two sites produce a combined total of 9 million cases of tissue products annually.

“The difficult, but necessary decisions we are announcing are part of our strategic efforts to improve the tissue group’s profitability and position this business for long-term success,” said Jean-David Tardif, President and COO of Cascades Tissue Group. “The losses recorded by these plants, existing market conditions, and our recently announced investments in acquiring and modernizing other converting units in the U.S. have prompted us to move production to our other sites to optimize operational efficiency and reduce logistic costs.”

The two sites produce a combined total of 9 million cases of tissue products annually and employ 213 workers. These volumes will be moved to other Cascades plants and filled with the ramp up of additional capacity.

DS Smith Sees Sales of Paper for Shopping Bags Jump 400% in Three Years
Atlantic Packaging Acquires Coastal Corrugated in South Carolina

Atlantic Corporation has acquired Coastal Corrugated Custom Packaging Solutions, a 35-year-old family owned box company in Charleston, South Carolina.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Atlantic Corporation, a private company in North Carolina, is a diverse packaging and equipment distributor to consumer products manufacturers throughout North America, the Caribbean, and Central America. The company operates 18 regional facilities east to west as Atlantic Packaging.

Wes Carter, President of Atlantic Corporation, said, “Coastal’s products are consistent with our marketplace focus, especially as it broadens our value proposition to the evolving automotive market. We have looked at corrugated sheet plants before as they are very allied to our converted products offering. This one seemed the right one at the right time.” Coastal Corrugated manufactures large format corrugated boxes for various manufacturing segments. They further manufacture custom protective packaging components for the automotive industry and its tier one suppliers.

“South Carolina has invested heavily in recruiting automotive manufacturers to the state and our company is increasingly aligned as a premier partner to these facilities,” Carter said. “Coastal’s ability to design and fabricate protective packaging solutions right here in the low country brings great value and sensible logistics.”

Mayr-Melnhof Karton Names Peter Oswald as Chairman and CEO

Mayr-Melnhof Karton has appointed Peter Oswald (57) as new Chairman of the Management Board and CEO of the company with a contract for a period of five years. Oswald will become a member of the Management Board as of April 1, 2020.

Oswald will succeed Wilhelm Hör manseder (65), who joined the Mayr Melnhof in 1990 and has been Chairman of the Management Board and CEO since May 2002. Hörmanseder will turn over the position to Oswald on May 1, 2020.

Oswald served as Group CEO of Mondi since May of 2017, but stepped down from that position on Jan. 10, 2020. He first joined Mondi in 1992, and prior to his role as Group CEO, served as an Executive Director and CEO of the Europe & International Division since January 2008.

Valmet to Supply ThruAir Tissue Production Line to Irving’s Mill in Macon, Georgia

Valmet announced that it will supply a second Advantage ThruAir tissue machine to Irving Consumer Products’ tissue mill in Macon, Georgia. Irving Tissue’s new $470 million mill, which officially opened in November 2019, produces ultra-premium quality household paper products including soft bath tissue and high-quality paper towel.

The new production line will double the mill’s capacity from its current 75,000 tonnes per year of tissue to 150,000 tpy.

The new machine is part of the second phase of Irving’s capacity expansion at the Macon mill, which represents an additional $400 million investment.

“Valmet has a strong track record of delivering ultra-premium quality tissue paper products to our customers,” said Robert K. Irving, President of Irving Consumer Products.

The new machine is planned to start-up in 2022.

Industrial Opportunity Partners Acquires Midwest Paper in Wisconsin

Industrial Opportunity Partners (“IOP”), an operations-focused private equity firm based in Evanston, Illinois, on Jan. 8 announced that it acquired Midwest Recycled and Coated Containerboard Mill, LLC.

Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Midwest Paper is a paper mill headquartered in Combined Locks, Wisconsin. The company manufactures and distributes various grades of paper including recycled containerboard (medium and linerboard) for corrugated packaging, recycled bag products, and white paper for book publishing and printing/writing applications.

The mill has an annual production capacity of 400,000 tons on three paper machines. The company employs about 320 workers.

Dave Mackin, an IOP Operating Principal, has been appointed Chairman of Midwest Paper.

“We look forward to partnering with the Midwest Paper management team in continuing to enhance the company’s production capabilities with a focus on delivering high levels of customer service and quality,” Mackin said.

Mike Deprey, Midwest Paper Vice President, added, “The Midwest Paper management team and I are looking forward to our partnership with IOP. We believe IOP’s operations-focused approach will assist us in optimizing all aspects of our business to support continued growth and better serve our customers.”
Tokyo 2020 to Use Recyclable Cardboard Frames for Athletes’ Beds in Olympic and Paralympic Games

The Organizing Committee of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games recently decided that the beds athletes will sleep in at the next Olympic and Paralympic games will include cardboard frames made from high-resistance cardboard and mattresses formed of polystyrene materials that can be recycled. The Organizing Committee unveiled the beds in the fall of 2019. The measure is part of Tokyo 2020’s plans to be more environmentally friendly.

According to Organizing Committee, 18,000 beds are needed for the Olympic village and 8,000 beds for the Paralympic village. All of the bed frames will be made from high-resistance cardboard, which will be able to support weights of up to 200kg, or about 440 lbs.—more than any athlete weighed at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. The Committee aims to minimize resource waste in its use of materials during the Olympics and has set a target of 99% of items and goods procured for the games being reused or recycled afterwards. After the games, the beds will be recycled into new paper products and the mattress components into new plastic products.

“This will be the first time in Olympic and Paralympic history that all villages’ beds and bedding are made almost entirely from renewable materials,” organizers explained. The Olympics open on July 24 followed by the Paralympics on Aug. 25.

Oji to Supply Paper to Replace Plastic Wrapping for Nestlé KitKat Bars in Japan

Oji Holdings said that Nestlé will use paper produced by Oji Group for the wrapper of its popular KitKat chocolate bars in Japan. The paper replaces plastic wrapping that was used to package bars. The switch from plastic to paper is in line with Nestlé commitment to achieve a waste-free future and make 100% of its packaging recyclable or reusable by 2025, with a particular focus on avoiding plastic-waste. As part of that effort, Nestlé Japan in 2019 announced that its line of KitKat bars (original, dark chocolate, and matcha) will come wrapped in origami paper.

According to Nestlé, the miniature version of the bars will come individually wrapped in matte stock paper instead of plastic, making it possible to fold the wrappers into different shapes. The wrappers will come printed with instructions for folding them into an origami crane, which symbolizes hope and healing.

In a written statement, Oji Group said, “We highly appreciate Nestlé Group’s considerate commitment towards creation of sustainable society. At the same time we will maintain supporting Nestlé’s action as a packaging material supplier.”

The switch to paper could make a substantial reduction on plastic waste, as Japanese consumers buy roughly 4 million KitKat Mini bars daily. Nestlé expects to reduce the use of 380 tons of plastic each year with the change.

Oji concluded, “As environmental statements were made at G20 summit which was held in Osaka in June 2019, the need to replace plastic with paper for the purpose of environment protection is increasing all over the world. Oji Group would like to engage in SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) by supply of environmental friendly products together with our clients’ actions. We are expecting expansion of the market followed by Thailand and Japan.”

Nippon Paper to Acquire Paperboard Packaging Business of Orora

Nippon Paper Industries in October of 2019 signed an agreement with Orora Limited to purchase Orora’s paperboard fiber-based, packaging business in Australia and New Zealand (the “Business”) for an enterprise value of AUD 1.72 billion in cash, subject to adjustment for movements in working capital and debt items.

The scope of the Businesses includes Orora’s Botany Paper Mill in Matraville, New South Wales, Australia, along with paper converting operations. The deal includes Orora’s Botany Paper Mill in Matraville, New South Wales, Australia, along with paper converting operations.

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The scope of the Businesses includes Orora’s Botany Paper Mill in Matraville, New South Wales, Australia, along with paper converting operations. corrugated base paper manufacturing, highly automated cardboard production and the provision of packaging-related materials and associated services.

“Through the acquisition of the Business, Nippon Paper Group will be entering the integrated corrugated paperboard manufacturing business in the Oceania region. Nippon Paper seeks not only to augment the synergistic effects with AP, but also plans to further build the Group’s packaging business on a global scale,” Nippon Paper concluded.

Nippon Paper expects to complete the deal during the first quarter of 2020.

According to Organizing Committee, 18,000 beds are needed for the Olympic village and 8,000 beds for the Paralympic village.
Graphic Packaging Announces Initial $250 Million Acquisition of International Paper’s Minority Ownership Interest in Partnership

Graphic Packaging Holding Company in January announced that International Paper has notified the Company of its intent to begin the process of reducing its ownership interest in Graphic Packaging International Partners, LLC (the “Partnership”). Per the agreement between the parties, Graphic Packaging will purchase approximately 15.1 million partnership units from International Paper for $250.0 million. As a result, International Paper’s ownership interest in the Partnership will decrease from approximately 21.6% to 18.3%.

The purchase will be funded with a draw on Graphic Packaging’s domestic revolving credit facility. At the end of 2019, Graphic Packaging had availability under the domestic revolving facility in excess of $1.4 billion.

According to Graphic Packaging, International Paper has the contractual right to continue to reduce its minority ownership interest in the Partnership every 180 days with the next potential transaction date in July 2020, subject to modification by the parties.

“Our strong cash flow generation and healthy balance sheet provide us the flexibility to purchase the initial $250 million of minority interest from International Paper,” said Mike Doss, President and CEO of Graphic Packaging Holding Company.

“The 2018 transaction with International Paper has successfully created value for our customers and stakeholders while building a leading integrated paperboard packaging platform. We appreciate the confidence International Paper placed in us to build and grow the business. The transaction significantly increased our addressable market and vertical integration opportunities, while accelerating our presence in fiber-based packaging solutions,” Doss concluded.

AF&PA Fights Paper Demand Destruction

The backlash of environmental concern over our world’s unquenchable thirst for plastic would seem to open the door of opportunity for the paper industry. But despite paper products’ environmental benefits — made from renewable raw materials, highly recyclable and compostable, the potential for recovered paper to be repurposed multiple times — paper use has come under attack by environmental campaigners, legislators and the plastics industry.

AF&PA has mobilized on behalf of member interests to prevent legislation and regulations that would otherwise destroy demand for paper products or damage the ability for paper to compete in the marketplace.

Environmental groups are predisposed against paper consumption and the prospect of consumers using more paper to replace plastics has prompted a renewed effort to influence public opinion and legislation against paper product use. It is true for industries like plastics: putting their support behind a certain bill, can help show they are taking action to alleviate a concern they are connected to.

Around the country, legislation has been introduced that would place fees on paper bags, eliminate paper receipts, require minimum recycled content in paper products, ban paper products containing certain chemicals and mandate that paper producers pay for the cost of recycling paper and paper-based packaging products. Left unchecked, these policies would greatly accelerate the deselection of paper and increase costs for paper manufacturers.

AF&PA is engaged to bring positive outcomes for members across all of these issues. A recent win was the defeat of a bill in California that would have nearly eliminated the use of paper receipts by replacing them with digital alternatives for retail purchases. This would have had devastating implications for paper producers and supply chain partners, as well as set a dangerous precedent for other states to follow.

In bag legislation, AF&PA has successfully carved paper bags out of state and local bills that aim to ban plastic bags and put a fee on paper ones, or reduced the proposed fees for paper bags in a number of states.

There are many more examples of AF&PA working alongside members to prevent negative consequences of destructive legislative efforts or regulations. While addressing these challenges can be daunting for individual companies, combating demand destruction is one of the best examples of how members can achieve effective outcomes by combining AF&PA policy expertise with working collaboratively toward common goals.
Paper Receipts Remain Essential Choice for Shoppers Following EU BPA Ban

In January, the EU-wide ban on the use of bisphenol A (BPA) in thermal paper came into force. The substance cannot now be legally produced or sold on the market in thermal paper in a concentration equal to or greater than 0.02% by weight.

For thermal paper manufacturers, this is a welcomed move.

“There are an increasing number of phenol-free receipt papers available to retailers. The most interesting development is a thermal paper without a chemical reaction.

“Long before the BPA ban, paper manufacturers have been developing alternatives that continue to offer retailers and shoppers the same security, convenience and peace of mind that comes with paper receipts,” says Greg Selfe, spokesperson for Choose Paper, a global campaign to raise awareness of the practical benefits and sustainable features of paper receipts.

There are an increasing number of phenol-free receipt papers available to retailers. The most interesting development is a thermal paper without a chemical reaction. These innovative papers use an opaque top layer that turns transparent when heat from a conventional thermal printer is applied, causing the black layer beneath to be revealed — a purely physical reaction. Not only are these papers highly sustainable, but they also provide high quality, longer lasting image life, as well as being approved for direct contact with food.

Satia Industries to Double Paper Production Capacity in India

Satia Industries has received environmental clearance, subject to certain specific conditions, for its plans to nearly double the production capacity of its paper mill in the city of Muktsar, Punjab, India.

Satia Industries mill is a fully integrated operation, including a pulp mill, paper mill with three machines, chemical recovery and effluent facilities, and a power generation plant. The paper mill currently produces about 105 thousand metric tons per year of printing and writing grades of paper. The company’s expansion plans call for an additional 100 thousand metric tons per year of production capacity.

The company said finances are in place and it has already acquired additional land and ordered equipment and machinery.

Satia plans to commission the plant in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2021.

Resolute Invests $38 Million in Its Kénogami Mill in Quebec, Plans Include Construction of Cellulose Filaments Plant

Resolute Forest Products will construct a commercial plant specializing in the production of cellulose filaments, a new sustainable biomaterial derived from wood fiber, at its Kénogami paper mill in Quebec as well as the optimization of the mill, at a total cost of $38 million.

“Our investment in cellulose filaments represents an opportunity to enter into non-traditional growth markets,” said Yves Laflamme, President and CEO of Resolute. “The cellulose filament and Kénogami mill optimization projects will create synergies within our network of operations in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean.”

Cellulose filaments offer a wide variety of uses and a number of benefits. The filaments can be integrated into commercial and consumer products from many industries, including transportation, construction and energy, increasing the resistance and durability of those products.

The new $27 million project will create eight jobs in the startup phase slated for 2021, and a total of 23 jobs once the plant reaches its full production capacity of 21 metric tons per day. These new jobs will be in addition to the 200 existing positions at the paper mill.

Resolute will also invest $11 million to enhance the Kénogami paper mill’s short-term competitiveness by modernizing equipment in order to produce high-grade SCA+ supercalendered paper, allowing the mill to access more favorable markets. The mill has a production capacity of 133,000 metric tons of specialty papers per year.

The cellulose filaments will be marketed with the help of Performance BioFilaments Inc., a joint venture established in 2014 by Resolute and Mercer International. The extraction technology was developed by FPInnovations.

The project will be funded in part by Quebec’s Department of Forests, Wildlife and Parks ($2.5 million), Investissement Quebec ($4.2 million) and Natural Resources Canada ($4.9 million).
Verso’s packaging papers product line is highlighted by recycled linerboard and medium designed for use in corrugated box manufacturing, virgin and recycled bleached kraft paper and recycled natural kraft paper used for a variety of packaging end uses. Verso also manufactures SBS paperboard used in single-face corrugated laminated box applications.

Our Kraft Paper possesses excellent convertibility, lay-flat, printability and durability while our Containerboard offering focuses on recycled linerboard and medium engineered to deliver excellent runnability on corrugators.

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