

# TRENDS

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VOLUME 53 | NUMBER 04 | APRIL 2012

In the world  
of polyester  
production,  
China is the



# Big Kahuna



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Textiles

**The only publication that offers  
News About The Industry, From The Industry, For The Industry.**

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*The ONLY magazine dedicated to  
the hosiery industry*

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# legislative column

by PAUL FOGLEMAN, Director, Hosiery Governmental Affairs Council

Michael Hubbard, vice president of the National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO) says these are “roller coaster years” for the textiles industry with the ups and downs.

Up: record-breaking exports of yarns and fiber last year, with spun yarns leading the way; apparel exports the best since 2004.

Down: shortage of cotton ... not enough to meet demand resulting in surging prices; India’s violation of the WTO agreements by shutting off raw cotton exports.

Speaking at the recent spring conference for the Synthetic Yarn and Fiber Association, Hubbard also described some of the ongoing issues in the Trans Pacific Partnership treaty negotiations. The so-called “21st century agreement” includes human rights issues, strong customs rules enforcement, and a phase-out of tariffs.

Initially the main players were the U.S., South Korea, Japan, and Singapore. Then came Viet Nam and India, with Mexico, Canada, and several South American countries pushing for a seat at the table.

Hosiery manufacturers have expressed concern about demands from South Korea and the American Manufacturers Trade Action Council which includes some leading hosiery producers is working to assure agreements do not penalize domestic mills.

••••

The short session of the North Carolina General Assembly convenes the week following the May 8 primary. Leaders of the House and Senate insist the business of revising and adopting a budget will be complete before July

4. Then the season hardball politics leading the Nov. 6 general election intensifies.

Some 20 percent of the incumbent legislators will get a free ride. No opponent. Another 20 percent have token opposition. Both with redistricting and some longtime legislators retiring, the 2013-14 Legislature will have a different look.

The Democratic gubernatorial primary will be in the spotlight, with Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton, Rep. Bill Faison, and former Congressman Bob Etheridge in the fray.

Raleigh insiders give the edge to Dalton.

If Dalton is elected in November, he would be the first governor west of Charlotte since Dan K. Moore who took office in 1965. But Dalton face the formidable challenge from former Charlotte Mayor Pat McCrory. Polls show McCrory winning by four percentage points if the election were held today.

••••

The top Republican leaders in the Legislature have no serious opposition, so no changes are expected. But what about the minority leadership in the House with the retirement of former Speaker Joe Hackney?

Look for Reps. Joe Tolson and Winkie Wilkins, both from the center of the Democratic party, to try to move up. Tolson and Wilkins worked hard to recruit candidates with the goal of blocking any gubernatorial override votes. Wilkins, however, must win a primary contest with Rep. Jim Crawford who was among the five Democrats who joined Republicans to override vetoes of Gov. Perdue. **T**



# TRENDS

## How to get more impact with your sales activity.

Textiles and hosiery industry vendors have used **TRENDS** magazine to open doors. Multi-national, veteran established manufacturers, and smaller niche players all look at market innovations in **TRENDS**. National and state legislation affecting the industries – manufacturing and distribution – are covered in easy-to-read articles. Happenings within the industries and retailers are included to help marketers and purchasing executives.



\* **Paul Fogleman**, a veteran experienced in hosiery and textiles operations, can help you with your advertising and public relations opportunities with **TRENDS**. Contact him at [pfogleman@informinc.net](mailto:pfogleman@informinc.net)

# China Will Determine Polyester Growth, Price





In the world of polyester production, China is the Big Kahuna.

At the spring meeting of the Synthetic Yarn and Fiber Association, Alasdair Carmichael, a recognized authority in the world of synthetic fibers, told some 150 textiles executives from the southeast just how dominating China can be.

Some 65 percent of all polyester in the world comes from Chinese mills. When it comes to setting prices for polyester fiber, China call the shots. And that's not going to change, Carmichael insisted. By 2020, China will be making 68 per cent of the world's polyester fiber. Throw in production from India and southeast Asia, and you get 84 percent of the world's polyester.

Polyester continues to gain market share, along with cotton which is experiencing slower growth due to limited land and crop competition. Yet the two fibers equal 82 percent of all used in textiles, Carmichael alleged.

Nylon, in contrast, is not enjoying growth mainly because of the decline of the carpet industry.

Carmichael said that man-made fibers accounted for almost 45 percent of apparel imports in the U.S. Cotton has declined. Higher prices and the loss of two million tons in the marketplace has reduced consumption. But cotton will regain some position, Carmichael predicted, but the climb will be slow because of limited cropland.

Carmichael told the conference participants that demand will grow for polyester with the recovery of the housing and automotive markets. But prices will increase also with the oil market. He reminded the executives that in 2009 the price of crude oil was \$39 a barrel.

Carmichael is president of PCI Fibres (Americas) and is vice president of SYFA. ■

# N.C. Textiles In Forefront Of Transportation Advances

Caught up in the constant changes in transportation is the U.S. textiles industry.

Commercial aircraft are getting bigger. Automobiles are getting smaller. It is all about reducing energy costs with lighter vehicles.

An overview of transportation industry and the impact on textile vendors was presented to the SYFA members recently at the Spring marketing conference in Charlotte.

John Wilson, a technical specialist with The Quantum Group in Colfax, laid out some of the challenges in textiles transportation in response to the demand for weight reduction and cost controls.

Example: a reduction of 3.5 pounds per seat in an aircraft equals an annual savings of \$336,000 in annual operating expenses. Just shifting from glass to plastic cuts with beverage service results in a \$21,000 savings for each airliner, Wilson said.

For passenger cars, the savings are equally impressive. For each 100 pounds reduction in the weight, a car gains 2 percent in fuel reduction. Golfers who keep their bags in the trunk of a car are adding the cost of four gallons of gas each year.

Transportation manufacturers also put a priority on the well-being and comfort of passengers, with seating that resists mold and mildew, that resists water and is easy to maintain, Wilson asserted.

Fibers with larger diameters are sought to increase durability because they resist abrasion wear. But new fibers must add value and profitability by holding or reducing costs, he stressed. Other performance features include flame retardant and anti-microbial.

Quantum was founded 16 years ago and serves a textiles specialty market. 

# Duke Energy Plan Helps

For those businesses sitting on cash: better hold some of it. Your electric bill is going to triple over the next decade.

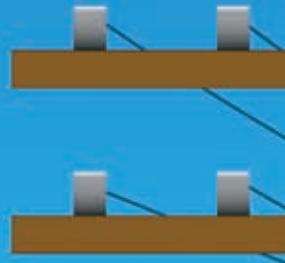
But the good news is that Duke Energy can help you save money – often substantial money – through its Smart Saver program.

This was the message given to participants at the recent meeting of the Synthetic Yarn and Fiber Association in Charlotte. Perry Stephens, Manufacturing Market Segment Manager for Duke Energy, pushed textile companies to explore areas of conservation which can bring about cash payments from Duke as well as lower rates.

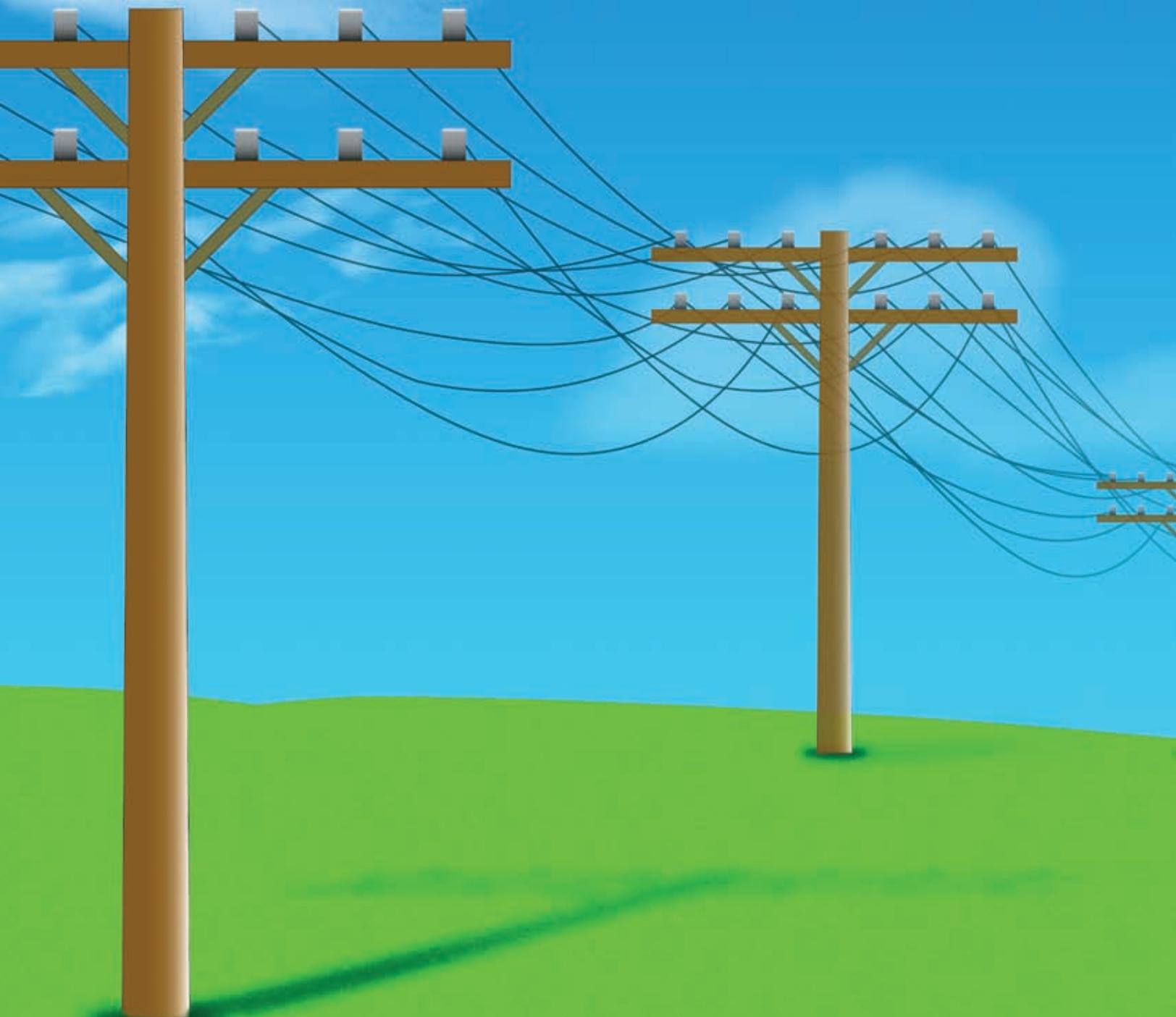
With \$50 billion in assets, Duke is investing in conservation which it calls “the fifth fuel.” This entails “decarbonized” power generating with plants using more efficient coal-burning and also nuclear energy.

Stephens said the cost of a megawatt hour of electricity is expected to jump from \$40 an hour to \$120 an hour in incremental raises over the next 15 years. In the meantime, Duke will be working with customers to use less electricity. The Smart Saver program will look at lighting, foodservice, operating equipment, heating and air conditioning, and other aspects.

According to Stephens, Duke Energy has paid out \$12 million to commercial Smart Saver customers since 2009 and saving the firms \$11 million. ■



# Offset Hikes In Rates



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# **BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER**

The Hosiery and Textiles Governmental Affairs Council looks forward to working with legislators in Raleigh in 2011. Republicans with a pro-business agenda will set priorities for state government, including how state finances are invested. Emphasis will be on smaller government and the best return on dollars invested by the state.

We congratulate the new leaders in the House and the Senate. Also we look forward to working with new members of the General Assembly as we present our case for the continued support of the Textile Technology Center and the Manufacturing Solutions Center with its successful hosiery industry testing and research programs.

There will be a lot of noise with competition for state money. We invite textiles and hosiery companies that continue to employ over 100,000 North Carolinians to join us in support of the value-added services of our centers.

**Hosiery and Textiles Governmental Affairs Council**  
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# Former Hosiery Executive Has 'Hunger Games' Role

During the last half of the 20th century, Wade Shepherd exemplified the hosiery entrepreneur, running a successful greige mill in Hickory.

Now he has stepped into the role of a movie entrepreneur. Of sorts. He is the owner of a long-abandoned cotton mill village that was a location for the filming of "Hunger Games." Shepherd has been featured as a guest on national talk shows and in print media stories.

The film company, Lionsgate, paid Shepherd \$1,000 a day for 35 days of filming. The old general store building was remodeled to be a bakery.

The village originally was home to employees of Henry River Cotton Mills which closed down in the 1960s. Shepherd has the property up for sale for \$1.4 million and he says the proceeds will go to several Baptist organizations.

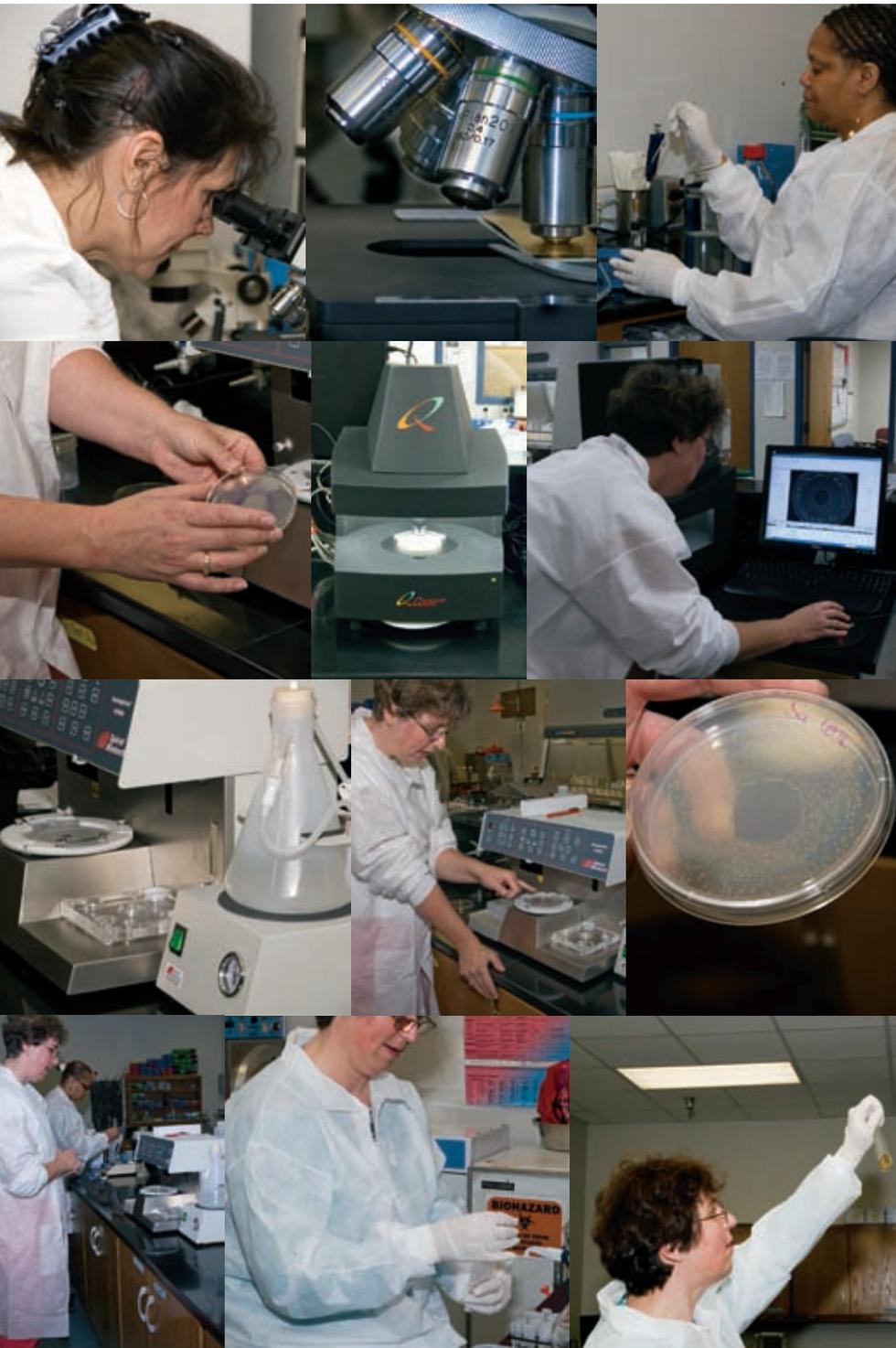
Shepherd served on the board of the Catawba Valley Hosiery Association which became the Carolina Hosiery Association. The CHA merged with the THA in 2001. 

# HUNGER GAMES



# People now call us the 'Manufacturing Solutions Center'

# and that's OK.



Officially we have been the Center for Emerging Manufacturing Solutions. (CEMS). Our mission is to help traditional manufacturing in North Carolina succeed in a changing environment. The Hosiery Technology Center remains a core service. But furniture, packaging, plastics, and other industries that helped build North Carolina's economy are now priorities.

If our official name is too much to remember, just call us the Manufacturing Solutions Center. We are ready to assist you with new products, new manufacturing strategies, new markets.

Traditional manufacturers have an old history with our state. But they are an important force in the new economy.

Dan St. Louis, Director • Catawba Valley Community College

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