



Peter Hart: A pulp and paper original

Editor's Note: This editorial column is part of ongoing profiles of TJ's editorial board members. TAPPI thanks these volunteer board members for their hard work and willingness to share their expertise with the forest products community.

– Monica Shaw, Editorial Director

As product development manager of new and applied technologies for Meadwestvaco (MWV), *TAPPI Journal* (TJ) editorial board member Peter Hart designs and implements unique technical projects at MWV mills to improve the bottom line. Specializing in pulp mill and fiber supply projects, he has recently worked on the installation and optimization of an ash leaching system and a Lime-Flash™ lime kiln feed system – both firsts for North America. Current efforts include the commissioning and operation of a new VOW biogas pilot plant and the design, engineering, and start up of new serial number 1 pulping technology at MWV's Rigesa mill in Brazil, where he spends several weeks each month.

Peter's original work doesn't stop with his demanding job assignments. A 30-yr veteran of TAPPI, he has written more than 50 peer reviewed articles published in various journals, edited six books (including *The Bleaching of Pulp*, 5th Edition, currently in press from TAPPI), co-authored five book chapters, and co-authored more than 20 conference presentations and papers (five of which won David Weatherhorn Awards for Best Paper, as sponsored by TAPPI's Alkaline Pulping and Bleaching Committee, and two of which were High Impact papers for the TAPPI PEERS Conference). Since 2006, Peter has been an Adjunct Associate Professor and Associate Research Faculty for North Carolina State University's Wood and Paper Science Department.

Peter's pulp and paper career – and TAPPI membership – began during his undergraduate studies at the University of Maine in Orono, where he received

a B.S. in chemical engineering and in pulp and paper technology, as well as an M.S. in chemical engineering. Peter continued his studies at Georgia Institute of Technology, where he received a Ph.D. in chemical engineering, with a dissertation topic on “The formation and release of adsorbable organic halogens during

kraft pulp bleaching.” Staying active in TAPPI – and as a TJ editorial board member for the past 11 years – allows Peter to stay on top of research and emerging activities in the industry.

“I've developed a network of very talented people through TAPPI with whom I can discuss technical issues and quickly obtain information for solving problems in my work environment,” Peter says. “In serving on the TJ editorial board, I review current topical manuscripts before they are published, which helps me answer mill questions about new technologies based on the very latest in pulp and paper research.”



Pulp “maverick” Peter Hart.

TAPPI participation

In addition to contributing to numerous TAPPI publications and events, Peter has served as Chairman of the Southeastern (SE) Local Section of TAPPI and was a member of the SE Local Section TAPPI Board of Directors from 1989-1997. He was also Chairman of the Alkaline Pulping and Bleaching Committee from 2006-2009, and is currently Pulp Manufacturing Division Chair. Peter is a past winner of the Research and Development (R&D) Award and Aiken Prize from the TAPPI R&D Committee.

Peter sees this active participation in TAPPI committees and conferences as extremely important to the success of his technical career – and that of others. “I strongly recommend that all technical personnel participate in TAPPI, and that all managers of technical personnel strongly encourage committee participation,” he emphasizes.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Opportunities in unsolved industry problems

Since joining the *TJ* editorial board 11 years ago, Peter has watched industry R&D efforts shift. The most significant change he has seen is an emerging focus on the biorefinery, which he feels has been at the expense of more traditional pulping and bleaching topics.

"The industry as a whole has done an excellent job of fully utilizing the entire tree, whether for value added fiber production or for lower value steam and power, and new efforts focusing on the production of a relatively low value (ethanol) liquid fuel as a co-product of pulp production have been driven by government grants," Peter says. "Many of these projects have no economic chance of success but the availability of research dollars has driven the researchers to abandon several promising avenues of research in favor of the biorefinery."

For Peter, the biggest future challenge to pulp and paper research is finding alternative sources of high

value-added revenue for mills, and the opportunities lie in solving long-term problems. "Substantially breaking the kraft pulp yield barrier, producing ultra strong, high bulk sheets, and developing affordable, environmentally friendly processes are just some of the problems that have not been fully addressed to date," he describes.

Lest anyone fear it is all work and no fun for Peter, his outside interests attest otherwise. A former Eagle Scout, Peter loves deer hunting and fishing. He also collects seashells (he has over 1,000 unique specimens), is a gourmet cook, likes hats (to keep his bald head from sun burning, he says), enjoys fine wine, and can quilt (he's made more than 15). In other words, he's a true pulp and paper original. **TJ**

Monica Shaw

Editorial Director, *TAPPI Journal*

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