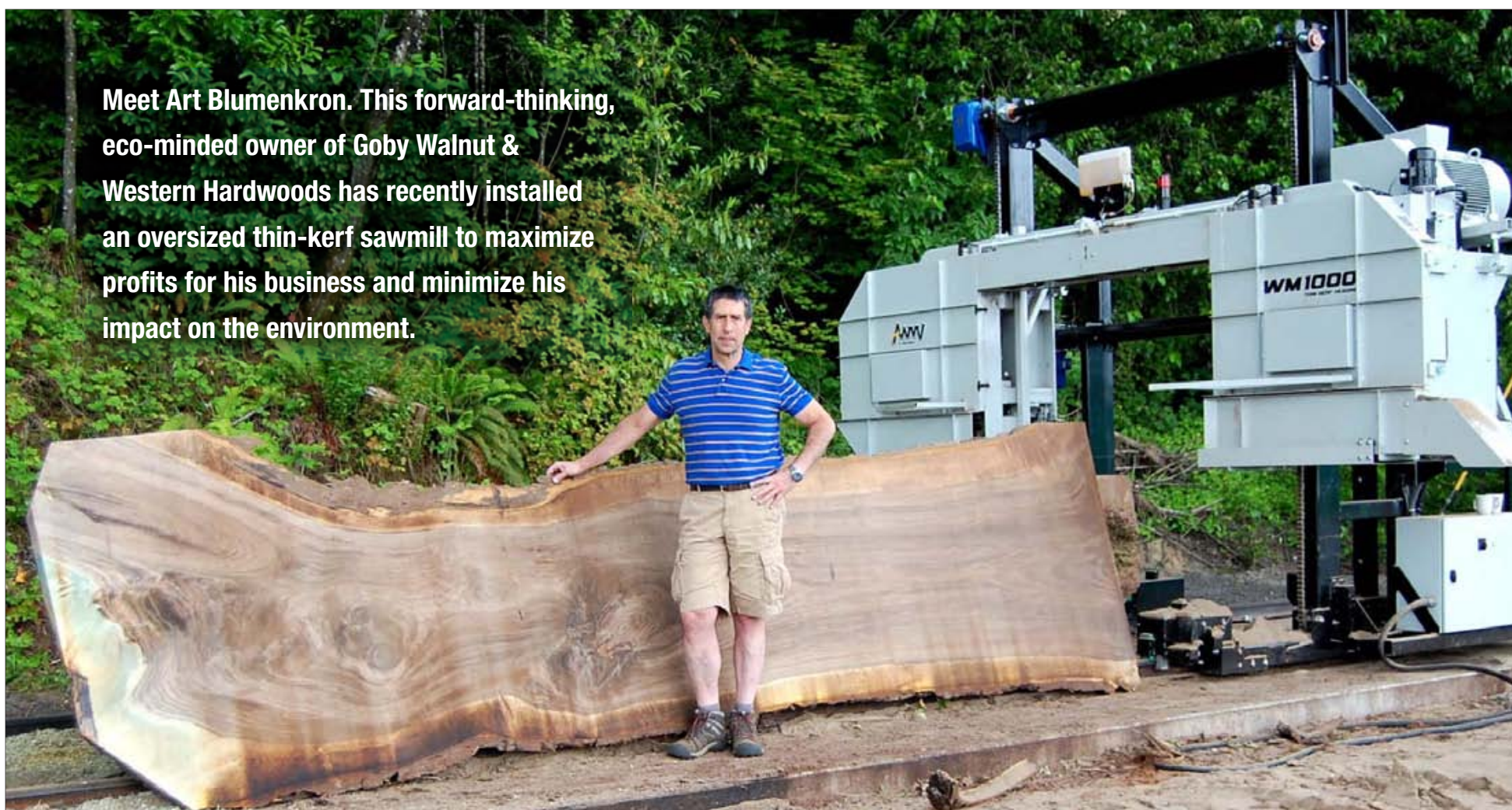


Portland company reaps hardwood profits with help from a new Wood-Mizer sawmill

Meet Art Blumenkron. This forward-thinking, eco-minded owner of Goby Walnut & Western Hardwoods has recently installed an oversized thin-kerf sawmill to maximize profits for his business and minimize his impact on the environment.



By Jacob Mooney, Wood-Mizer Contributing Writer

The Pacific Northwest is well known for its towering tracts of evergreen forests. One Oregon company, however, is making a name for itself by tapping into the wooden treasures found within a different natural resource: dead, dying, and diseased local hardwoods. Goby Walnut & Western Hardwoods is seeing worldwide sales growth due to their impressive product offering, and is leading the way in using environmentally responsible & profit enhancing business practices.

Started over 35 years ago by Gary Goby, the company was purchased in 2007 by Art Blumenkron, an entrepreneur who was looking for a break from the high stress of his dental equipment manufacturing business. He was ready to invest his time and money into something more rewarding. That's when he discovered Goby Walnut, being run from Gary Goby's home outside of Albany, Oregon.

Art realized that the growing specialty hardwood supply company had untapped potential, and after making the purchase,

he moved the company to the Northwest Industrial area of Portland, hired additional employees, and invested in a professional website displaying their inventory of hardwood slabs, figured boards, tone wood billets, and veneers. Art's changes are having their intended effect. The company processes 50% more logs, and sales have tripled since 2006.

Goby Walnut buys trees from arborists, municipalities, parks and individual landowners within a couple hundred mile radius of their Portland location. They look for trees from two to over seven feet wide, and will pay from \$500 to \$20,000 for the right tree. These logs are milled into slabs, boards, and veneers that all fetch premium prices from high end furniture makers, musical instrument craftsmen, and woodworking hobbyists. Two of the rough sawn figured Oregon Black Walnut slabs on the company's website are priced over \$10,000, but Art also supplies boards and remnants for under \$100.

With the increased sales and growing worldwide demand, Art saw the need to further expedite his milling and drying processes. He had been milling the huge hardwood slabs with chainsaw and

swingblade mills, but knew that there had to be a more efficient way to accurately saw the premium logs and decrease the amount of precious wood being wasted in sawdust.

Familiar with Wood-Mizer's thin-kerf portable and industrial sawmills, he learned about Wood-Mizer's most recently released machine, the WM1000 thin-kerf headrig, which can saw a 67" log in half while only losing 1/8 of an inch in sawdust each pass. Art weighed the cost of the machine with its increased efficiency, cut quality, and unbeatable material recovery, and knew he had found exactly what he needed to maximize his profits from his logs.

With the WM1000 installed at his facility, and running full-time every day, Art is confident that the machine will pay for itself quickly. Every log cut yields an extra slab each time. Each large slab in his inventory ranges from \$1,000 to \$10,000 dollars each, which means a significant increase in profitability coming from the new mill.

But the uses for this machine are not limited to just cutting premium slabs. "The WM1000 is great for any kind of



11 1/2' long, and up to 7' wide, this one walnut slab will fetch more than \$10,000.

sawmill business that deals with large logs, whether it be parting logs so they can be milled or sawing large slabs. It's a lot of machine for the money!" Art explains.

Wood-Mizer's current industrial equipment catalog lists the WM1000 at \$54,495, and comes standard with a ride-along control station, computer-control networks, and a 30 HP electric motor. The blades are 2" - 3" wide and measure a total of 32.35' long.

Large slabs for furniture makers are not the only wood product offered by Goby. Gunstock blanks in cherry, maple, myrtle, and three different varieties of walnut are available for muzzleloaders, rifles, and shotguns. Craftsman of musical instruments can find Oregon Walnut and Big Leaf Maple tonewood for most stringed instruments, providing superior sound and looks for the musical instrument.

Walnut veneers, book matched boards, turning blocks, remnant wood boards and blocks are available for woodworkers. Goby Walnut's inventory also boasts large walnut, maple, redwood, and myrtle burls for tabletops.

Art is continuing to research how to make his business more efficient and profitable. Right now he is sawing many smaller logs on the WM1000, which takes time away

“We recently cut a 15 foot, 48” diameter walnut log and were amazed to find that the thickness of the slabs didn’t vary by more than 1/32” over the whole 15 feet. Our finish on the slabs is much better than [our previous mill] and we yield an extra slab on every log. Another consideration is time... it takes about 10 minutes to complete a cut on a large slab....”

— Art Blumenkron

from sawing the big logs. He is looking at remedying that problem by putting in a Wood-Mizer industrial WM3500 to handle all his smaller hardwood logs and let the WM1000 concentrate on the big logs. Art is also working with kiln manufacturers to see if he can utilize new kiln technologies to speed up the drying process while maintaining the integrity of the wood. Large hardwood slabs presently take 1-3 years to completely dry and be ready for resale. He would consider his investment worth it if he could process those same slabs within months instead of years.

To learn more about what Goby Walnut & Western Hardwoods offers, visit www.gobywalnut.com and browse their extensive inventory of hardwood slabs for sale.

Visit www.woodmizer.com to learn more about the WM1000 and other industrial sawmills that are giving sawmill operations additional profitability from their logs.



Watch the WM1000 video at woodmizer.com or scan this code with your smartphone.

Editor's note: The preceding was a paid advertorial by Wood-Mizer.

Profitable Stewardship

5 Ways Goby Walnut is being environmentally conscious AND profitable.

- Uses the WM1000 thin-kerf headrig to minimize sawdust waste from premium hardwoods.
- Uses sustainable tree harvesting practices, and is in the process of being “SmartWood” certified.
- Uses scrap wood to heat his buildings and saves thousands on energy bills.
- Installed more efficient lighting in his warehouse, and will save even more on his energy bills.
- Is developing a way to market walnut shavings as a natural weed suppressant.



Redwood acoustic guitar billet, for the musical instrument master craftsman.



Maple burl



Sawing huge logs with the WM1000 is made easier with the ride-along operator station and computerized networks.