



July 2015

Signature benefit of HMA membership

HMA's South Atlantic Regional Meeting went off without a hitch. And we'd like to thank tour hosts - **Meherrin River Forest Products, Virginia-Carolina Forest Products, Inc., High & High, Inc., Josey Lumber Company, Inc., Jerry G. Williams & Sons, Inc.** – for displaying the 'welcome mat.' A special "thank you" to the kind folks at **Virginia-Carolina** - lunch was delicious!

If you were unable to attend, you missed some serious networking and information exchange opportunities, not to mention seeing and experiencing hardwood sawmilling technology in operation. Representatives from 36 HMA member companies were in attendance. And 12 industry suppliers were also represented.

At the reception and dinner Tuesday evening, members shared the microphone for a round of **Table Talk**, a popular exercise providing participants the opportunity to share success stories, as well as industry concerns. Concerns voiced centered around issues and costs related to shipping, exporting, insurance liability and EPA regulations.

HMA's Central Regional Meeting is for October 21-22, in Dayton, Ohio. Visit www.HMAmembers.org for all of the meeting details and to finalize your Registration.

A message from HMA's President

By Skipper Beal

It's summer, and as you read this short message, I hope that you and yours are keeping cool and not being hampered by stifling humidity and high temperatures.

It seems that as the weather changes, so do the hardwood markets. As I speak to and meet with industry counterparts and colleagues, it's apparent we all are experiencing **challenges** in our markets that perhaps a year ago were not anticipated. It's been my experience that to navigate through these troubling times and to sort it all out, it often helps to seek wise counsel. HMA's recent South Atlantic Regional Meeting provided that counsel and more, to me and 99 other industry associates.

If you were unable to participate, you missed seeing new sawmill equipment being installed and new kilns going up. You also missed "catching up" with HMA members, and you missed the opportunity to make new industry contacts. But most significantly, you missed hearing and participating in an **Open Discussion** (part of the Tuesday evening reception and dinner activities) regarding the "**state of our industry.**"

The majority of those present contributed openly. Some were reticent. A few were positive. For me, hearing what is reality for producers in areas ranging from Maine to Georgia, and points in between, was worth the price of admission, and then some. And this kind of meeting-interaction-information sharing is why I am a member of the HMA.

This **direct interaction** with, and truthful information from some of the most successful individuals in our industry is **most valuable** to me as I navigate a course for my businesses. And it is an HMA member benefit that other industry associations can only aspire to mirror.

I encourage you; **reap the benefits** of your HMA membership. Plan to attend the Central Regional Meeting, October 21-22, in Dayton, Ohio and experience the many facets of our valuable association. We are a positive and resilient group. Your participation will make us even more so.

Until then, have an enjoyable and profitable summer. And I look forward to talking with you in October.

An addition to the HMA membership roster

Welcome new member, **High & High, Inc.**, of Macon, North Carolina. Robby High will serve as the company's main contact, and many of you recently had the opportunity to spend time with Robby and to tour the High & High, Inc. facility. Give those fine folks a call, 252.257.2390, and welcome them into the HMA fold.

The 'where & when' of the Central Regional Meeting

It's all coming together for HMA's fall Regional meeting! Registration and hotel specifics are up and running at www.HMAmembers.org. And the complete meeting agenda is forthcoming. In the meantime, here's what's confirmed so far:

- **Location/Date** - Dayton, Ohio, October 21-22, 2015
- **Tour sites** - **Frank Miller Lumber Company**, Union City, Indiana, **Superior Hardwoods of Ohio, Inc.**, Wellston, Ohio, **Brown-Forman Cooperage**, Jackson, Ohio, **Hartzell Hardwoods**, Piqua, Ohio
- **Hotel** - **Crowne Plaza Dayton**, 33 Fifth Street, Dayton, OH 45402 For reservations, call **855.914.1429** and be sure to request the **group rate of \$119** for the **Hardwood Manufacturers Association Fall Regional Meeting**.

Please **mark your calendar** and plan to participate in this 36 hour member-to-member networking and facility tours extravaganza.

In touch with the specifying community

For many years, the **American Hardwoods Sample Kit** has provided the "build community" the opportunity to see, touch and conceptualize how our wonderful product complements their creations. Since the kits first became available, nearly 5000 have been distributed. But the supply is dwindling and a project to reproduce the storied tool is in the works.

Like its predecessor, it will contain:

- 2 ¾ inch x 6 inch **samples** of 20 of the most often used hardwood species,
- a clear, light, medium and dark **stain simulator** - to help visualize stain combinations of flooring, cabinetry, moulding and furniture co-existing in a single design space,

- a “refreshed” version of the **Sustainable Solutions Brochure** – detailed information about the sustainability of American Hardwoods and their use in green design and building, and in-depth profiles of the 20 species included in the kit - including working properties, physical properties, availability, workability, strength and mechanical properties.

It’s a significant project, time-wise and dollar-wise. But it’s an important tool to the specifying community, and an excellent way to promote solid American Hardwoods, to the benefit of **all** industry stakeholders.

Several industry associations have committed financial assistance to the project, already. And you too can participate by **donating product** for the production of the 20 species’ samples that will be included in the kit.

Please contact the HMA office, 412.244.0440, to discuss interest/involvement in this collaborative effort.

More than just Talk

*By Linda Jovanovich
HMA Executive Vice President*

Our family just returned from a relaxing week at the beach. It was fabulous and a wonderful treat. I love it when my most difficult decision is which pair of flip flops should I wear today? But that was then. This is now.

I’m back at my desk, getting into HMA-mode because it’s “get down to business” time regarding HMA’s 2016 National Conference and Expo. **Thank You** to all who were able to participate in our recent National Conference Planning call. It was a very productive 50 minutes. Your suggestions for learning session topics, in addition to those submitted following this year’s National Conference, have given us plenty to work on. And now the fun begins.

I’m also putting the finishing touches to HMA’s Central Regional Meeting. I hope you can make your way to Dayton, October 21-22. We’ll be touring the facilities of HMA member, Frank Miller Lumber Company, and the facilities of several non-member companies in the greater Dayton area. Registration and meeting details are available at www.HMAmembers.org. Of course, do not hesitate to call me, 412.244.0440.

Remember, School’s OUT for summer! Stay safe and I hope that your vacation plans are coming to fruition.

Next on the agenda for HMA’s Millennials

*By Bob Miller
Frank Miller Lumber Company*

HMA’s Millennial Council members have been busy and I’m pleased to report that more is in store. As Council Coordinator, it is my privilege to work with them. They are energized. They are full of ideas. They are eager to share. They are eager to learn. And HMA is providing an array of opportunities to aid in their professional development. For example ...

If you were in Nashville in March for HMA’s National Conference and Expo, you know first-hand that the “Next-Gen” Reception, hosted by these young professionals, was standing room only. And while this ‘mix and mingle’ was geared for younger Conference attendees, the excitement radiating out of that room made it impossible for our more seasoned members to stay out.

If you participated in HMA's recent South Atlantic Regional Meeting, you know that half of the Council members were also able to participate, and that many HMA member companies sent their younger generation to the meeting to network and to experience the great facility tours.

Each quarter we conduct a Conference Call Learning Session. The Council members determine the subject matter. Our most recent call provided information about log and lumber inventory systems. And coming up in the fall, the call will address the skilled and unskilled labor shortages many of us are experiencing.

The group is also involved with its 2015 project – the development of a Learning Session to be conducted at HMA's 2016 National Conference, in Fort Worth. For now, the session topic is being kept 'close to the vest.' But I will tell you that the session format will be a panel discussion, and it promises to be interestingly informative, and with an element of humor.

As you can see, they are on a roll and I anticipate this level of enthusiasm will continue. As Council Coordinator, it is my personal goal to assist these young professionals all that I can and to mentor them in ways I wish I had been helped in my professional career and during my early involvement in the HMA. Please contact me, bmiller@frankmiller.com, if you would like more information on the Millennial Council's goals and objectives.

And I hope you plan on attending HMA's Central Regional Meeting, October 21-22, in Dayton, Ohio. Frank Miller Lumber Company will be one of the tour stops. And I anticipate you'll have an opportunity to meet some of these fine 2015 Millennial Council members:

- **Thomas Battle**, Battle Lumber Co., Inc., Wadley, GA
- **Julio Alvarez**, Bill Hanks Lumber Company, Inc., Danbury, NC
- **Tim Brownlee**, Brownlee Lumber, Inc., Brookville, Pennsylvania
- **Jack Shannon, III**, J.T. Shannon Lumber Company, Memphis, N
- **Tripp Josey**, Josey Lumber Company, Inc., Scotland Neck, NC
- **Claire Getty**, Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods Inc., Huntland, TN
- **Derek Wheeland**, Wheeland Lumber Company, Liberty, PA
- **Trent Yoder**, Yoder Lumber Company, Inc., Sugarcreek, OH
- **Ben Pierce**, Holt & Bugbee Company, Tewksbury, MA
- **David Platt**, Kuhns Brothers Lumber Company, Inc., Lewisburg, PA
- **Matt Fisk**, Baillie Lumber Company, Hamburg, NY

Important information from industry friend BB&T

Some of the insurance carriers that we place property coverage with have started requiring insureds to have a formal **Preventative Maintenance** (PM) program in place as a condition of insurance coverage. And so, we (BB&T) recently reached out to Mike Cowley, President of Virginia consulting firm CE Maintenance Solutions, LLC, and he provided the following information regarding building an effective PM program.

Prioritize assets, equipment, and systems

An effective PM Program begins with knowing which systems and assets need special care and attention first. Review all your assets and list them in order of priority. Consider safety systems and equipment, like fire and smoke alarms, exit lighting, deluge systems. Next, look at air and water compliance inspections. Third, what equipment/systems, if not functioning, will shut down your operations? These should get the PM inspections before all other equipment.

Devise a "common sense" program

- **Create a checklist** of what's required to keep each critical asset or piece of equipment running in a normal or like-new condition. Remember, it doesn't have to

look beautiful. The key is that it operates and runs in the manner that serves the original purchased intent.

- **Create drive-by or walk-by routes** so that on a regularly scheduled basis, a technician and/or manager comes in contact with the asset or equipment and can get close enough to listen, touch, and look at how the asset or equipment is operating.
- **Document** every PM procedure or inspection. (Basic and simple observations should be noted on the PM work request.) Every PM inspection should improve the next PM procedure. Documenting actions that occur during each and every inspection should eliminate failure.

Commit to a PM schedule

Too many companies lack the discipline to conduct a PM Program consistently. So make it part of company culture and a team effort. Hold plant supervisors and/or managers accountable for ensuring PM gets done on schedule. Tie PM Program performance to annual appraisals and financial incentives.

Bottom Line: Taking care of your equipment **proactively** costs up to six times less than fixing things in a reactive manner. So for your business, make certain that maintenance is part of a profit center, not a cost center.

Information provided by Anthony R. "Robin" Little, CIC, Vice President, BB&T Insurance Services and Director of BB&T Insurance Services-National Forest Products Practice. ARLittle@BBandT.com or (252) 752-2824.

Dust Explosion Prevention information

As the summer heats up, the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) offers the following timely information regarding **Dust Explosions** and their **Prevention**.

How Dust Explosions Occur

Combustible dusts are fine particles that present an explosion hazard when suspended in air in certain conditions. In addition to the familiar fire triangle of oxygen, heat, and fuel (the dust), dispersion of dust particles in sufficient quantity and concentration can cause rapid combustion known as a deflagration. If the event is confined by an enclosure, such as a building, room, vessel, or process equipment, the resulting pressure rise may cause an explosion. These five factors - oxygen, heat, fuel, dispersion, and confinement - are known as the "Dust Explosion Pentagon". If one element of the pentagon is missing, an explosion cannot occur.

Secondary Explosions

An initial (primary) explosion in processing equipment, or in an area where fugitive dust has accumulated, may dislodge more accumulated dust into the air, or damage a containment system (such as a duct, vessel, or collector). As a result, if ignited, the additional dust dispersed into the air may cause one or more secondary explosions. These can be far more destructive than a primary explosion, due to the increased quantity and concentration of dispersed combustible dust.

Prevention of Dust Explosions

Control the accumulation of hazardous dust by implementing an inspection and housekeeping program.

- Be certain to use proper dust collection systems and filters, and minimize the escape of dust from process equipment or ventilation systems. Regularly inspect all areas, open or hidden, for dust residues. If ignition sources are present, use cleaning methods that do not generate dust clouds. Use only vacuum cleaners approved for dust collection and locate relief valves away from dust deposits.

- Use appropriate electrical equipment and wiring methods and control static electricity, including bonding of equipment to ground. Control mechanical sparks and friction. Use separator devices to remove foreign materials capable of igniting combustibles from process materials. Separate heated surfaces and heating systems from dusts. Select and use industrial trucks properly. Control smoking, open flames and sparks.
- Employees are the first line of defense in preventing and mitigating fires and explosions, and they should be **trained** in safe work practices applicable to their job tasks, as well as on the overall programs for dust control and ignition source control. Training should occur before their first day of work, periodically to refresh their knowledge, when reassigned, and when hazards or processes change.

Bottom line: Be aware and Proactive. A dust explosion can be catastrophic. If your company has this hazard, take action to prevent tragic consequences.

Information source: www.osha.gov

What now for the Waters of the U.S.?

*By Dana Lee Cole
Hardwood Federation Executive Director*

On May 27, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a long awaited final rule defining waters that are subject to the agency's regulatory jurisdiction as Waters of the United States, colloquially known as **WOTUS**. As you can imagine, the final rule is fairly lengthy and complex and Hardwood Federation (HF) is still reviewing provisions and discussing the text with our allies in other forest products and forestry trade associations. However, below is an **initial reaction** based on our review of the final rule and conversations with our contacts:

- Initial media coverage of the WOTUS rule suggested that EPA had made some changes from the proposed rule that provided clarity regarding "what is" and "what is not" a Water of the U.S. In some places, this assessment is correct. However, after our review of the full document, the overall impression is that the final rule adds **more confusion** in certain areas, particularly those areas of most interest to the landowner community.
- The 2014 **draft** WOTUS rule broadly declared that man-made ditches, ephemeral and intermittent streams and undefined-water features, adjacent to rivers and other navigable waters, were to be deemed Waters of the U.S. (This drew widespread opposition from landowner interests.) The **final** rule seems to make improvements in some places by appearing to exempt many ditches and wetlands with normal silviculture operations from a WOTUS designation. However, rather than declare definitively that all man-made ditches are not WOTUS, the final rule designates most intermittent ditches as WOTUS, **requiring a finding** as to whether a ditch is intermittent or ephemeral, in order to be excluded from WOTUS.
- The fundamental **problem** in the final rule is that EPA reserves the authority to categorize water features as WOTUS on a case-by-case basis. This means that these features may be WOTUS unless and until EPA determines otherwise. In our view, this approach only serves to create more uncertainty for the regulated community.

Final Rule Bottom Line: Some progress was made to address landowner concerns, but not enough. Because uncertainty still exists over which waters are regulated and which are not, critics on both sides of the Capitol are now ramping up to move legislation that would force the Agency to withdraw the final rule and **start over**.

HF will continue to closely monitor this situation and offer our support to those that would like to see more rational and clear guidance come out of the EPA.

Cypress stars in “First to the Future Home” Series

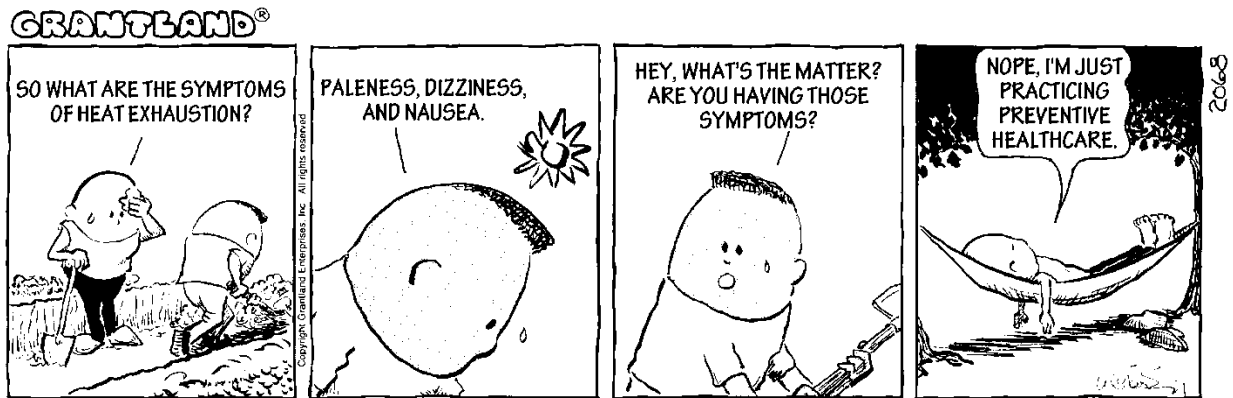
HMA’s management of the Southern Cypress Manufacturers Association (SCMA) involves overseeing the promotion of cypress to building professionals and consumers. And a recent collaborative project is producing big results.

SCMA and Atlanta Hardwood Corporation partnered with NextGenHomeTV on the “First to the Future Home” series with renowned host Ty Pennington. The series highlights the latest products and technologies, as well as traditional building materials, and shows viewers how to build an energy-efficient, healthy, and smart home. This project’s truly next-generation home, built in Palm Coast, Florida, reflects its southern roots by featuring native **cypress**.

President and executive producer of NGHTV.com, Paul Barnett said that the team selected cypress because of its good looks and long-lasting performance.

“There’s something special about the look and feel of wood that makes it appeal to homeowners, probably more so than any other material,” he said. “What sets cypress apart is its rich grain, natural durability, and flexibility with choosing a finish. When we began installing the cypress siding and soffit on the exterior of the home, we were blown away by the natural beauty and color of the wood. We liked it so much that we decided to carry it into the interior of the home for some of the ceilings.”

To watch host Ty Pennington detail the construction of the home and his use of cypress in the project, visit www.NGHTV.com.



HMA Link is published each month exclusively for members of the Hardwood Manufacturers Association. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the HMA. HMA Link welcomes comments and questions.

Hardwood Manufacturers Association

665 Rodi Road, Suite 305
Pittsburgh, PA 15235
Phone: 412.244.0440
Fax: 412.244.9090
www.HardwoodInfo.com
www.HMAmembers.org

Darleen Licina-Tubbs
Editor
Darleen@hardwood.org

Follow us @AmericanHardwds

