



October 2019

More than just talk

By Linda Jovanovich

HMA Executive Vice President

To everyone who participated in HMA's recent **South Atlantic Regional Meeting** in North Carolina/Virginia - HMA and SCMA members, industry suppliers and friends - thank you! It was wonderful talking with you; exchanging ideas; brainstorming! These are indeed changing and challenging times for our industry, and we must remember that there is strength in numbers.

Special thanks to:

- Our tour hosts – **Gates Milling, Inc.** and **Josey Lumber Company, Inc.** - for welcoming the HMA into your facilities, and for working to advance the interests of the hardwood industry.
- Our 'GOLD' sponsors – **McGriff Insurance Services**, provider of the McGriff identified T-Shirts, and **Wood-Mizer**, our Tuesday evening reception co-host.
- Our Tuesday evening Presenters – **Kara Matzko** (Port of Virginia/Virginia International Terminals, LLC) and **Cary Moon** (Hardwood Federation).

Up next is ...

HMA's 2020 National Conference and Expo, March 25-27 at the JW Marriott, Nashville! Our Conference theme is "**Piloting Change.**" And over the next several months, you'll be receiving all of the specific details of the event – sponsorship opportunities, agenda, presentation and speaker highlights, Expo specifics. The immediate call-to-action, however, is to finalize your Conference **Registration**. I encourage you to register NOW at HMAMembers.org, and take advantage of our 'Early Bird' savings opportunity.

Regarding strength in Numbers

Earlier this year, industry association representatives met, via teleconference, to discuss how to **organize and facilitate a collaborative promotion effort** for the hardwood forest products industry. More on that effort can be found in this issue of *The Link*. The article is entitled, "**Real American Hardwood Promotion Coalition.**" Don't miss it.

Remembering a Colleague and Friend

HMA was saddened to learn of the recent passing of Jonathan E. Martin, RoyOMartin Chairman, HMA Past President, and longtime industry colleague. An integral part of the hardwood industry and a "pillar" in his local area of Louisiana, Johnny spent 49 years of his life working for the family business, and passed away just days before his 71st birthday.

A memorial service was held on Saturday, September 28, 2019, at the Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria, Louisiana. Per the family request, memorials may be made to the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home, the Rapides Symphony Orchestra, or your charity of choice. To the entire Martin family, sincere condolences from the HMA!

Real American Hardwood Promotion Coalition

Driven by a variety of factors including: stiff competition from vinyl, plastic, ceramic and concrete products, a slowing world economy, misleading campaigns - aimed at both the public and policy makers - regarding the sustainability of wood products, and most recently, the ongoing U.S. trade war with China, the U.S. hardwood industry is facing significant challenges. Markets are shrinking and businesses are looking at an uncertain future.

And while the U.S. hardwood industry has a wonderful story to tell - the beauty and desirability of its products, the history of the industry, the small family business focus, the sustainability of our raw material, and the environmental and health benefits of using hardwood - the industry has yet to be successful in developing a coordinated and collaborative initiative to promote the true story and science-based benefits of real American hardwood. Unfortunately, this has allowed our competitors and adversaries to frame public opinion and gain the advantage.

Call to Action

To brainstorm in regards to developing a collaborative effort to promote the use of real American hardwood to consumers, a group of hardwood association executives came together to discuss ideas and approaches. From that conversation came a larger meeting in Atlanta, August 16-17, 2019, when 19 hardwood association executives and association board members met to further consider actions that the entire industry could participate in and benefit from.

It was agreed upon by all to move forward in a way that is open, and engages **all** members of the hardwood community...receiving input and recognizing the differences of various industry segments... regardless of the many unique aspects of the industry and the different industry segments that may have different, yet complimentary, promotional needs.

And most significantly, all in attendance agreed that ***Real American Hardwood*** be our common bond, i.e. 'brand.'

Proposed Action

Also during the Atlanta conversations, it became clear that the **first** thing we as an industry must do is assess our current marketing resources - existing promotion, research projects, and data related to consumer trends and competing product availability. Once we know what we have, we can identify what we need. This information will help develop the strong brand statement research needed to effectively promote hardwood products.

NOTE: The effort to collect this information has been completed. Also, Action Team members interviewed several marketing research firms during the recent Hardwood Federation Fly-In. And those firms have submitted RFPs with costing associated to the proposal.

The **second** priority, closely related to the first, is to identify university architecture and design school courses and competitions related to the use of hardwood. Once identified,

existing educational materials can be shared, and curriculum ideas and industry experts willing to participate in classroom presentations can be recommended.

Organization

Initially the group will function as a Coalition. Association Executives will serve as Coalition representatives.

- An Action Team has been appointed to draft communication materials that can be widely shared throughout the industry. They also are responsible for making sure all deadlines are met, and reporting all findings back to the group.
- An Advisory Committee has been set up to operate as the watchful industry eye. The Action Team will report directly to the Advisory Committee, and will forward all findings and communications it shares with the entire group.
- Future meetings will be open to interested associations and stakeholders. And communications about strategy development and implementation will be available to all.

Participating Associations

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers
Appalachian Lumbermen's Club
Decorative Hardwoods Association
Hardwood Federation
Hardwood Manufacturers Association
Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen's Assn.
Kentucky Forest Industries Association
Lake States Lumber Association
Missouri Forest Products Association
National Hardwood Lumber Association

National Wood Flooring Association
North American Forest Foundation
North Carolina Forestry Association
Pennsylvania Forest Products Assn.
Railway Tie Association
Tennessee Forestry Association
Virginia Forestry Association
Western Hardwood Association
Wood Components Manufacturers Assn

Action Team

Tom Inman, AHMI
Dana Cole, Hardwood Federation
Linda Jovanovich, HMA
Lorna Christie, NHLA
Michael Martin, NWFA

Advisory Committee

Lowery Anderson, AHMI
Rick Holden, Hardwood Federation
Bob Miller, HMA
Darwin Murray, NHLA
Tommy Maxwell, NWFA
Troy Brown, Facilitator and LSLA

Final Note

As members of the U.S. hardwood industry, the task before us all is not an easy one. However, there is great optimism that by working together, we will overcome the obstacles facing our industry. For questions and more information, please send a note to hardwoodpromotion@gmail.com.

Setting the Stage for NatCon 2020

Regardless of age, experience or circumstance, accepting change is a difficult undertaking.

Managing change however, is another matter entirely. And that will be HMA's focus at NatCon 2020 in Nashville – "**Piloting Change**" - setting a new course; eyes on the horizon; anticipating and working toward a more prosperous tomorrow!

Join us to Strategize

Our 2020 National Conference and Expo set for March 25-27, is on course for the JW Marriott Nashville. And **all** hardwood lumber producers and processors are welcome to attend.

- The event will feature speakers, workshops and panel discussions geared toward **“Piloting Change.”** Receptions and other meal venues will offer opportunities for networking, idea exchanges and one-on-one relationship building. And an industry Expo, comprised of the latest and greatest, will offer products and solutions to put you at the controls.
- **Nashville** - We’re making our move on *Music City* again, because HMA is “not going to find a city more [accommodating](#), [authentic](#), and [accessible](#) than Nashville.” Historically diverse, and with a “music scene that is second to none,” not to mention Moon Pies, Goo Goo Clusters and the infamous Tootsie’s Orchid Lounge – Nashville offers the perfect venue for business and pleasure.
- **JW Marriott Nashville** - “Located downtown, directly across from Music City Center, and rising from one of the city’s highest elevation points, this sparkling 33-story glass tower is just two blocks from the famous “Honky Tonk Highway” on Lower Broadway, and offers stunning skyline views from all 533 guest rooms and suites. Step into modern luxury at JW Marriott Nashville; Music City’s first luxury hotel!”

Make plans to Participate

Visit www.HMAMembers.org to register to attend; finalize your hotel accommodations; learn more about the Conference agenda, plus view the schedule of events and other Conference specifics. **Don’t miss this!**



Calling HMA members + Industry Stakeholders

Act now and save **\$\$!** **‘Early Bird’ Registration** for HMA’s National Conference and Expo, March 25-27, is open at www.HMAMembers.org. This is your opportunity to mix and mingle with a host of interesting and very experienced professionals. And it’s also your opportunity to participate in an event geared to the furtherance of the hardwood industry.

Not an HMA member?

No worries. The Conference is open to all hardwood industry stakeholders! So join us in Nashville and experience what the majority of our members say is the greatest benefit of their HMA membership - a significant connection to a unique forest products industry brain trust, a collective wisdom that is shared openly, freely and with great enthusiasm. It is **peer-to-peer networking** at its best.

All of the Conference details - agenda, presentation and speaker highlights, Expo specifics, registration, sponsorship opportunities – can be found at www.HMAMembers.org. And should you have any question, please contact the HMA office at 412.244.0440.

NatCon Sponsorship info coming your way

Keep a close watch on your email and snail-mail. Coming your way soon, everything you'll need to know about being a Sponsor of HMA's 2020 National Conference and Expo in Nashville. What's the big deal about being a Sponsor?

- For starters, it's a great way to differentiate your Company from the rest of the pack, and an easy, cost-effective way to establish your 'company presence' without taking a step away from your desk.
- And to thank you for your vote of confidence and extra measure of financial support, HMA will "spotlight" **you** on www.HMAmembers.org, in HMA's monthly newsletter, **The Link**, and throughout the event in Nashville. It's a 'win-win' opportunity for all involved.

To get in on the action, simply call the HMA office, 412.244.0440, and we'll get the ball rolling for you.

Fly-In 2019: Telling our Trade Story

By Dana Lee Cole

Hardwood Federation Executive Director

Driven by concerns surrounding the tariffs on U.S. hardwood exports to China, and the resulting impacts to the hardwood industry, as you might imagine, this year's Hardwood Federation Fly-In was a whirlwind 36 hours all about Trade.

Our Message

Not to say that other issues aren't moving, but trade is having such an impact, all else pales in comparison. And so, nearly 70 hardwood industry leaders - a great mix of knowledgeable Fly-In veterans and invigorated new faces - journeyed to Washington to make real, what for too many is just a government statistic or campaign talking point.

Together we stormed the Hill and visited as many congressional offices as possible. And there, face to face, we shared our business dilemmas and made known the economic impacts the trade dispute is having on the hardwood industry.

Our message on **trade** was simple - **The hardwood industry is suffering!**

- The trade dispute is having a devastating impact on hardwood companies, workers and consumers, and is causing long term damage to international markets.
- If the hardwood industry is to survive, we need help. And we asked that the Trump Administration provide financial relief to the industry, just as other agricultural commodity groups have been provided.
- We also asked for a speedy return to the negotiating table and a quick resolve to the trade dispute.

More one-on-one interaction

In addition to our meetings on the Hill, the Hardwood Federation Political Action Committee (PAC) sponsored several social events for both Republicans and Democrats during the Fly-in. As in years past, these events provided us outstanding opportunities to reconnect with friends on the Hill, and establish new relationships.

During this year's PAC events, we heard from two outstanding Members of Congress - Congresswoman Ann Kuster (D-NH) and Congresswoman Jackie Walorski (R-IN) - who completely tuned into our issues, and are joined with us in efforts to provide relief to the industry while the trade dispute continues.

The night before our Hill meetings, Congresswoman Kuster gave a terrific pep talk focusing our energy for the long day ahead. She also spearheaded a letter to Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue encouraging him to include hardwoods in agricultural relief efforts.

To wrap up our Hill Day, Congresswoman Walorski gave a fiery keynote encouraging continued action, and shared insight gleaned from her significant efforts communicating with Administration staff, up to and including the President, on our behalf.

Where are you in this story?

The Federation Fly-In to Washington is often billed as one of the most important advocacy events of the hardwood industry. This year, more than any other year, it was indeed a whirlwind 36 hours well spent. And I cannot emphasize enough the impact of personal accounts!

So, if you were not able to be with us in D.C., **it is not too late to make some noise!** Call, write or tweet your Member of Congress and Administration officials. Tell them what the trade war is doing to your business, to your employees and to your state and local economies.

And if you need help in reaching them, contact the Hardwood Federation, 202.463.2705, and we'll connect you with our Contact Congress outreach tool.

Working to get a seat at the CLT table

Currently, the annual production of cross-laminated timber (CLT) panels in the U.S. is about 35,000 m³. But within the next 10 years, it is expected that production will be close to 2 million m³ per year. At present, hardwood lumber is not included in the North American CLT standard, APA-PRG 320. Here's what's being done to potentially change that.

- **Virginia Tech (VT)**, in collaboration with the Hardwood Manufacturers Association (HMA), Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers Association (AHMI), and National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHMA), is conducting a research project to measure the possibility of using low-value hardwood lumber in cross-laminated timber as a primary raw material.
- In August, all HMA members were sent a Member Communique requesting **participation in a short survey** measuring not only the willingness of the hardwood industry to pursue this market, but also the current level of sawmill readiness to produce structural grade hardwood lumber.
- If you have yet to respond to the survey, please do so **here**.

Questions regarding the survey and the research project - "**Study of Markets for Hardwood Lumber Products to Promote Low-Value Lumber as CLT Raw Materials**" - may be directed to the VT Research Investigators, Sailesh Adhikari, saillesh@vt.edu or 217.819.1304, and Henry Quesada, Ph.D., Quesada@vt.edu or 540.231.0978.

A menacing imitator of American Hardwood

American Hardwood as a flooring material has yet another imitator to contend with – Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT). The man-made plastic can definitely be made to imitate the look of hardwood, but here's the reality, LVT lacks the substance and wholesome goodness that only real wood can provide. And ...

Did you know that "the raw materials used in the production of LVT include polyvinyl chloride resins (PVC)," and that the Environmental Protection Agency has ruled PVC "a known carcinogen and a volatile organic compound (VOC)?"

While much has been written regarding the “red flags” of LVT - and products like it - the man-made material continues to grow in popularity because of its short-term appeal. It imitates the look of hardwood; is affordably priced, is readily available; relatively easy to install, and durable.

But look beyond LVT’s ‘at-present’ perks and attractions, and think ‘long-term.’

- Will LVT last a lifetime?
- Is it repairable?
- What long-term harm will this off-gassing plastic cause?
- Are the cost-savings of LVT today, worth the human health risks and negative environmental impacts of tomorrow?

Bottom Line

There are many factors to consider when choosing materials and products for our homes and offices. But what is really important? Learn more about the “[Environmental Impacts of Polyvinyl Chloride \(PVC\) Building Materials](#),” and then compare that information with the facts about products made from American Hardwood. The ramifications are significant.



Short Course on Thermally Modified Wood

Time is of the essence! Virginia Tech is organizing a short course on Thermally Modified Wood, to be held in Charlottesville, Virginia, on October 17. Here are the details.

Description: This short course introduces the basic concepts of Thermally Modified (TM) wood including the production process, properties, applications, creating industry standards, and markets. The course also includes a tour of the TM wood unit at Northland Forest Products, Troy, VA.

When: October 17, 2019

Where: Virginia Department of Forestry,
900 Natural Resources Drive
Charlottesville, VA 22903

Who should attend: Architects, civil engineers, contractors, wholesale distributors, retailers, building contractors, government and state agencies, and the general public interested in learning more about this material.

Registration: Includes CE certificate (0.65 CEU), materials, coffee breaks and lunch.

For a look at the complete Course agenda and to Register, please visit sim.sbio.vt.edu.



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

