

The Link

Newsletter | December 2024



Building a Stronger Industry

by Ian Faight

Executive Vice President, HMA



It's the most wonderful time of the year. Yes, it's a busy season with wrapping up projects and gifts; busy days at the office and lazy days off at home; and time spent with coworkers, colleagues, family, and friends. It's also a time to put the past year—and the struggles that came along with it—behind us and look forward to the days and opportunities ahead.

In six short months, we'll be heading to Tennessee for HMA's 2025 National Conference and Expo, which will take place, **Tuesday-Thursday, June 10-12**, at the Marriott Knoxville Downtown. Our theme will be **Evolution**. It's a timely topic and our learning sessions will be designed to equip you with the knowledge and know-how you'll need to implement change and build a better future for your company and employees. And let's not forget the networking, information exchange, and research opportunities the Expo portion of our signature event provides.

How will your company evolve? Plan on joining us in the "Gateway to the Great Smoky Mountains" to find out more. More details will be on the way soon.

Over the coming days, we'll be reaching out and asking you to complete a 2025 Dues Recalculation Form. Effective January 1, your 2025 HMA membership dues will be based on your previous year's production. If your form is not returned, dues will be billed at the last reported production levels. We appreciate your help with completing the forms.

In the meantime, feel free to reach out to me at ian@hardwood.org with any questions, share ideas, or to simply talk shop.

On a personal note, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and yours! Enjoy the holidays and I look forward to seeing you all in 2025!



2025 National Conference and Expo
June 10-12 | Knoxville, Tennessee

Update Your Address Book

As a reminder, the HMA office moved to a new location. Our new physical address is:

Hardwood Manufacturers Association
2681 Sidney Street, Office 128
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

All dues invoices and meeting remittances, should be sent to:

PO Box 640632
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-0632

Please update your records accordingly. Also, if you'd like to receive your dues invoices via email and/or would like to set up automatic electronic payment of dues, reach out to Ian Faight at ian@hardwood.org.



The Latest from the HMA NextGen Leaders Council

HMA's NextGen Leaders Council members wrapped up their terms in early November with a Zoom call led by Council Coordinator Jim Howard of Atlanta Hardwood Corporation, and incoming Council Coordinator Steve James, a consultant and certified John C. Maxwell coach, trainer, and speaker.

The session was centered on the six types of Working Genius model: Wonder, Discernment, Enablement, Invention, Galvanizing, and Tenacity. The model helps people discover their natural gifts and thrive in their work and life.

Prior to the meeting, Council members completed the Working Genius assessment, which identifies the six fundamental activities that are required for any type of work and provides a simple framework for how work gets done.

Steve talked the group through their results and helped them recognize how they can tap into the people around them and help their teams succeed with more fulfilling and successful work.

A special thank you goes out to Jim Howard for serving as the Council Coordinator for the last two years. And thank you to those who recently graduated from the NextGen Leaders Council:

- **Steve Azzarella**
Wagner Lumber
- **Lindsey DiGangi**
Pennsylvania Lumbermens Mutual Insurance Co.
- **Parker Dukas**
Abenaki Timber Corporation
- **Chad Ervin**
Jones Lumber Company, LLC
- **Tony Pescaglia**
MO PAC Lumber Company
- **Alex Staalner**
American Wood Technology, LLC
- **David Steen**
Pike Lumber Company, Inc.

HMA's NextGen Leaders Council Seeks New Members

HMA is currently requesting nominations for 10 new NextGen Leaders Council members. The first meeting will be at HMA's 2025 National Conference and Expo, June 10-12, in Knoxville, Tennessee.

The purpose of HMA's NextGen Leaders Council is to engage the next generation of leadership in HMA member companies and the industry, and to seek their input as to how the HMA can better serve the professional development of future leaders.

Membership is open to anyone under the age of 40 who is employed—and nominated—by an HMA member company. Two spots also are reserved for industry suppliers.

During their two-year terms, Council members:

- Must be willing and available to work on various HMA-sponsored projects to help further develop each Council member, and to offer insight and recommendations on improvements for the HMA.
- Are encouraged to participate in HMA Board of Directors meetings, as well as Hardwood Federation Fly-Ins, in order to become familiar with all aspects of the HMA and to gain insight into industry issues.

If you have a future leader who could benefit from professional and personal development, please email Ian Faight at ian@hardwood.org.



U.S. Forest Service Grant Deadlines Loom

In October, the U.S. Forest Service announced the **availability of \$34 million** in funding to support innovation and jobs in the forestry sector, while supporting healthy forest landscapes. The agency is seeking proposals that will spark innovation, create new markets for sustainable wood products and renewable wood energy, and expand processing capacity. The funding is available through the Forest Service's three key **grant programs** to support the forest products economy: Wood Innovations Grant (WIG), Community Wood Grant, and Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Grant programs.

If you're planning on submitting an application, don't delay. Submission deadlines are quickly approaching.

Wood Innovations Grants

Application period closes December 11

The Wood Innovations Grant Program stimulates, expands, and supports U.S. wood products markets and wood energy markets to support the long-term management of our National Forest System and other forest lands. National focus areas include mass timber, renewable wood energy, and technological development that supports hazardous fuel reduction and sustainable forest management.

Community Wood Grants

Application period closes December 18

The Community Wood Grant Program provides funding to install thermally led community wood energy systems or to build innovative wood product manufacturing facilities. The Forest Service expects renewable wood energy systems installed under this program to use the most stringent control technologies. The program places extra emphasis on assisting sawmills in economically challenged areas to retool or add advanced technology.

Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Grants

Application period closes December 18

The Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Grants may be used to provide support for facilities that purchase and process byproducts of ecosystem restoration projects. This includes applications to establish, reopen, retrofit, expand, or improve a sawmill or other wood-processing facility in close proximity to federal or Indian lands that need ecosystem restoration and will generate byproducts.

Visit the **Forest Service website** for more information and to apply. And if you'd like a letter of support from the HMA, email Ian Faight at ian@hardwood.org.

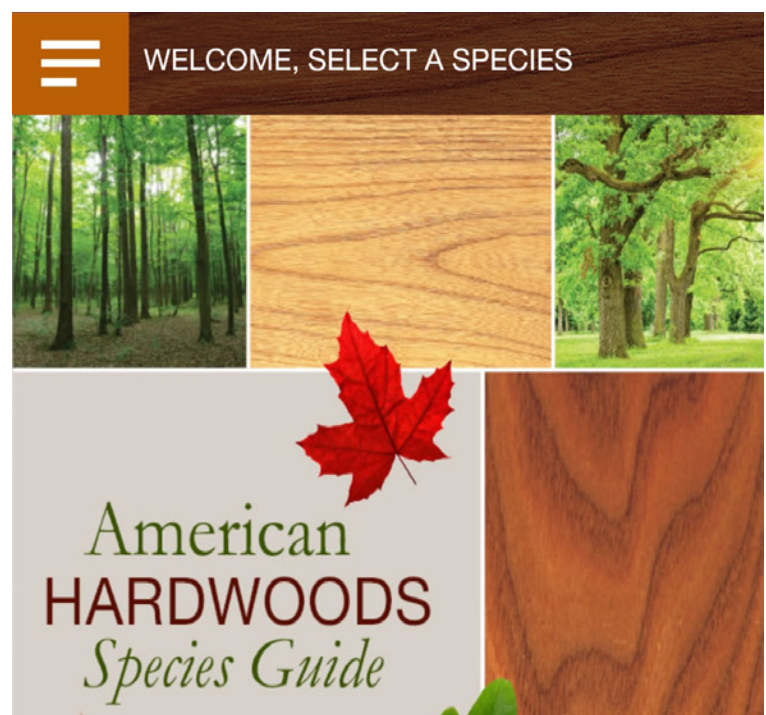
Guide to American Hardwoods Mobile App

The American Hardwood Information Center (AHIC) recently launched a *Guide to American Hardwoods* mobile app. The new tool is available for free on **Google Play** for Android devices and the **App Store** for iOS devices.

Designed for consumers, architects, interior designers, and specifiers, the app provides a digital species guide to assist users in finding information on the most abundant American hardwood species—including availability, physical and working characteristics, strength and mechanical properties, and typical applications of each.

The application allows users the ability to compare species being considered for a project. Plus, a virtual stain simulator displays the species in clear, light, medium, and dark finishes to help visualize stain combinations of flooring, cabinetry, moulding and furniture co-existing in a single design space. And species profiles include photos featuring the wood in finished applications.

Install the app today and share it with your customers.



Thank You for Supporting American Hardwoods in 2024

The Hardwood Manufacturers Association (HMA) would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank you, all the HMA member and non-member companies who have contributed to our American Hardwoods education/promotion campaign. Your contributions speak volumes. Thank you for keeping hardwood promotion on your priority list.

Over the past year—via **The American Hardwood Information Center** at **HardwoodInfo.com**—we were able to produce new editorial features and monthly blog posts, maintain active social media profiles, publish an updated American Hardwoods Species Guide mobile app, educate architects and designers through two Continuing Education Units (with another one on the way), and so much more.

On behalf of all industry stakeholders, HMA applauds the extra effort of the following contributors for their generosity.

HMA Member Contributors

AT Lumber Company
Baillie Lumber Co.
Bingaman & Sons Lumber, Inc.
Cersosimo Lumber Co.
Dwight Lewis Lumber Co.
East Perry Lumber Co.
Jerry G. Williams & Sons, Inc.
Kretz Lumber Company, Inc.
Middle Tennessee Lumber Co.
MO PAC Lumber
Mueller Brothers Timber
Northland Forest Products, Inc.
RAM Forest Products, Inc.
Stella-Jones Corporation
The Turman Group
Wellborn Cabinet, Inc.

Non-Member Contributors

Cedar Creek Hardwoods
Cotton-Hanlon, Inc.
Hardwood Market Report
Maxwell Hardwood Flooring
National Hardwood Magazine
SII Dry Kilns
Swaner Hardwood Company
W.M. Cramer Lumber Co



Photo courtesy of Room & Board

Driving Traffic

The American Hardwood Information Center website, **HardwoodInfo.com**, continued to serve as a valuable resource for homeowners and design pros. Each month in 2024, the site averaged:

- **9,300 users**
- **10,250 sessions**
- **14,096 pageviews**

Making Headlines

The AHIC published three listicles this year, securing **7,840 placements** and reaching more than **568M potential readers** across the country.

Continuing to Educate

The AHIC's two continuing education units, *American Hardwoods and their Role in Carbon Neutral Design* and *Thermally Modified Hardwood and its Role in Architectural Design*, were completed by **300 architecture and design professionals** online and in person.



Only through industry support and collaboration can promotional efforts, designed to inspire a renewed preference for American Hardwoods, continue.

To add your company name to these lists of supporters, contact info@hardwood.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

How to Use Thermally Modified Hardwood in Your Home

Thermally modified Real American Hardwood® is a durable, sustainable product gaining traction in U.S. home design. Developed in Finland in the 1990s, the process involves heating wood to over 400°F in a low-oxygen chamber, permanently altering its cellular structure to boost resistance to moisture, decay, and insects—without chemicals. It's also more dimensionally stable, making it less likely to warp or twist. "Thermally modified hardwood is an eco-friendly alternative to pressure-treated wood," notes Ian Faight of the **American Hardwood Information Center**. "For homeowners, this versatile, low-maintenance material is an excellent choice for exterior applications like decking, siding, and outdoor furniture, as well as for interior uses like flooring and cabinetry."

Here are six examples of its remarkable adaptability and great looks.



Photo: 161 Photography

Pennsylvania poplar siding from Americana™ Thermally Modified Hardwoods envelops this contemporary residence in Biltmore Forest, North Carolina, by Vellum Architecture and Design. The poplar's rich tones and clean lines enhance the home's modern aesthetic, while its durability and stability—achieved through heat treatment—ensure lasting performance against moisture, decay, and warping.



Photo: VikingWood, AHC Hardwood Group

VikingWood™ thermally modified sweet gum flooring enhances the covered porch of this Lake Lanier, Georgia, family home, offering a natural, chemical-free alternative to treated wood. The thermal process adds structural stability and fungal resistance while producing a deep, chocolate hue that helps create a warm, inviting setting for the retreat designed by Jillian Mitchell of Details Design.

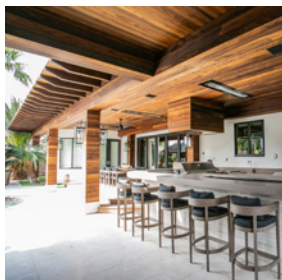


Photo: Henri Sagalow Photography

An architecturally complicated space, the renovated entertainment area of a Las Vegas, Nevada, residence is given a sense of unity by cladding the ceiling, soffits, and columns with thermally modified Pennsylvania poplar from Americana. The heat-treated

hardwood not only enhances the space's aesthetics with its burnished, natural tones, but also provides improved resistance to warping, decay, and insects—ideal for the desert climate.

About 4,000 square feet of thermally modified Appalachian ash decking, also from Americana, creates a seamless flow around the pool of a Sonoma County, California, residence. Part of a multilevel wrap-around terrace designed and built by Deck Supply Warehouse, the deck's heat-treated timber means the space will retain its glamorous looks and structural integrity for many years to come.



Photo: Americana Thermally Modified Hardwoods

Thermally modified hardwood's resistance to moisture, decay, and warping make it ideal for outdoor furniture, as does another attribute: During the heating process, natural sugars in the wood caramelize, giving the timber a warmer, more pronounced hue—a phenomenon showcased in these classic Adirondack chairs made from VikingWood thermally modified ash, which has acquired a rich, coffee-like hue that accentuates its characterful grain.



Photo: VikingWood, AHC Hardwood Group

By using thermally modified ash from Arbor Wood Co. to clad both the interior ceiling and the exterior roof overhang of this lake house in Riverside, Texas, Collaborative Designworks gives a master class in creating continuous indoor-outdoor living. The treated hardwood not only frames the water views perfectly, it also makes those deep soffits as low-maintenance as they are spectacular.

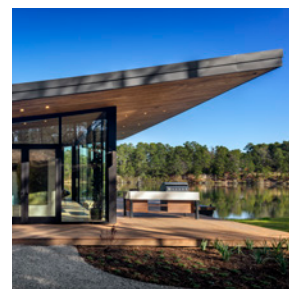


Photo: Joe Aker/Aker Imaging

Visit hardwoodinfo.com for more about using American hardwoods in your home.

Staying Social with Real American Hardwood

by Ian Faight

Executive Vice President, HMA | Digital Community Manager, RAHC

In November, the Real American Hardwood Coalition (RAHC) continued to share our industry's stories with engaging social media content. Following is a brief recap of what you may have missed.

Nourishing with Nature

When it comes to selecting materials for high-traffic spaces in a fast-paced world, Real American Hardwood® delivers excellent service. In the second installment of its Nourishing with Nature series, the RAHC showcased beautiful and durable commercial furniture supplied by Crow Works.

For this national burger joint, the Ohio-based company crafts tables, benches, chairs, bar stools, and booths from white oak that's responsibly sourced from the Appalachian region.

See the post on [Instagram](#).

Celebrating Natural Beauty

For one fast-casual dining spot, Crow Works is a one-stop shop for design, production, and distribution of their hardwood furniture packages.

Sustainably Sourced

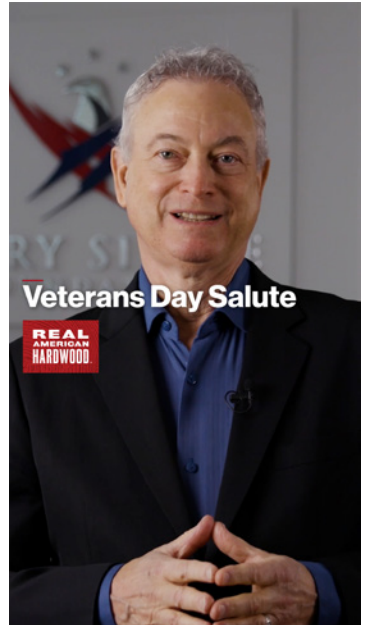
Tables, benches, chairs, bar stools, and booths are crafted from American white oak that's responsibly sourced from the Appalachian region.

Saluting Our Real American Heroes

In recognition of Veterans Day, the RAHC thanked the courageous men and women who have sacrificed so much for our country and freedom.

To shine the spotlight on the needs of our country's most severely wounded veterans, the RAHC shared a special message from Gary Sinise and the Gary Sinise Foundation about their Restoring Independence, Supporting Empowerment (R.I.S.E.) program. This incredible initiative builds specially adapted, mortgage-free homes for our nation's most severely wounded veterans utilizing durable building materials—like Real American Hardwood—that can serve the needs of wheelchairs, prosthetics, and other mobility devices.

See the post on [Instagram](#). And to learn more about the R.I.S.E. program, visit garysinisefoundation.org.



At this time of year, we give thanks for many things. From family and friends to industry colleagues and fulfilling careers, there's a lot to be thankful for in our everyday lives.

In the spirit of giving thanks, the HMA is committed to helping provide a sustainable future for our industry, your businesses, and Real American Hardwood promotion and education.

At HMA's Fall Board of Directors meeting, the Board voted to contribute an additional \$25,000 to the Real American Hardwood Coalition (RAHC), for a total of \$40,000 in 2024.

Build Your World® and give back to support the industry that has given so much to all of us. If you'd like to make a voluntary, year-end contribution to the RAHC, you may do so **online** or by completing and returning a downloadable **form**.

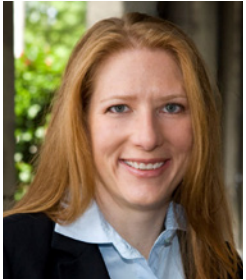
Contributions made out directly to the RAHC are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

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The Latest from Capitol Hill

by Dana Lee Cole

Executive Director, Hardwood Federation



Key Lame Duck Items Emerge

With GOP control of the White House and Congress on the horizon for 2025, the congressional to-do list for the lame duck session which began November 12, continues to take shape. As we approach the end of the year, lawmakers will need to pass a spending bill to extend beyond December 20, when the current

funding measure expires. This measure is expected to fund federal government operations to March 2025.

A second must-pass bill is the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). On a positive note, the Senate version of the bill currently includes report language directing the Department of Defense and the General Services Administration to move swiftly in transitioning from endangered apitong to domestically produced red oak for trailer bed and other applications. Unfortunately, the Senate bill also includes two amendments, S. Amdt 3268 (#21) and S. Amdt 3239 (#50), that if adopted, would remove more than 44,000 acres of Hoosier National Forest land from active forest management and set a dangerous precedent for the rest of the national forest system. The Federation is working closely with the Indiana Hardwood Lumberman's Association (IHLA) to build opposition to these amendments.

Despite the best efforts of Agriculture leaders, the Farm Bill is essentially dead in 2024 and will be extended into 2025. The Federation has been in contact with Agriculture Committee staff in both the House and Senate and understands that current programs will either be granted an extension—whether it is a three-month or a one-year extension is under discussion. Many GOP senators believe that by waiting until next year, they can elevate their priorities during negotiations and the bill drafting process.

Senate Committee Passes Forest Management Bill

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee approved more than 70 bills focusing on land-use issues, including a revised version of the industry-supported "Promoting Effective Forest Management Act," a bipartisan bill sponsored by Senators Manchin (D-WV) and Barrasso (R-WY). Although the revised legislation drops a provision that would hamstring the Administration's plans to expand old growth, it supports ambitious forest thinning projects and could serve as a vehicle to marry up with Rep. Bruce Westerman's (R-AR) "Fix Our Forests Act," also supported by industry.

Tax Tops Priority List in 2025

Hill leaders are looking at January to tee up a vote on a budgetary procedure known as "reconciliation" to allow tax legislation to move onto the Senate floor with a simple majority vote, bypassing the 60-vote hurdle applied to most legislation. Lawmakers will focus on extending provisions of the 2017 tax law that are set to expire at the end of 2025, including estate tax flexibility and small business deduction, which are priorities of the hardwood sector. Issues that could complicate the debate include whether to renew the \$10,000 limit on State and Local Tax deductions and whether lawmakers should scrap some of the clean energy tax measures to raise revenue. This will be necessary to offset the costs of renewing the 2017 tax law.

EU Parliament Approves One-Year Delay for EUDR

On November 14, the European Parliament voted to approve the European Commission's recommendation to delay the E.U. Deforestation Rule (EUDR) by 12-months, pushing the law's implementation date to December 30, 2025, instead of the end of the current year. The European Commission and European Council must now consider several amendments also passed by the Parliament before writing the new implementation dates and amendments into EU law. Although this is a positive step forward, challenges still remain for the U.S. industry exporting to the EU. For details, please see AHEC's November 14 [memorandum](#).

East Coast, Gulf Port Contract Negotiations Hit Rough Waters

The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) which represents dockworkers and the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX), representing port operators, continued contract negotiations in November. The parties have been aiming to agree to a new contract before the extension expires on January 15, an agreement reached in early October following a brief work stoppage. Once again, disagreement over the automation issue prompted the ILA to walk away from the bargaining table, leaving negotiations in limbo. USMX has issued a [statement](#) outlining disagreements with the dockworkers and expressing optimism for resumption of negotiations.

Color Trends for 2025

by Sara Skwaryk

Communications and Administrative Coordinator, HMA

As we approach 2025, paint companies are revealing their standout colors, setting the tone for home design and décor in the coming year. This year's selections showcase a delightful blend of boldness and subtlety, reflecting both timeless elegance and contemporary flair that pairs well with the natural tones of American hardwoods. Let's dive into the 2025 color trends from the leading paint brands, each offering a unique perspective on color and its role in living spaces.



Behr: Rumors

Kicking things off is **Behr's Rumors**, a rich red with brown undertones. This color reflects the growing demand for warmer neutrals that still pack a bold punch. Rumors is ideal for those seeking to create a moody yet inviting environment, perfect for making a striking statement in any room.



Benjamin Moore: Cinnamon Slate

Benjamin Moore introduces **Cinnamon Slate**. This delicate blend of heathered plum and velvety brown showcases a sophisticated yet modern sensibility. The hue encapsulates the concept of being "quietly colorful," offering a touch of warmth without overwhelming a space.



Dutch Boy: Mapped Blue

Dutch Boy presents **Mapped Blue**, a hue characterized by subtle yellow undertones and a hint of gray. This versatile shade complements both warm and cool color palettes, making it an excellent choice for a diverse range of design styles.

PPG/Glidden: Purple Basil

For 2025, PPG and Glidden are encouraging homeowners to embrace bold colors with **Purple Basil**. According to Ashley McCollum, a PPG color expert, this choice invites "color chip daydreamers" to step outside their comfort zones and explore new, vibrant hues.



Sherwin-Williams: Quietude

HGTV Home by Sherwin-Williams has chosen Quietude as its 2025 Color of the Year. Part of their "Naturally Refined" collection. This serene cool sage green, with subtle blue undertones, strikes a balance between traditional charm and modern sophistication.



Valspar: Encore

Valspar's choice for 2025, **Encore**, embodies deep blue tones that transport you to a luxurious realm where old-world design meets modernity. This hue captures the essence of both tradition and innovation, creating a space that feels familiar yet refreshingly unexpected.



As we look forward to 2025, these colors remind us of the power of paint to transform spaces and express individuality. Whether you're drawn to the deep elegance of Valspar's Encore or the serene calm of Sherwin-Williams' Quietude, this year's color selections offer something for everyone. Embrace these trends to create a home that reflects your personal style while remaining timeless beautiful.



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

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