

# The Link

Newsletter | January 2022



## More Than Just Talk

by Linda Jovanovich  
HMA Executive Vice President



Happy New Year, everyone! I trust you're rested from the holidays and are ready to get down to work. So, let's take care of some HMA business.

### Watch Your Snail-Mail

To ensure you are being invoiced fairly, arriving in your mailboxes this week is your 2022 Dues Calculation Form. Please provide an update on your annual production figures, then email the completed form to [info@hardwood.org](mailto:info@hardwood.org). If I do not hear from you, your 2022 dues will be billed at the last reported production levels.

Additionally, you will see listed on the form several ways to provide extra financial support to the HMA, and I hope you will sign on for one or both of the following options:

- **Sustaining Member Contributions**  
Support activities associated with HMA's Member Services.
- **Voluntary Member Promotion Contributions**  
Support HMA's Promotion and Education campaigns.

Should you have any questions, please call me at **412.215.9256**.

### Other Action Items

If you know of an eligible student that could benefit from one of the **Susan M. Regan Memorial Scholarships**, now is the time to take action. These annual scholarships are available to provide financial assistance to qualified students who are enrolled in an accredited forestry and/or wood products program. Eligibility requirements and a scholarship application are available at [HMAmembers.org](http://HMAmembers.org). And completed applications, along with all transcripts and references, must be received by **January 31, 2022**. Please, don't delay.

Also, it will soon be **HMA 2022 National Conference and Expo** time! And each day, I'm hoping to see your name on the event registration list. Online **Registration** for the March 23-25 event, is up and running. And **Hotel Reservations** at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, Miramar Beach, Florida, also can be made online. And if you haven't heard, we're trying something different this NatCon.

An informal HMA golf outing is set for Wednesday, March 23, at Sandestin's award-winning Links Golf Course. It's first come, first served. So, to reserve your spot, email Peter McCarty, golf outing coordinator, [PeterM@TSman.com](mailto:PeterM@TSman.com). He'll have all of the details on cost, tee times, hole sponsorships, and more. Join the Comradery!

## Also In This Issue

- NatCon Priority Items
- New Class Offerings from NTC
- Conference Agenda Details
- Kudos to these Conference Sponsors
- RAHC Year-End Update
- 2021 Wrap-up and 2022 Outlook, by *Dana Lee Cole*
- Continuing the Social Media Conversation, by *Ian Faight*
- Important Information for the Specifying Community
- Is it Flu or COVID?

**Investing in the Future**

**HMA**

**2022 National Conference and Expo Sponsorship Opportunities**

Contact the HMA at 412.244.0440 to explore options and stand out from the crowd!



## NatCon Priority Items

Calling all hardwood industry stakeholders. **Register** today for HMA's NatCon 2022, March 23–25, at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort in Miramar Beach, Florida. Easy, online registration is up and running at [HMAmembers.org](http://HMAmembers.org). So, finalize your registration now, and SAVE.

While you're at it, complete your **hotel reservations** at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort. Online is the easiest and fastest way to reserve your room(s). **Click here** for more information and to secure the negotiated room rate of **\$185**.

Be a **Conference Sponsor**. It's a great way to "spotlight" you and distinguish your company from the rest of the field. Sponsorship opportunities are listed at [HMAmembers.org](http://HMAmembers.org). Contact us at [info@hardwood.org](mailto:info@hardwood.org) or **412.215.9256** to discuss what's available.

## Attention Golfers

An informal HMA golf outing is set for March 23, at Sandestin's award-winning Links Golf Course.

- To reserve your spot, email Peter McCarty, golf outing coordinator, at [PeterM@TSman.com](mailto:PeterM@TSman.com).
- The cost to participate is **\$75+tax** (includes golf/cart/driving range) and will be paid on-site, directly to the Pro Shop at the Club House.
- Tee times begin at 9:03 am. Arrangements can be made to accommodate HMA Board Members and SCMA members who are attending their respective Association meetings.
- **Hole Sponsorships** (for "longest drive" or "closest to the pin") are available for **\$50**. Email Peter to learn more and to join the FUN!



## New Class Offerings from NTC

Looking for additional training opportunities to enhance the skills of your plant managers, production supervisors, quality control technicians, sales representatives, and other valued employees? HMA's partner in education, Northcentral Technical College (NTC), is offering two workshops to do just that! But as you will see, time is of the essence.



- Set for **January 10–12** is the **Applied Wood Science Workshop**. In this value-packed course, participants will learn how to reduce drying defects in lumber, minimize product failures due to dimensional change, increase machining quality, and increase product yield. (limited to 12 students)
- Then, running **January 13–15** is the **Moulder Set Up and Knife Grinding Workshop**. In this course—essential for moulder technician trainees, grinderman trainees, and all others who deal with the machining quality of wood products—participants will learn the step-by-step procedures for accurately setting up production moulders and properly grinding profile knives. (limited to 6 students)

All of the workshop details—registration, cost, hotel, enrollment deadlines—are available at [NTC.edu](http://NTC.edu). Don't delay.



## Conference Agenda Details

If you are wondering what other Business Sessions are on tap for HMA's 2022 National Conference and Expo, wonder no more.



### More from ITR Economist

As previously announced, Connor Lokar, ITR economist and senior forecaster, will be joining us, in person, with a two-fold offering. His formal presentation, titled **Plan and Prosper**, will discuss business responses, tactics, and strategies regarding

the challenges, uncertainties, and projected economic changes for 2022 and 2023.

Lokar also will conduct a 45-minute session, titled **ITR Methodology/Forecast 101**. Topics will include:

- An overview of ITR Economics' Forecasting steps,
- Understanding how to calculate and use rates-of-change in your internal forecasting processes,
- How to identify and properly use the phases of the business cycle, and
- Advice for each phase of the business cycle.

Other Business Sessions slated for the Conference agenda include:

### A Domestic Hardwood Market Update

Dan Meyer, editor, Hardwood Publishing Company, Inc., will join us to highlight and discuss price trends and potential opportunities for the domestic hardwood industry.



### Real American Hardwood Coalition Update

For all interested in hardwood promotion, this session is a MUST! Since its launch in 2019, the Real American Hardwood Coalition has made great strides in advancing its mission. You'll want to hear what's happening NOW and what the next steps will be for this important initiative.



All of the Conference details—registration, hotel, exhibitors, sponsorships—can be found at [HMAmembers.org](https://HMAmembers.org). Plan to participate.

## Kudos to these Conference Sponsors

Without hesitation, they've stepped up to the plate and said, "Count me in!" Such support is greatly appreciated by the HMA. And to say "thank you," we'll be spotlighting them—online and in print—leading up to, throughout, and after the 2022 National Conference and Expo! Kudos to:



**Exhibitor Event Sponsor**, for the eleventh consecutive year, industry supplier and HMA friend, Pennsylvania Lumbermens Mutual Insurance Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania! In Florida, they'll be manning Booth #15. Please stop by and be sure to thank them for their continued support of the HMA. [PLMins.com](https://PLMins.com)



**Exhibitor Event Sponsor** and longtime HMA event participant Taylor Machine Works, Inc., Louisville, Mississippi! At the Expo, you'll find their representatives in

Booth #32. Please stop by and be sure to thank them for supporting the HMA to the max. [TaylorBigRed.com](https://TaylorBigRed.com)

**Exhibitor Event Sponsor**, for the eighth consecutive year, industry supplier and HMA friend USNR, Woodland, Washington! Look for them at Booth #6. Make every effort to thank them for their ongoing support of the HMA. [USNR.com](https://USNR.com)



At the **Platinum Sponsor** level is industry supplier Piché, Daveluyville, Québec! The lanyards that will adorn the necks of all who participate at HMA's 2022 meetings will be touting their name/logo. Look for them in Booth #11 for an update on their products and services, and to thank them. [PichelInc.com](https://PichelInc.com)



And at the **Gold Sponsor** level is industry supplier, Nyle Dry Kilns, Brewer, Maine! These fine folks are sponsoring the room keycards. Find them at Booth #1 to show your appreciation and to discuss their "Made in the USA" products. [Nyle.com](https://Nyle.com)



Contact us at **412.215.9256** to discuss adding your company name and logo to this impressive list of HMA supporters. Looking forward to your call!

## RAHC Year-End Update

For all industry stakeholders recognizing the importance of Real American Hardwood™ promotion, keep reading, please. As 2021 was winding to a close, the Real American Hardwood Coalition (RAHC) issued the following news. And it's very exciting!

Major plans are coming together for our industry-wide promotional efforts. The big news heading into 2022, is that the RAHC Board of Directors has selected CANVAS United as its digital agency to develop a consumer website at [RealAmericanHardwood.com](https://RealAmericanHardwood.com)—and we're excited to report that work is underway.

CANVAS United was selected from a field of seven, high-profile agencies for their exceptional creativity, impressive project portfolio, and extensive experience working with a variety of client types—including other commodity groups.

*"We are thrilled to be partnering with CANVAS United to design and build a dynamic website to promote Real American Hardwood products," said Michael Martin, president and CEO of the National Wood Flooring Association, and member of the RAHC Board of Directors. "They are a prestigious agency and their work is outstanding. Their talented team has worked with the California Milk Processor Board (got milk?®) for a number of years, and they are the brains behind the got milk? website, which we greatly admire. We're looking forward to leveraging their expertise to deliver a digital experience and craft messaging that engages and informs visitors."*

On schedule to launch in the second quarter of 2022, the new website will tout the advantages and benefits of Naturally Authentic™ Real American Hardwood flooring, cabinetry, furniture, millwork, and other products through vignettes that make real, emotional connections with consumers across various demographics. Interactive modules will educate consumers on the products they're choosing to bring into their homes by comparing the appearance, durability, value, home health, and environmental attributes of Real American Hardwood products to faux, wood-look alternatives. The site will serve as a hub for project inspiration, maintenance tips, and technical information, as well as product sourcing.

*"Our products have compelling stories to tell," Martin added. "We're excited to work with CANVAS United on a digital strategy to tell these stories for the benefit of Real American Hardwood products and all industry stakeholders."*

## How to Get Involved

Contributions to the RAHC are 100% voluntary. HMA and other industry associations are leading the charge to fund the RAHC's efforts. And states—such as Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio—have issued fundraising challenges to ramp up support.

If your company would like to support this exciting initiative, go to [RealAmericanHardwood.org](https://RealAmericanHardwood.org) and click on "Contribute Today." You also can see a list of industry leaders who have joined our efforts under "About Us > Financial Supporters."

The RAHC also is asking for associations and companies to submit photos of how they are using the logo, regardless of whether it is on packaging, letterhead, trucks, or elsewhere. The more visible the logo is, the more effective the campaign will be once it hits consumer touch-points—especially retail outlets. Having the Real American Hardwood logo widely recognized will begin to influence consumer choices.



Don't have the logo? Visit the industry website at [RealAmericanHardwood.org](https://RealAmericanHardwood.org) and click "Use the Logo" in the upper right corner. Various formats of the logo are available, along with usage guides, brand standards, and a social media guide.

And be sure to follow Real American Hardwood on social media, as well as like and share content—it's created for you to use on your pages, too!

Have a question or want to know more? Email [info@realamericanhardwood.org](mailto:info@realamericanhardwood.org).

**REAL  
AMERICAN  
HARDWOOD**

 | @RealAmericanHardwood

 | @RealAmericanHardwood

 | @RealAmericanHwd

## 2021 Wrap-up and 2022 Outlook

by Dana Lee Cole

*Executive Director, Hardwood Federation*



Surprisingly, 2021 ended with a whimper in Washington, D.C. By December 16, federal lawmakers had decamped from Washington, dodging the possibility of deliberating end-of-year business during the days, if not hours, leading to the holiday.

### Issues of Note

- Congress took steps to avoid default on the nation's \$29 trillion debt, passing legislation to raise the federal debt ceiling to an amount that should keep the lights on in the federal government into 2023.
- Democrats fell short of moving some of their key priorities to federal election reform legislation, most notably the \$2 trillion "Build Back Better" bill, also known as the "reconciliation package."

### Holiday Cheer for Hardwoods

In December, however, two items benefitting the hardwood industry moved forward. On December 8, the House passed the "Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2021" (**H.R. 4996**) by a vote of 364–60. This important bill would update the federal "Shipping Act" and institute remedies for unfair shipping practices that exacerbate global supply chain disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Specifically, the bill would empower the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) to prevent ocean carriers from declining export cargo if the containers can be loaded safely and within a reasonable time frame. Note: During a discussion with the Hardwood Federation in November, Sen. John Boozman (R-AK) expressed interest in supporting a Senate bill and stated that his colleague, John Thune, will likely offer a slimmer version than H.R. 4996.

On December 15, on the heels of House passage, the Senate voted 89–10 to pass the "National Defense Authorization Act" (**NDAA**) (H.R. 4350), a \$768 billion bill. Fortunately for the industry, the NDAA includes a provision authorizing a pilot program to evaluate the use of more mass timber in military construction.

Specifically, the NDAA states that "each...military department shall conduct a pilot program" to analyze the impact that "the use of mass timber as the primary construction material in military construction may have on the environmental sustainability, infrastructure resilience, cost effectiveness, and construction timeliness of military construction."

### 2022 Outlook

As the new year begins, legislators are scheduled to return during the early weeks of January. And as the legislative days begin to go by, the prospects for major legislation moving through Congress will diminish as mid-term elections approach. That said, lawmakers will try to coalesce around consensus issues, and the Hardwood Federation team will be engaged with dozens of industry champions on the Hill discussing:

#### ■ Build Back Better

Although the bill has gone off the rails, certain provisions could re-emerge in future legislation. These include:

- Research funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture related to sustainable forestry methods, maximizing carbon sequestration on federal lands, and life cycle analysis of wood products.
- Funding for initiatives through the U.S. Department of Agriculture that protect older and more mature forests in the National Forest System.
- Grant programs that support private landowners entering voluntary carbon market programs.
- Tax increases and other revenue raisers that would impact hardwood businesses, as well as small-and medium-sized business that are organized as S-Corporations or other pass-through structures.
- **Shipping Reform**  
An aversion to controversy will likely entice lawmakers to rally around more bipartisan, consensus legislation such as ocean shipping reform, raising the prospects for a companion bill in the Senate. The House bill attracted nearly 100 Democratic and Republican co-sponsors split evenly on party lines, virtually reflecting the party composition of the people's House.
- **Farm Bill**  
The current Farm Bill—"Agriculture Policy Act of 2018"—does not expire until 2023, however, because a new Congress and possibly new leadership may convene, members of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees will kick off stakeholder meetings in 2022.

*Continued on page 8*



## Continuing the Social Media Conversation

by Ian Faight

Marketing, Communications, and Digital Content Director, HMA

Social media is a powerful and inexpensive way to enhance your company's marketing strategy. And if you're doing it right, your followers are not only liking and sharing your content, they're also leaving comments. Social media, after all, is all about engaging and interacting with your audience. So, remember to keep the conversation going by responding to comments—the good and the bad—in a timely manner. Here are some tips on how to handle different types of comments.

### Positive Comments

If someone leaves a positive comment on one of your posts, take advantage of the opportunity to acknowledge and thank them for their time and feedback. Doing so shows that you appreciate your audience and are actively building a community that they can refer to when they have questions or are looking for products. And it increases the likelihood that they'll comment again in the future.

### Negative Comments

Some followers are going to have a negative experience. Don't ignore them, it's always best to try to make things right. Apologize and respond to the comment in a respectful way—even if it's just to ask the commentor to contact you directly or through a direct message to take the conversation out of the public view. Making the effort to resolve their issue can turn a negative comment into a positive outcome and a loyal customer. And be aware, other followers will take note of how your company addresses negative comments.

However, there also will be times when deleting a comment is appropriate, such as when a post is overly critical, uses offensive language, targets specific people, or violates your company's values or community guidelines in some other way. And knowing this, your company can put a plan in place for how to address these situations if—and when—they arise.

### Neutral Comments

Some comments are simply defined as being neutral, which are typically someone asking a question or tagging one of their friends so that they can see a particular post. Use this opportunity to "like" their comment and consider striking up a conversation by providing more information. It only takes a few seconds and can lead to more interaction with your audience.

### Take "Customer Service" Seriously

According to the Sprout Social Index™ report, 44% of consumers say customer service distinguishes a brand from its peers. Whether we're talking about social media, or good old-fashioned phone calls or emails, customers expect responses to their inquiries—and they don't want to wait. The report also says 79% of consumers expect brands to respond to inquiries within 24 hours, and 49% of consumers say they'll unfollow a brand due to poor customer service.

If your company needs more guidance on how to keep the conversation going on social media, the HMA is here to help. Send your questions to Ian Faight at [ian@hardwood.org](mailto:ian@hardwood.org).

## Social Media Guide Available

The Real American Hardwood Coalition published a handy resource, titled *Beginner's Guide to Social Media: Tips, Tricks, Dos, and Don'ts*. This guide is available to you for free as a tool to help boost your company's presence on various social media platforms—including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Download a copy at [RealAmericanHardwood.org](http://RealAmericanHardwood.org).



## Important Information for the Specifying Community

Across the globe, concerns over climate change, global warming and the overabundance of carbon dioxide through the burning of fossil fuels, steel and aluminum production, building operations, deforestation, and a myriad of other human activities, has scientists, environmentalists and politicians calling for everyone to be environmentally aware, knowledgeable, and responsible. So, why aren't you specifying more American hardwood?

### The Facts are Overwhelming

By virtue of its natural magnificence, wood reduces greenhouse gases in the atmosphere! Approximately half the weight of the kiln dried wood in any building project is sequestered carbon. Conversion of wood into products such as structural beams, window frames, furniture, flooring, cabinetry, and doors contributes to the long-term sequestration of carbon.

Wood products make up 47% of all industrial raw materials manufactured in the U.S., but consume only 4% of the total energy required to manufacture those raw materials.

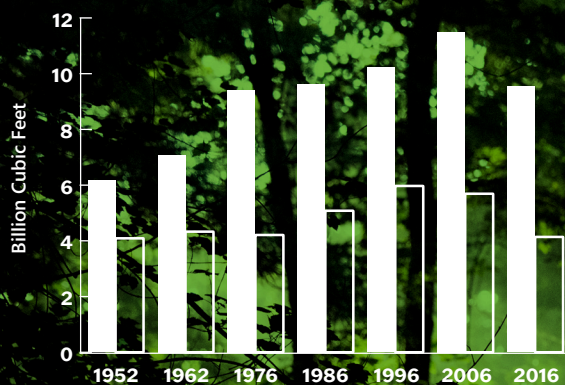
When comparing the amount of energy required to produce one ton of aluminum, steel, glass, or cement to the production of one ton of wood, it requires:

- 126x more energy for one ton of aluminum
- 24x more energy for one ton of steel
- 14x more energy for one ton of glass
- 5x more energy for one ton of cement (Replacing one cubic meter of concrete with one cubic meter of wood saves approximately one ton of CO<sub>2</sub>.)

So, if you are not specifying American hardwood, start now. When considered through Life Cycle Assessment against other materials, hardwoods are favored for their extremely long service life, low carbon footprint, and eco-friendly disposal or repurposing at the conclusion of their useful lives.

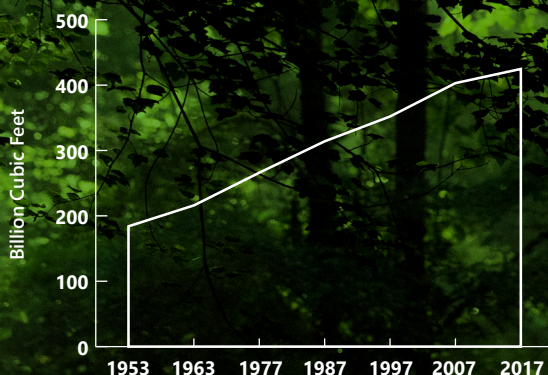
Few building materials possess hardwoods' overall environmental attributes. What's there to think about?

### Hardwood **Growth** Vs. **Removal** in U.S. Forests



The balance between net growth and removals provides an estimate of timber sustainability. The growth-to-removals ratio ( $G:R = \text{net growth} / \text{growing-stock removals}$ ) quantifies this balance. The G:R for hardwoods in 2016 was 2.3.

### Hardwood Forest Volume in the U.S.



In 2017, the volume of hardwood in U.S. forests totaled 425 billion cubic feet, an increase of 131% since 1953.



## 2021 Wrap-up and 2022 Outlook

*Continued from page 5*

The Hardwood Federation team has already talked to the committee chairs in each chamber, underscoring the need to quantify the important and integral role of forest products in capturing and storing carbon within the context of federal climate policies.

And the Hardwood Federation will continue to make that pitch going into 2022, underscoring, for example, the role that the USDA's Forest Products Laboratory can play to conduct research that will ground industry policy priorities in science.

Additionally, in 2022, Congress will begin to reach out to stakeholders to receive input on 2023 Farm Bill priorities. And as in the past, Hardwood Federation will continue to fight for full funding of the MAP and FMD within the context of the upcoming legislation.

So, stay tuned for developments coming straight from the source! And Happy New Year from the Hardwood Federation!

## Is it Flu or COVID?

Just as autumn was turning into winter, *The Wall Street Journal* ran an article, titled "Is it Flu or COVID-19? How to Tell." What did the medical experts say you should know and consider? Take a look.

- "The clinical symptoms and signs of influenza and COVID-19 are virtually identical—fever, achiness, fatigue, runny nose, cough—minus the difference in loss of smell and taste. However, COVID-19 infections don't always trigger a loss of taste or smell. And people shouldn't assume they are COVID-free if they still have those senses." (Daniel Uslan, co-chief infection prevention officer, UCLA Health)
- With the original version of the virus, symptoms typically took longer to emerge than in flu infections. "So, if you got ill very soon after being around a sick person with undiagnosed symptoms, that might have been a sign that you had the flu, rather than COVID-19." The current strains, however, tend to produce symptoms sooner, making it difficult to determine the infection, based on incubation. (Cameron Wolfe, infectious disease specialist, Duke University Hospital)
- Don't wait. "If you have symptoms, get tested. A PCR test—typically done at a pharmacy, medical office, or other site and processed by a lab—is still the most sensitive and accurate way to detect COVID-19. If an over-the-counter rapid antigen test is negative, still get a PCR test, if you continue to experience symptoms." (Uslan)

It also is important to know that co-infections can happen, "especially in young children in daycare or school settings where multiple viruses are circulating." Get tested and follow your physician's guidance. And the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** report that "you can get flu and COVID-19 vaccinations at the same time."



*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.

### Hardwood Manufacturers Association

One Williamsburg Place, Suite 108  
Warrendale, PA 15086

**Phone** 412.244.0440  
**Web** HMAmembers.org  
HardwoodInfo.com

**Contact**  
Darleen Licina-Tubbs, Editor  
Darleen@hardwood.org

### Follow Us

- | @HardwoodManufacturersAssociation
- | @AmericanHardwoods
- | @american\_hardwds
- | @AmericanHardwds