

A Message from HMA's President

by Matthew Netterville
President, HMA



Fellow HMA Members,

It was an absolute pleasure to be with all of you who attended our National Conference in Charleston, South Carolina. The Charleston Place is such a cool venue and our membership and fellow association partners showed up big time. We had 206 Attendees and 9 different industry associations present. Our presentations this

year were focused on what we can learn to make our companies better and how the HMA can facilitate this to our membership. In our planning sessions, we decided to change things up a little bit and talk about things that we can learn from and hopefully use in our everyday lives. Isn't this the reason that we all belong to associations? For Netterville Lumber Co., we belong to benefit from them—and HMA is the leader in this type of association benefits.

If you have not been to our National Conference in a bit or ever, I encourage you to come. In my opinion, our crown jewel is our Regional Meetings, and I hope that you will consider coming to our Spring Regional Meeting, which will be held in Franklin, Tennessee, **Wednesday-Thursday, June 12-13**. This is a great area and the HMA team has a fantastic assortment of facilities to visit. The tours and company interaction at this event will be second to none in the industry. Sign up today if you haven't already.

I am excited about the start of my tenure as President of the HMA, this has been a career bucket list item for me, and I'm honored at the opportunity. As a fourth generation sawmiller and a third generation President of the HMA, I hope that I will serve our hardwood community well in this role for the next two years.

Our industry is at a major crossroads, and we must come together as one to protect our industry. There are several initiatives that are being pushed for the betterment of our industry and it's important that we all stand together.

By my estimation, only 10% of the hardwood sawmills in the U.S. are actively involved in associations and helping to promote our industry. We all know people that aren't doing their part, and I encourage you to speak to local industry professionals in your area and ask them to participate in industry promotion.

In order for us all to be successful, we must fight to grow our market shares and keep imitation products out of our way—now and into the future. The hardwood industry is one of the oldest industries in our country, and we have a great story. We must band together to tell it to everyone, from the local home builder to the landowner who is thinking about harvesting their timber.

Once again, I look forward to serving you all.



A Real Message from Gary Sinise



Touring the Volunteer State

Pack your bag and grab your hard hat, we're hitting the road and heading to Franklin, Tennessee, for HMA's 2024 Spring Regional Meeting, which will take place **Wednesday–Thursday, June 12–13**. And you won't want to miss this opportunity to tour several facilities and network with your industry peers and colleagues.

Our Volunteer State hosts include:

Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods | Huntland, TN

Founded in 1993, Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods has grown from a small green sawmill to a full-service forest products company with a fully optimized sawmill, dry kilns, concentration yard, planer mill, and comprehensive timber procurement program. The family-owned company is committed to full

forest utilization as an integrated forest products manufacturer, producing high-quality hardwood lumber, industrial products, and wood biomass to serve regional and global manufacturers of furniture, flooring, and millwork, along with crosstie treaters and the pulp and paper industry.



Mayfield Lumber Co. | McMinnville, TN

Mayfield Lumber Company began operations in 1971 as a wholesale business, and transitioned into a concentration yard in 1980, specializing in red and white oak, ash, hickory, and poplar. Today, the company has 900,000 square feet of kiln capacity and S2S planing capability. Their most recent upgrade is a grading line sorter system by Froedge Machine & Supply Co.



Clark Hardwoods | Erin, TN

Part of Clark Lumber Company, Clark Hardwoods was established in 2018 after the purchase of J.V. Averitt Lumber Co.—a family-owned operation with a 114-year history—and has since increased production by 80% by focusing on increasing yield and efficiency.

The facility features state-of-the-art saws, lumber handling equipment, and dry kilns, including a brand new optimized edger and a new carriage—both by Cleereman Industries. They are currently installing a new grading line with a sling sorter by Froedge Machine & Supply Co. for both green and kiln-dried lumber, which may be operational during the tour.



Middle Tennessee Lumber Co. | Burns, TN

Back in the 1930s, Middle Tennessee Lumber Company (MTL) founder Bill Cockrall operated a sawmill on Cleveland Street in downtown Nashville. As the business grew, he expanded with two additional mills on the city's outskirts.

Word of the timber spread and its demand gave MTL the ability to move to their current 22-acre location in Burns.

Since becoming a family-owned business in 1985, MTL has successfully become one of the most diversified hardwood companies marketing lumber, flooring, and mouldings across the U.S. and internationally.

More details are available at HMAmembers.org.



Spring Regional Meeting Action Items

Registration is up and running at HMAmembers.org. Secure your spot and register today.

- **\$275** for HMA members, Promotion Contributors and 2024 NatCon Sponsors and Exhibitors
- **\$600** for Non-Members

Embassy Suites by Hilton Nashville South Cool Springs (820 Crescent Centre Dr., Franklin, TN 37067) will serve as our base of operation. Make a reservation online at Hilton.com or call **615.515.5151** and be sure to mention the Hardwood Manufacturers Association to secure our discounted room rate of **\$199/night**.

Note: The negotiated rate at this hotel is available until May 14, or until the group block is sold-out, whichever comes first. Don't delay!



Sponsorships Are Available

Gain extra exposure for your company by signing on as a Spring Regional Meeting sponsor! Your extra support truly enhances our event. To say "Thank You," HMA will recognize your company in *The Link* and *Mid-Month Update* newsletters, at HMAmembers.org, and on social. Available sponsorships include:

- **\$1,000 Gold Sponsorship**
Choice of co-hosting Wednesday or Thursday's bus transportation, or Wednesday's cocktail reception or dinner. *(This sponsorship includes one complimentary meeting registration.)*
- **\$500 Silver Sponsorship**
Choice of co-hosting the registration gift bags or bus refreshments.

To secure your sponsorship or if you have something else in mind, reach out to Ian at ian@hardwood.org.

Thank You, Sponsors!



mayfieldlumber.com



National Forest Products Practice

mcgriff.com



midtnlumber.com



newriverhardwoods.com

2025 NatCon Planning Call

HMA's 2025 National Conference & Expo is set for **Tuesday-Thursday, June 10-12**, in Knoxville, Tennessee, and we're asking for your participation in a NatCon Planning Call to help shape our learning session topics and event theme.

Join us on **Tuesday, June 25**, 10 am Eastern, for a discussion on what issues are affecting our industry

and your businesses, what solutions your company has recently implemented or is looking to explore.

HMA is here to serve you, and your input matters!

If you'd like to participate or share your thoughts in advance, email Ian Faight at ian@hardwood.org.

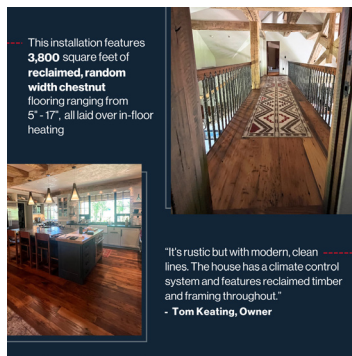
Staying Social with Real American Hardwood

by Ian Faight
Executive Vice President, HMA | Digital Community Manager, RAHC

This past month, the Real American Hardwood Coalition (RAHC) continued telling our industry's many stories through several original posts. Following is a brief breakdown in case you missed them:

What's Old is New Again

Continuing its Hardwood Makeover series, the RAHC featured a gorgeous flooring project that paired reclaimed Real American Hardwood with expert craftsmanship to produce a modern look that's filled with history and character.

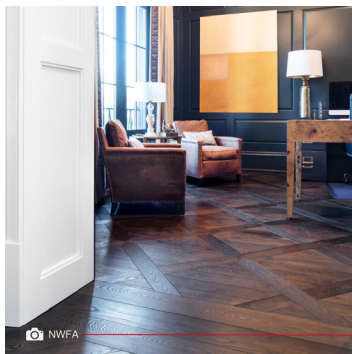


"The scale of the installation was considerable—3,800 square feet of reclaimed, random width chestnut flooring ranging from 5 inches to 17 inches, all laid over in-floor heating," said Tom Keating of Keating Wood Floors, based in Gunnison County, Colorado. "Sourcing such material was no small task, as chestnut is commercially extinct due to the parasitic fungus known as chestnut blight. The wood was reclaimed from various sources, showcasing wormholes and defects from its past."

See the post on [Instagram](#).

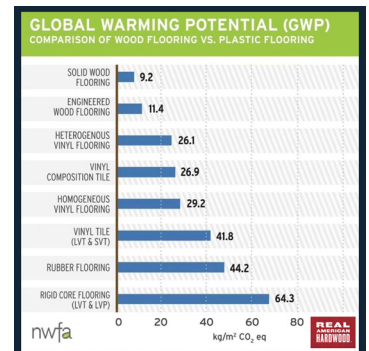
Spotlighting Home Offices

April 10 marked World Work From Home Day, and the RAHC compiled a beautiful collection of home offices featuring Real American Hardwood products. To encourage engagement, the RAHC asked its followers to choose their favorite. Take a look on [Instagram](#).



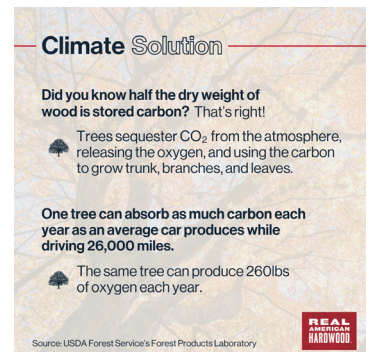
Earth Day 2024: Planet vs. Plastics

Did you know that this year's theme for Earth Day was *Planet vs. Plastics*? It's an battle our industry is particularly familiar with and the RAHC took to social media on Earth Day, April 22, to share the environmental benefits of trees and wood products—as well as a comparison of the global warming potential of hardwood flooring vs alternatives, including plastic. See the post on [Instagram](#).



Celebrating Our Greatest Resource

In recognition of Arbor Day, April 26, the RAHC shared some real facts on Real American Hardwood trees, educating followers on these abundant, renewable, and environmentally friendly resources. See the post on [Instagram](#).



The Latest from Capitol Hill

by Dana Lee Cole

Executive Director, Hardwood Federation



House Lawmakers Introduce White Oak Resilience Act

A bipartisan group of House members have introduced H.R. 5582, the **White Oak Resilience Act**. This legislation intended to prevent the supply of white oak lumber from dwindling to unsustainable levels as market demand for the material remains high. The effort is being

coordinated by the White Oak Initiative. The intention of the bill is not to restrict current harvesting of white oak, rather it is to work with the U.S. Forest Service and landowners to increase the future supply through research, reforestation, and planting.

Among other things, the bill would establish pilot projects for the USFS “to regenerate white oak where appropriate” and empowers the Civilian Conservation Corps to “plant white oak and associated hardwoods” in order to increase white oak and other hardwood species growth and re-establish native hardwood forests. While the bill has been referred to the House Ag Committee, a path forward is not certain at this time. Learn more at WhiteOakInitiative.org.

Administration Outlines Plan for Low-Carbon Buildings

On April 2, the Department of Energy (DOE) released a plan to **“decarbonize the buildings sector.”** Although short on specifics, the plan seeks to minimize “embodied carbon,” defined as “emissions from producing, transporting, installing, and disposing of building materials.” Although the devil will be in the details, the overarching goal is consistent with industry advocacy related to proposals for low-carbon construction materials initiated by the EPA, an agency which the DOE identifies as a partner in achieving its low-carbon objectives. The Federation will track implementation of the plan as details unfold.

House Lawmakers Take Up “A Stronger Workforce for America Act”

On April 9, House lawmakers overwhelmingly passed H.R. 6655, **A Stronger Workforce for America Act**, with a rare, bipartisan vote, going straight to the floor within a week of having passed the workforce committee. The legislation would support “workforce education programs at community colleges that align with in-demand jobs.” The bill also creates apprenticeship programs for work-based training targeted at younger workers. The Federation will keep you posted on possible next steps.

Senators Introduce Bipartisan Mass Timber Federal Buildings Act

On April 17, Sens. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and James Risch (R-ID) introduced the bipartisan **Mass Timber Federal Buildings Act**, a bill to promote the use of mass timber in federal building and military construction projects—a significant market. The bill’s sponsors point out that the legislation will help create “jobs in rural and urban communities, reduce wildfire risk, increase forest resiliency, and shrink the carbon footprint of federal buildings.” A path forward for the bill is not known at this time.

House Democrats Identify Farm Bill Red Lines

Even as House Ag Committee Chair GT Thompson (R-PA) signals that he would like to roll out the Farm Bill before Memorial Day, House Democrats have outlined top line issues that could prolong a stalemate on what’s historically been a non-controversial piece of legislation. Specifically, Ag Committee Ranking Member David Scott (D-GA) has underscored his determination to allocate all IRA resources available for conservation projects and full IRA funding of rural electric projects, presumably to meet the Administration’s green energy goals. The Democrat Ag leader also reaffirmed his party’s commitment to spare nutrition benefits from GOP cutbacks. The Federation will keep you posted on developments.

D.C.
Cheat Sheet

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Sign Up for the D.C. Cheat Sheet

Are you interested in receiving a weekly summary of these issues and others that are impacting the U.S. hardwood industry and your business? Subscribe to the Hardwood Federation’s [D.C. Cheat Sheet](#).

Young Adults Shifting Perspectives on Traditional College

by Sara Skwaryk

Communications and Administrative Coordinator, HMA

Enrollment in four-year institutions has been steadily decreasing across the country in recent years as more young adults are seriously considering alternative career paths over continuing their education at traditional universities.

There are several reasons why students are looking to find careers in blue-collar jobs, but most cite worries of rising tuition costs and the uncertainty of the job market in the face of advancements in technology—such as artificial intelligence—according to ***Building Products Digest***.

A **survey** conducted by *The Wall Street Journal* and research organization NORC at the University of Chicago found that 56% of Americans believe a four-year degree isn't worth the cost. In the decade between 2010 and 2021, college enrollment in the U.S. fell from 21 million students in 2010 to 18 million in 2021—and, of course, when the pandemic hit, students felt further isolated from traditional universities and institutions of higher education.

Also worth noting is the difference of opinion in women and even older Americans.



In the same survey, *The Wall Street Journal* found that the number of women who thought college was worth it fell from 54% in 2017, to 44% in 2023. This parallels the views of older Americans—56% thought college was worth it in 2017, compared to 44% in 2023.

As these groups are looking at their career options, this is a great time for trades to raise awareness of themselves to connect with talent that is searching for a lasting career in industry communities.

To learn more about this topic, consider reading **“Why Americans Have Lost Faith in the Value of College”** by Douglas Belkin of *The Wall Street Journal*.



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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