

# The Link

Newsletter | November 2023



## More Than Just Talk

by Linda Jovanovich  
Executive Vice President, HMA



Just when you think you are able to stop and smell the fall leaves—and the variety of pumpkin spice offerings throughout the neighborhood markets—you realize year-end is fast upon us. Time for next year's budget calculations, strategic planning, and evaluating performance of the past 12 months. Time waits for no one and there never seems to be enough of it.

And looking back over the past year, despite the many highs and a few too many lows, there is much to be grateful for. HMA hosted a well-attended Fall Regional Meeting in September, soaring back to pre-pandemic levels. This important member benefit brings us together for two short days and provides the networking backbone of our Association.

We are well into preparing for the 2024 National Conference and Expo. *Pathways to Success* will provide everyone in attendance a road map to navigate the challenges ahead. We hope you will be with us in Charleston, March 25–27.

And as we reflect over the past year and plan for next, I think it is important to acknowledge and thank some individuals that are integral to the HMA.

**HMA Officers** | Tommy Petzoldt, Matthew Netteville, and Troy Brown are invaluable resources to myself and Ian to provide guidance, wisdom, and a few chuckles as well.

**HMA Board of Directors** | Are available as needed—whether in person or on Zoom—to make decisions on behalf of the HMA. And your support of the Real American Hardwood Coalition is encouraging for our industry and dear to my heart.

**HMA Members** | Are the heart of this association, and HMA is thriving. The more involved you are, the more you will benefit from membership! We hope to see you often in 2024.

As we move into 2024, HMA's staff is one person lighter for the time being. Darleen Licina-Tubbs, our long-time editor, writer, and friend, retired after 16 years with the HMA. We will miss her contributions greatly. We wish her much love and happiness as she begins her next steps into life's journey.

And last, thankful for my work partner-in-crime and HMA's new COO, Ian. He is full of fresh ideas and energy and I look forward to watching him segue into HMA's next leader. Yes, I am very thankful and blessed.

Blessing at Thanksgiving and always,

*Linda*



## NextGen Leaders Learn The Psychology of Change

In October, HMA's Next Gen Leaders Council and several industry peers attended a professional development session on *The Psychology of Change* at the Truist Leadership Institute in Greensboro, South Carolina.

Participants learned how individuals approach change differently, as well as how to manage, lead, and implement change in their businesses.





## It's Time to Make Plans for NatCon 2024

HMA's 2024 National Conference and Expo is scheduled for **Monday-Wednesday, March 25-27**, at The Charleston Place in Charleston, South Carolina. And our signature event is open to all hardwood lumber producers, processors, and suppliers—members, non-members, and all industry stakeholders.

This year's theme is ***Pathways to Success*** and our learning sessions are focused on helping you navigate our industry's evolving landscape. From dealing with economic markets, workforce shortages, and increased competition from alternative products to modernizing facilities, optimizing operations, and leading your business through change, our 2024 agenda will offer *Pathways to Success*.

And you won't want to miss our industry's premier, peer-to-peer networking opportunity. Mix and mingle with industry veterans and the next generation of leaders, share wisdom and ask questions, visit with equipment manufacturers and industry suppliers, and enjoy all that Charleston has to offer.

All NatCon details can be found online at **[HMAmembers.org](https://HMAmembers.org)**. Check back often as agenda items and other updates are made.

### Registration is Open

It's time to start making plans to join us in Charleston. First on your to-do list? Registering to attend! Take care of business today at **[HMAmembers.org](https://HMAmembers.org)**.

- **HMA Members & Promotion Contributors | \$650**
- **SCMA Members | \$650**
- **Non-Members | \$800**

*Note: Rates increase by 10% after March 1, 2024.*

### Book Your Room

Located in the heart of Charleston's historic district, The Charleston Place (205 Meeting Street) stirs the senses and lives forever in the minds and souls of all who gather at this iconic, luxury landmark. And through sumptuous accommodations, delicious food and drink, restorative wellness services, and warm, generous hospitality, the hotel is redefining its legendary service, experiences, and the city with a renewed passion, purpose, and intention. Learn more at **[CharlestonPlace.com](https://CharlestonPlace.com)**.

Book your stay **online** or call **800.611.5545** and mention "Hardwood Manufacturers Association" to secure our discounted room rate of \$300/night. The reservation deadline is February 23, 2024. Act now!

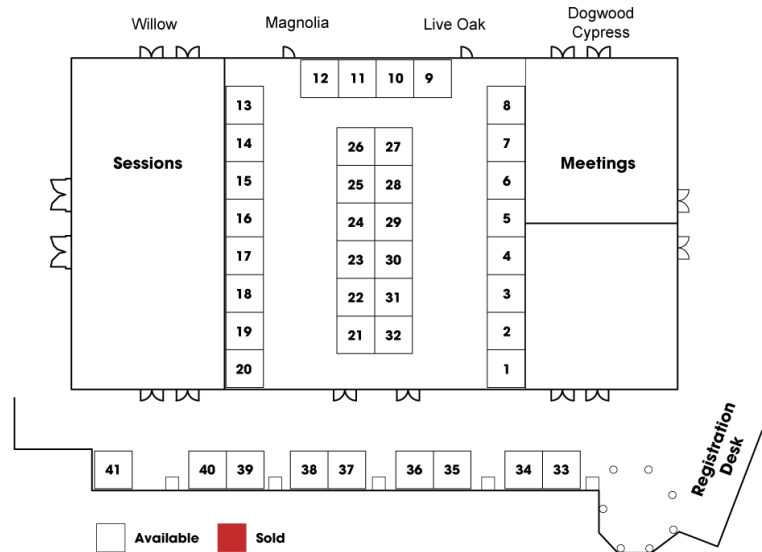


## Calling All Exhibitors: Booths Are Going Fast

Does your company specialize in manufacturing equipment for—or providing services—to the hardwood industry? Then you won't want to miss this opportunity to reserve booth space at NatCon 2024.

Booths are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis—and they're going fast. For an up-to-date look at available booths, visit [HMAmembers.org](https://HMAmembers.org). Then email Linda at [ljovanovich@hardwood.org](mailto:ljovanovich@hardwood.org) to secure your exhibit space and package.

And if you're interested in gaining extra exposure for your company or bringing additional company representatives, consider adding on a sponsorship. A listing of available opportunities can be found in the article below. To sign on, email [info@hardwood.org](mailto:info@hardwood.org).



## Sponsorships Are Available

Looking for a cost-effective way to get in front of NatCon attendees and stand out from the crowd? Sign on as a sponsor! Visit [HMAmembers.org](https://HMAmembers.org) to browse available options, email [info@hardwood.org](mailto:info@hardwood.org) to make your selection, send us your logo (vector files preferred), and we'll take it from there.

To thank you for your additional support, HMA will spotlight your company leading up to and during the event in Charleston, in *The Link* and *Mid-Month Update* newsletters, on social media, and all year long at [HMAmembers.org](https://HMAmembers.org).

## Thank You, Sponsors

A hearty *Thank You* goes out to our early sponsors (as of November 1). We appreciate your support in helping to make NatCon a success!



## Sponsorship Opportunities

### Platinum Sponsor | \$2,500

*Choice of:* Banners, NatCon Events Guide (full-page ad, interior front or back page cover), Opening Reception, Tuesday Reception with Named Specialty Beverage, Swag Bags, Hotel Key-Cards, or 3 Complimentary Registrations

### Gold Sponsor | \$2,000

*Choice of:* President's Dinner (1 available), Breakfast, Vendor-Expo Café Lunch, Tuesday or Wednesday Opening Session, Hotel Key Card Folders, *The Link* and *Mid-Month Newsletter Ads*, NatCon Events Guide (full-page ad), or 2 Complimentary Registrations

### Silver Sponsor | \$1,500

*Choice of:* Tuesday or Wednesday Coffee Bar, Snack Bar, Water Stations, NatCon Events Guide (half-page ad), or 1 Complimentary Registration

### Bronze Sponsor | \$750

*Choice of:* General Learning Session or Swag Bag Amenities



## Telling Our Industry's Stories

by Ian Faight

Chief Operating Officer, HMA | Digital Community Manager, RAHC

In October, the Real American Hardwood Coalition (RAHC) utilized social media to inspire homeowners with design trends, highlight Manufacturing Day, and go behind the lumber to recognize National Forest Products Week. Here's a brief review of a few posts.



### A Designer Look

The RAHC continued its Hardwood Makeover series and showcased a gorgeous custom flooring project that proved hardwood floors are anything but boring. The luxury look was achieved using white oak and a combination of finishing techniques. See the post on [Instagram](#).



### Promoting Industry Jobs

October 6 marked Manufacturing Day and the RAHC used the opportunity to create interest in jobs and career paths in the wood industry. The video featured a group of high school students who went on a tour of Middle Tennessee Lumber Company's manufacturing and shipping facilities, and learned about the skills and technology used in the industry. Watch the video on [Instagram](#).

### Why Are Forests Important?

The RAHC answered this question during National Forests Products Week with a video telling the story of Hickman Woods and Allegheny Mountain Hardwood Flooring—a fourth-generation, family-owned business in Western Pennsylvania. The video addressed misconceptions about the wood industry, explained how no part of a tree goes to waste during lumber production, and shared a childhood story. Watch the video on [Instagram](#).



## Make a Real Impact

One way your company can help promote Real American Hardwood products—and our industry—is to be more active on social media and engage with the RAHC.

Like, comment, share, follow, and subscribe! And be sure to use #RealAmericanHardwood across social platforms.

@RealAmericanHardwood

@RealAmericanHardwood

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@RealAmericanHardwood



## What's New with the RAHC?

It has been a little more than two months since the RAHC launched its advertising campaign on the Magnolia Network. And we're happy to report that the campaign ads have produced impressive results.

To keep the campaign going, the HMA committed an additional \$35,000 from its reserves and challenged

other associations to increase their contributions as well. If industry associations can meet the campaign's fundraising goals by December 15, HMA will contribute \$15,000 more.

Read the full update and other RAHC news at [RealAmericanHardwood.com/industry](https://RealAmericanHardwood.com/industry).

## Hardwood Federation Industry Tidbits

by Dana Lee Cole

*Executive Director, Hardwood Federation*



### USDA Rolls Out \$50 Million for Wood Products Grants

As part of the Biden Administration's "Investing in America" agenda, the USDA unveiled almost **\$50 million in grant funds** for proposals that create new markets for wood products. The new grant funding will fall under the umbrella of the

**U.S. Forest Service's** for Wood Innovations Grant, Community Wood Grant, and Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Grant programs. USDA states that it will focus on proposals that "support innovative uses of wood in the construction of low-carbon buildings, as a renewable energy source, and in manufacturing and processing products."

This latest announcement is consistent with Federation **advocacy** in Congress and the EPA, pointing out that wood products are the quintessential low-embodied carbon construction material.

### New Study Shows Gargantuan Cost of Regulations

EPA burdens on the manufacturing sector have moved to the front burner this fall. A **new study** by the National Association of Manufacturers shows the total cost of complying with federal rules and regulations reached over \$3 trillion, which equals 12% of U.S. GDP. As that relates to small manufacturers such as sawmills, the cost translates to \$50,100 per employee. Stay tuned for more details related to this study.

### Jobs in the Woods Act Moves in Congress

In a welcome example of bipartisanship on both sides of the Capitol, Senate and House lawmakers are moving legislation that will address the chronic worker shortage in the hardwood industry. The **Jobs in the Woods Act** will provide education grants ranging in size from \$500,000–\$2M to promote jobs in the understaffed timber industry and U.S. Forest Service. This will remain an uphill battle in 2023 as Congress operates under a stopgap funding measure and hashes out controversial spending legislation for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, which began on October 1.

### Sen. Manchin Reintroduces Forest Management Bill

In late September, Senate Energy & Natural Resources (SENR) Committee, Chairman Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Ranking Member John Barrasso (R-WY) reintroduced the **Promoting Effective Forest Management Act of 2023**, bipartisan legislation that will reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health by using existing resources.

The bill directs the National Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to establish yearly acreage targets for mechanical thinning, mandating a scientific basis for changes to definitions of old growth and mature forests, and address shortages plaguing the logging workforce. Senate leaders have referred the bill to the SENR where a path forward is not known at this time. **Click here** to read a summary of the bill.

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## AHEC Publishes New European Market Report

According to a report from the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), the latest data from the USDA shows that American hardwood lumber shipments to Europe fell by 39% in volume in the first seven months of this year, compared to the same period last year. It is not just U.S. hardwoods that have been impacted, as reports suggest timber demand in Europe has weakened across the board—as economies have slowed and the war in Ukraine continues to grind on.

Looking at the species mix, the biggest drop was for white oak, down 48%, but tulipwood, ash, and walnut also fell by 30% or more compared to last year. Red oak fared better, falling back 21%, which is still more than was shipped in 2020, as it has seen some of the strongest growth over the last few years and now seems to be firmly re-established in European markets.

According to the European Commission's latest data, economic activity in the EU was subdued in the first half of 2023, driven by weak domestic demand and consumption, due to inflationary pressures from increasing consumer prices for most goods and services. This is despite declining energy prices and an exceptionally strong labor market, which has seen record low unemployment rates, continued expansion of employment, and rising wages.

Meanwhile, the sharp slowdown in bank lending shows that monetary policy tightening is working its way through the economy. Survey indicators now point to further slowing economic activity in the months ahead.

Read the full report and more AHEC updates **online**.

## Forecasting 2024 Color Trends

Even before the autumn leaves displayed their vibrant splendor, leading paint manufacturers announced their favorite shades for 2024. What's on the swatch?

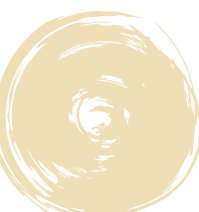


**BEHR Paint Company** announced **Cracked Pepper** as its 2024 Color of the Year. Company research found that homeowners favor using darker hues in their homes. This bold, yet soft, black evokes a

sense of confidence and individuality. And pairs easily with multiple finishes, textures and patterns. [BEHR.com](https://www.behr.com)



**C2 Paint** posted **C2 Thermal** as its hue for 2024. Simultaneously invigorating and calming, the refreshing blue is poised for adventure and brimming with hope, evoking feelings of loyalty, trust and confidence. [C2Paint.com](https://www.c2paint.com)



For **Glidden** and **PPG Paints**, **Limitless** is their feature for 2024. Perfect for any interior or exterior space, the versatile, warm, honey beige is "anything but yellow," and offers limitless applications—walls, ceilings, trim, accent walls, interior doors, cabinets, and all the places that consumers want to "Pop!" [Glidden.com](https://www.glidden.com) | [PPGpaints.com](https://www.ppgpaints.com)

Paint and coatings manufacturer **Valspar** has announced **Renew Blue** as its Color for 2024. Inspired by fleeting elements like fog, mist, clouds, and glacier lakes, Renew Blue elevates the everyday mood, encourages self-expression, and evokes a feeling of balance and calm. [Valspar.com](https://www.valspar.com)

A balanced blue with a touch of grayed sea-green, the hue "can be mixed and matched to fit a variety of design styles and applications."

And if you were to ask **Sherwin-Williams**, you would find the company selected **Upward**, a breezy and blissful shade of blue, as its Color of the Year. The hue exudes harmony, evokes a sense of enchantment, and is part of the company's *2024 Colormix Forecast: Anthology: Volume One*, a new biennial approach to the annual color trend report. The collection of 48 hues—comprised of blues and greens, reds and purples, deeps and darks and delicate tints—brings new color insight to the distinct chromatic families that designers, industry pros, and savvy DIYers have come to know and love. [Sherwin-Williams.com](https://www.sherwin-williams.com)



*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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