

# The Link



The Newsletter of the Hardwood Manufacturers Association

March 2014

## Record-breaking attendance set for NatCon

It's time! HMA members and industry friends are packing their bags and heading to the Hyatt Regency Savannah, March 12-14, for HMA's National Conference and Expo. Don't be left behind. Call us – 412.244.0440 - for assistance in registering or visit [www.HMAmembers.org](http://www.HMAmembers.org) to register online. You won't want to miss all of this:

### Wednesday, March 12

- 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. Conference Registration
- 1:30 – 4 p.m. Expo Set-up
- 6 – 7:30 p.m. Opening Reception and Expo

### Thursday, March 13

- 7 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast Buffet
- 8:15 a.m. Welcome and Introductions
- 8:30 a.m. **Driving Growth Through Innovation**  
**Robert B. Tucker**, President/Founder, The Innovation Resource
- 10:15 a.m. **Managing Your Company's Most Valuable Resource**  
**Rushe Hudzinski-Sero**, Human Resource Director, Effingham County Board of Commissioners - moderator
- Noon Luncheon, HMA Business Meeting  
Hardwood Federation Update  
**Dana Lee Cole**, Executive Director
- 1:30 p.m. **Innovative Sawmilling and Yard Technologies**  
**Scott Norton**, Operations Manager-Optimization Division, USNR
- 2 p.m. **American Hardwood Export Council Promotion Update**  
**Mike Snow**, Executive Director, AHEC
- 2:30 p.m. **Commodity Checkoff Conversation**  
**William A. Gillon**, The Cotton Board
- 3:30 p.m. **Continuing the Conversation - Industry Confab**
- 6 – 7:30 p.m. Reception and Expo

### Friday, March 14

- 7:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast Buffet
- 8:30 a.m. **Industrial Lumber Products, Looking Ahead**  
**Judd Johnson**, *Hardwood Market Report*
- 9:00 a.m. **Ahead of the Curve: 2014-2017**  
**Brian Beaulieu**, CEO, ITR Economics
- 10:30 a.m. **The Truth About Trees**  
**Crystal Oldham**, Hardwood Forest Foundation
- 11 a.m. Exhibitor Teardown

Remember, all National Conference and Expo details can be found at [www.HMAmembers.org](http://www.HMAmembers.org). Why not take a look to see what all of the excitement is about.

## A message from HMA's President



Jack Shannon, Jr.

The past two years have literally flown by! And it's time for my Swan Song.

It seems like just six months ago; Pem Jenkins handed the gavel over to me and said "It's all yours big boy, don't screw it up!" Well Pem, I've done my best, but I have pushed against a few "sacred" walls and given my fellow HMA Officers and Board, especially Linda, HMA's Executive Vice President, reason to seek medical treatment for a condition called "what's he up to now?" - My heartfelt thanks, Linda! Through my tenure as HMA President, you've been my mother, my sister, and my friend! I know I'm responsible for a grey hair or two, for sure.

But it's been a busy two years and I'm pleased to report that by recognizing and embracing the realities of today's world, and implementing long reaching changes, HMA's Officers and Board have better positioned the Association for the future. Our "ventures," considered on the leading edge of association **innovation**, have resulted in more than a few

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### Before heading home...

Be part of the fun and spend the final 30 minutes of the National Conference learning "The Truth About Trees."

During this educational program - presented by the Hardwood Forest Foundation's Crystal Oldham and assisted by Norm Murray (U\*C Coatings) and Sally Johnson (Batey Ltd.) - a group of Savannah school children will learn about our forests, the benefits of properly harvesting trees, and so much more.

See how compelling this entertaining and educational presentation can be. Our industry has an important story to tell. What better audience than our children!

## The do's and don'ts of Interviewing

G arnering information during an interview can turn into a very slippery slope. So the next time you or one of your managers prepare to embark on the interviewing process, be sure you're up-to-speed on what's appropriate and more importantly, **what's legal.**

Questions that delve into certain protected categories - age, race, national origin, gender or pregnancy status, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities, arrest and conviction record, military discharge status - having no job-related basis can be in violation of state and federal discrimination laws. So be prepared; keep it professional and remember, it's all in the asking.

### Do not ask:

How long have you been working - when did you graduate - what is your birthday?

What type of discharge did you receive in the military?

Do you have children?

What religious holidays do you practice?

What country are you from?

Is English your first language?

Have you ever been arrested?

When was the last time you used illegal drugs?

### Rather ask:

How long have you been working in this particular industry?

What type of military education, training, and experience did you receive?

What hours can you work? Are you able to travel for work?

Are you able to work Saturday or Sunday?

Are you authorized to work in the United States?

What other languages do you read, speak or write fluently?

Have you ever been convicted of a crime?

Do you currently use illegal drugs?  
What illegal drugs have you used in the past six months?

Remember too that applicants may politely decline to answer any question(s) they deem to be inappropriate, especially ones like these:

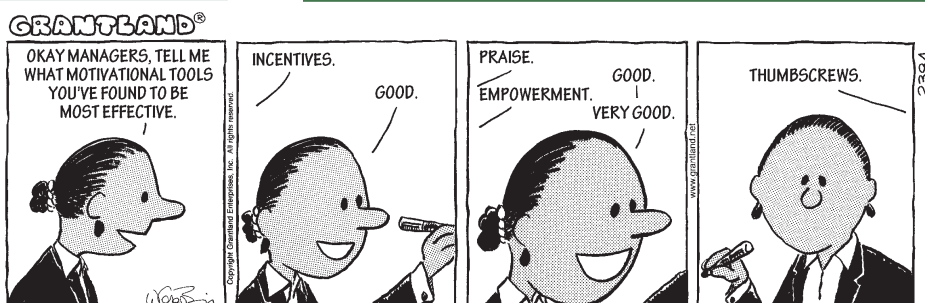
■ **Are you married?** - is illegal because it reveals marital status and can also reveal sexual preference.

■ **Do you socially drink?** - violates the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

**Bottom line:** state questions that relate directly to specific job requirements and qualifications. Any and everything else should be viewed as off-limits.

Information source: "11 common interview questions that are actually illegal," by Vivian Giang, *Business Insider*, [www.BusinessInsider.com](http://www.BusinessInsider.com).

## JUST FOR LAUGHS



## Once upon a time...

F alling a little short when it comes to engaging your employees and/or customers and looking to improve individual and organizational performance? Learn how to tell a story. It's a powerful way to communicate, influence, motivate and lead.

"Humans simply aren't moved to action by 'data dumps,' dense PowerPoint slides, or spreadsheets packed with figures," says college professor and author, Jonathan Gottschall, Ph.D. "People are moved by emotion. The best way to emotionally connect other people to our agenda begins with "Once upon a time...."

In agreement are the experts at consulting firm, The Kevin Eikenberry Group. They suggest that the next time you need to illustrate a point, transfer specific information or help your listener feel something, tell a story. Make it a powerful one by:

**Being vivid** - "Use descriptive language to create word pictures. When you tell the story, draw on as many senses as possible."

**Including action** - "There is a reason that action films are consistently among the top in the box office. To be compelling, your story must include action!"

**Being brief** - "Stories should be long enough to cover the topic, but short enough to be interesting. Some details and description are important, but creating your verbal version of *War and Peace* is not necessary."

If story telling just isn't you, seek other ways of solving your communication challenges. But first and foremost, **communicate.**

To learn more, visit [www.kevineikenberry.com](http://www.kevineikenberry.com).

## In Quotes...

"When we assume that other people know what we're thinking, and what we are expecting of them, we do them a real disservice - and end up causing frustration and conflict. So the next time you catch yourself thinking, 'I didn't specifically say that, but it should be obvious,' STOP. Nothing is ever obvious unless you made it obvious by spelling it out." .....Kevin Eikenberry



## A message from HMA's President

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improvements recognized by our membership and our industry.

■ The **Millennial Council** - our next generation of hardwood manufacturing leaders - was established to offer 'next generation' insights and concerns to the HMA Board, while we more 'senior' industry players provide a learning/mentoring platform to develop them as the future leaders of our industry. So far, it's been a great experience and opportunity for both generations. To Terry Brennan, thank you for serving as Council Coordinator.

■ The successful restructuring of HMA **dues** - under the direction of HMA's Second Vice President, Richard Wilkerson and his team - now more proportionately align with the production rates of our membership.

■ Technology is enhancing HMA's **promotion** of solid American hardwood products via an ever-growing **social media** presence on Facebook, Twitter, Houzz and Pinterest. This extremely cost-effective way of promoting our products to consumers, design professionals and hardwood industry veterans is being supported by an addition



to the HMA staff, Courtney Nickle, who is dedicated to this effort, as well as assisting Linda in office and during member meetings and events. If you have yet to do so, I encourage you to connect with us on these networking platforms, and be part of the excitement created by this smart promotion.

Did you know you can **buy/sell equipment** at [www.HMAmembers.org](http://www.HMAmembers.org)? The Equipment Information Center, a member

benefit prompted by soon-to-be HMA President, Skipper Beal, details which equipment is where. And our interactive member website provides participating HMA members the ability to confidentially contact other members regarding equipment performance, availability, cost etc. Have

you sent in your equipment inventory?

And how about the **Resource Purchasing Power** program! If your company qualifies, the monthly savings could potentially pay your HMA dues. (That's how it's shaping up for J.T. Shannon Lumber Co. and I hope many other HMA members.) Now **THAT** is a member service! Thank you to Board member Bob Miller for bringing this program to the HMA.

Much more has transpired, but as usual, 'Editor' Darleen keeps close watch on my word count. So suffice it to say, HMA is like family and it's been my privilege to serve the membership of this fine Association. I will indeed cherish the friendships I've made and the great conversations I've had, especially with those members who did not agree with me. But that's why there's chocolate, vanilla and tutti-fruity. Everyone loves ice cream, but we each have our flavor preference.

**Bottom Line:** we're all in this industry together! What we make of it and how we hand it to the next generation should always be forefront in this Association's vision.

Good luck Skipper! Keep the positive energy flowing!

## Hardwood Federation Update

*by Dana Lee Cole*

*Hardwood Federation Executive Director*

**D**espite Washington's reputation of moving slowly, there are times when major shifts happen quickly and impact significantly. Recent changes at the leadership level of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee (ENR) could resonate with the goals and objectives of the Hardwood Federation (HF).

On February 6, the Senate approved long-time Senator Max Baucus of Montana as U.S. Ambassador to China; a position that became available late in 2013. For many years, Mr. Baucus served as the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, a powerful position. Well respected by his colleagues, he was known for his willingness to work in a bi-partisan manner.

Why would a vacancy on the Finance Committee have significant impact on the Hardwood Industry? The Senate leadership tapped Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon to take Mr. Baucus' place as Chairman of the Finance Committee. In his role as ENR Committee Chair, Senator Wyden was a strong ally to the HF. And although he will continue to be a member of the ENR Committee, his time as Chair has ended.

Moving into Chair of the ENR Committee is Mary Landrieu of Louisiana. While Ms. Landrieu has also supported the Hardwood Industry in the past, she faces a tough re-election campaign. We anticipate her initial focus will be on oil and gas issues, important industries in Louisiana to both business and the public.

However, we're taking steps to remind Senator Landrieu of the importance of the hardwood industry to her state. We've already participated in an event with other members of the industry who came together to deliver this message to Senator Landrieu. And we'll continue to work with Senator Wyden and the ENR Committee staff, particularly on issues related to the national forest system.

Despite election year politics, HF will reach out to everyone on Capitol Hill that touches our industry. We're optimistic much can be accomplished in 2014.

**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.

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