

Conference and Expo “terrifically intense”

Thank you to all of the attendees, presenters, exhibitors and conference sponsors who contributed to the success of HMA's recent National Conference and Expo in Charleston. If you were unable to be with us, the event was bustling, intense and a whirlwind of activity, and we mean that in a good way! Here's the short version of what you missed.

The two day gathering included seven learning sessions with topics ranging from Executive leadership and communication strategies to healthcare costs, and economic forecasts. (Look for presentation overviews in this and future issues of the *Link*. And please visit www.HMAmembers.org to view all of the Conference presentations.) Plus two cocktail receptions, bursting with sumptuous food and beverage, an extraordinary industry Expo and endless peer-to-peer networking opportunities topped off each eventful day.

At its Monday meeting, the Board of Directors elected **Officers** and Executive Committee Members. Congratulations to President Jack Shannon, J.T. Shannon Lumber Company, First Vice President Skipper Beal, Beal Lumber Company, Inc., Second Vice President Richard Wilkerson, Anderson-Tully Company, and HMA Executive Vice President, Linda Jovanovich.

Executive Committee members were elected at this time, also. In addition to the officers, they are: Tommy Battle, Battle Lumber Co., Bob Miller, Frank Miller Lumber Company, Inc., T.J. Rosengarth, Northwest Hardwoods, Inc., Nordeck Thompson,



Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods, Inc. and Pembroke “Pem” Jenkins of Turn Bull Lumber Co.

And during Tuesday's HMA Business Meeting and Association Update, members elected HMA **Directors** – Matt Gilchrist, Northland Forest Products, Inc., Terry Stockdale, BWP Hardwoods, Inc., Scott Greene, High Country Lumber & Mulch, Phil Pierce, Holt & Bugbee Company, Darrell Beasley, Thompson Hardwoods, Inc., and Matt Weaver, Weaver, Inc.

Following the elections, members were briefed on other pertinent Association matters including the Dues restructuring, HMA's member website revamp, the formation of HMA's Millennial Council and much more.

To all who were present, again thank you! And be sure to watch your email. You will soon be receiving the “official” post Conference survey. We value your input, so invest a few moments, please, and let us know your thoughts. Then mark your calendar for HMA's 2014 National Conference and Expo, March 12-14, at the Hyatt Regency Savannah. Time flies!

June Regional Meeting heads to Tennessee

Planning is being finalized for HMA's **Central Regional Meeting**. So, mark your calendars please, and prepare to head to the greater Nashville/Murfreesboro area, June 12-13, and an exciting visit with HMA members and friends in the Volunteer state.

HMA **Regional Meetings** rank near the top of the list when it comes to favorite Member Services and Benefits because these compact, educational events deliver maximum value in minimal time. Members get to see the latest technology at work; witness working solutions to common problems; exchange information with seasoned counterparts, then benefit from presentations on industry issues, forest resource topics or hardwood market updates.

To date, confirmed Tours include *Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods, Huntland, Tennessee, *Hermitage Hardwood Lumber Sales, Cookeville, and Mayfield Lumber, McMinnville, Tennessee. Additional meeting details will be posted at www.HMAmembers.org. Stay tuned, please.

The Embassy Suites Hotel, 1200 Conference Center Boulevard, Murfreesboro, will serve as our base of operations. Complete with a fitness center/spa and an indoor swimming pool, the hotel is just 35 minutes from the Nashville International Airport. Room reservations can be made by calling 1(615) 890-4464. Be sure to mention **group code HMA**-Hardwood Manufacturers Association to secure the special room rate of \$129 single/double.

Plan on joining us.

(*Denotes HMA membership)

Member dues restructuring in effect

If you have yet to do so, please complete and submit your HMA **Dues Calculation Form** in order to take advantage of HMA's re-aligned membership dues structure which went into effect March 1.

Based on the production information supplied by YOU, the new calculation process assesses all members equally. If production is down, you should enjoy a decrease in dues. If you do not experience a reduction, that can only mean your production has increased. And that's the good news every member would like to shout about.

And for members desiring to make 'extra' monthly contributions to enable the HMA to continue to expand our valuable Member Services, educational opportunities with



specifying professionals and consumer website – www.HardwoodInfo.com – the new structure allows for **Sustaining Member** contributions. Please see the Dues Calculation Form for the Cherry, Maple, and Oak Level details.

Refreshed member website is 'live' and well

HMA's redesigned member website, www.HMAmembers.org is up and running. If it's been awhile since your last visit, we encourage you to log on to see what all of the excitement is about. And prepare to take a good long look. It's exciting for so many reasons.



Looking for upcoming meeting information? It's there. How about a look at that economist's presentation you've heard such great things about? It's there, too. Need to add the HMA member logo to your marketing materials? At your fingertips! And where can you find that EUTR Guidance information, issued by AHEC, in order to satisfy your EU importer? Yep, right here, too. But there's so much more!

Needing a social platform to stay in touch with industry peers and experts? Just log into the **members only** 'secure' section and get the conversations started. And as members complete their equipment questionnaires, that information will be added to the **Technology Center**. There you can see what equipment other members are using at their mills and even gather information on vendor's that can assist you with your mill upgrade.

The on-going goal is to keep our members informed. And the refreshed www.HMAmembers.org is 'the' vehicle to do just that. Be sure to check it out soon!



www.HMAmembers.org

More than just talk

by Linda Jovanovich
HMA Executive Vice President

And the beat goes on!

As we dot the i's and cross the t's on a very successful National Conference and Expo, without skipping a beat we begin our focus on 'other' signature HMA member services, namely HMA's 2013 **Regional Meetings**.

Still one or two tours left to confirm, but I hope you will make plans to join the HMA in Murfreesboro, Tenn. (Southeast of Nashville) June 12 -13. The Embassy Suites in Murfreesboro will be our base for the eventful two days. And as you have read on Page One, we have tours confirmed at HMA member facilities, Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods, Huntland and Hermitage Hardwoods in Cookeville. Non-member Mayfield Lumber in McMinnville is graciously welcoming us as well.

We are trying something new this meeting and have made plans for the former NOFMA manufacturing members of the National Wood Flooring Association to join us in Murfreesboro. This will provide our members the opportunity to expand their networking pool of industry peers, many of whom are facing the same business challenges.

In addition, our friends at Brewco are working with the HMA to set up an optional, private tour on Tuesday afternoon, June 11, of the Jack Daniels Distillery in Lynchburg, Tenn. You might not know Jack, but this is your chance to learn about the craftsmanship and history that goes into producing not only Tennessee's finest liquid gold but witness the birth of the oak barrels where the whiskey matures. Visit www.jackdaniels.com/history/barrels, for a sneak peek! It gave me goosebumps!

I'm very encouraged by the enthusiasm of all involved in this effort, so far. Start your summer vacation off right. Visit industry friends at the HMA **Central Regional Meeting** in the great state of Tennessee.

We're on a roll!

Don Hutson's "Leadership in Challenging Times"

Are you a great leader? Let's see what Don Hutson has to say about that.

At HMA's recent National Conference and Expo, the first learning session was conducted by author, speaker, sales growth specialist and U.S. Learning, LLC principle, Don Hutson – a regular guy who worked his way through the University of Memphis, graduated with a degree in Sales and after becoming the #1 salesperson in a national training organization, established his own training firm.

(With credentials like that, no wonder he conducts hundreds of presentations each year and continues to be a favorite of countless Fortune 500 Companies.)

In his presentation entitled, "Leadership in Challenging Times," Don discussed the tools needed to take "your organization to the next level" especially in times of tight margins and market strife. Here are the highlights.



leaders don't just think out of the box, they throw the box out the window and embrace change as an **opportunity** for progress and the key to success.

Great leaders adapt quickly, realistically assess their current environment, identify trends, and then establish an Action Plan of specific and measurable steps that will take them and their team to the next level.

While management refers to tasks, leadership refers to people. Exceptional leaders possess a "leadership style that engenders positive attitudes and receptive spirits in their team members." And that leads to success.

Collective Intellect



All of us is smarter than one of us

Collective Intellect – Great leaders know that "all of us is smarter than one of us," and they recognize the importance of tapping into that significant brain trust for success. Investments in cutting edge training and innovative solutions result in employee commitment, optimism and excellence. Great leaders maintain a "superb communications flow," praise their team and leave their ego's at the door.

Great leaders know that brainstorming with their 'team' about what is or isn't happening in the marketplace promotes employee buy-in and maximum performance.

How you go to Market – "Products and/or services without distinguishing characteristics, available from multiple sources," are simply commodities set apart by price and price alone. But maximizing sales and continued success in the marketplace depend on much more than 'price.' The manner in which you take your products and services to market makes all the difference.

The Recommended Strategy:

While prospects are **commoditizing** your offering, you need to ...

Differentiate it in every creative manner you can!



HMA
Presents
Don Hutson
C.P.A.E.
March 12, 2013
**Leadership in
Challenging Times**

Leadership Style – Today's great "leaders handle **change** positively," because if ever there is an absolute, it's that change is inevitable. But it's not for the faint of heart. Great

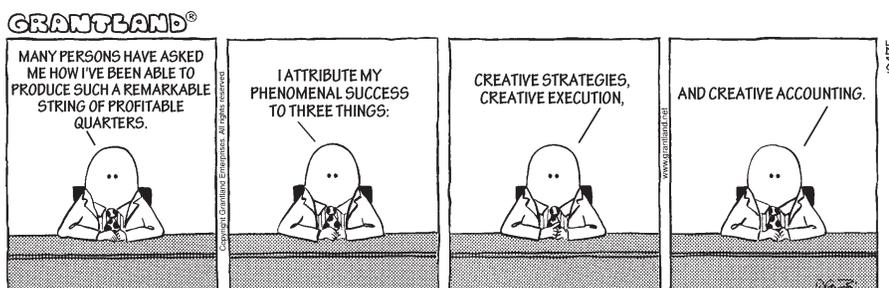
Great leaders know they must creatively differentiate their products and services from the rest of the field so that their potential customers, and even longtime ones, will "recognize the degree to which your value proposition is more compelling than that of your competitors."

Illustrate the ways in which your offerings are different from and superior to your competition. Then, communicate. Interact. Be available. All of that cultivates a lasting relationship. To your customer you become a trusted advisor and great leaders know that a satisfied customer results in a win-win for the entire team.

Visit www.HMAmembers.org to view Don's entire presentation, and all of the presentations from the 2013 National Conference and Expo.

Don Hutson is Chairman and CEO of U.S. Learning, LLC, a Memphis training firm composed of professionals who conduct presentations on sales, customer service, marketing strategy and leadership. Visit www.DonHutson.com to learn more.

JUST FOR LAUGHS



Hardwood Federation – Getting Engaged

by Jamey French
President & CEO, Northland Forest Products

I'm very involved in the Hardwood Federation (HF) and the Hardwood Federation Political Action Committee (HFPAC). Besides regular trips to Washington to meet with agency leaders or to testify before various Congressional committees, I also attend all of the Federation's fall Fly-ins in order to meet with Members of Congress and their staffs to discuss the hardwood industry.

Does all this involvement take me away from my business and my family? Yes, quite a bit actually. So, why do I do it?

I do it because I believe strongly in the work the Federation is doing on behalf of our industry. And I do it because I believe we need to be telling our hardwood story – loudly and proudly – to legislators and regulators, because if we're not defining ourselves – someone else may be.

I think back to a past HF meeting with about 16 Members of Congress. Representative Virginia Foxx (R-NC), one of the most con-

servative Members of Congress and a strong advocate for our industry, was asked why it was important for us to come to Washington and to participate in the PAC. Her answer resonated with me and others at that meeting. She said, "In Washington, those who are not at the table, often become part of the menu."

That succinctly sums up why it's important we all support the Federation through corporate, individual, PAC donations, or our own precious time – ideally, all of the above.

Every day in Washington, policies are being debated; decisions are being made – tax policy, trade initiatives, green building regulations, energy standards – that directly impact us and our businesses.

Did you know that currently, many hardwood products are specifically excluded from the Department of Agriculture's Bio Preferred labeling program? Did you know the EPA is considering classifying the burning of biomass the same as burning coal? Did you know Congress is debating a new five-year Farm Bill and that many of the market development and promotion programs so many of us rely on, like AHEC, may be on the chopping block?

Whether you know these things or not, the Hardwood Federation does and is taking action. But that small staff needs our support and our voices, together with theirs, so that the interests of our industry will not be ignored.

This is why I'm so involved with the Hardwood Federation. We can't expect 'others' to 'look out' for our industry's best interests. We all need to do that. And I'm asking you for your involvement.

For information about the Hardwood Federation, the September Fly-in, becoming an HFPAC supporter, or any of the issues mentioned above, please contact Dana Lee Cole at dana.cole@hardwoodfederation.com.

As always, in numbers there is strength. Add your voice to ours and make us that much stronger. **For our industry! For your own business! For your future!**

Jamey French has been on the HF Board of Directors for eight years, on the HFPAC Board since it started and continues in his 5th year as Policy Chair. He can be reached at jfrench@northlandforest.com.

AHEC guidance on EUTR

U.S. based companies selling timber products into the European Union (EU) may now be asked to provide additional documentation because EU importers must "comply with the due diligence system" requirements of the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR), which went into effect March 3, 2013.

The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), actively engaged in this issue for the past five years, has information available sufficient to help AHEC members assure their EU customers that they have met their EUTR "due diligence" obligations.

The following is a partial listing of information that "must be accessible to the EU importer."

Name/address of the U.S. exporting company – "EU importers are not required to seek specific information about the U.S. exporters own suppliers within the U.S, unless the importer believes this is necessary to mitigate risk of illegal wood entering the supply chain."

Trade name and type of product – "Ideally use both a clear description and reference to the relevant Harmonized System product customs code." Ex: "440791 oak sawn wood"

Country of harvest – "Typically the U.S., however, if a product contains a mixture of U.S. and Canadian wood, AHEC members should estimate and inform their customers of the average percentage of each contained in the product over a 12 month period. They may also refer to Lacey Act compliance procedures and provide copies of Lacey import declarations identifying species and Canadian origin."

Sub-national region of harvest – "Technically not required for U.S. hardwoods since both the Seneca Creek study and FSC Risk Register confirm that all U.S. hardwood producing regions are low risk of illegal supply." (Seneca Creek study is available at www.americanhardwood.org/sustainability/sustainable-forestry/seneca-creek-study/. FSC Global Risk Register is available at www.globalforestryregistry.org/map/)

Click [here](#) to download AHEC's complete summary of the EUTR minimum requirements and the recommended documentation information. For clarification or additional information, contact AHEC's Executive Director, Mike Snow, at (202) 492-0540.

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