

# The Link

Newsletter | April 2026



## Building a Stronger Industry

by Ian Faight  
Executive Vice President, HMA



Just like that, another successful HMA National Conference and Expo is in the books. For those of you who were able to join us in Jacksonville, I hope you found your time well spent. We once again had an excellent slate of learning sessions and there were plenty of opportunities to network and discover new solutions during our Expo hours.

HMA's Board of Directors had a busy spring meeting, where we discussed a number of HMA and overall industry matters. We will be having some updates to share over the coming months. All great things to help strengthen our association.

The NextGen Leaders Council held a productive meeting with the new council coordinator, Troy Brown of Kretz Lumber Company. Members of the Southern Cypress Manufacturers Association joined us for the 2026 Annual Meeting. And we welcomed a number of new faces and guests to their first National Conference. I'd also like to give a shout out to Peter McCarty of TS Manufacturing for organizing our fourth annual NatCon Golf Tournament, which raised \$1,000 to benefit the Hardwood Federation.

And speaking of the Hardwood Federation, HMA members and the industry suppliers in attendance raised **\$14,000** in support of the Hardwood Federation Political Action Committee (HFPAC). That's incredible!

With NatCon fresh on our minds, all member attendees and exhibitors will be receiving a link to complete a brief survey on your experiences. Please consider spending a few minutes to share your thoughts. Your feedback is valuable—and anonymous—and will help us make NatCon better than ever next year.

With that said, we also are holding our annual National Conference Planning Call on **Tuesday, June 30**. Details can be found on the right. Please plan on joining us. It'll only take about an hour of your time. Of course, if'd you like to share thoughts in advance, feel free to send them my way.

And next up on HMA's schedule is our Spring Regional Meeting, which is being planned for **Wednesday–Thursday, May 20–21**, in the Wausau, Wisconsin, area. Confirmed tour sites include Kretz Lumber Company and Northcentral Technical College, both located in Antigo, Wisconsin. Details are coming together quickly, so please keep an eye open for registration and hotel information, which will be hitting your inbox in the coming days.

For now, that's all I got. As always, feel free to reach out if you have any questions or would like to talk shop.

## Planning Call Announced for Our 2027 National Conference

HMA's 2027 National Conference and Expo is set for Monday–Wednesday, March 15–17, at the Charleston Place Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina. Before we get there, we're counting on your participation in our National Conference Planning Call to provide input on potential learning session topics, our event theme, and ways we can improve your experience in Charleston.

The call will take place on **Tuesday, June 30**, 10–11 am, on Zoom. Join the conversation and let us know what information you need to improve your business. Your input matters!

If you'd like to participate, send me an email at [ian@hardwood.org](mailto:ian@hardwood.org) and we'll make sure you receive the call details.



## HMA Elects Officers, Board for 2026



The Board of Directors of the Hardwood Manufacturers Association (HMA) elected **Brian Schilling** (pictured), Pike Lumber Company, Akron, Indiana, President of the HMA at their National Conference in Jacksonville, Florida.

Other HMA officers for 2026 are Vice President **Tripp Josey**, Josey Lumber Company, Scotland Neck, North Carolina; and Executive Vice President **Ian Faight**, Hardwood Manufacturers Association, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

HMA Board of Directors also elected members to the Executive Committee. In addition to the officers, they are: **Truss Beasley**, Beasley Group, Hazlehurst, Georgia; **Jason Dallas**, Stella-Jones Corporation, Pittsburgh;

**Kirby Kendrick**, Kendrick Forest Products, Edgewood, Iowa; **Cassie Lewis**, Turn Bull Lumber Company, Elizabethtown, North Carolina; **Jeff Lisk**, Baillie Group, Owego, New York; and **Matthew Netterville**, Fred Netterville Lumber Co., Woodville, Mississippi, will serve on the Executive Committee as the immediate past president.

During the Conference's Business Meeting, HMA members elected Directors: **Truss Beasley**, Beasley Group, Hazlehurst, Georgia; **Jason Dallas**, Stella-Jones Corporation, Pittsburgh; **Tony Machamer**, Koppers, Inc., Pittsburgh; **Javan Mallery**, Wolverine Hardwoods, Allegan, Michigan; **Scott Rossi**, Rossi Group, Cromwell, Connecticut; and **Tyler Shields**, Bingamon and Son Lumber, Kreamer, Pennsylvania.

## NatCon Presentations

Do you want to revisit a learning session presentation from HMA's 2026 National Conference and Expo? Presentations are available in the Members Only section of [HMAMembers.org](https://HMAMembers.org). Log in today!



## One More Thank You to Our NatCon Sponsors

HMA extends a hearty "thank you" to the companies listed below for going the extra mile in support of our 2026 National Conference and Expo. Your

sponsorships go a long way in making our event the best it can be and ensure all attendees have an excellent experience. Thank you!



CONTINENTAL  
UNDERWRITERS



## True Vanity Achieved with American Hardwoods

by Wendy Silverstein

Using wood in the bathroom—the most steamy, water-pervaded environment in the house—might seem counterintuitive, but when thoughtfully detailed and properly finished, American Hardwoods™ bring a level of warmth, durability, and architectural presence that manufactured materials can't match. Species like oak, walnut, maple, and cherry offer natural grain variation and tactile richness that elevate even the most utilitarian spaces. Whether expressed through custom millwork, integrated storage, or characterful cabinetry, hardwood introduces a grounded, organic counterpoint to stone, tile, and metal. The result is a bathroom that feels both refined and inviting—proof that natural materials can thrive beautifully in moisture-prone settings when crafted with care. Here are three vanities that show what I mean.



In his own rebuilt Stonington, Connecticut home, architect Michael McKinley pairs forward-looking sustainability with a quietly refined material palette, nowhere more evident than in this custom vanity in cerused oak—a finishing technique that highlights the wood's natural grain with a

pale, textured wash. The piece's clean lines and integrated storage echo the house's broader ethos: simplicity elevated through craftsmanship. Framed by twin mirrors and warm vertical sconces, the vanity brings an organic counterpoint to the crisp subway-tiled backdrop—a serene, transitional bathroom that reflects McKinley's vision for a resilient, daylight-filled, farmhouse-inspired home.



This handsome double-sink vanity in cherry from national brand Dura Supreme Cabinetry shows how production millwork can still feel tailored and personal. The Marley door style—a clean recessed-panel profile with quiet transitional

lines—brings structure without heaviness. Finished in Praline, a warm mid-tone stain that subtly highlights the wood's natural figure, the cabinetry reads calm and considered. Tall side units extend the storage wall, while a black-painted mirror frame adds contrast.

The result is a balanced, orderly composition that demonstrates how attention to detail can elevate semi-custom casework into a cohesive architectural design element.

A custom double-sink oak vanity in a Lafayette, California, kid's bathroom by the design firm In the Deets brings warmth, order, and functionality to a space intended for both independence and longevity. The recessed-panel cabinetry



includes pull-out steps—an elegant, integrated solution that lets younger children reach the sinks without adding visual clutter. Rounded-corner mirrors, polished fixtures, and a soft gray mosaic backdrop keep the composition light, while blue patterned towels introduce a playful note. Durable finishes and careful detailing strike a satisfying balance: practical for daily routines, yet refined enough to age gracefully as the children grow.



American Hardwoods™

### HMA Promotion \$\$ at Work

Visit [HardwoodInfo.com](https://www.hardwoodinfo.com) for more inspiring content to share with your audiences. Editorial features like **True Vanity Achieved with American Hardwoods** are posted regularly.

To learn more about the American Hardwood Information Center's promotion and education initiatives, reach out to [info@hardwood.org](mailto:info@hardwood.org).

*Wendy Silverstein is a former editor at Architectural Digest, Home, Kitchen & Bath Customer Planner, and Home/Style magazines. A consultant to the design industry, she works closely with interior designers, architects, and other professionals in the field.*

## The Latest from Capitol Hill

by Dana Lee Cole

Executive Director, Hardwood Federation



### Chairman Thompson Continues to Press for Hardwood Processor Relief

House Agriculture Committee Chairman GT Thompson continues to reinforce his position that U.S. hardwood processors must receive economic relief as part of the Senate's proposed supplemental agriculture support proposal. In

this week's Ag-Pulse, an inside the beltway publication focused on agriculture policy and legislation, he noted that forest landowner, both public and private depend on a healthy U.S. hardwood processing infrastructure and the federal government should include hardwood mills and processors in any economic relief package that moves forward. The Hardwood Federation continues to work both sides of the aisle to ensure that hardwoods remain in the current language.

### USDA Deputy Secretary Notes Need to Support U.S. Hardwood Industry

Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Stephen Vaden made comments this week on the AgBull podcast regarding the need to sell more U.S. hardwood internationally. Mr. Vaden also acknowledged the U.S. Government's role is pushing countries to meet purchase agreements in upcoming trade discussions. [You can listen to the full conversation here](#); hardwood comments are made around the 22 minute mark.

### More Agriculture Relief Pending

Senator John Boozman (R-AR), Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee reiterated his call for new federal aid to agriculture industries in the combined wake of global trade uncertainty, winter storm damage, U.S. activities in Iran and the resulting spike in gas prices. The Chairman and several Senate colleagues have been pushing for additional agriculture relief funds for the last few months. The Federation is working diligently to include hardwood relief in any package that moves forward. We will keep you apprised of progress.

### Administration Aims to Facilitate Home Building Loans

As part of President Trump's March Executive Order "[Removing Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Home Construction](#)" the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the Rural Housing Modernization Initiative, an effort to upgrade how USDA delivers affordable single-family housing through its Rural Development Mission Area. As part of the initiative, USDA is taking deregulatory action by providing delegated underwriting authority in the Guaranteed Loan Program, allowing qualified lenders to approve and close loans. The change allows lenders to close loans more efficiently and aligns USDA's requirements with other federal home lending programs at the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs. USDA has launched the My RD Loan Portal for direct loan borrowers, providing secure 24/7 access to loan information, payments and account management tools.

### EUDR Discussions Continue

The European Union continues to discuss how to implement the EU Deforestation Regulations that have created such concern for the U.S. wood products industry. The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) is doing stellar work to communicate the reality of US harvesting practices and supply chain safeguards to various enforcement agencies in Europe. The Hardwood Federation works in coordination with AHEC to inform U.S. government officials and provide additional support as needed. We also coordinate with industry allies. Seventeen forest products industry associations, representing key sectors, joined together to sign a Joint Statement noting the need for additional changes to the regulation including amendments to the plot-level geolocation data requirements.

## Register for the 2026 Hardwood Federation Fly-In

by Dana Lee Cole

*Executive Director, Hardwood Federation*

Dates for the annual Hardwood Fly-In to D.C. have been set and **registration** is open! This year, we will meet in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday, June 9 and Wednesday, June 10. Not only is the Fly-In a unique chance to share your insights, concerns, and opportunities with your Members of Congress, it is also a great way to celebrate the United States' 250th Birthday. Washington will be in full celebration mode in June, with plenty of **special events** to enjoy before or after the Fly-In.

This year we have tried to make our **agenda** as tight and focused as possible to make the best use of your valuable time. As in the past, we will start with a welcome reception on Tuesday and spend Wednesday on Capitol Hill meeting with your elected officials. We will end our Fly-In early in the evening on Wednesday with two select PAC events for our friends on both sides of the aisle.

If you are considering participating in the Fly-In for the first time, please be assured that the Federation team will hold a briefing session before and during the Fly-In, develop materials to share, identify a state or regional group of peers for you to spend the day with, schedule meetings, and be available to answer any questions you may have.

Trade associations, like the Hardwood Federation, are important to the business community because they are able to focus day in and day out on a specific set of problems and can consistently communicate with and educate policy makers on the impacts proposed legislation and regulation can have on employers and employees in their communities. Trade associations also develop consistent messaging that represents general industry agreement on important issues. In a perfect world, everyone in the industry can deliver the same message and strengthen the argument to make policy that best supports hardwood businesses. Your day-to-day focus is on business, not on politics. The Hardwood Federation focuses on politics to make your job easier.

The Hardwood Federation team is proud to represent the industry in Washington. But we can't and don't do it by ourselves. The Hardwood Federation Fly-In to Washington, D.C., has always been a highlight of our advocacy program. The second Trump Administration has moved at a blistering pace over the last year, making decisions and initiating policies that will have long term, significant impacts on the U.S. Hardwood industry. Global and domestic events are creating noise in D.C. that is loud and unending, but we continue to raise our voices over the din. We urge you to join us in June. Meet your federally elected officials. Tell your story. Network with your peers. Help us make the case for policies that work FOR the hardwood industry, not against it.

The Fly-In is an excellent opportunity for members of the hardwood industry to educate members of Congress about the U.S. hardwood industry and let their Members of Congress know just how businesses and employees are affected by the decisions being made on Capitol Hill. In the current fast-paced environment it is difficult to say for sure which issues will be red hot in June; potential priority issues include economic relief for hardwood industry companies, transportation, and regulatory reform. We will be ready to prepare you and your peers for whatever the topic of the day turns out to be.

A limited block of rooms is available at the Fly-In Host Hotel, the Embassy Suites D.C. Convention Center. **Register** today to take advantage of our special rate!

From past experience we know that direct communications with knowledgeable industry members is key to establishing and growing legislative contacts and their awareness of the Hardwood industry. Your participation is important...and very much valued. You can find out more about the Hardwood Federation, our priority issues and register at **[hardwoodfederation.com](https://hardwoodfederation.com)**. Please reach out to us if you have questions or thoughts.



## NWH Distributes 30,000 Alder Seedlings Across Pacific Northwest

NWH, in partnership with the National Hardwood Lumber Association, successfully distributed 30,000 alder seedlings during its March 15–16, 2026, pickup events, with participants gathering at the company's Eugene, Centralia, and Longview facilities.

The annual **NWH Alder Seedling Program**, now in its third year, continues to support reforestation efforts across the Pacific Northwest. With this year's distribution, the initiative has reached a total of 100,000 seedlings, all planted by a growing network of landowners, partners, and community members committed to the long-term health of regional forests.

The pickup events brought together participants from across the region, each playing a role in ensuring the seedlings make it from nursery to ground. The program reflects a shared commitment to sustainable forestry and responsible resource management, with alder playing a key role in forest regeneration and ecosystem balance.

NWH and its partners remain focused on supporting hands-on efforts that contribute to the future of working forests in the Pacific Northwest.



Article and photo courtesy of NWH



*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

2681 Sidney Street, Office 128  
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

**Phone** 412.244.0440

**Email** [info@hardwood.org](mailto:info@hardwood.org)

**Web** [HMAmembers.org](http://HMAmembers.org)  
[HardwoodInfo.com](http://HardwoodInfo.com)

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