



February 2026 Newsletter

A monthly publication of Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc.

Registration Grows, Still Open For '26 AM

You still have time to reserve a room and register for the Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc.'s **2026 Annual Meeting** on **March 4-8, 2026** at Naples Grande Resort, Naples, FL.

Online room reservations has closed but we have added rooms to the block. Contact the AHMI office for a room and to register.

The business presentations are:

* **USDA Funds Rural Development** - The USDA offers grants to companies in rural regions to fund energy development assistance and efficiency improvements. The guarantees also support loan applicants who want to establish, reopen, expand, or improve sawmill or wood facilities.

* **Automation Progress For 2026** - AHMI has enlisted a panel of suppliers to discuss minor tweaks and upgrades to increase efficiency.

* **SUSTA Connects Foreign Buyers** - The Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) works to increase the export of southern U.S. agricultural products. It offers 50% cost share / reimbursement for export marketing expenses.

* **Hardwood Federation DC Update** - HF Executive Director Dana Cole will share their work on tariff and industry relief.

* **Real American Hardwood Update** - Coalition Board members will discuss new strategies in 2026 targeting architects and designers.

* **AHMI Group Health, Retirement, Software Programs** - Delta Wealth will explain health insurance and wellness benefits for member companies. One program is funded through tax savings.

* **Annual Business & Board Elections**

* **Producer & Distributor Meetings**

AHMI has visited the Naples Grande Resort twice in the past 12 years. It is located on the Gulf Coast with a boardwalk to a private beach, three pools, spa, golf, tennis and excellent dining.

***AHMI Annual Is March 4-8
Naples Grande Resort, Naples, FL***

Naples Grande Gives AHMI MORE ROOMS!

AHMI learned this week the Naples Grande Resort has additional rooms available to us from another group. That means more space for YOU to attend!

We currently have dozens of sawmill and distribution yard owners and managers registered and Consumer member buyers. These are people who lead their companies and you need to network with. See the business program and agenda for complete details.

PLUS, it is in Sunny South Florida on the Gulf Coast BEACH. Golf, fishing and croquet.

Call the AHMI office to reserve a room at (336) 885-8315. The new deadline is soon!

FUN!! scheduled daily:

- **Annual Golf Tourn.** Friday
- **Annual Fishing Tourn.** Friday sportfishing
- **Golf Event** Saturday
- **Croquet Tournament** Saturday
- **Afternoon on the Beach** Saturday
- **Evening Receptions** daily
- **Chairman's Banquet** Saturday

Relaxation on the Gulf Coast DAILY

NETWORKING - CONNECTING - SOCIALIZING

There is shopping and dining just minutes away in Naples. Attendees should book travel to Fort Myers International Airport with taxis and private shuttles available to the resort.

Please complete the registration form on page 7 of this newsletter and print and mail or visit **our website to register.**

Call AHMI at (336) 885-8315 or email office@appalachianhardwood.org for more info.

See the **Full Agenda on page 2**

The way I see it...

By Tom Inman, AHMI President

...the Indiana Hardwood Lumber Association's 2026 Annual Convention was a great success for attendance, networking and information. More than 1,200 people registered and I believe most of them were there!

The mood was upbeat with many folks hoping for better results in 2026. AHMI has a booth each year and dozens of members and guests visited to get information about Appalachian Hardwood and our programs.

There were several people seeking lumber. I spoke with buyers from domestic millwork, furniture and cabinet operations and international furniture and timber importing companies about their needs this year.

Common lumber species requests were white oak, walnut and poplar. A few were seeking logs for export.

All were hoping that business improves and at some point every conversation discussed tariffs. Whether you are an exporter or not, the tariff issue has impacted your business as lumber goes to export buyers or is rejected because of the price and is placed into domestic markets.

The uncertainty of pricing is the top concern and highlighted in business sessions. Industry leaders note that pricing of red oak is the same as 20 years ago based on Hardwood Market Report data.

AHMI will have sessions on efficiency, grants, export markets and promotion at the 2026 Annual Meeting. Join us in three weeks to learn.



Visitors to AHMI Booth at IHLA (photo courtesy of National Hardwood Magazine)

2026 AHMI Annual Meeting Naples Grande Resort, Naples, FL

Agenda

Wednesday, March 4

5:30 pm - Early Bird Reception

Thursday, March 5

Morning activities on your own

2 pm - AHMI Board of Trustees Meeting

2-4 pm - Registration

5:30 pm - Welcome Reception by Stringer Ind.

Dinner on your own

Friday, March 6

8:30 am - General Session

Business Presentations

12:30 pm - Golf Tournament

12 pm - Fishing Tournament

5:30 pm - Reception by Tampa Wealth | UBS

Dinner on your own

Saturday, March 7

8 am - Producers Meeting – Producers only

8 am - Distributors Meeting – (open to all)

9:15 am - General Session

Business Presentations, Annual Meeting

12:30 pm - Golf Event - Two man tournament

2 pm - Croquet

2-4 pm - Fun on the Beach

5:30 pm - Reception

6:30 pm - Chairman's Banquet by PLM Ins.

Sunday, March 8

8:30 am - Fellowship of Christian Lumbermen

Travel home safely!

Sponsorships Available

AHMI invites companies to consider sponsoring events at the 2026 Annual Meeting to support the association and keep your company in front of customers and prospects.

Please review the **sponsor list** to learn how your company can contribute to the success of the meeting.

Sponsorships remaining:

Red Oak Level Golf Holes

Beach refreshments

Contact the office today. We look forward to seeing you there!

AHEC Monitors EU Talk Phyto Change For Oak



**AMERICAN
HARDWOOD
EXPORT
COUNCIL**

The American Hardwood Export Council reports there is a draft proposal in the European Union to alter the phytosanitary requirements for all shipments of oak lumber starting as early as March/April 2026.

This change as written would effectively require that only lumber with “at least 2.5 cm of the outer sapwood removed” may be allowed entry into the EU. The measure is apparently the EU’s response to the heightened risk of two-lined chestnut borer (*Agrilus bilineatus*) infestation in shipments of oak from the US.

AHEC has contacted APHIS in both Washington DC and Brussels expressing deep concern about the measures and lack of consultation. AHEC also requested assurance that every effort is being made by APHIS to ensure that, when the legal amendment enters into force, the EU will recognize kiln drying as an appropriate and effective treatment against *Agrilus bilineatus*.

The APHIS staff in Brussels reports it requested the EU Directorate consider the APHIS requirement that the “lumber should at least be provided the same system approach as ash lumber” on grounds that “this program is already active and approved by the EU”.

APHIS informed AHEC that the recommendation is based on the latest scientific advice for control of *Agrilus bilineatus* that heat treatment “at a core temperature of 60°C for 30 minutes is efficacious in mitigating the pest”.

AHEC is seeking clarity on the proposals for exports of oak lumber to the EU. The staff will continue to engage with APHIS and EU agencies as necessary in an effort to ensure that treatment methods that are both effective and workable are offered for oak lumber shipments to the EU.

Health Benefits, Grants On Delta Wealth Webinar

Delta Wealth Services helps lumber companies uncover and implement lesser known federally incentivized programs such as wellness, grants, and other specialized financially beneficial offerings. These programs offer tax savings to fund added benefits for every employee.

Delta Wealth Services’ focus on the lumber industry has saved companies millions over the last few years. Many companies successfully received thousands of dollars in ERC payments.

Join Delta Wealth and AHMI for a deeper dive and specifics of how your company can take advantage of the newest program that Delta offers.

The webinar is set for Tuesday, Feb. 17 at 11 am EST. Contact the AHMI for details and the weblink.

Delta Wealth is an AHMI Supplier member.

NHLA Offers Sawmills Benchmarking Study

NHLA and The Beck Group will host a webinar providing an overview of the **Hardwood Lumber Benchmarking Study and Competitive Assessment**, a confidential, industry-wide effort to help participating mills understand their operational and financial performance relative to peers.

The session will explain what data and metrics are used to evaluate costs, staffing, yields, and sales realizations and how participating mills will receive customized, confidential reports. The webinar is designed for mills considering participation and will explain the process, timeline, and overall value.

Webinar is scheduled for February 18 at 12 PM EST. Recruitment is now open with data collection in March and reporting scheduled for April through June. Register at www.nhla.com.

Trump Adm. Turns Attention To Housing

By Dana Lee Cole, Executive Director

Outside of the Federation's top advocacy priorities in the trade, tariff and Farm Bill spaces, the team has been active trying to find legislative avenues to create additional domestic markets of U.S. grown and manufactured hardwood products. One area that is receiving considerable attention both on Capitol Hill and in the Administration is housing, specifically, proposals that seek to grow housing "new starts" and make the prospect of owning a home a reality for first time homebuyers.

Late last year, bipartisan legislation almost became law that would have significantly moved the needle on a number of housing policy areas. Led by the unlikely duo of Senators Tim Scott (R-SC) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), the legislation would have authorized several new initiatives:

§ Creation of an Innovation Fund for communities that are building more housing supply, to be used to improve community infrastructure, and supplement water and sewer grants.

§ Establishment of a HUD-administered grant program to help communities establish preapproved housing designs, or pattern books, to help streamline and expedite local construction processes and build more homes.

§ A directive for the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to study multifamily loan limits and adjust those limits to better match housing market costs and enhance affordability.

The bill also included several regulatory reform measures to expedite local construction processes. While this measure did not become law, we expect focus will remain on this legislation.

In addition to the ROAD to Housing Act, bipartisan legislation is pending in both the House and Senate that looks to increase housing starts and make home ownership more accessible. The legislation (S. 1686 and H.R. 2854) is the *Neighborhood Homes Investment Act (NHIA)* and is led by Senator Todd Young (R-IN) and Representative Mike Kelly (R-PA).

In many areas of the country, the cost to build or rehab a home exceeds the price at which the home could be sold once completed. The NHIA es-



establishes a new tax credit which would help fill that "value gap" for developers, thus reducing their risk of loss and encouraging investments in new and rehabbed housing.

The goal for this tax credit is to make homeownership more feasible and support broader revitalization and economic development strategies in disinvested urban and rural communities. The Neighborhood Coalition—one of the supporters of the bill—estimates that, if enacted, NHIA could result in 500,000 new starter homes nationwide.

Because NHIA focuses exclusively on single to 4-family unit structures, the impact on dimensional lumber and other wood products manufacturers could be considerable. Depending on the type of home built, Forest Economic Advisors estimates that this bill alone could result in additional 7 billion to 10 billion board feet of demand.

The Hardwood Federation team has been meeting with the bill sponsors to explore options for including hardwood-specific language in the measure. Evidently, a modified version of the bill is being developed and will be made available sometime early this year.

President Trump signed an Executive Order (EO) the week of Jan. 19 that would discourage large institutional investors from purchasing single family homes that would otherwise be bought by individuals or families. We understand that a follow-up EO is in the works that would attempt to address housing supply and affordability and should come out any day now.

The Hardwood Federation team is looking opportunistically at proposals to secure hardwood forest product-specific provisions in these measures so that new homes and renovation projects deliver real value both to the consumer and the domestic manufacturers that make these renewable and sustainable products every day.

Member Benefits

401k Multiple Employer Plan

AHMI members can enroll in the **AHMI 401(k) Multiple Employer Plan** for existing retirement accounts or start new programs for employees. Participants have access to low-cost investments like large corporate plans. There is also no individual company audit requirement, saving staff time and creating efficiencies.

Adopting employers have plan design flexibility and can retain their individual plan features such as a matching formula, vesting, and eligibility. AHMI's retirement consultants, Tampa Wealth Management Group | UBS Financial Services, have over 50 years of retirement plan experience. Contact: John Faircloth 813-227-2892 and Michael Carey 813-227-2837 or AHMI at 336-885-8315.

Group Health, Wellness

AHMI member companies have access to group health insurance and group wellness programs.

The **Benefit Health Plan Inc.** offers four health insurance options and the largest independent, nationwide primary preferred provider organization. There are 920,000 practitioners, 4,800 acute care hospitals and 87,000 ancillary facilities in system.

Employer's Choice offers wellness options that are partially funded by tax savings under ACA. These preventative care programs lower long-term health risks and pair with existing health insurance or the new AHMI/BHPI group medical plan

Call **Delta Wealth Services** today at (828) 382-7755 or email info@DeltaWealthServices.com to schedule a time with a dedicated agent.

Lumber Payroll software

Dough HCM LLC offers unique, proprietary technology to its customers through **Lumber Payroll**. It is specific to the hardwood industry payroll needs and offers electronic access to wages.

AHMI members will be guaranteed a minimum cost reduction from their existing providers. As more AHMI members adopt, Lumber Payroll increases the rebate. For more information, contact Nick Koen at Lumber Payroll at (315) 750-9031 or email: nick@lumberpayroll.com.

AHMI Event Calendar

AHMI plans to attend the following events to promote AHMI member companies and products. Members are welcome to participate in the AHMI exhibit and we can assist with registration if required. Please check with the AHMI office:

2026

March 4-8: **AHMI Annual Meeting**, Naples, FL

March 10: **ALC**, Roanoke, VA

March 11-12: **Ohio Forestry**, Columbus, OH

March 25: **SUSTA Trade Mission**, Greensboro, NC

March 26-28: **NWPCA**, Fort Lauderdale, FL

April 16-18: **Expo Richmond**, Doswell, VA

April 21-23: **NWFA Flooring Expo**, Orlando, FL

April 25-29: **High Point Furniture Market**, High Point, NC

April 30-May 3: **ALC Meeting**, North Myrtle Beach, SC

June 8-10: **Railway Tie Tours**, Union City, TN

Aug. 1-4: **AHMI Summer Conference**, Williamsburg, VA

Aug. 24-28: **International Woodworking Fair**, Atlanta, GA

Sep. 8: **ALC**, Tryon, NC

Sep. 16-18: **NHLA Convention**, Cleveland, OH

Oct. 17-21: **High Point Furniture Market**, High Point, NC

Oct. 19: **ISFD Pinnacle Awards**, High Point, NC

For more information, please contact the AHMI office at (336) 885-8315 or info@appalachianhardwood.org.

Appalachian For Your Exhibits

AHMI has brochures, books, wood sample kits and other materials member companies can use in exhibitions to explain the benefits of Appalachian Hardwoods and forest management.

We also have videos and slide presentations for interactive messaging. Please contact info@appalachianhardwood.org.

RAH Boosts Reach With Videos, Magazine & Posts

Real American Hardwood continues to elevate the hardwood industry and inspire people to choose natural, renewable materials. Posts go online weekly at Instagram, Facebook and X.

1) There are new videos on TikTok and Instagram to showcase solid hardwood. The latest explains the benefits of hardwood over substitute materials like plastics and fake wood.

2) NHLA launched *Hardwood & Design* magazine to showcase hardwood's exceptional role in architecture and design. The magazine was mailed to professionals and will be printed three or four times annually.

3) AHMI, Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen's Association and RAH have met with two furniture design universities in North Carolina and Georgia and one architect school in Indiana to host competitions in solid hardwood. There are 120 students participating. The winning furniture designs will be on display at IWF in Atlanta in August.

4) AHMI and RAH will again sponsor professional design awards for the International Society of Furniture Designers in October in High Point.

5) AHMI and RAH will host a "hardwoods tour" during the April 2026 furniture market in High Point with walking tours in showrooms that manufacture solid American hardwood furniture.

How can you help?

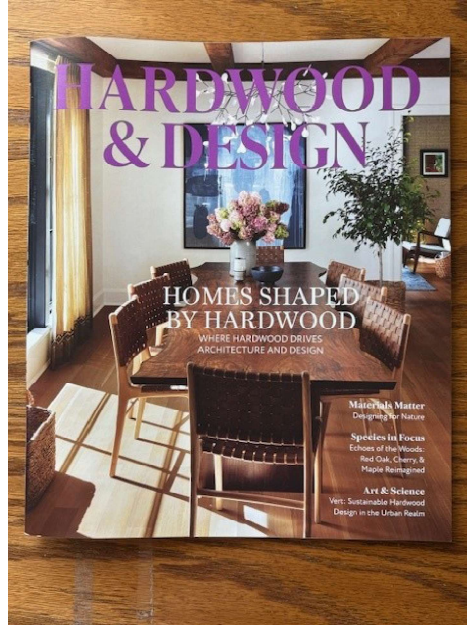
Contribute with long-term pledges - commitments that extend over two years or more and help ensure sustained growth for our industry.

These pledges offer flexibility and convenience: *Monthly or Quarterly Contributions* - Many donors prefer to spread their support across manageable installments throughout the year.

Annual Giving - Others choose to make a single donation each year for the duration of their pledge.

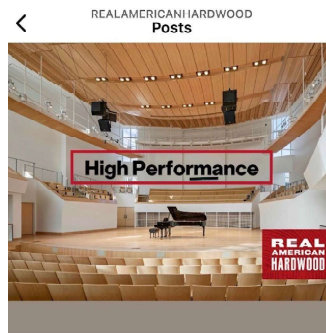
Whether you're an individual advocate or an organization committed to promoting Real American Hardwood, long-term pledges allow you to plan your giving while making a lasting impact.

Reach out today to learn more at realamericanhardwood.com/industry.



Hardwood & Design magazine targets the design sector with key features of American hardwoods

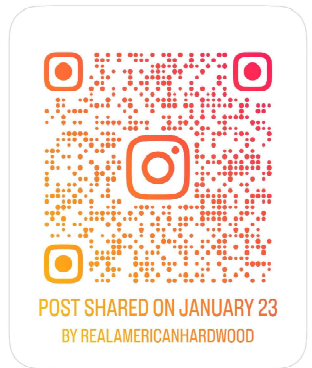
See new videos on Instagram at [realamericanhardwood](https://www.instagram.com/realamericanhardwood)



Like by northamericanforestfoundation and 17 others

realamericanhardwood 🎵🌟 The @pennstate Recital Hall is a showcase of how Real American Hardwood products elevate both design and performance. Completed in 2018, the hall features more than 200 custom crafted wood ceiling panels engineered to shape, reflect, and soften sound with remarkable precision. The acoustic system draws on hardwoods like maple and cherry, species known for their strength, stability, and warm tonal qualities. Their

QR code links to new video about American Hardwoods



Annual Meeting Naples Grande Resort, Naples, FL March 4-8, 2026

REGISTRATION

All participants must register to accurately plan for receptions, Saturday Closing Banquet and function space. Please complete this form and return with your payment to: AHMI, PO Box 427, High Point, NC 27261. Badges / materials will be on site. Reserve room online at www.appalachianhardwood.org/meetings .

Registration before Feb. 15, 2025:

AHMI MEMBER - \$600 per person

GUEST - \$700 per person

SPOUSE and/or ADULT CHILD - \$475

GUEST SPOUSE - \$575

CHILDREN AGE 10-18 - \$325, UNDER 10 - \$200

Add \$75 to any registration fee after Feb. 15, 2026

Registration includes three receptions, closing banquet dinner, business sessions and breaks, afternoon at the beach, and fun!

REGISTER for AHMI'S 2026 ANNUAL MEETING

Name: _____

FEE: \$ _____

Name: _____

FEE: \$ _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____



Optional Events I / We will attend

(included in registration fee)

___ Early Bird reception
Wed., March 4

___ Beach Fun & Drinks,
Sat., March 7
from 2-4 pm

Chairman's Banquet Saturday at 6:30 pm *(included in registration fee)*
___ people will attend

Golf Tournament Friday at 11:45 am at Naples Grande Golf Club
(includes lunch, range balls. Rental clubs are available)

Name: _____ FULL - CALL FOR WAIT LIST

Fishing Tournament Friday at 12 noon sportfishing
(4-hour fishing trip, includes boxed lunch, drinks, tackle, bait, license)

Name: _____ FULL - CALL FOR WAIT LIST

Golf Event - Two-man Tournament Saturday at 12 noon
(includes lunch, range balls. Rental clubs are available)

Name: _____ FEE: \$200

Pair me with _____

Croquet Tournament Saturday at 2 pm *(on site)*

Name: _____ FEE: \$20

Name: _____ FEE: \$20

Check # _____ Received _____

Credit Card # _____ Exp. _____ Sec. Code _____ Billing Zip _____

TOTAL \$ _____