REAL HARDWOOD PROMOTION COALITION IS MAKING PROGRESS

We would be remiss if we didn’t at least mention the Coronavirus COVID-19 issue and how it is disrupting about everything in our lives, much less, our forest products industry in Missouri. As expected, it has become another opportunity to further, or strengthen, political divisiveness, which is disgraceful. We hope and pray that our political leaders, from all parties, will come to their senses and begin working together to develop strategies that will result in minimal health and economic consequences to the citizens of the United States.

The following is a progress report regarding the Real Hardwood Promotion Coalition from the RAHPC Executive Committee:

The Real American Hardwood Promotion Coalition (RAHPC) is making crucial progress on efforts to establish a united marketing strategy for the American hardwood industry. The Coalition met at the Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen’s Association meeting in January and discussed recent accomplishments and upcoming action.

To date, the RAHPC has generated over $238,000 from 25 industry associations. Those dollars are funding the first phase of our project, research and brand development. Professional companies are under contract to provide market research and develop brand messaging.

There have been questions about the need for research. For the industry, the answers seem obvious. In order to properly address the issue…the decline of domestic hardwood use and understanding of the benefits of using our products…we need to gather direct feedback from the consumers. Buyer decisions are fluid and can (and do) change rapidly. In order to understand how to strategically promote our products effectively, we need to know what consumers and those who influence consumers are thinking TODAY.

To assess consumer attitudes, two focus groups were held in late January and early February. A focus group is a strategically selected group of diverse people assembled to participate in a guided discussion about a topic prior to the initial launching campaign of that specific topic. In our case, hardwood promotion, we talked to two types of people at each location. The first consisted of consumers that had performed major renovations in their homes within the last year. The second was a group of architects, contractors, and designers. Online polling of additional prosumers and consumers are being planned, as well as phone interviews with industry leaders to round out the research process.

A series of questions by a highly qualified facilitator led to dialogue about home renovations, materials, sourcing, forest products, sustainability and much more. Some key findings of the focus groups include:

Consumers:
• Perform most of the research themselves on their renovation projects. They rely on a variety of different resources; for instance, popular online shopping sites, television shows, local home improvement stores and word of mouth;

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Welcome New Members!

Company: Crows Truck Center
Contact: Bill Merical
Phone: (901) 482-5644
Email: bmerical@crowstruck.com
County: Shelby (Tennessee)

Company: Ingevity
Contact: Leah Hicks
Phone: (270) 936-6721
Email: leah.hicks@ingevity.com
County: Ballard (Kentucky)

MFPA On Line Timber Sales

Don’t forget about the MFPA on line Timber Sale webpage. Visit the MFPA website at www.moforest.org and click on “On Line Timber Sales” to view or post timber sales.

Western Star Trucks and TAG Truck Center is proud to provide the following rebates to MFPA members on the new purchase of the following truck models. Contact Zach Caudle at TAG Truck Center for more information.

Western Star 4700: $1,000
Western Star 4900: $5,000

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To understand customer needs, three groups need to be understood:

Architects, Builders, and Designers:
• Generally not the influencer, customers know what they want;
• Typically forced to stay within a strict budget;
• Believe home improvement television shows do not present realistic costs and time estimates;
• Agree most popular home renovations are kitchens, bathrooms, and flooring;
• Have numerous sources for their raw materials and no allegiance to products Made in America.

Consumers:
• Want a “quick and now” answer for their renovations, often based on current trends;
• Decisions are most often budget-driven;
• Associate real wood products with high fashion and a perceived status;
• For the most part, do not understand the terms sustainability and environmentally friendly;
• Misinterpret characteristics associated with the forest products industry.

Many of this information is already well known by hardwood insiders, but there were data points that were unexpected. These will help us as we move into our second phase, brand development.

On April 1, marketing professionals from various segments of the industry will gather to work to develop a brand statement that can be adapted and incorporated by associations and businesses alike, creating a common message that runs throughout multiple promotion platforms and campaigns.

Our marketing consultants will also develop a go-to-market playbook which will consist of many ways companies and associations can engage...with the average financial obligation attached to each option. At that point, RAHPC can begin to consider where we start and how funding needs will be addressed.

RAHPC members are attending industry/association meetings throughout the year. Please look for these opportunities to connect with those association executives that are actively engaged. And if you are interested in someone from the Coalition participating in one of your meetings, please reach out!!
**BECOME PART OF OUR 100-YEAR SUCCESS STORY**

Our decades-long relationships with more than 125 independently owned sawmills has enabled us to consistently provide high-quality crossties to multiple customers. These sawmills are often multi-generational businesses with the same family values that are shared by Gross & Janes.

To learn more about becoming one of our successful sawmillers, contact Bill Behan at 636-343-8484 or BillBehan@grossjanes.com.

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**MFPA Membership Directory**

Advertising Rates:

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Reserve a spot to advertise your company in the 2020-2021 Membership Directory. Each MFPA member receives a Membership Directory every year. The directory contains detailed company contact information for all current members and the types of products they produce or services they provide. The directory is used by member companies as a valuable information resource when trying to locate equipment, services, and raw material to support your business.

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**It’s Time To Renew!**

Membership renewal forms have been mailed and it’s time to renew your membership to continue receiving all the benefits of MFPA!

In your envelope you will find your membership dues invoice and the current contact information we have listed for your company. When returning your membership form please notify us of any changes to your contact information or any products and services you offer.

Please return your dues and information promptly as we have started assembling the 2020-2021 Membership Directory...
As I write this, I am watching the rain outside my window. It seems like for more than a year, that’s a fairly common occurrence. While we all understand there isn’t much that can be done about the weather…it doesn’t take away the frustration of not being able to get out in the woods and work. Being a PTH trained logger is more than cutting though. I don’t mean to sound like an opportunist…but….

If you can’t get out in the woods, and you have done as much preventive maintenance and repair work as you can, consider working on your Continuing Education credit. Remember, you are required to complete only 1 credit to maintain your PTH status. Keeping your PTH certification is important for several reasons. If you want to bid on an MDC sale, you will need it. It also shows the public that we are self-regulating, and don’t need outside assistance. Same with legislators. Most importantly, it provides a great foundation for improving skills, and minimizing the dangers of an already dangerous profession.

Taking care of your Continuing Education right now, when you CAN’T get in the woods will take away the frustration of the end of the year deadline when you MIGHT be able to be cutting. We have several DVDs available, as well as some online programs. You can find out more on our website (www.moforest.org). Each of those will be $40. You can take an industry related training or attend an industry related meeting. Continuing Education is not supposed to be burden, it is supposed to be an opportunity.

This morning (as the rain fell) I was entering Continuing Education credits for two young loggers. It gave me the inspiration to write this article…I hope it gives you the inspiration to get YOUR credit so you can keep your certification.

In the meantime….as we used to say as kids…rain, rain go away

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**Professional Timber Harvester 2020 Class Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Level 1 &amp; 2</th>
<th>Level 3 &amp; 4</th>
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<td>Bolivar</td>
<td>May 4-5</td>
<td>May 21-22</td>
<td>May 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sedalia</td>
<td>September 1-2</td>
<td>September 28-29</td>
<td>September 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perryville</td>
<td>October 5-6</td>
<td>November 2-3</td>
<td>October 19</td>
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Salem, MO is hosting a “Salute to the Timber Industry Parade and Timber Fun Day” to be celebrated on Labor Day September 2. Parade will showcase the timber industry and relative business. The Parade begins at the Commons on Hwy 72 with line up starting at 8:00 AM. The parade will start at 10:30 AM. Following the parade a Timber Fun Day will be had at the Commons from 12:00 to 5:00. Free hamburgers, hot dogs, and bratwurst will be provided by Vandivort Drug in celebration of 40 years in business. The activities include fun games for children, hands on activities such as shingle splitting, rail splitting, crosscut sawing and exhibits for viewing.

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www.danielandhenry.com
LSLA Education will be offering a Hardwood Lumber Grading Short Course in Antigo, WI on May 30 - June 1. The course is open to everyone, although members of LSLA are able to register at a reduced cost. For complete details, including the topics that will be covered in the course, list of instructors, suggested area hotels, and registration link, see the Hardwood Lumber Grading Short Course brochure.

To register complete the online form at ntcforms.formstack.com/forms/lsla_2020

LSLA | 920-884-0409 | lsla@lsla.com | www.lsla.com

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