

Virginia Urban Wood Group

News & Updates

December 15, 2022 | Issue -16

2023

Welcome to the **sixteenth** edition of the Virginia Urban Wood Group's newsletter!

If you are like me, you never flip a calendar before the month is over. I'm not sure if it is as much superstition or just my way of slowing down the pace of life - at least on paper! Yet before we know it we will all be recycling that 2022 calendar and staring squarely into the eyes of a new year!

So what will 2023 bring to the world of service providers and urban wood businesses? In my humble opinion these economies will remain strong. Let's talk about service providers first - those folks who have "skills" will continue to be a very valuable resource for the average property owner. As we continue to evolve into a more urban/suburban society, the skills required to engage/manage the natural world will be lost. Many of these urban-suburban residents will not have the skillsets nor time to operate a chainsaw, run a tractor, fell a tree, or even know which tree is a "keeper" and which tree may fall on their house. Your knowledge base about the natural world and your management skills will continue to impress this customer base and they will value your expertise!

The same scenario is true for the urban/local wood businesses. No matter what business I visited this fall most all of them relayed that they are booked for weeks, if not months in advance. People are still very interested in milling their own trees and creating beautiful products from them. Some of these businesses have had to refer potential customers to other millers and crafters because they do not want to overbook or overextend their time and energy. *Note for everyone* - be sure to take care of yourselves with adequate amounts of "me time".

There is still a strong demand for locally made, hand-crafted products. Without question the "local movement" has not passed. The present customer base, primarily comprised of Gen-Xers and Millennials (born 1965-1996), are incredibly supportive of locally made products and services and they are willing to pay for them. Further encouraging is the fact that our work with the present generation of college-age Gen-Zs shows signs that they too are interested in locally-sourced products!

We hope that you have had a wonderful 2022 and are looking forward to even more success in the new year - enjoy the rest of the newsletter!

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Upcoming Events

Utilizing Urban Wood in the Built Environment

In-person

Date: TBA
Richmond, VA

Sponsored by:
VA Dept. of Forestry
U.S. Forest Service
Urban Wood Network

A seminar designed for architects, planners,
contractors and urban wood suppliers



For all of our land care Service Providers:

On Demand

Natural Area Management Services: A Case Study

Are you a Green Industry professional interested in expanding the suite of services offered to your clients to include creating and enhancing woodlands and meadows? If so, then this three-part webinar series is for you!

click here for **on-demand** viewing >>

[NAMS-1](#)
[NAMS-2](#)
[NAMS-3](#)



Virginia Urban Wood Group News

UVA Sawmilling Continues to Expand!

UVA Sawmilling, the student-led group that coordinates the University of Virginia's urban wood program, recently announced a "Mill to Build" competition program. This is a design-build competition open to all UVA students that will focus on every step of the process from technical shop drawings, milling the logs, and finally actual project construction. Students are encouraged to form teams to participate in this wood design-build competition.

More information about the UVA Urban wood program can be found here> [UVA Sawmilling](#)

VA Urban & Small Woodlot Forestry Business Directory

This listing of service providers includes portable sawmillers, crafters, forestry mulchers, small parcel timber harvesters & resource managers, furniture builders and many more.

Know of a company that should be a part of this ever-growing family? Sign-up is easy and takes only a few minutes of time >>

Directory Link >>

[Additional Information](#)

Coming in 2023

A brand new version of the Urban Wood & Service Providers Directory!

The new directory will feature improved graphics, easier search tools and a radial locator of urban wood businesses and service providers in your area!

The Holiday Season!

The holiday shopping season is in full swing and people are scrambling to purchase some last minute items for their loved ones.

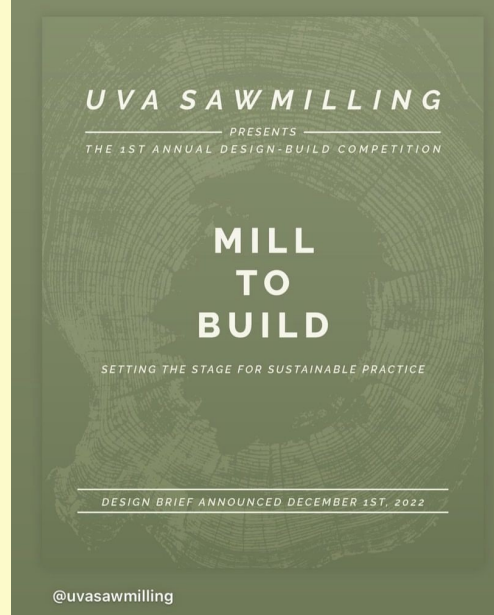
A marketing strategy for those last-minute shoppers is to advertise your in-stock items and highlight speedy shipping options!

Also, consider offering gift cards for products or services that your company offers.

Continue to encourage potential customers to "shop local" - after all, *local* is what your business is all about! Whether you are offering a service or a product, a strong local customer base can be the foundation of your growing client list!

**Remember by Shopping Local
Customers Are:**

Creating Jobs
Adding Money to the Local Economy
Investing in Entrepreneurship



Worth the Click!

"Ting"

There is nothing worse when milling a log or sawing a board and hearing that "ting" sound which automatically registers in your head that the blade just hit a metal object. Avoiding metal in logs can save time, money and definitely frustration! Most portable sawmillers will tell you that hitting an occasional metal object is acceptable when considering the overall value of the slabs or lumber.

However, an easy and somewhat reliable solution to avoiding metal objects is to prescreen all of your logs with a metal detector before the sawing begins. It just takes a couple minutes to do a scan but it can help to maximize your production on any project.

The question of course is....what metal detector do I purchase for this task? Some reliable advice comes from our friends at Diggers and Detectors, a blog site that provides great advice about metal detecting, even in logs or reclaimed lumber!

Visit their webpage for some great information on detecting metal in logs and recommendations on metal detectors >>

[Diggers & Detectors](#)

Nurturing a Sense of Community
Improving the Environment by
Reducing Waste
&
Conserving Energy

Member

URBAN WOOD NETWORK

The Virginia Urban Wood Group is an affiliate member of the Urban Wood Network.

Connect with the Urban Wood Network on Facebook [@UrbanUWN](#)
Have something to share? Use [#UWN](#)
[#urbanwood](#) [#urbanwoodnetwork](#)
[#urbanwoodmovement](#) to connect with us and to share your posts with us.

Additional info >>

[Urban Wood Network](#)

UWN's latest newsletter >>

[UWN News](#)

Feature Stories

The Sounds of the Season!

Tis the season for a little rest and relaxation! Well almost that is, because we all know that these last couple of weeks before the holidays can be slam jammin' busy! In order to help facilitate that rest & relaxation mode, we return to musically themed featured articles similar to what was published a couple years ago.

There is nothing more wonderful than listening to the music of the holiday season or even talking about the instruments that produce it. Virginia is fortunate to have several great music instrument makers! Even more important is the fact that most of them are using urban/local wood resources to create these incredibly beautiful instruments!

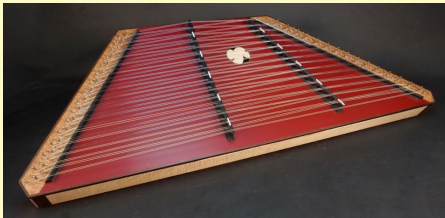
Harkening back to last month's theme, an Industrial Design Class at JMU is using urban wood to create incredibly innovative, and yet fully functional music instruments. In cooperation with the music department, the students will play their instruments during a December reception. The following stories are inspirational accounts of the versatility and beauty of our urban wood resources. The items that can be created from urban/local wood go far beyond slab tables, shelves, and flooring! Be sure to check out the associated links for more details about the great products being created by these organizations!

James Jones
Bedford, VA

James Jones has been crafting musical instruments in his Bedford, VA wood shop since 1978! Within the walls of this creative space - which he designed and built to suit his needs - Jones has developed designs



*Above - a custom bowed psaltery
Below - a hammered dulcimer*



*Above: a table that plays "biomusic"
from the plant
Below: the "Rocktagon"
multi-surface drum*

for ten different acoustic instruments. They include hammered dulcimers, folk harps, bowed psalteries, zithers, octave mandolins, tongue drums, Appalachian dulcimers, guitars, monochords and thumb pianos. His three top-selling instruments include hammered dulcimers, for which he has designed eleven different models, two models of octave zithers, and also bowed psalteries.

James uses a wide range of domestic and exotic woods, including walnut, cherry, maple and ash, all of which are locally sourced.

Reflecting on his many years of instrument craftsmanship, James noted that "There is no special project, {of which I am most proud} just the satisfaction of providing musical instruments to aspiring musicians of all ages and skill levels".

Check out the website to view more of his beautiful, hand-crafted instruments:

[James Jones Instruments](#)

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Building Percussion Instruments from Urban Wood

This fall semester, Dr. Audrey Barnes (Associate Professor of Industrial Design), taught a Percussion Design/Build Advanced Industrial Design Studio class at James Madison University which built percussion instruments from Harrisonburg urban ash and oak. The 18 students built several different instruments including gongs which utilize urban wood to create the frame, coffee tables with percussion built into them as a design element, to hybrid electronic-acoustic percussive instruments.

Audrey mentions "This is my first time teaching this percussion studio. The students have been very enthusiastic about the class and the projects. The class has been created with a connection to the JMU percussion ensemble which is led by Dr. Casey Cangelosi. On November 1, the students' first projects (Cajons - an Afro-Peruvian box drum) were played at the JMU Forbes center as part of the percussion ensemble Fall performance. A final performance of the students' creations will be on Dec. 13th."

More information about other JMU projects are available at:

[JMU Bike Shack Project](#)

[JMU Food Forest](#)



Huss & Dalton Guitar Company

Staunton, VA

Huss and Dalton Guitar company is a small, local business that has a worldwide distribution network! Their team of eight artisans builds custom guitars for a network of Authorized Dealers located all over the world. Huss & Dalton adhere to the manufacturer/non-retailer business model.

One of their more famous projects was the Jefferson Edition series of guitars, built from a yellow poplar tree that fell on the grounds of Jefferson's Monticello. The tree was aged and determined that it was planted in 1808! The guitars contained a beautiful quill pen inlay and also the start of the Declaration of Independence on the back of the guitar. Following is a link to this amazing project:

[Jefferson Guitars](#)

More information on the Huss & Dalton Guitar Company can be found on their website >>

[Huss & Dalton](#)



Thanks!

Many thanks to Trees Virginia (Virginia's Urban Forest Council) for hosting this newsletter and allowing access to their Constant Contact platform!

The Marketing Corner

"WOMers"

Over the past couple of years the "Marketing Corner" has emphasized that some of the best advertising for your business is free! That's right, F-R-E-E, as in it never eats into your profits - ever! One of the best, almost effortless marketing tools is Word-of-Mouth referrals from WOMers - you know, those folks who will pass information from one person to another. Check



The Virginia Urban Wood Program is supported by the Virginia Department of Forestry with grants from the U.S. Forest Service, Southern Region.



out this fun fact from the Yopto Platform: **92% of consumers will believe a recommendation from friends and family over any other type of advertising. That simple statistic hides one of the most powerful truths in marketing: Your biggest marketing asset is your existing customer base!**

Ponder that for a moment, if your present customer base is 100 people, and each of those WOMers tell just TWO other people about a great product you make or service you offer, your potential customer base can triple to 300!

That said, it should also make you realize that good recommendations from your customer base just don't happen on their own! Your customers are giving good recommendations about you for one reason - they are happy with your products, services, and customer care. You cannot sell your customers marginal products, or provide shoddy services and expect to get a good recommendation from them. If there is ever an issue with a product or service you have to dedicate your time and attention to make it right for the customer. This is known as good customer care, *never* take for granted those WOMers who "love" you.

Word-of-Mouth advertising is actually a quantified marketing strategy that helps major corporations expand their customer base. Check-out the Yopto website for more details and great examples of W-o-M advertising:

[Word-of Mouth Marketing](#)

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