

Virginia Urban Wood Group

News & Updates

November 3, 2022 | Issue -15

Looking to the Future

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

A wise man once told me: "Your eyes were put in the front of your head for a reason, to always be looking forward into the future". He told this to me as I was lamenting some trivial organizational change which at that moment in time I thought was monumental. Without a doubt, I was making a mountain out of a molehill.

While historic knowledge is a good foundation to build upon, progressing into the future has allowed us to realize incredible advances in the wonderful world of machines and wood working. The crosscut saw looks much better on the wall in my basement than it would if I were using it in yonder forest. Hand saws are still handy, but trust me, I was never good at cutting a straight line. I first realized that would be my forever destiny in Mrs. Hayes' kindergarten class, and I never improved no matter how old I got. While hand carving signs is an amazing talent, the CNC machine has allowed woodworkers to do incredible artwork of unimaginable designs in a minimal amount of time. And then there is us, the human capital, for which despite years of good living, exercise, and amazing advances in medicine, there is an ending point. It is never a good move to wait until you are near "the end" to be thinking about the future.

Recently we have embarked upon an amazing adventure in which we introduce students in high schools and colleges to the beauty, diversity and value of urban/local wood resources. Working with high schools, community colleges, and universities, we have been able to demonstrate the entire process from wood in log form to wood that they use in their design-build projects. The highlight of this program is giving them the complete sensory experience of seeing, smelling and handling local wood resources as they are transformed in front of their eyes. Some of the students had no idea about the progression from tree-to-lumber.

These students are our future and hopefully the seeds that we are planting today will grow and prosper, creating an entirely new generation of sawmillers, land managers, lumber retailers and wood artisans.

We hope that you are having a great ending to 2022 as we speed into the holiday season - enjoy the rest of the newsletter!

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Upcoming Events

The Urban Wood Network Conference 2022

In-person

November 15, 2022
Seattle, Washington

Sponsored by:
Urban Wood Network
U.S. Forest Service
Arbor Day Foundation

Click here for details>>
[Conference 2022
Registration](#)

Note: Be sure to go to the second page of registration & select "Partnering Event Only" to attend just the UWN Conference



For all of our land care Service Providers:

On Demand

**Natural Area Management
Services: A Case Study**



Virginia Urban Wood Group News

Beyond Virginia!

Recently the Virginia Urban Wood Program received U.S. Forest Service funding that would help support an urban wood partnership between Florida, Virginia and Puerto Rico. Also included in this collaboration are faculty from the University of Miami's School of Architecture and the Littoral Urbanism Lab. The multi-organizational program is designed to promote the use and sustainability of urban wood resources, including sound planning and management of urban forests. Updates about this program will be provided in coming issues of this newsletter.

And then there were five!

We are very excited and pleased to announce that VCU (Virginia Commonwealth University) is joining the coalition of colleges and universities that are incorporating urban wood into their curriculums. VCU's first urban wood outreach program happens Friday, November 3rd!

Worth the Click!

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](#)

Firewood sellers in the VA Urban & Small Woodlot Forestry Business Directory

There are 21 businesses in our directory that list firewood sales as one of their services. These service providers range from sawmills to wood artisans to land management companies!

Know of a company selling firewood that should be a part of this ever-growing family? Maybe you now sell firewood and you need to update your listing? (email us for changes in your listing) Sign-up is easy and takes only a few minutes of time >>

[Directory Link >> Additional Information](#)

Soon to arrive >

The Holiday Season!

Truth be told the holiday shopping season is already upon us! Many orders are already placed and items are being purchased.

Part of your marketing outreach from here forward should be to continually encourage 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! Here are some talking points for a great Shop Local campaign:

By Shopping Local You Are:

Creating Jobs
Adding Money to the Local Economy
Investing in Entrepreneurship
Nurturing a Sense of Community
Improving the Environment by
Reducing Waste
& Conserving Energy

North Carolina Urban Wood Group

The North Carolina Urban Wood Group is one of the most active, statewide urban wood programs in the eastern United States. The NC Urban Wood Group is a program of the North Carolina Urban Forest Council and is a member of the Urban Wood Network.

The NC Urban Wood Group's mission is to develop connections and provide up-to-date information and resources through a network of all aspects of urban wood utilization in NC. Our partners work towards developing a market for high-end wood products that divert removed urban wood from landfills into the hands of consumers in NC and beyond.

The group also sponsors trainings for local urban wood businesses, develops outreach materials for urban wood programs and publishes a periodic newsletter. Truth be told, the NC Urban Wood Group newsletter staff served as patient, valuable mentors for the VA Urban Wood Newsletter!

Click here for more information:

[NC Urban Wood Group
Webpage](#)

Member

**URBAN WOOD
NETWORK**

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

Be sure to check out their web page and learn how to become an individual member of this national urban wood networking organization.

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

Feature Stories

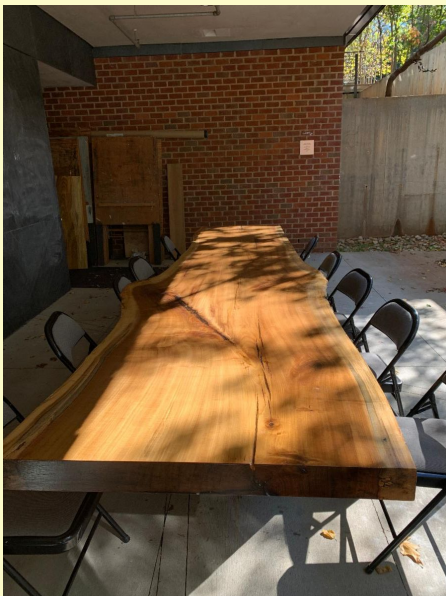
Developing New Talent

Just like any good professional sports team, business that provide services to small parcel landowners or operate in the world of urban wood are continuously trying to attract and develop "new talent". Whether the goal is to expand the current operation, or launch another business in a new location, there is definitely a need for quality people to make it happen!

We would encourage all of you to consider mentorship or internship opportunities with nearby high schools and universities. Most students are yearning for hands-on, real world experiences that can help to better prepare them for their future. Sharing your knowledge and experience about working with wood, machinery operation & repair and business management will help to build critical foundational knowledge for these future entrepreneurs.

Following are stories about the many great urban wood program accomplishments at UVA, JMU, Va Tech and Mountain Gateway CC. Be sure to check out the links for more details about the great work being accomplished by these organizations!

University of Virginia



*Architecture School's
outdoor classroom yellow poplar table*

The University of Virginia's urban wood program is coordinated by the members of UVA Sawmilling, a student-led organization led by Andrew Spears, Tim Victorio and Eric Bredder.

Since launching the effort in 2020, the UVA urban wood program continues to expand capacity and programming and has many awesome accomplishments:

- Construction of a solar kiln (soon building a second solar kiln)
- Numerous sawmilling days
- A public auction of slabs
- Building a table for an outdoor classroom
- Creating a UVA Sawmilling Video & website

Check out their website and video:

[UVA Sawmilling Website](#)

[UVA Sawmilling YouTube Video](#)

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James Madison University



Creative wooden bike frames made from Harrisonburg urban wood



Urban wood workshop for JMU Architectural Design Class

Below: Beginnings of JMU Food Forest



JMU's urban wood/urban forestry program is coordinated by four faculty members:

Nick Brinen, *Assistant Professor of Architectural Design*

Audrey Barnes, *Associate Professor of Industrial Design*

Kevin Phaup, *Assistant Professor of Industrial Design*

Michaela Schmitt-Harsh, *Affiliate Professor of Biological Sciences*

The JMU urban wood/urban forestry program has formed a wonderful partnership with their host city, Harrisonburg, VA. which also has a very innovative and active urban wood program.

In less than two years, the JMU architectural & industrial design classes have many great accomplishments including:

- planted a food forest on campus
- conducted an urban wood workshop for students including a sawmill demo
- hosted an evening urban wood reception at the arboretum
- built wooden framed bikes
- constructed a "Bike Shack" for the JMU Occupational Therapy Department

More information about JMU projects are available at:

[JMU Bike Shack Project](#)

[JMU Food Forest](#)

Virginia Tech

At Virginia Tech the urban wood program continually gains momentum since its start in 2019. The VA Tech program, like JMU's, is interdepartmental being comprised of:

Jonas Hauptman, *School of Architecture & Design*

Dan Hindman, *College of Natural Resources and Environment*

Jamie King, *VA Tech Campus Arborist*

Since 2019, VA Tech has completed numerous projects and has several ongoing including:

- conducted an urban wood workshop for students including a sawmill demo
- urban wood business field trips
- The Merry Tree Project, which is focused on honoring the existence of an historically significant tree which once stood on Smithfield Plantation, located adjacent to the VA Tech



*The iconic and historically significant
Merry Tree before being decimated by a
storm in 2020*



*Urban wood workshops for
MGCC students*



*Small parcel harvesting equipment
demonstration for MGCC classes*

campus.

[Click here for more information about the Merry Tree
Project and the Virginia Tech Campus Tree Program >](#)

[Va Tech Trees](#)

Mountain Gateway Community College

Mountain Gateway Community College (Formerly Dabney S. Lancaster CC) is the only VA community college to offer a degree in urban forestry with a focus on urban wood. The urban forestry/urban wood programs are led by two faculty:

Scott Riegel
Billy Newman

Located in Covington this program offers students a well-balanced education of both classroom instruction and hands-on field experiences. The urban forestry/urban wood program has many great accomplishments including:

- Offering students the unique opportunity to learn sawmill operations on the MGCC sawmill
- Urban wood workshops
- Classroom presentations by urban forestry professionals

More information on the Mountain Gateway CC program can be found [here](#):

[MGCC Urban Forestry](#)

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

"Oregon Strawberries"

About two months ago I was a victim - not of a crime, but rather of a simple, clever and effective marketing ploy. I was the victim of a *descriptor* word.

To set the scene for you, while in Richmond the family decided to go for ice cream. As we drove towards our destination I began narrowing the possibilities of what I was ordering so that I



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



would not have "menu daze" as the ice cream associate was waiting to take my order. By the time we parked near the front door, I had my mind made up, I was going with one of my favorites, a chocolate malt shake! As we stood in line waiting to be served, I gazed at the myriad of ice creams in the glass freezer case and a small sign in front of one of those frozen tubs of goodness caught my eye: "Oregon Strawberry". Immediately visions of strawberries growing in beautiful, pristine Oregon dominated my brainwaves and that was it.....the chocolate malt shake which is always a favorite of mine was instantaneously replaced by.....an Oregon Strawberry shake!

The point of this story is of how one small descriptor word (adjective to be proper) on a product or your business card can peak the interest in a buyer and lead to an immediate sale of goods or services. Here are a few examples for you to consider:

Virginia walnut
Harrisonburg ash
Veteran owned
Blue Ridge Mountain poplar
Chesapeake live oak

Descriptor words such as these can paint an immediate picture in the heads of consumers and most of the time motivates them to act. Using well placed adjectives, customers can perceive emotions such as:

Feelings of "home"
A place of good memories
Service to our country
Supporting their local economy

Sometimes a simple adjustment in your marketing tactics can reap big benefits. It can be as easy as adding "Oregon" to a strawberry ice cream label.

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