



Minnesota forests

December/January 2009

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

The MFA works on behalf of family forest owners, through education and advocacy, to promote stewardship of woodlands.

MFA
(218) 326-6486
PO Box 496
Grand Rapids
MN 55744

MFA
Newsletter
Vol. 10 No. 7
The Minnesota
Forests Newsletter
is published by the
Minnesota Forestry
Association.

MFA Meetings

Regular Board
Meetings

DNR Office
Cambridge
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

- January 28
- April 22
- July 22
- October 28

Editor
Mary Kröll
Editor@Minnesota
Forestry.org

Design/layout
Peg Churchwell
Lady Dog Design
peg@ladydogdesign.com



Bernadine Joselyn and her father, Gary Joselyn, find a beauty in the woods. Now if they can only get it home!

If You Want to Recycle Your Christmas Tree ...

Your holiday tree, with its mirthful decorations of angels and Twins ornaments, may not actually keep evil spirits at bay, as early peoples once believed. Still, it will soon have served its purpose as a festive decoration and you can give it a second life if you'd like.

Here's how you could recycle your Christmas tree:

- Use it in a wood-burning fireplace. Smells sweet!
- Prop it up near a bird feeder outdoors. Small birds covet the cover provided by the thick branches and will come in greater number to your feeders.
- Better yet, use the tree itself as a feeder. Cardboard tubes (from paper towels) can be spread with a mixture of lard and peanut butter, then rolled in bird seed and hung from the tree. Add orange slices and suet blocks.
- Cut up the tree and use it as mulch.
- Place your tree in your woods to provide shelter for rabbits and other small animals.
- Consider sinking your tree into a pond as cover for fish.
- Host a party (complete with hot chocolate) and burn the cut-up tree in a fire ring to entice people outdoors.
- Put your tree through a shredder and use the chips in landscaping projects.



**2008
Board of Directors**

John W. O'Reilly, President
40361 Grace Lake Road
Hinckley MN 55037
(320) 655-3901
President@MinnesotaForestry.org

Al Schacht, Vice President
58145 350th Avenue
Zumbro Falls, MN 55991
(507) 753-3214
Schacht2Schacht@aol.com

Barb Spears, Secretary
1656 Blair Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104
(651) 328-0463
BISpears@q.com

**Dennis Thompson
Treasurer**
130 Southgate Drive
Aitkin MN 56431
(218) 927-6565
Fax: (218) 927-6014
Treasurer@MinnesotaForestry.org

**Bruce ZumBahlen
Past President**
8203 Innsdale Ave. S.
Cottage Grove MN 55016
(651) 458-0483
ZoomerBruce@aol.com

Terry Helbig
1801 S. Oak Street
Lake City MN 55041
(651) 345-3216
Terry.Helbig@DNR.state.MN.US

Jerry Lenz
1805 Linda Lane
St. Cloud MN 56301
(320) 259-8864
JLenz@cloutnet.com

Bob Sonnenberg
P.O. Box 127
New York Mills MN 56567
(218) 385-2144
SFarms@LakesPlus.com

Chuck Erickson
34115 County Hwy 74
Battle Lake MN 56515
(218) 495-2659
CYErik@prtcl.com

Jim Chamberlin
7118 Clearwater Road
Baxter MN 56425
(218) 828-6197
IslandLakeFarm@Brainerd.net

**Mike Reichenbach
Ex-Officio Member**
Regional Extension Educator
Univ. of Minnesota Extension
179 University Rd
Cloquet, MN 55720
218-726-6470
Reich027@umn.edu

MFA Election Results

By John O'Reilly

As might be expected, the five candidates for the MFA Board who were chosen by the Nominating Committee were all elected. The results are:

Candidate	Number of Votes
Chad Dayton, St. Paul	112
Gary Michael, Waterville	119
John O'Reilly (incumbent), Hinckley	119
John Saxhaug, St. Paul	125
Al Schacht, Zumbro Falls	119

Meet the new members of the MFA Board!



Chad Dayton



Gary Michael



John Saxhaug

Some have asked, "Why nominate only one person for each open position?" The rationale is that the Nominating Committee should recruit and nominate the best candidates they can find. Too often in the past members were asked to choose between two people, neither of whom they knew. Members do have the option to write in names. In this election, these people received write-in votes:

Jim Berkeland
Jim Columbus, Grand Rapids
Judy Hunder, Plymouth
Tom Kroll, Little Falls
Darrell Lauber, Grand Rapids
Dave Lindroth, Apple Valley

Dave Marshall, Grand Rapids
Bill Marshall, Grand Rapids
Julie Miedtke, Grand Rapids
Kathleen Preece, Bemidji
Barb Spears, St. Paul

You can bet each of these people will receive consideration by the Nominating Committee in the coming year.

If you or someone you know would like to be considered for a future MFA Board Position, contact MFA's Nominating Committee chair, Bob Sonnenberg, to express your interest. Remember that prime consideration is given to those who have been accepted into and successfully completed the coursework of the Wisconsin Woodland Leadership Institute. The Institute helps prepare participants for the MFA Board and leadership positions in other woodland-related organizations. Virtually everyone who has been through the Institute raves about the experience. The proposed bylaw change to reauthorize a Life Membership category passed with 105 in favor, 19 opposed, and 6 no votes.

The following are comments received with the ballots. The best way to respond to one of these comments, or make your own, is on the Discussion Board of www.MyMinnesotaWoods.org.

- It would be nice to have more Woodland Advisor programs closer to the Twin Cities.
- I am very confused about the new Green Acres legislation and need info on the 2c provisions. Have not seen any statements by MFA about this.
- I'd like to see local chapters more active (even active) and adopting a program of advocacy by its members in reaching out to local woodland owners who have no stewardship plan nor any interest in creating one to sustain their 'woods.' Similar to the Wisconsin Woodland Advocacy Group.

Do SFIA and Class 2c sound like alphabet soup to you? A handy guide due to be included with our next newsletter will help you sort out the pros and cons of different programs offered in Minnesota. Our thanks to Mel Baughman, Minnesota Extension Service, for authoring this guide and analyzing the different tax scenarios.

- My write-in reasons are two-fold. Spears has been an excellent MFA member, a valued Board component, and an exceptional proponent for good forestry. MFA should herein seek a gender balance in its leadership, as our timber industry future shall surely benefit.
- All good people!
- Keep up the good work! Great job on timber classification tax change. It's about time to reinstate a life membership. I suggest a laser-engraved plaque upon membership. This can be factored into the cost. Then allow and sell "Life Membership" only merchandise. Good job, John O'Reilly.
- Sorry to lose Barb Spears from the Board! The magazine is GREAT!
- Is the Land Stewardship Program over??? Thank you.
- We voted against the life membership at this time because there was no explanation as to the benefits/pros/cons included in this mailing. How much is the cost of life membership? Will it be enough to offset the annual membership payments? There was nothing in the Oct/Nov newsletter about this.
- I would have voted on the bylaws change if I knew what the cost of a life membership would be.
- Keep up the great work!
- How is it that only five candidates have applied for five Board positions? How do others interested in being a candidate get listed on this ballot prior to the ballot being printed? It makes it look like a cut and dried election! P.S. I'm 62 years old. It makes little sense in acquiring a life time membership!
- I recently attended a conference in Grand Rapids. One of the sessions dealt with biomass harvesting. He distributed guidelines for forest lands and brushlands in Minnesota. My concern is that these are voluntary with no oversight or monitoring. I think MFA should push certification of harvesting to include this method of using fiber from our lands.
- Now with the drastic changes to the Green Acres Law, thousands of acres of woodlands will be pushed out of green acres protection as non-productive. MFA should step up to protect these woodlands.
- Let me see—5 seats and 5 candidates! This is no election when no one can lose! When did the MFA Board okay mailing commercial ads with the newsletter? Did we receive pay for this mass mailing? Finally, there is no secret ballot when a return address is required. Therefore, I decline to mark this ballot(?).
- A strong field of candidates!
- I would like to hear more of SFIA versus 2c and carbon credits as well.
- It's about time to let us old codgers buy (fund) life memberships for our family members!
- You are doing a great job with the newsletter—keep it up!
- Thanks for all that you active members do!

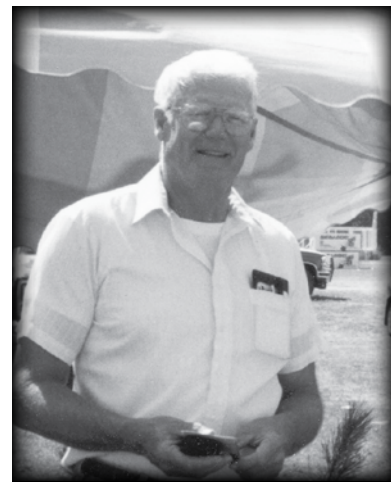
Dick Knoll: Friend of Minnesota Forests and Family Forest Owners

MFA lost a friend and benefactor on August 3, 2008 when Dick Knoll passed away suddenly at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester at age 73.

Knoll retired from his own company, Anderson & Dahlen, in 1988, and dove into his second career of forest policy. From the log home he and his wife, Mitzi, built on the Rum River near Milaca, Knoll helped Minnesota family forest owners through his work with MFA as President and Board member. He provided strong leadership during his tenure and helped MFA gain its financial footing.

Dick also made time to enjoy his family and friends and to work on his tree farm, including tinkering with his Iron Mule skidder. He earned Tree Farmer of the Year in 1988.

With his passing, Minnesota has lost a true leader for expanded family forest management. Those of us who were fortunate to know Dick Knoll will miss him dearly.



Richard "Dick" Knoll worked tirelessly on behalf of Minnesota forests and woodland owners.

MFA Member Profile

Ducks on the Pond

In the gentle hills of southern Minnesota near New Prague lies some very fine farmland. More than 30 years ago Bernie Rosckes bought 140 acres of the deep, dark loam then covered in corn and soybeans. Today, however, you'd be hard-pressed to find any conventional agricultural crops growing on his land. Instead, Rosckes has replaced the corn with native habitats including ponds, forests, and prairie.

On a warm day last July the Rosckes land is abuzz with activity. Junior Reinhart, self-proclaimed "Wetland Guy and a Duck's Best Friend" is moving an excavator with the precision of a surgeon with a scalpel, scraping and smoothing until the dirt is leveled just right. Tom Coffman, USDA NRCS, is inspecting the wetland work on Rosckes' land. Rosckes himself is asking a lot of questions. All are working toward the common goal of turning this low spot back into a wetland.

As we bump along across the land in a modified golf cart, Rosckes points out the plants growing in another wetland, now drained for maintenance. Coffman is delighted to see smartweed—manna from heaven for ducks. The pool has been drawn down to expose the soil to air and sunlight and encourage the growth of the plant.

Coffman helps Rosckes manage the levels of multiple wetlands on his property to attract waterfowl. Rosckes says he does it all so that his grandchildren can watch the waterfowl and their dabbling and diving ways, but it's clear he likes what he sees, too.

Overhead, a flock of American pelicans circle and soar, looking for big water. While Rosckes' ponds may be small potatoes to these large birds, the wetlands are critical resting, nesting, and feeding spots for other species.

Instead of corn and soybeans, Rosckes today grow a food web.



Decades ago Rosckes' land was drained to support crops and then seeded to cool-season grass under CRP. Now wetlands have been re-established, complete with smartweed, sedges, and sora.



Rosckes also has restored some of his rolling fields to native prairie, with big bluestem and wildflowers coming on strong after a spring burn. Eventually he'll extend the prairie until he "runs out of room."



The Rosckes have planted oaks on the outer margins of their sugar maple/basswood climax forest.

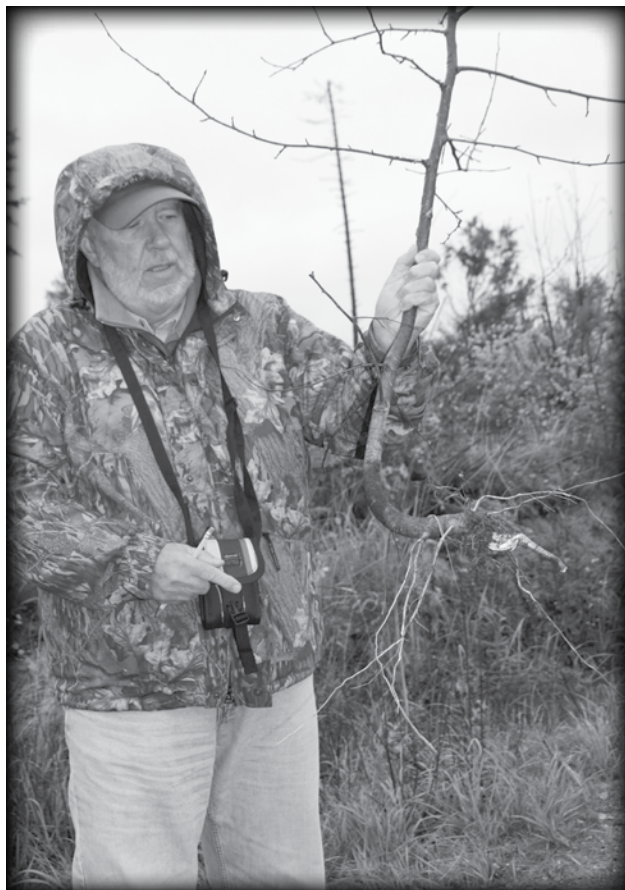
Report From the Field: Seeing the Forest and the Trees

By Bruce ZumBahlen

Over a nine-day period in late September and early October, our group of 38 team members and support staff had a whirlwind tour to learn about Scandinavian forestry. The project's purpose was to explore how to make the most of Minnesota's woods through information gained by visits to Ontario, Finland, and Sweden. Our group also was charged with the following objectives:

- Increase the quality and value of forests and the products that come from the land in Minnesota and the Great Lakes region.
- Optimize the balance of forest benefits, including timber, bioenergy, non-traditional forest products, ecosystem services and biodiversity, and public access and recreation.
- Develop a shared vision and public policy recommendations for forest management in Minnesota to increase productivity and sustain landscapes and the environment.

The group was organized into six teams: public policies, public engagement, systems change, private landowners, environmental review and permitting, and bioenergy/biochemicals. I served on the private landowners team along with Jack Rajala (Rajala Mills), Kathleen Preece (*Better Forests* magazine), Dave Parent (Minnesota Forest Resource Council), and Jim Marshall (UPM-Blandin Paper Company). All team members are part of MFA.



Above: Pulling stumps. Scandinavian countries utilize woody biomass to fight global climate change. Sweden uses woody biomass to provide heat through central heating districts so that they don't have to burn fossil fuels.

Left: Bruce ZumBahlen examines a woody shrub uprooted by machine since it was competing with a spruce seedling. Herbicides haven't been used on UPM lands in Finland for over 20 years because of "every man's right" that ensures public access to any property to pick berries and mushrooms. There are no "No Trespassing" signs in Finland, nor Sweden for that matter.

Ploof Brothers Land Tour

On a beautiful late September day more than 25 people participated in a tour of the Ploof brothers' land in Morrison County, sponsored by the Central Minnesota Landowners Association. The brothers—Galen, Tom, Peter, and Doug—are the recipients of the 2008 Minnesota State Tree Farmers of the Year award.

The Ploof brothers nurture an amazing variety of habitats, including woods, wetlands, and prairies. While they do most work themselves, they hire out big projects, such as the restoration of their prairie. Workers planted switchgrass and forbs, but the brothers themselves scattered the “amazingly small bag of \$800 fluff”—prairie flowers. After a few spring burnings that, according to Tom Ploof, “proved we could run faster than we thought we could” they managed to nurture a big, burgeoning prairie with more than 100 kinds of insects at last count.

Other tour stops included woodlands and the Ploof brothers' sawmill.



Top: Duane Strack of Cushing, Jim Towler of St. Cloud, and Irv and Janet Walz of Cold Spring await the hike into the white pine woods.

Middle: Dean Mackay, MN DNR (center of photo, standing), provides additional forestry information.

Above: The Ploof brothers' restored seven-acre prairie.

Left: Brothers Doug and Tom Ploof in their sawmill. They thin white pine infected with blister rust from their woods to cut into boards. This lumber has found a ready market among conservation agencies that buy the wood to build bird houses.

Report From the Field: Wisconsin Leadership Institute

By Ken Quass

The Wisconsin Woodland Leadership Institute is open to Minnesota woodland owners. MFA approves the selection of Minnesota participants, which this year included seven, along with 22 from Wisconsin. Participants own woodland ranging from 15 to 600-plus acres.

The purpose of the seminars was to equip woodland owners to provide grassroots leadership in sustainable forest issues. Classes, workshops, and field tours combine leadership and forestry issues for private woodland owners.

Participants dove into a wide range of topics, including silviculture, forest policy, woody debris/biomass harvest standards and markets, collaborations and cooperatives, new forest products, and the history of the timber industry in the Lake States.

The classes were well-paced, not rushed. The presenters were excellent, well-versed in their field of expertise, and able to answer relatively complex questions. There was ample time for free-ranging discussions among the participants. Landowners with common interests were able to discuss issues and solutions informally.

If you've ever wondered what it takes to excite and influence neighboring woodland owners, this program is for you. MFA can be proud of its support of the Institute as well as for its significant financial assistance to the Minnesotans who attended this year.



Ken Nichols of Oronoco, Germaine Davis of Hokah, Ken Quass of Pine River, Bill Ulvi of Duluth, and Gary Brunkow of Edina attend the Wisconsin Woodland Leadership Institute.

Look for more information and an application for the 2009 session of the Wisconsin Woodland Leadership Institute in the Feb/March MFA Newsletter.

Mark your calendars to attend the 2009 MFA Spring Field Days on Friday, May 15 and Saturday, May 16, 2008, in New York Mills. Don't miss this opportunity to share information with other woodland owners and learn new techniques to better manage your land. Watch future newsletters for more information.



The graduating class of 2008.

Up North and Living Green

More than 80 private woodland owners participated in the *Up North & Living Green* workshop held in Grand Rapids on September 19. Attendees selected from a menu of 20 hour-long seminars on subjects ranging from *Climate Change: Its Impact on Forest Health* to *Are Bears in Your Woods?* A special day-long session on *Build a Web Site for Your Woods or Business* was conducted by the University of Minnesota's Philip Potyondy and Abby Liesch.

Following this event was the annual *Goods from the Woods: Up North Marketplace* that combined workshops, a specialty forest products marketplace, and a community festival to celebrate northern forests.



Above: Carter and Florence Hedeon of Park Rapids and Wesley Carlson of Outing attend some of the *Up North & Living Green* sessions.



Far left: Jim Columbus of Grand Rapids and Keith Matson of Deer River participate in workshops.



Left: Instructors Abby Liesch and Philip Potyondy, University of Minnesota.

For MFA members, www.MyMinnesotaWoods.org is the best online source of woodland information. Here's what's new this month.



- The Year in review: Minnesota's 5 biggest forestry stories of 2008
- An interview with Jeff Forester: Problems (and solutions) with Minnesota's property tax code
- Save the date for a February conference: Forest Values and Carbon Markets: Opportunities for Minnesota, Feb. 25-26, 2009
- Nontimber forest products: A holiday focus on balsam boughs

Have a question about your woodland? Post it on the Discussion Board. You may be surprised at how many good responses you get!

For the live version, with much more info on each topic, visit MyMinnesotaWoods.org

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