



Minnesota Woodlands

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

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA)

Information@
MinnesotaForestry.org
218-326-6486
PO Box 496
Grand Rapids
MN 55744

MFA Newsletter Vol. 11 No. 3

June/July 2009
The Minnesota Woodlands Newsletter is published by the Minnesota Forestry Association.

MFA Regular Board Meetings

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

- July 22
- October 28

Editor
Editor@MinnesotaForestry.org

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

MFA's Spring Field Day 2009

MFA's Spring Field Day was held at the Sonnenberg Farm in New York Mills on Saturday, May 16. The temperature was low (50s) and the wind was high but MFA members enjoyed a great day on the Farm!

See many more photos on our Web site, www.MinnesotaForestry.org.



Above: A highlight of the day was a walking tour led by host Bob Sonnenberg in which he discussed the equipment and systems he uses to operate a one-person tree farm of 250 acres. He does everything from planting the seedlings to tending trees as they grow to harvesting and preparing for market, either as firewood or sawn lumber. Here he is demonstrating how he gets an oak log out of the woods.

Right: Carl Vogt, U of M Extension Educator, did a very entertaining seminar on tree ID. Other events included chain saw safety and buckthorn control.



Jim Chamberlin, Brainerd, demonstrated the procedure for growing Shiitake mushrooms. Here he is injecting spore into an ironwood log. Several lucky attendees went home with an inoculated mushroom log.



Ann Oldekowski, Wadena, is about to bite into a brat served by a local church group. Delicious!



Thanks to host Bob Sonnenberg and event chair Chuck Erickson for a great event!



**2009
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

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

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

Bruce Zumbahlen, Past President
8203 Innsdale Ave. S.
Cottage Grove MN 55016
651-458-0483
ZoomerBruce@aol.com

John Saxhaug
3940 Harriet Avenue
Minneapolis MN 55409
612-827-5824
John_Saxhaug@yahoo.com

Chad Dayton
154 Nina Street
St. Paul MN 55102
651-224-1125
chaddayton@mac.com

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

Administrative Assistant
Carol Cartie
P.O. Box 496
Grand Rapids MN 55744
218-326-6486
Information@MinnesotaForestry.org

MFA's 2009 Annual Meeting & Tree Farm Awards

MFA's Annual Meeting and Tree Farm Awards were held on Friday, May 15th at Mills Creamery Restaurant in New York Mills.

MFA members enjoyed a social hour with good conversation and beverages served by host Bob Sonnenberg. A scrumptious meal featured all you could eat lasagna.

Chris Schulke of the Otter Tail Historical Society told the story of early logging days in the county.



Left: George Kopferschmid, Perham, Frank Smith, Emily



Above: Lyle Keller, Peterson

Above left: Food is served!



Lower Left: John Rose, Underwood, Curt Kreklau, Alexandria



Above: Lowell Thornber, Roseville, David Lindroth, Apple Valley

Below: Jeff & Lindsey Henning, Dennis Muckala, New York Mills



Tree Farm Awards

Four Minnesota woodland owners were recognized as outstanding tree farmers for 2008. The awards were presented by Bob DeRoche of the State Tree Farm Committee during MFA's Annual Meeting Banquet held Friday, May 15th Awards were presented to:

Zone 1, northwestern Minnesota,
Bob and Ingrid Sonnenberg of New York Mills.

Zone 2, northeastern Minnesota,
State Senator Tom Bakk, Cook, who is also a carpenter and woodland owner.

Zone 3, central Minnesota,
Arden Aanestad, Edina, who has 80 acres of woodland near Emily. Aanestad was also named the Minnesota State Tree Farmer of the Year.

Zone 4, southeast Minnesota,
High Ridge Tree Farm operated by the McHale family.

Tree Farm Inspector of the Year is Finn Ostman, Cook.



Senator Tom Bakk, Cook, was one of four Minnesota woodland owners recognized as Tree Farmers of the Year for 2008.

Left: Are you interested in becoming a Tree Farmer? If you own at least 20 acres of woodland and have a Stewardship Plan, you may be eligible. To learn more, contact your local DNR Forestry Office. Find their contact information under Professional Help on the MFA Web site, www.MinnesotaForestry.org.

2009, A Maple Syrup Bumper Crop

For **Linda and Charlie Dinkel**, who farm near Long Prairie and have been tapping maple trees for 18 years, 2009 was their best year ever. "We produced 235 gallons of syrup this year," said Linda. That was produced from 680 taps the Dinkels and their neighbors put out. "Our worst year was 2005 when we produced just 35 gallons of syrup out of 400 taps."

"In a normal year, our maple syrup season lasts four weeks," Linda said. "The sap flows slowly the first week, then flows really well for two weeks and finally slows down during the fourth week. This year was different. We didn't get much for the first few days but then the sap flowed heavily. We got enough sap for our 235 gallons of syrup in just 11 days. On the longest day, we were cooking sap from 8 in the morning until midnight."

Charlie added, "The sugar content of the sap was higher this year too. Normally the sap contains about 2.5% sugar. At that rate, we have to boil down 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of finished syrup containing 66% sugar. This year some of our sap was running 4% and a batch from a neighbor was at 5%. This high sugar content sap produces a lighter-colored syrup because it is on the cooker for a shorter time and, the longer sap cooks, the darker it becomes."

What does one do with 235 gallons of maple syrup? The Dinkels keep 10 gallons for their own use during the year. The rest is sold by word of mouth. "We have thought about advertising or starting a Web site," said Linda, "but our output is too variable from year to year."

Another Long Prairie farm family, **Lynn and Hans Kroll**, made 750 gallons of syrup from 1,500 trees on their farm plus sap brought over by neighbors who had tapped 500 trees. "This was our best year ever, up from 600 gallons last year and just 450 gallons in 2007," Lynn said. "We actually stopped when the sap was still running because we ran out of wood for our cooker. For a couple of days we tried cutting wood in the morning for use in the afternoon, but that was just too much work and we ran out of energy."

The story was the same in Pine County where **Don and Lucy Opsahl** have been tapping trees on their land near Hinckley for five years. "We had about a hundred trees tapped this year," Don said. "We were getting a little sap until it snowed on March 21 and 22. After that the sap flowed like water for a week. With our little cooker, we couldn't keep up. I even had a couple of pans cooking on Easter Sunday when our family was here."

The Opsahls produced 23 gallons of syrup this year compared to 15 gallons last year. With the new cooker they just purchased, they'll be ready for another banner year in 2010.

Jim Jirik, who has land in Rice County west of Faribault, also had a great year in 2009. "I got my taps in early, about February 27. Sap started slowly in early March but

Maple Syrup Bits & Pieces:

- One cord of firewood is needed for every 25 gallons of syrup to be produced.
- Put up in a glass container and stored out of sunlight, maple syrup will last indefinitely.
- For a beginner, a good way to start out is to tap a few trees and trade with a neighbor to do the cooking in exchange for some of the syrup.
- Fergus Falls is the western edge of the North American maple syrup zone, the only place in the world with the combination of maple trees and spring time thawing / freezing weather conditions.
- The superstore for maple syrup supplies is Anderson's in Cumberland, Wisconsin. Open year round, their Web site is www.AndersonsMapleSyrup.com.

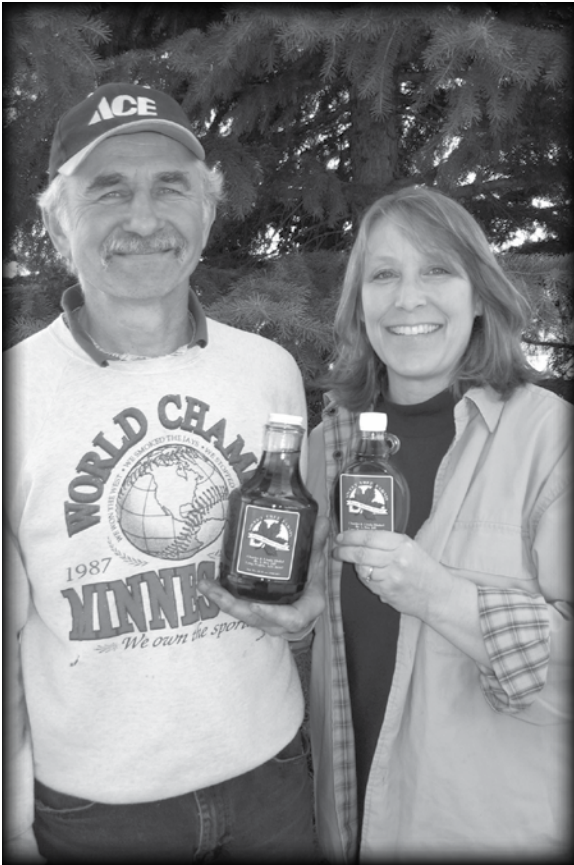
then it warmed up for four days. The red maple buds started to break open and I thought the season might be over. But then it got cold again. One night the temperature was down to 18 degrees. The sap flowed so fast I couldn't keep up. I produced 150 gallons of syrup on my own and traded 2,000 gallons of sap to a neighbor for 30 more gallons."

While Jirik is a hobbyist, he's pretty serious about maple syrup. His 700 to 800 taps are plumbed together with tubing. Using a vacuum system, the sap runs right into a holding tank. Besides reducing the work of emptying buckets and hauling sap, the vacuum system gets about 25% more sap out of each tree.

So, based on reports from the northwest, the northeast and the south, 2009 was a very "sweet" year for maple syrup!



Linda Dinkel checking the sugar content of cooking sap with a refractometer. Finished maple syrup contains 66% sugar.



Charlie and Linda Dinkel, Long Prairie, with their Sweet Tree Farms Maple Syrup.

Private Woodland Owners Did Okay in the 2009 Legislative Session

By Bruce ZumBahlen, Chair, MFA Government Affairs Committee

It was preordained that the 2009 legislative session would be a challenging one with a projected \$4.8 billion plus biennial budget deficit/gap to close. The need to reduce state spending meant that almost every program would be scrutinized, including expenditures supporting forestry programs.

Over the past few years, Minnesota has put into place two vital programs that support retention and management of family owned forests, the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA) and the 2c Managed Forest Law (2c Law). MFA strongly supported the establishment of both.

And the legislature tinkered with both but, in the end, both came through mostly unchanged.

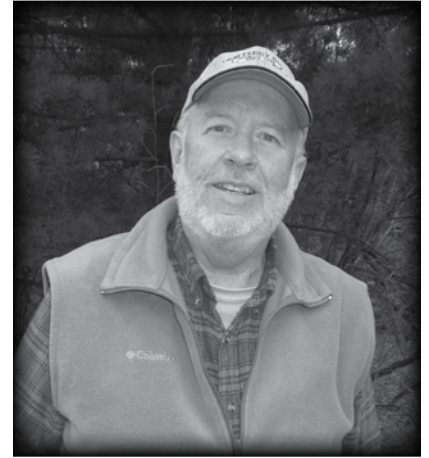
Payments under the **SFIA program** have grown to more than \$6 million a year with 1,000 Minnesota landowners enrolled. Last year's payment was \$8.61 per acre and it appears the methods to determine the payments will remain unchanged.

The new **2c Classification** can reduce woodland property taxes by as much as 35%. After some concerns early in the session that improvements to the 2c made in the 2008 legislative session might be repealed, it came through in the end unchanged.

The **Green Acres** property tax law was revamped again in this session. Green Acres is intended to protect actively farmed lands from excessive property taxation. In the past, the farmers' woodlands contiguous to their productive agriculture lands were also covered by Green Acres. Now those wooded acres can be covered by a new **Rural Preserve** program if the owner is willing to meet requirements similar to the SFIA. That is, lands to be covered must have a management plan prepared by a Board of Water & Soils Resources approved plan writer and the owner must take and record a 10 year covenant on the title to protect the land as Rural Preserve.

The **DNR Forestry Budget** did not fare as well as SFIA and 2c. The annual budget was cut by \$500,000. It is likely that a big share of this cut will come from DNR's private forest management – the foresters who provide service to private landowners.

At this point, considering what could have happened, forestry programs fared pretty well in this year's legislative session. But, the legislature adjourned without a resolution with the Governor on how to eliminate the remaining \$3 billion biennial budget deficit. As a result, the Governor will make the necessary cuts. Cross your fingers.



Bruce ZumBahlen

See MFA's Web site www.MinnesotaForestry.org for:

- Complete information on SFIA and 2c tax benefits.
- Sources of Professional Help available to private woodland owners: DNR, Soil & Water Conservation District Foresters and Private Consultants.

MFA Member Profile

A Seafarer on His Minnesota Land

Back in 1994 Jim Olsen realized a hunter's dream: After years of looking he found hunting land to buy. It was located near Askov in northern Pine County, more than two hours from his Wright County home in South Haven. Nonetheless, the land seemed perfect for hunting. It was 120 acres and nearly entirely covered by woods. There were nine deer stands already erected in key spots and a comfortable, if rustic, one-bedroom cabin.

Then in 2002 Jim heard about Woodland Advisor training to be held in Grand Rapids and he signed up. At that time the training was conducted in four Friday-Saturday sessions during February and March.

It was during that training that Jim realized his land was good for much more than hunting deer and grouse. Shortly afterward he obtained a stewardship plan and then sold aspen on 40 of his acres. In 2006 he hired a consultant, a retired DNR forester, to mark trees for a selective thinning on 50 acres of hardwoods. An indication of how much time, effort and expense is involved in marking trees can be seen in the consultant's report where he wrote:

"I used 20 gallons of paint,

A total of 2,760 trees were marked, or about 58 trees per acre and, Marking time was 6 days for 2 people."

Jim hasn't contracted with anyone yet to harvest the marked trees. If he can find someone to haul them to a mill, his preference is to cut the trees himself. "A neighbor in South Haven and I have also talked about bringing his sawmill up here. I have some really nice big-tooth aspen that he would cut into boards."

Now retired, Jim spent most of his professional life at sea, first for eight years in the Navy on a diesel-powered submarine, and then for 30 years as an engineer on a sea-going tug.

"The roughest seas I can recall were on that submarine," Jim said. "Since it is very dangerous for a submarine to surface or dive during rough weather, we usually rode out a storm on the surface. One time I was in the conning tower when 70-foot waves were crashing down on us."

"On the tug, most of our trips were four or five days up and down the East Coast. Using an 1,800 foot cable, we'd pull a single barge filled with 11 million gallons of gas or other chemical. In bad weather, there was a risk of snapping the cable so, if a storm was forecast, we'd stay in port until it blew over."

Back to his land, which Jim describes as his retreat and hunting shack:

"What I like most about the land," says Jim, "is it's a place to get away. Since cell service is very poor there, my wife wanted me to put in a phone but I said, 'No.' I haven't done much to the cabin since I bought it and I don't have any intentions of making it better. I sweep it out once a year whether it needs it or not."

"When I first bought the land, hunting was the priority. Now, I still like hunting but bagging a deer is no longer that important to me. What I really like is working on little projects, like mowing the trails, and just enjoying the woods."



Jim Olsen with one of his 2,760 trees marked for selective thinning.



Above: Jim refers to the cabin as his hunting shack.

Right: The hunting shack comes with outdoor facilities.



1,000,000,000

The one billionth (that's a one followed by nine zeros) produced by DNR tree nurseries was planted this spring on land owned by Todd and Glenda Erickson. The Ericksons, who live in Champlin, have their hobby tree farm in Wadena County, near Sebeka. The planting ceremony was a big event attended by State Forester Dave Epperly (left) and DNR Commissioner Mark Holsten. The sign commemorating the event was erected by DNR.



Emerald Ash Borer Has Arrived!

The tree-killing emerald ash borer has been found in Minnesota, which has the nation's second-highest number of ash trees after Maine, scientists said.

The long-expected pest was found in a tree in St. Paul's Hampden Park community in mid-May.

Minnesota has 900 million ash trees. Many of the ash trees were planted to replace trees killed by Dutch elm disease.

State officials are expected to ban the movement of any part of an ash tree in or out of Ramsey and Hennepin counties in the Twin Cities area. A similar ban is in place in Houston County because an ash borer was found recently in Wisconsin, about 20 miles east of the county.

The pest, native to China and Korea, has killed millions of ash trees in at least 10 states in the last decade.

For more information on this pest go to www.MinnesotaForestry.org.



Wisconsin Woodland Leadership Institute

Minnesotans who were admitted to the 2009 session of the Wisconsin Woodland Leadership Institute are (l-r) James Bursey, Minneapolis, Brian Huberty, Hastings, Neal Chapman, Roseville and Arlene Roehl, Long Lake. The first of three sessions of the Institute was held on May 15 & 16 at Palmquist Farm near Tomahawk, Wisconsin. The second session will be on July 10, 11 & 12 at Hartwood Conference Center near Danbury, Wisconsin. The final session will be held August 20 & 21 in the Wisconsin Dells area, with what has become a traditional graduation ceremony at Aldo Leopold's shack.



And The Winner Is

Enclosed with the last issue of Minnesota Woodlands was a booklet, *All About Minnesota's Forests and Trees: A Primer*. Also enclosed was a quiz based on this information-packed booklet. All who completed the quiz and sent it to MFA by May 11th received a forestry poster and the answer sheet by return mail, plus they were entered in a drawing for a Leatherman Tool.

Derek Held, 16 of Fridley, is the lucky winner. Derek, who is a freshman and hockey player at Totino Grace High School, completed the quiz with his grandfather, Ken Rumsch. Ken lives in St. Louis Park and enjoys his 80 acres of woodland is located just north of Nashwalk, which is 50 miles west of Hibbing.

If you or a young person in your family is still working on the quiz, send it in when completed. You'll still receive a poster and the answer sheet by return mail.

Congratulations to Derek and Ken!

Upcoming Events For more information on these or other events, go to www.MinnesotaForestry.org.

June

Thursday, June 18, 6 pm

- Growing Bio-Energy Crops (Waseca)

Friday, June 19, 1 pm

- Carbon Credit Payments (Park Rapids)

Monday, June 22, 5 pm

- Paper Birch Bark Harvesting Techniques and Pot Luck (Grand Rapids)

Tuesday, June 23, 5:30 pm

- Growing & Tending (Rochester area)

Tuesday, June 23, 6 pm

- Family Forestland Ownership and Taxes (International Falls)

Wednesday, June 24, 9 am

- Intergenerational Land Transfer (International Falls)

Friday, June 26, 1 pm

- Measuring and Reading Your Forest and the Nuts and Bolts of Timber Sales (Elbow Lake)

Friday, July 10, 9 am

- Biomass Feedstocks Field Tour (Wadena)

Monday, July 13, 6 pm

- Paper Birch Management (Grand Rapids)

Monday, July 20, 6 pm

- Invasive Plant Species Control Measures (Grand Rapids)

August

Monday, August 3, 6 pm

- Tree Doctors - Diagnose Your Forest's Health (Grand Rapids)

Monday, August 10, 6 pm

- Making the Most of Your Woods (Grand Rapids)

Monday, August 24, 6 pm

- White-tailed Deer and White Pine (Grand Rapids)

Monday, August 31, 6 pm

- Seed Cone Collecting - for Fun and Profit (Grand Rapids)

2010 Mark Your 2010 Calendar:

Friday & Saturday, January 8 & 9, 2010

- MFA's Winter Event (U of M Cloquet Forestry Center)

Friday, May 21, 2010

- Annual Meeting & Tree Farm Awards (Grand Rapids)

Saturday, May 22, 2010

- Spring Field Day (Forest History Center, Grand Rapids)

10% Off Forestry Supplies Through July 15th Forestry Suppliers, Inc. has a full line of equipment for forestry as well as camping and hiking. Currently, they are offering 10% off anything ordered from their web site before July 15, 2009. www.Forestry-Suppliers.com/promo/410 (Or Enter Key Code 410)

This information is supplied as a money-saving service to MFA members and is not a paid ad for by Forestry Suppliers.

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



- New web resource: Caring for Deer and Forests
- Can't see the flowers for the trees?
- Meet a Minnesota Logger: Stewart Ferrier
- Emerald Ash Borer Update
- Deer Exclosure at Forest History Center
- Plus a Poem, Photo, Video, News stories and Upcoming events

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

Thank You to Our Supporting Members!

**Boise White
Paper, LLC**
International Falls

**Potlatch
Land & Lumber, LLC**
Cloquet

**Minnesota Forest
Industries**
Duluth

**Sustainable
Forestry, LLC**
Duluth

Verso Paper
Sartell

Photo background by Eli Sagor
(Flickr: esagor).