



Minnesota Woodlands

MFA: an organization of, by and for Minnesota's private woodland owners and friends.

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA)

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MFA Board Meetings

Cambridge DNR
Office, 10 am – 3 pm
• April 14, 2015

Conference Calls

8 – 9 am
• January 13, 2015
• February 10, 2015
• March 10, 2015

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Update

MFA's trial Boots on the Ground Program is progressing. The Program is still limited to four counties: Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison and Todd. More will be added this spring and announced here and on our website. Under the Program, for just \$50, a landowner can get a two-hour visit from a professional forester. The two hours can be spent walking the woods, sitting indoors discussing questions and plans, or a combination of the two.

First Landowner Visit Completed

Randy Young, who has 75 acres in southeast Todd County, was the first landowner to walk his woods with a

professional forester under our Boots on the Ground Program. Forester Dean Makey met Randy on his land on November 19th. Early in the conversation, the two men learned they had much in common, having grown up in the same area of the Twin Cities and sharing an interest in umpiring. After looking over aerial photos that Randy had and more that Dean brought along, they started out on a walk of the land.

They started in a red and white pine plantation Randy and his wife planted 15 years ago. Dean suggested postponing the first thinning for five to 10 years and then making another evaluation.

Next, the men walked through mixed hardwoods with many large maple, basswood, oak and birch trees. Dean noticed little shrub cover in the understory. Since, except for the pine plantation, much of the property is hardwoods, Dean suggested creating some conifer cover in the hardwood cover type. They talked about how to do conifer plantings in scattered locations throughout the south half of the property.

Their walk continued through an aspen sapling type with good regeneration after the last harvest, then to an area of mature aspen with many of the large trees bearing conks. Dean agreed with Randy that this area should be harvested as soon as possible.

Finally, the men walked through a small balsam fir plantation that Randy maintains for Christmas trees, and on to a windbreak planting where the conifers are doing well but the shrubs have not survived. Dean discussed possible reasons for the failure and suggested other shrub species that might be tried, like gray dogwood or Juneberry.

This program is coordinated by the Minnesota Forestry Association under a grant from the Minnesota DNR and the U.S. Forest Service. If you would like an application for a visit in the four counties where the program is currently available, see www.MinnesotaForestry.org or call MFA's office at 218-326-6486.



Randy Young with aspen saplings that are regenerating nicely.

Minnesota Forestry
Association

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MFA Board Actions

The MFA board meets every month. Members are welcome to sit in on any meeting. See the meeting dates and a list of board members elsewhere in this newsletter. Contact any board member for further information. For a copy of minutes from any recent meeting, contact Carol Cartie at Information@MinnesotaForestry.org or 218-326-6486.

Discussed re-establishment of the Silver Medallion Award. In its early history, MFA presented this award to individuals who made outstanding contributions to private woodland management. Board member Al Schacht is heading the committee.

Discussed MFA's Annual Meeting and Spring Field Day. The event will be held on Friday and Saturday, May 15 & 16 in conjunction with a major Woodland Owner Conference. The event will be held in Grand Rapids with headquarters at the Sawmill Inn. Board member Dave Roerick is chairing our committee.

Suddenly, It's Winter

By Neal W. Chapman, chair, MFA Education Committee

Winter has come and for many of us, our time in our woods becomes limited. This gives us a good opportunity to dig out our management/stewardship plan and give it a careful review, and likely an update. What activities have we accomplished this year and what is scheduled for next year? We should be talking with other family members about our goals and objectives and insure these are accurately reflected in our plan. Have we seen new invasive plants/shrubs beginning to appear that we should work to eliminate before they quickly spread? Have we witnessed signs of new wildlife species we may want to attract?

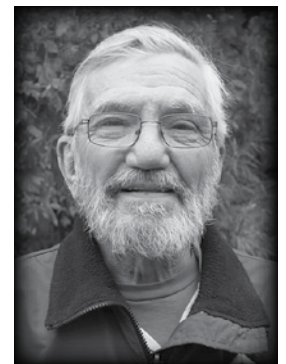
Now is also a great time to consider the spring planting season. Should we order tree, shrub, or other seedlings or seed for spring planting to complement or fill in gaps on our land? Many of us desire more wildlife on our land. Introducing the right native trees and shrubs is one sure way of accomplishing this goal. Should you create a wildlife opening in the woods to attract wildlife? Does your trail system best serve your needs as well as that of wildlife? Have you experienced recent dieback of trees in your woods? Should you call on a forester for their advice?

Have you created an account on MYLANDPLAN.ORG, a very useful tool for woodland owners provided free from American Forest Foundation-the Tree Farm People? Winter is a good time to think about your woods and your visions for it, so that at this time next year, you will be closer to achieving that vision.

Need more information? Visit www.myminnesotawoods.umn.edu for lots of great information from Extension and view the current calendar of events there. Also, visit MFA's website: www.minnesotaforestry.org.

Watch for Chapter meetings near you for opportunities to network with like-minded people. I am going to be working with local Chapters to help them become more involved in the activities of MFA and its members.

I welcome any questions or comments. Please contact me at woodland.steward@gmail.com



Neal Chapman

Notes From DNR Forestry

By Laura Duffey, Department of Natural Resources, forestry education

Pruning 101

Pruning: The removal of live or dead branches from the main stem of a standing tree.

Done right, pruning helps keep trees healthy, especially if you're dealing with diseases such as white pine blister rust. Pruning can be an economic investment and can raise future values of your trees. Also, your forest is safer when dead, overhanging branches or branches reaching over trails are removed. Finally, pruning can simply make your trees more aesthetically pleasing.

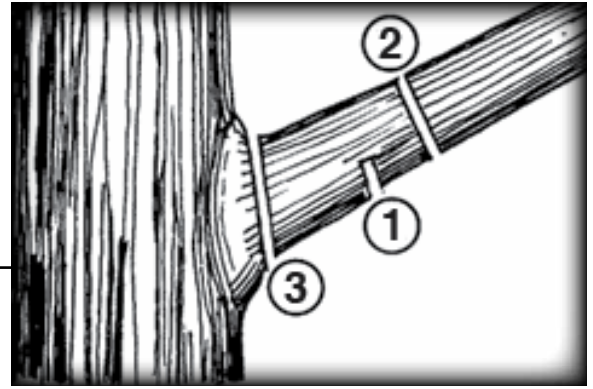
Here are some guidelines to pruning trees in your forest:

1. Prune at least 9 feet high, but no more than the lower one-third of the total tree height. The lowest permanent branch should be less than half the diameter of the trunk at the point of attachment.
2. Prune when trees are dormant. In Minnesota, that's typically between November and April. This helps prevent disease from invading the pruning wounds before they dry out or glaze over with pitch. Also, soils are frozen and less prone to damage, the woods are cool, and there are no insect pests.
3. Don't prune oaks from mid-April through mid-July because the wounds can attract sap and bark-feeding beetles that can carry the oak wilt fungus.
4. Don't use tree paint or wound dressings on pruned cuts. They don't promote healing.
5. Cut branches close to the trunk but do not cut into the branch collar. Cutting the collar will slow healing and may lead to decay.
6. Work safely! Wear a hard hat and eye protection. Keep tools sharp. Commonly used tools include hand pruning saws, pole saws, shears, and pole pruners. Call a certified arborist if the situation calls for using a chain saw above shoulder level, if you need to climb into a tree, or if there are power lines nearby. You can find a list of certified arborists from the International Society of Arboriculture, www.isa-arbor.com/findanarborist/findanarborist.aspx.

Other tips

Prune trees for safety, tree health, and structure first and appearance last. If you wait until the tree looks unsightly, you may end up pruning just for aesthetic reasons and the result may lead to a tree full of defects.

- Prune young trees every 1-2 years.
- Prune middle-aged trees every 2-4 years.
- Prune mature trees every 5 years.
- Remove no more than one-quarter of the canopy in any one year.
- When cutting a branch back to a lateral branch, remove no more than one-quarter of its foliage. The lateral branch should be at least one-third the diameter of the removed portion.



Because of its weight a branch can tear loose during pruning, stripping the bark and creating jagged edges that invite insects and disease. Prevent that by following these steps:

1. Make a partial cut from beneath several inches away from the trunk.
2. Make a second cut from above several inches out from the first cut, to allow the limb to fall safely.
3. Complete the job with a final cut just outside the branch collar, the raised area where the branch joins the trunk.



Pat Lanin, Brainerd, stocks and sells Logrite products like this Contractor's Pruning Saw. For information, contact Pat at 218-764-3315 or PELanin@Brainerd.net.

- Never top old trees.
- If you see stem-girdling roots around very young trees, cut them out before they strangle the tree.

As a general rule, the DNR does not prune trees in state forests. There is simply not enough economic return on investment. However, the DNR will occasionally prune certain high quality stands to prevent spreading diseases such as white pine blister rust. In DNR state parks, it's a different story. There, trees in high-traffic areas are pruned to be aesthetically pleasing and safe for visitors walking along trails, parking, and camping. Many private landowners and homeowners are encouraged to prune their trees for the same reasons.

New *Minnesota Woodlands* Editor

As of October 15th, the MFA newsletter is under new editor Linda Dinkel. She brings a unique set of experiences to the job. "I've spent a fair amount of time in the woods, either in Minnesota or Montana, though I'm not nearly as knowledgeable as I should be. I'm looking forward to learning a lot as editor of the MFA newsletter."

While pursuing a degree in Motion Picture Production from Montana State University in the early 80's, she worked summers as a firefighter and smokejumper based in Missoula, Montana, which is where she met her future husband, Charlie. "Charlie had already bought a farm near Long Prairie, so that's where we settled. Needless to say, the motion picture industry wasn't booming in central Minnesota, so for 12 years I had my own production company, creating public relations and training videos."

Eventually, Linda and Charlie's growing family, maple syrup operation, and the demands of dairy farming led her to close the company. The couple transitioned 360 acres to organic production and home schooled their five children. Writing and directing plays for their home school group to perform provided a creative outlet. But once again, change is in the wind.

"We sold the cows last fall, and with two children out of college, one in college, and just two high school students left at home, I'm ready for the next phase in life. I enjoy meeting new people and writing, so I'm excited to create the Member Profile for each newsletter. I look forward to meeting MFA members and picking up on their vast knowledge of Minnesota forests."



Charlie and Linda Dinkel on their farm in Long Prairie, MN.

Spears Receives Award

MISAC was formed in 2001 to communicate, coordinate and integrate actions among member organizations to fight invasive species in Minnesota fields, forests, towns and waterways. Each year they recognize outstanding and noteworthy work related to invasive species of an individual or organization with this award. Barb Spears received the honor for her work on invasive plant management and emerald ash borer. As the DNR's woody biomass project coordinator, she helped remove more than 11,000 tons of invasive woody plants from native habitats. She is very active on the Statewide Committee for the Minnesota Women's Woodland Network as well as the Metro Area MNWWN, and chairs the MFA Metro Chapter.



Congratulations to MFA member Barb Spears, 2014 recipient of the Carol Mortenson Award from the Minnesota Invasive Species Advisory Council.

Forester Phone Line Update

Recent calls from MFA members through our Forester Phone line to Dean Makey included one about a spruce plantation. The member wondered if the stand is ready for thinning and who might do

the work. Dean determined that it is an older stand which is quite dense because many of the lower branches were dead and the average tree diameter is 8 - 9 inches. With potential for commercial thinning, and knowing that Blandin Forestry has done a lot of work with spruce on their own lands as well as purchasing spruce stumpage, Dean suggested the member contact Quintin Legler at Blandin Forestry.



Dean Makey

MFA's Forester Phone Line is a free service exclusively for MFA members. Just call 218-326-6486 to set up a call with forester Dean Makey.

Member Profile: Peggy Meseroll

Just because you inherit land, doesn't mean you'll inherit a love for it. Fortunately, Peggy Meseroll's father, Ray Maki, was adept at passing on both, and his legacy lives on through his children.

"I remember playing in the woods when I was a kid, and that's where my love for trees started," Peggy reminisced. "All of us kids spent time in the woods helping Dad make firewood for an indoor wood stove and a sauna we had in the basement."

Ray and Katharine Maki bought a 120-acre farm outside of Esko in northeastern Minnesota in 1946, adding to it over the years. After several years as a small dairy farmer and beef producer, Ray went to work full time off the farm in the late 60's. "Dad had raised oats and hay for feed, and he didn't want the fields to go to brush. That's when he started getting trees from General Andrews Nursery. He planted thousands of trees every year, mostly red pine, with some spruce and fir, too, depending on the terrain."

As a welder/pipefitter for Conoco with a flair for inventing, Maki put his skills to use in his reforestation plan. "Dad put a tree planter on the back of our tractor that us kids sat in, planting thousands of seedlings. To combat weed pressure, he invented and welded his own stainless steel attachment for the front of the tractor that applied herbicide on either side of the seedlings." The newly planted trees got a head start on the competition, and Maki's invention went on to be used by other tree planters.

When her folks passed away, Peggy and siblings Scott and Mary established a limited liability corporation (LLC) to manage the land. "Each of us live on a piece of the original farm. I joined MFA in 2008 and contacted the DNR to set up a new forest management plan. In 2013 we started implementing part of the plan with some thinning in one 40-acre plot, and a clear cut in part of another 40. This year we worked with Jan Bernu, a private forester I met through the Woman's Woodland Association. Jan helped us contract with Bell Timber to selectively harvest red pines for utility poles in two other 40-acre sites."

Asked what advice she might like to pass on to others, Peggy was quick to respond. "I get a lot of good information from the meetings I go to and the publications I read, but I don't have much time to share it with my siblings. There are things we could do to manage our land better. Our first priority should be to talk with all of our own children about their interests in the land so we can start making plans for the future. Hopefully, we can pass on my dad's dream and hard work to the next generation."



Peggy and her grandson Preston.



Scott Maki, Jack and Mary (Maki) Maslowski, and Peggy (Maki) Meseroll.



Peggy and family hosted a tour of their land in conjunction with MFA's 2014 Spring Field Days event.



Photo by Vick Blitz, WA, May 2009

Creature Feature



by Jodie Provost, DNR Private Land Habitat Coordinator

Evening Grosbeaks (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*) – Golden Gems in Decline

Have you ever been so fortunate to enjoy a flock of evening grosbeaks at your bird feeder in winter? These heavyset finches of northern coniferous forests look like golden gems decorating the backyard trees. The species is becoming less common, however, particularly in the eastern United States.

Golden Gems The male evening grosbeak is a yellow-bodied, dusky-headed, handsome fellow with an imposing thick, conical bill, fierce yellow eyebrow stripe, and prominent white wing patch. Golden highlights on the female's soft gray plumage give her a more subtle air. She sports a second white wing patch, white-tipped tail, and a greenish-yellow tinge on her neck and flanks. Both male and female have thick necks, relatively short tails, and bodies up to seven inches long.

Irruptive Winter Visitors Evening grosbeaks are social birds, often found in flocks, particularly in winter when they feed on seeds, berries, and buds of trees and shrubs. Their crushing bills allow them to break open seeds too large for redpolls and pine siskins, so these smaller birds often seek out their company hoping for leftovers. When their population is high or the seed food crop is low, they become "irruptive" winter migrants, making erratic movements far south of their normal winter range into the continental United States, including northern Minnesota and, sporadically, southern Minnesota. When they appear, they're likely to use platform feeders offering sunflower seeds, particularly near forested areas.

Maple Sap Imbibers Mature and second-growth coniferous forests of northern North America and mountains of the West, including spruce-fir, pine-oak, and pinyon-juniper, provide breeding habitat for evening grosbeaks. They are harder to find in summer than winter, as they forage and nest high in trees, travel in smaller groups, and make less noise. Summer foods include insect larvae, such as spruce budworms and aphids, plus a wide variety of seeds, fruits and buds from trees and shrubs such as maple, box elder, ash, elm, pine, crabapples, snowberries, hawthorn, juniper, willow, oak, and aspen. In spring, they imbibe in drinking maple sap by breaking off small maple twigs!

Songbird Without A Song Monogamous pairs of evening grosbeaks court quietly. They are a songbird without a song, having no complex sounds to attract a mate or defend their territory. Just a small repertoire of simple calls, including

sweet, piercing notes and burry chirps, is emitted. In May or June, a flimsy, saucer-shaped nest is built by the female and lined with grasses, fine rootlets, lichens, or pine needles. Two to five light blue to blue-green eggs with brown or purplish blotches are incubated for 12-14 days by the female. Both the male and female care for the young nestlings that take flight after 13-14 days.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need Unfortunately, evidence points to a declining evening grosbeak population. The North American Breeding Bird Survey shows steep declines in recent decades, especially in the East (2.3 % decline/year since 1966, cumulative drop: 64%). A 2008 study of Project FeederWatch data found that their winter range had contracted, they were reported at only half the number of feeder sites, and flock sizes were down by 27% compared to early 2000s and late 1980s data. In northwest Minnesota, evening grosbeaks were once considered a common to uncommon year-round resident at Red Lake WMA and Hayes Lake State Park. Now, they are considered rare.

Why Do We Care? Why does it matter if evening grosbeaks no longer inhabit Minnesota? They are part of our heritage and a source of enjoyment, beauty and public pride; fill an important role in the ecosystems they inhabit and reflect the health of those ecosystems; and contribute to the economic draw of bird watchers to the state. They disperse seeds and eat insects, preying upon gypsy moths, tent caterpillars and spruce budworms that defoliate economically valuable trees. One pair of evening grosbeaks alone can catch up to 50,000 caterpillars while raising their young!

Make A Difference All conservation efforts to reduce stress on evening grosbeak populations make a difference. Activities such as providing healthy mixed and coniferous forests, reducing use of chemicals such as insecticides, having bird-friendly windows, and keeping cats indoors, can have a positive impact. And you can't go wrong with a platform feeder of sunflower seeds in your forested backyard this winter. Finally, you can also assist by collecting data through participation in Project FeederWatch, a winter-long survey to help scientists track bird distribution and abundance (see feederwatch.org). If a flock of evening grosbeaks should grace your feeder, feel blessed and enjoy!

Goodhue County

The Goodhue County Forestry Committee held a forestry field day on October 2, 2014 at the Ben Stefani plantation on Hay Creek near Red Wing. Led by Minnesota DNR Forester Mike Wachholz, attendees heard presentations on forest/ woodland diseases from DNR Forest Health Specialist Brian Schwingle, and on creek bank reforestation from the DNR Lake City Area Fisheries Supervisor. Hosting the event were committee members Brian Schreiber and John Witgert.

Submitted by MFA member Jim Edlund



Forestry Grad School Journal

By John Saxhaug

Dear MFA Friends,

Several months have passed since my last note, and it's almost time for what we used to call mid-terms. That will be another story. What a stellar fall it has been, and what a beautiful place the St. Paul Campus is. We used to call it the "Farm Campus", but it no longer has that comforting smell of manure in the air. However, the trees and shrubs still have those vibrant autumn colors that I remember as an undergraduate. Because I am always early for class, I have been collecting acorns to plant on my tree farm. I am especially interested in reproducing those ancient white oaks in front of Green Hall. Unfortunately, we had a break-in at our garage, and the acorns were stolen. Those squirrels are brutal; they left nothing! According to Lee Frelich, squirrels can remember only the last 5,000 items they bury. Hopefully, some of those Green Hall acorns will be forgotten and growing in South Minneapolis long after I've moved on.

Whether it's my age, generation, or technical competency, I ran into a small roadblock at class several weeks ago. We needed to come up with random numbers for an exercise. Everyone pulled out their smart phones, and magically, random numbers! We next needed the natural log for a formula, and out came the smart phones, and, natural logs! Do I really need a smart phone? I thought I was high tech with my standard cell phone and my 30-year-old Hewlett Packard HP-12 (yes, they really do last that long). Not the case. Fortunately, Lee Frelich is of my generation, and had random number tables on paper for the challenged among us. He also pointed out that my HP-12 has a natural log function. By the way, what's a natural log?

Next week is the mid-term, now mid-semesters. This is not an event I am looking forward to. I'll let you know how it goes.

Take care,
John



John Saxhaug, Minneapolis, is a former MFA board member and current chair of the Land Committee.



Priscilla Harvala

We are saddened to announce that Priscilla Harvala, Snellman MN, passed away on October 6th. Priscilla was a long time MFA member, board member and editor of the newsletter through 2007. Priscilla and her husband, Harvey, were featured in a Member Profile in the April – May, 2014 issue of this newsletter.

Membership Application

For New and Renewing Members

Name _____

Name _____
(second person for Family membership)

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please make any address changes above

Membership Categories

Renewing members, your membership will be extended by 12 or 36 months as you choose.

| Category | One Year | 3 years |
|--------------|--|--|
| Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$120 |
| Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 |
| Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$225 |
| Supporting | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 - \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,500 - \$3,000 |
| Life | <input type="checkbox"/> One-time payment of \$1,000** | |
| Perpetual* | <input type="checkbox"/> One-time payment of \$3,000** | |

**Perpetual Membership is for any estate, corporation, limited liability company, limited liability partnership or similarly structured entity. A Perpetual Membership is entitled to one vote. Call MFA for more information.*

***80% of dues from Life and Perpetual Memberships go into MFA's Endowment Fund.*

Mail this application with your check to:

Minnesota Forestry Association
P.O. Box 496, Grand Rapids MN 55744

1-2014



Upcoming Events

Find more events, and more information on these events, at the MFA website, www.MinnesotaForestry.org or by calling MFA at 218-326-6486.

Friday & Saturday, May 15 & 16, 2015

- MFA's Annual Meeting and Spring Field Day will be held at the Sawmill Inn in Grand Rapids in conjunction with the U of M's Minnesota Family Woodlands Conference.
- Also check the Sustainable Forest Education Cooperative website (<http://sfec.cfans.umn.edu/>) for seminars and webinars of interest to natural resource professionals and interested landowners.

For MFA members, the two best online sources of woodland information are the MFA website, www.MinnesotaForestry.org and www.MyMinnesotaWoods.UMN.edu.

MyMinnesotaWoods.org
Your source for woodland stewardship advice



Thinking of harvesting timber from your land?

Call Before You Cut

You will be sent a packet of information with no cost or obligation to you.

218-326-6486

MFA's Forester Phone Line

A free service for MFA members only!
Call for an appointment with the forester:
218-326-6486