



# 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 Newsletter Vol. 17 No. 5

October/November 2015  
The Minnesota  
Woodlands newsletter  
is published by the  
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Association.

## MFA Board Meetings

Cambridge DNR  
Office, 10 am – 3 pm  
• October 13, 2015  
• January 12, 2016

## Conference Calls 8 – 9 am

- November 17, 2015
- December 15, 2015

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## God's Acres of Amor

*By Linda K. Dinkel, Editor*

Get Chuck Erickson started on his pet project and you'd better have a little extra time on your hands. Fortunately, it's worth your time to hear about the inspired labor of love and faith that is an on-going project for Zion Lutheran Church of Battle Lake, Minnesota.

A beautiful country church located 15 minutes north of Battle Lake, Zion Lutheran Church of Amor sits on 40 acres. Originally, 35 of those acres were open fields and for several years, the parish farmers chipped in on planting and harvesting crops, calling it "God's Acres". The gross income went to the church. In 1988, the farm population – and labor – had dwindled, and the land was enrolled in CRP and planted in red pine, white spruce and black hills spruce. Eventually, the acres came out of CRP and sat idle for several years. Apparently the word "idle" doesn't sit well with Chuck, neither for land nor for him. Looking at the land, flat in some areas and gently sloped in others; open in parts, and wooded in others, Erickson saw an open canvas for landscaping a multi-purpose, outdoor space that would use God's creation for the benefit of body, mind and soul.

It's amazing how far that idea has come since church members formed a planning committee in 2007: over five miles of walking and cross-country ski trails, a children's playground, a fire pit and picnic area, prayer garden, pickle ball and half-court basketball court, disc golf course, horseshoe pits, apple orchard, wildlife food plot, Sunday School Garden, 200-seedling plantation, wildflower and native grass area, and many more projects are in the works.

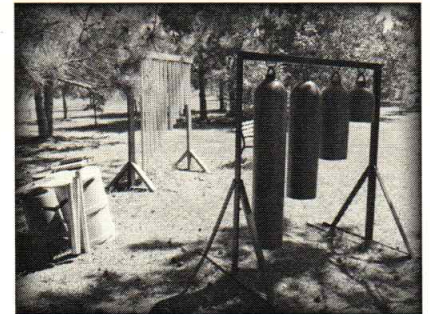
**"So many things have fallen into place on this project that we think it's obvious Somebody upstairs is directing it," said Chuck.** That may be so, but it wouldn't

have gotten off the ground without vision, commitment and elbow grease...lots of it. Erickson has become the head organizer by default, but it's a good fit, as his enthusiasm for the project seems endless. With all-volunteer committees for grounds caretaking, landscaping/horticulture, recreation and fundraising, plus a labyrinth and amphitheater in the planning stage, coordination is key. "I seem to be the one that makes sure everything is in place for work-days.

*Continued on page 2*



*A playground and sandbox nestle in a natural setting not far from the church.*



*Chimes and percussion instruments find a place under trees and open sky.*



*Kids find the whimsical alligator fun to crawl on.*

Minnesota Forestry  
Association

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## MFA Board Actions

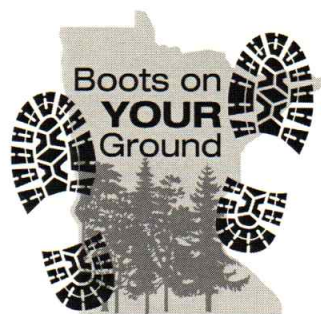
The MFA board meets every month. During January, April, July and October, the meeting is face-to-face at the Cambridge DNR Forestry office starting at 10 a.m. During all other months, the meeting is held via conference call. Any MFA member is welcome to sit in on the face-to-face meetings and listen in on the conference calls. See the list of board members and meeting dates 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](mailto:Information@MinnesotaForestry.org) or 218-326-6486.

**Signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU)** formalizing the relationship between MFA and the University of Minnesota Department of Forest Resources.

**Planned to join Master Naturalists' Gathering Partners event** for our Annual Meeting and Spring Field Day. The event will be held at St. Mary's University in Winona on May 20, 21 and 22, 2016.

**Signed a contract with board member Bruce ZumBahlen** under which he will be compensated for membership development efforts. A similar arrangement would be available to any MFA member who is interested in working on membership development. Contact MFA at [Information@MinnesotaForestry.org](mailto:Information@MinnesotaForestry.org).

**Welcomed the Kettleson and Sonnenberg families** under MFA's new Perpetual Membership category. Agreed that each family will be eligible to receive up to five copies of all MFA newsletters and other mailings.



## Boots on YOUR Ground Update

Over 50 landowners, mostly MFA members, have enjoyed a walk in their woods with a professional forester. Comments from both landowners and foresters have been very positive. MFA president John O'Reilly said, "When forester Philip Stromberg arrived for my visit, I wasn't sure we would accomplish anything new. But, by the time he left, plans had been set in motion to do a major reforestation project involving 11 parcels and totaling 10 acres."

At this point, the grant under which we were conducting Boots on YOUR Ground has been depleted. Thanks to a new grant from Blandin Foundation, the program is continuing at full speed in Itasca County. Also, as we seek a new, long-term grant, the program is still open to MFA members statewide, with the expenses coming from MFA's treasury.

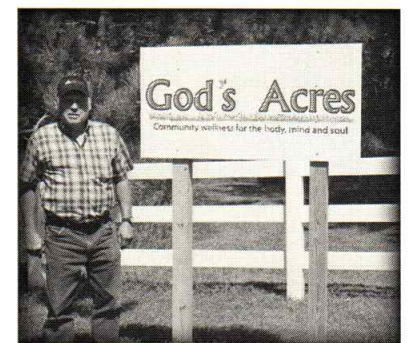
### *God's Acres continued from page 1*

We have over 50 volunteers that help as much as they're able, each with their own special talents," said Erickson.

**And what makes all the work worthwhile? For Erickson, it's seeing kids playing for hours in a natural wooded and prairie setting, exploring nature, running on the trails or playing on the variety of unique playground pieces (many designed and built by him).**

Or it's seeing groups use the sports areas or individuals quietly sitting in the prayer garden. "It's worth every minute of work when you see people enjoying it," said Chuck. "And it's worth it, knowing this is all something that God seems to want us to do."

If you're ever in the Battle Lake area, stop in for a walk around God's Acres. You're bound to find some plan being started, some project being finished, and always, Somebody watching over the progress with an approving smile.



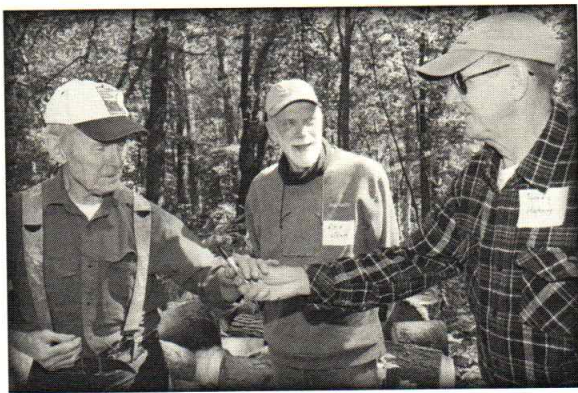
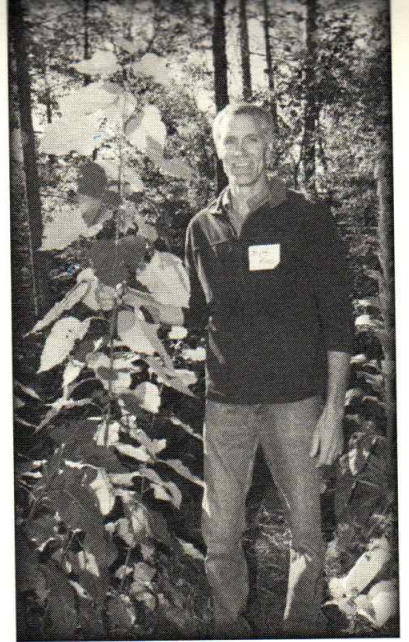
*MFA board member Chuck Erickson can often be found at God's Acres, organizing or working on a new project.*

# Northwoods Forestry Cooperative Field Day

The 14th Annual Northwoods Forestry Cooperative Field Day was held on Saturday, September 19, 2015, at Dr. Randall Hoghoug's property located eight miles southwest of Brainerd. The property is on the bluffs and the flood plain on the west bank of the Mississippi River just about a mile from the confluence with the Crow Wing River. The property has three distinct forest types: ash and burr oak on the flood plain, red pine on some of the sandy bluffs, and a mix of red oak and big tooth aspen on the heavier bluff soils.

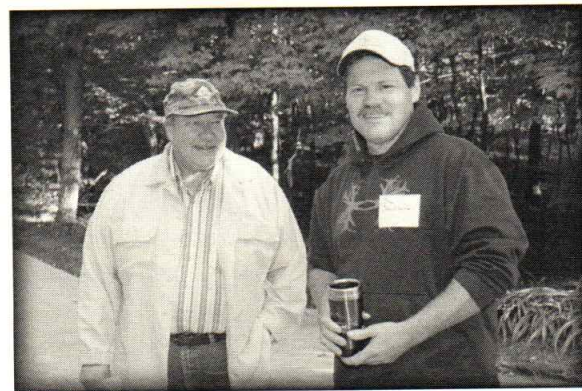
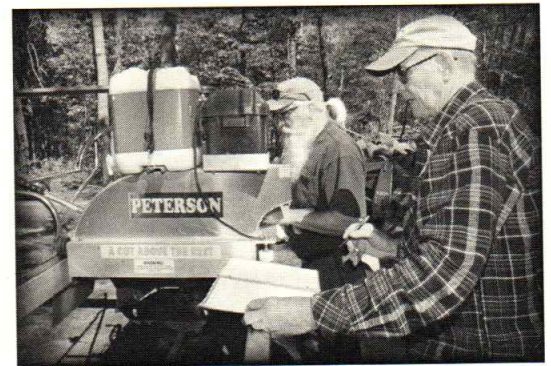
The day started with a guided tour led by consulting forester Peter Bundy who had managed a timber harvest last December. It was a selective harvest of mature red pine in full tree length and a clear cut of mature big tooth aspen cut to length. Bundy pointed out the spectacular regeneration of the big tooth aspen, with some "sprouts" five to six feet tall.

For more information on the Peterson Sawmill and the Northwoods Forestry Coop, email Pat Lanin at [PELanin@Brainerd.net](mailto:PELanin@Brainerd.net).



## Demonstrations Included:

1. The Peterson All Terrain portable swing blade sawmill. Red oak, soft maple and burr oak were sawn into one-inch boards, planks and cants.



2. A demonstration of an alternative method of hand filing a chainsaw which results in the production of remarkably large chips and very fast cutting.



3. The use of a Farni skidding winch to retrieve oak logs up a steep hill littered with slash.



*All of the photos here were taken by John Wallin, Pequot Lakes, [JCWallin4@TDS.net](mailto:JCWallin4@TDS.net).*

# Member Profile: David and Carole Cartwright

By Linda K. Dinkel, Editor

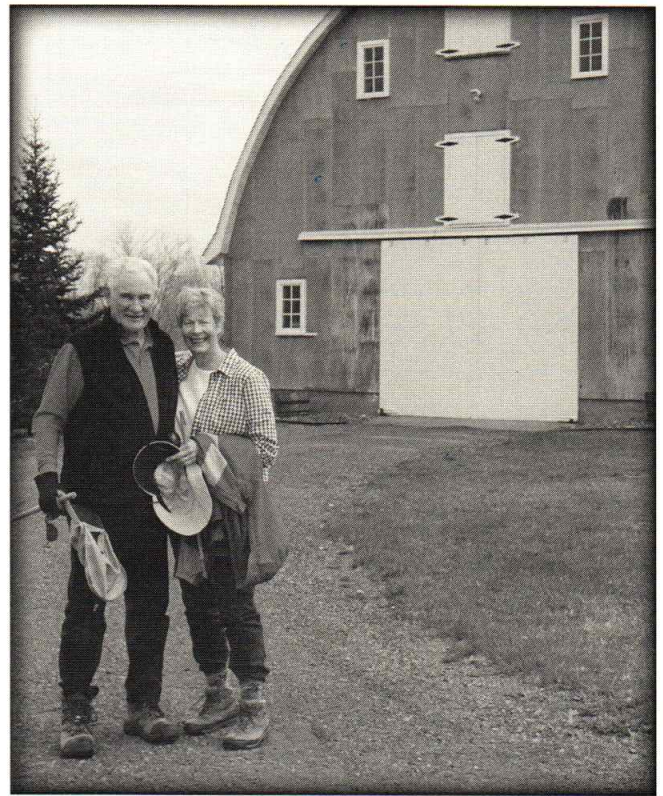
Take equal parts physicist and science teacher. Place in a beaker marked “retirement”, shake vigorously and release on 160 acres of Minnesota farmland. Stand back...at a safe distance, in fact... because this is not your grandparents’ idea of retirement.

David and Carole Cartwright both grew up in the Twin Cities area, but work took them far afield. After living for a time in California, **David spent 30 years working at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico as a physicist** (he is quick to point out that he never worked on weaponry). Carole taught junior and senior high science and owned and operated a pre-school in Los Alamos while raising their two children. When retirement time came in 2003, they had already laid the groundwork for moving to 174 acres they had purchased in Oregon. Before they could make the move, however, Carole found herself the inheritor of her grandparents’ farm on the north shore of East Rush Lake. It’s beautiful country, with rolling hills gently sloping to the lake and abundant wildlife. After weighing their options, they sold the Oregon acres and started making plans.

**“We considered several different uses for the land,” said David. “From raising beef, sheep or goats, to growing grapes for wine; we weighed our options very carefully.** But the idea we kept coming back to was growing trees.” In 2004, the couple planted 14,500 trees in about one month and also put down their own roots, building a new home in the “foot print” of the old farm house that Carole visited as a child. While the exterior was completed in 2005, the interior developed as Carole came up with the design and David worked on implementation. The house was completed in 2010, with staining, varnishing and installation of woodwork and hardwood floors done by the couple. They also installed the marble floor in the great room. The curving stair rail that leads downstairs is a particularly beautiful example of their work, having created it themselves from oak boards, steaming and bending it into shape. They also did their fair share of clean up around the farm, removing 35 tons of steel and restoring the barn - with the pleasant surprise of finding a cement floor under layers of dirt and straw!

**Of course, with two science-minded retirees, one shouldn’t be surprised that “growing trees” means more than just putting some seedlings in the ground.** In fact, on visiting the Cartwrights, one immediately senses the exceptional team they make, with the intensity of Dave’s passion for experimenting, the down-to-earth (literally) satisfaction that Carole gets from working the land, and the enjoyment they both get from working closely together. It’s obvious that they’re equal partners in the work of bringing their plans and dreams to fruition.

One of the Cartwright’s ongoing experiments focuses on tree zone hardiness. “Zone hardiness is a bell-shaped curve,” said David. “Trees at the upper end of the curve will survive in colder climates while those in the lower end won’t. I’m experimenting with a variety of trees to see which ones will survive here and which ones won’t. I want to know by empirical evidence that a



David and Carole Cartwright.



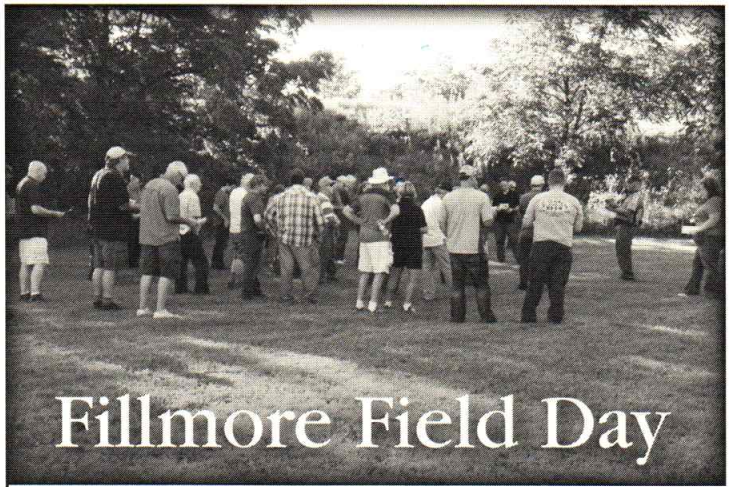
Top: Trees started from seed collected by David and Carole.

Above: The south field was the first planting on the farm in 2004.

given species of tree can or can't grow on our farm." To that end, they've collected seeds in Oregon and North Carolina that are then germinated in their sun room and planted in the spring. "We started growing Allegheny Black Cherry here on our farm in 2007. Our conclusion is it grows very well in Minnesota!" You can also find Persian Walnut, Shagbark Hickory, Shellbark Hickory, Grimo Hazelnuts, butternut and hybrid butternut, and American chestnut, all pushing the zone hardiness on the gentle slopes and fields of the farm. In addition to these experimental trees, Dave and Carole also plant trees more common to Minnesota, including white and red pine, and four species of oak. In all, they've planted over 22,000 trees since 2004. And yes, a few Ponderosa pine can be found on the Cartwright's spread.

**Like so many woodland owners, they've had their fair share of battles with the likes of buckthorn, Asiatic bittersweet vine and ironwood.** However, their war on prickly ash came to an abrupt halt after a meeting with Olaf Runquist, professor of Organic Chemistry at Hamline University. "Runquist told us to stop killing prickly ash because it has medicinal properties," said David. "It intrigued me so much that I knew I had to start my own experiments." To make a tincture of prickly ash, David cuts the stem and branches into 12-inch sections and then into one-inch pieces, peels the bark, and packs it into quart jars. He covers the bark with vodka and lets it sit in a cool, dark place for 10 to 14 days, shaking it every one to two days. The mixture is pressed and filtered, then stored in a dark jar for up to two years. The tincture is used topically. "What prickly ash does, very effectively, is dilate capillaries and increase circulation to remove 'poisons' from sore muscles and joints." He's anxious to see the results of prickly ash experiments being conducted this fall at Hamline.

The Cartwrights will continue to experiment with all things "trees". They enjoy applying their first careers as scientists in a beautiful setting with a long family history. And for what purpose? "We look at this farm as a long-term investment that goes far beyond David and me living here," said Carole. "We're concerned that the land remains undeveloped." To that end, the Cartwrights are looking into the Conservation Easement program. With their vision, enthusiasm, and work ethic, their retirement keeps them busier than ever, creating a diverse landscape of trees for the next generation to enjoy.



Sixty people took advantage of an information-packed, 5th Annual Forestry Field day held on July 29th at the Chatfield Fish and Game Club. Led by Jim Edgar, DNR Forester, and Mitch Gilbert, forestry consultant, participants took in a tour of the grounds that included seven stops to discuss various forestry issues. Demonstrations and discussion included proper pruning cuts, integrated pest management, grapevine control, proper buckthorn and invasive black locust control methods, and using prescribed burns in native prairie planting.

At the final site, the group learned the importance of proper forest thinning management. In a direct seeding area that was in need of thinning, Edgar demonstrated by marking trees with different colored tape to show which trees



he wanted to keep and which ones he wanted to thin. Determining the live crown ratio is important, which is the total percentage of the tree that has live branches. At 30 to 50 percent or more, a tree is still able to get the sunlight and nutrients it needs without thinning. Edgar used a three-step process. First, determine which tree in a given area is the one you want to keep – your crop tree – and mark it with a certain color tape. Second, determine if it is being crowded. Using a different color tape, mark which smaller trees you want to take out that are negatively impacting your crop tree. Third, after you've thinned the trees around the crop tree, find your next crop tree about 15 to 20 feet away and repeat the process. It can be helpful before cutting to return a different day, and walk the site from a different direction to be sure you've made the right choices before removing any trees.

The Fillmore SWCD thanks participants for their attendance and looks forward to the 2016 Annual Forestry Field Day!



David steamed and bent the wood for their stair rail.

# A Babe in the Woods

By Linda K. Dinkel, Editor

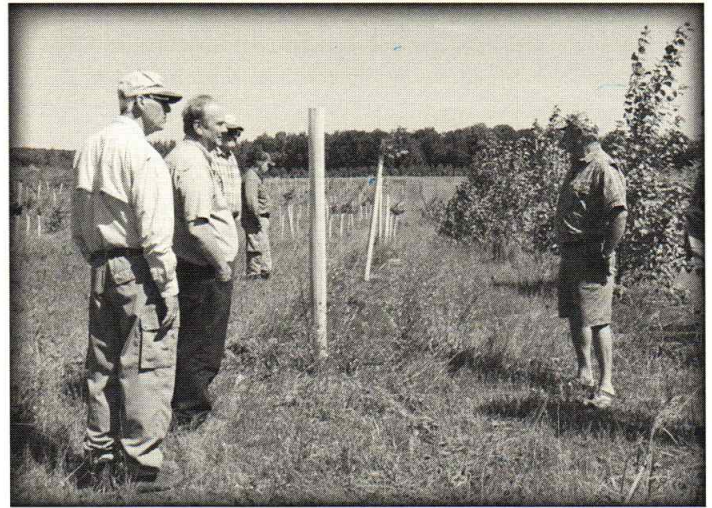
When the earliest settlers to the Prairie Pothole region of west central Minnesota arrived in the late 1800's, they invariably set up a farming operation, wresting fields from the hardwood and pine forests, building homes and barns, and putting up fences. With the area's gravel and sand soil and the prevalence of rolling hills and potholes, it's hard to imagine a successful outcome for those earliest Minnesotans. Today, the landscape of the area is valued not so much for what crops can be raised as for what has always been here: the beautiful mixture of lakes, woods and hills that make it an outdoor paradise. However, Babe Winkelman would be quick to point out that paradise shouldn't come with this many weeds.

On August 4th, the West Central Landscape Committee (WCLS) hosted a field day attended by 30 people at the Babe Winkelman farm located six miles northeast of Perham. According to Dave Johnson, WCLC chairman and organizer of the event, there are a lot of lessons to be learned from what Winkelman has done on his land. Holding a field day there was a natural fit with the mission of WCLC: To provide a public forum for diverse interests to cooperatively promote forest sustainability. "The West Central Landscape Committee is a springboard for ideas and information. Lots of landowners in this area are struggling against the same kinds of challenges Babe faced on his property. This field day was an excellent way to showcase what they've done, wrong and right, in managing their forests and fields to achieve the results they wanted," said Johnson.

After the program kickoff by Johnson, Babe Winkelman of Winkelman Outdoors, painted a pretty vivid picture of the 222 acres he bought in 2002. **"Rocks, weeds, thistle and broken machine parts, that pretty much sums up the worn out farm we bought 13 years ago.** That first year we saw no deer, no brown hare, nothing. And I bought this for hunting land," said Winkelman. "It seemed like a pretty lousy investment, and I developed a deep hatred for thistle and pocket gophers pretty quickly." But Babe had a good friend who could see the potential to create a hunter's heaven.

"This is beautiful country and wildlife is abundant. We just needed to come up with a plan to attract them to this particular piece of land," said Wayne Enger, friend and Landscape Manager for Winkelman. "Right from the start, Babe had a vision of what he wanted this land to become. My job has been to convert that vision to a plan, then experiment, adapt, and rework the plan. It's been fun to see Babe's whole family out here working on the farm, making his vision come to life."

**The center of Winkelman's vision isn't the center at all, it's the edges.** "All critters love edges," said Winkelman, "so that's what we set out to do first, develop edges." They increased the amount of edges by creating seven miles of trails planted with a blend of clover, and by planting trees in fields seeded as wildlife plots. All of the first tree planting succumbed to drought within three years, but they did begin



Attendees talked over the successes and failures of establishing trees in gravel and sand soil.



Winkelman proudly displays an apple on a two-year-old tree planted with six-foot Grow Tubes.



A 2008 planting of plum and cherry trees with five-foot Grow Tubes and weed barriers.

to see deer and grouse. Now, new plantings of trees had a new nemesis. “The very thing we’re doing all this for is the same thing we’re fighting: deer,” said Babe. Further tree planting, especially the hardwood seedlings, saw annual losses of 45% or more to deer. Fruit trees that managed to survive to the third or fourth years were browsed so severely that they were barely four to twelve inches tall. That’s when Enger contacted Plantra, Inc., and asked them if they’d like to experiment on the Winkelman farm.

Based in Egan, Minnesota, Plantra manufactures SunFlex Grow Tubes designed specifically for hardwood trees. These grow tubes are translucent to sunlight and act like mini-greenhouses that guard and grow deciduous tree seedlings until they’re big enough to make it on their own. “We jumped at the chance to work with Babe and Wayne because they were absolutely committed to doing what it takes to make seedlings survive and thrive,” said owner and CEO Joe Lais. “We were learning right along with them, working on product development as a direct result of this relationship and what we saw succeed or fail in field trials.”

**In places with heavy deer pressure, only six-foot tubes will do, foiling the appetite of even the most agile deer.**

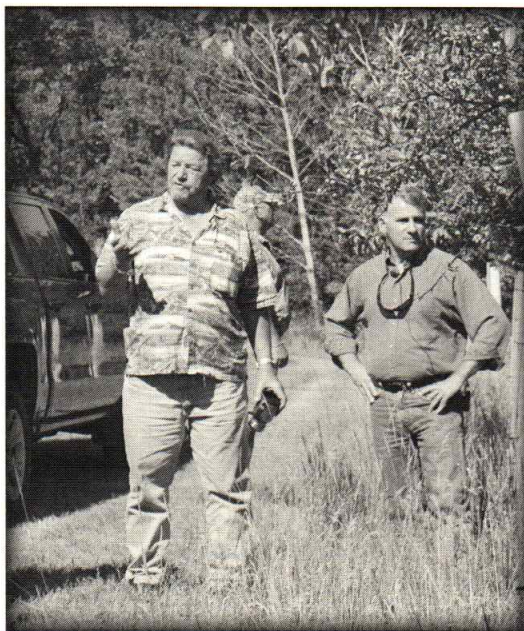
“There are a lot of unique features built into our grow tubes,” said Lais. “We know that trees need to develop flexibility as they grow. A rigid stake works against that. Through trial and error, we came up with a flexible, fiberglass stake that will allow the tree to move in any direction with the wind. They also last a lot longer than natural materials. Add to that the greenhouse effect of the tube material and we feel we have an ideal environment for growing trees.” In addition, individual mulch-mats or rows of weed barriers around seedlings reduce weed pressure and competition for moisture and nutrients, providing the best growing environment possible.

Looking at the incredible tree growth around the property is proof that it’s been a successful partnership. **Of 600 flowering crabs planted in 2006 with six-foot grow tubes, only five didn’t survive and over half of them had grown out of the tubes in the first year.** “Two years ago we planted 20 apple trees with crab apple root systems suited for this soil type,” said Winkelman. “We put six-foot tubes on them, and after two years, every one of them was growing out the top. One of them even has an apple on it this year!”

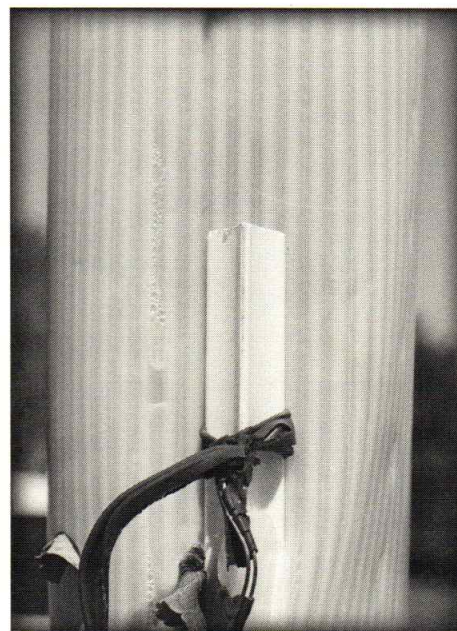
In addition to the apple trees, Babe and Wayne continue to make improvements to the land, introducing native prairie grasses in some areas, developing a pollinator project, planting new areas with poplar, spruce, Norway pine, and

red, white and bur oak. Dave Johnson has been impressed by what he sees. “It’s truly amazing what a well-motivated landowner can accomplish with a little good advice,” he said. “When one considers that private landowners own about 80% of the land in Minnesota, professional foresters need to make a stronger, coordinated effort to help them manage effectively.”

After spending an afternoon with Babe on his land, one doesn’t have to wonder if 13 years of effort was worth it. His enthusiasm seems to expand each year. **“It’s been a wonderful, ongoing process, seeing what you can do with the land,” said Babe.** “The deer have returned. Bear are regular, unwelcome, visitors at the bird feeders along with a large variety of songbirds. A healthy population of turkeys lives here. We see red and grey fox, fisher, bobcats, and wolf. But the main thing that keeps me going is what



Left: Babe Winkelman and Steve Tillman of Plantra explain the need to plant trees to increase the amount of “edges” on the farm to attract wildlife.



Right: Flexible fiberglass stakes allow for tree movement in the wind.

this place means to my family. To see my wife and girls out here, pitching in with the work and enjoying the hunting that we do together – that was the whole point. This is about family more than anything, and we’ve been blessed to be able to spend time together improving and enjoying this place.”

**A Few of Minnesota’s Record Trees**

Species	Height	Located Near
Big Tooth Aspen	82’	Marcell (Itasca County)
Basswood	91’	Oronoco in SE Minnesota
Balsam Fir	79’	International Falls
Red Maple	80’	Kerrick (Pine County)
White Spruce	130’	Littlefork (Koochiching County)
Northern White Cedar	86’	Grand Marais

# 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](http://www.MinnesotaForestry.org) or by calling MFA at 218-326-6486.

### Saturday, October 10, Princeton

Fall Family Field Day.

- 9 am – 3 pm. This is a major FREE event with many demonstrations, exhibits and activities for children. Location: The Jensen 194-acre property, 30045 136th St, Princeton, MN 55371. Farm Friends Barn is providing food for purchase (cash only). Contact Francine Larson at 763-241-1170 x 131 with questions.

### Tuesday, October 20 (Online)

How Can Minnesota's Urban Forests Be More Functional?

- Noon – 1 pm. For more information and to register for this webinar, go to <http://sfec.cfans.umn.edu/2015-webinars/>

### Tuesday, November 17 (Online)

Forest Management for Moose

- Noon – 1 pm. For more information and to register for this webinar, go to <http://sfec.cfans.umn.edu/2015-webinars/>

### Friday, Saturday & Sunday, May 20 – 22, 2016

Mark your calendar! MFA's Annual Meeting and Spring Field Day to be held at St. Mary's University in Winona in conjunction with Master Naturalists' Gathering Partners Event.

**Away from home for a time?** Please contact the MFA office if you'll be away from home for a time and when you'll be back. We'll hold on to the newsletter and its contents until you return so you won't miss a single issue! Information@MinnesotaForestry.org or call 218-326-6486

For MFA members, the two best online sources of woodland information are the MFA website, [www.MinnesotaForestry.org](http://www.MinnesotaForestry.org) and [www.MyMinnesotaWoods.UMN.edu](http://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