

New York Forest Owners Association Capital District Chapter Newsletter

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April 2017

Chair's Message



Jason Post

Log demand is strong. All species seem to be moving quite well. Even Cherry has picked up. Ash logs are still in strong demand from China. Red Oak and Poplar sales have been increasing steadily. White Oak, Hickory and Walnut are all still good movers.

China is still the largest factor responsible for the upward movement in the industry, by buying up as much logs and KD Lumber, as possible. The Chinese flooring industry is experiencing a boom, which is helping to drive up the prices on the low grade saw logs. This is a blessing for the logger, given the low demand for firewood, due to the past two mild winters here in the North East.

Canada is doing their part, with small increases in prices, and taking all that is available to them. Flooring plants are the exception. Flooring in Canada is stable, but given the past winter logging conditions and log production, inventories are high.

Then comes our blizzard, and thaw, at the same time. For the past few weeks, the

majority of the logging operations have been shut down. Log production is way down for March. Not only is the mud a factor, but towns and county highway departments ordering shutdowns on logging jobs, are putting a damper on things, as well. They sight that, loaded trucks leaving a landing and entering a Town or County road, is causing damage to the black top. These logging jobs will be shut down until Highway Departments deem it "ok" to proceed. This could take weeks.

In a nut shell, demand is up and production is down. According to Joe, it will be a good season for our industry throughout the summer and into fall.

Here is a thought to dwell on...
Is allowing the exportation of a raw material, such as our logs, hurting our industry by taking the saw mill production away from the U.S., or is it helping to keep log prices in balance?

Jason

New Members

The chapter welcomes the following new members:

Dave Bulich	Earlton, NY
Brian Cook	Manasquan, NJ
Frank McCaffrey	Slingerlands, NY
Robin & Jim Sevinsky	Ballston Lake, NY

Skinner Sugar Bush Tour

Larry and Kathy Skinner gave an excellent presentation of many of the nuances one should know or think about to set up and run a 200-tap sugar bush operation. The event was sponsored jointly by NYFOA and RPA.



Larry Skinner with sap tubing

A small, but interested turnout enjoyed the presentation, tour in the woods, and opportunity to see the evaporator at work. We discussed forest thinning operations that will be undertaken by Dick and Shari Gibbs, under guidance of their forester, Mary Spring to

enhance the long-term improvement of the sugar bush. This harvest operation will be coordinated with the need to replace the collection lines that Larry has which will age out in a couple of years. He must put in a large amount of work and time to keep squirrels from chewing the lines open to get at flowing sap. This year has been difficult for many sugar bush operators, and Larry has been able to make about 75% of the finished syrup that he has made in past years [72 gallons]. For the past five years Larry has had to be ready to tap and collect earlier and earlier or he would have missed the high volume days when the sap flowed best.



The new evaporator in operation

We also visited Larry's new larger and more efficient evaporator which allows him to boil upward to 40-60 gallons of sap an hour. This lets him spend

more time collecting sap. He continues to improve all aspects of his operation.



Maple products from Skinners sugar bush

Oak Wilt Disease Spreads

The oak tree disease, oak wilt, has been detected in the borough of Brooklyn, and in Suffolk County. Oak wilt had previously been found in Scotia, Schenectady County, and was subsequently identified in Canandaigua, Ontario County, and Central Islip, Long Island earlier this year.

There is no known treatment to contain and kill the oak wilt fungus other than to remove the infected trees, as well as any surrounding host oak trees. The fungus grows in the water conducting vessels of host trees plugging up these vessels. As water movement within the tree stops, the leaves wilt and drop off, and the tree dies. DEC will remove and destroy oaks that have tested positive for the fungus. Oak wilt is a fast-moving disease that can kill many trees quickly.

DEC asks the public to be on the lookout this summer for oak trees that suddenly lose leaves during the months of July and August and to report these occurrences to the Forest Health Information Line toll-free at 1-866-640-0652. For more information about oak wilt or the emergency order, please visit DEC's website.

CDC Deer Enclosure Project

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties with funding assistance from NYFOA's Capital District Chapter, installed two deer enclosures in their Siuslaw Model Forest in Greene County. The purpose of the enclosures is to help landowners and others see first-hand the impact that deer have on forests, especially regeneration. The information will also be useful for landowners to see how they can install a fence to prevent losses due to deer on their own property. One of the enclosures will also help to determine the feasibility of oak regeneration in an oak stand that had a selective timber harvest.



Volunteers installing enclosure fence



The finished enclosure



Signage on enclosure fence

Winter Holiday Gathering

by Laura Pisarri

Once again our handcrafted centerpieces were a big hit, at the Winter Holiday Gathering, on January 16, 2017. CDC Chairman Jason Post and CDC Secretary Laura Pisarri, cut each candle-log centerpiece from an Ailanthus tree (Tree of Heaven) and decorated them with beautiful ribbon, pine combs, cinnamon/pine sticks, and lace. The scented candles added an additional sweet aroma to the already fragrant logs. CDC members and guests played a Q & A game, in order to win the centerpiece at their table. Everyone enjoyed playing the game, and one winner from each table, had the pleasure of taking a candle-log home with them.



Holiday Gathering Centerpiece

Congratulations to the winners: Fred Backus, Valerie Walton, Peggy Pedersen, Darleen Springer, Phyllis House, Lucy Gaskell, and Claudia Dollerd.

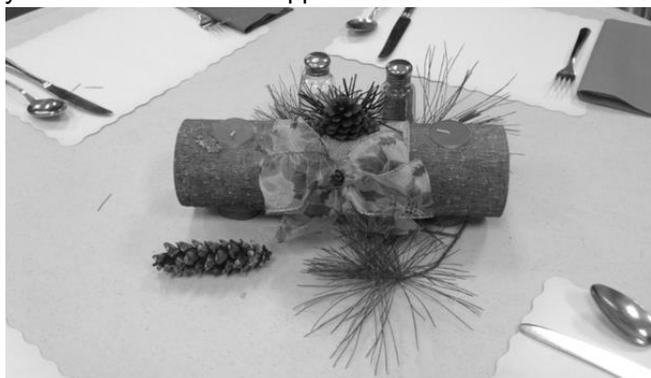
Jack Magai of Magai Arboriculture in Troy, NY, was the guest speaker this year. Jack gave a lengthy presentation on the “ins and outs” of Arboriculture. He talked about trees in urban settings, the difficulties they have trying to survive, and what can be done to help them. He also briefed us on his wife, Amy Halloran’s, latest book, “The New Bread Basket”. Copies were available for purchase, after his presentation.

Getting down to business...Chairman Jason Post opened the floor to nominations for this year’s elected officers. It was unanimously voted, that Jason remain NYFOA-CDC Chairman, Jeff Kehoe remain Vice-Chairman, Laura Pisarri remain as Secretary, and Phil Walton remain Treasurer.



The 2017 Holiday Gathering

After all business was completed, members and guests happily indulged in a feast of delicious appetizers, salads, entrees, and scrumptious desserts. For those who missed out on this festive occasion, we invite you to come and share in our Gathering next year. You won’t be disappointed!



Steering Committee Members

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Next meeting scheduled Tuesday, April 11, 2017
starting at 6:00 p.m. at

Winter Lingers

by Dick Gibbs

How has the Winter been for you? The teasing warmth and extended dreary grey cold already too much? Did you flee to a warmer climate for reprieve or even a season? Possibly a great ski and winter outdoor sports thrilled your stimulation centers? Slippery ice and snow shoveling dislodged your well-set plans? Frosty beer and bowl of New England chowder at the pub with fierce winds buffeting outside gave you comfort and camaraderie? Hot workouts at the Y followed by a steam room treat been a salve and source of needed community? The loss of human contact replaced by the glove covered hand wave from neighbors means a lot. Everyone has their own private "Winter" experience and I hear them all-at the gas pump, in the store, crossing the street, at the doctor's office and from the next booth at the local tavern. I try to be stoic and a voice of optimism in every situation I can muster; but I confess to also having my own private moments of despair in the pit of Winter. In only one day of sunny warmth, I let my fire die out and mentally fall prey to the hope that Winter is somehow over while the real "Spring" remains a distant vision in the bitter March winds.



For those of us who still heat with wood, the slow death of Winter is especially stark. At least two-three times even in this relatively mild winter I have just wanted to not get up and feed the fire and instead turn on the "button heat" of alternative heat-oil. Last week while loading the wood boiler, I came upon a piece of firewood with blue paint on it-that told me this was from a defective tree that Mike Greason had marked when he brought me into the NYFOA years ago. I began

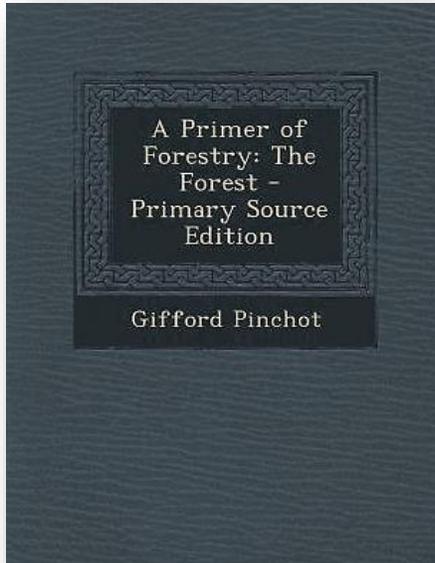
remembering the stories attached to every piece of wood headed to the fire, for instance wood that Charlie cut years back as TSI cuts, every stick a story. Some pieces bring back laughter and happy times, others hard shared work with friends. I choose a better mental track, again comforted and committed to visiting the woodshed with happiness and a thankful memory and outlook. I am the only one to know each story. I load my day cart with pieces that have been coming toward this day of burning over a very long time. One by one as I throw them into the fire I am rewarded with layers of appreciation.

The stories I have burned this Winter are fresh in my mind and live on. Last summer, Pat would come bursting out of the house when I had the next trailer load of wood to be carefully stacked into the woodshed, and the two of us would adroitly finish of that task, then we would head off on a 30 mile bike ride. Pat had spent a year recovering from salivary gland cancer and lost 30 pounds in the process because he was living from a feeding tube, but his biking was amazing. I was always so happy for him. Each stick of firewood has his name on it for me as he simply loved to work at loading the woodshed, putting his name and style on every piece he touched. Damn-his cancer has metastasized and it is now in his lungs, and things are grim. Still, I must think of him as I unload the woodshed, stick by stick, that heats the house and my life. He is today, receiving a new targeted gene therapy drug. My hope for him is simple-recover and come help me re-load the woodshed this summer. Winter, you see, is just a state of mind. Love your Winter however you engage in it and it in you.



From the Forestry Archives

The following excerpt is from Gifford Pinchot's Primer of Forestry published in 1905 – over a century ago. Pinchot was the chief forester of the US Forest Service. He writes that forests are more than trees and that timber is only one of many values. He also states that timber can be managed in a way “to make sure of other crops hereafter”. This is the concept of sustainable management. I guess these concepts have actually been around for a long time.

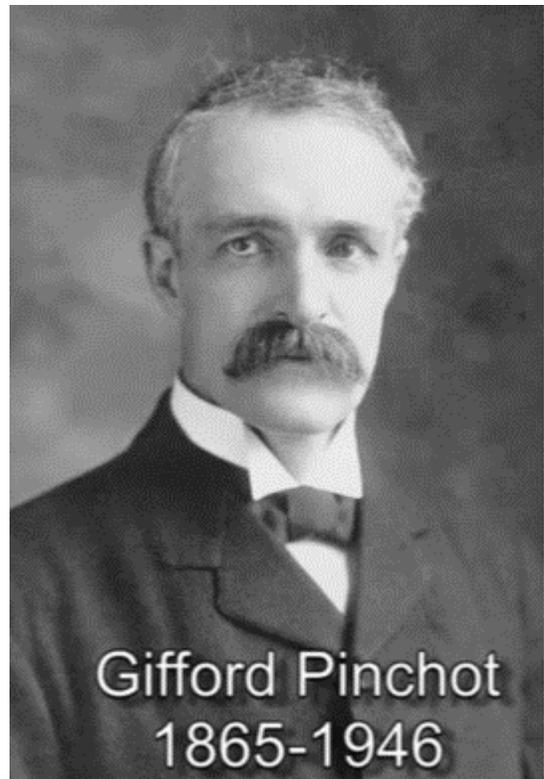


Pinchot writes; *“The object of forestry is to discover and apply the principles according to which forests are best managed. Although it is composed of trees, the forest is far more than a collection of trees standing in one place. It has a population of animals and plants peculiar to itself, a soil largely of its own making, and a climate different in many ways from that of the open country. The forest is as beautiful as it is useful. Perhaps no other natural agent has done so much for the human race and has been so recklessly used and so little understood*

The products of the forest are among the things which civilized men cannot do without. Wood is needed for building, for fuel, for paper pulp, and for unnumbered other uses, and trees must be cut down to supply it. It would be both useless and mistaken to try to stop the cutting of timber, for it could not cease without great injury, not to the lumbermen only, but to

all the people of the nation. The question is not of saving the trees, for every tree must inevitably die, but of saving the forest by conservative ways of cutting the trees. If the forest is to be preserved, the timber crop now ripe must be gathered in such a way as to make sure of other crops hereafter.

In general, it is true that the present methods of lumbering are unnecessarily destructive and wasteful. This is not because lumbermen are more greedy of gain or less careful of public interests than other business men, for they are not. It happens partly because in this country, compared with France and Germany and other densely populated regions, there is so much timber in proportion to the population that it does not pay the lumberman to take anything more than the better parts of the trees he fells. The lumberman cannot do his work unless he does it at a profit, and he must do it, for lumber is indispensable. Consequently, although much of the waste in lumbering is not only unnecessary, but actually costly to the lumberman, for the present it is impossible to avoid waste altogether. It will be easier to do so when the methods and advantages of conservative lumbering, which is forestry, are better known to the American lumbermen, and are therefore in more general use”.



Upcoming Events of Interest

What: Hemlock Woolly Adelgid: What You Need to Know and Why You Need to Know it!

When: Thursday, April 20 - 2:00-4:30 p.m.

Location: Columbia-Greene Community College, Main Building, Lecture Hall, #202, 4400 Rte 23, Hudson, NY

Cost: Free

Hemlocks are one of the most important tree foundation species in the northeast forest. The role they play is crucial to the regions they exist in. Hemlocks are also under attack by the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA), an invasive insect that is now established in our region. Come and learn about the biology, ranges and management options for dealing with this invasive pest as well as how to prioritize hemlock conservation based on ecosystem services they provide.

What: Invasive Species Management

When: Monday, April 24 at 1 p.m.

Where: Agroforestry Resource Center, 6055 Rte 23, Acra. NY

Cost: Free

Registration deadline: April 20 - Register online https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/Invasivesmanage_210 or call 518-622-9820 x0

Join the Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership for a workshop about the top 10 “early detection” threats to be on the lookout for in the Catskills landscape. These plants are not widespread yet, but have high potential to choke out native species if left untreated. Learn where these plants currently are, how to identify them, report them, and how to manage them on your property.

What: Growing Chinese Medicinal Herbs in New York Forests

When: Saturday, April 29 – 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Where: Agroforestry Resource Center, 6055 Rte 23, Acra. NY

Cost: Free

Registration deadline: April 27 - Register online https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/Chineseherbs_210 or call 518-622-9820 x0

Join us to learn about domestic production of Chinese medicinal herbs. Jean Giblette of High Falls Foundation will give a presentation on this emerging market opportunity for farmers and woodlot owners. Several tree, shrub and forest edge plants have been identified as candidates for production here in New York. Jean will give an overview and rationale for domestic production, then describe a cooperative model for direct marketing to licensed practitioners of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine. Following the presentation, a tour of the new ARC demonstration garden of Chinese medicinal herbs will be conducted by Tracey Testo.

What: Growing Forest Fungi and other Mushroom Cultivation Options

When: Saturday, May 6 – 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Where: Agroforestry Resource Center, 6055 Rte 23, Acra. NY

Cost: \$20 per person

Registration deadline: May 3 - Register online https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/growingshiitakes_2017 210 or call 518-622-9820 x0

Are you interested in exploring how to grow your own mushrooms or perhaps start a small scale mushroom operation? Participants in this workshop will learn various techniques for growing different species of mushrooms using a variety of materials. You will also participate in a hands-on experience inoculating bolts of wood with shiitake spawn and bring home your own inoculated log for personal enjoyment. This is a very popular program, so please register early as class size is limited!

What: New Baltimore Antique Machinery and Agricultural Festival

When: Saturday & Sunday, June 3-4 – 9:00 am to 5:00 p.m.

Where: Van Etten Farm, 1314 Sawmill Road, Ravena, NY

Cost: Free

There will be agricultural and vendor displays in an open-air field. The Capital District Chapter will have an exhibit at the New Baltimore Ag Fest.

Your Membership

Helps Support Sustainable Forestry

Forests cover more than 60% of the state providing important benefits including watershed protection, wildlife habitat, wood products, recreational opportunities, clean air, and beauty. The New York Forest Owners Association is a not-for-profit organization established to encourage sustainable forestry practices and sound management of privately owned woodlands. Members include woodland owners and all others who care about the future of New York's trees and forests.

NYFOA, P.O. Box 541, Lima, New York 14485 1-800-836-3566 www.nyfoa.org
