



Chairman's Corner

Submitted by Bob Wood

We Need Volunteers for 2019 Chautauqua and Cattaraugus County Fairs. These two Fairs are important to NYFOA-AFC; by way of our display, it provides information to woodlot owners, makes the public aware of the importance of our forests and of proper management of them. It provides entertainment to youngsters while allowing us to converse with their parents. It brings in new members and allows owners to sign-up for MFO visits. Our raffles bring in over \$300 per year.

We are in need of new coordinators for our presence at the two fairs, (one for Chautauqua and one for Cattaraugus). It is a fun and rewarding position. It is not a hard job but does require some diligence. One of the major stipulations is that the display is to be manned throughout the day every day.

Things that are important are: Get acquainted with the fair Personnel to make sure our space is available and secure Poster and Parking Passes for the display workers. Enlist workers to man the display and get the passes to them. Design the display and secure help to get it set up. Make sure materials are available for the display, this includes tables and chairs, prizes for game and/or raffle winners. Help new recruits get oriented. And, in general make sure the display is attractive, educational and provides something for all the visitors, not just woodland owners. Get any required flyers or notices printed. This is our chance to showcase the importance of woodlots.

Our current Coordinators, Tony Pingitore and Jeff Rupp have carried out this role for several years. Both will provide the AFC-NYFOA Fair Booth Coordinator with all the information and resources needed. Your assistance is greatly appreciated contact Tony, (Chautauqua County Fair July 15-21), 716-962-4041 and email: tonyfp231@gmail.com or Jeff, (Cattaraugus Fair, week after Chaut. Co. Fair), can be reached at 716-257-5652. Volunteering in several of the other capacities mentioned is also appreciated. Again a "big thanks" to Tony and Jeff for their diligent "AFC Fair Booth" coordination.

Many thanks,
Bob Wood, AFC Chairman

Mark Your Calendars—Upcoming NYFOA AFC Events

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|--|---------------------------|
| May 9th (7:00 PM) NYS Tree Farm Talk | Randolph Community Center |
| May 18th (9:30 AM) Wood's Walk—Vic & Kay Richardson's | Brocton, NY |
| July 20 (10:00 AM) Annual Picnic | Jamestown Audubon |

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Chapter Board of Directors:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| • Bob Wood— Chair | (716) 945-4849 |
| • Dick Brennan—Vice-Chair | (716) 699-4125 |
| • Otis Barber—Secretary | (716) 962-8175 |
| • Tony Pingitore— Treasurer | (716) 962-4041 |
| • Dick Patton—NYFOA Rep. | (716) 761-6333 |
| • Jim Barber—Steering Committee | (716) 962-9027 |
| • Mark Rivard —Steering Committee | (716) 835-5516 |
| • Vic Richardson.—Steering Committee | (716) 792-9559 |
| • Dan Anderson—Planning Coord. | (716) 640-5549 |
| • Mike Jabot—Newsletter/PR | (716) 673-3639 |



Christmas Party

Submitted by Dan Anderson

The AFC Christmas Party was held on December 15th at the Randolph Community Center. Thirty one people attended, with several newer members present, which is very encouraging. We were visited by Mike Zagata, our state executive director, who provided us with a vision of how to keep NYFOA viable as we move into the future. Thanks, Mike!

We all enjoyed the delicious lunch and great conversation. Fran Micalak then conducted the Christmas gift exchange, which is always a lot of fun. Thanks, Fran! Several people commented that this was one of the better Christmas parties in recent years, and I would agree! A good time was had by all.

Nominations for the AFC Chairperson Position (being vacated by Bob Wood)

Submitted by Dick Brennan

Please forward any names, including your own, to Mike Jabot (jabot@fredonia.edu) as soon as possible. These names will be presented to the general membership for a vote at the summer picnic/annual meeting. Additional nominations may also be presented from the floor on the day of the annual meeting.

Although not an elected position, volunteers are needed for the coordination of activities at the Chautauqua and Cattaraugus county fairs. There is much to be done and the current folks responsible could use assistance. These important events contribute to our public image in the community.

SAVE THE DATE!!!! May 18th - Vic & Kay Richardson's Woods Walk

Submitted by Vic Richarson

The Allegheny Foothills Chapter (Allegheny, Cattaraugus, & Chautauqua Counties) of the New York Forest Owners Association invites persons with woodland management interest to attend a "Woods Walk" at Vic & Kay Richardson's - 70 acre Forest Farm - **5944 Colt Rd.** Brocton, NY- Saturday, May 18th, 2019 - 9:30am to Noon. Guest Forester/Arborist, Eric Stawitzky, will be on hand to assist and answer questions.

Travel Directions: A quarter mile East of Brocton's - Route 20 Arch, take Route 380 South. Travel 3 miles, then turn right (West) onto Colt Road at the intersection of (Colt Rd, Parcel Rd. & Rte. 380). Go 3/10ths mile to the Richardson's, on North (right) side behind the pines.

Bring a bag lunch, coffee will be provided. A brief 'Orientation and History' begins at 9:30 am - followed immediately with hikes (dress for the weather), and witness a "Timber Stand Improvement" area, invasive species control, Firewood and Locust Post staging areas, plus different stages of woodland management.

Save the Date!!! May 9th—NYS Tree Farm Program

Submitted by Dick Brennan

The NY State Tree Farm Program—What is it and how can it benefit forest owners.

Eric Stawitzky, western region representative, will give an overview of the program and answers questions.

Place: Randolph Community Center, Randolph, NY

Date: May 9, 2019 (Thursday)

Time: 7:00 PM

The mission of the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) is to promote sustainable forestry practices and improved stewardship on privately owned woodlands in New York State. NYFOA is a not-for-profit group of people who care about NYS's trees and forests and are interested in the thoughtful management of private forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

An Overview of Real Property Tax Law 480a

by Steve Kutney, NYFOA Southern Tier Chapter Chair

The Real Property Tax Law 480a was created to make it financially possible for landowners to engage in the practice of forestry. Quality timber encourages jobs in the forest products industry and generates income for landowners and towns. The text of the law can be found at <https://codes.findlaw.com/ny/realproperty-tax-law/rpt-sect-480-a.html>. The 480a law requires that the DEC, “adopt and promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of the department’s responsibilities.” These regulations can be found online at https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/foresttaxlawhandbook.pdf. This is a useful document. A copy of the regulations and law should be sent to all landowners who are enrolled in the RPTL 480a Forest Tax Law Program. I think this would lead to less DEC landowner disputes. A landowner would have a difficult time explaining why they had a timber cut without notifying the DEC.

The increased use of technology improves productivity. May I suggest an online interactive website with a database that contains all of the relevant information on the properties enrolled in RPTL 480a. The online database could be used by foresters, landowners, and State and town workers. Automation would make it easier to file an annual commitment, manage notices to town assessors, and file notices of commercial cutting. The database should contain an electronic copy of current and past management plans. Work schedules could be more flexible and modifiable based on the owner’s current situation and the current timber market. An online State database would provide fire protection for this information since online databases are typically backed up. The law uses the term “certified commitment.” I would hope that online certification could be accomplished using online security software. I do my taxes online. Why not a 480a yearly certification?

The current Regulation states that “...noncommercial treatments shall be accomplished at not less than the greater of the following rates: (i) 10 acres per year; or (ii) five percent of the total acreage in the certified tract needing treatment;” This is a backbreaker and discourages landowners from doing Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) work. In the long term, more TSI means better timber resulting in more income for the landowner and more money for the town. The landowner is given a year to complete TSI work, but the effective time window is from midJuly to October. TSI at any other time of year is less effective, and typically results in multiple sprouts from stumps and girdled trees. I have hired people in the past when my work schedule prevented me from doing the TSI work myself. It’s not impossible, but in general it’s very difficult to find a contractor for this type of work. Completing the work can be influenced by the weather. Most landowners find it difficult to complete TSI within the effective time window. It may be an impossible task for long distance landowners. I would like to specify as little as one acre, with the goal of doing one acre each year. As a landowner gains experience they can commit to a greater number of acres per year. In today’s world, the landowner can send a cell phone picture of their completed TSI work to the Regional Forester, or upload the picture to a database. I would like to see an approach that looks like a partnership with the DEC rather than a rigid schedule with the threat of legal action.

The proposed 480b law never contained a provision for cutting firewood by the landowner like the current 480a law. I think that preventing people from cutting firewood is a huge mistake. People do not like the feeling that they no longer own their property. I do not cut firewood on my property but I can understand why landowners would want to. The current Regulation puts a strange twist to the law. Regulation 263 on fuelwood production states that “If standing trees are to be harvested a cutting prescription is required at least 30 days prior to cutting.” Yet in subdivision 5 (d) the law states “...and may annually cut, in accordance with sound forestry practices, ten standard cords or the equivalent for such owner’s own use, without notice and free of tax imposed by this section.” The 30 day notice of a “cutting prescription” should be removed from the regulation document to be in compliance with the law. The DEC could provide landowners with a document that explains how their long term financial interests are enhanced by using downed trees for firewood, and explain the characteristics of trees that have no commercial value but make excellent firewood. As I read this Law, it seems to me that trees cut for TSI can be used at a rate of up to 10 cords per year. Beyond the 10 cords, I do not see anything wrong with paying the town 6% of the stumpage value of firewood from TSI operations. The value of this wood can be derived from the firewood values in the semi-annual stumpage report published by the NYS DEC.

The current Regulation document calls for five-year updates to management plans. The commitment required in the law is for ten years. Updates to management plans are expensive. It seems to me that management plans could be updated every 10 years without any harm to the Program. Make the plans due on Nov. 1st in the year prior to when the work schedule begins. I do like the sections in the Regulation document on Christmas trees and maple syrup production. This could be expanded to include mushrooms, medicinal plants, and wildlife plantings as long as they don’t interfere with timber production. I sincerely hope that these suggestions help with the administration of the 480a program.

Stumpage Price Report

https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/sprwinter19.pdf



NYFOA
New York Forest Owners Association

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EVENTS CALENDAR

May 9th (7:00 PM)

NYS Tree Farm Talk

Randolph Community Center

May 18th (9:30 AM)

Wood's Walk—Vic & Kay Richardson's

July 20 (10:00 AM)

Annual Picnic—Jamestown Audubon

Welcome New Members!!!

Bill Burcher

Jim Davis

Scott Hanaka

Matthew Natale

Fred Rakvica

Todd Tyler

Fillmore, NY

Grand Island, NY

Wellsville, NY

Camp Hill, PA

Fairport, NY

Cherry Creek, NY



Please email your comments to:

jabot@fredonia.edu (Mike Jabot)

If you know of someone who has woodland, or is interested in wood lands invite them to join NYFOA-AFC. Feel free to show them your copy of the Newsletter and/or the N.Y. Forest Owner Magazine.

