The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner



NYFOA

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All photos by the author

The delicious buffet prepared by Chef Brad Stevenson. He can be seen setting out food on the right side of the table. Bravo, Laurier Catering Company for another delicious meal enjoyed by all.

13th Annual Dinner Meeting

by Colette Morabito

Since the inception of our annual dinner meetings, chef Brad Stevenson of Laurier Catering Company continues to provide a culinary delight for our Western Finger Lakes (WFL) membership. His sumptuous meals continually satisfy all our palates and his expert staff is very attentive. The kitchen at the Monsignor Schnacky Community Center in Mendon is well maintained for Brad to create his magic. This location proves to be exceptional for all our needs. It is very spacious and a central location for the majority of WFL members. The meeting room is also air conditioned (which we needed this year). There is plenty of space available for the dinner tables, buffet line, door prize displays, guest exhibitors along with their volumes of information, as well as room for our own NYFOA tables--well stocked with up to date handouts and brochures beneficial to our continued forest related, educational needs.

We welcome **Nick Jensen** to the WFL Board of Directors. Nick was officially voted in at the meeting. He joins us with a wealth of expertise in all things financial. He and his family live on their 100-acre farm in Prattsburgh, 60 acres of which are managed as both young and mature forest. *Please see the May 2019 General Meeting Update as Nick will be presenting on NYS Real Property Tax Law topics focusing on private property landownership.

Congratulations to our 50/50 raffle winner, **Jim Keebler**.

Raffling the chainsaw, which is generously donated by Dan Ras, was won by **Justin Damann**. It is always the highlight of the evening to see who the lucky winner will be! The WFL Board truly appreciates all those who so generously bought raffle tickets this year, as this is our most important fundraising activity.

We were excited to have Walt Friebel, an MFO, from the American Tree Farm System attend our dinner meeting. He provided many handouts, signage, as well as an opportunity for people with over 10 acres of forested land to sign up for membership.

There was a comprehensive presentation by **Eileen and Dale Schaefer** for WFL's Chainsaws for Charity (C4C) initiative. The C4C group is strictly made up of volunteers. **David and Cecelia Deuel** have kindly provided their farm for the work. Cutting logs, splitting wood, stacking the firewood requires many hands and many donuts. To date they have donated over \$10,500 worth of



Wonderful door prizes were again graciously donated by members at the annual dinner meeting. As you can see, the guests are milling around the wellstocked tables to check out what they will choose during the door prize raffle segment of the evening.

(Continued on page 5)

The Linden Tree

by Dick Starr

Franz Schubert (1797-1828) was an Austrian composer who left over 1500 musical works when he passed at age 31. The Linden Tree (Der Lindenbaum in German) is one of his best known works and was composed from a poem by Wilhelm Muller in 1827. In 1850 Johanna Maria "Jenny" Lind (1820-1887), a Swedish opera singer, began a 2 year tour of America under the guidance of P. T. Barnum of circus fame. She thrilled audiences with her beautiful voice and became known as the Swedish Nightingale. Schubert's The Linden tree was one of her favorite encore songs.

The lyrics to Der Lindenbaum are

Beside the rippling streamlet there stands a linden tree Where dreaming in its shadow my hours were sweet and free Its bark is cut with letters from many fancies made In joy and sorrow ever I sought its grateful shade, I sought its grateful shade

And if today I wander in other lands afar

I close my eyes and ponder beneath the evening star And hear those branches murmur as if they called to me

Come back and rest companion beneath the linden tree, beneath the linden tree Tho' cold the winds unceasing upon my pathway roar Still onward I am going and can turn no more Now years have come and vanished since I beheld that tree But still I hear it whisper come back and rest with me, come back and rest with me

To hear Schubert's Der Lindenbaum, engage You Tube and search "the linden tree by Franz Schubert" for a variety of performances. Many are done in German and to my untrained musical ear not particularly pretty. It makes me wonder why it was so popular when written. It might help if I was fluent in German. However, I did find on You Tube a very pleasing version in English by The New London Chorale. The New London Chorale is a mixed quartet not a chorus. The lyrics as sung by The New London Chorale are totally different from those shown above. I can't explain that.

The linden tree is in the tilia species and is also known as basswood in North America and lime in Europe. Lime is not a reference to citrus fruit but rather an altered form of "lind" which apparently also gives us linden. Interesting that the Swedish Nightingale's last name was Lind.

About Us

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Mike Seager, Director and Electronic Communications Coordinator P.O. Box 1281 Pittsford, NY 14534 (585) 414-6511 seager michael@yahoo.com The *Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner* is published for members of the Western Finger Lakes Chapter of the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) and is published 4 times per year. NYFOA was founded in 1963 and is organized to encourage the wise management of private woodland resources in New York State by promoting, protecting, representing and serving the interests of woodland owners. The Western Finger Lakes Chapter was founded in 1988 and encompasses Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, and Yates Counties.

Membership is open to anyone interested in understanding how to manage a woodlot. NYFOA membership can bring returns in the satisfaction of growing quality timber, stabilizing forest industries and markets, providing permanent jobs, increasing the value of your woods, enlarging areas of natural beauty across the state, and leaving behind a monument in living trees to bless the tomorrows for the youngsters of today. For information on becoming an NYFOA member, contact Liana Gooding, NYFOA Secretary, NYFOA, P.O. Box 541, Lima, NY, 14485 or at 1-800-836-3566. Annual membership is \$45 and includes: subscriptions to this newsletter; to the bimonthly NYFOA state-wide publication, The New York Forest Owner; attendance at chapter meetings; and to statewide meetings. Membership at the Contributing level \$50-\$99; Sponsor level \$100-\$249; Benefactor \$250-\$499; and Steward \$500 or more are also offered. For more information visit www.nyfoa.org.

Readers are encouraged to submit articles for publication in this newsletter. Articles should be mailed or e-mailed to: Richard Starr at the address to the left. Electronic submissions are preferred. Any letters should be sent to the Chair for consideration.

For event reminders and late-breaking news, subscribe **to our email list** by sending a blank email to nyfoa-wfl-news-subscribe@npogroups.org

Note: The deadline for our Spring 2019 issue is February 15th

Thanks Dick

by Dick Starr

The Dennisons and Starrs met in September 1964 when Dick and Dick joined the faculty of Penfield High School. Dick was in the history department, I was in science. Dick had already taught a couple years in the Syracuse area while I was a June recipient of a Bachelor's Degree, married for 2 weeks and at age 22 years about as green as a well tended lawn. We and the Dennisons rented in Pittsford and since Marlene and I only had one car, I arranged a car pool deal in which I gave Dick \$1/ week for a daily ride to and from school. If you're thinking Dick got the short shaft of that financial finagle let me remind you gas was 25 cents a gallon and he probably made money on the deal. In 1964 a brand new Ford Mustang cost \$2320, a loaf of bread 30 cents and a first class stamp was 5 cents.

The contract I signed with Penfield Central Schools set my gross salary at \$4700 per year. How gross was my salary? Marlene was a secretary and made more than I did. Further, any children we might have had in the school system would have been given a free lunch based on my salary. Dick and I soon became good friends and when Dick & Diane purchased a home on Golf Ave we borrowed the district's pick up truck and I helped them move in. I wonder if we could do that today? Insurance probably says no.

As time marched on our friendship continued and we often caught up on family events while waiting for faculty meetings to start. Ask me if I miss faculty meetings but perhaps you can sense the answer. Then Dick purchased 35 acres, or was it 45, of woodland in the town of Canadice and invited me to use my new chain saw to help with some timber stand improvement. Of course at that point in time we didn't call it TSI as we'd never heard of such a thing. I was just doing something I enjoyed and getting free fire wood in the process and some free exercise too. Over time I picked many gallons of blackberries on the Canadice land. I'm still amazed I never encountered a bear intent on the same thing.

We were there when Dick started a cabin on the land and how pleased he was with his new composting toilet. The cabin came after installing a lengthy driveway that lead to a future pond site. I recall cooling off in that pond after a hot day with the chain saw. When the Dennisons went to Maine in the summer I'd go to Canadice and mow the lawn, pick berries, run my chain saw, snag a load of firewood and generally pretend it was my acreage. Come November Dick's land was my go to hunting spot and the unheated cabin a spot to winter camp under a roof. Ah, the good old days.



photo credit– Colette Morabito

Dick Dennison at our Annual Dinner

In January 1990 Dick joined some kind of a fringe organization I'd never heard of called NYFOA. He later gave me a gift membership as well. When I received my renewal notice a year later I was embarrassed to not continue so I wrote a check. Next thing I know I'm on the WFL board of directors with Dick. I recall the board meeting when we learned the IRS wanted us to have an annual meeting. Dick, Ron Reitz and I were appointed as a committee of 3 to investigate having a dinner as part of the annual meeting – feed them and they will come. I claim Dick Dennison did most of the work in bringing that first dinner meeting to fruition. This is just the most recent in the various duties Dick has performed for WFL. He spent several years as our program coordinator arranging for general meeting topics and speakers. Naturally he's a recipient of the Chapter Service Award.

Dick recently told me he feels it's time to pass the baton. Thank you Dick for all you've done to make WFL chapter of NYFOA a vibrant organization, no longer near the fringe. And thanks to Nick Jensen for taking on the duty of annual dinner meeting coordinator. Not surprising Dick volunteered to help Nick learn the ropes of his new assignment. We anticipate continuing to meet at the church in Mendon and have Laurier Catering provide our meal. If it ain't broke, don't fix it!

Welcome New Members

Linda Groves	Rochester
James Hassan	Nunda
James Lahti	Naples
Richard A. Mosier	Penn Yan

Please note, this issue (as well as previous issues) of the *Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner* are also available online (with all photos in color) in the WFL section of the NYFOA web site, <u>www.nyfoa.org</u>.

Also note that other chapters' newsletters are also available for reading in their chapter's sections on the NYFOA web site..

New York State STAR Program

Basic STAR vs. Enhanced STAR: Which one is right for me?

By: Nick A. Jensen, CPA, CFP®

New York State resident homeowners may receive a property tax exemption called School Tax Relief or STAR program. This program is found in the New York State Real Property Tax Law (RPTL) § 425 and is aimed at providing relief from a portion of school district property taxes on primary residences of New York State residents. Although the RPTL includes over 200 other real property tax exemptions (for example some readers may be familiar with 480(a)), STAR is unique in that it is the only exemption that is funded by the State. All other exemptions erode the local tax base. STAR is also unique in its scope since it is not targeted toward a narrow group of property owners.

There are two flavors of STAR. A taxpayer may have either a Basic or Enhanced STAR exemption, not both.

• Basic STAR:

- Exempts \$30,000 from the assessed value of a home or property.
- There is no age restriction
- There is a combined annual household income limit of \$500,000 or less.

• Enhanced STAR:

- Available for property owners who are 65 and over by December 31st of the year when the exemption begins.
- It exempts an annually adjusted amount (currently \$66,800).
- The household income limit for Enhanced STAR is much lower at \$86,000 or less.
- For jointly owned property, only one spouse must reach the age limit.

For both flavors of STAR, "income" is defined as IRS Form 1040 Line 37 (Adjusted Gross Income) minus line 15b (taxable amount of total IRA distributions). The income is calculated from the tax returns from two years earlier. For example eligibility in 2018 is based on income information from the 2016 tax year. Some factors that are considered when determining primary residence are voting, vehicle registrations, and length of time spent each year on the property.

There is one registration web site for both varieties of STAR for new applicants located at https://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/ property/star/default.htm. Based on your inputs the system will automatically determine whether you are eligible for Basic or Enhanced STAR. It is important to note that if you initially qualified for the Basic STAR prior to March 1st of 2016 and then attain the age of 65 you must re-apply for Enhanced STAR with your local Assessor. If you applied and qualified after March 1st of 2016 for the Basic STAR (check) program and then turned 65, you do not need to re-apply, New York State will automatically send you the appropriate check. Applications prior to 2016 received an exemption right on the tax bill. This changed so any new applicants after 2016 get a check from New York State. The dollar amount of the check is generally the same as the property tax exemption.

Seniors who are applying for Enhanced STAR after March 1st of 2018 must authorize the assessor to have their incomes verified in subsequent years. For this, you will need to fill out the form RP-425-IVP. If you generally do not file a NYS income tax return, you will also need to fill out an income worksheet for STAR purposes, this is form RP-425-Wkst.

The deadline for most property tax exemptions (including STAR) is generally March 1st of the year you are claiming the credit. However, there are some municipalities, primarily cities, where this differs, so be sure to check with your local Assessor. For example, if you are turning 65 in October 2018 and want the Enhanced STAR exemption for the school tax bill that comes out in September 2018 for the 2018-2019 school year, you would have to get the application in by March 1st 2018. If you submit after the deadline the reduction will not happen until the next school tax bill in 2019.

Example Calculations:

Say you have a home valued at 100,000 for which you pay \$2,000 in school taxes or 2%. The Basic STAR program would reduce your school taxes by \$600 down to \$1,400 (2% x \$30,000). The Enhanced STAR program would whittle your school tax bill by \$1,336 to \$664 (2% x \$66,800).

Nick Jensen is WFL's newest board member. He works for John G. Ullman & Associates, Inc. This article originally appeared on that organization's website at http://jgua.com/new-york-state-star-program/. Reprinted with permission.

(Continued from page 1)

firewood to numerous programs and have been able to purchase their own equipment to continue their wonderful cause. Wagner Hardwoods and Runnings of Brockport continue to be a big part of this outreach and truly heartwarming cause. Bravo to all who share their time with C4C. Please contact the email listed to volunteer and receive the dates and times to volunteer: dschaefer1@frontiernet.net

Ray Cavallaro is the proud recipient of the WFL Chapter Service Award. His 15 years on the Board has been invaluable to our efforts as an organization. He always provided a great perspective and plenty of first-hand knowledge. He will be greatly missed, and we wish him all the best in his future endeavors in both his woodlot and beyond. Thank



Ed Harding describing some of his treasures before the annual dinner meeting on October 10, 2018. There were numerous topics discussed based on his discoveries, which he brought for us to observe: flint vs. chert, projectile points vs arrowheads, and radiocarbon dating, to name a few. A fascinating display from many years of hard work. you most sincerely Ray. The official presentation of the Chapter Service Award will be at the NYFOA State Board meeting in April 2019 in Syracuse.

Special thanks to all attendees to the dinner meeting who donated Door Prizes for a very festive part of the evening. Only nine people went home empty handed and we had a total of 70 attend! This tradition proves to be a big success as the items brought are unique and



Attendees reviewing the WFL display materials. This setup is about to get a new tablecover (see outside page).

fun. It is often hard to choose between the plethora of donated wonders. We hope that everyone continues to bring a door prize(s) for our annual dinner meeting in October 2019.

Dean Falkis is the organizer of the Northeast Timber Growing Contest. For either conifer or hardwoods, teams or individuals, you may register to enjoy this activity of growing your own trophy trees. Contact: <u>www.TimberContest.com</u>

Our Keynote speaker was Ed Harding. He is a true inspiration. The detailed description of his methodical process to uncover a cache of 22 grooved stones and many projectile points from his backyard was simply fascinating. His home is located near Lake Ontario and Irondequoit Bay; a stream once ran through this area many, many years ago. He

was simply digging a post hole in his backyard when he uncovered a projectile point which inspired the archaeological dig. A learning experience throughout the digging process which required him to utilize professionals of all sorts: scientists, archeologists, carbon dating test labs, historians, as well as precise documentation, measurements, and photography,

as he systematically continued his dig. He uncovered many examples of historical interest and intrigue. An inspiration to many, including his dad, neighbors, and children alike, his meticulous work awarded him many curious and exceptional specimens. There were numerous displays and glass covered cases showing fragments of charcoal and pottery. You could examine projectile points, fire cracked rocks, gunflint, bola stones (net sinkers), pieces of chert, coins, plastic soldiers, and buttons, to name a few! The visuals were fabulous as they showed his systematic and careful experience in literally turning his backyard upside down. Even the Maple tree in his backyard had to succumb to the removal of the dirt in and around the root structure. Incredible! Thank you, Ed, for treating us to a virtual visit to your backyard, archeological experience. Needless to say, the commute to your digging site was impeccable!



Displayed is the grooved stone cache found on 8/8/2016 by Ed Harding at the Harding-Fulton Site in West Webster, NY.

In conclusion: Play in the dirt because life is too short to always have clean fingernails!

Upcoming Events

Note: To learn about events in neighboring chapters and across the state go to our NYFOA website's EVENTS section at

https://www.nyfoa.org/events

WFL Board of Directors' Meeting

Tuesday, January 22, 2019, is designated as our next board meeting. All NYFOA members are welcome! Meeting time is set for 7 p.m. with pre-meeting meal at 6:15 p.m. Please join us at the American Hotel located at the stop light in Lima, NY. No RSVP needed, just come!

NY Farm Show

The New York Farm Show 2019 is scheduled for **February 21-23** at the New York State Fairgrounds in Syracuse, NY. There is plenty of free parking and shuttle buses run all day through the parking area. Be sure to visit the NYFOA exhibit/booth. Please visit the Farm Show website at

www.newyorkfarmshow.com/en/home.html for the most up-to-date information,

March General Meeting—Trail Cameras

Tuesday, March 12, 2019

Please join us to hear John Hammer at our General Meeting on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, 7 p.m. at the United Church of Christ, 8758 Main Street, Honeoye, NY 14471. John, a Yates County Master Forest Owner Volunteer (MFO) since 2009, lives in Middlesex with his wife Linda. They own a hundred acres, a predominantly forested farm in southeast Naples on a hilltop. The goal for his woods was deer hunting and recreation for both his children and grandchildren who all live nearby. He is active in Quality Deer Management (QDM) initiatives. As he pursued his interests in his woodlots and volunteering as an MFO, he developed a keen curiosity in trail cameras. Now a hobby-passion, John has 30 cameras, between his Naples farm and 16-acre home woodlot. With a camera for every 4 acres, it's difficult for a critter (or a human) to walk through his woods without getting their picture taken!

Please come and join us for this delightful and comprehensive presentation. He is truly knowledgeable in all things trail cameras! Plenty of time for questions and please stay for our delicious refreshments.

May General Meeting

Tuesday, May 14, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

<u>New York State Real Property Tax Law (RPTL)</u> <u>Topics of Interest to Private Property Land</u> <u>Owners</u>

Location: United Church of Christ, 8758 Main Street, Honeoye (Town of Richmond) NY 14471

Nick Jensen, one of our WFL chapter members, will be bringing his expertise to our general meeting. Nick and his family live on a 100 acre farm in Prattsburgh where they manage several conservation programs. Their acreage is divided between 40 acres of mature forest, 40 acres of meadow, and 20 acres of young forested land. Their woodlot goals include sustainable harvests, bio-diversity, and hunting.

Nick is employed at John Ullman & Associates. He brings over 25 years of experience in public accounting along with industry experience including client service, auditing, accounting, tax preparation, credit & collections, software implementation, data governance, fixed asset management, and treasury management.

Many NYFOA members are familiar with section 480a of the New York State RPTL. Many are **not** aware of the other areas of the NYS RPTL that should also be on one's radar. These include: §425 School Tax Relief (STAR) Exemption; §481 Ag Exemption; and §487 Renewable Energy Systems among others. The purpose of this talk will be to view the RPTL from a macro level and unpack some areas that may be of interest to you. We will touch on how these laws impact local communities. We will also discuss the logistics and timing of taking advantage of these property tax breaks and where to go for help. If time allows, we can also discuss the legislative process in Albany and the path that the 480(b) proposals have to navigate before becoming law. All are welcome.

There is always plenty of time allowed for questions and answers as well as snacks and conversation.

Member Stories

OK, you've put down the big bucks for a trailcam (or 2, or 3, or...) and you've now got some great shots. Why keep them to yourself? Your fellow forest owners would love to see them and hear what else you've got going in your woodlot. Submit photos and stories to Jim Minor (jcminor@rochester.rr.com) for posting on the NYFOA web site under *Member Stories*

https://www.nyfoa.org/member-stories

Classifieds



For Sale: Steel Tree/Pole Climbers, contoured and offset with snap-on Gaff Guards. Lightweight Nylon Body Belt with D-Rings and Pole Strap, OSHA Standards. See photo below. \$200 for both. Contact Dale at 585-367-2849.

Wanted: Woodlot and Related Activity Photos. We're building a small collection of photos for publicity and similar NYFOA purposes. If you have photos from woodswalks, woodlot activities, NYFOA activities, etc. and are willing to share, please e-mail them to Jim Minor, jcminor@rochester.rr.com.

Tree Tubes for Sale - Member(/Non-Member) price: 4' (\$5.00/ \$5.50); 4' w/ stake (\$6.00/\$6.50); 5' (\$5.50/\$6.00); 5' w/ stake (7.00/\$7.50). Proceeds benefit WFL chapter. (585) 367-2847.

For Sale: Bluebird Nestboxes, \$20 ea. Call Dean, 585-669-2956 for pictures and to order (check or Paypal). All of the purchase price benefits the Springwater Historical Society's Museum. Pick up in Springwater.

PLEASE NOTE: Space permitting, the WFL Steering Committee allows members to place free classified ads in this newsletter pertaining to good stewardship practices. However, ads presented here are not an endorsement by WFL.



Wait! Instead of recycling this issue of the *Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner*, why not pass it on to a friend/neighbor to give them a hint at what they're missing by not being a member of NYFOA.

Join and/or Give

NYFOA is a not-for-profit group promoting stewardship of private forests for the benefit of current and future generations. Through local chapters and statewide activities, NYFOA helps woodland owners to become responsible stewards and helps the interested public to appreciate the importance of New York's forests. Join NYFOA today and begin to receive its many benefits including: six issues of The New York Forest Owner, woodswalks, chapter meetings, and statewide meetings.

Note: For Gift Memberships, list the recipient's information (must not have been a NYFOA member for 3 years) directly below.

() I/We own _____acres of woodland.

() I/We do not own woodland but support the Association's objectives:

Name:	
Address:	
City:	
State/ Zip:	

Optional:

Telephone:		
Email:		
County of R	lesidence:	
County of V	Voodlot:	
Referred by	:	

Regular Annual Dues:

- () Student \$15 (Please provide copy of student ID)
- () Individual/Family \$45
- () 1 Year Gift Membership \$25
- Giftor's (NYFOA member) name

Multi-Year Dues:

- () 2-yr \$80
- () 3-yr \$120
- () Lifetime \$500

Additional Contribution:

- () Supporter \$1-\$49
- () Contributor \$50-\$99
- () Sponsor \$100-\$249
- () Benefactor \$250-\$499
- () Steward \$500 or more

() Subscription to Northern Woodlands 15 (4 issues)NYFOA is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) taxexempt organization and as such your contribution my be tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Form of Payment	: Check	Credit Card
Credit Card No.		
Expiration Date	V-	Code
Signature:		

Make check payable to NYFOA. Send the completed form to: NYFOA

P.O. Box 541, Lima, New York 14485

Questions: 1-800-836-3566

On-line: www.nyfoa.org



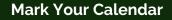
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- Tuesday, January 22, 2019 WFL Board of Directors' meeting
- February 21—23 NY Farm Show*
- Tuesday, March 12th, 2019 General Meeting: Trail Cameras*
- Tuesday, May 14th General Meeting: New York State Real Property Tax Law

* See inside for details

Note: For event reminders and late-breaking news, subscribe to our email list by sending a blank email to-

nyfoa-wfl-news-subscribe@npogroups.org

Welcome to the newest "member" of the Western Finger Lakes Chapter! The state organization of NYFOA has donated to WFL a wonderful table cloth proudly displaying our association. Kudo's to CDC's Laura Pisarri for making this happen. We can now feel proud to set up very professional and official exhibits. One such outreach that we do is the Empire Farm and Field Days in Seneca Falls each August. We look forward to wearing it out with all the many opportunities we have setting up WFL's latest and greatest networking efforts.