

Maine Tree Farm NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019

A publication of the Maine Tree Farm Committee



Issue No. 18

2019 Maine Tree Farmer of the Year: Don Newell & Family

By: Doug Rooks, Maine Woodland Editor

Don Newell and family, of Unity, have been selected as the 2019 Maine Outstanding Tree Farmers. Don and his family own and manage the Newell Tree Farm on the Ward Hill Road in Unity and Thorndike. He is very active and engaged in woodland stewardship and education, and a strong advocate for sound forest management. He is a member of the Maine Tree Farm Committee and the Maine Woodland Owners. Don has been a Tree Farmer since 1986. He bought the first piece of the now 250-acre forest in 1979 and added to it as adjoining parcels became available. He does the majority of the woods work himself, along with help from family members. Nearly every morning he can be found working in his woodlot: extending, improving, and maintaining his road and trail system; or improving the quality of his forest.



Don Newell and family on their property in Unity



Don and Patricia Newell receiving Outstanding Tree Farmer of the year award from Maine Forest Service Director, Doug Denico

Management practices include: crop tree release; thinning and pruning of hardwood sapling stands; patch clearcuts to promote early successional habitat for birds and other wildlife; removing low grade hardwood for firewood; removing invasive species; and thinning spruce, fir, and cedar stands to improve sawlog quality. Forest products sold to local wood markets have included: cedar logs, rails, and posts; firewood; and softwood logs and pulp. In particular, Don is deeply engaged in controlling the beech in his woods, nearly all of which is infected with the beech bark disease.

Don and his family received the Tree Farm award at the Maine Woodland Owners' 2019 Annual Forestry Forum, from Maine Forest Service Director Doug Denico. Denico, who toured the Newell woodlot on an exceptionally cold winter's day, said the experience was worth it, and that its forest management is as impressive as any he's seen. "I was

inspired," he told the audience. "I would never have the will to spend the thousands of hours he's spent improving the land." Don Newell said he spends two or three hours a day "with a chainsaw, in the woods," before going to his "day job" as a real estate agent, specializing in "woodlands and farms, encouraging the same kind of values."

The annual Forestry Field Day hosted by Maine Woodland Owners and Maine Tree Farm is scheduled for September 7th at the Newell's woodlot in Unity.



(Left to right) Don Newell accepting OTFY award while his forester, Rob Nelson, Maine Forest Service Director Doug Denico and wife, Patricia Newell look on.

The Newell Tree Farm is open to the public, for hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling on designated groomed trails. Hunting is allowed by permission only. Don has hosted numerous events and tours, including visiting forestry professors from Sweden and the University of Maine; Unity College students' forestry projects; Society of American Forestry and Maine Woodland Owner beech management workshops; and the annual Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association Low Impact Forestry 101 session, now for several years running. The Newells maintain more than five miles of popular cross-country ski trails and host an ITS snowmobile trail as well. Denico said the combination of public use, and accessibility for harvests, is a model for responsible management.

2019 Piscataquis County Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year

The Maine Tree Farm Committee also recognize Dr. Jessica Leahy, Maine Woodland Owners board president, and her husband, Dr. Bob Seymour, as the 2019 Piscataquis County Outstanding Tree Farmers. Jessica Leahy, a professor in the School of Forest Resources at the University of Maine, noted that this is her eighth year of service on the MWO board, and “after a while, I just had to get out there and try it myself.” She and Seymour, retired from the University of Maine forestry, purchased Wicopy Woods in Sebec, and have already hosted a number of tours. Said Denico, “They decided to get out there, and they did it, which is not something every professor of forestry does.”



Drs. Bob Seymour (left) and Jessica Leahy (right) receiving their Piscataquis County Outstanding Tree Farmer of the year award from Maine Forest Service Director, Doug Denico (center).

We want to hear from you!

Please consider sharing your story with the Maine Tree Farm Committee so we can better serve you, the Tree Farmer. You can submit your “Why I’m a Tree Farmer” story by:

email: info@mainetreefarm.org

or

mail: 535 Civic Center Drive, Augusta ME, 04330.

Please include your town, Tree Farm number, and any photos you may have of you with your sign. If sending photos, please indicate if the Committee can use them in their publications.

Community Features



INSPECTOR PROFILE:

Rob Nelson

Representing Counties:

Penobscot, Waldo, Piscataquis,
Somerset

Years Involved: 25

Other Organizations:

Society of American Foresters
Certified Tree Farmer

Featured Inspector: Rob Nelson

Rob Nelson's involvement with the American Tree Farm System began 25 years ago in Virginia. For 15 of those years he was a County Chair for the Virginia Tree Farm Committee.

Rob is a consulting forester with many clients across central Maine, ranging from Waldo to Somerset County. He writes forest management plans that meet the requirements for Maine's Tree Growth Tax Program, the Natural Resources Council Cost Share Program, and the American Tree Farm Standards of Sustainability. He became involved with Tree Farm because it naturally fit with the work he had always done, working with small non-industrial private family landowners.

He sees Tree Farm as a strong tool for recognizing exemplary landowners for their woodland stewardship. He is a Tree Farmer himself, with a woodlot in Dexter. He also runs his own low impact forestry operation.

Featured Volunteer: Kyle Burdick

Kyle Burdick is the most recent past chair of the Maine Tree Farm Committee, serving in the position for two years. Prior to serving as Chair, Kyle was the Vice Chair for two years and the Washington County Chair for two years. He began volunteering after having his own land certified as a Tree Farm in 2011 because it was a logical step for a "Tree Farmer with a background in forestry to become more involved."

Kyle is the Woodlands Manager for the Baskahegan Company in Brookton. He represents the company on the Maine Forest Products Council, University of Maine's Cooperative Forestry Research Unit, the Climate Smart Land Network, and Project SHARE.

When asked what is the impact of the Maine Tree Farm Program on landowners and communities, Kyle replied:

"The potential impact is enormous. Outstanding Tree Farmers host community tours, talks, recreation opportunities, and environmental services. This increases the quality and quantity of education, entertainment, health and happiness. Forests do more for us than most people realize, and Tree Farmers and Tree Farms provide an even greater benefit."

While Kyle predicts a somewhat smaller program in the future, he does not see this as a bad thing. He predicts that it will be "more robust and efficient... narrowing its appeal to landowners that are willing to go the extra mile."



VOLUNTEER PROFILE:

Kyle Burdick

Representing Counties:

Washington

Years Involved: 6

Other Organizations:

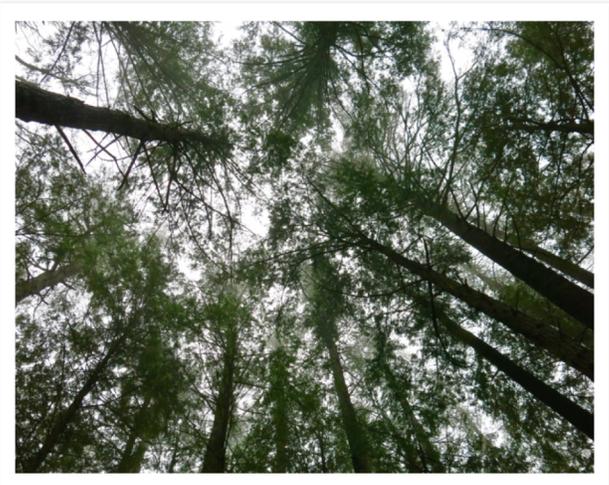
Maine Woodland Owners
Society of American Foresters
Forest Stewards Guild
Certified Tree Farmer

The Tall Pines

By: Logan Johnson

Judy Holt-Richards and her husband Ron Richards manage a 130-acre tree farm in Corinna. They started with a 10-acre parcel that has been in Judy's family for over 100 years. On that parcel sits a cabin that was built in 1932. When driving into the area where the cabin sits, you may not notice the natural wonder that towers above you.

The 10-acre parcel includes one of the last remaining old growth white pine stands in the state. For this reason, Ron and Judy have allowed University of Maine Professor Emeritus Bob Seymour and research scientist David Ray to study the stand's seed production. According to Ray, the white pines and



Canopy of 200-year-old white pine stand

hemlocks in this stand are over 200 years old with the largest trees measuring over 40 inches in diameter. The average height is 132 feet, with the tallest reaching 147 feet.

The remaining 120 acres of the Tree Farm were purchased by Ron and Judy in 1989, after a heavy harvest. They purchased the property for additional space to recreate and as an added layer of protection for their cherished old growth forest. However, they do intend on harvesting timber on the 120-acre parcel when the time is right. In preparation for this, they planted 13,000 black spruce and have conducted pre-commercial thinnings according to their management plan.



(Left to right) Research scientist, David Ray and property owner, Ron Richards.

When asked what their objective is in managing the property, Ron said: "[I want to] leave something nice and a legacy for my family; leave it better than I received it." Judy added: "Any improvements to the parcel were always in line with [her parents] Ed and Mamie Holt's love for The Pines!" When asked why he is a Tree Farmer, Ron replied, "I like the information and to keep [my] knowledge as current as possible." His advice for landowners who may not be managing their woodlands is to "get a management plan so at least you have something in front of you." Scientist David Ray added that the Tree Farm Program shows "[the public] the land isn't abandoned." Judy and Ron have been Tree Farmers since 1994 and are

also Maine Woodland Owner Members. They visit the property frequently and are excited to pass it on to their family. They are also excited to note that their great grandson is the family's 6th generation to enjoy the property.



(Left to right) Ron Richards and Judy Holt-Richards with their family cabin.



TREE FARM PROFILE: Richards Tree Farm

Owners: Judy Holt-Richards & Ron Richards

Town, County: Corinna, Penobscot

Tree Farm Since: 1990

Acres: 130

Feature: Maine Natural Areas Program:

- Critical Areas Program; Old-Growth White Pine

Current Forester: Rob Nelson



We Have a New Website!

If you haven't heard, the Maine Tree Farm Committee has a new website. While the address remains the same (www.maintreefarm.org), there is a variety of new content to explore, including community features, archived newsletters, and more! A special thanks to Pam and Bryan Wells, of Old Town, for their efforts in getting the website online. Please check it out, and let us know what you think. There are still some areas that are a work in progress, so your feedback will be greatly appreciated. We could especially use more pictures of Tree Farmers with their Tree Farm signs. And with their foresters, too!

2019 American Tree Farm System's National Leadership Conference

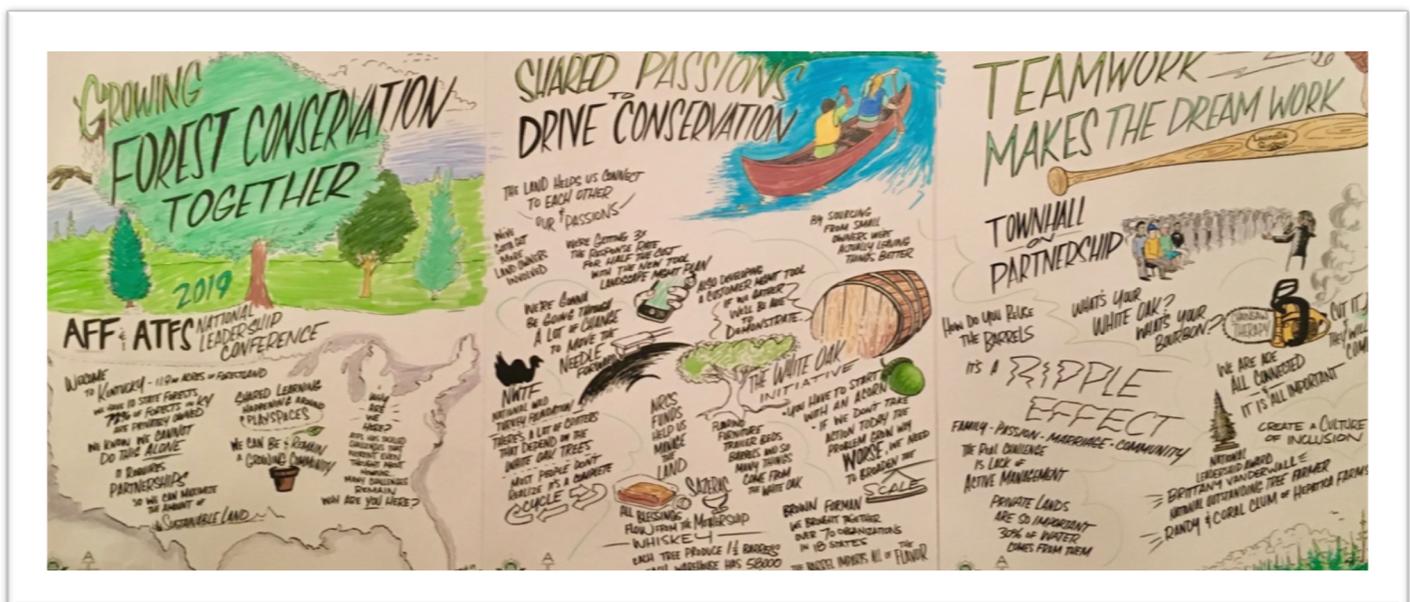


(Left to right): Logan Johnson (Coordinator), Patty Cormier (Secretary), and Andy Shultz (Chair) of the Maine Tree Farm Committee at 2019 National Leadership Conference in Louisville, Kentucky

The 2019 American Tree Farm System's National Leadership Conference was held from February 25 to 28 in Louisville, Kentucky. Attending from the Maine Committee were Committee Chair and Maine Forest Service Outreach Forester, Andy Shultz; Committee Secretary and Maine Forest Service District Forester, Patty Cormier, and Committee Coordinator and University of Maine Master of Forestry student, Logan Johnson. The theme of this year's National Leadership Conference was "growing forest conservation, together."

The group from Maine spread out to attend as many of the information sessions as possible which included topics such as "Increasing and Improving Management with Forest Stewardship Networks," "Connecting Forest Landowners to the Forest Products Value Chain," and "Measuring Up: A New Tool for Partnerships and Committees."

Officials from American Tree Farm System, a program of the American Forest Foundation, also outlined their vision to grow, strengthen, and increase the impact of Tree Farm System in the coming years. To do this, they will be relying on the state committees, like Maine, to work collaboratively with the national program, to find solutions to issues that will benefit the local Tree Farmers, volunteers, and inspectors that make the program possible



Interpretive drawings representing the various themes and topics of discussion of the annual conference



**Maine Tree Farm Committee
American Tree Farm System
535 Civic Center Drive
Augusta, ME 04330**

*The American Tree Farm System is a program of the
American Forest Foundation*

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Thank you so much for your support!

Please note: The Maine Tree Farm Program works very closely with the Maine TREE Foundation for administration support and fundraising. By making checks payable to the Maine Tree Foundation you will be able to take advantage of their non-profit 501c (3) status. **100% of your donation will go to the Maine Tree Farm Program.**

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