

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2005

VOLUME 61

52nd Annual
North Star Expo
DeLack Logging



*The Minnesota Timber Producers Association
would like to thank everyone for making the
2005 North Star Expo a success!*

A special thank you to the
Expo Committee members,
all of the vendors,
the Itasca County Fair Board,
and especially the companies
who helped sponsor the show:

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ON THE COVER

The Celebrity Loader Contest in progress during the 2005 North Star Expo.

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Minnesota
Timber Producers
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Nortrax Log-A-Load for Kids Donation at North Star Expo a Huge Success

Greetings to all . . .

The North Star Expo is over for another year. Thanks to everyone who visited or exhibited at Grand Rapids this year. The weather

President's Column



was nice, the crowd pleasant and the equipment shiny.

Also, thanks to the Expo Committee for their work in laying out and coordinating the show. Many

hours of planning, meetings and travel are put in by this committee. A big thank you to Warren Johnson for his years as chairman and a warm welcome to Wayne Johnson who will be the Expo chairman going forward. We look forward to next year's show.

The MTPA board of directors will be meeting at the end of October. A variety of association issues – transportation, financial, timber sale, legislative and insurance will be discussed. If you have an issue you would like before the board, please contact the TPA office or talk to a director.

The MTPA has suffered a great loss with the passing of Marilyn Fellows. Marilyn was the current chair of our Insurance Committee, and for years had served on the Group Health trustees and board of directors. She was always thoughtful, well-spoken and prepared. We will miss her greatly. Our deepest sympathy to her family.

Dale A. Erikson



Left to right: Mark Lindberg from Nortrax Duluth, Steve Sheehan from Gillette Children's Hospital, Dale Gessell from Nortrax Grand Rapids, and Peggy Tellers from Nortrax Duluth.

At North Star Expo in Grand Rapids, Minn., Nortrax held a donation drawing to win a John Deere gun safe with all proceeds to benefit Log-A-Load for Kids. Anyone participating received a chance to win the gun safe and a green John Deere ball cap. The Minnesota loggers have long been known to graciously support the Log-A-Load for Kid's charity and this year was no exception.

Nortrax presented a check for \$2,875.00 to Gillette Children's Hospital, on Sept. 27, 2005. Funds raised for Log-A-Load in Minnesota all fund Gillette Children's Hospital.

Stacey Curtis, marketing coordinator for Nortrax Midwest said, "We engaged many customers and participants at the North Star Expo by holding the donation drawing. It gave us a chance to interact with the folks who came through our booth and we also had a chance to tell many people about Log-A-Load and the hospitals they support to those unfamiliar with the organization. And, they all got a great John Deere hat in the

process!"

The donation drawing also yielded a winner of the John Deere gun safe, Don Wagner.

Ultimately, Nortrax could not have been successful with this charity event without the participation of the very generous Minnesota loggers! A special thank you goes out to all who donated at the 2005 North Star Expo.

Marilyn Fellow's passing is a terrible loss to her family, her community and to all of us. In an organization with so many great people, Marilyn was one of the greatest. She always cheerfully offered to help on the projects that we undertook. Just before the Expo she called the office and offered to help in any way since she knew we

Executive Vice President's Column



board of trustees. My heart goes out to her family. TPA will miss her and I will miss her.



I want to thank all of the vendors who exhibited at this year's North Star Expo, the members of our Expo committee, our Best Load contest participants and sponsors, the people who brought "wood cookies" and all of our members and friends who attended the show. You can't find a prettier site than the Itasca County Fairgrounds. The people at the fairgrounds are great to work with and have done an outstanding job improving their facility. A special thank you goes to our President Dale Erickson for arranging to have the Sloughgrass Family Band play at the barbeque. They added a great touch to a fun evening.

From live music, to draft horses, to the wood cookie contest, to the Thursday evening vendor shoot out we added a lot of new things to this year's show. I think that they all added to the event and we will look for more ways to improve the show again next year.



The DNR made an outstanding decision in selecting the St. Louis County Land Commissioner Dave Epperly to be the new director of the Division of Forestry. Dave is an

outstanding leader with a strong commitment to timber programs. Dave has also been a very progressive forester as he brought St. Louis County into the 21st century.

Congratulations to Dave. TPA looks forward to working with you.



The Minnesota Forest Resources Council has published the first major update to the Voluntary Site Level Guidelines. The update is the product of several years work. The new "gold" book will replace the previous "green" books. The books will be distributed over the next several months.

The Forest Resources Council is also looking at the current riparian guidelines. This issue was deferred during the current update. The riparian issue always seems to me to be a matter of seeing how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. While some academics and environmentalists push for ever tighter riparian management restrictions, these lands are being converted to home and cabin sites at an escalating rate. I think that these people should direct their energies at real problems instead of blaming timber harvesting for every ill.



TPA Field Representative Maureen Talarico has returned to the media. Maureen accepted a position as managing editor at KBJR TV in Duluth. Prior to working for us she had been a reporter and anchor at several television stations. During her time with TPA Maureen provided great energy to our committees and projects. Please join me in wishing her well in this important new position.



I'm not big on filling space here with fun facts but I was struck by reading some articles on the impact of hurricanes Katrina and Rita on oil refineries. The articles indicated that the newest oil refinery in the U.S. was built 29 years ago. The newest blast furnace for making steel in the U.S. was built over 30 years ago. And the newest pulp

mill in the U.S., Sappi Fine Paper's Cloquet mill, was completed in 1999. And we wonder why we have problems with our industrial economy.



The University of Minnesota continues on its path to reorganize its operations. The Board of Regents approved U of M President Robert Bruininks' proposal this summer. This proposal includes merging the College of Natural Resources (CNR) with the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (COAFES), along with some programs from the College of Human Ecology (CHE).

The university has appointed 34 task forces to make recommendations on the various aspects of reorganization contained in President Bruininks' plan. The task force dealing with CNR/COAFES/CHE has three co-chairs. Two are agriculture people and one is Dr. Debra Swackhamer from the School of Public Health. Some may recall that Dr. Swackhamer has a history of vitriolic attacks on the pulp and paper industry.

The task forces began meeting in September and will continue until they make their reports in December. As of the writing of this column, the university is choosing to keep these meetings closed from the public.

The ultimate impact of this reorganization on teaching, research and extension will not be known for years. These programs may be improved as President Bruininks has promised. They may be weakened as we fear. Only time will tell.

One thing is clear right now. The processes being followed by the university will go down as one of its sadder chapters. This great institution appears to be implementing a concerted strategy to limit or shut out non-university voices from this process. Whether it was the "hearing" held by the Board of Regents in which a couple of hours were allocated to three minute statements or this latest decision to close task force meetings, the university falls well

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short of the public's expectations
for a revered land-grant institution
older than the state itself.



I was pleased to participate in the tour organized by Rep. Gil Gutknecht (R-Rochester, Minn.) for Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns. I had the chance to visit candidly with the Secretary as the bus went from Duluth to Jon Rolle's job on the Laurentian District. I'd had a belly full of Forest Service issues as I'd just returned from two days of meetings with Forest Service and Department of Agriculture staff in Washington, D.C. I was pretty candid with the Secretary and he seemed to be listening.



We were pleased to once again host the Lake States Federal Timber Purchasers Congressional Staff Tour. This annual event had fourteen staffers from members of Congress in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan, as well as from congressional committees. The tour included stops on the jobs of TPA members Doug Popham and Doug Brenner and tours of Hedstrom Lumber, Louisiana Pacific and Stora Enso. Thank you to Doug and Doug for taking the time to visit with the staffers and show them what they were doing on the ground.



Be safe.

Minnesota Timber Producers Association *Meet the Director*



Jerry DeMenge is the newest member of the board of directors. Nominated in 2005, Jerry is the

owner of DeMenge Trucking and Forest Products, LLC out of McGregor, Minn., which he began in 1968.

Serving on the Transportation Committee, Jerry has been instrumental in getting the sixth axle exemption for higher weights for pup-truck trailers. Jerry says TPA has been "very helpful in all aspects of logging and trucking and helps to bring all new laws and regulations to life."

Jerry is married to Aileen and they have two children, Chad and Clint. Jerry also spends time working on township issues, serving on the Log a Load For Kids board, fishing and working on old Chevy cars.

Obituary

Marilyn Fellows passed away on Oct. 1 after an accident at her home. Marilyn was the daughter of long time TPA Director Roland "Babe" and Pauline Fellows. She was raised in Tenstrike, Minn., attended Tenstrike Elementary School and graduated from Blackduck High School in 1965. She moved to



Minneapolis after graduation and continued her education at the Minnesota School of Business.

While living in the Twin Cities Marilyn worked for Midwest TV, Control Data Corp., Fingerhut and K-Tel Corp. In 1993 she moved back to Tenstrike to work with Babe, her sister Joan Pomp and other relatives in the family business, Land O Lakes Wood Preserving.

Marilyn was a member of the TPA board of directors and was chair of the TPA Insurance Committee. She had previously served as a trustee for the TPA Group Health Plan.

An active member of the Tenstrike Community Church, Marilyn was known in her community for looking after the needs of others. She also dedicated time to working on the Fellows Family Museum, which preserves the history of the Tenstrike area and her family.

Marilyn was an active and involved member of TPA. She was always willing to help on projects and to share her time and talents for the betterment of the entire forest products industry. She will be sorely missed by her family, community, friends and TPA.

Forests are the Future in Minnesota

by Wayne Brandt, Executive Vice President
Minnesota Timber Producers Association

Forests have long been an important part of life in Minnesota. Imagine this state without woods surrounding our waters, without fall colors surrounding our country drives. Or, for that matter, without wooden walls surrounding our wooden floors.

The more than 40,000 hardworking men and women who form Minnesota's forest products industry understand and respect this important balance between ecological, economic and social forces. They dedicate themselves to using these renewable materials – trees – to create products that enrich our lives every day. And, enrich the economy in more than 300 Minnesota cities.

Through sustainable forestry, the forest products industry provides essential goods and services, while simultaneously maintaining healthy and abundant forests. We're improving tomorrow's environment today.

That's quite a challenge, when you consider that the average American uses 749 pounds of paper and paper products each year. Yet it's a challenge we're more than equal to. Thanks to sound management and modern technologies, Minnesota has more trees today than it did 70 years ago. For each tree that is harvested in our state, two more are grown.

It's that kind of excellence in Minnesota and elsewhere that led President Bush to proclaim Oct. 16-22, 2005 as National Forest Products Week, a time to recognize the many products that come from our forests, to honor the workers who produce them and to show people how these products contribute to their lives.

Certainly, we appreciate the president's recognition. But even more than that, we appreciate the

opportunity to play an important role in Minnesota's worldwide economy. We're proud to be the ones entrusted to pass our

forestlands on to future generations in better condition than we found them. We're proud to help Minnesota's future grow.

North Star Expo—a Great Success!

The 52nd annual North Star Expo was a huge success! The Expo was held on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 16 and 17, at the Itasca County Fairgrounds, Grand Rapids, Minn. The crowds that ventured through the show saw more than \$20 million dollars in logging equipment on display in the outdoor lots, as well as the latest in technology in both of the indoor display areas.

There were many contests during the show. The log loading contest is always a crowd favorite, starting on Friday and ending on Saturday afternoon. In the Master Loader contest on Friday, there was only one brave soul to test his ability against the clock, Stewart Hunter of Solon Springs, Wis. On Saturday the Master Loader winners (and over all winners) were first place Clarence Hasbargen, Birchdale, Minn.; second place Ramon Killmer, Big Falls, Minn.; third place Loren Grundmeier of Hines, Minn. In the Loader Contest, Friday's winners were first place Tony Kowitz of McGregor; second place Gordy Dobbs, Littlefork; third place Craig Turnboom, Meadowlands. On Saturday, the Loader contest winners were first place Gordy Dobbs; second place Town Kowitz and third place Craig Turnboom. The overall winners in the 2005 Loader contest were first place Tony Kowitz with an overall time of 8:19:24; second place Gordy Dobbs with an overall time of



First Place Best Load winner Scheff Logging.

8:22:87 and third place Craig Turnboom with an overall time of 8:34:02. Congratulations to all of the winners and participants.

Department of Natural Resources Deputy Commissioner Mark Holsten was the overall winner of the Celebrity Loader Contest. Mr. Holsten's winning time was 1:48. KBJR's Range 11 reporter Callie Martell was in second place with 2:04, Senator Tom Saxhaug was third with 3:12 and Brad Moore, assistant commissioner, Department of Natural Resources rounded out the contest with a time of 3:18.

Once again this year the Kid's Mini Loader was a huge success! The kids loved working the controls of the mini-loader and each one received a child-sized

hard hat. The North Star Expo Committee would like to thank LM Products Inc of Cold Spring, Minn. for donating the mini-loader for this kid-friendly activity.

A favorite among the vendors is the Indoors and Outdoors display winners. This year's honors for the Indoor Display first place were CATCO; second place Farm Oyl Company; and third place Agstar Financial. The Outdoor Display winners were first place Nortrax; second place Industrial Lubricant Company; and third place is Pomp's Tire Service.

This was the second year for the "Best Load of Wood" contest, which focused on the quality of the load instead of the truck. Of the four excellent entries this year, Best



Left to right: Loader Contest Overall Winners: First place Tony Kowitz, McGregor; second place Gordy Dobbs, Littlefork; third place Craig Turnboom, Meadowlands.



Master Loader winners were: first place Clarence Hasbargen, Birchdale and Ramon Killmer, Big Falls.



Celebrity Loader contest entrants, left to right: Mark Holsten, deputy commissioner, DNR; Sen. Tom Sauhaug; Callie Martell, Range 11; and Brad Moore, assistant commissioner, DNR.

Load winners were Scheff Logging & Trucking, sponsored by Ainsworth Engineered; second place Rutar Logging LLC, sponsored by Ainsworth Engineered; third place Rieger Logging & Trucking, sponsored by UPM - Blandin; and fourth place Hanson Wood Products, sponsored by Sappi. TPA would like to thank the following companies for generously donating the door prizes for this favorite contest: St. Joseph Equipment, Duluth; Duluth Tire, Duluth; Lake Superior Mack, Duluth; Rihm Kenworth, Superior, Wis.; Allstate Peterbilt, Superior, Wis.; Maney International Trucks, Duluth; Skubic Bros. International, Virginia; Pomp's Tire Service, Superior, Wis.; Jake's Quality Tire, Duluth; Nortrax, Duluth; and Boyer Trucks of Duluth/Superior, Superior, Wis.



Nortrax takes first place for its Outdoor Display.

In the Guess the Weight contest, congratulations goes out to Brett Mattson of Rochester, Minn., for correctly guessing the weight of 97,650 pounds. The actual weight of the truck (with its triple axle trailer) was 98,200 pounds.

A new contest this year was the "Biggest Cookie Contest." There were many fine entries, but the "big daddy" of them all was the piece of cottonwood entered by Dahl Logging, Starbuck, Minn. The other entries were (largest to smallest) white pine, Rick Hensen; white oak, NC Wildfire; white spruce, Dobbs Logging; white spruce, Tyler Wass; white spruce, Whitefish Creek Enterprises; sugar maple, Ron Beckman Jr.; and white birch, Turner Wass.



The Sloughgrass Band from Birchdale entertained everyone at the Friday night bbq.



CATCO Parts and Service wins first place in the Indoor Displays.



The ever popular Kids Mini Loader.



The draft horses that were "working" during the Expo courtesy of the Forest History Center.



Some of the wood cookies entered in the new contest.

Anne Fulton, Grand Rapids, Minn., was pleasantly surprised to learn that she had won the bear wood-carving for entering her card signed by various vendors. TPA would like to thank Guy Clairmont, Sr. for donating his time and talent in doing the wood carving for this drawing. Mr. Clairmont started a very big project at the Expo, he is doing a bear carving that will be welcoming visitors to the Itasca County Fairgrounds, the log was donated by Ainsworth Lumber.

The Expo committee brought back a favorite contest for the kids, the Coloring Contest. It was very hard to judge all of the wonderful colorings, but the winners were: Under 6 group, Elizabeth Nelson of Togo, Minn.; 7-9 group, Toni Ferdig of Blackduck, Minn.; and 10-12

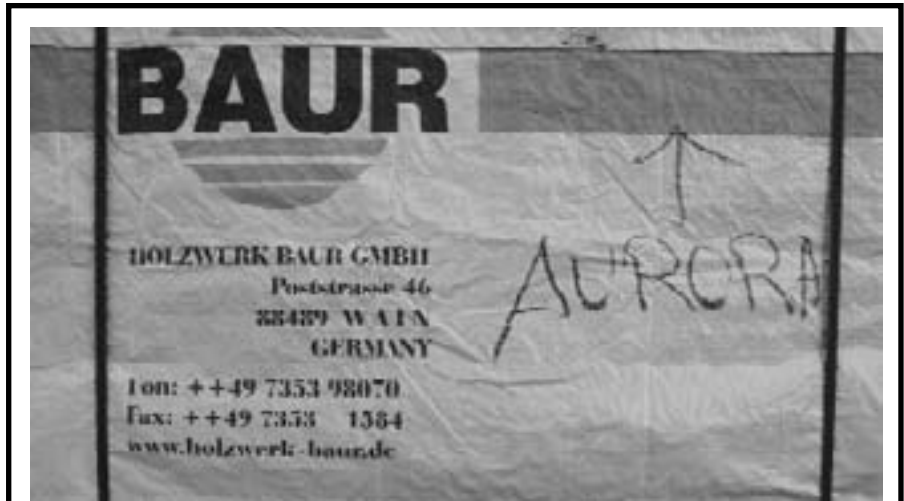
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group, Valeri Ferdig of Blackduck, Minn. Congratulations go out to everyone who entered the Coloring Contest.

Two excellent workshops were held on both days of the Expo. Ari Kettunen, Vermilion Community College, presented a very informative workshop on "Cut-to-Length Professional Harvester Training Programs." The college is offering two new training programs targeting the logging industry. Ken Bickel, University of Minnesota's Center for Diesel Research, presented his workshop on an overview of biodiesel, the various blends and the new state mandate. Also discussed were some of the properties of the various blends and how those properties might affect equipment.

On Friday night the crowd was entertained by the very talented Sloughgrass Family Band, from Birchdale, Minn. Their very entertaining style of music was fun for everyone. More than 200 people enjoyed the family style barbeque provided by B & B Market in Cloquet, after which the many great prizes were given away. TPA would like to thank the following companies for donating door prizes: St. Joseph Equipment, Interstate Power Systems, Wells Fargo, Blackduck; Rice Blacksmith Saw & Machine; Two Harbors Machine/Serco Loaders; Lindsay Machinery; Air Hydraulic Systems; Industrial Lubricant Co; Don Dens Sales; Minnesota Forest Industries; Road Machinery & Supplies; Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance; and Skubic Bros. International. TPA would like to thank Dave Chura for taking photos this year at the Expo. Thanks also to Cliff Shermer, Nate Heibel, and Kit Hasbargen for helping run the fork lift. The North Star Expo Committee would like to thank Northern 2-Way, Grand Rapids, for the use of the radios during the show. TPA would like to thank the following sponsors for their support of the North Star Expo: Ainsworth Lumber, Boise Cascade, Norbord, Stora Enso and Trus Joist Weyerhaeuser. Also, a big thank you to all the vendors and the public who came to the show, you all made the 52nd North Star Expo a huge success!



How bad is the timber supply in Minnesota? Mesabi East High School, Aurora, Minn., had German lumber stacked up in storage outside of its school on a recent fall day. Imagine tax dollars going to import lumber for students' school projects.



Secretary of Agriculture in Minnesota

U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns recently visited the Superior National Forest on a tour organized by Minnesota's First District Representative Gil Gutknecht. Rep. Gutknecht, who included loggers and industry people in addition to National Forest staff on the tour, sought to show Secretary Johanns what was going on in the woods in Minnesota.

The group toured a timber sale on the Superior National Forest that was being logged by TPA member Jon Rolle. The site, a mature stand of jack pine, showed some of the Forest Service prescriptions of concern. Substantial volume was left standing on the sale by Forest Service requirement at a time when timber supply is critical in Minnesota.

Secretary Johanns, who previously served as governor of Nebraska, had the opportunity to see Jon Rolle's equipment in operation and to interact with



Left to right: TPA Vice President Tom McCabe, Rep. Gil Gutknecht, Jon Rolle and Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns out in the woods.

loggers and industry people on the sale. Congressman Gutknecht, a friend of timber management, was very vocal on the tour about the need for national forests to harvest their entire Allowable Sale Quantities of wood.

Others public sector people on

the tour included staff from the offices of Rep. Oberstar, Senators Dayton and Coleman, regional forester Randy Moore, forest supervisors Norm Wagoner and Jim Sanders, DNR Commissioner Gene Merriam and Assistant Commissioner Brad Moore.



Bill Richard, chief of staff to Rep. Jim Oberstar, and regional forester Randy Moore discuss issues on the tour.



Rep. Gutknecht and Jack Rajala discuss Forest Service issues.

Early Loggers in Minnesota

by J. C. Ryan

VOL. I

VOL. III

VOL. II

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First hand recollections by storyteller 'Buzz' Ryan of the loggers, loaders, swampers, wood bulchers and bulchers who ruled the woods in the hey-day of the pioneer lumberjacks—with dozens of historical photographs.

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DeLack Logging Inc.



Scott and Neil DeLack.

by Maureen Talarico

When Neil DeLack was in high school, he began working in the woods on the weekends for extra money. That side job soon turned into a career that has spanned three decades and led to successful business that his son, Scott, will soon take over. "I'm getting close to the end of the line. I'll be 65 next year . . . so I'm thinking I may throw in the towel probably on everything."

Born and raised in the small town of Littlefork, Neil DeLack had grown up in the wood industry. His father worked for Mando and for Boise, and Neil worked in the wood yard at Mando for a while. He worked for nine years as the

district manager of the Koochiching County Forestry Department in Littlefork. Logging was a weekend activity at that time. "And I finally decided if I logged full time, maybe I'd get my weekends off; it didn't work out that way," he says with a laugh.

No, he never really got his weekends off, but he did start a business that would become a mainstay in the Littlefork community. He began small. "I started out with a small cable skidder, then I had a small dozer, and back then it was easy to buy wood. The hard part was getting rid of it."

It seems odd now, that wood was almost too prevalent. But in 31 years, DeLack has witnessed a lot of changes. As a contract logger for Boise and cutting some wood for other mills, he says without that arrangement it would be incredibly difficult to be a logger today. "If you didn't have that, you couldn't compete. The small guy is in trouble right now. It would be really impossible for someone to start logging right now. It's got to be that you take over a job situation because you just can't buy the wood."

His equipment includes two Timco feller bunchers, three John Deere Skidders, two of them 648s and a 748, one John Deere Delimber with a propac, one Cat Delimber with a propac, and a Kamatsu with a limit delimber. This equipment is

stored in perhaps the tidiest of all equipment shops in the state. Once, TPA staff stopped to visit DeLack only to find he had hired cleaning ladies to wash the shop walls!

DeLack has consistently been an active and strong supporter of TPA. He is currently on the board of directors, and has served on the safety, transportation and public relations committees. "There are so many issues we need to tackle that it is good to be part of an association like TPA."

Community involvement has always been important to DeLack as well. He served on the fire department of Littlefork for 20 years, was a charter member of the Lions club, giving them 25 years of service, and has served on the Littlefork City Council for one term. And only in a town like Littlefork would Neil DeLack's street be named after his wife, Laurel. "My uncle owned the property and he named the street after her. But everyone calls her Nubby."

Laurel, or Nubby if you prefer, and Neil raised two children, Scott and Stephanie. Both kids live in Littlefork as well. Stephanie does accounting work for a supermarket chain. Scott will soon take over the family business. "He went to college two years and then he decided this is what he wants to do. He's never looked back and he never will."

And that is a relief to Neil, knowing DeLack Logging will still exist long after his retirement. "I don't have to worry one bit about
(continued on page 22)



Daryl Street has worked for DeLack for 30 years.



Joe Anderson has worked for DeLack for 25 years.

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anything. He's probably doing a better job than I did, because I think he's smarter than me, believe it or not."

And who knows, perhaps Neil's grandchildren, Paige and Taylor, may also want to stay in Littlefork, in the family business. Neil says while he never got his weekends off like he intended when he first began logging, he has no regrets about his career change.

"I get paid for what I like to do. The harder I work the more I make. That's the part I like. And I didn't mind the work. So if you put in effort, I think it doesn't really matter what kind of business it is, you'll probably have success."



LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

"Days of Real Horsepower"

by J. C. Ryan

This story is reprinted from an earlier *Timber Bulletin*—one of the first of "Buzz" Ryan's ever-popular contributions to these pages. The *Bulletin* will continue to reprint selected stories from the memories he recorded for us.—*Editor*



Today, when a new skidder, tractor or other power unit is purchased to serve the logging industry, we ask, "What horsepower is it?"—meaning the S.A.E. rating of developed horsepower units.

In the old logging days, "horsepower" meant just what it said: How many head of horses needed to do the job.

In early days of logging in Maine, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, oxen were used extensively. This was when timber was cut near the rivers and lakes, and skidding was done over only about a quarter of a mile to the shore. The ox was good for skidding, but when sleigh hauls over ice roads came into the picture, the ox was out. Oxen were tough, needed little housing and care, and worked every day on hay with little grain. But oxen were slow, and it took eight head of oxen to handle a load that four good horses would haul.

In Minnesota, oxen were used mostly along the Rum, St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers, around Lake Mille Lac and the northern edge of the pine forests. They were used but very little in southeastern Minnesota, where there was considerable rock and rock out-crop. Horses were the

main source of power and transportation.

Along the St. Croix River and at Wisconsin, horses were brought in from the farms of Illinois, southern Wisconsin and Iowa as soon as freezing weather started in the fall. Several families would pool their horses and hire them out together to a logging company for the winter. The horses were shipped north by barge, boat or railroad as far as possible and walked the rest of the way into the camps. They returned the same way in the spring.

In northern Minnesota, many of the horses came from the farms of the southern part of the state and the Dakotas. There were several horse companies in the Twin Cities and in Duluth that brought these horses in from the farmers and hired them out in groups to the logging companies. Other companies owned horses and hired them out as a group. Tom Smart of Bentidji was one of these operators and had beautiful horses that went into the woods as a group every winter.

The moving of horses to and back from camps was quite a job, and I remember complete train loads of hives coming south on the Canadian Northern

and M & J Railroads when camps were breaking up in the spring. As a boy in the Bentidji area, I have sat all day by the road and watched horses being driven south from the camps. Two or three men would bring a long string of horses, each in harness with the halter rope tied to the horse ahead.

Besides the many horses hired each year, most logging companies had horses of their own. Some of the logging companies that had their own sawmills worked the horses around the mills during the summer. Other companies shipped their horses south to work on road and other construction jobs during the summer, while some like Northern Lumber Co. had large pasture camps where the horses were kept while not working.

Cloquet Lumber Camp No. 26, in Sec. 3-55-14, was one of those summer pasture camps, as were the Virginia and Rainy Lake horse camps near Cusson. The company horseman would meet every horse returning to pasture with a greeting as if it were one of his family.

Buying and hiring good, big horses for the woods was always a problem, but they were always the best obtainable. Most were Friesianos, weighing from 1,800 to 2,000 pounds apiece. Considerable effort and care was given to matching up the horses in color, weight and gait, and no one would allow splitting up teams once they were well matched. The large and fast walking horses were used on the sleigh hauls, while the smaller ones were used for skidding.

Four-horse teamsters who worked year after year for the same companies wanted the same teams back each year and took great pride in keeping their horses in good shape while hauling the biggest loads. Some camps had "been bosses" who fed and cared for the horses, but in most camps the teamsters did those jobs. Each horse was different, and a teamster learned how to feed his horses to keep them in the best condition. Most horses would do well on six quarts of oats twice a day; others needed more or less. Over feeding probably killed more horses than anything.

But good care of horses was always a rule, and very few were ever sick in camps. There was an occasional case of colic, but because the teamsters knew

Oxen did best at skidding, but not moving the big loads.



how to feed, this was rare.

Men like J. C. Campbell, Sr., who was windy superintendent for Northern for a number of years, and Ed Day, who cared for Northern horses, liked and appreciated their teams and made sure of good care. All large companies had a vet come into camp regularly and float the horses' teeth, for a horse that could not grind his grain well could not be kept in the best of shape.

Occasionally, a horse would slip into a hole in a swamp and break a leg, but this was rare. More commonly, horses "walked" themselves—stepping on their ankles with sharp shoe calks, for these injuries, the teamsters would apply turpentine or kerosene, and while the horse would prance around a lot, the cut seemed to heal in a few days.

For hard horses, logging companies would always be responsible if an animal was hurt or killed, but not if it died of natural causes.

As horses got old they were taken off the sleigh hauls and used to skid wood around camp, haul lunch out to the woods and for other odd camp jobs. Many companies kept their old horses around the pasture camps until they died or were disabled so they had to be disposed of. To my knowledge, no lumber company ever let one of its horses that had worked for a number of years be sold for junk or fire fuel.

In making up teams, the lead team was usually a little smaller than the pole team. The lead team wore a long tug harness without a breeching, while the pole team wore a breeching harness with side straps and two neck yokes. The whiffletrees and spaulders of the lead team hung on the end of the sleigh pole to keep them off the horses' heels when going down a grade. The pole was held up by a rod attached to the beam of the sleigh.

A small platform was built just back of the front runners of the sleigh, and the teamster stood on this platform on a sack of hay. While four horses were usual, six horses were used sometimes if there was much upgrade on the road. On short grades a scratch team was hitched in front of the four to help over the hill. When roads went downhill, hay was placed in the rut to slow the sleigh.

The usual sleigh haul was four to five miles for a two-trip road. A six or seven mile road was considered a horse killer for two trips. A haul of eight miles was considered a one-trip road, and sometimes one team took the load half way and was met by another team to finish the trip.

A teamster knew his horses and just how much they could pull—and he could get every ounce of pull out of them just by talking to them. I have seen horses get down and pull until they

pulled their shoes right off with the nails breaking loose from the hoofs. Teamsters were always on the watch for sore shoulders or necks and watched that a rivet on the harness did not rub or chafe a sore.

As a rule, a driving team was kept at camp for the foreman to use in making his rounds of the jobs or for camp jobs like hauling mail. Each camp had its tote team that hauled a hay, grain and camp supplies. Toting often started before the camp was in operation, banging in lumber for construction. Tote roads usually followed the high land, with trips up to 40 miles.

Horses for toting were picked for their ability to travel over rough, rocky roads and over the many soft spots. A well trained tote team driver was quite an asset to a camp. Frank McMinn, who toled for Northern Lumber Co. for a number of years, was one of the very best. Every jack around Duluth and northeastern Minnesota knew his team of two black and two halfbreed bays.

About the only time you would see more than four horses pulling together would be on snowplowing and I've seen as many as 20 horses pulling a snow plow. And in the old logging days, that meant 20 horsepower!



Men in the woods were always proud of horses' performance.



The teamster stood on a platform built across front runners.

Epperly Named DNR Forestry Director

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) selected St. Louis County Land Commissioner David Epperly to be director of the DNR's Forestry Division, effective Nov. 1. He replaces former head forester Mike Carroll, who took over as DNR Northwest regional director in Bemidji. Acting Director Bob Tomlinson will continue to serve in the interim, and then will continue to help guide the division in his position as assistant director of DNR Forestry.

"I'm looking forward to joining an impressive team of natural resources professionals," said Epperly. "My experience working on forestry and land issues at the county level, as well as previous forestry career experience in the private sector, should add to the great work the DNR is already doing," he said.

Epperly has a Bachelor of Science degree in forest management and a minor in land surveying from Michigan Technological Institute in Houghton, Mich.

He has been a county land commissioner since 1999, and was deputy land commissioner for about one year before that, both of which include forest and resource management of St. Louis County's 900,000 acres of tax-forfeited land.

From 1990 to 1998 he was the director of the Douglas County (Wis.) DNR. He was assistant district forest manager for Mosinee Paper Company from 1982-1989. He also spent about one year as a self-employed forestry consultant for Naturescapes in Solon Springs, Wis.

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