

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2004

VOLUME 60



Todd Figgins'
Secret to Success

TIMBER BULLETIN

Volume 60
September/October 2004
Duluth, Minnesota

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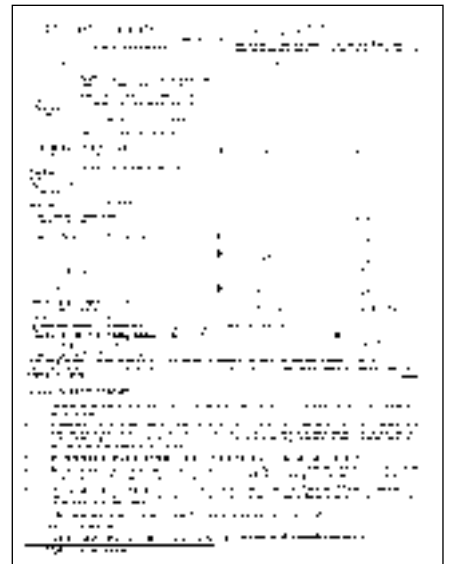
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Fall in Minnesota

The Timber Bulletin is published six times annually, in February, April, June, August, October and December by the Minnesota Timber Producers Association, located at 903 Medical Arts Bldg., 324 W. Superior St., Duluth, Minn. Minnesota Timber Producers Association members receive the Timber Bulletin at an annual subscription rate of \$15 which is included in their membership dues. Periodicals postage paid in Duluth, Minnesota. Advertising rates and data on request. The views expressed in the Timber Bulletin do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Minnesota Timber Producers Association.

Postmaster: Please send address corrections to **TIMBER BULLETIN**, Minnesota Timber Producers Association, 903 Medical Arts Bldg., 324 W. Superior St., Duluth, Minnesota 55802, Phone 218-722-5013.

Issn: 10973532 – USPS: 016208

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Minnesota
Timber Producers
Association



The leaves are falling, geese are flying. Fall is a very colorful time of year. Meanwhile, the MTPA membership contest is still going on. There is still time to sign up a new member and win a shotgun.

One of the many benefits of membership is direct contact with MN DOT, for example. The transportation committee is

President's Column



heavily involved with logging truck issues.

They are a valuable source of information, especially with the new weight limits. Along with co-

ordinating truck driver workshops, they are working on tie-down regulations, frost tube placement, spring load restrictions, and permitting issues. Did you know the MN DOT website has a link to permits? Go to www.dot.state.mn.us/motorcarrier/oversize/oversize.html. Print the application form you want, fill it out and fax it in. Beats being on the phone for extended periods of time. If you have questions about permits or regulations, please contact Maureen at the TPA office 218-722-5013.

The mechanization committee has tentatively set the 2005 North Star Expo for September 16 - 17 in Grand Rapids. Thanks to all who participate in this effort.

Remember, please vote for the candidates who support the timber industry.

Thank you.

Dan A. Erickson



Boise's Bob Anderson, his wife, Carol, and student worker Matt Weldy hand out tree seedlings, fact books, and bags at the 2004 Minnesota State Fair.

New MFI Display Debuts at Minnesota State Fair

Minnesota Forest Industries unveiled its new display at this year's Minnesota State Fair in St. Paul. The display featured a forest

scene with images of tree planting, wildlife and children in the forest. The display also included two tables featuring nature scenes and a new Tree Trivia game unit. At the 2004 Minnesota State Fair, industry representatives and staff handed out 12,000 red pine seedlings, 9,500 bags, 8,000 fact books, and 9,000 coloring books.



Crowds line up to play Tree Trivia and win a red pine seedling.

The *Timber Bulletin* has covered the issue of who controls how much state timber in the past. Regular readers may recall that the proportions have shown that roughly one-fourth of the state wood is owned by large firms (which is down from the 1970s and early-to-mid 1980s), half is owned by medium firms and one-fourth by small firms.

At the end of the last fiscal year (June 30, 2004) the figures remained relatively unchanged. Large firms

Executive Vice President's Column



owned 23.1% of active state timber sale permits. Medium firms held 50.5%. Small firms had 23.6% and co-ops owned 2.7%.

There were a total of 2,567 active permits with 2,330,654 cords on them at the end of the fiscal year.

What does this mean? It depends on your perspective. Obviously state wood is not all of the public stumpage that's out there. But the state does have the most wood under contract.

I think the thing that is the most interesting is how little the percentages have changed in recent times. While stumpage remains terribly tight, who is buying state wood has not changed much - at least when you break it down by firm size.



With the election season nearing its end, an interesting trend in campaigns has continued. I've always believed that the winning formula for campaigns, and for governing, is to start with a strong base, occupy the center of the political spectrum, and push your opposition to either the far left or far right.

The primary strategy these days seems to be to simply run hard to a base of support, polarize the issues and forget about the middle. Stark choices seem to rule the day.

While this may be a formula for winning elections these days, I do not think that it's a formula for

effectively governing our state or country.

We have all seen the gridlock that has settled on Washington and in many state capitols. Is this a result of candidates ignoring the middle of the electorate? I think so. I think that it is also a result of constituencies and their advocates with winner-take-all attitudes.

Frequently you will see long-faced lobbyists around the Capitol after something important has been passed for their members or clients. The advocate may know that they did a good job but they will always cite what part of the bill got left behind.

As a society, we might be better off with a few more candidates occupying the center and a few more constituencies and their advocates leaving a slice of bread on the table.



Every member reading this column knows someone who should be a member of TPA. The most effective way to get them to be a member is for you to explain why you are a member and then ask them to join TPA. Pretty simple. And, you'll become eligible for the drawing for a shotgun in our current membership contest.



Congratulations to the Minnesota SFI State Committee for being named the State Implementation Committee of the year. Minnesota won the award the first year it was given, 1999, and is the first two-

time winner. A lot of hard work has gone into the SFI program and a lot more will need to be done in the future. While some may be distracted by the scheme of the day, the SFI program continues to move forward.



As I write this column it's a glorious day here in Duluth. The sun is glinting off a calm as glass Lake Superior and it's supposed to be warm today. In a few weeks the ships will be stacked up in the harbor for the end of the shipping season rush, but there is no sign of bedlam on the waterfront today.

It's a lot like our late fall calm of equipment repairs and preparations for the bedlam of the winter logging season.

Planning will make things smoother this winter but there will always be challenges. One of the challenges that we face every day is to work safely. As you get ready for the winter, please include safety in your planning. When will we have safety meetings? What will we discuss? How does what's important on one site differ from another site? With the longer hours to come how will we stay fresh and alert? How will we avoid slipping when getting on or off of equipment?

Don't let today's calm give you a false sense of security about the bedlam to come.

Walter Smith

Announcing!!!

THE NORTH STAR EXPO

SEPTEMBER 16 & 17, 2005

Itasca County Fairgrounds

Grand Rapids, Minn.

Todd Figgins' Secret to Success

Todd Figgins says the secret to any successful business is good service and competitive pricing. "It's a philosophy I've always followed. I am honest and fair with our customers and we work hard to give them the best service we can, which they appreciate and respect. We have a great group of customers, they treat us well because they're hard working people just like we are and that's what makes good business."

If you didn't receive good directions, you might sail right by Figgins Truck and Trailer Repair Shop in Grand Rapids. The nondescript building has no sign, but that doesn't stop people from finding the shop.

Todd and his wife, Jackie, opened the shop in November 1993. "I worked with my parents for about 15 years at their trucking company, and we decided it was time to go out on our own. I have been working on trucks my whole life so the choice of a truck repair shop was the logical decision. We have been as busy as we can be with this business since we started and we are working with the daily ups and downs of running a small but successful business," says Figgins.

"We do general maintenance, under truck repair, alignments, tire service for on-road and off-road equipment, MnDOT inspections, 24-hour, seven-days-a-week emergency roadside service;



Todd Figgins outside his shop.

everything except internal engine work," says Figgins. The Figgins have two full-time employees. Denny Dixon has been working for them since 1999 and is an excellent welder. Dean Broten started working with the Figgins in 1996 and has 16 years of drive train experience. "With a combination of the guys in the shop, we do a lot of general maintenance and a wide variety of jobs, which keeps every day interesting," says Figgins.

Figgins Truck and Trailer has remained successful, not having many slow periods. Todd says much of his business comes from the timber industry; this is one of the driving factors in his decision

to join the Timber Producers Association. "A large part of my business is from the timber industry, either through the loggers or the finished product and also the supplies coming in, so I want to be aware of their needs and what's happening in the industry." He says so far, he's been impressed by what he's seen at the TPA. Denny stated that "The DOT officer in my recertification class said the TPA gives out excellent information and when a member calls, TPA researches the issue and passes back good information to its members."

New to the TPA, Figgins has a chance of winning in the Member Get a Member contest, entered by



Dean Broten is a drive train expert.



Denny Dixon, a superb welder, has worked for the Figgins since 1999.



Figgins truck and trailer repair shop in Grand Rapids.



The Figgins family – Micheal, Matt, Jackie and Todd.

his friend Mike Warren. The two played golf at the TPA tournament in Angora this spring, tying for third place despite temperatures in the low 40s. Todd also sponsored a hole for the Log-A-Load for Kids Golf Tournament and played with

the M&R Chips team. He plays golf with Jackie and their two boys, Matt, 16, who has started working after school in the family business, and Micheal, who's 13, not quite old enough to work daily at the shop. The family enjoys camping

and racquetball, but with business as busy as it has been, there's not a lot of free time. Still, the Figgins aren't complaining and they're looking forward to many more years of servicing the people of northern Minnesota.

Log a Load for Kids 8th Annual Golf Tournament Sponsored by Ford Raises \$11,200 For Gillette Children's Hospital

Log A Load For Kids, a non-profit housed by Minnesota Timber For Humanity, held its eighth annual late summer golf tournament at Pokegama Golf Course in Grand Rapids. Ford Motor Company sponsored the successful event and Montavon Motors of Grand Rapids supported the event with volunteers and a demo 2005 Ford pickup truck. In addition, Pokegama Lawn and Sport provided a 2005 Arctic Cat four-wheeler for the hole-in-one prize on the fifteenth hole.

Thirty-three foursomes golfed the beautiful and challenging Pokegama course. PGA Pro Bill Hensel challenged the skill of the golfers on the 11th hole "Beat the Pro" contest. Golfers made a donation to participate and those golfers who got closer to the hole than the pro got their name in a drawing for PGA golf items. One catch: if all four team members participated, bringing in more money for the cause, Bill teed off from the farthest tee to give the amateurs an advantage. Needless to say, Dave Hensel, Bill's brother, was ecstatic when he "Beat the



Left to right: Dave Hensel, Blandin employee and tournament co-chair; Becky Holst, Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare and Log A Load tournament co-chair; Paul Jensen, Montavon Motors.

Pro." Ted Kromy's team of Kromy, Jon Bauer, Mark White and Steve Forneris won the scramble format tournament with a score of 56.

The event raised \$11,200 for Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare, the Children's Miracle Network Hospital affiliate in Minnesota. Gillette treats children with disabilities and, in addition to

the main campus in St. Paul and a satellite clinic in Duluth, their Mobile Outreach Clinic travels to cities throughout Minnesota, including Grand Rapids. This clinic brings Gillette physicians and assistive technology staff and services to area patients, saving their families time and travel expense to St. Paul.

LUA Returns Dividends for 11th Year in a Row

Thanks to the efforts of all the TPA members participating in the workers compensation program, Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance announced a 20% dividend for the 10th consecutive year. In fact, LUA has proudly returned dividends to the TPA members for 11 consecutive years totaling almost \$6,000,000. LUA Branch Manager Bill Dupont says "The TPA/LUA is a unique relationship in which the members or subscribers are truly the owners of the program. The success purely stems from the conscientious, dedicated hard work of every member, along with the loss control and underwriting efforts of LUA." LUA has been involved with the TPA Safety Group since 1981. Dupont says the focus on safety and education will increase the opportunities for the same level of dividend in the future.

- Too many bugs and leeches and spiders and spider webs. Please spray the wilderness to rid the area of these pests.
- Please pave the trails so they can be plowed of snow in the winter.
- Chair lifts need to be in some places that we can get to wonderful views without having to hike them.
- Reflectors need to be placed on trees every 50 feet so people can hike at night with flashlights.
- Need more signs to keep area pristine.
- Too many rocks in the mountains.
- Ban walking sticks in the wilderness. Hikers who use walking sticks are more likely to chase animals.
- The places where trails do not exist are not well marked.

Wild Comments

The following are actual comments left on US Forest Service registration sheets and comment cards by backpackers after wilderness camping trips....enjoy!

- A small deer came into my camp and stole my bag of pickles. Is there any way I can get reimbursed? Please call.
- Escalators would help on steep, uphill sections.
- Instead of a permit system or regulations, the Forest Service needs to reduce worldwide population growth to limit the number of visitors to wilderness.
- Trails need to be wider so people can walk while holding hands.
- The coyotes made too much noise last night and kept me awake. Please eradicate these annoying animals.
- All the mile markers are missing the years.
- A McDonalds would be nice at the trailhead.
- Trails need to be reconstructed. Please avoid building trails that go up hill.

TPA MEMBERSHIP CONTEST

Announcing an exciting new way to build membership and win a fantastic prize. Best of all...it's easy!!! All you have to do is recruit a new TPA member by spreading the word about membership benefits. For each member you recruit, your name goes in a drawing to win a new shotgun! A new member's name will also be drawn for a prize.

**Benefits include: Health Insurance Savings Workers' Comp Savings
Drug and Alcohol Testing Program Timber Bulletin Subscription
North Star Expo TPA Golf Tournament Legislative Representation
Truck Driver Workshops (MLEP credit) Committee Participation**

Have a say in the future of your Industry!

Have a prospective member fill out the form below, along with your name so you get credit for the recruiting, then detach and mail to the TPA office:
324 W. Superior St., Suite 903, Duluth, MN 55802

Current TPA Member Name & Company: _____

Address & Phone: _____

New TPA Member Name & Company: _____

Address & Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____ Type of Business: _____

I would like to be part of the following committees: ___ Membership ___ Insurance
___ Safety ___ Public Relations ___ Transportation ___ Govt. Relations ___ Mechanization

Payment: \$300.00 minimum membership fee (see dues schedule on back)

I've enclosed a check Bill me

Make checks payable to Minnesota Timber Producers Association.
Send to: 324 W. Superior St., Suite 903, Duluth, MN 55802

Contest Deadline: November 1st
Winners' names will be announced in November

Lake States Federal Timber Purchasers Committee Congressional Staff Tour – August 18-20, 2004



Staff and industry representatives witness a cut-to-length system in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.



Tom McCabe of McCabe Forest Products speaks with congressional staff about his conventional logging operation.

The Lake States Federal Timber Purchasers Committee hosted its annual congressional staff tour this year in Duluth, Wed., Aug. 18, through Friday, the 20th. Representing nine different congressional offices, staffers flew in from Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, for the beginning of the tour. Staff from Representative Gil Gutknecht, Senator Norm Coleman, Representative Jim Oberstar, Representative Martin Sabo, Senator Herb Kohl, Representative Dave Obey, Representative Fred Upton, Senator Russ Feingold, and Representative Mark Green attended.

The staffers and industry representatives toured a conventional logging operation run by Tom McCabe of McCabe Forest Products. Mark Pannkuk of the St. Louis County Land Department spoke about county land management, and Dave Chura, executive director of the Minnesota Logger Education Program, also spoke to the staffers about the MLEP program. Tour participants also learned how wildlife benefits from young forests from Rick Horton of the Ruffed Grouse Society. And they heard a presentation from Norm Wagoner and Jim Sanders from the Chippewa and Superior national forests. The day ended with a dinner tour of the Duluth harbor

aboard the Vista Star.

The following morning, the tour traveled to Hayward, Wis., for a look inside the Louisiana Pacific Oriented Strand Board Mill, and then it was on to the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest for lunch and a helicopter ride of the forestland courtesy of Minnesota Power. Then the buses traveled deep into the forest so staffers could view a cut-to-length system.

That evening ended with a fabulous ride up the North Shore on the Historic Lake Superior Railroad.

On the final day attendees boarded a bus for a tour of Sappi Fine Paper, in Cloquet. Staffers and industry reps agreed the tour was a huge success and look forward to another educational and informative tour of the Lake States forest products industries again in 2005.

Minnesota Timber Producers Association *Meet the Directors*

Keith Larson, of Shevlin, has been in the timber industry his entire life. He began working in his father's business, Larson Lumber Company, in 1964. In September 2003 the sawmill business closed, but the Larsons still have a timber brokering business. Larson is married to Janie, and they have five children, plus a grandson, Caleb, with another on the way in February. Larson is active in the Solway Bible Chapel Church, where he sings in a gospel quartet. He also enjoys fishing, hunting and gardening. He says TPA has



helped him most by giving him valuable work contacts and a voice in government.

Forest Service Unveils New Plans for Chippewa/Superior

The U.S. Forest Service has announced how it plans to manage the Chippewa and Superior national forests for the next 15 years. The \$4 million dollar plan includes 102 million board feet (mmbf) Allowable Sale Quantity for the Superior National Forest. This compares to the current ASQ of 97 mmbf and the ASQ of 82 mmbf in the draft plan. The industry-proposed alternative provided for an ASQ of 140 mmbf, based on historic age class distribution and other research. Even with the increase, the yearly harvest level is only about 6/10 of one-percent of all the acres in the forest, or about 30 percent of the Superior's annual growth.

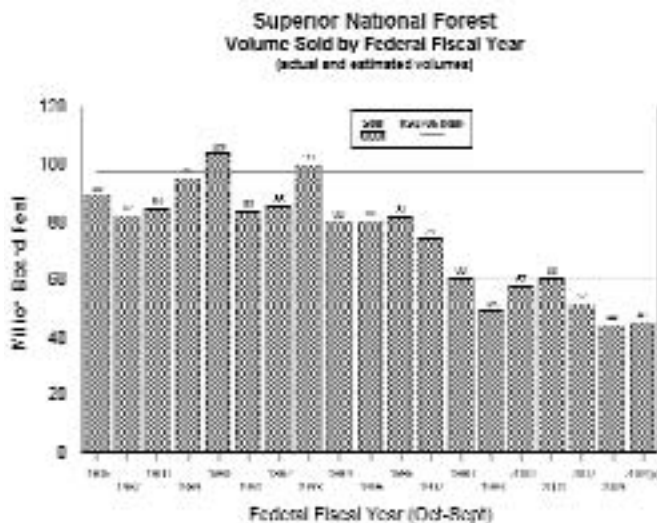
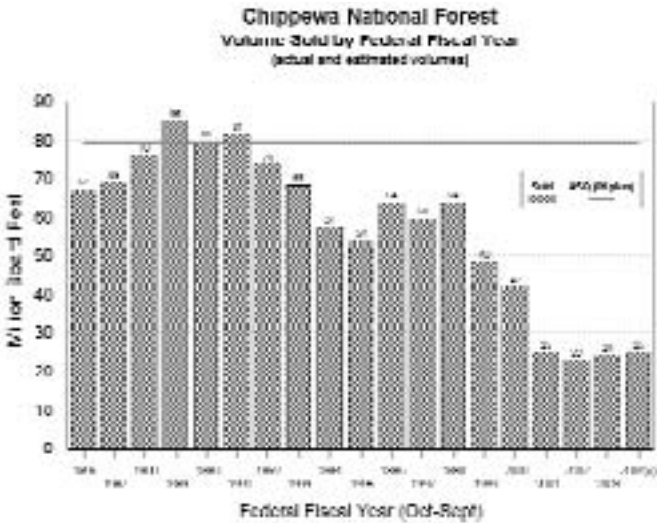
On the Chippewa, the ASQ is set at 58 mmbf. This is substantially lower than the current level of 79

mmbf, but higher than the draft plan of 50 mmbf. Industry's proposed alternative was an ASQ of 80 mmbf. The drop in the ASQ may be interpreted that the Forest Service prefers less active management on the Chippewa, one of the most productive forests in Region Nine.

The Forest Service determines an ASQ by considering the needs of a healthy forest, economic activity, recreation, and wildlife. The ASQ is the amount of acres the Forest Service determines it needs to treat through timber management to meet the objectives laid out in the plan. However, the Forest Service has not been meeting its ASQ levels. Last year, on the Superior and Chippewa combined, the Forest Service only met 40 percent of its ASQ, or 50 percent on the Superior

and 33 percent on the Chippewa.

Industry leaders had hoped for higher numbers on both forests. Utilizing timber harvesting in a productive, managed way would be better than allowing stands to be susceptible to disease, insects, blow down and catastrophic wildfire. The Forest Service must secure adequate funding from Congress to implement these plans. The appeals period is open until Nov. 25 of this year and litigation is likely. Now the test will be whether the Forest Service will attempt to meet the current ASQ levels laid out in the new plans and thereby fulfill its commitment to the public and to the forest products industry.



MnDOT Offers Free Seminar on Truck Weights

The Minnesota Department of Transportation is offering a series of workshops on truck weights. The Statewide Truck Weight Compliance Training course is offered free of charge, around the state. Topics include an update of road weight limits and the differences between local and state systems, overweight truck issues, workbooks and classroom exercises, axle spacing, and whether to alter an existing truck or purchase a new one. The course offers professional materials you can take home with you as a reference guide.

MnDOT has made the course accessible throughout the state and suggest those who should attend include entities who want to load to the maximum legal weight possible. The course is also designed for scale operators, farm truck owners and operators, aggregate haulers, truck manufacturers who configure truck axles and tires, township and county authorities who influence truck route weights, any company representative who influences the purchase or alteration of new trucks, out of state companies who need to understand and comply with Minnesota's legal weight

limits, and truck driving students.

The seminar will be at the following locations:

October 15, 2004

Blue Earth County Public Works Building
34 Map Drive,
Mankato

October 22, 2004

Cottonwood County Law Enforcement Center
902 5th Avenue, Windom

October 29, 2004

City of Bloomington, Public Works
1700 W. 98th Street, Bloomington

November 5, 2004

Lyon County Law Enforcement Center
611 West Main, Marshall

November 12, 2004

MnDOT Training Center
1900 West County Road I,
Shoreview

November 19, 2004

MnDOT Headquarters
610 South State Highway 9, Morris



Please remind truckers that state law requires that all loads from State timber sales be identified.

Failure to continuously identify the timber as specified in the permit constitutes trespass.

Thank you!

2005 Locations

January 7, 2005

Northland Community College
1101 Hwy. 1 East, Thief River Falls

January 14, 2005

Mn/DOT District 2A Headquarters
3920 Hwy. 2 West, Bemidji

January 21, 2005

Clay County Highway Dept.
2951 41-1/2 Street South, Moorhead

January 28, 2005

Alexandria Technical College
1601 Jefferson Street, Alexandria

February 18, 2005

Mn/DOT District 3B Headquarters
3725 12th Street North, St. Cloud

February 25, 2005

Mn/DOT District 2B Headquarters
1320 Sunflower Street, Crookston

Class size is limited to 30 people so if you are interested, register early. Those interested can contact Shirley Mueffelman, at 612-624-4754 or conferences2@cce.umn.edu

Minnesota Takes Home 6th Annual SFI® Implementation Committee Award

For excellence in logger training, landowner outreach, and program recruitment, the Minnesota Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Implementation Committee (Minnesota SIC) was recognized during the SFI Annual Conference in Austin, Texas. Acknowledging the outstanding work by the SIC in implementing the SFI program, AF&PA conferred its sixth annual SIC award on the Minnesota committee.

“The Minnesota SFI Implementation Committee is honored to be selected to receive this award,” said Kent Jacobson, chairman of the Minnesota SIC and regional procurement manager for Potlatch Corporation. “We have worked very hard this year to help recruit new SFI program participants, as well as to publish a new landowner outreach brochure to promote the SFI program. We were also successful in securing a foundation grant to assist in advanced training for logging professionals. Winning this award is a gratifying payoff for the hard work our SIC has undertaken this year.”

The Minnesota SIC received the annual award for its significant efforts in logger training, public outreach, landowner outreach,

and program recruitment. This year, the SIC was instrumental in working with the Minnesota Logger Education program to help secure a \$199,000 grant for advanced training for logging professionals. The SIC also published a landowner outreach

brochure to promote sustainable forestry and the SFI program to forest landowners throughout the state. Finally, the SIC was recognized for sponsoring an SFI licensee workshop and for recruiting more than 6.5 million acres into the SFI program.

The award was presented by Steven Lovett, executive vice president of the American Forest & Paper Association, to Patrick Galdonik, a procurement forester with Sappi Fine Paper and a



Pat Galdonik, procurement forester, Sappi Fine Paper; Tim O'Hara, vice president of Forest Policy, MFI; and Steve Lovett, executive vice president of AF&PA.

member of the Minnesota SIC, and Tim O'Hara, Minnesota SIC coordinator and vice president of forest policy at Minnesota Forest Industries. Along with a plaque recognizing the successes of the implementation committee, the Minnesota SIC received a \$1,000 award. The committee also will be added to a separate plaque on display at AF&PA headquarters in Washington, DC. Minnesota becomes the first SIC to become a repeat winner. They received the first SIC award, presented in 1999.

Adopted by AF&PA in October 1994, the SFI program provides a rigorous system of principles and guidelines that all member companies are required to uphold. The exacting standard of environmental and conservation practices encompass wildlife and water quality protection, biodiversity conservation, harvesting practices and a wide range of other conservation goals. SFI Implementation Committees exist in 38 states and 4 Canadian provinces and generally are comprised of representatives from AF&PA member companies, conservation groups, state forestry associations, academicians, non-AF&PA member companies and state forestry agencies.

Nortrax, Fabtek and Lakes States Loggers Support Kippenberg Creek Kids

Nortrax Equipment Company and Fabtek, A Blount Company, presented a check to Kippenberg Creek Kids for \$6,100 at the recent Lake States Logging Congress.

The money came from sales of "Proud To Be A Logger" t-shirts. Nortrax and Fabtek absorbed the cost of the T-shirts, and 610 shirts were sold at a price of \$10 each. The Kippenberg Creek Kids T-shirts were sold at the summer logging equipment shows, including the WPLA demo, the North Star Expo and the Lake States Logging Congress. In addition, Nortrax donated John Deere gun safes which were awarded via drawing to T-shirt purchasers at the North Star Expo and Logging Congress. Dean Haley, from Big Fork, Minn., won the safe at the North Star Expo and Randy Lee, from Mellen, Wis., won the safe at the Logging Congress.

Kippenberg Creek Kids is a non-profit organization that provides



Tim Murphy, vice president and general manager of Nortrax Equipment Company, presents a check to Kippenberg Creek Kids President Larry Beyer at the recent Lake States Logging Congress. From left to right are: Travis Lynn, Nortrax MW region sales manager; Glenn Brown, Fabtek district sales manager; Beyer; Murphy; and Allan Sawdo, Fabtek district sales manager.

hunting trips, fishing trips, snowmobile outings and other activities for children with life-threatening illnesses. These adventures are provided at no cost to the children and their families. The organization is run by logger Larry Beyer and his wife, Laurie,

who take no compensation. More information on Kippenberg Creek Kids, or donation information, can be obtained by contacting Kippenberg Creek Kids, W1818 Prairie Forks Drive, Gleason, Wis. 54435, or by phone at 715-873-4523 or at www.kippenbergcreekkids.com.

Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare Touches the Life of a Logging Family

On Aug. 2, Austin Venhuizen, son of Justin “Buzz” and Jessica Venhuizen, and grandson of Ed and Debbie Venhuizen, played golf against credit union presidents, vice presidents and other credit union employees in the Credit Union For Kids 9th Annual Golf Tournament, which benefited Gillette. Five-year-old Austin, who has mild cerebral palsy, held his own in the “Beat the Champ” putting contest fundraiser for



Gillette. He out-putted some of the adult golfers as he swung his kid’s-sized golf club throughout the day on Mora’s Springbrook Golf Course.

Austin was diagnosed with mild cerebral palsy at 21 months and is seen by several physicians at Gillette about every other month. Through physical therapy and botox injections in his right leg and arm, which help with spasticity, Austin has demonstrated great improvement in mobility in the past two years. “The doctors and staff have just been so wonderful,” says Jessica. “They always let you know what is going on and never leave us out in the dark. We thank God everyday for the wonderful knowledge and care we find at Gillette.”

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LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

"Entertainment in the Camps"

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



Whenever there is a discussion of the camp life of the Minnesota lumberjacks, the question, "What did they do for entertainment?" is asked. The fact is that they did very little in the form of entertainment other than listen to some of the old timers tell of their experiences.

Younger jacks were always interested in hearing the old timers recall some memorable events. When an old timer had several young listeners, he enjoyed telling about a large load of logs that had been hauled, about the swift water on some of the streams he had driven, the largest tree cut some winter in a camp, some of the cold winters he had put in, how a team broke through the ice on a lake with a load of logs and how they got the horses out.

the poor food some camps had or the good food furnished by some other camp, and who might be the best cook. He might also tell tales about some of the ladies he had met up with while spending his stake in town. At any rate, both the teller and the listener seemed to get a big kick out of these tales and this furnished much entertainment.

Any new man arriving in camp brought the jacks up to date on what was going on in town and they welcomed a new arrival and his news of the outside.

On Sundays, in the early days when most of the men spent the entire winter in the camps, if there was a violin in camp some of the younger men might pair up, one dressed as a girl by tying an empty

food sack around his waist, and dance a waltz or square dance. The rest of the jacks would clap their hands and enjoy the affair. However, this was rare and done only after they had enjoyed an extra good Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner.

Other games similar to "Button, button, who's got the button?" might be played by a few of the younger jacks, but again this type of game was rare.

However, the jacks did enjoy music and were happy to have someone in camp who could play a violin or mouth organ or another musical instrument. They also enjoyed singing and would sometimes join in and sing with someone leading. The lumber companies and foremen in the camps like to see entertainment that would keep the men happy.

In the early days in the Bemidji and Deer River areas, there was a lumberjack by the name of Hank Underwood who had a beautiful voice. Many a tale has been told about how he held the whole bunkhouse spellbound with his songs. Some of the logging companies put Hank Underwood on the payroll and had him travel from camp to camp singing for the boys several winters.

Card games were played each night until the lights went out at nine o'clock. Cribbage and poker were popular, but gambling was never very heavy because of the lack of cash in the camps.

Occasionally there would be games of strength like wrist wrestling or turning, but wrestling itself was not allowed because one might get hurt.

On warm Sunday afternoons, the younger jacks would gather outside in the sun and try their luck at two main types of skills. One was "tossing the caber," an old Scottish sport where they would pick up an eight-foot-long stick of wood, run to a given line and throw or toss it as far as possible. Another one that was more popular was throwing an axe. They would stand back 40 or more feet and throw an axe from over their shoulder and make it stick in the end of one of the logs in the camp building or another log set up on blocks for this purpose. They would put a six-inch circle on the end of the log as a

These three ladies were logging camp visitors about 1905.





Above: A sleighing party visited the Howard Camp just north of Duluth in 1888.
Below: A camp cook feeds a pig; and a typical crew poses in camp.



This nice four-horse load was photographed in the Burnside Forest in 1910.



(continued on page 24)

(continued from page 22)



Camp whites: a group of businessmen and their ladies (above) and a few of the local girls and their boyfriends at a Emerson camp (below).



Six nice pine logs made a load for this team of six oxen.



ranger and try to stick the axe in the circle.

Also, late in the spring after the snow had melted, they would put up stakes and play horseshoes as there were always lots of horseshoes available at the blacksmith shop. Occasionally on a Sunday toward spring when the weather was warm, a group might gather at the blacksmith shop or sleigh repair yard and try out other feats of strength such as bending a horseshoe or lifting heavy weights. However, this was rare.

I remember coming into camp one soft day and seeing several snowmen that the boys had built all dressed up in lumberjack clothes. Even the lumberjacks recalled their childhood days, but again this was rare as most of their spare time was spent sorting up, washing clothes and sharpening tools.

Visitors in camp were rare, other than people connected with the camps or the lumber companies. The camps near towns, such as landing camps, would have some of the townspeople visit now and then but the camps back in the woods seldom had any visitors. Visiting of camps by outsiders was not encouraged as it would interrupt the routine and slow down the work.

The monks did not like to set up an extra table for visitors who might want to eat at the camp. However, occasionally, some relatives of the camp owners, including ladies, might make a visit to the camp and be served a meal. This was a treat for the jacks as they would get a chance to view some real ladies.

The Sisters visited the camps regularly selling their hospital tickets and holding services. The sky pilots' made their regular visits, also. They were both well accepted by the jacks as well as the camp foremen.

I remember representatives of orphanages visiting the camps soliciting funds and while they were tolerated in some camps, other camps did not encourage

"Sky Pilot" Frank Higgins made regular visits to preach in camps.



them.

There was one man who was always welcome and that was the man who sold and repaired watches. Timberjacks, like most working men of the period from 1870 to 1925, all carried a good watch. They felt that having a good watch in their pocket was like having money in the bank. If they went broke in town, they could always sell their watch for a few meals or a few drinks to get them over a drunk. Besides that, they took pride in having a good watch.

There were several watchmen who traveled the camps. I remember one from the Barker Company in Bemidji who traveled the camps along the M.&N. Railroad and one from Virginia who covered camps of the Virginia and Rainy Lake Co. The Eastern Jewelers of Duluth had a man who made the camps throughout the northeastern part of the state.

They would arrive in camp carrying a pack full of watches. If the jacks' watches were in need of repair, they would take them or trade another watch for them. Most of the time they traded another watch for the one in need of repair, but there were some jacks who wanted their own watch repaired and the watchman would have it repaired and sent to them or bring it back on the next trip to camp. There were also men who had lost their watch in town and wanted a new one.

These watch salesmen were honest men and were approved by the companies to do business in the camps. As a rule, they would spend only one night in camp, but would make several trips during the winter. They seldom sold anything but watches and occasionally pocket knives as jacks also liked to carry a good pocket knife.

The camp foreman would give his permission to the clerk to let the men draw money from their wages or pay for watches or pocket knives.

During the later days of logging in the Virginia and Rainy Lake camps and the camps of the Alger Lumber and Sawyer-hauser Company, a tailor by the name of E. H. (Clickey) Clark was allowed to make trips to the camps and take orders for tailor-made suits. He only made about one trip a year to a camp and because the regular run of lumberjacks were not much for tailor-made suits, the orders were confined pretty much to the foremen, clerks and supervisory personnel.

In the early days, Indians would sometimes visit the camps to exchange fish, venison or moose meat for coffee and sugar.

Where the camps were near settled areas, settlers would make an occasional visit.

Logging camps were not set up for entertaining visitors, but rather were designed for the work of getting logs out for the mills that provided lumber for the development of our great nation.



Above: an Oliver Mining Co. camp about 1912.



Above: meeting with a man, near Baker's Mill in camp.



Classifieds

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FOR SALE

CABLE SKIDDERS

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1970 440A JD10,500

GRAPPLE SKIDDERS

1993 518C Cat., new trans.....40,000
1991 JD648E, dual arch.....39,000
1991 450B TJ, Cummins eng...18,000
1982 JD540B w/studded chains21,000
640 JD, single arch grapple, rebuilt engine and transmission.....19,500

2000 648G III, dual func., enclosed cab wA/C, new engine and tires.....110,000

1998 648G JD, dual function, enc. cab wA/C.....P.O.R.

1988 648D JD, single function, rebuilt engine and transmission.....24,000

1986 648D JD, dual function...27,000

1987 JD648D, single function .24,000

1980 C6 TF, with 23.1x26 tires ..9,000

CRAWLERS

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1975 450C, 6-way blade.....12,500

1990 650G, 6-way blade.....32,000

1977 D6D LGP27,000

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Carrier w/60" slasher53,000

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slasher pkg27,000

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1992 Mitsubishi MXR5512,000

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AND SHEARS

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1993 775B Barko39,000

1988 JD 643, 20" shearhead.....25,000

1979 Drott 40, shearhead.....17,000

1978 Drott 40, JD eng.....13,000

1991 JD 493D w/1996 Kato #150 2 Track 20" head, 3000 hours on head.....40,000

1993 JD 590D w/18' Roto saw27,000

1998 JD 653E w/20" Cameco sawhead.....95,000

1997 T415 Timbco, 8600 hrs., w/2001 AFM #60 3 dr. roller processor head, 3000 hrs. on head95,000

1993 Risley Black Magic w/Risley sawhead65,000

1976 544B JD17,000

1976 544 JD 20" shear.....21,000

1988 910 Cat, 17" shearhead, rebuilt trans.....32,000

1987 411B Hydro-Ax.....20,000

1986 511B Hydro-Ax, 6 BT Cummins27,000

1994 511E Hydro-Ax, 20" sawhead, new JD eng....P.O.R.

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544B JD.....15,500

1979 544B JD18,500

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60" slasher w/power unit.....14,500

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