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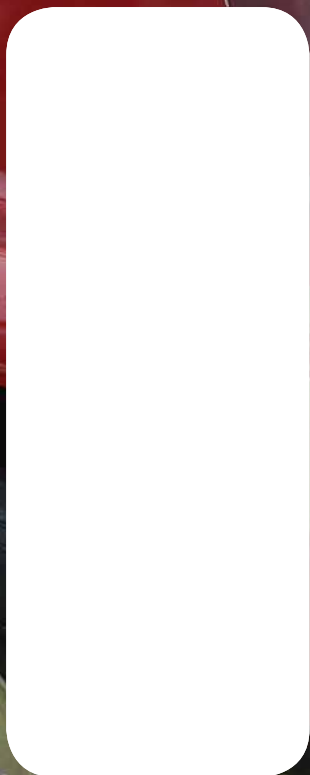
TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017

VOLUME 72

A Good Way of Life Pine Products 64th North Star Expo is Big Success





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Volume 72
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ON THE COVER

Junker Logging of Littlefork won the Best Load Competition at the 2017 North Star Expo. For more on the 64th Annual event, please see page 14.

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Hello members! As I write this I am amazed at how fast the summer has passed. Much of our harvesting area was well above average for precipitation, making for a wet summer of logging.

On a positive note, I want to thank our members for a good turn-out at the North Star Expo. Everyone I talked with thought it was a very successful event. We had many good comments from the vendors. I hope all of you found the Expo time well spent.

President's Column



If there is something you would like to add or change please let your executive committee know by contacting the TPA office.

As we head into fall and winter logging, let's hope for better weather and remember to be safe out there. Remember to spend time with family. The trees will always be there.

David Berthiaume

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Wow! What a great North Star Expo this year. Chad Lovdahl, the Expo Committee and our staff did a great job in putting the show together.

The Log-A-Load harvest was an outstanding addition to the show. It was a great opportunity to show area high school students what we do. It opened some of their eyes to the opportunities in our industry.

Of course the Show doesn't go on without two groups. The vendors

Executive Vice President's Column



who put so many resources into bringing their equipment and products

to the Expo and everyone who attends.

We are very grateful to the vendors, attendees, committee

volunteers, community supporters and our sponsors.

Thank you!



Congratulations to Dr. Mike Kilgore who was recently appointed Head of the University of Minnesota's Department of Forest Resources. Mike has made many presentations at TPA meetings through the years and we have

appreciated his participation and our mutual friendship. He has had a long and varied career as a leader on forestry issues. Dr. Kilgore was the project manager for the Generic Environmental Impact Statement on Timber Harvesting and Forest Management. He served as the first Executive Director of the Minnesota Forest Resources Council and then moved on to the University of Minnesota. He was also the original Chair of the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.

Dr. Kilgore replaces Dr. Alan Ek who was Chair of the Department for many years and retired in 2016.

I served on the University's search committee for this position and can confidently report that Dr. Kilgore was far and away the best person for this important position. We look forward to his leadership in moving the Department of Forestry forward and his continued role as a state and national leader on forestry and natural resource issues.



The Minnesota DNR continues to move forward with their Sustainable Timber Harvest Analysis. This is a review and study of various approaches to managing state timberlands. The consulting firm of Mason, Bruce and Girard from Portland, OR has been contracted to perform the study. They are a well-respected consulting firm.

As part of this study the DNR established a stakeholder committee to provide input. Former TPA President Dale Erickson serves on this group along with Cheryl Adams, UPM Blandin; Brian Bignal, Potlatch; myself, and a group of other folks representing other constituencies and perspectives.

A Draft report is expected in late October followed by public input, revisions and a final report by March 1, 2018.

This review is important as it will inform DNR decisions on harvest levels on their lands in the coming years.



With the fall hunting season in full swing it always reminds me of taking gun safety training when I was a kid. The training was strongly oriented to safety as I recall and it made a strong impression on all of us who took the class.

As you head afield I know that you will be thinking and talking about hunting safely with your partners. You might even stop to discuss safety if you see someone doing something that is potentially or actually unsafe.

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minds. This seems to be the case with well-known environmental activists Becky Rom and her husband Reid Carron of Ely. They were quoted in a New York Times Magazine article about proposed copper-nickel mining in northern Minnesota.

Fourth generation miner Ron Forsman, who is the brother of former longtime St. Louis County Commissioner and miner Mike Forsman, is a supporter of mining and was quoted. Ms. Rom is then quoted that Mr. Forsman “drives to the mine in his truck, comes home and watches TV and doesn’t know this world exists,” in reference to the BWCAW.

Mr. Carron is quoted that pro-mining individuals are “resentful that other people have come here and been successful while they were sitting around waiting for a big mining company. They want somebody to just give them a job so they can all drink beer with their buddies and go four-wheeling and snowmobiling with their buddies.”

After strong condemnations from across the political spectrum Rom and Carron issued an apology.

Seems to me that if you are quoted correctly speaking your views you shouldn’t apologize.

Maybe you should just live with the consequences of your words.

Wayne E. Smith

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Member Feature...



Tyler, Larry, and Ben Dubbe at the company's Waconia facility.

A Good Way of Life

For the Dubbe family, a transition nearly thirty years ago has turned into a lifetime in the forest products business.

by Ray Higgins

Something had to give.

That's the conclusion Larry Dubbe reached by the time he was 30.

When he graduated from Mayer Lutheran High School in 1977, he went into dairy farming, winding up with roughly 80 cows and 30 acres of land. But it was a tough business: tough to make money, and a tough family life.

"It can be a good way of family life," Dubbe says, "but it can be a

tough way of family life. It's seven days a week. When I'd get done with chores in the morning, the kids were already off to school, and then in the evening, by the time I'd be done with chores, the kids were already in bed. I just thought, there had to be something that's better in life."

Then opportunity came from an unlikely source. By 1989, Dubbe had been purchasing all of the

sawdust and other residue from a nearby cabinet shop and using it for bedding for the cows. Any leftover material was marketed to other farmers in the area. Soon, word got around that Dubbe had affordable material for bedding, and he realized there might be a market for it.

"Pretty soon we had more people asking us for the material than we had available, so we knew there was



A panoramic view of Pine Products' facility in Waconia.

more demand than we had product for," he says. "So we said, let's try to make a go of it."

At that point Larry and his wife Diane sold the dairy cows. Initially, Larry's father Ron a retired large animal veterinarian was a partner, and they called their new company Pine Products. Ron remained a partner in the business until retiring in 1997. Larry's brother Mike became a partner in 1997 and retired last year. Although Larry and Diane briefly had some hogs to go along with the bedding business, the transition from dairy farming to Pine Products was relatively quick and seamless.

The Dubbes learned how to make different products, like a fluffy low-dust pine shaving for horse stables or county fairs, a simple absorbent product for dairy farms, even a fine flake shaving used by truckers who haul livestock.

As Larry's sons Aaron, Tyler, and Ben came of age, they joined the business as well, Larry and his three sons remain partners in Pine Products.

For example, in the early years of Pine Products, the company had taken in a load of ground up pallets, with coarse material that wasn't suitable for bedding. Plus, it had been a rainy year. Not knowing quite what to do with it, they set the material aside.

"So one day," Aaron says, "A car drives in and the guy says, 'can I buy some mulch?' We didn't have any mulch, but the guy pointed at the pile of ground up pallets and said, 'that right there. I'd like to buy some of that.' So, we thought maybe there's a market for this."

As they looked into making and

selling mulch, they learned there was demand for different colors like red, gold, light brown, and dark brown. So they devised a unique coloring system, utilizing an old feed mixer that was used for mixing grain for the dairy cattle.

"There was a lot of trial and error," Aaron says. "We took the colorant we were getting in and we had to figure out how many pounds of color goes into a yard of mulch. But we figured it out. We'll do some specialty colors too, if that's what the customer wants."

Another transition came ten years ago when the company added a second facility in Bemidji. A good amount of the material they were using for bedding and mulch was coming from northern Minnesota, so it made good economic sense to find a location closer to the resource.

The Dubbes had a relationship with Potlatch in Bemidji, buying residue from the stud mill, and it turned out a gravel pit adjacent to the site to the north had closed and was available for purchase.

"We were hauling their green sawdust to Waconia," Aaron says. "The only downfall to that was you could only haul half a load because of the weight. The green material was heavier than dry material, so we decided to expand up here, put a dryer in, and so that way we could dry it, bag it, and haul a full load."

Today, the Bemidji facility handles most of the animal bedding processing and manufacturing, while most of the mulch is handled in Waconia.

To make the bedding, Pine Products receives material from sawmills within a roughly 150 mile

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Harold Erno, Aaron Dubbe, Duane Yerbich, Daryl Davis, and Dan Frater of Pine Products' Bemidji facility.

radius, including Potlatch next door. Red pine and jack pine make the best bedding because it has the least amount of bacteria growth. Because the sawdust is green, it's dried first, and then screened to filter the material to the proper size for each product.

This entire process is self-

sufficient, in that particles that are screened out are burned as fuel. In fact, no additional fuel is burned to run any of it. One hundred percent of the woody material used to make bedding is utilized.

From there, the material is blended or mixed for the various products, depending on the

customers' needs. Then it's either shipped out in a bulk load straight to a larger farm or operation, or it's bagged for smaller end users, like livestock haulers.

"People that have horses, chickens, or anything will buy the bedding from us," Aaron says.

As for mulch, most of it is manufactured in Waconia, but some is processed in Bemidji. They'll receive wood from loggers or sawmills, mostly cedar, but they've also used aspen, birch, even a little ash.

"We get a lot of white cedar, because that's what the customers want," Aaron says. "Some species are more conducive to coloring. Hardwoods like red oak or white oak are species that the color adheres to really well."

Some of the mulch materials are composted and used in specialty markets. The mulch piles heat internally and are monitored with thermometer probes. The piles are also packed with a loader and turned so they compost throughout. Once the composted mulch is finished, some of it is trucked to Waconia to be bagged and sold into the retail market. The remaining composted mulch is shipped directly to landscape supply stores. The mulch portion of Pine Products'



Green material for bedding is loaded into the feed box for processing at Pine Products' Bemidji facility.



The Bemidji facility where raw material is screened and dried.

business is busiest from the time the frost comes out of the ground in the spring until the middle of July.

“We sell a lot of mulch wholesale,” Aaron says. “A lot of contractors who do a hotel, condo or apartment complex will buy large quantities. Or retailers buy it and re-sell it. Most of the mulch is sold in bulk form. But if someone comes in and they want two five-gallon pails of it, they can buy that much of it if they want, too.

As for the three sons, all three worked at Pine Products during high school, so joining the family business was a natural progression. Aaron is the oldest, and when he graduated from Waconia High School in 1999, he had an interest in trucking and diesel mechanics, and the company needed help in that area, so he went to work. Tyler followed after graduating in 2001 and started by driving delivery trucks for the local market. Ben took a little different path after graduating in 2003, attending St. Cloud State to earn a four-year business degree.

These days, the three are the

future of the business. Now 36, Aaron lives in Bemidji and runs the facility there. Tyler is 34 and manages the Waconia yard and schedules deliveries, while 32-year-old Ben takes care of the marketing, sales, oversees the

company’s finances, and carries the title of company president. Larry is definitely still involved, providing guidance that nearly thirty years in the business can offer but does enjoy time off after the busy mulch season.



Once bedding has been processed, it is fed into hoop sheds in Bemidji where it waits to be blended and/or bagged as a final product.

“It also helps to have good employees,” Aaron adds. “We have 12 in Bemidji and 17 in Waconia, and they’ve been important to our growth as a company.”

The company stresses quality products and strong customer service, and as a result, business is good, with solid growth through the years. And Pine Products continues to evolve. They added a sawmill in Waconia in 2012, where they saw grade lumber, often purchased by flooring manufacturers, sometimes shipped as far as New York. On the landscape side, Pine Products has added decorative rock and boulders to the suite of products they sell. But bedding and mulch continue to provide the lion’s share of their production and sales.

“If you’d asked me at age 22,” Larry says, “I’d have said I’d be dairy farming my whole career. But trees have given us a good way of life for a good many years. I’ve planted over 1200 trees in Waconia over the last four years, and it’s because trees have given us a good way of life.”



A bag of finished Pine Products bedding leaves the bagging process and heads to be shipped.



Cedar delivered by area loggers or mills waits to be made into mulch at the Bemidji yard.

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64th North Star Expo is Big Success

Already the largest logging equipment show in Minnesota, this year's North Star Expo saw even more vendors than previous years, and increased attendance to go along with it.

"We thought this was the best attended Expo in twenty years," gushed one longtime Expo vendor.

The Grand Rapids community rolled out the red carpet for the 64th Annual Expo, held again at the picturesque Itasca County Fairgrounds. Members of our state's logging community and other stakeholders all flocked to see the vendor displays around the scenic fairgrounds. In all, more than \$20 million in logging equipment was on display, including the latest and greatest in logging equipment—both conventional and cut-to-length—as well as the trucks, trailers, firewood processors, tires, and other products that go into making a logging company function.

If that wasn't enough, hundreds of school kids also came to the Expo to not only see everything the Expo has to offer, but also a Log-A-Load For Kids live harvest. On top of that, they had the chance to learn the ins and outs of Minnesota's forest products industry. Full coverage on this event appears elsewhere in this issue of the *Timber Bulletin*.

Add it all up, and it's further evidence why we like to call the Expo, "The Great Minnesota Logging Get-together."

The following pages contain pictures that tell the story of the 64th Annual North Star Expo.



In the **Best Display—Large Equipment** competition, the team at Nortrax was awarded the blue ribbon. ZieglerCAT took second place, while RMS finished third.



In one of the greatest winning streaks in the history of the Expo's **Loader Contest**, Matt Lundberg (left) of Solway won for the 9th consecutive year. The Lundberg family swept the top three spots, with father Dan taking second and brother Kyle finishing third. In the **Master Loader** competition, Chuck Stock (right) of Cannon Falls topped the field.

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In the competition for **Best Outdoor Display**, Laona Machine captured the Blue Ribbon. Liebelt's Enterprises was the runner-up, while the Pomp's Tire display was third.

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In the **Best Indoor Booth** competition, Wallingford's received top honors. Fleet Pride was second, while LaValley Supply was third.



UPM Blandin mill manager Joe Maher took top honors in this year's **Celebrity Loader Competition**.



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L-R: Jace, Bonnie, and Bruce Junker of Littlefork, winners of the Blue Ribbon in this year's **Best Load Competition**. The tree-length load was sponsored by PCA/Boise. Greg Cook Logging provided the second place entry, while M&M Logging and Son placed third.

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The Binkley family rocked this year's Expo Coloring Contest, with several outstanding young artists! L-R: Kylee Binkley, Bristol Binkley, Addison Bradseth and Sierra Binkley all won ribbons in the various age groups this year! Kylee, Bristol, and Sierra are sisters, while Addison is their cousin, and they all live in Hines. This year's top finishers were: 10-12 age group: Emma Peterson of Carlton won the blue ribbon, with Kendra Frandsen of Cohasset finishing second and Lea Hasbargen of Thief River Falls finishing third. 7-9 age group: Kylee Binkley finished first, followed by Laney Danielson and Vincent Arendt of Grand Rapids. 6 and under division: Sierra Binkley captured the blue ribbon, with Bristol Binkley finishing second and Addison Bradseth earning third place. The top three in each category received ribbons, while each winner was awarded an art kit.

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In addition to the high school students from around the region who attended the Expo and the Log-A-Load for Kids harvest, over 100 fourth graders from Murphy Elementary in Grand Rapids stopped by with their classes to see a wide variety of the equipment Minnesota's logging professionals use to manage our state's forests, as well as to learn about the important role loggers play in proper forest management.

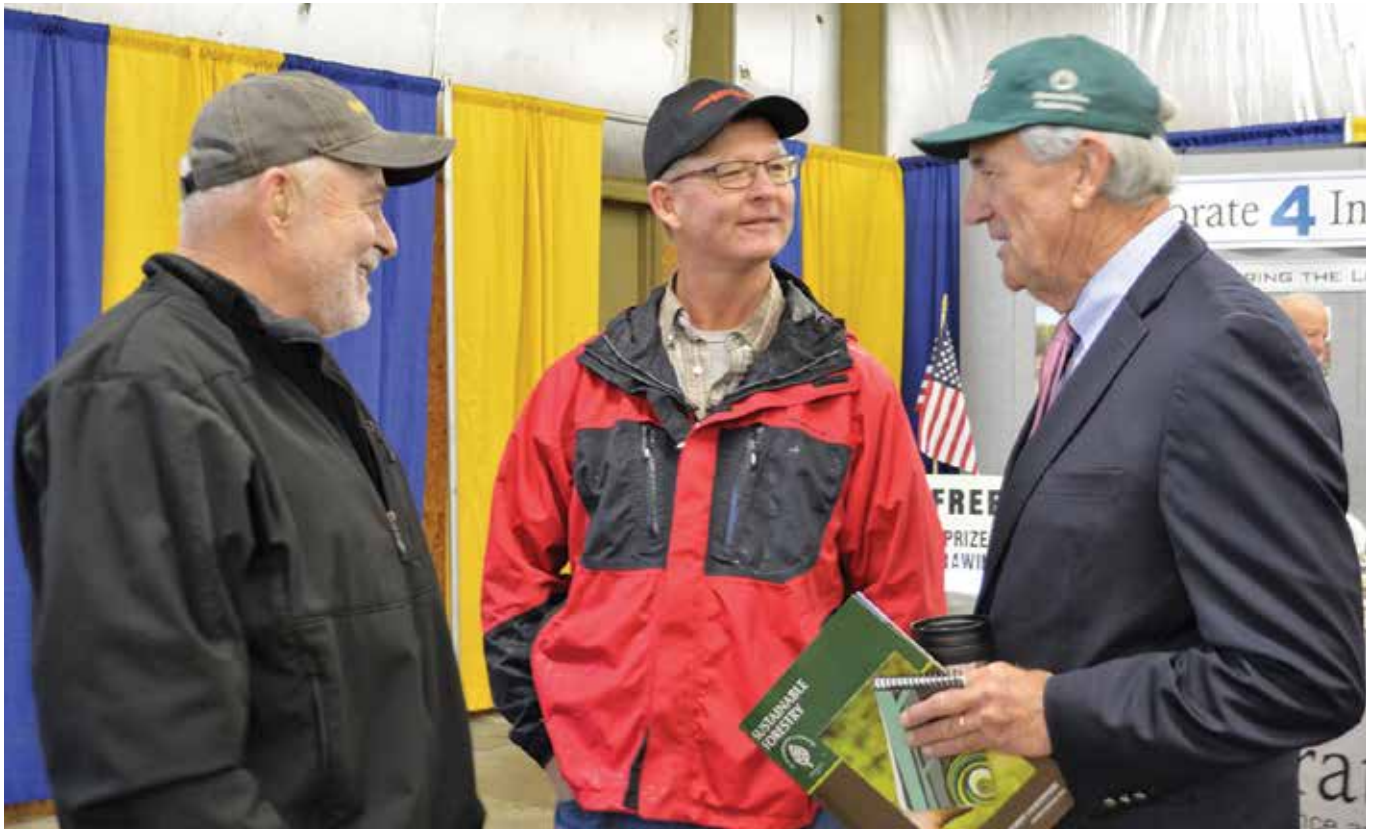
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TPA board members Cliff Shermer and Gordy Dobbs chat with U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan during the Congressman's visit to the Itasca County Fairgrounds and the North Star Expo.





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Expo: Great Food, Drink, and Stories



As is Expo tradition, Day 1 of the event was capped off with outstanding food and drink; Famous Dave's in Duluth again catered the meal, which included barbecued ribs and all the fixins', including beans, coleslaw, and cornbread muffins. And the Friends of the Forest History Center hosted the beer garden. In all, more than 200 joined in for some cold beverages, hot barbecue, and good stories amongst old friends. And to top it all off, Expo vendors donated dozens of door prizes. It was again a great way to cap off a great first day at the 64th Annual North Star Expo.



Tony Filipiak (right) chats with Nortrax's Dale Gessell at Saturday morning's free Loggers Breakfast, sponsored by Nortrax. As is Expo tradition, attendees got their mornings started right with hundreds of tasty flapjacks, as well as plenty of sausage, coffee, and juice, all free of charge, courtesy of Nortrax. Plus, over \$550 was donated to Log-A-Load For Kids by happy pancake consumers and Nortrax generously matched those donations. While enjoying the delicious cakes, one family brought it all back around to the cause, volunteering that their son had received treatment at Gillette as a young boy.

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In the **Guess the Weight Comptition**, Greg Vezina of Bigfork had the winning guess of 89,050, which was the closest to the actual weight of 89,160 to win the \$50 prize. In addition, Larry Schaller of Lake Nebagamon brought a 31-inch white pine cookie to claim the \$25 prize in the **Big Cookie** contest, and Robert Bachman of Pine River took top honors in the **Wood ID** contest.

Next Year

TPA's Expo committee is already working on plans for next year. We look forward to seeing you at the 65th Annual North Star Expo!

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 **NORDCHAIN** SINCE 1930

Log-A-Load for Kids Teams With Timber Industry Leaders to Help Move Gillette Kids Forward

A number of school buses and vans carrying 140 students converged on the North Star Expo at the Itasca County Fairgrounds for a fall field trip that could possibly change their lives.

The students came from Grand Rapids, Chisholm and Greenway high schools expecting to see a timber harvest and hear from loggers, truckers, foresters, DNR staff, and equipment technicians about jobs in the Minnesota's forest products industry. The three-acre harvest on Itasca County land was adjacent to the fairgrounds, providing an excellent harvest viewing opportunity for North Star Expo attendees, as well.

Log-A-Load for Kids collaborated with several groups to provide this excellent learning experience for area high school students wanting to remain in the region and find good jobs once they graduate: the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce, the regional economic development organization APEX, the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training, the Applied Learning Institute, UPM Blandin, Pittack Logging, Rieger Logging, and TPA. In addition to hearing from professionals about their jobs that tie to the timber industry, the students learned about logging, sustainable forestry practices and the timber industry's economic impact in our state.

"Hearing from people who actually do that job every day and their point of view is really cool," Chisholm High School sophomore Lindsey Bocht told WDIO-TV.

"They don't have to move out of the area to find a job," Itasca County Land Commissioner Kory Cease told KBJR-TV. "Forestry as an industry is a vibrant industry in our area. There are jobs in our area. We do responsible forest management."

Students heard from a variety of



Congressman Rick Nolan with high school students at the Log-a-Load for Kids harvest. Nolan addressed the students about the importance of the forest products industry to our region's economy.

folks working in our state's forest products industry, among them: Scott Pittack, owner of Pittack Logging, explained what it's like to own a logging business; Burt Alger, with Rieger Logging, talked about his job as a forwarder operator and what qualifications are needed; Jake Emmel, with Nortrax Equipment, explained his education background and shared his experience working as a field technician; Corey Skerjance talked about his position as a land management specialist with Minnesota Power; Jesse Lehner and Casey Dabrowski talked about their jobs as District Foresters with the Itasca County Land Department; UPM Blandin's Quintin Legler and Sappi's Chris Martland shared with students their educational backgrounds and job experience as company foresters. And that's just a few of the speakers students heard from at a total of eight different stations around the fairgrounds. The students asked great questions and received valuable answers from these professionals with firsthand experience.

The benefits and positive impact of these events is far reaching. Chris Martland, Chair of Minnesota Log-A-Load for Kids, thanks everyone involved for their role and effort in the success of these events adding, "Without the help and contributions of many organizations, I don't think we could have pulled off the harvest event as smoothly. It ran extremely well and allowed us the opportunity to promote our industry and the sustainable forestry message with juniors and seniors from the area who are interested in more hands-on work fields. I think that our presenters did an excellent job in giving the message that this is a sustainable industry that is capable of suppling well-paying jobs now and into the future."

The Log-A-Load for Kids harvest is helping children through Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare. The benefit harvest raised \$7,000 and was made possible when Scott Pittack offered his timber sale as a Log-A-Load harvest site. UPM Blandin then generously donated the stumpage through a

reimbursement to Pittack. Pittack Logging felled and processed the timber while Mike Rieger Logging provided the forwarding. Dukek Logging, M&R Chips, Scheff Logging & Trucking, Andy Michalek Logging, Kevin Forseen, and McCabe Forest Products all teamed up to haul the stumpage to area mills.

Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare's reach is local, regional, national and world-wide. Gillette cares for patients from every county in Minnesota, forty states and twelve countries. These patients have some of the most complex, rare, and traumatic conditions in pediatric medicine, including cerebral palsy, epilepsy, spina bifida and hydrocephalus. Children who have disabilities and complex medical needs—and their families—have been at the center of the mission of Gillette for more than 120 years.



High school students from around the region view the Log-a-Load For Kids harvest site.



Bovey Logger Scott Pittack was one of several speakers at the Log-a-Load for Kids harvest. Pittack also donated his time to perform the harvest with his cut-to-length processor.

Kilgore Named U of M Department Head

Professor Michael Kilgore has been named Head of the Department of Forest Resources at the University of Minnesota.

Kilgore has been a frequent presenter at TPA Annual Meetings and Board of Directors meetings. He served as interim head of the Forest Resources Department since June 2016 upon the retirement of Dr. Alan Ek. Previously Kilgore had been director of the Natural Resources Science and Management graduate studies program, executive director of the Minnesota Forest Resources Council, and served in leadership roles with the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board, Conservation Legacy Council, and Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.

"Kilgore's understanding of and appreciation for the University of Minnesota runs strong," said Dr. Brian Buhr, Dean of the University's College of Food Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences, in a statement. Dr. Buhr cited Kilgore for "his excellence as an educator," in announcing the appointment. Buhr also said Kilgore has been "a caring and valued adviser to countless students."

Kilgore earned his B.S., in Recreation Resource Management from the U of M in 1982. He also received a masters degree in 1984 and a Ph.D. in 1990 from Minnesota in Forestry with an emphasis on forest economics, policy, and administration.




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Changes Coming to SFIA



Changes were made to the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA) during the 2017 Minnesota Legislative session to further protect and enhance Minnesota's forests that will affect landowners enrolled in the program.

Among the changes, the Minnesota Department of Revenue (DOR) and Minnesota DNR will jointly administer the SFIA program. In addition, payment rates per acre are likely to increase beginning in 2019. Landowners will be able to choose from three covenant lengths, either eight, twenty, or fifty years, with payment rates increasing with the covenant length for parcels without a conservation easement. A forest management plan must be registered with the DNR to participate in SFIA.

DNR and DOR are still working through the details, including payment rates for landowners.

Starting next year, landowners with conservation easements on land enrolled in SFIA will be required to allow year-round public access and use. If 1920 or fewer

acres are enrolled, a landowner may withdraw from SFIA without penalty until July 1, 2018. Only a handful of enrollees are expected to be affected by this change, according to the Department of Revenue.

These changes do not affect 2017 SFIA payments or certification. Most enrollees do not have to do anything at this time. DNR and DOR plan on releasing more information before the end of the year.

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On the Markets

The *Timber Bulletin* publishes information regarding results of a sampling of recent timber sales and other market indicators, as well as other market-related news items.

DNR Gives Go Ahead to North Arm Sale

The Minnesota DNR is going ahead with the North Arm sale in the Burntside State Forest just west of Ely.

The proposed 62-acre pine thinning is adjacent to the YMCA's Camp Du Nord and the BWCAW. Opponents to harvest claimed the area was "old growth" forest and a harvest would adversely affect ski trails through the site.

However, the DNR pointed out the site had previously harvested in 1963 and in 1972, so it isn't old growth. In addition, harvest will

promote white pine regeneration through the planting of seedlings and natural seeding afterward. Harvest will also keep the forest healthy by helping maintain forest plant and tree species and age diversity, which helps reduce the impact from invasive species. Also, the harvest will reduce forest fuels by removing dense balsam, helping to protect adjacent old growth timber and wilderness from wildfire.

Recent Timber Sales

Average prices, as reported by each agency

Agency	Regular	Intermediate
Cass County		
<i>August 31—Sealed Bid</i>		
Aspen	\$37.53	\$64.10
Birch	\$18.35	\$29.99
Red Oak	\$18.79	\$62.90

4 of the 5 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—Little Falls Area – Camp Ripley

<i>September 7—Oral Auction</i>		
Aspen Species (WC)	\$27.88	NA

Oak Species (WMP) \$24.63 NA
All 5 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—Park Rapids

September 12—Oral Auction

Trembling		
Aspen (WC)	\$56.41	\$39.10
Pine Species (WMP)		
	\$59.67	\$33.42
Nrthn Hrdwds (WC)		
	\$11.31	\$14.28
Spruce-Balsam (WMP)		
	\$29.02	\$35.06

20 of the 21 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

DNR—Little Falls

September 14—Oral Auction

Aspen Species (WC)		
	\$26.35	\$16.15
Trembling		
Aspen (WC)	\$10.79	\$17.28
Basswood (WMP)		
	NA	\$ 9.29

6 of the 11 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Cass County

September 28—Sealed Bid

Aspen	\$34.37	\$42.71
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Jackpine \$25.76 \$31.50
 All 5 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

Crow Wing County
 September 29—Oral Auction

Aspen	\$47.15	NA
Maple	\$10.73	NA
Basswood	\$15.55	NA
Birch	\$18.99	NA

All 9 tracts offered during the sale were purchased.

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LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

The Forgotten Cruiser

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*



With modern transportation into the woods and the use of aerial photography today, it is difficult for foresters and others to realize the great hardships the old-time timber cruiser endured or the role he played in harvesting our vast virgin timber stands.

Before timber could be logged, men had to be sent into the woods to locate and appraise timber. In the very early days, this consisted of more or less exploring upstream or across lakes to locate the tim-

ber stands. All transportation away from water was made on foot.

Most companies or outfits that bought and sold standing timber as well as those who logged had timber cruisers on their regular payrolls. Some timber cruisers also took on short jobs for many companies.

In the early days, Stillwater, Minn., was headquarters for many of the cruisers; but by the 1890s, Duluth became timber cruiser headquarters for all Minnesota and parts of Wisconsin and Michigan and

Canada. The St. Louis Hotel – current site of the Medical Arts Building – became the rendezvous for cruisers, and there were always 10 to 12 of them staying there between jobs or resting after a hard trip.

A few of the more successful cruisers had offices in the old Manhattan Building. The Manhattan was just east of the then Spalding Hotel at 5th Avenue East and Superior Street.

In the early days, a cruiser would go on short jobs alone. But it soon became an



unwritten law that no man should be sent out alone, so it was seldom they cruised by themselves. Timber cruising crews generally included an appraiser, compass man and cook. Sometimes a crew had two appraisers, two compass men and one cook. Some received their jobs through the State Surveyor General of Logs and Lumber, but most were in demand through their reputations. And in the early days, there always were jobs for good cruisers.

These men were paid from the day they left town until they returned. During winter months, they often stayed in trapper cabins, homesteader cabins or any shelter they could find near the land to be looked.

When no cabins were available, tents were used. Cruisers could rent sikaleen tents and all their other needs – compact and lightweight cooking utensils, tents and other equipment packed into a No. 2 packsack – from Poirer Tent & Awning Co., Duluth, which specialized in fitting crews. Properly set up, these double tents with the air space in between could keep men warm in the coldest weather.

In winter, crews would try to work a week or more without moving the tent; but in summer, tents were moved every day to cut the walking distance to the jobs. Cooks attended to the crew's general comforts. They set up the tents, made beds of birch poles and balsam boughs, split wood and cooked food.

Timber cruisers were not only rugged individuals; they were honorable, honest men that took great pride in their ability to determine how much timber there was on a given tract. For a three-week job that would earn a cruiser's crew less than \$200, a company would not hesitate to invest up to \$50,000 on the cruiser's report. Millions of dollars worth of timber was purchased, traded and sold by firms on nothing more than the cruiser's report. Surely no one group more held the destiny of the lumber companies as did the timber cruiser. Yet the history of the logging industry make little mention of these rugged, noble men.

The cooks that worked with the cruisers were also a special breed of men, and they could really prepare some fine meals cooked over an open fire. Some of the best who were always in demand were Jack Dewar and Gulbert Peterson of Duluth, Jerry Dahlquist of Ely, Fred Seivert and Rolly Vibert of Cloquet, Chet Lawson of Bemidji and others.

By the end of World War I, the days of the job cruiser were numbered. More and more timber went into the hands of logging companies, and each had its own cruising department. More duties, such as running lines around company operations and checking trespass were added to the cruiser's appraisal work each winter. Most of the job cruisers in the Duluth area ended their careers mapping the big Cloquet-Moose Lake fire and appraising for

fire claims brought against the federal government – the fire was supposed to have been started by the wartime, government-operated railroad. A few of the younger men worked by the month for the lumber companies.

When logging was at its peak, on a Monday morning every train leaving Duluth had several timber cruisers heading for the woods. Cruisers were recognized by the little, black leather bags containing compass, maps, books, etc., they carried over their shoulders. In the winter, they also carried snowshoes.

Trains often stopped and dropped cruisers at mile posts nearest the timber they had to look. The men were picked up at other stopping spots along the railroad.

Many railroads had large blocks of timber they obtained through land grants and had cruisers check their holdings. Mining companies also had large blocks of timber

Dan Cameron, pioneer cruiser, arrived at the site of Duluth in 1864 to cruise timberland around the Oneota settlement. He was 99 in this 1944 photo.



and had cruisers on their payrolls too. And there were the government and state cruisers. But by 1925, the job timber cruiser had passed from the picture.

As a boy and young man, I held a warm spot in my heart for the timber cruiser; and my father, the late James Ryan, was engaged in this work much of his life. Among the old-time cruisers I considered great men were Mark Hesse of the E.W. Backus (International Lumber Co.), Henry Graham of the National Pole Co., Miles McQuire of the Bemidji Lumber Co., Andy Gordon of the Crookston Lbr. Co., Fred Murphy of the St. Croix Lbr. Co., John Foran of the J. Neals Lbr. Co., Tom Kilrow of the Twomey Williams Co., Jesse Dow of the Virginia Rainy Lake Lbr. Co., "Dick" Coolidge of the Alger Smith Lbr. Co., Harry Johnson of the Watab Paper Co., "Black Jack" Wilson of the M. & O. Paper Co., George Gowan and William Smith of the D.I.R.R. Co., Steve Crackenbergh of the Martin Timber Co., Mike Goggins of the St. Louis County Assessors Office and John Steinke of the Oliver Mining Co.

Most of the timber cruisers that covered what is today the Cloquet Valley State Forest worked for the combined Cloquet Companies of the Weyerhaeusers, whose cruising department was headed by the late Jim Underhill. Among others in the Cloquet Valley were Charles Hillie, Reggie Vibert, Ben Keller, Walt McDonald, Rorry McKinsey, Miles McAlpine, Dave Mullen, Andy Gleason, Ollie Proudlock and "Big Jack" McNally, who held the reputation of being the best pine appraiser in the state and looked after the interests of the Northern Lumber Co. There also was the veteran Weyerhaeuser timber cruiser, the great Dan Cameron with his white flowing beard, who cruised until he was well past 80 years old and put many a younger man to shame when it came to traveling through the woods on snowshoes.

There were many early State timber cruisers that were well known and respected by all for their ability to look after the State of Minnesota's interests. Most are dead today, but their names should be part of the "timber cruiser history" of this state. Among them were Sam Dahlgaard, Alex McNeil, Sam Files, Denny Mahar, Clyde Johnson, John McDonald, Roy Hunt, William Getchell, Jim Angell and Jim Niles.

In the old days, there were no snowmobiles and helicopters to take men into the woods. The only way cruisers could find out the amount and kind of timber that grew on the land was to get there by foot. This meant many miles of "running the compass" and pacing along old trails, section lines, etc., on snowshoes in the winter and across mosquito-infested bogs in the summer. These early cruisers were all rugged, honorable men of which there is little history, but whose role was important to logging our vast virgin timber stands.

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