

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

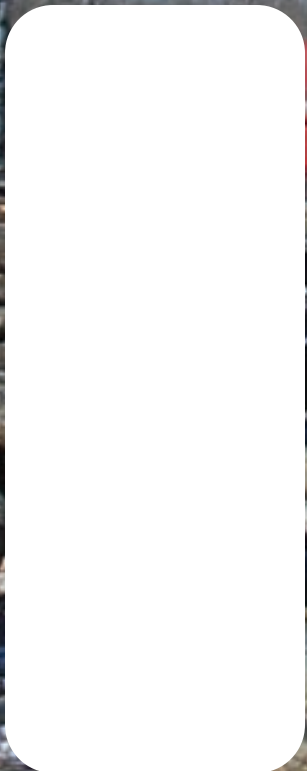
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009

VOLUME 65

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TIMBER BULLETIN

Volume 65
January/February 2009
Duluth, Minnesota

IN THIS ISSUE

Going the Extra Mile, and then Some
Lundberg Forest Products.....**8**

In Memoriam – Dick Walsh.....**14**

Lessons from Losses**16**

Timber Talk.....**18**

Logger’s Yearly Training Requirement
Reduced: Logsafe Partners with MLEP.....**20**

Loggers of the Past**21**

On the Markets.....**24**

Mark Your Calendar.....**25**

Classifieds.....**26**

Advertisers Index**26**

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ON THE COVER

Matt Lundberg of Lundberg Forest Products slashes and then loads wood to be hauled to the mill. For more, please see page 8.

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8



14



16



21

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I would like to start this article by sending my condolences out to the families of Dick Walsh, Chester Walsh, Nile Benson and Greg Olson. The logging community is saddened by the loss of these four loggers.

President's Column



A new year is ahead of us and along with a new president in office we will have to see how the country's economy will unfold; hopefully for the better.

With a state budget shortfall of \$5 billion the TPA will be hard at work trying to keep the DNR – Division of Forestry from being a target of budget cuts. We will make sure they continue to put up their wood for sale.

The TPA has been asked for suggestions on how the DNR could save time and money, so you should have received a questionnaire to fill out. Please take a moment to send this back or call the office with your thoughts or concerns.

That being said, stay warm and work safe.

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TPA Board of Directors Meets



TPA Executive Vice President Wayne Brandt briefs TPA's Board of Directors on the state of the association and on pending matters at the Capitol at December's board meeting in Duluth. Board members also received reports on the activities of the Transportation, Audit, Insurance, and Public Relations committees, reviewed financial statements, and discussed potential legislative activities at all levels of government for 2009.

Logger of the Year Nominations Being Accepted

The Minnesota Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Program Implementation Committee is now accepting nominations for our 2009 Logger of the Year Award.

The award is designed to recognize outstanding independent logging contractor performance, increase the visibility of competent professional independent logging contractors within the forestry community, encourage independent logging contractors to emulate the outstanding performance of award winners, and improve forester-logger-landowner relations by publicly recognizing outstanding logging performance as an essential element of every planned timber harvest.

Among the areas in which nominees loggers will be evaluated are safety, forest management, timber harvesting practices, business management, as well as community involvement.

The winning logger will receive a \$500 cash award and "2009 Logger of the Year" plaque. In addition, this year's honoree will be

nominated for FRA's Regional and National Logger of the Year awards. Minnesota's 2008 winner, Scott Pittack, was also named Regional Logger of the Year and was a national award finalist.

Nomination forms can be obtained through the MN SFI Implementation Committee office by calling 218-722-5013. Nominations are due March 13, 2009. All nominations will be reviewed and a Logger of the Year selected the end of March. The winner will be notified in April and the award will be presented at the MLEP Logger Conferences.

Dick Walsh passed away at his home in January. Where do you start in describing a giant like Dick? I'll start with his laugh. It was fun and brightened many a meeting and event. It came out a lot because Dick enjoyed life and being involved as a way of making others lives better.

During his time in the business Dick logged, had a sawmill, started and sold an equipment dealership, and was involved in other ventures. I've always loved his

Executive Vice President's Column



story of how a group of nuns who wanted to heat their facilities with wood financed his first chipper and he paid it off load by load.

Dick was very active in TPA. He was one of our best presidents ever, served on the board and executive committee and other committees, and chaired our task force that created MLEP. He also was appointed by Governor Pawlenty to the MN Forest Resources Council and made a lot of trips to the State Capitol with me.

One of the unique things about Dick was his attire on the job. He's the only logger I've ever met, and I've met a few, who would get down out of whatever machine he was operating wearing a collared shirt, slacks and loafers on his feet. Always neat as a pin, just like his company's trucks which were washed every night.

Dick also had a playful side. He would always needle me about the perpetually broken mirror on my trucks. One time he offered to pass the hat at a meeting so I could get it fixed. What he didn't know was that the mirror had been broken and fixed many times. I always find a post in parking ramps to hit it with. I think of him when I look at the mirror.

Dick was my friend. I miss him. I think I'll wait awhile to get the mirror fixed again.



Our TPA family was also saddened by the passing of Chester Walsh, Nile Benson, and Greg Olson. All were longtime TPA members who were well respected in their communities and made many contributions during their lives. We offer our sympathy to their families.



With Ainsworth announcing the permanent closure of their Bemidji and Cook OSB plants it marks the end of a sad chapter. These plants, along with the Grand Rapids OSB plant, were purchased only 4 1/2 years ago for roughly one-half billion dollars and now they are gone. They are victims of the economy and business decisions that some may second guess. The carnage extends to our members who delivered them wood, purchased stumpage and equipment and hired people to supply them, the employees in the plants, other suppliers and their communities. So what happens next? Will Ainsworth sell the facilities to someone else? It's hard to say if they would want a competitor running them in the future. Will the plants be converted to another use? Would it or could it be a wood-using industry – who knows?

So what becomes of logging in our state? Clearly less wood will be used by mills. Just as clearly, the mills that are operating can't get wood from loggers who are broke and out of business. There is plenty of pain to go around as we work our way through these issues and push forward for a brighter future.



It's going to be a long slog through the budget morass at the Capitol this year. The deficit for the next biennium is projected at \$4.8 billion. This number increases by roughly \$500 million when you look at increased costs. It also increases by another \$500-600 million that will be included as reserves in the next biannual budget. Most informed observers also feel that the February revenue forecast will show an additional deficit of more than a billion

dollars. So you add it all up and it looks like a \$7 billion plus deficit, which is 20 percent.

The governor's budget was released. It cuts the DNR Division of Forestry a bit over \$3 million for the biennium. It also cuts Payments in Lieu of Taxes to counties by \$8.7 million and caps payments to landowners under the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act.

It will be a long, tough session with not many happy people at the end.



Wow. This is a bad column: deaths, depression and deficits. It's time for all of us to get to work. So what does that look like for TPA? I was reviewing some of the things your organization and staff have been involved in during the past few weeks. They include: TPA executive committee meetings; attending timber sales; meeting with members; producing this magazine; working on truck safety workshops; pushing for better timber sales programs at Koochiching, Itasca, Hubbard and Beltrami counties; working on this year's North Star Expo; meeting with MLEP and the Commissioner of Labor & Industry to improve and streamline training; briefing legislators, county commissioners and members of Congress; fighting to maintain wetlands exemptions and prevent onerous shoreland regulations; and working for improved timber programs at the DNR and U.S. Forest Service. We all believe that working hard makes a difference. And TPA makes a difference.



Preoccupied? Who isn't? The economy, business, cold weather, family, health – they all weigh on our minds. We can lose our focus thinking about these and other things. And that's when accidents and injuries often happen. It's a good thing to think about yourself and talk to your crews about. Keep the focus on safety and being productive. We'll all be better off.

Timber Bulletin

Member Feature...



Matt and Dan Lundberg at their jobsite in western Roseau County.

Going the Extra Mile, and then Some

by Ray Higgins

In more than 25 years in the logging business, having grown up working with his father and now running Lundberg Forest Products, Dan Lundberg figured he'd seen it all, or at least heard stories about it. Until one day earlier this winter.

As he was running his John Deere 2054 delimeter with a 2100 Lim-mit, Lundberg looked up and saw a helicopter. It circled and

then landed on his logging job, just a few hundred feet away.

You see, the site is adjacent to the Canadian border in a remote portion of Roseau County, and the chopper belonged to the U.S. Border Patrol.

"We were so close on one block," Lundberg says, "that if I swung the tops I could put sawdust into Canada. When the helicopter landed, I don't know if they did

some checking on the radio or what. They never came out and talked to us.

"I wasn't too concerned," he says. "I half expected it. I was telling people, they're going to be watching us and nobody believed it. They stopped a truck one night. And we saw that unmanned drone flying over on Friday."

"Actually, the head of scaling from Barwick was out here the

week before last, just to meet with the DNR about rot issues and stuff, and before he got back over to Baudette to go across, the Border Patrol ran him down and stopped him because the airplane had seen a strange vehicle here with Ontario license plates on it and they had to check him for work visas and stuff, so they're watching us closely."

Being closely watched is a huge change for a guy who is used to being in the woods. But the hassle of having the feds around is minimal compared to being so far from home. Lundberg lives just west of Bemidji in Solway, and he's working east of Caribou, roughly 165 miles away. The Lundberg crew is actually harvesting on two tracts of aspen that are close to one another: one is a DNR sale, actually purchased by Ainsworth, with 3600 cords of aspen. The other is also a state sale, 3500 cords of aspen Lundberg bought in December.

"We have a full winter right here," Lundberg says. "I couldn't turn down the Ainsworth sale. And then this sale that we're on right now was on the Northwest sealed bid auction, so I thought we're going to be here anyhow, so if I can buy it right, I'll buy it."

That he did. The good news is Lundberg has 7100 cords of aspen to cut in basically one spot. But the hauls to the mill are long. The wood on the Ainsworth sale is all going to their mill in Barwick, 145 miles to the east. Half the wood on the sale Lundberg bought is going to Barwick too, with the other half headed for Norbord in Bemidji, 165 miles from the job, so none of the hauls are quick and easy.

Still, Lundberg has come up with a pretty good system with his conventional logging crew. Eugene Iverson – a 40-year Lundberg employee – runs the John Deere 843H feller buncher, Luke Molnar skids in the John Deere 648-GIII, Dan operates the delimeter, and Dan's son, Matt, runs the Prentice slasher/loader.

Three men, Chris Wass, Dale Johnson, and Bob Binder, handle the hauling, either to Ainsworth or Norbord. Lundberg also supplies wood to Verso in Sartell and Potlatch's Bemidji mill. Then

around 3 p.m. every day, Matt and Luke take loads to Barwick, getting back to Caribou on a good night around 9 p.m.

The crew also had some good fortune with where to stay while working so far from home.

"A guy from Roseau was out getting firewood," Lundberg says, "and he said he had a cabin just down the road and he offered to let us use it while we're here. He just said to be fair with the electricity, so we're taking advantage of it. Whatever that's

going to be, it's going to be cheaper than driving to Hallock or wherever to stay the night. Hallock is about 45 miles, Roseau is about 50, so this is working out well."

Most of the crew goes home on Wednesday nights to see their families, while Lundberg only gets home on weekends. As a life-long logger, it's something he knows has to be done to keep the business going.

"My dad Paul started the business in 1959," he says. "Dad



The snow and sawdust fly as Eugene Iverson runs the John Deere 843H fellerbuncher. Iverson has worked for Lundberg Forest Products for 40 years.



After slashing the harvested timber, Matt Lundberg loads the wood onto the trailer for hauling to the mill.



Luke Molnar operates the John Deere 648-GIII skidder.



The John Deere 2054 delimeter with a 2100 Lim-mit with Dan Lundberg at the controls.



Two Lundberg Forest Products trucks start the long haul to Ainsworth's mill in Barwick, Ontario.

had a sawmill out in the woods in the '60s, had a dry spell in the '70s, and started cutting popple and taking it to the Potlatch mill in Cloquet. They'd fill rail cars in Bagley for Northwest Paper all the time. He spent a lot of time with the pickeroon on top of the rail cars over there.

Once Dan came along, he helped out where he could, counting sticks for the piece cutters on Saturdays as a youngster, and then as he got older, doing maintenance on the trucks and equipment in the shop.

"I started hauling wood on Saturdays, maybe even before I had the actual driver's license," Lundberg says with a smile.

When he graduated from Bemidji High School in 1982, Dan joined the business full time as a hauler. Four years ago, Paul retired and Dan took things over. His mother Joanne still helps with the books, with sister Kari helping with payroll.

It's a business that has worked well for 50 years and Lundberg plans on seeing that continue, despite the tough economic times for the industry and for the country.

"We just try to do everything the best we can and try and keep the people that we're dealing with happy, basically," Lundberg says. "We're fortunate because right now, we're sitting as good as we've been for quite a few years as far as winter stumpage.

"Even so," he says, "what else can I do? This is what I know. We have all of the equipment, and other businesses aren't that great, either. I mean, the industry is kind of crazy right now, the way everything is going. Everything's changing. You've just got to be ready to make it work with whatever you have when the time comes. We're all creatures of habit, used to doing things one certain way, but you've got to change some of that sometimes. I'd have never dreamed five years ago, if somebody said we'd be up here hauling wood to Canada, I'd have said they were nuts. But it was an opportunity and we'll see how it works out."

It looks like the next generation of Lundbergs will be along for the

(continued on page 12)

(continued from page 10)

ride. Matt's now 22, but started running skidder on Saturdays when he was back in middle school.

"He didn't want to do anything else," Dan says. "Matt was in about 5th or 6th grade and he told the teacher he didn't need to learn any of that stuff because he was going to run skidder when he got older."

Matt's already showing a pretty good aptitude for the business. In fact, he finished third in this year's loader contest at TPA's North Star Expo in September. Fortunately for Dan, he was able to keep the bragging rights within the family, finishing second.

"Matt's pretty good at it," Dan says with a smile. "I'm not very competitive, but in something like that, I like to do well."

Dan and his wife Arlene have two other kids: 16-year-old Kyle also looks like he'll eventually join the business, but 19-year-old LaRae is a sophomore at Bemidji State and is looking in other directions, possibly forensics, for her career.

Once break-up comes in March, the Lundbergs will head home for the season and start hauling some bark, do their maintenance on the equipment and get ready to get back into the woods sometime during the summer. For now, the focus is on this harvest near the border. Not only is it a long way from home, but they've also had to work through this winter's frigid temperatures. This morning it was 28 below zero, which is hard on the equipment, and it wasn't the first time this year it's gotten that cold.

"If we had waited until tomorrow," Lundberg says, "we'd have still had to get everything going tomorrow and we'd have lost production tomorrow, too. Now that we're so far from home, we figure once we're here, we should get some work done. Two weeks ago it was really cold too, but I just made sure everything was running every night before we went back to the cabin and then the next morning we were going right away.

"Whatever it takes to make stuff go," Lundberg says, "you just do it."

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In Memoriam

Industry Leader Dick Walsh Dies Served as TPA President

Longtime logging industry leader Richard "Dick" John Walsh died Friday, Jan. 9, 2009, at his home near Park Rapids. He was 69.

He started Dick Walsh Forest Products in 1962. Through the years Walsh assumed many leadership roles in the logging industry, including serving on the TPA executive committee from 1990 to 1998, and as TPA president. He was one of the founding fathers of the Minnesota Logger Education program, chairing the task force that created MLEP in 1997. In 1998, he was instrumental in establishing the Minnesota Timber for Humanities/Log-a-Load for Kids programs. He served on the Arago Township Board from 1990 to 2006. In 2003, Governor Pawlenty appointed Walsh to the Minnesota Forest Resources Council, on which he served until 2007.

In 2006, *Timber Harvesting Magazine* named Dick Walsh Forest Products as its Logging Business of the Year. The award goes annually to "special overachievers in the logging corps." In honoring Walsh, *Timber Harvesting* said the award was, "in recognition of Walsh's leadership and forward thinking, of the family's many contributions to the advancement of the logging profession, and for setting a stellar example of professionalism and pride in a job well done."

The magazine called Dick Walsh a leader who has set a standard that others want to emulate, writing, "A visionary by nature, Walsh is often first in his area to try new technology and first to recognize and develop new business opportunities. He's also often first to offer a helping hand, whether it is to improve his community, his industry or his state. His winning personality, wit and dedication to educating others



Dick Walsh with Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty in 2004.

about the forest industry have helped open the eyes of many a skeptic."

In talking about the leadership roles he's taken, both in local government and in the logging industry, over the years, Walsh told *Timber Harvesting*, "I've always felt that if you don't have representation at the state level you could wake up one day and find out you've been legislated out of business."

In 2006, Walsh sold the business to sons Robin and Steve, who have grown up in the woods and have been integral parts of its success.

He was born April 26, 1939, to Charles Emery and Julia Ethel

(Olson) Walsh at home in Savannah Township. He grew up there and attended the local country school in Arago Township through the seventh grade. He went to high school in Park Rapids where he graduated in 1957. He married Sandra Mae Waterman March 21, 1959, in Park Rapids. He served in the Minnesota National Guard from 1956 to 1962; he belonged to the Park Rapids Unit. He was a member of Riverside United Methodist Church in Park Rapids. He enjoyed working, hunting, lawn work and spending time with the grandchildren.

He is survived by his wife; five children, Roger (Sherry) Walsh of Waconia, Minn., Robin (Jodi) Walsh of Park Rapids, Steven (Kristine) Walsh of Park Rapids, Anthony Walsh of Cambridge and Nancy (Jason) Eystad of Park Rapids; 12 grandchildren; two sisters, Opal Myhres of Yakima, Wash., and Dianne (Roger) Diestler of St. Paul; two brothers, Donald (Pat) Walsh of Park Rapids and Dean (Joyce) Walsh of Park Rapids; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Lessons from Losses

Broken Access Steps Lead to Close Call

To help TPA members avoid accidents resulting in injury or damage to property, the Timber Bulletin, in association with Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance, will publish details of actual incidents and what can be done to avoid such occurrences in the future. By sharing this information, TPA and LUA hope to make our industry as safe as possible.

by Dave Amundson
Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance

Background: The mobile equipment at this logging site is less than five years old, and maintenance and housekeeping are reviewed daily.

During the winter months, working in the dark is routine due to the longer work days. On this particular day, shut down occurred after 7:00 p.m. The temperature at the time of the incident was very cold, roughly -20 to -25 F. The skies were clear with a slight breeze. The job site is located approximately 30 to 45 minutes from the nearest town, and over one hour from the operation's home base.

Operators: The operator of the equipment is considered fully trained in operation of logging equipment, with most of his experience as a cut-to-length harvester operator. For the last ten

years, this individual has operated forwarders and processors, as well as having driven a truck.

Incident and/or Injury: The operator was working into the dark hours of night, felling a mixed stand of timber with a cut-to-length harvester. At the end of his work day, the operator was preparing to leave the cab of the machine. Being unaware that at some point during the work day/night the access steps had been broken off and were missing, he abruptly fell as he reached for the top step of the access ladder. As a result, the individual over-reached for the



An example of broken steps on mobile equipment.



This is an example of broken steps on mobile equipment where the ground-to-step height is stressed.



Steps in poor condition on mobile equipment may lead to problems.



Another example of extra steps being added to mobile equipment to improve access and maintenance (both sides of machine).



Review the access method to truck loads, truck loaders, etc., for the safety of the worker. Adding additional steps, chain boxes, etc. are all very user friendly and promote safe egress.



This is an example of additional steps added to mobile equipment for maintenance purposes.

missing steps, which caused this slip/fall incident. The individual was facing the machine and had a secure grip on the hand holds, allowing the worker to catch himself. The worker still suffered a serious bruise, but no lost time or medical attention was necessary.

Unsafe act and/or condition: The unsafe condition was the missing / broken steps, and the unsafe act was the operator assuming the steps were in place without actually seeing them. Some contributing factors may have included the following: the cold temperatures which caused the step material to fracture, lack of lighting around equipment when working and/or failure to inspect equipment after dark, stumps cut too high, rough terrain, etc. The following suggestions can help prevent problems of this nature when working with mobile equipment.

Preventative Measures:

1. Always be sure of the access steps and have a secure grip on hand holds when entering and exiting the operator cabs of all mobile equipment. Use the three point positioning (two hands and one foot, one hand and two feet, etc.) whenever climbing onto or into mobile equipment.
2. Be alert to the surrounding terrain when operating, so the mobile equipment is not damaged (backing into trees, striking stationary objects, etc.).
3. When shutting down mobile equipment, complete an equipment inspection for maintenance problems, housekeeping needs, and broken or missing items. This is especially important when working after dark. Also, have

adequate lighting available to operate and view equipment.

4. Review all mobile equipment for safe access steps. In many situations it may be necessary to add more steps, hand holds, etc. even on newer mobile equipment.
5. Also, review these safety measures on your truck and trailer units as drivers secure their loads, access loaders, etc.

The enclosed pictures involve mobile equipment and truck egress examples that may also affect your operation. Also, as our trails come together this working season, please take the time to share new ideas/close calls/etc. This valuable information is a great tool that is user friendly for the logger, mobile equipment operator, and woods trucker!

In Memoriam

Chester Walsh

Former TPA member Chester Walsh, 91, of Park Rapids, died on Jan. 18, at his home.

Walsh headed one of the branches of the Walsh family that logged around the Park Rapids area. As a young man, he cut firewood and sold it in Park Rapids. When Pearl Harbor was attacked, Walsh was called into military service, and he proudly served in the U.S. Army as an amphibious engineer in the Pacific Theatre of World War II. After his honorable discharge, he resumed logging in the pine and hardwood forests near Park Rapids, and he was proud to have formed a partnership with his son, Mike, in 1985. Walsh's career spanned more than 60 years, working daily in the business until well after his 75th birthday.

Nile Benson

Nile Benson, a former TPA member, died Jan. 19, at his home in Blackduck. He was 81.

Benson spent 13 years with the Minnesota DNR, Forestry Division, while working on the family farm in Blackduck. He joined his father in the timber business, and after working with different partners for several years, he started Benson Timber and was involved with it until his sons, Mike, Mark and Kurt, bought the business in 1998.

He was a member of the Blackduck Lions Club and was honored by the club for his service within the club and to the community at large. He served on the board of the Blackduck Senior Center and was a member of the Blackduck Agricultural Cooperative for 12 years. He enjoyed bowling, going to coffee with the Blackduck Coffee Club and attending the Blackduck Lions Club meetings.

Greg Olson

Longtime Orr logger and TPA member Greg Olson died in

December as the result of injuries sustained in a tragic accident. He was 52.

Olson carried on the family tradition started by his father Clarence "Ike" Olson in the logging and sawmill businesses, along with Greg's brother Tim. The Olsons were longtime contract loggers for Boise in International Falls.

Greg was also an assistant football coach at Orr High School, was active at Orr's Calvary Lutheran Church, and was an avid outdoorsman, enjoying hunting and fishing.

Timber Talk

Biodiesel Closes Schools in Bloomington

Bloomington school officials cancelled classes for a day because some of the district's buses wouldn't run due to gelling biodiesel in sub-zero temperatures.

According to the district, the problem left some students at bus stops on the previous morning for as long as 30 minutes, or sitting on stalled buses.

The nearby Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan School District also saw problems, starting school two hours late on the same morning after a similar problem with biodiesel fuel in about a dozen buses the day before.

Rick Kaufman, a Bloomington district spokesman, said the buses in question are about 10 years old, have a rear engine, which sometimes experience problems during cold weather, and are stored outdoors.

Log-A-Load For Kids Advisory Board is Looking for New Members

The Log-a-Load For Kids Advisory Board would like to invite those interested in board membership to attend their upcoming meeting, or call and ask questions. Log-A-Load For Kids, a national Children's Miracle Network (CMN) sponsor, raises money for Minnesota's CMN

affiliate hospital, Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare.

Log-A-Load holds an annual golf tournament and occasional harvests when donated stumpage is made available. Silent auctions, dunk tanks, and quilt raffles have also generated funds in the past. The board is looking for volunteers to attend meetings, share ideas, and help plan or carry out fundraising activities. Volunteers are welcome to participate at whatever level they prefer. Loggers, timber industry professionals, relatives, friends, all are welcome to join.

Contact Becky Holst at 218-624-4790 for more information.

DNR Initiates Tick Prevention Policy for Staff

The Minnesota DNR has implemented protection requirements for employees working in deer tick environments. The Tick Protection Policy provides a number of methods to protect employees working in deer tick endemic areas. These methods specify various clothing items and other protective actions that will be used to prevent deer tick bite illnesses.

All employees accessing by foot, during snow-free periods of the year (especially the months of May – July), in grassy locations in the endemic area of the state for deer tick presence, will use at least one of the following protective equipment or protection methods: Saveyur Tick Gaiters, Upland Briar Pants for Ticks, BugProof Gear Undergarment, wear light-colored clothing, tuck pants into socks and duct tape pants to socks or some similar method of physical barrier to prevent ticks from reaching skin coming from the ground up, and/or utilize commercial products that prevents ticks from reaching the skin.

The policy also advises personnel on what tick repellents to use and how to safely remove a tick. All these measures are intended to reduce the number of tick bites (attached more than 24 hours) and medical treatment illnesses occurring in the DNR. They are not intended to eliminate ticks from crawling on your clothing or skin, or having a tick bite or attachment (lasting a short period of time 1-2 hours) that can easily be removed.

Loggers' Yearly Training Requirement Reduced: Logsafe Partners with MLEP

A partnership is being finalized that would bring the administration of Minnesota's Logsafe program, which helps educate loggers on the importance of safety in the workplace, together with the Minnesota Logger Education Program. Minnesota's Department of Labor and Industry (DLI), the state agency that oversees Logsafe, is in the process of finalizing a contract with MLEP so that both programs will be administered out of the same office.

In addition, the yearly training requirement for loggers is being reduced from 32 hours every two years (Logsafe and MLEP combined) to 24 hours over a two-year span.

Through 2008, DLI policy stated a logger needed to attend eight hours of Logsafe training each year, while MLEP also had an eight hour yearly requirement, for a total of 16 hours per year. With the new Logsafe/MLEP partnership, each program will require 12 hours over two years.

"The recently approved training requirements are aimed at increasing the quality of training that loggers receive, as well as improving the level of knowledge retention and overall adult education learning experience," said MLEP executive director Dave Chura. "It is our belief that even though this new approach will reduce the training hours from 32 every two years to 24, the quality and effectiveness of that training will improve."

With the Logsafe/MLEP partnership, DLI will continue to provide onsite workplace safety consultation to those loggers requesting assistance, and the department will also continue to administer the targeted industry fund and rebate program.

The partnership is the result of a task force sponsored by the Blandin Foundation's Vital Forests/Vital Communities Initiative. The Continuing Education of Forestry Professionals Task Force was made up of representatives of DLI, MLEP,

and a dozen others representing the forestry community and was charged with reviewing current professional forestry continuing education practices and devising a strategic plan of action for the delivery of continuing education and training services for foresters, forestry technicians, loggers, and closely related positions.

The 2009 Logsafe training will include 17 CPR/First Aid workshops. In addition, a series of four- to eight-hour OSHA Safety related workshops are being developed and delivered. Input on the topics and specific learning objectives for these workshops is being provided by an "Education Planning Working Groups," comprised of loggers, insurance professionals, mill representatives, and MLEP and DLI staff.

Logsafe was created to emphasize the importance of safety in lowering workers' compensation costs in the logging industry. Logger employers and their employees are required to maintain current workers' compensation liability insurance coverage throughout the year, before they



can receive their portion of designated rebates.

MLEP was established in 1995 to assist logging business owners in meeting ever-changing demands of their profession. MLEP provides assistance to Minnesota's logging community through educational programming. This objective is accomplished by partnering with numerous groups to identify needs, and facilitating the development, design, delivery and evaluation of programs which focus on sustainable forest management, transportation, safety and business management.

LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

"Last Log Drive on the Cloquet"

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*



Without a doubt, the most exciting and colorful part of the logging of our vast virgin pine stands in Minnesota was the drives on the rivers.

While much has been said and written about some of the log drives in other states, little has been said about our Minnesota river drives. While they might not have been as colorful as the drives in Maine, Michigan or Wisconsin, they are

still worthy of note.

Most river drives in Minnesota came to an end in the 1920s. There were a few that continued a little longer. The last drive on the Littlefork in 1939 got considerable publicity and made its mark in history with the help of Karl Hendrickson, a former logging camp clerk who made a movie of the drive. We also have record of a small local drive on the upper

Mississippi in the 1950s.

Due to the heavy stands of white pine adjacent to the Cloquet River and the stretches of rough and swift water along its entire course, the Cloquet River drive was one of the outstanding drives in the state. The Cloquet River had been driven every year from the 1880s until the last drive in 1924.

Because of the swift water and rapid runoff, many dams had to be built on the upper parts of the river and its tributaries. These dams extended from the big dam at the outlet of Island Lake to the Langley and Murphy Dams near its source.

They include the Alden Lake Dam, Spring Lake Dam, Mud Creek Dam, Smith Lake Dam, Pequaywam Lake Dam, Brown's Dam, Murphy Dam, Langley Dam, Sullivan Dam, West Branch Dam, Wolf Dam, Berry Creek Dam, Fish Lake Dam, Boulder Creek Dam and several other small dams.

When the Great Northern Power Company started to develop water on the St. Louis River, they built large, permanent dams. One of these was the large concrete dam below Island Lake. There had been a log-type drive dam at this site, and it was replaced by the concrete dam in 1915.

The Boulder Dam was built in 1919, a concrete dam at Rice Lake in 1907 and the Fish Lake Dam in 1910.

The Island Lake Dam was the largest of these, with a 40-foot head. "Beartrap" type gates were put in this dam for the sluicing of logs. However, water needed to sluice the logs through the dam was lost for the power company. Water from the Island Lake Dam was also needed to move the logs in the river below the dam.

Although the water used to carry the logs downriver in the spring was a loss as far as the power company was concerned, they always had plenty of water from the natural runoff in the spring to operate their generators at Thomson. They needed the water to be held in their Island Lake Reservoir for summer use when the natural flow in the river was low. The power company was anxious to have the log drive come to an end so they could control the flow in the river to suit



Pequaywam Dam (above) helped supply water for the 1924 drive. The big power company dam on Island Lake (below) brought an end to log driving out of the lake.





Wanigans like those above were used by early river drivers. All scenes below are from the Cloquet River in July 1924.



their need.

The log drive in 1924 was actually in two parts, one between the river's source and Island Lake and the other below the Island Lake Dam. The Cloquet River had been driven in the spring of 1923, but there was no "rear" or cleanup on the river.

J. C. Campbell, then general manager of logging operations for the combined Weyerhaeuser Company at Cloquet, decided that the river should have a clear rear in 1924, as all the pine adjacent to the river had been cut. During the winter of 1923-24 the wanigans at Island Lake were dismantled and hauled by horses to Wolf Dam, where they were assembled under the direction of William Dewar, an old river driver.

The furthest landing of logs upstream was in Sec. 2-55-12. These logs had been put in by William Kimball, the foreman in Camp 12. The next landing below that was in Sec. 21-55-15 and had been put in by Fred Villard from Camp 4. This made up the bulk of the logs in the upper main Cloquet. Several million had been put in on the Little Cloquet in Sec. 26-54-13.

These three landings consisted of about 15 million and were all the new logs in the river. However, there were many logs from previous years still in the river and in Indian and Alden lakes. During the winter Ed McLaughlin, an old dam man, had repaired all the dams that were to be used in this spring drive.

Christ Lee was walking boss in charge of the drive. Christ was an old camp foreman who had worked for the Cloquet Companies for a number of years. William McDermit, an old-time river drive foreman, was to be his assistant. "Dangling" Jones, another old-time river driver, was to be straw boss on the upper part of the river. William Dewar had charge of the wanigans and the rear crew. Water from Wolf Dam, West Branch Dam, Browns Dam, Alden Lake Dam, Spring Lake Dam, Smith Dam, Pequaywam Lake Dam and the Mud Creek Dam was to be used as needed to carry the logs to Island Lake.

They had a good crew and good luck and plenty of water and by May 15 all the logs from the upper drive were lying in Island Lake, most of them west of the highway.

Most of the logs that were driven down the river below the Island Lake Dam in the spring of 1924 were new logs that were put in by the Campbell and Shields Co. west of Fish Lake on the Beaver. Some of these logs had been landed on Fish Lake and sluiced through the Fish Lake Dam, and some were on the Beaver below Fish Lake.

Water from the Fish Lake Dam was used to carry the logs down to the Cloquet River and some logs were sluiced through the Island Lake Dam, although the logs that went through the Island Lake Dam

were limited to the water needed to carry the logs downriver. Other logs had been put in below the Duluth and Northeastern Railroad bridge during 1922-23 by Eklund and Boland, by "Jinpole" Johnson and by some small operators, and the river had never been reared.

Once the logs reached the St. Louis River, they were joined by logs coming down the St. Louis. As mentioned, the logs coming down the upper Cloquet that spring probably were only about 15 million of new logs. However, logs had been gathering in Island Lake for several years when the logging companies were unable to get sluiced through the dam.

Also, there had been a number of dry years when there was not enough water to rear the river. As the water was pulled off by the power company, many of these logs were left high and dry. They were subject to worm damage, and several fires occurred in the dry debris and spread to the logs and a number were burned.

Because of not being able to get the logs through the dam without losing all the water that the power company needed, the logging companies and the power company joined in a project to build a spur from milepost 25½ on the Duluth and Northeastern Railroad to the west side of the Island Lake Reservoir in Sec. 3-52-15. Here a hoist was set up and the logs were sent to Cloquet by railroad.

It took several years to get all the logs out of Island Lake and the spur was extended across the reservoir as it became dry. A camp was set up on the point, with John "Single Eye" Shea in charge, to skid some of the logs back into the water where they were "boomed" and hauled across the water to the hoist by a steam "alligator."

John Shea said this was the second time he had skidded some of these logs, as he had run a camp near Brimson that had put some of the logs in the river originally.

Just how many logs were tied up in Island Lake in 1924 is only a guess, but I believe there were between 50 to 70 million. Big Jack Dewar, who operated the "alligator" on the lake for several years, said that there were around 75 million. The entire lake was full of logs.

In 1931 a small logger from Sturgeon Lake put a couple hundred thousand board feet in the river about a mile north of the end of the Carroll Trail and planned on taking them out at the Carroll trail and saw them in a small mill. He put a boom across the river to catch them, but he lost quite a few that went down the river and were never recovered. But the last drive on the Cloquet River took place in the spring of 1924. This ended the transportation of logs by water on one of the rivers that carried millions of feet of our vast virgin stands of pine logs to market.



Logs landed on the river bank await the drive.



Louis McDonald (above), clerk on the last Cloquet drive, stands atop logs. Drivers with pike poles (below) push logs into the main channel of the Cloquet.



On the Markets

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

Recent Timber Sales Average prices, as reported by each agency

Note: On state sales, the DNR does not calculate price per cord on individual auctions. Price per cord information on these sales is done by TPA staff. This average is for "trembling aspen" and "aspen species" combined, unless otherwise noted.

Average prices are for the combined regular and intermediate auctions.

DNR – Northwest Region

November 24 – Sealed Bids

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$25.99

The regular and intermediate auctions contained 88 tracts, of which 10 went unsold.

DNR – Baudette Area

December 2 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$21.85

Carlton County

December 3 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$38.65
Birch	\$14.06
Balsam	\$15.00
Maple	\$13.85

The auction contained 10 tracts, nine of which sold and the 10th was withdrawn.

DNR – Tower Area

December 4 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$19.68

The regular and intermediate auctions contained 33 tracts. Of those, 22 went unsold. Of the 11 tracts that were purchased, eight sold for the appraised price. The bid-ups on the other three were 10%, 85%, and 101%.

DNR – Northeast Region

December 4 – Sealed Bid

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$28.91

The regular and intermediate auctions contained 39 tracts, of which 14 went unsold.

DNR – Aitkin Area

December 8 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$22.35

The regular and intermediate auctions contained 36 tracts, of which 18 went unsold.

Aitkin County

December 8 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen P/B	\$23.21
Maple P/B	\$ 9.39
Paper Birch P/B	\$11.32
Oak P/B	\$17.77
Balsam P/B	\$26.04

Beltrami County

December 3 – Sealed Bid

December 4 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen pulpwood	\$31.46
Balsam pulpwood	\$26.76
Hardwood pulpwood	\$10.89
Jack Pine pulp	\$37.43

Lake County

December 9 – Sealed Bid

Species	Avg. Price
Birch P&B	\$14.12
Aspen P&B	\$21.43
Maple P&B	\$11.52
Balsam Fir	\$17.32

DNR – Warroad Area

December 10 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$22.23

All 25 tracts on the regular and intermediate auctions were sold.

DNR – Hibbing Area

December 10 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$28.08

The regular and intermediate auctions contained 18 tracts, of which four went unsold. Seven sold at the appraised price.

DNR – Bemidji Area

December 11 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$27.27

Eleven of the 12 tracts on the regular and intermediate auctions sold, four at the appraised price.

DNR – Two Harbors Area

December 11 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$17.95

The regular and intermediate auctions contained 21 tracts, of which only two sold, both at the appraised price.

DNR – Blackduck Area

December 15 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$28.52

The regular and intermediate auctions contained 34 tracts, of which two went unsold. Fourteen sold at the appraised price.

DNR – Brainerd Area

January 6 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$20.52

The regular and intermediate auctions contained 18 tracts, six which went unsold. Seven sold at the appraised price.

Cass County

December 24 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen	\$23.39
Birch	\$15.20
Maple	\$12.91
Basswood	\$18.15

Hubbard County

January 6 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen mixed	\$28.05
Birch pulp	\$10.95
Jack Pine mixed	\$26.95

Koochiching County

January 21 – Oral Auction

Species	Avg. Price
Aspen Pulp/Bolts	\$27.43
Spruce Pulp/Bolts	\$20.50
Balsam Pulp/Bolts	\$15.80
Balm Pulp/bolts	\$25.70

DNR Offers More New Wood in First Half of FY2009

The Minnesota DNR offered more new wood during the first half of fiscal year 2009 than it did during FY2008, according to figures released by the agency. However, the amount of re-offered wood fell during the first half of FY2009. DNR Timber Sale Director Lillian Baker said that's

due to all of the wood that had been turned back and then reoffered in FY2008. Because there have been fewer turn-backs in FY2009, the re-offered wood is mostly unsold timber from previous auctions.

Still, the amount of new volume offered is up in FY2009 over last year. The DNR offered for sale 411,331 cords of wood during the first half of FY2009, as compared to 317,925 during the same time in FY2008, a 29% increase. This year's figure also exceeds the five-year average for timber offered during the fiscal year's first half.

As for re-offered timber, the agency has re-offered 116,620 cords in FY2009, as opposed to 350,589 cords last year.

The DNR's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. The figures released are for the period of July 1 through December 31, 2008.

The DNR plans to offer 900,000 "new" cords of wood during FY2009. In FY2008, the agency offered 801,917 "new" cords.

In other figures released by the Division of Forestry, volume sold, cords harvested, and revenue all fell in the 1st half of FY2009 when compared to the previous year:

	Cords Sold	Cords Harvested	Actual Receipts
1st Half FY'08	623,700	197,800	\$11,189,200
1st Half FY'09	425,000	285,000	\$ 9,637,200

Consumer Confidence Hits All-Time Low in January

The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index™, which had decreased in December, inched lower in January and continues to be at a historic low. The Index now stands at 37.7 (1985=100), down from 38.6 in December. The Consumer Confidence Survey, which began in 1967, is based on a representative sample of 5,000 U.S. households.

In addition, the Present Situation Index declined slightly to 29.9 from 30.2 in December, and the Expectations Index decreased moderately to 43.0 from 44.2.

"The Consumer Confidence

Index continues to hover at all-time lows and it appears that consumers have begun the new year with the same degree of pessimism that they exhibited in the final months of 2008," says Lynn Franco, Director of The Conference Board Consumer Research Center. "The minor change in the Present Situation Index suggests that economic conditions did not deteriorate significantly further in January but, on the other hand, they did not improve either. Looking ahead, consumers remain quite pessimistic about the state of the economy and about their earnings. And, until we begin to see considerable improvements in the Expectations Index, we can't say that the worst of times are behind us."

Consumers' assessment of overall current conditions remains pessimistic. Those saying business conditions are "bad" increased to 47.9 percent from 45.8 percent, while those saying business conditions are "good" declined to 6.4 percent from 7.7 percent last month.

Existing Home Sales Rise in December, New Home Sales Fall

The National Association of Realtors (NAR) reports pending home sales increased during December by 6.3 percent to 87.7 percent.

That's the good news. The bad news is that sales of new single-family houses in December fell 14.7 percent compared to the previous month and 44.8 percent compared to December 2007, according to estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The South and Midwest regions posted big gains in pending sales during the month of December. The National Association of Realtors cited improved affordability conditions as a big factor in the upward climb in the Pending Home Sales Index.

The NAR's chief economist says the index figures reflect a modest rebound. According to Lawrence

Yun, "the biggest gains were in areas with the biggest improvements in affordability." Yun adds that despite the improved figures, "significant uncertainty still clouds the housing market."

Housing Starts Fall in December, Down 33 Percent for the Entire Year

U.S. housing starts in December were down 15.5 percent from November, and 45 percent below December 2007, according to statistics released by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

For the entire year, an estimated 904,300 housing units were started in 2008, 33.3 percent below the 2007 figure of 1,355,000.

Single-family housing starts in December were at a rate of 398,000; this is 13.5 percent below the November figure. The December rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 145,000.

By region, the Northeast saw a 15.4 percent drop in housing starts in 2008, Midwest had a 35.7 percent decline, the South a 33.5 percent fall, and the West was down 39 percent.

Mark Your Calendar

Here are some of the events in the coming months you'll want to make sure are on your calendar:

- April 7 & 8 – Tower Logger Conferences – Fortune Bay Lodge and Casino
- April 14 & 15 – Walker Logger Conferences – Northern Lights Casino
- June 11 – TPA Annual Meeting/ Golf & Fishing Event – Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge
- Sept. 18 & 19 – 2009 North Star Expo at Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids

For more information on any of these events, call the TPA office at 218-722-5013.

Classifieds

To serve our readers better, the Timber Bulletin offers free classified ads of up to 85 words to all members and associate members of the Minnesota Timber Producers Association. All ads must be submitted in writing to the Association office.

WANTED

Barrel stave logs – White Oak and Burr Oak butt cuts 12" diameter and up – random lengths
For more information call
Robert Staggemeier
Staggemeier Stave Co. Inc.
Caledonia, MN 55921
Office: 507-724-3395
Cell: 608-792-7598

EXCESS EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

John Deere with ProPac Delimber
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Call: 218-348-7904 for details

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60" Siiro Slasher,
has Volvo motor\$6,000
Call 218-787-2264

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Skidder.....\$20,000
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ADVERTISERS INDEX

AgStar.....	12
Cass Forest Products.....	20
Corporate 4.....	17
Enbridge Pipeline.....	7
Fryberger, Buchanan, Smith & Frederick, P.A.....	15
Great Lakes Trailers.....	7
Hedstrom Lumber Co.....	15
Industrial Fluid Technologies, LLC.....	13
Itasca Greenhouse.....	13
Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance.....	19
Northern Engine & Supply.....	19
Northern Timberline Equipment.....	11
Nortrax.....	27
Otis-Magie Insurance Agency.....	14
Pomp's Tire.....	11
Rapids Hydraulic.....	19
Rice Blacksmith Saw & Machine.....	5
Road Machinery & Supplies.....	28
Rux Strapping.....	26
Schaefer Enterprises.....	4
Stewart-Taylor Printing.....	15
Wausau Sales Corp.....	14