

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

JULY/AUGUST 2009

VOLUME 65



**Perfect Timing:
C&M Walsh Logging**

**Feds & State Use
New Truck Data System**

**TPA Annual Meeting:
Complete Coverage**

2009 North Star Expo

September 18th and 19th

Itasca Co. Fairgrounds

Grand Rapids, MN

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TIMBER BULLETIN

Volume 65
July/August 2009
Duluth, Minnesota

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ON THE COVER

John Daniels operates a cut-to-length harvester for C&M Walsh Logging. For more on the Walsh business, please see page 16.

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Forester Meets Mama Bear

August is here, the last month of summer. Where has the time gone? I hope everybody had a great summer.

With September fast approaching, it is time to think of fall. I hope everyone has September 18 and 19 set aside for the North Star Expo. It will be in Grand Rapids, at the Itasca County Fairgrounds. The TPA has worked hard again this year

President's Column



to set up a great show, so hopefully everyone will find some time to come out, have some fun and show your support for the TPA.

Also with fall coming it means you have one last chance to complete your MLEP and Log Safe training. If you haven't, check the MLEP website for the fall training dates.

With that I hope to see you in Grand Rapids for the Expo and, as always, remember to be safe.

Mike Rieger, President

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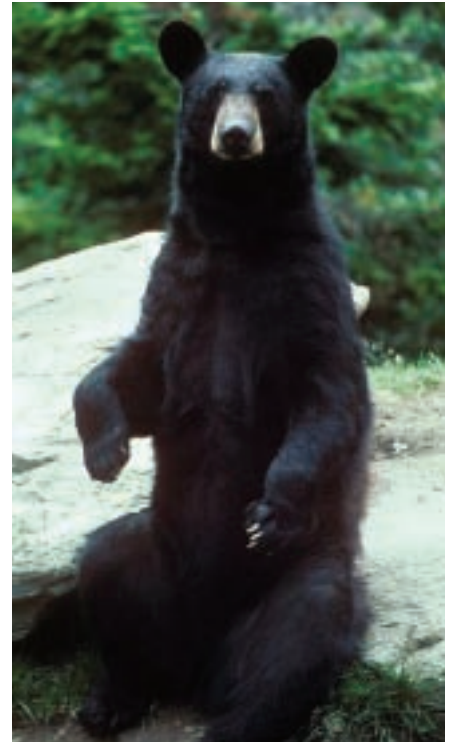
On July 24, St. Louis County forester Randy Roff, had an encounter with a sow black bear and her cubs, a story that is of interest to anyone in our industry who spends time out in the woods:

"After 23 years of beating the brush as a forester for the county Land Department north of Duluth, this had never happened...but when it does, it can happen fast. I was working off our Hulligan Forest Management Road east from St. Louis County Highway 4 north of Island Lake, traversing with GPS an area to be planted next spring. I was struggling through heavy raspberry and brush cover when I heard a movement just down slope from me. In an instant I saw a flash of black and then a smaller flash of black. I knew instantly I'd stumbled onto bears in the raspberries, but didn't really expect what happened next.

"The sow charged at me from 30 to 40 feet away to less than eight feet. My instincts (and knowledge of black bears) told me to stand my ground, look big and yell at the top of my lungs, which I did. I also struggled to grab a stick, which I thought I could use to defend myself. But of course I found nothing in the split seconds I had.

"In a classic example of the irrational thoughts that come into our heads when adrenaline kicks in, I remember thinking quickly, 'Oh, she's not that big a sow. I can probably take her.' (Yeah, right!) Anyway, either she thought better of it, or it was strictly a bluff charge, as she stopped about six to eight feet away and then peeled off back to her cubs.

"Thirty seconds later (as I kept yelling), I saw two good-sized cubs climbing an ash tree on the cut edge about 40 yards away, and I never saw the sow again. As I calmed myself down, and got back to my work, moving quickly on from the area, I counted myself very lucky. The windy conditions had hidden the sound of our mutual approach, which normally would have scared her and her cubs off. As I finished my task, all afternoon all I could think of was



that I'm really glad to work in black bear country, as they can be intimidated. If it had been a grizzly sow with cubs, I might not have left the woods.

"The safety messages are clear: This time of year, as raspberries and blueberries come into season, the black bears (and their cubs) are as interested in those berries as we might be. Be aware of that, keep your eyes and ears open for them, stand your ground and be big (hands up and waving) and scream really loud if you do stumble onto each other. Generally speaking, they will back off and perhaps only bluff charge, and you will live to talk about it...once your heart slows down again!"

Sound wood. Short hauls. Volume.

There are some signs that the economy may have hit bottom. The questions now are whether this will be a "double dip" recession with the economy sinking again after a short period of optimism or whether we are on the upswing. Even if we have hit bottom and there is not a double dip it will clearly take awhile to dig out of the economic mess that we are in.

There isn't a lot that any of us can do about the national and

Executive Vice President's Column



international economy. But there are some things that can be done, particularly by our

friends who manage public lands for county, state and federal governments.

Sound wood. Quality stands of

timber have greater volumes of timber per acre making them more economical to harvest. They produce more useable wood for the time, equipment and fuel that it takes to harvest them. Quality wood also produces more useable product at the mill for the volume processed. In the papermaking process it also reduces the amount of chemicals and additives needed, which reduces costs and environmental impacts.

Short hauls. Wood closer in to mills is golden right now. It reduces fuel consumption for transporting wood to mills and increases the number of loads that each truck and driver can haul in a given day or week. This reduces costs all around.

Volume. While total wood consumption is down due to mill closures, the mills that are running need wood. With the decline in stumpage prices we have seen some decrease in private wood on the market. The economy also has our mills looking to purchase more wood closer to home. This makes public timber even more important today than before. If we are going to live to see better days and have

the ability to manage our public lands we need economically healthy mills and loggers. That is why we need volume from public lands now.

Each public agency has their own plans. We simply need to the agencies to look at those plans and bring the stands described above forward for sale. When times were good we harvested a river of bad wood. Now we need to have some of the cream available so that we have strong loggers and mills in the future.

Sound wood. Short hauls. Volume. Now!



The *North Star Expo* returns to Grand Rapids on Sept. 18 and 19 this year. Our committee and staff have been working hard on the show for the past year. Everyone is excited about being in Grand Rapids again with its beautiful fairgrounds and central location. Mark your calendars and plan on attending this year's show.



We really had great weather for this year's Annual Meeting. On the social front we had great participation in the golf and fishing outings and an enjoyable banquet. Tough not to have fun being outside playing on a beautiful day and then sharing a good meal with old and new friends while listening to an interesting speaker. The morning program covered biomass markets and projects, preliminary results of the DNR paired bid study and an update on MLEP. Rob Harper, the supervisor on the Chippewa National Forest, also gave an outstanding talk on issues affecting the USFS and the Chippewa.



One of my brothers and his wife were in town recently for a sailing race. They've been sailing and racing for over 30 years and used to live in Duluth so they are familiar with the water and conditions. Even with that the winds were pretty stout one day and they dumped their boat several times. On one of these dumps my sister-in-law went all the way in. This is

never a pleasant experience in the always cold waters of Lake Superior. Fortunately she had on a self-inflating life preserver which kept her up until they got the boat righted and picked her up. Planning ahead and thinking about safety are important when we work and play. My sister-in-law was never in any danger because they had planned ahead and prepared to be safe. It's a lesson for all of us when we work and play.



My 84-year-old mother and a couple of her college friends went fishing on Lake of the Woods recently. My mom loves to fish and said that they had a great time and caught lots of walleye and sauger. When she was getting ready for the trip she shared one of her friends' list of things to bring on the trip: knitting, books and liquor. You have to love that.

All of us have things that we love to do. Even when times are tough like now let's all make sure to have a laugh and keep doing the things that we love to do.

Timber

Mark Your Calendar

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

Sept. 10-12 – Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association 64th Annual Lake States Logging & Equipment Expo, Escanaba, Mich. (U.P. State Fairgrounds) , \$10 Admission for the 3-day event
Visit: www.timberpa.com or
Call: 715-282-5828

Sept. 18 & 19 – North Star Expo at Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids. Parking \$2, admission is free. For more information, call the TPA office at 218-722-5013.

Members Gather for Informative Presentations

by Ray Higgins

TPA's Annual meeting was highlighted by the Annual Report of Association Activities, by guest speakers on a wide variety of topics – including the future of biomass markets and the status of the Chippewa National Forest – and by the election of new members of the organization's Board of Directors.

Four new directors joined TPA's board: John Bloom (John Bloom Logging), Jim Scheff (Scheff Logging and Trucking), Sheldon Sokoloski (Sokoloski Logging, Inc.) and Scott DeLack (DeLack Logging, Inc.).

Annual Report of Association Activities

At the annual meeting, members heard from TPA Executive Vice President Wayne Brandt on TPA's accomplishments and activities over the previous twelve months.

Among the issues Brandt addressed regarding the 2009 legislative session were:

- Funding for DNR Division of Forestry
- State study on timber scaling
- Tax bills
- State forest bio-energy strategy



Transportation committee chair Jerry Demenge reports to TPA members on the activities of the committee over the past year and on key issues of interest at the Annual Meeting, as TPA president Mike Rieger looks on.

- Proposed increases to overweight truck fines (defeated)

Brandt also outlined some of the other TPA activities of the past year, including:

- Briefing in Washington, D.C., for congressional staffs
- Lobbying in favor of increase of

- interstate truck weights
- Meeting with new USDA Secretary Vilsack
- Radio public service announcements on truck safety
- Ongoing communication with county, state, and federal agencies on various issues
- The North Star Expo



TPA members filled the banquet room at Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge for the TPA Annual Membership Meeting.



Chippewa National Forest Supervisor Rob Harper gives a rundown on the CNF's timber sale program and where it will go in the future.



Mark Lindquist of the DNR Biofuels Program updates TPA members on biomass markets in the state. Lindquist was joined by the DNR's Anna Robertson.



U of M Graduate student Ross Brown reports on the 2008 DNR paired bid study at the TPA Annual Meeting.

Featured Speakers

The 2009 membership meeting included several invited guests who shared information and gave members an opportunity to engage in questions and answers. Chippewa National Forest Supervisor *Rob Harper* discussed "the State of the Chippewa," including numbers from the last several years that show that timber offerings are again increasing on the forest. While ongoing litigation may preclude the forest from returning to the levels enjoyed in the 1990s, the Chippewa has seen increases in timber offered and sold over the past two years. According to Harper, among the reasons for those increases are the development of a systematic planning process which is continually monitored and adapted; line officers who are committed to working with various stakeholders; and increasing the acres of harvest per timber sale project from approximately 1600 – 3100.

Annual meeting attendees were treated to a

presentation on biomass utilization by *Anna Robertson* and *Mark Lindquist* of the DNR's Biofuels Program. Robertson said that as of June 1, 25 different biomass facilities had been proposed in Minnesota, and of those, four had made public announcements or had begun the environmental permitting process: Central Minnesota Ethanol Cooperative (Little Falls), Mountain Timber (Mountain Iron), US Steel Keetac Expansion (Keewatin, Minn.), and *RenewaFUEL* (location to be determined).

Lindquist talked about key issues that need to be addressed as the markets for biomass emerge, including the fact that there are currently competing visions as to how markets should be developed. In addition, the state needs a better broad-based understanding of the size of the biomass supply, and more definition of the most strategic and beneficial use of biomass. A state policy on biomass energy will be helpful, and Lindquist said such a policy will need to not only take into account economic factors, but must also work with current federal policy as well as build upon existing state priorities and directions.

Minnesota Logger Education Program Executive Director Dave Chura spoke to the members about the new partnership between MLEP and the Logsafe program that was initiated this year. Chura reported that under MLEP's administration, there has been an increase in the number of workshops and a greater variety of training options than in the past. Several additional First Aid/CPR workshops have been scheduled in order to accommodate demand and the desire to limit the class sizes to 20-25. Demand for this training has increased over previous years and can primarily be attributed to MLEP's educational efforts aimed at reminding employers that all employees need this training, not just one per crew. Chura expressed his belief that part of MLEP's responsibility in providing safety training is to help everyone stay compliant with OSHA training requirements.

The final speaker of the morning was University of

Minnesota graduate student *Ross Brown*, who along with Mike Kilgore, Charlie Blinn and others, helped conduct the paired bid study of timber auctions in 2008. The study examined how lower base prices and varied contract lengths affect stumpage prices.

In regional sealed bid auctions last November and December, roughly one-third of the tracts were offered with both two-year and five-year permit durations, and the remaining tracts had two different base prices: one “normal” base price and one with a 50% reduction. Bidders submitted separate sealed bids addressing each scenario. In all, a total of 447 paired bids were submitted and all were examined, not just the successful bids.

According to Brown, there was no significant difference in bid price based on contract length. The average on five-year sales was \$23.98 per cord, while the two-year bids were slightly lower at \$23.63 per cord. Brown said Most bidders expected to harvest the sales within the next couple of years and did not expect prices to increase much over that time.

In the tracts offered with different base prices, those with reduced minimum bids sold for roughly 10% lower prices than those with “normal” bases. Brown saw that on tracts that were more competitive and received more bids, the base price had less of an influence on the ultimate price. In addition, 20% of the sales actually received higher bids for the lower base price, which Brown said he’d like to study more closely.

Brown also pointed out that while Lower minimum bid prices resulted in lower stumpage prices, this alone does not imply higher

minimum bid prices are better for the DNR in terms of revenue. He also said that during periods when price speculation is not common (e.g., now), longer contracts do not increase willingness to pay. Conducting a similar study during different economic times could yield different results.

Next, the researchers are

examining the nearly 4400 tracts the DNR sold from 2001 to 2006 to look for other factors that drive stumpage prices. They also plan to survey foresters and stumpage purchasers to find out what factors they feel are most important and to see how bidding has changed over the past 10 years. 🍃

Joe Schmit Inspires at Banquet

by Ray Higgins

The TPA Annual Meeting Banquet again provided members the opportunity to compare notes on their businesses, as well as socialize with fellow members and industry stakeholders. The evening's highlight was the keynote speech by former Twin Cities broadcaster Joe Schmit. Covering the region's top sports and news stories for more than 25 years, Schmit has interviewed such sports stars as Tiger woods, Michael Jordan, and Wayne Gretzky. He's covered Super Bowls and World Series – the Twins sprayed champagne on him twice – and his humorous and inspiring stories illustrated his main point that a key to success in all areas of life is maintaining a positive attitude.

"Joe was great," said Jay Eystad of Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance. "Hearing his stories and his message were especially pertinent in these difficult economic times."

Also, winners of the TPA Safety Contest were recognized for having no lost-time accidents from April of 2008 through March of this year.



Longtime Minnesota broadcaster Joe Schmit inspires banquet attendees with his message about staying positive in the face of adversity.

Logging Division

- C & M Walsh Logging, Inc., Park Rapids
- C. O. Johnson Logging, Inc., Blackduck
- Dick Walsh Forest Products, LLP, Park Rapids
- Dukek Logging Inc., Bemidji
- Erickson Timber Products, Inc., Baudette
- Great Northern Logging, Inc., Pierz
- Greg Cook Logging, Inc., Bigfork
- Johnson Logging, Inc., Cannon Falls
- Killmer Bros. Inc., Big Falls
- Kimball's Logging Inc., Park Rapids
- Lundberg Forest Products, Inc., Solway
- M & R Chips, Inc., Grand Rapids
- McCabe Forest Products, Inc., Duluth
- Mike Gates Logging, Big Falls
- Northwoods Chipping Inc., Int'l Falls
- Page & Hill Forest Products, Inc., Big Falls
- Palmer Logging, Barnum
- Pittack Logging, Inc., Bovey
- Ron Beckman Timber Harvesting, LLC, Grand Rapids
- Root River Hardwoods, Inc., Preston
- Shuster Logging, Gheen
- Simcoe & Habisch Logging, McGrath
- Third Generation Logging Co., Bigfork
- Weijo Logging, Ely



Tom McCabe and Clinton Cook hold the safety awards they earned for the safe work of their employees over the past year.

Trucking Division

- C. O. Johnson Logging, Inc., Blackduck
- Dick Walsh Forest Products, LLP, Park Rapids



L-R: Cindy Hughes, Kurt Benson, and David Hughes socialize before the TPA banquet.

- Johnson Logging Inc., Cannon Falls
- Rajala Mill Company, Bigfork
- Two Inlets Mill, Park Rapids

Special recognition went to Dukek Logging of Bagley as repeat winner in the logging division since 1987. Lundberg Forest Products of Solway was also recognized as a repeat winner in the trucking division since 1988.

In the drawing for cash awards from among those recognized in the safety contest, \$500 awards went to Shuster Logging (Gheen), Page and Hill forest Products (Big Falls), and C.O. Johnson Logging, Inc. (Blackduck). Awards of \$250 went to Bergstrom Wood Products (International Falls) and Savanna Pallets, Inc. (McGregor).



Kit Hasbargen won the grand door prize at the TPA banquet – a Stihl chainsaw.

- Dukek Trucking, Inc., Bemidji
- Erickson Timber Products, Inc., Baudette
- Greg Cook Logging, Inc., Bigfork
- Johnson Logging Inc., Cannon Falls
- Kimball's Logging Inc., Park Rapids
- Lake Nebagamon Trucking Corp., Lake Nebagamon, Wis.
- Lundberg Forest Products, Inc., Solway
- M & R Chips, Inc., Grand Rapids
- Mannco Trucking, Inc., Int'l. Falls
- McCabe Forest Products, Inc., Duluth
- Mike Gates Logging, Big Falls
- Northwoods Chipping Inc., Int'l Falls
- Palmer Logging, Barnum
- Pittack Logging, Inc., Bovey
- Thomas Long & Son Trucking, Orr
- Two Inlets Mill, Park Rapids

Sawmill Division

- Bass Lake Mill, LLP, Sandstone
- Bergstrom Wood Products, Int'l Falls
- Erickson Timber Products, Inc., Baudette

TPA Thanks Our Sponsors!

Annual Meeting Sponsors:

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- Minnesota Forest Industries
- Minnesota Power
- MN SFI® Implementation Committee
- NewPage Corporation
- Norbord Minnesota
- Potlatch Corporation
- Road Machinery & Supplies Company
- Sappi Fine Paper
- UPM – Blandin Paper
- Verso Paper

Door Prizes:

- AgStar Financial Services
- UPM Blandin
- Border State Bank
- Cass Forest Products
- LUA
- Ultima Bank
- RMS
- TPA
- Nortrax
- Boise
- Bell Pole

The chainsaw was donated by Minnesota Forest Industries

TPA Golfers and Anglers Enjoy the Sun

With more anglers and golfers than ever before, TPA's golf and fishing outing was again a rousing success. And the weather cooperated with sunny skies throughout the afternoon.

The fishing event was held on Sugar Lake, with awards going to the angler with the longest fish and the angler with the shortest fish. Again this year, Bell Timber donated rod-and-reel combos for the winner in each category. Since it was a catch-and-release event, fish were measured in the boat and anglers reported their lengths at the end of the day.

The Conservation Award (smallest fish of the day) went to Dave Amundson of Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance with a 6-1/2 inch perch.

The Big Walter Award (largest fish) went to Bob Behr of UPM Blandin for a walleye measuring 24-1/4 inches.

In golf, the Caddyshacker Award – for the team that had the most fun and the highest score – went to the foursome of Bruce Meade, TPA board member Joan Pomp, Anna Pomp, and Mark Woodward.

The Foot Wedge Award – for the team with the best score – featured a huge turnaround. 2008 Caddyshacker Award winners Erik Lunemann of Nortrax, TPA board member Kelly Kimball and his wife Shelly returned this year with a new partner: Nortrax Midwest region VP Tim Murphy and the change paid off. They went from “worst” in 2008 to “first” in 2009 to win the Foot Wedge Award.

It was a great day all around for Nortrax. Not only did they win the golf event, but they treated all of the golfers by generously driving the beverage cart and donating all beverages throughout the afternoon.



L-R: Eric Lunemann of Nortrax, Kelly and Shelly Kimball of Kimball Logging, and Tim Murphy, Nortrax Regional VP, pause for a moment before going about the business of posting the lowest score at the TPA golf outing.



L-R: Jay Eystad of LUA, TPA President Mike Rieger, banquet speaker Joe Schmit, and Aaron Olson of Greg Olson Logging look over a putt during the TPA golf outing.



With Scott Pittack (R) at the controls, Lowell, Lisa, and Judy Pittack (L-R) head out onto Sugar Lake for a day of fishing.



Kalin Kvitek (L) and Bob Cook of Nortrax spent the day in the beer cart. Nortrax again sponsored the cart, picking up the tab for all beverages on the golf course.



Monte Nelson of S. E. Nelson and Sons Logging drains a putt as teammate John Cloutier of Verso Paper watches.



UPM Blandin's Bob Behr shows off the biggest fish of the day, a 24-1/4 inch walleye.



Dave Amundson of LUA holds the perch that earned him the Conservation Award at the TPA Fishing outing.



David Berthiaume of Berthiaume Logging looks forward to a productive day on the water at the TPA Fishing event.

Member Feature...



C & M Walsh's Logging Crew. L-R: John Daniels, Kenny Daniels, and Mike Walsh.

Perfect Timing

by Ray Higgins

C & M Walsh Logging was at a crossroads. But the timing for their ultimate path couldn't have been better

Mike Walsh had a decision to make.

It was 2005 and business was good. His conventional logging operation based in Park Rapids had plenty of work, cutting wood mostly for Potlatch. But then two of his employees, a truck driver and his long-time buncher operator – both decided to leave the company. Walsh knew finding replacements as good as those

leaving would be difficult. A conversation with Potlatch forester Brian Smith made Walsh look at things from a different perspective. Maybe he didn't need to replace the two employees, after all.

"He said 'maybe you need to go small,'" Walsh remembered.

By "going small" he meant selling his conventional equipment and investing in a cut-to-length operation, allowing him to reduce the size of his crew. But he'd have to switch from doing almost exclusively clear-cuts to becoming pine plantation thinning specialists.

Walsh couldn't make such a move without talking to his father Chester, who'd started the business back in the 1940s.

Chester Walsh's father had a sawmill back in those days, and Chester had the opportunity to work in the woods. When World War II broke out, he headed to the South Pacific as an Army amphibious engineer. When he returned to Park Rapids after the war, Chester initially drove truck but ultimately found his way back to what had become the family business. His brother Harris was a



John Daniels operates the Fabtek FT133 Harvester. Daniels is cutting every fifth row and thinning within the other four rows to a basal area of 80 to 90.

logger and owned a sawmill. Chester found a home logging, as well. Wife Ann became a partner not only in marriage, but also in the business.

“She was very heavily involved,” Mike Walsh says. “It was almost a partnership.”

Logging could be a tough business in those days, but Chester

showed he had what it took to survive in good times and in bad.

“Dad would tell stories of times where he didn’t have anything to do,” Mike says. “He’d sit up in Park Rapids on Main Street in the early years with a load of firewood and he’d sit up there all day trying to sell that load of firewood.”

Ann and Chester had two sons and two daughters, but only Mike showed an interest in the woods.

Through the years, Chester was a contract logger for Potlatch, sending pulp and bolts to Cloquet. In 1980, Potlatch built its oriented strand board mill in Bemidji, so the pulp went there, and ultimately the bolts started going to the company’s stud mill next door. When Mike graduated from Park Rapids High the following year, he went to work with his dad.

“Dad never encouraged me to go into the woods,” Mike says. “I rode in the truck with him when I was young, so I knew a lot about the business already. It’s all I ever really wanted to do.”

He did flirt with going into electronics right after high school,



Walsh forwarder operator Kenny Daniels picks up the red pine bolts that have just been harvested.

taking courses at Moorhead Vo-Tech. After three months, he knew that wasn't for him.

"I decided to come back to what I call the W.S.L.," Walsh says. "The Walsh School of Logging."

In 1985, Mike became a partner in what is now C & M Walsh Logging. The company was incorporated in 1992. Chester never retired, but as the years went by, he gradually reduced his role in the company.

"The last 10 or 15 years," Mike says, "he didn't do a whole lot in the woods. He would oversee things, sort of my adviser, which is good. I loved every minute of it.

"Everything I have," he says, "I owe to my dad."

So Mike went to Chester for some of that advice on the possibility of making the major change from a conventional operation to cut-to-length.

"He left it up to me," Mike says, "because I was the one that was going to have to live with the decision."

At the time, bidding at auctions for public timber, especially aspen, was highly competitive, pushing stumpage prices to all-time highs.

"I could see what was happening," Walsh says. "I couldn't keep going to auction sales and pay that kind of money for timber. I don't produce those volumes of wood."

The final factor in the decision was something Walsh learned in his years in the logging business: Change is inevitable.

"You have to change with the times," Walsh says. "Change is constant. I used to say I'd quit before I'd go into short wood processing. And here I am. If you're going to stay in it, you have to change."

Walsh sold the conventional equipment and made the cut-to-length investment. The new equipment made it easier for him to commit to Potlatch plantation thinnings that require the cut-to-length harvester, reducing the company's dependence on taking pulpwood to the Bemidji OSB mill which Ainsworth had purchased from Potlatch a few years before.

What Walsh didn't know is that the timing of the change would prove to be nearly perfect. High aspen prices and a global housing crunch led to Ainsworth closing the Bemidji mill – and others in Grand Rapids and Cook. He'd lose the volume he'd take to Ainsworth. The resulting timber industry downturn would have made it nearly impossible for him to sell his conventional equipment.

Now, 80 percent of what the company cuts is on Potlatch land. The rest are private sales he picks up. The bolts all go to the stud mill in Bemidji, with the pulp going to either Norbord's OSB mill in Solway or Verso Paper in Sartell. That means Walsh buys little public stumpage, helping him control expenses.

"You have more control over costs," Walsh says, "because you

know where you're at constantly. If the price fluctuates, you already know what you are getting paid and you haven't paid a great deal of money for stumpage.

What's more, many of the thinnings he's now doing for Potlatch were previously thinned or clearcut by the Walshes themselves.

"On many of these sites," he says, "we have already built the roads, the landings, and all of that years ago. That's one thing nice is that a lot of that stuff is already there, so that expense is almost gone.

"Also, plantation stuff is a little bit easier on the equipment. You're not banging around, it's pretty flat where you're at. On this Fabtek harvester, there's no tailspin on it, so they fit real nice in these plantations, especially the first thinnings. The tailspin stays even with your tracks, so it's only the same as your width. And I only burn less than 200 gallons of fuel a week in that equipment – it's that efficient – so that's a huge savings right there. I burn more in my truck than I do in the equipment."

In the end, "going small" as Brian Smith suggested, has been the way to go for C&M Walsh Logging.

"Looking back," Walsh says, "not knowing what the industry was going to be like three years down the road like it is now, it was perfect timing."

Ironically, one of the initial reasons for the change didn't end up being a problem in the long-term. Remember the buncher operator who was leaving, one of the two departures that made Walsh think about making the move to cut-to-length in the first place? That was John Daniels. Two years ago, he came back to run Walsh's Fabtek harvester. He's now been with C&M Walsh for 18 years in all. And he's a rookie compared to the guy who operates Walsh's forwarder: John's dad Kenny, who's been with the company 32 years.

"When you have people with loyalty like Kenny and John," Walsh says, "you can't beat it. They're there every day and they're very good. It's a great relationship. A lot what we have with our business is owed to those guys."

In a business filled with change, consistency in the crew is highly



Fully loaded with freshly cut Norway pine, Mike Walsh leaves the logging job north of Osage and heads for the Potlatch stud mill in Bemidji.

valued. Walsh values another form of consistency, that of having constant work.

“Since the change to cut-to-length, we’re not a real high production outfit any more,” Walsh says, “but it’s consistent and I like that. If you’re consistent day after day, you don’t have to get eight loads, nine loads, 10 loads of wood to the mill. What we do is three or four loads a day, and that works well.”

A typical day works like this: Kenny Daniels forwards the wood harvested by John and loads one of Walsh’s two trailers. Mike, who handles most of the hauling, takes the full trailer to the mill. In the meantime, John and Kenny are back at the job site loading the second trailer. When Mike returns, he trades the empty trailer for the full one and heads back to the mill. With the current job site north of Osage, it’s about a two and a half hour round trip to Potlatch. With all the time in the truck, Mike can run the business from the cab.

“This is my office,” he says.

Walsh does have an office where he handles the billing. The shop is still on his parents’ land, where he grew up. Chester passed away earlier this year at age 91. Ann died a couple of years back. Mike’s sister still lives in the house.

Life is good. Wife Shelli is an academic adviser at Park Rapids High. Son Dylan is going to be a freshman at Bemidji State and 15-year-old Kody is getting ready for

his freshman year in high school. Going to their baseball, football, hockey, and basketball games keeps the family busy, as does fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, just about anything outdoors. In this economy, business could be better.

“This summer hasn’t been as busy, but it’s been consistent,” he says. “We’ve had enough plantation thinnings. With the stud mill, the markets have been there. The prices are dropping, which adds a little bit more to the difficulties of business. I’m not putting a lot of money away, and the equipment’s getting older, so

that’s a concern, but I think it’s a spot where we can maintain.”

Having a majority of his markets at one mill is another concern. But Walsh says his association with the people at Potlatch is integral to the company’s success.

“The relationship that we have had with Potlatch and all of their foresters is tremendous,” Walsh says. “Our relationship with Brian Smith is unique in that besides having a great working relationship, we have also been able to become good friends. I value both relationships with Brian and feel fortunate to have them in the logging industry. We work with Mark Gossman too, and he’s also great to work with.”

All things considered – business, family, life – when Walsh takes stock, he likes what he sees.

“I like what I do for a living. It’s just like any job. There are days were you wish you weren’t doing it, but I love the little things. A number of years back we took some video and we had a guy come into the woods to show what we do. I looked at it not long ago and the little things that every day you tend to overlook was on that video. Like when he was walking in on a logging trail, the birds were chirping. We take all that for granted, but sometimes you need to sit down and take a look and say how lucky you are to be doing what you’re doing.” 🍃

NORTH STAR EXPO

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, September 18

8:00 am	Equipment Displays Open
8:00 am - 12:00 pm	Workshop – Reasonable Suspicion Training
9:00 am	Display Contest Judging
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Loader Contest (sign up at site)
11:00 am - 3:00 pm	Kid's Mini-Loader (sign up at site)
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	Celebrity/Media Loader Contest
12:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Loader Contest (sign up at site)
5:00 pm	Equipment displays close
5:00 pm	Cash Bar Social Hour begins
6:00 pm	Duke Skorich BBQ and Door Prizes - on site

Saturday, September 19

7:00 am - 9:00 am	Free Pancake Breakfast (sponsored by Nortrax)
8:00 am	Equipment displays open
9:00 am - 11:00 am	Loader Contest (sign up at site)
9:00 am - 1:00 pm	Kid's Mini-Loader (sign up at site)
11:00 am	Coloring contest winners announced
1:00 pm	Winners announced for Loader, Master Loader, and Best Load contests
2:00 pm	Equipment displays close

CONTESTS

Vendor Drawing – Visit the vendors identified on the back of your entry card and become eligible to win a chainsaw carving!

Guess the Weight – Guess the weight of a fully loaded truck

Wood Identification – See how many tree species you can identify

Loader – Test your skills against the clock

Masters Division Loader – Loader contest for those 50 and over – sign up at site

Best Load – Come and see the Best Loads of Wood on Display

Big Cookie – Enter to see if your wood cookie is the biggest of it's species.

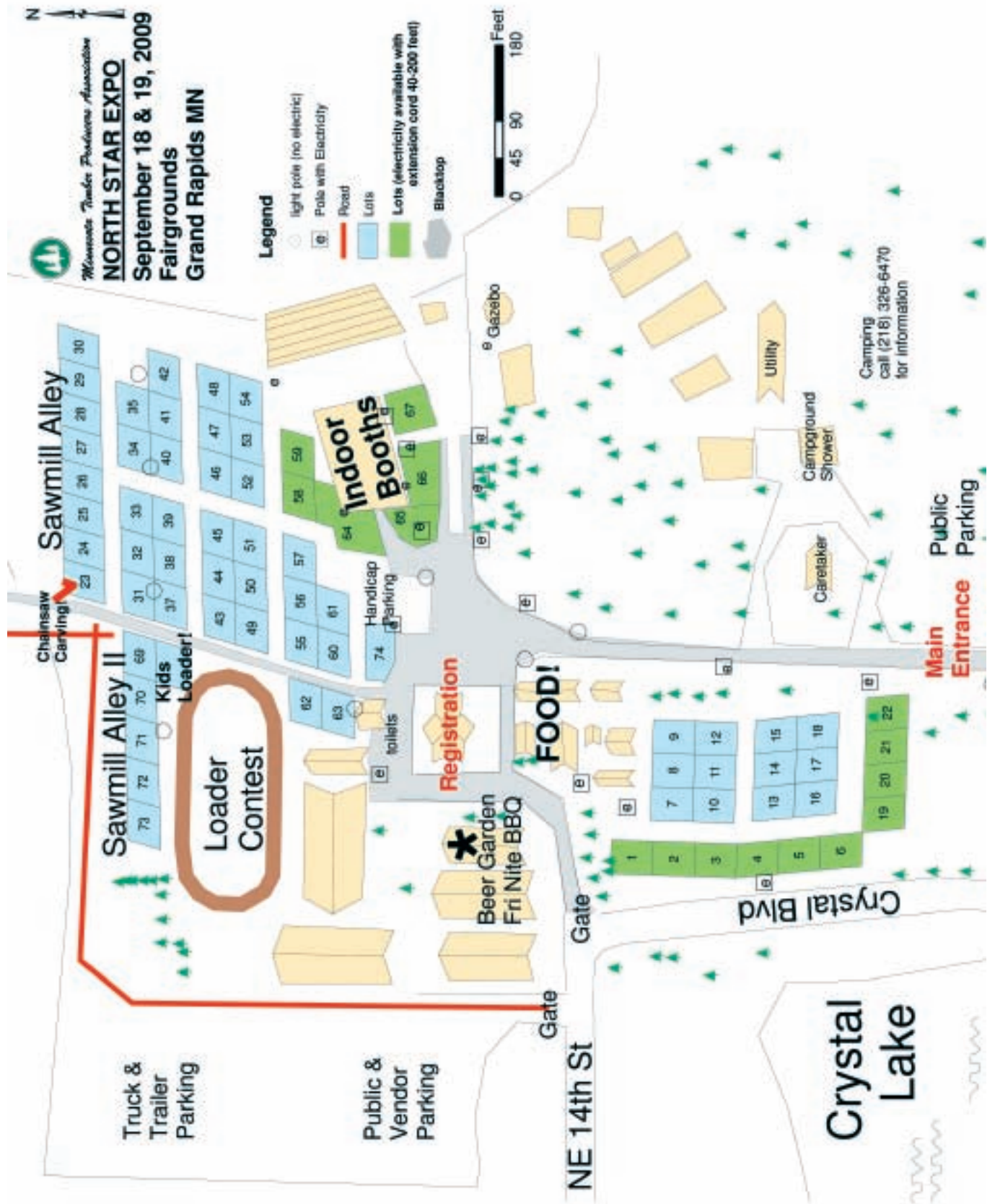
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324 W. Superior St. #903 • Duluth, MN 55802
218-722-5013



Minnesota Timber Producers Association
NORTH STAR EXPO
September 18 & 19, 2009
Fairgrounds
Grand Rapids MN

Legend

- Light pole (no electric)
- Pole with Electricity
- Road
- Lots
- Lots (electricity available with extension cord 40-200 feet)
- Blacktop



Expo Returns to Grand Rapids

Features Duke Skorich BBQ

by Ray Higgins

After two years in Bemidji, the North Star Expo is returning to the Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids. Minnesota's largest logging equipment show is in its 56th year and will be held September 18 and 19. As always, there will be lots to see and do, including the latest in logging equipment from all of the region's top vendors.

By popular demand, Friday night's dinner will feature the famous Duke Skorich Barbecue, with barbecue beef and pork, baked beans, potato salad, and European cole slaw. Tickets for the dinner are \$12 for adults and \$8 for kids and can be purchased in advance from the TPA office or at the door.

Continuing the Expo tradition of great food and fellowship, Nortrax will again provide a free pancake breakfast on Saturday morning.

"We're looking forward to being back in Grand Rapids," said TPA Expo chair Joan Pomp. "We had a wonderful two years in Bemidji and we look forward to going back some day, but this year's show at the Itasca County Fairgrounds is



Big trucks and big equipment are the big attractions at any Expo, and the 2009 show will feature both.

shaping up to be a great one."

Again this year, attendees will have the chance to win a beautiful chainsaw carving! Everyone attending the Expo will get a vendor card at the entry gate, and on the back of the card will be vendor names and locations. Just visit those locations and have the vendor initial your card. Once all

the vendor names have been initialed, return the card to the registration area. At the end of the Expo, one lucky name will be drawn to win the carving!

Like at any Expo, there will be plenty of competitions:

The Best Load contest is taking place again this year. Wood only will be judged, not the truck it is



The 2009 Expo will again feature the latest logging equipment from the top manufacturers. Last year, Ponsse received the award for Best Outdoor Lot at the Expo.



The Kids Loader is very popular among the younger generation of Expo visitors.



Food is always a huge attraction at the Expo. These folks last year lined up for the great good at the Friday banquet, which this year will feature the famous Duke Skorich Barbecue.

hauled on. Points will be scored on the timber quality, product quality, product manufacturing, load appearance, and load securement. Monetary prizes are awarded to the top finishers.

The Loader Contest will also be held again this year, as well as the Master Loader contest. For the kids, back by popular demand, we'll have the Kid's Mini-Loader.

The Coloring Contest will take place this year as well. In this issue of the *Bulletin*, you'll find a pull-out poster for the little ones to enter. Just have them color the poster and either bring it to the Expo or mail it to the office. Entries will be posted at the Expo for all to enjoy.

Don't forget to bring in your wood cookies for the Big Cookie Contest. Remember to attach a list indicating species, where taken, company name and *register at the Registration Desk first!*

Test your visual skills and Guess the Weight! Entry forms will be available near one of the Best Load trucks.

We'll have fun for the whole family. See you September 18 and 19 in Grand Rapids!

CSA 2010 Comes to Minnesota

New Federal System changes the way data is examined, affecting the state's trucking companies

The Minnesota State Patrol, along with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and the Mn/DOT Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations, is changing the way it examines trucking company data in an effort to reduce CMV crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

The initiative is called Comprehensive Safety Analysis 2010 (CSA 2010) and will include tracking not only the safety performance of trucking companies, but of individual drivers as well.

"Not only will carriers continue to have performance-based measures," said Captain Ken Urquhart of the Minnesota State Patrol, "but drivers as well will be included in the performance-based system. So if a driver wants to

drive one of your trucks, you're going to be able to look into that driver's history from previous employers so you can decide whether you want to hire him. It will help the owner with risk management."

"In the past," Urquhart said, "if a driver kept getting violations, all of the onus was on the company. But now the driver will carry a portion of the responsibility, too."

While the program will be rolled out nationwide by the end of next year, Minnesota is one of six states getting an early start as part of a pilot program to see how the initiative works. The FMSCA says the program will help the agency and its state partners contact more carriers and drivers, use improved data to better identify high risk carriers and

drivers, and apply a wider range of interventions to correct high-risk behavior before it becomes chronic and habitual.

"It will help us focus our resources toward helping carriers with specific issues," Urquhart said. "So rather than conduct a comprehensive audit which is labor intensive, we can focus on the problems, which will save time for both the companies and enforcement. We're hoping that this system will help us see that maybe an industry has a trend throughout multiple carriers that we can then focus our resources on these issues in the form of education to those carriers or associations."

The program is focused on seven areas called Behavioral Analysis and Safety Improvement Categories

or BASICS. These are:

- Unsafe Driving
- Fatigued Driving
- Driver Fitness
- Controlled Substances and Alcohol
- Vehicle Maintenance
- Improper Loading/Cargo Securement
- Crash/Incident Experience

The CSA 2010 operational model will regularly determine the safety fitness of motor carriers and drivers of commercial motor vehicles for which there is sufficient data, and as new data enter the operational model. A compliance review would not be required prior to a safety fitness determination.

"This is not going to change our philosophy as to whether we cite someone," Urquhart said. "It's going to give us a better idea of how carriers perform and how we can help in the future. We really look at this as better information to help us help the carrier or the driver to be better in the future."

A key change is that Safestat, the current system that analyzes a carrier's safety, has been using the previous 30 month of a company's data and looking at only out-of-service violations when generating a safety score. CSA2010 will look at 24 months of data, but all violations when determining the BASICS score.

"Sometimes it's hard to determine where a company's safety concerns are simply by looking at the Safestat score," said Pam DeGrote of MnDOT's Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations. "CSA2010 will help figure out exactly what area is raising its score, giving us the opportunity to offer the carrier information on how to take corrective measures."

DeGrote will lead a workshop on DOT audits cosponsored by TPA and The Minnesota Logger Education Program, and the CSA 2010 program will be a topic of discussion. The workshop is October 20th in Brainerd. Visit



Trucking companies in Minnesota are being monitored using a new data tracking system called CSA 2010.

www.mlep.org to register.

In addition, the Minnesota Trucking Association is sponsoring four seminars this fall titled CSA 2010: A New Way of Enforcing Motor Carrier Regulations—An In-Depth Introduction. The seminars will feature Captain Urquhart of

the State Patrol and Dan Drexler of FMCSA. For more information on dates, times, locations, and pricing, visit www.mntruck.org.

More information on CSA 2010 can be found at <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety-security/csa2010/home.htm>

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St. Louis County Board Maintains \$1 Million Liability Insurance

The St. Louis County Board has decided to leave its liability insurance requirements for timber sale contracts at \$1 million. That brings the county in line with all other county timber sale programs in the state.

In 2008, the Minnesota legislature voted to increase tort liability requirements to \$1.5 million for all county contractors statewide. The move was in response to a case in northwest Minnesota that had

Timber Talk

nothing to do with the timber industry. However, because insurance companies that sell these coverages only

offer policies in \$1 million increments, timber permit owners would have had to purchase \$2 million in coverage, an increase in premiums of thousands of dollars per year.

Partially due to the fact that no claim has ever been filed against St. Louis County – or any county – due to a timber sale contract, the board voted unanimously to leave the insurance requirement for timber contract holders at \$1 million. But because the county could potentially be liable for a claim against one of its contractors if a claim is awarded for an amount between \$1 million and \$1.5 million, the move expires in July of next year. In the meantime, it is hoped state law is amended to remove the \$1.5 million requirement for timber sale contract holders.

DNR Consolidates Offices

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is consolidating several southern region field offices to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

DNR forestry offices in New Ulm, Mankato, and Willmar have been closed, with staff assigned to other

state forestry offices. The functions of those offices will be assumed by other forestry offices, DNR divisions, partner agencies or private contractors.

The DNR Fish & Wildlife Division has also moved operations at its Willmar office to Sibley State Park. The Appleton office has moved to the Lac qui Parle Wildlife and Parks Headquarters.

“These decisions were made jointly by our regional and divisional management as part of our ongoing efforts to streamline processes to better deliver services,” said DNR Southern Region Director Mark Matuska. “We know change is difficult, but our goal is to maintain services to our customers at less cost. In addition, we anticipate increased visitor traffic to these park locations.”

In other changes, the DNR has relocated Mankato staff from the divisions of Waters and Ecological Resources to Minneopa State Park. Additionally, a wildlife lakes specialist and a private lands specialist will be reassigned from Mankato to the DNR Farmland Wildlife Populations and Research Station near Madelia.

House Climate Legislation Benefits Family Forest Owners

The U.S. House of Representatives has approved climate legislation, HR 2454, *the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009*, that includes new opportunities for family forest owners to participate in energy and carbon markets.

The legislation will:

- Guarantee that forest offset market opportunities will be created for family forest owners, including working forest management projects (this wasn't so clear a few days ago).
- Ensure USDA has the lead role in implementing the offset markets for forests (this wasn't the case just a few days ago).
- Ensure "early actors," family

forest owners who have already taken steps to manage their properties responsibly, will be rewarded for their carbon-positive activities.

- Allow all biomass from family forests to be used to meet the Renewable Electricity and Renewable Fuels Standards, fixing the flawed definition in the original Waxman-Markey bill and the 2007 energy bill, while maintaining protections for sustainable forest management.
- Allow a range of green building standards, including those that allow the use of wood from American Tree Farm System® certified forests.

In addition to the improvements in the carbon offset market provisions, the bill includes incentives for agricultural activities that sequester and store carbon. These types of incentives are important for landowners who might not otherwise be able to participate in offset markets due to the smaller size of their land.

The measure still needs to pass the Senate before it goes to President Obama for signing.

Dahl Returns to Wallwork Truck Center

Orlin Dahl has returned to Wallwork Truck Center as the new Manager at the Collision Center in Fargo. He was with a trucking company in Wahpeton, N.D., for the past six years and with Wallwork in Fargo from 1981 to 2002. Orlin attended North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton, N.D., where he completed the Diesel Mechanics program. He has also received certifications from Kenworth Truck Company in customer service and service department management. The Collision Center at WTC, which is located at 950 35th Street Northwest in Fargo, specializes in medium and heavy duty truck damage repair and painting.

Caught in Roller System at a Sawmill Location

by Dave Amundson
Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance

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.

Background:

The work week at the sawmill started as it typically does, with nothing abnormal or out of place, when an employee was suddenly injured during the mid-morning hours. This particular mill has mechanized its set-up in recent years to allow lumber decks and roller conveyors to move a large

portion of wood from one application to another. Lumber/slab handlers assist the product flow in assigned areas. Personal protection for eye, ear, hands, etc. is enforced. Also, job rotation and monthly safety meetings are in place. In this situation the slab handler was using rubberized mechanics gloves

for hand protection.

Operator:

The involved lumber/slab handler worked for this operation a little over one year and was considered trained for the position. This is a job position that rotates with other trained individuals.

Accident and/or Injury:

On this Monday morning, the involved employee was moving back and forth along the roller conveyor deck behind the head rig carriage directing the flow of slabs. As the employee walked beside the deck, he placed his hand on top of a rotating roller. Before he realized what happened, his hand was pulled into the pinch zone between the roller and deck. Fortunately, the employee was able to pull his hand from the rotating roller. He received a serious laceration that required medical attention and stitches, but had no lost time. This is a situation where mechanization has improved lumber handling, but also brought forth other risks and/or hazards.

Unsafe Act and/or Condition:

It is uncertain why this happened, however, here are some unsafe acts that may have contributed to this situation:

- Lumber/slab handler was using rubberized mechanic gloves for liquid protection which is not encouraged for this position. Rubberized gloves grip metal

and should not be worn around rotating rollers, pulleys, gears, etc.

- Lack of awareness, boredom, and not following work procedures.
- Not attentive, or being focused on the job.

The most logical cause of this injury was due to the employee laying his hand on top of a rotating roller, which caused the gloves to grip the roller and pull his hand into the deck. This personal injury could have been as serious as amputation or even death.

Preventative Measures:

1. Enforce the use of smooth, loose-fitting gloves that do not tighten around the wrist and are not rubberized when working around rotating rollers, pulleys, etc. The proper safety gear for each hazard area needs to be reviewed.
2. Install complete guards/shields to prevent contact with the hazard area that is being protected. As processes change, regular self-inspection for improvements and efficiencies need review.
3. Restrict walkways next to hazard areas by installing barrier guards to prevent access to these problem areas. As mechanization takes place, attention needs to be given to areas where access points are restricted.
4. Install emergency shut-off

Lessons from Losses



Pinch point on a roller system



Walkway next to live roller deck



Quick release shut-off system

controls for the operator and lumber/slab handlers at the start of the process equipment, the end of the lumber deck, and possibly work areas between.

Emergency shutdown push button switches, emergency pull shutdown controls, etc. are just a few examples of controls that can be incorporated into your process equipment.

5. Enforce proper work procedures when working in high hazard areas and other work situations.





Attention to the job at hand and direct supervision of employee behavior need regular review.

6. Complete refresher employee training for proper work procedure, emergency response, etc. for all new and existing employees.

Weekly tool box safety meetings work well in reviewing all equipment, danger areas, proper shutdown procedures, etc. Cross training all employees is very beneficial.

Early Loggers in Minnesota

by J. C. Ryan

<p>VOL. I</p>  <p>VOL. II</p>  <p>VOL. III</p>  <p>VOL. IV</p> 	<p>First-hand recollections by storyteller "Butz" Ryan of the loggers, loaders, swampers, wood butchers and bull cones who ruled the woods in the hey day of the pioneer lumberjacks with dozens of historical photographs.</p> <p>Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ copies "Early Loggers in Minnesota" Vol. I at \$8.50 each.</p> <p>_____ copies "Early Loggers in Minnesota" Vol. II at \$8.50 each.</p> <p>_____ copies "Early Loggers in Minnesota" Vol. III at \$8.50 each.</p> <p>_____ copies "Early Loggers in Minnesota" Vol. IV at \$8.50 each.</p> <p>Prices include sales taxes, postage and handling.</p> <p>Please make check or money order payable to "TPA Services"</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ Zip _____</p> <p>Mail to: Minnesota Timber Producers Assn. 903 Medical Arts Bldg., 324 W. Superior St., Duluth, MN 55802</p>
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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.

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 – Sandstone Area

June 8th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$21.62

Eleven of 15 tracts on the regular and intermediate auctions sold.

DNR—Blackduck Area

June 9th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$24.90

44 of 48 tracts on the regular and intermediate auctions sold.

DNR – Orr/Tower Areas

June 9th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$21.08

Of the 47 tracts on the regular and intermediate auctions, 18 didn't sell and another 16 sold for the appraised price.

Carlton County

June 10th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$28.20
Birch	\$14.52
Balsam	\$23.23
Maple	\$14.50

DNR – Bemidji Area

June 10th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$24.47

DNR – Cloquet Area

June 10th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$19.27

DNR – Two Harbors

June 11th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$21.54

Of 26 tracts on the regular and intermediate auctions, 15 tracts went unsold.

DNR – Northeast Region

June 15th – Sealed Bid

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$26.63

Of the 85 tracts on the regular and intermediate auctions, 45 went unsold.

DNR – Brainerd Area

June 15th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$23.79

All 22 tracts on the regular and intermediate auctions were sold.

Lake County

June 16th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen P&B	\$14.86
Aspen Pulp	\$11.72
Maple P&B	\$10.21
Birch P&B	\$13.42

Cass County

June 25th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$23.46
Birch	\$15.90
Red Oak	\$19.41

Cass County

July 30th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$26.87
Birch	\$13.98
Red Oak	\$24.00
Jack Pine	\$27.33

Beltrami County

August 5th – Sealed Bid

August 6th – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen pulp	\$24.26
Jack Pine P&B	\$29.90
Birch/Maple	\$ 8.10
Balm	\$19.46

Beltrami County combines the sealed bid and oral auctions when reporting auction results. All 29 tracts on the two auctions sold.

Northland Economist Sees Better Times Ahead

Dr. Tony Barrett, economics professor at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth and an expert on the Northeastern Minnesota economy, is expecting conditions to improve for the timber industry over the next 18 months.

"Obviously, with us experiencing the worst recession since the early 1980s, things are tough right now," Barrett says. "The good news is that the economy is showing signs of bottoming out. I fully expect that the recession will end before the end of the year. That means that 2010 will be a better year for the timber industry and the regional economy."

Barrett's optimism stems in part from the close relationship timber markets have to the economy as a whole.

"Timber demand is highly correlated with overall economic activity," Barrett says. "If the economy is doing well, it will be good times for the timber industry."

Unemployment Rate Drops in July

For the first time in 15 months, the U.S. unemployment rate fell in July. According to figures compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate in July was 9.4%, down from 9.5% in June. A total of 247,000 workers lost their jobs during the month, down from 443,000 during the previous month.

U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis says the unemployment numbers "are a reminder that we still have a lot of work to do on behalf of America's workers." Secretary Solis went on to say, "we are not in recovery yet, but we are starting to create the stability necessary to get us there and we will not be satisfied until we see robust monthly job growth."

Housing Stats Show Improvement

Three key indicators of the housing market – new home sales, existing home sales, and housing starts – all showed increases in June when compared to the previous month, according to recently released figures.

According to statistics compiled by the Census Bureau, housing starts in June were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 582,000, up 3.6% from May, the second straight month the rate showed an increase. The number is also the highest rate since November. However, June's figure was still 46% below June 2008.

Census Bureau figures also show an 11% jump in new home sales when compared to May, the highest month-to-month increase in eight years. Finally, existing home sales rose for a third straight month in June, increasing 3.6% according to the National Association of Realtors.

LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

"The Men with Authority"

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*



After his first winter in the woods, every young lumberjack from Maine to Minnesota had ambitions to be a camp foreman—the top job in all the logging camps.

No job in the logging industry was as important as that of a good camp foreman, and probably no group of men contributed more to the building and developing of this great nation of ours than did those who "ran camp."

Surely few in civilian life had more authority. The foreman was sole authority on everything that went on in the camp. And while the "walking boss" in the larger

company camps gave some advice during his trips around, the foreman was pretty much on his own as far as making decisions concerning the camp.

No industry ever produced so many "self made" men as did the logging industry, and the camp foremen were all this kind. In some industries, relatives of the owners were put in as foremen—but not so in the logging industry. Owners of the logging camps wanted self made men of ability in this very important job, leaving the softer office jobs for their relatives.

The first thing a foreman had to have

was the respect of the crew. This is probably the reason that most camp foremen were big men, as they often had to prove that they were worthy of respect by action as well as deeds. Of all the camp foremen I have known, none weighed less than 175 lbs. Second, the foreman had to have the confidence of the owners in his ability—so he would have the freedom of putting his particular methods into practice.

Most camp foremen worked year after year for the same companies, while others worked for contract loggers and several different companies. Some foremen pre-

The foreman was the final authority on all that went on in camp, as in checking the cut made by saw gang.



ferred railroad logging, others sleigh haul camps, others river driving, etc. Every camp foreman had his following of lumberjacks—good men he could depend on to do a particular job—and if the camp foreman moved from one company to another, probably the whole crew would also. This is maybe the reason that foremen stayed with one company year after year. However, there were times when a company would cut back the number of its camp operations during a certain winter, and rather than take a "straw boss" job, a foreman would go to work for another company.

In the early days of logging, when camps were smaller, the foreman was timekeeper as well. But all he had to do was mark on the calendar the day the camp started and the day it closed, as a worker seldom "went down" all winter.

He also ordered supplies and set wages for some of the men. Wages were pretty general, and he probably would adjust the pay for only a few special men. However, as camps got larger, ordering of supplies and timekeeping were done by camp clerks.

During the early days, when there were less than 50 men per camp, the foreman slept in the bunkhouse with the men, but as the camps became larger, the foreman slept in the office with the clerk and scaler.

Women in camp were a rare thing, but I know of several camps where the foreman had a special building built for his wife and himself. Tom Henderson of Pine City had his wife in camp with him for many years.

Each camp foreman had several "straw bosses," but as a rule not over three—one for the skidding crew, one for the sawyers and one for the steel crew of a railroad camp or for the "landing" if a sleigh haul camp.

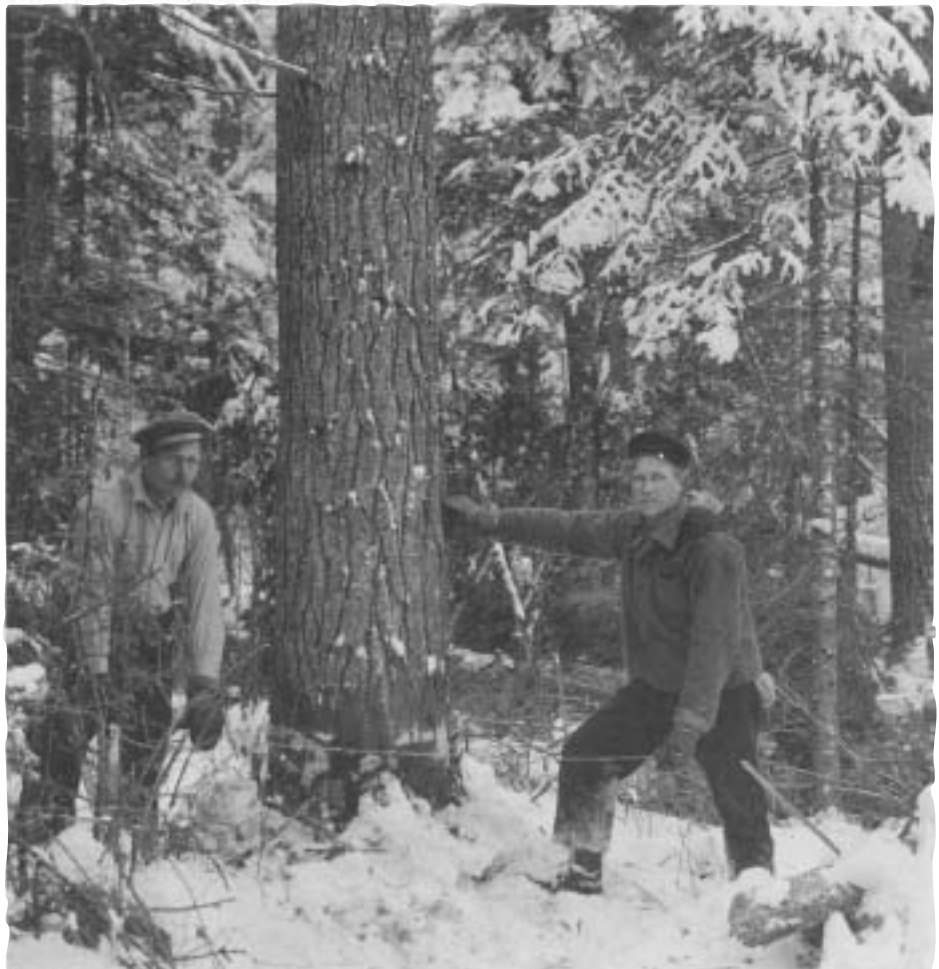
The foreman was the first man up in the morning, checking on the weather and checking to see if the water tank was off the road so he could start the sleighs. As a rule, he gave orders to the bull cook to wake him during the night if it started snow, so he could get the teamsters up to begin snow plowing. I have known foremen to stay up several nights in a row when the weather was bad, keeping crews going so the roads would not block up with snow.

Work was never tied up because of cold weather. Lumberjacks, as a rule, did not mind the cold, and did not like soft weather when their clothing got wet. No foreman would allow a thermometer in camp. I recall one man bringing one to camp and hanging it outside the bunk house. One cold morning several men laid in after looking at the thermometer. But, somehow, the thermometer disappeared the next night.

Bunk houses were full of stories about the abilities and shortcomings of certain



A good foreman had logs skidded soon after cutting—so they did not get covered with snow. Note how saw gang below has scored bark to let saw run better.





The foreman made sure of clean cooks and good food, and always sat at the head of the table—even wearing a necktie (below).



foremen, with each lumberjack telling about his favorite. As a boy in the Bemidji area, one of the outstanding camp foremen I got to know was "Bum" Bush, who operated a camp about a mile and a half west of Turtle River on the road to Nat Lake, known now as Lake Beltrami. He was a large man with a large voice, and he had the distinction of being featured in Fitzpatrick's story "The Hospital Ticket," which appeared in the Dec. 19, 1914 issue of *Colliers* weekly—probably the reason I remember him better than any other foreman. Later on, as I grew up, I knew his brother George Bush, who "ran camp" in the Mizpah area. He also was a big man with a loud voice and every other word a curse word—but he had lots of ability as a camp foreman.

I knew many of the foremen for the Crookston Lumber Co. when they operated in the Northome, Mizpah and Kelliher area—including George Brown, Billie Betts, Merdick Morrison, Robert Mercerow, Andy Jordon and others.

Foremen for Backus & Brooks, or the International Lumber Co., included Ben Bronson, Lew Harmon, "Poker Jack" Bost, Bob Smith, Dave Argee, Tom Welsh, Jack McKibbin, "Hungry Mike" Sullivan and Tom Flemming.

Other great foremen who worked up and down the M.&I.R.R. were Paddy McLaughlin, Jack McTaggart, "Tar Paper" Smith, George Cox, Dick Green, Charley Blakely, Jack Robinson and more.

In the area north of Virginia, I remember Jim Haley, Finn Matt Whitting, Walter Boyce and George Nixon. Up around Ely and Winton, I remember Fred Murphey, Andy Cook, Herb Good, Gilmore and others, while the Alger Line had its "Gunny Sack" Kane, Dick Coolidge, George McCoullough—and I could go on naming more.

But the ones I remember best were the foremen of the later years for the Combined Cloquet Northern Lumber Companies that logged the last stands of virgin pine in the Cloquet Valley district. They included Hank Glasow, Ed Netser, Jack Daley, Fred Villard, Red Peabody, George Noland, Bob Harris, Fred Carter, Frank McMillen, Tom Henderson, Christ Lee, Black John, William Kimball, William Campbell, Mort Shiels, Jack Shea, Percy Vibert, Jack Chisholm, William Dewar, "Whiskers" Burton, William Roache and others.

When history is written, not only of the logging industry, but of the development of the entire Northwest, much credit is due the logging camp foremen—for it was their individual ability to produce, sometimes under the worst of conditions, that kept the logs rolling into the mills that furnished the lumber that built the homes for the wave of immigrants that settled our great Northwest between 1870 and 1910.

Early camp scene (top) shows barns and water tank. The camp foreman checked his roads and work crews daily. Note the oxen used in cross haul loading (bottom).



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