

THE VOICE OF THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

# TIMBER BULLETIN

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2009

VOLUME 65



**56th Annual  
North Star Expo  
Great Northern Logging**

# TIMBER BULLETIN

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Duluth, Minnesota

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### ON THE COVER

The sun rises over the 56th Annual North Star Expo in Grand Rapids.

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# Boise Wins 13th Annual Log A Load For Kids Golf Tournament

**O**n September 11, 16 golf teams – all representing the timber industry – participated in the Log A Load for Kids annual golf tournament benefiting Minnesota’s only Children’s Miracle Network hospital, Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare. Dave Hensel, forester for UPM-Blandin and golf tournament co-chair, sent the golfers out on the course at 9 a.m. to “have fun and play well.” The rain held off, and play well they did. In fact, Hensel came within two feet of winning the hole-in-one prize, a 2010 Arctic Cat 550 EFI Camo ATV provided by Pokegama Lawn and Sport.

The Boise White Paper team took first place in the Veneer Flight with a score of 54. UPM was second with 56, and Industrial Fluid Technologies took third with 57. Murphy Oil was the winner of the Sawlog Flight with a 62. Jeff Foster Trucking took second at 63.

The tournament netted over \$5,200 for Gillette. Last year, Gillette saw more than 21,000 patients representing nearly every county in Minnesota, as well as 40 states and 16 countries. The Minnesota chapter of Log A Load for Kids has been a supporter of Gillette and Children’s Miracle Network for more than 10 years.

I hope everyone who attended the Expo this year had a great time. The weather was nice and that always helps make the show a success. Since I was unable to attend I would like to thank the TPA staff and all the volunteers

who gave up their valuable time to make the Expo work so well.

## President’s Column



With the Expo over this always marks the end of summer and the beginning of fall. I hope everyone

has a chance to enjoy some time to hunt or fish or spend time with your families for we all know that winter is just around the corner.

Just a reminder to check to be sure you have completed the MLEP requirements and, most importantly, please be safe.

*Michael Rieger*



Left to right: Boise team members Tim Anderson, Eric Walls, Scott Riley and Howie Arch admire the ATV hole-in-one prize from Pokegama Lawn and Sport.

**F**ormer TPA President Arvid Olson passed away recently. I always enjoyed seeing Arvid at our events. He kept up on things and always shared a thought or two about the issues and TPA. Arvid also would give me some advice on things in his own soft-spoken way. I found his advice to be on the mark. We extend our sympathies and thanks to his family for his many contributions. A complete obituary can be found in this issue of the *Timber Bulletin*.



Another friend of forestry also passed away recently. Bob Oswald,

**Executive Vice President's Column**



a long-time papermaker at the Cloquet mill, represented labor on many forestry issues. He served on the MN Forest Resources Council, the Wood Fiber Employees Joint Legislative Council,

Governor's task forces and many others. He was a respected leader in the MN AFL-CIO where he was a long-time vice president. Bob was a friend of mine for 30 years. He spent a lot of time and energy on these various committees and was always a solid advocate for our issues. We will miss his voice.



The *North Star Expo* returned to Grand Rapids this year and was a great success. The weather could not have been better with temperatures in the upper 70's and bright blue skies. Attendance was strong with about 250 spending a beautiful evening at the barbeque. Our thanks to all of the vendors for their participation, everyone who attended and to our Expo Committee that does such a great job of putting the show together each year.



One issue that has flown a bit below the radar was the re-write of the Wetlands Conservation Act

Rules that was completed the end of the summer. This was a multi-year process that involved many meetings in the Twin Cities.

The wetlands law contains both silvicultural and forest road exemptions. There was a push to make anyone with an exemption appear in front of bureaucrats to have the exemption blessed. We resisted this very strongly as did others. In the end we succeeded in keeping this silly proposal out of the new rules.

We worked very closely with agriculture and other interests during this process. One of the truly level heads on the committee was Koochiching County Commissioner Wade Pavlek. We owe him a big thank you for his role in this process.



Health care reform is all the talk in Washington these days with both the Senate and House of Representatives working on bills that they hope to pass by the end of the year. I'm not sure why the issue is referred to as "health care reform" when what it really is is health insurance reform. Each of the bills that are moving make efforts to increase the number of people covered by health insurance and modify how that insurance is provided.

This is fine but does not get to the underlying issue of health care costs. While I'm sure there are ways to improve health insurance delivery the bigger issue is the cost of insurance to employers and individuals. And the cost of health insurance is driven by the cost of the health care services that we consume.

I would prefer that the Congress and the State Legislature look at ways to reduce costs. I don't pretend to have the answers to costs but there are some glaring examples. These include administrators at Duluth facilities that make a million dollars a year; specialist physicians that make seven hundred thousand dollars or more and facility charges that seem exorbitant on their face.

I think that physicians should be paid well but I also think that they can get along in Duluth just fine on,

say, four hundred thousand dollars a year. Most of us would like to try to live on that wage. And, in the end that's what physicians and health care administrators do - work for wages. Wages that we all pay for with our insurance.



The 2010 race for Governor is starting off with a very crowded field. Governor Pawlenty has announced that he will not seek re-election. This has spawned a field of nearly 20 candidates and likely candidates from the two major parties.

The process for selecting and electing will be a little different this year. Both major parties have moved their endorsing conventions from June to April. It is likely that the legislature will move the primary election from September to the summer. This is in response to new requirements to have absentee ballots available for overseas - particularly armed services - voters 45 days prior to an election.

These changes will also likely move up the time for filing from the first two weeks of July to earlier in the year. All in all quite a few changes.



As we head into the traditional lull of fall rains, hunting and waiting for winter freeze up, everyone will be going through their equipment, organizing their timber sales and lining up contracts. While we're doing this let's make sure that we're also prepared for a safe winter logging season. As the seasons change, change the things in your business that will make operations on your job or in your mill safer.

*Arvid Olson*

# Sun Shines on 56th Annual North Star Expo

by Ray Higgins

**G**rand Rapids – With blue skies and temperatures pushing 80 degrees, weather conditions were perfect for the North Star Expo's return to the Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids. In its 56th year, the Expo not only provides the timber industry the best opportunity of the year to see the latest in logging, trucking, and sawmill equipment and technology, but also the chance to show the general public the importance of logging to Minnesota's economy.

The community of Grand Rapids and Itasca County embraced the Expo, with more than 2000 folks visiting over 100 exhibitors, who displayed in excess of \$20 million in equipment, over two days. Vendors reported being pleased with the turn-out, seeing a steady stream of loggers and other interested industry insiders wishing to see what dealers had to offer.

The regional media also visited the Expo, with WDIO/WIRT-TV and The Northland's News Center from Duluth and Bemidji's Lakeland Public TV News all doing stories for their newscasts. That's on top of the Grand Rapids Herald-Review's special 12-page section on the Expo that was included in each Sunday paper the week before the event.

The 2009 Expo was again an action-packed two days, filled with various contests, good food, great vendors, and the chance to compare notes on the industry with folks from throughout Minnesota.



TPA Vice President Kit Hasbargen (R) presents the Ponsse North America staff with the **Best Outdoor Display** award. Representing Ponsse are (L-R): Ken Zuiker, Marko Mattila, Diana Evans, Pekka Ruuskanen, Paul Estabrooks, and Jerry Koski. Receiving second place honors was Magneto Power. Nortrax was awarded third place.



TPA Vice President Kit Hasbargen presents Gary Hagemann of American Pressure with the blue ribbon in the **Best Indoor Booth** competition. Mid-States Equipment received the second place award, and Rice Blacksmith placed third.



The Lundberg family of Solway claimed first and third place finishes in this year's Loader Contest. Matt Lundberg (L) posted the best time, with a two-day overall mark of 10:10.16, more than a minute better than second place finisher Kory Michalicek. Matt's dad Dan Lundberg (R) finished third. Ramon Killmer of Big Falls successfully defended his championship in the Master Loader competition with a two-day time of 8:12.80.



The Kid's Mini Loader was again a big hit at the North Star Expo, with kids working the controls, getting the chance to experience working a miniature version of the big iron firsthand. Above, Nathan Heibel of Boise showed a future logger how it's done. Thanks go to Lyle Dix at LD Sales for supplying the mini-loader in 2009!



Participants in the 2009 **Celebrity Loader** competition were (L-R): Minnesota DNR Commissioner Mark Holsten, WDIO/WIRT-TV reporter Laura Kennedy, Boua Xiong of the Northland's News Center, Chisholm Mayor Mike Jugovich, Jim Marshall of UPM Blandin, and Bob Anderson of Boise in International Falls.

Kennedy won the competition with a time of 2:19. Commissioner Holsten finished second, and Xiong was third.



Jazlynn Svaleson of Nashwauk shows off the blue ribbon and art kit she received for winning the 6 and under division of the annual coloring contest. Jazlynn is also showing off the masterpiece that allowed her to win first prize. Second place went to Tessa Counture of Mt. Iron, while Natalie Haley of Bigfork received third prize. For kids aged 7-9, Slayde Johnson of Blackduck claimed top honors, followed by Mitchell Frank of Milaca and Kayla Towner of Gheen. In the category for kids aged 10 to 12, Jacob Hufnagle of International Falls was the winner, with Colton Hasbargen of Littlefork and Levi Havermen of Sebeka rounding out the top three. The top three in each category received ribbons, while each winner was awarded an art kit. We ended up with several masterpieces that displayed the talent and hard work of our youngsters. Congratulations to all of the winners, and to everyone who showed off their skills by entering the coloring contest!



In the Biggest Cookie competition, Bob Maki, a former DNR forester from Grand Marais, brought this northern white cedar cookie, provided by Alton Berglund and Sons Logging of Grand Marais. Counting the rings, the tree was more than 300 years old!



The Expo attracts folks of all ages interested in learning more about the logging industry.



Winning this year's Best Load Contest was Anita Goodell of Greg Cook Logging. The entry was sponsored by Sappi. The truck weighed-in at 89,820 pounds, and in the **Guess the Weight Competition**, Jake Gilhousen's guess was right on the nose! Gilhousen lives in Bovey.

Thanks go to AgStar Financial, Skubic Brothers, and Two Harbors Machine for donating prizes for the winning entry.



Folks at the Expo again enjoyed watching the talents of Mike Hanson of Cook who displayed his chainsaw carving abilities this year. Mike provided the carving for this year's vendor drawing, which was won by Mary Joseph of Cohasset, now the proud owner of Mike's carving of a rooster.



Saturday morning, the free hot cakes went like, well, hot cakes at the Nortrax-sponsored free Pancake Breakfast. More than 300 folks enjoyed the flapjacks, sausage, juice, and coffee, all on Nortrax's dime!





The Minnesota Timber  
Producers Association  
would like to thank

**NORTRAX**

for again sponsoring the  
**Pancake Breakfast**  
at the  
56th Annual North Star Expo

*Great Job!*



Nearly two dozen loggers took advantage of the opportunity to earn Minnesota Logger Education Program credit, as well as learn valuable information to help them run their business, and keep the roads safe. MLEP offered a workshop on federal regulations regarding Reasonable Suspicion, which mandate that trucking company employers be able to recognize signs of alcohol and/or drug use among their employees. Above, Bob Lyman, a substance abuse professional from St. Luke's Hospital in Duluth, shares critical information with workshop attendees.

## Friday Night Barbecue



As is Expo tradition, Friday was capped off with a delicious dinner, featuring the famous Duke Skorich Barbecue. More than 250 tickets were sold for the delicious pork and beef with all the fixins'. The Grand Rapids Curling Club staffed the Beer Garden, making it an evening of great food, cold beverages, and lively conversation, a fitting end to day one of the North Star Expo.

In other competitions, the **Wood Identification Contest** was won on Friday by Milaca's Jason Frank, and by Casey Dabrowski of Backus on Saturday. Each won \$25.

### Next Year

In 2010, the Expo is expected to return to the Itasca County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids. The TPA Expo committee is already working on plans for next year, and we look forward to seeing you there!



## Thank You!

The Minnesota Timber Producers Association would like to thank the following companies and organizations for their donations toward making the 55th Annual North Star Expo a huge success:

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TPA would also like to thank Dave Chura for taking the Expo photos you see in this issue of the *Bulletin*.



Tom Kruschek, owner of Great Northern Logging, on a pine plantation northwest of Backus.

# Better Late than Never

**Tom Kruschek entered the business relatively late in life – at least for a logger**

by Ray Higgins

**A**fter graduating from Pierz High School, Tom Kruschek knew what he wanted to do. He wanted to work in the woods.

"I was born for the woods," Kruschek says. "When I was younger, in high school, I cut firewood and sold it just for extra money. I cut it with a chainsaw and split it by hand. And we had a little sawmill just a couple of miles from my house and I'd go out and help them once in a while. I just loved to do all of it.

So he went off to college to

become a forester. The only trouble was, his adviser told him it wasn't a good time to try to find that line of work.

"He told me it was pretty tough," Kruschek remembers. "So I came back and looked for a job."

Wanting to stay in the woods, he found a job as a feller buncher operator, first for a logging operation in Onamia, then for one in Princeton. Four years later, opportunity knocked.

Through connections in the logging business, Kruschek heard that a contract logger for Potlatch

had passed away. The logger had family in the business, but he had specialized in cutting pine plantations. The family members wanted to stick with aspen clearcuts and weren't interested in filling the contract; they wanted to sell. Kruschek and a partner thought it was a perfect fit.

There was only one problem. Unlike most loggers in Minnesota, whose families are in the business and begin learning about harvesting trees about the same time they learn to walk, Kruschek

*(continued on page 20)*

(continued from page 18)

didn't come from a logging family. His knowledge of the business was limited to those four years running a buncher.

"I just hopped in with both feet."

So while most of his logging colleagues get their first exposure to the business while in grade school, Kruschek started Great Northern Logging at the relatively ripe old age of 25. And it wasn't easy.

"When we bought the business, we ended up with an old Franklin skidder," Kruschek says. "I absolutely replaced everything from front to back on it. We also got a Serco slasher with a Sirro delimber and a Serco heel boom. We hand cut down the rows for about the first year and then we bought a little Clark skid-loader-type shearer. Then we bought another one."

He was young and had a lot to learn. The four years running buncher were invaluable to figuring out how to operate his own company, because he hadn't grown up in the logging business – or any other business, for that matter – and didn't have any business training, whatsoever.

"I learned the hard way,"

Kruschek says.

But something clicked, and opportunities continued to present themselves. Those were the days when Potlatch had not only the stud mill in Bemidji, but also the Cloquet paper mill and the board mills in Cook, Grand Rapids, and Bemidji. Having a contract with Potlatch was invaluable and when he had the chance to get contracts from other loggers, Kruschek and his partner went for it.

"We just kept building," he says.

Along the way, Kruschek bought out his partner and added equipment. He came to realize that for his specialty of thinning pine plantations, a cut-to-length operation might work better, so he made the switch.

"I love the freedom of cut-to-length," he says. "In fact, today we've got a forwarder with a flat tire. But I can still work. And if I break down, he can still work."

"The other thing with cut-to-length is we stay consistent. We can work all year round. You're



Kruschek thins pine with a John Deere 1270 harvester on this plantation northwest of Backus.

not losing 6-8 weeks in the spring. You're cash-flow consistent."

In 2004, he felt he could increase production and knew some experienced operators looking for work, so he added a second cut-to-length operation. In 2006, he added a third.

Now 38, Kruschek manages to keep all three operations busy, still marketing wood to the Potlatch mill in Bemidji, as well as Sappi, Warren Woods in Rice, and Woodline Sawmill in Onamia. One of the operations is almost always

working on Potlatch land. Today that crew – with Kruschek running the harvester – is working on a site northwest of Backus, thinning it down to a basal area of 80, producing 350 cords of pine over the next week or so. Another crew is often working for Sappi, either clear-cutting aspen or many times thinning hardwoods like maple. Today they're on an aspen clear-cut near Hill City. The third crew is just north of Brainerd, thinning pine.

"The reason I added a third crew is," Kruschek says, "working with



Kevin Rushline operates one of Great Northern Logging's three forwarders, a Fabtek 546C, just outside of Brainerd. Great Northern has another 546C and a Fabtek 344 single-bunk.

Sappi, working with Potlatch, if one crew's getting behind, I can bounce from one to the other. Sometimes two of us will be on the same job to try and catch up."

With the growth, Great Northern Logging has found a niche with thinnings, and that suits Kruschek just fine.

"You leave something behind," he says. "They look like a park when you're done. Ninety percent of the time, I'll be back here again in eight to ten years. I've been to sales two or three times since I've started and it's always nice to go back and see what they've done. A lot of guys would rather go clear-cut Norway pine or aspen, but not me. I love hardwood thinnings and I love Norway pine thinnings."

It pays to have good help. Usually, Jerry Hayes Sr. runs the forwarder on Kruschek's crew, Jerry Hayes, Jr. operates a harvester with Kevin Roeschlein running forwarder on a second crew, and Jon Nutt and Doug Beck are the third pairing for Great Northern Logging. Three of them share the moving of the equipment, and the hauling is contracted with area trucking companies.

"I've got very good help," Kruschek says. "I can trust them. I don't have to worry about them. If they need parts, if something breaks down, they order them themselves. I trust them with what they're doing."

Not that business hasn't had its challenges. Markets have surely tightened, especially over the past 18 months. Keeping three crews running isn't easy. And balancing all of that with the responsibilities of a family – he and wife Renee have a 5-year-old and a 3-year-old



**Great Northern Logging has two Fabtek 133 cut-to-length harvesters. This one, operated by Jerry Hayes, Jr., is operating on a pine thinning near Brainerd.**

with another on the way – make life particularly busy. But Kruschek is living where he wants to, working in the woods, where life is always good.

"I'm an outdoors guy," he says. "I'm working on my own and if I

want to go home, I can. And when I go home, I go out in the woods. Fishing, bow hunting, bird hunting, I love that. Or I'll go home, I plant 3,000 to 5,000 trees a year at home. I just love nature. I love watching them grow."

# Enforcement Alert: 5-axle vs. 6-axle stickers

It's a decision many loggers and truckers make when licensing their vehicles: whether to purchase the sticker for five axles or for six. If you always run either a trailer with two axles or one with three, the decision is easy. But if you have both kinds of trailers, you have a choice. The sticker for five axles is more expensive. And it is easy to assume that with the sticker for the 6-axle configuration, you'd be "over-licensed" for five. Many in this situation choose the 6-axle sticker.

In fact, that's exactly what happened to one TPA member. He sometimes hauls on the interstate, so at times will run five axles, and at other times run with six. When he went to the DMV office, he registered his truck for 102,000 pounds, and when he asked the clerk whether to get the sticker for five axles or for six, he was advised that the 6-axle weight sticker would be good for either configuration.

The clerk turned out to be wrong. According to the statute, with the 6-axle weight sticker, you're only properly licensed when running six axles, not with five. It's the 5-axle weight sticker that is



good for both configurations.

Here's the reason: the 5-axle weight sticker is priced higher because truck-trailer combos with five axles have more weight distributed per axle, therefore doing more damage to the road than a configuration with six axles.

The driver for the TPA member mentioned above was running five axles with a 6-axle weight sticker and was stopped for a routine inspection. He was cited for

having the wrong sticker.

"If you're going to register for six, that's fine," says Captain Ken Urquhardt of the State Patrol's Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division. "But if you're going to be using the 2-axle trailer, you should get the 5-axle weight sticker."

**Bottom line:** When registering your trucks, if you're going to be running both 2-axle and 3-axle trailers, purchase the 5-axle weight sticker.

## Forest in the Classroom Brochure Available



TPA has created a brochure with ideas for loggers who are asked to speak to school children, either by visiting classrooms or by having students visit their logging jobs. Titled "The Forest Is Your Classroom," the brochure includes information on available resources for classroom visits, as well as tips on how to make the most of visits to the woods. It's an effort to maximize opportunities to promote our industry with Northland students. The brochure is being mailed to all TPA members. For additional copies, contact the TPA office.

# Nortrax Donates Simulator to Forest History Center

The most popular exhibit at the Forest History Center in Grand Rapids, one of the Minnesota Historical Society's State Historic Sites, is the full-scale cut-to-length timber harvester simulator which is identical to the machines used today to train forest professionals. Previously, the simulator had been on loan since 2004, and now Nortrax has donated it to the museum.

"We have been very proud to be a part of the Forest History Center these past five years," said Dale Gessel, general manager for Nortrax in Grand Rapids. "The simulator has given

visitors of all ages a feel for today's high-tech logging capabilities and has given the general public a better understanding of the logging industry and the forestry professionals that we serve at

Nortrax."

Skip Drake, Northern Sites district manager for the Minnesota Historical Society, says that since the introduction of the popular timber harvester simulator, other Minnesota Historic Sites, such as the Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site, the Oliver H. Kelly Farm and the North West Company Fur Post, are in the early stages of implementing simulators. "We know from research that retention in learning is greatly increased when all the senses are involved. The timber harvester simulator has been hands down our most popular exhibit at the Forest History Center," said Drake.

## FRA Publishes Log Trucking Safety Manual

The Forest Resources Association has published a manual on log trucking safety, titled the Manual on Safe and Efficient Practices for

Trucking Unmanufactured Forest Products. The manual is directed to logging professionals and the truckers of raw forest products they work with.

Fully illustrated in color, the ten-page manual examines the common causes of driver-related accidents; presents "best practices" in establishing a safe trucking environment; and concludes by identifying and discussing key "productivity and efficiency" issues specific to forest products trucking.

A Virginia Tech team led by Professor Chad Bolding developed the manual, with funding from the National Timber Harvesting and Transportation Safety Foundation (THATS) and support from Virginia Cooperative Extension and the SHARP Logger program.

"The Virginia Tech team found that, while the logging industry's general safety record has improved over the past decade, the proportion of truck-related injuries is growing, in many cases because of conditions specific to our industry," noted FRA's Lake States region manager, Vickie Hoffart. "The action of loading is a key area that needs attention, primarily to prevent injuries at the landing but also to reduce subsequent risks on the highway."

The manual also addresses productivity issues, such as tare-weight reduction, reducing turn time, controlling truck weight variability, improving truck scheduling, and the pay-offs of a good preventive maintenance program.

The manual is available online at: <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/420/420-310/420-310.html>. In addition, hard copies may be ordered through the Forest Resources Association. FRA members may order the Safe and Efficient Practices Manual at \$5 apiece, or \$2 apiece for any order of 10 or more; the manual is available to non-members for twice these rates. Please enclose payment with order, checks payable to "FRA"; charge

## Timber Talk



Nortrax General Manager Dale Gessel (L) and Skip Drake, of the Minnesota Historical Society, with the John Deere cut-to-length harvester simulator.



orders may be faxed to 301/838-9481. Direct orders to Forest Resources Association Inc., 600 Jefferson Plaza, Suite 350, Rockville, MD 20852, and refer to stock number 09-A-3.

The Forest Resources Association Inc. is a nonprofit trade association concerned with the safe, efficient, and sustainable harvest of forest products and their transport from woods to mill. FRA represents wood consumers, independent logging contractors, and wood dealers, as well as businesses providing products and services to the forest resource-based industries.

## **Sec. Vilsack Outlines Vision for the National Forests**

**I**n his first major speech regarding the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack outlined his vision for conservation, management, and restoration of the national forests.

“Our nation's forestlands, both public and private, are environmental and economic assets that are in critical need of restoration and conservation,” said Vilsack. “By using a collaborative management approach with a heavy focus on restoring these natural resources, we can make our forests more resilient to climate change, protect water resources, and improve forest health while creating jobs and opportunities.”

A USDA news release cites climate change, catastrophic fires, disease and pests as factors that have led to declining forest health in recent decades. The resulting impact on watersheds, the climate, local economies, wildlife, and recreation, has led the USDA to offer what it calls “a new vision for our nation's forests.” The news release says, “by taking forest management in a new direction, the Department will emphasize the role our national forestlands play in contributing to the health and prosperity of the country and reverse the trend of declining forest health.”

“Declining forest health and

the effects of our changing climate have resulted in an increasing number of catastrophic wildfires and insect outbreaks,” said Vilsack. “It is time for a change in the way we view and manage America's forestlands with an eye towards the future. This will require a new approach

that engages the American people and stakeholders in conserving and restoring both our National Forests and our privately-owned forests. It is essential that we reconnect Americans across the nation with the natural resources and landscapes that sustain us.”

# Mobile Equipment Pre-Heater Failure Issues

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:

During the cold winter months the use of pre-heater units that mount on trucks and other mobile equipment is becoming very popular. These pre-heater units are

self contained, and fired by diesel fuel. Problems have been seen in the field with the discharge of flames and fuel from the exhaust of

## Lessons from Losses

these units. The excess use of these pre-heaters this past winter has warranted this discussion about proper installation and the extra time needed for necessary maintenance.

This review involves four different situations where pre-heater units failed and belched flame from the exhaust:

The first involved a delimeter unit with a timer system. The operator had set the timer for the pre-heater to start approximately twenty minutes before start-up time. The next morning, another operator was on-site starting other equipment about the time the involved mobile equipment should have been pre-heating. No problem was noticed due to the darkness and location of the involved mobile equipment until the operator arrived. Immediately, a light was noticed coming from the bottom side of this delimeter unit, but unfortunately it was too late to control the fire, leading to a total loss.

The next situation also involved a delimeter unit, but in this situation the operator arrived at the site as this unit was belching smoke from the exhaust. As this pre-heater unit fired, flames and fuel discharged from the exhaust. The fire was extinguished with a hand-held fire extinguisher. The pre-heater unit was subsequently removed from the piece of mobile equipment.

In another situation, a cut-to-length harvester was equipped with this same type of pre-heater. The heater unit misfired while the operator was on-site, and a small flame flash discharged from the exhaust. The machine's housekeeping was very good, and fortunately no problem occurred. The pre-heater was reviewed, repaired, and the fuel regulator was replaced. No extended problems or damage occurred after the repair of this misfire.

The last situation involved another delimeter unit where the pre-heater unit failed to start. During the repair process, a start test was completed, and this pre-heater unit flashed fire out the exhaust. That was the last straw for the owner, and this unit was dismantled. An electric frost plug heater was installed on the engine as an alternative.

## Operator:

The involved operators and owners were trained in proper operation of the equipment, specifically including the use

of these pre-heater units.

## Accident and/or Injury:

These recent pre-heater problems noted above do have a direct cost involving mobile equipment loss and down time of equipment. No serious injuries were noted; however, these high-stress times (fire) warrant the need for pre-planning for an emergency situation.

## Unsafe Act and/or Condition:

It is very difficult to pin down the basic problem in the above situations; however, here are some factors that may have contributed to these failures:

- Improper installation
- Little or no maintenance
- Not following safe operating procedures in use of these pre-heaters
- Failure to clean – or position of – equipment before use of these pre-heaters
- No emergency plan to respond



Example of discharging into the engine compartment – not recommended.



Example of discharging outside the engine and hydraulic compartments – recommended.



Example of discharging outside the engine and hydraulic compartments – recommended.

to fire situation

The most logical cause of this property loss and these near misses may be little or no maintenance and poor operating procedures. Proper operator training and maintenance will benefit all involved and add to the profitability of a logging operation.

**Preventative Measures:**

1. Follow proper installation procedures of these pre-heater units. Always utilize the installation manual when installing by yourself or having a mechanic install. In addition, the following should be considered:
  - Locate in a clean safe area
  - Position so maintenance can be easily completed
  - Be sure the exhaust is routed to outside the engine and hydraulic compartments away from the equipment
  - Discourage splices of fuel and electrical supply
2. Complete regular maintenance and upkeep of these pre-heater units before use. Also, during the year, more frequent maintenance may be needed due to use. Examples of these activities include the following:
  - Review the igniter for cleaning
  - Review the air intake/filter
  - Review the fuel regulator
  - Review the heater enclosure
3. Follow safe operating procedures during the use of these pre-heaters. Always utilize the installation and operator manuals before use. Depending on the situation, the following should be considered:
  - Position the mobile equipment so the discharge exhaust is downhill, so that if fuel is leaked it will run away from the equipment
  - Position the mobile equipment so the discharge exhaust falls to the ground and away from the equipment
  - Clean around the discharge exhaust and the surrounding area, including the pre-heater

- Inspect the pre-heater
  - Test system
4. Review and train all operators in emergency response. Being prepared in a panic situation (fire or personal injury) can and will help reduce the seriousness of an emergency. Weekly tool box safety meetings work well in reviewing all equipment, danger areas, proper shut-down procedures, etc. Cross-training all employees is very beneficial.

# 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

**N**ote: 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 – Aitkin/Sandstone/ Brainerd Area

June 8 – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$36.16

The regular auction included these tracts that included large volumes of aspen: 3430 cords, 4120 cords, and 11,270 cords.

### Koochiching County

August 5 – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$24.57
Spruce	\$17.61
Balsam	\$15.26
Balm	\$18.85

### Aitkin County

August 20 – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen P/B	\$21.77
Red Pine P/B	\$29.43
Maple P/B	\$ 9.18

### St. Louis County

August 20 – Sealed Bid

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen pulpwood	\$25.93
Birch pulpwood	\$12.44
Balsam pulpwood	\$16.10
Tamarack pulpwood	\$ 7.92

### Hubbard County

September 8 – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$22.07
Aspen pulp	\$22.15
Norway Mixed	\$20.06
Birch pulp	\$ 9.14
Jack Pine Mixed	\$34.82

### DNR – Warroad Area

September 8 – Sealed Bid

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$11.58

Of the 15 tracts offered, seven went unsold, including all three on the regular auction.

### DNR – Little Falls

September 10 – Sealed Bid

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$19.20

This sale included a regular auction only via sealed bids. All seven tracts offered were purchased.

### DNR – Park Rapids Area

September 15 – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$23.20

All 15 of the tracts offered were sold.

### DNR – Little Falls

September 24 – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$18.14

### Cass County

September 24 – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$20.68
Red Pine P&B	\$40.08
Birch	\$13.50
Jack Pine	\$33.77

### Crow Wing County

September 28 – Oral Auction

<u>Species</u>	<u>Avg. Price</u>
Aspen	\$23.81
Oak	\$13.33
Birch	\$11.26
Maple	\$ 8.55

## DNR 2009 Timber Offerings Exceed Target; 2010 will Decline

**F**or the fiscal year ending June 30, the DNR offered 948,000 cords of new volume, exceeding the agency's minimum target of 850,000 cords. That represents a 16.7% increase in volume offered from FY2008.

"It's important to thank industry for helping us meet their needs," said director of the DNR's Division of Forestry Dave Epperly. "We're all dealing with reduced resources."

The increased volume was in response to a recommendation from Governor Pawlenty's Task Force on the Competitiveness of Minnesota's Primary Forest Products Industry that the yearly harvest be increased to 1 million cords by 2012. The DNR committed to increasing annual offerings until the 1 million goal was reached.

However, Epperly also said the minimum target for the fiscal year that began July 1 is being reduced to 800,000 cords. The DNR said a reduced budget and the resulting staff reduction of 6% is the major cause for the lower target.

Epperly stresses that the 800,000 cord figure is the minimum target and that the agency will strive to exceed that goal.

"The department is still

committed to the commitments we made for 2012 in the Governor's Task Force Report," Epperly said.

## **Credit Woes Threaten Housing Recovery**

**N**early two-thirds of single-family home builders are reporting a severe lack of credit for housing production, threatening the fragile housing recovery before it has time to take hold, according to a new builder survey of acquisition, development, and construction (AD&C) financing conducted by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

"Across the country, home builders and developers are reporting a deterioration in credit availability and intensifying pressure on borrowers with outstanding loans," said NAHB Chairman Joe Robson, a home builder from Tulsa, Okla. "Lenders are cutting off loans for viable new housing projects and producing unnecessary foreclosures and losses on AD&C loans. With the pending expiration of the \$8,000 first-time home buyer tax credit, these challenges threaten to halt any positive developments we have seen in the housing market in recent months."

In the latest NAHB survey of AD&C financing conditions, 63 percent of builders stated that the availability of credit for single-family construction loans worsened in the second quarter of 2009.

While federal banking regulators continue to maintain that they are not instructing institutions to stop making loans or to indiscriminately liquidate outstanding loans, builders responding to the survey cited the top reason that lenders have given them for restricting the availability of new loans or for tightening the terms of outstanding loans is that "regulators are forcing lenders to do it."

## **Housing Starts Hit 9-Month High**

**P**rivately-owned housing starts reached their highest level in November of last year, reaching a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 598,000, according to figures released by the U.S. Census Bureau. That represents an increase of 1.5 percent from July, but a 29.6 percent drop from August 2008.

LOGGERS OF THE PAST . . .

## "Come and Get It"

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*



There probably were no sweeter words to the ears of the old-time lumberjack than the cook's "come and get it"—or the ringing of the dinner bell or horn.

One thing the old-time lumberjack demanded and got was good food.

My first trip to a lumber camp was with my father, in about 1907. I sat at the head of the table and ate with the men; I was amazed at the good food that was piled before me. The camp foreman, "Big Otto," sat across the table from me and kept saying, "Have some more pie, son," or "How about some more beans, or potatoes and gravy, or some good stewed prunes?"

As I was consuming my second piece of

pie, he said to my dad, "More logs have been put in with beans, sowbelly and pea soup than there have been with pie, ain't that right, Jim?" My dad replied, "Yes that's right, but it's prunes that keep all the jacks on the job each day."

I grew up with the logging industry and soon learned that if you wanted to do a good job of logging you had to keep good food on the table. Nothing caused so much grumbling or quitting as did poor food or a poor cook. Lumberjacks just had to have good food, if nothing else.

In the early days of logging—late 1870s to early 1880s—pea soup, sowbelly (pickled salt pork) and beans made up a good part of the lumberjacks' food. A late

camp cook, John Neary of Northome, told me that in the 1880s he did most of his cooking on drives over an open fire; and the food consisted mostly of sowbelly, pea soup, baked or boiled beans, baking powder biscuits, dried apples and prunes.

In the early days, there was no canned food. All the fruit—apples, prunes, peaches or apricots—was dried. Other dried food included peas, rice, beans, barley, macaroni and tapioca. However, fresh rutabagas, potatoes, cabbage and carrots were plentiful. Syrup came in barrels and was served with flapjacks or pancakes.

The only fresh meat available to lumberjacks was sold to the camps by



Some cooks played several tunes on 6-foot-long horns . . .

Indians. The meat included caribou, moose and deer.

By the early 1890s, canned foods, mostly in one-gallon cans, began to appear in the camps; and today, one can find a pile of old rusted cans at the site of any old lumber camp. Canned milk was one of the first items available, followed by apples, tomatoes, etc. And during the summer, canned corned beef was used.

At the camps in this early period, bacon and sometimes ham was on hand during the summer months; and beef was brought in by the quarter and kept frozen in an outdoor room in the winter months.

Some camps that stayed several years in a location raised pigs during the summer and butchered them in the fall. These camps usually had pork for dinner each Sunday. But I knew one logger who went to Montana and bought a lot of sheep and brought them to camp in a hayrack. He piled the frozen sheep like cordwood behind the cook camp and served mutton every day all winter; by mid-winter, he had a hard time keeping a crew. Lumberjacks just didn't like mutton.

By 1917, canned foods of all kinds were plentiful in all lumber camps. Canned fruits replaced dried fruit to a great extent. However, dried prunes remained; and very few meals in the camps were eaten without prunes on the table. Prunes

were like a tonic to the lumberjacks.

Raisins were plentiful and were served with rice and in other puddings. In the old days, currants were used a lot in the summer; and in the darkened cook camps, one could not tell currants from flies, and many a fly was eaten.

Cheese for some reason was seldom seen in the camps and only served on special occasions such as Thanksgiving and Christmas. Very few camps served butter, and the familiar oleomargarine signs were always on display.

Camps had no refrigeration and fresh meat was hard to keep in the summer months. All camps had a screened house for hanging the hams and bacon. In later years, eggs were furnished for cooking but were only served in the spring for special occasions.

Most pastry was made without eggs in the early days. However, pies, doughnuts, drop cakes and cakes both light and dark were always on hand. Some hardtack, which came in barrels, and dry toast was served in most camps. Most cooks were good bread and roll makers, and fresh bread was made each day.

By the time lumber camps began closing in the late 1920s and early 1930s, transportation was much better; and fresh fruit began showing up in most camps to some extent.

Prior to the first World War, most

camps had about 100 men and the kitchen could be handled by a cook and four cooks, or a cook and three cooks.

If camps were over 100 men, there was an extra cook for each 20 men, and camps over 200 men would have a cook, a meat cook, a pastry cook, a second cook and cook for each 20 men. However, there were few camps with over 200 men.

The cooks set tables, peeled potatoes, washed dishes, waited on tables and kept the kitchen clean. Kitchen help was generally plentiful, and cooks could usually be ordered at any time from the employment office. Many a cook was fired if he got lazy and did not put on the quality food the foreman wanted. However, most cooks were quite independent, and often up and quit at a moment's notice leaving the second cook to handle the job.

In small camps, 30 to 40 men, sometimes a man from the crew had to be picked to feed the men until a new cook arrived.

In the old days, the "Bull cook" would stick his head into the bunkhouse at 5 a.m. and yell "Roll out." Breakfast was usually served about 6 a.m.

The cook would announce mealtime by blowing a horn or pounding on a triangle iron or piece of railroad iron hung by the kitchen door. Dinner horns in the camps were about 6 feet long, and some of the



... and the lumberjacks would come running in chow.

cooks, the first class ones, took pride in playing several tunes on them. On a frosty morning, these dinner horns could be heard for several miles. I have stood outside on a cold morning and heard up to six dinner horns from camps within five miles of ours.

In smaller camps, the cook would open the kitchen door and yell, "Come and get it."

The lumbercamp cooks were a special breed of lumberjack and, as a rule, "cranky." They were kings of the kitchen and had considerable leeway in running the kitchen as long as they made good food. The "no talking" rule at the tables was strictly enforced, and it was the cook's job to see that it was. Cooks were paid more than the average lumberjack, stayed longer in the camps, made bigger stakes and drank more whiskey when in town.

It took a lumberjack an average of about 12 minutes to eat, and I have seen a crew of 200 men file in and out of a cook camp in 25 minutes. Bunkhouses were always full of stories of good cooks and where they were cooking.

Jacks always wanted to work where the good cooks were.

Most companies had their favorite cooks and tried to keep them from year to year. I have known many of the cooks of the International Lumber Co., Virginia & Rainy Lake Lumber Co., the Crookston Lumber Co. and the combined Cloquet Northern camps.

During the winter of 1922, while I worked as a log and cutting inspector for the combined Weyerhaeuser Companies of Cloquet, I visited over 70 camps and ate and slept in them as well as in a number of jobber camps. I never found a camp that did not have food on the table equal to the food served in our leading hotels!

Some of the lumber camp cooks that I remember as good ones were Ed Thomas, the "Brainerd Kid," "Pug" O'Brien, Joe Edwards, "Mustache" McDonald, "Johnnie on the Spot" Segorski, Ole Hagen, Bob Plante, Jimmie White, Chet Lawson, "Crooked-neck Paddy" Haley, Jack Dewar, Jack Donahue, Martin Hall, Jerry Dahlquist, "Shag" Dunbar, "Root House Pete" Johnson, Jude McDermit and others.

But in the Cloquet Valley District, where the combined Cloquet Northern camps were located during the 1920s, the

camps were the largest of any I have known and some of their later camps were equipped with electric lights and quite modern.

The Cloquet Northern companies had a group of cooks over a number of years that really were outstanding. They included Mose Paquette, Pete Olson, Ben Melankin, Joe LaCourse, Joe Glen, Charley Norum, Jerry Dahlquist, George Romans, Ed Selvert, "Slim" Cassidy among others.

If I were to pick out one cook as being the best, I would have to choose Tom Burns. He cooked for the Oliver for many years and later cooked for the Great Northern Power Co. when they built their dams at Island Lake, Boulder Lake and Whiteface.

Although during the early days of logging our great pine stands, the jacks' food may have consisted more or less of pea soup, sowbelly and beans, the food furnished them was always the best available. And as the companies and the foremen soon found out, a well-fed man made them the most money and did the best job—and our lumberjacks were some of the best-fed people in the United States.



Inside early lumbercamp mess hall.



# Arvid Olson, Former TPA President (1923-2009)

**H**onesty, integrity, and hard work. Those were the words used to describe former TPA president Arvid H. Olson, who died September 25 at the age of 86.



"He served on the executive committee and as president during some pretty tough times in the industry," said former TPA

executive vice president Russ Allen. "He was called upon to represent the association during a difficult period. He was a quiet guy who spoke up when it was necessary and was just a good president, a good leader and a faithful member of the association."

Olson was born and raised in Bemidji, and along with a stint as a pilot in the Navy during World War II, he worked as an electrician in Minneapolis and in Seattle. He then returned in Minnesota, married his wife Beryl Ganyo in 1950, and settled in Graceton. That's where he started Olson Timber Products, and for three decades diversified into pulpwood brokerage, sawmilling, lumber, and railroad ties. He was also a carpenter, mechanic and amateur engineer, having designed much of his own logging and sawmill machinery.

"Dad and his brother started in the back of our house in 1947, cutting popple with a bowsaw, and skidding with horses and a dray," said Arvid's son Bill. "They loaded the wood into a box car at Graceton, not a gondola. He, along with the rest of the folks his age, physically worked hard and saw so much change over their lives as they witnessed the timber industry undergo nearly total mechanization and well as corporate consolidation."

Arvid was also an avid outdoorsman, which is why the timber industry was a perfect fit.

"One of the things he really enjoyed was physical activity and being outside," Bill Olson said. "He relished the outdoors tremendously and loved people. He was very comfortable whether he was in a pair of mackinaws or a

suit, and it was reflected in the base of friends that he had both professionally and socially. He was pretty well known in the industry, particularly for his sense of humor and easy going demeanor."

That easy going demeanor carried over into Olson's business practices.

"One of the things he prided himself on was that he ran the brokerage from his back pocket," Bill Olson said. "He was a handshake guy. He never committed to a stick of wood that he didn't ultimately take. His word was golden. He was well known for that. He was an excellent father and devoted husband. He taught all of us kids so much about life, business, and people and always made an effort to instill his values in us."

Olson was a TPA member for over 50 years, including serving as the organization's president from 1976 to 1978. Allen called Olson an effective president.

"He worked to keep our organization working together in spite of the diverse opinions of the some of the individual members," Allen said. "He knew we needed the organization, he presented his viewpoints, but sought others as well and then worked to find solutions and implement the path

that everyone decided."

"Arvid was one of the more progressive members at that time in a business sense," said former TPA President Tom McCabe, Sr. "He was a smart guy, and he did a good job as president of the association during those years."

Olson also loved the camaraderie of the organization, including the social events like the annual meetings at the Hotel Duluth or fishing or pheasant hunting trips taken with fellow TPA members. He also joined fellow members in planting tens of thousands of trees in the St. Cloud area.

"You can still see those trees they planted as you drive along Highway 10 near St. Cloud and Sartell," Bill Olson said.

Olson is survived by his wife of 58 years Beryl, daughters Susan (Dave) Thomas of Baudette and Marcia (Byron) Hauger of Graceton and son Bill Olson of Minneapolis; one sister, Marguerite MaGaur of Bemidji; grandchildren, Jennifer (Doug) Erickson, Justin (Breanna) VanDeHey, Harland (Laurel) Hauger and Clark Hauger; great grandchildren Jordan and Max Erickson; step grandchildren, Ryan Thomas, Blaine (Angela) Thomas and Kristi Kupsc; several step great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

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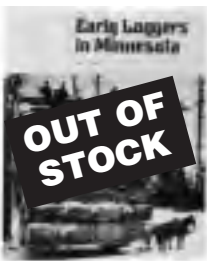
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by J. C. Ryan

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