

Leaves

Newsletter of the Michigan Forest Association

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Association News

Reserve the weekend of August 21 & 22 on your calendar now for the MFA annual meeting at Cedarville. We'll have registration materials for you in the next issue of Leaves.

Thanks for your prompt attention to the **dues notices**. Most of you are paid up. Please check to make sure you're not one of the few still out. By the way, remember the question we asked about acreage owned? Take a guess on the total --- so far, we've heard from owners of over **250,000 acres**, collectively. Thanks for helping with this.

Last month we told you about a grant MFA has received from the DNR to connect new members with foresters. We're still waiting for the last Ts to be crossed, but in the meantime, Nicholas Lanning read about it and sent in his money. He'll be the first in. **Welcome, Nicholas!**

Chapter 7, in the Saginaw Bay area, held a meeting in Midland on January 30 with speakers on bioenergy and land conservancies. A couple dozen members attended. Thanks to chapter chairman **Dan Keane** for organizing this event.

Are you planning a Chapter or other regional event? Let us know so we can help publicize it. There may be help available, too, in the form of mailing labels and postage from the MFA office.

MFA plans to have our educational trailer, *The Wanigan*, on display at the **Outdoorama** show February 26 – March 1 at the Rock Financial Showplace in Novi. This is a great event to visit; stop in and say hello if you're at the show.

Cost-Share Money Available

Many woodland owners find themselves in possession of patches (or "stands") of timber that need thinning, but the trees are too small to yield commercially valuable products. Foresters often prescribe thinning of such stands, referring to it as Timber Stand Improvement or TSI. The lack of markets makes it difficult to accomplish the actual thinning. Under a provision in the 2008 Farm Bill, you might find cost-share money to encourage you to do the work. Some of the details are still being worked out, but now is the time to get in line. Contact your local U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center and tell them you want to apply for Timber Stand Improvement under the Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP). You'll need to be able to show you have a management plan written by a forester.

Volunteers Sought

Dr. Karen Potter-Witter, professor of forest economics at Michigan State University and MFA member, is looking for volunteer instructors for the forestry portion of the Conservation Stewards Course. There are four sessions available – 2 inside on March 9 and April 2 (evenings) in Pontiac and Ann Arbor respectively, and 2 outside on March 21 and April 18 in Oakland Co. Indian Springs Metropark and Leslie Science Center, Ann Arbor. Information on the program can be found at: <http://web4.msue.msu.edu/mnfi/education/stewards.cfm> If you're interested, let us know at the MFA office and we'll pass the information on.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is looking for volunteer campground hosts at certain state parks and state forest campgrounds. Hosts direct visitors to their campsites, answer questions about the park or state forest, arrange campground activities and perform light maintenance and other

services. For more information, call Maia Stephens at 517-373-8378 for state parks, or Ada Takacs at 989-275-5151, ext. 2049 for state forests.

WILDLIFE NEWS

The **Quality Deer Management Association** has announced certification program dates and locations. Level I courses will be offered at Killens Pond State Park, Delaware on May 1 – 4; in Columbia SC on May 15 – 18 and Tallula, Illinois on August 14 – 17. Details can be found at www.QDMA.com under the "REACH Program" button, or call 800-209-3337 to register.

State record bull elk? According to the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC), 13 year-old Courtney Williams shot a very large bull elk in Charlevoix County that measured 333 inches, which surpassed the state record. Shortly thereafter, James Ruthven shot one that was bigger yet – scoring around 400 inches! Official measurements will be made in March, after the required drying period. Wildlife officials said it was the biggest bull they'd ever seen.

And speaking of **bulls**, MFA Board member **John MacInnis**, of Novi, sent us this picture. John owns forest property in Baraga County. Rumor has it that this was taken on a recent harvest at John's place, but he claims the picture came from Alaska. Does anybody know this logger?



Alternative Energy

Kirtland Products, of Boyne City, expects to be in operation making wood pellets this year. The company expects to employ about 25 people at the plant and 40 in the woods. The Northern Logger & Timber Processor

Michigan has established an **Alternate Fuels Fund** to be used for promotion of alternative fuels, grants and development of motor fuel quality standards among other things. SB 1130 established the fund. A related bill, SB 1467 allows us to designate a portion of our state income tax refund for this fund.

Michigan Farm News

"Yale's *Environment 360* e-newsletter reports on the slate of companies, including one headed by biologist and entrepreneur Craig Venter, that are developing **genetically engineered biofuels** they say will provide a greener alternative to oil. For more information, visit the *Environment 360* website." The e-forester

Miscellaneous

Smurfit-Stone Container at Ontonagon has extended its temporary shutdown through February. A company spokesman said this reflects a continued weakness in demand for packaging material. Lansing State Journal

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, timberland investments are holding up better than many other assets. The e-forester

Birds Eye Lands for sale. According to a brochure recently received at the MFA office, over 2,500 acres of forest land owned by the Birds Eye Veneer Company are for sale. These lands are in the western Upper Peninsula and northern Wisconsin.

Loggers like their work anyway. JobsRated.com ranks logger as the worst job in America. They said that's because it involves physical labor in an outdoor environment. Still, lots of them like it. It's a lot like being a forester – you need to be smart enough to do the work, yet slow enough to like to work outdoors...