

New York Forest Owners Association Capital District Chapter Newsletter

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Chair's Message



I'd like to inform you about a new book on the market that is geared towards the landowner; the rookie and experienced. The book is called Backyard Woodland by Josh VanBrakle. In his book, Josh talks about how to maintain and sustain your trees, water and wildlife. I have read it cover to cover and find it a very useful tool for any forestland owner. I would highly recommend it.

Now for the Market update. Conditions are good! (At least for export log shipments.) Kiln Dry lumber inventories are still quite high, on most species. There has been a lot of interest in Kiln Dried Red Oak lumber, the last couple of months. This item will be on the rise soon. By watching the bids put out by Independent Foresters, I have seen already, an increase in stumpage prices on Red Oak standing timber. Red Oak will be a good item this year.

Ash log prices are still strong, and White Oak is doing extremely well. Hickory Lumber has slowed, but log exports are still a hot item. Cherry lumber and logs have been the dog for quite some time, but are on the move now. According to Joe, 4/4 KD Cherry lumber # 1 common and better, has gone up the last 2 months in a row. Cherry exports have risen in September and October by 14% each month. This is a good sign.

So far this season, I have seen tremendous activity from the Chinese buyers, for logs. (More so than lumber.) Harvesting has been good in our area, so far, given the dry weather and cold that set in early. Things look busy for the rest of the season, for the

Exporters. As for the Domestic scene and Canada, maybe not as well.

Due to weak Canadian sales, Canadian mills still have a high log inventory, and even higher finished product inventory, especially the flooring plants. Some plants are even limiting log production coming into the mill. Others are dropping prices on this low grade log, primarily in the lighter color species, such as Hard Maple. Here in the U.S., the Feds feel our economy is doing well, and have raised the interest rate. Based on a steady increase in housing starts, a rise in new job hires, and a decrease in unemployment, they feel American pocketbooks can accept higher interest rates. (They haven't checked my pocket book lately.)

According to the Hardwood Review, lumber exports are up. For example, Red Oak is up about 8%, White Oak is up almost 10% and Ash has increased 6% this season. However, imports have taken a downward turn, with Tropical Hardwoods Lumber down 8%, Solid Hardwood Flooring down 12% and Engineered Flooring down 2%. Was this a sign of pre-election jitters, or is our economy not quite what the Feds think it is? Time will tell.

Jason

New Members

The chapter welcomes the following new members:

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| James Baxter | Catskill, N.Y. |
| Bill Faulkner | Glenville N.Y. |
| Barbara Heinzen | New Baltimore, N.Y. |
| Robert Johnson | Engelwood, N.J. |
| Victor A. Shear | Canajoharie, N.Y. |
| Shane Stevens | Cairo, N.Y. |

Activity Reports - Starks Woodswalk

Charles and Karen Starks welcomed a group of visitors on Saturday, October 8, 2016 at their property on Dean Hill Road in Canaan, Columbia County.



After enjoying cider and donuts we learned about the history of the property. At one time it was operated as a dairy farm. Now trees have grown into the fields.

Charles uses a consulting forester, Jim Kelly, from Great Barrington MA. Charles finds him easy to work with and responsive to his management objectives. A good relationship with the forester is important because the woodlot is enrolled in the state forest tax law. The forester is responsible for preparing a management plan which meets landowner objectives as well as the requirements of the tax law.



Charles cuts and moves firewood and sawlogs with the help of a Massey Ferguson model 1540, 40 hp, 4-wheel drive, and a 4 1/2 ton winch. The loader will

lift 1,200 pounds, which works out to about 120 board feet in a sawlogs, or 1/3 cord green firewood.



Charles described how decay effects log quality.



The forest tax law management plan calls for a timber harvest in an area of mature red oaks. Charles is considering the idea of trying induce regeneration of the red oak after the harvest by fencing off the area, and either scattering acorns or planting seedlings, but hasn't decided yet.

Hudson River Hardwoods

Log Yard Tour by Laura Pisarri (Secretary of HRH, LLC)

A well turned out Log Yard Tour commenced on October 15, 2016, at Jason Post's Hudson River Hardwoods Log Yard in Leeds, NY. Jason started his business over thirteen years ago, with the goal of providing woodland owners the opportunity to sell their timber at the best prices, without over-cutting their woodlot. Working with a crew of experienced and reputable local loggers and foresters who get the job done quickly and efficiently, Jason sells the logs wherever they will bring the highest price.



Jason Explains Lumber Grades

Sixteen people were in attendance, ranging from 8 years and up. New, old and potential members, enjoyed watching and learning the grading and scaling techniques, our professional Log Buyer/Broker so enthusiastically performed. Jason started out by explaining lumber grades, and how manufacturers use the lumber from logs to make their products. These include products such as flooring, cabinets, stair treads, baseball bats, etc.

He then led the group to the log yard, to explain how logs are bucked up for quality, to gain the highest grade of logs from each tree harvested. They also learned how this log grade determines lumber yield at the sawmill. All the attendees were actively participating throughout, and in the Q&A session, at the end of the class. It was clearly an appreciated learning experience for all.

Refreshments were welcomed on this crisp fall morning. Piping hot coffee, tea, apple cider donuts, organic apples, and of course, apple cider, were enjoyed by all



Jason Demonstrates Log Grading & Scaling



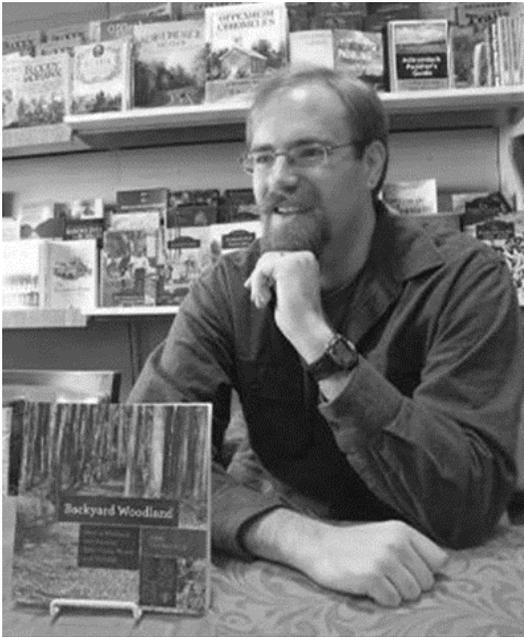
Jason Demonstrates How to Maximize Log Value

Jason would like to host two tours a year, starting in 2017. He feels there is a need to educate landowners, by offering this class, more than once a year. Forest conservation and sustainability are very important to Jason. He is not only a chapter member, Jason is also our NYFOA CDC Chairman. His motto has always been, "Sustainable forests are the beginning of a future, exploited forests are the beginning of an end."

An Interview With Josh VanBrakle

by Carl Wiedemann

Josh VanBrakle is the author of the recently published book Backyard Woodland. He lives in the Catskills with his wife Christine and daughter Katelyn. The book was reviewed in the November/December issue of the New York Forest Owner and is highly recommended for woodland owners.



Josh VanBrakle

Q: What inspired you to become a forester? A: I grew up in a rural area of central Pennsylvania on a dairy farm. I've always enjoyed the outdoors and developed an interest in forestry during my college studies.

Q: What's your advice to woodland owners who think that the best management is to let nature takes its own course? Human influence is unavoidable and adverse impacts are growing – climate change, invasive species and development pressure are all problems. Stewardship is necessary in the face of these threats. It's not about improving on nature it's about protecting natural processes.

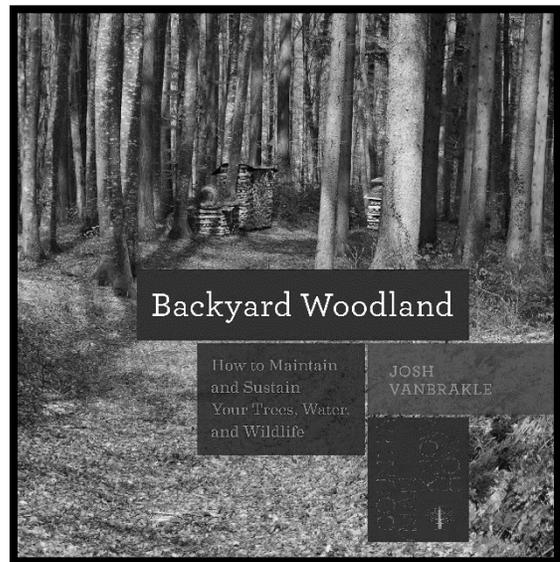
Q: What are your thoughts about the stewardship responsibility of woodland owners? A: We all benefit from sound management and so both landowners and non-landowners have a stewardship responsibility. I identify strongly with the quote; "We do not inherit the earth from our fathers, we are borrowing it from our children."

Q: NYFOA's mission is to promote sustainable practices and improved stewardship of privately owned woodlands. What can NYFOA do to improve its effectiveness? A: As a statewide organization of woodland owners NYFOA can make peer to peer connections with landowners. Often it takes a one-on-one approach and landowners have credibility with other landowners. I'd like to see more NYFOA members consider becoming Master Forest Owners.

Q: What do you enjoy doing in your leisure time? A: I enjoy hiking, canoeing and kayaking, nature photography, and in general spending as much time outside as possible.

Q: Are you planning to write any more books? A: Yes, I'm currently working on another book about what landowners can do for wildlife – 101 Projects to Improve Wildlife Habitat.

Q: What would most surprise readers about you? A: They might be surprised to learn that my first three books were fantasy fiction – The Wings of Dragons, The Hearts of Dragons, and The Flames of Dragons.



Backyard Woodland can be purchased on-line through Amazon @ \$14.55.

Upcoming Events of Interest

What: CDC Holiday Gathering

When: Saturday, January 21, 2017- 4:00 p.m.

Location: Bethany Presbyterian Church
21 North Lyons Avenue
Albany, N.Y. 12204

Cost: Bring a Dish to Pass

What better way to begin the New Year than with an opportunity to share food and fellowship? Please join us! Chapter members, family, and friends are invited to attend the annual Holiday Gathering covered dish supper. If you have never participated before – bring a dish to pass and find out what you have been missing. Our covered dish supper will be starting at 4:00 p.m. Our guest speaker is Jack Magai the owner of Magai Arboriculture located in Troy.



With a family background in engineering, undergraduate work in math and chemistry, and a degree in dance and literature from Bennington College, Jack Magai started working in the tree care field in 1985. He started pruning trees in Seattle in the 90s and became certified as an arborist by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) in 1997. Under his other hat he has been making and performing dance-based works for 30 years. He has two sons with the writer Amy Halloran.

The company, currently with three certified arborists, strives to maximize the great benefits provided by large trees in landscape and urban settings. By assessing and managing risk a tree's useful life can be extended, often by decades!

Jack Magai's Philosophy of Tree Care (Jack Magai is the speaker at the Holiday Gathering)

Trees don't need to be pruned; people need trees to be pruned for human purposes.

Most trees are adapted to forest conditions. When we put them in other situations they grow in ways foreign to their genetic makeup. This is the underlying source of most of our problems with trees. On the other hand, the ways they grow in response to novel stresses can be interesting.

The thick layer of decaying plant material on the forest floor is missing in the urban forest, depriving the trees of beneficial organisms and nutrients, and exposing it to greater temperature and moisture fluctuations.

Solution: leave mulch where possible (but not against the trunk - see volcano mulching).

Often the qualities of the soil are further changed by traffic and development. The soil can have reduced water-holding capacity and gas-exchange potential. Water from the soil is needed to keep the leaves cool, and the roots need oxygen to use the sugars made by the leaves. Solution: protect soil! Remediating soil damage is a doubtful and expensive enterprise. Still, it is possible to try: soil aeration and amending may be advisable in some cases.

Lower branches thrive rather than getting shaded-out and dying; multiple sprouts at the tops of small trees all grow rather than becoming reduced by the competition for light in the forest understory. These grow to become multiple great trunks, not well attached to each other (a condition called Co-Dominance). They may eventually break apart, causing major decay to set in, thus shortening the life of the tree.

Solution: Subordination can help young and middle-aged trees grow more like ones in the forest. Old trees with these problems well established can often be cabled or braced together to prevent breakage.

Upcoming Events of Interest – continued

What: Sugar Bush & Sap House Tour

When: Saturday, March 18, 2017 at 10 a.m.

Where: 245 Hidley Rd., Wynantskill, NY

There will be maple sap tour at Hidley Farm and the Skinner Sugarbush on Saturday, March 18th. This is a great opportunity to see a small scale maple sugaring operation. It will start with a tour of the woods to learn about sugarbush silviculture, how to tap maple trees, and then how to collect and transport sap. The tour will move to a nearby property where the sap house is located. The operation is a good example for landowners who may be considering a maple sugaring side business. Dress for the weather on this program. Questions? - call 283-0155. This event will be co-sponsored by RPA and the CDC-NYFOA.

What: Shiitake Mushroom Workshop

When: Sunday, April 2, 2017 starting at 9 a.m.

Where: 249 Stanton Road, Coeymans Hollow

Cost: \$10 & limited to 12 participants

Note: You must pre-register before March 1st!

Call (518) 756-2232

Want to grow Shiitake mushrooms? This workshop will cover the basics of inoculating hardwood logs so you can grow a year-round supply. NYFOA member Gerry McDonald has been growing Shiitake mushrooms on his property in Coeymans Hollow for 6 years. He currently harvests enough fresh Shiitakes for in-season use and dries enough for use during the colder months.



Shiitake Mushrooms

Participants will learn techniques for inoculating hardwood bolts with Shiitake spawn. In summary, bolts, (preferably oak) are drilled with a number of 5/16 holes about 1¼ inch deep. Inoculated dowels are pounded into the holes, which are then sealed with hot wax. About 30-40 plugs are put into each bolt. The bolts can then be stored outside in a relatively moist environment to allow for the spawn to run through and colonize the wood. In about 6 to 12 months, you can expect to harvest a small amount of mushrooms. Thereafter, the

bolts will fruit more heavily for several years. We'll discuss techniques for forcing the bolts to fruit when you want them to. We'll also take a tour of the McDonald's shiitake growing yard and discuss the characteristics that make a good growing yard.

You Must be Pre-registered because space is limited

- Cost: \$10.00 will cover the cost of the materials needed to inoculate 2 or possibly 3 smaller logs including 100 hardwood dowels inoculated with Shiitake mycelium.
- Fresh cut oak bolts suitable for plugging will be available for additional cost of \$5.00 each.

Materials to bring if you have them:

- Portable drill
- 5/16 bit. Sizes 1/64 larger and smaller can be helpful when the inoculated dowels are slightly off spec
- Hammer or rubber mallet
- Hardwood bolts if you want to inoculate your own wood and save on cost.

Materials we will provide:

- Hardwood plugs inoculated with shiitake mycelium
- Sealing wax
- Stove and pans for heating wax
- Daubers for applying hot wax
- Metal tags and nails for marking the logs with inoculation information



Hardwood Plugs [With Mycelium](#)

Log Bolt specs:

Oak is preferable, but it's reported that other hardwoods such as sugar maple and beech can also work well. The bolts need to be fresh cut in winter or early spring before sap starts to run. This ensures the highest sugar content in the wood. Avoid any wood that's dried out. I cut bolts that are 3 to 6 inches diameter because they are easier to handle and seem to colonize well. I cut them 3 feet long because they fit inside a 55 gallon drum used as a soaking tub.



Shiitake Mushroom Log

Steering Committee

Members

| | | | |
|--|-------------|---|-------------|
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Next meeting scheduled Tuesday, January 10 starting at 6:00 p.m. at Bethany Presbyterian Church 21 North Lyons Avenue, Menands.

When we use wood products, we help sustain working forests.

The more wood we use,
the more trees we grow.
Strong markets for wood
products have helped
increase the volume of
growing trees in U.S.
forests by 50% since 1953.

50%
MORE TREES
SINCE 1953

Government policies that support
strong markets for wood use and
affordable forest management help
keep private working forests intact.
Without such policies, forests will
be converted to other, less
environmentally-beneficial
land uses.

Your Membership

Helps Support Sustainable Forestry

Forests cover more than 60% of the state providing important benefits including watershed protection, wildlife habitat, wood products, recreational opportunities, clean air, and beauty. The New York Forest Owners Association is a not-for-profit organization established to encourage sustainable forestry practices and sound management of privately owned woodlands. Members include woodland owners and all others who care about the future of New York's trees and forests.

NYFOA, P.O. Box 541, Lima, New York 14485 1-800-836-3566 www.nyfoa.org
