

Chainsaws For Charity!

Dean Faklis

NYFOA WFL has begun a fun project whereby firewood is generated for the purposes of raising money for charity, providing a social function for NYFOA members, and to provide a vehicle for NYFOA to attract new members. The name "Chainsaws for Charity" is brilliant and comes from Dick Starr. Dick won the naming competition and a \$20 gift card from Tim Horton's is on its way to Dick!

The project was kicked off on June 5, 2016 at Dale and Eileen Schaefer's property, with ten NYFOA members in attendance (Dick Starr, Dale and Eileen Schaefer, Dana Allison, Ron Reitz, David and Celia Deuel, Chris Howard, Dean and Julie Faklis). Since then, about ten more NYFOA members have signed up including Jim Miller, Keith and Lorie Bowers, and Greg and Kathy Lessord. A second meeting was held at David and Celia's homestead on July 24 to discuss the details....and to enjoy the mutual trust and friendship.



The project's short-term goal is to generate 100 face cords in the first year. To get an idea of the amount of money that will be realized by the beneficiaries, it is possible that quarter face cords will be sold for \$25, half face cords for \$45 and full face cords for \$75. This provides a lower bound of \$7,500 and an upper bound of \$10,000. Not bad!

A Model

Generating and selling hardwood firewood to raise money for charity has a long history. Here is just one example, which is in place in Illinois with Habitat for Humanity:

"(Fire)wood sales are the largest fundraiser for Habitat. Six to eight volunteers spend each Thursday morning when weather permits chopping wood with four Habitat-owned log splitters and a pair of chain saws.....it's a good cause that allows (them) some regularly scheduled exercise." "It also fits into the Habitat theme of getting your hands dirty to further the cause....volunteerism is the biggest asset for the organization."

Please read more details on how they generate \$27,000 per year for charity:

<http://www.journal-republican.com/news/people/2014-04-29/wood-you-help-habitat-humanity.html>

WFL's approach is different. It does not plan to sell or deliver firewood; that is the job of the charity/beneficiary. They do not plan to cut live trees. They plan to cut firewood from logs, which are harvested in TSI operations and then delivered to a landing. The firewood will then be picked up and transported to a location specified by the beneficiary. The beneficiary will sell the firewood to raise funds for its programs. A similar approach is used by the Boy Scouts, where Christmas trees are donated and the boys sell them to raise funds for their programs.

The primary goal of the model is to provide value to NYFOA members, to increase the awareness of NYFOA's mission, and to obtain new members.

The Progress

1. A site for firewood processing has been established at the lands of David and Celia Deuel, near Avon , NY. It is viewed to be centralized so that we can operate in accord with NYSDEC regulations regarding firewood. If the project is successful, other locations within the WFL region will be established to serve more volunteers and charities.
2. The first load of hardwood logs was donated by Tom Gerow and Wagner Lumber and has been delivered to the site. We are all extremely grateful to Wagner for stepping up immediately with strong support! The estimated value of the donation to NYFOA is **\$1,200-\$1,500**. They have a desire to be a long-term partner with NYFOA in this project. Here are some pictures of the log pile at David and Celia's place (July 1, 2016):





3. The first cash donation, to help offset project expenses, has been received from new member Mike Sanchez in the amount of **\$150**. Thank you very much for the leadership Mike!
4. A donation of ~50 new pallets has been received from Keith & Lorie Bowers and have been delivered to the site through the help of Greg & Kathy Lessord. Approximate value of this donation is **\$400**. Due to their kindness, an ongoing supply is available to the project. Thanks!
5. The local Zoning Officer has allowed a sign to be placed at the site, which will highlight NYFOA on Rt 20. It is limited to a size of 3' x 4' (12 sq. ft.). WFL volunteers will build the sign and plant it. An artist (Dottie of Canadice, NY) will paint the sign as a donation to NYFOA. Approximate value of this donation is about **\$300**.
6. We're working with several non-profits right now and hope to receive some proposals from them soon. Based on merit and overall benefit, WFL will make some decisions on which organizations and groups it'll partner with. Stay tuned!
7. David, Dale and Greg are putting the pieces together regarding the firewood process. The first firewood session is planned for the end of August, well before you'll be reading this article.

In summary, this is an example of FANTASTIC Teamwork and Volunteerism!

Estimate, Value of Donations to Date: \$2,350

This project can be replicated across the state, if we are successful.

Take Action!

Sound like fun?! Send a note with questions and comments to Eileen Schaefer (dschaefer1@frontiernet.net) if you're interested in participating and/or making a donation of delivered logs/firewood, equipment, wood transportation or cash to help with expenses. Eileen will put you on the mailing list so you'll be up to date on all the action!

Perhaps the largest benefit of NYFOA membership is camaraderie. Get involved. It's easy, not time