



FOREST OWNER

- the voice of 255,000 forest owners in New York
- representing an ownership of 11 million acres

Much of the credit for this new mast head and the new format of the Forest Owner goes to Emiel B. Palmer, former Director and currently Chairman of our Committee on Printing. He has made numerous trips to our new Forest Owner printers, Associated Printing Service of Syracuse. Now we hope you will want to begin filing issues of the Forest Owner as it becomes an increasingly important voice to forest owners of New York - Editor.

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October 1966

No. 6

4TH ANNUAL FALL MEETING TOPS IN SETTINGS, TOPICS, TOUR AND LUNCHEON

Lingering clouds clinging to the tops of the Catskills Friday morning Sept. 30 were wrapped up and rolled away by the time enthusiastic NYFOA members began to register at Lake Mohonk Mountain House to set in motion a varied program that proved to have wide acceptance and interest for our NYFOA members attending.

The night before, NYFOA Directors attending a Board Meeting at Mohonk on Thursday evening may have been apprehensive about the outcome of Friday's weather. They had the eerie experience of driving through dense fog on the winding mountainous road leading to Mohonk. But if there had been any concern it vanished the next morning. Friday the sun came out and spread a sparkle over the fall tinted and picturesque landscape comprising the Shawangunk Mountain Ridge that furnishes the striking site for the Lake Mohonk Mountain House. The splendid vistas westward toward the Catskills and eastward to the Valley of the Hudson River were clear and autumn colored.

NYFOA members arriving early joined the other guests during the morning hours, taking to the trails around the lake, clambering among the giant slabs of massive granite-like rock jumbled in all manner of formations around the perimeter of Lake Mohonk, hiking to and climbing up the 1160 foot fire tower and talking with the friendly Conservation Department look-out. That was in the morning.

GUIDED TOUR WITH DAN SMILEY

Following a luncheon in the spacious dining room of Mohonk Mountain House with large picturesque windows facing the Catskills, the 4th Annual Fall Meeting program got underway with President Hanaburgh introducing Dan Smiley who reviewed the history of Lake Mohonk Mountain House from its inception nearly a hundred years ago and described its varied program to meet the physical, mental and spiritual needs of visitors and guests during this span of century.

Beginning in bright sunshine right at the front of Mohonk Mountain House, Dan Smiley guided NYFOA members to a number of outlook points illustrating how management at Mohonk had taken measures to maintain vistas by the use of herbicides, tree removal and encouragement of low vegetation.

Cloud formations coming up providing alternate sunshine and shadows did not prevent numerous camera carriers from recording the experience.

At one stop utilizing low sloping space for the growing of Christmas trees that could be removed and thus maintain vista, there appeared at the far edge of an open meadow as if by prearrangement, a half dozen white tailed deer that added special pleasure to the hikers. As this part of the program came to an end there was general awareness that throughout most of the century the Smiley proprietors at Lake Mohonk Mountain House had demonstrated

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Meetings and correspondence are stirring up problems that invite solutions. Keep stirring up problems and let us see if the NYFOA can find the solutions.

Soon you will be able, through the Forest Owner, to hear the din of battle on the taxation front from John Stock's Committee on Taxation; on the legislation from from "Woody" Olmsted's Committee on Legislation; on the membership front from Fred Najer's Membership Committee. Let us have a strong, vocal and vibrant NYFOA by each of us getting into one of these battles or starting one of our own. If anyone can generate a cause we can organize an army to fight for it.

From time to time we may be canvassed by various interests, agencies and institutions. Be not reluctant to provide them with your opinions, ambitions and achievements. You are the PUBLIC and these studies serve to direct the efforts of both public and private agencies to your service.

To provide the membership of the NYFOA with the kind of service that we hope eventually to provide will take an annual income of about \$25,000. This will provide a full time Executive Secretary with office and facilities to service the membership along with an enlarged Forest Owner. At the present time we take in about \$4,000 in dues. Most of this goes for mailing, printing, stationery and the Forest Owner.

For the many other services necessary to provide we beg, borrow or steal from any source most readily available. Eventually we must earn

for decades their concern with esthetics more than a half century before the current nationwide interest in natural beauty and its importance to environment.

"THE HUDSON OF THE FUTURE"

With time out for relaxation and a surprisingly varied menu at the dinner hour, the Friday evening program featured a talk illustrated with Kodachrome slides by Mr. Bruce E. Howlett, Associate Executive Director, Hudson River Valley Commission with his headquarters at Iona Island, Bear Mountain, New York.

Bruce established a fine rapport with his audience. He made it clear that while the Hudson River Valley Commission has no mandate of its own, its present staff of 20 planners, landscape architects - to be doubled in the future - are at the disposal of communities, villages, towns and metropolitan areas up and down the whole length of the Hudson. Furthermore, that while local government alone has the power to determine what happens by way of improvements and local planning and zoning, that the Hudson River Valley Commission nevertheless will have an important service to perform, not only in an advisory capacity but in putting forth proposals for establishment of new State Parks, community parks, identification of suitable sites for industry, the preservation of historical homes and monuments as well as furnishing guide lines for grouping of future residential housing.

Piles of red ripe apples, zesty cider and stacks of donuts provided for a social hour brought to a close a successful afternoon and evening 4th Annual Fall Meeting program Friday Sept. 30. There was more to follow on Saturday October 1. This will be covered next month.

CORRECTION - PLEASE NOTICE

In the August 1966 issue of Forest Owner in the following statement there was reference to "plantings--done by the New York State Conservation Department." This statement conveyed wrong information. "We do not and never have done any planting on privately owned lands" says our NYFOA member, William D. Mulholland, Director, Lands and Forests, New York State Conservation Dept., Albany.

FOREST RANGERS RECEIVE NEW SALARY CLASSIFICATION

In a letter to Conservation Commissioner Kilborne, Governor Rockefeller announced on August 18, 1966 that salary grades for Conservation Department Forest Rangers have been raised to Grade 10 (\$5,295 to \$6,525) with corresponding increases for Assistant District Rangers and District Rangers.

The Governor emphasized the fact that "with a basic area of protection of more than 21 million acres including 14-1/2 million acres of woodlands, the Forest Ranger is a vital link between the public and the administration of the State's broad programs of natural resource conservation."

TEXAS FORESTRY ASSOC. SAYS:

Each \$1.00 from standing trees adds \$25 to Texas's economy through manufacturing, construction, transportation and marketing.

FOREST PRACTICE ACT 20TH ANNIVERSARY

The New York State Forest Practice Board held a 20th Anniversary meeting October 5-7 at Lake Luzerne commemorating the signing into law in 1946 The Forest Practice Act which provides for the establishment of standards for the practice of sound forestry on privately owned woodlands and for assistance from the Conservation Dept. in carrying out these practices.

According to the Conservation Dept. there are now more than 8,000 FPA cooperators. These private owners of more than 1,500,000 acres of forest land have and are now receiving assistance through the 47 regular FPA professional foresters assigned to this work. Backing up and supporting these FPA foresters are 7 senior professional foresters, 2 FPA state foresters and 4 professional foresters assigned to the Appalachian program, making a total of 60 professional foresters serving this program in the Conservation Dept.

In return for agreeing to follow sound practices the land owners receive free marking assistance, timber marking services and advice on reforestation and management of their woods. Altogether there are 14 regional boards maintaining forest practice standards locally. Representatives from all these District Boards make up the New York State Forest Practice Board.

President's Column (cont'd)

(through enlarged membership) or find (an angel) the money for a paid Executive Office. WHERE DO WE GET THIS MONEY? YOU TELL US.

REPLY TO PRESIDENT

Attorney and Counselor at Law
48 Albany Street
Cazenovia, N. Y. 13035

Mr. David H. Hanaburgh, President
New York Forest Owners Assoc.
Craft Lane
Buchanan, N. Y. 10511

Dear Mr. Hanaburgh:

Taking you at your word, inviting comments and criticisms for your column, I wonder how many of us forest owners have experienced the frustration of coming upon your woodlot cut down, and not selective but indiscriminate cutting. Then after discovering this senseless destruction, going through the frustration of trying to find out who did it.

As an attorney and representing forest owners in attempting to recover for damages to their trees, let me say that is a real problem. Many of our forest owners are absentee owners or have such extensive holdings that it is almost impossible to police. Cooperation with lumber mills is almost impossible to obtain, since they themselves could be made liable for damages in handling of stolen lumber. Whether or not control at the mill level is the answer, I do not know.

We have on our New York Statute books triple damage provisions; that is, a forest owner can recover three times the value of the actual damage, but to recover it is another story. There was talk of providing legislation for registering of professional loggers, but I have never heard anything further on this aspect. What the solution is I do not quite know.

However, I definitely feel one of the prime interests of our organization should be to study this problem and possibly offer suggestions to our legislators.

(signed) Michael Klysa

NEW BUILDING FOR TFA

Texas Forestry Association will break ground for new headquarters building at 52nd Annual Meeting Oct. 21, 1966 at Lufkin, Texas.

TRESPASS! AN EXPERIENCE

Dear Mr. Carlson:

May I report to you the following. I am an absentee owner of an 18 acre woodlot located in the vicinity of Rosendale and High Falls in Ulster County New York. In 1952 I started an approximate 8 acre reforestation plantation of mostly white pine, some Douglas fir and very unwisely, such species as white fir, blue spruce and Norway spruce. The last 3 were planted in only small numbers and for the purpose of beautifying the property. In these 14 years I have lost well over 400 trees by theft.

On December 21, 1965 after 5 pm I apprehended two men, carrying a pruning saw, on my property, which is posted. I ordered them out and told them that I was going to take them to the sheriff. On reaching the road bounding my land they entered a truck, which they had parked there and made ready to drive off. Determined that they should not get away I fired a shot into the front tire of the truck.

At the resulting hearing that same evening, with the justice of the peace at High Falls, - I related to him my expenditures in money, time and effort to grow trees on my land. I explained that some of the land before planting had to be cleared of a dense stand of sumach. That for several years I had weeded the whole plantation by hand. That I had carried water in 5 gallon buckets on many weekends. That I had applied hay for mulch. That I had sprayed against weevil and had eradicated gooseberries.

I also told him that I had appealed to the sheriff and State Police for help at least in the critical times at Christmas and spring planting time. That for the past several years I am taking my vacation just before Christmas, so that I might protect the plantation.

The two men denied that they had been on my property!

The justice of the peace then said "Many people plant trees, which is very commendable. Much land is posted, but a lot of it is not legally posted. I myself own fields but I do not post my land. Now since these men did not cut any trees and left the property when you told them to get out, they have done nothing wrong. On the other hand you have seriously violated the law. These men can press charges against you. Because it is the Christmas season I am recommending to them they they do not press charges against you if you will pay them for their tire."

He then asked the two men if they were willing to agree to this. When they agreed he asked them how much their tire was worth. They told him that it was a brand new tire and worth \$30. The justice of the peace then asked me if I had the money to pay them. I said yes and gave the truck owner \$30.

Dear Mr. Carlson, may I suggest the following:

1. That this letter be made known to the members of NYFOA for the purpose of considering steps to protect all, but especially absentee owners from unfair verdicts once a thief has been apprehended.

2. That "Posted" signs instead of bearing the name and address of an absentee owner, may read "This property is protected by NYFOA."

3. That members using signs as above mentioned pay an agreed sum of money to the NYFOA, available to obtain as severe a sentence as possible for theft or vandalism in the woods.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Hans Haug
8631 Elm Ave., Ridgefield, N. J.
07657

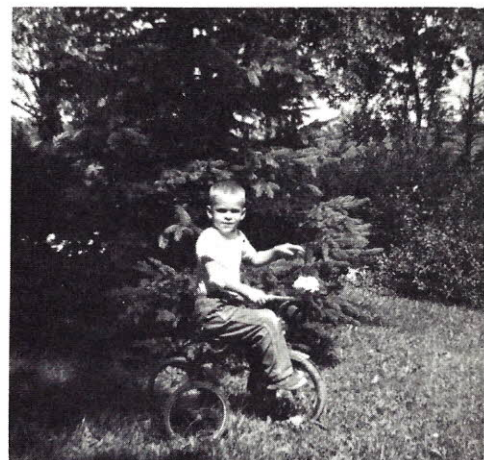
QUESTION FOR TAX FAX

Highlands, Keeseville, N. Y.
October 7, 1966

Dear Mr. Carlson:

It is impossible for me to imagine any member of this association who is not greatly disturbed by the increased taxes on our forest lands. It is important to us all and a vital matter to those of us who depend, in any degree, on timber income to carry the property.

In less than 20 years, my land tax has increased 223%. In the last 10, it has gone up 146%. This is bad enough but the school tax which, by rule of thumb, used to be 1/2 of the land tax, is now 87% of it. The average increase in the school tax is on my wild forest land, 523%. I have to see that those taxes are paid on 5000 acres. Though it is a good mixed stand, I am confident that no forester can make the property self supporting. When I bought the basic acreage, it could. Then, sound hemlock lumber commanded a good price for dock building and exterior construction. Now, I know of no market. Popple pulp cannot be sold locally. Stumpage for white pine is down. No timber market is up in proportion to taxes.



NEWS OF YOU - (CAN YOU BEAT THIS?)

As far as I know Master Donald Roberts, age 3 years, has the distinction of being the youngest member of NYFOA. His parents, Mr. & Mrs. James Roberts, Alden, N. Y., included a junior membership for him when they joined with us recently. His mother wrote "We thought it was a method of encouraging his interest toward this field or related subjects."

Some other new members are:
Root Glen Foundation, Inc., H. W. van Loon, Director (Oneida)
Frank Bailey Estate (Columbia)
New York City

Mr. and Mrs. William A. Roden (Warren) - Columnist for several weekly newspapers on subjects of hunting, fishing and conservation, Past President of New York State Conservation Council.

J. G. Jordan (Allegany) - Proprietor of Springbrook Hotel at Springbrook.
Prof. and Mrs. Ralph K. Morrill (Warren) - Professor of Architecture at Auburn University. His wife is in the Art Department at University of Alabama.

Kenneth L. Robb (Oswego) - Penningtonville, construction worker.

Michael Raymond Close (Tioga) - Mail carrier in Syosset.

Indian Ladder Farms, Peter G. Ten Eyck II (Albany) - fruit farm.

If you wish to have our NYFOA literature sent to anyone, please forward the names and addresses to me.

Mrs. Luella B. Palmer
Membership Secretary

QUESTION (cont'd)

The logical answer is to clear-cut and then sell to the State. I will not do that because I love my acres. In general, what are your suggestions?

(Signed) Koert D. Burnham
Member NYFOA

**ARE YOU BEING TAXED FAIRLY?
YOU CAN CHECK!**

We have found, somewhat to our surprise, that many forest land owners have only the vaguest of ideas of how their land tax figures are arrived at. Equalization rate is a meaningless term. Even worse, they do not know how to determine if they are being unfairly taxed. And they do not know the method to use in correcting an inequity.

From time to time in the Forest Owner, we would like to go into this vital matter, with the idea that maybe we can assist some of the members of the NYFOA to be better able to protect themselves.

First of all you must know how much your land is valued at by the Town assessors. The easiest way to determine this, assuming you have probably mislaid your tax bill, is to go to the office of the Town Clerk of the Town in which your property is located. In some of the smaller towns this may be hard to find, but it is there somewhere. Ask the Town Clerk, or his wife, if you can look at the current assessment book.

This large, bulky book, lists in more or less alphabetical order, the names of all of the land owners in the town. After your name there should be a listing of the names of the property owners on each side of you. This enables you to find their listing and assessment if you wish.

Then there should be an indication of the type of land you own, i. e. Forest Land, Farm, Residence, etc. Then there is an item showing how many acres of land you own of any

one type, followed by a figure showing the assessors valuation of this land. The last figure in this section should show the value of the land plus the improvements (houses, etc.) on it.

So far this is very simple and straightforward. But now complications creep in. Although by law, this dollar and cents figure for the land is supposed to represent its full value, it very seldom does. For no valid reason, except that "We've always done it this way," assessors value property at a fraction of its full value. This figure may vary anywhere from 1/20th to 3/4s of the land's market value.

For rather complicated reasons, that have to do with State and County financing, the NYS Board of Equalization and Assessment determine at what rate each Town assesses its property. They will announce that Town A is assessing its property at 20% of its true value and that Town B is assessing at 27%. This figure is called the Equalization Rate and can be different from Town to Town and from year to year.

So in order to find out what the assessors think your land is worth you have to find out the equalization rate of your town. The Town Clerk can tell you this. If your town has an equalization rate of 20% and your land is assessed at \$1000, it means the assessors feel that the market value is \$5000.

If, for instance, you just purchased your land for \$3000, then you will know you are over assessed. But perhaps you have owned the land for years and are not just sure what it is worth. Then the easiest thing to do is to com-

pare your assessment with your neighbors, or with someone in the same town who has similar land. This of course must be done on a per acre basis. If your assessment per acre is more than equivalent to land in the vicinity, then you know you are being discriminated against and you should start to think about what to do about it.

Do this fact collecting now, because you can't take any effective action until May or June anyway. Later on we will discuss what your next steps should be.

If you have any questions about your land taxes, send them along to the Forest Owner and we will try to get some answers for you.

William R. Fraser
John W. Stock, Chairman

Forest Practice Act (cont'd)

Our first President, Ted Buckley, also served as Chairman of District No. 11 (which includes Saratoga, Warren and Washington counties) and as the representative of District 11 on the State Forest Practice Board.

NYFOA member Francil Donnelly (Dist. No. 9), Olmstedville, is State Chairman. Other NYFOA members on the State Forest Practice Board including those serving as alternates, are: Alex Forester, Kenyon Parsons, Robert Ford, Francis Demeree, Ray Walker, John Keib, Herbert Engert, John Hofmaster, J. S. Hand, Thomas Quick and Owen Boyd.

(Note to Forest Practice Board Members: Don't you think every live member of the District Boards and every member of the New York State Forest Practice Boards should be active members of the NYFOA? Will you help bring them in? - Editor)



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