

# The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner



Fall 2012

Volume 26 Number 3

## In Our Woodlot

by Ed and Wanda Piestrak

As per the last two issues about harvesting the conifer plantation, we have come to the following conclusion:

We were not very hopeful that the logger would complete the project, but he did. That is, he harvested the remaining trees and left the site. He has a tri-axle or two of logs left on the landing but his wife assured us he would remove them as soon as possible. Upon further investigation it was revealed he would not take the remaining trees but have a nearby neighbor remove the logs for firewood.

Therefore, after several years of pursuing the project, it has finally ended. The 16 acre plantation was divided by a power line and the area along the stream didn't get cut because of the steep location so we ended up with about 15 acres of harvested red and white pine. It worked out to be 31 tons per acre with most of the weight coming from the red pine. A final tally left us just shy of 500 tons at \$4/ton, so just under \$2000.

We toured the site with Bruce Robinson our forester, and discovered a forest floor that

*Continued on page 5.*

## Upcoming Annual Dinner Meeting

by Dick Dennison

Our 7th Annual Dinner Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 30th, at the Monroe County Cooperative Extension building, 249 Highland Avenue in Rochester. Members, family and friends are invited. Appetizers at 5:30 and dinner at 6:00.

Our speaker will be Kim Sherwood, a hydrologist and watershed planner, who will discuss the timely topic of shale gas recovery. Originally from the Finger Lakes area, Kim has spent 20 years in the western U.S. He has degrees in Forest Resource Management and in Forest Hydrology, and has worked for the Weyerhaeuser company and the U.S. Forest Service. Recently, he has served on three subcommittee reviews of NYS DEC's proposed regulations for HVHF horizontal drilling. See inside for details.



*Photo courtesy of Dick Starr*

Chef Brad Stevenson of Laurier Catering in Mendon will provide another delicious buffet. The WFL Board is trying to keep costs down and has a goal of making the Annual Dinner self-supporting. At our first Annual Dinner in 2006, Laurier Catering charged \$25 per person. This year, the fee

*Continued on page 2.*

## Upcoming Annual Dinner (continued from page 1)

is \$28 per person. Your cost is \$22 with the chapter picking up the rest. Space is limited to the first 84 people who sign up by sending \$22 per person to WFL treasurer Ron Reitz at 6086 Canadice Hill Road, Springwater, NY, 14560.

Once again, we invite donations for door prizes. 50/50 raffle tickets will be available at 1 for \$5 and 3 for \$10.

**Stihl Chainsaw Raffle:** Northeast Stihl has once again given the chapter a new chain saw, model MS 211 with a 16 inch bar. This new saw has a suggested retail price of \$279.95. Tickets are 1 for \$10, 2 for \$15 and 3 for \$20. We accept cash or check. Thank you Stihl for your generous donation.

## Welcome New Members

**Serger Bartishevich**  
**Kathy Kimber**  
and **Artie Dietschler**  
**ECO Program**  
**Howard Harris**  
**John Keidel**  
**Hans & Leslie Kunze**

**Lyons**  
**Naples**  
**Rushville**  
**Springwater**  
**Penn Yan**  
**Wyoming**

**Malcolm MacKenzie**  
**Scott Richmond**  
**Elizabeth**  
and **Andrew Simkin**  
**Don Stalica**  
**Leo Starowitz Jr.**  
**Jimmy Stopinski**

**Naples**  
**Hammondsport**  
**Poplar Ridge**  
**Pavilion**  
**Elba**  
**Honeoye Falls**

**Western Finger Lakes Chapter Board of Directors Meeting:** Any NYFOA member is welcome to attend a meeting of the WFL board of directors. Our next meeting is Wednesday October 3rd at the American Hotel in Lima, NY. Meeting starts at 7 PM with a voluntary pre meeting dinner at 6.

## About Us

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*The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner* is published for members of the Western Finger Lakes Chapter of the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) and is published 4 times per year. NYFOA was founded in 1963 and is organized to encourage the wise management of private woodland resources in New York State by promoting, protecting, representing and serving the interests of woodland owners. The Western Finger Lakes chapter was founded in 1988 and encompasses Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, and Yates counties.

Membership is open to anyone interested in understanding how to manage a woodlot. NYFOA membership can bring returns in the satisfaction of growing quality timber, stabilizing forest industries and markets, providing permanent jobs, increasing the value of your woods, enlarging areas of natural beauty across the state, and leaving behind a monument in living trees to bless the tomorrows for the boys and girls of today. For information on becoming an NYFOA member, contact Liana Gooding, NYFOA Secretary, NYFOA, P.O. Box 541, Lima, NY, 14485 or at 1-800-836-3566. Annual membership is \$30 for individuals and \$35 for families and includes: subscriptions to this newsletter; to the bimonthly NYFOA state-wide publication, *The New York Forest Owner*; attendance at chapter meetings; and at two statewide meetings. Membership at the Contributing level \$50- \$100 and Supporting level \$101 & up) are also offered. For more information visit [www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org).

Readers are encouraged to submit articles for publication in this newsletter. Articles should be mailed or e-mailed to: Richard Starr at the address to the left. Electronic submissions are preferred. Any letters should be sent to the Chair for consideration.

For event reminders and late-breaking news, **subscribe to our email list** by sending a blank email to [nyfoa-wfl-news-subscribe@npogroups.org](mailto:nyfoa-wfl-news-subscribe@npogroups.org)

**Note:** The deadline for our next, Winter, issue is December 1st.

# Photos from the Piestrak Woodswalk and from Empire Farm Days

(Please see next page for related articles.)



Piestrak Woodswalk - Wagon loaded and ready to go.



Piestrak Woodswalk - On site stop.



Piestrak Woodswalk - Six-year old deer enclosure area



Piestrak Woodswalk - Hunting Stand #14



Piestrak Woodswalk - Each participant received a Wooden Pig E. Bank and a Blue Bird Box



Empire Farm Days - Inside the Cornell Building

## Summer Hayride

by Ed and Wanda Piestrak

On Saturday June 30, 2012 our fourth woods walk was held at Piestrak's Forestlands LLC which is a managed and certified forest. Approximately 25 people attended and the quality of the attendees was excellent. That is, they were eager and open to learn new ideas as well as had a good interaction with the main presenter, Mr. Bruce Robinson, our forester. Initially we were somewhat disappointed in the number of people attending (we expected and planned for 50) but as it turned out we were quite pleased with the attendees.

Chef Jeffrey with the assistance of his wife Becky prepared a sumptuous buffet lunch. Our daughter Crystal prepared cookies and cupcakes as well as home brewed coffee. Also, Crystal is preparing a DVD on the woods walk. If you would like a copy of the free DVD contact Crystal at [crystal@paluck.org](mailto:crystal@paluck.org).

The weather was surprisingly comfortable and the tractor-drawn

wagon was usually stopped in a shaded spot when we reviewed the work going on in a particular area. A row of hay bales added seating to the woods walk wagon. All attendees were given a wooden pig bank made by grandson Joshua as well as a blue bird box made by son Jeffrey.

We covered multiple topics but the two that stand out are the over story removal in 15 acres and the amount of regeneration that has taken place in the area. The second one is the planting of the Dunstan hybrid chestnut trees which should bear nuts in two to four years. In 10 years they should be providing 10 pounds of nuts per tree. The trees are guaranteed blight resistant and highly sought by wildlife as a food source. We will closely monitor the trees and keep you informed in future articles.

Again, our thanks to Mr. Bruce Robinson for his time and sharing of his wealth of knowledge and information and to the family for all their hard work in making this possible and to all who attended.

## Empire Farm Days

by Dick Starr

Once again WFL vice chair Dale Schaefer arranged for a "crack crew" of volunteers to monitor the WFL/MFO table at Empire Farm Days in August. Over the three day event a total of 10 new NYFOA members were signed up setting a new record for this event.

Because NYFOA participates in Cornell's Master Forest Owner program we get space in the Cornell building. If it should chance to rain or get windy we're safe and dry. It's also nice because Cornell

has a steady stream of free munchies including corn, ice cream, grape juice, jams, jellies, apples, water and other things I don't recall. Why pack a lunch?

Thanks to this year's volunteers = Harry Dieter, David Deuel, James Houle, Chris Howard, Jim Minor, Pete Muench, Tony Ross, Dale Schaefer, Charles Stackhouse, Dick Starr and Gene Stephens.

If you like to plan ahead, the dates for 2013 are August 6, 7 and 8.

## NY Champion Trees

by Dick Starr

In July I had a conversation with long time NYFOA supporter and WFL member Dave Swanson. He mentioned a large Bur oak "out behind the barn" and wondered if it might be large enough to be considered for champion status. Dave estimates the tree as having a circumference of 25 feet and is at least 80 feet tall. That's a large tree but is it a champion?

This kindled my curiosity so I contacted DEC forester Mark Gooding about NY champion trees. Mark directed me to the DEC website where I learned the NY champion Bur oak is in Livingston County and it garnered 393 points when last measured in 2009. Three measurements are made of a tree and then summed for a final point value. The measurements are circumference in inches at 4.5 feet above ground, height in feet and 1/4 of average crown spread in feet.

The Livingston County Bur oak champion has a circumference of 266 inches (22.2 feet), a height of 100 feet and a crown spread of 27 feet. These numbers total 393 and it's the largest Bur oak known in New York State. If Dave's estimate of his tree is correct, a circumference of 300 inches (25 feet) plus 80 feet tall = 380 points before adding the crown spread. It wouldn't take much crown spread to nudge his tree toward or maybe over the 393 point range.

What now? Not that I question Dave but the tree must be positively identified as Bur oak and not one of the other oak varieties. It must also be measured by someone recognized as a tree professional such as an arborist or forester. I told Dave to measure the tree again and contact Mark if the numbers approach 393. I also told Dave I want to be present if he calls Mark to make a measurement. Wouldn't that be neat?

Measurements of circumference and height can be precisely done with the right tools. Crown spread is a bit more nebulous and causes the most confusion. Crown points are determined by measuring the tree's maximum and minimum crown spread in feet. Two approaches can be used with these numbers but both give the same final value. Choice #1 is add the two numbers, divide by 2 (gives the average) and multiply the result by .25. Choice #2 is add the two numbers and multiply the result by .125. An example using choice #2, a maximum spread of 50 feet + a minimum spread of 35 feet = 85 feet x .125 = 10.6 crown points.

To do some further reading and see a list of the champion trees log on to the DEC website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/5248.html>. I find it easier to enter NY champion trees in my search engine and click on Big Tree Register – NYS DEC. Then select common name order (PDF) for a current list of champion trees.

# Transporting Wood in New York

by Peter Muench

In March 2009, moving firewood in New York State became limited to a fifty mile radius from the source in an effort to control the movement of invasive insects. The regulations were revised in July 2012 to clarify questions for producers, dealers and purchasers. Changes to the definition of “firewood” exempted kiln dried lumber and logs being transported to sawmills or other manufacturers.

My involvement was triggered by a desire to move northern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) from the Town of Lawrence in St. Lawrence County to the Town of Italy in Yates County. Confusion arose since all species of trees were considered firewood including coniferous species and cedar. Cedar is generally not used for firewood and what I wanted to move was four to six inches on the small end and obviously not saw log material. Cedar is not a host species for any of the pests that are the focus of the regulations. Am I in compliance if I move this wood?

I called the local forest ranger who acknowledged I was probably in compliance if I moved the cedar. When I asked if all enforcement personnel would agree he suggested I call the DEC and speak with a forester. I did so and the forester agreed with

the forest ranger and did not anticipate any issues with moving the cedar.

The DEC forester did recommend I call the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets in Syracuse as their Horticultural Inspectors also have enforcement responsibilities. Speaking with Ag and Markets personnel confirmed that my proposed activity was in full compliance with all regulations and I could move the cedar at my convenience without concern.

What I’ve related is an answer to a specific question, not a blanket approval. The regulations do leave situations open to question. For example, if a logger moves saw logs forty nine miles to an individual who decides later to block it up for firewood, can the firewood now be moved another fifty miles? Who owns the liability? What is considered the source in that case?

All state personnel I talked with provided excellent help and steered me where I needed to go. I thank them for their professional assistance. If you find yourself in a situation where regulations generate questions, call the DEC. They are more than happy to discuss your issues, provide answers or refer you to someone who can. Sometimes it’s just good to say hello!

*Peter Muench, a new member of the WFL Steering Committee, retired as a Transmission Superintendent after a 27-year career with the New York Power Authority. Peter lives in Naples, NY.*

# A Book Report

by Dick Starr

*The Man Who Planted Trees* by Jim Robbins, copyright 2012, is about a modern day Johnny Appleseed and Michigan nurseryman named David Milarch. After a life of hard living and intimate familiarity with products of the brewer’s art, he quit cold turkey causing his kidneys and liver to fail. He had a near death experience and while on the “other side” was told he had work to do and must return. It seems the big trees are dying, it’s going to get worse and his assignment is to clone the world’s largest trees. Can a 4000 year old tree be cloned? Some have argued that’s equivalent to asking a 90 year old woman to give birth. Good luck with that.

There’s something about big trees. Maybe it’s our obvious insignificance when standing next to them. Even folks who are not NYFOA members can be in awe of a large tree and it’s been that way for a long time. In Genesis 13:18 of the New International Version we read that the patriarch Abraham, “... moved his tents and went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron....” Abraham is generally assumed to have lived about 3000 B.C. There is evidence that being near trees has a calming effect. Did Abraham know this?

So David Milarch with no funding, no staff and no guidance formed the Champion Tree Project and began his task of cloning the largest specimens of the world’s trees including the 826 species found in the U.S. The assumption is that a very large tree

is a very old tree and has built in mechanisms (genetics) to survive the slings and arrows Mother Nature tosses over time.

While global warming is not endorsed by all, the numbers say that July 2012 was the warmest July on record in the U.S. As I write this in late August some level of drought alert affects 65% of the country and wild fires are rampant in the west. Add to this a variety of invasive insects attacking our trees and it’s easy to believe only the hardy will survive.

Mr. Milarch is betting on the big trees and their obvious superiority as the trees most likely to survive. Because of our past high grading practices of “cut the best and leave the rest”, our current forests are mostly runts that came from parents of inferior genetic stock.

In the U.S. we have cut 90% of the old growth forests found here when the Europeans arrived. Roughly 80% of the remainder is threatened in some way. Can we afford not to support David Milarch’s vision? Maybe it’s luck and not genetics that allows a bristle cone pine to approach 5000 years old but should we take that risk and do nothing?

I’ll have some more nuggets from this book in a future issue. Also, this book will be available as a door prize at the October 30th annual dinner meeting.

## *In Our Woodlot (continued from page 1)*

was alive with seedlings. He states that the conversion to hardwood will be fairly complete including maple, cherry, oak, aspen etc. With the tree tops left on the forest floor, it would make it very difficult for our hungry deer to enjoy the greenery.

However, specific birds will benefit from this area. These include rufous-sided towhees, indigo bunting, common yellow throated warbler, song sparrow, hooded warbler, gray cat bird, and chestnut sided warbler are already present because of the adjacent areas that were clear cut 12 years ago. As that clear cut grows and develops, this new area will encourage

these birds to stay as their needs continue to be met.

We have a plan to establish a road system in and around the area to account for easy access. As with any area that has complete sunlight, we expect some invasive species to try and get a foothold. However, with the access we can monitor the invasives and keep them at bay with loppers and Roundup.

We would say it is a trying process to get low grade trees to harvest but if you keep trying, and have a forester who really cares about the future of the forest, it can be done. Thank you, Mr. Robinson.

## **Oak Regeneration in the Bristol Hills, Part 1**

*by Franz Seischab, Professor Emeritus RIT*

**The following article is in response to questions posed by WFL member Audrey Fernandez. We thank Audrey and professor Seischab for his response.**

**T**he oak regeneration problem in the Eastern Deciduous Forest has been the subject of considerable debate over the last 40 years. In the Bristol Hills, it's not a soil nutrient problem. It comes down to two main factors, one is physiological and the other is the way in which these forests are managed.

Repeated experiments have shown that most of the oak seed is viable. A significant number of the acorns germinate, so it's not a germination problem. Yes, as you suspect, animals consume quite a few of the acorns. What the red squirrels don't get in the tree canopy, the deer and turkey get on the ground. Even so, the seed of other species are also consumed in large numbers by herbivores, yet they seem to reproduce.

The physiological problem that the oaks have is that their seedlings are not shade tolerant. Therefore, they don't survive very well in the understory. The management problem is the result of the way in which we harvest trees in the Bristol Hills. Most loggers selectively cut trees. They don't clear cut and they don't block cut. When selectively cutting a forest, usually the larger trees are removed and the remaining trees are left behind. So larger oaks are removed and smaller trees, mostly red and sugar maples are left

behind. Thus the oaks that could have produced more seed are hauled to the mill.

When a large oak is removed from the forest the first thing that happens is that the surrounding trees grow branches into the canopy space that was once occupied by that oak. So the hole in the canopy is filled in several years. That means that the forest floor is again shaded, a situation not conducive to oak seedling survival. Maples, on the other hand, are shade tolerant. Peter Marks, at Cornell, found some sugar maple seedlings that were 15 years old and still weren't a meter tall (Marks, 1998). The maple seedlings sit there and wait for a canopy opening. Then they have a spurt of growth until the canopy closes again. It takes about five canopy openings before they finally reach the top of the canopy.

In the Bristol Hills, as throughout the Eastern Deciduous Forest, the red maples are doing quite well and are increasing in importance (Abrams, 1998). They reproduce both by seed and by stump sprouting. They also do well in canopy openings created when large oaks are removed or when large oaks die.

**Abrams, M. D., 1998.** The red maple paradox. *Bioscience* 48: 355-364.

**Marks, P. L., 1998.** A case study of sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) as a forest seedling bank species. *Jour. Of the Torrey Bot. Soc.* 125: 287-296.

## Upcoming Events

### Annual Meeting Topic: Shale Gas Recovery in NYS

A Broad Overview of NYS DEC's  
Proposed Approach  
by Kim Sherwood

Much of the discussion about shale gas drilling in NYS has been strongly polarized between environmental and economic perspectives. As a result, it seems many communities are avoiding any discussion of the topic altogether. This presentation provides an overview of how NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) proposed to permit and regulate high-volume hydraulic fracturing (HVHF) and horizontal drilling, as disclosed in the September 2011 revised draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) and draft regulations. The presentation includes information about some of the major differences between traditional vertical drilling that has occurred in the western part of the state, and HVHF horizontal drilling. The presentation includes suggestions about some of the community planning preparations that could be done to be proactive, and provides references to NY and PA Cooperative Extension and NYS DEC websites for additional information.

Kim Sherwood is a hydrologist and watershed planner. Originally from the Finger Lakes area of NYS, he spent about 20 years in the western US. Kim has a B.S. in Forest Resource Management and a M.S. in Forest Hydrology. His career in the West included work for the federal Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service, Weyerhaeuser Company and the City of Seattle. He returned to NYS in 2003 and works as a private consultant to help landowners and municipalities address natural resource concerns. As a member of the Chautauqua County Water Quality Task Force, he has participated on three subcommittee reviews of NYS DEC's proposed protocols and regulations for HVHF horizontal drilling.

### Landowner Liability Workshop

Saturday, 29 September 2012, 9:00 am - Noon  
Yates County Office Building  
417 Liberty Street, Penn Yan, NY  
Cost \$10 per family

Property ownership carries numerous hazards and our "litigation happy" culture makes it prudent to be knowledgeable about this. The Master Forest Owners and CCE of Yates County are offering a workshop to address landowner liability issues. Attorney and NYFOA member David Colligan will address timber and forestry law issues, including posting, trespass and hunting. A DEC Conservation Officer will address their role and authority in enforcing the law. There will be time for questions and answers following the presentations.

For further information: Yates County Cornell Cooperative Extension (315) 536-5123

### SAD Deer

First 3 Weekends in October

The former Seneca Army Depot overlooking Seneca Lake has the world's largest herd of white deer. These are not albino deer but ones that exhibit white hair rather than the traditional brown. Since the Depot was fenced and had restricted access, the white deer flourished. The fencing is still in place protecting this unique finger lakes feature and popular tourist attraction.

Dennis Money is president of Seneca White Deer Inc., a nonprofit organization working to secure the future of the rare herd of white whitetails. Tours will once again be offered this fall on the first three weekends of October. Tickets range from \$8 to \$15. Register at [senecawhitedeer.org](http://senecawhitedeer.org) or by calling (315) 568-4112.

### Hunting Season

This fall's deer hunting season in the Southern Zone starts October 1st and ends December 18th. Specifically, early bow is October 1 – November 16, shotgun is November 17 – December 9 and black powder and late bow are December 10 – December 18. Bear hunting dates coincide with the above BUT the state is divided into three zones. Make sure bear hunting is allowed where you hunt if taking a bruin is on your list. Also, hunting with rifles is allowed in many counties including Cayuga. Gov. Cuomo's signature was too late for including Cayuga in the state's 2012-2013 Hunting and Trapping Guide, available at any licensing agent. Wear orange and stay safe.

### Classifieds

**Tree Tubes for Sale** - Member/Non-Member price: 4' (\$4.35/\$4.85); 4' w/ stake (\$4.90/\$5.40); 5' (\$4.85/\$5.35); 5' w/ stake (\$5.50/\$6.00). Proceeds benefit WFL chapter. (585) 367-2847.

**1947 Ford Tractor 2N (9N-8N)** - Two speed Sherman Transmission, 3 point hitch, belt driven buzz saw. \$2,300 or best offer. Dale Schaefer (585) 367-2849.

**PLEASE NOTE:** SPACE PERMITTING, THE WFL STEERING COMMITTEE ALLOWS MEMBERS TO PLACE FREE CLASSIFIED ADS IN THIS NEWSLETTER PERTAINING TO GOOD STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES. HOWEVER, ADS PRESENTED HERE ARE NOT AN ENDORSEMENT BY WFL.



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# The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner



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Master Forest Owner and WFL NYFOA member John Hammer submitted this trail-cam photo of a fisher on his property this July in Italy, Yates County. For size reference, that's a 6 - 7" beech by its tail. Thanks for sharing, John!

## Mark your Calendar!

- September 22 Seager Woods Walk. Please see our Summer issue for details.
- September 29 Liability Workshop \*
- October 1 – December 18 Hunting Season \*
- First 3 weekends in October - Seneca Army Depot Deer Tours\*
- October 3 WFL Board of Directors meeting \*
- October 30 WFL Annual Dinner Meeting \*
- January 15, 2013 - WFL General Meeting, Canandaigua Cornell Cooperative Extension Office. Topic TBD. See our next (Winter) issue for details.

\* See inside for details