

# The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner



Spring 2015

Volume 29 Number 1

## In Our Woodlot *by Ed Piestrak*

### Removing Forks

During our biennial woods walk, my daughter, Crystal, puts together a DVD of the days activities and we provide a copy to all who request one.

I was looking back to our 2012 woods walk and listening to our forester, Mr. Bruce Robinson talk about a clear cut and newly forested area. He indicated that a new forest will have the majority of trees with forks since that would gather more sunlight and grow much faster than a single stem tree. He recommended getting involved early with the start and eliminate the forked trees in favor of the single stemmed ones.

This reminded me of a project Wanda and I did in 2003 whereby an abandoned field approximately 2 1/2 acres was seeded by nature from nearby adult soft maple trees. Most of the trees were forked and we proceeded to eliminate the forked part with lopers. The project took quite awhile and we always wondered if it was worth the effort. Well it truly was!!! Going back and examining the residual trees, one has a difficult time finding a forked tree. The

*continued next page*

## Timber Framing: Put Your Forest to Work

*Dean Faklis*

Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) generally leads to material that is much too good for firewood in addition to....lots of firewood. In January 2012, at a WFL meeting in Honeoye, we presented some examples of woodland structures that are very DIY-friendly and can make use of your home-grown TSI wood in their construction. Here is one example that borrows from that 2012 talk and that can utilize the higher quality TSI wood from your own forest; a timber-framed outbuilding.

Timber framing, which is a special case of the “post-and-beam” construction method, got its start around 200 BC. Timber framing uses wood joinery, like mortise and tenon, and wooden pegs to tie the structure together. It was a mainstay here in the USA until later in the Industrial Revolution when it was overtaken by stick framing, which could make use of unskilled labor and smaller trees.



*All photos by Julie Faklis*

### The Lift

Amazingly and abruptly, by about 1920, timber framing was dead and forgotten and all of its trade secrets were essentially lost. In the 1970's, the craft was revived and relearned by studying the earlier frames that continued to stand proudly. Thanks to the preservationists, there is now a ton of how-to literature on the subject, including ready-to-build designs. Timber frames can stand for centuries, so why not give it a try on your land?



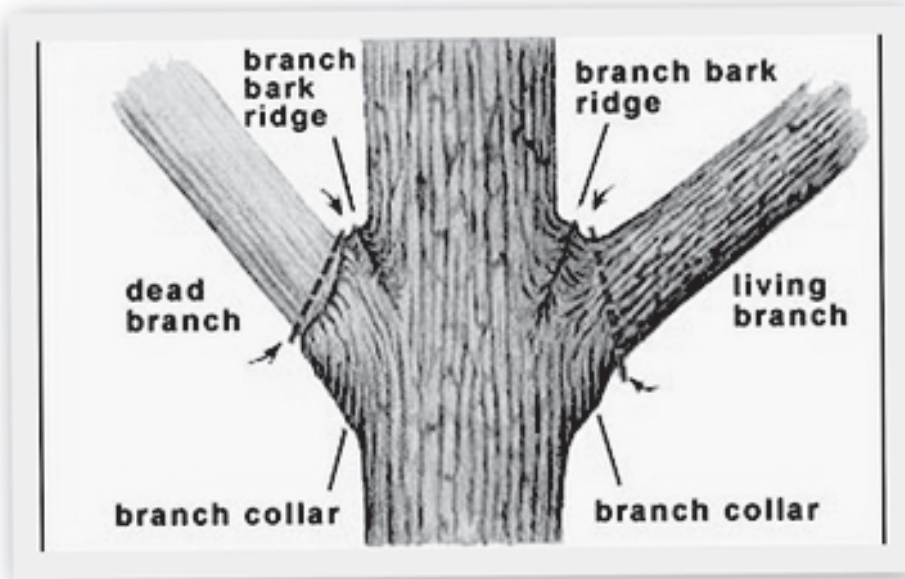
### The Plate

**Timber Framing - continued on page 5**

fork that remained responded very well and they have become single stem trees.

When one recalls all the mistakes we make in the forest, it is comforting to know that we can make a

difference for the positive in at least some cases. Mark one up for the landowner.



## 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 youngsters 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 \$45 and includes: subscriptions to this newsletter; to the bimonthly NYFOA statewide publication, *The New York Forest Owner*; attendance at chapter meetings; and to statewide meetings. Membership at the Contributing level \$50-\$99; Sponsor level \$100-\$249; Benefactor \$250-\$499; and Steward \$500 or more 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 Summer 2015 issue is June 1st.

# Sang

by Dick Starr

A few years ago we were traveling a rural road when up ahead I noticed a large table piled high with books. I slowed as we passed and saw a sign with my favorite 4 letter "F" word = FREE. We were soon immersed in books. Especially noteworthy to me were the first 7 volumes of the Foxfire series. I had been vaguely aware of these before but here were copies in pristine condition. There are 12 volumes total.

What's Foxfire? Eliot Wigginton was fresh out of college in 1966 and took a job teaching English in a rural Georgia high school. He soon learned that his enthusiasm for studying the English language didn't necessarily transfer to his young scholars. How to motivate them? He came up with the idea of having his students interview parents, grandparents and elderly neighbors about southern Appalachian heritage. The interviews would be written up as reports. In the spring of 1967 these papers were combined in the first issue of a quarterly magazine.

The reports captured oral history, craft traditions and other cultural materials. Topics such as how to make moonshine, hog dressing, log cabin building, mountain crafts, snake lore, hunting tales, faith healing, and ginseng gathering names a few of the topics. In 1972 the articles were collected and published in book form which became a national bestseller. The name Foxfire comes from a naturally occurring fungal bioluminescence found in the North Georgia woods.

Those of a homesteading mindset find the Foxfire information has practical appeal and contains useful skills. For example, how many deer hunters have tanned the hide into buckskin? There's a Foxfire piece that will tell you how. Folks in rural Appalachia were often an under educated lot who lived off the land in a subsistence life style. This required skills largely lost in our modern age. Foxfire tries to record and preserve these skills.

Hard currency was often scarce in Appalachia and one reliable source of money was ginseng harvesting. The old timers called it "sang." I suspect because in their southern drawl it was pronounced ginsang. Foxfire Volume 3 devotes 28 pages to ginseng. It apparently came to the attention of Europeans when Father Joseph Lafitau noticed it growing around a Mohawk village near Montreal. Father Lafitau



recognized the similarity to a plant he had seen, or perhaps heard of, in China. By 1717 he had ovens set up and was drying ginseng gathered by native peoples from as far away as Wisconsin. He shipped it to China via France.

In 1784 George Washington wrote, "In passing through the mountains, I met a number of persons and pack horses going over the mountains with ginseng." Sang is still a source of hard cash and forest owners can grow it for profit or pleasure. In 2012 it was selling for \$500 - \$600 per dry pound.



Ginseng is a dweller of the woods usually found growing in the shade, on or near a N/NE slope. A sugar maple grove provides what ginseng likes, a shaded environment, water and calcium. Sugar maple is one of the few trees capable of bringing water to the surface from great depths. In addition, sugar maple leaves have a relatively high concentration of calcium and this is added to the soil during the fall leaf drop.

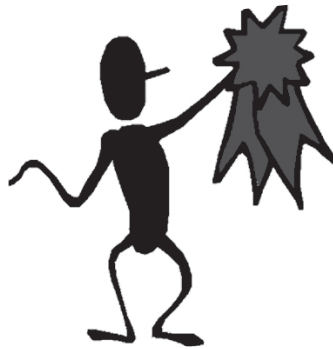
***Learn more about the subject of Ginseng at our May 19th meeting. See page 7 for details.***

# WFL Chapter Service Award 2015

by Dale and Eileen Schaefer

**Ron Reitz** has been a member of the Western Finger Lakes Chapter of NYFOA since approximately 1997 after taking a tour of his woods with MFO Dale Schaefer. Ron lives with his wife Linda on 63 acres in Canadice where he has completed TSI projects over the years; they have two children and three grandchildren. He is an avid snowmobiler, a long-time volunteer at the Walnut Hill Farm Driving Competition and loves spending time with his grandchildren.

Ron graciously accepted the WFL Treasurer's position in 1998 and has kept meticulous records for the chapter since then. In 2002 he took over the WFL tree tube ordering and storage from Harry Dieter and has hosted the Game of Logging for the chapter. Congratulations and thank you Ron for all of your hard work and dedication to the Western Finger Lakes Chapter of NYFOA!



## WFL Gift Membership Campaign

Our Western Finger Lakes chapter of NYFOA did an **outstanding job** in NYFOA's Gift Membership Campaign. We gained 65 new members and our generous members gave 73 memberships (some recipients lived outside the WFL chapter area). Many of these new members were welcomed in our Winter newsletter and we are delighted to welcome more in this.

### A Gift

A gift membership to NYFOA is a wonderful way to introduce a friend or family member to the wonders of the woodland. Contact Liana Gooding at 585 624-3385 ([lgooding@nyfoa.org](mailto:lgooding@nyfoa.org)) for details. Alternatively, register on-line at [www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org).

## Welcome New Members

Scott Aldrich	Corning
Tom Allen	Nanticoke, PA
Marc Ambrosi	Rochester
Dan & Cindy Barben	Honeoye Falls
Doug Barnard	Hornell
Keith Becken	Bath
Bret & Jennifer Burrows	Farmington
Tony Carapella	Campbell
Bill Demings	Lindley
Rick Donofrio	Rochester
Bob Eustace	Walworth
Kathy Bauer and Andy Flynn	Waterloo
Nathan Follett	Rochester
Zach and Ben Groet	Lima
Tomas & Nancy Hamilton	Wolcott
Ann Higbee	Marion
David Hoselton	Pittsford
Rick Lee	Fairport
Bob Lonsberry	Mount Morris
Angelique Morabito	Charlotte, NC
Andrew Morabito	Endicott
David R. Morabito Jr	Seneca Falls
Mt. St. Francis Hermitage	Maine
Harry Pierce	Lindley
Dan Ras	Livonia
Mike Reynolds	Fairport
Tom Schwarzweller	Farmington
John Seniw	Berwick, PA
Jeff & Mary Starr	Palmyra
Starr Property Management	Penfield
Nick & Elsa Steo	Mendon
Jim Tingley	Swain
Mark Van Morrelgen	Hemlock
Ronald VanAcker	Williamson
Tom & Mae Vandenberg	Victor
Doug Whittaker	Endicott
James Yarnell	Stillwater, PA
Joe Zbick	Macedon

# January Meeting: "Archeology in the Woodlands"

by John Holtz

On January 20th, over 30 people attended our Western Finger Lakes winter meeting at Genesee Community College in Lima, NY.

The Speaker was Dr. Ann Morton and her topic was "Archeology in the Woodlands". Through a multi-media presentation Dr Morton touched on the variety of subjects and the range of time her profession encounters. Everything from 19th century bottles and pottery fragments, to Revolutionary War era wheel ruts buried under modern roadways and of course Native American tools and weaponry.

Several members brought artifacts from their personal collections to share and talk about. Many folks had questions and received answers that helped them understand the subject better.

One tool we spent time on was learning to use a government web site available to us all and that is Cultural Resources Information System in the NYS Parks Recreation and Historical Preservation. This is very interesting and fun to "poke around" in.

Dr Morton said that she is available to answer questions, or give advice, if contacted at [amorton@rochester.rr.com](mailto:amorton@rochester.rr.com)

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## *Timber Framing - continued from page 1*

Beside a good design that meets your needs, you'll need a few simple tools: ruler, handsaw, mallet and chisel. However, electricity and power tools (e.g. circular saw and drill) makes life a bit more fun for the busy builder! In addition, access to an experienced sawyer for the production of sawn timbers and lumber can really save time. There are several in our region (I use Old Mill Lumber in Bristol, NY, [www.oldmilllumber.com](http://www.oldmilllumber.com)) and some have portable mills that will saw your logs at your jobsite. Using material grown on your land might be its highest and best use.

To illustrate the process, the accompanying pictures highlight a 16'x12' frame that can be used as a shed, cabin, studio, or sugarhouse. That's 192 sq.ft. on the main floor with a loft space of up to an additional 192 sq.ft. The "tiny house" movement's adherents live full time in structures much smaller than this!

The timber frame consists of three subassemblies



**The Frame**

called "bents," where each bent consists of two 8"x8" posts and a braced 8"x8" crossbeam, which ties the subassembly together (please see the photos). The three bents are then tipped up one at a time and supported on a floor system that consists of 8"x8" sills. The sills are connected using mortise and tenon joints and 4"x6" floor joists that span the 12' dimension. The tops of the posts have long tenons that are capped by mortises in the braced 16' plates. A simple rafter system designed for a 12:12 roof pitch tops it off and allows plenty of headroom. The oak-pegged frame is now complete and just needs to be closed in with your choice of roofing and siding.

All in all, it's certainly work and the timbers are a bit heavy. A fresh 16-foot 8"x8" might weigh 300-400lbs depending on species but there are methods for managing the timbers. Assembling and raising the 16'x12' frame takes about six hours with six able-bodied humans. For bigger structures, we hire a crane for raising. We usually have a party afterwards to celebrate the forest and good friendship.

Give it a try! Drag out some logs, hire a sawyer, and sharpen your chisel. If you want more details on building timber frames, send me a note ([dfaklis@frontiernet.net](mailto:dfaklis@frontiernet.net)). If you simply want a frame, I enjoy building them.

# Firewood

by Dick Starr

We've had a wood burning stove for 35 years mainly because I enjoy being warm during winter's hibernation. A well stocked wood shed is a sign of wealth. Wood is a renewable resource whereas oil, natural gas, propane, coal and electricity are not. Wood is also carbon neutral since the carbon in a tree was removed from the atmosphere when the tree took in carbon dioxide during its lifetime. When we burn wood the carbon it contains recombines with oxygen and is released back to the atmosphere from whence it came. This process causes no increase in greenhouse gases. Can that be said about other heating fuels?

The accompanying chart shows the heat value of some generally available eastern hardwoods and their dry weight per full cord. A full cord is a pile 4' high by 4' wide by 8' long. It's clear from the chart that heavier wood produces more heat per cord. Dry means a moisture content (MC) of 20%.

Note that two cords of Cottonwood at 13.5/cord provides slightly less heat than one cord of Shagbark Hickory at 27.7. To say that another way, twice as much Cottonwood must be placed in a stove to provide the same heat obtained from Hickory. This also implies it takes twice as much tending of a stove

fueled by Cottonwood compared to one eating Hickory.

Being a softwood in the coniferous family, Tamarack is not an eastern hardwood but I included it because my woodshed has a good supply of it. At 20,800,000 BTUs per cord Tamarack beats Black Walnut, Green Ash and Black Cherry for heat potential and that's a good trick. However, Tamarack is very "sparky" and wouldn't be good for an open fireplace where sparks flying into the room would be a no no.

Buying or stock piling wood by the cord is using a measure of volume, that is, how much space the wood takes up. Sometimes firewood is sold by weight. It's interesting to note that all wood species contain about the same BTUs of heat energy per pound. Note the last column in the chart obtained by dividing the dry weight (column 2) by the BTUs of heat energy (column 1). The resulting values are quite similar. If you buy a ton of Basswood you'll get essentially the same heat energy as buying a ton of Osage Orange. However, your pile of Osage Orange will be less than half as large as the Basswood. On the other hand, a cord of Osage Orange will be as large as a cord of Basswood and provide almost 2.5 times as much heat energy.

In the English system heat energy is measured in British Thermal Units (BTUs). One BTU is the heat required to raise one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit. Moisture content has a great deal to do with the available BTUs in firewood. For example, fresh cut Red Oak contains 16.8 million BTUs/cord. After drying to 20% MC it rises to 24 million BTUs/cord for a gain of 7.2 million BTUs. If wet/green wood is added to a fire some of the available heat is used to evaporate the water. This must occur before the wood can begin to burn. Heating water to evaporation does nothing to heat the room and such a fire, if it burns at all, burns cooler. This encourages creosote formation.

Fire wood Chart

<u>Name</u>	<u>BTUs</u> Millions	<u>Dry weight</u> Pounds	<u>BTUs</u> Per pound
Osage Orange	32.9	4730	144
Shagbark Hickory	27.7	4330	156
Black Locust	26.8	3890	145
Apple	25.8	3710	144
Beech	24.0	3760	157
Red Oak	24.0	3760	157
Sugar Maple	24.0	3760	157
White Oak	24.0	3760	157
Tamarack (Larch)	20.8	3320	160
Black Walnut	20.0	3120	156
Green Ash	19.9	2880	145
Black Cherry	19.5	2880	145
Sycamore	19.1	2990	157
Soft Maple	18.1	2900	160
Box Elder	17.9	2797	156
Aspen	14.7	2295	156
Willow	14.3	2240	157
Cottonwood	13.5	2110	156
Basswood (Linden)	13.5	2110	156

## Upcoming Events

### **BOD Meeting, April 22nd, Lima, NY:**

Our next Western Finger Lakes Chapter Board of Directors' meeting will be held Wednesday, April 22nd, at the Lima Hotel at the stop light in Lima. All members or would-be members are invited to attend. The meeting will start at 7 PM and an optional pre-meeting dinner gathering is at 6 PM for those interested.

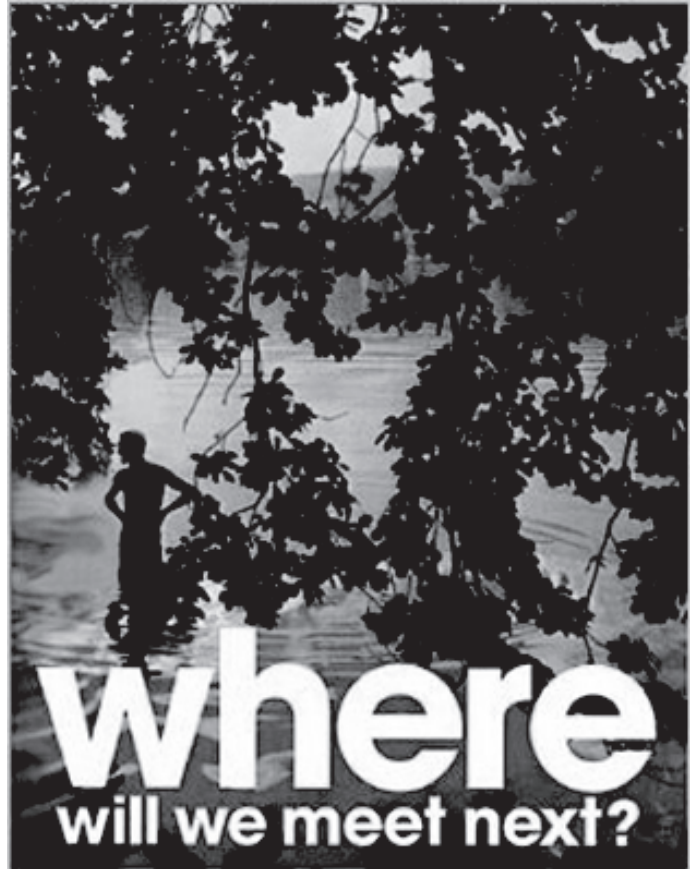
### **WFL Woodswalk: Saturday May 16, 2015 1:00 pm; 5420 Gulick Rd, Town of South Bristol, Ontario County.**

Rick Lee, a new NYFOA member, purchased a 10 acre woodlot two years ago. He is very enthusiastic about learning sustainable forestry and has accomplished several projects in his woodlot so far including clearing an area to plant an orchard. His objectives are to have trees marked for a small timber sale, sell firewood from that TSI sale and plant an orchard. Rick and his son Joe are also avid deer hunters.

5420 Gulick Rd is north of Cummings Nature Center. From Route 20A in Honeoye take East Lake Rd heading south, at the first left turn onto County Rd 33/Pinewood Hill Rd, Pinewood Hill Rd splits off to the right from County Rd 33, at the T-intersection turn right onto Gulick Rd and 5420 will be on the right (west side). Watch for NYFOA signs; the walk will take place rain or shine. There are no rest room facilities.

### **May 19th, General Meeting: Ginseng**

The topic of our May meeting will be ginseng. As of this writing the speaker is to be confirmed. The meeting will start at 7:30 PM at the United Church of Christ, 8758 Main Street (Route 20A), Honeoye. Subscribe to our e-mail list (see "Mark Your Calendar", on the outside cover) for the latest news on this.



## **Annual Meeting Need**

Since it began a decade ago our annual dinner meeting has been held in October and housed at the Monroe County Cornell Cooperative Extension building near Highland Park. Unfortunately, the County has decided to close this facility so we must find a new home for this yearly event. First choice is an intimate setting such as a church or fire hall facility with some AV capabilities. Such are generally available only if one of our members is one of their members. If you know of a suitable place to hold our annual dinner meeting please contact any WFL board member, listing on page 2.

## **Classifieds**

**Tree Tubes for Sale** - Member(/Non-Member) price:  
4' (\$4.50/\$5.00); 4' w/ stake (\$5.50/\$6.00); 5'  
(\$5.00/\$5.50); 5' w/ stake (\$6.50/\$7.00).  
Proceeds benefit WFL chapter. (585) 367-2847.

**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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*Photo Credit: Julie Faklis*

**You, too, can get in on the ground floor.  
See "Timber Framing" on page 1.**

## Mark your Calendar

- April 22 - WFL Board of Director's meeting\*
- May 16th - Woodswalk at Rick Lee's in South Bristol\*
- May 19th - General Meeting: Ginseng\*

\* See inside for details.

**Note:** For event reminders and late-breaking news, subscribe to our email list by sending a blank email to-  
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