



OverSTORY

Timber Research Environmental Education

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Newsletter of the Maine TREE Foundation

It's Never Too Early To Start: Teaching the Next Generation of Loggers



Ed Berry, with his son, Robert Berry both Cetifield Logging Professionals with grandson, Weston Berry, future CLP!

Norridgewock - After watching her grandson attempt to cut down apple trees and nearby utility poles with his toy chainsaw, Roberta Berry knew something had to give. That's when she turned to her husband Ed, a Certified Logging Professional (CLP) since 1996, and asked, "why don't you teach him the correct way to cut down a tree?" If that wasn't enough to move him to teach technique to his four-year-old grandson Weston, she concluded by reminding him, "you are always saying it is better to train someone than to retrain someone with bad habits." The challenge was accepted.

With some plywood and a pre-cut cedar log, Ed assembled the perfect training tree for felling. A log screwed to a base, cuts made in the correct spots, including the "beaver tail" and wedge, and a hinge. As a proponent of logger safety, and preparing the next generation to work in the woods, Weston and Ed's other grandchild, Emerson, get to hear firsthand about being a logger. And now their love for their "Bampa" is paired with learning the proper way to cut down a tree.

During a recent training session, Ed's daughter Mary recorded Weston, decked out in the appropriate safety-gear, carefully following instructions, and shared it with us. While it may be too early for him to enroll in a certification class with CLP, it's never too early to be inspiring

the next generation. And if Weston's skill is any indication, while he will be safe, no tree will be. Ed and his son Robert run R.A. Berry & Son, Norridgewock, Maine.

You can find the brief demonstration by Weston on Facebook at fb.com/clploggers

It is the mission of the CLP program to provide the best possible training and education to people involved in the Maine logging industry. The program is equally committed to recognizing the skill and professionalism of those who meet and exceed the CLP standard. The successful CLP candidate will be prepared to work safely, productively, and in a manner that protects, enhances and sustains the forest. Our program will evolve to reflect changes in the forest products industry and will provide a means for continual professional growth.



Weston Berry demonstrates proper technique as he practices his "beaver tail" cut on the training tree made by his grandfather and Certified Logging Professional Ed Berry

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Mission: The Maine TREE Foundation educates and advocates for the sustainable use of the forest and the ecological, economic and social health of Maine's forest community.

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A Message from the Maine TREE Board President

Dear Maine TREE Foundation Friends and Family,

It has been a busy summer and fall for the Maine TREE Foundation. Henry Whittemore, our executive director for the last 2 and half years retired at the end of July. This spring we concluded our search for Henry's successor by bringing Jonathan LaBonte on board, who became executive director at the beginning of July. Jonathan had the luxury of time to overlap with Henry and take a deep dive on who Maine TREE is, where we want to go, and what our stakeholder community needs from Maine TREE.

One of the needs included the Covid based reformatting of our annual teacher tours that we migrated to a digital platform called Window to the Woods, that you will read about later in this newsletter. These challenging times have the tendency to shine a light on opportunities and needs in our communities and none have been greater than providing additional resources for educators and educational opportunities that can occur outdoors.

Maine TREE remains the preeminent source for forest based environmental education to a host of different audiences and is looking to expand our reach and educate other audiences about the benefits, opportunities, and intricacies of the forests of Maine.

I encourage you to read through our OverSTORY newsletter and consider continuing your generous contributions to the Maine TREE foundation and supporting the future of Maine's Forest communities.

Alexander Ingraham, President
Maine TREE Foundation Board of Directors



A Message from the Executive Director of Maine TREE

(Photo credit: Russ Dillingham/SJ)

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Maine’s economy, something that Maine TREE feels as we raise money for forest-based education and outreach.

Maine CDC guidelines to protect public health led to the cancelation of workshops and trainings by Maine TREE’s sponsored programs like Project Learning Tree (PLT), CLP, and summer camps at the Holt Research Forest.

The explosion at the pulp mill in Jay has had significant impacts on wood markets and livelihoods in the forest community of Jay and throughout Maine. Our timber harvest at the Holt Research Forest in Arrowsic is feeling those shifts in the market.

But challenges are our opportunities to think differently and to innovate.

Maine’s forests present an ideal platform for outdoor education across all subject areas in an era where education is being invited outside by public health guidelines. PLT and other tools within Maine TREE position us to meet that need.

The ability of Maine TREE to pivot our acclaimed Forests of Maine Teachers’ Tours to a virtual format is a demonstration of how capable our staff and dozens of volunteers are to meet this need. We have completed a survey of Maine educators previously trained by Maine TREE to gauge their access this fall to outdoor, forest-based classrooms and the use of PLT tools. Their input will guide our efforts through the end of this year and the duration of 2021.

The forest community, despite current economic conditions, still face a workforce challenge. Young people throughout Maine need to aspire to careers as loggers, wildlife biologists, sawmill workers, foresters, and the dozens of other careers possible due to our state’s forested landscape.

And with changes in land ownership, in particular among small forestland owners, research and outreach that informs on how management decisions can impact local economies and the environment is more important than ever.

If you’re receiving this newsletter, it’s because you are an investor, participant, or stakeholder in our work. Your engagement with these efforts is more important than ever and we hope you’ll consider volunteering, partnering or financially supporting us.

Maine TREE Delivers In-Person PLT Workshop for Bangor YMCA

Hampden - While the challenges surrounding COVID-19 restrictions on gathering kept Maine TREE from hosting Project Learning Tree (PLT) workshops in the spring and early summer, when a call came in from the Bangor YMCA seeing to leverage this tool in support of their school-aged programs, we led with yes.

The Bangor YMCA, like so many other organizations statewide, is working with schools and families to provide a safe place for kids to learn as they head back to school in a new format. For them, this meant re-imagining their after-school programs as an academy that could offer activities linked to learning objectives.

PLT became an ideal tool to train their program staff in utilizing, and the G. Peirce Webber Camp of the Bangor YMCA located in Hampden was the perfect setting for the workshop. And, with the help of volunteer facilitators (Keith Kanoti, Joanne Alex, Anita Smith, Barry Burgason, and Terri Coolong), we trained 40 school-age program staff in PLT.

“Workshops like this at the Bangor Y are a great opportunity to reach a large number of people who will be passing on a love of the woods to young children,” said Terri Coolong, a Maine Forest Service District Forester, and trained Project Learning Tree volunteer. While we are fortunate to have such a dynamic network of educators in Maine that utilize PLT in their learning environments, we see further opportunities to partner with non-formal educators to use PLT.

What’s a non-formal educator? Think anyone or any group providing education outside of a school setting. It could be a scout troop, a land trust, or even a pre-school. If you’re part of an organization that might benefit from training on this program, or know of one, please reach out to us at meplt@mainetree.org



Our PLT facilitator network was excited to support this workshop, and here they are as we wrapped up today’s planning session. Thanks to Keith Kanoti from the University of Maine, Joanne Alex from the Stillwater Montessori School, Barry Burgason (retired wildlife biologist from JM Huber Corp.), and Anita Smith with the China School’s Forest – China, Maine (on Facetime!).

Forests of Maine Teachers' Tour Goes Virtual: Window to the Woods

With public health concerns and CDC restrictions around in-person activities due to COVID-19, Maine TREE needed to innovate to provide the content from our popular Forests of Maine Teachers Tours in a virtual format. The results, our first ever public online course, connected over 50 teachers, land trust staff, and family landowners with an overview of Maine's forest community in a program we called "Window to the Woods."

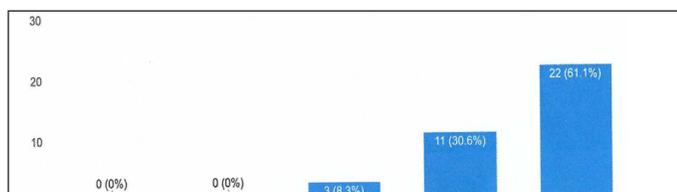


Maine TREE staff and volunteers debrief via Zoom following one of the Window the Woods Course sessions

The six-session course covered a wide array of topics about Maine's forests. Topics included woodland ownership, forest management and harvest systems, wood processing, and careers. For each session, participants reviewed related resources, discussed the provided resources in virtual small groups facilitated by many of our partner educators from Maine Project Learning Tree, and engaged guest experts on the topic.

Window to the Woods would not have been possible without the generous support of our program sponsors and the dedication of Maine TREE's staff and contractors that built the entire three-week course from scratch. In addition, volunteers dedicated over 100 hours to the program. Based on survey feedback, our participants are able to share what they learned about the Maine's forests with over 300 colleagues and more than 1,200 students in our state and beyond. One participant had this to say about the program: "I found the course to be very interesting and enlightening for me about forest management and careers in forestry."

Was this course helpful for you in developing a strong understanding of the forests in your community and the resources available to you?



Feedback from participants demonstrated strong value in the program and is the basis for our effort to develop additional online learning opportunities

(Continued next column)

Due to this pilot course's success, Maine TREE is exploring opportunities to continue offering virtual programming for both educators and the general public. To express interest in participating in a future program or if you have ideas for individual sessions, please contact us at info@mainetree.org.



Maine TREE's Holt Research Forest Sponsors UMaine Interns in 2020



Three of the four interns pose next to an newly installed interpretive panel at Holt Research Forest

Arrowsic - As future stewards of our forests, we wanted to introduce you to them and their backgrounds.

Coming to us from Winslow, Maine where she lives with her two sons, Jasmine Gregory is studying Forest Ecology at the University of Maine in Orono as a non-traditional and commuter student. Through this internship, she is expanding her participation in the Maine woods. Her growing interests are in systems ecology, wetlands, fungi, and biophysical economics. Jasmine is also working toward a Minor in Soil Science and intends to pursue professional licensing as a Soil Scientist.

Our first of two summer interns to hail from New Jersey, Nathaniel Harris is a native of Fanwood and is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Ecology and Environmental Science at UMaine. With his studies, he wants to conduct research and to spread awareness of forest and environmental conservation in an accessible way for the general public.

Born and raised in the Pine Barrens of southern New Jersey, Emily Roth is a rising fourth-year student of forestry and women's, gender, and sexuality studies at UMaine. In past summers, she worked as a forest

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inventory technician at Howland Forest and as a field technician collecting soil samples in Maine's North Woods. At Holt, Emily worked as a botanical technician, surveying the forest's hundreds of plant species.

While the interns we hosted at Holt Research Forest were hired by the University of Maine to conduct this work, they were funded by Maine TREE and a matching grant from the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund.



CLP BANQUET GOING VIRTUAL

The 30th annual banquet of the Certified Logging Professionals (CLP) will be held virtually this year, on Friday December 4th at 4 PM, due to ongoing challenges with in-person events due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board of Directors for CLP is looking forward to the return to an in-person banquet in 2021 and has already secured Jeff's Catering in Brewer for it.

While we will miss the social time and the meal, the virtual banquet still includes a guest speaker to share the latest information on the forest products industry, the presentation of the Logger of the Year Awards, and even a door prize. In order to be eligible to win a prize, you must pre-register and attend the virtual banquet live.

Speaking of Loggers of the Year, as of the printing of this newsletter nominations are still being sought for these awards. Be sure to visit our website at www.clploggers.com to fill out the online form, or print and mail one in by November 20th.

Presenting during the banquet will be Patrick Strauch, Executive Director of the Maine Forest Products Council. He will provide an update on the state of the industry and some of the challenges, and opportunities, in the year ahead. We will be keep the banquet to no more than an hour, so be sure to register at www.clploggers.com and you'll be able to join us in recognizing outstanding loggers and have a chance to win a free chainsaw!

Keeping Maine's Forests Awarded Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant

Keeping Maine's Forests, a sponsored program of Maine TREE has received grant funding from the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund to produce *A User's Guide to Maine's Tree Growth Tax Law*. The intended audience for the *Guide*

is landowners, town assessors and municipal officials, realtors, loggers and foresters who are key stakeholder groups that will directly benefit from the project. They will benefit from the *Guide* by understanding the purpose of the Tree Growth Tax Law and the proper interpretation of its language, understanding alternatives to the Tree Growth Tax Program, addressing commonly asked questions about the program, and an increased appreciation of the law by keeping forests as forests.

The *Guide* will serve as a response to the recommendation from the Review of the Maine Tree Growth Tax Law: Report to the One Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Legislature Committee on Taxation. The goal will be to help forest landowners make decisions about the management and future of their land, find assistance, and understand the costs and benefits of their options. Assessors, realtors, foresters, and loggers will receive clear guidance on how best to serve their clients when addressing land in, or potentially enrolled in, the Tree Growth Tax program. Municipal officials will understand the long-term benefits of the tax program and how it should be implemented.

The *Guide* will describe the Tree Growth Tax Law as it is today in laypersons' language and address common interpretation and implementation questions. The Tree Growth program has been in effect in Maine since 1971, and today covers roughly 11.2 million acres (3.7 million acres in the organized towns, 7.5 million in the unorganized territories). With over half of the state's land area enrolled in the Tree Growth program, it is easy to understand how important it is to the conservation of the many values that rely on forests: wildlife habitat, recreational access, ecological integrity, carbon sequestration, and clean water and air.

Maine TREE is fortunate to have partners from several organizations that will assist in drafting the *Guide* and advising on outreach to stakeholders and its contents. Maine Woodland Owners, one of the most engaged organizations in Maine on the tree growth tax law, will lead the *Guide's* text development. Other advising partners include the Maine Forest Service, Maine Municipal Association, Maine Forest Products Council, Maine Farm Bureau, and the Association of Consulting Foresters.



Interpretive Sign Investment Made at Holt Research Forest



UMaine Research Scientist Jack Witham with one of the interpretive panels

In a partnership with The Nature Conservancy, Maine TREE recently installed a series of interpretive signs at its Holt Research Forest on the coastal island of Arrowsic. The signage program is the continuation of an effort to integrate the educational programming of Maine TREE into the Holt Research Forest, which it acquired in 2014 through a merger with the Holt Woodland Research Foundation.

Maine TREE, as the sponsor of the acclaimed Project Learning Tree program within the state, sees a growing opportunity for the Holt Research Forest as a base of outdoor learning for southern Maine students and families and for owners of forested land to convene to share best practices and learn from the on-going research activities sponsored there.

“While COVID-19 has put a hold on hosting students and groups at the Holt Research Forest this year, Maine TREE continues to invest in improvements to the learning environment there, just as we have pivoted to creating virtual tools to support educators statewide at the same time,” stated Executive Director Jonathan LaBonte.

The four interpretive panels, installed along a footpath from the designated visitor parking area to the outdoor classroom constructed in 2016 by volunteers from Maine’s forest community, highlight the history, ecology, research projects, and forest management activities at Holt Research Forest.



Fall/Winter Timber Harvest at the Holt Research Forest

The Holt Research Forest (HRF) is a lovely 304 acre property in Arrowsic which is owned by the Maine TREE Foundation. The University of Maine has conducted long-term forest ecosystem research here since 1983, under the guidance of research scientist, Jack Witham. In 2014, The Holt Woodlands Research Foundation (former owner of the property) officially merged with Maine TREE.

In addition to research, demonstration forestry is an essential part of the mission of HRF. The most recent commercial timber harvest on the property was conducted at HRF in 1987-88 on about 30 acres. A selection cut/improvement harvest is scheduled for this fall and winter on about 127 acres of the east side of the property, including the research area. About 57 acres of shoreland zones, wetlands, road frontage, and control areas are designated as no-harvest. Don and Will Cole, well-respected logging professionals of Trees LTD, will be doing the harvesting using both a cut-to-length system and a whole-tree chipping operation. The objective of the harvest is to remove low quality, poorly formed, overcrowded, and unhealthy trees to encourage the growth of the remaining overstory trees, and to release established regeneration (young trees of all species that are established in the forest) and to encourage natural establishment of new regeneration.

The harvest will last several months, depending on weather and wood market conditions. Barrie Brusila, consulting forester with Mid-Maine Forestry will be working with the Coles and MTF on this harvest. Both Barrie and Will are members of the Maine TREE Board of Directors. HRF is a certified Tree Farm, meeting the American Tree Farm System’s Standards of Sustainability, and the harvest will be certified to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards.

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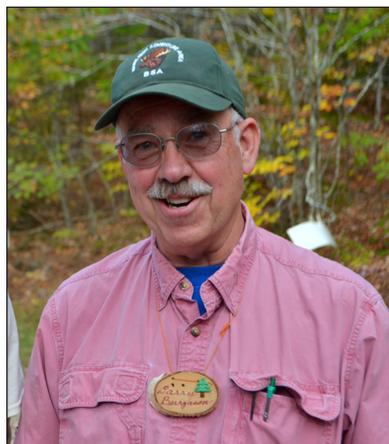
Jack Witham & Barrie Brusila, Maine TREE Board member and co-owner of Mid Maine Forestry in the Holt Research Forest

As Maine TREE plans for research activities after the current harvest, we have been conducting additional outreach about the history of HRF and some of the questions we might seek to answer as the forest responds to the harvest. You can find a newly released webinar highlighting this information by visiting www.mainetree.org and clicking on the NEWS link.

Barry Burgason Awarded the Maine Project Learning Tree Stewardship Award

Every year, Maine TREE selects a partner with Project Learning Tree program to be recognized with the Stewardship Award. This year, Barry Burgason, a retired wildlife biologist from Huber Resources, is being recognized with the honor.

Barry has been actively involved with Maine Project Learning Tree for over 30 years serving in a variety of capacities, including chairing our steering committee over seven years. He has led many PLT professional development workshops across Maine for formal and non-formal educators, and his knowledge of forestry, wildlife biology and resource management connect PLT lessons in meaningful and engaging ways.



Barry Burgason at PLT Workshop

Longtime Maine PLT volunteer facilitator Joanne Alex shared that “Barry has always been an advocate for PLT and has given his time in so many capacities from the steering committee, to the Teacher Tours, to the facilitator trainings and workshops and working with children with guided walks and talks. He is excellent with all ages and brings knowledge, wonder and excitement about PLT and the natural world.”

Our well-known Forests of Maine Teachers Tours have also benefited from Barry’s skills in planning and facilitating the program. His knowledge of forestry resources, natural resource professionals and local points of interest helped set a standard for high-quality professional development allowing educators to gain an in-depth understanding of the working Maine forest.

In 2019, Barry retired from a long and successful career as a Wildlife Biologist for Huber Resources and prior to that the Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for 17 years. In addition to his professional career, Barry is very active in his community. He volunteers for the Penobscot Conservation Association, serves in his local church and is an enthusiastic and steadfast supporter of the Boy Scouts of America and its Maine High Adventure Program. He is always willing to put in the extra time and energy to make his community a better place. Barry resides in Old Town with his wife, Carolyn and together, they have raised two wonderful daughters.

The Maine PLT Stewardship Award recognizes someone who has contributed significantly to the mission of Project Learning Tree and its goal to increase awareness of the forest, its dynamic ecological systems and the human dimensions of forest resource management. Barry exemplifies the PLT motto of “teaching others HOW to think, not WHAT to think” and Maine TREE is proud to recognize his years of dedication and stewardship of the program.

Your generous contribution supports all of our programs and provides opportunities for wide-ranging inquiries in the ultimate outdoor classroom – Maine’s Forests! You can mail in this form or go online to www.mainetree.org. Thank you for your support!

- \$5,000 – King Pine
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 \$1,000 – Sugar Maple
 \$500 – Yellow Birch
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