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 Steve Higgins, Vice President
 Norma Corliss, Rec. Secretary
 Joanne Bond, Exec. Secretary
 Tammie Mulvey, Exec. Treasurer
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A Publication of the Maine Christmas Tree Association

January 2018, Issue #259

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Frank Zmigrodski

The fall 2017 meeting, hosted by Rob and Tammie Mulvey at their Searsmont tree farm, was a great success. Those that attended the fall meeting in September experienced a great weekend highlighted by the presentations of Jim Rockis of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board and, Larry Downey of Downey Nurseries, Hatley, Quebec. Both gentlemen are a wealth of information and stimulated some great conversations. Thanks to the Rob and Tammie for a great weekend. Wishing all a successful sales season and a Merry Christmas.

Frank Zmigrodski
 President

New MCTA Website Up and Running

As you know by now the new MCTA website is up and running and is extremely consumer and member friendly. Many of my new customers have remarked that they located my farm via the website. The MCTA is indebted to Gary Fisher, Dugald Kell and Tom McNeil for their time and energy in working with the website designer and producing a superior product.

MCTA Winter Meeting at Augusta Civic Center

The MCTA Winter Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 9th, 2018, in conjunction with the Maine Agricultural Trades Show at the Augusta Civic Center. The meeting runs from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. Among the presentations, there will be the opportunity to earn two pesticide credits.

Registration Form on Page 3

PLEASE PRE-REGISTER

We have a block of 10 rooms at the Best Western held under our name. The rooms are \$77.00 and you will need to tell them they are with the MCTA when you make your reservations.

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SECRETARY'S CORNER

Joanne Bond

Things went very well in 2017. Our membership is up and the new website is state of the art with most of the bugs worked out. We have a good meeting planned for January with two pesticide credits available. MCTA poplin hats will also be available at the meeting at a cost of \$15.00. Among the many phone calls and email messages I received one was concerning ticks in a Christmas tree. I called Max McCormack and he got a hold of Dave Strubel, Maine State Forest Entomologist, and the following is their conclusion.

Ticks in Christmas trees: "In terms of a harvested tree, especially trees handled in a commercial operation, there is no risk."

National's version, regarding bugs in Christmas trees: "The bottom line is that this story was perpetuated by a bug spray company trying to sell bug spray and ultimately taking away from the hard working Christmas tree farmer and families throughout North America."

The second hot topic was a Christmas tree shortage. National's statement: "Recent price increases are due to a tighter supply of harvestable size Christmas trees. The current tight supply situation results from fewer trees being planted 7 to 10 years ago. This was due to a combination of excess supply at that time and the recession both pushing prices downward, along with some growers exiting the business."

I hope the above was a help for the future if asked these questions. Always feel free to contact me if you have a problem or a better solution for anything.

Take care, Joanne

TREASURER'S REPORT

Tammie Mulvey

\$34,930.37 is our bank balance with a few bills to be paid and a few deposits to be made.



Tammie & Rob Mulvey, hosts of the September 2017 MCTA Meeting

MCTA 2017 WINTER MEETING

Registration Form

Date: January 9, 2018

Location: Augusta Civic Center
76 Community Dr, Augusta, ME

Business/Farm Name _____

Your Name _____ Telephone _____

Business Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

List Additional Attendees' Names: _____

Registration Type	Quantity	Pre-Registration (Deadline Jan. 5th)	On-Site Registration	Extended Amount
MCTA Member	_____	\$ 15.00	\$ 20.00	= _____
Add'l Family Member	_____	\$ 12.00	\$ 15.00	= _____
Non-Member	_____	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	= _____
			Subtotal	\$ _____

Please Pre-register for the Commissioners' Luncheon:

Call Joanne Bond (793-4658) to reserve. Limited seats available.

Lunch _____ @ \$ 20.00 = _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Payment Info: Check# _____ (made out to MCTA)

Mail Completed form and payment to:

Tammie Mulvey, MCTA Treasurer, 1190 Calais Rd, Hodgdon, ME 04730

REGISTRATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY January 5th for Pre-Registration Rates

MCTA 2017 WINTER MEETING

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

AGENDA

- 8:30 – 9:00 Registration / pre-registration recommended
- 9:00 – 9:15 Presidents welcome. Frank Zmigrodski
- 9:15 MCTA business meeting
- Committee reports
- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Treasurers report | Pesticides/ OHC |
| Executive secretary report | Legislative /Agcom |
| Website report | Public relations/ Fryeburg fair |
| NCTA | MCTA scholarship presentation |
| Seed orchard | |
- 11:00 Identification and Control of Invasive Plants in Maine
Nancy Olmstead, Board of Pesticides Control (pesticide credit available)
- 12:00 – 1:30 Lunch
- 1:30 – 2:45 Industry Development and Past Public Support of Balsam Fir Christmas Tree Production and the Potential for Fraser Fir in Northern New England Max MacCormack
- 2:45 – 4:00 Board of Pesticides Control Update
Megan Patterson, Board of Pesticides Control (pesticide credit available)
- 4:00 Adjourn

LOOKING AHEAD – Our Fall 2018 meeting will be hosted by Mingo's Evergreen Products in Calais, Maine on September 15 and 16. Tentative plans are for Saturday's meeting to be held at the Washington County Community College and a tour of the Mingo Christmas Tree Farm, wreath making facility, and cranberry bog to be held on Sunday. The Mingo family is also the founders of "Wreaths for Hope" which raises money for cancer research through the sale of unique ribbon shaped wreaths. Plan to attend.

SEED ORCHARD

Frank Zmigrodski

At the fall meeting Larry Downey reported that 7,000 transplants would be available for sale in the spring of 2018. Those that previously responded to surveys posted in the MCTA newsletter were given the opportunity to purchase these transplants. Larry Downey reports that the first planting in 2015 has resulted in 29,000 seedlings which are mostly 6-12 inches, with many in the 10-12 inch range. The seeds planted in 2016 suffered from poor germination resulting in 7,800 seedlings while the 2017 planting currently has 21,000 surviving seedlings. Larry's goal is to raise 30,000 seedlings, or more annually, to satisfy the anticipated needs of MCTA members. This is a critically important project for the MCTA as our association receives \$.10 for every MCTA tree Downey Nursery sells. All members are encouraged to purchase future planting stock from Downey Nursery when available.

FRYEBURG FAIR

Jim Corliss

The display of trees and wreaths at the Fair was excellent. It would have been even better if there had been more trees, but the overall quality of the trees exhibited was higher than ever. Sales of seedlings and wreath making supplies were good, resulting in a profit of over \$1,100 for the MCTA Scholarship Fund. Next year we hope to have wreath making demonstrations all eight days of the Fair, for the first time. Here are the results of the wreath and tree judging:

FRYEBURG FAIR TREE CONTEST RESULTS**Class I – Balsam Fir**

1. G & S Tree Farm
Reserve Grand Champion
2. Finestkind Tree Farm
Peoples Choice Winner
3. First Frost Farm
4. Trees to Please
5. Finnegan's Fine Firs

Class II – All Other Fir

1. Finestkind Tree Farm
Grand Champion
2. G & S Tree Farm
3. First Frost Farm
4. Tree to Please
5. (no entry)

Class III – Pine

1. Finnegan's Fine Firs
2. Fisher's Tree Farm
3. Gooley's Tree Farm
4. (no entry)
5. (no entry)

Class IV – Spruce

1. Boiling Spring Farm
2. Finnegan's Fine Firs
3. James LaCasce
4. Gooley's Christmas Trees
5. (no entry)

As you can see, by the number of places labeled “No Entry” growers left a total of \$185 in premiums on the table by not bringing a tree to the exhibit.

As virtually all the wreath exhibitors are unknown to MCTA members I have provided the location of all the winners.

FRYBURG FAIR WREATH CONTEST RESULTS**Class I – Decorated**

1. Barbara Martineau, Unity
2. Laurie McKenna, Rumford
3. First Frost Farm, Orland
4. Trees to Please, Norridgewock
5. Maria Kingsbury, Dixmont
6. Christine LaFlamme, Whitefield, NH
7. Shawa Mitchell, Unity

Class II – Undecorated

1. Barbara Martineau, Unity
2. First Frost Farm, Orland
3. Laurie McKenna, Rumford
4. Danny Green, Derby, VT
5. June Brooks, Whitefield, NH
6. Finnegan's Fine Firs, Bethlehem, NH
7. Gloria Brown, Norridgewock

TREES FOR TROOPS

Jim Corliss

Monday morning, November 27, 300 donated trees left Maine bound for Fort Bragg, NC. They were accompanied by 3,000 ornaments, 10 per bag. This year the Christmas Spirit Foundation will pass the 200,000 mark of trees donated nationwide since the project began 10 years ago. Contributors this year were Art & Joe Young, Tom Bond, Ed Buschmann, Wayne Adams, Frank Zmigrodski, Dana Graves, Len Price, Jim LaCasce, Brett Mitchell, Todd Murphy, Jim Corliss, Gary Fisher, Tom McNeil, Rob Mulvey, Duane LaCasce, Doug Kell, David Schaible, Lynn Park, Clem Meserve and Mike Pomroy. The event was covered by the CBS affiliate in Bangor, Channel 5 and a good story produced for the evening news. This is good public relations for all of us who grow trees in Maine and for the real tree industry as a whole. If you have never donated trees and would like to join the folks on the list above, let me know any time. I always have the list with me.

ANNUAL AND DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Norma Corliss

Due to an electronics glitch the formal minutes of the meetings are not available. However here are highlights. The meetings were held at the Municipal Building in Searsmont.

Treasurer Tammie Mulvey reported the MCTA has largely recovered from the difficult financial times of five or

six years ago. It was necessary to cut back on member benefits but we are now on a solid financial footing.

Larry Downey announced that some of our seed orchard seedlings have done so well in the seed bed that if they went to the transplant bed they would become too large. These seedlings will be available in the spring to those growers who had provided an estimate of planting needs for 2018. They will be apportioned out on a percentage basis.

Dugald Kell announced he has been elected to the post of incoming President-Elect at NCTA in January. Then in January 2020 he will become the second New Englander to become NCTA President. Congratulations, Dugald!

The annual meeting next September will be hosted by Alden Mingo and family at their cranberry, blueberry, wreath and Christmas tree operation in Calais.

Our condolences to Wayne Adams, on the passing of his wife, Catherine

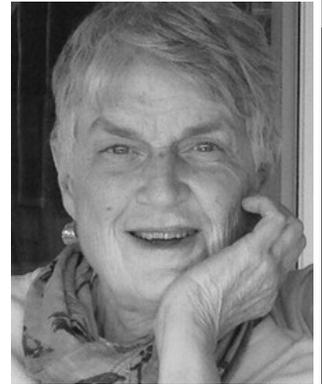
Catherine Jones Adams, 77, a longtime resident of Kennebunkport, died Thursday, November 16, 2017 at Southern Maine Health Center in Biddeford. She thought of herself first as an entrepreneur, spending 19 years building *Catwear*, an apparel company that sold items she designed and had made here in Maine.

She was born in San Antonio, Texas, on July 26, 1940. After graduating from the University of Texas, Austin, she lived several years working in Germany. She later moved to Carmel, California. A blind date led to a lifelong marriage to Wayne Thomas Adams. They lived in Brussels for a few years, and later moved to his family home in Kennebunkport to raise a family. They all survive and miss her: her husband, two daughters, son, the spouses of her children, and three grandchildren.

Catherine was known for her sharp eye for style and for her quick wit. She loved her hens, her weekly duplicate bridge game, and her nightly martini. She was a no-nonsense woman who always perched her glasses on the tip of her nose.

The full obituary for Catherine Jones Adams can be read at:

<http://www.bibbermemorial.com/book-of-memories/3328303/Adams-Catherine/obituary.php>



PESTICIDE NEWS

Frank Zmigrodski

Listed below is a schedule of pesticide training courses provided by the Maine Board of Pesticide Control:

January 8 - 11, 2018 - University of Maryland 2018 Advanced Landscape Plant IPM PHC Short Course. Location: U of MD Plant Sciences Building, 4291 Fieldhouse Dr in College Park, MD 20742. Rooms have been blocked out for attendants at a discounted rate at: Holiday Inn Express 9020 Baltimore Ave College Park, MD 20740. Entire course approved for 20 credits. For agenda and speaker bios visit: <http://landscapeipmphc.weebly.com/program.html> For registration information visit: <http://landscapeipmphc.weebly.com/>

January 9 - 11, 2018 - 77th Annual Maine Agricultural Trades Show, hosted by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry. The Show will be held from January 9-11, 2018 at the Augusta Civic Center. This three-day event will offer multiple opportunities for credits.

January 17 - 19, 2018 - Greenhouse IPM Workshop. Cornerstones of IPM: Don't Let Your Walls Come Tumbling Down! This meeting is approved for 5 credits. There is a \$60 registration fee which includes: a hand lens, handouts, and snacks. Held over three days in three states! The Maine workshop will be at: Longfellow's Greenhouse (AgPlant, Greenhouse) on the Puddledock Road in Manchester on January 17, 2018. IPM Workshop Agenda: <http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/attach.php?id=772859&an=1>

Throughout the year - Safety Works! Maine Department of Labor. Respirator and hazard communication classes approved for credits. For more information, contact Maine DOL 207-623-7900 or toll-free 1-877-SAFE-345 (1-877-723-3345). Schedule on-line: http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=Safetyworks_Classes&v=ListAll

Throughout the year - Food Industry Sanitation Auditors Seminars. Locations all over the US. Information and registration details

- SAJE WANTED -

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Contact:

Brian Fox, Fox Brand Inc.

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bryanfox@nbnet.com.nb.ca

at Food Industry Sanitation Auditors website: <http://www.fisaconsulting.com/Seminars.aspx> or contact Paul Laughlin at 913-782-6399 or info@fisaconsulting.com. Many credits.

Throughout the year - U-Mass Green School, Conferences and Workshop Calendar at this website: <http://extension.umass.edu/landscape/upcoming-events>

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

Social Media a Key Component in 2017 Campaign Success

Marsha Gray, Industry Communications and Program Director, CTPB

Article note: This article was written in mid-December. References to number of video views and consumer reach are based on information available as of December 11.

As all Christmas tree growers can attest, holiday 2017 was quite a push! While growers dealt with supply issues and trucking challenges due to hurricane and other weather issues around the country, the Christmas Tree Promotion Board dove into its second full-scale promotional campaign.

With the long-term goal of increasing demand for fresh-cut Christmas trees, the CTPB continued with the campaign theme; *It's Christmas. Keep it Real*. CTPB staff, along with Promotion Committee Chair, Mark Arkills, took on the role of overseeing and directing campaign components. CTPB once again engaged advertising agency, Concept Farm and bolstered the creative team with the addition of public relations firm, Fleishman Hillard. This team met in the early spring to develop a strategy and budget.

First, the team developed and agreed on an overarching statement and three key messages that would be included in all campaign materials: **A real Christmas tree is a choice you can be proud of.**

- Growing, using, and recycling real Christmas trees is good for the environment.
- Buying real Christmas trees provides business for farmers.
- Selecting a real Christmas tree makes memories for families and friends.

Facebook Focus for Campaign

The team determined that Facebook would be the primary vehicle for sharing new campaign content due to its popularity with consumers and relative familiarity with growers. The campaign chose to feature Christmas tree growers on their own farms, talking about what it means to be a Christmas tree grower. Using humor and sentiment, these attractive videos shared the three key messages and were very well-received by the industry and consumers alike.

"I was totally blown away by the quality of these videos," commented Phil Hunter of The Wreath Works in Port Orchard, Washington. "They totally exceeded my expectations. We shared them on our Facebook page and our customers told us how much they enjoyed them. I am thrilled with the end product!"

Apparently, consumers liked the videos as well. The campaign racked up more than 3 million video views by December 11!

This tremendous reach was made possible in two ways; by growers and industry friends organically sharing the campaign content and through paid engagement. All campaign videos can be viewed on the campaign Facebook page, www.facebook.com/ItsChristmasKeepItReal/

Media Outreach

The campaign reached out to traditional and on-line media sources using three opportunities; our campaign Infographic, Christmas tree lighting ceremonies and a satellite media tour.

- An attractive **Infographic**, dispelling common myths about real Christmas trees, with an accompanying press release was sent to both traditional and on-line media outlets. Early results show strong media interest with 143 million impressions.
- **Christmas Tree Lighting Events** in four cities provided the backdrop for media outreach and interviews with Christmas tree growers at each location. In St. Louis, Sacramento, Portland (OR), and Boston – the campaign team engaged with event goers with a game and prizes, but more importantly secured many media interviews for our grower spokespersons. Total impressions from the interviews and stories generated reached 46 million.
- The **Satellite Media Tour** provided a platform to schedule 31 television and radio interviews in a four-hour window. Guest spokesperson, Joe Washington, was joined by Christmas tree grower Steve VanderWeide in a studio in Atlanta. From that location they shared the three key messages of the campaign with media outlets across the US; creating 10.8 million impressions.

(continued on page 9)

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD (continued)

Television

The campaign included a bit of television into the mix of the promotion with the Hallmark Channel and syndicated television talk show; *The Real*.

The **Hallmark Channel**, with its incredibly popular Christmas movie features, was a natural fit for the campaign. With a very modest budget, the campaign secured a package of 36, 15-second spots on the Hallmark Channel during the *Countdown to Christmas* event, between November 27-December 3. 15-second versions of three popular grower videos were created for this project. According to an article in the Chicago Tribune, Hallmark averaged 1.1 million viewers during prime time during the 2016 holiday season*. Actual reach numbers won't be available for the Hallmark Channel until January of 2018.

The campaign also included a national TV integration with **The Real**, an hour-long daily daytime talk show airing on FOX Television stations and in national syndication, reaching an audience of more than 1.1 million viewers per day. The partnership included two TV segments featuring campaign messaging, which aired on December 1 and December 8. The second segment included a beautiful, fresh tree on the studio set. In addition, the digital and social media extensions included website content, e-mail newsletters and social media on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube, reaching their audience of more than 3 million social followers.

Bloggers and On-line Influencers

As another avenue for the campaign messages, CTPB engaged five, family-focused bloggers with large followings. All five of these influencers were matched with the families featured in our grower videos. In most cases, the bloggers visited the farms on the day the videos were shot; integrating the video shoot and farm experience all in one fun day. Our bloggers wrote about their experiences meeting the grower families and shared their recently acquired Christmas tree farming knowledge; with a focus on the environmental benefits of real Christmas trees. Each blogger then visited the farms at tree harvest time and then shared their tree search experience with their readers. Bloggers were also enlisted to help raise the awareness of the Trees for Troops program, with partial CTPB funding, those stories included real tree messages. Check out one of the blogger posts here: <https://liagriffith.com/our-team-visit-to-the-christmas-tree-farm-video/>

More Results to Come

As exciting as these early reach numbers are, they are just that; early! More complete and conclusive numbers will become available in late January. The Christmas Tree Promotion Board will be making presentations at most state and regional winter meetings during the first three months of 2018. This will include a brief "highlight" video of the campaign, as well as an opportunity for questions with an CTPB staff or board member. The video will also be posted to the CTPB website and growers will be notified when the video is ready to view.

It's Christmas. Keep it Real.

A real Christmas tree is a choice you can be proud of.

Growing, using, and recycling real Christmas trees is good for the environment.

- ✓ For every real Christmas tree harvested, one new tree is planted.
- ✓ Artificial trees are manufactured, real trees are grown.
 - Research shows that the natural tree is much friendlier to the environment when compared to an artificial tree, which has three times the amount of impact on climate change and resource depletion when compared to a real tree.¹
 - Real Christmas trees are biodegradable; they can be recycled or reused for mulch.
 - Most artificial Christmas trees are thrown away seven to ten years after they're purchased and will then sit in a landfill literally for centuries.

Buying real Christmas trees provides business for farmers.

- ✓ Real Christmas Trees are a real crop, farmer-planted and hand-harvested specifically for people to enjoy.
- ✓ 100% of real Christmas trees sold in the U.S. are grown in North America (naturally).

Selecting a real Christmas tree makes memories for families and friends.

- ✓ The hunt for a Christmas tree creates an experience that can't be manufactured.
- ✓ Everything from the scent to the search is an experience that no artificial tree can replace.

¹ *Comparative Life Cycle Assessment of an Artificial Christmas Tree and a Natural Christmas Tree*; Ellipsos, Montreal, Quebec, 2009; pages 6 & 8.

* <http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/tv/ct-hallmark-channel-is-booming-in-the-age-of-trump-20170821-story.html>



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