



Stephen Higgins, President  
 Norma Corliss, Rec. Secretary  
 Joanne Bond, Exec. Secretary  
 Tammie Mulvey, Exec. Treasurer  
 Dugald Kell Jr, Newsletter Editor

Correspondence to: Joanne Bond  
 174 Bond Spring Rd  
 West Newfield, ME 04095

A Publication of the Maine Christmas Tree Association

August 2019, Issue #264

GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Stephen Higgins

Dear MCTA Member,

One question: Why do Christmas trees make such wonderful pets?

--They have a great bark, but wooden bite.

All jokes aside we'll start with the seed orchard. Cone harvest is set to begin in Norridgewock on the weekend of the 31st of August with a bumper seed crop. The seed committee hopes to have the job completed by the end of the weekend with a good showing of volunteers.

I spoke with Larry Downey a short time ago and he said that there will be 12,700 3-2 MCTA transplants going to Maine growers this spring and numbers will increase in the next years.

The MCTA fall meeting will be on the 14th and 15th of September at Joe and Arthur Young's farm in Fayette, Maine. There will be a combination of speakers and technical information, round table discussions, field tours and pesticide credits. Lunch will be put on by the Youngs--it should be a fine meal. Membership numbers are up so we hope to see you all there.

The next MCTA meeting after the fall meeting is in January of 2020 at the Agricultural trade show at the Augusta Civic center in Augusta ME. At the January meeting we hopefully can interest a few members to join the board of directors. There are directors that will have served their terms and their spots need to be filled.

The next exciting event is the Fryeburg fair, held from the 29th of September to the 6th of October. The MCTA has a building at the fair where trees are displayed and judged in many ways to determine the best in each category. The trees are viewed by thousands of fair goers. It is great advertisement. We are always looking to have more trees entered in the contest. I hope to see you there.

How do you turn a Christmas tree into a reindeer? --You put on a Hornament.

Good Shearing,

Stephen Higgins  
 President

**“AG-TOURISM LIMITED LIABILITY” SIGNS AVAILABLE**

\$15 each. Approximately 24” x 24” size, black print on weather proof white plastic sign stock. Available in the Bangor area (contact Len Price at 234-7268), at the September MCTA meeting site, or at the Fryeburg Fair.

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Maine Christmas Tree Association**

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**Director-at-Large, Constitutional**

**Dugald Kell, Jr.**  
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207-546-7989 dugald@kelcoindustries.com

**SECRETARY'S CORNER**

Joanne Bond

I hope this message finds all of you happy and well. Presently membership is maintaining and things are going along pretty smooth. As usual I need counts from the wholesalers ASAP. Been getting a number of calls and some growers are sold out already!! So please get back to me.

Also, please mark your calendar for the January MCTA meetings. The Director's meeting will be Monday night January 13 and the member meeting will be January 14 at the Augusta Civic Center.

Take care,

Joanne  
Executive Secretary

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Tammie Mulvey

Account Name	Beginning Balance	Income	Expenses	Ending Balance
General	\$16,026.95	\$10,321.33	\$(4,679.10)	\$21,669.18
Web Site	\$1,607.50	\$1,710.00	\$0.00	\$3,317.50
Marketing	\$(142.71)	\$637.50	\$(594.00)	\$(99.21)
Seed Orchard	\$11,550.67	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,550.67
Scholarship	\$6,621.13	\$400.00	\$(4,000.00)	\$3,021.13
Meetings	\$4,798.96	\$1,439.28	\$(1,200.64)	\$5,037.60
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$40,462.50</b>	<b>\$14,508.11</b>	<b>\$(10,473.74)</b>	<b>\$44,496.87</b>



2019 NCTA Grand Champion Decorated Wreath  
Gary Hague, Hague's Christmas Trees, Hatfield, PA

## MCTA SUMMER/FALL MEETING September 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Location:**

Moose Hill Farm  
159 Moose Hill Rd  
Fayette, ME 04349

### AGENDA

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Saturday, September 14, 2019

- 8:30 AM Registration opens, coffee and donuts.
- 9:00 AM MCTA President's Welcome / Steve Higgins
- 9:15 AM Speaker - TBD
- 9:45 AM Speaker - TBD (possibly one pesticide credit)
- 10:45 AM MCTA Seed Production Update / Downey Nursery / Grower Forum
- 12:00 PM Lunch
- 1:00 PM MCTA Annual Meeting
- 2:30 PM Break
- 2:45 PM Speaker - TBD (possibly one pesticide credit)
- 3:45 PM Meeting Adjourned

Sunday, September 15, 2019

- 8:30 AM Registration opens, Coffee and Donuts
- 9:00 AM MCTA President's Welcome / Steve Higgins
- 9:15 AM Young's Farm History and Tours
- 11:30 AM Lunch
- 12:30 PM Cracker Barrel Session
- 1:30 PM MCTA Director's Meeting
- 3:30 PM Meeting ends

\*\* Lunches provided by the Youngs

<p>Hardy reliable Christmas Tree planting stock.</p> <p>We grow Balsam, Fraser, Fraser x Balsam, Meyer and others.</p> <p>Call or e-mail for our current price list. 506-325-2701 (Woodstock, NB) brianfox@nbnet.nb.ca</p>		<p><i>Fox Brand Inc.</i> <i>PO Box 4278</i> <i>Woodstock, NB</i> <i>E7M 6B7</i></p> <p><i>PO Box 603</i> <i>Houlton, ME 04750</i> <i>Brian Fox, President</i></p>
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**CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD**

Jim Corliss

The Promotion Board met in Scranton, PA, on Thursday, August 8th. There isn't time or space here to write about all the activities in which the Board is engaged, but I'd like to mention a few. First, there was a feeling of great optimism now that the referendum has passed and we know we have a full seven years to work for the future of the real tree industry.

I think the item of most interest to us here in Maine is research. The research committee has an immense challenge to make sure projects are allocated in such a way that there will be no perception that any species or section of the country is being favored. Perhaps the project of most interest to us here in Maine is entitled, "Effectiveness of Pre-harvest Application of 1-MCP in Reducing Needle Loss on Cut Christmas Trees." I will quote from part of the proposal: "Evaluate the effect of pre-harvest application of Harvista (1-MCP) in reducing ethylene-induced needle loss on Douglas fir, Canaan fir and Balsam fir. Industry surveys have shown that messiness/needle loss is one of the top reasons consumers cite for dissatisfaction with fresh Christmas trees. Research has shown that there are a number of factors which predispose cut trees to shed needles. Recent research has shown that prolonged exposure of cut trees to ethylene has the potential to significantly accelerate post-harvest abscission of needles. ...If effective, this would provide growers with a powerful tool to improve the quality of trees and consumer satisfaction with the use of real trees."

This is one of ten projects being funded by the Promotion Board within a budget of \$200,000. Another project, also of potential interest in Maine, is "Managing cone formation in Abies Christmas tree species."

# **FOR SALE**

## **Kelco TP300 Tree Planter**

**with 6 ft and 8 ft spacer attachments**

This unit is in good condition, shed kept. Full set of drive shoe spacers inc. Plant 10,000 trees in one day with one tractor operator and three ground crew. Located in Brownfield, Maine. Photos upon request.

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**Contact: [Simonton@fairpoint.net](mailto:Simonton@fairpoint.net), 207-935-6026**

**Maine Christmas Tree Association  
2019 Summer/Fall Meeting**

**Pre-Registration Form**

Meeting Dates: September 14 & 15, 2019

**Location: Moose Hill Farm / 159 Moose Hill Rd / Fayette, ME 04349**

Farm/Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

List additional attendee names: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pre-Registration Deadline: Form must be received by September 9, 2019**

Registration Type	Quantity	Pre-registration (before Sept 12)	On-Site Registration	Extended Amount
One Day Only (circle one: Sat / Sun )		\$10.00	\$15.00	\$
Both Days		\$20.00	\$30.00	\$

Please Pre-register for meals				
Meals: Saturday Lunch		\$15.00		\$
Meals: Sunday Lunch		\$15.00		\$

Total Enclosed (make checks payable to MCTA)				\$
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Mail completed form & payment (make checks payable to MCTA) to:

Tammi Mulvey (ph. 532-4769)  
MCTA Exec. Treasurer  
1190 Calais Rd  
Hodgdon, ME 04730

## TREES FOR TROOPS

Jim Corliss

As the new owner of Piper Mountain and a career Navy officer, Larry "Mac" McCullen is fully on board with the Trees for Troops program. Piper Mountain will continue to be the drop off point for growers and the FedEx pickup location. For the time being, I will continue to be the person coordinating for the 300 trees Maine commits every year to the program, however I am certainly open to being replaced. As of today I have 116 trees promised, with 184 to go. I always have my book with me, so don't hesitate to send me an email (jmc52536@gmail) or call 862-0065.

## FRYEBURG FAIR

Jim Corliss

This year the Fair begins Sunday, September 29th. Tree and wreaths must be in the exhibit area by noon on Saturday the 28th so that judging may begin. I am unable to convey trees from central Maine because the pickup belongs to the farm and I no longer have one. Len Price will be going down Friday evening (the 27th) so call him to make arrangements for a tree (cell 659-2058). I can still take wreaths (preferably boxed), if they reach us by 9AM on Friday.

Norma and I will be there the full eight days. We no longer use the bunkroom, so it is available most nights if someone would like to come in and help sell seedlings and generally enjoy the Fair. I'm maintaining a list of available days and nights and most are open right now. I can get passes for you right up until the fall meeting but no later. We have plenty of chairs and the porch is a great place to rest from travels around the Fair. The Bonds, Fishers and Bardens have been faithful helpers for years and others have helped from time to time. Please join us.

## SEED ORCHARD

Mike Seaman

Visited the Norridgewock seed orchard 8/7 to assess the opportunity for a cone harvest. There are a fair amount of cones and the young trees also have a fair amount of cones. I would like to schedule a cone harvest and work day for 8/31 starting at 7am. If we get enough help this task should only take one day.

After talking with Todd and from his observations of the cones in his plantation still being green, we pushed things out the end of August to permit the cones to fully ripen. Todd Murphy is going in to mow the seed orchard and will clear the road. Todd will also bring his skid steer to remove the blowdowns and dead trees, cost for mowing and skid steer \$450.00. I will order two bundles of 10 burlap bags, rubber gloves and rent the 40 foot man lift (approx. cost \$400) for the 8/31 cone harvest. I will be bring four saw horses and two pieces of plywood for work tables. If we can get two more work tables that would be great. The plan is to top trees and clean the cones off the tops on work tables. The only item that still requires closure is drying the cones, transporting and storage. After the cones have been dried and cleaned, the seed will be stored in the freezers at Kelco.

Here are several details to be considered:

1. There are several dead trees and a couple blowdowns that need to be removed.
2. I do not have any means to handle the cones so will need to get someone who has the capacity to handle the cones/top.
3. In the past harvest a man-lift was used to pick the cones off the trees and they were bagged in burlap bags.
4. We can top the trees then pick the cones off the tops.
5. When Duane LaCasce harvested 2-3 years ago, he waited until the majority of the cones were ripe

(ripe cones will crumble in your hands without any effort). The remaining small percentage of cones (not ripe) were left intact on the harvested tops, which were stood up in a dry area with good air circulation until the cones would easily crumble in your hand. If we choose to do that this time, then we need a place to let the cones dry. Timing, as well as how the cones and or seed is handled during and after the harvest is critical for good germination potential.

6. We may need a tractor to haul the dead trees out.

7. There are a few trees across the access road that need to be removed to get into the orchard.

## NCTA DIRECTORS REPORT

Dugald Kell, Jr

On August 8th I traveled to Scranton, PA, for meetings of the National Christmas Tree Association (NCTA) Executive Committee and Board of Directors. My term as "President-elect" will end on January 1st and I will advance to the position of President of NCTA. This will be a two-year term.

NCTA has a smaller membership than it did five years ago, but is on solid financial footing and able to maintain its core programs. These include legislative contact in Washington DC, monitoring fire codes and regulations, performing "voice of the industry" activities by fielding calls and emails from the media and the public during the Christmas season, and providing the White House Christmas Tree.

The process for selecting the White House Christmas Tree begins with the bi-annual National Tree & Wreath contest. On August 9th, the day after the meetings I attended, I was part of the NCTA tree contest committee that conducted the contest at the Pennsylvania Christmas Tree Growers Association Summer Meeting. The meeting was held at Roba Family Farms in North Abington Township, PA, and the tree contest was held in a large tent on that site. There were 18 growers who entered trees in the contest, each vying to be selected as one of two Grand Champions. The winners were Larry Snyder of Mahantongo Valley Farms (PA), and Dan Taylor and Bryan Holler of Dan and Bryan Trees (WV). The Grand Champion growers earned the honor of providing the tree to the White House for 2019 (Larry Snyder) and 2020 (Dan Taylor and Bryan Holler). Two other growers were awarded as Reserve Champions, with the honor of providing the tree for the Vice President's residence for 2019 and 2020. NCTA also held a wreath contest, with decorated and undecorated categories. The Grand Champion winner for the decorated wreath category can be seen on page 2. The next NCTA tree and wreath contests will be in 2021.

Above, I mentioned the "voice of the industry" activities of NCTA during the Christmas season and at other times of the year, and I would like you to take notice of the huge importance of this function. With upwards of 4,000 farms and businesses that grow and sell Christmas trees or provide related services, it is essential to our industry to have NCTA as this central point for providing information to the media and the public. NCTA represents Christmas trees and tree farming in a measured, well thought out, and accurate manner. It is especially important during our busy November and December months because we individuals are busy running our businesses and because that is when the media and public are requesting information. Sometimes an issue is raised that has the potential to cast Christmas trees in an unfavorable light. The NCTA staff and the seasonal spokesperson, who is hired by NCTA only during the busy months, respond quickly and with key facts and information that steer the story toward a balanced report less detrimental to tree growers as a whole. We all know how "bad news" can get blown out of proportion. Providing information and resources while the story is being developed has a much better effect than damage control after the fact.

This "voice of the industry" function can be carried out only by a central and responsive entity. The National Christmas Tree Association is that entity, and it exists by way of its membership. Christmas trees are central to my business and to my means of income. That is why I am a member of NCTA and take an active role in helping it thrive. That is also why you should become a member of NCTA. Got Christmas trees? Get real and be a member!



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