



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

August 2018, Issue #261

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Frank Zmigrodski

Time marches on and we are just a few weeks away from our Summer meeting in Calais, Maine on September 15 and 16. Your Vice President, Steve Higgins, has been busy scheduling guest speakers and arranging the itinerary, for Saturday 9/15, and planning the tour of the Mingo tree farm, cranberry bog, and wreath making facility, on Sunday 9/16. So plan to attend, head down east, and meet in Calais.

For the third straight summer I am watching the sky, and the local weather forecasts, in hopes of getting relief from another dry, dusty, summer. While some areas of the state have been fortunate to receive abundant precipitation in the form of thunderstorms, my farm here in Kennebec is once again dry and dusty in August. Monthly rainfall totals are difficult to glean from the numerous weather websites but my wilting pumpkin plants indicate to me that this, and last year's, Christmas tree transplants are in jeopardy. Fortunate are the nine Christmas tree farms in Maine that the USDA reports as having irrigation systems.

Frank Zmigrodski
President

Summer Meeting on September 15 and 16 hosted by Mingo's

This year's summer meeting will be hosted by the Mingo family in Calais, Maine. The meeting will be held September 15 and 16. Saturday's meeting will be held at the Washington County Community College. Sunday we will be at Mingo's with tours of their wreath making facility, tree farm and cranberry bog. Plan to attend. See page 3 for the program agenda and page 5 for the registration form.

"LIMITED LIABILITY" AGRI-TOURISM SIGNS AVAILABLE

Len Price

"Limited Liability" agri-tourism activities signs are again available. Cost is \$15 each. Approximately 24" x 24" size, black print on weather proof white plastic sign stock. Currently are in Newburgh and can be picked up there or reserved for delivery to a MCTA meeting site. Contact Len Price at 234-7268.

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667 Morgan Bay Rd Surry, ME 04684
207-546-7989 dugald@kelcoindustries.com

SECRETARY'S CORNER

Joanne Bond

I hope you all had a good Summer so far. The humidity and heat are not our thing but one thing is for sure, the tourist are all happy! We like it when we get a lot of rain for our trees but when we go anywhere we have to listen to them all complain!

As far as the MCTA goes, we are up in membership. We are gaining a few more every year since our low point a couple of years ago. Membership is now at 119 and gaining. I have at least two people signing up at the Fall meeting next month and hopefully we will get some more. Plus our bottom line is going up as well, which is a good news. There are a number of other types of associations and organizations not doing as well as we are, which is sad.

On another note we got together this Spring and bagged up over 6,000 ornaments at the Corliss' farm, which takes care of two years. Thank you to all who helped by bagging, etc. (Jim & Norma, Regina, Clem & Mary, Gary & Melba, Tom and my daughter Ashley), and made or donated ornaments. It was greatly appreciated.

Just a reminder to the wholesalers to get your availability of trees to me. Calls are starting to come in, especially for Fraser Fir.

Always feel free to give me a call. See you next month in Calais.

Take care,

Joanne Bond
Executive Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

Tammie Mulvey

General Membership:

As of 08/14/18 we have 102 paid members along with two lifetime members. We have 57 members that have paid for our website which is an increase of 14 from 2017.

Bank Account:

Beginning balance 2018:	\$37,723.23
Income for 2018:	\$11,838.63
Expenses for 2018:	\$8,880.08
Transfer to Jim Rockus Scholarship fund:	\$400.00
That leaves us a balance of:	\$41,081.78

QUICK TREE FACTS:

There are close to 350 million Real Christmas Trees currently growing on Christmas Tree farms in the U.S. alone, all planted by farmers. There are about 350,000 acres in production for growing Christmas Trees in the U.S., much of it preserving green space.

[source: NCTA website-> Education-> Quick Tree Facts]

MCTA SUMMER/FALL MEETING

September 15th and 16th, 2018

Locations:

Washington County Community College 1 College Drive Calais, ME 04619	-and-	Mingo's Products Shattuck Road, Calais, ME (Tree Farm, Wreath Shop, Cranberry Bog)
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AGENDA

Saturday, September 15, 2018

8:30AM Registration opens.
Coffee and doughnuts, etc.

9:00AM MCTA President's Welcome / Frank Zmigrodski

9:15AM MCTA Website / Dugald Kell

10:00AM Applications of Unmanned Systems for Christmas Trees / Mark Wallhead, University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service (1 pesticide credit)

11:00AM MCTA Seed Production Update / Jim Downey

Grower Forum

12:00PM Lunch

1:00PM MCTA Annual Meeting

2:30PM Break

2:45PM Identification and Management of Needle Cast Diseases / Alicyn Smart, University of Maine Extension Pathology Lab (1 pesticide credit)

3:45PM Meeting adjourned

Sunday, September 16, 2018

8:30AM Registration opens.
Coffee and doughnuts, etc.

9:00AM MCTA President's Welcome / Frank Zmigrodski

9:15AM Farm history/ equipment display

10:00AM Tour of wreath building

11:30AM Lunch

12:30PM Farm tour, Christmas trees and cranberry bog

3:00PM MCTA Directors' Meeting

4:30PM Meeting ends

FOOD

Mornings Donuts & Muffins

Lunches Saturday: Catered by Crumbs Cafe & Bake Shoppe
Sunday: Lunch arrangements to be made by Arthur Mingo at his farm

CHECKOFF PROGRAM & CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

Jim Corliss

I imagine that by now you have heard that the referendum passed by a very close vote. 51% yes and 49% no. A positive vote is supposed to keep any commodity program in place for seven years before another vote but the Secretary of Agriculture has ruled that it was so close that we have to do it again next year. Back when USDA conducted the comment period, 70% were in favor and 30% against. So the vote is puzzling. More than 300 (about a quarter) of the ballots were not returned. Perhaps these were folks who thought it would pass easily so didn't bother to vote. Were you one? I hope no one in Maine was turned by that old fellow from Virginia who used a barrage of half truths, innuendo and questionable math to try to convince people to vote no. Thanks to the Maine Directors who voted in April to support the program.

MCTA SEEDLING UPDATE

Frank Zmigrodski

Larry Downey, of Downey Nurseries, reports an excellent spring planting of MCTA seeds with a germination rate double that of last year's planting. Larry further reports that there will be 10,000 3-0 seedlings available next spring. Following are some photos from the MCTA seedlings at Downey's:



Our seed orchards and seedling plantings are critically important projects 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.

**Maine Christmas Tree Association
2018 Summer/Fall Meeting**

Pre-Registration Form

Meeting Dates: September 15 & 16, 2018

Location: Washington County Community College
1 College Drive, Calais, ME 04619

Business Name: _____

Your Name: _____

Business Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Business Telephone: _____

List additional attendee names: _____

Pre-Registration Deadline: Form must be received by September 12, 2018

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		No cost (provided by Art Mingo)		\$

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

LEGISLATIVE TOUR

Frank Zmigrodski

**MAINE LEGISLATORS AND LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES
TOUR OLD FARM CHRISTMAS TREE PLACE**

Members of the Maine State Legislature, and candidates for the legislature, conducted their annual tour of Maine farms and businesses that provide Maine grown and made products, showcasing the Portland and Cape Elizabeth area on July 31. Approximately 45 guests participated in the tour. The tour is sponsored by the Agricultural Council of Maine (AGCOM) and included tours of a craft brewery, a mussel farm, a produce farm and an apple orchard.

Jay Cox, owner of Old Farm Christmas Tree Place, Cape Elizabeth, conducted a tour of his Christmas plantation, explaining the planting, nurturing, and harvesting process. Some of the guests are regular customers at Jay's farm and were delighted to be back on the farm and re-unit with Jay prior to the holiday season. Tour guests were provided with a "fact and statistic sheet" which provided data about Christmas tree farming in Maine. The tour, which lasted one hour, concluded with a lively question and answer session.

**MONSANTO LAWSUIT**

Frank Zmigrodski

MONSANTO ORDERED TO PAY 289 MILLION IN ROUNDUP CANCER TRIAL

A California jury recently found Monsanto liable in a lawsuit filed by man who alleged the company's glyphosate-based weed-killers, including Roundup, caused his cancer, and ordered the company to pay \$289 million in damages. The case of a school groundskeeper was the first lawsuit to go to trial alleging that glyphosate causes cancer. Monsanto faces more than 5,000 similar lawsuits. Monsanto responded by saying it would appeal the verdict and added that more than 800 scientific studies and reviews support the fact that glyphosate does not cause cancer.

FRYEBURG FAIR

Jim Corliss

Someone at the April meeting of the MCTA Directors thought it would be a good idea to put the criteria for judging the wreaths and trees on the MCTA website. I agree and those pages should be there or will be shortly. I hope this will answer some questions and make it easier for people to exhibit. If you bring a tree or wreath to Fryeburg, it must be there by noon on Saturday, September 29. The trees and wreaths I usually take can still be brought here to the farm and dropped off by noon on the 28th. Len Price will be taking them to Fryeburg as we have to go early. This will be the first year I will be able to stay all week and do wreath demos every day.

APRIL 2018 DIRECTORS MEETING

Norma Corliss

The MCTA Directors met for the Spring meeting at the home of Gary and Melba Fisher in Belfast on April 6, 2018. Directors and officers attending were Frank Zmigrodski, Tom and Joanne Bond, Norma Corliss, Brett Mitchell, Rob Mulvey, Lee Skillins, Doug Kell and Dugald Kell. Guests were Regina Mitchell, Len Price, Gary and Melba Fisher.

The meeting was called to order at 6:32PM. Previous meeting minutes were approved. Joanne passed around the agenda for the meeting. It was reported that former president Dave Rice has had a recurrence of his cancer and it is very serious. Norma Corliss told the group that Jim was recovering from a knee replacement and would be released from a rehab facility the next day.

Joanne passed out the new membership list, which now shows 117 members. Doug Kell was nominated for a lifetime membership. Motion passed. Joanne expressed concern that she was not getting adequate information on new members. Some were sending money but not providing any emails, mailing addresses or phone numbers.

In the absence of Treasurer Tammie Mulvey, Rob gave a verbal treasurers report which was approved.

Tom McNeil suggested it would be a good idea to put entry info and judging criteria for both trees and wreaths for the Fryeburg Fair on the MC TA website.

Dugald Kell reported that NCTA is planning on tagging onto the Pennsylvania State meeting in 2019. Membership is stabilizing in the 300 to 400 range after many years of decline. The Harris poll conducted by NCTA after Christmas seemed to indicate that 27 million real trees were purchased by consumers. 17 million new artificial trees were sold.

Lee Skillins said he didn't see OHC being very active in the near term, perhaps next fall it will revive under new leadership.

Motion was made for the MCTA to support the Christmas Tree Promotion Board and the check off program. Motion passed.

Len Price said the Scholarship Committee has had one application, however the applicant has not provided all the required information.

Motion was made to purchase an ad in Downeast Magazine and allocate \$2,000 for this purpose. Motion failed for lack of a second.

Len Price spoke about the twilight meetings which the Massachusetts Association sponsors in the summer. There was some discussion whether this would be effective in Maine. Motion was made to make \$200 available to plan two twilight meetings. Motion passed.

Motion was made to donate \$100 to Maine Ag in the Classroom. Motion passed.

In the absence of Vice President Steve Higgins or anyone from the meeting planning committee there was no information on the fall meeting in September.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10PM with thanks to the Fishers.

Norma Corliss
Recording Secretary

TREES FOR TROOPS

Jim and Norma Corliss

As far as I know right now, FedEx is on board to transport trees again this year. I have already had promises of a pretty good number but need more to fill out our 300 tree commitment from Maine. I'll have my list with me at the fall meeting and there are still empty spaces in the book.

At 10:00AM on June 6, 2018, Melba and Gary Fisher, Joanne and Tom Bond, their daughter Ashley, Clem and Merilee Meserve, Regina Mitchell, and Norma and Jim Corliss met to put together 600 ornament bags. These bags are for the years 2018 and 2019. We finished at 1:30PM and then gathered around the kitchen table for lunch and conversation.

Many thanks to all who have helped in any way with this project, but especially to Melba who makes a good percentage of the ornaments. A two year supply was made because Piper Mountain has been our gathering place for this project and uncertainty reigns as to what the new owner will do.

AGCOM REPORT

Gary Fisher

AgCom news items are posted regularly to the MCTA website. Please check periodically to catch up on the latest posts. Following are excerpts from a few recent AgCom news items:

MEET THE CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR ON AUGUST 28, 2018

Hear each of the gubernatorial candidates speak about the issues impacting Maine's agricultural sector, and engage in a question & answer session about some of the challenges facing Maine farmers and the potential solutions that would be proposed by the next governor. Each candidate has a one-hour dedicated time slot to talk with farmers and those working in Maine agriculture. Candidates are allotted 10 minutes of opening remarks and 5 minutes of closing remarks. A moderator will keep track of time, and facilitate questions from the audience. The candidates will appear in the following order: 12:00pm Shawn Moody (R), 1:00pm Terry Hayes (I), 2:00pm Alan Caron (I), 3:00pm Janet Mills (D). This forum will be held Tuesday, August 28th, at the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine L.L. Bean Conference Room, 205 Church Hill Road, Augusta, ME.

the full news item can be read at:

<http://www.mainechristmastree.com/meet-the-candidates-for-governor-august-28-2018/>

PUBLIC'S HELP NEEDED TO FIND ASIAN LONGHORNED BEETLES

August Is Tree Check Month: Public's Help Needed to Find the Asian Longhorned Beetle

The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is reminding citizens that August is Tree Check Month. This is the best time of year to check your trees for signs of the Asian longhorned beetle (ALB), a destructive invasive pest that kills trees. The Asian longhorned beetle has the potential to destroy millions of acres of America's hardwoods, including maple, birch, elm, willow, ash and poplar trees. Unfortunately, there is currently no cure to save infested trees. Infested trees need to be removed to keep the beetle from spreading to nearby trees.

The beetle is slow to spread on its own during the early stages of an infestation, so early detection and reporting is critical to containing it. People in areas quarantined for ALB can also help by not moving firewood, which can transport the beetle to new areas. The beetle has distinctive markings that are easy to recognize:

Long antennae with black and white bands, longer than the insect's body.

A shiny, jet-black body, about 1" to 1 ½" long, with white spots.

Six legs with possible bluish-colored legs and feet.

Signs of infestation include:

Round exit holes, about the size of a dime or smaller, in tree trunks and branches.

Shallow oval or round scars in the bark, where the adult beetle has chewed an egg site.

Sawdust-like material, called frass, on the ground around the tree or in the branches.

Dead branches or limbs falling from an otherwise healthy-looking tree.

After seeing signs of the beetle, make note of what was found and where. Take a photo, if possible. Try to capture the insect by placing it in a container and freezing it. Doing so will preserve it for easier identification. Report findings by calling 1-866-702-9938 or completing an online form at www.AsianLonghornedBeetle.com.

the full news item can be read at:

<http://www.mainechristmastree.com/publics-help-needed-to-find-asian-longhorned-beetles/>

EMERGENCY ORDER RESTRICTING MOVEMENT OF ASH PRODUCTS & FIREWOOD

The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's (DACF) Bureau of Forestry Director has issued an Emergency Order to Stop Movement of Ash in response to the detection of emerald ash borer (EAB) in northern Aroostook County. The Emergency Order restricts the movement of certain ash (*Fraxinus* spp.) products and any untreated firewood from emerald ash borer (EAB) infested towns in Maine. Current Order Area Towns: Frenchville, Grand Isle and Madawaska, Aroostook County, Maine.

To protect the ash resources of the state of Maine from a dangerous tree-killing forest pest, the Director has taken action and issued the Order. The emerald ash borer is a highly destructive, introduced pest of forest and ornamental ash trees. Since its initial detection in southeastern Michigan in 2002 it has spread rapidly. As of August 2018, it has been found in 35 states, and 4 Canadian provinces. Ash trees infested with EAB may die within two to three years. From 2002 to 2018, EAB has killed hundreds of millions of ash trees.

In 2003, the USDA—Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) established a federal quarantine to restrict movement of potentially infested material. Federally regulated materials include: the emerald ash borer; firewood of all hardwood (non-coniferous) species; nursery stock, green lumber, and other material living, dead, cut, or fallen, including logs, stumps, roots, branches, and composted and uncomposted chips of the genus *Fraxinus*.

In late May 2018, an established EAB infestation was detected in Edmundston, NB, Canada, approximately 500 yards from the Maine border. Subsequent surveys detected lightly-infested ash trees in Maine immediately across the river from the Edmundston infestation. The infested ash trees were located in Madawaska, immediately adjacent to the Frenchville town line. In early-August purple trap surveys revealed that EAB is also established in the town of Grand Isle. The detected infestation in Maine is very light and covers only a small area. If immediate steps are not taken to contain the infestation, however, this infestation will spread.

Ash trees comprise 4 percent of Maine's hardwood forest, are a valuable timber species, and are also an important street tree. EAB threatens all species of ash trees (except mountain ash) and could have significant ecological and economic impacts on the state. There are no practical means to control EAB in forested areas, though pesticide treatments can protect individual trees.

Parties interested in receiving updates regarding emerald ash borer in Maine can subscribe to the Department's electronic bulletin list "Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)." Subscriptions are available through e-mail or text message (SMS) at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MEDACF/subscriber/new>.

Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Contacts:

Allison Kanoti, Acting State Entomologist, Maine Forest Service, Allison.M.Kanoti@maine.gov, (207) 827-1813 or

Gary Fish, State Horticulturist, State Plant Regulatory Official, Plant Health, Gary.Fish@maine.gov, (207) 287-7545

the full news item can be read at:

<http://www.mainechristmastree.com/emergency-order-restricting-movement-of-ash-products-firewood/>

CHECK OUT THE MAINE CHRISTMAS TREE ASSOCIATION for INDUSTRY UPDATES ON A REGULAR BASIS, always something new.

Application for Membership Maine Christmas Tree Association, Inc.

Date _____ Business/Farm Name _____

Owner's Name _____ Telephone _____

Physical Address _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Website _____

Do you wish to receive the MCTA newsletter by email? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(for the foreseeable future, a hard copy will also be mailed to your mailing address)

Please check the items that describe your operation:

- ☐ Wholesale Grower ☐ Choose & Cut Grower ☐ Wreath Maker
☐ Retail Grower ☐ Tree Retailer ☐ Related Products

Membership Class (check one):

- ☐ Regular (\$75)
☐ Sustaining (\$100) *Upgrade your membership to help keep MCTA strong*
☐ Junior (under age 18 - enter birth month/year: ____/____)

Total Amount for
this Section:

\$ _____

MCTA Website Application and/or Renewal

To be listed on the website, you must be a member of the MCTA and grow/produce Christmas evergreen products in Maine.

Once you have paid the appropriate fee, a website account will be created for you. You will be sent the information to log on and set up your listing. Features include listing in any of three categories, customizable links to your own website and/or Facebook pages, as well as your own web page on the site where you can describe your product offerings, hours, location, etc.

Total Amount for
this Section:

\$ _____

Website Fees (check one): ☐ New Listing (\$60) ☐ Renewal (\$30)

Send completed application with a check to the treasurer at the following address:

*Tammie Mulvey
1190 Calais Rd
Hodgdon, ME 04730*

Payment Due:

Check# _____ Amount \$ _____
Payable to: MCTA Add 2 Amounts above

Membership Application can be done online at mainechristmastree.com. Payment can be made by PayPal

Signature _____ Date _____

NCTA Director's Report

Dugald Kell Jr

NFPA Conference & Expo

In June, NCTA/Christmas Tree Promotion Board had a booth at the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Conference & Expo in Las Vegas, which was staffed by two volunteers: Ellis Schmidt, a tree grower from Pennsylvania, and Jim Heater, a tree grower from Oregon. The conference was for NFPA members to consider proposals for the codes due for revision in future years and to give final approval to changes to the codes scheduled for revision in 2019. The Expo, with several hundred vendors exhibiting, provided a forum for conference attendees to see equipment, programs and services available for use in areas related to fire safety.

Ellis Schmidt, in explaining the purpose of the NCTA/CTPB booth, said, "We were there to promote the safe use of our product and that we felt there was a better way to do that than showing the burning of a dry tree on TV over the Thanksgiving weekend." The two growers discussed with visitors to the booth how to best maintain a real tree, and emphasized to all visitors of the need to educate the consumer rather than just scaring them with the burning of a dry tree. This message was well received, with many visitors being those who are responsible for training personnel at their home fire department as well as the public regarding fire safety.

The backdrop of the booth emphasized the family tradition of using a real tree and real trees as beneficial for the environment. A loop of videos demonstrating dry tree vs. well cared for tree vs. artificial tree burn tests ran continually at the booth for attendees to view. "Jim and I were encouraged to hear how many of our visitors said they had a family tradition of using a real tree," said Schmidt.

2019 NCTA Christmas Tree and Wreath Contest Announced

NCTA is pleased to announce that the Pennsylvania Christmas Tree Growers Association will host the 2019 NCTA meeting and National Christmas Tree contest in conjunction with the PA Summer Convention. The dates and location are August 8-10, 2019 at Roba Family Farms in Scott Township, PA. Growers interested in competing in the National Christmas Tree Contest must first qualify by competing in their local state Christmas tree contest.

The NCTA Executive Committee is seeking state and regional organizations interested in hosting the 2021 NCTA meeting and National Christmas Tree contest. State organizations with interest in learning more can call the NCTA office.

Other NCTA News

NCTA is on track with the 2018 budget and cash balance, although membership dues income remains a concern. Membership is about the same as in 2017. The Executive Committee is looking to encourage more members in 2019.

NCTA expects to have the funding to carry out its Voice of the Industry campaign again this year. This program ensures that an experienced, knowledgeable person is able to answer the many calls during the Christmas season from the news media, the general public, and anyone else seeking information about trees and the US Christmas tree industry as a whole. This is one of the most important functions of NCTA for our industry, because it requires someone who can give out accurate information that represents all growers and all regions in a favorable manner.

The 2018 White House Christmas Tree plans are moving forward. Larry Smith of Mountain Top Fraser Fir in North Carolina was the NCTA Tree Contest winner in 2017 who earned the privilege of providing the tree this year. In mid-September, the White House staff members are scheduled to visit the Smith farm and select a tree.



If undeliverable, return to:

P.O. Box 160

Milbridge, ME 04658-0160

INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS FOR CHRISTMAS TREE AND WREATH PRODUCERS



- K102 WREATH MACHINE
- RED NET TREE PACKAGING
- BOW-MAKING MACHINE
- CAROLINA GARLAND MACHINE
- TP300 TREE PLANTER
- WREATH RINGS & WIRE
- RIBBON & DECORATIONS
- SHEARING KNIVES & PLANTING TOOLS
- CHRISTMAS TREE STANDS

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