

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

January 2019, Issue #262

GREETINGS FROM OUR OUTGOING PRESIDENT

Frank Zmigrodski

Another sales season is about to pass and I hope all members have realized their goals. For the third year in a row reports of Christmas tree shortages have arisen. It seems that the media loves nothing more than a holiday crisis whether real, rumored, imagined or irrelevant to its audience. Shortly before Thanksgiving I began receiving calls from the print and television media asking me to comment on the Christmas tree shortage. All callers seemed disappointed when I reported that there is no Christmas tree shortage in Maine. I also added that according to the Christmas Tree Promotion Board there was no tree shortage in 2016, 2017 or this year. I suggest all members visit the CTPB website regarding the alleged shortage and also read the tips about speaking to the media. I also suggest that all members note on their websites that there is no shortage.

HELP WANTED: My term as MCTA President expires on December 31 of this year. At that time Stephen Higgins will begin his term as your President. At this time there is no one in line to become MCTA Vice President. The MCTA Constitution requires that a nominee for Vice President will have served as a member of the Board of Directors. Numerous past and present Board members have been offered the nomination and all have graciously declined. Upon looking ahead, on January 1, 2021, when Steve Higgins' term is completed, your association will have no President and no Vice President. I sincerely hope, and trust, that the Board of Directors will consider the future of the MCTA and address this issue at their January meeting to resolve this matter.

Frank Zmigrodski President until 12/31/2018

A FEW WORDS FROM THE INCOMING MCTA PRESIDENT

Stephen Higgins

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Frank Zmigrodski for the great service that he has provided in the last two years as president of the Maine Christmas tree Association. Since my first introduction to the business of Christmas trees in my early twenties I have found that the growing and selling of Balsam Fir, and now a few Frasers, to be a challenging and rewarding endeavor. I am looking forward to the challenge of being our MCTA President and talking with my fellow growers about matters of concern.

Stephen Higgins President-Elect

2019 Officers & Directors Maine Christmas Tree Association

Officers

Stephen Higgins, President 41 Reach Rd, Presque Isle, ME 04769 207-227-7425 pstephen20@hotmail.com

Vice President (office vacant)

Joanne Bond, Executive Secretary 174 Bond Spring Rd, W Newfield, ME 04095 207-793-4658 joannebond@metrocast.net

Norma Corliss, *Recording Secretary* 27 Trundy Rd, Newburgh, ME 04444 207-234-4300 pipermtnct@aol.com

Tammie Mulvey, Executive Treasurer 1190 Calais Rd, Hodgdon, ME 04730 207-532-4769 robertmulvey@ainop.com

Directors until 12/31/19

Robert Mulvey 1190 Calais Rd, Hodgdon, ME 04730 207-532-4769 robertmulvey@ainop.com

Arthur Mingo 405 Shattuck Rd, Calais, ME 04619 207-454-7411 orders@mingosproducts.com James Corliss

27 Trundy Rd, Newburgh, ME 04444 207-234-4300 pipermtnct@aol.com

Directors until 12/31/20

Len Price

269 Chapman Rd, Newburgh, ME 04444 207-234-7268 nutkin@uninets.net

Lee Skillin 89 Foreside Rd, Falmouth, ME 04105 207-781-3860 leeskillinsg@outlook.com

Michael Seaman 127 Pine Tree Rd, Litchfield, ME 04350 207-268-2834 mseaman@fairpoint.net

Directors until 12/31/21

Brett Mitchell PO BOX 226, Bass Harbor, ME 04653

207-266-1960 brett@mfctreefarm.com Donna Palmer

424 Hanson Rd, South China, ME 04358 207-877-5487 bm@benandmollystrees.com Robert Palmer

424 Hanson Rd, South China, ME 04358 207-877-5487 bm@benandmollystrees.com

Past President

Frank Zmigrodski, President 434 Legion Park Rd, Vassalboro, ME 04989 207-445-3023 fzmigrodski@aol.com

Director Emeritus

Doug Kell, Sr. PO Box 481, Ellsworth, ME 04605 207-664-0350 doug@kelcoindustries.com

Director-at-Large, Constitutional

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

SECRETARY'S CORNER

Joanne Bond

Very little to report except membership is up and as far as I know everyone had a good year. Got alot of late calls looking for wholesale trees. The wholesalers on my list either sold out or could not get into the plantations to cut because of the snow depth. Remember your 2019 dues and website fee are due by February 1.

See you in January,

Joanne Bond

Executive Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

Tammie Mulvey

General Membership:

As of 12/16/18 we have 112 paid members along with two lifetime members. We have 60 members that have paid for our website.

Bank Account:

| Begining balance 2018: | \$37,723.23 |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Current balance: | \$41,062.50 |



Arthur & Alden Mingo, of Mingo's Evergreen Products in Calais, hosted the MCTA 2018 Annual Meeting in September.

MCTA 2019 WINTER MEETING

Registration Form

Date: January 15, 2019 Location: Augusta Civic Center 76 Community Dr, Augusta, ME

| Your Name | | | Telephone | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Business Address | | | | |
| City | | S | tate | Zip |
| List Additional Attendees' Names: | | | | |
| Registration Type | Quantity | Pre-Registration (Deadline Jan. 11th) | 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 th | <u>e Commissio</u> | ners' Luncheon: | | |
| Call Joanne Bond (793-4 | 4658) to rese | | | |
| | | Lunch | @ \$ 20.00 | = |
| | | | Total Enclosed: | \$ |
| Payment Info: Chec | k# | (made out to | MCTA) | |
| Mail Completed form a | nd payment | to: | | |
| | | CTA Treasurer, 119 | O Calaic Bd Had | adon ME 01721 |

REGISTRATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY January 11th for Pre-Registration Rates

MCTA DIRECTORS' MEETING - JANUARY 14, 2019

To be held at IHOP, Augusta, ME Social hour 5 to 6 PM, Order Dinner at 6 PM, Meeting proceeding Dinner

AGENDA

| Reading of the minutes of the last Director meeting | | |
|---|--------------|--|
| Executive Secretary | Joanne Bond | |
| Treasurers Report | Tammy Mulvey | |
| Legislative/pesticide committee | Gary Fisher | |
| NCTA | Dugald Kell | |
| Public relations | Jim Corliss | |
| Fryeburg Fair | Jim Corliss | |
| Ornament for troops | Melba Fisher | |
| Scholarship Committee | Len Price | |
| Seed Orchard | Mike Seaman | |
| Website | Tom McNeil | |
| Old business | | |
| New business | | |

MCTA Directors' Meeting January 14, 2019

The Directors Meeting will be held Monday night in the International House of Pancake's Function room down the hall between the Inn and restaurant. Cocktail hour is at 5:00 until 6:00 at which time we will all order off the menu. The meeting will start as soon as we eat.

Rooms at the Best Western

The Association has reserved 10 rooms at the Best Western Plus at the Augusta Civic Center. The rooms are \$79.00 each plus tax for the night of January 14. Reservations need to be received by January 7 and made under the Maine Christmas Tree Association name to get the discounted price. Check in time is 3:00PM and you have a choice of a king or two doubles beds. Rooms were requested to be on the first floor. Phone #622-4751

MCTA 2019 WINTER MEETING

Tuesday, January 15, 2018 Arnold Room, Augusta Civic Center

AGENDA

| 8:30 - 9:00 | Registration / pre-registration recommended. Coffee etc. | | |
|--------------|--|---|--|
| 9:00 – 9:15 | Presidents welcome. Steve Higgins | | |
| 9:15 | MCTA business meeting <u>Committee reports</u> Treasurers - Tammie Mulvey Executive Secretary - Joanne Bond Website - Dugald Kell NCTA - Dugald Kell Seed orchard - Mike Seaman | Pesticides/ OHC Legislative /AgCom - Gary Fisher Public relations/ Fryeburg fair - Jim Corliss MCTA scholarship presentation - Len Price | |
| 11:00 | <u>Farm Safety</u> Jason Lilley, Cumberland County Extension | on Service | |
| 12:00 – 1:30 | Lunch | | |
| 1:30 – 2:45 | <u>Regulation and Enforcement of Lesticide Laws</u> Max Raymond Connors, BPC Manager of Compliance. (one pesticide credit) | | |
| 2:45 – 4:00 | <u>Pesticides Risk and Human Health</u> Pam Bryer, Board of Pesticides Control Toxicologist (one pesticide credit) | | |
| 4:00 | Adjourn | | |

Norma Corliss, Recording Secretary

The MCTA annual business meeting was held at Washington County Community College in Calais on Saturday, September 15, 2018.

Treasurer Tammie Murphy reported a total of \$41,231 in the various MCTA accounts. That did not include income and expenses for this meeting or income from the seed orchard. Treasurer's report was accepted.

Executive Secretary Joanne Bond advised we have 121 members on the rolls, but that will change when those who have not paid for 2018 are removed after this meeting. There are nine new members.

Dugald Kell said that NCTA will be holding a summer meeting in conjunction with the Pennsylvania CTA. in early August. He explained the role of NCTA is presenting a tree for the Blue Room to the First Lady. He also reported on the efforts of NCTA to monitor the fire codes nationally.

Jim Corliss explained the activities of the Promotion Board. He spoke about how to enter a tree or wreath in the Fryeburg Fair exhibit. He reminded members that money brought in by sale of seedlings goes to the MCTA Scholarship Fund.

Len Price said there has been unusual interest in the MCTA scholarship this year and he has received several applications.

Gary Fisher reported on his role on the Ag Committee in Augusta.. He asked members to be on the lookout fo evidence of the Emerald Ash Borer and the Asian Longhorn Beetle.

Mike Seaman, Brett Mitchell and Donna and Rob Palmer were elected to the Board of Directors.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

DIRECTORS' MEETING SEPTEMBER 2018 Norma Corliss, Recording Secretary

The fall meeting of the MCTA Directors was held at Mingo's Evergreen Products in Calais on September 16, 2018. Meeting was called to order at 2:14PM.

Officers and Directors present were Frank Zmigrodski, Stephen Higgins, Tom and Joanne Bond, Rob and Tammie Mulvey, Jim and Norma Corliss, Doug Kell and Dugald Kell. Guests present were Regina Mitchell, Mary Zmigrodski, Joy and Duane LaCasce, Arthur and Alden Mingo, and Mike Seaman.

Treasurer Tammie Mulvey presented the same report from the annual meeting the day before. The report was accepted.

Duane LaCasce reported on the treatment for balsam wooly adelgid in the Norridgewock seed orchard. The new plantings were fertilized. Todd Murphy has agreed to do some site work. There are buds on some of the 2013 plantings and perhaps some seed may be able to be harvested next year. The original planting in the orchard was done in the early 80's and the trees are approaching the end of their lives. Duane explained how distribution of available seedlings was originally agreed. That system will no longer work. There was a long discussion of various ways to solve the problem. Mike Seaman has volunteered to take the seed orchard chairmanship. Motion was made to generate a list of those growers who respond to a survey of how many trees they want and the list will be turned over to the nursery. Motion was seconded and passed. There was general agreement that the website would be the vehicle for growers to communicate to the nursery their needs going forward.

Dugald Kell moved that TIP payment to NCTA should be made by the end of September. Motion passed.

Dugald Kell made a motion to have Secretary Bond send a letter to Brian Fox explaining the cost of seed orchard plants has increased from 5 cents to 10 cents. Motion passed. Further motion as made to explain that MCTA seed is not for sale. The motion was withdrawn when it was mentioned that policy was implemented several years ago.

Frank Zmigrodski expressed his frustration that no one would consent to serve MCTA as Vice-President and his concern about the future of the Association going forward. Stephen Higgins was elected President of MCTA beginning January 1, 2019. Norma Corliss was elected Recording Secretary.

Arthur Mingo was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board until Dec. 31, 2019.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00PM.

FRYEBURG FAIR

Jim Corliss

This was the first year that we were able to have wreath making demonstrations every day. All were well attended. With our newly purchased motor home on the grounds and a cart to get back and forth we just may be able to eke a few more years out of these old bones.

The sale of small balsam seedlings was very strong and produced a fine return to benefit the Association Scholarship Fund. We began the week with more little trees than ever but sold out for the first time ever with the last sale at one on Sunday.

We were all deeply saddened by the loss of our friend, mentor and competitor, Jim LaCasce, just three weeks before the Fair. Jim always took the lead in setting up the exhibit and loved to sit on the porch for a few days chatting with passers by.

When I look across the street at the barns and think about the expense and time it takes to bring cattle and horses to the Fair I wonder why more members of our Association don't take the time to cut a trees and have it exhibited. I struggle with that every year. We did have one tree brought by someone who had never brought one before, so that's a little progress. We'll keep trying.

TREES FOR TROOPS

Jim Corliss

The annual Maine donation of 300 trees was loaded on a FedEx trailer the morning of November 26 and left for Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. They were accompanied by 3,000 ornaments, a bag of ten for each tree. Joanne Bond has received a photo of one of our Maine trees set up in the home of a military family in Missouri. A very nice thank you note was sent with it. Here is a list of the folks who made a better Christmas possible for some of the people serving our country:

Mitchell, Bond, Buschmann, Fisher, Adams, LaCasce, Graves, Luther, Mulvey, Barden, Corliss, Meserve, Zmigrodski, LaPlante, Murphy and Pomroy.

I am concerned that so few of our members participate in this worthwhile endeavor. It was difficult this year to get verbal commitments and I had to go back to the same generous folks who have always given.

MCTA SEED ORCHARD

The Seed Orchard Committee is planning to graft another 50 trees the spring of 2019. Fifty potted trees, provided by Duane LaCasce, were picked up early December and are being stored under cover. These trees are to continue regenerating the Norridgewock Seed Orchard. Scions will be harvested late March to mid-April and the grafting will immediately follow.

At the 2018 Annual Meeting, Duane LaCasce reported that an abundance of male polling cones were visible so there may possibly be a step ladder cone harvest in late summer of 2019 from trees that were planted several years ago. Those members who would like to participate in the late summer seed harvest please contact Mike Seaman at the January 2019 winter meeting.

The Seed Orchard Committee plans to have a spring 2019 seedling update from Downey for the winter meeting.

AGCOM REPORT

Gary Fisher

AgCom news items are posted regulary to the MCTA website. Please check periodically to catch up on the latest posts. Here is the latest item posted in MCTA News:

Senate Passes Bipartisan King-Backed Bill to Promote High-Speed Internet for Farmers

Bill aims to grow precision agriculture and availability of rural broadband by promoting high-speed internet deployment to nation's agricultural land

December 7, 2018 / BANGOR, ME – Today, U.S. Senator Angus King (I-Maine) applauded last night's Senate passage of the "Precision Agriculture Connectivity Act of 2018," a bipartisan bill cosponsored by Senator King that promotes precision agriculture and rural broadband deployment. The legislation, which Senator King cosponsored in May, would direct the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish a task force to identify gaps in high-speed internet connectivity for the nation's agricultural land. The measure also instructs the agency to develop ways to help encourage broadband adoption and precision agriculture and to promote broadband deployment in areas where it is currently unavailable.

"In rural regions across Maine, our state's farmers are pillars of their communities and the foundation of the local economy," said Senator King. "And, by the way – their products are second-tonone. We need to find ways to help them expand their efforts and reach new markets, and we should start by making sure they have all the technology they need to maximize their yield and reduce their costs. Through precision agriculture and rural broadband, we can help Maine farms increase efficiency and become more competitive in the global marketplace."

"Broadband connectivity can support our rural farmers and their farm businesses in many ways, including utilization of tools and technologies to enhance their practices, and improving access to

markets and other timely information that is difficult to obtain without reliable and consistent broadband service," said Amanda Beal, President and CEO of Maine Farmland Trust, at the time of Senator King's cosponsorship in May.

Precision agriculture describes the use of mobile devices, robotics, field sensors, remote monitoring, and other technologies to manage agricultural production. Farmers and ranchers who use the technology can significantly increase crop yields, streamline operations, and reduce production expenses. In many areas of the United States, reliable, high-speed internet connections are not consistently available to support precision agriculture operations.

Specifically, the legislation asks the newly-created FCC task force to:

- Identify and measure current gaps in the availability of broadband coverage on agricultural land;
- Assemble a comprehensive guide of all federal programs or resources dedicated to expanding broadband access on cropland and ranchland;
- Develop policy recommendations, in consultation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to promote the rapid, expanded deployment of fixed and mobile high-speed broadband on agricultural land, with the goal of achieving service on 95 percent of agricultural land in the United States by 2025;
- Recommend specific steps that the FCC and other Federal agencies should take to obtain reliable and standardized data measurements of broadband coverage as may be necessary to target funding support to unserved agricultural land;
- Recommend specific steps the FCC can take to ensure that available farm data from the USDA is reflected in developing Federal programs to deploy broadband to agricultural land; and
- Submit an annual report to Congress detailing the status of fixed and mobile broadband coverage on agricultural land; the projected future connectivity needs of agricultural operations, farmers, and ranchers; and the steps being taken to accurately measure the availability of high-speed broadband on agricultural land and the limitations of current measurement processes.

In addition to Senator King, the bill is cosponsored by Sens. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Steve Daines (R-Mont.), Jon Tester (D-Mont.), Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.), Cory Gardner (R-Colo.), John Hoeven (R-N.D.), Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), Tina Smith, (D-Minn.), Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisc.), John Thune (R-S.D.), Deb Fischer (R-Neb.), and Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.).

Application for Membership Maine Christmas Tree Association, Inc.

| Date Business/Farm | n Name | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------|--|--|--|
| Owner's Name | Owner's Name Telephone | | | | |
| Physical Address | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | State Zip | | | | |
| Email | 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 des | cribe your operation: | | | | |
| 🗌 Wholesale Grower 🛛 Cho | ose & Cut Grower 🗌 Wreath Ma | ker | | | |
| 🗌 Retail Grower 🛛 🗌 Tree | e Retailer 🗌 Related Pro | oducts | | | |
| Membership Class () | | | | | |
| Membership Class (check one): | | Total Amount for | | | |
| | membership to help keep MCTA strong | this Section: | | | |
| Junior (under age 18 – enter birth i | | \$ | | | |
| | | | | | |
| MCTA Website Application and/ | | | | | |
| To be listed on the website, you must be a Christmas evergreen products in Maine. | member of the MCIA and grow/produce | | | | |
| | 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 this Section: | | | | | |
| | New Listing (\$60) 🗌 Renewal (\$30) | \$ | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Send completed application with a check to the treasurer at the following address: | Payment Due: | | | | |
| Tammie Mulvey 1190 Calais Rd Hodgdon, ME 04730 | Check# Amo | Add 2 Amounts above | | | |
| Membership Application can be done online at mainechristmastree.com. Payment can be made by PayPal | | | | | |

NCTA Members Lose Home and Farm in California "Camp" Fire

Joe McNally and Anne Benoit, long time NCTA members, were victims of the deadly Camp fire in California. Their home, possessions, business and all their trees were destroyed. Fortunately, they are safe but face an extremely difficult future. NCTA has established the <u>Joe McNally fund</u> to collect donations from the Christmas tree industry to assist Joe and Anne in their difficult path ahead. 100 percent of all donations received will go to Joe and Anne. Your generosity is appreciated.

To donate, make your checks payable to "*NCTA Joe McNally Fund*" and send them to:

NCTA - Joe McNally Fund P.O. Box 3609 Littleton, CO 80161 * If you would like to donate by credit card please email NCTA at *info@realchristmastrees.org*



Joe McNally (left) working as an official at the 2017 NCTA National Christmas Tree and Wreath contest presenting a ribbon to Gary Hague.

NCTA - Voice of the Industry

During November and December, NCTA fields hundreds of phone calls and emails from the media seeking information on numerous Christmas tree topics. Some of the topics the media are interested are negative. Examples include, *"Is there a Christmas tree shortage?"* and *"Up to 25,000 bugs could be on your Christmas tree"*. NCTA provides accurate information to the media and is often able to turn negative stories ideas into positive press. Unfortunately, not all media outlets contact NCTA before they publish inaccurate or sensational information. We follow up to attempt to correct inaccurate and harmful articles. Consumers also contact NCTA to seek tips on caring for their trees and help with problems. This spike in activity requires NCTA to bring on a seasonal spokesperson to deal with the volume of calls and emails. Doug Hundley, a retired extension Christmas tree specialist, has served as our seasonal spokesperson for 2017 and 2018. Funding to add the seasonal spokesperson is provided by CTPB.

Here are a few examples of stories that are the result of NCTA's interaction with the media:

New York Times: Real vs. Artificial Christmas Trees: Which Is the Greener Choice?

- <u>Columbus Dispatch</u>: Experts offer tips for keeping live trees looking good through Christmas
- <u>ABC News</u>: National Christmas Tree Association says millennials might be saving Christmas tree industry
- <u>Associated Press</u>: Square and the National Christmas Tree Association Reveal Why Millennials Might be Saving the Christmas Tree Industry

White House Christmas Tree

NCTA 2018 Champion grower Larry Smith, Mountain Top Fraser Fir, Newland, North Carolina delivered the Blue Room tree to President and Mrs. Trump at the White House on November 19. The event was highly covered by the media as the horse drawn wagon brought the tree up the White House driveway and the President and First Lady inspected it and visited with Larry Smith's family and friends in attendance at the presentation. Over 2 million visitors will see the tree in person during the Christmas season.



The tree decorated and on display in the Blue Room of the White House



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