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Norma Corliss, Rec. Secretary
Joanne Bond, Exec. Secretary/Treas.
Dugald Kell Jr, Newsletter Editor

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Greetings From Our President

Stephen Higgins

Dear MCTA Members:

I would like to express condolences to all the MCTA members who have lost their loved ones this past year. We all realize life has changed, if we keep our nose to the wind we will succeed. So keep your eyes on the skyline.

At our board of director meeting on the 13th of September we discussed a few topics. One was a vote on funding a needle retention program that will run three years and be studied at Nutkin Knoll Farm. The vote was positive and the association will fund the project.

The directors also came to a unanimous decision to supply the \$1500 that the Fryeburg Fair usually supplies to fund the scholarship program and to increase the yearly amount that MCTA donates to the program from \$250 to \$400.

The MCTA seed orchard program is progressing with the help of some dedicated volunteers. Downey Nursery will be planting plenty of MCTA seed for the future.

It has been a good year, prices are good and the demand continues to be strong.

The trees for troops program is in need for trees. Call Larry McCullen at Piper Mountain Tree Farm to donate.

May we all have a successful harvest and selling season.

Thank you,

Stephen Higgins
President

January 2021 Directors' Meeting

The MCTA Directors' Meeting will be held Monday night, January 11, 2021. If an in-person meeting is possible, it will likely be held in the Function Room at IHOP in Augusta as was done in the past. Otherwise a virtual meeting (video chat or conference call) will be held.

2021 Maine Ag Trades Show is going Virtual!

due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Trade Show will be going virtual! The Department is working to design a fun, effective, and vibrant Virtual Agricultural Trades Show in 2021. More information will be made available on the MCTA website.

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Norma Corliss, Recording Secretary

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Len Price

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Lee Skillin

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Donna Palmer

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SECRETARY'S CORNER

Joanne Bond

I hope this Newsletter finds everyone safe and well. Because of Covid-19 our MCTA farm meeting at Rob and Donna Palmer's place in South China had to be canceled along with our annual Summer/Fall Officers and Director's meeting. Instead, the director of our newly formed Marketing Committee, Ryan Liberty, came up to the plate and put on an exceptional zoom meeting for us. Dugald and Ryan together set up another zoom meeting for the Officers and Director's which again went very well.

On another note concerning Covid-19, please be advised that both the National Christmas Tree Association and the State of Maine have Covid-19 restrictions and guidelines for this upcoming season. Both are in the Newsletter.

In August I sent out reminder letters to members of the association who had not paid their dues and website fees for 2020. I apologized for not getting the letters out sooner but had two major deaths in my family and a cardiac episode with my son, Mark, plus other deaths to deal with this Spring. I'm just very disappointed as to how slowly the response has been. I realize we are all experiencing a terrible year and I was not going to set a time limit on when both had to be paid but decided that November 1 will be the deadline for 2020. I will delete unpaid members from the association and from the website after this date.

I do not know if the body of members realize that all members are listed on the website whether or not you are in production. This is in addition to the individual listing you pay for. With the year we have had I would think you would want present and future customers to know you're open for business, or you will be when your trees have matured enough to market. If you misplaced my letter there is a membership/website form in this newsletter for your convenience.

Finally, if there are any wholesalers who I have not spoken with that have trees and wreaths available PLEASE let me know as soon as possible. The phone calls and emails are still coming in looking for more, even though I know we are tentatively sold out.

Take care and have yourself a good selling season,

Joanne

Executive Secretary

MCTA MOURNS PASSING OF TWO LONG-TIME MEMBERS

Once again, we must pause in consideration of two MCTA members who have recently died, and reflect on the lives, and their contributions to our association.



Mr. Thomas W. Bond of West Newfield, Maine, died unexpectedly on Thursday, March 5, 2020 at Southern Maine Health Care surrounded by his loving family.

Tom was married to Joanne V. (McGlincey) Bond with whom he would have celebrated their 27th wedding anniversary on June 4, 2020.

He was born in West Newfield on November 22, 1933, the son of the late Claire Eugene Bond and Gladys Maud (Gile) Bond. He was student at Parsonsfield Seminary in Parsonsfield, Maine, until 1948 and was a graduate of Sanford High School with the class of 1951.

He served with the U.S. Army from 1956-1958 in Germany as mechanic and honorably discharged in 1962.

In 1988, Tom began the Bond Mountain Acres Christmas Tree Farm. He and Joanne operate and lovingly and painstakingly grow, care for and sell award-winning fresh cut Christmas trees. He was a member of the Maine Christmas Tree Association since 1987. He worked for The Merganser Company in Maine and New Hampshire as a construction supervisor. A master finish carpenter by trade, he left his mark on many homes and businesses in the New England area.

He served his community as a member of the Board of Selectman in Newfield for many years, as well as other committees, and is well known throughout the town. He was also a 65 year member of the Freemasons, Newfield Dayspring Lodge #107.

Besides his wife, he is survived by three daughters and a son, Cindy Littlefield and her husband Steve from Tyngsboro, MA; Sandy Bond of Kensington, NH; Kathy Masucci and her husband Dave of Pepperell, MA; Tom Bond and his wife Monica of Nashua, NH; the mother of his children Connie Carlson of Seabrook, NH; 6 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. Two stepsons, Martin Sanborn and his wife, Jennifer, Mark Sanborn and his wife, Kate, and two stepdaughters, Glenda Tripp and her husband, Mike, and Ashley Cook, 10 step-grandchildren and one step-great grandchild; his sister-in-law Joyce Bond of West Newfield. Four nieces Susan Winn of West Newfield; Patricia Moulton and her husband Edward of West Newfield; Karen Benjamin and husband David of Meridian, Idaho; Barbara Lemieux and husband John of Portland, Maine; several great nieces and nephews and several cousins and dear friends, and his beloved English Bulldog, Lucy, and his cat, Honey.

He was predeceased by his brother, Bernard E. Bond of Newfield on November 11, 1981; and a great niece Victoria Wickson of Newfield.

A funeral service was to be held on Thursday, March 12 at 11:00 a.m., at Autumn Green Funeral Home. Committal prayers with military honors were to be held later in the spring at the Maine Veteran's Memorial Cemetery in Springvale.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Newfield Fuel Assistance Program, P.O. Box 62, West Newfield, ME 04095.

Wayne Thomas Adams, 79, a longtime Kennebunkport resident and well known attorney, died Tuesday, July 28, 2020, at Maine Medical Center in Portland following a brief illness.

Wayne was born May 24, 1941, in Biddeford, Maine, the son of Donald Thomas and Velda (Garvin) Adams. He attended Kennebunkport schools, graduating from Kennebunk High School. Wayne earned a bachelor's degree at

Bowdoin College and went on to earn his law degree from the University of Chicago.



Wayne served his country in the United States Army and retired from the Army Active Reserve with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, having served as a Military Intelligence Officer. He saw active duty in Vietnam. He served five years in the Foreign Service of the State Department during which time he was a Vice Consul in Brussels.

During his remarkable career, he practiced law for 35 years at Reagan and Adams in Kennebunk before venturing out on his own for several years. He had spent the last 15 delightful years at Bergen and Parkinson before retiring this year.

Wayne had a firm belief in public and community service, serving as longtime town meeting moderator for both Kennebunk and Kennebunkport, he served as a past commodore of the Kennebunk River Club, a member of the Arundel Yacht Club, member and past president of the Kennebunk Rotary Club, a vestryman and member of St. David's Episcopal Church as well as St. Ann's Episcopal Church. Wayne was a longtime active member and past master of Arundel Lodge, No. 76 in Kennebunkport, where he was instrumental in re-establishing the Lafayette chapter of Demolay at the Lodge and was also honored to be elected as Grand Master for the State of Maine. He was a past member of the Masonic Education and Lodge Services (MEALS) Committee and was Chairman of the Disbursement Committee of the Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation, a member of four bodies of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, Valley of Portland and served as Sovereign Prince. He was a member of Murray Chapter #20, RAM, Maine Council #7, R&SM, St. Armand's Commandery #20, Knights Templar, a Noble of Kora Temple AAONMS and an honorary member of the Supreme Council 33rd Degree in Pittsburgh, PA and was a past director of PUT Stevens, Royal Order of Jesters.

In his spare time Wayne enjoyed developing Adams Woods Preserve, working his Christmas tree farm on his property and spending time with his friends and family.

He was predeceased by his loving wife, Catherine Jones Adams in 2017.

Survivors include his son, Bradford Adams and his wife Clara Long and their children Sage and Luca of Oakland, Calif.; daughter, Sarah O'Sullivan and husband, Brian and their son, Logan Douglas of Kennebunkport, and Emily Adams and her husband Joel Aguilar and their children, Goya and Lorenzo of Oaxaca, Mexico; his brother, Bruce Adams of Kennebunkport; by his companion, Diane Denk and by a wide circle of friends throughout the state.

Due to concerns of Covid-19, a private graveside service will be held at the family lot in Arundel Cemetery, Kennebunkport.

Arrangements are in care of Bibber Memorial Chapel, 67 Summer Street, Kennebunk, Maine, 04043. <http://www.bibbermemorial.com>.

Should friends desire, memorial donations may be made to the Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation, PO Box 430, Holden, ME 04439 or to Kennebunkport Conservation Trust, PO Box 7004, Cape Porpoise, ME 04014.

News from the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation

Rick Dungey, Executive Director

Trees for Troops Program Still on for 2020

2020 has thrown everyone a lot of curveballs. The Christmas Spirit Foundation is no exception, but we are thankful that our Trees for Troops program will still happen. Read on below to learn about some exciting changes this year has brought us, and the plan for our 2020 program.

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New Management Company



The Christmas SPIRIT Foundation has chosen St. Louis-based association management company **Q&A Business Solutions** as its new headquarters office. Q&A will provide CSF with full-service management, administration, operations and staffing.

Q&A brought on Rick Dungey to serve as CSF's Executive Director. Dungey, an association executive and public relations/marketing expert, also previously served on the CSF staff as Public Relations Manager from 2005-2016. He has spent nearly 20 years working for national and international agriculture associations with complex and complimentary relationships with state, regional and international associations. He has implemented marketing efforts aimed at growers, buyers and the general public, as well as coordinating marketing programs among industry groups and individual producers.

Beth Quick-Andrews, a Q&A Principal, has over 30 years of practical experience working with organizations that cover a spectrum of disciplines and industries. "Our team has great mix of expertise and skillsets, and coupled with Rick's previous experience with CSF, we felt Q&A would be a great fit for the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation," said Quick-Andrews. "We are looking forward to a great partnership that will help the Trustees grow their organization and achieve their mission."

CSF will be operating the Trees for Troops program for the 16th year in a row in 2020, although some aspects of the program may be different. To date, we have provided almost a quarter million free, fresh Christmas trees to U.S. military personnel and their families stationed both abroad and domestically.

The CSF-specific email addresses are now fully operational, including rdungey@christmasspiritfoundation.org, info@christmasspiritfoundation.org and info@treesfortroops.org. The new office phone number for CSF is 314-416-2245, and the 800 number has been ported and is operational at 800-965-1653. Both numbers are answered as "Christmas Spirit Foundation". Please share this info with anyone you think may need to contact CSF.

Update on Trees for Troops 2020

Currently, we are busy communicating with the military branches confirming everyone who wants trees for 2020. Once we have that info finalized, the process begins of sharing trailer drop locations, tree pick up locations, delivery locations and total number of trees requested with the amazing farmers and state coordinators.

Timeline for Trees for Troops Tasks

August: Updated sign up forms; uploaded new forms to the CSF website; emailed last year's Trailer Drops a form

to sign up for this year and solicited new locations to sign up; contacted the State Association Coordinators to get pickup locations and tree donation numbers from farms in their states; emailed last year's Military Bases their form to sign up for this year.

Mid-September: Finish collecting all info on state pick-up points, trailer drops and military bases.

Early October: Email pick up dates and times plus delivery locations to: Trailer Drops, State Association contacts. (pick-up points). Begin promotions.





Increasing availability of the Trucking Program

This year, we are going to emphasize the trucking program to make it easier for more farms to donate trees. If there are additional farms in your state who would donate trees if they were closer to a pick up location, we want to help facilitate that by providing a stipend to someone willing to drive to those farms and bring their donated trees to the nearest pick up location. We understand that not everyone can easily make the trip when it can be hours and hours away. We've done the trucking program as a pilot program in some areas, so we

have examples to show how well it can work. Just keep that in mind as you contact farms in your state and ask them if they would donate trees to the program. If they are not close to a pick up location, we can work together on finding a driver to collect trees in that area and bring them to where FedEx will pick them up.

Looking Ahead: Possible New Piece of the Trees for Troops Program

Finally (and we'll preface this with a big caveat as it's currently a work in progress), CSF has an idea for a new program within Trees for Troops. In this new program, CSF would try this year something new in lieu of trees going to personnel outside the United States. Based on our meetings with our contacts in the military, we know they are excited about the idea and are helping to get this elevated to the appropriate approval areas to assist in making this new idea happen. While this is only a teaser for now, as we cannot provide any further details, stay tuned for more updates in the future!

We are looking forward to a fun and fulfilling 2020 Trees for Troops season and want to thank everyone over the years for supporting the program, in addition to those who provide leadership and dedication to the effort. If you would like to participate in this year's program, future programs, or want more information about CSF or Trees for Troops, contact Rick Dungey: rdungey@christmasspiritfoundation.org.

MCTA January 2020 Directors' Meeting Minutes

Norma Corliss

The winter meeting of the MCTA Directors was called to order at 7:40PM on January 13, 2020. Meeting was held at the IHOP Restaurant in Augusta, Maine. Officers and Directors attending were Stephen Higgins, Arthur Mingo, Joanne Bond, Jim and Norma Corliss, Tammie Mulvey, Len Price, Lee Skillin, Michael Seaman, Brett Mitchell, Robert Palmer, Pat Ankers, Tom McNeil, Calvin Luther, Dugald Kell Sr. and Dugald Kell Jr. Guests were Regina Mitchell, Rob Mulvey, Harry Ankers, Tom Bond, and John Archambault.

Joanne Bond announced she had 16 rolls of MCTA stickers to sell. It was moved and seconded to authorize her to sell them for \$17 per roll. Motion passed. Joanne announced we now have 139 members and she introduced the three new Directors: Pat Ankers, Tom McNeil and Calvin Luther. She announced the family of Jim Pearson is starting a scholarship fund in his name. It was moved and seconded to send \$100 to the Pearson family. Motion passed.

Outgoing Treasurer Tammie Mulvey reported the totals in the various MCTA accounts as follows: General Fund, \$18,989.39, Marketing \$86.79, Website \$2,917.50, Seed Orchard \$10,668.79, Meetings \$6,695.88, and Scholarship \$3,716.75 for a total of \$43,075.10. The TIP payment has not been made for this year so that would come out of the General Fund. Motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion passed.

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Dugald Kell spoke about the NCTA response to the perceived shortage of trees last season. He explained Maine's status as a TIP state. He also mentioned that he had a short video depicting the work of the promotion board which he would show tomorrow at the general meeting.

Jim Corliss said that 312 trees went to the Trees for Troops. He has been invited to give a presentation about the program to a leadership conference of the American Legion in February. He will be giving way to the new owner of Piper Mountain as the next coordinator of the project in Maine.

Jim announced that MCTA may lose our exhibit space at Fryeburg Fair because of non participation of Maine growers. He suggested he might be making some changes in the premium payments by the Fair.

Len Price said the Scholarship Committee is awarding two \$1,000 scholarships this year.

Stephen announced that Frank Zmidrodski supplied three trees to the Blaine House this year. This had not been done for seven years. Member Ryan Liberty has volunteered to revive the Marketing Committee. Pat Ankers said she wondered if the winner of the Fryeburg exhibit would be interested in providing the main tree for the Blaine House. Directors agreed that this project should fall under the auspices of the Marketing Committee.

There was a long discussion of the promotional effort put forth at Bangor Fair. No Director volunteered to head up the project in 2020, however it was agreed to visit the issue once more at the March meeting.

Mike Seaman voiced his concern that the seed orchard cone harvest may not be adequately covered by insurance. It was suggested he contact the equipment rental company and his own agent to see how all possible liability issues can be covered. He said by 2022 we should arrive at the goal of 30,000 trees available each year. He pointed out that the income from 30,000 trees sold will not support the seed orchard going forward, so our goal needs to be at least 60,000 trees sold each year.

Rob Palmer presented a written plan for distribution of seed orchard material. Much of the plan depended on surveys of growers to determine what they would need in the future. Various Directors pointed out that this has been tried more than once and growers do not respond. The plan did not receive Board support. Motion was made to provide Downey Nurseries with enough seed to grow 100,000 transplants per year. Motion was seconded. Motion passed.

The next meeting will be at Governor's in Waterville beginning with social hour at 5:00PM, Friday, March 27.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45PM.

Norma Corliss
Recording Secretary

MCTA March 2020 Directors' Meeting Minutes

Norma Corliss

The March meeting of the MCTA Directors was called to order at 6:05PM on March 27, 2020, by President Stephen Higgins. The meeting was held via conference call. Officers and Directors attending were Stephen Higgins, Joanne Bond, Jim and Norma Corliss, Len Price, Lee Skillin, Michael Seaman, Robert and Donna Palmer, Pat Ankers, Calvin Luther and Dugald Kell. Guest was Ryan Liberty.

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FOR SALE

1 Kelco Tree Packager for 6.5' trees Set up with hand winch
4 cartons of 5 boxes each (BXT78) 8.5" x 8.5" x 78" outside diameter for mailing

\$100 or Best Offer

Contact Calvin Luther by call or text to 207-949-3971

Norma Corliss called the roll, then read the minutes of the January 13 meeting. Motion was made and seconded to approve, motion passed.

Treasurer Joanne Bond said the total of all MCTA accounts is \$42,465.52. The TIP payment of \$3,175 has been made. Individual account totals were not immediately available. It was revealed that in the changeover from the former treasurer two \$1,000 scholarship checks had been mailed to the same recipient. The Board left the resolution of this matter to the persons involved. Motion was made and seconded to accept the treasurers report. Motion passed.

Joanne reported we now have 145 members. This total includes 11 new members however there are 40 members who have not paid for this year. She promised to get reminder letters to them soon.

Dugald Kell announced the NCTA consumer survey showed that 32.4 million real trees were sold in the 2019 season, down a very little from 2018 but prices were slightly higher. NCTA will partner with Indiana for a meeting this summer and with North Carolina in 2021.

Jim Corliss moved that the Board instruct the treasurer to send a check for \$250 to the Newfield Fuel Assistance in memory of Tom Bond. The motion was quickly seconded and passed. Joanne thanked the Board and said that Tom had begun that program when he was a selectman.

Jim also said he is looking for sources of 2-0 plugs of both blue spruce and balsam for sale at Fryeburg. He is considering changes in the exhibit format to encourage more growers to participate.

Mike Seaman said the seed orchard committee will be grafting to creat new planting stock for the orchard.

In the absence of Artie Mingo there was no report on plans for the Fall meeting. The Board established the dates of September 12 and 13 for this meeting. It will be held at the Palmer farm in China.

There was a long discussion of the proposed promotion at the Bangor Fair. The Board did not express enthusiasm for the project, mostly because it is so early in the year to display trees and uncertainty about the financial aspects of the proposal by the Fair. In addition the requirement by the Fair that the exhibit be staffed by MCTA when the Fair is open could be difficult to meet.

Ryan Liberty made a comprehensive presentation of his ideas for the Marketing Committee going forward. He has formed a committee consisting of Pat Ankers, Mathew Quinn, Donna Palmer, Brandon Watson, David Karras, Len Price, Jeff Woodbury and Walter Gooley. He mentioned some of the ideas, such as the winner at Fryeburg each year presenting a tree to the Governor for the Blaine House and getting trees into all the Visitors Centers every year.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30PM.

Norma Corliss
Recording Secretary

MCTA September 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes

Norma Corliss

The Annual Business Meeting of the MCTA was conducted via ZOOM on Saturday, September 12. The meeting was moderated by MCTA member Ryan Liberty and opened at 8:30 AM.

Minutes of the 2019 meeting were approved as published. Joanne Bond reported MCTA has assets of \$46,000. There are 145 members, however 30 have not paid dues for this year and will be dropped. She announced for those who did not know her husband Tom passed away last spring. Member Wayne Adams also passed away more recently.

Concerns were raised on how members can obtain pesticide credits. The Board of Pesticide Control is currently working on a method to do this remotely.

The primary source of funding for MCTA scholarships is the sale of seedlings at Fryeburg Fair. The Fair has been canceled. Len Price reported the Scholarship Committee is considering the possibility of skipping a year

because of lack of funding. There are presently 2 applications.

One year ago the MCTA Board directed the nursery to plant enough seed each year to produce about 100,000 trees per year. Larry Downey announced this was done and in two years MCTA members will be able to obtain all the MCTA plants they need.

The Nominating Committee presented three names for three year terms on the Board beginning in January 2021. They are Ryan Liberty, Lee Skillin and Mike Seaman. The slate was approved.

Jim Corliss announced he had just done a four minute video about the tree and wreath exhibit at Fryeburg Fair. It will appear under the Demonstrations button on the Fair website, www.FryeburgFair.org.

Member Mac McCullen said the Trees For Troops will go forward this year with the usual 300 trees from Maine. He asked members to contact him at Piper Mountain with the number they wished to donate.

Dugald Kell spoke about the benefits of becoming an NCTA members and particularly the “best practices” section of the website which focuses on sales in the COVID era.

Jim Corliss brought forward activities of the Promotion Board. The programs for this season are all in place. \$265,000 has been allocated for various research projects. One of particular interest to MCTA is a study of how to restrict cone formation in young firs, especially fraser and balsam.

The business meeting was suspended from time to time for presentations normally associated with a fall field meeting. Ann Trenholm, marketing specialist at the Maine Dept of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, gave a talk on marketing in the COVID era. Member Len Price took his phone to the field and gave a comprehensive presentation on common (and some uncommon) weeds which may be found in our fields and how to deal with them. Matt Quinn of Cornville ran a video he had made showing members how to produce Youtube videos showcasing their own farm.

The meetings, including both business and programs, concluded at 12:30PM.

Norma Corliss
Recording Secretary

MCTA September 2020 Directors' Meeting Minutes

Norma Corliss

The September 2020 MCTA Directors meeting was called to order via ZOOM at 6:00PM September 13 by President Stephen Higgins. Recording Secretary Norma Corliss called the roll. Officers and Directors attending were Stephen Higgins, Joanne Bond, Jim and Norma Corliss, Len Price, Michael Seaman, Brett Mitchell, Pat Ankers, Tom McNeil, and Dugald Kell. Not attending were Artie Mingo, Lee Skillin, Rob and Donna Turner, Calvin Luther, Frank Zmigrodski, and Doug Kell. Guest was Ryan Liberty.

Minutes of the March 27 meeting were read by Norma Corliss and approved.

Joanne Bond reported the following balance in the various MCTA accounts: General Fund, \$18,989.30. Marketing \$86.79. Website \$2,917.50. Seed Orchard \$10,668.70. Meetings \$6,695.88, Scholarship \$2,916.75. Total assets, \$42,275.10. There are currently 145 members however 30 have not paid dues for 2020 and will be dropped. She made a motion that Doug Kell be awarded a Lifetime Membership in MCTA. Motion was seconded and approved. She read part of a brochure from a group called the Climate Council of Maine. They are asking if MCTA would like to affiliate with them. Discussion was put off until the January meeting.

The nominating committee presented the names of Artie Mingo, President, Ryan Liberty, Vice-President and Norma Corliss, Recording Secretary. The slate of officers for two year terms beginning in January 2021 was approved.

Len Price said he had received a third application for a MCTA scholarship. He was concerned that the committee would have to award a lower amount than has been the practice because of no income from Fryeburg Fair. Jim Corliss moved that \$1,000 be transferred from the general fund to scholarship. After discussion, Jim

changed the amount to \$1,500. Motion passed. Jim then moved that the annual stipend to scholarship from the general fund be raised from \$250 to \$400. Motion passed.

Mike Seaman said 40 grafts had been done last spring to supply new plants for the seed orchard. All had failed. The seed orchard committee did not know why this had happened. They are exploring the cost to have grafting done professionally. Motion was made to support a needle retention study. Motion passed.

Ryan Liberty reported for the Marketing Committee. They are moving to make sure existing or former activities such as tree for the Blaine House and the Visitors Centers are not dropped. Many other ideas have surfaced and will be discussed within the committee. Ryan also said control of the MCTA Facebook page will be turned over to Matt LaCasce.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.

Norma Corliss
Recording Secretary

MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT

Ryan Liberty

The Marketing Committee is made up of the following members of the MCTA: Len Price, Walter Gooley, Pat Ankers, Heidi Watson, Matt Quinn, Matt Lacasce, Donna Palmer, Jeff Woodbury, David Karas, Ryan Liberty. We met on July 8th and came away from the meeting working on the following initiatives:

- Welcome Center Promotion - We'd like to keep and invigorate our 'Welcome Center Promotion'. It was felt that this effort goes a long way in promoting MCTA with a broad group of people.
- Seed orchard harvest promotion – The story behind the work that has been done and continues needs to be told. It was agreed we'll focus on this on future social media posts.
- Needle retention testing - In a project that we're working on with the Seed Orchard Committee, we harvested scion wood from the Norridgewock Seed Orchard on September 26th. We'll be adding that to specific progeny from Len Price's farm and all will be sent off to Washington State University for needle retention testing.
- Blaine House Christmas Tree Event – The group would like to continue on with this event as it obviously creates the kind of buzz that is good for our brand. We're in discussions with the Mills administration now.
- Improve MCTA Advocacy within government organizations – It seems we currently don't have strong advocacy within Maine state government anymore, as you'd see with the maple, apple and other popular Maine crops. We'd like to try to improve this. We've already established a strong advocate for us within the Maine Department of Agriculture in Anne Trenholme. We hope to continue with this in other areas of government.
- Big E Virtual Event - We're working with the Department of Agriculture on identifying opportunities with the Big E virtual events.
- Fryeburg Fair - I reached out to Jim Corliss to try to identify ways that we could help him in his efforts at the Fryeburg Fair. A group within the Marketing Committee have already come forward to do this.
- MCTA photo & video archive collection – I'd like to try to begin to archive some of the membership photos and videos for posterity, as well as for promotion. As we compile these they will be hi-lighted on social media.
- Leverage the MCTA Facebook Page – We have just recently won back administrative rights to the MCTA Facebook page. We will begin to add content soon.
- We continue to encourage membership MCTA membership to use and create content on Facebook Groups and YouTube.
- We're working on putting a float in this year's Wells Christmas Parade. If it comes to fruition, we'll plan on promoting local farms, the MCTA and 'Get Real – Get Maine'.

Ryan Liberty, Chairperson

NATIONAL CHRISTMAS TREE ASSOCIATION

Choose & Cut Farm COVID-19

BEST PRACTICES RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Christmas Tree Association has developed these best practice recommendations for Choose & Cut farms to use as guidance to adapt their business to the circumstances they will face during the 2020 Christmas season due to COVID-19.

Choose & Cut farms must protect the health and safety of their employees, provide customers with the confidence they need so they can enjoy selecting a tree without risk and demonstrate to state and local officials they are conducting business responsibly. We highly encourage you to develop the best possible response to these recommendations:

DEVELOP A COVID-19 PLAN

- Frequently sanitize items and areas such as hand saws, tree cart handles, counter tops, door handles and restrooms
- Limit the number of customers permitted inside buildings, minimize or eliminate wagon rides, fire pits, or other places that people gather
- Supply no touch garbage receptacles
- Offer Santa either on closed circuit TV or live at a distance
- Do not erect photo op "cut-outs" where faces come in contact
- Offer individually bagged food items instead of self-serve loose items such as cookies
- Provide a server for drinks instead of offering self-serve
- Require all dogs to be on a leash, or discourage dogs, as they cause unnecessary interaction among customers
- Encourage customers to tie their own trees on their vehicles by offering an instructional video

SALES & PAYMENT

- Install windows or plexiglass partitions at sales counters
- Offer Curbside pick-up
- Use a touchless pay credit card system
- Price products to limit the use of coins
- Eliminate the need for customer signatures on credit card transactions

PROTECTING CUSTOMERS

- Take staff temperature daily, provide PPE for all employees, do not permit staff exhibiting symptoms of illness to come to work
- Encourage customers to visit during non-peak hours

- Create special hours for select customers (elderly and at risk)
- Advise customers that you reserve the right to deny service to anyone displaying signs of illness or not following farm guidelines
- Have sanitizing stations available to staff and customers
- Request masks be worn by those able to without adverse health impacts
- Require masks be worn when social distancing is not possible, as on wagon rides to fields or in checkout lines
- Offer masks or neck gaiters for sale (with farm name or logo)

COMMUNICATIONS

- Discuss procedures with staff to keep employees safe
- Train staff on new procedures to keep customers safe
- Communicate early the proactive steps your farm is taking to keep customers safe through website, newsletter, social media, phone message, local paper, etc.
- Recommend signs at farm: wear mask inside buildings, limited numbers in gift shop (follow your state/county regulations), maintain social distancing, manage customer flow (one-way traffic in and out)
- Stress no visitors to farm if ill or had contact with someone ill with COVID-19
- Consider sign in sheet with family name and phone number. Break into morning/afternoon each day

RESOURCES

- Additional information is available on CDC, State and Local Health Department websites
- **There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be transmitted on plants or plant products** Source: Cornell Cooperative Extension/New York State Integrated Pest Management

NATIONAL CHRISTMAS TREE ASSOCIATION

Christmas Tree Lot COVID-19

BEST PRACTICES RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Christmas Tree Association has developed these best practice recommendations for tree lot operators to use as guidance to adapt their business to the circumstances they will face during the 2020 Christmas season due to COVID-19.

Tree lot operators must protect the health and safety of their employees, provide customers with the confidence they need so they can enjoy selecting a tree without risk and demonstrate to state and local officials they are conducting business responsibly. We highly encourage you to develop the best possible response to these recommendations:

DEVELOP A COVID-19 PLAN

- May be needed for lot permits
- Designate a qualified COVID-19 coordinator to develop and implement the lot's COVID-19 plan
- Plan should consider NCTA's best practice recommendations
- Meet CDC and local regulations
- Provide personal protective equipment for employees
- Establish sanitizing protocols, also provide and encourage customers to use hand sanitizer upon entering the lot
- Adapt as changes occur

OFFER A DRIVE-THRU SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

- Having this capability and communicating it will attract at-risk and concerned customers
- Explore alternatives to traditional face-to-face sales if drive-thru is not possible

PAYMENT TRANSACTION

- Install physical barriers between cashiers and customers
- Provide masks and gloves for all checkout staff
- Use a touchless credit card payment system (there are many options available which should be explored before the season)
- Limit cash sales to exact change only
- No paper receipts or customer signatures
- Consider pre-orders, payment by phone, on-line orders and home delivery
- Disinfect payment area often

SIGNS

- Designate social distancing, entries, exits and traffic flow patterns
- Establish one-way traffic with separate entry and exit points if possible
- Identify hand sanitizer stations, payment locations and methods and other things of importance for customers to know

EMPLOYEE ILLNESS PLAN

- Create a plan and ensure all employees are familiar with it
- The plan should include how to handle employees who are ill or become ill at work
- Having a plan in place will position everyone to respond properly
- Clearly educate and provide employees current information about COVID-19 as suggested by the CDC

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Follow CDC and local guidance for customer numbers on the lot at a given time
- To maintain 6-foot social distancing 113 square feet per person is required
- Lot layout and traffic flow should be planned to facilitate social distancing
- Limit the number of people in line for payment with social distance spacing signs
- Entrance to the lot may need to be regulated at peak times to maintain the proper head count in the lot
- Encourage regular customers to shop at off-peak times to assist with crowd management

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:

Joanne Bond
174 Bond Spring Rd
W. Newfield, ME 04095

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 _____



If undeliverable, return to:

P.O. Box 160

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