



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

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A Publication of the Maine Christmas Tree Association

October 2021, Issue #269

Obituary for Bryant LaPlante

It is with great sadness that we mourn the passing of Bryant LaPlante, a long time member of MCTA.

Bryant Edward LaPlante

August 19, 1942 - July 24, 2021

Cornville - Bryant Edward LaPlante, 74, passed away July 24, 2021, at Gosnell Memorial Hospice House in Scarborough. He was born August 19, 1947, in Bangor, the son of Edgar B. and Hazel A. (Davis) LaPlante.

He graduated from Stearns High School in Millinocket in 1965, continued his education at Farmington State Teachers College and graduated in 1969 with a Bachelor's degree. He was a self-employed income tax preparer (Tax Smart), Christmas tree grower (The Forest) and grade school teacher in the Waterville school district. He was a member of the Maine Christmas Tree Association and enjoyed motorcycle touring, road trips, and car cruising in downtown Skowhegan in his customized Hyundai Tiburon or his Polaris Slingshot.

Bryant is survived by his son, Matthew LaPlante of Portland; daughter, Megan G. LaPlante of South Berwick; brother, Michael LaPlante and partner, Esther Coyle, of Portland; 3 brothers-in-law, David Hodges of Old Orchard, Terry Hodges of Albion, and John Hodges of Jefferson; nephews, Shawn LaPlante and wife, Andrea, of Cumberland, Christopher LaPlante of Portland. Bryant also appreciated the long-term support of his friends, Mark Poulin and Terry Hewey.

In lieu of flowers, friends wishing may make donations in Bryant's memory to a charity of their choice.

A celebration of life will be held Saturday, September 18, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. at Dan & Scott's Cremation & Funeral Service (Adams Chapel), 445 Waterville Road, Skowhegan, ME 04976.

Published in the Bangor Daily News on September 12, 2021

MCTA Winter Meeting January 11th, 2022

Mark your calendars for the 2022 Winter Meeting on January 11th at the August Civic Center. A Directors' Meeting will precede the MCTA member meeting on the evening of January 10th.

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SECRETARY'S CORNER

Joanne Bond

Happy Fall everyone!! The rush is on for the busy Christmas season which is going to be busier than ever. The Association has been sold out of wholesale trees since last Spring and I have four pages of customers waiting. So during the rush if someone should back out on you or you otherwise have extra trees to sell, PLEASE let me know.

Back on the 11 and 12 of September we had our Summer/Fall meeting at Ben and Molly's tree farm in South China. What a meeting it was! I did not see one blade of grass out of place on the plantation. It was beautiful. We all had a great time, the meeting was packed full of important information and the food was excellent. Many thanks need to go out to Rob and Donna Palmer, Ryan Liberty our Vice President, and anyone else who helped make it such a big success.

At the Saturday meeting we awarded Lifetime Memberships to both Jim Corliss and Dugald Kell Sr. for all their years of hard work and dedication to the Association.

As far as the Association goes, we are up in membership and the bottom line is good and healthy. We have many new members this year as well.

Thank you very much and have a great season!

Joanne Bond

Executive Secretary/Treasurer

bondjoanne1947@gmail.com

TREASURY REPORT

Joanne Bond

Following is a summary of MCTA's account balances:

Account	Balance 4/30/21
General	\$20,673.91
Marketing	\$2,786.79
Website	\$5,777.5
Seed Orchard	\$11,426.66
Meetings	\$7,316.28
Scholarships	\$1,775.75
Total	\$49,756.89

MCTA 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes Norma Corliss

The annual meeting of the Maine Christmas Tree Association was held September 12, 2021 at Ben and Molly's Tree Farm in South China, Maine. The meeting was called to order at 9:10 AM by Vice President Ryan Liberty.

It was moved that the minutes of the last meeting be accepted as published in the newsletter. Motion passed.

Executive Secretary Joanne Bond reported we have 125 members and the organization is financially healthy.

Ryan Liberty said the Marketing Committee is focusing on Fryeburg Fair as a great marketing tool for MCTA members. New signage is being prepared and growers are being asked to exhibit trees.

Len Price reminded members that the deadline for scholarship applications is October 1. He announced Kelco Industries had donated \$500 to the scholarship fund because there was no income from the Fair last year.

Gary Westlake from Pennsylvania gave a very comprehensive summary of the activities of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board.

Ryan reported that the Seed Orchard committee has examined two sites for a possible new seed orchard. Maine Woodland Owners may have a site which could be made available very reasonably.

The Nominating Committee presented the names of three members to fill the three year term beginning January 1, 2022. They are Gary Fisher, Larry "Mac" McCullen and Matt Quinn. All three were elected. It was announced that Director Pat Ankers had resigned. Anyone interested in filling this vacancy until December 31, 2022 should let President Artie Mingo know. *(Editor's note: this director position has been filled. See the minutes of the Directors' meeting that follows)*

Meeting adjourned at 10:00AM.

Norma Corliss

Recording Secretary

MCTA September 2021 Directors' Meeting Minutes

Norma Corliss

The MCTA Directors met September 12, 2021 at Ben and Molly's Christmas Tree Farm in South China. The meeting was called to order at 4:20 PM by President Artie Mingo. Officers and Directors attending were Artie Mingo, Ryan Liberty, Joanne Bond, Jim and Norma Corliss, Rob and Donna Palmer, Brett Mitchell, Tom McNeil, Calvin Luther and Dugald Kell. Not attending were Pat Ankers, Lee Skillin, Mike Seaman, Stephen Higgins and Doug Kell. Guests were Regina Mitchell, Mac McCullen, Matt Quinn and Margaret Schmidt.

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MCTA September 2021 Directors' Meeting Minutes (continued)

Art Mingo introduced Margaret Schmidt of Buxton, whom he had appointed to the Board to finish the term of Pat Ankers, who has resigned. Ms. Schmidt was approved by the Board to be seated immediately until December 31, 2022.

Joanne Bond reported that we have 127 members, however 21 have not paid dues and will be dropped after this meeting. Only 36 members attended the meeting today and only 24 Saturday, far less than the estimate given the caterer. A compromise was negotiated with the caterer. Motion was made to compensate the caterer \$2,000. Motion passed.

Current MCTA funds are shown as follows: General fund \$20,671.91. Marketing \$2,786.79. Website \$5,777.50. Seed Orchard \$11,426.66. Meetings \$7,316.26. Scholarship \$1,775.75 for a total of \$49,756.89.

Dugald Kell said that about half of our members have paid to be on the MCTA website.

There was a long discussion regarding the distribution of MCTA seedlings. In general it can be said we are much closer to the day when all members will be able to obtain all they want.

The marketing committee has several ideas to help get the Real Tree message out to the public. Right now the focus is on the Fryeburg Fair.

Mike Seaman sent a written report on two sites which have been identified as possible future locations for another seed orchard.

Mac McCullen said he already had 191 trees committed for the Trees for Troops program.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 PM.

Norma Corliss

Recording Secretary

MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT

Ryan Liberty

The MCTA Marketing Committee photographed and documented the MCTA 2021 Annual Meeting held on September 11th & 12th at Ben & Molly's Christmas Tree Farm in China, Maine. The farm is owned by MCTA members, Rob & Donna Palmer. The two-day event began with a series of presentations and seminars, highlighted by MCTA president Art Mingo presenting lifetime achievement awards for service to the MCTA to members Dugald Kell Sr. and Jim Corliss. The day was also marked by an update from National Christmas Tree Association President, Dugald Kell Jr., and State of Maine Bureau of Forestry Director, Patty Cormier, as well as Maine Office of Tourism Director of Communications, Jennifer Geiger.

The field day portion of the event was held at the farm, and included a presentation by Christmas Tree Promotion Board Secretary, Gary Westlake. Other presentations included weed identification and mitigation strategies by member, Len Price; a shearing demonstration by members Duane and Matt LaCasce; and a history of the MCTA seed orchard by Dr. Maxwell McCormack. It was announced that the 2022 MCTA Annual Meeting will be held at Quinn's Christmas Tree Farm in Cornville, Maine, which is owned by Marketing Committee member, Matt Quinn. Photos and a summary was sent to the National Christmas Tree Journal.

Much preparation and work has gone into working with the Fryeburg Fair Committee to prepare for this year's event which kicks off on Oct 3rd. Photos were taken and will be updated on the MCTA Facebook page.

The committee will visit with member farms shortly before Thanksgiving in order to promote the MCTA brand.

Thank you,

Ryan Liberty, Chairperson

Fryeburg Fair

Jim Corliss

The Fryeburg Fair Committee put together by Ryan Liberty did its work well, resulting in 33 trees being exhibited. The previous best was 29 and two years ago only 12. The exhibit area was nearly filled and the trees were uniformly top quality. All week long there were people wandering through them, looking at the tags to see what kind they were and who had grown them. Wreaths did not do as well, with only a few showing up.

Seedling sales were a big surprise. In the past we had only exceeded \$3,000 in sales a couple of times. This year sales were well over \$4,000! I had ordered 300 Blue Spruce, thinking we would probably sell out late in the week. They were all gone early afternoon of the second day! It was too late to order more.

I can't say enough about the help rendered by Gary and Melba Fisher throughout the week. They were there every day, putting out the ribbons in the morning and taking them in at night, bagging a good share of the 1,800 seedlings we sold, and countless other tasks. Ryan Liberty gave of his time, Joanne Bond spent a day, as did the Barden Family. Matt Quinn helped with set-up. Bob Payne sat in for a little while one afternoon.

Here are the results of the judging:

FRYEBURG FAIR TREE CONTEST RESULTS

Class I – Balsam Fir

1. Finestkind Tree Farm (Dover-Foxcroft)
Grand Champion and Peoples Choice Winner
2. Skillins Greenhouse (Falmouth)
3. G & S Tree Farm (Bangor)
4. Ben & Molly's Tree Farm (South China)
5. Trees to Please (Norridgewock)

Class III – Pine

1. Finnegans Fine Firs (Bethlehem, NH)
2. Skillins Greenhouses (Falmouth)
Scotch Pine
3. Finestkind Tree Farm (Dover-Foxcroft)
White Pine
4. <no entry>
5. <no entry>

Class II – All Other Fir

1. Finestkind Tree Farm (Dover-Foxcroft)
Korean Fir, Sub-Alpine Cross / Reserve Grand Champion
2. Boiling Spring (Dayton)
Balsam-Fraser Cross
3. Finnegans Fine Firs (Bethlehem, NH)
4. Trees to Please (Norridgewock)
Fraser Fir
5. Pleasant View (Hodgdon)
Balsam-Fraser Cross

Class IV – Spruce

1. Adams Family Tree Farm (Kennebunkport)
Meyer Spruce
2. Nutkin Knoll Farm (Newburgh)
Meyer Spruce
3. Finnegans Fine Firs (Bethlehem, NH)
4. Pleasant View Tree Farm (Hodgdon)
5. Chadwick Florist (Houlton)

FRYEBURG FAIR WREATH CONTEST RESULTS

Class I – Decorated

1. Laurie McKenna (Rumford)
2. Trees to Please (Norridgewock)
3. Finnegans Fine Firs (Bethlehem, NH)
4. <no entry>
5. <no entry>

Class II – Undecorated

1. Trees to Please (Norridgewock)
2. Laurie McKenna (Rumford)
3. Finnegans Fine Firs (Bethlehem, NH)
4. <no entry>
5. <no entry>

UPDATE ON TREES FOR TROOPS

Rick Dungey, Exec. Director
Christmas Spirit Foundation

September 23, 2021

Hello everyone.

I hope you had a safe, fun and somewhat normal summer and are looking forward to a great harvest season. It was great to see so many of you at the state grower meetings I attended this summer. I'm going to be talking to the Georgia growers at their meeting next weekend, and then attending the NH/VT meeting in a couple weeks.

I'm just going to rapid fire some updates about Trees for Troops, so here it goes:

Promotional Items

If you need items to display to show customers you support T4T, we have them and can send them to you. Please ask using the "Supporter Participant Application" form. Stuff we have in inventory:

- 2'x3' paper posters for indoor use
- 7'x2.5' vinyl banner with metal grommets for outside/inside use
- truck magnets
- postcards (these can be used as handouts at community events, pumpkins (fall) customers, etc)
- pocket folders (these are great for press kits if you have media coverage)
- customer donation jars & stickers (we have 2 stickers, one specifically for T4T and one generically for CSF)

We'll put examples of these in the tool kit area of the website:

<https://www.christmasspiritfoundation.org/marketing-toolkit>

This stuff doesn't do any good sitting in my office, so if you want to display any T4T stuff, use the form and we'll send it to you.

Forms

We have simplified into one form the various ways that you all support the program, whether it be donating trees, volunteering to be a pick up location, putting out donation jars or any of the many ways to get involved. Hopefully it makes it much easier and simpler to let us know how you want to participate. It is the "Supporter/Participant Application". Please contact us for the form, so you can complete and return it to help us keep track of all the support we are getting from those of you in the Christmas tree industry.

Official Locations

For those farms/lots who want to leverage T4T into a cause marketing effort and have your customers or sponsors donate trees to the program, you still have until October 6 to sign up to be an "Official Location". We are producing now the specially branded promotion pieces for those locations to display. Use the "Official Location Application", which you can obtain from us. When someone asks us where they can go to buy a tree and donate it, we will direct them to the list of Official Locations. When we publish the list in the next week or so, we will distribute a news release, make SM announcements, and will also incorporate new social media marketing tools such as geo-fencing. If you have customers and/or local sponsors buy and donate trees and don't need the extra marketing effort, then there's no need to sign up as an "Official Location". It's just another "tool in the toolbox" that would work for some, especially if pre-selling donated trees.

Bases

In the past year, we have received a request (all 5 branches) to be added to those who receive trees from 49 bases. FedEx has committed to deliver trees to 80 total (compared to 79 last year). So obviously, we can't say

UPDATE ON TREES FOR TROOPS (continued)

yes those 49 new requests. However, we're working with the various branches to put together a list of 80 locations and asked them to consider the best way to have new ones participate. We should have that final list compiled this week.

Trees

I know, this is the "elephant in the room"I've talked to enough growers at meetings this summer to understand it's going to be hard to get trees into the T4T stream. I have confidence in the creativity and commitment of you folks though. I know some who have sponsors pay for trees, some have customers donate them...all that is great. Realistic estimates are going to be key though as we start signing up pick up locations. Also, I'll just give this reminder again, we have ways to help coordinate (and pay for) gathering trees from farms who may not be close enough to a pick up location to easily drop off some trees. If you and/or the T4T Coordinator from your state thinks there are some outlying farms who would donate some trees if we could get them to a pick up spot, contact me and let's figure it out.

Social Media

We're going to be ramping up a large volume of social media posts going forward. If you want to harness the power of this communication tool and ensure your customers know you support T4T, make sure to use these tags in any posts about T4T: #treesfortroops #trees4troops #fedexcares #militaryfamilies. Also, you can follow @Christmas Spirit Foundation and @Trees For Troops

I'll be sending more frequent updates in the next few weeks. Thanks again for everything you do. Shoot me an email or give me a call if you'd like to discuss anything about CSF and the T4T program.

Rick Dungey
Executive Director
314-416-2245



NCTA Director's Report

Dugald Kell Jr.

In early August I traveled to West Jefferson, North Carolina, to attend the NCTA Board Meeting and National Christmas Tree and Wreath Contest, which was held in conjunction with the NC Christmas Tree Christmas Tree Association's summer meeting. Many tree growers from NC and the surrounding states, as well as NCTA members from various states from all parts of the US, were in attendance.

The winning trees in the National Tree Contest were: (a) a Fraser Fir from Peak Farms in Jefferson, NC, as the 2021 Grand Champion; (b) a Leyland Cypress from Berry's Tree Farm in Covington, GA, as the 2021 Reserve Grand Champion; (c) a Douglas Fir from Evergreen Acres Tree Farm in Auburn, PA, as the 2022 Grand Champion; and (d) a Blue Spruce from Cline Church Nursery Fleetwood, NC, as the 2021 Reserve Grand Champion. In each of the next two years, the Grand Champion winners will be presenting trees to the First Lady for the Blue Room at the White House, while the Reserve Grand Champions will provide trees for the Vice President's Residence.

Next July the NCTA will hold its annual Board meeting at the Nova Scotia Tree Growers' summer meeting in or near Halifax.

Photos from the MCTA 2021 Annual Meeting, September 11 & 12



Having fun at Friday evening's barbeque.



More fun at Friday evening's barbeque.

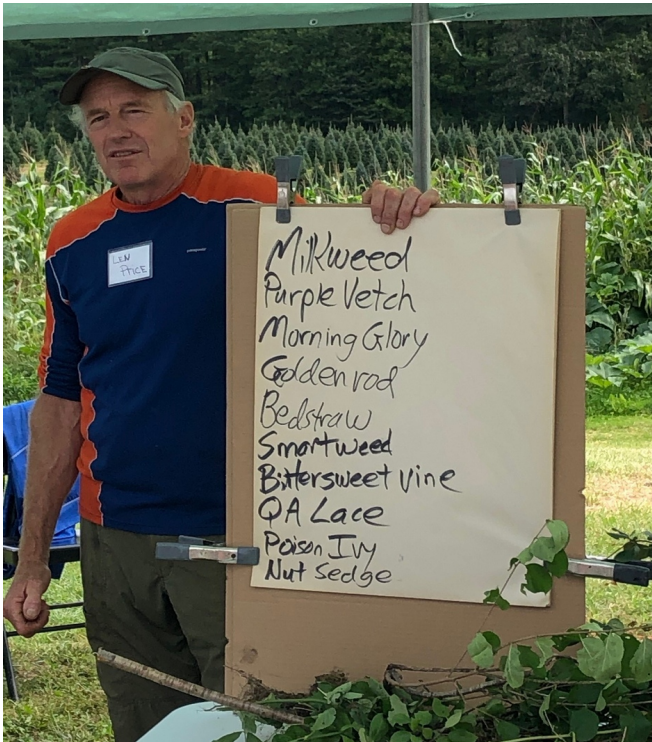


Artie Mingo awards Jim Corliss a plaque in recognition of his Lifetime Membership.



Gary Westlake speaking about the CTPB.

More Photos from the MCTA 2021 Annual Meeting, September 11 & 12



Len Price talking about weeds.



Dwayne and Matt LaCasce giving a shearing demonstration.



Max McCormick speaking about the origins of the MCTA seed orchard.



Artie Mingo honoring our meeting hosts, Rob and Donna Palmer, with an MCTA sign.



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