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 Bryan Mayo, Vice President
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A Publication of the Maine Christmas Tree Association

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Greetings from our President

Matthew Quinn

Greetings MCTA members,

"Summertime and the livin' is easy..." unless you're a Christmas tree farmer, then it's full steam ahead! Hopefully everyone was able to get their trees in the ground. Mother Nature didn't work in our favor, but we have to play the hand we're dealt.

The MCTA Fall Meeting Committee, lead by VP Bryan Mayo with massive assistance from Christmas Tree Atlantic members Matthew Wright and Brian Fox, has been hard at work with regular planning sessions for our Fall Meeting which will be held September 13-14 at Fox Brand, Inc in Richmond Corner, New Brunswick, Canada. Brian Fox is a long time Christmas tree farmer and MCTA member. We are collaborating with Christmas Trees Atlantic this year and the featured speaker list is a "who's-who" of Christmas tree growing. If you do not have your passport, start working on getting it now. It's a straightforward process. I have submitted my paperwork with ease and await my credentials in the mail.

Another effort that MCTA is undertaking is expanding its membership. I have met a few farmers who are not members, and it always surprises me when people are not interested in taking advantage of the Association and the benefits it has to offer. The networking ability alone in my opinion is worth the annual fee, as I have met many farmers and learned so very much about the industry from them. It's difficult to make that pitch without some tangible media to give to new farmers, so MCTA Treasurer/Secretary, Heidi Watson, and MCTA administrative contractor, Jenn Hicks, will develop membership pamphlets and packages to share with new farmers who may be interested in joining the MCTA.

In the wake of the most recent scam attempt, just a friendly reminder that my email addresses are: matthew.quinn141@gmail.com and quinnstreefarm@gmail.com. These are the only two emails I use. Remember that the MCTA officers will never solicit for your personal information, gift cards or cash in the form of a random email. We are all readily available to answer questions, and as many of you did, feel free to contact me or others if something looks a little hinky.

Quinn's Tree Farm will be hosting an event on Friday June 27th from noon to 3 pm. Dr. Manjot Sidhu, Assistant Extension Professor and Ornamental Horticulture Specialist at University of Maine Cooperative Extension, will be speaking on relevant topics to the tree industry. The agenda has not been finalized as of press time; however, phytophthora has been mentioned as a likely candidate. Brett Johnston will be there as well. We did something similar last year and it was well attended. Stay tuned for more information.

On Saturday August 9th, 9 am to noon, Quinn Tree Farm will be hosting Jason Hilton, District Forester from the Maine Forest Service to talk about trees as part of a farm tour and other tree related demonstrations. Updates will follow as well.

The rainy weekends are bound to break at some point. All spring I have been looking at places desperate for drain tile. No doubt come July, I'll be looking into irrigation. Would we want it any other way?

Dirigo My Friends, I'll See You Soon.

Matt



2025 Officers & Directors Maine Christmas Tree Association

Officers

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Directors until 12/31/25

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Calvin Luther
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(3rd seat vacant)

Directors until 12/31/26

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(3rd seat vacant)

Directors until 12/31/27

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(3rd seat vacant)

Past President

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Matt LaCasce (NCTA Director)
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207-717-0836 matthewlacasce@yahoo.com

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Heidi Watson

Greetings!

I hope this newsletter finds you well! The Association is doing very well with over \$63,000 in the bank and 138 members.

A few events are coming up that need your attention. The summer/fall meeting will be held on September 13th to 14th at Brian Fox's farm just over the border in New Brunswick, Canada.

Also, the Fryeburg Fair is September 27th to October 5th. The competition trees and wreaths deadline is Friday, Sept. 26, before 12:45 pm. Thursday drop-offs are fine, any time between 8 am and 6 pm.

Please be sure to get your passports to meet in Canada! We have a spectacular meeting planned!

I want to welcome our newest members/farms :

Middle Branch River Farm	Kristy Perkins
Seekonk Tree Farm LLC	Bouchard Tree Farms
Lisa Boucher & Mike Polland	Gradeigh Cameron
Fred Dauths Christmas Trees LLC	Mr. D.'S Trees
Schoolhouse Cove Farms	Walsh Family Farm
Bowhorn Farm	East Branch Farm

Happy mowing!

Heidi Watson
Secretary/Treasurer

Summary of MCTA's account balances as of 6/05/2025:

Account	Balance 1/01/2024	Y-T-D Deposits	Y-T-D Expenses	Balance 6/28/2023
General	\$24,208.02	\$8,127.83	\$2,985.00	\$29,350.85
Marketing	\$1,779.99	\$0.00	\$350.00	\$1,429.99
Website	\$8,175.50	\$720.00	\$575.00	\$8,320.50
Seed Orchard	\$12,584.36	\$0.00	\$155.59	\$12,428.77
Meetings	\$5,905.16	\$700.00	\$767.65	\$5,837.51
Scholarships	\$6,669.48	\$0.00	\$1,030.50	\$5,638.98
Totals	\$59,322.51	\$9,547.83	\$5,863.74	\$63,006.60

2025 Fall Meeting – Sept 13-14
Registration Form on Page 9

MCTA Honors the Passing of Max McCormack Jr.

Long-time Member and Advocate, Researcher, Advisor for Maine Christmas Trees

Maxwell Leland McCormack Jr.

July 18, 1934 - March 11, 2025

Maxwell Leland McCormack Jr., loving husband of Lynne Marie Lavoie for 36 years, died in Orono, ME, on March 11, 2025. Maxwell was born July 18, 1934, in Emory University, GA, the only child of Maxwell and Bonnie (Batson) McCormack of Carbondale, IL.

He is survived by Lynne and three children from an earlier marriage and their families, Patricia Elwell and Brian of OH, Patrick McCormack and Jackie of VA, and Kelly Houseman and David of NY; and four grandchildren and five stepgrandchildren.

McCormack's first visit to Maine was by train in 1948. That summer at Buckskin Camp on Donnell's Pond, he decided to pursue a career that would contribute to maintaining the forest resources of Maine. In 1997 he retired from the University of Maine as research professor emeritus of forest resources. Throughout his life he was grateful for his many inspiring teachers, mentors, and friends from kindergarten through graduate studies, and beyond.



Dr. McCormack graduated from Cranford (NJ) High School in 1952; earned forestry degrees from The University of Maine, 1956 (undergrad Xi Sigma Pi, Forestry Honors Society); and Duke University (NC), 1959, 1963. Maxwell was a dedicated brother in Sigma Nu Fraternity. During 8 years in the U.S. Army Active Reserve he completed two advanced cycles of training at the Provost Marshall General's School, Ft. Gordon, GA, and was honorably discharged in April 1963. He was an accomplished graphic artist and a scholar of World War II. Throughout his life's travels he was always "thrilled to see Old Glory paint the breeze." While in VT he was employed at the Shelburne Museum as a part-time barge driver and substitute guide. In Orono he coached youth ice hockey, including the Orono Bantams in the first game on the new Alford Arena ice sheet in 1977. He contributed to a variety of community efforts and responsibilities in the towns where he resided.

During his forestry career he carried out consultations, workshops, and invited lectures in 28 U.S. States, 7 Canadian Provinces, 7 European nations, New Zealand, and Australia. Dr. McCormack taught at Southern Illinois University, the University of Maine, the former Maritime Forest Ranger School in Fredericton, NB; and the University of Vermont, where he offered a forestry survey course for non-forestry majors that was elected by thousands, including 778 students during the 1972 spring semester. He was a guest professor in German universities in Göttingen (1972-1973) and in Freiburg i. Br. (1991). McCormack was a fellow in the Society of American Foresters (SAF), a distinguished member of the Northeastern Weed Science Society, and an honorary lifetime member of the University of Maine Cooperative Forestry Research Unit, the Maine Hardwood Association, the NH-VT Christmas Tree Association and the Maine CTA. During his career he received many

Honoring Max McCormack (continued)

recognitions and awards including the Humboldt Prize from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany; the Integrity in Conservation Award from NE SAF; the Albert D. Nutting Award from the Maine Forest Products Council; the Austin H. Wilkins Forest Stewardship Award; and, in 2023, the Peter Lawrence Award for Outstanding Service to Maine Woodland Owners. The Wilkins Award citation credited McCormack, "...for leading the vibrant recovery of over 1 million acres of Maine spruce-fir forests after the cataclysmic 1975-1985 spruce budworm epidemic."

He was extraordinarily thankful for his long life during the best of times. A modest marker will be placed in the family cemetery lot in Cobden, IL, down the road from the site of his great-grandfather's farm. His cremains will remain in the forests of Maine. A celebration of life was held on April 13, 2025, at the Buchanan Alumni House, Orono, ME. Those who wish to remember Maxwell in a special way may make donations to The Clifford McIntire Room Fund, by online at our.umaine.edu/mcintire or by mail, University of Maine Foundation, Two Alumni Place, Orono, ME 04469. Condolences to the family may be expressed at BrookingsSmith.com.



Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting - April 14th, 2025

Jennifer Hicks

6:07 pm - Matt Quinn calls the meeting to order

Attendance

Matt Quinn (President), Bryan Mayo (Vice President), Ryan Liberty (Past President), Heidi Watson (Executive Secretary), Tom McNeil, Jim Hummer. Guests: Gary & Melba Fisher, Len Price and Jennifer Hicks (Administrative Consultant)

Absent: Calvin Luther, Dugald Kell, Matt Lacasce, Jim Corliss, Lowell Freiman

Minutes: Approval of the minutes from the January 13, 2025 Board Meeting. Passed Unanimously.

Secretary/Treasurer Report

\$65,000 in bank account. Memberships were due at the end of January. Have reached out to members who had not renewed. 92 paying members. 47 are receiving late notices. Would like to work with Jenn Hicks to reach out to past members to invite them to renew. There are issues about members who signed up in the middle of 2024 and wanted to buy trees but hadn't renewed for 2025 so were not qualified.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee: Discussion about the resignation of Lowell Freiman and how to fill the vacancy. Lowell's term ends at the end of 2026. There are other vacancies to fill as well and Matt Quinn pitches to the Board to think about potential nominees. Need people who are committed to contribute the organizational work. Seats available: 1 Two-year term (ends 2026) / 1 Three-year term (ends 2027).

Motion: Tom McNeil motioned to appoint Gary Fisher to the MCTA Board of Directors (Term end 2026). Bryan Mayo seconded. Unanimous approval.

Jeffrey Patterson offered to be considered for a board position.

Motion: Tom McNeil moved to nominate Jeffery Patterson to serve to be on the Board of Directors for a three-year term (Term ends 2027). Bryan Mayo seconded. Unanimous approval.

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting - April 14th, 2025 (continued)

Meetings Committee: Will be meeting with members of Christmas Tree Atlantic on Tuesday April 15 at 6pm online to start planning the Fall meeting in New Brunswick. Bryan Mayo will be reserving a block of rooms ASAP (both US & Canadian). Meeting will focus on sketching out an itinerary and possible speakers and logistics. Canadians offered to help with arranging tents, food, port-a-potties. There are things that need to be considered about border crossing. Recommend calling before crossing to be sure you are set. Will provide communication to members as information develops.

Budget: No report

Scholarship: Len Price informs the board that a student would like to apply for a scholarship but it is outside of the application window. Len proposes that there be a second scholarship award period in addition to the October 1 deadline to accommodate a greater pool of applicants. The student is enrolled at NTI vocational school. Ryan Liberty brought forward the candidate and requested that he have an early consideration. It is suggested that a spring deadline be added to the Fall deadline. This change will accommodate current trends of financial need for skill-seekers.

Motion: Tom McNeil motions to allow the Scholarship Committee to create a second MCTA scholarship period with a deadline of June 1 and give them the power to decide about how to facilitate. Jim Hummer seconded. Unanimously approved. Ryan Liberty abstained.

Seed Orchard: Scions are cut and looking for refrigerator space for storage. Grafting will commence in a few weeks. Gathered a lot of supplies this winter. Will be planting grafted trees in Hartland orchard in three weeks.

Proposal for board consideration: MCTA provides a \$1,000 contribution to the “Dr. Gary Chastagner Endowed Chair in Plant Pathology” campaign at the Washington State University to continue the work of Dr. Chastagner who has been a pillar of research and development worldwide for horticulture groups such as flowers, the ornamental trade, forestry and Christmas trees.

Motion: Jim Hummer motions to contribute \$1,000 to Washington State University for the Chastagner Endowed Chair campaign. Bryan Mayo seconded. Unanimously approved.

Marketing: Working with the Fishers on Fryeburg Fair promotions. Blaine House has invited MCTA to deliver trees and wreaths in December. Using a stylized version of the MCTA logo on the email blasts. Asked Jenn Hicks to think about featuring a grower in the next newsletter. Hoping to have the Jim Corliss video edited and released soon. MCTA archive will be established in the Liberty home basement.

Fryeburg Fair: Cumberland Fair is scheduled the same time as Fryeburg Fair. The two organizations are working to settle the conflict. All help positions filled with some “stand-bys”. Seedlings are ordered: 500 blue spruce and 500 balsam. Some left over from last year.

Ornaments for Troops: 800 ornaments will be arriving at the Fisher’s and ready for packing on June 10th.

Website: There have been issues with members renewing and not being able to update their information on the grower list on the website. There is money available to update the website as needed. The board recommends that the website committee uses that money to ensure that the website function is at full power.

[editor's note: the website developer was sent a list of the problems weeks prior to this meeting; most of the issues were fixed by 4/18/25 and the rest were fixed by 4/24/25]

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting - April 14th, 2025 (continued)

Old Business: Reviewing Matt Quinn's ideas for the future of the organization:

Establishment of a 501 (c) 3 Organization: NO UPDATES

Program for New Growers: Matt will be hosting a "New Grower" workshop with Maine Forest Service District Forester Jason Hilton mid spring at a Christmas tree farm. Details will be forthcoming.

Establishing a MCTA legislative committee: Matt Quinn proposes investigating becoming a paying member of the Ornamental Horticulture Council. OHC represents, coordinates, and acts upon the unified interests of the ornamental horticulture industry in the State of Maine. The following associations are presently included: Maine Arborist Association, MAA, Maine Landscape and Nursery Association, MELNA, Maine State Florist's and Growers' Association, MSFGA, Maine Golf Course Superintendents' Association, MGCSA. Each member association sends two members of the organization to act as voting members.

Next steps: Matt Quinn and other board members meet with OHA coordinator Jessie O'Brien to discuss this opportunity for MCTA before the next Board meeting.

New Business:

Gary Fisher has met with Senator King and Rep. Pingree to discuss federal cuts to USDA. Will be meeting with Rep Golden on April 18 to discuss impacts of loss of federal funding. Send stories to Gary to share with Golden.

Update about follow-up steps to create a mentorship service for members.

Gary Fisher putting out a bid for roping for Fryeburg Fair. Will put an announcement out on next email blast.

Motion to Adjourn: Made by Gary Fisher. Bryan Mayo seconded. Unanimously approved. Adjourned 7:51pm.



www.mainechristmastree.com



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2025 FALL MEETING SEPTEMBER 13 - 14, 2025

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www.shiretowninnandsuites.com

A passport or passport card is required!

To cross the border into Canada from the US, a valid passport or passport card is required. To learn about other considerations regarding crossing the border go to:

www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/menu-eng.html

For more information, contact MCTA Vice President Bryan Mayo:
(207) 570-8388/bryanemayo@gmail.com

Fall Meeting Registration Form on page 9

Fryeburg Fair Report

Gary & Melba Fisher

UPDATES: As you hopefully all know, the Fair will run 9 days this year from Sept. 27 through Oct 5. Please make note of this! Trees and wreaths will have to be at the fair no later than 12:30 Friday the 27th. Still looking for bids on roping for the fence at the Fair or I will have to use plastic or worst case scenario have none at all. Questions or information call Gary at 207 322-8716 or email to alonghere492@gmail.com.



Thank you,

Gary & Melba Fisher
MCTA Fryeburg Fair Superintendents

AGCOM (Agricultural Council of Maine)

Gary Fisher

The AGCOM committee has been diligent following the actions and bills in Augusta. We meet the last Wednesday of every month, 9 am to 12 pm, in Augusta at the Farm Bureau office. MCTA members interested in sitting in on a meeting are more than welcome.

On a day-to-basis I post information from the State house, Department of Agriculture, pesticide board, University of Maine and AGCOM on the mainechristmastree.com site, under the industry and updates heading. Information affecting MCTA growers is emailed out on an immediate-need-to-know basis.

Gary Fisher, AGCOM REP.
alonghere492@gmail.com

Seed Orchard Committee Report - May 30, 2025

Calvin Luther

The Seed Orchard Committee reports that 27 of the transplants successfully grafted in 2023 by our grafting contractor Ellis Sprague were outplanted at the Huff Hill seed orchard in Hartland on May 22 by Len Price, Jim Hummer and Calvin Luther. The Huff Hill seed orchard has 9 rows of trees (rows 25' apart), with 8 trees per row (trees 20' apart within rows). It rained quite hard the next day providing good moisture for the transplanted trees.

Last summer we applied 1000 lbs of maglime to the site per the instructions from the soil test performed a couple of years ago. In August we also had the previously laid out planting spots herbicided prior to this years spring planting, and those spots remained weed free. Mowing was also performed at the site.

This May Len Price and Calvin Luther also performed some grafting of more scion collected from the 7 superior trees from the needle retention study onto root stock which was potted in 2024 for this purpose. This grafting was performed to fill out our goal of fully occupying the Huff Hill seed orchard. Our goal is to plant 70 superior (from needle retention study) seed source trees into this seed orchard, 10 grafted seed orchard trees per each of the 7 superior needle retention trees from the needle retention study. Also keep in mind that the superior needle retention trees are but a subset of the original 13 superior trees from our two other seed orchards in Norridgewock and Ashland.

Seed Orchard Report (continued)

Todd Murphy will visit Norridgewock to apply some herbicide and fertilizer to the newer trees in the orchard and will inspect the orchard for potential cones for this year. He does report that the cold weather has delayed bud break somewhat on his farm this year.

Calvin Luther
Seed Orchard Committee



Jim Hummer planting a grafted transplant into Huff Hill seed orchard.



Len Price grafting scion from superior needle retention onto root stock.



Final graft of superior needle retention scion onto root stock.

MCTA/CTA FALL MEMBER MEETING SEPT 13 & 14 Richmond Corner, NB, Canada

Meeting Registration:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Farm/Business Name: _____

Are you a member of one of the Christmas Tree Associations?

- ☐ MCTA
- ☐ CTA
- ☐ Both
- ☐ Other CT Association

This is a Two Day Event – Programs are held Saturday 8:30 am – 3:00 pm and Sunday 8:30 am - 2:00 pm

Register Before September 1:

\$120 per member for two days with lunch both days	Number of members	Amount
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_____	_____
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\$150 per non-member for two days with lunch both days	Number of non-members	Amount
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_____	_____
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\$60 per person for one day with lunch included	Number of people	Amount
Please choose Saturday or Sunday		

_____	_____
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Registration Fees After September 1:

\$140 per member for two days with lunch both days	Number of members	Amount
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_____	_____
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\$170 per non-member for two days with lunch both days	Number of non-members	Amount
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_____	_____
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\$70 per person for one day with lunch included	Number of people	Amount
Please choose Saturday or Sunday		

_____	_____
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Guest Names: _____

Vendor Registration:

\$50 per booth or save the reg fee and donate a \$50 gift certificate for drawing at the event

Business Name or Vendor _____ Amount: _____

Make check payable to: MCTA

Mail to: MCTA, 918 Richville Rd, Standish, ME 04084

You can also register online and find more event details at www.mainechristmastree.com

Questions? Contact MCTA at: email: contact@mainechristmastree.com, phone: 207-576-5076



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