

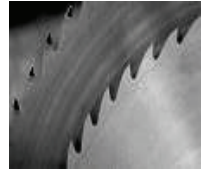


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The Cutting Edge



Inside This Issue

P. 2-3, TIMPRO CT News: 'Dead Standing'; Brennan Sheahan on 'The Perfect Storm'

P. 4, Viewpoint: Brennan Sheahan; Phytosanitary Regulations

P. 5, CT-DEEP 2018 Tree Mortality Report

P. 6-7, An Interview with CT-DEEP Director of Forestry Chris Martin

P. 8-9, Meet Our Scholarship Winners: Rebecca Durinick and Erin Reilly

P. 10, Thinking Outside the Box: The Magic Fruit Tree

P. 11, Ad: Ct. Mulch Openings

P. 12, Calendar

Cover: Photo courtesy Gerard Milne; Art by Deborah Roach

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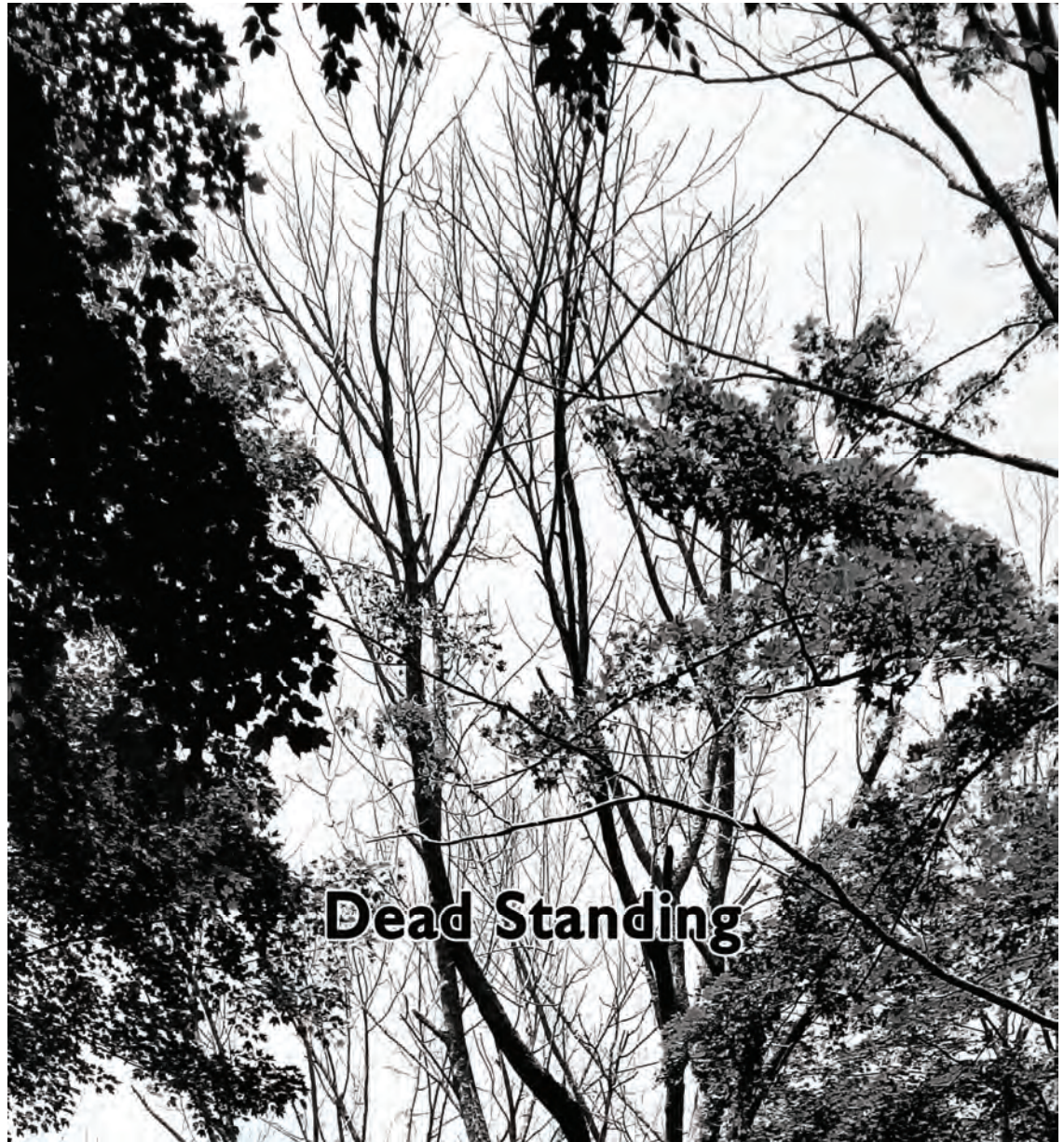
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Dead Standing

The Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc. (TIMPRO CT) is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)6 non-profit corporation. Our mission is to enhance the image and understanding of the forest products industry throughout the state through public outreach programs, education, and a commitment to professionalism among its members.



Photo of dead ash along a Seymour, CT roadside courtesy of Gerard Milne, CT-DEEP Forester.

"DEAD STANDING"

That expanse of blue sky in the cover photo reveals the gap where ash trees once provided roadside shade. Those trees are now "dead standing."

In the last few years, several factors have increased the number of "dead standing" to a crisis point:

- Insect and disease infestation has killed thousands of acres of Connecticut trees.
- The glut of "dead standing" has overwhelmed markets and lowered prices.
- These lower prices plus tariffs remove the incentive to cut down the "dead standing".
- These dead trees undercut forest regeneration and, at risk of falling along roadsides and other places, endanger the public.
- Phytosanitary regulations have made it more difficult to export hardwood. (Read more about this on p. 4)

After sending a letter to CT-DEEP foresters (opposite page), TIMPRO CT President Brennan Sheahan reported, "I heard that the Governor took notice of the situation recently due to a Hartford Courant article ["Huge Number Of

Dead, Dying Trees In Connecticut At Increased Risk Of Falling Due To Years Of Drought, Insects," Gregory Hladky, August 22, 2018] and that he was looking to schedule meetings with DEEP Forestry to be brought up to speed with our current situation. I hope I didn't over dramatize the situation but I wanted to let them know that it is, in fact, real and will be a problem moving forward."

Membership in the Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association

Membership is open to sawmills, loggers, foresters, landowners, supporting businesses and anyone else interested in supporting the forest products industry in Connecticut. Benefits include educational programs, a voice in the Connecticut Legislature, a listing on the TIMPRO CT website, current information on issues affecting the forest products industry, discounts from area businesses, a free subscription to ***The Cutting Edge*** and more.

Dues are \$150/year. \$25.00 for student memberships.

Applications are available by calling TIMPRO CT at 860-948-0432 or visiting the website at www.timproct.org.

Aug. 29, 2018, to Christopher Martin, CT-DEEP Director of Forestry, and William Hochhozer, CT State Forester.

"Gentlemen: I am writing on behalf of our membership to provide some input regarding the 'perfect storm' of thousands and thousands of acres of tree mortality, the current U.S./China trade negotiations that have resulted in heavy tariffs, and newly imposed phytosanitary restrictions on log exports. The combination of all three of these factors is hitting the CT forest products industry in a terrible way. The financial loss to the landowners, loggers, sawmills, and town/State municipal agencies is and will be substantial.

The forestry community was well aware of the three years of consecutive gypsy moth infestations and drought-like conditions. We knew that things were going to be bad for the health of our oak/hickory forests but none of us expected the massive amounts of mortality that presented itself this summer of 2018. Drive down any road east of the Connecticut River and look up and you cannot miss the image of death, thousands of dead roadside trees. These dead trees are not only roadside but can be found deep within our forest landscape. The forest products community has reacted by aggressively answering the calls of the landowners that have found their family woodlots devastated by this insect. Unfortunately the calls are just too frequent. There is no way that our industry will be able to react quickly enough before most of this material loses its value as sawtimber.

Now add the trade negotiations, tariffs, and phytosanitary restrictions and we have a 'perfect storm'. This has crippled the movement of log exports, lowered value of timber sales, and shut down markets for our forest product materials. The U.S./China trade wars have drastically impacted our ability to pay a fair market value for this glut of dead wood material. In May of 2018 most mills were of the mindset to purchase this material from loggers and landowners but drop the grade and volume accordingly. Presently, as a direct result of the U.S./China trade war, our mills have been forced to stop purchasing this material altogether. The reasoning behind this is the oak lumber/log market has seen a 25% drop in value in the last few months and bigger drops in pricing are expected by the end of September. The uncertainty of the log/lumber market has created a panic for some creating a situation where sellers are dumping large volumes of this material into the market to try to unload their inventory before a big 'crash'. Now the folks that have prepaid for standing timber are finding themselves without the markets to move their sawlogs.

The log and lumber export is a very large market that serves the forest products community of CT very well. The uncertainty created by China and U.S. trade negotiations has crippled this market. Local markets cannot absorb the volume of material that is being produced. Add in the thousands of acres of dead trees that need to be harvested ASAP before spoilage sets in and we really have a crisis situation upon us. The value of the sawtimber of this dead wood has fallen into the firewood and pulpwood category. This market has been strong this year in CT but will most likely become flooded as well once the massive amounts of dead wood starts pouring into these markets. The outlook for 2019 is very grim for our industry.

Our industry has invested millions of dollars into infrastructure and equipment to keep our forests healthy and productive by actively harvesting woodlots on a regular basis. Loggers and sawmills have been growing their businesses steadily since the economic downturn of 2008 only to see their ability to earn a dollar drastically reduced. Landowners have carefully managed their woodlots to increase their return on this long-term investment only to see their retirement money or children's college tuition die standing in their back yards. The forest products industry in CT is in trouble. The forest landowners with high tree mortality are in trouble. CT municipal agencies are going to be in trouble when they start realizing the scope of the problem with the sheer volume of dead trees that need to be dealt with.

What can be done? The best thing to immediately help our situation would be to urge our government leaders to come to a solution with our trade relationship with China. This would greatly ease the uncertainty within the hardwood market and create stability in the export industry. Our forest products harvesters could then concentrate their efforts on harvesting the thousands of acres of dead trees because they should have markets to move the material. The timing of all of this is crucial because these dead trees are only viable for so long.

Please use this information when in discussions with government leaders and help our forest products industry by bringing the severity of this situation to their attention."

Thank you, Brennan Sheahan, Forester, TIMPRO CT President

VIEWPONT: BRENNAN SHEAHAN

A forester now for CT Mulch, Brennan Sheahan states, "My job is to make sure there is enough inbound pulpwood." He is always on the lookout for hemlock, in particular. "That's a big change in my career," he noted. "I never thought I'd be chasing hemlock pulp."

But hemlock aside, he sees a troubling situation for TIMPRO CT members. "The mills won't buy any hardwoods because of oversupply," he said. "It bumps down value which makes it hard to get dead trees cut down." He predicts we'll have a better idea of the damage in the spring of 2019 but notes, "Red, black, and white oak are 'dead standing' because of the gypsy moth. The market is flooded. Land-owners are taking it on the chin."

And while he supports free trade, he points out that the federal government is creating programs to help farmers hit by tariffs on soybeans and other crops. "Why," he asks, "is the forest products industry ignored even though we are an agricultural product?"

PHYTOSANITARY REGULATIONS AND FAIR TRADE

While these statistics are not the latest, the July *Hardwood Review Weekly* reported that May log exports to China "tumbled" as a result of enhanced phytosanitary requirements imposed on the import of hardwood. China is now requiring that all US hardwood logs shipped to China be debarked and sanitized in the US prior to export rather than "in Hong Kong or elsewhere" as had been the practice. Further, the change was announced in April and went into effect immediately. The *Weekly* estimated in July that some 9,900 containers of logs already in transit to China could be rejected. While the Chinese had not announced in April what they would do about those containers in transit, they were clear that all shipments in transit leaving US ports on or after May 2 would be "summarily rejected."

No surprise then, as the *Weekly* reports, exports in May dropped 45% from record highs in March and April. By June, exporters were beginning to debark and fumigate logs in the US and some shipments that had been in transit were accepted. But, long term, the US does not yet have the fumigation capacity needed to restore previous levels of trade. Furthermore, the EPA has implemented a phase-out of methyl bromide, a preferred fumigant, because it depletes the ozone layer. The EPA is actively re-searching alternatives.

Despite this news, *Weekly* Editor Dan Meyer expressed cautious optimism. For one, the reported May figures reflected a drop of 33% in ash exports to China, a change that could really be a function of the scarcity of ash. He further notes that 2014 and 2016 recorded similar large drops in exports. It's also possible Chinese manufacturers will demand easing restrictions that cut into their productive capacity. Finally, if Chinese stocks of logs drop very low, the result may be increased demand in the future.

Phytosanitary regulations aside, hardwood exports are caught up in a US/China tariff standoff that could be "very, very painful," according to Michael Snow, executive director of the American Hardwood Export Council, as reported this August in *Bloomberg News*. Snow noted that most US-manufacturing companies are small family-owned firms that will be hit hard by a loss of markets. "It's going to be a bumpy road," he said, "There's no question about it."

A special thanks to TIMPRO CT Treasurer Trish LaPlatney for sharing information from the *Hardwood Review Weekly*.



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2018 Connecticut Tree Mortality

Storms, Emerald Ash Borer, Gypsy Moth & Drought

1. 2018 Town Tree Warden Survey administered by DEEP Urban Forestry Program. 120 municipalities responded
 - a. 64% reported recent storms and tree mortality putting at least a "serious" strain on staff capacity and finances.
 - b. 19% described this strain as "severe".
 - c. 14% described it as "extreme".
 - d. Most describe a worsening situation with a growing backlog of a steady accumulation of dead trees.
2. Causes of tree mortality and disposal concerns.
 - a. Emerald ash borer tree mortality continues to spread west to east across Connecticut. Ash comprise 5 to 15% of Connecticut's tree canopy. Ash common along roadsides.
 - b. Three consecutive spring droughts allowed Gypsy moth caterpillar defoliated acres to explode; 2015 – 175,000, 2016 – 400,000, 2017 – 1.175 million
 - c. Secondary stressors taking advantage of weakened trees causing additional mortality.
 - d. Wood utilization and waste disposal challenged due to limited low grade markets.
3. Trees are an asset to be managed, not a problem to be overcome.
 - a. Tree Wardens and forest resource managers are not surprised by the amount of dead and dying trees. Governor Malloy's Two-Storm Panel which directed the DEEP Commissioner to form a [State Vegetation Management Task Force](#) identified capacity and financial resource constraints with recommendations, some of which have been instituted. Failure to invest in management causes problems, not the trees themselves.
4. The response at the local level needs to increase.
 - a. Access to resources to remove dead and dying trees. This may be an opportunity to employ innovative solutions through regional coordination and targeted grant programs.
5. Eastern CT 2018 dead tree roadside inventory administered by UConn Extension Forestry.
 - a. 160 randomly selected road miles surveyed in Windham, Northern New London and eastern Middlesex counties.
 - b. All dead roadside dead trees are counted and categorized according to potential risk.
 - c. Rates ranged from one or two dead trees per mile to more than 60 for an average of 14 dead trees per mile. There were no road segments with no dead trees.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

AN INTERVIEW WITH CT-DEEP FORESTRY DIRECTOR CHRISTOPHER MARTIN

CT-DEEP Director of Forestry Christopher Martin is well aware of the concerns raised by Brennan Sheahan about the serious threat to forest health posed by the sheer volume of “dead standing”. That’s only one of the many issues covered at a June 2018 meeting of the Connecticut Forest Practices Advisory Board. Also on the table were: protection of core forests, appointments to the Advisory Board, improving forestry terminology, and new hires.

The good news first: Martin reports, “We have completed the interview process for three positions and will be making offers to candidates. The highest priority was to appoint a new Service Forester but someone looked at the list and realized it would make more sense and be most efficient to fill the two other vacancies now – State Land Forester and Forest Practices Forester implementing the Forest Practices Act. The benefit is that the new hires will now get to work with experienced staff that is still here. We have an opportunity to do some mentoring and training.”

Each new staff member will make a big difference in his or her field. “With the new State Land Forester we can do more active forest management,” Martin said. Even with a glut of wood, he noted, “We still have multiple bidders for every lot. Oak isn’t doing well but maple and ash are. The markets vary.” The Service Forester will be invaluable because NRCS enrollment continues to hit record highs. “Just five to six years ago, it was zero. Now NRCS budgets over \$1,000,000 a year for participating landowners. We especially need to be out there responding to forest pests,” Martin added.

But not every forestry issue is hopeful. Private landowners especially face a tough market. “Connecticut has so many dead trees that there’s very limited markets to sell them,” Martin noted. “We have nowhere to dispose of the roadside wood from utility, DOT, and municipal hazard tree removals. It has always been marginal to ship chips out state.” Echoing Sheahan’s assessment, he said, “We have a waste management problem now as well as a forest management problem. The firewood market is saturated and low grade stuff can’t move.”



It’s not just trees affected by insect and disease. It’s entire habitats. Matthew J. Toenies, Pennsylvania State University, and collaborators have found that the loss of hemlocks drives the disappearance of birds that are specialized to them. They also found that birds living in habitats *not* dominated by eastern hemlock are expanding into these dying hemlock forests and diminishing avian biodiversity. Thus, a less diverse bird community is apparently due solely to one invasive species of insect, the woolly adelgid. For example, Blue Jays and Cowbirds are replacing this hemlock-dependent Blackburnian Warbler.

	Primary Owner	Secondary Owner
Primary Residence	83%	
Has a farm nearby	15%	
Years owned		
0 – 10	26%	
11 – 20	18%	
21 – 50	45%	
50+	5%	
Purchased	78%	
Inherited	22%	
Gender	70% male	70% female
Age		
Under 50	14%	16%
51 – 70	60%	67%
70+	27%	17%
Bachelors or advanced degree	51%	62%
Household annual income		
Less than 25,000	8%	
25,000 – 50,000	19%	
50,000 – 100,000	41%	
100,000 – 200,000	16%	
Over 200,000	16%	

Protection of core forests (250 acres or more) is critical as the state shifts its support away from biomass to solar and wind energy. The problem is that solar arrays developers want the least expensive land to build on – and that's often forest. DEEP has developed a solar array forestlands habitat impact map ([ArcGIS Web Application](#)) that it hopes will guide developers away from important core forest areas

Impacting all these issues is the "silver tsunami", the aging of forest landowners, often with large holdings, who subdivide and sell off valuable forest acreage they no longer want to own or manage. [Ed's Note: This demographic table, originally published in the June 2015 *The Cutting Edge*, was taken from Mary Tyrrell's groundbreaking assessment, *Understanding Connecticut Woodland Owners*.]

Would a change of terminology make forest preservation and management more attractive? At the June meeting Dr. Mark Ashton, Yale's Morris K. Jesup Professor of Silviculture and Forest Ecology and Director of School Forests, proposed the term "clear felling" rather than "clear cutting" for forestry operations in Connecticut. "Hats off to him for bringing that distinction to the Forest Practices Advisory Board," states Martin. "In other areas of the country logging includes lots of site preparation including grubbing out stumps and roots. Here, the regenerative processes remain in place." He hopes the new term will be more appealing to private forest landowners. "That's especially important for the success of the Young Forest Initiative. To create the critical habitats provided by young open stands", he notes, "We have to start somewhere. Typically a 'clear cut' has a lot of negative connotations and will put off municipalities. But 'clear felling' may take some of the stigma away" from logging.

There is still one piece of unfinished legislative business – Martin hopes the Advisory Board will finally be required to have a representative from the forest products industry. It's true that anyone can attend the open meetings, as Sheahan does regularly, but can't vote. "The 2018 proposed legislation was not controversial," Martin sums up. "The Bill got bipartisan support so we are planning to reintroduce the same in the 2019 CT General Assembly."

For the future, Martin says, "We can't stop trees from dying, we can't do much about trade, but we can reassure and support landowners."



BITS AND CHOKERS

MEET OUR TIMPRO CT SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!



*Carrying the banner at the USNSCC Ceremony.
Photo courtesy of Rebecca Durinick*

Rebecca Durinick remembers the childhood moment that sparked her interest in conservation law: "I was ice fishing on a frozen lake one day with my parents. A Conservation Officer approached. He wore a dark green uniform. I noticed how clean cut, well-spoken, and kind he was. He introduced himself and asked us how the fishing was going. He took a careful look around, presumably surveying the number of tip-ups we had out and looking at the fish we had caught laying on the ice. After inspecting and returning my parents' licenses, he told us to enjoy our day and thanked us for being ethical. This brief interaction began my lifelong goal of becoming a Conservation Officer."

A graduate of Mercy High School in Haddam, Rebecca, known as "Becky," has already garnered an impressive array of skills that will help her reach her goal. She worked for three years with CT-DEEP wildlife biologists banding Canadian geese. She also helped record the nightly sounds of

the newly-found leopard frog. As a member of the Haddam Volunteer Fire Company, she was elected chief of the junior program. Her advisor Jeffrey Dосkos noted in his TIMPRO CT recommendation that the number of female applicants increased when she became chief thanks to her showing that "women can succeed in the volunteer fire service."

Equally demanding and extensive are her accomplishments for 4-H. At county events Becky taught children wilderness survival skills, care of farm animals, and woodworking. In addition to serving in various offices, including as a junior member of the Middlesex County 4-H Advisory Board, she was Assistant Poultry Manager for four years. Her dedication won her a trip to the 2017 Presidential Inauguration as a Connecticut 4-H Delegate. A cadet in the USNSCC (United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps), Becky was the Ships Company Honor Graduate of her 2016 Boot Camp class. She was also the Delta Division Honor Graduate of the USNSCC Petty Officer Leadership Academy and became an Assistant Recruit Division Commander.

Adding to these successes, Becky has achieved Certification in: CPR, Conservation Trapping, Boating/Personal Watercraft, Conservation Education/Firearms Safety, and Conservation Bow Hunting.

Becky will continue her studies at Unity College in Maine where she hopes to get a BA in Conservation Law with a possible minor in wildlife biology. She is also very excited about joining Unity's Timber Team Club. For the future, she says, "I envision myself educating the public about wildlife, fish, and environmental issues while at the same time ensuring public safety."

Erin Reilly knew a little about the TIMPRO CT scholarship from her sister Mary, a 2016 winner. But the decision to apply this year was purely her own. In her application she described how her natural resources class at Nonnewaug High School gave her practice and skills in areas such as woodlot management, safe tree climbing techniques, and estimates of stand value. As a result, she has become very interested in the business side of forest management.

In an August conversation as she was preparing to head off to Paul Smith's College, Erin explained further, "A friend got me into Farm Business Management. I even competed in a CDE at the state level. Part of it is huge individual written tests and the rest is a team test so you're judged on collaboration." She ranked 6th place individually and her team took second place twice. Erin has practical experience, too, raising chickens in her backyard. "One turned out to be a rooster," she said. "We had to give him away because he was too loud." Besides the chickens, she has a dog Jimmy that's "definitely some chowchow. He's 15-16 years and a sweetheart."



In addition to her science course work, Erin has a strong background in languages having studied Italian and Latin, which she says was "a lot of fun." She took an AP English class through UConn and enjoyed reading such classics as "1984," "Frankenstein," and "Brave New World." She is a member of the National Honor Society, Literary Club, and the Algonquin Archers Club. When she has free time, she likes to knit.

Erin says, "The Forestry CDE, Natural Resources CDE, and classes at school have given me a taste of the fields of silviculture and dendrology, so I hope to pursue these interests in college. My career goal would be to become a professional forester. My preferred place of employment would be the United States Forest Service but I wouldn't mind placement in the private sector. Through my courses, I have developed appreciation for the current balance of profit and preservation. The conservation of natural resources is a long-standing goal of mine."

Above, left. Erin Reilly sugaring and bottling maple syrup with her high school forestry team. Photos courtesy of Erin Reilly.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

THE MAGIC FRUIT TREE

Sam Van Aken is an art professor at Syracuse University, but his most famous achievement is a botanical wonder - the Tree of 40 Fruit.

As reported by *Science Alert* this past June, Van Aken learned in 2008 that the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station was about to shut down an orchard due to a lack of funding. This orchard grew many heirloom, antique, and native varieties of stone fruit, and some of these were 150 to 200 years old. Determined not to lose these precious rare old specimens, Van Aken, who grew up on a farm, bought the orchard and spent the following years figuring out how to graft parts of the trees onto a single fruit tree.

With a pool of over 250 varieties of stone fruit, Van Aken developed a timeline of when each of them would blossom in relationship to the others and started grafting a few onto a working tree's root structure. Once the working tree was about two years old, Van Aken used chip grafting to add more varieties on as separate branches. In the springtime, he took a sliver off a fruit tree that included the bud and inserted that into an incision in the working tree. He then taped the graft, allowed it to heal over the winter, and pruned it to grow into a normal branch. Best of all, he preserved varieties that would have been lost because they aren't valuable for commercial growers who consider keeping and other qualities more important than taste.

Aken has planted some 20 such trees around the US and noted, "Since all of these fruits ripen at different times, from July through October, you aren't really inundated." But in the spring, when all the buds burst at once and the tree is hidden by a profusion of blooms in pink, white, red and purple, the result is a tree that is, truly, a living work of art.





ANNOUNCING OPENINGS

Log truck / Log Trailer Driver Wanted

CT Forest Products is looking for log truck & trailer drivers ~ Must have Class B for log truck/Class A for log trailer - Will train the right candidate. Offering medical/short term/ 401K match. EOE ~ email mike@ctmulch.com or call 860-689-9579.

Experienced all-round equipment Operator Wanted

High speed debarking and chipping facility looking for an experienced, all round equipment operator (Loader, log truck, wood knowledge, etc. preferred) Offering medical/short term/ 401K match. EOE ~ email Kurt@ctmulch.com or call 860-689-9579.



PO Box 508
Oneco, CT 06373

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2018

CT Professional Timber Producers Association

Look for mailings or check the website for further details and any changes to the Calendar of Events.

Ideas for classes you would like offered?

Contact TIMPRO CT:

PO Box 508

Oneco, CT 06373

860-948-0432

info@timproct.org

**Articles, ideas, pictures
you'd like to see?
hallie.metzger@rcn.com**

www.timproct.org



Tues. Oct. 30, Heartsaver™ Standard First Aid & CPR, 8:30-4, CF&PA, Middlefield, CT. 2.5 CEUs, free for TIMPRO CT members, \$90 for non-members, \$100 late registration and walk-ins. Registration available through October 24.

Get Involved

The Board of Directors is seeking members who are interested in helping out with various activities throughout the year such as CEU programming, fairs, Ag Days at the State Capitol in March, Plant Science Day in August in Hamden, programs at the Agriscience Centers and more. The Board, made up of business owners, just like yourselves, is keenly aware of the demands on your time. Any amount of time, no matter how minimal, is greatly needed.

Contact TIMPRO CT for more information:
860-948-0432 or e-mail: info@timproct.org.