

Clackamas County Farm Forestry Association—An Historical Perspective

Scott Hanson

This article is Part II of a two-part series on organizations within Clackamas County promoting forest management for small woodland owners. Part II reviews the historical role Clackamas County Farm Forestry Association (CCFFA) has played promoting forest management for small woodland owners and Christmas Tree production in Clackamas County. There is an old saying which says, “It’s difficult to know where you are going, if you don’t know where you have been”. History gives us a context to carry past successes (and lessons learned from failures) into our planning for the future. CCFFA tours where veteran woodland owners narrate successes/failures on their woodland property allow us newer members to avoid repeating similar mistakes. For example, any information we can glean from CCFFA veterans/OSU Extension Agents on weed control, stand density management, road systems, etc gives us a better chance of being successful managing our woodlands and Christmas Tree acreage. The CCFFA was formed in 1957. It is the oldest county forestry association and currently has the largest county membership in the state.

CCFFA has five primary objectives:

- Educate forest landowners about

the benefits available from sound forest management.

- Educate the public and policy makers on the value and the importance of managing our forest resources.
- Promote legislation that helps create a favorable climate for managing our forest.
- Cooperate with forest industry and federal and state agencies for the benefit of the small woodland owners.
- Protect and preserve the rights of private woodland ownership.

There are many ways to tell the CCFFA story over the past 46 years. One way is to recognize the 20 presidents of the organization from first president Ernest Zahar to current president Dick Caldwell. And to highlight events which take place in each decade. The year 1997 marked the 40th Anniversary of the CCFFA. CCFFA member Merrily Enquist researched and presented at the Fall 1997 Woodland Farmer of the Year Banquet a review of past presidents and events for CCFFA. Merrily has graciously allowed me to use her notes to help prepare this article. Thank you, Merrily. What follows is a recap of Merrily’s research on past presidents and events. My shorthand notation designates “CA” for Clackamas County Woodland Farmer of the Year Award winner, “EA” for Evergreen Award winner, and

“OA” for Oregon Tree Farmer of the Year Award winner. If an award was won twice, I indicated it by a “2” in parenthesis.

First Decade 1957 to 1967

Tour	Name	Area	Awards
1957-1963	Ernest Zahar	Molalla	CA
1964-1965	Clyde Ramsey	Molalla	CA(2), EA(2)
1965-1966	Jack Isberg		

Highlights in the First Decade include the formation of CCFFA, which held its first meeting in February 1957. Clyde Ramsey cites, the idea of a forestry association was proposed in a stump patch by OSU Extension Agent John Inskeep while on a woodland tour with a group of farmers. The vital issues of taxation and government controls on forestry for the Association in 1957 remain to this day. Everyone was learning about Christmas Tree culturing; and Barney Douglas was the teacher of note. Clyde Ramsey urged the development of a marketing association for Christmas Trees. Oregon Small Woodlands Association was getting underway in 1966; and tree farmers began signing up for the Small Woodlands Optional Tax.

Second Decade 1968 to 1977

Tour	Name	Area	Awards
1968-1969	Neil Beyer	Molalla	CA(2), OA
1970-1970	Clem Ault		CA
1971-1972	Jack Isberg		
1973-1974	Wendell Harmon		Beavercreek CA(2), EA, OA(2)
1975-1976	Lloyd Olson	Oregon City	CA
1977-1977	Vic Ems	Molalla	CA(2), EA, OA

Highlights in the Second Decade include Neil Beyer and his family’s continuing legacy toward tree farming. There was concern about the Optional Tax being administered by

the State Forester or the Department of Revenue. The State Forest Practices Act was being developed. Current issues included Christmas Tree theft, timber taxes, and helicopter logging. CCFFA sent a telegram to President Nixon countering his proposal to ban clear-cut logging on federal forests. Wendell Harmon was the first Oregonian to be named State Tree Farmer of the Year twice. Ken Humbert began Service Forester work at Clackamas-Marion office in Molalla. Harvesting permits were no longer needed for plantation Christmas Trees. A logger list was developed for CCFFA members, and we started having twilight tours. CCFFA set up a booth at the Clackamas County fair. We campaigned for capital gains treatment for tree growers.

Third Decade 1978 to 1987

<u>Tour</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Awards</u>
1978-1979	Otto Hudrlick	Molalla	CA, EA
1980-1981	Howard Hopkins	Beavercreek	CA, EA
1982-1983	Lebert Lundmark	Colton	CA, EA
1984-1985	Jim Wolfe	Sandy	
1986-1987	Dan Green	Oregon City	

Early in this decade the use and value of various sprays was under legislative consideration. 2,4,5-T was a hot topic. Federal cost sharing programs were in full swing; including Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP) and Forestry Incentives Program (FIP). In 1980 Howard Hopkins predicted the central issues facing tree farmers include funding for fire protection, land use planning regulations, support of small woodland owners, use of chemicals, pollution in wilderness areas, air quality, service forestry and extension forestry conflicts with environmental concerns. In the following decade (1990) Howard's wife, Margaret Hopkins would make a pivotal decision to donate their 120 acre tree farm (now known as Hopkins Memorial Tree Farm) as an educa-

tional demonstration forest. In the early 80's harvest taxes were increased and China was paying \$245 for #3 saw logs. Ken Everett produced a CCFFA banner so impressive, CCFFA was asked to contribute logo ideas for a state banner. In 1984 poplar and eucalyptus trees were attracting interest. The seedling committee produced 65,000 seedlings. In 1985 the search for superior trees began, and a seed collection committee tried to get a 5-year supply. Mike Bondi was selected from 14 candidates to become extension agent in forestry and Christmas trees for Clackamas County. Gypsy moth presented a threat to our trees. This decade ended with spotted owl petitions circulating, the loss of capital gains, the first tree farmer Recognition Banquet, and Bob Kintigh (Springfield) announced for the Oregon State Senate.

Fourth Decade 1988 to 1997

<u>Tour</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Awards</u>
1988-1989	Roy Beyer	Molalla	CA
1990-1991	Ken Everett	Colton	
1992-1995	John Poppino	Estacada	CA
1996-1997	Clem Hunter	Beavercreek	CA, EA

Early highlights in the fourth decade included a joint meeting with Washington FFA and OSWA, a two page quarterly newsletter started in 1990 by John Poppino as editor, and a CCFFA \$1000 donation toward the formation of Forests, Forever, Inc. Representative Peter Defazio (D-Ore) led an unsuccessful effort to ban log exports from private lands. In 1991 the spotted owl was listed as an endangered species. The CCFFA winter workshop was transformed into the highly successful Tree School. The CCFFA logo was revised. The newsletter became the *Forest-Tree Leader*, and John Foster (editor) won a national award. A Christmas tree marketing group was formed. As this decade ended, the 1997 OSWA Convention was hosted by CCFFA, we studied the issue of pests

and diseases in imported logs, and became interested in the certification of pruned forests.

Fifth Decade 1998 to 2007

<u>Tour</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Awards</u>
1998-1999	John Foster	Estacada	
2000-2001	Jim Wick		
2002-2003	Dick Caldwell	Beavercreek	
2004-05	Stan Beyer		
2005-present	Scott Hanson		

Highlights in the first half of the fifth decade include continued success at Tree School (341 attendees in 1998, 500 in 2000, 600 in 2002), Annual Seedling Sales, and Arbor Day sales event. CCFFA establishes internet website to provide information and schedule of upcoming events. Oregon voters overwhelmingly (81%) voted no to defeat Oregon Ballot Measure 64's restrictive forest practices in the November 1998 General Election. CCFFA played an important role getting signs placed and providing information on this ballot measure. Family Forest Day held on Belton Property shows forest management in a public oriented woods tour. CCFFA Equipment Show on Beyer Tree Farm in Molalla.

The volunteer efforts and commitment by these 20 presidents (and many other CCFFA members!) have brought CCFFA to where it is today. The volunteerism and commitment by current and new members will ensure the success of CCFFA's future. ■

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