10 things AFA has done for its members lately...

1. **Telling our story** – AFA continues to find new ways to tell the forestry story. Max Braswell and Seth Stephenson “zoomed” into thousands of Arkansas homes via KATV Channel 7’s Good Morning Arkansas show in September to provide an overview of the association’s work on behalf of its members and to educate viewers on the impact of the state’s forestry sector. The two were back on the air in October during National Forest Products Week to tout some of the more than 5,000 products we use every day that come from our forests.

2. **WOW Conference a First** – The Arkansas Tree Farm Program and AFA Education Foundation have stepped into the gap and revitalized The Woman Owning Woodlands Program (WOW) through consistent, monthly education and outreach sessions. The first WOW two-day conference took place October 21-22 at the lodge at Lake DeGray State Park. More than 30 attendees engaged in hands-on sessions and field trips devoted to Pollinators, including beneficial bees, butterflies, pollinator trees, quail and beneficial habitat for multiple species.

3. **Landowner Outreach and Education** – The Arkansas Forestry Association Education Foundation continues to offer monthly virtual landowner workshops as a way to provide resources during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Zoom session topics have included: Invasive Trees, Wild Turkey, Herbicide Applications, Pine Management, Wildlife Food Plots, Silvopasture, Timber Security, Best Management Practices for Water Quality, Prescribed Fire and Site Prep. AFAEF looks forward to continuing these monthly sessions in 2022.

4. **Annual Meeting huge success for smaller crowd** – COVID concerns may have reduced the in-person attendance by just a few, but it certainly didn’t hamper the excitement or success of the 76th AFA Annual Meeting October 5-7 at the Embassy Suites Northwest in Rogers. Telling our story within the changing landscape of forestry was the theme throughout the meeting as attendees heard great information on forestry’s role as a natural climate solution, how we are connecting with architects, engineers and builders to encourage the use of wood, how Walmart will incorporate Arkansas-grown pine into the mass timber used to construct their new corporate campus, and how there is a new vision for the College of Forestry, Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Arkansas-Monticello.

5. **Teacher Conservation Tour Reaches Teachers** – AFA Education Foundation Director Rob Beadel has conducted two of three Project Learning Tree Teacher Conservation Tour sessions for this year. Twelve educators attended Session 1 in July that focused on Forest Health. Then in October, 18 educators participated in Session 2 on Prescribed Fire. Session 3 – Pine to Paper is scheduled for November.

6. **Podcasts turn 20** – The AFA podcast, “Voices of Forestry,” recently reached 20 episodes and is now an established part of AFA’s public education and outreach effort. The podcasts have surpassed 6,000 listeners, including downloads from Canada, Chile, Brazil and the United Kingdom. A new episode of the podcast premiers on the first Friday of each month and has a “five-star” rating on iTunes. The most recent episodes focus on what landowners need to know about leasing their land for hunting and the “how-to” of ag land financing.

7. **Measuring our Tree Farm Success** – The Arkansas Tree Farm Committee recently completed the 2021 Tree Farm Program assessment. This arduous task, made even more challenging by COVID-19, is conducted every four years by third-party auditors Price WaterhouseCoopers to measure the program’s adherence to the American Tree Farm Standards. The results from the 32 properties are being finalized but early indicators show only a few minor non-conformances compared to more than 25 Good Management Practices.

8. **Person to Person at Tree Farm Conference** – After a year hiatus, the annual Tree Farm Conference returned to an in-person event hosted by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture Forestry Division Baucum Nursery. An excellent crowd of approximately 50 family forest owners engaged in discussions on the new Arkansas Landscape Management Plan and Tree Farm Standards, forestry practices to enhance wildlife habitat, innovative income sources for timberland owners and tree improvement. Baucum Nursery Manager James Shelton then treated the attendees to a tour of the nursery.

9. **Supporting our Partners** – Networking is one of the most valuable benefits of being part of the Arkansas Forestry Association – and not just for our members. The AFA staff recently participated in the Southwest Forest Products Expo at the Hot Springs Convention Center to network with members of the timber and forest products community from across the region, and to support our great friends at the Arkansas Timber Producers Association.

10. **Helping create a PATHH** – AFA was pleased to serve as a communications partner to promote the Pandemic Assistance for Timber Haulers and Harvesters Program. The PATHH program provides financial relief to timber harvesting and hauling businesses that experienced a 10 percent or greater loss of gross revenue in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible businesses will receive an initial payment of $2,000 after application approval. A final payment will be made after the program ends. The sum of both payments will not exceed $125,000.