

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



1 Voice of Forestry – AFA relishes its role as the “Voice of Forestry” in Arkansas and the opportunity it provides for us to promote the value of sustainable, working forests. Recently we had the opportunity to share a state legislative update at the annual Registered Forester’s Training Day, and insight on several key policy issues at the Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation’s Forestry Sector meeting. Plus – AFA Executive Vice President Max Braswell moderated a “Connecting Educators to Industry” panel where AFA forestry members shared their expectations and the challenges of finding qualified employees with teachers from across the state.

2 Building Relationships – The 2020 Primary Election fundraising season picked up speed over the summer and AFA was busy evaluating opportunities to support candidates through its Forest Express Political Action Committee. Each race is evaluated by the AFA Executive Vice President and members of the Government Affairs and Executive Committees to ensure the association supports qualified candidates for the General Assembly and Constitutional offices who have demonstrated interest and support for forestry, agriculture and business issues.

3 Tackling Tough Issues – AFA is working hard to help find a solution to the issues facing our logging community in the area of log truck insurance and the shortage of truck drivers. And we’re not alone. Partners such as the Arkansas Timber Producers Association, individual logging contractors, forest products manufacturers and forest landowners are working together on different components of the solution – ranging from integrating Team Safe Trucking training into the ArkPro Logger Training Program, to advocating at the federal level for passage of the Safe Routes Act of 2019.

4 Just for Fun – Over 200 AFA members, family and friends enjoyed the third annual AFA Night with the Arkansas Travelers on a perfect evening for baseball in late May. The only item on the agenda was fun, though there were plenty of items on the menu, as attendees enjoyed all the burgers, hot dogs, BBQ and soft drinks they could eat and drink for two hours during the game. “It’s like a family reunion at the ballpark,” said Max Braswell, AFA executive vice president. AFA listens to its members, and they tell us they most enjoy networking with colleagues, visiting with old friends, and making new ones. We can’t wait until next year!

5 Growing the Next Generation – AFA’s second Emerging Leaders Class of 13 young forestry professionals kicked off its two-year program in early March with an introduction to all things AFA. In May, members of the group toured the Weyerhaeuser seedling nursery in Magnolia and had the unique opportunity to view the science of acquiring and preparing pine seeds for planting, the planting process and millions of new seedlings just breaking the surface. They followed up in July with a trip to Green Bay Packaging’s Linerboard and Recycling facility in Morrilton to see the step-by-step papermaking process firsthand.

6 Making a Difference – The Log A Load for Kids Program is community-based philanthropy at its best, having raised over \$10 million for Arkansas Children’s Hospital (ACH) since it started in 1993 – over \$600,000 last year alone. The 2019 fundraising campaign for LAL’s six Arkansas chapters is in full swing with events in Texarkana, Glenwood, Sheridan, Malvern, Russellville, Monticello and

Warren – all to benefit children in need of critical medical services. There is big news just around the corner as LAL looks forward to revealing its latest endowment commitment to ACH, as well as some special recognition for Arkansas Log A Load for Kids!

7 Seasons of Change – Plans are nearly complete to host representatives from all sectors of the timber and forest products community at the 74th AFA Annual meeting at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Little Rock. Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson will deliver the keynote address on Wednesday morning, October 9. In addition, the meeting will include recreational and social events, a forest management workshop, and a day-long general session featuring topics on timber markets, the National Woodland Owners Survey and more. We hope to see you at the 74th AFA Annual Meeting, October 8-10, 2019 in Little Rock!

8 Public Outreach Leadership – Working in partnership with the Sustainable Forestry Initiative State Implementation Committee, AFA coordinated the publication of a new “Landowner’s Guide to Sustainable Forestry.” The 16-page full-color brochure is designed to help forest landowners find the resources they need to prepare a management plan, implement voluntary best management practices for water quality, identify threatened and endangered species, forests of exceptional conversation value and more. In addition to a printed version, the publication is also available on the AFA website at www.arkforests.org.

9 Family Forests – AFA is proud to administer the Tree Farm Program in Arkansas. Currently, there are 2,507 Tree Farms in the state, representing 476,550 acres of certified timberland. The ATFP recently selected regional finalists for the Arkansas Tree Farmer of the Year Award. The state-level Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Award is chosen from the district award winners and is then nominated for the National Tree Farmer of the Year award, awarded by the American Tree Farm System. The district winners for this year are: David & Susan Brown, District 1; Darrell Oglesby, District 2; David Rodgers, District 3; G. William Smith Family, District 5; Ron Bell, District 8; and, University of Arkansas Livestock and Forestry Research Station, District 8 (Non-profit). District award winners were recognized at the 2019 Tree Farmer Conference. The state award will be presented at the Arkansas Forestry Association Annual Meeting that takes place October in 8-10 at the Embassy Suites in Little Rock.

10 Education in the Spotlight – The Arkansas Forestry Association Education Foundation hosted the 33rd Annual International Project Learning Tree Coordinators’ Conference in Little Rock on May 6-9. A total of 113 PLT professionals from 39 states, Washington DC, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and Japan attended the conference. Arkansas PLT has conducted 24 workshops training 485 formal and non-formal educators in the award-winning environmental education curriculum so far this year. The AFA Education Foundation (AFAEF) also presented at and/or participated in 28 classroom programs, camp programs, forestry contests, civic meetings, and community events reaching 1,080 students, 2,416 citizens, and 96 schools throughout Arkansas. The AFAEF also partnered with the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center in Little Rock on their temporary exhibit “Finding Freedom in the Forest”. AFAEF continues to provide informational and educational meetings on a variety of topics and issues to forest landowners and managers across the state. To date, AFAEF has reached 1,592 participants representing over 94,274 forested acres across the region.

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