Become a Sponsor, Exhibitor for AFA’s 78th Annual Meeting

The Arkansas Forestry Association is all in on forestry this year as we gather for our 78th Annual Meeting in Hot Springs.

Sponsorships and exhibitor opportunities are now available for the Arkansas Forestry Association’s 78th Annual Meeting from September 26-28.

Since the end of our big 75th anniversary celebration, the AFA program committee has been diligently working to provide an excellent meeting this year. We are back in Hot Springs, a fan favorite, but will be at a brand-new location. Join us at the Oaklawn Racing Casino Resort as we go all in on forestry in Arkansas.

We are offering six different levels of sponsorship with this year’s meeting. AFA would like to go ahead and thank this year’s Premier sponsor, Farm Credit Associations of Arkansas, for their continued support of our event. At the next level, you can become a Diamond sponsor, which costs $5,000. With that, you get the following:

• Two complimentary registrations
• Full-page ad in the annual meeting program
• Logo on signage and A/V materials at the meeting

Tickets Now Available for AFA’s Night with the Travs

It is that time of year again when the Arkansas Forestry Association goes to the ballpark with our annual Night with the Travs event to take place on May 26.

Tickets are on sale now for AFA’s Night with the Travs at arkforests.org/event/2023Travs. Prices remain the same as in years past. Adult tickets are $15, youth tickets for kids 4-17 years old cost $10, and tickets for kids 3 years old and younger are free. You will have until May 6 to purchase your spots at the park.

For those that may not know, AFA’s Night with the Travs is an event we hold to simply gather our members together for a night of baseball, food, and comradery. Our guests will get to enjoy burgers, bratwursts, chicken, popcorn and much more as the Arkansas Travelers take on the Frisco RoughRiders.

AFA staff will be set up under the bridge at the front gate of the ballpark with your tickets and wristbands before gates open at 6:05 p.m. From there, we will gather at the Track’s Inn Picnic area near right field for the rest of the evening. The game is scheduled to begin at 7:05 p.m.

New Board Members Attend AFA Orientation

The Arkansas Forestry Association welcomed some of its newest board members to their new leadership position by holding an AFA Board Orientation on April 5.

Every two years, after a new board election, the association holds this event to provide those recently elected an opportunity to further learn about AFA’s operations and strategic plan.

AFA Executive Vice President Max Braswell started the orientation discussing what the association’s primary focuses are, which include advocacy, education, and communication. He continued with talks on the responsibilities of each staff member.

That led into Communications Coordinator Seth Stephenson’s role with the association. He talked about the work he does on a daily basis including preparing the various newsletters published by AFA, production of the podcast “Voices of Forestry”, amongst other communications and design work. Braswell stepped back into the conversation to discuss the Tree Farm Program administered by AFA. This was a great opportunity for new staff member Anna Sparks to introduce herself.
CALANDER
OF EVENTS

May 4-5
AFA Spring Board Meeting
DeGray Lake

May 10
10:00 a.m. - Tree Farm Committee Meeting
AFA Office/Zoom
Little Rock

May 15
10:00 a.m. - Program Committee Meeting
AFA Office/Zoom
Little Rock

May 26
6:00 p.m. - AFA night with the Travs
Dickey-Stephens Park
Little Rock

May 29
AFA Office Closed for Memorial Day

June 2
10:00 a.m. - Program Committee Meeting
Oaklawn
Hot Springs

July 3-4
AFA Office Closed for Independence Day Holiday

Please Note: Please visit our calendar at arkforests.org for information on the above Zoom meetings.

For meetings held at the AFA Office, please park on the street or in one of the area lots – do not park in the Arkansas Chamber of Commerce parking lot.

AFA’s Annual Meeting will be at Oaklawn Racing Casino Resort in Hot Springs.

The format of the meeting consists of three days, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, beginning with recreational activities in the morning. The Forest Management Workshop and exhibitor setup begins the afternoon. The conclusion of the meeting will be on Friday morning with our Awards Breakfast where we will announce all the winners for the awards.

On the morning of Wednesday, September 22, our General Session begins the day. Keep an eye on your AFA members where we will announce all the winners for the awards.

The final sponsorship opportunity available is at our Bronze level for $750. With this sponsorship, you receive a one-eighth page ad in our program, a logo on AFA materials at the meeting, a business listing on the conference website, and recognition on your name badge.

Companies can also become an exhibitor for $625 for AFA members and $750 for non-members. There will be a fee of $275 for each additional exhibit booth staff. With this form of support, you will receive the following:

• Business listing as exhibitor in meeting program
• Pre-registration attendee list two weeks prior to the event
• One draped exhibit table and two chairs
• Recognition on name badge

Annual Meeting Sponsorship, con’t.

• Name and logo on all meeting promo materials
• Logo on conference website with link to your website
• Recognition on name badge
• Free exhibit space

You can be a Platinum sponsor for $3,500, and receive everything above except the free exhibit space. Platinum sponsors will receive a half-page ad in our program.

Gold and Silver sponsorships are the next step in line at $2,500 and $1,500 respectively. Gold sponsors get one complimentary registration and a four-page ad in the program. Silver sponsors will receive a complimentary registration, a one-eighth page ad in the program, a logo on A/V materials at the meeting, a business listing on the conference website, and recognition on your name badge.

The general sponsorship opportunities are growing at the Bluff City Nursery.

Rob Beadel rounded out the orientation with an overview of the Arkansas Forestry Association Education Foundation.

He showcased data from the many Project Learning Tree events and Teacher Conservation Tours he conducts over the year, Beadel also explained that a part of the long-range plan, the foundation will be focusing more time and energy into workforce development. This includes becoming members of Pro For, Be Proud, Forestry Works, and more participation in various career expos across the state for students.

AFA Board Orientation, con’t.

be taking on tree farm responsibilities along with business administration.

Braswell continued the conversation to discuss the advocacy side of AFA. He discussed his recent work during the legislative session as an example of how we work to be the “go-to” association on timber and forest products issues in the state. He introduced the new members to the long-range plan, which outlines how we would like the association to grow to further benefit our members over the next 10 years. AFA Director of Forestry Education

AFA Communications Coordinator Seth Stephenson facilitates the program. He explained that the group has more tours scheduled later this year where they will have the opportunity to see several mills and other tree farms in the state.

“I wanted to join the program to get better plugged into the Forestry community,” Spikes said. “Since coming on board with NativState, I feel like it is important to be aware of what is happening in the forestry space in Arkansas. I am looking forward to applying what we learn to our conservation practices for our landowners and giving back to the state.”

This class is the fourth group of professionals to go through the program. They are scheduled to graduate at AFA’s Annual Meeting in 2024.

“I am very excited about this new group of Emerging Leaders,” Stephenson said. “They were all very engaged during this first tour, and I hope they continue with that level of excitement over the course of the program.”

Tickets Available for AFA Night with the Travs, con’t.

There are a few things you need to know before attending. Dickey-Stephens Park does have a clear bag policy that all attendees should be aware of. Every ticketed fan entering the gate is allowed (1) clear bag and/or (small clutch purse). The following bags will be permitted at Dickey-Stephens Park:

• Clear bags (Plastic, Vinyl or PVL) that do not exceed 12” x 6” x 12”
• One-gallon plastic freezer bag (Ziploc or similar)

All clear bags and clutch purses will be screened prior to entry into Dickey-Stephens Park. Childcare items (i.e. diapers) are permitted: however, they must be in an approved clear bag to enter. All bags and purses not meeting the requirements of the clear bag policy will not be permitted to enter the ballpark. You can find more information on that policy at millb.com.

New AFA Emerging Leaders Group Takes First Tour to Learn More on Advanced Genetics

The Arkansas Forestry Association’s newest class of emerging leaders took their first tour earlier this month to learn about ArborGen’s work with advanced genetics.

Every two years, AFA seeks applications for its Emerging Leaders Program, which is designed to turn new and younger forestry professionals into leaders in the industry. The group will take tours and hold discussions designed to make them future leaders in the association and forestry as a whole. This is the class of ten selected for the 23-24 Emerging Leaders Program:

• Robby Buffington, NativState
• Robert Floyd, Arkansas Department of Agriculture – Forestry Division
• Carl Kirtley, FarmCredit
• Justin Mallett, Cypress Creek Forestry Services
• Caitlin Mann, Arkansas Department of Agriculture – Forestry Division
• Jacob Muckelrath, Canfor
• Lucas Rogeau, NativState
• Anna Sparks, Arkansas Forestry Association
• Ryan Spicer, Weyerhaeuser
• Clay Spikes, NativState

Their first tour took them to South Arkansas in Bluff City where they met with ArborGen’s Greg Hay. He guided the group to various locations to discuss and show the advanced genetics trees the company has produced.

“I was unfamiliar with that process and how it was becoming an applied practice in reforestation,” said Clay Spikes. “I am hopeful that NativState will become more involved in reforestation projects in the near future and will be very beneficial information to have.”

ElP students will spend two years working to become leaders in the AR forestry industry. The group got to see some of the differences in trees that were open pollinated and some that were mass controlled pollinated. They also took a trip to landowner Charles Pruett’s property near Magnolia, where Purite has invested in advanced genetics trees. Hay explained the management plan Purite has implemented to showcase the results he has seen.

“The very distinguishable differences in some of the variations of pines was surprising,” said Robby Buffington. “It was also interesting to see how adjusting the planting spacing can yield healthier trees and grow in volume.”