ARKANSAS FORESTRY ASSOCIATION
Voice of Forestry

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November 2022

AFA PAC Supported Candidates Do Well in General Election

Forest Express PAC

34 candidates supported by the PAC will be serving in the 94th General Assembly.

Arkansas made history on November 8 when voters elected the state's first woman governor, Sarah Huckabee Sanders. The Republican from Little Rock and former spokesperson for President Donald Trump, is also the daughter of the state's 44th governor, Mike Huckabee. She resoundingly defeated her opponent, Chris Jones (D-Little Rock) in a race that was called shortly after the polls closed.

Republicans continued their dominance of politics in Arkansas as all of the state's Constitutional offices are again held by members of the party. Former Attorney General Leslie Rutledge (R-Maumelle) became Lieutenant Governor and former Lieutenant Governor Tim Griffin (R-Little Rock) was elected Attorney General. Secretary of State John Thurston (R-Little Rock) was re-elected, former treasurer Dennis Millligan (R-Benton) is the new State Auditor, while Rep. Mark Lowery (R-Maumelle) replaces Milligan as Treasurer. Tommy Land (R-Heber Springs) easily held on in his race and will serve another term as Land Commissioner.

The Arkansas 94th General Assembly will convene Monday, January 9 and will include a multitude of members who received support from the AFA Forest Express PAC during the recent two-year election cycle. AFA formed the Forest Express PAC in 1998 to provide financial support to those seeking election or reelection to Constitutional offices or the state legislature. PAC contributions may also support campaigns for or against Constitutional amendments, initiated actions, recall petitions or any other type of ballot measure.

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Three Forestry Students the First Recipients of New Scholarship



Thomas (right) stands with winners (right to left) Chapman, Phillips, Martinez and Dr. Matt Pelkki during the check presentation.

At the Arkansas Tree Farm Program's Tree Farm of the Year Tour in late October, the Goggans Family announced their new scholarship for local students to help them reach their career goals in the state's forestry industry.

Before the tour began on October 28, Jack Thomas, one of the owners of the Goggans Family Tree Farm, presented scholarships to three University of Arkansas – Monticello students. The funds raised for the financial aid came from the annual clay shoot held on the property.

"My wife and I are passionate about the value of education and, equally as

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AFA Emerging Leaders Applications Open for 23-24 Class

The Arkansas Forestry Association is now seeking applicants for a new Emerging Leaders class, which will run from 2023 thru 2024.

AFA's Emerging Leaders Program is designed to educate young or new forestry professionals on the different aspects of the industry in the state with the end goal of making them better leaders. For two years, the class will gather for various Arkansas events, including mill tours, Project Learning Tree training, and forestry economics discussions.

AFA invites people who are interested to apply at **https://form.jotform.com/82965526184164**. A prospective candidate must be a member of the Arkansas Forestry Association. All AFA needs is some basic info and a letter of recommendation from a supervisor or mentor. We do want our applicants to understand the commitment we are asking them to make. The class will usually meet in person once a quarter. These get-togethers can and often include travel to various locations around Arkansas. Our classes have gathered in various locations, including Magnolia, Ashdown, Little Rock, and Russellville.

We require participation in most activities to complete the program. At the end of the two years, those who do will be awarded recognition at our AFA Annual Meeting and a certificate of completion. The deadline to apply is Friday, December 16. AFA leadership will go through the applications and contact those accepted. If you have questions regarding the program or applying, contact Seth Stephenson at **sstephenson@arkforests.org.**

Candidates Do Well, con't.

All 135 seats in the General Assembly were on the ballot this year after redistricting based on the latest census data.

Republicans gained additional seats in both the State House and Senate. The latest election information shows Republicans will occupy either an 83 or 84 seats in the House, and hold a 29-6 advantage in the Senate. During the 2021-2022 election cycle, the PAC supported 41 different House and Senate candidates as well as Governor-elect Sanders. In addition, AFA provided PAC support to three other registered Political Action Committees in the state – the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce PAC, Arkansas Conservative Leadership Caucus and the House Leadership PAC. Several candidates received more than one contribution from the AFA PAC during the cycle, bringing the total number of contributions to 53.

Taking into consideration both the 2022 Primary election and the General election on November 8, 34 candidates supported by the Forest Express PAC will be serving in the 94th General Assembly. One hundred percent of the candidates who received AFA PAC support won their General Election race. Membership and leadership on the Legislative Forestry Caucus, House or Senate Agriculture, Forestry and Economic Development committee, and support of issues of importance to the timber and forest products community are key considerations for providing PAC support. Here are those who will be serving:

Governor
Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Arkansas House of Representatives
Rep. Howard Beaty, Jr. (R-Crossett)
Rep. Mary Bentley (R-Perryville)
Rep. Stan Berry (R-Dover)
Rep. Bruce Cozart (R-Hot Springs)
Rep. Carol Dalby (R-Texarkana)
Rep. Kenneth Ferguson (D-Pine Bluff)
Rep. Delia Haak (R-Centerton)
Rep. Mike Holcomb (R-Pine Bluff)
Rep. Lane Jean (R-Magnolia)
Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R-Elm Springs)
Rep. Julie Mayberry (R-Hensley)
Rep. Mark McElroy (R-Tillar)
Rep. Rick McClure (R-Malvern)
Rep. Richard McGrew (R-Hot Springs)
Rep. Ron McNair (R-Alpena)
Rep. David Ray (R-Maumelle)
Rep. Marcus Richmond (R-Harvey)
Rep. DeAnn Vaught (R-Horatio)
Rep. Jeff Wardlaw (R-Warren)
Rep. Les Warren (R-Hot Springs)
Rep. Carlton Wing (R-North Little Rock)

Arkansas Senate
Senator Ben Gilmore (R-Crossett)
Senator Ronald Caldwell (R-Wynne)
Senator Breanne Davis (R-Russellville)
Senator Jonathan Dismang (R-Beebe)
Senator Jane English (R-North Little Rock)
Senator Kim Hammer (R-Benton)
Senator Jimmy Hickey, Jr. (R-Texarkana)
Senator Blake Johnson (R-Corning)
Senator Mark Johnson (R-Little Rock)
Senator Missy Irvin (R-Mountain View)
Matt McKee (R-Pearcy)
Rep. John Payton (R-Wilburn)
Matt Stone (R-Camden)

As part of AFA's Long Range Plan, the association has a goal to grow the PAC substantially in the years to come, which will heighten AFA's profile with legislators and the issues of importance to the timber and forest products community in Arkansas.

All four high-profile Ballot Issues failed to gain the support of a majority of Arkansas citizens on November 8. Issue 1 was a constitutional amendment to allow the Arkansas General Assembly to call itself into special session – a power currently reserved for the governor. It failed by a 61% to 39% margin. Issue 2 would have raised the vote threshold required to pass most statewide ballot issues from 50% to 60%. It failed with 59% of voters against it and 41% voting for the issue. Issue 3 was a proposed religious freedom constitutional amendment. It was narrowly defeated. Issue 4 garnered the most attention from a funding and media perspective. It would have legalized recreational use of marijuana. It failed with more than 56% voting against it.

At the federal level, all four members of the U.S. House delegation easily won re-election – 1st District Rep. Rick Crawford (R-Jonesboro), 2nd District Rep. French Hill (R-Little Rock), 3rd District Rep. Steve Womack (R-Rogers) and 4th District Rep. Bruce Westerman. Westerman, the forestry sector champion in Congress is also in line to be the Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee should the Republicans gain the majority in that chamber as expected.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 7
10 a.m. - AFAEF Board Meeting
AFA Office/Zoom
Little Rock

12:30 p.m. - AFA Executive Committee Meeting
AFA Office/Zoom
Little Rock

December 15
11:30 a.m. - WOW Lunch & Learn: Prescribed Fire Effects on Wildlife Habitat
Zoom

December 16
10:00 a.m. - AR Tree Farm Business Meeting & Inspector Luncheon
Wood Grill Buffet
Benton

December 22-26
AFA Office Closed for Christmas Holiday

December 30
AFA Office Closed for New Year's Holiday

January 4
10:00 a.m. - Program Committee Meeting
AFA Office/Zoom
Little Rock

January 10
9:30 a.m. - Forest Protection Committee Meeting
AFA Office/Zoom
Little Rock

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.

Students the First Recipients of New Scholarship, con't.

important, have strong feelings about supporting causes local to the communities in which we live," Thomas said.

The idea initially started when he toured the Five Oaks Ag Research and Education Center with George Dunklin. Thomas explained that seeing the different habitat initiatives and hearing about the various plans that will be implemented through Five Oaks got him thinking about what they can do on the Goggans Family Tree Farm.

"Similar to Mr. Dunklin and Five Oaks, I was inspired to use our property as a "living lab space" for the next generation of forestry professionals and habitat managers to conduct research, implement best practices, and gain the important experience needed for a career in these fields," he said.

From there, the Friends of the G Camp Scholarship was born. Its first three recipients were Jovanny Martinez, Jacob Chapman, and Patrick Phillips. Each student has different aspirations for what they would like to do in the future. Chapman, a sophomore, is currently studying wildlife management and conservation and plans to double major in forestry and wildlife.

"I have always loved the outdoors and want to be able to contribute to our natural resources in some way," Chapman explained. "I cannot be thankful enough to have a property like the Goggans farm to use for my school-related studies. To know that I can have a great place with many different opportunities and resources gives me reassurance that I will always have somewhere to learn more about managing our natural resources."

Also a sophomore, Martinez hopes to enter the forestry industry after spending much of his time in high school helping his dad with his new logging business. He is still debating on what he would like to do after graduation but is very grateful for the opportunities provided by Thomas.

"It feels great to be offered the Goggans Tree Farm for future research purposes," Martinez said. "I am excited to conduct future research projects there as it is a great spot. There are not many people who get to have a quality resource like this property."

Phillips is currently a graduate student at the university with plans to maintain the sustainable forests of Arkansas and enhance the economy through forestry-related practices.

"Overall, I love being outdoors, and Arkansas has a wonderful landscape and natural beauty," Phillips said. "So, the opportunity to give back to that is important to me since I love outdoor activities like hiking, rock climbing, and hunting."

He added that his plans after college include entering the forestry workforce in a field pertaining to his thesis, which is creating a landowner-controlled forestry cooperative or getting a job in a forest business or economics. Phillips would also like to continue researching and contributing papers to the scientific community in forestry and economics.

Thomas said during the tour that life is better when we do it together, so making the property a "living lab space" was a big part of this scholarship. Something which couldn't have happened without the help and support of the over 100 friends that joined them for their 10th Annual G Camp Shoot.

"This scholarship is 100% funded from that event, which has become an awesome reunion for many friends and a chance for people to meet others they wouldn't otherwise meet," Thomas said. "I'm so grateful to have a place to host this event and am forever indebted to the generations of men who have gone before me to make the G Camp the recreational paradise it is today."

AR Tree Farm Program Hosts Tour at 2022 Tree Farm of the Year

On October 28, over 70 people gathered near Star City to tour Arkansas's Tree Farm of the Year, the Goggans Family Tree Farm.

It was a great morning to see how the Goggans family manages their land. AFA Executive Vice President Max Braswell kicked off the event with a welcome and rundown of how the day would go before passing it to landowner Miles Goggans. Goggans detailed some of the farm's history, including how the property used to have row crops before the pines were planted and how their management has brought quail back to the area.

From there, everyone sat on hay-covered trailers to see more of the Goggans Family Tree Farm. The stops on the tour included talks on timber harvests with LD Long's Mike Pennington, cost share programs with Josh Smith from the Natural Resource Conservation Service, prescribed burning wiith the Forestry Division's Tabitha Holloway, and the enhancement of quail and wildlife habitate with both Ryan Diener and Austin Klais with Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever.



Tour guests listen to Mike Pennington as he explains the timber harvests on the property.

Goggans was there at each stop providing more information to curious guests. He said he hopes everyone who attended comes to understand the importance of having good relationships within the forestry community.

"First, I am incredibly lucky to have the family I do, and secondly, we are equally fortunate to have the friends we do," Goggans said. "Our management starts with these relationships. Hopefully, folks realize that actively managing a tree farm is very rewarding, especially as goals are recognized over time."

Jennifer Johnson, the Arkansas Tree Farm Program administrator, hopes more people will come to this realization. The Goggans Family Tree Farm is up to potentially be named the regional then national tree farm of the year.

"I really believe that their property embodies all of the best aspects of the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) and would love for them to be recognized for their hard work," Johnson said.