AFA Makes Changes to Upcoming Events Amid Pandemic

With changes happening every day, the Arkansas Forestry Association wants to update our members on our plans for upcoming events during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Joining the many organizations, businesses and individuals who are practicing caution and following CDC recommendations on gatherings, AFA has made the decision to cancel or postpone all face-to-face meetings, events and activities until at least early May.

We will hold our Executive Committee Meeting on April 2 and our Program Committee Meeting on April 8 by conference call.

We will send the details for those calls to committee members closer to the meeting date.

We have decided to cancel and postpone several meetings coming up within the next few weeks.

Women Owning Woodlands, April 3 – Rescheduled to a date to be determined

Emerging Leaders PLT Session, April 17 – Canceled with hopes of being rescheduled

AFA Spring Board Meeting, May 7 & 8 – Rescheduled to May 2021 for the normal 2-day format. We will attempt to schedule one day 2020 meeting in Little Rock on a date to be determined

Camp War Eagle Project Learning Tree (PLT) Workshop, May 18 – Canceled

Prescott PLT Workshop, June 17 – Canceled

Prescott PLT Workshop, June 18 – Canceled

“It is certainly disappointing to have to cancel or postpone so many activities at this time, but our first priority is the safety of our members and the AFA staff,” said Max Braswell, executive vice president.

“Despite these difficulties, we are still working to provide service and support to our members and partners. Our plan for the time being is to have at least one staff member in the office each day to answer your calls and help with any needs that arise. We look forward to the day, we hope very soon, that things return to normal. Until then, we want everyone to stay safe and healthy and to let us know how AFA can be of service.”

AFA Implements New Communication Techniques to Tell the Story of Forestry

The Arkansas Forestry Association recently started new communication campaigns to tell the story of forestry, which include premiering a new podcast to airing radio advertisements.

At the beginning of February, the new forestry podcast Voices of Forestry aired for the first time on multiple sites. Every month, host Seth Stephenson as he sits down with a guest to discuss topics related to the industry. The first episode features AFA Executive Vice President Max Braswell as he talks about the association’s role in forestry as well as some of the changes over the past decade.

“With the new Voices of Forestry podcast, we wanted to tell our stories in a way that had not been done before at AFA,” Stephenson said. “We believe this medium will be an excellent way to share those stories with people in and out of the industry.”

continued page 3
AR Log a Load for Kids Celebrate 2019, Kickoff 2020

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do celebrate raising over $600,000 and to kick off the events for 2020, all six chapters of the Arkansas Log a Load for Kids met in Little Rock on February 21 for their annual LAL Kickoff event.

The group met at Arkansas Children’s to hear from Dr. Michael L. Schmitz, the LAL Endowed Chair in Congenital Cardiac Disorders, who provided an update on operations at the hospital. Adam Cherokee spoke to everyone about the impact Log a Load has on patients like his son, Alex. Last year, Arkansas Log a Load for Kids sold coins commemorating raising $10 million since 1993. Some of those coins were still available, and our volunteers decided to give them back to the hospital to gift to patients for significant achievements. Alex, who visited with everyone, was the first patient to receive one of these coins in this way.

Arkansas Forestry Association Education Foundation Starts Teacher Conservation Tours for 2020

The Arkansas Forestry Association Education Foundation started its 27th year of Teacher Conservation Tours (TCT) last month with a Woods, Water, and Waterfowl Workshop.

The AFAEF, along with partnering forestry professionals, timber producers, and forest product manufacturers from across the state, has been providing this professional development workshop for Arkansas educators since 1993. The TCT has become one of the premier professional development opportunities in our state, and the only one focused solely on sustainable forestry.

On February 20-21, 2020, 15 educators and natural resources professionals met at Arkansas Game and Fish Commission’s Patriots Conservation Education Center at Cooks Lake near Stuttgart for the first tour. Participants learned about the biology, habitat, and economic impacts waterfowl have on the state.

The TCT has become one of the premier professional development opportunities in our state and the only one focused solely on sustainable forestry. "Green tree reservoirs, or flooded timber, is crucial duck habitat here in the state," said Rob Beadle, Director of Forestry Education for the AFA Education Foundation. "Flooded timber is what draws millions of ducks to continue page 3

NEW AFA COMMUNICATIONS, CON’T.

As of March 2020, the first two episodes have been released. Episode two features the G. William Smith Family Farm Tree, AFA’s 2019 Tree Farmer of the Year. Co-owner Billie Smith-Ipson explained how the land has been an essential part of her family members’ lives since the early 1900s.

Listeners from afar as well as the United Kingdom and Poland have listened to Voices of Forestry. The show has been downloaded hundreds of times, with most of its audience residing all across the United States.

If you are interested in listening to any episode of Voices of Forestry, you can subscribe to the show on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, and Spotify.

You can also find it on the home page of arkforests.org or under the Media menu.

If you are living or working in the Monticello area, you might have started hearing radio ads about the Arkansas My Land My Forest program. This initiative highlights sustainable forest activities and is part of the Morehouse Family Forest Initiative (MFFI).

AFA is very proud to be a partner in this program, and the lead organization in charge of communicating the outreach efforts of the partnership.

AFAEF Starts TCT Con’t.

The state and it takes sound science and management to keep these bottomland hardwoods healthy and sustainable.

This 2-day workshop featured presentations and field sessions by waterfowl biologists, habitat specialists, and conservation educators. Participants got out in the flooded timber of Bayou Meto Wildlife Management Area to look at tree conditions, forest health and food sources.

TCT participants confirmed that the information provided by the professionals helped them see the lengths and efforts that are put forth to protect and enhance our state’s great natural resources.

“TCT participants confirmed that the information provided by the professionals helped them see the lengths and efforts that are put forth to protect and enhance our state’s great natural resources.”

2020 LAL Kickoff, Con’t.

Starting this year, we are beginning a new endowment of raising $2.5 million over the next five years. This money will go to the Heart Institute at the hospital, continuing Log a Load’s commitment to helping Arkansas Children’s cardiovascular work.

Vanessa Delgadillo, with Arkansas Children’s, gifted Clontz with a framed copy of the nomination letter that was submitted and written by AFA Communications Coordinator Seth Stephenson.

“Emily has jumped head first into Log a Load with a passion,” said Stephenson. “Her peers inside and outside of her chapter have recognized this and that is why she is an excellent candidate for National Volunteer of the Year.”

AFAEF volunteers listen to a report presented by Dr. Schmitz, the Endowed Chair in Congenital Cardiac Disorders. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic Texarkana has moved its event to later in the year due to an abundance of caution. As of late March, the rest of the chapters are still holding their auctions and golf tournaments as originally scheduled.

South Central – Golf Tournament, June 4; Dinner & Auction, June 6

Drew County – Dinner & Auction, Aug. 1

Bradley County – Dinner & Auction, Sept. 12

Texarkana – Shooting Tournament, Sept. 19

River Valley – Dinner & Auction, Sept. 26

Central AR – Dinner & Auction, Oct. 24

Golf Tournament, TBD

In 2019, Emily Clontz, one of the Texarkana Log a Load for Kids Leaders was voted as AFA’s Log a Load for Kids Volunteer of the Year. Her name was submitted as a nominee to become the National Volunteer of the Year, which will be decided later in 2020.

2019 Log a Load Volunteer of the Year winner Emily Clontz receives a framed copy of her National Volunteer of the Year nomination letter.

We want to thank each and every person who attended, volunteered or helped in any way with all of our events in 2019.

It is because of your generosity and support that we were able to give so much to help children in need in our state.

We hope that you will continue to support us as we start a new endowment in 2020.

You can follow the Arkansas Log a Load for Kids Facebook page for future updates to all of these events.

Join us when you can to help us help children in Arkansas.

AFA is very proud to be a partner in this program, and the lead organization in charge of communicating the outreach efforts of the partnership.

CALENDAR

OF EVENTS

April 2
10 a.m. - Executive Committee Meeting
Conference Call
Little Rock

April 8
10:30 a.m. - Program Committee Meeting
Conference Call
Little Rock

May 20
10 a.m. - Forest Practices Committee Meeting
AFA Office
Little Rock

June 4
South Central Log a Load for Kids Golf Tournament
Glenwood Country Club
Glenwood

June 6
South Central Log a Load for Kids Dinner & Auction
Arkadelphia Recreation Center
Arkadelphia

Rescheduled to May 2021
AFA Spring Board Meeting
Fairfield Bay Conference Center
Fairfield Bay

Portaged, Date TBD
8:30 a.m. - Women Owning Woodlands:
Bee’s, Butterflies and Pollinator
Habitat Workshop
Cane Creek State Park
Star City

Please Note:
For meetings that are 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.