



School of Forest Resources  
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# BRANCHING OUT

University of Maine School of Forest Resources Newsletter

## Another Successful Workshop...but Wait Until 2010

The New England Regional Council on Forest Engineering (NERCOFE) held its annual workshop at UMaine last March. A total of 234 participants attended the event from all sectors of the forest products industry. Over the last few years, NERCOFE has outgrown Nutting Hall, so this year the workshop was held at the newly renovated Wells Conference Center on campus. The rivalry between forest operations students from Université Laval in Canada and UMaine was intense at the student poster session, where UMaine students took first prize for their presentation on biomass accumulation techniques (see related story). This marked the 25th anniversary of NERCOFE. The organizing committee has already begun planning next year's program, so stay tuned. We hope to see you all in 2010!



UMaine's Jack and Jill team competing during the Team Bow Saw Event

## UMaine Woodsmen Team

UMaine's Woodsmen Team has completed another exciting season, continuing a 40-plus year tradition of competing on the intercollegiate level while practicing old woods logging skills. The team includes 25 students from across campus and with varying levels of experience. They attended five meets this season from nearby Unity College last fall, to Nova Scotia Agricultural College in the spring.

## Student Honors



UMaine Forestry student **Cassie Vaillancourt** was inducted into the *All Maine Women Honor Society* in 2009—one of just 12 campus coeds chosen at the end of their junior year based on distinguished leadership, scholarship, character, and service to the university and campus community. Members serve as valuable role models and pledge to uphold themselves to the highest levels of social responsibility and personal integrity while promoting the ideals and traditions of UMaine. Congratulations Cassie on achieving one of UMaine's highest honors!

Top honors last May went to **Nathaniel Vir**, who received the Robert I. Ashman, Sr. Award. **Cassie Vaillancourt** and **Anna Schwarcz** shared the Dwight B. Demeritt Academic Achievement Award. Congratulations!

Doctoral student **Teresa Thornton** was awarded the 2009 Distinguished Service Award for Graduate Students in recognition of her excellent work in advancing the goals of the School of Forest Resources.



Forest Operations seniors (left to right) **Zach Jones**, **Ian Farley** and **Anthony Lauria** took first prize for their poster presentation on biomass accumulation techniques at the annual meeting of the New England Regional Council on Forest Engineering in Orono last March.

**Gloria Oporto**, a Ph.D. Candidate and Research Assistant in UMaine's AEWAC Advanced Structures and Composites Center, received the Jerry Saeman Award for Student Achievement in Wood-Plastic Composites Research at the 10th International Conference on Wood & Biofiber Plastic Composites last May in Madison, Wis.

## Faculty in the News

**Barry Goodell** is currently serving as the Vice President for the Forest Products Society and will transition to President-Elect in June.

A paper entitled *Behavior of Natural-Fiber/Thermoplastic Sheet Piling* by **D. Alvarez-Valencia**, **H.J. Dagher**, **R.A. Lopez-Anido**, **W.G. Davids**, and **D.J. Gardner** won the Best-in-Track Technical Paper Award at the meeting of the American Composites Manufacturers Association last January in Tampa, Fla.

**Dr. Melissa Baker**, a Lecturer in SFR since 2008, left UMaine to join the faculty at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point. We all wish Melissa the best of luck in her new position!

## Director's Welcome



We just bid farewell to another successful cohort of 28 forest resources undergraduates this year. About half received forestry and forest operations degrees, one-third received parks, recreation, and tourism degrees, and just under a quarter received forest ecosystem and wood science degrees. Our number of graduates is

down a bit from previous years and this represents one of our biggest challenges. We are no different, however, than other forest resources programs across North America, despite the importance of forests to the nation and a relatively good employment environment for the field.

In addition to enrollments, the financial crisis has hit our program in a big way. State revenues are being cut and the stock market crash has severely reduced our endowment income. On the bright side, a number of our distinguished alumni and supporters have come to our aid this year in the form of the **Friends of the School of Forest Resources** (see story in this issue). We thank **Jim Robbins** who spearheaded this effort and his enthusiastic group of supporters for their leadership.

To address the enrollment and funding challenges, our faculty developed several new initiatives this year. We formed a Marketing and Alumni Affairs Committee that is working to more effectively market our excellent program and provide a stronger link to our alumni. After all, they are the best advertisements for the strength and success of our program. The *Branching Out* newsletter is part of that effort, as well as our newly designed Web page. We also have taken on the substantial task of overhauling our curriculum to ensure that our program offerings are as attractive as possible to entering students, take best advantage of our faculty expertise, and position our program and graduates to meet the most important forest resource challenges of the new century.

As always, feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the school.

Robert G. Wagner, Director  
Email: bob\_wagner@maine.edu  
Phone: 207-581-4737

## UMaine Receives \$20 Million NSF Grant for Sustainability Initiative

**G**overnor **Baldacci** joined **UMaine President Robert Kennedy** in July to announce a \$20 million National Science Foundation grant for a five-year project called the **Sustainability Solutions Initiative**. The project, led by **Professor David Hart**, Director of the **Senator George J. Mitchell Center**, will bring together researchers from across Maine's universities, as well as government, industry and community stakeholders, to improve the science and practice of sustainable development. Initial efforts will focus on problems related to urbanization, forest management and climate change. For example, portions of southern Maine have experienced rapid sprawl while record sales of private forest lands and mill closures are transforming the social and economic fabric of northern and western Maine.

"Maine's future depends on the ability to move forward with economic development in a manner that sustains our vital natural resources," said **UMaine Vice President for Research Michael Eckardt**.

To address these multifaceted problems, the research team includes more than 30 faculty members with diverse expertise. The project team includes SFR professors **Rob Lilieholm**, **Jessica Leahy** and **Steve Sader**.



www.forest.umaine.edu





### Plum Creek Pledges Support for Summer Camp

Plum Creek has pledged to provide \$5,000 per year for five years to support student safety at Summer Camp, held each year at Acadia National Park. The funds will be used to purchase safety helmets, leather gloves, and eye and leg protection.

This will significantly reduce student expenses for attending summer camp while helping to ensure a safe learning environment. Thank you Plum Creek!



Richard Jagels

### Forestry Forensics

In addition to their routine university duties of teaching and research, many of our faculty possess unique skills valued worldwide. Professor **Richard Jagels**, a faculty member for 30 years, has made use of his ability to understand the structure of wood to serve as a forensic expert in legal cases ranging from the ladder used in the Lindberg kidnaping (case re-opened in the 1980s), to local murder and rape cases where wood chips or tree branches became key pieces of evidence. Jagels says that although the work is not as glamorous as portrayed on TV dramas such as “CSI,” it does provide an interesting departure from his normal academic pursuits. Recently, Jagels saved thousands of dollars in duty fees for a Maine wood products firm exporting dowels to Canada by devising a simple test to differentiate sanded from unsanded (duty-free) products.

In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and pursuing its own goals of diversity, the University of Maine shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, including transgender status or gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other areas of the University System. The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request.

Questions and complaints about discrimination in any area of the University should be directed to the Director of Equal Opportunity, the University of Maine, 5754 North Stevens Hall, Room 101, Orono, ME 04469-5754, telephone (207) 581-1226 (voice and TTY).



Left to right: Rudy Stoczek, Lester DeCoster, Hank Hosking, Bruce Probert, Cliff Foster, Pete Hannah and Jack Lindsay

### 1959 Forestry/Wildlife Class Meet at Nutting Hall

Members of the 1959 Forestry and Wildlife class met last May to reminisce about the early days that launched their careers. They caught up on old times, and fondly remembered Summer Camp and the tremendous bonding with classmates that has lasted a lifetime.

Each attendee recalled wonderful careers in forestry, wildlife, and other resource-related fields, while recognizing the valuable education they received at UMaine that has served them well through a diverse set of career paths. Thanks to **Pete Hannah** (phannah@mid-coast.com) for organizing this gathering!



### Forestry Students at the State Capital

Last March, SFR showcased the significance of forestry education and research in the State of Maine. Held in the historic Hall of Flags at the State House in Augusta, students and faculty demonstrated to Maine state legislators and the Governor the values that forests provide. During breaks in the legislative sessions, students and staff were able to meet one-on-one with Maine policymakers to discuss forestry and its role as part of the state's character and economy. Graduate student **Kasey Legaard** discussed the capabilities of using remote sensing techniques to detect forest cover change, and **Spencer Perry** stressed to lawmakers the technologies behind developing wood composites and green building materials. Undergraduate student **Christine Paluga** addressed the values that recreation and tourism have for the state, and **Matt Russell** represented the Cooperative Forestry Research Unit to emphasize the importance of working with landowners for forest research. The display and discussions left an impression on legislators that the future leaders and outstanding forestry education and research programs come from one place in the state: UMaine's School of Forest Resources.

### “Friends of the School of Forest Resources” Formed

SFR has the largest student scholarship endowment in the UMaine System, and last year awarded \$180,000 in scholarships. This year, despite the economic downturn, SFR awarded more than \$100,000 to our students. Over the years, SFR alums have generously given back to UMaine so that young people can follow them in their pursuit of forestry careers. Despite this substantial endowment—which totaled more than \$15 million before the downturn—SFR has few endowments targeted to enhance the quality of our programs by funding new labs, updating equipment, bringing in visiting experts, and providing seed funds for new programs. Steady declines in state and federal funding make the situation worse each year.

**James Robbins, Sr.**, an alumnus and great supporter of SFR, saw the challenge and came to our aid by forming *Friends of the School of Forest Resources* to help raise operating funds. Jim and 12 other alums and supporters are focusing their initial effort on raising funds to match a very generous anonymous donor that offered to match 50 percent of all donations to SFR up to \$200,000. Thus, if \$200,000 can be raised from private donations, the donor will match it with another \$100,000 for a total of \$300,000. If you are interested in helping with this effort, please send your gift payable to the University of Maine Foundation, Attention: School of Forest Resources Operating Fund, Two Alumni Place, Orono, ME 04469-5792. If you have any questions, Jim Robbins can be reached at: jlrobbins@rlco.com.

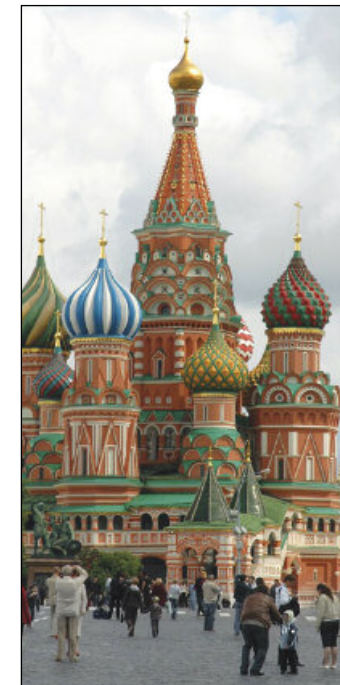
Board Members: **Jim Robbins, Sr.** (Chair) *Robbins Lumber Co.*; **Chip Bessey** *E.D. Bessey & Son*; **Luke Brochu** *Pleasant River Lumber Co.*; **Jay Haynes** *H.C. Haynes, Inc.*; **Hank McPherson** *McPherson Timberlands*; **Roger Milliken, Jr.** *Baskahagan Corporation*; **Russell Read** *C Change Investments Management*; **Henry W. Saunders** *Retired*; **Steve Schley** *Seven Islands Land Company*; **Rick Smith** *Forest Systems Services*; **Patrick Strauch** *Maine Forest Products Council*; **Don Tardie** *Maine Woods Company*; **Peter Triandafilou** *Huber Resources Corporation*.

### Professor Mike Greenwood Retires



Mike Greenwood

Professor Mike Greenwood retired after a long and distinguished career in forest biology and genetics. Mike joined UMaine in 1984, and plans to perfect his golf swing and expand his outdoor live steam model railroad. Over the years he influenced hundreds of students with his insight and guidance—he will be greatly missed!



Saint Basil's Cathedral, Russia

### A Flash from the Past...



**Dr. Max McCormack** (UMaine B.S.1956) sent us this photo that was taken at a Christmas Tree Association Meeting in 1968. The photo is quite historic because it includes (left to right) **Al Nutting** (former Director and namesake of Nutting Hall), **Austin Wilkins**, **George Dow** (former Director of the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station), **Ned Cutting** (the benefactor of the Cutting Scholarships) and **Arthur Hauck** (former president of UMaine). Thanks Max for passing this along!

### Students Visit Russia, Turkey

Students **Alissa Bougas** and **Ben Wasserman** traveled to Russia in May as part of a UMaine course entitled “Role of Russian Government in Exploration and Development of Natural Resources.” The students, with their faculty leaders, visited Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Syktyvkar and Syktyvkar State University—home of the Russian energy and forest products industries. The group traveled via sleeper trains, visited the Kremlin and other sites, and stayed in the homes of local families.

Students **Svenson Pulsifer** and **Matt Noone** were awarded SFR scholarships to attend a month-long summer field course in Turkey. Joined by 17 other students from around the world, the group traveled 4,600 km by bus and visited major cultural, climatic and geographic regions. The trip was organized by Purdue University, Uppsala University in Sweden, and NC State. UMaine will likely play a leading role in next summer's trip to Maine and the Maritime Provinces.