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# BRANCHING OUT

University of Maine School of Forest Resources Newsletter

## UMaine to the Rescue!



SFR's **Al Kimball** and **Robin Avery** rescued two teenagers on a raft from a remote area of Birch Pond (formerly Mud Pond) last July. Al, a UMaine Forestry Professor and Superintendent of 13,000 acres of UMaine forest land, and Robin, Operations Manager and a Registered Maine Guide, were marking boundaries for land recently acquired for public access. "When we saw them we thought they're not going to be able to get back," said Kimball. "The wind was really, really strong, and the couple got out farther and farther," Kimball said. "I've been on Mud Pond a lot, and the waves were as high as I've ever seen them." Realizing the two were in trouble, Kimball and Avery rescued them from the water in their 20-foot Grand Laker canoe.

## Student Honors



President Kennedy and Lindsay Utley

**Lindsay Utley**, an M.S. student in SFR, was nominated by the Dean and Associate Provost for Graduate Studies as Graduate Student Employee of the Year due to her diligence, strong work ethic, and charismatic attitude. Lindsay has worked as a Graduate Assistant for the Graduate School for two years.

SFR held its annual scholarship and recognition luncheon in April. Students selected for top academic honors were **Maria Rocio Fernandez** for the **Robert I.**

**Ashman Award**, and **Jonathan Ferguson** for the **Dwight B. Demeritt Award**. The Ceremony concluded with the announcement and recognition for the **2010 Outstanding Alumnus in Forest Resources, Carol Redelsheimer**.

Forestry Ph.D. student **Yucheng Peng** won an award for his poster presented at the polymer nanocomposites conference at Lehigh University.

## Student Profile



Crista Straub

**Crista Straub** is an Ecology & Environmental Sciences Ph.D. student in SFR working with **Professor Jessica Leahy**. Her dissertation involves testing whether children participating in environmental education programs influence their parents' attitudes and behaviors. She is also looking at the role of science learning and long-term outcomes from an environmental education program in school and after-school settings. She enjoys kayaking, skiing, and hiking when time permits.

## Faculty in the News

**Professor Doug Gardner**, visiting Ph.D. student **Niels Nielsen** and others took second place in this year's **George Marra Award for Excellence in Writing** for their paper entitled *Importance of Temperature, Moisture Content, and Species for the Conversion Process of Wood Residues into Fuel Pellets*. The award was presented in October at the annual meeting of the Society of Wood Science and Technology in Geneva, Switzerland.

**Professor Jessica Leahy** received the **Pitts-Webber Award for Outstanding Research**, and **Professor Rob Lilieholm** was named **Pitts-Webber Teacher of the Year**.

## In Memoriam

**Melissa Laser**, BS PRT 1994; MS FTY 1997  
**Kermit Schott**, BS FTY 1992  
**E. Bart Harvey III**, BS FTY 1964; MS FTY 1966  
**Karl F. Wenger**, BS FTY 1939

## Director's Welcome



Welcome to another issue of Branching Out! This newsletter is a wonderful way to let our alumni keep in touch with the many good things that are happening in the School of Forest Resources.

As a complement to this newsletter, the SFR launched a new web page last year to better connect prospective students, current students, and our alumni. We added a new Alumni & Friends section to our web page where we feature alumni profiles and stories. A significant addition to this page was the scanning of all past issues of the Maine Forester Yearbook, where you can see the stories and photos of historic classes (see story in this issue). Please add your profile to the alumni profiles web page at [www.forest.umaine.edu](http://www.forest.umaine.edu).

In addition to the accomplishments listed in the Forestry Highlights section (see right panel) and other stories described in this issue, our faculty has been working hard over the past year to critically review and revise our curriculum. This review was prompted by enrollment trends, changes to our faculty over the past decade, projected budget challenges, and the need to ensure that our undergraduate program produces excellent graduates with the skills and knowledge needed to address the forest resource challenges of the 21st century. The faculty is putting the finishing touches on the new plan right now. When complete, we will share the highlights in Branching Out and make them available on our web page.

On a sad note, this year we mourned the passing of four of our alumni. Kermit Schott and Melissa Laser graduated in the 1990s, and have left us far too soon. Dr. Karl Frederick Wenger (BS 1939) and Ernest B. "Bart" Harvey III (BS 1964, MS 1966) enjoyed long and distinguished careers and made outstanding contributions to the forestry profession. We dedicate this issue of Branching Out to these Alums.

As always, feel free to contact me if you have any questions or issues concerning the school. And thank you for your continued support!

*Robert G. Wagner*

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## 2010 Forestry Highlights

- Renovation of Nutting Hall was identified as a top priority by UMaine's **President Kennedy** and received **\$3.5 million** under Ballot Measure 2. Renovation plans are underway.

- The **Friends of the School of Forest**

**Resources** was instrumental in helping raise **\$342,000 in private donations** to support the School of Forest Resources (SFR) this year.

- SFR conferred 26 B.S. degrees and 18 graduate degrees (14 Master's and 4 Ph.D.s), providing **24% of the Ph.D.s and 18% of the Master's degrees** awarded in the college.
- Undergraduate student **enrollment was up** for the second year in a row, with an additional 18 students as compared to 2007-08. This increase was primarily due to students pursuing the Forestry major.
- Over 60 students received **54 scholarships totaling nearly \$125,000** from SFR endowment funds.
- SFR faculty members were awarded **\$1.9 million in extramural research grants** and submitted \$20.6 million in grant proposals.
- SFR faculty had **86 scientific articles** accepted, published, or submitted in 2009-2010, compared to 75 last year.
- SFR and UMaine Extension received approval to create a **new small woodlot management position** to help improve our work with Maine's family forest landowners.



Kelsey Troy during Team Swede Saw.

## UMaine Woodsmen's Team

The Woodsmen's Team hosted another successful meet last March. The team is a 40-year tradition at UMaine, practicing old-woods logging skills and competing on the collegiate level with schools from the Northeast and Canada. This year Maine's woodsmen and alumni were joined by the

University of New Hampshire and Unity College. UMaine's Mens A and Womens team won the event overall, with the women taking first in events such as Team Pulp Toss, Team Cross-cut, Triples Quarter Split, Doubles Water Boil, Standing Block Chopping, Ax Throw, Super Swede, and Single Buck.



[www.forest.umaine.edu](http://www.forest.umaine.edu)





CRSF Expands Mission

The Center for Research on Sustainable Forests (CRSF) was formed in 2006 to promote research on issues affecting the management and sustainability of Northern Forest ecosystems and Maine’s forest economy. Directed by **Dr. Bruce**

**Wiersma**, CRSF has built strong linkages with Maine’s forest industry through its **Cooperative Forestry Research Unit**. CRSF is now building on that success with the creation of two new research and outreach areas – **Family Forests** and **Conservation Lands**. The Family Forest effort, led by **Dr. Jessica Leahy**, seeks to better understand and serve Maine’s 130,000 small woodland owners. The Conservation Lands unit, led by **Dr. Rob Lilieholm**, will research issues related to the nearly 4 million acres of Maine that currently lie under conserved lands status. With Wiersma’s retirement (see related story), **Dr. Bob Wagner** will serve as CRSF Director.

Jagels and Wiersma Report on Retirement



Dick Jagels

“After 31 years of teaching and research, I had become somewhat of a packrat. Jettisoning much excess detritus, I now have a smaller office where I continue consulting, wrapping up research projects, and free-lance writing—including my 4th decade for *WoodenBoat* magazine. In my (limited) free time, I’m restoring a 1946 square-stern canoe and pursuing Maine’s elusive fish.” — Dick Jagels



Bruce Wiersma

“Aside from visiting grandchildren and golfing with Mike Greenwood (I’m getting better...), I’m active in church affairs, civil air patrol, and gardening. I’m still editor of Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, which handles 1,500 submissions a year. And as President of the Maine TREE Foundation, I’m busy with a \$500,000 fund-raising campaign. This spring I’ll teach Principles of Environmental Science at UMaine.” — Bruce Wiersma

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).



University Forests installs Habitat Management Demonstration Site

Meeting both wildlife and timber goals can be a challenge for landowners, but recent habitat management guidelines for vernal pools allow managers to serve multiple objectives. **Rick Morrill, Al Kimball, and Robin and Francis Avery** designed and installed a demonstration site last winter on the Demeritt Forest that utilizes an expanding gap silvicultural system – or *femelschlag* in German – to meet habitat guidelines. The approach includes the design of initial and proposed canopy openings that maintain canopy conditions favorable to the seasonal movement of vernal pool amphibians. Student workers helped with field layout, and a winter harvest was conducted by SFR staff. The site promises to be a useful teaching and outreach tool that highlights the compatibility of forestry and wildlife habitat management objectives. More information can be found at <http://www.forest.umaine.edu/university-forests/>



Students Present Research at Regional Conference

The 25th anniversary for the New England Regional Council on Forest Engineering was held March 8-9 on the University of Maine campus in Orono. Attendance records were broken as over 235 participants and speakers gathered to learn about the challenges every operations forester faces – from technical bridge issues to people management and forest policy. Included was a successful student poster session, with 15 students from three regional forestry schools presenting 7 posters. Conference attendees were also treated to an evening of fun as Maine humorist Tim Sample entertained during the dinner banquet.

80 Years of “Maine Forester” Yearbook Now Online

UMaine’s **Fogler Library** has scanned all past issues of the *Maine Forester* yearbook, preserving this unique publication and providing easy online access. Throughout its 80-year history, the Maine Forester has portrayed a timely snapshot of the School and profession, along with wonderful photographs of students, faculty, and the Maine woods. Past issues include amusing sketches and the occasional “ode-to-life” in the Maine woods. One excerpt from the first volume published in 1923 portrays “The Forestry Guy” as

*A knightly figure amid the green,  
In khaki instead of mail,  
A face of bronze, eyes quick and keen—  
Swift hoofbeats on the trail;  
A home in the saddle through the summer days,  
A bed ’neath the evening sky;  
Who is it travels the silent ways?  
He’s only a forestry guy.*

Sparsely published in the 1920s and 1930s, *Maine Forester* appeared annually from 1936 to 1941, taking a hiatus during WWII. By the late 1950s, the yearbook adopted a larger format similar to UMaine’s Prism yearbook. Special features are scattered throughout, including a 1971 guest article by **Senator Edmund S. Muskie**. In 1969, **Nutting Hall** was proudly featured on the cover as the new facility opened to students. There is also a special edition published in 2003 in conjunction with SFR’s 100th anniversary. All volumes are keyword searchable, and we invite you to explore past issues at <http://library.umaine.edu/forester>



Professor John Daigle and Bureau of Indian Affairs forester Mike Benedict inspect a brown ash tree along the Penobscot River.

UMaine and Tribes Work to Protect Brown Ash

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an introduced beetle from Asia which was first detected in Detroit in 2002. Since then, EAB has spread to 14 states and Canada, and is currently just 120 miles from Maine. EAB has devastated ash trees and will likely incur tens of billions of dollars in damages. But for Maine’s Indian tribes, the potential loss of brown ash is beyond dollars. Indeed, the Wabanaki origin story has their ancestors emerging from the brown ash tree, and it continues to play a central role in Wabanaki culture and basketry. Supported by **UMaine’s NSF-funded Sustainability Solutions Initiative**, Anthropology’s **Darren Ranco**, and SFR’s **Rob Lilieholm, John Daigle**, and **Bill Livingston** are working with local tribes to anticipate and respond to EAB. For more information, visit: <http://www.umaine.edu/browlash/>



Bruce Wiersma

UMaine Releases Future of Maine’s Forests Report

After decades of debate over forest policy, an 18-month study led by **Professor Bruce Wiersma** has brought together diverse interests to develop a shared vision for the Maine Woods. Wiersma was asked by **Governor John Baldacci’s**

administration to lead the group – comprised of academics, industry representatives, and environmentalists – to identify key threats and opportunities facing Maine’s forests. “It was evident that the group shared a common bond and a common interest in our passion about the forest,” said Wiersma. “This established a bond that carried us through almost two years of study.” The result is a ground-breaking document entitled *Keeping Maine’s Forests: A Study of the Future of Maine’s Forests*. The document can be accessed free-of-charge at: [www.crsf.umaine.edu/pdf/KeepingMainesForests\\_2009.pdf](http://www.crsf.umaine.edu/pdf/KeepingMainesForests_2009.pdf)



UMaine Hosts Spruce Budworm Forum

The **Cooperative Forestry Research Unit** (CFRU) recently hosted more than 60 resource professionals from Maine, New Hampshire, Quebec, New Brunswick and the Canadian Maritimes in Caribou, Maine, to revisit lessons learned from the spruce budworm epidemic of the 1970s and 1980s. The day-long forum reviewed the periodic nature of budworm outbreaks, and the insect’s ecology and destructive potential. After an indoor morning session, CFRU member **JD Irving, Ltd** hosted a field tour to demonstrate techniques they are using between outbreaks to reduce budworm vulnerability. A panel of experts including SFR Professors **Bob Seymour** and **Jeremy Wilson** analyzed past lessons and identified key challenges for the future. See presentations and other information at [www.umaine.edu/CFRU](http://www.umaine.edu/CFRU)