2020 ANNUAL MEETING & TRADE SHOW

The Association’s 2020 Annual Meeting was held September 1-3 at the beautiful Omni Amelia Island Resort. A slate of outstanding speakers, exhibitors, sponsors, silent auction donors, and attendees combined to make this year’s event a success. Given the challenging circumstances this year, we are especially grateful for everyone’s support.

PowerPoint presentations from the sessions are available for viewing under the Annual Meeting tab on our website, FLForestry.org.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Incoming president Carlton Jones (Robbins Manufacturing) received the symbolic presidential gavel from outgoing president Edward Cole at the President’s Dinner.

Other officers were also elected to lead the Association for the next two years:

Vice President/President Elect: Jimmy Bielling – Bielling Site Prep & Reforestation

Secretary-Treasurer: Ann Hutchinson Duff – WestRock

Executive Vice President: Alan Shelby – Florida Forestry Association

Executive Committee Members:

Committee Chairs:
Communications: John Dooner – Southern Forestry Consultants
Environmental: Wesley Carter – Loncala
Government Relations: Mark Milligan – F4 Tech
Leadership/Nominations: Edward Cole – Coward, Hicks and Siler, P.A.
Steering: Jeremy Sapp – Sapp’s Land & Excavating
TREEPAC: Avery Roberts – Roberts Land & Timber Investment Corp.

At Large:
Matt Goodin – Georgia-Pacific WFS LLC
Lynetta Usher Griner – Usher Land & Timber
Russ Hannon – Great South Timber & Lumber
Jim Karels – Karels Forestry & Fire Consulting
Matt Webb – Genesis Timber

In addition, the Association’s Board of Directors added several new members to its roster:

Anthony Boggess – Farm Credit of Florida
Shawn Cook – Enviva
Jib Davidson – Columbia Timber & Env. Svcs.
Matt Goodin – Georgia-Pacific WFS LLC
Marshall Hilton – Lykes Brothers, Inc.
Jim Karels – Karels Forestry & Fire Consulting
Ray Sharp – American Forest Management
Tom Smith – Rex Lumber Company
Patrick Spinoso – Ag America
Tim Stuhr – St. Joe Timberland Company
Tom Trembath – Forest Investment Associates

AWARD WINNERS

Award-winning forestry was also celebrated:

Legislators Of The Year:
Senator Doug Broxson

“Senator Broxson has been a friend of Florida forestry for many years,” said Association Executive Vice President Alan Shelby. “He has fought for a myriad of issues directly impacting the forestry community in his district and across the state. In the wake of Hurricane Michael, he has kept forestry at the forefront of recovery discussions and has steadfastly used all available tools to maximize relief funds.”

Senator Broxson represents Florida’s Senate District One, which includes Escambia, Santa Rosa, and part of Okaloosa Counties in the Florida Panhandle. He previously served in the Florida House of Representatives, representing northern Okaloosa County and Santa Rosa County from 2010 to 2016.

Representative Bobby Payne

“Representative Payne has been a friend of Florida forestry since Day One,” said Association Executive Vice President Alan Shelby. “He has immersed himself in passing comprehensive water policy legislation to provide tools and a pathway forward to address the state’s water quality and water quantity challenges. His work strikes a practical balance using science and data as the backbone for some of our most complex water issues.”

Representative Payne has represented the Florida House of Representatives’ 19th District since 2016.

Florida Forestry Association’s Distinguished Service Award: Bryan Olmert

“The positive impact Bryan’s lifetime of service has had on Florida forestry is undeniable,” said Association President Carlton Jones. “His body of work has earned the respect and appreciation of the Association, as well as many other groups and individuals who continue to benefit from his efforts.”

Olmert moved to Florida after high school to pursue a career in forestry. After attending Lake City College and Forest Ranger School, he joined the staff at Loncala, Inc., as operations manager. His hard work, commitment, and leadership eventually earned him the position of president, where he served for more than two decades. He retired in 2015 after 40 years, but he continues to be an active part of Loncala’s board.

During his career, Olmert played a leading role at the Association, culminating in a two-year term as president. He remains a valued member of its Board of Directors and is a past director for the Forest Landowners Association as well.

Olmert played a very important role with the Timber Harvesting Equipment Program at the Chiefland campus of the College of Central Florida. He was not only instrumental in behind the scenes work and planning, but he also served as the instructor for the class.

Olmert has also been very involved with his local community. He worked on the High Springs Comprehensive Plan, was a past President of the Chamber of Commerce, and a past Rotarian President. Olmert has attended and served the First Baptist Church of High Springs for the past 45 years.

Florida Forestry Association’s “Above & Beyond” Award: Lynetta Usher Griner, Usher Land & Timber, Inc.

“As the name suggests, this award recognizes members who go above and beyond on behalf of Florida forestry,” explained Association President Carlton Jones. “For Lynetta, ‘above and beyond’ is just the starting point. Her resume of accomplishments is long and distinguished.”

Griner has served in a variety of leadership roles for the Association, culminating in a term as its first female president. A former Florida Woman of the Year in Agriculture, Lynetta effectively uses her many public platforms to advocate for forestry on local, state and national levels. In 2017, she was one of only 14 producers

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from across the country invited to the White House to discuss agricultural issues with President Trump, Vice President Pence, and Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue.

“I’ve known Lynetta for a number of years, and I can tell you that she was born to be a leader,” said Jones. “Her love for forestry and her passion for the land are evident in everything that she does.”

Griner is Secretary/Treasurer of Usher Land & Timber, Inc., a family owned logging, farming and cattle company in Chiefland, FL.

**Florida Logger of the Year Award:**
**Jerry Gray, Gray Logging**

“Jerry Gray embodies the essence of logging at its best,” said Florida Forestry Association President Carlton Jones. “He is known for his extensive knowledge, his strict adherence to professional practices, and his passion for the industry. All of those qualities are reflected through his outreach and education efforts in his local area.”

According to Gray, manager of Gray Logging, Inc., in Madison, he comes by his love of logging naturally. Multiple generations of his family have made their living from the woods. The business operates 14 logging trucks and semi-trailers, working with a number of mills within a 100-mile radius of Madison.

In addition to the logging operation, Gray is active in community workforce development through a partnership with North Florida College. The school offers a Commercial Drivers License (CDL) program. Gray was not only instrumental in launching the program, he also provided a logging truck and trailer for training.

**Jon Gould Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Award:**
**Don Ashley & Theo Meadows, Ashley Farms**

The brother and sister team have transitioned their 570-acre multi-generational tobacco farm in Madison County into a showcase of sustainable multiple-use management and habitat diversity. After the Ashley’s tobacco crops were no longer farmed, they decided to transition into planting pine trees and became a certified Tree Farm in 1984. Ashley Farms is now a diverse land of pine plantations, woodlands, wildlife food plots/openings, and integrated corn fields. The property operates with multiple-use objectives for timber, wildlife habitat, soil and water conservation, recreation, and aesthetics in a sustainable manner.

“The care and management of Ashley Farms convey the values of the Tree Farm program,” said Florida Forestry Association President Carlton Jones. “Previously recognized as the Florida Land Steward of the Year, it is regarded as a model example for encouraging other landowners to become great land stewards of their working forests.”

Florida’s Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Award honors the memory and legacy of Mr. Jon Gould, a respected member of Florida’s Tree Farm Program State Committee and a proud Tree Farmer and advocate for forestry for more than 30 years throughout the Southeast.

**Silvicultural Contractor of the Year Award:**
**Albert & Chad Norris, Norris and Son Reforestation**

“The father and son duo are known for their work doing site preparation, land clearing and road work,” said Association President Carlton Jones. “Working side by side, they have been in business in Jasper for over 30 years, building a solid reputation for outstanding service, hard work and community involvement. Their clients appreciate the honesty, integrity and reliability that have become the Norris’s trademark.”

Albert and Chad don’t like to boast about their achievements. They prefer to let their work speak for itself. They have developed a very loyal client base in Jasper, where their business is located, and beyond. Customers know that they can call on them at any time and rely on them to get the job done.

**FOREST RECOVERY ACT**

The Forest Recovery Act (S.1687/H.R. 1444) would amend the tax code to allow forest owners to deduct the full market value of their timber prior to the loss caused by natural disasters. Currently, landowners and business generally receive $0 tax deduction on the loss of their timber following a natural disaster.

Our partners at the Forest Landowners Association (FLA) are coordinating a national effort to recruit co-sponsors for this important legislation in the U.S. House and Senate. If you own or manage forests for timber and want to change the tax code to ensure that decades of hard work, risk, and investments don’t result in a total loss from a natural disaster, please contact your U.S. Senators and Representative today in support of the Forest Recovery Act.

Many thanks to Representatives Neal Dunn, Ted Yoho, John Rutherford, Al Lawson, and Alcee Hastings, who have already signed on as co-sponsors.

**EFRP/ECP DEADLINES FOR HURRICANE MICHAEL EXTENDED**

The USDA Florida Farm Service Agency State Committee has authorized an additional extension to the Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP) and Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) late filed period. This allows producers impacted by Hurricane Michael to apply for assistance under EFRP and/or ECP and be considered timely if application is made by the new deadline of **October 30, 2020**. Contact your local FSA office to set up an appointment.

**MASTER LOGGER COURSES ONLINE**

Master Logger training has moved online!

Everything you need to know and do for Master Logger training is located in one convenient place, on the Master Logger page of our website. Sign up for upcoming classes. Take classes online. Register credits for courses taken outside the Association and pay the related FL-SIC dues.

2-day Master Logger initial training (online): **October 27-28**

CLE courses (online): **November 5 and December 10**

**ASSOCIATION ROLLS OUT NEW MEMBERSHIP PORTAL**

The Association officially launched its new, online membership portal on October 15, 2020. This portal provides members an easy way for you to pay invoices, connect with other members, register for events such as the Annual Meeting and Master Logger trainings, and so much more!

To take a look at everything our new portal has to offer, please visit FLForestry.org/community.

As always, we will continue to accept check payments.

**CDL DRUG AND ALCOHOL CLEARINGHOUSE**

Since January 6, 2020, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has begun requiring all CDL holders and companies who employ them to register themselves with the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse. This clearinghouse was created in order to reduce the number of CDL drivers with a drug/alcohol violation who are operating in a different state than they are currently employed. So far, approximately 8,000 drivers with existing violations have been found, increasing the safety of our roads, reducing potential accidents and protecting both our industry and insurance rates.

Employers are required to run a check on all employees prior to the close of 2020 and all drivers must be registered in order to have a check run.

To learn more and register online, please visit clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov.
WAYNE SMITH TO BE INDUCTED INTO FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME

Congratulations to Dr. Wayne Smith, Emeritus Professor and past Director of the School of Forest Resources and Conservation, UF/IFAS, for his well-deserved induction into the Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame!

The induction ceremony will be held at the Florida State Fair’s Agricultural Hall of Fame Banquet on February 16, 2021. Tickets will go on sale January 1, 2021.

Learn more on the Ag Hall of Fame website at floridaaghalloffame.org.

DOUG MOORE EARN NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR CONSERVATION EFFORTS

The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies has recognized Association member Doug Moore and the South Prong Plantation in Baker County with the Private Lands Fish and Wildlife Stewardship Award.

South Prong Plantation is a working, multi-use timberland operation that provides wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities and a living classroom to teach others how to be better land stewards. Moore has previously been recognized for his efforts with the Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Award in 2018.

BOSWORTH NAMED TO GOPHER TORTOISE TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP

Association Director of Forestry and Regulatory Affairs Laura Bosworth was recently selected to represent the forest industry on the Gopher Tortoise Technical Advisory Group (GTTAG). The GTTAG advises the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission on permitting and mitigation procedures for gopher tortoises in Florida.

Ms. Bosworth takes the seat formerly held by Joe McGlincy of Wiregrass Ecological Associates. Mr. McGlincy had represented the forest industry on the group since its inception.

VIRTUAL ARCHITECTURE TOUR

The Association and FL-SIC have partnered with the University of Florida School of Architecture’s LU_LAB to host a virtual architecture tour. Association Director of Forestry and Regulatory Affairs Laura Bosworth is collaborating with LU_Lab Director Professor Christopher Meyer to lead innovation between academic, manufacturing and professional organizations.

The fall semester offered an advanced design studio titled Wood and Everything After. This lecture series serves to connect upper level undergraduate and graduate architectural students, practitioners, and researchers to create environments that foster wood innovation and healthy forest management.

This studio is funded by the first U.S. Forest Service Wood Innovations Grant in Florida.

ELECTION DAY

NOVEMBER 3, 2020

Your vote matters!

MY VISION

By J. Scott Angle • jangle@ufl.edu • @IFAS_VP

The Florida Forestry Association not only introduced me to a great industry at its annual meeting in September, it introduced me to a great community.

You made a newcomer feel like an old friend, one of the team, a member of a community. Two days at Amelia Island demonstrated that the community extends way beyond the association itself, and that UF/IFAS is a leading member.

Let me repeat here what I said at the annual meeting: I work for you. Like the whole team at UF/IFAS, I wake and work to serve. You, the people who rely on science for the success of your enterprise, give us meaning and purpose and relevancy.

Partnering with industry is good business for us at UF/IFAS, but it’s also central to the land-grant mission. You’re part of why we exist. So please, call, email or visit me when you need something. If there’s anything at all I can do to help, I’ll do it.

I come with an understanding of the important role research plays in your industry’s success. Until July 13 when I joined UF/IFAS, I led the USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture, or NIFA. Part of my job there was to oversee McIntire-Stennis capacity grants to fund research into the production, utilization and protection of forestland, to train future forestry scientists, and to involve other disciplines in forestry research.

Both the annual meeting’s formal program and the socially-distanced barstool education that occurred in the spaces in between offered a crash course in Florida forestry. I also had a top-notch in-house guide in Red Baker, director of the UF/IFAS School of Forest Resources & Conservation, who demonstrated that he is a solid leader with a strong relationship with this association.

My vision will continue to develop as I listen and learn from you, but here’s some of what you can expect ahead:

- My support for the proposed SFRC name change. I know Red has communicated to you extensively about it being renamed the School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences. This keeps forestry first but better reflects the wide array of programs under the School’s umbrella.

- Research, teaching and Extension that brings forestry decision-making tools powered by artificial intelligence. Red is among the first to have his unit start a creative conversation about artificial intelligence and already has ideas about how to do put it to use.

I envision smartphones helping you with more real-time management decisions to keep your forests healthy. You have the data. We just need to make more sense of it.

In July, UF announced a $70 million AI initiative. The university will hire 100 faculty members. It will also create an AI-centric data center that houses the world’s fastest AI supercomputer in higher education. UF/IFAS will be asking university administration to invest a substantial portion of these funds in agricultural science. This needs to be on your research agenda to help us make the case for the great impact we can make together.

- More experiential learning. That’s outside-the-classroom experience like study abroad, working in a research lab, and internships.

I want every undergraduate to have the opportunity to participate in one of these experiences. It’s not a mandate, but no one should miss out because their family can’t afford it. I’ll be raising money so all students can take advantage of these opportunities.

I want to thank all association members who have hosted interns and hope we can send you many more in the future.

This emphasis on experiential learning, combined with the new infusion of AI in our curriculum, will produce a new generation of job-ready graduates. One of the highlights of this annual meeting for me was the chance to meet SFRC alumni at a reception Red hosted.

- Efforts to reward foresters for ecosystems services. You know the crop you grow is a mighty tool in removing CO2 from the atmosphere. We aim to increase public understanding of your stewardship and to investigate ways you can be compensated for things you provide for which you’re not currently paid: carbon sequestration, flood control, water filtration, wildlife habitat. It’s time that this was incentivized instead of taken for granted.

Amelia Island was nice, but I hope to see you in the forest soon.

Scott Angle is the University of Florida’s Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources and leader of the UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS).

HUNTING FOR WAYS TO SAVE?

Partnering with Outdoor Underwriters, Inc., the Association offers our members special reduced rates for liability insurance for hunting leases and timberland. For more information, please contact Laura Bosworth (850.222.5646 or Laura@FLForestry.org).

PLANNED GIVING, BEQUESTS & CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

Consider making a gift of a lifetime to support the future of Florida’s working forests by naming the Florida Forestry Association or Florida Forestry Foundation as a beneficiary.