

TIMBER TALK

Newsletter of the Iowa Woodland Owners Association

Spring, 2003

Phone 319-266-4228

Volume 13, Number 2

e-mail ulfers@cfu.net

Summary, March 8, 2003 Board Meeting

The IWOA Board of Directors met at Marion, IA, March 8, 2003. The meeting was called to order by Acting President Greg Twedt, with Directors Hansen, Hendricks, Sparks, Twedt, and Ulfers present. Also present were State Forester, John Walkowiak, Membership Secretary Cathy Wilkie-Tomes, and Past Secretary Eugene Frye serving as secretary pro-tem.

Minutes of the December 14 Board meeting were approved as distributed.

After brief discussion the treasurer's report was approved as distributed.

Tomes presented her membership report. Currently there are 459 paying and 32 complimentary members. She expressed concern about 28 members who have not yet paid their current dues. She also suggested that IWOA generate interesting press releases and distribute them to editors of various newspapers. Considerable discussion on membership development followed. No formal action was taken.

State Forester John Walkowiak reported that the SAF Legislative Breakfast held in February attracted 70 members of the legislature and that the event was deemed to be a success. He said that HF109, relating to applying more severe restrictions on qualifications for Iowa's Forest Reserve, probably will not get out of committee. He doubts that SF141, to increase prices for the state forest nursery seedlings to 25% above costs, will get out as a bill but may be introduced as an amendment to other legislation.

Walkowiak said that he is to generate a case for the economic benefits of woodlands primarily in defense of the Forest Reserve program and sought Board comments. He stated that 575,000 acres, or about one quarter of Iowa woodlands, are in the Forest Reserve.

Hendricks reported on arrangements for the 2003 IWOA Annual Meeting. He is thinking of September 20 at the Warren County Nature Center about 4 miles south of Indianola near the Aquabi State Park. The location and date were confirmed by the Board. Hendricks was directed to proceed with more detailed arrangements.

Tentative arrangements are for the IWOA Summer Field Day to be held at Mount Pleasant on June 27. The field day will feature a visit to a small sawmill. More detailed arrangements for the event will be pursued. Because of timing, with respect to the newsletter, it was decided that a separate mailing should carry the detailed program and registration forms.

Some interest has been expressed in life memberships in IWOA. Frye stated that organizations with which he is familiar generally set the one-time fee at 20 times the current annual dues. The Board directed the president to seek financial advice on the matter and to report at the next Board meeting.

Hansen reviewed preliminary arrangements for the State Fair this year.

A contribution of \$500 to the Tree Farm Committee toward procurement of copies of the "Tree Finder" publication for the Master Woodland Manager program was approved. This gets IWOA co-sponsorship in the program.

After discussion it was approved to grant recent Tree Farmers certified by the Iowa Tree Farm Committee a one year complimentary membership in IWOA. For those who are already IWOA member, their membership would be extended by one year. This is similar to IWOA's long-standing offer to recent Master Woodland Manager graduates.

Walkowiak asked if IWOA could co-sponsor the publication of posters for the "Trees for Kids" program at a cost of about \$250 per year. The Board deferred action until the next Board meeting.

Ulfers reported that Harvey Ulfers will attend the FFA awards ceremony next month. IWOA contributes financially to the FFA awards.

The next Board meeting was set for the morning of Saturday, June 7, at the Linn County Extension offices at 10:00 am.

Exciting Changes are Springing Up at ISHS

Have you heard the buzz? The Iowa State Horticultural Society (ISHS) is no longer supported by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship but is privately funded through individual and corporate memberships.

ISHS is still publishing the same *The Iowa Horticulturist* magazine that you have come to know and trust, but with some great changes. It has now been expanded to include more color, more pages, and more articles.

Memberships may be obtained for only \$35.00. With your new membership, there is a beautiful membership card that entitles you to discounts with participating retailers all over the state. The list of ISHS Retail Partners promises to grow in the months ahead.

For a membership form, visit the web site at www.iowahort.org and click on member application from the choices on the left. Just print it off, fill it out and return it. Don't have a computer? See the spring issue of *The Iowa Horticulturist*, page 5 for the complete application or use the insert. Applications can also be picked up at participating HyVee stores' Burpee seed racks. Want something easier? Just call 515-490-0777 and use your credit card or ISHS will even bill you!

If you have any questions, contact Sarah Bibens, Executive Director, or her associate, Nancy Langemach, at ishs@ponyexpress.net or use the telephone number above for any questions pertaining to ISHS.

Remember, the mission is still the same to promote and encourage horticulture and related interests in Iowa. Your membership will help ensure that we continue to meet our mission.

Forest Reserve Legislation Update

House Study Bill 312 contains language that could potentially change the forest reserve tax exemption. IWOA members interested in this subject should monitor the activities of the House and Senate Ways and Means committees.

To access the complete House Study Bill via the internet, go to www.legis.state.ia.us and click on Legislation—Real Time Updates. At the bottom of the page you will find a link to House Study Bills. Select the Ways and Means Committee, and a listing of study bills related to that committee will be available. For those who do not have internet access, you may want to contact your representative or senator.

Dates to Remember

April 22 – Earth Day

April 25 – Arbor Day in Iowa

June 27 – IWOA Field Day in the Mount Pleasant/Fairfield area
Registration information will be mailed.

September 20 – IWOA Annual Meeting at Aquabi State Park in Warren County

EPA Website

Information on landscaping with native flowers, grasses, and plants is available at the United States Environmental Protection Agency website, www.epa.gov/greenacres. The information focuses on the Great Lakes region, but much of the data is applicable to our area.

Natural landscaping is good for the environment as it reduces the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. Landscape maintenance is also minimized. Get ready for spring with a visit to this site.



2301 Hawthorne Dr.
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Spring, 2003

2003

Thomas Brady
199 NE 80th. St.
Runnells, IA

50237-2128



Non-Native Tree of the Quarter

Sassafras *Sassafras albidum*

Sassafras is in the laurel family and is the only member of this family with any hope of growing in Iowa. Most of its relatives, one of which is avocado, are tropical or sub-tropical. It's a little risky using sassafras for this article because it is one of several trees that may touch the southeastern tip of Iowa as a native, but grows nowhere else in the state. So, if there is someone in Keokuk making fun of me because they're looking out the window at their sassafras, forgive me...the rest of us think sassafras is non-native.

When I started this more or less harmless obsession of collecting every non-native tree that has a chance of living in Iowa about 15 years ago, sassafras was on my "must have" list. It has several attributes that make it unique. It has bright green leaves that have several different shapes, often on the same branch. They can be three lobed (shaped like a trident), a mitten shape, with the thumb on either side, or no lobes at all. All shapes have a wedge shaped leaf base and long stem. The twigs are bright green and the branching habit is unusual (seen in the winter landscape), horizontal branching with the tips turned up like a candelabra. It has yellow-green flowers that come out before the leaves in spring with male and female almost always on separate trees. The fruit ripens in September or October and is a dark blue, almost black, berry resting on a bright red 2 inch pedicel. Inside the berry is one hard seed. They are very pretty, although I've only seen pictures. Sassafras is a medium sized tree often growing in thickets, in the understory or fence rows. It has beautiful fall color of yellow to bright red and every shade in between. One of our prettiest fall trees.

I mentioned having sassafras on my wish list. I found a couple of seedlings growing near Washington D.C. in the late 80's, dug them up and brought them to Iowa for planting...they died. I bought a couple of trees from the National Arbor Society...they died. I had a friend who lives in Springfield, Illinois bring me 6 trees he had dug up... they all died. I do have three trees. One I purchased from an Iowa nursery in 1991 and 2 given to me by Larry Krotz in 1999. It's not that we are too far north, the tree grows to zone 4; it's just that sassafras hates to be transplanted because of its taproot. It also prefers acid soil that is in short supply in Iowa. I find them very slow growing. My 1991 tree is about 10 feet. Almost all the tree is aromatic and in the past (less so today) various parts have been used for brewing tea, flavoring root beer, and extracting oil for use in soap and lotion.

Tom Brady, IWOA Member

Trees for Kids/Trees for Teens Materials

IWOA members who are looking for educational materials regarding trees are reminded that resources are available free of charge through the Trees for Kids/Trees for Teens programs sponsored by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and several other businesses and organizations. The goal of these programs is to educate students about the value of trees and to encourage tree planting projects at schools or other public areas around the state. This year's theme is Native Trees and stresses the benefit of native trees to our natural ecosystems.

To order your information packet send your request by e-mail to tfkids@dnr.state.ia.us or contact Sarah at 515-281-4915.

A Breeze in the Branches: The President's Corner

It looks like spring maybe making an appearance and I am sure it is welcome around the state. However, by and large it was a pretty nice winter for working and or walking in the woods. It sure is a lot easier pruning trees when you don't have to wade through 3-4 feet of snow.

We conducted a timber sale this winter and it went very well. I was very impressed with the professional and conscientious way in which the loggers went about their jobs. This is the second timber sale we have had and both time the loggers have done good jobs. I know there are "bad actors" in any profession but I think many time loggers are painted with a broad brush of criticism that is not deserved. Most of the loggers in Iowa are local family owned businesses and I think most of them care about doing a good job.

Of course now that the trees are harvested there are some big open spaces in our woods. The seedlings for the re planting have been ordered and we will doing that this spring. I sure hope it doesn't interfere with mushroom hunting! Maybe if I am lucky there will be a nice morel right next to where each seedling is to be planted.

Speaking of seedlings. Once again there has been an effort by some legislators and nurseries to eliminate the State Forestry Nursery during this session of the legislature. To me this is very short sighted as the projected demand for "bare root" seedlings for reforestation and conservation planting will require the output of both state and private nurseries. Hopefully this has been laid to rest for this session but I am sure it will continue to be an issue. If you believe as I do that the State Forestry Nursery is a vital asset to the state of Iowa may I suggest that some time this summer you invite your local legislators to tour your wood lands and try to educate them on the importance of the State Forestry Nursery to Iowa wood lands.

The summer field day will be held in the Mt. Pleasant area and looks to be a fun day. Hopefully this will be convenient for our members in this area of the state and those of you from other parts of the state will enjoy the trip.

A gentle reminder. We are still looking for pictures of you and your wood lands to put together for our state fair booth this year. As it stands now the display will consist of one picture of me sitting asleep on a tree stump!

Take care and good mushroom hunting.

Jim Ahrens, IWOA President

Membership Renewal

Please check your address label to confirm that your membership is current. If your label has the year 2002 highlighted in yellow, your membership dues had not been paid as of the printing of the labels. To renew your membership, please fill in the enclosed form and return it to Tom Woodruff, Iowa Woodland Owners Association, 4115 Rodeo Rd, Davenport, IA 52806. If you have already renewed your membership, please disregard the notice.