

NEEDLE NEWS

A publication of the Inland Empire Christmas Tree Association
www.iecta.org

Spring 2013

IECTA Meets April 6 at The Center in Newman Lake, WA

IECTA's spring meeting will be Saturday, April 6 at The Center at Word of Life Community Church at 6703 North Idaho Road Newman Lake, WA.

Cost: \$25.00 per farm plus \$10.00 per person for meals.

Pay at the door.

To register call 208-689-9868 or
email rustyगतetreefarm@gmail.com

- 8:30 a.m. Seedling Distribution and Registration
- 9:00 a.m. Gather & Greet - light breakfast & coffee
- 9:30 a.m. Gary Chastagner—Tree Keepability: Improving the postharvest quality & safety of cut trees.
- 10:30 a.m. Break
- 11:00 a.m. Chastagner and Mckeever—Overview of new research projects: Needle retention and Phytophthora root rot genomic project; Nordmann, Turkish and Trojan firs; adelgids; and more.
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. IECTA Business Meeting
- 2:00 p.m. Conclusion and Finish Seedling Distribution



Tom and Lynn Roberts hosted the fall meeting and have graciously agreed to host our spring meeting also.

Thank you, Tom & Lynn!

Come to the Spring Meeting Ready to Pay For and Get Your Seedlings

It's planting time!

Our grand fir seedlings will be ready for distribution at the spring meeting.

Tom Roberts is picking up our seedlings on Friday, April 5 and will have them at the spring meeting, so be prepared to pay for and transport your seedlings.

See page 5 for details.

**Directions to The Center at Word of Life Community Church
6703 North Idaho Road
Newman Lake:**

- ◆ Take I-90 Exit 299 at State Line and go north across the Spokane River.
- ◆ Go 0.4 miles then take a left onto E Wellesley Ave.
- ◆ Go 0.2 miles.
- ◆ Take a right onto Idaho Road.
- ◆ Go about 1.5 miles to The Center next door to the Word of Life Church.

Gary A. Chastagner is Featured Speaker for IECTA on April 6

Gary A. Chastagner was born in Woodland, CA. He received an A.A. in Natural Science from Sacramento City College, his B.A. in Biology and Industrial Arts from California State University, Fresno, and M.S. and Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from the University of California, Davis. Gary worked briefly as a Post Doctoral Fellow at UC Davis before joining the faculty at Washington State University in 1978 at the Research and Extension Center in Puyallup, WA, working on ornamental bulb crop and turfgrass diseases. He added responsibilities for Christmas trees in 1980, hybrid poplars in 1988, and sudden oak death in 2003. He was promoted to Professor in 1998 and currently has statewide research and extension responsibilities for ornamental bulb crops, Christmas trees, and sudden oak death.

Gary has developed a highly respected and productive extension and research program with international impact. He has received over \$5.7 million in competitive and noncompetitive funding and published 70 peer reviewed papers, 23 non-refereed professional papers, 27 extension bulletins, 9 web pages, 1 educational video, 9 book chapters, 70 technical publications, 93 popular press articles, 132 abstracts,

and given more than 600 presentations to regional, national and international audiences. The following is a brief summary of Gary's programs and their impact.

Ornamental bulb crops: Early in his career, Gary showed how some new fungicides improved the control of several Botrytis diseases. On tulips, the increased productivity was estimated at \$2 million in Washington State. He also was involved in the development of a detached leaf inoculation procedure that was used by breeders to develop screening procedures to identify sources of Botrytis-resistant germplasm and formed the basis for the development of the BoWaS disease forecasting system in the Netherlands. When growers were facing the loss of formaldehyde to prevent the spread of basal rot during hot water treatment of bulbs, Gary introduced the use of chlorine dioxide as an eco-friendly alternative. This material is now being tested internationally by researchers in other bulb production regions.

Christmas tree disease management: Swiss needle cast (SNC) on Douglas-fir was an emerging problem

Chastagner continued on page 5

In memory of IECTA Member & Outdoorsman, Roger M. Williams

IECTA member, Roger Williams, died July 6 at his home in Meridian, Idaho. Roger attended Penn State University and received a Bachelor's degree in Forestry in 1948. That fall he left Pennsylvania for Idaho, where he lived the rest of his life.

After completing his Master's degree in Wildlife Management at the University of Idaho and serving two years in the Army, Roger began work as a game biologist with the Idaho Fish & Game Department. Thirty-two years later he retired from Fish & Game as Chief of Program Coordination and moved with his wife, Elinor, to their 6-acre utopia in Meridian. There they built their dream home, bird sanctuary, and the Williams Tree Farm. People came to the Christmas tree farm to cut their own Christmas trees.

An avid outdoorsman and conservationist, Roger loved to roam the backcountry for hiking, bird-watching, hunting, and fishing. His greatest passion was backpacking, and he could "walk the legs off a mountain goat". He travelled extensively in retirement, hiking and rafting in Alaska and

the Yukon, Antarctica, New Zealand, Australia, Europe, South America, and Africa. He climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro at age 68 and summited 49 of the state's high points, only foregoing Mt. McKinley in Alaska due to a "moment of clarity".

His main love was always the Idaho backcountry and sharing it with others. Among his proudest accomplishments were surveying and naming previously unnamed lakes in the Sawtooth Wilderness in 1960 and his role in helping to develop Idaho's Centennial Trail, inspired mostly by his backpack trip the length of Idaho with his close friend, Syd Tate, in the summer of 1986.

A memorial service was held on September 15, 2012. Memorial donations may be submitted in Roger's name to the Sawtooth Society or The Idaho Conservation League. Remembrances may be left for the family at www.AccentFuneral.com.

Published in Idaho Statesman on July 15, 2012

IECTA Fall Meeting Minutes from October 6, 2012

IECTA's annual fall meeting was at The Center at Word of Life Community Church on October 6, 2012. President John Myhre welcomed members and guests after a light breakfast. He gave a survey of the agenda and introduced our presenter, Jennifer Jensen from University of Idaho Extension, Bonners Ferry, Idaho.

Jennifer began the first presentation on the white pine weevil, a stem borer that is widespread and native to the United States. A black with orange spots insect, about ¼ inch long, it prefers spruce in the West but white pine in the East. It winters over in the duff under the trees then crawls to the top to lay eggs and feeds on the stems. Most of the damage is done to the tree in the late spring when the female insect drills holes and delivers 100 or more eggs per weevil. The eggs become larvae and bore down through the stem causing it to droop and the tree to die from the top down. There are several ways to control this insect from putting sticky bands on the leaders to spraying in the spring with a second application two weeks later. Interested members can go to WSU PICOL website for more information on chemicals and sprays.

After a break Jennifer continued with information on subalpine and corkbark trees as Christmas trees. Both trees are members of the *Abies lasiocarpa* species and are known to grow slowly, have a narrow cone with blue-green, silvery soft foliage, and need little shearing. While the hardiness zone is 2, they often have frost damage and they are not drought tolerant. Planting on north or east facing slopes, avoiding frost pockets, and irrigating for the first two years

King and Alice Rockhill enjoy discussions at IECTA's fall meeting. Alice served as substitute secretary.



Dellora Gauger continues as IECTA's webmaster until a replacement can be found. Are you interested?

may increase their viability. They are subject to fungal infestation and the usual aphids, mites, budworms, but standard practices work well. Both the subalpine and corkbark trees are easy to grow with the corkbark having a slight advantage over the subalpine. Jennifer ended her presentation with questions from the audience. In the process the grand fir seed source in Sandpoint was mentioned. She believes the cones are still available because the seed trees are still standing.

Members were reminded to assess their seedling needs for the spring of 2013 and to get their orders in by November 1st for subsequent years through 2015. There are 2,000 additional P-1 seedlings available this coming spring. Please contact Tom Leege as soon as possible if you want to buy these seedlings.

As a continuation of media use and technical programs offered at the spring meeting, John Myhre brought four examples of what members could find on Youtube. All four short video presentations were educational/entertaining with many of us gasping as we watched shearers work without protective leggings or head protection. Interested individuals are encouraged to browse further under Christmas trees and consider creating their own Christmas tree videos for marketing.

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Minutes continued ...

Following the morning presentations, Tom and Lynn Roberts provided a delicious lunch of lentil soup with vegetables from their garden, sandwiches, fruit, and pumpkin cake. Both Tom and Lynn hosted us royally, setting up the facilities, feeding us, and cleaning up afterwards. The facilities were modern, convenient, and lovely in every way. Thank you, Tom and Lynn.

The business meeting followed lunch. Door prizes were awarded to Jim Dietz and Tom Roberts. John had IECTA signs available for sale.

The motion to accept the minutes as printed in the *Needle News* was made by King Rockhill, seconded by Jim Storms, and passed. The treasurer's report was handed out and reviewed. The balance is \$2,817.57 with some outstanding bills. The members were disappointed to learn that Lisa Beckman is stepping down. She has taken on the enormous task of sorting out our finances and giving us some budgeting perspectives. We want to thank her for her hard work and organizational ability and are truly sorry she is not continuing as treasurer. Jim Storms consented to act as treasurer for one year and was duly elected.

Dellora Gauger agreed to continue as webmaster until a replacement can be found. She reminded all of us that the website can be accurate only if members check out their personal information and inform her if changes need to be made. Mike Yackley will continue to send her information on new members as in the past. A recommendation was made that the website address be included on the newsletter heading.

A director is elected or re-elected every fall. This year position #3 (2012 – 2015) was up for election. Tom Roberts volunteered and was elected into office by a motion from King and a 2nd by Marguerite. Motion passed. He replaces Steve Gauger who has given many years of service and is one of the original members of the Montana Association that joined with IECTA some years ago. We thank Steve and expressly want him and Dellora to continue to attend meetings as much as possible. Jim Dietz and Mike Beckman hold positions 1 and 2.

Because there are insufficient funds to support a National Trustee, that position will remain vacant until someone with the time, interest, and funds can take on the responsibility of keeping IECTA connected and informed of the National Christmas Tree Association activities. In addition, IECTA will not donate funds to Trees for Troops, but individuals are encouraged to donate on their own.

The president, secretary, (and treasurer) must be elected each year at the annual meeting. King moved to cast a unanimous ballot for John Myhre and Carolyn Leege as president and secretary, respectively. Seconded by Alice and the motion passed.

Bylaw changes: In order to align the bylaws with practices already being used, Steve Gauger moved that only one signature needs to be written on a check, but that a minimum of additional two signatures be on record at the bank so that bills can be paid in a timely manner if the treasurer is not available. MaryAnn seconded the motion. After much discussion, the motion passed.

Steve moved to drop the bond requirement in our bylaws. Seconded by Lynette. Passed. IECTA also has a bill for \$313.00 to pay for Commercial Liability Insurance coverage due on October 18th. This item was tabled at the meeting with the understanding that an effort would be made to ascertain whether or not we needed this insurance by October 18th.

Steve moved to drop references to a nominating committee from the bylaws. Nominations and volunteers will be accepted from the floor and subsequently voted on at the meeting. King seconded the motion and it passed.

Jim Storms made the most recent edits to the bylaws. He will search his files for the most recent electronic version of the bylaws, so these changes can be made.

The recommendation was made to increase the down payment on seedlings to 50% to match what IECTA pays Silvaseed. A discussion followed as to how we might increase our income because our funds are getting very low. Both increasing our membership fee and the cost of our meetings was discussed. This issue was tabled until the spring meeting.

Steve mentioned that it was not that many years ago when the Montana Association joined with the IECTA that there were sufficient funds to support the activities of this organization. His question focused on what has caused this current deficit. After discussion, falling membership numbers and higher prices seemed to be two reasons for our financial situation.

The spring meeting will be held on April 6, 2013. Location to be determined. Recommendations for programs included some practical applications through a panel. Members are encouraged to give John Myhre their suggestions for future programs.

Respectively submitted,

Alice Rockhill, substitute secretary for Carolyn Leege

Grand Fir Seedlings to be Distributed at April 6 Meeting

The plug+1 seedlings that IECTA had grown will be delivered to members at the spring meeting on April 6. Silvaseed in Roy, WA grew these seedlings from seed IECTA obtained from our seed orchard in Sandpoint, ID. The trees in the seed orchard tested extremely well for needle retention.

The following members need to come to the meeting prepared to take delivery of their seedlings and pay the amount still due on them:

Name	Number of Seedlings	Amount Due
Mike Beckman	2500	\$1,000.00
Dave Tysdal	1000	450.00
M. Gillespie	500	225.00
John Myhre	2000	850.00
Jim Dietz	500	0
Wayde Emel	3600	1,550.00
Tom Roberts (Spokane)	200	100.00
Rod Hansen	300	112.50
Mike Yackley	500	255.00

There are no additional seedlings available for this year, but there may be a few available for delivery in 2014 and 2015. Please contact Tom Leegre if you have additional seedling needs for those years. ▲

Chastagner continued ...

in the late 1970s. Gary's research on the epidemiology of SNC led to the development of effective monitoring and control measures for this disease, which, in 1981, caused preharvest losses of \$3.4 million in western Washington and Oregon. The control measures Gary developed required a single spray and cost about 5 cents per tree. The disease monitoring and control program that was put in place 30 years ago has virtually eliminated SNC from Christmas tree plantations in the Pacific Northwest and has improved postharvest tree performance.

When the demand for noble fir increased in the mid-1980s, growers faced production problems with diseases like interior needle blight (INB), current

season needle necrosis (CSNN), Annosus root rot and Phytophthora root rot. Gary's research showed that INB, which was causing losses of up to \$30,000 per acre, could be controlled with 1 or 2 fungicide sprays. He showed that CSNN was a physiological disorder that is under genetic control and is more likely to develop in plantings at low elevation sites. Gary determined that tree mortality of up to 35% from Annosus root rot in some growers' fields was associated with planting seedlings next to newly-infected stumps. He found that a simple way to prevent stump infection was to "kick" soil onto them immediately after harvest. Gary's Phytophthora root rot research revealed that there are at least eight species of this pathogen on trees in the PNW for which applications of fungicides have not been effective.

Chastagner continued on page 6

Chastagner continued ...

Although most *Abies* spp. are considered susceptible to *Phytophthora* root rot, Gary showed that there are some species, notably Nordmann and Turkish fir, that appear resistant. He found that these species are also resistant to several common insect pests. As a result of this work, the number of Nordmann fir planted in 2007 (511,000) was 10 times greater than in 1998.

During the past 15 years, Gary has worked with scientists and industry partners in eight states and four foreign countries to identify genetically superior sources of trees. North American cooperators collect branches from existing seed orchards and send them to Puyallup for needle loss testing. Scion wood is then collected from the trees with excellent needle retention, which is under strong genetic control, to establish improved grafted seed orchards in North America and Europe. The testing procedure Gary developed has dramatically changed how trees are being evaluated and will eventually lead to better quality trees for consumers.

Gary's WSU Tree Care Recommendations are widely read across the nation. Because of his extensive knowledge of the care and handling of Christmas trees, he has partnered with the Christmas tree industry and fire regulatory agencies to develop educational brochures and community service programs dealing with proper tree care and fire safety. He co-organized a "Flammability of Cut Christmas Trees" workshop at an International Association of Arson Investigators Annual Conference, where he gave an

overview of factors that affect the moisture level of cut Christmas trees and described a research trial studying the effects of fire retardant use and display care on the postharvest quality and flammability of Douglas-fir Christmas trees.

Gary co-founded the International Christmas Tree Research and Extension Conference and hosted the first meeting of this group in 1987. This conference provides a unique venue for research and extension scientists working on Christmas trees to share ideas and, more importantly, develop collaborative projects to address issues facing the industry.

Working with regulatory agencies and industry partners, Gary's program also provides research-based information relating to the detection, spread and management of sudden oak death in Washington State. He has developed biocontainment facilities to work with this regulated pathogen and a molecular bioscience laboratory that provides valuable information to regulatory agencies on population structure and spread of this pathogen. The WSU SOD program is recognized for its leadership in studying the potential risk this pathogen poses to conifers. Hands-on and web-based programs have provided information to the public and trained hundreds of growers. ▲

Reprinted from The American Phytopathological Society website

Just for fun ...
**Bring a
Door Prize
to the
Spring Meeting**

Spring Meeting Registration
Call: 208-689-9868 or
Email: rustygatetreefarm@gmail.com
Pay at the door:
\$25.00 per farm plus \$10.00 per person for meals