

NEEDLE NEWS

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

July 2014

Work Day to Develop Corkbark Fir Seed Orchard Deemed a Success

IECTA's work day June 25 at the closed Sandpoint experiment station was well attended, and we accomplished a great deal of work. We are trying to save and develop a seed tree orchard of the best corkbark fir from the previous University of Idaho extension provenance test of subalpine fir and corkbark fir.

We selected 30 of the best corkbark trees to save, and we plan to manage the stand as a seed tree orchard for future seed collections. Management goals are to first eliminate the subalpine fir and less desirable corkbark fir. We culled some of the corkbark fir because of fungal damage. We also cut and piled about 500 subalpine fir that showed substantial damage from fungal disease. About 100 of the best subalpine fir still have commercial value and were selected by attendees for selling as Christmas trees this winter. Trees from the best corkbark seed sources (Apache-Sitgreaves, Coconino, and Gila) are reserved for future options in the seed orchard development. We need to get a sign made and installed to explain the project.

Attendees included Mike Yackley, Greg Kardong, Sean Rowe, Izzy Rowe, Maynard Gillespie, Wade Emel, Marissa Emel, Jason Morrel, Paul Brusven, Tom Leege, Carolyn Leege, and John Myhre. Ron Mahoney who is the advisor of the U of I Society of American Foresters and

Harry Menser who is a previous Sandpoint U of I experiment station director stopped by and are interested in the project.

This will be the second seed orchard developed by IECTA at the Sandpoint location.

Summer Farm Tour at Brusven's Spring Valley Tree Farm

Saturday, August 9
9:00 a.m.

Brusven's will provide
moose burgers
and beverages.

Bring a salad or dessert
to share.

Directions to Spring Valley Tree Farm for Summer Farm Tour:

From Moscow: Head south through Moscow on Hwy 95, stay in the far left lane straight through the intersection on the south end of town. The other two lanes turn right to Lewiston, but your lane turns into Hwy 8 headed east. Stay on Hwy 8 (Troy Hwy) for 12 miles. Go through Troy and continue on Hwy 8 for 2 more miles. At the brown Spring Valley Reservoir sign turn left on Spring Valley Road. Continue for about 0.2 miles and look for the address post on the left with birdhouses and "1041" on it. Turn left up the middle driveway and go up the hill between two houses and adjacent waterway. Follow driveway straight back to forest.

From Deary: On Hwy 8 turn right on Spring Valley Road (2 miles before Troy). Follow directions above to Spring Valley Tree Farm.

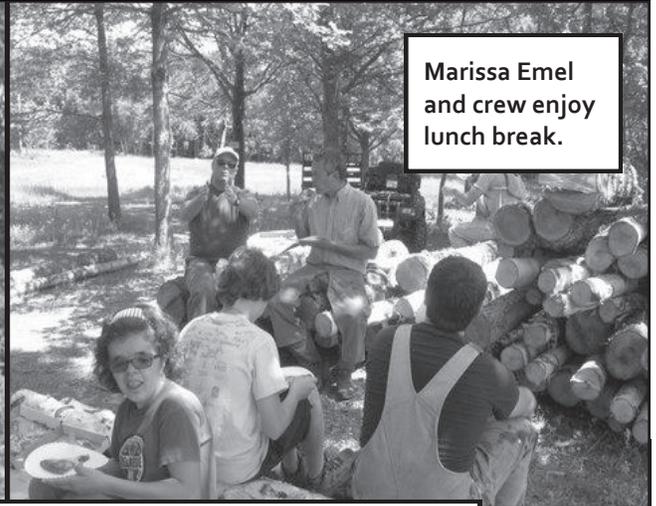
See map on page 6. Please call Paul on his cell phone (208-791-4699) if you have any questions.

IECTA Work Day to Establish Corkbark Fir Seed Orchard at Sandpoint

IECTA members, friends, and family develop new corkbark seed orchard



Marissa Emel and crew enjoy lunch break.



Jason Morrel, Sean Rowe, Izzy Rowe, and Greg Kardong

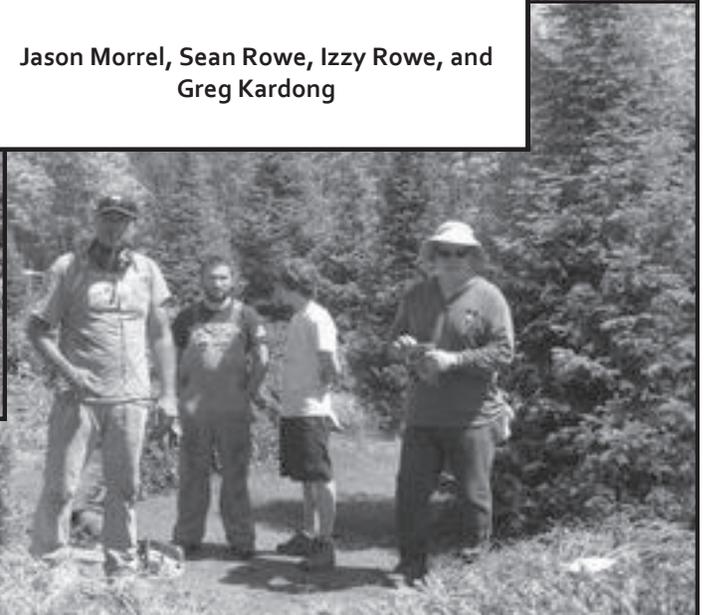
Mike Yackley and Paul Brusven



Tom Leege tags a tree to sell next winter.



The work day to establish a corkbark fir seed orchard at the former Sandpoint experiment station went well. We had beautiful weather and made great progress. This will be the second seed orchard developed by IECTA at the Sandpoint location. The first seed orchard, established in 1983, has grand fir from the Sears Creek Drainage on the Clearwater NF. In 2007 IECTA began collecting seed from those trees to grow seedlings, and IECTA members report good success with the seedlings in the field.



John Myhre brought his tractor to pile culled trees.



Minutes from IECTA's Spring 2014 Meeting

The Inland Empire Christmas Tree Association's annual spring meeting was at The Center at Word of Life Community Church in Newman Lake, Washington on April 5, 2014. Present were officers and committee chairs: President John Myhre, Secretary Alice Rockhill, Treasurer James Dietz, Directors Thomas M. Roberts and Paul Brusven, Scott Carver (Website manager), and Mike Yackley (Membership). Also present were 18 IECTA members and guest speaker Jennifer Jensen from U of I Extension.

President John Myhre opened the meeting at 9:30 with a welcome. He introduced Jennifer Jensen from Boundary County, University of Idaho Extension. She provided an update on corkbark and subalpine fir studies and the status of the tree nursery and seed orchard at Sandpoint, Idaho.

Jennifer Jensen handed out a publication on "Growing Corkbark and Subalpine Fir for Nursery Production" (Pacific Northwest Extension Publication 645). She emphasized their natural qualities as Christmas trees: soft fragrant foliage, narrow conical shape, disease resistance, altitude tolerance from sea level to 12,000 feet, etc. Production problems include slow growth rate, variability in growth rate and quality depending on seed source, and spring frost damage. These firs grow best on north or east slopes in well-drained sandy loams, loams, or silt loams with a relatively high pH.

The extension study looked at six corkbark fir and ten subalpine fir seed sources. The results showed corkbark fir superior to subalpine fir for Christmas trees and landscaping. The best corkbark seed sources were from Apache-Sitgreaves, Coconino, and Gila National Forests. The subalpine firs showed slower growth and more susceptibility to a phoma-type fungal blight. The studied subalpine seed sources were not recommended for landscape production but have potential for Christmas trees with fungicide treatment if needed. The best subalpine seed sources were Kaibab, Umcompaghre, Dixie, and Cibola. A paper, "Survival, Frost Susceptibility, Growth, and Disease Resistance of Corkbark and Subalpine Fir

Grown for Landscape and Christmas Trees" (HorTechnology, April 2013, 23(2)) was distributed. It contains more detailed trial information including fungicide programs.

Jennifer Jensen concluded with a presentation of several Christmas tree diseases including Botrytis blight, interior needle blight, Rhabdocline, Swiss needle cast, Rhizospaera, Linula need cast, and others.

Tom and Lyn Roberts prepared a delicious lunch of potato/sausage soup and sub sandwiches. We enjoyed a delightful time with good food and good conversation. Thank you, Tom and Lyn, for your hospitality and excellent food.

President John Myhre called the business meeting to order at 1:05 P.M.

Tom Roberts began the agenda with a report on tree tags. He presented a variety of options from Lawton Printing that took into consideration size, one or two sided, color, eyelet or simple punch, tie on or wire on, printing, etc. One estimate was \$887.00 for 5,000 tags. Further information was deemed necessary, so estimates from the National Christmas Tree Association and Kelco are being checked.

Thanks to Scott and Tamryn Carver who have agreed to take over IECTA's website from Dellora and Steve Gauger. A special thanks goes to Dellora who has been managing the website for many years. The Carvers have a vision for a new look that includes marketing, research, and supply information (MRS for short). Their goal is to make the website easy to navigate and to supply links from the public to growers with an interactive map showing location and driving directions. The website should accommodate all members, whether U-cut, wholesale or both, and help fill special requests for specific trees. They are recommending Athena or Wordpress for ease in manipulating grower information. A motion was passed at the September 2013 meeting to allow \$500.00 to update the website. An amendment to

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the motion was raised by King Rockhill to increase the amount to \$1000.00. The amendment was seconded by Rob Hansen. With a voice vote, the amendment to the motion carried. Lisa Beckman has passed the Facebook page management to Dave Tysdal.

Jim Storms presented an accounting of the grand fir seed and seedling project from the summer of 2007 to December 31, 2013. The cones were collected from the seed orchard in Sandpoint, Idaho, cleaned, processed and sent to Silvaseed where they are stored or sowed depending on seedling orders each year. Orders must be taken two years in advance to assure seedlings are ready in any given year. At this time a profit of \$4,850.08 has resulted from seed and seedling sales. Starting in 2009, IECTA has sold a total of 37,185 seedlings at \$0.50 apiece. Total seedlings ordered for 2014 through 2016 are 17,400. If you need seedlings in the future, you will need to order as soon as possible. To do this, Tom Leege has turned over the sales and distribution of tree seedlings to Jim Dietz, Treasurer, and Dave Tysdal for receiving orders and distribution.

The previous minutes were published in the *Needle News* both online and sent in the mail. King Rockhill moved to accept the minutes as published, seconded by MaryAnn Storms. After a voice vote, the minutes were accepted as printed.

Jim Dietz presented the financial report from September 7, 2013 when he was elected Treasurer to April 5, 2014. He reported a net balance of \$9,392.81, not including the registration fees of the current meeting. Jim Storms moved to file the financial report, seconded by Dave Tysdale. The motion was voted on and carried. Jim Dietz suggested the purchase of a new laptop specifically for IECTA for retaining records and easing the transition from one person to another. Alice Rockhill moved to allow \$500.00 for a new laptop with at least two USB ports and a disk reader/writer, seconded by King Rockhill. Dellora Gauger amended the motion to include \$150.00 for a printer with the agreement of both Alice and King Rockhill as to the original motion. The motion with the amendment was voted on by voice and carried.

The final business of the day was a discussion of tree prices. After the sharing of several perspectives, the members agreed that prices would fall where they may depending on the market and product variables.

Door prizes were won by the following:

- Alice Rockhill received locally made honey and a Carver Farms Cookbook donated by Carver Farms.
- Scott and Tamryn Carver won a bluebird house provided by Tom and Carolyn Leege.
- Tom and Lyn Roberts won a quilt checkerboard donated by Delora and Steve Gauger.
- Karen Hansen received marking tapes donated by Rusty Gate Tree Farm.
- Marissa Emel won ten bird-attracting arbor trees donated by King and Alice Rockhill.

The summer social farm tour will be held in mid-July (Note: Date is changed to August 9) at Paul and Annette Brusven's Spring Valley Tree Farm near Troy, Idaho.

The Fall IECTA Annual Meeting will be October 25, 2014 at the Event Center of the Word of Life Church on the state line in Newman Lake, Washington. If you are willing and able, help will be needed next fall for preparing a light breakfast and lunch. Please volunteer.

King Rockhill moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by John Myhre, and motion carried after a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Alice Rockhill, IECTA Secretary. Final draft corrected and sent to President Myhre and others, April 23, 2014. Final draft edited for publication June 28, 2014 by John Myhre (president) and L. Myhre (editor).

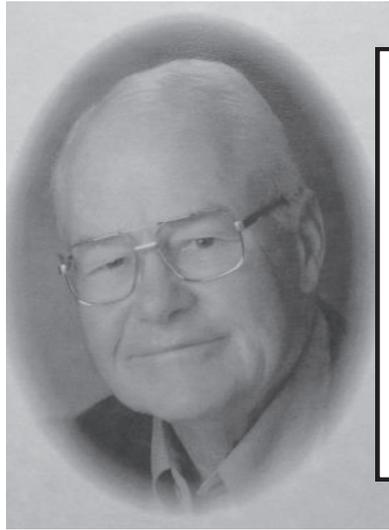
Thank you

to those who donated door prizes:

Carver Farms
Tom & Carolyn Leege
Delora & Steve Gauger
Rusty Gate Tree Farm
Alice & King Rockhill

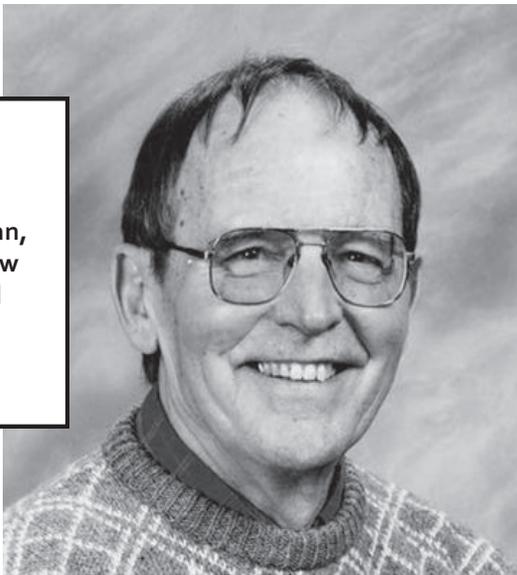
Obituaries of Former Inland Empire Christmas Association Members

John Kayler, former IECTA president, passed away May 4, 2014. John was an advisor to the University of Idaho forest research nursery and had the vision to help develop the grand fir seed orchard at the Sandpoint Research Station which now provides seed for IECTA's grand fir seedlings. He supplied seedlings for our members for many years. John and his wife, Beverly, started Fantasy Farms Nursery and Christmas Tree Farm at Peck, Idaho near Orofino in 1968. In 1997 John and his son, Jeff, began constructing Kayler's Bend Golf which opened to the public in 2000. *Full obituary is attached in the email edition of this newsletter.*



IECTA members said John Kayler's Fantasy Farms produced the best seedlings for Inland Empire Christmas trees.

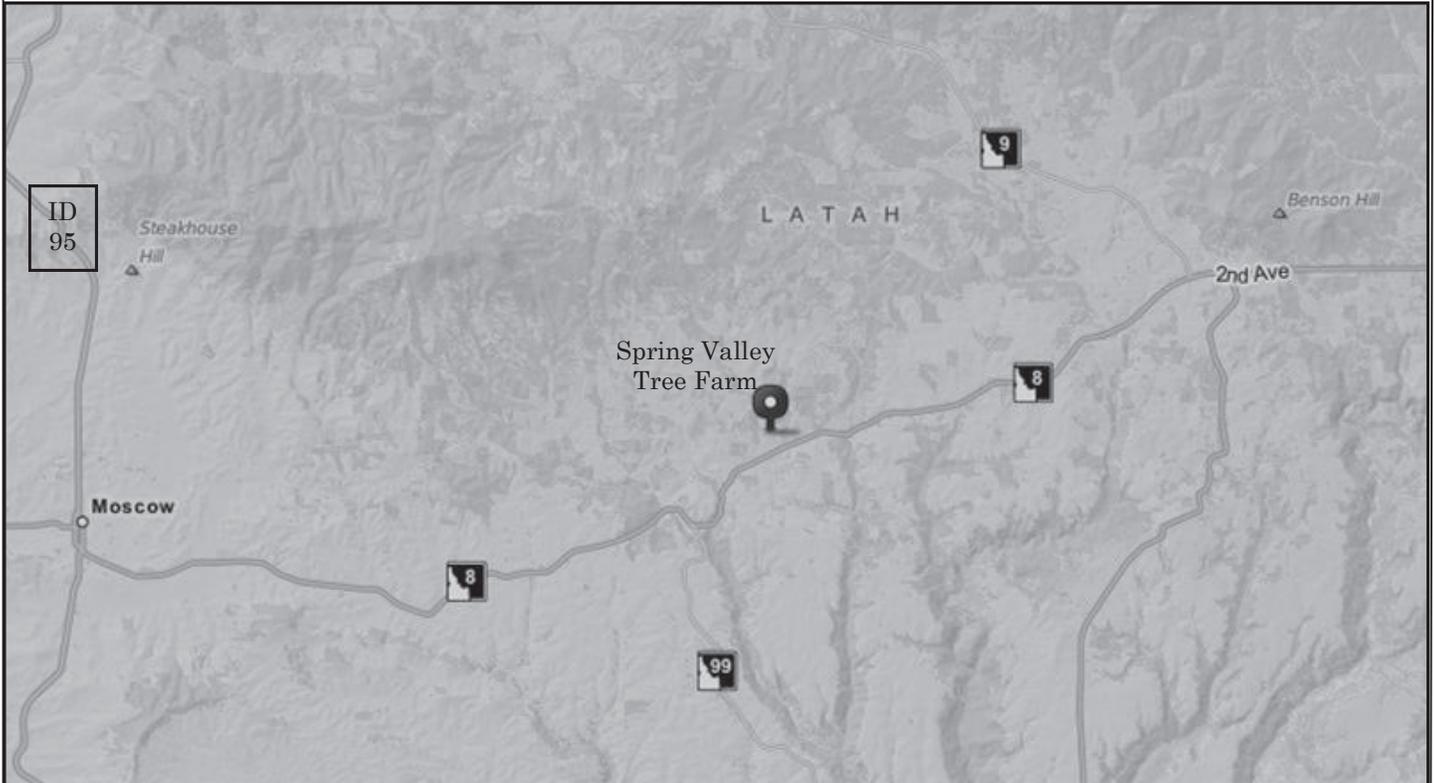
Don was a counselor, outdoorsman, athlete, brew master, and walking miracle.



Don Keays, former IECTA member, passed away March 2014. Don and his wife, Shirley, started their Christmas tree farm on six acres near Potlatch, Idaho in the mid-1960s. Don was director of student counseling for the University of Idaho for 22 years until he retired in 1987. In 1979 Don was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS) and was in the final stages of the disease when he miraculously recovered fully with virtually no trace of the fatal disease. Don found time for play throughout his life with a love of games, sports, and the outdoors. Don helped and inspired many people through counseling, by pitching in and volunteering for worthy causes, with financial assistance, or just by being a good friend and father. *Full obituary is attached in the email edition of this newsletter.*

IECTA
Fall Meeting
New Date:
Saturday, October 25

Map to Spring Valley Tree Farm for Summer Farm Tour



Christmas Tree Expert Chal Landgren Featured Speaker for Fall Meeting

Chal Landgren, Oregon State University Extension Christmas Tree Specialist will be the featured speaker at the Inland Empire Christmas Tree Associations fall meeting October 25.

Chal Langren's work includes selection and breeding of Turkish and Nordmann firs for the Christmas tree industry. Some of the important projects he's been involved with include foliar fertilization; genetic improvement and testing of noble fir, Douglas-fir, Nordmann fir, and Turkish fir; various insect control projects; weed testing; and fungicide trials. His program at Oregon State covers information from site preparation through harvest. Current extension and research efforts include sustainability certification, tree selection/breeding and fertilization.

IECTA's fall meeting will be at The Center of Word of Life Church in Newman Lake, Washington near Spokane on Saturday, October 25.

