

ELECTRONIC KN0THOLE NEWS
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Newsletter of the Upper Puget Sound Farm Forestry Association

*An accounting of a field trip held at Crystal Lake Tree Farm on
Feb. 17, hosted by tree farm Forester Ron Munro*

Two men got to talking, and the older man mentioned he was celebrating his 50th wedding anniversary the next week. ``That's very impressive,`` said the younger man. ``To what do you owe your marital success?``

``Well,`` said the older man, ``I took my wife to Hawaii on our 25th anniversary.``

That's wonderful, replied the younger man. ``What are you planning for your 50th?``

``I'm thinking of going back to Hawaii and asking her if she wants to come home.``

That was the first laugh Ron Munro got as he led a crowd of 63 adults and a half-dozen kids along roads and paths at the Crystal Lake Tree Farm near Maltby on Feb. 17, a sunny Saturday.

But Ron had more up his sleeve, pulling out a Quiz sheet to inform and entertain as the group toured the 205-acre tree farm, named 2001 Tree Farm of the Year..

Q-1 What is the Washington State Tree? A) Western red cedar B) Western Hemlock C) Douglas fir (Answers to all questions at the end. Only some of Ron's questions are repeated here.)

The first stop was in a plantation of 19-year-old Douglas fir where the herbicide Garlon 4 had been used to control hardwoods encroaching on the fir. John Keller of the DNR's Small Forest Landowner Office, who assisted in the tour, discussed use of the

herbicide. He suggested Fall is the best time of year, when the tree sap is returning to the roots. However, he said Spring was also a good time to combat smaller-diameter hardwoods.

Q-2 Black cottonwood is the fastest growing ``hardwood'' (deciduous tree) in the Pacific Northwest, and can easily shade out planted conifer seedlings. What is the diameter of the record cottonwood in Washington? A) 6'6'' B) 8'9'' C) 12'4''

Q-3 David Douglas was the Scottish botanist for whom the Douglas fir is named. He visited the West Coast with A) Lewis and Clark B) Capt. Vancouver C) The Hudson Bay Co.

Q-4 While exploring the West Coast, Douglas is credited with introducing how many species of plants to the Royal Horticultural Society of London? A) 66 B) 124 C) 240

We visited a 14-acre clearcut next. Judging by the trees not taken, it was an impressive stand of Douglas fir—80 years in age. Ron said the Crystal Lake community was paid \$253,000 for the timber, which came in at about 35,000 board feet/acre. But that left 45 huge piles of slash—1,400 tons—to deal with. The bid to grind it into chunks and truck it away came in at \$78,000. Too much, said Ron, and set about to jumping through the considerable bureaucratic hoops to burn the piles. Permission was finally granted, and the job was done for \$14,000—after tons of material was set aside as free firewood for anyone wanting it.

A benefit of burning, besides the savings: the mountain beaver left for at least a couple of years.

The 14 acres were replanted equally in cedar and Doug fir, 300 trees/acre. Ron allowed as to how it would have been good to plant more trees to the acre.

Q-5 A square acre is 208.71 feet on each side. How many square feet are there in an acre? A) 42,400 B) 43,160 C) 43,560

Moving on, the group entered a standing forest that had suffered some windthrow due to this winter's storms—and because it had been exposed by clearcutting the adjacent 14 acres. Most of the blowdown had been recovered. Ron and log buyer Will Miller of Miller Shingle Co. discussed how to measure trees, and use plots, to estimate timber amounts, quality and values.

Q-6 Foresters measure tree diameters at DBH—or Diameter Breast High. How high is DBH off the average ground level? A) 4.0 ft. B) 4.5 ft. C) 5.0 feet.

At the next stop, a smaller clearcut, Ron talked about damage to seedlings and young trees by mountain beaver, rabbits, deer and bear, showing small trees that had been bitten, scraped and chewed. The tree farm, he said, had used traps to get rid of a lot of mountain beaver that were a serious threat to seedlings. He discussed the use of plastic net "sleeves" that have been used to some success to combat deer and elk. The downside of sleeves are costs and maintenance, he said.

Ron also talked about his efforts to test powdered repellents used to protect seedlings. He said all repellents helped improve on his findings that 25 to 30 percent of seedlings were browsed in untreated areas. He had especially high marks for "Deer Away," developed by Weyerhaeuser, and "Seadust," manufactured by Wildlife Services Co. of Olympia. Burke Campbell of Wildlife Services demonstrated use of Seadust to the group.

Like the better known product Plantskydd, Deer Away is made with rotten eggs. Seadust is made using waste from clam and mussel shells.

Q-7 The deer browse problems on the Crystal Lake Tree Farm are caused by A) mule deer B) blacktail deer C) whitetail deer

After the tour of about 3 ½ hours, everyone headed for the Crystal Lake clubhouse for brownbag lunch, washed down with Bill Woods' homemade juice.

Following lunch and a final round of testing (springboard, old survey chain, Borneo ax, rat trap, etc. You had to be there.), the UPSFFA executive board held a meeting to plan events for the coming year. More on that to come. We also began looking at the 2008 Washington Farm Forestry Association annual meeting, which the chapter will host. Tentatively, it will be in late April, in or around Mount Vernon.

At Ron's tree farm tour, we were also pleased to have WFFA President Don Theoe and his wife Florence attending. Thanks to Ron and his assistants for the tour and to Miriam Munro and others with the Crystal Lake community who helped in hosting.

Here are the answers to the above questions: 1-B, 2-B, 3-C, 4-C, 5-C, 6-B, 7-B.

Jim Klahn
UPSFFA president

Other Events On The Farm Forestry Calendar:

March 24: 6th Annual Small Farm Expo by WSU King County Extension, all day at Fairgrounds in Enumclaw. Topics include Rural Living, Trees and Woodlands, Alternative Energy and Land Management.

April 26-28: WFFA Annual Meeting, hosted by Lewis County Chapter at the Red Lion Inn in Kelso. The theme this year is "Through Thick and Thin—Keep Growing," looking at current silvicultural practices and new directions in forestry. The Saturday field trip will be at the B&D Tree Farm near Chehalis.