

North Central

## John & Pat Malone

Iowan born Pat Chilton married a tree farmer. “I thought the term “tree farming” was very strange because I knew what farming was, and it wasn’t trees,” Pat recalls.

John graduated from Oregon State University with a major in forestry. He



was drafted in 1958 and sent to Iceland where he served two years in the U.S. Army.

Pat and John were pen pals long before they met. John, “I was in Iceland, with the U.S. Army and needed some girls to write to because I was lonely and my buddy said, ‘I know some girls from the University of Iowa.’ He gave me four names and she won.”

Pat graduated from the University of Iowa in 1961 with bachelor of science degree in nursing. The two met face to face after John was transferred to Fort Lewis, Washington. Then, after being discharged from the Army, John took a job with the U.S. Forest Service and married his pen pal sweetheart.

John’s interest in forestry originated during his five summers on a trail crew in the Mt. Hood region during his high school and early college years. This inspired him to change his major from pre-engineering to forest engineering.

Working in forestry strengthened his bond with the land and eventually led him to search for his own land to manage. John, “The idea of managing a parcel of land didn’t strongly develop until after we were married. I told Pat that we should maybe have a cabin in the woods, so I began looking for forestland for sale. All of a sudden the cabin idea faded in the background, replaced with the thought that I could go out and manage my own forest, particularly with the background I had. We purchased 70 acres in the Toutle River area in 1963.”

Thick with quarter-century Douglas firs, alder and cottonwood, John spent his spare time thinning the forest and selling a few alders on the side. When John was transferred to Sweet Home, Oregon, they sold the land to buy a house.

John estimates he became involved with the Washington Farm Forestry Association (WFFA) during the 1960s while working with the U.S. Forest Service near Spirit Lake. At that time he met Charlie Chambers and Dick Woods, both active foresters and consultants in Cowlitz and Lewis Counties. Foresters John Malone, Monroe Bickford and Gary Kuhn formed the Chelan County Chapter, including Douglas County, in 1982. At that time, John and Monroe were employed by the Wenatchee National Forest. Gary worked for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. This Chapter merged with the Okanogan Chapter in 1997 to become the North Central Chapter, with a combined membership of about 45 forestland owners.

John, “I’ve been president since 1982, except during 1998 and 1999 when Bill White from Twisp, Washington agreed to be president. Bill moved away, thereafter, and I became interim president until the next election, at which time I was re-elected. It looks like a lifetime job for

me. The Chapter needs two or three people to keep it functional. Civil Engineering Consultant Mike Salisbury has been the elected secretary/treasurer for many years and has done as much or more than I have to keep the Chapter functional. Tom Brannon has been my appointed publicity chairperson for several years and has made many valuable contributions in this capacity.”

John was WFFA secretary from about 1985 to 1987 and has chaired the Chapter’s annual meetings in 1984, 1994, and 2004.

Experienced in both westside and eastside forest management, John discusses the differences, “The eastside is a much drier climate. The Wenatchee Valley is mostly green because of irrigation water from the Columbia River. Otherwise, eastern Washington is semi-desert until an elevation of about 1,500 feet. At this elevation and above, there’s a significant increase in moisture, where rain and snow support the commercial forest growth on primarily north-facing slopes. The south-facing slopes are mostly non-commercial forests or open grassland because the soil temperatures are too hot in the summer for seedlings to survive.

“Westside forests are much more extensive on the landscape due to their abundance of moisture and are much more productive. The biggest problem with both eastside and westside commercial forests is density. Forest areas in the Pacific Northwest, in general, have been managed to suppress natural wildfire (from dry lightning) for nearly a century. This has resulted in many areas being too dense and, therefore, prone to catastrophic wildfire, insect, and disease damage. Forest health is the biggest issue to address in managing private forestland as well as national and state forests. Thinning young and mature stands is very beneficial to improve forest health.”

John and Pat Malone purchased 400 acres in Ferry County in 1968 and 40 acres in Chelan County in 1993. They take pride managing their forestlands and have been candidates for Washington State Tree Farmer of the Year on three occasions. On April 23, 2005, John and Pat were selected Washington State Tree Farmer of the Year for management of Chumstick Forest, their 40 acre property near Leavenworth, Washington.

Pat, “There’s a real positive aspect working with the land and promoting forests and wildlife refuge areas. It’s a part of living close to nature itself.” John, “There’s a lot of satisfaction doing something well and helping other people to learn by their participation in field educational meetings held by our Chapter. Individual forest management by chapter members using good stewardship promotes goodwill in the community.”

*“You’re being a role model for those who don’t know as much about caring for the forest, people learn by seeing and doing and participating. It’s your own inner satisfaction. A positive aspect for the community and those around you.” – John Malone*

#### CHUMSTICK TREE FARM

John Malone, born September 24, 1935

Pat Chilton Malone, born March 15, 1939

Storm King Ranch, Partnership

Secretary Society of American Foresters, 2 years,

Secretary WFFA, 1985-1987

President North Central Washington Chapter, 1982 – present