

THE MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF TIMBERMEN

SUMMER 2023

TIMBER TALK

Dedicated to Representing the Needs of Small Businesses in the Forest Product Industry

INSIDE _____

- Island Logger Shares Story
- Advice for Loggers in Down Economy

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OUR MISSION

The Michigan Association of Timbermen is dedicated to the practice of sustainable forestry which provides the goods and services we demand without compromising the opportunity to provide the same goods and services for future generations.



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IN THIS ISSUE

- 04** President's Message
- 04** Executive Director's Report
- 05** Welcome New Members
- 07** Platinum Sponsor Spotlight: AIS Forestry Division
- 10** Tolksdorf Talks Biomass
- 10** Timbermen Golf Outing Grows in Cadillac
- 11** Crane Mat Voucher Program a Success
- 12** MAT's Master Logger Program Secures
New Bridge Funding
- 13** Maple Rapids Lumber Mill 50th Anniversary
- 14** As We See It: Can't See the Forest for the Trees
Advice for Loggers in Down Economy
- 15** Legislative Update
- 15** 2023 SFI Training and Workshop Schedule
- 16** History Across Michigan's Regions:
Island Logger Shares Fascinating Story
- 19** Timbermen on Parade



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



PRESIDENT
Joe Doyle

Michigan Association of Timbermen

August 7, 2023

Pain and Agony,

How did we get through a pandemic only to find less employees in our stable than we would like? To finding ourselves in the most robust market most of us have seen in decades, to a worsening market situation that we also haven't experienced in decades.

Many MAT members looked at parked equipment two years ago experiencing lost opportunities while markets were good now to find a rebuilt staff that can out produce the quota quickly. Sawmills, Loggers, Trucking companies, Foresters, Landowners, and related suppliers all will see the effects of this recent downturn.

In some areas the market price dictates what type of work we will be doing in the upcoming weeks, but in a growing list of cases, it is

as if they can't get rid of any wood period.

Many decades of logging and sawmilling knowledge and experience were gathered at our quarterly board meeting last Friday. Honestly, we don't have a better crystal ball than anyone else. We don't know if it's going to get worse before it gets better. The media touts the latest job report that came out the same week diesel fuel prices jumped again, 40-60 cents a gallon.

What I do know is that our board has a pretty good pulse on market conditions, and we are diligently guiding MAT staff to wade through a book of work and goals that the Association hasn't seen in years. Normally, I have a very positive outlook and I'm sorry about the doom and gloom. It is our current reality.

Our director, Mr. Justin Knepper, will be rolling out a new membership benefit package in September.

Take a look at it, I'm sure there are many benefits that we all underutilize. Justin is also working on some cost saving programs exclusive to MAT members. Hopefully this helps your company.

Lastly, know that we are all in the same boat. Do what you can to help your neighbor.

If we proved anything in the last two years, we proved that our industry's capacity was not enough to supply market needs.

We all could use some good news, hopefully this levels out in the coming months. Feast or Famine isn't good for anyone. Let's pray for stability in Q4 of 2023.

Did I mention 2024 is an election year?

Regards,
Joe Doyle
President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Justin Knepper

Michigan Association of Timbermen

Dear Members and supporters,

This summer has been marked by significant progress here at the Michigan Association of Timbermen office, as Michelle and I have been working hard along side your board of directors to make a positive difference for our industry. We've been working diligently in the following areas:

Staying Strong in a Down Economy: the timber industry in Michigan and across the United States is facing an unprecedented downturn. We recognize the need to support our logging community during this time more than ever. We've already taken some steps to begin a process to "stop the bleeding." We jointly reached out to the DNR along with other organizations to alert them to what is taking place, and to request no-cost contract extensions. I've also begun working with leadership at the American Loggers Council to coordinate discussions regarding the economic downturn on the national level, and to identify initial steps that we must take as an industry. Timbermen board member Charley MacIntosh and I spoke with US Senator Debbie Stabenow earlier this month about ways she can help, as Chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition

and Forestry. We will be following up with specific requests related to state and federal funding over the coming months.

Our office will be conducting surveys over the next few months to quantify the dire economic situation here in our state. Expect to see both electronic and mailed surveys that will help us begin to tell the story to our state and federal elected officials. We will also explore ways to provide information to you related to financial management and business resilience strategies.

Further Advocacy: I've been on the road to Lansing alongside other industry and association leaders nearly every month, working hard to educate our new batch of legislators on the critical importance of our forest products industry. I believe we made a solid impact by testifying to the Natural Resources Committee in May, in a joint effort with GLTPA, MFPC, Michigan Biomass, Michigan State University, and others. This resulted in additional meetings where I was able to spend time with various legislators that really wanted to learn more about what we do each and every day to grow our state's economy.

We've been especially focused recently on educating and pro-

moting the benefits of biomass in Michigan. There are current efforts by some to remove biomass from being classified as a renewable energy, which would spell disaster for our energy producers using woody biomass. We've been working hard with Gary Melow from Michigan Biomass to make sure our legislators are aware of the positive benefits of biomass to loggers and to the general public across the state.

New Membership Benefits: We have been diligently working on enhancing our membership benefits to provide increased value to our esteemed members. During the summer, we successfully negotiated new partnerships and discounts with key suppliers and industry service providers. These partnerships will offer cost-saving opportunities for you, our members, which is especially important during these challenging economic times.

In conclusion, your continued participation and engagement will be crucial as we move ahead with these endeavors. Thank you once again for your continued support, and we remain committed to fostering a thriving and sustainable timber industry in Michigan.

WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!



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Kole Birgy
Birgy Forest Products,
Manton



Scott Zinsli
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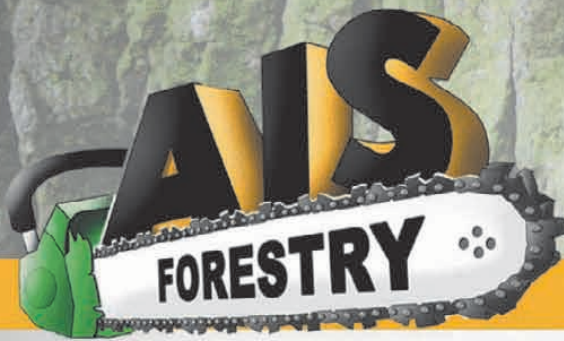
MAT was established in 1972 for the purpose of reducing costs and increasing profits of small forest industry businesses while ensuring a continued supply of timber. As a member you should enjoy all the benefits we have to offer.

Becoming a member of the Michigan Association of Timbermen guarantees the following opportunities:

- Automatic enrollment as a member of the American Loggers Council (www.amloggers.com) and the Small Business Association of Michigan (www.sbam.org).
- Unmatched workers compensation insurance opportunities through the Michigan Association of Timbermen Self-insurers Fund (www.matsif.com).
- Multiple opportunities to earn Sustainable Forestry Initiative (www.forests.org) credits
- Quality home, auto, life, and other insurance opportunities through MAT's own subsidiary companies Forest Insurance Center (www.forestinsurancecenter.com), as well as Loggers Insurance Agency, and Mauck Insurance Agency.
- Representation on issues with local, state and federal departments such as MDOT, MDNR, county road commissions and townships as well as federal motor carrier issues.
- Health insurance opportunities through Superior Insurance Agency of Sault Ste Marie, Michigan.
- Opportunities for rebates thru Western Star, Peterbilt, International Truck, and Clark Tracks as well as other discounts (available through our members only webpage)

To join, simply fill out the membership form at
www.michigantimbermen.com/join
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If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at: **(906) 293-3236**



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SPOTLIGHT: 2023 Platinum Sponsor

AIS Forestry Division

AIS is a Michigan Association of Timbermen 2023 platinum sponsor. Their commitment of finances and volunteer time to our organization is invaluable. We couldn't offer many of the programs and services we are able to afford for our members without the financial support we receive from AIS and our many other wonderful sponsors. Please read the following from Sales Manager Larry Fay and the AIS Forestry Division team to learn more about their company's mission and purpose.

"AIS Construction Equipment's Forestry Division is one of Michigan's most reputable and longest-established dealers of forestry equipment, catering to the needs of professionals in the forestry industry. With decades of experience, we are committed to offering the best machinery and services to support our customers' success.

Our mission is centered around helping our customers become more profitable. We understand the unique challenges of the forestry sector and strive to provide the right equipment and solutions to enhance operational efficiency and productivity. Our goal is to be your trusted partner, providing top-quality machinery, unmatched customer service, and reliable support.

AIS Construction Equipment's

Forestry Division is conveniently located in Williamsburg, situated in the heart of Northern Michigan. We are strategically positioned to serve customers across the area and beyond. Here in Williamsburg, we offer a wide range of new and used equipment options from leading manufacturers, including John Deere and other reputable brands. From skidders and loaders to harvesters and forwarders, our extensive inventory ensures that you have access to the latest technology and reliable machinery to meet your specific forestry needs.

Our dedicated sales team, led by Larry Fay, brings extensive industry knowledge and expertise to the table. With years of experience, Larry and the team - including Timbermen board member Vaughn West, as well as Rob McDonald, Bill Britt, and Jim Kunisch - understand the unique needs of the forestry sector and work closely with customers to provide tailored solutions. They are committed to providing exceptional service and guidance, ensuring that you find the right equipment to meet your specific requirements.

Whether you are in the market for new forestry machinery or exploring reliable used options, our sales team will assist you every step of the way. They



Thank you from Vaughn West, Larry Fay, Jim Kunisch, Bill Britt, and Rob McDonald at AIS Forestry Division

take the time to understand your business goals and offer personalized recommendations to help you make informed decisions. With their support, you can find the equipment that best suits your needs and budget.

In addition to equipment sales, we provide comprehensive services to keep your machinery running smoothly. Our experienced technicians are available 24/7 to handle maintenance, repairs, and technical support, minimizing downtime and maximizing productivity. We understand the importance of reliable equipment and strive to deliver unparalleled customer service.

At AIS Construction Equipment Forestry Division, we

believe in building long-term relationships with our customers. Our sales team strives to go above and beyond to ensure your satisfaction. They are dedicated to providing reliable information, transparent communication, and ongoing support even after the sale is completed.

Visit our location in Williamsburg, MI, near Traverse City, to experience our exceptional customer service firsthand. We are ready to assist you and help you find the perfect forestry equipment to drive your business forward. Contact us today to schedule a consultation or simply stop by our facility. We look forward to serving you."



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BIOMASS: The Renewable Resource That Promotes Healthier Forests

BY: Glen Tolksdorf,
Forester, MAT Board Member

Biomass is a forest resource that is primarily comprised of logging residue such as treetops, deformed trees and miscellaneous wood residue that is not utilized for commercial forest products. Biomass is mostly consumed by electric energy generating facilities producing renewable energy for consumer use. Other uses consist of landscaping material and soil erosion protection around critical watershed areas.

How does biomass promote healthier forests? In forest science, to maintain good silvicultural practices, in managing a variety of forest cover types, we need to thin or clear undesirable tree and vegetation growth to increase the health and vigor of

the remaining trees within the forest. For example, within a hardwood forest cover type that is of high-density volume, and needs thinning, there is a certain percentage of wood that can only be used for biomass purposes as explained above. Leaving poor quality, non-commercial trees reduce the growth and vigor of the surrounding healthier younger trees.

Jack pine and aspen are typically clear-cut to promote future regeneration. If Jack Pine is to regenerate naturally, the tops are typically left after harvest, in which the pinecones within the tops drop seeds back down to the soil. If the Jack Pine area is to be re-planted, excess vegetation can be removed to utilize as biomass. This improves the site for better planting of tree seedlings. Removal of aspen woody material after harvest helps promote the forest surface to regenerate naturally of aspen by direct sunlight, creating sprouting of new aspen saplings.

We can see how biomass, our renewable resource, promotes a healthier forest, and creates a renewable energy resource and other uses for everyone to enjoy.



Timbermen Golf Outing Grows In Cadillac

The Michigan Association of Timbermen enjoyed a great turnout for “Links with Loggers” at Lakewood on the Green in Cadillac on July 21. More than 80 players from businesses all over the State joined us for a great time of networking and fundraising to support the Michigan Association of Timbermen. More than \$6,000 was raised to support our association’s efforts.

Thank you to the following Lunch Sponsors:

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GRANT-FUNDED CRANE MAT VOUCHER PROGRAM A SUCCESS

The Michigan Association of Timbermen has successfully concluded its Little Bridges of Michigan Counties grant initiative, providing over \$180,000 worth of crane mats to 45 logging companies across the State. The initiative was made possible through a Michigan Department of Natural Resources grant, in cooperation with DNR Forest Stewardship Coordinator Mike Smalligan. This was one of the first major grants administered by the Michigan Association of Timbermen, and was awarded during the COVID pandemic, which complicated the process of awarding and administering the grant.

Michelle Sears at the Michigan Association of Timbermen office persistently worked with Mike Smalligan over the past few years to ensure that as many members as possible received crane mats, with the only cost borne by the logger being fuel and transportation to pick up the mats.

This initiative reflects our association's commitment to enhancing the logging industry's produc-

tivity and safety while promoting sustainable forestry practices. Crane mats have proven to be crucial tools for the timber industry, offering stability and safe access for heavy equipment during logging operations. By distributing crane mats to various logging companies, both large and small,

“

... was able to get the wood out and no erosion went into the pond! Thanks for the mats, I will use them again!
– Bryce, Metcalfe Forestry”

”

the Association of Timbermen ensured that 45 individual logging companies could access challenging terrains and protect sensitive ecosystems. The provision of these mats aligns with broader environmental goals, reducing soil compaction and erosion, contributing to the health and sustainability of Michigan's forests.

The Michigan Association of Timbermen received a testimonial from Metcalfe Forestry in Grayling regarding the benefit of

the crane mats grant program:

“Here are some pictures of a [recently completed harvest]. It is private property in Alcona County with clay soils...The harvest started in March and continued right through the wet spring weather. We had a choice to forward the wood

past the edge of a pond or push log trucks through clay for two miles. We chose the pond route!

I [used] crane mats that I got through MAT. Shawn Muma Forest Products sent a truck out to my place in Kalkaska to pick them up and deliver them to the job site. AJD Forest Products also had some mats to add to the project. Corey Yoder Forest Products assembled the mats as shown in the pictures. I installed the filter strips. Our efforts worked, Yoder was

able to get the wood out and no erosion went into the pond!

Thanks for the mats, I will use them again! – Bryce, Metcalfe Forestry”

The success of the Little Bridges of Michigan Counties grant program highlights the positive outcomes achieved through collaboration between organizations and government agencies. The partnership between the Michigan Association of Timbermen and the Michigan DNR, demonstrates how joint efforts can address real-world challenges and promote the balance between economic interests and ecological responsibilities. We tremendously appreciate our partners at the Michigan DNR and hope to offer our members access to additional grant funded programs and services in the near future!

For questions, comments, or feedback related to the Michigan Association of Timbermen's recently completed crane mat program, please call the office at 906.293.3236 or email Director Justin Knepper at jknepner@timbermen.org.

New Temporary Bridging Grant in Process to Support Michigan Master Loggers

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently secured \$175,000 in funding from the Temporary Bridge Funding Opportunity, under the US Forest Service's Wood Innovation Grant Program. The majority of the funds will be used to purchase 3 to 4 portable bridges. A smaller amount of these funds will be reserved for maintenance and training on the use of these bridges. These portable bridges will be used as temporary stream crossings on logging jobs. Bridges will be owned by the Michigan Master Logger Certification Program and made available for use by Michigan Master Loggers on private lands. The bridges will be housed at strategic locations across Michigan, to ensure accessibility to all Master Loggers. The Sustainable Resources Institute, Inc. (SRI) will be contracted to incorporate the portable bridges into the Master Logger Program.

The Master Logger Certification Program recognizes loggers who go above and beyond to meet the sustainable forest management standards set by the American Loggers Council. The Master Logger Program assesses and documents the harvest practices that loggers use in the forest and ensures that professional loggers are rewarded for the good work that they do. This program was administered by the Michigan Association of Timbermen, which contracted SRI (as of January 1, 2023) in partnership with VanOss Forestry, LLC, to grow the program. With support from the Michigan DNR, we are working to market Certified Master Loggers to private landowners and the forestry professionals that work with them.

Master Loggers are trained on "Michigan Forestry Best Management Practices for Soil and Water Quality" (BMPs) at core



training of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). Their use of BMPs is audited by SFI procurement foresters. The use of portable bridges is described in the Michigan BMP manual, but they have not been widely available for use on private forests. Increasing the availability of portable bridges, and encouraging loggers to obtain Master Logger certification, will significantly reduce erosion and loading of sediment pollution in Michigan's surface water from forestry operations.

Currently, the Michigan DNR owns 39 portable steel bridges, but they can only be used on 4 million acres of state forest land. The DNR does not loan these bridges for use on the 12 million acres of private forest land in the state. The bridges procured by these funds will help fill the need for these bridges on private lands.

If you have any questions about the program or suggestions, please reach out to SRI at 906.875.3720 or kari@sustainableinc.org or VanOss Forestry at 906.874.0777 or office@vanossforestry.com.

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Maple Rapids Lumber Mill, Inc. 50 Year Anniversary

Timbermen member Maple Rapids Lumber Mill, Inc. celebrated their 50th anniversary in business this past Saturday, and we are tremendously proud of their accomplishment!

Maple Rapids Lumber Mill was founded by brothers Richard and Kenneth Grubaugh and is a family-owned mid-sized sawmill. The mill has been an integral part of the St. Johns area for several decades. Located about 25 miles North of Lansing, the lumber mill has earned a solid reputation for providing high quality lumber products and exceptional service.

Please join us in congratulating Maple Rapids Lumber Mill on their 50 years in business. Jason McLaren of Forest Center Insurance Agency conducted an interview with the owners for this edition of Timber Talk:

Tell us a little bit about Maple Rapids Lumber Mill.

We're a mid-sized sawmill located in the St. Johns area about 25 miles North of Lansing. We are a family-owned business with a reputation for providing high quality lumber products and service. We are a hardwood grade sawmill, purchasing standing timber from private landowners in Lower Michigan. We try to stay within a 100-mile radius of our sawmill for logs.

Year after year the business has steadily grown, adding more and more machines to help grow the business's production capacity. Today, Maple Rapids Lumber Mill produces nearly 10 million board feet of green hardwood lumber per year. A separate facility in Coleman, Michigan is dedicated to kiln drying lumber and producing beautiful hardwood flooring that can produce 2 million board feet per year. We have recently updated the kilns and boiler in Coleman and now we have the capacity to dry with

2 kiln charges of 45,000 board feet each.

How did the business get started?

Two brothers, Richard and Kenneth Grubaugh, started working together logging for another company. They decided to start their own business. They started with a portable sawmill in an open field and became incorporated on September 6th, 1973. They have been producing hardwood lumber ever since. We've had four brothers that have worked either part-time or retired with over 30 years of service.

Currently, Ken's son Ryan Grubaugh has taken over the day to day running of the sawmill. He also handles the lumber sales. Sister Catherine and nephew Greg Armbrustmacher oversee accounting and human resources along with many other nieces and nephews working for the business. Jon-Alex Bailey is our payroll clerk and receptionist. Overall, we have an average of 42 full-time employees.

What products and services are you dedicated to as a business?

We provide the highest quality hardwood lumber for all our customers. Timber is a renewable resource and when managed properly a woodlot will continue to produce forever. Sustainable woodlot management will ensure future growth and sales.

Woodlots are like a farmer's crop, when it is mature it needs to be harvested. We have 2 full time foresters on our staff buying ahead of the mill usually 1 ½ years ahead of production.

We are thankful for all our customers in Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Canada, and kiln dried lumber shipped overseas to China and Italy.



Maple Rapids Lumber Mill owners and family celebrate 50 years in business.



Continued on page 17



Scott Dane
Executive Director,
American Loggers Council

AS WE SEE IT:

CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FOR THE TREES

Can't See the Forest for the Trees

Originally the phrase was "Can't See the Wood for the Trees". Either way is apropos for the timber industry. Sometimes even loggers have a hard time seeing the forest for the trees.

"From him who sees no wood for trees and yet is busy as the bees."

The expression refers to someone so consumed by the details of a problem (situation) that they are

blind to the big picture. Looking at the situation from a 30,000-foot perspective can bring the big picture into focus and shed some light on the challenge instead of having tunnel vision or blinders on.

Rarely have the economic challenges of the timber industry been so daunting and challenging; Mill Closures, Quotas, Price Cuts, Workforce Shortages, Inflation and Costs.

Pulling back and playing into the doom and gloom scenario of all the negative economic news would be tempting. But there is a lesson about a hotdog salesman that is a good example worth considering.

There was a man who lived by the side of the road and sold hot dogs.

He was hard of hearing, so he had no radio.

He had trouble with his eyes, so he read no newspapers.

But he sold good hot dogs.

He put up signs on the highway telling how good they were.

He stood on the side of the road and cried, "Buy a hot dog, mister."

And people bought.

So, he increased his meat and bun orders.

He bought a bigger stove to take care of his trade.

He finally got his son home from college to help him out.

Then something happened.

His son said, "Father, haven't you been listening to the radio?"

Haven't you been reading the newspapers?"

There's a big depression.

The European situation is terrible.

The domestic situation is worse."

Whereupon the father thought:

Well, my son's been to college.

He read the papers and listened to the radio and ought to know.

So, the father cut back on his meat and bun orders, took down his advertising signs, and no longer bothered to stand out on the highway to promote his hot dogs.

His hot dog sales fell almost overnight.

"You are certainly right, son," the father said to the boy, "we are certainly in the middle of a depression."

It is all a mindset, but it can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Scale back, less income, more contraction, less income, more contraction..... It is an induced downward spiral.

The economy is cyclic, it always has been and always will be. Look at the Great Recession and the housing industry collapse of

2008. Even the stock market tanked. But we recovered from that. The economics of the timber industry will improve (if the doesn't, then the entire economy is in bigger trouble, and it won't matter), the only question is will you be weaker, like the hotdog vendor, and have to recover and play catch up, or will you maintain your strength and be positioned to take advantage of the recovery?

Furthermore, loggers are in far more control of the situation than they realize. You are the most important segment of the timber supply chain and you are indispensable, irreplaceable, and essential.

The timber and forest products industry is a lot like the human body. Each part is vital to survival and has a distinct function. The following analogy is an example of the vital function that the logging sector plays in the overall forest products industry:

One day the different parts of the body were having an argument to see which should be in charge.

The brain (foresters) said: 'I do all the thinking, so I'm the most important, and I should be the boss'.

The eyes (landowner) said: 'I see everything and let the rest of you know where we are, so I'm the most important, and I should be in charge'.

The hands (equipment vendors) said: 'Without me, we wouldn't be able to pick anything up or move anything. So, I'm the most important and should be in charge.'

The stomach (mills) said: 'I turn the food we eat into energy for the rest of you. Without me, we'd starve. So, I'm the most important and should be the boss.'

The legs (truckers) said: 'Without me, we wouldn't be able to move anywhere. So, I'm the most important and should be in charge.'

Then the rectum (loggers) spoke and insisted it should be in charge.

All the rest of the parts laughed and derided the very notion. The rectum wasn't necessary. How could it possibly be in charge?

So, the rectum closed. After a few days, the legs were all wobbly, the stomach was queasy, the hands were shaky, the eyes were watery, and the brain couldn't think straight. The other body parts soon agreed that they couldn't take it anymore and that the rectum should be in charge.

This all goes to show that you don't have to be the most important; you just need to show others that you do matter, and without you, the rest cannot exist or function. Although some people say the story's moral is that it demonstrates that to be in charge, you just must be an

In conclusion:

Step back and gain a 30,000-foot perspective. **See the forest, not just the trees.**

Don't create a self-fulfilling prophecy of decline. Position yourself to weather the economic storm but from a position of strength, not weakness. All storms pass. Having spent 15 years sailing the seven seas, I have encountered many storms, some life-threatening. When young sailors expressed concern, I would tell them, "Three days from now, we will have calm seas again," and we did. Yesterday's storms you faced have passed, last month's storms are history, last year's storm is a distant memory, and today's storms will be too.

You are far more important than the brain, eyes, hands, stomach, and legs want you to believe. You might be taken for granted, not given rightful respect, neglected, and abused, but if you weren't functioning, they wouldn't be either. **Don't be afraid to speak up or stand up for yourselves.**

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

August '23

After passing a historic \$81.7 billion state budget at the end of June, the Michigan Legislature has now adjourned for the summer recess period until after Labor Day. The budget included spending a significant amount of the remaining COVID relief dollars from the federal government.

As we look toward the fall, the Governor's office is focused on trying to pass the package of bills based on the "MI Healthy Climate Plan" which the legislature has called the "Clean Energy Future Plan." Included in this plan is a bill that would eliminate biomass as a renewable energy in state law. This is of great concern to our industry and association.



FIGHT OVER THE REMOVAL OF BIOMASS AS A RENEWABLE ENERGY CONTINUES

As part of their "Clean Energy Future Plan", the Senate Democrats introduced a seven-bill package that aims to achieve a 100% clean energy grid by 2035. Included in that package of legislation is Senate Bill 271 which would remove the definition of

biomass as a clean and renewable energy.

The House of Representatives followed suit with their own package of bills a few months later including House Bill 4759 that would do the same.

These bills would cripple many of our businesses as we could no longer turn the leftover wood product into energy. The legislation also doesn't address what would be done with that product, the potential impact on the environment and increased threat of forest fires if the product remains in the forest.

Last month, MAT's Executive Director and lobbyist met with Rep. Laurie Pohutsky (D-Livonia) to discuss the legislation in the House of Representatives. Rep. Pohutsky has taken the lead on all of the energy bills for the House Democrats.

We believe the meeting was very productive and that Rep. Pohutsky was very gracious with her time and knowledgeable on the issue. She has asked MAT and other timber interests to offer suggested changes to the bill. She also vowed to meet again with MAT prior to any final decisions on what will happen with the legislation.

Our greatest concern at this point is the accelerated timeline that some in Lansing have for these massive changes to energy policy in our state. MAT lobbyists have been told that there is a goal by some to have these bills across the finish line by the end of October. We believe that is too aggressive of a plan for such complicated issues.

MAT will continue to make this legislation their number one priority in Lansing.



Jason Wadaga
MAT Lobbyist

MAT TESTIFIES IN HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIROMENT, TOURISM AND OUTDOOR RECREATION COMMITTEE

On May 18th, MAT Executive Director, Justin Knepper, testified in front of the Michigan House of Representatives Natural Resources, Environment, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Committee.

The topics touched on were:

- MAT organization details
- Current Projects
- Workforce Development
- Accomplishments
- Legislative Concerns

MAT also hosted legislators the night prior to the hearing for a Legislative Reception at our lobby firm in Lansing, Kindsvatter, Dalling and Associates (KDA).

Remaining 2023 SFI Trainings

Date	Time	Location	City
8/16/2023	8am-12pm	Running Gears Inc., 2500 Major Mt. Rd.	Harrison, MI
8/23/2023	8am-12pm	Roger Bazuin & Sons, 240 Cherry Dr.	McBain, MI
9/26/2023	8am-5pm	Tigertown Log Yard	Iron River, MI
10/5/2023	8am-5pm	MSU Forestry Innovation Center 6005 J Rd.	Escanaba, MI
12/7/2023	9am-1pm	4111 W. Four Mile Rd.	Grayling, MI

HISTORY ACROSS MICHIGAN'S REGIONS - REGION THREE: NORTHERN MICHIGAN



Gillespie Enterprises: A Proud Legacy Rooted in Beaver Island History

The story of Gillespie Enterprises traces back to the year 1852 when Timbermen member Richard Gillespie's ancestors' journey to Beaver Island began. Driven from their homeland on the island of Arranmore, along the coast of Ireland, Richard Gillespie's relative Charles "Strack" O'Donnell sought refuge in America. Charlie fell in love with Beaver Island during a ship's stop for wood and decided that it was a place to re-assemble Arranmore's culture in America. He sent the word out far and wide and they came by the dozens, perhaps hundreds, to Beaver Island.

As the early settlers from Arranmore arrived on Beaver Island, they carried with them the dream of a better life and a deep desire to preserve their heritage. Their arrival coincided with the demise of self-declared Mormon "King" James Jesse Strang, Beaver Island's ill-fated ruler, which is an entire history lesson in and of itself. This marked a turning point in Beaver Island history and created a space for Richard Gillespie's Irish ancestors to establish their roots and thrive.

Here is where the story of Gillespie Enterprises begins, and it offers an explanation as

to why this Timbermen member is as passionate about logging today on Beaver Island as his ancestors were for the past 150 years.

The Gillespie Family's Logging History:

According to the Beaver Beacon, Beaver Island's monthly periodical, in the 1850s and 60s "The fish-based Beaver Island economy was booming, and the availability of cheap or even free land and abandoned Mormon houses allowed the first wave of settlers to save enough money to send for their family and friends." As time progressed, new industries arrived on the



Island. The early 1900s saw the Beaver Island Lumber Company emerge as a significant force, bringing dozens of men and a

narrow gauge railroad that was constructed deep into the white pine forest, extending south for the full 14-mile length of Beaver Island.

Amidst the island forest, Richard Gillespie's grandparents found their place as cooks in the bustling lumber operations, leaving a lasting mark on his family's legacy. Richard shared,

"On January 1st, 1900 my grandmother went into labor all the way at the other end of the island before the rail was complete. They started down along the railroad bed that was under construction in a buckboard wagon, got half way back and her water broke. This woman had her first-born child [she had a total of 13 children!] on the ground [in] a horse blanket! No one knows if anyone else was with them. They swaddled the baby and went to a relative's house some three miles further. That baby [grew up to be] Chief Captain for Great Lakes Towing in Chicago!"

Through the decades, our family continued to adapt and embrace new opportunities on Beaver Island. Richard Gillespie's father, Jewell, made significant contributions to the island's progress, becoming the operator of the Beaver Island electrical power plant. He also established the Island's telephone company and, later, a barging company that transported maple, birch, and other timber off the island for Louisiana Pacific.

The family tradition of logging continued through the years, with Bob Graves from Shingleton, Michigan, and later, Richard Gillespie and his crew joining

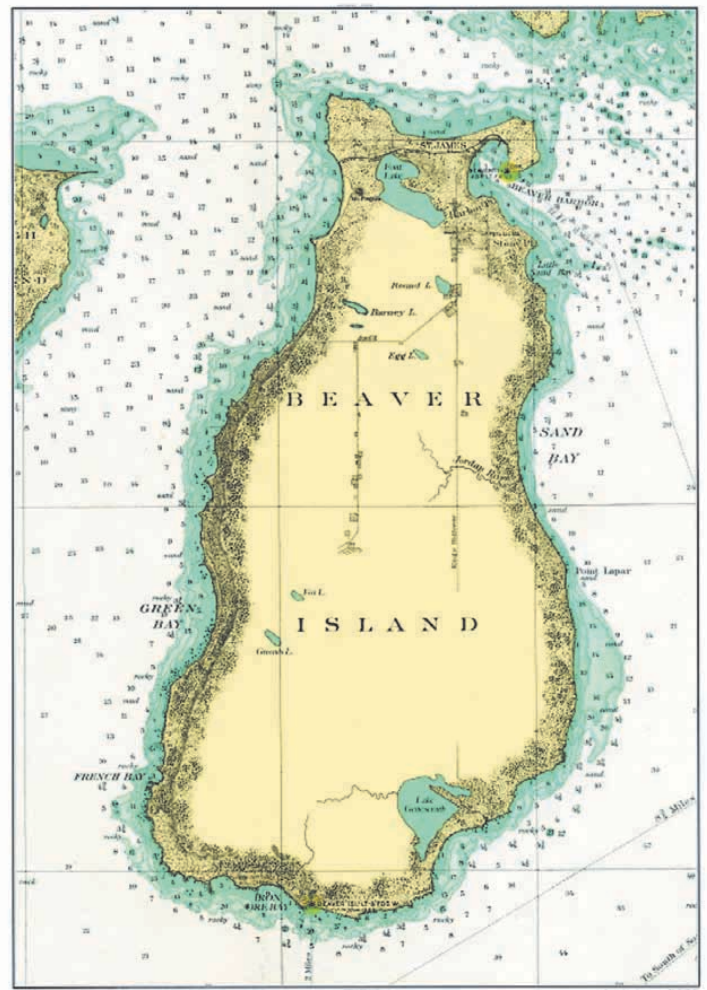
the ranks of those who worked the island's forests. Richard Gillespie said,

"We [originally] sold to a sawmill in Newberry but the docking situation ended at Port Inland some time earlier so we started shipping to Ironton, Michigan, and sell veneer to Manthei and saw logs to various operations. We operate a dual arch Cat grapple a 640 John Deere cable skidder and an old forwarder. We also produce soft wood products with our own home-built kiln! Forestry is one of the most renewable commodities there is and we are proud to be doing our part. We now have 7th generation grandchildren."

The Michigan Association of Timbermen is currently working with Gillespie Enterprises to ensure that the tradition of logging can continue on Beaver Island. New residents on the island do not always understand the benefits of proper forest management, which have resulted in shifts in the way that state timberland is managed. This issue, compounded by the current volatility of the market, as well as the high cost of barging lumber from the island, have caused a lot of concern for Richard Gillespie as he looks toward the future. Let's continue to work hard as the Association of Timbermen to protect and promote our local logging companies and the amazing history they represent! To learn more about Gillespie Enterprises visit: www.gillespieenterprises.com. To learn more about Beaver Island's history, visit www.beaverislandhistory.org.



BEAVER ISLAND LIMITED, BEAVER ISLAND, MICH.
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Continued from page 13

Maple Rapids Lumber Mill, Inc. : 50 Year Anniversary

They purchase our Red Oak, White Oak, Hard Maple, Soft Maple, Hickory, Cherry, Basswood, and Walnut lumber and our veneer logs.

What is your opinion on how the business has been so successful?

To make a business success-

ful it takes a lot of hard work, and everyone works together as a team to succeed. We are fortunate to have a lot of outstanding employees.

Having excellent customers to work with and giving the best service possible is also a key to success.

Technology is also important. Computers rule the world even in sawmills. Logs are scanned and the computer decides the best cut to yield the highest-grade production.

Do you have long term goals for the business?

We always need to keep up

with technology and if hardwood trees are growing in Michigan, we want to harvest them. We are fully insured and are always looking for hardwood timber. For more information on our business visit our website: www.maplerapidslumber.com



Department of Forestry
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY | Extension

Loggers, Consulting Foresters, Mill Owners, & Mill Managers!

We need your help!

We are conducting a survey to gather data on wood prices and the various components of the wood procurement supply chain. This endeavor aims to create annual & quarterly reports on Michigan's wood product industry. These reports will not only provide you with more frequent updates on wood prices and other information but will also contribute to a better understanding of market dynamics and valuable insights for the industry's growth and development .



<https://tinyurl.com/msuforestsurvey>

Please complete the survey by visiting the
link or scanning the QR code.



Shamco, Inc.,
Iron River Wild West Parade



Cutting Edge Forest Products,
Trout Lake July 4th Parade



Gapinski Forestry Products,
Johannesburg July 4th Parade



Max Constantino Trucking,
Rapid River Memorial Day Parade

TIMBERMEN ON PARADE



Gerald Dugree & Sons Trucking & Forest Products,
Hermansville July 4th Parade



Hincka Logging,
Alpena July 4th Parade



Shamco, Inc.,
Iron River Wild West Parade





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YOUR PREMIER WORKERS' COMPENSATION PROVIDER

MATSIF has established itself as one of the premier workers' compensation funds in the nation providing a comprehensive package of services focused on reducing injuries and increasing member profitability. Our knowledge of the wood products industry's characteristics, needs and market influences enables us to meet the needs of our members. We continue to develop and offer value-added services designed to help control the overall cost of your workers' compensation program.



The Michigan Association of Timbermen Self-Insurers' Fund (MATSIF) is Michigan's first group self-insurance fund for workers' compensation. We have a 45+ year history of providing a quality workers' compensation program to businesses in the wood products industry.

Program Advantages:

- ▶ Customized "Think Safety" Program
- ▶ Skilled Loss Control Representatives
- ▶ Industry Specific Training and Knowledge
- ▶ Onsite Safety Meetings Available
- ▶ Aggressive Claims Management

Financial Advantages:

- ▶ Competitive Class Rates
- ▶ Return of Surplus Premium
- ▶ Mod Rate Reduction with Loss Control Services
- ▶ Decrease in Employee Injuries
- ▶ Governed by a Board of Trustees Elected by the Membership
- ▶ Low Administrative Costs

Michigan's first group self-insured fund

