

VIRGINIA LOGGERS ASSOCIATION NEWS & UPDATES



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VLA

SUMMER 2022 ISSUE



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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<i>Leroy Woodward & Son Logging, Inc.</i>	<i>Rodney & Theresa Woodward</i>	<i>Madison, VA</i>
<i>Long Island Lumber, Inc.</i>	<i>Jacob Givens</i>	<i>Long Island, VA</i>
<i>Snider Fleet Solutions</i>	<i>Willard Adkins</i>	<i>Greensboro, NC</i>
<i>Tigercat</i>	<i>Judy Brooks</i>	<i>Branford, Canada</i>
<i>Timbersmith Logging</i>	<i>Kevin Smith</i>	<i>Bluemont, VA</i>
<i>Virginia Timber Harvesters, LLC.</i>	<i>Robert Swann</i>	<i>Culpeper, VA</i>
<i>Woodland and Family Logging, LLC.</i>	<i>Edwin Woodland</i>	<i>Tappahannock, VA</i>

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 11-14, 2022

VLA Annual Meeting, Williamsburg, VA

September 22-24, 2022

ALC Annual meeting, Branson, Missouri

October 7-9, 2022

**Paul Bunyan Show
Lore City, Ohio**

November 11, 2022

**Legal Workshop & Safety Training, Keystone
Truck & Tractor Museum, Colonial Heights**

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



FRANK MYERS
PRESIDENT

VIRGINIA LOGGERS
ASSOCIATION

First of all, I would like to thank all of you that visited the VLA booth at the Logging Expo in Richmond. I encourage everyone to take advantage of opportunities like this to meet Ron Jenkins. When the day comes you need his assistance, and it will, it's always easier to talk to someone you know.

I would also like to thank Lesley Moseley, Susan Seward, Don Bright, and all the folks from VFPA for putting on the Expo. It's not easy planning and organizing an event like this and they did a great job, under very difficult economic conditions.

I don't fancy myself a writer, but evidently I struck a chord with many of you in my last column regarding elections and consequences. I'd like to share my thoughts on the matter again with you and expand on that theme. A couple of months make a difference. Unfortunately, that difference is severely harming not only the typical American family, but it is potentially devastating to our industry.

What is this difference? When I wrote my last column, diesel fuel was still slightly below \$5.00 a gallon. We are now at \$6.00 a gallon, with no end in sight. I have even heard there could be fuel rationing as well as a DEF shortage. Our businesses run on diesel fuel. Period. There are no solar or wind powered skidders that I am aware of. For us, a rationed supply of fuel, we may or may not be able to afford, is akin to a shutdown of our operations.

I have spoken before about how critical the supply of energy in ALL forms is to our businesses – and frankly to every business, large or small, and every single citizen that has a vehicle on the road and a roof over their head. This president has made one catastrophic choice after another regarding energy since before he took office.

In his pandering to the left that he depended on to be elected, he made promises to eliminate fossil fuel production, to end fracking for natural gas and to power this New Green Deal boondoggle with electric cars. To his credit, he has made good on these promises. On his first day in office, he canceled the Keystone XL pipeline by Executive Order. Now eighteen months later, we are begging the Middle East and Venezuela for lower priced oil – rather than producing our own in this country while employing hard working Americans at the same time.

As we approach the heat of summer, the train wreck of non-base load renewables pushed by the left will collide head on with a grid unprepared to meter and deliver this kind of energy. We can expect, along with much higher electric prices, the potential maddening inconvenience of rolling brown-outs as our reward for their chosen rush into green energy. There is nothing wrong with using green energy, but these projects take years to plan and build.

There is so much irony and hypocrisy in this current Administration's energy policy. As they incessantly tout the "solution" of electric cars, they refuse to acknowledge the rare earth minerals that must be mined (one of the main ones in China) to create the batteries, the amount of diesel fuel it takes to power the Earth moving equipment to extract the minerals, the Trans-Atlantic shipping fuel to get the materials here, and the amount of electricity it will take to power the electric car revolution. I have read that if just 5% of Americans transitioned to electric vehicles, it would crash the current electric grid. Once again, the facts are deliberately ignored to construct a feel good, sounds good, fairy tale that literally falls apart when taken to its actual conclusion.

Meanwhile, we do have a true "green" energy source here in Virginia (and around the Nation) that the environmentalists have perverted to the negative in the same fashion they have lauded renewables and electric cars. The original and ultimate renewable energy is woody biomass. It is, and should continue to be, part of Virginia's base load energy mix. Our industry, from loggers to sawmills and wood products producers of all stripes, makes this material – literally tons of it—every day. Woody biomass can be an extremely valuable tool for landowners and foresters to properly manage forestland. This biomass is burned cleanly by a number of utilities and private manufacturers to create energy.

The left has convinced many Democratic legislators that burning biomass is dirty and harmful to our environment at large and our forests in particular. The trees are sacred and must not be cut, unless of course, they are removed by the hundreds of thousand acres for their solar projects, not to mention the miles and miles of powerlines that will have to be built to connect these projects to the grid. This land will likely never be forestland again. While we recognize that the main difference between a crop of corn and a stand of trees is 50 years give or take, the environmentalists want them off limits unless it suits their agenda. How we make toilet paper, lumber, staves for bourbon and wine barrels, cardboard for packaging, or furniture, and the fact that they need these items every day is an inconvenient truth that they have twisted, maligned and manipulated.

Again, it is up to US to band together in this war on American energy, our businesses and our way of life. Who's with me?

Log safe,
Frank



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IN THE REAR VIEW OR THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

The first six months of 2022 are trying to escape from my memory way too quick before I have time to reflect on the many good things. VLA has packed a lot in these first six months, everything has gone well and exposed VLA and its great members as powerful advocates for our industry.

VLA also reached its 20th anniversary in 2022 and imagine what those who helped create this trade association must have seen. When you see a senior board member, you should ask them to share some stories.

We appreciate all of you that have shown VLA so much kindness and courtesy as we climb towards achieving goals for members and reach upwards a little further to meet new higher ones. Below are a few areas VLA members helped accomplish.

January to June 2022:

- Virginia congressional representatives Bob Good from CD 5 and Abigail Spanberger CD 7 met with VLA Board of Directors for challenges and solutions at the federal level.
- Secretary Matthew Lohr attended a meeting with VLA Board of

Directors to discuss the industry and opportunities at the state level.

- VLA was granted space for exhibiting at the Mid-Atlantic Biomass and Logging EXPO. This opportunity gave VLA lots of exposure to people in NC, SC, and VA. We are grateful to Jonzi Guill, Chip Capps, and CLA for their gracious hospitality. VLA gained one new member!
- VLA was granted space for exhibiting at the Richmond Sawmill & Logging EXPO. This opportunity gave VLA lots of exposure to people from NC, VA, and many other parts of the country. Met lots of you and enjoyed the opportunity. VLA gained four new members.
- Membership is moving in a positive direction thanks to many who spread the word that keeps us growing.
- Madison County Board of Supervisors accepted the superior presentations by Madison County loggers and amended their local ordinance to accept the state tax option for exempting personal property taxes on off-road logging equipment. Two more businesses joined VLA.
- New law was created to heighten the visibility of loaded log trucks that extended four feet or more beyond the trailer's end. Beginning July 1, 2023, all log trucks with loads longer than four feet beyond the end of the trailer must have TWO flags! Each flag must be 18 inches X 18 inches in size and either fluorescent red or orange. The new state law will be in compliance with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations and provides a greater detail of safety to motorists. VLA is grateful to Delegate James Edmunds (VA HD 20) for his superb leadership.

VLA has lots left to do in 2022. The Board of Directors has looked ahead to bring many positive outcomes for its members and industry. Here is a quick glimpse of the Board's vision for the next six months.

July to December 2022:

- Meet with Senator Mark Warner July 15 to discuss the challenges in our industry in a face-to-face meeting. Thanks to Tom Sheets at Blue Ridge Lumber who initiated an opportunity for Senator Warner to attend the Richmond EXPO and meet with VLA Frank Myers and VFPA Jamie Coleman, about their concerns. Senator Warner wanted to learn more, so VLA is working with his staff to ensure a successful meeting.
- VLA annual meeting will be at the Williamsburg Lodge August 12 & 13. VLA has added extra time for more networking between members, businesses, exhibitors, and industry representatives. Great speakers will cover our most pressing subjects. The only thing left now is for a large attendance to fill the rooms and seats. **You can register online at https://swipesimple.com/links/lnk_39a3a288 or check out VLA's website at <https://www.valoggers.org/vla-annual-meeting/>** for details on rooms, registration, sponsorship, and program. Fun activities are included for free!
- Legislation efforts for 2023 include two big issues:
 - Uninsured/Underinsured Motorists. First VLA members are frustrated by the increasing number of accidents between log trucks and uninsured motorists. Did you know anyone can pay \$500 to DMV and drive without insurance? It is true!
 - Biomass: VLA wants to ensure that biomass is safely included in Virginia's energy policy as a renewable energy source for the production of electricity.
- Legal and safety training at the Keystone Truck & Tractor Museum, Colonial Heights is scheduled for November 11 with speakers from Setliff Law, Virginia State Police Motor Carrier, Gaines & Critzer, and Vestige. Please register with Virginia Tech SHARP Logger office.
- Federal legislation is on VLA's radar, and it will continue working closely with Scott Dane at the American Loggers Council on important federal issues for our industry.

As always, VLA is ready to listen and help you, our members. Contact Ron Jenkins at info@valoggers.org.

VLA INVITED TO JOIN COLLEAGUES AT RICHMOND EXPO FOR SAWMILLS & LOGGING



Virginia Forest Products Association friends and colleagues invited Virginia Loggers Association to set up an exhibit at the Richmond Sawmill & Logging EXPO on the Richmond International Raceway. They have 60 + years of going strong with partners and do a great job for the industry. VLA is grateful to Leslie Mosely, Susan Seward, Don Bright, Jamie Coleman, and others at VFPA for providing space and accommodations.

VLA also appreciates the great help of Ervin Bielmyer and Nannette Jenkins who set up the booth. Many of VLA board members, Ervin, and Nannette met people, sold clothing, raffle tickets for LAL, and took down the booth once the event was over. Special appreciation to Carmen Smith, Buck Morris, Frank Myers, Jenna Wells, Chad Shelton, Palmer Dugger, and more. Through their help, VLA raised important revenues to support members and Log-A-Load, added four new members, and met many people in our industry.



Expo Richmond 2022 has enjoyed over 5 decades of providing forest industry the opportunity to keep their operations efficient and cost-effective. Since the first Expo in 1960 was hosted in Crozet, VA the event has grown larger and larger. Over the years, Expo moved around the Commonwealth to Petersburg, VA, then to the Richmond Arena (next to the Diamond), and finally, in 1976, it moved to its current home at the Richmond Raceway Complex. Tens of thousands of forest industry personnel have visited the Expo site over the years ... where they have found one of the largest sawmills, logging, pallet machinery and suppliers' displays in the country. Visitors have come from every state and many foreign countries to see the latest innovations. They are proud to continue this 60-year tradition and always welcome their guests back. We believe the next EXPO will be in 2024!

VLA worked closely with Nikki Robertson to ensure Log – A – Load was well represented at the EXPO.

VLA highly recommends attending the Richmond Sawmill & Logging EXPO to see the latest in equipment, meet old friends, and add some new ones. People there are friendly and helpful!

During the EXPO, several well-known people from Virginia House of Delegates and Congress dropped to meet people in our industry and catch up on the latest news.



Jamie Coleman, Senator Mark Warner, and Frank Myers

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Ron Jenkins and Delegate Otto Wachsmann



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Laurie Wright Elected to Virginia Forestry Association Board

Laurie Wright wears many hats in the forestry community. Upon graduating from Virginia Tech in 1996 with a degree in Forest Management, she married Vance Wright and moved to Mecklenburg County. Laurie's entry into the Wright family ensured a lifelong immersion in ALL THINGS forestry related.

In 2000 Laurie brought her interest in estate planning and how it could apply to her husband's family's land to her father-in-law, Charles A. Wright. Together they planned and implemented a new family company to hold all the forested properties in Wright Forestry, LLC. Today, Laurie continues to oversee the financial management of Wright Forestry and assists Vance in creating forest management plans. Wright Forestry is also certified by the American Tree Farm System.

Laurie assumed the financial management of Charles A Wright Logging, Inc. in 2006, a job she continues today. While her husband, Vance, and brother-in-law Alan, run the day-to-day operations in the woods and shop, she is overseeing the regular bookkeeping and Human Resource duties, and staying on top of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Association's record keeping requirements. She is also a supporter of the Virginia Loggers Association.

In 2010, at the request of her family, Laurie spearheaded the creation of one of the largest Conservation Easements with a working forest held by the Department of Forestry. The family's desire was to honor the legacy of Charles A. Wright to not develop or fragment his farm and forestland and to maintain active forest management. The easement contains provisions to curtail the building of houses and removed the ability to divide the land in perpetuity.

In 2016 Laurie was also able to obtain the Century Forest designation for Wright Forestry. The Century Forest designation was established in 2016 and honors families in the Commonwealth whose property has been in the same family for 100 years or more and includes at least 20 contiguous acres of managed forest. The original Home Farm has been in the Wright family since 1861!

In 2020 Laurie began serving on the Virginia Tree Farm Foundation Board of Directors. In her spare time, Laurie is the local coordinator for Impact Virginia, a youth construction mission camp that brings teenagers together to serve Christ by providing construction assistance to homeowners in need. She is also an avid hiker and mushroom forager.

"I am excited for this opportunity to continue to serve in the forestry community."

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MADISON COUNTY LEADERS SEE TAX EXEMPTING TAXES ON OFF-ROAD LOGGING AS AN INVESTMENT

County leaders serving as members of the Board of Supervisors begin to understand that exempting personal property taxes for loggers is an investment in their future. This simple idea sounds logical to most of us, but it is a hard concept for many members of county Board of Supervisors. VLA understands these fine leaders have much to consider when deciding to exempt one group while others continue to be taxed on something. We do not envy their difficulties and pressures from their constituents.

According to VLA's best estimate, twenty-four Virginia localities have made the decision to exempt personal property and machinery & tools taxes on off-road logging equipment. Fourteen of these counties are a direct result of local loggers with help from VLA collaborating closely with local leaders to educate and show the benefits of the logging community and forest products.

Madison County Board of Supervisors is the most recent locality to adopt tax exemption for sustainable forest resources and future generations. According to Madison

amend their ordinance adopting the exemption. The picture below shows all who turned out for the Madison County public meeting and public hearing. There is power in a unified voice and common cause!



Pictured Above: Rodney Woodward, Theresa Woodward, Cory Woodward, Lester Woodward, Jesse Woodward, Andy Deane, Christie Jones, Sidney Coates, Mackie Jenkins, Mason Jenkins, Amy Gentry, Chandler Gentry, Greg Morris, Dana Morris, Earl Morris, Bradley Gentry, and Hazel Woodward.



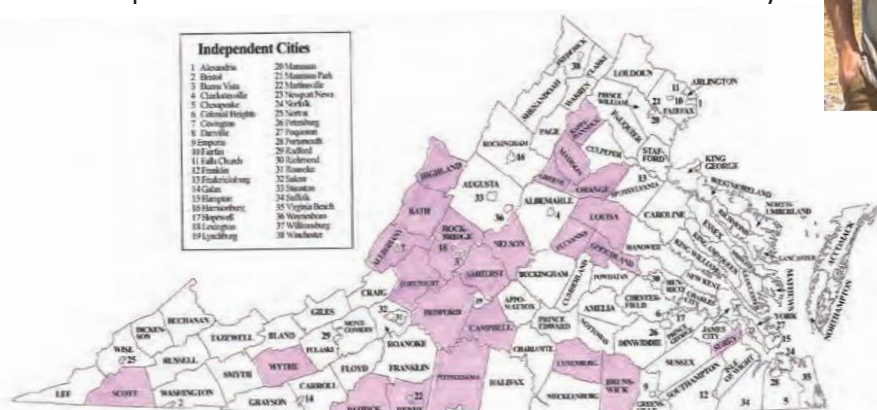
County comprehensive plan, forests are an important and valuable county resource well worth this investment, and we agree! According to one member of the Board, Jim Jewett, stated that he recognized the exemption would be a worthwhile investment and Madison County would reap rewards in the future.

Many members of the Madison County logging community clearly presented benefits of this exemption. Theresa Woodward of Leroy Woodward & Son Logging, Inc. spoke twice in front of the Board of Supervisors. She spoke so eloquently about the challenges small businesses were facing in the forest products industry. Several other loggers also spoke very well on behalf of the logging community and helped convince the entire board to unanimously

Deane Logging featured in picture below also accepted an invitation from a board member to see a logging operation. Andy was happy to offer the opportunity. The logging company got started when Andy's grandfather owned a sawmill. Wayne (Andy's dad owner of the company) decided to start logging and went into business for himself. Andy collaborated with his dad in the woods at an early age. Wayne and Andy continued to work in the woods together until Wayne turned 86 yrs. old, he is now 88yrs. old. The company incorporated in 1980.



L to R: Josh Hurt, Carey Clatterbuck, Andy Deane



VLA will continue to work with any logging member who wants to explore this in their locality. Just reach out anytime and let us know. As always, VLA is ready to listen and help you, our members.

Contact Ron Jenkins at info@valoggers.org.

VLA JOINED OUR FRIENDS AT MID-ATLANTIC BIOMASS & LOGGING EXPO

From VLA Executive Director
Ron Jenkins

Carolina Loggers Association friends and colleagues invited Virginia Loggers Association to set up an exhibit at the Mid-Atlantic Biomass & Logging EXPO outside of Laurinburg, NC. VLA was greeted warmly by Zack & Laura Myers, Chip Capps, Jonzi Guill, Gina Phillips, and other great partners in CLA.



This EXPO is an outdoors logging event complete with live logging equipment demonstrations, competitive competitions, vendors from across the USA, and great people. Several loggers from Virginia joined the event and visited with us at VLA's booth. And we also met many people from North Carolina and South Carolina who loved our T-shirts with universal messaging like "Hug a Logger and You'll Never go Back to Trees," or "My Daddy (Granddaddy) is a Logger."

VLA highly recommends attending the Mid-Atlantic Biomass & Logging EXPO to see the latest in equipment, meet old friends, and add some new ones. People there are friendly and helpful!



Lowe Rogers from Virginia took time for a photo-op Nannette & me



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Scott Barrett, PhD,
Extension Specialist,
Forest Operations

**Coordinator for the VA
SHARP Logger Program**

**VA Tech Department of
Forest Resources &
Environmental
Conservation**

**NEWS AND
UPDATES FROM
VIRGINIA TECH
FOREST
OPERATIONS
EXTENSION**

Running a logging business is challenging. Recently it seems like the challenges have only gotten bigger. We have had record high fuel prices. Insurance premiums for log trucks have increased substantially. Finding qualified truck drivers is challenging. Finding replacement parts and equipment has gotten harder than before. Finding good employees that are willing to work seems like it is always a challenge. Markets for forest products are continually changing and fluctuating. The list can go on and on, that's for sure.

Loggers are faced with running a business that is in the middle of a forestry supply chain that includes the landowners who grow timber and the mills that purchase delivered timber to produce a variety of products. The sustainability of logging businesses is critical to the sustainability of the whole forestry supply chain including forest landowners and mills. And nobody knows that better than you, Virginia's loggers, and that's why I want your help.

I am planning to work with a graduate student beginning in 2023 to work on a project related to the challenges faced by logging businesses in the forestry supply chain. Many of the details have not been finalized, which is why I can use your help. We will be looking for your help in identifying the biggest challenges you face in your logging business and what are the issues that can be addressed. If you have thoughts on what we should focus on or ideas for what you think are the most important challenges in logging businesses, then let me know. My hope is that this research project will help to identify the most important challenges faced by logging businesses so that we can not only communicate the challenges, but also work to address these challenges and improve the sustainability of the logging industry which is a vital part of the forestry supply chain. A sustainable logging industry is dependent on a lot of factors, and identifying the most critical issues and most challenging issues can help highlight the factors that need to be addressed. Addressing critical challenges can help to improve the forestry supply chain as a whole so that future generations of logging businesses will continue to have a viable future in the industry.

I plan to share more details on this project at the VLA annual meeting in Williamsburg in August. If you are planning to be there and would like to share your ideas with me, I would love to talk with you more about it. Or you can always call or email me to share your thoughts on this. Let me know what you think are the biggest challenges for logging businesses and we will try to include those in this project. And if you have ideas for how to fix those issues, I'll be glad to listen to those ideas as well, but I can't make any promises that I'll be able to solve all the problems! However, I am committed to help identify the challenges, communicate those challenges, and help to make a more sustainable logging industry.



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LOG TRUCK INSURANCE PREMIUMS, CLAIMS, SAFETY PRACTICES IN THE SOUTH



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It is no secret that log truck insurance premiums have been rising in recent years. While premiums have been increasing, do you know how your premiums compare to other businesses? What is the average insurance premium in the South? How much do insurance premiums vary between businesses? Research can help answer these questions. During 2021, 86 southern logging businesses participated in a survey about insurance premiums, claims, and safety practices. The survey was supported by the Forest Resources Association. Most responses came from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas.

Insurance Premiums and Trends

Log truck liability insurance premiums averaged \$10,619/truck/yr in 2021. Nearly all logging businesses and contract haulers had a \$1 million policy limit per incident and 44% of companies also had an umbrella policy to protect them from claims exceeding \$1 million.

There was significant variability in premiums between companies, with premiums ranging from \$1,000–\$48,000/truck/yr. Almost 75% of logging businesses were paying between \$5,000–\$15,000/truck/yr (Fig. 1). There was greater variability in premiums between businesses in the same state than between the average premium between different states. Log truck fleets that had been involved in one or more fatal or injury crashes in the previous three years paid 41% higher average premiums than other fleets. Small fleets tended to pay higher premiums than larger fleets.

Log truck insurance premiums increased by an average of 55% between 2018 and 2021. Ninety-two percent of logging businesses experienced premium increases during this period. The average premium increase was \$3,248 per truck.

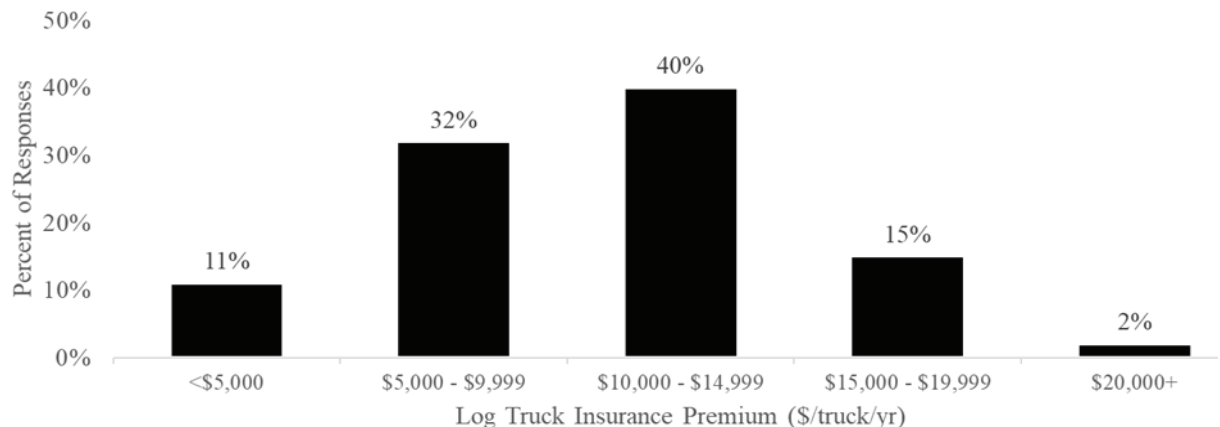


Fig. 1: Log truck liability insurance premiums in the South during 2021.

Log Truck Insurance Claims

The average claim cost was \$107,805. At an average premium of \$10,619/truck/yr, the average claim was wiping out premiums from 10 claims-free trucks. This is why insurance premiums are rising. The high average cost was a result of a few policy-limit (i.e., \$1 million) claims. A few bad actors and/or a little bad luck can have a major impact on everyone's premiums.

Forty-five percent of survey participants had a claim against their liability insurance policy between 2018 and 2021. Fifty-eight percent of crashes led to liability insurance claims, supporting the notion that many crashes are not the fault of log trucks. However, just a handful of severe at-fault crashes can drive everyone's premiums higher.

Comparisons to Other Trucking Industries

Other trucking industries are facing the same trends as the logging industry. According to the American Transportation Research Institute, 90% of trucking fleets experienced insurance premium increases between 2018 and 2020. Truckload carriers experienced an average premium increase of 44% between 2018 and 2020. Estimates of average premiums for heavy trucks outside the logging industry range from \$7,500 to nearly \$20,000 depending on the source of information and fleet characteristics. It appears that log trucks pay slightly higher premiums than trucks in other industries, which suggests log trucks are considered higher risk.

by insurers. As has been the case in the logging industry, small fleets, especially owner-operators, have experienced the largest increases in premiums. Likewise, insurance premium increases have been greatest in the South.

What Can be Done to Reduce Premiums?

The way to bring down premiums is to reduce insurance claim costs. Tort reform would obviously be helpful in some/most states to prevent frivolous claims. However, the best way to reduce claim costs is to prevent log truck crashes. Implementing safety policies/practices and using safety technologies can help to avoid crashes.

The majority of logging business owners required daily pre-trip inspections, had regular safety meetings with their drivers, and held annual driver reviews (fig. 2). Just over half of logging businesses were using road-facing cameras and GPS tracking (fig. 3). Fewer than half were using speed governors and in-woods scales.

There is strong evidence to support the use of dash cameras. The obvious benefit to cameras is to avoid frivolous claims when a truck is not at fault in a crash. Cameras are also beneficial in crashes when the log truck is at fault because it can lead to quicker resolution and lower investigative costs for the insurance company.

The best use of dash cameras is to coach drivers. In my recent study, fleets that used dash camera footage to coach their drivers paid 42% lower premiums than fleets that had dash cameras but did not use the footage to coach their drivers. The driver is the most important safety feature of any vehicle. I know one log truck owner that implemented dash cameras and was able to double his drivers' average following distance. Consequently, he was able to stabilize his insurance premiums after several years of significant increases.

It appears that log truck fleets are behind other trucking fleets in the use of advanced safety technologies. Use of dash cameras and advanced safety features such as automatic emergency braking, forward collision warning, and lane departure warning systems are far more common in other trucking industries.

Fig. 2: Most used log truck safety practices by logging business owners.

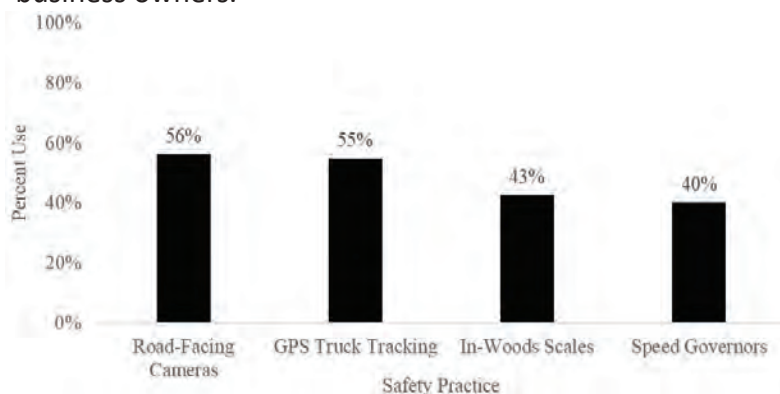
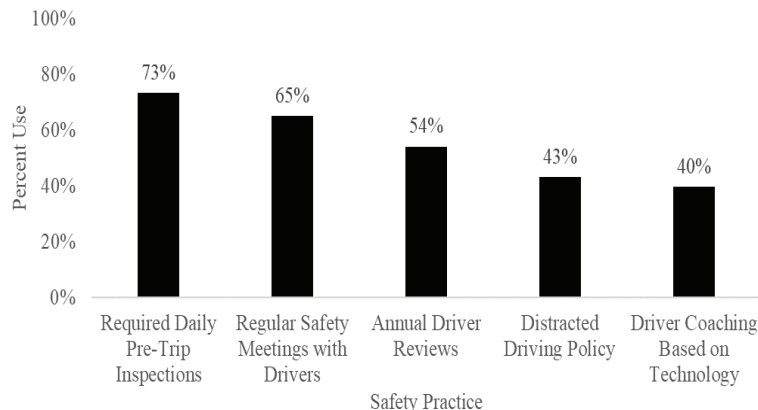


Fig. 3: Percent of logging businesses using select safety technologies.

Conclusion

This research confirmed that log truck liability insurance premiums are rising rapidly in the South. The data suggest that insurance claims are the primary culprit. A comprehensive approach is needed to bring down crash rates. Implementing appropriate safety practices and utilizing technologies such as dash cameras can



help, especially when paired with driver education and coaching. However, when it comes to reducing crashes, the whole system matters: hiring practices, fleet condition, driver education, drug testing, and use of technology all influence crash risk. While there is no "one thing" that is guaranteed to reduce premiums, log truck owners should be proactive and not feel powerless to prevent crashes and future premium increases.

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A LOOK AHEAD ON FOREST HARVESTING AND WATER QUALITY

As I look back on 40 years of accomplishments for the Water Quality Program in Virginia and the progress that has been made by the timber harvesting community, the results are impressive. This is due in no small part to the effort of the loggers, the forest industry, groups such as the Virginia Forestry Association, the Virginia Forest Products Association, Virginia Cooperative Extension, the Virginia Department of Forestry and especially the Virginia Loggers Association who have supported education and implementation practices over the past 30+ years. The vision and commitment to the protection of the water resource and effort that it took to “do the right thing” in a manner that both allowed for the utilization of the forest resource and the protection of the “common water resource” can be attributed to a host of individuals. Former State Forester Jim Garner put it in the proper perspective when he said that it was a “Team Effort”. And it truly was! From the first meeting of the Water Quality Task Force he organized to the wrangling at those meetings for the development of a law that would allow the logging community to operate fairly unencumbered by regulation while still protecting the water resource. There was a lot of discussion, back-and-forth, and finally consensus on how things would work moving forward. Jim Mooney, VLA’s first executive director, and folks like Danny Goodbar and Terry Porter kept things lively, but out of these meetings came a program that seemed to work for all parties, protected the resource and put the forest operators in a defensible position that would show the regulators in Washington, D.C. and Richmond that forestry was being practiced in a responsible manner.

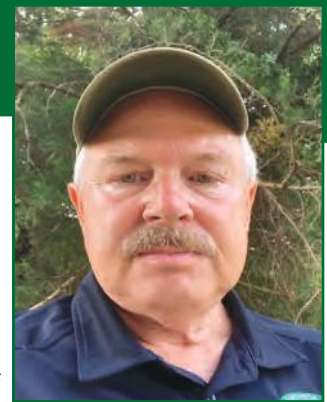
To support this effort and provide data that would prove to those that would question a voluntary Best Management Practices (BMP) program, the Department of Forestry (VDOF) began a BMP monitoring program that looked at a subset of harvest sites randomly selected to identify specifically how the industry was doing in implementing BMPs compared to the standards in the states BMP Manual. In the early days of the VDOF’s BMP Implementation Monitoring effort the agency looked at the perfect job! That is to say that were all of the BMPs that were in the BMP manual implemented according to the way the book described them and were they perfect. Those scores were very low and didn’t really capture the huge effort that the logging community put forth in utilizing BMPs for water quality protection. In a parallel effort, the 13 southern states (which includes Virginia) were working to develop a common protocol to monitor sites and to be able to score BMP implementation based on the individual states BMP manual. This would allow for the ability to compare voluntary BMP Programs across state boundaries and to compile results for an entire region of the country. Ultimately, in 2007, Virginia’s monitoring effort met the criteria set forth in the southern region protocol. The state data and the regional data have both been used to prove that not only do BMPs work to protect water quality, but they are being implemented at a high level VOLUNTARILY!

Figure 1 – Tract BMP Median Score by year for Virginia.

The 2021 calendar year data is consistent with the previous eight years of data and Virginia has been averaging 95% implementation rate. While scores have been consistently high, the challenges that the industry is facing in terms of increased fuel, labor and other operating costs while dealing with fluctuating markets will make working smarter in the woods critical in being able to operate profitably. BMPs while implemented during the course of the operation can provide more

operating days and put less stress on machinery thus providing less downtime (Shaffer, Robert M; Meade, Gregory; Evaluation of harvest planning training; Forest Products Journal Jul/Aug 1997).

To assist the loggers in the implementation of BMPs at the critical area of stream crossings the VDOF has been able to provide a valuable cost-share program to assist in covering the costs of implementing BMPs associated with a stream crossing. This popular program will be funded for the upcoming year and can help cover the purchase of portable bridges that would then belong



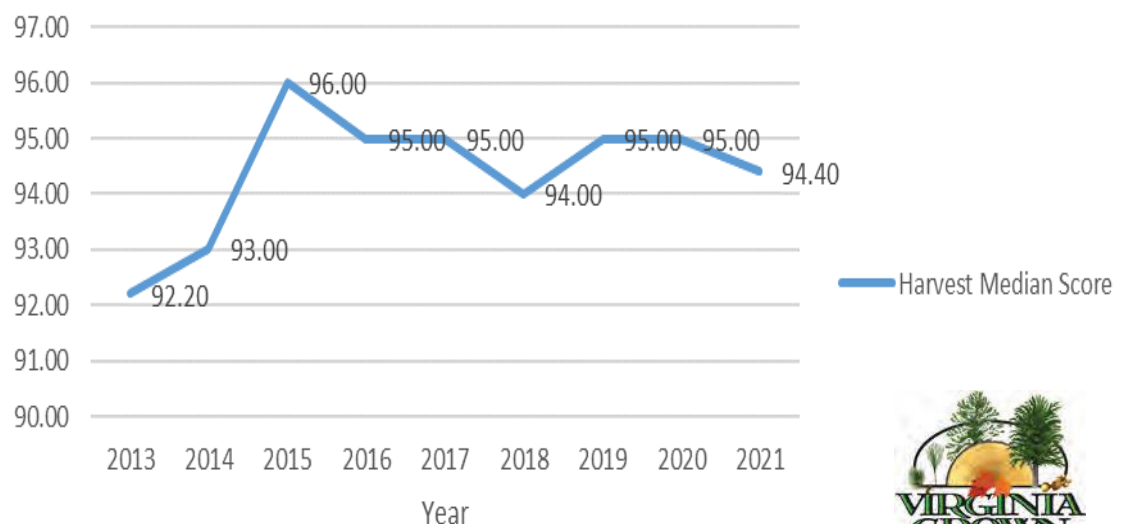
Matt Poirot

Water Quality
Program Manager

Virginia
Department of
Forestry



Harvest Median Score



to the logger thus providing continued benefits for protecting water quality and operational efficiency for years to come. This program can be accessed by contacting the local VDOF Water Quality Engineer or Specialist covering the County that the tract is located within.

Looking Ahead

This article has taken some time to look at where the water quality program has come from, now is the time to look ahead and focus on the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

The good news is that there is a focus that maintaining healthy forests on the landscape is perhaps the best mechanism for combating climate change. By practicing good forest management, forests provide a variety of forest products and are an economic driver for our economy. Our forests also provide multiple environmental benefits such as improved air and water quality, carbon sequestration, wetland protection, habitat for wildlife and opportunities for recreation. The ability to practice forest management and to provide all of these environmental benefits relies on a strong forest industry which starts with the logger, the first link in a supply chain that provides for all of the benefits that a healthy forest contributes. That being said, timber harvests continue to be under a great deal of scrutiny from environmental groups looking at the “supposed” loss of carbon

sequestration, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the impact to proposed threatened and endangered species habitat and a host of other groups looking at wetland loss. The challenges are great, but working together and with the support of the logging community, forest industry, forest researchers we can continue to make this a “Team Effort” to provide all of the benefits that a healthy forest can provide.

In wrapping this up, this author will be retiring after 45+ years



working for the forestry community, starting as an industry procurement/land management forester and winding up a career as a program manager overseeing one of the premier state forestry water quality programs in the country. While there are a tremendous number of groups and individuals whose support over the years I have relied on and would like to recognize, it would be impossible to name them all without missing someone but as a group, I would

like to thank the loggers of Virginia for being the driving force of a successful program that has made my job over the years both challenging and rewarding. This has truly been a “Team Effort” and I thank you!

Sincerely Grateful for all of your efforts!

Matt Poirot



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Don Bright, owner of Meherrin River Forest Products and VFPA President, and Frank Myers, co-owner of MM Wright and VLA President met with members of the Federal Reserve to discuss lots of topics including inflation, interest rates, recessions, and lumber prices.

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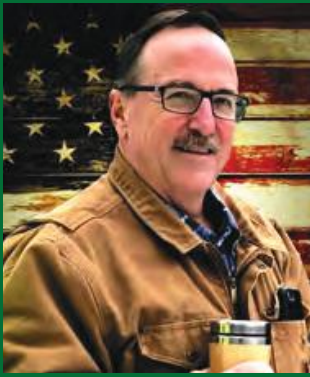
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AS WE SEE IT

Canary in the Woods



Scott Dane

Executive Director

American Loggers
Council



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXWfiMdEP4o&t=178s>

Instead of “not making a sound” the Goodsons took the opportunity to publicly announce their decision via a YouTube video from their kitchen counter. Making this decision was obviously a very difficult personal choice, but like always, Bobby and Lori put the timber industry above their personal privacy and shared this publicly in an effort to bring the current overwhelmingly challenging business environment threat to the attention of those controlling the markets and policies. The Goodsons are the canaries warning the forest products industry that the logging and trucking sector is not sustainable under the current model.

The Forest Products Industry and the Public Policymakers can heed the warning that the Goodsons have shared or ignore it and live with the consequences.

Fuel costs have proven to be the “Straw that Broke the Camel’s Back”. Some mills have been professional and responsive in providing fuel adjustments, but most have not, and many have only provided a portion of the actual increase in production and transportation costs.

Those who feign that they don’t fully know what the additional costs are, employ a tried and true negotiating strategy of requesting that you provide a breakdown so that they can better understand your costs. This is merely a delay tactic that usually results in a response that is:

A Day Late and a Dollar Short

In order to provide loggers and truckers with the resource to re-

spond to this ongoing strategy, the Virginia Loggers Association worked with Dr. Joseph Conrad from the University of Georgia to provide an objective analysis of the incremental (per 10 cents per gallon) additional costs for production and transportation. Unfortunately, this information has not resulted in consistent or adequate fuel adjustments for loggers and truckers from many of the mills.

<https://www.amloggers.com/news/how-to-calculate-a-fuel-cost-adjustment-virginia-loggers-association>

Ironically, the mill inbound supplies and outbound transportation fuel surcharge is not debated by the mills. The vendor tells the mill what the fuel surcharge is going to be and the mills pay it, otherwise the vendors don’t provide the service. The mills just incorporate that expense into the end product cost which has resulted in record profits for many mills.

The Timber Industry is the only industry that allows the “buyer” to dictate the price even when it results in the supplier losing money.

That has to change. Timber Unity in the Northwest demonstrated the effectiveness of the timber industry rallying together. If loggers and truckers would practice this unity regarding what they get paid (not in collusion or in violation of anti-trust practices) for their services and products, based on what it costs them, things could change.

Loggers and truckers are not indentured servants (although it may seem so with the amount of debt you carry). It is your business, your logging operation, your truck. Nobody can force you to work.

The timber industry model is the same as it has been for 100 years with loggers and truckers, whether in lumber camps or independent logging / trucking companies, being told what to do and if they don’t they will be replaced by a logger or trucker who will. Those days are over, there aren’t enough loggers and truckers to play against one another. If someone wants to work for less than it costs, let them, they won’t be around long.

As the old saying goes “don’t kill the Goose that lays the golden egg”. This refers to killing something that brings one wealth. The loggers and truckers are the “Golden Goose” which has brought record wealth to many in the forest products industry. Those who are benefitting are risking killing the goose that lays the golden egg.

Since there is a proverbial theme to this As We See It column – the Goose that Lays the Golden Egg, the Straw that Broke the Camel’s Back, the Tree Falling in the Woods, and the Canary in the Mine I want to close with a Biblical Proverb:

“A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight” Proverbs 11:1

Meaning one should use an honest scale and pay someone a fair amount, because a laborer is worthy of his wages.

SAWMILLSTORIES: MORGAN LUMBER COMPANY, INC.



With roots tracing back four generations and over 83 years, the story of Morgan Lumber reveals triumph through tragedy, environmental stewardship, economic opportunity, and industry pride.

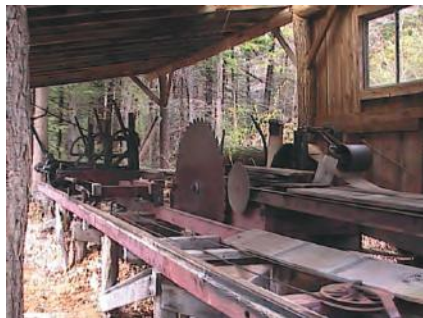
"I find it humorous and ironic that Morgan Lumber produces southern yellow pine lumber in Red Oak, Virginia," says Ken Morgan. Mr. Morgan entered the lumber business with his dad in November 1971- at the age of 24 after graduating college and a four-month stint of basic training in the Army Reserves.

From humble beginnings as a portable ground sawmill in the years between the Great Depression and the onset of World War II, Morgan Lumber Company got its start. With money earned from tobacco crops on their small farm in southern Virginia, Ken Morgan's granddad (J.C.), dad (Billy), and uncle (Willard) purchased the portable sawmill and earned money from it by going to neighboring farms, harvesting timber, sawing the lumber and dividing proceeds 50/50 with the timber owner. After Billy returned home from his service in WWII, the Morgan family banded together to build a stationary sawmill that, over the course of the 1950s, expanded to a second sawmill, planer mill, and building supply store. Today, Ken marvels at how far Morgan Lumber Company has come. For the past 40+ years Ken's son John has led the company with state-of-the-art



technology and top notch people.

Tragedy and Triumph



Thanksgiving Day 1981 brought tragedy to the Morgan Family. Billy Morgan, Ken's dad, was involved in a farming accident and succumbed to his injuries a few days later at the age of 58. Ken was suddenly left feeling alone and lost * contemplating whether to operate the planer mill since he had no exposure to it over his ten years with the company. Ken says he could hear his dad's voice saying, "Son, the money is in finished lumber", so he continued his focus on running and learning the planer operation.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the sawmill doubled many times its production. Capital improvement projects yielded a new primary breakdown, an optimized edger, trimmer, sorter, stacker, dry kiln, and new planer mill. The past twenty years have revealed equally remarkable improvements and progression.

Ken also says it was in the mid-1990s he realized the value of investing in people: "There is obviously not a better investment than in that of good people and what I describe as 'good people' are those foremost of integrity. After integrity and in no particular order are competency, commitment, work ethic, team player, and communicator. The quality of a company directly reflects the quality of its people." By the late 90s a unified team of good managers was ticking like a fine clock. "We now made decisions as a team," says Ken.

Morgan Lumber suffered a devastating fire in February 2006 that resulted in the loss of the planer mill operation. Several lumber

companies asked Morgan Lumber what they could do to help. Amelia Lumber Company in Amelia, VA and Gibson Lumber Company in Gretna, VA graciously leased their operations to Morgan Lumber Thursday through Sunday each week for 6 months. Morgan Lumber shipped our own rough dry lumber on sticks to each of these operations and brought Morgan Lumber's planer crew to run their operation. "We ran the mills, maintained the mills, and worked hand and hand with the Amelia and Gibson employees and management team to ensure the mills were in good condition week after week. These mills were running 7 days per week for 6 months. It was a team effort." says Ken. On Sunday evening, all of the dressed lumber was shipped back to Morgan Lumber's mill, so Amelia and





Gibson were ready to start back up Monday morning. Every employee on Morgan Lumber's planer crew remained with them during this trying time and they were able to operate a 40 hour schedule each week for 6 months. This allowed Morgan Lumber to retain contract commitments that it needed desperately during this time. Morgan Lumber owes so much thanks and gratitude to these two companies for allowing us to lease their operations. "Morgan Lumber would certainly not be where we are today if not for these two companies, and it just shows what a great industry we are in when your neighboring mills, even as competitors, come forward to help you."

Teaching Environmental Stewardship and Economic Opportunity

Ken Morgan believes it is extremely important for forestry and forest products industries to take advantage of the unique opportunity in educating the public regarding the environmental and economical contributions derived from progressive forest management. To this end, Mr. Morgan regularly works with youth education and sits on the Board of Directors for the Virginia Forestry Educational Foundation (VFEF) whose mission is to "financially support statewide youth education promoting sustainable forests for the environmental, social and economic benefit of all Virginians." VFEF's goal is to train teachers to teach the environmental and economic benefits of progressive forest management in every elementary school throughout Virginia. Ken believes involvement with VFEF and educational programs like it constitutes "a prudent and solid investment for forest landowners, forestry professionals and industry personnel." Ken says, "I am most proud to be actively involved in helping ensure young people have the same opportunity which I have had."



Industry Pride

Since 1939, through ups and downs, the Morgan family company has been the backbone of the community because of our employees. "I am most proud of Morgan Lumber from hearing comments of many of our employees expressing their pride in working for the company," says Ken. Morgan Lumber has been very fortunate to have many smart, dedicated employees over the years that take

a genuine interest in their role with the company. Each job and position in the operation is truly as important as the next one and it takes a strong team of individuals with a variation of skill sets to run the operation efficiently each and every day. "There is a lot that can happen between the log being cut and the lumber going on the truck", says Ken. "We have certainly had employees come and go through the years and all have contributed to the success of the company at one time or another. We have been fortunate to have been able to retain many key employees celebrating 10,20,25 and even 30 year anniversaries with the company last year. When all employees share common goals and vision of the company, they tend to feel a sense of pride of what the company is trying to accomplish and the direction the company is headed. This philosophy pulls a good team together. Good people attract good people. We have a solid team of good people!" says Ken. The pride we cherish is twofold: our employees and customers; and the quality of our products. We are committed to provide an enjoyable,

safe, and productive work environment for our employees. Our focus is always keen to the importance of good and healthy relationships maintained with all customers:



foresters, loggers, lumber, by products, and vendors. Relationships mature and we believe that loyalty is imperative to success.

When there is a common goal among a group of people, there is definitely a progression of strength within that unity. We have gained strength from our membership in the Virginia Loggers Association, the Virginia Forest Products Association, and Virginia Forestry Association.

"Through all the ups and downs since our family has been in the lumber business, I would not trade it for anything. If I had it to do all over again today, I would walk the same path and enjoy the ride all over again. There is an adage in our industry," says Ken, "'if you get sawdust on your collar it is hard to shake it off.' I am proud to have sawdust on my collar and to call many in the industry friends."



Mr. Joe Ross was recognized by the Virginia Forestry Association with a Logger Merit Award as an outstanding logger.



Joe Ross and his Family

Dan Hockenberger, Owner of Virginia Forest Resources, LLC and President of Virginia Forestry Association 2022.



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2022 - EXPO

Last month it was my pleasure to again represent Hatton-Brown Publishers at Expo Richmond. I believe this was my seventh Expo since 2008.

While there I got a chance to hang out with Richard Schwab, of M.A. Rigoni and Schwab Brothers Hydraulics, based in Perry, Fla. You might wonder why a logger from Florida was at a forestry show in Virginia; Richard and his son-in-law Ryan Wood were there to present CHAD, a product of Schwab Brothers Hydraulics. It stands for Compact Hose Assembly Device, and is tongue-in-cheek named after Richard's brother Chad, President of M.A. Rigoni. Richard and Ryan have been bringing the innovation to new customers at different forestry shows all over the country, like last fall in Mississippi and more recently this spring in North Carolina.

I also enjoyed catching up with some of the loggers I've gotten to know in Virginia over the years—among others, Frank Myers and Mr. Donnie Reaves, who told me a story of how he managed to track down his dad's first tractor. Ron Jenkins also introduced me to Otto Wachsmann, a member of Virginia's House of Delegates.

Got to have a chat with Buck Morris; I've been hoping to get a story with Buck for Southern Loggin' Times for a while. He sent me a copy of his CD of traditional country music, Give Her The Flowers; I listened to it with my dad, and loved it. We do a little podcast about traditional country, called Talkin' Country, just for fun; hopefully one day we can have Buck on as a guest to discuss his music. It's a great album; if you're a fan of traditional country, in the style of Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard and George Jones, you should get a copy.

It was VERY hot. I don't know if it's accurate, but according to the thermometer in my rental car, temperatures topped 100° both days. I'm used to it coming from Alabama...but I had been hoping to escape the extreme highs. Didn't seem to keep many other people away either. I even saw one company there from as far away as Puerto Rico.

Equipment suppliers I talked to, especially at the outdoor exhibits, mostly continued to report robust sales and demand, so far despite inflation and the ongoing backlog of supply chain delivery. Still, one rep

at the Deere tent indicated the sales market may be starting to slow down as the realities of inflation catch up to demand.

Still seems to be taking months in some cases to get equipment and parts orders delivered, and many manufacturers and

dealers still report that they have items sold before they can get them in inventory. Case in point: Ray Prevette with CSI in Union Grove, NC, told me that a D2 2600 delimber trailer was the only thing CSI could bring to the show that wasn't already spoken for. Within the first few hours, someone from Forest Pro saw it, word got around and one of their customers, Tim Bowling, bought it before the show even officially started.

Speaking of Mr. Bowling, he recently underwent leg surgery and was riding around the show in a golf cart. He had a trailer there, too, at ITI's area, one he recently bought with disc brakes. "It was a wild hare I got to try something new," he told me. He hasn't taken it into the woods yet; "I'm scared to because it's too pretty," he jokes. "Somebody has to be the guinea pig so I decided it might as well be me. Won't be the worst thing I ever did."

Equipment sales might still be doing pretty well, but loggers by and large tell me they aren't. Everyone knows by now that North Carolina's "Swamp Loggers" Bobby and Lori Goodson have decided to retire; I'm afraid they aren't the only long-time loggers having to make such tough choices right now. High fuel prices and quotas in some cases despite record profits from sawmills have really put a crunch on our loggers; see my last couple of columns in Southern Loggin' Times for more on that. It seems to be a real global crisis, and not just for loggers. Hopefully there will be some policy changes soon that might help.

Expo returns to Richmond in 2024, but I'm sure I'll be in Virginia again long before then. Till next time, Excelsior!



DAVID ABBOTT
MANAGING EDITOR

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CHAINSAW VS THE HUMAN FOOT

The modern power saw is an engineering marvel. Technology and design has allowed engine speed to exceed 15,000 RPM's on some production saws. Coupled with a razor sharp saw chain, the chainsaw is a very effective tool. The chainsaw has been the work horse in the logging woods for years. In spite of an ever growing mechanical presence in the woods, the chainsaw remains one of our go-to tools when it is needed.

Recently, we have seen a rising occurrence of saw cuts to the feet. Education and training are designed to reduce the chance of injury, or turn around a trend. The first step in this process is to study the animal, the chainsaw. As earlier stated, the modern chainsaw is a very effective cutting tool. To be effective, the saw engine and saw chain must be finely tuned and maintained. A chilling fact is the cutting tooth of the saw chain is designed to REMOVE! Saw chain doesn't cut like a filet or hunting knife. If we are running a 3/8 pitch chain, the cutter is 3/8 of an inch wide. Upon contact with the human body, there is 3/8 of an inch of skin; muscle; tendon and bone that are gone! Add to the fact that a lot of foreign material, (Bar oil, dirt, pieces of shoe leather, etc.) is introduced to the wound area. This injury becomes quite serious.

The first part in the loss control process is to AVOID CONTACT with the moving saw chain. Chainsaw kick-back is the culprit in the majority of all laceration incidents. Chainsaw kick-back happens seven times quicker than what the human brain react to. By the time a human can move a foot or shield a face, the cut has happened! Kick-back injuries can be reduced by understanding the reactionary forces of the bar and chain unit of the saw. Proper bracing and the use of the "thumb-wrap" grip counteracts the reactionary forces of the moving saw chain. The chain brake on the power saw should be treated like a safety on a firearm. When not cutting, the chain brake should be engaged to avoid unexpected chain movement. Above all, proper body placement greatly reduces the risk of a serious chainsaw laceration. If the foot is not in-line with the saw chain, it won't be injured there!

Personal Protective Equipment, (PPE) in the form of cut-resistant foot wear is federally mandated for saw hands. Chainsaw cut-resistant foot wear can prevent or greatly reduce the seriousness of a cut situation. Protective foot wear comes in many forms and styles and is quite comfortable to wear. It just makes good sense; it's like having extra insurance should a situation arise. As with any PPE, catastrophic injury can be prevented or reduced by its use. My angle on the subject is to train and educate to avoid having to rely upon the PPE for protection.

The recent trend of chainsaw foot lacerations has been severe. Many of the cuts have dealt with contact to the bone, which often requires bone-graft surgery. To avoid this possible crippling injury training and education reduce the risk of incident. Good work habits and the use of proper PPE reduce the chance of injury. Try as they may, the chainsaw will always have a place in the logging woods.



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Pittsylvania Forest Products, LLC.

Owner: Nathan Harker • Hurt, VA

Established in 2008 at the edge of the recession, Pittsylvania Forest Products, LLC. was the culmination to two bored VT foresters. Myself, Nathan Harker class of 2003 and Chuck Bullington 2002. I was operating Staunton River Timber, Inc. a timber brokerage I started in 2005 and Mr. Bullington was working for a land development company. The two of us had collaborated on some land and timber deals in the past and given our trusted relationship, starting doing some small woodlot logging as a hobby and a pastime.



When the land market was hit hard with the recession, we began spending more and more time in the woods together. Starting with a tractor and a pto driven winch, we soon found a specialized skidder that was small enough to move on a gooseneck. The ability to get in and out of tight spots using this small "mini" skidder, as well as self loading tandem trucks allowed us to get to really nice hardwood timber that other loggers just physically couldn't reach. For several years we cut tracts ranging from 2 to 15 acres. We developed great relationships with several larger landowners and eventually they wanted us to cut more conventional tracts. This led to us starting to transition to more conventional equipment. We kept the small skidder but added an excavator with a grapple saw as well as a Morbark M20R chipper. The chipper more than anything led us to switching to road tractors and 42ft log and chip vans. It was at this point that I took full ownership of the company. Taking on the debt liability was not an option for Chuck at the time, but he stayed on as my trusted



employee and right hand man.

In 2015 we bought our "regular skidder" a 548 Deere. We still cut hard to get to tracts but were out growing our niche. Hand felling was not how we wanted to spend our life, so soon after we bought a used 720 tigercat cutter. It didn't take long for us to realize older equipment is too much work. In 2017 we bought a new 610E skidder from Forest Pro, and that began our relationship with them and Tigercat. Today we operate a 2019 Tigercat 250 Loader, a 2019 Tigercat 720 cutter, and the same 610 skidder we bought in 2017. Along with a Morbark 40/36 and 3 Trucks we are now conventional company cutting mostly hardwood log stands in Pittsylvania, Halifax, Campbell, and Charlotte Counties. We still do some extraordinary jobs from time to time and that has led to many new avenues of business.

In addition to the logging, I also build log cabins. The idea was spawned when one of our landowners commented on how they'd always wanted one. I had purchased a portable sawmill for my own use in 2015, and decided to give it a try. Chuck and I attended a "Log Cabin Academy" in Helena, Montana and came home with our new "hobby". We built our





first cabin for that landowner and have built 5 others to date for other people. Currently I'm restoring an antique cabin for me and my wife Emilee. We are scheduled to build two more cabins before the years end.

I am married to a wonderful woman (Emilee) and we have two sons, Jackson (10) and Luke (8). We love Jesus and spend most of our free time in fellowship with our church friends and some of our family. I credit God and Emilee with whatever success I've experience over these last 14 years of business. God has given me a passion for the woods, and Emilee has been my rock and cheerleader. I have 6 employees in all, 3 in the woods, 2 drivers, and one cabin helper. Each one have contributed to the successes.



We like all loggers are feeling the crushing pressure of fuel cost. 2022 will be an interesting year for sure. I pray for all my fellow loggers and hope we can get some relief soon. The VFA award we received on May 4, 2022 was a much appreciated and much need motivator. I was beyond honored to be recognized in front of some of the best in the state. Seeing other foresters, loggers, and even old professors was humbling. Thanks to you Ron and the VLA for speaking out and representing the concerns of our state's loggers. It was a real pleasure meeting you and your wife and Emilee and I look forward to more encounters. God Bless!



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Virginia Motor Carrier Services – Changes to face the Challenges

The past couple of years have certainly posed many challenges, but they have also brought some exciting new developments to Motor Carrier Services at the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. I was delighted to be given the opportunity to share some highlights with VLA members in this issue of your newsletter.

IRP and IFTA

As most of you know, in July 2020 DMV retired our old online portal for IRP and IFTA self-service transactions, webCAT, and in its place launched a new system, VirginiaMCS. The webCAT interface had been released in 2001 and was linked to an even older system that had been in use for more than 25 years and that was being decommissioned by its vendor (which was itself getting out of the IFTA/IRP business). We recognize that, unfortunately, the switch to the new system did not go smoothly for everyone. We sincerely appreciate the patience and understanding you showed as we worked through the challenges of that transitional period. Although the transition is behind us now, continuous improvement is not: we are still tweaking and making enhancements to VirginiaMCS, and would certainly welcome any suggestions you have for how we can make things better.

Along with enhancements to VirginiaMCS, we have been working on several other changes in recent months to bolster support for our IFTA/IRP customers. We have expanded staffing to include a new 12-person customer contact team, dedicated to responding to your calls and emails and to expediting the shipment of license plates, decals, and other credentials. We have equipped this team and our other IFTA/IRP staff with a new incident management system to help us track issues as they arise and ensure they are resolved as quickly as possible. We are also working on initiatives to provide extra support to new businesses who are just getting started and who need help getting their arms around all the various state and federal rules that apply to interstate carriers. In the coming weeks we will be rolling out some newly redesigned forms and publications that aim to make it easier for these new carriers to quickly complete their business with DMV and get on the road.

Fleet Management for Intrastate Vehicles

DMV understands that fleet management is about efficiency and productivity, and that offering businesses an online option to take care of their own DMV needs gives them important tools to meet those goals. To that end, earlier this year we expanded our self-service fleet management programs to add a new service called EZ Reg.

EZ Reg was launched as a complement to the existing EZ Fleet program, which enables IRP registrants and intrastate carriers with larger fleets of 75 or more vehicles to title and register their vehicles without having to visit a DMV customer service center. EZ Reg allows carriers with smaller fleets of between 25 and 74 vehicles to renew intrastate vehicle registrations, get replacement license plates, and maintain fleet vehicle records online at no extra cost without having to leave the office. As part of the new EZ Reg system, carriers can also:

- Transfer and surrender truck, tractor, and trailer registrations
- Report vehicles that have been sold or have changed garage jurisdictions
- Perform registration maintenance (change gross weight, unit #, etc.)
- Reprint truck, tractor, and trailer registration credentials
- Process overload permits

EZ Reg includes helpful online guides and demos explaining every transaction, but as with EZ Fleet, carriers signing up for the service also receive individual training from DMV Motor Carrier Services staff.

For more information and to sign up, please visit www.dmvNOW.com/commercial and follow the links to EZ Reg.

Hauling Permits

Last but certainly not least, I am happy to share that last fall DMV and VDOT partnered with ProMiles Software Development Corporation to create a new, cloud-based online solution for issuing oversize/overweight permits. Building on our existing brand of “EZ” systems (EZ Fleet, EZ Reg), our new hauling permits service will be called EZ Haul. We are extremely excited about this new solution, and are eagerly looking forward to it going live this summer.

With the launch of EZ Haul you can expect:

- Overall system enhancements and efficiency
- Automated routing including a robust map and larger routable network
- Restriction management for up-to-date information about construction, maintenance and other restrictions
- Increased self-issuance capabilities

We will be providing additional information about EZ Haul, including sign-up instructions, in the coming weeks. Please continue to check our website, www.dmvNOW.com, for the latest information.



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TASTE BUD TEASERS

Crabs come to us too from Virginia, North Carolina and other southern waters, and there are also the King and Dungeness crabs found in the cold waters of the Pacific. Today we can buy some variety of crab meat all year round; fresh, frozen, or canned. You may choose lump or back fin, crab cakes, or meat from the claws. All are rich in protein, calcium and minerals and low in calories. Crab is perishable and, if fresh, should be prepared almost immediately. To liven your menus, for family dining or for entertaining, this month's Collector's Cook Book brings you delicious crab recipes including hors d'oeuvres, soups, salads, sandwiches and main dishes.

CRAB MEAT TROPICANA

Crab meat, pineapple cubes and green-pepper strips simmer in soy-pineapple syrup, and are served on chow-mein noodles.

- 1 can (1 pound, 4½ ounces) pineapple cubes
- ¾ cup pineapple syrup
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 2 cups green pepper strips
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 chicken bouillon cube
- 1 cup boiling water
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 pound lump crab meat
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Dash of pepper
- 15 cups chow-mein noodles



Drain pineapple, reserving syrup. Cook pineapple in butter 3 minutes. Add ½ cup pineapple syrup and pepper strips, cover and simmer 10 minutes. Mix cornstarch with remaining ½ cup syrup. Dissolve bouillon cube in boiling water. Add to pineapple and stir in cornstarch mixture, vinegar, soy sauce and sugar, stirring until thick. Add crab meat carefully, salt and pepper; blend thoroughly and beat well. Serve over crisp chow-mein noodles. Makes 6 servings.

MARYLAND CRAB CAKES

They're spiced with mustard and Worcestershire.

- 2 slices stale bread
- 1 pound crab meat
- 2 egg yolks, beaten
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 tablespoon margarine, melted
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fat for frying Crackers
- Tartare Sauce (recipe below)
- Pickles



Break bread in small pieces. Mix remaining ingredients, except last 4. Add bread, blend well and shape in cakes. (Makes 4 large or 8 to 12 smaller crab cakes.) Put in refrigerator for 2 hours or more. Then fry in 1" fat in skillet, turning to brown. Drain on absorbent paper. If preferred, fry in deep fat. Serve with crackers, and with Tartare Sauce and pickles. Makes 4 servings.

Tartare Sauce Mix 1 cup mayonnaise, 1 teaspoon grated onion, 2 tablespoons, chopped sweet pickle and lemon juice to thin to desired consistency, For variety, add chopped parsley, chopped celery, capers, chopped olives, chili sauce or hot pepper sauce.

CRAB PUFF CHUU

Layers of bread cubes, cheddar cheese and crab meat, topped with an egg sherry sauce and baked.

- Butter or 2 eggs, lightly margarine beaten
- 6 slice bread
- ½ cup sherry
- 1½ cups grated
- ½ teaspoon
- cheddar cheese Worcestershire
- ½ pound crab
- Salt and pepper

Spread bread with butter and cut in cubes. Arrange alternate layers of bread cubes, cheese and crab meat in a greased baking dish, finishing with bread-cube layer. Mix remaining ingredients and pour over layers. Bake in slow oven (325F.) 1 hour, Makes 4 servings.

FRIED HARD CRABS

You dip them in batter before frying. 1 dozen large Crabs

- 2 tablespoons hard crabs baking powder
- Salt and pepper
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups all
- 1 ½ cups milk
- All purpose flour
- Fat for frying



- Buy the hard crabs live and drop in boiling water for 3 or 4 minutes. (You can buy these frozen and already cleaned if you prefer.) When all signs of life have disappeared, cool and clean, removing gills and intestines. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Sift flour, baking powder, 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper. Mix eggs and milk, add to dry ingredients and mix until smooth. Dip crabs in batter and fry in hot deep fat (375°F. on a frying thermometer) about 5 minutes. Drain on absorbent paper. Makes 6 servings,

SAUCY CRAB ROLL

You serve this dish with a sherry mushroom sauce.

- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon prepared mustard
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon salt Dash pepper
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire
- 2 tablespoons minced parsley
- 3 tablespoons cracker meal
- 1 pound crab meat



Rich pastry (recipe using 1 ½ cups flour and ½ cup shortening)

Mushroom Sauce: Combine mayonnaise, mustard, egg and seasonings. Blend well. Add this mixture to parsley and cracker meal and combine with crab meat, tossing lightly. Prepare pastry and roll in rectangle 12" x 8" and ¼" thick. Put crab meat mixture in center of pastry, bring long sides together, folding over to seal crab meat in. Fold over each end. Put in baking pan and bake in hot oven (400°F.) until pastry is crisp and brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Serve with the Sauce. Makes 4 servings

Mushroom Sauce Combine 1 can undiluted mushroom soup with 3 tablespoons sherry and heat. If desired, mushroom soup can be mixed with milk or cream instead of the sherry.





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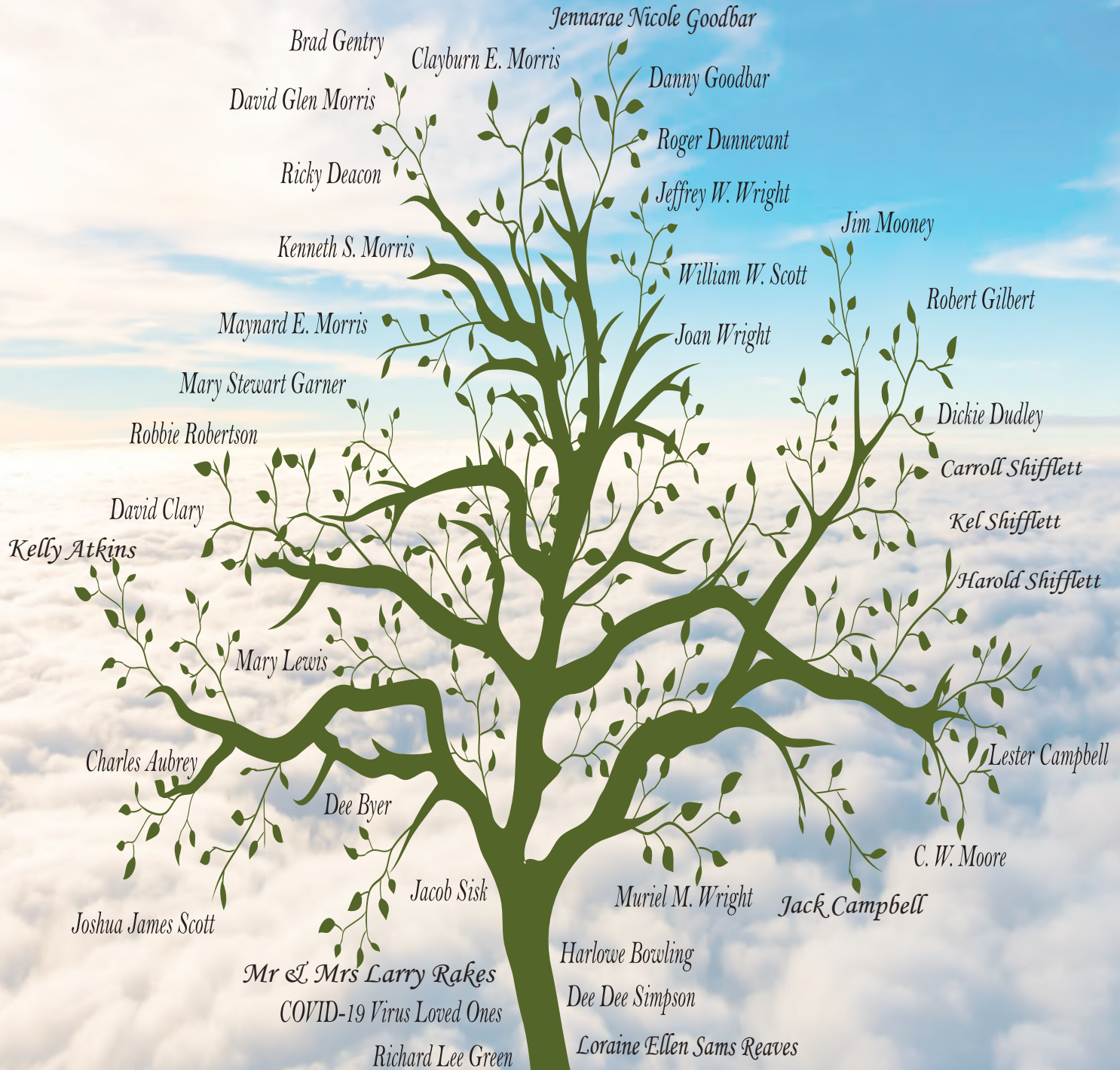
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SETLIFF'S LAW



Stephen Setliff

New year brings higher minimum wage and car insurance requirements in Virginia As of January 1, 2022, the minimum wage in Virginia was increased to \$11.00 per hour and the minimum car insurance policy was increased to \$30,000/\$60,000 limits.

Virginia Minimum Wage

The minimum wage law, enacted in 2020 set forth a step-up schedule, with the Virginia minimum wage currently set to reach \$15 per hour by 2026. Va. Code § 40.1-28.10. The following chart illustrates the Virginia minimum wage increases in the law:

May 1, 2021, until January 1, 2022	\$9.50 per hour or the federal minimum wage, whichever is greater
January 1, 2022, until January 1, 2023	\$11.00 per hour or the federal minimum wage, whichever is greater
January 1, 2023, until January 1, 2025	\$12.00 per hour or the federal minimum wage, whichever is greater
January 1, 2025, until January 1, 2026	\$13.50 per hour or the federal minimum wage, whichever is greater
January 1, 2026, until January 1, 2027	\$15.00 per hour or the federal minimum wage, whichever is greater

See Va. Code § 40.1-28.10.

While the federal minimum wage remains at \$7.25 per hour, Virginia is not alone in increasing its minimum wage on the state level. Over 20 states increased their minimum wages for 2022, many of them by a scheduled yearly step up similar to Virginia. Additionally, the minimum wage rate for federal contractors covered by Executive Order 13658 also increased for 2022 as follows:

Beginning January 1, 2022	\$11.25 per hour \$7.90 per hour for minimum cash wage paid to tipped employees
For covered contracts that are entered into on or after January 30, 2022	\$15.00 per hour

See 86 FR 51683. These increases come as some call for a \$15 federal minimum wage across the board. The current \$7.25 minimum wage has not been increased since 2009. For covered contracts that are entered into on or after January 30, 2022 \$15.00 per hour

Virginia Minimum Car Insurance Policy Limits

Meanwhile, the minimum limits for a motor vehicle owner's insurance policy also increased, as shown in the following chart:

	Injury to or death of one person in any one accident	Injury to or death of two or more persons in any one accident	Property damage in any one accident
Previously in 2021	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$20,000
For all policies effective on or after January 1, 2022, but prior to January 1, 2025	\$30,000	\$60,000	\$20,000
For all policies effective on or after January 1, 2025	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$25,000

See Va. Code § 46.2-472. If your car insurance does not meet the above referenced minimum requirements, the Virginia DMV will require you to pay a \$500 Virginia Uninsured Motor Vehicle fee, in addition to the regular registration fees, in order to register your vehicle. Falsely certifying your car insurance or other noncompliance with these requirements could result in additional fees, penalties, or the suspension of your driver's license.

If you have questions about this article, please contact Steve Setliff (ssetliff@setlifflaw.com) at 804-377-1261.

Sonny Merryman

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