



# Serving 2.0

## Veterans in the Urban Forest

*Success Stories*

Forestry Topic 38

[www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov)

September 2018

### Urban Wood Opportunities

As Virginia's Urban Wood project evolved, the accumulated contacts within this world of single trees and small woodlots expanded and showed great diversity. Yet as the project progressed and more contacts were added to the Urban and Small Woodlot Forestry Business Directory ([www.vaurbanwoodhelp.org](http://www.vaurbanwoodhelp.org)), a theme became apparent. The folks working on the Urban Wood Project soon realized that urban and small woodlot forestry was a very attractive endeavor for our military veterans.

As one might imagine, all of these veterans are hands-on, mission-accomplished, service-oriented people. In this world of small-scale forestry, the opportunities for people with these personality traits are readily available. In fact, it is the ideal niche for those folks who served our country, providing them with unlimited opportunities to serve the needs of others.

#### Thomas Parmiter

Thomas Parmiter, a.k.a. "The Woodsman" ([www.thewoodsmanna.com](http://www.thewoodsmanna.com)), graduated in 1998 from the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry with a B.S. in Forest Engineering. Responding to a lifelong desire to serve in the military, he made a radical decision and enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps as an Infantryman only 10 days after graduating college. After 15 years of active duty and being promoted to the rank of Major, Thomas elected to take the Marine Corps up on a rare, but timely, opportunity to retire early in 2013.

Thomas Parmiter formed his own forestry company that offers a suite of services to homeowners and landowners including small property timber harvesting, portable sawmilling and general tree removal, trimming and felling.

"I love the outdoors, physical activity, problem solving, physics and serving the needs of others", Thomas says. "Outside of spending time with my wife and

three children, there is no other thing I would rather be doing. To work as an advisor and steward of God's magnificent creation is a privilege that brings me great joy".

Thomas has totally embraced his newfound vocation by becoming a Certified Arborist, adhering to Virginia's Harvesting Best Management Practices for Water Quality and following all safety protocols set forth by the American National Standard Institute (ANSI) for Tree Care Operations.

#### Jeff Tidd

Jeff Tidd has served in the U.S. Army continuously since February 1980 including eight years active duty and in the Army Reserves since 1988. Currently, Jeff is assigned as a Sergeant Major in the Provost Marshal's Office of the Military District of Washington. Jeff's life beyond his military service includes the purchase of a portable sawmill in 2015 and discovering that there were opportunities beyond just milling logs.

In 2016, Jeff established Tidd's Timber Works LLC and now offers a wide variety of products including rough-cut lumber, furniture, wooden crafts, BBQ smoking wood and sawdust. Jeff's goal is to "be engaged in



Jeff Tidd and helper "Hank Kerchief"

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sustainable woodworking, turning wood otherwise wasted by rotting or burning, into usable items such as tables, chairs, usable lumber" (<https://www.facebook.com/tiddstimmerworks/>).

## Veteran Urban and Small Woodlot Forestry Businesses

There are several other veterans across Virginia engaged in urban and small woodlot forestry businesses. In the northern Shenandoah Valley, a trio of retired Army colonels, Rusty Sears, Ron Light and Mark Loring, frequently pool resources and talents to produce fine pieces of furniture. Rusty Sears of Red Jake Farm and Mill (<https://www.facebook.com/redjakefarm>) owns a portable sawmill. Ron Light creates fine furniture pieces at Lighthouse Woodworking (<http://www.lighthousewoodworking.com/index.html>). Mark Loring is often found helping Ron at milling time.

The Virginia Urban Wood Project is pleased to assist these veteran-owned businesses by offering marketing opportunities for their services and products, enhanced public exposure and outreach engagement. Two of the featured veterans, Thomas Parmiter and Jeff Tidd were presenters at urban wood workshops, relaying to participants their challenges and successes as owners of relatively new forestry enterprises. The Virginia Urban Wood project continuously seeks opportunities to assist veteran-owned urban and small woodlot forestry businesses and to help grow the local economies of communities across the Commonwealth.



Ron Light of Lighthouse Woodworking



Red Jake Farm Shirt



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