



**May 04, 2020**

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**Employee Spotlight**

*Virginia Public Service Week – May 3 – 9*

- ◆ For many, the first full week in May marks the countdown to the arrival of the summer months. Yet, for families it also marks a period of preparations for celebrating the achievement of high school and college graduates. In nearly every household, we look forward to celebrating our beautiful Mothers. And for more than three decades the first week of May is synonymous with the official recognition period for our dedicated professionals engaged in public service across the Commonwealth, or the formal period we celebrate their self-less service during The Virginia Public Service Week (May 3 – 9).

This year more than ever, our committed workforce has endured unprecedented demands to serve, support and adapt in unfamiliar or a continually-changing operating environment. Even though we will not be able to celebrate our longstanding employees with more than 25 years until later this summer, we are joyful to celebrate more than 1,000 years of combined public service by our teammates attaining their respective service milestones as of April 30.

VDOF employees not only receive this public recognition; they are also recognized with a certificate honoring their milestone. What's more, employees with more than 25 years of service will be

celebrated later this summer (July 16) at the boyhood home of Thomas Jefferson in Tuckahoe Plantation, if gathering restrictions have been lifted by then.

<b>The 2020 Service Awards Recipients are:</b>				
<b>40 Years</b>	<b>30 Years</b>	<b>15 Years</b>	<b>5 Years</b>	<b>3 Years (cont.)</b>
Fred Turck	Stephen Morris	James Pugh	Mary Weaver	Kyle Manning
Joseph Lehnen	C. Brian Ledford	Ed Zimmer	Matt Wolanski	Michael Downey
Carl Belew	Tammy Ingle	Jerre Creighton	Stephen Jasenak	Matthew Lynch
David Queen	<b>25 Years</b>	Jeff Hensley	Kevin Dodson	Daniel Cloeter
James Blackwell	Pat Murphy	William Perry	Heather Tuck	Jonathan Vest
Warren Coburn	Steven Coleman	Chad Stover	Joseph Cotner	<b>1 Year</b>
Junius Miles	Jay Bassett	Joe Rosetti	Jonathan Perry	Amanda Jones
<b>35 Years</b>	Michael Womack	Kathleen Ogilvy	David Bryan	Andrew Matteson
Daniel Fortune	<b>20 Years</b>	Michael Salyer	William Sweeney	Chad Wisecarver
Bernard Brooks	John Miller	W. Chad Austin	<b>3 Years</b>	Robert Robertson
Charlene Bardon	J. Miller Adams	Josh McLaughlin	Molly O'Liddy	Clint Phegley
David Tolliver	Zach Dowling	<b>10 Years</b>	Katlin DeWitt	Meghan Mulroy-Goldman
William Shumaker	Thomas Snoddy	T. Mason Jeffries	Lara Johnson	Ben Wassum
	Brad Carico	Chad Lykins	Paul Morse	Grayson Coleman
	Waceticia Stainback	William Butler	Laura Guthrie	
		Justin Barnes	Zoe Sumrall	

### *Jim McGlone – Note of Appreciation*

- ◆ Below is an e-mail received from a landowner that is very appreciative of Jim McGlone (urban forest conservationist):
  - "My name is Carol Campana and I am a homeowner on Snow Meadow Lane in the McLean Hamlet, Section 5, off of Lewinsville Road. Approximately five years ago, when my husband and I served on our homeowner's board, we had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Jim McGlone from your Urban Forestry Department. Jim accompanied Taylor of the Fairfax Releaf Program as we were inquiring about what we could do with the storm water area that is a common area owned by all homeowners. Jim made many good suggestions but the unfortunate part was none of the neighbors wanted to bother working or even supporting anything we wanted to do there including planting free trees that Taylor could have provided to us. During that visit Jim walked throughout our common area including our street. He observed the Yoshino cherry trees that were approximately 34 years old at that time along the periphery of our street in the VDOT right of way. Jim told us that the trees were nearing the end of their life expectancy and should be removed sometime in the near future.
  - Since that time our trees have gotten progressively more rotten, and unhealthy; at the end of last year one of our neighbors cut two trees down in front of their property as there were large branches falling out of them into the street. A number of the neighbors discussed the possibility of cutting the trees down individually and replanting them but my thought was to do it as a community, everyone in agreement and contributing, as the trees had been planted that way. (We are the only original owners on our street) The first person I contacted was Jim McGlone as I knew he could help me and I was not mistaken. He has been a constant guide along my journey, sending me the VDOT website and all their information and requirements, answering all my questions, visiting our street and educating my husband and myself, followed by a thorough summary of the current status of our trees that I shared with my neighbors, and always giving his very professional opinion in a timely fashion.

- I just wanted you to know how much we appreciate Jim and what a great asset he is to your department. We are so lucky and thankful to have him as a resource to our community. With his guidance and support he greatly helped me overcome a few difficult hurdles. Through his professionalism, knowledge, and candor he reaffirmed my belief that through educating my neighbors I could succeed in making this an amicable community project. Although it too was a lesson in patience, diplomacy, and courage I am happy to share that all of the neighbors are now on board to beautify our neighborhood. Our project will start later this spring and our twenty-one healthy lovely cherry trees will be planted in the fall. And for this I owe a debt of gratitude to Jim. HE IS THE BEST.
- We are already planning our "First Cherry Trees Blossom Get-Together" next April and Jim will indeed be invited."

## Employee News

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### *Thank You!*

- ◆ The Bland Corrections Timber sale was sold to Bradshaw Lumber Company of Bland. Thank you to Greg Estoll's (senior area forester) past efforts in developing the plan for the property, and to Chad Austin (water quality engineer) and Brad Carico (deputy regional forester) for their help in identifying a better harvest area based on today's markets, laying out the sale and cruising. It takes a village to make things successful! Forty acres of timber was sold, with about 30 acres planned for white pine reforestation and the rest for natural hardwood regeneration.
- ◆ Thank you to Dennis Gaston (state forests forester), Scott Bachman (senior area forester) and a host of other Eastern Region staff and others for completing the Southampton Corrections State Lands cruise and work up. Southampton Corrections is looking to sell about 152 acres of mostly loblolly pine in areas that had been scheduled for harvest in 2014 and re-approved by DGS in 2018-19.

## Project Updates

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### *Urban Wood Project Update*

- ◆ Recently the Virginia Urban Wood Group published its first Virginia Urban Wood newsletter. The e-newsletter is distributed through the Trees Virginia Constant Contact platform. More than 250 people received the first edition, including VDOF personnel who have been involved in the Urban Wood program. Many thanks to Molly O'Liddy (urban & community forestry partnership coordinator) and Becky Woodson (forest management programs coordinator) for their assistance with this project.
  - Below is a link that will take you to the first edition of the Virginia Urban Wood newsletter.  
<https://conta.cc/2VTPCgn>
- ◆ **Please contact Joe Lehnen (utilization and marketing specialist) at [joe.lehnen@dof.virginia.gov](mailto:joe.lehnen@dof.virginia.gov) if you would like to be included on the distribution list.**

## Last Week

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### *Forestland Conservation*

- ◆ As part of the COVID-19 crisis response, Charlie Becker (utilization and marketing manager) developed and sent out an online survey to forest related businesses about current conditions. Although the results are very preliminary, they indicate that most businesses have experienced negative impacts. However, there were some that experienced no impacts and a few had actually seen an increase in

business. The most significant impacts noted include loss of markets, availability of needed supplies, and policies that restricted employees' work.

- ◆ Joe Lehnen was a guest speaker for an Urban Wood Webinar for VA Master Naturalists. This statewide event was coordinated by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) and had 77 Master Naturalists in attendance.
- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry program manager), Molly O'Liddy and Doug Audley (area forester) assisted Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) staff with planting a field and riparian buffer at Powhatan State Park.
- ◆ Urban & community forestry and forest health program staff were awarded \$80,000 from the US Forest Service (USFS) to assist Virginia communities with hazardous ash tree removals and recovery plantings due to the emerald ash borer.

### **Forest Resource Management**

- ◆ Meredith Bean (emerald ash borer coordinator) has placed seven emerald ash borer traps in counties east of Richmond where the invasive pest has not yet been confirmed. To learn more about VDOF's emerald ash borer program, visit our online story map here: <https://arcg.is/P945r>
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health manager), Katlin DeWitt (forest health specialist), and Jerre Creighton (research program manager) attended a conference call with the USDA Southeast Climate Hub to discuss future partnerships.
- ◆ Katlin DeWitt viewed a webinar hosted by the USFS regarding forest health survey in the time of COVID-19. Options and opportunities for collection of forest health condition data in a virtual environment were discussed by a wide range of participants.

### **Agency Lands**

- ◆ Jerre Creighton and Dean Cumbia (director of forest resource management) spent a day at Virginia Tech's McCormick Farm along with personnel from the university, VCE and forestry consultants to consider a hardwood demonstration harvest for oak regeneration. It was agreed that a combination of strip and patch clearings intended to expand with periodic harvests would be a good opportunity and a draft harvest map will be developed.
- ◆ Augusta Forestry Center (AFC) will conclude seedling shipments this week and orders YTD total 1,114. AFC personnel planted black and chestnut oak as part of their spring plantings and they continue to irrigate some of the seedling beds to prevent damage to germinated seedlings from cold temperatures.
- ◆ Contract fumigation work, which will provide pre-emergent weed protection for this year's loblolly pine seedlings, has been completed at Garland Gray Forestry Center. The nursery staff continues to prepare the fields for planting to begin May 4.
- ◆ Avond Randolph (equipment operator), Willie Shumaker (maintenance supervisor) and Ian Morris (P14) assisted Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) with trout stocking on the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. DGIF conducts the program annually to supplement the natural stock of the fish.

### **Central Region**

- ◆ VDOF provided Smokey Bear fire prevention materials to Greene County Public Schools to use in "goodie bags" that were handed out to schoolchildren during one of their drive-thru meal pickup days last week. Greene County schools have been providing meals to all school-aged children via a drive-

thru service each Monday and Thursday for the past six weeks. Children and families also receive goodies bags with school supplies, crafts, games and books as well as an opportunity to check out books from the school library on a request basis. The Smokey Bear materials provided to the children included pencils, frisbees, coloring books and stickers. One-hundred-and-twenty-five meals and goodie bags were handed out.

### Eastern Region

- ◆ Paul Reier (forest technician) taught a ground-cover unit for nine New Kent wildland firefighter recruits. Paul is encouraging each recruit to complete the official National Wildfire Coordinating Group training and is planning to host an S-130/190 field day later in the fall.
- ◆ Eli Podyma (community forest specialist) attended a Richmond Virginia (RVA) Green City Commission meeting. During the meeting he presented information on VDOF's new urban wood removal study. He also assisted members of the RVA Tree Stewards with tree identification around Holton Elementary School in the City of Richmond and met with GroundworksRVA to assist with mapping cover types in the north side of the city with iTree.
- ◆ Jesse Bander (forest technician), with the help of Eli Podyma, Dave Terwilliger (area forester) and Smokey Bear, developed an educational outreach video highlighting the job duties of a forest technician for use at career days. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uD7YTHBsToE>
- ◆ Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forester) produced an excellent Community Forestry Plan for Campostella Square Park in Chesapeake. This plan included recommendations for structural and remediation pruning as well as hazard tree removals and replacement recommendations. The City of Chesapeake and Meghan have started tentative steps to improve their Community Forestry Program. She is working with partners from the City of Chesapeake and Master Gardner and Master Naturalist groups to make these recommendations a reality.
- ◆ Dennis Gaston and Ben Duke (state forest technician) led Jim Schroering (longleaf pine specialist), forest technicians Jack Coyer and John Rose, area foresters Austin Babb, Travis Tindell and Manij Upadhyay, John Hisghman (deputy regional forester), and Scott Bachman (senior area forester) on a cruise of the Deerfield Correctional Center timberlands in Southampton County. Dennis briefed the teams on the data to collect and how to use Avenza to check on accuracy of our pacing. During the briefing, all staff was able to practice social distancing as did the pickup trucks! (pictured) The Cruise covered nearly 150 acres of timber that will be put up for sale in the near future. Hopefully the economic downturn will not impact the ability to sell this timber for the best price for the Commonwealth. Future plans for the harvested lands will include at least some longleaf pine management and perhaps some shortleaf pine along with a good number of loblolly pine acres.



### Western Region

- ◆ Patti Nylander (senior area forester) recently participated in a conference call to take part in the planning stages for a substantial stream buffer project at the Augusta Correctional Facility in Craigsville. Cooperators from federal, state and nonprofit organizations are seeking funding to establish a rotational grazing system and forested buffers on 300 acres of farmland at the facility. If the grant is approved and the project implemented, we will see almost 35 acres of buffered streams and close to five miles of protected streambanks with this single project. VDOF will also be developing an updated Management Plan on the 200+ acres of forestland that is also located on the property.

- ◆ Kenny Thomas (forest technician) spent time with Claiborne Woodall and Laura Young (DCR-Natural Heritage) showing them historic and interesting features on a new property they are acquiring from The Nature Conservancy. One of the geologic features included the “keyhole” which was used by many hunters (including Kenny) to access one part of the property in only 10 minutes that would otherwise take an hour to go above the cliffs on the property. They also observed a stand of Kentucky coffeetree which is rare in the area. The group looked at some cedar glades and old fields and discussed burning in the future with the assistance of VDOF. (pictured)



- ◆ Grayson Coleman (forest technician) and Clint Folks (area forester) traveled to VDOF’s Abingdon office to acquire some surplus furniture for our newly remodeled Mountain Valley field office. In the coming months, the Mountain Valley staff will move from the brick building at Augusta Forestry Center to the two-story white house located on the property. David Queen and Greg Farrish (building and grounds crew) have done an amazing job updating the downstairs bathroom to make it ADA compliant. Once phone lines and computer networking equipment are installed, the office will be finished. Thanks to Bill Miller (senior area forester) for his assistance in obtaining the furniture from his Clinch Area offices.

- ◆ Grayson Coleman assisted DCR with moving several tons of large rocks from their Mount Joy Natural Area in Augusta County to the Buffalo Mountain Natural Area in Floyd County. Wes Paulos (DCR-Natural Heritage) asked for VDOF transportation assistance in order to block off a parking area during the COVID-19 stay-at-home period. Thanks to Josh McLaughlin (assistant nursery manager) and Harvey Darden (director of agency lands) for loan of the AFC dump truck. (pictured)



- ◆ Rocky Wood (forest technician) assisted William Neff (forest technician) with a fire investigation in Lee County and Aaron Rosenbalm (forest technician) with a fire investigation in Russell County.
- ◆ Chris Thomsen (regional forester) assisted Dabney S. Lancaster Community College (DSLCC) Forestry Department’s staff and eleven graduating students with review of their forest management plan projects. The review was a seven-hour video conference with each student presenting their completed plan to the review panel of three foresters at separate locations throughout the state. Hats off to Billy Newman (DSLCC – Associate Professor and former VDOF area forester) for orchestrating the flawless video review. During the conference it was noted that some of these graduates have an eye towards VDOF for future employment, and based on their plan presentations, VDOF would be getting some enthusiastic new forest technicians.

## Public Information

- ◆ Michelle Stoll (public information director) and Robbie Lewis (senior area forester) attended “virtual” Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute last week. The session’s highlights included a panel

discussion about the Clinch River Valley Initiative, leadership development and a session about “competing science.” Plans for the final session and graduation have yet to be determined, but it will likely not be an “in-person” event in June.

### **News Clips:**

- ◆ [James River Association keeps Chesapeake Bay Watershed clean with added flora in central Virginia](#)