



Leading by Example



Wolfram Wollenheit teaches forestry student interns inventory data collection on his woodlot.

By SARA GRADY

When it comes to forestry practices, few regions of the province invite more scrutiny than Vancouver Island. The combination of residents who've chosen a particular, outdoor-based, lifestyle, the concentrated geographic footprint of the region (its borders are Discovery Pass and the Pacific Ocean), and the small-community setting create an atmosphere that requires diligence and diplomacy on the part of forestry operators.

Woodlotters on the Island strive to maintain excellent relationships with their communities, partly because it's their mandate to carefully manage Crown resources, but also because they consider themselves stewards of a shared ecology.

Wolfram Wollenheit and Sibylle Walkemeyer of Truewood Forests, who manage Woodlot #1641 near Campbell River, are excellent examples of this conscientious stewardship. They were the recipients of the Minister's Award for Innovation and Excellence in Woodlot Management this year, both for their region, and for the entire province. They've earned the respect of peers and the trust of the community with their thoughtful and progressive management practices, and are definitely worthy of the praise.

The methods they employ are a textbook example of how to maintain diversity, health and sustainability while producing marketable timber. They utilize a wide range of progressive silviculture practices: thinning; conducting strategic clear, patch or strip cuts; managing root-

THANK YOU, WOLFRAM

Wolfram and Sibylle have been tireless advocates for the woodlot program, with Wolfram taking lead roles in the North Island Woodlot Association Board of Directors and on the Executive Board of the FBCWA. He recently stepped down from his positions on those two boards and we'd like to acknowledge his many years of service and the tremendous contributions he's made to the industry. Thank you, Wolfram.

rot with complementary planting of alternative tree species in order to minimize further spread and promote the health of the forest floor; employing aerial fertilization to encourage growth; and, using genetically improved stock and protective cones (island deer love fresh seedlings) when replanting.

While the science behind their woodlot management is admirable (and extremely effective), it probably escapes the notice of the countless community members who enjoy easy access to the forest for recreational, cultural and educational pursuits.

Wolfram and Sibylle have gone to great lengths to make sure their woodlot is safely accessible to the public. They've provided parking space at the entrance to their lot, and share trail maps with (Turn to Page 2)



Sibylle Walkemeyer and Wolfram Wollenheit receive the Minister's Award from Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.

outdoor enthusiasts on wheels and on foot. And they've worked closely with the neighbouring rifle range to ensure everyone has a safe and positive experience while enjoying the great outdoors.

They've installed gates at various points along their network of access roads, but readily provide the keys to members of the community wanting to gather firewood, pick mushrooms, or harvest the abundant evergreen salal, an ornamental plant used by florists. And they've made a concerted effort to preserve the red cedar in their woodlot, an important cultural resource for the First Nations community.

They also play host to international forestry

students seeking experience and firsthand knowledge of BC's forestry practices. Students from four universities in Germany, who have the option of conducting two months of their required six-month internship abroad, come live with Wolfram and Sibylle, assisting with silviculture, inventory and other duties relating to woodlot operation.

Woodlotters are nominated for the Minister's Award by peers, and it's small wonder that these two garnered the attention and respect of their fellow foresters. They truly embody the woodlot spirit with their thoughtful, community-minded practices.

'Classroom' in the Woods

The Project Based Learning program in Port Alberni is a unique and alternative teaching methodology where Grade 9 students learn core high school requirements through hands-on learning on a woodlot licence and Christmas tree farm.

The FBCWA provided financial support to the program when it first started in 2009. It has proven to be successful and well received by SD 70 and the Minister of Education. It is in its sixth year of operation and is jointly funded by the forest industry and SD70.



Grade 3 and 4 students from Gill Elementary take a field tour through a Christmas tree farm which included choosing their own Christmas tree.

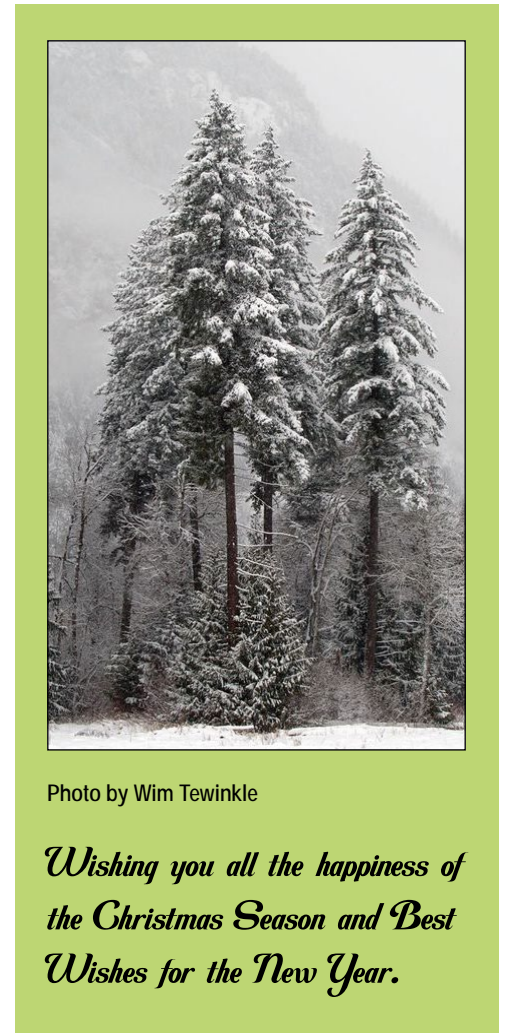


Photo by Wim Tewinkle

Wishing you all the happiness of the Christmas Season and Best Wishes for the New Year.



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