



# Celebrating the future in Fort St. John

By SARA GRADY

Twenty-five years after the first gathering, Fort St. John once again played host to the Federation of BC Woodlot Associations as they joined the Woodlot Product Development Council for their Annual General Meetings in early September. And once again, the patented Peace Country hospitality was in full swing. It was a lively event, complete with cowboy poets, skeet shooting and some unexpected entertainment from the Federation fold. Dubbed “Back to the Future,” the weekend provided lots of opportunities to acknowledge past accomplishments, and glimpse future potential.

In a poignant moment of the future meeting the past, Keynote Speaker Janice Burns pointed out that she and the Federation were born in the same year! During her engaging address she spoke about the tremendous respect her fellow students in the UBC forestry program held for woodlot licensees, and shared her insights on the future of small-scale forestry in BC.

Echoing the sentiments of many licensees in the province, she identified “niche marketing” as a key to the continued success of woodlot owners, whose Allowable Annual Cut (the amount of timber they’re allowed to harvest) is so small by comparison to their larger commercial competitors.

After discussing the importance of family succession planning she intrigued the audience with a proposal to partner BC’s Wildfire Management Branch aerial fire detection program with an innovative new mapping system that would create efficiencies for woodlots. “LIDAR” technology, which is used for map-



Field tours to local woodlots, like this one to Jim Collins’ land near Fort St. John, are a regular part of the FBCWA’s annual general meeting.

ping stand-level inventory of large commercial operations, could prove to be an economical means of also mapping woodlots. Planes already flying over BC’s forests as part of the province’s wildfire prevention detection program could be simultaneously gathering LIDAR data for licensees, who are required to track and report on the health and growth of their area-based tenures.

Also looking to the future were two panel presenters, Sandy Long and Peter Sanders. Sandy led a discussion about utilizing wood waste for biofuel, pointing out that “change is inevitable in an emerging market,” and that woodlot owners should remain nimble and prepared to adapt quickly to the opportunities as they arise. Peter also discussed the future of the woodlot program, encouraging its mem-

bers to continue working together and look for creative ways to ensure the continued health of the program.

It wouldn’t be a woodlot meeting without quality time in the great outdoors, naturally. While many delegates took the afternoon off and enjoyed a scenic boat tour of the Peace River – viewing the controversial Site C dam project along the way – the educational field tour was just as pleasant. Hugo McLeod and Sarah Bauman of Spectrum Resources Group lead licensees through an information-packed explanation of aerial pesticide application on a section of Jim Collins’ aspen-dominated woodlot, exploring the costs, benefits and options available to licensees grappling with

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# Students get forestry DEMO thanks to FBCWA

UBC Forestry Undergrad students attend Canadian Institute of Forestry's 2012 AGM in Quebec City

The Federation provided sponsorship to help send a team from UBC's Forestry class to attend the Canadian Institute of Forestry's AGM in Quebec City, which included the Quiz Bowl competition and Canadian Woodlands Forum's DEMO International tradeshow. Mike Harray shares their experiences.



**UBC Forestry students narrowly lost the annual CIF Forestry Quiz Bowl. But they had a great time in Quebec City, and saw the Canadian forest industry inside and out thanks to the generous support of the FBCWA.**

During the week of September 17-20, the UBC Quiz Bowl team – Even Powell, Oliver Holt, Michael Harray, Eli Fraser, Duncan Walters, and Maddie Crowell – went to Quebec City to attend the Canadian Institute of Forestry's (CIF) annual general meeting, the Canadian Woodlands Forum's DEMO International tradeshow, as well as to participate in the annual CIF Forestry Quiz Bowl. The trip was an amazing success.

The Quiz Bowl was only a small part of the overall conference, but was definitely the most exciting event, with students from across the country competing. Schools from Vancouver Island University and Thunder

Bay sent all their undergraduate foresters. A total of 13 teams competed and the last two years UBC has placed second. UBC won the Quizbowl in 2008 and we were set to reclaim the title. Unfortunately, this year we came in second place again, beat on the final question, a tie-breaker that hinged on a true-false question, "Enchanter's nightshade indicates dry, nutrient-rich soils." Of course it is false! A video replay shows that both teams raised their hands at exactly the same moment, but the winds favoured the University of Alberta Team that day.

It was great to spend time with other foresters, young and old. I enjoyed several lectures on wildlife management in forestry, including discussions of the woodland caribou and overabundance of deer and moose. There were also stimulating lectures regarding forest tenure, and the new economic analysis of silviculture systems.

We were lucky this year to have the conference coincide with a quadrennial trade show of forestry equipment called DEMO International. This was a big event where all kinds of manufacturers and businesses from North America and Europe came out to show off the cutting edge of forestry equipment and technology. It all took place in a demonstration setting, so not only did we get to climb

over harvester-processers, but we got to watch them work and cut trees. It was good to see the big industry types, but the woodlot-oriented forwarders, portable mills, and horse loggers held my respect. They are quiet and much less frantic.

Overall we had a very memorable trip and hope that next year the UBC Quizbowl team can finally reclaim the title at the 2013 CIF AGM in New Foundland!

Thanks again for all your help, it really made a difference!

*-Mike and the CIF Quizbowl Team*

## AGM a chance to reflect back with pride and look forward with optimism

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species management in the wake of the mountain pine beetle infestation.

After a long trek in the bush, licensees were treated to a unique experience: a trap shoot at the Fort St. John Rod & Gun Club, followed

by a delicious BBQ meal that included local bison and homegrown corn. The dance floor got a workout as multi-generational trio, Diamonds in the Rough, played lively country tunes, and the walls rang with laughter as Sandy Long sang comical folk songs.

The past and the future were drawn together tightly during the week, and with dedicated stewards like Julia Kowalsky and up-and-comer Janice Burns in the mix, woodlot-ers can look back with pride, and forward with great optimism.



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