Forestry Club-The Year in Review

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Forestry Club—The Year in Review

By Brian Flage

1994-'95 Officers
President - Brian Flage
Vice President - Susan Borts
Secretary - Cory Levendusky
Treasurer - Ben Wehrspann
Sr. Ag Council - Jason Sable
Jr. Ag Council - Joel Skelley

Looking back at the past year for the Forestry Club, I can be truly pleased with the level of activity and participation by the members. We were able to bring back some old traditions as well as try some new things. All in all, it was an enjoyable year.

**Freshman Welcome**
As is the tradition, the first activity of the year was the Freshman Welcome Picnic at Brookside park. There were close to a hundred in attendance, giving those new to the department a chance to meet those that have been around a while (no implication about the time it takes some to graduate of course). We had brats and hot dogs that were ready in short order due to Ben's ingenious utilization of an entire can of lighter fluid. That's OK though, the mushroom cloud made it easier for people to find the shelter. After eating, we played volleyball and softball (relax Dr. Mize—I'm pretty sure there weren't any pro scouts watching).

**Fall Canoe Trip**
The next big activity was a canoe trip down the Des Moines river. We had picked the first weekend in October and naturally when the day came, the weather channel precipitation map made Iowa look as green as the great north woods. Being the diehard outdoorsman that we foresters are, we would not be deterred by a little torrential downpour, so we decided to go ahead with the trip. When we hit the water near Frasier, however, the clouds broke and a
miraculous ray of sun shone down on our trusty canoes—and as if through divine intervention, we canoed that river during what turned out to be the most beautiful day of the year.

**Conclave**

On October 21, five Iowa State foresters embarked on an impossible journey. Tanya Anthofer, Susan Borts, Shane Delaney, Jason Sable, and myself were to travel to the Lake of the Ozarks State Park in southern Missouri to compete in the Midwestern Foresters Conclave. This might not have been such a difficult task except that Iowa State had not participated in this event for some time, and much of the lore had been lost. We were also to discover that our equipment, much of which predates the discovery of steel, was less than competitive. The other schools that were in attendance were University of Illinois, Southern Illinois, Southeast Illinois, Michigan State, Purdue, Minnesota, and Missouri. I must say that they were all quite friendly and willing to provide our wayward team with whatever direction we needed. We never did find that left-handed speed chopping ax they said we needed.

With only five people, we were also by far the smallest team, so to make up the deficit we developed ironman conclaving—between the five of us, we had 16 separate event entries, including tobacco spit, match split (2 entries), dendrology (3 entries), traverse (2 entries), chain throw, wood ID (3 entries) speed chopping, 2-man bucking, pulp toss (team), and the special event (team). The special event involved four members carrying a 12 foot log down a trail, estimating DBH and height of a tree as we go by, running over several hurdles, and canoeing a course out on the lake—all while either carrying or towing the log. Points were given to the team closest on diameter, closest on height, and fastest time for the course.

We managed to place second in the compass and pace traverse, second and third in the wood ID, and second in the special event. This yeilded a fifth place finish overall for the team, something we were quite proud of. In fact, the weekend would have been perfect if Jason and I had not been detained for over half an hour by the Kearney, MO police department for breaking into my truck (I locked the keys in the cab when we stopped for dinner and an overly astute officer didn't like the appearance of two unshaven, ax-wielding, young males forcing open the topper to retrieve the spare set). All worked out fine, however, no harm done—watch for the episode on Cops.

**Other Activities, Meetings, and Plans for the Future**

Other activities that the Forestry Club has engaged in thus far include the Ag Week volleyball tournament (don't ask how that came out), Christmas tree plantation workdays, seedling planting for Earth Day and VEISHAS, Christmas tree sales headed by committee co-chairs Matt Cosgrove and Cory Levendusky, and program committee chairman, and Joel Niemeyer, has given several programs to local youth groups. We have also had Fireside Chats at Dr. Countryman's and Dr. Kuo's with several more planned for the rest of the year.

We've been fortunate to have several good programs given at the regular club meetings. Dr. Kuo gave a slide show and talk on China, we watched some old summer camp movies from the 20's and 30's, a Peace Corps representative talked about the opportunities that the program offers, Dr. Colletti showed slides and
talked about the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico, Chris Feeley, a student in forestry, gave a presentation on archaeology in Iowa, and of course we had the ever popular pizza/movie night. The Forestry Club also challenged the faculty to a volleyball match. Unfortunately, since these are the people that determine our grades, we were forced to let them win—every game.

To finish out the spring semester, we have our VEISHEA display that is being led by Tanya Anthofer and the Wild Game Banquet being co-chaired this year by Shane Delaney and Rob Rubsam. We have also planned a spring canoe trip and Spring Forester’s Day to allow those that will attend conclave next year a chance to practice. Dr.’s Hall, Manwiller, and Mize have all offered to do fireside chats before the end of the year as well.

Overall, I feel that it has been a productive year for the Forestry Club and I have fully enjoyed my tenure as president. I’d like to thank all of the officers, committee chairman, and regular members for their participation and recognize them for their input. Looking at the leadership potential found in the underclasses, I know that the club is in for a bright future. I hope that next year when I read this column as an alumnus, that they will have branched out to new and better things. Bye all, and long live ISU Forestry!