

PSCTA Fall Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2023
Wilson Hill Tree Farm

Those in attendance:

Wilson Hill Tree Farm; Rich McDonald
Double Four Tree Farm; Bob Moore
Red Rooster Ranch; Byron Nelson
Good Boy Farms; Chris Yumen
Ohop Ridge Christmas Tree Farm; Mike & Denise Roosendaal
Three Trees Farms; Mike Scott
Shining Star Tree Farm; Hugh & Rayna Messer
Outpost Tree Farm; Josh Dove
Mt. View Tree Farm; Vic Starkovich
Lochsloy Acres, George & Dixie King
Buttonwood Farm; Lyubov Botvina
Helping Hearts Farm; Joe Larson
Christmas Creek Tree Farm; Todd & Jenny Kuspert
Kirk Company; Stacy

President Bob Moore called the meeting to order.

We recognized new members to the association: Todd & Jenny Kuspert from Christmas Creek Farm; previously owned by Don & Lynn Douglas.

History of Wilson Hill Tree Farm – In 1976 Rich's mother wanted to grow Christmas tree, which she began with the first field, then she planted another field, then another. She sold trees in the winter of 2000 and then fell sick and passed away. In 1998 Rich took over. He had been the mechanic on the farm but now he was the grower and seller of the trees. His niece was helping but she got tired of working out of a camp trailer, so they set up a building to work out of. She also wanted to do a gift shop; which she managed for close to 23 years.

They have 15 acres total. 7.5 acres in an "L" shape with the house; 2.5 acres where Rich lives and another 5 acre parcel in the back. They have about 5,000 – 7,000 trees in the ground, 6.5 – 7 acres planted.

They plant trees 6.5' apart rows and 5' tree to tree. They started with Doug Fir and Nobles, then added Frasers. They had 3 good rotations of Fraser, then they got dry, spider mite and they decided to phase them out 2 years ago.

He planted Turkish this year, and they were all plugs along with the Doug Firs.

He excavates all of the left over stumps.

Being Rich was a mechanic and loves to work on things, he modified and retro-fitted a lot of the equipment on site.

Minutes from the annual meeting were mailed out to everyone. Bob asked if anyone had any questions on the minutes. Discussion followed on the idea of raising the membership fee. But it was clarified that it was just a suggestion and not a motion; therefore, no action was needed. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes with the fee increase deleted. Motion passed unanimously.

A copy of the treasurer's report was available for all attendees. It included a reduction of the Research/Lobbyist fee by 10%, the membership fees will be put back to \$75.

Discussion ensued on whether anyone was interested in taking on the treasurers position starting in 2024; no one stepped up and voiced their acceptance. It was decided that Sheila McKinnon will remain treasurer until the annual meeting where we will again open this up for election.

A motion was made and to accept the treasurer's report. Motion passed unanimously.

Website – Bob advised everyone to update their farm information on the PSCTA.org website.

No Washington State Fair report as the association did not have a booth. Discussion was held on whether we needed to continue with this form of marketing. It was decided there was no reason to be there. Mike Roosendaal did mention that we have some Davis stands that were used in the booth, the wood pieces engraved with the PSCTA by Rich and the banners that used to be hung above the booth. If any one is interested.

Joe Larson of Helping Hands Farm in Port Orchard is now on the Board of Directors for the PNWCA. He said he wanted to be an advocate for the small farmers. He talked about some of the information he learned while at the meeting; some on retail and liability insurance. With the liability insurance, it is important to have it for your farm. There is a sign that you can place at your gate and at various places on your farm that would be helpful in the event someone wants to file a suit against your farm.

At the summer meeting, Bob Moore selected 31 random trees to do some culturing on. At that time, he started documenting what kind of tree, what as needed and what he did. He also took pictures to show the before and after affects of his culturing. This was all to help you be able to identify your problems early and what to do. Of the 31 trees he worked on, only put one stick in. By doing it right the first time and culturing early, you don't have to do anything later.

All participants were so appreciative and thankful for the work and the documentation provided.

A question came up about electronic tipping. Was anyone doing it? Did they like it? Did it work? Shining Star reported that they do electronic tipping and their staff did very well. Bob Moore said he is going to try it this year.

The question was asked what were farms doing anything new? New marketing? New items? Bob Moore will have an espresso/doughnut cart there this year.

Photographers on the property? Some said yes, some charge \$15-20 per hour, some \$75 an hour; all pre-season or during the week. But not doing open times.

Shining Star has changed their building layout, they moved their balers out front, trying to create a Christmas village.

Discussion followed about the pricing of trees and the information was all over the board. Each farm does what works best for them for their location.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch. After lunch, Rich gave a tour of the farm and the excavator work in removing stumps.

The annual meeting will be held the 27th of January at the hall we've had it for the last few years. Information will be forwarded after the first of the year (2024!).

Happy selling everyone!!