

DAVY'S COLUMN

Davy Sheets, MLA President

Whereas, this column is being penned on **Veterans Day**... I offer my solemn gratitude to all veterans of every generation past and present. I can think of no greater sacrifice or commitment than *Service to Country*. Let's all vow to keep in mind those who serve as the holiday seasons approach and throughout the coming year.

Congratulations to Pete Tallmadge—Tallmadge Logging, Troy, Montana—for his selection as the “official timberfaller” of the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree. Pete is a third-generation Montana logger and past member of the MLA board of directors.

This year's Capitol Christmas Tree—a 79-foot-tall Engelmann spruce—comes off the Three Rivers Ranger District on the Kootenai National Forest.

When asked by the press for a comment on his selection to topple the tree, Pete is quoted as saying he's “*happy that my kids and grandkids will be able to remember that I was a sawyer, and that they have a strong family history of working in the timber industry in Northwest Montana.*”

MLA Safety Ranger/Northwest Representative John Hansen was on site when the tree was fell and snapped a great picture of the Tallmadge Logging Family that is printed on page 12 of this newsletter.

Congress has been busy—well—accomplishing little this past year... however, we should all be grateful for the recent passage of the Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017 by the U.S. House of Representatives. Similar legislation was passed by the House last year... and, unfortunately, suffocated in the U.S. Senate.

Hopefully, this year's bill receives a warmer reception. Following this year's devastating wildfire season, there appears to be bipartisan support for “doing something” ... and we can only hope that “something” isn't compromised into meaningless rhetoric.

The article posted on the facing page—authored by the *Boone and Crockett Club*—and the article on page 6 titled, *Myths & Facts about the Resilient Federal Forests Act*—authored by *Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities*—are worthy reads.

Montana Congressman Greg Gianforte is most supportive of this effort... and I encourage MLA members to offer up our appreciation for his support. And while you're at it, please let Senator Steve Daines know that his efforts to incorporate most of the House bill into a Senate bill are also appreciated.

Stateside, Governor Steve Bullock has called a Special Session of the Montana Legislature to deal with an impending budget shortfall of some \$225 million. The session may be over before this newsletter arrives in your mailbox... so I encourage you to follow MLA's weekly “Compendium” which is emailed most Friday afternoons, for how the Special Session dealt with the budget.

Lastly, on page of 3 of this newsletter... is the program for the MLA's 2017 Winter Meeting and Christmas Reception at Kalispell's Red Lion Hotel on the 2nd and 3rd of December. This is always a great holiday event... and I hope to see many of you there.

Till next issue... ****Davy****