

DAVY'S COLUMN

MLA President, Davy Sheets

The MLA's 2018 convention in Polson was well attended—and the picture pages provide a nice recap of many of the featured speakers and guests. Special thanks to all of the speakers:

- ✓ Keynote speaker, **Senator Steve Daines**
- ✓ **Nick Smith**, Healthy Forest, Healthy Communities
- ✓ **Todd Morgan**, UM Bureau of Business & Economic Research
- ✓ **Tom Shultz**, VP, Governmental Affairs, Idaho Forest Group
- ✓ **Jim Geisinger**, Executive VP, Associated Oregon Loggers
- ✓ State Senator **Chas Vincent**, Vincent Logging
- ✓ **Sara Ghafouri**, Attorney, American Forest Resource Council.

Please take a moment to review the list of conference sponsors/hosts on page 4... as they committed time, personnel and financial support to make this year's convention a success. If you have an opportunity to personally thank these folks for their participation in our events I encourage you to do so.

The Tall Timber Awards Banquet was certainly memorable... The Northwest Montana Hoo Hoo #187 honored **Paul McKenzie**, Resource Manager at FH Stoltze Land & Lumber, as this year's *Lumberman of the Year*.

Rick Smith presented the MLA "Safety Rangers", past and present, with the ALERT Foundation's *Clyde Smith Award*.

Then... things got really interesting... Rich T, as only Rich could, brought out the "celebrity roast" to honor **Keith Olson** for his 38 years of service as executive director of the Montana Logging Association. Keith has been the back bone of this organization for nearly as long as I've been alive. He has mentored 20 MLA presidents, numerous officers, board members and of course his staff. There's not enough space in this article to recap his career, but we all know, that his accomplishments are many and those of us that have been honored to know him and work with him are better at what we do because of him. On behalf of the entire membership, Janice and I wish him the best in his retirement!

If Olson's retiring wasn't enough change at the MLA, **John Hansen** has submitted his resignation and will be focusing on his health for the immediate future. John Boy has been working at the MLA for nearly 30 years and impacted more lives than we will ever know by providing safety for 1,000's of folks all over the state of Montana. We won't even try to count the miles he's driven or the donuts he's provided but we will wish him luck in his battle with the big "C".

At the general membership meeting in Polson, MLA Staff reported 49 new members have joined the association since January 1. Several of these members signed up to participate in safety training and the ALP workshops. As for those Safety and ALP workshops... Attendance at the 1st aid & CPR workshops exceeded last year's numbers and, as you'll notice on page 5, there were a record 40 participants in the Forest Stewardship Workshop at Yellow Bay this year. Overall there seems to be optimism in our industry.

Housing starts are up, lumber production is up and log prices are gradually rising. I for one like the momentum. Let's have a great logging season... til next issue... Davy