

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Davy Sheets, MLA President



Holy Smokes... it's hot and dusty and smoky out there... so please be careful and pay attention.

Speaking of "paying attention" ... MLA past-president **Ken Swanstrom** has penned a great human interest story on page 6 about a long-time MLA member that concludes with a reminder to us all about the importance of those pesky professional enhancement workshops conducted by the MLA every spring.

And on page 8... MLA past-president **Rich Tatarka** (RichTee to his loyal readers) has penned yet another "great and truthful" column under his Truck Stop banner that I'm sure you will enjoy.

Speaking of MLA members... congratulations to MLA board member **Kevin Kanduch** (Kanduch Logging in P'burg) for his selection by REAL Montana (Resource Education and Agriculture Leadership) for their third leadership training class. Following is an excerpt from the news release:

"REAL Montana continues to strengthen its mission of building a network of informed and engaged leaders to advance the natural resource industries in Montana. The individuals selected for Class III are a diverse group of leaders who will offer a variety of perspectives and experiences. We look forward to the next two years," says Howard Skjervem, chairman of the REAL Montana Advisory Board and Class I graduate.

The class of 20 participants was competitively selected from a pool of highly qualified candidates, all of whom represent a variety of agriculture and natural resource industries. MLA's **Bryan Lorengo** is a graduate of REAL Montana's Class II and currently serves on their board of directors.

The last MLA member I will reference... is past-president **Brent Anderson** of Lincoln. Brent has a well-deserved reputation for causing minor catastrophes—and, as proof, we have pictures of him receiving the **Herbie Award**.

Nonetheless, we have it from a trusted source (his wife Carla) that the earth tremors that have hit Northwest Montana in recent weeks, though centered in Lincoln, were not caused by anything Brent did. She is certain of this because she and Brent had just retired for the night when the first tremor hit.

What makes this story even more interesting is that they were staying in their "House in a Tree" ... not to be confused with a tree house. Their "House in a Tree" is perched in an enormous Yellow Pine on their property... and, as Carla tells us, "We thought the tree was coming down."

To be clear, all is well in Lincoln and with the Andersons... and, no, Brent was not responsible for the recent earthquakes.

Also in this issue... updates on congressional issues, including the *Resilient Federal Forests Act* on page 3 ... efforts by a new coalition to ensure a bigger and better *Forestry Title in the next Farm Bill* on page 5 ... and an update from the American Loggers Council on page 15 about efforts to ensure federal regulatory policy reflects that the *carbon-neutrality of forest-based biomass* will allow biomass to play a significant role in future federal energy standards.

Of further interest... yet another attempt to resolve the "wildfire funding dilemma" has been introduced in the Senate using the Flood Insurance Reauthorization Act as the vehicle. This fire funding fix resembles the fix found in the House bill (Westerman's *Resilient Federal Forests Act*), in that it uses the Disaster Relief Fund as the funding source; and in that regard it is also similar to the package that fell apart in the 11th hour of the last Congress. With much of the nation on fire... we'll see how this bill fares in this most disagreeable Congress. Till next issue... *****Davy*****