

Colchester Couple Woodland Owners of the Year



Norman and Stacey Paupin accepting the large sign signifying they are 2020 Provincial Woodlot Owners. Donald Cameron, who emceed the event stands socially distanced on the right. (Submitted)

By Maurice Rees

A field day was held in Shinimicas on Oct 3rd for Stacey and Norman Paupin of Folly Lake who have been selected provincial Woodland Owners of the Year for 2020.

It was their commitment to sustainable forest practices and an eye for innovation which earned the Colchester County couple the title.

Approximately 125 people attended the event, which ran from 9 am to 1 pm. There were 15 stations located around the woodlot.

After registering and signing the necessary form and cleaning hands, visitors walked along a predetermined route in the same direction in a distanced manner as they visited the stations.

Two of the most popular stations were Norman's buggy that he designed and

built to carry approximately 1/2 cord of random length wood; and Stacey's station on birch syrup which they have raised to a new global level. Samples were provided to all visitors interested.

In 2012, the Paupins bought a 40 hectare wood-

lot near Shinimicas Cumberland Co. with the goal of restoring the forest to harvest firewood and non-timber forest products.

Using treatments like thinning, they have improved the forest health by encouraging growth of native species.

Stacey and Norman use solar powered pumps to collect sap and have adapted technology to make birch syrup, which sells for a higher price than maple syrup.

Norman has continually refined his process to produce a syrup that won the World Birch Syrup Championships in 2018. He is now further developing the process with a researcher at the Dalhousie University's Agricultural Campus in Truro.

"Initially, we purchased the property as a source of firewood to heat our

home, as a way to get exercise and we saw it as an investment. Our approach has been to take what was there and make every attempt at improving its overall value. To us, it has more than an economic value; it is a quiet place to walk, to appreciate the trees themselves, to observe wildlife and just enjoy nature and think. It has allowed us the opportunity to experiment with some pretty awesome ideas.", Norman Paupin said.

The Woodland Owner of the Year award program has honoured private woodlot owners for outstanding resource stewardship for 30 years.

Nova Scotians who own between 20 and 2,000 hectares (50 and 5,000 acres) of woodland are eligible to be nominated.



Socially distanced approximately 125 watched Norman and Stacey Paupin being honoured as 2020 Provincial Woodlot Owners of the Year. (Submitted)



Amelia Kennedy takes a turn at driving Norm's Buggy, which he designed and built to carry approximately 1/2 cord of random length wood. (Submitted)



Visitors line up for a sample of Stacey Paupin's birch syrup, which she and husband Norm have developed. (Submitted)



Influenza Vaccine Available

All Nova Scotians over six months old are encouraged to get a flu shot this year. The seasonal influenza vaccine is now available from most pharmacies, family doctors, family practice nurses, nurse practitioners and clinics.

It can take up to two weeks for the vaccination to provide protection. Nova Scotians are encouraged to get vaccinated in the coming weeks to see the full benefit before flu season is expected to arrive in late December to early January.

"With flu season nearly upon us, we need to be diligent in following public health directions and in practicing the core public health practices for COVID-19," said Dr. Robert Strang, Nova Scotia's chief medical officer of health. "The symptoms for influenza can be similar and we want to limit the spread of any respiratory illness in our communities. We can protect ourselves

and our loved ones from influenza safely and effectively by getting our annual flu shot."

Flu symptoms are similar to COVID-19 and often include a sudden high fever, headache, general aches and pains, fatigue and weakness, a runny, stuffy nose, sneezing and sore throat.

This year, due to COVID-19 precautions, the process for getting the flu shot may look different. Changes could include pre-screening for illness/exposure to COVID-19, making appointments rather than walking into a clinic, keeping physical distance whenever possible, requiring hand washing and mask wearing.

For more information on the flu and the vaccine, visit: <https://novascotia.ca/flu> For hours and location of your local public health office, visit: <https://www.nshealth.ca/public-health-offices>

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