

The art of chainsaw carving



Photos by Jim Burns

Chainsaw carver Jim Niedermayer from Silver Falls displays a 7-foot totem of a bear, eagle, heron, sturgeon and loon emerging from fire, carved from a 200-year-old red cedar. Left, an ash bear. More on pages 4 and 5.

• A visit with Stan Goodman, the quintessential woodsman, pages 6 and 7



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The Manitoba Woodlot is published six times annually as a service to the membership of the Woodlot Association of Manitoba (WAM).

WAM seeks to promote an understanding of sustainable woodlot management, increase income and employment potential for the woodlot sector, promote the use of woodlot products in the place of non-renewable and imported products, and develop human resources in woodlot management.

WAM represents the interests of our members within the Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners (CFWO). The CFWO makes those interests known to forestry ministers at both levels of government.

WAM also has a representative to the Manitoba Model Forest, another organization that promotes sustainable management of Manitoba's wooded areas.

WAM is a non-profit organization led by a volunteer Board of Directors, which meets monthly. Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held each year before the end of March and is open to all members in good standing.

THE MANITOBA WOODLOT

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A reminder of the rules for open fires

It's the season for enjoying a campfire or roasting marshmallows over an open fire. And it's up to firewood users to be aware of the rules and regulations governing firewood permits and open air fire by-laws for their area, particularly for urban centres.

In Manitoba's provincial parks:

- Campfires are permitted in designated firepits and must be extinguished when the campsite is empty.
- Firewood, where provided, is for the campsite permit holders' use only.
- Removal of cut firewood from a provincial park is prohibited.
- Cutting or gathering living or dead wood for your fire is not allowed.
- Burning of elm or ash is not permitted.
- Do not transport firewood. Out-of-province firewood can spread harmful pests and destroy our forests.

For more information on using firewood, go online to WAM's Wood-Wise Firewood Information Centre at woodlotmanitoba.com/wood-wise.

Stats Canada counts berry sellers

Statistics Canada wants to know if you are selling fiddlehead ferns or saskatoons picked from your managed woodlot, but only if you're also a farmer.

The questions for the 2016 Agriculture Census have recently been released, and they include new questions on "direct farm sales" of foods. This includes non-processed foods such as maple syrup, honey, hazelnuts, wild mushrooms and blueberries that are sold directly to consumers.

The survey also asks about value-added direct sales, which includes jams, jellies, fruit leathers and berry wines.

Although the survey recipients are asked to list all the nuts, fruits and vegetables they sell on the farm, the inclusion of wild foods appears to be implied, rather than explicit. For instance, farmers are asked to include wild blueberries, but only if harvested from "managed lands". There is no differentiation between wild and cultivated saskatoons.

Statistics Canada also wants to know how you are selling your foods, such as at farmers' markets or from a stand at the end of your lane.

The Agriculture Census collects information every five years on all farm operations in Canada. This is the first time the census will measure the volume of foods sold directly off the farm to consumers. The census is set for May 2016.



Photo by Jim Burns

Highbush delight

Highbush cranberry bushes are flourishing near Matlock on the west side of Lake Winnipeg, due to the early summer warm and wet weather.

Pine seedlings dying off in pine beetle damaged forests

Researchers studying the impact of mountain pine beetles on boreal forests in British Columbia and Alberta are seeing evidence of unexpected long-term damage.

A recent study from the Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences (ALES) at the University of Alberta says that while the typical survivability rate of pine seedlings in a healthy forested area is about 25 percent, the survivability of seedlings in forests heavily damaged by pine beetle kill-off is near zero.

The impact on forest regrowth is potentially devastating.

The study notes that there is a ripple effect when mature pine trees are killed off by pine beetles. The tree roots die, and the fungi on the roots that are important to the survival and growth of seedlings die as well. Researchers say that pine seedlings are particularly susceptible to the type of fungi in the soil. When the soil chemistry changes due to the loss of needed soil fungi, it affects the ability of the plant to acquire needed nutrients and develop defences against pathogens and insect attacks.

According to the most recent data from Natural Resources Canada, pine beetle infestations have now killed off half the volume of commercial lodge pole pine in British Columbia. The pine

beetle has since spread to jack pine, the dominant pine species of the boreal forest.

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Courtesy of Jim Niedermayer

Jim Niedermayer's pelican carving won him first place at the Manitoba Trappers' Festival in 2013.

Chainsaw sculpting an art and a business

By Sheilla Jones

Jim Niedermayer has been cashing in on the growing popularity of chainsaw sculptures. The wood carver from near Pine Falls got into chainsaw sculpturing about seven years ago.

“I taught myself the art of sculpturing,” he said, “using logs left over after the (Tembec) paper mill closed.”

That was well before the television show *Saw Dogs* launched in 2012 on Discovery Channel. Or *Carver Kings* started cranking up the chainsaws for HGTV this spring. Both are Canadian reality shows.

“Before *Saw Dogs* and *Carver Kings* came on,” said Niedermayer, “I was getting into wildlife. I got invited

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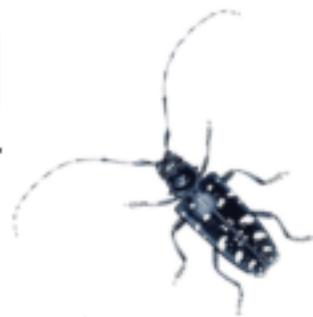
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Manitoba 



Photo by Jim Burns

Jim Niedermayer put some of his sculptures on display at the intersection of Hwy 59 and Hwy 11 on a weekend in the middle of June to catch the attention of cottagers on their way to Victoria and Grand beaches.

in 2010 to the Ridgeway Carvers Rendezvous in Pennsylvania, and it was pretty amazing to be with so many other carvers.”

The Rendezvous in the small town of Ridgeway, about 200 km south of Erie, has become the mecca for chainsaw carvers. According to event organizers, it started in 2002 when “winter boredom and theInternet” sparked a challenge to see how many carvers would make the trip to Ridgeway in February. The first year saw 33 carvers turn up, and then the event went viral.

The event is not a competition, but rather a chance for carvers to compare notes, share techniques and display their talents to the thousands of visitors who come to watch the carvers in action.

Niedermayer was one of 175 carvers at the 2010 Rendezvous, but he is also a competitive carver. He won

first place first in the chainsaw carving competition at the Manitoba Trappers’ Festival in The Pas in 2013 and 2014.

Niedermayer said markets for sculptures do vary. “There is a good market for bears and eagles. They’re certainly the most popular. Interestingly, pelicans used to be very popular when the Gulf oil spill was in the news.”

Niedermayer does most of his carving at his home in Silver Falls, about 15 minutes southeast of Pine Falls on Hwy 11. In the summer, he also harvests wild rice, which he sells to high-end markets in Winnipeg.

For more information about Niedermayer’s sculptures, visit his website at chainsawsculpture.ca.



Stan Goodman measures the butt of a giant ash tree from his son Glen's woodlot. Harvested in midwinter, this monster was nearly 4 feet at the butt. He has plans to cut table tops from this log.

Quintessential woodsman does it all

By Bob Austman

Stan Goodman is the quintessential woodlot entrepreneur. He custom saws wood for just about any project you can think of. He has produced church pews, unique coffee tables, small cabins, furniture, and gazebos. You name it and he has milled wood for it.

I've had the privilege of knowing Stan Goodman for nearly thirty years. He farmed land along the American border near the community of Piney for many years, and when he sold the farm, he kept 240 acres of woodlot to pursue his interest in sawmilling and woodlot management.

Stan began building his dream retirement home in 2001, and completed it in 2002 using wood from his woodlot.

Fourteen species of local wood grace his unique home,

complete with an observation turret with a 360-degree view. Stan used jack pine, red pine, spruce, white poplar, oak, ash, elm, birch, willow, tamarack, white cedar, Manitoba maple, and black poplar. All of the wood was sourced from his own woodlot. He also used red cedar from old telephone poles since it is not native to this province. The wood was heated in an aeration bin and dried for about a year.

Stan has to be one of the hardest-working fellows I've ever known. Closing in on 76 years, he's in better shape than a lot of people half his age. He has a skill set that includes farming, woodlot management, sawmilling, welding, machining, mechanical repair, woodworking, gardening and much more.

He maintains all of his own equipment, including a skidder, saw mill, chainsaws, tractors, etc. There's not

much that scares him when it comes to repairing his own equipment. He modified his sawmill so that he can operate the hydraulics by remote control, and he even sharpens his own blades to keep costs down.

He has an intimate knowledge of his woodlot, including the trees, shrubs, and wildlife that inhabit the mature mixed woods forest.

Stan's approach to woodlot management is simple. Once Stan receives an order, he will select the most appropriate to satisfy the customer. He will also harvest trees that have blown down, or have some form of damage or defect.

Harvesting is done selectively, and Stan will examine every log to see what it can become. He has a way of seeing the beauty in every knot, twist of the grain, or fungal stain. He can visualize what that particular board

or plank can become; then he saws it, dries it, and magically transforms it in his heated workshop. (Most of the other work places down at Stan's place are not heated, but Stan does not let cold weather stop him).

On my recent visit to Stan's place, camera in hand, I mention how good he looks and he responds with a chuckle, saying that he feels great ever since the doctor put him on a "HAM" diet. When I ask him if he gets tired of eating that all the time, he smiles with a twinkle in his eye and says "no, it's just eating Half As Much."

Stan then fires up his front-end loader and lifts a huge log onto his modified Enercraft mill. The butt end reads 28 inches on the tape. It's an old white spruce that was being bulldozed on a neighbour's yard, so Stan salvaged

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Stan Goodman sits on a semi-finished bench. Note the curvature of the seating area, another one of Stan's creative ideas.

Wisdom in the Woods

— an article from Issue 32 worth sharing again.

The Art of Sawing Manitoba Hardwoods

By Fred Tait

The introduction of the portable band saw lumber mill into rural Manitoba has drawn the attention of hobbyist wood workers to the quality and availability of Manitoba hardwood lumber. The most commonly sawn species are Elm, Green and Black Ash, Aspen, Birch and Bur Oak. Each of these has its own characteristics and each individual has their own preference for one wood over another.

Wood such as Elm, Green Ash and Black Ash are often found to be most attractive if they are common sawn. Common sawn lumber has the growth rings of the tree horizontal to the widest face of the board. Common sawn lumber has a strong tendency to cup. This tendency is very noticeable in most lumber of more than six inches in width. A quarter sawn board will seldom show any tendency to cup but will show a strong tendency to warp. The quarter sawn board has the growth rings of the tree running perpendicular to the widest face of the board. The warping is caused by the different rate of shrinkage during drying. The sapwood edge shrinks more than the heart wood side.

Bur Oak responds very well to being quarter sawn, but quarter sawing presents its own problems. Large logs are necessary, the larger the better. Sawing costs are increased to near double that of common sawing. The most effective method I have used in quarter sawing is as follows.

Saw the log into quarters, using the mill's toe boards or shims to center the log to the cut of the saw. Spend some time at this, saw as near to the centre pith of the log as possible.

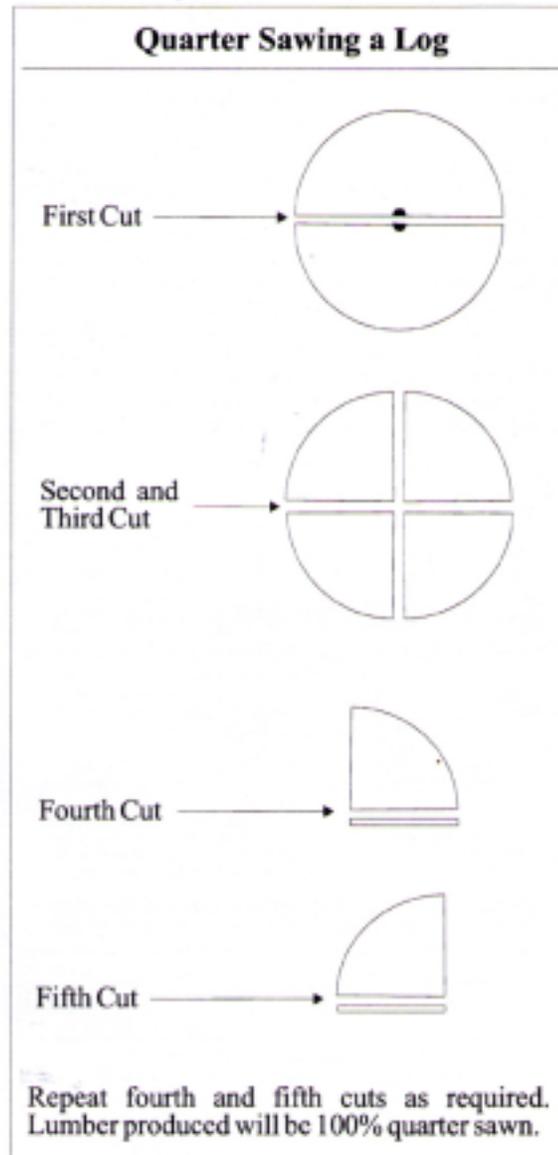
After the log has been quartered, place one of the quarters on the sawmill bed with a sawn face against the bed. Make your first cut one inch (four quarters) above the bed. After the completion of this cut, turn the second sawn face against the bed and make a second one inch cut. Repeat the process of altering one cut from each sawn face until the first section is sawn into lumber. Saw the remaining quarters of the log in the same manner.

Every board that is sawn in this manner is 100 percent quarter sawn. There will be boxed pith in the inner edge of the first one or two boards that can easily be sawn out later. This system of sawing produces narrower boards than does common sawing and the boards decline in width as the sawing of a section continues. The mill owner or log owner will need to make a judgement call as to edging the lumber at the time of milling or after the lumber has been dried. A greater rate of recovery is possible by edging after drying. Wood workers may use a table saw for this operation and end up with very little waste from a log.

Bur Oak requires care in drying due to the wood's cell structure that slows the movement of moisture from the core of a board to its surface. Any attempt to hurry the drying process with high temperature and high air flow will result in deep surface checking and stress warping. Improper drying will ruin your lumber in very short order. For best results in drying Bur Oak lumber, purchase a hand

held moisture tester and aim for a moisture reduction of in the area of one percent per day until reaching an average moisture content of six percent. After drying, the lumber needs to have the time to regain moisture from the atmosphere until an equilibrium is reached. In our climate, 12 percent moisture is the expected equilibrium.

Good luck with your saw milling and wood working!



Wisdom in the Woods

— an article from Issue 33 worth sharing again.

Growing Shiitake Mushrooms on Logs

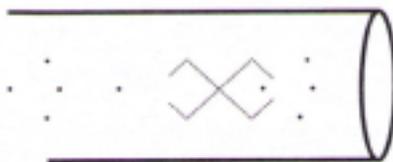
by Ken Fosty

Shiitake mushrooms are a delicacy that originally were grown for centuries in China, Japan and Korea. Shiitake mushrooms have been cultivated in North America since the 1970's but only recently were introduced in Western Canada. Now, many gardeners are experiencing the pleasure of growing these mushrooms in their own backyards, woodlots or cottage retreats.

Shiitake, meaning "mushrooms of the shii or oak tree" are more chewy and aromatic than common button mushrooms. They have a meaty texture with a flavourful taste and are a dietary source of protein, vitamins and minerals. The shiitake is excellent for use in soups, stir-frys, pasta and meat dishes.

Shiitake mushrooms can be grown on oak logs obtained from the woodlot. Standing live trees or large branches should be harvested in early spring prior to bud break. Care must be taken not to damage the bark during the harvesting process. Logs or branches approximately 4 to 6 inches in diameter, 4 feet long should be used.

After cutting the trees, the logs must be inoculated with the shiitake spawn plugs. This is done by drilling a series of holes 1 ½ inches deep spaced about 6 inches apart in a series of rows along the length of the log. The rows are spaced approximately 2 inches apart. You must ensure the holes are offset to create a diamond pattern. See diagram.



Spawn plugs are then inserted into the holes. These wooden dowels are impregnated with the mushroom spawn. Good quality spawn is important for successful inoculation of your logs. The dowels are easily driven in with a few taps of a hammer until they are level with the bark surface.

Wax is then heated to approximately 300 degrees Fahrenheit in a small saucepan or old deep fryer. A very thin layer of hot wax is applied over the plug with a brush or wax dauber. The wax seals the surface preventing the spawn from drying or pests.

When the inoculation process is complete, the logs can be labeled with the date of inoculation and placed in a laying yard for incubation.

The laying yard should be in a well-shaded area of your yardsite preferably under a canopy of trees or shrubs. The area should be sheltered and wind protected. This cool moist environment with high humidity levels will provide an ideal site for the shiitake spawn to colonize the oak logs. The logs should be layed almost flat to the ground level where moisture conditions are high. This can be accomplished by elevating one end of the logs slightly. The logs should be rotated periodically to ensure the entire surface will benefit from nature's elements. During hot

dry weather conditions, the logs may be occasionally showered with a garden sprinkler to maintain high humidity conditions. The logs will remain in this laying yard until the following summer at which time they will be fully colonized and able to produce mushrooms. During the winter months, the logs lay dormant under snowcover.

The following summer, the logs are re-stacked in a manner enabling room for mushrooms to grow and easy harvesting. The logs are placed in an offset leaning position enabling rainfall or irrigation to penetrate the entire pile. Rainfall or irrigation combined with temperature change will induce fruiting. The logs may also be submerged in cold water for 24 hours to induce fruiting.

Mushrooms will appear sporadically during the summer and subsequent summers for three to five years depending on log diameter. The amount of mushrooms will depend on rainfall, humidity and temperature. Mushrooms should be allowed to grow to a large size with their edges still rounded prior to picking. They can be harvested by grasping firmly at the base of the stem, then twisting them off the log. Mushrooms will grow in many sizes and shapes and at different points along the log. Harvesting them will be an activity you will love.



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As a member you will be promoting active stewardship of Manitoba's privately owned woodlands, woodlots and family forests. You will also receive a great deal, including:

—A bi-monthly newsletter, complete with up-to-date information of upcoming events, current woodlot/forestry/conservation issues, and wood products/services available in your area. The Manitoba Woodlot newsletter can be mailed to a Canadian address or accessible on-line to members only in advance of being made available to the public. On-line access saves WAM the costs for postage and printing, and members can view the newsletter in colour. View past issues of *The Manitoba Woodlot* at woodlotmanitoba.com/newsletter.

—Special members-only rates for events and workshops.

—Opportunities to participate in field days, demonstrations, conferences, workshops and meetings on topics related to woodlot management.

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—If you operate a commercial woodlot or agrowoodlot, the WAM membership fee is a tax deductible business expense.

—Membership in WAM is open to individuals and businesses. Dues are \$30.00. Those interested in membership can telephone (204) 467-8648, or apply/renew membership on-line at woodlotmanitoba.com/about-us/membership.

Goodman takes pride in custom building

Continued from page 7

it from being burned. It will become a bench, a table, or whatever item of beauty Stan beholds when he mills it into planks.

Stan adds value to the wood from his sawmill by planning it, or v-grooving it as well, depending on the customer's needs.

Stan has been busy filling orders for customers that come from places like Roseau, Minnesota, all the way to Winnipeg. Stan is very creative, and will sell precisely what the customer requests. He won't sell anything that does not reflect the pride he takes from harvesting sustainably, step by step, from milling, drying, and then to final production.

Stan wastes nothing from the saw mill. Slabs are used for firewood, and even the sawdust has ended up as animal bedding. Small boards are re-sawn and used as stickers in the kiln, and even smaller pieces are used for staking plants in the garden.

If Stan feels some aches and pains after a day in the woodlot (and who doesn't!), he'll have a cup or two of Chagas tea brewed from a type of fungus that grows on white birch, and regain his energy.

A hike into the woods will take you to a variety of stands of ash, jack pine, spruce, and poplar. Trails cut through the woodlot give him access to a variety of stands, and the trails are used for hiking and hunting. He even built a 20-foot tower, complete with a toboggan slide for his grandchildren to enjoy. (It doubles as a deer stand).



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Rough-cut beams from jack pine harvested on Stan's woodlot. When dry, they will be re-sawn into lumber, or used for mantels, counters, benches, and support beams.

You can learn an awful lot even from a short visit with Stan. He's a humble guy, extremely knowledgeable about woodlot management, sawmilling, woodworking, local flora and fauna, and is always ready with a pun, a quote, or a humorous story. I'm fortunate to have Stan as a neighbour in my woodlot neighbourhood – being about seven miles away “as the crow flies”.

Stan has found his passion, and I think this is what keeps him young and healthy. “I enjoy all aspects of this work,” he says, “and I look forward to every day.”

To place an order, Stan can be reached at home near Piney at 204- 423-2297.

*Article and photos
by Bob Austman*



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