Prez Says
Jeremy Parish

I’ve been hearing that this year’s corn crop could be a bin-buster. The conditions responsible for this mean that it should turn out to be a better-than-average year for tree growth as well (at least for those that survived the wind). Unfortunately, that also means it’s been a better-than-average year for all the weeds competing with our fine hardwoods. Take a few moments and walk your tree farm to assess how well, or not so well, your weed control efforts are holding up. It’s not too late to make some adjustments.

Many thanks to the Illinois Forestry Development Council for funding the Safety in Forestry Demonstration day held back on June 21st. Those who attended were treated to world-class instruction that has made them better equipped to work safely in the woods. Thanks also to Dan Schmoker for hosting this event at his tree farm in Green County.

Don’t forget to register for our upcoming annual fall field days September 20 in Knox County. More information on this can be found on page 8-9 in this issue, including a registration form. It’s shaping up to be a good one, so don’t miss it. We hope to see you there.
Case Study in Champaign County

“As you know, benign neglect is not a food management scheme.” Those words were spoken by Dan Schmoker in 2013 to a walnut plantation owner. Trees were planted on 4 acres over a three year period. The average diameter measured at breast height (DBH) is approximately 6 inches, with a range of 4 to 10 inches and a height of 35 to 40 feet. The original spacing was 12 x 12 resulting in 302 trees per acre. At final harvest, there will only be 35 to 40 trees per acre after repeated thinning. The trees were planted in Catlin silt loam which is a good soil for walnut since it is deep and moderately well drained (internal drainage).

Recommendations:
First, the best crop trees should be selected and marked with paint. Next, prune the crop trees in stages to a height of 17 feet. Remove only up to 30% of the live limbs during a single growing season. Dead limbs can be removed any time. Limbs larger than 3 inches should not be pruned due to the long time required for closing the wound and risking fungi and disease. Prune a few other good quality trees as insurance. The third step is to remove crown competition from the crop trees. The objective is to have 3 to 4 sides of the crop trees released and free to grow. This allows the food factory to expand and for the trees to maintain an even rate of growth. A second crop tree release needs to happen when the tree crowns begin to touch. Then a third thinning… etc. By the fourth and fifth thinning, the trees to be removed will have some commercial value.

A fourth treatment is to help the trees obtain more of the most lacking soil nutrient, nitrogen. Brome grass sod is most efficient in extracting soil moisture and the naturally fixed nitrogen in precipitation. If the trees can obtain more moisture and nitrogen, then the growth will be better. Alleviate this problem by killing the brome grass by spraying glyphosate in strips 3 to 4 feet wide between the rows. This needs to be done annually. The thick bark of the trees prevents harm from the herbicides. Mow only once per year in late fall. Frequent mowing only removes the grass and makes it more competitive. Walnut trees cast a very light shade and do not inhibit the grass.

The future is uncertain but here are some estimates and comments for your consideration. I estimate the present diameter growth rate to be ½ to ¾" per year. Growth rings are ¼ to 3/8" wide. If on average the tree grows ½" per year, than in ten years it will grow 5" in diameter. The average size at 6’’ DBH will be 11 inches. If growth is ¾” then that 6” tree becomes a 13.5 inch tree. In 20 years the tree diameter would be 16 inches or with the faster growth, 19 inches. Had it not been so bitterly cold on December 9th, I would have examined the growth rings. I will do so when I mark the crop trees.

The goal for growing walnut is to maintain the current rate of growth, not allowing a slowdown or a big gain in diameter growth. An even growth rate produces the best quality wood. There are many things which can change this goal, things we cannot control. We can influence the amount of sunlight each tree obtains, thereby improving quality and shortening the rotation.

Current prices for walnut range from $0.40 to $1.00 per board foot, and for veneer the range is $1 to $5 per board foot (a board foot is a piece of wood about 12”x12”x1”) and is the standard unit for measuring volume of wood in a tree or log).

Trees will be marked by the end of February. Meanwhile, here are some tips: Buy a really good pole pruning saw- Silky and ARS are good brands. The closer you are to the branch you are pruning, the better the wound will seal. When you fell trees, use a notch of 70” to 90”. Get a helper and a forked pole or spike (wedges and pry bars are helpful) to help push the trees where you want them to go.

Story Continued on Page 4
On March 11, 2013 Dan Schmoker selected and marked 48 crop trees with blue paint, 79 trees to removed were marked with orange spots. There were many trees with no markings; these trees should be kept as trainers and as insurance trees which could substitute as crop trees should any of the crop trees be damaged in future years. In addition, 10 representative crop trees were numbered and their DBH measured as a record for growth in future years.

The Illinois Walnut Council offered to thin and prune crop trees for a donation to the Chapter. The landowner accepted this offer so four IWC members assisted one of the plantation owners and their farm manager with thinning and pruning.

Judging from the picture, killing grass would help trees grow faster especially in the early stages of growth.

Thanks to a grant from the Illinois Forestry Development Council, the Illinois Walnut Council co-sponsored a one day workshop at Dan Schmoker’s Greene Tree Farm, dealing with chainsaw maintenance and tree felling safety. According to Joe Glenn, logger and Game of Logging instructor, here is a 5 step plan for felling trees safely:

Step 1: Look for hazards both on the ground, and in the tree you are going to cut, and the surrounding trees.
Step 2: Check for lean and select the good side (most of the canopy) and the bad side.
Step 3: Plan your escape route – the angle of escape should be about 45 from the line direction from the tree you are cutting and make sure the path is clear.
Step 4: Cut the notch at 70-90 degrees- the length of the hinge should be about 80% of the DBH, hinge thickness not more than 10% of DBH.
Step 5: Bore cut behind the hinge to establish thickness, then cut back on small diameter trees, continue to cut out of the tree, on larger trees, leave the back side of the tree left intact; then when you drop the tree, cut from the back side (puling the trigger").
Market Report

Here's an update on the Lumber Market (IN), 4/4 green, $/ thousand board feet- Reported 8/22/2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average (all lumber grades)</th>
<th>Best grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basswood</td>
<td>$463.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black cherry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hickory</td>
<td>$699.79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sugar maple (hard)</td>
<td>$1052.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver maple (soft)</td>
<td>$834.17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red oak</td>
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<tr>
<td>White oak</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulip poplar</td>
<td>$611.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black walnut</td>
<td>$1787.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What's hot—Hickory; What's not —Red oak

Member News and Information

FINANCIAL REPORT
July 15, 2014

Checking Account
Beginning Balance (March 5, 2014) $5,377.09

Revenue:
None

TOTAL REVENUE: $0

Expenditures:
24 pruners $371.52
National Meeting Sponsorship $500.00
Wildlife Prairie Park Donation $100.00
Juglans Newsletter (VCCD and Stamps) $99.00
Illinois Dept. of Revenue (Sales Tax) $8.00
Safety in Forestry Seminar* $1,866.29
- Joe Glenn - $1,100.00
- Food, Supplies, etc. - $766.29

TOTAL EXPENDITURES: $2,944.81

Expenditures over Revenue: ($2,944.81)
Subtract from Beginning Balance: $2,432.28
(-agrees with bank statement)

*The IWC will be reimbursed for this Seminar by the IFDC

2013-2014 Annual Audit

The 2013-2014 Annual Audit for the Illinois Walnut Council has been approved by the IWC Audit Committee as submitted by the IWC Treasurer Ken Konsis. Committee members include Harold Winship (chair), John Torbert and Jeremy Parish (IWC President). The completed audit has been submitted to the Walnut Council National Office. Note: The Illinois Walnut Council is the only state chapter of the National Walnut Council that is independently incorporated.
IWC Annual Field Day

Mark your calendars!

The annual Walnut Council field day/meeting will be held September 20th north of Galesburg. Plans are to meet at the Pilot Truck stop (car side) on I-74 near Woodhull (Exit 32) at 9AM Saturday morning. From there we will carpool to a large (50+ acres), young walnut plantation just north of Woodhull; from there we will visit a 15-year old CRP hardwood plantation w/ pine near Swedona. We will have a catered lunch and our business meeting at the covered bridge park at Fyre Lake near Sherrard, IL. After lunch we will move a few miles north and visit a woodland to observe logging, heavy site preparation, and planting of container grown trees.

STOP 1:
The managers of this walnut plantation will be on hand to discuss the establishment of this stand and future management activities.

STOP 2:
This planting has two distinct areas: the bottomland area was planted to walnut and swamp white oak; the upland area was planted with a mixture of white pine and hardwoods. Thinning and pruning will be demonstrated.

STOP 3:
An improvement cut has been marked. Mature, defective, and undesirable trees that are merchantable will be harvested. Several trees will be cut and open areas will be created where container-grown trees will be planted.

Registration Form

Name _________________________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
Phone     _______________________________________________________________
No. of People _________   Cost: $15/person (Payable to Illinois Walnut Council)

Send to: Steve Felt
522 Roberts Lane
Sherrard, IL  61281
or: Phone: 309-373-0506 (cell)
or: E-mail: feltfam3@mchsi.com
Upcoming Events

September 20   Illinois Walnut Council Field Day - see Page 8-9 Inside for Information
              E-mail Stephen.Felt@illinois.gov
September 20   Field Day at Luebke Tree Farm, Stockton, IL
              Contact www.ilforestry.org
September 26-27 Illinois Forestry Association Annual Field Day, Springfield, IL
              Contact www.ilforestry.org
October 8      Fall Field trip Weiland property in Dodge County
              Contact www.wiscwalnutcouncil.org
October 18     Chestnut Roast at Forrest Keeling Nursery, Elsberry, Missouri
              Contact www.fknursery.com
October 18     Illinois Tree Farm Annual Field Day
              E-mail: Kurt.Bobsin@illinois.gov