

PAUL'S TREE FARM

2009 NEWSLETTER

CELEBRATING 61 YEARS OF GROWING QUALITY CHRISTMAS TREES!



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Something New

Welcome to our 2009 Newsletter. This is the third year we have had our newsletter on our website instead of mailing it out.

We have added something new to our website this year. We are sure a lot of you have heard of the Legend of the Avon Swamp Monster. Stories & rumors have been floating around for years. We are trying to gather as much information as possible including eye witness reports. Be sure you click on "Swamp Monster" before you leave our website & check it all out!

Enjoy our newsletter & we are looking forward to seeing you at Christmas tree cutting time.

Paul & Helen

Paul's Diary

April 1, 2009: I am a little late starting my Diary this year, but Helen & I have had a good healthy winter with no colds, flu, etc. The winter, after starting out nasty in December while selling trees, turned around & the second half wasn't bad at all.

I spent quite a bit of time with my film collecting hobby during the winter months. I usually took one day a week & watched films, both old home movies & Hollywood films. I would pull all the shades & darken our living room, pull down my 70 inch screen (84 inches if measured diagonally like TV screens) relax & enjoy the films. I had purchased a new Elmo Super-8 sound projector last fall & I gave it a good work out. It really isn't new, it was made in the 1970's, but it is in like new condition. A good old projector like this doesn't come along very often. I also picked up another old Elvis feature film on Super-8: "Tickle Me." I now have 8 Elvis feature films. I purchased "Tickle Me" from a film collector in Australia. Now is the time to buy items from Australia. The money exchange rate is greatly in our favor. It is also a great time to buy items from England as the exchange rate is very favorable from there also.

The snow melted off early this spring so I have had a chance to get a lot of spring clean-up work done down in the tree fields

during March. I cleared off five old patches of trees, about five acres, & piled all the brush for burning next winter. I finally got last years brush piles burned.

We had so much snow on the ground in January & February I couldn't get down in to them to burn them. By the last week in February, enough snow had melted so that I could drive back in there & I got them burned.

I guess March has been the wettest on record. At least there is plenty of moisture in the ground & even if we don't get too much rain during April, the new seedlings should get a good start. The seedlings should be here the second week of April.

May 3, 2009: The tree planting went OK. It was too wet to use the tractor & tree planter again this year so I planted them all by hand, but it all went right along. I planted at least 500 trees a day, so it only took six days. I also got the spruce & fir trees fertilized. We have had plenty of rain so that took the fertilizer into the ground. The new seedlings have gotten off to a good start.

I planted 24 new rhubarb plants plus I dug the rest of our old rhubarb patch & divided the roots & set out 35 more roots from them.

We picked the first few pounds of asparagus on April 29. That is about as late as we have ever gotten started, but it's been quite chilly out & the ground needs to warm up to get the plants growing. There is quite a lot up now (about 2" to 5") so there should be some bigger pickings in the next few days.

I have been cutting fire wood for the past week & will cut some this next week. Several large trees blew down in our timber last summer so I have been cutting them up.

Helen's daffodils & tulips are blooming. The orioles, bluebirds, indigo buntings, rose-breasted grosbeaks, rufous-sided towhees & hummingbirds are all coming to our feeders. We saw the first oriole this morning. It is looking a lot like spring!

June 9, 2009: We finished picking asparagus today. We had the best year we

have had in a long time. We picked 348 pounds more than last year. We only had one light patchy frost one morning which did little or no damage to the asparagus. Helen & I would like to thank all of our customers. We appreciate each & every one of you!

I just started shearing small scotch pines. Our crew will be here on the 15th to start shearing the large pines.

Helen sold a few daffodils & iris again this year. She will probably have some for sale again next spring. Keep that in mind if you would be interested. She has many different colors of iris.

We also sold quite a few items from our craft shop while selling asparagus. The most we have ever sold this time of year. Of course the Christmas season is our big selling time for crafts & knives.

We had more people apply for tree shearing that we have had in years. I suppose it's because of all the people that have been laid off. Most of our crew from last year came back to shear again, so we didn't have to hire many new ones. I'm sorry we didn't have more job openings so we could have hired everyone that applied.

June 24, 2009: We finished shearing the pines with our crew of 9 today. We had two hot days; otherwise the temperature was very comfortable. On the 23rd, yesterday, our thermometer read 100 degrees at 3:00 pm! This is the hottest day we have had to shear in many years. Two of our workers weren't feeling good, so I sent them home for the afternoon. The rest of us stuck it out all day & got a lot done considering. Everyone was back this morning & feeling fine. We will be shearing spruce & fir after the 4th of July.

July 15, 2009: We finished shearing spruce & fir with our crew today. I still have a week or so of shearing that I do alone. I have to shear the tops of the tall trees using a long handled (four feet) "shears on a pole" tool called the "lightening rod." I also have to use a step ladder for the really tall ones. I still have the Fraser fir to do, but they only take a few days. The weather has cooled off & has been nice for the last two weeks (70's & low 80's). There were two days it was

cloudy & calm out, the mosquitoes were bad on those days, but with repellent they at least didn't bite.

August 10, 2009: We had 3 inches of rain over the last three days. We really needed it. We had only had 3 inches of rain in the last seven weeks. It's a good thing that it has been a cool summer so far or the crops & little trees would be in tough shape by now. Everything looks good though & these 3 inches of rain should take us for a week or two before we need more. By then it will be almost September & it cools off considerably in September & the crops don't need as much moisture then.

August 21, 2009: Our old Christmas tree planter was recently on display at the "Covered Bridge Days" in Brodhead. Maybe some of you saw it. It was built by Stan Knight back in the 1940's. He cut up old plows & welded them back together as a tree planter. It has planted hundreds of thousands of trees over the years & still works great, even if it is getting a little loose in the joints.

Previous Newsletters Available

Those of you that didn't get all of our newsletters over the past few years may pick one up when you get your tree this year, if you like. I know some folks like to save the old newsletters for souvenirs & for the articles. We have back issues available from 1999. They will be on a shelf in our craft shop. Feel free to pick one up for each year you don't have.

Drawing Winners

Announced

The winners of the 60th Anniversary Adult's Drawing held at Paul's Tree Farm December 15, 2008 are as follows:

1st Prize: Philips 7-Inch Portable DVD Player: Roger Willing, Pecatonica, IL.

2nd Prize: United Cutlery Gil Hibben 8 7/8" Alaskan Pro Guide Hunting Knife with Guthook & Genuine Leather Sheath: Barb Knilians, Janesville, WI.

3rd Prize: Handmade Cherry Rolling Pin: Glen Kazmar, Belleville, WI.

The winners of the Kid's Drawing for the two HO Electric Train Sets held at Paul's Tree Farm December 15, 2008 are as follows:

1st Prize: Model Power "Double Diesel" HO Train Set: Elias Greenberg, age 8, Beloit WI.

2nd Prize: Model Power "American Classic" HO Train Set: Corey Breezer, age 15, New Glarus, WI.

Paul & Helen Schilling, owners of Paul's Tree Farm, would like to thank each one who visited their tree farm in 2008 & those who entered their drawings.

Kids Only Drawing For Ages 8 – 18 years!



Paul's Tree Farm will be giving away a Life-Like HO Gauge Electric Train Set "Golden Thunder."

The drawing will be held on December 15, 2009 so the winner will be able to pick up their prize in time to enjoy for Christmas.

Need not be present to win, but must be able to pick prize up in person.

Children—be sure to enter your name in the drawing box when visiting Paul's Tree Farm!



Open On November 21st

Beginning November 21st, we will be open every day from 9:00 to 4:00, weather permitting. In case of bad weather, it is best to call to check & see if we are allowing vehicles to drive down into the fields.

If anyone wants to cut a tree before we officially open, you should call to set up an appointment. We could probably work out a time that would be convenient for both of us. If you do cut your tree early & don't want to set it up until after Thanksgiving, just keep it in a cool place, as in a garage, out of the sun. You could stand it in a pail of water, although that's not really necessary. The important thing is to be sure to make a 1/4 inch fresh cut off the stump just before you set your tree up. This will open the pores & your tree will be able to take water. Be sure to keep the tree stand full of water at all times. Do not let the water level go down below the bottom of the stump.

Open Weather Permitting

Just a reminder that we sometimes have to close the gate into our fields if we get a lot of rain & also if we would get enough snow that has to be plowed. The lanes down in the fields would be closed until they have drained off or we get them plowed out, depending on the case.

Rain is actually worse than snow in most instances. We have sandy ground and the water soaks away in a few hours after it stops raining, so we are never closed for very long. We thank you for your patience on those rainy days.

After a rain, there are usually water puddles in the lane. We greatly appreciate it if you would straddle the puddles or drive around them if possible. Every time someone's tires go through a puddle, it gets a little deeper, and we would soon have a very rough roadway. It doesn't matter what type of vehicle you have, we do not want vehicles driving through puddles, cutting the lane up for others. We and everyone arriving after you appreciate very much your not driving through puddles.

If you are thinking of coming on a rainy day it is always best to call first to see if the lane is open. We do have a few Christmas trees not too far from our Craft Shop which you could walk to if the lane is closed. However, some of the trees are a mile from the Craft Shop. It is always better to come the day before a predicted storm or the day after the storm.



You have probably noticed the small orange flags along the drive going down into the field. These are marking the waterways that I have dug to drain the water off the roadway. They are a warning to not drive there. It will be very bumpy if you do. If you drive over these bumpy waterways, you do so at your own risk!



Trees Available This Year

Spruce: We have a total of about 1200 spruce available this year. There is a large selection of Norway & White Spruce. Most will be in the 6' to 8' range for height. We have a new area of Blue Spruce open with a limited supply in the 6' to 8' range. There are about 40 large Norway & White Spruce in the 10' to 14' range for those of you requiring a tall tree. There may even be 2 or 3 in the 15' to 18' range. There isn't hardly any Serbian Spruce this year.

Fraser Fir: We have about 125 Fraser Fir this year. This is about the same as last year. This will not be enough for the demand, so we will probably sell out early. However, if you like the Fraser Fir & they are picked over by the time you come to choose & cut your tree, check out the Balsam Fir & the Canaan Fir. The Fraser Fir we have this year are very nice & will run from 6' to 9' tall. Most of the Fraser Fir that are ready this year have been raised through stump culture. That is

growing another tree from an old stump that another tree had already been cut from. Therefore be sure that the tree you pick is tall enough as you will have to cut it about one foot off the ground to get above the old stump.

Canaan Fir: This is an exotic fir that grows naturally in the mountains of West Virginia. It is a natural cross between the Fraser Fir & the Balsam Fir. We will have about 200 available this year in the 6' to 9' range. Reports have been coming in from those of you that have cut a Canaan Fir over the past four years & everyone is saying they have excellent needle retention.

Balsam Fir: We have a good selection of Balsam this year. Most available are of the hybrid variety. There are about 350 in the 6' to 8' range, however, there are a very few that will be 9' to 10' tall.

Concolor Fir: Our Concolor Fir sustained severe winter damage last winter. It damaged the new buds & therefore the new growth was severely stunted. At the time I am writing this, August 1st, there are only about 10 concolors that put on new growth as they normally should. The rest are growing, but stunted. I don't know if they will grow enough over the next month or two or not. They should grow normally again next spring, barring any new winter damage, & recover in the next year or two. Concolors are more susceptible to winter damage than other varieties, but this is about the worst I have seen. I don't know if we will have any for sale this season or not. We will have to wait & see.

Douglas Fir: None available. This is a tree that doesn't grow well for us which is too bad as we could sell every one we would have.

White Pine: There is a large selection of very nice White Pine again this year. There will be over 500 ready to go in the 6' to 12' range.

Scotch Pine: We have a nice selection of about 350 Scotch Pine in the 5 1/2' to 8' range.

Norway (Red) Pine: We have about 100 very nice Norway Pine available this year. They are in the 6' to 9' range.

NORWAY PINE SPECIAL PRICE: The Norway Pine is becoming less popular every year. Therefore with the economy the way it is, & for those of you that feel you can't afford a tree this year, we are lowering the price to \$18.96, which is almost a \$10.00 reduction from last year (33% reduction). These are really nice, full trees. Check them out!



You May Cut Your Tree High

If you find a tree you like & it is too tall, cut it off high, a foot or two even, so the tree is the height you want. The price is the same no matter what size you get. The price depends on the type of tree, NOT THE SIZE. There are some really nice Balsam & Canaan Fir that have bad bottoms, but if you cut them a foot or two high, you will have a beautiful 6' to 9' tree. Bring a tape measure along, and then you will know exactly what size tree you are getting.

If you do cut a tree high, please then cut the remaining stump off close to the ground & leave the stump in the field where you cut it. Thank you.

Can't Find That Perfect Tree?

We all look for that perfect tree with no open spots, etc. The truth is, there are very few trees that are exactly perfect no matter how well they are cared for or how we shear them. Some varieties come closer to being perfect than others. Of course, everyone seems to have their own idea of what the perfect tree is. Some like them fat, some like them skinny, some like them extra full & some like them more open. We have a little bit of everything here at our tree farm.

Sometimes you find a tree that is perfect all the way around except for one defect. If you set your tree in the corner or next to the wall & put the defect on the back side, you will never see the defect. The tree will look perfect.

We always set our tree up in front of our picture window. There is about a distance of two feet from the bottom of the picture window to the floor. I therefore always look for a tree that is thin on one side for the bottom two feet. I can also get this type of tree up closer to the wall & window, thus taking up less space out into the room.

Use the defects to your advantage. If there are two or three small openings in your tree, hang larger ornaments in these openings. We have done this many times therefore being able to use those larger ornaments where they won't hang & look right on an extra full tree.

We try to make the trees as perfect as possible but the trees still sometimes do what they want to do. But then again this

is part of the fun of having a real tree. No two are exactly alike. Have fun choosing, cutting & decorating your real tree from Paul's Tree Farm!



Small Pre-Cut Trees & Wreaths

Once again we will be having pre-cut table trees, ranging 2 ft. to 5 ft. in the \$4.00 to \$15.00 price range. These are great trees for those of you who need a shorter tree, or for the children's room. Pre-cut pines ranging 6 ft. to 7 ft. will also be available, priced at \$18.00 to \$28.44 each + 5.5% WI Sales Tax.

Paul will be making the extra full wreaths again this year, in several sizes, decorated with velvet bows. Wreaths will range from 21 inches to 32 inches in diameter, prices starting at \$10.00.

If You Cut Your Tree Early

We are opening the week before Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving falls about as late as it ever does again this year. It is OK to cut a tree a week or so before Thanksgiving, but if it is a Spruce it will be questionable if it will hold its needles until Christmas if it is set up in your home that early. If you cut a tree early, it is always wise to store the tree in a cool, dry place & in a bucket of water & out of the sun; such as in a shed or garage. Then make a fresh cut on the stump of about 1/4 inch before you set it up. I know a lot of you like to cut your tree early as you don't have time to come out & cut the weekend after Thanksgiving or later because of deer season, Christmas shopping, etc.

A Spruce tree should last two to three weeks when handled this way. I know I hear reports from customers who have had a Spruce up for 4 or 5 weeks with no problems. We have a time or two. Spruce are a very popular tree, but they just don't hold their needles like a Pine or Fir. When someone says they are going to set up a Spruce the week before Thanksgiving, they are really taking a chance of it still holding needles by Christmas. When we put up a Spruce, we usually put it up around the 5th to the 8th of December. It will then usually last till Christmas. If it is still holding its needles at Christmas we will leave it up till New Years or longer. Spruce are very unpredictable. If you are going to have a needle retention problem, it will probably be with a Spruce.

Never set any tree up next to a hot air register. It will dry out in 2 or 3 days!

Never let your tree stand go dry of water. If you do, the bottom of the stump will seal over & the tree will no longer take water &

the tree will dry out prematurely. If the water level goes below the bottom of the stump, the only thing to do is take the tree out of the stand & make a fresh cut so the tree can take water again.

When we put up a Spruce, we always use “Kling” tree preservative. It seems to make the tree take more water helping it last longer.

We set a Scotch Pine up in our Craft shop on November 7th & took it down on Christmas eve. It was up for 6 ½ weeks & the needles were still just as fresh and pliable as the day we set it up! Of course it’s a pine, & pines do have excellent needle retention; and we kept it watered & used “Kling” in the water. It looked like it was good for a couple more weeks!

Shaking & Baling Services

We will be offering the free shaker service again this year. Most customers have found that it really helps “clean up” their tree. Remember though, that you shake your own tree at your own risk, especially on days when the temperature is below freezing. No one wants to “break” the top or any branches out of their tree under those conditions. When trees are frozen, they can snap like glass!

The baling service will be \$1.50 + tax per tree. As a reminder—some trees may be too big to pull through the baler & on days when the temperature is below freezing, it is not wise to bale either, due to the risk of breaking branches.

Kling Tree Preservative

We will be giving Kling away again this year with the first 1000 trees sold. After that, Kling will be sold at the low price of three sheets for \$1.00 + tax. Kling is such an easy to use product & it really helps keep your tree fresher longer. Be sure to keep your tree stand full of water at all times!

Fraser Fir Cutting Rules

We would like to thank everyone who followed our special cutting rules perfectly last season by leaving a whorl of branches on the stump keeping the stump alive so we can grow another tree from the same stump (“stump culture”).

However about 10 trees were cut leaving no branches on the stump, causing the stump to die. Ten to 15 doesn’t sound like a lot, but over a 10 year period it would add up to 100 less trees we would have available.

We have the special cutting rules in our price list & on signs around the Fraser Fir

area, so everyone should be aware of these special rules. Please, please follow these simple rules. Transplants are so hard to get started, especially when we have extreme dry spells in the summer like we have had off & on over the past few years. It is much easier getting another tree started from the stump, although it doesn’t work 100% of the time.

Thank you for your cooperation.



Please Bring Back Our Saws!!

Someone still has several of our saws. If you took one home with you by mistake, please bring it back. Just cut your tree & leave the saw in the saw box. This is just a friendly reminder! Several saws come back every year.

We had several of you bring a saw back this spring & summer and we thank you very much. It was much appreciated!



Handle Carefully On Cold Days

When the temperature drops below freezing, the sap freezes in the Christmas tree branches. The branches snap like glass when frozen solid. Therefore on cold days when the temperature is below freezing we don’t dare bale a tree or it would snap the branches. We also don’t recommend shaking your tree in our tree shaker as it is quite a vigorous shaking & can break branches. If you want to shake your tree on a cold day, you do so at your own risk.

When you get your frozen tree home, the branches may break just bringing it into your home. If you have a heated garage or a warm place you could put it for 15 to 30 minutes it will thaw out & the branches will become limber making it go through a narrow door more easily. I guess the cold weather is a little more normal than some of the 50 to 60 degree weather we have had over the past 5 or 6 years! Just handle your tree carefully on the cold days & your tree will be fine.

Did Your Tree Put On New Growth?

In last years newsletter we asked if any of your trees put on new growth while you had it up for the holiday season. Several

customers told us that their tree put on new growth last year before they took it down. Our Fraser Fir just started breaking bud before we took it down.

This is a rare occurrence. We have only had it happen 4 or 5 times for us over the past 40 years. It gives an extra surprise and enjoyment to the Christmas season when this happens. Everyone always has a chance that their tree may grow, so watch for it. I feel sorry for people with fake trees, as they will never be able to experience this.

If your tree put on new growth this past Christmas season, let us know when you come to cut your tree. Bring a picture if you have one!

The
Christmas
tree reminds
us of the Christ:
its top pointing to
heaven, its lights denoting
the Light of the World, and all
the presents beneath it reminding us
that every good gift comes from above.
Thanks
be to
God.

Which Trees Hold Their Needles The Best?

Every year quite a few customers ask me this question so I will give my answer here:

The Fraser Fir is noted to hold its needles the best of all species. I have had people tell me they have had a Fraser Fir up from Thanksgiving through March!

All Fir & Pine hold their needles very well. If you are going to have a problem with needle drop, it will probably be with a Spruce. However, a Spruce should hold their needles 2 to 3 weeks without any problems.

All in all Christmas trees of all varieties hold up quite well. They are no different than cut flowers. They need a fresh cut on the stem & need watered daily. Cut flowers will only last about one week. Christmas trees will last 2 to 5 weeks, depending on the variety. Never set your tree next to a hot air register. The warm furnace air will dry them out in 2 or 3 days.

One of the most important things is to never, & I mean never, let your tree stand go dry of water. If you do, the bottom of the stump will seal over & no longer take water & the tree will dry out prematurely. If the water level goes below the bottom of the stump, the only thing to do is take the tree out of the stand & make a fresh cut so it can take water again.

The Scotch Pine we had set up in our Craft Shop last year was set up on November 7th & taken down the day before Christmas. It was up nearly 7 weeks! It was just as fresh as the day we put it up & hadn't lost a needle. But we did keep it watered & used Kling tree preservative in the water.



**JESUS IS THE REASON
FOR THE SEASON!**

Christmas Spirit Foundation 2008 Donations

Paul's Tree Farm would like to thank each one who donated to the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation while visiting their tree farm during the 2008 Christmas tree season. The donations came to \$114.06! Those who benefited from this program (such as "Trees for Troops," etc.) greatly appreciated your involvement in helping make their Christmas a little brighter.

Holiday Tree??!

The decorated tree that has been on display in the Wisconsin Capitol rotunda annually during the Christmas season since 1916 was known as a "Christmas tree" until 1985 when state officials began referring to it as a "holiday tree." And this past season (2008) it was the "Capitol tree."

Assembly Joint Resolution 12 was introduced on February 17th by 26 Representatives and Senators on renaming the decorated tree.

"It was resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, that the decorated tree annually displayed in the Capitol Rotunda during the Christmas holiday season shall be known as the "State of Wisconsin Christmas tree." (Quote from Wisconsin Christmas Tree Producers Association Quarterly Journal, April 2009, page 7)

I say it's about time!!



Organic Christmas Trees

We at Paul's Tree Farm use very few herbicides & chemical fertilizer. This seems to be a big concern with everyone.

The only herbicides we use are: Roundup for site preparation the fall before we plant seedlings in the next spring. This is about a necessity to kill brush & perennial weeds before we start the next growing cycle. We walk the entire farm each spring with a backpack sprayer & spot spray any brush, like oak, cherry, elm, maple, etc. that are coming up volunteer. The spray is only applied to the brush & none comes in contact with any Christmas trees, it can't, or it would kill them also. If we didn't do this, the brush would soon take over the farm.

All Spruce trees get fertilized on the year after they are planted with an all around general purpose chemical fertilizer, like 13-13-13, & then not again through the rest of their growing cycle. This is usually another 10 to 12 years with no fertilizer applied. The pines never get fertilized.

The Fir trees are the only exception to the rule. They are fertilized every spring until harvested. Most Firs require a lot of nitrogen, so we apply urea to them each spring which is almost 50% nitrogen. The Fraser Fir require nitrogen for good growth & color and also require a low soil PH, so we apply Ammonium Sulfate to them each spring. This contains the necessary nitrogen plus sulfur which lowers the soil PH & it must be applied each year until harvest.

The last time we applied an insecticide was in 1991 when we had an infestation of European Sawflies on the Scotch Pines. They eat the old needles & can quickly defoliate the tree. European Sawflies come in cycles. There will be 2 or 3 years when they will be thick, then it may go 10 or 15 years & there will be very few where nothing needs to be done to control them. Sawflies do their damage in May when in the larvae stage. There may be a cluster of 25-100 on a branch eating every old needle (not new growth) as they go. In 2008 they were about as bad as I have ever seen them. I didn't spray, instead I wore a pair of rubber gloves & walked each row & squashed them. I did this twice in May. This way I didn't have to use an insecticide, which is also expensive & it didn't take any longer to do than spraying with a back pack mist blower. It worked great. That was the peak of their cycle. There were hardly any this past spring, so no control was necessary.

I believe for a crop to be considered organically grown, no chemical fertilizer or herbicides can be applied in the past 3 or 4 years; so all Pines could be classified as organically grown, as the only chemical applied is for site preparation before planting. It is then 8 to 12 years before they are harvested.

All Spruce could also be considered organic as besides the site preparation, an all around general purpose fertilizer is applied only once the next spring after they are planted and then nothing for the next 10 to 12 years or until harvest.

The Fir are the only trees we raise that couldn't be called organically grown as fertilizer must be applied every spring right up to harvest.

Of course we have to continually monitor the trees looking for bugs or disease & may need to use necessary chemicals if absolutely necessary. We have been fortunate so far & have not had to use many chemicals.

A lot of tree farms spray herbicide over the top of their trees every year to kill weeds, etc. We have made the decision to mow the weeds instead. We have to fight a few more weeds this way, but we avoid the chemicals.

The only other chemical we use that I forgot to mention is a fungicide on small Scotch pines the next spring after they are planted. This is a preventative measure in case we get seedlings with some fungus type spores on them. If we spray them when they are small, it takes very little chemical & much less labor. Many years ago we had a problem with Brown Spot Needle Disease & didn't realize we had a problem until the trees were 4' - 6' tall. That was a big job spraying trees that size & expensive as you need to use so much chemical. Since we have been spraying them as seedlings, we have had hardly any fungus type problems.

Even back in the few years we sprayed an insecticide for sawflies, it was applied in May & would have been completely washed from the tree in a month or so by the rain & weather.

So you can rest assured your tree will have no harmful chemicals on it when you harvest it at Christmas time. And most of our trees can be considered organically grown even though we have never had our farm certified.

Help Wanted

We are always looking for some good help to shear Christmas trees in the summer. We usually hire high school students for approximately two weeks in June to shear pines & one week in July to shear Spruce & Fir. If you are interested, talk to Helen or Paul for more information when you come to cut your Christmas tree. You must be 14 years or older (Child Labor Law) to shear Christmas trees in Wisconsin. We will also have a "Help Wanted" ad in Brodhead's weekly newspapers beginning about April 1st.

Apply early, don't wait until the first of June.



Kitchen Gift Package

We will be offering the Kitchen Gift Package once again this year, as it seems to be very popular. The package contains one of Paul's handmade rolling pins (\$14.95 value), two Old Hickory Paring Knives, one 8-inch Old Hickory Slicing Knife, one fancy Kitchen Towel & three Cookie Cutters. These items all come packaged in a nice gift box for only \$34.95; or \$44.95 with a set of nicer knives. Another rolling pin of your choice may be substituted for the difference in its price.



Paul's Rolling Pins & Woodworking News

I have been busy making rolling pins again this summer & still am as of August 20th.

Where we are putting our newsletter on our website earlier this year I won't have my final count yet for another month or two. I have now made 60 rolling pins & plan on making about 40 more. There will be over 200 to choose from when we open to sell trees.

I have been getting up at 4:30am each morning & going out to the shed to work on my lathe. I work until 7:00 when I come in to eat breakfast. It's a great time to be working on the lathe. It is cool out & the birds are just waking up. The robins are usually the first to sing followed by the cardinals & then all the rest of the birds that make their homes in our yard. They all keep me company while I am making rolling pins. Even though I am inside my shed I can still hear them all plainly. I love to work in my shed with the steel roof when it is raining. It can only be lightly raining but inside it sounds like it is coming down in buckets!

My rolling pins are made from local wood cut here on our farm or in the nearby area, such as: Maple, Red Oak, Swamp White Oak, Cherry, Black Walnut, Elm, Ash, Manitoba Maple (Box Elder), Hackberry, Catalpa & more. I have several highly figured Walnut, Cherry, Catalpa & Manitoba Maple (Box Elder) rolling pins & a few that are laminated with different kinds of wood. These are quite striking & beautiful.

I have several fantastically figured & with the highly desirable spalting. The ones like that I had last year all sold out quickly. A lot of people don't realize what spalting is. It is most common in Maples, but then quite rare. As the wood starts to decay, but is still solid, it forms black lines. I believe this is a fungus growth. The thin lines follow the grain pattern & makes a very strikingly beautiful piece of wood. A few of the Manitoba Maple (Box Elder) rolling pins have some of the nicest spalting I have ever seen, along with the natural red stripes & highly figured grain, these are truly one of a kind rolling pins.

I make my rolling pins larger in diameter than those commercially available so they are easier to use. I put a non-toxic, clear salad bowl finish on them so the natural color of the wood comes through to show its beauty. None have been stained to change the natural beauty of the wood. I also make rolling pins without handles for those who prefer that type. I have a good selection of those cute mini rolling pins too.

When you need a unique gift, especially for a shower or wedding, remember the new bride would love a handmade rolling pin from Paul's Tree Farm! We also have available shipping/gift boxes for the full sized rolling pins at \$1.50 each, plus tax.

I also have a good supply of Turned Ornaments, Turned Cattaills, Scroll Sawed Ornaments, Round Cheese Cutting Boards, Wooden Cherry Plates, Rolling Pin Racks, Salt & Pepper Shakers (turned on the lathe from Black Walnut), & Toy Wooden Tops (great stocking stuffer!).



Knives

We have many new models again this year. We will have over 80 different models in stock when we open to sell trees. We have more knives than will fit in our display cases again this year, so ask to see the rest of the knives if you are interested.

We will again have an excellent selection of quality made knives from China. Some have very unique designs for the collector. There is a large selection of folding knives in the \$7.00 to \$20.00 range.

We have a great selection of fixed blade hunting knives, both Bowie & Skinner models in stock. Some will have a gut hook. These knives (both carbon steel & stainless blades) will range from \$20.00 to \$94.00.

We also have folders, lockbacks & linerlocks, with & without an easy open thumb stud. We have knives with fancy

paintings & scrimshaw pictures on the handles. These range from \$5.00 to \$15.00.

Check out the Boker Magnum lockback with a 37 layer Damascus steel blade. What a bargain for a genuine Damascus blade for only \$32.00!

Popular brand name knives that we have in stock this year are: M-Tech, Elk Ridge, Junglee, Schrade, Winchester, Buckmaster by Camillus, Opinel, Rough Rider, Master Cutlery, United Cutlery, Boker, Condor, Buck, Smith & Wesson and Cold Steel.

With the economy the way it has been, we actually considered cutting back on our knife inventory this year, but the economy seems to be starting to turn around & we can't sell them if we don't have them in stock. So we decided to stock as much as we did last year. Last year was one of the best years we have had yet in knife sales. Actually, we now have more in stock than last year!

Knives make excellent gifts and we have an extended price range to fit anyone's budget. We try to stock knives that are different & unique, along with traditionally styled knives. While we do have a large selection in stock, knives have proven to sell fast as Christmas gifts. For best selection, shop early.

If you would like to come & look at the knives, or anything else in our craft shop, before we officially open, just give us a call & we can set up a time that will be convenient for both of us.

DeKalb Seed Corn Signs



For Sale: Antique DeKalb Seed Corn Signs from the 1940's. The ear of corn measures 18

inches long. Prices range from \$35.00 to \$100.00 depending on condition. Several available.

Helen's Crafting News



This year has really flown by fast! It is hard to believe it is time to be getting ready to sell trees & crafts again.

I have been quite busy the past few weeks getting things organized, working on this newsletter, getting our post card mailing ready to send out to just over 4000 regular customers, getting the Christmas tree price flyer ready plus doing a little crafting. All this work has been tedious this year as I

have had "Tennis Elbow" for the last month or so. A shot of cortisone helped relieve the pain for a short time, but then wore off probably due to the reason I have not been able to "baby" that arm as I have so many things to accomplish before we open to sell trees.

There are always some crafts left over from the previous year, but I have made more of the popular Shotgun Shell Snowmen & Shotgun Shell Santas & hope to make the Shotgun Shell Angels yet. I have made Golden Shell Angels, Yo-Yo Snowmen & hope to make Yo-Yo Santas yet. Some of the crafts left from last year are: Mini Grapevine Wreath Cross Stitched Ornaments, Other Cross Stitched Ornaments, Frosted Glass Icicles with Ribbon Bows, Mini Snowmen Ornaments, Crystal Beaded Angels, Jingle Bell Wreath Ornaments & many one-of-a-kind ornaments too numerous to mention!



Our Other Crafters



Other Family Crafters

As in the past, our daughter, Lorie will have crafts in our shop, along with a few ornaments made by her children. They have made Beaded Pastel Snowflakes, Crystal Dangle Drop Ornaments & Clothespin Reindeer Ornaments which are just so cute! Lorie will also have a good selection of handmade fashion & winter scarves available. They make lovely handmade gifts!



Debbie Jean's



Debbie Niedermeier-Wartgow of Brodhead, WI will once again offer her hand painted **Christmas Ball Ornaments, Misc. Ornaments & Framed Paintings** in our craft shop. Debbie also has her ownshop, "Debbie Jean's," where she specializes in "Custom Framing & Whimsical Treasures." For special orders, Debbie can be reached at (608) 879-2018.



Bruce



Once again we will offer the hand crafted items made by Bruce of Brodhead, WI. Bruce makes handmade, barnboard items, such as **Bird House Stakes, Picket Fence Birdhouse Benches & Other Barnboard Yard Décor.**



Illinois Crafters



Two ladies from Rockford, IL (a Mother/Daughter team) will be putting crafts in our shop again this year. They always have an assortment of Christmas tree ornaments. Be sure to check them out!



Broom Corn

Paul has an ample supply of colored broom corn again this year. It adds a nice touch to dried arrangements.

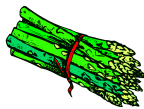


Also in our Craft Shop

Maple Syrup



Pure Maple Syrup will once again be offered in our shop during our Christmas tree selling season. It is made locally on Scott Elsasser's farm near Orangeville, IL. If you need syrup during the rest of the year, you may call Scott at (815) 789-4419.



Asparagus

We will have fresh home grown asparagus again this coming Spring. If you would like some, get your name on our list so we can call you when it's ready. Let us also know approximately how many pounds you would want. When we call you, you can change the amount, either more or less if you like. If you would like a small amount each week, or if you want a larger amount all at one time, we can accommodate you. We fill orders as small as one pound. If you are already one of our customers, we still have your name, phone number, etc. on file. You don't have to put in a new order unless you wish to change the number of pounds you want. We will just be calling you when your order is ready!

The asparagus season runs from about the first of May to June 15th depending on the weather. Asparagus is a warm weather crop. The temperature needs to be in the 70's or higher & the sun needs to be out to warm up the ground, then it grows like crazy. If the temps are in the 50's & 60' & it is cloudy out it grows but not very fast & we won't be picking every day.

If you are on our list to be called for asparagus, don't think we have forgotten

you if you haven't heard from us during the first week or two of May especially if it has been cool out.

If you are one who gets a few pounds each week, we will call you first to get you started as soon as we have some available.

In 2009 we got \$2.00 per pound for the green asparagus. There may be a small price increase due to increased operating expenses. We won't know the exact price until closer to the 2010 season.

Bargain Priced Asparagus

We will be having the 4 lb. Bargain Bags of asparagus for \$3.00 (only 75 cents a pound) if you buy some at the regular price. Every day we sort out the asparagus that has loose tops & that is smaller in diameter. It is kept separate from what we sell at the regular price. If you buy asparagus at the regular price, then we will give you the chance to purchase the 4 pound bargain priced bag for \$3.00. If you do not buy any regular priced asparagus, the bargain priced asparagus will cost you \$5.00 for 4 pounds (only \$1.25 per pound).

There is nothing wrong with this asparagus other than it having loose tops & being smaller in diameter. As a matter of fact, this is what we eat throughout the growing season! The supply is limited, but if you would like some, just ask. There is usually some available every day during the asparagus season.



The Purple Passion is sweeter than the green asparagus. It has 20% higher sugar content. It's even good eaten raw! We believe it would be good with a little vegetable dip just like one uses with raw carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.

We will have a good supply in 2010, but limited, so you will need to let us know a few days ahead of when you want some so we can fill your order. The price will be \$3.00 per pound. Many customers liked it packaged in 2 pound packages, but we can put any amount one would want in the bag. We have one customer who bought 5 pounds of the Purple Passion each week plus 5 pounds of the green asparagus each week. So just let us know how many pounds you would like & we will be glad to fill your order!



Fresh Asparagus Keeps Well

Each year when we finish picking asparagus, we usually pick about 20 pounds to store for ourselves. We store it upright in about one inch of water in a container in the refrigerator & then we can extend our season about two to three weeks. After two weeks or so the flavor isn't quite like the day it was when picked, but it keeps great stored like this. It is a lot better than most of the so called "fresh" asparagus in most grocery stores. It is best not to store your order of asparagus in the plastic vegetable bag that we put it in when you pick it up. Let us know if you want some extra asparagus at the end of the season & try storing it as we did & continue enjoying this wonderful tasting vegetable!



Rhubarb

We hope to have a good supply of Rhubarb this coming Spring. We set out a new patch four years ago & more rhubarb should be ready this coming season. We also set out about 60 more plants in 2009. Just get your name on our list & we will call you when it is ready. It is usually ready about the same time as the asparagus. The price is \$2.00 per pound.

Cameras Wanted

As most of you know I collect home movie equipment & films: I am currently looking for the following:

MINOLTA Model XL-601 Super 8 Camera or

MINOLTA Model XL-401 Super 8 Camera

FUJI Single 8 Movie Camera—any model

These must all be in perfect operating condition, including auto exposure & intervalometers on the Minoltas. They can cosmetically show wear on the outside, but must be 100% mechanically perfect.

I am also interested in other 8m/m & Super 8 equipment. If you have something that you no longer want, let me know. Even if it doesn't work, don't throw it out. I will take it & maybe can use it for parts.

I am also looking for old home movies on 8 m/m, Super 8 & 16 m/m. If you have old home movies that you have had transferred to tape or your projector no longer works, don't destroy your old films.

I will take them. I believe the films should be preserved. The first thing I do when I get any old films is clean & lube them. They probably have never been cleaned & lubed since they were new. Films always used to come back from the processor treated with an anti-static lubricant, but they need to be re-treated from time to time. I then store them in the proper environment to prevent mold & deterioration. Of course, if you would ever want your old films back to look at or have transferred to another format, I would be more than happy to do so. If you do bring me your films, try to have them labeled good with people & subject matter named & the year they were taken if possible.

I now have several thousand feet of old films all reconditioned & in perfect projecting condition. If there are any torn sprocket holes, I repair those & if there is a foot or two that got caught in a projector & all wrinkled up, I cut that foot or two out & splice back together.

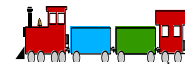
Most of these old films are Christmas get togethers, birthdays, weddings, vacations, just everyday family films but the interesting part is the history that is in the background, like the cars. I have films from the 1930's up to the present with pictures of old cars from each decade. In one film from the 1930's, where children playing are being photographed, there is a steam train going across in the background! I also have films with propeller type airplanes, back before the jet era. I really enjoy reconditioning these old films & keeping them in top condition.

I also picked up a few more great old films on Super 8 over the past year. I got two great "Tom & Jerry" cartoons in the widescreen cinemascope format, a "Lone Ranger" TV show, another "Betty Boop" cartoon, a film with "The Dave Clark Five" performing many years ago, the Elvis feature film "Tickle Me," an old silent Laurel & Hardy film called "Big Business" & a couple of trailers. I thought I had better get the Laurel & Hardy film as they are Christmas tree salesmen in it!

New film is still available for your old movie camera. There is color and Black & White film still available for the old Regular 8 cameras (made from about 1932 to 1963). There are quite a few different films still being manufactured for Super-8 cameras (1964 & later). For Super-8 there are two B & W films (Kodak Plus-X & Kodak Tri-X). For color reversal type films, there is Ektachrome 64T, Ektachrome 100D & Fuji Velvia 50D. Kodak also makes several color negative type films. These are not made to be projected, but to be transferred to DVD. These are more for the semi-pro & pro movie maker. I have a list of where you

can get films, processing & supplies. If interested, just ask.

Our son, Chris, is now set up to transfer Super-8 & Regular-8 films to DVD. Early last spring he purchased a Telecine machine which works with his computer to make the transfer. The Telecine machine scans each frame on the movie film at eight frames per second & transfers the information to the computer via a high quality camcorder. Each frame is converted to a digital signal in the computer so it can then be transferred to a DVD or any other format. This is an expensive, quality outfit for making high quality transfers. If you have home movies that you would like transferred, contact Chris. See his ad below. After you have your films transferred & if you don't want your old films taking up space in your closet, remember that I, Paul, will take them & preserve them like I stated above in this article. Don't throw them out!



Trains By Paul

On September 14th Helen & I drove down to Rochelle, IL to the Train Park to watch the trains. We haven't been there for a couple of years. There are usually about 100 trains a day that go through there. There is the Union Pacific main line and the BNSF (Burlington Northern Santa Fe) that go by the Train Park.

It was a slow day while we were there this time. We were there four or five hours & only saw six or eight trains. We took a picnic lunch & it was a relaxing, fun day even though the trains were slow at coming through. As usual, there were cars in the parking lot from all over the U.S.

On our way home, while driving through Seward, IL we had to wait while a CN (Canadian National) train went through. The CN engine was quite newly painted & we got a picture of it as it went by. It was a sharp looking engine!

We went to the model train show once again in Lena, IL back in February & the model train show in Monroe at the StateLine Ice Community Expo on September 26th. These shows are always fun. They both had many train layouts up & running and of course the many vendors selling new & used trains & accessories. I can always find something I need for my trains. If you have never been to a model train show, you should go & check one out. Even if you don't have a model railroad yourself it is still great fun to see all of the layouts set up & running. I know you would have a great time.

Be sure to come into our Craft Shop & check out our operating HO train when

you come to get your tree or stop in & check it out even if you don't buy a tree. I will also have much of my train collection on display dating back to the late 1940's with my old Marx train that I got when I was a kid. Most people collect American Flyer or Lionel, but where I had Marx trains when I was young, I am collecting old Marx stuff & always adding to my collection. I guess Marx is a good brand to be collecting as they aren't as valuable as the more desirable Lionel & American Flyer so Marx is quite easy on my pocket book. And I know I have had as much fun with my Marx trains as the people who collect Lionel & American Flyer.

Lionel & Marx are "O" gauge & operate on either "O" or "O27" three rail track. American Flyer is just a little smaller in size & called "S" gauge and operates on "S" gauge two rail track.

However, the Marx trains that I have & collect are called 3/16 scale which is about the same size as American Flyer "S" gauge & operated on "O27" three rail track.

We will be setting up my old Marx train under our Christmas tree again this year. If you have never had a train under your tree, why don't you try it this year. The kids & grandkids will love it & you will too. If you don't have a train, there are many beginner sets out there that are very reasonably priced, so give it a try.

I will also be having some of my old home movie cameras on display again this year.

I combine my interest in trains & old home movie equipment. I am always taking movies on FILM of trains, both models & the real ones.

* * * * *

Paul & Helen's Health Update

As most of you know, Helen & I (Paul) are both cancer survivors. In 1993 Helen had breast cancer surgery and chemotherapy. In 1998 I had prostate cancer surgery. In 2004 my PSA started to go back up so the doctors said something must be going on and suggested radiation treatments. In February & March of 2005 I took radiation treatments every day for 33 days, except on weekends. My PSA went back down to too low to measure.

Helen & I just had our yearly check-ups this fall & are both doing great with no signs of cancer!

* * * * *

Paul's Tree Farm Is For Sale

The Christmas tree farm has been listed with a realtor since the end of January. Helen & I are ready to retire. We would like to find someone to continue on with the tree farm. There have been several interested parties, but no offers yet. If interested, contact our realtor: Barb "Tiger" Myers, Re/Max Preferred at 608-558-7299.

With the introduction of the new, exotic Christmas tree species, this is a great and exciting time to be growing Christmas trees. We now have many of the new varieties in the ground as well as the older tried & true varieties. We are an established business with a large customer base. Real Christmas tree sales were up nationwide again last year, so the future looks bright for growing Christmas trees.

We are selling 160 acres of land of which 80 acres are in normal Christmas tree rotation. There is about 20 acres tillable and the rest is in woods & windbreaks. We are not selling our home or the asparagus patch. We need the asparagus as supplemental income for a few more years, or until our backs give out!

The hardest part about selling out & retiring is not seeing all of your friendly faces year after year! We will really miss you.

We may keep our craft shop open during the Christmas selling season after we sell the tree farm if there is enough interest & it continues to be profitable.

* * * * *

Happy Holidays

 Seth Engen Owner/ Sales	 Curt Gietz Owner/ Web Developer	 Aaron Phalin Owner/ Finance	 Chris Schilling Owner/ Network Administrator
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Schilling Video

by Chris Schilling

(Paul & Helen's son)

Do you have home movies on video tape? Is your wedding on video tape? Video tape does not last forever. Over time the quality of your tapes slowly degrades. Eventually your precious memories will become unwatchable. Depending on the quality of your tape, you may notice significant loss of quality within 10-15 years. Act now to preserve your videos before it is too late.

Schilling Video can convert your videos to DVD at a very reasonable cost. DVD's are virtually indestructible. DVD's will not lose quality over time and will last many years. Schilling Video can convert the following video formats: BETA, VHS, VHS-C, HI8, Digital8 and MiniDV.



Do you have home movies on Regular 8 or Super 8 film? We are now able to convert these films to DVD. Preserve your old home movies by having them converted to DVD today.

Do you have old family photos on slides? We also have the option available to transfer your slides to DVDS or CDS. These digital scans of your slides can then easily be used to make professional prints.

More information, may be found at Chris Schilling's website www.schillingvideo.com

Chris may also be contacted by telephone at: (608) 897-3777, Ext. 111, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm; or at (608) 897-4959, 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm.

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