THE POWER OF POSITIVITY

On a monthly basis I review and look at many “economic outlook” publications that are sent to me via email. I distinctly remember looking at one of these publications in late 2019 and thinking, I really believe 2020 could be a good year for our industry, especially if we continue to get business sorted out with China. At that time, the political craziness was ramping up as the democratic nominee for President was becoming apparent and the stage was being set for a showdown between President Trump and apparent nominee Joe Biden. At that time, it just seemed to me that our industry would likely have a reasonable 2020.

I have no idea where I was in January 2020 when I first heard of the Coronavirus, but I do recall thinking that this “thing” might be bad. Little did I know that the virus would become a pandemic that has turned our world upside down over the last 6 months and will likely result in some permanent change throughout the world. Now, we bring into the mix rioting that is ravaging cities throughout the United States and we begin wondering, when is it going to end? I begin longing for the days of Trump tweets, political fighting, and what had become normal craziness prior to the coronavirus pandemic.

I am writing this article on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, which is opening day in Missouri, by order of Governor Parson. Restrictions for some businesses and schools are still in play in some counties, but at least the governor has given us the green light to crank back up and hopefully kickstart our economy.

I recently returned from about a week of visiting some of our members and I distinctly detected a hint of “positivity” that I think is a result of the following:

1) Governor Parson lifting the statewide restrictions
2) Great weather the last 10 days
3) Markets ticking up a bit (I know this is arguable)
4) Growing weary of being weary
5) Football season is coming
6) Eating a good steak at a restaurant
7) Knowing your kids will likely go back to school, or better yet, leave for college

I returned from my trip really feeling inspired and knowing that it is time for me to turn a corner and become more positive and hopeful for the future. We at MFPA are looking forward to transitioning from pandemic information central to supporting our members with more traditional member benefits that focus on the “positivity” of being a member of our Association. I want to send a note of sincere GRATITUDE to all our members that renewed their membership for 2020 during economic uncertainty and feeling that the world was upside down. We experienced about a 98 percent renewal rate, and we are extremely grateful.

I am hoping and praying that our collective “Power of Positivity” will result in good things to come!!
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Last month, we announced the disappointing news about the MFPA Logging School. I mentioned that we were working on another program that would benefit the industry…well, it happened…at warp speed. Part of the plan with the logging school was to, of course, develop a new generation of loggers….but we also wanted to create a bigger awareness of the industry. The jobs, it’s importance to the state, and the future. Rather than 10 weeks, with some classroom time, the new program is a paid internship, or apprenticeship. We are going to be placing “students” with a logging crew.

We are also adding some time in a sawmill. This first session is involving MU School of Natural Resources students. It’s a win/win. The MU students will learn more about the industry…hands on….and the industry gets increased awareness, and potential employees. The students start at the end of this month and will be finished at the end of July. As I mentioned, this is a “hands on” program. Hopefully, when all is said and done, it will be a great experience for all involved. We will be updating the program on our website, and social media. This session, we are working with Master Loggers. We hope to include more MFPA member for next session and will involve future loggers as well. Of course, we will continue to have a presence at career days, 4H, Ag classes…anywhere we can get our foot in the door. If you know of any opportunities to promote our industry, please let me know: mark@moforest.org, or (573) 634-3252.

ALSO-Remeber Continuing Education!

Our Mission
Missouri Forest Products Association is dedicated to serving and promoting the forest products industry of Missouri. Founded in 1970, MFPA has over 300 members representing primary and secondary wood industry, supplier and service industries, loggers and landowners. MFPA advocates sustainable management and sound stewardship of Missouri’s forests to benefit current and future generations.
2020 Scheduled PTH Core Curriculum Sessions
(note classes are not all in chronological order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Level 1 &amp; 2</th>
<th>Level 3 &amp; 4</th>
<th>Forest Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolivar</td>
<td>September 9-10</td>
<td>September 16-17</td>
<td>September 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedalia</td>
<td>September 1-2</td>
<td>September 28-29</td>
<td>September 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perryville</td>
<td>October 5-6</td>
<td>November 2-3</td>
<td>October 19</td>
</tr>
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Continuing Education Opportunities
(As new opportunities become available we will list them on the website)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Module</td>
<td>Forest Resource Management (Silviculture)</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Module</td>
<td>Tree Identification (Dendrology)</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD</td>
<td>Team Fire Safety</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD</td>
<td>Image of the Forest</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>DVD</td>
<td>Be Seen Be Safe Be Alive</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>DVD</td>
<td>Timber Harvesting Deck Safety</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>DVD</td>
<td>Log Loader Safety</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
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</tbody>
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Missouri Announces
Additional Extended Benefits for Unemployment

Jefferson City, MO — The Missouri Department of Labor’s (DOLIR’s) Division of Employment Security (DES) announced today that Missouri will begin offering the extended benefits (EB) program for those who have exhausted their previous unemployment benefits.

Missouri’s most recent insured unemployment rate (IUR) of 5.39% triggered the state onto a 13-week EB period beginning the week of May 31, 2020. With the current rate of unemployment nationwide, a total of 44 states have triggered on to EB in recent weeks.

Under federal law, the EB program offers up to an additional 13 weeks of benefits to individuals who have exhausted both their regular unemployment benefits and 13 weeks of the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) assistance.

Upon exhaustion of regular UI entitlement and PEUC entitlement, the DES will issue written notification to all individuals who are eligible to apply for the new EB program. The weekly benefit amount (WBA) under the EB program is the same as the individual received for regular unemployment compensation.

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Governor Parson to Lift Statewide Business Restrictions

The following statement is from Daniel P. Mehan, president and CEO of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry:

"The Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry supports Governor Mike Parson's decision to lift the statewide restrictions that have been in place since early April. The governor's order has played an important role in helping reduce the threat of COVID-19 and limiting the spread of the virus. As the order is lifted and businesses across Missouri reopen, we urge employers to continue following best practices for the health and safety of their employees, customers and communities. The Missouri Chamber's Return to Work Guide is a free resource that details steps employers should be taking at this time and we encourage all businesses to use it. While many Missourians have undergone significant hardships in recent months, we now have an opportunity to rebuild and reimagine our state's economy for the future. Moving forward, the Missouri Chamber will continue to push Missouri toward a strong recovery, including working to stop opportunistic COVID-19 lawsuits from slowing our economic rebound. Removing the statewide business restrictions is a positive step forward that will allow more businesses to take proper precautions and get Missourians safely back to work."

Ask about MFPA Rebates!

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