

2008 Algonquin College Forestry Technician Dinner and Awards Ceremony by Alain Belliveau

The Canadian Institute of Forestry, Algonquin Section and the Forestry Technician Program of Algonquin College in the Ottawa Valley held their annual Forestry Dinner, in the Landing at the Pembroke Campus on Tuesday March 18, 2008.

The dinner of the evening consisted of a fresh caesar salad, followed by one of three main course options, including delectable thick juicy beef steak, delicious chicken cordon bleu, or marvelous vegetarian lasagna. Each of these was served with tasty potatoes and steamed asparagus. As for dessert we enjoyed delightful cherry or raspberry cheesecake. The extraordinary meal was prepared by the students of the 1-year Cooks Apprentice Program, under the watchful eye of Chef Ian Montgomery.

Immediately following the marvelous feast, Peter Schleifenbaum was called up to present his motivating views on forestry's place in today's world. Schleifenbaum, manager of the renowned Haliburton Forest & Wild Life Reserve, spoke of sustainability, conservation and stewardship as 'musts' in today's forest management efforts. Much emphasis was set on using wood as a renewable source of energy and material, and on forestry as being crucial to Canada and the world now and for future generations. Schleifenbaum's speech was both rewarding and inspiring for all dinner guests.

Frank Knaapen, CIF-Algonquin Councillor and Coordinator of the Forestry Technician Program, hosted the evening. Knaapen also presented the Canadian Institute of Forestry Algonquin Section Award. This award was established in 1971 and is given to a Forestry student at Algonquin College who has achieved the highest academic standing at the end of the first term in the Forestry Program. Alain Belliveau from Nova Scotia, was this year's recipient. With this award Belliveau received some beautiful Algonquin Park mounted pictures, from Purvis Gallery, and his name is engraved on the Algonquin Section Plaque, which is kept at the college in the Forestry display cabinet.

The next award was established in 1991, to commemorate a student who tragically passed away before graduation. The James Croll Memorial Award is presented to an Algonquin Forestry student who, in the first term of the Forestry program at Algonquin College, has shown a general concern for environmental matters, demonstrated leadership abilities, exhibited field work skills, contributed significantly to student life at Algonquin College in the Ottawa Valley and achieved academic excellence. Even before the award's description was read completely by its presenter Erroll Downey, Professor of the Forestry Technician Program, all eyes were on its very deserving recipient. This year's recipient was Pierre Sabourin from Edmonton, Alberta. Sabourin's name will go onto the James Croll Memorial plaque, which was contributed from the James Croll Memorial fund, established by his family and friends. This plaque is also kept at the college in the Forestry display cabinet. Sabourin also received a generous monetary award from the Croll and Wells family.

The Algonquin College Loggersports team was also presented with plaques and a certificate for their participation and a job well done. The plaques and certificates were made and prepared entirely by the first-class, selfless coach Chris Ryan. In November at Sir Sandford Fleming College in Lindsey, the men's team finished 27th and the woman's team placed 11th out of 13 competing teams. The event was best remembered for hard work, dedication and team spirit. In January at McGill University (McDonald Campus) in Montreal, the men's team almost doubled their score and placed a respectable 16th amongst the stiff competition. With a new climbing pole, lots of practice logs, and hopefully more funding on its way in the upcoming years, the 2007-08 team wishes only the best for the coach in future competitions.

The evening was capped off by a fun trivia game, produced by Alain Belliveau, hosted by Pierre Sabourin, and assisted with by Melanie Kotulak. Each of the 13 forestry-related questions was a hard-fought battle, but the war was ultimately triumphed by team "L". They won various lumberjacking products generously donated by Stihl and Chris Ryan.

In conclusion, this year's Forestry Dinner was a big success thanks in large part to the planning committee (Frank Knaapen, Chris Ryan, Ximena Salcedo, Melanie Kotulak, Pierre Sabourin, Shonelle Wilkinson and Alain Belliveau) and to the remarkable cooking staff. Everyone ate well and had an enjoyable evening. Thank you to all who participated in making this evening such a great turnout.



Canadian Institute of Forestry - Algonquin Section Award Presenter Frank Knaapen (left) with recipient Alain Belliveau



James Croll Memorial Award Erroll Downey (right) with recipient Pierre Sabourin.



2008 Algonquin College Loggersports Team: Left to right: Anthony Hobbs, Erik Higgins, Kyle Lamarche, Shonelle Wilkinson, Trevor Slack, Sue Nelson, Melanie Kotulak, Ximena Salcedo, Greg Tipman, Alain Belliveau, Adam Stuber (equipment manager), Josh Carnegie, Dave Gibbs, Dave Van Hooren, and Chris Ryan (coach). (Not present: Deidra Chartrand, Katie England, Victoria Robinson and Kristin Shaw)