



## MAINE PROJECT LEARNING TREE®

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### SPRING 2017

PLT® Mission: PLT uses the forest as a "window" on the world to increase students' understanding of our environment; stimulate students' critical and creative thinking; develop students' ability to make informed decisions on environmental issues; and instill in students the commitment to take responsible action on behalf of the environment.

#### READ ALL ABOUT IT! MEPLT HAS STORIES TO SHARE

Have you found time to breathe in the spring air and turn your face to the warm sun? This is the season for taking that time to just stop and soak in the season while forgetting, for a moment, about impending mud and ticks! Reality is ever present when planning outdoor experiences with students.

Working with foresters, teachers and statewide community leaders certainly provides a lot of fodder for our MEPLT newsletter. So much good news to share beginning with Maine's 40th Anniversary celebrations taking place in October.



*A few years back: Pete Lammert, Barry Burgason and Kathy McGlauflin share a MTF Tree Trunk moment!*

On October 14, the China School's Forest hosts our outdoor family fun 40th birthday party with music by Nancy Sferra and friend, locally grown fruit & veggies from Full Circle Farm in Vassalboro, bread by a soon to be famous Bowdoinham baker, lots of forest activities and tours and some surprises!

Also this fall the Maine TREE Foundation will celebrate our anniversary in Falmouth with special guest speaker Bob Duchesne, trail guide and author of the official Maine Birding Trail guide book. Watch for updates and details on the MEPLT FB page and in your mailbox.

**Two Maine science teachers** got together with PLT this winter to write a proposal for the Maine Land Conservation Conference 2017. Their self-designed forestry courses include in-depth forest studies within their communities and require students to write actual forest management plans. Jason Cyr, Waterville Junior High and Jeff Cleaveland, Hall-Dale High will share the stories of developing these PLT based lessons, student work and final reflections. A big thanks to Jeff and Jason for their creative and dedicated teaching and their interest in getting students into the woods!

**Looking back:** Who can remember what happened within our MEPLT network on May 17, 1994?

Right! Joanne Alex, PLT facilitator extraordinaire and Early Childhood teacher was presented with a National PLT Outstanding Educator Award in Washington DC. She was among twelve educators recognized for her commitment to the goals of PLT. In a '94 press release written by Lisa Knauf, Larry Wiseman, then President of the American Forest Foundation, was quoted: "indeed the awardees exemplify the core of the PLT program based on teaching students how to think and not what to think about environmental issues." Joanne was the first of many Maine educators to be recognized as Outstanding Educators and 1994 was the first year that PLT presented these awards! Sincere thanks to our excellent PLT facilitators and for the leadership that they exemplify.



*Joe & Joanne Alex with Senator Cohen, Washington DC*

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**Thanks to National PLT**, Maine is a partner in a EE360 federal grant. Joanne Alex, Connie Ronco, Mary Logue, Tim Surette and Laurie Haines joined our Maine team and put together a proposal to deliver in-service and pre-service educator training that will include a strong component for effectively teaching about the environment. Early Childhood, new on-line PLT units and K-8 workshop dates and locations to be announced this summer.



(L to R) Lee Academy Juniors Lauren and Cole and teacher Susan Linscott accept Teddy Roosevelt Maine Conservation Award for the school's Service Learning Team

## Maine Woods Forever Recognizes Lee Academy

By Pat Maloney

Project Learning Tree honors outstanding educators across the country in a variety of ways and through different groups that recognize these teachers. Maine is fortunate to have a large network of teachers who provide students with opportunities to learn about and work to improve the quality of life in Maine woods-dependent communities. The Maine Woods Forever Teddy Roosevelt Maine Conservation Award recognizes educators, young people and youth organizations whose efforts are in the spirit of Roosevelt's conservation ethic and achievements, and recognizes what Maine's young people are doing to conserve our forest heritage, with an eye to their potential as future conservation leaders.

Susan Linscott, Lee Academy Science teacher, provides not only her high school students with direct experiences in the forests and with their community but requires that they design and deliver forestry lessons for local elementary and middle school students. Lee's student body is made up of local and international students all of whom explore, research and experience the feeling of being in nature while gaining an appreciation of the woods.

Students at Lee Academy conducted a culvert survey in Lee and analyzed them for environmental safety and structural integrity. Following the survey, students dug into

design work assuming the role of engineers. All the while learning about conservation.

Another group studied the Spruce Budworm with a unit that included history, economics and environmental impacts of the last outbreak including long term effects on the forest. Students were required to research SBW topics, interview Lee residents and present findings to the Lee community. They assumed leadership roles in an authentic forest challenge and planned a community forum.

Lee students prepare and deliver forestry lessons to Winn Elementary 4th graders and at least one Lee Team enters the statewide Envirothon competitions. As a PLT facilitator Susan has assisted in a number of workshops around the state including Summer Teachers' Tours workshops.

One question that Susan presents to students asks how the forest ecosystem responds to stress? In seeking the answer students study their forest and teach others to conserve and to get involved.

Susan's passion for wilderness, dedication for promoting Maine's natural resources and sincere respect for all living things can be summed up with a reflection on Teddy Roosevelt:

*Maine, to Roosevelt, was where he first found his authentic self. Near the end of his life, (he) presented his wilderness days in the North Woods as the apogee of his happiness during adolescence. He became the adventitious expert on Maine.*

May her students find their "authentic" selves through their involvement with forestry and community related concerns.

## Beyond our Wentworth School Walls

By Kelly Tukey, Wentworth teacher

Many things drive teachers crazy, but we have discovered one that is crazy GOOD. This past fall our Wentworth School Professional Learning Team, a group of 7 educators from grades 3-5, wished to bring learning outside for our students. With a little nudge from a colleague and team member, Karin Kelly, we learned about the Maine Forest Inventory Growth Project (FIG), an exploratory project that connects students to Maine forests. Linda Woodard from the Maine Audubon Society and Kevin Doran, forester with the Maine Forest Service, met with us to discuss the details of setting up FIG plots. On a cold wintry day in March, students and staff joined by Kevin and District forester, Oliver Markewicz, Linda and her helping hand, Jeanie, headed outside to a small wooded lot adjacent to our building and play area. The 4th and 5th grade students measured, marked, nailed and recorded data about the trees in our two plots. The best thing about this project, however, has not necessarily been the forestry work, it has been the drive and energy to go beyond our walls and learn outside.

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Linda Woodard leading a tree ID activity at Wentworth

The weeks following prompted the teachers and students to explore and learn about forests. Lessons about tree growth top our list, but we have also been on ‘bug patrol’, tracking missions, investigating tree and leaf characteristics, and setting up game cameras to capture activities when all is still. The excitement of our students has kept us motivated to learn more about what we can explore and do in our wooded area.

Pat Maloney of PLT met with the group and shared resources and information about upcoming workshops and the summer Teachers’ Tour schedules. It turned out that the workshops are a perfect fit. The workshop will help us find ways to enhance our students’ critical thinking skills, problem solving, and effective decision making skills as we explore the forest.

On April 29, three members of our team will attend the China Primary School workshop. We’ll experience hands on activities and take away dozens of lessons related to outdoor learning to use with our students. We look forward to learning and growing with our students as we continue to explore outside classroom possibilities.



FIG Plot measurement with Kevin Doran and Wentworth students

## Maine PLT Steering Committee welcomes new member Laurie Haines

Laurie has been an active PLT facilitator for a number of years and offers her professional expertise willingly and with great enthusiasm. The Steering Committee extended an invitation to Laurie to join because she’ll offer an urban school perspective while bringing best classroom practices to our meetings.

Laurie currently teaches earth science at Lewiston Star Academy, an alternative school associated with Lewiston High School, and has worked in the Lewiston Public School System for the past 17 years. Since then she has brought close to 1,000 students on field trips into both semi old growth and mixed growth forests with the goal of enhancing their view of the local environment and the importance of trees. Laurie uses PLT activities throughout each year and promotes PLT within the high school biology and earth science classes at LHS.

She first became exposed to PLT back in 1981 when her father (who was the president of the Boca Raton Audubon Society) became a facilitator. During her college years Laurie assisted him with workshops. Laurie told the Steering Committee that she had “been on a few Teachers’ Tours and had worked with Pat Maloney organizing Forest Field Days at Thorncrag Nature Sanctuary in Lewiston.”

### 2017 MAINE PROJECT LEARNING TREE STEERING COMMITTEE

- Anita Smith, Chair**, Maine Master Naturalist
- Sherry Huber, Treasurer**, Maine TREE Foundation
- Barry Burgason**, Huber Resources
- Stephen Gettle**, Woodland Investment Services
- Laurie Haines**, Lewiston High School
- Betty MacWilliams**, Tree Farmer and Former Science Teacher
- Timothy Surette**, University of Maine, Augusta
- Shari Templeton**, Maine Department of Education
- Bernie Welch**, Sebasticook Valley Middle School
- Warren Whitney**, Maine Coast Heritage Trust
- Linda Woodard**, Maine Audubon
- Pat Maloney**, Maine PLT Coordinator

## PLT – A Vital Component at China School’s Forest

By Anita Smith

Recently China Primary students involved with forestry lessons in the China School Forest commented that they love the school forest and one student mused: “I don’t have a forest by my house, so this is MY forest.”

On any given day, you might find students learning tree identification, recording data about new discoveries or exploring the differences and similarities between various microhabitats in the forest. Teachers see the school forest as an extension of their classroom and Project Learning Tree (PLT) has been a key factor in the education journey of students and staff for close to 25 years.



Students at the China School Forest

The China School’s Forest features several trails and 17 learning stations with many of them directly connected to PLT activities. At Forest Choices, teachers use activity #69 *Forest for the Trees*, to learn about different ways to manage a forestland as well as the benefits and drawbacks of different types of management. At the Wood Measurement station, students use #67 *How Big is Your Tree* to measure tree diameter, height and volume. PLT’s K-8 Activity #48, *Forest, Field and Stream* brings pond studies into the curriculum with students collecting data at various habitats. Since all PLT activities have literacy connections, teachers can be found reading stories about life cycles of the trees and the kids literally see many examples as they enjoy sitting in the tree house found at a massive white pine.

Students care for the trails and outdoor classrooms and take great pride in “their” forest. This year students created a monarch butterfly garden area by planting native milkweed seeds and learning about the life cycle of a butterfly. Each year we find high school students returning to help with trail and outdoor classroom maintenance.

Visit the China School’s Forest for yourself at Maine PLT’s 40th anniversary celebration on October 14. Join family-friendly activities throughout the forest. Take a guided or

self-guided tour or stop by for a tree pruning demonstration while enjoying music, local foods and much more!

## East Grand School Teachers Reflect

By Peggy White, East Grand School Principal

On Friday, March 17, the East Grand Elementary teachers enjoyed a Project Learning Tree (PLT) workshop presented by Terri Coolong, District Forester, Susan Linscott, Lee Academy teacher, and Pat Maloney, Coordinator of Maine Project Learning Tree. A few of the modeled activities stood out which are worth sharing.

“One of our favorite activities was to *Adopt a Tree* in the school forest. We took photos and described our trees in detail,” 1st grade teacher Mary Bartlett said. She added, “We examined several tree cookies – one of which Mr. Apgar revealed the age of the tree with a few stories about its history. As part of the *Tree Cookie* activity we drew a tree cookie of each of our lives.”

Louise Latvis, Special Education teacher, did a Kindle search for children’s literature that support PLT K-8 activities. A quick search came up with *Little Sandy and the Magical Forest (Forest KIDS Adventure Books #1)*. Louise’s students each have their own Kindle which has been well received by students.

David Apgar, high school science teacher, complimented the comprehensive resource book provided by PLT. Upon completion everyone received the ready to use resource book. Mrs. Bartlett mused that “this book has several valuable lessons that I plan to use before the end of the school year. I also appreciated that each of the PLT facilitators encouraged us to get in touch if we need further assistance.”

(Note from Pat Maloney: If you have a favorite Kindle book about forests, please share on the MEPLT FB page)

### The 2017 Summer Teachers’ Tours

Have you attended a Maine TREE Foundation Summer Teachers’ Tour? If not, join us on a 4-day tour of Maine’s forests and mills. The tour includes an introductory Project Learning Tree workshop, trips to see modern tree harvesting, wood products manufacturing, maple syrup making, a wind farm and a tree farm. You’ll hear from foresters and land owners and have time to share with and enjoy colleagues.

**July 11 – 14 The Birches on Moosehead Lake**  
**July 25 – 28 Camp Wapiti: Gateway to Baxter State Park and the County**

Space is limited, so call or e-mail soon to receive an information/registration brochure. Contact us at 207-621-9872 or [mtf@gwi.net](mailto:mtf@gwi.net). For more details visit: [www.maintreefoundation.org](http://www.maintreefoundation.org)

## 400 Acre Wood with Auburn Middle School Students

By Cameron Sutton

Students in my 7th grade science class recently participated in the 400-acre wood activity. We were about to start our Ecology and Ecosystems unit. Many students in Auburn are familiar with forests and forest land, but not with how it is managed nor jobs it might provide. I decided that this activity would give students the opportunity to learn about different occupations in the forest and also different ways that a forest is used.

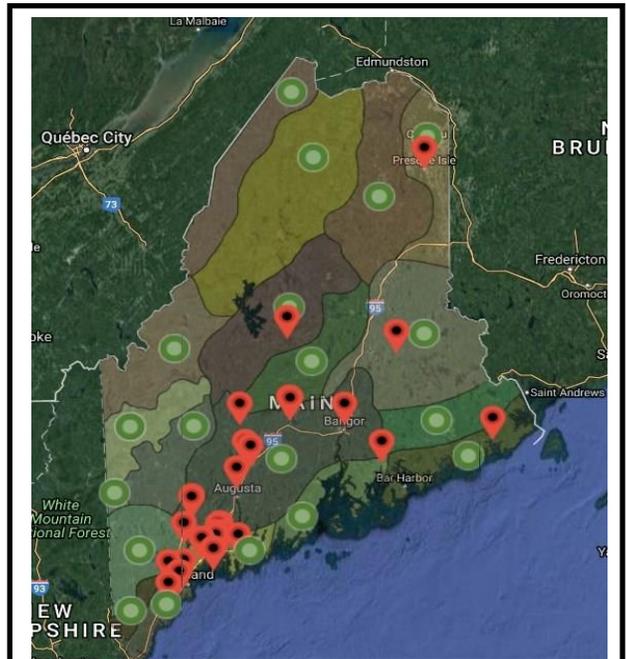


400 Acre Wood Student Posters

Small groups brainstormed how forests are used and what they provide. Students came up with many forest products including paper, maple syrup, and wood, and I was happy to hear conversations about jobs and animal habitats.

From there, students explored different forest uses from PLT K-8's #32 *A Forest of Many Uses* including wilderness, fishing/hunting, campgrounds, and trails. Using Key questions through Google Classroom, each group discussed and answered all questions. Students worked together to decide which uses and how many would fill their 400-acres. We discussed the size of an acre since scope and scale is often a bit abstract for 12 year olds. Each group had a draft forest management plan map for creating their own plans. We used an online spreadsheet to calculate their use, costs and revenues. This often changed the decisions of the group. Groups considered the focus of their forest plan for maintaining wildlife, increasing revenue, or increasing visitors. Lots of great discussions took place about what was important to each group and each student.

Students used Google Classroom throughout the project to calculate, answer and discuss questions and then to assess their learning. Once plans were completed and posters made, students evaluated which plans balanced or impacted wildlife, visitors and preservation. This activity did indeed introduce students to many aspects of forest management, many of which they had never considered.



Need to update your FIG data? Interested in learning about the Maine PLT Forest Inventory Growth (FIG) program? Call Pat Maloney or check out the [www.mainefig.org](http://www.mainefig.org) website.

### OUR BIENNIAL ROUND OF APPLAUSE TO THE FOLLOWING PLT FACILITATORS & PRESENTERS EXTRAORDINAIRE:

|               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Terri Coolong | Elaine Philbrook  |
| Patty Cormier | Ann Putney        |
| Kevin Doran   | Janice Rey        |
| Shane Duigan  | Anita Smith       |
| Cindy Kuhn    | Katrina Venhuizen |
| Ken Laustsen  | Linda Woodward    |
| Jake Maier    |                   |

### Sincere & special thanks to:

Ecomaine  
 Maine Audubon  
 Greg Miller, Maine Forest Service cartographer  
 Sarah Morrisseau  
 National Project Learning Tree Staff  
 Anna Schwarz, Maine Society of American Foresters  
 Tim Surette, UMaine at Augusta  
 Weyerhaeuser  
 Forest Field Day Presenters for Skowhegan, Sid Emery  
 Demo Forest and Pownal Elementary School

Maine TREE Foundation  
Project Learning Tree  
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## Calendar of Events

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Watch [www.maintreefoundation.org](http://www.maintreefoundation.org) for 2017 workshop updates.

If you are interested in hosting a PLT workshop in your school or community,  
please call Pat Maloney at 626-7990 or email [meprojectlearningtree@gmail.com](mailto:meprojectlearningtree@gmail.com) to make plans!

Visit us on Face Book: <https://www.facebook.com/MainePLT>

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**April 24-28, 2017**

National PLT Coordinators Conference  
Louisville, Kentucky

**May 11, 2017**

MEPLT Steering Committee  
Viles Arboretum  
Augusta, Maine

**May 29, 2017**

China Forest Field Day  
China's School Forest  
China, Maine

**August 10, 2017**

MEPLT Steering Committee  
Viles Arboretum  
Augusta, Maine

**April 29, 2017**

PLT K-8 Workshop  
China Primary School  
China, Maine

**May 19, 2017**

Children's Water Festival  
University of Southern Maine  
Portland, Maine

**July 11-14, 2017**

Maine Summer Teachers' Tour One  
The Birches on Moosehead Lake

**October 14, 2017**

Maine PLT 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration  
China's School Forest  
China, Maine

**May 3, 2017**

Forest Field Day  
Skowhegan, Maine

**May 24, 2017**

Forest Inventory Growth (FIG) and Focus on  
Forests workshop  
Lakes Environmental Association  
Bridgton, Maine

**July 25-28**

Maine Summer Teachers' Tour Two  
Camp Wapiti: Gateway to Baxter State Park and  
the County