

The B.C. Forest Service

NEWSLETTER

No. 26

A newsletter for employees of the Ministry of Forests

November, 1988



With plans for the future, Charlie Johnson, right, is joined by Campbell River Nursery superintendent Bob Hudson, left, in receiving congratulations from Forests Minister Dave Parker.

Jack Biickert slated to take on new duties as asst. chief forester

Jack Biickert, director of industry development and marketing branch, has been appointed as assistant chief forester.

He started in his new position October 1, taking over from the recently retired Jim Bullen.

Biickert will also be the director of integrated resources branch and he will continue to co-ordinate the ministry's legislative requirements.

He has served as regional manager, Prince Rupert forest region and held the position of special advisor to the deputy minister prior to becoming director of industry development and marketing branch in 1984.

Privatized nursery group views branching-out as good business

Diversification is the key to success.

That's how a group of new business partners view the forest nursery business after buying six provincial nurseries.

The nurseries, which were sold for \$8.9 million as part of the provincial government's privatization program, include Campbell River, Chilliwack River, Vernon, Harrop in Nelson, Red Rock near Prince George, and Thornhill at Terrace.

The partners — a 40-member employee group headed by **Charlie Johnson**, the former director of the integrated resource branch — became their own bosses as of Sept. 1.

Their government contracts include the production and storage of seedlings for reforestation projects in the province.

However, newly formed Pacific Regeneration Technologies Inc. (PRTI) will also grow cucumbers, tomatoes and ornamental plants.

"There is a fair element of risk in the agricultural business. By operating six nurseries and diversifying into non-forestry products we spread some of that

risk," said employee-owner, **Ev van Eerden**.

The company is also considering providing silvicultural consultation to other provinces and establishing nurseries outside B.C.

Another provincial forest nursery, the Telkwa, was previously sold to its only regular employee, **Norman Chadsey**, for \$182,000.

The sale includes a five year agreement for Telkwa to provide the ministry with pesticide and seed cone storage, and seedling cold storage. Under a three-year agreement, the nursery will also provide up to 700,000 seedlings to the ministry.

Of the two remaining Forest Service nurseries, the Koksilah nursery in Duncan will be consolidated from two sites into one location and sold through public offering. The vacated site will be transferred to Crown Lands for disposition.

It is anticipated that Green Timbers Nursery will be run as a small education nursery by Surrey municipality following a provincial-municipal land exchange.

Newsletter renamed after reorganization of Forests and Lands

With this issue of our newsletter we have changed our name, revised our format and introduced the first theme edition.

We have also tried to keep some valued friends onboard a little longer.

Although our new name — *The Forest Service Newsletter* — reflects the separation of Crown Lands from the Ministry of Forests, this edition includes a story submitted by Crown Lands correspondent **Carol Watts**.

While our most recent amalgamation with Crown Lands was somewhat short-lived, we appreciate the active contribution they made to the newsletter.

This issue also launches the first of our theme editions. Our feature focuses on the battle against wildfire in B.C.'s forests.

The wildfire feature recognizes the danger inherent in all forest fires. It is dedicated to the memory of **John Leland Thies**, a 49-year-old Sidney pilot who died when his air tanker crashed July 27 near a fire south of Nelson.

Hegyi elected president of key science commission

Inventory branch director, **Frank Hegyi**, was elected president in early July of the influential Commission VII, a division of the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS).

Hegyi will serve a four-year term as head of the commission.

It is responsible for interpreting information provided by aerial photography — a process known as photogrammetry — and analysing remote sensing data (satellite images) for use in computerized mapping and other geographic information systems.

The commission is also researching development and use of decision-making computers, called expert systems, which can automate various procedures involved

in photogrammetry and remote sensing.

Almost 10 years ago, under Hegyi's direction, BCFS was the first forestry organization in the country to develop computer mapping and to integrate it with the use of satellite imagery.

Hegyi's ongoing work in the areas of photogrammetry, remote sensing and expert systems has created a large, efficient and fully operational geographic system, which is currently being used in inventory and forest management programs.

The technology involved in BCFS' geographic systems, much of it developed by British Columbia scientists, will likely be spotlighted during Hegyi's term as Commission VII president.

"Scientists and firms that are world leaders in this field will now have an inside track in the development and marketing of their high-tech products," Hegyi said.

Hegyi's term as president of ISPRS' key commission includes the co-ordination of seven working groups that meet annually, and involves the preparation of a major international symposium on remote sensing slated for 1990 in Victoria.

He is now responsible for the commission's technical working group's presentations at the next ISPRS Congress in Washington, D.C., in 1992.

Birthday surprise a stunning jolt for senior writer

Public affairs staffers do it faster — get older, that is.

At least that's the story you get these days if you talk to **Ben Pires**, manager, publications and writing services.

It seems fellow workers staged a coffee-break birthday celebration June 30th that was the ultimate surprise.

It was exactly one month early.

When Pires tried to correct the mistaken impression that he had hit another forty-something milestone, he was met with stiff opposition by branch secretary, **Marlene Docherty**.

Docherty — who organized the birthday bash, complete with cake — steadfastly maintained Pires birthday was etched into government records as the last day of June.

However, a hurried review of Docherty's normally faultless birthday records revealed a typo.

Pires was grateful.

"I was really beginning to doubt myself," he said.

Although Pires didn't get another birthday cake, he did relish the one-month reprieve in the aging process.

Forests was heir until discovery of a legal error

Where there's a will, there's usually a catch.

That was certainly the case with **Anthony Karpicius'** rather unusual last will and testament.

The Prince George man willed half his estate to the Ministry of Forests (and Lands) — but it's unlikely the ministry will ever see even a small portion of the the \$45,000 left to it.

It seems Karpicius — a native of Russia who came to Canada to work in his brother's logging company before being employed by Northwood Pulp and Timber — wanted to show his gratitude for being able to live a good life in this country.

He wrote a will in 1971 leaving half the value of his estate to the Minister of Lands and Forests'.

Unfortunately, Karpicius didn't provide instructions for use of the money, so it was absorbed into the province's general revenue.

Anyone making a bequest should take note of Karpicius' mistake and state in the will exactly how the funds are to be used, such as a scholarship, research or other specific uses.

- from a **Dale Philpott** submission to Dollars and Sense newsletter

FIST role makes Van Isle Man Winner of a special Regional blooper award

John Tisdale of Campbell River has been given the dubious distinction of being named winner of Vancouver forest region's Conspicuous Contribution Award for 1987.

The award — a cassette tape of old radio bloopers mounted with red wind-up teeth on an oak board — is presented annually to the region's district fire information spokesman who makes the most conspicuous contribution to fire information.

Although the award is often presented to the district fire information spokesman with the worst case of 'foot-in-mouthitis', Tisdale was selected because he was the only person in the region "mad enough to

volunteer for the duties of a Fire Information Support Team (FIST)."

FIST members provide on-call information support at sites where wildfires attract substantial media attention and where there is a need to communicate directly with communities and nearby residents about a fire's activity.

Mike Greig, regional fire information co-ordinator at the time of the awards, said selecting winners was difficult because of the excellent work done by district fire information spokespersons.

Honorable mentions in the region went to **Len Leroux** and **Kerry Davies** for their efforts with the media.

BCFS is tops in suggestion awards

When it comes to making suggestions, nobody does it better than BCFS staffers.

That's the latest word from **Bill Bell**, chairman of the provincial suggestion awards program.

The program, administered by the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations, encourages government employees to forward suggestions that will streamline workplace operations by saving time, reducing costs, or by improving services and products.

In a memo, Bell says BCFS employees have logged the most suggestions of any ministry during 1988—a total of 30 to date compared to 20 from Transportation and Highways and 15 by Health.

However, Bell says competition for a trophy to be awarded to the 'top suggesting ministry' is far from over, noting this year's contest will continue until the awards committee meets April 9, 1989.

He said winners will be selected, in part, by determining the number of suggestions per FTE and the number of suggestions adopted per FTE.

The awards chairman also noted that cost savings of adopted suggestions will also be considered.

However, it appears BCFS continues to be the frontrunner.

Although BCFS, and Transportation and Highways, are tied at two-each for the number of suggestions adopted, BCFS employees have won the top \$10,000

awards presented to date.

Estimated savings from BCFS' adopted suggestions are pegged at \$20,000, while the value of Transportation and Highways accepted suggestions have been ranked as intangible.

Bell suggested that two major award

winners in BCFS' ranks may have had a positive effect on other staffers.

"The promotional impact of two Forests employees earning \$10,000 awards within the last year is likely a contributing factor to their ministry's outstanding performance to date," he said.

BCFS employees take on the criminals

Thief's run ended by on-the-spot cop

Where are the police when you really need them?

Just ask **Joyce Fitzsimmons**.

The administration/financial co-ordinator at BCFS's Prince George regional office had her wallet stolen by an office-prowling thief when, suddenly, the long arm of the law reached out to save the day.

It happened like this:

While temporarily away from her desk shortly before 4 p.m., July 18, Fitzsimmons was alerted by co-worker **Anne Hawkins** to the presence of a stranger in her office.

After finding her purse open and wallet missing, Fitzsimmons and payroll clerk, **Marcia Staub**, headed for the main-floor building entrance in hopes of cutting-off a tall, blond man they had seen prowling the area moments before.

When they reached the lobby—a five-floor elevator ride for Staub and a run down five flights of stairs for Fitzsimmons—it was just in time to see the suspect cross the street and enter the passenger's side of a waiting car.

Fitzsimmons yelled for help.

John McClary, regional recreation officer, responded by sprinting to the car, trying unsuccessfully to keep the suspect from locking his door and closing his window.

McClary called for help.

A passing pedestrian threw down his briefcase and held his wallet up to the car window.

It was the end of the run for the suspected thief—the passerby was a policeman and the wallet displayed his law enforcement identification.

Security has now been reinforced at the Prince George regional office, but Fitzsimmons has some tips for all working women.

"I advise everyone who brings a purse to work to keep it in a closed filing cabinet or somewhere out of sight," she said.

Fitzsimmons said that although she had \$40 and a cheque book in her purse wallet, she was more concerned about the possible loss of a number of credit cards.

"If anyone is going to charge those cards to the limit, I want it to be me," she said.

- submitted by **Esther Soles**
correspondent, Prince George
forest region

Appointments

Art Scott - manager, communication and extension services, research branch.

Bruce Welsh - headquarters personnel officer, human resources branch.

Ginny Magee - personnel officer, Kamloops human resources branch.

Jocelyn Vanden Dungen - supervisor, clerical support, human resources branch.

Sheila Litt - personnel analyst, classification section, human resources branch.

Gerry Still - manager, integrated resources management, research.

Retirements

John Little - director, protection branch; July 29 after 35 years.

Rick Townsend - fire management technician, protection branch; July 15 after 22 years.

Disarming act of bravery praised in rare RCM-Police commendation

Terry Walker, of Prince Rupert forest region management service, was honored this spring with a special police award for his part in apprehending a thief.

Walker was presented with the RCMP Commissioner's commendation May 14 in recognition of his involvement in disarming a robber at the Smithers Hotel Nov. 7, 1987.

In presenting the award, RCMP Staff Sergeant **Dennis McKay** said Walker's action probably averted a serious shootout.

McKay also said presentation of the award is a unique honor since it is rare for an officer and even or a civilian to be given the award.

-from Dollars and Sense newsletter

FEATURE

WILDFIRE IN B.C.'S FORESTS

Fires blaze path of destruction

Every year forest wildfires destroy tens of thousands of hectares of B.C.'s forests.

Their consequences are serious, since forests are the province's greatest resource.

Wildfires damage more than economically valuable timber. Uncontrolled natural and man-caused fires threaten wildlife, water supplies, recreational activities, other resources, and can have long-term negative effects on the tourism industry.

Over its 76-year history, BCFS has forged a highly successful method of fire-fighting from its mandate to detect, control, or suppress these fires.

Using a no-nonsense formula — find it fast, hit it hard, and go where the need is greatest — BCFS is able to control 86 per cent of all wildfires within 24 hours.

Yet, fires in B.C.'s forests continue to exact a costly toll.

An average of 2,600 wildfires annually engulf almost 100,000 hectares and consume 4.65 million cubic metres of timber — enough wood to build about 200,000 average-size homes.

People cause most fires — about 55 per cent — often through careless use of campfires and cigarettes. The remaining 45 per cent are ignited by lightning.

Lightning fires, however, account for half the area burned annually because they strike the province's remote areas where they are difficult to discover, reach and control.

Regardless of cause, when fires escalate into major blazes — called project fires —

the full spectrum of BCFS' equipment and specially trained crews is often mobilized.

These resources include helitack and rapattack crews, unit crew ground forces, airtankers, helicopters, fire management specialists (Overhead Teams), and special information personnel called Fire Information Support Teams (FIST).

BCFS can also get help from other provinces, and is prepared to go to their aid, through the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre in Winnipeg.

Early detection key to control

Early detection of wildfires is the first step — and an essential element — in keeping fire damage in British Columbia's forests to a minimum.

While spotting fires in their earliest stages is not as easy as it might appear, recent technology now enables faster and more accurate detection than ever before.

Low-level and high altitude infra-red scanners can often 'see' fires even when smoke or flames are invisible. In addition a province-wide computer-linked lighting detection system helps air patrols home-in on potential lightning-caused fires.

Computer technology has also enabled BCFS to predict the location and probability of wildfires, as well as store and use historical fire and weather information.

The actual predicting of forest wildfires is done with a computer operated called

Fire facts

- Firefighting costs average \$37 million annually.
- An average 2,600 fires yearly burn 100,000 ha. destroying 4.65 million cubic metres of timber.
- 86% of all wildfires are brought under control within 24 hours.
- While 55% of wildfires are man-caused, 45% lightning-caused; lightning is responsible for over 50% of the area burned.

the Advanced Fire Management System.

A terminal and printer attached to the system provides color-coded, graphic display of potential fire danger areas throughout the province. It can also be focused specifically on one of the six forest regions or 44 forest districts.

The system makes predictions based on its analysis of historical and current information about forest and weather conditions, weather patterns, and the amount and location of human activity, among other data.

Despite these advances in technology, knowledge and technique, people still spot more fires than computers.

The public is credited with reporting one-third of all new fires — more than air patrols, lookouts, forest industry workers or any other single source.

If you spot a fire dial 0 Zenith 5555

More than 800 of the 2,600 fires recorded annually in B.C. are reported by the public.

"We're indebted to the public for their involvement and we certainly want to encourage everyone's participation in reporting wildfires," said Colin Effa, superintendent, fire operations.

Effa said quick reporting of fires helps minimize damage caused by wildfires and reduces firefighting costs.

Fires can be reported to a BCFS office or by dialing "0" and asking for Zenith 5555.



Twin engine firecat air tanker drops retardant on a fire

Smoke-eaters hit target sites hard

FIREFIGHTING IS A HOT, DIRTY JOB, DEMANDING TOUGH, SKILLED PEOPLE.

When wildfire attacks B.C.'s forests, BCFS declares war and strikes back with speed and unrelenting force.

The first line of defence usually involves deployment of initial attack crews based throughout the province. They include:

- 67 three-man firetak teams (ground crews);
- 38 three-man helitak crews (landed near fires by helicopter);
- 14 three-man rapattack crews (rappelled down ropes from hovering helicopters).

It's through the efforts of these crews, armed with hand tools and back pumps, that most fires are suppressed.

Their goal is to control the spread of

fires, and contain them within natural or man-made borders so they burn out.

If that doesn't work, BCFS mobilizes additional resources and launches a major ground attack that may also be augmented by special fire-management teams and the use of retardant-carrying air tankers.

"There is no firm set of rules for fighting wildfires, each fire calls for dynamic decisions," said **Colin Effa**, superintendent, fire operations.

Those decisions often involve such concerns as fish-spawning rivers, wildlife, watersheds and nearby communities.

Weather, dryness of forests, types of trees, topography, accessibility, the intensity of the fire and rate of spread, are also factors in how fire is fought and who fights it.

When initial attack crews need help the provincial fire control officer in Victoria can mobilize additional men and equipment.

A newly-formed 20-man unit crew is available to augment ground crews on major fires, while airtankers and helicopters can drop retardants on fire perimeters. Heavy equipment can also be deployed to help build fire guards.

Specialized support is available from a group of fire managers (Overhead team) and communication experts (Fire Information Support Team).

Protecting urban forest homes is the focus of interface program

A total of 500 persons were evacuated from their homes in 1987 in the face of forest wildfires. Another 200 people were put on evacuation alert.

Many of the homes were part of residential developments near forests or other natural growth in areas being referred to as 'interface zones'.

Since many of the fire dangers attached to living in these zones can be reduced, BCFS has launched a two-pronged fire-preparedness program aimed at owners of urban homes and at community firefighting agencies serving these areas.

Featuring two video presentations — one aimed at residents and the other at fire-control agencies — the program shows

both groups how to reduce fire risks and make evacuation plans. It also includes a user guidebook on planning and public service broadcasts.

The public and local fire control agencies throughout the province can arrange to see the videos and obtain a *Wildfire Beware and Prepare* kit by contacting the nearest forest district office.

Fires last year in urban areas near Victoria, Nanaimo and Penticton required a massive land and air attack that used all BCFS firefighting resources.

Some fires are set to help forests and wildlife

Wildfire is an ongoing threat to B.C.'s forests — but not all fires are bad.

Prescribed burning — intentionally set and controlled fires — is done by BCFS to enhance forest conditions.

These fires were used initially to reduce wildfire dangers caused by slash remnants from logging.

Now prescribed burning also prepares harvested areas for replanting, helps control forest diseases and pests, enhances wildlife habitat and increases forage for domestic herds.

Not all these benefits can normally be achieved at one burn site — nor is it usually desirable to do so — but often, several goals can be met simultaneously.

This is where planning plays a key role.

Resource managers pool their expertise to determine what goals can be met by a particular prescribed fire. They also assess the immediate and long-term effect on the environment.

For instance, will it endanger other forests, stream banks, or lake shores? Will it lessen area aesthetics or adversely affect the

potential for recreational activities.

After these and similar questions have been answered satisfactorily, BCFS schedules a prescribed fire.

However, before a fire can be set, conditions must be right for a safe and effective burn.

Concerns centre on how fast the prescribed area will ignite, how quickly the fire will burn and spread, how hot it will burn, and how difficult it may be to control.

In addition, atmospheric conditions are assessed prior to a prescribed fire to minimize air pollution.

Weather and atmospheric reports, specific to the burn-site, are consulted so the fire is scheduled when conditions are best for venting and dissipating smoke into the upper atmosphere.

Prescribed fires can be set by a variety of airborne or ground based methods, depending on topography, weather, burn objectives and related considerations.

Following completion of a burn, thorough mop-up operations ensure the fire doesn't re-ignite.

Essay and photo contests feature forest-use topic

A school essay contest and an amateur photography competition are slated for this fall, with both events featuring aspects of forest use as their topic.

The Truck Loggers Association is sponsoring the essay contest for grade 10 students in coastal B.C., including Queen Charlotte Islands, Vancouver Island and Fraser Valley.

The essay topic, *The social and economic importance of the forest industry to the people of British Columbia*, is designed to develop an awareness of the importance of the forests to the provincial economy, says contest manager **Lisa Furney**.

Entry forms and instructions will be available in early September at schools in the contest area.

Entries must be postmarked by Oct. 31, judging will be completed Nov. 30, and prizes will be awarded during the association's convention in Jan., 1989.

There will be 10 first prizes of \$333.33; 10 honorable mention prizes of \$33.33; and

a \$3,333.33 award to the school whose students show the greatest level of involvement in the contest.

Further information is available by phoning 648-4291.

Meanwhile, a contest for amateur photographers, with provincial competitions linked to a national contest, features use of the winner's photo in a national poster.

Sponsored by the Canadian Forestry Association in conjunction with the Canadian Forestry Service, the competition is a series of Canada-wide provincial contests under the theme of *Forests ... A Shared Resource*.

Provincial winners in each of four categories — harvesting or forest products, forest recreation, wildlife in the forest, and forest landscape — will qualify as entrants in the national *Canada's Forests — Photography Contest*.

B.C. entrants should submit an eight-by-10-inch unmatted, unframed color print to B.C. Forestry Association, 1430 - 1100 Melville Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6E 4A6, by Dec. 31, 1988. Entry forms are available from the same address.

Entries will be judged on relevance to theme and category, originality, and technical and artistic quality.

More money, perks for major winners in awards program

There will be more money and VIP treatment for major winners in the provincial suggestion awards program.

In a memo to cabinet ministers, Finance and Corporate Relations Minister **Mel Couvelier** has outlined a five-point strategy to broaden and intensify the program's promotional efforts.

Effective June 1, 1988, the program was enhanced with the following:

- Maximum award increased to \$25,000;
- Percentage of savings which can be awarded increased to 15 per cent from 10 per cent;
- Topping-up of the award to allow for a 25-per-cent income tax rate, ensuring cheques equal to the posted award;
- Victoria major-award winners to be presented their award by the premier, after which winner and immediate family will have dinner at a restaurant of their choice, and;
- Major winners from outside Victoria will also be provided hotel accommodations.

In 1987, savings from adopted suggestions increased by more than 200 per cent to almost \$1.4 million.

For more information on the program, contact Pat Wolfe at 387-8128 or Mel Zurkowski at 387-8127.

Fire-warning video sparks hot interest in public showings

Demand for a ministry video and information kit titled *Wildfire - Beware & Prepare* has been so great since its release last spring that public affairs is producing an extra 500 copies.

That's more than triple the original supply of 150 copies, which were sent to regional and district offices.

The video focuses on the fire dangers inherent in interface zones, which are areas of forest or other natural growth near communities and residences.

The new supply of video kits will be sent to every firefighting organization in the province.

Video kits include a user's guidebook, a color poster for advertising showings, and a brochure outlining the video's contents.

Public affairs is also producing seven companion display units designed for use as backgrounds when the video is shown in high-traffic public forums such as malls or fairs.

Wide range of topics covered in soon-to-be released videos

A total of four videos, all of which are now nearing completion, are scheduled for release to regional offices soon.

Following Nature's Lead examines the management of second growth timber. It is based on information gathered from the Sayward fire and reforestation site on Vancouver Island.

B.t. in B.C. is a look at BCFS's use of the pesticide *Bacillus thuringiensis* in pest management programs. The video examines B.t.'s use, long term effects and explains how it works.

Hit Hard...Hit Fast features Rapattack firefighting teams as it explores the threat of wildfires and the leading-edge technology that B.C. has developed to deal effectively with forest fires.

Crown Land Marketing: A Fair Return is a video that Ministry of Forests, public affairs, is completing for the Ministry of Crown Lands. It is aimed at Real Estate Boards and Crown Lands' clients who want information on how Crown land is marketed.

Another video production, which was completed and released last spring, focuses on the history of the British Columbia Forest Service. Titled *B.C. Forest Service - A Proud Past*, the video was produced to celebrate BCFS's 75th anniversary last year.

Copies of all videos are available from regional or district offices, or by phoning the Burnaby-based L.M. Media Marketing Services at 294-6231.

B.C. Tel man named feature client

George Malysheff, of B.C. Tel, was honoured recently as Crown Lands' Vancouver Island feature client.

He is the Vancouver Island real estate and rights-of-way representative for B.C. Tel and he was named as the first of four feature clients to be chosen in 1988-89 for "co-operation and contribution to good working relations with Vancouver Island Crown Lands staff".

Honoring of feature clients is an ongoing Ministry of Crown Lands program. It recognizes clients for their co-operation and for providing insights into their business operations that help the ministry improve its services.

Before being chosen as a feature client, Malysheff had familiarized Crown Lands staff with B.C. Tel operations and organization, and his role as the company's real estate representative.

B.C. Tel holds some 500 Crown land

tenures and pays nearly \$102,000 rent annually for these lands, he said.

He noted that he receives excellent co-operation from Crown Lands' staff in tenure administration and said he appreciates

the heavy workload under which they operate.

- submitted by Carol Watts correspondent, Vancouver Island Crown Lands region

B.C. Tel's George Malysheff is presented a feature client commemorative plaque by regional Crown Lands manager, Doug McColl, during an award presentation recently.



New computer's expert deductions will help speed forest inventory tasks

A new expert is being plugged into inventory branch operations.

It's a computer system that thinks for itself — and, in some cases, thinks for its human users.

And it's the brain-child of branch director, Frank Hegyi.

The expert system — so called because its artificial intelligence mimics the decision-making capabilities of a human expert — is just now being introduced following five years of testing and fine tuning at the branch.

When fully operational, the system will direct and analyze BCFS' use of photogrammetry (aerial photography) and remote sensing (satellite images) used in the ongoing inventory of B.C.'s forests.

"It will be the brains of our technological operations in the inventory branch," said Hegyi during a recent interview.

"The expert system can analyze remote sensing data and photogrammetry to give us a fast, accurate view of forest inventory," he said.

During the next three years, the system will help complete computerized mapping

of the province's forests. This will be a fast-track continuation of work already being done to identify species of timber stands, estimate their sizes and ages, and calculate the stems and volume per hectare.

It will also be instrumental in making recommendations for harvesting plans, silvicultural programs and monitoring of changes in the inventory due to fire, pests and disease.

"It will be the brains of our technological operations in the inventory branch."

"The nature of the system also makes it self-analyzing," Hegyi said.

"It will ask us for specific information if it needs more data to make a decision. It will also give us reasoned options as well as make decisions."

For instance, the expert system will decide what mixture of satellite images

and aerial photographs will be needed to make accurate calculations of forest inventory. And it will provide several options based on cost and operational efficiency.

Of course, the final decisions will be made by people.

Hegyi said the expert system's fast deductive prowess becomes a real asset when inhuman deadlines are created.

"It may be impossible, under normal conditions, to measure the volume, species and quality of timber within one million square hectares and make a decision about its use — all within three months.

"But that type of deadline is well within the capabilities of the expert system."

Hegyi said the design and implementation of artificial intelligence is a continuation of programs and projects that made BCFS a world leader in developing and using technology to manage natural resources.

He noted that, almost 10 years ago, BCFS was the first forestry organization in the country to create computerized geographic maps and to integrate it with satellite technology.

Doing a good deed gets deed of thanks

Public affairs staffers are used to dealing with contentious issues.

They have also been known to respond firmly but tactfully to irate callers.

Often they are able to provide information to an individual or group wanting to know more about B.C.'s forests and BCFS' responsibilities in managing the resource.

However, they rarely let others know about the praise they have received for their efforts.

That changed this summer when the Fraser Valley Region of the Boy Scouts of Canada sent the ministry a certificate of appreciation for public affairs part in helping them out with a national project called *Trees for Canada*.

The branch had provided informational material that "helped our youthgain a better understanding of the need for conservation and reforestation in their community", said a letter that accompanied the appreciation certificate.

The certificate is soon to be framed and displayed in branch's reception area "to let others know, and to remind our own staff, that we are appreciated", said special projects co-ordinator, Doug Adderley.

LEISURE

Recreation takes top billing in F&L softball championship

Recreation triumphed 7-1 over Lands in the Forest and Lands softball championships Aug. 6 in a sudden death match that capped a nine-team round robin series.

The nine teams had played a round robin of three games each at Centennial Park in Central Saanich to determine seedings for final placings.

Recreation and Lands tied for first with 3-0 win-loss records. Recreation then won handily in sudden death play.

Although three teams tied for third, a

calculation of runs for and against put Liquor Distribution Branch in third (they played in the F&L league), Information Systems captured fourth spot and Silviculture ranked fifth prior to the playoff.

However, a final game only reiterated the standings, with Liquor Distribution winning 12-7 over Information Systems.

A tie for sixth place between Research, Tech and Admin, and Valuation/Contractors — each with 1-2 records — was decided in Tech and Admin's favor after tallying runs for and runs against.

Although Financial Services fought hard during the series, they were unable to win a game.

A three-way tie was established after team votes were counted to determine the winner of the Most Sportsmanlike Team award.

The honor was shared by the teams of Valuation/Contractors, Lands and Information Systems.

Despite final standings, the players maintained a friendly competition throughout the series. In fact, many friendships established on the ball field have been carried into the workplace as well as into other recreational activities.

Plans are now underway for a new softball season and a new roster of teams featuring veteran players and newcomers.

-submitted by **Jeremey Janzen**,
Information Systems

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Correspondents

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Audit Services: Ian Birch; **Financial Services:** nil; **Human Resources:** Audrey Cowman; **Industry Development and Marketing:** Tom Niemann; **Information Systems:** nil; **Integrated Resources:** Sandy Currie; **Inventory:** Jack McLellan; **Protection:** John Parminter; **Public Affairs:** Ben Pires; **Research:** Art Scott; **Silviculture:** Ralph Huber; **Technical and Administrative Services:** Neil Chapman; **Timber Harvesting:** nil; **Valuation:** nil.

Forests Regions:

Cariboo: nil; **Kamloops:** Heather Gell; **Nelson:** Dale Anderson; **Prince George:** Esther Soles; **Prince Rupert:** Dave Francis; **Vancouver:** Jerry VanderBurch.

Forests Districts:

100 Mile House: nil; **Arrow:** Ted Evans; **Boundary:** Karen Pullman; **Bulkley:** nil; **Campbell River:** John Tisdale; **Cassiar:** nil; **Chilcotin:** nil; **Chilliwack:** Nan Vye; **Clearwater:** Ian Brown; **Cranbrook:** Tom Volkers; **Dawson Creek:** nil; **Duncan:** Tom Walker; **Fort Nelson:** Herb Spence; **Fort St. James:** nil; **Fort St. John:** Pat Doonan; **Golden:** Larry Price; **Horsefly:** nil; **Invermere:** Richard Dominy; **Kalum:** nil; **Kamloops:** Tim Sheldan; **Kispiox:** Brian Atherton; **Kootenay Lake:** Steve Flett; **Lakes:** nil; **Lillooet:** Bev Rennie; **Mackenzie:** nil; **Maple Ridge:** Doug Eastman; **McBride:** Len McClinton; **Merritt:** nil; **Mid-Coast:** nil; **Morice:** Rod DeBoice; **North Coast:** nil; **Penticton:** nil; **Port Alberni:** Ernie Beadle; **Port McNeill:** Reg Brick; **Powell River:** Lena Grant; **Prince George East:** Maury Drage; **Prince George West:** Del Blackstock; **Queen Charlotte Islands:** Ben Hansen; **Quesnel:** nil; **Revelstoke:** Bill Mitchell; **Salmon Arm:** Harry Drage; **Sechelt:** Oliver Thomas; **Squamish:** Ailsa Siemens; **Vanderhoof:** nil; **Vernon:** nil; **Williams Lake:** nil.

Forests race team 14th in BIG relay

A ministry relay team, dubbed the Cruisers, captured 14th place in a field of 93 teams, competing June 5, in the second annual BIG relay run in Victoria.

The Cruisers finished three minutes, 44 seconds behind the frontrunners — Ministry of Environment and Parks' Super Naturals — who covered the five-mile course in 34 minutes, 35 seconds.

The BIG (Business, Industry and Government) relay draws teams from southern Vancouver Island. It is run at the University of Victoria and focuses on fun, fitness and team work.

The 93 teams, representing various businesses, organizations and government ministries, involved 465 participants.