

**LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR**

ATFA Members,

On behalf of the board of directors, I'd like to share our gratitude with the members of this wonderful organization. Thanks to you, we can further our mission to promote, educate and improve. Whether you joined last week or you've been a member for a decade, your contributions have ensured Alabama's natural resources are being carefully managed for the next generation. We have had another successful year and appreciate the time and effort you put into growing programs locally.

Over the last year, I've had the pleasure of spending time on several of your properties. Whether it was for Classroom in the Forest, a landowner tour, discussing your management objectives or enjoying an afternoon in the woods, I learned from some of the best land managers in the state. Your hard work, innovations, struggles and successes have been incredible to see firsthand. We are excited to help achieve your management objectives.

2019 was a great year for our association. We enjoyed the largest membership jump in five years, an encouraging gain in license plate sales and a healthy increase in grant opportunities. Let's continue to help grow the association! Invite friends and neighbors to county events, share this newsletter and visit [TREASUREForest.org](http://TREASUREForest.org). You can also encourage friends to buy an "I'd Rather Be in the Woods!" license plate. Help show others the value in natural resources education.

As we move into 2020, the board will set certain goals, which we will share in the newsletter and on the website. Please take advantage of our free liability insurance and reimbursements for Classroom in the Forest. If your area is having a forestry or wildlife event, we want to know about it! We can help plan, promote or fund programs. Feel free to email [wmgreen@alfafarmers.org](mailto:wmgreen@alfafarmers.org), call (334) 612-5235 or message our Facebook page. With your help, 2020 will be another great year.

William Green  
Executive Director

## Conference Educates, Awards Landowners

Natural resources education and awards were at the forefront of the second annual Alabama Landowners Conference Oct. 22-24 in Prattville.

Over 200 landowners and professionals attended the event, hosted by the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA), Alabama Natural Resources Council (ANRC) and Alabama Tree Farm Committee.

During the conference, the ATFA presented the Bill Moody Award to state Rep. Danny Crawford, R-Athens, for his commitment to multiple-use forest management and helping others understand the benefits forests provide. The Bill Moody Award is the organization's highest honor and is named after former State Forester Bill Moody, who founded the TREASURE Forest certification and died earlier this year.

"Knowing Bill Moody and some of the winners since the award started, I have joined a class of people who are passionate about natural resources in Alabama," Crawford said. "I appreciate and am humbled by the selection." *(continued on page 2)*



State Rep. Danny Crawford, R-Athens, received the Bill Moody Award, which recognizes individuals who are committed to multiple-use forest management. Crawford, a Limestone County native, is pictured with his wife, Mary Kay.

## Upcoming Events

ALABAMA FARMERS FEDERATION COMMODITY ORGANIZATION MEETING  
Register at [AlfaFarmers.org](http://AlfaFarmers.org)

Feb. 4 Wildlife

Feb. 5 Forestry

Check [TREASUREForest.org](http://TREASUREForest.org) for more events and additional information. To submit an event, contact William Green at [wmgreen@alfafarmers.org](mailto:wmgreen@alfafarmers.org).



Mobile County educator Joy Herring, pictured with husband Robert, received the Gary Fortenberry Partnership Award.

*(Continued from page 1)*

The Limestone County TREASURE Forest owner and ATFA board member also chairs the House Agriculture & Forestry Committee.

ATFA honored Joy Herring with the Gary Fortenberry Partnership Award, which recognizes professionals who promote TREASURE Forest at the county level.

Herring is the science lab coordinator at McDavid-Jones Elementary School in Citronelle and has led students through Classroom in the Forest for over 20 years. During the last two decades, she and community volunteers turned a former gully bordering the school into a certified TREASURE Forest with 11 learning stations used by the school's 1,000 students.

"This is truly my passion, and I hope this program continues to teach children the value of forestry," Herring said. "We're so proud of our students, who are truly good stewards of the land. I feel we are growing a good harvest for the future."

The conference kicked off with tours at Sherer Longleaf Farm and the Central Alabama Fowl Preserve in Chilton County, both focused on gleaning alternative revenue from forestland. A landowner panel echoed that theme later in the conference.

Other speaker topics included forest market updates and a legislative update and preview. During workshops, attendees learned about Project Learning Tree, landscape management plans, chronic wasting disease, the White Oak Initiative and wild hog removal.



A panel discussed additional revenue sources for property. From left are Mississippi State University Extension's Daryl Jones, landowner Salem Saloom of Conecuh County and Central Alabama Fowl Preserve's Mike Atcheson of Chilton County.



Chris Erwin of the American Forest Foundation addressed attendees about landscape scale management plans.

The ATFA silent auction raised over \$1,800 for scholarships. Columnist Sean Dietrich, known professionally as Sean of the South, entertained attendees with stories of the South during the welcome banquet.

For more conference photos, find the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association on Facebook. ■

Popular columnist Sean Dietrich entertained attendees during the welcome dinner Oct. 22.



William Freise of Mobile County, right, asked a question during the landowner panel discussion Oct. 23 while ATFA Executive Director William Green looked on.



During the Alabama Landowners Conference, attendees networked with exhibitors at the trade show. From left are James and Slade Johnson of Trips 4 Trade, an outdoor travel organization, and the Alabama Forestry Commission's Bayne Moore.



# Wildlife Trends

with Andy Whitaker



## HELPFUL TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL HUNTING SEASON



### Discuss Deer Management And Harvest Strategies

**H**olding a preseason meeting to discuss the deer management program and deer harvest plans for the upcoming season will ensure everyone is on the same page as hunters head to the woods.

Hopefully you have been collecting harvest, hunter and population data regarding the deer herd. Use this information to assess the deer herd's status and how the herd has or is responding to management strategies.

A preseason meeting is a great time to review this information, make harvest decisions and share that intel with the group or hunters using the property. As a biologist, I often present this information to hunting clubs or landowners with recommendations for the upcoming season. These meetings are most effective if held just prior to hunting season to ensure the information is fresh on hunters' minds.

This is also a great time to review general rules for hunting, discuss housekeeping items around the camp and property, and develop management or maintenance project lists. These meetings are often tied into a work day or work weekend at the property.

### Scout From The Skinning Shed

How many times have you found a great place on your property that had everything — great food sources, cover, a few deer trails and rubs — and then you set up a stand, sit there all day with anticipation and never see a deer?

Or have you ever convinced yourself, "This is the place, it's just a matter of time," and spent a weekend committed to a single stand and not seen much of anything?

I have, and it isn't much fun! I don't have to kill a deer every time I go to the woods, but I at least want to see some action.

In these situations, it's likely the area I was hunting was good and had all the ingredients of a prime spot, but the deer simply weren't using it at the time. It's also likely there were either abundant food sources or more preferred food sources available elsewhere on the property.

Like people, deer feed many times each day, so food drives most deer movement. That movement results in successful hunts. The key is to know where deer are bedding or loafing or which food source they are using. Position yourself in a strategic location near the food source, bedding area or between the two, and you're in business.

Scouting by traditional techniques is necessary to consistently have successful hunts. However, traditional methods require time and energy, which can be

limited. Besides the time required, traditional scouting requires the hunter to ramble around the woods disturbing deer and leaving a lot of scent behind. This is where scouting from the skinning shed comes in handy, as it will minimize scouting pressure and can save precious time for the stand.

Scouting from the skinning shed refers to inspecting rumen contents of harvested deer to determine available and preferred food sources deer use at that particular time of the season. The time is important because food sources change from week to week. To do this, simply cut the rumen, or stomach, open and look at what's inside.

A word of caution: If the rumen is bloated or tight, release pressure slowly with the point of your blade before slicing. Although the contents often look messy, the primary food sources the deer has eaten should be obvious after some inspection. It helps to pour the contents on the ground or concrete pad and run water over it.

I keep a scouting box at the skinning shed that makes the job easier. The scouting box is just a wooden box with a hardware cloth bottom. This box allows you to dump the stomach contents onto the screen and wash away the more digested or fine particles leaving only the larger pieces behind. Stomach contents often include leaves and acorns. Identifying what deer eat helps you focus on specific areas of your property leading to more productive hunts. ■

## In Memoriam: Bill Moody



Moody

Cecil William "Bill" Moody of Pike Road died Aug. 12 following a battle with cancer. He was 89.

An Air Force veteran, Moody completed a Bachelor of Science in forestry in 1956 at the University of Florida. He served as Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) state forester 34 years and helped the AFC become a model for fire prevention and forest management. He helped create the TREASURE Forest Program, which focuses on multiple-use

forest management. The Bill Moody Award is presented annually by the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association to a TREASURE Forest owner who exemplifies Moody's spirit of sustainability and usability.

Moody also helped form People Against a Littered State (PALS), served on Faulkner University's board of trustees and was a member of Dalraida Church of Christ.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Mary; sons Kevin (Sheila) Moody and Mike (Karen) Moody; and grandchildren Miles (Meredith) Pepping, Emma Moody, Michael (Erin) Moody and Cole Moody. He was preceded in death by a son, Ken.

# 2019 In Review

In 2019, the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA) reaffirmed its mission to promote, educate and improve through various programs and events.

"We're dedicated to helping landowners manage their property to the best of their abilities," said ATFA Executive Director William Green. "It's a pleasure to reach those landowners with the ATFA mission and to educate future natural resources leaders about the importance of good stewardship."

Programs and initiatives included:

**Scholarships:** ATFA created new scholarships for Alabama students. Two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to students pursuing degrees in forestry or wildlife sciences at Auburn University, and two \$500 scholarships will be awarded to students enrolled in the Forest Technology program at Lurleen B. Wallace Community College in Andalusia.

**Private Applicator Certification Courses:** ATFA partnered with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System to host four meetings, where over 75 landowners completed private applicators training and received a license at no cost.

**Classroom In The Forest:** Over 3,000 fifth-graders participated in ATFA's flagship program. They learned the value of private land ownership, basic timber management, firearm safety, tree identification, animal identification and environmental safety.



David Farnsworth, right, hosted Classroom in the Forest (CITF) on his Talladega County TREASURE Forest Sept. 27. In 2019, over 3,000 students learned about timber management, wildlife, the environment and more during CITF events.

**Hunters Night Out:** ATFA partnered with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to host and promote regional meetings for hunters. Topics included food plot management, accurately aging deer on the hoof, common wildlife diseases and scoring white-tailed deer.

**Liability Insurance:** ATFA continued to promote and manage its liability insurance program, underwritten by Outdoor Underwriters, Inc. It provides peace of mind for landowners and clubs across the state. The competitive price was designed to act as a member benefit for ATFA and Alabama Farmers Federation members and help protect their property. ATFA offers two products, hunting club liability insurance and general timberland liability insurance.

**Bylaws Amendments:** ATFA amended its bylaws to adjust the number of directors and redefine the organization's regions. The new changes show the board can have a minimum of 12 members and a maximum of 18. The new regions are North, Central and South. In addition to these changes, the board designated John Dorrill and Jimmy Jimmerson as its first honorary members. ■

## Supporting Conservation Education In Alabama

Available at your local tag office. For more information, visit [TREASUREForest.org](http://TREASUREForest.org) or [pros.mvtrip.alabama.gov](http://pros.mvtrip.alabama.gov) to reserve yours today!

## ATFA Officers

### Gary Cole\*

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### Mark Finley\*

Vice President, Winston Co.

### Jamestican Parham\*

Secretary-Treasurer, Wilcox Co.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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\*Executive Committee

### William Green

Executive Director

(334) 612-5235

[wmgreen@alfafarmers.org](mailto:wmgreen@alfafarmers.org)

### Will Brantley

Alabama Forestry Commission

Management Division Director

(334) 560-6047

[william.brantley@forestry.alabama.gov](mailto:william.brantley@forestry.alabama.gov)



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