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Second timber-harvesting class graduates from CF Levy Campus



CF Provost Holly McGlashan speaks with Instructor Bryan Olmert before the start of the ceremony.

Story, Photos and Video

By Jeff M. Hardison © July 20, 2018 at 12:48 p.m.

LEVY COUNTY -- Five men graduated Thursday (July 19) as the second group to have completed the timber-harvesting class at the College of Central Florida's Jack Wilkinson Campus in Levy County.

<https://youtu.be/Hwutrau4Vpk>

In this video, CF Levy Provost Holly McGlashan tells about the program the five men took part in to earn the recognition they received on Thursday (July 19).

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Before the program began, sitting in the audience was (from left) Instructor Bryan Olmert, Jimmy Breeden, owner of Breeden Pulpwood, an independent contractor with Loncala, his daughter and candidate for Levy County School Board Ashley Breeden Clemenzi, Lynetta Griner and Ken Griner of Usher Land and Timber.



Bryan Olmert speaks about the students in this graduating class of Master Foresters.

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(from left) Ronnie Henry, Jacob Mercer, Lane Montes, Thomas North and Dalton Philman accept their certificates as part of the CF Class of 2018 for the Timber-Harvesting Equipment Program.



CF Levy Campus Manager of Instructional Services Leah Gamble gives the closing remarks.

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Showing some of the certification they earned as they stand with their instructor are (from left) Dalton Philman, Tommy North, Jacob Mercer, Instructor Bryan Olmert, Ronnie Henry and Lane Montes.



Refreshments await the people's enjoyment after the event.

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Ronald Henry, Jacob Mercer, Lane Montes, Thomas North and Dalton Philman are the CF Class of 2018 for the Timber-Harvesting Equipment Program.

Their instructor, who taught the first set as well, is Bryan Olmert. Olmert is 68 years old and retired from Loncala of High Springs after working in the timber industry with Loncala for 42 years.

CF Levy Provost Holly McGlashan expressed her gratitude to everyone who helped make the program a success. The late Gary Beauchamp, who passed away in May, is missed, McGlashan said.

Beauchamp was a moving force behind the program and he is a key contributor to the final textbook, McGlashan said. He was well respected in the industry and spent countless hours developing this program, she said

This program was eight weeks long, and it went from May 29 through July 19 at the Jack Wilkinson Levy Campus, 15390 N.W. U.S. Highway 19, Chiefland. The campus is a bit south of the City of Fanning Springs.

Classes met Monday through Thursday in the morning for the first five weeks and then for the full day during the last three weeks.

All five men attended every day and no one was tardy, even though one of the students lived in St. Augustine,

The five students learned through classroom instruction as well as field trips to local logging companies and mills.

All five men earned and were presented with three certificates on Thursday. They earned OSHA-10 and CPR certification, as well as the Master Logger Certification.

They participated in cover harvesting a section of timber donated by the Florida Forestry Association. They each used three machines to prove they had learned how to harvest timber. Those machines are known as a skidder, a fellow-buncher and a loader.

Due to a generous scholarship, students attended the program for free. The program includes all assessments required for registration, textbooks, fees, personal protective equipment and tuition.

In addition to her expression of heartfelt gratitude for the late Mr. Beauchamp, Provost McGlashan spoke about other significant contributors.

Lynetta Griner and Ken Griner of Usher land and Timber were next to be recognized for their support in the program. McGlashan said they came to CF with a need for this class to exist.

They donated their time to speak with students, she said, , and they allowed staff to spend time in the field as part of the training as well.

Loncala donated employees to assist with training, McGlashan said, as well as helping with field trips. Loncala hauled all of the timber logged by the students, she added.

The Florida Forestry Association was noted for its support of the program as well. The association was crucial in providing scholarships for the Master Logger Certification, McGlashan said.

The Florida Forest Service allowed CF for the second year to train in Goethe State

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Forest. From the Florida Forest Service, Assistant State Director Jeff Vowell and Best Management Practices Forester Robin Holland were noted for their assistance in the program.

Florida Forest Service State Land Forester Bobby Cahal of Goethe State Forest was a key participant in this learning exercise as well.

Assistant State Director Vowell was unable to attend the ceremony Thursday and State Forest Management Chief John Sabo represented the Florida Forest Service at the event.

Industry partners included Citrus Levy Marion CareerSource, Ring Power, Tidewater Equipment and Tri-County Oil.

When Instructor Olmert took the podium, he spoke about this set of five men who achieved their goals.

Like McGlashan, Olmert shared his feelings about the late Gary Beauchamp.

“Gary did a wonderful job,” Olmert said.

He left behind some great guidelines for harvesting timber, Olmert said.

Students learned about mapping, measuring, helping to write management plans for timber owners, and tree identification, Olmert said.

They learned about the value of trees, he said, including the economic impact that forestry has on the state of Florida -- \$24 billion a year.

The men gained a basic understanding of a broad spectrum of the industry, Olmert said. The students gained a thorough grasp of logging techniques, Olmert said, which they will hone for years to come.

The majority of harvesting operations use the three main pieces of equipment the student mastered, Olmert said.

Another thing he noticed about this class of students was their ability to work as a team.

To see this set of men being able to pull eight or nine loads of logs a day, Olmert said, is very impressive. These students truly mastered their skills.

Olmert spoke about each of the students.

Ronnie Henry, already an employee of Usher Land and Timber, want to further his education about the profession of logging, Olmert said.

Jacob Mercer of Williston is going to work in the logging business in Dixie County, Olmert said. The instructor noted this student was very efficient and did a great job on each piece of equipment.

Lane Montes, also from Williston, is seeking employment through a couple of logging interests in the area, Olmert said.

Thomas “Tommy” North is the youngest student, being just 18 years old. He came from St. Augustine and, like the other students was never absent and never tardy.

The equipment was in the woods at 6:30 a.m., all oiled and greased, Olmert said.

John Dalton Philman. Like his classmates, he always agreed to do what was asked of him, Olmert said, adding that the skills this set of students demonstrated will take each of them a long way in their chosen profession in the timber-logging industry.

CF Levy Campus Manager of Instructional Services Leah Gamble gave the closing

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remarks.

She congratulated the graduates and mentioned that CF hopes to offer this class next summer for another set of future timber harvesters.

Refreshments after the event included cookies, coffee, fruit drinks and water. And just as there are many unnamed people behind this class, so too there are the people who work in the background on the campus.

For refreshments, one of those workers is Martha Chadburn, staff assistant.

Click [HERE](#) to see the story about the first class like this to graduate CF.