

MARYANNE ARCAND HONOURED AS ILA MEMBER OF THE YEAR



MaryAnne Arcand was this year's well-deserving recipient of the Interior Logging Association's Member of the Year Award.

Every year the ILA recognizes a recipient who is worthy of this meaningful award, and there is no question MaryAnne was a great choice for this year. MaryAnne is well known throughout the industry and the province as a whole for her tireless efforts to promote safety, both in the workplace and elsewhere.

MaryAnne is Director of the BC Forest Council's Forestry Truck-Safe and Northern Initiatives program, and is known affectionately throughout the industry as "the bulldozer". She earned the nickname and award because of her relentless pursuit for safety in the industry as well as her outstanding contribution to the harvesting sector.

The BC Forest Safety Council is a not-for-profit society dedicated to promoting forest health and safety. The Council was created in 2004 and is dedicated to promoting forest safety in the sector. It is supported by all major forestry organizations in B.C. and works with forestry employers, workers, contractors and the provincial government and agencies to implement changes necessary to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries in the forest sector.

For the past two years, MaryAnne has been advocating safer practices in the forest industry, particularly in the log-hauling sector. In the last year alone, she has met with over 6,000 workers and their families teaching them about safe practices and responding to issues and their concerns. She has traveled to every logging community in the province, held over 60 meetings and spoke at over a dozen conferences.

Wayne Lintott, general manager of the ILA, says MaryAnne deserved the award because she puts her heart into her work. "She's made a tremendous difference in our industry," Wayne said. "MaryAnne's brought log haulers closer to contractors and licensees, and opened up the lines of communication."

MaryAnne says she was shocked when she received the award. "I'm not the only one doing things," said MaryAnne. "The entire Council is just as determined as I am to make a difference and everyone is working their tails off."

In 2006, the Council and MaryAnne helped to implement the first radio campaign targeted at drivers to encourage them to share the road and drive safely. They also began working on a joint-industry strategy for resource road management, adopting vehicle identification plates for trucks and managing technical development work on steep-slope hauling standards.

MaryAnne plans on continuing these initiatives through 2007 while also focusing on a few other major projects. Two of these projects include initiating the development of a log truck driver certification program and working actively with the Council to launch the SAFE Companies program for independent operators.

MaryAnne says the key to her job is meeting people in their communities and helping them to believe in safe practices. "This is how it has to be done," says MaryAnne. "Bureaucratic solutions don't work on the ground."

MaryAnne's involvement with promoting safety began well before

her position with the BC Safety Council. She has been involved with Northern Health's RoadHealth Coalition for a number of years. RoadHealth is a task force made up of organizations committed to working on motor vehicle crash reduction initiatives. RoadHealth has been working to develop innovative projects focusing on preventing injuries and saving lives.

"Northern Health sees road safety as a health issue, which it is," MaryAnne explained.

MaryAnne explains that her dedication to improve safety on the roads began as a personal cause.

"My sister was killed in a traffic accident at 17," she stated simply. "This is far more than just a job to me."

She added that on average 75 people per year are killed in motor vehicle accidents in BC's north.

Previous winners of the ILA Member of the Year Award include Sharon Wilkinson previously of Revelstoke and Marcel Payer of Vernon. ■



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