



STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

JOHN D. CHERRY, JR.
LT. GOVERNOR

February 4, 2004

Dear Herb and Florence:

Though I am unable to congratulate you in person, it is my honor to recognize you both as the 2003 Michigan Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year.

This award is a small token of the thanks the entire State of Michigan owes to you both for providing us with your exceptional example of forest management. Private landowners who take such an active interest in the positive aspects of tree farming are invaluable to our state, and I am so pleased to know that you both have had a tremendous impact on your community. It is always an honor to recognize individuals who have made a difference, and I am grateful for the opportunity to thank you for your contributions to the industry and to our Great Lakes State.

Again, Herb and Florence, my warmest congratulations and best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer M. Granholm".

Jennifer M. Granholm
Governor

STATE AND DISTRICT TREE FARMERS OF THE YEAR -2003

Herb and Florence Reiley have been selected as the State of Michigan Tree Farmers of the Year for 2003. They live in Antrim County near Bellaire on there 800 acre Tree Farm. Reiley's were selected from Statewide Tree Farmers for their long time proper management; their history as tree planters and Christmas tree growers, and their service to the State and local community.

Reileys have lived on the farm over 60 years. Part of the original farm was bought and inherited from Herb's father and grandfather, who purchased it in 1905. The rest they have purchased over time as property became available. They have had a written forest management plan for 43 years. The property has been a Certified Tree Farm for 9 years.

Herb and Florence have been doing proper forest and wildlife management from the beginning when they planted trees together as High School Students in 1937. Since recording assistance in 1958, they have done 470 acres of hardwood improvement, 45 acres of pine pruning, 200 acres of harvest and planted over 150,000 trees on their own property. It is now being managed on a sustainable basis by Fahl Forest Products. They have set up annual monitoring plots and a modest cutting rotation. They have wildlife ponds and plantings, turkey releases and a reserved area at Hitchcock Creek, headwaters of the Chain-O-Lakes.

As Contract Tree Planters in the area, Michigan State University estimated they have planted over 15 million trees. As Christmas Tree growers, they were innovators in the business and have sold trees across the nation. Their trees have been sold to the actual South Fork Ranch in Dallas Texas, as seen on TV.

Herb and Florence have been involved in local service: 25 years with the Conservation District; Farm Bureau; Masonic Lodge; Boy Scouts; Bank Board; Zoning Board; and Herb has received the "Mel Jones Fellowship", the highest Service award in Lions International. They have traveled to Cuba with MSU in a cultural exchange.

Reiley's property has been used for numerous educational and training tours; workshops; and even the High School Cross Country race sire. The Lions Club has cut donated fire wood annually for a benefit.

Reiley's children gave them a gold pin engraved: "Our parents gave more than they took." We agree, and congratulate Herb and Florence upon recognition of their work.

Michigan Tree Farm is part of the National Tree Farm System, sponsored by the American Forest Foundation. It is the oldest Certification system in the US and recognizes landowners who do a good and sustainable job of forest management. For information call the Michigan Tree Farm office in Grayling at 1-989-348-9319.