

Mark Metz

Mark Alan Metz was born in Huntington in 1959 and grew up in Barboursville. He attended Marshall University for two years, and then transferred to the West Virginia University School of Forestry, where he earned his Master's Degree in Forestry in 1984. He was active in the WVU Forestry Club and Xi Sigma Pi National Forestry Honorary.



He worked at the West Virginia Division of Forestry from 1985-1990, where much of his time was spent fighting forest fires. He also helped landowners evaluate and improve woodlands and was a strong proponent of detailed written forest management plans.

He then founded Mountaineer Forestry Services, which he operated until 2012, when he took a state/federal forester job to help private landowners with non-commercial timber management. He was a member of the of the year selection committee, and, between 1999 and 2001, helped prepare three state winners to win Northeast Regional awards.

Metz was known for organizing the West Virginia Forestry Association's silent auction for 19 years. He was also on the group's board from 2003-2006 and won the group's Service Award in 2002. He was chairman of the Tree Farm Program committee from 2002-2005, and was instrumental in setting up the Pat Plitt Memorial Tree Farm Scholarship Fund.

He was a founding member of the Woodland Owners of West Virginia. He was a board member for 10 years and president from 2004-2006. The logo he developed for the group is still in use. The "Emergency Forest Restoration Program" practice plan he developed in case of tornado or other disaster is still in use today.

He married Becky Patterson in 1991 and they had two daughters. He died in a hunting accident in 2012 at age 53.

As a youth, Metz was an Eagle Scout. He also helped a family friend label trees along a trail he was building as an Eagle Scout project. The trail has now been renamed in Metz's honor.

He attended Christ the King Lutheran Church in Barboursville, where he was the financial secretary, a church council member and property committee chairman.

He was known as a person who could take complex issues and make them easily understandable. He organized numerous workshops and tours of his farm at Peppermint Creek in Jackson County, and was the author of numerous articles, including one in Wonderful West Virginia Magazine.

Most importantly, he was known as someone who believed it was more important that a forest be well managed than it be used simply to maximize profit at harvest.