A&R Tree Service Chooses Wood Beaver 20 BAB to Support Growing Firewood Component

By Diane M. Calabrese

RICHMOND HILL, Georgia – Tree maintenance and firewood are the business components at A&R Tree Service, an enterprise with a definite focus: It is to “show God’s love through our work,” said owner Randy Ryan.

“We try to amplify God in all we do,” explained Randy. “We do devotions before we start in the morning.”

A&R Tree Service has operated for 15 years. Yet Randy has been doing tree work since 1983, when he added trimming to part-time handyman services, a source of extra money for his family.

Before entering the wood products industry, Randy did many things. He earned a degree in radiology and worked in hospitals along the East Coast doing cardiac catheterizations, stenting, CT scans and ultrasounds.

Randy also served with the 82nd Airborne and in Desert Storm. A former drill sergeant, he is a survivor of the March 23, 1994 crash between an F-16 and a C-130 transport at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. — an accident in which 23 died and 100 were injured.

“A lot of lives changed that day,” said Randy, recalling the March date. “It was the worst day of my life and the best day of my life.” Best because Randy would fully commit as a Christian, something about which he has done testimony, including at a Billy Graham Crusade.

“I try to pay it forward,” said Randy. Helping people is as important to him as are doing and learning.

As for doing, once Randy added tree work to his part-time handyman service, he

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kept going. “I always carried my saws, even when [working in hospitals],” he said.

With his technical knowledge, Randy is an exacting buyer of machines. “Firewood – I’ve been doing it five or six years – and just couldn’t keep up with my splitter,” he said. So he started to look for a firewood processor.

“I did a lot of research and investigation,” said Randy. “Then, I called Bryndon [O’Hara] at Wood Beaver and I was really impressed.”

Randy explained that Bryndon did not speak negatively about his competitors. Moreover, Bryndon confirmed the capabilities of the Wood Beaver firewood processor, a model 20 BAB that Randy ultimately purchased.

“For instance, the ram on the splitter — it has a second ram,” said Randy. That allows it to have fantastic speed and still have the power to blast through anything.

With the Wood Beaver model 20 BAB in use, A&R Tree Service is able to produce firewood much more quickly. “Now, two guys working for an hour can do what [three] did working all day,” said Randy. “It’s a great piece of equipment. I’m really pleased with it.”

The Wood Beaver model 20 BAB firewood processor had only been in use for a couple of months when we spoke with Randy in mid-December, and on a day when it was 80 F in the Richmond Hill, Ga. home to A&R Tree Service. Randy was unsure where production was heading, but he was certain it would increase considerably.

“The sky’s the limit next year,” said Randy. “I just purchased a bundler from Wood Beaver. We have six businesses that we bundle for – and we’ve already sold 400 bundles.” The Wood Beaver Twister Firewood Bundler, which has a tension-spring clutch, packages 12-inch to 24-inch long pieces at a rate of 75 bundles per hour.

It’s mainly red oak that’s processed for firewood. The raw material comes from A&R’s tree component.

“Our main focus is tree work,” said Randy. “Most people in the tree business do firewood to get over three months of winter.”

Even so, Randy envisions his firewood sales moving in new directions. Currently, the growing roster of customers includes a wholesaler and a highly-rated barbecue restaurant.

Tree work encompasses residential customers and some standing arrangements with property managers, building complexes, and a chain of gas stations. “I’m trying to get to where I can recycle everything I cut or trim – the bigger pieces for boards, the smaller for mulch or fuel,” said Randy. And, of course, the in-between pieces, firewood.

The equipment used by A&R for tree work includes a 75-ft. bucket truck and several pieces of Vermeer equipment, including a stump grinder. Randy still climbs. “I’ve tried every chain saw out there,” he said. “And I’ve always used Stihl. I’m a Stihl guy.”

Randy got to know Savannah, Georgia when he worked in a hospital there. He liked the area and when he decided to leave radiology for wood products, he based his company in the Bryan County town of Richmond Hill, a municipality with 11,000 residents that lies just west of Savannah.

Wood Beaver Forestry is headquartered in Hartford, Wis. Randy was so keen to get his Wood Beaver 20 BAB firewood processor that he drove 1100 miles to Hartford from Richmond Hill and arrived a day early.

When he got to Wisconsin, Randy was not only early but without a coat. The team at Wood Beaver found him a loaner coat, made sure he had a room to get some rest before the return trip, and generally reached out as new friends and colleagues. “They took care of me like I was family,” said Randy. “It’s just a company of integrity. That’s the bottom line.”

The team at Wood Beaver aims to be positive view of Wood Beaver Forestry. “I saw a lot of my business traits in Wood Beaver,” said Randy. “They take pride in what they’re doing.”

A&R Tree Service has three employ-
ees, all of whom have overcome difficult circumstances to move forward. “We’re a ministry here,” said Randy. “It’s to show God’s love through our work. Our mission statement is a Bible verse, Proverbs 3:5-6…Trust in God is the beginning.”

Randy has confidence in his team. He knows Wood Beaver has the same unwavering confidence in its team.

“My workers are men of integrity,” said Randy, explaining he can be off a jobsite and know his men will do everything correctly. He learned talking with employees at Wood Beaver how they, too, were working independently and with the same attention to detail they would if they were being supervised directly.

Randy knows he does not have to ask his team “to go the extra mile,” he said. They just will.

“I’ve got to do what’s right,” said Randy. That means charging a fair price for each job. When he provides an estimate, he does not consider it the start of a negotiation, but simply what the job will cost to do. He wishes that everyone would operate with such candor because it saves time that can be used elsewhere.

Randy’s wife, Sheila, helps in the business, doing books. “She’s awesome,” he said.

When Randy and Sheila have free time, they enjoy going out on the water and boating. Randy also plays in a band at his church. He started out playing guitar, but a bass player was needed so they taught him how to play the bass.

Helping young men who have gone off course reestablish a good path is extremely important to Randy. There are many young men who would benefit from the presence of someone who will take the time to give them “tough love,” he said. He has tried to do just that; and he believe that jobs and showing the way to do things right can change young men’s lives.

As for the ‘A’ in A&R Tree Service, Randy was told when still a boy that if he ever started a business, the name should begin with an ‘A’ to move it to the top of alphabetical order. He took the advice to heart.

With the Wood Beaver model 20 BAB in use, A&R Tree Service is able to produce firewood much more quickly. According to the owner, “Now two guys working for an hour can do what three did working all day.”

A&R Tree Service processes mainly red oak for their firewood. The raw material comes from the company’s tree component.
“The Firewood Factory”

**20BAB PERFORMANCE & SPECIFICATIONS**
- 4 Plus Full Cords Per Hour
- Duts up to 23"+ Diameter
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- Spits Wood from 3" to 24" Lengths
- Kohler 40 HP gas engine or optional Kubota 40 HP diesel
- 10-19 GPM Hydraulic Eaton Pump System
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- Log Length “Cem” Measure System – Move & Relieves Cut
- “Super Split” Cycle Time 3-4 Seconds
- Clean Out Grate

**PERFORMANCE**
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- Maximum Log Length 8 Ft
- Splitter Cycle Time Super Fast 5 To 6 Seconds
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