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Captain Santa and the Christmas Tree Ship

The loss of the vessel known throughout Chicago as the “Christmas Tree Ship” is a symbol of dangers faced by the ships and sailors who braved the storm ridden great lakes in the age of sail. [View Video](#)

In the News

Wisconsin Archaeologists Identify 16 Ancient Canoes in a Prehistoric Lake 'Parking Lot'

The Wisconsin Historical Society announced Wednesday that archaeologists have mapped the location of 16 canoes submerged in the lake bed of Lake Mendota in Madison. Tamara Thomsen, the state's maritime archaeologist, said that the site lies near a network of what were once indigenous trails, suggesting ancient people left the canoes there for anyone to use as they traveled, much like a modern-day e-bike rack. [Read More](#)

Report Invasive Hemlock Insects This Winter

Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) looms as a major threat to Wisconsin's hemlock trees. As the infestation of these invasive, aphid-like insects spreads in Michigan and other states in the eastern United States, Wisconsin is preparing to respond when it arrives. HWA is most evident in winter and spring as fluffy, white, woolly balls that are present at the base of hemlock needles. These fluffy, waxy balls cover adult female adelgids and eggs. [Read More](#)

'The Tracks We Leave': A Forester's Reflection on the Legacy of Conservation

Forestry offers a unique glimpse into the natural beauty and evolving landscape of Wisconsin. In an essay for “Wisconsin Life,” writer Ron Weber — a forester himself — reflects on the tracks we leave in the woods, and what that can teach us about wildlife restoration and the legacy of conservation work. [Read More](#)

What to Know About the Emerald Ash Borer and its Significance to the Menominee Tribe

The emerald ash borer has brought disappointment and heartbreak for more than two decades over an ever-increasing portion of the United States. For the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin, the invasive beetle has also challenged its culture, because the ash tree, especially the black ash, is such a part of its history. Here's what you should know. [Read More](#)

Longtime Northeast Wisconsin Tree Farmer Donates Christmas Tree for State Capitol

OCONTO COUNTY, Wis. (WFRV) – For Dave Vander Velden, Christmas trees are his livelihood, a career he was able to carve up for himself throughout his life. Vander Velden was the owner of Whispering Pines for decades, and even today continues to grow trees. He again was able to add another honor to his name—having a tree in Madison at the State Capitol Rotunda. [Read More](#)

Wisconsin Capitol Rotunda Christmas Tree Installed for 2025

MADISON, Wis. — The 2025 Wisconsin State Capitol Rotunda Christmas Tree was installed Thursday morning inside the Capitol, bringing the holiday spirit to visitors and politicians alike. This year's tree is a 30-foot balsam fir harvested in Gillett. The tree was donated by retired growers Mary and Dave Vander Velden. The official theme for the tree is "The Learning Tree," featuring student-made ornaments. [Read More](#)

Beware Of Invasive Plants In Your Holiday Décor

With the holiday season drawing near, it's time for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to remind home crafters to be wary of using invasive plants in fall and winter decorations. While holiday decorations made from natural materials can be beautiful, some wreaths and other home decorations may contain invasive species. [Read More](#)

How Could AI Help (and Hurt) Forestry?

The whole world is buzzing about the potential and pitfalls of artificial intelligence—including those who work in forestry. AI could revolutionize forestry, making it possible to save more lives and ecosystems through faster and more accurate data analysis. But if forestry professionals aren't careful, AI could also botch critical land-management and policy decisions. [Read More](#)