



The Tapline

Quarterly Newsletter of the Indiana Maple Syrup Association

Meeting Edition, October 2008

Sugar Bush Management to be Featured at Annual Meeting

Dr. Randall B. Heiligmann, Professor and State Forestry Specialist at The Ohio State University and co-editor of the North American Maple Syrup Producers Manual will be the featured speaker when members of the Indiana Maple Syrup Association gather for their annual meeting on Saturday, December 5 in the Community Building at the Whitley County Fairgrounds in Columbia City.

A past presenter, Dr. Heiligmann last spoke at our 2003 meeting when he shared information regarding Ohio's laws and rules related to maple production and inspection. For this year's meeting, he will focus on sugar bush management.

In his position as State Forestry Extension Specialist, Dr. Heiligmann is responsible for extension education in forestry management.

Furthermore, as a co-editor of the North American Maple Syrup Producers Manual, he was called upon to invite experts from the maple industry to contribute to author chapters that deal with important aspects of maple production. Dr. Heiligmann was one of the experts that contributed to the writing of the chapter dealing with managing maple trees for sap production.

His presentations on sugar bush management will provide valuable information based on his expertise in maple research. Sugar bush management incorporates a wide variety of subjects from planting to determining which trees to remove from your stand.

As he has been active in maple research for many years, we are privileged to have Dr. Heiligmann come and share his knowledge with us.

In addition to Dr. Heiligmann, a representative from Bendix Woods County Park will be giving a presentation.

Bendix Woods County Park is located in New Carlisle, IN which is about 10 miles west of South Bend on the south side of S.R. 2.

The park has nature trails and a nature center with a naturalist available to conduct tours of the nature preserve.

Bendix Woods Nature Preserve is a tract located within the park that contains an old-growth woods. The woods is dominated by beech and sugar maples trees. Black maples may also be found in this woods.

Bendix Woods County Park and Nature Preserve are owned by the St. Joseph County Park and Recreation Department.



Dr. Randall Heiligmann, Professor at The Ohio State University and co-editor of the North American Maple Syrup Producers Manual—photo courtesy of The Ohio State University Web site.

Hoosier Production for 2008 Above Average

About 9783.75 gallons of maple syrup were produced in Indiana in 2008 according to Jeff Settle, Supervisor for the Indiana Division of Forestry's Utilization & Marketing (U&M) Program. The total number of gallons produced was about 95% higher than the 5018.75 gallons produced in 2007.

However, this year's production was the highest reported production since 2005. Though Indiana has an active maple syrup industry, Hoosier production is too small to be included in the federal agricultural survey.

Because of this, Settle and the Indiana Division of Forestry have kindly stepped in to distribute survey forms and compile results.

Otherwise, we would have no information about maple syrup production in Indiana.

We are grateful to producers who take the time to complete the surveys and return them to Jeff.

Jeff Settle's Report begins on Page 5.

Welcome to IMSA's 2008 Annual Meeting

**Garry Sink,
President, IMSA**



Many things have happened since our last annual meeting in December; some good, some not so good. In February, Kenny Shipley passed away after a long illness. He was a good friend, and an excellent sugar maker. He was one of the founders of the Indiana Maple Syrup Association. He has been the President and also Treasurer of the organization. He will be greatly missed.

In the late winter at tapping time, Williams-Teague sugar house burned to the ground.

The Indiana 2008 sugar season, for the most part, was good, but some reported below average production.

In May, some of the members got together at Harris Sugar Bush to can almost 400 gallons of syrup to be sold at the State Fair. This year the syrup sales at the fair was excellent. We ran out of syrup two thirds into the fair. A special 'Thank You' to Art and Becky Harris for canning many more gallons of syrup so we could continue our sales.

This year we have Pam Childers as our new Webmaster and Publisher of the Tapline; also Louise Jewell is our new Tapline Editor. Larry Yoder has done these jobs for many years.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Larry for his faithful and excellent service to the Indiana Maple Syrup Association.

The Indiana Maple Syrup Association has been representing the interests of Hoosier maple syrup producers since its formation in 1990, and the annual sugar shack the Indiana State Fair is a great way to promote Hoosier maple syrup.



Larry Smith gives samples of maple syrup at IMSA's Sugar Shack at the 2008 Indiana State Fair — photo Larry Yoder

Call for Nominations

Following our usual rotation schedule, three directors will be elected at the annual meeting in Columbia City on December 5. The terms of Pam Childers, Bill Owen and Dave Hamilton are up this year.

Ron Burnett, director and chair of the nominating committee, will accept suggestions as well as nominations from the floor at the annual meeting. Members present will elect three directors whose terms will run to 2011.

Current IMSA members may make nominations.

You may send your nomination along with a brief statement about the nominee's qualifications to Ron Burnett, 9741 W Baseline Rd., Paragon, IN 46166.

Board of Directors, Indiana Maple Syrup Association Directors are elected for 3 yr terms at the annual meeting held on the first Saturday of December. Directors elect the officers of the association.

Ron Burnett (2009) South
9741 W Baseline Rd
Paragon, IN 46166
(765) 537 2375
rburnett@scian.net

Pam Childers (2008) Central
3509 W River Rd
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pam.childers@indwes.edu

David Hamilton, Treasurer (2008) Central
625 N 100 East
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(765) 836 4432
sugarcamp@bigfoot.com

Phillip Hanner (2010) South
6500 N 825 W
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(812) 995 3155

Arthur Harris (2010) At Large
999 E CR 325 N
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(765) 653 5108
aharris@alink2000.net

Don Jewell, Vice President (2009) Central
10577 E 450 North
Otterbein, IN 47970
(765) 583 4865
hbce@iquest.net

William Owen, Secretary (2008) North
0535 S 500 E
Avila, IN 46710
(260) 636 2073
owenwf@ligtel.com

Garry Sink, President (2009) North
17430 Zubrick Road
Roanoke, IN 46783
(260) 638 4919

Florence Williams (2010) South
1152 W Egg Farm Rd
Rockville, IN 47872
(765) 569 3704

2008 State Fair Report

Through the efforts of 35 different people who worked about 1400 man hours the State Fair was a success. Our profit for the twelve day run of the state fair was right at \$7000. This was through the sale of syrup, confections and cookbooks. A big thank you to all who helped, especially to our President Garry Sink and to the First Lady of Maple, Nancy Sink who worked all but two days of the fair.

Next year IMSA has a bigger challenge as the fair expands to seventeen days. That means that we will need more help to man the sugar shack in the Pioneer Village. Please consider devoting a day or two between August 7 and August 23. The Fair next year will span three week-ends.

The profits from the State Fair make it possible to subsidize our annual meeting meal, to provide for excellent speakers at our annual meeting, and to provide representation for Indiana Maple Syrup

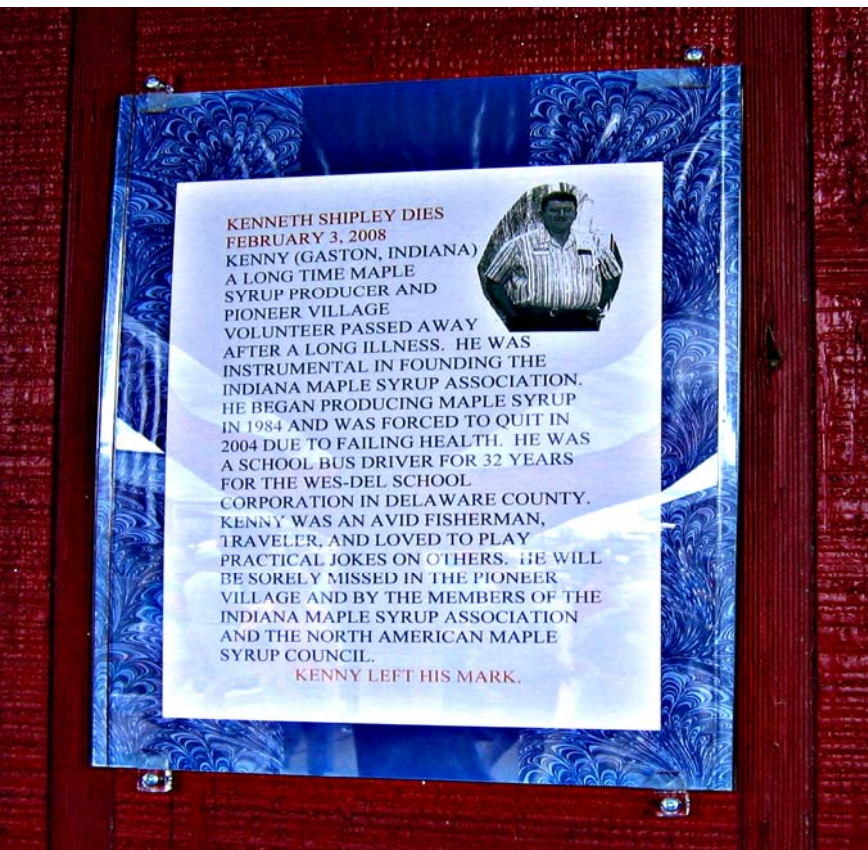
Producers at the North American Maple Syrup Council annual meetings.

Our thanks go to all the association members who helped out by greeting visitors, answering questions, and introducing Hoosiers to this fine natural product.



Becky Harris (right) waits on customers at the IMSA's Sugar Shack at the 2008 State Fair

—Photo Larry Yoder



Kenneth Shipley Dies February 3, 2008

Kenny (Gaston, Indiana) a long time maple syrup producer and pioneer village volunteer passed away after a long illness. He was instrumental in founding the Indiana Maple Syrup Association. He began producing syrup in 1984 and was forced to quit in 2004 due to failing health. He was a school bus driver for 32 years for the Wes-Del School Corporation in Delaware county. Kenny was an avid fisherman, traveler, and loved to play practical jokes on others. He will be sorely missed in the pioneer village and by the members of the Indiana Maple Syrup Association and the North American Maple Syrup Council.

Kenny Left His Mark.

Memorial to Kenny Shipley (left) was posted at the 2008 Indiana State Fair — Photo Larry Yoder

Florence Williams — The Record Keeper



Florence Williams and her apron

Florence Williams is known at THE RECORD KEEPER of the IMSA and is a stickler for accurate records. She keeps a daily weather record with

am, noon, & evening temps, any precipitation, etc. Florence states that, like many others in the state, they have gotten two year's worth of rain in the last two months. Keeping records like this comes naturally to Florence — she has always done it—and it is a real help to the IMSA to have the ones she keeps for them.

This summer, while repapering and generally redoing her dining room/office Florence was cleaning out files. She found that 40 years ago a pint of maple syrup sold for \$1.25 and in 1935, when Florence was 12, her family bought the farm where her daughter Irene now lives and a gallon sold for \$5. This farm had lots of maple trees on it and they had to be utilized. So her dad, Fred Swaim, started making syrup in an old farrowing barn, about 10' by 8' out in the middle of the woods.

Florence is the oldest person in her church where she plays the organ. She has an organ and piano in her living room and plays both well. Raised a Methodist, she is now a member of the Friends (Quaker) church where she and Marvin Williams were married on April 7, 1943 by Marvin's uncle.

Marvin died in June of 1997 so they had over half a century together. She says she doesn't want to seem ungrateful, but that was not enough. Marvin had been in the service since 1941 and served at several pacific locations. Though a CO medic, he was in fox holes (without a gun) along with soldiers with their guns and also helped with prisoners released from POW camps. After coming home in 1945, he worked for REMC as a lineman. In

1950, they moved to the farm where Florence had been raised. While still working as a lineman, Marvin farmed this farm as well as helping his own dad farm. Then in 1954 after Fred's death, they bought the farm from her mother.

Florence had worked in the county auditor's office while Marvin was in the service and continued there until one week before Irene was born. A local CPA wanted Florence to come work for her and even offered to put a crib in the back of the office (that was before that was a common occurrence) But Florence wanted a family and wanted to care for that family at home. However, she did not really quit working at all. She kept all the farm records and they raised chickens, hogs, and cows and took the milk, cream, and eggs to town, sold them and bought groceries.

In 1960, she started taking care of 11,000 layers. Before that it was ONLY 2-5000. Marvin asked Florence if she wanted kids or chickens. "Kids of course....." answered Florence, "but chickens too."

Even with all the work of caring for them, gathering, washing, blow drying, candling & grading the eggs, calling schools, hospitals, groceries, restaurants, nursing homes, etc to see how many eggs they wanted, delivering them plus selling door to door she was making more on her chickens than they were on the feeder cattle that Marvin loved. Marvin said he guessed he'd rather

clean a chicken house once a year than shovel manure anyway, so they quit the feeder cattle and went with the chickens. She hasn't drunk milk since they quit milking.

Florence still has her family around her with Irene and her family living North a bit, Sharon and her family living South around the corner, and Mary Kay and her family over on Raccoon Lake. Florence has 9 grandkids, 8 step grandkids, 12 great grandkids and one great, great grandchild.

John Teague's folks lived at the foot of the hill and the Swains at the top of the hill. John's mother was always like a grandmother to Florence's kids. Both were making maple syrup. The Teague's & the Williams decided to combine their operations in 1957 and have worked together ever since. John was also the local mail carrier, retiring in 2006.

Williams had a brooder house where she raised 1000 chicks at a time to restock her chicken houses. They moved that brooder house to the house area and built a new sugar shack over the cement where the brooder house had been. That sugar shack was where the IMSA canned maple syrup for the State Fair pioneer village sugar shack for many years and the same one that burned this year just before the

Record Keeper, Continued on page 7



Sugar house after the fire — Photo Florence Williams

Maple Syrup Production in Indiana for 2008 (A Banner Year) Jeff Settle, Supervisor Utilization & Marketing (U&M) Program Indiana Division of Forestry

Shortly after the close of the 2008 Maple Syrup season, 156 questionnaires were sent to all known producers of maple syrup in Indiana. 62 individuals promptly responded to the questionnaire resulting in almost a 40% response rate, down slightly from the 42% response rate in 2007.

For the sake of comparison of similar climatic regions, the results were broken down per two major regions. The dividing line chosen was U.S. Route 40 bisecting the State into a Northern region and a Southern region. 13 questionnaires were returned from the south region and 49 came from the northern region.

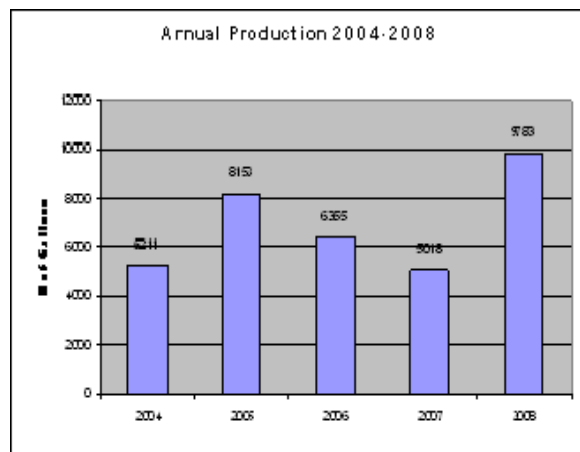
Of the producers that responded to the questionnaire, a whopping 80% of these folks produced syrup in 2008, a significant increase from the 30% reported in 2007. 10 producers from the southern region and 40 producers from the northern region reported production in 2008.

Almost 75% of the states' total syrup production of 9783.75 gallons (highest production since 2005) was accounted for by 13 large producers. The total number of gallons produced was about 95% higher than the 5018.75 gallons produced in 2007. Northern producers accounted for 7576.75 gallons compared to 3964.75 gallons while southern producers generated 2207 gallons, significantly higher than 1054 gallons reported in 2007. The graph below reflects the total number of gallons produced each year from 2003.

There are 29 counties in the state that have at least one active maple syrup producer. Elkhart County was once again the county with the most reported sugar camps – 15. Elkhart County was once again, the home to the largest sugar camp, producing almost 1100 gallons of syrup.

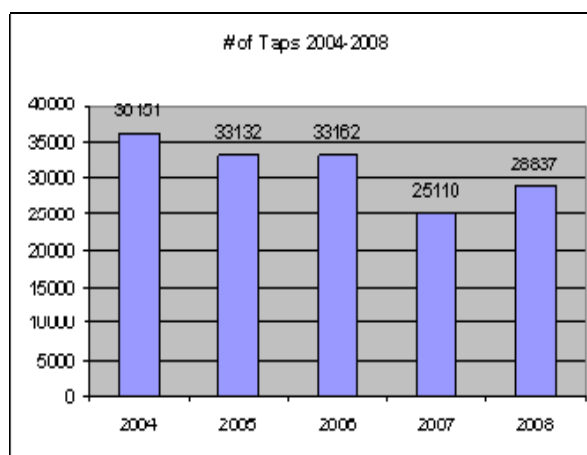
The overall state average for the opening date was 2/19/08 and the closing date was 3/23/08. Regionally, the average opening dates were 2/24/08 and 1/30/08 for the north and south respectively. The average closing dates were 3/25/08 for the north and 3/12/08 for the south.

The average amount of sugar water (sap) needed to produce a gallon of syrup was 40.4 gallons in the north and 46.5

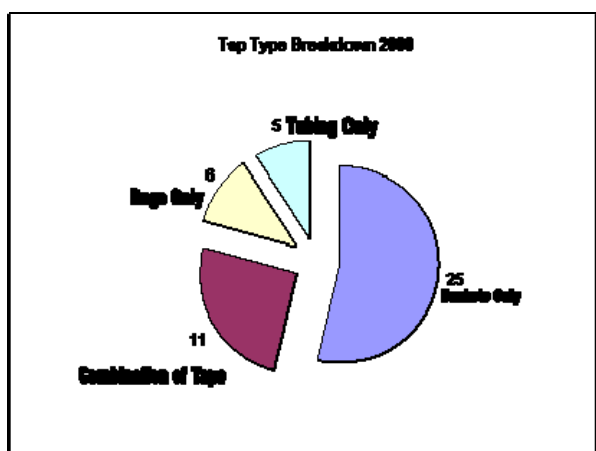


bush(es); however in 2008 producers did purchase around 44,000 gallons of sugar water from outside producers.

Of the 28,837 taps, almost 52% of the state's syrup production was accounted for via producers using only buckets for sugar water collection. 12,249 buckets were used in 2008 for collection purposes. The amount of sugar water collected solely by buckets accounted for total syrup production of 5007 gallons in the north and 37.5 gallons in the south region. 56 Indiana maple syrup producers used an average of 340 buckets in their collection operations. The graph below represents the total number of taps used each year from 2004 to present.



Buckets continue to remain the most popular way to collect syrup regardless of the region. The largest single producer utilizing buckets hung 1440 buckets in the northern region and 300 buckets in the southern half. Several producers reported using plastic bags and tubing in addition to buckets for the collection of sugar water. The pie chart below shows the number of producers per type of tap used in 2008.



gallons in the south. The state average was 41.7 gallons of sap to produce a gallon of syrup. Using these figures, we can estimate that almost 40,800 gallons of sap was collected in 2008. The average amount of sap needed in 2008 to produce a gallon of syrup may not be wholly accurate, as quite a few producers do not maintain accurate records of sap inflow. The average amount of syrup produced per camp was slightly over 195 gallons, up significantly from 100 gallons per camp reported in 2007. Almost all the sugar water

was produced at the producer's own sugar

Although plastic sap collection bags have yet to really catch on, 11 producers used 529 collection bags. Many of these producers also used buckets and or tubing as well. Producers using only bags to collect sap set on the average, approximately 66 taps. Those using only bags for sap collection accounted about for 207 gallons in 2008. On a regional basis, those using plastic sap collection bags were split pretty evenly between the two regions. Seven northern producers using 323 bags collected 267 gallons of syrup. Three producers in the southern region using only plastic

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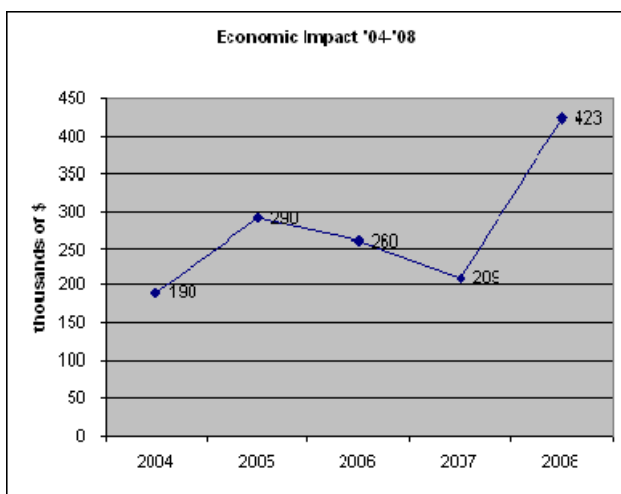
Syrup Report, Continued from page 5

bags collected 42 gallons and set 206 bags for collection.

A number of producers are trying tubing for sugar water collection and are slowly changing over as terrain, dollars and results allow. Statewide, 12 persons (8 in the northern region and 4 in the south) used over 217,000 feet (over 41 miles) of tubing for collection purposes in 2008. Those using only tubing produced 2791 gallons of syrup. This was an increase from the 2007 figure of 1927 gallons. This amounts to 558 gallons per producer.

The statewide average price received for a retail gallon of syrup was \$36.06 which is a dollar and a half higher than the price reported for 2007. The average price per retail gallon in the south was \$34.88. Northern producers averaged \$35.60 per retail gallon. The average statewide price received for a quart of retail syrup was \$11.80. For the past couple of years more surveys were returned this year with information about pricing per pint. The state average per retail pint was \$6.77. Statewide wholesale average gallon price was \$32.16. The graph below depicts the average price per retail gallon of syrup since the year 2004.

The statistics gathered via our 2008

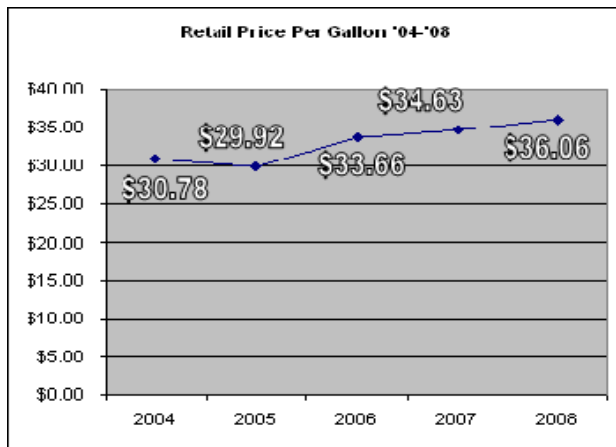


maple syrup production questionnaire most likely will not reflect the true income generated from Indiana's producers. The statewide reported syrup income for 2008 (multiplying the

average \$/per gallon X reported production) is almost \$353,000.00. However, if one appreciates that which was consumed via the producers' family, given away, or simply not reported, the calculated dollar figure may very well conservatively grow to almost \$423,000.00. Assuming this figure to be realistic, the average dollar return per tap hole is \$14.66, considerably higher than the \$8.32 reported in the 2007 maple syrup producer's survey. The graph below shows the estimated economic impact for maple syrup production during the past 5 years.

Sales do not appear to be a limiting factor for Indiana maple product producers; rather the inability to produce enough syrup due to the unfavorable weather and/or short tapping seasons were the greatest impediments to finding our maple fortunes. Prime tapping conditions center on below freezing temperatures of an evening with a fairly fast thaw in the mornings which normally allows for good syrup flow. 2008, according to those who commented on the season was an exceptionally good year with 62% of the producers reported this season was above average, 32% as average, and only 6% as below average.

Overall, most of the produced syrup is sold at a retail level. Of those reporting sales, 30% of those respondents reporting production, state that at least a portion of their production is given away or consumed domestically; of course these same producers tend to be smaller in scope and production. Packaging preferences show the majority favoring retail sales in gallon containers, fewer favoring quarts, with remainders sold in smaller units. A few producers offer maple sugar, creams, candies, cookies, etc., but apparently these maple products do



not account for substantial percentages of any one producer's sales.

We are all aware that each sugar bush has unique characteristics and that no two bushes produce alike. Although Indiana is a relatively small geographic area, the variation in weather is significant as evidenced by prior years. As reported earlier, conditions in 2007 were average for a good tapping season. 2008 appears to be one of the best years in both weather and production of syrup.

31 respondents stated they would like to be listed in the Indiana Maple Syrup Producers Brochure. As time and funds permit, we are hoping to prepare an updated brochure. Additionally, we believe it would be beneficial to have "Indiana generic" maple syrup articles on hand for the barrage of requests from reporters for local newspapers and other media come next February, 2009.

I sincerely thank all the maple producers for their prompt questionnaire responses. I have updated our maple database and will continue to be a contact for Indiana maple products. Please remember the data compiled in this report is only as good as the data received. To be able to more accurately report maple syrup production figures, we'll continue to need a high response rate. Although our time is limited for personal visits to your operation, we do welcome your calls and inquiries on all facets of maple production. Special forest products such as maple syrup contribute substantially to many rural folk's income while offering wholesome

Syrup Report, Continued on page 7



Florence Williams, the Record Keeper, holding some pillows that she sewed.

season began. They had already canned 30 gallons in jugs and had 60 gallons in five gallon buckets ready for the Maple Syrup Festival in Rockville but lost all that in the fire. They had just installed a new three bay sink and put new cores in their reverse osmosis machine. The fire, of course, ate all that up as well as the evaporator and all the other equipment in the sugar shed. How disheartening. Anything that looked even remotely like it could be cleaned up and reused was brought up to the barn to be dealt with later.

When the fire started, Florence was sitting in a wheel chair because of a shattered knee cap. She still managed with the help of her daughters, to feed all the men from her church who came to help clean up as well as the women of the church who had been working at the church and came out to join their men for lunch.

Florence will be 86 on December 23 this year, but her activities belie her age. Florence still kept 85 chickens to supply eggs for friends and family up until Irene was hurt badly in a wreck in Nov of 2006. When Irene was released from the hospital, she came to stay with Florence for about eight weeks until she was well enough to go to her own home. Then Florence would go up the lane to Irene's house several times a day to help. She opens her home for up to 24 tourists during the festivals in Park County. She sews an amazing amount for her church to sell at these same festivals. She bought a new 'fancy' sewing machine this last Nov but still has her old reliable Singer for straight stitching.

And of course, there is all that record keeping to do.



The Sugar Shack at the Indiana State Fair . Thanks to all the volunteers who helped out — Photo Larry Yoder



Clean up after the fire at Teague-Williams Sugar House — Photo Florence Williams

Syrup Report , Continued from page

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