

OUTDOORSMAN'S CALLING IS FORESTRY

By Margaret Wanlin
Thunder Bay Ventures

As a student at Hagarville High School, near his home at Six Nations of the Grand River, Ken Van Every was first interested in agriculture. It was a love of the great outdoors and the call of the north that caused Ken to think about a career in forestry instead.

Following graduation in 1998 from Lakehead University with a Bachelor of Science in Forestry, Ken went to work at KBM Forestry Consultants here in Thunder Bay. KBM's cross-Canada projects gave Ken a diverse perspective on forestry and enabled him to achieve his Registered Professional Forester designation. From authoring a Forest Management Plan to working with a Far North community in Ontario and participating in Independent Forest Audits, Ken learned a lot in a short time.

An advertisement from the Forestry Futures Trust Committee for a Forest Audit Coordinator caught Ken's interest. Ken was hired in that position as its first incumbent in 2002 and continues in it, picking up some additional roles along the way. Ken also serves as the Coordinator of the Far North Forestry Development Initiative and the Enhanced Forest Productivity Science Program. The Ontario-wide scope and the diversity of this work means there is never a dull moment for Ken.

In 2003 Ken received the Ontario Professional Foresters Association (OPFA) Forester of the Year Award for Ontario. This award goes to a person in his or her first ten years after graduation and "recognizes notable achievement to the Ontario Professional Foresters Association or to forestry in Ontario." Ken continues to contribute to the profession in a number of ways. He is currently on the organizing committee of the OPFA Annual General Meeting that will be held in Thunder Bay April 23- 25. The focus of the session will be climate change and will include a public presentation at the Thunder Bay Community Auditorium by Stephen Lewis.

In his off hours Ken enjoys country living in Kaministiquia with his wife



Ken Van Every

EVERYDAY HEROES

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Stacie where he is the Deputy Fire Chief of the local Volunteer Fire Department. His interest in hunting, fishing and private land trapping are all evidence of his love of the outdoors. And then there is pistol and trap shooting club in the winter and spring. Among all his fine qualities Ken's friends experience his keen wit, and some memorable zingers.

In Ken's crystal ball for the future, he would like to see more Aboriginal people become Registered Professional Foresters; his own heritage is Cayuga, Mohawk and Chippewa. And he would like to see those people working in all aspects of forestry - industry, government, consulting, and First Nations organizations. He hopes to see, and would like to work toward enhanced Aboriginal involvement in the forest sector. Ken believes that goal can be accomplished through meaningful dialogue rather than resorting to courts and blockades, both of which are costly, inefficient and conflict-based approaches.

Although Ken's career is still young in years, his commitment to his profession and his community make him an Everyday Hero.

Everyday Heroes is a community initiative by Thunder Bay Ventures. Everywhere there are people living, working, playing and contributing to the fabric of our city. Nominate a hero-heroes@thunderbayventures.com. Read about past heroes at www.thunderbayventures.com