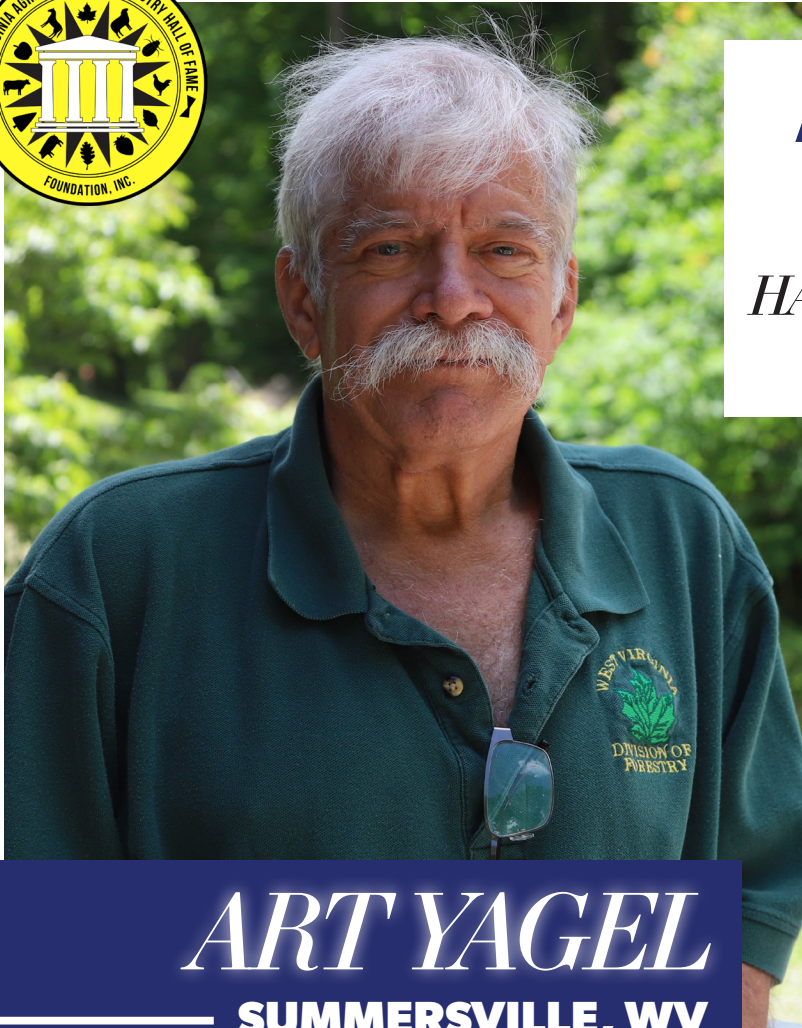




AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY *HALL* *OF* **FAME**

WEST VIRGINIA | 2024

“ This is going to be #3 on the most important list of things I’ve accomplished in my life. I just want to say, Thank you. Thank you. ”



ART YAGEL
SUMMERSVILLE, WV

Art Yagel has had a significant impact on the forestry industry with 37 years of dedicated work in forest fire prevention and outreach. He grew up in New York State, coming to WVU to earn his Forestry degree. He fell in love with the state and began his career with the WV Division of Forestry (WVDOF) as a Nicholas County Forest Fire Ranger, where he developed a passion for fire suppression and outreach.

Advancing to the role of Service Forester, Art’s commitment to fighting forest fires led him to volunteer for numerous wildfires across the United States. He also played a key role in laying the foundation for what would become the WVDOF’s Special Operations Unit, where he worked as an arson investigator. Art’s work not only protected the forest and communities from arson and carelessly caused wildfires, but also educated many new foresters and landowners.

Throughout his three-plus decades with the WVDOF, Art mentored and inspired many organizational foresters. Even after retirement, he remained involved in various organizations and groups, including the West Virginia Forestry Association (WVFA) and the WV Christmas Tree Growers Association. Art’s contributions were recognized with the prestigious Bronze Smokey Bear Award for his dedicated service during Smokey Bear’s 50th-year celebration.

Art devoted himself to outreach throughout his career, including working with volunteer fire departments across the state, participating with Nicholas County schools via Smokey Bear and working with 4-H and Boy Scout groups. He has played an important role at the WV State Conservation Camp by teaching fire prevention and conducting the forest fire assembly for more than 40 years. Art’s Christmas Tree farm has provided trees for families for more than 30 years. He has been an active member of the WV Christmas Tree Growers Association, holding positions as the past vice president and current secretary. Art is active in the local Farm Bureau, WVFA, and other state and community organizations.