

Thomas Edward Snyder



Thomas Edward Snyder was born March 13, 1959, in Murfreesboro, Tenn. He grew up in Clarksburg, but spent many of his summer days on the family farm near Roanoke where he developed an enduring interest in the outdoors.

He graduated Notre Dame High School in Clarksburg in 1977 and Glenville State College, where he earned degrees in Forest Technology, Land Surveying Technology and Business Administration.

He worked for a time for a land surveying firm in Lewis County in the early-1980s. In 1984, he returned to Glenville State as an Academic Laboratory Technician in the Division of Land Resources.

At Glenville, he quickly warmed to his role assisting faculty and students. He made it his mission to become expert in using all the tools and equipment so he could teach those skills to students. He mastered the school's bulldozer, skidder and chainsaws, as well as surveying instruments such as transits and GPS units. He even earned a CDL so he could take students on field trips to see forest management practices, sawmills and papermills on the school-owned bus.

Safety was always a top concern. Over 35 years, there was not a single chainsaw accident in Snyder's programs. During that period he trained more than 500 forestry technicians and 200 land surveyors, many of whom still work in the state. "Tom's Help Labs" provided assistance for students wanting extra tutoring, both in indoor labs and outdoor help sessions.

In recent years, he has taught three important and popular classes: Dendrology, Wood Identification and Wildlife and Outdoor Recreation Management. Student evaluations routinely rank him among the best teachers at the school. He has been a strong supporter of the Forest Industries Camp held annually in Upshur County, and often presented a session on forestry education opportunities after high school. He was instrumental in establishing and managing an American Chestnut orchard on the Glenville farm that was sponsored by the West Virginia Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation. He was the primary force in erecting the top section of the historic Sand Springs fire tower, originally from Coopers Rock State Forest, on the highest knoll of the college forest.

Snyder also helped establish a nature trail at the Gilmer County 4-H Center, selecting trail highlights and preparing trail signs and a detailed booklet for the

attraction. He is a longtime supporter of the West Virginia hunter education program and the Hunters Helping the Hungry Program in Lewis County. He is a member of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

In 2001, he received the National Graduate Forest Technician Achievement Award from the Council of Eastern Forest Technology Schools. On several occasions, he has represented Glenville State, Division of Land Resources, on the recognition committee of the West Virginia Agriculture and Forestry Hall of Fame Foundation.

Snyder is an active member of Saint Boniface Catholic Church, where he served as President of the Holy Name Society.