

MEQUON

Exclusively serving the Mequon Community

Beacon

*Lisa & Rick
O'Malley*



*Nurture the
Holiday Spirit*



Best Version Media

Cover photo by Linda Smallpage, Boutique Photography



The Christmas Experience By Colleen Jacobus **AT TREES FOR LESS NURSERY**

The family tradition of getting a Christmas tree is one that has grown in popularity; in fact there are now approximately 12,000 growers in the United States who work about a million acres to produce approximately 35,000,000 trees annually. Live Christmas trees have also increased in demand as the Go Green movement has taken root in our society. The ideal Christmas tree is usually grown on a tree farm where they carefully cultivate beautiful trees, growing them with the right amount of water, fertilizer and pruning, along with lots of love. Growing saleable trees is a five to 10 year process. Christmas tree farms often involve generations of families and Mequon has it's very own at multi-generational nursery at Trees For Less Nursery.

The nursery first opened for business in the mid 1970's. Rick O'Malley is the owner of the property that was originally acquired by Rick's grandfather, Otto Kuehn, in the late 1940's. The original name of the nursery was Traumerei Nursery, which meant heavenly place in German. Rick and his brother were initially partners and began by selling dig-your-own evergreens that his grandfather had planted for \$7.00 each. They would sit in a car with a small cash box and there would be cars all over the field and people digging evergreens. After several years, Rick bought his brother out for \$200.00. Rick changed the name to

Trees for Less nursery since nobody could pronounce Traumerei or knew its meaning. Rick continued to sell dig-your-own evergreens and began planting other varieties of spruce and pine trees. Eventually, he purchased a tractor and a small tree spade and that was the beginning of what is now a full service nursery operation. In the early 2000's, Rick began growing balsam fir to be sold as Christmas trees. The first year of retail sales Rick used a tent for sales but since has moved his operations into a heated log cabin on the property. The cabin was built by Otto Kuehn and used by him and his wife, Valeska, as a weekend home. In the first year of Christmas tree sales, a grand total of 25 trees where sold. "As the years have come and gone we have grown the sales to well over a thousand trees," explains Rick. "This is a family fun business. The kids, parents, and grandparents are always excited and enjoy the holiday festivities. We also encourage our customers to bring along the family pet so all can enjoy our Christmas tree farms."

What exists today is The Christmas Experience at Trees For Less Nursery, which is located on the corner of Wasaukee and Mequon roads. This experience includes finding your perfect Christmas tree and cutting down your own or selecting a pre-cut Fraser Fir. You can enjoy a scenic hayride, a smorgasbord assortment of snacks, hot chocolate and a large cozy fire pit

while waiting for your tree to be tied on your car. All of the amenities are included in the tree price. There are thousands of Balsam, Fraser and Concolor (White) fir to select from between the Mequon and Grafton locations. Preselecting a tree in October or early November and tagging it for Christmas cutting is also available at both locations.


Trees For Less is nestled among many hundreds of sugar maple trees. In 2014, Rick began tapping sugar maple trees as a labor of love. He started with 10 trees and this year he tapped 85 trees. In 2016 we will tap over 125 trees. Thus was the birth of, "O's Gold" Maple Syrup. Many hours are spent collecting sugar water, boiling it down and bottling the maple syrup. Forty gallons of sugar water yields one gallon of maple syrup after the evaporation process. Rick's wife Lisa O'Malley suggests that her husband has a great \$2.00 per hour job.

Trees For Less nursery also has a large selection of mulch. (Hemlock, Jack Pine, Shredded Oak, Chocolate Enviromulch and Double Grind (mulch that is made on site from wood chips). In addition to mulch that is delivered, they also welcome customers that pick up mulch on site themselves. Rick adds, "The Tree Nursery, Mulch, Christmas Tree, Maple Syrup business is very rewarding although comes with a lot of hard work. Having January and February to recharge our batteries and get ready for the next season is a welcome time of the year."

Please visit www.treesforless.com for more information.



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