The Tapline

Fall 2026

Newsletter of the Indiana Maple Syrup Association

Inside this issue

Message from the President	2
Board Member Roster	2
Annual Meeting Registration	3
Maple Weekend Registration	4
Annual Meeting Notice	5
Message from Rick Bollinger	6
Member Classifieds	6
Producer Survey	7
Vendor Ads	7

Come Hail and High Water, Sugar Shack a Success

IMSA's largest fundraiser and outreach is the Sugar Shack at the Pioneer Village during the Indiana State Fair. Thousands of visitors enjoyed free sample spoonfuls of maple syrup and maple cream, many trying the real stuff for the first time. The weather had lots of rain and thunderstorms, keeping crowds away, but the crowds returned before the end in big numbers. All who volunteered had a wonderful time sharing the love of maple, fellowshipping with each other, and raising funds for IMSA.

Annual Meeting
December 4 & 5 2026

Print off a membership registration at

www.indianamaplesyrup.org
2026 IMSA dues are $25.00

Checks should be made out to IMSA and sent to:

Levi Mast, Treasurer
418 3 B Road
Nappanee, IN 46550

IMSA 2026 Board Members

Dan Winger, President
imsa.dwinger@gmail.com
260-578-7382

David Hinchman, V.P.
dhinch37@yahoo.com
765-621-3628

Chris Slabaugh, Secretary
leon@countrysidewindow.net
574-354-4552

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hoosierhomefurn@ibyfax.com
574-773-0148

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765-301-0016

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812-345-9544

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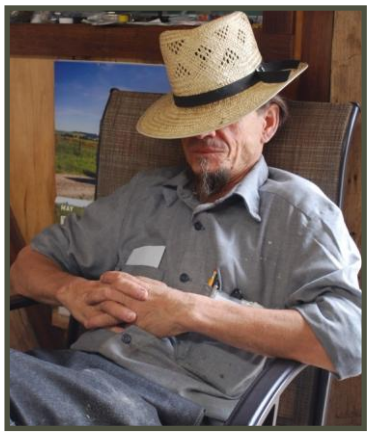
574-498-6898

Doug Mark, Public Relations
765-336-9511

Message from the President by Dan Winger



Greetings to all!! It is amazing to me how quickly time is going by it seems we were just finishing up making syrup. It is now time to start getting ready for another year. I know some are making repairs and expanding their operations.

We had a slow start in Pioneer Village this year due to stormy weather. When the weather changed in the last week, things changed. The sales were comparable to last year. On one day 48 - one pound bags of sugar were sold. This is the most that has been sold at the fair in one day. A big thanks to the folks that worked on that day!!

I would like to thank all that took time and worked in the Pioneer Village this year. It is greatly appreciated. None of this would have been possible without your help. We had a few first-time helpers this year. This is very encouraging to me.

A special thanks to all those that helped on setup day, it was a nice group and very enjoyable to work with each other.

This event of selling syrup and maple products helps keep our annual dues low. We are some of the lowest in the maple industry. We use some of the money for our annual meeting, bringing in guest speakers, and helping with the meal costs.

The board members from the central district are working on the annual meeting. It looks like they will have a good program. They are planning on having a workshop on Friday afternoon.

A reminder to all that on October 21-23 is the annual meeting for NAMSC. It is being held in Sault Ste Marie Ontario Canada.

Plans are moving forward as Indiana plans to host this in 2029.

Thanks to all for your support this past year, I am looking forward to working with you all in the years ahead. It will be great to see all that can make it to our annual meeting on December 5, 2026. Hope all have a safe and great fall.

Surplus from Sugar Shack to Be Sold at Annual Meeting
Gallon $40
Half gallon $21
Quart $11
Pint $6
Half pint $3
Maple candy $3.10/ bag
Root beer $34 /case (24)

The Tapline is the quarterly newsletter for members of the Indiana Maple Syrup Association (IMSA). J.R. Elrod is the editor of the Tapline (bluetempestllc@gmail.com). The latest IMSA information and archive of past issues is available on IMSA's website (indianamaplesyrup.org). IMSA also hosts a Facebook page: facebook.com/IndianaMapleSyrupAssociation.

2027 IMSA Membership Renewel

2026 IMSA Annual Meeting registration

Please check all that Apply:

1. ___ I want to renew my IMSA membership for 2027 and plan to attend the annual meeting on Dec. 5.
2. ___ I want to renew my IMSA membership for 2027 but cannot attend the annual meeting on Dec. 5.
3. ___I already paid my IMSA membership for 2027 and plan to attend the annual meeting on Dec. 5.
4. ___I plan to join IMSA for the Friday evening program (see elsewhere in the Tapline for details) and evening meal at the Huntington Co. Fairgrounds.
5. # of people attending Fri. program is. _____

Are you a new member? YES NO

Name: _____

Company Name (if applicable): _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State _____Zip Code: _____County: _____

Phone: ( ) - Email Address: _____

Number of taps planned for 2027: _____

Do you sell maple products to the public? YES ____ NO_____

Amount payable

2027 IMSA Membership..... $30.00 $ _____

2026 Annual Meeting meals for members and guests.....#of meals.....x$20.00 $_____

2026 Annual Meeting meals for late registration.....#of meals..... x$25.00 $ _____

2026 Annual meeting meals for children..... #of meals.....x$10.00 $_____

Meals for Non Member Syrup or value added products producers.....x$35.00 $ _____

Maple Weekend New $50.00 renewal $30.00.....$ _____

TOTAL $_____

The Friday evening meal is free-will donation.

Send this completed form to the following address **DUE by NOV. 15 2026.**

Registration postmarked after NOV. 15,2026 should choose the late registration line for meals.

Levi Mast (IMSA treasurer) 574-773-0148 ext.4

418 38 RD

Nappanee IN 46550

Make payable to "IMSA". Write your check number here:

If you don't plan to attend the meeting please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope with renewal form and payment so the 2027 sticker and membership plaque (if needed) can be sent to you by mail.

The membership renewal is DUE by Jan 1, 2027. After Mar 1,2027 membership is delinquet if not renewed.

2027 IMSA Maple Weekend Registration

March 13-14, 2027

CHECK ONE: New participant ($50) ____ Renewing participant ($30) _____

Sugar Camp Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person's Name: _____

Phone Number: (_____) _____

Email Address: _____

Website Address: _____

What days will you be participating?

Saturday/Sunday ___ Saturday only ____ Sunday only ____

We will collect more information at annual meeting. Please bring photos, and any other information that would attract people to your sugar house with you at the meeting. That info will then be used for the Maple weekend website. For more information
Contact Doug Mark 765-336-9511.

Mail this completed registration form and payment to IMSA treasurer Levi Mast.

Levi Mast
418 3B Road
Nappanee IN 46550
574-773-0148 ext. 4

Make check payable to IMSA. Write your check # here_____.
Registration deadline for the 2027 Maple Weekend is January 31, 2027

NOTICE OF THE INDIANA MAPLE SYRUP ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, December 5, 2026 at 8:30 a.m.
Huntington County Fairgrounds
Beacon Credit Union Heritage Hall
631 E. Taylor Street, Huntington, IN 46750

Friday December 4, 2026

9:00 a.m. Doors Open

3:00 p.m. Tubing Demonstration for the Small Producer
Meet at the Fairgrounds and caravan to Huntington College
2303 College Avenue, Huntington Ave., 46750

6:00 p.m. Fellowship Dinner
Heritage Hall

Saturday December 5, 2026

7:30-8:30 Registration

8:30 IMSA Business Meeting (welcome, treasurer report, secretary report, elections)

10:15 Health Department Speaker

11:00 Breakout Session 1 (choice of two topics)

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Breakout Session 2 (choice of two topics)

2:00 Breakout Session 3 (choice of two topics)

3:00 Door Prizes and Closing

Break-Out Session Topics and Activities Include

- **Cream making**
- **Forest management**
- **Sap handling**
- **Evaporator use**
- **Sap chilling- cooling**
- **Vendor displays**

The Indiana Maple Syrup Association will hold its Annual Meeting and election of officers.

Terms are expiring for current Board Members Mike Smith, Mike Czajkowski, David Hinchman and Levi Mast.

If anyone wishes to be included as a candidate for the Board,please contact one of the following:

George Earnest, 812-580-8031

Scott Craft - 574-952-8003

Ethan Zimmerman -574-498-6898

Third Annual Maple Syrup Contest

The Annual Meeting is a fantastic opportunity to have your syrup graded in the Maple Syrup Contest.

2026 IMSA Syrup Contest Submission Rules:

- Each entrant must be an IMSA member in good standing
- Each entry must contain one pint of syrup
- A member may submit one entry in each of the four categories (grades)
- Submissions must be made at the Annual Meeting by the end of registration at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday
- The four categories are Golden – Amber – Dark – Very Dark
- You do not have to be present to have your syrup graded

If you have any questions, contact:
George Ernest
1-812-580-8031
ernestiig@gmail.com

Junior Slabaugh
1-574-354-4552
leon@countrysidewindow.net

How did I get here?

By Rick Bollinger

Picture it: Whitko High School, South Whitley, IN 1975. Whitko high school teacher, Luke Hunt, asks his students if they would be interested in learning more about America's past by building a small, one room cabin on the school grounds. They would build it with period correct tools supplied by community members and student's families. They were excited to take on this challenge. The art teacher Walter Malicki drew the cabin that would be created.

So, it began. They used horses to pull the logs from the woods where they were harvested. They picked rocks from local farms to build the fireplace. Over time, they shaped and fit each log and placed each rock in it's perfect spot. They split the wooden shake shingles, created the windows, door and even the hinge hardware. The cabin was dedicated in 1976 as part of the United States Bicentennial celebrations.

At the time, I was very young. In the mid 80's, when Mr. Hunt was my biology teacher, he taught our class about the process of collecting maple sap and evaporating maple syrup. He had a homemade evaporator in the cabin for us to make the syrup in. We were able to go out during class to see the evaporation process. He asked for volunteers who would be willing to work during study hall to keep the evaporation process going during our short maple harvest season. At the end of the season, all who volunteered received a small canning jar of Whitko Maple Syrup to enjoy and share with family to go along with our hands-on education.

Melissa and I were married in late 1995 and started our family in 2000. About the same time, I started buying aluminum maple buckets and spiles and making my own lids. I knew some day, I wanted to use the small woods on our five acres to teach our four kids how to make maple syrup. I started attending the Columbia City IMSA annual meetings so I could buy some more supplies and learn what I could while I was there. I attended more meetings as the years passed and along with a good friend, we eventually built an evaporator similar to the one in the cabin. Over the next several years, we added more buckets and bags, and collected sap from 5 different local properties. With the help of family and friends, we were up to about 100 taps making 22 gallons of syrup that we mostly gave away to those who helped or showed interest in what we did each spring. The syrup we made has ended up in many different states and a few different countries. IMSA decided to add three more directors and I tossed my name in and became a Northern Director. A year later I was voted in as IMSA Vice-president. I also had the chance to be on the Acer Grant Board with IMSA and Purdue. As Vice-president, I was also able to attend NAMSC and IMSI annual meetings in Wisconsin and Massachusetts.

I decided to reach out to Mr. Hunt and tell him thank you for taking the time to teach me something that changed my life. He asked me to start making syrup at the cabin again during syrup season. So I have honored his request during Maple Weekend every year since then. Some people come to buy syrup, others come to learn the process, others come to see the cabin that is 50 years old and remember. Mr. Hunt even attends each year for at least part of one day and so many people come to see him. Making maple syrup is a great experience to spend time with friends, family and community. When we processed at home, we would have many visitors of all ages from as far away as India.

I appreciate all that others have poured into me and my family. I love sharing what I've learned with those I meet in our backyard, at work, in the community, around the state and our country.

Blessings to each of you and thanks to all you have given me creating who I am today. I am truly grateful for each of you.

~Sweet Spot Maple Supply~

Sweet Spot Maple Supply is excited to serve you in the 2026 maple syrup season. We carry CDL equipment and supplies. Our shelves will be fully stocked to enable us to serve you better.

so contact us today for all your maple needs.
We can find an answer for all your sugaring questions

Marcus Miller
10155 Teasdale lake st
Constantine MI 49099
(574) 364-0538
sweetspotmaple@outlook.com

CDL SUGARING EQUIPMENT

Purdue University ACER Maple Producer Survey

Our friends at Purdue University in conjunction with the USDA Acer Access and Development Program are surveying maple producers on their experiences and challenges as well as perspectives on cooperative and sustainable practices. All responses will remain completely anonymous.

Responses Due November 15th

Questions? Email Mo Zhou at mozhou@purdue.edu

Winger's Sugarbush & Supplies

Winger's offers D&G equipment and supplies. Winger's also stocks glass jugs from Artisan Printing with the state of Indiana outlined. A large supply of containers is on hand. Marcland products are also available. Contact Dan for prices on equipment and supplies.

Dan Winger
11571 N Ogden Rd
North Manchester, IN 46962
(260) 578-7382
(260) 982-7382 (fax)

D&G DOMINION & GRIMM INC.

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We want to hear from you!

- Share a favorite picture or story from your sugarbush this season
- Ask us a question on best practices

Upcoming Events

Annual Meeting:
December 4 & 5 2026

Maple Weekend:
March 13 & 14 2027

"The trees of the Lord are full of sap . . . ."
Psalm 104:16 KJV