



Highland Trees Wausau

The First Generation

In the winter of 1971-72 Jim and Lorna Martin purchased an 80 acre dairy farm. They planted the first trees in the spring of '72, establishing Highland Trees. It was barren and empty in those days, with only a few trees on the en-



tire property. The snowdrifts were immense and the 1890's farmhouse didn't yet have indoor

plumbing. The name Highland Trees comes from the land being the greatest elevation in the area. In the first half of the 20th century a tower was constructed on the farm while the country's first modern geodesic land surveys were conducted. The tower stood until about 1960 and three of the four geodesic markers are still in place on the property. While the first crops were growing Jim was retailing trees in Houston, Texas. His two Houston lots eventually reached 3000 trees sold per year. Lorna passed away in 1982 and



during the 1980's Jim raised two children as a single parent and found that the tree market in Houston was becoming tight. Highland Trees began to pivot to a wholesale operation to sell inventory that was no longer going to Texas, as well as running a small cut-your-own operation on a nearby plot.

In the mid-90's the cut-your-own operation was moved to the main farm and began to grow.

Within a decade, nearly half the trees sold were retail.



At our farm you can find:



- Hay wagon rides -- the "tree taxi" makes regular rounds on weekends
- Complimentary apple cider and cookies on weekends
- Saws available
- Shaking and baling for a small additional fee
- Friendly elves to help you load and tie down your tree
- Wreaths, Garland, centerpieces and ornaments -- all handcrafted



The Second Generation

By 2010 Jim's children Mike and Annie had both returned to the area and began to contribute to the running of the farm. With Jim in poor health starting in about 2018, it was necessary to reduce the size of the operation; to stop caring for some of the large trees and to put aside some planned projects. Because of this the second generation at Highland Trees begins in somewhat of a rebuilding phase.



The farm is now operated by Mike Martin, his wife Angie Gonzalez, Annie Martin and her fiancée Erik Olsen, with Mike as the full-time farmer. The future includes a particular emphasis on cut-your-own with the planned addition of a Christmas market, more amenities, special events and a greater variety of tree species.

