



TREEmendous News



Florida Christmas Tree Association's Newsletter

July 2015

FALL MEETING AT MILTON, FLORIDA

Presidents Comments:

Mike & Erica Kelly and Joyce Schnoor are setting up an exciting Fall Meeting on August 22nd. They are always busy, so we may have to help trim some trees when we get there. The whole program is set up on the farm with speakers, lunch, and drinks. It will be nice to see everyone again.

Craig Sorensen, Tim Mitchell Supplies and Tree Stands, (800-394-6536 or 615-497-2299) (See Advertisement) will be unable to attend due to the Texas Meeting. Phone in your orders ASAP. Those that live near Jodi Utsman can pick up your prepaid orders at Jodi's farm. Those who live near Jacksonville, can have Michael Songer pick up netting and smaller items at the Franklin, TN Tim Mitchell warehouse.

Michael Songer will have Coty Color, but please email, songerma@hotmail.com or phone 904-535-7822 and leave a message by August 7 to benefit from Free Freight. Otherwise, it costs about \$28 per 5 gal case to have it shipped.

The TreeMendous News is emailed to our members then posted on the Web Site www.flchristmastrees.com. For those who do not have a valid email address, we are mailing a shorter version and asking that they go to the website to see the full version. They can go to the public library

or have a friend or relative pull it up on any computer.

We made an error by not setting the date of our fall meeting well in advance. Craig Sorensen would have come had we done so. Please speak up if you would like to host the Fall Meeting 2016, and would everyone please advise us when you would like the meeting to be held.

We have interested people phone all year for information about the FCTA and where they can get seedlings. I answer specific questions, but I always refer them to the web site: www.flchristmastrees.com where they can gather information and see the Seedling Report for information on where seedlings are available. Whenever **you** find someone interested in the FCTA, please refer them to the Web site.

In December, 2014 Sue Kossuth was preparing to send the trees to the Florida State Capitol. Someone contacted her at the last minute from Tallahassee, and said they didn't need the trees this year. I didn't hear of this until after the season, and I really don't know why. If anyone would like to present trees this year, contact me and I inquire with the Dept. of Agriculture.

Michael Songer, FCTA President

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- August 22, 2015 Florida Christmas Tree Assoc. Fall Meeting
Milton, FL See www.flchristmastrees.com
Hosts: Mike & Erica Kelly
Formerly: Dean & Joyce Schnoor's Farm
- Sept. 19, 2015 Georgia Christmas Tree Assoc. Fall Meeting
Rock Springs, GA See: www.gacta.com
Hosts: Dan Raulston
- Oct. 20-22, 2015 Sunbelt Expo Moultrie, GA
www.sunbeltexpo.com
- Oct. 23-25, 2015 Agri-tourism World Summit
Greenbay, Wisconsin Radison Hotel
www.agritourismsummit.com
Interesting....
- December, 2015 Trees to Governor
Looking for Volunteer.....
-

Florida Christmas Tree Association Officers and Board

PresidentMichael Songer
443 Cody Drive
Orange Park, FL 32073
904-535-7822
songerma@hotmail.com

Vice President.....Mark Powell
7593 Old Spanish Trail
Sneads, FL 32460
850-593-5199
POWELL147@embarqmail.com

Secretary Sue Kossuth
20926 NW 75th Avenue
Alachua, FL 32615
386-462-2060

TreasurerJohn Gregory
3605 NW 69th Street
Gainesville, FL 32606
352-373-4575
unicornhill@yahoo.com

DIRECTORS:

Term Expires 2017 Mike Kelly
1603 Penton Rd.
Milton, FL 32570
850-449-4316
schnoorjp@AOL.com

Term Expires 2015 ...Cathie Gregory
3605 NW 69th Street
Gainesville, FL 32606
352-373-4575
unicornhill@yahoo.com

Term Expires 2016 Bob Neilson
6780 SE 67th Ct.
Trenton, FL 32693
352-472-2340
gatorjoyce@aol.com

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FLORIDA CHRISTMAS TREE GROWERS 2015 SHOW SPECIALS

Due to our change of meeting date Craig Sorensen will not be able to attend our meeting on August 22, 2015. They will have a list of specials and you can phone and check the prices, and we will email the list as a special item when it is completed. Those who live near Jodi Utsman and Jack Ewing can have your prepaid orders shipped to Jodi for pick up at her farm after our Fall Meeting. If you live near Michael Songer, email him at songerma@hotmail.com to pick up your supplies. He plans to pick up netting and small items from the Franklin, TN warehouse.

Phone Craig Sorensen 615-497-2299 or email craigsorensen@comcast.net

See advertisement for additional information.

Red Roof Inn & Suites From I-10: Exit 22. Avalon Blvd, Milton, FL 32583

Phone 850-995-6100 www.redroof.com

FREE Continental Breakfast and enclosed Pool Looks very nice.

Regular 2 Q \$89.99, Senior Rate 2Q \$80.99 Mike Kelly checking on FCTA rate

Tentative Agenda for Fall Meeting August 22, 2015

9:00 am (Central Time) Registration at Whispering Pines Christmas Tree Farm (**Mike & Eric Kelly and Joyce Schnoor**)

1603 Penton Rd., Milton, FL 32570 Phone 850-304-1559

GPS coordinates: N 30°49'03.419; W 87°05'50.110

9:30 Opening comments and introductions at Whispering Pines.

10:00 Speaker:

Topic:

11:00 Speaker:

Topic:

12:00 Lunch at the Farm

1:30 Speaker:

Topic:

2:00 Vendors:

Tree Talk, and Farm Tour

4:30 Short Business Meeting

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Our hosts at the 2014 Meeting



Mark and Kay Powell

Mark explains his Christmas tree operation

Kay is giving us an overview of their grape production

FLORIDA CHRISTMAS TREE ASSOCIATION
Fall Meeting ~ August 22, 2015

REGISTRATION per Farm/Company: \$20.00/Advance; \$25 at meeting = _____

Lunch \$8: Sandwiches, misc, drinks @ Whispering Pines Farm

lunches _____ x \$ 8. = _____

TOTAL = _____

SEND TO: John Gregory, 3605 NW 69th Street, Gainesville, FL 32606 with this form,
by August 12, please make checks payable to FCTA.

REGISTRATION (PLEASE PRINT)

Name(s) want on Name Tag(s) _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Farm/Co phone _____ Cell phone _____

Farm/Company Name _____

Address (street) _____

(city/state/zip) _____

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SEEDLINGS ALERT

Superior Nursery at Lee, Florida. Phone 850-971-5159 They have increased the cost of bare root Southern Red Cedar to (\$250 per thousand). They have Sand Pine, and Virginia Pine seedlings (\$100 per thousand.) and Spruce Pine (\$120 per thousand) available for the Fall Season.

Dwight Stansel Farm & Nursery, 5553 164th St, Wellborn, FL 32094, Phone 386-963-2827, e-mail [dsfntte@windstream.net] raises bare root Southern Red Cedar which they sell for \$218 per thousand.

The Division of Forestry--Andrews Nursery, Chiefland, FL, Phone 352-493-6096, will have bare root Sand Pine at \$50 per thousand. They currently have containerized (Plugs) Sand Pine available for \$200 per thousand.

Southern Christmas Tree Plantation, (Bill Murray), Cordele, GA, (See advertisement) has Leland Cypress, Murray Cypress, and others in liners, in gallons and in three gallons. Phone 229-273-5748. The Murray Cypress seems to be the most disease resistant.

Aucker's Nursery, Williston, FL, (See Advertisement), phone 352-528-3889, has very nice Leland Cypress liners, and three to twenty-five gallon containerized. They have a very nice educational Web Site: www.auckersnursery.com

BK Cedars (Susan Kossuth), Alachua, FL Phone 386-462-2060 has a good supply of three gallon (\$6) genetically improved Southern Red Cedar ('Robin Blue') suitable for initial or replacement planting. She also has three gallon (\$7) Carolina Sapphires. I get a few of these to sell to customers who are thinking of digging a small tree. It is easier than digging, and I plant whatever is left over. Michael

The 2014 meeting was held at Mark and Kay Powell's farm. We had some interesting and informative speakers at the meeting.



Susie McKinley spoke on Agritourism and how to use social media to promote our farms



Ben Parks also spoke on Florida Agritourism and the Tourist-Oriented Directional Sign Program (TODS)

Fire Safety & Christmas Trees

For years, we have all seen or read stories in the news that real Christmas Trees can be a fire hazard. For the sake of this discussion, I would like start it in a little different manner than usual. Let's build a typical Christmas tree setting in most households in reverse. Presents: lots & lots of them all stacked on top of each other. They are in cardboard boxes and then covered in wrapping paper topped with beautiful frilly bows. Most of these are toys and in most cases, they are made of plastic. We all know that all of these materials are extremely flammable and many of us have used most of these same materials in the same configuration to start a fire. All you need is a heat source. Lights: Hundreds and hundreds of them wrapped in a tight pattern. Many are within inches of the presents and there is a good chance that they could be touching them. Anyone that has ever tried to change a light bulb that has been on very long or any girl that grew up with an easy bake oven knows some light bulbs can get hot. I'm sure just about every fire chief in the country would tell you that you have a fire hazard at this stage. Overload your electrical circuit, and it just became a major hazard. Tree: A fresh cut, real tree is not flammable. And if you keep it hydrated, it will not become so. But as with many other things including artificial trees, can burn with enough heat from below. As long as you take care of your tree, it is not a fire hazard.

I did not bring up this topic to be a Scrooge or scare people away from putting up a Christmas tree. With a little common sense, you can safely continue your family Christmas traditions.

An easy way to test the lights that you have is to turn them on for 30 minutes & then try to touch the bulb. If you cannot hold the bulb in your hand throw them away. LEDs are good & use much less electricity but modern incandescent can be safe to use as long as they pass the heat test. Inspect your lights before putting them up. Don't let your lights or wiring touch the presents under the tree. This goes for artificial tree users also.

If you are using a real tree, make sure that you get it into water within an hour or so, the sooner, the better. If longer than this, all you need to do is cut about ½ inch off the trunk to revive it. Make sure you keep your water level checked. This is very important in the first 2 or 3 days. Larger trees can drink a gallon per day in the first couple of days. If it runs out, the trunk can seal off & the tree will be unable to drink anymore water. This could be corrected as above but much more difficult on a decorated tree.

If you have fireplace & plan to use it, I know it looks romantic in pictures but don't put your tree near the fireplace. The dry heat will dehydrate your tree very quickly.

Wishing all a merry & safe Christmas

Mark Powell

Powell Tree Farm

Sneads, FL

Aucker's Nursery

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Minutes of the Florida Christmas Tree Association Business Meeting September 20, 2014

The meeting was called to order at Mark and Kay Powell's Christmas Tree Farm, 7509 Old Spanish Trail, Sneads, FL 32604: 850-209-3110: GPS Coordinates: N30 42.456 W84 58.115.

Susie McKinley spoke on Florida Agritourism and avenues to **FREE ADVERTISING** using Social Media Platforms. Our websites are not interactive but include an abundance of information.

Each Christmas Tree Farm can have its own Facebook account. Word about your Christmas Tree Farm can spread exponentially starting with just one "like".

With Instagram you can take a picture and have it framed and filtered for viewing. You must have a Smart phone in order to read an Instagram site.

Pinterest is an on-line bookmarking site with a fee. It is more time consuming. Our website pictures can be transferred to the customer's Pinterest account so we are not forgotten. Hash tag numbers are part of Instagram or Twitter and a Facebook platform can be used as well.

Hootsuite (logo is an owl) will post your schedule for the public to view.

Susie encouraged us to "Share a little Florida Sunshine" by posting photos about what you like about Florida.

Ben Parks: Executive Director, Florida Agritourism Association (850-559-1155) provided a hand out of the Florida Statutes on Agritourism: 570.961. Agritourism activity means "any agricultural related activity consistent with a bona fide farm or ranch or in a working forest which allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy activities, including farming, ranching, historical, cultural, or harvest-your-own activities and attractions." Florida also has a Tourist-oriented directional sign program (TODS). 2014 Florida Statutes 479.262 in which provisions for placing signs along state roads is discussed. There is an opportunity for the State to help Christmas tree growers make signs. The contact person at the Department of Transportation is Christopher Lewis, Highway Signing Program: 850-410-5581.

Mike Kelley, a new BOD member, has offered to have the fall 2015 meeting at Whispering Pines Christmas Tree Farm. Cathie Gregory and Bob Neilson currently serve as the other BOD members. Jack Ewing is the temporary Chairman for "Trees for Troops". Jack and Judy Ewing's Santa's Christmas Tree Forest has provided trees for the program for years.

The TREEmendous newsletter is now only going out by e-mail.

Respectively submitted,

Sue Kossuth, Secretary, FCTA

Southern Christmas Tree Nursery

Bill and Sara Murray

3452 Pateville Rd

Cordele GA 31015

Ph 229-273-5748

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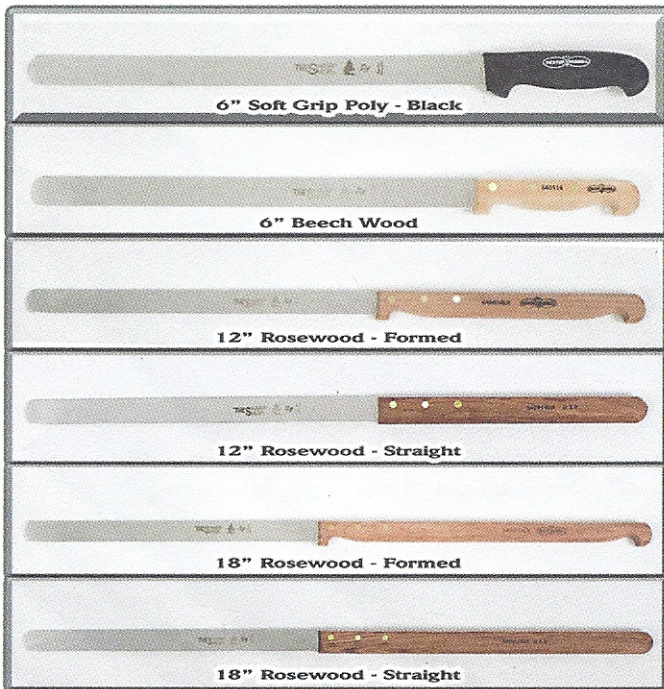
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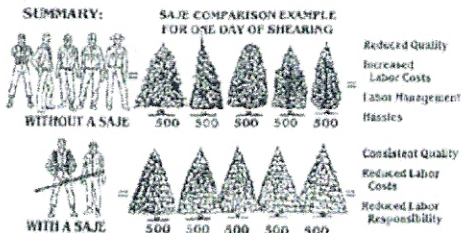
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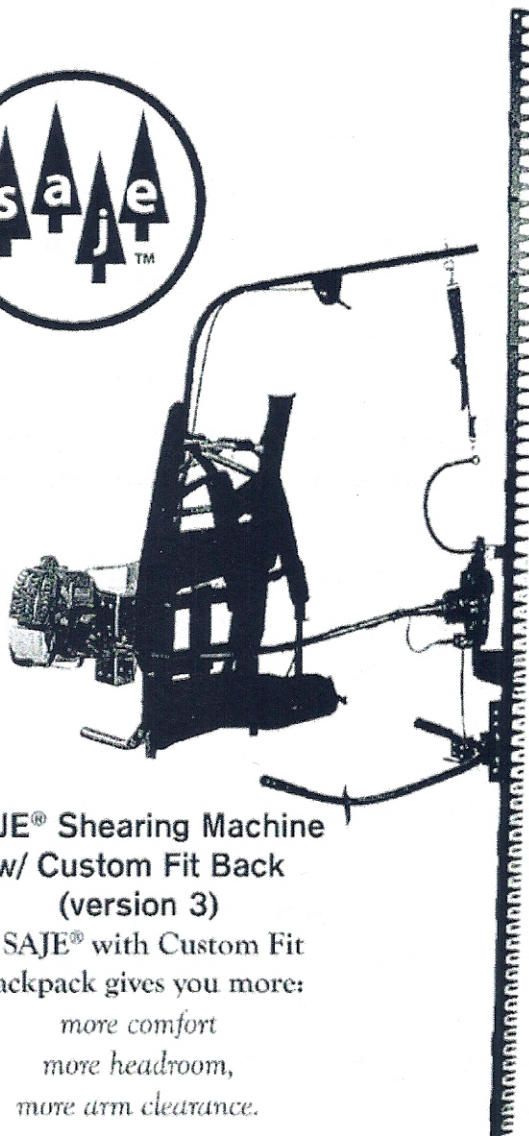
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Wesley Bass one of our original vendors and advertisers is making some changes to his business. Wesley has transferred his colorant, netting, and supply business to **Evans Christmas Products**, another long term advertiser.

Wesley is keeping the Saje Trimmer business for both new and older model s. See the advertisements for both **BASS TREES** and **EVANS CHRISTMAS PRODUCTS** in this newsletter.

Wesley was one of our original vendors, and a true friend. He would come to our meetings with his truck and trailer both overloaded. He would purchase terra sorba, then break it down to 5 pound packages, just enough for us to use for planting. Wesley has limited his business because his wife has been ill for the past two years, but she is showing signs of recovery. We wish them our very best wishes.

