



# TREEmendous News



## Florida Christmas Tree Association's Newsletter

August 2014

### FALL MEETING AT SNEADS SEPTEMBER 20

#### Presidents Comments:

Mark and Kay Powell are setting up an exciting Fall Meeting. They are in the middle of Grape Harvesting working night and day, 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, drinks, and an early BBQ Dinner. 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) plans to attend. Phone in your orders ASAP so you can pick up your supplies at the meeting. Michael Songer will have Coty Color, but please email, [songerma@hotmail.com](mailto:songerma@hotmail.com) or phone 904-535-7822 and leave a message by Sept 1<sup>st</sup> to benefit from Free Freight to the Fall Meeting. 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](http://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 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](http://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.

Michael Songer, FCTA President



**Joyce and Bob Neilson were the hosts for the 2013 meeting of FCTA**

The FCTA members who attended the 2013 meeting at Neilson's farm enjoyed an interesting program, a BBQ lunch, and a wonderful Low Country Boil dinner.

## DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Sept. 13, 2014            Georgia Christmas Tree Assoc. Fall Meeting  
Augusta, GA See: [www.gacta.com](http://www.gacta.com)  
Hosts: Matthew & Angela Gay
- Sept. 20, 2014            Florida Christmas Tree Assoc. Fall Meeting  
Sneads, FL See [www.flchristmastrees.com](http://www.flchristmastrees.com)  
Hosts: Mark & Kay Powell
- Oct 14-16, 2014           Sunbelt Expo Moultrie, GA  
[www.sunbeltexpo.com](http://www.sunbeltexpo.com)
- December, 2014           Trees to Governor .....  
   Looking for Volunteer.....
- 

### Florida Christmas Tree Association Officers and Board

President .....Michael Songer  
443 Cody Drive  
Orange Park, FL 32073  
904-535-7822  
[songerma@hotmail.com](mailto:songerma@hotmail.com)

Vice President.....Mark Powell  
7593 Old Spanish Trail  
Sneads, FL 32460  
850-593-5199  
[POWELL147@embarqmail.com](mailto:POWELL147@embarqmail.com)

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

Treasurer .....John Gregory  
3605 NW 69<sup>th</sup> Street  
Gainesville, FL 32606  
352-373-4575  
[unicornhill@yahoo.com](mailto:unicornhill@yahoo.com)

#### *DIRECTORS:*

Term Expires 2014 ..... Mike Kelly  
1603 Penton Rd.  
Milton, FL 32570  
850-449-4316  
[schnoorjp@AOL.com](mailto:schnoorjp@AOL.com)

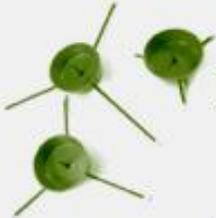
Term Expires 2015 ...Cathie Gregory  
3605 NW 69<sup>th</sup> Street  
Gainesville, FL 32606  
352-373-4575  
[unicornhill@yahoo.com](mailto:unicornhill@yahoo.com)

Term Expires 2016 ... .. Bob Neilson  
6780 SE 67th Ct.  
Trenton, FL 32693  
352-472-2340  
[gatorjoyce@aol.com](mailto:gatorjoyce@aol.com)

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<b>Yule Stands</b>	<b>2014 Price</b>	<b>Show Price</b>	<b>Orders over \$2000 Price</b>
Small stand ½" pin	\$3.90	\$3.80	\$3.50
Medium stand	\$6.50	\$6.30	\$5.90
Super Medium stand	\$8.75	\$8.60	\$8.25
Large stand	\$10.25	\$10.00	\$9.50
Reinforced stand	\$21.25	\$20.75	\$19.50
5 Qt. Water Bowl	\$3.20	\$3.05	\$2.85
10 Qt Water Bowl	\$4.35	\$4.25	\$4.00
<b>Tree Removal Bags</b>			
50/case	\$48.95	\$45.25	\$44.00
Jumbo Tree bags 48/case	\$60.95	\$57.25	\$56.00
<b>Kirk or Green/Red Netting</b>			\$4.50 off per order
<i>Supplies are limited on some sizes of the Green &amp; Red netting</i>			
<b>Stay Real Watering System</b>			\$5.00 off per case

All orders must be paid and picked up by end of show.

**Craig will see you September 20<sup>th</sup>  
 at the 2014 Summer Meeting.**

# Tentative Agenda for Fall Meeting September 20, 2014

**9:00 am** (Central Time) Registration at Powell's Christmas Tree Farm (**Mark & Kay Powell**)  
**7509 Old Spanish Trail, Sneads FL 32460, Tel: > 850-209-3110, >**  
**GPS coordinates: N30 42.456 W84 58.115**

**From Fairfield Inn:** take Hwy 71 north to Hwy 90. Turn right (East) on Hwy 90 approx. 13 miles to Inland Road. Turn Right on Inland Rd. then Left on Old Spanish Trail approx. .8 mile. Farm is 1st driveway on Right.

**From I-10:** Sneads Exit 158. Hwy 286 through Sneads approx. 5.2 miles. Turn Left on Old Spanish Trail approx. 2.5 miles to farm on the Left. See Sign.

**9:30** Opening Comments and Introductions

**10:00** Speaker: Susie McKinley

Topic: SOCIAL MEDIA (Facebook & Instagram) FREE ADVERTISING

**11:00** Speaker: Ben Parks, Florida Agritourism Association

Topic: Agritourism

**12:00** Lunch at the Farm

**1:30** Speaker: Representative from UF/Jackson County Extension Office

Topic: To be determined

**2:00** Vendors: Craig Sorensen, Tim Mitchell Tree Stands

Joyce Ezell, Bahco Pruning Tools

Tree Talk, and Farm Tour

**4:30** Short Business Meeting

**5:00** DINNER AT THE FARM...BBQ Pork & Chicken, sides, dessert, and tea.

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**FLORIDA CHRISTMAS TREE ASSOCIATION**  
**Fall Meeting ~ September 20, 2014**

REGISTRATION per Farm/Co: \$20.00/Advance; \$25 at meeting = \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch \$8, Sandwiches, chips, cookies, drinks @ Powell's Farm  
# lunches \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 8. = \_\_\_\_\_

Dinner \$10, BBQ Pork & Chicken, sides, dessert , drinks  
@ Powell's Farm  
# dinners \_\_\_\_\_ x \$10. = \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL = \_\_\_\_\_

SEND TO: John Gregory, 3605 NW 69<sup>th</sup> Street, Gainesville, FL 32606, with this form,  
**by Sept 12th.** 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) \_\_\_\_\_

**Hotel: FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES, 4966 Whitetail Dr. Marianna, FL 32448.**  
**PHONE 850-482-0012** , I-10 Exit 132, north on Hwy 71, Whitetail Dr. on right.  
King - \$84./night..Studio or double queen - \$92.

Ask for Florida Christmas Tree Assoc. price.

**Call to make room reservations by Sept. 7th.**



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# CHRISTMAS TREES TO THE STATE CAPITOL



Delivery of Christmas Trees to the Governor is an exciting experience. Franco & Sigrid Camacho had delivered the trees in 2012 and were willing to do it again in 2013 because they are so close and they enjoyed the experience. The Agriculture Department called and ask if a different family could deliver the trees each year. So, Michael & Linda Songer and Granddaughter Kacey, age 11, delivered the trees for 2013.

Tom Thomas, Dept of Agriculture, came to our farm on Wednesday December 4<sup>th</sup> and picked up a 7.5 foot Cedar, a 7.5 foot Spruce Pine, two 7 foot Leyland Cypress, and a 6.5 foot Sand Pine. The trees were taken to Tallahassee and set up in the Capitol Building.

On Monday December 9<sup>th</sup> we went to Tallahassee in the late afternoon and stayed in the Quality Inn so we could be at the Capitol at 8 am on Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>.

At the Capitol we met Pam Bondi, Attorney General; Alan Putnam, Commissioner of Agriculture; and Jeff Atwater, CFO. We then went to meet with Governor Rick Scott and his wife Ann. The Governor's wife asked Kacey to place the official Florida ornament for 2013 on one of the trees. Then the Governor and Kacey pressed the button to officially light the tree. There were photographers and members of the press there to record the event, and Kacey was thrilled to later see herself on TV. Several years ago, I went with Mark Powell and his younger daughter to present trees to Governor Jeb Bush. Politicians like to have a child around for picture taking. So, when your turn comes be sure to take your Granddaughter or Grandson or another young child.

We were on the Government News station in Tallahassee, and the pictures were picked up by several other TV stations. We had some comments from customers that they had seen us on TV. You are representing your farm and the Florida Christmas Tree Association.. Michael

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7 GALLON 4'- 5'		\$ 20.00 each
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## **Florida Christmas Tree Association Board of Directors And Business Meeting September 28- 29, 2013**

The meeting was called to order at Bob and Joyce Neilson's Christmas tree farm at Trenton.

The Tremendous News newsletter is mailed out to members who do not use E-mail. It costs \$2.00 to print and \$1.00 to mail. Converts to E-mail would reduce costs and work!

There was an interest in what prices were for trees at the various locations. Some farms put their pricing on their web site. Pricing varied as shown below.

- 1) Under 6' = \$24.95  
7' = \$27.95
  - 2) \$6 per foot
  - 3) 4' = \$16 The farm is considering a blanket \$35 per tree for all trees under 10'
  - 4) 6' Carolina Sapphire (Arizona Cypress) \$48
  - 5) 6' = \$25
  - 6) \$5 and \$6 per foot up to 10': over 10' = \$8 per foot
- It was noted that prices are going up and some areas have better pricing power.

We are still having problems being allowed to put our signs up on public right of way land. For example, for \$200 paid to the DOT (Department of Transportation) one can put up a sign on the right of way. Mark Powell reported he could put up a generic directional sign such as "Christmas Tree Farm" for 2 months. It seems a lot depends on the county.

Mark Powell has volunteered to have the 2014 fall meeting at his Powell Christmas Tree Farm. Thank you Mark and Kay! He will try to find a date when Gainesville and Tallahassee do not have a football game and the Georgia Christmas Tree Association is not meeting. The Georgia meeting is once a year on a Saturday starting at 8:00am and ending at 4:30pm.

Jodi Utsman reported that FL Statute 570.964 had passed requiring a sign with specific size letters and wording to be posted at tree farms to avoid (reduce) liability claims. She brought many of them for us to purchase at her cost. Thank you JODI!

E-mail inquiries come to Michael Songer and John Gregory. They E-mail each other so both of them do not reply. Thank you Michael and John! The FCTA Tremendous News can be viewed on the website: [www.flchristmastrees.com](http://www.flchristmastrees.com) by clicking on "newsletters".

The Board of Directors met 9-29 at John and Cathie Gregory's Unicorn Hill Christmas Tree Farm. The consistent participation and support from Bill and Sara Murray led the Directors to vote and approve them to be Honorary members of FCTA. The Secretary is to write a congratulatory letter to them and the Treasurer is to have a certificate prepared.

Respectively Submitted,

Sue Kossuth  
Secretary

20874 NW 91 Street  
Alachua, FL 32615

August 15,2014

Bill and Sara Murray  
Southern Christmas Tree Farm  
3452 Pateville Road  
Cordele, GA 31015

Dear Bill and Sara,

At the last Florida Christmas Tree Association Board of Directors Meeting you were unanimously elected to be Honorary Members of the Florida Christmas Tree Association. Congratulations!

We had a wonderful time reminiscing about you and your participation in our meetings. As the years went by we looked for you because you were always early and greeting our arrival to our meeting! There was your pick-up truck loaded to the hilt with trees members ordered, but you always saved some space for your trees to be part of the drawings for door prizes. Thank you. For the door prize winners, many a Murray tree stood out just a bit bigger because it came in a container and was planted early - right after the meeting.

Never a shy conversationalist, you gave us encouragement and advice as we talked back and forth about what worked and did not work, knowing that trying new things may or may not pay off. Realizing you were a wealth of information we invited you to be a guest speaker. This was most rewarding, not only for what you had to say at the podium, but the open door you left for experienced and new growers to meet with you afterward as there was not enough time for all the questions to be answered.

Sara, you may not have been in the limelight as much as Bill, but we know that you are very much a part of the success of the Southern Christmas Tree Farm. It takes two in agreement, each doing 80 percent of the total effort to make things happen on time and the way it is supposed to be. Many of those details, unknowing to Bill, probably fell to you.

We hope to see you again at our fall meeting at the Powell Christmas tree farm Sept. 20,2014.

Congratulations again from all the Florida Christmas Tree Grower Association members.



Sue Kossuth  
Florida Christmas Tree Association Secretary

# Southern Christmas Tree Nursery

Bill and Sara Murray

3452 Pateville Rd

Cordele GA 31015

Ph 229-273-5748

Leighton Green Leyland Cypress

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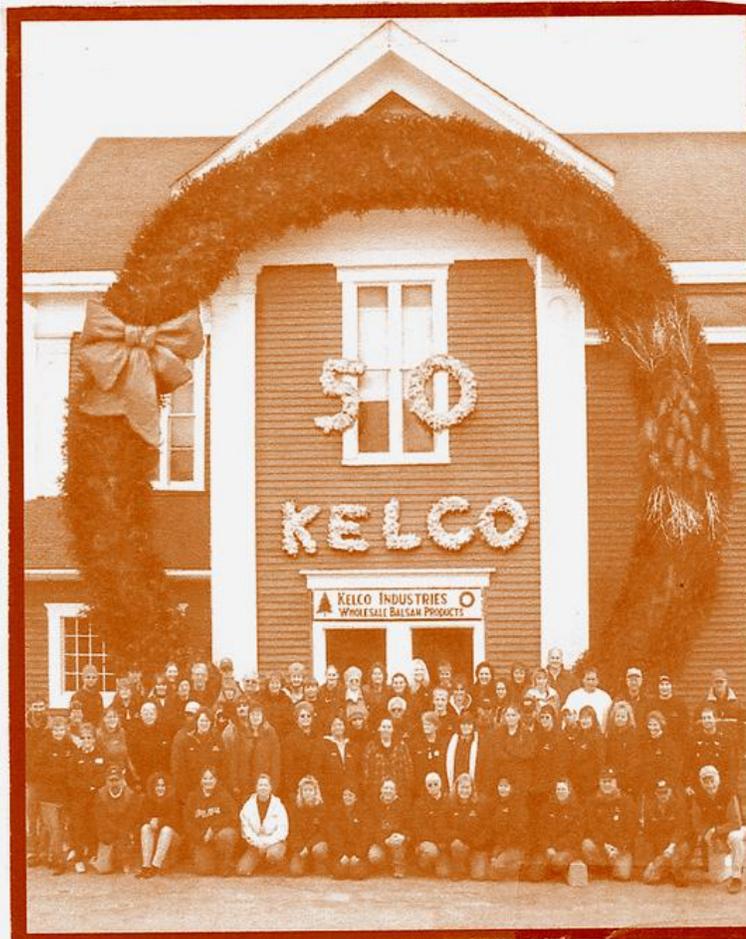


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# SEEDLINGS ALERT

**Superior Nursery at Lee, Florida.** Phone 850-971-5159 They have bare root Southern Red Cedar (\$214..per thousand) . They have Spruce Pine, and Virginia Pine seedlings (\$87. per thousand.) available for the Fall Season. They are out of Sand Pine for this year.

**Dwight Stansel Farm & Nursery**, 5553 164<sup>th</sup> St, Wellborn, FL 32094, Phone 386-963-2827, e-mail [\[dsfntte@windstream.net\]](mailto: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, currently has bare root Sand Pine at \$50. per thousand. Seeds have become scarce and they are not currently producing the containerized Sand Pine.

**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](http://www.auckersnursery.com)

**BK Cedars** ( Susan Kossuth), Alachua, FL Phone 386-462-2060 has a good supply of one gallon (\$3.) and 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 what ever is left over. Michael

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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.



Craig Sorenson of Tim Mitchell delivers supplies



Farm tour at Fall 2013 meeting


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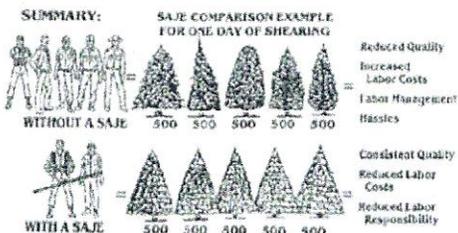
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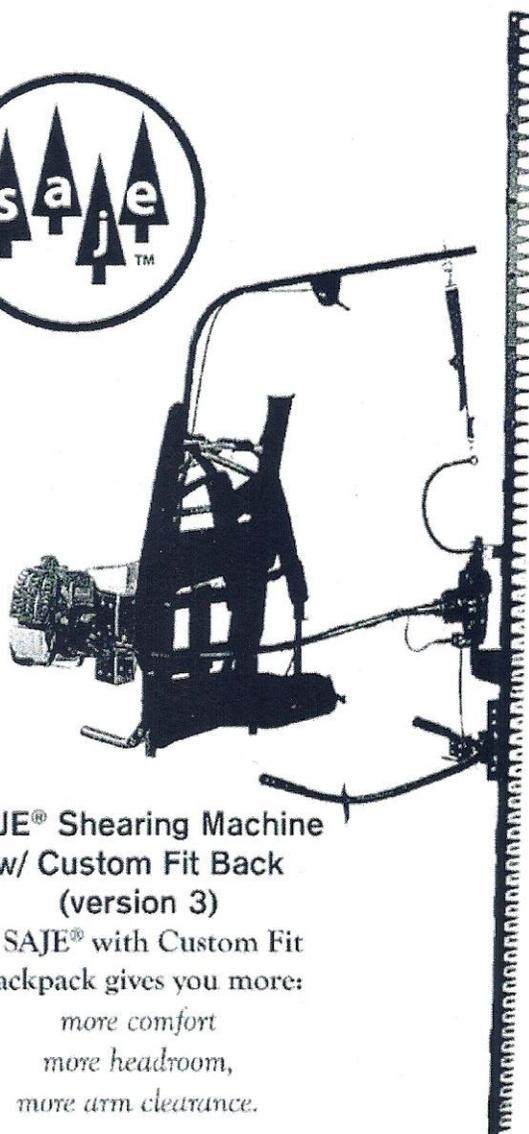


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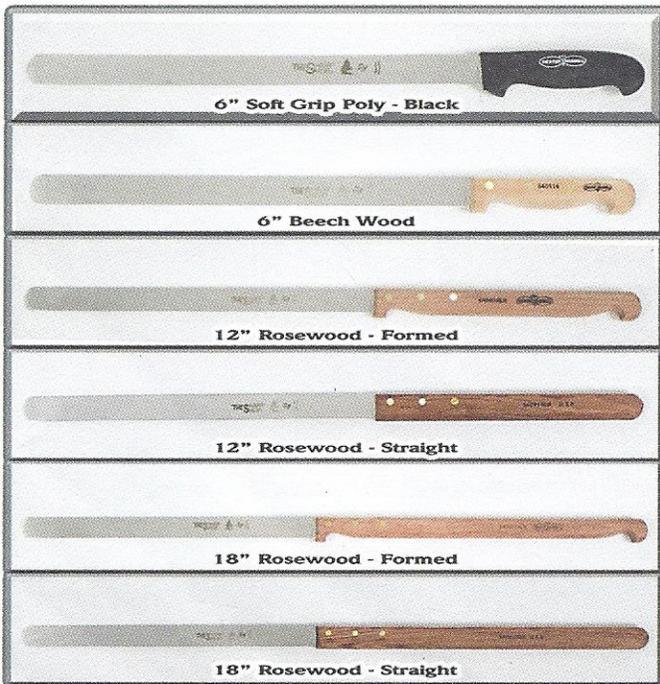
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