



www.SouthernChristmasTrees.org

2013 Annual Meeting

of the

Southern Christmas Tree Association

August 16 – 18

The Dancing Rabbit Inn

13240 Highway 16 West
Choctaw, Mississippi 39350
www.DancingRabbitInn.com

Farm Hosts

Larry and Sue Massey Rosebud Christmas Trees

5819 Gunter Road
Walnut Grove, Mississippi 39189
Leake County
www.RosebudChristmasTrees.jmassey.com



www.SouthernChristmasTrees.org

August 16, 2013

Welcome friends,

Thank you for your interest in the Southern Christmas Tree Association (SCTA) by registering and participating in our annual meeting August 16-18, 2013.

Our governing board will meet Friday night to renew old acquaintances and discuss activities for the upcoming year. Saturday, the annual meeting will be held at the Dancing Rabbit Inn in Choctaw, Mississippi followed by a Sunday farm tour-demonstration at Larry and Sue Massey's Rosebud Christmas Trees farm near Walnut Grove in Leake County. The Massey's farm is approximately 17 miles southwest of the Dancing Rabbit Inn.

During the meeting, we will share ideas amongst our members capitalizing on experiences within our organization. Please do not be bashful to ask questions but also stand ready to offer experiences that can help others and improve our industry. But just as importantly, do not be ashamed to reflect on mistakes and lessons learned. Competition is good but it is extremely important in our organization to share information since 'we' is what 'we' have to improve our farming ventures.

Mike Buchart, the executive secretary, has made me realize that this organization and the predecessors – the Alabama Christmas Tree Association and the Louisiana-Mississippi Christmas Tree (Grower) Association have better than a forty year history. All kinds of farming organizations have come and gone yet we, the Christmas tree grower, still have our association and with that the opportunity to regularly exchange information. You are to be commended.

Mike has been bent on establishing a historical archive of what you, I and numerous others have done over the years. Look deep and find past newsletters, meeting agendas, minutes and something unique to our organization so Mike can properly archive and display for our benefit. Take it a step further by contacting old grower friends to inquire if they have any old association documents. Please have the documents forwarded to our business office. Be sure to let Mike know.

Again, thank you. I look forward to visiting with each of you during our meeting.

Sincerely,

JOE GERSCH, President 2012 & 2013
Yawn Station Christmas Tree Farm
29400 Ruby Purvis Road, Independence, Louisiana 70443
Telephone: 985-878-6223; E-mail: joegersch@yahoo.com



2013 – 2014

SCTA Officers and Board of Directors

President 2012 & 2013

Joe Gersch
29400 Ruby Purvis Road
Independence, LA 70443
985-878-6223
joegersch@yahoo.com

National Director

Bentley Curry
548 Robinson Drive
Rayville, LA 71269
318-728-6203
bentleycurry@aol.com

Alabama Director 2013

Michael Duncan
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neelyfarms@centurytel.net

Alabama Director 2014

Steve Mannhard
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Summerdale, AL 36580
251-988-8114
fishrivertrees@gulftel.com

Alabama Extension Director

Vacant
Auburn University
101 Funchess Hall
Auburn University, AL 36849
334-844-3032

2012 Joe Gersch (LA)
2011 Steve Mannhard (AL)
2010 Larry Massey (MS)

Senior Vice-President

Robert Foster
008 Love Road
Hernando, MS 38632
662-429-2540
cedarhfarm@yahoo.com

Parliamentarian

Steve Mannhard
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Summerdale, AL 36580
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fishrivertrees@gulftel.com

Louisiana Director 2013

Danna Day
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318-805-6106
dmt_day@yahoo.com

Louisiana Director 2014

James Cox
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Ethel, LA 70730
225-683-9706
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Louisiana Extension Director

Dr. Don Reed
Louisiana State University
4419 Idlewild Road
Clinton, LA 70722
225-683-5891
dreed@agctr.lsu.edu

Past Presidents

2009 Clarke Gernon (LA)
2008 Ray Gilbert (AL)
2007 Tommy McDaniel (MS)

Vice-President

Ray Gilbert
1230 County Road 296
Lanett, AL 36863
334-499-4007
raygilbert@mindspring.com

Executive Secretary

Michael Burchart
12263 Brookshire Avenue
Baton Rouge, LA 70815
225-505-6335
sctaes@gmail.com

Mississippi Director 2013

Larry Massey
5819 Gunter Road
Walnut Grove, MS 39189
601-253-2285
massey_larry@hotmail.com

Mississippi Director 2014

Larry Haley
13493 Martha Redmond Road
Saucier, MS 39574
228-669-0425
Larry-haley@att.net

Mississippi Extension Director

Dr. Stephen Dicke
Mississippi State University
1320 Seven Springs Road
Raymond, MS 39154
601-857-2284
steved@ext.msstate.edu

2006 Bentley Curry (LA)
2005 Paul Beavers (AL)

Agenda

2013 Annual Meeting of the Southern Christmas Tree Association

Dancing Rabbit Inn, Choctaw, Mississippi
Rosebud Christmas Trees, Walnut Grove, Mississippi

Friday August 16, 2013

Dancing Rabbit Inn

- 05:00 pm – 08:00 pm **On-Site Registration** (Oak Room)
- 05:00 pm – 10:00 pm **Exhibitor Set-Up** (Hickory Room)
Christmas Tree Competition Set-Up (Foyers)
- 06:00 pm – 07:30 pm **Board Dinner**
City Limits Seafood & Steaks, Philadelphia, Mississippi
- 08:00 pm – 10:00 pm **SCTA Board Meeting** (Pine Room)

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Saturday August 17, 2013

Dancing Rabbit Inn

- 06:30 am – 10:30 am **On-Site Registration** (Oak Room)
- 08:00 am – 08:15 am **Welcome** by *Joe Gersch*, President 2012 & 2013
Yawn Station Christmas Tree Farm, Independence, Louisiana
- 08:15 am – 08:30 am **Welcome** by *Kaye Rowell*, TMP, Tourism Director
Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, Philadelphia, Mississippi
- 08:30 am – 09:00 am **Mississippi Agriculture**
Page Manning, Director of Marketing
Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce, Jackson, Mississippi
- Agritourism in Mississippi**
Donna West, Division Director
Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce, Jackson, Mississippi
- 09:00 am – 09:45 am **Real Experiences with Agritourism**
Robert Foster, Senior Vice-President 2013
Cedar Hill Farm, Hernando, Mississippi

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09:45 am – 10:15 am

Proposed Changes to SCTA By-Laws

Larry Massey, Mississippi Director 2013

Rosebud Christmas Trees, Walnut Grove, Mississippi

10:15 am – 10:30 am

Coffee Break

10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Production & Marketing Challenges in 2013: *Member to Member*

Steven Mannhard, Moderator

Fish River Trees, Summerdale, Alabama

- Issues Using Roundup (glysophate)
- Fertilization of Field Grown Christmas Trees
- Chemicals for Treatment of Cercospera Blight
- New Christmas Tree Species for the Deep South
- New Marketing Strategies – Going beyond a Website
- Fire Ant Control
- Etcetera

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12:00 pm – 01:30 pm

Buffet Lunch

Dustin McKissen, Executive Director
 National Christmas Tree Association

01:30 pm

Deadline to Submit Christmas Tree Competition Ballots

01:30 pm – 02:00 pm

NCTA National Director's Report

Bentley Curry, SCTA-NCTA National Director
 Curry Farms, Rayville, Louisiana

Avoiding Pesticide Resistance

Bentley Curry
 Curry Crop Consulting, Rayville, Louisiana

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- 02:00 pm – 02:30 pm **Tomorrow's Farm Tour / Demonstration**
Larry Massey
Rosebud Christmas Trees, Walnut Grove, Mississippi
- 02:30 pm – 04:00 pm **General Membership Business Meeting**
Joe Gersch, President 2012 & 2013
- 07:00 pm **Buffet Dinner / Tree Competition Awards / Recognition**
- 08:15 pm **Auction Fundraiser**
Jim King, Auctioneer
King's Christmas Tree Farm (former), Hammond, Louisiana
Bentley Curry, Barker (Sidekick)
Curry Farms, Inc., Rayville, Louisiana

Sunday August 18, 2013 *Rosebud Christmas Trees*

Directions to Rosebud Christmas Trees, 5819 Gunter Road, Walnut Grove, MS 39189 from Dancing Rabbit Inn (formerly Hilton Garden Inn). Distance: 17.3 miles. Approximate travel time: 29 minutes.

1. Head east on MS-16 E toward Choctaw Trail, go 0.7 miles
2. Turn right onto BIA Route 0221, go 1.7 miles
3. Turn left onto Oswald Road, go 0.9 miles
4. Take the 1st right onto MS-488 W, go 5.6 miles
5. Turn left to stay on MS-488 W, go 4.5 miles
6. Turn right to stay on MS-488 W, go 2.2 miles
7. Turn left onto Gunter Road.

Destination will be on the right, go 1.7 miles. See attached map.

- 08:30 am – 08:15 am **Worship Service on the Farm**
- 08:15 am – 11:30 am **Christmas Tree Farm Tour and Demonstration**
Soil Testing to Sales – A Walk-Through of Experience
- 11:30 am - 01:30 pm **Lunch with Refreshments**
- 01:30 pm **Adjourn:** Return home safely. See you next year in Alabama!

SCTA 2013 Annual Meeting Vitae, in Alphabetical Order



Bentley Curry
Curry Farms, Incorporated
Curry's Crop Consulting
Rayville, Louisiana

The Bentley's operate a choose and cut Christmas tree farm in northeast Louisiana on the same small cotton farm where Bentley was born and still resides with his wife Sandy. Their hard and innovative work has developed their farm into a regional area on interest offering a pumpkin patch, corn maze and numerous other "agritainment" activities. They planted their first Christmas trees in 1981, began harvesting in 1983 and now market about a 1000 trees per season.

Bentley is a recognized crop expert in the field of pest management through his consulting company Curry's Crop Consulting. Bentley is certified by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry in Agricultural Entomology; Orchard and Nut Tree Entomology; Ornamental Entomology; Agricultural Plant Pathology; Agricultural Weed Control; Turf, Ornamental and Shade Tree Weed Control; Agricultural Field Soil Management; and Agricultural Water Management. He holds many other ag related certifications.

Got a question? Ask Bentley Curry.

Contact:

548 Robinson Drive, Rayville, LA 71269-7506

Telephones: home 318.728.6203, cell 318.366.3575; E-mail: bentleycurry@aol.com

Website: www.curryfarms.net



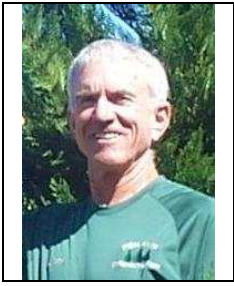
Joe Gersch
President 2012 & 2013, Southern Christmas Tree Association
Co-Owner, Yawn Station Christmas Tree Farm
Independence, Louisiana

Joe Gersch is the 2012 & 2013 President of the Southern Christmas Tree Association, the first to have served a two-year term. He and his wife, Kay, own Yawn Station Christmas Farm located in Tangipahoa Parish. During 2006, the Gersch's planted their first 400 trees. Eight acres are under tree production with approximately 6,500 trees. They continue to improve their farming operation with the incorporation of tours, parties, new species, and farm animals. The Gersch's are expanding agritourism ventures into their working farm. Prior to tending their farm full time, Joe worked in emergency medicine and lawn management while Kay continues a second career as a chemistry and physics teacher at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School in Hammond. Joe is fortunate his wife has a Ph.D. in Horticulture. They have three children with grand and great grand children, all of whom have become good farm hands. When not tending to their responsibilities, you just might see them riding a Harley.

Contact: 29400 Ruby Purvis Road, Independence, LA 70443

Telephone 985.507.3236; E-mail joegersch@yahoo.com

Website: www.yawnstationtreefarm.com



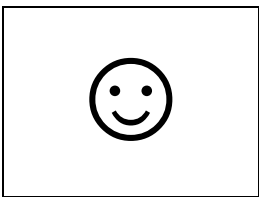
Steve Mannhard
Fish River Trees
Summerdale, Alabama

Fish River Trees is a premier choose-and-cut Christmas tree farm owned and operated by Steve and Sandra Mannhard that has been in operation since 1981. The farm is located in central Baldwin County, 5 miles east of Fairhope, Alabama along the Gulf Coast.

Steve retired as a full colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves having served our country 30 years. He taught English in the Alabama public school system for many years. Steve is a very knowledgeable Christmas tree farmer learned the good-old-fashion way - through a lot of hard work. Their farm is a showcase for our industry. Steve has served the Southern Christmas Tree Association, its predecessor the Alabama Christmas Tree Growers Association, and our industry with enthusiasm and dedication.

Contact:

13982 Woodhaven Dairy Road East, Summerdale, AL 36580
Telephone: 251 988.8114; E-mail: fishrivertrees@gulftel.com
Website: www.fishrivertrees.com



Paige Manning, Director of Marketing and Public Relations
Market Development Division
Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce
Jackson, Mississippi

Paige Manning is the Director of Marketing and Public Relations for the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. Her foremost responsibilities are to direct the operations of the Market Development Division and to promote Mississippi agriculture, including commodities and value-added products, statewide and worldwide. The Market Development Division is responsible for the Mississippi Farmers Market, Mississippi Market Bulletin, Make Mine Mississippi Program, Mississippi's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program, Certified Farmers Market Program, Livestock and Grain Market News, as well as duties in the areas of agritourism and international trade.

Paige serves on the Board of Directors of the Mississippi Agricultural Economics Association and the Mississippi Women for Agriculture. She is member of the Mississippi Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, the Metro-Jackson Attractions Association, the Junior League of Jackson, and First Baptist Church of Flora.

She graduated from Mississippi State University with a B.S. in Agricultural Economics in 2001 and received a Masters of Agribusiness Management from MSU in 2002. Prior to joining the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, she worked for the Mississippi State University Extension Service in Community Resource Development. She resides in Madison with her husband, Ron, and one son.

Contact:

P.O. Box 1609, Jackson, MS 39215
Telephone: 601.359.1163; E-mail: paige@mdac.ms.gov
Website: www.mdac.state.ms.us



**Dustin McKissen, Executive Director
National Christmas Tree Association
Chesterfield, Missouri**

Dustin McKissen joined the National Christmas Tree Association and Christmas Spirit Foundation as Executive Director in April 2013. Prior to that Dustin had 13 years of experience in the association industry and public sector, serving small business owners and members that can be dramatically impacted by the legislative process.

While new to the Christmas tree industry, one of Dustin's most cherished memories is going with his father and brother each year to pick out their Real Christmas tree while growing up in the mountains of Utah.

Dustin earned a Bachelors degree in Public Policy and a dual Masters in Business Administration and Public Management. He received his Certified Association Executive (CAE) designation in January of 2013. Dustin and his wife Megan and their three children live in St. Charles, Missouri.

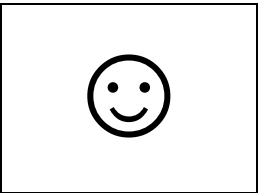
Contact:

AMR Management Services

16020 Swingley Ridge Road, Suite 300, Chesterfield, MO 63017

Telephone: 636.449.5070; E-mail: mckissen@realchristmastrees.org

Websites: www.RealChristmasTrees.org; www.TreesforTroops.org; www.amrms.com



**Donna West, Division Director
Market Development
Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce
Jackson, Mississippi**

Donna West is the Division Director of the Market Development Division for the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. In addition to promoting Mississippi agriculture, including commodities and value-added products, statewide, she assists in the daily operations of the division. Donna oversees the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*, the Make Mine Mississippi Program, Certified Farmers Market Program, Mississippi Agritourism Registration Program, the Dixie National Parade, and works with the Mississippi Farmers Market.

She graduated from Louisiana Tech University with a B.A. in Fashion Merchandising and Marketing in 1979. Prior to joining the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce in 2000, she worked in Catering and Sales in the Hotel and Hospitality Industry, and managed and organized Corporate Special Events in Retail Establishments. Donna resides in Ridgeland.

Contact:

P.O Box 1609, Jackson, MS 39215

Telephone: 601.359.1118; E-mail: donna@mdac.ms.gov

Website: www.mdac.state.ms.us



Directions to 5819 Gunter Rd, Walnut Grove, MS 39189
17.3 mi – about 29 mins
From Dancing Rabbit Inn (formerly Hilton Garden Inn)
to
Rosebud Christmas Trees, Walnut Grove

