

FARMERS COOPERATIVE

# FARMING NEWS

Vol. 26, No. 3

Live Oak • Madison • Florida

April 1, 2013

STANDARD MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT # 130  
LIVE OAK, FL

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## Shade Tree Nursery

# Creating One Family's Dream

By Pauline Fletcher Cogdill

About 13 years ago, Buddy White and his two sons, Franklin and Ronald, embarked on a small nursery business with about one acre of land on which to grow their nursery plants. After all, they had a great deal of experience in agriculture with Buddy's experience as a crop duster pilot, and Franklin and Ronald always working on the farm with their dad. They felt they might know a little bit about growing and selling plants to the public.

As the nursery grew so did their families. Franklin and Kim have a blended family of three children. Kim is a registered nurse at Lake City Medical Center. Franklin's son Spencer will be graduating in December from Santa Fe College with a degree in Cardiovascular Technology. While he's spent most of his childhood years working at the nursery, he has chosen to set his sights on a career in the medical field. Franklin's daughter, Taylor, and younger son, Trey, are busy hands at the nursery. Trey and Taylor enjoy their activities in FFA at Branford Middle School.

**FRANKLIN** works throughout the nursery doing whatever needs to be done: supervision of employees, sales, loading trucks, doing the reports required by various government agencies, and driving the

truck if necessary to get an order on time to their customers. It is just an unwritten law at the nursery that everybody works until the job is done.

Ronald and Darlene stay busy at the nursery with their responsibilities. Ronald will work up a quote for you just as he does the large customers. Shade Tree Nursery serves customers throughout Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and North and South

Carolina where the nursery transports large orders of ornamental trees and plants. And yes, the end of the line—getting the payment for the goods sold—that's one of Ronald's greatest strengths.

Darlene is the Marketing Manager for Shade Tree Nursery, which includes being their website specialist. Shortly after

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**T.E. "Buddy" White**

# Family's Dream

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Darlene started working at the nursery, she revamped Shade Tree Nursery's logo and she keeps their website up to date. A website is a very important sales tool to keep your business growing. Without one, you might not reach many prospective customers.

Darlene also does quotes online for customers and attends trade shows throughout the area to keep informed about all the beautiful plants and ornamental trees the nursery sells. Shade Tree Nursery has just about any plant that you might want, except tropical plants since they do not grow well in this area.

Ronald and Darlene's son, Trevon, helps in the nursery after school and on weekends. Their daughter, Tiffanie, is allergic to plants, so she prefers to take part in culinary projects at Branford Middle School. She especially enjoys the many different meals that her teacher, Julie Dees, teaches her to cook. In fact, she practices on her family with her culinary skills at home.

**BUDDY AND WIFE, JANE,** still have their work at the nursery because retirement just does not seem to fit into their busy schedules. However, Jane did turn over her bookkeeping job to Lisa so that she could become the chief cook and spend time with her precious grandchildren.

Buddy "Papa" oversees the entire operation to be sure that the nursery works like a well oiled machine. In fact,



**Foreman Rolando Mendoza.**



**The work at Shade Tree Nursery spans three generations.**

as a retired pilot, he knows that all the machinery needs a lot of attention with routine maintenance. Papa is meticulous about the machinery and keeps it in good working order. If there is a part that needs replacing, it's off to town Papa goes to purchase that part and back to work to be certain there's no hold up in the daily work at the nursery.

When he has a lull in repairing equipment, Papa's mixing soil in the pots to have them ready for the plants or cleaning an area of the nursery that looks like it needs attention. Clearly there's no idle hands for Papa White or any recruits near him.

Yes, the Whites are fulfilling the American Dream by working the land to be productive and earn a living ... that's

just what farmers have always done. Incidentally, that one acre of land the White's started their business on 13 years ago has grown to over 150 acres.

Ronald and Franklin have certainly learned their work ethic from their dad as evidenced by adding another dimension to their nursery work. They own and operate White's Trucking Services: "You call and we haul." Their trucking services include all your dump truck needs by hauling lime rock, milling rock and even fill dirt.

**SO IF YOU** want to purchase some of their beautiful Knockout Roses, or native Florida plants, just visit Shade Tree Nursery in McAlpin, Fla. Call or visit their website at [www.ShadeTreeNursery.weebly.com](http://www.ShadeTreeNursery.weebly.com).



## For the Past Quarter

# NEW CO-OP MEMBERS

### LIVE OAK STORE

Elizabeth Pearce, Lake City  
James Cochrane, Lake City  
Frank Gardner, Live Oak  
Larry Strange, Jasper  
Cindy Bruce, Live Oak  
Candy O'Neal, Live Oak  
John Stanovik, Live Oak  
Michelle Langford, White Springs  
Barbara Tippie, Wellborn  
Chase Turman, Live Oak  
Linda L. Wheeler, O'Brien  
Natasha McGee, Live Oak  
George Michlik, Jennings  
Doris A. Stormant, White Springs  
Glenda Roberts, Live Oak  
Frank O. Smith, Dowling Park  
Calvin R. Bagley, Glen St. Mary  
John Edward Lee, Branford  
Ward C. Daniels, Jr., Jasper  
Sundeana Butts, Live Oak  
Jim Rowe, Lake City  
Frank W. Page, Mayo  
Carla Fussell, Live Oak  
Jerome Lee Wright, Monticello  
Vivid Visions, Inc., Live Oak

Melinda Holcomb, Live Oak  
5 O'Clock Farm, LLC, Wellborn  
Randy Vick, Live Oak  
Edwin Wheeler, Lake City  
L. E. Ginn, Live Oak  
Susan A. Moore, Wellborn  
Joe Smart, White Springs  
Curtis D. Land, N. Ft. Myers  
Jim Maxwell, O'Brien  
Wendell L. Lane, Live Oak  
Michael J. McDowell, McAlpin  
Todd M. Reeves, Ft. White  
Ken Koch, Lake City  
Sandra Homer, Miami  
Jonathan Daniels, Jennings  
Suw. Valley Fence, LLC, Live Oak  
Sally R. McAbbe-Tillman, Lee  
Teresa Habben, Live Oak  
Tammy Sapp, Live Oak  
Suwannee Co. Fire Rescue, Live Oak  
James Lanier, Branford  
Carolyn R. Smith, Live Oak  
Steven Johnson, Live Oak  
Amber Fuhrmann, Live Oak  
Ron Proesl, O'Brien  
Lauren Lamantia, Jasper  
Flowers Tree Farm, Live Oak

Matthew Morgan, Jasper  
Kenny Greene, Bryceville  
Lauri McKelvey, Live Oak  
Diane Wood, Live Oak  
Nancy J. Sunday, O'Brien  
Denise Watson, Live Oak  
Russell Rodgers, Wellborn  
Courtney Coffman, Live Oak  
Fred R. Watson, Live Oak  
Paul D. Tyson, Orange Park  
Verlon W. Williams, Mayo  
Adalberto Brito, Mayo  
Lucas R. Smith, White Springs  
Randall Boyette, Live Oak

### MADISON STORE

James F. Folk, Jennings  
Michael Tabb, Lee  
Mary L. Freeman, Perry  
Cary Hamilton, Lee  
Dorothy Lewis, Monticello  
Drew Bell III, Mayo  
Timothy C. Blue, Pinetta  
Mike Powers, Pinetta  
Greg Hughes, Lee  
Chris Ellis, Madison

Bill & Vickie Clement, Mayo  
William J. Leslein, Pinetta  
Jerome L. Wright, Monticello  
Dorothy M. Tucker, Mayo  
Milton R. Sutton, Monticello  
Daniel Manso, Lee  
Cheryl Pattie, Pinetta  
Joseph J. Moore, Madison  
Arlie Tyson, Pinetta  
Jennifer McElveen, Lee  
Gary Calhoun, Madison  
Florida-Georgia Nursery, Inc.,  
Jennings  
Carmon, C. Thompson, Lee  
James W. Lee, Perry  
Cassie Young, Greenville  
John P. Ramsey, Lee  
Gerry Cooks, Madison  
Valerie Lawson, Lee  
Brandie Littleton, Madison  
Ronnie Ragans, Madison  
James L. Barlow, Sr., Greenville  
Jim Kauffman, Ferandina Beach  
Wayne Barwick, Perry  
Pest Patrol, Madison  
Rodney Tyre, Jasper  
Lillian Chamblee, Perry  
Mike Anderson, Shady Grove  
Renee Kilpatrick, Madison  
Judith A. Mosier, Aurora, Ind.  
George H. Noth II, Cocoa  
Roger & Cynthia Holt, Perry  
Hamp Walker, Greenville

## Big Buck Results



### By Barry Long

The results are final for the 5th Annual Big Buck contest at Farmers Cooperative. On Feb. 2 officers from the Florida Wildlife Commission visited the Live Oak store to measure potential winners for the contest. There was a good turnout of hunters and spectators to witness the event.

First place winner, pictured left to right, Blake Webb and Jerry Owens, Madison Crop Specialist. Jerry Owens presented a \$500 gift card to Blake Webb of Madison with a net score of 145 5/8. Second place winner, Robert Frier, III of Wellborn received a \$200 gift card. Robert's net score was 143. Third place winner, Benji McCarley from Madison, with a net score of 136 received a \$100 gift card.

## Purchase Bonnie Plants, Win Jam Passes

Farmers Cooperative has several varieties of tomatoes, eggplants, squash, cucumbers, bell peppers, hot peppers and sweet peppers in stock, and now is the time to plant.

Bonnie Plants and Farmers Cooperative want to give you a chance to win two free general admission weekend passes to the Suwannee River Jam, May 1-4, 2013, at the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park. These free weekend passes are valued at \$170.

Each time you come in and purchase Bonnie vegetable plants, you are eligible to register to win these weekend passes.

## Where Are These Folks?

Farmers Cooperative is trying to locate the following people whose patronage refund checks have been returned from the U.S. Postal Service as "undeliverable":

Grace Norman & Mary G. Wall, Live Oak  
Clyde J. Arnold, Madison  
Vernon D. McHargue, Stanton, Va.  
T. R. Hines, Wellborn  
J. A. Townsend, Live Oak  
Ricky Erskine, Hilliard  
William Sanders, White Springs  
Cornell Miller, Greenville

## Co-op Sales Associate

# Need Help? Ask Amelia

Meet our sales associate Amelia Grace Kurtz. Amelia has been employed with Farmers Cooperative, Inc. for a little over a year. Amelia is a Suwannee High School graduate and the daughter of Howard and Leslie Kurtz. The Kurtzes own and operate Kurtz & Sons Dairy in Live Oak. Mr. & Mrs. Kurtz have two other



**Amelia Kurtz**

**Farming News**  
[www.farmerscooperative.org](http://www.farmerscooperative.org)

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Is published quarterly, or as the need arises, by Farmers Cooperative in Live Oak and Madison.

**Todd Lawrence, Publisher & Editor**

### Co-op Directors

Kenneth Dasher, McAlpin (Suwannee County)  
Ted Henderson, Live Oak (Suwannee County)  
Eddy Roberts, O'Brien (Suwannee County)  
E. Richard Terry, Madison (Madison County)  
William T. Carte (Suwannee County)  
Tim Steichen, Wellborn (Suwannee County)  
John C. Webb, Lee (Madison County)  
Walter K. Brown (Suwannee County)  
Kevin Morgan (Hamilton County)  
Kenneth McLeod (Madison County)  
Jeff Lee (Suwannee County)

children: a son, Dalton, and another daughter, Virginia.

Kurtz & Sons Dairy is a unique dairy because they bottle, process and distribute their own milk. Howard's speciality is all non-homogenized products, heated at a lower temperature so the cream stays in their products. On the family farm their day begins at 4:00 a.m. and sometimes they are finished by 4:00 in the evening. Their yogurt, undoubtedly, is the best you will ever eat. Howard Kurtz delivers his delicious products to Gainesville, Tallahassee and Ocala, Fla.

Amelia remembers receiving her first paycheck when she was 7 years old for feeding calves and mowing on the tractor. Amelia's experience at Beverly Burnelle's Thoroughbred Horse Farm has given her insight on horse needs and supplies that our patrons ask questions about, and which product will be the best for their horses.

Also, working as a seasonal worker for Black Gold Farm inspecting potatoes for the best ones to be used for potato chips helped her appreciate her paycheck. While it was hard physical labor, Amelia learned a lot about other types of farming and much patience.

Mrs. Jerry Ellis took the time to send a card to Farmers Cooperative expressing her appreciation for Amelia's extra efforts in assisting her, and we would like to share that note with our patrons.

*Just a note to tell you how much I appreciated the help I received today from your staff member, Amelia! She answered questions for me on pasture grasses, ordered what I needed and even looked up information on planting of Texas Bluebonnets I'd received as a gift. She is an excellent resource and with a wonderful personality as well. Thanks, Amelia.*

Welcome aboard, Amelia!

## Co-op Buys Pigs

Madison County held their 59th Annual North Florida Livestock Show & Sale Feb. 18-21 at the Madison County Agriculture Center. Farmers Cooperative of Madison purchased pigs from the following deserving Madison County FFA and 4-H students:



**Farmers Cooperative's Madison Manager, Eddie Curl (right), congratulates FFA student Pierce Minor.**



**Farmers Cooperative's Madison Manager, Eddie Curl (right), congratulates FFA student Sarah Kauffman.**



**Farmers Cooperative's Madison Manager, Eddie Curl (right), congratulates 4-H student T.J. Rogers.**

*Photos courtesy of Shannon Webb*