

FARMERS COOPERATIVE

# FARMING NEWS

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## Dewayne Leslie of Madison

# Right Way To Do Things

By **Pauline Fletcher Cogdill**  
and **Travis Page**

We met with Dewayne Leslie recently at Ken's Bar B Que in Madison, Florida, and it seemed as though we were meeting with a famous celebrity. It appeared that everyone in the restaurant stopped by our table and talked with Mr. Leslie. He could have been a statesman for Madison County. He is respected and admired in his community because all those folks had probably been touched by Mr. Leslie's kindness.

After Mr. Leslie asked the blessing for our food, we understood why people loved him so much. As he bowed his head and began to pray, it was very clear why he is so admired and respected. Just a couple of lines in his prayer will let you know who he is, "Let us stand up for what is right and stand up for God."

**MR. LESLIE'S PARENTS,** Clifford and Audrey Leslie were born in Madison County. Clifford and Audrey farmed the land that he and his son, Kevin still operate today. In fact, Dewayne lives just about 100 yards right from where he was born, and all three of his children are only about 200 yards away from

each other. And the good thing about them living close to each other, most of their Sunday dinners are shared by the entire family.

Since he is an only child, he gained a lot of his experience from his uncles. Dewayne helped his Uncle Lum Townsend pen the cows and took them to the dipping vats where the cows would jump on the slanted vats and the dipping was over as soon as they ran to the other side of the vat. It's interesting to note, that his Uncle Lum Townsend was one of the last Range Riders in the State of Florida.

Dewayne Leslie is a Fifth Generation Farmer and his three grand children claim the rights to being Seventh Generation Farmers. In 1967 Mr. Leslie started farming. His first year he bought a C-2 Gleaner 4-Row Combine from Dub Barfield. He said in about a year's time, he picked enough corn to pay off the combine. He also bought two Ford F600's with dump bodies, and it took him a little longer to pay for them. Mr. Leslie is the nephew of M. C. Leslie and George Townsend. He's proud to tell you they were a great influence in teaching him the right way to do things.

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**Dewayne Leslie by historic  
Live Oak tree planted in 1800s.**

## **Dewayne Leslie**

*Continued from Page 1*

Many of you will recall Mr. M. C. Leslie as a Corporate Manager of Gold Kist in Atlanta, and he was the head of the Feed Division for many years. Mr. Leslie also had a hog operation and at that time the hogs would eat a semi-load of corn a week. Now he is out of the hog business but continues to run a couple herds of beef cattle. He has always supported the Cooperative because they provided what he needed. Mr. Leslie is known for telling true stories that really happened and they are also very entertaining.

He reminisced about his younger days when he was a high school student and loved to dance. He and his friend, would travel to Statenville and Pinetta because they were scared to go to Perry. It was in Pinetta he met a beautiful girl, Sharon Shaw who was visiting a relative in Pinetta, Florida. He knew Sharon was the one; however, by this time she had gone back to her home in Meridian, Mississippi, and he took off to Meridian to convince her to marry him and move to Madison Florida. And what a wonderful life they have had raising their three children on their farm. Mrs. Leslie took care of her family and worked at North Florida Community College until she retired in 2012.

**DAUGHTER LYNN** Hanners finished her degree in Music and taught for a short time before she decided to take over her grandmother's famous ten layer cake baking. Anybody that's lived in Madison very long has certainly heard of Mrs. Leslie's cakes. In fact, Dewayne said when his mother first started baking cakes, she made Dewayne and his daddy sample so many different chocolate frostings, they thought they would never eat any more chocolate again. Mrs. Audrey perfected that ten layer cake so well that it has been an outstanding business for her and now her granddaughter, Lynn, has a very successful



**Kevin and Dewayne Leslie**

business. In fact, Oprah Winfrey had her cakes on her show, and the business continues to thrive throughout the area with Busy Bee's truck stops and other retail outlets that are selling them to people traveling throughout the southeast.

Daughter Tammy Sloan is a school teacher and has helped bale hay and pen cattle on horses. The photo that is in the article has a neat story behind it. Dewayne Leslie's great-grandfather planted this Live Oak tree back in the 1800's. He planted the tree in hopes he could tie his horse and buggy up to the tree while they were attending church; however he realized the tree was too small to hold his horse and buggy so he had a spare wagon wheel axle that he drove into the ground by the tree to hold his horse and buggy. As time went by, the Live Oak tree swallowed up the axle. All that is left today is the end of the wagon wheel

axle sticking out of the tree.

Son Kevin, pretty much runs the farm now, which includes corn, soybeans, peas, hay, cattle and peanuts. Dewayne's daddy and granddaddy always liked to plant an extra garden to give away to the community, and Dewayne and his family continue the tradition today. Mr. Leslie is very proud to have the opportunity to farm with his son, Kevin on a daily basis. A Leslie tradition is to meet early each morning (except Sunday) at their tractor shelter. This shelter is where Mr. Dewayne met with his daddy each morning before heading to the field. He thoroughly enjoys meeting his son Kevin at this same shelter every morning to plan their day on the farm.

## For the Past Quarter **NEW CO-OP MEMBERS** **LIVE OAK STORE**

Lori Davis, Live Oak  
Timothy L. Bemis, Live Oak  
Russell L. Willis, Live Oak  
Lonnie Robinson, Jasper  
Bruce McFarland, Live Oak  
Clifton Simpson, Live Oak  
Cynthia Brown, Live Oak  
Cyril G Smith, Live Oak  
Roxanne M. Roettger, O'Brien  
Leroy Tutten, Live Oak  
Toni Hansard, O'Brien  
Audrey Marie Brown, Live Oak  
E. W. Hill, Lake City  
Joseph Schofield, Wellborn  
Dorina Sackman-Ebuwa, Greenville  
John Sullivan, Live Oak  
Shelley Q. McLeod, Live Oak  
Joanne Gundell, Live Oak  
Diana Byerley, Wellborn  
Graham & Sons Electric, Lake City  
Ed Martin, Live Oak  
Jennifer Kreis, O'Brien  
Jim Gilbreth, Wellborn  
Stephen E. Bailey, Lake City  
Betty Hicks, McAlpin  
Irma R. Dangerfield, Live Oak  
Mark Bubar, Mayo  
Michael White, Branford  
Rex A. Robinson, Lake City  
Hubert L. Blalock, Live Oak  
Nikira Johnson, Live Oak

Dawn Cartwright, Live Oak  
Daniel L. Johnson, Lake City  
Gene Tomlinson, Sr, Live Oak  
John David Sasser, Live Oak  
Michael N. Roberts, Lake City  
Christine D. Thompson, Live Oak  
Marshall Hayes, Live Oak  
Eric Parsons, Ft. White  
Holli B. Miller, O'Brien  
Arthur W. Henderson, Statenville, GA  
Pamela J. Marshall, Wellborn  
James Bell, O'Brien  
David Hogan, Jasper  
Victoria Jacobs, Live Oak  
Linda Perez, Live Oak  
Thomas P. Vigeant, Lake City  
Joseph Simmons, Live Oak  
Bob Hopkins, Mayo  
Tyler Putnal, Mayo  
Johnny Swindell, Live Oak  
Wayne Greene, Live Oak  
Pamela Porter, Lake City  
Carol J. Pitts, Branford  
Charlene Howell, Live Oak  
Jason A. Westberry, Live Oak  
Troy Construction, Houston, TX  
Brooke Motes, Live Oak  
Dianna Rosenbaum-Robb, Live Oak  
Sharon Barton, Branford  
Mary S. Prescott-Utendorf, Live Oak  
Kolby L. Creamer, Live Oak  
Caleb Creamer, Live Oak

Fredrick Hall, Live Oak  
Melissa S. Morgan, Live Oak  
Linda Crews, Wellborn  
Joe Jacobs, Carlinsville, IL  
Eleanor L. Miller, Jennings  
Missy Freeman, Live Oak  
Leon Land, McAlpin  
Robert J. Quirk, Sr., Live Oak  
Margie Howard, Live Oak  
Phillip S. Aaron, Live Oak  
Kathy Root, Live Oak  
Penny Staffney, Live Oak  
Candace Siekmann, Live Oak  
Glenn Lord, Debany  
Louise Blankenship, Live Oak  
Amy Henderson, Live Oak  
Deborah Harris, Live Oak  
Suzette Yates, Lake City  
J. Arthur Davis, Live Oak  
Sidney Koon, Mayo  
Rovon Lawson, Live Oak  
Cherry Lumbert, Branford  
Virginia Hendricks, Lake City  
Linda Peretic, Live Oak  
Shawn Larney, Live Oak

## **MADISON STORE**

Monticello Milling, Monticello FL  
All State Builders, Inc, Hooksett NH  
William T "Bill" Pfeil, Madison FL  
Madison County Memorial Hospital, Madison FL  
Brittany Wilkes, Madison FL  
Martha & Delbert Blair, Madison FL  
Bill Thompson, Gainesville FL  
Arleen Kroehle, Perry FL

Peter Savino, Lee FL  
Jennifer Poore, Lee FL  
Kari Cohen, Jasper FL  
Mamie Haynes, Madison FL  
Andrew Saucier, Monticello FL  
Chris Menhennett, Live Oak FL  
Evan Rhoden, Pinetta FL  
Sarah Anderson, Madison FL  
Cole Bridges, Valdosta GA  
Anthony Dimeo, Jennings FL  
Deborah Ferris, Lee FL  
Eric Dipple, St Petersburg FL  
James Holman, Palm City FL  
James O Lee, Jasper FL  
Gary Duncan Pitts, Lee FL  
William MacKinnon, Madison FL  
James Williams, Lee FL  
Harvey Pickles, Lee FL  
Patricia Plotke, Monticello FL  
William S. Soule, Jasper FL  
Robert C. Miller, Madison FL  
Carmelo Puleio, Indian Harbour Beach, FL  
Doretha Anderson, Madison FL  
Leo Morin, Lee FL  
Pamela Manaton, Madison FL  
William Robinson, Madison FL  
J & J Restaurant, Greenville FL  
Hollie E. Roberts, Madison FL  
Jonell M. Stahl, Greenville, FL  
John R. Hohensee, Deltona FL  
Deep South BBQ LLC, Lee FL  
Angela Barfield, Madison FL  
Carol J. Williams, Perry FL  
David Brigmond, Yulee FL  
LaFrenchee McCreary, Madison FL  
Nita Cruce, Jasper FL  
Chris Draper, Dunnellon FL  
Marianne Larsen, Live Oak FL  
Gregory Freeman, Madison FL  
Norris Agricultural, Kissimmee FL

## Patronage Refund Checks Mailed

# **71st Annual Membership Meeting**

Farmers Cooperative's 71st Annual Membership Meeting was held at the Suwannee County Agriculture Complex Exhibition II Building in Live Oak on October 14, 2017. Following registration, the meeting started at 10:00 a.m. General Manager Todd Lawrence reported annual sales volume of \$12,999,553 with a net profit of \$113,292 for fiscal year 2016-2017. Lawrence said he was pleased to report that your Coopera-

tive will mail Patronage Refund checks in December 2017 for those for those patrons who qualify for a refund.

General Manager Lawrence then discussed Farmers Cooperative's participation in the Ninth Annual Bonnie 3rd Grade Cabbage Program. Lawrence displayed several photos of the students and their cabbages in Live Oak, Branford, Madison, Lee and Pinetta. General Manager Lawrence remarked, "It's a good way to

get the entire family involved in this educational project. Your Cooperative sponsors activities for FFA (local and state), 4-H projects, Love, Inc, and other agriculture related activities." After the business meeting, several door prizes valued at over \$2,500 were awarded to the members attending the 71st Annual Membership Meeting.

# Healthy Honey For Sale

Farmers Cooperative has been selling Thomas Honey since March of this year. Many of our patrons use it for their allergies while other members just enjoy the energy it gives them. You can purchase Clover, Gallberry, Orange Blossom and Wildflower varieties in many sizes. For example, the honey straws are favorites of some of our customers while other patrons like the 8 oz. honey bears. Additionally, we sell a lot of gallon containers of honey. So if you want a healthy energy boost, come try our local honey from the Thomas Farm at your Live Oak Cooperative.



*Buy a Gallon*

## Farming News

[www.farmerscooperative.org](http://www.farmerscooperative.org)

P.O. Box 610 Live Oak, FL 32064 Phone 386-362-1459	P.O. Box 390 Madison, FL 32341 Phone 850-973-2269
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**Todd Lawrence, Publisher & Editor**

### Co-op Directors

Ted Henderson, Live Oak (Suwannee County)  
Eddy Roberts, O'Brien (Suwannee County)  
William T. Carte (Suwannee County)  
Tim Steichen, Wellborn (Suwannee County)  
Kevin Morgan (Hamilton County)  
Kenneth McLeod (Madison County)  
Jeff Lee (Suwannee County)  
Jeffery Hamrick (Madison County)



## Recognizing Years of Service

General Manager Todd Lawrence presented four employees their certificates for years of service: Left to right, Timmy Tuten, 10 years of service, Nancy McCall, 30 years of service, Don Aue, 30 years of service and Barry Long 10 years of service. Not pictured, Melissa McCook, 10 years of service and Darryl Linton 15 years of service.

## Get 5% Discount: Advance Deposit

Our 5% advance deposit program will be available through January 31, 2018. For our patrons who are not familiar with the Co-op's 5% advance deposit program, we will automatically credit your account for a 5% discount of the amount that you prepay during the month of January 2018.

The 5% discount does not apply, however, to equipment construction con-

tracts. When you have decided just how much money you will need to spend at the Cooperative for the calendar year 2018, please visit your Co-op at Live Oak or Madison and we will be happy to assist you with your farming needs.

So, if you are really interested in getting the most out of your money, our advance deposit program will give you an even greater savings than the 5% discount.



Barry Long drove the RoGator at the Christmas Parade while several Cooperative employees passed out candy to the children along the way. Todd Lawrence, Tim Richardson and his wife Alice Richardson, Karen Fraley, Robert Sweat and his wife Lynn Sweat, Samantha Sykes, and Kaleb Kelley.

## Small Business Of The Year

For several years, Suwannee County Chamber of Commerce has been presenting Small Business of the Year Award as well as a Large Business of the Year Award to our local businesses. On October 2, 2017, Farmers Cooperative, Inc. was honored to be the winner of this prestigious award as the Small Business of the Year Award. All nominees were treated with a delicious dinner sponsored by River Oak Technical College.