

» NCTA Business Report

Renew Your Membership Today

Each year, more than 1.7 million people come to the NCTA website to find a farm or lot in their area – will they find you there? By now, you should have received your NCTA membership renewal forms in the mail. Please submit your renewal invoice and web listing form as soon as possible to ensure that your website listing is updated in time for the Christmas season. You can even delay payment until after the holiday season – just select this option on your renewal form. If you have questions, please contact NCTA Member Services at 636/449-5070.

White House Tree Selected



White House staff traveled to Schroeder's For-evergreens near Neshkoro, Wis., in early October to select the Blue Room Christmas Tree. Tom and Sue Schroeder earned the

right to present the Blue Room Christmas Tree by winning the National Tree Contest at the NCTA Convention

in Huron, Ohio. The selected tree is scheduled to be presented to First Lady Michelle Obama on Nov. 25. Our Grand Champions and the industry have already received a great deal of media attention, and HGTV is again expected to film and air a special on Christmas at the White House.

NCTA is also coordinating with the Vice President's staff to arrange for a Real Christmas Tree at the Vice President's Residence. This tree will be supplied by Reserve Champions Dan and Ken Wahmhoff of Wahmhoff Farms, Gobles, Mich.

2011 Trees for Troops



The seventh year of Trees for Troops is underway – and we're on course to deliver the 100,000th tree this season! Whether you donate trees, collect consumer donations, host a trailer drop or simply spread the word, your participation makes a difference for more than 16,000 military servicemembers and their families. Check out pages 29-30 of this issue to see how you can still get involved, and be sure to check out the poster and brochure enclosed with this issue of the magazine.

Did You Miss the Trial of the Century?



During the General Session of the NCTA Convention, attendees had the opportunity to witness the trial of Frankie Fir and Priscilla Pine. As the courtroom drama unfolded, the prosecution made some convincing arguments, but witnesses for the defense provided compelling evidence in favor of the conifers. In the end, a jury of consumers found Frankie and Priscilla innocent of all charges. This "Trial of the Century" was a dramatization of charges regularly made against Real Christmas Trees and possible responses and questions that we can all use to set the record straight.

A transcript of the trial is available online at www.christmastree.org/transcript.pdf, and a DVD, which runs about an hour, is being made available to state/regional associations.

No News on Checkoff Program

As most are aware, a proposed check-off program was published in the Federal Register in November 2010, with the second comment period ending March 9, 2011. USDA is in the process of reviewing the comments, addressing the issues raised and making an assessment as to whether the program should go forward and if so, how the final governing document would read.

We are told that most checkoff programs have had a final rule published about 3 to 6 months after the close of the comment period, depending on the number of comments filed, the issues raised and whatever else is going on at USDA or the U.S. government in general. During this rule-making period, USDA is not allowed



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to talk to the industry.

While this is not an NCTA program and would be an entirely separate board, it is an issue of national importance to the industry and we will keep you aware of any updates. If a program is announced soon, the first assessments would likely be due in early 2012 for the trees sold during the 2011 season. The new board would then create a promotion and research plan and budget for its first fiscal year – Aug. 1, 2012 – July 31, 2013.

Research Match Program Ends Dec. 31

Help further Christmas Tree research with a contribution to the NCTA Bob Stohr Memorial Christ-

mas Tree Research Fund – and increase your donation automatically. For all contributions made to the NCTA fund through Dec. 31, 2011, NCTA will provide a dollar-for-dollar match, up to \$5,000.

Administered by the Horticultural Research Institute (HRI), the fund was established in 2003 to support research dedicated to increasing the value and use of Real Christmas Trees.

To download a contribution form, visit www.christmastree.org/hri/donation.pdf. Or, donate online at www.hriresearch.org. (Note: when you donate online, you will need to call or email Teresa Jodon at 202/741-4852 or tjodon@anla.org to designate your contribution for the NCTA fund.)

DRAKE & COMPANY Becomes AMR Management Services

AMR MANAGEMENT SERVICES

As many of you know, NCTA has been professionally managed by DRAKE & COMPANY since 1998. In late July, the company was sold to AMR Management Services of Lexington, Ky., and the NCTA Board of Directors decided to transfer the management contract to AMR. The contact information and staff for NCTA will remain unchanged, and the association will continue to be managed from the Chesterfield, Mo., office. ▲



2012 NCTA Meetings Announced

Mark your calendars now for these opportunities to connect with fellow NCTA members and leaders, while gaining valuable tools and ideas to grow and improve your business.

2012 CT Plus Meeting

February 18-19, Menger Hotel, San Antonio, Texas

If you're a Premier Member (or simply want to improve your marketing), this is the meeting for you! This year's meeting heads to the heart of Texas and offers attendees the opportunity to be among the first to hear the 2011 season results.

For more information: See page 35 of this issue or visit www.christmastree.org/ctplus_2012.cfm.

2012 NCTA Convention & Trade Show

August 8-11, Sacramento, Calif.



California, here we come! Known as the "City of Trees," Sacramento offers plenty of family-friendly activities, from sightseeing in the Old Sacramento historic district to touring the California State Capitol to spending a day at the Sacramento Zoo.

For more information: Be sure to bookmark www.christmastree.org/convention2012.cfm for regular updates.



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