New Director of Communications

Lee Ann Fisch has joined the FFA team as its Director of Communications. Previously with the Florida Farm Bureau, she is a graduate of Mercer University with a bachelor’s degree in Communications. Lee Ann’s responsibilities will include handling media relations and social media; managing publications, the web site and daily newsclips; coordinating the annual meeting; working with the Teacher’s Tour; and staffing the Communications Committee.

Shelby appointed EVP

Alan Shelby has been appointed as the Florida Forestry Association’s Executive Vice President. Alan has served the Association since January 2001 as the Director of Government Relations and the Assistant Secretary/Treasurer. He holds a bachelor’s degree in Social Science from Florida State University. Alan enjoys spending time with his family and in the great outdoors. He and his wife, Jennifer, have two daughters, Sarah, 12, and Addison, 5.

FFA Board meeting

The FFA Board met Tuesday, November 15, in Tallahassee. Items on the agenda included the Association’s 2012-13 budget; ideas for the FFA annual meetings in 2013 and 2014; TreePAC and election results; and Association committee updates.

Guest speaker Timothy Rach, Bureau Chief for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Submerged Lands & Environmental Resources, gave an update on the Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) Uniformity Rule. Jim Karels, the Florida Forest Service’s State Forester, provided information on Operation Outdoor Freedom and the Forest Inventory Study as well as legislative budget issues and requests.

Renewable Energy Power Agreement Reached by Rayonier and FPUC

A renewable energy agreement between Rayonier Performance Fibers, LLC and the Florida Public Utilities Company (FPUC) was commemorated this month at an event held at Rayonier’s Fernandina Beach mill. Attendees included Florida’s Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam, as well as other dignitaries. Under the terms of the 10-year agreement approved by the Florida Public Service Commission in July, Rayonier will sell FPUC excess energy generated by a 22.5 mega-watt turbine generator recently installed at its Fernandina mill.

2012 TreePAC/election results

Through your generous donations to Florida’s only forestry related political action committee, TreePAC contributed $35,500 to help elect 85 state legislative candidates in the 2012 elections. When the results were tallied, TreePac’s success rate was phenomenal: Ninety percent of those funds ($32,000) went to winning candidates!

Though Republicans held onto their majority in both chambers of the state legislature, they lost two seats they had previously held in the Florida Senate. The Senate now has a split of 26 Republicans and 14 Democrats. In the House, the GOP lost 5 previously held seats. The House now has 76 Republicans and 44 Democrats.

“In a redistricting year where every candidate was running in a new seat, we are very pleased with the results. We want everyone who contributed to TreePAC to share in the success,” said Edward Cole, TreePAC President.
Tree Farm News

A gathering of approximately 50 landowners, friends, foresters and other natural resource professionals were treated to a field day event on Thursday, November 8.

Benjamin and Judi Wyche of Madison County were honored as Florida’s 2012 Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year. The event was held at their 330 acre tree farm, aptly named Rollercoaster Hill.

In addition, Greg Marshall, the Florida Forest Service’s Levy County Forester, was named the 2012 Florida Tree Farm Inspector of the Year. Shawn Cook of the St. Joe Timberland Company also accepted an award for his outstanding service to the Florida Tree Farm program as its chairman over the past two years.

Forestry Forward (40UNDER40)

Did you know that FFA offers an exciting opportunity for our younger members who want to develop their leadership skills? Our Forestry Forward program (formerly named 40UNDER40) has just accepted ten nominations for its next class:

Class VI (2013)

- Jesse Bielling: Bielling Site Prep & Reforestation
- Sheli Derato: Plum Creek Timber Company
- Jesse Dumas: Farm Credit
- Sean Gallagher: Florida Forest Service
- Jennifer Greene: Greene’s Timber Farms
- Eric Handley: Usher Land & Timber, Inc.
- Daniel N. Kennedy: St. Johns River Water Management District
- Ryan Pavlik: Stoutamire-Pavlik & Associates
- Leigh Ann Wynn: Land South Group

Lake Butler
Fort Myers
Newberry
Tallahassee
Orlando
Panama City
Chiefland
Umatilla
Monticello
Lakeland

Our goal is to provide training, information and involvement opportunities for this group as they become the next generation of FFA leaders.

The following individuals were previously recognized in the 40UNDER40 program as noted:

Class V (2011)

Scott Brodbeck, Jacob Cremer, Ben Dow, Shelton Feagle, Jamie Hall, Katelyn Crow Landrum, Karen Newberry, Ret Tiner, Kyle Wehner

Class IV (2010)

Philip Allen, Mike Berzinis, Josh Ensminger, Matt Ezekiel, Adam Garcia, Jeff Hunt, Kyle Hunter, Casey LaCasse, Greg Marshall, Dwight O’Neal, Steven Parrish, Elizabeth Ramirez

Class III (2008)

Anthony Boggess, Mike Lamonica, Travis McCoy, Brian Moody, Larry Simon, Matt Webb

Class II (2007)

John Boland, Wesley Carter, Danielle Clark, Dow Derato, Jerry Flood, Georgia Cochran Jones, Matt Simpson, Richard Schwab, Rhett Sumner, Shawn Webb, David Williams

Class I (2006)


National winners recognized by local bank

T.W. Byrd’s Sons, Inc., a Branford logging company named 2012 National Outstanding Logger by the Forest Resources Association, was recognized recently with a personalized banner presented to them by Drummond Community Bank of Mayo. Garrett Knight, Gray Drummond and Luther Drummond were on hand to award the banner to Byrd family members Paul, Benita, Jack and Earl. FFA President Lynetta Usher Griner was there as well. Lynetta says “The Byrds are a unique family and business. They are a hardworking forestry and logging family, all of who are very low-profile when it comes to fanfare and recognition, but they deserve to be recognized for the great example that they are!” T.W. Byrd’s Sons, Inc. was named the state’s best logger in 2011, and then went on to win the national title in 2012.

Master Logger Two-Day Workshop

Registration Open

Attending this workshop is the starting point for loggers wishing to obtain the Florida Master Logger designation. The initial two-day Master Logger educational program provides information to the professional logger on safety, timber harvesting, and business and environmental regulations. A registration form can be obtained by calling 850.222.5646. Please note that there are plans to hold only ONE workshop in 2013: June 26-27 in Lake City.
Two new committees forming

Two very important committees at our Association are forming now, and both are open for participation from members. If you can volunteer your time or expertise to serve on either, please contact the staff person as noted for each committee. The committees and their purposes are as follows:

Steering Committee – Jim Cottingham, Chair (contact Debbie Bryant at debbie@forestfla.org)
The mission of the Steering Committee is to ensure the sustainability of the Association through member dues as well as non-dues income. Our vision is to grow the Association’s membership in numbers and to inspire interest in Association activities.

Communications Committee – Katelyn Crow Landrum, Chair (contact Lee Ann Fisch at leeann@forestfla.org)
The mission of the Communications Committee is to develop a focus for media and member outreach efforts, raising awareness of the benefits of working forests. Our vision is to raise the consciousness of the value of membership through member and partner communications.

Congressman Southerland Awarded SWPA’s Top Recognition

U.S. Congressman Steve Southerland, R-Tallahassee, has been presented the Southeastern Wood Producers Association’s (SWPA) “Long Haul Award.” He was unanimously selected for the honor by the SWPA’s Board of Directors.

According to SWPA, “This recognition is only given to those who have illustrated the most outstanding service and assistance to the primary goal of the association. The award is not given every year and it has been three years since anyone was selected for this honor.” Southerland received the award during the Florida Forest Festival activities on October 27th, in Perry, FL.

Tree Planting Trends Upward

After a decade of a sharply declining trend in Florida tree planting, the newest information gathered by the Florida Forest Service shows an increase in planting for the period of 2008-2011. During that period, the total area planted increased from approximately 61,000 acres to approximately 117,000 acres. Despite that increase, Florida tree planting still lags far below the levels achieved from the mid-1950’s through the 1990’s.

BP Cancels Plans for Florida Ethanol Plant

BP recently announced that it has canceled plans to build a 36 million gallon commercial-scale cellulosic ethanol plant in Highlands County. The company said that it would refocus its US biofuels strategy on research and development, as well as licensing its industry-leading biofuels technology.

“We have made the decision to end our pursuit of commercial-scale cellulosic ethanol production in the US. This decision is in the best interest of our stakeholders to redeploy the considerable capital required to build this facility into other more attractive projects,” said Geoff Morrell, BP vice president of communications.

BP originally announced plans to build the Florida facility in 2008 with the intention of turning thousands of acres of energy crops into 36 million gallons per year of cellulosic ethanol. While BP did not directly comment on its plans to build a second, 72 million gallon plant in the southeastern US by 2017, a statement by the company said that it was “ending its pursuit of commercial-scale cellulosic ethanol production in the US.”

FFS Opens State Forests for Military Missions

Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam announced that the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services’ Florida Forest Service has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United States Air Force to support military training missions in Northwest Florida while allowing for compatible use in Florida state forests.