



# Southeast Texas Nursery Growers' Association Newsletter

**Board of Directors:**

Volume 11 Issue 7

August 2011

**President**

*George Prucha*

**Vice-President**

*John Trimmer*

**Past President**

*Steve Johnson*

**Treasurer**

*Becky Gardipee*

**Secretary**

*Beth Hott*

**Members at Large**

*Jim Naeger*

*George Shackelford*

*Willy Liesner*

**Advisory Board**

*Robbie Abillama*

*Russ Taylor*

**Admin Asst/  
Newsletter Editor**

*Jenni Duncan*

**S.T.N.G.A.**

**P.O. Box 1018**

**Columbus, Texas  
78934**

**1-866-88-STNGA**

**www.stnga.org**

**info@stnga.org**

## **A Word from President... George Prucha**

Greetings to all,

It appears that big changes have taken place since my July Letter. It has gotten hotter & drier and the political scene over the national debt has intensified. Unfortunately, we can't do anything about either one.

On the debt subject – what bothers me about this whole thing is that the politicians in D.C. are not as worried about solving the debt problem as they are about getting re-elected. And, the \$4 Trillion in cuts that these fools are posturing over is just a drop in the bucket, and a distraction from the real figure. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the real figure would be over \$ 15 Trillion at status quo over the next decade. Digging ourselves out of this budget hole will take a real commitment from the leaders we elected and a true understanding of just how deep the hole really is.

Another thing that bothers me is the current administration's obsessions to make the top 2% of our country's wage earners pay their share. They say that a family that earns \$250,000/year is wealthy! Are they saying that the middle to upper middle class is wealthy? I just can't wrap my head around that one, nor do I buy the 2% figure. Where does upper class start? The way I see it, someone that makes \$800,000- \$1million might be getting close depending on what part of the country they live in. If they (our trusted leaders) are dead set on raising taxes, why don't they raise the Medicare payroll tax? That is one tax that every wage earner must pay; therefore, everyone would be sharing the burden.

Nobody asked me, so why bother? Well, I am forwarding this letter to Senator Cornyn and Senator Hutchinson so that they might enlighten me, or maybe vice versa. Maybe it is time that we all tell them what we think. They damn sure are not going to ask you. You have to tell them. Somewhere in your letter you should very respectfully ask them "What have you done to fix the problem?"

There are some good things that are happening. It appears that some of the agricultural community is shifting its focus to the horticulture/landscape area. I attended a conference in Houston on the 26<sup>th</sup> sponsored by AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M and the Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership group. The main focus was to honor people that have made substantial contributions to farming and ranching operations in Texas, but all of the speakers gave very informative speeches promoting the Urban Landscape Industry. They stressed its importance to the quality of life and its immense financial contribution to the state of Texas. We should jump on the band wagon and keep the momentum going.

Chao,

George Prucha

(Just to keep the record straight. The comments and facts presented in this letter don't necessarily represent a position taken by STNGA, but are opinions of mine and are offered up to create some constructive conversation.)

**\* Save the Dates for a General Dinner Meeting and Fall Tour! \***

### **General Dinner Meeting**

Wednesday, September 14th at 6:30pm at the Mercer Arboretum

Our Speaker will be **Robert M. Mendell, J.D. and CPA**, a local tax, business, and estate planning attorney. His topic will be on

### ***Perpetuation and Succession Planning***

This topic is of concern and interest to all our members who are individuals or partners needing to create an "end game" for their business. Plan in advance rather than waiting and planning under pressure later. Robert Mendell has years of experience in this field. You do not want to miss out!

This event will be catered by The Backyard Grill

### ***Dinner Meeting Sponsored by Living Earth***

Reserve your space no later than Wednesday, September 7th, by 5pm to [info@stnga.org](mailto:info@stnga.org) or by calling 866.887.8642

### **Fall Farm Tour**

Saturday, October 15th

Brazos Citrus Nursery, hosted by David and George Schackelford

There will be a budding and grafting presentation along with a tour of the facility and growing operation!

***Farm Tour will be Sponsored by Everris (formerly The Scotts Company)***

### **Local Happenings... Texas Watershed Steward Program**

The Texas Watershed Steward program is a free, one-day educational workshop designed to help watershed residents improve and protect their water resources by getting involved in local watershed protection and management activities. The workshop will provide an overview of water quality and watershed management in Texas. It will primarily focus on water quality issues in the Cedar Bayou Watershed as well as efforts to help improve water resources and the health of the surrounding watersheds.

August 30, (8-4pm), Baytown Community Center (2407 Market St, Baytown, 77520)

For more information, go to ([www.tws.tamu.edu](http://www.tws.tamu.edu)) or call 979.862.8070

## TNLA Expo

**August 18-21, 2011, Dallas, Texas**

*Excerpts from Joseph D. Davenport, BFA, MBA, MSFS, CLU, ChFC, STNGA Staff Writer*

If you're exhibiting at the TNLA Show in Dallas this year, here's the drill to an effective tradeshow experience:

First, (2-3 weeks before the show, that means RIGHT NOW! ) send a letter of invitation (or an attractive, colorful post-card) to every customer and prospective customer, letting them know that they can see your quality plant material (got some special offering to attract them? Mention it!) and be sure to include your booth #, so they'll know where to find you.

Next, a week to ten days before the show, call (or have someone from your nursery call) as many as you can, certainly all your most important customers, to let them know that you look forward to seeing them at your booth during the show. They'll be complimented that you thought enough of them to offer a special invitation.

As the show draws near, plan your exhibit: what plant material in your nursery shows off best? Do you have some unique trees/plants/color to highlight your exhibit? Begin to plan right now how you're going to earn the "Best of Show" for your exhibit.

You'll want to have a box or basket for business cards, perhaps a neat sign inviting visitors to "Take a Treat, Leave a Card!" or a signup sheet to be "Added to our Mailing List". Have your nursery's brochure, availability or other material ready to hand out to passersby. Don't be afraid to step into the aisle, make eye contact with all who come your way, and have a welcoming statement or greeting to encourage them to learn more about you and your nursery. (Successful Trade Show Marketers learn the badge codes at the start of the show, so that they can concentrate on potential BUYERS rather than on those who have found their way into the show for an afternoon's entertainment.) By doing so, they expend their time and energy on those who are bona fide potential customers.

**Do:** Look and act like you really want to be there; stand up; smile; greet people like friends; be enthusiastic; take notes (who are they, where do they come from, interests, what are they looking for)

**Don't:** Block the entrance to your booth; eat or drink in the booth; leave personal items in view; leave your booth empty; visit with associates or other exhibitors when visitors are coming by

At the end of each day, sort through the cards/names you've picked up for:

The most interested, best prospects you talked with that day. These should get IMMEDIATE follow-up after the show.

Those who seemed impressed with your product, worth a call or mailing within ten days/two weeks after the show.

The "walkers and lookers" who might, if you have time, be added to your master mailing list.

*Now that you're in Dallas... Enjoy the Show!!*

### Newsletter Advertising:

Full Page Color Ad Space (8.5"x11"): \$300/one month

Half Page Color Ad Space (8.5"x5.5" OR 4.25"x11"): \$200/one month

Quarter Page Color Ad Space (4.25"x5.5"): \$100/one month

#### Requirements:

\* Ad must be copy-ready in electronic format

\* Paid in full before publication

\* Submitted by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication

Questions? Call Jenni Duncan @ 866-887-8642 or email [info@stnga.org](mailto:info@stnga.org)

Limited Space is available to advertise. Open to STNGA members only! Reach out to potential customers!

August 2011

**Southeast Texas  
Nursery Growers'  
Association**

P.O. Box 1018  
Columbus, Texas  
78934

Phone: 866-88-STNGA  
Fax: 866-88-STNGA  
E-mail: [info@stnga.org](mailto:info@stnga.org)

We are on the web!  
[www.stnga.org](http://www.stnga.org)



**"Dedicated to the Highest Professional Standards of the Nursery Industry"**

---

## **Upcoming Events/Notices...**

---

**Our Program Committee Will be Working Hard to Bring Numerous Opportunities to You Through the Year. Stay Tuned in Upcoming Newsletters for the Latest Information!**

- **August 18-21, 2011—TNLA Expo in Dallas**
  - **August 30, 8-4pm, Texas Watershed Steward Program, Baytown Community Center**
  - **September 14, 6:30pm; General Meeting—Mercer Arboretum**
  - **October 15, Fall Farm Tour, Brazos Citrus Nursery**
  - **December Annual Meeting; details to come later**
  - **January 26-27, 2012—STNGA Tradeshow**
-