



**Virginia Christmas Tree
Growers Association**
Experience a Real Tree™

383 Coal Hollow Rd,
Christiansburg, VA 24073-6721
Ph: 540-382-7310 Secretary@VirginiaChristmasTrees.org

June 14, 2018

You are cordially invited to attend the VCTGA Annual Conference and Farm Tour!!

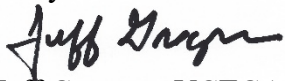
August 9-11, 2018

This Conference includes 18 events, including presentations by Dr. Rick Bates, Penn State University. He has extensive experience and knowledge in all matters relevant to the Christmas tree industry. You will find that the topics presented useful to new and experienced wholesale growers, choose-and-cut growers and retail sellers alike and important to your business.

The 3-day conference includes a tree and wreath contest (for VCTGA members), a live scholarship auction, “how to” seminars, three lunches, including the Annual Awards Luncheon with special guest, The Honorable Bettina Ring, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, Thursday evening Social and Dinner at the historic Virginia Tech McCormick Farm, and the Farm Tour at Robert and Cecille McDowell’s Hidden Fields Farm, Covington on Saturday.

Fees listed in the program registration form cover conference materials, lunches, the Awards Luncheon, the farm tour, attendance at speaker sessions, and the auction.

See you there!



Jeff Gregson, VCTGA President

John Carroll, Program Chair

Enclosures: Annual Conference Program
Registration Form
Christmas Tree and Wreath Entry Form



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Secretary@VirginiaChristmasTrees.org
www.VirginiaChristmasTrees.org

Annual Meeting, Conference and Farm Tour

Wednesday, August 8

4-7 pm. Board Meeting
and Dinner

7 pm Auction and Vendor Setup

Thursday, August 9

8-11:30 am – Vendor Set Up

9-11:30 am - Tree and Wreath
Contest Entries

Morning Pre-Conference Workshops

10:00-11:30 am - **Controlling Grass
and Weeds in Christmas Tree
Plantations**, *Kyle Peer, Virginia
Tech*

10:00-11:30 am - **Wreath Work-
shop** by *Tommy Naylor*. Bring your
hand clippers. Greenery and wreath
rings provided.

Noon Lunch
(provided with registration)

Afternoon Program

1:00 pm - **Welcome** by *Jeff Gregson,
VCTGA President*

1:10 pm – **Introduction of After-
noon Program and Evening Activi-
ties**, *John Carroll, VCTGA Vice
President*

1:15-2:00 pm **The Impact of Our
Last Sales Season: Adapting to the
Tree Shortage and Being Positive
with Our Customers and The Me-
dia:** *Della Deal, Steve Rhoades,
Ryan Clouse*

(Program Subject to Change)

2:00-3:00 pm **Species Selection for
Virginia Growers, True firs,
Spruces and Pines:** *Dr. Rick Bates,
Penn State*

3:00-3:30 pm **Break with Exhibi-
tors**

3:30- 4:30 pm - **VCTGA Business
Meeting:** Election of Officers and
Board Members, Industry Updates

5:45- 8:00 pm **An Evening at
McCormick Farm:** Beautiful His-
toric Farm, Relaxing Social, Casual
Dress Farm Dinner catered by Wades
Grocery and Deli of Staunton
(*provided with full registration*)

Friday, August 10

8:30-9:15 am - **My First Sales Sea-
son: Lessons Learned:** *Robert and
Cecille Mc Dowell, Laura Wolfe, Ed-
die Seaman*

9:15- 10:15 am - **Post-Harvest Nee-
dle Retention/Freshness and Why
It's Important:** *Dr. Rick Bates, Penn
State*

10:15- 10:30 am **Break**
with Exhibitors

10:30 -11:30 am - **Featured Farm
Business: Mistletoe Meadows
Farm and Nursery:** *Joe Freeman,
Laurel Springs, NC*

11:45am -1:15 **Awards Luncheon**
(provided with full registration)
*The Honorable Bettina Ring, Secre-
tary of Agriculture and Forestry,
Guest Speaker*

1:30 -2:15 pm - **Tree Farm Expan-
sion to Multi Season Crops:**
*Bill and Mary Apperson, Mill Farm,
Williamsburg*

2:15- 2:45 pm **Alternative Farm
Income Panel:** - *Cheryl Green,
Jeff Gregson, Virginia Carroll*

2:45- 3:30 pm - **Capital Gains
Treatment for Christmas Tree
Income; Employment Rules and
Regs:** *Raetz and Hawkins Certified
Public Accountants, Lexington*

3:30 -5:30 **Break and Social Fol-
lowed by Our Annual Scholarship
Auction:** *Danny Neel, Auctioneer*

Dinner on your own



(Hotel Seafood
Buffet for \$37.95
**Make Your Own
Reservations**

*Directly with the Natural Bridge
Hotel at (540) 291-2121.*

*(Other local restaurants are availa-
ble)*

Saturday, August 11

Farm Tour

9:00 am-1:00 pm **Tour Hidden
Fields Farm, Covington, Virginia**
*Robert and Cecille McDowell,
Owners*

**One of Virginia's Newest Choose
and Cut Farms!**

*(Boxed Lunch provided with full
registration)*

Keynote Speaker - Rick Bates

Dr. Rick Bates is a Professor of Horticulture in Penn State University's Department of Plant Science. He received his Ph.D. in horticulture from Virginia Tech, and his B.S. and M. S. in horticulture from West Virginia University. Rick worked as a county extension agent in Ohio and Virginia and as an Assistant Professor at Montana State University prior to coming to Penn State. Since arriving at Penn State in 2000, his research has focused on developing innovative approaches to plant production systems and development of plant varieties exhibiting improved pest resistance and adaptability.



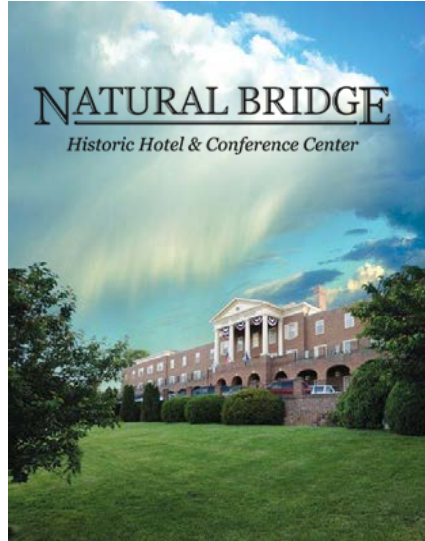
Rick's extension responsibilities include the development of educational programs in support of Pennsylvania's woody ornamental

industry. The primary goal of his research program is to enhance the profitability and competitiveness of the nursery and Christmas tree industry in Pennsylvania, and the U.S. He is currently working on projects relating to Nordmann and Turkish fir evaluation, Douglas-fir resistance to Rhabdochline needle cast, and Canaan fir improvement.



Hotel Info

Natural Bridge Historic Hotel and Conference Center



15 Appledore Ln
Natural Bridge VA 24578
(I-81 Exit 175 from the South, Exit
180 from the North)

**ASK for VCTGA Special
Rates**
(540) 291-2121

**Hotel Reservation
Deadline: Wednesday,
8/1/2018**

Come Early – Stay Late!

Group rates are available 3 days
pre and post-conference.

The State Park admission is
\$8.00/person

The Caverns offer a 20% dis-
count for hotel guests, that's
a \$4.00 savings off of \$18.00
admission!



2018 Annual Meeting Registration Form
August 9-11, 2018
Natural Bridge, VA

Name of Primary Attendee:			
Farm Name			
Address:			
City:	State:	Zip Code:	
Cell Phone number:			
E-mail:			
Additional Names Attending:			
I will be participating in: _____ Wreath Workshop on Thursday morning *** (see note on back)			
Events or Function	How Many?	Member Fee *	Total
Registration fee for members (includes lunch/dinner Thurs; lunch Friday and Saturday Farm Tour Lunch - per person)		\$159	
Registration fee for members (includes lunch/dinner Thurs; lunch Friday and Saturday Farm Tour Lunch - per 2 persons)		\$299	
Registration fee for members (does not include any meals, add a la cart below)		\$99	
Thursday Lunch only		\$22	
Thursday Social & Dinner at McCormick Farm		\$25	
Friday Luncheon/Awards only		\$ 29	
Farm Tour per person (includes lunch)		\$15	
Non-Member – Add \$50 to Registration fee		\$50	
Additional Late registration fee after July 31		\$20.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> I have special food needs: _____		GRAND TOTAL	

***The primary member registration rates apply to members in good standing of the**

*Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association
 Mt. Rogers Christmas Tree Growers Association
 West Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association
 Tennessee Christmas Tree Growers Association
 Maryland Christmas Tree Growers Association
 And their guests and families*



2018 Auction
to Benefit Scholarship Fund

Please list all new and slightly used items you are donating to our annual auction.



Thursday, August 9, 10:00-11:30 am
Wreath Workshop
by Tommy Naylor and Dreama Huffman.

Bring your hand clippers.
Greenery and wreath rings provided.



Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association

Experience a Real Tree™

383 Coal Hollow Rd, Christiansburg, VA 24073-6721
Ph: 540-382-7310 secretary@VirginiaChristmasTrees.org

Virginia Christmas Tree & Wreath Contest Entry Form

Entrant's Name: _____

Farm/Business Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Note: Rules state that each VCTGA farm may enter up to four (4) trees in the contest, but no more than one tree in any one category. Rules state that each VCTGA member may enter up to 2 wreaths in the contest, but no more than one wreath per category. In no case shall one person, family or farm enter more than four trees and two wreaths. Entrant must be present during the time of setup and enter his or her own tree(s) or wreath(s). The tree(s) must be Virginia grown and the wreath(s) must be made from fresh Virginia grown material.

Previous winners and their immediate families are not eligible to participate in the contest at the Convention immediately following the one in which they won, but are eligible to participate after that.

Which class are you entering? Check all that apply All-fir__ Pine__ Spruce__ Other__

Which wreath category are you entering? Check all that apply. Undecorated__ Decorated__ (MUST be on a 12" ring)

I certify that I am a 2018 current member in good standing in the Virginia Christmas Growers Tree Association and was a member of the VCTGA in 2017.

_____/_____/2018
Entrant's Signature Date

Please complete this form and bring it with your entry.

Questions? Contact Robert O'Keefe Phone: (540) 651-8440; Cell: 540-580-3528 rifton@swva.net
See complete rules and regulations on the VCTGA website at www.VirginiaChristmasTrees.org

VCTGA Christmas Tree Contest

The 2018 Virginia Christmas Tree Contest will be held at the Wytheville Meeting Center, Wytheville, VA. Trees will be set up and judged on Thursday, August 9, 2018. Setup will begin at 9 a.m. and must be completed by noon.

Eligible participants should complete the following form and submit it with their entry(s). Delivery, setup and responsibility for the tree's condition will remain with the entrant until the tree is set up in the judging area.

It is the responsibility of the entrant to remove and dispose of the entries after 3 p.m. on Friday.

Questions? Contact: Robert O'Keeffe, (H) 540-651-8440; (cell) 540-580-3528, Email: rifton@swva.net

Additional details, scoring forms on trees and wreaths are on the website at www.VirginiaChristmasTrees.org

PURPOSE OF CONTEST:

- To establish an opportunity for VCTGA to encourage and promote the use of Real Christmas Trees.
- Select a grand champion winner to receive the honor of presenting a Real Christmas Tree to the Governor of Virginia.

RULES AND JUDGING GUIDELINES

These rules and guidelines establish the procedure to be followed in selecting the grand champion. To ensure the greatest possible media coverage of the presentations, cooperation between the winner and VCTGA is extremely important. All media coverage is to be coordinated with the VCTGA office.

General

- The tree contest will be held at a site selected by the host association and will be convenient to the convention site.
- The four contest classes will be: (A) all firs (B) all pines (C) all spruce and (D) all other species.
- Trees entered must be commercially cultivated and be 6-8 feet in height from bottom of the handle to top of leader. The length of the handle shall be at least 6 inches but no longer than 12 inches. The tree shall not have been artificially colored. No wiring, tying or inserting of limbs or branches or other artificial means will be permitted. Any tree failing to meet these qualifications will be disqualified by the tree contest committee.

Contest Procedures

- Eligibility will be cross-checked with VCTGA membership records before judging begins.
- Trees shall be ready for judging by noon the first day of the convention. Under no circumstances will trees arriving after this time be allowed into the contest. The judging area will be clearly described by a map showing location of site and will indicate times and person(s) to contact and phone number(s) for those bringing trees early.
- Securely tied to each tree will be a blank sealed envelope, containing a card with grower's name, address, telephone number and location of tree farm. The species of the tree must be clearly printed on the outside of the envelope.
- No contestant shall have entry to the judging area to view competitive trees prior to submitting their entry to the tree contest chairperson.

Eligibility of Entrants

- Each Virginia Christmas Tree Association 2018 member in good standing and a prior member in 2017, is eligible to enter four trees in the VCTGA Christmas Tree Contest. In no case shall one person, family or farm enter more than one tree per class.
- Entrants must be United States residents and the tree(s) must be Virginia grown.

Previous winners and their immediate families are not eligible to participate in the contest at the Convention immediately following the one in which they won, but are eligible to participate after that.

Judging

- The grand champion winner from the preceding convention will be asked to serve as a judge of contest trees. In addition, a non-member and a VCTGA member will be chosen to serve as a judge. If a grand champion winner declines, another qualified judge from the association will be selected.
- Each judge will prepare a score sheet on each contest tree. See current guidelines for judging for scoring criteria. Score sheets will not be provided to an entrant.
- Winners will be selected by judges in each class for the four classes based on the total number of points awarded for each entry.
- The grand champion will be selected from among the first-place winner of the four categories. The tree that scored the highest overall will be the Grand Champion winner.