

DISPATCHES

CFSA 2011 Sustainable Agriculture Awards

The Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA) has named this year's sustainable agriculture award recipients. The awards were announced November 12 and 13 at the 26th Annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference in Durham, a gathering of over 1,250 sustainable farmers, agriculture advocates, foodies, educators, and experts. These institutions and individuals have made outstanding contributions to the sustainable food movement in North and South Carolina and have helped make the Carolinas one of the fastest growing sustainable agricultural sectors in the country. The award recipients are:

FARMERS OF THE YEAR, John and Betty Vollmer, Bunn, NC (919.496.3076)

In the early 1990s, John Vollmer, a third-generation tobacco and small grain farmer, knew that the outlook for tobacco farming was bleak. "My main goal was to keep the farm in the family for the next generation," Vollmer said. So, John completely diversified into pumpkins, strawberries and organics. Recently, John and Betty added organic blueberries and they are looking to expand into more organic varieties.

YOUNG FARMERS OF THE YEAR, Jamie and Amy Ager, Fairview, NC

(828.628.1027) Jamie and Amy Ager are part owners of Hickory Nut Gap Farm and operate Hickory Nut Gap Meats, the brand under which they market meat sales from the farm. Jamie has spent the past few years revitalizing the farm's pastures and hayfields by developing an intensive rotational grazing system that keeps the livestock out of the creeks and springs. Amy focuses on the marketing and accounting aspects of the farm while working out in the field as much as possible.

BUSINESS OF THE YEAR, Eastern Carolina Organics (ECO) Pittsboro

(919.542.3264) Born as a project of the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association in 2004, ECO markets and distributes wholesale Carolina organic farm produce to retailers, restaurants and buying clubs. ECO is completely farmer owned; 80 percent of their sales go right back to the growers. ECO's customers get fresh organic veggies and fruits, along with the knowledge that they're enabling farmers to protect their family land. ECO allows participating organic growers to profitably sell their products and supports efforts to improve production and packaging techniques.

INSTITUTION OF THE YEAR, Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, Mineral, VA

(540.894.9480) Southern Exposure Seed Exchange (SESE) offers more than 700 varieties of vegetable, flower, herb, grain and cover crop seeds. They emphasize varieties that perform well in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast and are specifically adapted to organic conditions. Part of the SESE's mission is to promote seed saving and traditional plant breeding.

ACTIVIST OF THE YEAR, Janette Wesley, Greenville, SC (janettewesley@yahoo.com)

A Greenville, SC native, Janette Wesley serves as Convivium Leader of the Slow Food Upstate chapter. With Janette at the helm, this active chapter has accomplished much to, as Janette puts it, "create a space for the 'feasting and living together' of those seeking and providing sustenance that is 'better, cleaner, and fairer' in Greenville and the Upstate.

NORTH CAROLINA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION AGENT OF THE YEAR, Paige Burns, Richmond County

(910.997.8255) Since embarking on her Extension career in 2008, Paige Burns has worked with energy and enthusiasm to help farmers struggling to adjust to shifting markets.

SOUTH CAROLINA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION AGENT OF THE YEAR, Blake Lanford, Horry County

(843.365.6715 Ext. 115) In his role as the Regional Economic Community Development agent, Blake Lanford has worked extensively to promote agritourism throughout SC.

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA) is a 32-year-old non-profit network of over 2,300 members that helps people in the Carolinas grow and eat local, organic foods by advocating for fair farm and food policies, building the systems family farms need to thrive, and educating communities about local, organic farming. www.carolinafarmstewards.org.



Son and Father Duo play Chatham

Somewhere in Chatham County a key turns and a dump truck rumbles to life and pulls off, towing a trailer loaded with a tracked skid-steer. Behind the wheel of this particular truck is Mike Resnik, retired UNC Philosophy Professor and owner of Collins Mountain Grading. He is also half of the duo Chatham County Slim and Papa Mike, that plays locally in the Triangle area and has one CD out. The other half of the duo is Resnik's son Dmitri who plays guitar and sings while Papa Mike blows the harmonica. They play well-chosen covers and their own songs about old dogs, donkeys, pick-up trucks and more. "We play Piedmont Blues, Roots and Old-Time Music, acoustic and semi-electric," says Dmitri Resnik.

The duo started playing out in 2009, but the musical association goes back to the mid 1990's when Papa Mike would sit in with his son's band on tour from New Orleans, where Dmitri lived for many years. According to Dmitri, "I got my Father a harmonica for Christmas because he seemed interested when he saw my band in New Orleans. He started getting pretty good at it and got books and got all the keys and would sit in when we came

through town."

Dmitri moved back to Chatham County in 2001. He has several critically acclaimed CD's to his credit which have received airplay on Blues radio stations worldwide. "I won some awards and got quite a few spins on the radio and had some decent gigs, mostly in the 90's and first decade of the 2000's. My band is still active, but things have slowed down some. They played a couple of my songs on NPR's Car Talk last year and that was pretty cool. I'm known as the most unlikely name in the blues.

"When the economy slipped, I started playing solo more and Dad would sit in. It added a new dimension and there were songs that I wanted to do outside of my regular band, we needed our own project so Chatham County Slim and Papa Mike came about. Audience members started asking if we had any CDs for sale, so we put one out independently," says Resnik.

Chatham County Slim and Papa Mike will be appearing at The Eddy Pub in Saxapahaw on Dec 16. You can follow their schedule and listen to some of their songs at www.reverbnation.com/chathamcountyslimandpapakimie.

BRIEF

Bluegrass Favorite hosts 10th Anniversary Show

One of the Triangle's most well-loved bands, The Kickin Grass Band, celebrates ten years of signature Americana-style bluegrass with a special hometown concert and celebration on Saturday, January 14, 2012 at the Carolina Theatre of Durham. The show is a co-presentation of The Carolina Theatre of Durham and Pinecone – the Piedmont Council of Traditional Music.

The Kickin Grass Band 10th Anniversary Show will feature the current lineup performing favorites

from three acclaimed albums over the past decade, as well as new material slated for a 2012 release. The audience will also be treated to appearances by past members and old friends, including the world-renowned Apple Chill Cloggers.

The Kickin Grass band formed in early 2002 as the accompanying band for the Apple Chill Cloggers and went on to release three albums of original and traditional music showcasing their grasp of tradition as well as a spirit of adventuring into the new frontier of an ever-evolving Americana genre.

The show will be recorded by F/Stop Grooves and 5x5 Photography for video. Tickets are \$15 and available at www.carolinatheatre.org and www.pinecone.org, by phone 919.560.3030 or toll free 888.241.8162, or at the Carolina Theatre box office.

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Chatham County Line is a community newspaper serving all of Chatham County as well as the southern part of Orange. Our mission is to inform our community by providing a forum "where all voices are heard." We seek all views and ideas about our community, and we report on important matters — including our cultural life — comprehensively and in-depth. Our commitment is to create the best-written, best-edited and most stylish community newspaper anywhere.

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WAKE UP WEDNESDAYS

LOOKING FOR NEW BUSINESS OR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS?

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