

# Southern Christmas Trees

The Southern Christmas Tree Association Newsletter

Second Quarter 2018

June 30, 2018



## Important:

- 2018 annual meeting August 3-5, West Monroe, Louisiana – *reserve & register now*
- 2018 final notice for 2019-2020 director nominations
- Mark your calendars for the 2019 annual meeting June 7-9 somewhere in Mississippi

## A Message from SCTA's President Danna Day

Dear friends,

Our annual meeting is right around the corner. It is amazing and sometimes unbelievable how fast time flies. I look forward to seeing everyone, strengthening old relationships and making new friends. I sincerely hope you will be able to attend our meeting in West Monroe, Louisiana.

The Hilton Garden Inn is doing everything to accommodate our group. The Monroe – West Monroe Convention & Visitors Bureau has been working closely with us from the start. The Peppers, Currys and Rawls are working harder than they should while preparing their farms during this brutal heat. All are anxious for our visit so we can share and learn from each other. And, the exhibitors are lining up.

I appreciate the effort of the planning committee for they laid the groundwork for what is shaping up to be a great meeting. Gray Anderson, Michael Buchart, Bentley Curry, Ricky Kilpatrick, Don Rawls and Kevin Steele are to be commended for their planning and preparation. Additional thanks go to Gray, Bentley, Wendy Ellis, Bryon Hughes, Joe Gersch, Don Kazery and Don for sitting on the member-to-member sharing sessions. This kind of cooperation and willingness to share is one of the reasons we succeed.

As we approach the meeting, take time to reflect on past gatherings for strengths and weaknesses. While you attend the West Monroe meeting, look for opportunities to improve what we do so SCTA (you) can continue to improve upon its delivery for membership (you). Visit with your directors and work with them to build an even better organization.

New membership solicitation is extremely important especially for a small organization such as ours. If you know of anyone who is considering growing trees or are but not yet members of the association, please encourage their participation. SCTA depends on you.

Thank you,

Danna Day, President 2018-2019, SCTA; Old Days Farm, Winnsboro, Louisiana

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## 2018 Annual Meeting of the Southern Christmas Tree Association

August 2018 will be the 43<sup>rd</sup> time since Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi growers met for the first time and it will be SCTA's 14<sup>th</sup> annual meeting! Congratulations to you and those before us.

*Included in the newsletter are the agenda and registration form. Please register before July 28. Doing so allows meeting coordinators better numbers to estimate with. Thank you.*

### The Mini Farm Tours 1 & 2



Friday August 3, there will be mini farm tours at Curry Farms (11:00 AM) and Pepper Christmas Tree Farm (2:00 PM) in the West Monroe area.

# Everything But the Trees For the Successful Christmas Tree Lot

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The Peppers are longtime, active members of SCTA living on their beautiful 15 acre, traditional choose & cut Christmas tree farm they established in 1987. Joe has always had an interest in propagating plants and has now reached a point where he can offer containerized planting stock. The August gathering will be the first time membership has visited their farm. *Enjoy!*

The Currys are longtime, active members of SCTA, the National Christmas Tree Association (NCTA) and other national farming organizations. Bentley has repeatedly served leading positions in SCTA, NCTA and the Christmas Tree Promotion Board (CTPB). They live on their 40 acre Christmas tree farm they established in 1981. Their agritourism farm has grown substantially from a choose & cut operation to offering numerous activities, including a pumpkin patch, corn maze, event hosting, playgrounds, gift shop and a whole lot more. Over the years the Currys have hosted numerous events but none more enjoyable than “their” own membership. *Welcome back!*



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## The Restaurant

Six o'clock post meridian (when is the last time you saw that?) Friday evening, the board will meet for dinner at Warehouse #1 Restaurant ([www.WarehouseNo1.com](http://www.WarehouseNo1.com)) located at One Olive Street, Monroe, Louisiana 71201, telephone (318) 322-1340. If you are interested dining at the Warehouse #1 Restaurant Friday evening and you are not a board member, the executive secretary strongly recommends you make reservations now for the very popular establishment.





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## The Hotel & Conference Facility



Saturday, the annual and business meetings, dinner and auction will be conducted in the Hilton Garden Inn ([www.WestMonroe.HGI.com](http://www.WestMonroe.HGI.com)). SCTA conference rates for the Hilton Garden Inn are \$99.00 plus tax which will be held until July 20, 2018. For reservations, telephone the local desk at (318) 398-0653. The Hilton Garden Inn is located at 400 Mane Street, West Monroe, Louisiana 71291 near I-20 Exit 113: Downing Road. Be sure to make your reservations early to enjoy the conference rate.



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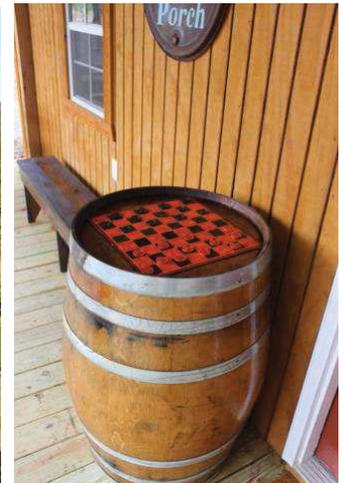
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## The Sunday Farm Tour



Sunday, Barbara and Don Rawls with their family and friends will host the main farm tour on their Precious Memories Christmas Tree Farm near Calhoun. Though the official start time will be 9:00 AM, coffee and donuts will be out on the table by 8:00 AM. Then there will be the catfish lunch...

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- Excellent fit for Ground Cover Management Systems
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## 2018-2019 Nominating Committee & 2019-2020 SCTA Director Position Nominations

The 2018-2019 Nominating Committee consists of Paul Beavers (Alabama), Kevin Steele (Louisiana), and Larry Massey (Mississippi). Mailing addresses for the nominating committee members are:

Paul Beavers, 10093 Bradford Trafford Road, Trafford, AL 35172  
Kevin Steele, 56459 Dollar Road, Angie, LA 70426  
Larry Massey 5819 Gunter Road, Walnut Grove, MS 39189

The Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi state director positions are open for the 2019/2020 term. *This announcement is the final notice for nominations.* Nominations shall contain the signature of the person making the nomination in a letter to be hand delivered or by the US Postal Service to your appropriate state committee member no later than 12:00 pm July 18, 2018. Nominations must be received at least fifteen (15) days prior to the annual meeting. Any nomination must be a member in good standing and a Christmas tree farmer in Alabama, Louisiana or Mississippi.

SCTA's officers are Danna Day (La.), President 2018/2019; Michael May (Miss.), Senior Vice-President 2018/2019; Steve Mannhard (Al.), Vice-President 2018/2019; Ray Gilbert (Al.), Past President & Parliamentarian 2018/2019; and Bentley Curry (La.), NCTA Representative 2018/2019. Alabama directors are Paul Beavers 2018/2019; Michael Duncan 2017/2018 (expiring); and Dr. Jeremy Pickens, Extension Service. Louisiana directors are Kevin Steele 2018/2019; Gray Anderson 2017/2018 (expiring); and Ricky Kilpatrick, Extension Service. Mississippi directors are Larry Massey 2018/2019; Lowell Worthey 2017/2018 (expiring); and Dr. Stephen Dicke, Extension Service.

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## Christmas Tree Promotion Board Referendum Vote is Being Counted

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Christmas Tree Promotion Board referendum was held May 1-31, 2018. The referendum vote is currently being counted by USDA-AMS with announcements to be made at the appropriate time.

## Prayers and Support

During the cycle of life, beautiful gifts are born and eventually those treasures pass on often having had numerous challenges along the way. Please keep in your prayers:

Larry Haley and his family, especially their daughter Michelle and her children, have suffered with the tragic loss of their son-in-law Michael Douglas Hester of Saucier, Mississippi who was married to their daughter. Michael's obituary can be read at [www.TrinityFuneralServices.net](http://www.TrinityFuneralServices.net). And, Larry recently was discharged from the hospital for a serious infection. Now that Larry is discharged, he best take care of himself while catching up.

Member Ricky Peairs of Windy Hills Farm, Ethel, Louisiana, lost his father Stephen Preston Peairs, Jr. of Zachary, Louisiana March 27, 2018. Mr. Peairs' obituary is posted at [www.TheAdvocate.com](http://www.TheAdvocate.com).

James "Jim" King has recovered enough from a broken hip during May that he intends to attend the West Monroe meeting. As a combat fighter pilot having survived 30 combat missions in Korea and 300 in Vietnam, he is not about to let this hold him back, Must be that piloting urge to get up and go – somewhere.

## **Association Membership / Dues**

SCTA has three (3) levels of membership:

- 1) Regular grower (actively selling trees) dues are \$120.00 annually.
- 2) New growers just starting out or people considering the adventure, may join for \$50 annually and can pay the \$50 rate for a maximum of 3 years or until they begin selling trees, whichever is first.
- 3) Growers in states other than Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi may join for \$60 annually. These growers will be listed on the SCTA website under "Other States" and will be non-voting members.

## **Welcome New Members**

Please welcome SCTA's new members Ben and Robin Williams of Benton, Mississippi in Yazoo County. They planted a quarter acre in 2016 and, as they gain experience, will plant more acreage. They are anxious to attend the meeting and like all of us – learn something.

## **SCTA Website**

If you have recently created your own website or made any changes to your farm contact information, please inform the executive secretary immediately by e-mail so the updates can be made on the association's website.

For those members who do not have a website, SCTA provides a dedicated sub-page (until you have your own website) to facilitate exposure. SCTA will post your page with the expected sale season the year before you open or sooner (your preference). Information posted will be of a static nature, i.e. farm name, address, telephone number, county and a brief description.

If you utilize SCTA's website and have a Facebook page (highly recommended) the executive secretary will provide a link to your Facebook page. New growers who are not yet harvesting should consider promoting their farm through social media to develop a following.

## **SCTA Advertisement, Exhibits, Sponsorships**

Feel free to inquire about advertising, exhibiting or sponsoring events with SCTA. SCTA's advertising platforms are the quarterly e-mailed newsletters, the association's website membership page and the annual meeting program packet. When you advertise with SCTA, your placement is with each platform for a 12 month period. Advertisers are requested to provide electronic file (.jpg or .pdf) copies of logos, art work and text suitable for placement in Word documents.

SCTA's 12-month advertisement fee schedule is as follows. Please note, when an advertisement is placed, it is for the following consecutive 12 months beginning with the next full quarter and not bound to a fiscal or calendar year.

*One quarter page:* \$200.00. A one quarter (approximate) page ad is placed in the quarterly newsletters, annual meeting packet and on SCTA's membership web page.

*One half page:* \$400.00. A one half (approximate) page ad is placed in the quarterly newsletters and annual meeting packet. A one quarter page ad will be placed on SCTA's membership web page.

Annual meetings are usually late summer rotating amongst Alabama, Louisiana & Mississippi in that order. Exhibitors and sponsors are always welcome during annual meetings or other events hosted by SCTA such as workshops. Exhibitor fees vary per event with SCTA keeping costs at a minimum. SCTA strives to make fees agreeable so you will return. SCTA members who exhibit benefit from a \$40 member-exhibitor discount. If you are interested in partnering with SCTA, please contact the executive secretary.

***News, News, News***

*If you have information worthy of mention in the newsletter, including deaths of past members, please inform the executive secretary.*

*Southern Christmas Trees* is a multi-page, quarterly newsletter of the activities and interests of the membership including ideas and information beneficial to the industry. The newsletter serves as the primary platform for information dissemination to membership. Content is provided by members and secured or derived elsewhere. Every effort is made to use factual information from established, credible sources with references. Subscription is a membership benefit. Distribution is by e-mail.

Michael Buchart, Executive Secretary, 12263 Brookshire Avenue, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70815 USA  
Telephone: 225.505.6335. E-mail: [sctaes@gmail.com](mailto:sctaes@gmail.com).

**SCTA's Advertising Supporters:**

<b>Evans &amp; Company, Inc.</b>	<b>Fraser Knoll Farms</b>	<b>Fresh Cut Tech, LLC</b>
<b>Kirk Company</b>	<b>Keelson Partners</b>	<b>Peak Seasons \ Veldsma &amp; Sons</b>
<b>Pennington Seed, Inc.</b>	<b>Steele's Saje Shearing Machine</b>	<b>Swihart Sales Company</b>

Attachments:  
2018 SCTA agenda  
2018 SCTA registration

**Agenda (revised 06/29/2018)**  
**2018 Annual Meeting of the Southern Christmas Tree Association**  
**August 3, 4 & 5**

**Hilton Garden Inn**  
**Conference Facility & Hotel**  
400 West Monroe, Louisiana 71291  
(318) 398-0653; [www.WestMonroeHGI.com](http://www.WestMonroeHGI.com)

**Precious Memories Christmas Tree Farm**  
**Don & Barbara Rawls & Family, Sunday Farm Tour Hosts**  
455 Glen Acres Road, Calhoun, Louisiana 71225  
(318) 557-0390; [www.PreciousMemoriesChristmasTreeFarm.com](http://www.PreciousMemoriesChristmasTreeFarm.com)

**Friday August 3**

11:00 AM – 01:00 PM

**Mini Farm Tour 1**

**Curry Farms, Inc.**, Bentley & Sandy Curry

548 Robinson Drive, Rayville, La. 71269, Richland Parish  
(318) 728-6203; [www.CurryFarms.net](http://www.CurryFarms.net)

The farm is located 22 miles east of the Hilton Garden Inn, West Monroe. Off I-20, take Exit 132 onto LA-133 toward Columbia, then turn left 0.4 miles onto Magnolia Drive and left again 1.7 miles onto Robinson Drive. Farm will be on left 1.1 miles. *This is a short, informal farm tour offering an opportunity to visit and discuss farm operations. The Currys are longtime, active members of SCTA, the National Christmas Tree Association (NCTA) and other national farming organizations. Bentley has repeatedly served leading positions in SCTA, NCTA and the Christmas Tree Promotion Board (CTPB). They live on their 40 acre Christmas tree farm they established in 1981. Their agritourism farm has grown substantially from a choose & cut operation to offering numerous activities, including a pumpkin patch, corn maze, event hosting, playgrounds, gift shop and a whole lot more.*

02:00 PM – 04:00 PM

**Mini Farm Tour 2**

**Pepper Christmas Tree Farm**, Joe & Grace Pepper

2181 Highway 557, West Monroe, La. 71292, Ouachita Parish  
(318) 387-5172; [www.Facebook.com/PepperXmasTreeFarm](http://www.Facebook.com/PepperXmasTreeFarm)

The farm is located 15 miles south of the Hilton Garden Inn, West Monroe and 30 miles west southwest of Curry Farms. From I-20, take Exit 114 south to LA-617 (Thomas Road), continue onto Jonesboro Road, take (~7.7 miles) left onto LA-557. Farm is 2.9 miles on left. *This is a short, informal farm tour offering an opportunity to visit and discuss farm operations. The Peppers are longtime, active members of SCTA living on their beautiful 15 acre, traditional choose & cut Christmas tree farm they established in 1987. Joe has recently started growing and offering containerized seedling stock.*

04:00 PM – 05:30 PM

**On-Site Registration** - Hilton Garden Inn

04:00 PM – 11:00 PM

**Exhibitor & Tree Competition Set-Up** - halls, lobby, side room

06:00 PM – 08:00 PM

**Board of Director's Dinner**

**Warehouse No.1 Restaurant**

One Olive Street, Monroe, La. 71201

(318) 322-1340; [www.WarehouseNo1.com](http://www.WarehouseNo1.com)

*The board and family members will dine in a reserved, side room. SCTA participants are invited to the restaurant which is known for delicious food and great service. It is located on the east bank of the Ouachita River and has consistently been awarded Best Overall Restaurant by Delta Style Magazine.*

08:30 PM – 10:00 PM

**SCTA Board Meeting** (Hilton Garden Inn)

## Saturday August 4

- 07:00 AM – 10:30 AM **On-Site Registration** (Hilton Garden Inn)
- 08:00 AM – 09:00 AM **Visit with Vendors and Friends**
- 09:00 AM – 09:30 AM **Opening Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance & Welcome** (Magnolia Room)  
Danna Day, SCTA President 2018/19, Old Days Farm, Winnsboro, La.  
Bentley Curry, Opening Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance  
Don Rawls, Farm Host
- 09:30 AM – 10:30 AM **Panel Session 1** (Magnolia Room)  
**You Can Fail at This, Member-to-Member Sharing**  
Topics in no particular order and not inclusive: Plant Varieties; Bad Luck Growing Certain Trees; Mechanics of Buying & Selling Pre-cut Trees; Pests & Management; Diseases & Management; Vegetative Competition; etc.  
Facilitator: Bentley Curry, Curry Farms, Rayville, La.  
Joe Gersch, Yawn Station Christmas Tree Farm, Independence, La.  
Bryon Hughes, Hughes Christmas Tree Farm, Benton, La.  
Don Rawls, Precious Memories Christmas Tree Farm, Calhoun, La.
- 10:30 AM – 11:00 AM **Break / Visit with Vendors and Friends**
- 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM **Panel Session 1**, continued (Magnolia Room)  
**You Can Fail at This, Member-to-Member Sharing**
- 12:00 PM – 01:30 PM **Buffet Lunch** (Magnolia Room), Visit with Vendors and Friends
- 01:30 PM – 02:30 PM **Panel Session 2** (Magnolia Room)  
**Your Farm's Future, Member-to-Member Sharing**  
Topics in no particular order and not inclusive: Maintaining the Core Business of Trees; Growing Something Else; You Pick or Specialty Markets; Farmer Markets; Gift Shop; Bees, Lemonade; Handling Purchases on the Farm – ATMs, Cash, Checks, Credit Cards, etc.  
Facilitator: Danna Day, Old Days Farm, Winnsboro, La.  
Gray Anderson, Grant Christmas Tree Farm & Syrup Mill, Grant, La.  
Wendy Ellis, The Eagles Nest (floral shop), Carthage, Miss.  
Don Kazery, Kazery Farm (specialty produce farm), Jackson, Miss.
- 02:30 PM – 03:00 PM **Break / Visit with Our Vendors and Friends**
- 03:00 PM – 04:00 PM **Panel Session 2**, continued (Magnolia Room)  
**Your Farm's Future, Member-to-Member Sharing**
- 04:00 PM – 04:30 PM **General Membership Business Meeting** (Magnolia Room)  
Danna Day, SCTA President 2018/19  
Bentley Curry, NCTA Representative
- 04:15 PM **Deadline to Submit Tree Competition Ballots**
- 04:30 PM – 06:00 PM **Clear the Conference Room for Hotel Staff Dinner Preparation**  
*Everyone please clean up and straighten your area when you leave to make it easier for hotel staff to prepare the evening function. Thank you.*

06:00 PM – 07:00 PM	<b>Buffet Dinner</b>
06:45 PM	<b>Close Silent Auction</b>
06:45 PM – 07:15 PM	<b>Speaker</b> (invited)
07:15 PM – 07:45 PM	<b>Tree Competition Awards</b>
07:45 PM	<b>Name Successful Silent Auction Bidders</b>
08:00 PM – 09:00 PM	<p><b>Sum-Fun Live Auction</b></p> <p><i>SCTA's "other" auction team led by auctioneer, Bentley Curry and his talented barker Michael May of Lazy Acres, Chunky, Miss., will once again entertain our gathering while hustling items so generously donated by membership, exhibitors and friends to the association. Because of their generosity and your willingness to bid against friends for "fun", SCTA can "sum" it up for the association. Thank you. In the interest of preventing a not-too-late evening, the live auction folks will do their best to keep it shorter yet just as fun.</i></p>

**Sunday August 5**

**Farm Tour**

**Precious Memories Christmas Tree Farm**

Don & Barbara Rawls, Family & Friends  
 455 Glen Acres Road, Calhoun, La. 71225; Ouachita Parish  
 (318) 557-0390

[www.PreciousMemoriesChristmasTreeFarm.com](http://www.PreciousMemoriesChristmasTreeFarm.com)

The farm is located 10 miles northwest of the Hilton Garden Inn.

*From West Monroe, take I-20 West toward Shreveport, take Exit 108 and turn right (north) onto LA-546 (Cheniere Drew Road) toward US-80, turn left (west) onto LA-15, and then right onto Glen Acres Road. The farm entrance will be on the left.*

08:00 AM	<b>Coffee &amp; Donuts, Visit</b>
09:00 AM	<p><b>Opening Prayer by Bentley Curry</b></p> <p><b>Welcome by Farm Host Don &amp; Barbara Rawls</b></p>
09:30 AM – 12:30 PM	<b>Farm Tour – Back to Basics</b>
12:30 PM – 01:30 PM	<b>Fried Catfish &amp; Fixings for Lunch</b>
01:30 PM	<p><b>Adjourn &amp; Return Home Safely - Mississippi here we come!</b></p> <p><i>SCTA's officers and directors welcome your suggestions, ideas and considerations for 2019, including constructive criticism. Where shall 2019 be? Previous Mississippi meetings have been in Ocean Springs (2016), Choctaw (2013), and Hernando (2010). How about it? If you know of a non-member grower or someone considering the venture, please encourage their participation. Thank you.</i></p>

**Registration Form (revised 06/29/2018)**  
**Southern Christmas Tree Association 2018 Annual Meeting - August 3, 4 & 5**

**Friday Mini Farm Tour 1 (11:00 AM)**  
**Curry Farms, Inc.**  
 548 Robinson Drive, Rayville, Louisiana 71269  
 318-728-6203  
 www.CurryFarms.net

**Friday Mini Farm Tour 2 (2:00 PM)**  
**Pepper Christmas Tree Farm**  
 2181 Highway 557, West Monroe, Louisiana 71292  
 318-387-5172  
 www.Facebook.com/PepperXmasTreeFarm

**Conference Facility & Hotel**  
**Hilton Garden Inn**  
 400 West Monroe, Louisiana 71291  
 318-398-0653  
 www.WestMonroeHGI.com

**Sunday Farm Tour (9:00 AM)**  
**Precious Memories Christmas Tree Farm**  
 455 Glen Acres Road, Calhoun, Louisiana 71225  
 318-557-0390  
 www.PreciousMemoriesChristmasTreeFarm.com

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse / Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Additional People: \_\_\_\_\_

Farm / Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Early registration must be received on or before July 28 to benefit the early registration rate. Later or on-site registration will be an additional \$10.00 for all categories, except meals. Please register early.

The Hilton Garden Inn SCTA room rate is \$99.00 plus tax for rooms. Telephone the local desk (318-398-0653) for reservations. Be sure to reserve before the release date of July 20 for the SCTA rate.

Please indicate by how many in your party will attend each Christmas tree farm (CTF) tour:

\_\_\_\_\_ Friday, Pepper CTF; \_\_\_\_\_ Friday, Curry Farms, \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday, Precious Memories CTF

Category	SCTA Member	Non-Member	Exhibitor 1 table (extra table +\$100) 1-2 people
<b>Complete Package Two People meetings &amp; meals</b>	\$130.00 after 07/28 = \$140.00	\$180.00 after 07/28 = \$190.00	<b>Members \$210.00</b> <b>Non-Members \$250.00</b> after 07/28 = \$220/\$260
<b>Extra Person(s) meetings &amp; meals</b>	_____ x \$65.00 = _____ after 07/28 _____ x \$75.00 = _____ enter # \$ amount	_____ x \$65.00 = _____ after 07/28 _____ x \$75.00 = _____ enter # \$ amount	_____ x \$65.00 = _____ after 07/28 _____ x \$75.00 = _____ enter # \$ amount
<b>Individual Package meetings &amp; meals</b>	\$70.00 after 07/28 = \$70.00	\$95.00 after 07/28 = \$95.00	
<b>Extra Lunch(s)</b>	_____ x \$18.00 = _____ Enter # \$ amount	_____ x \$18.00 = _____ enter # \$ amount	_____ x \$18.00 = _____ enter # \$ amount
<b>Extra Dinner(s)</b>	_____ x \$26.00 = _____ Enter # \$ amount	_____ x \$26.00 = _____ enter # \$ amount	_____ x \$26.00 = _____ enter # \$ amount
<b>Extra Sunday Lunch(s)</b>	_____ x \$12.00 = _____ enter # & amount	_____ x \$12.00 = _____ enter # \$ amount	_____ x \$12.00 = _____ enter # \$ amount
Check #:	_____ total payment	_____ total payment	_____ total payment <i>Note: 1 extra table add \$100</i>

Please make check payable to "SCTA" & mail with registration form to:

SCTA, 12263 Brookshire Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70815

(Processed by: \_\_\_\_\_; Date \_\_\_\_\_)