

life in natural florida

CURRENTS

MARCH-APRIL 2011

magazine

Been there, DUNN that!

Ronnie Dunn rocks the
20th Annual Suwannee River Jam

Big Leagues

Michael Kirkman takes his
skills to Spring Training

Music Lives Here

Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park hosts two
of the hottest events in the area this spring.

Ripe for the pickin'

High Springs Orchard and Bakery offer the
freshest fruit, right off the trees



PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNY FRANKLIN

Jenny and Collins
explore
the High Springs

Orchard & Bakery

Story & Photos by
Antonia Robinson



Jenny Franklin
relaxes with
Collins the dog.



It started with a few fruit trees for Jenny Franklin of High Springs. Soon the few spread over 28 acres of land, and the High Springs Orchard and Bakery was born.

That birth took place in August 2010.

"We're brand new," Franklin said.

The orchard specializes in a variety of you-pick fruits.

Franklin is from Singapore, but there was not much land to have an orchard, she said. Her interest in planting came after purchasing the 28 acres of land in 1996.

She planted just a few of the trees she liked and would share the fruit with friends, Franklin said. Then she decided to share the joys of fresh fruit with many others.

Franklin researched and read every gardening book available before starting her orchard.

"I made a lot of mistakes to get where I am," she said.

She also became a master gardener and has 14 years of gardening knowledge to share with others.

Fruits available in the orchard include persimmons, apples and Asian pear trees. Also available are muscadine grape vines, blueberry, blackberry and raspberry patches, and chestnut trees.

It's easy to pick the many fruits available at the orchard, Franklin said. The orchard supplies everything needed for a person to pick their fruit from buckets to shears.

"All you have to do is wear tennis shoes," she said.

The orchard is certified organic which makes the fruits "safe for even a child to pick and pop in their mouth," Franklin said. No chemicals are used on the fruit.

There is a yearly check the orchard undergoes to ensure it maintains the certified organic distinction.

Franklin's husband, Charles, takes care of the honey bees they use for the orchard's pollination.

People are often surprised how good



Jenny Franklin, owner of the High Springs Orchard and Bakery shows a persimmon. Fruits from the orchard are used in the bakery.



Franklin prunes a tree to prepare it for the harvest season. Work continues on the orchard during winter months.



The High Springs Orchard has rows and rows of trees waiting to bloom to provide a variety of fruit, such as apples and Asian Pears.


Jami & Jordan Yarbrough
Mother & Daughter
Major: AA/Nursing
GPA's: Jami - 3.9 & Jordan - 3.5
Clubs: Drama Club, Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society


Jami "I enjoy attending FGC because it's close to home, the professors and students are very friendly, and the campus is beautiful."


Jordan "I love attending FGC, it's my second home! All of the professors and students are great."

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YOU-PICK CALENDAR

Fruit

Blueberry
Apple
Grape
Asian Pears
Chestnut
Persimmon

Harvest Season

May-June
June-July
July - September
July - September
mid-September - late December
late September - early December

Best Time U-Pick

May - June
June - July
August - September
August - September
October - December
October - November

The High Springs Orchard & Bakery is located at 10804 NW State Road 45 in High Springs. The number is (352) 222-1343, and the website is highspringsorchard.com.

fresh fruit they pick tastes, Franklin said. You-pick provides fruit not imported and shipped from overseas to a store.

"When fruits come here they're still not ripe," she said. "You go to your local u-pick and get them when they're ready."

Often some people have a misconception of how certain fruits, such

as persimmons, taste, Franklin said. They've only had it from a store and think the taste is unappealing.

"I have them taste one and tell them if they don't like it to spit it out," she said. "They have a totally different opinion after tasting a fresh one."

The High Springs Bakery fea-

tures freshly baked items from cakes to muffins and cookies. Jackson Kwong is the head baker, and he has more than 10 years of experience in the industry.

The fruits and honey used in the bakery all come from the orchard, Franklin said. Other fruits come



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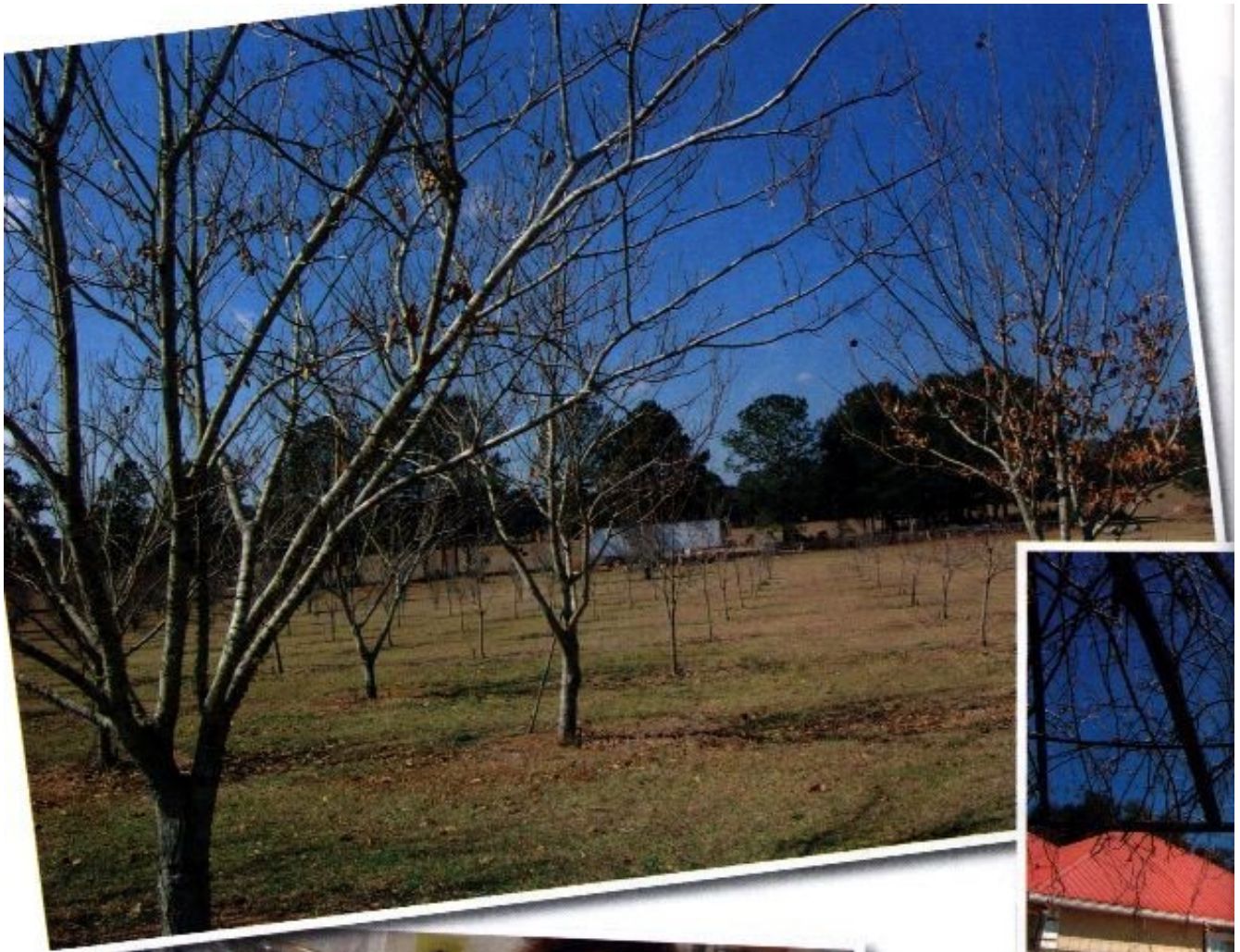
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The bakery offers a variety of made-to-order treats such as cakes.

Once the orchard is in bloom, returning and new customers will come for the you-pick season for fresh organically grown fruits.



Franklin used old satellite dishes to hang her grape vines, offering easier accessibility for you-pick customers.

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