

FEATURE Story

Walk It Out with MADCO 4-H!

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In this day and age of the intensification of health awareness and health consumerism (fad diets, fitness gear, trackers, etc.), Extension Agents are becoming more vocal about the importance of work-life balance. As youth development professionals, 4-H is seeing a rise in the need to encourage families to prioritize their work/school down-time and physical activity sessions. To find a solution for our families, Madison 4-H asked a sampling of its members the following questions:

What are your biggest hurdles for increasing your physical activity?

1. Do you have a “no work or school-work after/during ____ time” rule in your household? If not, would you find this valuable?
2. When it comes to quality family time, my family needs: A. More B. Less C. Same
3. Would you and/or your family be interested in a 4-H physical activity group?

The responses all seemed to point to the same thing: Our family is over-scheduled and does not get enough physical activity or bonding time...
HELP!!



The biggest hurdle seemed to be needing an “excuse” to exercise or spend time with their family. (Clearly and increase in offerings on how to prioritize your life will be added to the Madison 4-H agenda!) Demands from work, school, and extra-curricular activities that will help their children become successful was distracting these families from being present in their own lives. 4-H to the rescue! First, we designed a twice weekly standing appointment was created for a walking session. Second, we seized the opportunity to recruit new volunteers and members, increase our current volunteer/member involvement, and have questions about 4-H answered.

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These meetings would offer the opportunity for walking meetings...and meetings go in the calendar so we can't miss those! Third, we knew that not everyone could attend during the times we set but would also want to participate. Setting up a Facebook group and social media hashtags allowed participants to join virtually on their own time and still have an element of accountability and an appointment they could put in their calendar. We eliminated the "excuse" factor.

Attendance had its ebb and flow, but we had a consistent crowd whether they chose to use the Facebook group for accountability, show up in person, or just let us know they were participating and their progress. The resounding conclusion from the participants was this type of event was exactly the kind of excuse and motivation they were seeking to prioritize their health, their family members' health, community involvement, and quality time as a family unit. Who knew that such a

small effort, could have such a wide impact!

The bonus to offering this type of activity is that we as professionals can make our health a priority while also meeting the needs of our clientele. Learn by Doing, Lead by Example.

From the DISTRICT DIRECTOR



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When is my next Promotion?

This is a good question that each and all of us should ask ourselves on a regular basis as we manage our careers. As the saying goes, if you are not progressing, you are stagnating...or worse, regressing. This question was recently asked to me...during a job interview for a county faculty position. I have to admit, the question took me by surprise as we just finished the negotiation...and I immediately felt that my answer was not the expected one as I said "in six years, per UF regulations".

Recognizing my mistake, I tried to "adjust while fumbling": "Well, sometimes we get annual merit raises - and sometimes we get across the board raises. Ah! And five to six years later (actually "when ready"), faculty can submit for yet another promotion". The ball was slipping through my hands and bouncing away out of sight.

It was too little, too late. What? SIX years until my next promotion?? (I swear, I heard the phone think "I will be long gone by then...") Are you serious?

After further review, I recalled that according to UF regulations, indeed faculty in agent tracks at UF get a maximum of three promotions (while by the way, state faculty only have three). I realized then that I might have misunderstood the question (not a first...) and gave an incomplete answer. Promotion in faculty positions occur "officially" as described above and also "softly". Many professional accomplishments (like a major publication, a new curriculum,

a visual demonstration, a program impact well conducted and shared, assuming a leadership position in a local, state, national or international association, a grant or an award - just to name a few) do advance our careers, do promote our professional standing in the eyes of our peers, clients, and stakeholders, and do promote us.

It is now clear that we are lucky that in our academic jobs, our next promotion is today, tomorrow and the day after. I see it happen in your professional lives every day. **You score all the time. Keep winning!**



DISTRICT Life

Union County Youth Create MyPlate Pizza

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On a Monday evening in Lake Butler a group of 25 4-H youth gathered at their 4-H club meeting. On this evening the discussion was not about showing animals or what needs to be included in project books but rather ways to eat healthier. I was invited to discuss healthy eating with the group. So I decided to make Pizza, but not just any pizza; MyPlate pizza.

Parents listened and watched their kids explore the parts of MyPlate and why each section is important while building a pizza. Parents also learned that MyPlate helps build meals to make



sure our kids get all the components of a nutritious meal. Each youth received a whole wheat pita bread, carrots, tomatoes, black beans, broccoli, peppers

and scallion's low fat cheese and low fat yogurt spread to build the pizza. The recipe card has a picture of MyPlate and a brief message to explain the parts of MyPlate and a simple recipe. The MyPlate pizza doesn't require cooking and is good for a quick snack or as a component of a meal. Overall the youth enjoyed trying various vegetables and black beans instead of animal protein. The youth also discussed what they would add to the pizza or what they liked best about the pizza.

Upon leaving I asked how many would make the recipe at home and 15 of the youth raised their hands. With parents being the primary shoppers in the house and being able to watch their kids enjoy a new meal I believe it make the take home message stronger.

What's WORKING?

Meat Science Judging Team - Building a History of Success

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The Suwannee County 4-H Meat Science Program was created to raise awareness, impart knowledge, and involve youth in a fun atmosphere. The purpose of 4-H meat judging is for 4-H members to develop an appreciation for red meats as a protein source, become better informed as consumers, and develop life skills, using meats to accomplish this goal.

The Suwannee County 4-H Meat Judging Program has been very successful for youth. Since 2009, 28 different youth have competed on teams and have won 12 state contests. Two teams have also taken part in the National 4-H

Meat Judging contest held at Kansas State University and one team in 2017 took part in the Western National Roundup Meat Judging Contest held in Denver. While on these national trips, teams have had the opportunity to visit, tour, and learn about the Department of Animal Sciences at five different universities while meeting with professors and staff.

Meat judging team participants and parents were sent a survey regarding their experience in the meat judging program. Youth responses included: "the meat judging team helped me be more confident in talking about my



The Suwannee County 4-H Meat Judging Team members judge beef carcasses at a practice at the University of Wyoming in January 2017.

opinions and in teaching others" and "I learned consumer and leadership skills." Parent responses included: "my kids have more confidence in making wise choices;" "I think that the judging teams, were the best thing for my son because they gave him more confidence in himself;" and "our family has benefited (travel, etiquette, responsibility, communication, food selection, and health skills) from the meat judging program.

TEACHING Tips



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I Heard Every Word You Said

Although research-based content is often the basis of a successful program, it is also important to engage the audience and manage yourself and the class to ensure that your content is reaching your participants. Due to my own hearing loss issues and the prediction that more of our participants will be in this category, I offer some suggestions for agents:

- Provide participants with index card to write questions. At the beginning

of a class, ask what they especially want to know. At the end, ask what questions they still have. Some may be shy to voice their questions while many may have the same question. You can quickly shuffle through the cards to determine how and in what order you want to respond.

- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly. I tell 4-Hers to think in slow-motion as they practice their demonstrations or public speaking and that rate will come out about right. We often talk faster than some people can listen and comprehend.
- Always face your audience when speaking.....don't turn your back while talking. Instead, stop talking, turn for the necessary reason, and resume talking while turning back.
- Don't drop the punch line! Keep the volume level up when speaking. It is so frustrating to miss the final comment when it is said too softly.

- Use eye contact to determine if individuals are getting it. Expressions are easy to read and give you clues as to how your information is being received.

One final suggestion is related to seating arrangement (and also helps with hearing because people can see each other). To encourage group interaction, arrange seating in a circle, semicircle or U configuration. That applies if you want the group to talk. The standard class-room style of rows tends to reduce interaction among participants.

I have practiced these suggestions and am always glad to receive the comment, "I don't know if I'll use all the information, but I heard every word you said!"

PROFESSIONAL Development



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Slowing Down

We live in a fast paced world. As Extension professionals we are asked to provide high quality customer service, stay up to date on research in our fields, teach, and oh wait have a personal life as well. That is a pretty tall order. How do we succeed and enjoy our personal and professional lives? The answer may be to slow down. Our focus for this addition of our Professional Development corner is "Slowing Down" TED Radio hour podcast focuses on

TED RADIO HOUR

shifting your perspective on deadlines, fast pace living, and how we communicate. We will focus on one speaker for our corner conversation.

Adam Grant, Professor at Worton College of Business and Author of "The Originals" helps us understand "Procrastinators" Procrastinators, and The Originals; an interesting blend of both that seem to have a path to unlocking creativity. Grant describes himself as a procrastinator; that person who is always ahead of the deadline often months ahead of the deadline. What he doesn't feel like he has in this approach is creativity. He is so focused on the deadline that he does not take the time to find that unique outside the box idea.

We all know what the typical chronic procrastinator looks like and maybe we consider ourselves one; someone who sees a deadline as the day we open up the project and start. If you are a last minute person you probably already know that procrastination tends to not spark creativity. But what about those purposeful procrastinators? I happen to be one of those. Grant calls these individuals "the originals". They start a project like a "procrastinator" would, early but they walk away to reflect. This "time-out" provides opportunities for other ideas, projects, and just life to cast a shadow on the project. This shadow may help see things in a new light. Aaron Sorkin says "you call it procrastination; I call it thinking."

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Slowing Down...continued from previous page

Martin Luther King, Jr. worked and stopped and started on his "I have a dream" speech. He was still making changes and adjustments as he was getting ready to walk on stage. That first line, "I have a dream" was not actually part of his speech as he walked on stage. By delaying the completion of his speech he opened himself up to the "widest range of possible ideas".

As Extension professionals, how do we get there? Don't accept the first "default" approach or idea as the only idea. Slow down, take the time to see your project from a different angle. Originals are more afraid of failing to try than of failing at the project. Failure is just another draft. "Our biggest regrets are not our actions, but our inactions". I challenge

you to find the time to slow down, take a different approach to a project. Start early and try to walk away for a bit to find inspiration. Find your Original moment.

From the CED'S

Farmers - Counting on them for more than just supper

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As Extension faculty, we have so much to offer our communities, but often suffer from a lack of awareness of who we are and the great things we can help citizens accomplish. Between answering phone calls and responding to the latest crisis, marketing your program or the overall Extension office sometimes gets pushed to the backburner.

Citrus County has found a way to help a client group while also receiving many benefits ourselves. A number of years ago, an alliance of agricultural operators gathered at the Extension office to discuss challenges and opportunities. Since few of us operate

in a vacuum, other experts/partners were added: water managers, property management, county administrator, and Chamber of Commerce representatives to name a few.

Fast forward to 2017 where the Ag Alliance of Citrus County has become so much more than a group of agribusinessmen utilizing the Extension office meeting room. They have become strong advocates for Extension, they fund-raise for us (last year a BBQ benefit netted the Extension office \$5,000), they help drive attendance at some of our events (even when these activities are not ag related), they allow us to utilize their facilities for events and camps, and generally serve as strong ambassadors for Extension.

What does Extension do to get this support? We facilitate agendas and meeting space plus educational speakers on timely topics (sometimes it is us,

sometimes others), we report what we're up to, and ask for help from time to time. This symbiotic relationship not only keeps Extension and its good works front and center, but it also brings a highly diverse audience to Extension. Everyone learns about our community impacts and can help facilitate connections with other individuals, businesses and partners that we might not thought of or had access to. Third-party credibility is an amazing door opener.

There is no cookie cutter approach to making this an effective venture but is well worth the effort. If you would like examples of our speakers list, meeting agendas and/or the types of members we have, please contact me at bjjarvis@ufl.edu or Clay Cooper, Ag Agent, at coop1632@ufl.edu. We'd be happy to share our insights.

SUCCESS Stories

Fit 4 Life Camp Grocery Store Challenge

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In July, Alachua County 4-H had success with the Fit 4 Life Day camp as

a part of the Florida Food Smart Grant. The capstone for the week was when 18 youth participated in the Florida Food Smart Shopping Experience. This event allowed the youth to showcase the skills we taught throughout the camp such as how to effectively grocery shop, shop on a budget and make wise food

choices. Youth were challenged to shop for a meal consisting of 1 whole grain, lean protein, low-fat dairy, 1 lb. vegetable and 1 lb. fruit for \$12 or less.

A mock supermarket can be created for this challenge but, in order to make it as realistic as possible, Alachua County

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Let's Meet WHO'S NEW TO EXTENSION



Cynthia Laukert, our new Office Assistant III for the NE District. I am a true Floridian and dedicated Gator! I've worked for UF for over 15 years and graduated with a Bachelors degree in Forest

Resources and Wildlife Ecology from UF's School of Natural Resources and Conservation. During football season you will find me tailgating on campus and attending every home game, GO GATORS! As an active Girl Scout Leader for over 20 years, I currently have a Brownie/Junior troop with my mother and daughter as co-leaders. This makes three generations of dedicated Girl Scouts.

My daughter is a Junior at UF majoring in Natural Resource Conservation. She currently is working for Challenge 2050 as a Program Assistant, for Creative Development, while completing her degree. I am also a puppy raiser for guide dogs for the blind. As a volunteer for Southeastern Guide Dogs, I am the Co-Area Coordinator for our Gainesville group with over 12 puppies. If you stop by my office you might get to meet my current puppy, Frank. He is an 8 month old Golden Retriever. I am very excited to work for IFAS Extension and look forward to meeting everyone in the district.



Paulette Tomlinson, Columbia County Agriculture (Livestock) & Natural Resources Agent II. Some of you may recognize the name and yes, I have

returned to the position which I held from 1994 to 2004. In 2004 I was recruited to work for an herbicide application company as a contract manager, concentrating my efforts on invasive exotic weed control in natural areas around the state. Upon leaving that position I have spent the last four years at home expanding our beef cattle and free range poultry operations and now I am happy to be back in Extension!



Denise DeBusk, DPM, BCE, Environmental and Community Horticulture EA II, Alachua County. Dr. DeBusk graduated from the University of Florida with a Doctorate in Plant Medicine

(DPM), a Master's in Science Education, and a Bachelor's in Entomology and Nematology, as well as being a Board Certified Entomologist (BCE) with the Entomological Society of America. Her varied work experience includes: middle school science teacher, Extension information specialist for IPM Florida, and pest management consultant for the Navy.



Savanna Turner, UF/IFAS Extension Duval County, 4-H Youth Development. Savanna has a BS degree from UF in Agricultural Education. She graduated from UF in 2011 then

enlisted in the US Coast Guard. She served in active duty for five years. She was hired July 11th to be the 4-H livestock agent in Duval County. She is currently in the Coast Guard Reserves.

Savanna raised swine, served as an officer, and participated in dairy judging in FFA during high school. She is new to the Jacksonville area but is loving it so far! For some of her hobbies she enjoys kayaking, fishing, and SCUBA diving. She is so excited to get the opportunity to work with some wonderful people with UF and 4-H! Go Gators!



Wayne Hobbs, UF/IFAS Extension Clay County, Environmental Horticulture Agent. Wayne Hobbs comes to UF/IFAS Extension Clay County from Delaware where

he has been an Agriscience Educator for the past 7 years. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Landscape Horticulture from the University of Delaware and is enrolled at University of Florida in the Agricultural Education Masters Degree program. His focus in UF/IFAS Extension will be on Florida Friendly Landscaping, Master Gardener development, and youth education.



Savanna Barry PhD, UF/IFAS, Regional Specialized Agent - Coastal Ecosystems. Savanna Barry finished her Ph.D in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences at

UF in April 2016 and works as a Regional Specialized Agent for Coastal Ecosystems at the UF/IFAS Nature Coast Biological Station in Cedar Key, FL. Savanna's extension program focuses on increasing sustainable

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Fit 4 Life Camp Grocery Store Challenge...continued from page 5

4-H partnered with Wards Supermarket in Gainesville, FL. Once the counselors and campers individually shopped then brought items to a checkout line where adult volunteers totaled the items, verified they had all 5 food components and that they were buying items within their budget. Then all of the youth's items were checked out and marked. Campers and counselors were able to take the food home to actually make the meal since cooking and food safety were something taught during the camp. The challenge took around 2 hours from the time we arrived until checkout. For every 2 campers we had a ratio of 1 teen counselor and 1 adult volunteer, which was vital for the youth's safety and productivity. The store was still operating as normal so youth knew their behavior was expected to be exceptional because they were ambassadors for 4-H. Youth were encouraged to cheer on each other during the competition which led to it being a healthy competition between the counselors to see who could get the most for their money.



We provided media moments to promote the work of 4-H in impacting change. Families were invited at the beginning of the week to attend the event. Family engagement is a critical component in the long term change so, we sent home educational material each day with the families and had a handful attend the event. Other items that would be helpful for this challenge are watches, calculators, pencils and paper, and grocery bags with names,

group shirts for each participant. This event took a lot of upfront planning and follow through during the week. Youth returned from the event expressing that they had no idea food is that expensive, interested learn more about healthy cooking and now wanted to go shopping with their parents. If you are looking for a healthy living activity or event, this is practical and gets youth engaged in healthy lifestyle and food choices.

Roaming INTERVIEW Section

Charles Barrett, a Regional Specialized Agent in Water Resources, in Suwannee County



Larry Figart
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The agents for this section are randomly selected, so be ready.

Where are you from/where did you grow up? I grew up in New Smyrna Beach FL

How and when did you decide you wanted to be an Extension Agent? I wanted to become an extension agent during my Masters work when I helped a grower find a solution that worked for him. I was hooked.

If you had one extra hour of free time a day, how would you use it? I would be on my bike on a trail!

State something about yourself that most people don't know about you. I've brewed beer for 10 years

If you could live in any sitcom, which one would it be? It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia

Where did you go on your last vacation?

My friends and I hiked 40 miles on the Florida Trail... saying the whole time "we do this for fun?"

What was the last book you read? Sand County Almanac

What is the weirdest question you had to answer as an extension agent? What is this scum on my pond?

If you could play any musical instrument, what would it be and why? If you already play an instrument(s), what do you play and why? I play drums because I'm always on time

What is the most exciting place you have ever visited? Hawaii

Let's Meet Who's New to Extension...continued from page 6

behavior of tourists and residents along the Nature Coast and engaging youth and adults in marine science and citizen science. Savanna is an estuarine ecologist who has worked on a broad range of topics including seagrass ecology and lionfish management on coral reefs.



Charles Barrett
PhD, UF/IFAS,
Water Resources
Regional
Specialized
Agent. Hello
all! My name is
Charles Barrett. I
grew up in New
Smyrna Beach,
FL. I received a
B.S. in Botany
(2009), M.S. and Ph.D. in Horticultural
Sciences (2011,2016). My M.S. research
focused on vegetable grafting for

disease tolerance. My PhD research focused on improving Best Management Practices for Florida cabbage growers. We developed a plastic mulch and drip irrigation system to maximize production and profit while reducing risk. As of May 2016, I am your Water Resources RSA and I am located at the Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center in Live Oak, FL. I look forward to working with everyone in the NE District. If you have a question or if I can assist you in any way, please reach out to me! I keep up with current issues on Twitter, follow me @FLWater!

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