

FEATURE Stories

Janet's Jamaican Cuisine

J. Scott Angle

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A 50-year-old restaurant in Live Oak nearly closed because of one bad hour. For the first time she could ever recall, Marion Cason Gross failed an exam she needed to pass to keep cooking.

Katherine Allen sees it as her job to create—or in this case save—other jobs. She got to work getting Cason Gross back to work.

As a family and consumer sciences agent for the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension Suwannee County, Allen has led a communitywide effort

to plan for its economic future. Her office also prepares people to pass certification tests to get or keep jobs. It's her mission to keep Suwannee working.

Closing Ms. D's Kozy Korner would mean another vacant storefront in a rural community that already had too many. In addition to losing her business, Cason Gross would lose her job, and so would the people who cooked, cleaned and served. It would also mean the vanishing of retirement income for the 73-year-old Cason Gross and the 91-year-old mother for whom she cares, Dorothy D. McMillian, the original Ms. D.

To pass the exam and avert this personal economic disaster, Cason Gross needed not just a study buddy but a motivational coach. Allen turned out to be both.

continued on next page



October – December 2021

In this ISSUE

Do unto others as you wish to be done	3
Best Practices on When to Enter Time	4
Can anyone serve as a volunteer for UF?	5
Ten Ways to Have a Better Conversation	6
Northeast IDEA Talks & the Evolution of Statewide Extension Webinar Series 2022	7
Let's Meet Some Staff: In Our District	7
Bradford 4-H Youth are Street S.M.A.R.T.	8
You're Bringing WHAT Home for School?	8
Growing Environmental Stewards: Citrus County 4-H Council	9
Let's Meet Some Agents: In Our District	10
Dr. Scott Angle Visits Taylor County	11



Janet's Jamaican Cuisine...continued from previous page

Allen did what UF/IFAS Extension does every day in every Florida county—assemble and share evidence-based information. Cason Gross, a third-generation restaurateur known as “Ms. Marion,” had used outdated library books to study. Allen knew exactly what Food and Drug Administration Food Code information Ms. Marion needed and invited her to the Extension office in downtown Live Oak.

Ms. Marion doubted herself, but Allen convinced her that passing the exam was a matter of putting in the hours of preparation. Ms. Marion heeded the advice. She made her own food safety flash cards and had her mother quiz her as they drove to doctor's appointments.

On exam day, Ms. Marion had the jitters. Allen gave her a small gift. The keychain had a miniature dinner plate on it. It reminded Ms. Marion not only why she needed to pass but that someone cared that she passed the test.

A few days later, Allen called Ms. Marion with her passing score. They both shouted out loud. The restaurant would stay open.

That meant continued employment for Kerri Hart, who worked the takeout window. She lived with her mother Janet Myers in Live Oak. Janet is a talented cook, and the oxtail and curry chicken on the Ms. D's menu came from her kitchen.

Ms. Marion announced her retirement last year and her intention to sell. Kerri had an idea to keep it in Ms. D's family and to reunite her own.

Kerri's father Steve Myers worked as a waiter at Disney World. It was good enough money that it had for 24 years kept him and Janet from taking the risk of opening their own Jamaican restaurant. There were already so many in Orlando. They had seen friends' dreams dashed by failed restaurants. Certainly, the middle of a pandemic was no time to launch a restaurant.

Ms. D's didn't have the sparkle of Disney, nor the tourist traffic. But they could rent instead of buying, they wouldn't have to invest in kitchen equipment, and no one else they knew of had a Jamaican restaurant in Suwannee County.

Steve quit waiting tables and moved back home, Janet moved out of her kitchen and into Ms. D's, and Kerri kept working the takeout window. Janet's Jamaican Cuisine was born. Business is good enough that in the fall they hope to expand with outdoor dining and hire people—creating jobs—to wait on customers. Allen is now preparing Janet for the food safety exam.

Beyond creating jobs and buying local, a successful restaurant also gives its owner the capacity to support local charities or to simply express appreciation. Ms. Marion sent Allen a \$20 bill. Tips, after all, are part of the restaurant economy.

Allen doesn't work for tips. She works for taxpayers. She returned the gift.

For all the good that UF/IFAS Extension and public science do for a local economy, there's some money that should never change hands.



Cherry Lake Summer Day Camp

"This image/footage was taken prior to national guidelines of face coverings and physical distancing."

Have you ever walked in somewhere and the smell brought back wonderful memories? For a Taylor County 4-H

counselor, walking into the dining hall at 4-H Camp Cherry Lake this summer reminded him of lots of great memories of his time at 4-H camp. The thought of how much youth need these types of experiences even during a pandemic, made the efforts of Madison, Lafayette and Taylor County agents that much more essential.

Due to COVID restrictions, local 4-H Extension agents could not provide a residential camp experience for their youth. Therefore, agents from the tri-county area worked together to provide a similar residential experience without sleeping over. More than 65 lucky youth and staff attended Camp Cherry Lake Summer Day Camp in June. While

Covid-19 guidelines and modified programs were necessary, the fundamental essences of camp remained intact. Kids enjoyed playing and learning together, mentored by camp counselors and staff. According to the campers, parents and staff at the camp it was by far their most meaningful camp experience ever. Youth were able to have in person connection that had been absent for most of the previous year. During the pandemic, zoom and remote learning allowed 4-H to continue meetings and programming while social distancing. Making and strengthening relationships while being guided by caring adults is what 4-H camp is all about.

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Cherry Lake Summer Day Camp...continued from previous page



This camp provided an opportunity for youth to reacquaint with nature. While society has been trapped indoors, whether in a classroom or at home, most of the world is outside and it is amazing. Youth were taught how to connect with nature through hands-on experiences. They learned how to operate a kayak and for some this was a first. Resiliency –our kids are certainly developing it; experiencing disappointments that will make them stronger. Learning to be brave and step out and learn a new skill can be scary for some, but kids need to grow up with the kind

of courage and “can do” attitude that our firefighters, military, and many more have learned to cultivate.

Summer day camps are widely known for their physical health benefits, according to the CDC, “Children’s mental health during a public health emergency can have both short- and long-term consequences to their overall health and wellbeing.” Kids needed the social interaction that this face-to-face day camp provided. Youth traveled daily to 4-H Camp Cherry Lake. Each day youth were taught a variety of life

skills. Youth enjoyed learning in the great outdoors where they participated in kayaking, fishing, seining, archery, air rifle, vermi-composting, nutrition, yoga, food science, crafts, line dancing and singing camp songs. The most popular, next to jumping off the top deck of the pontoon boat was playing a game of paint war with marshmallows dipped in a bucket of tempera paint. Next time you visit a place, remember to breathe in the wonderful memories that cultivated from that space as the camp counselor did when returning to Camp Cherry Lake.

From the DISTRICT DIRECTOR



Eric Simonne
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Do unto others as you wish to be done

As members of a complex organization like UF/IFAS Extension, we are all supervisors and supervisees. Supervision is a slowly acquired skill. Do we

sometimes practice behaviors that we do not like from our own bosses? Here are some examples of behaviors that some bosses exhibit.

- **Make everyone run on their schedule.** This is a bad practice that sends the message that employees’ time is not valuable. A modified manifestation of this is repeated, last-minute rescheduling or cancellations. Don’t do it!
- **Refuse to give feedback.** Well, employees are not mind readers and want to better themselves. Why not use the effective tool of feedback?

- **Spend time on less important things so that they can ignore more important things.** Fantastic strategy to procrastinate without looking like it.
- **Involve themselves in every decision.** Humm...there is a word for this: micromanager. Could become nanomanager in extreme cases.
- **Delegate autonomy, but they don’t really mean it.** Another expression of the micro, nano, or pico management styles.

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Do unto others as you wish to be done...continued from previous page

- **Have responsibility without authority.** Uncommon in the corporate world, this is common in Extension. We have to use arguments other than supervision to rally our colleagues to ideas and tasks.
- **Don't learn new skills or improve existing ones.** We are educators. If we do not learn anything new, we just repeat the same old stuff.
- **Be inconsistent and unpredictable.** This leaves me speechless!
- **Play favorites with team members and make it obvious.** Yes! I do it all the time: my favorite agent is _____ (insert your name here!).
- **Evaluate employees on goals they have never seen before.** This reads like a cardinal sin of employee management. Luckily, all Extension agents "plan, deliver, evaluate and report". No surprises here!
- **Criticize people in front of their coworkers.** Unless you enjoy it when your boss does it to you, don't do it! (even so, don't do it!)
- **Send subtle messages to employees that their role is not a good fit for them** (like giving them job descriptions). This happened once in the district. A supervisor started giving an employee several job postings only one week after starting. How can we make such a "wrong" hire? We need to try harder on on-boarding and welcoming new employees!
- **Treat people the same, regardless of experience.** "Fairness"(treat everyone the same) has several unintended consequences. Treating everyone "the same" ignores personality, styles, experience, and preferences. Employees are series of ONE individual and should be handled as such.
- **Refuse to learn anything about their employees' leadership and working styles.** Florida Extension does a good job at allowing employees to be themselves, know themselves, and read others. Strength in diversity!
- **Taking credit for employee's work.** Seriously? Academia has a name for this: plagiarism. Another cardinal sin.
- **Leading and managing by intimidation.** This has happened in the past and these employees are no longer in Florida Extension. Threat, blackmail, or intimidation are not among UF values.
- **Become defensive at the slightest constructive feedback.** Feedback should go both ways – from supervisor to employee and employee to supervisor. We are in 2021! Listen to your people!

- **Double talking or not owning their decisions.** This responsibility comes with the job. Supervisors need to identify a problem, look at options, assess them, and make a decision. If they have a method and a set of constant principles and values, it will be easy to explain their decisions later and be predictable. After all, the worse decision... is the failure to make a decision.
- **Displaying incompetence.** "The secrecy of my job is such that I do not know what I am doing." Humm.... time for a career change?
- **Multi-task while interacting with others.** This shows they are not in the moment and that those they are with are not important. Their family members don't like it, their co-workers don't like it either.

That's a lot of things to worry about to be a good supervisor and employee. I am sure you can add to this list. Oh! By the way, I don't do any of these myself. As I did not mean to self-incriminate, I'll invoke the fifth here!

IVONNE'S Minute



Ivonne L. Black
UF/IFAS Extension
Northeast District
Administrative
Specialist II

I may sound like a broken record, however, in some counties, there are new agents. We are going to go over some best practices on when to enter time. I know that there are some CEDs that have a calendar reminder on the Friday before Time Approval Week to remind their agents and staff to enter any time that needs to be approved.

One best practice is to remind agents and staff to only enter time on Mondays and Tuesdays of any week, and to project their time expected for the remainder of the week. The reason is that we don't want them to enter time on Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday on Time Approval Week, with the CEDs not aware of additional time to be approved

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Best Practices on When to Enter Time

Best Practices on When to Enter Time...continued from previous page

after their initial approvals on Wednesdays. We are having people entering time on the Friday of Time Approval week and it's 9:50 am and we are only having 10 minutes to approve, and we don't know what is going on. Then it turns into that person may not get a full paycheck if we don't see it in time and get it approved. Sometimes Payroll Services pushes last minute timesheet changes through, and sometimes they don't.

Since agents and staff have entered their time by Tuesday (projected through Thursday) and all their time is ready to be approved, the next best practice is for CEDs to approve time on Wednesday. The reason is that this helps to have the preliminary payroll listing clean. This gives Becky, our HR liaison, and me time on Thursday to check for any errors, and the errors stand out more clearly, so that Friday morning we are not running after another.

Another best practice is to pay close attention around holidays, since sometimes the approval weeks may be shorter. Also, if you alter your time and there is a holiday on that week, you will have to manually enter holiday (HOL) pay for that day. I have personally uploaded all of UF's holidays onto my calendar to remind me that if I have taken sick or annual leave around a holiday, I have to enter the holiday as well.

How Does the UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA Work?



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Can anyone serve as a volunteer for UF?

(Spoiler alert: No!)

Adults and youths volunteer in many Florida Extension programs - including county councils, leadership projects, 4-H club leaders, 4-H judges, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, Master Food volunteers, Water Stewards or Tree Stewards - just to name a few. We love our 20,000-some volunteers as they allow Extension programs a greater reach into Florida communities. Beyond the "RTR" (Recruit, Train, Retain) or "ISOTURE" (Identification, Selection, Orientation, Training, Utilization, Recognition, Evaluation) models, how does an Extension agent know to accept or not a volunteer application?

UF regulations chapter 6, 3.0031 - Volunteers defines volunteers in (1) Purpose and definition, (2) Responsibilities of Schools Colleges

and subdivisions, (3) Screening, Acceptance and Benefits, (4) Training, Utilization and Supervision, and (5) Responsibilities of Volunteers -- Termination (regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/30031.pdf).

UF has developed additional policies for volunteers at UF. They can be found at hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/volunteer-coordination. Noticeably, a Volunteer Policy hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/volunteer-policy.pdf is now in place to provide guidance on the engagement of volunteers. This policy also helps to clarify who is and who is not considered a volunteer. Briefly, this document outlines "2.1 Persons Not Considered University of Florida Volunteers" and "4.11 Limitations" including those pertaining to family members and foreign nationals seeking to serve as volunteers. The appointment of relatives or persons living in the same household to any position where a direct or indirect supervisory relationship would exist between relatives or would create a perceived or actual conflict of interest, is prohibited. Foreign nationals may only volunteer if they have a current and valid work authorization in the US. The government views volunteer work as "unpaid work" thereby needing the granted gov't authorization. Examples of Work

Authorizations are (1) Current DS-2019 (J1 visa holders), (2) Employment Authorization Card (EAD) or work permit, (3) Approved employer sponsored visa (including H1B, O1, TN, E3), or (4) Permanent Residency (green card).

Volunteers spending time with youth are subject to additional regulations not covered in the general regulations and policies cited above. These can be found at the UF Compliance Youth Requirement page (youth.compliance.ufl.edu/protection-requirements) and of course in the 4-H website (florida4h.ifas.ufl.edu/get-involved). Potential 4-H volunteers should choose a volunteer role and complete a Volunteer Application through 4HOnline - which includes background screening. The volunteer application includes agreeing with the statement: "As a University of Florida IFAS 4-H volunteer, I agree to abide by all applicable rules and regulations of the University of Florida and guidelines of the UF\IFAS Florida 4-H Youth Development program and to fulfill the volunteer responsibilities to the best of my ability. I understand that I will receive no monetary benefits in return for the volunteer service I provide and that the University of Florida may terminate this agreement at any time without prior notice."

PROFESSIONAL Development



Katie Jones

UF/IFAS Extension
Suwannee County
4-H Agent

Ten Ways to Have a Better Conversation

TED Talk by Celeste Headlee

We are living in a disconnected world. More of our communication than ever is taking place through digital platforms and we are losing so much meaning in the process. Students are more likely to text than talk to their peers. Civility is non-existent on social media platforms as individuals share their own personal opinions or feel the need to respond to everything they see. I can remember being told as a child not to talk about politics and religion, but today the list of things that we aren't supposed to talk about includes even the formerly safe topics of the weather and health.

As a social studies teacher, my students and I covered hard topics that made for uncomfortable conversations. Diverse viewpoints and cultural differences meant that we had to create ground rules for how to have a productive conversation. I wish that I had found Celeste Headlee's TED talk entitled "10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation" (10 ways to have a better conversation | Celeste Headlee - YouTube) back then. And today, in such an emotionally charged environment, I thought we could use a refresher on conversational competence.

Headlee, a PBS radio host and professional opera singer, shared 10 tips for interviewing people that she has used in her career as a journalist to train herself to be a better conversationalist.

TED RADIO HOUR

- 1. Don't Multitask.** It doesn't matter if it's an electronic device or other things around you, if you want to be a good conversationalist, be present. Give your full attention to the person you're with.
- 2. Don't Pontificate.** If we want to be a good conversationalist, we need to assume that everyone we meet has something to teach us. For those who want to share their opinions without being challenged, may need to go write a blog.
- 3. Use Open Ended Questions.** Complicated, closed ended questions produce short, simple responses. Go back to the Who, What, Where, When Why and How questions that allow the speaker to share their experiences. The questions you ask will have a direct result on the quality of the responses you get.
- 4. Go with the Flow.** Too often we get sidetracked by questions or thoughts that enter our mind and we fixate on those instead of focusing on what the speaker is saying. Instead, let the thought go and if it's worthy, it will find its way back into the conversation in the future.
- 5. If you don't know, say you don't know.** Better to err on the side of caution than make claims that can later damage your credibility. (This is especially important in our role as extension educators.)
- 6. Don't equate your experience with theirs.** All experiences are individual and it's not all about you. Too often we are taught to try to empathize, but sometimes it's just better to let the other person's experiences speak for themselves.
- 7. Try not to repeat yourself.** It's condescending, and boring, and unfortunately, we tend to do it a lot. Repeating the argument doesn't make it more effective.
- 8. Stay out of the weeds.** In a conversation, the details are not the priority. Don't get so caught up in the correct dates and times that you forget the person is the most important part of the conversation.
- 9. LISTEN.** This is probably the most important point made, yet the one that we have the hardest time implementing. This might be because when we are the one talking, we feel in control. It might also be because listening takes effort and we have become a society that is very easily distracted. Perhaps we need to practice Steven Covey's advice and try to listen with the intent to understand, instead of with the intent to respond.
- 10. Be brief.** "Good conversations should be like miniskirts- short enough to retain interest, but long enough to cover the subject."

Maybe you're like me, and think these tips seem like common sense, but studies show that the soft skill of conversational competence has been neglected and the harsh, abrasive climate of



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Ten Ways to Have a Better Conversation...continued from previous page

social media is proof of this failure. I want to be a better conversationalist, so I'll be practicing these ideas for myself in the future!

I'll leave you with a paraphrase of her final thoughts, "If we truly want to be good conversationalists, we need to be genuinely interested in people, keep our

mouths closed and our minds open. If we do that, we're sure to be amazed!"

Northeast District IDEA



Ashley Johnston

UF/IFAS Extension
Duval County
Family and
Consumer
Sciences Agent

Northeast IDEA Talks & the Evolution of Statewide Extension Webinar Series 2022

You've probably heard about IDEA Talks either in past newsletters, or maybe you even had the opportunity to participate in one of our webinars. As a refresher (or introduction to anyone unfamiliar): IDEA Talks focuses on subject matter surrounding inclusion, diversity, equity, access, and more. Roughly each

month, a different topic is discussed in a webinar format. Our next webinar is scheduled for Thursday, September 19, at 10 a.m. on Zoom. We'll explore mindfulness and include self-reflection tools as well - you won't want to miss this one, so make sure to keep an eye on your inbox! Your IDEA committee is dedicated to sharing interesting and useful material to help you grow professionally and personally. If you'd like to know more about IDEA Talks in our district, drop D'Alicia Straughter a line at dalicia1203@ufl.edu.

With that in mind, another noteworthy update: Because our Northeast IDEA Talks were so widely popular, the need to build upon this model was identified by District Extension Directors throughout the state. As a result, the Statewide Extension Webinar Series

Planning Committee has evolved! The committee is comprised of two representatives from each district, reflecting different backgrounds and disciplines throughout the state. Our district representatives are Ashley Johnston (FCS-Duval) and Tyler Pittman (AG-Gilchrist). We are excited to expand the IDEA scope statewide. Webinars will include a variety of IDEA topics and beyond, to keep the material beneficial, fresh, and captivating. The series is slated to begin in January 2022, and the schedule of webinar speakers and themes will be set before the end of the year, so stay tuned! If you have questions, suggestions, or know someone (including yourself!) who is interested in being a guest speaker, please reach out to Ashley (johnstona@ufl.edu) or Tyler (pittmanhl@ufl.edu).

Let's Meet Some Staff: IN OUR DISTRICT



Kimberly Glasscock

Staff Assistant
UF/IFAS Extension
Suwannee County

Kimberly Glasscock began providing excellent customer service at

the Suwannee County Extension office four years ago. She grew up in St. Cloud, Florida and watched her small town grow into a bustling city. After her three children (two daughters and a son) grew up, Kimberly was anxious to get back to the small-town way of life, so she moved to Live Oak.

She began her career at the Extension office working with the FCS and FNP programs. Personnel changes allowed her to change program support to 4-H and Ag. During Covid, she began working with the Horticulture Agent to fill the void left by Master Gardener volunteers who were no longer able to volunteer at the small greenhouse area. Kimberly's self-professed black thumb evolved to olive green and is now a healthy 4-H green. The hands-on learning in the greenhouse and at the demonstration gardens at Heritage Park helped her realize that she likes working with plants and gardening. She took her newfound plant knowledge and

taught a 4-H Gardening SPIN Club for six weeks in the fall and a second time in the Spring. Kimberly also learned about micro-irrigation systems and helped teach the new Master Gardener participants how to utilize the water conservation system. Additionally, her involvement in the Embryology School Enrichment Program rubbed off on her, she is now the proud mama to 18 chickens!

Kimberly loves helping people, learning opportunities, completing task lists, and the ever-changing work of "Extension Life". When not at work, she loves spending time with family, working in the yard and watching football.

SUCCESS Stories



Samara Purvis

UF/IFAS Extension
Bradford County
CED/4-H Agent

Bradford 4-H Youth are Street S.M.A.R.T.

Bradford County has an elevated level of youth emergency room visits, according to the 2020 Bradford Community Health Needs this is three times higher than the Florida average. One of the biggest factors affecting this increase is the limited access to human services programs that could provide support due to lack of care providers, socio-economic conditions and the social stigma related to mental health. Bradford County's youth would receive help from a program that focuses on mindfulness and healthy living.

Self-care focuses on enhancing one's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health as part of a balanced health and wellness regiment.

Street S.M.A.R.T.S., which stands for Safety, Mindful, Acceptance and Resilience Team, is a youth program focused on teaching mindfulness to participants and how to incorporate this practice into their lives. Mindful practices have been shown to reduce stress and anxiety, help youth feel more connected and help youth focus and make better decisions. This youth centered approach used hands on activities such as crafts, cooking as well as group activities to explore various techniques. Through this 4-H program health is emphasized by teaching youth life skills related to character, self-esteem managing feelings and healthy lifestyle choices.

Through the Street S.M.A.R.T.S. Program, 100% of participants increased their knowledge of how to

apply mindful practices and healthy living such as Yoga, quiet listening, and mood management. 90% indicated feeling more confident in dealing with stressful emotions and situations. 100% of youth participants used positive affirmations to combat negative thoughts throughout the workshop.

In today's climate, our youth face many environmental challenges whether it is at home, school or in their communities. Street S.M.A.R.T.S was a collaborative effort between Bradford County Extension, Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, and the Local National Guard. By establishing this partnership, the 4-H agent was able to provide a positive program experience for Bradford County's youth. Youth were eager to share their experiences with techniques learned and how they incorporated those techniques from day to day.



Jessica Altum

UF/IFAS Extension
Gilchrist County
4-H Agent

You're Bringing WHAT Home for School?

In spring of 2021, public school teacher, Chandra Collier, emailed UF/IFAS Extension Duval County 4-H Agent, Grace Carter. Duval County was piloting a new 4-H butterfly school enrichment program. Collier wanted to pilot the project with her students, but there was one challenge. Collier's students were 100% remote. Keeping virtual students excited about learning and interested in

school projects was a struggle. Remote students didn't feel part of the school community, and Collier was looking for a way to change that.

Carter and Collier began brainstorming ways to make the project happen. When the project start date arrived, 27 of Collier's students were waiting in the school's "homework pick-up line." In addition to folders with their usual homework, students each received two small cups containing caterpillars and caterpillar food. Instead of a large butterfly enclosure, Carter and Collier modified the program kits. Each youth received a large, plastic food container with holes punched in the lid. Students would tape their specimens inside after the caterpillars molted into chrysalises. Butterflies would then emerge, and students could observe them.

Students were excited, but parents were understandably hesitant. Would the children care for their larva? Would there be caterpillar escapees at home?

The experiment was a success. Collier reported her students were engaged and excited to learn. She stated, "Students were teaching their parents and having discussions at home about the process. Most importantly, my virtual students felt as included and involved as if they were in the school building." The parent of one student shared, "The lifecycle of the butterfly was amazing! Gabrielle really enjoyed watching it... Gabby would check on her butterflies every day (sometimes more than once a day). To pull this off in a school setting is great, but to do this in a virtual environment is totally awesome!"

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You're Bringing WHAT Home for School?...continued from previous page

This spring 482 youth from eight schools and community centers took part in the pilot program. Observation forms indicated students increased their ability to:

- Recognize and compare life cycles in animals
- Keep records that describe observations made



Marnie Ward
UF/IFAS Extension
Citrus County
4-H Agent

Growing Environmental Stewards: Citrus County 4-H Council

Water, soil, trees, and clean air are shared natural resources passed on to future generations. This is the message from youth leaders of the Citrus County 4-H Council to their community. Council officers and members chose to promote and preserve Florida's natural resources with service-learning projects this year.

Composed of youth, eight to eighteen years old, the Council represents 4-H members across the county. These youth leaders take active roles in learning and serving to educate their

- Relate Science to real life experiences
- Verbalize concern for living things

Becoming Butterflies: A 4-H Metamorphosis Project is about to begin for the new school year. Collier has already signed her class up for this

peers and the public as they build better communities. As they engage government officials and businesspeople, they actively participate in the decision-making process, advancing group goals, coordinating schedules, and developing civic responsibility. By asking questions they learn, by acting, they make a difference.

Earlier this year, County Council members were able to complete a service project they began in 2019. The project was a partnership with the Inverness Lion's club, to collect plastic caps and lids, and Green Tree Plastics, LLC in Evansville, Indiana. The 4-H members learned to identify, separate, and teach others about plastics. The caps and lids were then recycled and processed. The product, a 6-foot bench, was produced by Green Tree Plastics. Council members chose to place the bench at the Citrus County Fairgrounds as a donation to the community. Fairgoers and 4-H members can now use the bench, while sharing the benefits of recycling and reuse.

year's session, and she's recruited all the teachers in her grade level to join her!

If you're interested in bringing a butterfly school enrichment program to your county, reach out to the Duval County 4-H Team.

Last fall, the 4-H Council met in accordance with University of Florida (UF) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines to plan activities. Members set a goal to plant native trees in Citrus County. Youth teams scheduled meetings with community leaders to discuss ideas and learn about local needs. One team met with the Mayor Joe Meek of Crystal River, while another met with Hal Porter, Fair Manager. Using what they had learned about Florida Friendly Landscaping (<https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu>), teams selected native trees, suited for the soil and sunlight conditions of the areas, and requiring low maintenance. Ray Pateracki, GreenEarth Wholesale Nursery provided the teams with hands-on lessons for proper tree planting. They practiced the skills to prepare a hole for a tree at the correct depth/diameter, transport potted trees, back filling around the roots, watering, and post planting care.

Let's Meet Some Agents: IN OUR DISTRICT



Heather Janney

UF/IFAS Extension
Columbia County
CED/4-H Agent

their time working for 4-H in Virginia and made an agreement with each other that they wouldn't both be 4-H Agents at the same time so that they could always support each other in their county roles. Now that Derby has moved from the county level to the state office, Mary Lee is excited to get back into the agent role and to be able to continue serving 4-H'ers in Alachua County where she has already been lucky enough to form great relationships with volunteers, parents, youth, and other stakeholders in the program over the past 3.5 years.



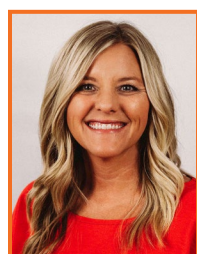
Mary Lee Sale

4-H Youth
Development
Agent II
UF/IFAS Extension
Alachua County

Mary Lee grew up in the Marion

County 4-H program showing dogs and pigs and participating in public speaking and creative arts projects. She attended the University of Florida and interned in the Marion County 4-H office while earning her degree in Family, Youth, & Community Sciences. After graduation, she moved to Virginia to become a 4-H Extension Agent in Mathews County while earning her master's in FYCS from UF in the distance learning program. While in Virginia, she helped develop a program to teach 4-H club members about camp and 4-H camp participants about club membership in order to help bridge the gap that she saw within her district. After four years of serving as a 4-H Extension Agent, she decided to start working towards her PhD in Youth Development & Family Science and briefly mentored the UF Collegiate 4-H Club but quickly realized that she missed the practitioner role and wanted to get back out into a county 4-H role. Since 2018, she has served in the Alachua County Extension Office as the 4-H Program Coordinator.

You may recognize Mary Lee's husband, Derby, as the State 4-H Citizenship/Leadership Coordinator. Mary Lee and Derby met through



Emily Beach

Agriculture and
Natural Resources
Agent II
UF/IFAS Extension
Lafayette County

I graduated from UF with a de-

gree in Agricultural Education and Communications in 2004 and went to work for one year in Clay County as a Agricultural Educator and FFA Advisor then moved back to Mayo the following year for the same position at Lafayette High School. During that time, I got my Masters degree in Educational Leadership from FSA. After 5 years of that, I moved into the Biology and Environmental Science classroom where I stayed for the next 11 years.

I grew up in Lafayette County on a dairy farm, so agriculture has always been very important to me and promoting it became a passion early on. I am very happy to be back involved in agriculture and am excited to help producers, consumers, and the youth in our community! I hope to continue to increase knowledge of agriculture and natural resources through programs of interest in our area as well as introduce innovating techniques and ideas to help our community.

I am married to Ehrin Beach, and we have three daughters who are all very involved in school and community events.



Peyton Beattie

Community
Resource
Development
Agent I
UF/IFAS Extension
Clay County

Peyton is originally from Houma, Louisiana - a town 45 minutes southwest of New Orleans. She grew up in 4-H and was an active member at both the parish and state levels. She went on to pursue her bachelor's degree in agricultural and extension education and evaluation at Louisiana State University. When in college, Peyton remained involved in Extension as she worked for the Louisiana State 4-H office, the LSU AgCenter Beef Unit, and served as an intern for the Iberville Parish 4-H program for two summers throughout her time there. She moved to Florida shortly after to begin graduate school at the University of Florida where she earned her master's and doctoral degrees in agricultural education and communication. Extension has been a major and influential part of Peyton's life. As such, she chose to pursue an Extension career after graduate school. She is excited about the work that she gets to do in Clay County contributing to the land-grant mission and serving and making an impact in the community. As a community resource development agent in Clay County, Peyton looks forward to continuing the county leadership program and developing new youth and adult programs that will build capacity and foster a healthy and vibrant county. In her free time, Peyton enjoys using her creative energy to do some graphic design projects or little projects around the house.

continued on next page

Let's Meet Some Agents: In Our District...continued from previous page



Ashley Johnston
Family and
Consumer Sciences
Agent II
UF/IFAS Extension
Duval County

I am the new Life
Skills and Wellness

Digital Media Influencer, based in Duval County. I'm not a stranger to Extension though; I previously managed the Family Nutrition Program in Duval and Nassau Counties from 2017-2021, before joining the agent family this past June. As for my professional background, I have also been teaching as an adjunct at the University of North Florida (my alma mater) since 2014, where I earned both my bachelor and master degrees.

A native Floridian, I was born in Palatka and raised in the tiny town of Interlachen, where much of my family still resides. I moved to Jacksonville in the fall of 2004 to attend college and earned a Bachelor of Arts in English. After taking a couple years off, and honing my passion for health, education, and prevention – I truly believe everyone should have THE RIGHT to be healthy – I decided to attend graduate school and earned a Master of Public Health degree in 2013.

Following graduation, I worked at the American Cancer Society, as well

as an Ascension population health company, while concurrently teaching at UNF's Brooks College of Health. Then in 2017, I landed a position as an Extension Program Manager for the Family Nutrition Program, which was my dream job at the time – reducing barriers, health education, disease prevention, and leadership in my community all sounded like a match made in heaven to me. I enjoyed my time working with FNP, and I consider myself lucky to still be able to work with and talk with my former team. I've always referred to UF/IFAS Extension as my "forever home," so when I heard about the opportunity for my current role, I knew it was time to grow!

Though this Influencer role is largely uncharted in Extension, since it's brand new, and the only of its kind (at least in Florida), I viewed this as both a substantial challenge as well as an opportunity that I wanted to take on. That said, I jokingly refer to myself as both the litmus and guinea pig -- I'm currently still riding the learning curve and gaining as much knowledge and training as I can. I plan on putting my background in public health, program planning/implementation/evaluation, online education, and even social media marketing to good use in this role. All while consulting all the experts available to me (that's YOU, my fellow agents!). My programs will likely focus

on topics I am passionate and experienced in, centering on healthy eating, exercise, mental wellbeing/mindfulness, and weight loss (something I have experienced firsthand, and am especially interested in), all in a digital platform. My ultimate goal is not only to use science to combat the *mis-* and even *disinformation* that has been running rampant throughout social media (which seems to have grown exponentially throughout the pandemic), but also to make science more trendy than all the popular, but false information floating around. With that, my role is the same as a traditional agent, but my delivery and approach is all digital. Thus far, I have created several social media channels and platforms, and yes, even a TikTok account, so stay tuned!

As for my life outside of work, I love spending time with my family, and my 6-year-old boy (Benjamin), and pug/beagle mix (Emma) certainly keep me on my toes! I'm also an avid F45 junkie, and I appreciate nature-related activities (hiking, kayaking, swimming, etc.), traveling, cooking, and I LOVE food.

Although I have shifted from my previous role as a manager, I have kept with my open-door policy; I love to collaborate, so please don't hesitate to shoot me an email to connect or chat (food pics are always welcome in my inbox too).

Dr. Scott Angle Visits Taylor County

Dr. Angle made a stop at the Pine Tree Capital of the south, Perry, FL, at the Taylor County Extension Service.

The agents shared about extension programming in the county and treated Dr. Angle to world famous Johnson's bakery donuts.



Pictured left to right: Dr. Angle, Lisa Strange (Ag & Natural Resources Agent II), Lori Wiggins (County Extension Agent IV), Victor Blanco (Marine & Natural Resources Agent II), not pictured 4-H Agent II, Abbey Tharpe.

Keeping YOU INFORMED

Covid-19 Resources

- UF Health Screen, Test & Protect Vaccination Information: coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability
- UF Health Screen, Test & Protect Testing Information: coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test-protect-2/how/screen/#locations
- UF Health Screen, Test & Protect: coronavirus.UFHealth.org
- UF COVID-19 Information: Coronavirus.ufl.edu

Hurricane Preparedness

Homeowner's Handbook for Florida

- [Homeowner's Handbook updated to prepare Florida residents for disasters](#) - Blog post by Tory Moore in September 2020 introducing new edition of Handbook.
- [Homeowner's Handbook available for download](#) - This link provides an electronic copy of the handbook available for download. Link can be shared.

EDEN Resources

- [FL EDEN Resource Page](#) - Collection of FL EDEN Resources including templates, fact sheets, and the FL EDEN Readiness Video Series.
- [EDEN Resource Database](#) - Great searchable database of resources from other universities on a variety of different topics.

State Resources

- [Hurricane Preparation and Recovery Guides for Florida Producers | USDA Climate Hubs](#) - Excellent resource for preparation and recovery guides for producers. Guides available for many different products.
- [Florida Public Radio Emergency Network](#) - A collective of 13 public radio stations that stay on-air during times of crisis to broadcast real-time updates from EOC in Tallahassee.
- [Floridadisaster.org](#) - Great website from the FL State Emergency Response Team (SERT). Website includes planning resources, weather resources, and the ability to sign-up for text alerts from the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

- floridastorms.org - Great website from the FL Division of Emergency Management. Website includes storm tracker, know your zone, and alerts.

National Resources

- [National Hurricane Center](#) - NOAA website providing latest storm updates and predictions. Updates are provided every 3 hours beginning at 8 a.m.
- [Ready.gov Hurricanes](#) - Ready.gov is a great site with lots of wonderful resources. Page linked here is specifically for hurricanes, but there are many other disasters and emergencies covered.
- [FEMA Hurricane Planning & Response](#) - National Hurricane Program (NHP) provides data, resources and technical assistance for hurricane planning and response.

For past Northeast News issues, visit:
EXTADMIN.IFAS.UFL.EDU/COMMUNICATIONS/NENEWS

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