

# Comings & Goings

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN FOR EXTENSION

## Reaching Out with Science



Walton County 4-H Agent Suzanne Wilson helps a 4-H youth test her robot during the Tech Wizards afterschool program.

Through a grant from the Dept. of Juvenile Justice, 4-H agents in Escambia and Walton counties have established after-school programs to help youth learn science and technology skills. The program is called “Tech Wizards” and was originally developed by Oregon Cooperative Extension.

The program targets youth in an underprivileged socioeconomic status, or those that have risk factors like school truancy or low academic

performance. The program utilizes a 4-H science and technology curriculum, such as robotics or geospatial science, to teach youth science through experiments and inquiry-based learning.

Although Florida’s program is less than 1 year old, initial evaluation results show a decrease in school truancy and an increase in academic performance. Both sites have been granted another year of funding with a third site being added in Duval County.

For more information about this program, please contact Dr. Bryan Terry at [terrys1@ufl.edu](mailto:terrys1@ufl.edu)

## February 2012

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## UF/IFAS Award for Excellence in Internationalizing Extension



Norma Samuel agrees that U.S. Extension needs to develop a human capacity that can understand and address global issues while acquiring an international perspective. For her, Extension should help clientele prepare for life in an interdependent world. A network for information sharing to tackle common issues and clientele more informed of global issues are just two of the benefits of internationalizing extension programs.

Norma Samuel's interest in international Extension work spawned from her participation in the Internationalizing Extension In-service training offered by UF/IFAS Extension in 2006-07. Her first international project (Jan 2008) was developing a training program on starting and maintaining 4-H Clubs in Antigua and Barbuda in her capacity as a 4-H Agent. In 2009, Samuel led a team of extension faculty members that developed a Pesticide Certification Training Program for Antigua and Barbuda modeled after the Florida program. Samuel worked with another team of faculty members to develop a 4-H Program for the Bahamas.

Samuel has gained leadership experience on an international level and increased her ability to work with diverse audiences.

*E-mail announcement on 01/18/2012 regarding the UF/IFAS International Awards for 2011:*

*"Awardees were recognized for their outstanding international efforts during the UF/IFAS Administrative Council meeting held on Thursday morning (12 Jan) at the new Straughn Extension Development Center." -SVP Jack Payne*

## Instant Impacts from 4-H Camping Experience



Each year a select group of Senior 4-Hers from the Baker, Madison, and Nassau County Camp Cherry Lake camping cluster serve as Camp Counselors and Camp Counselors In Training (CITs). These young people guide the younger camp participants throughout the week and serve as their mentors. Not only does this mold the younger ones into exemplary citizens through peer-to-peer learning, but it also provides leadership experiences for the older youths.

Within hours of returning, parents of both counselors and campers commented on the difference in their child's thinking and behavior, and how much they had matured in just 1 short week.

This year, 2 hours after returning from camp, the Madison County kids were safely dispersed back to their home and this outgoing agent began catching up on emails. The very first email was from a parent of one of this year's camp counselors with a subject reading "THANK YOU SO MUCH!" So of course I perked up and immediately began reading the message that followed: "I picked up a different young man – I can't believe how much Ryan matured this week. Thank you so much for this year's camp experience. I think Ryan has finally "GOT IT" about 4-H...he is so excited. I just can't thank you enough for the young man I picked up today. Let me know how I can help with 4-H."

This episode reinforces the significance of the development of life skills we provide for youth through subject matter experiences and how the impact can be perceived almost instantly. So, when you're running on fumes, remember...you really are making a difference!

*Becky V. Bennett, 4-H Youth Development, Extension Agent I, Madison County*

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## 4-H Growing Green School Garden Program

In 2011, the 4-H Growing Green School Garden program was implemented in nine Seminole county public schools. Other than the 4-H Tropicana Public Speaking program, this new 4-H school enrichment program has been the only one to be widely accepted by Seminole county schools since 4-H began in the county. Additionally, this program has been implemented in two community centers: Safe Harbor Center in Midway (one of the highest crime rate areas in Sanford) and the West Side Community Center. The vegetable garden at the Safe Harbor Center has been used as a tool to teach about food

production, nutrition, and environmental education with the Children, Youth and Families At Risk, (CYFAR) program. Constructing the garden taught the students about teamwork and planning as well as understanding the components of a garden planted for food production. The students have expressed their desire to implement their own gardens so they may provide for their families by showing them what they learned about growing their own food. The students are looking forward to hosting their own mini farmers market where they will learn how to market their produce and work on their entrepreneurial skills.

The West Side Community Center, in the Goldsboro community of Sanford, also received a garden through the assistance of Seminole County 4-H and the Heathrow Women's Club to create a total of five garden beds. The garden is being used as multi-generational model of learning at the center along with the 4-H afterschool program and Boys and Girls Club. The West Side Community Center affectionately refers to one of the community residents as "Grandpa." "Grandpa" has been charged with maintaining the garden and assisting the children in learning about planting and maintenance. "Grandpa" has been pleased to pass down his knowledge to the younger children who have been eager to listen.

*Bridgete McKenna, 4-H/FCS, Extension Agent I, Seminole County*

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## Recruiting Science Content-Rich Volunteers

4-H Eco-Camp is an on-going program in Washington and Holmes counties designed to teach youth about environmental science content in a field setting using science inquiry skills. 4-H Agents Natalie Bomann (Holmes County) and Julie Dillard (Washington County) created new partnerships with five agencies and recruited fifteen new science





Agent Julie Dillard helps a 4-H youth collect a water sample from a Washington County stream.

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-content rich volunteers in order to reach more than 200 youths. As a result, 90% of a group of 36 youths indicated they better understood how science plays a part in their everyday lives; 85% of this group indicated they were more interested in a career in science after attending day camps and 83% reported that they increased their knowledge or skills related to science, engineering and technology.

*For more information about this program, please contact Julie Dillard at [jpdillard@ufl.edu](mailto:jpdillard@ufl.edu)*

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## Does Financial Education Work?

Duval County social service agencies, financial institutions, governmental agencies, and educational entities (including Extension) joined together in 2002 as the Real Sense Prosperity Campaign to improve the financial wellness of Jacksonville's residents. The social marketing message "Make One Smart Move with Your Money" begins with "take a free financial class."

Extension has been a leader in providing workshops taught by Anita McKinney (FCS Agent) and UF/IFAS Extension volunteers trained by her to teach curricula developed by Extension and the

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Knowledge-gain assessments after each workshop indicated that participants are increasing their knowledge of budgeting, saving, credit use, and financial accounts. In 2010, the financial education committee developed a research project to determine if their limited-income participants were retaining key skills needed for financial health and converting knowledge to behavior. At the request of the committee, a representative from the Bank of America and Ulrich Research Services, Inc. donated the resources to compile and analyze the results of surveys conducted on the day of class and 6 months later.



Members of the Life Skills Program at Jacksonville City Rescue Mission learn about choosing and using checking and savings accounts from Anita McKinney, FCS Extension Agent in Duval county.

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The results showed participants significantly improved confidence in their ability to manage their personal finances from an average of 6.5 in the survey taken the same day to an average of 7.6 (on a 10-point scale) in the survey taken six months later. Positive changes in these key behavioral indicators lead to greater financial stability for limited-income consumers. A written budget is the most important financial behavior of good money managers. Budgeting leads to the ability to pay bills on time, which in turn helps individuals and families avoid late fees or even disconnection of services. Individuals who have checking and savings accounts are more likely to avoid predatory or higher-priced financial products. Ordering and reviewing credit reports

periodically increases the likelihood that errors will be detected. Identifying and correcting errors may adversely affect the credit standing needed for homeownership and transportation loans, as well as acquiring and maintaining a job, apartment, and financial accounts. Financial education DOES work!

Anita McKinney, FCS, Extension Agent IV, Duval County

## Increasing Climate Literacy for Florida Youth and Volunteers



4-H RSA Heather Kent helps a 4-H volunteer learn about lightening with a Van de Graaff generator.

The need for unbiased information on climate literacy increases as the public becomes more aware of climate variability. Florida 4-H is partnering with Dr. Clyde Fraisse of the UF/IFAS Agricultural and Biological Engineering Dept. and Melissa Griffin of the Dept. of Meteorology at Florida State University to develop a weather and climate literacy tool kit for 4-H volunteers that will help teach youth about weather and climate through science-based inquiry. Teams of youth and adult volunteers will be trained on how to use

the tool kit and will then deliver climate education programs in their communities. Mini grants will be available for clubs to conduct climate-based service projects. This program is funded through a USDA-NIFA grant.

For more information about this program, please contact Heather Kent at [hckent@ufl.edu](mailto:hckent@ufl.edu).

## The Sea is Rising - How are Local Governments to Adapt?

Florida Sea Grant, extension offices in Lee and Pinellas counties, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration presented workshops on legal issues confronting local governments seeking to adapt to rising sea levels. The workshops began with sea-level rise science: sea level in Florida has risen about 8 inches in the last 100 years, and sea level is predicted to rise 30 inches more by 2100.

Potential liabilities sea-level rise can create for local governments were presented. Multiple tools were highlighted for counties to adapt to sea-level rise, and the strengths and weaknesses of the possible tools were discussed. It was clear that local government efforts to adapt to sea-level rise needed to consider whether their actions amount to a “taking” of private property rights. Both the U.S. and Florida Constitutions contain prohibitions on the “taking” of private property without payment of just compensation.

In addition, Florida Statutes contain private property protections that may lead to local government liability for laws that “inordinately burden” private property. Workshop outcomes showed an increase in knowledge of the science of sea-level rise and the impacts of increasing sea level. Ninety-four percent of participants in Lee County plan to utilize knowledge gained in their work; 73% reported the same in Pinellas County.

The presentations and background information are available on Florida Sea Grant’s Coastal

Planning website at [www.flseagrant.org/coastalplanning/](http://www.flseagrant.org/coastalplanning/)

*Thomas Ruppert, Esq., Coastal Planning Specialist, Florida Sea Grant [truppert@ufl.edu](mailto:truppert@ufl.edu)*

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## Delivering Extension Using the Living Integrated Pest Management Field Lab

Florida farmers, gardeners, and landowners are today more interested than ever in learning how to implement integrated pest management (IPM) techniques on their land. UF/IFAS Extension agents have a keen interest in teaching these techniques. UF/IFAS Extension agents in the Northeast Extension District, statewide specialists, and agency cooperators have secured a 3-year, \$250,000 USDA Integrated Pest Management grant. Through this grant, agents seek to transform the 330 acre farm at the Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center in Live Oak into an educational battleground against pests.



Agent Bob Hochmuth shows a group of vegetable growers and master gardeners how to use sunflowers to attract pollinators.

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The overall goal of this project is to create a unique, hands-on, whole-farm teaching approach to IPM with specific objectives of 1) creating a

field laboratory by transforming an existing farm into a model that can be used to teach IPM principles and techniques beyond the classroom, 2) teach clientele whole farm IPM approaches, and 3) build a sustainable education infrastructure and networking capacity for future IPM information delivery.

The field laboratory includes maintenance of annual and permanent plantings that attract beneficial organisms and provide year round habitats, demonstration of strategic trap cropping systems, provision for beneficial vertebrate habitats (such as bat houses, bluebird houses, chickadee houses, and brush piles), use of banker plant systems (especially in greenhouse programs), demonstration of how to increase pollinators, and enhancement of the ecological contribution of the lake and surrounding forest.

Development of the farm's teaching areas will be completed in the spring of 2012. These areas will provide training opportunities for farmers, Master Gardeners, USDA technical service providers, and Extension agents.

*Robert Hochmuth, Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center, Extension Agent IV, Multi-County*

## Extension Responds to Law Enforcement Needs

The Livestock Education and Certification for Agricultural Law Enforcement program (LECALE) was initiated by UF-IFAS Extension faculty in partnership with Florida Farm Bureau in response to a need expressed by law enforcement personnel across Florida. Currently, Florida law enforcement personnel who desire animal science training and certification to perform their jobs better

must enroll in out-of-state courses, resulting in additional agency expense. UF/IFAS Extension has the resources to train Florida law enforcement personnel through the development of the LECAL program. During their daily routines, these law enforcement officers encounter numerous cases where judgment calls are required to determine if current Best Management Practices (BMPs) are being properly applied to advance the agricultural industry and the public at large. This training program will be tuned for Florida-specific conditions. The program will improve the skills of this clientele group and it will enable them to do their jobs more efficiently and uniformly across the state. In addition, the accompanying certification program will add to the credibility of this clientele group as they make difficult decisions in cases that may depend on their testimony in a court of law.

*Ed Jennings, Livestock/Crops, EA IV, Pasco County; Bridget Carlisle, Livestock, EA II, Polk County; Matt Hersom, Associate Professor, Animal Science*

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## South Florida Marine Extension Agents Begin Fish Recompression Field Trials

Florida Sea Grant recently funded a program development project to test a variety of new devices designed to recompress fish suffering from barotrauma. It is hoped that such practices can increase the survival of fish caught and released from deep water. A major goal of the project is to involve extension agents and anglers throughout Florida in evaluating the practicality of using these devices in Gulf and South Atlantic fisheries. Gear has been purchased and distributed to Florida Sea Grant Extension Agents and field trials have begun. So far, four field trials have been conducted by marine agents. Valuable experience has been gained in using these devices with more than 125 fish successfully released.



Betty Staugler, Charlotte County Marine Extension agent, using Rocklees fish decompression device on red grouper.

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Other agents around the state will be involved in similar activities in the upcoming months.

*John Stevely, Marine Science, EA IV, Manatee County.*

## Drawn to Charlotte County, Artist Meets Landscape

Charlotte County Extension helped identify a need and facilitated a good matching resource for our county partner. Jim Fendrick, the Community Development Department's Concurrency Manager, has been working on a special project called the "Parkside Community Redevelopment Area." This Special District has been identified for revitalization with the help of public and private partnerships to focus their energy and resources on improving this area. One item that Mr. Fendrick asked for help with was finding an artist to do landscape architectural renderings to provide conceptual illustrations of the site.

Charlotte County Extension Director Ralph Mitchell contacted Dr. Gail M. Hansen, Assistant Professor in the UF/IFAS Environmental

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Horticulture Department, who specializes in landscape design. Dr. Hansen and Mr. Fendrick have communicated and begun to explore the possibility of having one or more of Dr. Hansen's students assist as a team member in the development of streetscape drawings and thematic pocket parks – all part of multiple mini charrettes and a 10 year Park Master Plan. "Gateway" initiatives like this provide County Government with a connection to UF/IFAS Specialists with expertise in a variety of subject matter. Such a partnership expands our palette of offerings and strengthens the value Extension brings to local communities. Stay tuned for more information as this mutually beneficial arrangement takes root!

*Ralph E. Mitchell, CED, Charlotte County*

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## Getting Kids to Eat 'Trees'

Chefs across the US are answering First Lady Michele Obama's call to get involved with their local schools as part of the Chefs Move to Schools initiative, run through the USDA. Locally, two chefs have teamed-up with the Pasco Family Nutrition Program to adopt two elementary schools in Pasco. These chefs are working with teachers, parents, school nutritionists, administrators and community groups to help educate approximately 1,300 children, showing them that learning about nutrition can be fun! Students help grow their own vegetables and herbs that are included in school lunch meals in such recipes as "Cheesy Macaroni with Trees" (broccoli). Family Nutrition Program Assistants go into classrooms to teach nutrition, offering taste-treats and promoting "Harvest Week" where the students wear the color of the fruit/vegetable featured that week.

*Betsy Crisp, FCS, EA II, Pasco County*

## New Faculty

Please welcome the following new faculty:

Jonathan (Jon) Mayer ([mayerj@ufl.edu](mailto:mayerj@ufl.edu)), 4-H Youth Development EA I, Palm Beach County  
Lauren Hrnccirik ([hrrncirik@ufl.edu](mailto:hrrncirik@ufl.edu)), 4-H Youth Development, Highlands County  
Yvette Goodiel ([goodiel@ufl.edu](mailto:goodiel@ufl.edu)), Sustainability/Commerical Horticulture EA II, Martin County

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## Resignation

We would like to wish the following faculty the best of luck in their future endeavors:

Mary Shedd, Florida-Friendly Landscaping. Miami-Dade County



Hello to everyone across the state I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting. I am the new Executive Secretary here in IFAS/Extension Administration, Valkyrie Shah. I look forward to meeting and working more with all of you. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns ([valkyrieshah@ufl.edu](mailto:valkyrieshah@ufl.edu)).

Extension Comings and Goings is a monthly newsletter distributed by the Office of the Dean for Extension via e-mail and on the Extension web site at <http://extadmin.ifas.ufl.edu>.

If you have any suggestions or would like to submit your own recognition or short article of interest, please send them to Valkyrie Shah.

Please feel free to also forward any questions or comments about this periodical to Valkyrie Shah at [valkyrieshah@ufl.edu](mailto:valkyrieshah@ufl.edu).