



Comings & Goings

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN FOR EXTENSION

January/February 2016

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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.

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Meet Your Specialist



Dr. Gurreet Brar,
Assistant Professor

SWFREC, Citrus
Horticulture

gbrar@ufl.edu
239-658-3400

I came to the University of Florida from California where I worked with the Univ. of California's Cooperative Extension Division as Extension Advisor for Nut Crops/Pomology in the Central Valley of California. I did research and extension work in serving the almond, pistachio and walnut industries. My specialties are tree physiology, nursery production research, controlled environment systems, plant propagation, and horticulture. I also take a special interest in extension activities, mass media, science communication, and using photography as a tool for communicating science.

In 2012 I received my Ph.D. from the University of Florida in Horticultural Sciences. I did my research work in the field of citrus nursery production, studying physiological aspects of poor bud push and scion growth in container-grown citrus nursery trees.

I have a special interest in plant propagation and my research program involves exploring propagation techniques and work on citrus nursery production improvement. My special research interests include studying modified light environments and PGR applications in container grown citrus nurseries, evaluating promising citrus scion and rootstock materials for suitability in SW Florida, and studying different propagation methods, substrates and nutrition for nursery trees. Prior to joining UF, I worked with the Univ.

of California for 3 years conducting research and extension work focusing on chill accumulation and pollination in pistachios and studying salinity issues and cultivar evaluation in almonds.

I call myself a global person who likes to embrace ideas, cultures, and expressions from people across the globe. I was born and bred in Punjab, in northern India, which is known as the "Cradle of Indus Valley Civilization" - one of the first agricultural settlements, also called "The Bread Bowl of India."

I deeply love trees and plants and all things green, which explains the "why" of my journey to becoming an Extension Specialist in citrus horticulture. I enjoy communicating and I love being in the public domain serving research and extension needs of people. My journey has been like a fork: one prong being in scientific research, trying to find answers to our field problems, while the other being a communicator, taking those scientific answers back to the public. In the past, in addition to being a University researcher, I have worked as a presenter of an evening talk show on agriculture for a regional TV station and I did a weekend radio show for growers in California, imparting first-hand technical information on nut crops.

Talking about the forks, I am a big food lover and like to cook and share food. I am very excited to be back in Florida, to my alma mater, and I am looking forward to serving the SW Florida citrus industry to meet its very local research and information needs.

Making Complaints That Get Results

Stephanie Toelle, FCS EA IV, Duval Cty

How can you effectively raise an issue or complaint and be heard? A team of FCS agents from Duval, Santa Rosa, Palm Beach, Citrus, and Manatee counties will be addressing this and more on relationship skills, having partnered with Dr. Vic-

tor Harris on a 5-year, \$5,000,000 grant from the Office of Family Assistance/ Administration of Children and Families. Whether it is a personal or a work relationship, many of the same concepts apply.



First, let's look at common mistakes. Our goal with a complaint is either to get someone to stop doing something, to start doing something, to listen, or to change. Unfortunately, the approach gets in the way. Most likely, the other person becomes angry or defensive. There are four common tactics:

1. Mind-reading: the assumption that you know what the other person is thinking or their intentions behind a behavior that you don't like. Example: "You're just doing that to get back at me."
 - Focus on your own thoughts rather than your assumptions of other people. Verbalize what you think and feel.
2. Name-calling: attacking someone's character, rather than the behavior that annoys you. Example: "You're so irresponsible. You didn't follow through and now we all look bad."
 - Character or personality is awfully hard to change. However, a person can work on changing a specific behavior. Focus on how the individual can improve a behavior instead.
3. Overgeneralizations: overstating the complaint with qualifiers, "you always," "you never." Example: "You never get your report in on time."
 - Consider: is a person ever so consistent? These statements develop into an overly negative view of a person or situation.
4. Blaming: intent to hurt another person. Example: "It's your fault that our budget was cut."
 - Guaranteed to result in defensiveness.

Other mistakes: "kitchen-sinking" during which one complaint brings in an avalanche of others that are unrelated, and "cross-complaining" dur-

ing which your complaint is followed by a complaint against you, like a yo-yo. The first complain-er is totally discounted, and though the second complainer may have a legitimate issue, it shows respect to listen and resolve the first complaint.

How do we get over these pitfalls? There is a formula called WWWF: what, when, where, and feelings. Think of a complaint as an opportunity to let another person know what is on your mind. A lot of times the other person is clueless. Further, due to patterns in other relationships, they may have developed one of the above approaches into a habit.

- W: What happened? Focus on the specific behavior that is a problem.
- W/W: When or Where did it happen? Focus on the very last time the issue happened, rather than dredging up an overwhelming deluge from the past.
- F: Feelings – Focus on your feelings, your reaction, and how and why their behavior bothers you. Speak for yourself and the effect of their behavior on you. It can be a powerful motivator for change.

Goldsboro Front Porch Growing Partnership

Gabrielle Milch, Urban Hort EA I, Seminole Cty

The 2008 Farm Bill defines a food desert as an "area in the United States with limited access to affordable and nutritious food, particularly such an area composed of predominantly lower income neighborhoods and communities" (USDA, ERS, 2009). Accordingly, the methods chosen for identifying food deserts in the study reported here use three broad aspects of accessibility—physical accessibility, economic accessibility, and healthful accessibility. This information was collected from a review of articles from the Journal of Extension from 2012.

Food deserts have traditionally been discussed in an urban context, but can exist in both urban and



Volunteers from Boy and Girls Club after planting their favorite vegetables in their community training garden.

rural areas, as supermarkets continue to move towards newer suburban developments characterized by higher incomes and greater buying potential (Gallagher, 2006). Access to healthy foods can be limited in some areas of central Florida. These areas are often known as food deserts and often access to fresh fruits and vegetables for people who live in these areas can be problematic.

The Seminole County Urban Horticulture program has partnered with an innovative project with the Goldsboro Front Porch Group, The Westside Boys and Girls Club, Westside Seniors groups and the Florida Department of Health and private industry business owner of the Farm Daddy Company to create the Goldsboro Gardening Project. More than 60% of the students in the county receive free or reduce priced lunches and school gardening and volunteer gardeners are being trained as well. One hundred self-watering grow boxes, soils, and a 5-year seed supply purchased with a \$5000 grant have been donated to folks in the Goldsboro neighborhood. A community program for vegetable gardening is beginning to take root. The program is to help folks become more self-sufficient, learn to vegetable garden, exercise, and improve their nutrition. The Extension Service Urban Horticulture Agent has worked extensively with the Front Porch Community in getting a vegetable gar-

Volunteers getting the raised beds weeded before planting.



dening program going through education about growing vegetables and associated problems when growing vegetables. The team

is trying to recruit community members to become Master Gardeners and create a help desk type service for the community.

Joyce is an elderly lady involved in her community. She has volunteered to take on some responsibility for helping her community grow vegetables and is serving as a Master Gardener volunteer. She is working with the Urban Horticulture Agent to obtain tailored learning about vegetable issues utilizing and taking on the Master Gardener and learning about the UF/IFAS Extension Service's



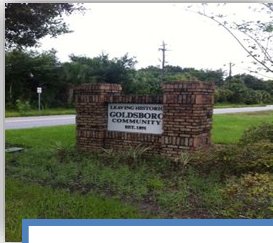
Joyce (above) at Goldsboro Westside Center showing off her produce grown with her "Grow Daddy" box.

research-based information. She has a large family and has begun

vegetable gardening late in her life.

Joyce has planted her self-watering grow box and assisted other elderly ladies who meet at the Westside Center. She attended a Master Gardener Volunteer Program orientation meeting and was quite overwhelmed and did not wish to become a formal Master Gardener yet.

Joyce did not graduate high school, she takes care of her son's and daughter's children and grandchildren, and does not work outside of the home at this time. Her budget is tight and she talked about vegetable gardening as a way to get quality foods and learn about something new. She is very proud of her first crop of okra and she shows off the pictures on her phone with much pride. The Goldsboro Gardening Program is providing UF/IFAS Extension vegetable gardening information to more than 78 individuals and several groups of youth who attend classes at the Westside Center due to the Goldsboro partnership. Fall vegetable gardens have been planted at the center and a micro irrigation system installed by volunteers to efficiently water the gardens have been created by volunteers in the Seminole County Master Gardener program. Future plans including an exten-



Picture of sign in front of the Center near the garden.

sive demonstration garden will be created at the Center and a farmer's market will eventually be started with the help of the community and the partnerships.

Joyce is ready, willing and able to help lead the senior ladies and youth of her community.

Recently a Root Cause Analysis, Counter Measures and Barriers/Aid Analysis has been done at a community meeting by the Office of Promotion and Education of the Florida Department of Health in Seminole County and plans to reach out to other age groups in the community has been developed. The Seminole County Urban Horticulture Agents will continue to develop an education-appropriate vegetable gardening program to serve the community. The garden at the Westside Center will be a training and education demonstration for the next phase of the project. Additional funding is being sought by the Health Department to expand the program in this neighborhood and well as three others in Seminole County.

Leon County Seed Library Program: Big Success in Year One

Molly Jameson, Sus Ag and Com Food Systems EA I, Leon Cty

As a result of the partnership between Leon County UF/IFAS Extension and the Public Library, the Leon County Seed Library was created in spring 2015, giving patrons the opportunity to "check-out" seeds with their free library cards. This program encourages gardening, healthy eating, saving money on produce, and self-reliance. Because there are seven Leon County library locations around the County, this program has been able to reach a diversity of Leon County citizens.

Extension Agent Molly Jameson presenting at the fall, 2015, Seed Library Launch Event.



Sustainable Ag and Community Food Systems Agent Molly Jameson collaborates with local farmers to select seeds, creates Seed Library brochures and posters, recruits volunteers to assemble seed packets, and partners with FNP to deliver "Grow Healthy, Eat Healthy" workshops at multiple library branches. These workshops utilize educational seminars, displays, hands-on activities, and handouts to deliver sustainable gardening education, information on how to support local farmers, a variety of nutrition education, and healthy food demonstrations to participants.

The Seed Library has been very successful, with high praise from librarians. Cay Hohmeister, the head librarian, was given a "shout-out" about the Leon County Seed Library Program

from the Florida Library Association President during the opening remarks of their annual conference. Librarians have even commented that patrons will pay \$20 to \$30 late fees or have acquired library cards for the first time just so they can check out seeds.

The Seed Library and Grow Healthy, Eat Healthy workshops have received local media promotion, leading to more than 15,000 seed packets being checked out in the program's first year and more than 300 Leon County citizens attending events.

The program's success is an indication that many patrons are growing their vegetables from seed,



Seed Library Program brochures and variety selections for fall, 2015, displayed at the LeRoy Collins Main Library



FNP Program Assistant Chelsea Marshall-Hirvela delivering food demonstration at a Grow Healthy, Eat Healthy library workshop.

which will teach them gardening skills, self-reliance, and can provide patrons with nutritious home-grown produce. Participation in the Seed Library and workshops therefore increases agriculture awareness and adoption of healthy behaviors.

The Perils of the Mighty Ficus!

Bill Schall, Comm Hort EA IV, Palm Beach Cty

Whitefly damage in southern Florida landscapes has been severe and widespread since about 2007. By 2009 and 2010, ficus whitefly (*Singhiella simplex*) was defoliating thousands of miles of *Ficus benjamina* hedges and trees. It is now found in 20 Florida counties, including the most populous centers of the state. Ficus hedges provide critical visual and physical barriers between landscape properties, roadways, etc. for residents and businesses. In the past few years, a disturbing and chronic syndrome of defoliation, poor re-leafing, severely reduced health, and branch and plant dieback has become apparent. Ficus whitefly is intimately involved in this problem, but heaviest branch damage often occurs months after whiteflies have been controlled. Increased use of fertilizer, especially nitrogen, to force leaf production is a frequent practice.

Ficus hedge in research plot that has received recommended insecticide treatment. Note health of the plants vs. the untreated row in the background. UF/IFAS Tropical Research and Education Center, Homestead.



Fertilization often occurs during winter months when ficus is

not actively growing, so the nutrients are not well absorbed by roots. This possibly unnecessary nitrogen use may be environmentally detrimental and it contradicts recommended practices. Additionally, it is suspected as a contributing factor to the plant decline. Ficus hedges are heavily sheared throughout the year in most southern Florida communities. They are also planted

Ficus whitefly on leaf with defoliation and dieback on shrub in background.



where roots are severely restricted by compacted soil, paving, and tight plant spacing. Any of these factors may be significant in ficus decline and they impact whitefly populations. Management of some of these variables is possible if shown to be helpful.

In addition to ficus whitefly, rugose spiraling whitefly (*Aleurodicus rugioperculatus*) assaulted southern Florida landscapes. It was even more serious than ficus whitefly, in part because it attacks a much broader range of landscape plants. It is now mostly suppressed by a beneficial wasp, and secondarily by predatory insects and pesticide treatments. Local Palm Beach County extension efforts included development of a local whitefly task force, workshop training of 571 pest management professionals, release of beneficial insects in collaboration with Dr. Catharine Mannion and Dr. Lance Osborne, numerous site visits and tele-



Ficus used as a barrier hedge around a residential community in Palm Beach County.

phone and email consultations, website development (<http://pbcgov.com/coextension/horticulture/whitefly>) and other educational efforts. Follow-up surveying of the pest management professionals attending workshops indicated

62% saved money for their companies or their customers, 25% obtained new customers, and

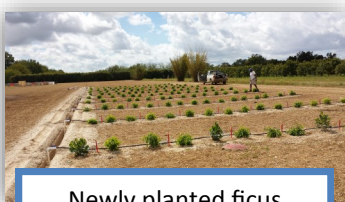


25% reduced the

Ficus used as a barrier hedge separating a residential community from a roadway in Boca Raton.

amount of pesticides they were using because of the training.

A multi-year project supported with \$5,000 from the IFAS/FNGLA Endowed Research Fund was undertaken in early 2015. It is designed to clarify the roles of fertilization, shearing, soil compaction, spacing, interplanting with non ficus species, and



Newly planted ficus research plot in February 2015. UF/IFAS Tropical Research and Education Center in Homestead.

whitefly in ficus dieback. Another goal is to generate recommendations concerning how best to manage these variables. Initial seed money supported installation of field testing at the UF/IFAS Tropical Research and Education

Center in Homestead. The project is headed by Catharine Mannion and Palm Beach County Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent Bill Schall. Planting was completed in February 2015. Data being collected includes the level of ficus whitefly on leaves and sticky traps, soil compaction, and plant quality factors including defoliation, leaf yellowing, dieback, and growth.

This multi-year project is already yielding some interesting but very preliminary observations including:

- Soil compaction with whitefly interaction is reducing plant quality.
- Interplanting with non ficus whitefly host plant species results in lower whitefly activity on the ficus, and healthier growth.
- Standard minimum ficus fertilization with whitefly interaction is resulting in lower plant

quality.

- Recommended whitefly treatment is effective and is producing the most vigorous and healthy looking plants so far.

Plans for the project include additional plot replications, and expanding the variables that will be evaluated.

Positive Relationship with County Government

Gregory Hicks, CED IV, Hamilton Cty

Establishing and maintaining positive relationships with Extension's stakeholders is imperative to assure the survival and success of local Extension Offices. A stakeholder is someone involved with an organization and therefore has interest in its success. They have the capacity to generate good will and obtain resources for support. One such stakeholder is the board of county commissioners.

Hamilton County is a small rural North Florida county that has a "County Coordinator" in place to handle general information concerning administrative matters. The County Coordinator (CC) is the Chief Administrative Officer for the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners. This position operates under and reports directly to the board. In Hamilton County, the County Extension Director (CED) is considered a department head. Led by the CC, all department heads meet monthly. Following the chain of command, the CED reports to the CC on current programs, results in the county, future programs, and budgetary matters. With the agent's approval, the CED also shares privately each agent's individual UF annual appraisal results. As a liaison to the board of commissioners, the CC reports any necessary information to the board.

Hamilton County is fortunate to have a CC who lives on a farm and who previously owned an agricultural supply business for many years. His children were members of Hamilton 4-H and partici-



Louie Goodin (Hamilton County Coordinator) and Greg Hicks (Hamilton County Extension Director) discuss UF/IFAS Extension Hamilton County annual Reports of Accomplishments and Plans of Work.

pated in many 4-H activities. The Clerk of the Circuit Court for Hamilton County and a Hamilton County Commissioner both has had or still have children heavily involved in 4-H. Another commissioner has a small beef cattle operation. Several of the board members are involved with our annual

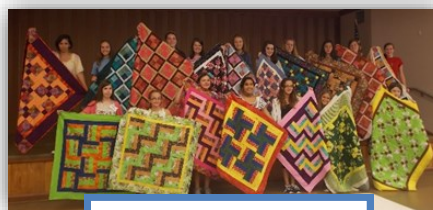
livestock show. To engage all commissioners in an extension activity and to help keep extension continuously visible in the community, a plaque is given at a scheduled board meeting to the Hamilton County Farm Family of the Year. This recipient is selected annually by the UF/IFAS Extension Agricultural Advisory Council. During this presentation, the CED promotes Extension and gives a brief background on the family being honored. Following the presentation, the commissioners, the CED, and the farm family are featured together in the local newspaper.

These simple but effective actions have helped to build positive relationships with an important Extension stakeholder, the board of county commissioners. These actions give ownership to these individuals in return for supporting extension programs.

Piece by Piece: 4-H Quilt Project

Geralyn Sachs, 4-H EA II, St. Johns Cty

For the past nine summers, the St. John's County 4-H program has offered both a week-long Beginning Sewing Camp (prerequisite to the quilt camp) and a week-long Quilt Camp, which supplement the county's very active 4-H sewing club that meets at least monthly from September to May.



St. Johns County 4-H youth quilters proudly display their quilts.

in- The camp includes more than 30 hrs of instruction for youth and is led by seasoned quilters who are both 4-H volunteers and members of the St. Augustine Piece-makers Quilt Guild. Each year, these volunteers donate more than 500 hrs toward this project, guiding the youth through the planning and construction steps of making a 48 by 48 inch or larger quilt. In addition to making the quilts, youth learn about the history and traditions of quilts, care for quilts and a variety of quilting techniques and styles, and learn to appreciate the art within a quilt.

In 2015, the 4-H Quilt Camp, with the help of 15 adult volunteers, had 18 youth participants of varied skill level who all completed a quilt. In recognition and support of this learning opportunity, for the past 9 years youth quilts have been entered in Quilt-Fest, a national quilt show in Jacksonville, as well as displayed locally at community and cultural events.

The 4-H Quilt Camp is a great benefit to our 4-H youth who take part in this experience. The life skills learned, appreciation of the arts, and the ability to complete a quilt project and be recognized is an important part of what positive youth development is all about. In addition to the benefits for our youth and their families, this experience also benefits the volunteers who gain the satisfaction of making a difference in their community and enjoy sharing time and talent with youth. Finally, the community at large benefits through its appreciation and enjoyment of a variety of quilt exhibits in the community where the



St. Johns County 4-H volunteers discuss the long tradition of quilting with 4-H youth.



St. Johns County 4-H youth busy at the sewing machine.

youth quilts are displayed. The success of the 4-H summer quilt camp is based on the progress toward advanced skills that are

learned and applied during the week of camp, the number of participants who successfully complete their quilt, and the number of youth who return each summer to attend the camp.

For the past 2 years, the St. Johns County 4-H Program has gratefully received two grants totaling \$4,800 from the National Quilt Association. This money is used to purchase quilting materials and supplies, maintain or replace aging sewing machines, and train 4-H volunteers. This coming year, the grant funds will also support efforts for 4-H volunteers leading the 4-H Quilt Camp to conduct a training for 4-H volunteers across the state who are interested in leading a 4-H quilt camp. Needless to say, St. Johns County 4-H youth and adults are successfully putting the pieces together, one quilt at a time!

Community Leader of the Year



Santa Rosa County 4-H Extension Agent Prudence Caskey was recognized as the 2015 Community Leader of the Year by the Santa Rosa County Chamber of Commerce. Caskey began her career with the University of Florida/IFAS Santa

Rosa County Extension Service in 2012 as the 4-H Program Assistant. She was hired as the 4-H Extension Agent in March of 2014. During her time as the 4-H Extension Agent, Prudence has been heavily involved in the community. Prudence takes the time to work individually with youth, creating a connection between them and their community. She works feverishly to recruit quality volunteers and garner community support. Her

hard work, dedication, and commitment to the youth in her county has not been overlooked. By establishing relationships with businesses, community leaders and other youth organizations, Prudence has enhanced the 4-H program in Santa Rosa County. Congratulations Prudence Caskey, 2015 Community Leader of the Year for Santa Rosa County!

Hayfield Management

Keith Wynn, Ag Nat Res EA I, Hamilton Cty

In August of 2014 this agent was visiting a local hay producer who was concerned with a weed taking over his field. With the assistance of Dr. Jay Ferrell the weed was identified and a treatment was applied. After successful control of the weed, the producer remained unsatisfied with the production of this improved Bermudagrass hay field and in October (2014) this agent discussed possible production problems and presented the producer with some production options to consider. First a soil sample was submitted which deter-



This photo shows how severe Gaeumannomyces (Take-All) can affect forage crops. At least forty percent of this hayfield was in decline due to previous management decisions.

mined some past production practices had led to a high pH and low potassium level. The agent consulted with Dr. Ann Blount and Dr. Cheryl Mackowiak to create a fertilizer schedule based on UF/IFAS recommendations that would correct the producer's soil fertility problem. A plant sample was also submitted to positively identify Gaeumannomyces (Take-All) which was expected due to earlier soil sample results. Last spring (2015) the producer followed recommendations to use ammonium sulfate and apply appropriate rates of potassium after each harvest. A farm visit in July confirmed the producers hay field was on its way to recovery. The first harvest generated 3,045 lbs/ac, the second 3,395 lbs/ac, and the

third 3,325 lbs/ac of forage. The producer stated that this was an increase of 750 lbs/ac. He applied 60 lbs/ac of nitrogen and 80 lbs/ac of potassium before the first cutting and has applied 60 lbs/ac of nitrogen and 40 lbs/ac of potassium after additional cuttings. This agent continues to make field visits in order to aid the producer through the recovery process. Additional weeds and mole cricket issues have been identified and treated during this transition period.

Bozeman School Students Successfully Re-establish Bay Grasses in Classes Program

Scott Jackson, Sea Grant EA IV, Bay Cty
Jonnie Smallman, St Andrew Bay Resource Management Association (RMA)

Bozean School students have completed initial work to renovate their aquatic plant nursery used to grow bay shoreline grasses. These plants will be used in future environmental restoration projects. Students are participating in a service learning project that provides them with new skills and knowledge while simultaneously benefitting the local community and St. Andrew Bay ecosystem. Funding for this effort is through a Coastal Program Grant provided by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Key partnerships are also vital to the project. RMA is the lead partner that organizes and works with community volunteers to provide support necessary to complete the project. Another key partner is UF/IFAS Extension Bay County. Extension agents and volunteers from Master Gardener and Master Naturalist programs assist with technical expertise. The RiverCamps Homeowners Association (HOA) completes the partnership and provides additional resources. The HOA hosts Bozeman field study activities.

Currently more than 110 students are engaged in Bay Grasses in Classes project at their campus using a model developed by Tampa Bay Watch. This school year students have installed nursery plants and built a 24' x 24' greenhouse. They are learning about Living Shoreline approaches to address



Bozeman students completing construction and planting activities to create a restoration nursery that will provide more than 5,000 plants annually to St Andrew Bay Living Shoreline restoration projects. Photo by L. Scott Jackson, UF/IFAS Bay County Extension.

shoreline erosion as an alternative to using sea-walls. Bozeman students will

restore a small section of eroded shoreline near River-Camps in 2016. By early spring, students involved in environmental and agricultural studies

will work with community volunteers and project partners to complete the restoration activities. Once restoration is complete, the HOA will monitor progress and will be responsible for maintaining the site as needed. Bozeman students will also conduct a field evaluation in preparation for future projects. Approximately half of the nursery plants will be planted during restoration while the other half will be replanted in the nursery for future classes and restoration projects. The nursery is capable of producing 5,000 or more plants each year.

Addressing the Big Problem of Microplastics

Maia McGuire, Sea Grant EA III, Flagler/St. Johns Cty

Patrick is a 13-year old boy who lives in Flagler County. He has a real love for the ocean and the animals that live there. For the past 4 years, Patrick has participated in 4-H marine science summer day camps in the county. This year, he helped collect water samples from the ocean and learned to filter them and look at the filters under a microscope. Having learned about plankton in previous camps, he expected to see some of them on the filters. However, there were several things that looked like eyelashes on the filters as well. Patrick was shocked to discover that those "eyelashes" were actually small pieces of plastic



Microscopic fragment of plastic found in coastal water sample.

fiber. He learned that wastewater treatment plants and septic tanks are not designed to remove small, floating pieces of plastic. However, tiny plastic fibers are shed when we wash synthetic fabrics in the washing machine. Also, many personal care products like facial scrubs and deodorants can contain tiny plastic “microbeads.” Patrick was very concerned to find that these plastics can end up being dumped into local waterways as effluent from the wastewater treatment plant. Here the microplastics (plastic pieces smaller than 5 mm in size) can be eaten by tiny marine organisms at the base of the food chain. There are concerns about potential human health impacts of microplastics. Patrick was given a list of personal care products that contain polyethylene plastic. He took this list home and asked his mother to make some photocopies of it. He



Microscopic plastic fiber found in coastal water sample.

then proceeded to share that list with his mother’s friends, “Because you wear makeup, Mrs. Jones...” He wanted others to be aware that by using these products, they were probably adding plastic to the ocean environment. Patrick is one of more than 550 people who learned about microplastics from the UF/IFAS Extension Flagler County Sea Grant agent in 2015. The agent is also coordinating the statewide Florida Microplastic Awareness Project. The FMAP involves 15 other educators (including seven other Sea Grant, one 4-H and two Natural Resource Extension agents) who are teaching people about microplastics and training them to sample local coastal waters for the presence of microplastics. Data collected so far show that 92% of the 181 samples collected contained some sort of plastic. Samples averaged seven pieces of plastic per liter of water, and plastic fibers made up 85% of the

plastics found. Microbeads and plastic fragments each comprised 7% with film making up the final 1%.

More than 100 people were surveyed to see if they have taken any actions since learning about microplastics from the Flagler County agent. Most (86%) stated that they have checked the labels on their personal care products to see if they contained polyethylene (plastic). Two thirds (67%) stated that they had changed the types of personal care items purchased in order to avoid those containing plastics. Three quarters stated that they were trying to avoid single use plastic items, making more of an effort to pick up plastic trash and identify and appropriately recycle plastic items. Ninety-nine percent have shared information with others. Since a single container of facial scrub can contain between 300,000 and 2,000,000 “microbeads” of plastic, having people change their behavior to avoid purchasing these types of personal care products has the potential to greatly benefit the marine environment.

R.I.P. Isaac Chandler

We regretfully announce the passing of 4-H Hall of Fame inductee, Mr. Isaac Chandler. Our thoughts are with his family at this difficult time. Please see the following announcement from CED John Lilly:

Good Morning All,

At the end of every day, as we rest from our labors, every retired agent should ask, “Have I made the best better?” Isaac Chandler, Jr. made a lasting impression on virtually everyone he came in contact. During his 35 years tenure, Mr. Chandler has made a tremendous impact on the citizens of Hamilton County, many of whom can attribute their success directly to being under his leadership.

It is with heartfelt sympathy Extension mourns the passing of another Florida 4-H Hall of Fame inductee. On February 23, 2016, we have lost a dear friend and valued colleague. Mr. Chandler died peacefully. Our hearts and prayers go out to the family.

R.I.P. Bobby Leon Damron



We regretfully announce the passing of Emeritus Professor Dr. Bobby Damron. Our thoughts are with his family at this difficult time. Please see the following announcement for more information: [Obituary](#)

Arrivals

We would like to welcome the following new faculty:

Abbey Tyrna, Env Sci Prg EA II, Sarasota Cty
Anne Yasalonis, Res Hort EA II, Polk Cty
Mark Tancig, Com/Res Hort EA I, Leon Cty
Ethan Carter, Ag/IPM RSA I, Jackson Cty
Ray Bodrey, Ag/Nat Res/Com Dev CED II, Gulf Cty
Nickie Munroe, Env Hort EA I, Manatee Cty
Brenda Rogers, DED IV, District IV
Nelly Nelson, FCS EA I, Manatee Cty
Savanna Barry, Sea Grant/Marine Sci RSA II, Dist II
Daniel Leonard, Com/Res Hort EA I, Walton Cty
Randall Penn, Env Sci Prg EA II, Sarasota Cty
Amanda Morgan, 4-H EA I, Alachua Cty
Alexandra Boswell, 4-H Prog Asst, Leon Cty
Kelly Thomas, Hort Prog Asst, Leon Cty



A special welcome to our newest member of the Extension Admin team, Amy Holton! She comes to us from UF Health with a Bachelors Degree and a history rich with Agriculture! You can reach her at holtak@ufl.edu or 352-273-3424

New Positions

We would like to congratulate the following faculty members on their new position:

Tim Wilson is now CED II for St. Johns Cty
Jonael Bosques-Mendez is now CED I for Hardee Cty

Departures

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

Aparna Gazula, Com Hort EA III, Alachua Cty
Tracy Tesdall, 4-H RSA II, District V
Gabrielle Milch, Res Hort EA I, Seminole Cty
Amy Morie, Env Hort EA II, Clay Cty
Elizabeth Gorimani-Mundoma, FCS EA II, Gadsden Cty

Retirement

We would like to give our best wishes for an enjoyable retirement to



Dr. Charles Vavrina, SC DED, Dist IV



Albert Fuller, 4-H CED IV, Levy



Karla Lenfesty, FCS EA II, St. Lucie



Georgene Bender, 4-H RSA IV, Dist IV



Stan Rosenthal, Prg EA I, Leon



Jean Rogalsky, 4-H EA II, Pinellas