

# UF/IFAS Extension *Comings & Goings*

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN FOR EXTENSION

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UF/IFAS Extension *Comings and Goings* is a monthly newsletter distributed by the Office of the Dean for Extension via e-mail and on the UF/IFAS 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).

### **Fostering Healthy Behaviors through Gardening and Cooking with At-Risk Youth (pg 2)**

Cooking Matters for Teens has been added to the Bannerman Learning Center's curriculum for at-risk youth.

### **From School to Community Wellness HUB: Franklin Park Elementary School (pg 2)**

Franklin Park Elementary School partners with Streets Alive SWFL and UF/IFAS Extension FNP to address food deserts and infrastructure issues in Fort Myers.

### **What effect do best management practices (BMPs) have on corn yield? (pg 3)**

To demonstrate the efficacy of BMPs, SVAEC in Live Oak recently implemented 8 BMP trials, using 12 advanced corn hybrid varieties.

### **Arbor Day Events Improve Winter Haven's Urban Forests (pg 3)**

Arbor Day events have given away more than 400 native trees to build up the tree canopy in Winter Haven.

### **Polk County Water School (pg 4)**

After attending Water School, a city manager learns how to propose low-impact development and water quality improvement projects that had once been shot down by his city commission.

### **Rural LEAP Comes to Madison (pg 4)**

Rural Lifestyle Eating and Activity Program (Rural LEAP) is a 17- week series giving participants the tools to lose weight, increase fitness, improve nutrition and manage stress.

### **Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Yard Tour (pg 5)**

One homeowner's chance encounter with a Master Gardener leads to widespread acclaim on annual FFL yard tour.

### **One Seed, One Community (pg 6)**

What "One Book, One City" did for promoting community literacy, this program hopes to do for local food systems.

### **Family Nutrition Program Engages Teachers as Well as Youth (pg 6)**

One example of how a classroom lesson results in knowledge gains that extend into the larger community.

### **Grocery Store Tours Help Parents Make Better Food Choices without Breaking their Bank Account (pg 6)**

The Cooking Matters at the Store tour is used to teach families how to stretch their food dollars so their children will get healthy meals at home.

### **A Salty Heritage: Celebrating the Fishing History of Tampa Bay (pg 7)**

As part of Sea Grant's 50th Anniversary, Florida Sea Grant agents hosted an event highlighting the bounty and diversity of commercial fishing in Tampa Bay.

### **Extension Education Helps Program Participants Restart Their Lives (pg 8)**

County enables participants to share their newfound knowledge with friends and family, enhancing the quality of life for the community as a whole.

### **Food Preservation in the Classroom (pg 8)**

Sometimes having to stay after school leads to new skills, better nutrition and important insights.

### **Leon County Teen Counselors Moving Fresh Fruit to the Communities in Need (pg 9)**

4-H volunteers glean fruit for a good cause.

### **Sassy Cows Learn About Fodder (pg 9)**

Students participated in an 11-week program that taught the importance of agriculture, horticulture, small farms and community and home gardens.

### **From SPIN Club to In-School Club (pg 10)**

The secret to getting more 4-H programs into schools might involve underwater robots.

### **4-H Members Make a Difference for Pinellas County Schoolchildren (pg 10)**

In December, the Pinellas County Ochs Garden 4-H Club presented Anona Elementary School with over fifty bags of donated books and school supplies.

### **More than Moving a Drum, It's Life Skill Development (pg 11)**

These 4-H campers were over a barrel until they started talking with each other instead of to each other.

### **Jump into the Gator Pit! (pg 11)**

Could you do it? Could you pitch your business idea to an audience of 200 people? These 4-Hers can!

### **Growing Character through Livestock Projects (pg 12)**

At 4-H youth livestock shows, character is on full display.

### **Nassau County Extension & 4-H Hatch Community Success! (pg 12)**

What do you do when all those embryology projects start hatching? Nassau County 4-H made an old aquaponics shed into a chicken coop and turned a problem into a fundraiser.

# FOSTERING HEALTHY BEHAVIORS THROUGH GARDENING AND COOKING WITH AT-RISK YOUTH

Annie Sheldon, FCS EA II, Clay Cty



Bannerman Students and MG Volunteers Working in the School Garden



Bannerman Students participating in Cooking Matters for Teens Lesson

For more than 15 years, Master Gardener volunteers have been instrumental in providing hands-on, garden-centered lessons at the Bannerman Learning Center, an alternative school that creates a positive, safe and supportive learning environment for at-risk youth in Clay County. After many years of success through this partnership, Bannerman principal Mike Elia was excited to welcome additional support from the UF/IFAS Extension Family Nutrition Program in expanding their garden-centered curriculum to include nutrition education and cooking.

The kitchen and the garden are now two co-equal sites of learning on Bannerman's campus, and students are able to learn about food systems on both the individual and

environmental levels. Students work in the garden to prepare beds, plant seeds and seedlings, tend plants and harvest produce. Harvested vegetables and herbs are brought into the kitchen and incorporated into the recipes prepared by the 18 students currently participating in the Cooking Matters for Teens program taught by the FCS agent and FNP program assistant.

Supported through \$1,080 in grant funds from Share Our Strength, the Cooking Matters for Teens program is a hands-on, six-lesson cooking course that empowers teens with the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices and cook delicious, affordable meals at home. In addition to the interactive nutrition and cooking lessons, each of the 18 students is provided with a bag of groceries to make the same recipes they prepared in class for their families at home.

To date, 83% (n=15) of the students have reported that they prepare the recipes at home for their families using the groceries provided and herbs from the garden. "I cooked the recipe for my Dad and he liked it... it was the first time he ever ate black beans," said one of the 12th grade students participating in the program this semester. Statewide evaluation results of Cooking Matters for Teens show that the program is making a lasting impact. Students report increased intake of fruits and vegetables and other improved eating habits, cooking skills and food resource management skills that extend beyond the individual to the entire family.

## FROM SCHOOL TO COMMUNITY WELLNESS HUB: FRANKLIN PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Diana Giraldo, FYCS CRD 1, Lee Cty

Franklin Park Elementary is located in the Dunbar community, a low-income urban food desert neighborhood in Fort Myers, made up of primarily single-family dwellings with low access to grocery stores, farmers markets and providers of healthy foods. The Dunbar community has also struggled with years of street violence and lack of proper infrastructure to allow safe access to schools or basic neighborhood services.

In 2016, Franklin Park Elementary School in collaboration with Streets Alive SWFL (a local nonprofit) and the UF/IFAS Extension Family Nutrition Program began working with local governments to address issues that affected the school directly. The result of this partnership evolved into installation of proper sidewalks and infrastructure for safe school access by anyone regardless of physical abilities, improvement in school programming to increase nutrition education and physical activity, and the planning and implementation of a school garden to also serve as a community garden.

At the summer of 2016 "walk to school day" event, over 120 individuals from the Dunbar community walked to Franklin Park Elementary School with their children — a significant

increase from previous years where community attendance did not surpass 15 people.

Having observed the impact of the partnership and the resulting changes in the community, the Lee County School District has become interested in developing plans for other improvements such as turning the school into a wellness HUB to benefit the Dunbar community. The partnership between

Streets Alive SWFL, the Lee County School District and the UF/IFAS Family Nutrition Program will emphasize safe, healthful active mobility, food and gardening as part of the efforts to establish the community HUB. The partnership envisions the program as a seed from which broader neighborhood connections can grow, extending to future productive partnerships with other community-based organizations and municipalities in Lee County. The strategic plan for the 2017/2018 community HUB is to expand the education garden, establish a community garden club, and build an outdoor pavilion with a trailer pop-up kitchen to offer cooking lessons with food from the garden, thereby opening up nutrition and wellness education to the community.

<http://tinyurl.com/mur92en>

## WHAT EFFECT DO BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs) HAVE ON CORN YIELD?

*Patrick Troy, Row Crops RSA III, Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center, Live Oak*



Varietal trials helped Patrick Troy showcase BMPs for production (like the soil moisture sensor)



On-farm corn yields improved with attention to irrigation and nutrient management

When it comes to convincing farmers in the Suwannee River Basin area to adopt Best Management Practices, seeing is believing. Driven by the proposed 2016 Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP), strong emphasis is being placed on irrigation and nutrient management in the Suwannee River Basin area. Farmers are encouraged by the Florida Department of Consumer Services (FDACS) to enroll in Best Management Practices (BMPs) to conserve water and reduce nitrate leaching. To demonstrate the efficacy of BMPs, the Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center in Live Oak

recently implemented 8 BMP trials, using 12 advanced corn hybrid varieties in a randomized complete block design. The practices included cover cropping, soil sampling, poultry litter applications, crop nutrient budgeting, soil moisture sensor installation, ear leaf tissue sampling, side dress fertilizer application, and pivot nozzle upgrade and calibration (via Mobile Irrigation Lab).

At the trial sites, an average of 220 bushels per acre was harvested, while statewide grain corn yields average 122 bpa (NASS 2012). With applied nitrogen inputs of 246 lbs, an efficiency ratio of 89% was achieved (compared with typical ratios of 60-80%). Such a trial proves high yields are possible while minimizing the risk to leaching. Additionally, water savings of approximately 8% were recorded through close monitoring of volumetric water content at various soil depths with a Sentek TDR probe. Full implementation of these practices reduced inputs by approximately \$95/acre. With these promising results, UF/IFAS will expand this demonstration to neighboring farms, so as to document both high yields and nutrient savings (from leaching and expense). Quantifying the economics and environmental services now will encourage early adoption and greater financial success.

## ARBOR DAY EVENTS IMPROVE WINTER HAVEN'S URBAN FORESTS

*Shannon Carnevale, Natural Resources and Conservation EA I, Polk Cty*

Winter Haven is a small community of 38,000 residents in Polk County, FL. In the transition from being almost an exclusively agricultural community to the home of Legoland Florida, Winter Haven has been experiencing a surge in urban growth and development. The long-term impacts of residential development, past agricultural practices, and urban infrastructure have resulted in a situation where the city of Winter Haven is actively seeking projects and practices that can reduce urban impact and help restore local ecosystems.

Healthy and sustainable urban forests positively affect surface water quality, reduce stormwater runoff, and improve quality of life. As a result of collaborating with UF/IFAS Extension Polk County's Natural Resources and Conservation program and the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ program, the city of Winter Haven has successfully held two annual arbor day events

during which native understory tree species were given away to residents.

The main challenge Winter Haven is facing regarding their urban forest's resilience is the age, species, and structure of the current tree canopy. The majority of Winter Haven's urban forest is comprised of aging oak trees, which in a few years' time may succumb to disease, age or other environmental stressors. The loss of a large number of these oaks would drastically reduce canopy cover and severely alter the structure of Winter Haven's urban forest.

With the aid of UF/IFAS Extension Polk County, the City of Winter Haven chose three native tree species (flatwoods plum, Dahoon holly, and winged elm) that were not found in high numbers locally to improve Winter Haven's urban forest biodiversity, age diversity and overall structure and as a result, improve the urban forest's resilience. At the Arbor Day celebrations in 2015

and 2016, 400 trees were given to residents and local businesses.

By the city of Winter Haven's calculations, the two events resulted in an 8 percent increase in abundant tree species. In addition, the measure of richness and evenness increased by a range of 2-3 percent. While these are moderate estimates, the positive trend in impacts are indicators of the cumulative effect the Arbor Day event can have on Winter Haven's tree community over the years with continued plantings. The 2017 Arbor Day event and tree giveaway is targeting specific neighborhoods lacking in urban forest diversity and resiliency.

As a partner in this event, UF/IFAS Extension Polk County provided outreach materials and on-site tree planting and maintenance training to all participants adopting a tree. Extension also provided the marketing materials, event data collection forms, and follow-up survey design and



implementation. As a direct result of the collaboration with UF/IFAS Extension Polk County, the City of Winter Haven was awarded funding for the project from Florida Forest Service's Arbor Day Grant program.

Without Extension's partnership, city staff does not believe their request would have been so successful or praised so highly.

In September 2016, Winter Haven's Arbor Day event, grant application,

and results were used as an example to other cities interested in applying for funding and participating in the Tree City USA program at the Urban Forestry Symposium held in Sebring, FL.

## POLK COUNTY WATER SCHOOL

*Shannon Carnevale, Natural Resources and Conservation EA I, Polk Cty*

"John" (pseudonym) is the city manager of a small community in Polk County, FL. Polk County has strong agricultural and tourism industries and a growing demand for urban growth, all of which depend on healthy natural resources and clean plentiful water. As a rain-driven system at the top of five major watersheds, Polk County relies on strong public policies and sustainable water management to protect and enhance these industries. Furthermore, continuous efforts by residents, businesses, and municipalities to conserve water and improve aquifer infiltration are an important part of securing future water supply and improving local ecosystem health.

One of the challenges John faces is communicating the necessity of water resource improvement projects and policies with the city commission. It can be difficult, without adequate background knowledge, to justify the cost of water resources projects.

As a participant in Polk County Water School in 2016, John learned about local hydrology and surface water ecosystems, the impacts urban development can have on local lakes, and where local drinking water comes from and how it is treated. He also learned, through case studies, how other communities are using innovative water treatment and stormwater projects to improve the sustainability of their community's water resources. Most importantly, John learned all of this alongside his city's mayor;

as a result, John had the opportunity to discuss with the mayor future implementation of several innovative low-impact development and water quality improvement projects that previously had been shot down by the city commission. Additionally, John learned how to communicate the local impact of water quality improvement projects with staff in a way that empowered them in turn to discuss these impacts with concerned residents.

John is just one of nine city managers or other municipal staff who have attended Polk County Water School with one of their elected officials. The information shared at Water School, and the conversations which have taken place as a result, are building community capacity for improved water policy and increased implementation of water quality improvement projects.

Retrospective evaluations indicate that there was a 47% increase in the number of participants who felt proper management of water resources was highly important on a five-point scale (94%, n=17). Such changes in attitudes imply that Polk County Water School increased recognition by decision-makers of the importance of the problem, and hence, the potential future support for policy decisions and community projects to address the problem. All respondents (n=18) thought that water education programs, like this Water School, help improve public policies.

## RURAL LEAP COMES TO MADISON

*Diann Douglas, FCS EA IV, Madison Cty*



Vivi Bauman, Graduate Assistant; Meena Shankar, Research Coordinator; and Lindsey Recheigl, UF student

For local residents throughout Florida, UF/IFAS Extension is the gateway to the research and expertise of the University of Florida. We bring UF to the community, and now a new university experience in the form of an outreach study is being conducted in Madison County. Starting in January, UF/IFAS Extension Madison County is collaborating with the UF College of Public Health and Health Professions to provide a weight loss study for overweight residents.

Rural Lifestyle Eating and Activity Program (Rural LEAP) is a 17- week series giving participants the tools

to lose weight, increase fitness, improve nutrition and manage stress. This program is part of a 3.7 million dollar study by Dr. Michael G. Perri, designed to reach rural areas with limited access to nutrition and physical activity education. This study began in 2014 and has conducted programs in several other rural communities in north Florida. It seeks to enroll people between the ages of 21 and 75 with a body mass index between 30 and 45.

Research coordinator Menna Shankar reported a large response by local residents applying for the program. After screening applicants, 43 were

selected to participate in the study. Participants are currently attending one of the three weekly classes and will be followed for a year after the sessions end.

Once the classes are completed in May, participants will be contacted on a weekly basis until the end of 2018. Three different forms of communication will be used — personal calls, group calls and e-mail. Part of the study will attempt to

determine which form of communication is most effective at weight maintenance.

Due to the confidentiality of the study, we are not allowed to photograph participants. However, all feedback has been very positive and participants seem very motivated to lose weight. Pictured are the staff from the College of Public Health and Health Professions, who are in our community each Monday delivering the educational program.

## FLORIDA-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING™ YARD TOUR

Denise DeBusk, Environmental Horticulture EA II, Alachua Cty



Participants learning about Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ during the yard tour at John's house



Master Gardeners staffing the information booths



Agent Denise DeBusk, second from right assisting during registration

“John” (pseudonym) spent thousands of dollars trying to maintain and “save” his grass, until he spoke to a Master Gardener at a Home Depot plant clinic, who introduced him to Florida-Friendly Landscaping™. He discovered that he can still have a good-looking yard without having grass. However, he was concerned about how his homeowner's association would react to removing his grass. The Master Gardener told him about the Florida-Friendly landscaping ordinance (FS 373.185), which gave him backing when he approached the homeowner's association. After some research about drought-tolerant plants requiring little maintenance, he replaced his front yard with mainly ornamental grasses and pine straw.

Sometime later, John received a letter from the Master Gardeners, who were trying to identify some homes to use for the 9th annual Florida-Friendly Landscaping Yard Tour. Shortly after, John got FFL yard recognition from the Master Gardeners and was one of four

homes featured in the FFL yard tour. In his yard description he wrote about Florida-Friendly Landscaping™: “It has been a positive change, using less water, therefore less expensive.”

During the tour, John stood like a proud father in his yard as nearly 150 participants came to look at his landscaping and find out how they can do the same thing. He was amazed at the sheer number of participants. He said that his experience was very positive and that he is a true advocate of Florida-Friendly Landscaping™.

The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Yard Tour is a self-guided tour with maps and yard descriptions. Attendees were able to tour landscapes with labeled plants and Master Gardener volunteers were on hand to answer their horticulture questions. At each tour location, a teaching station (totaling 10) was set up to demonstrate one of the principles of Florida-Friendly Landscaping™, such as right plant

right place, mulching, managing pests, attracting wildlife, and watering appropriately. The Alachua County Environmental Protection Department was also there to discuss irrigation and fertilizer ordinances.

In a post-survey following the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Yard Tour, participants indicated a 34% increase in knowledge of FFL principles. Participants indicated that after the FFL yard tour they wanted to make changes to reduce turf, more mulch (73%), look for and remove invasive plants (43%), and pay closer attention to when and how to water (30%). Nine homes received FFL yard recognition and 4 of those were on the tour. Attendees to the tours and seminars are often close to making changes in their landscapes, and by providing local examples of landscapes and education, they will have the tools to move forward with their intentions of having a Florida-Friendly Landscape™.

## ONE SEED, ONE COMMUNITY

*Bryan Dailey, Community Resource Development CED II, Sarasota Cty*



Rapid urban growth in Sarasota County has highlighted the need to expand community awareness and knowledge of local food systems and the means to grow food. This need has contributed to the popularity of our community gardens program, but we wanted to create ways to reach new audiences and involve people who could not participate. Therefore, the gardening program of UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County has introduced a new shared, experiential learning opportunity called “One Seed.” This program, which is patterned after “One Book” reading projects popular in many cities, is designed to get everyone in the community to grow the same plant. Each growing season, a single edible plant is highlighted, chosen by community vote. One Seed is a shared, edible-gardening experience designed to build a community around food. Launched in October with 1,500 green bean seeds, this annual program enables anyone — whether they tend one pot or an entire plot — to easily join this community. We provide them with key tools for growing food, including seeds, classes, discussion forums, recipes and more. Plans call for adding a seed-saving component to the program as it continues to develop.

## EXTENSION EDUCATION’S FAMILY NUTRITION PROGRAM ENGAGES TEACHERS AS WELL AS YOUTH

*Brenda Marty-Jimenez, Health Nutrition & Food Safety CED EA III, Broward Cty*

One of the functions of the Family Nutrition Program (FNP) – a partnership between the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) and Broward County Parks – is education. Currently, for example, FNP is reaching youth at Colbert Elementary School in Hollywood through a series of six lessons presented to first- and second-grade students. The curriculum, aptly titled YUM, includes lessons on MyPlate, grains, dairy, fruits, vegetables, and protein.

As FNP staff have already discovered, the program has benefits not only for the young students, but also for their instructors, who are provided with supplementary classroom materials that allow them to reinforce the information taught during the series. One second-grade teacher at Colbert Elementary shared that, spurred on by the program, her students have expanded their knowledge of nutrition and are now more likely to choose fruits and vegetables over highly processed foods.

The teacher also shared with staff the unsurprising news that her second graders love the program’s food tastings. One recent tasting (part of the lesson on “MyPlate and Proteins”) treated participants to whole-grain tortilla chips with hummus, a food most of the students had never tasted. Many overcame their initial reluctance and eventually admitted they were glad they tried it. Some children asked about how hummus is made, while others wanted to know where their parents could buy it for the family.

This is just one example of how a classroom lesson results in knowledge gains that extend into the larger community. At the end of the nutrition series, the teacher said she was so happy with the [Family Nutrition Program](#) that she is already looking forward to having it be a part of her curriculum next year.

## GROCERY STORE TOURS HELP PARENTS MAKE BETTER FOOD CHOICES WITHOUT BREAKING THEIR BANK ACCOUNT

*Meg McAlpine, FCS EA III, Nassau Cty*



UF/IFAS Extension Nassau County recently provided grocery store tours to Head Start parents. The grocery store tour reaches out to families who are on a tight budget, and teaches adults how to shop for health. This hands-on approach helps overcome the belief that healthy shopping is expensive. The Cooking Matters at the Store tour curriculum is used to teach families how to stretch their food dollars so their children will get healthy meals at home. A total of nine Head Start parents participated in the two-hour tour. They learned how to compare products using unit prices, how to read labels and look

for foods low in sugar, sodium and fat, and high in fiber. Post program evaluations indicated that all participants learned something new, and indicated they will read and compare food labels to make healthier food choices. Before the tour, parents did not know how to compare unit prices; however, after the tour eight parents stated they will begin to unit price food items when they shop. Overall, everyone really liked the tour and stated they would recommend it to family and friends.



# A SALTY HERITAGE: CELEBRATING THE FISHING HISTORY OF TAMPA BAY

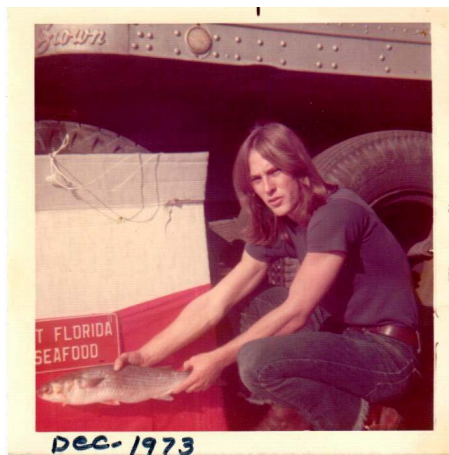
Libby Carnahan, Florida Sea Grant EA I, Pinellas Cty | Angela Collins, Florida Sea grant EA II, Manatee Cty



John Stevely, UF/IFAS Extension Florida Sea Grant Agent emeritus, talks about the history local working waterfronts in Tampa Bay; notably the sponge industry in Tarpon Springs and mullet in Cortez.



Libby Carnahan introduces the panel, from left to right: John Stevely (retired Florida Sea Grant), Dawn and Captain Bobby Aylesworth (Aylesworth Fish and Bait Inc.), Jason De La Cruz (Gulf Wild), Captain Larry Borden (recreational fisherman), and Gus Muench (commercial crabber)



A young Bobby Aylesworth showcases a mullet from Tampa Bay (1973)

The National Sea Grant Program is celebrating 50 years of Science Serving America's Coasts. (For a 30-second video: <http://bit.ly/2dhRASs>, or even better, a 10-minute video: <http://bit.ly/2e3MvL7>). To commemorate Sea Grant's cherished history of working with fishing communities, UF/IFAS Extension Florida Sea Grant agents Libby Carnahan (Pinellas County) and Angela Collins (Manatee, Hillsborough, Sarasota counties) hosted "A Salty Heritage: Celebrating the Fishing History of Tampa Bay." The program, held at Weedon Island Preserve in December 2016, was open to the public and highlighted the bounty and diversity of fishing opportunities within the Tampa Bay region. Invited panelists included the commercial and recreational sectors, and included crabbers, seafood wholesalers, and fishermen. Each speaker told tales from the past, provided insight into their industries, and shared their visions for the future. Programs such as these provide the opportunity to increase awareness and spark excitement for coastal environments, and establish a strong foundation for environmental stewards in our community.

Two of the featured keynote speakers, Captain Bob and Dawn Aylesworth, operate Aylesworth's Fish & Bait, Inc., which is a 65-year-old, second-generation family business based in the Tampa Bay area. Aylesworth's specializes in high-quality frozen baits, chums and fish attractants, and depends upon healthy marine ecosystems for their product (and their customers!). Captain Aylesworth is the current co-chair of Florida Sea Grant's Advisory Panel, and is president of the Aylesworth Foundation for the Advancement of Marine Sciences. The Aylesworth Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and enrichment of marine resources through education and research, and to date, has donated nearly \$1 million to the marine community.

Captain Jason De LaCruz, owner/operator of Don's Dock and founder of Gulf Wild, provided his insight on local fisheries, first as a recreational angler and spearfisherman and now as a commercial fishing enterprise. Jason is the Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance vice president and Gulf Wild executive director. His work with Gulf Wild led Jason to become a recipient of the first-ever Presidential Award for "Champion of Change for Sustainable Seafood."

Other panelists, including Gus Muench (commercial crabber), John Stevely (Florida Sea Grant Agent Emeritus) and Larry Borden (commercial and recreational angler and diver) were equally inspiring, and all have played a role in empowering and inspiring members of Tampa Bay's fishing communities.

The Salty Heritage program was recorded by our partners at Pinellas County Communications and can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/8xKVcA2W12I>.

## EXTENSION EDUCATION HELPS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS RESTART THEIR LIVES

*Brenda Marty-Jimenez, Health Nutrition & Food Safety CED EA III, Broward Cty*

After the death of her husband, “Joan” (pseudonym) found herself withdrawing from life. Eating alone wasn’t fun. With no one to enjoy her cooking, preparing a full meal for one person hardly seemed worth the bother, and cleaning up afterward felt like a waste of time and left her tired. She found herself making excuses to justify why she was eating crackers or cake for dinner.

In an attempt to give Joan a wakeup call she wasn’t quite ready to receive, her doctor gently admonished her for her weight gain and her lack of exercise. She knew she needed a change, but the habits she had settled into seemed too difficult to break.

The solution, it turned out, was right in front of her. For the past year, Joan had been participating in the Family Nutrition Program at the Pat Larkins Community Center in Pompano Beach, in hopes that the interaction with others might help her make new

friends even as she adjusted to life on her own. The program’s classes – a service of UF/IFAS Extension and Broward County Parks – were a pleasant diversion and piqued her interest in taking charge of her own meals again.

After several class sessions, Joan began talking with her newfound friends and discovered that others used the same excuses she did. They decided to plan weekly potluck dinners, with the only stipulation being that they would prepare nutritious foods. Old recipes that relied on frying were discarded or transformed into recipes that used baking or broiling. Vegetables and fruits received greater emphasis, and sugar-laden desserts were replaced with healthier alternatives.

Using what they learned in the classes, supplemented by their own research, the women began to lose weight, not only because they reduced their fat intake and made half their plate fruit

and vegetables, but also because they reduced portion sizes. Before long some of the women also started exercising more often, while others enrolled in cooking classes to build on their new knowledge base. As a bonus, the group provided much-needed companionship for its members.

For her part, Joan began walking regularly and found time in her life for both friends and food – only now, her food choices were healthier. Thanks to the Family Nutrition Program, she has reestablished a foundation for a better lifestyle after a period of neglecting her health and diet. Now Joan actually looks forward to her next visit to the doctor.

The Broward Family Nutrition Program is full of stories like Joan’s. The program enables its participants to share their newfound knowledge with friends and family, enhancing the quality of life for the community as a whole.

## FOOD PRESERVATION IN THE CLASSROOM

*Melanie Thomas, FCS EA II, Duval Cty*



*Just one batch of candy apple jelly cooling after processing. Students could not wait to get their hands on these!*

students, but the down time gave me the opportunity to talk to the students one-on-one and find out more about them and what they liked about the lesson. One student said she was from Vietnam and goes back at least once a year to spend time with her grandparents. She stated that her grandmother frequently makes homemade jelly and she was so excited to be able to help her grandmother in the kitchen more the next time she visits. Rather than just sitting and eating the jelly, she can surprise her grandmother by helping her and showing her what she learned in our food preservation class.

In 2016 UF/IFAS Extension Duval County FCS agents partnered with a local middle school to provide comprehensive FCS programming to students. Each FCS agent provided education based on their specific program area. Students were trained in basic nutrition, food preparation, physical fitness, food safety, food preservation, personal finance and healthy relationship strategies. One of the many hands-on activities provided was a food preservation lab.

Working with 37 middle school students at one time in a kitchen requires a lot of coordinating and cooperation between volunteers, teachers and students. After the lesson all 37 youth successfully completed the task, which resulted in every student proudly showing off their own jar of candy apple jelly. While the students were packing up an announcement was made over the loud speaker that all students and staff were to stay inside the classrooms due to a severe thunderstorm. This led to a few sighs and groans from



### LEON COUNTY TEEN COUNSELORS MOVING FRESH FRUIT TO THE COMMUNITIES IN NEED

Marcus Boston, 4-H EA IV, Leon Cty



Teens hard at work gleaning citrus from homeowner's grapefruit tree.

As a way to kick off our 2017 4-H counselor training sessions, the Leon County 4-H Program, for the 9th year in a row, decided to allow a community service project to serve as the initial ice-breaker and team building activity for our teens. This year Leon County 4-H partnered with the Leon Fruit and Nut Exchange, a nonprofit organization that seeks to improve the health and well-being of families by making fresh fruit or nuts available at no cost for people who live in areas where fresh, healthy food options are scarce. Program director and former Master Wildlife/4-H Volunteer Tabitha Frazier coordinates volunteers to glean citrus trees for homeowners who want to donate their excess fruit to a worthy cause.

On February 11th, 13 Leon County 4-H teen counselors pledged their "hands to larger service" by volunteering to



Camp Counselors working together to harvest all the fruit they can reach

glean fruit from two different homeowner sites. "We are so happy that our grapefruits will be given away to families that can enjoy them instead of our backyard being filled with fruit all over the ground that would have gone to waste," said one delighted homeowner.

This community service activity provided the teens an opportunity to get acquainted and cooperate with one another, communicate, exercise, and experience a sense of fulfillment in knowing that what they did will have a positive, long-lasting impact on families in the community. In just over two hours the youth covered two sites and picked over 400 lbs of grapefruit, lemons, tangerines, oranges, and kumquats.

### SASSY COWS 4-H GROUP LEARN ABOUT FODDER

Lynn Barber, Urban Hort EA II, Hillsborough Cty and Program Coordinators • Brent Broaddus, 4-H Agent III, Hillsborough Cty and Program Coordinator • Nicole Pinson, Urban Hort EA I and Master Gardener Program Coordinator, Hillsborough Cty • Susan Haddock, Commercial Hort EA III, Hillsborough Cty • Jamila Lepore, FCS EA I, Hillsborough Cty • Alicia Whidden, Vegetable Crops EA III, Hillsborough Cty



At Pepin Academy in Hillsborough County, twelve students with identified learning or learning related disabilities were taught new horticulture skills so they could

grow and sell plants for the Strawberry Festival Youth Plant Sale. As members of the 4-H group Sassy Cows, these students participated in an 11-week program that taught the importance of agriculture, horticulture, small farms and community and home gardens. Program methods and activities included demonstrations followed by active student participation in reading a seed packet, planting seeds and plants, installing a trellis, hand watering, installing

microirrigation, describing plant nutrition, identifying good and bad bugs, scouting and recognizing pollinators and environmentally safe pesticides/insecticides. One parent stated, "The skills learned in Sassy Cows and Garden Goodies will serve (our son) the rest of his life. We feel blessed to have the opportunity to be a part of this program." Another parent commented, "Garden Goodies taught (our son) so much about composting. He was always so excited daily about what we were going to put into our compost pail and bring to Garden Goodies. He learned to plant and grow vegetables and he actually got to eat what they grew." Impact on youth involved was significant, with one grandparent remarking her grandson engaged in less self-harm while participating as a member of Sassy Cows. This collaboration of program areas provided horticulture education and life skills an educational opportunity that the Sassy Cows 4-H'ers can transfer to school, home and for other life situations.



## FROM SPIN CLUB TO IN-SCHOOL CLUB

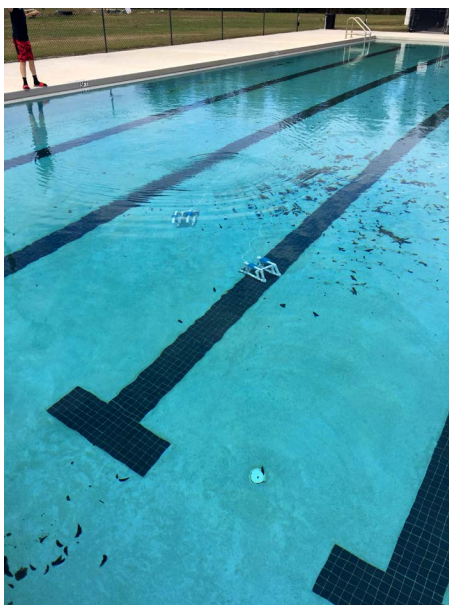
Kristen Poppell, 4-H EA I, Nassau Cty



Students test their robots in the community center pool



The group shows off their robots after testing them



Testing out the robots

Take a group of gifted middle school students and give them the chance to build their own robots – what could be a better fit? Last fall, a local middle school teacher reached out to Nassau County 4-H to start a Seaperch program with her gifted students. The SeaPerch program allows youth to construct underwater robots, or ROVs (remotely operated vehicles). Working from pre-packaged kits, youth are responsible for building both the vehicle itself and its control box. The program began as an in-school special interest project (SPIN club). This short-term approach allowed the teacher to see how 4-H could enhance her curriculum and benefit her students without a long-term commitment. It also gave youth a chance to try out 4-H before becoming community club members.

Over the course of four weeks, the students split into two groups to build frames and control boxes for their ROVs, waterproof and mount the motors, and troubleshoot issues as they arose. When the day arrived to test the ROVs, both were up and running successfully. The students had an absolute blast testing them in the community center pool by making them swim, dive, and even race! The students also gained scientific knowledge related to robotics, electricity, and applied science and enhanced many tangible skills, such as measuring, soldering, using pipe cutters and drilling.

After such a successful short-term project, the agent shared the opportunity to continue to have a 4-H presence in their classroom as an in-school club. Both the teacher and the students were excited for this possibility. The class decided to continue on the robotics track and move on to building Lego EV3 robots. The club officially launched in February and is led by the teacher and a Nassau County 4-H volunteer. Continued interaction with these students has made 4-H a more distinguished presence in a school where previous 4-H programming had been limited to Tropicana Public Speaking. Being part of a longer project will give youth increased opportunities to build life skills, as well as provide the opportunity to learn more about other programs offered by 4-H.

## 4-H MEMBERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLCHILDREN

Alyssa Slavin, 4-H EA I, Pinellas Cty



Ochs Garden 4-H Club present the donation bags

On December 15th, the Pinellas County Ochs Garden 4-H Club presented Anona Elementary School with over fifty bags of donated books and school supplies. The 4-H members planned and organized this service project with the help of the club leader Maribel and parents. These books and supplies were collected and donated by the 4-H members themselves, because they wanted to share their love of reading with students that may not be able to afford their own books at home. The 4-H members knew that teachers and schools in Pinellas County often struggle with getting enough supplies, leaving little money for extras like classroom books. With this project, they were able to help at least fifty classrooms get some of the much-needed supplies and classroom books. A thank you card from the school read, "Thank you so much for donating the books and school supplies to Anona Elementary. Our teachers were so excited to pass them along to their students! Thank you so much for choosing to help Anona for your project! You did a great job!" The 4-H Ochs Garden Club and all of Pinellas County 4-H members continue to make the community better by participating in projects such as this one.

## MORE THAN MOVING A DRUM, IT'S LIFE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Stephanie Conner, 4-H EA II, Clay Cty



Campers trying to lift and move the drum



Campers realizing the drum was too heavy to lift and carry



After several minutes the campers devised a new plan to move the drum



Campers taking turns rolling drum to the new location

All About Animals is a weeklong 4-H day camp geared towards children 5-8 years old. Campers received more than 45 hours of education as they learned about different species of animals and habitats and developed their communication, teamwork, confidence and critical-thinking skills. During the 2016 camp we had an opportunity to watch these skills develop and be put to use right before our eyes.

On the fourth day of camp, while picking up after the wildlife lesson, the campers asked if they could move a 55-gallon drum (empty of course) in front of their projects for protection. For the first five minutes, the campers argued back and forth about who was going to get to move the drum. Next, two sets of two campers began challenging each other who would be able to move the drum the farthest. As the minutes ticked by, the children were all struggling to move this heavy drum and were getting pretty frustrated. I asked if they needed help, the campers all said, "No, we can do this! We just need a lot more time." With that the campers started talking *with* each other rather than *to* each other. Within 6 minutes they had tipped the drum over and had begun to work as a

team, rolling the drum to its new location, each camper with their own task. As the drum rolled closer, the campers were taking turns rolling and cheering each other on. As the drum reached its new location, the campers were high fiving each other and yelling, "Did you see that, did you see what we did? Can we try to roll another barrel... please?"

In 4-H we often wonder if youth truly develop life skills that will help them as they grow. Having the opportunity to watch these young campers take the communication and critical thinking skills we worked on in the days prior and apply them to a real life situation was reassuring and neat. It was as if you could actually watch their brains working through the process and develop new skills. As each one of them completed their task and saw the team goal achieved, the campers walked a little taller the rest of the day. With each activity that followed, they tried harder and worked together for solutions before asking for help from the adults. We do make a difference, and every once in a while we are blessed to be able to see the impact we make!

## JUMP INTO THE GATOR PIT!

Vanessa Spero-Swingle, 4-H RSA II, South District



Lights glaring...All eyes on the competitor at the front of the room... Audience is silent. Welcome to the Gator Pit! If a youth has made it to this point, it means they have gone through a detailed application process,

stands behind them with all the encouragement and support they can give, while at the same time cheering wildly if one of their own walks across the stage.

grueling judges panel, crash course in presentations, and been given an earful on how to succeed in the world of business. Now they must pitch their business idea in front of an audience of 200 of their peers. The 4-H Youth Development program

Gator Pit is a Florida 4-H program that searches for the most innovative young entrepreneurs, inventors, creators and business people. Participants demonstrate goal-setting, financial literacy, creativity, communication skills and effective marketing. If, upon completion of a written application, participants are selected as one of five finalists, they will pitch their business ideas at 4-H University before a panel of judges. Participants will also receive coaching tips on selling their pitch and are taught business savvy skills through hands-on workshops. The highlight of the event is a showcase where the participants present their ideas in front of their peers. The winner has the chance to walk away with up to \$1,250 in scholarship money.



According to an eXtension study, “Seeding a Successful Future: Youth Entrepreneurship,” the benefits of encouraging youth to participate in an entrepreneurship program can be seen as an increased willingness to take personal responsibility, increased earning power, enhanced social skills, improved grades, and increased participation in school-related activities.

4-H follows the experiential learning model. The “apply” leg of that model is imperative to help youth take what they’ve learned to the next level. Gator

Pit was created to achieve that last step of project work—by applying what youth have learned in their projects, they have an opportunity to showcase their talent and work in an effort to secure scholarship money and receive recognition.

Do entrepreneurial programs actually have an impact? Based on a study of youth who completed the University of Nebraska’s ESI Entrepreneurship Investigation Curriculum, 85% saw themselves as entrepreneurs, 90% believe in planning upon conclusion of the program, 75% were more likely

to be a business owner, 55% know about opportunities to develop new businesses, 89% found ways they could give back to their communities.

Ready to jump in? Whether you’re an agent looking to get your youth involved, a business guru who would like to be a judge, or an entrepreneur who would like to support the contest, go to the following web page for more information: [http://florida4h.org/programsandevents/\\_gator-pit/](http://florida4h.org/programsandevents/_gator-pit/) and feel free to jump into the Gator Pit with us!

## GROWING CHARACTER THROUGH LIVESTOCK PROJECTS

David Nistler, Agriculture/Natural Resources CED II, Union County



Bradford/Union County Fair 2017. Youth demonstrating what they have learned.

Those of us who work with 4-H youth understand that there are many skills gained by youth through livestock projects, including responsibility, caring for others, making good decisions, managing money, keeping records, etc. These are important characteristics to develop in our youth.

A youth livestock show is the culmination of a years’ work and effort. It’s a community event, highlighting competition between youth within their chosen livestock projects. These youth take great pride in exhibiting their animal—character is on full display.

Over the past few years, many states including Florida have implemented compulsory ethics clinics for youth livestock shows. These clinics serve a variety of purposes, but chief among them is to remind youth of the ethical practices of livestock projects.

In 2016, UF/IFAS Extension Union Cty conducted youth livestock show ethics training at various state and regional events. These clinics are designed to be conversational – discussion is prompted with topics and open-ended questions. This method works well when talking about ethics, as ethics are not taught but reminded. This year’s clinic was highly successful; youth demonstrated high levels of understanding, problem solving, and communication skills. These clinics build upon and strengthen nearly all the impacts we have as youth educators, and truly helps grow character.

## NASSAU COUNTY EXTENSION & 4-H HATCH COMMUNITY SUCCESS!

Kelsey Irvine, 4-H EA I, Nassau Cty



Every youth participated in building and painting the new coop. The team shown here helped assemble the lumber and cut/attach the wire mesh.



All the youth and some of the volunteers painted their hands to leave their personal touch on the coop. Nassau County 4-H agent, Kelsey Irvine and volunteer instructor Dave Edwards are also pictured.

What comes first in 4-H Embryology, the chicken or the egg? Supplying eggs for the Nassau County 4-H school enrichment program is the first, and easiest, step... but then comes the end result, when dozens of classes start simultaneously producing chicks! In previous years teachers were responsible for finding homes for their classroom chicks, and sometimes excess chicks were adopted by agents. This was an “okay” solution, but this year Nassau County 4-H decided to repurpose a dilapidated aquaponics structure into a working chicken coop. Chicks could then be housed at the Extension Office in Callahan where they’d be available for public adoption — and more importantly for new inspired 4-H members to start poultry projects with their classroom friends.

On February 18th, 12 volunteers (7 youth) spent three hours transforming a rickety frame into a chicken coop. Supplies were donated from community partners, and a volunteer instructor taught the youth all the steps needed to complete the structure. Every youth participated in building and painting the coop. In fact, the majority of the work was carried out directly by the youth with only minimal assistance by adults. For one youth the experience was so enjoyable that she requested a hammer tacker for Christmas!

### *Hatch Community, continued*

With the coop built, chicks would be housed for 1 week after the classroom pick-up date and advertised for a suggested donation of \$5 each. The first set of chicks settled in on March 13th. At this time over 40 chicks have been adopted by youth and over \$160 in donations have been collected to further support the 4-H Embryology Program. Each family took home 4-H information and direct contact information to club leaders specializing in poultry. This extra step allowed Extension to help first-time poultry families obtain sufficient and trusted guidance and information. The program will continue until the end of May.

Now Nassau County can inspire new 4-Hers to join using in-school programs already in place, while fundraising to continue the program's quality. This small construction project translated into youth gaining larger life skills such as cooperation, wise use of resources, and problem solving. This solution would not have been possible without the time and donations from Nassau County partners and volunteers.

## NOTE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Celia Hill, retired Extension Agent from Lee County and a Past-President of Florida's Alpha Delta Chapter of ESP is undergoing treatment for cancer. She is her usual high-spirited self, but the treatments are taking their toll. Some agents are working together to raise funds to help with basic housekeeping and cleaning services while she is having the second round of chemotherapy. Please find our fundraising effort at <http://www.floridianfabrics.com/celia.html> and join with us to celebrate the "Celia Strong" spirit and give strength to our dear friend.

We would like to welcome the following new and transferring faculty. These individuals were hired following a highly-competitive search, screening, and selection process. In some cases, candidates interviewed both on the UF campus in Gainesville and in a county Extension office. Selection was often difficult because we typically have two or three suitable candidates. These new faculty are truly the best of the best!

### ARRIVALS

Janes Yarborough, Ag/Nat Res EA I, Orange County

Noelle Guay, 4-H EA I, Palm Beach County

JanaFaye Griffin, FCS EA I, Orange County

Amanda Marek, FFL EA I, Marion County

Matthew Krug, Food Science SSA II, South Central District

Marguerite Beckford, Com Hort EA II, Sarasota County

Carol Alberts, CRD EA I, St. Lucie County

Patrick Williams, Res Hort EA II, Sarasota County

Stacey Struhar, FCS EA I, Pasco County

Shelly Johnson, FL Mast Nat/Nat Res SSA II, Statewide

### NEW POSITIONS

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

Brian Estevez, 4-H EA II Escambia County from 4-H Suwannee County

Clay Cooper, Ag/Nat Res EA I Citrus County from Ag/Com Hort Citrus County

Samantha Kennedy, FCS EA II Wakulla County from South Central District

Maxine Hunter, Res Hort EA I Marion County from Ag/Res Hort Flagler County

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

### DEPARTURES

Karen Miliffe, 4-H EA II, Orange County

Norma Samuel, Res Hort EA III, Marion County

Vanessa Bielema, Sustain Ag/Food Sys EA I, Collier County

James McWhorter, Livestock EA I, Highlands County

Morgan Hopkins, FFL Prg EA I, Miami-Dade County

Eric Westbrook, 4-H EA I, Wakulla County

### RETIREMENTS

Mary 'Betsy' Nayfield-Crisp, FCS EA IV, Pasco County

Mary Sue Kennington, FCS EA III, Orange County

Catherine Rogers, FCS/4-H EA II, Suwannee County

Will Sheftall, Natural Resources EA IV, Leon County