

Northeast News

A District Newsletter

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From the District Director



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What I've Learned at the 2010 NAE4-HA Conference: "Your Passport to Success"

Attending the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents conference held in Phoenix on October 24-28 was an enriching experience – intellectually that is. This year was different for me: I attended as an administrator, but also as a 4-H parent.

First, there were many Florida delegates. The Florida delegation was comprised of nearly 40 agents, RSAs and state specialists. It was refreshing to see that despite the countries' economical climate, Florida's resources and commitment to professional engagement at the national level allowed our 4-H agents to travel in such large number. Not all the states are in the same situation.

Our own Debbie Nistler gave a vibrant and passionate view on how she plans to lead the NAE4-HA and convinced the attendance that she is the right person for the job. Together with Marcus Boston, they will represent the best of Florida 4-H at the national level. Congratulations – and thank you for stepping up!

Dr. Keith Diem, the new UF/IFAS 4-H program leader was also cheering with the orange and blue group when we presented the many reasons why 4-H agents should attend the 2012 4-H meeting in Orlando to the tune of "it's a small world after all" (mark your calendars-October 21-25, 2012!). After just a few days on the job, Keith is already working on how to address the 4-H IRS compliance mandate. More on this soon.

Second, it was good to see the central role of life skills in 4-H programming. Life skills are the set of individual human skills acquired by teaching or experience that are instrumental in handling problems and answering question throughout life. Through the experiential learning process, youth internalize knowledge, acquire tools and gain the ability to apply the skills appropriately.

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ALACHUA, BAKER, BRADFORD, CLAY, COLUMBIA, DIXIE, DUVAL, GILCHRIST, HAMILTON, LAFAYETTE, LEVY, MADISON, NASSAU, SUWANNEE, TAYLOR, AND UNION COUNTIES

District Life



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The NE Green Team Teams up to Address Commercial and Homeowner Horticultural Needs

The Northeast Florida Green Team is a working group comprised of our district's horticulture agents and supportive UF/IFAS faculty and specialists with extension appointments. The team assembles each quarter for a business meeting and educational program. Smaller project committee members meet on an 'as needed' basis.

An issue of great concern to us right now is the education and pesticide

licensing of our landscape maintenance clients. With the advent of new state legislation and local ordinances, these clients must obtain licenses that require passing difficult tests. Because of low state-wide passing rates, the Green Team has developed a plan to improve these rates while documenting this improvement.

The Limited Commercial Landscape Maintenance is one such test with a history of low passing percentages. A Green Team committee is working now to develop a quality curriculum that is standardized across the district. Members have coordinated class offering dates so there are enough high quality programs in convenient locations to meet the needs of clients. Agents are happily crossing county lines to help deliver these top notch programs.

All of these efforts are ultimately aimed towards properly educating landscape professionals in the responsible use of water, fertilizers and pesticides in order to minimize non point source pollution. Several team members are working on evaluation tools that will measure knowledge gain and behavior change regarding water conservation and fertilizer management. These tools will also be standardized.

Through these Green Team efforts, we anticipate significant positive outcomes. As a collective Green Team effort, the inferences that we hope to draw from combined district wide data may show enough impact that we'll hasten to broaden our cooperative endeavors.

New Hires, Retirements and Recognition

The Northeast District has had two new CEDs join us recently. **Basil Bactawar** started in Union County in July and **Michael Davis** started in Baker County in September.



Basil obtained his Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from University of the West Indies, his Masters of Science from University of Manitoba and a Certificate in International Development from University of British Columbia. His professional experience spans thirty five years of service in both the public and

private sector, working mainly in agricultural extension. He worked as a Livestock Development Officer with Guyana Ministry of Agriculture, as an Animal Nutritionist in Ontario and as College Instructor with Assiniboine Community College in Manitoba. He joined British

Columbia Ministry of Agriculture in 1994 as an Industry Specialist with provincial responsibility for the small ruminant, horse and forage industries. He provided technical support as a volunteer to several livestock projects in six developing countries over the past eight years through U.S.A.I.D.



Michael A. Davis was born and raised in Etowah County, Alabama; Attended Boaz High School; Graduated from Auburn University with Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Poultry Science, 1997 and 2004, respectively. Michael worked for GoldKist as a Quality Assurance Supervisor prior to working Texas

A&M University as an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in the Poultry Science Department.

How Does the **University of Florida** Work?



Debbie Nistler

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Learn By Doing & Religious Neutrality

The traditions of 4-H and Extension activities are as engrained in communities as many of our biggest family traditions. Youth and families gather, learn about their projects, celebrate accomplishments, and plan the activities of the year. An accepted social tradition at many public activities, especially

in the southern region, is the blessing at the beginning of a meeting. This is where 4-H and other community activities differ; 4-H events should not include a prayer. But, as we are part of a community, we must also be respectful of its citizens and the topic of religion is a very sensitive one.

4-H is a unique youth organization in many ways. It is the only youth development organization in the United States outside the public school system that is truly public, overseen by the United States Department of Agriculture. The Green Clover carries the same protection as the Presidential Seal and with that protection the freedoms and individual liberties it represents. For this reason,

4-H events and activities should not have structured religious activities such as a prayer.

This is great in theory or in a publication, but how do you truly implement this in your county program? The answer is thoughtfully and with the guidance of your county advisory committee. Your committee can be your greatest ally when questions come up about this policy. You don't plan your county program on your own and this situation is no different. Remember ultimately the county agent will need a strong relationship with these stakeholders and this will be an easier transition if you take the lead in this transition.

Featured County **Extension Office**

Greetings From the City of Jacksonville

By **Mike Sweat**
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Duval County covers the largest metropolitan area in the Northeast Extension District covering 874.3 square miles. It was created in 1822 and named for William Polk Duval Florida's Governor at the time. Although we are one of the largest urban areas, agriculture still plays a key part in our local economy. In fact agriculture contributes \$2 billion to our local economy annually.

What makes us different than most counties in Florida is that we have a consolidated form of government. The city of Jacksonville and Duval County merged

in 1968 expanding Jacksonville city limits and made it the largest city in land area in the United States. Jacksonville is also the most populous city in Florida and 13th in the United States with a population of over 850,000 residents. We do not have a county commission, but rather a mayor and 19 city councilmen which represent all areas of the county.

The St. Johns River (only one of two rivers that flow north in the United States) flows through the city and provides unique opportunities for recreation, shipping and naval facilities. Jacksonville has the largest urban park system in the United States with over 50,000 acres dedicated to parks and preservation lands.

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Jacksonville skyline.

The county extension office is located close to downtown and houses thirteen agents, nine program assistants and eleven staff personnel. Last year over 566,000 residents utilized our extension services. We conducted 1,560 educational programs, handled 21,000 telephone calls and 24,000 emails. Twelve hundred trained volunteers assist with

our programs. These volunteers donated over 74,400 volunteer hours representing a value of \$1,506,600.

Our Urban Gardening program works with over 20 community gardens throughout Jacksonville. This program provides the opportunity for residents to learn sustainable gardening techniques.

We also have one of only two operating canning centers in Florida. The canning center provides Jacksonville residents the ability to preserve locally grown fruits and vegetables as well as a unique learning environment.

For more information, visit our web site at <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu>

Roaming Interview Section

By **Larry Figart**
Duval County Extension Agent
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Who are your co-workers? Good question! Although we might work with individuals for years, many times we don't know much about them – because we are always working! Each quarter the newsletter team would like to interview a different person from the district so that we can become more familiar with each other. It seemed logical to start with Eric Simonne.

Where are you from/where did you grow up? I am a native Floridian born in France who grew up in a big town in the south west mostly known for violet plants, rugby, and aerospace industry: Toulouse, la ville rose (the pink city because of the color of the terracotta bricks and roof tiles of old houses).

How and when did you decide you wanted to work in Extension? When I was in college, I realized that in agriculture, information transfer is as important as information development. The beauty (and efficiency) of the US land-grant system is that Research and Extension are two explicit functions of the same universities – and often the same people. Research and Extension go hand in hand.

What are your hobbies? I've always liked running and traveling.

State something about yourself that most people don't know about you. I am a double agent working for the CIA. That's why no one knows (and no one will believe it!)

If you won the lottery tomorrow, what would you do/how would you spend your time? Interestingly enough, I sometimes talk about this with Amy. We both agree that we like what we do and would continue doing the same thing and work for IFAS Extension.

Where did you go on your last vacation? Amy, Audrey and I went to Thailand this summer.

What was the last book you read? "FYI: For Your Improvement, A guide for development and coaching," by Michael Lombardo and Robert Eichinger. Among others, this book describes in clear terms the core leadership competencies. Recommended to everyone wanting to improve themselves.

What is the weirdest question you had to answer as an extension agent? Two phone calls always come to my mind in this category. One day, someone wanted

me to guarantee them that it was not going to freeze anymore that season and it was ok for them to plant their tomatoes... (maybe they had the wrong number or got me confused with the weather channel). The other one was someone who did not believe that the best way to have their strange looking potato plants (10-ft long thick stems, pale leaves about the size of a finger nail) that were in her basement grow normally again was to (1) remove the boards off their basement windows, (2) take the plants outside and (3) return the grow lights they had just bought to the store. They "knew" the plants were "copper deficient." All I needed to do was to validate this diagnostic.

Do you play a musical instrument?
Nope.

What is the most exciting place you have ever visited? I have been to many exciting places in the world, but as a horticulturist, the top one has to be a greenhouse range I visited in Kuwait that was air-conditioned because it is too hot outside.

Success Stories



Lori Wiggins

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Adventures in 4-H Camping

Taylor County is a rural community with limited planned summer activities for youth, and has chronically above state averages in poverty levels and unemployment. During the summer month's youth in Taylor County are limited in choices and need a safe place to go where they can continue to learn and enhance their out-of-school time.

Lori Wiggins, 4-H Extension Agent III conducts twelve continuous week-long sessions of 4-H day camps and one week

of residential camp is offered to youth from ages 5-18. Each week, activities are organized around a theme. Themes include marine science, environmental education, sports nutrition, culinary arts, nutrition, science and technology and animal science education. Each day camp is held Monday thru Thursday, 9:00am-5:00pm, providing campers with a safe environment while their parents work. Each session incorporates hands-on activities, field trips, guest speakers, arts & crafts and/or recreational activities. Learning is measured at each camp through pre and post-tests. Trained senior 4-Hers are provided leadership opportunities to help during the day camps and the week of residential camp.

In 2010, Taylor County 4-H camping programs reached 485 youth. Through participating in these camps, youth

develop a better sense of awareness for the environment, aquatic systems, animals, and agriculture products. 99% of the youth surveyed, stated that they would like to return to camp next summer and we are already working at ensuring that such opportunities will also be available in 2011. Each week post-test scores showed an overall increase in subject matter knowledge by almost double and 100% of the teen volunteers reported an increase in their leadership skills.

In 2010 4-H camps gave youth the opportunity to continue learning during the summer months while meeting new friends and having fun in a safe environment.



4-Hers having fun at a fishing day camp.



Day Campers learning how to properly follow a recipe during a Culinary Day Camp.



Day Camper learning about the many uses of forestry equipment.



Youth learning about aquatic specimen during a marine day camp

Information Technologies



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The Dark Side of the Internet – What I’ve Learned

For well over a year now I’ve been re-searching Internet security in my spare time. When I began, I thought I knew something about it, but I was mistaken.

I’d like to share with you some of the things I’ve learned.

I knew about viruses (viri?) and worms. I’d heard of Trojans. Otherwise I was clueless.

I learned that malware is an abbreviation for malicious software.

I learned that there’s much more to malware than I knew.

I thought that some, if not most of the malware created was written by teens proving themselves by hacking into websites and posting digital graffiti, or trying to break into the pentagon. I was very wrong.

I learned that cybercrime is big business. VERY big business... as in global... as in billions of dollars annually. There are certainly amateurs around the edges of this industry, but in the center are professional gangs. They’re organized, sophisticated, well-funded, and clever. Devious might be a better word. The amateurs do the dirty work, the risky work. They’re a lot more likely to get caught.

I learned that malware is way more sophisticated than I knew.

Did you know that there are now malware ‘kits’ being sold online?
<http://bit.ly/a6zDSi>

The prices range from free, yes free, to \$10,000 and more depending on the bells and whistles.

These ‘kits’ have simplified malware and cybercrime to the point where average people that are only a little tech savvy can enter the game. Would you believe there are call centers running 24/7 to help criminals with software problems?

Did you know there are websites online where stolen credit card numbers – complete with PIN numbers – are sold in lots of 1,000 or more? Needless to say, you need serious references to access these sites. The FBI infiltrated and ran one of these sites to gather information

sites. They closed it down in 2008. More here: <http://bit.ly/bmazra>

Scareware happens when you get a popup on your screen screaming that you’re infected. It’s intimidating. People panic. If they click on most anything they get infected. Scareware is a small portion of cybercrime, yet it’s still BIG business. <http://bit.ly/8YP3LM>

One of these cyber gangs was taken down this past September. Ninety arrest warrants issued in the U.S., 19 in the U.K., and five in the Ukraine. The gang attempted to steal \$220 million but only got \$70 million. Only! This was a huge bust that involved dozens of agencies over multiple countries. It took an amazing degree of cooperation. More information here: <http://bit.ly/bzio00>

And I haven’t even mentioned botnets yet. I talk a lot about the nooks and crannies of Internet Security on my blog – TechTeachToo.com

Dave Palmer is an Instructional Media Agent. His job is to help IFAS/Extension faculty and staff in the South Central Extension District better understand and utilize technology to accomplish the IFAS mission. His website is at <http://TechTeachtoo.com>

Teaching Tips



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When do Adults Learn?

When I joined Extension my contractual obligations included my getting a Master's Degree. Having no formal training in teaching, I decided to pursue a degree in Extension Education. It was a logical choice since the number one ag education college in the country, yes the University of Florida's AEC Department, was offering a new, long distance program.

Occasionally I enjoy browsing through some of my textbooks in search of gold nuggets I can use to enhance my client's learning experience. Here is a list of 8 principles identified by Robert J. Birkenholz in chapter 4 of his text entitled, *Effective Adult Learning*.

1. Learning is change: For learning to be effective it must occur in the form of both knowledge gain and eventually behavior change. Although learning can occur in a group setting it is an individual process.
2. Adults must want to learn: Adults do not have to go to school, they attend classes because they want to.
3. Adults learn by doing: Encourage them to become engaged. Plan basic early-workshops and progress to advanced topics.
4. Learning should focus on realistic problems: don't waste their time or yours!
5. Experience affects adult learning: Adults need information tailored to their experience.
6. Adults learn best in informal settings: Let adults establish their own set of operating rules to promote transformation to becoming self directed learners. Food is always popular.
7. Use variety in teaching adults: Involve multiple senses for long term retention.
8. Adults want guidance, not grades: Develop a trusting relationship with clients and do not compare them to others.

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