

April 2011

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Visit us on the web at <http://extension.hernandocounty.us>

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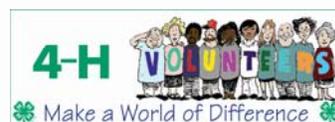
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Director's Notes

April is National Volunteer Month. We have incredible volunteers within our organization. Volunteers take a number of active roles in our day to day operation. For example, some Master Gardeners have telephone duty where they answer common, and not so common, questions that residents have about lawns and gardens. Other Master Gardeners have jobs that suit their skill set. 4-H club leaders are teaching the UF curriculum to our younger generation. In some cases our club leaders teach at school during the day and the 4-H club in the evening. Our diverse volunteer base consists of highly educated and motivated professionals and former professionals. Our newest group of volunteers are the Florida Master Money Mentors. These university trained volunteers extend the educational opportunities of our Money Management Program. Collectively, our volunteers performed 56,384 hours of service in 2010 for an economic benefit of \$1,175,606.

Thank you to all our Extension volunteers for your support throughout the year and your dedication to educating our community!



Bugs that Will Bug You in April



The **jadera bugs** are red as juveniles but will grow black wings. They are actually beneficial in that they feed on the seed of golden raintrees. My recommendation is to leave them alone...they'll be gone soon!

Lubber grasshoppers are black when they're young but will soon grow into a very large grasshopper. The easiest time to kill them is while they're still black. A size 11 works very well since they're congregated in large numbers as juveniles. A size 6 shoe also works well; it only requires twice the number of stomps.



There are a few holdover **tussock caterpillars** from the incredible infestation that we had last month. Many a honey-do list will include removing the cocoons from the siding of homes.

The immature **leaffooted bug** will be red; as an adult they are a brown-grey color. They, along with their cousins, stinkbugs, do a lot of damage to your vegetable garden by piercing into your fruit. If you wish to rid your garden of these critters, insecticides would need to be applied while they're young.



Time to Tune-Up Your Irrigation System!



When it comes to your irrigation system, try to get the biggest bang for your buck. Start by looking for problems. Turn on the system manually. Most irrigation controller clocks have a button or a dial for a manual start. Do this on your watering day to avoid getting in trouble for watering on the wrong day! Do you see any leaks, broken pipes or broken sprinkler heads? The freezing temperatures we experienced this past winter may have caused some pipes to split or crack. Check to make sure the sprinkler heads are watering the lawn and not the street or house. Look for sprinkler heads that have become victims of lawn mower blight, a situation that occurs when the irrigation head has been cut off, causing a geyser-like output of water. You may need to repair or replace pipes or irrigation heads. Remember to replace irrigation heads with the same type of sprinkler head. Ideally, you should check your irrigation system every month for problems.

Did you remember to set your irrigation time clock to the current time when we sprang forward an hour in March? Make sure it is set properly for a.m. or p.m. The best time for the system to irrigate the lawn is as close to sunrise as possible.

If you have not done so, calibrate your irrigation system. This sounds technical but it's really very simple. All you need is a few straight sided cans and a ruler. Begin the calibration by setting 5 to 10 short, straight sided cans (tuna or cat food cans work quite well for this purpose) randomly in zone 1 of your irrigation system. Mark the inside of each can with a permanent marker 3/4 of an inch up the side of the can. Turn on the water to the zone. Begin timing how long it takes to accumulate an average depth of 3/4 inch of water in the cans. Record this time for zone 1. Repeat the calibration test for each of the remaining zones. Typically speaking, zones with stationary spray heads need less time than a similar zone with rotary spray heads. Once you have finished the calibration testing of your system, adjust the time for each zone from the information you have collected from your calibration test results. **Never** change these settings unless you make changes to the irrigation system! The goal is to deliver 3/4 of an inch of water each time you irrigate, all year long.

Need to replace plants that froze to death this winter?

Master Gardeners Spring Plant Sale

Saturday, April 30, 2011

19490 Oliver Street, Brooksville

9:00 a.m. to noon

The Master Gardeners have propagated hundreds of plants ideally suited to our climate. Prices are very reasonable!



4-H WITH EXTENSION AGENT NANCY MOORES

Things you may want to do in the next few months

Hernando County 4-H is a busy program year round. There are many things to do in the coming months but registration deadlines are often well in advance of the event. Please be sure to get your name, or members' names, on the *I'm Interested List* or visit one of several websites for more information:
<http://extension.hernandocounty.us> or <http://florida4h.org>

 **April 14-25** is the third Tractor Supply Clover Campaign. Visit our local TSC on the truck route and purchase a clover to support our program. Better yet, choose a day to spend at TSC promoting your club, project or idea to the public and help us ask for clover supporters.

 **May 21** is our Annual Buc Bay Fun Day 2011. Members, families, and friends are able to purchase advance tickets for only \$9.00 and spend the day at Buccaneer Bay and Weeki Wachee Springs. This event is open to our entire district so come visit with 4-H families from four counties. Sales end on May 7 so register soon.

 **May 27-Aug 1** is your window of opportunity to turn in your completed Record Book. We are trying something new this year and giving you a chance to work on your book throughout the summer and turn it in later. To earn a year pin and be eligible for project awards, your book must be in the 4-H office by August 1, 2011.

 **June 13-17** is our week of Camp for members ages 8-12 not yet entering high school. Camp is held at 4-H Camp Ocala; registration includes food, transportation, t-shirt, snacks, classes, activities and everything else needed for a great week. Packets now available on the web or in the office.

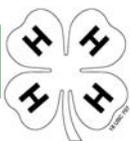
 **June 20-24** is 4-H Legislature week for those senior members ages 14-18. Spend a week in Tallahassee getting a hands on learning experience about how Florida's government works. Lobby for bills, legislate for law or become a reporter for the week. There are dances and social activities, too, while staying on FSU campus. This is a great program for senior members only. Registration ends in April.

 **July 7-9** is our 4-H State Horse Show open to qualifiers. Join members from around the state at the State Fairgrounds in Tampa and cheer on friends and fellow 4-H'ers from District VII. If you are a novice rider, get some great tips and see what you can work towards.

 **July 25-29** is 4-H Congress on the UF campus in Gainesville. You can earn your way there with a blue ribbon demonstration or fashion project or you can ask to attend as a council representative. Another event for senior members ages 14-18 that includes a variety of workshops, leadership programs, social networking and a chance to visit with 4-H'ers from around the state.

Throughout the summer, Hernando County Extension will be offering day camps on various topics. You may have youth interested in Bug Camp, Science Camp, Craft Camp or Recreation Camp. Our dates are still being finalized but feel free to get names on the *I'm Interested List*.

Email your 4-H Agent at nmoores@ufl.edu or visit her on Facebook, search Nancy M Moores



If you are young, start saving now and be rich in retirement



Young workers are more concerned with kick-starting careers, not ending them in the long-distant future. It's worth noting that the very fact you are young gives you a huge edge if you want to be rich in retirement. That's because when you're in your 20s, you can invest smaller amounts for a short period and end up with far more money than someone older who saves much more over a longer period.

Consider this: If you begin saving for retirement at 25, putting away \$2,000 a year for just 40 years, you'll have around \$560,000, assuming earnings grow at eight percent annually. Now, let's say you wait until you're 35 to start saving. You put away the same \$2,000 a year, but for three decades instead, and earnings grow at eight percent a year. When you're 65, you'll wind up with around \$245,000 -- less than half the money.

Seems pretty simple, right? Save a little now and reap big rewards later.

Unfortunately, many of today's youngest workers do not take advantage of the opportunity to save for retirement early, when the beauty of compounding interest can work its magic and maximize savings. A recent study by a human resources consultant found that just 31 percent of young workers (those born in 1978 or later) who are eligible to put money into a 401(k) retirement savings plan actually do so. That's less than half of the 63 percent of workers between ages 26 and 41 who do invest in employer-sponsored savings accounts.

Reaching your financial goals is much like finding a specific location a hundred miles away. With just a little planning, you can head in the general direction and probably get close to your destination. However, by using detailed directions provided by a GPS device, you can get there quicker and with a lot less wasted time and energy.

Financial planning is the "GPS" device for a successful retirement fund. By using the directions provided by good financial planning, you can reach your retirement fund destination with little wasted time, and get there a lot quicker than just heading out in the general direction with no plan of how to get there.



The Canning Corner

It's spring and things are heating up at the Rock Cannery! Flossie has informed us that the gardens are starting to come in and the place is hopping! Make those appointments to take your produce to the cannery to process. Appointments are definitely a must this time of year so there is room for everyone to work and your jars are able to be processed in a timely manner. Cannery hours are Tuesday *through* Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and the membership fee is \$25 annually.

The local u-pick farms are open, as well. The Extension Office has a brochure of the local u-picks with which we are familiar. If you know someone that has a u-pick farm, please have them give us a call so we can list them in our brochure. We don't want to leave anyone out! Veggies and fruit coming into the cannery to be canned at this time include tomatoes and green beans; corn should be ready early May; and blueberries are ready for picking. So plan a trip to a u-pick and then you might want to try your hand at canning! If you're a beginner, no worry, Flossie will get you up to speed in no time.

