

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

VOLUSIA COUNTY: Increasing Ecotourism Opportunities

Sometimes when you least expect it, an idea hits you. That is just what happened to me last September at the National Extension Tourism Conference. I was attended a presentation on paddling trails located in upstate New York, when that “Ah Ha” moment hit me. Why not develop a paddling trail from St. Augustine to Cape Canaveral? That part of the Intra-coastal waterway is beautiful and also contains many cultural and historic sites. With the increased popularity of paddling today, and the potential for increased ecotourism in the area, this should be simple right? Here is where the fun begins! David Griffis, Mia McGuire and Eddie Leonard from UF-IFAS Extension have conducted several multi-governmental brain storming sessions. We have the St. Johns River Water Management District, Flagler County, Volusia County, St. Johns County, Brevard County, Canaveral National Seashore Florida Department of Environmental Regulation and the US Department of Interior involved right now.

Currently, we are still in the planning stages, but hopefully in 2008 we can invite all FANREP members to the grand opening of the “Conquistadors to Astronauts Paddling Trail.” For those FACAA members, yes that was the theme for the 2004 NACAA national meeting.

For more information contact David Griffis, Volusia County Extension Director and Natural Resources Agent, dgriffis@ifas.ufl.edu.



NASSAU COUNTY: Demonstration Garden Wins UF/IFAS Grand IMAGE Award

The UF/IFAS IMAGE Awards Program encourages and recognizes excellence in the events, products, services, and projects developed by UF/IFAS faculty and staff. The Nassau County Extension office won a 2006 GRAND IMAGE Award for the Nassau County Demonstration Garden.

Established September 2005, the purpose of the Demonstration Garden is to show examples of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Northeast Florida landscapes, adopted from the University of Florida’s “Florida Yards and Neighborhoods” program. The garden provides an opportunity for Nassau County residents, children and businesses to see the care and maintenance of landscape plants best suited for our area. These principles include: micro-irrigation; ‘Right Plant/Right Place’; mulching; recycling; attracting wildlife; and

Page 4 *Florida Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals* Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

The University of Florida/IFAS IMAGE award judges commented on this creative collaboration in which several agencies and private businesses successfully re-developed the Nassau County Government Complex landscape. This entry stood out due to their excellent branding and comprehensive measurement data. More detailed information about the Garden is available at <http://nassau.ifas.ufl.edu/horticulture/demogarden/demogarden.html> or by contacting Rebecca L. Jordi, Nassau County Extension Environmental Horticulture Agent, rjordi@ufl.edu.