

Educating with Extension



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Celebrate Earth Day's Birthday



This year will mark Earth Day's 39th birthday. Do you know how the first Earth Day came about? Who was responsible for starting it? What was the purpose? And why was April 22 chosen as the date?

The idea for Earth Day evolved over a 7-year period, starting in 1962. Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wis.), an environmental activist, was troubled that the state of the environment was a non-issue in USA politics. He came up with a solution to put the environment into the political "limelight." In order for this to occur, he had to persuade President Kennedy to give visibility to the issue by going on a national conservation tour. The President began his 5-day, 11-state conservation tour in September 1963. But for many reasons, the tour did not succeed in putting the issue onto the national political agenda. It was, however, the seed of the idea that ultimately flowered into Earth Day.

The purpose of Earth Day was to create a nationwide grassroots demonstration to increase the awareness of the environmental crisis by establishing a national day of observance in which environmental activities could take place.



Senator Nelson chose the date as one that could maximize participation on college campuses for what he saw as an environmental "teach in." He decided that the week of April 19-25 was the best week to choose a date because it did not occur during exams or spring breaks, did not conflict with religious holidays such as Easter or Passover, and was late enough in the spring to have great weather. More students were likely to be in class and there would be less competition with other events midweek, so he chose Wednesday, April 22.

The beginning of the modern environment movement was commemorated on April 22, 1970. Twenty million Americans took part in various celebrations and activities, with the goal of a healthy, sustainable environment. There were massive coast-to-coast rallies. Thousands of colleges and universities organized protests against environmental degradation. Groups that had been fighting against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, loss of wilderness, and the extinction of wildlife suddenly realized they shared common values.



Earth Day has become very popular in the U.S. and is now observed by more than 500 million people and national governments in 175 countries. It is the only event that is celebrated at the same time around the world by people of all backgrounds, faiths, and nationalities.

The 2009 Global Theme is **The Green**

Generation. This two-year initiative will culminate with the 40th anniversary of Earth Day in 2010. With negotiations for a new global climate agreement coming up in December, Earth Day 2009 should be a day of action and civic participation to defend The Green Generation's core principles:

- ◆ A carbon-free future based on renewable energy that will end our common dependency on fossil fuels, including coal.
- ◆ An individual's commitment to responsible, sustainable consumption.
- ◆ Creation of a new **green economy** that lifts people out of poverty by creating millions of quality **green jobs** and transforms the global education system into a **green one**.



www.EarthDay.net



Earth Day Events in the Florida Keys

Native Plant Day

John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, MM 102.5, Oceanside, Key Largo
Saturday, April 4, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

- Free admission
- Information booths and guest speakers
- Two guided hammock nature walks (10 & 2)
- Extension Plant Clinic (9 a.m. - 12 p.m.)

14th Annual Earth Day Celebration

Bahia Honda State Park, MM 36.8
Saturday, April 18, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

- Free Admission
- Free shuttle from Sandspur Beach (1-3 pm)
- Live music, food, and raffles
- Face painting, puppet shows, sand sculpture contest
- Free tote bags (while supplies last)
- Craft booths and environmental exhibits
- Free vessel safety checks by the Coast Guard Auxiliary

Green Turtle Hammock Earth Day Event

MM 81, Bayside, Islamorada
Wednesday, April 22, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

- Information/Education booths
- Kayaking, boat tours, nature walks, lectures, and kids' activities



Information in this article compiled from
www.Wikipedia.org and www.EarthDay.envirolink.org

Last Call for Plant Clinics

The Regional Plant Clinics are winding down - only one more month left for Kim and the Monroe County Master Gardeners to identify your plant problems and/or insects. The schedules are as follows:

Upper Keys: April 4, 9 am to noon, at John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, MM 102.5, Key Largo.

Key West: April 6 & 20, 1 to 4 pm, at the Extension Office, 1100 Simonton Street, Room 2-260, Key West.

Big Pine Key: April 18, 9 am to noon, at Big Pine Academy, 30220 Overseas Highway, Big Pine Key.

Marathon: April 18, 9 am to noon, at the Marathon Garden Club, MM 50, 5270 Overseas Highway, Marathon.

2009 Master Gardener Class has Graduated!

Certificates of Completion were given to each of the beaming 20 graduates of the UF/IFAS/Monroe County Extension Services Master Gardener class recently. The trainees are from Key West to Key Largo. They survived a 9-week class of intense horticulture education provided by Environmental Horticulture Agent Kim Gabel and specialists from the University of Florida.



Photo by Doug Gregory
Front Row (left to right): Sherry Coussens, Tracy Widener, Laura Shell, Stephanie Palmer, Linda Lorenz, Deb Curlee, Kim Gabel, Dede Dillon, Pink Gidseg, Susan Matthews.

Back Row (left to right); Stephanie Bartley, Sandy Wolfe, Mark DeLorenzo, Calvin Allen, Lu Foley, Elizabeth Moore, Jean Crouch, Kitty Somerville, Larry Koenig.

Not pictured: Jeannie Riecker, Susan Fisher.

Florida Keys Freecycle™

Where one person's trash can be another's treasure!

Do you have some good stuff in need of a new home? Instead of contributing to yet another trailer full of trash bound for the incinerator, consider becoming a member of Florida Keys Freecycle™.

Freecycle is a global network of individuals, businesses, schools, and non-profit organizations committed to saving resources, and who's goal is to reduce waste by giving away good items they can no longer use rather than throwing them away. Group members post the items on an online message board which is geographically specific to their area.

The Freecycle Network™ consists of 4,696 groups, with over 6 million members across the globe. It is a grassroots and entirely non-profit movement of people who are giving (and getting) stuff for free in their own towns and thus keeping good stuff out of landfills. Membership is free.

Florida Keys Freecycle™ has over 964 members. The message board averages 10 to 20 posts every five days from members with used items to give away, or those who are seeking something. To view the items, you must be a member of the local group. To view the local group posts, log onto <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FloridaKeys-Freecycle>.

Main Rule: Everything posted must be free, legal, and appropriate for all ages.

Requests include furniture, barbeque grills, fishing equipment, small appliances, televisions, and baby items. Who knows - you may even find a desktop or laptop computer!

To learn more about the network and to join the local group, log onto www.freecycle.org, or you can send an e-mail to FloridaKeys-Freecycle-owner@yahoogroups.com for questions or improvement ideas.

Media Recap

Doug Gregory, Sea Grant Agent, spoke on US 1 Radio's "Morning Magazine," and WGMX's "Morning Mix" regarding the solar energy classes he taught at Florida Keys Community College and at the GLEE Expo. He was quoted in a *Keys Sunday* article titled, "Old hands keep fishing industry alive" regarding commercial fishermen's salt-water products licenses (SPLs), how commercial fishing provides economic diversity and stability to an economy based on tourism, and that commercial fishing represents the historic and cultural part of the Keys economy.

Kim Gabel, Environmental Horticulture Agent, spoke on US 1 Radio's "Morning Magazine" and WGMX's "Morning Mix" about what kinds of plants Iguanas and Key Deer eat and don't eat. The list can be found on the main page of our Web site, <http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu>. She also spoke on "Morning Magazine" about the composting workshops and solar cooking demonstrations she held at the GLEE Expo.

Alicia Betancourt, Family and Community Development Agent, spoke on US 1 Radio's "Morning Magazine" twice; once about Monroe County's municipal greenhouse gas emissions inventory and carbon footprint, and again about weatherizing and annual home check up for energy efficiency.

ON THE RADIO

Extension Agents appear on US 1 Radio's "Morning Magazine" show with Bill Becker every Tuesday at 8:55 a.m. (104.1 FM)

They also appear on WGMX's "Morning Mix" with Anne O'Bannon on the first and third Wednesdays of every month at 8:45 a.m. (94.3 FM)

Tune in to both shows and listen to what they have to say!





Family & Community Development
Alicia Betancourt

Alicia supervised an intern for over 20 volunteer hours and coordinated over 90 teaching hours for the “High School Financial Literacy” program, which provides high school juniors and seniors with training to develop skills so that they can:

- ◇ Design and use a personal financial budget to manage monthly expenditures.
- ◇ Establish and/or manage their credit spending, including decreasing their debt load.
- ◇ Obtain and maintain a checking and savings account.
- ◇ Practice procedures and techniques to reduce fraud.



Alicia worked with various Monroe County departments to further the Green Government Program by developing a system for gathering focus teams or task force support.

She provided “Budgeting” and “Senior Scams” programs to two local groups, which are important topics for seniors. With the rise in prices of consumer goods, many people are looking to squeeze every ounce of buying power they can from their money. Also, if you have elderly parents, you should do this with them every year. Saving a little here and there can really add up.

Alicia worked with Green Living & Energy Education as lead-assistant to the youth activity coordinator for the GLEE Expo to educate youth on issues such as recycling, solar energy, and conservation.



Marine News
Doug Gregory

Seven of the eight Florida Keys Community College Photovoltaic Installation class students, who took the National American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) PV Certificate exam, passed the test. To date, 35 local contractors have been trained in PV installation and 11 have received the national certification.

Doug provided comments on the NABCEP Study Guide pointing out areas of confusion and necessary editorial changes. All recommendations were accepted.

He attended the quarterly meeting of the Monroe County Marine & Port Advisory Committee, where hurricane preparation in canals, use of boat ramps, and the potential impacts of Cuba becoming open to tourism were discussed.

Doug represented Florida Sea Grant and Monroe County in the Clean Marina award ceremony for the U.S. Navy’s Sigsbee Marina, which met all the criteria for becoming a “Clean Marina” designation.

He presented an overview to the Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen’s Association (FKCFA) regarding the need to provide documentation to the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in their upcoming workshop about the elimination of the biased criteria that precluded Monroe County from qualifying for the Stan Mayfield Working Waterfront grant money. Scott Zimmerman, FKCFA Executive Director, Lisa Tennyson, from the Monroe County Office of Management & Budget, and Doug participated in the DCA workshop via teleconference and provided comments both verbally and in writing.

All three Extension Agents had a large presence at the 2009 Green Living and Energy Expo in Marathon. They gave four public lectures to about 300 people, and had a large educational display featuring solar energy.



Horticulture News
Kim Gabel

Kim organized a field trip for Monroe and Miami-Dade County Master Gardeners to the Deering Estate in Miami. They hiked through the historical preserve and toured the grounds. To find out more about this beautiful estate, log onto the Web site at www.deeringestate.com.

She set up a horticulture education booth at the Windley Key Native Plant Sale to educate 40 homeowners on Florida Keys Friendly landscaping practices. Sixteen Master Gardeners volunteered at this event.

Kim concluded teaching the Master Gardener Intern Training Class in which 20 people successfully finished the course and each received a “Certificate of Completion.”

Regional Plant Clinics were conducted in Key West with 10 clients and 3 Master Gardener volunteers; Big Pine Key: 7 clients and 4 Master Gardeners; Marathon: 12 clients and 6 Master Gardeners; Key Largo: 6 clients and 6 Master Gardeners.

Kim proctored a pesticide exam (CORE and Natural Areas) for one client, and Advanced Public Health for another client.

She made 6 site visits: Tangelo (Key West), Royal Palm (Big Pine Key), Plant overview (Key Largo), Buccaneer Palm (Little Torch Key), Mulch advice (Key Largo), and Slugs (Key West). She also released parasitic wasps to combat the pink hibiscus mealybug at 10 sites in Key West, Big Coppitt, Sugarloaf Key, Big Pine Key, Cudjoe Key, and Ramrod Key.

At the Green Living & Energy Education Expo, Kim gave a presentation on “Composting to Reduce Waste & Improve Your Garden.” She also had a display which demonstrated how to cook with a solar oven.



Wire composter

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We're on the Web at <http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu>

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Extension programs and activities are open to all persons and do not discriminate with regard to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations.

Websites to help you recycle items that may not normally be considered recycle-friendly:

- Shoes - soles4souls.org; nikereuseashoe.com
- Clothes - dressforsuccess.org
- Eyeglasses - onesight.org
- Hearing Aids - sotheworldmayhear.org
- Toothbrushes & Razors (plastic handles) and Brita® filters - preserveproducts.com
- Ink/Toner Cartridges - recycleplace.com
- Crayons - crazycrayons.com
- Exercise Videos - videofitness.com offers a video exchange service. (Must be a member.)

Other ways to recycle items:

- Sports equipment** - Look up "used sporting equipment" in the Yellow Pages or online.
- Dry cleaning hangers and plastic bags** - Some dry cleaners will accept wire hangers and plastic bags and reuse them.
- Film canisters** - Check with your local recycling center to find out if it takes gray film-container lids (No.4) and black bases (No. 2). Or, many photo labs will accept them.
- Carpeting** - Some carpet manufacturers take part in recycling programs. Google "What can I do with my old carpet?" to learn about carpet reclamation.



Earth Day 1970

Photo courtesy of <http://FoodDemocracy.wordpress.com>

Check out these Green Web sites

- ◆ http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu/community_development/green_initiatives.shtml ◆ - Monroe Co. Extension Services
- ◆ <http://LivingGreen.ifas.ufl.edu> ◆ ◆ www.Ecorazzi.com ◆
- ◆ www.realclimate.org ◆ ◆ www.SolarEnergy.org ◆
- ◆ www.KeysGlee.com ◆ ◆ www.EcoGeek.org ◆
- ◆ www.treehugger.com ◆ ◆ <http://grist.org> ◆

FRANK & ERNEST

Bob Thaves



UF/IFAS/MCES QUARTERLY CONTACTS

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Phone calls	468	486	437	1391
Office visitors	35	67	45	147
Visits to clients	17	15	39	71
Group teachings	8	18	28	54
Participants	129	257	500	886
Media materials	10	5	7	22
Bulletins distributed	448	682	766	1896
TOTAL contacts	1115	1530	1822	4467