Attention boaters and anyone else with an interest in Florida’s waterways: How much do you know about HY-DRILLA?

Hydrilla is one of the most troublesome aquatic weeds that infest our lakes in Florida. It has been causing problems since the 1950s, spreading rapidly across the state and clogging our waterways. In its native range of Asia, hydrilla is kept in check by natural conditions, however in Florida it is able to explode and overwhelm our waters. If left unmanaged, hydrilla is capable of creating damaging infestations which can choke out native plants, clog flood control structures (which can lead to flooding), and impede waterway navigation and recreational usage.

It is very difficult to control hydrilla. It spreads easily from fragments breaking off and producing new plants. Boats and fishing equipment can easily spread this weed from one lake to another. **Boaters can help prevent the spread of hydrilla by always removing plants from boating equipment before leaving the water body.**

Managing hydrilla has become a challenging task and aquatic plant managers have had to incorporate new management strategies. We are in need of additional tools to keep hydrilla under control. For these reasons, Osceola County is working with the University of Florida, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and SePRO Corporation on a four-year Demonstration Project to find new and alternative methods to control hydrilla and another aquatic weed, hygrophila. They are currently evaluating new herbicides and searching for natural enemies for controlling the plants.

The University of Florida/IFAS Osceola County Extension Office plays a major role in the Demonstration Project and is responsible for managing the grant, collecting biological data and keeping stakeholders updated on the project results.

One of the main components of the Demonstration Project is education and outreach. We hope by raising awareness among lake users that they will begin to recognize these problematic weeds and help prevent their spread. We also hope that we can help residents understand the problems these weeds can cause and why they need to be managed. You can help by learning more about invasive aquatic plants and then telling your family, friends, and neighbors. Visit our website at [http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/osceola](http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/osceola).
In an effort to ensure that Florida residents voices are heard, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is extending the comment period for the agency’s proposed water quality standards. The comment period is being extended for 30 days and will now end on April 29. the agency will also hold three more public hearings in Florida to obtain additional input and comments on the proposed rulemaking. Planning for the additional hearings is underway and the hearings are targeted for mid-April in several cities across the state.

These proposed water standards will protect people’s health, aquatic life and the long-term recreational uses of Florida’s waters, a critical part of the state’s economy. In February, EPA held seven public hearing sessions on the proposed standards in Tallahassee, Orlando and Fort Lauderdale.

Clean and safe waters are central to people’s health and Florida’s economic growth, which is why EPA is proposing this rule to curb the impacts of costly nutrient pollution said Pete Silva, assistant administrator for EPA’s Office of Water. “We are extending the comment period and having additional hearings to ensure there is more time for Floridians to offer their comments and ideas.”

In 2009, EPA entered into a consent decree, approved by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida, with the Florida Wildlife Federation to propose limits to pollution. The proposed action, released for public comment and based heavily on state data and science developed in collaboration with the state, would set a series of numeric limits on the amount of phosphorus and nitrogen. Also known as “nutrients,” that would be allowed in Florida’s lakes, rivers streams, springs and canals. The proposed standards aim to make it easier and quicker to address the economic, environmental and health issues of nutrient pollution.

Nutrient pollution can damage drinking water sources; increase exposure to harmful algae blooms, which are made of toxic microbes that can cause damage to the nervous system or even death; and form byproducts in drinking water from disinfection chemicals, some or which have been linked with serious human illnesses like bladder cancer. Phosphorus and nitrogen pollution come from storm water runoff, municipal wastewater treatment, fertilization of crops and livestock manure. Nitrogen also forms from the burning of fossil fuels, like gasoline. Nutrients problems can happen in local ambient water or much further downstream, leading to degraded lakes, reservoirs, and estuaries, and to hypoxic “dead” zones where aquatic life can no longer survive. High amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus in surface water result in harmful algae blooms, dead fish, reduced mating grounds and nursery habitats for fish.

The proposed action also introduces and seeks comment on a new adaptive management regulatory process for setting standards in a manner that drives water quality improvements in already impaired waters. The proposed new regulatory provision, called restoration standards, would be specific to nutrients in the state of Florida.

4-H has long prided itself as being an organization that teaches citizenship skills to youth. For over 100 years, youth have learned skills that have helped to improve our communities, our country and our world. Presently, Citizenship is classified as one of the three mission mandates of 4-H National Headquarters, along with Healthy Lifestyles and Science, Engineering and Technology.

Research indicates that youth need opportunities to participate in civic engagement. Youniss and Levine make a case that more young people would become involved in civic activities if given opportunities to do so in their book Engaging Young People in Civic Life. Moreover, the Civic Mission of Schools Report (Carnegie and CIRCLE, 2003) stated that enhancing civic engagement should take place through a multi-faceted approach of “active learning opportunities.” 4-H is based in experiential, “active” learning with a strong focus on citizenship. This creates an ideal opportunity for 4-H youth to learn and practice citizenship.

What are ways that youth may become involved? Do a 4-H Citizenship Project: The 4-H Citizenship curriculum has recently been revised and includes
all levels of citizenship from yourself to the world

- **4-H Day at the Capitol, April 22:** An opportunity to learn how state government functions and how those decisions affect us, our local communities, and our state
- **4-H Clubs, County 4-H Council and District 4-H Council:** Learn parliamentary procedure and participate in decision making
- **State 4-H Executive Board:** The youth voice of the Florida 4-H program, with representation from all over the state, help to plan state events through committees and Executive Board meetings.
- **Accept Proclamations:** Come to County Commission and City Council meeting to accept proclamation on behalf of 4-H for events such as National 4-H Week
- **Participate in 4-H Legislature:** A week-long mock legislative event in Tallahassee where youth play the roles of Senator, Representative, lobbyist, Governor and Reporter for senior 4-Hers, ages 14-18 by September 1)
- **District 4-H Legislature:** A day-long district mock legislative event for intermediates ages 11 - 13.


Building Your Child’s Character

Joy Borgman FCS/4-H Agent

Because you will not always be there to ensure that your child makes good decisions, it is important that they develop an underlying framework of beliefs, attitudes, and values that will help steer a successful course on their own. This is commonly called “character”, and is one of the most important concepts in parenting. While there are many qualities of character that you may want to instill in your children, there are five generally recognized as especially critical for success in today's high-tech, diverse, and demanding society. These topics and others are addressed in parenting classes made available through the Extension office.

**Courage** is the first, and may be the most important gift a child can receive. A child’s courage enables the child to try, fail, and try again, until they master the challenges of life. With too little courage, the child gives up easily or does not try at all and fear becomes the characteristic that leads to failure. Failure reinforces fear and a cycle of discouragement and fear becomes a lifelong attitude of regret and resentment.

Where does courage come from? It comes from a belief in ourselves that we are lovable, capable human beings who will eventually succeed. Even if we fail, we are still lovable, capable human beings.

This belief in ourselves is called **Self-Esteem**, the second critical quality. When we think well of ourselves, we think we have a good chance to succeed which gives us the courage to try. A child with healthy self-esteem knows that even failure is an opportunity for learning, so when they don’t succeed at first, they do not give up.

The third quality a child needs to thrive is a sense of **Responsibility**. This quality enables a child to accept the natural consequences of the decisions made. Our children will be called upon to make thousands of choices, some of which may be life and death matters, and they will be followed by natural consequences. They will be offered drugs: will they choose to accept? They will face serious choices about drinking, sex, crime, and other life altering experiences. These choices will come when parents aren’t there to tell them what to do! If they have been prepared to make responsible decisions, and have developed the courage to stand behind these decisions, they will be prepared to meet these challenges.

**Cooperation** is the fourth essential quality children need to develop in order to thrive. While competition is often emphasized as a tool for success, it is the individuals who learn the magic of teamwork who move society forward. Ideally, the relationship of child and parent is one of cooperation rather than conflict. Cooperation from a child cannot be demanded, it must be won. And then they know how to pass it on.

The fifth quality to develop is **Respect**. Teaching our children to respect themselves and others
begins at home, but it pays dividends in every area in which they will become involved. Respect is about appreciating the worthwhile qualities in ourselves and others and demonstrating this through actions as well as attitude. Our goal, and responsibility, as parents then, is to instill in our children the skills and character that will enable them to survive in our fast-changing, diverse society.

Effective parenting is an ongoing challenge, but sharing the experience and learning new parenting skills doesn’t have to be. Effective parenting classes tailored for groups and individuals are available. To discuss various topics and arrange parenting workshops for groups, call the Extension office at 321-697-3000. Classes, and workshops for parents (and grandparents raising grandchildren) are available for groups and individuals who may want to address these challenges together.

Eletrical Safety Checks for Your Home
By Laura Royer

Owners of older homes may have more to worry about than visible imperfections like peeling paint, loose flooring and sagging doorways and countertops. There may be hidden dangers lurking behind the walls.

According to the Leviton Institute, unsafe electrical conditions are cited as one of the largest causes of household fires. Faulty household wiring can also be a leading cause of accidental electrocution.

Play it Safe: Inspect Your Home’s Wiring
For these reasons, the Leviton Institute urges homeowners to conduct an electrical inspection of each room in their house, garages, as well as outdoor areas. This inspection is all the more important if your home is over 20 years old, if you’ve had major renovation work done or if you’ve added new appliances to a more than 10 year old home. An electrical inspection should also be conducted if you just bought a previously-owned home.

Signs of Unsafe Wiring
There are many telltale signs of unsafe wiring in your home. If your home has dim or flickering lights, loose outlets, circuit breakers that trip frequently or fuses that pop you should investigate these situations immediately. Hot or discolored outlets or wall plates, or wire insulation that’s damaged should be replaced immediately.

Aluminum Wiring Can Lead to Arcing
It’s also important to know whether your home has copper or aluminum wiring. If your home was built in the 1960s to mid 1970s, it may have aluminum wiring. Aluminum wire oxidizes more rapidly than copper wiring, increasing resistance and heat buildup at connection points. Since aluminum wire expands and contracts at a greater rate than copper wire, the likelihood that problems could develop switch and receptacle connections is greater. This can lead to hazardous arcing conditions. To eliminate these risks, copper pigtail wires should be added to the ends of the aluminum wire, or special CO/ALR switches and receptacles should be installed.

Seek Help from a Qualified Electrician
Even if your house was built after 1975, you need to understand the condition of its electrical system, including its capacity, limitations and potential hazards. Seek the assistance of a qualified electrical inspector or licensed electrician to inspect your home’s circuitry and ensure all circuits adequately meet your electrical demand. This is especially important if you’ve added new appliances, electronic equipment or fixtures.

It’s also a good idea to develop a detailed chart of your home’s circuitry, to show which circuits serve which outlets and fixtures and how much power is being drawn on each circuit.

Electrical inspections can catch potential disasters waiting to happen and correct them before they wreak havoc on your home and family. Upgrading your electrical service capacity and installing electrical safety devices such as ground fault circuit interrupters and arc fault circuit interrupters create a safer environment for your family.

The newest generation of GFCI devices with a lock-out feature provides protection above the requirements mandated by Underwriters Laboratories. These devices cannot be reset if they’ve been damaged for any reason and can no longer provide the protection they were designed to afford.

SOURCE: The Leviton Institute
Moola Venture Money Camp

Moola Venture is a five day money camp designed to teach 14 to 18 year old youth vital financial management skills.

June 14 - 18, 2010
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

CAMP LOCATION:
UF/IFAS Osceola County Extension Service
1921 Kissimmee Valley Lane
Kissimmee, FL 34744

COST OF THE CAMP:
$25 per registrant

REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
June 4, 2010

FOR A REGISTRATION PACKET or MORE INFO CONTACT:
Amy at (321) 697-3000 or visit
www.tinyurl.com/moolaventure

Presented by:
Moola Venture
Money Camp

TEENS WILL LEARN HOW TO:
- Check writing & balancing a checkbook
- Interview for a job
- Set up a budget and spend money wisely
- Shop for a vehicle
- Establish credit and use it wisely
- Examine college and career options
- Savings & Investing

The Camp will include field trips to:
The Florida Mall, Riverside Bank of Central Florida, Auto Dealerships, Valencia Community College

Feng Shui in the Garden
By Mariela Perre Master Gardener

A garden is an outdoor room surrounding a home. We can all agree a garden is a wonderful connection to nature, some of us have experienced that a garden could be a tool to help us through our life circumstances.

There is an ancient Chinese art, called Feng Shui that can help us with the arrangement of elements in our environment in respect to the forces of nature with the purpose to attain a physical, social and economical disposition in balance with our needs. I would like to introduce the use of this art applied to gardening as Feng Shui in the Garden. The principles of good Feng Shui for the garden remain the same whether we are cultivating ten acres or a shrub in a tub.

Here are ten essential facts of Feng Shui when landscaping a home:
- Protect the home from severe weather by natural vegetation, topography, or fences.
- Site it above flooding and spring runoffs.
- Place the most frequently used exit door facing the direction of the rising sun.
- Create curved pathways.
- Create a threshold that separates public from private domains.
- Make sure vegetation around the home is healthy.
- Let go and replace trees, plants that die or need to be cut down.
- Maintain a balance of vegetation (not too overgrown, not too sparse).
- Block out large ominous objects that face the property.
- Make sure to protect the privacy of your home.

A garden, like a room, has a point of entry and a way to reach a comfortable place for the activity in it. A garden needs a path leading to it, a door to enter, walls to define the garden area, and a place for rest and relaxation. Adjusting minor things around a garden (like those mentioned above) while taking into consideration the characteristics of those living in the home and what they need could just do the trick to get them into the positive and refreshing environment the green area of a house can be. Just like any other interior room in a house has a purpose, the outdoor space needs...
**Registration for any class is** required so adequate materials are available and if classes are rescheduled we will be able to notify you.

### APRIL

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 1st</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Dietary Supplements @ Board of County Commissioners Chambers room 4727 - 2 Courthouse Square, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 2nd</td>
<td>9 - 5 p.m.</td>
<td>Master Gardener Spring Plant Sale @ Osceola Heritage Park, KVLS Building, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, 3rd</td>
<td>9 - 3 p.m.</td>
<td>Homeowner Irrigation Workshop @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 6th</td>
<td>6 - 8 p.m.</td>
<td>Home &amp; Community Education County Council Meeting @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 7th</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
<td>Home &amp; Community Education Leader Training @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 7th</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Taking Control of Your Money @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 8th</td>
<td>11 a.m.</td>
<td>Arthritis and Fibromyalgia @ Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau 1925 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 13th</td>
<td>11 a.m.</td>
<td>Plugging Your Spending Leaks @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 15th</td>
<td>11 a.m.</td>
<td>Working with Difficult People @ Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau 1925 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 19th</td>
<td>5 - 7 p.m.</td>
<td>Sewing classes @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee. YOUTH 5 - 7 p.m. ADULT 7 - 9 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 26th</td>
<td>7 - 9 p.m.</td>
<td>Homeowner Irrigation Workshop @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 20th</td>
<td>9:15 a.m.-12:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Edible Landscapes @ Poinciana Library 101 N. Doverplum Ave, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 21st</td>
<td>5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Taking Control of your Money @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 21st</td>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Recognizing Learning Disabilities @ Board of County Commissioners Chambers room 4727 - 2 Courthouse Square, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 22nd</td>
<td>6:30 - 8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Homeowner Irrigation Workshop @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, 24th</td>
<td>10 - noon</td>
<td>Understanding Your Credit Score @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 27th</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
<td>Micro-Irrigation: Basic design and installation @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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### MAY

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, 1st</td>
<td>9 - noon</td>
<td>Sewing classes continued @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 4th</td>
<td>6 - 9 p.m.</td>
<td>Home of Your Own @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 11th, 18th &amp; 25th</td>
<td>6 - 9 p.m.</td>
<td>Home of Your Own @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 21st</td>
<td>2 - 5 p.m.</td>
<td>Taking Control of Your Money @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 10th</td>
<td>5 - 7 p.m.</td>
<td>Sewing classes continued @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee. YOUTH 5 - 7 p.m. ADULT 7 - 9 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 17th</td>
<td>7 - 9 p.m.</td>
<td>Sewing classes continued @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 11th</td>
<td>10 - noon</td>
<td>Homeowner Irrigation Workshop @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 12th</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>Parenting @ Supervisor of Elections 2509 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 12th</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Managing in Tough Times @ Sheriff’s Office, 2601 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 13th</td>
<td>11 a.m.</td>
<td>World of Energy - (Exercise and Physical Activity) @ Sheriff’s Office, 2601 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 14th</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Building Stepfamily Relationships @ Supervisor of Elections 2509 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 18th</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Good Carbs vs Bad Carbs Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau 1925 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 19th</td>
<td>5:30 - 8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Taking Control of Your Money @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 24th</td>
<td>5 - 7 p.m.</td>
<td>Sewing classes continued @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee. YOUTH 5 - 7 p.m. ADULT 7 - 9 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 26th</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Improving Your Credit Score @ Board of County Commissioners Chambers room 4727 - 2 Courthouse Square, Kissimmee</td>
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### JUNE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 2nd</td>
<td>2 - 5 p.m.</td>
<td>Taking Control of Your Money @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 3rd</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Antioxidants @ Board of County Commissioners Chambers room 4727 - 2 Courthouse Square, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 8th</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>Using PowerPay to get Out of Debt @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 9th</td>
<td>11 a.m.</td>
<td>Working With Difficult People @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 10th</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Spectrum Awareness Understanding Personalities @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 14th - 18th</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.</td>
<td>Moola Venture Money Camp for Teens @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<td>Wednesday, 16th</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Sodium and Hypertension @ Sheriff’s Office, 2601 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 16th</td>
<td>6 - 8 p.m.</td>
<td>Homeowner Irrigation Workshop @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 16th</td>
<td>5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Taking Control of Your Money @ Osceola Heritage Park Extension Services, Kissimmee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 24th</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Stretching Your Dollars @ Sheriff’s Office, 2601 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy Kissimmee</td>
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Spring welcomes us every year with a beautiful display of new blossoms. It is the season of flowers. Unfortunately, a large number of these flowers require full sun in order to generate blooms, making it difficult to grow them on a covered porch or patio. There are, however, some flowers that can be grown without direct sun and still produce a wonderful show.

Finding the right plant for the right place is the most important step when choosing plants. Almost all of us are guilty of buying plants on impulse. We’re walking down the garden center aisle, see a beautiful plant that we must have and buy it without even knowing where we are going to put it or if we have the right place to put it.

Plants have certain requirements that they need in order to survive. Some plants like full sun, some plants like shade, some like to have wet soil, and some do not. When a plant is put into an environment that it does not like, it will not perform up to our expectations, either by not blooming, not growing or dying.

So, how can we be sure we buy the right plant for the right place? Do some research. Know the conditions of the site you want to put a plant and then find a plant that fits those needs. Growing plants in containers, we can control the soil conditions, however, it may be difficult to control the light levels. Most patios and porches probably do not receive full sun, leaving the only option to find plants that like shady conditions (no direct sunlight).

Knowing which plants grow in which environment is a simple task. Most plants at the garden center have plant tags in the pots that list their requirements, making it easy to make the match. Therefore, all you have to do is read the label.

Colorful annuals for the spring include begonias, impatiens, crossandras, and dahias. They are all unique plants that come in a variety of colors, shapes, and sizes to fit anyone’s needs. These plants will provide the most flowers and color for containers under roof. With the proper care and maintenance, they should continue to thrive throughout the spring and into the summer months. Look for them at your local garden center.

Pets make great companions. Pet ownership helps us learn about life and responsibility. Pet interactions have been shown to help with the wellbeing of the sick or elderly. My pets are part of the family. I chose hotels that are pet friendly and make scheduling adjustments, just as if they were my children. In these tough economic times, it is difficult for families to care for their own needs and often pets are discarded on roadsides or taken to a shelter in the hopes of adoption. Unfortunately, there are more pets than caregivers. If you love animals, please consider contacting the Osceola County Animal Control office to adopt a pet, volunteer or to make a donation to support care for animals until they can find a loving home. Call 407-343-7101 to see how you can help.

Youth can learn more about responsible pet ownership through our Osceola County 4-H program. We have a variety of projects related to cats, dogs, birds, fish amphibians and reptiles. Call our office to locate a 4-H club in your neighborhood or to find out more about pet care activities for youth. 4-H is open to all youth ages 5 to 18 and we have information developed for various age levels. Help teach your family members how to love and care for pets.

Well behaved pets can be a source of great pleasure and comfort. But sometimes, pets follow their natural instincts and cause us heartache as well as damage the environment. The most popular pets, cats and dogs, are natural predators, meaning they are meat eaters. They have been bred for domestic traits that make them calmer house mates, but the natural tendency to
hunt and kill prey is still present. As a result, outdoor pets can pose quite a threat to wildlife. Free roaming cats and dogs reduce wild animal populations, including threatened or endangered species. In addition to harboring diseases that affect humans, such as ringworm, distemper, toxoplasmosis, leptospirosis and rabies, infected pets have the potential to transmit diseases into wild populations of animals. Free ranging cats can be especially damaging to ground feeding and nesting animals such as bobwhite quail, wrens, cardinals, loggerhead shrikes, towhees, rabbits and lizards. Consider the number of strays as well as outside house cats in Florida and the threat to our native animals, especially the threatened and endangered species is quite staggering. Free ranging cats are also susceptible to larger predators such as coyotes that are moving into our urban areas.

If you love your pets and enjoy wildlife, there are a few simple steps to keep you pets safe and reduce wildlife damage. University of Florida wildlife specialists with the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) makes the following suggestions:

- Spay or neuter any cats or dogs that will roam outside.
- Vaccinate pets to protect their health and wildlife they may come in contact with.
- Do not place a bird feeder or bath immediately next to dense shrubbery or other hiding places.
- If you own an outside cat, place two bells on its collar--some cats can learn to adjust their moves to silence a single bell.
- Do not let your cat roam at night when they can be much more effective predators on sleeping prey.
- If you are having problems with a neighbor's cat, speak to the neighbor about the problem and see what can be worked out.
- Cats hate water, so you may be able to discourage a cat from entering your yard by spraying it several times with a garden hose or squirt gun. Sprinklers can be set to activate with a motion sensor.
- If the cat is an untagged stray or feral (wild cat), trap it with a live trap (the raccoon-type trap) then turn it over to the Osceola County Animal Control Office on Kissimmee Park Road in St. Cloud (407-343-7101) or a local Humane Society.

### Sewing Classes

**REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED CLASS LIMIT 25**

Sewing classes are scheduled for April 19th & 26th, May 10, 17, & 24th. The classes will be 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. for youth and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. for adults.

The first class (April 19th) is to identify skills and discuss patterns and material selection – do not bring machine to this class.

Also, if you have a sewing project and you need help, you can bring it to the class.

Please contact Mary Beth Salisbury or Faye for more information at 321-697-3000.

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**Dressing for the Job**  
*By Mary Beth Salisbury*

Clothing influences our feelings. Don’t you feel good when you know you look good? It is important to have this self-confidence when you go on a job interview.

There is probably no other place where your image is more important than a job interview. Numerous studies show that employers base hiring decisions on the impression an applicant makes during the first THIRTY MINUTES of a job interview! A big part of that first impressions is of personal appearance. This does not compensate for lack of skills and knowledge, but if you are well qualified, it may give you an edge in getting the job.

They equate neatness and appropriate dress with efficiency, stability, and competency. Sloppy
appearance may reflect sloppy work habits. If your dress and appearance fit into the company’s image, then it is easier for an employer to imagine you doing the job.

When you are looking for a job, it is important that your clothes be clean, pressed and fit properly. Suit what you wear for the interview to the kind of place you will work.

The following items are considered to be inappropriate for most interviews and jobs:

- loud colors
- “dressy” outfits
- flashy fabrics
- extreme styles
- glittery jewelry
- noisy jewelry
- jeans
- too tight garments
- extremely large garments
- revealing necklines
- too short garments
- unusual accessories

The garments which are usually considered appropriate for most interviews and jobs are:

- clean and well pressed
- basic accessories
- ones suited to the job
- ones you feel comfortable in
- suitable for your age
- simple styles
- solid, restful colors
- simple jewelry
- conservative appearance
- hemline below the knee
- good fit

Select garments that are appropriate for the job, for your age and your shape. They should be comfortable and of good quality. Remember you want to impress the interviewer with your abilities, not your clothing.

Your grooming is as important as the clothes you wear. Be well groomed and look as attractive as you can. Shower, use a deodorant, and brush your teeth just before going to the interview.

Hints for Men:
- clean and neatly trimmed hair
- becoming hair style
- shave or trim facial hair
- clean hands and neat fingernails
- lightly applied cologne or after shave
- minimum amount of jewelry
- simple and functional briefcase
- wear calf-length dark socks
- neat and clean shoes

Hints for Women:
- clean and neat hair style
- natural and flattering makeup
- clean hands and neat nails
- lightly applied cologne
- simple jewelry
- simple shoes that are neat and clean
- simple handbag or briefcase
- hose that complement outfit

SOURCE: HE 4022, University of Florida, Nadine Hackler, Clothing Specialist
Penne Pasta with Chunky Tomato Sauce and Spinach

1 package (8 ounces) multigrain penne pasta
2 cups spicy marinara sauce
1 large ripe tomato, chopped (about 1½ cups)
4 cups packed baby or torn spinach leaves (4 ounces)
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
¼ cup chopped fresh basil

Cook pasta according to package directions, omitting salt. Meanwhile, heat marinara sauce and tomato over medium heat 3 to 4 minutes or until hot and bubbly, stirring occasionally. Turn off heat; stir in spinach. Drain pasta; return to same pot. Add tomato mixture; toss well and divide evenly among 8 serving bowls. Top with cheese and basil.

Apple, Apricot and Cinnamon Waldorf-Style Salad

2 tbsp. fat-free sour cream
1 tbsp. light mayonnaise
1 tbsp. sugar substitute (optional)
¼ to ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
8 oz. Granny Smith or Gala apples, cored and diced
¼ cup pecan pieces, toasted
½ cup finely chopped celery
½ cup chopped dried apricots or cherries

Blend sour cream, mayonnaise, sugar substitute, if desired, and cinnamon in small bowl. Add remaining ingredients. Toss until well coated. Serve immediately.

Asian Chicken

¼ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
½ tbsp. honey
1 tsp. sesame oil
½ tsp. dry mustard
½ tsp. grated fresh ginger or
¼ tsp. powdered ginger
½ tsp. minced garlic
½ tsp. red pepper flakes
1½ pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts

Place soy sauce, lemon juice, honey, oil, mustard, ginger, garlic and red pepper flakes in re-sealable plastic food storage bag. Add chicken. Seal bag. Turn to coat evenly. Place bag in pan. Chill in refrigerator 1 hour or overnight. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line roasting pan with foil. Remove chicken from bag and place in pan. (Discard unused marinade.) Bake chicken breasts 30 minutes, or 165°F in the center.

Chinatown Stuffed Mushrooms

24 large mushrooms (about 1 pound)
½ pound ground turkey
1 clove garlic, minced
¼ cup dry bread crumbs
¼ cup thinly sliced green onions
3 tbsp. reduced-sodium soy sauce, divided
1 egg white, lightly beaten
1 tsp. minced fresh ginger
½ tsp. red pepper flakes (optional)

Remove stems from mushrooms; finely chop enough stems to equal 1 cup. Cook turkey, chopped stems and garlic in medium skillet over medium-high heat until turkey is no longer pink, stirring to break up meat. Drain and discard fat. Stir in bread crumbs, green onions, 2 tablespoons soy sauce, egg white, ginger and pepper flakes, if desired; mix well.

Preheat broiler. Line broiler pan with foil; insert broiler rack. Coat broiler rack with nonstick cooking spray. Brush mushroom caps lightly with remaining 1 tablespoon soy sauce; spoon 2 teaspoons stuffing into each mushroom cap. Place stuffed mushrooms on prepared broiler rack. Broil 4 to 5 inches from heat 5 to 6 minutes or until heated through.

Parmesan-Pepper Crisps

2 cups (4 ounces) loosely packed, coarsely grated Parmesan cheese
2 tsp. black pepper

Preheat oven to 400°F. Line wire racks with paper towels.

Place heaping teaspoonfuls cheese 2 inches apart on ungreased nonstick baking sheet. Flatten cheese mounds slightly with back of spoon. Sprinkle each mound with pinch of pepper.

Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until crisps are very lightly browned. (Watch closely - crisps burn easily.) Let cool on baking sheet 2 minutes; carefully remove with spatula to prepared racks. Store in airtight container in refrigerator up to 3 days.

Source: Diabetic Cooking
Osceola County Master Gardeners’

Spring Plant Sale

Friday, April 2, 2010  9:00 am—5:00 pm
Saturday, April 3, 2010  9:00 am—3:00 pm

Located at Osceola Heritage Park, KVLS Building

Master Gardeners available to answer questions

All proceeds used to support the Master Gardener Horticulture scholarship and other Master Gardener programs in Osceola County

Mary Beth R. Salisbury
Osceola County Extension Director