

Indian River Research and Education Center

news

A Bulletin for IRREC Advisory Committee Members, Faculty, Staff and Students



Message From the Director



Dr. Brian Scully

The news at IRREC this quarter is blueprints, bricks and mortar, for at least the next few years. Two Pruitt Research Road construction projects were recently completed and the Florida Legislature authorized nearly \$5 million for the construction of a 15,000 to 20,000-square-foot Plant and Soil Science Building. We are eagerly anticipating the planning and construction of the new plant and soil science research facility. This facility will showcase IRREC and compliment the new research and education park. The faculty and staff are very grateful for the efforts of our legislative delegation and constituents who worked to make this happen. On behalf of the faculty and staff, I'd like to extend a grateful thank you to everyone who helped. Preliminary floor plan drawings have been prepared and soon, members of the faculty will be invited to visit the Gulf Coast REC, which is a new, cutting edge research facility located in Balm. After faculty recommendations are completed, they will be forwarded to an architect and the process of site selection will begin.

The new building is expected to begin rising from IRREC grounds in about two years and will probably include 10 offices and six to eight laboratories, two of which will be certified by the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference, or NELAC. Abandoned and no longer suitable for occupation, the original research laboratory, constructed in 1960, will be demolished.

The recently completed construction projects on Pruitt Research Road include a spacious student dormitory, two barns for agricultural equipment and vehicles, and a secure chemicals storage facility.

In appreciation of the late Mac Varn, a celebrated local agricultural pioneer, and his family, I would like to take this opportunity to honor and recognize the Varn family for generous contributions made to the center for renovations of the pre-existing dormitory, and for the newly constructed dormitory. The facilities have been long needed and will provide housing for graduate students and visiting scientists. Many IRREC faculty and staff members were able to view the new dormitory during the last campus-wide faculty and staff meeting.

It features a large common room that opens up into a high, sweeping ceiling, a fully equipped kitchen, two bathrooms, laundry facilities and four dorm rooms that accommodate two guests per room. At present, the new dorm is home to two graduate students; two prospective residents' applications are pending approval. The old dorm is currently serving as a home for two female graduate students and a married couple.

The automobile barn, agricultural equipment barn, and the chemicals storage facility were each constructed as part of the Barney Greene Barn complex, honoring citrus agricultural philanthropists Barney and Harlot Greene. A top priority in the design and operation of the vehicle barn was IRREC employees' safety. Each of the center vehicles is available to center faculty and staff at all times within a locked and gated area. The barn and vehicles availability were designed specifically for employees to park their personal vehicle under the barn, adjacent to the center vehicle which they would be using, so that when a driver returns the state vehicle the barn, they may efficiently transfer themselves and materials quickly into their personal vehicles—and in a secure area.

During the last two years, IRREC's farm equipment fleet has been enhanced with purchases and in-kind donations made by local supporters. The equipment's total value is about \$350,000 and is now securely stored in the newly constructed equipment barn situated behind the vehicle barn. Also within the Barney Greene Barn complex is a new chemical storage facility. It features explosion-proof fixtures and a recessed floor to capture any possible chemical spill. An emergency shower and eyewash are positioned just outside of the facility entrance for immediate intervention should someone become exposed to a chemical while not wearing protective gear.

Providing added security and protection to IRREC faculty and staff gives me great satisfaction. And adding on-site housing for graduate students will assist in our goal to increase the IRREC student body. I would like to thank those members of the faculty and staff who helped in the process of constructing the new buildings. I join them in their eager anticipation of the upcoming Plant and Soil Science Building and the research and education park. The center is growing in many positive directions and will continue to do so for decades, as it will serve as the vanguard to a full-scale research and education park planned for our site. Please look forward to the next issue of the Indian River Research and Education Center News in December, in which news about the park will be revealed.

Brian Scully



in this issue

<i>Message from the Director.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>IRREC Teaching Program News.....</i>	<i>2-3</i>
<i>New Bachelor Degree Program.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Treasure Coast Research Park Authority Board News.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Dr. Sandra Wilson's National Award.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Aquaculture Expert Joins IRREC.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Fall Semester 2005.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>IRREC Faculty and Staff Awards.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Upcoming Events.....</i>	<i>8</i>

IRREC Teaching Program News

The number of scholarships available to IRREC students, and the number of IRREC students being honored with academic scholarships is increasing at exciting rates. This year, the number of Mac Varn Scholarship Awards increased to three, up from one recipient for the two previous years awards. A scholarship award new to the IRREC student body this year is the James H. Davis Award, presented by the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties, Inc. Next spring, seven more IRREC students will receive UF College of Agricultural and Life Science Scholarship Awards. In total, \$9,000 will be distributed to deserving scholars who will pursue their educational goals here at IRREC. Their devotion to the industry and their desire to serve growers, researchers and organizations will have a positive, direct impact on the state's agricultural industry for decades.

Record Number of Treasure Coast Gator Club Mac Varn Scholarship Awards



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT ARE: Kristina Jewett, Melissa Austin, University of Florida Football Coach Urban Meyer, Jessica Blank, Dr. John Mallonee and Jordan McBee. Not pictured is Amanda Cartwright. Each student was presented with a scholarship by Treasure Coast Gator Club Scholarship Chair Dr. John Mallonee, and were congratulated by Coach Meyer, at the club's annual banquet held May 27 at the Pelican Yacht Club in Fort Pierce.

The Treasure Coast Gator Club and Riverside National Bank recently awarded three IRREC students with a total of \$3,000 for their work towards bachelor's degrees. The three recipient students are: Cody Hoffman and Zach Langford, both residents of Port St. Lucie, and Kristina Jewett, a Vero Beach resident.

"The Treasure Coast Gator Club seeks to honor Mac Varn, his contribution to agriculture and support students who are pursuing academic careers near where the club meets," said Dr. John Mallonee, a local ophthalmologist and Treasure Coast Gator Club scholarship chairman.

Mallonee said the scholarship award will be offered to local students annually in honor of Mac Varn, who contributed much to local agriculture and the community for many years.

"We all miss Mac Varn so very, very much. We are glad that we can give something back to our local UF students. He would want it that way," said Mallonee.

Each of the recipient students carry outstanding grade point averages and each is seeking a Bachelor of Science degree in Food and Resource Economics with a specialization in Agribusiness Management. Award recipients Zach Langford and Cody Hoffman both reside in Port St. Lucie, and are both are employed full-time as truck operators by Lambeth

Groves Inc., based in Vero Beach. Lambeth Groves is one of the region's most prominent fruit growing and packing firms.

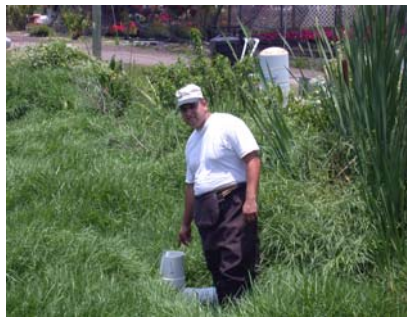
Award recipient Cody Hoffman said his educational pursuits include plans for a master's degree. His career goal is to work in sales for a prominent agricultural chemical supplier.

Zach is also interested in earning a master's degree and he would like to pursue a career in sales for an agricultural chemical supplies firm.

Kristina Jewett intends to enroll in the UF Veterinary School in Gainesville, following completion of her bachelor's degree. She has six years experience working with animals at the Florida Veterinary Animal League in Vero Beach as a veterinary technician. There, her chief responsibilities are with client relations. She also assists veterinarians with stabilization of animals, and with animal surgeries.

The Mac Varn Scholarship Award was created by the Treasure Coast Gator Club and Riverside National Bank in 2002, to honor the late Mac Varn, a Treasure Coast agricultural philanthropist whose impact upon the local agricultural industry and the community was profound. Mac Varn was an active member of the Treasure Coast Gator Club, a University of Florida Graduate, and an active university supporter.

New IRREC Bachelor of Science Degree Program in Environmental Management



Miguel Mozden recently graduated from IRREC and secured an environmental management position with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in West Palm Beach

Environmental Management—it's an up and coming field for a growing number of local governments and industries.

In an U.S. News listing of "hot tracks" for future employment, 20 percent of those listed were positions either directly related or indirectly related to the environment.

Professionals with skills needed to help organizations manage their interaction with the environment are already in high demand, said PJ van Blokland, IRREC program director. And to meet that demand, the IRREC is now offering a Bachelor's degree program in Environmental Management to students who hold an Associate in Arts degree. The new program is available to students who will begin their studies for the spring semester 2006.

van Blokland said environmental managers can be identified as conservation coordinators, farm managers, public policy and water district administrators, urban planners, utility companies and many other positions including general management.

"Environmental management is increasingly becoming more important in many industries because of new regulations and increasing population, and the environment is now being regulated by global mandates. Businesses are also more conscientious about their organization's outputs and the ways they affect their environment," said van Blokland. "The need for people who have these skills is increasing demand and will continue to be so for many years."

The Environmental Management degree program curriculum will include courses such as Wetlands, Environmental Policy, Water Resources Planning and Management, Law, Ecological Engineering, Natural Resource and Environmental Policy and a minor in agribusiness.

The new program will be delivered primarily with a distance education format, but will include courses taught live by professors at IRREC.

Those interested in enrolling in the UF Environmental Management Bachelor's degree program may contact Kim Wilson, UF Coordinator of Student Support Services at (772) 468-3922, Ext. 126, or by e-mail at kswilson@ifas.ufl.edu

New Scholarship Award for IRREC Student Honors South Florida

Pioneer Nurseryman James H. Davis



Frank Hill, who has devoted his career to the nursery industry.

Frank Hill, an Indiantown resident and IRREC exemplary student, was recently selected for the James H. Davis Memorial Scholarship Award by officials representing the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties, Inc. The award, for \$3,000, will fund Hill's educational pursuits towards a Bachelor of Science degree in Horticultural Sciences at IRREC.

"Frank Hill has an excellent background in the hands-on aspects of ornamental plant production which makes him an asset in the classroom," said Dr. Lamb, Frank's academic advisor. "By sharing his practical knowledge, he helps other students understand the basic principles of horticulture."

According to Danielle Cameron, vice president for donor services of the Community Foundation of Palm Beach and Martin Counties, Inc., the foundation that administers the scholarship, The James H. Davis Memorial Scholarship Award recognizes Mr. Davis and his pioneering Florida agricultural family; his great grandfather raised sugar and tobacco in Florida, in the early 1800s. The Davis Family also operated nurseries in Palm Beach County. Mr. Davis was a prominent tree-farmer whose operations specialized in sub-tropical trees.

Frank has for eight years been employed with his family business, Frank Hill Nurseries Inc., based in Indiantown, where his duties are primarily as nursery foreman. Frank Hill Nurseries produces woody ornamentals.

Following completion of a Bachelor of Science degree in Horticulture, Frank will continue his lifelong commitment to the nursery industry and to his family business.

Frank attended Okeechobee High School. In 2004, he graduated from Indian River Community College, or IRCC, with an Associate in Arts degree. During his academic work at IRCC, Frank was recipient to both a Florida Bright Futures, and the Donald C. Hicks "STARS" Scholarship Awards.

The Treasure Coast Education, Research and Development Authority



Rick Minton, Treasure Coast Education Research and Development Authority Board Chairman

Rick Minton, chairman of the IRREC Advisory Committee, is heading efforts as Chairman of the Board to establish The Treasure Coast Education, Research and Development Authority Board, under the auspices of St. Lucie County Commissioner Fran Hutchinson.

"Complimenting the Scripps effort in Palm Beach County, the expanding 1,800-acre Research and Education Park in St. Lucie County will serve to attract high paying, skilled employment opportunities for the Treasure Coast workforce," said Hutchinson.

Of those nominated for board positions, O.R. Rick Minton was unanimously elected board chairman. Minton is a former State Representative, current chair of the UF Indian River Research and Education Center, or IRREC Advisory Committee, and president of Rick Minton Realty Inc. in Fort Pierce. Linda Cox, St. Lucie County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, will serve the authority as vice-chair; Sherwood "Buddy" Johnson, a prominent agriculturalist and UF Treasure Coast Foundation Chair, as business representative; Kathleen McGinn, with the St. Lucie County School District, as education representative; Joe Joyce, UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, or IFAS, executive vice president, with administrative expertise; Thomas Jones, vice president of First National

Bank, was appointed to the authority as treasurer, and for financial representation; Jane Bachelor, a UF lecturer and human resources expert, will serve as board secretary and head fundraising efforts; Peter Stoffella, Ph.D., a UF research professor, has been appointed to the authority to handle research issues. The Board of Governors officially certified the authority board appointments at their June 9 meeting.

"We thank Sen. Ken Pruitt, R-Port St. Lucie, for his foresight and support for this strategic, economically vital park program. The Authority Board is energized and anxious to begin its work on behalf of all of our community's stakeholders."

"Twenty-five years ago the St. Lucie County Go Team, now the Economic Development Council, envisioned these types of opportunities," said Minton. "It's exciting to be a part of a new and emerging community as it matures into the 21st century."

"State Sen. Ken Pruitt, R-Port St. Lucie, is the driving force behind the research park. His support has been instrumental in the progression of his vision to reality," said Minton.

"We thank Sen. Ken Pruitt for his foresight and support for this strategic, economically vital park program. The authority board is energized and anxious to begin its work on behalf of all of our community's stakeholders."

In mid-July, Gov. Jeb Bush signed a bill that officially established the Treasure Coast Education, Research and Development Authority, or TCERDA. The board will request funds from domestic and international businesses, and from a countywide independent taxing district, to promote and stimulate regional economic development by supporting research undertakings and working to attract research organizations to the park.

To provide funding for local educational institutions and the park's efforts, St. Lucie County voters will be asked to vote on Nov. 7, 2006, to approve a "research and education benefit assessment." Should voters approve the assessment, the St. Lucie County Taxing Authority will be set up to manage the funds, which the state will match. The TCERDA, and other educational institutions, will request funds from the taxing authority.

According to Minton, the board is also seeking additional funding sources.

"This has been something the delegation has been working on for five years," said Sen. Ken Pruitt, R-Port St. Lucie. "Voters willing, this will allow us to move forward to realize our dream to be a premier research center."

The St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners has already purchased land designated for part of the research park. Since their appointment to the authority board, members have started work to develop a mission statement and a master plan for the park. Work on park by-laws, and park logos have also begun.

The TCERDA meetings are open to the public and are held the second Tuesday of each month, 2 until 4 p.m. Meeting locations are publicly posted two weeks prior to meetings. Should you need more information about TCERDA or wish to attend a meeting, contact Jane Bachelor at (772) 468-3922, Ext. 151.

IRREC's Dr. Sandra Wilson Honored With NATIONAL NACTA Award AND Promoted to Associate Professor



Dr. Sandra Wilson,
IRREC Associate Professor

Sandra Wilson was promoted to IRREC Associate Professor and honored for teaching eminence with the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture, NACTA, Teacher Fellow Award. The award was presented to her during the organization's annual meeting in Wooster, Ohio, on June 17.

"It brings me great pride to work with such a talented, innovative, exemplary faculty member. Dr. Wilson is highly worthy of this award and she is a tremendous asset to our center and to every student with whom she has worked and will work," said Brian Scully, IRREC director.

"She actually cares about her students. She cares about them all of the time and will shift heaven and high earth to help them. This provides students with a comfort zone that frankly I envy," said PJ van Blokland, UF IRREC Program Director and Professor.

He nominated Wilson for the award, devoting about 20 hours to the organization of a bound packet that includes more than 40 letters of support written by Wilson's supervisors, colleagues and students, and five years of actual student evaluations, all of which are well above the mean for a program which is primarily based at the university's main campus in Gainesville.



For five years, students who have attended Dr. Wilson's Florida Native Landscaping Courses have planned, implemented and cared for the IRREC Teaching Garden.

PJ van Blokland, Jane Bachelor and Kim Wilson to Serve on St. Lucie County Chamber of Commerce Education Task Force



Dr. PJ van Blokland,
IRREC Professor



Jane Bachelor,
IRREC Lecturer



Kim Wilson, IRREC Coordinator,
Student Support Services

What are the community's educational training gaps? And what higher education programs would offer the community its greatest opportunities for growth and prosperity?

PJ van Blokland, Jane Bachelor and Kim Wilson were recently named members of the St. Lucie County Chamber of Commerce Higher Education Task Force. As members of the task force, they will participate in the group's mission to answer those questions. The three will work with chamber leaders to identify needed educational programs, to increase awareness of all higher education programs, and to bring needed educational programs to the community.

The group's strategic plan includes collaborative efforts among all higher education institutions within the region to attract essential programs needed to meet training needs identified by local employers. Collaborative efforts will also include identification and implementation of externship and internship programs with employers, and the development of new scholarship programs.

IRREC's Dr. Bill Overholt Promoted to Associate Professor



Dr. Bill Overholt,
IRREC Associate Professor

Bill Overholt, a research scientist at the IRREC Biological Control Research and Containment Laboratory, was recently promoted to associate professor. Bill carries out research with invasive plants having a negative impact on Central Florida's ecology.

Dr. Overholt has more than 26 years of experience with biological control, including a major success with a biological control program in Africa. In 1991, while he was working at the International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology in Nairobi, Kenya, he led a research project on biological control of an Asian insect pest of corn. Bill was successful in identifying a parasitic wasp that attacked the invasive insect in India, and introduced it to Africa. The wasp's introduction resulted in a 30 to 50 percent decrease in the density of the pest, and an estimated 10 percent increase in corn yield.

During his professional career, he has published 105 peer-reviewed scientific papers, authored or co-authored five book chapters and written a number of non-peer reviewed articles.



THE 100 CLUB

In recent years, the number of scholarly journal articles produced by IRREC faculty members has greatly increased. Following are faculty members of The 100 Club, or those who have published 100 or more peer-reviewed journal articles.

- ◆ Dr. Zhenli He
- ◆ Dr. Bill Overholt
- ◆ Dr. Peter Stoffella

Dr. Cortney Ohs Joins IRREC Faculty



Dr. Cortney Ohs,
IRREC Assistant Professor

Cortney Ohs, an aquaculture researcher with over 12 years of research and extension experience with an emphasis in evaluation of management practices for new aquaculture species, and for existing aquaculture operations, has been named assistant professor of aquaculture of the University of Florida's Indian River Research and Education Center near Fort Pierce.

Ohs is the center's first professor of aquaculture. He joins UF's Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences based in Gainesville; he will head research and extension programs at the center's recently established Aquaculture Demonstration Project, a 15-acre, inland site adjacent to the University of Florida St. Lucie County Extension on Picos Road.

Brian Scully said the purpose of the newly established aquaculture program is to diversify agriculture in the region the center serves, and in south Florida. He said Ohs was selected for the position because of his ability to identify methods to maximize production and profitability of aquaculture systems.

"Cortney Ohs will lead aquaculture research in the region's emerging aquaculture industry," said Scully. "He is highly qualified, he is innovative and he is very much needed in this capacity."

Ohs, whose appointment officially began July 18, will conduct research with select aquaculture food species at the aquaculture demonstration project, and manage the project's systems, staff and operations. The site comprises four grow-out ponds, a greenhouse, retention ponds and a 1,060-foot deep artesian well.

In his new position, Ohs will help coordinate the university's statewide aquaculture program and the state's \$95.5 million aquaculture industry. His appointment includes extension work to support agriculturalists within the region who produce, and who will produce aquaculture products.

Fall Semester 2005

Important Dates:

Fall	Advance Registration	July 22 until August 22, 2005
	Regular Registration	Aug. 22 until Aug. 23, 2005
	Classes Begin	Aug. 24, 2005
	Last day to withdraw	Aug. 29, 2005
	All Fees Due in Full	Sep. 3, 2005
	Drop/Add	Aug. 23-29, 2005
	All Fees Due in Full	Sep. 2, 2005
	S/U Option	Sep. 9, 2005
	Classes End	Dec. 7, 2005
	Final Examinations	Dec. 12-16, 2005

Course Offerings:

Bachelor's Degree Courses:

Agricultural and Food Marketing
 Food and Resource Economics
 Principles of Economics
 Agricultural Finance
 Human Resources Management
 in Agribusiness
 Horticultural Physiology
 Fundamentals of Pest Management
 Special Problems in Agriculture
 Elementary Organic Chemistry and
 Biochemistry
 Fundamentals of Pest Management
 Genetics
 Organic Crop Production
 Special Topics
 PC Use in Agriculture
 Full-Time Practical Work
 Experience in FRE
 Principles of Entomology
 Principles of Entomology Lab
 Biology and Identification of
 Urban Pests
 Insect Classification
 Medical and Veterinary Entomology
 Medical and Veterinary Entomology
 Lab

Graduate Courses:

Strategic Agribusiness Human
 Resource Management
 Agricultural Instructional Techniques
 Extension Administration and
 Supervision
 Graduate Survey of Entomology
 Graduate Survey of Entomology Lab
 Biology and Identification of Urban
 Pests
 Medical and Veterinary Entomology
 Insect Ecology
 Insect Pest and Vector Management
 GIS in Land Resource Management
 Environmental Soil and Water and
 Land Use
 Soil Microbial Ecology
 Environmental Soil Physics
 Biogeochemistry of Wetlands

Degree and Certificate Offerings at the Indian River Research and Education Center

Bachelor's degree programs

Agribusiness Management
 Environmental Management

Master's degree programs

Agricultural Education and Communication
 Entomology
 Environmental Science

Certificate programs

Agricultural Education and Communication
 Entomology
 Environmental Horticulture

Those interested in enrolling in
 IRREC courses or degree and
 certificate programs may contact
 Kim Wilson, UF Coordinator of
 Student Support Services at (772)
 468-3922, Ext. 126, or by e-mail at
 kswilson@ifas.ufl.edu



RECENT IRREC AWARDS:

Dr. Sandra Wilson:

- Was honored with the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture Teacher Fellow Award. This highly prestigious and competitive award was presented to Dr. Wilson during the organization's annual meeting held in Wooster, Ohio, on June 17.

Dr. Ferdinand Wirth, recently retired Senior Biological Scientist Bob Pelosi and Robin Koestoyo:

- UF/IFAS Gold IMAGE Award for the "Citrus IQ Test"

Robin Koestoyo:

- UF Communications Network Golden Gator Award for the "Open House and Shrimp Boil" special event, named best UF special event for 2004
- UF/IFAS Gold IMAGE Award for same program
- Florida Public Relations Association Treasure Coast Chapter Grand-All Award for same program, top entry for a public relations program
- Florida Public Relations Association Treasure Coast Chapter IMAGE Award for same program, top scoring entry in Special Events category
- Florida Public Relations Association Treasure Coast Chapter Judges' Award for same program for outstanding entry that achieved maximum results while using minimum amount of money
- UF/IFAS Silver IMAGE Award for successful nomination of Frank "Sonny" Williamson Jr. to Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame

Tara Minton and Maria Solis

- UF/IFAS Silver IMAGE Award for Graduation Celebration Poster

Upcoming Events

July 28, 2005

Rural Lands
Sub-Committee Meeting

August 2, 2005

Treasure Coast Education,
Research and Development
Authority Meeting

August 3, 2005

Rural Lands
Sub-Committee Meeting

August 3,4 2005

School Board of St. Lucie
County Meeting

August 4, 2005

Rural Land
Sub-Committee Meeting

August 19, 2005

Department of Agriculture and
Consumer Services Customer
Service Training

August 26, 2005

Rural Land
Sub-Committee Meeting

September 8, 2005

Indian River Fall Postharvest
Workshop

October 11, 2005

Treasure Coast Education,
Research and Development
Authority Meeting