

LSWCD Staff

Patty Fletcher
Office Associate IV

Mobile Irrigation Lab

James "Bobby" Brown
Mobile Irrigation Specialist

Adam Boykin
Mobile Irrigation Technician

LAKE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 1 - SEPTEMBER 2012

www.lakecountyfl.gov/lswcd

**District
Supervisors**

Melanie Rose
Peggy Belflower
James "Buddy" Elmore
Frank Paulhamus
Betsy Farnor

USDA -NRCS Staff

Suzy Daubert
District Conservationist

We've Moved!

Where to find us:



Lake Soil & Water Conservation District Office is located in the Lake County Agricultural Center.

**1951 Woodlea Road
Tavares, Florida 32778
352-253-1646**

District Supervisor Melanie Rose

Melanie Rose was appointed to Seat #1 on the Board at their regular meeting on October 26, 2011.



Melanie was born and raised in Lake County. She has owned Sand Hill Ferns since 1982, and grows leather-leaf fern, variegated pittosporum, and blueberries.



Associate Supervisor Karen Fowler

Karen Fowler was appointed as Associate Supervisor to the Board at the regular meeting held on December 7, 2011.

Karen is a third-grade teacher from Sorrento Elementary School and has been instrumental in helping the Board start new projects at the elementary level.

Lake Soil and Water Conservation District donated 129 tree seedlings for the entire third grade. Karen led the Third Grade Team in organizing a tree give-away event, which was held the same day as the District's annual Tree Give-away* in honor of Florida Arbor Day.



"The kids were so excited about helping the environment by planting their trees."

Karen Fowler

Chair Peggy Belflower stated, "Lake Soil and Water Conservation District is proud to have provided the State Tree saplings to the students, in an ongoing effort to educate our children as to the importance that trees play in soil

Melanie expressed her thoughts about being on the Board of Supervisors: "I joined the Lake Soil and Water Conservation District in hope that I can help preserve and protect our Environment. I have also had the pleasure of having the Mobile Irrigation Lab* visit our farm, and the information they provided was very helpful in our water conservation."

"I enjoy working outside, watching my plants grow, and the joy I see on people's face when they eat our blueberries."

Melanie Rose

Melanie lives in Cassia with her husband, Bob, and three children.

*See Mobile Irrigation Lab, page 2

conservation and to further their interest in the natural environment. This pilot project was a huge success. We appreciate teacher Karen Fowler's enthusiasm and participation."

In February 2012, Karen incorporated a second project into the lesson plan: "Soil Babies." After making the soil babies, they created birth certificates and wrote a narrative from the viewpoint of their soil baby.



Soil Baby's first hair cut is needed after three or four weeks.



*See Tree Give-away, page 4

Welcome!

Suzy Daubert District Conservationist

On August 27, 2012, Suzy Daubert became the new District Conservationist (DC) in the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office in Tavares.

For the past three years, she has worked as a DC in New York, covering two counties in a tributary to the Chesapeake Bay.

We look forward to working with her and welcome her family to the area.



USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

Florida's farm or forestland owners and managers who would like help with:

- soil erosion
- water quality
- conservation
- integrated pest management
- forest stand improvement
- pasture and hayland improvement
- invasive plant control
- wildlife habitat improvement

We encourage you to sign-up by **October 30th** for federal conservation programs available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Applications for NRCS programs may be submitted at any time, but by applying by October 30th, landowners can start the conservation planning process with the assistance of NRCS staff and be ready for the next round of federal funding when it is available. A conservation plan is the essential first step to participating in federal conservation programs.

Please stop by the USDA Service Center at 1725 David Walker Drive, Suite C, Tavares, call 352-343-2481, ext 3 or email suzy.daubert@fl.usda.gov.

Mobile Irrigation Lab

As of July 1, 2012, the Lake Soil and Water Conservation District's Mobile Irrigation Lab (MIL) began its seventh year of providing free on-site evaluations of agricultural irrigation systems.

The previous annual contract was fulfilled with a total of 99 initial evaluations and 25 follow-up evaluations completed. The evaluations represent 2,039 acres and water savings below:

Potential water savings	136 million gallons per year
Actual water savings	37 million gallons per year

MIL Technicians can develop irrigation water management plans specific to your needs. Call 352-343-2481, ext. 6, to schedule your appointment.

Agriculture Producers

- Voluntary
- Free Public Service
- Non-Regulatory
- Confidential

Adam Boykin MIL Technician



Adam Boykin joined the Mobile Irrigation Lab on April 23, 2012. He previously worked for the Florida Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) performing irrigation evaluations

for their Mobile Irrigation Lab in Volusia, Flagler, Putnam, and St. Johns counties.

Adam lives in Eustis with his wife, Samantha, and one year old son, Ayden.

Poster Contest

The Lake Soil and Water Conservation District's annual poster contest was held on November 17, 2011 with more than 150 posters entered.

Posters were evaluated on originality, conservation message, visual effectiveness, and universal appeal. Posters were judged by Chair Peggy Belflower, Carol Johnson from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Gary England, University of Florida Extension Agent.



It is important to understand where the food comes from that you eat each day. You see a wide variety of products in your local grocery store. But where does it all come from? What is the connection to the soil you walk on each day? This poster contest helped students gain a better understanding of the process the food takes.



Posters were displayed and judged at the Lake County Agricultural Center.

First Place Posters

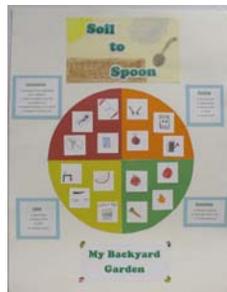
To view the second and third place winning poster designs, log on to www.lakecountyfl.gov/lswcd.

**Category
K - 1st Grade**



Gabi Moser
Christian Home & Bible

**Category
2nd - 3rd Grade**



Deanna Ern
Sorrento Elementary

**Category
4th - 6th Grade**



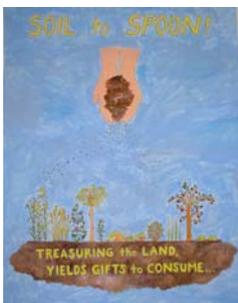
Nicholas Keiper
Leesburg Elementary

**Category
7th - 9th Grade**



Hope Friedrich
Gray Middle

**Category
10th - 12th Grade**



Iman Seale
East Ridge High

Winning posters were displayed at the Lake County Administration Building.



See page 7 for information on the upcoming poster and speech contests.

Speech Contest

Topic:

Should food crops be used for fuel?

Alex Sainz, a six grade student at Lake Montessori and Learning Institute, won first place at the speech contest held by Lake Soil and Water Conservation District on November 17, 2011.

Nine contestants gave speeches that were scored on content, composition, delivery and time criteria. The three judges were: Juanita Popenoe, Lake County Extension Director, Keith Truenow, Lake County Farm Bureau, and Sandi Good, Retired Biology Teacher, Leesburg High School.

After winning at the local level, Alex went on to win second place at the Area Three Association of Florida Conservation Districts' contest hosted by Osceola Soil and Water Conservation District in May 2012.



(L to R) Alex Sainz, speech contest winner with Peggy Bellflower, District Supervisor



2nd Place
Emily Waddington



3rd Place
Emmie Palmer

"In my opinion, foods should not be used as fuels. I agree that we need to find a replacement for fossil fuels because they pollute our planet, and we are eventually going to run out. I do not agree that we should be using crops, though. Instead of using crops to make bio-fuels, we should use byproducts to make second generation bio-fuels."

~Alex Sainz

Tree Give-Away

The Lake Soil & Water Conservation District gave away close to 1,800 bare-root tree seedlings to 364 citizens at the Lake County Agricultural Center's Horticultural Learning Center at Discovery Gardens in Tavares on Thursday, January 19, 2012.

District Supervisors gave each person a tree of every variety: Dogwood, Red Maple, Sabal Palm, Redbud, and Myrtle Leaf Holly. Chris Otremba, County Forester, provided pine trees and was available to answer questions. Hand-outs with tree descriptions and how to plant a tree were available.

The event is held annually in honor of Florida Arbor Day, which is the third Friday in January.



The line formed outside before the doors opened.



LAKE REGIONAL ENVIROTHON

The ninth annual Lake Regional Envirothon was held on February 16, 2012, with 21 Lake County teams. Middle and High School students gathered at the Hickory Point Recreational Facility in Tavares to compete.



Participants of the 9th Annual Envirothon



1st place team, Squirrel Scouts (L-R front row) Aaron Janosa, Corey Carruthers, Graham Sligh, Victoria Romero, Tessa Clark (advisor). Backrow: Griffin Matthews, Joan Wukotch (advisor)

The Envirothon is a natural resource education program sponsored by Lake Soil and Water Conservation District. The five-member teams are led by an advisor in studying prepared resource materials on aquatics, forestry, wildlife, soils and a selected current environmental issue, which for 2012 was "Nonpoint Source Pollution/Low Impact Development."

Students work in teams to answer written questions and conduct hands-on investigations.



High School Teams

Place	Team	High School
1 st	Squirrel Scouts	Leesburg
2 nd	Thunder Zucchini	Tavares
3 rd	Impeccable Pandas	Tavares



Middle School Teams

Place	Team	Middle School
1 st	Destructive	Lake Montesorri & Learning Institute
2 nd	Gray Gators	Gray
3 rd	Zazzy Syzygies	Lake Montesorri & Learning Institute



1st place team, Destructive Interference (L-R front row) Ryan Venetta, Emmie Palmer, Samuel Sutch, Emaad Syed, and Harshul Gupta. Backrow: Katrina Palmer (advisor)



LAKE COUNTY LAND JUDGING

The annual Land Judging competition was held on March 8, 2012, at Lake May Reserve, a Lake County public lands property located on County Road 44 in Eustis. Awards were presented at the Trout Lake Nature Center.

The Lake Soil and Water Conservation District invited Future Farmers of America students to test their knowledge by judging soils from four pits selected by the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Chair Peggy Belflower spoke to participants before the contest.

The skills that the teens test at the contest involve principles that can be valuable in career fields such as environmental and agricultural management, natural resources conservation, homebuilding, engineering, and construction.



First Place team from East Ridge High



*Savannah Olson
First Place - High School
Individual High Score
with Supervisor Melanie Rose*

High School Teams

Place	Team	High School
1 st	Team A	East Ridge
2 nd	Team B	East Ridge
3 rd	Umatilla Team	Umatilla



First Place team from Clermont Middle



*Kyle Garner
First Place - Middle School
Individual High Score
with Supervisor Melanie Rose*

Middle School Teams

Place	Team	Middle School
1 st	Team A	Clermont
2 nd	Team B	Clermont

First place high school and middle school teams competed at the Florida Land Judging competition in Marion County on March 30, 2012. East Ridge High placed 8th and Clermont Middle placed 2nd in the state. Kyle Garner, from Clermont Middle, tied 5th place for highest individual score in the state.



Individual score cards were marked for evaluation of characteristics, planned use, and limitations.



Lake Regional Science and Engineering Fair

The Lake Soil and Water Conservation District provided an award for the Agricultural and Natural Resources category of the Lake Regional Science and Engineering Fair and gave support for students to attend the State Science and Engineering Fair.

On February 11, 2012, District Supervisor Betsy Farmer presented Maegan Garner with the first place \$100 award.

"My project was The Effect of Mulch on Soil Retention. I learned a lot about water conservation from my project."

Maegan Garner

Exhibit at the Lake County Fair

April 5 through 14, 2012



Deadline
October 29, 2012

POSTER CONTEST The poster contest provides kindergarteners through twelfth graders with an opportunity to share their thoughts about water and related natural resource issues. As a poster wins first place, it proceeds from the local contest to regional, state, and national competition.

Future Events Scheduled

Poster and Speech Contest flyers are posted on our site: www.lakecountyfl.gov/lswcd.

The theme for both contests is, **"Where does your water shed?"**

Deadline
October 29, 2012

SPEECH CONTEST The speech contest is designed to develop leadership and stimulate interest in conserving natural resources. From the local contest, the first place winner can advance to regional and state contests.



A watershed is an area of land that drains to a particular body of water, such as a river or a lake. Rain or any type of precipitation that falls anywhere in that watershed eventually flows to a body of water. The water may travel over land as surface water or flow underground as groundwater.

2013

Thursday
February 14

ENVIROTHON Envirothons are a natural resource education event where students work in teams to answer written questions and conduct hands-on investigations relating to aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and current environmental issues. The first place team has the opportunity to go on to the state and national competitions.

TREE GIVE-AWAY

Free tree seedlings are given in honor of Florida Arbor Day.

Saturday
January 19

Thursday
March 14

LAND JUDGING Future Farmers of America and 4-H students take turns examining soil in pits dug especially for the contest, to judge adaptability of land for various purposes, including farming, range management, and home-site construction. The first place team has the opportunity to go on to the state and national competitions.

Upcoming Events

September

3 - Labor Day
 26 - Lake Soil & Water Conservation District Meeting - 3:00 p.m.

October

24 - Lake Soil & Water Conservation District Meeting - 3:00 p.m.
 29 - Deadline for Poster and Speech Entries

November

11 - Veterans Day
 22 - Thanksgiving
 29 - Speech contest

No Board Meeting
 in November

December

5 - Lake Soil & Water Conservation District Meeting - 3:00 p.m.
 25 - Christmas

Board meetings are held at
 the Lake County
 Agricultural Center
 1951 Woodlea Rd, Tavares

Newsletter Distribution

Request for Email Addresses

Last Notice: Lake Soil and Water Conservation District would like to move as many newsletter recipients to email address format as possible in order to be considerate of the environment and save on costs. You may refer to our website for future newsletters, or you can send us your email address.

Under Florida law, email addresses are public records. If you do not want your email address made public, go directly to our website for the newsletter. at www.lakecountyfl.gov/lswcd

If you do not have computer access, please call 352-253-1646 to let us know you would like to continue to receive a printed newsletter via U.S. Postal Service.

Florida Conservation Districts

In 1937, the Soil Conservation Act, Chapter 582, was enacted by the Florida Legislature. There are 63 conservation districts in Florida, all organized by local people for the purpose of promoting and encouraging the wise use, management and general conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources.

An elected five-member, non-partisan board of supervisors, who volunteer their services, manages each soil and water conservation district.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts are non-taxing and are supported by maintaining relationships and partnerships with organizations, government agencies, and receive voluntary contributions.

Supervisor Vacancy in January 2013

The Lake Soil and Water Conservation District will have a vacancy on the board of supervisors as of January 8, 2013.

Vacancies are filled by appointment by the remaining supervisors until the next regular election. The office of district supervisor is district wide.

Regular board meetings are held monthly (except November) for setting priorities and planning with County staff. The Lake Soil and Water Conservation District promotes and encourages preserving and enhancing the quality of life in Lake County through conservation of its natural resources.

For more information, email pfletcher@ufl.edu.