



**June 2009**  
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*Ever wonder...if con is the opposite of pro, is Congress the opposite of progress?*



***Congratulations, Zhanao!***

Zhanao Deng has received his well-deserved promotion to Associate Professor! Zhanao has been with the Gulf Coast REC since November 8, 2002 as Assistant Professor in Environmental Horticulture for floricultural breeding. He received his PhD in 1988 in Plant Genetics and Breeding from Huazhong Agricultural University in China. Zhanao has proven himself to be an extremely productive and effective faculty member and has done an excellent job in securing extramural funds for his floricultural breeding, as well as being a very prolific writer and active mentor and chair in the graduate student program. His work with caladium, gerbera daisies, and lisianthus cultivars has made him a leader and won the respect of the scientific and grower communities, not to mention the staff and faculty at GCREC. ***Congratulations!***

**JUNE BIRTHDAYS!**

- 2.....Jim Sumler
- 3.....Justin Harris
- 6.....Scott Hughes
- 7.....Carly Summers
- 11....Lee Smith
- 13....Lu Han
- 16....Catalina Moyer
- 16....Dasha Taborsky (ret)
- 16....Joel Parlin
- 17....Jim Price
- 22....Don Maynard (ret)



***It's JUNE! School's out for the summer and it's time to get away for a break!***



**Celebrate  
 FATHER's DAY  
 June 21<sup>st</sup>!**

## ***Congratulations...***

We congratulate **Georgene Bender** from our Plant City HCC campus upon receiving notice of tenure and promotion to level III as the South Central District specialized 4-H agent. Most of the staff has not had the opportunity to meet Georgene, so I asked her just what she did at Plant City...

*I am one of 5 Regional Specialized 4-H Agents (RSA) and we are all located in a research or educational UF facility in the state to provide extension youth education to the surrounding area county staff. My local responsibility is to assist and support 11 counties' 4-H staff with in-service and training; my assigned curriculum area is Communications and my State Program responsibility is Collaborations and Partnerships where I serve as the PI and Project Director for the Operation: Military Kids grant. I also support the 4-H clubs on five (5) US Air Force bases in England with training.*

*At PC I have assisted with promoting the UFPC program at fairs, 4-H events, newsletters, career nights, summer college exploring day and guest speaker on "What is Extension?" for courses at HCC and UF.*

*I served in Extension in Ohio one year as 4-H Program Assistant in Columbus and 8 years in Michigan as 4-H Agent in St. Clair and Macomb Counties. I returned to Extension in August 2003 in Florida and served 4 years as 4-H Agent in Hillsborough County with school and urban programs until being offered the RSA position in August 2007.*

*The 5 RSA positions were awarded as a result of a Family & Youth State Initiative passed in 2006. Being located in an educational /research facility enables me to learn more about the program and share it in the 11 communities that I work with.*

*I love working here – it is great to learn more about research and also have some great educational mentors to learn from here at Plant City.*

*Thanks – Georgene*



Last month we were privileged to have two volunteers sign up to assist Nancy West in Geoff Denny's horticulture program...



**Roger Rixom**  
from Apollo Beach

and  
**Diane Schwaninger**  
from Tampa.



We appreciate their willingness to volunteer and assist at UF.

## **WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES!**



David Schuster welcomed another OPS assistant to his Entomology program in May. **Donna Carty** received her BS in animal husbandry from Delaware Valley College. She and her husband now reside in Sun City Center. Welcome to the team!



In May, **Carly Summers** has joined Gary Vallad's pathology team (OPS). Carly is a graduate of New College with a BS in Biochemistry. She spent two years with the Peace Corps

and is now living back home in Myakka. Welcome, Carly!

The Plant City campus has two new OPS on board in May. **Joseph Latvis** from Dade City is working with Amr Abd-Elrahman in his Geomatics program. **Gabriela Laboy Payan** is the new assistant for the teaching garden at Plant City, working with Sydney Park Brown. She is taking Monica Ragukas' position as Monica is starting her work with Zhanao Deng's program this month. (Sorry, no photos available.)



**Congratulations to Norma Scott** (wife of Jay Scott)! She truly went "to the head of the class" with her promotion to School Principal for McNeal Elementary School at Lakewood Ranch, Bradenton. (Now if she could just keep Jay in line...)



**Mark Your Calendar:**

- June 10.....Zhanao Deng Seminar for Strawberry Breeder position, *Breeding Strawberries for FL: New Tools and Opportunities* 11am-12pm in Auditorium with Faculty Meet/Greet 9:30 am - 11:00 am in Main Conference Room
- 11.....Vance Whitaker Seminar for Strawberry Breeder position, *Qualifications & A Vision For UF Strawberry Breeders Program* 11am-12pm in Auditorium with Faculty Meet/Greet 9:30 am - 11:00 am in Main Conference Room
- 16.....Eric Stafne Seminar for Strawberry Breeder position, *A Vision For Strawberry Breeding at UF* 11am-12pm in Auditorium with Faculty Meet/Greet 9:30 am - 11:00 am in Main Conference Room
- 17.....Highlands Corp. – Mulberry; workshop from 8am – 4pm in the Auditorium
- 19.....BLOOD MOBILE; 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
- 19.....Faculty Seminar – Jeremy Edwards – Auditorium at 12:00 pm
- 21.....*FATHERS DAY – Man does not live by bread alone – occasionally he needs buttering up!*
- 26.....June Birthday Party – 3:00 pm in Auditorium



[Return to Home Page](#)