

Congratulations to the winners of the first graduate student travel award competition

The committee for judging the inaugural GCREC graduate student travel award received 9 excellent applications. The applications were evaluated based on merit, need and potential impact. Because of the close competition, we have decided to give first, second and third place awards to the following recipients:

1st place, \$500 – Shaun Sharpe (PhD with Nathan Boyd)
2nd place, \$300 – Rodrigo Onofre (PhD with Natalia Peres)
3rd place, \$200 – Bruna Forcelini (PhD with Natalia Peres)



We congratulate the winners and thank all applicants for their submissions. We look forward to receiving applications for the next round of awards in April.



Welcome New Gators!

We have a few of new faces roaming the halls this month. On the left is Eduardo Suarez who is working as a student intern in Dr. Natalia Peres' lab. He comes to us from Honduras where he is a student at Universidad Zamorano. We also have a new Research Scholar with Dr. Johan Desaegeer's program. Paul Dahlin is pictured here in the center and arrived this past week. Originally from Sweden, Paul will be working on soilborne disease management. We also have a new graduate student working and living here at the center. Meet Gurleen Kaur pictured here on the right. She is working with Dr. Tong Geon Lee. Gurleen is Dr. Lee's first grad student for his new program.

GatorPerks Available for Your Use!

Although some discounts are offered at Gainesville-area vendors, there are a lot online or state-wide so visit <http://hr.ufl.edu/benefits/other-benefits/gatorperks> and take advantage of this benefit today. Save some \$\$ on the following:

Arts & Leisure; Automobile, Scooter, and Tires; Auto Insurance, Rental & Repairs; Books; Office Supplies & Printing; Childcare & Related services; Electronics; Financial & Mortgage Services; Food & Restaurants; Hair Services; Health, Fitness & Wellness; Home Goods, Services & Repairs; Hotel Accommodations; Moving & Relocation Services; Pets & Pet Supplies; Real Estate, Apartments & Houses; Travel & Entertainment; UF/Campus Discounts; Wireless Communications

Plant City Chronicles—February 2017

On January 28th, 2017, students volunteered for a work day at the Plant City Commons Community Garden. Members built a pollinator garden, built handicap garden containers, and helped work on projects that needed attention. This space is adjacent to the GCREC Plant City Campus at HCC. Members look forward to continuing their collaboration with the Community Garden.



Agricultural Education Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate students in the agricultural education program held a laboratory class at the GCREC for their “Laboratory Practices in Agricultural Education” Course. Students learned about tractor operations, management, equipment and safety. Students returned to the GCREC on January 31st, 2017 for another laboratory, which will focus on row crop and greenhouse production and management.



Gator Collegiate FFA Alumni

Students have been busy this past month! On January 17th, Gator Collegiate FFA members went to a Riverview 4-H meeting. Members shared opportunities in CALS and the GCREC Plant City Campus, and provided pizza and ice cream for the group. These 4-H members collected hundreds of pounds of healthy food items for the Florida Baptist Children's Home, and were the winning 4-H group for the Gator Collegiate Hillsborough County challenge!



On January 20th, 2017, Gator Collegiate FFA Alumni members traveled to the Florida Baptist Children's Home in Lakeland, Florida. The group packaged over 125 backpack meals, that will go home with needy elementary school students in the area. This was an amazing experience, and a service activity that the group hopes to continue!



♥ Plant City Blood Drive/Be The Match was held on Friday, January 27th, 2017—Many folks came out to
♥ the event. We had dozens of blood donors/Be The Match registrants. Thank you to everyone who took the
♥ time to stop by! This event meant so very much to Jemy Hinton and her family.



Save the Date!
Spring Mini-Conference
Saturday,
March 18, 2017
Suncoast Youth Conservation Center
Apollo Beach

LEEF Spring Mini-conference
3/18/17 10am-5pm
Suncoast Youth Conservation Center— Looking for Presenters!
For more info—<http://leef-florida.org/>



The Kitty Night Stalker—what’s the best time to hunt for rodents? At night, of course. If you wondered about our farm cat, she’s still around. Photo by S. Arango.



Received a delivery last month of three large storage cabinets and they were packed with long, heavy-duty cardboard strips. Sent an email asking if anyone wanted any of them for whatever purpose they could come up with and what do you know! Braden Evans, PostDoc in Renkema’s lab, took a stack home and built a fort with his two adorable kids. Genius! And who wouldn’t love that “tarp”!



Just what is Groundhog Day and how did it become an American “Holiday”? Groundhog Day, February 2nd, is a popular tradition in the United States. It is also a legend that traverses centuries, its origins clouded in the mists of time with ethnic cultures and animals awakening on specific dates. Myths such as this tie our present to the distant past when nature did, indeed, influence our lives. It is the day that the Groundhog comes out of his hole after a long winter sleep to look for his shadow. If he sees it, he regards it as an omen of six more weeks of bad weather and returns to his hole. If the day is cloudy and, hence, shadowless, he takes it as a sign of spring and stays above ground. The groundhog tradition stems from similar beliefs associated with Candlemas Day and the days of early Christians in Europe, and for centuries the custom was to have the clergy bless candles and distribute them to the people. Even then, it marked a milestone in the winter and the weather that day was important.



GCREC Employee News

February 2017

February Birthdays

- 1.....Amr Abd-Elrahman
- 1.....Zhen Guan
- 10...Cheol-min Yoo
- 12...Hugh Smith
- 14...Cedric Bellard (PC)
- 15...Kazuyo Ueda
- 19...Hua (Margaret) Zou
- 20....Nathan Boyd
- 21....Tim Davis
- 27....Jack Rechcigl
- 28/29....Nicole Billera

Research Matter Seminar Series is Off and Running
The first seminar of our Research Matter Seminar Series was held last month and was a great success. Dr. Nathan Boyd presented: The past, present, and future of weed management in small fruit and vegetable crops. Faculty, staff, extension personnel and others were treated to lunch during his entertaining as well as educational presentation regarding the field of weed management. This will be a monthly series for all faculty and staff. If you think you need a scientific mind to attend, you couldn’t be more wrong. This series is designed to allow everyone to learn something about each research program here at the center and we hope will promote more interdisciplinary work among the different labs.

The next seminar will be presented by Dr. Sam Hutton. So if you are interested in learning what goes on in the tomato breeding lab and field trials, be sure to attend.



Friday, February 17th
Presentation title:
Tomato breeding at GCREC,
accomplishments
and future directions

Things to Celebrate in February

- 1st week of February: African Heritage & Health Week
- 3rd Weekend of February: National Margarita Weekend
- American Heart Month
- Bird-Feeding Month
- Black History Month
- Canned Food Month
- Cherry Month
- National Children's Dental Health Month
- Chocolate Lovers Month
- Creative Romance Month
- Grapefruit Month
- Hot Breakfast Month
- Potato Lovers Month
- Return Shopping Carts to the Supermarket Month
- Snack Food Month



GCREC Valentine’s Day Party
3:30 p.m. Auditorium
Tuesday, February 14th
Strawberry Shortcake
Games and Prizes
Fun Photo Shoot Opportunities