Trending at TPIE: Innovation, Style - and PLANTS!

University of Florida’s Jack Payne Talks Toxic Plants

President Ed Bravo Gets Personal on the Opioid Crisis

Bridging the Gap With the Industry’s Future Labor Force
December was a whirlwind of chapter Christmas parties for the Amigos and FNGLA staff. There were events at country clubs, antique bowling alleys, pole barns with live bands, restaurants, church reception halls, hipster bars and even one party onboard a ship. FNGLA chapters reflect the industry-at-large in that we are diverse, unique and generous. Thank you all, for the warm reception and gracious hospitality! I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays — freezing temperatures excluded! By now, the lights are off the house, the brown Christmas tree is gone from the end of your driveway and the last relative is finally out of the guest room. Time to get back to work!

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate my business partner, Luis Diaz, for being recognized as the Builder of the Year for North Central Florida at last month’s BANCF annual banquet. His commitment to innovative design, community involvement and tireless leadership with governmental affairs and building policy are just a few of the reasons he was awarded this prestigious honor. I am proud to work at his side and I am grateful for his support in my role as FNGLA President.

TPIE is just about here and I hope to see many of you there. If you have never been, you are missing a fantastic display of everything tropical, cutting-edge educational programs and a unique opportunity to see the latest in plants and products showcased by the world’s leaders in their field.

On Dec. 6, FNGLA’s Marketing and Membership Committee met. It was noted it would be wiser to find out what our members want rather than provide you with what we think you need. So, the committee decided to survey FNGLA’s members to learn what benefits and services are most important to you. In this way, the committee can best direct programming efforts. If you have not yet done so, please take a minute to complete the short survey at: http://bit.ly/FNGLASurvey.

The Northeast Chapter is helping to connect FNGLA member businesses and FFA students through direct involvement in events such as their competition held last month in Middleburg. FNGLA Secretary/Treasurer Shawn Thomas was the keynote speaker for the event, while Stefan Liopoulos (Lawn Enforcement Agency Gainesville) and I were invited to act as judges for the competition. Stefan judged Tractor Driving and, ironically, I was asked to judge the Public Speaking contest. They must not have received the memo about my personal abilities in that particular skillset.

Hurricanes, such as Irma, are not the only crisis leaving devastation in the heartland of Florida agriculture. The opioid epidemic is leaving...
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Trending at TPIE

International trends expert Max Luthy kicks off with an Opening Session on what’s hot in consumer trends and innovation.

Setting the stage for three days inside a virtual tropical plant wonderland at TPIE, trends expert Max Luthy plans to kick off the Opening Session by imparting five consumer trends with major implications for 2018.

“We’re going to boil all five of them down,” said Luthy, who serves as director of trends and insights at TrendWatching. “We don’t just want to tell you five trends and you have to learn five new buzz words and how to respond. Our whole approach is to make it as actionable as possible.”

Based in New York City, TrendWatching assists companies around the globe in connecting their brands and products with the whims and wants of an evolving consumer marketplace.

Luthy also plans to hone in on what he sees as the best opportunities for live plant
and related businesses.

“There’s a huge focus on wellness that we’ve seen — from how people eat, to the clothing they wear,” Luthy said. “Live plants allow people to implant health and wellness into their surroundings — and their mental and physical well-being.”

Luthy added, “I think this is just a huge, almost positioning, opportunity for the industry.”

Another trend on the agenda to discuss at the Opening Session involves expectations related to how businesses credit and acknowledge their influences, according to Luthy.

“If you’re doing textiles which pay homage to a North African artifact, you don’t just rip them off,” Luthy cautioned. “Consumers want to see, if you’re going to have something with a hint of it [homage], you’re paying tribute to them.”

Luthy added he will also impart a few tips on ways to better tell the story of one’s brand — a business initiative which has in recent years taken a front seat, thanks to social media.

After all, as Luthy, perched at the epicenter of trending tastes puts it, “consumer expectations are higher than ever before.”

TPIE takes place Jan. 17 – 19. Opening Session takes place 9 a.m., Jan. 17. Admission to the session is free with a show badge. •
Chapter Spotlight

Bridging the Gap

FNGLA’s Frontrunners and Northeast chapters team up to help provide materials, equipment to Florida’s agriculture curriculums.

Hoping to bridge the gap between industry and agriculture curriculum in Florida’s schools, members from two FNGLA chapters have teamed up to offer personal support, equipment and materials.

“Our main goal is to become a resource for all nursery, landscape and irrigation Career Technical Education programs, while also bringing awareness to our industry and informing students of the opportunities and careers available to them,” Shawn Thomas, FNGLA secretary/treasurer, said. “Our hope is we broaden the scope of what is available to these students.”

Members from FNGLA’s Frontrunners and Northeast chapters last month laid the groundwork for the outreach campaign, which aims to connect with school officials and teachers and provide what is needed to fortify nursery and horticulture programs.

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL — Harrison Love, now employed with Rode Groundcovers, earned his FCHP certification while enrolled at Williston High School in Levy County, Florida.
This includes furnishing equipment, donating materials, and potentially even offering internships for students, according to Thomas.

The hope? Better qualified future entry-level workers, stronger relationships with educators, and direct career paths into Florida's horticulture industry, Thomas said.

Northeast chapter members last month formed a subcommittee to plot a course.

Chapter members also plan to create a master calendar of events which will include upcoming career fairs, contests and speaking opportunities so chapter members can also get involved.

Stefan Liopiros, past president of FNGLA’s Frontrunners chapter, said the effort will ultimately strengthen the future of Florida’s horticulture industry.

“If we are smart and work to help strengthen the horticulture curriculum in agriculture classes, and actively get in front of these kids and show them our industry, it will pay dividends to FNGLA, and Florida agriculture, in general, with quality future employees,” Liopiros said.

Liopiros added he hopes the project yields a template for all FNGLA chapters to embrace.

**How Can FNGLA Chapter Members Assist Horticulture Curriculums?**

- Serve as a guest speaker
- Host a field trip/use of business facilities
- Provide student scholarships, internships and sponsorships
  - Serve as a contest judge
  - Serve on an advisory committee
  - Become a mentor
- Host a student for career shadowing
- Help students and teachers prepare for industry certification exams
- Provide teacher externships
- Volunteer for mock job interviews for students
- Provide technical assistance for teachers
- Advocate for Career and Technical Education
- Participate in career fairs and community service events
- Provide new/used equipment
Participation exploded this Fall at FNGLA’s landscape certification test sites. More than 60 nursery and landscape professionals looking to increase their knowledge, skills and professionalism took their places at the four test sites, located across all corners of the state.

Swinging at SeaWorld

With the happy screams of excited roller coaster riders in the background, test participants at the Orlando-based site performed round robins at a series of hands-on test sections. Host Gary Weitersmann of SeaWorld Horticulture greeted each tester with a pep talk.

Special ‘Thank you’ to Central Florida’s judges for maintaining the high integrity of FNGLA’s certification exams.

Going Bilingual

At FNGLA’s only bilingual test site, host Robert Shoelson of Getting Green and his interpreters set the tone for the day. The weather provided a perfect South Florida day.

Special ‘Thank you’ to South Florida’s judges for bringing certification opportunities to all regardless of their native language.

Wintery Wonderland

Rain and cold did not stop the debut of FNGLA’s newest test site at Florida Gateway College in Lake City. Host Joe Petersen from the college made sure everyone stayed as comfortable as possible.

Special ‘Thank you’ to North Florida’s judges for braving the weather to bring back landscape certification to the area.

Tampa Bay Takes on the Task

Members in the Tampa Bay Chapter have a unique opportunity for certification. Host William Ortiz from AmericanScapeUSA set up both training and testing for a successful event. Special ‘Thank you’ to the judges for spending their Saturday with FNGLA.

Fall 2017 wraps up banner year for FNGLA landscape certifications
FNGLA wishes to acknowledge all who contributed to a successful season:

SeaWorld Horticulture Orlando
Gary Weitersmann, host
Troy Abbott, Yellowstone Landscape
Gareth Barnard, Universal Orlando
Kevin Carmean, Lake Conway Landscaping
Adam Chapman, KCI Engineering
Billy Copeland, BrightView
Philip Johnson, Commercial Co.
Tedd Kenny, DBI Services
Lee Lovett, Forest Hills Landscape
Robert Maier, CEPRa Landscape
Christian Martinez, BrightView
Pete McKay, Palm Guy
Angel Ocasio, Dora Landscaping
Hank Oyler, Dora Landscaping
Luis Perez, BrightView
Frank Pollard, Midwestern Construction
Diane Sappington, A Landscape Vision
Mahendra Setaram, Dynamics Group

Ed Simpson, Ed Simpson Landscapes
Paul Sykora, BrightView
Linda Tootle, Tootle Construction
Terry Waddell, KCI Engineering
UF/IFAS Ft. Lauderdale REC, Davie
Robert Shoelson & Rob Purcell, Getting Green, hosts
Kim Moore & Luci Fisher, UF/IFAS, hosts
Rigoberto Amezquita, Miami-Dade Co.
Evelio Arias, Miami-Dade Co.
Rick Blaha, EDJ Services
Nick Bohle, Tenusa
Cedric Brown, BrightView
Carmelo D’Oro, Landscaping
Details
Tedd Flack, 100% Landscaping
Vlad Foursa, B.G. Katz
Arturo Izquierdo, Keith & Schnars
Tedd Kenny, DBI Services
Akevis Lewis, Miami-Dade County
Luc Limbourg, GREEteam Solutions
Sergio Lopez, 100% Landscaping
Robert Marshall, BrightView
Chris Miller, Keith & Schnars
Fernando Ortega, SFM Services
Tedd Reich, Keith & Schnars
Steven Rivera, Miami-Dade County
Sarah Rosen, Keith & Associates
Chase Russell, Keith & Schnars
Troy Scutchings, Miami-Dade County
Wayne Simmons, Miami-Dade County
Ned Skiff, Skiff & Associates
Tom White, A-1 Floridian
Ameriscape USA, Thonotosassa
William Ortiz, AmeriscapeUSA
M.A. Chavous, Hillsborough Co. Schools
Marcelo Cruz, Ameriscape USA
Ken Dobler, Westcoast Landscape
Marie Petresky, Nature Design

Landscaping
Paul Rauch, Pay It Forward Farm
Florida Gateway College, Lake City
Joe Petersen, Florida Gateway College
Robin Barber, All Pro Landscapes
Jarrod Batson, Jacobs Engineering
Steve Bos, Tallahassee Nurseries
Johnny Gruener, City of Tallahassee
Chris Hampton, Jacobs Engineering
Tim Harris, BrightView
David Langston, Jacobs Engineering
Pete McKay, Palm Boss
Paul Sykora, BrightView
Linda Tootle, Tootle Construction
Gary Weitersmann, SeaWorld
Kenny Welsh, City of Tallahassee
**FNGLA Welcomes New Members**

Association gains 65 new member companies in December 2017

**ACTION**

Alday Company, Inc. 10111 W Church St Orlando, FL 32805 407-425-4861 Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

PalGlobal, LLC David Poris 14 S Indian River Dr Cocoa, FL 32922 770-329-8903

Sod Depot Luis Silva 4209 N Orange Blossom Tr Orlando, FL 32810 407-942-8259

Amerigrass Landscape, Inc. Jason Willcoxon 17537 Orange Grove Blvd Loxahatchee, FL 33470 561-379-6855 Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

O&A Services, Inc. Rob Clearfield 170 Ronning Way Clearfield, UT 84015 435-785-1420

Robert Dickson 2487 E Jefferson St Orlando, FL 32803 360-969-2879

Prism One Doug Vaught 1133 Crown Park Cir Winter Garden, FL 34787 321-293-1003 Rec’d by: Stingray Chevrolet Commercial Sales

Professional Vending Services Andy Kartiganer 18095 Powerline Rd Deerfield Beach, FL 33442 954-627-2725 Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

**COASTAL SPRINGS**

Banks Road Properties LLC
Onley Arnold
231 SW 5th Ct
Pompano Beach, FL 33060
954-942-6044
Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

Dennis Shipping
Dennis Hawthorne
3695-99 NW 15th St
Lauderhill, FL 33311
754-232-2348
Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

Drone Nerds, Inc.
Robert Weitler
320 NE 1st Ave
Hallandale, FL 33009
786-708-7807
Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

Eulogio Linares Roofing
Eulogio Linares
6420 SW 15th St
Pompano Beach, FL 33068
954-818-9455
Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

Nu Turf of Pompano Beach, Inc.
William Murphy
2801 N Dixie Hwy
Pompano Beach, FL 33064
954-234-0113

Broward Landscape, Inc.
Adam Baker
7501 Wiles Rd
Coral Springs, FL 33067
954-325-1111
Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

JLS Landscape Services, Inc.
Alexander Lapierre
4201 NW 43rd St.
Coconut Creek, FL 33073
954-956-7454
Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

Silva Paiva Corp.
Adlance Amalar
1511 NE 34th St.
Pompano Beach, FL 33064
754-423-4945
Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

City of Pompano Beach
John LePage
100 W Atlantic Blvd
Pompano Beach, FL 33060-6099
954-786-4926

**DADE**

Bahama Wholesale Construction Corp.
Yovel Perez
11680 SW 5 St
Miami, FL 33184
305-852-3656
Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

Master Touch Refinishing, Inc.
Hector Aguilar
1848 NW 21 Ter
Miami, FL 33142
305-962-5451
Rec’d by: Steve Weiss, Tri County Truck

**LAKE REGION**

McGill Citrus Nursery, Inc.
Laura McGill Oak
PO Box 3962
Lake Wales, FL 33859
863-455-9519
Rec’d by: Walter Farmer Sr, Tiger Creek Citrus Nursery

H & T Landscaping Services LLC
Tim LaBarr
2042 Magnolia Ave
Lakeland, FL 33812
863-944-0601

**MANASOTA**

Coastal Quality Tree Service, Inc.
Hector Munoz
1121 W Price Blvd #115
North Port, FL 34288
941-815-2077
Rec’d by: Shelby Moore, Steele Truck Center

Green Thumb Landscape Management, Inc.
Ray Cieniek
12700 Upper Manatee River Rd
Bradenton, FL 34212
941-755-0461
Rec’d by: Shelby Moore, Steele Truck Center

Sarasota County
Patrick Foslin
1001 Sarasota Center Blvd
Sarasota, FL 34240
941-281-8471

**OUT OF STATE**

GreenTek, Inc.
Paul Jacobson
420 Industrial Blvd
Baldwin, CA 90041
800-747-6440
Rec’d by: Frank Giglia, Signature Supply

Starcom Plant Partner
Ron Sims
PO Box 1437
Bothell, WA 98041
951-837-7653

Filtrexx, living walls
Barb Wehner
23 Cassens Ct
Fenton, MO 63026
314-287-4470

Atlas Manufacturing, Inc.
Bill Mathis
PO Box 558
Alapaha, GA 31622-0558
229-532-2905

Alfresco Home
Patti Geltman
1000 Armand Hammer Blvd
Pottstown, PA 19464
239-240-9011 c

Always In Season, Inc.
Don Langston
701 East 6 1/2 St
Houston, TX 77007
713-681-1414

**PANHANDLE**

UF/IFAS - Washington Ext.
Matthew Orwat
1424 Jackson Ave
Chipley, FL 32428-1615
850-638-6180

**PANHANDLE**

**PALM BEACH**

Home & Garden Pest Control, Inc.
Theo Treuren
1395 NW 17th Ave #103
In Memorial

Industry loses great with McDougald passing

Walter Owen “Butch” McDougald Jr., founder of McDougald and Son’s Nursery, passed away in December, leaving behind a legacy of service and giving to the industry he loved.

A funeral service was held for Walter Dec. 21 in Deerfield Beach.

In addition to founding the family’s Delray Beach-based nursery in 1968, McDougald, 76, established the Hoskins-McDougald Horticultural Scholarship Fund through the National Horticulture Foundation to honor the memory of his late wife, Sandra.

McDougald was also a very active member of FNGLA’s Palm Beach chapter, where he forged many bonds and served as a mentor and friend to many members.

The chapter’s annual service award is also named in Walter’s honor.

For those wishing to honor his memory, the family asks donations be made to McDougald’s endowment fund at NHF.

Checks can be mailed to FNGLA, 1533 Park Center Dr., Orlando, FL 32835. In the memo section, reference Hoskins/McDougald.
Oleander is beautiful but potentially deadly. That’s why IDing plants isn’t for amateurs.

Even pros need help. Just like doctors need tools to diagnose disease, even the most experienced nursery operator will come across an unfamiliar plant from time to time. You are only as good as the science you have access to.

That’s why it’s so important to the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences – the science behind your industry – to reverse last year’s veto of funding for the Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology (CLCE).

The veto threatens the future of projects like Dr. Chris Marble’s work on a poison plants mobile app. He’s got a team working on how to use your phone to identify which plants are toxic, how toxic, and if they’re a threat to people or to animals.

It interrupts the seed funding CLCE provides for important work like Dr. Andrew Koeser’s investigation of what makes a tree survive a hurricane. He wants to know which species are the most nearly hurricane-proof in our hurricane-prone state.

He was arguably as prepared as anyone for Irma. He started loading up data on trees three years ago, and to run the experiment on how well they hold up in hurricanes, all he needed was, well, a hurricane.

Irma delivered. Now Koeser can do the before-and-after comparisons necessary to start drawing conclusions. Koeser’s discoveries could inform which species of trees you choose to propagate, which trees your customers will buy, and where cities such as Tampa do their planting and trimming.

Plant science is so robust at UF/IFAS in part because we have such a valuable partner in FNGLA. Not only does the organization understand how important science is to the industry’s bottom line, it marches with us in Tallahassee to secure the resources to produce that science.

Please listen closely to what Ben Bolusky and Jim Spratt have to say over the next two months. They have their fingers on the pulse of what’s going on in the state budget and policy-making arena.

In the case of identifying
oleander, funding for science is arguably a matter of life and death. Even if lives weren’t at stake, livelihoods are. That means yours and anyone else’s whose job depends on selling what you grow.

That’s a lot of people. As you know, again because of UF/IFAS science, it’s more than 100,000. If they all lived in one place, their community would be more populous than West Palm Beach or Lakeland.

Science touches them all. State funding touches science. Keep in touch with your leadership, and we’ll all have a better chance of getting on-time solutions-based science in 2018. •

ON DISPLAY - Chris Marble, Ph.D, an assistant professor at the University of Florida, educates on identifying weed species.
Continued from page 2

President’s Letter

broken hearts, broken lives, broken families and communities. According to government estimates, approximately 64,000 Americans died from opioid overdosing last year—a 21% increase from 2015. And, the increase continued in 2016, according to government data. The synthetic opioid, Fentanyl, which is said to be 100 times more potent than morphine, has recently come into focus as a contributing factor.

Beginning in the 1990s, there have been three separate epidemics, with compounding death tolls, according to an article in the International Journal of Drug Policy. The first wave involved prescription opioids. Thanks to heroin, the second wave emerged around 2010, according to the article, which added heroin-related overdose deaths have since tripled. The current third wave of overdoses are attributed to synthetic opioids including “illicitly manufactured Fentanyl and Fentanyl analogues,” the article stated. As a result, overdose deaths between 2013-2014 doubled.

Volusia County Sheriff Michael Chitwood recently testified before the Health Policy Committee telling the Associated Press in all of his years in law enforcement, he hasn’t seen anything like the current opioid epidemic in Florida.

Chitwood, telling the AP added, “When I first started in law enforcement in 1987, it was crack cocaine and open-air drug markets. Then it moved to houses, now the addicted person sits in front of a computer and the postal service delivers to their homes.”

On Jan. 4, the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) and National Farmers Union (NFU) announced they’re teaming up to confront the opioid crisis facing farm communities nationwide. This “Farm Town Strong” campaign comes on the heels of a recent survey (http://farmtownstrong.org/2017/12/08/survey) which shows massive opioid impact in farm country. The groups launched www.FarmTownStrong.org to provide easy access to information and resources to help struggling farm families in rural communities.

“Opioid addiction – along with all of its consequences – is a silent, but very real, crisis for our farming communities,” said NFU President Roger Johnson. “The lack of services, treatment and support exacerbates the issue in rural areas, and the negative stigma associated with addiction makes it hard for farmers to discuss the problem. Too often, those struggling with addiction and their family members don’t seek the support they need. Through the Farm Town Strong campaign, we’re tackling this crisis head-on by encouraging more dialogue, more information sharing, and more farmer-to-farmer engagement.”

AFBF President Zippy Duvall similarly encouraged those struggling with addiction and their families to talk about the crisis so others know they are not alone.

FNGLA is working with the University of Florida/IFAS to create a similar program and survey to best serve the specific needs of our member businesses and families. In the meantime, I feel the need to provide this information and these resources and also to explain why this can’t wait any longer.

For the past ten years, my family has been dealing with this issue. We have been af-
fected by every destructive element of addiction you can imagine. Please believe me, addicts are not the only casualties in this epidemic.

Not long ago, I gave the eulogy for a fellow grower. I believe his abuse of the prescribed opioids contributed to his final act of desperation. The same year, a friend and successful landscape contractor lost his home and thriving business—not because he was an addict—but because he spent his last dime trying to help his brother resolve his cycle of addiction, incarceration and rehab. The contractor is now greeting folks at Home Depot.

In 2016, I hired three young men from the rural part of our county. They were smart and worked very hard—at first. As time went by, one would return late after lunch on Fridays (after payroll checks were handed out) and then they would all be late on the following Monday. Eventually, they all started to miss Mondays altogether. I should have seen the pattern—yet I wasn’t looking for it. Ultimately, they were fired and one admitted he needed help. So, I drove him to rehab.

Please open your eyes and look around you. Someone you know is going through this and needs your help. FNGLA cannot solve this problem—yet we can give you tools you need to help each other!

Ed Bravo

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In their own words:

**The Opioid Impact in Farm Country, USA**

The opioid crisis has struck farm and ranch families much harder than the rest of rural America.

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**Scope of the Crisis**

Share of Americans who have been directly impacted by the opioid epidemic:

- 45% Rural adults
- 74% Farmers and farm workers

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**Access to Opioids and Opioid Treatment**

- **3 in 4** farmers say it would be easy for someone in their community to access a large amount of prescription opioids or painkillers without a prescription, and just under half of rural adults—**46%**—say the same.

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- **Only 1 in 3** rural adults say it would be easy to access treatment for addiction to prescription drugs or heroin in their local community...

- ...and, only **2 in 5** are confident they could seek care that is either effective, covered by insurance, convenient or affordable.
Booths are still available.

Jacksonville Landscape Show

- Cultivate new connections
- Grow from seminars & harvest CEUs
- Plant the seeds for business success

Register online today and save $2!
nefngla.org or call 904.292.1117