

April 2006

This bi-monthly newsletter is for you. Let me know what type of information you would like to see. I invite everyone to submit an environmental related article or blurb that would be of interest to PLT educators and supporters.

Thank you for all your support,  
Jennifer Seitz  
Florida PLT Coordinator

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1. FL PLT News

To date we have had 24 educator workshops reaching over 600 educators! In addition to our regular workshops we had a number of themed workshops on the following topics: forest ecology, wildland fire, risk, energy and urban forestry.

Thank you to the following state and national sponsors for their support in making these workshops possible: American Petroleum Institute, Bureau of Land Management, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Division of Forestry, Georgia-Pacific Co., Leon County Extension, National Forests in Florida, National PLT, Santa Rosa County Extension, Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation, and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, and University of Florida-SFRC.

## 2. Upcoming PLT Events and Workshops

\*April 17-18: K-8 Educator Workshop at Monroe County Professional Development Conference (Key Largo and Key West).

\*April 22: Connecting PLT to Reading Presentation and Exhibit at the North Central Florida Home School Fair (Gainesville).

\*May 20: PreK-8 Educator Workshop at Greynolds Park (Miami).

\*June 24: PreK-8 Educator PLT and WILD Workshop at John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park (Key Largo).

\*July 21: Energy & Society 3-8 Educator Workshop at Nassau Cooperative Extension Service Office (Callahan).

\*August 5: PreK-8 Educator Workshop at the Community United Methodist Church (Casselberry).

\* August 26: PreK-8 Educator PLT and WILD Workshop at John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park (Key Largo).

You can register for any of these workshops by contacting the lead facilitator listed on the Calendar of Events web page from our home page: <http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/>.

### 3. Annual Florida PLT Awards

Here's your chance to recognize an individual or organization for their efforts in promoting and enhancing environmental education. Nominate an educator, PLT facilitator, or business partner of the year for the Annual Florida PLT Awards.

- Nominate an educator that incorporates PLT activities into the classroom or their programs and encourages the use of PLT activities by their colleagues.
- Nominate a facilitator that has energized you to bring the environment into the classroom by using PLT.
- Nominate an organization or business that has supported your efforts of using PLT in your school, center, or programs.

The deadline for all nominations is May 5, 2006.

### 4. Conferences/Workshops

#### Toyota Int'l Teacher Program ~ Galapagos

October 27 - November 8, 2006 ~ Galapagos Islands. This fully funded professional development program is open to twenty secondary school classroom teachers (Grades 7-12) of all disciplines, who teach full time in Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Texas, and Washington, D.C. Deadline: April 21, 2006

#### PLT Facilitator ReTREET-November 17-19, 2006

To qualify you must already be an active PLT Facilitator. Lodging and events will take place at the Wildfire and Forest Resources Management Training Center in the Withlacoochee State Forest (north of Brooksville). Finalized details and registration forms will be made available through the Calendar of Events Web site.

#### PLT and WILD Facilitator and Leadership Workshop

Join us in Ocala January 26-28, 2007! To qualify you must have attended at least one Project WILD or PLT workshop (or both) and be recommended by an active facilitator or supervisor. You will only qualify to be a facilitator for the project in which you participated in a workshop. Details are being finalized. If you are interested in attending please contact Jenny at 352-846-2329.

## 5. Grants/Contests/Awards

### Garden Crusaders

Honor individuals who are improving the world through gardening. To learn more about the awards, and how to nominate a gardener, visit the link above and click on the “community” tab for an online application. Deadline is June 1, 2006. <http://www.gardeners.com>

### Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes

The Barron Prize honors young people ages 8 to 18 who have shown leadership and courage in public service to people and our planet. Each year, ten national winners each receive \$2,000 to support their service work or higher education. Half of each year's winners are chosen for their work to protect the environment. Nomination deadline is April 30.

### Capco Science Class Challenge

Teachers (grades 4-9) participate in the CAPCO Science Class Challenge and win \$250 to \$5,000 for your school. The competition is meant to encourage students and teachers to learn about the Earth's protective upper ozone layer, CFCs, and the environment by using provided activities or their own creative methods. Teachers must be employed by a public or private school, or be a home school educator. Deadline: May 8, 2006. <http://www.nocfcs.org/scc/home.htm>

### DOE American Stars of Teaching

The U.S. Department of Education Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative is seeking nominations for teachers from all grade levels and disciplines, who are improving student achievement, using innovative strategies in the classroom, and making a difference in the lives of their students. One teacher will be recognized from each state. Deadline: April 15, 2006

### Excellence in Math & Science Teaching Awards

The 2006 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching for outstanding K-6th grade math or science teachers. Each Presidential Awardee will receive a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation. Nomination Deadline: May 1, 2006

### President's Environmental Youth Awards

Program available to individuals, classes, and youth groups. Awards are presented in each of the EPA regions, and one project from each region is presented with a national award in Washington, D.C. Regional Application Deadline: October 31, 2006

### Presidential Freedom Scholarships

Two students from every high school in the United States are eligible to receive \$1,000 Presidential Freedom Scholarships in recognition of their outstanding service to the community. Deadline: May 12, 2006

### VIVA! Garden for Schools Contest

50 VIVA! Garden Contest winners will receive a \$250 Home Depot gift card and have their winning garden entry featured on the [vivagarden.com](http://vivagarden.com) Web site. Deadline: May 31, 2006

### NASCO Lesson Plan Contest

Do you have a lesson plan that has aided in your classroom instruction? A first place prize (\$100) and a second place prize (\$50) in Nasco gift certificates are available. Deadline June 1, 2006.

### The ASM Materials Education Foundation

The Foundation sponsors 10 grants each year for teachers. Each grant has a value of \$500. The purpose of these grants is to enhance awareness of materials science and the role of materials scientists in society. Deadline May 25, 2006.

### Captain Planet Foundation

Captain Planet Foundation awards are between \$500 and \$2,500 for schools and nonprofit organizations that develop innovative environmental projects for youth that promote cooperation, planning, and problem-solving skills. 2006 Application Deadlines: March 31, June 30, September 30, December 31

## 6. Resources

### Team Green in Florida

A program to help educate students about the Florida Statewide System of Greenways and Trails. The program encourages educators in the subjects of science, social studies, history, and economics to teach greenways and trails concepts and to use greenways and trails as outdoor classrooms. A variety of resources are available to download and by request.

### Kidsregen.org

Our mission: To empower children to make healthy choices for the environment, and for themselves. Kidsregen.org is part of The Rodale Institute's® Youth Educational Program.

### Planet Plant

Botanic Gardens Conservation International's student education web site.

### Celebrate National Poetry Month with Science

This resource was compiled by the AAAS review journal, Science Books & Films (SB&F). This resource identifies poetry resources that cover a wide variety of content areas. Resources can be used as supplemental material for lessons, as motivation ideas for lessons, or as ways to introduce students to certain science topics.

For additional ways to celebrate national poetry month please visit the MarcoGram web site.

### NASA Connect: Sun-Earth Day

Features teacher guides and other resources for studying sun-earth connections and celebrating Sun-Earth Day.

2nd Annual National EE Week, April 16-22, 2006

The 2nd Annual National EE Week will be the single largest environmental education event in the U.S. and will provide a week of educational preparedness for Earth Day for thousands of educators and millions of students. For ideas on how to celebrate Earth Day visit the link above.

#### Arbor Day, April 28, 2006

Arbor Day is a nationally-celebrated observance that encourages tree planting and care. Founded by J. Sterling Morton in Nebraska in 1872, National Arbor Day is celebrated each year on the last Friday in April. Go to the web site for ideas on how to celebrate.

#### The Kids Do Ecology Web site

This site offers student-friendly information about general ecology, biomes, and marine mammals; a forum that lets students pose questions to ecologists; and student-created web pages presenting ecology experiments. The web site offers the option to view some material, including ecological terms and themes, in Spanish.

#### Clean Sweep USA

Six lessons for grades 4-8 on waste in the environment. Lessons focus on source reduction, recycling, composting, landfills, and waste to energy.

#### Science & Human Health Lessons for Grades 6-8

National Institutes of Health (NIH) site offers middle school curriculum supplements including teachers' guides to two weeks' of lessons on science and human health.

#### Build Your Own Jeopardy Game On-line

A classroom version of the Jeopardy game is a great tool for review and as a means of instruction. A version of this software is available on the Holton Middle School Web site. It includes the theme music and Double Jeopardy. After customizing it to your training needs you can save your version and copy it accordingly. Scroll to the bottom of the page to find the files.

#### Bear Creek Educational Forest in Gadsden County

Guided programs are offered FREE of charge. Field trips can be scheduled for a full day or for shorter excursions. Students will learn using activities correlated to Florida's Sunshine State Standards.

#### PLT PreK-8 Resources by Activity—Searchable Database

Find activity enhancing resources through our online searchable database! Connect to a variety of resources and download student pages.

#### National Geographic EdNet Resource Library

This National Geographic community page provides a wide variety of teaching materials and resources, including grade specific lesson plans, news articles, classroom companions, photos, videos, and more.

#### 7. Interesting Tree Fact #10

Leaves With Pointy Edges Explained  
by Jennifer Viegas, Discovery News

February 17, 2006 - Leaves either have smooth or pointy, "toothed" edges, and now researchers think they know why - the teeth take some of the bite out of cold weather for trees, shrubs and other plants.

Since the study, published in the "International Journal of Plant Sciences," links leaf teeth to climate, the finding suggests analysis of leaves from ancient and existing plant species could reveal past and present climactic patterns.

These are critical for determining periods of global warming and other profound temperature changes.

Dana Royer, who authored the study with Peter Wilf, told Discovery News that the jagged, pointy edges on leaves are packed with a tissue called xylem that transports sap, which contains water and nutrients. Most of the liquid evaporates by leaving the teeth through minuscule pores.

"In the springtime when leaves are just starting to leaf out, leaves with teeth are, on average, losing more water than leaves without teeth," said Royer, an assistant professor of earth and environmental sciences at Wesleyan University.

"This loss of water helps pull more sap up from the roots. Thus trees with toothed leaves probably have a higher rate of sap flow early in the spring than toothless leaves."

He added, "This is important because it delivers nutrients to the developing leaves, helping to 'jumpstart' their photosynthetic season. As you move to colder and colder climates with shorter and shorter growing seasons, it becomes increasingly beneficial to have teeth."

For the entire article visit [http://dsc.discovery.com/news/briefs/20060213/leafteeth\\_pla.html](http://dsc.discovery.com/news/briefs/20060213/leafteeth_pla.html).

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Thank you to our contributors: MarcoGram, NAAEE listserv, National PLT listserv, and SIFT listserv. If you have a resource, grant, workshop, etc. or topic of interest to share with other educators please send your information to Jenny.