

## **UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County**

## **Extension Connection**

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"UF IFAS Extension Citrus County"



## **Extension Notes**

#### Welcome to Summer!

Hot, wet, dry, and humid will be the pattern for the next few months. As your lawn benefits from the added rainfall, read Steven's article on *The First Lawn in America*. The 'roots' may be different than you thought.

Often lawns are more than grass. Mine has several other plants growing in it. Ky has some tips for identifying the plants living in your lawn. Read how to take photos of the plants in your lawn or yard and send them to the Extension office for identification.

Summertime means preparing for storms and severe weather. Stephanie shares tips to be prepared and ready for the hurricane season (June 1 – November 1). Water, batteries, and first aid kits are just a few of the supplies families need to have available. For a complete list see Stephanie's article *Are you Prepared?* 

Accidents happen, prevention is key to reducing their number and severity. That is the message of the Extension's Safety Event. See my article *Safety First!* for ways to increase safety in your backyard this summer.

"Extension For All"

Marnie Ward 4-H Youth Development Agent





#### The First Lawn in America

#### Steven Davis, FFL Program Coordinator



The notion of the perfect lawn in America migrated from Europe. Open meadows were the desired landscape surrounding castles in medieval times, allowing visible open space for security. The early English word "launde" referred to open meadows and glades later to be used in managed open spaces called "commons", where public grazing of livestock provided mowing and fertilization services. After centuries of logging, opened grasslands prevailed in Scotland where activities including lawn bowling and golf were conceived. Shorn grass or meadows were labor intensive activities and desired by the elite and wealthy. Commoners did not have the resources of the wealthy and most often performed the labor of mowing with scythes to create a playing surface for privileged landowners. For several centuries commoners were outlawed from participating in lawn sports.

When Scottish immigrants relocated to north America, they brought lawn sports with them, initially to Canada and then later to the British colonies. "Bowling Green" is a common name for cities and villages across the United States commemorating this lawn sport. Golfing on the links was another lawn sport which traveled across the pond becoming a staple outdoor activity in the Americas late in the 1800's.

No ornamental turf is native to North America. Experiments and importation of grasses from



Europe and Asia were desired by early plant scientists including Thomas Jefferson among other colonial agronomists. Lawn grasses had only an aesthetic appeal and was not a plant grown as resource for consumption such as tobacco, sugar, corn or grain.

In 1830, Edwin Budding developed the first mechanical lawn mower. By 1890 mechanical lawn mowers replaced a herd of livestock for managing early lawn care. Early manufactured fertilizers including bone meal, sulfuric acid and phosphate stone were developed in the 1800's with more sophisticated supplements later in early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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# Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Florida-Friendly Roadmap

(continued from page 2) FIRST LAWN

America's first lawn was named the Grand Avenue by L'Enfant, the first urban planner of Washington D.C, later to be identified as the Mall in the early 1900's. Like many lawn spaces, America's first lawn has suffered from high traffic on occasion, flooding and many of the management problems associated with grass.

The recent history of the Mall includes a renovation from suffering turf to a more sustainable solution; yes a new lawn, but more durable with improved soils and an under-ground storm water reservoir to reduce potential flooding. The right plant for this renovation was determined to be improved varieties of bluegrass and tall fescue. The compacted soil was aerated and blended with 80% sand appropriate for quick





drainage and with 20% topsoil and peat to reduce compaction. Organic fertilizers are used to provide nutrients. Four 250,000-gallon cisterns were installed and are used for supplemental irrigation combating several environmental barriers we all battle when growing grass. The first lawn is irrigated using collected water reserves and monitored by a weather station economizing on water use when not necessary.

The love of the lawn still endures, but is problematic. Conservation and wise use of water resources may soon be a prerequisite when joining our neighborhood. Options do exist for appropriate use of landscape space. Conservation of native spaces, preserving tree canopy and maybe a meadow or two when appropriate are all alternatives to high maintenance grass. Eliminating lawn space is not the answer, although landscaping the space more wisely is important to Florida's healthy future. If not for the high pedestrian traffic on the Mall, a nice first meadow might be a landscape friendly option.



### Plant Photos - How to get a Good One!

#### Caetano (Ky) Sales, Agriculture/Natural Resources Agent



Florida's hot and humid climate promotes the growth of hundreds if not thousands of different plants. Plants that are typically unwanted and tend to spread rapidly throughout the landscape, affecting the development of other plants, are commonly known as weeds.

Knowing what type of weed is the first and most important step in taking action to control that weed and prevent it from taking over the area. Several online resources help identify what weed is and what is the best method of controlling it. But if you are still having trouble, your local extension agent can help you with that, and you don't even need to leave your house.

Sending an email with some photos and information on the weed is a fast way for the extension agent to help you identify the plant, but there are a couple of important points to consider when writing up an email.



Figure 1. Tropical Soda Apple in Pasture. Credit: UGA

Where is the plant growing? – Some plants like to grow in specific areas; where did you first notice the plant? Is it growing out in the open or a shaded area? Did you find it on your lawn, garden, or pasture?

What does the plant look like? – A good description of the plant significantly helps identification. Is it grass, a tree, or a shrub? What color is the flower? Does it have any fruits?



**Photos** – The rule for taking a good photo for weed identification is always to take at least three:

One of the entire plant

One of the stems and leaves

One of the flowers or fruits

Figure 2. Thistle in field. Credit: UF/IFAS

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(continued from page 4) PLANT PHOTOS

When taking the photos, remember to have good lighting and focus. Usually, a dark background is best. Having a pen or a ruler in the photo as a reference is always good. Here are some examples of good photos:



Figure 3. Good photo example. Credit: Florida Museum



Figure 4. Good photo example. Credit: Florida Museum

Good photos help the identification process and allow us to get you the answer to what that plant is faster. Bad photos are the complete opposite, fuzzy photos, several plants in a photo without any description; not taking photos of different parts of the plant makes identification challenging or nearly impossible. Some examples of bad photos are:



Figure 5. Bad photo example. Credit: Florida Museum



Figure 6. Bad photo example. Credit: Florida Museum

Ready to test your photographer skills to identify that weed? Send an email to <u>c.rossisales@ufl.edu</u> with some good photos, and we can help you identify it.



### **Are You Prepared?**

### Stephanie McMinds, Family & Consumer Sciences Agent

With hurricane season running from June 1<sup>st</sup> through November 30<sup>th</sup>, make sure that you have the necessary items prepared before a storm hits and develop a plan in case you need to evacuate. During an emergency, you may not have time to gather up supplies. Therefore, preparing a disaster kit in advance is important. This kit should contain all important items detailed below and be easily portable in the event of an evacuation.



To assemble your kit, store items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as plastic bins or a duffel bag. After assembling your kit, remember to periodically check the items to make sure they are ready when needed and the items are not expired.

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

- ⇒ Water: one gallon per person per day for at least 3 days
- ⇒ Food: at least 3-day supply of non-perishable food
- ⇒ Manual can opener
- ⇒ First aid kit
- ⇒ Local maps
- ⇒ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ⇒ Whistle: to signal for help
- ⇒ Cash
- ⇒ Fire extinguisher
- ⇒ Prescription and non-prescription medications
- ⇒ Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery
- ⇒ Battery-powered or hand crank radio for weather updates
- ⇒ Prescription eyeglasses and contact lens solution
- ⇒ Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes, and diaper rash cream
- ⇒ Pet food and extra water for your pet
- ⇒ Key personal records such as driver's license, birth certificate, proof of residence, and health insurance
- ⇒ Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies and bank account records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable container
- ⇒ Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- ⇒ Change of clothes for each family member
- ⇒ Matches in a waterproof container or a lighter
- ⇒ Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- ⇒ Books, games, puzzles, or other activities for children



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(continued from page 6) BE PREPARED



#### **Develop a Plan**

- Put a plan together by discussing questions with your family, friends, and household.
  - ⇒ How will I receive emergency alerts and warnings?
  - ⇒ What is my shelter plan?
  - ⇒ What is my evacuation route?
  - ⇒ What is my family/household communication plan?
- Consider specific needs in your household.
  - ⇒ Dietary or medical needs
  - ⇒ Disabilities or access and functional needs
  - ⇒ Pets or service animals
  - ⇒ Households with school-aged children
- Fill out a Family Emergency Plan
  - ⇒ Use this fillable form to create your plan: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/56fhvdrb">https://tinyurl.com/56fhvdrb</a>
- Practice your plan with your family/household
  - ⇒ Practice your plan at least every 6 months.

Don't forget to pick up your free hurricane guide that can be found in the lobby at the Citrus County Extension office. This handbook covers basic information on emergency preparedness, evacuation planning, and more. Looking for other resources? Check out these websites to help you start preparing: www.ready.gov www.redcross.org

Contact UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County office at 352-527-5700 or visit the UF/IFAS Disaster Preparation & Recovery website for tip sheets, infographics, how-to videos, bilingual information, and more at <a href="https://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/">https://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/</a>



## Florida 4-H Youth Development

Head • Heart • Hands • Health



### **Safety First!**

#### Dr. Marnie Ward, 4-H Agent



Accidents happen, prevention is key to reducing their number and severity. Citrus County 4-H recently hosted their first Citrus County 4-H Progressive Agriculture Safety event with the goal to spread the message of safety. Each year, Progressive Agriculture Safety Days© reach tens of thousands of kids across the United States and Canada with potential life-saving education.

According to the National Safety Council (NSC), injuries are the major cause of childhood emergency department and hospital visits. Yes, kids will be kids and bruises and scrapes are a part of growing up. However, unintentional injuries cause nearly 12,000 deaths in children and young adults, ages 1-19, every year. Most of these injuries are linked to falls and drownings. In Florida, ninety-eight children died from drowning in 2021, an increase from sixty-four deaths in 2020. Often, these childhood injuries are preventable. Citrus County Extension wants to reduce injuries and increase safety for youth across the county.

Cindy and Tony Russ, Florida Best Blueberries, generously provided their blueberry farm east of Inverness as the host site for the event. They know first-hand how quickly an accident on the farm can change a family especially because farming is the most hazardous occupation in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

Young people and their families rotated through several educational stations to learn about safety and health with fun, safe, and hands-on activities. By partnering with the Citrus County Sheriff's Office, youth learned to be safe on the water with whistles, sharing a water plan, and avoiding swimming alone. Brian Thomas, IRBY construction company, taught electrical safety sharing his tools of the trade. Dr. Serap Gorucu, from the University of Florida's Agricultural and Biological Engineering Department brought a unique tool.

Kylar Viss checks his reflex against the PTO simulator demonstrated by Dr. Serap Gorucu, UF/IFAS Agricultural & Biological Engineering



L to R. Hope Walters and Grace Ward use whistles to practice water safety



The power take-off (PTO) simulator allowed the participants to relate reaction time to rotation. At 9-16 revolutions/second, loose pants, boot laces, and jewelry can be wrapped around the PTO very quickly. This is because reaction time is much slower than the speed of an engaged PTO.

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## Florida 4-H Youth Development

Head • Heart • Hands • Health



(continued from page 8) FARM SAFETY

Participants share ways to practice mental health awareness with Marnie Ward, 4-H Agent, from top L – R. Lillianna Athanasiou, Hope Hill, Marnie Ward, Emilia Indelicato, and Sailor Copeland



Youth attendees were surprised to learn the amount of sugar in their favorite sodas and juices. When presented with the choice of a sugared beverage or fruit-infused water, 75% were able to identify the water as a drink lower in sugar and "better for staying hydrated". At the mental health awareness station, youth self-identified stressors, including homework, school, chores, and family responsibilities. They shared peer to peer strategies for reducing stress. One youth demonstrated a breathing technique that has worked for them. As a result of attending the Safety Day, youth were able to interact with safety-trained adults and practice safety skills.

This event was sponsored by the Citrus County 4-H Foundation, Florida Best Blueberries, Ag-Pro of Crystal River, State Farm-David Rom, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), Florida Department of Health in Citrus County, and Hernando-Citrus Farm Bureau.



Breadyn Wurst checks his reflex against the PTO simulator demonstrated by Dr. Serap Gorucu, UF/IFAS Agricultural & Biological Engineering



<sup>1</sup>According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, **the agriculture sector is the most dangerous in the country**. There are 573 fatalities each year in the farming profession, which equals 23 deaths per 100,000 workers. Sep 21, 2021

## Nature Naturally

## Florida's National Treasures

The last issue of Nature Naturally explored the rich diversity of Florida State Parks with some local favorites at Rainbow Springs, Silver Springs, and Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife Park. These Florida state parks, trails, and historic sites are managed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and their committed team of community volunteers. Florida is also home to many National monuments, preserves, and seashores of natural and cultural significance. Management of these sites is under the National Park Service (NPS).



Did you know there are 423 National Park sites in the United States? Everglades National Park may be the first that comes to mind, but it's only one of the sites in Florida.

Everglades National Park is sometimes referred to as the "River of Grass". At one time water flowed from the Kissimmee River south to Lake Okeechobee and then continued until it reached Biscayne Bay. Development pressures and drainage altered the flow of water and changed delicate ecosystems. In 1947, Everglades National Park was established with the goal to prevent further degradation of the plants, animals, and ecosystems.





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## Nature Naturally

(continued from page 10) NATIONAL PARKS

Biscayne Bay Park combines coral reefs, islands, shoreline, and an underwater trail. The Maritime Heritage Trail is a path to explore six shipwrecked vessels. The ships can be accessed by scuba divers and snorkelers. The most recent addition to the trail is the Fowey Rocks Lighthouse, a.k.a. the Eye of Miami. Go here to learn more about the trail: <a href="https://www.nps.gov/bisc/learn/historyculture/maritime-heritage-trail.htm">https://www.nps.gov/bisc/learn/historyculture/maritime-heritage-trail.htm</a>



Fort Matanzas National Monument is located in St. Johns County. Built in the mid 1700's, the Fort was constructed of *coquina*, a soft limestone made of broken shells, then commonly used as a building material. The Fort was a Spanish stronghold and played an important role in the protection of St. Augustine and Castillo de San Marcos (also a National Monument). This short video clip from 1934 shows the condition of Fort Matanzas when it was transferred to the National Park Service.

https://www.nps.gov/media/video/view.htm?id=E9303A86-1DD8-B71C-0708F152479C4812



Fort Matanzas after restoration

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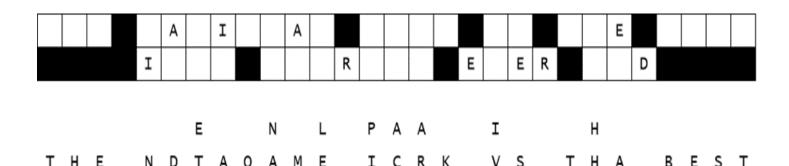
# Nature Naturally

(continued from page 11) NATIONAL PARKS

Is there a National Park on your bucket list? Now is the time to start planning the next outdoor adventure. The National Park Service offers free admission days to encourage everyone to discover the National parks and the benefits that come from being outside. For 2022, free days:

Thursday, August 4 – Anniversary of <u>the Great American Outdoors Act</u>
Saturday, September 24 – <u>National Public Lands Day</u>
Friday, November 11 – <u>Veterans Day</u>

## Puzzle Time



Try to rebuild the message.

The letters from each cell are below the puzzle.

Try to rebuild the original message by choosing the letters for each cell.

ANSWER:

"The National Park is the best idea America ever had."

## UF/IFAS Extension SolutionsForYourLife.com

## CLASSES/SEMINARS/EVENTS



## **Virtual Gardening Seminars**

Contact Steven Davis at 352-527-5708 to pre-register for these free classes

or go to: https://ccufflprogram.eventbrite.com



"Managing Pests Wisely"

Tuesday Jul 12 2:00 - 4:00 pm

"Create a Florida-Friendly Landscape"

> Tuesday Jul 26 2:00 - 3:30 pm

"Optimizing Irrigation Systems"

Tuesday Aug 9 2:00 - 4:00 pm

"9 Florida-Friendly Principles"

Tuesday Aug 23 2:00 - 4:00 pm "Lawns in Central Florida"

Tuesday Sep 6 2:00 - 3:30 pm

"Florida-Friendly Fertilizing"

Tuesday Sep 20 2:00 - 3:30 pm

## **SAVE THE DATE**





6th ANNUAL PLANT SALE Saturday October 15, 2022 8:30am - 12:30pm

> Citrus County Extension 3650 W Sovereign Path, Lecanto 352-527-5700



Service animals only please! (No "comfort" animals)





## JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER







#### **Monthly Extension Master Gardener Seminars**

Programs offer an opportunity to explore timely garden topics at these seminars offered at each Citrus County Library. No registration required for in person seminars. All programs start at 1 pm, last approximately 1 hour, and are **free**.

Virtual seminar: pre-register on our Facebook page for the secure link.

July: Groundcover - turf alternatives

**August: Myth Busters Garden Style** 

**September: Creating Drought Tolerant Landscapes** 

2nd Tuesday Lakes Region Library Inverness

2nd Wednesday Central Ridge Library Beverly Hills

3rd Wednesday Floral City Library Floral City

4th Monday Coastal Region Library Crystal River

4th Monday Virtual - pre-register on our Facebook page!

4th Tuesday Homosassa Library Homosassa

Bring plant problems and questions for expert advice to the Extension office.

Trained Master Gardeners are available most days between 8am - 5pm.

Schedules can vary, so please call ahead (352-527-5700).

Additionally, challenges (pictures are helpful) can be emailed to:

IF-SVC-citrusmg@ad.ufl.edu

## ALZHEIMER'S \\ ASSOCIATION

## **BRAIN BUS**

Statewide Mobile Outreach Initiative



### TUESDAY, JULY 19 | 9:30 A.M.-12 P.M.

Citrus Memorial Health Foundation YMCA 4127 W. Norvell Bryant Hwy/CR 486, Lecanto, FL 34461

#### Visit with the Brain Bus to learn about

- 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's
- 10 Ways to Love Your Brain
- Steps to an Accurate Diagnosis
- Advancements in Research

### 10-11 a.m. | Healthy Living for Brain and Body

### Alzheimer's community educator LuAnn Duncan, UF IFAS Extension

Join us to learn about research in the areas of diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity and social engagement, and use handson tools to help you develop a plan for healthy aging.

Sign up at the membership desk or call 352.500.9622

To learn more about our other education programs, visit alz.org/CRF or call our 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900.

Funded in partnership with





## Cooking For 1 or 2

## Cooking for one may seem like an impossible task!

Find out how to easily plan, shop for and prepare meals for one or two. There will also be a cooking demonstration to show how easy and quick it can be.



Call 352-527-5700 to pre-register or register online at:

July 28 Floral City Public Library 10:30am

Register at: www.FloralCityCookingfor1.eventbrite.com

September 29 Central Ridge Public Library 10:30am

Register at: www.SeptemberCooking1or2.eventbrite.com





An Equal Opportunity Institution



## **Cooking Under Pressure**



## Do you have an electric pressure cooker or plan to get one and are not sure how to use it?

This HANDS-ON class will cover:

- Different pressure cooker models
- Appliance features
- Safety tips
- Additional equipment you can purchase
- Tricks to make cooking a breeze
   Participants will complete a recipe in
   an electric pressure cooker and enjoy a
   meal together.

August 8, 2022

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

#### Location:

UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County 3650 W Sovereign Path, Lecanto

#### Cost:

\$15.00 per participant Registration ends August 1st

## For more information, or to register, contact:

Stephanie Clamer McMinds 352-527-5700 sclamer@ufl.edu



Register at: <u>www.CitrusCookingAugust2022.eventbrite.com</u>
Pre-registration is required.

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## ServSafe Citrus County





Are you opening a new business in the food service industry? Do you prepare food at any point in your business and require certification? UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County is providing training to help food managers and staff keep food served to Florida's consumers safer.

The class runs approximately 7 hours then participants have a maximum of 2 hours to take the national certification exam.

What to bring with you: Bag lunch and valid picture identification.

Friday

July 22, 2022

8:30am

#### Location:

UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County 3650 W Sovereign Path Lecanto, FL 34461

**Cost:** \$110.00 for the course and the exam and \$55.00 for Manager Manual

#### Registration deadline:

July 8, 2022

## For more information, contact:

Stephanie Clamer McMinds 352-527-5700 sclamer@ufl.edu

## To register: www.tinyurl.com/z6dp7jf

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## **Summer Gardening Calendar**

**Vegetables:** There is still time to solarize soil to minimize weed seeds and nematode populations, if you start in July. Six weeks of clear plastic covering will get temperatures up high enough to reduce these pesky problems in the fall. Now is also the perfect time to start a fall garden. If starting from seeds, give a few weeks for germination and acclimation to being outdoors before placing in the ground.

**Herbs:** Biannual parsley may start to flower toward the end of summer. Pull the entire plant, dry and store leaves in a zip-style bag or other air-tight container. Best to store out of light and in the refrigerator. Start new parsley plants for two years of steady production.

**Houseplants:** Most houseplants will enjoy a little vacation into a shady spot outdoors. Place containers under a tree and wash with a hand-held hose to remove dust and insects. After they drip-dry, return to their original home. If pot-bound, repot.

#### **Soil Solarization**



UF/IFAS researcher Bob McSorley demonstrates soil solarization.
(Photo: Tyler Jones, UF/IFAS)



Lawns: St. Augustine grasses are prone to thatch build-up, especially if regularly watered and fertilized. Mid-summer is a good time to vertical cut, giving the plants time to rejuvenate before easing into winter dormancy in the fourth quarter. If grass plants (of any type) are showing signs of nutritional deficiency, now is the time to fertilize with a slow-release fertilizer. Remember this area is abundant in Phosphate (the middle number) and rarely needs this addition. Look for fertilizers that have a balance of the first and last numbers (Nitrogen: Potassium) and zero or less on the middle number. Did you know that Citrus County was once mined for Phosphate?

(Continued on page 20)



(continued from page 19) SUMMER GARDENING



Weeds: Spot treat with a non-selective herbicide but be cautious as these products will kill whatever they touch (in about 2 weeks). Really tough weeds may need more than one application. Always follow label directions for mixing and frequency of application. And of course, follow instructions for PPE (personal protective equipment), which usually means no shorts or flip-flops when working with chemicals of all kinds. And sometimes more PPE than that.

**Palms** – Summertime is a good time to plant palms as the rainy season continues to add necessary moisture. Large palms may need supplemental irrigating for many months until they are properly established. Make sure installers don't plant the base of the palm too deeply or nail supports into the base of the plant. Both of these can cause death of this important and expensive addition to the landscape.



Appropriate staking is shown to the left. Stakes should be removed within about one year after planting when roots can support the palm. However, there is too much soil over the root ball in this photo. This should be removed before leaving the job site. The top-most roots should be visible at the surface of the root ball.

**Pruning** – It's getting late to prune spring bloomers, such as azaleas. The next flowering season's buds start developing on a plant about 3-4 months after the last blooms fade. Unless a plant has broken limbs, or is encroaching onto the driveway or walk, don't prune late in the summer. If you do, that area of the plant may produce no or limited flowers.

For specific gardening information, be sure to contact us - 352-527-5700

