

## Air Potato Roundup a Success



*Do you think there is a prize for smallest?*

A total of 17,415 lbs. of air potatoes were gathered this year from 25 different sites around town by 880 volunteers during the 6th Annual Great Air Potato Round Up in Gainesville, Florida. Volunteers also gathered



*Doomed 'taters*

over half a large dumpster of trash. We thank the hundreds of citizens who participated and our many sponsors, including FLEPPC, who made this event possible.

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## Kanapaha Spring Garden Festival

At the Kanapaha Spring Garden Festival in Gainesville, Florida, attended by approximately 10,000 enthusiastic gardeners, FLEPPC again had a booth and enticed visitors with another "Guess how many air potatoes are in the jar?" contest. This year's winner was Mr. Jim Glanville who correctly guessed the number at 312. Tropic Traditions, Inc., a wholesale plant nursery in Newberry, Florida, donated a beautiful native azalea for the grand prize. They have generously provided our native plant prize two years in a row. — Ed.



## New Quarantine Facility Takes Flight in Davie, Florida

*by Cressida Silvers*

Fifteen years ago the FLEPPC Melaleuca Task Force concluded that long-term control of *Melaleuca quinquenervia* would be impossible without the integration of biological, traditional mechanical and chemical control technologies. In its first Melaleuca Management Plan, the task force designated implementation of a biological control program and the construction of a quarantine facility for this purpose as one of their top priorities, as did the task forces on Brazilian Pepper and Old World Climbing Fern in subsequent years. Now, a new containment facility at the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Invasive Plant Research Laboratory is finally completed and operational. To make it official, a dedication ceremony was held at the new facility in Davie on April 8, 2005.

The 17,000 square foot building is devoted to research on biological control of Florida's worst invasive plants. It contains office space, laboratories, and state-of-the-art quarantine space. This facility increases by eight-fold the available quarantine space for research on biological control of Florida's worst invasive plants, allowing more insects to be processed more quickly than before. In addition, the location and design of the facility allows for research on different invasive species agents simultaneously—something that had not been possible previously.

Almost two hundred people attended the dedication ceremony and the open house that followed. Speakers included officials from the US Department of Agriculture-ARS, the US Department of Interior, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the South Florida Water Management District. These are the principle agencies responsible for the building's design and construction. Congressman Clay Shaw, Jr. gave the keynote address. It was Congressman Shaw's efforts to secure funding that made this facility a reality. In recognition of his unflagging and indispensable support of this project through the years, Mike Bodle, on behalf of FLEPPC, very eloquently presented him with engraved scissors (for ribbon cutting) accompanied by a plaque with the name and dedication date of the facility.



JOHN SCOTLES



JOHN SCOTLES

*FLEPPC Board Member Mike Bodle presents award of appreciation to Congressman Clay Shaw, Jr. [bottom] Cutting the ribbon.*