



Connections

Newsletter for Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

Spring, 2008



President's Message

On April 12, 2008 the "Green Ribbon" was cut signifying the official opening of Six Mile Cypress Slough's Interpretive Center. Standing behind that ribbon were children, elected officials, slough volunteers, county staff, any and all who had a part in making possible this very special day.

Lee County's first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building was made possible by the dedication and commitment of so many in this community who had a dream! It started back in the 1970's with high school students who wanted to "save" the slough from logging. In 1991 the boardwalk opened the slough to the public. The community responded by volunteering their time to work with the staff by introducing the public to the wonders of the wetlands.

In 2001 Friends of Six Mile Cypress Preserve was formed as a citizens advocacy and support organization to the staff of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve. This building is the result of a lot of hard work, dedication and commitment from an entire community and the partnerships that have been formed.

The Board of County Commissioners listened to YOU! They accepted your donations and while these contributions were a fraction of the cost of the building, the project was moved forward due to the demonstrated community support! . This "Green Interpretive Center" serves as a model for the good things that are possible when **Community Partnerships** are formed.

I believe Booch DeMarchi, Lee County's Special Events Coordinator, sums it best in an email the day after the Grand Opening.

"It's amazing how many good things happen when everybody shares in the 'heavy lifting' and nobody cares who gets the credit! Thanx everybody. Booch"

I want to join Booch in my heartfelt thanks to all of you and especially for the honor it has been to stand and speak on your behalf! Thank you!

The best is yet to be...
Joyce Sanders, your president



President Joyce Sanders and "Friends" cut the green ribbon at Grand Opening Ceremonies of the Interpretive Center at the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.



**MARY RUDE
FRIENDS HONOR AND THANK YOU
FOR YOUR LOVE AND DEVOTION
TO THE SIX MILE CYPRESS
SLOUGH PRESERVE
By Carolyn Babb**



Mary Rude lost her heart to the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve on a field trip some years back and has never looked for it to be returned. As an employee of Lee County Parks and Recreation and as the county liaison to the Friends organization, she has continually shown in every way the love and devotion she has to the Slough.

From the first meeting of Friends in 2001, Mary has been involved not only with her physical help and presence but with her advice and support. She provided space for brain-storming sessions at the beginning of the organization, meeting and workspace for the first fundraiser, "Raise the Roof," time, advice, guidance and most importantly the link between Lee County and the Friends organization.

Mary was one of the first members of Friends and has contributed her time and energy through the years. She and her husband, Bob, have been very generous financially as well in support of this organization.

She continues to teach volunteers, educate them always, and share her knowledge of the Slough and all that makes it so special. This past year her time has been devoted to developing the new Interpretive Center into the beautiful showplace that we see today.

It is fitting that the issue celebrating the government and citizens working together for the common good of the slough, should honor the Friends Board Liaison, Mary Rude. We cannot begin to thank her enough for her devotion to the Slough and constant support to our organization.



**On the outside looking in.....and
AT LAST getting to look in!**

By Flo Kornman

The Volunteer Recognition meeting, March 7, 2008, of the Volunteers of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve was well attended as congratulations were extended to Rudy Lampron, Volunteer of the Year, (a well deserved honor) and Heather brought us up to date on what constitutes a "green building", specifically our green building.

Finally, the *piece de la resistance*, we were invited on to the broad verandah of our Interpretive Center where a festive table was laden with fresh fruit and delicious bonbons. Then we toasted the event with sparkling grape juice (non-alcoholic) and applauded when Alouise Skehan and Joyce Sanders were given lovely bouquets of red roses in appreciation of their efforts in bringing the building to fruition.

All followed by ooh's and ah's over the potential of extraordinary space! The welcome desk, the book shop, the research room, the staff area, the rest rooms and on and on!

What impressed me the most was a feeling of pride to be connected with an organization that values its volunteers, makes them feel appreciated and the joy in being able to represent our wonderful Slough.



Kathy Cahill, Mary Rude and Heather Gienapp lead the role playing for preparation for front desk responsibilities for volunteers

Our Green Building By Heather Gienapp

I know many of you have questions about the new Interpretive Center. Many of them surely surround the designation of being "Green". Since this will be the first public LEED Certified Green Building in Lee County I thought you might be wondering what that really means? There are many reasons our building is green, but first...

Who decides what makes a building green?

The U.S. Green Building Council is a non-profit organization that is comprised of individuals and businesses involved in the building industry. Their mission is "To transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy, and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life."

They have come up with a system for rating and certifying buildings as Green called the LEED® Green Building Rating System. LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. This is a voluntary national rating system designed to promote the building of "high performance, sustainable buildings."

What makes our building green?

There are 5 categories that a building must earn points for to be certified green by LEED standards. They are sustainable site, materials and resources, energy and atmosphere, indoor environmental quality and water efficiency.

Examples of how our building meets those categories are:

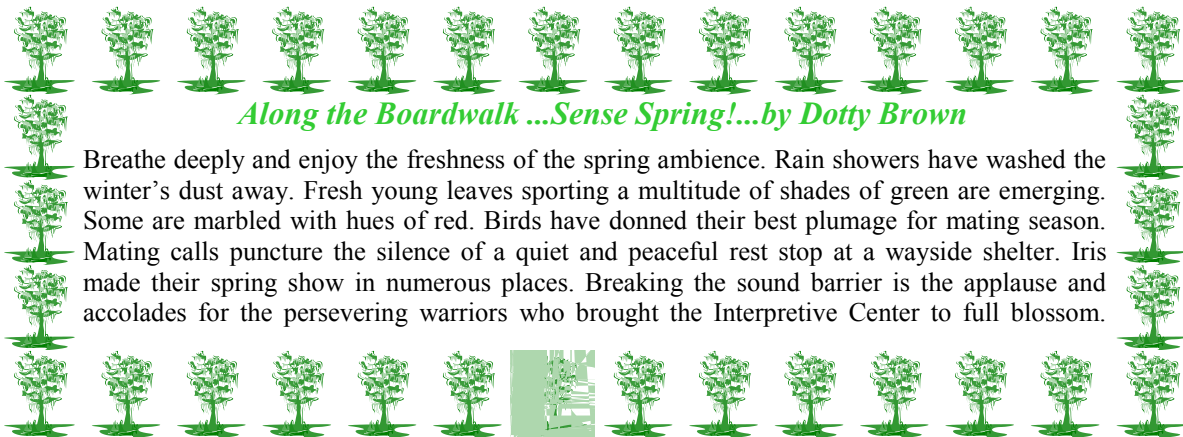
- 1 The building was built on an old road-bed
- 2 We used rapidly renewable resources like bamboo for our ceilings
- 3 We are committed to using Energy Star ® equipment and natural lighting
- 4 We have implemented green cleaning practices to reduce VOC's (volatile organic compounds).
- 5 We will also be using a cistern to flush our toilets and have xeriscaped around the building to reduce our water usage.

We are very excited and proud to have built the first public LEED Certified Green Building in Lee County. We could not have started or completed this project without the help of the Friends of the Six Mile Cypress Slough.



For more about green buildings <http://www.news-press.com/assets/pdf/A4105504410.PDF>

Heather Gienapp explaining details of the Green Building to interested on lookers.



The Interpretive



The anticipated ribbon cutting by excited staff, volunteers and dignitaries..



Bill Hammond relays stories of how the dream of the Interpretive Center started!!!



Friends' President Joyce Sanders still not believing that the opening of this dream of so many is finally going to occur.

The long awaited happened on April 12, 2008 with a Grand Opening Celebration and a "Green" Ribbon cutting by all of the people who were responsible for this historic occasion!



The alligator bicycle rack was full of visitors' bicycles ridden to the Grand Opening ceremony.



The crowd anticipates the long awaited welcome and congratulatory speeches by invited guests.



Christine Chitwood, Senior Supervisor at the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve begins the program with the National Anthem.

Center is Open!!!!



Lee County Commissioners Brian Bigelow and Ray Judah, and Barbara Manzo, Deputy Director, Lee County Parks and Recreation, address the crowd of over 350 at the Grand Opening Ceremony.



Six years ago, Friends began a fund-raising drive to start the movement to build an Interpretive Center at the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve! A grant awarded from Southwest Florida Community Foundation gave Friends the base and the credibility to move into the community to support the vision that an Interpretive Center was needed and wanted by the citizens of Lee County. Membership grew and donations large and small began to build upon the belief that it could really happen.

Thank you, Lee County Board of Commissioners for believing in the vision and the mission of Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.

Thank you Lee County Parks and Recreation Staff for your time consuming dedication.

THANK YOU FRIENDS!!!!!!!



Back Row—Frank Mann, Brian Bigelow, Bob Janes, Rev. George Jones, Jr. Front Row—Charles Dauray, SFWMD, Joyce Sanders and Steven Teuber, Lee County School Board

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Cadkin Foundation

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Henderson, Franklin, Starnes
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**Parks and Recreation
Liaison**

Mary Rude, Supervisor, Six
Mile Cypress Slough Pre-
serve



Welcome to the
Board of Directors
Mary and Frank Murray



Being a volunteer naturalist at the Slough is Mary's Do-Over (if I had it to do over again...) after 20 years working with American Red Cross Disaster Services. She has always been an avid outdoors person and is loving getting to know a whole new ecosystem in SW Florida after moving here in 2004 with Frank. She is starting her 2nd year with the Slough and is eager to become involved with the Friends in supporting her favorite preserve. She also likes computer systems and organizing information which should serve us well as she follows the excellent work of the previous membership chairs. Friends welcomes Mary as our new membership chairperson.

**Thank You
FRIENDS GREETERS!**

The Friends Greeters at the slough entrance kiosk have wrapped up this year's season having greeted and welcomed a total of over 2,200 visitors. A special thank you goes to Dee Burns, Lee Marks, Alouise Skehan, MJ Major, Rosie Hackman, and Flo Kornman who staffed the welcome table.

Frank Murray moved to Cape Coral in 2004 with his wife, Mary, after a 41-year career as a news reporter and editor. He worked at several newspapers in Florida, at the Associated Press in Miami and Washington, and 17 years at The Washington Times from which he retired in 2003 after six years of covering the White House and nine at the Supreme Court. News competitors jokingly accused him of unfairly using his accounting training to decode the Federal budget. Frank was a member of the White House Correspondents Association Board of Directors, and also was a director and Treasurer of Rapidan Family Cooperative, whose members share ownership of five rustic cabins on Rapidan River adjacent to Shenandoah National Park near Culpeper, Va., thus explaining his Florida license plate: RAPIDAN. Friends welcomes Frank as the new Treasurer.

This mural greets visitors upon entering the Interpretive Center. It was painted by Erma Jean Woodis, a Fort Myers artist.



Membership

Renewing Members:

Thank you for your continued support.

Bill & Jean Black - C
Frank & Dee Burns - C
Elizabeth Carter
Dave & Jan Cornell
Jerry & Joan Curcuru
Ann & Randy Deming
Ben Desmond, Jr.
Joan Dougherty
Eileen Downing
Gayle Edwards
Joanne & Jack Gifford
Doris Giuseffi
Bill & Rosemarie Hammond - C
Pete Hawkins
Richard & Debra Huxley
Jasmine Garden Club
Connie Langmann
MJ Major - C
Conrad & Ann Massa - C
Sally McPherson
Garn Mennell - C
Mary & Frank Murray
Nancy Osborne
Poinciana Garden Club - C
Homer Pyle
Clark Rhodes
Sue & Jack Rogers
Bob & Mary Rude - C
Judy & Dave Schele
Charlotte Schwartz
Mike & Connie Spradlin
Timothy Snyder, DDS
Rick Tully - C
Stephen Webb
Jeffrey Zasadny

“C” denotes charter member

Welcome New Members:

Jerald J. Bernstein
Jeanette Botha
Tom & Bev Brown
Pascha Donaldson
Gail Evers
Ken & Nancy Hollmann
Lee Huberty
Charlie & Ginger Huether
Chris McEachern
Sharon Turcot
Ron Wilson
Tom Woiak

Interpretive Center Donations Gratefully Received From:

Gretchen Barness
Frank & Dee Burns
Jerry & Joan Curcuru
Gail Dye
Gayle Edwards
Doris Giuseffi
Richard & Debra
Huxley
Marty & Alice Krebs
MJ Major
Conrad & Ann Massa
Garn Mennell
Pelican Landing
Community Association
Pelican Preserve Golf
Club
Poinciana Garden Club
Carl & Patricia Price
Mary & Bob Rude
Judy & Dave Schele
James & Shirley
Talmadge
Regina Satterly
Ron Wilson

In Memory of Reinhard Otten

Horst & Betty Armbrust
David Burnaska
Karen & Robert
Burnaska
Denise & John De Vivo
Dr Eric & Karen Fass
Marlaine Hampton
Kathleen & Jim Hinton
Laura Robinson
Elizabeth Rugen



CONNECTIONS – ON LINE ONLY?

Would you like to receive your copy of *CONNECTIONS* on line? **This is another way to show your commitment to preserve natural resources, consume less as well as save money.** This funding that can be devoted to the interior of our Interpretive Center. You can do your part by receiving our newsletter on line. If you would like to receive your future copies of *CONNECTIONS* via email only, please send your request via email to Carolyn Babb at babb88@centuryfla.com

CONNECTIONS STAFF

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Wanted: TRASHY FRIENDS
Come and help on the third Saturday of the month at 9:00 AM at the Slough. The company is great!! Watch for email and signs at the slough this summer.

FRIENDS' CORNER Volunteers Needed

At Left, Nancy Johnson, Secretary of Friends, helps set up our temporary store for the Grand Opening at the Interpretive Center. Volunteers are needed to staff FRIENDS' CORNER. Please contact Joyce Sanders at 293-275-7790 or email at sandersj01@comcast.net

SIGN UP TODAY

Check Area of Interest

- Education Preserve Advocacy
 Projects Publicity
 Fund Raising Special Events
 Gift Shop Volunteer

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Phone _____

CHECK TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

- STUDENT \$10
 INDIVIDUAL \$20
 CONTRIBUTING \$50
 SUPPORTING \$100
 ASSOCIATE \$500
 CORPORATE SPONSOR \$500
 PATRON \$1000

In addition I would like to contribute

\$ _____ for exhibits and displays for the Interpretive Center.

TOTAL\$ _____

Mail to Friends of the Six Mile Cypress Slough, 7791 Penzance Blvd., Fort Myers. FL 33966 **PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS**

Friends web site: sloughpreserve.org

Special thanks go to the Lee County Department of Parks and Recreations for its generous support in producing this newsletter and for providing meeting space at the Eco Living Center at Rutenberg Park and the Interpretive Center at the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.



**FRIENDS of SIX MILE CYPRESS
SLOUGH PRESERVE**

7330 Gladiolus Drive
Fort Myers, Florida 33908

What are you doing????

ENJOY THIS SUMMER !!!

**VISIT ALL OF THE GREAT PARKS IN
LEE COUNTY.**

www.leeparks.org