



Connections

Newsletter for Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

WINTER 2009

NEW EXHIBITS AT THE INTERPRETIVE CENTER

by Mary Rude

The Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve's new Interpretive Center is complete with informational and hands-on displays. Learn about otters, panthers, alligators and other animals that live at the Preserve. Listen to sounds that you might hear out on the trail...what are they? Be adventurous and guess what's in a box by just touching.

Many visitors are also curious about what the Slough looks like in our different seasons. See astounding photos of the difference between the wet season and the dry season taken from the same location. How do the animals adapt to these amazing, changing conditions?

Not only do the displays give information about the Preserve and its inhabitants, but there is information about the building itself.

It is the first public certified green building in Lee County. See if you can detect what makes the building green. (Hint: the ceiling is made of bamboo. This is a highly renewable resource.) Go on a mini-self guided tour and learn more.

The exhibit designer was Pattie Smith of Frina Design and the fabricator was ADM II studios in Tampa. Both companies worked extremely hard to get the project done in a very tight time frame.

Many thanks to the Friends on the display committee **Carolyn Babb** and **Nancy Johnson** and the staff of Six Mile Cypress Slough for all the time and effort they put into proofing, selecting photos and contributing ideas.

Thanks also to the people who contributed photos such as **Wilma Keidel**, **Charles O'Connor**, **Bob Repenning** and others.

Thank you to the donors who made this project financially possible and thank you especially to everyone who dreamed with us and believed that we could create a place of fun and learning.



Students at the Slough (Photo Courtesy of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve) See Page 5 for more pictures of the Interpretive Center Exhibits.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This message will be my last as president of Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve. On March 23rd at our Annual Meeting, I hope to turn over the leadership of this incredible organization into the very capable hands of Vice President Carolyn Babb. You will notice she is also our *Connections* Editor and wears many hats at the slough. She works every Friday, with Jeff Key, off the boardwalk checking water levels in wells, or sometimes with our Adopt a Road trash gang, or talking to visitors on interpretive walks, roving, or at one of the ponds with the scope, at the reception desk or in Friends Corner. That is a snapshot of your new president and I could not be happier or prouder. A strong, energetic board of directors made up of seasoned as well as new faces supports Carolyn. We continue to look for new members to serve, so this will also be my last appeal for your support in that area!

As I look back over our past issues of *Connections*, I realize I have asked for your membership, your money, and your help in fundraising, your presence at our meetings, and your voice to add to our advocacy efforts. You have always responded!

Thank you for the years of support, encouragement and most of all your faith in our mission to preserve, protect and promote the slough for future generations through education and community partnerships.

The building of the Interpretive Center as the "gateway into the slough" has gone beyond our greatest expectations! When we see the pleasure of discovery through our visitors, old and young, when viewing and interacting with the exhibits and the displays in the reception area, we know we have accomplished the first step in our mission to preserve and protect the slough for future generations.

It has been a privilege and honor to serve as your president for the past 7 years!

Thank you!
Joyce Sanders

Editor's Note:
Joyce is staying close to her Friends. She has agreed to be Friends Corner Coordinator. See Page Four Membership News!



**MEET THE FEBRUARY
FRIENDS GATHERING
SPEAKER**

Monday, Feb 23rd at 7:00 PM

The guest speaker will be **Scott Gregory** from the Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium. Scott has been with the **Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium** since November, 2004 as a Resource Naturalist, leading its animal management programs.

Scott was born and raised in Milton Keynes, England. He moved to the United States in 1993. He started his zoological career at Santa Fe Teaching Zoo, graduating in 2003 with a degree in Zoo Animal Technology, which led to a job with Wild Adventures, an animal conservation park, in Valdosta, Georgia. Scott was recruited by the Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium in November, 2004 for the position of Resource Naturalist, leading its animal management programs. Under his guidance, Calusa's animal collection has grown to over 100 animals and features such protected species as Bald Eagles, Indigo Snakes and gopher tortoises. Calusa's venomous snake collection was made possible after he arrived, as Scott holds all necessary permits for public exhibition of the species. He performs various public relations duties, appearing on television, radio and in print media, and holds daily presentations for the visiting public.

**JOIN US FOR FUN AND A
GREAT PROGRAM.**



Scott at a previous Friends program with an Indigo Snake.

**2009 ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE FRIENDS**

Monday, Mar 23rd at 7:00 PM

The guest speaker will be **Lisa Ostberg**, from the **Friends of the Florida Panther Refuge**, the official support organization created to promote a better understanding and appreciation of the National Wildlife System and the Florida Panther Refuge in particular.

Nominations for the Board for the next year will be presented for membership approval.

Please join the Friends at the Interpretive Center. **RSVP to 239-533-7557 or babb88@centuryfla.com**



**THANKS TO CINDY BEAR FOR
HER PRESENTATION ON THE
BURROWING OWLS**

By Charles O'Connor

On December 15th, 2008, Cindy Bear spoke about her recent comprehensive five year study of Burrowing Owls in Cape Coral using radio telemetry data and intensive site investigations ("25 Years of Wildlife - Human Interface; Burrowing Owls in Cape Coral"). She also compared the data to her preliminary owl studies that began 22 years ago. Cindy is a Resource Teacher with the Environmental Education Program and a part time Avian Biologist for Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.



**RICKI LAIRD, THANK YOU FOR YOUR YEARS AS A
VOLUNTEER AT THE SLOUGH! WE ARE PROUD
THAT YOU ARE A FRIEND!**

Ricki and her husband George retired and relocated from Illinois to Florida in 1980. She was only here for a few months before finding it necessary to do something with her extra time. She started her volunteer career at the SW Regional Hospital in Fort Myers. Volunteering at the hospital and at her church, led her to volunteering at the Slough in 1994. Ricki was introduced to the Slough in the second volunteer naturalist class that met in the Fall of 1994-1995. For the fourteen plus years since then she has worn many hats including leader of guided walks, rover on the boardwalk, helper at Slough events and her latest efforts in volunteering have been at the front desk at the new Interpretive Center. She has been a member of the Friends organization since shortly after formation of the group and volunteered at the many Friends sponsored events as well. Unfortunately, she has decided it is time to hang up her tennis shoes (so to say) and concentrate her efforts on herself for a while! Although she is retiring from volunteering, we hope to see her at the Friends meetings.



RICKI— Many thanks for all of your time as a volunteer and a member of Friends.

**PROGRAMS AT THE
INTERPRETIVE CENTER**

FRONDZOO ART

Fee: \$20 per person
Minimum Age: 6 years old
Dates: Saturday, February 28th (Fish)
 Saturday, March 28th (Any)
Time 10 AM - 12 PM
Registration Required: 533-7440



Design and create your own wild-life from Palm Fronds. Artist Heidi Saletko from FrondZoo Art will teach you how to make wild animals from materials you collect at home. Queen palm fronds and “hair” are perfect for this activity. We will provide the paint and tools to put it all together.

TRACKING CLUB

Free: With Paid Parking
 (\$1.00 per vehicle per hour)
Minimum Age: 18 Years old
Dates: Saturday, February 21st
 Saturday, March 21st
 Saturday, April 18th
Time: 10 AM—12 PM
Minimum Age: 18



**If you are interested in nature, the outdoors and wild-life tracking, please contact Heather Gienapp to sign up. 239-533-7556
hgienapp@leegov.com**

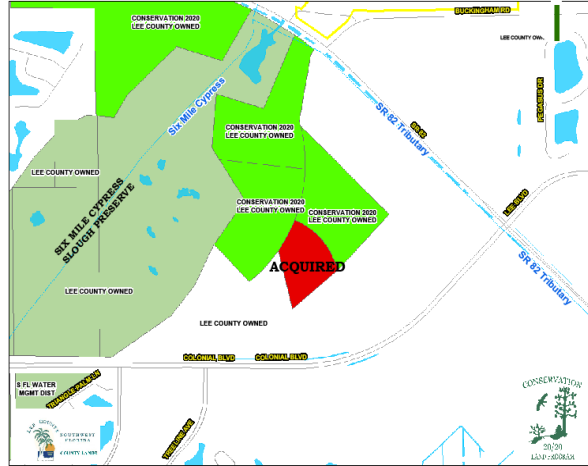


(The Science and Art of Tracking by Tom Brown Jr. is the book used for this program.)

Along the Boardwalk....Imagine That...

by Dotty Brown

Cozy shelters furnished with benches are spotted along the boardwalk. Each has a quote to quicken your imagination! Quietly focus your senses on your wintry surroundings, now with an open canopy and streaming sun rays reaching the under story vegetation. A broad leaf flutters in a caressing breeze. Can you imagine that leaf as an umbrella for a butterfly in a rain shower? There is a spider's orb web stretched across naked twigs. Can you imagine that web jeweled with droplets of water emitting rainbows in the sunlight? A bird flits by in determined flight with a twig in its beak. Can you imagine the nest, the young and the coming new life at the slough? Do you leave in awe and wonder. Can you imagine all that and much more?



**LEE COUNTY EXPANDS SIX MILE CYPRESS
SLOUGH PRESERVE**

Lee County added 19 acres to the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve December 5, 2008. The acquisition was funded by the Conservation 20/20 Program. The parcel is located in Fort Myers and it is attached to the eastern portion of the preserve just north of Colonial Blvd. Its acquisition will facilitate management. The greatest environmental importance of this property is that it adds an upland buffer to a portion of the Preserve and retains an undisturbed sheet flow area that allows the Slough's flow way to expand and contract with the seasons without any man made constrictions like a berm. This property contains a cypress dome, pine flatwoods, wet flatwoods and wet prairie. The Conservation 20/20 program buys environmentally important lands for preservation. It's funded by a property tax, which was approved by referendum in 1996. It is 50 cents for every \$1,000 of taxable property value. With this purchase, the County's Conservation 20/20 program has made 95 land purchases and the land inventory now stands at 20,550 acres. Press Release—Lynda Thompson, Conservation 20/20 Program Coordinator

There have been visitors to the Interpretive Center from 38 states and eight foreign countries!!!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Renewing Members: Thank you for your continued support!!

Dr. William B. Akerly
Walter Baker
Bill & Jean Black C
Beverly Brazill C
Bill & Dottie Brown C
Bruce & Janet Bunch
Barbara Catineau
Frankie Crain C
Clyde Dabbs
Ben Desmond
Calvin Eells
Richard & Lois Fein
Shirley Fox C
Harriet Gallagher
John W. Gnagey
Richard & Andrea Houle
Lee & Roberta Huberty
Sue Johnson C
Wilma Keidel C
Flo Kornman C
Rudy & Irmgard Lampron C
Connie Langmann
John & Sue Miller C
Dale & Eileen Mitchell
Jan & Mary Ellen Nyland
Carla Palmer
Deanna Pipher
Wendy Rex
Bill & Joyce Sanders C
Stephen F. Scholle, MD, PA
Walter & Cathy Sedlacek
Marie Shaffer
Mark A. Smith
Timothy L. Snyder DDS PA
Jim Turner
Stephen Tutko
“C” denotes Charter Member

Welcome New Members

Bill Catineau
Linda & Carl Grispino
Terri Lollo
Carolyn Nieset
Lisa Ostberg
Jean L. Scholz
Linda Sprankle

Additional Donations Gratefully Received From:

Joseph Cassin
Nancy Ellis
Shirley Fox
Sue Johnson
Carla Palmer
Mark A. Smith

HOPPY SAYS.....



“HELP JOYCE AT THE STORE AND RAISE FUNDS FOR THE SLOUGH.”

Joyce Sanders may be finishing her post as President of Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve but she has agreed to take on the job as **Friends Corner Coordinator**, a position that has turned out to be a demanding and time consuming effort! We all thank her from the bottom of our hearts for agreeing to take on this endeavor. Please help her staff the store as needed by volunteering—even in a two hour shift. Please contact her at sandersj01@comcast.net to volunteer.

EXTRA, EXTRA FRIENDS NEW MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT!!!

Beginning in 2009, memberships of \$50, and more will receive a 10% discount at FRIENDS CORNER. All of the books related to the Slough, hats, shirts, puzzles and other goodies are available to you at this discount. What a great opportunity for all of us! Support the Slough and do some extra shopping as well. There are many great gift ideas for children as well as for adults. All of the profits go directly back for programs and items for the Slough.

Thanks to the Friends Corner Gang for this wonderful idea!!!

Honorary Member Terri Lollo Membership and Activities Director at Pelican Preserve in Fort Myers Florida

By Mary Murray

Terri Lollo has been coordinating visits of Pelican Preserve residents to the Slough since 2005. Residents are taken on walks guided by Slough Volunteer Alan McTeague and each visit has resulted in valued donations for the Interpretive Center fund. Coordinating the visits involves a lot of work: getting notices of the walks in the Pelican Newsletter, follow up emails to residents, poster displays and Pelican website information. Not only that, but Terri also collects the donations for the walks and sends us the money and names of the participants for thank you notes. We have had several dozens of Pelican Preserve residents participate over the years and this could not have been accomplished without Terri's leadership. We welcome Terri as our newest Honorary Member with sincere appreciation for her efforts on behalf of the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.



DESSERT FESTIVAL GRAND PRIZE WINNER, ARNIE ROSEN!

Friends member Arnie Rosen (and new 2009 volunteer naturalist class member) was the favorite dessert maker at the Friends Dessert Festival. Arnie's old fashioned apple pie was excellent and the favorite of those in attendance. The crust was outstanding. Arnie was presented with a gift card from Publix to replenish his pie making supplies! Thanks Arnie—The pie was superb!

Advisory Board

Jacquelin Cadkin
Cadkin Foundation

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Henderson, Franklin,
StArnies & Holt, P.A.

Dr. William Hammond
Florida Gulf Coast Uni-
versity

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John Gnagey

Jeff Key

Mary Murray

Charles O'Connor

**Parks and Recreation
Liaison**

Mary Rude, Supervisor
Six Mile Cypress Slough
Preserve



Interpretive Center Photos Cour-
tesy of Six Mile Cypress Slough



Friends Members Dick and Andrea Houle and
Special Events Chairperson Janet Bunch go
about their trash duties every third Saturday of
the month!

**PLEASE COME, JOIN THEM!!!
HELP KEEP SIX MILE CY-
PRESS PARKWAY, ADJACENT
TO THE SLOUGH, FREE OF
TRASH—EVERY THIRD SAT-
URDAY OF THE MONTH AT
9:00 AM.
MEET AT THE BOARDWALK.
FUN, FELLOWSHIP WITH
FRIENDS!!!**

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 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

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	Lee County
	Parks & Recreation

Sign Up Today!

Check Area of Interest

- Education Preserve Advocacy
 Projects Publicity
 Fund Raising Special Events
 Friends Corner

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

Friends web site: Sloughpreserve.org Phone 239-533-7557

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

SAVE THESE DATES!!!
FEBRUARY 23—SCOTT GREGORY,
CALUSA NATURE CENTER
MARCH 23—LISA OSTBERG, FRIENDS
OF THE FLORIDA
REFUGE
LISA PANTHER, WILDLIFE

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve
7791 Penzance Blvd,
Fort Myers, Florida 33966

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

