



Connections

Newsletter for Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

APRIL 2011

MISSION STATEMENT

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve is a not-for-profit advocacy and support organization committed to preserving, protecting and promoting Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve for future generations through education and community partnerships, working together with Lee County and South Florida Water Management District. The Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve is a critical wetland system having positive value in inspiring and educating its visitors about wetlands and their roles in preserving the environment and local quality of life. Friends' vision is to maintain the Preserve's positive community influence in perpetuity.



SUMMER CAMPERS MAKE FIRE!

INSIDE

- Wonders of the Slough 2
- Photo Contest Judging 2
- Photo Contest Winners 3
- Photo Contest Winners 4
- Along the Boardwalk 5
- Poetry Winner 5
- Friends Annual Meeting 5
- Membership News 6
- President's News 7
- Membership App 8

FRIENDS OFFERING SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

By Jean Scholz

Summer is here – well, close enough for the Friends! Once again, we are supporting scholarships to Summer Camp at the Slough, with generous assistance from Jerry Bernstein – a Slough volunteer – and wife Frances Pitlick. Jerry says that he and Frances knew their contribution “would go right to the kids,” providing the opportunity to appreciate a unique environment by (literally) walking through it. Some of the young people may even start to train for a career in the process.

Week-long day camp experiences are available for Summer Naturalists (ages 10-12), who learn how to use all five senses to explore nature. Their week culminates in an exciting walk off-boardwalk to experience the natural beauty of our cypress swamp. Wilderness Explorers (ages 12-16) are trained in a range of wilderness survival skills such as tracking, natural cordage, and native crafts.

The Friends will offer twenty scholarships for the summer of 2011, several more than to last year. To apply, interested students complete a brief form and submit an essay explaining why they want to attend Summer Camp at the Slough. Friend's board member Charles O'Connor, a science teacher at Lexington Middle School, has already started to send notices to local schools. In 2010, we received the exact number of applications to fill the scholarships available, and we hope to see even more interest in 2011. Applications are available at the Friends website www.sloughpreserve.org, at the Interpretive Center at the Slough at 7791 Penzance Blvd. in Fort Myers or by calling the Friends at (239) 533-7557.

FGCU LAUNCHES SLOUGH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

By Carolyn Babb

Florida Gulf Coast University graduate students under the direction of Dr. Erik Carlson, Associate Professor of History in the College of Arts and Sciences, are conducting an oral history project of the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve. An oral history is the collection of interviews of people about their experiences and memories, significant to a specific topic such as the history of the Slough. The recorded interviews will then be transcribed from the audio tapes into a written record of the memories of the people and those experiences. The first phase, interviewing of 18 people significant in the history of the Slough, is currently underway. Nine of those people have been interviewed, including Dr. Bill Hammond, who was responsible for the start of the Monday Group that was instrumental in the preservation of the Slough and Dr. Rick Tully, coordinator of science and environmental education for the Lee County School District. Another nine will be interviewed in April. The second group will include some of the long term volunteers and former Monday Group members, two of whom are instructors at FGCU. The completed transcripts of the interviews will be donated to the FGCU library. A copy will also be given to Lee County.

Dr. Carlson would like this project to be a starting point to stimulate interest in an oral history program at FGCU. Ideally, this would enable future students at FGCU to finish work needed for the Slough project and do more studies in other areas of Fort Myers.

Natural Wonders of the Slough Makes Successful Debut

By Molly Meadows

On Saturday, January 15, 2011 the Friends of Six Mile Cypress hosted the first Natural Wonders of the Slough program. Participants were encouraged to learn fun facts about some of Florida's wildlife from animal displays, an Alligator Detectives Program and live Florida Reptiles Presentation. Exhibitors from the Calusa Nature Center, CREW, Mosquito Control, the Eco-Living Center and Babcock Wilderness Adventures were stationed on the back deck of the Interpretive Center with live animals, aquatic critters and more.

The local artist that painted the beautiful entrance mural in the education building, and the artist that created the unique Great Blue Heron Picnic Pavilion were both available to talk about their art work.

Volunteers were posted throughout the slough to point out animal life and to answer questions.

The picture below shows participant Jennifer Carter taking the Friend's Slough test. She answered all of the questions correctly except for the question regarding the spider that eats fish. Volunteer Janet Bunch was able to tell her all about this interesting creature. Jennifer was also excited about making her eco-friendly recycled paper bead bracelet!



Jennifer Carter on the left, participates in the Slough Knowledge Test with Friends' Special Events Coordinator Janet Bunch

PHOTO CONTEST JUDGES OFFER INSIGHTS

Here are comments from the judges of this year's Friends Photo Contest. These tips will be helpful to other photographers in their endeavors to get the perfect shot!

First Place in Animal Category—Green-backed Heron and Fish: The bird is classically "posed" ("That's exactly what they look like!" said one judge). It's great technically; every feather, and especially the eye, is tack-sharp, and the exposure is perfect, with detail both in shadows and the lightest areas of the scene. It's a beautifully captured moment: the fish shows up perfectly against an uncluttered background. The composition is beautiful, with the bird slightly to the left of center(so that the implied direction of action of the shot (left to right) has some space in front of it.

First Place in Open Category—Moon in Slough: Astronomical photos are difficult to take: cameras typically overexpose the moon when it's placed in a dark sky, but this exposure is perfect. The photographer also chose a shutter speed that eliminated the possibility of motion blur from the moon, which is speeding across the sky faster than you think. We liked the juxtaposition of the trees against the dark sky, too..and thought that the roosting birds added interest.

First Place in Plant Category—Resurrection Ferns on Planter Log: The bright hues of the ferns contrasted really well with the dark browns, blues and grays of the trees and water surrounding it. The foreground is well handled (it's in focus, and the placement of trees and log tend to lead the eye to the center of interest —the resurrection ferns.

Second Place in Altered Category—Calendar Shot of Slough: The matting and titling, done with the help of photo editing software, is tasteful and enhanced the subject. The exposure was perfect: lots of detail in both the shadowed areas (especially the cypress trees at the right) and the beautiful blue sky. The photographer did a nice job choosing an "uncluttered" vantage point in a way that showed off this peaceful, serene scene.

If you missed the Photo Contest this year, watch for the announcement of the **2011 Photo Contest**. The information will be on the Friends website www.sloughpreserve.org and in the Fall issue of *Connections*.

FIRST PLACE WINNERS
*SECOND ANNUAL FRIENDS
PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST*



OPEN CATEGORY
VINCENT ABBATIELLO



ANIMAL CATEGORY
RICHARD BURWELL



PLANT CATEGORY
LAURA TORRES



ALTERED CATEGORY
ROBERT KIMBRELL



STAFF CATEGORY
CHARLES O'CONNOR



ALTERED CATEGORY Second Place
Daniel Brady



OPEN CATEGORY Second Place
Robert Kimbrell



ANIMAL CATEGORY Second Place
Susan Leach Snyder



STAFF CATEGORY Second Place
Charles O'Connor



PLANT CATEGORY Second Place
Richard Burwell



PLANT CATEGORY Third Place
Marin Asher



ANIMALS CATEGORY Third Place
Dennis VonLinden



ALTERED CATEGORY Third Place
David Neff



STAFF CATEGORY Third Place
Carolyn Babb



OPEN CATEGORY Third Place
Daniel Brady



ANIMAL CATEGORY Honorable Mention
Vincent Abbatiello

*Along the Boardwalk...
The Color and Cacophony of Spring*
by Dotty Brown

Fresh green growth covers the cypress branches signaling the onset of burgeoning activity in all of life at the slough. Enjoy the green buds of the southern blue flags as they prepare to burst and display those colorful purple sepals and petals. Along the margin of Alligator Lake the primrose willow adds yellow to the scene. The delicate yellow bladderwort blooms rise above a whorl of leafstalks. Woe be unto any mosquito larva that ventures near its trapping bladders!! Overhead listen for the red-shouldered hawk screech the sounds of the mating season. Cacophony rises along interior boardwalk trails as you hear the squeals of otter, the drumming of red-bellied woodpeckers, the croaking of the pig frog, the bellowing of the gator and then the more soothing sounds of the cardinal, carolina wren, warblers, red wings and the clicking of the kingfisher as he soars over the ponds. Check out the sound display in the interpretive center!



WELCOME SPRING!!

A Day at the Slough
By Michael Moore

Sweet air, gently stepping ibis
dancing, warm water
both fresh and salt.
Mixing together
winding rivers, creeks and marsh
Mother Nature's ancient purifier
calmly trickling,
caressing cypress knees
plants filtering,
cleaning the toxins of man
minerals settling on the bed.
Wasted, taken for granted
struggling, surviving
sometimes close to death,
dry
essential rainfall, crucial
steeping, lingering until clean
gloriously emerging
Estero Bay



Michael Patrick Moore, 11, son of Tammi Cripe, the creator of the Friends Logo, and grandson of Friends Charter Members Alan & Jackie Cadkin, won 3rd place in the Aspiring Authors Writing Contest of Lee County with his poem, "A Day at the Slough".

**LOCAL AUTHOR ATTRACTS 60 FRIENDS TO
MARCH ANNUAL MEETING**

Local Sanibel author, Charles Sobczak, attracted an enthusiastic crowd to the Gathering of Friends March Annual meeting. Prior to the meeting Mr. Sobczak autographed his books, including his latest, *The Living Gulf Coast – A Native Guide to Southwest Florida*. About 60 members, guests and interested visitors listened to stories and enjoyed slides of the pictures in the guide about destinations in southwest Florida, including the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.

The 2010-2011 Annual Report was presented to the membership. It includes a complete report on the financial status of the organization as well as the highlights of accomplishments of the year. The entire report can be found on the Friends' website, www.sloughpreserve.org. Three current board members were re-elected to another two year term, current President Carolyn Babb, Vice-President Charles O'Connor and Web Master and Research Chair Jeff Key.



FRIENDS APRIL MEETING

IF YOU PLAN ON ATTENDING THE APRIL 26th GATHERING TO
HEAR THE *STATE OF THE SLOUGH*
BY BOB REPENNING

EMAIL CAROLYN BABB carolyn_babb08@comcast.net
OR

CALL THE FRIENDS AT THE INTERPRETIVE CENTER 239-533-7557

Author Charles Sobczak signing books at the
March Gathering of Friends.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Renewing Members: Thank you for your continued support!!

Carolyn & William Babb
Walter Baker
Gretchen Barsness
Jerry Bernstein
Bill & Jean Black C
CJ Botha C
Bill & Dotty Brown
Janet & Bruce Bunch
Richard Burwell
Dave & Jan Cornell
Bill & Barbara Catineau
Ben Desmond
Pascha Donaldson
Gayle Edwards
Harriet Gallagher
Gilkey Organization LLC
Doris Giuseffi
John Gnagny
Linda & Carl Grispino
Rosie Hackman
Bill & Rosemarie Hammond C
Carol Hampton
Pete Hawkins
Bryan & Linda Hefty
Bonnie & Brian Hogan
Nancy Hollmann
Lee & Roberta Huberty
Charles & Virginia Huether
Richard & Debra Huxley
Laurel Kearns
Richard & Judi Krauss
Marty & Alice Krebs
Rudy & Irmgard Lampron C
Connie Langmann C
MJ Major C
Mickey Miller C
Frank & Mary Murray
Ron & Lynn Myrick
Charles O'Connor
Nancy Osborne
Carla & Jim Palmer
Deanna Pipher
Poinciana Garden Club C
Mary Porter
Clark Rhodes
Arnie Rosen
Sanibel Captiva Audubon Society
Judy & Dave Schele
Stephen Scholle MD PhD
Jean Scholz
Marie Shaffer
Peter Sidell

Renewing Members (Cont.)

Jim Turner
Stephen Tutko
Harriet H. Warner
Mary Webber

“C” denotes Charter Member, persons who were first year members of the Friends.

Welcome New Members !!

Penny & Henry Burkitt
Kathleen Cadle
Scott Cooper
Donna Cressman
Suzanne Frechette
Cheryl Gatbonton
Jay & Mary Ham
Lynn Hartmann
Patti Heath
Stuart Jacobs
Glen Kessler
Teresa Krass
Michel Letellier
Sue Meyers
Kelly Powers
Theresa Roake
Joy Salberg
Judy Samelson
Donald Saylor
Bud Schopp
Walt & Daphne Weber

Additional Donations Gratefully Received From:

Jerry Bernstein
Penny & Henry Burkitt
Richard Burwell
Bill & Barbara Catineau
Doris Giuseffi
Linda & Carl Grispino
Carol Hampton
Mary Porter
Bob & Mary Rude



HELP WANTED

Inventory—Individual (or more) for an end of the season inventory at Friends' Corner. Checking computer and actual inventory for accuracy. Contact Carolyn Babb, carolyn_babb08@comcast.net

Check Phone Messages—Friends phone at the Slough to be checked daily for messages. This can be done from any phone from anywhere. Messages can be transferred to Slough personnel or relayed to Friends members for action. Contact carolyn_babb08@comcast.net

Facebook—Maintain a Facebook page for the Friends. Contact Jeff Key, jeffgkey@comcast.net

Computer—Solicit pictures of plants and animals that are included in the Lee County Management Plan for the Slough. To be incorporated into a page on the Friends website. Contact jeffgkey@comcast.net

Bernard MacDonald New Board Member



Welcome to the newest member of the Board of Directors of Friends. Bernie is a retired Special Education teacher, a volunteer at Manatee Park and at Harry Chapin Food Bank. He is a birder, hiker, lover of nature and all things wild. We are so glad to have you on board!

Connections Staff

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Printing	Lee County Terry Park Facilities

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Advisory Board

Jacquelin Cadkin
Cadkin Foundation

Carolyn Delizia Swift

Dr. William Hammond
Florida Gulf Coast Uni-
versity

Carol Newcomb-Jones

Wiley M Parker, A.I.A.
Parker,/Mudgett/Smith
Architects, Inc.

Clyde Dabbs

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Charles O'Connor
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Bernard MacDonald

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Steve Tutko

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Jean Labriola Scholz

Parks and Recreation Liaison

Mary Rude, Supervisor
Six Mile Cypress Slough
Preserve



BENCHES IN THE GARDEN

There are three new benches in the garden located in the center of the Slough parking lot. The benches were purchased with funding provided by Patron membership in the Friends. Try them out!

State of the Slough Tuesday, April 26, 2011

The speaker for this Gathering of Friends is Robert Repenning, Land Stewardship Coordinator for Lee County Parks and Recreation. Bob received a Bachelor's of Science Degree from Stockton State College in New Jersey and a Master's of Forest Resources and Conservation from the University of Florida. He has studied human impact on wildlife communities and worked for the State of Florida as a land manager for 20 years. He was the manager of the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic and State Buffer Preserves managing lands in Sarasota, Charlotte and Lee Counties. His duties included the preparation and review of land acquisition projects, land management of acquired lands, and aquatic preserves. He has planned and overseen the construction of trail systems and public access facilities to natural areas. He is currently the Land Stewardship Coordinator for Six Mile Cypress Preserve and Lakes Park in Lee County.



Bob working on one of his on going projects at the Slough.

Come hear and see the latest and the greatest at the Slough.

Hello Friends,

What a great visitor season we are having here in Fort Myers. It seems like everyone in the world has heard about the Slough and wants to see our wondrous place! In the past year there have been visitors from 25 countries and 46 states. It still makes me smile when a visitor realizes that they are seeing baby alligators in the scope at Otter Pond, no matter what language they speak. It is always the same. And it makes my day!



The annual meeting was a success, to say the least. There were about 60 folks there to hear Charlie Sobczak and, I hope, to hear about our past year. Charlie was great, and so was our past year. I'm really looking forward to the upcoming year to see what it brings.

Friends Corner has been fully staffed for the last month. Many, many thanks to those volunteers that help keep the store open. We had a couple of recent weeks that the sales were about \$1,500 a week.

It has been ten years since the Friends organization was started by a group of volunteers with a common goal. They were intent on the importance of environmental education to the community. They also had a dream of an Interpretive Center for the community and the staff of the Slough. By late 2001, Friends was in place as a not-for-profit corporation, and the rest is history! I will have more on this story as the year unfolds.

There is a new help wanted column included on the Membership News page. We are looking for help with specific tasks. See if there is anything listed in this issue that interests you. If not, watch for future items.

See you at the Slough! CB



Photo by Bob Repenning—Aerial view of the new Slough property north of SR 82

JOIN FRIENDS TODAY!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Phone _____

In addition I would like to contribute

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

TOTAL\$ _____

Membership Level (Please Check One)

- Student (\$10)
- Individual (\$20)
- Contributing (\$50)
- Supporting (\$100)
- Associate (\$250) - 1
- Sustaining (\$500) - 1, 2
- Corporate Sponsor (\$500) - 1, 2
- Patron (\$1,000) - 1, 2, 3

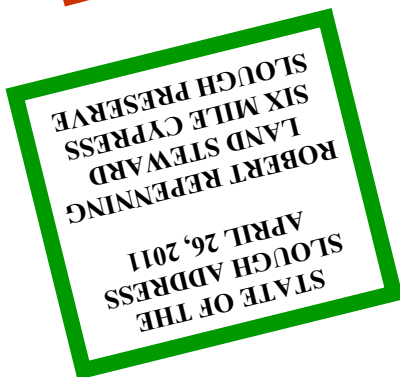
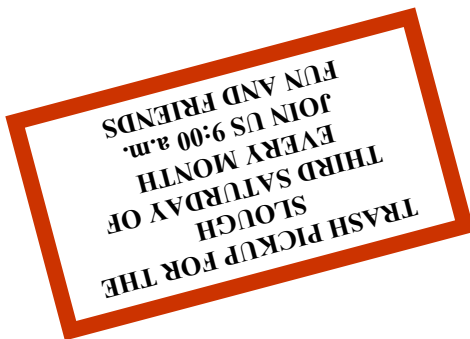
- 1- includes parking pass for 17 Lee Co. facilities
- 2 - includes choice of wet walk or moon walk for ten guests
- 3 - includes bench or rocking chair naming opportunity

**HOW CAN YOU HELP WITH YOUR TIME?
I AM INTERESTED IN HELPING WITH:**

Mail to Friends of the Six Mile Cypress Slough, 7791 Penzance Blvd, Fort Myers. FL 33966

Friends web site: www.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.



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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

