

Connections

Newsletter for Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

April 2013

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.



April Friends Field Trip to CREW

Singer, Songwriter, Storyteller Rosie Emery Featured at Friends April Gathering



Rosie Emery will be the Friends Gathering speaker Wednesday, April 24, 2013 at 7:00 pm. Rosie Emery is a WGPU singer/ songwriter, environmental educator and award winning television producer. Rosie currently writes, produces and directs WGPU's Emmy-nominated *Curious Kids Show*, a half-hour, quarterly children's television program hosted by kids for kids! Hosted by a cast of talented local children, the show focuses on kid-centered information through the lens of *Myself*, *My Backyard* and *My World*; Rosie's original songs are featured as fun music videos in each episode.

With years of experience touring schools and developing programs in Canada and the United States, Rosie has developed her own brand of unique environmental educational resources. She shares these with educators through her presentations as a Keynote and Guest Lecture Speaker at educational conferences and also in workshops for community and educational institutions.

In addition to her children's work, Rosie has written and produced many of the *Green Living* segments for WGPU's signature television show *Connect*, and two half hour documentaries produced by WGPU for the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program.

The Friends Gathering is free and open to the public, but seating is limited. Please RSVP at the Friends at (239) 533-7557 to reserve a seat.

Photo Contest Winners Announced

Visitors to the Slough submitted 285 photos to be judged in the fourth annual Photo Contest sponsored by the Friends of the Six Mile Cypress Slough. One hundred photographers submitted 285 photos for six categories.

Judges for the contest were Friends vice-president/education chair, Dr. Charles O'Connor; photographer Geoff Coe, owner of Wild Images Florida in Fort Myers, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ranger and photographer Jim Matheson.

First place winners included Richard Burwell, animal category and altered category, Dave Sterling, plant category, Carolyn Heymann in the open category, Hanna Grimm, youth category and Charles O'Connor, staff category. All of the winning photographs are included on pages 2-3. The photos are currently on display in the Interpretive Center.

Congratulations to all of the winners!

INSIDE

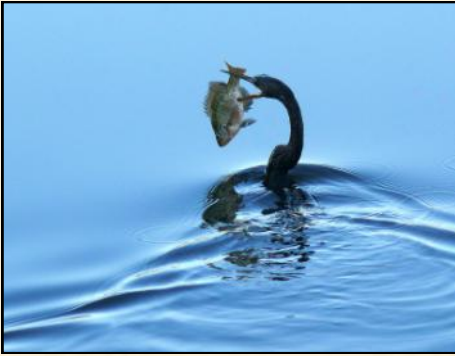
- Photo Contest Winners 2
- Photo Contest Winners 3
- Field Trips 4
- Along the Boardwalk 4
- Summer Camp 5
- Spring Programs 5
- Membership New 6
- President's Notes 7
- Membership Brochure 8

"ROCK ON" In the Slough Garden

The Friends are launching a unique fund raising project to support the educational programs and materials for the Slough. You can purchase one or more beautiful natural river stones (approx. 11" – 15" in size) to place in the center garden at the Slough and engrave it with a name, favorite saying, peaceful thought or remembrance. Complete information and order form included in this newsletter.



PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



First Place Animals
Richard Burwell



Third Place Animals
Eileen Fonferko



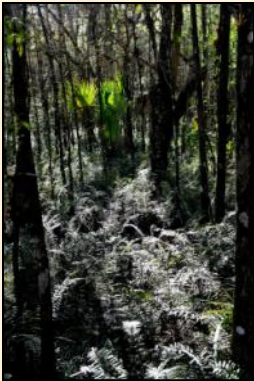
Honorable Mention Animals
Benjamin Dion



Second Place Animals
Bill Hofer



Second Place Plants
Bruce Jaeger



First Place Plants
Dave Sterling



First Place Open
Carolyn Heymann



Third Place Plants
John McConnell



Third Place Open
Dena Espenscheid



Second Place Open
Peter Sidell

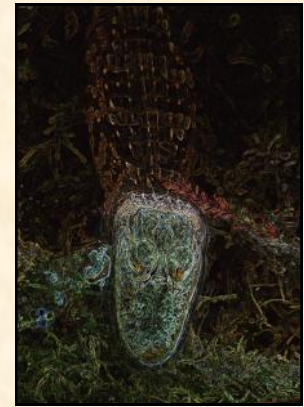
PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



First Place Altered
Richard Burwell



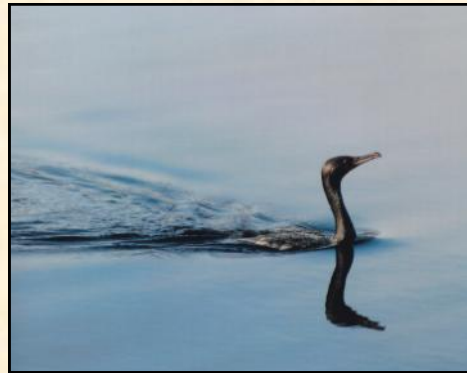
Second Place Altered
Larry McCarty



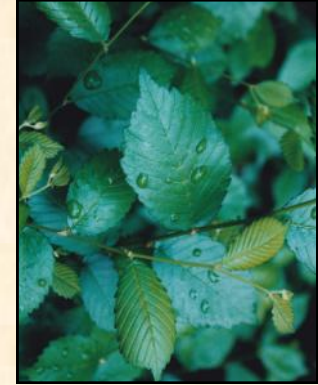
Third Place Altered
Debra Hodroff



Second Place Youth
Leah Rittenberg



Third Place Youth
Hanna Grimm



First Place Youth
Hanna Grimm



First Place Staff
Charles O'Connor



Third Place Staff
Robert Repenning



Second Place Staff
Charles O'Connor

Friends Next Excursions

by Mary Murray

We have two more excursions planned this Spring and they are special!



Field Trippers at Archbold Research Facility in March

April 9, 2013 (Tuesday) **CREW**—Wildflower walk. **moderate difficulty, dirt/ grass paths.** We will walk one of the trails that is used for the annual CREW Wildflower Festival (scheduled this year for April 5 and 6, 2013)

May 7, 2013 (Tuesday) **Bowditch Point, Estero Island, Fort Myers Beach**—**moderate difficulty (sand)** Nathaniel Bowditch was responsible for the perfection of celestial navigation that is still utilized to this day. He was an astronomer, navigator and scientist. The property includes beach, tropical hardwoods, coastal scrub and wetland hardwood forest plant communities and is a gopher tortoise habitat.

To register for an excursion or to get on the excursions mailing list email Janet Bunch at janet-bunch@yahoo.com or call the Friends phone 239-533-7557. We carpool from the Slough.

Feedback Appreciated

If you have any ideas for improving our excursions or of places we might visit, please send those suggestions and ideas to Janet Bunch. Your feedback helps shape our program.



Crew Wildflower



Bowditch Point Osprey



Bowditch Point Sand Dune Vegetation

Along the Boardwalk...Slough's Spring Show by Dotty Brown

Puffy clouds are fringed in pink as the sun's rays pierce the gray dawn. Slowly a full sun envelopes the horizon in a breath taking moment of fiery orange before shining forth to pump chlorophyll into the burgeoning vegetation. Pond waters warm. Enjoy the antics of the whirligig beetles...would you know which way to go if you had pairs of eyes both above and below the water's surface? Praise the gambusia fish for their appetite for mosquito larvae. Watch the fishing spider in wait for that just-right -size prey to come for lunch! Spot the crayfish chimney that announces the crayfish's damp burrow where he stays during the dry season to keep his gills moist. Check out any tracks nearby of otter or raccoon which are among its predators. A sunny spring morning may show an observant eye the black young lubber grasshopper or a spider's web busy with young pinhead size spiders recently hatched from the necklace of eggs. Ferns have sprouted colorful fiddlehead fronds; strangler fig trees host the ruddy dagger wing's ornate caterpillar. The slough's spring show is underway. Come, enjoy nature's latest production!



Annual Meeting March 2013

by Carolyn Babb

The Friends annual meeting was held March 27, 2013. Three board members were approved for reelection by the membership at the meeting. Carolyn Babb will remain as President for two additional years. Charles O'Connor will stay as Vice-President and Jeff Key as a Director on the board.

The annual report for 2012 was presented by President Carolyn Babb. Highlights included a partial listing of accomplishments by the Friends for the year.

The entire report can be found on the Friends website at www.sloughpreserve.org

Camp Scholarships available for Six Mile Cypress Slough Summer Campers

The Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve is again offering scholarships to interested campers, which will cover the fee of \$75.00 for a camping session. All sessions of the camps involve exploring and learning about nature through the beauty of the Slough.

Camp sessions are:

Summer Naturalists (10-12 year olds)

June 17th – 21st

June 24th – 28th

Wilderness Explorers (12-16 year olds)

July 15th – July 19th

July 22nd – July 26th



Students from ages 10 -16 are asked to submit a one page essay explaining, “Why I want to go to Summer Camp at the Slough.” Essays should be submitted to Charles O’Connor at rcoc77@embarqmail.com or to Charles O’Connor, 10560 Habitat Trail, Bokeelia, FL, 33922. If you have any questions please call the Friends at 239-533-7557.

Entries must be received by Wednesday, May 8, 2013. Winners will be notified by May 15, 2013. If your camper is already enrolled in camp and wins a scholarship, the Friends will reimburse you directly.



SLOUGH SPRING PROGRAMS

Tracking Club Saturdays, May 4, June 1, and July 27, 2013, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Drawing Inspirations Thursdays, February 7, 2013 through April 18, 2013, 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm



Yoga Tuesdays, April 2, 2013 through April 23, 2013, 9:00 am to 10:15 am

Clever Camouflage Saturday, April 13, 2013, 10:00 am to 11:00 am



Surprising Squirrels Wednesday, April 17, 2013 and Saturday, April 27, 2013, 10:00 am to 11:00 am



Basket Making Saturday, April 20, 2013, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm



Friends Gatherings Wednesday April 24, 2013, 7:00 pm Rosie Emery, Singer, Songwriter, Storyteller



The Slough by the Light of the Full Moon, Thursday, April 25, 2013, 8:00 pm



Reservations are required for most programs. Register for programs online at leeparks.org or by calling Lee County Parks and Recreation at (239) 533-7275.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Renewing Members: Thank you for your continued support!

William and Carolyn Babb
Walter Baker
Ronald R. Bensch
Marlin Berkland
Kelly Bishop
Dotty Brown C
Kathleen Cadle
Erik Carlson
Elizabeth R. Carter
Bill and Barbara Catineau
Dave and Jan Cornell
Scott Cooper
Frankie Crain C
Donna Cressman
Eileen Downing
Gail Dye
Gayle and Paul Edwards
Suzanne Frechette
Harriet J. Gallagher
Cheryl Gabbonton
John Gnagey
Rosalene Hackman
Jan and Mary Ham
Bill and Rosemarie Hammond C
Pete Hawkins
Nancy Hollman
Bonnie and Brian Hogan
Richard and Debra Huxley
Laurel Kerns
Jeffrey Key
Wilma Keidel C
Glen Kessler
Richard and Judi Krauss
Marty and Alice Krebs
Rudy and Irmgard Lampron C
John and Sue Miller C
Mickey Miller C
Gretchen Monti
Frank and Mary Murray C
Poinciana Garden Club
Mary and Frank Porter
Wendy Rex
Robert and Mary Rude C
Joy Salberg
Dave and Judy Schele
Jean and Bill Scholz
Marie Shaffer
Peter Sidell
Kate Streng
Mary Webber
Daphne Weber

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

Welcome New Members

Lequita Adkins
Eleanor Blitzer
Jason Boeckman
George Boyer
Stuart and Susan Draper
Jackie Gozdz
James R. Johnson
Larry Korland
Bernie MacDonald
Sue and Jim McClure
Carolyn Rhodes

Additional Donations Gratefully Received From:

Drawing class participants—Teacher Suzanne Frechette
Pelican Preserve guided walks—Guide Brian Hogan
Mary Murray
Garn Mennell, in memory of Phoebe Obdyke
Richard and Janice Schele, in member of Carole Pruss

FRIENDS ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2012

Wet walks for 150 visitors
Friends field trips including
Hickeys Creek Preserve
Bird Rookery Swamp
Caloosahatchee Regional Park
Matanzas Pass Preserve
Speakers for Gatherings including
Dr. Jerry Jackson, FGCU
Bob Repenning, State of the Slough
Amy Williams, News Press
On line store
Camp scholarships for 20 campers
Summer camp supplies and speakers
Summer camp volunteers
Photo contest 95 photographers, 480 photos
Summer camp intern compensation
Four new benches on boardwalk
Plants in butterfly garden
Volunteer thank you gifts
New tripods for spotting scopes
New spotting scope
Books, CDs, DVDs for Blake Cadkin Resource Library
Binoculars for guided walks
Volunteer of the year
Special Events committee represented Friends at:
Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival
Burrowing Owl Festival
Crew Wildflower Festival

Complete 2012 Annual Report Available at www.sloughpreserve.org

Remembering Phoebe Obdyke

by Heather Gienapp

Sadly this January retired volunteer **Phoebe Obdyke** passed away. Phoebe volunteered at the Slough for 13 years with events, programs and in the garden. She had a great sense of humor and was very creative as demonstrated by her beautiful native plant displays for events.



Phoebe, a Charter Friends member, on the bench named in her honor in the center garden at the Slough

I enjoyed spending time with Phoebe as she assisted me with numerous visits to schools. Her favorite animal to talk about was the anhinga and alligator...she would become very animated when describing the behavior of each.

Phoebe's daughters recently sent us the following about Phoebe's memorial: *"Phoebe requested that there be no formal service and suggested that in commemoration you sometimes think of her when you learn something interesting; experience beauty; enjoy humor."*

For those who knew Phoebe this seems very fitting and I know I think of her often in these ways. Andy last saw her sitting on a bench on a beach smiling and waving. I enjoy remembering her that way as well.

Dee Burns, Retired Volunteer and Charter Friends Member

By Heather Gienapp

Retired volunteer and Charter Friends Member Dee Burns passed away in Pennsylvania this past December. Dee and her husband, Frank spent many hours at the Slough interacting with visitors. Dee had a great sense of humor and I loved hearing her laugh as she talked about her experiences at the Slough. She and Frank were married for 65 years.



PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Friends—Knock me over with a feather. That was my reaction when Mary Rude announced ME as the Volunteer of the Year at the Slough. All of the volunteers at the Slough are so dedicated and work so hard that I know any one of many could be named the volunteer of the year. I tell folks so often that Otter Pond is where I found my love for the Slough and spend some great quiet time there and now I have a wonderful plaque thanking me for my work. And it gets better. My truck gets a parking space with my name on it.



We are practicing very, very hard on the Friends puppet show for the Five Year Anniversary Party on Saturday, April 6th. Friends member Steve Roake has built us a puppet stage worthy of professional puppeteers. I do hope we do it justice. Fellow puppeteers Theresa Roake, Donna Cressman, Rudy Lampron, Marie Shaffer and Brian Hogan are wonderful. Our play is based on Friends member Bill Sanders book, *The Slough and You*. Bill wrote the book when the Interpretive Center and Friends Corner opened and it has been a best seller since. Hope you get the chance to see our show sometime. I think we will be in great demand once word gets out how great we are.

The Friends field trip to Archbold Biological Station was a huge success. The facility is a platinum LEED award winning facility in Venus, about an hour and a half north east of Fort Myers. We had just gotten out of the vehicles and a pair of scrub jays were already there to see what we were doing. Our tour guide Dustin was giving his first tour and if it is any indication he will be a wonderful guide for the location. He has only been here for six months from New York but really knows his information. The Archbold station is lucky to have him. Archbold staff will be visiting the Slough in September and Janet Bunch already has a plan to show them our wonderful place.

The Friends gatherings have been really well attended this year and the speakers great as usual. The speaker for April, Rosie Emery should be a treat for everyone. If you know any youngsters please make sure that you bring them to this presentation. Rosie uses songs and stories to teach environmental education for adults and kids.

I finally made fire. I attended the Wilderness Awareness class for grown ups. (Everyone should attend, great survival tips) Heather Gienapp, Senior Program Specialist for the Slough was the instructor with her able bodied assistant volunteer Janet Bunch. Ranger Mickey Miller was called in to instruct the class on fire. It is not easy. With some last help pulling the bow at the end I was able to make fire. I'm ready for Survivor, at least the first day!

See you in the Slough. CB

INVENTOR DONATES NEW AQUATIC RETRIEVAL SYSTEM

Pockets full and on the run, volunteer Janet Bunch somehow dumped her people clicker (with more than 100 people recorded!) in the slow-moving slough waters along the boardwalk. No problem, said Andy Gurri, as he reached for the shiny unit with his pinchers. Carefully, he raised the prize over the boardwalk where another volunteer—who will remain nameless—botched the catch and knocked the clicker back in the drink. It was now out of reach of Andy's device and buried in sediment. Worried about the record of all her guests rusting away, Janet relayed the tale to *Connections* Copy Editor and part-time inventor Bruce Bunch. After much crashing, sawing and only one cut finger, Bruce produced Swamp-A-Matic, a nine-foot long bamboo pole with a hand-crafted wire mesh basket at its tip. Armed with the new device, Andy rapidly retrieved the errant clicker. With Swamp-A-Matic now part of his arsenal, his reach for retrieving lost items has been extended.

Congrats to Carolyn Babb Volunteer of the Year 2013

by Mary Rude

The Slough Volunteer of the Year 2013 was awarded to *Carolyn Babb*. Please congratulate her when you see her. She is stationed at Otter Pond with the spotting scope every Thursday all year, no matter what. She is also at the Front Desk every Thursday and twice a month on Sundays. This year Carolyn has been very active helping Heather lead groups such as wet walks, moon walks and school groups.

As President of the Friends of the Slough, she publishes a quarterly newsletter, "Connections", runs the gift shop (which includes – orders, inventories, counts the money, goes to the bank, trains new people), Photo contest organizer (PR in the newspapers, organized all the photos, framed winning photos, put all others in a book), orders items for library, camp supplies and other materials, Field trip scout, organized and decorated for the Pot Luck Holiday dinner, leads Moon walks for large donors, runs Board meetings and serves on committees. You get the idea that she is a busy lady and a champion for the Slough!

In Carolyn's honor, a plaque was placed on a bench at Otter Pond that reads: "Thank you Carolyn Babb for your passion to educate people from around the world about the Slough."

Carolyn, you have helped the Slough soar higher than we imagined possible. Thank you for your dedication and love towards the Slough. It is greatly appreciated!



PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Two juvenile gators guard a water bottle at Otter Pond. For some reason maintenance guru Andy Gurri left this bottle in place! Winning caption writer will get a Friends ball cap. Send your photo caption entry to, carolyn_babb08@comcast.net. Carolyn and copy editor, Bruce Bunch will select the winning caption and publish it in the next issue of *Connections*.

**TRASH PICKUP 9 AM
3RD SATURDAY
EVERY MONTH
JOIN US**

Contact: thehoules75@yahoo.com

**SHOP AT FRIENDS
CORNER**

Interpretive Center or on line at
www.friendscorner.qbstores.com

Advisory Board

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Cadkin Foundation

Carolyn Delizia Swift

Dr. William Hammond
Florida Gulf Coast University

Carol Newcomb-Jones

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

Joyce Sanders
Past President, Friends

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Theresa Roake
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Steve Tutko

Parks and Recreation Liaison

Mary Rude, Supervisor
Six Mile Cypress Slough
Preserve

Connections Staff

Carolyn Babb, Editor
Bruce Bunch, Copy Editor
Printed at Terry Park

JOIN FRIENDS TODAY!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Phone _____

In addition I would like to contribute

\$ _____ additional for the Friends use at the Slough.

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 sticker for 18 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 of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve Corp. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit public charity. Registration Number CH13822 Florida Dept of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Friends web site: www.sloughpreserve.org Phone 239-533-7557

Online store: friendscorner.qbstores.com

Special thanks 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.

**GATHERING OF FRIENDS
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24
7:00 PM
Rosie Emery, WGU singer/songwriter,
environmental educator, television producer,
INTERPRETIVE CENTER**

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

