



July 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.*



March Friends Field Trip to CREW

**ENJOY A SUMMER WET WALK AT SIX MILE CYPRESS SLOUGH PRESERVE**



The Friends of the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve are hosting off the boardwalk strolls along the wet walk trail that is usually closed to the public. The invigorating, beautiful path is immersed in the watery heart of the Slough. Children must be 10 years or older. Wear tie on/secure shoes, bring a change of clothing, and waterproof camera – expect to get wet to the waist in clean rain water. Allot 2 hours. Group size limited to 16. Rain showers will not be a problem, but lightning will cause the trip to be cancelled.

A \$10 donation to the Friends Education Fund is suggested.

A reservation is required. Please email a reservation request to Charles O'Connor at [rcoc77@embarqmail.com](mailto:rcoc77@embarqmail.com) Include the date and time requested and a phone number where you can be reached.

Saturday, August 17	10:00 am and 1:00 pm
Sunday, August 18	10:00 am
Saturday, August 24	10:00 am and 1:00 pm
Sunday, August 25	10:00 am
Saturday, September 14	10:00 am and 1:00 pm
Sunday, September 15	10:00 am
Saturday, September 28	10:00 am and 1:00 pm
Sunday, September 29	10:00 am

**JOIN US!**

**FRIENDS EARN CHRYSALIS AWARD FROM LEE COUNTY VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU AND THE GREATER FORT MYERS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

The Friends organization was selected as the winner in the Eco-Innovation category of the 2013 Chrysalis Awards. Volunteer Services Coordinator Kathy Cahill nominated the Friends for the award. The award is by the Lee County Visitors and Convention Bureau and the greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce. It celebrates the value of tourism and the community teamwork involved in maintaining and enhancing tourism as a major economic engine for Lee County.

The Friends were judged on fostering growth and sustainability, how we distinguished our organization in the community, the results of our efforts to promote the slough, and our contributions to business and tourism in Lee County.

Congratulations to the Friends board of directors, all of the members, donors and visitors who made this award possible.

Chrysalis Award is on display at the Interpretive Center



**Feet above Sea Level**  
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## MORE THAN EVER CONSERVATION 20/20 NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

by Janet Bunch

As you may know, 46% of the Slough acreage has been acquired through the Conservation 20/20 program, Lee County's conservation land acquisition and stewardship program. It is administered by CLASAC, Conservation Lands Acquisition and Stewardship Advisory Committee, a citizen group that meets monthly and reviews nominations, acquisitions, land stewardship plans, activities and general management. Their meetings are open to the public, and everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend.

Last year the program came under fire after a series of audits from the Clerk of Courts. These audits were discussed in previous editions of Connections. The author of these audits, Charlie Green, is now a member of CLASAC, nominated by Larry Kiker who defeated Ray Judah in last fall's election. Mr. Green has opposed all motions for acquisitions of new parcels, stating that the original straw ballot enabling the C20/20 program was for 7 years only. The Board of County Commissioners has renewed the funding since 1995, but it is at their discretion and they could vote against it at any time. Mr. Green feels, perhaps rightly, that the public deserves the opportunity, and the program deserves the validation, of another vote in favor of continuing the funding. The problem facing 20/20 supporters is getting accurate information to the electorate when such a vote is held.

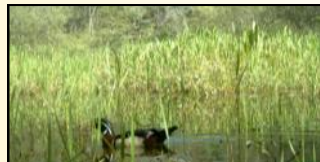
The News-Press, our only daily newspaper, is heavily dependent upon advertising revenues from the real estate community. Therefore, its coverage leans in favor of the real estate position that Lee County has enough publicly owned land and that no more needs to be acquired, protected or preserved. This flies in the face of the fact that Lee County (82,550 acres/16%) trails by a large margin its neighboring counties of Collier (865,930 acres/66%) and Charlotte (107,550 acres/24%) in protecting land. Real estate interests also view the C2020 program as unfair competition. Willing sellers must approach the program and offer their properties for consideration. The negotiated selling price is derived in the same way as any other land purchase, but the C2020 program comes with cash in hand, and does not have any contingencies like obtaining zoning permits or development orders.

The facts remain that our drinking water comes from somewhere, our storm water storage areas come from somewhere, our critical wildlife corridors are found somewhere, and none of the above come from developed land. If we want our children to know and love what we do, our Board of County Commissioners needs to hear from ALL of us that we support the 20/20 program. If it comes to a vote, we must work together to get the word out on this program critical to our quality of life.

For more information, please visit [www.conservation2020.org](http://www.conservation2020.org).

## FWC CATCHES SLOUGH CRITTERS IN ACTION

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) placed cameras in various spots specifically to monitor the Florida panther first spotted in the slough on March 31, 2013. FWC checked the cameras at the end of May and there was no evidence of the panther at that time. However, when the camera was checked on June 24, 2013 there were pictures of the panther on May 31, 2013 and June 21, 2013. The cameras had snapped pictures of other animals including a bobcat, coyote, deer, raccoon, gray squirrel, opossum, armadillo and Janet Bunch with the summer campers. After a rain in June there were several pictures of egrets, herons and wood ducks. Thank you to Bob Repenning for sharing the pictures from the FWC camera.



Photos by FWC



# SLOUGH PROGRAMS



**Tracking Club** Sundays, July 14, September 8, and November 17, 2013, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

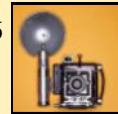
**Pond Explorations** Saturdays, August 3, September 7 and October 5, 2013, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm



**Puppet Show** Saturday, October 26, 2013, 10:00 am and 11:00 am



**Photography Exposed** Saturdays, October 12, 2013 through November 16 2013, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm



**Slough Fun Day** Thursday, September 5, Friday, October 11 and Wednesday, November 27, 2013, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm



**Reservations are required for most programs. Register for programs online at [leeparks.org](http://leeparks.org) or by calling Lee County Parks and Recreation at (239) 533-7440.**

## FRIENDS EXCURSIONS CONTINUE IN 2013-2014

By Mary Murray

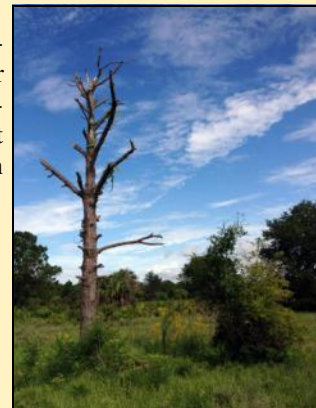
The Friends field trips are back by popular demand! Friends will continue to sponsor monthly excursions October 2013 thru May 2014. We will continue to explore new places with a nice mix of walks in nearby parks and preserves and one trip further afield.

Our first excursion will be to the Alva Scrub on Saturday, Oct. 26, 2013. This will be a morning trip that will not involve much walking, but will require the ability to get in and out of pretty big sport utility vehicles. The program will involve participants in the kinds of land management decisions that the stewardship coordinators of the Conservation 2020 program consider in their purchase decisions, exotics control, public use considerations and contiguity with other C2020 land holdings. This is a one of a kind trip, with stewardship coordinator Laura Greeno.

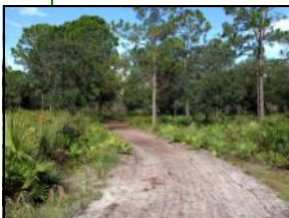
Other excursions in the works include: Bunche Beach with shore birds, another Wild Slough with Wild Bob, Sector 33 Flint Pen Strand, Estero Marsh, Little Pine Island, The Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Randall Research Center and Myakka State Park. Carolyn, Janet and I are finalizing plans for the excursions this summer. A complete list will be published in the Fall Connections.

We will give you information about the length, duration and difficulty of the excursion to help you decide which ones are for you. We will continue to pre-register participants and maintain a standby list. Groups are limited to 12 persons and carpools will be available. You may sign up for a walk 30 days in advance. Janet Bunch maintains an email list for advisories about the walks. If you wish to be on this list please send her an email [janetbunch@yahoo.com](mailto:janetbunch@yahoo.com)

Hope to see you on the trail next year!



Alva Scrub Photos Erin White



# SUMMER CAMP AT THE SLOUGH JUNE 2013



A day of camping begins on the boardwalk



Volunteer counselor Rudy Lampron explains mistletoe to the campers.



A look through the scope at Otter Pond



Volunteer counselor Janet Bunch dipping for water critters in the ephemeral pond after the wet walk.



Silent time in the cathedral area of the slough during the wet walk



The slough puppets are put to use by the campers.

Summer camp has started with the first two week sessions of ten to twelve year olds at the Slough. The campers have experienced arts and crafts with a new volunteer Rebecca Mitchell including painting pots and making paper. They have seen a presentation by Ranger Mike Hammond that included several turtles and snakes. Our resident panther was even cooperative and walked by the Florida Wildlife Commission camera and left tracks as he did so the campers could make plaster casts of his tracks. The Slough puppets have been used (or is that abused) by the campers to present a play about the Slough and the information that they have learned through the week on the last day of camp. The campers were also treated to a wet walk to the interior of the Slough to see the wonders off of the boardwalk.

Wilderness Explorer camp session for the older campers up to sixteen years old starts in July for two week long sessions. The schedule includes learning to make a shelter in the Slough as well as making fire as taught by Ranger Mickey Miller.

Many thanks to Friends members Rudy Lampron, Mary Murray and Janet Bunch for their work with the campers. The new camp head counselor this year is Barbara Kerby. We thank her for all of her hard work and enthusiasm. Good job by all.



Happy Campers!





Photo by Heather Gienapp

## NEW FRIENDS PUPPETEERS MAKE APRIL DEBUT

The Friends new puppeteer group entertained the crowds of visitors at the Interpretive Center five year anniversary celebration in April. The inaugural play was based on the book *The Six Mile Cypress Slough and You* authored by Bill Sanders, charter member of the Friends and volunteer at the front desk and at Friends Corner. The puppeteers included Friends President



Photo by Heather Gienapp

Carolyn Babb, Secretary Theresa Roake, board member Donna Cressman and Friends members Brian Hogan, Rudy Lampron and Marie Shaffer. The beautiful and very large stage was built and donated by member Steve Roake. Theresa Roake made the curtains. The sounds of the critters and other sound effects were assembled by member Jeff Key.



Photo by Heather Gienapp

The next scheduled performances by the puppeteers are October 26th at 10 and 11 am at the Interpretive Center. Anyone interested in being one of the puppeteers or helping out in any way with the performances, please contact Carolyn Babb at [carolyn\\_babb08@comcast.net](mailto:carolyn_babb08@comcast.net).



Photo by Heather Gienapp



Photos by Bonnie Hogan

## Along the Boardwalk...Summer 2013...Subliminal Summer by Dotty Brown

The summer slough slips silently into wildlife maturity. The immature brown white ibis mottles into its pure white plumage. The young white feathered little blue heron with its blue tipped beak slowly changes into its azure blue feathers. The serenity of the boardwalk is shattered by an arc of lightning and its accompanying thunder clap. A lightning struck cypress tree explodes into toothpicks. Subliminally the lightning engages nitrogen fixing bacteria in the soil and water in producing ammonium compounds. These are absorbed by plants turning the slough into an emerald preserve. COME! Observe the wonders of this natural sanctuary.



## FRIENDS CORNER NEWS



Pictured are some of the new items that can be found in the store at the Interpretive Center. There is a foldable, refillable and transportable water bottle with the Friends logo. It is a perfect addition for use at the new water bottle filler attachment. Visitors will also find a new line of jewelry from Green Tree Jewelry in California. The earrings, bracelets and pendants are all made from recycled materials. Pictured are the alligators in fuchsia color. There are also have several new book titles along with all of the favorites.

And don't forget Friends members get a 10% discount. If you can't visit the store in the Interpretive Center Friends shirts and hats are also available on line at [www.friendscorner.qbstores.com](http://www.friendscorner.qbstores.com)



# MEMBERSHIP NEWS

## *Renewing Members: Thank you for your continued support!*

Marcie Barbaro  
Barb Beers  
Lyn Brown  
Jerry and Joni Curcuro  
Bill Dabroski  
Hugh and Mary Ross Denison  
Len Eishen  
Dale and Lynn Garman  
Krekel Green  
Carol Hampton  
Evie and Neal Hartman C  
Patti Heath  
Charles and Virginia Huether  
Lucy Jacoby  
Flo Kornman C  
Jasmine Garden Club  
Connie Langmann  
MJ Major C  
Matt McNeil  
Gretchen McCaw  
William McCaw  
Charles O'Connor  
Alice Oldford  
Doris Orff  
Carla Palmer  
Clark Rhodes  
Sissel Robertson  
Arnie Rosen  
Sanibel-Captiva Audubon Society  
Stephen Tutko

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

## *Welcome New Members*

Annisa Karim  
Jim Rodwell  
Wally and Mary Van Dyke  
Phyllis Williams  
Rebecca Mitchell

## *Additional Donations Gratefully Received From:*

George and Irene Andreaco in memory of Walter Baker  
Hugh and Mary Ross Denison  
Rosie and Lloyd Hackman in memory of Randy Deming  
Carol Hampton  
Susan Handke from the Drawing Class  
Hailee Hengstler  
George and Edie Kohut in memory of Walter Baker  
Meta Little  
Arletta and Ronald Lutka in memory of Walter Baker  
Thaddeus Pruss II in memory of Carole Pruss  
Stephen and Theresa Roake  
Stephen and Susan Tutko



Photo by Dick Burwell

## **“ROCK ON” In the Slough Garden**



The Friends have launched 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.

The rocks are being placed along one of the pathways in the center garden of the parking lot area of the Slough.

Contact Terri Krass at Krass@maine.edu with any questions and for an order form.

## **BUYS BY THE BOARD**



The Board of Directors for Friends recently approved the purchase of several new items for the Slough. Included in the purchases are an addition to the water fountain in the Interpretive Center that fills water bottles. There is a counter on the device that tells how many bottles have been filled.

Also purchased was a “bear proof” garbage and recycle bin to place at the entrance to the Interpretive Center. There are some pesky raccoons that insist on sampling the garbage at that location and all attempts to discourage them have failed.

Both items are installed and being used by visitors with great reviews.

We thank all of the members and donors who make these much needed purchases possible.



## **Friends Member and Winning Photographer Dick Burwell Enjoys his Minute of Fame**

Dick Burwell, a daily slough visitor and multiple year slough photo contest winner had his minute of fame in the Friends Corner gift shop this spring. Like many of the regular visitors, Mr. Burwell comes into the Interpretive Center to report the daily happenings on the boardwalk. A visitor was purchasing postcards at the same time.

The volunteer at the desk pointed out to the visitor that the photos on the postcards belonged to Mr. Burwell. The visitor not only purchased additional postcards but also asked that he autograph them.

What a fun example of the influence of the photo contest on our visitors and photographers. The volunteer, visitor and Dick all enjoyed the experience.



Dick and his fans



**Advisory Board**

Jacquelin Cadkin  
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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Six Mile Cypress Slough  
Preserve

**Connections Staff**

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

**Friends Funds Help with  
Exotic Removal Grant**

**By Robert Repenning**

The State of Florida's Office of Invasive Plant Management is offering funds for melaleuca control this year for the first time in a number of years. These funds are competed for by various conservation agencies and the private sector. The money can be use only for the initial treatment of established stands of melaleuca on protected conservation lands. Part of the selection process is whether you can provide a match or not. The Friends of the Slough offered a 10% match up to \$10,000 for this project. The melaleuca to be removed is in the arm of the slough an eastern portion of the slough near I-75 north of Penzance Blvd. Hopefully, we will get this grant and tackle one of our last stands of mature melaleuca.

The grant request was for removal of melaleuca in 68 acres of the slough for \$55,400 the friends match was \$5,540. This should give us a competitive edge over other agencies. Thank you friends for all your help I'll keep you posted on the results.



Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve Management Unit 6  
Melaleuca Project Site



Another happy camper on a wet walk

Hi Friends Members—



We were so honored to be nominated for the Chrysalis Award by Kathy Cahill, volunteer coordinator for Lee County Parks and Recreation. It was so exciting to actually get the award! You can read about it on page one. It is a good time for the Lee County Commissioners to be reminded about the organization and all of the members, donors and supporters and the importance of the Slough.

It is budget time in Lee County and the commissioners are looking for ways to balance the county budget. Watching the proceedings it is obvious that most of the commissioners realize that there are some things that shouldn't be done, including closing parks and preserves. They talk and talk about tourism and visitors in one breath and closing parks in the other. Watch for information from the Friends on the budget talks. If you don't receive email notices from me please send me your email and I will add you to the email list for updates on that subject from the Friends.

I led wet walks for the younger kids in June. It was a fun time for everyone concerned, especially me. Most of them were a bit hesitant but once we made it to the cathedral area they were hooked. Their knowledge of the slough and the information they had learned from the week of camp is very impressive. They are understanding the importance of the slough and why it should be preserved. I love going out into the slough and it is especially rewarding to help the youngsters grow more comfortable with the slough and all of the wonders that she holds. Maybe the moms that were a bit hesitant will enjoy the report about the wet walk and come for the walks next month.

Summer camp for the older kids is getting ready to start in July. Do you think that they will be as excited as the young ones were for the camp experience. Good luck to the volunteers and counselor.

Join us for the wet walks in August or September

Can't wait for season to start for the field trips. We have a great schedule planned. Watch for the fall newsletter announcement.

See you in the slough. CB

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

**Contact: [thehoules75@yahoo.com](mailto:thehoules75@yahoo.com)**

## 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](http://www.sloughpreserve.org) Phone 239-533-7557

Online store: [friendscorner.qbstores.com](http://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.

**WET WALKS IN THE SLOUGH  
AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER**

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

