



Connections

Newsletter for Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

April 2014

ANNUAL MEETING

The Friends annual meeting was held March 26, 2014. Six board members were approved for reelection by the membership at the meeting. Frank Murray will remain as Treasurer for two additional years. Theresa Roake will stay as Secretary and Donna Cressman, Terri Krass, Jean Scholz and Steve Tutko will remain as Directors on the board.

The annual report for 2013 was presented by President Carolyn Babb. The entire report can be found on the Friends website at www.sloughpreserve.org

Former Lee County Commissioner Ray Judah was the guest speaker. See Page seven for more information.

MONDAY GROUP CELEBRATES THE PAST INSPIRES THE FUTURE APRIL 23

By Rick Tully

The Monday Group, High School Juniors and Seniors in Lee Schools' Environmental Education Program, will host a special Friends Gathering from 6-8 pm, Wednesday, April 23, 2014.

More formally known as the Environmental Education Research Seminar Class, the Monday Group and its students helped establish the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, initiated plans for Manatee Park, promoted the Bald Eagle Habitat Protection Ordinance, worked to support Conservation 2020 and Babcock Ranch, brought awareness to exotic species issues, and most recently has promoted school gardens and worked to celebrate and inspire others about Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.

This year's Monday Groupers are eager to reveal a commemorative plaque to be placed in the center garden at the Preserve. The plaque was designed by the students and seeks to engage the public in the slough's history and inspire environmental stewardship. The Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve has worked with the students to make the plaque a reality and all are invited to the celebration.

The program includes a slide show of the history of the Monday Group, comments from influential community leaders and cake and punch at the conclusion of the evening.

The celebration is free and open to the public.

INSIDE

- Photo Contest Winners 2
- Photo Contest Winners 3
- Rock and Stroll Garden 4
- Meander Musing 4
- Spring Slough Programs 5
- Volunteer of the Year 5
- Along the Boardwalk 5
- Membership News 6
- 2013 Accomplishments 6
- Ray Judah 7
- Conservation Amendment 7
- President's Notes 7
- Membership Brochure 8

CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR SLOUGH SUMMER CAMPERS

By Heather Gienapp

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve is again offering ten scholarships to interested campers, which will cover the fee of \$75 for a week of camp. Students from ages 10 -16 are asked to submit a one page essay explaining, "Why I want to go to the Six Mile Slough Summer Camp". Essays and the application should be submitted to Charles O'Connor at rcoc77@embarqmail.com or to 7791 Penzance Blvd. Fort Myers, FL 33966. (The application is located on the Slough's webpage at www.leeparks.org under facilities and parks.) Please specify which session you desire.

Summer Naturalists (10 to 12 year olds)

June 23 through 17

July 7 through 11

Wilderness Explorers (12 to 16 year olds)

July 21 through 25

July 28 through August 1



The same information is covered each week of camp. If you have any questions please call Heather at 239-533-7556. Entries must be received by Friday, May 15th, 2014. Winners will be notified by June 1st, 2014. If your camper is already enrolled in camp and wins a scholarship, the Friends will reimburse you directly.

JOIN US ON Facebook

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



First Place Animals
Jose Padilla-Lopez



Third Place Animals
Pamela Kopen



Honorable Mention Animals
Chuck Pavlik



Second Place Animals
Cayce Jehaini



Second Place Plants
Richard Burwell



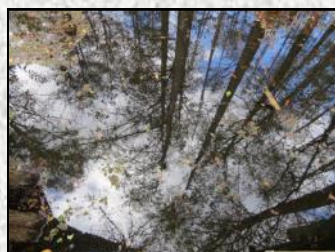
First Place Plants
Richard Kraus



First Place Open
Richard Burwell



Third Place Plants
Jason Boeckman



Third Place Open
John Swisher



Second Place Open
Joseph Loverde

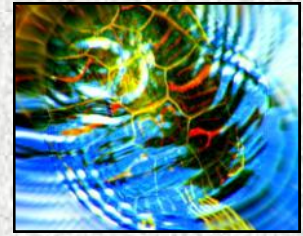
PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



First Place Altered
Krystle DiNicola



Second Place Altered
CC Mattingly



Third Place Altered
Sharon Hutchinson



Second Place Youth
Leah Rittenberg



Third Place Youth
Joseph Mathey



First Place Youth
Katy Matter



First Place Staff
Robert Repenning



Third Place Staff
Charles O'Connor



Second Place Staff
Carolyn Babb



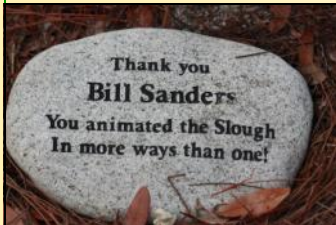
Honorable Mention Staff
Carolyn Babb

Rock and Stroll Garden Honors Joyce and Bill

by Terri Krass

To date we have fifteen engraved stones placed in the Rock and Stroll Garden located in the center of the main parking lot. Each week the flowers and plantings in the garden improve with butterflies frequently spotted. As we expand the garden there will be additional opportunities for volunteer gardeners to share their expertise.

Two prominent stones belong to Joyce and Bill Sanders who were both very active in the fundraising for our Interpretive Center building. With every stone there is a story and here is just a short summary; Joyce Sanders was driving by and first noticed the Six Mile Cypress Slough sign one morning in 1993 – so she decided to stop in and check it out. It was a little before 9 a.m. and the guided walk didn't begin until 9:30 but she just couldn't wait. As she proceeded down the board walk she fell in love with our Slough. When she looked at her watch it was almost 4 o'clock! As she stood at Ibis March observing several snakes and wondering what they were, along came John Kiseda, the manager at that time. By the time he finished explaining about the banded water snakes, Joyce was recruited as a volunteer! She has served in many capacities and after a brief (5 week) retirement looks forward to returning as a volunteer. The quote on her stone says "our rock in white tennis shoes" and she is still wearing those famous shoes.



Bill Sanders came to volunteer a few years after Joyce, when the movement to build the Interpretive Center gained momentum. He is responsible for building the scale model that was hauled all over Lee County to inform and convince investors of the vision for a new building. Bill worked on many of the temporary displays that were first used in the Center. The children's book "The Slough and You" is his creation – an Ibis walks the reader through the Slough. To celebrate the 5 year anniversary of the Interpretive Center, a puppet show was adapted from his wonderful book. The quote on his stone says "you animated the Slough in more ways than one".

Welcome back Bill and Joyce Sanders, we missed you! Order Forms are available at the front desk and we look forward to placing your stone in the Rock and Stroll Garden.



Meander Musings

by Jeff Montgomery

One of the frequent questions I get on Meanders is about the difference between water fern (Salvinia) and duckweed (Lemna). We currently have both plants in the Slough and I have attached a picture taken near the amphitheater. The large, round, darker green leaves are of the Salvinia and the smaller, oval, lighter green leaves are of the Lemna. When you see them together, the differences are quite striking. In case you didn't know, the Salvinia is an invasive species from Brazil and is largely replacing the native Florida water fern (Azolla). This genus of tropical water fern had a huge impact on our planet, known as the Azolla Event.

Roughly 50 million years ago, the Earth was a very different place. The planet was much warmer than today, largely because the carbon dioxide levels were nine times higher than they are today. There were no polar icecaps and the drifting continents and oceans would be unrecognizable to us. What is now the Arctic Ocean was a warm inland sea full of an ancient Azolla species. For over 800,000 years, the Azolla flourished, capturing the carbon dioxide out of the air and removing it by dying and sinking to the bottom, sealing the carbon dioxide in the marine mud, much the same way that pickerel weed removes phosphates. The net effect was to cut the CO₂ in the atmosphere, allowing the Earth to cool down and creating the climate we have today, complete with polar icecaps.

It is difficult to believe that such a tiny plant could have such an enormous impact on the planet, but the evidence is exhibited in the nearly 25-foot layer of carboniferous Azolla deposits under the Arctic. These deposits are associated with Arctic oil fields. Without the Azolla Event, the Earth might have been quite a different place and it is likely that some forms of life, us included, might never have evolved.

Have you thanked a water fern lately?

More info at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Azolla_event



SLOUGH SPRING PROGRAMS

All About Alligators Saturday, April 5, 2014, 11:00 am

Amazing Aningas Tuesdays, April 1-15, 2014, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm

Basket Making Saturday, April 5, 2014, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Drawing Inspiration Friday, April 4, 2014, 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm

Yoga Class Tuesdays, April 1-22, 2014, 9:00 am to 10:15 am

Friends Gathering Wednesday April 23 2014, 6:00 pm Celebrate the achievements of past Monday Groups presented by the current Lee County School District Monday Group

Tracking Club Saturdays, May 18, 2014 and July 20, 2014, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
Contact Mary Rude (239) 533-7555 for information about the Tracking Club.

The Slough by the Light of the Full Moon, Saturday, April 12, 2014, 7:45 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.

Wally Van Dyke, Slough Volunteer of the Year 2014

By Heather Gienapp

One of the many reasons Wally VanDyke is the slough volunteer of the year is his role as a mentor. This past October, Wally helped me interview 15 prospective new volunteers for both the Trail Guide and the new Trail Host Positions. Wally co-taught the Interpretive Naturalist training classes and provides positive feedback through the check-out process to those graduates. He leads guided walks for the public and for school groups, he takes out the spotting scope and is incredibly passionate about the Slough. Please tell him congratulations the next time you see him!

Mary Rude and Heather congratulate Wally with his certificate, book and a parking spot.



Along the Spring Boardwalk by Dotty Brown

“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing of birds is come; and the voice of the turtledove is heard in the land.” Song of Solomon 2:11-13 (RSV).

A slough dove has nested and successfully incubated two eggs that hatched on the first days of March at the edge of Ibis Marsh. The woodland is alive with blue-grey gnatcatchers, Yellow Rump and Palm Warblers singing their species songs. The Carolina Wren adds his descant to the cacophony with a joyous volume for all to hear. A Snapping Turtle laid her eggs at the sandy sloping foot of a hardwood tree just north of the northern viewing deck at Gator Lake. Will a Raccoon find them before they hatch?? The lake and ponds are sporting two tone green shawls along their edges. The welcome return of the Duck Weed with its tiny leaves is the lighter green living successfully with the darker Water Fern. Duck Weed is a nutritious delicacy for the aquatic population. Renew, restore your soul with a stroll along the boardwalk!!



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Renewing Members: Thank you for your continued support!

Carolyn and William Babb
Ronald Benz
Marlin Berklund
Kelly Bishop
Eleanor and Peter Blitzer
Jason Boeckman
Kathleen Cadle
Pete Cangialosi
Barbara and Bill Catineau
Ron Chappell
Frankie Crain C
Stuart and Susan Draper
Gail Evirs
Jamie Ferguson
Suzanne Frechette
Rosie Hackman
Bob Herbst
Jay and Mary Ham
Brian and Bonnie Hogan
Annisa Karim
Glen Kesler
Marty and Alice Krebs
Rudy and Irmgard Lampron C
Frank and Mary Murray
Corinne Murphy C
Kris Nelson
Mr. and Mrs. Jan Nyland
Mary R. Porter
Poinciana Garden Club
Bob Repenning
Mary and Bob Rude
Sanibel-Captiva Audubon Society
Judy and Dave Schele
Marie Shafer
Kate Streng
Jim Turner
Walt and Daphne Weber
Dana Wiest
Jeff Zasadny

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

Welcome New Members

Barry and Joan Benz
Joe and Valerie Emerson
Lee Hoffman
Jean Landon
Barb Lutarewych
Michael Moran
Christine Prestella
Don Stohler
David Zuhusky

FRIENDS ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2013

Direct Support to the Slough of \$22,526. for purchases including:

Magnet Spotting Board
New Signage
Protective Railings at viewing decks of all ponds
Garden Trellis
Water Faucet in Garden
Water Bottle Filler at Fountain
Bear Proof Garbage and Recycle Bin
Camp Scholarships and Supplies

Friends Field Trips including:

Bay Kayak Tour
Telegraph Creek Preserve
Archbold Biological Station
Bowditch Point Preserve

Chrysalis Award from Lee County Visitors and Tourism Bureau

Funding for Field Trip Buses and Teachers
Invasive Plant Control – Financial and Physical
Puppet Troup e
Rock and Stroll Garden
Photo Contest

Books, CDs, DVDs for Blake Cadkin Resource Library
Special Events Representation at
Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival

Burrowing Owl Festival
Gathering Speakers including:

Neil Wilkinson

Roger Clark

Robert Repenning

Rosie Emery

Volunteer of the Year

Binoculars, scopes and tripods

Friends Corner

New Benches

Butterfly Garden

University of Georgia Students Support

Five Year Anniversary of the Building Event

Complete 2013 Annual Report Available at www.sloughpreserve.org

Additional Donations Gratefully Received From:

Ann Bishop
Rachael Emerson
Ward and Norah Johnson
Alouise Skehan Pyle, in memory of Doris Giuseffi
James R. Scheler Sr. and Janice Scheler, in memory of Carole Pruss
Mary Lou Weddle

SHOP AT FRIENDS CORNER

Interpretive Center
or on line at

www.friendscorner.qbstores.com

Advisory Board

Jacquelin Cadkin
Cadkin Foundation

Dr. William Hammond
Florida Gulf Coast University

Carol Newcomb-Jones

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

Board of Directors

Carolyn Babb
President

Charles O'Connor
Vice President

Frank Murray
Treasurer

Theresa Roake
Secretary

Donna Cressman

Jeff Key

Terri Krass

Jean Labriola Scholz

Steve Tutko

Parks and Recreation Liaison

Mary Rude, Supervisor
Six Mile Cypress Slough
Preserve

Connections Staff

Carolyn Babb, Editor

Bruce Bunch, Copy Editor

Ray Judah Speaks at Friends Annual Meeting

By Theresa Roake

Former Lee County Commissioner Ray Judah and current Coordinator of the Florida Coastal & Ocean Coalition was the speaker at the Friends Gathering on March 26th. Mr. Judah served on the Lee County Board of Commissioners for 24 years. He co-founded the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Land Trust (CREW) and was instrumental in the effort to establish the Conservation 20/20 program to protect our critical water resources, open space and wild-life habitat. After leaving the Board of Commissioners, Mr. Judah is now able to devote his time to environmental issues.



Mr. Judah's presentation illustrated the need to protect the Caloosahatchee and coastal estuaries by advocating for restoration of the historic southern flow to the Everglades and responsible management of Lake Okeechobee. He compared the historic and current water flow in Southern Florida and the environmental and economic impact of these changes. In addition, he advocated for restoring the flow from Lake Okeechobee south to the Everglades. This would be accomplished by purchasing lands (or trading currently owned public lands) in the Everglades Agriculture Area to create a spillway for the reservoir we call Lake Okeechobee. Water filtration would be an element of this plan so as to ensure the health of the Everglades. If you would like more information about this plan or find out how you can help make it happen, please visit Florida Coastal & Ocean Coalition's website at www.flcoastalandocean.org.

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Happy Spring to all of the Friends— We had another great photo contest this year. The winning efforts are on pages two and three. These images really don't do them justice. Try to check them out online at our website www.sloughpreserve.org.



The Monday Group has big plans for our April gathering. Please try to join us at the end of the month if you can. It will be a great tribute to the Monday Groups of the past and time for us to thank them for all that they have done.

The visitors at the slough this winter were numerous and generous. We had record donations for the Friends and sales at the store are also up from last year. Many thanks to all of the visitors and donors for their generosity. Our membership also remains constant so an extra thank you to all of the members for their continued support as well.

It's almost camp time again. Can you believe it? The Friends will pay for the fees. And then wet walks. I love summer at the slough. Can't wait.

See you in the Slough. CB

Conservation Amendment Qualifies for November 2014 Ballot

By Bruce Bunch

An environmental coalition has collected more than 680,000 signatures to place a constitutional amendment on the November 2014 Florida ballot. The amendment would require Florida to use \$10 billion in state funds over the next 20 years for land and water conservation.

The Trust for Public Land, Audubon Florida, The Florida Wildlife Federation, The Sierra Club and many other organizations began the amendment campaign after the state cut spending on land preservation from approximately \$300 million per year to \$8.5 million in 2012, diverting funds to the general budget. This 97.5 percent reduction means that far less than one cent of every tax dollar collected is spent for land and water conservation.

The state reduction was not offset by local spending. In Lee County, no conservation lands were acquired by the 20/20 program in 2013, and commissioners diverted \$26 million in taxes collected for this purpose to balance the budget.

The state constitutional amendment would not raise taxes. It would direct the state to use a portion of the funds collected on real estate document stamps for conservation. The document stamps were the source of funding for the Florida Forever land conservation program before the legislature began diverting funds from this purpose.

The amendment requires a yes vote by 60 percent of voters to pass.

For additional information and text of the amendment check: www.floridawaterlandlegacy.org

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 table 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

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 23, 2014 Gathering
Monday Group Celebration
and Memorial Dedication
6:00 pm

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

