



# Connections

Newsletter for Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

Summer, 2007

## Ground Breaking for the Interpretive Center- March 20, 2007



Board of County Commissioner, Bob Janes, accepts \$50,000 from Friends



Using gold plated shovels and wearing hard construction hats the ground was "turned-over" by County Commissioners, Water Management Dignitaries, Parks and Recreation Staff and Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough

### President's Message

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, in its role as a non-profit support organization and partnering with Lee County Parks and Recreation, proudly presents a **\$50,000 check for the Green Building Certification** to Lee County Board of Commissioner Bob Janes!

March 20, 2007 was the long-anticipated day for breaking ground to begin construction on the Interpretive Center!

Pictured directly behind Commissioner Janes is Steve Tutko, Advisory Board member. Partially hidden is Wendy Rex, followed by other board members, Clyde Dabbs, Sissel Robertson, Carol Newcomb-Jones, Nancy Johnson, Deanna Pipher, John Gnagey and Advisory Board members Bill Hammond and Wiley Parker. Directly to my left, Mary Rude, Slough Supervisor, Alice Carlson, Governing Board Member, and Director, Carla Palmer, South Florida Water Management District. Present, but not in the picture were board members, Scott Trebatoski and Alouise Skehan.

The mood for the groundbreaking ceremony was set with the invocation by Pastor George Jones, Jr., pastor of the Apostolic Revival Center. Mary Rude and I had the pleasure of taking Pastor Jones on a walk around the boardwalk a few days prior to the ceremony. His brief experience that

morning on the boardwalk was reflected in his words of praise and thanks for the slough and for all who wish to protect and preserve it. The assembled crowd heard similar words of appreciation spoken by County Commissioners, Bob Janes, Ray Judah, Brian Bigelow and Frank Mann. Alice Carlson and Carla Palmer also joined in by thanking Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough for bringing together the public and private sector in this fundraising venture.

Many thanks to "Booch" DeMarchi, Lee County Public Information Specialist, for making the Ground Breaking Ceremony the special day it was! It seems very fitting to close with his words about **Teamwork...work done by a number of parties each doing a part but all subordinating personal prominence to the efficiency of the whole...** this textbook definition perfectly describes this project. Specifically, the Lee County Board of County Commissioners, the South Florida Water Management District and the Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve pooled their resources to ensure that this dream became a reality.

**Thank you, all our supporting partners, for making this day possible.**

Stay with us as we enter stage-two in funding for exhibits and displays to make this building a real "Interpretive Center."

- Joyce Sanders



### Along the Boardwalk ... Trails and Thrills...by Dotty Brown

Springing into summer brings the thrill of following the trails of the young that renew the species that inhabit the slough. Guides and frequent visitors gawk at the Red Shouldered Hawk's nest near Otter Pond and watch the fluffy hatchling as it becomes independent over a few weeks time. A young Barred Owl thrills visitors at the "Grandmother" tree near Wood Duck Pond. Playful pups of the otter entertain our younger guests in particular. The immature brown White Ibis transition to their white feathers as they dabble in the shallow ponds. The flora bloom, are fertilized and will spend the summer months maturing their fruits and seed for their own propagation and to feed the new generations. Come, come and be thrilled!

Dotty Brown "birding" along the boardwalk



## Update on Building Process

by Mary Rude

We had a slight hold up in getting our final building permit, but that has since been resolved. We have finally really begun! The construction company, **Gates Butz Institutional Construction**, has installed an office trailer on-site so they have "moved in" for the duration of the construction.

The footprint of the building area has been cleared of some vegetation and the fill has been graded. Pipes and other lines are being installed. Currently, the crew is preparing the foundations to be filled with concrete.

So, the excitement is building! (no pun intended) We also have quite a few dumpsters on site which is a requirement of the green building standards. The dumpsters separate concrete from wood from steel and other materials. It reminds me of when we first started recycling...separating the green glass the brown and clear glass. Now that process has all been greatly improved. Hopefully the construction industry and all of us will benefit from this new direction. It is certainly better to reuse than add more materials to the landfill.



## Slough Wet Walks!



Rudy Lampron, Friends member, leads slough volunteers on a summer wet walk!

Photo: Heather Benson

Charles O'Connor of the Lee County Schools Environmental Education Department and a Friends Board member will be leading three wet field trips through the slough. This environmental education "wet walk" will highlight flora/fauna identification, natural history, and the importance of the slough and its life within. You will have an opportunity for a silent "solo" reflection time while deep in the watery cypress forest.

Rainy season is often unpredictable, your elbows might get wet in spots, and you may encounter a sudden rain shower, a most memorable experience!

June 30th (Saturday) 10:00 AM

August 11th (Saturday) 10:00 AM

September 9th (Sunday) 12:00noon

**Sign up now for one of Charles O'Connor's wet walks! Groups limited**  
**RSVP to [rcoc@comcast.net](mailto:rcoc@comcast.net)**

239-246-5526

2007 Interpretive Center Building Fund Contributors:

Walter & Nancy Baker  
 Gretchen R. Barsness  
 Beverly Brazill  
 Anita Buff  
 Joanne Buffington  
 Bruce & Janet Bunch  
 Barbara Catineau  
 Clyde Dabbs  
 Eileen Downing  
 Charles & Gail Dye  
 Robin Gardner  
 Doris Giuseffi  
 Dr. Lynn Hartman  
 Nancy Johnson  
 Marty & Alice Krebs

Gretchen Monti  
 Kris Nelson  
 Mr. & Mrs. Reinhard Otten  
 Wiley Parker  
 Poinciana Garden Club  
 Dr. & Mrs. Thaddeus Pruss  
 Sissel Robertson  
 Joe and Mary Romano  
 Judy & Dave Schele  
 Jim and Shirley Talmadge

## Advisory Board

Jacquelin Cadkin  
*Cadkin Foundation*

Carolyn Delizia Swift  
*Henderson, Franklin, Starnes  
& Holt, P.A.*

Dr. William Hammond  
*Florida Gulf Coast  
University*

Wiley M. Parker, A.I.A.  
*Parker/Mudgett/Smith  
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Stephen D. Tutko  
*Babcock Ranch*

*Sharon Kuchinskas  
Citizens Advocate*

## Board of Directors

Joyce Sanders, President

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Nancy Johnson, Secretary

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Clyde Dabbs

John Gnagey

Carol Newcomb-Jones

Jeff Key

Dr. Charles O'Connor

Deanna Pipher

Wendy Rex

## Parks and Recreation Liaison

Mary Rude, Supervisor

## Welcome To the Board: Jeff Key



Jeff Key who was featured as a special member of Friends in *Connections Fall 2006* is a welcome addition to the Board of Directors. Jeff is a recent graduate from FGCU with a degree in Environmental Studies and plans to pursue a masters in the same field. Jeff is a man of many talents. He and his wife, Wendy, are professional musicians, raising two sons, ages 6 and 3. He has his own environmental consultant business as well as working as a wetlands researcher through FGCU at the slough. If that isn't enough he is involved with native planting and land and pond management solutions for adjacent neighborhoods to the slough.

Jeff is assuming the role of advocacy "watchdog" as well as continuing as webmaster to Friends website: [sloughpreserve.org](http://sloughpreserve.org)

## Welcome to Advisory Board: Sharon Kuchinskas



After four years as Advocacy Chairperson on Friends Board of Directors, Sharon Kuchinskas has agreed to serve as *Citizen's Advocate* on Friends Advisory Board. Sharon will continue to lend her expertise and experience to ward off any threat coming to the preserve. Her advocacy committee reports in this newsletter have demonstrated the influence and the power to protect and preserve the slough. Thank you, Sharon Kuchinskas, for your dedicated service on the Board of Directors! Friends look forward to your new role on the Advisory Board.

## New Members:

Jens Beth  
Edison Garden Club  
Joanne & Jack Gifford  
Billie & Charlotte Key  
Don Parsons

## Renewing Members:

Carolyn Babb  
Walter & Nancy Baker  
Ellie Boyd – c  
Joanne Buffington  
Frank & Dee Burns – c  
Elizabeth Carter  
Jenny Chay  
George & Jackie Cooper  
Patricia & William Coppins – c  
Dave & Jan Cornell  
Jerry & Joni Curcuru  
Mary Ross Denison  
Eileen Downing  
Joan W. Dougherty  
Charles & Gail Dye  
Samantha Eagan  
Daniel Eagan  
Barbara & Calvin Eels  
Richard & Lois Fein  
Florida Native Plant Society  
Eileen Fonferko  
Harriet Gallagher  
Marsha Golod  
Rosalene Hackman  
Bill & Rosemarie Hammond-c  
Neal & Evelyn Hartman – c  
Ray & Kay Hoffman  
Lucy Jacoby  
Jasmine Garden Club  
Nancy Johnson  
Bark & Betty Kmetzko  
Sharon & Chris Kuchinskas  
Lester & Joan Lincke  
Alan J. McTeague  
Garn Mennell-c  
Nancy Osborne  
Mr. & Mrs. Reinhard Otten  
Wiley Parker – c  
Macy Rainer  
Clark & Fran Rhodes  
Sissel Robertson  
Kenneth & Karin Rogers  
Sue & Jack Rogers  
Sabal Palm Garden Club  
Judy & Dave Schele  
Nora Schor-c  
Harriet Warner  
Stephen Webb  
Ginny Widrick  
Betty Willis  
**Thank you new and renewing  
members for your support**  
c charter

# Swing For the Slough

Another Day, Another Dollar...W



It was another beautiful day on a perennially beautiful course at *The Club at Renaissance* when 63 golfers on 16 teams teed up their golf balls to kick off our fourth annual Swing for the Slough.



This fundraiser is co-sponsored by Lee County Parks and Recreation and Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, so it seemed fitting to pair John Yarbrough, Director of Parks and Recreation and Barbara Manzo, Deputy Director with Friends President, Joyce Sanders and husband, Bill Sanders, (Bill is a retired cartoonist who draws our golf swinging Ibis)



We had some fabulous tournament and raffle prizes this year. Our tournament committee, especially Rosie Hackman and Neal Hartman worked very hard to come up with some great prizes including golf at some of the area's top courses, dinner at some of our best restaurants and a personal favorite, a gift basket from **Norman Love Chocolates**. We almost needed an armed guard to protect it. (You can trust me with the money, but not with Love's chocolates.)

If those prizes weren't enough, there was a new girl on our team. Tracey Arkin, a Programmer with Lee County Parks and Recreation joined our efforts. She brought in round trips on the Key West Express, a three day/two night stay at diamond Head Resort on Ft. Myers Beach, and show tickets at Barbara B. Mann and Broadway Palm Dinner Theater to name just a few prizes.

Don't these prizes sound wonderful? Wish you could win some? Well, we're looking to change a few things for next year, and we need your help and your participation!

First, we need golfers to participate. I know, duh, it's a golf tournament, but in the past, we have had a great deal of support from local developers and construction-related companies. It hasn't been the best year for the housing market so many of our past participants couldn't support our fundraiser this year.

If you are a golfer or know someone who is, why not put a team together? Even if you can't make a foursome, we'll set up singles or doubles with others. It's \$150 per player to play on a gorgeous course that would not normally be accessible and if it was, would cost almost that to play. In addition, we offer breakfast, lunch, and a chance to enter a raffle with fabulous prizes, and you never know, win some great prizes due to your amazing ability or luck in any number of award categories.

We also need sponsors. We need hole-in-one sponsors @ \$500 and hole sponsors @ \$150 which are great ways to advertise your business or use as a memorial or to show your support for our efforts.

We can always use tournament and raffle prizes. Going out for dinner tonight? Why not see if the restaurant host will support the Slough? Do you have a time share you don't use own a vacation home you'd be willing to donate a week in? Do you own a business or have a skill or service we might offer. Even if it seems like a small item, we can put packages together that make that small item make a big difference. (Continued on the next page)

# Posts Another Success

Well, Actually Ten Thousand!

By Wendy Rex



It was close, but the third try was a charm for the players from **Passarella and Associates** who took home the honors for 1<sup>st</sup> place win! The team of Matt Brosious, Will Cronin, Paul Flood, and Chris Emblidge received a back bay fishing trip for four from Friends member, Jeff Zasadny. Way to go "Bench Warmers" and thank you for your loyalty and perseverance. And thank you, Jeff, for your generous prize contribution for a second year

## AND YOU CAN WIN!

Next year, we will offer two sets of raffle prizes: golf-oriented prizes for tournament participants and a prize raffle for the general public. We need YOU to sell (and buy) tickets. If we can gather enough big prizes, we may even try a silent auction the night before the tournament. In any event, we will offer a few big prizes (get-aways, dinner and show packages, who knows packages?) as well as some other fun items – whatever you can bring in we can offer and **ALL PROCEEDS WILL HELP FURNISH THE DISPLAYS, EXHIBITS, AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS OFFERED IN THE SIX MILE CYPRESS SLOUGH PRESERVE INTERPRETIVE CENTER.**

Pinch yourselves. YOUR HELP MADE IT A REALITY!

### Special thanks to:

The Club at Renaissance and our Fundraising Chair, John Gnagey who makes this wonderful venue available to us and so much more.

Gulf Coast Printing who printed our Tournament Entry Brochures Val Ward Cadillac who provided the car for one of our hole-in-one prizes

Henderson/Franklin Attorneys at Law who provided the \$500 hole-in-one prize and to County Commissioner Ray Judah once again took time out from his busy schedule to come speak to our participants.



Commissioner Ray Judah thanking sponsors and golfers

### Our Tournament Committee:

Joyce Sanders John Gnagey  
Rosie Hackman Neal Hartman  
Mary Rude Wendy Rex

### Our Tournament Day Volunteers:

Joyce Sanders Rosie Hackman  
Neal Hartman Evie Hartman  
Mary Rude Heather Benson  
Bob Repenning Laura Estabrook  
Deanna Pipher Nancy Johnson  
Doris Giuseffi Lee Marks  
Robin Gardner Carolyn Babb  
Carol Newcomb-Jones Wendy Rex  
Charles O'Connor

### To Our volunteers



Charles O'Connor and Heather Benson keep all the golfers happy with their cart full of cold drinks!



Back row L-R Evie Hartman, Doris Giuseffi, Nancy Johnson  
Front Lee Marks and Carolyn Babb

### Hole Sponsors:

Marty and Alice Krebs  
S.A.M. Drywall  
Bob Rude Structures  
Johnson Engineering  
Community Engineering  
Colonial Construction  
Gates McVey Construction  
Hans Wilson & Associates  
Crowther Roofing  
Nancy C. Johnson PA, Realtor  
Carter-Pritchett Advertising  
Alouise Skehan  
Gora McGahey Architects

### Special Contributors:

JoAnn Berry  
Arlene Horowitz  
Gerry & Jacque Wolken  
Pete & Marjorie Brown  
Doris Giuseffi

## Alouise Skehan: Lifetime Membership Award



Alouise Skehan, one of the founding members of Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, received a **Lifetime Membership Award**, from President Joyce Sanders at the Annual Meeting on March 26, 2007.

**Alouise Skehan** was present, when early in the year of 2001, a few slough volunteers met to discuss the possibility of forming a Friends organization to support the work of the staff of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve. Alouise has tirelessly worked in the following years to fulfill the mission to preserve, protect and promote the slough, serving on almost every committee, including assuming the role of vice-president when the need presented itself. When the boards were called on to lead the fundraising effort by 100% participation, Alouise Skehan reached deep to show her commitment.

As **Membership Chairperson, Alouise Skehan has excelled!** Under her leadership, this organization has grown from the original 7 to well over 300. Her dedication and hard work show by the increase in new memberships as well as in the renewal rate!

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve are strong and growing as a result of Alouise Skehan and her 6 years of dedicated service!

**Thank You  
FRIENDS GREETERS!**  
by  
Alouise Skehan

The Friends Greeters at the entrance kiosk at the slough have wrapped up this year's season having greeted and welcomed a total of 4,040 visitors. A special thank you goes to Dolores Burns who coordinated the Greeter Table and to Lee Marks, Alouise Skehan, MJ Major, Betty Willis, Doris Guiseffi and Frank Burns who staffed the welcome table.

## Limited Special !!



Friends logo slough shirt- Hurry, as sizes and quantity limited!

Donation of \$25.00

Proceeds benefit Interpretive Center Exhibits and Displays

E-Mail [sandersj01@comcast.net](mailto:sandersj01@comcast.net)



**Thank You, Sissel Robertson!**

Sissel Robertson is leaving her position as Connection Editor, but not before we can tell her how much we have appreciated her work on design and editing! She has set a high standard for this publication.

## Connections Staff

Editors:	Joyce Sanders Wendy Rex
Lay-out & Design:	Bill Brown
Copy Editor:	Alouise Skehan
Mailing:	Wendy Rex Alouise Skehan Lee Marks
Printing:	John Derums Lee County Parks and Recreation

## Community Events with Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve



Deanna Pipher and Nancy Johnson at **Earthday Festival** Koreshan State Park- April 21, 2007  
Photo: Heather Benson

**The Special Events Committee** was initiated to represent and coordinate the Friends volunteer efforts to protect and preserve the eco-importance and natural beauty appreciation of the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve at various venues in Lee County. We participate with informational display tables and volunteers to meet and greet visitors, acquaint them with the Slough, answer questions and offer opportunities to join the Friends group. Nancy and Gary Johnson donated their time, resources and efforts to build an exceptional display board system for mounting the information pamphlets and photos; Carolyn Babb donated beautiful photos and stickers. Nancy also donated coloring pages for handouts. *Appreciation for assisting with these displays goes to Heather Benson and Bob Repenning for the materials and artifacts loans.*

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve have participated in:

**March 3** at BIRDFEST at Lakes Park with 4 volunteers and 100 visitors.

**March 31** at the Wildflower Celebration at C.R.E.W. with 2 volunteers greeting 125 visitors.

**April 21** at Sierra Club Earth Day Festival at Koreshan State Park with 3 volunteers and 200 visitors.

**We hope you can join us in promoting the Slough to our community**

[deannap@yahoo.com](mailto:deannap@yahoo.com)

## Are You a Neighbor of the Slough?



**Nature As Your Neighbor Program** was developed to include all the surrounding communities of the Slough Watershed area. With the assistance of Lee County Parks Dept Environment Education Supervisor, John Kiseda; Mary Rude; Heather Benson; and Bob Repenning, a presentation and resource materials were compiled to offer to our 22 neighboring communities to become acquainted with the Slough. This committee is comprised of Carolyn Babb, Nancy Johnson and Deanna Pipher. Letters of Introduction were mailed to the Association Directors and personal telephone contacts were made. We are in the process of further connecting with our neighbors with the offer of bumper stickers and a Resources File contribution to the Associations Libraries. We, also, hope to be contacting the businesses bordering on the Slough to acquaint them with the Slough.

**We look forward to your input and participation in the program.**

## Adopt-A-Road Program



Friends members, Deanna Pipher, Gary Johnson and Kathleen Cadle (the trash folks) begin "pick-up" of litter on Six Mile Cypress Parkway

In October in affiliation with the Lee County DOT, we began a litter control committee. The trash pick-ups occur monthly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday at 9am along the Six Mile Cypress Pkwy that borders the Slough 1 mile south of the entrance. Please join us in our efforts to protect and preserve the Slough. To date, there have been 21 volunteers for a total of 61 hours collecting 58 bags of trash and recyclables.

**Join us on June 16th, July 21st, August 18th and Sept. 15 and "trash with Friends!"**

## Sign Up Today!

Check Area of Interest

- Education  Preserve Advocacy  
 Projects  Publicity  
 Fund Raising  Special Events

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, 7330 Gladiolus Drive, Fort Myers, FL 33908

Friends web site: [sloughpreserve.org](http://sloughpreserve.org) Phone 239-275-7790

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 Rutenberg Center



**Mark your calendar!**

**Adopt a Road Pick-Ups –3rd Sat. 9:00 AM**

**Wet Walks—June 30th (Saturday) 10:00 AM, August 11th (Saturday) 10:00 AM, September 9th (Sunday) 12:00noon**