



# Friends of St. Sebastian River

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P.O. Box 284 ❖ Roseland, Florida 32957-0284

July 2014

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**website: [www.fssr.org](http://www.fssr.org) email: [info@fssr.org](mailto:info@fssr.org) ph: 772-202-0501**

The mission of the Friends of St. Sebastian River is to maintain and improve the health and beauty of the St. Sebastian River and its watershed.

## **SUMMER VACATION**

Hello everyone and thanks for reading our July newsletter. As is usual time of year, we are on vacation and will not have a public meeting this month. And often we do not get around to producing a summer/July newsletter. There is always something going on though and there are several items that we wanted to bring you up to date on, so keep reading.

If you feel like getting more involved, we can always use your help. As first mentioned in our newsletter last November, we have undertaken a research project to seek out any information we can find having to do the St. Sebastian River and watershed. We have posted some initial resources and information in the “Library” section of our website. But as we’ve mentioned, this is a large and mushrooming long-term project, akin to genealogy research. If anyone would like to help with the research, please let us know! One of the latest installments is some information pulled together by FSSR Board member Jane Schnee, of which she offers a few tidbits in the “Did You Know?” article in this issue.

## **FSSR FALL FUNDRAISER**

Members and other friends, here’s a chance to get rid of those items that you once “loved” but found you no longer do. Donate them to the Friends for our fall yard sale – a fundraiser for our George Schum Award, which includes a \$500 scholarship for a Sebastian River High School senior each year.

To stimulate your thinking, how about: yard décor, plants or tools; boating, camping or sports stuff; excess furniture; glassware; pictures; an old collection of whatever; those gifts that you never found a place for in your home. Or perhaps those unique “treasurers” that just don’t fit your style of living or taste?

If you have something that you would like to donate, we will have more information on the designated drop-off location, as we get closer to the event in the fall. If you have something that can’t wait and would like to get rid of now, or for more information, please contact us at 772-202-0501 or email at [info@fssr.org](mailto:info@fssr.org).

## **FLORIDA WATER AND LAND LEGACY**

We have reported on this issue before and are a supporting organization of the Florida Water and Land Legacy constitutional amendment that will be on the Florida ballot in November. The amendment will dedicate a portion of Florida’s documentary stamp tax specifically for water conservation, protection and restoration in the state.

On August 28 former Florida governor Bob Graham, former Florida Audubon Society president Clay Henderson and others, will give a presentation at FIT in Melbourne on the amendment. The event is free but space is limited and reservations are required. For more information and a link to the reservations website, visit <http://goo.gl/DZ9Z2D>.

For more information about the Florida Water and Land Legacy amendment, visit [www.voteyeson1fl.org](http://www.voteyeson1fl.org).

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

Over 100 species of fish live in the St. Sebastian River. Four species are rare and considered "threatened." They are: River Goby (*Awaous tajasica*), up to 11 inches; Slashcheek Goby (*Gobionellus pseudofasciatus*), a tiny Goby no bigger than 1.7 inches; Bigmouth Sleeper (*Gobiomorus dormitor*), up to 12.5 inches; Opossum Pipefish (*Micropphis brachyurus lineatus*), up to 7.6 inches. This combination of fish occur in only 3 rivers in all of North America: the St. Sebastian, the St. Lucie, and the Loxahatchee.

Critical to the survival of these rare fish is to maintain and preserve "natural" vegetation along the rivers such as mangroves, other natural shoreline plants, seagrasses, etc. Pollutants such as fertilizers and herbicides need to be kept out of rivers in order to save these and other fish, animals, and birds that depend on the St. Sebastian River for survival.

Source: St. Sebastian River Greenway Plan, Feb. 2006

## **NORTH SEBASTIAN/ROSELAND SEWER PROJECT**

At our May 2014 meeting, Vincent Burke and Arjuna Weragoda of the Indian River County Utilities Dept. gave a presentation about a survey that was conducted for the feasibility and options of installing a sanitary sewer system in the northern part of Sebastian and parts of Roseland. Doing so would help alleviate nutrients from septic systems, leaching into the Indian River Lagoon and the St. Sebastian River. Preliminary research by Dr. Brian LaPointe of Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute in Ft. Pierce, has found that nutrients from septic systems, even when they are working properly, appear to be significantly impacting the water quality of the lagoon and river.

The costs of installing a sewer system are substantial and would be the largest impediment to such a project. The survey conducted for the county helped determine the options to minimize those costs, and outlined areas of highest priority that would provide the most benefits to water quality in the local area. Grant funding may be a possibility, especially from the federal government for such projects, and public support could help the county qualify. If you would like to contact the county regarding this project, you may write to Vincent Burke, Director, IRC Utilities Dept., Building A, 1801 27<sup>th</sup> St., Vero Beach, FL 32960-3388 or email Mr. Burke at [vburke@ircgov.com](mailto:vburke@ircgov.com).

Possible additional benefits could include installation of potable water lines and hydrants at the same time at a reduced cost.

## **NEW SUMMER FERTILIZER ORDINANCE TAKES EFFECT**

As of June 1, the new fertilizer ordinances passed in Brevard and Indian River Counties, as well as other local municipalities, has taken effect. As a result of the ordinance implementation in Indian River, the county has hired Alexis Thomas to help educate and enforce the fertilizer restrictions. The following information is from Ms. Thomas:

As you may have heard, Indian River County has adopted a new ordinance restricting fertilizer application. The function of this ordinance is to protect the Indian River Lagoon from excess nutrients that are washing from local yards into the ailing estuary. The rules are as follows:

No fertilizing between June 1<sup>st</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup>; this is the rainy season here, and therefore more nutrients are likely to be washed away. No fertilizer containing Phosphorous is to be used anytime. All fertilizers must contain at least 50% slow release nitrogen. And no fertilizer is to be within 10 feet of any water body.

Please see [www.ircgov.com](http://www.ircgov.com) for more information regarding the ordinance and fertilizer tips or email Alexis Thomas, the County's Stormwater educator and fertilizer enforcement officer, at [athomas@ircgov.com](mailto:athomas@ircgov.com) or 772-226-1565.

Thank you for your cooperation in protecting the Indian River Lagoon

Alexis is a graduate of Sebastian River High School and was the recipient of our 2008 George Schum Award! Nice work Alexis and congratulations on your new job as the “enforcer!”

For more information about the fertilizer issue and pollution of the Indian River Lagoon and more resources, visit our website at <http://goo.gl/Xx3Qgk>. This web page is also available as a brochure from the Indian River Lagoon Coalition, and printable format in the “Library” section of our website.

Additional resources and information about use of fertilizers and Florida-friendly landscaping are available at these websites:

- Indian River Neighborhood Association fertilizer brochure – <http://goo.gl/IdJEK1>
- Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Program - <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>
- Be Floridian - [www.befloridian.org](http://www.befloridian.org)
- National Wildlife Federation “Garden for Wildlife” – [www.nwf.org/How-to-Help/Garden-for-Wildlife.aspx](http://www.nwf.org/How-to-Help/Garden-for-Wildlife.aspx)
- Florida Wildlife Federation Wildlife Habitat Program - [www.fwfonline.org/Habitat/Florida-Wildlife-Habitat-Center.aspx](http://www.fwfonline.org/Habitat/Florida-Wildlife-Habitat-Center.aspx)
- St. Johns River Water Management District Waterwise Landscaping - [www.sjrwmd.com/waterwiselandscapes](http://www.sjrwmd.com/waterwiselandscapes)
- FL DEP – Florida’s Water: Ours to Protect - [www.protectingourwater.org/watersheds/get\\_wet/protectwater/friendly](http://www.protectingourwater.org/watersheds/get_wet/protectwater/friendly)

For more information about local fertilizer ordinances, visit the Indian River County Extension Service website at <http://indian.ifas.ufl.edu> or Brevard County Extension Service at <http://brevard.ifas.ufl.edu>. Watering restrictions are also in place year round. With the summer season, residents are allowed to water twice a week. For more information on watering restrictions and days that watering is allowed, visit the St. Johns River Water Management District website at <http://floridaswater.com/wateringrestrictions>

### FINANCIAL UPDATE

May 1, 2014 – June 30, 2014

Balance 5/1/14 .....	\$3005.57
Receipts .....	180.00
Total .....	3185.57
Disbursements .....	231.85
Balance 6/30/14 .....	\$2953.72

George Schum Memorial Award Fund

Total to date .....	\$213.12
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### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wednesday, July 23, 9 AM – 12 PM

#### FL Specialty License Plate

#### Funding Projects

Harbor Branch

Oceanographic Institute

5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce

info: [www.fau.edu/hboi](http://www.fau.edu/hboi)



Wednesday, July 23, 12:45 PM

#### Turtle: The Incredible Journey

Harbor Branch

Oceanographic Institute

5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce

info: [www.fau.edu/hboi](http://www.fau.edu/hboi)



Friday, July 25, 1 PM

#### Indian River Lagoon Counties

#### Collaborative

IRC Commission Chambers

1801 27<sup>th</sup> St, Vero Beach

772-567-8000



Thursday, August 7, 10 AM

#### Spoil Island Preservation Program

Billy Gibson, Naturalist/River Guide

Ocean Discovery Center

Harbor Branch

Oceanographic Institute

5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce

info: [www.fau.edu/hboi](http://www.fau.edu/hboi)



Thursday, August 28, 6:30 PM

#### FL Water & Land Legacy

#### Amendment

Bob Graham, former FL Governor

Gleason Performing Arts Center, FIT

150 W. University, Melbourne

321-674-8006

Please visit the “Meeting Info/ Events” page of our website for more events!

# Friends of St. Sebastian River

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**NOTE:** The date on your mailing label is the month/year when your dues are next due. Thank you.

## APPLICATION FORM

The Friends of St. Sebastian River depends on member support for programs of conservation and education.

**Youth (under 18) free — Individual \$10/year**

**Family \$15/year — Corporate \$50/year**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Special interests, concerns or expertise: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your completed application and dues to:

**P.O. Box 284, Roseland, Florida 32957-0284**

This newsletter is available on our website and delivery by email for current members. We encourage email-only delivery to save funds and paper! Email us at the address on the front to request email delivery.

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## Officers for 2014

President . . . . . Tim Glover  
Vice President . . . . . Buzz Herrmann  
Secretary . . . . . Gayle Heath  
Treasurer . . . . . Bill Brennan

## Directors for 2014

Tom Bauer . . . . . Jane Schnee  
Lynn Stieglitz . . . . . Bruce Zingman

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

## CORPORATE SPONSORS

Roseland Community Association  
Tropical Kayak Tours