



Friends of St. Sebastian River

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

May 2013

website: www.fssr.org email: 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.

HYDROPONIC PRODUCE IN OUR BACKYARD

Hydroponic gardening has many benefits, including several for the environment; and did you know there is a large producer in our backyard? Alex Gomez of Pure Produce in Micco, will give a presentation on the what, why and how of hydroponic gardening at our meeting this month.

Among the numerous benefits of hydroponic gardening are environmental ones, such as efficient use of irrigation, where water is recycled and does not pollute the environment. Hydroponics facilitates the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs for pest, disease and weed control. There is also a significant reduction in the use of chemicals, with neither the produce nor the environment being contaminated by them.

Everyone is welcome to join us and learn more about the benefits of hydroponic gardening on **Tuesday, May 28, 7:30 PM** at the North Indian River County Library, 1001 Sebastian Blvd. in Sebastian. For more information, visit www.fssr.org. Our May General Meeting is our last of the season. Have a great summer and we look forward to seeing you in September when Sam McGee of the St. Sebastian River Preserve State Park will bring us up to date on changes at the Preserve, and the status of their red-cockaded woodpeckers.

INDIAN RIVER LAGOON UPDATE

The “brown tide”, the same microalgae species that had its first recorded Florida bloom in the Mosquito Lagoon last summer, has made an early return to the northern Indian River Lagoon this spring. The current bloom was first detected in early April and has resulted in Secchi depths (visibility) of 0.25 to 0.3 meters in some areas, extending to just south of Titusville.

The frequency of manatee, dolphin and pelican deaths in Brevard County has been declining, but there was a fish kill in early May, in the southern lagoon and St. Lucie River that is still under investigation.

The spring edition of the “IRL Update” will have more information about the condition of the lagoon. Updated information, as well as information on how individuals can help out, is regularly being posted on the St. Johns River Water Management District’s website at www.ItsYourLagoon.com. Also look for water conservation and landscaping resource information on their website at <http://floridawater.com/floridawaterstar/landscaping.html>.

You may also be interested in *100 Simple Ways to Save Water Outdoors* at <http://valleycresttakeson.com/watermanagement/?p=11983>.

Source: Troy Rice, Director, Indian River Lagoon Program

STATE'S LOWERED TOXIC CHEMICAL STANDARDS REJECTED

As we reported from the Clean Water Network of Florida in our last issue, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) had proposed weakening standards for several toxic chemicals that potentially may show up in the state's waters.

"The state has the audacity to propose changes that would weaken current protection of our water from toxic chemicals, including: benzene, chlordane, PCBs, chloroform, carbon-tetrachloride, bromoform, tetrachloroethene," stated Dick Batchelor, a former FL Environmental Regulation Commissioner, in an editorial.

"Many other toxins would be regulated in Florida for the first time, but at levels that are significantly less stringent than recommended by the federal..." EPA, he said.

The ERC rejected the DEP's proposal and requested the DEP to come back in the fall with a new proposal, that addressed theirs' and the public's concerns. Thank you if you took the time to respond to the Clean Water Network of Florida's petition to the governor and the ERC on this issue, that we wrote about in our March issue!

Source: Clean Water Network of Florida

ST. SEBASTIAN RIVER CLEANUP

Last month, we hosted our annual St. Sebastian River Cleanup, as part of the American River's National River Cleanup events, held throughout the year around the country. We thank those who participated and helped remove trash and debris along the shoreline around the mouth of the river – nice work! We would also like to thank our corporate sponsor Tropical Kayak Tours of Vero Beach, for offering to provide kayaks for attendees to cleanup from the waterside. Due to weather conditions though, everyone remained on shore.

130 pounds of debris was removed and we recycled what items we could. You can find out more about National River Cleanup events, read about 2012 statistics, and find more cleanup locations to come this year, on the American Rivers website at www.amrivers.org/cleanup.

American Rivers is a national organization advocating for the protection and restoration of rivers and streams, of which the FSSR is a member. If you are interested, you may sign up to receive their online newsletter and/or "action alerts" by email for free, at www.amrivers.org.

WE NEED YOUR IDEAS AND JUNQUE

The Friends of St. Sebastian River turns 25 next year and we are starting to think about how we should celebrate! We would love to hear from you, our members, and anyone else from the public who have any suggestions, or would even like to help organize something to help us celebrate. We held a barbecue and acknowledged our founding members, at our 20th anniversary celebration – any ideas on how to top that? See the contact information on the front page of this newsletter, and let us know.

We also need your junque – "seemingly useless or out-of-date items with a certain je ne sais quoi." We are planning on holding a yard sale as a fund-raiser, tentatively scheduled for October this coming fall. So we would like to ask that you save your junque and other treasures, that you would be interested in donating.

If you have items that you just can't wait to get rid of, please contact us and we will see if we can arrange to pick up and store them for now. Also let us know if you would like to help with the event – we could use help with pricing and sales the day of the event.

GEORGE SCHUM MEMORIAL AWARD

George Schum was a long-time member of our board of directors. He passed away in April 1997 and the award is given in memory of his spirit of volunteering and community service. The award is presented to a Sebastian River High School senior who has participated in similar activities and has shown an interest in environmental issues.

This year we were able to present two Schum awards, thanks to one of our previous recipients! Kimberley Maxwell was the winner of our 2004 Schum Award and has kept in touch, keeping us apprised of her career

progress. She attended West Point Military Academy and is now serving as a pediatric physician at Ft. Bragg.

Kimberley expressed her gratitude for the presentation of our Schum Award to her, and wanted to give back to the Friends. She provided the funding for a second award, and even participated on our Awards Committee, assisting in the selection of this year’s recipients.

With Dr. Maxwell’s assistance, we are pleased to announce that Casey Keeler and Kasey Lentini are the recipients of this year’s George Schum Award, which includes a \$500 scholarship for each recipient. Congratulations to Casey and Kasey, and best of luck with your future education and endeavors.

ORCAS CAMPAIGN FOR A CLEAN INDIAN RIVER LAGOON

“We have arrived at the tipping point for the Indian River Lagoon. Pushed any further and it will collapse into an algae-dominated, pollution-laden system that is unhealthy for fish, dolphins and humans alike.” – Dr. Edie Widder

With no significant industry to blame, the documented decline of the Indian River Lagoon can be traced primarily to non-point source pollution. Storm water runoff, sewage spills, leaky septic tanks, fertilizers and pesticides are just a few of the suspected sources of pollution. Present day efforts to identify sources of pollution rely predominately on hand sampling that only provides a snapshot of the area sampled. This information is then distributed to the public in formats that are often difficult for non-scientists to understand.

Team ORCA – the Ocean Research and Conservation Association of Ft. Pierce, founded by Dr. Widder, has launched a new campaign to raise funding to change the way information is obtained and presented. The goal is to revolutionize how scientists interact with communities and policy makers, by mapping pollution and its sources.

“We don’t intend to simply observe what’s happening. Our goal is to make pollution visible for all to see... and fix!” For more information about Team ORCA and their Campaign for a Clean Indian River Lagoon, visit their website at www.teamorca.org.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

March 1, 2013 – April 30, 2013

Balance 3/1/13	\$3625.47
Receipts	753.86
Total	4379.33
Disbursements	1379.05
Balance 4/30/13	\$3000.28

George Schum Memorial Award Fund

Total to date	\$0.00
---------------------	--------

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday, May 28, 7:30 PM

Hydroponic Gardening

Alex Gomez, Pure Produce
FSSR

North IR County Library
1001 Sebastian Blvd., Sebastian



Wednesday, June 5, 7 PM

Lionfish Are Invading the Indian River Lagoon

Jeff Beal, FWC &
Emily Dark, Antioch Univ.
Harbor Branch Ocean Graphic Inst.
5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce
info: www.fau.edu/hboi/Events.php



Saturday, June 8, 10 AM – 4 PM

FL Maritime Science Festival

Harbor Branch Ocean Graphic Inst.
5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce
info: www.fau.edu/hboi/Events.php



Saturday, June 8, 10 AM – 3 PM

World Ocean Day Celebration

Smithsonian Marine Station
420 Seaway Dr., Ft. Pierce
info: www.sms.si.edu



Thursday, June 20, 7 PM

Yard Visit – Tim Glover, Micco

FL Native Plant Society –
Eugenia Chapter
info: 772-567-1565 or <http://eugenia.fnpschapters.org>

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

Friends of St. Sebastian River

P.O. Box 284

Roseland, Florida 32957-0284



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.

Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper

Officers for 2013

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

Directors for 2013

Tom Bauer Jane Schnee
Lynn Stieglitz Bruce Zingman

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Jake Crowe

CORPORATE SPONSORS

Roseland Community Association
Tropical Kayak Tours