



Friends of St. Sebastian River

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

May 2014

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.

NORTH SEBASTIAN SANITARY SEWER STUDY

Late last summer, the Indian River County Board of Commissioners approved a study on the feasibility of installing centralized sewer services to parts of the Sebastian/Roseland area, bordering the Indian River Lagoon and the St. Sebastian River. Earl Masteller of Masteller & Moler (the engineering firm contracted to develop the study), along with Indian River County Utilities Director Vincent Burke and Capital Projects Manager Arjuna Weragoda will attend our meeting this month to give a presentation on the findings of the study.

The M & M study reports on the various alternatives to on-site disposal systems (OSDS) or septic systems, projected costs and funding. The full report may be downloaded at www.ircutilities.com/Sewer-Feasibility-Study.htm.

Dr. Brian LaPointe of Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute in Ft. Pierce, along with the assistance of graduate students and a few volunteers from the Friends, has been conducting tests in the Indian River Lagoon and the St. Sebastian River, to determine the source of nutrient pollution. These nutrients are likely contributing to the dramatic decline in the health of the lagoon the last few years, and the county is undertaking this effort to address some of these issues.

It was two years ago this month that Dr. LaPointe gave a presentation to our group, as his research project was getting underway. Since then, he has learned a significant amount about the source of nutrients in the lagoon and has given several presentations on their preliminary findings. It appears that septic systems are contributing significantly to the nutrient pollution of the lagoon and our river. We hope to have Dr. LaPointe and his research students give a future presentation to our group, once they have concluded their work. In the meantime, you may view water quality data being recorded by test equipment Harbor Branch has deployed at select locations in the lagoon, on the HBOI website at www.fau.edu/hboi.

In addition, the Ocean Research and Conservation Association, also of Ft. Pierce, is doing similar research in the Indian River Lagoon and has its own real-time water quality monitoring device. Their device is called "Kilroy" and its water quality data may be viewed online at www.treamorca.org.

ST. JOHNS EXPANDS WHEELER STORMWATER PARK

The St. Johns River Water Management District's Governing Board has approved expansion of the Wheeler Stormwater Park in southern Brevard County that will improve the quality of water flowing into the Indian River Lagoon.

The 300-acre park features a series of stormwater ponds and restored wetlands that will capture pollutants that have historically flowed directly into the lagoon. Additionally, a future recreational park is planned for the property that will include trails around the stormwater ponds and wetland areas. An emphasis has also

been placed on saving existing trees and creating a park environment.

The property is bisected by the Sottile Canal, which receives storm water from a 21,000-acre residential and farming area and discharges it into the north prong of the St. Sebastian River -- a tributary of the Indian River Lagoon.

Ralph Brown, SJRWMD Project Engineer for the Wheeler Stormwater Park gave a presentation to the Friends at our March 2013 meeting about this project. Once completed, we look forward to leading walks in this area.

For more information and the full news release, including a map of the park, visit SJRWMD at http://webapub.sjrwmd.com/agws10/news_release/ViewNews.aspx?nrd=nr14-029

Source: New Release, March 12, 2014, St. Johns River Water Management District

GEORGE SCHUM MEMORIAL AWARD

George Schum was a long-time member of our Board of Directors. He passed away in 1997 and this award was started to memorialize his spirit of community service and volunteering. The award is given to a Sebastian River High School senior who has been involved in similar community service, and shown an interest in environmental issues.

The award includes a \$500 scholarship and we were able to present two awards for the second year in a row, due to the generous donation of one of our previous recipients! Dr. Kimberley Maxwell received our award in 2004 and has kept in touch with us ever since. She attended the West Point Military Academy and now serves as a pediatrician at Ft. Bragg.

In addition to her \$500 donation for the second Schum award, Kimberley also served on our selection committee, and their choices this year are two very impressive young men – Thomas Hays and Chase Pavlock. Thomas plans to attend college to become a pharmacist or be involved in drug research. Chase is a math whiz and will be attending college to become a math teacher. Congratulations to both Thomas and Chase, and best wishes with your continuing education and future careers!

ST. SEBASTIAN RIVER CLEANUP

The Friends once again hosted a river cleanup earlier this month, as part of the American Rivers organization's "National River Cleanup" events throughout the country. The weather was a bit threatening which perhaps limited the amount of participation, but we collected a sizeable amount of trash, much of it recyclable, and it did get recycled!

We collected the usual sort of stuff – bottles, cans, trash, shoes, clothing, etc.; nothing too unusual this year, but it all added up to more than 300 pounds of trash! We thank the volunteers who helped with this year's cleanup – Bill Brennan, Joanne & Ed Burkhart, Tim Glover, Jeff Harrington, and Buzz Herrmann.

In addition, thanks to Bruce Zingman and the volunteers of the Sebastian Property Owners Association for a similar cleanup along Indian River Drive, and to the City of Sebastian's Natural Resources Board for their spoil island cleanup the same day.

For more information about the National River Cleanup program, and other cleanup events around the country, visit American Rivers at www.americanrivers.org/cleanup.

WATER CONSERVATION AND SUMMER WATERING RESTRICTIONS

With daylight saving time comes relaxed summer lawn watering restrictions. Water conservation though is still a very important practice most anywhere, and April was Water Conservation month in Florida.

During the months of daylight saving time, watering of lawns is allowed up to twice per week, and only between the hours of 4 PM and 10 AM. You can find specific watering restrictions for our area on the St. Johns River Water Management District's website at <http://floridaswater.com/wateringrestrictions/>, and more

information about protecting Florida's water at www.protectingourwater.org.

The SJRWMD website has information for designing a water-efficient landscape for your yard. Their "waterwise" landscaping page includes tips for designing a water-conserving landscape, and includes a searchable database of over 800 plants. For more information, visit <http://floridaswater.com/waterwiselandscapes/>.

GOPHER TORTOISE SMARTPHONE APP

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) needs your help documenting where gopher tortoises live. You can help by downloading and using the "Florida Gopher Tortoise" smartphone application. With this app, you can record the location of gopher tortoises you may see in your yard, neighborhood, or crossing the road. This information will help FWC biologists better understand where populations of gopher tortoises live. The app also contains gopher tortoise information and a fun quiz to test your knowledge, learn more about this protected native Florida species, and help protect and conserve gopher tortoises.

All photos submitted to FWC of gopher tortoises will be posted to an interactive map. The map allows web visitors to zoom in and see where gopher tortoises occur in your neighborhood or community.

With your help, FWC will be able to better document where gopher tortoises are living within our Florida communities, and how we can work together to protect them. For more information and to download the app, visit <http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/managed/gopher-tortoise/app/>.

This is just one of many "citizen scientist" projects that we have been reading about recently. Probably one of the best known such project is the annual Audubon Christmas bird count. But there are many more and we would like to feature a collection of these opportunities on our website, when time permits. If you know of any other citizen scientist projects that may be of interest to our members, please let us know!

FINANCIAL UPDATE

March 1, 2014 – April 30, 2014

Balance 3/1/14	\$2659.61
Receipts	906.00
Total	3565.61
Disbursements	560.04
Balance 4/30/14	\$3005.57

George Schum Memorial Award Fund

Total to date	\$213.12
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday, May 17, 7:30 PM

How to raise a seahorse

Nancy Pham, FIT Vero Beach
Marine Lab

Pelican Island Audubon
Vero Beach Comm. Center
2266 14th Ave., Vero Beach

info: www.pelicanislandaudubon.org



Tuesday, May 27, 7:30 PM

North Sebastian Sewer

Feasibility Study

Vince Burke, Utilities Director, IRC
Arjuna Weragoda, Projects Manager,
IRC

Earl Masteller, Masteller &
Moler, PE
FSSR

1001 Sebastian Blvd.

info: www.fssr.org



Wednesday, June 11, 7 PM

Lionfish in Florida: The New Normal? What We've Learned

Since Lionfish Arrived on Florida's Shores

Dr. Zack Jud, Florida Intl. Univ.
Harbor Branch Oceanographic
Institute

5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce

info: www.fau.edu/hboi



Wednesday, June 18, 7 PM

The Science of Tracking Little Loggerhead Turtles on

the High Seas

Dr. Jeanette Wyneken, Florida
Atlantic University
Harbor Branch Oceanographic
Institute

5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce

info: www.fau.edu/hboi

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

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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

Nichole LaCroix
Roger & Terri Lister

CORPORATE SPONSORS

Roseland Community Association
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