

# Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



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Newsletter

[www.calusalandtrust.org](http://www.calusalandtrust.org)

December 2004

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## President's Report

Jim "Alex" Alexander

2004 has been a rewarding, challenging, and most interesting year for the Calusa Land Trust. *Rewarding* because our fundraising campaigns, partnering efforts, and the leadership of our acquisition committee have led to the preservation of additional properties which further serve to protect the environmental integrity of our beautiful island. *Challenging* because Hurricane Charley caused significant damage to many of our preserves that will take time and substantial resources to heal. *Interesting* because land prices have continued to rise dramatically; our Calusa Land Trust "Wish List" of important properties coincides closely with the wish list of deep-pocketed developers — in other words, we must be both aggressive and innovative in our acquisition efforts if we are to expand our holdings.

I encourage all members to attend our upcoming annual meeting and bring a friend or two. At this session you'll learn the highlights of 2004, the hopes, challenges and opportunities of 2005, and our plan to make the Calusa Land Trust even more successful. I look forward to seeing you there!

## Notice of Annual Meeting

by Norm Gowan, Nominating Committee

Our annual meeting will be held on Sunday, January 30, 2005, at 1:00 P.M. at the Fishers of Men Lutheran Church located at 10360 Stringfellow Road, ¼ mile south of Pine Island Road. A separate notice will **not** be mailed, so please mark your calendars.

In addition to reports on our activities and plans for the future, we will be holding elections for the Board of Directors. Seven of our directors have already been elected for the year 2005 (the second half of their two-year terms). They are Alison Ackerman, Harold Bruner, Brian Cotterill, Bill Spikowski, Rubye Woodhead, Brenda Anderson, and Gene Tollman.

The terms of our eight other directors are expiring. Seven have agreed to serve for another term if re-elected. They are Jim “Alex” Alexander, Ed Chapin, Joan Culver, Norm Gowan, Bud House, Judy Ott, and Ron Wesorick. Jack Worthington is declining another term on the Board for personal reasons. Our thanks go out to Jack for many years of dedicated service to the Calusa Land Trust – we will miss his knowledge and insight on board matters, but he plans to remain involved with Calusa Land Trust in other capacities. Jack’s departure leaves one vacancy for the 2005/06 term. The Nominating Committee has selected an excellent candidate, Donna Venesky from Bokeelia. Donna has a strong background in environmental consulting and has been attending CLT Board meetings and also working on both land management and canoe outings. Additional nominations will be taken from the floor during the annual meeting.

### **PURPOSE OF THE CALUSA LAND TRUST:**

“... to acquire, hold, and manage environmentally sensitive lands, archaeological and historic sites, and other natural lands; to encourage education and research in the fields of conservation and preservation; to establish nature preserves or other protected areas to be used for scientific, educational, aesthetic, or passive recreational purposes; to cooperate with other entities having similar or related objectives; and to engage in any other activity relating to the furtherance of the foregoing objectives.”

— *From the articles of incorporation of the Calusa Land Trust (Article II)*

## **Land Acquisition Report**

by Harold Bruner (464-2436)

As real estate prices continue to escalate it becomes tougher for the Calusa Land Trust to afford new purchases of land. This is especially true for uplands with pine flatwoods. These properties are often suitable for residential construction or for agricultural uses such as palm farms. One-acre buildable homesites on Pine Island are rapidly approaching \$100,000. While the price per acre is often lower for larger tracts, the total cost of a larger parcels is quite significant.

In the past we have leveraged our funds by buying jointly with other conservation groups. York Island, for instance, was purchased jointly with the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation. More recently, we have located and steered some properties to Lee County’s “Conservation 20/20” program which has a much larger budget. We are able to strengthen a 20/20 nomination by contributing part of the purchase price and by offering continuing management help.

Occasionally we are fortunate enough to get an outright donation of a land parcel. We recently did a mailing to about a dozen property owners near a recent 20/20 purchase and asked if they would consider donating or selling their property to us. One generous owner responded with the offer to donate his land and we are now working on the many details.

Rest assured that the board attempts to be very careful in how we spend the funds we receive via memberships, donations, and fundraising efforts. Please keep us in mind if you or someone you know is willing to donate land to us, sell at a reduced price, or retain ownership but donate or sell the development rights via a conservation easement, do get in touch so we can discuss the details.

Thanks to everyone for their support of continued acquisitions. We hope to be able to announce several new acquisitions in the coming year!

# Ranger/Stewardship Report

by Ed Chapin (392-0090)

**Peter Ordway Mangrove Water Tours:** We had our first trip on November 20<sup>th</sup> traveling off-island to Fisheating Creek near Palmdale. This beautiful black water area was one of Peter Ordway's favorite places to visit. We had a very enjoyable day, canoeing up the creek about 3.5 miles, having lunch and then returning for a 7-mile round trip. Hundreds of birds and alligators shared the day with us.

**Work Parties:** Since our last newsletter we have had two work parties, one to Picnic Island and another to York/Coconut and Long Cut Preserves. Our turnout was understandably low because of Hurricane Charley, but as time goes by and our seasonal members return, our work force should rebound.

The damage on our preserves from Hurricane Charley ranges from mild to catastrophic, which has complicated our job considerably. Simply put, volunteers cannot do everything that is needed, so we have hired a clean-up crew to concentrate on our worst hit areas. So far they have tackled Fritts Park, the Calusa Canal Preserve, Picnic Island, and Calusa Island, working very long hours at a bargain rate.



Lunch spot on Fisheating Creek (photo by Donna Venesky)

## WORK PARTIES

Saturday, January 8	9 to 12	St. Jude Trail, Back Bay, Dobbs Preserves (meet at St. Jude Trail)
Saturday, February 5	9 to 12	Fritts Park, Calusa Canal, Calusa Island (meet at Fritts Park)
Saturday, March 5	9 to 12	Picnic Island, Sister Keys, Back Bay Preserves (meeting place to be announced)
Saturday, April 5	9 to 12	York, Coconut, Long Cut Preserves (meet at Hopkins Point)
Saturday, May 7	9 to 12	Dobbs, Baxley, Calusa Canal Preserves (meeting place to be announced)

## PETER ORDWAY MANGROVE WATER TOURS\*

Sunday, January 9	Noon - 3:00	Back Bay Preserve
Saturday, February 12	Noon - 3:00	Big Jim Creek/Kreie Preserves
Saturday, March 12	Noon - 3:00	Smokehouse Bay/Underhill Creek
Sunday, April 16	Noon - 3:00	Underhill Creek Preserve

\*These are guided trips and we do ask for a donation. Also, reservations are required so beep Ed at 392-0090 or e-mail him at ecalusaed@aol.com. Ask to have your name added to our e-mail list and he will notify you before each trip.

## Membership Report

by Norm Gowan (283-8203)

We currently have 826 members with 472 (57%) current in their dues. If there is an asterisk (\*) following your name on the address label of this newsletter, your membership is due.

Many members are choosing to use credit cards (MasterCard or VISA) to make their donations. If this is more convenient for you, then by all means do so. Records of card numbers are shredded after posting.

## Fund Raising Projects

by Norm Gowan (283-8203)

The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Poker Run on the water, sponsored by the Pine Island Boat Club to benefit the Trust, was run in perfect weather on December 5<sup>th</sup>. A full report is forthcoming.

**Rummage Sale:** We previously announced that our next rummage sale will be in January, but the date has been changed to February 5, 2005. As before, it will be at Fritts Park on Beach Daisy Lane, just south of the Pink Citrus Trailer Park. The sale will run from 8:00 A.M. until 1:00 P.M.

Please bring your donations directly to the park on Friday, February 4, anytime between 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. We are sorry we are not accepting computers or microwaves for this sale. If you can volunteer to help, or if you have any questions, please call Shirley House at 283-3493. We hope to see everybody there.

**Rubber Duck Race:** The 7th Annual Rubber Duck Race will take place March 5 at the Double Nichol Pub in St. James City. Tickets are \$5 per duck (we provide the ducks). Please consider buying some tickets – you don't have to be present to win, but of course it is more fun if you are!

**Boardwalk:** The names on our boardwalk continue to grow. It is amazing to think we have done 663 names for over \$33,000 in donations since this idea got started many years ago. We are slightly backlogged in carving due to the recent hurricane season but there is still space available (\$50 per name) and we will catch up soon. We are now working on the third (and final) rail.

**Babcock Ranch:** Many of you have responded to our plea for donations to help purchase the wonderful Babcock Ranch. So far there have been 22 donations totaling \$2,050. Contributions for this cause also count as your Land Trust membership!

## Upcoming Board of Directors' Meetings

The Board of Directors holds regular monthly meetings at the Elks Lodge at Pine Island Center. The next board meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2005. These meetings, held on the third Tuesday of each month, begin at 6:30 and usually run no longer than 7:45. All are welcome to attend and listen, as well as share ideas.

*The following article about several of our local heroes is reprinted with permission from the Fall 2004 issue of Charlotte Harbor Soundings, a publication of the Friends of the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves*

## **Friends IN FOCUS: Archaeological Preservation**

A small cadre of professional archaeologists and others with a deep personal interest in the welfare of cultural resource sites in Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park (CHPSP) have volunteered their services numerous times over the past twenty to thirty years.

**Charles E. Blanchard** has navigated the waters of southwest Florida's estuaries in open canoes for the past 25 years, mapping and recording his routes and landfalls for their archaeological significance. Currently he is Cultural Resource Consultant for state-owned buffer preserve lands in the greater Charlotte Harbor area. He is director of Blanchard & Associates, a cooperative of consulting archaeologists and heritage educators. His Florida Heritage lesson plans are used in schools in Florida and throughout the southeastern U.S. He is the author of "New Words, Old Songs: Understanding the Lives of Ancient Peoples in Southwest Florida Through Archaeology."

**George Luer** is a PhD candidate in Anthropology at the University of Florida in Gainesville. He has given scores of hours of volunteer time to the profiling, material analysis, and final report writing concerned with the restoration and repair of vandalized Charlotte Harbor prehistoric sites. His definitive work on the interpretation and restoration of the Hooker Key site in southern Pine Island Sound is now a model for cultural resource management in the harbor and throughout the state.

In the same spirit, he has given days of his time to the ongoing site analysis and repair work on Josslyn Island. He provides expertise in the analysis of ceramic and worked-shell site materials, examines and evaluates potential sites that are discovered in the course of yearly surveys, and facilitates communication between the Preserve staff and the Division of Historic Preservation in Tallahassee and St. Augustine. It is impossible to imagine cultural resource management in Charlotte Harbor without the volunteer assistance of George.

**Corbett Torrence** is a PhD candidate in Archaeology at the Museum of Natural History in Gainesville. He also teaches at Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers. Over the years he has shared his information and archaeological mapping skills with Preserve staff on such projects as the Josslyn Island restoration project, the Sword Point recordation project, and the Big Mound Key repair evaluation effort. He has conducted tours, made presentations at coastal management workshops, and assisted with public outreach organized by Preserve staff. His insights into the architectural aspect of Indian mound construction have raised the level of understanding of these remarkable monuments.

**Robert Edic** is an anthropologist and oral historian whose work for the past 35 years has focused on both the pre-Columbian and the historic fisherfolk of Charlotte Harbor. A gifted practical mechanic, he has pioneered functional understanding of the elaborate Native Shell Tool Culture that is the unmistakable signature of human success in Charlotte Harbor over the millennia. No one understands how shell tools work better than Bob, and he is always there for consultation, for artifact interpretation, for site survey, and for the historic point of view on the harbor.

His wife and partner of many years, **Linda Edic**, owns two of the sharpest eyes for cultural site and artifact recognition in southwest Florida. She is an experienced and tireless bow paddler in the long-distance open canoe work so necessary to accessing and understanding harbor Indian sites. She also lends a welcome sense of civilization and normalcy to an otherwise pretty eccentric-looking cast of characters.

All of these people have come to their understanding of the harbor organically, from the water up, just as the Indians did. They understand the ancient culture of fish and shell because they have lived it themselves. Their contributions, spirit of volunteerism and countless contributions have been invaluable to the welfare of Charlotte Harbor.

**CALUSA LAND TRUST MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS:**

_____ \$ 15	Individual Member	_____ \$ ____	Babcock Ranch
_____ \$ 25	Family Member	_____ \$ ____	Endowment Fund
_____ \$ 50	Donor or Organization	_____ \$ _____	
_____ \$100	Contributor	_____ \$ 50	Plunk-a-Plank (fill in lettering below)

**CREDIT CARD #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **EXPIRATION DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE (for credit card only):** \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Second Address? \_\_\_\_\_

Second City, State, Zip? \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

A COPY OF THE CALUSA LAND TRUST'S OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA'S DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING 1-800-435-7352 (TOLL-FREE FROM WITHIN FLORIDA). OUR REGISTRATION NUMBER IS SC-03439. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE OF FLORIDA. FULL FINANCIAL DETAILS, INCLUDING FEDERAL TAX RETURNS, CAN BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING THE LAND TRUST'S TREASURER AT 239-334-8866 DURING WORKING HOURS. THE CALUSA LAND TRUST NEVER EMPLOYS PROFESSIONAL FUNDRAISERS; 100% OF YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS ARE RETAINED BY THE CALUSA LAND TRUST.

**Calusa Land Trust & Nature Preserve  
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