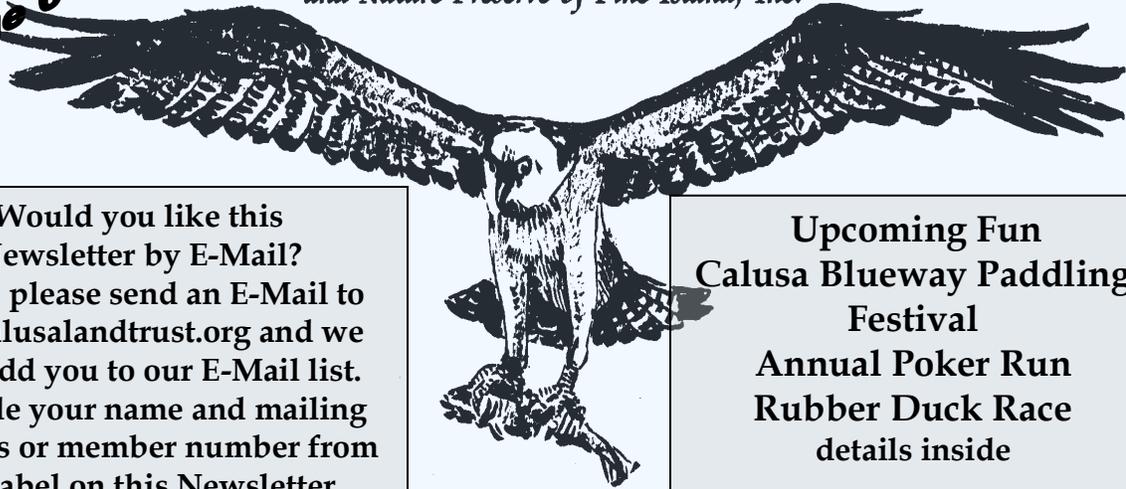


FLASH
New Acquisition
See PAGE 6

Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



Would you like this Newsletter by E-Mail?
If yes, please send an E-Mail to clt@calusalandtrust.org and we will add you to our E-Mail list. Include your name and mailing address or member number from the label on this Newsletter.

Upcoming Fun
Calusa Blueway Paddling
Festival
Annual Poker Run
Rubber Duck Race
details inside

Newsletter #65

Founded 1976

October 2009

www.calusalandtrust.org

Calusa Blueway Paddling Festival

by Brenda Anderson 283.1878

Once again, your Calusa Land Trust will participate in the Calusa Blueway Paddling Festival. The ten-day festival has many eco-event festivities including a kayak fishing tournament, two kayak races, and many opportunities for guided trips and hospitality nights. At the "hubs", on the two Saturdays, there will be vendor booths with lots of boats, demonstrations, and paddling gear as well as interesting displays from local eco-organizations.



We will have a booth at each of the "hubs" from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm to display our paddling and hiking maps and provide other CLT information. Dates and locations for our booth are **Saturday, October 24 at the Mound House on Fort Myers Beach** and **Saturday, October 31 at the Randall Research Center at Pineland.**

The CLT has scheduled the following guided tours for the festival:

Saturday, October 31

Calusa Island - 10:00 am - 1:00 pm.

A guided paddle to Calusa Island in Bokeelia. This paddle will introduce you to one of our most interesting preserves. We will depart from Jug Creek Cottages in Bokeelia and paddle about a mile and a half to the island that forms the northeast border of Jug Creek where you can then join us on a guided hiking tour of this beautiful island preserve. A donation of \$20 per person is suggested. If you don't have your own boat, kayaks will be available to rent from the Tropic Star.

Sunday, November 1

Saint Jude Trail - 10:00 am - 1:00 pm.

Guided paddle to the Saint Jude Trail in Saint James City. This paddle will take you to our outstanding nature trail, from a different perspective. We will depart from Tropical Point in Saint James City and paddle through Saint James Creek for about 2 ½ miles to the landing at the Saint Jude

Trail where we can enjoy a leisurely walk on this half-mile long nature trail. A donation of \$20 per person is suggested. If you don't have your own boat, we have kayaks available for another suggested donation of \$20 for this trip.

You can obtain additional information about the Calusa Blueway Paddling Festival by visiting their website <http://CalusaBluewayPaddlingFestival.com>.

To reserve a place on one of the guided tours, obtain directions to the launch site, and other details, please E-mail me at Brenda@CalusaLandTrust.org or call me at 239-283-1878. Space is limited, so please contact me as soon as possible.

Fund Raising

by Ron Wesorick

283.7249

17th Annual Poker Run

The Pine Island Boat Club will host its 17th Annual Poker Run on Sunday, December 6. All proceeds will be donated to the Calusa Land Trust.



Last year's Poker Run had two new twists which were well received by both our regular and new players. Along with our usual boat dock stations, we added land stations so our poker players could complete their poker run by bike, motorcycle, golf cart, or other favorite mode of land transportation. In addition, the land/sea stations allow players to use kayaks, dinghies, or any other mode of sea transportation. The key is to have a great time with friends.

The Poker Run uses the well-known poker game of Seven Card Stud. To participate, the player purchases a poker card for \$5 (of

course, players may buy as many as they wish.) Players then carry their Poker Card(s) by land or water to six locations around Pine Island Sound and St. James City canals. A card is drawn, and duly recorded on the Poker Card at each station, with the 7th and final card being drawn at Woody's Waterside Pub in downtown St. James City. The best poker hand is the first prize winner, and there are also second and third prizes awarded. While socializing at Woody's, and awaiting final results there will be live music and 50/50 raffles. Food and drink will be available to purchase. The final event is a Losers' Drawing in which losing poker cards are placed in a container, drawn, and the owner of the "losing" card wins \$100! Purchase poker cards at Woody's beginning in early November.

For questions, please contact Dan Foote / Claudia Binter at 239-283-3825 or Bob and Bonnie Kellen at 239-283-8677

12th Rubber Duck Race

3000 new rubber ducks just flew in to start training for the 12th Annual Rubber Duck Race which will be held at Woody's Waterside on Saturday March 6, 2010.



Last year's race was a fantastic success with 2700 ducks in the race. This year we hope to have all 3000 racing down the canal.

Although the big race is a few months away, we need everyone's help now. Mark your own calendar now and start encouraging all your friends and neighbors to buy tickets and attend the race. In addition to ticket sales, our proceeds come from the live and silent auctions. To accomplish our goals, we

need items to be donated for both the auction and duck race prizes. If you are a craftsman or artist, consider donating some of your work. You can also donate your time or services such as boat rides, cook a dinner, etc. If you have contacts with businesses, ask them to donate, or contact the Race Committee and we will call on the business.

Once again, Pink Wesorick will lead the Duck Race Committee. You can call her at 283-7249 or 292-9789. e-mail pink@calusalandtrust.org

Plunk-a-Plank

As we proceed with improving the Norm Gowan Trailhead Vista and St. Jude trail, there are now more opportunities to install planks along the trail. For a \$50 donation, we will carve your requested name on a plank which will be permanently installed along the trail.

The application is included on the last page of this newsletter.

We are in the process of developing a complete database of memorial names and their location along the trail. When complete, you will be able to go to the Calusa Land Trust website and view the complete list.

Hopefully everyone can make a trip out for an enjoyable walk and view their memorial.

A couple of happy plank owners



An Editorial

by Gracie,
the Ghostwriting Gopher Tortoise
gracie@calusalandtrust.org

The last couple of months have been challenging at the old Ranger Hut. Three issues demonstrate the challenges of maintaining preserved lands. Our Work Parties usually accomplish the routine, yet important tasks of keeping foot and kayak/canoe trails open, planting and encouraging the growth of native plants and wildlife along with removing invasive exotics and picking up trash left by foolish people. If you caught the recent, impressive PBS special on National Parks, you saw both sides of conserving land. On one hand, John Muir's quotes, and the exquisitely beautiful scenery are breathtakingly inspirational. On the other hand, the PBS special documented how competing interests, ignorance and cultural differences can morph usually enjoyable conservation work into deep frustration and trigger the occasional, unfortunate battle, fighting to save natural areas. Here are three Calusa Land Trust (CLT) examples.

First, at the end of August, a newly hired, Lee County Dept. of Transportation (DOT) worker, clearing along the County Right of Way, managed to mow down over 40 slash pines, planted by CLT Board Members and volunteers two years ago at the Norm Gowan Trailhead Vista, in St. James City. The trees were on CLT property. These pines, after many, many hours of care and watering, had grown beautifully to an average of 8' high and 3" diameter. Even after adjacent homeowners stopped the County worker and told him he was taking out desirable native plants on CLT property, the guy ignored the homeowners and kept on clearing. It took perseverance, during a series of phone calls, by Ed Chapin and some of the adjacent homeowners, but DOT finally agreed to replace the trees. On Sept 30th, Lee County DOT supplied and planted 20, nice, 6 foot Slash Pines.

We appreciate DOT's gesture and hope, not only, that 20 additional trees will be provided but that we can go on to work harmoniously with the County in establishing boundaries and preventing this mistake from re-occurring. It is taking about 3 hours a day, every day, (except for when it actually rains) for the St. Jude Harbor Homeowners Association and Ed Chapin, to water these trees until they get established. Replanting native trees isn't always easy and it takes dedication to replant after mishaps, but it must be done.

The next was on Saturday September 19th, we had a die-hard group of CLT Board members and volunteers meet at our Baxley Preserve in St. James City. The goal was to, once again, attempt to securely fence a section of that Preserve, protecting it from determined ATV and 4 wheelers, who claiming the land as their own, have been tearing up and literally shooting up the place. Knowing this is a CLT Preserve doesn't stop these motorized vandals. Part of the Baxley Preserve is a rare remnant of the salt flat berm that used to ring most of Pine Island - not the best site for an ATV park. A couple of months ago the CLT spent time and money installing a metal fence. It was quickly and unceremoniously lifted up and removed by these determined (and strong) vandals. So, at this recent work party, we upped the ante and hired a metal fabrication company, AMD Ornamental, to fabricate and install a serious fence. Post holes were jackhammered through bedrock. (Yes, not a lot of bedrock on Pine Island...but the volunteers that day will confirm that it is indeed found at the Baxley Preserve). Heavy-duty steel posts were well-anchored in concrete. A solid fence was installed and so far, so good ATV-free! The fence installation was very tough work for all involved. A big thanks to Dennis Sr. & Dennis Jr. Mackowski of (AMD), Tommy (AMD), Brian Cotterill, Judy Ott, Brenda Anderson (CLT), Dan England (Volunteer Extraordinaire) and Ed Chapin of course. Hopefully, this fence will stop the unwanted vehicles from tearing up the

Baxley Preserve. Sometimes natural areas need serious protection.

Lastly there is Picnic Island in St. James City. Although beautiful and fun, it continues to impress us all with its never-ending accumulation of trash and the odious problems of unburied human waste. There is a wonderful, long standing tradition of local people truly enjoying themselves at this lovely island. But some users are abusing the privilege of having access to this island, straining CLT resources. Currently, there are vigorous discussions going on, considering if the CLT should prohibit camping and/or campfires. And, there is the question of does a heavily used and often abused island fit into the CLT's Mission Statement?

It is discouraging when our volunteers wisely and cheerfully place signs stating, "Future Shade Tree" on native trees, replanted for the n'th time, only to find the trees still get pulled up and burned for firewood. And no one should be expected to deal with unburied human waste.

Seriously, anyone want to donate funds for a very much needed compost toilet? Want to spearhead a "Save Picnic Island" program? This is the nuts and bolts of stewardship, asking better questions and solving problems. The CLT is doing the best it can with its resources and we are grateful to the other conservation-minded groups, boating clubs and other responsible Picnic Island users who have stepped up to the plate to assist with maintenance and the education of visitors, teaching them the importance of burying their waste, packing out all trash and letting native trees grow unharmed. Island signage will be improved when the CLT comes to a conclusion on how best to proceed with management. If you are out at Picnic Island, please feel free to be an island Ambassador and help raise awareness for island visitors. And Picnic Island would really like a compost toilet for Christmas. Are you listening Santa? What an opportunity for a memorial!

Membership

by Phil Rosenberg

283.3871

E-Mail Newsletter Available

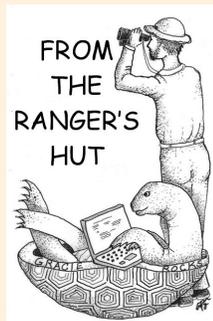
As mentioned on the front page we can deliver the newsletter by E-Mail. If you want the e-mail version just send an e-mail to clt@calusalandtrust.org and include the e-mail address you want us to use also include your name and mailing address or your member number located on the address label of this newsletter.

We currently have 990 members receiving this newsletter and some have a PINK address label. The pink label means it has been more than a year since you have made a contribution to the Land Trust. Take a look at the inside back cover and there you will find a renewal form and there is a return envelope tucked in the newsletter also.

Ranger's Report

by Ed Chapin - Beeper 239.392.0090

Usually the Ranger's report is standard fare. But stewardship of our Preserves hasn't been all fun and games, lately. Preserving lands is our Mission and stewardship is serious work. It involves much more than just clearing invasive-exotics and watering in a young slash pine and watching it happily grow. Our work party attendance has been dwindling lately. So next time you get an e-mail for a work party, please consider showing up. Chief Ranger Ed is tired and could use some more help. Those of you who know Ed know it is not a good idea to let our Chief Ranger get cranky.



Please consider joining us. The work parties are fun and there are interesting tasks for people of all levels of fitness and experience. Come learn about stewardship. We won't make you jackhammer - honest!

Work Parties!

On Sat Sept 12th, we had a small turnout at Fritts Park, in Bokeelia, due to an early rain.

Geoff Rogers of Rustic Fence Services and I measured and planned for a new fence on the south property line that had been recently cleared of exotic vegetation. We also worked on weeding around the Tootsie Barnes Memorial in the Park.

Sat. Oct. 10th: 9am till Noon. Work Party at the Lee County 20/20 Pine Island Flatwoods Preserve in St. James City. We will be doing follow up invasive/exotic plant control .

Sat. Nov. 14th: Work Party at Cayo Pelau. Time to be determined. We will be crossing Charlotte Harbor to work on this beautiful, Lee County 20/20, 100 + acre Island. Lots to do including trail work and invasive/exotic plant control. We will need volunteers and seaworthy boats for this fun work party. And we always have lunch on the beach before returning to Bokeelia, so break out the picnic baskets.

Sat. Dec 12th: Work Party at the Back Bay Preserve in St. James City. We will be doing trail blazing, trash pickup and invasive/exotic plant control. Again we will need boats (canoes/kayaks are fine for this preserve)

The dates for Work Parties in 2010 will be in our next newsletter. Please consider donating some volunteer labor to improve and maintain these outstanding preserves.

Acquisition News

by Harold Bruner 239.464.2436

New 10-Acre Purchase Adjoins Pine Island Flatwoods Preserve

Part of a successful land acquisition vision is patience and perseverance. In the last few years we have occasionally mailed letters to owners of environmentally sensitive lands. When the Pine Island Flatwoods Preserve (PIFP) was first created we identified the owners of several tracts that were bordered to the north and the south by two big but separate parcels of the preserve. That first mailing resulted in the donation of 10 acres shown on the photo as CLT.

A few months ago I received a call from Bill Howells in Ohio. His mother, Syil Howells, had recently passed away. While going through her documents he found the letter that had been sent to her almost five years ago. Bill was calling to ask if the CLT was still interested in purchasing his mother's land. He and his sister were the sole heirs and both wanted to see the land preserved.

Two things made this parcel especially attractive. The north boundary adjoined the south end of the 10 acres that had been donated to us. And the south boundary adjoined the PIFP. By purchasing the 10 acres from the Howells we would own 20 contiguous acres that would adjoin the PIFP. This latest purchase is shown on the photo as CLT NEW.

The photo shows that the makeup of the two parcels is very similar. The western third or so is the lowest elevation and is comprised of mangrove wetlands. The slightly higher ground to the east is salt flats. Salt flats form between the higher pine flatwoods and the wetter mangroves. The evaporation of saltwater from higher tides results in higher salinity levels that many plants can not tolerate. While appearing barren to some, salt



flats can get heavy use at times by wading birds who feed on various subsurface organisms.

Let's review again the importance of acquiring these parcels often referred to as inholdings. An inholding is defined as a privately owned parcel of land within the boundaries of a park or preserve. As long as these parcels are privately owned they are subject to a host of perfectly legal private uses such as building a home or clearing for agricultural use.

Many of these parcels do not border a road, but do have easements meant to allow legal access. That is precisely the case with several of the parcels just east of our 20 acres shown on the photo as PRIVATE. One of the easements to these parcels runs from Stringfellow west across the PIFP. Needless to say, the existence of that easement is a concern for the management of the preserve.

The CLT purchased these 10 acres for \$20,000. We are always interested in purchasing additional wetlands and we are especially interested in properties that adjoin lands that are already preserved. The funds for Lee County 20/20 Conservation purchases are already allocated to specific parcels for the next 5 years or so. This means that the CLT is one of the few remaining buyers of environmentally sensitive lands on Pine Island. Please give me a call if you know of anyone who might be interested in selling such lands.

Peter Ordway Mangrove Adventures

It is time for our seasonal, Peter Ordway Mangrove Adventures. This is a series of monthly, guided, canoe/kayak trips exploring some of our Preserves and adjacent waters. We offer these trips in honor of Peter Ordway, who started the tours back in the early 90's and inspired a lot of people to get into canoes and kayaks. The trips, about 3 hours long, are fun and educational. Most trips can accommodate all levels of paddlers and are a great way to learn canoeing or kayaking.

Saturday, October 31, 2009 - Calusa Island - 10:00 am - 1:00 We will explore our Calusa Island Preserve in Bokeelia. This trip is planned as part of the Great Calusa Blueway Festival going on the same week. The Calusa Island trip is very popular so reservations are a must. We will depart from Jug Creek Cottages in Bokeelia and paddle about a mile and a half to Calusa Island which forms the northeast border of Jug Creek. After arrival we will have a guided hiking tour of this beautiful island preserve. For this special trip, instead of contacting Ed, please call the trip coordinator, Brenda Anderson at 239-283-1878 or e-mail her Brenda@calusalandtrust.org to make reservations and ask any questions. A donation of \$20 per person is suggested. If you don't have your own boat, kayaks will be available to rent from the Tropic Star for this trip. Calusa Island is our Flagship Preserve. It was the first piece of land preserved by the Calusa Land Trust in 1976. Along with the Island's natural beauty, there is a shell mound to explore. Don't miss this!

Sat. Dec 5th - Time to be determined. This trip will be an off-island day trip to Fish Eating Creek, a beautiful waterway winding through a primeval cypress forest. It's a nice change of scenery and there may even be a lazy alligator or two for excitement. It's a safe paddle - not to worry. Fish Eating Creek is near Palmdale on US Hwy 27. If you have never been to Fish Eating Creek, you don't want to miss this paddle. Again reservations are required and rental boats are available on site. Just Beep Ed at 239-392-0090 with any and all questions.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>_____ \$ 15 Individual Member</p> <p>_____ \$ 25 Family Member</p> <p>_____ \$ 50 Donor</p>
<p>_____ \$ 50 Plunk-a-Plank
(fill in lettering) _____</p> | <p>_____ \$100 Contributor</p> <p>_____ \$500 Patron</p> <p>_____ \$1000 Benefactor</p> |
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CREDIT CARD #: _____ **Visa or MasterCard only**

EXPIRES: _____ / _____

Your Name: _____

Sponsor: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Alt Phone _____

Second Address: _____

Second City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail address _____

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Upcoming Work Parties – 2009

Mark your Calendars – Plan to Attend

Saturday Oct 10	9 am - 12 noon	Pine Island Flatwoods	Exotic Plant & Litter Clean Up
Saturday Nov 14	9 am - 12 noon	Cayo Pelau	Exotic Plant & Litter Clean Up
Saturday Dec 12	9 am - 12 noon	Back Bay	Exotic Plant & Litter Clean Up

For more information including
where to meet contact Ranger Ed Chapin by calling his pager 392-0090 or
check the Web Site www.calusalandtrust.org

Calusa Land Trust & Nature Preserve
of Pine Island, Inc.
P.O. Box 216
Bokeelia, Florida 33922

FLASH
New Acquisition
See Page 6

If the address label on this Newsletter is
PINK it is time to renew your
membership. Use the enclosed
envelope and the form on the last page
to renew.