

Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



Newsletter

www.calusalandtrust.org

December 2002

Land Acquisition News

by Phil Buchanan (283-4067)

Since our summer newsletter, we have gone to closing on two new preserves and secured two more by other arrangements.

Mills Property: In September, we closed on the 56-acre Mills property, which is just north of Galt Island Avenue and west of York Road in St. James City. The Lee County Conservation 2020 Program paid \$145,000 and Calusa Land Trust paid \$55,000 (\$32,550 of which was donated by the residents of Galt Island Avenue). Lee County took title and the nature preserve will be co-managed by the Lee County Parks and Recreation Department and the Calusa Land Trust. Earlier this year the 110-acre property to the north of the Mills property was purchased under a similar arrangement (in that case, the 2020 Program paid \$480,000 and the Trust paid \$10,000). The combined preserve, which does not yet have a name, is now 166 acres of pristine mangroves and rare native uplands.

Picnic Island: Last March, the Corps of Engineers, which holds a spoil easement on Picnic Island, signed an agreement giving Calusa Land Trust the right to manage the island on their behalf. We are seeking the same arrangement with the state of Florida, which owns the island subject to the easement. We expect that effort to be completed this winter. The Trust is partnering with the Pine Island Boat Club to ensure that Picnic Island remains the most popular boating and picnicking destination in this area.

Pine Island Flatwoods Preserve: The Conservation 2020 Program, with assistance from the Calusa Land Trust, added another 32 acres to this preserve in August. The 2020 Program paid the entire cost of \$355,000. The preserve, which is all native pine flatwoods (slash pine and palmetto with lots of gopher tortoises and wildflowers), now totals 92 acres and includes really great hiking trails.

Pine Island Center Preserve: At our request, the Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation has agreed to turn the 40 acres of uplands and mangroves they own west of the Methodist Church (and southwest of the fire station) into a nature preserve. That area had been slated to be converted from native habitat to ball fields. Other property in the Pine Island Center area will be purchased to build the ball fields and other park facilities, which will supplement or in part replace Phillips Park.



The Gathering (photograph by Scott Schutz)

Notice of Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting will be held on Sunday, January 19, 2003, at 1:00 PM at the Fishers of Men Lutheran Church located at 10360 Stringfellow Road, 1/4 mile south of Pine Island Road. Please mark this date on your calendar; a separate notice will **not** be mailed. The meeting will be relatively short and informative.

In addition to reports on CLT activities, we will be holding elections for the Board of Directors. The nominating committee is recommending reelection of the following board members, all of whom have agreed to run for another two-year term: Jim Alexander, Ed Chapin, Joan Culver, Norm Gowan, Bud House, and Jack Worthington. In addition, the committee is placing Ron Wesorick's name in nomination for a vacant seat. Additional nominations will be taken from the floor during the annual meeting.

In another business matter, a change to the bylaws will be voted upon at the annual meeting. The Board of Directors has on occasion had difficulty during the late summer months putting together a quorum to conduct business. That's because not only are the "snowbird" directors gone, but many of the year-round resident directors also travel during that period. To alleviate that problem, the Bylaws Committee has proposed that the quorum requirement, now a majority of the board, be changed to 1/3 of the board during July, August, and September, and 1/2 the board the remainder of the year. For example, with a 15-member board (the maximum currently allowed), we would need 5 members present instead of 8 during July, August, and September. The proposed change, which would require a 2/3 vote of the membership at the annual meeting, is to amend Article V, Section (4) to read "One-half of the members A simple majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business, except during the months of July, August, and September, when only one-third of the members shall be required for a quorum."

Announcements

Board of Directors Meeting: The next two board meetings will be held on January 21 and February 18 at the Elks Lodge at Pine Island Center. These meetings, scheduled for the third Tuesday of each month, begin at 6:30 and usually run no longer than 8:00. Anyone is welcome to attend and listen as well as share ideas.

Laptop computer needed: We still need a laptop computer for presentations. Last year, as you may recall, Sony Corporation gave us a computer-driven projector so we could make Powerpoint presentations. It is a beautiful and expensive piece of equipment, but not usable without a laptop to drive it. It need not be a late model or very big, as we only require enough memory and processor capability to run Powerpoint. If anyone can help, please contact Phil Buchanan at 283-4067.

Ranger/Stewardship Report

by Ed Chapin

As usual, our dedicated rangers and stewards have been very busy maintaining and enhancing our preserves. I want to again thank them all for their hard work and good spirit; the job would not get done without them. The schedule for upcoming work parties is listed below; all run until about noon. In addition, we are now meeting every Sunday at 11:00 A.M. to work for about two hours; we meet for coffee at Fritts Park, on Beach Daisy Lane just south of the Pink Citrus Trailer Park, and then disperse to our many preserves for monitoring, trail maintenance, and exotic plant control. If you have not had a chance to join us for one of these work days, do consider coming out and giving it a try. You can work as hard as you feel comfortable; I guarantee you will leave feeling satisfied. For more information, beep me at 392-0090 or send an e-mail to ecalusaed@aol.com

Our guided canoe trips continue to be popular. See below for our updated schedule and make your reservations early as we like to keep the total participants to no more than 25. If you do not have a boat, don't worry, we usually have extra space. Just contact me at one of the above numbers and I will reserve a spot for you.

WORK PARTIES

Saturday, January 4	9 to 12	Kreie Preserve and Peter Ordway Tropical Hammock
Saturday, February 1	9 to 12	Dobb's Preserve & St Jude Trail
Saturday, March 1	9 to 12	Big Jim Creek Preserve & Calusa Canal Preserve
Saturday, April 5	9 to 12	Long Cut Preserve & York/Coconut Island Preserves

PETER ORDWAY MANGROVE WATER TOURS

Saturday, January 11	9 to 12	Big Jim Creek Preserve
Sunday, February 9	9 to 12	Back Bay Preserve
Saturday, March 15	1 to 4	St. James Creek Preserve
Sunday, April 6	9 to 12	Underhill Creek Preserve

Trips last between 3 and 4 hours. \$15 donation per canoe/kayak is suggested.

FUND-RAISING - FUN EVENTS!

Saturday, February 8	2 to 6	Calusa Canal benefit lunch to be held at the Greater Pine Island Moose Lodge
Saturday, February 15	8 to 12	Annual rummage sale to be held in Tropical Estates at the home of Bud and Shirley House
Saturday, February 22		The 5th Annual Pine Island Rubber Duck Race to be held at the Double Nichol Pub in St. James City

Membership Report

by Norm Gowan (283-8203)

The Land Trust membership remains steady at 795 members. Of these, 500 (63%) are current in their annual dues. Please stop now and take a look at the address label on this newsletter. If there is an asterisk " * " following your name, it has been more than a year since your last donation. We would love to hear from you. You, the members, are the backbone of our successful organization.

Calusa Canal, Phase III

by Bud House (283-3493)

As previously reported, the Calusa Canal–Phase III has been in progress since June 11, 2002. On that date the Archeological Conservancy purchased a canal parcel located at 6360 Meadow Lane. Through a contract with that organization, Calusa Land Trust needs to transfer funds to the Conservancy, in the original purchase amount of \$15,000, on or before June 11, 2003. As of November 13, we had accrued \$8,192.00 toward this goal.

This Phase III parcel is adjacent to the Phase II parcel purchased in 2001. If you would like to visit this new purchase, Meadow Lane is the second street to the right off of Harbor Drive, after traveling north on Stringfellow Road. Thanks to the Saturday volunteer work crew for removing exotic vegetation and preserving the baby pine trees; the property is looking better and better all the time.

Please consider helping us making our third purchase a reality. Here are three ways you can do this. For a donation of \$50 or more, you can receive a beautiful Calusa Canal T-Shirt, showing that you supported this important project. Be sure to mark your check “Calusa Canal” and specify the desired size (S, M, L, XL). You can also attend a lunch sponsored the Pine Island Moose Club which will be held on February 8, 2003, or our annual rummage sale where you can donate old treasures or come to find new ones.

Fund Raising Projects

by Norm Gowan (283-8203)

Plunk-A-Plank: In the seven years since its inception, over 600 names have been carved on the boardwalk or benches on the St. Jude Trail, resulting in a gross income of over \$30,000 to the Land Trust. Is your name out there? During the next year, we plan to create a directory to make it easier for donors to locate names on the trail.

Rubber Duck Race: Our 5th annual Rubber Duck Race will be held on February 22nd at the Double Nichol Pub in St. James City. See the Pine Island Eagle for more details. This is a fun event that raises a good deal of money for the Land Trust.

Poker Run: December 8th marked the 10th annual Poker Run sponsored by the Pine Island Boat Club to benefit the Land Trust. Details of this event will be provided at the annual meeting.

Benefit Lunch: There will be a special lunch to benefit the Calusa Canal purchases hosted by the Pine Island Moose on February 8th from 2:00 to 6:00 P.M. Once again, read the Eagle for particulars. This event will feature live music and a varied menu. There will be a reverse raffle to give away \$2,000 in cash prizes. It is called a reverse raffle since the first ticket drawn will win only \$50 but the last (7th) will win the \$1,000 prize. Only five hundred \$10 raffle tickets will be sold and the winner does not need to be present. Follow the Eagle for ticket sales or mail in your ticket money with your usual donation or contact me at 283-8203 or GoldenPond@CalusaLandTrust.org.

Endowment Fund: The Land Trust is creating an endowment fund to support future land stewardship (maintenance) obligations. The project will be formally announced at our annual meeting in January, with sign-up forms provided both there and with our next newsletter.

Rummage Sale: On Saturday, February 15th, we will hold our now annual rummage sale, with all profits going toward the Calusa Canal purchase. It will run from 8:00 A.M. until noon at 3489 Gasparilla Street in St. James City. Please call Shirley House (283-3493) to donate items or volunteer to help.

CALUSA LAND TRUST MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS:

_____ \$ 15	Individual Member	_____ \$ ____	Calusa Canal purchase
_____ \$ 25	Family Member	_____ \$ 23 @	<i>Nature Lover's Guide to P.I.</i>
_____ \$ 50	Donor or Organization	_____ \$ ____	_____
_____ \$100	Contributor	_____ \$ 50	Plunk-a-Plank <i>(fill in lettering below)</i>
_____ \$250	Angel		_____

Sponsor's Name (optional): _____

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 941-334-8866 DURING WORKING HOURS. THE CALUSA LAND TRUST NEVER EMPLOYS PROFESSIONAL FUNDRAISERS; 100% OF YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS ARE RETAINED BY THE CALUSA LAND TRUST.

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