

Greetings to all! Now that we have made it through the hot summer months, we can enjoy the cooler weather and enjoy the great outdoors. With this welcome relief also comes many exciting events planned for Calusa Land Trust members and other interested folks. Our committees have been active throughout the summer and have made progress on a number of important projects. Through this newsletter we hope to catch everyone up on that progress and help plan for our fall and winter activities.

Land Management Committee Report by Ed Chapin

Our land management crews have been very busy this summer despite the absence of many of our regular volunteers. On the St. Jude Trail, we did a lot of weeding and planted about 50 native plants such as sea grapes and wild olive. Our plans for a boardwalk at the end of the trail are well under way. (Read more about this below.)

We also spent about 170 man- and woman-hours on our newly acquired Fritts Park. The area was heavily infested with Brazilian peppers and Australian pines. With the help of Steve Deutsch and Mitchell Swenson of Swenson Enterprises, we now have a beautiful upland park we can use for meetings, picnics, or canoe outings.

The committee also met with Lee County personnel to discuss the bald eagle nesting area of the St. James Creek Preserve. We installed a new sign at the south-

west corner of the preserve and also established a 750-foot-radius primary zone around the eagles' nest. Preliminary plans for the nature trail were also begun.

On Coastal Clean-Up Day, we helped out the county by cleaning up trash at the Bocilla Island Preserve just west of Bokeelia. We had 14 volunteers and picked up 350 pounds of junk and garbage.

If you think the Land Management Committee really has the situation in hand, this is far from the truth. We desperately need more help as there is so much to do. For the seasonal members who are now returning and for those who can work better during the cooler months, please volunteer some time if at all possible. It is such a good feeling to get out there and do something that is so needed and also so visibly rewarding. Call me at 283-1167. Leave a message and I will most definitely get back with you.

Membership Committee Report by Norm Gowan

We now have 428 members on our membership roll with 249 current in their dues. This is a strong 26% increase in paid-up members, 17 new members since our last newsletter and 40 new members in the past 12 months! Membership is tracked as one year from the date of a donation; when that period has elapsed, an asterisk (*) is printed by the members's name on mailing labels. Please take a moment now to check your mailing label on this newsletter. Many of you must have done this already but please check once more.

Our 1995 campaign to double our membership by asking all members to sponsor a new member is slowly gaining momentum but still needs a lot of work. So far, eleven members have sponsored a total of 19 new members. These honor roll sponsors are:

Bud & Shirley House	-	Four new members
Ed Chapin	-	Three new members
Susan Edwards	-	Three new members
Harvey & Maxine Ingelse	-	Two new members
Alison Ackerman	-	One new members
Norm & Marie Gowan	-	One new member
Leroy & Lene Lippmann	-	One new member
Rick & Silvia Moore	-	One new member
Brant & Jane Stanford	-	One new member
Karen Walker	-	One new member

We must continue to increase our membership in order to continue to build parks and preserves on and around Pine Island! Sign up a friend, relative, or neighbor today. Give a gift membership. Add your name to this honor roll before our next newsletter.

St. Jude Nature Trail

We have started the permitting process for the boardwalk, observation deck, and shelter. This will make it a joy to walk the trail and enjoy the trees and wildlife without getting your feet wet (or your head when it rains!). If you remember the beautiful plan prepared by Lisa Dodd Beaver, you will know that this project is going to be one of Calusa Land Trust's proudest accomplishments. We are not far away from beginning actual construction, so the time is now! Please think about helping to build it and/or contributing some funds to make it happen.

As a fund raiser for this endeavor, we are selling planks in the boardwalk. A donation of \$50 will provide a four-foot-long 2 x 6 complete with the donor's name carved into it. These planks will show everyone who walks the trail the names of those dedicated members and friends who helped make it possible. A spot has been added to the membership form at the end of this newsletter in case you are interested in sponsoring a plank. **PLUNK DOWN A PLANK ON THE BOARDWALK!** Use the "lettering on plank" line on the form to show exactly how you want the plank to read. Space is limited to a combination of 16 letters, spaces, and punctuation marks on a single plank. Multiple lines can be accommodated if more planks are purchased.

Pine Island Elks Lodge Dance

The local Elks Lodge is sponsoring a dance to benefit Calusa Land Trust on Saturday, November 4. The Elks are leasing the Greater Pine Island Civic Association building at Pine Island Center and have created a comfortable and tastefully decorated lounge and hall. Tickets, at \$7.50 each, will provide guests with hors d'oeuvres and live dance music. A cash bar will be available. For each ticket sold, \$2.50 will be donated to the Calusa Land Trust. Contact any Board members for tickets and come out for a relaxing and fun evening with fellow islanders, Land Trust members, and friends.

Grand Opening of Walbridge Otto (Bill) Fritts Park

On November 26, we are planning a celebration of the acquisition of the Fritts Park and look forward to showcasing the work that is underway there to make it a beautiful and special place. We hope that Peggy Fritts will be able to join us. Her late husband was an avid conservationist and this park is named in his memory.

We will begin the festivities at 1:00, to include a few speakers who will explain the history of how the park came to be. We will have a champagne toast to dedicate the new park to Bill Fritts and his family. Come and join us. The park is on a 1½-acre uplands parcel just south of the Pink Citrus mobile home park near Bokeelia. Turn west from Stringfellow Boulevard onto Beach Daisy Lane. Just north of the parcel (across Beach Daisy Lane) is an existing drainageway that connects to an old mosquito control ditch system which then flows into our Big Jim Creek Preserve. We need to decide whether to exercise our option to purchase another acre to enlarge this park. What do you think?

Poker Run

Yes folks, it's back by popular demand. The Pine Island Boat Club has announced that their 3rd annual poker run for the benefit of the Calusa Land Trust will be held on Sunday, December 3rd. Details will be published before then in the Pine Island Eagle, but mark your calendars now. Last year's winner, a Land Trust member, took home a prize of nearly \$1100 for the winning hand, and the Land Trust realized an income of over \$3100 for the Day! Incredible. We are attempting to line up a party boat for those who wish to participate but do not have access to their own boat. Since there was a bit of a weather problem at last year's poker run, an alternate course in sheltered waters will be included this year.

President's Corner

by Norm Gowan

As our organization grows and our holdings increase and our activities are more numerous, we need more help. Also, every now and then, our active members are forced to reduce or eliminate their participation for personal reasons. We are an open group and want to encourage our members to increase their participation past the donation level if they are in a position to do so.

Would you like to search out and investigate potential properties to add to our preserves? Our Land Acquisition Committee under Rich Larkin (283-4871) will welcome you to play "Land Baron." If you would rather spend a few hours once or twice a month controlling exotic plant growths and creating nature trails, the Land Management Commit-

tee with Ed Chapin (283-1167) is the place for you. Fund raising can be fun, so don't believe what you've heard. Want to deal poker hands out on the water? Fund Raising Chairman Norm Gowan (283-8203) is the man to call. For computer buffs, we are planning to implement a Geographical Information System (GIS) this coming year under the guidance of Peter Ordway (283-5918). If you are interested in helping to manage the organization, inquire about joining the Board of Directors from any of the names mentioned above.

All board meetings are open meetings, so if you just want to sit in and get a first-hand look, come on out. Our next board meeting will be held on November 14th at 6:30 p.m. Call me (Norm Gowan) for the meeting's location.

Land Acquisition Workshop in Fort Myers

Florida's Department of Environmental Protection is in the midst of their series of half-day seminars on important environmental topics. On November 4, the program will focus on environmental land acquisition activities in Lee County. This seminar will begin at 9:00 a.m. in the "Back Porch" room of the Cooperative Extension Service offices at Terry Park, 3406 Palm Beach Boulevard, Fort Myers. Speakers will include Karen Forsyth, Director/Division of (Lee) County Lands; Roger Clark, environmental planner with Lee County; Ellen Lindblad, Assistant Director/CREW Trust; Heather Stafford, Manager/Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve; and Bill Spikowski, a director of the Calusa Land Trust. These seminars are free and open to the public, but advance registration is requested by calling the DEP field office in Bokeelia at 283-2424. An optional field trip will follow the morning seminar. Other seminars include "Fire Ecology in Florida" in Punta Gorda on October 21, and "Keep It Clean: Steps to Becoming a Water-Wise Community" in Cape Coral on November 11.

Local Archaeology

Pine Island was a center of the ancient culture of the Calusa Indians, from whom the Land Trust takes its name. In addition to their impressive mounds, the dug inland canals for their canoes. One canal was dug from Pineland across northern Pine Island, and then picked up again across Matlacha Pass, extending inland through north Cape Coral in the vicinity of Gator Slough. Remnants of this canal still exist on Pine Island, and an informal committee of Land Trust members is investigating these remains. For those who missed it, we are reprinting on the next page an informative article from the Fort Myers News-Press on the almost-lost Calusa canals.

— Alison Ackerman, newsletter editor