

1996 ANNUAL MEETING

An estimated 80 members and interested people attended the Calusa Land Trust's annual meeting held on January 21. This was a wonderful turnout considering it was a such a beautiful sunny day when most of us would rather be outside! Besides the usual committee reports bringing us all up to date and the election of the Board of Directors, there was considerable discussion about two particular topics.

The first one concerned the purchase of another acre of land adjacent to the newly acquired Fritts Park in Bokeelia. We had acquired an option on another acre just to the south to expand the park. A motion to spend \$10,000 for this acre was approved, which will increase the park to 2 1/2 acres.

A second and lively discussion surrounded the dramatic struggle for title of the McCardle Island property. Bill Spikowski presented the facts: we have what looks like clear title, but the federal government now claims that its original deed transferring McCardle from federal ownership (just after the Civil War) was defective. Our title insurance company claims that the federal government is wrong but has offered us \$23,000 cash to let the company off the hook. A motion was approved that we go ahead and accept the \$23,000 offer from the title insurance company instead of taking our chances in court in April. We are not relinquishing whatever claim to the property that our title gives us, but we will use the money to pursue other land environmental land acquisitions.

Other announcements from the annual meeting and full committee reports follow.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

(by Norm Gowan)

The Trust continues to grow! In the past year, the mailing list has grown to 459, a welcome 17% increase. Of these, 239 (52%) are current in their membership dues showing an impressive 35% increase. Membership is considered as current for one full year from the date of a previous donation. We know that not everyone is going to remember that date so we help out. Take a moment to look at your name on the address label and if an asterisk (*) appears there, it means that a year has passed and you may need to renew your membership.

In spite of our many fund-raising activities, it is our members' donations that provide the majority of the money to acquire and manage endangered natural lands. If we could double our membership, we would also double our financial base. Last year, we asked our members to find a new member, and many did. Seventeen members signed up forty-one new members; the honor roll follows:

Norm and Marie Gowan (8)	Bill and Alison Spikowski (1)
Wayne and Shirley House (5)	Ralph Baker (1)
Peter and Patricia Ordway (4)	Leroy and Lene Lippmann (1)
Ed Chapin (3)	Larry and Kathleen Osgood (1)
Harvey and Maxine Ingelse (3)	James and Virginia Richey (1)
Rick and Silvia Moore (3)	Brant and Jane Stanford (1)
Susan Edwards (3)	Peg Fritts (1)
Phil and Nancy Freeman (2)	Karen Walker (1)
Island Hardware (2)	

Add your name to this list! Recruit a friend or give a gift of a membership to a friend, neighbor or relative.

TREASURER'S REPORT

(by Bill Spikowski)

The year ended with our financial situation almost identical to the previous year's. Our expenses are tilting toward those involving land management, to be expected from a maturing land conservation organization. The annual financial summary (on the next page) shows our income and expenses over the past year, and the total amount remaining in our various funds.

CALUSA LAND TRUST TREASURER'S REPORT

SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR OF 1995

Funds on hand as of 1/1/95:	Unrestricted Accounts:	\$23,619.39
	Emergency Fund:	9,500.00
	Public Relations Fund:	10.69
	Land Management Fund:	<u>18,641.54</u>
	TOTAL:	\$51,771.62

Income since 1/1/95:	Interest/Dividends:	\$ 2,878.63
	Memberships and Donations:	11,426.00
	Plunk-a-Plank:	1,750.00
	Poker Run:	5,948.00
	Shrimp Dinner:	1,551.25
	Elks Club Dance:	707.00
	T-shirts and Caps:	<u>935.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$25,195.88	

Expenses since 1/1/95:	Insurance & Fees:	\$ 1,268.25
	Land Management:	7,186.18
	Poker Run:	2,076.83
	Office Supplies:	288.31
	Postage:	689.64
	Printing and Paper:	444.90
	Shrimp Dinner:	836.00
	Signed Artwork:	1,050.00
	Elks Club Dance:	268.00
	T-shirts and Caps:	<u>441.28</u>
TOTAL:	\$14,549.39	

**Land acquisition costs
since 1/1/95:**

Closing on Fritts Park (canoe launch):	<u>\$10,100.28</u>
TOTAL:	\$10,100.28

Funds on hand as of 1/1/96:	Unrestricted Accounts:	\$15,809.64
	Emergency Fund:	11,589.72
	Public Relations Fund:	- 78.48
	Land Management Fund:	23,123.34
	Boardwalk Fund:	<u>1,873.61</u>
TOTAL:	\$52,317.83	

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Spikowski, treasurer

FUND RAISING REPORT

(by Norm Gowan)

T-Shirt sales are always a steady source of income. Last year's net income was \$494 under the guidance of members Don and Mary Shontz and Maxine Ingelse. The supply of shirts was nearly exhausted at year's end and no more were available from our old source. A new style shirt with a unique Land Trust design is planned for the near future.

Last March's shrimp dinner netted the Trust \$715, and a benefit dance hosted by the Pine Island Elk's Lodge brought in another \$439. The first plank on the boardwalk was raffled off at that dance and won by Frank and Judy Becker.

The third annual Pine Island Boat Club Poker Run on December 3rd brought in nearly \$3900 for the Trust from ticket sales and donations. People on about 60 boats managed to play almost 700 hands of poker, in spite of being lost in a dense fog for nearly two hours. The first prize was \$1388, half of which was donated back to the Trust by the winner!

A beautiful piece of artwork has been created by local Pine Island artist John Bredin for the Trust. Only 1000 numbered and hand signed prints will be available for a price of \$15. The scene is a map-like view of the Island and surrounding area overlaid with an eagle, pelican, green heron, dolphins and manatees. It must be seen to be appreciated; you will want one! They will be on sale at various events around Pine Island.

LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

(by Ed Chapin)

Our volunteers have made 1995 a record year for land management activities. We had a total of 34 work days from January 7, 1995 to January 13, 1996, with a grand total of 507 man/woman hours of donated labor. The specific breakdown looks like this: Calusa Island — 32 hours; Fritts Park — 246 hours; and St. Jude Trail — 229 hours. Fifty-three volunteers provided this labor, an increase from the 36 we had in 1994. Here are some of the many tasks that were accomplished:

- ▶ Removal of exotic plants, primarily Brazilian pepper, Australian pine and melaleuca.
- ▶ Removal of trash in the September coastal clean-up and throughout the year.
- ▶ Planting native trees and shrubs on the St. Jude Trail and at Bill Fritts Park.
- ▶ Opening a canoe trail from the Bill Fritts Park to our Big Jim Creek Preserve.

A list of our volunteers follows, with my deep appreciation for all the time and sweat they gave. I thank you all for making this an enjoyable year for me and for everyone involved. (I apologize in advance if I have left anyone off the volunteer list. Please let me know if I have.)

Hats Off to Our 1995 Calusa Land Trust Land Management Volunteers

Brenda Anderson	Dick Jephson	Earl Scot
Phil Buchanan	Bill Kemper	Mari Scot
Ed Chapin	Chic Kennedy	Raymond Shaw
Steve Deutsch	Bob Kessler	Don Shontz
Dean Dolbeck	Mike Latrino	Butch Snearly
Norm Gowan	Richard Little	Mitchell Swenson
Jimmy Green	Bob Mann	Don Taggert
Mike Green	Cindy Mann	Lucille Thompson
Sam Green	Dennis McKowski, Jr.	Neal Thompson
Ida Herbert	Dennis McKowski	Stan Tracy
Mike Herbert	Gail McKowski	Ted Watrous
Liz Hooks	Rick Moore	Mike Weinberg
Wyatt Hooks	Peter Ordway	Bill Workman
Bud House	John Orrell	Tish Wszolek
Shirley House	Sheila Orrell	Walt Wszolek
Harvey Ingelse	Cris Roggie	Steven Yerks
Maxine Ingelse	Phil Rosenberg	Letitia Zolek
Fred Jamsen	Chuck Sandburg	

I would also like to mention the excellent work done by the following individuals and businesses:

- ▶ Swenson Enterprises, for the exotic removal at Fritts Park
- ▶ Butch Snearly of B&D Mowing, for mowing the Fritts Park and St. Jude Trail
- ▶ Honc Construction for removing truckloads of exotics from the St. Jude Trail
- ▶ Harold Riehm of Pine Breeze Nursery for donating native plants
- ▶ Ted Watrous of Watrous Plantation for donating native plants
- ▶ Jan Baily for routing all the names on the planks for the St. Jude boardwalk
- ▶ Dennis McKowsky for donating a gate for the entry to the St. Jude Trail

It looks like 1996 will be a good year as well for land management activities. We already have 100 man/woman hours on the books for work done on the St. Jude Trail. We also would like to get our Volunteer Ranger Program started this year. If you would like to donate some time and labor, please call me (Ed Chapin) at 283-1167 in the afternoons or evenings.

FRITTS PARK CELEBRATION

Our major land acquisition project for 1995 was the new Walbridge Otto (Bill) Fritts Park. After months of negotiation, the purchase of an acre and a half of uplands covered with the remains of a mango grove (and Australian pines and Brazilian peppers) was completed. After a few more months, the pines and peppers were gone and there was a beautiful little park with nice grassy areas and native trees and bushes. The park's opening was celebrated November 26th with over 130 Trust members attending, including Peggy Fritts and her family and also the resident alligator in the adjacent irrigation pond. Speeches were made and a champagne toast given to highlight the event. Peg Fritts opened her historic cracker home for tours. The guided canoe tour to the Big Jim Creek Preserve had to be canceled due to an extremely low tide (but try it on your own!). This jewel of a park is now available and may be found in Bokeelia at the end of Beach Daisy Lane (just south of Pink Citrus).

PLUNK-A-PLANK CAMPAIGN

Construction of the boardwalk on our St. Jude Trail in the St. James Creek Preserve is now underway! Land Trust volunteers under the direction of Construction Foreman Chic Kennedy have erected 28 pilings and are about halfway through assembling the underlying structure for the 100 feet of boardwalk. Professional help will be hired to set the pilings out in the water for the observation deck.

Funds are being raised to pay for this project by selling planks on the boardwalk for \$50 each. Donors will be remembered in future years since the donor's name, or name of his choice, will be carved in the plank by long-time Trust member Jan Bailey. 110 planks have already been purchased and they are going fast. Boardwalk planks are only four feet long so names are limited to about 16 letters, spaces, and punctuation, but we will squeeze in all we can. Some members have solved this problem by using two lines: on two planks of course! A spot has been added to the membership application/donation form at the end of this newsletter to show your desire to sponsor a plank. **PLUNK DOWN A PLANK ON THE BOARDWALK!** Use the name line on the form to show exactly how you want the plank carved.

The observation deck overlooking tranquil St. James Creek has been designated as a memorial deck and those planks are being reserved for loved ones who are no longer with us. There is room for only about 30 planks on the deck and 12 of these have already been provided for.

During construction of the boardwalk, everyone noticed the beautiful view from the small high ground area at the very end; this spot has now been designated as "CALUSA POINT." Future plans call for a simple shelter to be built at another point about halfway down the trail to provide a place for walkers to rest a moment or get out of a quick summer rain. This has been funded to a large degree by a generous donation from the local KOA Campground at St. James City.

BOARD OF DIRECTOR NEWS

Don Shontz resigned from the Board late last year. He felt that his part-time residency prevented him from doing as much as he wanted, but luckily he has promised to continue to help out whenever he is here. He will continue to be a great asset to the organization. The nominating committee selected Richard Little to replace Don in the slate of Board members up for election this year. The other members on the slate were Alison Ackerman, Bill Spikowski, Chic Kennedy, Cindy Bear, and Rick Moore. They all were elected for a two-year term. Board members continuing for the second year of their two-year terms are Norm Gowan, Peter Ordway, Rich Larkin, Ed Chapin, and Bud House.

This Board elected officers at their meeting held on February 13th. The officers for 1996 will be as follows:

President	Rich Larkin
Vice-President	<i>[to be selected]</i>
Secretary	Norm Gowan
Treasurer	Bill Spikowski

LAND TRUST GETS GIS GRANT

(by Peter Ordway)

Last year the Calusa Land Trust received a donation of over \$12,000 worth of computer hardware, software, and training to enable us to develop a computerized mapping and data management system.

The Land Trust was among 30 private non-profit conservation organizations out of some 400 national applicants to be awarded this grant of GIS (Geographic Information System) materials. The granting organization was the Conservation Technology Support Program, a consortium of institutions including the Smithsonian Institution, Hewlett-Packard, and ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute). This grant consisted of the following:

1. ESRI ArcInfo and ArcView (GIS software)
2. Multi-media training kits for the software, including two weeks of free training
3. A 3' by 4' digitizing table from GTCO
4. Global positioning system (GPS) mapping system hardware and software from Trimble Navigation
5. Office Pro software from Microsoft

When someone is informed that the CLT has been given a grant of GIS materials, the first reaction is a blank stare followed by "What's that, and what does it have to do with land conservation?" A GIS is a computerized mapping system that allows the user to store information about specific geographic locations. For example, one can "point" to a particular location on a computer map, let's say a pond, and the computer could show what wildlife has been observed at the pond, how deep the pond is, or any other information that has been collected and stored about the pond. Or the computer could be asked to show all owners of land parcels in a particular environmental habitat and to print out the names and addresses of the owners. A very valuable feature of a GIS is the many types of printed maps that can be generated.

In order to make the most efficient use of the donation, we are going to work in cooperation with three other organizations in our area that share our goals of land preservation and environmentally sensitive land management. The Southwest Florida Aquatic Preserve, the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, and Cayo Costa State Park have expressed interest in working with us and sharing their expertise in designing an environmental database covering the area in which we are all active.

Several projects have already been started as we slowly learn how to use this new technology. The Lee County Property Appraiser has their own very complex GIS, and they are putting some of their land parcel ownership data in a form that our system can use. We will then be able to use this data to locate owners of parcels of land designated as

environmentally critical and ask them whether they may be interested in either donating the land or in placing a conservation easement on it. A land trust in Barnstable County, Massachusetts, obtained seventeen donations using this approach.

Also, we have started to construct a map of the Big Jim Creek Preserve. This map will show boundaries, plant and wildlife habitats, waterways, canoe trails, ponds, and specific locations of exotic vegetation infestation.

A third project in the planning stage is to take a series of aerial photographs of Pine Island and code them with reference to land use and natural vegetation areas using the categories developed in the Florida Land Use and Land Cover Classification System. Using our GIS capability, we will then be able to compare current land use patterns and natural habitat areas with data presented in a study done for the county in 1988. An analysis of the changes in land use on Pine Island over the last ten years could be helpful in setting priorities for the future acquisition of land by the CLT as well as by other state and county agencies. A professional pilot and aerial photographer has donated his services for the project next month. Some other possible uses of a GIS system suggested by members of the GIS committee are as follows:

1. Show areas already protected by state and federal agencies.
2. Show areas owned/protected by the CLT.
3. Locate possible future CLT acquisition sites.
4. Locate submerged aquatic vegetation in CLT areas and monitor changes.
5. Show deeper water channels where power boats won't damage submerged vegetation.
6. Locate sites for monitoring water quality and show results of sample data.
7. Map areas of exotic vegetation intrusion and monitor changes.
8. Show threatened and endangered species habitats; monitor changes.
9. Map erosion and storm damage; monitor changes.
10. Locate rookeries; collect and store population data.
11. Provide maps for users of established canoe trails.
12. PR for membership and fund-raising
13. Information source for educational activities conducted in the preserves.
14. Help for other organizations such as the Aquatic Preserve staff in their activities.
15. Guide for local residents.
16. Vehicle for membership participation in gathering data and by 'ground-truthing' data collected and published by other agencies.

If any readers of this newsletter are interested in learning along with us about how to use and apply GIS technology, please call Peter Ordway at 283-5918. We have various training materials including videos.

MEMORIALS

Few tributes are so lasting as a gift that helps preserve our Island's natural heritage for future generations. We in the Land Trust are privileged to carry on our work in the memory of individuals so honored.

Melvin Atkin	Ralph Brimacombe
Jack Campbell	George Darnell
Joyce Gasow	Jack Gates
Nancy Gilmore	Loren "POP" Gowan
Joe Hanson	E.S. (Red) Ingram
Lezlee Jean Ingram	Jack Kirmer
Edward J. & Amanda Lever	John Moran
Arthur & Ida Newberg	Edward Newton
Mildred V. O'Brien	Dorothy Seeling
William Sherwood	Agnes Jane Snyder
William Webster	Dorothy Welch
Walt Woodhead	

It is possible that other memorials have been donated in the past and not carried through from some of the old Trust records to the current database. If know of any name has been omitted, please notify us and we will add it to our records.

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, sometimes our long-time members have to reduce or eliminate active participation for personal reasons. We are not a closed shop and would like to encourage any of our members who are able to increase their participation beyond the donation level. 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 with him. If you would rather spend a few hours once or twice a month controlling exotic growths and creating nature trails, the Land Management Committee with Ed Chapin (283-1167) is the place for you

Fund raising can be fun. New ideas? Want to deal poker hands out on the water? Chairman Norm Gowan (283-8203), is the person to call. For biological types and computer buffs, we are implementing our Geographical Information System this coming year under the guidance of Pete Ordway (283-5918). If you are just interested in actively participating in managing this organization, inquire about joining the Board of Directors from any of those mentioned above. All board meetings are open meetings so if you just want to sit in and get a firsthand look, come on out. Call any of us for the time and place of the next meeting. We'd love to have you.

GARAGE AND YARD SALE TO BENEFIT CALUSA LAND TRUST SATURDAY - MARCH 16

We Need Your Stuff!!! Mark your calendars and please consider donating some of those things you haven't used lately and have been meaning to get rid of. The sale will be held at Ellen Jephson's house in St. James City. You can drop off items either there or at any of the following locations:

Ellen Jephson	3659 Schooner Lane, St. James City	283-8522
Gloria Andrews	7891 Barrancas Ave, Bokeelia	283-5020
Cari Caudill	2490 Harbor View, Matlacha	283-9710
Liz Hooks	16311 McNeff, Bokeelia	283-9151
Shirley House	3457 Gasparilla, St. James City	283-3493

These members will be organizing and running the sale. They would like donations of anything and everything, especially small items.

EXCITING SLIDE PRESENTATION: (by Cindy Bear) "Paddling to a Native American Point of View"

On Monday, March 18, the Calusa Land Trust will sponsor a slide program by Chuck Blanchard. Chuck is the author of the book, "New Words, Old Songs" about the Calusa and pre-Calusa people of southwest Florida. Chuck worked with the Florida Museum of Natural History directing the education programming of the "Year of the Indian" studies at Pineland. In this presentation, "Paddling to a Native American Point of View Archeology by Canoe," Chuck will share how he accesses the past through paddling the waters and traversing the shores in the way of people in the past. He will also provide the latest information on the water-borne cultures of southwest Florida. The program is based on an article which will be published in an upcoming edition of "Florida Anthropologist" magazine. The program will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Matlacha Park Recreation Building and is free of charge. For more information call 283-1125.

CALUSA LAND TRUST HOLDINGS AS OF JANUARY 1996

The Calusa Land Trust has been steadily acquiring land on and around Pine Island since being formed back in 1976. It has been in the last five years, however, that most of our holdings were acquired. To provide a better picture of exactly what we own, a detailed list follows, giving total acreage and assessed value. (In the next newsletter, we hope to begin including maps to help locate these preserves.)

<i>Big Jim Creek Preserve:</i>	<i>[Size]</i>	<i>[1995 Assessed Value]</i>
36-43-21-00-00001.0040	108.50 acres	\$10,850
36-43-21-00-00001.0050	108.50 acres	\$10,850
36-43-21-00-00001.0060	<u>108.50 acres</u>	<u>\$10,850</u>
SUBTOTAL:	325.50 acres	\$32,550
<i>Fritts Park:</i>		
06-44-22-00-00001.0010	<u>1.50 acres</u>	<u>\$10,500</u>
SUBTOTAL:	1.50 acres	\$10,500
<i>Calusa Island:</i>		
30-43-22-01-00053.0000	31.04 acres	\$ 3,100
30-43-22-01-00070.0010	<u>1.83 acres</u>	<u>\$59,470</u>
SUBTOTAL:	32.87 acres	\$62,570
<i>Matlacha parcel:</i>		
24-44-22-00-00046.0000	<u>1.78 acres</u>	<u>\$ 180</u>
SUBTOTAL:	1.78 acres	\$ 180
<i>McCardle Island [title in dispute]:</i>		
36-44-22-00-00003.0000	15.00 acres	\$ 1,500
31-44-23-00-00002.0000	25.00 acres	\$ 2,500
01-45-22-00-00002.0000	7.00 acres	\$ 700
06-45-23-00-00001.0000	<u>4.00 acres</u>	<u>\$ 400</u>
SUBTOTAL:	51.00 acres	\$ 5,100
<i>St. James Creek Preserve:</i>		
25-45-22-00-00003.0010	7.67 acres	\$ 770
26-45-22-00-00004.0020	37.17 acres	\$ 3,720
26-45-22-00-01004.0010	6.64 acres	\$ 660
35-45-22-00-00001.1000	182.01 acres	\$18,200
36-45-22-00-00001.0000	96.00 acres	\$ 9,600
01-46-22-00-00001.0010	14.33 acres	\$ 1,430
02-46-22-00-00001.2000	<u>10.23 acres</u>	<u>\$ 510</u>
SUBTOTAL:	354.05 acres	\$34,890
TOTAL:	766.70 acres	\$145,790

CALUSA LAND TRUST MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS:

_____ \$15 Individual Member _____ \$100 Contributor
_____ \$25 Family Member _____ \$500 Patron or Business Patron
_____ \$50 Donor or Organization _____ \$_____ for _____
_____ \$50 Plunk—a—Plank (*fill in below*) Sponsor's Name (*optional*): _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Second Address? _____

Second City, State, Zip? _____

Phone _____ Today's Date _____ Lettering on
Plank: _____

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