

**ANNUAL MEETING REPORT**

Alison Ackerman, Newsletter Editor

Calusa Land Trust's annual meeting for 1997 was held on January 25 at the KOA campground in their new clubhouse. About 40 members and interested friends attended. The reports in this newsletter cover most of the news presented by each committee chairman at the meeting, plus a few other noteworthy items and observations. First and foremost, as you read through what has been accomplished this year, from expanding the membership base to creating a park, building a boardwalk and even purchasing more land, you cannot help but share our awe at these accomplishments. In one way, we are no longer struggling to get the word out and raise a few dollars; but in another way, we seem to be at a crossroads where we can take the next big steps to expand.

Seemingly in response to this, two things happened at the annual meeting: The membership adopted an amendment to the By-Laws to increase the number of people that can serve on the Board of Directors. Instead of being limited to 11, we can now go up to 15. In addition, several people expressed interest in expanding the scope of the regular board meetings, perhaps advertising the date and place so more members might attend. The Board has since decided to do exactly that; see details below. Yes, we have come a long way since 1976 when Calusa Land Trust was formed, but we are definitely not through expanding. I am sure I speak for everyone in appreciating each and every member for contributing to this organization in their own way over the years. Here is my wish that in the days and years to come, there will be those same folks plus many more who will find a little time to attend a meeting, take a whack at a melaleuca, plant a gumbo limbo on the Nature Trail, buy a T-shirt, or even serve on the Board for a while.

Other annual meeting news includes election of this year's Board of Directors. Rich Larkin, Norm Gowan, Peter Ordway, Ed Chapin and Bud House were voted in for 2-year terms, joining Alison Ackerman, Rick Moore, Chick Kennedy, Bill Spikowski, Richard Little and Cindy Bear who are finishing out their 2-year terms in 1997. Unfortunately, since the annual meeting Cindy Bear has had to hand in her resignation. She will be sorely missed, but she intends to continue helping out with her expertise in environmental education.

Two amendments to our by-laws were approved. One, mentioned above, increased the number of Board members to 15 beginning next year, and the other changed the election of the officers to the first regular meeting following the annual meeting, instead of doing this right after the annual meeting. The Board has since held a meeting and the following officers were elected for one-year terms: President - Rich Larkin; Vice-President - Ed Chapin; Secretary - Norm Gowan; Treasurer - Bill Spikowski.

If you have not had a chance to visit the St. Jude Trail lately, you will be pleasantly surprised to find at the entrance our newly created Interpretive Trail Guide, created by Richard Little and Cindy Bear. It will guide you down the trail and not only explain various plants and animals but also be a thoughtful inspiration to you while enjoying nature's peaceful beauty. Richard presented his guide at the meeting and we thank him and Cindy for their efforts.

Before presenting all the various reports and announcements, I would like to recognize our new historian, Rubye Woodhead, who has taken over the duties of assembling the most recent pictures and news articles pertaining to Calusa Land Trust's endeavors. Kate Fitzgerald put our original album together and got us off to a terrific start. We are delighted that Rubye has agreed to carry on the tradition and get us organized and up-to-date once again. Thank you in advance, Rubye, for a difficult but most needed job.

## **MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** (283-8203)

Norm Gowan

As of the annual meeting of the Land Trust, the active membership stands at 521 which is a strong increase of 105 (23%) during the past year. Of these 521, 319 (61%) are current in their membership dues which is also a significant improvement for the year. Do you wonder if you are one of those 319? Take a moment to check the address label on this newsletter. If there is an asterisk by your name, then a year has indeed gone by since your last donation. By sending in your dues, that 319 figure can get even higher! We really appreciate your continuing support.

Another idea is to sponsor a new member as I have discussed in previous newsletters. Our membership is our real treasury and the greater our membership, the more lands we can

purchase and put into preservation. Thirty-five members have sponsored 96 new members since the inception of our “sponsorship” program. The HONOR ROLL is as follows:

Norm & Marie Gowan (25)	Leroy & Lene Lippmann (1)
Wayne & Shirley House (10)	Carol B. Newman (1)
Chic & Clara Kennedy (8)	James & Virginia Richey (1)
Peter & Patricia Ordway (7)	Larry & Kathleen Osgood (1)
Don & Mary Shontz (4)	Brant & Jane Stanford (1)
Ed Chapin (3)	Pat Waite (1)
Phil & Nancy Freeman (3)	Joseph & Josephine Williams (1)
Harvey & Maxine Ingelse (3)	Margaret (Peg) Fritts (1)
Rick & Silvia Moore (3)	Bob & Cindy Mann (1)
Susan Edwards et al (3)	Phil Buchanan (1)
Bill Spikowski & Alison Ackerman (2)	Betty Robey (1)
Island Hardware (2)	Don & Dottie Kernaghan (1)
Ralph Baker (1)	Karen Walker (1)
Gulf Coast Kayak (1)	Waterfront Restaurant (1)
Mike & Ida Herbert (1)	Al & Margie Walker (1)
Nancy Holabird (1)	Sandra VanCleaf (1)
Mary Shaw (1)	Bruce Van Slyke (1)
Bob & Jean Speckman (1)	

Add your name to the Honor Roll. Sign up a friend or relative or give a membership as a gift. Many have.

## LAND MANAGEMENT REPORT

Ed Chapin

Over the past several months our superb volunteers have been working diligently on improving the canoe trail that goes from Fritts Park near Bokeelia to our Big Jim Creek Preserve. This has been very tough work. Richard Little is heading up this project and would especially like to thank Ken Keller and Ward Howard who have gone above and beyond the call of duty. There is still much to be done and Richard organizes workdays almost every other Saturday. If you would like to help, please call him at 283-4974. He could really use some new blood so please consider giving him a hand.

Speaking of volunteers, we are in need of a few more able and willing souls who love the fresh smells and calm beauty of the outdoors and don't mind a little bending, snipping, raking, pulling, and digging on the side. As you know, every volunteer we have enables us to stretch our dollars and acquire more land. I am especially asking for help in exotic plant control, trail building, helping to organize all our shell artifacts at our Calusa Island Preserve, and monitoring. The last job entails a willingness to patrol our preserves and

note anything unusual that might require attention. I am always updating the volunteer list, so please give me a call even if you only have a little time to spare. Any hour here and there is well appreciated.

Our regular work day is the first Saturday of each month. However, we have a special workday scheduled for March 15 at 9 A.M. to work on creating a nature trail within the county's eagle preserve in the St. James Creek Preserve. During February, volunteers started this project along with Roger Clark from Lee County Parks and Recreation Department. We plan on continuing these efforts over the next few months while the weather is so good. For more information or for a chance to volunteer at any time, call me at 283-1167 between 10 A.M. and 6 P.M. weekdays.

## **BACK BAY CAMPAIGN**

The latest addition to our preserves, the 186-acre Back Bay area in St. James City, was purchased from island builder Charlie McKenzie for \$20,000 this past year, and the campaign to replace these funds is progressing nicely but is not yet complete. To date, 85 contributions totaling \$14,300 have been received. A Back Bay celebration was held on December 8th at the residence of Joe and Jimmie Eisenberg, to whom we give our sincere thanks. Those members making a donation of \$100 or more were feted as "Honored Guests" and given a pontoon boat tour of the new area. "Honorary Deeds" for the area are also being awarded to \$100 contributors. It is still not too late to get yours!

## **SONGWRITERS MUSIC FESTIVAL AT FRITTS PARK**

Over 100 people were treated to some great music, performed by those who wrote it, on a beautiful sunny January 11th. Fritts Park provided an ideal setting, with the stage protected by an old boat sail suspended from four pine tree poles, and many in the audience seated on pine tree logs cut from the area. The event raised about \$400 and could become another annual fund raising activity for the Trust, as well as a great time for all.

## **PLUNK-A-PLANK CAMPAIGN**

This year-long campaign to pay for the construction of a boardwalk and memorial observation deck on the St. Jude Nature Trail has been a towering success! 304 planks have been purchased for a total of \$15,100. Construction is being completed under the sharp-eyed guidance of construction superintendent Chic Kennedy.

We are no longer seeking contributions for this project but there is still some room left on the hand rails for a few more names if you would like to be "immortalized" in wood with

your name carved in a plank by long time Trust member Jan Bailey. A Seminole-style “chickee hut” has also been constructed about halfway out the trail for anyone wishing to rest a bit or get out of the sun or rain. Space does not permit us to list all of those volunteers who devoted countless hours working on this project, but our thanks go out to all of them. Everyone, please come out to the trail and admire the result!

## MEMORIALS

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

Johan C. F. Andersen *	Melvin Atkin *	Vesta Bailey *
Marge Borton *	Ralph Brimacombe *	Jack Campbell
John M. Campbell *	Arnold Ceimalnieks *	Ben Counselman *
George Darnell	Louis Del Signore *	Woodie Dillon *
Dr. Ambrose C. Estes *	Joyce Gasow *	Jack Gates*
Nancy Gilmore	Loren “POP” Gowan *	Anne Grace *
Alfred Woodhull Guibord *	Joe Hanson *	Earl Hord *
Allen Hougland *	E.S. (Red) Ingram *	Lezlee Jean Ingram *
Walter R. Kaune *	Jack Kirmer *	Edward J. & Amanda Lever
Hector Magnuson *	Lewis W. McAllister *	Ethel McDonough *
M. Kathleen Mellon *	John Moran	Arthur & Ida Newberg
Edward Newton	Mildred V. O’Brien*	Earl Ott *
Fred Patterson *	Frank Polaski *	Yolanda Mae Reppa *
Gertie Rudd *	Dorothy Seeling	William Sherwood
Dan Shockley *	Agnes Jane Snyder	Frank Taugner, Sr. *
Kay Taugner *	Leonore M. Vondervor *	William Webster *
Dorothy Welch	Edith Williams *	Margaret L. Wilson, M.D.
Walt Woodhead *	Bruno & Theresa *	

*\* Indicates name on the St. Jude Trail Memorial Observation Deck.*

## RUMMAGE SALE

You may remember the rummage sale organized last March by the House, Ingelse, and Jephson families. They raised \$900 for the Trust with that event. Well, we are happy to announce that another sale is planned this year for March 22. It will be at the Jephson home at 3659 Schooner Lane, just off Sanibel Blvd. in St. James City, from 8 A.M to 2:00 P.M. Please gather up your unwanted treasures and drop them off at one of the following locations: 16311 McNeff Rd., Bokeelia; 7891 Barrancas, Bokeelia; 3457 Gasparilla, St. James City; 2490 Harbor View Dr., Matlacha; or 3659 Schooner Lane, St. James City. Contact Shirley House (283-3493) or Ellen Jephson (283-8522) if you have any questions.

## **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)**

This system continues to be developed by Trust member Pete Ordway. He is now producing some basic maps from the computer and was able to make others for last year's Poker Run fund raiser and the Christmas Boat Parade. His next job is to produce a map for each of the Land Trust's preserves. This is an incredible undertaking and we thank him for his time and expertise.

## **CELEBRATE ST. PAT'S DAY AT THE PINE ISLAND ELKS AND BENEFIT THE CALUSA LAND TRUST**

All members, friends and guests of Elks or the Calusa Land Trust are invited to the Elk's Lodge, at Pine Island Center, for an afternoon and evening of good food, fellowship and music. Starting at 1 P.M. on Monday, March 17, dinners of corn beef and cabbage (or sandwiches) will be served continuously. Music will start at 3 P.M. with a sing-along by Jimmie and company. Come out and enjoy this traditional day of fun and feasting. Money raised during the celebration will be donated to the Calusa Land Trust. We hope that many of you will join us on March 17.

## **VOLUNTEER WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM**

The staff of the D.E.P Aquatic Preserve Pine Island field station is inviting members of the Calusa Land Trust to join other interested citizens in participating in a newly forming Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program to regularly assess the condition of the estuaries surrounding Pine Island. Volunteer monitors will work in teams of two or three, and each team will collect and analyze water samples at an assigned site within one hour of dawn each month. The Pine Island group will be responsible for monitoring 10-15 sites in the Pine Island Sound and Matlacha Pass estuaries. Some of the sites are accessible by car or on foot, but others will require use of a boat to reach the site. Training and necessary equipment will be provided by the Aquatic Preserve professional staff. Training sessions will begin in April and the teams will start monitoring in May.

The Pine Island participants will be a part of a wider Water Quality Monitoring Network of 40 sites in the Charlotte Harbor National Estuarine Preserve. Nationwide, there are several hundred Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Programs, some of which have been in operation for over ten years.

Water quality monitoring is just one of several activities of a new Citizen Support Organization (CSO) being organized to assist the environmental specialists of the Aquatic and Buffer Preserve with the implementation of their management activities. Volunteers are being sought to become involved with resource management, research, resource monitoring, education and public outreach. People with a variety of backgrounds and skills, including writing, organizing, computers, and boating, as well as marine science, are needed. No experience is necessary; and training will be provided when needed. If you would like to learn more about these opportunities to help make a difference in the protection and stewardship of our environmentally sensitive natural habitats, or to volunteer to participate in the Water Quality Monitoring Program, call Judy Ott or Carla Kappmeyer at the Aquatic Preserve Office, 283-2424. You may also call Peter Ordway, who is acting as Calusa Land Trust liaison with the Aquatic Preserve Staff, at 283-5918.

# CALUSA LAND TRUST MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15 Individual Member                      \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Contributor  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 Family Member                      \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 Patron or Business Patron  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Donor or Organization                      \_\_\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Back Bay Land Purchase      Sponsor's Name (*optional*): \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

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