

Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



Newsletter

www.calusalandtrust.org

November 2001

Another New Pine Island Nature Preserve

By Phil Buchanan

Our partnership with Lee County's Conservation 2020 program continues to reap rewards, as we add yet another joint nature preserve to Pine Island. In late October a Miami group agreed to sell their property to the program for \$490,000, \$10,000 of which will be paid by the Calusa Land Trust. This preserve will be owned by Lee County and jointly managed jointly by the county and CLT.

This new preserve is labeled #155 on the aerial photo and contains 105 acres on the west side of Stringfellow just north of York Road, with about half in native upland slash pine and palmetto and the other half in red mangroves. The west and southwest portion of the property abuts the State Buffer Preserve, and the southwest portion of the property also abuts a road and canal that serve the electric transmission lines to Sanibel. The canal leads to open water and will make a perfect canoe/kayak launching area (once we establish an access trail).

It's possible, perhaps likely, that the preserve will eventually be greatly expanded because both the properties to the north (105-acre Indian Lake area, labeled #185) and the property to the south (52-acre Galt Lake area, labeled #152) are also under negotiations for similar purchases.



Other Land Acquisition News

by Phil Buchanan

In other acquisition committee news, we continue to negotiate for the purchase of an area to establish a large nature preserve in the Bokeelia area, as well as for the purchase of a kayak destination/camping island in northern Pine Island Sound. We also have several members who plan to give significant tracts of native properties to the CLT later this year. We should be able to announce all of those by our next newsletter. We also continue to work with the state government for an arrangement to preserve Picnic Island.

As always we have had our share of failed negotiations. Purchase of the property across from Winn-Dixie, our proposed Central Park, does not seem likely (although we won't give up until the concrete dries), and our efforts to purchase mangroves in northeast Pine Island have not succeeded. However, the Board of Directors has authorized the land acquisition committee to attempt to negotiate several other purchases, and we continue to dicker prices with several Pine Island landowners. We do not have any successful conclusions to announce since our last newsletter. Lee County Conservation 2020 nominations both by the CLT and by land owners are plentiful—we have 14 nominations in various stages of the process. Most of them will probably not work out, but a few most likely will and thus make all our efforts worthwhile. Our partnership with the Lee County Conservation 2020 program has been and undoubtedly will continue to be very fruitful.

We have also tried hard to partner with the state of Florida in conservation efforts, but “Florida Forever” and the other state programs are difficult to match to either Pine Island or even Lee County needs. Nonetheless, our efforts will continue. In addition, we are exploring possible partnership arrangements with federal government entities as well as other nonprofit land trust organizations.

Notice of Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting will be held on Sunday, January 20, at 1:00 PM at the Fishers of Men Lutheran Church located at 10360 Stringfellow Road, 1/4 mile south of Pine Island Road. Mark this meeting date on your calendar; a separate notice will **not** be mailed.

In addition to reports on CLT activities, we will be holding elections for the Board of Directors. The following board members have agreed to run for another two-year term: Alison Ackerman, Phil Buchanan, Bill Spikowski, and Rubye Woodhead.

Four current board members have decided for various reasons to step down from the board. Richard Little, our current President who has done so much to promote Calusa Land Trust within our community and beyond, will unfortunately not be running again; the good news is that he vows to stay very active in many of our projects. Jim Gray has moved to Orlando so is unable to finish out his term; George “Chic” Kennedy, long-time board member and our construction superintendent, is stepping down due to other personal commitments during the coming year; and Pat Williams has agreed to continue to be our “Sales Rep” and creative genius for T-shirts, hats, and other merchandise, but would rather not serve on the board at this time. We are extremely grateful for all the efforts that these four champions of conservation have performed during their tenures.

Our bylaws allow up to 15 people on our board or directors. With the above resignations we have up to four openings. The Nominating Committee is recommending two well-qualified candidates who are willing to serve two-year terms. Harold Bruner is a recent transplant to St. James City after finishing his career as a forester for the state of Indiana; he is now associated with Pine Island Realty. Anna Riehm is a long-time island resident and former nursery owner, now with Realty World in Matlacha. Nominations will also be taken from the floor during the annual meeting.

President's Message

by Richard M. Little

This has been a year of honors for the Calusa Land Trust. In June, the Linda Pederson Award for the Outstanding Land Trust Volunteer for 2001 was presented to Dr. Phillip Buchanan, our CLT vice president, land acquisition chairman, and editor-author of the book, "The Nature Lovers Guide to Pine Island." Phil received the award at the Florida Land Trust Conference that was held this past June in Naples.

On October 2nd the Calusa Land Trust was honored to receive the Allen Morgan Award for Membership Development. The Land Trust Alliance (LTA), an association of land trusts from across the USA and abroad, presented this award at the National Land Trust Rally 2001 conference in Baltimore, Maryland. Ed Chapin, chief ranger, attended the Rally and accepted the award on our behalf. It included \$1,000 in recognition of our outstanding membership growth, member participation, and land preservation efforts. See Ed's article for more details.



From left to right: Charlie Morgan, son of Allen Morgan; Ed Chapin; Stephen Johnson, Executive Director, Sudbury Valley Trustees; Jean Hocker, President, Land Trust Alliance.

Land Trust Rally - Allen Morgan Award

By Ed Chapin

I was very honored to represent Calusa Land Trust at the LTA Rally. The Allen Morgan Award recognizes excellence in membership development by a trust with one or no full-time staff members that best exemplifies the ideals that Allen Morgan embodied during his tenure as executive director of the Sudbury Valley Trustees and the Massachusetts Audubon Society. At the presentation I recognized Norm Gowan as being the one most responsible; as most of you already know, he has worked very hard to not only develop and maintain our membership but also raise money through his innovative fundraising ideas such as the Poker Run and the Rubber Duck Race. I also acknowledged all our current and past directors as a *working* board who have volunteered their time and energies to make our land trust an organization we are all proud of. In closing, I thanked all of our members and community volunteers who truly have formed the backbone of CLT, supporting what we do year after year with their memberships, donations for special projects, and countless hours to maintain our lands and help with a variety of profitable and fun events.

Afterwards many people wanted more details about our creative fundraisers and also congratulated us in doing so much without any paid staff. The whole experience was incredible – it was great to represent our organization and the Pine Island community. There was one other award presented besides ours: Sarah James, a Native American of Arctic Village, Alaska, received the American Land Conservation Award for actively working on stewardship of their native lands where there are still healthy populations of grey wolves, wolverine, moose, musk ox, grizzly bears, and vast herds of caribou.

While at the rally, I learned that there are now 1,263 land trusts in America holding 6.5 million acres of land under protection, up 240% since 1990. At the Rally, 450 of these trusts were represented with about 1,600 people attending workshops about the varied aspects of operating a successful land trust. I was able to attend six workshops and will give reports in later newsletters.

Ranger Report

By Ed Chapin

On September 10 the Ranger Council met at Fritts Park. We reviewed our Junior Ranger program which we hope to begin again this fall with the fifth graders at Pine Island Elementary. Phil Russo from the Fire Department was on hand to propose that we have our Junior Rangers, new and old, plant 500 longleaf pine tree seedlings on Arbor Day. He will help us coordinate this worthy project. Cathy Valenti discussed how she is matching adult rangers with teams of Junior Rangers to work together on specific preserves (a great way to keep the youngsters involved).

Five volunteers from CLT and the community picked up half a dumpster of trash from the west end of Calusa Island on Coastal Cleanup Day.

Jack Worthington, who heads up the Fritts Park Committee, reported that progress is being made getting the park ready for the outdoor Music on Pine Island (MOPI) concert series this winter, but help will definitely be needed before and after each concert. There is a big tent to erect, chairs to arrange, and traffic to direct. Afterwards, everything must be taken down and the grounds cleaned up. If you can help, please give Jack a call at 283-3448.

Finally, we set the dates for the next several work parties and canoe trips. Please refer to the charts below and be sure to call me anytime for information – my beeper number is 392-0090 or you can reach me via e-mail at ecalusaed@aol.com.

For our guided canoe trips, the times and launch sites will be sent out via e-mail to anyone on my current list. If you would like to be included, please let me know and I will add your name. Otherwise, give me a call and I will be happy to tell you the times or launch sites before each event. Please notice that half the trips are now on Sundays. Each outing lasts about 3 to 4 hours and the suggested donation is \$15 per canoe/kayak. We do have some extra canoes and kayaks if anyone needs one; please advise us in advance.

WORK PARTIES

Saturday, December 1	9:00 AM	Calusa Canal, Meadow Lane
Saturday, January 5	9:00 AM	Long Cut Preserve, Hopkins Point, St. James City
Saturday, February 2	9:00 AM	Calusa Island Preserve, end of Aura Lane
Saturday, March 2	9:00 AM	Baxley and Dobbs Preserves, Sable & Mango in Tropical Homesites, St. James City

GUIDED CANOE TRIPS

Sunday, November 18	Calusa Island
Saturday, December 15	Big Jim Creek
Sunday, January 13	Back Bay
Saturday, February 16	Underhill Creek
Sunday, March 17	St. James Creek
Saturday, April 20	Smokehouse Bay

T-SHIRT SALES

By Pat Williams (283-8589)

We now have a special-edition T-shirt with a U.S. flag and bald eagle. They are only \$12.00 and we have sizes ranging from small adult through 3X. In addition, you can purchase the CLT golf shirt with an osprey emblem; they are \$20.00 in sizes from small adult through XL; and we continue to have the Calusa Canal T-shirts in small adult through XL.

Orders may placed with Pat Williams at 283-8589. Remember, these make great holiday gifts!

FUND RAISING PROJECTS

By Norm Gowan (283-8203)

POKER RUN - December 2 — The 9th annual Poker Run on the water will take place on December 2, 2001. The Pine Island Boat Club sponsors this event and all profits are donated to CLT. Last year's event awarded over \$1,500 in prize money to the best three poker hands and all three winners were land trust members! Income to the land trust was over \$3,500. If you cannot boat around the course, you can send your tickets with a friend or we will get them carried for you. You do not have to be present but it is a day of fun at the Waterfront Restaurant in St. James City so do consider coming out. Tickets are \$5 per hand but anyone making a donation of \$100 to the land trust receives five **free** tickets from the Boat Club. Tickets will be sold at the Waterfront Restaurant and the Double Nichol Pub or by mail if you like. Watch the Pine Island Eagle for more details.

PLUNK-A-PLANK — We continue to carve names on the St. Jude Trail boardwalk handrails and memorial benches: 553 so far! For only \$50 (approximately 20 letters) you or perhaps a loved one can be immortalized. Visit the trail when you can; it is so relaxing.

RUBBER DUCK RACE — The 3rd annual Rubber Duck Race has been scheduled for March 30, 2002, at the Double Nichol Pub in beautiful downtown St. James City. Up to 2,000 rubber ducks will be swimming down the Monroe Canal this year. More details will follow in our next newsletter and in the Pine Island Eagle.

Calusa Canal, Phase III

by Bud House

Now that we have successfully purchased two parcels of land on Meadow Lane, which were part of the ancient Calusa Indian Canal across Pine Island, we are actively working on Phase III and looking for our third parcel. The Board of Directors had voted to acquire all six parcels on the north side of Meadow Lane to save this portion of the canal. Unfortunately our attempts to find a seller that will sell at today's market price has been unsuccessful, but we remain determined. In the meantime, maintenance efforts have been ongoing for the lots we do own. All of the large exotics have been eliminated and the smaller ones are being dealt with slowly but steadily. Over 30 baby pine trees, both longleaf and slash pines, have been discovered in the Phase II parcel and we have every intention in nurturing their growth. White wooden stakes have been placed adjacent to each baby tree to protect and identify it. An archaeological investigation in January, 2001, disclosed that the canal was constructed about 950 AD. If you have any thoughts, suggestions, or questions, please call Bud House at 283-3493.

Rummage Sale – December 8, 2001

By Shirley House

Plans are proceeding for the CLT rummage sale, scheduled for Saturday, December 8, 2001. It will be held from 8:00 AM until 12:00 PM at Fritts Park just south of Pink Citrus Trailer Park. Members are requested to gather materials to donate and drop them off at the park from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Friday, December 7. If you have larger items to be donated, please call me at 283-3493. The recent improvements at the park will allow for more items to be displayed and will also allow the volunteers to display the sale items more conveniently. Remember, we need both volunteers and sale items to make this event a success! Please call if you can help. Thanks.

Membership Report

by Norm Gowan (283-8203)

Our Land Trust currently has 770 members of which only 433 (56%) are current in their membership donations. If an asterisk (*) appears after your name on this newsletter's mailing label, you are among the 44% that we have not heard from in the past twelve months. While we pursue several fund-raising projects, they are but a small portion of our annual income – it is your memberships that really make the difference.

Getting to Know Your CLT Directors

This newsletter will introduce three more of the directors who serve our members:

- # **Jim (Alex) Alexander:** Alex and his wife Jan moved from Culiacán, Mexico, to St. James City in 1998. He combines living in paradise with his career as an associate professor at the University of Maryland, business and government consultant in commerce, and “e-business” as an independent consultant in international business marketing and training. When do you get time to fish, Jim? A very congenial guy with lots of skills to bring to our board of directors' work. Great to have you with us, Alex!
- # **Joan Culver:** Joan came to Pine Island in 1997 after living many years in another quite different island, Manhattan, N.Y. She brings skills in construction management and artistic talents, “combining the esthetic senses with practical application.” Joan loves being part of native land restoration and the outdoor work it involves. Welcome aboard, Joan!
- # **Richard M. Little,** CLT President: Richard joined the CLT in 1992. He and his wife Claudia moved to Pine Island in 1991 from the Rochester area. He worked many years in electronics and human factors engineering and with retirement, he and Claudia embarked on a second career in massage therapy. He finds that nurturing the healing of people has a lot in common with nurturing the healing of mother earth and her wild denizens.

CALUSA LAND TRUST MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS:

_____ \$ 15	Individual Member	_____ \$____	Next 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 _____

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