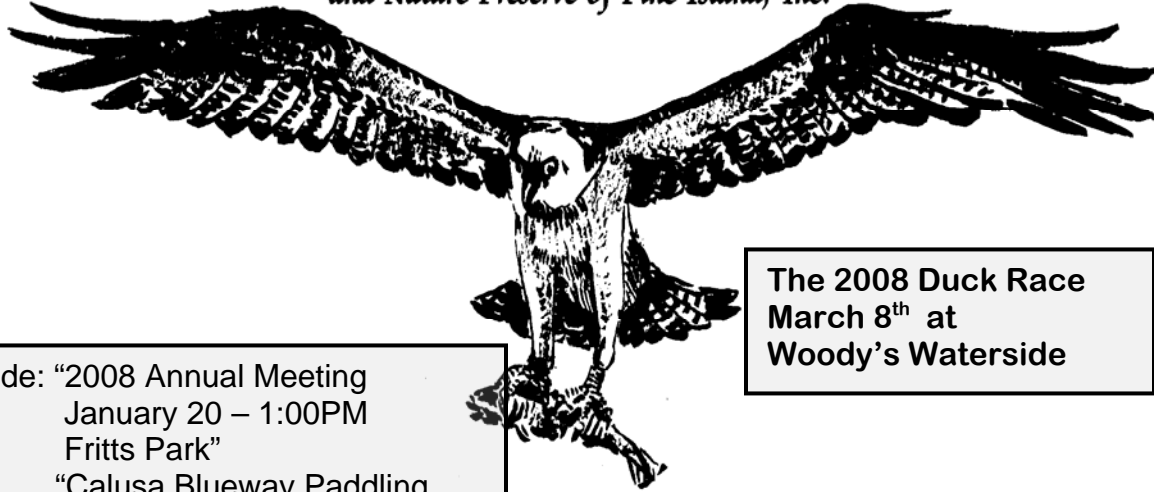


Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



Inside: "2008 Annual Meeting
January 20 – 1:00PM
Fritts Park"
"Calusa Blueway Paddling
Festival Report"

The 2008 Duck Race
March 8th at
Woody's Waterside

Newsletter #56

Founded 1976

December 2007

www.calusalandtrust.org

2008 Annual Meeting

by Joan Culver (995.1615)

The 2008 annual meeting of the Calusa Land Trust and Nature Preserve of Pine Island will be held at 1:00 PM on Sunday, January 20. The location is outdoors at Fritts Park five miles north of Pine Island Center. Turn left at Beach Daisy Lane just south of the Pink Citrus Trailer Park. Bring a neighbor or a friend!

Following on the popularity of last year's delicious buffet, lunch will again be served after the business meeting. The folks at J.D. Hollway's Waterfront Restaurant in St. James City will provide the fare and donations will be accepted and appreciated. Live music will be provided to round out a festive afternoon.

Committee chairs will present reports on membership, land acquisition, land management, canoe trips, and current projects. If you know someone who may be interested in learning how land trusts work,

bring them along. We want to hear from you so bring your questions and comments. The nominating committee has proposed that the following board members be re-elected for another two years: Alison Ackerman, Brenda Anderson, Harold Bruner, Brian Cotterill, Liz Donely, Bill Spikowski and Rubye Woodhead. In addition, Phil Rosenberg has been nominated as a new board member and additional nominations will be taken from the floor during the annual meeting. There are seven members who will continue their two-year term during 2008 they are: Alex Alexander, Ed Chapin, Joan Culver, Norm Gowan, Judy Ott, Ron Wesorick and Donna Venesky. Elections for board membership will be held after the business meeting.

Hope to see you there. In case of rain, look for signs at the crossroads at Pine Island Center directing you to the alternate meeting location, the Fishers of Men Lutheran Church located at 10360 Stringfellow Road, ¼ mile south of Pine Island Road.

President's Message

by Harold Bruner (464.2436)

Smart Growth:

There is an ongoing controversy over the destruction of Willow Lake. During the process of clearing land for a project that is supposed to provide housing for farm workers the developer has allegedly cleared a seasonal shallow wetland known as Willow Lake. The CLT has a 3-acre preserve referred to as Willow Lake that is quite close to the development but there is no reason to believe that our property was disturbed. It is too early to know how the issue will be resolved but it raises the broader issue of growth and development.

The CLT is certainly not an anti-growth organization. But we do support the concept of Smart Growth. If you're not familiar with this concept visit www.smartgrowth.org. The Pine Island Comprehensive Land Use Plan incorporates a lot of Smart Growth principles. Concern for environmentally sensitive lands is one of the principles that appears to have been ignored in this development.

Growth is going to continue on Pine Island. We just hope that developers (and individuals) will be responsible and will attempt to incorporate Smart Growth principles. When that is done, everyone will benefit.

Individual Responsibility:

Several weeks ago someone shared a thought that has stuck with me: "Nothing changes if nothing changes." That is a simple but powerful concept. If you are a CLT member you probably have an above average appreciation for our natural environment. What we do in our own homes and in our own yards impacts our neighborhood, our islands, our estuaries and beyond. Too often we overlook the collective power of the individual. The old adage comes to mind that we have met the

enemy and it is us.

Water quality issues are constantly in the local news – red drift algae, high bacteria counts, declining water levels in our aquifers, polluted water dumped into our estuaries, and the threat of nutrient runoff from golf courses, agricultural activities, and our own yards.

Since learning is often the result of repetition let me restate some things that each of us should consider doing:

- **Use native plants**
Native plants require no irrigation after establishment, have fewer pest problems and require no fertilizer.
- **Conserve water**
Instead of watering St. Augustine grass all winter consider a lawn of Bahia grass. Better yet, let nature fill the void and mow whatever grows.
- **Recycle, reuse and reduce**
Refill water bottles with filtered tap water. Set a goal of one bag of trash a week.

We should all work at being a part of the solution rather than a part of the problem.

WildChild Art Gallery becomes Calusa Land Trust Sponsor

by Alex Alexander (283.7400)

We are extremely pleased to announce that WildChild Art Gallery in Matlacha has agreed to focus the majority of its charitable event giving for the next year for the benefit of the Land Trust. This includes donations and gifts from their *Chocolate Sundays* held the first Sunday of every month, their *Art Night* events also held monthly during season, a special painted Fish Measuring Board fund raiser (boards donated by Jim from the *Nautical Mile* and

painted gratis by WildChild artists), and a grand finale fundraiser (to be announced) coming at about this time next year. As you see, this is a very serious commitment on their part.



Peggy McTeague – owner of WildChild Gallery in Matlacha.

Here is what Peggy McTeague, owner of WildChild had to say: “We are extremely pleased to be supporting the Calusa Land Trust. We are very happy to contribute to their mission of buying and managing environmentally sensitive lands as it benefits all of us.”

To learn more about their upcoming events, go to www.wildchildartgallery.com, or stop by their gallery in Matlacha.

Note: Volunteers are needed to help CLT on Chocolate Sundays (January 6, February 3, March 2, and April 6.) Also volunteers are needed for Art Nights (January 11, February 8, March 14, and April 11.) Contact Norm Gowan or Ron Wesorick to volunteer.

Merchandise Committee

by Gloria Andrews (283.5020)

The Merchandise Committee is planning for an energetic and prosperous year. We will be staffing many more venues on the Island this year with plenty of “Merchandise”. All items will be on display and available for purchase at the Annual CLT Meeting in January. “House Parties” are being booked. Give some thought to hosting a “Fuzzy Mango Clothesline” house party of your own. Schedule during the

season to help fill the CLT coffers. The host or hostess can earn a free outfit for selling a specific quota at “his or her party”.

The CLT fishing shirts have been big sellers and we will have plenty again this year. We always welcome volunteers for sewing, sorting & selling.

TOURS & TRAILS

by Brenda Anderson (283.1878)

CALUSA LAND TRUST PARTICIPATES IN CALUSA BLUEWAY PADDLING FESTIVAL

What a fun event! The Calusa Land Trust was well represented at the Pine Island portion of the Calusa Blueway Paddling Festival that was held in Matlacha November 2-4, 2007.

Betsy Clayton, Waterways Coordinator for Lee County Parks and Recreation let us set up our large display of the CLT paddling & hiking trail maps next to their booth. She was a great help, manning the display when I could not be there, promoting our trips and up-dating me with last-minute participant sign-ups for the guided tours. Many people stopped by the display and obtained information about the land trust.

We took out a total of four guided trips to our various preserves:

- **Calusa Island Preserve** – Twenty-seven, yes 27! kayaks with Ed Chapin leading in his canoe departed Saturday, November 3, at noon from Jug Creek Cottages in Bokeelia and paddled to our Calusa Island Preserve where Ed took everyone on a tour of the island. This event was coordinated with our annual series of Peter Ordway Tours which allowed the newcomers from the paddling festival to get acquainted with some of our loyal paddling members.
- **Back Bay Preserve** – The sunset paddle to our Back Bay Preserve left

Saint James City at 4:00 pm on Saturday, November 3. Liz Donley led the group of paddlers on a tour along the south end of Pine Island and into the preserve, winding through the intricate mangrove tunnels and bays. While watching the spectacular sunset at the end of the trip, dolphins were spotted close by and we were visited by heavy-breathing mammals - manatee, which surfaced within a few yards of our boats! What a perfect ending to a beautiful paddle.

- **Underhill Creek Preserve** - On Sunday morning, November 4, the wind that had been blowing hard all week completely died for our 9:00 am launch into the now glassy waters of Matlacha Pass. Thank You! We left from the small county park at Tropical Point and paddled across the pass to our Underhill Creek Preserve. While paddling up the winding creek, a bright pink roseate spoonbill streaked across in front of us, the first sighting of a roseate for some of the paddlers. We came upon numerous other avian sentinels, including white ibis, great blue heron, black crowned night heron and osprey. The mullet were thick in the shallow waters and nearly hit our boats when they leapt and crashed sideways back into the water. On the way back across Matlacha Pass we paddled past a small island rookery with pelicans covering the trees on one end and turkey vultures, patiently watching, but keeping their distance, on the opposite end.



Getting ready to launch at Underhill Creek

- **Saint Jude Trail** – Ed Chapin led a walking tour of our Saint Jude Trail in Saint James City on Sunday, November 4 at noon. He shared his extensive knowledge of the native plants as well as the history of the trail with the appreciative hikers. The newly cleared Trailhead Vista property facilitated the access to the trail and provided an overall view of the preserve.

We hope to have enough volunteers available next year to be able to set up our own booth at the festival in Matlacha Park to sell our T-Shirts and other CLT items as well as displaying our trail maps. So mark the first weekend in November (tentative date) on your calendars to come out and help with the booth and the trips. It's really a lot of fun!



Betsy Clayton at the CLT display during the Calusa Blueway Paddling Festival.

KAYAKERS CLEAN UP CLT PRESERVES AT ANNUAL MONOFILAMENT MADNESS EVENT IN SAINT JAMES CITY

Once again, the Waterfront Restaurant was the gathering place for Pine Island participants in Monofilament Madness, sponsored by Keep Lee County Beautiful. The marine cleanup is an annual event during which volunteers go out in boats, kayaks, canoes, and anything else that floats, to remove monofilament fishing line and other harmful debris from the mangrove areas of Lee County.

Members of the Southwest Florida Paddling Club joined CLT kayakers who, this year, paddled from the beach at the end of

Oleander to the Calusa Land Trust's Long Cut Preserve and York Island to clean up that area.

In addition to fishing line, other trash was pulled out of the mangroves by the kayakers including a couple of old tarps, chunks of Styrofoam, and a plastic garbage bin. This trash was all precariously balanced on the small crafts for the trip back to the beach.

After the cleanup, Keep Lee County Beautiful provided a delicious catered BBQ chicken lunch at the Waterfront Restaurant for the volunteers complete with live music for entertainment.



Bruce and Brenda head out for monofilament madness.

Visioning Committee

by James "Alex" Alexander (283.7400)

As our members know, the primary focus of the Calusa Land Trust remains the same: to aggressively buy, co-buy, or support the purchase of all environmentally sensitive land on or around Pine Island.

The other main component of the CLT mission is to effectively manage all the lands under our stewardship. This is becoming even more important as the number of preserves grow and our acreages increase. Therefore, the Visioning Committee was formed to develop a strategy and a plan to enhance our land stewardship while not sacrificing any efforts toward acquisition. Our approach is based upon building a management plan for each of our preserves, complete with desired results, proposed actions, anticipated timelines. To help create and implement these plans we need to find Preserve Rangers--individuals willing to lead the management of one preserve. The land trust will give plenty of

support, but good management practices require one person to steer the ship.

We'd like to talk to anyone interested in considering assuming this role. It can be a very rewarding and fun experience. Please call Alex now at 283-7400 to talk about becoming a Preserve Ranger.

20/20 Highlights Acquisition News

by Harold Bruner (464.2436)

Acquisition efforts continue to focus on encouraging new 20/20 nominations and facilitating those in the works. There are four nominations that are doing well at this point:

20/20 Nom. 068-2

This is 80 acres of mangroves west of Pine Island Center. This has passed secondary review and is being pursued for acquisition. We have pledged \$5,000 to this parcel.

20/20 Nom. 346

This is a 34-acre palm farm that would tie together the two big Flatwoods Preserve pieces. Negotiations are underway to purchase this property. We have pledged \$10,000 to this acquisition.

20/20 Nom. 363

This is 18 acres of mangroves on the south side of Pine Island Road at the east edge of Matlacha. This has passed secondary review and is being pursued for acquisition. We have pledged \$2,500 to this parcel.

20/20 Nom. 368

This is 189 acres of mangroves west of Fritts Park in Bokeelia. It includes the mouth of Big Jim Creek and is less than 1/4 mile south of our Big Jim Creek Preserve. This has passed initial review and is set for secondary review. We have pledged

\$5,000 for the acquisition of this parcel.

Conservation 20/20 has an excellent website where you can learn all about the program, view a calendar of upcoming meetings, and get a great map of existing preserves and nominations. All of this can be found at www.conservation2020.org

MEMBERSHIP

by Norm Gowan (283.8203)

Membership Report:

We currently have 889 members with 426 (49%) current in their dues. In an effort to improve our paid up membership level we are now preparing a special appeal to members that we have not heard from in two years. We are in a pinch right now with our major restoration expense for the Trailhead Vista and our commitments to the County's 20/20 Program. So please help us out. Now is the time that we might be able to take advantage of the depressed real-estate market and pick up a good buy. So take a good look at the address label on this newsletter and if there is an asterisk (*) following your name, please consider making your membership contribution now!

Many members are choosing to use credit cards (M/C or VISA only!) to make their donations. If this is more convenient for you then, by all means, do so. Records of card numbers are shredded after posting!

2007 Membership Drive:

The vast bulk of our income is made up of donations from our wonderful members!! We need to increase our income in order to attack new projects so... Let's increase our membership! Our membership continues to hover around the 800 level. Some join, some move away and some die. We must continue to cultivate new members!!

We have started a brand new 2007 membership campaign. We are asking every member to sign up at least one new member. Ask a friend, neighbor or relative

to join us. Maybe buy them a membership as a gift to get them started. What a fine Christmas present that would make! Become a new member's sponsor. Make sure that your name appears on their application so that I can keep track of the results.

Major recruiters will be announced in 2007 newsletters and final results announced at our annual meeting in 2008. There will be a suitable reward!

FUNDRAISING AND 100 DAYS TO \$100K CAMPAIGN:

The initial response is OK but there is a long way to go! So far 17 donors have contributed \$9,450! Won't you hop on the bandwagon and help make this vision come true?

We have already "skinnied" our bank account to buy Trailhead Vista and do some critical initial exotic removal. We need another \$100,000. Therefore, I am introducing the "100 Days to \$100K" promotion to help make Trailhead Vista into the outstanding preserve it can be.

Everyone who donates either \$10,000, \$1000, or \$100 will be recognized (if you want) at this new gateway to St. Jude Trail. Let's see if we can fill it up with the names of scores of our members! Please send your donation via check or credit card in the special enclosed form and envelope. Thank you for keeping our Land Trust great.

The Wish List

by Harold Bruner (464.2436)

Wanted:

Used Boat with Outboard Engine

In the last issue I introduced the idea of a Wish List where people could support the CLT with contributions of talent, time, money, labor or specific items. Although he is hesitant to do this on his own, on behalf of Ed Chapin, our land stewardship chair, I

would like to see if a member or friend would be willing to donate a used boat with an outboard engine. Through a combination of events the older boat and engine that Ed has used to help manage CLT lands over the years is no longer functional. A large boat is not needed because of the shallow waters around Pine Island. Something in the range of 15-17 feet in length with a 30-50 hp engine would be ideal. One person might have a boat and another an engine. Please give me, Ed or any other board member a call if you can help us out.

Ranger Stewardship Report



Ed Chapin - Chief Calusa Land Trust Ranger
By **Gracie**, the Ghost Writing Gopher Tortoise

A big thank you to all our volunteer Rangers! Couldn't do it without y'all. On **May 5th**, the monthly work party had a small group of 4 volunteers who went out to Long Cut Preserve in St. James City to do follow up on invasive exotic plant control, mostly Brazilian Pepper and Australian Pines. We also picked up some trash. **June 2nd**, work party. We had a good turnout of 11 people going out to Picnic Island in St. James City where we found *lots* of trash, maybe half a dumpster load. We are having trash problems on this preserve.

July 5th, work party. We had a small party of three dedicated rangers who worked on plant trimming and trail maintenance along

the St. Jude Trail. We cancelled our usual, summer, native planting projects this year because of the extended drought.

August - Vacation :)

September 8th, work party. We had 8 brave volunteers who boated out to the Peter Ordway Tropical Hammock and the Kreie Preserves, on the northwest shore of Bokeelia, for invasive exotic plant control and trail maintenance.

September 15th, work party. Three rough and ready rangers went out to Picnic Island for coastal cleanup and found only five bags of trash that day - a big improvement.

September 16th, Jimmy Green came out to Calusa Island and four back breaking hours later, we got the beach trail finally re-opened since Hurricane Charlie's damage.

September 18th, I joined three County 20/20 staff going out to Cayo Peleu Island for overall coastal cleanup, signage installation and the start of opening up some rough trails.

October 6th, work party. Six of us went boating in St. James City - 2 to Picnic Island and 4 to the Back Bay Preserve. Both teams picked up trash (Picnic Island is looking much better - only two bags of trash picked up over the entire Island - shows the value and necessity of consistently paying attention to trash pickup). The Back Bay Preserve team did extensive trimming and rough trail opening to beat back heavy invasive plant growth and picked up a lot of trash that had washed up along the shore.

Ongoing - Kudos to the Bokeelia Boat Club who has adopted Calusa Island Preserve as a "Service Project". They have done a terrific job over the last year in cleaning up Charlie debris along the beach and controlling invasive plant materials in areas used by Calusa Land Trust members and volunteers. Who else wants a service project?

See the "Events Calendar" on the web at www.calusalandtrust.org for work party schedules.

_____ \$ 15 Individual Member _____ \$ ____ Endowment Fund
_____ \$ 25 Family Member
_____ \$ 50 Donor or Organization _____ \$ _____
_____ \$100 Contributor
_____ \$ 50 Plunk-a-Plank
(fill in lettering) _____

CREDIT CARD #: **Visa or MasterCard only**

--	--	--	--

EXPIRES: _____ / _____

Your Name: _____

Sponsor: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Alt Phone _____

Second Address: _____

Second City, State, Zip: _____

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 239-334-8866 DURING WORKING HOURS. THE CALUSA LAND TRUST NEVER EMPLOYS PROFESSIONAL FUNDRAISERS; 100% OF YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS ARE RETAINED BY THE CALUSA LAND TRUST.

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

**2008 ANNUAL MEETING
JANUARY 20 - 1:00PM
FRITTS PARK**