



Island Parks Insider

Quarterly Newsletter for the Friends of the Island Parks

www.islandparks.org

January 2004

Honeymoon Island Seafood Fest Successful Despite Weather

Despite Mother Nature, more than 23,000 people attended the 4th Annual Honeymoon Island Seafood Fest and Boat Show Thanksgiving weekend.

The event featured three days of live entertainment; boats, RV's and cars; arts and crafts vendors; delicious seafood and other tasty treats and carnival rides galore.

Mother Nature also sent a cold front with rain and a breeze.

Osprey Village featured the environmental treasures of the park including guided walks on the Osprey trail, and nature-themed exhibits from local environmental organizations. Thanks to the many volunteers who graciously providing workshops and talking to curious visitors about our treasures.

Perry Parasco of Palm Harbor was the lucky winner of the drawing for the seven-day Carnival Cruise. Many thanks to **Bill and Kris Gray** of Ships-N-Trips, who donated the cruise.

Proceeds from the event support the Friends of the Island Parks and the Dunedin Chamber of Commerce. Thanks to emcee **Dave Kaufman** who kept the show moving and promoted the cruise drawing throughout the festival.

Event sponsors were First National Bank of Florida, St. Petersburg Times, Oldies 104.7, Ships-N-Trips, LogoPro.com, Toronto Blue Jays, Dimmitt Chevrolet, Vision ACE Hardware Dunedin, Huettig Electric, and Carlson & Meissner.

Activities of Interest on Honeymoon & Caladesi Islands

- ◆ **Painting Party:** January 24 & 25. Join us 10 a.m. to paint Café Honeymoon. Wear painting clothes.
- ◆ **Member Outing:** February 14. Guided walk on the Osprey Trail. 10 a.m. Meet at Café Honeymoon.
- ◆ **Member Outing:** March 13. Activity TBA.
- ◆ **Caladesi Island Kayak Race:** March 20. The "Caladesi Challenge" is a kayak race highlighting Caladesi Island. Volunteers needed. Register to race at

www.active.com.

- ◆ **Dunedin Beach Sprint Triathlon:** June 6. Swim, bike and run to benefit the Visitor's Center. Volunteers needed.
- ◆ **Ranger's Choice** every Saturday from 11 a.m. to noon. Park Rangers guide visitors in a tour.
- ◆ For more information about volunteering, call (727) 469-5942.

From the President:

Dear Friends,

If you haven't been to the park recently, drive or bike out and take a look at the new color scheme for the tollbooths and bathhouses. Pay particular attention to Bath House 3 and the sign announcing its metamorphosis into the new Visitor Center at Honeymoon Island. The projected date for building completion is February 2005.

Our proceeds from the 2003 Honeymoon Island Seafood Fest will reduce the amount still to raise for the center by approximately \$15,000. I want to thank everyone who volunteered, visited the event (despite some daunting weather on Friday and Saturday) and purchased tickets for the cruise drawing. Every bit helped!

Osprey Village was a great success and shows the need for permanent exhibits and an expanded nature tour program at the parks year round. We hope to expand the exhibits and tours for next year's festival. Let me know if you'd like to learn the tour and become a guide. In order to make this year's event successful, over 200 dedicated people expended over 2,500 volunteer hours.

Our next fund-raising effort for the Visitors Center will be a weekend paint party at Café Honeymoon. We will be painting the exterior of the café in the new Florida colors.

Check the website, too, for special Friends events on the free entry day (second Saturday) each month. We'd love to have you join us.

From the islands,

Sally
Phone: 727-733-7762
E-mail: slhess731@mac.com

Plans for Visitor Center Develop Quickly

The two Dunedin Rotary Clubs (Dunedin and Dunedin North) have adopted the Visitors Center as a fundraising project to honor the Rotary centennial.

Bathhouse #3 will be renovated to become the Visitor Center which will house exhibits, a media room and environmental displays.

The renovation is estimated to cost \$225,000. The two Dunedin Rotary Clubs have committed to raising \$45,000 each to contribute to the Visitor Center.

Displays will be professionally designed to highlight the environment of Honeymoon Island and surrounding areas. Exhibit sponsorships are available.

The leadership of the Friends of the Island Parks appreciates the assistance of the two Rotary Clubs

and wants to thank all their members for their tireless support.

In February 2005, the planned opening of the Rotary Centennial Visitor Center on Honeymoon Island will coincide with the Rotary Clubs celebrating 100 years of promoting world peace and understanding.

For information on supporting the Visitor Center please contact one of the following:

- ◆ **Sally Hess**
Friends of the Island Parks
(727) 733-7762
- ◆ **Dave Kaufman**
Rotary Club of Dunedin
(727) 459-4339
- ◆ **Sonny Thornton**
Rotary Club of Dunedin North
(727) 734-0886

Park Manager's Report

Happy New Year from Gulf Islands State Parks,

As we begin the new year, I'd like to reflect on 2003 and share some projections about 2004.

In 2003, our plans to build a Visitor Center got a much needed boost when the two Rotary Clubs of Dunedin adopted the project for their centennial celebration. We have been on a fast track to raise the funds for project completion in February 2005. I am very pleased that the structure and the exhibits will be built during 2004.

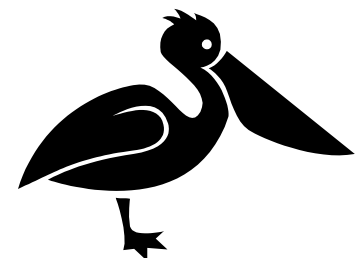
In 2003, several scenes from the movie **The Punisher** were filmed on Honeymoon Island. As a result, we've been given permission to change the color-scheme of our buildings. Watch as our buildings change colors.

In 2003, Friends, staff and volunteers hosted a spooky Halloween weekend. Next year, Halloween falls on Sunday so our event should be the spookiest ever!

For 2004, there are plans for a beach renourishment project that should help sand collect and stay near Café Honeymoon. This should boost our park attendance to near 1 million visitors a year.

Regards,

Scott Robinson, Park Manager
Gulf Islands State Parks



Friends Donate Tree to Honor Folkman Baby

On November 8, several members of the Friends group gathered to plant a tree in the picnic area to honor the birth of Ethan Craig Folkman, born May 7, 2003.

Ethan is the son of Friends members **Ellen and Carl Folkman**.

Ellen has served on the Board of Directors since its creation two years ago. She has also served as the chairperson of the Honeymoon Island Seafood Fest and Boat Show. She resigned that chairmanship position after the 3rd Annual Festival to focus on her new family.

Ellen and Carl have been longtime supporters of Honeymoon Island State Park and the Dunedin Chamber of Commerce.

Friends will miss her on the Board but are pleased that the Folkman's will continue as members.



Ellen Folkman holds Ethan Craig while he touches the tree planted in his honor.



Ellen and Ethan watch while Carl plants the tree.

Osprey Village

the Educational and Environmental Experience of this Year's Honeymoon Island Seafood Fest and Boat Show

Osprey Village is an educational area within the Honeymoon Island Seafood Fest and Boat Show dedicated to the preservation of our natural environment.

Osprey Village was jam packed with fun and interesting displays from state and local environmental agencies. The Clearwater Marine Aquarium, Clearwater Audubon, Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary, the State of Florida Park Service and the Friends of the Island Parks joined together to make Osprey Village a very exciting focal point of the festival.

Join Friends of the Island Parks

Show your support of our local parks by joining the Friends of the Island Parks.

Membership levels are:

General:	\$ 25
Non-Profit:	\$ 50
Corporate Memberships:	
Bronze:	\$ 100
Silver:	\$ 250
Gold:	\$ 500
Platinum:	\$1000

Visit www.islandparks.org to print an application.

Café Honeymoon Extends Weekend Hours

Café Honeymoon has extended its hours on the weekends. Park visitors can now enjoy pancakes Saturday and Sunday mornings. The Café is also open until sunset on the weekends.

Presentations on sea turtles, birds, plants, fossils and fishing techniques filled the "village" earthen stage area. The Osprey Village interpretive nature walks on the Osprey Trail were very popular. Over 120 people were introduced to this treasure within our park.

Many who came to the festival to eat the seafood, listen to the music, ride the midway carnival rides or view the boats left with the added benefit of learning what Honeymoon Island is really all about ... its precious natural resources.



**Happy
New Year!**

Member Benefits

As a member of Friends, you will enjoy the following valuable benefits:

- ◆ Newsletter: Members receive a quarterly newsletter with interesting articles, important dates and so much more.
- ◆ Voting: Each membership entitles you to one vote.
- ◆ Dues and donations are 100% tax-deductible.
- ◆ Member picnics and socials.
- ◆ Member days: Members may visit the parks for free on the second Saturday of every month.
- ◆ The knowledge that your dues and donations will be used to directly support your favorite parks.

Triathlon Scheduled for June 6

Honeymoon Island will host the Dunedin Beach Sprint Triathlon / 2004 Race through Xanadu on June 6. The event will feature a 1/4-mile swim, a 12-mile bike ride and a 3.1-mile run. The race will begin at 7:15 a.m. The Dunedin Causeway will be used for the bike portion of the race but the rest will happen on Honeymoon Island.

Cost to enter is \$45 per individual registration or \$90 per team. Proceeds benefit the Dunedin Rotary Clubs that are raising money to support the Rotary Centennial Visitor Center on Honeymoon Island.

More than 1000 athletes are expected to participate. Volunteers are needed for this event.

Friends Meeting Schedule

Meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Interpretive Trailer on Honeymoon Island. For more information, contact Shane Bittaker at (727) 736-2132.

Winter 2004 Meetings:

- ◆ Tuesday, January 20
- ◆ Tuesday, February 17
- ◆ Tuesday, March 16

Visit Honeymoon Island and Caladesi Island Today

Friends News and Kudos

Thanks Capt. Harry

Thanks to **Capt. Harry Beck** of Marine Max for donating 20 life jackets to equip one of the park's boats for the CSO trips to Three Rooker Bar and Anclote Key on November 8. Boating safety is very important. Thanks a bunch.

Thank You ...

It was Delicious

The snacks for our monthly meetings are delicious and appreciated.

- ◆ Thanks to **Linda Taylor** for October.
- ◆ Thanks to **Deborah Lemmon** for November.
- ◆ Thanks to **Scott and Martha Robinson** for hosting the December meeting and Holiday Social.

Remember to log those hours!!

Please remember to keep track of your volunteer hours. It helps the parks track labor needs. Hours add up and are worth some great gifts such as Park passes and stylish ranger hats. For more information on how to log those hours contact Shawn Yeager at 469-5942.

Nominations for Friends Board of Directors

At the November meeting of the Friends group, the following people were nominated and elected to the Board of Directors.

Capt. Harry Beck
Shane Bittaker
Bill Gray
Sally Hess
Martha Robinson
Linda Taylor

Thanks, Jacques

Thanks Jacques for sharing home movies of your personal encounter with spotted dolphins off the coast of Bimini, Grand Bahama. **Jacques Marion** works at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

Buy Your "Friends" License Plate Today!

Show everyone that you support Honeymoon and Caladesi. Put the Friends of the Island Parks license on your car for \$5. The Friends license plate is available at the Honeymoon Island toll booth or at the Café Honeymoon gift shop. Buy yours next time you visit the park.

Many Thanks...

to all who volunteered during the 4th Annual Seafood Fest and Boat Show Seafood Festival. It took many people to work this event. Mark your 2004 Calendar for November 26, 27 and 28.

Remaining on the Board are Don Bergeron, Stephanie Bergeron, Dave Kaufman, Gabriella Mullins, and Scott Robinson.

Officer elections will be held at the January 20 meeting of the Friends of the Islands Parks.



Friends of the Island Parks

1 Causeway Boulevard
Dunedin, FL. 34698
www.islandparks.org

2003

Board of Directors

Officers

President	Sally Hess
V.P.	Shane Bittaker
Treasurer	Linda Taylor
Secretary	Stephanie Bergeron
Membership	Stephanie Bergeron

Board Members

Capt. Harry Beck
Deborah Lemmon
Ellen Folkman
Dave Kaufman
Scott Robinson
Don Bergeron
Gabriella Mullins

Contact Us

Please send your questions or suggestions to Stephanie Bergeron at stephsb@tampabay.rr.com.

Telephone

Gulf Island State Parks:
Scott Robinson, Park Manager
Honeymoon Island:
(727) 469-5942
Caladesi Island:
(727) 469-5918
Volunteer Hotline:
(727) 298-2305



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