



Island Parks Insider

Quarterly Newsletter for the Friends of the Island Parks

www.islandparks.org

January 2005

Kayak Race to Challenge Paddlers

The 2nd Annual Caladesi Kayak Challenge has been scheduled for the morning of Saturday, March 5.

Last year, thirty-five racers paddled in the first-ever kayak race hosted by the Friends of the Island Parks.

We have added a few divisions and the 8-mile race will feature a complete rounding of Caladesi Island, including a portage at the south end where Caladesi meets

Clearwater Beach.

You can register at our website, www.islandparks.com, or visit www.active.com.

Many thanks to **Rob and Karen Mirlenbrink** for agreeing to organize the race again this year. Their paddling expertise and knowledge of the sport makes this a great opportunity for local paddlers to discover the islands.

Activities of Interest On Honeymoon & Caladesi Islands

- ◆ **Friends meeting:** Tuesday, January 18, 7:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express in Dunedin. The meeting will feature a presentation on tidal pools.
- ◆ **Planning Session,** Saturday, January 22, 10 a.m. at the Park Managers Residence. We will plan our activities for the year.
- ◆ **Friends meeting:** Tuesday, February 15, 7:30 p.m. at the Interpretation Building.
- ◆ **Caladesi Kayak Challenge:** March 5. Sponsors and volunteers needed.
- ◆ **Friends meeting:** March 15, 7:30 p.m., Interpretation Building.
- ◆ **Island Fest:** April 29 from 5 to 9 p.m., April 30 from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and May 1 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Volunteers needed.
- ◆ **Grand Opening of Rotary Centennial Nature Center on Honeymoon Island:** TBA
- ◆ **Caladesi Coffee** for Boaters: Call for dates.
- ◆ **Race Thru Xanadu II:** June 5. The Rotary Club of Dunedin sponsors this triathlon.
- ◆ **Ranger's Choice** park tour every Saturday at 11 a.m.
- ◆ For more information about volunteering, call Karen Le Blanc at (727) 469-5942.

From the President:

Dear Friends,

"Make no little plans" is the phrase you could use to refer to the past two years as we raised funds to build the Honeymoon Island nature center. For 2005, I think we need to make a lot of little plans. In other words, success is "in the details."

Please come help us at the 2005 porch planning session to be held Saturday, January 22nd at Scott and Martha's - on the porch. We will begin at 10:00 a.m. and try to finish by 2:00 p.m. Please bring a bag lunch and we will provide beverages and dessert. All members and prospective members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

A new year also brings changes to our board of directors. We will sorely miss those directors leaving us: **Captain Harry Beck, Dave Kaufman, Shawn Yeager, Don Bergeron and Scott Robinson.** Tremendous thanks to each of you for all you have helped us accomplish! And we look forward to your recommendations and support in the future.

I'd also like to welcome all new board members. I know you'll have great ideas and lots of energy and enthusiasm to share with us over the coming years.

From the islands,

Sally

Phone: 727-733-7762

E-mail: slhess731@mac.com

Web: www.islandparks.org

Visit Honeymoon and Caladesi Islands Today!

Join Us for Island Fest

Join us Friday, April 29; Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1 for **Island Fest** on Honeymoon Island.

You'll enjoy food, music, arts & crafts and outdoor recreation—all beachside.

The event will run Friday, 5 to 9 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Music will include steel drums, reggae and classic rock and roll. Food will feature something for everyone, including seafood and all kinds of delicious treats.

There will be boats, RVs, outdoor recreation equipment, a bungee ride, climbing wall and more.

Osprey Village will expand its menu of environmental exhibits,

seminars and hands-on fun.

For a \$5 donation, you may enter a drawing for a Carnival Cruise for two people for 7 nights with an ocean view stateroom courtesy of **Bill and Kris Gray** at Ships N Trips. It includes tips, taxes and fees on any Carnival ship.

Only 3000 drawing tickets will be distributed. You can find the tickets at Island Fest, the Dunedin Chamber of Commerce or Café Honeymoon.

The cruise will be awarded on May 1, 2005 at 4:30 p.m.

Proceeds from the event support the Friends of the Island Parks and the Dunedin Chamber of Commerce.

Park Manager's Report

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year. I hope this finds you resolving to use Caladesi Island and Honeymoon Island State Parks for fun, exercise and relaxation.

Do you have an idea that would improve the island parks? Here's your chance.

In February, we will hold a Public Workshop to seek input from the community for the revision of the land management plans for both Caladesi Island and Honeymoon Island State Parks. These plans deal with the facilities and management of the parks and are designed to govern for a maximum of 10 years. They are then reviewed for changes through the same process.

It is important that the public participate in the development of the land management plans. This is the only way for Florida State Parks to effectively meet the needs of the users and the community.

The meetings will be held Wednesday, February 9 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hale Activity Center, 330 Douglas Avenue in Dunedin, FL.

I hope to see you there. Bring all your good ideas about ways to improve the parks and better meet your needs for fun, exercise and relaxation.



Scott Robinson, Park Manager
Gulf Islands State Parks

Take Pride in Florida Event Nets Thousands of Hours in Volunteer Hour Pledges

On October 23, Honeymoon Island hosted Florida's flagship event to honor the Take Pride in Florida initiative.

The nationwide event began with speeches from **Secretary Colleen Castille** of Florida's Department of Environmental Protection, **Fran Mainella**, Director of National Parks and others.

Overall, volunteers and Friends members pledged to donate more than 7500 hours over the next year to help Florida's natural lands recover from the four hurricanes.

Volunteers at the event on Honeymoon Island participated in a clean-up of the main beach, north beach and pet beach; a kayak-based

clean-up of St. Joseph Sound, a clean-up of Osprey Trail and the planting of native plants to protect the island from further erosion. More than 890 hours were donated during the event.

More than 100 volunteers participated at Caladesi Island, which was toured by Secretary Castille after the press conference on Honeymoon Island.

Volunteers were asked to pledge at least 10 hours of volunteer service to Florida's public lands (local, state or federal.) Many people pledged many more than 10 hours.

You may still volunteer. Pick up a form at Honeymoon Island State Park.

Friends Nominate New Board Members

Every year, Friends nominate themselves and their friends for a spot on the Board of the Friends of the Island Parks.

Re-elected for another two-year term are **Stephanie Bergeron** and **Gabriella Mullins**.

Newly elected to the Board for a two-year term are **Megan Cagle, Scott Hood, Pat Linn, Jacques Marion, Captain Sam Marshall** and **George Skalkeas**.

Remaining on the Board are

Shane Bittaker, Bill Gray, Sally Hess, Sam Martin, Martha Robinson and **Linda Taylor**.

The Board meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. before the General Meeting at 7:30 p.m.

In January 2005, the Board will meet to elect officers for the new year.

Thanks to volunteers who give their time to the Board.

Nature Center Work to Begin

The contract for moving Bathroom 4 from the beach to its new location on St. Joseph Sound was awarded to Dolphin Constructors. Work should begin on January 10. They have 120 days to substantial completion and 30 additional days for punch list items.

Plans for the interior renovation are complete. Work can begin after the building is moved.

The exhibit design is underway. The exhibits will be ready for installation when the interior renovations are complete.

Stay tuned for the date of the Grand Opening. This is very exciting.

Caladesi to Host Boaters' Coffee Hour

Boaters on Caladesi Island may now enjoy meeting with each other over coffee and pastries on select Saturday mornings in the marina. Asst. Manager **Shawn Yeager** hosts the boaters and talks with them about the island and the Friends group. Call the park at 469-5918 for dates.

Many thanks to **Ships N Trips** for sponsoring some of these Coffee with a Ranger sessions.

Remember to Log Those Hours!!

All Friends volunteers are encouraged to complete a volunteer agreement. Volunteers are also asked to track volunteer hours. Now it's super easy. Just log onto www.islandparks.org and do it on the web! Hours add up and are worth great fun and great gifts. For more information, contact **Karen Le Blanc** at 469-5942.

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.

Friends Meeting Schedule

Meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Honeymoon Island's Interpretation Building. For information, contact Stephanie Bergeron at (727) 234-3587.

Winter 2005 Meetings:

- ◆ Tuesday, January 18 at Holiday Inn Express, Dunedin
- ◆ Tuesday, February 15
- ◆ Tuesday, March 15



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.

Friends News and Kudos

Thank You ...

It was Delicious

The snacks for our monthly meetings are delicious and appreciated.

- ◆ Thanks to **Linda Taylor** for providing snacks during the October meeting.
- ◆ Thanks to **Gabriella Mullins** for snacks during the November meeting.
- ◆ Thanks to everyone who attended the December party at the home of **Scott and Martha Robinson**. We enjoyed the cool ocean breeze and the bonfire.

Happy New Year

Many Thanks!

Thanks to the Rotary District for the Simplified Grant of \$4000 to be used to support the Nature Center. The funds were used to purchase books for training tour guides and a laptop computer.

Halloween Thanks

Thanks to the many volunteers and staff members who helped with Rest in Pieces VII, our Annual Halloween haunting of the picnic area on Honeymoon Island.

Each set was carefully planned and spooked. As usual, the Park Rangers did a fabulous job designing new sets. Did you see the saloon and can-can girls?

Thanks also for the generous donations to support the event from **James and Patricia Ostrosky, Rosebud Ranch** and **Café Honeymoon**.

The Friends group raised approximately \$5000 on this fun (yet exhausting) project.

Congratulations and thanks!

Welcome

New Members

The following people joined the Friends of the Island Parks group in October, November and December 2004. Please welcome them.

- ◆ **Cristine and Don Baer**
- ◆ **Howard Benjamin**
- ◆ **Kevin and Lisa Cahill**
- ◆ **Dave Foster**
- ◆ **Bob Meadows**

Polo Shirts Available

You may now order Friends of Island Parks polo shirts for \$25 each. They are embroidered with the Friends logo. Other merchandise will soon be available. See **Stephanie Bergeron** for details and an order form. Delivery time varies.

Buy Your Friends Plate Today!

Put the Friends of the Island Parks license on your car for \$5. The Friends license plate is available at the Café Honeymoon gift shop. Buy yours next time you visit the park.

Meeting Spaces

Thanks to **Ken Carson** for use of the **Blue Jays** Conference Room for our September meeting.

Thanks to **Gabriella Mullins** for use of the **Holiday Inn Express** meeting room for the October, November and January meetings.

The remodeling of the Interpretation Building should be complete soon.



Friends of the Island Parks

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

2005

Board of Directors

Stephanie Bergeron, Secretary and Membership
Shane Bittaker
Megan Cagle
Bill Gray
Sally Hess, President
Scott Hood
Pat Linn
Jacques Marion
Capt. Sam Marshall
Sam Martin
Gabriella Mullins
Martha Robinson, Vice President
George Skalkeas
Linda Taylor

***Officers will be elected in January 2005.

Contact Us

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

Telephone

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



Friends of the Island Parks

Visit us at www.islandparks.org