



# Island Parks Insider

Quarterly Newsletter for the Friends of the Island Parks

www.islandparks.org

July 2005

## Nature Center Update

Progress is being made every day to ready Bath House 4 for its new job as the Rotary Centennial Nature Center at Honeymoon Island.

On April 7, it moved from its place on the beach to its new location on St. Joseph Sound.

The contractor is busy building the ADA ramps, stairways and decks for the structure.

The roadways and parking areas have been cleared and will be paved soon.

We are seeking bids for the interior renovations. There will be an exhibit area and a classroom/media room. Exhibits will be ready for installation when the interior renovations are complete.

Stay tuned for the date of the Grand Opening. We'll celebrate the hard work and success of many people who helped to make all this happen.



*Grand stairway to the Rotary Centennial Nature Center at Honeymoon Island.*



*View of St. Joseph Sound from the deck of the Nature Center.*

## Activities of Interest

### On Honeymoon & Caladesi Islands

**Friends meeting:** Tuesday, July 19, 7:30 p.m. at the Osprey Center on Honeymoon Island. The program will be about the best ways to protect your windows during severe storms.

◆ **Friends meeting:** Tuesday, August 16, 7:30 p.m. at the Osprey Center on Honeymoon Island.

◆ **Friends meeting:** Tuesday,

September 20, 7:30 p.m. at the Osprey Center on Honeymoon Island.

◆ **Golf Tournament** to benefit Caladesi Island, August 13 at Lansbrook Golf Club. See Page 2 for details.

◆ **Caladesi Breakfast with a Ranger** for Boaters: August 21 and September 4.

## From the President:

Dear Friends,

We're meeting tonight on the deck of the Rotary Centennial Nature Center at Honeymoon Island. It's not finished, of course – the interior work hasn't even begun – but the building is at its new location and the exterior work is nearing completion. It's a great view up here! I can't wait for you all to see it.

Our annual Caladesi Kayak Challenge, Island Fest and the Race through Xanadu are all behind us for this year – and all were very successful despite some tricky weather during Island Fest. We're introducing a lot of new people to the parks and using them (people and parks) in many different ways. With your help, we plan to continue this trend.

This August will be the first ever golf tournament to benefit Caladesi Island. We're talking about a series of adventure races utilizing both islands and expanding the kayak race to a series. There is also talk of a wine/art affair in our future as well.

Right now our focus is on launching the training for nature guides and planning a GRAND opening for the nature center.

Please join us for any and all of these exciting programs and events.

From the islands,

Sally

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Web: www.islandparks.org

# Congratulations to **Caladesi Island State Park** The **#4 Beach** in the U.S. according to Dr. Beach

## Caladesi Hosts Gulf Winds/Marine-Max Appreciation Weekend

Caladesi Island State Park hosted the **Annual Gulf Winds / Marine-Max Appreciation Weekend**, May 13 through 15, 2005.

The park's 108-slip marina was at capacity with Sea Rays and Boston Whalers of all sizes. Over 300 boats lined the shoreline throughout the weekend, with more than 2,000 visitors attending the event.

Attendees enjoyed fun, sun and great food! Some of the activities included a beach olympics, kayaking, a model boat construction contest, and picnic Bar-B-Que,

catered by Hungry Harry's of Land O' Lakes, FL.

This successful event was made possible by Caladesi Island State Park staff and volunteers, Florida Park Patrol, Honeymoon Island Administration and Friends of the Island Parks' Corporate Member Gulf Winds / Marine-Max of Clearwater.

**Shawn Yeager**, Assistant Park Manager of Caladesi State Park offers a big **thank you** to all who helped host this event.

## Golf Tournament to Benefit Caladesi Island

The first annual Caladesi Open Golf Tournament will be held on August 13 at Lansbrook Golf Club. Plan to join us for golf and fun.

The cost is \$70 per person and includes 18 holes of golf, use of a golf cart, range balls and more.

The registration forms are avail-

able at [www.islandparks.org](http://www.islandparks.org). Registration includes a buffet lunch at the Awards Ceremony.

Contact **Shawn Yeager** at Caladesi Island if you want to help find golfers, sponsors or drawing prizes.

## Gators Invade Caladesi!

The **Pinellas County Gator Club Alumni Association** visited and volunteered on Caladesi Island State Park for the 2005 International Gator Day on Sat., May 7.

The group members had a choice of three jobs: beach clean-up, sea oat replanting or mangrove clean-up. Most chose mangrove clean-up and sea oat planting.

With the help of Park Biologist **Sally Braem**, who took the lead with the sea oats, **Park Rangers Steve Koba, Jason Maurer and Kimberly Mann**, we were able to move 25 sea oat plants to beach dunes, clean up 10 bags of trash from mangrove **swamps** (over 50 tennis balls!??) and remove debris from 1 mile of beach.

The Gators then treated park staff and other volunteers to a picnic lunch. Without the help of volunteer groups like these, Caladesi Island would not be able to accomplish so much in so little time.

Our very own **Shawn Yeager**, Assistant Park Manager at Caladesi is a Gator alum, class of 1995.

## Caladesi Hosts 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.

On Mother's Day, Caladesi Island

celebrated the day with a special Breakfast with a Ranger. Every mom in attendance received a pink or red carnation. Special thanks to our event guests, Friends of the Island Parks Board Member **Stephanie Bergeron** and her daughter **Natalie**. Over 35 marina guests were treated to fresh

doughnuts and muffins, fruit and hot coffee.

There was a special Breakfast with a Ranger for Father's also.

Upcoming dates: July 3, August 21 and September 4.

Thanks to sponsors **Tampa Bay Online** and **Ships-N-Trips**.

## Sprint Triathlon Swims, Bikes and Runs on Honeymoon Island

More than 600 athletes participated in the 2nd Annual Dunedin Beach Sprint Triathlon / 2005 Race through Xanadu on Sunday, June 5.

The event featured a 1/4-mile swim, a 12-mile bike ride and a 3.1-mile run.

Race results are available at

[www.altavistasports.com](http://www.altavistasports.com).

Proceeds benefit the Dunedin Rotary Club and the Friends of the Island Parks.

Many volunteers and organizer Suzanne Hensley worked many hours planning the course and working out the details of the race.

## Park Manager's Report

Dear Friends,

It is with regret and anticipation that I share this news. I have accepted a position in the Director's office in Tallahassee. My family will move there at the end of July 2005.

I have enjoyed my time at Honeymoon Island, Caladesi Island, Anclote Key and Bar, Three Rooker Bar, Egmont Key, the Skyway Fishing Pier and Werner Boyce Salt Springs State Parks. I will miss these beautiful islands that we all love and all of you. The volunteers and staff at these parks are dedicated and hard-working.

Despite the 2004 Hurricane Season, Red Tide and a variety of other challenges, this has been a great place to work, live and play.

I look forward to working with Assistant Director Larry Perry and Director Mike Bullock. I hope to celebrate the grand opening of the Rotary Centennial Nature Center at Honeymoon Island State Park with you. It will be a happy occasion to see that dream become a reality.

Sincerely,



Scott Robinson

## Caladesi to get Connected

Soon, boaters staying overnight at the Caladesi marina will be able to connect to the Internet through a wireless connection. Stay tuned for more information.

## Visit Honeymoon and Caladesi Islands Today!

### 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

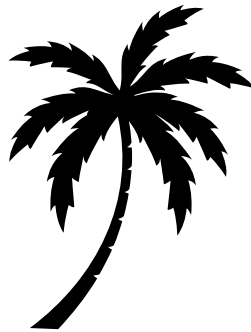
Visit [www.islandparks.org](http://www.islandparks.org) to print an application.

### Friends Meeting Schedule

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

### Summer 2005 Meetings:

- ◆ Tuesday, July 19
- ◆ Tuesday, August 16
- ◆ Tuesday, September 20



### 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 **Scott and Martha Robinson** for snacks in April.
- ◆ Thanks to George and Maureen Skalkeas for snacks in May.
- ◆ Thanks to **Shane Bittaker and Café Honeymoon and Café Caladesi** for snacks in June.

### Welcome

#### New Members

The following people joined the Friends of the Island Parks group since May 2005. Please welcome them.

- ◆ **Ray Dabkowski**
- ◆ **Jerry and Rose Deese**
- ◆ **Carol and Gary Fako**
- ◆ **Tracie Gattas of LogoPro.com**
- ◆ **Joy Harris**
- ◆ **Nancy Holland**
- ◆ **Diane Havens Ingram**
- ◆ **Rick and Cheri Krampert**
- ◆ **Tim Marshall**
- ◆ **Jim McGinity**
- ◆ **Pat Snair**

### 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](http://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.

### Thanks for the Info

Many thanks to the presenters who bring us environmental information. In April, **Ranger Andy Schiro** talked about gopher tortoises. In May, we watched a Nature Scene video about Honeymoon Island. In June, we watched a Florida Master Naturalist video about the coastal environment. Thanks to **Stephanie Bergeron** for arranging the programs.

### Can you help?

The Friends need someone to line up the program topics and presenters for each meeting. If you are interested, please call Stephanie at 234-3587.

### Lights Out for Turtles

If you live on or near the water, please turn off all outside lighting at night to help baby sea turtles find their way to the water.

### 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 is also available. Check out our website for a catalog.

### 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.



## Friends of the Island Parks

1 Causeway Boulevard  
Dunedin, FL 34698  
[www.islandparks.org](http://www.islandparks.org)

2005

### Board of Directors

#### Officers

President	Sally Hess
V.P.	Martha Robinson
Treasurer	Jacques Marion
Secretary	Gabriella Mullins

#### Board Members

Stephanie Bergeron, Membership  
Shane Bittaker  
Megan Cagle  
Bill Gray  
Scott Hood  
Pat Linn  
Capt. Sam Marshall  
Sam Martin  
George Skalkeas  
Linda Taylor

### Contact Us

Please send your questions or suggestions to Stephanie Bergeron at [stephsb@tampabay.rr.com](mailto: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](http://www.islandparks.org)