



# ISLAND PARKS INSIDER

Published by Friends of the Island Parks, Inc.

Summer 2010

## Park Manager's Report

by Pete Krulder, Park Manager

As I was getting ready to write this article for the newsletter I took a minute to look at the last one I wrote so that I would not repeat myself and realized the last time I wrote was back in March. So much has happened since then.

One of our two baby eagles was able to fledge and fly off with its parents. The other little guy fell from the nest and the damage to his wing was irreparable. He will be spending his time in captivity unfortunately, but he will be in a facility where people can learn about eagles.

The move of bathhouse three was completed and I think we have one of the best views in the park from that deck. Our Friends Secretary in her best British accent has given it the nickname "The Loo with a View".

Unfortunately, our Earth Day event was only one day due to rain. We were on track for this year's event to generate record breaking revenue for the Friends. I want to again thank everyone who helped to organize the event. It was the best event we have planned so far.

Park staff is now sporting new high band radios. For the last several years it has become increasingly more difficult for the staff to communicate with each other. Our old low band radio system had become antiquated and it we could no longer talk via radio. Through the generosity of the Friends, we were able to each put in about half the money for the system and on June 28<sup>th</sup> we went live with our new system. The staff is elated with the new system. We are now able to talk via radio from the north end of Honey-moon to the South end of Caladesi. I had one of the Toll Collectors ask if we had hired new staff because

they had never heard some of the radio call signs that were coming over the radio.

Last but not least, one of the biggest things on people's minds has been the oil spill. We have worked closely with various agencies throughout the area and have plans in place on what we will do in the event the oil reaches here. Although we will not be able to actively clean-up the oil, there will be many support roles that we would be involved in. I am confident that if the need arises I can depend on my Friends to be there. The most important thing we can do at this time is to let everyone we know be aware that our beaches are as pretty as they have always been and to come down and visit. Our local economy depends on our visitors coming to visit and so many are ill informed about what our situation in this area really is.

Have a great summer  
See you around the park.

Pete

## Volunteer Spotlight

by Karen Malo, Park Services Specialist



I stopped by a store one morning on my way to work and one of the employees commented, "You know, being a park ranger is a dream job for a lot of people" and it really made me think about where I work. At first, my quick response was to tell him that like any

job there are less glamorous aspects that the public does not see but of course I just nodded and said “*oh yes it is a great job!*”

Recently I was able to enjoy the park from the other side of the board walk. Entering the park, Mary, a volunteer greets visitors with a smile, answers their questions and takes their entrance fees. I see mono-filament recycling bins that were built by student volunteers. To get to the beach I walk over a boardwalk built by two skilled volunteers known as “George squared” and I walk past recycling bins that an intern and volunteer assisted with installing. Near the sand dunes there is a sea turtle nest and our park biologist with help from a volunteer have put a cage over to protect it from predators or beachgoers that could step on the delicate and forming hatchlings. On the north end of the beach, Tom and Mike, two volunteer Bird Stewards head out to gently educate visitors on why the bird nesting areas are roped off to the public.

As I enjoy simple pleasures such as watching birds dive for fish and basking in the warmth of the sun I am reminded why so many people flock to our beaches and how much our volunteers do to help the staff make this place so special to so many people. So now my response that morning has taken on a new meaning rather than just a passing comment and even though there are hectic and trying days I really do feel fortunate to work in such a beautiful place with others who share the same sentiment. All of our volunteers including our toll booth volunteers have been very helpful and are always amazing me with the support they provide to us. During the spring when we were working out of only one toll booth while the main booth was being remodeled we had to work in some very cramped quarters. I think what impressed me the most was that the volunteers remained professional at all times helping visitors to purchase passes, answering the phones and visitors questions without even missing a beat.

We have some new volunteers who attended orientation in June and we welcome them to our team. Whether you are a friends member helping to plan our next special event or you are a volunteer helping in the toll booth, nature center or in the field, we thank you for your help on these hot summer days! Speaking of special events, our next event is the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Halloween in the Park event sponsored by the Honeymoon and Caladesi Island State Park and the Friends of the Island Parks. The event will be held on Friday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> in the picnic area. We will have our first meeting later this month and will be sending out an email to all regular service volunteers and will post it on the

Friend’s website. We need lots of volunteers to make this wonderful event happen so if you would like to be on a planning committee, scare children or help in the family area on the night of the event, please contact Karen Malo at (727)462-6187 or send an email to me at [karen.malo@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:karen.malo@dep.state.fl.us)



Volunteer interns Liz Booth (far right) and Grayson McCormick(far left) assist OPS Ranger Steve Harris (middle) head out to spray some exotic plants on the nature trail.

## Caladesi Corner

### Summer visitors hit the beach at Caladesi

by Bill Gruber, Assistant Park Manager

Each season has its own rhythm at Caladesi Island State Park.

As spring and summer bring their heat, humidity and a pesky insect or two, visitation in the marina tends to taper off. At the same time, however, more and more ferry passengers head to the famous beach to beat the heat.

Now is a great time to come on out by ferry, private boat or kayak to enjoy the clear, clean waters off Caladesi.

The kayak and hiking trails still see plenty of use, but be sure to bring insect repellent and drinking water for your inland journey.

Nature too undergoes changes as the weather warms. Plants bloom, the air musky with their smell, and wild creatures find romance in the air.

At this writing, we’ve seen three great horned owl owlets grow and fledge successfully. They left the nest weeks ago but are still spotted around the park

from time to time. Shorebirds have been nesting too, many successfully despite increased human use of the beach.

A keen observer might see a variety of tiny chicks on the beach including Wilson's plovers, American oystercatchers and willets ... so far this year.

When this article was filed we had only a few false crawls and no sea turtle nests at Caladesi, but park rangers were conducting sea turtle patrols daily for signs of nests. When nests are found they are evaluated, documented and protected from predators by wire cages that allow the hatchlings to head for the surf when they emerge.

Caladesi conducted a successful prescribed burn in June, and within a couple weeks the zone was coming alive again with fresh green growth. Rangers also continue their exotic removal efforts --hot work at this time of year.



Other recent projects included the completion of our re-decking project on the South Boardwalk to the beach. Volunteers, so key to the success of our parks, played a crucial role in the decking project.



Manatee visitor at Caladesi Marina

## What a Difference a Day Makes!

By Sharon Meyer

Back in April, our annual Island EarthDays event started off on a very high note. All the hundreds of person-hours put into this huge undertaking paid off, and the day was perfect. We had wonderful weather, a great turnout, and everyone had a ball. The food selection and quality was top notch. The organic chili was a delight, the desserts were incredible and it was impossible to pick just one yummy thing to eat. I heard lots of talk of planning to return the second day to try something else wonderful for lunch.

Our first venture into encouraging the use of personal water bottles and offering free water refills all day was a reasonable success, with Culligan supplying the water, and the Friends offering a very reasonably priced, made in USA, eco-friendly refillable water bottle with water for the same price as the disposable water bottles. We will certainly do this again next year, and have already lined up a source to donate the water. We were able to really cut down on the amount of plastic bottles used for the day, though surprisingly, some people were still willing to pay the same thing for a disposable bottle of water as for the refillable water bottles. Go figure!

The bungee jump concession, another first this year, was busy all day, with kids and adults alike screaming with delight as they shot into the air. The music line-up was wonderful, with people up and dancing most of the day.

The girls scouts presented a "leave no trace" activity that was a hit with the kids and the rest of our Osprey Village activities were very popular all day long, providing family fun that everyone loved. And our craft vendors were so varied and interesting this year. I was especially fascinated by the solar appliances booth.

So Day 1 ended with high hopes for a record turnout for Day 2 and a big boost to the bottom line for the Friends, so we can continue our support of our two favorite state parks.

OK, who ordered the monsoon that hit us on Sunday? The skies just opened up and the rain kept coming all day. In just a day, we went from playing to drenched, from sun to storm, from dancing in the sand to tromping through the swamp. Those of us who had the joy of closing down the event on Sunday can attest that we'd really like to NOT have to do that

again. My personal favorite was tearing down one of the easy-ups and having about 50 gallons of water cascade off of it right into my face. Where else can you have that kind of fun?

So here we are, starting to think about planning for the 2011 event, and thinking about how to improve over this year. I'd vote for better weather for a start!

All kidding aside, Barry and I, as co-chairs of the event, would like to thank everyone who spent countless hours planning this year's Island EarthDays, setting it up, working it and getting extremely wet tearing it down. Those of you who were there on Sunday, in spite of the rain, pitched in with good grace and a big sense of humor. A big thanks, also, to our vendors and sponsors. Even though the event did not raise the amount of money we hoped, it more than broke even and provided a wonderful day in the park for thousands of visitors, so let's consider it another huge success and look forward to an even bigger and better event in 2011.

## Membership News

by Ray Dabkowski, Membership Director

Our membership continues to grow at a rapid pace. We currently have over 240 members and many more who have shown interest and follow us online. We've had some good times already this year: a delightful reenacted evening with Myrtle Betz and a Honeymoon Bride, our Annual Chocolate Buffet, and a terrific talk on Gopher Tortoises, to name a few.

The Membership Committee is dedicated to enhancing your membership with interesting programs, great events and new benefits. In August we will hold our annual Ice Cream Social at the Honeymoon Pavilion. In October, we are planning an Artist Gallery Opening which you won't want to miss. And it won't be long, we'll gather in downtown Dunedin for our annual holiday celebration.

Your support has been vital to the Parks this year. For example, we recently purchased new communication equipment for the rangers, funded a new weather kiosk at the Nature Center, and provided "Field Trip" transportation to a group of budding environmental scientists from a local school.

Be sure to check the Website for the latest Friends' news. As always, thank you for your support.

Ray Dabkowski  
Membership Director

## We Would Like to Welcome Our New Members:

Chrystal Anders - Clearwater FL  
Robert Baker - Dunedin FL  
Kitty Begley - Clearwater FL  
Gisela Bennie - Safety Harbor FL  
Wm. Harlow Boyer - Palm Harbor FL  
Terry & Jim Chapman - Palm Harbor FL  
Jerry Dabkowski - Dunedin FL  
Brigitte R. Davey - Safety Harbor FL  
Gayle DeCoste - Dunedin FL  
Aunna & Ken O'Day Elm - Palm Harbor FL  
Jerry Fletcher - Clearwater FL  
Carrie Friedman - Clearwater FL  
Joan Galvin - Clearwater FL  
Diana Goodwin - Palm Harbor FL  
Sandra Gridley - Dunedin FL  
Roger Gridley - Dunedin FL  
Joanne Heckman - Columbia MD  
Susan Johnson - Palm Harbor FL  
Toni Johnson - Dunedin FL  
Sherry Kuper - Clearwater FL  
Marcia I. Lamb - Dunedin FL  
Valerie Lane - Dunedin FL  
Lawrence LaPlante - Largo FL  
Andrea LaPlante - Largo FL  
Joseph Lonergan - Dunedin FL  
Diane Mandell - Palm Harbor FL  
Linda Manninen - Oldsmar FL  
Jackie McDonough - Dunedin FL  
Matthew Mitchem - Crystal Beach FL  
Nancy Mitchem - Crystal Beach FL  
Ed Ostiguy - Clearwater FL  
Sheila Poley - Dunedin FL  
Ray Poynor - Odessa FL  
Janice R. Riccillo - Palm Harbor FL  
Dr. Nicholas G. Rinaldi - New Port Richey FL  
Robin Romblad - Dunedin FL  
Christine Ross - Dunedin FL  
Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers - Seminole FL  
Karen Seel - Clearwater FL  
Margie Sigman - Dunedin FL  
Jeri L. Wexler - Pinellas Park FL  
Maura Zeph - Oldsmar FL



## Florida State Parks 75th Anniversary

by Sally Hess

The Florida State Parks are celebrating their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary all year long! Join the fun!

### Attend these signature events around the state:

Saturday, August 7:  
National Lighthouse Day Celebration at Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park, Key Biscayne.

Saturday, August 28- Sunday, August 29:  
Former Mermaid Show at Weeki Wachee Springs State Park, Weeki Wachee Springs.

Thursday, September 9:  
State Park Literacy Month, Butterfly Story Time event at Washington Oaks Gardens State Park, Palm Coast.

Friday, September 10- Sunday, September 12:  
State Park Literacy Month – Free entry to all state parks except Skyway Fishing Pier State Park.

Saturday, September 18- Sunday, September 19:  
Spanish American War Event at Fort Clinch State Park, Fernandina Beach.

October (all month):  
Fall Harvest Days at Dudley Farm Historic State Park, Newberry.

Saturday, October 16:  
Fall Festival at Wekiwa Springs State Park, Apopka.

Saturday, November 6:  
25th Annual Civilian Conservation Corps Festival at Highlands Hammock State Park, Sebring.

Thursday, November 11:  
Veterans Day – Free entry to all state parks except Skyway Fishing Pier State Park.

Saturday, December 4:  
Camellia Christmas celebration at Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park, Tallahassee.

Friday, December 10:  
50th Anniversary Celebration of John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park at John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, Key Largo.

## Rotary Centennial Nature Center

by Tim Marshall, Nature Center Coordinator

### Discounts for Friends Members!



**Friends members, volunteers, and park staff receive a complimentary 10% Discount** on all merchandise sold at the nature center, with the exception of consigned art/photography and calendars. We accept Cash, check or credit card, and offer an ever expanding selection of exclusive items.

**75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary items** include Tee Shirts, hats and Polos. All items are top quality USA made and locally embroidered featuring the Florida Parks Service 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo

**NEW! - Custom Embroidered Winter Cardinal Shirts**

## Nature Center Hours / Information

**Hours:** Daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
**Phone:** 727-738-2903  
**Email:** [info@islandparks.org](mailto:info@islandparks.org)  
**Website:** [www.islandparks.org/naturecenter](http://www.islandparks.org/naturecenter)  
**Contact:** Tim Marshall, Coordinator



### Upcoming Fall Programs & Activities at Honeymoon Island State Park

**Osprey Trail Guided Walks** - Beginning in Mid October every Wed., Sat. & Sun. at 11 am Meet at Osprey Trail located in the picnic area.

**Nature Center Trail** - Self Guided 1/3 mile 15 minute walk featuring currently blooming flowers. Flowers are featured on the trailside bulletin board and also on the interactive touch screen inside the nature center.

### Daily Inside the Nature Center

#### New! Children's Activities

Make a Critter! - Choose from 5 designs, all made from paper plates.

Nature Match Game, Shell Sorting Activity and as always, our ever popular Free Scavenger Hunt Prizes!

**New! Weather Station and Interactive Information Kiosk.** Use the touch screen to access a wide variety of information including current weather, and to identify common birds and wildflowers of the park.

**Shell Show Inside the Nature Center** - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. of the Month - Ongoing from 11am to 3pm - Featuring guest artist and conchologist Pat Snair!

**Family Story & Craft** - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat. of the Month - 1:30pm (1 Hour) Thank you, Palm Harbor Library!

### Workshops

**Make-n-Take Rain Barrel Workshops** - Held monthly – call the center for dates and times or register online, \$35 Preregistration Includes your own rain barrel to take home!!! **PLEASE PREREGISTER IN ADVANCE** for this workshop at the Nature Center or at [www.islandparks.org](http://www.islandparks.org)

**Fall Birding Workshops** – Dates to be announced. Check the Friends Website for announcements.

## FLORIDA STATE PARKS ON TWITTER!!

**Florida State Parks on Twitter** will highlight Florida's 160 state parks, events and contests, as well as:

- Photos and questions of the week.
- Exclusive discounts only for Twitter followers.
- Free admission weekends.
- Links to podcasts and Web cam footage.
- Emergency weather conditions and closures.

Using Twitter as a communication tool will not only allow Florida State Parks to better alert residents and visitors of special events, offers and happenings in their local state park, but will allow 'FLStateParks' followers worldwide to experience the diverse natural beauty of parks across Florida through photos, wildlife sightings and historical facts. In addition, using Twitter will encourage followers to share their favorite park activities, plant and animal sightings as well as outdoor adventures with the entire 'FLStateParks' Twitter community.

Friends of the Island Parks Presents



## Honeymoon and Caladesi Island 2011 Calendar Photo Contest

Welcome to the 4th Annual Photo Contest for the Caladesi and Honeymoon Island Calendar. The 2011 calendar will feature images from the islands and will also include special information, dates, and cool nature facts throughout year. As before, the calendar will have a front cover photo, and one for each of the fourteen months between Dec 2010 and January 2012. The calendar will be sold at the Rotary Centennial Nature Center, Cafe' Honeymoon and online at [www.islandparks.org](http://www.islandparks.org). This is a chance to get your work out to many people who visit the island. Proceeds will go directly to support the Friends of the Island Parks.

**ENTER THE CONTEST AT:** [www.islandparks.org](http://www.islandparks.org)  
**Questions? Email:** [membership@islandparks.org](mailto:membership@islandparks.org)



## Friends of the Island Parks

### Membership Application Renewal Form

#### About the Friends

Friends of the Island Parks is a CSO (Citizens Support Organization). Florida Park Service CSOs are volunteer organizations that sponsor events, raise funds, and support the goals of the parks. The Friends of the Island Parks CSO's main focus is the support of Caladesi Island State Park and Honeymoon Island State Park.

#### 501(c)(3) Status

The Friends of the Island Parks, Inc. is registered in Florida as a non-profit organization whose purpose is to provide educational, interpretive, and financial assistance to Caladesi Island State Park, Honeymoon Island State Park, and the Gulf Islands GEPark. This group is recognized as a citizen support organization by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks. One hundred percent of your contribution is tax deductible. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services solicitation registration number is CH14031. The Pinellas County charitable solicitation permit number is 0409075.

**Important:** Please print clearly. Thanks!

Name:

Street:

City/State/Zip:

Telephone:

Email Address:

Select Your Preferred Membership Level:

\$25 **General**

\$25 **Charter/Insider Renewal\***

\$50 **Non-profit**

\$100 **Bronze**

\$250 **Silver**

\$500 **Gold**

\$1000 **Platinum**

#### \*Charter/Insider Renewals:

If you are currently a Charter or Insider member, you may renew at that level for \$25 annually. Continuous membership is required to maintain this level.

**Application Process** – You may apply or renew at our website, or use this form.

#### Please make your check payable to:

Friends of the Island Parks

#### Mail your application and check to:

Friends of the Island Parks  
Attention: Membership  
1 Causeway Blvd.  
Dunedin, FL 34698

Dues:

Additional Donation:

Total:


## Island Amenities



**Honeymoon Island**  
**Friday Night Fish Fry**  
\$9.99+  
4:00pm-Sunset

**Beer Battered Cod, Corn on the Cob, Mac -n- Cheese, Hush Puppies, Cole Slaw and Salad. Beer & Wine Specials.**

Follow Us on Facebook for Updates on Future Events and Discount Coupons!

Be sure to visit *Café Honeymoon* and *Café Caladesi* when on the islands for food, gifts and beach supplies.

The new **Honeymoon Pavilion Café** is now offering a **Friday Night Fish Fry** for **\$9.99** from **4:00 pm to sunset**.

Try out the **pancake breakfasts** on **Saturdays & Sundays** at *Café Honeymoon*. In addition, they can help you plan your special occasions on the islands.



Friends of the  
Island Parks

## Members of the Board

### Executive Committee

President: Barry Metcalfe  
Vice President: Ron Geisheimer  
Treasurer: George Skalkeas  
Secretary: Melanie Metcalfe

### Directors

Shane Bittaker  
Wayne Case  
Ray Dabkowski  
Nancy Dunne  
Cynthia Farris  
Diane Hood  
Scott Hood  
Jacques Rene  
Marion

Bob Meadows  
Sharon Meyer  
Mike Moran  
Gabiella Mullins  
Sally Naylor  
Ellen Pfau  
Linda Taylor (ex-officio)  
Toni Wise

## Contact Us

**Honeymoon Island:** 727-469-5942  
**Caladesi Island:** 727-469-5918

### Friends of the Island Parks President:

Barry Metcalfe  
[barry.metcalfe@earthlink.net](mailto:barry.metcalfe@earthlink.net)  
813-925-3442

### Membership:

Ray Dabkowski  
[rayd@en.com](mailto:rayd@en.com)  
727-415-1615

### Nature Center / Newsletter / Website:

Tim Marshall  
[info@islandparks.org](mailto:info@islandparks.org)  
727-738-2903

### Volunteers:

Karen Malo  
[karen.malo@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:karen.malo@dep.state.fl.us)  
727-469-5942 Ext. 6

## Island Parks Insider

Choose Your Delivery Options

Go to [www.islandparks.org](http://www.islandparks.org) to view the Insider online. Now you can opt to receive it via e-mail & save a tree! Simply notify our Membership Secretary, **Ray Dabkowski**. – Thanks!



*Honeymoon Island*  
*The perfect setting for any occasion!*

- Weddings
- Birthdays
- Breath Taking Views
- Receptions
- Fundraisers
- Unlimited Guests
- Anniversaries
- Corporate Events
- Catering by Cafe Honeymoon

[www.bonappetit-restaurant.com](http://www.bonappetit-restaurant.com)  
For More Information Contact: Shane Bittaker  
727•736•2132  
1 Causeway Blvd.  
Dunedin, FL

## Caladesi Island Adventure

Daily excursions from Honeymoon Island depart hourly beginning at 10am - weather permitting

### Round trip tickets:

Adult \$10.00 - Child 4 thru 12 \$6.00 - Under 4 Free

For information and reservations, call 727-734-1501