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Name _____

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I reside in Florida from _____ to _____

Checks payable to: **Supporters of Del-Nor Wiggins Park, Inc.**
11135 Gulf Shore Drive North, Naples, Florida 34108
Phone: 239-597-6196, Fax: 239-597-8223

www.DelnorWiggins.org



PALM TREE PRESS

Supporters of Del-Nor Wiggins Park, Inc
11135 Gulf Shore Drive N
Naples, FL 34108



BECOME A MEMBER OF THE CSO

MISSION AND GOALS

To Promote Environmental Awareness, use and enjoyment of the Park.

To assist Park Staff with resource management, facility maintenance, recycling and visitor services.

To improve the resources and facilities through fund raising events and volunteer activities.

To learn more about the Park's ecosystem, inhabitants and functions.

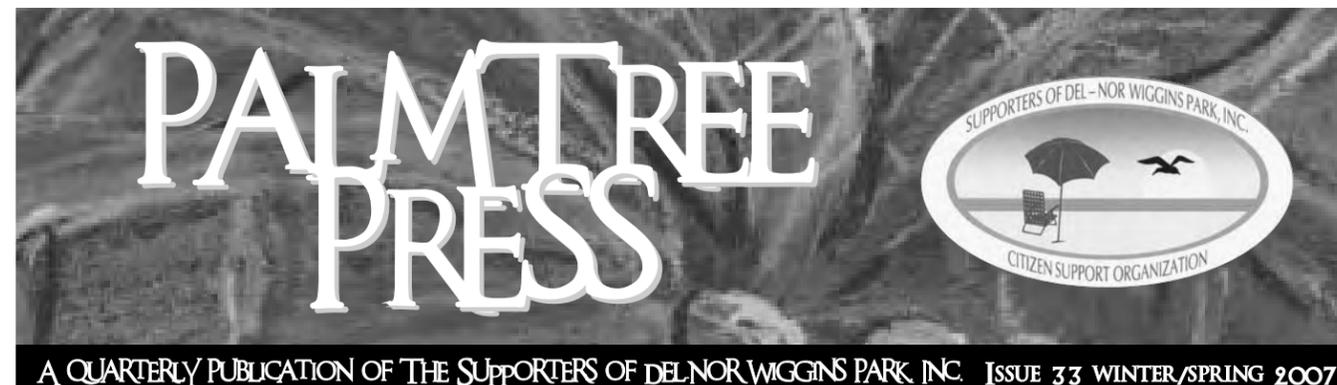
Join Us Today!

New members always welcome. Membership meetings held each month, call for more information!

Membership Categories

Individual	\$ 15.00
Family	\$ 25.00
Corporate	\$ 35.00
Donation	\$ _____

"Helping the Park Achieve its goals since 1987"



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Southwest Florida oil painter William North was named Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park "Resident Artist," on Feb. 2, 2007

In making the announcement, Lois Cantwell, president of the park's citizen support organization and Robert Steiger, park manager, said North was selected to be the park's first resident artist on the basis of the quality and appropriateness of his work and his long history of painting on location at the park. The artist has painted at the park for more than ten years and was the inspiration for the first park art exhibit nine years ago.

William North (b.1927) has been painting in oils for more than sixty years. He is a graduate of Pratt Institute (BFA 1951) and attended the New York Art Student's League and the Lyme Academy of Fine Art in Connecticut. Over the years he has been represented in galleries, recently including Naples, Sanibel and Bonita Springs. His work is in the permanent collection of the Naples Art Association and he was the first Lee County artist invited to exhibit in the Governor's Gallery in the State Capital. His oil paintings are presently featured at the Florida Fine Art Gallery in Gannon's Antiques & Art Center, 16521 South Tamiami Trail, Fort Myers.

The artist will not literally reside at the park but will commute from his south Fort Myers home for his mostly-morning painting excursions to the beach. There will be an exhibit of the artist's work at the beach on March 24, 2007 and another in March 2008 at the culmination of his residency.

MESSAGE FROM THE PARK MANAGER



January was like spring and February is like winter so spring and summer will be here soon. The

Supporter's will reach a milestone with the 20th Anniversary in August. Like the commercial, "You've come a long way baby". So it is true with the CSO. Today the Supporters are a mixture of original and new members. We have 2 annual events each year which offer visitors a more educational look at us. We have you working as volunteers with various jobs and repairs, while funding multiple programs that help us with everything from sea turtles to bath house repairs. These are the things we could not accomplish without your help. You have helped us come a long way in providing the best service possible to the visitors and residents alike.

Thank you and let's make the 20th Anniversary a memorable occasion. We are looking for any old memorabilia you might have from the Supporters early days. We are planning on using some of the items in the celebration. Our president is looking for a committee to help with the planning and ideas so please contact me, Lois or Carolyn. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Robert M. Steiger
Park Manager

PRESIDENTS CORNER

In the last issue I talked about getting ready for our art show and how we hoped to raise enough funds for the stainless steel grills. Now, here we are looking back on a very successful event. Two grills have been ordered and we can cover the cost of 7 more with what we earned from the art show.

Now we can look ahead to our next event, which is the 4th Annual Family Discovery Day on April 14th. Invitations to exhibitors have been sent out. We are asking each exhibitor to provide some type of children's activity so they can learn something about their environment or nature. While we are waiting for responses, there is still a lot of planning to do.

More committee participation is needed. More people with new ideas and energy are most welcome! If you can serve on a committee or sign up for a specific task, please contact Jo Ann Linck (jlink@toad.net or 566-6026. On the day of our art show we had 35-40 people working a combined total of nearly 170 hours, not to mention the committee members who devoted countless hours to planning the event. Thank you, everyone for making it a great show!!

There are also opportunities for our senior members to make a contribution to another event. Near the end of the summer the CSO will mark its 20th Anniversary. A number of our volunteers have been with us since those early years and are the grass roots members that have provided leadership and dedicated innumerable hours to uphold our mission and goals. I urge our veteran members, as well as others who are interested, to organize a planning committee. Anyone who would like to be a group leader, or join this group, please contact Carolyn Shaw.

Lois Cantwell



Email & Web Site Update

In an effort to encourage better communication between members, we have created a mailing list that will reach all our CSO members with an email address. From now on, if you have something to share with the entire group, you can just address an email to: cs@delnorwiggins.org. Your message will reach all 45 or so members who have provided us with their email address.

If you are reading this and have an email address to add to the group, please email: webmaster@delnorwiggins.org and I will add you to our new mailing list. You might also add cs@delnorwiggins.org to your email address book. This will prevent your spam blocker from sending your message to the junk mail folder, since it has so many recipients. One cannot be too careful nowadays.

Also, remember that you can submit your volunteer hours online. Just log onto our web site www.delnorwiggins.org and navigate to: **For Members Only** where you will find a link to: **Submit Hours**. When you fill out and submit the form, Carolyn will get an email with your volunteer hours information and she will record them. This will save some trees and help us keep our hours up to date.

A final website reminder, don't forget about another new feature under **For Members Only**, a link to **LibraryThing**. This is a free website where users can create an account to list all the books their organization owns. We now have an account that lists all the professional books currently owned by the park. We will be purchasing news ones periodically with CSO funds and continue to update the collection listing. To see what books the park owns, go to www.librarything.com and use **delnor** as the username and **wiggins** as the password.

Alicia Astorga
Webmaster



Sea Turtle Enthusiast

by Ranger Cheryse Wellman



In January I was graced with the opportunity to attend "Florida's 10th Annual Marine Turtle Permit Holder Meeting" in Ft. Pierce. The experience was so enlightening that I feel compelled to share it. I have only experienced one true "turtle season" at Wiggins, which happened to be rather unsuccessful. Although wildlife/land conservation is a passion of mine, there is much I have yet to learn, and embrace every opportunity to do so. When my managers asked me if I would like to go in representation of our park, words cannot describe how fortunate I felt.

The meeting was held at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, an astounding complex of labs, research, and teaching facilities. There were huge vessels docked in the river, and manatees playing all around them. The meeting was held in an auditorium large enough to accommodate the roughly 150 attendees. Eighteen speakers, from state departments to community volunteer groups, addressed everything from lighting issues, decline in population, poaching, grants programs, red tide mortality, even shorebird and dune protection. Prior to the meeting I thought I knew sea turtles. I could spout out basic sea turtle facts about ecology, nesting habits, longevity . . . I had no lack of admiration and appreciation for these "nomads of the deep," but the meeting divulged so deep into sea turtle issues making me realize that my basic factual tidbits were but a thin layer of importance, and now I was being exposed to core issues.

The 10-100 year graphs of scientific data calculated and portrayed by biologists on mortality rates and decline in population really hit me where it hurt. Most of the graphs showed Florida sea turtle populations, particularly loggerheads, on a practically vertical downslope, essentially on a hypothetical collision course with extinction. Though heart wrenching and depressing, I couldn't help but hear the optimistic theory of a wise man shine like a beacon in the back of my mind. "Scientific studies don't even go back 200 years. How do we know that this decline in population isn't just part of their overall life cycle?" Everyday I see humanities lack of knowledge, concern, or just plain ignorance toward environmental issues, which is why I generally have more of a pessimistic attitude toward our role in the ecological crisis that we may be up against if changes aren't made. Still there is no way that I could argue his theory, because we don't know.

Sea turtles have been on this planet for roughly 110 million years, and we have less than 200 years of scientific data. This is but a heartbeat in their elemental existence.

So I took a look around me, abolishing my negativity, and came to the realization that I was surrounded by an ample group of individuals that have dedicated a part of their lives and a piece of their heart to study, educate others, and conserve these glorious prehistoric reptiles. This is but a minuscule fraction of people who care, which made me recognize that there are groups like this everywhere fighting for our other priceless species clinging to survival. Coming to this actualization filled me with more hope and ammunition than I had felt since the day that I become aware of my purpose, to act as a voice for those without, the wondrous creatures that we share this fascinating planet with, that are taken for granted everyday by people that don't realize that without them our own future is at stake. We did not create the web of life. We are but a trivial string in the fiber that connects all that is, was, and ever will be. Only so many fibers can stand to be cut before the web is no more.

So I am here today to thank you for your part in the fight to save sea turtles and the places they call home. My passion is evident and my fire rekindled. I stand strong and steadfast in the battle to save what appears to be a dwindling population, for sea turtles and all things natural. I hope you stand with me!



Jo Ann

Wildlife & Wildlands Art Show 2007

The Supporters sponsored another successful art show at Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park. Success is measured by responses from not only the visitors but from the Artists as well. The Artists' best comments were directed mainly towards the organizational skills of the committee. Thank-you **JoAnn Linck**, Show Committee Leader, for teaching us the right protocols and keeping us on track and on time. Other great comments

from the Artists were for the friendliness and team work of our CSO and the artwork and time that went into the flyers, programs and advertising. The atmosphere was complimented with the beautiful, sunny day and the fact that most of the visitors this year came just for the show. The Artists remain excited about coming back again next year too. I encourage those of you who have not been involved in the art shows before, to please join us for next year's Tenth Annual Show preparation. It is a very nice event to get involved in.
CL Shaw



Artist Angie Brooks, who donated her Pelican head artwork for our groovy new t-shirts, was on hand to sign them.



Art and BJ set off a fashion trend with this new "Jaws" inspired take on the t-shirt.



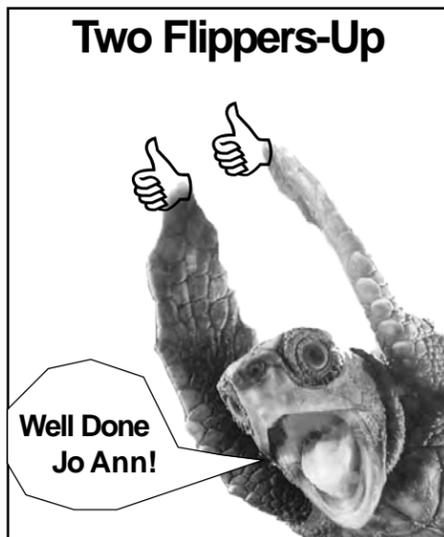
The Bake Sale table and William North's art prints were big crowd pleasers again this year.



Phil, ice cream scooper of the year.



Scott works the crowd selling raffle tickets



The Ups and Downs of Eagle Watching

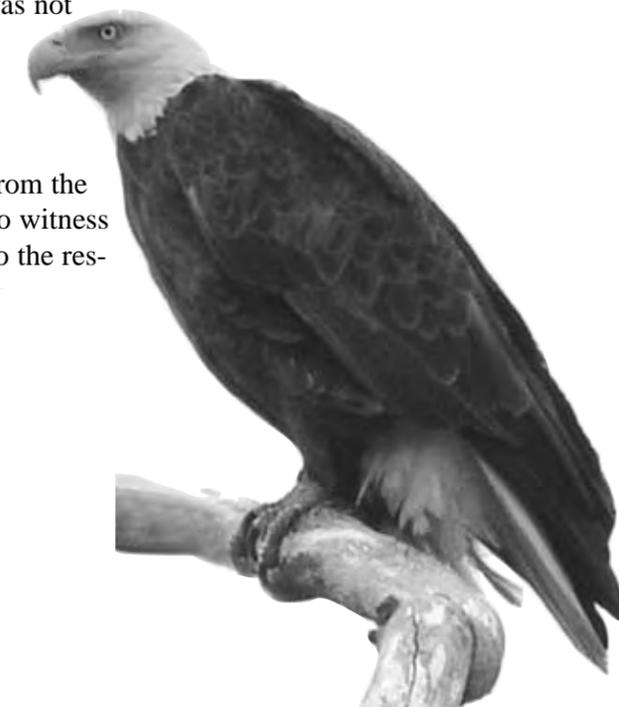
Our Audubon Eagle Watch group has certainly been on an emotional roller coaster so far this nesting season. It started out quietly in November and December when we started monitoring our 4 assigned nests here in the North Naples area. Nest building or maintenance begins during September or early October. Most nests contain at least 2 eggs. After incubating eggs for about 35 days, most of the eaglets we see hatch by early to mid-December. Normally, we look for them to fledge from the nest around the mid- to end of March. They may remain near the nest site for an additional 4 to 11 weeks, dispersing by July.

Of the 4 nests on our watch, we were only seeing 5 hatchlings at first. Eagle pairs often build more than one nest, which allows them to move to another nest while remaining in their territory. They space their nests apart to ensure sufficient food resources for nestlings and to raise young with minimal disturbance from other eagles. Nearly all bald eagle nests are built within 1.8 miles of water.

The infamous Cocohatchee eagles have nested in a tree visible from Vanderbilt Drive (north of Wiggins Pass Rd) for many years. This year they decided to move to a beautiful live slash pine with a great canopy, surrounded by other pines. A far cry from the nest in a dead tree with no cover, out in a wide open area. It brought them closer to the bay area, but also near established condo communities and the obstacles that put them in harms way. The female of that nesting pair, with 2, 2-week old babies to care for met her demise on January 5th on a high tension wire. Dad was left to care for them on his own. Once he determined that his mate was lost, he started sending out distress calls.

The first of a succession of females showed up within a couple of days. We had great expectations until we discovered that she was still immature. The process of selecting a mate dragged out over a period of weeks. Meanwhile, Dad had 2 mouths to feed and that is a challenge even without the distraction of looking for a new step-mother. To complicate matters, a group of juveniles (2 to 3-year olds) began to hang around seeing opportunities for food. This kept the lone male from providing adequate food for the 2 babies and the weaker one just couldn't survive. It died about a week after the female was lost. The remaining eaglet, who we knick-named "Solo" seemed to thrive after that and grew rapidly. Little did we know that he wasn't progressing normally, again due to lack of adequate nutrition. The male was not getting any help with bringing food to the nest and the hangers-on were interfering by squabbling over what was being brought in.

It was one of those "food fights" that caused Solo to fall from the nest. Fortunately, a couple of our watchers were on hand to witness this and put out the alarm to the rest of the team. We ran to the rescue only to run out of daylight and had to return the next morning. By about 9 AM the next day we had systematically hunted down the fallen eaglet, captured it unharmed and got it to the Conservancy to be examined. It was deemed to be in good health, so we got the opinion of our coordinator at the Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Center in Maitland as to what to do. Solo is now there recovering, eating well, getting stronger and is in a "flight cage" in preparation to learn to fly. He could be returned to his point of origin by the end of March if all goes well. Stay tuned for further adventures of the eagle watchers. The season isn't over, yet and there is another story unfolding.



by Lois Cantwell



Volunteer Appreciation Day

Volunteer Appreciation Day for District 4 of Florida Park Services was held at Alafia River State Park February 10, 2007. Close to 400 volunteers from 35 parks spent the day listening to the great folk music of tow volunteers from Hillsborough River State park,

attending walks, hikes and enjoying a barbecue feast from "Hungry Harry's".

Southern Travel Enterprises transported the volunteers from the lower Southwest Florida parks by bus to the Event. Volunteers who wouldn't have traveled that distance, enjoyed the tour bus. Eleven volunteers from Delnor Wiggins, sixteen from Koreshan, fourteen from Collier Seminole and three from Lover's Key and one from Gasparilla Island were chauffeured to the front entrance of Alafia River State Park.

The special guests who attended the Award Ceremony were: Senator Polly from Lakeland, Scott Robinson, Asst. Director for the FPS, Bureau Chief of Parks, Dist. 4 Valinda Subic, Asst. Bureau Chief B.J. Givens.



Our Devoted Park Rangers and Staff, Christmas Portrait.
Carolyn, Big John, Marcio, Cheryse, Nick, Patty, Adam, Meredith, Mark Jr, Mark, Bob, and Sean.

Updating Member Phone List

In the next Palm Tree Press we intend on including an updated phone and address list along with email addresses for those who want them published. If you have any new information to add to the list please contact Lois Cantwell, Jo Ann Linck or Sharon Eddy. We have several new members and new numbers to add to our list.

More notes of interest

The Art Show yielded a gross of \$3753. New purchases included \$859 for two steel grills, and \$500 for books for the Ranger library.

A donated painting by a Colorado artist, Jim Freeheart was displayed. It will be offered for silent auction at next year's Art Show.

A special thanks to Carolyn for organizing the bus trip for Volunteer Appreciation day. A good time was had by all.

Bob reported the dredging is to be completed today, and plans are underway to make all restroom areas ADA accessible. Engineering drawings are forth coming. Work also has started to repair the louvers on the bathrooms.

A one day admission pass was offered to anyone traveling to a Florida State Park. This is part of our membership in the Friends of Florida organization. Contact one of the Board Officers or Carolyn Shaw for one of these passes. Sign up sheets were circulated for volunteers needed for Discovery Day, April 14.

This marks the 20th year of the CSO. Any ideas or a committee to work on a commemorative celebration, please contact Lois. Also, a perpetual plaque will be developed for recognition of volunteers in various categories of hours and years of service.

Volunteers are needed in the Park for various activities and repairs. Bob has some potential opportunities for help with beautification of the park entrance road and ADA improvements.

Lois mentioned that T-shirts left over from the January Art Show were still available for a \$10.00 contribution.

The Cradle of the Ocean: Estuaries

At our February CSO Meeting we had a young FGCU graduate student speak to our group about an Estuary Guardian Fellowship Program. His name is Geoff Burgerhoff, and he is conducting environmental studies across a broad spectrum of ecosystems that are in the estuarine waters surrounding our Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park.

Fish counts, shore bird counts, eagle watching, water quality, salinity and turbidity measurements, locating and measuring sea grass beds, observations of coastal erosion and many other facets of this study are examples of how you may help out with this project. A great opportunity and learning experience awaits!!

Geoff's contact information is (941) 276-8534 or gburger@eagle.fgcu.edu He is also sponsored by the ECA (Estuary Conservation Association, Inc.) If you are unable to help with the "hands-on" aspect of this project, but are interested in making a monetary contribution to the Cocohatchee Guardian Estuary Fellowship, log on www.estuaryconservation.org for more information.

What are estuaries?

Estuaries are semi-enclosed areas, such as bays and lagoons, where fresh water meets and mixes with salty ocean waters. These are dynamic systems with constantly changing tides and temperatures and variable salinity.

Survival of plants and animals in estuaries requires special adaptations. The ebb and flow of tides may leave some plants and animals temporarily high and dry. Temperatures in shallow estuarine waters can range from freezing to more than 100 degrees during the course of a year and expose marine organisms to intense sunlight and drying.

Although naturally adapted to these conditions, these organisms must have a balanced flow of fresh and salt water. This balance can be upset if too much fresh water enters the estuary, which can happen when causeways are constructed, impeding the free flow of tides. If too little fresh water is available, as occurs during a drought and when a river is diverted or dammed, the marine life may die if the balance of fresh and salt water is not maintained.

Why are estuaries important?

More than 95% of Florida's recreationally and commercially important fishes, crustaceans, and shellfish spend periods of their lives in estuaries, usually when they are young. Many fish and crustaceans migrate offshore to spawn or breed. The eggs develop into larvae that are transported into estuaries by tides and currents.

The shallow waters, salt marshes, sea grasses, and mangroves provide excellent places to hide from larger predators.

Without estuaries, many important fisheries would disappear. Snook, trout, mullet, grouper, redfish, sheepshead, spiny lobster, shrimp, crabs, oysters, and clams are examples of the diverse marine animals dependent upon healthy estuaries. They also provide roosting and nesting areas, or rookeries, for many birds, including several endangered and protected species.

How you can help protect them

Prevent paper, garbage and other forms of trash from washing up on our shorelines by properly disposal. The next time you change your oil or wash your car in your driveway, be aware that the run-off ends up in storm water sewage systems that carry contaminants into lakes, streams and other bodies of water. Avoid overuse of fertilizers and pesticides whenever possible, as these pollute local streams and lakes and may influence estuarine plant communities.

if you see a typo, remember this....

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