

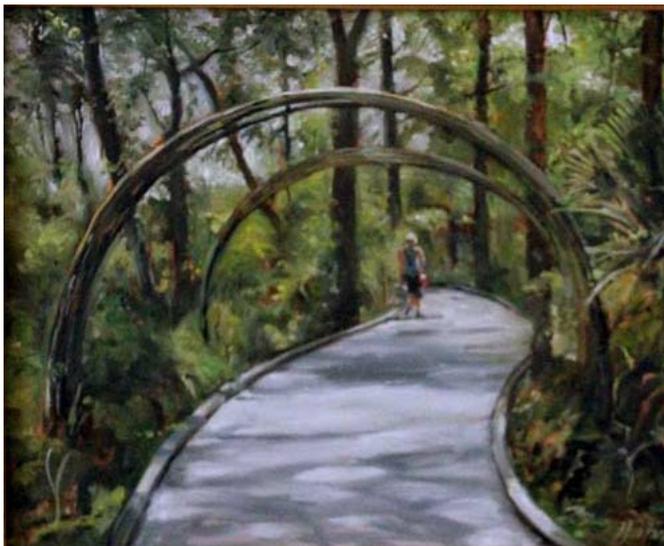

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve

January - February 2019

Chairman's Message by Cathie Foster

Happy New Year! I hope each of you had a wonderful holiday. During the holidays most of us enjoy connecting and reconnecting with family and friends. In this New Year, I encourage you to also take time to connect and reconnect with Nature. To quote environmental artist Andy Goldsworthy, *"We often forget that WE ARE NATURE. Nature is not something separate from us. So, when we say that we have lost our connection to nature, we've lost our connection to ourselves."* Of course, **Brooker Creek Preserve** is the perfect place for this, whether you join a guided hike or take your own quiet hike. Each offers the opportunity to reflect on the wonders of nature.

Best wishes for a healthy, happy, hopeful 2019!



Plein Air oil painting "Morning Stroll" by Elaine Hahn, 2017.

Save the Dates Upcoming Friends Events

- Jan. 5 Jeff Klinkenberg Book Talk 10:30 am
- Jan. 5 FOBCP Readers Club 9:30-10:30 am
- Jan. 6 Beekeepers Club 9 am
- Jan. 12 Gopher Tortoises & Prescribed Fire
= Increased Biodiversity 10 am-12 pm
- Jan. 13 Off the Beaten Path:
Cypress Swamp Stomp 9am
- Jan. 19 Return the Preserve work day
- Jan. 19 Night Hike 6-8 pm
- Jan. 26 Plein Air Event 7 am - 4 pm
- Jan. 26 Wildflower Garden work day 9-11 am
- Feb. 2 FOBCP Readers Club 9:30-10:30 am
- Feb. 3 Beekeepers Club 9 am
- Feb. 9 Night Hike - Star Party 5:30 pm
- Feb. 17 Plein Air Exhibition Reception 1-3 pm
- Feb. 23 FOBCP 25th Anniversary Party
- Feb. 23 Wildflower Garden work day 9-11 am
- Mar. 23 Off the Beaten Path:
Sandhill Scramble 9am

Plein Air 2019

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve is pleased to announce its first sponsored **Plein Art Event and Exhibition**. All artists (amateurs to professionals) are invited to participate in showing their talent and support for Brooker Creek by creating art inspired by the natural landscape of the Preserve - so please consider participating.

Participants, even those pre-registered, must check-in at the boardwalk entrance by the parking area on Saturday, Jan. 26 anytime between 7 and 10 AM to receive their information packet. All artwork must be created that day on the Preserve grounds to participate in the exhibition and judging for *Plein Air 2019*.

Completed art pieces (up to two pieces) may be submitted to volunteers in the Friends Nature Store in the Education Building up until closing at 4 PM (photographers will have until Sunday at noon to turn in their artwork). All artwork must be presentation-ready to participate. Works are to be matted (if desired) and framed with a wire on back for hanging (accompanied by a submission form including title, medium and sale price). The exhibition, reception and awards program will take place from 1:00 to 3:00 PM on Sunday, Feb. 17 and all unsold artwork must be removed at the end of the event.

Cost to participate is a \$20 non-refundable fee and we strongly encourage early registration to assure participation. Cash prizes will be awarded for Best in Show (\$100), First (\$75), Second (\$50) and Third (\$25), and Visitor's Choice (\$25) Awards. Sales of artwork is allowed and a suggested donation of 10% from any sales is requested to be given to the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve. (See pages 10-11 for Plein Air registration.)

Chairman's Message	1
Save the Dates	1
Plein Air 2019	2
FOBCP Hosts Eco-Tour to Cuba	3
FOBCP Art Collection by Lynn Whitelaw	4
FOBCP Annual Meeting 11/11/18	5
Regional FNPS Holiday Party 12/1/18	6
Meriggiane String Quartet 12/9/18	7
Acre Adoptions	7
Meet Jeff Klinkenberg Book Talk	8
Gopher Tortoise/Biodiversity Program	9
Arbor Day Youth Program	9
Plein Air 2019 flier/Registration	10
Photographing Nature program	12
Star Party	13
FOBCP 25 th Birthday Party	14
Return the Preserve by Evan Earle, Jr.	15
Night Hikes	17
Off the Beaten Path hikes	18
My Thoughts on Native Plants and Native Plant Landscaping by Craig Huegel	19
News from the Wildflower Garden & Gardening Tip by Pam Brown	21
Nature Store News by Cathie Foster	23
Beekeepers Club	23
FOBCP Readers Club by Jon Burr	24
Volunteer News by Julia Myers	25
Adopt an Acre Info/Form	26
Calendar of Events Jan./Feb.	27
Mission Statements/Contacts	28

BROOKER CREEK PRESERVE PRESENTS: AN AMAZING CULTURAL ECO-TOUR TO CUBA! 4-Night, 5 Days – November, 2019 (Dates TBA)



Visiting: ▶ Havana- ▶ Las Terrazas- ▶ Playa Larga- ▶ Zapata Peninsula- ▶ Salinas Park ▶ Cienfuegos Botanical Gardens ▶ El Nicho Waterfalls ▶ Santa Clara

As a travel destination, Cuba is well-known for its amazing culture, charming colonial villages, highly regarded vintage cars and immaculate beaches, but travelers who are environmentally conscious and gravitate towards ecotourism, can find more than clichés in Cuba. You can explore the largest Caribbean island which can offer more than any other island in the Caribbean Sea by its sources of biodiversity. Home to 263 protected areas and six UNESCO Biospheres, Cuba has a lot to offer ecotourists.

On Nov. 11th, the FOBCP Board unanimously voted to sponsor for next November an eco-tour to Cuba for FOBCP members. The 4-night, 5-day trip would also be a fundraiser with \$100 of the individual cost donated to the Friends as a tax-deductible donation. As a fund-raiser, the board is hoping for significant participation in this unique once-in-a-lifetime travel opportunity. The tour will be hosted by our own Dr. Craig Huegel. Our Cuban guides will introduce us to the diverse ecological wonders of Cuba, including the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve at La Terrazas, the swamp lands of the Zapata Peninsula, and the forests and waterfalls of the Gran Parque Natural Topes de Collantes in the Sierra Escambray mountain range. The eco-tour is being organized by the fully licensed and OFAC compliant Cuban travel specialists at Carlson Maritime Travel in Tarpon Springs.

More information will be available in the next newsletter. Stay tuned!

SOME OF YOUR HIGHLIGHTS WILL INCLUDE:

- ✓ Rare fruit tree farm, Havana
- ✓ Sustainable Biosphere, Las Terrazas with hiking and lecture
- ✓ Cuban Orchid Farm
- ✓ Finca Marta (organic farm)
- ✓ Zapata Peninsula – Playa Larga (Cuba's largest wilderness area)
- ✓ Salinas Park- Rare bird watching, Cuban Crocodiles
- ✓ Cueva de los peces (Caves of the fishes for swimming)
- ✓ Cienfuegos Botanical Gardens
- ✓ Gran Parque Natural Topes de Collantes/ El Nicho Waterfalls
- ✓ Che Guevara Museum
- ✓ Fully Escorted / Private Guides / Private Driver
- ✓ One night Havana
- ✓ Non-stop air from Tampa



This group is being organized through a fully licensed Travel Service Provider. Carlson Maritime Travel, LLC is authorized to provide services in connection with travel to Cuba for U.S. citizens who are authorized to engage in travel-related transactions involving Cuba under either a general or specific license. CU-2014-307835-1 Dept. of Commerce License: D1118969

More information will be available in the next newsletter

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve Art Collection By Lynn Whitelaw

Did you know Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve has an art collection? In 2015, long-time Friends members, Evan & Ruth Ann Earle, gave a portfolio of limited-edition prints by well-known Florida naturalist artist, Robert Butler (1943-2014). The prints, created in 1987, were commissioned by the First National Bank of Clearwater to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Pinellas County. The Bank selected Butler, an accomplished Florida landscape artist, to "portray sights of diminishing undeveloped areas and areas of significant historical interest within the County." Butler's paintings of Brooker Creek Park (today John Chestnut Park), Brooker Creek Boat Ramp, Cobb's Landing on Lake Tarpon and the McMullen Coachman Log Cabin, were then reproduced as color lithographs for the commemorative portfolio.

The Earle's gave the prints to Brooker Creek because she felt it was "the best place where everybody can enjoy these beautiful images recorded by one of Florida's best landscape artists." The works were framed by FOBCP and have become the nucleus of the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve Art Collection. They are shown in the Auditorium Gallery between scheduled changing exhibitions and will be on view for the upcoming 15th anniversary exhibition along with the new portfolio donation by Tarpon Springs artist Christopher Still (see below).

The Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve Art Collection Grows

First a little history: When Brooker Creek Preserve opened in 2004, the Auditorium was used as a gallery space for artists whose works were inspired by nature. These exhibits continued until 2008 when the economic recession caused the loss of staffing at the Preserve. The gallery program laid dormant until the Friends group took over responsibility for organizing exhibitions in 2017.

Back in 2004, the first exhibition in the Brooker Creek Auditorium was a portfolio of limited-edition prints by painter Christopher Still of Tarpon Springs. At the time, Christopher had recently completed an extraordinary series of 10 mural-size paintings commissioned for the House of Representatives in Tallahassee. This was a major commission and gave Christopher prestigious recognition for his paintings that focused on Florida's unique history and natural resources. The prints that were shown were of those paintings.

Moving ahead, Christopher and his wife, Kelly, who worked as a naturalist at Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center when the center opened, have remained supporters of Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve over the years. When approached to restage the popular 2004 exhibition for the Preserve's 15th anniversary, the Still's decided to donate the boxed print portfolio of the ten legislative paintings to the FOBCP Art Collection. Eight of the prints document Florida from the pre-Columbian period through statehood, to the history of conflicts and growth, to the space missions of today. Two other prints represent Florida's underwater maritime environments and complete the set. The prints have been framed and didactic panels describing the

cultural and historical details in each print have also been prepared for the exhibition. The Christopher and Kelly Still gift will be on view for the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve's 25th anniversary programs on February 23 and will remain on view for several months so that we will all have an opportunity to see them.



Photo by Mike Young.

FOBCP Annual Meeting — 11/11/18

It was great to see and chat with so many of you at our November Annual Meeting! Many thanks to our FOBCP Directors, who provided the delicious brunch casseroles and treats. It almost seems as if having great culinary skills is a pre-requisite to being on our Board. I promise you it's not!

What is requisite is a love of Brooker Creek Preserve; a desire to see it appropriately maintained and kept healthy, a desire to educate others about its importance as a greenspace and habitat in this most densely populated Florida county, and a desire to participate as a working member of our Board of Directors. At this meeting, those in attendance approved the slate of Directors that was presented. The **list of current Directors and Officers**, and those who contribute in **other leadership** positions, as well as the jobs they do for the Friends can be found on the last page of each newsletter.

Our membership also approved amending the **FOBCP Bylaws** as described in information sent out to them in October 2018. In short, we changed our Annual Meeting date from November to January starting in January 2020, amended other sections that were affected by this date change, and cleaned up several typographical and grammatical errors. Many, many thanks to **Walt Hoskins**, our Guiding Documents Director for his diligence in combing through the many articles and sections of our bylaws to make sure everything jibed. A tedious task, for sure, but an important one!

The Regional Native Plant Society Holiday Party - a great success!

Held on Saturday, December 1, the all-day event featured a morning program, pot-luck lunch, a choice of two workshops - Leaf ID or Palm Weaving - and an afternoon walk. About 80 people attended representing four NPS chapters.



The pot-luck lunch was delicious and plentiful. Everyone brought their best recipes!



James Stevenson, on staff at Brooker, gave an awesome morning presentation on *Ferns of Brooker Creek Preserve*. This was followed by an afternoon walk during which James pointed out ferns and discussed their natural history in real life.



Leaf Identification was led by Katie MacMillan, a biologist with Pasco County. Katie brought lots of demo leaves and explained the jargon used for identification. "She made it so easy!" recalled a participant joyfully.



Palm Weaving was led by Ruth Ann Earle who taught participants how to weave a cabbage palm frond into a beautiful door hanging or wall decoration.



Music in the Woods Series: Merigiare String Quartet - 12/9/18

By Jane Myers

The string quartet, Merigiarre, was enjoyed by over 100 people in the lovely Education Center Auditorium on December 9th. The Friends are so very, very grateful to Jon Burr for his very generous donations which have paid for a string quartet 3 years in a row now! Jon has a passion for chamber music and loves to share this with all of us. This gift of beautiful music at the Preserve has been appreciated by so many people - many who have never visited the Preserve before. Jon does many other things as a volunteer at the Preserve. Thank you, Jon, for such a wonderful gift!

Thanks, too, to board member and volunteer, Barb Hoffman and her husband, for hosting three of the musicians while they were in town, and thanks to all who brought food for intermission, those who helped by taking donations at the door, driving folks from the parking lot in the golf cart, and helping cleanup after the event.

The members of the quartet came from Tallahassee and they all really enjoyed our venue and the wonderful acoustics of the Auditorium. Such a wonderful afternoon at the Preserve!



Jon Burr and Jane Myers with the String Quartet.

Friends  of Brooker Creek Preserve

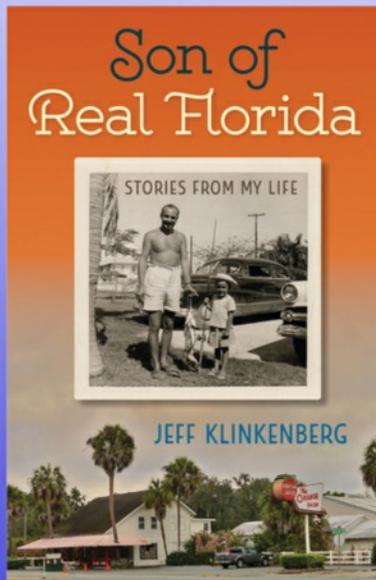
ACRE ADOPTIONS FOR BROOKER CREEK PRESERVE

**Many thanks for the following Acre Adoptions for
Nov./Dec. 2018:**

In honor of John "Pops" Landers — - given by The
Childress Family - Wade, Allyn, Danny & Ryan

Please consider adopting an acre as a birthday gift, memorial or to honor a special person. See p. 28 for Adopt an Acre Form and additional information.

Meet Jeff Klinkenberg: Book Talk & Signing



Award-winning author and journalist Jeff Klinkenberg will discuss his latest book *Son of Real Florida: Stories from My Life*. The book will be available in the Friends of Brooker Creek Nature Store for sale and signing after the talk!

Saturday, January 5th 10:30 a.m.



UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve

BCP Annual Volunteer Appreciation Party

Sun., Jan. 6, 12 to 2 pm

See Volunteer News, p. 25

Gopher Tortoises + Prescribed Fire = Increased Biodiversity



Brooker Creek Preserve is home to one of Pinellas County's largest populations of gopher tortoises, a threatened, burrowing species which occurs in upland habitats. Learn about the significant ecological role played by this keystone species. Find out how habitat restoration, including the use of prescribed fire, can greatly benefit plant and animal communities. This program is recommended for all ages.

Heinrich Ecological Services
Exploring the Nature of Florida



UF IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
An equal opportunity institution.

Friends of
Brooker Creek Preserve



Celebrate Trees! Saturday Youth Program



Happy Florida Arbor Day!!



**Saturday, January 19
1pm to 2pm**

Hey Kids! Let's celebrate Florida Arbor Day and the importance of TREES! Come learn about all of the amazing things these giant plants can do by participating in fun hands-on activities. Led by Lara Milligan, your local Pinellas County Natural Resources Agent. Family Friendly! Recommended for youth ages 6-12.

Register at: <https://youthtreeprogram.eventbrite.com>

UF IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
An equal opportunity institution.



Plein Air 2019

Brooker Creek Preserve

Saturday, January 26

(Plein Air Event) – All Day

Sunday, February 17

(Reception and Awards Program) 1- 3pm



Plein Air 2019 is sponsored by the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve to encourage the use of the Preserve as an inspiration for artists to create nature-inspired works of art. All artists (amateurs to professionals) are invited to participate in showing their talent and support for Brooker Creek Preserve by creating art inspired by the wildlife and natural landscape of the Preserve. All artwork must be created on January 26 within the Preserve grounds. Up to two pieces per artist may be submitted. The resulting works will be displayed in the Brooker Creek Preserve Auditorium Gallery for three weeks during which time judging will occur. Sale of artwork is encouraged and 10% from any sales is requested as a donation to Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve. The Reception and Awards program will take place from 1:00 to 3:00 PM on Sunday, February 17. All unsold artwork must be removed at the end of the event.

Cost to participate is a \$20 non-refundable fee. Early registration is strongly encouraged to assure participation. Cash prizes will be awarded for Best in Show (\$100), First (\$75), Second (\$50), Third (\$25), and Visitor's Choice (\$25).

Registration forms and more information can be found at:
www.friendsofbrookercreekpreserve.org

Friends  of Brooker Creek Preserve

3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs, FL 34688
For questions: Call 727-934-2680 * Email fobcp@tampabay.rr.com


Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve
3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs, FL 34688

PLEIN AIR 2019
BROOKER CREEK PRESERVE

Saturday, January 26 - Plein Air Event
Sunday, February 17 - Closing Reception

REGISTRATION & RELEASE FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone (cell): _____

Email: _____

Art Medium: _____

RELEASE & MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

I fully release and hold harmless Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve and Pinellas County for any injury or loss to myself, my possessions, and my artwork during the activities of **Plein Air 2019**.

I understand that I must check in at the boardwalk entrance kiosk at Brooker Creek Preserve on 1/26/19 (rain date 1/27/19) between 8:00 and 10:00 am.

I understand that I may submit up to two pieces of art and the pieces must be artwork done during event day within the boundary of Brooker Creek Preserve.

I understand that framed and wired paintings must be submitted by 4:00 pm and framed and wired photography must be submitted by noon the following day.

I understand that my artwork will be on display in the Auditorium Gallery at Brooker Creek Preserve until 2/17/19.

I understand that 10% of my artwork sales from this event gets donated to Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve.

I understand that my artwork must be removed by 4:00 pm on 2/17/19.

Signature

Date

Capture the Moment: Photographing Nature

Have you wondered what all of those 'other' knobs and settings on your camera do? And what about all those options when you push the Menu button? The manual gives a short description, but how and when do you use them? And what difference does it make? Join professional photographers Karl and Kathleen Nichter for a tour of the most common settings on your camera, and what they do. We'll throw in tips for using them, and some other photography basics too. Bring your camera if you have one!

Meet in the Auditorium!

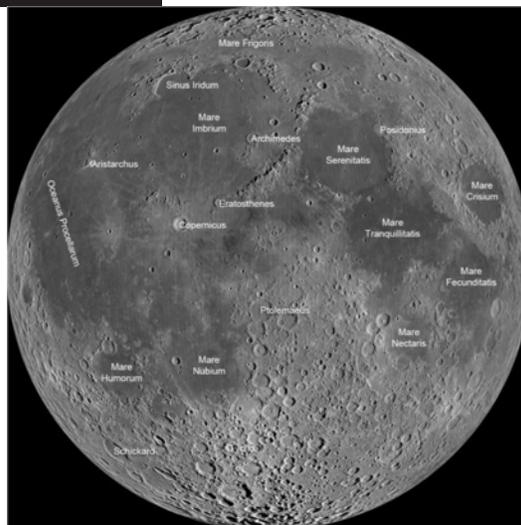
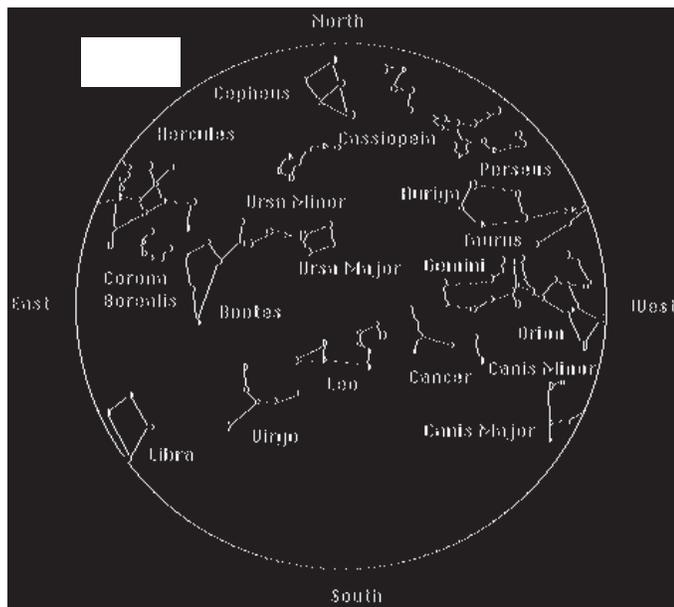
January 26
10:30am



Star Party!

Saturday, February 9, 2019, 6:00 — 10:00 or so

Join The Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve as we observe the night sky with the St. Petersburg Astronomy Club. Observe the stars through telescopes provided. Night hikes will be conducted as well along the 0.75 mile Ed Center Trail through the woods. Please bring a chair, water, insect repellent, and your own telescope if you have one. As always, pets, smoking and alcohol are not allowed. Arrive between 5:30 and 6:00 pm -- the front gates will be open only during this time. A \$3 per person donation is requested; registration is required. Register online at [Eventbrite](#). Questions: fobcp@tampabay.rr.com or 727-934-2680.





25/15!

It's our Birthday! Come celebrate with us!
Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve—25 years old!
Environmental Education Center—15 years old!

Saturday, February 23, 2019

Exciting things happening all day!

Hikes, presentations,

birthday cake, crafts, gifts, and more!

Mark your calendar! More info coming to you soon!

FOBCP Return the Preserve

By: Evan Earle, Jr

Our next RTP work day will be January 19. Join us!

On Saturday Nov. 12th, 2018, volunteers from the Hillsborough Academy of Math and Science (HAMS) joined the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve (FOBCP) and Keep Pinellas Beautiful (KPB) for the inaugural HAMS Family Volunteer Day by participating in a special FOBCP Return the Preserve Work Day. KPB was generous in not only being there to work with us, but also by giving everyone a reusable water bottle that helps to reduce the need for plastic water bottles and cups and thus helps our environment. HAMS showed up with over 70 volunteers. This was our largest RTP Work Day ever! Way to go HAMS!

It was a wonderful turnout of students, parents, and teachers. HAMS should be very proud of the way these volunteers represented their school because they accomplished a tremendous amount of work. We removed over 20 large garbage bags of invasive, exotic plants such as caesarweed and skunkvine. We removed thousands of pounds of overgrown vines. In doing so, these great volunteers supported the FOBCP in our mission to help return the Preserve to its natural condition. By cleaning up these areas, we allow the trees and the understory to return and grow naturally. This in turn invites the return of native wildlife. It is a win-win scenario for the trees and shrubs, the animals, and visitors to the Preserve.

The students were impressive, a smart and hard-working group of young people. It sure looked and sounded like they had fun. I hope that they will return to the Preserve with their families and friends to enjoy the Education Center, the programs, the trails, and all the Preserve has to offer. And to show off all of their hard work and accomplishments from this RTP Work Day.



I would be remiss if I didn't give a shout out to the parents who joined us. The HAMS moms and dads rocked it! It was a hot November morning but the parents jumped in and never slowed down. It was hard to get some of them to take a break! The



before and after look of the areas receiving attention tells the whole story. It is rewarding to work with students, teachers, and parents and introduce them to the Preserve and to this beautiful natural setting. Seeing them roll up their sleeves and get to work, well, you can't help but feel good.

I want to thank Valerie and Veshali from HAMS for working with me to

make this partnership possible. It was no small task to successfully coordinate this many people! I also want to thank Greg Long who is a longtime supporter of our RTP Work Days and has coordinated the participation of HAMS students many times.

Thank you KPB for partnering with us and providing those great reusable water bottles. KPB is always generous with their time, support, and hands on involvement and they make our RTP Work Days even better. Thank you, Pat, Stephanie, Megan, Amanda, Sydne, and Nathan, for being there!

A special thank you to Kristen Prevost with BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse at Countryside Mall. Kristen helped to arrange for BJ's to DONATE 20 delicious, freshly made pizzas for our hard-working volunteers. BJ's continues to be a generous supporter of the FOBCP RTP Work Days. Thank you, Kristen and BJ's, for your generosity and for making a lot of hungry people happy that day!

Thank you to FOBCP Volunteers Ruth Earle and Marion Yongue. Ruth picked up and delivered our pizza lunch safe and sound. Her van must have smelled delicious for a few days. Thank you for always stepping up to help with deliveries and more! Marion was the force behind those 20 plus bags of invasive plants. He has been a constant at our RPT Work Days and his dedication and hard work is appreciated!

The Preserve also showed off a little for everyone on this RTP Work Day. Several people saw deer as they drove in. All of us were fortunate enough to see a gopher tortoise in the parking lot area. Some of us went for a short hike on our boardwalk where we got to see a pileated woodpecker (the largest woodpecker in Florida) up close and, from a very safe distance, our resident alligator who was sunning on the banks of the creek.

Volunteers are the key to our success at the Preserve! I can't thank you enough for your support of our RTP Work Days in 2018. We had gone to a quarterly schedule in 2018, but because of the interest and enthusiasm from our supporters, neighbors, and friends, we conducted SIX very successful RTP Work Days over the course of the year. The areas around the parking lot, along the delivery loop road, and around the buildings are looking healthier than ever. Let's keep the momentum going in 2019 as we work together to help Return the Preserve to its natural beauty.



Photos by Evan Earle, Jr.

Friends  of Brooker Creek Preserve

2019 NIGHT HIKE!

Join the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve for a hiking experience along the Education Center Trail...*at night!* These special hikes are open to the public and limited to 20 people per hike. **A \$3 per person donation is requested.** Hikes are led by Mark Yeager, a Preserve volunteer who is knowledgeable about nocturnal wildlife. The hike is about one-mile in length and will take about 1.5 hours.

Saturday Jan. 19, 2019 6:00 pm
Saturday Feb. 9, 2019 6:00 pm - Star Party!
Saturday Mar. 9, 2019 6:30 pm
Saturday Apr. 20, 2019 7:30 pm
Saturday May 11, 2019 7:30 pm

Pre-registration is required! Once you register, more information will come to you via email. Pre-register online by logging onto: <https://nighthikes.eventbrite.com>

These hikes are for adults and families only. Children must be accompanied by parents. Please leave your pets at home. Pets are not permitted in County Preserves.

Star Party! Join the Friends AND the St. Petersburg Astronomy Club to view planets, stars, and the moon with telescopes. Night Hikes will be conducted as well.

Questions? Email fobcp@tampabay.rr.com

Cuba-Related Event (Re: FOBCP sponsored Eco-Tour of Cuba, p. 3):

The exhibition *CUBA: The Natural Beauty*, images of Cuba taken by Florida's premiere landscape and environmental photographer, Clyde Butcher, will be on view Jan. 9 through Feb. 22 in the Rao Musunuru, M.D. Art Gallery at Pasco Hernando State College (New Port Richey Campus, 10230 Ridge Road). For the opening reception on Jan. 9, Butcher will be in attendance for a book signing. This event is free and open to the public. Get inspired to travel to Cuba by these photographs commissioned in 2002 for the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Habitat of Mountains.



Friends  of Brooker Creek Preserve

Back by popular demand...

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

A nature-based fundraising hike series

Description: This series of four hikes will take place in beautiful areas tucked away within Brooker Creek Preserve in sites that are closed to the public. Our guide, Dr. Craig Huegel (SPC Biology Professor), can identify everything, from the tiniest moss to the tallest tree including animal prints, bird calls, lichens, and more. He is full of stories and very patient in answering questions. The hikes will be not only educational, but a lot of fun as well! The hikes will begin at 9:00 a.m. and be about 3-4 hours long. Bring water and lunch.

Cost: \$80 donation for the series or \$25 donation per hike with a 10% discount for members of Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve

Sites Off the Beaten Path:

Jan. 13, 2019 - Cypress Swamp Stomp – Located in the central part of the preserve, this site features orchids, ferns, and epiphytes. Plan to get wet, or maybe not, as we plunge into the depths of the swamp!

March 24, 2019 – Sandhill Scramble – The only true sandhills of Brooker Creek Preserve. This site is in the northern end of the preserve and will feature an abundance of spring wildflowers.

June 23, 2019 – Interior Wildlands – We will be in parts of the Preserve so remote that cell phones won't work, areas so pretty you won't believe you are in Pinellas County!

Sep. 22, 2019 – In Search of Catesby's Lily – Located in the eastern part of the preserve, we will search for the threatened Catesby's Lily. In so doing, we will see a profusion of beautiful fall wildflowers in full bloom.

Reservations Required: Reserve your spot by emailing fobcp@tampabay.rr.com. Sign up early! Only 20 spots are open for these fabulous hikes *off the beaten path!* Questions? Email fobcp@tampabay.rr.com or call 727-934-2680.

My Thoughts on Native Plants and Native Plant Landscaping By: Craig Huegel

I have been deeply involved in the native plant movement, here in Florida, for more than 30 years and my writings reflect my sincere commitment to incorporating them in developed landscapes. That said, I believe that we have missed the point. The concept that an "all native" yard will somehow magically suffice to restore the environmental damage that we've created using traditional landscape approaches is simply wrong. It will not.

The real change will come when we select plants for the ecological attributes they will bring to our yards. The concept of creating a "living landscape", does not necessarily denigrate one group of plants over another. It sees them only for the role they will play in achieving our landscape goals. Just as many non-natives are little more than plastic show pieces, some natives will also fall far short of achieving what we desire. In a "living landscape", each selection we make should have a positive role to play. It requires us to first identify our goals and then choose wisely.

We must first define what it means to be a "native." As I sit here in Florida, my state is inundated by invasive species purposely imported at one time to placate someone's need for a missing aesthetic or to provide a service that someone thought was not being performed by something already here. Such invasives exist throughout the modern world. It is not just a Florida problem. We spend countless millions of dollars each year attempting to control such plants - mostly to no avail in the long term; money that would have been much better spent on land acquisition and management. When I talk about non-native plants, I am not giving a pass to those species, but not all non-natives have invasive qualities.



Spiny hackberry (*Celtis pallida*)

As a species, humans have traded for and brought home a great many plant species that were not originally present. One of my Florida favorites, spiny hackberry (*Celtis pallida*), is certainly one of those. This is a species found in the arid desert Southwest as well as in Mexico, Central and South America. In Florida, it is a state-endangered species and we protect it as such. Here, it is recorded only on a few Native American middens. Its bright yellow succulent fruit are edible. Though it may have made it to Florida in the droppings of migratory birds, it seems most likely that native peoples brought it here as a food plant. Otherwise, it should also be found in xeric areas elsewhere in the state. It is native by definition, but it was likely introduced. I have planted it for its wildlife value, not because it is native. Not everything humans have traded for and introduced are problems or detrimental to nature's balance.

Dr. Doug Tallamy, most famous for his book *Bringing Nature Home*, has sparked a great conversation on the importance of native plants. Everyone involved in this movement owes him a

debt of gratitude for this, but I believe he has also skewed the conversation in a way that is also detrimental. His discussion is too simplistic and perhaps that partially explains its popularity. Creating a living landscape is not that simplistic. It is about increasing the habitat value of our properties and not simply about "native" or "non-native." We choose to maximize the habitat value of our properties by first deciding what it is we are trying to create habitat for, and then looking seriously at what the missing pieces are that we have to amend. Each plant brings to the table its own set of attributes and none are created completely equal. It is not enough to look at a list of "best wildlife plants" and simply plant them. One type of oak, for example, is not the same as another. Wildlife are not that simplistic either. Each has its own unique habitat needs and unless you have a great many acres to play with, you have to target your planting efforts to those species you most want to support.

It's also not just about food - whether we're talking about caterpillars, fruit, seeds, or something else. It's about cover for nesting and hiding, It's about feeding their young as much as it's about feeding the adults - in spring as well as winter, summer and fall. Habitat needs change over the seasons and with the age of each species. To create a truly living landscape requires us to look at what we have and what we need to have and it makes no distinction about whether the plants are native or not. I wish it were that simple, but it isn't.

There are non-native plants that can be especially important in a landscape designed for nature. Our non-native citrus, for example, provide food for giant swallowtail butterfly caterpillars - every bit as good as our native prickly ashes. When given a choice to plant a spiny wild lime (*Zanthoxylum fagara*) that is dioecious and needing of both sexes to provide seeds of marginal use to my songbirds, or an orange or key lime that I can also enjoy, I will always use the non-native. When asked to choose between our native maypop (*Passiflora incarnata*) and the non-native hybrid *Passiflora x incense*, I will choose the latter. I have failed miserably over the years trying to keep our native maypop alive in my landscape. I just don't have the right conditions for it. 'Incense', however, has done spectacularly and the butterflies love it just as much. In south Florida where we have a resident population of non-migratory monarch butterflies, the non-native milkweed, *Asclepias curassavica*, is what sustains them over winter. Our natives are all resting below ground until spring - and many native milkweed species are very difficult to keep alive in a home landscape.

My point is that we choose plants for their ecological attributes, not their nativity. I have never had the luxury of managing a large yard. I have to pack in everything I can into the standard lot that I live on. I do not have room for plants that do not have a defined function. I'm betting most of you don't either.



Native maypop (*Passiflora incarnata*).
Photos by Craig Huegel.

News from the Wildflower Garden

By: Pam Brown

We took November and December off from working in the garden during the Holidays. Not much is happening in the garden during this time. Plants have gone to seed and we have let them fall this year in hopes of increasing the number of wildflower plants in the garden. Volunteers work to maintain the garden as a wildflower meadow that contains wildflowers native to Brooker Creek Preserve. We meet on the last Saturday of each month to continue our maintenance of this garden area. Please consider coming out to help from 9 to 11 a.m. (winter hours). We will have a lot of winter clean-up to do in January. There will be breakfast snacks, coffee and juice. Bring gardening tools, gloves, a hat, and wear closed toed shoes. We would love to have you come and join us on January 26, or February 23, 2019.

Pam's Gardening Tip

I already have some frost damage from the early frost in mid December. Frosts and freezes are always possible from January into February. Plan ahead for what protection measures you will take in your landscape if a frost or freeze is predicted. Common plants which require protection in home landscapes are copperleaf, banana, papaya, poinsettia, hibiscus, Ixora, dwarf schefflera, croton, bougainvillea, Allamanda, sea grape, bromeliads, tropical fruit trees or any other tropical or semi-tropical plant you have planted. Orchids should be brought into the house or garage for protection.

Remember tomato, pepper and other cold sensitive vegetable plants too.

Covers offer the most practical cold protection for sensitive plants. Old sheets, blankets, boxes, newspaper or plastic can be used for covers. When using plastic, build a frame over the plant so that the plastic does not touch the plant's foliage. Any covering should continue to the ground. This will trap heat rising from the ground and keep the interior three to four degrees warmer than the outside air.



Freeze damage to a marlberry (left) and a native seagrape (above) at the Pinellas Cooperative Extension Office.

Apply the cover late in the afternoon while the soil is at the warmest and before the temperature starts to drop. Plastic covers should be removed the next morning after the temperature is above freezing but before the sun's rays become warm enough to cook your plants. Cloth or paper coverings can remain over plants for two or three days if frost is again predicted. Covers might not effectively protect plants if temperatures fall below 30 degrees for several hours or more. Watering landscape plants **before** a freeze can help protect plants. Well watered soil can absorb more heat from the sun than dry soil. Additional information can be obtained by accessing the University of Florida/IFAS publications: *Preparing your Landscape for Cold Weather* <http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/weather/preparing-the-landscape-for-cold-weather.htm> and *Cold Protection of Ornamental Plants* <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/MG/MG02500.pdf>

Damaged plants will look wilted, the leaves might turn brown and die, and some plants can look melted. Resist the temptation to start pruning these plants back. The damaged leaves help to insulate damaged plants from frost and further injury. Wait to prune cold-damaged tropical shrubs such as hibiscus, firebush, oleanders, and crotons until after they begin to sprout new growth with the onset of warm weather, maybe by late February or March. Once plants begin to sprout, be sure to prune below the new sprouts so that you cut into green healthy wood. Fertilize only after you see healthy new growth on these plants. It is often difficult to determine how far freeze damage extends. If you are worried that the plant is dead, gently scrape the bark near the base of a stem, if the cambium layer just under the bark is still green then the plant is alive.

Herbaceous plants, such as bananas, coleus, impatiens, gingers and begonias, will collapse and need to just be cut down and removed. This will reduce fungal or bacterial problems as these dead plants decay. Banana plants will usually send up new pups from the root system in the spring. There are many cold sensitive palms planted in our area that can be damaged by freezing temperatures. You can possibly save them by treating the growing bud with copper fungicide. The UF/IFAS Extension publication *Treating Cold Damaged Palms* is available at: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/MG318>

Something New in the Nature Store!

Check out these awesome hand-turned wood bowls! They are made right here in Pinellas County from Florida maple and pine.



Nature Store News By Cathie Foster

What a successful year we have had! Thanks to all of our dedicated Nature Store volunteers who made this success possible!

Alison Shepard	Barb Hoffman
Chuck Parsons	Dixie Mills
Donald Borbath	Ruth Ann Earle
Janet McNew	Janet Wheeler
Katy Roberts	Mona Gardner
Nancy Mellican	Paul Mellican
Sandra Miraglia	Tom Trimmier
Ric Hoover	Lou Petersen
Kathleen Nichter	Kathy Miller



Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve
Nature Store

Opened 2011 in the Exhibit Hall lobby with minimal inventory and a handful of (and sometimes no) volunteers.
Profit 2011: \$1336.69

2018 – full retail operation run with 15 volunteers.
Profit 2018: **\$12,869.11**
Profit 2017: \$9,884.46



Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve



BEEKEEPERS CLUB

The Friends Beekeepers Club is open to anyone who is interested in beekeeping. Those of us already in the club are very new to the hobby and are learning as we go. Bob Burkard, Beekeepers Club President, is very knowledgeable about beekeeping. We have now built TEN hives, each hosting between 10,000 and 20,000 bees.

Meetings are held the first Sunday of each month at 9:00 am. We meet at the Bee Shed at Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center, gather equipment, and then go to the apiary located about two miles away. Everyone shares in all work.

Annual dues for the club are \$25 per person. You must also be a member of *Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve* in order to join the Beekeepers Club. The Friends Beekeepers Club is an affiliate of *Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve*.

If you would like to join the **Friends Beekeepers Club** or simply have questions, please email fobcp@tampabay.rr.com.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve Readers Club

By: Jon Burr



For the November 2018 Friends of Brooker Creek Readers Club we read and discussed "Everglades Lawmen", by James

T. Huffstodt. True Stories of Game Wardens in the Glades. Everyone liked the book. One comment was that the book seemed a little repetitive. I found disturbing the asymmetry between the weeks and month spent by the wardens to finally make an arrest only to have the defendant get a lawyer and then get off with a small fine. This, unfortunately, was one of the repetitive features. The book included the story of Peggy Parks who was killed on land later to become the Preserve. There is a memorial to Peggy on the right side of the entrance road to the Preserve.

The December 2018: book discussed was "The Florida Reader, Visions of Paradise from 1530 to the Present" by Maurice O'Sullivan and Jack C. Lane, editors. Perhaps not the most popular book we read this year but each member found something of interest in the book. We then went to lunch together for an early holiday get-together.

Here are the books for the first 6 months of 2019:

January 2019: "Flight Behavior" by Barbara Kingsolver

February 2019: "The Orchid Thief" by Susan Orlean

March 2019: "River of Golden Ibis" by Gloria Jahoda

April 2019: "A Sand County Almanac" by Aldo Leopold. (Note: this is considered the major book of the ecosystem understanding movement. If you could only have one book on the environment it would be this one)

May 2019: "Land of Flowers" by Jeff Klinkenberg

June 2019: "Tracking Desire" by Susan Cerulean

There is lots of room at the table for more readers. We meet at 9:30 in the conference room of the Ed Center at the Preserve on the first Saturday of the month.

Volunteer News and More!

By Julia Myers, Education Support Specialist, Brooker Creek Preserve



Hi Amazing Brooker Creek Volunteers!

Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 6th, 2019 for our annual Volunteer Appreciation Celebration! We cannot wait to shower you all with our appreciation and feed you a yummy lunch! Please see the attached invitation. We hope you can join us! Please R.S.V.P to me by Wednesday, January 2nd. Thank you!

Thank You for another GREAT Year!
Volunteers are the backbone of Brooker Creek Preserve and it is your efforts that keep this place so special and wonderful. In fiscal year 2018, Brooker Creek

volunteers contributed 8,920 hours, which is an equivalent of \$220,234.80 of service to our Preserve! On top of that we had 33,525 visitors in the Education Center this year, a 13.5% increase from last year! We offered a total of 535 programs reaching 15,430 visitors. You all are amazing, thank you for everything you all do to help us keep those numbers on the upward trend! Keep up the AWESOME work.

If you would like to join our active volunteer group at Brooker Creek Preserve, please call us at (727) 453-6800.

We are kicking off January with some fantastic NEW programs, be sure to check out the January schedule, it is jam packed!


 Friends of
 Brooker Creek Preserve

ADOPT AN ACRE



*A program to enhance restoration
 and land management programs in
Brooker Creek Preserve*

The **ADOPT AN ACRE** program was established by the Friends in 2016 to give individuals the opportunity to help keep intact the ecological integrity of the Preserve.

100% of funding will be used for:

- Removing exotic and invasive plants
- Restoring the natural flow of water
- Fire management
- Restoring natural plant communities

Acres make great gifts for birthdays, anniversaries, memorials and more!

Upon receipt of the donation, the donor or honoree's name will be placed on the **ADOPT AN ACRE** display inside the Environmental Education Center for one year. A certificate will be sent to the honoree acknowledging the adoption.

Donor
 Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

___in honor of ___in memory of ___for myself

Honoree
 Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

I wish to adopt _____ acres @ \$100/acre

Total Due: _____

Make check payable to: FOBCP

Mail to: 3940 Keystone Road
 Tarpon Springs, FL 34688

Questions? fobcp@tampabay.rr.com

FEID #59-3302182 tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (1-800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. REGISTRATION NUMBER CH. 16077

BROOKER CREEK PRESERVE

Cool calendar for your refrigerator!

January 2019

**Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve events*

THURSDAY		FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
3 Pre-School Book Time 10:30-11:30		4	5 Guided Hike 9-10:30 *Brooker Readers Club 9:30-10:30 A Morning with Jeff Klinkenberg Talk and Book Signing 10:30-12:00	6 *FOBCP Beekeepers Club Work Day 9:00 AM
10 Pre-School Book Time 10:30-11:30		11 Guided Hike 9-10:30 <i>(Native Plants & Pollinators)</i>	12 Beginning Bird Hike 8:00-10:00 Gopher Tortoises and Prescribed Fire (George Heinrich) 10:00-12:00	13 *Off the Beaten Path Hike 9:00-1:00 \$25/psn donation \$22.50 for FOBCP members
16 *FOBCP Board Meeting 6:30 PM	17 Pre-School Book Time 10:30-11:30	18 Guided Hike 9-10:30 Family Fun Friday 10-11 am	19 *Return the Preserve Work Day 8-11 am Guided Hike 9:00-10:30 Youth Program: Celebrating Trees 1-2 pm *Night Hike 6:00-8:00 pm \$3/person donation	20
24 Pre-School Book Time 10:30-11:30		25	26 *Plein Air Art Event -artists must pre-register 4-Mile Hike 9:00-12:00 *Wildflower Garden Work Day 9-11 am Photographing Nature 10:30-12:00	27
31 Pre-School Book Time 10:30-11:30				

February 2019

THURSDAY		FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		1	2 Guided Hike 9:00-10:30 *Friends Readers Club 9:30-10:30 Plants and People: FL Ethnobotany 10:30-12:00	3 *FOBCP Beekeepers Club Work Day 9:00 AM
7 Pre-School Book Time 10:30-11:30		8 Guided Hike 9:00-10:30 <i>(Native Plants and Pollinators)</i>	9 Beginning Bird Hike 8:00-10:00 Intro to Plant ID 10:30-12:00 *Star Party with St. Pete Astronomy Club 6:00-10:00 \$3 donation	10
14 Pre-School Book Time 10:30-11:30		15 Guided Hike 9:00-10:30 <i>(Wildlife in the Preserve)</i>	16 Guided Hike 9:00-10:30 <i>(Nature's Hidden Wonders)</i> Design a FL Friendly Landscape 10:30-12:00	17 *Plein Air Art Reception and Awards Program 1:00-3:00 pm
21 Pre-School Book Time 10:30-11:30		22	23 BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION! <i>Friends of BCP 25 years</i> <i>BCP Environmental Education Center 15 years</i> Exciting activities and presentations all day! 9:00-4:00	24
28 Pre-School Book Time 10:30-11:15				

For program details go to <http://www.brookercreekpreserve.org/programs-classes.htm> Click "Calendar of Classes/Programs/Hikes"

Hiking Trails are open every day from 7:00 am until one hour before sunset.

Additional Note: It takes about 10 minutes to drive from the preserve entrance (Keystone Rd.) to the parking lot, and 2-5 minutes to walk from the parking lot to the Education Center buildings.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve - Mission Statement: The mission of the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve is to provide public support for the Preserve through fund raising, volunteer programs, and education to ensure that the Preserve remains a natural wilderness for future generations.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve - Land Use Position Statement: The Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve support land uses within the boundaries of Brooker Creek Preserve which have a main purpose that furthers the preservation, conservation, restoration or protection of the land and resources of the Brooker Creek Preserve.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve:
www.FriendsOfBrookerCreekPreserve.org
Email: fobcp@tampabay.rr.com
Voicemail: (727) 934-2680

Brooker Creek Preserve:
Phone: (727) 453-6900
Website: www.brookercreekpreserve.org
Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center is located at 3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs, Florida, 34688. Phone: (727) 453-6800
Hours: Thurs. - Sat. 9am - 4pm, Sun., 11am - 4pm.

Friends Nature Store is located in the Education Center. Hours: Thurs. - Sat. 9am - 4pm, Sun., 11am - 4pm.

Preserve Hiking Trails open 7 days a week, 7:00am to 30 minutes before sunset. Closed the day after Thanksgiving and Dec. 25.

Horse Trails open 7 days a week, all year, sunrise to sunset.

This newsletter is published every other month. Please submit articles to Newsletter Editor Dr. Craig Huegel (727) 422-6583 or email Huegelc55@aol.com

Pinellas County PCR Mission statement: The mission of the Parks and Conservation Resources Department is to maintain and protect the inherent value of the County's natural, cultural and recreational resources through sustainable access, education, and stewardship that enhance quality of life for our community and future generations.

Board of Directors

Officers

Chair: Cathie Foster
Vice Chair: Robert Burkard
Secretary: Pam Brown
Treasurer: Jane Myers

Directors:

Beekeeper: Robert Burkard
Business: Barbara Hoffman
Communications: Julie Wade
Craftsman: Ray Poynor
Fall Wildflower Festival: Cathie Foster
4th Grade Coordination: Chuck Parsons
Grants: Allyn Childress
Guiding Documents: Walt Hoskins
Land Use: Dr. Craig Huegel
Music in the Woods: Jane Myers
Nature Store: Cathie Foster
Newsletter Editor: Dr. Craig Huegel
Night Hikes: Mark Yeager
Owl-O-Ween: Barb Hoffman
Publicity: Barbara Schultz
Return the Preserve Work Days:
Evan Earle, Jr.
Wilderness Trail: Dr. Craig Huegel
Wildflower Garden: Pam Brown
Wildlife Safari: Cathie Foster

Further Leadership

Accountant: Bob Host
Book Club: Jon Burr & Kathleen Nichter
Gallery Curator: Lynn Whitelaw
Membership: Jeff Myers
Newsletter Publisher: Cathy Vogelsong
Website Master: Cathy Ordiway

Registration Info: FEID #59-3302182 tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (1-800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. REGISTRATION NUMBER