

Caloosahatchee River Citizen's Association

RIVERWATCH

www.caloosahatchee.org

June, 2004

New Riverwatch Officers

President	Scott Perry
Vice President	Pete Quasius
Secretary	John Capece
Treasurer	Paula Bender

Oxbow Update

At the recent CRCA Board of Directors meeting, John Capece reported that the first oxbow restoration (#24 at Old Ft. Denaud subdivision) is moving forward but with some minor delays due to permit transfer formalities, questions of sediment disposal, and complications in securing the \$100,000 matching funds to go with the \$400,000 provided by SFWMD. Hendry County, the agency to implement the project, recently reached an understanding with the real estate developer that owns the lots adjacent to the planned restoration. Once the permit and funding issues are resolved, John Capece and Rae Ann Wessel will complete the work plan so that Hendry County can begin the dredging and scientific assessment project intended to help design future restorations.

SFWMD has allocated another \$500,000 for oxbow restoration in 2005. SFWMD has designated oxbow #32, one of the smaller of the five oxbows along Ft. Denaud Road, as the site of the second project. At a recent budget forum, SFWMD explained that the #32 oxbow restoration would primarily involve vegetation removal. Thus, sufficient funds should remain from the \$500,000 to restore an additional oxbow selected by a community ranking process.

Capece is suggesting that CRCA support using the remaining funds to partially restore the remnant oxbow on the eastern edge of the LaBelle Nature Park. This is one of the few, perhaps only, public lands adjacent to an oxbow in Hendry County. Even with the proposed partial restoration of the Nature Park oxbow, this meander would still be closed to flow from the river at its upstream end. A full restoration would require far more funds and years to organize and complete. Nevertheless, the partial restoration of this oxbow channel would provide public benefits by contributing to the scenic beauty and ecological function of the Nature Park, a facility that the Hendry-LaBelle Recreation Board manages and has targeted for improvement as a shared community resource.

For more information about the oxbow projects, see www.caloosahatchee.org/restoration.

Meet CRCA's Commodore Perry!

CRCA's new president, Scott Perry, is a native of LaBelle where he now resides with wife Cathy and their two young sons.

It is in large part due to his prominent involvement in issues affecting the county's at-risk youth and education that local residents have come to know Scott over the years. Helping young people to fulfill their academic potential is Scott's lifelong passion, to which he brings seemingly inexhaustible reserves of energy, enthusiasm, and professional dedication.

In the mid-1990s Scott perceived a gap in the county's provision of educational services to at-risk school students, and set about developing an educational model targeted specifically at the special requirements of this population. Efforts spearheaded by Scott resulted in the establishment of Clewiston Youth Development Academy (CYDA) with Scott as lead teacher. Since CYDA's founding in 1995, Scott has overseen a continuous expansion of the school's capacity to serve more and more at-risk youth in our region.

The other major focus of Scott's life is sailing and the natural history of Florida's waterways and environment. Scott shares his extensive knowledge of sailing and marine education in special vocational classes at CYDA and in summer "Fossil Camps", where he leads elementary kids in hunts for remnants of past civilizations and extinct species along the rivers and banks of the Caloosahatchee River.

National Geographic Expedition

The National Geographic Society grant recently sponsored two educational voyages along the Caloosahatchee, sailing from Clewiston through Ft. Myers to the Gulf of Mexico. Students of Clewiston Youth Development Academy learned how to sail and to navigate using GPS, performed experiments for water pollution, hunted for fossils, conducted wildlife counts, produced journals, and camped out at sites along the river. Students later expressed that taking part in the expedition exposed them to new skills and experiences and increased their knowledge of the river's ecology.

For more information about the National Geographic project, see www.cyda.hendry-schools.org. Then click on the tab, *Expedition Caloosahatchee*.

It Is Time to Renew Your Membership?

If you count yourself as a member of RiverWatch then please take a moment to fill out this form and then return it to us with your check. All memberships have expired (except those who paid at the March meeting). Also, pass this form on to a friend and ask them to join! As you know, the Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association (RiverWatch) needs your continued support to make sure that good things occur on our river.

Name: _____ Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____

E Mail: _____ Fax: _____

Membership Level:

Student \$5 _____ Individual \$10 _____ Family \$20 _____ Friend \$50 _____ Guardian \$100 _____

Sponsor/Corporate \$250 _____ Protector \$500 _____ Champion \$1000 _____

Volunteer Interests:

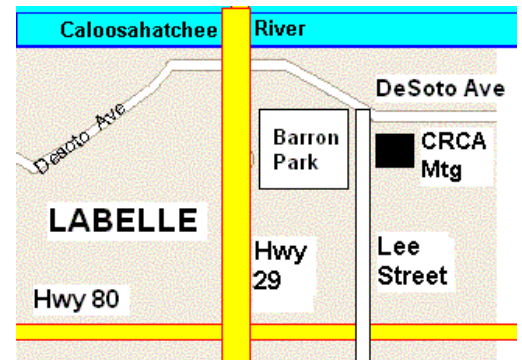
Clerical _____ Technical _____ Membership _____ Education _____

Projects and Events _____ Publicity/Communication _____

Please complete this form and send it with your check to: CRCA, Box 1165, Fort Myers, FL 33902

Membership Meeting Announcement

A CRCA meeting is scheduled for 10:30 AM on Saturday, June 19 to elect replacement board members and conduct other general business. The meeting will be held at the LaBelle community house located on the east side of Lee Street where the road meets the south shore of the river. Free BBQ and canoes provided. Scott Perry will also take any adventurous souls on a fossil hunt in the river.



RiverWatch

Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association

P.O. Box 1165

Fort Myers, FL 33902

The Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to protecting the Caloosahatchee River and its watershed through education and promotion of responsible use and enjoyment by all people.