

OCTOBER 2023

MICA *wave*

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A Periodic Publication of the Marco Island Civic Association



*Dr. Gerald Swiacki, President,
MICA Board of Directors*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Dr. Gerald Swiacki, President, MICA Board of Directors

We hope you enjoyed your summer and those in other areas of the country, hopefully, are experiencing some cooler temperatures!

We urge you to monitor the Marco Island City Council meeting agendas. City Council has instructed staff to amend the City's Land Development Code to allow public parking at condominiums and churches along Collier Boulevard's "Beach Corridor." City Council has also discussed options for public beach access through beachfront condominiums, so this will be on future agendas. Make your voices heard to Marco Island City Council members. Link to City Council page on the City's website: <https://www.cityofmarcoisland.com/citycouncil>

Switching gears, MICA is sponsoring a beach cleanup on October 14 at 8 a.m. We will meet on the sandy side of the boardwalk and head north and south. Please join us!

The MICA Board of Directors has the responsibility to protect and maintain Residents' Beach and Sarazen Park at a level our members have come to expect.

Over the last few years, expenses associated with the operation of the two properties have increased across the board, including insurance, landscaping, waste removal, payroll, printing, postage, electric and water, to name just a few. The annual fee was last increased nine years ago.

In addition, MICA expended just under half a million dollars to cleanup and return Residents' Beach to its pristine condition after taking a major flooding hit from Hurricane Ian and more than \$400,000 in cleanup costs after Category

4 Hurricane Irma hit in 2017. None of the damage from either hurricane was covered by insurance as insurance does not cover cleanup costs, sand, sod, plants, trees, electrical repairs, broken pipes nor chickee huts, etc.

At its July Board of Directors meeting, the MICA board voted to increase the Marco Island Residents' Beach fee to \$200 for the 2023-2024 membership year. This increase will help ensure that the property proudly referred to as "The Crown Jewel" of Marco Island continues to shine and welcome members every day of the year.

The Marco Island Residents' Beach is member supported and receives no funding from property taxes or any other entities. We have an ideal scenario wherein those who wish to support Residents' Beach do so and those who do not wish to support Residents' Beach are not required to.

Before closing, I would like to thank the MICA employees, from the office staff to the gate attendants. They are the face of MICA, and I appreciate all they do to help our members enjoy the Jewel of the Island.

As always, we are grateful for your continued support. We extend our best wishes to you and your family!

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Cover Photo: American Flamingos.
Photo: Holley Short. Audubon Florida

MICA PARTNERS WITH SISBARRO IMPROV TEAM FOR LUNCH WITH FRIENDS

by Maria Lamb

A big thank you to the Marco Island Civic Association (MICA) for the delicious lunch sponsorship with a delightful platter of healthy summer salad garnished with grapes and cherry tomatoes accompanied with platters of yummy baked cookies.

For July Lunch with Friends Over 60, the guests were treated to something fun and creative by Gina Sisbarro's Improv Team. Gina is the owner and founder of Sisbarro Acting Studio and they prepare two programs, one in the Fall and the other in the Spring. They were also preparing for their YMCA Summer Camp Play.

Gina told the audience that she writes all plays and it is always fun, since her plays are all original and you'll never see them in local community theaters.

In the format of a Dear Abby skit, the seniors read their problems and asked the panel of experts for their advice. The panel of experts consisted of Dear Abby herself (Ayla Vantansever); Zoe (Gina Sisbarro) a Counselor from Woodstock; Dr. Wilhelm Schmidt from Germany (Sammy Zocco) and Dr. Ben Razoredge from a Lunatic Asylum (Luke Tirrell)

Sample Question: I'm considering marrying a man who is divorced. We get along great, and I love and trust him. Is it ever appropriate to call the Ex and discuss her side of the story? Or should I ask my boyfriend what she'd say if I were to contact her? COVERING MY BASES from California.

Nothing was rehearsed and the answers popped right out of their heads. Thanks to the Sisbarro Improv

Sisbarro Improv, continued on page 4



Thanks to Marco Island Civic Association (MICA) - for the delicious lunch!

Sisbarro Improv, continued from page 3



Team of Ayla, Sammy and Luke, for a fun, creative with lots of laugh for everybody! Through the non-rehearsed skits and audience participation seniors showed their ability to “think outside the box” and deliver witty and funny comebacks in their “advanced age.”

Esta Alliker from the Y Read Program of the YMCA of Collier County also spoke on their need for volunteers, which is a program made possible by a grant from the State Department of Education. These volunteers are needed for Manatee Elementary

School, Parkside and Avalon to help students from Kindergarten through 3rd Grade to improve their reading skills. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Esta from the YMCA.

Always a fun part of the luncheon is the generous raffle where almost every participant leaves with a gift beautifully wrapped. Thanks to Al’s Pals, Our Daily Bread Food Pantry, the YMCA of Collier/Marco and all their volunteers.



The Sisbarro Improv Team: Ayla Vantansever, Gina Sisbarro, Sammy Zocco and Luke Tirrell



Audience participation in a non-rehearsed skit

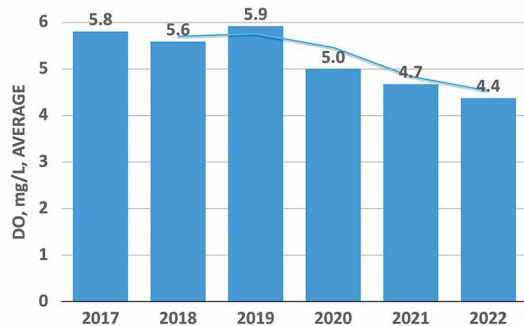
SEWAGE REUSE WATER HARMS WATERWAYS WITH PHOSPHORUS POLLUTION

by Eugene Wordehoff, Marco Island

Marco Island, Florida had healthy levels of oxygen in the waterways until 2019. Since then, oxygen has been dropping. In 3 years, Marco lost 25% of the oxygen in the waterways. Why?

Dissolved Oxygen (DO), which is the amount of free oxygen dissolved in water is an essential component of the aquatic environment. The most important and commonly used measurement of water quality, it indicates a waterbody's state of health - that is, the ability to support aquatic life. Generally, waters with DO concentrations of 5 mg/L or higher can support a well-balanced, healthy biological community.

Marco Island Waterways Oxygen



Waterways Oxygen Trending Downward

How did this happen? Search these words with Google: “What is the cause of low oxygen in waterbodies in Florida?” Answer: “Excess nutrients delivered to a waterbody can lead to both overgrowth of algae and eutrophication. As dead algae decompose, oxygen is consumed in the process, resulting in low levels of oxygen in the waterbody.”

Eutrophication is a big word that describes a big problem in the nation's estuaries. Harmful algal blooms, dead zones, and fish kills are the results of

a process called eutrophication — which occurs when the environment becomes enriched with nutrients, increasing the amount of plant and algae growth in estuaries and coastal waters.

Then search these words: “What is the source of excess nutrients in water bodies in Florida?” Answer: “Because there are increasingly more people living in coastal areas, there are more nutrients entering our coastal waters from wastewater treatment facilities, runoff from land in urban areas during rains, and from farming. All these factors can lead to increased nutrient pollution.”

Nutrients comprise two major components: nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P). Think of the fertilizer bag at the hardware store. All fertilizer labels have three bold numbers. The first number is the amount of nitrogen (N), the second number is the amount of phosphorus (P). The N and P are the components of fertilizer that make plants grow and make grass green.

A six-year database (2017-2022) was constructed comparing the oxygen in the Marco Island waterways against lawn fertilizer use, stormwater (rain), nitrogen in the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) sewage reuse water, and phosphorus in the sewage reuse water. There is no farming on Marco which rules out agriculture.

Lawn fertilizer was first examined. Phosphorus (P) is completely banned in lawn fertilizer on the island for the entire year. The only nutrient in the lawn fertilizer is nitrogen (N). Marco's fertilizer ordinance bans lawn fertilizer completely during the summer months. Oxygen levels in the water body during the (8) months with fertilizer was compared to oxygen levels in the (4) months with no fertilizer. There was no difference in waterbody oxygen levels. Based on this evidence, the fertilizer ordinance on Marco Island appears to be working. Fertilizer is apparently not a root-source of oxygen degradation on Marco Island.

Sewage Reuse, continued on page 12

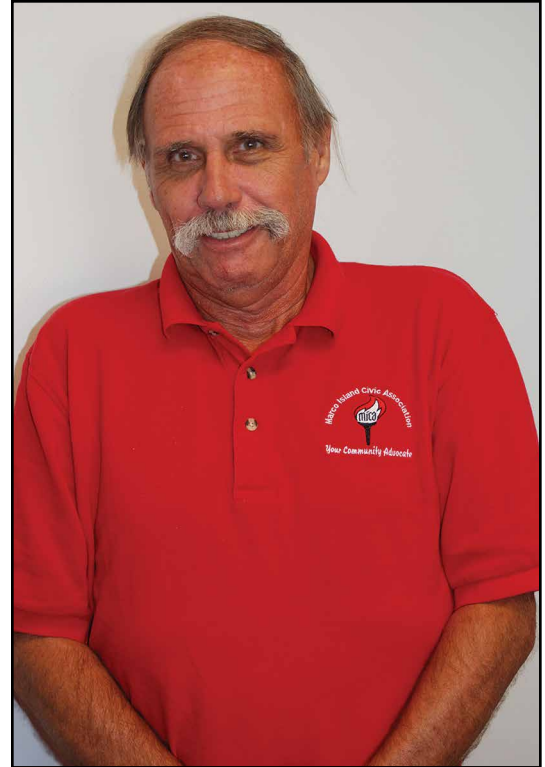
RAY MCCCHESNEY WILL BE MISSED BY MANY ON MARCO ISLAND

Raymond McChesney passed away in June 2023, after a long, valiant battle with pulmonary fibrosis. He died at home on his beloved Marco Island. He is survived by the love of his life and wife of 35 years, Marie Lynn McChesney. The two grew up on the same street in Akron, Ohio and dated in high school.

Ray worked in sales and finance in the telecommunications industry for 25 years, including a year-and-a-half in Tokyo. He set a goal of retiring at age 50, and he did it! For the last 20 years he enjoyed Marco Island to the fullest, going to the beach, drinking cold beer, soaking up the sun, and cruising in his convertible Camaro. He was a diehard Cleveland Brown's fan, and every Sunday could be found watching the games at CJ's on the Bay. He was also a big fan of the University of Notre Dame and Michigan football teams.

But relaxation was not in his vocabulary. He worked hard to make Marco Island a cohesive, vibrant and safe community through extensive volunteering. A longtime Kiwanian, Ray spent many hours supporting events and activities including the Seafood Festival, the Annual Car Show, Reading is Fundamental, Toys for Kids and the 5K Run for Kids. He was a Marco Island Civic Association board member, served as Chairman of both the Residents' Beach and Beach Clean Up

committees, in addition to serving on the Fourth of July Celebration and Coastal Advisory Committees. He also volunteered extensively with the Marco Island Police Department, including serving on the Police Foundation Board of Directors.



HUNGER ACTION MONTH: WHY IT'S SO IMPORTANT

by Allyson Richards, Our Daily Bread Food Pantry

September was Hunger Action Month, a time to raise awareness of the issue of hunger in the United States and to inspire people to act to help end it. Hunger is a serious problem in the United States with millions of people struggling to put food on the table. In fact, one in eight Americans faces food insecurity, meaning they do not have reliable access to enough affordable, nutritious food.

Hunger has a devastating impact on people's lives. It can lead to health problems poor academic performance, and social isolation. Children who are hungry are more likely to have developmental delays and behavioral problems. Adults who are hungry are more likely to have chronic health conditions such as diabetes and heart disease.

How does Our Daily Bread Food Pantry help people? Our Daily Bread Food Pantry targets food-insecure, low-income households from Marco Island, Goodland, Golden Gate, and East/South Naples, **servicing an average of 1,100 households weekly.** Each week, with an approximate 15 lb. bag of shelf-stable food and an 8-10 lb. bag of fresh produce, milk, eggs, cereal, and meat, approximately \$150 of food if purchased at the grocery store. Food is distributed in a variety of ways: drive-through Mobile Food Pantries at various locations every Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, drive-through Pantry every Saturday morning at the Pantry's Winterberry Drive location, home deliveries for those who do not have transportation and appointments for those whose schedules do not allow them to attend any of the above.

Thirty-six percent of those served by Our Daily Bread Food Pantry are children. How do we help them? We provide school breakfasts for children at Marco Island Charter Middle School and in conjunction with the YMCA for three of their summer camps, we provide morning snacks for the athletes at Lely High School, and we also provide a weekend backpack program for children at Manatee

Elementary, Manatee Middle, Marco Island Charter Middle School and Lely Elementary. Based on the school evaluation, the schools observed improvement in the areas of attendance, health, attitude, grades, and behavior in students based on the schools' evaluation. This has been a win-win for everyone!

We also have a Saturday pantry that provides nutritious and healthy food for families. Each week, we serve approximately 700 households. We also offer mobile food pantries each week to assist those who cannot come to the food pantry on Saturday, we have individual appointments and a care and share program for the elderly.

Hunger Action Month is an important opportunity to educate all about the issue of hunger and to encourage you to get involved in the fight to end it. Below are some ways you can help:

- Volunteer at Our Daily Bread Food Pantry – application can be found at Ourdailybreadfoodpantry.org
- Donate unopened shelf-stable food products such as cereal, rice, beans, canned vegetables, canned fruit, pasta, and soups at the donation boxes located around town or at our location at 1450 Winterberry (donation boxes on Auburndale side)
- Take advantage of the many “Buy One Get One” specials. Keep one and donate one to the Food Pantry at 1450 Winterberry (donation boxes on Auburndale side)
- Donate money – even a small donation can make a big difference. Our address is Our Daily Bread Food Pantry, P.O. Box 109, Marco Island, FL 34146
- Advocate for policies in the state that support food security.

Together, we can make a difference in the fight against hunger. Let's all do our part and make “Hunger Action Month” every month!

PROTECTING OUR PARADISE: SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS CONTINUES FOR EVERGLADES RESTORATION AND WATER QUALITY

by Charlette Roman, Chair of the Big Cypress Basin Board and Governing Board Member of the South Florida Water Management District

To all of my fellow MICA members, I have some very exciting news to start this article. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis made three new appointments and two reappointments to the Big Cypress Basin (BCB) Board. Michelle McLeod, Michael Romano, and Patricia “PJ” Smith are joining Andy Hill and Dan Waters, who were reappointed to serve on the BCB Board.

The BCB Board focuses on safeguarding and restoring Southwest Florida’s water resources and ecosystems while protecting communities from flooding and meeting the region’s water needs. Projects that enhance flood control operations, improve water quality, restore habitats, and improve the timing and quantity of water flows remain the priority; and the Board will continue to work for all of our citizens. I look forward to continuing to serve as the Chair of the Big Cypress Basin Board, and I thank Governor DeSantis for making these appointments.

We mark a historical occasion this year with the groundbreaking of the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir Project. The groundbreaking is the culmination of decades of work to bring this project to life—a top priority of our Board and Governor DeSantis. This project will provide ecological benefits, reduce harmful discharges to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries, and send more clean freshwater south to the Everglades.

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) began working on the project site in April 2020 to build the 6,500-acre wetland, known as a Stormwater Treatment Area (STA). The STA is expected to be completed in the coming months. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, our federal partners in Everglades restoration, is building the 10,500-acre reservoir and expects to complete it in 2032.

We have celebrated more than 60 ribbon cuttings, groundbreakings and major milestones on Everglades projects



*L-R: BCB Board Vice Chair Dan Waters; Patricia “PJ” Smith; Chair Charlette Roman; Michael Romano and Andy Hill.
Not Pictured: Michelle McLeod. Photo by SFWMD.*



*Charlette Roman,
Chair of the Big Cypress Basin
Board and Governing Board Member
of the South Florida
Water Management District*

since Governor DeSantis signed his first sweeping environmental order in January 2019. This record-setting progress is making a measurable difference for Florida’s environment and resulting in record flows of water south to benefit our ecosystems, communities, and drinking water aquifers. From Orlando to the Florida Keys, numerous projects and initiatives are actively underway to enhance the quantity, quality, timing and distribution of water within the Greater Everglades Ecosystem.

Let me share some of our other recent



EAA Reservoir Groundbreaking L-R: USACE Jacksonville District Ret. Lt. Col Todd Polk; City of South Bay Mayor Joe Kyles; SFWMD Governing Board Vice Chairman Scott Wagner; Former Florida Senate President Joe Negron; Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Michael Connor; USACE Jacksonville District Col. James Booth; SFWMD Executive Director Drew Bartlett; U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman-Schultz; U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Everglades Restoration Initiatives Director Adam Gelber; DEP Secretary Shawn Hamilton; Everglades Foundation President & CEO Eric Eikenberg; Captains for Clean Water Executive Director Daniel Andrews; Florida Farm Bureau Assistant Director of Government and Community Affairs Jake Fojtik; Office of U.S. Senator Marco Rubio - London Rotundo (Photo by SFWMD)

successes with you.

Right in our own backyard, the Western Everglades Restoration Project (WERP) is nearly ready for authorization by Congress. Each Everglades restoration project must be reviewed and approved by Congress prior to breaking ground. SFWMD is taking the lead, which will help support the Big Cypress National Preserve and Ten Thousand Islands. I continue to advance WERP given its regional significance.

The SFWMD, along with the National Park Service, completed the Taylor Slough Flow Improvement Project within Everglades National Park. This environmental restoration project was completed in just four months and now allows more clean freshwater to flow south through Taylor Slough and into Florida Bay, where it is needed to balance salinity levels and promote ecological health.

This important project included the installation of 18 culverts at nine locations along a 3.2-mile section of Old Ingraham Highway in Everglades National Park to improve the distribution of freshwater flows and restore natural plant communities and wetlands.

The SFWMD also remains focused on improving the health of Biscayne Bay. The SFWMD, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District, and Miami-Dade County broke ground on the final component of the Biscayne



Taylor Slough Flow Improvement Project. L-R: Kelly Cox, Director of Everglades Policy, Audubon Florida, Mark Perry, Executive Director, Florida Oceanographic Society, Dr. Wes Brooks, Florida Chief Resilience Officer, Pedro Ramos, Superintendent of Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks, SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Chauncey Goss, Shannon Estenoz, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks for the U.S. Department of Interior, SFWMD Governing Board Member Cheryl Meads, SFWMD Executive Director Drew Bartlett, SFWMD Governing Board Member Charlette Roman, Eric Eikenberg, CEO Everglades Foundation, and Lt. Col. Todd Polk, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District.

Protecting our Paradise, continued on page 22

CONSERVATION COLLIER UPDATE

MARCO ISLAND CITY COUNCILMAN

by Rich Blonna, Marco Island City Councilman

Conservation Collier was created in 2003, after a November 2002 voter referendum in which voters approved creating a taxpayer-funded conservation land acquisition program. To pay for the program, taxpayers agreed to a property tax increase of up to .25 mills for up to ten (10) years and bonding for up to \$75 million. CC's mission is "To acquire, preserve, restore and maintain vital and significant threatened natural lands, forest, upland and wetland communities located in Collier County, for the benefit of present and future generations."

The first preserve ever created by Conservation Collier, Otter Mound, is located on Marco Island. The first section (1.77 acres) was acquired on July 30, 2004. An additional .68-acre tract was acquired on June 18, 2007. The total cost for this preserve was \$2,234,000 (\$1,347,500 for the 1.77-acre parcel and

\$886,500 for the .68-acre parcel). Unfortunately, that was the first and last property on Marco Island acquired by Conservation Collier.

As many of you know, one of my campaign promises in 2020 was to support the re-authorization of the Conservation Collier referendum and, if passed, to try to get as many properties on Marco Island preserved as part of this program as possible. In 2020 I got elected and the citizens of Marco Island overwhelmingly voted to re-authorize the program for an additional 10 years.

During my first year in office, working independently and with Audubon of the Western Everglades and a few key citizen stakeholders, we identified close to 30 Marco Island properties that were high value in terms of protecting native species (particularly Gopher Tortoises and Burrowing Owls) and historical and archaeological sites in the Indian Hills St. area. However, over half of these property owners did not wish to enroll their lots in the Conservation Collier acquisition program. Fortunately, the rest of the properties moved forward and were given support from the Marco Island City Council and District 1 Commissioner Rick Lo Castro. Commissioner Lo Castro was instrumental in moving the Marco Island properties forward despite their high price compared to the majority of the other, more rural Collier County properties that also came before the Collier County Board of Commissioners.

There are seven basic steps involved in preserving land under the Conservation Collier referendum:

- Owners or other citizens nominate properties for acquisition by Conservation Collier.
- Conservation Collier staff contact owners to verify that they are "willing sellers" who want to have their property evaluated for possible acquisition.
- Field environmentalists representing the Conservation Collier Land Acquisitions Committee (CCLAC) perform a detailed assessment of the properties to evaluate whether or not they meet specific criteria related to

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habitat, wildlife, wetlands, passive and active recreational potential, access, and other items. These evaluations are presented in public meetings.*

- CCLAC Staff ranks the properties as A (highest priority), B, or C list parcels.
- The CCLAC Board confirms the rankings in public meetings and sends the list to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for their approval.*
- Approved properties are appraised and bids are offered to willing sellers.
- The BCC discusses and approves the purchase of the approved properties in a public meeting.*
**All public meetings have "Public Comments" sections that allow participants to sign up and express their opinions about the properties being discussed.*

As you can see, the process is comprehensive, takes over a year to complete, and can result in some willing sellers removing their properties from the process and selling them privately to developers.

Each year a new "Cycle" begins with a new batch of properties being reviewed. In 2020, my first year in office, Cycle 10 was underway. I have been involved in Cycles 10, 11, and most recently, Cycle 12. Cycles 10 and 11 resulted in close to 30 properties being nominated and evaluated. Of those, only 9 were

approved by willing sellers for an initial assessment. The rest were either sold privately or taken off of the market.

Four of the 9 properties reviewed (the Annecy parcel is actually 4 lots next to Publix on S. Barfield Dr.) made it to the final stage of purchase. These properties were appraised twice, the final bids were accepted by the willing sellers, and they await approval for purchase by the BCC.

I will continue to follow the progress of the four Cycle 10 and 11, coming up for final purchase approval by the BCC tentatively scheduled for their 10/24/23/ meeting. I will appear at the meeting and speak in favor of acquisition.

I urge all residents to check to make sure that the Marco Island properties will be on the 10/24/23 BCC Meeting Agenda. If possible, please attend and share your support for the Marco Island property acquisitions. You may attend virtually. Information is available from the following link when the meeting is posted. The agenda is usually available a few days before the actual meeting. <http://colliercountyfl.iqm2.com/Citizens/default.aspx>

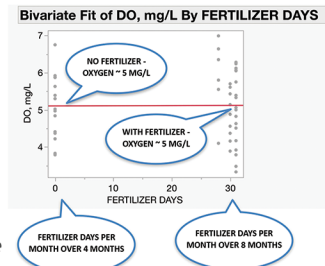
I am personally holding off nominating any new properties for Cycle 12 until the outcome of Cycle 10 and 11 Properties is determined.

Cycle 10 & 11 (2021 & 2022) Marco Island Properties Initial Ranking

Property	Initial Rank	Current Status
Addison Fischer Trust	A	Not willing seller
WISC (Inlet DR)	A	Offer Made & Rejected by Seller and BCC
WISC (Dade Ct.)	C	CCLAC uninterested
Agua Colina	B	See below
Annecy Marco LLC (4 lots)	A	See below
Diane Chestnut	A	See below
South Terra Corp.	A	See below
S & B Properties of Marco LLC	A	Offer Made & Rejected by Seller
Otter Mound Preserve Khoury	A	Property sold privately
Current Status (as of 9/8/23)	Initial Rank	Current Status
Agua Colina	B	Bid Accepted (on 10/24/23 BCC Agenda)
Annecy Marco LLC (4 lots)	A	Bid Accepted (on 10/24/23 BCC Agenda)
Diane Chestnut	A	Bid Accepted (on 10/24/23 BCC Agenda)
South Terra Corp.	A	Bid Accepted (on 10/24/23 BCC Agenda)

Fertilizer Impact on Oxygen

- Ordinance bans all fertilizer in (4) summer months
- Bans phosphorus completely year-round
- With summer ban, Oxygen levels in waterways do not change

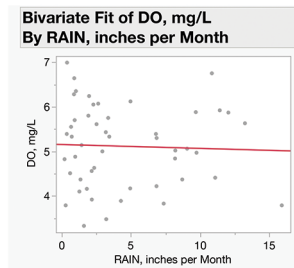


Data shows fertilizer has no effect on waterbody oxygen

Stormwater impact on oxygen was examined. Stormwater is simply rain. Oxygen levels in months with large amounts of rainfall were compared to oxygen levels in months with low levels of rainfall. There was no difference in oxygen levels in the waterbody related to stormwater. It seems that the swale systems on Marco Island are working. Based on this evidence, stormwater is apparently not a root-source of oxygen degradation on Marco Island.

Stormwater Impact on Oxygen

- Rain = Stormwater
- Rainy season has the same effect on oxygen as dry months
- Current swale operations appear to be effective

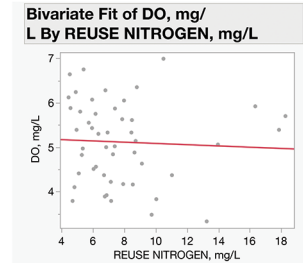


Stormwater has no effect on waterbody oxygen

Nitrogen (N) concentration in the sewage reuse water was compared to the oxygen levels in the waterbody. There was a very minor change in the waterbody oxygen with variation in the reuse nitrogen. There was wide variation across the scale. This suggests to a statistician that there are other drivers involved in the interaction. Reuse nitrogen is probably a factor, but there may be another driver of the low oxygen levels in the waterbody.

Reuse Nitrogen Impact on Oxygen

- Little difference seen in waterbody oxygen with variation in nitrogen concentration
- High variation of DO at low end of scale suggests other variables involved

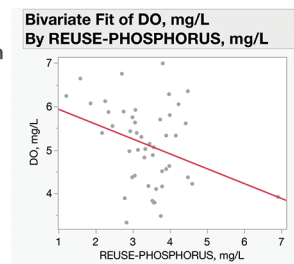


Reuse nitrogen has minor effect on waterbody oxygen

Phosphorus (P) concentration in the sewage reuse water was compared to the oxygen levels in the waterbody. There is a strong linear relationship between the concentration of phosphorus in the reuse water and oxygen in the waterbody.

Reuse Phosphorus Impact on Oxygen

- Reuse phosphorus has strongest relationship with oxygen depletion
- Nutrients from sewage stimulate algal growth
- Algae decomposition consumes oxygen



Higher reuse phosphorus decreases waterbody oxygen

Based on 6 years of data collected by the City of Marco Island, phosphorus in the sewage reuse water is the primary root-cause of low oxygen in Marco's waterways.

This is not a new problem. This is not just a Marco problem. Nutrient pollution is one of America's most widespread, costly, and challenging environmental problems. This problem is simply observed on Marco Island. Just look at the waterways and see algal slicks and benthic mat releases in the summer months.

*Sewage Reuse Water,
continued on page 16*

THE WRACK LINE

by Kaitlin M Sikes

The wrack line is an ode to the contradictory nature of the beach.

It's a salty, slimy, smelly, treasure trove.

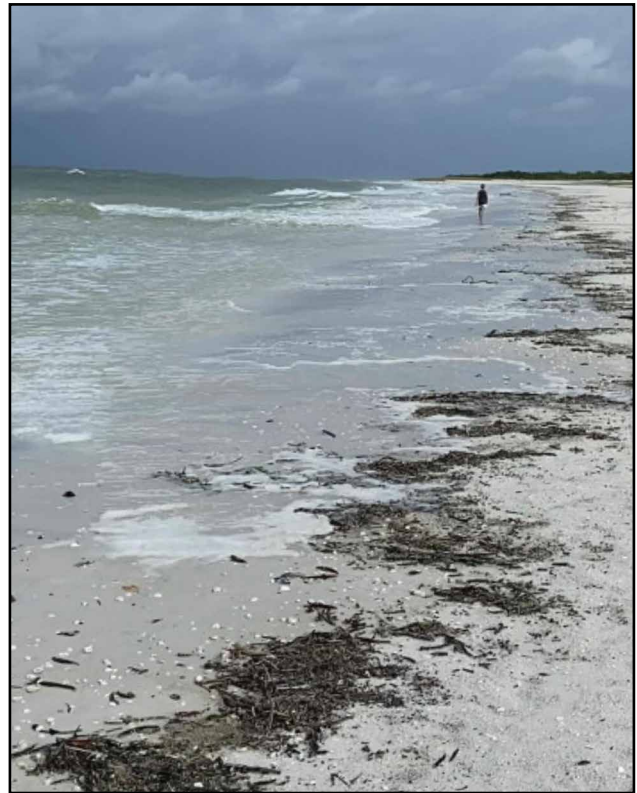
It changes with seasons and storms, but it may sit stagnant for long stretches of time.

It's a nuisance to some, the beating heart of the beach ecosystem to others.

Most of us know it as the best place to beach comb.

Technically, beach wrack is “anything washed ashore and found above the high-water line” (FWC). I like to think of it as the place where land, sea, and sky interact in an endless dance of give and take. With each high tide, the ocean gifts the beach food and nutrients in the form of seaweed and dead plants. They will be future fertilizer for the beach, but seaweed and seagrass provide immediate shelter for insects, worms, crabs, and beetles. These little creatures are the perfect meal for larger invertebrates, small mammals, and shore birds such as the Ruddy Turnstone (a calico-backed, stocky bird that earned its name by flicking aside beach wrack and stones to find invertebrates). Imagine them lifting off for their arduous flight to the Arctic Circle, bellies full from the beach.

Much of the wrack line's ecological significance isn't immediately visible to our sun-strained eyes. Close examination might turn up egg casings, sponges, or Sea Beans. Sea Beans (the “hamburger” is a favorite) are seeds that have seen far more of the world than I have. Many have drifted thousands of miles before washing up on the beach, mostly from Central and South American forests. But some from as far away as Australia, Asia, and Africa. Their journey across a restless ocean is worthy of another article. Other tiny plant seeds get trapped in seaweed and may eventually become early beach colonizers, shooting out extensive root systems that trap and bind sand together. No wrack? No plants, no dunes, no erosion control for vulnerable coastal land.



The high tide line, known as the wrack line, is a vital part of the beach

Salty, slimy, smelly it may be, but the wrack line is part of a vital cycle that nourishes the beach.

The beach...

A peaceful refuge, and the first witness to a hurricane's violence.

A place of constant tides, and changing winds.

Barren in parts, and teeming with life in others.

Contradictory, or perhaps dualistic. But then, isn't that all of us?

“In this flotsam and jetsam of the tide lines, we are reminded that a strange and different world lies offshore. Though what we see here may be but the husks and fragments of life, through it we are made aware of life and death, of movement and change, of the transport of living things by tides, by wind-driven waves.” Rachel Carson, *The Edge of the Sea*

VISIT AUDUBON'S CORKSCREW SWAMP SANCTUARY

THE BEST WAY TO EXPERIENCE THE WESTERN EVERGLADES

by Renee Wilson, Audubon Society

People agree that spending time in nature is good for the body, mind, and soul, and the 2.25-mile boardwalk at Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary provides an enchanting immersive experience. A walk through this world of giant cypress trees evokes a feeling of calm and reverence, like stepping back in time to a forgotten, magical Florida where traffic noise is replaced by bird song. Special places like this are becoming harder to find with each passing year.

Our legacy

The National Audubon Society jumped to the forefront of conservation in the early 20th century when plume hunters in search of feathers for women's fashion decimated colonies of Florida's iconic wading birds. In 1905 Audubon began assigning wardens



Little Blue Heron, by Charlie McDonald

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to protect the plume birds across the Everglades, including at Corkscrew Swamp in northern Collier County, where Wood Storks and other birds nested by the thousands. Decades later, local community members came together to buy and protect 5,680 acres of bald cypress forest from logging and established Corkscrew Swamp as an Audubon Sanctuary in 1954.

Today, the Sanctuary has expanded to more than 13,000 acres and hosts the largest remaining expanse of virgin bald cypress forest in the world at nearly 700 acres. Standing close to 100 feet tall, some of these trees are 25 feet around and older than 535 years. Just looking at these amazing trees instills a sense of wonder.

Visit any day of the week

Explore the Western Everglades on your own or with a guide. You'll find Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary and the "world-famous" 2.25-mile boardwalk in

Naples just 15 miles east of the I-75 at exit 111 (Yes, you must drive over the Jolley Bridge!) With exhibits, artwork, a nature store, and bird-friendly gardens, the Blair Visitor Center serves as the gateway to an enchanting wilderness. Visitors see alligators, otters, a wide variety of wading birds, songbirds, and raptors throughout the year, and the fabulous Painted Bunting is one of many winter visitors.

The Sanctuary is open daily from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., with the last admission at 1 p.m. Online tickets are recommended at corkscrew.audubon.org/visit.

Explore with a guide

Guided programs on Corkscrew's boardwalk or through the remote Sanctuary backcountry are some of the best ways to learn about and experience the Western Everglades. Choose from several guided experiences, including:

EARLY BIRDING WALK Experience the sights and sounds of the awakening swamp while looking for birds and learning about their natural histories and habitats.

SUNSET STROLL Explore the swamp as the day draws to a close. Watch the sunset from the



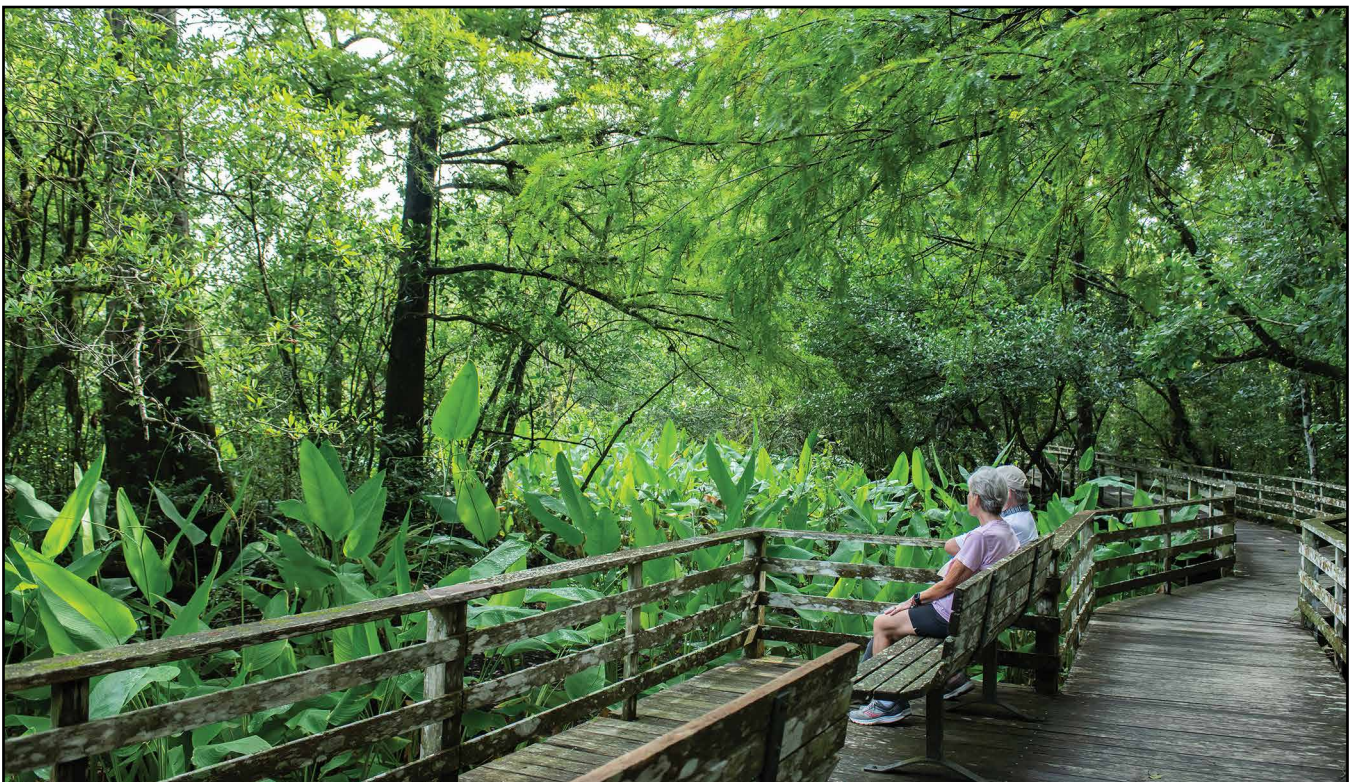
Alligator close-up, by Donald Sawin

observation platform, then listen to the sounds as the day changes to night.

NIGHT WALK Enjoy an evening in the swamp when the nocturnal animals are out and vocal.

ANCIENT FOREST TOURS Discover the mysteries of the forest and hear stories of the trees that have lived here for more than 500 years.

Guided experiences are offered several times a month and require tickets in advance. Find the entire schedule at corkscrew.audubon.org/events.



A couple on a bench at the board walk at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, by Charlie McDonald

*Sewage Reuse Water,
continued from page 12*

As reported in a United Kingdom study published in 2022: “Phosphorus pollution is destroying our ecosystems.” Unsustainable phosphorus use affects food and water security, freshwater biodiversity, and human health. Increasing demand for food to support a growing global population continues to drive increases in phosphorus inputs to the food system, as well as losses from land-based sources of phosphorus to freshwater and coastal ecosystems.

These phosphorus losses cause ecological degradation through the proliferation of harmful algal blooms in fresh waters, contributing to alarmingly high rates of biodiversity decline, economic losses associated with clean-up, and large-scale human health risks from contaminated drinking water supplies. “Our Phosphorus Future. UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Edinburgh, 2022”

Marco Island is a good case study for examination of the harmful impact of phosphorus from reuse water on the environment. There is an extensive water quality testing program in place on the island and only ONE point source of phosphorus – the drinking water and sewage treatment plants. Potable (drinking) water is a secondary source of phosphorus on Marco Island. Both water sources are used for landscape irrigation.

The sewage plant on Marco is not designed to remove phosphorus from the reuse water. The City of Naples WWTP is an upgraded Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT) facility and does remove phosphorus from the reuse water. The new WWTP in Everglades City is also AWT.

There is a large algae population in the Marco waterways that can cause the waterbody oxygen declines. Ironically, the decomposition of the algae produces more nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen) which creates a self-feeding and accelerating process.

Algae always exist at low levels in waterways. Nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen) from the sewage treatment plant are feeding the background population causing the algae in the waterways to explode. This is visible to the naked eye, especially in the summertime when algal slicks and benthic mat releases are frequent.

Many communities are focused on “downstream” projects, treating the effects of pollution. There is a wide array of these types of projects. Dumping large amounts of hydrogen peroxide into the waterways to raise the oxygen levels is one such idea. This project may or may not be good for the oxygen levels, but hydrogen peroxide is reported to be toxic to aquatic life.

Dredging the waterways to eliminate the benthic mats formed by the eutrophic algal fields is another idea. A major problem is what to do with the spoils. The dredged material may be toxic. If the source of the pollution is not removed, dredging will need to be repeated.

Communities must focus on “upstream” projects that eliminate nutrient pollution at the source. Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTP) must be upgraded to significantly reduce the phosphorus and nitrogen nutrients in the sewage reuse water stream. Once the sources of nutrients are removed, restoration can begin. Restoration is easier in tidal estuaries as there is significant flushing action every day. Inland lake restoration can take decades. Estuary restoration begins immediately.

The cost of the sewage treatment plant upgrade? According to the book “The Algal Bowl,” Schindler (2008), the cost per person of controlling cultural (man-made) eutrophication might be “a dime a day.” For Marco Island, this would amount to \$575,000 per year for the 15,760 island residents counted in the 2020 census. We can afford this.

There are operating cost reductions that can be realized depending on the technology chosen for the upgrade project. For example, 90% of the chlorine in the process might be eliminated with a technology now used by FDEP. Deep well injection of excess reuse water is no longer required. The sewage treatment plant upgrade might be a cost reduction project.

Why so much resistance to upgrading the sewage plant? Financial incentives are at play. The sewage plant gets \$800,000/year in revenue from the “liquid fertilizer” sold. Golf courses, Condo Associations, and Hotels save money from fertilizer contained in the cheap reuse water.

The motivation for change is low: the sewage plant “meets” the FDEP permit requirements as there are no limits to the nutrient pollution being distributed.

The permits given by the FDEP to the sewage plant are “in perpetuity” – i.e., forever. Damage to the environment is the unintended consequence of the Florida reuse or reclaimed water program (purple pipes).

What is not understood by the public is that sewage reuse water is loaded with nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen). The connection between waterbody oxygen decline and the phosphorus in the reuse water is not well understood by the public. This connection is understood by the “insiders.” Bottom line – poorly treated reuse water harms the environment with phosphorus.

Regulatory gaps allow this situation to exist. There is no political will at the state legislature. Special interests are in control. FDEP issues permits allowing pollution. The root-sources of water quality problems in Florida are not being addressed. Manatees continue to die in alarming numbers.

We are using our waterways as the final step in sewage treatment. On calm, warm summer nights

the canals and bays smell like sewers. We can do better.

Upgrade the Marco Island sewage treatment plant to Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT), like Everglades City and the City of Naples, and then begin restoration of the Marco Island waterways. This has been done already in Tampa Bay. We can do it on Marco Island. We can bring the manatees back to Marco Island.

There is some good news. For the first time, the Collier County Pollution Control Department has recommended “converting existing wastewater plants to advanced wastewater treatment (AWT) technologies” to reduce or eliminate the phosphorus and nitrogen nutrients from the county reuse water streams and to “address the issue at the source.” See “FY22 Collier County Surface Water Report” April 2023, page 43, recommendation 7.6. This report can be found at the county web site: Pollution Control Water Quality Reports & Maps.





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BEST VIEW ON THE ISLAND

by Ruth McCann

Where is the best spot on Marco Island to enjoy breakfast or lunch? You guessed it, Paradise Grill at Residents' Beach! If you didn't guess it, you have been missing out. Sunday, October 1, marked the start of another season for Paradise Grill at Residents' Beach. After being closed for the month of September, it reopened with renewed energy!

Behind the scenes, Donna Wood and Andy Graver are at the helm of this fresh, friendly, beachfront establishment. February 2013 began Donna's tenure at Paradise Grill, and a couple years in, her son-in-law, Andy, stepped in to help lighten the load. One of them will always be there to greet you.

Paradise Grill is open seven days per week October through May, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the summer. It has reopened after a bit of freshening up and adding a couple new items to their menu.

Of course, you must be a member of Marco Island Residents' Beach to utilize Paradise Grill or any other portion of the Residents' Beach facilities. Some residents join Residents' Beach simply to enjoy meals at Paradise Grill. Others join to swing a bit with their children or grandchildren on the playground or have a picnic lunch under a chickee hut. We have early-morning walkers and

the late-evening sunset crowd. Not everyone who joins Residents' Beach heads out to the white sandy beach.

Remember the laid-back days of your youth? Standing in bare feet in front of the pool or beach food stand, contemplating the menu? Yes, that's the feel here!

The Paradise Grill lunch menu is well rounded, featuring salads, burgers, chicken, and the secret family recipe tuna salad, as well as grouper, fries, chips and ice cream dessert choices. Breakfast, a favorite meal of the day for many, features fresh eggs prepared to your liking, breakfast meats, bagels and muffins, as well as pancakes to order.

Don't forget everyone's favorite on a hot day – the smoothie! A few years ago, beer and wine were added to the menu and with the introduction of seltzer drinks, the drink menu expanded a bit more.

Fridays during season at Paradise Grill are also special as it stays open until sunset and a fantastic Fish Fry is offered! Is there someone in your group who prefers something other than fish? No need to despair! There are other delicious menu items offered as well.

Once you are seated at your favorite table, look to the west and enjoy the BEST BEACHFRONT VIEW ON MARCO ISLAND!



NEW FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP AND RISK RATING 2.0: WHAT IT MEANS FOR MARCO ISLAND

by Kelli DeFedericis, CFM, Floodplain Coordinator, City of Marco Island

As a participant of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) the City of Marco Island agreed to adopt and enforce floodplain management regulations that meet or exceed the minimum National Flood Insurance Program standards.

When the City is in good standing with the NFIP, it qualifies for:

1. Federally backed flood insurance for all the residents and business owners on the island.
 2. Federal and state grants.
 - Grant projects can be found on the City's floodplain management page under annual progress report.
- Marco Island has the 22nd most policies in the state of Florida with 15,375 flood insurance policies.
 - Marco Island residents and property owners pay the 20th most in flood insurance premiums in the state of Florida annually paying \$10,721,276.
 - Marco Island has more flood insurance policies than 36 individual states.

On December 31, 2019, Marco Island was issued

a preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). City staff felt there was a contradiction in FEMA's proposed map changes with increased inland flood impacts and decreased flood impacts on the coast. Marco Island made the decision to appeal the preliminary FIRM. Marco Island hired an engineering firm that specializes in reviewing flood insurance rate maps prepared by FEMA. Marco Island staff and the contracted engineering firm prepared and submitted an appeal to FEMA in 2021.

In 2023, FEMA advised City staff that they could not accept the City's appeal due to an engineering discrepancy. FEMA determined there was a discrepancy without being able to site a code section explaining their rejection. Although FEMA did not accept the City's appeal, FEMA found a mistake that was made on their part in their proposed Limit of Moderate Wave Action (LiMWA) boundary, on the southern portion of the island. As a result, FEMA advised they were revising this boundary.

*Flood Insurance,
continued on page 20*



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What will Marco Island Property Owners see with the adoption of the new FIRM?

1. There is a large portion of the island where the base flood elevation (BFE) is increasing two to three feet, while some coastal areas will be decreasing a foot.
 - Since the FIRM is no longer used to determine the flood insurance premium the BFE increase will not affect your flood insurance premium.
 - The BFE increase can turn a conforming structure into a non-conforming structure causing it to fall within FEMA's 50% threshold.
Scan the QR code labeled Marco Island Floodplain Regulations for more information on the 50% threshold.
2. A Limit of Moderate Wave Action (LiMWA) boundary also referred to as Coastal A Zone (CAZ) has been added.
 - The CAZ is a hybrid of a velocity zone (VE) and area elevation zone (AE) where FEMA believes the area will receive less than 3' of wave action but more than 1.5' of wave action.
 - Per FEMA this "new" flood zone does not affect your flood insurance.
 - However, it does affect your construction.
Refer to the 8th Edition of the Florida Building Code for further information. Scan the QR code at the end of this article.
3. The approved Letter of Map Revisions (LOMR) were rescinded; however, the new FIRM reflects the approved BFE of the LOMR.
 - LOMRs are located on properties which a homeowner hired an engineering firm to evaluate their flood zone determined by FEMA.
4. City staff is working with the state's floodplain ordinance coordinator to update chapter 26-Floodplain of Marco's Municipal Code.
5. The City expects to adopt the new FIRM in conjunction with the 8th edition of the Florida Building Code, December 30, 2023.

October 2021 FEMA and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) rolled out Risk Rating 2.0 (RR2.0)

What is RR2.0?

RR2.0 is a new algorithm FEMA developed using flood hazard information by incorporating private sector data sets, catastrophe models and evolving actuarial science.

Why did FEMA change their algorithm?

Per FEMA - Risk Rating 2.0 enables FEMA to set rates that are more mathematically uniform and ensures rate increases and decreases are both equitable; however, Marco Island residents will only see increases. Additionally, where the FIRM was originally developed to determine the flood insurance premium, the FIRM will no longer be used to determine your premium. Your premium is determined by location of a property to the flooding source and the exterior grades.

How is your flood insurance affected by RR 2.0?

All of Marco Island's flood insurance policies will have a substantial increase.

- Per federal guidelines the NFIP is not allowed to increase the legacy policy more than 18% annually. Because of this, the NFIP has placed existing policies, referred to as legacy policies on a glidepath to their full risk rate. Most will see a policy similar to the example. While this policy holder is currently only paying \$870, at some point this property's flood insurance will be \$7,333.
- The federal government is referring to the glidepath as a "statutory discount" or on a policy "Annual increase cap discount."
"Statutory Discount or Annual increase cap discount," is the difference between your full risk rate and your current glidepath premium.
See example policy on continuation page, where FEMA/NFIP believes they are giving a policy discount of \$6,847 because they are not charging the full risk rate and allowing you to be on a glidepath.
- You will no longer receive your Community Rating System discount if your "statutory or Annual increase cap discount" is greater than your Community Rating System (CRS) discount. For Marco Island the "statutory and or Annual increase cap discount" is greater than the CRS discount and will continue to be greater until you are close or at your full risk rate.

Do not let your flood insurance lapse if you are on the Glidepath

- If you cancel your flood insurance while on the glidepath and decide to reinstate you will be rated at the full risk rate.
- Flood insurance is transferable if you sell your structure.
- The NFIP states you do not need an elevation certificate to determine your flood insurance premium. However, to receive the most accurate premium rating, it is recommended to have an elevation certificate, specifically to give you credit for any mitigated item, i.e., flood vents and elevated machinery.

“I received a phone call from a resident who has had the same flood insurance agent for 15 years, with their bills mailed to their up north address. At some point there was a glitch in the system that defaulted the renewal to go to their Marco Island address. The resident did not realize this until the policy had been canceled. What this did was cause the resident to lose their glidepath and be forced to their full risk rate. They had

a legacy policy premium of \$1,500; their new full risk rate is \$12,000. The new policy does not include contents, because the owner cannot afford contents coverage. Unfortunately, these are not exaggerated numbers.”

In conclusion, FEMA/NFIP refers to RR2.0 as equity in action. However, Florida and nine other states have filed a lawsuit against FEMA over the algorithm used to calculate the premiums for the NFIP.

Should you have questions pertaining to this article or require specific details in writing about your property regarding the information (such as if the property is located within a special flood hazard area, flood zones, base flood elevations, Natural Flood functions (such as critical areas or wetlands) historical flood information, to determine if the property is located seaward of the coastal construction control line or seaward of the erosion control line, to provide elevation certificates or if the property is in or near a severe repetitive loss area) e-mail the City’s Floodplain Coordinator Kelli DeFedericis, CFM at kdefedericis@cityofmarcoisland.com



Current Flood Insurance Rate Map



Elevation Certificates



MI Floodplain Regulations



Preliminary FIRM Information



Floodplain Mgt Information

SAMPLE INSURANCE BILL - COMPONENTS OF TOTAL AMOUNT DUE

BUILDING PREMIUM:	\$5,039.00
CONTENTS PREMIUM:	\$2,234.00
INCREASED COST OF COMPLIANCE (ICC) PREMIUM:	\$75.00
MITIGATION DISCOUNT:	(\$0.00)
COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM REDUCTION:	(\$15.00)

FULL RISK PREMIUM:	\$7,333.00
ANNUAL INCREASE CAP DISCOUNT:	(\$6,847.00)
STATUTORY DISCOUNTS:	(\$0.00)

DISCOUNTED PREMIUM:	\$486.00
RESERVE FUND ASSESSMENT:	\$87.00
HFIAA SURCHARGE:	\$250.00
FEDERAL POLICY FEE:	\$47.00
PROBATION SURCHARGE:	\$0.00

TOTAL ANNUAL PREMIUM: **\$870.00**

*Protecting our Paradise,
continued from page 9*

Bay Coastal Wetlands Project. The Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project - Cutler Wetlands Component will improve the health of Biscayne Bay, aid in wetland rehydration, build coastal resiliency and improve water quality.

The SFWMD also recently joined the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Miami-Dade County to celebrate the completion of a new pump station that is designed to move more than 25 million gallons of water a day to help restore coastal wetlands. The pump station, built by our partners at the Army Corps, is another key part of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project.



Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands - Cutler Wetlands Component Project Groundbreaking L-R: Maria Nardi, Director, Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces; Kelly Cox, Audubon Florida; Craig Grossenbacher, Chief of the Water Resources Coordination Division at DERM, Miami-Dade County; Superintendent Penny Del Bene, Biscayne National Park; Commissioners Danielle Cohen Higgins and Sen. René Garcia, Miami-Dade County; Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, Miami-Dade County; Mayor Tim Meerbott, Town of Cutler Bay; Brig. Gen. Daniel Hibner, USACE - South Atlantic Division; Col. James Booth, USACE - Jacksonville District; Irela Bague, Chief Bay Officer, Miami-Dade County; SFWMD Director Drew Bartlett; SFWMD Chairman Chauncey Goss; DEP Secretary Shawn Hamilton; Chairman Noah Valenstein, Biscayne Bay Commission; SFWMD Board Member Ben Butler; SFWMD Board Member Charlie Martinez

All components of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project will be complete by 2025.

The SFWMD also broke ground on another key Everglades restoration project that will restore water levels in the northern portion of the Central Everglades and improve our water resource resiliency in South Florida. The Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) North includes the construction of seven new structures and one new canal as well as the improvement of 18 miles of existing canals to enhance water flow.

The northern phase is one of four major components within the Central Everglades Planning Project. These four components will work together to restore water levels in the Central Everglades, and ultimately help deliver more water south to replenish our aquifers and nourish the Everglades and Florida Bay. With the northern phase underway, all four components of the Central Everglades Planning Project are now under construction - marking another major milestone for Everglades restoration and water quality.

Over here on the west coast, the SFWMD, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and ALJO Groves, L.C., along with many local, state, and federal officials, held a ribbon cutting to recognize the completion of the ALJO Four Corners Rapid Infiltration Project in Lee County. This new water storage and water



Central Everglades Planning Project North Groundbreaking L-R: Cara Capp, National Parks Conservation Association; SFWMD Director Drew Bartlett; SFWMD Board Member "Alligator Ron" Bergeron; Ret. Lt. Col. Todd Polk, USACE - Jacksonville District; SFWMD Chairman Chauncey Goss; SFWMD Board Member Charlette Roman; Florida Department of Environmental Protection Deputy Secretary Adam Blalock; SFWMD Board Member Jay Steinle; SFWMD Board Member Cheryl Meads



ALJO Four Corners Rapid Infiltration Project Ribbon Cutting L-R: SFWMD Board Member Ben Butler; Florida Agri Properties Joe Beale; Florida Agri Properties Joey Beale; SFWMD Chairman Chauncey Goss; Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Wilton Simpson; Florida Department of Environmental Protection Deputy Secretary Adam Blalock; City of Sanibel Commissioner Holly Smith; SFWMD Board Member and BCB Chair Charlette Roman; Lee County Chair Brian Hamman; ALJO Consultant Henry Dean

quality project helps support the balance of fresh and salt water in the Caloosahatchee Estuary. The ALJO Four Corners Rapid Infiltration Project is the latest of several public-private partnerships to be utilized by the SFWMD

to create immediate water storage and improve water quality.

Another major project is the Caloosahatchee (C-43) Reservoir Project. The Caloosahatchee Reservoir will play a significant role in protecting the water resources of the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary and sustaining our way of life in Southwest Florida. It's been long promised to the people of Southwest Florida, and it needs to come online as soon as possible.

The SFWMD is pleased with the progress being made on the site, and we're going to continue strong oversight to keep the project advancing quickly. The SFWMD anticipates substantial completion of the Caloosahatchee (C-43) Reservoir before the start of the wet season in 2025. This project is a major part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and is designed to store approximately 170,000 acre-feet of water or approximately 55 billion gallons of water.

Work also continues on Picayune Strand Restoration Project. The project is expected to result in improved flows of water into Collier Seminole State Park, Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge and the Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. Crews are actively removing crumbling roads, plugging canals, and building pump stations to restore the natural sheet flow of water, rehydrate drained wetlands and in turn enhance habitat for fish and wildlife.

Protecting our Paradise, continued on page 24



Progress on the North Embankment of the Caloosahatchee (C-43) Reservoir Project



Charlette Roman talking about the Picayune Strand Restoration Project in Southwest Florida

The project will restore over 55,000 acres of native Florida wetlands and uplands on Florida's Southwest Coast and is expected to be complete in 2025.

The SFWMD continues to host Resiliency Coordination Forums, which are proving to be successful coordination efforts among our many local, state, federal and tribal partners. There is great momentum to advance resiliency initiatives in Florida.

During that meeting, the SFWMD launched a new 2023 King Tides Forecast, which will inform interested parties about the various meteorological factors like wind intensity, direction, and ocean currents that may lead to tides exceeding or falling short of anticipated levels at specific locations. These updates are designed to offer valuable information to our stakeholders and the public. To start receiving these updates regularly, visit [SFWMD.gov](https://www.sfwmd.gov) and click on "Subscribe for Email Updates" and then check the "King Tide Forecast" option.

The SFWMD also hosted the first regional resiliency Open House focused on Responding Resiliently to Flood Risks and Impacts. This event brought together professionals engaged in emergency management, local flood mitigation and resiliency planning efforts. This event helped us gain deeper insights into the alignment of our collective responsibilities, which will empower us to strengthen our mitigation and adaptation strategies.

In addition, the 2023 SFWMD Sea Level Rise and Flood Resiliency Plan was published on September 1, 2023. The SFWMD is making significant infrastructure adaptation investments that are needed to successfully implement its mission of safeguarding and restoring South Florida's water resources and ecosystems, protecting communities from flooding, and ensuring an adequate water supply for all of South Florida's needs. Working to ensure the resiliency of this region's water resources and ecosystems, now and in the future, is part of everything



Resiliency Coordination Forum held at SFWMD Headquarters in West Palm Beach

the SFWMD does. To read the plan, visit SFWMD.gov/Resiliency.

With the leadership of Governor DeSantis in Tallahassee and my fellow board members, there's never been more hope for our region's natural resources than now. We're investing across the state to restore our natural areas and support the resiliency of our water resources for future generations. Our efforts today mean that the wildlife and wild places that make Florida special will continue to thrive for future generations. All of this is possible because of the citizens of Florida prioritizing water quality and protecting the Florida we all know and love. Thank you for the privilege of serving.

It is an honor to serve as chair of the Big Cypress

Basin Board and as a member of the South Florida Water Management District's Governing Board during these significant times for Florida's environment. Thanks to historic levels of state funding for Everglades restoration, the SFWMD continues to expedite and advance key projects that are enhancing water management across South Florida.

The dedicated staff members at the SFWMD are working every day to restore South Florida's ecosystem, improve water quality, protect the region from flooding and ensure an adequate water supply for millions of South Floridians.

I invite you to learn more about the SFWMD and the ways you can get involved by visiting SFWMD.gov.



MICA is looking for a few good individuals to join its Architectural Review Committee (ARC).

Are you a retired engineer, architect or builder, or someone who learns quickly and wants to get involved? ARC WANTS YOU!

Please send an email with your details to Info@MarcoCivic.com



MARCO ISLAND RESIDENTS' BEACH JULY 4TH 2023





SHARE THE BEACH WITH MIGRATORY BIRDS

by Maria Lamb

During a morning visit to Residents' Beach, you will most likely be greeted with a noisy flock of birds sitting, preening and resting by the water's edge. The real "snow birds" are here!

According to Brittany Piersma, Biologist for the Audubon of the Western Everglades (AWE), starting in September until the end of March AWE's new shorebird steward JJ Jewett will be at Residents' Beach with other volunteers on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Lookout for "ASK ME ABOUT THE BIRDS" signs and shirts. They will also continue stewardship at Kice Shoals and Clam Pass in Naples. If you are interested in volunteering, email: CollierShorebirdStewards@gmail.com.

You will encounter large flocks of different types of terns such as the Royal Terns, Common Terns and the Sandwich Terns. The younger sandwich terns are still hanging around with yellowish legs and no yellow tip on their beak begging to their parents for fish. For the adult sandwich terns, that mustard color on their black beak is a good clue to remember what their name is!

Terns are excellent divers from heights of 25ft or less. It is important to avoid fishing where they are feeding to prevent entanglement. If you hook a bird, reel it in slowly. If you cannot remove the hook without injury, please call the Conservancy of Southwest Florida. We work closely together to transport animals for treatment.

According to Piersma, some of these birds are here to refuel and others will spend the entire fall and winter here. Most recent arrivals are the red knots and black terns. The Red Knots travel 9,000 miles to and from the Arctic to the tip of South America every year. Black Terns travel from Canada and northern North America down to Northern South America. It is vital to give all the birds space so they are able to rest and stock up on vital food sources to make it to their final destinations. It was also good to see banded Black Skimmers on Residents' Beach after they abandoned Sand Dollar Island for the summer nesting season.



Black Tern travels from Canada and northern North America to Northern South America with stopover in Marco (photo by Brittany Piersma)



JJ Jewett, shorebird steward at Residents' Beach with her sign "Ask Me About the Birds" educating beach walkers about the shorebirds (photo by Maria Lamb)



Red Knots travel 9,000 miles to and from the Arctic to the tip of South America every year with a stop over in Marco. We are seeing less and less of them each year. (Photo by Jean Hall)



Marco Island Beach Laws are enforced to protect our diverse wildlife such as migratory birds and sea turtles (photo by Maria Lamb)

TIPS ON SHARING THE BEACH WITH SHOREBIRDS:

- Keep your distance - Crowds can put extra stress on migrating birds leading them to flush non-stop. Walk around the flock and you'll help them thrive and survive.
- Dogs are NOT allowed on Marco's beaches - Resting flocks perceive dogs as predators and they flush.
- Pick up your trash – litter contains plastic that is toxic to birds.
- Do not feed the birds – Human food is NOT their natural food and can cause birds to become sick.
- Spread the word – if you see beach goers disturbing resting birds, gently remind them that shorebirds' survival depends on our actions.

HURRICANE IDALIA'S IMPACT ON SAND DOLLAR ISLAND

by Maria Lamb

Marco Island declared a State of Emergency on Monday, August 28th, in anticipation of Hurricane Idalia. On August 29th Idalia, though over 200 miles off Marco's coast, managed to dump rain and several feet of storm surge. Idalia altered Sand Dollar's landscape with numerous breaches and sand erosions and once again Mother nature vs. manmade fixes are playing out at Sand Dollar Island.

Immediately after the storm, during low tide beach walkers and observers were able to get to the northern tip to assess the "condition of the dredging/berm project" that was recently completed in mid-June. Nine breaches were observed. Each breach was a gap between two berm regions where these sections of berms featured rivulets caused by the storm over-wash and/or rain creating channeling deep in the sand. During high tide, these breaches were impassable.

The "2022 Tigertail Lagoon/Sand Dollar Island Ecosystem Restoration Project" started in November 2022, two months after the devastating effects of Hurricane Ian, which made landfall into Southwest Florida on September 28, 2022. The

"restoration project" continued through June 2023 and changed the landscape which caused significant disruption to nesting loggerheads and to the nesting black skimmers.

The "Dredging Project" was "to restore Sand Dollar Island to its pre-2017 condition and to eliminate the over-wash that is closing off the flow of water into the Tigertail Lagoon." It involved multiple dredging components and according to Humiston & Moore's Engineer, Mohammed Dabees, the "project is part of a nature-based adaptive management plan to restore and stabilize the sandspit and tidal

*Hurricane Idalia's Impact,
continued on page 33*



*The 2022 Tigertail Lagoon/Sand Dollar Island Ecosystem Restoration Project
started in November 2022 - June 2023 (photo by Maria Lamb)*



Post Idalia, berm showing rivulets/channeling (photo by Maria Lamb)



Post Idalia photo of the Northern tip of Sand Dollar (photo by John Cavanaugh)

MARCO ISLAND CENTER FOR THE ARTS IS EXCITED TO KICK OFF ITS 2023-2024 SEASON

As always, there will be an exciting array of art exhibitions, classes and workshops for adult students, music, programs and events. Additionally, the second season of the Arts Center Theatre (ACT) will bring musicals, mainstage productions, comedy and more for audiences to enjoy.

Art Exhibitions that will run from October through December 2023 are as follow: From October 9 - November 21, **Natural Elements** with artists Koren Forquer, Ran Adler, Mary Day, Dusty Holmes, Beth Shroeder, Tekla Taylor, Catherine Nearhouse, Roselyn Young and Martha Bennett will be in the main galleries. From December 4 - January 2, the remarkable **Art Center's Clay Guild** will show their work in an exhibition. Artists exhibiting their work on a monthly basis from October through December will be Inez Hudson (October), Bruce Hecksel (November) and Llos Ilyas Elias Kirkan (December) Every second Tuesday, the Art Center is the place to be on Marco Island. Enjoy the gallery reception, meet the artists and sample wine provided by wine sponsor Total Wine and More of Naples.

The **Day of the Dead** grass wall installation will return in the courtyard for October and November with new artwork created by students from the children's summer art workshops. The **10th Festival of Trees** will take place from November 28 - 30. This annual event with trees created by individuals, organizations, businesses and artists makes the Art Center an essential part of celebrating the holidays on Marco Island.

The Musical Interludes will take place in the art gallery with Claude Bourbon on October 26 and Terra Guitarra Nuevo Flamenco Guitars on November 9. Both performances start at 5:30pm.

Embark on your own artistic journey by taking an adult class or workshop at the Art Center. With programs offered in painting, drawing, clay, sculpting and much more, there is sure to be a class that inspires you.

The mainstage productions at the Arts Center Theatre (ACT) will be **The 39 Steps** (October 25 - November 12, 2023) and **The Complete Works of Shakespeare Abridged Revised** (November 29 - December 10). In partnership with the Fort Myers Theater, ACT will present limited runs of **The Music Man** (October 18-21) and Irving Berlin's **White Christmas** (December 13-17). Other events at ACT include comedy shows on October 13, November 17 and December 29, **Highlights from the Nutcracker** presented by Gulfshore Ballet on November 18 and a ventriloquist and magic show on December 22.

Whether it is visual or performing arts, the Art Center and the Arts Center Theatre has something for you.

*Marco Island Center for the Arts is located at
1010 Winterberry Drive,
Marco Island, Florida 34145.
You can reach them at 239-394-4221
or visit www.marcoislandart.org*



*Hurricane Idalia's Impact,
continued from page 30*

lagoon through cyclic use of sediment within the system so periodic dredging and sand restoration will be needed in the future.”

It is often said that you destroy one place to replace it with another – and that’s what happened with Marco’s Critical Wildlife Area (CWA), Big Marco Pass, located on a spit of sand called Sand Dollar Island. Mangroves, shoreline vegetation, bird nesting habitat, mudflats and sea turtle nesting areas - an entire ecosystem altered and replaced with sand dredged from an offshore borrow area.

Cost of the Project: According to Dabees, the project’s projected cost ranged from \$2.9 - \$3.9 million and advised the Hideaway Taxing District to budget for \$4 million. A \$700K loan was approved by City Council in August 2021. Additional funding also came from Collier County Tourist Development Council (TDC). The project was paid for by the City of Marco Island’s Tax District for Hideaway Beach.

Frequency of dredging? 3-5 years’ timeframe with minor maintenance in between.

What’s next after Idalia? According to Dabees, they are “assessing the impacts on the protective berm and anticipate required maintenance post storms such as regrade and restore the berm.” On September 8, 2023, City Manager McNeas approved the “Emergency Procurement to Authorize a Purchase Order to repair damage to Tigertail Lagoon/Sand Dollar Island Ecosystem Restoration area in the amount of \$47,528.”

Councilor Blonna also wrote in an email to a resident that “we can no longer abdicate the full financial responsibility for this work to the Hideaway Tax District. It is time that we the City and County help them bear this financial burden.”

How did the dredging impact the 2023 sea turtle nesting season? For May, the first month of the nesting season, monitors recorded 294 false crawls. For comparison, for the entire year of 2022, monitors recorded 214 false crawls.



Sand Dollar Island post Hurricane Idalia showing several breaches and remaining berms (photo John Cavanaugh)

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY CELEBRATES 40 YEARS ON MARCO ISLAND

by Maureen Chodaba, ACS Publicity Volunteer

Imagine a world without cancer. That is what Marco Island did the night of February 25, 2023, at the JW Marriott as Paradise Found Restaurant presented the American Cancer Society Imagination Ball. Emceed by Lindsey Sablan of WINK News, it was a night of elegance and celebration fueled with the mission to raise funds in the fight against cancer. This year was extra special as we celebrated forty years of ACS presence on Marco Island.

Debra Shanahan, chair of the gala for the eleventh consecutive year, welcomed the crowd with a heartfelt message of hope, reminding us that we each have just one life to live and should live it well by loving our families and friends. Cancer is a thief that has stolen precious time, cutting short the lives of so many. We celebrate life and love by fighting back against this deadly disease. Those words ignited the energy of life that would prevail throughout the night.

Perhaps the most touching moment of the evening was the Survivor video. Introduced by “Chef” Laura Owen of Mission Sponsor CJ’s On the Bay, the video featured survivors Ginny Jermanok and Marco Island Police Chief Tracy Frazzano. Their stories brought us hope and inspiration.

Jermanok, diagnosed with stage 4 spindle cell lung cancer six years ago, was originally told that there was nothing that could be done and that she should consider hospice. Thanks to a newly developed immunotherapy treatment, she now celebrates life traveling, socializing, and enjoying her grandchildren.

Frazzano was diagnosed with stage 2 breast cancer in November 2020, right at the height of the Covid pandemic. She underwent chemotherapy, a double mastectomy, and radiation. She thanks her family, friends, and the Marco Island community for supporting her through this journey.

Funds were raised by both live and silent auctions, and three revenue enhancers. The Diamond Dig, sponsored by Kathein Jewelers, added sparkle



Sue Olszak, Debra Shanahan, and Lisa Honig

to the evening. An anonymous donor donated a fabulous Louis Vuitton handbag for a raffle donation. Attendees had the opportunity to purchase teddy bears that will deliver comfort and healing to children at the Golisano Children’s Hospital in Fort Myers.

Auctioneer Jon Foege conducted both the live auction and the Finish the Fight final round. Attendees raised their paddles, pledging funds to finish the fight against cancer once and for all.

All auction items and revenue enhancers were generously donated to the American Cancer Society by our generous sponsors. ACS gratefully acknowledges Presenting Sponsor – Paradise Found Restaurant & Bar, Reception Sponsor – Seminole Casino Hotel, Gold Sponsors – Morgan Stanley David Caruso & Bob Hart, JP Morgan Private Bank, Photography Sponsor – Condee Cooling & Electric/Lennox, Mission Sponsor – CJ’s on the Bay, and Bronze Sponsors – NCH Healthcare, Kathein Jewelers – Diamond Dig, and Rotary Club of Marco



Bill and Karen Young



*Dr. Jerry Swiacki and Linda Turner with
Rick Popoff and Dianna Dohm*



*Barbara and Mike Murphy with
Arne and Jill Sandberg*

Island Sunrise. Patron Table Sponsors were Guerin & English/Raymond James, JW Marriott Marco Island, Marco Island Academy, Myrt Rose, Melissa Scott, Dr. Rick Siegel, and Bill & Karen Young. Patron Couples included Drs. Glenn Groat & Anne Marie Tremaine, Dave & Tiffany Homuth, Veronica Vanacore, John & Lisa Quetti, Ron & Pat Rutledge, Arne & Jill Sandberg, and Patrick Thawley & Patricia Bunke.

Funds raised by the event are being used for research, education, and patient support programs.

The American Cancer Society is a volunteer driven organization, and the Imagination Ball was no exception. Among the volunteers for the evening were the friendly faces from Rotary, Kiwanis, the Marco Island Woman's Club and other local service organizations, all pitching in to make the evening a success.

The American Cancer Society will never stop fighting against this disease until we find a cure.

We believe that day is coming, and we believe with your help, that day will be soon.

Please mark your calendars now for our upcoming events:

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of Southwest Florida – Saturday, October 21, 2023. The event opens at 9am, followed by the 5K Walk at 10am at North Collier Regional Park, 15000 Livingston Road, Naples, FL. For more information, please contact Sue.Olszak@cancer.org or Wendy.Rivera@cancer.org.

American Cancer Society Imagination Ball – Friday, February 2, 2024. For a Night of Illusions! For more information, please contact Sue.Olszak@cancer.org or 239-610-3032.

*To learn more about the
American Cancer Society, including news of its
research, and patient support programs,
please visit
<https://www.cancer.org>.*

*To learn more about the
Imagination Ball and other local events,
please contact Sue.Olszak@cancer.org
or 239.610.3032.*

COLLIER COUNTY WASTE MANAGEMENT

Recycling Center - Hurricane season has arrived. Be prepared before a storm approaches. Bring items like paint, gasoline, and electronics for environmentally safe disposal. Give yourself peace of mind this hurricane season by dropping off your hazardous waste before the storm. For a list of items, drop-off locations open six days a week and rates, visit colliercountyfl.gov/dispose



Storm Debris - Separating Storm Debris Declared emergency events such as hurricanes can inundate Collier County with tons of debris, including normal household garbage, yard debris, household hazardous and chemical waste, appliances, and construction and demolition debris. Collecting and properly disposing of storm-related debris is a critical step in community recovery efforts. After the storm, monitor the Collier County Government webpage, social media, and news outlets for information on debris removal. The collection of storm-related debris is prioritized in the immediate aftermath of a storm. All types of materials will be collected, but not all at once. You can help ensure debris is collected in an efficient, safe, and timely manner by following a few guidelines. **DO NOT MIX ANY MATERIAL TYPES** (see below). Mixed piles will not be eligible for collection. For more information visit colliercountyfl.gov/hurricaneprep.

Shredding Event - Collier County Drop-off centers offers paper shredding events on the first Saturday of each month. You can shred up to 20 pounds of paper free of charge at the Naples, Marco Island, North Collier, and Tim Nance Center Drop-Off Centers. You can also drop off up to 5 pounds of paper at no charge Monday to Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, a list of items, drop-off locations open six days a week and rates, visit colliercountyfl.gov/dispose

PLACE ALL STORM DEBRIS CURBSIDE

1 LARGE APPLIANCES

Refrigerator, washer/dryer, air conditioner, stove, water heater, dishwasher. REMOVE PERISHABLES AND DOORS.

2 CONSTRUCTION DEBRIS

Building materials, drywall, lumber, carpet, furniture, plumbing. DO NOT BAG.

3 VEGETATIVE DEBRIS

Tree branches, leaves, logs, plants. DO NOT BAG.

4 ELECTRONICS

Television, computer, stereo, phone, DVD player.

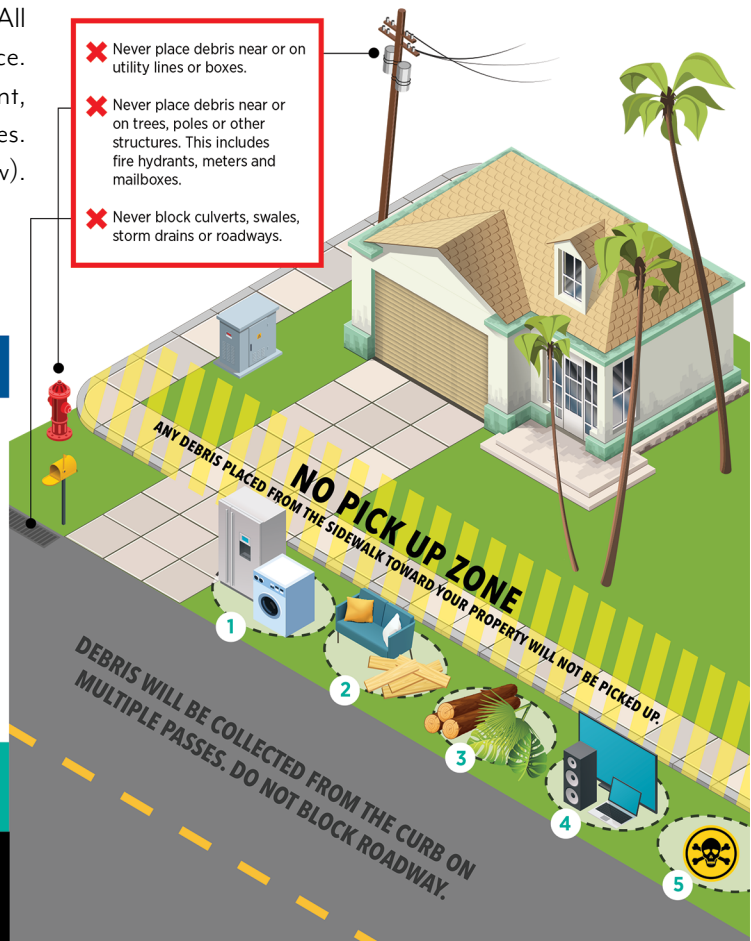
5 HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

Batteries, paint, oil, pesticides, pool chemicals, cleaning supplies will be collected separately or can be brought to a County Drop-Off Center.

REGULAR HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE

Regular household garbage and recycling will be collected separately from storm debris.

CHECK FOR UPDATES AT colliercountyfl.gov/hurricaneprep



TAKE ACTION - THE RIGHT TO CLEAN WATER

by Eugene Wordehoff, Collier County Captain, Right to Clean Water

If you like to fish, boat, swim, paddle, shell, surf, or just sit on the beach looking out over glistening blue water, your help is needed.

Even a partial list of facts demonstrates the broad failure of Florida's environmental regulatory system to protect our waters.

- Red tides have increased dramatically in frequency, duration, and virulence during the past three decades.
- Summertime blue green algae blooms are the new norm.
- Nearly a million acres of estuaries and 9,000 miles of rivers and streams are contaminated with fecal bacteria.
- Tens of thousands of acres of seagrass are disappearing.
- No state has lost more acres of wetlands.
- No state has more acres of polluted lake water.
- Oxygen in the Marco waterways has dropped to historic low levels from algal eutrophication

Florida waters suffer because our state government permits pollution and environmental degradation through its actions and inactions. This has much to do with Big Ag, Big Development, and Big Mining wielding undue influence over legislators and thus environmental policy.

In 2020, looking to clean up their polluted waterways themselves, 89% of Orange County voters approved a Right to Clean Water charter amendment. But fearing the effectiveness of a rights-based approach to environmental protection, the Legislature swiftly took that right away by preempting the authority of local governments statewide from passing such laws. That preemption successfully snuffed out other similar local efforts throughout the state.



If we can't work at local levels to protect our waters, the only viable recourse left to us is to amend our state constitution giving all Floridians a fundamental right to clean water, such as Pennsylvanians, Montanans, and New Yorkers have.

Given how critical clean water is to Floridians, we need this right. With it enshrined in our constitution, we can hold state government accountable when it permits pollution and degradation of our waters and aquatic ecosystems.

Go to FloridaRightToCleanWater.org to read the full text of the amendment. Check out the FAQs. Learn that this right doesn't mean your neighbor can sue you for fertilizing your lawn or that there will be a proliferation of lawsuits. Note all our supporting organizations and businesses. Then sign and mail the petition and get others to do the same.

*For more information, please contact
Eugene Wordehoff, Collier County Captain,
or visit www.FloridaRightToCleanWater.org.*

*To help your community with the right to clean water,
sign a petition and mail it to:
13300 South Cleveland Ave, Suite 56,
Fort Myers, FL 33907*

MARCO ISLAND WOMAN’S CLUB – BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS AND GIVING BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY

by Maureen Chodaba, MIWC Publicity Chair

“Why you were born, and why you are living, depends on what you are getting out of this world, and what you are giving.” That is the motto of the Marco Island Woman’s Club (MIWC), an active social network of women dedicated to serving and improving our community. Chartered in 1966 by a group of 16 Marco Island ladies, the Club has grown to over 140 members, touching our community with a lasting impact that will soar to new heights as we embrace and nurture the future.

From the beginning, the Club has proudly made significant impact donations to our schools, and various civic and health organizations. One of the Club’s first accomplishments was the founding of the Marco Island Public Library. It began in the old Deltona “Welcome to Marco” Polynesian style sales shack. For the first five years, MIWC volunteers staffed the library, even making weekly trips to exchange books with the Naples library! The Club funded the lovely gazebo which is now located at the Marco Island Historical Museum. MIWC initiated the beautification movement for our island and the youth center which grew to become the present-day YMCA. We have helped restore the Marco Island



*MIWC members enjoy a summer social event -
Left to Right - Dina Johnson, Christina Wergiles,
VP Debbie Rosen, Pres. Sharyn Kampmeyer,
Carol Ann Anzalone*

Historical Cemetery with garden features, including the flagpole. For many years, the Club funded the purchase of medical equipment for NCH, a defibrillator for Marco Island’s ambulance service, and the building of the current Marco Island Health Care Center.

Friendships abound through special interest groups, including a Book Club, Lunch Bunch, Card Group,



MIWC members model at annual Fashion Show



*Anne Marchetti and Sharyn Kampmeyer
at Golisano Hospital*

Stitch Makers, Travel Club, and Theater Group. Annual fundraisers, including our Fashion Show, and Cards & Games Day raise funds for the MIWC Charity Foundation (501c3) that supports our Scholarship Foundation and other service organizations benefiting our community. Through the years, MIWC has awarded over \$700,000 in scholarships to more than 200 Marco Island students, funding their opportunities for a bright future.

The Stitch Makers, a special interest group of quilters, seamstresses, knitters, and crocheters of the Marco Island Woman's Club (MIWC) have touched the lives of children in a very special way. The group's leader, Anne Marchetti, describes their work as a labor of love. "Since we started our stitching group in 2016, we have donated 1,111 blankets, 1,002 hats, sixty-two sweaters and thirty-nine pairs of booties to Golisano Hospital, AI's Pals, Manatee Elementary School, Outreach Programs, etc. We have also donated an assortment of items such as scarves, stuffed animals, books, clutch balls, blocks, paintings, gift cards, masks, etc. to other organizations. Think of the lives we have touched and comfort we have brought to so many!" She humbly adds, "This could not have happened without everyone in this incredibly special group. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!" Marchetti and MIWC President Sharyn Kampmeyer personally delivered 150 blankets, and twenty-two preemie blankets and sweater sets to Golisano Children's Hospital this past spring.

We have reached out to the community as the helping hands of volunteerism at Beach Clean-ups, the



MIWC volunteers at Little Pink Houses of Hope breast cancer awareness event - Left to Right - Maureen Chodaba, Sue Purvis, Joyce Frame, Sharyn Kampmeyer

American Cancer Society Imagination Ball, Meals of Hope Packing Event, Little Pink Houses of Hope, Lunch with Friends Over 60, activities of the Girl Up Club of Manatee Middle School, and more.

We look forward to an exciting new year with the leadership of Sharyn Kampmeyer, President; Debbie Rosen, Vice-President; Sherri McKenna, Recording Secretary; Carol Hobday, Corresponding Secretary; Debbie Rago, Treasurer; Sue Niebling, Assistant Treasurer; and Barbara Malta, Advisor. The Club meets the first Wednesday of each month from October to May for an informative luncheon program at Naples Lakes Country Club, 4738 Naples Lakes Blvd., Naples, FL 34112.

This summer, on break from our regular meeting schedule, Club members stayed cool and kept the momentum going with several informal social gatherings. A good time was had by all!

Upcoming events include our South Beach Clean Up w/City of Marco - November 4, participation in the Meals of Hope Packing Event - November 18, annual Fashion Show & Luncheon fundraiser - February 19, Cards & Games Day at CJ's On the Bay - March 14, and of course our monthly luncheons.

As you can see, we are a group of movers and shakers for this community! We would love to welcome YOU to our Club. Membership is available to all women who live (own or rent) on Marco Island. Please join us at one of our luncheons to experience friendship and fun in the spirit of goodwill. Please visit <https://marcowomansclub.com> to learn more.

2023 FRIENDS OF TIGERTAIL UPDATE

by Allie Delventhal, Friends of Tigertail

Friends of Tigertail celebrated their 25th Anniversary with a party for members and dignitaries at the Marco Island Library on March 22. Presentations were made by Linda Colombo, outgoing Friends president; Rick LoCastro, County Commissioner; Dr Mohamed Dabees, Vice President of Humiston and Moore Engineers; who designed and oversaw the Tigertail Beach restoration project, and Linda Ryan, coordinator of the project and chairperson of the Hideaway Beach Tax District that funded the bulk of the associated costs. Linda Colombo was thanked for her many years leading Friends of Tigertail, and Joanna Metzger was introduced as the new president of the organization.



The current Friends of Tigertail Board, from left: Susan Kubat, new president Joanna Metzger, Gwynette Goodman, Harriette Tax, Susan Lagrotta, former president Linda Colombo, Lynn Livingston, Allie Delventhal, Russ Colombo

At the end of May Tigertail Beach restoration was completed, returning the area to near pre-2017 condition prior to the deterioration caused by Hurricane Irma and subsequent storms. Opening Big Marco Pass to the lagoon permitted renewed tidal flow, with berms constructed along Sand Dollar Spit to limit the over-wash which had previously choked off the pass. Hurricane Idalia caused some damage similar to other area beaches, and follow-up repairs are being assessed.



*Top: South of Tigertail lagoon pre beach restoration
Bottom: Same area post restoration*

The annual Friends of Tigertail membership outing was enjoyed on the Conservancy's informative Good Fortune II evening cruise. Resuming after a three-year hiatus due to COVID, two popular "Breakfast and Birds" presentations were hosted at the beach. Quarterly clean-ups continued, including participation in the annual International Coastal Clean-up in September, a world-wide effort to clear coastal areas of trash and tabulate the types of debris collected.

To promote environmental interest and education, Friends of Tigertail donated to the MIA Ambassadors of the Environment Camp, supporting student scholarships.

Friends of Tigertail looks forward to the upcoming season, continuing their efforts to support and enhance the beautiful Tigertail Beach area.

Visit www.FriendsofTigertail.com or find them on Facebook for more information

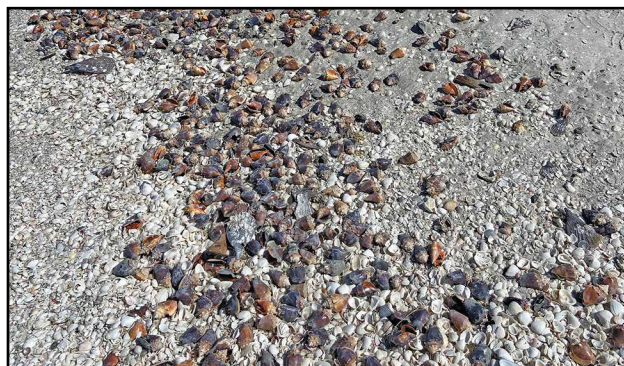
TREASURES FROM IAN, BUT FROM IDALIA, NOT SO MUCH

by Karen Caster, Recording Secretary and Scholarship Committee Chair, Marco Island Shell Club

While we all know the devastation and destruction storms can bring to our coastal communities, for the shelling community these storms often have a silver lining in that they can bring many treasures to our beaches. Each storm has its own effects on shelling. One of the best times for finding seashells is at a low tide after a storm has passed.

For shellers, the shell treasures from Idalia didn't measure up to those from Ian. Each hurricane brings its own seashell treasures to the beaches of Marco Island. Each hurricane is unique in its length of time in passing, in its production of a storm surge, its wind speed, size, and more.

The eye of Ian passed closer to Marco Island, had a much greater wind speed, and it was larger in size. It moved slower and produced a storm surge. This caused some smaller shells to end up on the beach the next day, and larger live shells were in the sand at the waters' edge (as seen in the photo below). Within 24 hours the receding water had pulled them back out to the deeper water. For a sheller, it was exciting to see the large live Whelks, Horse Conchs, and others that you would normally never see on the beach. Please remember it is illegal to collect live shells and if possible when you find a shell with the creature still inside place it gently back into the water.



Fighting Conchs washed ashore after Hurricane Ian

Unfortunately, there were also many live Florida Fighting Conchs that were deposited further up on the beach. The tides never seemed to get that high again, and many of these creatures died. Other smaller shells in that situation included Scallops, Olives, and Dosinias. Many Urchins and Starfish were also deposited on the beach too far from the water.

Hurricane Idalia compared to Ian, was smaller, lower wind speed, the eye was much further away from Marco Island, and produced a very small storm surge. Idalia pushed more aquatic plants on the beach and fewer shells. Most shells were common shells to Marco beaches.

Treasures, continued on page 42



Large Whelk sitting at the waters' edge after Hurricane Ian



*A Sea Star washed up
onto the beach after Hurricane Idalia*

As a sheller, it was interesting to see the results of these 2 storms. Though Idalia did not bring the shell treasures that Ian did, we are very grateful she decided to pass us!

The Marco Island Shell Club is a friendly and dedicated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization for shell enthusiasts at all levels of interest and expertise. Our mission is to promote the study, conservation, history, and science of seashells and mollusks, and to encourage shell-related interests, such as shell collecting, crafting, and shell art.

*Join the Marco Island Shell Club at the
Annual Holiday Shell Art Sale
Friday, November 24, 2023,
from 10:00am to 3:00pm
at the New Life Community Church
489 W. Elcam Cir.*

*Proceeds from sales go toward our
Scholarship and Education programs.*

*For more information on the
Marco Island Shell Club, please visit our
new website at marcoislandshellclub.com*

THE LCEC POWER TO SHARE PROGRAM

This past year Southwest Florida has been picking up the pieces from Hurricane Ian. The devastation is still felt across the community. LCEC customers can help those in need by donating to the LCEC Power to Share Program.

The LCEC Power to Share program was created to assist financially strained customers having difficulty making electric bill payments. This program is a partnership between LCEC and the United Way offering short-term emergency assistance to customers who meet the one-time requirements. The program is funded through donations by LCEC employees, business partners, and customers.

Power to Share by Rounding Up expands the program by providing participating customers with the opportunity to round up their monthly electric bill to the nearest dollar. Customers can enroll and un-enroll easily through the LCEC SmartHub, online at lcec.net or over the phone by calling LCEC Customer Care at 239-656-2300.

For more information on the program or the other ways LCEC positively impacts our community, visit lcec.net. Rounding Up is a simple way to make a huge impact in the lives of others!

WHO CAN USE MY
RESIDENTS' BEACH ID?
YOU AND ONLY YOU

NO ONE OTHER THAN
YOURSELF CAN USE YOUR
RESIDENTS' BEACH ID,
NO EXCEPTIONS.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

BEACH CLEAN UPS

October 14th - Residents' Beach, sponsored by MICA, 8-10 am

November 4th - South Beach, 8-10 am

December 3rd - Tigertail Park, 8-10 am



For more information, please contact City Staff Liaison at 239.389.3949

OPERATION MEDICINE CABINET[®]

A pharmaceutical take-back program brought to you by:
DrugFreeCollier.org

Working to Save & Change Lives



Operation Medicine Cabinet helps keep harmful drugs from falling into the wrong hands and offers a responsible alternative for reducing pharmaceutical contaminants in our environment.

A Prescription for Safe Kids & Clean Environment

- **DO** Lock up all medications and keep away from children and teens.
- **DO** Bring unused or expired prescriptions and over-the-counter medication to one of the locations listed for proper disposal.
- **Don't** Flush medication down the toilet. It is a danger to our environment.
- **Don't** Bring needles or other "sharps." They cannot be accepted.*

Drug Free Collier
P.O. Box 770759
Naples, Florida 34107
Phone: (239) 302-6717 info@DrugFreeCollier.org

PERMANENT DROP-OFF SITE MARCO ISLAND:
Marco Island Police Dept.
51 Bald Eagle Drive
Marco Island, FL 34145
Ph: 239.389.5050
Mon. - Fri., 8am - 5pm

* Sharps may be taken to a Collier County Recycling Drop-off Center during regular business hours. For information on sharps disposal call Collier County Public Utilities Solid Waste Division at (239) 252-2598.

PROUD TO PARTNER WITH:



RESIDENTS' BEACH PHOTOS - Member submitted photos

To be featured in the next edition of MICAwave, send your favorite photo by email to info@marcocivic.com



Left: Sunset at Residents' Beach, taken by Carol Darwish. She calls this photo "To The Sunset"

Top right: Residents' Beach Fourth of July firework celebration, taken by Ron Caspari

Middle Right: Sunrise at Residents' Beach, submitted by Diane Janco

Bottom Right: Sue Vetrano, sunset at Residents' Beach

Bottom : Collette Combs at sunset, submitted by Shannan Combs

Bryan's Best Home Watch

Among The Things We Check:

**Water Meter
Insects**



**Security
A/C**

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BryansHomeWatch@gmail.com

Veteran Owned

Licensed & Insured



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- BACK COUNTRY FISHING
- NEAR COASTAL FISHING
- ISLAND SHELLING

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www.sunshinetoursmarcoisland.com

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Marco's Most Unique Waterfront Dining Experience!

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- Lunch
- Sunset Dinner
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Sunshine Tours ★ Marco Island Princess
Rose Marina 951 Bald Eagle Drive, Marco Island, FL

Planning a special gathering or celebration? Leave it to us! Call today to speak with our Event Planning Professionals.

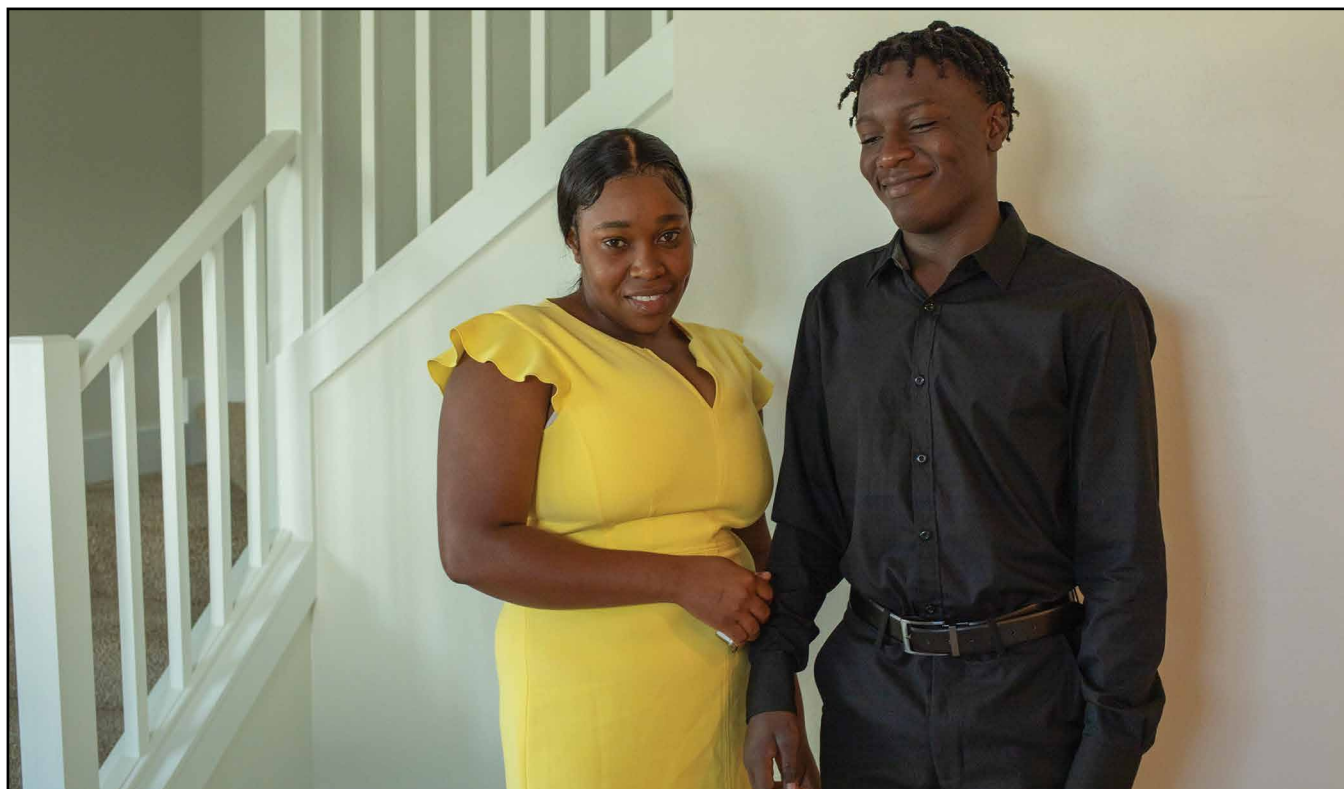
CELEBRATING OUR PARTNERSHIP IN SERVING MORE THAN 2,500 FAMILIES

by Andrea McKenna, Donor Relations, Habitat for Humanity of Collier County

As the need for affordable housing continues to increase dramatically, it is no surprise that we see more families employed on Marco Island applying to partner with Habitat for Humanity of Collier County. We are the only alternative for access to affordable homeownership for hard-working members of our workforce who have been squeezed out of the local housing market. Not only is there no available inventory, but these low-wage earners would not qualify for a sufficient conventional mortgage due to their income. Our last fiscal year ended on June 30, 2023, and we found that the number of families inquiring about our program increased a staggering 42% over the previous year, demonstrating just how dire the situation is for those seeking a safe, affordable home for their families.

Much remains to be done, but we take a moment to celebrate that since our founding in 1978, more than 2,500 families have achieved the safety, security and self-reliance that result from owning an affordable home where each family member has space and enjoys privacy. To address the tremendous need, Habitat Collier is building homes in two locations in Naples, Whitaker Woods and Songbird at Whippoorwill, and one in Immokalee, Kaicasa.

Angeline Prophete just purchased her home in Whitaker Woods and works two jobs to make ends meet. You may see her at the Publix on the Island or Taco Bell. When they applied for their Habitat home, Angeline and her teenage son Marc were living in an apartment with her mother, paying over \$1,200 per month in rent. The rent steadily increased each year.



Angeline Prophete and her son at the closing of their new Habitat for Humanity House in Whitaker Woods

Angeline's mom had one bedroom and Angeline and her son shared the other. He slept on an air mattress on the floor. Now they are settled comfortably in their forever home, each with their own bedroom. Marc plans to attend college to study business and play football. His likelihood for success is far better now that he has his own room where he may rest peacefully and do schoolwork.

Another applicant, Emmanuelle Chery, will soon be purchasing her home in Songbird. Emmanuelle has been a dishwasher at JW Marriott for 7 years. Emmanuelle and her daughter Sophia were also sharing a home with family when they applied for a Habitat home. Emmanuelle is eager to finally have the home that she dreams of for her daughter. They will live in a safe community and have the privacy that they lack now.

The Alcenat family is in a rare situation where their family lives in Immokalee but commutes to Marco Island for their jobs. Both Gregory and Marie are employed at the Hilton, Gregory as a Houseman and Marie as a room attendant. This family lives in a shared house. They lack privacy and don't even feel comfortable using the kitchen to cook their meals. On their application they said, "We seek a Habitat home so we can lay our heads in a safe and stable environment that offers privacy to us."

Each month when our Selection Committee members review applicant families, we are seeing more families who lack housing security, verging on homelessness. So many live with others who control the living situation and access to shared spaces such as kitchens and bathrooms. These untenable conditions weigh heavily on each family member, especially parents who work multiple jobs just to pay for these poor conditions. Families often report that rents, already unaffordable, increase substantially with very little notice. Parents worry that they will once again have to seek an affordable home and uproot their children from school.

Habitat Collier will not be able to serve those in need without your continued support. The cost of housing in Collier County is 40% above the national average. In May of this year, it was reported that

Naples metro area median monthly rents increased 24% to \$5,756 per month. Clearly, Habitat Collier applicants could not possibly afford this with an average salary of just over \$57,000 annually even though they work multiple jobs.

Habitat Collier remains focused on our singular goal of making homeownership a reality for hard-working, low-wage earners in our workforce. Homeownership for these families and others in need would not be possible without those who offer their hand-up in partnership to Habitat Collier and the families we serve. We are sincerely grateful to all who provide support, helping us get one step closer to the day when everyone has an affordable simple, decent home.

*Please visit our website:
www.habitatcollier.org
to learn more about our work in
Collier County
and how you may help.
Updates on our volunteering
opportunities are available.*

*If you have any questions, please contact
Andrea at amckenna@habitatcollier.org.*

Twice Habitat for Humanity of Collier County was honored to be among the 1% of charities to have earned a perfect 100 score from Charity Navigator, the largest and most utilized evaluator of charities in the U.S. Additionally, Habitat Collier has received eighteen four-star ratings from the nonprofit watchdog.

In 2014, Habitat Collier was recognized as #1 in the nation for Housing and Community Development.

Habitat Collier earned the Platinum Transparency 2023 distinction from Candid. 94¢ of every donated dollar is used to build homes and serve families.

AMERICAN FLAMINGO RELEASED IN TAMPA BAY WILL SHED LIGHT ON FLAMINGO INVASION

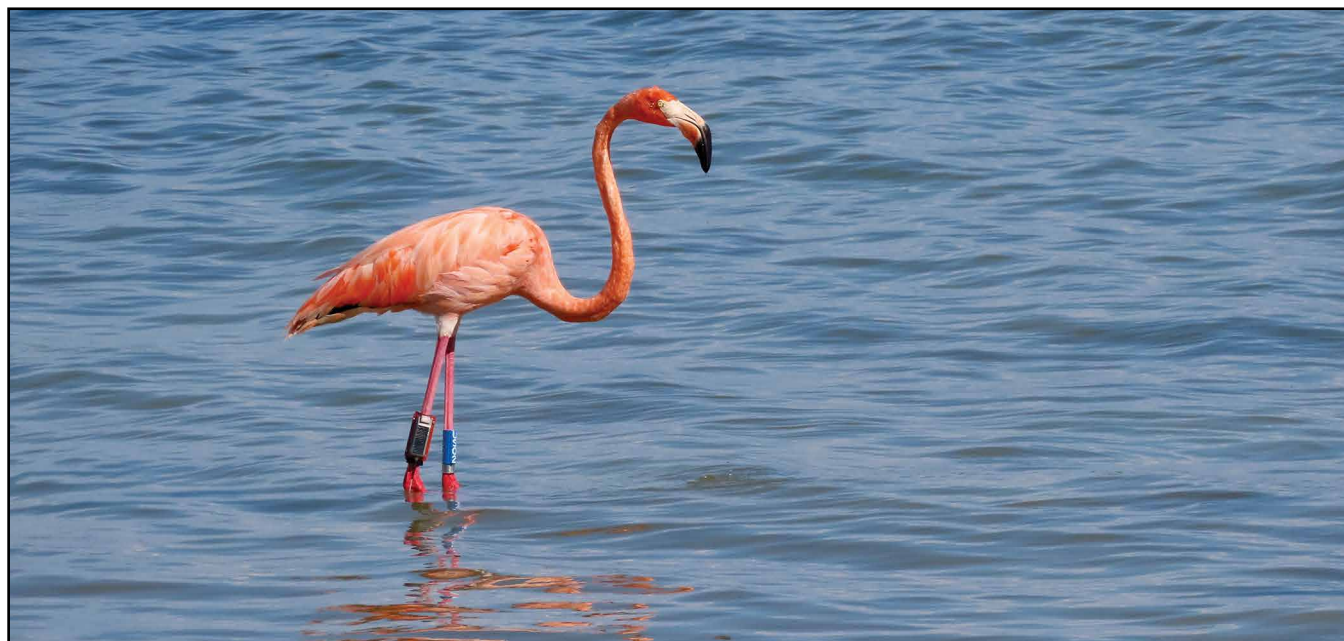
Audubon Florida attaches transmitter to track its movements, fate

In late August, Hurricane Idalia's Category 3 landfall brought rain, wind, and, unexpectedly, flamingos to Florida. While many flamingos have been reported on Florida's shores, one bird was rescued from the Gulf and rehabilitated by the Seaside Seabird Sanctuary. Prior to its successful release in Pinellas County on a September Saturday, Audubon Florida research staff tagged the bird with a geolocator that could provide scientists with important clues about the movements and fates of these storm-blown birds.

American Flamingos were more common in Florida before they were hunted to extirpation around 1900. Today, they are numerous in Mexico and Cuba where they breed, with a few individuals straying to the Everglades and Florida Bay in winter. As Hurricane Idalia passed between the Yucatan and Western Cuba this August, her strong winds likely swept up flamingos from this region, carrying them

to Florida's coast. Sightings have been reported on beaches and in other Florida natural areas including in the Keys, Tigertail Beach, Sanibel Causeway, Bunche Beach, Punta Gorda, Charlotte Harbor, Clearwater, Treasure Island, Siesta Key, Tarpon Springs, Port St. Joe, St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, and Lake Pithlachoco, as well as locations in Ohio, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Texas, Tennessee, Alabama, and more.

The rehabilitated flamingo, affectionately known as "Peaches," was rescued floating in the Gulf off St. Pete Beach by boaters. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Tampa Bay transferred it to the Seaside Seabird Sanctuary in Indian Shores, where hospital staff determined the bird was in good condition overall but was visibly exhausted, likely from its hurricane ordeal. After a day of rest and supportive care, the bird began self-feeding, and by week's end,



American Flamingo banded and tracked after rescue. Photo: Kara Cook/Audubon Florida.

“Peaches” became much more active and vocal.

Audubon Florida’s Director of Research Jerry Lorenz, PhD, recognized that Peaches represented a golden opportunity to learn more about wild flamingos and their movements in Florida. The USGS Bird Banding Laboratory agreed and rushed its federal approval for Lorenz and ZooMiami’s Frank Ridgley, DVM, to tag Peaches with bands and a satellite transmitter before its return to the wild. The flamingo will now be part of a unique study of flamingo movements between breeding grounds and Florida.

This isn’t the first time a rescued flamingo has provided insight into the mystery of their return to Florida. In 2015, Dr. Lorenz worked with Steven Whitfield, PhD, and other members of the Florida Flamingo Working Group to affix a tracking device to a young American Flamingo captured at the Naval Air Station at Boca Chica Key, Florida. The study tracked the bird, dubbed “Conchy,” for nearly two years and reported on the bird’s whereabouts before the tracking device stopped transmitting signals. The study revealed the flamingo’s preferred habitats and locations (mangrove-fringed islands and mudflats at Snake Bight in Everglades National Park) and upended the prevailing wisdom by not leaving Florida as many anticipated it would.

With its new tracking device, Tampa Bay’s “Peaches” will add critical data to this research initiative. Will the flamingos brought to our shores remain and breed here? If they return to the Yucatan and Cuba, will they return in subsequent years? Florida once had breeding flamingos year-round. Might we again one day, with the protection and restoration of key habitat, including coastal wetlands, the Everglades and Florida Bay?

On September 9, the Seaside Seabird Sanctuary team released “Peaches” at Fort DeSoto Park, where other flamingos have been consistently seen since Hurricane Idalia. The public is asked to give this and all flamingos in Florida space to rest and feed undisturbed. Photographers and other enthusiasts approaching too closely present a grave threat to their survival.

“We want these flamingos to stay and raise their families here,” says Dr. Lorenz. “If we give them their

space, restore their habitat, and keep their water clean, we can hope for a pink future in Florida.”

Seaside Seabird Sanctuary, LLC was founded on July 13, 2016, as a non-profit organization dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating, and releasing sick or injured wild birds. Their mission is to rescue, treat, and rehabilitate sick and injured wild birds with the goal of releasing them back into their native habitat in the wild, as well as to educate the general public about Florida’s native wild bird population, and how to prevent and reduce the man-made dangers that wild birds face every day.

Audubon protects birds and the places they need, today and in the future. Audubon works throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education, and on-the-ground conservation. State programs, nature centers, chapters, and partners give Audubon an unparalleled wingspan that reaches millions of people each year to inform, inspire, and unite diverse communities in conservation action. A nonprofit conservation organization since 1900, Audubon believes in a world in which people and wildlife thrive.

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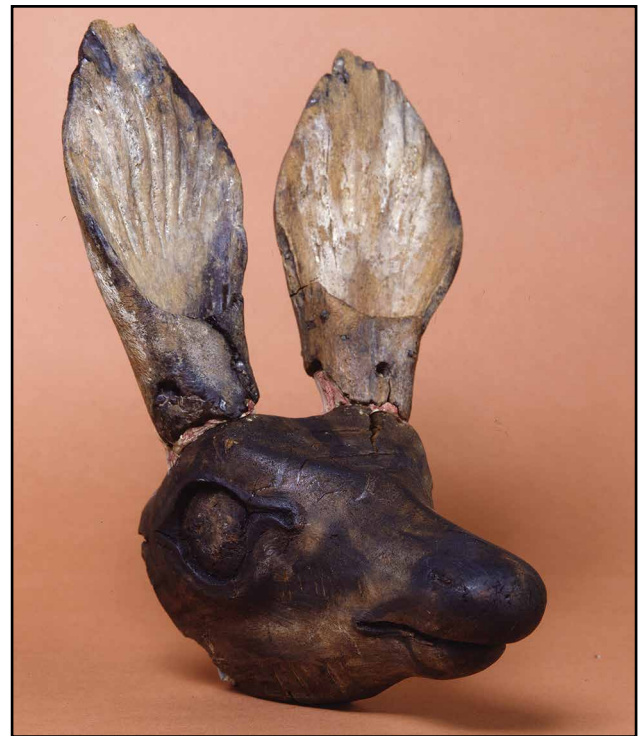
MARCO ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS AN ENLIGHTENING AND ENTERTAINING SEASON THAT INCLUDES SPECIAL EXHIBITS TO ROCK & ROLL AND LOTS IN BETWEEN!

The Marco Island Historical Society (MIHS) presents another great season of exhibits and activities that are sure to enlighten and entertain while providing a fun and fascinating “tour” through the ages. From the continuing “RETURN” of the ancient Key Marco artifacts discovered on Marco Island in 1896 to the exhibit *Out of the Sand: The Origins of Golf on Marco Island* to the popular World Class Entertainment musical artist tribute shows — it’s a don’t miss line up!

Currently, the famous Key Marco Cat continues on exhibit at Marco Island Historical Museum (MIHM) through April 2026, thanks to an unprecedented Smithsonian Institution loan to MIHS. The enigmatic feline is joined in the exhibit by other remarkably intact 500 to 1,500 year old objects discovered with it on Marco Island during an 1896 archaeological dig. Recently, a Key Marco Deer Figurehead was added to the exhibit and will remain until June 2024.

The Key Marco Deer Figurehead is on loan from the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Penn Museum). Second only to the Key Marco Cat in terms of famous objects from the site, the deer figurehead was likely created by a Calusa or Muspa artist for use in masked religious processions. It was masterfully decorated with blue, black, and white pigments (now faded) and its detachable ears may have moved realistically using a system of cords.

On November 14, the exhibit *Out of the Sand: The Origins of Golf on Marco Island* opens at MIHS. An opening reception will be held on November 16, 4:30-6:30 p.m. The exhibit continues through March 2, 2024. It is sponsored by the Island Country Club Charitable Foundation.



The Key Marco deer figurehead — one of several painted wooden animal carvings excavated in 1896 from the Key Marco archaeological site. On exhibit now until June 2024.

(Photo credit: Courtesy of Penn Museum, object 40707A-C, image #15012)

The exhibit examines more than 50 years of local golf history through historical images and objects from the MIHS collections. From the first pitch-and-putt golf course on the beach to the star-studded Tony Lema Memorial Tournament, golf has been part of Marco Island’s identity since the 1960s. This fun

and interactive exhibit, which features its own three-hole “course,” is a hole-in-one for all ages.

January through March, you can get your music on with the MIHS World Class Entertainment series of tribute performances to famous musical artists

and there no doubt will be dancing in the aisles! These popular shows sell out fast so get your tickets now before they are gone. They take place on the Museum campus at the Rose History Auditorium with a 6 p.m. curtain. Tickets are \$50.00.

Here’s a peek at the lineup of fun:

- Jan. 24: Three award-winning tributes in one night: Cher, Billy Joel and Lady GaGa
- Feb. 1: ELVIS by world champion tribute artist Ted Torres Martin
- Feb. 6: Essence of Motown with tribute artist Larry Johnson
- Feb. 22: A Tribute to Paul McCartney with artist John Babcock
- Feb. 29: The Rhythm Chicks — Great Girl Groups through the Decades
- Mar. 12: Ed Sullivan Show presents the Golden Age of Rock N Roll with talented Las Vegas tribute artists
- Mar. 19: John Denver - Back Home Again with tribute artist Tom Becker

The Marco Island Historical Museum is located at 180 S. Heathwood Drive. Open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission is free. For information, call 239.389.6447 or visit www.theMIHS.org.



Spectators gather round as Richard Nixon tees off at the inaugural Tony Lema Memorial Tournament at Marco Island Country Club. (Photo by Howard Holsberg, courtesy Marco Island Historical Society)

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Guide to Owning LOW SPEED VEHICLES

A low speed vehicle (LSV) is a vehicle with a top speed greater than 20 MPH, but not greater than 25 MPH. **LSVs must be registered, titled and insured** with personal injury protection (PIP) and property damage liability (PDL) insurance. **Any person operating an LSV must have a valid driver license. LSVs may only be operated on streets where the posted speed limit is 35 MPH or less.**

LSVs must be equipped with the following safety equipment:



To title and register an LSV, bring the following documents to an FLHSMV or tax collector office, flhsmv.gov/locations:

- Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin;
- Form HSMV 82040 (Application for Title) flhsmv.gov/forms;
- Proof of Florida insurance, minimum \$10,000 PDL and \$10,000 PIP;
- Identification - driver license, ID card or passport; and
- Payment for applicable fees, flhsmv.gov/fees;
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 - Initial registration fee, if applicable
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For more information, visit flhsmv.gov/low-speed-vehicles.

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Golf carts are defined in section 320.01(22), Florida Statutes, as "a motor vehicle that is designed and manufactured for operation on a golf course for sporting or recreational purposes and that is not capable of exceeding speeds of 20 MPH."

Golf carts may not be operated on the streets of Marco Island.



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CANINE PET PARADE:

CJ'S ON THE BAY - DEC. 5TH, 5:30 PM

ANNUAL STREET PARADE:

SAN MARCO ROAD FROM BALFOUR TO BARFIELD DR, DEC. 9TH, 6:30 PM

HOLIDAY MOVIE IN THE PARK:

VETERANS' COMMUNITY PARK - DEC. 15TH, 5:30 PM

COOKIES AND MILK WITH SANTA:

MACKLE PARK - DEC. 16TH, 10:00 AM

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MARCO ISLAND ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BOAT PARADE:

DEC. 16TH, 6:00 PM

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