

# The Pelican Flyer



April 2014

[www.firstrefuge.org](http://www.firstrefuge.org)

## **From the President's Desk**

By Steve Massey

I would like to thank all of you who participated in this year's very successful Pelican Island Wildlife Festival. It was a day of which we should all be proud. Mother Nature was certainly on our side. With input from many people, and by resurrecting some former relationships, we were able to have a very fun and educational festival.

We are already planning for next year's wonderful event – mark your calendars for March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015 – same place, same time. We have in mind more and better opportunities to educate the public about Pelican Island and our wonderful refuge system. I can't even begin to mention names of the countless individuals, agencies and vendors who came together for the event this year. You know who you are and for that I am grateful to each and every one of you for your participation. Thanks so much for everything.

Steve

## **PIPS Annual Meeting**

The PIPS April meeting is our Annual Meeting. In addition to a guest speaker/presentation, current PIPS members will be voting for this year's Officers and Directors. All nominees are incumbent Board members, except Bonnie Swanson; Steve Massey, Bruce Dangerfield, and Ilka Daniel are current serving members whose terms will not expire until 2015. Bonnie is a past member of the PIPS Board and has previously served as president. We are excited to have Bonnie coming back to participate in PIPS once again!

The current slate of nominations for this year's Officers and Directors is as follows:

### Officers:

President – Steve Massey, '16

Vice President – vacant

Secretary – vacant

Treasurer – Tim Glover, '16

### Directors:

Megan Adams, '16

David Cox, '16

Gini Prasch, '16

Bonnie Swanson, '16

If you are interested in serving as a Director for PIPS, please let us know! The only requirements to serve are to maintain a current PIPS membership and to have the time and interest in participating.

The guest at our April meeting will be Pelican Island Audubon Society President Richard Baker, to give a presentation on the new “QR” code signs recently installed at the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge. The signs were developed with the assistance of the PIAS and funding from Florida Audubon. The signs provide a code that can be read by “smart” devices that link to information about the PINWR.

April is also membership renewal season. All PIPS memberships run from April through March each

year, regardless of when you first joined. Basic membership levels remain unchanged at \$10/individual and \$15/family. Dues may be paid at the April meeting, by credit card via the "Donate" page of our website under the "Get Involved" menu, or mailed directly to PIPS at P.O. Box 781903, Sebastian, FL 32978-1903. A printable copy of our membership application is available on our website and only needs to be submitted to update/change any of your membership information.

The meeting is Monday, April 28, 7 PM at the North Indian River County Library, 1001 Sebastian Blvd. in Sebastian. All are welcome to attend – for more information, visit PIPS at [www.firstrefuge.org](http://www.firstrefuge.org) or call 772-202-0697.

### **Pelican Island Wildlife Festival Update**

As mentioned by PIPS president Steve earlier in this newsletter, we certainly appreciate everyone's help and participation in having made this year's Pelican Island Wildlife Festival one of our best events ever! We have provided a few updates on the festival page of our website and have provided a link to the photo gallery of this year's entries to the photo contest. Thanks to Patty Corapi and Vince Lamb for their great job in organizing the contest for us! They are both very busy folks and should have this photo gallery updated soon, with a list of the photo contest winners. And congratulations to the handmade wooden kayak raffle winner John Galvez! We are hoping to get a photo of John with his new craft, to post on our festival webpage too.

Also as announced by Steve, our 2015 wildlife festival will be Saturday, March 14 – the actual date of the designation of Pelican Island as the first federal bird reservation, later to become the National Wildlife Refuge System. And it's never too early to let us know that you would like to help out with next year's festival! We will begin planning for the event later this summer, so if you would like to be involved, just let us know! You can email us at [info@firstrefuge.org](mailto:info@firstrefuge.org) or leave a message at 772-202-0697. If you are interested in helping only on the day of the festival, you will find information about volunteer opportunities on our website under the "Get Involved" menu.

### **PIPS Facebook Update**

The PIPS facebook site is once again being updated with new information and photos, thanks to our new PIPS volunteer Angela Hinck. And did you know that each of the four refuges under the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex has its own Facebook page? You will find links to all of these sites on the "Links" page of our website. Check us out, and please post your comments about things you've seen or experienced at the refuge to share with others.

### **Andy Yuen Receives Paul Kroegel Manager of the Year Award**

The National Wildlife Refuge System Awards, sponsored by the National Wildlife Refuge Association, honor outstanding accomplishments by refuge managers, refuge employees, volunteers and Friends groups. Recognizing the excellence of these individuals and groups not only highlights the dedication and devotion of those who support the Refuge System, but also raises awareness about the diversity of the National Wildlife Refuge System, the challenges it faces and innovative efforts across the country to meet those challenges.

This year's Paul Kroegel Manager of the Year was awarded to Andy Yuen, manager of the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Complex, "...for his conservation vision and ability to give his staff the space to learn, grow, and ultimately do great work." To learn more about Mr. Yuen, the NWRS awards and the other award recipients, visit the NWRA at <http://refugeassociation.org/people/awards/2014awards/>.

## **Send a Refuge System eCard**

The National Wildlife Refuge System has a new “eCard” feature, where you can send friends and family your sentiments, let them know more about the NWRS, or even wish them a happy Earth Day! Visit [www.fws.gov/refuges/eCards/index.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/eCards/index.html) and spread the word!

## **Pelican Island NWR Volunteer of the Year**

The staff of the Pelican Island NWR congratulate Doug Sutherland on his selection of this year's Outstanding Volunteer of the Year award.

Over the year, Doug has demonstrated a high level of availability and dependability, passion for the natural world, knowledge of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NWR System, and the Everglades Headwaters NWR Complex.

Doug has proven to be adaptable within our refuge complex as well. Whether it is working at Pelican Island NWR, Archie NWR, or Lake Wales Ridge NWR, he never passes up an opportunity to help our needs within the biological, maintenance, and visitor services programs.

Congratulations, Doug! And thank you for your willingness to donate your valuable time on your national wildlife refuge.

## **Pioneer Festival Photo Gallery**

The Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> birthday of Paul Kroegel, the refuge's first warden, in January. The festival also celebrated many historical aspects of life in the early days of Sebastian – the time when the Kroegel family moved to the area from Germany. You will find a gallery of photos taken at the festival here -

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwssoutheast/sets/72157639875420725/>, and a link to the gallery on the “Photos” page of our website.



President Teddy Roosevelt and  
PIPS President Steve Massey,  
Pelican Island NWR Pioneer Festival  
Photo: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

## **More Money, More Conservation**

By Jim Kurth

Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System

Congress funded the Refuge System at more than \$472 million for this fiscal year, 4 percent more than we received last year. And I can't help but think that's due in large measure to the support refuge Friends show year-in and year-out.

In the current fiscal climate, a 4 percent budget increase is a huge vote of confidence in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which welcomes more than 47 million visitors to wildlife refuges each year. We are able to welcome those visitors -- who make a measurable economic contribution to communities across the country -- because the nation's Refuge Friends help us at every turn.

In short, we can't do our work without their support.

To read the full article by Chief Kurth, visit

<http://firstrefuge.org/top-news/more-money-more-conservation/>.

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### **Observations of Pelican Island NWR**

by Nancy Soucy

One late morning I stopped by the refuge to see what was happening. Blue-winged teals paddled leisurely along the shore with a great blue heron looking on. Looking up into the blue spring sky, I saw a group of white birds flying over the horizon towards me. As they got closer, the huge wingspans with black wing tips revealed they were American white pelicans. The birds landed with a splash on the pond one by one, until all the birds were floating together. Immediately, the birds started working the surface, scooping prey into their beaks, working as a group to push fish towards one another.

This mode of feeding is unlike the brown pelican, which dives for food. A unique feature of the white pelican is that it may develop a bump on top of its beak, indicating the bird's interest in breeding, and is shed at the end of the breeding season.

The white pelican is among the largest native birds of North America. Wingspans of up to nine feet make it the 2<sup>nd</sup> longest, after the California condor. The white pelican nests in colonies on islands in Canada and the Northwest U.S. Some non-breeding birds may choose to remain in the South rather than migrate to nest. Florida is one of their adult wintering grounds, and we are among the lucky ones to have some who choose this area as "snowbirds."



Both brown and white pelican populations declined dramatically due to the plume trade in the late 1800's. While they have recovered somewhat, they also faced decline from pesticide exposure in the 1960's. Even today they continue to struggle. Entanglement in fishing lines can cause death, along with the deterioration of the health of the lagoon waters that provide their food. We all need to do our part to continue to protect these birds from further endangerment.

The date above your name is the month/year  
that your membership renewal is/was due.  
Thanks you!

### **Pelican Island Preservation Society Membership Application**

Please check one:

- ☐ Student (under 18) - \$5/year
- ☐ Individual - \$10/year
- ☐ Family (joint) - \$15/year
- ☐ Contributing - \$50/year
- ☐ Corporate/Business - \$100/year
- ☐ Supporting - \$250/year
- ☐ Life - \$500

Names(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*Send completed application and dues to:*

**PIPS Membership**  
**P.O. Box 781903, Sebastian, FL 32978-1903**

Or use your credit/debit card to make a  
donation via our website.