

The Pelican Flyer



April 2016

www.firstrefuge.org

Compiled and written by Carol Lynn Peterson and Tim Glover
This newsletter is available on our website at www.firstrefuge.org

From the President's Desk

Dear PIPS members,

I was recently at the Refuge on an overcast and windy day. In spite of the weather conditions, I was happy to see cars in the parking lot at the "Centennial Trail" with license plates from Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and Virginia. There were a few ducks on the retention pond and white pelicans on the island. I recommend your driving the "Jungle Trail" north from CR 510 to the Refuge, a true old-world Florida experience.

This year's Wildlife Festival went very smoothly, and the weather cooperated as well. I heard many positive remarks from vendors and exhibitors alike. At center stage was Joe Wiegand, our Teddy Roosevelt re-enactor who, as always, kept the proceedings going at a jovial pace. He, along with the D.J. Joe Farro, have both promised to return next year. We were honored to have the Mayor of Sebastian, the Honor/Color Guard of Sebastian, as well as Tim Timinsky and his mother Janice (great grandson and granddaughter of Paul Kroegel) attend our opening ceremonies.

I want to extend my thanks to the Festival Planning Committee for their long hours of work as well as to the City of Sebastian and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for their valuable assistance. Finally, I want to thank the many volunteers who all came together to make this one-day festival an enjoyable and educational experience for all.

Please plan to attend our April meeting, at which time we will announce our Board members, and marvel at Bob Montanaro's latest video presentation on Florida land crabs.

Don't forget to "like" us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Pelican-Island-Preservation-Society-185733424862382>.

Have a beautiful spring!

Sincerely,

Steve Massey



Photo: President Roosevelt & Steve Massey, by Lorna Thibeault

2016 PIPS Wildlife Festival a Smashing Success!

All our hard work and planning paid off this year; we actually turned a profit! With the monies earned from the Festival, PIPS has committed to supporting the monthly expense for the new wildlife cam to be installed at the PINWR in the near future. The wildlife cam is being provided for by the Sebastian River Area Chamber of Commerce, who received grant funding from the IRC visitors' tax revenues. It will be our great privilege to keep it running from month to month. To view four other "amazing wildlife cams" for yourself, check out the U.S. Dept. of the Interior's site www.instagram.com/USInterior.

Please enjoy the following summary of this year's Festival:

We had 69 non-food vendors and 3 sponsors manning booths at the Festival. In addition to our "regular" informational and arts & crafts vendors, we had several new artists, crafters, and sellers of environmentally friendly commercial products and services. A special treat this year was having Kroegel Produce and Butterfly Flowers Nursery in attendance. Disney volunteers organized and manned our Kids' Activities area, and Brevard County Parks and Recreation's Riverwalk Nature Center brought their popular Sea Turtle Crawl back to help kids understand how sea turtles live. The Treasure Coast Wildlife Center had their animal ambassadors on display, the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation booth featured a touch tank of live fish and invertebrates from the Indian River Lagoon, and Welaka National Fish Hatchery brought a tank containing several fish native to Florida. We hope that everyone comes back next year to contribute to our diverse environmental and wildlife offerings.

The PIPS headquarters tent was full of activity this year. We sold numerous hats, tee-shirts, windshirts, and hooded sweatshirts to eager buyers. We also sold 104 tickets for boat tours around Pelican Island provided by the River King pontoon boat from Capt. Hiram's. Many memberships were renewed and new ones started. Finally, we ran both a silent auction and raffle. Highlights of the 11 items in the raffle included a \$150 gift card from Publix in an insulated shopping tote; 15 day passes donated by Sebastian Inlet State Park in a rolling cooler filled with ice pack, beach towel and sunblock; a Centennial Teddy Bear donated by the Teddy Roosevelt Foundation; and an assortment of breakfast items in a gift basket plus a gift card for two meals from Cracker Barrel. Highlights of the 5 silent auction items included 4 day passes at Disney donated by Disney Vero Beach Resort; a gift certificate for a one-night stay at the Vero Beach Hotel and Spa, plus dinner for two at Cobalt Restaurant; and a collection of fishing items from our president Steve Massey, owner of the Wabasso Bait and Tackle Shack.

The Indian River County Historical Society, as well as the other historical and preservation organizations, had a great day interacting with the public. The Society's tent told the story of the "Feather Wars" and how one person, Paul Kroegel, made such a difference in the preservation of Florida's wildlife. The Old Vero Ice Age tent was replete with a collection of huge bones of mastodons and giant shark teeth. The communities of Roseland, Sebastian, and Fellsmere were also engaged all day sharing historical tales and wonderful old photographs with the public.

In the photo contest tent, festival-goers were able to watch a back screen display of all 114 entries received; this year's judge was Reinier Munguia. Winners received a total of \$655 in prize monies. The 2016 top winners are as follows:

Best in Show--Marc Szesny-Pumarada--"Turtle Trail"
Landscape (1st)--Chuck Palmer--"Evening at the Pier-Melbourne Beach"
Macro (1st)--David Sime--"Gulf Fritillary"
Wildlife (1st)--David Sime--"Palm Warbler"
Migratory (1st)--Lou Lower--"Mighty Kingfisher"

Photo contest entries may be viewed online at <http://piwfccontest.zenfolio.com>.



Left: President Roosevelt with Carolyn Bayless, president, Indian River County Historical Society. Photo: Ruth Stanbridge



Right: Pelican Island NWR Complex Leader Bill Miller and family. Photo: Carol Lynn Peterson



Left: Volunteer Susan Isom and Tim Brown, Treasure Coast Wildlife Center, checking out PIPS merchandise
Photo: Carol Lynn Peterson

Right: President Roosevelt and Nelson Fell (aka Rich Votapka) enjoying a cold drink
Photo: Vince Lamb



This year's sponsors and partners are too numerous to thank all at once, but we do want to give special recognition to a private donor, Mr. William Curran, who donated \$500!

Finally, we could not run our annual Festival without the untiring efforts of our volunteers. Our "regulars" helped with setup and breakdown, parking, merchandise sales, silent auction, raffle, membership sign-ups, photo tent, fishing booth, boat tickets, and boat tours. Other volunteers came from Vero Beach Disney Resort, Boys & Girls Club of Indian River County, and the Sebastian River High School ROTC Cadets.

Special thanks go to our Raffle/Silent Auction sub-committee of Susan King, Eileen Fretz, Gini Prasch, and Lorna Thibeault, who spent many hours seeking the wonderful donations we received in both categories and then presenting them to the public in decorated baskets.

The Festival Planning Committee consisting of Steve Massey; Lorna and Dick Thibeault; Carol Lynn and Sandy Peterson; Tim Glover; Liz Landrum; Eileen Fretz; Susan King; Gini Prasch; Vince Lamb; Patty Corapi; Ruth Stanbridge; and Debbie Avery are already meeting to plan an even better Wildlife Festival for 2017!

PIPS General Meeting

Please plan to attend our PIPS General Meeting on Monday, April 25th at 7 p.m. at the North Indian River County Library, 1001 Sebastian Blvd. in Sebastian. For more information, visit www.firstrefuge.org or call 772-202-0697.

The evening's presentation will be "Creepy Crawly Land Crabs of Florida--and Beyond" by Bob Montanaro, accomplished wildlife photographer. This latest production of his explores the role of the crab in mythology and popular culture, while presenting the life history of the Florida Ghost Crab and Great Atlantic Land Crab in an entertaining and informative format about these most unusual creatures. You can view some of Bob's work on his website at www.lunarcabin.com.

Our meeting this month is also our Annual Members' meeting, at which current PIPS members will be electing this year's Directors and the office of president and treasurer. Steve Massey has agreed to the nomination as president and Tim Glover as treasurer. The office of vice president is currently vacant, as David Cox resigned a few months ago, due to his many other commitments. In addition, Director Gini Prasch will not be running for re-election after many years of service on the PIPS Board. Debbie Avery likewise will not run for re-election due to demands of her current job. Both intend to remain active in the wildlife festival activities, and we thank them all for their dedication to PIPS.

Sandy Peterson has agreed to the nomination, and Susan King plans to continue her service on the PIPS Board. Sandy previously served on our Board and we are excited to have him return. There remain a few Board vacancies. If you are interested in helping out, let us know or attend the meeting, as nominations will be accepted from the floor.

Membership Renewal Reminder

April is the beginning of our membership renewal year; all memberships run April through March each year. Please see the address label on the back of this newsletter for the date your membership is/was due. Basic membership levels are \$10 for an individual and \$15 for a family. Please visit our website at www.firstrefuge.org for full membership details, a membership application, or to renew online using a credit or debit card. Dues and donations may also be mailed to PIPS at: Pelican Island Preservation Society, P.O. Box 781903, Sebastian, Florida 32978-1903.

Pelican Island Preservation Society
P.O. Box 781903
Sebastian, Florida 32978-1903

Environmental Happenings Worth Noting

- 1) 2016 marks the 100th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Act. You will find more information online at www.fws.gov/birds/index.php
- 2) The National Park Service turns 100 in August, 2016. A 43-minute film, narrated by Robert Redford, will be shown in 400 IMAX and giant-screen cinemas over the next several months. It features more than 30 parks and is designed to get people outdoors.
- 3) Visit www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-national-wildlife-refuge/ to see the readers' choice awards of the 10 best National Wildlife Refuges in the nation, of which there are 560. Ding Darling on Sanibel Island in FL made the list of the top five! Paul Tritaik (former Refuge Manager at PINWR) continues to be Ding Darling's Refuge Manager.
- 4) Florida's green sea turtles have been removed from the "endangered" list and reclassified as "threatened" under the Federal Endangered Species Act. 1,680 green turtles nested on the beaches of Indian River County in 2015. In the state of Florida, 37,341 green sea turtles created nests in 2015.

The PIPS newsletter is published in the months of January, April, June and October. Subscription is included with membership and delivered by e-mail only, unless requested otherwise, or no useable e-mail. Please contact us to notify of change of address or e-mail.

Board of Directors

Steve Massey, President
vacant, Vice President
Lorna Thibeault, Secretary
Tim Glover, Treasurer

vacant, Apr '17
Susan King, Apr '16
Gini Prasch, Apr '16
vacant, Apr '16

info@firstrefuge.org

772-202-0697

PIPS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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

Thank 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

Name(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.