

# The Pelican Flyer



**Pelican Island**  
PRESERVATION SOCIETY

April 2018

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

Compiled and written by Carol Lynn Peterson and Tim Glover  
This newsletter is available on our website at [www.firstrefuge.org/newsletterslibrary](http://www.firstrefuge.org/newsletterslibrary)

## From the President's Desk

Wow, it has been another year -- can you believe it? I hope everyone had a great Easter holiday. Plans are already in progress for the next Wildlife Festival. The last one was very successful -- thanks to everyone who participated with volunteering, and to those of you who attended.

Children's activities were a great hit. A special thanks to the festival committee who spends an entire year planning the festival. We also want to recognize our major sponsors who donate prizes, time, and money -- Florida Power & Light, Windsor, SeaWorld, and Capt. Hiram's. They allow us to have a great time every year.

I hope everyone was able to say enjoy and even visit with Teddy Roosevelt. He does a fantastic job informing the public about Pelican Island's history and the Refuge. We were very blessed by the attendance of Anne Michael, who through the hard work and generosity of her late husband Joe and family, allowed the Refuge to expand beyond Pelican Island itself.

Please plan to attend our Annual Meeting this month where we will elect our new Board members, who will continue to represent PIPS throughout the year.

Have a great summer!

*Steve Massey*

## PIPS Annual Meeting

The PIPS April meeting is our Annual Meeting and current PIPS members will be electing Directors and this year's Officers to our Board. The current slate of nominations is Steve Massey, President and Tim Glover, Treasurer. Vacancies remain on our Board so if you are interested in getting involved, let us know! The term for Directors is two years and you need to maintain a current membership.

Eileen Fretz and Sandy Peterson have been of great service on our Board but have decided not to run for election once again. Both plan to remain involved and continue to help in many ways, especially with the wildlife festival!

In addition to the few administrative chores, Laura Flynn will be our guest speaker at the meeting. Laura is a wetland scientist for Lewis Environmental Services and Coastal Resources Group Inc. and has worked at Pelican Island since 2005. She works with Robin Lewis, who was a key participant in the initial shoreline restoration efforts at Pelican Island proper in 2001. Laura has monitored the restoration efforts throughout this time and, most recently in 2017, implemented a small-scale oyster reef project near the island with the Refuge staff and numerous volunteers, including some PIPS members. "This project is the next phase of more than two decades of work to restore and preserve this important natural resource," said Flynn.

Laura's presentation will give a review of work that has been completed at Pelican Island proper and an update on the current status of the island. Pelican Island was originally about 5 acres and has eroded to less than 3 acres today, due to boat wakes and rising sea levels. If you are unable to attend our meeting, you may read more about the 2017 restoration work online at [www.firstrefuge.org/news](http://www.firstrefuge.org/news).

The PIPS meeting is Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 6pm at the North Indian River County Library, 1001 Sebastian Blvd. and everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. For more information, visit the PIPS website at [www.firstrefuge.org/calendar](http://www.firstrefuge.org/calendar) or call 772-202-0697.

April is also PIPS membership renewal month for all members and dues will be accepted at our meeting this month. Membership dues remain \$10/individual or \$15/family. Any and all donations are greatly appreciated and support our efforts for the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge. You may also increase your level of support for the Refuge by accepting our e-newsletter as an alternative to the printed version. We send the e-mail version only to members for whom we have a usable e-mail address. You may request a printed version if you prefer, but your preference for the electronic version of our newsletter saves us time and money. You may also download a copy of the print version of our newsletter on the "Newsletters/Library" page of our website at [www.firstrefuge.org/newsletterslibrary](http://www.firstrefuge.org/newsletterslibrary). And you will find more information about membership, and an online payment option for memberships/donations, on our website at [www.firstrefuge.org/membership-donation-information](http://www.firstrefuge.org/membership-donation-information).

### **2018 Pelican Island Wildlife Festival**

PIPS celebrated the 115<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge with our 26<sup>th</sup> annual Pelican Island Wildlife Festival in March. We hope you were able to join us for this fun and fabulous event once again! It was a gorgeous day but a bit on the windy side which, unfortunately, resulted in the cancellation of most of the boat tours to Pelican Island.



Teddy Roosevelt shows off baby alligator, Photo: Sandy Peterson

As usual, Joe Wiegand, aka President Theodore Roosevelt, joined us and helped host our event to celebrate the history of Pelican Island and the heritage of the Sebastian community. President Roosevelt enthusiastically teaches us about our local history and the issues that were threatening pelicans and other birds of the Lagoon a century ago. Many enjoyed chatting with the President and having their pictures taken as well.



Budding children artists created their fabulous gyotaku t-shirt designs and enjoyed the sea turtle obstacle course, learning about hazards these marine inhabitants face as they cruise our coastal waters, and make their way to local beaches for nesting. The beaches of the Archie Carr NWR are host to one of the largest loggerhead sea turtle nesting aggregations in the world, and the second largest nesting aggregation in the Western hemisphere for the green sea turtle.

gyotaku art drying in the breeze, Photo: Sandy Peterson

Congratulations to the winners of the Photography Contest. The entries were all very beautiful and can be viewed in a slideshow, as well a slideshow of photos from the overall festival, on our website here - [www.firstrefuge.org/pelican-island-wildlife-festival](http://www.firstrefuge.org/pelican-island-wildlife-festival). Below is a list of the winning entries in the Contest:

Best in Show – Linda Leonard, "Fishing in the Rain"  
Landscapes

First Place - Chuck Palmer, "Natural Patterns"  
Second Place - Susan Grube, "Blue Cypress Foggy Morning"  
Third Place - Chuck Palmer, "Her Secret path"

Macro

First Place - David Sime, "Dragonfly on Horsemint"  
Second Place - Jennifer Lanam, "Florida Sunshine"  
Third Place - Cheryl Howard, "Dragonfly"

Wildlife

First Place - David Sime, "Two for One"  
Second Place - Maria Heffernan, "Morning Catch"  
Third Place - Don Martin, "Home Building"



Presentation of Photo Contest Awards, Photo: Patty Corapi

In addition to the wind causing issues for the boat tours, the wildlife display was limited this year due to some logistical problems. The Treasure Coast Wildlife Center is always very generous with their efforts in sharing critters and birds for the public to view at our event. This year, one of their vehicles was disabled, and another in an accident shortly before the event. Therefore, they were not able to have their usual variety of birds on display. Tim Brown of the Center was able to join us for





Tim Brown with peregrine falcon, Photo: Sandy Peterson  
 some of whom have been supporting us for a number of years! We thank all of you for helping us educate the public about Pelican Island and the incredible historical importance of this Island to the community of Sebastian, the National Wildlife Refuge System, and the birds!

We have already begun initial planning for next year's festival. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup> and plan to join us once again, and bring all your friends! And it is never too early to let us know you'd like to get involved. There are many ways to help in the planning for our next festival, and many volunteers the day of the event are needed, as well. You will find more information about volunteering on the festival web page listed above.

### Featured Refuge Volunteer

Our featured Refuge volunteer this month is John Boucher. John has volunteered at several of the refuges in our area, including Pelican Island.

Raised in Delaware, John received Bachelor and Masters Degrees in Electrical Engineering, and joined Harris Control Systems in the 1980s. At Harris, he was an engineering executive responsible for designing and delivering energy control centers for worldwide electric power utilities.

For the past 15 years, John has been an active volunteer with Brevard and Indian River County wildlife, gardening and ecological organizations, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), maintaining trails and facilities for Merritt Island and Pelican Island NWRs, as well as turtle scouting at the Archie Carr NWR. John is also involved in community outreach, such as tram tours at PINWR and turtle talks to schools and civic organizations. He conducted sea turtle hatching surveys for Canaveral National Seashore and will now be doing turtle nesting surveys for the Carr Refuge. His Merritt Island "Thursday Crew" team has received volunteer-of-the-year awards from Merritt Island NWR, NASA and Southeast Region of the USFWS. He retired from the board of the Friends of the Carr Refuge and is now their volunteer co-coordinator.

Congratulations and thanks, John, for your efforts and service on behalf of all our local refuges!

### Sea Turtle Nesting Season Begins

The annual sea turtle nesting season began in our area last month and is underway now through the summer months. You may donate to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to help fund sea turtle research and conservation efforts, and for a donation of \$5 or more, you will receive a sea turtles decal. Current year decals are available in local county tax offices, and for those who would like to collect decals from prior years, visit the FWC website at <http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/managed/sea-turtles>. Lots of additional information may be found on the FWC site about sea turtles, including where to find turtle nesting walks and how not to disturb turtles during their nesting season. Our sister organization, the Friends of the Carr Refuge, conducts nighttime sea turtle nesting walks as well, beginning in June. For more information, visit them at [www.carrrefuge.org](http://www.carrrefuge.org).

his usual educational demonstrations at Center Stage with critters, including a gopher tortoise, alligator, red-tailed hawk, barred owl, and peregrine falcon.

One of the good news/bad news features of our event is Tim tries to have a rehabilitated brown pelican available to release back to the Lagoon during our event. The good news is that they didn't have an injured pelican available this year. But the bad news is that we didn't get to share in that joy and excitement of returning a pelican to the wild.

Even though this was our 26<sup>th</sup> year hosting the Pelican Island Wildlife Festival, not much about it was "routine" and its success was due to all the efforts of the many volunteers who work throughout the year organizing, and the many more who help out the day of the event! And, of course, it wouldn't be a success without our generous sponsors,



Sea Turtle Obstacle Course, Photo: Sandy Peterson



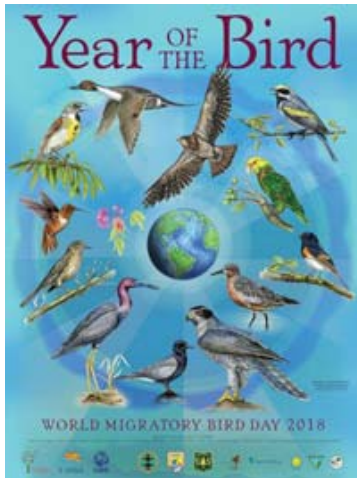
John Boucher giving sea turtle talk

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

**2018 Year of the Bird**

In 1918 Congress passed the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to protect birds from wanton killing. To celebrate the centennial, National Geographic is partnering with the National Audubon Society, BirdLife International, and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology to declare 2018 the Year of the Bird. NG has produced a web page entitled "The Epic Journeys of Migratory Birds," which as you would imagine includes many stunning photos of birds, some in large migrating congregations. The page includes a wealth of information about migration and how birds make their epic journeys. "We're learning more about what they endure as they fly thousands of miles—and how humans and climate change are making it tougher for them."

The Environment for the Americas celebrates the 25th anniversary of their International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) as well, by expanding the reach of its keystone education program in joining with new partners across the globe. To create a single event, IMBD becomes World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD). "This year, we will unify our voices for bird conservation and through the conservation theme, Year of the Bird, share ways that you can help to protect birds 365 days of the year." To learn more visit the new WMBD website at [www.migratorybirdday.org](http://www.migratorybirdday.org).



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, Apr '18  
vacant, Vice President, Apr '18  
vacant, Secretary, Apr '18  
Tim Glover, Treasurer, Apr '18

Eileen Fretz, Apr '18  
Sandy Peterson, Apr '18  
Eric Swenson, Apr '19

[info@firstrefuge.org](mailto:info@firstrefuge.org)

772-202-0697

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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.