

# The Pelican Flyer



January 2015

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

## From the President's Desk

By Steve Massey

Dear Reader,

While visiting the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge one weekend this month, I was pleased to see about twenty visitors. Some were on the Centennial Trail, some were at the kiosk reading pertinent information about the Refuge, and others were walking the Joe Michael Trail. I met a couple from South Carolina who were looking for river otters; even though they had no sightings, they said they now had a perfect reason to return to this beautiful natural setting. I also gave them background on Paul Kroegel and his connection to Pelican Island, including defending the nesting birds from the plume hunters from up North! They were interested to know that our Refuge has such a fascinating history.

There were only a few birds on Pelican Island, as nesting season is just now getting underway. I couldn't help but think about Joe Michael and of others whose efforts made it possible for us to enjoy this natural setting in all its pristine beauty. As a Friends' group of PINWR, PIPS will be having their annual Wildlife Festival on Saturday, March 14th, 2015 at Riverview Park in Sebastian to raise funds in support of the Refuge and its needs. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Lorna Thibeault at [lmtebo@msn.com](mailto:lmtebo@msn.com). Please remember to attend our January meeting at the North County Library in Sebastian on Monday, January 26th, when Kim and John Massung of Indian River by Air will take us on an aerial journey of Indian River County and its surroundings. Hope to see you at our spring festival as well as on the 26th.

## Indian River by Air

We are pleased to share some amazing aerial photography with you at our upcoming meeting on Monday, January 26th at the North County Library, 1001 Sebastian Blvd., in Sebastian at 7 p.m. Kim and John Massung of Indian River by Air have assembled a series of photos to share in a slideshow showcasing the beauty of our region as seen from above. John Massung of Sebastian learned to fly a powered parachute six years ago. He was so enthralled with the beauty of the scenes below that he started taking photographs of what he viewed, and the rest is history. His family started a website [www.indianriverbyair.com](http://www.indianriverbyair.com) to celebrate the natural beauty of Indian River County. Photographs are posted daily of local scenery and wildlife and provide a unique view of the special region in which we live. Please join us for this unusual viewing experience. Admission is free, and light refreshments will be served.

## **New York Artist Jennifer Miller Wins 2014 Federal Duck Stamp Contest**

---

Jennifer Miller, of Olean, NY, won the 2014 Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest. Miller's acrylic painting of a pair of ruddy ducks will be made into the 2015-2016 Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, or Duck Stamp, which goes on sale in late June 2015.

The Federal Duck Stamp sells for \$15 and raises about \$25 million each year to provide critical funds to conserve and protect wetland habitats in the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Ron Louque of Charlottesville, VA, placed second with his acrylic painting of a red-breasted merganser. Frank Mittelstadt of Beaver Dam, WI, took third place with his acrylic painting of a Canada goose.



More than 6.5 million acres of waterfowl habitat have been protected by funds provided through the purchase of Duck Stamps. "The Duck Stamp is one of this nation's most successful conservation efforts," said Jerome Ford, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Assistant Director for Migratory Birds.

"Buying a Duck Stamp is the simplest way to help save our nation's disappearing wetlands and ensure ducks, geese and thousands of other species of birds and other wildlife don't lose their homes."

Waterfowl hunters age 16 and older are required to purchase and carry the current Duck Stamp. Conservationists, stamp collectors and others also may purchase the stamp in support of habitat conservation. A current federal Duck Stamp can be used for free admission to any national wildlife refuge open to the public.

Ninety-eight percent of the proceeds from sale of the \$15 Duck Stamp goes to the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, which supports the purchase of migratory bird habitat for inclusion into the National Wildlife Refuge System. You can contribute to conservation by buying Federal Duck Stamps at many national wildlife refuges, the U.S. Postal Service or online at [www.fws.gov/duckstamps/stamps.htm](http://www.fws.gov/duckstamps/stamps.htm).

## **Parting Remarks from Refuge Manager Charlie Pelizza**

---

The year 2014 will be known as the year of transitions for the Pelican Island staff. We began the year with an almost full staff of nine permanent, two temporary, and one contract employee, with a single maintenance worker vacancy. During the summer, our Deputy Project Leader Karen Hillier retired early to spend more time with family. Kristen Kneifl, Archie Carr Refuge Manager, moved on in her career, accepting a senior biologist position with the National Park Service at Canaveral National Seashore. Clay Hamilton finished his law enforcement training program and moved on to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as a Refuge Officer/Service Pilot. This past fall, our Biological Technician, Andrew "Maury" Eastwick, took a big step in his career by accepting his first permanent assignment as a Biologist at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. The contract for

Dennis David, who had been working with us on Everglades Headwaters, also expired. We have yet to fill our maintenance position.

Kevin Lowry, our Visitor Services Manager, has accepted a position in our Regional Office within the Visitor Services Program in Georgia; he will be working with the Service's Urban Initiative, connecting those who live in urban settings with the outdoors. And, lastly, I will be leaving after January 1st for a position in the Regional Office in Portland, Oregon. I've accepted an Assistant Refuge Supervisor position assigned to the Hawaii and Pacific Island complex, but stationed in Portland. While I am looking forward to this new challenge and adventure, I leave



Ducks and wading birds at Pelican Island NWR: Sandy Peterson  
with mixed feelings. My time spent here has marked the pinnacle of my career--from establishing a new Refuge, to constructing an office/maintenance facility on the Refuge, to hiring and increasing the Refuge staff, to working with all of the dedicated Friends and Volunteers of the Refuges. All of these experiences have truly been a blessing.

One might ask what all of these staff changes might mean for future staffing at Pelican Island. We are high on the list of regional priorities and most of our open positions are in various stages of being filled. Two selections are pending at the office: one for Bio Tech, and the other for the Vice Archie Carr Manager. By springtime, we should have a full complement of staff. I wish you all the best and look forward to keeping up with all that is occurring at Pelican Island Refuge and the rest of the stations within the Complex.



Butterfly Garden, Pelican Island NWR: Sandy Peterson

Sincerely,  
Charlie Pelizza  
Refuge Manager, Pelican Island NWR



Pelican Island Preservation Society  
P.O. Box 781903  
Sebastian, Florida 32978-1903  
772-202-0697  
info@firstrefuge.org

PIPS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

### Wildlife Festival Photo Contest

This year's Pelican Island Wildlife Festival in March will once again include a photo contest. Photography enthusiasts are encouraged to enter in the categories of Wildlife, Landscape, and Macro. Deadline for entry is March 1st. Entry fee is \$25 per photographer for up to three images.

See <http://goo.gl/u8kabA> for details on how to enter online. CASH prizes will be awarded.

### Membership Renewal

April, 2015 is the beginning of our membership renewal year. Basic membership levels are \$10 for an individual and \$15 for a family. Please visit our website at [www.firstrefuge.org](http://www.firstrefuge.org) for full membership details, a membership application, or to renew online using a credit or debit card. Dues or donations may also be mailed to PIPS at the address above. Thanks for the continued support!



Blue-winged Teal at Pelican Island NWR: Sandy Peterson

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.