

# The Pelican Flyer



June 2015

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

Compiled and written by Tim Glover

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## From the President's Desk

Dear All,

It is hard to believe that we are almost half way through the year. It makes for a hot time for all of us. I noted while visiting Pelican Island recently, that the pelicans were not present. However there were numerous other birds. All of them were very active trying to catch fish for themselves and their families. I had taken Jungle Trail north to get there, which by the way, remains a true jungle experience. It has changed little over the years, since I was a young boy.

I want to let you know, and personally thank Lorna Thibeault, Debbie Avery and Susan King for joining us and welcome them as new members to the Board of Directors. They join the rest of us—Steve Massey, David Cox, Tim Glover and Gini Prasch. We all plan to work hard for you to continue educating the public about Pelican Island and the refuge, as well as supporting the refuge with special needs requests, as we have over the last decade.

Reminder, it is turtle nesting season again. Archie Carr NWR is our neighbor, and has 20 miles of beach and is the most significant area for loggerhead sea turtle nesting in this part of the world. It also hosts other turtles wanting to nest this time of the year. Please plan to take your families and witness this amazing event by signing up for guided turtle walks at [www.floridastateparks.org/park-events/sebastian-inlet](http://www.floridastateparks.org/park-events/sebastian-inlet) or call 772-388-2750. Also please bring your families to visit Pelican Island and the refuge, as I did.

PIPS will be participating in the Sebastian's July 4th Parade, and we look forward to seeing you there.

Next year's Pelican Island Wildlife Festival will be March 12th, 2016 at Riverview Park in Sebastian. Please put it on your calendars—we look forward to your attending the festival. Better yet, we would love to have you volunteer at the event. It's not too early to let us know that you would like to help out, either on the day of, or with the planning for our event. Look for contact information on the back of this newsletter.

Lastly, we hope you can attend our General Meeting which is June 22nd at the Sebastian Library at 7pm. The new Pelican Island NWR Project Leader/Manager Bill Miller will be there to meet all of you—he started his new job at the refuge as of June 1st. Thanks for all of your continued support, and see you at the meeting.

Steve Massey, President

## **PIPS General Meeting, Monday, June 22nd**

The new Project Leader/Manager of the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge will be our guest at our June General Meeting on June 22nd. Bill Miller was recently serving as a biologist with the US Fish & Wildlife Services office in Vero Beach, and was selected as the newest Manager of the refuge, effective June 1st. Bill will join us at our meeting this month to introduce himself and give a report on the status of the refuge and talk about the plans for future Improvements. The meeting will be Monday, June 22nd, 7 pm at the North Indian River County Library, 1001 Sebastian Blvd. in Sebastian. The program is free and everyone is welcome to attend.

If you have been to the refuge recently, you may have noticed one of the latest changes is the improvement of Wildlife Way. This access road has been improved and straightened so that it now terminates at Jungle Trail, directly across from the parking lot for Centennial Trail. This project has been in the works for some time, but surveys for the endangered beach mouse had to be completed prior to the start of work. The improvement to the road is also in preparation for a new visitor contact station/office which will be located just off A1A. The new facility will house the refuge Visitor Services employee when that job is filled, and provide space for refuge volunteers to greet the public, to provide orientation and information to refuge visitors. This is not the future Visitors' Center that the refuge has envisioned, but will provide that type of service until funding can be acquired to build a formal Visitors' Center in the future. PIPS is in the early stages of planning for a major fundraising campaign for the project. If you have any expertise in this type of project or would like to make a donation, please contact us!

## **Building Community Through a Refuge**

By Dan Ashe, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

*Friends NewsWire*, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, June 5, 2015—Throughout the National Wildlife Refuge System, our visitor services folks are engaging nearby communities and helping them build their connections to nature by answering their concerns and meeting their needs.

Unless we act, many of today's children will have few opportunities to experience nature. We have become a more diverse, more urban nation, and many kids don't get a chance, like I did, to wander fields breathing in pristine air, to turn over rocks in creeks and find out what was hiding out there, to watch a bird of prey swoop down on a river and grab a fish with its talons.

But visitor services folks are working tirelessly to find programs that do allow young people to connect with nature....

Since I took this job, I have emphasized that priorities are making the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service relevant in people's lives and ensuring that all Americans really see that what we do matters in their lives. We can't afford to allow millions of kids to continue growing up with little understanding of the personal stake they have in healthy wildlife and ecosystems. A world without a conservation ethic is not a world friendly to humanity.

## **Membership Renewal Reminder**

A quick reminder that April is the membership renewal month for all PIPS members. Please see the membership form on the back of this newsletter, or see the "Get Involved" menu on our website at [www.firstrefuge.org](http://www.firstrefuge.org), for more information. Membership dues can be paid at our upcoming meeting this month, mailed to the address on the back, or paid with credit or debit card through our website. If you have any questions, send us an e-mail or call the number on the back page. Thanks for your support of PIPS and the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge!

## A Look Back ... Lawrence Wineland

Larry Wineland was the first man since Paul Kroegel to serve full-time at Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge in Florida, the nation's first refuge. He worked as biological technician, law enforcement officer, public affairs specialist and environmental educator. But when asked if he needed more help, he answered, "Nope, [my wife] Edith and I can usually handle it."

The Winelands lived near Sebastian, FL, with five beagles, pigeon roosts, rabbit hutches and a free-roaming gaggle of geese. Wineland was a commercial fisherman before he came to work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1947, working at White River Refuge, AR; St. Marks Refuge, FL, Lacassine Refuge, LA, and Blackbeard Island Refuge, GA, before coming to Pelican Island in 1964, where he stayed until his retirement in 1980.

Wineland came to Pelican Island Refuge soon after a controversial effort by the state of Florida to encourage housing developments across from the island. Wineland excelled at building relationships with the community and developing environmental education programs before EE was a discipline. "When people talk about conservation and wildlife preservation at a local level, they inevitably talk about Larry Wineland," according to a 1977 newspaper article about an award he received from the Woodmen of the World Life Insurance Society.

Teacher Laura Matheson told that award dinner audience that "Larry Wineland creates the largest classroom you've ever imagined," eventually putting fourth-graders in a boat to see Pelican Island. "The schoolchildren get wet and they get muddy, but they learn," said Wineland, who insisted that the youngsters not feed the pelicans. "If I brought a sack of fish out here and gave it to the birds, before I hopped into my boat they would be on relief. And the next time I came back they could be lined up waiting for a government handout."

After Wineland retired, there was a 12-year gap before Paul Tritaik became the third full-time employee at Pelican Island Refuge. Tritaik has talked to people who remember those grade-school field trips. "I was the beneficiary of seeing some of his students as adults, and it did make an impression on them as he'd hoped." It was Wineland's passion, says Tritaik, to educate children so when they became adults, they would make informed decisions.

At that award dinner, friend and fellow environmentalist Richard Thomas said, "Larry Wineland is a darn good egg that hatched into a very rare bird."

*Friends NewsWire*, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,  
June 5 2015



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

**20 Most-Visited Refuges (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)**

National wildlife refuges attracted almost 47 million visitors in fiscal year 2014. According to the Refuge Annual Performance Plan, here are the 20 most-visited refuges:

- 1 – Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon
- 2 – Havasu National Wildlife Refuge, California/Arizona
- 3 – Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois
- 4 – Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Oklahoma
- 5 – Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, North Carolina
- 6 – Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia
- 7 – Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, Florida
- 8 – Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska
- 9 – Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, Illinois
- 10 – J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge, Florida
- 11 – Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, Alabama
- 12 – Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, California
- 13 – National Elk National Wildlife Refuge, Wyoming
- 14 – Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon
- 15 – Horicon National Wildlife Refuge, Wisconsin
- 16 – Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Massachusetts
- 17 – Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge, Hawaii
- 18 – Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge, Hawaii
- 19 – Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, Georgia
- 20 – Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge, Tennessee

How does the Pelican Island NWR get on the “top 20” list? With your help—please volunteer today!

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 usable e-mail. Please contact us to notify of change of address or e-mail.

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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

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*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.