



INDIAN RIVER LAND TRUST

Conserving Land and Water

Winter 2009

LANDMARKS

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Photos*



...and much more!



Open Spaces. Special Places.

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Executive Director

Ralph Monticello
Land Protection Manager

Ginny Blossom
Director of Marketing
and Philanthropy

Dana McDougall
Administrative Assistant

From the Director



Welcome to 2009! And welcome to our outstanding new Board of Directors and Advisory Board members as they begin what is certain to be an important year for conservation in Indian River County.

2009 is a year of great opportunity for the Indian River Land Trust, with opportunities for our members to immerse themselves in the special natural places of this unique and beautiful county, opportunities to make an impact on the conservation of land and water in our area, and opportunities to preserve key conservation properties as we continue to prioritize the natural lands remaining in our county.

With a toolbox of well positioned programs in place, the Indian River Land Trust is available to act quickly as potential projects become available. We are invigorated and enthusiastic about the year ahead, and we look forward to seeing you all out on the land. Thank you for your dedication, interest and support.

— Ken Grudens
Executive Director

Water Quality Is Topic Of Presentation To JI Garden Club

On Wednesday, January 7, 2009, Indian River Land Trust Executive Director, Ken Grudens, was invited to speak to the members of the John's Island Garden Club regarding water conservation and quality issues as they relate to Indian River County. Community threats to water quality and availability are topics of significant concern in our area, especially as they relate to population growth, development, and irrigation of parks and other recreational areas. Speaking to an audience of more than thirty women, Ken discussed possible threats to maintaining the level of our aquifers, intrusion of salt from the ocean into our drinking water, and the long term effects that such threats could have on our quality of life. He spoke specifically about water usage within John's Island and the community's proactive efforts to address the issue of water conservation on a community level, especially

as it relates to recreational activities at the club. The Indian River Land Trust would like to thank Carole Parks and the John's Island Garden Club for inviting Ken to speak on this subject.



Land Protection Update

by Ralph Monticello, IRLT Land Protection Manager

Protecting Open Space and Agriculture in Florida

If you take a road trip across Florida you might notice a pattern of land use skewed toward urban conversion. In spite of the current economic decline, this pattern of development is expected to continue. Florida can expect to lose over a million acres of land to suburban development in the next ten years.



When development spreads to an isolated rural landscape it fragments and degrades the quality and character of Florida's natural landscape and agricultural lands. It is very likely that energy resource costs will accelerate in the future and this could create the need for south and central Florida to once again be a winter food production area for the eastern region of our country. Not only does the prevailing development pattern threaten the state's ability to meet the needs of its citizens through the adequate delivery of services, it also interrupts the natural hydrological and biological functions that support both agriculture and healthy ecosystems.

The Indian River Land Trust has worked to support both the implementation and funding of the Florida Rural & Family Lands Protection Program (RFLPP). This program, funded under the reauthorized Florida Forever program, is much different from its predecessor programs of the last two decades. While Florida Forever has usually focused on protecting and preserving natural communities and providing nature-based recreational opportunities, the RFLPP focuses on maintaining the integrity and function of working agricultural landscapes.

The Rural & Family Lands Protection Program is focused on acquiring development



Gail Cohen

rights using permanent easements from qualified and willing agricultural land owners. After its establishment in 2001, this program was finally funded in 2008 from a portion of Florida Forever funds. It will protect agricultural lands in the path of potential

development so that Florida will continue to maintain a viable agricultural sector, while allowing its citizens the opportunity to enjoy rural landscapes and open space.

In the past few months the Indian River Land Trust has assisted two agricultural land owners in Indian River County to develop applications for this land protection program. IRLT staff has worked closely with the owners of the 800-acre Ox Creek Ranch north of Blue Cypress Lake and the Hogan Groves Family Farm off Tripson Trail to submit applications to this vital agricultural conservation program. A review process for the new grant program has been established and, if the program is kept intact by the Florida Legislature, the ranches and farms selected will be announced in early 2009.



Florida Passes Amendment #4

In November, the Florida Conservation Land Amendment #4 was approved by 68.4% of voters in the state. This constitutional amendment, which required a 60% margin to pass, will provide property tax exemptions for land placed in perpetual conservation easements beginning in 2010. It also requires the State Legislature to draft a law allowing land being used for conservation, but which hasn't been permanently set aside, to be taxed according to its conservation use.

By making it easier for private landowners to set aside their land for conservation, Amendment #4 will complement the Indian River Land Trust's work in preserving and protecting our county's natural places.

Explore, Experience and Educate: Outings and Activities for IRLT Members

Explore: What better way to build a greater appreciation of the landscape that surrounds us than by touring it with an experienced conservation guide?

Members of the Indian River Land Trust will have that opportunity through our schedule of member outings to a variety of places of interest in our beautiful and diverse county.

Experience:

All tours are *free of charge* and open to members of the Indian River Land Trust. RSVPs are requested one week prior to the scheduled outing, though space is limited and reservations will be taken on a first come, first served basis. For more details about any of the outings listed or to RSVP, feel free to contact the Indian River Land Trust office directly at 772-794-0701 or visit our web site at www.irlt.org.



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Walking Tour of Fort Drum Marsh
Conservation Area



SATURDAY, MARCH 7
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Annual Members Event
Talk, Tour and Tasting at the Florida
family owned and operated Schacht
Groves (invitations will be mailed to
members in February)



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Walking and Buggy Tour
of Padgett Creek Ranch

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Walking Tour of Treasure
Hammock Ranch

SATURDAY, MAY 9
Time TBD

Full Moon River Tour of
Indian River Waterways

SATURDAY, JUNE 13
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Morning Boat Tour of
Blue Cypress Lake



Special Thanks to
O'Haire, Kmetz, Nuttall, Elwell
& Co. CPAs for sponsoring our
January outing to North
Sebastian Conservation Area.

Join us out on the land as our Land Protection Manager, Ralph Monticello, and Executive Director, Ken Grudens lead tours of the native landscape of Indian River County.



Educate:

Noted Environmentalist Lecture Series at ELC

IRLT and the Environmental Learning Center have partnered to present a series of lectures on topics of special interest to those with a passion for our local environment. Members of either organization receive discounts to attend (lectures are \$25/member or \$30/non-member). All lectures are accompanied by a selection of wines and locally grown produce. To make reservations to any of the following, please contact ELC directly at 772.589.5050. For details on speakers, visit www.irlt.org.

February 4
4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

MARINE MAMMALS

Dr. Juli Goldstein and Stephen McCullough, both associated with Harbor Branch, will discuss the dynamics of the Indian River Lagoon and current research on our marine mammals.

March 4
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

EAT LOCAL

Participate in a round table with local growers, farmers and ranchers as they discuss the differences between “sustainable” and “industrial” agriculture, and how we can support agriculture as local consumers.

April 1
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

BEACH QUEST

Dr. Blair Witherington, Research Scientist for the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission and co-author of Florida's Living Beaches, will explore the wonderful and often mysterious treasures that can be found on an everyday beach walk.

May 6
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

THE COASTAL PLAIN

Dr. Bruce Means, President and Executive Director of Coast Plains Institute and Land Conservancy, will present a photographic exhibition of plants and animals indigenous to the oft-overlooked southeastern US coastal plain.

End of Year Appeal Meets its Match!

The Indian River Land Trust is proud to announce the successful completion of our first ever End-of-Year Appeal. Thanks to all who contributed to this important funding request, we were able to meet and exceed the \$15,000 challenge offered to us by one of our generous donors. The full \$15,000 in matching funds was transferred to us in December thanks to all

of you who responded to our appeal for support of the ongoing programs and activities of the Indian River Land Trust. We are grateful for the participation of all of you who gave so generously to this appeal, and have been humbled by the extraordinary surprises along the way.

Thank you! The Board and Staff of IRLT.

New Board Member Highlights:

The Indian River Land Trust welcomes the following new board members to the 2009 Board of Directors: *(For more complete bios on these and our other board and advisory board members, please visit our web site at www.irlt.org)*



Karen Abell

Karen, an associate with Charlotte Terry Real Estate, and her husband, Vero Beach Mayor Sabe Abell, moved to Old Riomar from Vermont in 1999. They have three children and two grandchildren. In addition to her position on the board of the Indian River Land Trust, Karen is a member of the board of McKee Botanical Garden.



Louis Schacht

A third generation Indian River citrus grower, Louis is an owner/operator of Schacht Groves in Vero Beach. He is a graduate of UNC/Chapel Hill and is married to Kelly Brown. In addition to his commitment to the Indian River Land Trust, Louis volunteers for St. Francis Manor, the Heritage Center, Habitat for Humanity and the Education Foundation of Indian River County. His interests include golf, travel, backpacking, and Tar Heel sports.



Edward N. Dayton

Ned and his wife, Sherry Ann, are both dedicated to the natural world and to philanthropy. A native of Minnesota where the family business has been based for generations, Ned has been a recognized and active volunteer both in his home state and in Vero Beach.

Among his list of activities, he is a member of the President's Conservation Council of The Nature Conservancy, is a long time board member of the Minnesota Zoo, and is on the board of Riverside Theatre in addition to his active role at the Indian River Land Trust.



Georgia Welles

Georgia is a resident of Windsor and of Bowling Green, Ohio. In addition to her position on the Board of Directors of the Indian River Land Trust, Georgia is a Director of the Board of The Nature Conservancy, is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Vero Beach Museum of Art, is Vice President of the Cricket Island Foundation and is an active contributor to the arts in Ohio and a former member of the Ohio Arts Council. She is former member of the board of the National Association of Independent Schools and former Chairman of the NAIS National Trustee Committee. A native of Illinois who attended Vassar College, Georgia is an avid outdoorswoman who enjoys fly fishing and spending time with her five children and fourteen grandchildren.



Kelly P. Kite, Jr.

Kelly is a fourth generation Managing Director of the family business, Kite Properties, LLC, a hospitality investment and development company based in Vero Beach. He is a graduate of the University of Florida and of New York Law School. An avid outdoorsman,

Kelly is a frequent volunteer with the Indian River Chapter of Habitat for Humanity in addition to being a Director of the Indian River Land Trust.



Grant Withers

An avid tennis player and energetic adventurer, Grant is an outdoorsman at heart having been raised in the woods and waters of rural Pennsylvania. He is an active member of the Grand Harbor Audubon Society, where he serves on the board. After retiring as a corporate executive of human resources with GTE, Grant made his full time home in Vero Beach in 2000. Prior to moving to Florida, he was a member of the board of the Aspetuck Land Trust (Fairfield County, Connecticut) where he served a term as president.

Land Water Wildlife: A Celebration to Remember



Under a glorious full moon and a clear evening sky, the Indian River Land Trust held its first Land Water Wildlife: A Celebration of Conservation benefit on Thursday, November 13 at the beautiful Rock City Gardens. Guests mingled through three pavilions, enjoying an array of food from local farmers of Indian River County. One of the unique surprises was held by the campfire, where guests were encouraged to toast marshmallows for their own homemade s'mores.

Thanks to all who supported this perfect evening, whether as a sponsor, partygoer or volunteer. We look forward to another spectacular event next fall! Mark your calendars now for Thursday, November 12, 2009.

If you are interested in viewing the Local Growers Guide that was compiled for this event, please feel free to visit www.irlt.org.



Ginny Blossom, CFRE, Becomes President of Non-Profit Association

Congratulations to Ginny Blossom, the Director of Marketing and Philanthropy for the Indian River Land Trust, for being granted the professional CFRE designation. CFRE (Certified Fund Raising Executive) is a distinctive honor, recognizing those professionals in the fund development field who have exhibited expertise, dedication, and

the highest ethical standards through their work in the non-profit arena. With her CFRE, Ginny joins more than 5,000 professionals throughout the world sharing this distinction, which will serve her well as she takes on the role of President of the Association of Fundraising Professionals/Indian River chapter this year.

SAVE THE DATE!

Annual Membership Event to Offer Insight on Citrus Industry

- When: Saturday, March 7, 2009
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- Where: Schacht Groves, Vero Beach
- What: Private walking tour of working Indian River County grove
Guided tours of original packing house
Citrus tasting and seminar with local growers
Delicious brunch under a native oak hammock
- Who: IRLT members and their guests
- Cost: Free of charge to members; \$20 per guest



Schacht Groves, Vero Beach

Please join us for this unique opportunity to learn about the Indian River County citrus industry from those working in its groves. Learn firsthand about the challenges and rewards of the industry, while touring a privately owned and operated family citrus grove.

We invite you to call for more information or to RSVP. Invitation to follow.



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We would like to thank

Mr. & Mrs. Henry G. Stifel

for sponsoring this newsletter.



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