



# Friends Matter

A Quarterly Newsletter

Fall 2013

Page 1

Breaking News!



Page 2

A Fun and Busy Fall



Page 3

Get Your Goose On!



Page 4

President's Letter, Calendar of Upcoming Activities. Volunteer and Contact Information



## Breaking News!

You're no doubt well aware of the extreme challenge presented by the on-going erosion of the beach on Egmont Key; a challenge so extreme that, without intervention, the island is expected to breach and wash away in its entirety within several years. Save Egmont Key, an alliance of multiple interested non-profit organizations and local businesses, was formed several years ago and has served as the leading proponents of saving the island through beach nourishment. Thankfully, the beach nourishment that Save Egmont Key has been seeking is now going to happen!

A Memorandum of Agreement between the US Fish & Wildlife (owner of Egmont Key) and the Army Corps of Engineers (supplier of sand) has been signed and delivered. Because of budgetary restrictions, the timeline for sand placement that will prevent the island from washing away is sometime in the summer 2014.

Planning is currently in process to help avoid significant impacts to nesting sea turtles and birds as the island is nourished. While it would have been preferable to do the nourishment this winter, budget considerations forced it into the summer. Regardless, this is great news since the alternative was to possibly lose this historically rich island with essential habitat for sea birds, gopher tortoises, and sea turtles to the same forces that had us lose Passage Key NWR.



# It was a Really, Really Fun and Busy Fall for Friends' Members and Volunteers

Friends volunteers, including Jim Igler, Dave Kandz, and Lynn Sauer, and FWS staff unload new buoys to replace existing buoys at Egmont Key. Seems the water was too rough for the old buoys, which spent more time on their sides than sticking up.



Friends' fall public outreach program at the Guy Harvey Outpost focused on birds of prey. Gabe Vargo's discussion of the birds and their habits was followed with an up close and personal viewing as Boyd Hill volunteers circled the room with several species of owls and hawks.



Directly above and below: Friends on field trip to Cedar Key and Lower Suwanee NWR in October...the upcoming trip to Ding Darling is full--names are being taken for a wait list. Be sure to watch for notices on the next field trip scheduled for fall.



Joyce Galiardo accepts recognition from former TBNWR Refuge Manager Gisela Chapa for her outstanding leadership of the FWS Bird Stewarding program on Egmont Key.



## Get Your Goose On!

*at a National Wildlife Refuge*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing Friends' organizations across the country with an opportunity to sell special rally towels in support of an educational and outreach program launched in the summer through its **Get Your Goose On!** campaign. The campaign is designed to teach the public, particularly youth, about the Refuge System and encourage them to enjoy the many outdoor recreational opportunities refuges have to offer. (Our Friends group currently supports the education goals of FWS with our in school programs, field trips to Weedon and Ft DeSoto for 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> graders, WildNites speakers, and member field trips.)

Last year, the Service printed and distributed hundreds of **Get Your Goose On** towels to refuge staff around the country – to much fanfare. USFWS received over a thousand photos and videos from folks proudly posing with the towels. It has since created a video to promote the campaign, and is launching special **Get Your Goose On!** social media accounts to spread the word.

Click on the link below to see a great video, flicker photo pages, and other social media sites that spread the word:  
<http://www.fws.gov/getyourgooseon/aboutGYGO.php>.

We're excited and pleased to announce that your Friends' group has just received its first shipment of the quirky little towels in support of the **Get Your Goose On!** campaign. The towels are 26 x 16". The price of each towel is only \$10 for Friends' members, \$12 for non-members.

To reserve your towel simply email [Friends@TampaBayRefuges.org](mailto:Friends@TampaBayRefuges.org).

Get your towel, get outside, get your photos, and **Get Your Goose On!**



## President's Message



*From Barb Howard*

We are still in good hands even though we're between managers at the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge Complex which includes the Tampa Bay Refuges. The manager of Lower Suwannee, Andrew Gude, will be the complex's temporary manager until a new manager is hired.

Andrew has assigned Stan Garner, Federal Wildlife Officer, Central Florida Zone, to be the liaison between our Friends group and the Refuge. You might remember Stan from when he was the law enforcement officer for the Refuge. He was frequently in the Tampa Bay area working on Egmont, Passage, and the Pinellas Refuges. Needless to say, we are in **very** good hands!

Time, and certainly the budget negotiations in Congress, will tell if we get another manager dedicated to the Tampa Bay Refuges. In the mean time we will do as we as Friends always do to promote the National Wildlife Refuges, especially the Tampa Bay Refuges, advocate, educate the public in conservation matters, and assist FWS with their projects on the refuges.

Welcome Andrew and Stan, we are looking forward to working with you!

## Board of Directors

**Barb Howard** — President/Treasurer  
**Sid Crawford** — Vice President  
**Joyce Galiardo** — Secretary

**Directors:** Dave Howard, Martha Gruber, Janica Johnson, Emma Mason, and Dave Kandz

## Contact

Barb Howard at 727.343.1272 or 727.512.4914

[Friends@TampaBayRefuges.org](mailto:Friends@TampaBayRefuges.org)

**Friends of the Tampa Bay National Wildlife Refuges, Inc.**

**PO Box 40782**

**St. Petersburg, FL 33743-0782**

or visit us on the web:

**[www.TampaBayRefuges.org](http://www.TampaBayRefuges.org)**



## Wouldn't You Like to Help??

Volunteering at Friends activities is fun, rewarding, and helps you to meet other like minded, environmentally oriented, neat folks. Listed below are some of our volunteer opportunities and the contact information for their coordinator:

Youth Education: Emma Mason, [emason24@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:emason24@tampabay.rr.com)

Refuge Bird Surveys: Dave Howard, [d\\_howard2001@yahoo.com](mailto:d_howard2001@yahoo.com)

Festival Booth Assistance: Barb Howard, [b\\_howard2001@msn.com](mailto:b_howard2001@msn.com)

Bird Stewarding: Joyce Galiardo, [Galibird@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:Galibird@tampabay.rr.com)

## Mark Your Calendar!

### Holiday Hoopla, Gulfport

- Saturday, December 14, 10 to 6

**Friends members receive a 20% discount** on Friends merchandise as a holiday special at the event!! Come early, stay late...

### Pinellas Refuges Wildlife Surveys

- Saturday, January 4
- Saturday, February 8
- Saturday, March 22

### Raptor Fest @ Boyd Hill

- Saturday, February 1 from 10-4  
BOOTH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

### Annual Membership Meeting

- Sunday, February 9, @ Tampa Bay Watch. Details to be sent via email in January.

### Wildlife Weekend @ Boyd Hill

- Saturday and Sunday, March 8 & 9, 10-4  
BOOTH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

### Bird Stewards -- Season Starts in May

**EGMONT KEY GUARDHOUSE VISITOR CENTER--Opening Spring 2014!!!!**

### Board Meeting (all welcome)

- 2nd Monday of each month @ 6:30 PM, Panera Bread, Bryan Dairy and Starkey Road, Largo