

**MINUTES**  
**Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys NWR**  
**Annual Meeting**  
**March 7, 2009**

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges met at the Suwannee, Florida, Community Center on March 7, 2009. The meeting began at 10:50 a.m.

John Kasbohm, Refuge Manager, welcomed the group to the Annual Meeting and thanked everyone for their participation and support of the Refuges. He recognized Kay McCallister for securing the use of the Community Center, and thanked the Friends group for its support. John provided an update on the Refuge, including successful controlled burning, salt marsh vole research and other important projects.

Jay Bushnell, President, called the business meeting to order. He welcomed everyone to the meeting, and in particular, welcomed residents of the town of Suwannee. He noted that the Friends group would like to add one or more board members from Suwannee.

Jay discussed proposed revisions to the Friends group bylaws, noting that the revised bylaws had been posted on the website for several months for review. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to approve the revised bylaws. Motion carried.

Joan Stephens presented a proposed slate of officers and Directors, which included the following:

- Officers
  - President – Jay Bushnell
  - Vice President – Marcie Wilcox
- Directors
  - Tom Liebert
  - Ed DeHaan
  - Rod Hunt

Joan asked for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, it was moved and seconded to approve the slate of officers and directors as proposed. Motion carried.

John Thalacker, Chairman of the Event Sub-Committee, reviewed a list of upcoming events sponsored by the Friends group. He noted that our goal is to have three to five events each month. He asked for suggestions for new events.

Jay Bushnell asked if there were any additional business items from the group. Hearing none, the business meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Jay Bushnell introduced Dr. Peter Frederick from the University of Florida. Dr. Frederick provided a fascinating presentation titled Ibis: The Wildebeest of the Swamp. He reviewed migratory patterns and driving forces for large populations of Ibis. The impact of changes to Ibis habitat on human populations was discussed in depth. Dr. Frederick's presentation was followed by a questions and answers.

Jay Bushnell introduced new Friends group board member, Rod Hunt, noting that Rod has earned the designation of Florida Master Naturalist. Rod discussed the Florida Master Naturalist program, and Jay reported that he is working with the University of Florida to potentially offer classes for the program onsite at the Refuge. The program consists of three separate naturalist tracks of approximately forty hours training in each track.

John Kasbohm introduced Dawn Miller, D.V.M., of Newberry; FL. Dr. Miller is a specialist in treating injured and sick birds of prey. She gave a presentation on raptors, and the factors contributing to sick and injured birds. Dr. Miller introduced the group to a number of her birds that she brought with her, including a red-tailed hawk, great horned owl, screech owl, barn owl, and several others.

John Kasbohm introduced Holly Gaboriault, Deputy Refuge Supervisor for Florida, Mississippi and South Alabama, who thanked the group for their support of the refuges.

Jay Bushnell invited members of the Friends group to participate in a BBQ lunch prepared by Refuge staff and members of the Friends group board of directors. During lunch, Ms. Gaboriault introduced Mr. Jeff Danter, State Director for the Nature Conservancy, who spoke on the partnership between the National Wildlife Refuge system and the Nature Conservancy.

Following lunch, the group participated in afternoon activities that included hayrides, boat rides and kayak excursions conducted by Refuge staff and Friends group volunteers. Maryann Tempest presented a photography workshop.