

MINUTES
Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys NWR
Annual Meeting
March 6, 2010

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges met at the Refuge Headquarters on March 5, 2011. The meeting was called to order by Jay Bushnell, President, at 10:40 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 the Refuge staff, and thanked the Friends group for its support. John provided an update on the Refuge, including successful habitat improvement through controlled burning, planting of longleaf pine seedlings and wiregrass habitat, forestry program and timber sales, construction of observation decks in the Refuge, solar power array at Refuge headquarters and other important projects.

Jay Bushnell, President, welcomed everyone to the meeting, and provided an overview of the mission, activities and volunteer opportunities of the Friends of the Wildlife Refuges. He reported on the Great Suwannee River Cleanup project of which the Friends of the Refuges was a sponsor, bird and nature walks the 1st Monday of each month, the Tree Identification Project along the Riverwalk spearheaded by John Thalacker and several other Friends projects. He also encouraged participation in the silent auction and the agenda for the Annual Meeting today. Following his overview, Jay Bushnell called the business meeting to order.

Report of Nominating Committee

Jay Bushnell, reporting on behalf of the Nominating Committee presented a proposed slate of officers and directors. The Nominating Committee membership included Greg Lang (Non-Board Member), Marci Wilcox, and Jay Bushnell. The proposed slate included the following:

- President – Peg Hall
- Vice President – Marci Wilcox
- Treasurer – Jerry Salamon
- Directors
 - Jerry Salamon
 - Ed DeHaan (Reappointment)
 - Richard Herman (Reappointment)
 - John McPherson
 - Michelle Pearson
 - Ron Black

Jay Bushnell asked if there were nominations from the floor. Hearing none, it was moved and seconded to approve the slate of officers and directors as proposed by the Nominating Committee. Motion carried.

Donna Bushnell conducted an installation ceremony for the officers and directors, and led the Friends members in a pledge of their support.

Financial Report and Financial Review Committee Report

Jay Bushnell reported that a Financial Review Committee consisting of himself, Jerry Salamon and Joan Stephens had recently reviewed the financial records of the organization as called for in the Bylaws; and, that all records were in order and transactions and expenditures were conducted in accordance with the Bylaws. He reported that the Friends bank balance as of the date of the Annual Meeting is \$8,220.07.

Jay Bushnell asked if there were any additional business items from the group. Hearing none, the business meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Keynote Presentation

Jay Bushnell introduced Friends board members Mark Gluckman and Russ Hall, who are leading a "Signature Project" to produce a paddling guide in the Refuge that will include detailed descriptions of bio-zones and other information. Mark Gluckman reviewed the purpose of the project which is to develop advocates and stewards for the Refuges, as well as provide education. Russ Hall reviewed a series of photographs showing the broad bio-diversity of the Refuges and various bio-zones. Mark discussed the thirteen paddling trails included in the project, the information that will be included on the maps, including bio-zones, GPS waypoints, key features and points of interest of each paddling trail. He also invited participation by Friends members in naming the project and providing feedback and noted that the ultimate plan is to collect data about each of the paddling trails to provide to paddlers.

Recognition

Jay Bushnell recognized Joan Stephens for her ten years of service to the Friends of the Refuges, noting that she was a founding member of the organization, its first President, and had been very active and supportive over the years. He presented Joan with a cast glass map of the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge. Pam Darty, Refuge Ranger, presented a slide presentation of Joan Stephens and chronicling her service to the Refuge. Pam presented Joan with a digital photo frame of photos of the Refuge.

Peg Hall recognized Jay Bushnell for his four years of service as President of the Friends of the Refuges and presented him with a framed painting and chart of the Refuges.

John Kasbohm recognized Jay Bushnell for his service as President of the Friends of the Refuges and presented him with a gift on behalf of the Refuges.

John Kasbohm recognized Linda Alexander and Sandra Smith for their donation of the Vista property to the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge, and presented them with a framed collage of photographs of the property over the years. He read a letter

from the Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service thanking them for their generous donation.

Discussion Break-out Sessions

Donna Bushnell facilitated a discussion of the future direction of the Friends of the Refuges. Small discussion groups were formed and were asked to provide answers to the following questions:

- What does a successful Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWR “look” like?
- What does a successful Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWR “sound” like?
- What does a successful Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWR “feel” like?
- How do we know the Refuges are valued by our communities?

The results of the discussion break-out sessions are attached and made an integral part of these minutes. (See Attachment A)

Dawn Miller, DVM

Dawn Miller, DVM, and her volunteer staff introduced the group to her Rescue Center for raptors, including presentations and displays of several raptors including a Great Horned Owl, Red Tailed Hawk and an Osprey.

Lunch and Activities

Following the discussions, Jay Bushnell invited attendees to participate in a BBQ lunch prepared by Refuge staff and members of the Friends group board of directors.

Following lunch, the group participated in afternoon activities that included hayrides through the Refuge, tours of the Vista property, boat rides on the Suwannee River, and an outdoor photography workshop. The afternoon activities concluded at 4:00 p.m.

Tree identification trail

Eye of the Eagle Wildlife Sanctuary

Attachment A

Annual Meeting Discussion with Friends Members

What does a successful “Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWR” look like?

A successful Friends organization looks:

Organized	Like it has lots of members
Diverse	Like a wide range of the community is involved
Hard working	Like people having fun
Multi-generational	Like Old Florida

What does a successful “Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWR” sound like?

A successful Friends organization sounds:

Enthusiast	Polite, never rude
Informative	Happy
Knowledgeable	Positive
Upbeat	Outgoing
Exciting	Articulate
Proactive	Like people meeting new friends
Receptive	Like people reaching out to new members

What does a successful “Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWR” feel like?

A successful Friends organization feels:

Cohesive	Edifying
Proud	Comfortable
Eager for new members	Enjoyable
Like a vehicle for getting things done	Inviting
Friendly	Participative
Growing	

Members of a successful Friends organization feel:

Needed
Like they're contributing
Like they're successful in their efforts
Like they're appreciated within the group
Happy
Worthwhile

How do we know the Refuges are valued by our communities?

People visit them

People keep them clean

People make positive comments

Newspapers run stories about the Refuges and the Friends

People call their representatives about the Refuges

Lots of local turn out for events

Donations from community