

BAY REFLECTIONS

January 2012 - *Happy New Year*



Photo by Maxis Gamez

See more images at the Creative Expression Gallery
www.sarasotabay.org

In This Issue

Watershed Symposium
Sarasota Bay Today
Bay Wise Kayak Tours
Nature's Academy
Bay Partner Grants
Bay Guardians
Condo Partners
Cannons Marina
CAC Member Profile

Historian and Storyteller to Keynote Sarasota Bay Watershed Symposium; Additional Sponsors Welcome



Author Cynthia Barnett

A historian and a storyteller are the bookend keynote speakers for the Sarasota Bay Watershed Symposium scheduled for February 15-17 at the Sudakoff Center on the campus of New College of Florida. New College is presenting the Symposium in partnership with SBEP. Author Cynthia Barnett will provide a water historian's view on our region's relationship with water resources. Joseph Tankersley will lead a visioning session at the end of the symposium to propose a long term vision for Sarasota Bay.

Cynthia Barnett is a long-time journalist who has reported on water issues from the Suwannee River to Singapore. Her book, *Mirage: Florida and the Vanishing Water of the Eastern*

SBEP News Briefs

Bay Friendly Links

Final Reflection

What is Bay Reflections?

Bay Reflections provides information about projects, programs and events associated with the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP).

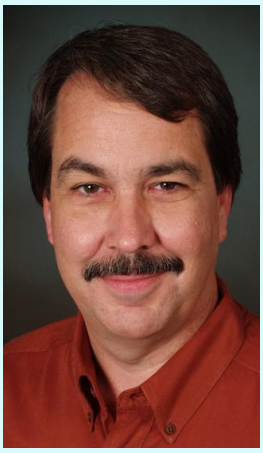
Triple 3 Marketing, LLC
randy@triple3marketing.com

Like us on Facebook

U.S. won the gold medal for best nonfiction in the Florida Book Awards. Joe Tankersley is a writer, storyteller and producer. He has led workshops in North America and Europe where he has taught groups how to use narrative tools to create and implement visionary strategic plans.

Registration for the Symposium is now open; you can sign up at **sarasotawatershed.com** to receive news and updates.

Event organizers welcome additional sponsors for this unique event. Current sponsors include Janicki Environmental, Inc., Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Shafer Consulting, Scheda Ecological Associates, Chiles Restaurant Group, Lynn Townsend & Associates, LLC, and Triple 3 Marketing, LLC.



Joe Tankersley

January 30 is the deadline for submitting posters for the Symposium Poster Session. Topics related to watershed science, policy and education are welcome. **Click here** to learn more about the Sarasota Bay Watershed Symposium.

EPA's Nancy Stoner Visits Sarasota County to Learn More About Community Environmental Initiatives



Photo by Sara Kane

Nancy Stoner, the Acting Assistant Administrator for Water at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), visited Sarasota December 29. Ms. Stoner and a group of local officials visited the Celery Fields Stormwater Facility, Honore Avenue to see recent efforts to improve drainage, and Red Rock Park to learn more about local efforts to replace septic tanks along Phillippi Creek. The final stop was a boat tour of Roberts Bay to see a bird colony island, mangrove habitat and seagrass beds.

Ms. Stoner has had an extensive career in environmental policy and law beginning in 1987 as a trial attorney in the Environmental and Natural Resources Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. Most recently, Ms. Stoner served as the Co-Director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's (NRDC) Water Program.

Region's First Bay-Centric Blog Launches with Interviews of Jack Merriam, Paul Hindsley, and Jay Leverone; Goal is to Expand Public Awareness



Paul Hindsley, PhD

Randy Moore, the SBEP marketing contractor with Triple 3 Marketing, has launched a new blog titled *Sarasota Bay Today*. It's the first blog in the region focused exclusively on Sarasota Bay. **Click here** to read interviews with Jack Merriam, who recently retired from Sarasota County as Environmental Manager, Paul Hindsley, PhD, the lead researcher for the SBEP Economic Value Study, and Jay Leverone, PhD, the SBEP Staff Scientist.

Randy will be interviewing many area professionals involved with restoring and protecting Sarasota Bay. This includes resource managers with local government, private industry contractors, elected representatives, scientists and researchers, environmental educators, and other experts. He welcomes suggestions for future interviews at **randy@triple3marketing.com**

Eight Free Bay Wise Kayak Trips Available Thru April



Photo by wayfaring.info

SBEP has 8 free guided kayak excursions remaining with its annual Bay Wise Kayak Tour Program. The first two trips to Neal Preserve took place in December. Upcoming trips include Leffis and Jewfish Key (1/7 and 1/21), Lido Mangrove Tunnels (2/4 and 2/18), Blind Pass (3/3 and 3/17), and Lyons and Blackburn Bay (4/7 and 4/21).

The SBEP Bay Wise Kayak Tour Program is a fun learning opportunity to discover the plants, animals, habitats, and restoration projects that distinguish Sarasota Bay. Brad Tanner, a professional guide and the School Programs Coordinator for Mote Marine Laboratory, is the kayak tour leader. Brad is also a member of the SBEP Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

Participants are required to bring their own kayak and gear. The Bay Wise Kayak Program is for experienced kayakers. **Click here** to learn more and to register online for upcoming trips.

Nature's Academy Completes Bay Partners Grant to Provide Environmental Education for 200 Students



Nature's Academy, Inc., a non-profit environmental educational company based in Bradenton recently completed a student education project supported by a grant from the SBEP Bay Partner Grant Program. The project titled *Island Adventures Pilot Program* engaged 1,500 students. Of this total, 200 elementary aged students from Kinnan Elementary and Prine Elementary in Manatee County were able to participate thanks to the SBEP grant. The project involved a classroom workshop, a mangrove nature walk through Leffis Key to observe bird life, an aquatic species biodiversity study with the use of dip nets, and a coastal cleanup project. The final part of the program involved classroom discussions and small group projects designed to demonstrate new knowledge. Students were tested before and after the program to help measure learning results. Congratulations to Nature's Academy.

SBEP Bay Partners Grant Applications due March 1; Unique Program Promotes Bay-Friendly Stewardship

SBEP has awarded $150,000 in grants to more than 90 community organizations since 2002. They include local schools, homeowner associations, community and neighborhood groups, and non-profit organizations. Completed projects have included wildlife gardens, landscape projects featuring native plants, micro-irrigation projects, Bay-education signage, contouring to create bioswales, and various education programs.

The purpose of the SBEP Bay Partners Grant Program is to promote environmental education, awareness, community involvement, and stewardship to improve the overall quality of Sarasota Bay and its tributaries. To support these goals, funding is available from SBEP for projects that focus on Bay Education, Bay Restoration or Bay-Friendly Landscaping.

Applications are due by 4pm on Thursday, March 1. **Click here** to complete the 2012 application. **Click here** to review the 14 recipients of 2011 grants. Questions should be directed to Sara Kane at **sara@sarasotabay.org**.

Bay Guardians Combine Work with Learning at FISH Preserve; Next Outing Set for March 10 at Quick Point Preserve on Longboat Key; Volunteer Today



Fifty-two Bay Guardian volunteers removed invasive plants at FISH Preserve on November 5 while learning about the area habitat from guides with Around the Bend Nature Tours. The volunteers included students, teachers and parents from King Middle School. Representatives of the Cortez Fishing Village provided a lunch featuring smoked mullet.

FISH Preserve is a 95-acre parcel adjacent to Sarasota Bay within the Village of Cortez in Manatee County. FISH, which stands for Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage, is a non-profit organization

that purchased the property in 1999 to help restore, conserve and protect the upland and wetland habitats and adjacent waters.

SBEP is supporting the ongoing restoration at FISH Preserve. The first phase of the large-scale project was completed in the summer and involved the removal of exotic vegetation, creation of a tidal wetland, and mangrove restoration. Two bridges were also constructed to connect hiking trails. Future plans involve creation of kayak trails and converting two stormwater retention ponds into more natural wetland features.

The next Bay Guardian volunteer event is set for Saturday, March 10 at Quick Point Preserve on Longboat Key. The 34-acre preserve with 3,000 feet of shoreline is well known for its scenic vistas and wildlife viewing. The outing will involve the removal of debris and invasive plants as well as a nature education walk.

The Sarasota Bay Guardians is a family-friendly volunteer program that SBEP manages in partnership with Around the Bend Nature Tours. The program was established to attract adult and student volunteers interested in helping restore Sarasota Bay's habitat. New volunteers receive a tee shirt featuring the Bay Guardians logo. Groups can learn more at **sara@sarasotabay.org**.

Condo Associations Complete Bay Partner Grants; Projects Focused on Retrofitting, Expanding a Saltwater Bioswale & Upgrading a Detention Pond

Sunbow Bay Condo Association on Anna Maria Island, Windward Bay Condo Association on Longboat Key and Beachplace Association, Inc., on Longboat Key recently completed SBEP Bay Partner Grant Projects. All three condo associations earned grant support from SBEP to help complete projects that benefit Sarasota Bay.

Sunbow BayCondo Association completed retrofitting of existing turf to create a Bay-friendly garden of native plants; Windward Bay Condo Association expanded their saltwater bioswale and added more native plants; and Beachplace Association, Inc. expanded and upgraded their stormwater detention pond. Congratulations to all three organizations.

Cannons Marina Designated a Florida Clean Marina; DEP Program Emphasizes Best Management Practices



Cannons Marina located on Longboat Key is one of the 11 area marinas that have been designated a Clean Marina through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The program requires that marinas implement and maintain best management practices that are considered environmentally sound. The practices address waste management, storm water control, spill prevention, and emergency preparedness.

Cannons became designated in June, 2005; one of the earliest participants in the statewide program. It was an easy decision according to Benny Parrish, Cannons manager. "Everyone on our team shares a desire to keep Sarasota Bay healthy," he said. "Working with DEP to earn the designation was also a good learning experience since it exposed us to new practices."

Other local marinas that have been designated Clean Marinas include Crow's Nest Marina in Venice, Galati Yacht Sales on Anna Maria Island, Gulf Harbor Marina in Nokomis, Hyatt Regency Marina in Sarasota, Longboat Key Moorings, Marina Jack in Sarasota, Regatta Point Marina in Palmetto, Twin Dolphin Marina in Bradenton, and the Venice Yacht Club in Venice.

SBEP is working with the Florida DEP to encourage other marinas and boatyards in Sarasota and Manatee County to practice Bay-wise stewardship and to consider earning their designation as a Clean Marina. **Click here** to learn more about the program.

CAC Profile: Environmental Educator Melissa Nell has a Lifelong Passion for Nature and Wildlife

Melissa Nell is at home whether leading flashlight tours through the owl-filled Rye woods or presenting detailed restoration plans before policy leaders. As the Manager for the Education and Volunteer Division of Manatee County's Natural Resources Department, she's led hundreds of educational programs and worked with thousands of volunteers to improve Manatee County's natural habitat.

Melissa was raised near the beaches of Brevard County before moving to the west coast of Florida. Her love for the environment began early in life; she was inspired to pursue a career as an environmental educator after attending classes at Sea World and Busch Gardens.



Melissa Climbing Mt. Fuji in Japan

Melissa is a Certified Interpretive Guide and a Certified Heritage Interpreter through the National Association for Interpretation. She is also interested in herpetology and animal behavior and spent a number of years working on reinforcement based training of parrots and birds of prey. Melissa completed the University of Florida Master Naturalist Program in 2011. She completed her undergraduate degree from New College in Fine Arts and Biology; her Master's Degree from NOVA Southeastern in Environmental Education and recently completed a Graduate Certificate in Informal Science Institutions from USF.

One of her passions away from work is a "secret identity" as a professional Middle Eastern dancer. This avocation has taken her across the globe, most recently to Japan, to perform with other artists. She co-facilitates a local troupe with her husband that brings music and dance to the community through impromptu flash-mob performances and charity events. She also collects antique kimonos.

Click here to learn more about all the members of the CAC.

SBEP News Briefs

Jack Merriam & Ernie Estevez Retire
Congratulations from SBEP to both gentlemen for their distinguished careers and long term support of Sarasota Bay. Jack was the Environmental Manager for Sarasota County and Ernie was Director of the Center for Coastal Ecology at Mote Marine Laboratory. **Click here** to read an interview with Jack in Sarasota Bay Today, the new blog about Sarasota Bay.

Cortez Commercial Fishing Festival

This popular annual event is set for February 18-19 at the Cortez Fishing Village in Manatee County. Highlights include plenty of seafood, live music, art, and museum displays. Admission is $2 and free for kids under 12. The event runs from 10am to 6pm both days. Proceeds benefit FISH Preserve. **Click here** to learn more.

Sarasota Bay Water Festival
SBEP is planning a special event in the fall that will showcase the people and organizations involved with restoring and protecting Sarasota Bay. The theme is *Enjoy the Bay* and the event will feature food, live music, art, exhibits, and fun activities for people of all ages. The Sarasota Bay Water Festival is a unique opportunity to promote Bay recreations, conservation and science. Future editions of Bay Reflections will provide details about exhibiting and sponsorship opportunities.

Power Point Presentation
SBEP welcomes opportunities to present its PowerPoint presentation about its mission, programs and collaborative projects. The organization is launching a special outreach effort to area business groups and social service organizations as an opportunity to raise awareness about the SBEP mission, programs and the issues impacting on Sarasota Bay. Contact Sara Kane at **sara@sarasotabay.org** to discuss speaking venues and dates for 2012.

Public Meetings
The SBEP Management and Policy Boards will meet Friday, January 20 at the Federal Building in Sarasota at 111 South Orange Avenue (Room 100). The management board meets 9am and the policy board meets 1pm. The next meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is 4:30pm on February 6 at Dan McClure Auditorium located at the Sarasota Airport.

SBEP Facebook Page
Click here to "like" SBEP on Facebook. The SBEP online network continues growing each month and the site also features hotlinks to 90 other Bay-friendly organizations.

Visit These Bay-Friendly Links

Click here to read Sarasota Bay Today, the region's first Bay-centric blog.
Click here to see hundreds of photos from SBEP programs and events.
Click here to visit 55 websites of other Bay-friendly organizations.
Click here to visit the websites of the SBEP habitat restoration project partners.
Click here to visit a digital map showing completed, current and planned restoration projects.
Click here to learn more about the 23-members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).
Click here to learn more about the 23-members of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

Final Reflection with Artist Tom D'Auria



This painting of a dolphin mahi is from the collection by artist Tom D'Auria of Sarasota. **Click here** to see more of his paintings. New content continues to be added to the Creative Expressions Gallery as a way to showcase the passion many people feel about the beauty and importance of Sarasota Bay. Inquires are welcome at **randy@triple3marketing.com**

Editors: Randy & Bryan Moore

Triple 3 Marketing, LLC
randy@triple3marketing.com

Trusted Email from Constant Contact
Try it FREE today.