

BAY REFLECTIONS

SBEP Newsletter - July 2015 Edition

Celebrate Independence & Enjoy the Summer!



In this Edition: SBEP awards eight Bay Partner Grants; SBEP launches digital map of completed Bay Partner Grant Projects; Bay Guardians on Siesta Key; SBEP contractor removes exotic plants from North Water Tower Park; Sarasota Bay Today interviews Suzi Fox, Brad Tanner and Randy Moore; Fourth Water Festival set for April 30; Bay Guardians complete oyster project; and Tidal Creek Study update. Thank you for supporting the SBEP mission and its various programs.

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SBEP Awards Eight New Bay Partner Grants Supporting Local Projects Benefiting Sarasota Bay

The SBEP Policy Board approved Bay Partner Grants for eight local organizations selected by the SBEP **Citizens Advisory Committee** (CAC). They include New College of Florida, Riverview High School, Boys & Girls Club of Manatee County, Save Our Seabirds, Sarasota Audubon, Gardeners Out East, Science Environmental Council of Southwest Florida, and Marie Selby Botanical Gardens.



The Bay Partners Grant Program promotes environmental education and community stewardship. SBEP has awarded more than $267,000 in grants since 2003. **Learn more**.

Students complete project at Bay Haven School.

SBEP Launches Digital Map of Completed Bay Partner Grant Projects Spanning Both Counties



SBEP has launched a **digital map** on its website showing many of the completed Bay Partner Grant Projects in Sarasota and Manatee County. The idea was suggested at a recent meeting of the SBEP Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

SBEP has awarded $267,000 in grants to more than 120 organizations since 2003 including local schools, condo developments, neighborhood associations, nonprofits, and other organizations.

Photo shows Boy Scouts and friends following a bay-friendly planting project at Plymouth Harbor.

Local Bay Guardian Volunteers Plant 1,200 Native Dune Plants on Siesta Key Beach

A group of 40 volunteers with the SBEP **Bay Guardians** planted 1,200 native dune plants and removed thousands of cigarette butts recently at a project on Siesta Key Beach. SBEP teamed up with Sarasota County Parks and Natural Resources and Around the Bend Nature Tours and the plants were donated by the Serenoa Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.

The award-winning Bay Guardians are the region's most active volunteer group focused on projects that benefit Sarasota Bay. The program is managed by SBEP in partnership with Around the Bend Nature Tours. **Learn more**.



Sarasota Bay Today Presents Fox, Tanner & Moore

The three newest interviews on the SBEP-sponsored Sarasota Bay Today website feature **Suzi Fox**, the Executive Director of AMI Turtle Watch and Shorebird Monitoring, **Brad Tanner**, the Senior School Program Coordinator with Mote Marine Laboratory, and **Randy Moore**, CEO of Triple 3 Marketing and Director of the Sarasota Bay Water Festival.

Suzi and Brad serve on the SBEP **Citizens Advisory Committee** (CAC). Triple 3 Marketing is the marketing contractor for SBEP. Randy Moore interviewed Suzi and Brad and Bryan Moore interviewed Randy. **Sarasota Bay Today** features 27 interviews with professionals focused on restoring, protecting and studying Sarasota Bay.



Suzi Fox with Michael Gallen.

SBEP & Partners Remove Exotic Plants from North Water Tower Park to Support Revitalization Plan



Brazilian Pepper

Sarasota County, City of Sarasota and SBEP are working on a comprehensive plan to revitalize North Water Tower Park and the surrounding area. The primary focus is innovative stormwater treatment for water flowing through the watershed into Philippi Creek.

An early goal was achieved in June with the removal of exotic invasive plants including Brazilian pepper and air potato vines. Eco Consultants based in Palmetto completed the project. The revitalization plan is funded by a federal grant through the **EPA Gulf of Mexico Program**.

Fourth Sarasota Bay Water Festival Set for 2016

The fourth **Sarasota Bay Water Festival** is set for April 30, 2016 at beautiful Ken Thompson Park. SBEP is the Founding Sponsor. The fun event features live music, unique art for sale and many displays promoting water recreation and bay-friendly living. More than 100 local businesses, nonprofits and private clubs from Sarasota and Manatee County participate as sponsors and exhibitors.

The Water Festival celebrates the importance of Sarasota Bay to the region's environment and economy. It's the largest public event focused on the Bay's natural resources and recreational amenities. **Learn more**.



100 Bay Guardian Volunteers Complete Oyster

Project at Robinson Preserve in Manatee County



SBEP volunteers partnered with the Tampa Bay Estuary Program and the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department May 2 to place 1,000 five gallon buckets of oysters at **Robinson Preserve**. The oysters provide habitat for fish and other aquatic species and serves as a natural filtration system to enhance water quality.

SBEP and TBEP also presented awards to volunteers following the project. That included a Blue Dolphin Award to Scott and Virginia Lloyd-Jones. The couple is the tenth recipient of a **Blue Dolphin Award** since 2012.

Professionals Review Data for Tidal Creek Study



A joint workshop of the **Technical Advisory Committees** (TAC) of the three National Estuary Programs reviewed sample data from tributaries collected by teams focused on water quality, algae and fisheries. The collection of data for determining the nutrient criteria is expected to be completed by the end of September.

"The study will help to determine the appropriate level of nutrients to ensure the ecological health of tidal creeks," explained SBEP Staff Scientist Jay Leverone, PhD.

SBEP is managing the project engaging the region's three National Estuary Programs, six counties (Manatee, Sarasota, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Charlotte, and Lee), Mote Marine Laboratory, and the Florida DEP through a grant from EPA. Other partners include Janicki Environmental, Inc., Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, and the USF Florida Center of Community Design and Research.

Hold the Fertilizer through September



SBEP and its partners remind residents in Sarasota and Manatee County to hold the fertilizer with nitrogen or phosphorus through September 30. Not using fertilizers in the summer reduces the amount of chemicals running into Sarasota Bay following heavy rainfalls.

Summer rains do not water fertilizer in; they flush the chemicals into ponds, rivers and larger water bodies. The overuse of nitrogen and phosphorus undermines water quality and can harm aquatic life. **Learn more**.

SBEP News Briefs

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Power Point Presentation

Contact SBEP if your school or group is interested in a 30-40 minute presentation about the SBEP mission, programs and projects. Reservations are being accepted for the summer and fall season.

CAC Page Update

The bios of the 24 Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) members were recently updated. The CAC provide citizen input to SBEP and share information with the public about SBEP programs, projects and priorities. **Visit the page**.

TAC Page Update

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) page on the SBEP website has been updated with six new bios. New active members include Sherri Swanson, Wendy Conn, Ray Leary, Chris Warn, Julie Neurohr, and Pam Fetterman. The TAC provides technical peer review and input to SBEP for various projects and programs focused on the bay and area tributaries. **Visit the page**.

SBEP Public Meetings

The next CAC meeting will be 4:30pm on Monday, August 3 at Dan McClure Auditorium near the airport. The next SBEP Management Board meeting is 9am on Friday, August 28 and the next SBEP Policy Board meeting is 1pm on Friday, September 18. The location for the board meetings will be posted on the **SBEP website**.

Final Reflection with Lou Newman



Photo shows an adult Least Tern with its chick. Lou Newman is a retired veterinarian and wildlife photographer who travels the world taking photos of birds and other wildlife. Lou is also a member of the SBEP Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). See more of Lou's work on his **website**. You can also read an interview with Lou at **Sarasota Bay Today**.

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP) is dedicated to restoring the area's greatest natural asset - Sarasota Bay. Its unique program strives to improve water quality, increase habitat and enhance the natural resources of the area for use and enjoyment by the public. Sarasota Bay is one of 28 estuaries in the U.S. that have been named by the U.S. Congress as an "estuary of national significance."