

BAY REFLECTIONS

March 2012



Photo by Jean Clark
See more images at the
Creative Expression Gallery
www.sarasotabay.org

SBEP to Present Blue Dolphin Awards to Local Champions of Sarasota Bay & SBEP Mission

SBEP is hosting the inaugural Sarasota Bay Awards Program Wednesday, April 4 at Crosley Estate Mansion. Invitations to the private networking reception honoring the award recipients will be sent next week. The award winners include Charles Edwards, Jack Merriam, Martha B. King Middle School, Raindrops Cisterns, and AMI Turtle Watch and Shorebird Monitoring.

In This Issue

SBEP Blue Dolphin Awards
Visit Sarasota Bay Today Blog
Bay Guardians on Longboat Key
Final Bay Wise Kayak Tours
LID Expo at Twin Lakes Park
Sunbow Bay Open House

[Sarasota Bay Water Festival]

[Restoration Project Update]

[SBEP Pursuing EPA Funding]

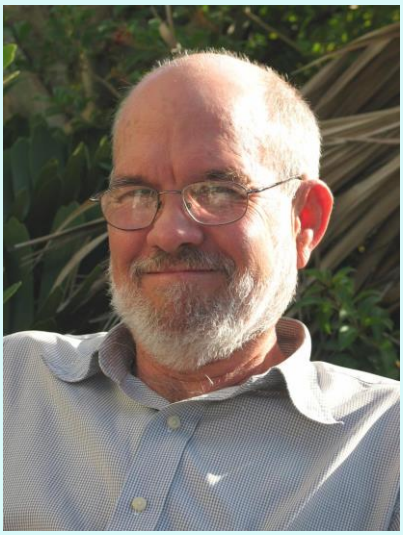
[Ronald Johnson Joins CAC]

[CAC Member Profile: Tom Price]

[SBEP News Briefs and Updates]

Triple 3 Marketing, LLC
randy@triple3marketing.com

Like SBEP on Facebook



Jack Merriam

Charles Edwards is a long term member of the SBEP Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). Jack Merriam recently retired as the environmental manager with Sarasota County. Martha B. King Middle School in Bradenton is an active participant in the Bay Guardians volunteer program. Raindrops Cisterns is a Sarasota based business focused on rainwater harvesting and water storage solutions. Anna Maria Island Turtle Watch and Shorebird Monitoring is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting nesting sea turtles, shorebirds and habitat.

The special event will feature light food selections, a cash bar and entertainment during the social hour prior to the awards ceremony. Randy Moore, the SBEP marketing contractor with Triple 3 Marketing will serve as the master of ceremonies. Local elected representatives serving on the SBEP Policy Board will present the awards.

Visit *Sarasota Bay Today* to Read Interviews with Jon Thaxton, Cris Costello, and Jeanne Dubi



Jeanne Dubi (Photo Barbarba Banks)

Jon Thaxton, a Sarasota County Commissioner, Cris Costello, a regional organizer with the Sierra Club, and Jeanne Dubi, the president of Sarasota Audubon, were interviewed recently by Randy Moore for *Sarasota Bay Today*. Jon and Cris answer questions about various environmental issues impacting on Sarasota Bay. Jeanne answers questions about the challenges faced by year round and migrating birds. She also shares information about local Audubon activities and events.

Sarasota Bay Today presents interviews with many of the professionals in the region involved with water quality, habitat restoration, estuarine research, resource management, policy planning, and related topics. *The Bay-centric blog* launched January 1 with interviews of Jack Merriam, Paul Hindsley, PhD, Jay Leverone, PhD, and Randy Moore. **Click here** to visit *Sarasota Bay Today*.

Bay Guardians to Rally March 10 at Quick Point Preserve on Longboat Key; Next Outing is the Air Potato Roundup April 14 at North Water Tower Park



The first Bay Guardians volunteer event for 2012 is scheduled to take place Saturday, March 10 at Quick Point Preserve on Longboat Key. Volunteers will pick up debris and remove invasive plants at the popular 34-acre preserve located at 100 Gulf of Mexico Drive. The preserve has 3,000 feet of shoreline featuring scenic vistas and opportunities for viewing birds and other wildlife. Paved trails and boardwalks provide convenient access to the man-made tidal lagoons.

Students from Martha B. King Middle School in Bradenton and the Future Leaders Academy in Sarasota will be participating at the volunteer event. Guides with Around the Bend Nature Tours will provide educational insights and lunch will be provided. **Click here** to register and pre-registration is required.

The next Bay Guardians event is the fourth annual Air Potato Roundup April 14 at North Water Tower Park in Sarasota. Air potatoes are an invasive species and prior Bay Guardians events at the park have focused on removing the plant. The April event is supported by the local Sarasota Sky Pilots Disc Golf Club. North Water Tower Park has one of the region's most popular disc golf courses.

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 volunteers interested in helping restore Sarasota Bay's habitat. New volunteers receive a t-shirt featuring the Bay Guardians logo. Groups can learn more at **sara@sarasotabay.org**.

Final Bay Wise Kayak Trips set for March and April



The remaining free kayak trips include Blind Pass on March 3 and March 17 and Lyons and Blackburn Bay on April 7 and April 21. Eight prior trips visited Neal Preserve in December, Leffis and Jewfish Key in January, and the Lido Mangrove Tunnels in February.

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. Outfitters throughout the region rent kayaks and offer demonstrations and beginner classes. The Bay Wise Kayak Program is for experienced kayakers. **Click here** to register online.

LID Expo Set for Twin Lakes Park March 23



Green Street at Golden Gate Point
(Photo Angela Maraj)

The region's first Low Impact Development (LID) Expo is set for Friday, March 23 at Twin Lakes Park in Sarasota. The expo runs from 10am to 4pm and the address is 6700 Clark Road. The free event will showcase low impact development techniques and products such as rain gardens, bio-swales, green roofs, vertical living walls, filter strips, rain barrels, cisterns, pervious pavements and natural site preservation techniques. Florida experts, educators and industry representatives are encouraged to participate as exhibitors, speakers and guests.

Some of the participating organizations include Sarasota County, Stantec, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Beautiful Ponds, Inc., GAP Architectural Products, Applied Sciences, the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Program with the University of Florida, Elkistics Design Studio, DMK Associates and the University of Central Florida.

"Industry professionals such as builders, developers, architects, engineers, and land planners as well as condo associations and homeowners can benefit from these techniques," explained Angela Maraj, the event organizer. "Sarasota County is leading Florida with LID planning and the regional expo is an opportunity to encourage the expansion of LID policies and practices statewide."

Prospective exhibitors are encouraged to contact Maraj at lidexpo2012@gmail.com. Maraj is being supported by a Bay Partners Grant from SBEP. The organization has awarded $150,000 in grants to 90 local organizations since 2002. Contact Angela at **lidexpo2012@gmail.com** with your questions.

Join Us at the Sunbow Bay Open House March 24



Sunbow Bay Condo Association will host an open house Saturday, March 24 to showcase recent efforts to create Bay-friendly landscaping on the property located at 3805 East Bay Drive in Holmes Beach. Part of the funding for the retrofitting came from a Bay Partners Grant provided by SBEP. The open house runs from 2-4pm and the public is invited.

Sunbow Bay volunteers have been working to convert the landscape to be more Bay-friendly since 2009. "Our plan is to continue enhancing the property while improving the quality of water running into the Bay," explained Denise Elliott. "We were able to plant 3,500 square feet of native plants on or near the waters edge using Florida-friendly practices with funding support in 2010 and 2011 from SBEP ($5,500 total) in addition to a $3,000 in-kind contribution from Sunbow Bay."

Girl Scout Troop 536 from Bradenton will sell water and lemonade at the open house to raise money for a camping trip. The troop plans to work in the garden and learn more about Bay-friendly practices at a Saturday outing prior to the event.

Ms. Elliott credits local professionals for technical guidance on the project including Sara Kane with SBEP, Michelle Atkinson with the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Program, and Jim Derwenko, the association's green-certified landscaper. Ms. Kane and Ms. Elliott spoke to association members in January 2011 to explain the benefits of Bay-friendly landscaping.

Sarasota Bay Water Festival October 6 to Feature Live Music, Tasty Food, Fun Activities and Exhibits

SBEP is hosting the region's first Sarasota Bay Water Festival Saturday, October 6 at Ken Thompson Park near Mote Marine Laboratory. The special event will showcase many of the organizations and groups in the region focused on Bay recreation, Bay science and research, Bay restoration, and Bay photography and art.

The free community event will feature live music, food selections, kayaking demonstrations, nature walks, exhibits and fun activities that appeal to people of all ages.

Inquiries welcome at **randy@triple3marketing.com**.



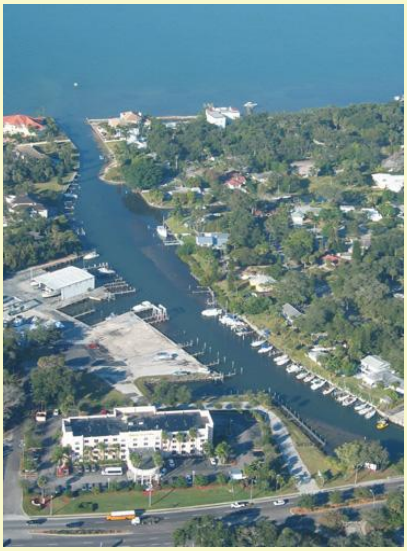
SBEP Contractors Complete Restoration Projects

SBEP oversaw a number of habitat restoration projects bordering Sarasota toward the end of 2011. SBEP contracted five local firms to perform a variety of restoration serivces, including exotic vegetation removal, minor earth work and planting native coastal vegetation. The companies were Rick Richards, Inc., Stantec, Eco Consultants, Inc., EarthBalance, and Tampa Contracting Services, Inc.

The projects took place at North Lido Park where Australian pines were removed from a tidal creek to increase tidal flushing and improve fisheries habitat, South Lido Park where Australian pines were removed, Sarasota Baywalk Creek where a tidal creek was cleared of a variety of invasive plant species, Grassy Point where upland habitat was restored with the planting of native vegetation, and FISH Preserve where Australian pines were removed from a three acre plot in preparation for creating a tidal wetland.

Funding for these projects was made possible through a cooperative agreement with the Southwest Florida Water Management District. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided additional funding support for the North Lido Park and Sarasota Baywalk Creek projects.

SBEP Pursuing EPA Funding for Tidal Creek Research



The SBEP is leading a regional effort to solicit funding from the EPA through the Wetland Development Grant Program for developing nutrient criteria for southwest Florida tidal creeks. This work stems from the SBEP work on nutrient standards in estuarine waters.

Tidal creeks are unique from freshwater streams and marine waters, and the grant will allow SBEP and its partners to explore how hydrology and water quality lead to productive and healthy creeks. Partners include the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program, five local county governments, Mote Marine Laboratory and Janicki Environmental, Inc.

Ronald Johnson, Former Mayor of Longboat Key, Joins SBEP Citizens Advisory Committee

Ron Johnson of Longboat Key was recently approved for membership by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). Johnson is a former mayor and vice mayor of the Town of Longboat Key. He served on the Town Commission for eight years. He's also on the Board of Trustees with Mote Marine Laboratory. His association with Mote spans 16 years and includes serving as President of the Mote Volunteer Board.

Johnson and his wife Jinny moved to Longboat Key from Tampa in 1996. He has been involved with environmental issues since his arrival and that includes serving on the SBEP Policy Board when he was a Commissioner. His early career was spent with IBM followed by many years as a professional in the housing industry.

The 24-member CAC provides the SBEP with citizen input and helps the organization promote programs and projects in support of its mission to enhance, restore and protect Sarasota Bay.

Recent Sarasota Bay Watershed Symposium Encouraged Networking and Exchange of Ideas

The Sarasota Bay Watershed Symposium held mid February at New College of Sarasota was an opportunity for area professionals to network while sharing perspectives and ideas. More than 220 individuals attended including scientists, educators, elected representatives and members of the community. Congratulations to everyone that supported the Symposium including the organziers, sponsors, volunteers and participants. SBEP will evaluate hosting similar events more frequently in the future. **Click here** to access the Wiki page for more details about the Symposium and associated topics.

CAC Profile: U.S. Army Veteran and Long Term Resident Tom Price Supports Environmental Groups



Tom & Nancy Price (Photo Randy Moore)

Thomas and his wife moved to Sarasota from Cleveland in 1972 after serving in the Army in Vietnam and Korea. As a barber by profession, he's had opportunities to listen to the concerns of many people in our community. He's a member of various environmental groups including the Audubon Society, Control Growth Now and the SBEP Citizen Advisory Committee.

Tom recalls the early days of SBEP. "I applied to be a member of the CAC and two commissioners recommended me in addition to Jon Thaxton and the late Dave Bullock," he said. "The CAC has grown over the years and the group contributes to awareness about the importance of Sarasota Bay."

"My wife and I live in a waterfront community and it's important that we advocate clean water in Sarasota Bay so people can enjoy boating, swimming, fishing and other forms of recreation. We have seen progress over the years and we still have challenges in various areas including some of the tributaries and smaller Bays in south Sarasota County."

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

SBEP News Briefs

SBEP Receives FISH Partnership Award
SBEP received an award at the Cortez Commercial Fishing Festival February 18. The FISH Partnership Award acknowledged the SBEP support of the Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage (FISH). FISH Preserve is a 95-acre parcel adjacent to Sarasota Bay within the Village of Cortez in Manatee County. The non-profit organization purchased the property in 1999 to help restore, conserve and protect the upland and wetland habitats and area waters.

Sea Grant Research Project to Focus on Social Values

Zac Cole, a PhD candidate at the University of Florida, is planning to conduct a survey to better understand the social values of local ecosystem services around Sarasota Bay. The study is funded by the University of Florida Sea Grant Program in partnership with USGS. SBEP is supporting the project by helping identify community stakeholders that could participate in a series of fact-finding workshops. The plan is to hold 10 workshops with 10-20 participants each. The workshops are expected to last about two hours. **Click here** to learn more.

Tissue of Sarasota Dolphins Reveals Local Ecological History

A recent study by the Sarasota Dolphin Research Group showed that the ecological history of Sarasota Bay is recorded in the tissues of bottlenose dolphins. By using stable isotope analysis, they learned how dolphins responded to long term environmental changes in nitrogen inputs. Since 1989, when human produced nitrogen input to the Bay was greatly reduced through advances in wastewater treatment, local dolphins also reflected lower nitrogen isotope values in their tissues. These findings show that improved wastewater treatment not only reduces anthropogenic nitrogen inputs into the Bay but into its food web as well. **Click here** to learn more.

Power Point Presentation

SBEP welcomes opportunities to present its PowerPoint presentation about its mission, programs and collaborative projects. The organization is particularly interested in reaching area business groups, private clubs and social service organizations throughout the region. Contact Sara Kane at**sara@sarasotabay.org** to discuss speaking venues and dates for 2012.

Upcoming Public Meetings

The next meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is 4:30pm on April 2 at Dan McClure Auditorium located at the Sarasota-Bradenton Airport. The next meeting of the SBEP Policy and Management Board is Friday, May 18.

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 60 websites of other Sarasota 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 24-members of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

Final Reflection with Kathleen & Ronnie Pacheco



This photo is from the Kathleen & Ronnie Pacheco collection. "A simple birthday gift of a camera turned into a passion for wildlife photography," explains Kathleen. The couple enjoys capturing images of wildlife, flowers and seascapes. **Click here** to see more images on the SBEP Creative Expressions Gallery. 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 FREE
Try it FREE today.