

**Friends of Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
July 25, 2009**

The Board of Directors of the Friends of Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (“Friends Board”) met on Saturday, July 25, 2009 in the Conference Room at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (“Refuge”).

Attendees: President Steve Horowitz, Vice-President John Marshall, Director Judy Colvard, Director Joan Davis, Director Cynthia Plockelman, Director Lance Warley, and Director Elinor Williams. Absent were Director Tom Poulson, Director Jay Brenner, Director Mitch Rosenheim, Secretary Kim Edoff, and Treasurer Herb Teitler. Also in attendance were David Underwood, representing the Refuge, and Stephanie Wright, representing the Friends PR Initiative.

The meeting opened at 9:00 am. A quorum was established.

Steve Horowitz asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 23, 2009 meeting. Cynthia Plockelman moved to approve the minutes. Joan Davis seconded the motion. The minutes as circulated for the May 23, 2009 meeting were unanimously approved.

Steve Horowitz announced that the exhibit installation is scheduled for September and the gala opening ceremonies will be in October. The opening ceremonies will be funded by several sources including the Refuge and Marshall Foundation. Today, the Friends Board has a request from the Refuge in the amount of \$3,000 to fund part of the opening ceremonies. Steve has attended all gala committee meetings to date. Steve and Elinor will attend the August 6 meeting. Cynthia may be able to attend the August 27 meeting. Judy Colvard moved to contribute \$3,000 to the gala opening ceremonies. Elinor Williams seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was carried.

David Underwood reported on the successful progress for the opening of the exhibits. The Atlanta Regional office will be printing the invitations. The VIP Reception on Thursday October 15 will be from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. and it will be centered around the exhibits and the new Refuge movie currently being produced. The Friends Board and the Marshall Foundation will be invited. The Saturday public opening, October 17 at 9:00 a.m., will be approximately 45 minutes in length with a flag raising ceremony, ribbon cutting, and speakers. Parking will be at the boat ramp with visitor transportation by trolley. Josette Kaufman, co-chair of the events, will be handling the press releases and promoting the event. Cynthia suggested that an additional parking area may be necessary and should be considered. Bill Calvert (Refuge law enforcement) will probably be the point person on crowd control and parking for the events. Judy volunteered to help cover the gift shop that Thursday night. She will also assist on volunteer coverage coordination for both opening events.

John Marshall discussed concerns around exhibit maintenance. Steve reported that the first year is covered by warranty but the Friends will be responsible starting 2010. The annual maintenance of approximately \$5,000 - \$7,000 had already been committed by the Friends and is already in the budget.

Stephanie Wright reported on the Public Relations Initiative to date. She is working with George Berman and to date, a Friends "Meet-Up" group and a Facebook page have been initiated on the Internet with plans to promote the Refuge and recruit volunteers. There are many opportunities including adding calendar events and tracking volunteer activity using the Meet-Up group tools that we will be investigating. Regarding the use of press releases, Steve reported that there are a variety of press releases and specific formats for different types of press releases. At Lance's request, Stephanie will prepare a short article on the initiative and meet-up opportunity for the upcoming Gator Tales.

Judy reported that volunteers are responding well and that volunteers are emailing or calling her when they can't make their shifts giving Judy an opportunity to find replacements. There was some discussion about older volunteers who may not have internet access. Elinor indicated that most of our volunteers have email as opposed to our Friends population in which around half have reported email addresses.

Cynthia reported on her attendance at the EVCO meeting with nothing new resulting.

Lance Warley announced that the next newsletter will be published in December. Articles are to be submitted between October 1 – October 15. Cynthia volunteered an article on native birds and plants. Steve recommended that an article on the upcoming EVCO 25th coalition conference and the tie in with the Friends of Florida meeting should be featured including events for the 4 days. Lance suggested to Elinor that a calendar with graphics would be a good fit. He will also interview Cindy Fury for a piece on biology, and Steve will solicit an article from Serena Rinker on the upcoming Everglades Day event.

Joan and Cynthia reported on the new Water Permitting Rules as changed by legislation recently signed by Governor Crist. Now, only the signature of the director of a Water Management District (there are 5 Districts in the state) is required. Both suggest this will be appealed in the courts and overturned. A West Boca Raton golf course which abuts the Refuge has recently been approved for 180 million gallons of ground water use per year.

Elinor reported that she is working on the final draft of the 2010 calendar and is accepting sponsors at a rate of \$250. Last call on ads for the calendar.

David Underwood reported that he is working on 4 new Refuge Brochures (fishing and boating, marsh trails, and a basic volunteer brochure), and hopes to have them ready by the grand opening of the exhibits.

Steve stated that the Turtle River Times printing and mailing are funded by the Friends (budgeted item). The Friends publishing schedule is twice yearly for the Gator Tales (the Friends

newsletter) and twice yearly for the Turtle River Times (the Refuge newsletter). The Turtle River Times will be coming out in September. We are working to coordinate the timing so that we have one of the two types of newsletters coming out quarterly. All publications are available on the website.

Steve asked that John work with Tom Poulson to revise our visitors guide in color. We may sell these once again in the gift shop upon completion.

Steve stated that EVCO has 52 members and any ONE can reject proposed sponsors. Nancy Marshall is working on getting sponsors for the EVCO conference and bringing the business community into EVCO. Recently some environmental groups have attacked Florida Power and Light (FPL) making the job to solicit potential sponsors for the conference more challenging. The Marshall Foundation has a “friendly” position towards FPL. John stated that FPL has supported the Marshall Foundation’s summer intern programs for a couple of years. In 2007, FPL contributed \$25,000 to plant cypress trees on newly acquired Refuge land, resulting from a survey, just west of 441, and north of Boynton Beach Blvd extension. John discussed the best avenues for challenging FPL’s positions, policies and practices (e.g., nuclear expansion, fee increases, etc.) and indicated that the best way is through the government and not by other active means. EVCO is planning plenary sessions now for the conference and is considering sessions which will center around creating positive change in working with governmental agencies. Tom Poulson is the designated representative from the Friends to EVCO and Steve is the alternate.

Summer interns continue to work at the Refuge and are weeding the butterfly garden at present. The Friends will be taking a few Refuge employees as guests to the Marshall Foundation summer intern reception on August 6.

The bricks for Ruth and Jean have been installed.

Elinor questioned the “Point and Shoot” category in the upcoming photography contest. Lance explained that the category is a means to involve new photographers with less professional equipment and increase participation in the contest, fee revenue, and attendance at the Refuge.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 am.