

## ON THE STREET

- Age 65
- Cathy Patterson also volunteers at the Women's Circle in Boynton Beach and once a month in the infant nursery at First Baptist Church for the past 17 years.
- She has been married to Jim Patterson since 1969. The couple has two grown daughters, Britany and Ashley.
- She retired after 38 years from her family business, Natural Forest Patio in Boynton Beach.

**How does Cathy help the refuge?**



**ELINOR WILLIAMS**  
FRIENDS OF ARTHUR R. MARSHALL LOXAHATCHEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Cathy is always there when you need help, volunteering to do whatever needs doing. She's indispensable to our Friends organization and I can't imagine what we would do without her.

### **ANA CASTILLO** VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Cathy is an awesome volunteer. She always offers to help, whether with tram tours or the Friends of the Refuge, or organizing the cleanup of the Intracoastal. She's quiet, but you can always rely on her. She's the one others shadow to learn the ropes.

## ON THE SPOT



**CATHY PATTERSON**  
VOLUNTEER AT THE ARTHUR R. MARSHALL LOXAHATCHEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

### **How did you come to volunteer at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee Wildlife Refuge?**

I had been visiting the refuge since the early 1970s before there was much out there. Whenever I needed my 'country fix,' I'd head out to the refuge. It was, and still is, a sanctuary for me. Several years ago, one of the Rovers approached me and it didn't take much to convince me, but I did wait until I retired.

### **What is your role at the refuge?**

Initially, I joined the Friends of Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. Now I am on the Nature Store committee, cookbook committee, help run the annual photo contest, assist with school groups, drive the tram, work at the visitor desk and whatever else needs to be done, including pulling weeds in the pollinator garden.

### **What do you get from volunteering your time?**

Loxahatchee is the last remnant of the Everglades in this part of the state. It's my

pleasure to be able to help educate children and adults on the importance of our water resources. They are a precious commodity that need to be preserved. It's rewarding to be able to show people the history of this region and the water flow as it was before the first settlers arrived and changed the landscape of Florida.

### **What is your background?**

My dad was career Army so we lived in many places, including western New York; Vicenza, Italy; Lawton, Okla.; Colorado Springs and for the past 50 years in Boynton

Beach. My mother's family has roots in Broward County from the early 1920s.

### **Why is it important to preserve the Everglades for future generations?**

Kids today don't grow up with the same sense of freedom to enjoy the outdoors as I did. I roamed through the woods upstate New York with my siblings or my dog. Bugs and birds, snakes and foxes, wild flowers and creeks were not foreign to me. I hope to introduce the next generations to the wonders of the outside world and get them away from their handheld devices.