



Winter 2014

Landmarks

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Land Trust Announces Campaign to Save Our Indian River Lagoon Acre by Acre

The Land Trust announced the public phase of the Campaign to Save Our Indian River Lagoon: Acre by Acre at the Annual Benefit in November. The public announcement was made by a group of children ranging in ages from 8-14. These children love the Lagoon and enjoy all that it offers: fishing, boating, kayaking and birding. Each child described to the audience their experiences along the Lagoon and their hopes for future preservation of the shoreline. Once the announcement of the campaign was made - the microphone was handed over to professional auctioneer, Wesley Davis, and the first dollars were raised to kick off the public phase.

As part of the announcement the Land Trust set a goal to raise \$10-million or more to preserve other remaining sensitive lands not yet preserved along the Lagoon, and the Board also hopes to greatly increase the awareness and understanding of the mission of the Land Trust and its vision for the Lagoon.

Executive Director, Ken Grudens notes, "to date we have raised over \$9.8 million and saved more than 835 acres including 8 miles of Lagoon shoreline; now we hope everyone will join our Board and staff and Save an Acre along the Lagoon."

After all, there is still more work to be done to complete the protection of our county's shoreline, and to *preserve* our wildlife habitat, *protect* the scenic shoreline, and *provide* public access to the Lagoon.





Annual Benefit

Friends and members of the Land Trust gathered on November 7, 2013 at Rock City Gardens for the Land Trust's Annual Benefit, Land Water Wildlife: Celebrate Our Lagoon.

This year's event met with unprecedented success and the Committee, Co-Chaired by Stephanie Smith and Kathleen Schulke, is to be commended. The celebration was the kick-off of the Campaign to Save Our Indian River Lagoon Acre by Acre. Highlights of the evening included s'mores by the fire pit and dancing to the sounds of the Sunrise Party Band. With nearly 400 in attendance, the event was the best attended in the ten years it's been held at Rock City. For the first time, the net funds raised exceeded the \$100,000 mark, providing critically needed funds to continue our land protection work.





Annual Benefit Committee with Cathy, 2nd from left.

Meet: Cathy Filusch - Benefit Volunteer

I became a volunteer with the IRLT when a friend of mine, already involved, asked me to “help out.” I couldn’t possibly say “no” to my friend so I jumped in with both feet. I must admit that at the time I knew very little about the organization. Little did I know the impact this organization was going to personally have on me.

I am blessed to live on the lagoon and enjoy the many species of birds, dolphins, manatees and other wildlife. The flora and fauna indigenous to the Indian River are a

sight to behold. However, it was not until I became a volunteer with the IRLT that I became acutely aware of the precarious balance of nature our lagoon constantly requires in order to maintain its health and beauty. In return for our care of the lagoon, it gives back, in so many ways, to all in our community and those who visit. The IRLT through it’s purchasing of land, preservation of ecosystems within and around the lagoon, and its educational programs and partnerships in the community is greatly succeeding in making this a great place to live.

I have volunteered my entire life and know the importance of being part of the community in which I live and I am proud to be a part of this most worthy organization.

— Cathy J. Durrett-Filusch

To volunteer call our office — 772.794.0701.



Volunteers from the Vero Beach Geocachers joined Land Trust staff for a workday at the Lagoon Greenway in November to spread mulch on trails, install new mile-marker trail signs, and clean up trash caught in the mangroves.

Vero Beach Museum of Art collaborates with the Land Trust

The Vero Beach Museum of Art's weekly after-school teen program, ARTLAB collaborated with the Indian River Land Trust in an effort to raise awareness of the environmental state of the Indian River Lagoon.

ARTLAB is a group of students, from local secondary schools and Indian River State College, who meet after-school on a weekly basis to assist the Museum's education department with the development and implementation of projects that apply Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) skills within a creative visual arts environment.

This past fall, the Vero Beach Museum of Art hosted an exhibition entitled Simply Beautiful: Photographs from National Geographic, which served as the inspiration for the collaborative work.

Students were challenged with drawing on key themes from within the show and creating a display of their own locally based photographs. This involved many aspects of the display's creation,

from preparing, painting, and applying finishes to the structure, to editing, categorizing, trimming and mounting several hundred photographs. One student expressed "I learned to construct an exhibit from scratch. I enjoyed this part very much and learned that it is easier to work with other people who are experienced and to learn from them. I am very much a visual learner and once I see something done, I have a better chance of succeeding in that task."

This project was executed in collaboration with the staff and volunteers of the Land Trust, from which students received information and resources about the importance of land conservation and protection of valuable natural environments such as the Indian River Lagoon.

The students were invited to visit and take pictures at Land Trust properties, and upon completion of the semester all photos from the display will be sent to Tallahassee along with student letters to legislators expressing concerns about lagoon deterioration.



ArtLAB kiosk constructed by students to display photography on view at the Vero Beach Museum of Art.



ArtLAB students in their Land Trust t-shirts.



Land Trust Upcoming Events

Join the Land Trust for one or more of these exciting events — visit our website for details: www.irlt.org

*Call the office for reservations
772.794.0701*

Walking Tours – Available free of charge through March.

Padgett Creek Ranches

Two tours, on Friday:
February 21
March 21

Toni Robinson Waterfront Trail

This property is open to the public, but special tours are being conducted:
January 24
February 14
March 21

Bee Gum Point

Tours will be conducted on Wednesday:
February 5
March 5

Bee Gum Family tours will be conducted Saturday: January 25 & March 15

New this year - Kayak Excursions in conjunction with Adventure Kayaking

Wednesday, February 12
Wednesday, March 12

These special tours are limited to 15 participants. All equipment will be provided. Leaving from MacWilliams Park located on Indian River Drive, at the northeast end of Merrill Barber Bridge, you will kayak on the Lagoon and learn more about the waterfront land that has been preserved north of the Barber Bridge.

Vision 2014 Presented by Admiralty Gallery

An art exhibition benefiting the Land Trust. Works in varied medium will be shown, 20% of the proceeds benefit the Land Trust. January 14 — January 31.

Junior Scientists Study Land Trust Preserve

Beginning last fall, eleven students from three Indian River County public high schools began conducting scientific work on IRLT's 185-acre Coastal Oaks Preserve. This work is part of the Junior Scientists Fellows Program, a new collaboration of the Land Trust and the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute.

Juniors and seniors from Sebastian River High School, Indian River Charter High School and Vero Beach High School are working closely with Harbor Branch scientists on this diverse property containing a mile of frontage on Indian River Lagoon. Student projects, which will be presented at Harbor Branch's Lagoon Symposium in February, focus on various environmental aspects of the Preserve. The research will assist the Land Trust in making land management decisions for the Preserve in the future.

The two organizations collaborated to design the program and submit a grant application to Impact 100 in November 2012. The program received a runner-up grant award of \$7,000 in April 2013 which prompted two Land Trust families, the Daytons and the Bucks, to pledge a combined \$25,000 to initiate the program in May.

The program costs approximately \$50,000 a year to operate, which includes project materials and field equipment, weekly transportation for the students, and access to the Harbor Branch labs and a graduate student liaison from Florida Atlantic University. Both organizations hope to continue the program next year, with nearly double the students, for the same cost.



Harbor Branch Scientist, Dennis Hanisak discusses field tests with Junior Scientists at Coastal Oaks Preserve.

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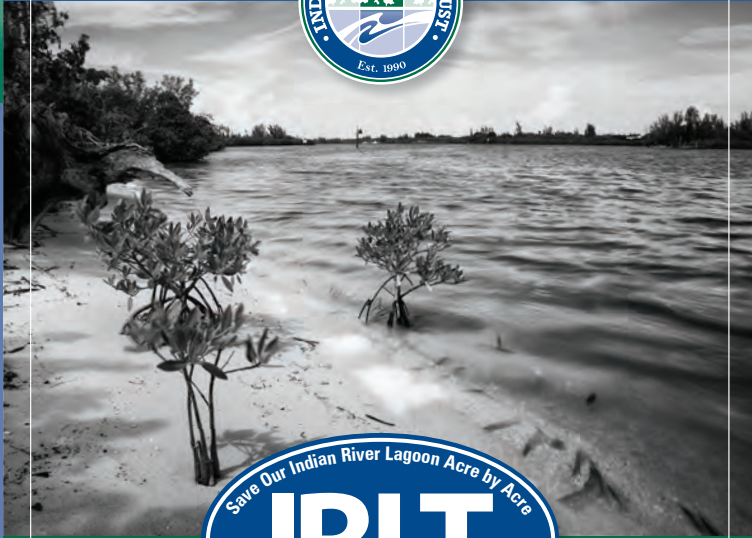
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Volunteers at the annual benefit



The staff of the Land Trust with volunteer Nikki Smith created a one-of-a-kind Holiday Tree unique to the Lagoon. The tree was donated to the Riverside Children's Theatre and auctioned as a part of the annual Festival of Trees.



Save an Acre of Land along the Indian River Lagoon

Visit: www.irlt.org | Call 772.794.0701

Special thanks to:

Complete Cleaning for helping to keep the office sparkling.

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Visit our website!

For more information on the projects and events described in this newsletter, visit us at www.irlt.org.



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