Annual Land Trust event to protect lagoon draws 400

BY MARY SCHENKEL
Staff Writer

With its lushly landscaped paths and waterways, Rock City Gardens was the perfect backdrop for the Indian River Land Trust's annual fundraiser, Land Water Wildlife; Caring for our Lagoon. Roughly 400 guests attended last Thursday's event, presented by Stephanie and Orin Smith and co-chaired by Lee Moore and Kathleen Schulke. Jackets were quickly draped over chair-backs and ladies resigned themselves to wilting hair in a sultry evening more reminiscent of August than November, but the heat did nothing to stifle enthusiasm for the cause.

"My mother showed me through her actions the importance of preserving our green space and our lagoon. And now it's become ingrained in me," said Lee Moore, referring to her mother, Toni Robinson, Director Emeritus and the Land Trust's first board president.

"I want to carry on her legacy by growing awareness going forward, with a focus on our generation and younger generations, as well as newcomers to Indian River County. I would also like to help the IRLT in its efforts to continue to amass properties of environmental significance, but my main goal for now is to get this next generation more in tune with the importance of preserving this beautiful county. Otherwise, these amazing hammocks, estuaries, green space and pristine lands will disappear. As mom says, once it's gone, it's gone."

Guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and cocktails before dining on a delicious dinner buffet catered by Elizabeth Kennedy. Monti Jones, of Monti's Flower Market, added a whimsical touch with
table centerpieces featuring enchanting fish, birds and other animals made from fruits and vegetables, such as bright yellow lemon fish, watermelon sea turtles, and owls and parrots intricately carved from pineapples.

Attendees were also treated to a delightful performance by the Encores, an elite Sebastian River High School choral ensemble, and later danced to music from the Sunrise Party Band. And despite the heat some still braved the fire pit to toast marshmallows, unable to resist the gooey goodness of s'mores.

"It gets bigger and better every year; it's amazing," said Marlyn Higgs, sitting with husband George.

County Commission Chairman Wesley Davis presided over a paddle raise,
of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.

of the Lagoon.