

April 2019, Coconut Telegraph

Important information in this issue you won't want to miss!

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LGPOA Annual Membership Drive - REMINDER - Your LGPOA subscription ends April 30th unless you renew.

From Membership Chair, Dawn Bokar:

Just a reminder that your LGPOA membership will expire on April 30th! If you haven't already, please send in your membership in the envelope provided with the recent membership mail you received, or even simpler, join or renew online right now at www.lgpoa.org/membership. We look forward to seeing your membership registration soon!

Although the mail-out was distributed to all known addresses, at least 40 were returned undeliverable. Please remember to make sure your email and mailing addresses are up to date when you renew.

****LGPOA Annual Meeting & Potluck Picnic 2018-2019**

From Vice President, Rhonda Olson:

The LGPOA Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Picnic was held at the Placida Beach Condos on Saturday, March 30th.

LGPOA President Richard Leydon Jr. led the meeting and covered the board's accomplishments in 2018 and early 2019. Environmental, membership, and planning updates were given by committee chairs. The board determined that a business meeting was needed and scheduled it for Tuesday, April 2nd, to discuss an increasing number of boaters visiting the south end of our island. Minutes for both meetings will be posted on the LGPOA website by mid-April.

We were lucky enough to have several special guests. Fire Chief Bill Underhill, updated LGPOA members on LGIFR's annual statistics and shared interesting information about a fire retardant for homes and boats. Deputy Ed Trentacosta was in attendance and presented crime occurrences on the island for the past year. Our FPL representative, Steve Norton, updated us on FPL's goals and progress since last years meeting. Lastly, Jim Locascio, Carol and Al's son from Mote Marine, gave a slide presentation on the effects of last year's red tide on the snook population in our area. We sincerely want to thank all of you for your time and everything you do to protect our island.

The LGPOA affirmed the continued service of District 1,3,5, and 7 directors for the two-year term beginning with the March 30th board meeting. They are as follows:

District 1 - Rhonda Olson

District 3 - Deric Flom

District 5 - Jeff Cowherd

District 7 - Paul Holmes

Your representative wants to know your concerns. If you are unsure about your district or how to contact your director, please refer to the "About" page on the LGPOA.org website. You can always locate your district by house number and find your director and his/her contact information there.

The meeting was followed with smoked pork prepared by Bill Underhill. There were also salads graciously donated and made by Pede Frazer, and everyone who attended brought a dish to share. As a result, the food was outstanding! A quick thank you to everyone who helped with everything from purchasing and bringing the paper products to setting up and taking down. There's a lot that goes into a picnic for 50 to 100 people. Good job islanders!

****Boating with Paddleboarders and Kayakers in the Bay**

Boaters should use good seamanship in regards to kayakers and paddleboarders when in or out of the channel. It's nice to slow down because your wake can affect them. Imagine yourself in the kayak or on the paddleboard you see and act accordingly.

Paddle Boarding Safety

Did you know the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) has determined that a paddleboard is a vessel in most situations and is required to have the same safety equipment as other small human-powered vessels such canoes and kayaks? If using a paddleboard:

1. Unless the paddleboard is being used within a "swimming, surfing or bathing area," the paddleboard must have a USCG-approved life jacket for each person and a sound-producing device on board while on the water.
2. Although persons on the paddleboard are not required to wear the life jacket while on Florida waters (unless they are less than 6 years of age), it is advisable to find a comfortable life jacket that you can wear or easily carry while on the water.
3. A "sound-producing device" is a small whistle or horn that can be heard for a least one-half nautical mile. "Referee-type" whistles or other similar devices that can be attached to your life jacket work well.
4. If you are operating in limited visibility or at night, you will also need a flashlight or lantern that produces a white light. It should be displayed to approaching vessels in enough time to prevent a collision. The light should not be continually displayed.

This information on required equipment for paddleboards is general information and is not intended to address every situation on the water. For more information on required safety equipment for boats, please visit MyFWC.com/Boating.

Kayak Safety - same as paddleboards except:

Registration is a requirement for all kayaks using a gas or electric motor. It isn't required if the kayak will be paddled.

****Hurricane Tips Needed for the LGPOA Website**

From Vice President, Rhonda Olson:

We'd like to post a list of hurricane tips on the LGPOA website for members specific to our island.

Most of us are familiar with the links below on Hurricane Preparedness Week, which is May 5-11th this year, but these suggestions don't take into consideration that we live on a bridgeless, barrier island, which results in unique situations.

Let's help each other out! Please take a minute to submit your LGI-specific tips for islanders about before, during, and/or after a hurricane. All suggestions can be submitted to twrhonda@gmail.com. I can't wait to hear from you!

<https://www.weather.gov/wrn/hurricane-preparedness>

<https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

4th of July Picnic - Helpers Needed

From Vice President, Rhonda Olson:

Remember everyone I thanked earlier for making the annual meeting picnic a success? We need some helpers for the 4th of July picnic this summer. If you're going to be on the island and you can spare an hour or two, let me know. If you won't be there on the 4th but you don't mind picking up some supplies, let me know. If you'd like to help, but you're not sure how you can, let me know! If you like to grill and you'd like to share some great cooking, let me know! The LGPOA will provide the main dish ingredients, and we're open to suggestions. Contact me at twrhonda@gmail.com or 941-999-7788.

****Island Services - New Phone Number**

From Island Services Chair, Phyllis NeSmith:

Tired of Brazilian Peppers and Australian Pines on your property? Element 4 is a biodegradable poison that can be sprayed on these trees. The park service uses the product to eliminate exotics, and the LGPOA has purchased Element 4 for the island's use. You can either spray the poison on the stumps or "skirt" the tree before cutting it down. Skirting consists of cutting a ring around the base of the trunk and spraying the poison on it while it's still standing. The tree will then die and be easier to remove.

Contact Phyllis NeSmith at islandservices@lgpoa.org or call **303-809-0493** to make an appointment. Bring a plastic spray bottle to take some Element 4 home.

****Environmental Update**

From Environmental Chair, Linda Soderquist:

Linda Soderquist has served as our island Environmental Chairperson for many years. Because she is increasingly off-island, she has offered to give her position to someone who spends more time on the island. If anyone is interested, she will provide assistance. She is more than willing to help from her computer with anything the island needs. If no one comes forward, she will remain the Chairperson.

Seagrasses were hit hard by last year's red tide. As a result, volunteers are needed for a seagrass survey in Charlotte County. Training for the survey will be held from 7 to 8:30pm on April 11th at the Charlotte County Environmental Campus as a UF Citizen Science Project. The surveys will be April 12th and April 25th. Volunteers form their own teams, consisting of at least three people. Each team uses their own boat, snorkels, and fins. For more information, contact staugler@ufl.edu or call 941-764-4346.

Marietta reported the 2018 nesting sea turtle statistics in Laura Dallas' place at the annual meeting. Despite the red tide, the season went well. There were 150 nests including one extremely rare Kemps Ridley nest, and there were only four documented wash backs of newly hatched baby turtles.

Marietta reminded islanders that turtle nesting season begins May 1st and lasts until October 31st. As a result, nothing can be left on the beach at night including chairs, shade tents, sand toys, or animals. She urged that anyone spotting a sea turtle nesting during daylight hours to please avoid disturbing it but try to take video or photos and report the nest to Laura Dallas.

The FWC is assisting in the protection of birds by posting no trespassing signs, along with orange tape, to mark off any shorebird nests on the south end of the island. The birds are easily disturbed by foot traffic and animals. Unfortunately, the orange tape is often dismantled. Let's do our best to ensure the tape and signs stay up to protect the wildlife on the south end.



Please feel free to email me at twrhonda@gmail.com with any information you'd like circulated in next month's Coconut Telegraph by the 25th of each month. The content is reviewed by board members for approval.

Rhonda Olson