

June-July 2014 Coconut Telegraph

Welcome to all new and renewing members of Little Gasparilla Property Owners Association. The job of the Coconut Telegraph is to keep islanders up to date on events and issues that concern LGI.

Docks: See our website: www.lgpoa.org for up to date information about the LGI Dock bill that has been passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor. If your dock is not already covered by a letter of consent for its current configuration, you have two years from the date the Governor signed the bill (June 12) to take advantage of the provisions of the bill. Contact Dock Committee member Tom McCoy if you are not sure whether your dock is covered by a DEP permit.

Water: Jack Boyer of Little Gasparilla Water Utility has signed an agreement with Charlotte County to bring county water to LGI. He expects to complete a connection from the mainland to the foot of King Street in 4 to 6 months. When that is complete, Charlotte County ordinances will require everyone within 100 feet of a water line to connect to LGWU. Jack plans to lay pipe to the areas of the north end of the island so that all islanders will be served by his company – and will be required to connect. The fee to connect is currently \$4500 and the monthly fee is \$49.50 plus \$4.08 per 1000 gallons of water used. **The Florida Public Service commission will hold a rate hearing for LGWU on Wednesday, July 16 at 6PM at the Tringali Center, 3400 North Access Rd in Englewood.** At this hearing, the PSC staff will present its recommendations for hookup fee, monthly base rate, and rate per 1000 gallons of water used. The PSC does not have the power to grant waivers from the mandatory hookup requirement – it is a Charlotte County ordinance and can only be changed by a vote of the Commissioners.

LGIFR: The Board of Directors of LGIFR met on June 21. At the meeting the Board voted not to increase the assessment of \$350 per house and \$125 per lot. However, the Chief, the Board, and many of those present expressed concern that the need to replace deteriorating equipment and the need for a fire station are not being provided for. The Board agreed that it will hold a planning workshop in the near future to address meeting those needs.

Feral Cats are still a problem on LGI, despite the presence of predators such as coyotes and bobcats. If you have seen a feral cat and would be willing to try to trap it, Animal Control will lend a trap at no cost. You must bring the cat in the trap to the mainland, and Animal Control will take it to the animal shelter at no cost to you. If you would like to borrow a trap, call Lt. Brian Jones at Charlotte County Animal Control: 941-833-5686 or 833-5690.

Sea Turtle Nesting Season runs from May 1st to October 31st. Island volunteers walk LGI's beaches every morning to identify and mark nests. Hatching occurs 45 to 60 days after eggs are laid. Please be careful not to leave furniture or other objects on the beach, as these may entangle or distract a female from depositing her eggs or entrap hatchlings as they emerge. Hatchlings emerge at night and travel toward the

brightest horizon. Please shield or turn off lights at your house if they can be seen from the beach. Also, if you walk the beach after dark, please walk down by the water. A turtle could be above you in the sand near the dunes and would be easily disturbed by your movement and not deposit her eggs.

Endangered shore birds also nest on LGI, particularly at the south end. These birds deposit their eggs in shallow depressions in the open sand, and are easily spooked from their nests when people come too close, leaving the eggs exposed and vulnerable to predators. Also, if the bird leaves the nest, the eggs will be exposed to direct heat from the sun that can damage them and prevent hatching. Volunteers who have spotted females sitting on eggs have roped off areas asking beachgoers to please stay away from these nests. Shorebird nesting season usually ends by August 1st.

If you have any questions about sea turtle or shorebird nesting, email Linda Soderquist: linist@hotmail.com.

LGPOA has been providing free **environmentally friendly herbicide** to members to eradicate pepper trees and other exotics. This herbicide, called Element 4, is to be sprayed on the freshly cut stump, not on the foliage. If you would like a supply of Element 4, contact Phyllis or Charles NeSmith at 697-2242.

Mosquitos: When mosquitos are present in large numbers, call Mosquito Control at 764-4370 and ask them to spray. They seem to respond quicker when many people call.

The Great Bay Scallop Search will take place on Saturday July 21 from 9AM to 2PM. Those who have lived and visited in our area know that scallops were once plentiful in Lemon Bay and Gasparilla Sound but are now rare. Every year volunteers join in the effort to find and count scallops in our area to see if they are making a comeback. For more information or if you would like to volunteer, call 941-764-4346.

The LGI Chapel will hold services every Sunday through the summer from 9:30 to 10:15AM. All are welcome to attend this non-denominational service. Dress is casual.

New Manatee signs have been posted in the bay at the south end of the south channel that comes to LGI. Be sure to notice these when boating at night.

The **6th Annual Labor Day Weekend Fishing Tournament** will be held again this year. Check our website for details: www.lgpoa.org.