



The Pelican Island Audubon Society

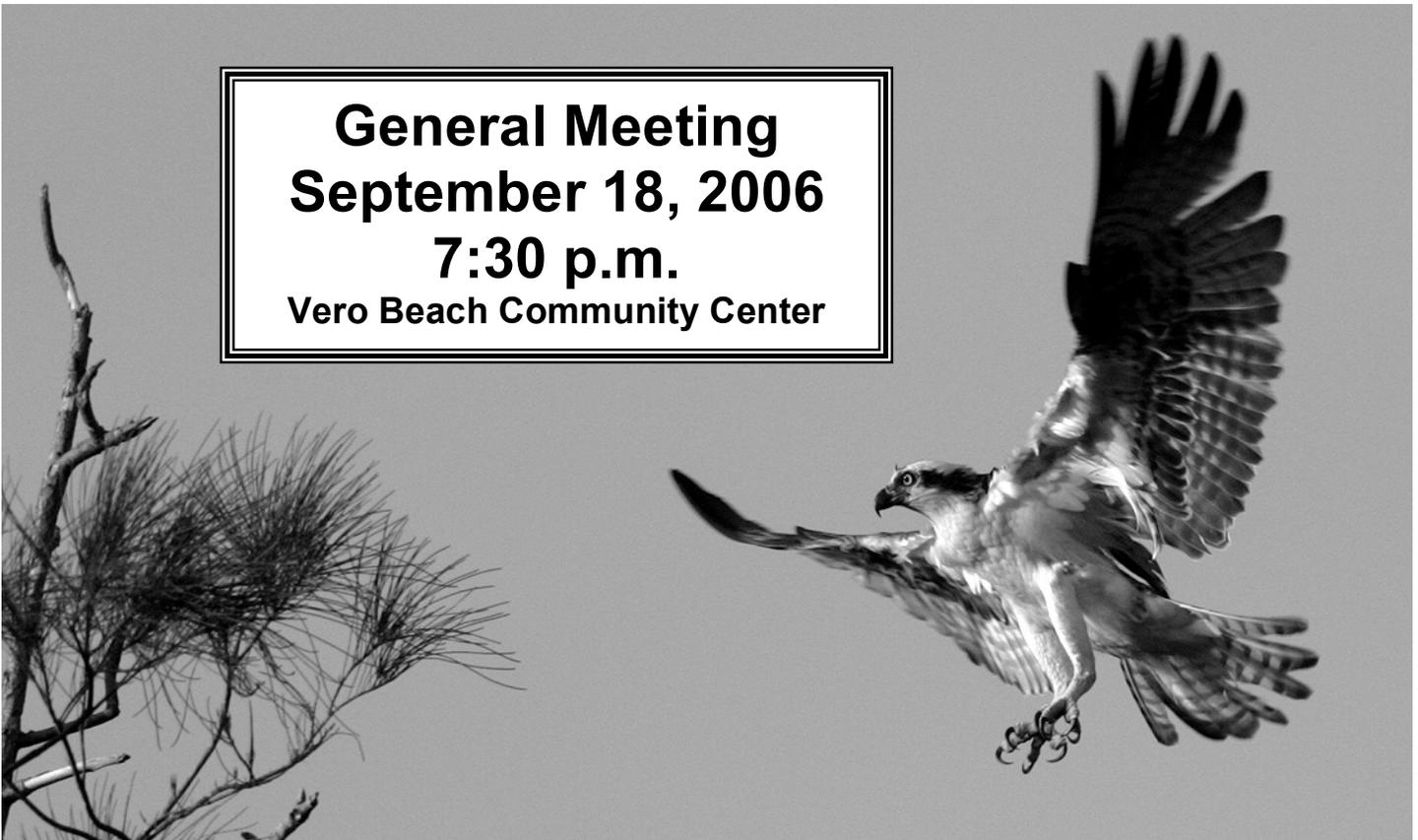
Peligram

- founded in 1964 to serve Indian River County -

P.O. Box 1833, VERO BEACH, FL 32961 772-567-3520 Fax 772-567-3521 www.pelicanislandaudubon.org
Our 42nd Year Vol. 42 No. 6 September 2006

Our Mission: To preserve and protect the animals, plants, and natural communities in Indian River County through advocacy, education, and public awareness.

**General Meeting
September 18, 2006
7:30 p.m.
Vero Beach Community Center**



Ospreys of Pelican Island

National Wildlife Refuge

Pelican Island Audubon Society

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Office Manager **Bob Montanaro**

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COASTAL CLEANUP SEPTEMBER 16, 2006 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.

In partnership with The Ocean Conservancy, the Pelican Island Audubon Society will be conducting the 2006 Coastal Cleanup at Wabasso Beach, Jaycee Beach, South Beach, and Round Island. Approximately 4,000 volunteers took part in 2005 to remove several tons of garbage from shorelines, beaches, parks, spoil islands, highways, and school campuses to make Indian River County a cleaner place for everyone. If you or your organization would like to help with this worthwhile cause, please call 772-567-3520 to volunteer.

ORCA CANOE TRIP SEPTEMBER 10, 2006 8:00 A.M. TO NOON

Richard Baker and Alice Rowe, using Audubon-supplied canoes and equipment, will be leading a canoe trip through the coastal wetlands of the mangrove-fringed "back country" of the Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area and a nearby bird rookery. This fun and leisurely paddle usually offers memorable views of birds and other Lagoon wildlife and plants. For reservations and directions, please call 772-567-3520. Cost is \$5 for members and \$20 for non-members.

OSPREYS OF PELICAN ISLAND

GENERAL MEETING

The September 18, 2006 general meeting at the Vero Beach Community Center, 2266 14th Avenue, in downtown Vero Beach starting at 7:30 p.m. will present the premiere of *Ospreys of Pelican Island* by Bob Montanaro. The movie follows the nesting attempt by a pair of Ospreys at Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge throughout the 2006 nesting season. Approximately 30,000 images were taken during the season of which about 500 images were selected for the movie to chronicle the lives of the Ospreys along with showing the great variety of other wildlife that live in the nation's first established wildlife refuge. Refreshments will be served following the program.



A pair of Pileated Woodpeckers fledged two young from a cavity near the Osprey nest.

Buy a copy today!

You can now purchase your copy of *Reflections of Blue Cypress* on our website using Visa or Mastercard! Visit us at pelicanislandaudubon.org to see how!!

DECISION TIME....

Knowing where we are heading, but what can we do to change it?

If in doubt about where we are heading in Indian River County, there are at least two books that help us see our future. One of my favorites, *A Land Remembered* by Patrick D. Smith, published in 1984, should be recommended reading for all who settle in Indian River County. Using a compelling, earthy novel, Smith chronicles Florida's transformation from wilderness to agriculture, and finally to development by following three generations of one family from 1858 to 1968. The first generation fights for survival in Florida's beautiful



The President's Hoot!

wilderness, the second develops cattle ranching and citrus, and sadly ends when the 3rd generation exploits the land by developing south Florida as we see it today. Unfortunately, we can see many parallels in the Treasure Coast, which should cause some concern and alarm. In the novel, Sol of the 3rd generation explains that some people including himself were just stupid not knowing what they had done to south Florida, while with others it was all greed: "More is better, bigger is better. Well, you bastards are too stupid to know there soon won't be no more. Else you haven't been here long enough to remember."

Sol further laments to a gala of the rich and famous to honor him for his successful development of south Florida: "If I could rip out the concrete and put back the woods, I would. But I can't. Progress ain't reversible. What's done is done forever, and I'm sure as hell not proud of it. If any of you idiots had the brains of a jay-bird you'd stop right now too. From what we've done to this place in just the past fifty years, what the hell you think it's going to be like in another fifty?"

The second, a recent book, is *The Swamp* by Michael Grunwald, a *Washington Post* reporter, who recently was a speaker at Harbor Branch. It covers the history and politics of the Everglades and Florida including the present efforts to repair the ecological mess.

With the primary election in only a few weeks and the general election in a few months, we might reflect on what has happened recently in Indian River County. On Audubon's initiative both a \$50 million bond issue to preserve environmental, agricultural, and historical lands was voted in by 67% of our citizens and a tougher tree

ordinance was passed. After much delay the county and Audubon are in the process of revising a landscaping ordinance. But the management of growth seems out of control. We even watched these last two years while new houses were being built madly in excess of need, but we could not find people to repair the houses we have that were damaged by the hurricanes.

After spending public funds in prior years on reviewing the sentiment of the county's growth and finding that there was a consensus of opinion, including our county commissioners, that new towns were not wanted, unfortunately three county commissioners changed their minds from no new towns to now wanting new towns. Instead of allowing the urban area to be built out with its available 118,000 lots, more than double what we utilize today, they may want to extend the boundaries outward very soon. Destroying large blocks of remaining undeveloped lands is cheaper than holding the line.

In the meantime, there are major concerns with our planning for the expected effects of growth:

- We are discovering that we have major water issues. St. Johns Water Management District is prohibiting the county from drilling new wells in the south county to protect St. Lucie County's water supply. With our growth and water misuse, the county now plans to drill 6 huge new wells in north county, but we now know this may have serious impacts on the water pressure and salinity of our thousands of agriculture and residential wells. Moreover, how do we resolve the excess brine (salt) from the reverse osmosis process? Dumping it into the Indian River Lagoon is not acceptable to SJRWMD, NOAA, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as well as to Audubon. It may have to be injected back into the ground. County officials say we have plenty of water, but in fact, we are restricted to watering our lawns to two days a week.
- Our transportation systems are not keeping up with the growth or encouraging reduced pollution or encouraging people getting exercise. We find we need to widen our roads (e.g. 66th, 43rd and 27th Avenues), which destroy homes and the neighborhoods of people who have lived there for years. Many of our major intersections are broken. Better public transportation with the ability to transport bicycles is needed, along with increased bike paths.

Continued on page 4....

Pelican Island Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1833
Vero Beach, FL 32961-1833

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...The President's Hoot, continued from page 3

In Conclusion:

- We have made a mess of much of our growth.
- We must change course
- We can change the way we do things in Indian River County

This is paradise, and we need to keep it that way. Every so often, citizens have a chance to make their voices heard. Now is the time for you to exercise this right. Two county commission positions will be decided in the primary, the Republican primary. The only way for independents or Democrats to have a say was to switch parties for the primary before August 7th. Few people turn out for primaries; therefore if you vote in the Republican primary, your vote will have a heavy weight. The candidates differ on their stand on development, so your vote will make a difference, even one vote. Hope to see you at the polls on September 7th. This is your chance to preserve our county.

Richard Baker, President

VOLUNTEERING FOR WILDLIFE

The next Pelican Island Wildlife Festival is scheduled for Saturday, March 10, 2007 at Sebastian's Riverview Park. The festival is in its fifteenth year and celebrates the Treasure Coast's unique natural resources and the Birthday of Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge. The event has grown to become dependant on over 130 volunteers to execute and the expected guest attendance is approximately 7,000. The festival planning committee has begun to meet monthly to plan next year's event. Volunteer opportunities include joining the planning committee, assisting with event preparations the two weeks before the event and day-of-event volunteers.

Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge is also seeking new Refuge volunteers for: 1) Outdoor Refuge Maintenance Assistant; and 2) Office Assistant. For more information about these and other volunteer opportunities with the Refuge, contact the Refuge Volunteer Coordinator, Joanna Taylor at (772)562-3909 ext. 258 or e-mail joanna_taylor@fws.gov



BECOME A MEMBER OF THE PELICAN ISLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Membership benefits include subscriptions to *Audubon* magazine, *Florida Naturalist*, and the PIAS newsletter *The Peligram*. Additionally, members have full borrowing privileges to the PIAS nature library and much more!

Please choose a membership:

- \$20 one-year membership
- \$30 two-year membership
- \$15 one-year student membership
- \$20 Friend (receive *The Peligram* only)
- Check box if a *MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL*.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-Mail _____

Please send your name and address along with a check payable to the "Pelican Island Audubon Society" to: Pelican Island Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1833, Vero Beach, FL 32961