

The MULLET RAPPER

What's Happening in the Everglades City Area

FRIDAY, JULY 25, 2008

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Summer Camp Ended With Sweet Treats

by Helen Bryan

Our wonderful five weeks of Reach Out Everglades summer camp, directed by Pam Drake, ended on Friday, July 18. Tawny Wood's picture poster (photo left) says it all. Each Friday an exciting activity was planned for the childrens' enjoyment. An exception was Tuesday, July 1, when Lt. Mark Milligan headed up the second annual trip to WANNADO CITY at Sawgrass Mills near Ft.



Lauderdale. Thanks to Collier County Sheriff's Office, there were complimentary entry fees for 51 campers and counselors attending an awesome day of fun, pizza, and the enjoyment of learning about career jobs. Reach Out Everglades supplied the beautiful motor coach that took them there and back.

This was followed up by a pizza and skating party at our local Community Center which turned out to be a screaming success as the more experienced skaters chased and tagged each other while "it had it's up and downs", but the resilient campers skated on.



Down came the rains Tuesday but that didn't put a damper on the excited campers who enjoyed a 1-1/2 hour boat tour with Captain Julie Russell pointing out the wildlife including manatees, dolphins, blue herons, beautiful pink spoonbills as well as other birds while aboard the vessel "Starfish" at Everglades National Park Boat Tours, thanks to Mayor Sammy and Brenda Hamilton.

Certificates and awards were presented to each camper on the last day by Director Pam Drake. Outstanding Camper with the most awards was presented to Lillian Pablo-Jeronimo. The Perfect Attendance certificate for the five weeks went to Brandon Beaty. As the final awards were given out, lunch was served along with a special party cake, ending with all students bused by driver Robin Smallwood to Everglades Scoop. Owner Sandy Dampier dipped up 29 cups of ice cream allowing the campers to enjoy their choice of flavor for a sundae with sprinkles and whipped cream.

Then it all ended with quick hugs and goodbyes to special camper friends before boarding the school bus for the last time.

More Summer Camp photos on page 5 and on our website.

Website Sponsors Needed

Local businesses have a chance to support Reach Out while, at the same time, getting some advertising. Our neighborhood charity is developing a website and is looking for sponsors. For a yearly contribution of \$50, your name and a link to your website will appear on their Contacts page.

The website should "go live" within the next week. You can pick up a Sponsor's Form at City Hall or phone 695-2905 for more info.

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JULY/AUGUST 2008

<u>SUN</u>	<u>MON</u>	<u>TUES</u>	<u>WED</u>	<u>THURS</u>	<u>FRI</u>	<u>SAT</u>
20	21 Hour of Prayer Holy Family Catholic Church 7 pm	22	23 Ladies Coffee Ivey House 8 am	24	25 POI Fishing Tournament, call 671-9347	26 POI Fishing Tournament, call 671-9347
27	28 Hour of Prayer Everglades First Baptist Church 7 pm	29	30 Ladies Coffee Ivey House 8 am	31	AUGUST 1 new moon ☾ Deaconess Lecture see p.9	2
3	4 Hour of Prayer Everglades Community Church 7 pm	5 Aide to Congressman City Hall, 3 pm City Council City Hall, 5:30 pm	6 Ladies Coffee Ivey House 8 am	7 Lions Club Depot, 7 pm	8	9
10	11 Hour of Prayer Copeland Baptist Church, 7 pm Early Voting starts	12	13 Ladies Coffee Ivey House 8 am	14	15	full moon ● 16 Mobile PetVet, see p.3
17 Mobile PetVet, see p.3	18 Hour of Prayer Chokoloskee Church of God 7 pm	19 BACK TO SCHOOL Reach Out City Hall 8:30 am	20 Ladies Coffee Ivey House 8 am	21 Lions Club Bd Mtg Depot, 5 pm Copeland Civic Association 7 pm	22	23

Tuesday, August 26: Primary Election August 30 - Sept 1: Clyde Butcher's Labor Day "Muck-About"

Wednesday, September 3: City Council Meeting

Monday, October 13: OFCD Advisory Board

THRIFT SHOP: Thurs, Fri, Sat, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm

MUSEUM: Tues-Fri, 9 am to 5 pm; Sat, 9 am to 4 pm

FOOD PANTRY: Sat, 8:30 to 10:30 am, Community Church

CHRIST-CENTERED ADDICTION RECOVERY PROGRAM, Chokoloskee Church of God, phone 695-4626 for schedule

SHERIFF AT CITY HALL: Thurs, 7/24 (1-2:30 pm) Mon, 7/28 (9-11 am) Wed, 7/30 (9-11 am)

for August hours, see the list outside the office

OBITUARY

Ernie Masey, 51, of Copeland died suddenly on July 18. He leaves his widow Janice (Hamilton) and children Nicole Masey, Wendell & Tina Wooten. The family would like to thank everyone who has contributed and expressed their good wishes. Further donations can be sent to Janice Masey, P.O. Box 133, Copeland, 34137, or left in the collection buckets around town.

BARTON VISIT

George Barton, aide to Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, will be at City Hall on **Tuesday, August 5**, at 3:00 p.m. to talk with constituents.

CITY COUNCIL

Everglades City Council will meet on **Tuesday, August 5**, at 5:30 p.m. after its summer break. The September meeting will be held on Wednesday, 9/3/08, rather than Tuesday.

MOBILE PET VET

Dr Baker will be here on **Saturday, August 16**, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in McLeod Park, Everglades City, and from 2 to 4 p.m. in Copeland. On **Sunday, August 17**, she will be doing surgery by appointment only during the morning. Phone her at 777-PETS.



Laura Moseley and Ken Duke had their dream wedding at City Hall on Monday, July 14, officiated over by City Clerk Dotty Joiner. The happy couple spent their honeymoon in ECity, a relaxing respite from their busy lives in the Miami and the Keys. Laura's parents were married here in 1946 by Lucy McLeod (see the Rapper, 7/11/08).

History on TV

WGPU-TV, our local public station, will focus on early settlers in Immokalee in "Untold Stories" on **Friday, July 25**, at 8:30 p.m.. The program is repeated on Saturday at 6:30 p.m. and on Sunday at 11:00 a.m. For more info, see www.wgcu.org.

SKATING RINK CLOSED

The Skating Rink at the Community Center will be closed for a few weeks while work is being done inside. Watch the *Rapper* for good news about what's happening and when it will be finished.

OCHOPEE FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT

- 07/12/08: Vehicle Accident, 60m I-75
- 07/12/08: Emergency Medical, Everglades City
- 07/13/08: Emergency Medical, Everglades City
- 07/14/08: Heart Problem, Port of the Islands
- 07/14/08: Vehicle Accident, 75m I-75
- 07/15/08: Vehicle Accident, US-41 and SR-29
- 07/16/08: Vehicle Accident, Ochopee
- 07/16/08: Vehicle Accident, 68m I-75
- 07/16/08: Vehicle Accident, 67m I-75
- 07/16/08: Possible Cardiac Arrest, Janes Scenic Drive
- 07/18/08: Vehicle Accident, East of Monroe Station
- 07/18/08: Person Fell, Plantation Island
- 07/18/08: Person Fainted, 59m I-75
- 07/18/08: Chest Pains, Chokoloskee Island
- 07/19/08: Vehicle Accident, 55m I-75
- 07/19/08: Vehicle Accident, 63m I-75
- 07/20/08: Vehicle Accident, 63m I-75
- 07/20/08: Vehicle Accident, 74m I-75
- 07/22/08: Hand Laceration, Ochopee
- 07/22/08: Emergency Medical, 80m I-75

OFCD Board Holiday

The OFCD Advisory Board is on summer recess until **October 13**. It normally meets on the **2nd Monday** of each month at **6:00 p.m.** at the **Fire Station**. Members of the public are always welcome to attend.

Welcome to Todd Schilling who has joined OFCD from Isle of Capri. Originally from Cleveland, he lives in Naples and has three children.



TIDES FOR BARRON RIVER

INFORMATION FROM <http://TIDESANDCURRENTS.NOAA.GOV>

07/25/2008	Fri	02:36AM	0.6	L	07:48AM	2.7	H	04:10PM	0.3	L	09:25PM	2.1	H
07/26/2008	Sat	03:23AM	0.8	L	08:32AM	2.8	H	05:24PM	0.1	L	11:15PM	2.0	H
07/27/2008	Sun	04:37AM	0.9	L	09:34AM	2.9	H	06:33PM	-0.1	L			
07/28/2008	Mon	01:09AM	2.1	H	06:02AM	1.0	L	10:53AM	3.1	H	07:35PM	-0.2	L
07/29/2008	Tue	02:18AM	2.2	H	07:13AM	1.0	L	12:07PM	3.2	H	08:32PM	-0.3	L
07/30/2008	Wed	02:56AM	2.3	H	08:15AM	0.9	L	01:08PM	3.4	H	09:25PM	-0.4	L
07/31/2008	Thu	03:26AM	2.4	H	09:10AM	0.8	L	02:02PM	3.6	H	10:12PM	-0.4	L
08/01/2008	Fri	03:54AM	2.4	H	10:00AM	0.7	L	02:52PM	3.6	H	10:56PM	-0.3	L
08/02/2008	Sat	04:22AM	2.5	H	10:48AM	0.5	L	03:40PM	3.5	H	11:37PM	-0.2	L
08/03/2008	Sun	04:52AM	2.5	H	11:35AM	0.4	L	04:27PM	3.3	H			
08/04/2008	Mon	12:15AM	0.0	L	05:22AM	2.6	H	12:21PM	0.4	L	05:17PM	3.0	H
08/05/2008	Tue	12:52AM	0.2	L	05:54AM	2.6	H	01:09PM	0.3	L	06:10PM	2.7	H
08/06/2008	Wed	01:27AM	0.4	L	06:28AM	2.7	H	02:01PM	0.3	L	07:07PM	2.4	H
08/07/2008	Thu	02:02AM	0.6	L	07:06AM	2.7	H	03:01PM	0.4	L	08:11PM	2.2	H
08/08/2008	Fri	02:35AM	0.8	L	07:50AM	2.6	H	04:11PM	0.4	L	09:28PM	2.0	H

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In most cases, pain from shingles recedes after the vesicles crust. Sometimes, however, the pain persists - this is a condition called postherpetic neuralgia.

If you are 18 or older and had shingles more than six months ago but still have pain, you may be eligible to participate in a clinical research study of an investigational drug.

Study drug and study-related procedures will be provided.

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SCHOOL NEWS

Everglades City School

phone: 377-9800 or 695-2561

website: www.collier.k12.fl.us/evg

From Savannah's Eyes

Ahhhh! The wind. I love it when the wind blows. It's been so hot here lately and it has also been raining a lot. But when it is really hot there is always a breeze here, or most of the time there is. Anyway, the town is empty. I think everyone is on vacation, because it is

summer. So what I have been doing is going swimming to cool off. And staying at home, spending time with family and friends, before school starts. But I am looking forward to school starting because every year you get smarter and learn different things. That's what I like to do best. I get to move up and be a 6th grader this year. And I'll be glad to see my teacher again. Also, talking about cooling off, we went to Disney Typhoon Lagoon Water Park. It was a blast of cold water. La'Shaun and I loved it so much. Actually, we all did. Then the next day we went to Disney Animal Kingdom Park and we got to ride Mount Everest. It's an AWESOME ride. We rode it three times in a row. I've been doing lots of fun things this summer. I love cooling off in the summer with water. Until next time, Savannah.

P.S. If you're really desperate for cooling off, get under a water hose. I've done that too. FUN FUN FUN!

Savannah Oglesby will be in the 6th grade at Everglades City School and is a regular contributor to this paper.



A special outing for summer campers was a boat ride through the Ten Thousand Islands, courtesy of Everglades National Park Boat Tours.

More Summer Camp Photos

Summer Camp is sponsored Reach Out Everglades & C.O.P.S., Inc., our neighborhood charity.

With thanks to Helen Bryan for photos and reporting.



During the final treat at Everglades Scoop, the girls giggled while the boys got down to some serious eating.



We had this email from Kim Perraud, staying here for the summer from Weston:

I have been so blessed this year with the Summer Camp program. My son, Garrett (age 6 1/2) shared with me one afternoon what had gone on during his day at Camp. "Mom, do you know that I have had a **miracle** happen to me?". Well, to my surprise, I had no idea that Garrett truly even knew the definition of the word *miracle*. Once I was assured he clearly understood *miracle*, I asked him, "Garrett, what *miracle* happened to you?". He looked up at me with his beautiful blue eyes, his hair a bit lighter than what it was the beginning of summer, and said, "Mom, my **miracle** was that I was able to attend the Summer Camp in Everglades City".

The School has issued these Guidelines for Clothing:

- 1- Polo style shirt, any solid color, short or long sleeve.
- 2- Pants, knee-length shorts, and knee-length skirts must be solid color (khaki, navy, or black). No embellishments, embroidery, or sequins, etc.
- 3- No altered Jeans or holes will be permitted. NO baggy pants or hip huggers, NO athletic/sport shorts, sweats/warm-up style pants outside Physical Ed class.
- 4- Shoes with closed toe and heel for both male and female with no more than 1" heel.
- 5- Socks in solid colors: white, khaki, navy, or black.

ELEMENTARY STUDENTS ONLY: can wear jumpers in khaki, navy or black (no embellishments such as embroidery, sequins, etc).

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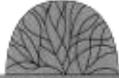
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Cats & Dogs

by Marya Repko

I don't know if this is a Household Tip or a Recipe or the lead-in to a Book Review but ...

I shared some V8 juice with my doggie (a friendly Bichon Frise) and he lapped it up. Then, usually a reluctant eater, he attacked his bowl of kibble.

I've also noticed that cats like tomatoes. I used to squirt ketchup onto their canned food when they got bored with it. I once had a kitten who licked out the juicy center of a quarter of tomato as a special treat. Cats and dogs like spaghetti sauce (and sometimes enjoy the pasta) but maybe that's because of the meat in the ingredients.

Generally, my domestic animals will eat most of the things I do – not all of it good for them, like potato chips. The doggie is mad about steamed asparagus and broccoli. He doesn't like black beans but will pick out the rice kernels when I give him a spoonful of beans & rice. And he loves anything with lashing of mayonnaise (yes, even lettuce).

Of course, all these people treats are just supplements to the animal's staple diet of kibble which is supposedly balanced but probably boring.

If you have both cats and dogs, read the packages and note that cats have about 31% protein in their diet whereas dogs have only 26%. A dog eating cat kibble could be hyper from the extra protein and a cat nibbling on dog food could have too much filler which might make it overweight.

A clever British author, writing in the voice of his dog, referred to kibble as "sawdust balls" – to read more, see "*Buster's Diaries*" by Roy Hattersley, a very amusing book which is available by request from our local library.

Angels of the Swamp

by Patricia Huff



Angels give and continue to give throughout the years, no matter what the circumstances. Our angels this month are a married couple but it is separately that they do so much to help others. When a friend or neighbor is sick, Rudy Oglesby is the first to bring homemade chicken soup. When she travels she always returns with a little gift for her friends, something special from the area she's visited. Parker Oglesby is also a special angel for the constant giving of his time and talents to help everyone in the community. After Hurricane Wilma, he was the first on the scene to repair broken screens in neighbors' porches (without even being asked). He did so with his own supplies and never expected anything in return. That's one thing that is so special about this couple. They do things from the bottom of their hearts, always thinking of others. Every year Parker is called upon to sing and play his guitar at various events and his voice brings tears to the eyes of many. They both love children; not only their beautiful daughter Savannah, but all children. Rudy takes care of neighborhood children and delights in their grandchildren. She also volunteers at the school. The list could go on and on about how these two local residents have given back to their community but in defining what angels are, they are true to what we all aspire to be: unselfish, giving, loving, and proud members of our community.



Off the Shelf – Book Review

“Weird Florida” by Charlie Carlson

reviewed by Patricia Huff

With gas prices as high as they are this summer, Floridians may want to stay around their home state and visit places they've never seen before. Get off the beaten path and take this book with you. The subtitle “Your Travel Guide to Florida's Local Legends and Best Kept Secrets” describes only a fraction of what's in store for you. It's full of exciting people and places, and it's not just for those on the road. The armchair traveler will also enjoy the chapters on “Bizarre Beasts, Sunshine State Ghosts and Ancient Mysteries.” Since I always like to travel the back roads of Florida, I'll be using this book as a reference to cities and towns throughout the State. Other chapters include “The Weirdest Mailbox, Roadside Oddities and Abandoned and Forgotten.” Of course, the Skunk Ape is mentioned and so is the oldest living thing in Florida: a 3,500-year-old cypress tree with a girth of 47 feet and a height of 126 feet. It's not located in Big Cypress or the Fakahatchee but in Longwood. There's page after page of interesting facts about Florida. Stay close to home and enjoy the rest of your summer!

Household Tip

How can you save on electricity bills, protect your furniture and rugs from fading, and provide a bit of privacy? Window film can do it for you. It might also stop your windows from shattering.

Fortunately, we have our own expert right here in Everglades City. Skip Freeman of All Season Window Tinting offers a variety of shades and thicknesses of film that he can apply to cut down on harmful rays from the sun. For info, contact him at (239) 825-5874 or at Skip_Freeman@hotmail.com



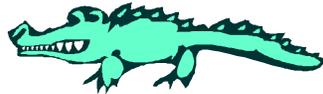
Fishing Report

by Capt. Bill Lindsay

Everyone I've spoken to says the fishing is very good. A lot of the fish are being taken at the mouths of rivers on the falling tide. Because of all the rain, lots of bait and small crabs are being washed down rivers. Capt. Don Cochran caught and released several tarpon and snook and released a huge sawfish. Capt. Herb Kehoe has been catching lots of big snook on live bait. His best fish was a monster 28-pounder. Capt. Bruce Hitchcock has also been doing well. One day he caught and released snook, tarpon, and redfish. That's a backcountry grand slam. I have not been fishing much but I have taken several snook off my dock in Chokoloskee. Most of the fishermen have been fishing out on the Gulf but I have heard of some good snook catches in the backcountry, as well.

Capt. Bill Lindsay lives in Chokoloskee and has been fishing in the Everglades National Park for 27 years. In 1992 he was Master Angler of the MET Tournament.

Gator Hunting



The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is offering alligator hunters a no-cost, three-hour class to help them prepare for the August 15 through November 1 statewide alligator harvest. Reservations are not required to attend a class.

Attendance is not mandatory for licensed hunters, but the FWC recommends that participants attend, especially if they have not previously hunted for alligators.

Class topics include preparing for the hunt, hunting techniques and safety, harvesting and processing, caring for your alligator hide and alligator hunting rules and regulations.

Persons who do not have an alligator harvest permit can attend if they want to learn what hunting alligators is all about. For info, phone Steve Stiegler, 850-488-3831

The two courses closest to Everglades City are:

Aug. 2, 1-4 p.m. - Tampa
Florida State Fairgrounds

Aug. 3, 2-5 p.m. - Okeechobee
Okeechobee County Civic Center

For more info, see www.myfwc.com.

BANKING BOTTLES

by Shirley Leonard



I miss Florida, particularly Everglades City where I worked this past winter and spring as a volunteer for the Everglades National Park.

One thing I don't miss is how beverage bottles and cans heavily litter many roadways.

Arguably one of the most beautiful and ecologically stunning states, Florida is one of 39 without what's known as a "bottle bill".

Beverage bottles and cans no longer litter the landscape in 11 states: Connecticut, California, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oregon, and Vermont.

In Massachusetts, for example, each bottle or can is worth a nickel, \$1 for every 20. In Maine each is worth a dime. Purchasers pay this as a deposit when they buy the beverages and it motivates them to return the empties. And, if they carelessly throw one out a car window, someone usually comes along fairly quickly to collect and redeem it.

Ten more states are currently conducting campaigns for bottle bills: Arizona, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee and West Virginia.

Among the missing is Florida.

Before the bottle bill was passed in 1983 in Massachusetts, people in passing cars would often throw beer bottles against a large granite ledge close to my bedroom windows. Once those same bottles became worth a nickel each, the nights became considerably quieter and the rocky area safer for children to play in.

Shirley Leonard was a journalist in Quincy, Massachusetts, on The Patriot Ledger for over 20 years and a regular contributor to the Rapper last winter while she was a volunteer at the Park.

PARK VOLUNTEERS



Join the Everglades National Park Volunteer Team! Enhance the experience that thousands of visitors have in the Everglades by orienting them to the park's natural, cultural, and recreational resources at the Gulf Coast Visitor Center. This is a year-round position with flexible hours. During winter months, assist rangers as they lead visitors on guided canoe trips through the Everglades. Paddle through mangrove-lined creeks and across an open bay dotted with mangrove islands. Along the way, lend visitors and rangers a hand when needed. You'll enjoy beautiful views while helping visitors from near and far to explore, enjoy, and learn about the unique mangrove ecosystem. For more info, call Jackie at 305-242-7752 or email Jackie_Dostourian@NPS.GOV.



LOCAL HISTORY

The Florida State Archives describes this photo as "Deaconess Bedell and ladies from Chokoloskee". Do you recognize them?

DEACONESS LECTURE

"The Influence of Deaconess Harriett Bedell in My Life" is the subject of a talk by local Floridian Dr Gary Pettit on **Friday, August 1**, at 3:30 p.m. at the Naples Preserve (on US-41 just before Coastland Mall). The talk is one of a series organized by Naples Backyard History. For info, phone 213-7120.

MARCO LECTURE

The Marco Island Historical Society meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Mackle Park. On **Tuesday, August 5**, the speaker will be Geoff Fahringer, renown diver from the Collier County Sheriff's dive team and archeologist. For info, phone (239) 394-7280.

MUSEUM NEWS

This painting entitled "Dan House Prairie" was donated to the Friends by Marco artist JoAnn Sanborn for a raffle. Tickets are \$2 each (3 for \$5) and are available at the Museum.



The gift shop has a few new items including fridge magnets, the book "The Tamiami Trail" by Maria Stone, and a music CD "My Florida" by Valerie Wisecracker and Cindy Hackney. Phone 695-2159 to order.



From The Saddle

Report from Patty Huff



email dated 7/14/08:

We drove up to Abingdon, Virginia, where we started this summer's biking adventure.

After a wonderful evening with the hosts at a B&B in this historic town, we biked the Virginia Creeper Trail and up into Mt. Rogers, camping the first night at a Baptist Church hostel where they let us camp outside (only lodging around). The next day took us up and down the mountain range. The rain felt good but we decided to stay in a motel in Pulaski before heading out our third day in the mountains. The weather since then has been great (although a little too warm at times but pleasant now).

We've been traveling through some incredibly beautiful countryside and quaint little towns, meeting wonderful people along the way. Our third night we stayed in Troutville at a City Park after showering in the local fire station (it's close to the Appalachian Trail and hikers do this all the time, they tell us). The community was great. They had no lodging except the local park. From there we continued to climb with steep hills and lots of roller-coaster roads until we found a river road and Mallard Duck Campground.

The following day we climbed our steepest hill, CR-608, which leaves Vesuvius and goes straight up to the Blue Ridge Parkway (I had to walk the last 2 miles; just too steep for me but Steve continued on the bike; he's amazing, as always!). The Blue Ridge Parkway was really worth the trip up the mountain. Incredible scenery, then lots of downhill all the way to Charlottesville where we had dinner at a wonderful Northern Italian Restaurant; we stayed near the University of Virginia and walked around the old historic area the next day before biking on to Culpeper. We probably had one of our best roads ever on this day: CR-615, shady with beautiful farm/horse land. We stayed at the Lord Culpeper Historic Hotel which had a great Thai Restaurant. Today we biked through more horse country to Centreville, just west of Fairfax, to have dinner tonight with Steve's cousin.

As always, the people we meet make the trip more enjoyable. Everyone is very friendly and helpful. Virginia has such history and we've enjoyed just riding through all the country roads.

email dated 7/20/08:

Steve and I are still biking the roads of Virginia. We arrived in Washington DC on Tuesday after biking the Washington and Old Dominion (W&OD) trail into the city. It was exciting to cross the bridge and arrive at the Kennedy Center. We then biked to a friend of Dustin's where we spent the night near DuPont Circle. That afternoon we toured the Hirshhorn Museum and the Air & Space Museum at the Smithsonian. Really enjoyed both. The next day we biked all over D.C., including the White House, the Mall, the Vietnam Memorial (where Steve found the name of an old friend), and the Lincoln Memorial. Best way to see Washington, by bike.

There are so many great bike trails leaving D.C. so we headed south past the Regan National Airport along the Potomac on the Mt Vernon Trail. The next day we had a wonderful ride on country roads (getting lost somewhere outside of Quantico on secondary roads), then headed to the Northern Neck peninsula. The best rides were on the very small county roads from Oak Grove, through Newland to Warsaw where we had a great lunch (crab quiche for me), staying in Kilmarnock. The weather has been so hot (in the mid-90's with lots of humidity) that we've only camped once since we left the mountains. Friday was our longest day of 84 miles but yesterday and today we did 74 each so on the straight roads and rolling hills we're able to go farther. After biking the Colonial Parkway from Yorktown to Jamestown, we took a ferry this morning to Surry and biked along beautiful quiet back roads all the way to Emporia.

Some of the fun names we've seen along the way are: Mortgage Manor, Carpe Diem Lane, Key West North, Total Loss Farm, Charlie Horse Farm, and Jerusalem Korean Baptist Church!

Also, one of my favorite sayings in a restaurant bathroom was:

Good Morning. This is God. I will be handling all of your problems today and I will not need your help, so have a good day.

Best to all; we're now headed west back to Abingdon.



Florida Flora

by Patricia Huff

The Paurotis Palm (*Acoelorrhaphe wrightii*), also known as the Everglades Palm, is one of the native palms that can be observed along our medians in Everglades City. The average height is 20 feet but the ones next to the old fish pond at the end of Broadway across from the Rod and Gun are older and have grown to over 25 feet in height.

The palmate leaves are light green, two to three feet in diameter, and with silvery-green on the underside. Leaves can be palmate or pinnate on palm trees. I remember the difference by thinking that palmate looks like the palm of your hand whereas the pinnate doesn't have the "center" palm but separates from the center.

The Paurotis Palm is what's known as a clustering palm which means it grows in clumps and prefer swampy wet areas to grow well. They are tough and durable so this palm would be a good choice for your South Florida landscape.

FREE PLANTS!

**Chokoloskee residents are tidying their garden and have plants to give away – all sizes and species.
For info, phone 695-2645.**

From Predator to Prey and Back

by Frank Denninger

It all began around 5:00 a.m. one November morning. I silently eased my rifle, backpack, and self into the pirogue (canoe) alongside the Tamiami Trail. Conditions were excellent with low water in the swamp, a new moon, and a solunar feeding period to begin at daylight – perfect for hunting success. A penlight in my mouth supplied the necessary light as I paddled down the canal, as I've done for years, to silently access the swamp. Numerous orange reflections announced the presence of gators that are always lurking. I kept on, in spite of them. Shortly, I arrived at the point where I turn North to enter the Cypress Strand to hunt and a large unseen gator violently swirled under the pirogue's bow to make his exit, definitely an attention getter.

The canoe trail became shallow so the paddle was stowed to be replaced by three-foot push poles as I moved silently ahead towards my prey. About a quarter mile in I heard the skir-plash, skir-plash sounds this predator loves – a deer moving through water close by. This was a good sign but the deer I was after was much farther North. A couple of minutes later the dimming penlight illuminated a reddish orange reflection about thirty feet on up the trail, the right eye of an alligator in the narrow trail.

Decision time was now upon this over zealous predator – me. Should I keep going or retreat? Pondering for a few moments, I decided to continue since the eye seemed small compared to ones viewed earlier. I failed to recall that if a gator raises his second protective eyelid the reflection is less, making the eye seem smaller. Thinking now that it was a small gator that would run away as I approached was a mistake with a capital "M".

The light beam was kept on the eye during the approach until a sound to the right broke my concentration. I swung my head around to check out the sound – nothing much, just a falling tree limb. Looking back quickly to keep track of the gator eye, it was no longer visible. Instead, I was facing the pure white open mouth of a 9' or 10' gator 15' away. Now came my transition from predator to prey, as this man-eater instantly closed the 15' distance between him the bow of the pirogue and crashed into it during his headlong linebacker charge through the shallow water. Lucky for me, he snapped his jaws and engulfed the whole side the boat in his mouth. As petrified as I was, I have to say it was a strange sight to see a gator's head sticking up with the side of the pirogue fully in his jaws. After that it was chaos breaking loose. Sounds of his teeth gnashing the fiberglass where deafening as he worked his way down the left side of the hull like a typewriter carriage. Water was splashing everywhere as his bulk thrashed alongside. You couldn't imagine the noise level unless you'd been through it but, trust me, it wasn't fun. Then he released the boat after getting almost next to me. The entire attack only lasted for around 30 seconds even though it seemed like eternity. Silence returned. Resisting panic and being as quiet as humanly possible, I picked up the poles and backed the boat up about 20 yards. The gator had returned to his original spot. I got into the backpack for a real flashlight. Most of the man-eater was now visible, definitely 9' or 10' long. Another transition began from prey back to predator since with better light I noticed the rifle in the rack that unbelievably had been forgotten about during the ruckus.

An hour or so later sunshine was upon me as I re-entered the swamp with a boatload of caution and trepidation. This time the rifle was fully loaded. All went smoothly, though, for the gator and me as I moved up the trail. He had decided to go elsewhere.



"Change of Seasons" – Evidence of the dry season is still present by the burned brush and new growth, now complimented by the standing water of the rainy season.

This picture was sent to us by Angie Chestnut who says that her passions include fly fishing as well as photography. Her work can be seen at the Ivey House and at her website www.pixartbyangie.com.

MEMORIES

"A Bump in the Night" by Barbara Hoffman Daniels

It was a time in October when one night I heard a loud sound outside the area of my carport – a sound much like that of a bucket being knocked around. I looked out my bedroom window but could not see anything and since my son was in the next bedroom, I chose to ignore it as being something in any way threatening. Just a raccoon, I supposed.

The next day after my son had left and gone home, I went investigating and found the source of the noise I had heard. There, turned over spilled, was an old bucket of roofing tar that my late husband had left sitting under the bedroom window of the room my son always slept in.

As I stood there looking at the mess, I noticed large tarry bear tracks leading away off the concrete and I had to laugh,

wondering what that poor bear must have thought as he plodded away with that mess on his feet. He had tried to stand on the bucket to peek in the window which my son always left open when he was in that room.

After I told my son about what I found, he never slept with that window open again.

I heard that bear again about a week later one night when I was alone. He passed under my bedroom window so close that his breathing sounded like someone snoring. He came back every October for all the years I lived out there in the Big Cypress.

Barbara Hoffman Daniels grew up in Everglades City. She lived for over thirty years in the Big Cypress where she had the experience of seeing what our animals are really like.

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Patty Huff is on a well-deserved summer vacation. Please contact Marya for advertising and news.
 mrepro@earthlink.net
 or phone 695-2905

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Patricia A. Huff, Snook Publications
 P O Box 617, Everglades City, FL, 34139
 (239) 695-2397, snookcity@hotmail.com

EDITORS

Patty Huff & Marya Repko

CONTRIBUTORS

Helen Bryan, Barbara Daniels, Bill Lindsay, Peyton Beebe,
 Shirley Leonard, Savannah Oglesby, Bob N. Wallace,
 Adela Padron-Butler, Lisa Marteeney, Trina Mitchell

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The views expressed in signed articles are not necessarily those of the editors or publisher.

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