

Winter, 2014

The Hermit

Like the shy and timid hermit crab, Theodore Tollofsen (known as Teddy the Hermit) was also shy and reclusive. After his boat wrecked on the shores of what would later become St. Andrews State Park, Teddy made his home in a quaint shack constructed of the driftwood that washed up on the very shores he shared with the native hermit crab.

Christmas Party



Nat Drace and Channing Abernathy, daughter of Larry and Debi, relax at the Christmas party. Dressed as an elf, Channing delivered gifts during the gift exchange.

Board of Directors

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Recording Secretary

Lynne Siegfried

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Membership Secretary

Judy Rowe

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Board Members at Large

Nat Drace

seagnat@aol.com



Friends members enjoyed sampling the large variety of delicious food on the buffet table.

A large turnout of members, park staff, and camp ground hosts gathered in the recently renovated Friends building for an evening of good food, good fellowship, and good fun. An elaborate buffet with ham and turkey being provided by Friends and a sumptuous array of side dishes and deserts contributed by members. After dinner, guests participated in a take-away gift exchange with much laughter and groaning as gifts were won and lost.

Recent Events



Recent events in the park include the annual Coastal Clean-up and the Ironman run.

The clean-up is part of an international effort sponsored in part by the Ocean Conservancy.

The Ironman brings participants from around the globe to Bay County to participate in the event. The organizers of events such as these donate to the Friends for the privilege of using the park and for Friends help with traffic control, parking, information, and clean-up.



Top L-R: Jim Pressing, Vicki and Carlos Garcia, resident volunteers Bill and Jean Hendrix, Elaine Pressing, and Betty Ezzell. Above Left L-R: Vivian Steele, Vicki Garcia, and Emily Mullis. Right L-R: Aquarius Dive Club members from Fort Rucker, AL, Jim Lambert, Cheryl Fields, Bob Boutwell, and Rollie Edwards.



Treasurer Dick Rowe accepts a \$3000 check from Ironman Florida director Ben Rausa.

A few of the Ironman volunteers pose in their fashionable safety vests. L-R: Dick Rowe, Judy Rowe, Lynne Siegfried, Betty Ezzell and Nat Drace.



Meet Melissa Our Go-to Person

Melissa LeMatty is the Friends go-to person when we need help or advice from the park staff. Melissa, a native of Chiefland, Florida earned a degree in Parks and Tourism from the University of Florida and after working as an intern at Manatee Springs State Park, she spent three years there as a ranger before moving to St. Andrews.

Melissa's title here is Park Services Specialist, which is a broad term for the many hats she wears. One of those hats is labeled volunteer

and event coordinator. Not only does she work with the Friends, but at any given time there are up to 28 resident volunteers living in the campground. Melissa coordinates their activities and resolves any problems they have. She says the resident volunteer program takes much of her time but they are fun people to work with and she now has friends from all over the country.

Melissa assists the FSASP with long-range projects as well as day-to-day needs. She attends board meetings and, along with Park Manager Brian Addison, keeps us apprised of activities in the Park and of how we can help. She also assists the Friends board with applying for grants and other funding and works with us on planning and organizing events.

Melissa's other Park duties include assisting with events, planning interpretive programs, working with school groups, and maintaining a relationship with local media. She is also involved in natural resource programs such as sea turtle monitoring and prescribed burns—many hats indeed!

It was Melissa's training in prescribed burns that indirectly brought her to our park. While conducting burn training, she met Dylan Shoemaker on the fire line—and apparently a fire was lit. Melissa, applied for the position in our park to be closer to Dylan, manager of the St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve, and the two plan to be married in April. **Congratulations Melissa and Dylan!**

Volunteer Opportunities

The Thursday morning work group always needs volunteers to help improvements to our building, can recycling, and the native nursery and other physical labor projects. Volunteers are also needed for special events and administrative chores such as public relations, newsletter distribution, and many other things.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Second Thursday Each Month

BOARD MEETING

6:00 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

7:00 p.m.

Meeting dates are: Jan. 9, Feb. 13. Mar. 13

Thursday Morning Work Group

Call Jim 890-0782, or Nat 238-5191 for details.

Thursday, January 9, 7:00 PM--Anne Ake will present a program on her new book *Turning Turtles in Tortuguero*. The book is about the world's longest running turtle tagging and research program and the village that houses it--Tortuguero, Cosa Rica. Friends member Larry Ogren first manned the station in 1956 and the book draws from his memories, letters, and photos.

Snapshots

Friends Committees

Adopt-a-Highway

Jim Watts

890-0782

Native Plant Nursery

Debbie Fable

Laura Jenkins

Beach Cleanup

Jim Watts

890-0782

Environmental Center

Judy Rowe

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Public Relations

Anne Ake

265-6879

The Hermit

Anne Ake

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Vivian Steele

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Website

Anne Ake

265-6879

Recycling

Nat Drace

238-5191

Historian

Vivian Steele

230-1600



We recently purchased new signs for our recycle bins in the park. Friends collects and recycles aluminum cans both to keep the park clean and to provide funds. Wyndham Vacation Resorts contributes to our effort by collecting cans from the resort and donating them to our recycling project.



A sea anemone and an oyster fish—two denizens of our jetties ecosystem.



Friends Meetings

are the second Thursday of the month at 6:00 PM in the Friends Building. Membership meetings are not usually held in the summer months. Visitors and prospective members may contact Judy Rowe at rowes@netpenny.net or for additional information and instructions on how to get in if you arrive after the park gate closes.

Friends member Cheryl Fields is a talented underwater photographer. The board is considering working with Cheryl and her dive club to produce an educational booklet to tell visitors, especially youngsters, about the fascinating life of the jetties.

THE HERMIT

The Hermit is a publication of the Friends of St. Andrews State Park, Inc., a Citizens Support Organization formed to promote public awareness of St. Andrews State Park through conservation efforts, special events and educational programs.

The Hermit is published quarterly and submissions are encouraged. Call **Anne Ake at 265-6879**, or send news items to **The Hermit, c/o Anne Ake, 604 E. 6th St., Lynn Haven, FL 32444**, or e-mail **aake@comcast.net**. Visit our Website at **friendsofstandrews.org**.