



For updates on the Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park, please visit the [website](https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/fakahatchee-strand-preserve-state-park) at <https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/fakahatchee-strand-preserve-state-park>

President and Executive Director's Letter



We continue to be grateful and encouraged for all our members who have renewed their membership since our last newsletter while the Pandemic continues to disrupt everyone's life. We extend our special thank you to Randy Parks who transitioned to an Individual Life membership, to Richard and Sue Jagels who transitioned to a Family Life membership and to new Family Life members Jim and Peggy Phillips.

Nature trails, canoe and kayak areas are open for visitors in the Preserve but the Boardwalk remains closed. The first week of July DEP approved resumption of guided tours in the Preserve conditional on commercial tour operators' adherence to strict COVID Safety Plans following the CDC guidelines. Commercial tour operators will judge for themselves when it is safe for their staff to conduct tours. The FOF will determine later in the fall whether it is feasible to schedule the tour season that usually begins in November and runs thru mid-April.

Volunteers missed being in the Fakahatchee and on the 9th May were welcomed back to volunteer – Faka-Hacker Dino Barone made a beeline to the Preserve accompanied by Howard Lubel even though the summer heat and humidity creates an additional challenge as they must pace themselves and call it quits before heat exhaustion overtakes them or they get caught in the middle of a severe thunder storm. On that subject a gentlemen member who ventured into the Preserves this week lost his way and felt the heat getting the best of him; fortunately he decided to stay in place and dial 911. The rescue team came by helicopter, and because the gentlemen had a GPS device he was able to communicate his exact location to the rescue team. The Fakahatchee rescue made news on a local TV channel. Dino later shared with us he had met the gentlemen a few times and had advised him to always explore the Preserve with a GPS – we are glad he followed Dino's advice.

We close this short letter hoping everyone is coping the best they possibly can six months into a global Pandemic, making the necessary adjustments and sacrifices to keep their family and friends safe and healthy.

Best regards,

– Glen Stacell and Francine Stevens

News from the Strand



New Family Life Members Jim and Peggy Phillips pictured here with their son to the left of Dino (in orange) participating to a volunteer work day on JSD.

Please Don't Feed the Wildlife



On East Main trail near the historic cabin, alligators demonstrating by their aggressive behaviors that they had been fed by visitors had to be removed by a licensed contractor paid by Fish and Wildlife Conservation, Park staff installed a sign to remind visitors it is illegal to feed wildlife. – Photo by Park Services Specialist Mike Duey

Chasing the Comet

Treasurer Phil McGuire was on a mission to capture the passing of the Comet NEOWISE in July when it was the closest to earth on the 23 July at 64 million miles away. NEOWISE will visit Earth again in seven thousand years!

This composite image is a part of a Lightroom panorama of 17 individual shots by Phil McGuire.



Culvert Project bridges the gap

Back in Oct 2015, park staff with FOF volunteers, a bridge was built over the collapsed culverts on West main by the cabins. This bridge served us well for close to 5 years.



This was one of the many culverts replaced during the culvert project on West Main in May of 2020.



The contractors preserved the bench on the south side of the culvert. This is an awesome place to sit while enjoying the tranquility.



Local supervision!

Six Pipe Culvert on Jane's Scenic Drive, Hydrological Seasonal Changes

These pictures show why it's called Six Pipe Slough and the difference between the seasons. Six Pipe Slough is also where the Introduction to Swamp Walk tour begins.



Six pipe culvert Aug 2017 at high water – looking south off of Janes Scenic Drive.



Six pipe culvert – May 2020 – dry season - same view, looking south off of Janes Scenic Drive.



Six pipe culvert May 2020 south side looking north – the Alligator's View

Seen in the Strand



Looks like one gator got a French manicure!



A group of frogs practicing synchronized swimming in a puddle on Janes Scenic Drive.



Happy Vanilla orchid showing off all of its glory on a hot and sunny Sunday morning in the Fakahatchee. Nearby, we find the Brown Anole, king of the concrete culvert.



Red shoulder hawks keep everyone smaller on high alert, including this well camouflaged small water moccasin.

Avian Mysteries of the Fakahatchee

On Saturday, July 4, Dino and Howard were heading back to the barn after a very successful day of hacking/clearing/hydrating when Howard noticed something peculiar on the ground at Gate 4.



At first we thought the bird was either injured or hiding a successful catch. Neither of us had ever observed this behavior by a hawk. We stopped to see what might happen next.

The hawk stood up and wrapped its wings around its legs, then made an adjustment. Now appearing normal, it appears the hawk was providing commentary to the photographer by sticking his tongue out, then flew off. Did not appear to be injured nor hiding a catch. We guess this was a horaltic pose to get rid of parasites in its feathers.

Friends of Fakahatchee Board

President – Glen Stacell

Vice President – Andrew Tyler

Secretary – Ken Shapiro

Treasurer – Phil McGuire

Tom DesFosses

John Kaiser

Don Leonard

Ex-Officio

Bruce Bunch

Dennis Giardina

Patrick Higgins

Tom Maish

Francine Stevens

(Executive Director)

Membership News

Does your employer have a “Matching Gift” program?

Several of our members have taken advantage of their employer’s matching program (General Electric, Exxon Mobil) for donations to not-for-profit organizations by sending us the “matching” form. We do the rest – it’s that easy! We have revised our Membership Form with a reminder.



If you haven’t yet opened your free AmazonSmile account, please take a few minutes to do so. Go to smile.amazon.com, then choose the Friends of Fakahatchee as your charity to receive the donations from your purchases. This works for your shopping all year round, and when more FOF members join in the donation parade, we’ll see more money for our Park. Thank you!



You can now donate to FOF via your Fidelity Investment account with a Charitable program called the Fidelity Giving Marketplace, the following link will provide you with more information.

https://www.fidelitycharitable.org/?immid=EML_427_1

Stay up to date with what’s seen in the Strand on our FOF Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/orchidswamp>



The Friends of Fakahatchee, Inc, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation Citizen Support Organization, provides financial and volunteer support to preserve the unique ecology and cultural heritage of Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park and to educate the public about its importance. The Fakahatchee is the largest cypress strand in the world and the deepest slough in the greater Everglades.

The Ghost Writer, named after the endangered Ghost Orchid which blooms in the Preserve, is currently edited by Next Steps Collective, LLC, which also manages the [Orchidswamp.org](https://orchidswamp.org) website. Contributions to Ghost Writer that relate directly to the business and purpose of the Friends of Fakahatchee, Inc. are welcome. Please write news@orchidswamp.org, subject line: Ghostwriter.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR THE FRIENDS OF FAKAHATCHEE, A FLORIDA-BASED NONPROFIT CORPORATION (REGISTRATION NO. CH9223), MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE OR VISITING THEIR WEBSITE HERE (<https://csapp.800helpfla.com/>)

Miss an issue of the Ghostwriter? Visit the archives at <http://orchidswamp.org/about-fof/the-ghost-writer-archives/>.
Our mailing address is:

Friends of Fakahatchee, Inc. PO Box 35
Everglades City, FL 34139

Become a Friend of the Fakahatchee
Visit <http://orchidswamp.org/support/memberships/>

Members make a difference.

Welcome to new members:

Andy and Virginia Skok, Monroe CT; Jim and Peggy Phillips, Ipswich MA; and Judah Solomon, Coral Springs FL. Membership now totals 357.

Thanks to our Lifetime members:

Thank you to Randy Parks for making the transition to a Life Membership, to Richard and Sue Jagels for making a transition to a Family Life membership and to new Family Life members Jim and Peggy Philipps.

Lifetime Preservers

Bruce & Janet Bunch

Lifetime Protectors

Kit & La Raw Maran

Lifetime Family

Members

Richard & Sue Jagels
John and Pauly Kaiser
Tom & Judy Maish
Noel Nation
Jim & Peggy Phillips
Van & Jane Sayler
Glen & Laura Stacell

Lifetime Individual Members

Karen J. Berkley
Rita Bleasdale
Warner Blow
Elsie Caldwell
John Elting
Carolyn Ginther
Peter Haffenreffer
Don Harmon
Susan Hauze
Terry Heaps
Patty Huff
James Nici
Randy Parks
Mark Perro
Wendy Becker Payton
Ken Shapiro
John Spengler
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