The Mission of SMSKA is to provide an action forum for property owners and others with vested interest in the ambiance, economy, ecology, beauty, recreation and culture of this area, as well as to foster community among residents.

South Manasota Sandpiper Key Association
April 10, 2017 2:00 pm
Gulf to Bay Clubhouse 2295 North Beach Road

Guest Speaker: Michael Poff of Coastal Engineering Construction will update us on the progress of beach re-nourishment. He will be bringing sand samples.

The Next Regular Membership meeting will be May 8, 2017

F.Y.I. (Also check the SMSKA website at http://Smskafl.org)

Sally Stephenson is our new secretary. Formerly from N. Senaca Lake, New York, the largest of the Finger Lakes, she retired from Annapolis, MD where she was a registered nurse. She is now a full time resident of Manasota Key. Be sure to stop by and introduce yourself to her.

Income Tax filing deadline is April 15th. Since it’s a Saturday, and the following Monday is an official Washington DC holiday, (Emancipation Day) the deadline to file your 2016 tax return or extension is Tuesday, April 18, 2017.
Tom Adams Bridge Closure Clarification - Jack Knowlton, 3/24/2017, 1:58 pm

The article in today's newspaper has really caused some confusion. It is difficult for a reporter to get the amount of information that we provided correct and without some confusion just from how a particular phrase is worded.

**First** - the bridge will be closed for 7 days during the summer. Not a month. I told the reporter that it would probably happen between mid-June and mid-July.

**Second** - During the 7 day closure, fire/rescue and EMS will be stationed on the Island to provide rapid response to emergencies.

**Third** - One of the factors that greatly increases the back-up is when the bridge opens for boat traffic. A single opening can back up an addition 200 to 250 cars in each direction that would have gone through the lane closure. The County is trying to get approval to only open the bridge once an hour. This will help with the back-ups.

**Fourth** - We will not close the bridge over the July 4th holiday!

The current work on the bridge is to widen the sidewalk to 5 feet (bikes and pedestrians will be able to pass each other in the future). To perform this work, we have to put temporary barrier wall down. This narrows the driving lanes to 10 feet (usually 12 feet). The narrow lanes make some drivers drive their vehicles slower, especially if a truck or boat is approaching. Keep an eye out for sudden slow drivers.

We are not closing a lane today and traffic is still backed up past McDonalds.

Thank you for putting up with the inconvenience. We know how frustrating it is for everyone. Just remember, the new and improved Tom Adams bridge will be better for everyone when it opens late this summer.

Tom Adams Bridge Lane Closure – Jack Knowlton, 3/24/2017, 2:10 PM

The contractor will be closing a lane to place the first of the new sidewalk pours on Wednesday, March 29th. As usual they will be utilizing alternating one way traffic control. Although we had previously stated that we would be closing a lane every day ‘til mid-April, the contractor has devised a way to form the concrete sidewalk without needing to close a lane. We are not planning a long duration lane closure for Monday or Tuesday.

If the contractor needs to make a delivery of materials or supplies, they may close a lane for up to half an hour without prior notification.

Enjoy the no lane closures Monday and Tuesday. If you have errands to run, consider doing them Monday or Tuesday and stay on the Island Wednesday. Any reduction in traffic will help reduce the back-up. Thanks and have a good weekend (no lane closures on the weekends either.

Jack Knowlton, PE, Sr. Project Engineer, American Consulting Professionals, LLC, 2818 Cypress Ridge Blvd, Suite 200, Wesley Chapel, FL 33544 JKnowlton@ACP-FL.com 813-927-4714 Cell, 813-435-2608 Office, 813-435-2601 FAX.
Natural Beauties of Winter in SW Florida by William Dunson

We are fortunate in having a lot on Lemon Bay which is both picturesque and attractive to wildlife. However a major aspect of the yard that brings in wildlife is the vegetation. We have about 160 species of plants divided almost equally between natives and exotics. However I have to fight against an "addiction" to beautiful flowers such as the Asiatic hibiscus that provide no benefits to insects since they lack nectar.

One exotic flower that is beneficial to local insects is the burgundy passionflower, which attracts insects such as this carpenter bee. The leaves are eaten by passion vine specialists such as caterpillars of zebra and gulf fritillary butterflies. A mangrove skipper whose caterpillar might have fed on nearby red mangroves is attracted by the nectar in flowers of this exotic penta. Our monarch butterflies (which require milkweeds for food at the caterpillar stage of their life cycle) benefit from the presence of exotic milkweeds (both giant and tropical) as native milkweeds do not thrive in our area. The photo shows a female monarch that has just emerged from her chrysalis. We raised her from an egg laid on one of our giant milkweed plants.

When birds come to our water drips we get an up close and personal look at them which can be very interesting. For example this common "trash bird" the mourning dove or "modo" has a beautiful face pattern. Another visitor to the drip is a male pine warbler which has a subdued beauty. We have a pair of cardinals in our yard which nest here and we especially enjoy the spectacular song of the male this time of year. His color is also spectacular but those of us who have grown up with cardinals have become too familiar with them to fully appreciate their beauty. When our relatives from Utah visit, they cannot believe how astounding the male looks. Apparently the female cardinal is also smitten by lots of red since she is likely the evolutionary agent that has selected to mate with males with the brightest red color.

When you think about enjoying wild animals, do not fail to look right in your backyard. If you select yard plants that have specific qualities that attract animals, you will be richly rewarded.
Tornado Strikes Manasota Key by Brigid Bailey

On Monday, March 13th, at approximately 9:20 pm, Manasota Key had a very unwelcome visitor. We were all aware of the thunder and lightning, rain and wind but, other than moving lanai furniture to safety and turning off the computer, we felt safe and cozy in our homes. We had no warning from the weather man and did not feel threatened until the rain and wind began to sound like golf balls battering the windows and, then it happened! The sound was deafening. We thought our table had blown against the screens but not so. There were no screens. There was no frame and there was no furniture. All were gone along with our power.

We did not venture outside as, in the blackness, we worried about downed wires. However, the next morning, we walked the neighborhood and could not believe our eyes. Although the 300 yard wide tornado seemed to be gone in less than five minutes, the destruction and devastation it left were horrendous.

The Englewood Fire Department arrived within minutes. They secured the area, walked the beach and the properties and knocked on every door to make sure everyone was safe. They were here until 3:00 am. Then FP&L took over and worked until we all had power at approximately 6:00 pm the following evening. We cannot thank them enough for their dedication. We also need to acknowledge our Sherriff’s Department who tried to keep the traffic flowing while pedestrians were taking pictures and tree companies were laboring to cut up the large limbs which were everywhere. Waste Management worked diligently to clear the debris which was piled in front of every building.

The best news is there were no serious injuries.
1. Keep personal documents such as birth certificates, social security cards, passports, etc. in a safe hidden in your home or in a safety deposit box.

2. Do not carry bags that can easily be reached into--purses/bags that can zip closed are best and always carry on your body with a tight hold. Do not leave in shopping carts while shopping, in vehicles, or in other open, public spaces.

3. Examine bank statements regularly and set up banking alerts to notify you of large purchases or purchases outside of your local area.

4. Do not reveal personal information over the internet or via phone to unverified sources. Do not hesitate to question the source and do not feel pressured to give them information.

5. Shred all personal documents before discarding. This can include mail, credit card or bank statements, and even receipts.

6. Use various methods of protection online, from complicated passwords that are difficult to guess to using anti-spyware and anti-virus protection.

7. Keep photocopies of items in your wallet, such as ID’s and credit cards. Maintain a list of numbers to call and cancel cards and report the theft such as banks and the local police department.

8. Only make online purchases on trusted sites. Check for the padlock icon on the bottom of your screen to verify the site is safe.

9. Make sure to always use secured networks, unsecured networks are very easy for hackers to pull information from effortlessly.

10. Always use the optional security questions or back up email/phone number options. This adds an extra later of protection to your confidential information.
TRUEX WANTS TIERED TAXING

Our Charlotte County Commissioner, Bill Truex, is a “Hands on Man” representing us in all areas of County interest but especially when it comes to beach management. He would like to see a “Tiered Countywide Assessment.” Mr. Truex feels the beach is not a West County issue as our Gulf Beaches are a major financial asset that draws tourists from far and wide.

The three tiers would include Manasota Key, West County and the remainder of the County and, whatever is proposed must be “legally defensible. The County is eligible to receive approximately 40% of matching state funds. It is exploring ways to increase that number and also looking into the possibility of funding through the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

By adopting a beach management plan similar to those on the East Coast, “We will get more Federal assistance and thereby reducing the pain on our local community.”

Financial Consultant, Peter Ravella, is still working on issues with the County and hopes to schedule two public meetings in April.

SMSKA ANNUAL PICNIC

April 1, 2017
12:00 until 2:00 pm – Chadwick Park, Manasota Key

Music by “Destined Light Rock” featuring Rick Creger starts at 11:30

No charge for great food, good music, dancing and camaraderie

Hot dogs, chips and drinks served at noon

Guest and Prospective New Members are Welcome

BRING YOUR CHANGE TO PAY THE PARKING!
South Manasota Sandpiper Key Association - General Membership Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2017

President Joan Dunham-Card called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Community Affairs Officer Deputy Burke reported that the CCSO is conducting a major operation involving 13 deputies to monitor spring break activity on the Key. He was called away because of a foot pursuit.

Guest Speaker Sean Viara, retired Northport Detective, addressed the issue of Identity Theft and how to identify ID theft and what to do to prevent it.

Secretary Report - none

Treasurer Report - $15,668.48 ending balance a full report is available from the treasurer.

Committee Reports - none,

Old Business – the search for a secretary is over. Sally Stephenson has stepped up and has been approved by the Board.

New Business - none

Adjournment and Announcements
March 16, at 8:00 am at MKCH, Bill Truex will discuss beach re nourishment and flood insurance
April 10, next SMSKA meeting Guest Speaker Michael Poff update on beach renourishment
May 10, MSTU meeting at Library Conference Room at Tringali

Meeting was adjourned at 3:45 pm.

Submitted by Joan Dunham Card, President

Earth Day Free Public Walk

Dr. William Dunson, Emeritus Professor of Biology, Penn. State and a member of SMSKA, will lead a free public walk sponsored by The Friends of Little Salt Spring on the newly planned “virtual nature trail” on the North Port School Board Property just west of Heron Creek School. The 1.5 hour walk will begin at 10 am on Earth Day, Saturday, April 22nd. Dr. Dunson will lead a discussion of the ecological interpretation of changes that have occurred in the forest since 1948. Walking towards large natural wetlands just across the boundary with the University of Miami owned Little Salt Spring property, the group will look for evidence of differences between the former agricultural land on the left/west and the long term forested area on the right/east. The considerable potential for this area to be used as an educational laboratory for students of all ages will be discussed.
Manasota Key Tornado
3/13/17.
Pictures by Steve Dunn