



Bay County Conservancy, Inc.

The Land Conservancy of Northwest Florida

P.O. Box 1122 Panama City, FL 32402
(850) 872-8260

Winter 2017 Newsletter
www.baycountyconservancy.org



Mural detail: osprey with mullet - commissioned by Mayor Greg Brudnicki.

Mural in Harmony with Nature

It is somehow fitting that our smallest preserve – land donated to the Conservancy by a lover of both art and nature -now has something special tying these elements together. **Mary Ola Reynolds Miller**, owner of the old Gallery of Art adjoining the Palm Preserve, passed away in 2011. Fortunately for all of us, her children, **Maxwell Miller** and **Ola Jane Gow**, have kept her commitment to land preservation and artistic expression alive and well. Last year, when local artist **Jane Perry** voiced interest in painting a mural on the exterior wall of the vacant gallery, the magic began.

Maxwell erected scaffolding, purchased paint and installed lighting. Jane enlisted the help of several volunteers...and a mural depicting our native Florida habitat began to emerge. When viewed at different times of day, the mural now makes the tiny Palm Preserve come to life. A closer look reveals the birds and butterflies that live in this little corner of our world – all painted in detail by Jane – and commissioned by members of our community.

Please take a look at Page 4 to see some photos of the mural commissions – and find out how you can add a critter to the mural. And the next time you drive through downtown, pull over on Beach Drive, get out of your car and take a look. As an added note....we are happy to report that **The Artist Cove** is now open in the newly renovated gallery building. It offers both a Fine Art Gallery as well as a studio for working artists. Thank you, Mary Ola, for your vision. Thank you, Maxwell, for your hard work and commitment. And thank you, Jane Perry, for bringing beauty to our tiny pocket park.
– Teresa Nooney

Our new and improved website is now live!!

Many thanks to the crew at **Aaron Rich Digital Marketing and IT Services** here in Panama City for working with us to create the new site. And **thank you to the generous donors** who made it all possible:

☆ Bay Point Women's Club ☆

☆ True Path Financial of Raymond James and Assoc., ☆
Tom King, Noah King and Amanda Jowers



☆ Jackie Kolk ☆

☆ Allen Jelks ☆

☆ Graham Clarke ☆

Check out our new look at: www.baycountyconservancy.org



Calendar

January 20, 2018:

**Air Potato
Roundup**



March 10, 2018:

BCC Annual Meeting

Watch our website for more
details coming soon.
www.baycountyconservancy.org

Talking Trash

We love nature and love being in nature, and we hate to see it trashed. Picking up litter is part of the job, but at times, it can feel overwhelming. In early August, while checking on an inner parcel of woods on Audubon Nature Preserve, we came upon an area so strewn with trash and garbage that it left us speechless. Layers of bottles, cans, old food containers, clothing, toys, tarps, tents, bicycle parts, blankets, buckets, strollers, coolers, and broken lawn furniture covered the forest floor. We needed help—a lot of help.

The **Bay County Sheriff's Office** stepped up and provided BCC with work crews from the jail. For two weekends, Detention Specialist **John Culpepper** led his workers into the woods and pulled out bag after bag of trash and debris.

The Conservancy rented two dumpsters—which were filled to the brim. Eventually, we reclaimed our woods. We would like to offer a huge THANK YOU to the BCSO, Mr. John Culpepper, and the jail crews—we couldn't have done this job without your help.



Meanwhile...over on Wood Avenue

A few weeks after the big clean up at Audubon Nature Preserve, a new problem was brought to our attention by City workers wanting to mow near the King Preserve on Wood Avenue. Someone had decided to illegally dump approximately 75 used tires on the preserve. Once again, an inmate work crew was brought out to help.

Bay County Conservancy now owns and has stewardship responsibilities for over 285 acres of land. Two part-time staffers monitor, mow, pick up trash and keep access and trail areas clear. **You can help: please use your powers of observation when out and about. Let us know if you see suspicious activity near our preserves, particularly in these areas: Jenks Avenue (between 19th and 23rd Streets); Wood Avenue; State Avenue (between 23rd Street and the 19th Street round-a-bout). Call Candis at 872-8260 or Teresa at 814-4755. Or Email us at: bcc@comcast.net.**



Your membership in the Bay County Conservancy—*The Land Conservancy of Northwest Florida*—provides support and encouragement for ongoing efforts to preserve local open spaces!

**Local People...
...Saving Local Land**



Field Trip to Tumble Creek: You're Invited!



BCC has scheduled a field trip to visit our “off-the-beaten-track” **Tumble Creek Preserve** in Washington County the morning of **Friday, Feb. 9th, 2018**. (Rain date: Saturday, Feb. 10th). Tumble Creek consists of 92 acres of land about 38 miles north of Lynn Haven. The preserve is open to the public for passive recreation and nature study...but is a little bit difficult to find. There is a rough trail that passes through longleaf pine, turkey oak and wiregrass habitat.

If you are interested in joining us for this trip and would like to be notified about carpooling and meetup times, please email Teresa at tnooney@knology.net.

Thank You, Bay Point Women's Club!



Candis Harbison accepts a grant from the **Bay Point Women's Club** in May. The funding was put to good use and helped the Conservancy cover the costs of developing a new website.

Biological Control: Air Potato Leaf Beetles

On May 10, BCC released a long-awaited shipment of 50 air potato beetles onto a section of Audubon Nature Preserve near the 19th St. roundabout. This is the site of our annual Air Potato Roundup, in which we gather hundreds of air potato “bulbils” in hopes of slowing the spread of invasive air potato vines.



After extensive research on its safety and impact, the air potato leaf beetle, *Lilioceris cheni*, was approved for release in Florida. **The beetle only attacks air potato.** Both adults and larvae feed on the foliage. When the vine dies back during the winter, the adult beetles go into a resting state under leaf litter. In spring, the adults emerge and females begin laying eggs. While no one expects an overnight success, we are hugely encouraged by results so far. We observed the beetles reproducing and eating holes in leaves not only in the release area—but all along 19th Street. Clumps of eggs and larvae and webbed and dying leaves are good signs that the beetles are thriving. We also found beetles several miles away in Lynn Haven, which might back up scientific claims that the beetles can travel up to 20 miles from where they are released.

BCC hopes that the beetles, along with the efforts of our Air Potato Roundup volunteers, will reduce - if not completely eliminate—the invasive air potato from our natural areas.



Help For A Better World

How can you make the world a better place? Volunteer—right here with the Bay County Conservancy, *The Land Conservancy of Northwest Florida*. If you have only a few **MINUTES**, you can make a difference by stopping to clean up litter. Have a little **MORE TIME**? The Conservancy likes to have a steward walk each preserve periodically and keep everyone up to date on preserve conditions. You could help with projects at a preserve—or not. If you can't volunteer, can you make a donation to help support the part-time staff? Could you organize a presentation of our lovely Power-Point to a local group? Can you help with work days, such as the Air Potato Roundup on January 20, 2018, to keep these invasive vines under control? To learn more, please call (850) 872-8260.

-Jackie Kolk, BCC Land Acquisition Chair

Palm Preserve Mural Commissions



Current commissions displayed on the mural

Brown Pelican commissioned by **Maxwell Miller**
 Seagulls commissioned by **Jane Perry**
 Cardinal pair commissioned by **Joe Tannehill, Sr.**
 Ibis pair commissioned by **Starlett Miller Massey**
 Egret commissioned by **Ola Jane Miller Gow**
 Box turtle donated by **Kesia Blein Milner**
 Osprey with Mullet commissioned by **Mayor Greg Brudnicki**
 Red Shouldered Hawk commissioned by **Ron Houser**

New Additions!

Cooper's Hawk - commissioned by **Jennie & Michael Duncan**
 Great Blue Heron - commissioned by **Kim Ogren**

THANK YOU!!

The Palm Preserve and Mural are located on
 the NW side of The Artist Cove,
 36 W. Beach Drive, Panama City, FL

Board of Directors & Staff

President	Members at Large
Candis Harbison	Jacalyn Kolk, Esq.
	Joseph Parell, M.D.
Vice President	Phil Mount
Sandra Lynch	Ron Houser
	Ted Wilson, M.D.
Treasurer	Warren Middlemas III
Carolyn Parell	John Bente
Executive Assistant	Property Manager
Teresa Nooney	Sandy Walker

Support the Palm Preserve and the Bay County Conservancy.

You can commission your favorite native bird or animal on the mural!

\$200.00 suggested donation.

Please contact Jane Perry
janeperryctdd@gmail.com
 or the Bay County Conservancy
bcc@comcast.net or 872-8260

Mission Statement: The Bay County Conservancy is a land trust dedicated to the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands in Northwest Florida.

BCC Membership Form



Yes! I want to help the Bay County Conservancy - *The Land Conservancy of Northwest Florida*— save open space, wetlands and wildlife habitat.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Level: (circle one): **\$25-\$49 Contributor**
 \$50-\$199 Supporter
 \$200-\$999 Benefactor
 \$1,000+ Lifetime

Please mail this form to: Bay County Conservancy, P.O. Box 1122 Panama City, FL 32402