



# Bay County Conservancy, Inc.

## *The Land Conservancy of Northwest Florida*

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Winter 2024 Newsletter  
[www.baycountyconservancy.org](http://www.baycountyconservancy.org)

### Pending Addition to BCC's Savage Property

Recently, Brian Dusseault and I met with Dr. Johnny Savage and Ron Hardy up in Ebro at Dr. Savage's dental practice on the Choctawhatchee River to discuss his proposal to add about 15-20 acres to Bay County Conservancy's existing property across the river. Thanks to Tom Francis, a friend of Dr. Savage, we acquired that property over 10 years ago. Candis Harbison, Audrey Parker and I met with him at that time. This is a heavily wooded floodplain with steep banks bordering on Northwest Florida Water Management District land. As you can see from the photo, there are some very large trees there. Ron Hardy, a friend of Brian's who lives near there, acted as a go-between with Dr. Savage. We were led around the property by Dr. Savage and Ron Hardy and plans were begun to construct a walking trail that will be open to the public. Of note is a detailed botanical survey done back then by Dr. Robert Godfrey, Angus Gholson and Tom Francis.



Johnny Savage is a very interesting man, having been a dentist and Antarctic explorer with the U.S. Navy during the International Geophysical Year in 1958. He even has a previously unknown glacier named after him. After establishing his dental practice in Atlanta, he then became a Georgia State Representative for 10 years, pushing for changes to segregation policies during that time. His employee and close friend, Otis, eventually became the first black dental assistant in Georgia. His adventures are told in the book Jazzbo and Johnny, by Katherine Hardy, the wife of Ron Hardy. It's a great story, well worth reading.

-Ron Houser

### Palm Preserve and Downtown ArtWalk



Thank you to **Susan Llorca** and her creative friend **Siri Korsgren** for linking up the **Mary Ola Reynolds Miller Palm Preserve** with other downtown Panama City businesses and art galleries for the **Downtown ArtWalk** on Nov. 16, 2023. Visitors picked up ArtWalk maps and followed self-guided tours of art around downtown, with some locations offering door prizes. The Palm Preserve is located right next door to the **Gallery of Art** at 36 W. Beach Drive. Take a stroll through the preserve and then stop by and visit our favorite neighborhood art gallery!

-Teresa Nooney

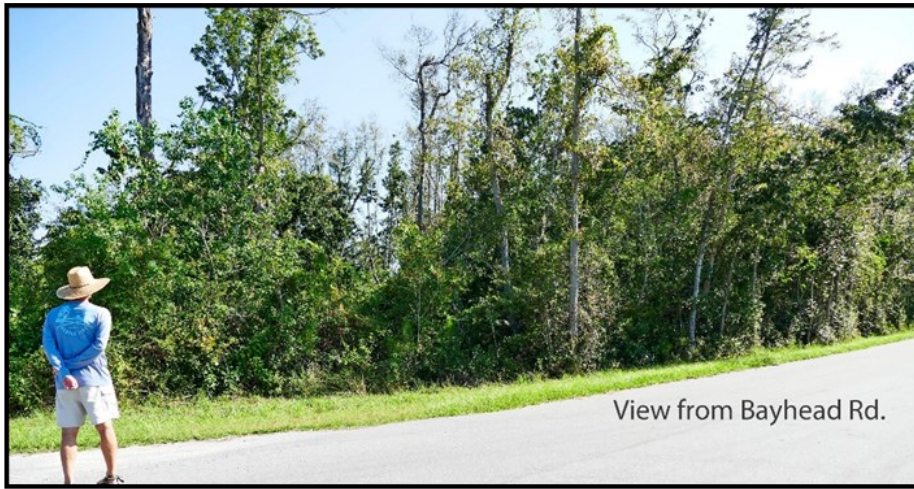
### New Bench for Oltz Preserve

The Oltz Preserve has a new bench in memory of John W. Juchniewicz who lived in the area and tirelessly served on the Board of Directors of Gulf Coast State College, the Board of the Visual Arts Center, United Way, the Bay Economic Development Alliance, and the Chamber of Commerce, Military Affairs Committee. Thank you, **Jackie Kolk**.



## 7 Acres Near Deerpoint Lake Donated

Two parcels of forested wetland that total 7 acres have been donated to BCC by Fenn Farms, LLC. Currently being called Bayhead Preserve, they contain some beautiful trees and other native plants. Sweet-bay, blackgum tupelo, red bay, maples and Southern magnolia are a few of the trees. Other native plants observed were sweet pepper bush, swamp azaleas, beautyberry, possumhaw viburnum and wax myrtle. There are a few invasive plants and some trash on the property, so we may be having a Work Day there this spring!



## BCC Welcomes a New Director to the Board

### Heather Briscoe

Originally from New Hampshire, Heather earned her biology degree from Keene State College and moved to the Florida Keys. She spent time working as a marine biology educator in the Florida Keys before settling down to teach biology, chemistry and environmental science at Rutherford High School.

Heather is passionate about conservation and education and is excited to join BCC.

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BCC would also like to thank outgoing BCC Board Member **Carrie Fioramonti** for her enthusiasm and hard work these last couple of years. Your GCSC students are lucky to have you!



## Land at Indian Pass



We are happy to report that a Gulf-front lot at Indian Pass has been saved by the gift of a Conservation Easement. More details to come in our next newsletter!

## Mission Statement

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

## Board of Directors

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