



# Spring Lake BREEZE

Florida . . . the way it should be.

VOL. 3 NO. 4

www.seabreezecomunications.com

APRIL 2009

## Board Process Continues

The Spring Lake Board of Supervisors conducted a Workshop on Wednesday, March 18, at the Community Center to continue discussions on the updated water control plan and golf course land acquisition option; 137 people attended. Presentations were made to the Board by Gary Ritter, Director, South Florida Water Management District Okeechobee Service Center; Craig Wrathell, District Advisor, Wrathell, Hunt, and Associates; and Gene Schriener, District Engineer and President of Craig A. Smith Engineering. Guests attending who provided additional input to the Board were: Ramon Gavarette, Highlands County Engineer; Elius Nortelus, Assistant County Engineer; Kyle Green, County Road and Bridge Superintendent; Mike Willingham, Executive Director, Sebring Airport; and Mike Tellschow, Owner, Spring Lake Golf Resort. A handout containing Frequently Asked Questions, shown below, was given to each person.

A question-and-answer segment with the public followed the workshop and comments were made both for and against the Board looking at the golf course as an option. While the Board was able to extract new data, especially from SFWMD and the engineer, a number of lingering questions still remain as to whether the golf course land acquisition will remain an option. The Notice of Non Compliance received by the District will begin the Conceptual Permit process with SFWMD and the steps that will be needed, some perhaps legal, for the District to correct deficiencies. SFWMD Director Gary Ritter was most emphatic regarding the powers the District has to enforce violations of the water surface permit, something the Board will have to look into extensively. The due diligence process will continue over the next four to six months as the Board looks into all options for the future. District Staff continues to prepare grant applications to a number of agencies with the intention of securing funds to fully support or underwrite construction projects.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Is the Board required by an unfunded mandate to update the water control plan?

Yes. According to State Statute this is our responsibility, with oversight by South Florida Water Management District. A conceptual permit process must begin within the next 60 days.

#### When did the update process begin?

SFWMD notified the District in November 2005 that we were in noncompliance and needed to act.

#### What are the results of the updated plan?

The District is required to complete a number of projects outlined in the updated plan that are projected to cost approximately \$4 million.

#### How will these projects be funded?

Up to this point the Board has been looking at a 30-year bond issue, which is a common government approach.

#### Why does the Board want to purchase the golf course?

An intent to sell letter was sent to the Board in November 2008 by golf course owner Mike Tellschow. The Board decided to look at this as an option for the water control plan and the future needs of Spring Lake.

#### Is there a contract to purchase the golf course?

No. The Board sent an intent to purchase letter to Tellschow to enable the Board to begin its due diligence process, request financial information, determine capital expenditures, and secure other pertinent data for review. The recent, unfortunate death of Ralph Horak, who was Mike's associate and putting together all of the information, has slowed the process down a little.

#### Has Kitson Partners already been hired to manage the golf course?

No. They currently manage Sun 'n Lake and since their personnel were just on the other side of town, it made sense to see if they were willing to answer questions for the Board and assist during the due diligence process. They knew from the beginning that if the golf course were purchased there would be a bid process to manage the golf course. Three other groups have already sent information to the District in that event.

#### How much will all of this cost our residents?

Until the Board looks at all of their options, an accurate figure is not available. In August of 2008, the original methodology that was completed for the 30-year bonds came to approximately \$168 per year to complete the construction projects as presented. If the



Workshop presenters left to right: Gene Schriener, Craig A. Smith & Assoc.; Craig Wrathell, Wrathell Hart Hunt & Assoc.; Gary Ritter, South Florida Water Management District.

Board Process Continues on page 2

## District Receives Non-Compliance Letter



### SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

OKEECHOBEE SERVICE CENTER 205 North Parrott Avenue, Suite 201, Okeechobee, FL 34972-2916  
(863) 462-5260 • FL WATS 1-800-250-4200 • Suncom 761-5260 • Fax (863) 462-5269 www.sfwmd.gov/okee/

February 27, 2009

Joe De Cerbo  
Spring Lake Improvement District  
115 Spring Lake Boulevard  
Sebring, FL 33876-6143

Dear Mr. De Cerbo,

**Subject: Notice of Non-Compliance  
Spring Lake Improvement District  
Permit No. 28-00127-S, Application No. 11187-1  
Highlands County, S3,4,7-18,21/T35S/R30E**

District staff periodically reviews permits for compliance and it has been noted that the above referenced permit has not been converted from the construction phase to the operation phase. The permit required the construction and operation of a water management system serving 4,934 acres of residential/commercial lands by swales, canals, detention lakes and 260,000 gpm pump station discharging into the Ar buckle Creek via an auxiliary channel.

To date, the construction of the surface water management system has not been completed, nor certified, as required by the permit. Therefore, the water management system is being operated without all the required water management system components, and is, in other words, in non-compliance with your permit. The construction of your water management system must be completed as soon as reasonably possible.

Additionally, before the operation phase of a permit can become effective, rules 40E-4.351, 40E-4.361 and 40E-4.381, Florida Administrative Code, and Sections 373.117 and 373.419, Florida Statutes, require you, as permittee, to have a Florida licensed Professional Engineer submit a signed and sealed certification. This certification shall indicate that the system has been constructed substantially in accordance with the approved plans and specifications, and any deviations from the approved plans and specifications will not prevent the system from functioning in compliance with the plans and specifications approved by the District. This will satisfy your permit's conditions regarding submittal of an engineer's certification for construction completion of the permitted surface water management system.

Please submit an update on the status of the completion of your water management system or notify District staff of your intentions within thirty (30) days of the date of this letter. Should you have any questions, please contact the undersigned at the Okeechobee/Martin St. Lucie Service Center at (863)462-5260 ext. 3016.

Sincerely,



Gary R. Priest, P.E. Senior Engineer  
Environmental Resource Compliance  
Okeechobee/Martin St. Lucie Service Center  
South Florida Water Management District  
gp

c: Gene R Schriener, PE, Craig A. Smith & Associates

DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS: 3301 Gun Club Road, P.O. Box 24680, West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680 • (561) 686-8800 • FL WATS 1-800-432-2045

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
FORT MYERS  
FLORIDA  
PERMIT NO. 751

**Board Process Continues from page 1**

Board chooses the bond option, that figure could change based on the most recent cost of bonds. Until all the data is secured relative to the golf course, no costs have been determined. The engineer continues to work on what costs would be if we did or did not own the golf course, and SFWMD is assisting with these cost projections relevant to future permitting. Preliminary estimates by the engineer reduce construction costs by \$625,000.

**Will an appraisal of the golf course be secured?**

The Board has an appraisal that was done in June of 2008 by another group that wanted to purchase the golf course; they allowed the Board to use it. While an updated appraisal will be needed, the Board has not yet authorized it to be done.

**What right does the Board have to purchase a golf course?**

While the Board's legal and bond counsel agree that the District has the statutory powers to purchase the golf course, an opinion is pending from the state of Florida Attorney General's office.

**Is the sewage plant part of the golf course purchase?**

**No.** The sewer plant is listed in Tellschow's letter of intent at a cost of \$150,000. The Board has asked the engineer to give his thoughts and opinion on this matter, and to determine any future capital costs.

**How long does the District have to complete the water control plan?**

The District Engineer and SFWMD should begin working on the conceptual permit within the next 60 days. Each project has its own time frame, but if the Board chooses to do a bond issue, the cost for the bonds begins immediately. The Board is looking into the other options available to them in an effort to minimize the immediate costs to residents, and pay for each project as monies become available.

**Can the golf course land be used for activities other than golf?**

The engineer, SFWMD, and other agencies have pointed out the ability to develop additional parks, walking and bike trails, wildlife corridors, mitigation sites, and preserving future green space.

**Is the golf course profitable?**

Financials secured from the owner go back to 2001; a profit has been shown for each year.

**Do residents of Sun 'n Lake pay excessive assessments to operate the golf course?**

Data and financials secured from their Manager show an annual recreation assessment of \$95 per year. It was further reported that in 2007, \$500,000 was returned to the general fund. An additional \$500,000 was returned in 2008. The Manager stated that the golf course is making money.

**Why is Wauchula Bank involved? Is there an agreement with them already?**

The District Manager approached Wauchula Bank because they hold the loans from Tellschow on the golf course. At the December workshop they confirmed they would be interested in working with the District on a 15-to 20-year loan at a much lower rate and cost than bonds if the project moved that direction.

**What happens to the lost assessments the golf course currently pays to SLID?**

During the due diligence period the Board will need to be assured that all lost revenue, approximately \$80,000, would have to come out of the golf course operating budget and back to the general fund. There has been no dialogue up to this point with the County Tax Assessor.

**Are efforts being made to secure funds from government grants and programs?**



137 people attended the workshop

Yes. Rep. Denise Grimsley is lobbying a legislative earmark; abstracts of our construction projects have been sent to the Florida DEP for inclusion into the economic stimulus monies, FEMA proposals are being completed, joint venture proposals with the County are being developed, and several other initiatives are being prepared for submission to the appropriate agencies. Spring Lake has never been in this arena before and extra lobbying and communication is necessary to get our message out and proposals noticed.

**What role will the Airport Authority and DOT play in the future?**

The engineers and manager have had dialogue with DOT about continuing to accept their storm water runoff. In the near future we will request a meeting with the Airport Authority to discuss the plans that both entities will be moving forward on.

**What is the impact of the recent noncompliance letter from SFWMD?**

This letter could have been sent to SLID in November 2005, but since we were working with their staff and our



Board Members listen intently to workshop data.

engineers to develop our updated water control plan they did not issue it. Circumstances that have evolved over the last two months caused them to "play by the book" and send the letter. We will now have to start our conceptual permit process that could cost upwards of \$50,000.

**What future water quality issues impact the water control plan?**

Throughout the state of Florida water quality issues are paramount and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection is developing much more stringent requirements relative to storm water runoff. Engineers have suggested that SLID identify future "green space" for potential water quality purposes, as well as addressing future enforcement issues by DEP relevant to retention and storage of storm water.

**What are the next steps?**

The Board will continue to look at all the facts and perform the necessary due diligence prior to making any financial decisions that impact the District. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, 3 p.m. at the Community Center.

# Arbuckle Creek Park Renovations

District staff has been working diligently on renovations at Arbuckle Creek Park, as these pictures show. A new dock replaced the original structure, and a new fence now surrounds the park to keep cows and horses from coming on the property. Additionally, the road into the park has been made smoother to accommodate most vehicles. The keypad gate at the Rt. 98 entrance has been working well, and plans call for a second automatic gate to be installed at the park

entrance at the end of the road. This second gate prevents animals from entering the park. The District has applied for funds from Florida Fish & Wildlife to develop a master plan for the park and to improve the road even more.

If you are interested in using the park, you must be a resident. A \$50 cash deposit is required to secure a combination to the keypad for a specific amount of time. Contact the District Office at 655-1715 for more information.



**Seabreeze Communications GROUP**

**Publisher** Terrence C. Reid  
**Production Director** Jacquelyn Reid  
**Sales Department**  
**Sales Manager** Lisa E. Hartford  
 Teresa (Teri) Brady  
 Al Ullio  
**Director Of Mailing Operations**  
 Sherry Whalon  
**Mail Room** Katie Idler  
**Production Manager** Carol Sands  
**Production Department**  
 Elaine Donholt • Ruth Nekoranec • Clara Doster  
 Lora Cox • Nancy Glazers • Katie Heystek • Polly Bryden  
 Joyce Bunting • Millie Poland

All rights reserved. Reproduction or utilization of these contents in any form by any electric, mechanical, or other means, including xerography and photocopying is forbidden without the written permission of the Publisher.  
 The Publisher is not responsible or liable for misinformation or misprints herein contained and reserves the right to accept or reject all copy deemed unsuitable for publication.

**(239) 278-4222 • Fax (239) 278-5583**  
 5630 Halifax Avenue \* Fort Myers, FL 33912  
 Ft. Myers • Bonita • Estero • The Palm Beaches • Boca Raton  
[www.seabreezecomunications.com](http://www.seabreezecomunications.com)

**unity**

*Helping You Discover* **Life Enrichment Centre**  
*How Wonderful Life Can Be*

10417 Orange Blossom Blvd. S.  
 Sebring, FL 33875  
[unity@vistanet.net](mailto:unity@vistanet.net)  
[www.UnityOfSebring.org](http://www.UnityOfSebring.org)

JOIN US THIS SUNDAY AT 10:30AM  
 A New Facility • A Place To Grow • A Place For Family • A Place to Find Peace  
 • A Place To Experience God • A Place to Share Love.  
**For Information Call 863-471-1122**

# New Member In The Retirement Club

By Debbie Delaney

Feb. 20, Carole Frederick celebrated retirement as Sales Operation Specialist for 30 years with IBM. Carole worked for IBM three years before leaving 14 years to raise her family, then returned to IBM in Tampa. When the Fredericks moved to Sebring, Carole negotiated to maintain her position by communicating via the phone and computer. She was offered a promotion in 2008, which she declined. Carole won't have much time on her hands in retirement. There is plenty of work assisting her husband, Rob, in his tax business, Individual Tax Services.

Rob managed to coordinate a surprise retirement celebration for Carole in the Pub at Spring Lake Golf Resort. That included a buffet dinner and entertainment by Pete and Lisa for local and out-of-town guests. Not a peep was let out to Carole, which took her totally by surprise. Friends and co-workers from Tampa, children and grandchildren from Georgia and Florida, and her sister, Phyllis, from New Jersey, were the biggest surprise for Carole.

Welcome aboard, Carole! Life travels fast on the retirement train.



# Levee Maintenance Begins

These pictures show District field staff cleaning debris that has accumulated on the levee that runs north and south on Arbuckle Creek, adjacent to our pump station. New FEMA guidelines regarding the inspection and maintenance of levees are affecting the new flood maps that are being developed. The District has until 2012 to fully comply with all the new regulations that are in place. Field Foreman Randy Nelson recently attended training conducted by both FEMA and SFWMD relative to proper inspection and maintenance practices. Staff will soon begin work on the levee that runs east and west along the Davis farm and airport boundaries.



# Florida Fish & Wildlife

The Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation (FWC) Commission is responsible for managing fish and wildlife resources for their long-term, well-being and the benefit of people. Headquartered in Tallahassee, there are more than 700 law enforcement officers working out of 73 field offices. Erika Zimmerman, pictured, patrols in and around the Spring Lake community and is a frequent visitor to the District Office, updating staff on problems and violations. She is responsible for enforcing rules to protect fish and wildlife, keep waterways safe for boaters, and cooperate with other law enforcement agencies providing homeland security. FWC law enforcement officers are among the first on the scene to help when natural disasters occur, because their specialized equipment to access remote, hard to reach locations.



Erika Zimmerman



The alligator pictured above was discovered in Village I park. The District has an extraction permit with FWC to remove nuisance gators. When a resident reports a gator as a nuisance, Erika is contacted by the District Office and a determination is made as to whether the gator needs to be extracted. A trapper, licensed by FWC, is then contacted and he tries to identify and capture the nuisance gator. Not all gators should be considered a nuisance and reporting a gator does not necessarily mean it will be extracted.

For more information on the services and programs of FWC, go to [www.myfwc.com](http://www.myfwc.com).

# Resident Hosts Luncheon

For the third consecutive year, Spring Lake resident, Tim McKenna, has hosted a St. Patrick's Day luncheon for the District staff. Tim, a retired law enforcement officer from South Florida, has been living in Spring Lake for close to five years. He previously hosted a luncheon for his fellow workers down south and has carried the tradition to our community. Tim says, "I appreciate the work and effort the District staff gives to Spring Lake and I enjoy showing my appreciation on St. Pat's Day."

Thanks to Tim, staff enjoyed traditional corned beef and cabbage, salad, carrots, potatoes, rolls, drinks and a beautiful Irish cake. As the picture shows, we even had a leprechaun stop by!



## DRIVE-THRU PETS OF THE MONTH

**Barnie**

**Casey**

**Saddy**

## Looking for the best Homeowners or Auto Insurance?

We will shop and compare to help you find the best coverage at the lowest price.

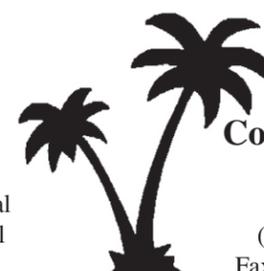


Visit our new office at 1105 U.S. 27 North  
(863) 385-5171 or [www.Heacock.com](http://www.Heacock.com)



### Shop At Home Service

- Carpet
- Ceramic
- Vinyl
- Wood
- Laminate
- \*\*\*
- Commercial
- Residential
- Marine



### Coastal Carpet of Lorida

Alan or Linda  
(863) 633-9228  
Fax (561) 627-7137

1679 US Hwy 98, Lorida, Florida 33857

# *Spring Lake banks at*



***All the bank you'll ever need ...***

***Checking, Savings, Internet Banking with Free Bill Pay,  
CDs, Mortgages, Loans, Business Accounts***

***... and the personal service you deserve.***

**Main Office**

2600 U.S. 27 North  
Sebring  
385-8700

**Downtown Sebring**

205 W. Center Ave.  
Sebring  
385-7737

**South Sebring**

3540 U.S. 27 South  
Sebring  
386-1900

**Avon Park**

400 U.S. 27 North  
Avon Park  
453-6400

**Sun 'n Lake**

6505 U.S. 27 North  
Sebring  
314-9797

**Lake Placid**

120 U.S. 27 South  
Lake Placid  
465-2700



**[www.highlandsindependentbank.com](http://www.highlandsindependentbank.com)**

