



Reflections

NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF ST. MARKS WILDLIFE REFUGE

Reflections newsletter is a benefit of membership for Friends of St. Marks Wildlife Refuge.

It also serves as an important supplement to the Friends' web site, www.stmarksrefuge.org.

Both the newsletter and the web site provide members and the public information about volunteer activities and events at the Refuge.



Distinguished Refuge Volunteers Betsy and Lou Kellenberger

Nobody had to encourage Lou and Betsy to get involved when they first moved to Tallahassee. In fact, they chose Tallahassee to live, in part



because of the many volunteer opportunities available in our area. Their involvements were numerous: Wakulla Springs State Park, Maclay Gardens, and some less intense commitments such as Tallahassee Theater and FSU athletics, but most of all, the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge.

Given Lou's financial management experience in the business world, and his appreciation for the importance of funding to an organization being able to meet its goals, he and Betsy knew they could help by encouraging membership growth and the development of infrastructure to generate long-term support for Refuge programs. They were early members of the Friends group (then known as the St. Marks Refuge Association), and they became the Group's first life members. Lou and Betsy both served on the Group's Board of Directors for many years - Betsy as President - and they both took special interest in helping build the membership size. Lou spearheaded the decision to establish an Endowment Fund for the Refuge, which will support its programs in perpetuity. He was a cofounder of the Refuge Photo Club, and he served as a refuge ambassador for several years before this effort to enrich the experiences of visitors ever became an official program. And no contribution was too small. If we needed help stuffing envelopes, for example, the Kellenberger Team could be counted on.

Since Lou's passing on June 28th, we've heard numerous tributes, and especially the recognition that Lou had served as a mentor to many people. Lou's generosity with his time helped many of us expand our skills in nature photography. What should also be recognized is that he was a valued mentor to many Board members too. He often had good suggestions to offer, and managed to criticize constructively - to be helpful without being hurtful. He modeled patience, diplomacy, and solid strategic planning in our approach to dealing with issues.

Finally, we want to recognize Lou and Betsy's generosity in terms of their photography. A contact from the editors of the eUpdate, the website, or the annual report and other publications, is all that had been needed for

them to meet a request for a needed image. For example, we could ask for a shot of an alligator, and within 48 hours receive several candidates, each at two resolutions, and with no strings attached because it was 'for the Refuge'. Also, after every festival or other major event, Lou and Betsy routinely distributed to Robin and "the editors" mentioned above, CDs containing copies of the pics they had shot at the event.

In closing, few people are aware of the circumstances behind a gift that Lou and Betsy were responsible for to our account at the Community Foundation of North Florida (CFNF), the 501.c.3 organization that manages the endowments of many regional non-profits. About 18 months ago, CFNF wanted to decorate the walls of their new office space with photographs depicting life throughout the geographical area they serve. Lou and Betsy provided about two-dozen beautiful images that eventually graced their walls. CFNF wouldn't take no for an answer when they offered to pay Lou and Betsy a fee for their use of the images. But they did accept Lou and Betsy's compromise of having the \$500 fee contributed to the Refuge's endowment account.

Simply put, the Refuge and its Friends group owe Lou and Betsy an immense debt of gratitude for all they have contributed to our success. The Kellenberger Family invite memorials to the [Refuge Endowment Fund](#) in Lou's honor. He was all about generosity and planning for the future, and in this way we can carry that spirit on.

(photo and article by Paul Hamilton)



Fundraising

The Crowdfunding Campaign Results Are In

From everyone at the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, we would like to thank contributors who made the Friends' online crowdfunding effort a great success. Our goal needed to finish work on the lantern room for the lighthouse was \$12,000. However,

contributors who made online donations, plus those who wrote checks for the funding campaign, pushed the net figure raised to \$14,775. Since our goal was conservative, the excess ensured that we would be able to finish the work. Well over 70 individuals made this happen.



Go to the top entry on our [Friends' web site home page](#) to see a list of those we have identified as contributors. Once again, our heartfelt thanks to everyone who assisted in "Bringing the Past to Light."

(photos, above and left, show before and after work, credit Chris Weber)



**Prescribed Fires
Forestry Management**



Prescribed fires are not haphazard, but planned carefully. They are ignited by fire staff to simulate lightning fires which are naturally occurring events in forested regions. Prescribed burning (such as that pictured above) has positive effects on the health of pine forests like that of the Refuge. Burning reduces flammable fuels (e.g., dead and decayed vegetation) abundant in forests, reduces populations of invasive plant species, restores ecosystem health, recycles nutrients, and helps prepare an area for new trees or vegetation. Prescribed burning also reduces forest damage resulting from potential *wildfires*.



When you visit the Refuge, be aware that fire staff *could* be burning near areas that you are exploring. Should there be prescribed fires, signs will be posted.

(The photo above was taken in July, 2016, looking across Picnic Pond, photo credits Phillip Pollock.)



Coming Event
Monarch Festival Scheduled For October 22



This is a reminder that the annual Monarch Festival is almost upon us. It is a great family event that allows everyone to learn about the importance of monarch butterflies, as well as other wildlife at the Refuge. Educational opportunities abound during this October event.

Food vendors will be present again this year. Also, there will be local musicians present, and craft projects will set up especially for children. A truly informative aspect of the festival is the "behind the gates" tour of the Refuge that guests can take at scheduled times. These tours are often

highlighted by unusual animal sightings.

Join us Saturday, October 22 from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm. It's a great time to be at the Refuge, when brilliant orange butterflies, trimmed in black, are the stars of the show.

(photo above, Lou Kellenberger; art at right, Phillip Pollock)



News at the Refuge

National Public Lands Day

National Public Lands Day, September 24, is the nation's largest, single-day volunteer effort for public lands sites. The St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge is celebrating the day promoting the important issue of pollination. If you like volunteering at a grass roots level, this is an activity you will enjoy. Call 850-925-6121 to sign up, or just come to the Refuge prepared to work.



Be A Pollinator Partner!

FEE FREE! **Saturday Sept. 24, 2016**
9 am - noon

Help restore important pollinator gardens on the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge!

Come ready to work outside and help butterflies, hummingbirds and other pollinators.

State of Florida Historical Marker Restored

Thank you to the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources Historical Marker Program and Vale 'Tim' Fillmon. Mr. Fillmon restored the metal marker that is mounted in stone at the base of the lighthouse. If you have visited the lighthouse in the past year, you may have noticed that the paint on the marker's surface had severely deteriorated. To restore the marker, the old paint had to be stripped from the metal. Then the metal surface required treatment prior to a beautiful new coat of weather-resistant paint.



Department of State Grants Program Helps the Refuge Move Forward on Lighthouse Restoration

The marker above could not have come at a better time. As work on Phase I of lighthouse restoration is closing out, Phase II is just



beginning this Fall. Recent funding from the Department of State Division of Historical Resources Grants Program is allowing for continued work on the lighthouse to bring it back to its historical prominence. The Refuge is indebted to the State for its assistance on this important restoration.

While the grant money will not finish all the necessary work required, it brings us much closer to completion.



Have you considered including the Refuge in your will? We would appreciate hearing from you if so. The Friends of St. Marks Wildlife Refuge can provide information and guide you through the process. Just call the Refuge at 850-925-6121, and ask to be contacted by the Friends' Development Committee, or [email us](#).

Reflections Editor, Phillip M. Pollock

St. Mark's Refuge Association, 1255 Lighthouse Road, St. Marks, FL 32355