

Aug. 18, 2020 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

In my last memo I told you of the need for Rick Storsberg to have a lung transplant. A lung match was found, the surgery was performed, and Rick is now recovering. His daughter reports:

“Dad is still progressing well. He is out of the ICU and has been moved to a regular room. His numbers are looking good and he did his walking a little faster yesterday, so his nurses are pleased. He has been cleared to eat some liquids (Jello, popsicles and broth), he does still have a feeding tube so they can give him additional nutrients... Overall the doctors are pleased with his progress. Thanks for everyone's support. Sasha”

That's the good news. The bad news is that Debbie Blanco has submitted her letter of retirement for October 30th. Donna Day was able to set up a Zoom conference with a small group of volunteers (Jim Courtright, Donna Day, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Martin Siesta, Art Smith, Sherm Stratton and Ernie Winn) yesterday with Debbie. With Covid-19 and the time of the year (the Carlton is often flooded at this time of the year – currently it has bad spots), no formal meeting was possible. We discussed the need for any urgent actions. Fortunately, the park is in good shape generally.

The Wildlife Monitoring Program is changing direction. In the past, a database was created of what animals were photographed and where the pictures were taken. The need for continuing to increase its now-huge size was felt to be past. The cameras will continue to be operated and the pictures reviewed regularly. The emphasis will now be on spotting endangered species (e.g., panthers, Florida black bears), animals with diseases or other problems, and fluctuations in numbers that may indicate a problem or concern.

A replacement of marker posts and the addition of “You Are Here” signs will continue based on the weather and trail conditions. Fire Fest will likely be some sort of “virtual” event rather than a large crowd event.

Otherwise, the park is in good shape. We are really waiting for the Covid-19 crisis to pass.

I just wanted to bring you up-to-date.

Nov. 5, 2019, Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The November 5, 2019 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve (FCR) was attended by Joyce Adams, Debbie Blanco, Donna Day, Dan Hamari, Russ Johnson, Jim Lombardi, Linda Lovallo, Guenter Maurer, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Ted Samuel, Art Smith, Sherm Stratton and Ernie Winn.

Bob Oliphant led the meeting and asked us all to introduce ourselves. Debbie Blanco then reviewed her ideas for providing storage space for the volunteers and their equipment. The two small buildings (garage and tool shed) are scheduled to be painted. She thinks converting one of the three sections of the pole barn to an enclosed facility would provide adequate additional storage. No plumbing or air conditioning is needed, but some electric lighting and outlets would be necessary. The type of construction would be classified as “agricultural” and not meet the standards of homes. None-the-less, an approved plan of construction will be needed. She hoped to have a contact name in the County for us before the end of the week. FCR has indicated that it will help with financing. If properly designed, the volunteers may be able to do the majority of the labor

Art Smith reviewed the “You Are Here” map program that was started over a year ago. At six key spots in the park, maps are placed that identify where this spot is located on the map. Due to the fact that the maps face south (so that the reader can more easily orient directions reading the map), the maps are beginning to fade. Debbie also wants to make some changes in the maps. Art want to replace the standard printed maps with maps printed by a sign maker using sun-resistant pigments. Also, a “sun-shade” will be added to help resist the sun and to make the sign more prominent to passers-by. Sherm added some comments about helping lost individuals in the park. He thought a few arrows and “to parking” signs should be added.

Donna Day and Ernie Winn reviewed the Wildlife Monitoring Program. The most significant improvement has been the considerable addition to the database of descriptions by Martin Siesta. There were now

15,476 entries covering 33 species and records entered going into the year 2017. We discussed the 10 cameras being used. A motion was made and unanimously passed to spend up to \$1,000 on new and replacement cameras and equipment.

The Saving the Giant Air Plant Program is cruising along. No new cages are needed. However, the nationwide program has seen an 80% decline in GAPs. Research seems to have located a variety of the plant that is resistant to the Mexican Weevil. So, there is hope for an alternative solution.

Debbie said that Fire Fest is scheduled for 1/25/20. The Boy Scouts are handling parking, and the Fire Department is handling food. FCR volunteers will be needed for only certain specific assignments. There will be a Trail Run on 12/1, and Equestrian Event on 12/8, and Piggy's Revenge will occur on 1/5.

Bob said that the Wednesday Work Crew will start up on 12/4. The list of assignments is the same as always – clearing around trail markers, clearing trails, getting fire-load out of the public area and cleaning up the public area generally. Bob thought that the County crews had done a good job of getting the park ready after the rainy season.

Sherm said the Carlton website and Facebook websites were being kept current and were seeing good activity levels. Art Smith was complimented for his contribution of great pictures of flowers in the Carlton.

No future meeting has been scheduled at this time. It was felt that there was no need to meet again before Fire Fest.

Dec. 4, 2018. Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The December 4, 2018 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve (FCR) was attended by Debbie Blanco, Steve Christian, Jim Courtright, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Russ Johnson, Jim Lombardi, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Dave Schaefer, Jill Schaefer, Martin Siesta, Art Smith, Sherm Stratton and Ernie Winn.

Bob Oliphant led the meeting and asked Debbie Blanco to provide a Staff Update. Debbie said that the trails are all mowed except for a few very wet spots. Upcoming events are a trail run of ½ marathon on 12/9, the South Creek Foxhounds Equestrian event with jumps on 12/16, Piggy's Revenge on 1/6, and Fire Fest on 2/2. In anticipation, the outlying areas that serve as parking lots have been mowed. A group of volunteers from the horse community has volunteered to build a horse walk through gate in the park. Debbie's problem is to design it in such a way that ATV's can't go through the opening. Now that the water has receded, burn preparation can begin again. Balancing fire break cutting, burning and other land management activities against the use of land for recreation can be challenging. She noted that camping has become more popular recently. The hog trapping contract has expired, and no trapping will take place until a new contract is signed. A motion was made that FCR pay for the food for Fire Fest, and the motion was unanimously approved. There is a possibility that T-shirts may be sold to offset the cost of food.

Sherm Stratton said that the website had over 30K visits recently. Added to the website were two historical reports – a new photo gallery on turpentine and pine tar production, and the use of arsenic dipping vat at the Windy Sawgrass camp.

Bob Oliphant reported that the "Wednesday Group" had been working on opening up the sides to the paver trail. He complimented the County on doing a great job of keeping the park in shape. The volunteers will be trimming around marker posts and other "tweaking" assignments plus helping Debbie with her "To Do" list. Art Smith has made six "You are here" maps/signs and is placing them in locations where people have historically become disoriented.

Donna Day and Ernie Winn reported that there are now 10 active cameras in the Wildlife Monitoring Program. The data base has 10,795 entries (thanks to Martin Siesta), and the goal for 2019 will be to bring the database to full currency. Of course, new pictures are being added every day, and the goal is a moving target. They said that the new cameras take better pictures, the memory holds more pictures, the batteries last much longer, and the costs of the cameras are very reasonable. Sherm complimented the team on the excellent results and the amount of time devoted to the project. With respect to the Giant Air Plant program, there are four cages in full use. Volunteers are helping with the placement of seeds in the park. The team is still coordinating with Teresa Cooper.

Hans Mooyman reviewed the Swallow Tailed Kite Research project. The first bird tagged, Carlton, lost contact somewhere in South America. The second bird, Sarasota, completed a successful trip and returned to the Carlton. Discussions are underway to see if another venture should be attempted.

Steve Christian reviewed the upcoming Piggy's Revenge. The plan is to limit the event to 300 participants. The routes have not yet been finalized. Steve also noted that the recently passed bond issue for the extension of the Legacy Trail included \$2M for a North Port Connector going through Deer Prairie Creek Park. The actual route is yet to be determined.

Russ Johnson gave a Treasurer's Report. He said that the account balance was approximately \$11-1/2K. He also gave an opinion that the Carlton needed a "Volunteer Activity and Storage Facility" to replace the two old and inadequate buildings used by the volunteers and County. He estimated that a replacement building would cost in the range of \$100K to \$140K. He said he was postponing work on this project until after Fire Fest.

At this time, no future meeting is scheduled. We will react to what is happening in the Carlton.

Jan. 9, 2018, Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The January 9, 2018 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Martin Siesta, Art Smith, Sherm Stratton and Ernie Winn.

Bob Oliphant led the meeting and asked Debbie Blanco to provide a Staff Update. Debbie said that last Sunday saw the Piggy's Revenge in the Carlton. 330 registered and 289 participated in the bicycling event. She and other EMT and Sheriff's department personnel were around in case of emergencies. Debbie complimented SCORR on leaving the Carlton so clean that nobody would suspect such a big event took place. (Our Steve Christian broke his hip prior to the event and could not participate.) The next event coming up is Fire Fest on Saturday, 1/27. There is a new kiosk in the parking lot. A new map for the kiosk is being created as well as new brochures. While trail marking numbers remain unchanged, colors of certain trails are being changed. The weather is now generally good for prescribed burns after a long period of flooded lands.

Sherm reviewed the FCR website. Over a 2-1/2 year period, the site has 24,000 hits, or an average of over 8,000 per year. The site has been renewed for another two years. Sherm then reviewed some of the recent additions to the site. He asked that he be informed if anyone has an idea for an addition.

Bob reviewed the work of the "Wednesday Crew". Since starting up again in October, several tasks had been completed. Currently, work on new marker posts heads the To Do list. Bob complimented the County on their fast and good cleanup of the Carlton after Irma. He also appreciated the new Kubota vehicle now in the Carlton and called it a great addition.

Donna and Ernie reviewed the camera program. They especially appreciated the addition of Martin Siesta to the data entry work. There are now ten cameras out in the Carlton and one spare. Three are old and should be replaced at some time in the future. A motion was made and unanimously approved to provide up to \$1,000 for cameras and equipment. Donna and Ernie then went over the Giant Air Plant project. Prior to Irma, much work went into protecting the plants and equipment. This was successful, as nothing was lost. However, some maintenance is needed and parts replaced. We approved spending up to \$500 on such expenditures.

Hans reviewed the Swallow Tailed Kite Research project. The first kite captured and fitted with a locator unit (named Carlton) stopped broadcasting when it was in South America. FCR had donated \$700 to this project. A second bird (named Sarasota) has been fitted with a locator and is still broadcasting. FCR had not been involved financially in this second project, and \$2,000 was still needed. A lengthy discussion followed. It was finally agreed to participate in funding the project in the amount of \$500. This agreement was a majority opinion. Hans agreed to provide the group with updates and photographs to be posted on the Friends website.

At this time, no future meeting is scheduled. We will react to what is happening in the Carlton.

Dec. 13, 2016, Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The December 13, 2016 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Steve Christian, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Russ Johnson, Brooke Langston, Linda Lovallo, Guenter Maurer, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Sherm Stratton and Ernie Winn.

Bob Oliphant led the meeting and asked Debbie Blanco to provide a Staff Update. Debbie said that she is working on a new map for the "Eastern Ranchlands". It would include the Carlton Reserve, the Carlton Ranch and Myakkahatchee Creek Park – all of the parks for which she is now responsible. In total, it is over 30,000 acres. Included in this land are several fences. Good fences will likely remain, as cattle may be allowed to graze in certain areas. Old fencing should be removed. She is also trying to get some new kiosks at key points with new orienting maps. At this point, Brooke Langston was introduced. She has recently been hired by the County and is Debbie's immediate superior. Fire Fest on 2/4 is being planned. Major cleaning in the cabin has begun, as the yellow jackets appear to have been eliminated. Trails are dry and mowed. However, the dryness has stopped prescribed burning (high fire risk situation).

Bob reviewed volunteers (the "Wednesday Crew"). Work began on 11/9 with cleaning up the Public Area. Last week work was done on the Scout Camp north of the Cabin and also out at the Homestead. The number of volunteers usually picks up after New Year's Day.

Donna gave a quick review of the Wildlife/Camera program. The program began in 2001 with a single camera. Today there are 9 cameras in use plus one spare. Today's cameras take better pictures, store more pictures, are user friendly and consume fewer batteries. A database of 8,000 or more entries has been created over the years. For certain camera locations, a historical pattern can be reviewed. Donna thought that at least one more camera should be purchased to replace older models, batteries and other supporting material would be needed for the "season". She estimated the total cost as less than \$500. A motion was made to allow up to \$500 in such expenses, and it was unanimously approved.

Donna continued on with the "Save the Giant Air Plant" project. The project began in January of 2015 with workshops on the subject. Theresa Cooper is the lead scientist. FCR participated by buying materials and building a cedar cage to protect plants. Jeff King donated a similar sized plastic cage already assembled. Both have successfully been filled with Giant Air Plants and protected from the Mexican Bromeliad Weevil. Now, Donna hears that the Florida Bromeliad Society will donate an already built cedar cage to the Carlton. At this time, no funds are requested by the program. Debbie will travel to Titusville to pick up the donated cage.

Steve Christian reviewed bicycling in the area. The Boldly Go single-track trail in the Carlton is in excellent shape due to dry weather and work of the volunteers who continue to improve the trail. Piggy's Revenge is coming up on 1/8. Due to rain last year, the registrations this year are estimated to be in the 200-250 range. A new single track in the Carlton Ranch has been created. It is 2 miles up ("Live Long") and 2 miles back ("Prosper") along Big Slough canal north from the new gateway bridge. On the Boldly Go trail, a bridge is being considered near marker #6.

Hans Mooyman reviewed the Swallow Tailed Kite project. FCR had donated \$750 to this project. On 6/14/16, a Swallow Tailed Kite was captured in the Carlton and banded with a transmitter. The bird spent some time in areas of Florida, but eventually it flew to the Yucatan Peninsula. From there it continued moving. However, contact with this bird has recently been lost. Such a loss of contact happens, and it is hoped that contact will be restored in the future.

Sherm reviewed the purchase of the Z-display near the cabin. We were anticipating that the three panels would have bulletin boards on both sides (total of 6), but it came with only 3 bulletin boards. The cost to add 3 more bulletin boards would be just under \$500. A motion was made to ask Sherm to obtain 3 more bulletin boards as discussed, and the motion was unanimously approved. With respect to the website, we are averaging 700 hits per month.

Russ quickly reviewed expenses not requiring motions and approvals. Those expenses that follow normal responsibilities of individuals require no pre-approval. An example is the purchase of tool parts by Bob Oliphant, who keeps the tools volunteers use in a good state of repair. The annual fee on the website is a similar example. With respect to the Treasury, we have \$11,887.79 in our account. (A total of \$2,820 came from the Giving Challenge on 9/20-9/21.) This is about as much as we have ever had. Russ's opinion was that this amount was ideal for the purposes of FCR. The parent organization, Friends of Sarasota County Parks, has signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the County. While many consider the new agreement more restrictive, for FCR it adds no controls that we have not been following for many years, largely due to a close relationship between FCR and Debbie Blanco.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 10, 2017 at 4:30 PM.

April 12, 2016. Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The April 12, 2016 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Dave Cottrill, Jim Courtright, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Betsy Oliphant, Bob Oliphant, Sherm Stratton and Danny Williams.

This was an informal meeting and "season" final meeting. Sherm and Linda brought delicious snacks, which all enjoyed.

We had a chance to check out the new cedar Giant Air Plant cage, which was already in use. We also checked out the new plastic GAP cage, which will soon be screened in and moved out into the park. The zig zag display board had been erected, but no information has yet been posted.

Debbie explained that she and others were interviewing individuals to be a replacement for Nancy Edmondson, who is retiring. There were two prescribed burns today in the Carlton. Since there was no agenda, the conversation moved from one subject to another.

With respect to the zig zag display board, only one side of the three panels has an outdoor bulletin board unit affixed to it. The design of the big unit could support bulletin boards on both sides. Sherm agreed to look into how much it would cost to add three bulletin boards so that we could display all six panels and protect the information from the elements.

This was a chance for us to just socialize and not focus on issues, which made the meeting pleasurable.

Our next meeting will be in the fall, and the date will depend on the weather. You will be notified by email.

March 8, 2016, Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The March 8, 2016 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Steve Christian, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Linda Lovallo, Bob Oliphant, Chris Oliver, Julie Scherer, Carl Schwartz, Drew Shell, Sherm Stratton and Ernie Winn.

Bob Oliphant led the meeting and asked Chris Oliver to update us on issues concerning the Carlton Reserve. Chris is an environmental specialist working with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection / Florida Park Service and is responsible for the area around the Myakka River. Normally, Chris would talk to us about poaching and illegal camping. Knowing that we would be talking about Giant Air Plants, he reported that he and Mike Owen had recently performed a survey of such bromeliads from a boat in the Myakka River. From Route 72 down to Border Road, they spotted 477 GAP's of which 462 seemed healthy and only 15 seemed to be dying. From Border Road down to US-41, the numbers were 661 and 40. So, the results were better than expected as of this date.

Bob brought us up to date on volunteer activities. Bob said that it been a wet winter, and activities were quite delayed due to muddy conditions. The priority was to get trail markers repaired starting at the public area and working outwards. He commented that the quality of replacement tools (tools lost in the burglary of the tool shed) by the County has been excellent. Sherm added that he thought this had been the wettest winter in about 15 years, and it was affecting the volunteers as well as events in the Carlton. Sherm also introduced Drew Shell and Julie Scherer, who had worked on projects in the Carlton while working for Microsoft Corporation. Those projects earned Friends of Carlton Reserve donations from Microsoft, and Sherm thanked them for their work.

Ernie Winn brought us up to date on the Wildlife Monitoring Program. We had agreed to spend up to \$1,000 on new cameras and related equipment. Ernie has spent around \$300 so far (but not submitted reimbursement forms). He is testing what he is buying before buying more cameras to be sure each best meets the needs of the program.

Sherm then provided an excellent overview of the Bromeliad / Giant Air Plant program. FCR is committed to building a protective cage on 3/26, but others are working on a grant to obtain funding for more such cages

in the surrounding area. The County is fully involved in the work and has given FCR approval to do the work on 3/26. The “leader” of the project is Dr. Teresa M. Cooper. A discussion of materials needed for the cage followed. Jeff King volunteered to look into using plastic material in place of cedar wood. A motion was made and unanimously approved to spend around \$500 up to a maximum of \$1,000 on the materials for this first cage.

Steve Christian brought us up to date on bicycling issues. Like the volunteering, the wet weather dominated the bicycling activities in the Carlton. Trails were still muddy in parts. The bridge from Myakkahatchee Creek Park into the Carlton Ranch area seems to be moving ahead. Steve commented that the completion of that bridge along with the awareness of the Carlton Ranch and the Walton Ranch lands will open up access to the Carlton from the east. He suggested some kind of kiosk might be located at the eastern entrance to the Carlton Reserve.

Officers for the next year were unanimously approved. They are:

Bob Oliphant – President

Jim Courtright – Vice-President

Russ Johnson – Secretary/Treasurer

A quick review of Fire Fest followed. (We had skipped the February meeting.) In general, it was a big success with over 500 people attending. Despite the wet conditions and last minute location changes, it went smoothly. The idea of having a backup location maintained all year seemed a good idea.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 12, 2016 at 4:30 PM.

January 12, 2016, Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The January 12, 2016 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Boyce Blackmon, Micheline Blackmon, Debbie Blanco, Rand Carter, Steve Christian, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Nancy Edmondson, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Joe Rodriguez, Carl Schwartz, Sherm Stratton and Ernie Winn.

Bob Oliphant led the meeting and asked Russ to bring us up to date on our financial situation. In short, FCR has just over \$10K in the bank, has had just about the same amount for the last seven years, and had less in the first three years of existence as various fund raisers brought the balance up from nothing from the start. Today, about 35 members pay dues and add generous donations so that the annual income is around \$1K per year. The annual expenditures are about the same amount.

Debbie Blanco then provided a Staff Update. Weather, more than any other factor, determines when prescribed burns take place. Usually weather patterns stay the same for several days, and that’s why prescribed burns come in bunches. The County had been able to replace three stolen weed-eaters and one air compressor, and they were now in the shed. Nancy Edmondson reminded us that Fire Fest will be on Saturday, 1/30. She has the minimum number of volunteers for handling parking and would like one or two more for better control. She will send out an email to the volunteers prior to the event with details on parking.

Bob reviewed the Wednesday volunteer efforts. Due to the holidays, there was a gap in the program. Now, it has restarted beginning in the Public Use Facility area, and it will proceed easterly with focus on making sure trail sign posts are clear, in place and painted. With respect to the installation of the kiosk, it is planned

for just after Fire Fest. Debbie added that some additional wayfinding signage is coming. Some hikers and bikers have gotten lost. Additionally, the Boldly Go trail needs to be added to the map.

Steve provided a review of the very successful Piggy's Revenge (on the web at <https://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=FDemouzLURo>).

There were 240 riders this year versus 160 last year. Riders came from more than just locally, with Florida well represented. Rides were 20, 40, 60 and easy. However, the rain over the prior two days made the trails muddy and difficult – even “easy” was difficult. About 300 pork bratwursts were served along with beer and pig shaped cookies. All had a wonderful time. Sherm complimented SCORR and the event on the cleanliness of the park after the event. The participants left hardly a trace. With respect to the pigs, Debbie said more traps are on order as the pig damage seems to be growing. (Sign: What do pigs write with? Ans: Pig pens)

Donna Day and Ernie Winn reviewed the camera program. Begun in 1999, the first cameras used film, required development of the film and consumed batteries at a great rate. Today, the cameras are digital, have better quality, use batteries less, use cheaper batteries and have many more features. None-the-less, the cameras can go bad. Some replacement cameras (plus the equipment and batteries go with them) and two additional cameras were requested. A motion was made and unanimously approved to spend up to \$1,000 in this year on such equipment. Donna and Ernie then reviewed the Bromeliad problem. In 1989, the Mexican weevil (sometimes called the Evil Weevil) arrived in the USA. This bug attacks the large air plants native in Florida and the Carlton. If some solution to the problem cannot be found, this type of Bromeliad will eventually die off. Until that time, efforts are being made to grow plants in gardens from seed and to build a protective cage around plants using aluminum screening and cedar wood frames. With respect to FCR building some protective cages, more details will be presented at the February meeting.

Sherm presented some quick updates. The website is paid for the next 2 years (\$110). Sherm recommends viewing the Florida Field Journal programs on You-Tube. The one on Grandmother Oak was filmed in the Carlton at the horse ponds. You can go to the carltonreserve.org website and find a link to this program. Also listed is a link to Darryl Saffer videos. One last You-Tube recommendation is the Sarasota County Oral History project, particularly with Boyce Blackmon, who was with us for the meeting. Sherm recommended that we consider holding some evening programs in the Carlton for the public of subjects like history of the Carlton, turpentine, control of exotic/invasive plants, raptors, nature photography, wildflowers, etc. With the lack of man-made lighting in the area, night-sky viewing should be excellent. Another thought is to collect some artifacts found in the park and organize them in bins in the cabin for children to touch and identify.

Next month, we vote on officers for the next year.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 9, 2016 at 4:30 5:00 PM.

P.S.

After the meeting, Donna offered these websites:

Here is the website for the project Save Florida's Bromeliads: <http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/frank/savebromeliads/index.htm>

• Another good site about the weevils from UF is this one: http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/orn/m_callizona.htm

- And finally, this is Teresa's current site which includes a link to come for both CR and Lemon Bay Park. <http://entomology.ifas.ufl.edu/frank/savebromeliads/SaveBromeliads%20conservation/index-conservation.html>

November 10, 2015, Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The November 10, 2015 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Jim Courtright, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Nancy Edmondson, Bruce Hamill, Russ Johnson, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Jon Robinson and Joe Rodriguez.

Bob Oliphant led the meeting and asked Debbie Blanco to provide a Staff Update. At this point, Jon Robinson introduced himself. Jon is the Natural Area Parks and Preserves Manager, replacing Belinda Perry, who has retired. Jon had previously worked in the Myakka River State Park. Debbie said that late rains in the summer had left the trails in the Carlton very wet. However, the park was drying out, and the Wednesday crew could expect to start next week. Mowing of trails might have to wait a few more weeks. The equipment shed had been broken into in June. Several power tools were burglarized. Bob Oliphant was making a list of the items taken along with their approximate value. The tools were owned by the County and not FCR. Debbie expected to be able to find replacement tools piece-by-piece somewhere within the department. Bob volunteered to repair tools if replacement tools needed such service.

Nancy Edmondson reviewed the need for volunteers for Fire Fest coming up on 1/30/16, a Saturday, from 10 to 2. More visitors are expected this year, and the parking will require more control points and some earlier start times. Nancy asked that volunteers let her know via email (nedmonds@scgov.net) if they can help. New this year will be tent-like structure built like a gopher tortoise burrow and in which children can crawl around. Nancy said that volunteers will sew the tent together, but that the materials were expected to cost \$320. A motion was made and unanimously passed to have FCR fund up to \$400 for such materials.

Although Donna Day was not able to attend, Debbie said that the program to save giant air plants (Tillandsia) was moving along. A workshop is scheduled in December. Tops from pineapples are being used to attract and trap the weevils that are infesting the air plants.

Before Steve Christian brought us up to date on bicycling activities, he thanked Lisa Carlton for recognizing the Friends of Carlton Reserve. Lisa Carlton, along with the Argus Foundation, held a memorial dinner for Mabry Carlton at the Hyatt Regency in Sarasota on Wednesday 11/4. Debbie Blanco was invited, representing the Carlton Reserve. Lisa also invited two members of FCR. Steve Christian and his wife Linda attended as did Jim Courtright and his wife Karen. Steve said it was a "swanky affair", and Lisa wanted to recognize FCR as a driving force in making the Carlton Reserve what it is today. With respect to bicycling, the SCORR trail was scheduled for cleanup on next Saturday. Prior to that date, the trail was too wet. Steve asked Debbie if something could be done about the potholes on the Venice-Arcadia grade and the power line road. Debbie said both were on her list. The bridge across the ditch between Myakkahatchee Creek Park and the Carlton Ranch is committed for a 10/16 ribbon cutting. Piggy's Revenge is scheduled for 1/10/16 with 10, 20, 40 and 60 mile loops. 170-200 participants are expected. And, Steve said that he has been named the Bike Advocate of the Year by the Bike Florida organization. The award takes place in Clermont FL at the Horrible Hundred, 11/13-15.

Debbie said that installation of the "Z-style" bulletin board can begin when the full Wednesday crew is available. The location will be in front of the cabin in the shade of the trees but within a sight line of the security camera on the front of the cabin.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8, 2015 at 4:30 5:00 PM.

April 14, 2015. Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The April 14, 2015 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Jim Courtright, Karen Courtright, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Bruce Hamill, Randy Hurley, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Betsy Oliphant, Bob Oliphant and Sherm Stratton.

This was not an official meeting but rather a Pot Luck get together to close out the "season". We enjoyed a great quantity and a great variety of food. We also enjoyed the friendly conversation.

Sherm brought copies of the April 2015 Harbor Style magazine for us to see. In that issue on pages 78-88 is an excellent article on the Carlton written by Carol Bruyere after talking with Debbie Blanco and Sherm Stratton. In fact, the cover picture of the magazine was taken by Sherm. (You can view the magazine and article on the website at CarltonReserve.org). Sherm also said that the display board that FCR agreed to buy at the last meeting had come in and was currently being stored in the water plant.

Bob said that the Wednesday crew was "on top" of assignments but that work would slow down during the summer months. Randy Hurley brought us up to date on the lengthening of the single track trail in the Carlton. Many volunteers were working on making that trail even better. SCORR also has a single track trail ("Palmetto") in the Myakka State Forest.

Our next meeting will be in the fall, and the date will depend on the weather. You will be notified by email.

March 10, 2015. Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The March 10, 2015, meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Jim Courtright, Karen Courtright, Bruce Hamill, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Chris Oliver, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, and Sherm Stratton.

Bob Oliphant led the meeting and asked Debbie Blanco to provide a Staff Update. Debbie said that stump removal ("stumping") is continuing. When asked what was done with the removed stumps, Debbie explained that pine stumps contain rosins which are essential in many manufactured products. Burning is also continuing and is active right now. Fire-Fest saw 418 attendees (plus exhibitors and volunteers). All comments were positive except that it could have been advertised better. The hog trapper collected 1350 pigs in the last fiscal year. He is currently on a break, and pigs are returning quickly. Steve Christian reported that he was able to release a Sandhill Crane that had been caught in one of the traps. There have been no panther sightings recently. Sherm said that the number of cameras in place is now eleven.

Steve Christian reported that he and Patrick Lui, the new Sarasota County Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, rode much of the planned route from the Legacy Trail to North Port as part of a budget exercise. Steve has a bicycling website at bikeveniceflorida.com. On the site is a new map of the Carlton showing easy introductory bicycle routes (under the Sarasota County Off Road Riders tab). The idea is to get new riders out into the Carlton. A Face Book page has also been created. The Boldly Go trail count has been down due to the wet weather, and certain parts of the trail are still wet. Steve has submitted a proposal to Debbie to extend the current Boldly Go trail from six miles to eight.

Debbie Blanco said that the proposal to buy a recycled plastic display board in a zig zag configuration seemed to be acceptable for the location in the shade by the cabin. Sherm estimated that the cost would be in the area of \$2,500. A motion was made and unanimously approved to have FCR buy the unit and have FCR volunteers install it. The actual content of the bulletin boards could be a separate project in the future.

Bob Oliphant said that much of the activity of the "Wednesday Crew" had focused on getting the Carlton into tip top shape for Fire Fest. Now that the event is past, the team is working on painting and clearing around marker posts. The team has built up an inventory of 4 x 4's that are used as replacement posts. Priscilla Oren said that she had a pleasant talk with Carolyn Brown at the 50th anniversary of the Venice Audubon Society. Both agreed that the Carlton was a great park! Priscilla also said that she and Rett were staying in Pennsylvania after this year and not being "snow birds" to the Venice area (due to various reasons).

Chris Oliver was with us to talk about issues on the Myakka River. The Myakka River is one of only two rivers in Florida designated by state legislature as a "Wild and Scenic River." This designation recognizes its extraordinary beauty and undeveloped character. Chris is an Environmental Specialist II with Florida State Parks and oversees this area of the river. Projects underway right now are the development of the Senator Bob Johnson's Landing near where US-41 crosses the river and the expansion of Snook Haven from three to six acres. He said that manatees have gone up river all the way into Myakka Lake during periods of high water. When the water recedes, the manatees become stranded. Fortunately, the manatees have been rescued. The problem area of the river is the area between Border Road and Laurel Road. Power boaters are speeding in the narrow channel. Individuals cannot take action but can report the incidents (with as much detail as possible) to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission by dialing "**FWC".

Sherm told us that many flowers are in bloom in the Carlton at this time of the year. It is necessary to get away from the Public Area to see them. Particularly beautiful are varieties of violets, irises, pineland daisies and clematis. Also, certain invasive plants are being located and marked with pink flagging tape by Sherm and Linda for future removal.

At this point in time, there are no issues to discuss at another monthly meeting. It was decided that the next meeting would be a "Pot Luck" get together on Tuesday April 14th at 4:30.

Jan. 13, 2015. Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The January 13, 2015 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Nancy Edmondson, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, and Sherm Stratton.

Bob Branson began the meeting and asked Debbie Blanco to provide a Staff Update. Debbie said that there have been three very credible panther sightings in the Carlton in the last few months. Channel 10 in Tampa interviewed Debbie on New Year's Eve about the sightings. FCR has several cameras in key locations hoping to take a picture, and Florida Wildlife has one camera in the park. Unfortunately, 2014 saw 33 panthers killed statewide, mostly by cars. Coyotes are also being spotted, and one pair appears to be very bold. Linda Lovallo suggested that this may be a mating pair or a pair protecting a den. The Walton Ranch public use plan has been approved, and early phases of the project will get underway. With respect to the display case project, Debbie asked for a pause to take care of Fire Fest and other issues first.

Nancy Edmondson reviewed the planning for Fire Fest on 1/31. A volunteer signup sheet was passed around. Volunteers will have t-shirts. FCR purchased some paper fans to supplement the fans the County purchased. These will be handed out to participants for use and as keepsakes. There will be a helicopter water drop, many vendors, fire trucks and speakers. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate and a large crowd will attend.

Steve Christian reviewed Piggy's Revenge on 1/11. A total of 160 riders participated in the 20, 40 and 60 mile rides (roughly evenly). Several states were represented, approximately 30 teams were included, and

all declared the ride a big success. Thomas Becnel of the Sarasota Herald-Tribune was also there watching the event. One of the YouTube videos (find under "Piggy's Revenge" and year 2015) was taken from a drone and provides an aerial perspective of the park. Steve also recommends these links for articles about the event.

<http://www.gravelcyclist.com/race-reports/piggys-revenge-race-report/>

<http://ahbmx.blogspot.com/2015/01/redemption-in-ruts-piggys-revenge-2015.html>

Sherm Stratton complimented the organizers of the event. The following day, Sherm said you could not tell that so many participants had used the park. There truly was "no trace left behind."

Steve said the design/engineering cost for the bridge from Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park to Carlton Ranch is funded, but the proposed bids for design were too expensive. The City of North Port is looking for ways to reduce costs. Steve said he is looking into people counters and downloaders. With existing units and limited data and relatively wet weather at the end of the year, counts seem to be steady or increasing. Sherm noted that he and Linda did a special walk of 40 people from Discover Greater Sarasota Walkers.

Bob Oliphant presented a review of the work done by the Wednesday crew. The front entrance has been cleaned up, all the color trails have been mowed and trimmed, the public area has been picked up, and the main walkway has been trimmed. Now that the park is drying out, the crews will be using the mules and venturing out to more distant areas.

Russ Johnson noted the Hans Mooyman had updated the DVD in the cabin to break it into segments for easier viewing of specific topics.

Sherm reviewed problems connected with the Myakka River. Speeders on the river and people coming ashore from the river are causing problems. Sherm noted that the river area is protected by the Wild & Scenic River Act, and the Sheriff's department can be called if a problem is observed. Individuals should not take action but should notify the Sheriff with as much detail as possible.

A slate of officers for the next year was presented by Bob and unanimously approved.

President – Bob Oliphant

Vice President – Jim Courtright

Secretary/Treasurer – Russ Johnson

Our next meeting will be the second Tuesday in February (2/10) at 4:30.

Dec. 9, 2014 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

A special meeting was held in lieu of the regular December 9, 2014 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve. Its purpose was to discuss the single subject of possibly adding an interpretive display or exhibit in the Carlton covering prescribed fire and invasive exotics. Attending were Debbie Blanco, Jim Courtright, Karen Courtright, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, and Sherm Stratton.

Debbie presented her idea in general terms. A very open and positive discussion followed. While no firm decisions were made, the following is a summary of the consensus.

It was felt that the display would be located outside the cabin and not inside. As such, it would not have electricity and not be electrically interactive. While the final product might include two or more subjects, an

initial display would cover only one subject, and that subject would be invasive exotics (perhaps as few as five initially). The reason for the limited target was to gain experience. It was felt that the display had to be educational, entertaining and be able to withstand the elements. Once a good model was created, following displays could be added as a group or gradually.

Funding for the initial display could probably be handled within the FCR budget. However, there were many options for matching gifts or even full funding grants even in this initial effort. When the full series of displays is determined, a grant would be sought.

During the open discussion, many participants mentioned displays they had seen in other parks or in museums that were particularly effective. It was decided to ask all the people interested in the Carlton about their experiences with educational displays.

Therefore, if you have an idea for making a good display in the Carlton and you can provide some details or pictures of those ideas, please respond to me with those ideas. I will convey those ideas to the "team". Also, feel free to join the team.

The next regular meeting of Friends of Carlton Reserve will be the second Tuesday in January (1/13) at 4:30.

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Nov. 11, 2014 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The November 11, 2014 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Beth Branson, Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Jim Courtright, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Nancy Edmondson, Bruce Hamill, Coralie Hoselton, David Hoselton, Randy Hurley, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, and Sherm Stratton.

Bob Branson began the meeting, said snacks and beverages were available, and asked Debbie Blanco to provide a Staff Update. Debbie said that over the summer, Sarasota County had reorganized. She and the Carlton were now in Natural Area Parks & Preserves/Preserve Management and of the larger Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Department. Otherwise, the operating procedures were pretty much the same, with Debbie reporting to Scott Moranda and eventually to Carolyn Brown. The computer program for organizing volunteer activities had been rewritten. It is necessary for all volunteers to sign up again. Debbie was looking at updating the rules for volunteers in the Carlton. The code in the cabin has been changed, as too many people had the old code. "Stumping" was underway in certain areas. This is where tree stumps previously left behind were being removed to prevent damage to equipment navigating the area. Some ruts created during wet weather will be smoothed over during dry spells. The prescribed burning program for the year had been quite successful with about 5,000 acres burned.

Upcoming events included Piggies Revenge (sponsored by SCORR) on 1/11/15, Fire Fest on 1/31/15, Suncoast Orienteering sometime in February and a Sasquatch Trail Run (Bike & Hike) on 3/1/15. Charlie Sample will be renovating the bird houses for bluebirds and relocating them within the Carlton. Debbie has some new wooden benches which will be replacing deteriorating ones already in the park. Planning is underway on creating an access to the Carlton Ranch off State Road 72, with both a car and a horse trailer

parking lot. Debbie has access to a Polaris “mule”, and it can be used along with the Kubota by the Wednesday work group. The current horse parking lot at the Carlton Reserve will be expanded to the east for overflow parking during events.

Nancy Edmondson said that last year’s Fire Fest was quite successful despite not such perfect weather. The festival, which educates people about the prescribed burn program, should be even better this year (on Saturday 1/31). She is counting on volunteers from FCR to provide parking assistance and other services at the event. The helicopter is expected to participate again this year.

Russ Johnson provided a financial update. About \$1,800 was received and about \$1,800 was spent (mainly on camera equipment, educational materials and a donation to SCORR) during the year. Thus, the year-end balance stayed the same at about \$11,800.

Steve Christian and Randy Hurley explained that the Boldly Go bicycle trail was a big success with about 700 riders last January. There still are some wet spots where mowing has not been possible. The trail consists of about 6-1/2 miles of single track plus a return trip on existing trails totaling 10 miles. Sherm Stratton complimented the SCORR team for adding such a popular draw to the Carlton. The North Port connector project is moving ahead, but slowly.

Bruce Hamill explained that he and Sherm have been updating the seven individual hiking guides (one page each) plus cover sheet to reflect revised maps and wording. An added feature will be trail distances, and the revised sheets should be available in the cabin very soon.

Sherm asked that we be observant of events on the river and at the kayak launch. There is a person assigned to the Myakka River protection zone, and he is Chris Oliver, Environmental Specialist at Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection, Florida Park Service. He should be made aware of people speeding on the river or damaging property. Get as much information about the incident, but do not confront the individual(s).

Sherm reviewed the distinction between being a “friends” member and being a volunteer who works in the park. The volunteer is protected under the Florida Volunteer Protection Act. This is why the County needs all volunteers to be registered. Because of the new computer system, all volunteers must re-register. Sherm also noted that many volunteers are also members of the Friends of Carlton Reserve, but that is not required.

Our next meeting will be the second Tuesday in December (12/9/14) at 4:30.

March 11, 2014 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The 3/11/14 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Jim Courtright, Lee Ann Harling, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Jim Noller, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Sherm Stratton and Gordon Sutherland.

Bob Branson led the meeting. Linda volunteered what she knew about County issues and the Carlton. The Carlton is now the sole responsibility of Preserve Management (a unit of Natural Resources). Parks and Recreation will no longer participate in the management of the Carlton. Both departments are under financial pressure due to the addition of parks and land without a corresponding increase in funds. Friends of Carlton Reserve may lose its second Kubota, but Debbie is working to keep it or provide an alternate. A discussion followed about how best to help the Carlton and Friends get the equipment and supplies it needs to maintain services. It was concluded that recording volunteer hours provided the best documentation needed to make the point. The county is going to a new system for their volunteer tracking so hopefully it will be much easier to record hours worked in the future. Meanwhile Debbie Blanco is keeping a spreadsheet and would appreciate it if all volunteers continue to send her their hours so she can keep an accurate record of hours worked.”

Steve Christian provided an update on SCORR (the single track bicycle path) plus the North Port Connector. The single track in the Carlton is now six miles long with an added four mile return route on existing trails for a total loop of ten miles. Activity has been high as recorded on a counter mounted on the trail. Funding for the bridge needed for the North Port Connector (to connect Myakkahatchee Creek Park and the Carlton Ranch) has been approved by North Port in the amount of \$200,000. Steve has had a meeting with Tom Harmer, the new Administrator of Sarasota County, and he felt a similar amount would be approved in the County's 2015 budget. The data from the trail counter had been valuable. Steve offered to put a spare counter on the road to the Carlton parking lot to collect some data there.

Russ noted that the trailer at Tucker's Camp was removed Wednesday 2/26 by Bill Lemons of La Porte, IN. The following Wednesday the regular cleanup crew got rid of all the remaining material in the location. Soon that area will return to its original wilderness condition. A discussion suggested that a picnic table be moved to a spot near there (to be done by the Wednesday crew) and a plaque added to signify the importance of the area, as this is a destination spot on the map. This would be similar to the picnic table near Rocky Ford.

Russ provided a financial update. Although the totals in the funds are almost the same as they were at the beginning of the “year”, \$1,333 had been received during the period while \$1,326 had been spent. Sherm thanked the volunteers whose work generated donations, while Russ thanked the dues payers whose contributions far exceeded the suggested dues amount.

Sherm noted that the employees of Microsoft who visit the Carlton doing research on plants have again been in the area. Visitors to the Expo in Venice complimented the Friends of Carlton Reserve and also made donations in the jar. Sherm suggested that FCR have a decent banner for such events, and he also asked that the panther display be replaced due to wear and tear. He thought the two items would cost around \$300, and a motion was unanimously approved.

We then discussed vandalism in the area. Although down from the early years of the Carlton, there still are problems near the Myakka River where access is via the river. People cut down living trees for wood, and they speed on the Myakka. Sherm's experience is that the Fish and Wildlife Conservation (FWC) in Lakeland FL (863-648-3200) has the best ability to deal with these issues. If provided with documentation and pictures, if possible, results have been achieved.

We want to have one more meeting for the "year" and provide a chance to cover any open subjects. A Pot Luck is scheduled for the second Tuesday in April (4/8) at 4:30.

January 14, 2014 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The January 14, 2014 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Beth Branson, Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Jim Noller, Bob Oliphant, and Sherm Stratton.

Bob Oliphant began the meeting and asked Sherm to review the plans for Fire Fest on 2/1/14 (Debbie Blanco was on leave and could not attend.). Two areas were being prepped for possible prescribed burns, depending on the wind direction at the time of the event. The area inside the Blue Trail south of the picnic pavilion was being roto-chopped for possible burning, and the area north of the access road about 100 yards from the picnic pavilion was the other designated area. The County has a list of exhibitors participating, and the County will serve free food at the event. There will not be hay rides, but there will be nature walks. Friends of Carlton Reserve will handle parking and man the cabin with a video presentation (Hans Mooyman) plus provide free hot beverages.

Sherm then mentioned that Tom Trammell has again offered FCR free space at the Kiwanis Venice Expo on 2/28 & 3/1 (Sat. & Sun.). We can bring the video equipment from the cabin and Hans' video as part of our presentation material.

Bob Oliphant said hay rides could begin once we got some new hay for the wagon. A discussion followed about possible liability for FCR in connection with the operation of the wagon. Even though the wagon is owned by the County, pulled by a County vehicle and is only on County property - because the volunteers are also members of FCR (but all registered as County volunteers), there is a potential of liability for FCR. It was agreed that all hay wagon events would be advertised as County events, and that FCR would not "pass the hat" for donations.

A review of volunteer operations followed. Except for Christmas and New Year's Day, the Wednesday group has been doing cleanup work. It was agreed that the results were excellent. The core of 3 or 4 individuals might increase soon with the seasonal volunteers returning. The next goal was all the trail markers in the Reserve.

Sherm covered for the camera update. New cameras (though less expensive are much better in quality) are being deployed, and an effort to photograph the panther is underway. It has been seen in Myakka River State Park and at the bridge over Deer Prairie Slough by a county contractor.

Russ Johnson mentioned that we are in the process of receiving over \$200 from Microsoft Corporation for work done by its employees in the Carlton. He also reviewed a change in direction in our parent organization – Friends of Sarasota County Parks (FOSCP). In general, FOSCP will take a more active role in Fund Raising and Grants. FOSCP has also lent its name and personnel (Bruce Dillon) to head up the Capital Campaign for the Extension of the Legacy Trail.

Sherm noted that the Wild and Scenic River Act, which covers the Myakka River, has provided a “Ranger” for our area – Chris Oliver. (Chris is the Wild & Scenic River Biologist.) Sherm is impressed with his dedication to protecting the Myakka River area. Sherm also mentioned some updates on the web site. He was impressed with an article by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (copy on web site) that reports that National Wildlife Refuges support over 35,000 jobs and pump \$2.4 billion into local economies. Further, passive activities (like the Carlton) generate 75% of the revenue, while active activities (hunting, fishing) generate only 25%.

Steve Christian reviewed the recent “Piggy’s Revenge” in the Carlton. 73 people participated in the event of which 6 were from out of state and 23 were from out of the area. The popularity of the Carlton for bicycling is increasing. The single track trail is now completed for 4 miles, 2 miles are marked for construction, and the return route is the Red Trail of 4 miles – for a total of a 10 mile route. A counter on the trail had 500 “hits” in December, and the numbers so far in January are on the rise. We discussed the agreement with Sarasota County Off Road Riders (SCORR) made at the last meeting to help with the expense of the new kiosk in the parking lot. A figure of \$350.00 was agreed upon, and a motion was made and unanimously approved to donate that amount to SCORR. Steve has had some successes with his efforts on the North Port Connector project. To read more about this project, just log onto:

<http://bikewalkvenice.com/NPC+11.25.13.pdf>

Our next meeting will be the second Tuesday in February (2/11) at 4:30.

November 19, 2013 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The November 19, 2013 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Beth Branson, Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Sally Christiansen, Jim Courtright, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Nancy Edmondson, Bruce Hamill, Lee Ann Harling, Coralie Hoselton, David Hoselton, Russ Johnson, Kenya Leonard, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Jim Noller, Bob Oliphant, Carl Schwartz, Rick Storsberg, Sherm Stratton, Ray Vinson and Danny Williams.

Bob Branson began the meeting and asked Sherm to make a presentation prior to the regular agenda. Sherm recognized the outstanding service to the Carlton Reserve by Debbie Blanco and Kenya Leonard by having a specially decorated cake (for all to share), and for each an award certificate, a DVD highlighting past events involving each individual and a \$50 gift certificate. We all acknowledged the two, ate and continued.

Debbie then told us of the current plans for administering the Carlton by Sarasota County. Parks and Rec. will no longer share in the administration of the Carlton. Debbie Blanco of Natural Resources now administers the Public Use Facilities (PUF) that consists of the area located at the core of the park. She took over that position from Kenya Leonard on 10/1/13. Therefore, Debbie now has responsibility for the entire park, which includes the PUF and the balance of the park commonly called the “back country” (the part of the park she has been administering all along). If plans underway are put into effect, Nancy Edmondson also of Natural Resources will become the administrator of the “back country” and Debbie will

continue with PUF. Although new assignments for Debbie and Nancy, both people have a long history with the Carlton.

Ray Vinson from Sarasota County Natural Resources told us that the Carlton Reserve was an excellent candidate to become a YouTube channel. Fortunately, Sherm understood what Ray was saying and offered that Hans Mooyman had considerable source material for such a project. It would be investigated.

Russ Johnson explained some of the background regarding Friends of Carlton Reserve and the umbrella organization of Friends of Sarasota County Parks. Because of changes in general liability insurance, it was imperative that all volunteers be registered on the scgov.net site. Almost all volunteers are already registered through the dogged efforts of Linda Lovallo over the past few years.

Bob Oliphant and Bob Branson covered the volunteer work crew update. Sherm has mowed all the PUF and those trails with color markers. The Wednesday work crew consists primarily of Jim Noller, Stan Teague, Bob Oliphant, Sherm Stratton and Jim Courtright, and it is keeping the park looking sharp.

Hayrides will begin soon. New hay is needed. Bob Oliphant will start off and Rick Storsberg will pick up in January.

Donna Day provided a brief history of the camera program. Her recollection is that some wildlife pictures were being taken as early as 1999. The early cameras used film and several "D" batteries. Film was expensive to process, and the batteries had a short life. Over the years the cameras changed to digital, the batteries changed to less expensive "C", and battery life was greatly extended due to better software that let the cameras "sleep" when not in use. Additionally, pictures taken and not "keepers" could be deleted. Donna Day and Ernie Winn took over the program in 2006, and in 2010 Danny Williams took over the data entry. Today the program is producing excellent results.

Nancy Edmondson let us know that there is a planned event in the Carlton on Saturday, February 1, 2014. The Fire Fest 2014 will be put on by the County, will have two speakers and will highlight the prescribed burn program. There may actually be a small "burn" at the event. Other participants may have tents. Nancy asked us to think about having some nature walks or short hay rides. She asked that FCR provide volunteer support. Sherm made a motion that FCR would support the event, and it passed unanimously.

Steve Christian gave us an update on the SCORR (Sarasota County Off Road Riders) single track in the Carlton. It is now up to 5 miles and has an entrance off the parking lot. SCORR would like to have a kiosk identifying the entrance. A figure of \$500 to \$1,000 was discussed as well as alternative methods of directing riders to the entrance. Since the plans are not final, Sherm made a motion that FCR would support SCORR in this project (financially and otherwise) to a reasonable extent, and it passed unanimously.

Debbie notified us that the County has approved an event in the Carlton for 3/29/14 called the Mud Slide and put on by Pangea Adventure Races. She thought it involved a 6 hour Elite race and a 3 hour Sport race. She also thought that the event was fully supported by the presenting organization and that FCR volunteers would not be needed.

We ran out of time to discuss Sherm's ideas for the upcoming year. Sherm simply said that he thought we could focus on educational events and improve our cabin coverage. More to come at a future meeting.

Our next meeting will be the third Tuesday in December (12/17) at 4:30.

April 9, 2013 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The April 9, 2013 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Randy Hurley, Russ Johnson, Kenya Leonard, Hans, Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Terry Redman, Carl Schwartz, Rick Storsberg and Sherm Stratton.

This meeting was the last of the “season” before the summer break, and we enjoyed snack food and refreshments courtesy of the participants. While snacking, Sherm asked Bob Oliphant and Rick Storsberg to update us on the work being done out at the Cowboy Camp. A large dumpster had been brought in and filled with debris from years of accumulation. Some of the debris came from the “Hilton” and the “Blackmon” camp sites. The windows in the Cowboy Camp Bunk House had been cut out and shutters added. Screen doors were added to the Cook House. Additional lumber is needed to add a pantry to the Cook House, and Terry Redman thought he might have a source of some cedar.

Kenya Leonard’s Wednesday crews were still working in the Carlton. She was considering improving the landscaping along the sides of the entry (paver) trail into the park. Debbie Blanco said that two line items were put into the budget – the teardown of the “Hilton” site and the teardown of the “Tucker” site. Kenya noted that the Tucker Camp site included a Spartan Mansion trailer – a collector’s item. Terry suggested that the Friends of Carlton investigate the value of the trailer on the website (forum) for Spartan trailers. If a buyer was interested, the removal might be done at the buyer’s expense. Also, the paperwork for FCR would be considerably less than for the County to handle this process. Russ Johnson will look into it.

Randy Hurley announced that the County has approved a “Pilot Project” for the SCORR plan for single-track bicycle trails in the Carlton. The Pilot Project is phase 1 (about one mile) of the first trail. The first trail will eventually run parallel to existing trails beginning at #1 and continuing east to #3 and then diagonally northeast beside the Venice Arcadia grade. The trails may come back to the regular trails for short sections around depressed (water) areas. In general, the routes would follow high ground, be dirt and grass, be easily maintained, and would be marked. Randy said that funding for the project is in place. The County will assess the success of phase 1 and then decide whether to approve the entire trail.

Rick and Bob reviewed the hayride program, both past results and future opportunities. Debbie discussed the status of the Myakkahatchee Creek connector. Terry listed some upcoming events in the County. We continued snacking and ended the meeting.

We expect that we will resume meetings in October or November depending on the weather. Enjoy your summer!

2/12/2013 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The February 12, 2013 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Beth Branson, Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Jim Courtright, George Ferance, Bruce Hamill, Gord Hunter, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Kenya Leonard, Jim Noller, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Rick Storsberg and Sherm Stratton.

Bob Branson presided over the meeting and asked Kenya Leonard to provide a staff update on Carlton activity. Kenya said that a new firm (low bidder) is handling the opening and closing of gates in the park. She also thanked all the volunteers who had been working in the park to keep it in top shape. Later in the meeting, she said that the County has created a new volunteer registration form. (It will be emailed to the FCR mailing list in the near future.)

Bruce Hamill said that the volunteers had recently been focusing on getting all trail markers visible, mostly by weed whacking the areas around the markers. The north and east of the park had been serviced, and the eastern end of the park still needed some work. A new compressor has been ordered, and a donor gave one to be used until the new unit comes.

Steve Christian reported that the recent Sunday SCORR event involved 12 riders in one pack riding for about 1-1/2 hours and 14 miles.

Our guest speaker was Gord Hunter, a snowbird from Canada and a high school teacher. The Florida Orienteering Organization asked him to look into setting up some events in the area, and he has set up four events, one of which will be here. Gord defined orienteering as family of [sports](#) that requires [navigational](#) skills using a [map](#) and [compass](#) to navigate from point to point in diverse and usually unfamiliar terrain, and normally moving at speed. Participants are given a topographical map, usually a specially prepared [orienteering map](#), which they use to find [control points](#). Originally a training exercise in [land navigation for military officers](#), orienteering has developed many variations.

Those present at the meeting then participated in a short and nearby exercise on foot. All reported that it was fun and great exercise! An email will be sent to the mail list notifying the date of the next event.

We then conducted some business. The slate of officers (Bob Branson – President, Bob Oliphant – Vice president and Russ Johnson – Secretary/Treasurer) was approved as was agreement that past officers can be used if present officers are not available (e.g., snowbirds, health, etc.). Russ Johnson was appointed as a chapter representative to the FOSCP board. The Venice Expo, 3/1-2, 9 to 4, at the Community Center will have a FCR table.

Kenya then talked about some security issues. Recently the areas along the river have seen problems from boaters and campers. The visitors to the park and the volunteers can help with security by reporting issues. These individual should not confront violators but simply report the problems. The method recommended was: If serious and immediate – call 911. Otherwise get as much detailed information as possible and email it to Kenya Leonard (kleonard@scgov.net) and to Debbie Blanco (dblanco@scgov.net). If at all possible, get pictures. Pictures have helped convict violators in the past!

Rick Storsberg will be having a haywagon ride for Friends and their friends on 2/24 (a test run for him). Details will be provided in a future email. Kenya reported that two butterfly experts will be in the park in March.

Our next meeting is planned for Tuesday, March 12th.

1/8/2013 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The January 8, 2013 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Beth Branson, Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Sally Christiansen, Eric Claessens, Jim Courtright, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Bruce Hamill, Lee Ann Harling, Randy Hurley, Russ Johnson, Hans Mooyman, Jim Noller, Tom Obermeier, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Rick Storsberg, Carl Schwartz and Sherm Stratton.

Bob Branson presided over the meeting and asked Debbie Blanco to give us an update on Carlton activity. Debbie said that she had been having discussions regarding building a people bridge (not capable of handling a car) over the canal separating the Carlton Ranch and North Port at the Myakkahatchee Creek

Park and providing access into the Carlton Reserve at the southeastern corner. She also wanted the Friends group to consider removing the trailer at Tucker's Camp and cleaning up that area for safety reasons. (Later in the meeting she added that the planned burning program was way behind schedule due to weather problems.)

Randy Hurley then gave us an overview of SCORR (Sarasota County Off-Road Riders). This group has a Facebook page as Scorr Rider. It was formed last year to promote off-road riding in Sarasota County and the Carlton Reserve. It has regular rides the 2nd Sunday of the month. This past Sunday they held the 2nd Piggies Revenge Ride. 62 riders participated from ages 12 to 60+. The weather was good, and rides of 20, 40 and 60 miles were offered.

The purpose of the talk was both informative and cooperative. Bicycle trails are generally firmer and longer than hiking trails. Revised trail markers in some locations might indicate good bicycle trails along with a special bicycle map. SCORR can provide feedback on trails far from the public area. SCORR would also like to increase trails like the colored (red, green, orange) that are narrower but firm. Debbie and Kenya are working with SCORR on some possibilities.

Steve Christian reviewed routes that are connectors from North Port to Border Road and west to the Legacy Trail. Essentially there is considerable open space in which many paths can be taken. His summary can be found at <http://ht5000.jimdo.com/north-port-connector-update-11-20-12/>.

Russ gave a Treasurer's Report. FCR has \$2,000 in a fund for Wildlife Monitoring Equipment, \$2,000 in a fund for Public Education Equipment, about \$2,300 in the Hay-wagon Depreciation Fund and about \$5,500 in the General Fund – for a total of about \$11,800 in our account with FOSCP. He added that in his opinion FCR is in a good financial position for an organization of its size and purpose.

Donna Day reported that there are now 6 cameras working in the Carlton, 4,980 records are in the database (which includes 6,687 animals captured). It is a continuing effort to locate the cameras in good positions for photographing animals while avoiding weather and people problems. Alexis Meyer has been identified by the Sierra Club out of Ft. Myers as being the dedicated panther advocate for the organization representing SW Florida (including the 106,000 contiguous acres of land of which the Carlton is at the center).

Sherm reported that a recent survey indicated which programs members found most interesting. Future meeting will attempt to include such events. He also noted that we should elect FCR officers at the next meeting. Larry Robbins will be unable to continue as President next year. Names for officers can be submitted to this email address.

A volunteer update indicated that work is continuing on keeping the park and trails in good condition. All at the meeting agreed that the park has never looked better!

Sherm reviewed the recent gift of \$510.00 from Microsoft from their volunteer matching program. He said that additional information can be found on our website -<http://www.carltonreserve.org/>.

We had a chance to talk with a healthy looking Richard Storsberg (aka Ranger Rick). He reported that he is not "recovered", but he is healthy enough to take a vacation and participate in some volunteer work.

Our next meeting is planned for Tuesday, February 12th.

4/17/2012 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The April 17, 2012 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Beth Branson, Bob Branson, Carty Carpenter, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Bruce Hamill, Lee Ann Harling, Russ Johnson, Kenya Leonard, Guenter Mauer, Hans Mooyman, Carl Schwartz and Sherm Stratton.

This was the last meeting of the “season” before the summer break. We expect that we will resume meetings in October or November depending on the weather.

Sherm Stratton provided sandwiches, snacks and refreshments. After socializing just a bit, we grabbed some food and watched Hans Mooyman’s 20-minute DVD about the Carlton. The DVD included many areas of interest in the Carlton. In addition to animals and plants, Hans was able to capture workers thinning out trees to prevent crown fires, workers installing concrete power-line poles to replace the wooden poles that failed during hurricane Charlie, work on the expansion of the water plant and a prescribed burn. Hans got a nice round of applause. The DVD is available in the cabin and is used when FCR participates in events.

After the presentation we continued socializing and discussing the Carlton one on one.

Enjoy your summer!

2/28/2012 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson. The February 28, 2012 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Bruce Hamill, Judy Henry, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Larry Robbins and Sherm Stratton.

The February 28, 2012 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Bruce Hamill, Judy Henry, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Larry Robbins and Sherm Stratton.

Debbie Blanco provided a staff update. Roller-chopper work is being scheduled as are planned burns, particularly along the northern edge of the park. Approval has been received to do some trail grooming. Anyone knowing of areas in serious need of trail grooming (other than the river trail) should notify Debbie. A “Piggy’s Revenge” bike event brought many bikers to the Carlton last Saturday. Although not permitted in advance, the event was allowed to take place.

Russ gave a Treasurer’s Report. Even though FCR spent and received a significant amount of money from the “Marjorie and Marjory” event, the balances of about \$9,000 in the general fund and somewhat over \$2,000 in the hay wagon depreciation fund remained almost the same.

Sherm said the “M&M” event was very successful. Ernie taped the event, and Sherm converted the tape to 3 CD’s, which are in the cabin. The discussion evolved into what other events could be considered, including another Open House. Many ideas were put forth. A consensus seemed to be that a “themed event” where there was more than one presenter but less than all that had taken place at the full Open House was right for the Carlton. Themes mentioned included history of the area, wildlife, flora and fauna, birding and photography. It was hoped that some planning could take place during the summer for the period after the summer break.

The FCR T-shirt is still popular, but only one size remains. It was voted to ask Jim Courtright to look into seeing if we could spend about \$500 to buy more of the same T-shirt to supplement our supply with more sizes.

Requests for volunteers for the Kiwanis Venice Expo (3/2-3) and the Venice Newcomers 3/21 luncheon were made by Larry.

Sherm explained that our new web site is based on the new "cloud" technology, which requires no software on the user's computer other than a browser (like Internet Explorer). If anyone has an interest in helping with the maintenance of the site, very little training would be needed, and it would be both interesting and educational. Similarly, FCR is using "Dropbox" for data transmission and storage. Again, you should contact Sherm if you are interested in participating in this latest technology.

A slate of officers for next year was proposed and approved:

President – Larry Robbins

Vice-President – Bob Branson

Secretary/Treasurer – Russ Johnson

Our next meeting is scheduled to be the third Tuesday in March (3/20) at 4:30.

1/17/2012 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson The January 17, 2012 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Bob Branson, Linda Christian, Steve Christian, Sally Christiansen, Donna Day, Bruce Hamill, Lee Ann Harling, Russ Johnson, Joshua Kesting, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Carl Schwartz, Sherm Stratton and Danny Williams.

Debbie Blanco provided a staff update. An entomologist will be leaving moth traps in the Carlton. Also, someone from the University of Georgia will be trapping small mammals and birds to check for ticks and parasites. But the big problem in the Carlton is the hogs. A general discussion followed. Hunting may be considered for Deer Prairie Creek but not for the Carlton. Studies indicate that hunting removes far fewer hogs than trapping; plus there are many other problems with hunting. The current trapping contract runs through September. The County will be looking at different incentives and possibly more than one firm. Donna volunteered that the camera data could provide some trends if it would be helpful.

Sherm commented that the County has a Scavenger Program (educational game) using the Carlton. Personnel from Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve are reviewing our camera program. Individuals supported by Microsoft Corporation are reviewing certain plants in the Carlton.

Sherm then talked about our new web site, carltonreserve.org. The provider of our previous web site is scheduled to discontinue that particular service in the summer. Sherm found another provider with full features, the new "cloud computing" and at half the price. Everyone agrees that the new site is even better than the previous one! Sherm will likely have to change the FCR email accounts and notify us.

Donna reviewed the "Marjorie & Marjory" event for 1/28. 62 people have registered already, and this is prior to publicity. The limit of 75 people may be raised to 100. A volunteer sign-up sheet was passed around. It was agreed that at the Wednesday 1/18 planning meeting, the group would decide on how to get chairs for the event. One possibility was to rent them because of the large number needed. Sherm said FCR would purchase 23-mile range walkie-talkies prior to this event and thus available for other events afterwards.

Sherm asked that members submit names of nominees for officers of FCR prior to the next meeting.

Steve Christian reviewed what he is calling the "North Port connector". Separate plans are already proposed to create a trail from the Legacy Trail east down Border Road, south down South Moon Drive, across I-75 and to Deer Prairie Creek Preserve. Continuing east in Deer Prairie Park (and not part of the prior proposal) is an existing paved road of about 2 miles. From the end of that road to North Port is a straight line of about 2 miles. If a trail of just 2 miles could be built, people could bicycle or walk from North Port to the Legacy Trail. Making that connection is the goal of the team.

There are many considerations, however. The straight path east goes across SWFMD property that is scrub jay habitat, is near I-75, is wilderness, requires a bridge across a drainage ditch and ends up in a neighborhood of homes. Further, SWFMD does not want any pavement on its property. If you go south from the eastern end of this road, you will stay in Deer Prairie and can then go east to North Port. This is a longer route, but you may meet North Port in a better terminus location. North Port and the team are reviewing several alternate routes.

Steve also noted that Tour de Parks will be Sunday 3/25 starting and ending at the Venice Train Station, and it will be even better this year.

Our next meeting will be the third Tuesday in February (2/21) at 4:30.

12/20/2011 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson The December 20, 2011 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Beth Branson, Bob Branson, John Branson, Sally Christiansen, Wayne Connor, Donna Day, Bruce Hamill, Lee Ann Harling, Bill Heyd, Carolyn Heyd, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Kenya Leonard, Linda Lovallo, Mark Matthews, Guenter Maurer, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant and Sherm Stratton.

Linda was our moderator, and she asked Kenya to update us on County activities in the Carlton. Kenya thanked all the volunteers who have worked so hard and long to keep the park in excellent repair. The trail trimming and the repair/painting of the sign markers were especially noted. Kenya also told us the good news that as of 12/3 she is a permanent employee of Sarasota County! The program to formalize camping in the Carlton is moving along. The first date is 1/20 & 1/21. Five locations in the picnic area have been marked with new signs. The two outlying locations are still the Homestead and the Scout Camp. The camping program follows the plans discussed in the previous meeting. A question about hog damage started a discussion. Kenya said the worst hog damage is north of marker #27 near the Windy Sawgrass area. Better ways to repair the damage on trails are being sought. The County may have to renegotiate the contract with the trapper to improve the incentives in a changing economy.

Russ said we have about \$9,300 in our "general fund" and about \$2,100 in our Hay Wagon depreciation fund for a total of about \$11,400. Linda mentioned Rick Storsberg's event on Sunday 1/22. Sherm noted that all the pertinent information can be obtained on our web site. Donna summarized the plans for the "Marjorie & Marjory" event featuring Betty Jean Steinshouer on Saturday 1/28. All is pretty much ready. There will be a limit of 75 attending the event by reservation through the County. The \$500 grant has been received, but we may have to spend another \$200 on expenses. The picnic pavilion is the primary site with the Nokomis Community Center as the weather backup. Volunteers will be needed to help with parking and other control operations. An email will be sent out prior to 1/28.

Donna also reviewed the camera program. Six cameras are active right now, and over 5,000 records have been logged, mostly by Danny Williams. Deer and hogs lead the list of most photographed. Linda noted that there are many steps in managing the program and thanked the "camera team" for their efforts. The "maintenance team" spoke briefly about recent activities. Bill Heyd was working with the hay rides and presenting digital slide shows of birds after the rides. Bruce Hamill and Bob Oliphant were weed whacking around sign posts and repairing some. Bob Branson was cleaning up the picnic area and other areas as well. Linda thanked all the "team" members.

Our guest speaker was John Branson, brother of Bob Branson. John is the Ranger/Historian for Alaska's Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, an area of about 4 million acres (160 times the size of the Carlton). He provided a description of the park that was established as a National Park by President Carter in 1980. The park is located on Cook Inlet and is a major breeding area for salmon. The park has 90 miles of coastline. The terrain is rugged with mountains "like waves" and even a volcano. Three planes are available for transport: a Cessna Super Cub, a Cessna 185 and a Cessna 206. John was asked about global warming and perma frost. John noted that there is not much perma frost in Lake Clark, but the rapid growth of tree saplings due to the high CO2 in the air is certainly occurring. Linda thanked John for his presentation.

Our next meeting will be the third Tuesday in January (1/17) at 4:30.

10/25/2011 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson The October 25, 2011 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Boyce Blackmon, Beth Branson, Bob Branson, Linda Christian, Steve Christian, Wayne Connor, Jim Courtright, Donna Day, Jerris Foote, Bruce Hamill, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Tom Learmont, Kenya Leonard, Linda Lovallo, Bob Oliphant, Larry Robbins, Carl Schwartz, Sherm Stratton and Shari Swickard.

Kenya began the meeting with a staff update. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at the water treatment plant on 11/2 (Wed.) celebrating the completion of the latest additional capacity. (The Venice city park on the Myakka River is now also open.) There is only one box remaining of the new Carlton brochures, and reprinting with changes is next. Any corrections should be sent to Kenya. Training of Carlton volunteers is scheduled for 11/8 at the Carlton. This is for safety, operations and maintenance. At 1 PM is hay wagon and at 3 PM is tractor training. A CPR refresher course has not been scheduled yet. The automatic entrance gate has been replaced by a security service. The service is working well as it is flexible and also provides a personal presence in the park. The composting toilets have been repaired, and the County wants to enter into a service contract for these complex toilets.

Russ gave a treasurer's report. The "general fund" of unallocated money is around \$9,100. The depreciation fund (money earned from donations) for the hay wagon is \$2,086. So, the total balance (in FOSCP's bank account) is around \$11,200. There are no known liabilities, and dues are being received for the fiscal year that runs from October to October (like the FOSCP fiscal year).

Larry reviewed some of the recent financial highlights. The Gulf Coast Gives program for kayak equipment brought in \$587, which was entirely spent on oars and other kayak items. We spent \$1,393 on kayak insurance (and received donations only roughly half that amount to offset the cost). Since the coverage runs through February, it's been proposed that a kayak invitational be scheduled. People could bring their own kayaks allowing for a larger event. Phil Peters donated a newer computer for the cabin. Boyce Blackmon donated a Bimini top for the hay wagon (much appreciated on sunny days). Friends of Legacy Trail gave us

\$500 for our help with the Tour de Parks. The money was used on a refrigerator and flat panel TV screen for displaying DVD's in the cabin. King Plastic donated many signs which have been located in the park.

Linda gave us a maintenance update. Bob Branson is doing trim and toss cleanup on the colored trails (red, green, etc.). Bob Obermeier has completed the refurbishing of the entrance way. (More pine needles wanted.) Sherm mows the public area and colored trails. Debbie mows the far trails. The pig trapper has begun again after a summer break. Trapping in the public areas may be done even though the trapper has had a problem with people releasing trapped pigs. (Note: Do not release pigs but rather call or email Debbie or Kenya if pigs are seen in traps. Pigs must be removed from traps within 24 hours.)

Sherm then provided a whole list of ideas for adding presenters to regular meetings or for scheduling separate events. We could get someone to talk about Hiking 101, for example, which would cover subjects like shoes, packs, poles, hydration, SPF clothing and repellants. The presenter could be someone from a local business. Similarly, subjects considered might be Biking 101, Paddling 101, Nature Photography (101 and so on), Stargazing, Birding, Emergency First Aid, Land Management, Map reading and GPS, Bugs, Native/Invasive Plants, Leave No Trace, Carlton History, SW Florida History, Zoology, Blue Grass Music and Nature Writing. Donna offered that there are actors who portray individuals from the history of the area. After some discussion, Sherm Stratton, Linda Lovallo and Carl Schwartz agreed to work on this idea.

Linda quickly highlighted the upcoming calendar outings. For the most part, these are a continuation of the programs from last season. Russ and Linda mentioned that a Volunteer Handbook, similar to the one provided to the volunteers with Legacy Trail, is being prepared.

Jerris Foote then reviewed the program for camping in the Carlton. There has always been some camping in the Carlton as well as other County parks. There is an effort to formalize the County camping program. For the Carlton, it appears that only two sites will be used. The Homestead is about 4.2 miles from parking and can be gotten to by hiking, biking or by canoe. The Scout Camp is less than a mile and is the other site. The Cowboy Camp (Windy Sawgrass) is considered incomplete, with construction debris and otherwise not ready for use (safety issues). Camping may occur in only six months, November to April and one weekend (Fri, Sat, Sun) per month. The Homestead could probably handle 4 tents and 12 people. The Scout Camp is probably a 1 tent site. Any concerns people have about the camping program can be emailed to Kenya or Jerris.

Our next meeting will be the third Tuesday in November (11/15) at 4:30.**4/19/2011 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson**

The April 19, 2011 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Corinne Adams, Jim Adams, Beth Branson, Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Sally Christiansen, Wayne Connor, Jim Courtright, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Phil Ellis, Russ Johnson, Kenya Leonard, Hans Mooyman, Chris Shiparski, Rick Storsberg, Sherm Stratton, Greg Vine and Danny Williams.

Sherm began the meeting by welcoming Greg Vine, Phil Ellis and Chris Shiparski from Venice Area Beautification, Inc. (VABI). The VABI team made a presentation about "Ribbons of Venice", a plan to connect the "backbone" of the area (the Legacy Trail and Venetian Waterway Park) with the open spaces in the County (mostly to the east) and also with the various neighborhoods in the area. Phil Ellis provided us with some history of the events leading up to the "Ribbons" plan: the 1990 moratorium, the 1993 20/20 Visions and the Discovery Charrette, the list of 13 items to be accomplished in 20 years, and the successful Venetian Waterway Park. Greg Vine said that the VWP is just now beginning its final segment 18 years after

plans were first discussed. Greg's point was that projects are seldom "overnight successes," and it takes many steps and years to accomplish results.

Chris Shiparski closed the presentation by asking the Friends of Carlton Reserve to formally support the Ribbons of Venice project. A motion was made and approved unanimously. Sherm agreed to compose the letter.

Sherm asked Rick Storsberg if he would provide us with an update on Rick's health. About the time Rick retired from being the "Ranger" in the Carlton, he was diagnosed with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, an illness of the lung tissue (not cancer) that is very serious. Rick has been to the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, has had extensive testing and been considered for a lung transplant. However, at the present Rick is so healthy that he is not on any transplant list. Rick monitors his blood oxygen saturation, and if it drops below a certain figure, his status will change quickly. Rick was in good spirits, although he knows that in the future he will face some major health and financial strains.

Sherm asked Steve Christian to review the Tour de Parks event. Steve said that there were 506 paid entrants, far more than even hoped for. All participants indicated that they had a good time. There were no negative incidents. Steve thanked all the volunteers who made the event such a success. Next year the race will be held 3/25 from the Venice Train Depot, and it is expected to be bigger and better!

Sherm was asked about the Hay Ride program. Sherm said it has been very positively received. People even applaud at the end of rides. Improvements in the towing vehicle and other smaller items have helped.

Kenya Leonard brought the new Carlton brochure to the meeting. It is 17" x 11" folded twice to 4-1/4" x 11", in full color both sides, has a detailed park map and public area map, information and many pictures with captions. It also includes a quote from Donna Day. "The pristine beauty of the Carlton Reserve makes my heart sing. Who knows what each visit will offer other than the assurance of Joy?"

As this was the last meeting of the "season", Sherm said that some snacks were provided by FCR and others. He invited us to enjoy. The next meeting will be scheduled in the fall depending on the weather and park conditions.

3/15/2011 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The March 15, 2011 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Alicia Bartol-Thomas, Debbie Blanco, Linda Christian, Steve Christian, Wayne Connor, Lee Ann Harling, Russ Johnson, Kenya Leonard, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Betty Lou Murphy, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Larry Robbins, Sherm Stratton and Danny Williams.

Sherm began the meeting by welcoming Kenya Leonard to the Friends group. Kenya has now been officially assigned to the Carlton (and Lemon Bay Park) by the County for the next 12 months. Kenya has worked for the County for about 10 years and will office in Lemon Bay Park. She reviewed her role in the Carlton with us.

Sherm congratulated Larry Robbins on being invited and accepting the position as a board member of the Friends of Sarasota County Parks. Larry first advised FOSCP on some insurance matters. Sherm also thanked Phil Peters for donating a Dell computer to the cabin to replace the older model there. Sherm has successfully installed it with the necessary software. The newer model will allow us to transfer files using modern hardware.

Larry reviewed the Kayak program. Just days after our last meeting the County decided that it wanted the Carlton to be active in kayaking and requested that the necessary liability insurance be purchased. FOSCP (Terry Redman) handled this at a cost of around \$1,300 per year. So far roughly half of this amount has been recovered in donations from participants of the kayak program. Larry and Sherm said that the program is well managed, but that more trained volunteer leaders are needed.

Larry reviewed the "Gulf Coast Gives" program on the internet. Of the \$587 requested for paddles/supplies, 15 people have contributed \$339 leaving \$248 yet to be collected. We approved a motion to monitor the results and complete the \$587 with FCR funds just before the deadline ends. Sherm agreed to do this.

Sherm reviewed the Hay Wagon program. This has become very popular; people actually applaud at the end of rides. The use of Debbie's truck in place of the tractor has been a big improvement. The lack of the tractor's diesel fumes and the smoothness of the truck make for a nice ride.

Steve and Linda Christian (event leaders) were at the meeting and brought us up to date on the Tour de Parks event on April 3rd. About 60 volunteers (11 at the Carlton) are signed up and 245 participants are already registered. Steve is expecting 300 to 400 total participants on race day. The proceeds from the race will be used to buy trail counters for various County locations. All is well organized for the event.

Linda reviewed the Kiwanis booth at the Venice Community Center. The increased visibility of FCR and the many Carlton activities have noticeably increased attendance in the Carlton. The volunteers continue to work on trash pickup, maintenance, tree and limb removal and data entry (Danny Williams). Linda read a letter by Bruce Hamill written to Commissioner Barbetta thanking the County for such nice open parks.

Sherm thanked Jeff King for donating a group of very professional signs to be placed in the Carlton. These signs provide directions or information to visitors.

Debbie reviewed current programs in the Carlton. Trail smoothing has not had the necessary rain to solidify the loose soil, and she apologized to the bike riders. The work on the water pipeline under the Myakka River is coming to an end. Both she and Kenya are reviewing the latest draft of the Carlton Map to be printed as the guide to the park.

Priscilla Oren commented that the geo-caching program is successful with 8 approved and maintained sites in the Carlton.

The meeting ended at 5:40. The next meeting will be April 19th at 4:30.

2/15/2011 Minutes by Secretary, Russ Johnson

The February 15, 2011 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Corinne Adams, Jim Adams, Linda Christian, Steve Christian, Wayne Connor, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Linda Lovallo, Bob Oliphant, Rett Oren, Phil Peters, Larry Robbins, Sherm Stratton and Danny Williams.

Linda began the meeting by reviewing two upcoming events that need volunteers – the Venice Expo at the Venice Community Center on March 4th and 5th and the Tour de Parks beginning at the Legacy Trail on April 3rd. A sign-up sheet for each event was passed around the room. Steve and Linda Christian are heading up the event for FLT and added some information about the three bicycle "tours" of 15, 35 and 65 miles. The 65-mile tour will come through the Carlton. Linda pointed out that last year the event raised around \$9,000,

all of which was returned to the parks. Major items were the \$6K surray bought for the Legacy Trail and \$2K spent on park entrances including the Carlton.

Larry then reviewed the Kayak Program. As many as 15 people are signed up for next weekend. However, major discussions are taking place regarding insurance. The appropriate liability policy now excludes kayak events. The County wants FOSCP (our parent organization and not FCR itself) to purchase additional coverage for kayaks. The premium is thought to be around \$1,200 per year. The requested donation per person is \$40, which means that 30 participants are needed to break even. Sherm pointed out that there may also be some costs for equipment maintenance. Paddles are needed, and the cleanup after an event is hard work. There is a question of who (FCR or FOSCP) would make up the short fall if not enough revenue could be generated. Although discussed at some length, no decision was reached. It was hoped that many questions would be answered in the next few days in various County meetings.

Sherm reviewed the hay wagon usage. The hay wagon is being used, and there is no liability insurance issue as there is with kayaks. However, due to these same insurance issues, Charlie Sample can no longer use personal vehicles for his bird viewing events and needs the use of the hay wagon. So far, Sherm and Linda have been able to provide towing service using the tractor. It is hoped that something quieter and with less fumes can be used instead of the tractor and that a bigger base of volunteers for towing can be found.

Larry has been asked to serve on the FOSCP board as one of the five board members coming from the chapters. We formally voted to have him represent us, and Sherm prepared a letter to FOSCP certifying that Larry was duly approved.

Linda said that a dead coyote had been found by the County and frozen for preservation. FCR was asked if it wanted to pay for taxidermy on the animal. Linda noted that we already have several stuffed animals in storage and are currently only displaying the otter due to lack of interest. We decided to not pay for taxidermy at this time.

Sherm discussed the need for a newer computer in the cabin and the desire to have some equipment that could be used in presentations or displays. Phil Peters volunteered to see if his old (but much newer than in the cabin) computer could solve some of the problem.

Linda reminded us that the Snook Haven FOSCP fund raising event on Saturday 3/12 still needs volunteers, and a reminder email will be sent out. Sherm has updated the main map and all the trail maps. The new maps are on the web site and also in the cabin for printing. Linda said that the current pattern of volunteer days on Wednesdays and Sundays is continuing, and that cabin coverage has increased nicely. Danny Williams is still loading data about animal sightings, and geocache locations are also being updated.

A question was raised about an earlier event: Prior to the FCR meeting, a number of County staff (EdWolfenbarger, Jerris Foote, Debbie Blanco, Kenya Leonard) and Linda & Sherm were discussing camping in the Carlton.

The meeting ended at 5:45. The next meeting will be March 15th at 4:30.

1/18/2011 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The January 18, 2011 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Boyce Blackmon, Debbie Blanco, Bob Branson, Linda Christian, Steve Christian, Wayne Connor, Pete Davis, Lee Ann Harling, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Betty Lou Murphy, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Terry Redman, Larry Robbins, Carl Schwartz, Jo-Ann Scott, Sherm Stratton and Ed Wolfenbarger.

Sherm began the meeting by reviewing the Educational Outing held on 12/13/10 in the Carlton and led by Alicia Bartol-Thomas. Each of the over 100 participant students had written a short letter thanking the volunteers for their excellent presentations. Sherm had made several copies of the letters (a thick packet) and passed them around the room. Also, each of the volunteers received a Thank-You Christmas Card signed by several dozen participants. All-in-all, the event was a big success. Sherm asked if we should pursue a Toyota grant of up to \$5,000 for funding educational items (i.e., telescopes, projectors, books) for 2011, and the vote was approved.

Pete then discussed the nomination of officers for the year, and the following individuals were elected.

President – Larry Robbins

Vice-President – Sherm Stratton

Sect./Treas. – Russ Johnson

Sherm then thanked Charlie Sample for donating a brand new kayak to Sarasota County for use in the Carlton. Charlie has also agreed to man the cabin for several hours on Mondays.

Linda reviewed the events occurring in the Carlton. There are more events, and they are becoming attended more. Lee Ann Harling said she was “stunned” when 30 people showed up for her recent Curious about the Carlton Walk. She thought that a notice in the newspaper added to the number. One of the frequent comments from the volunteers leading the outings and the participants was that the Carlton has never looked better, thanks to the efforts of Linda’s volunteer crew. In addition to Charlie manning the cabin, Kenya Leonard, Nelson Hay and Russ Johnson have been working there. Bob Branson has been correcting the “\$2 maps” for updates. Steve Christian tightened all the bolts on the hay wagon, which is seeing increased usage. A discussion of the camera program followed, and it was suggested and approved that purchasing of batteries and replacement cameras up to \$800 be done without the need for further approvals.

Russ reviewed the bank balance, which is \$10,932.25, and commented that in his opinion our finances are in excellent shape.

Terry then led a discussion of Friends of Sarasota County Parks, volunteering, permitting and insurance. FOSCP pays the expenses of 501-C-3 filings, audit and insurance (around \$5,000 to \$6,000) without assessing the individual chapters, and it hopes to cover all of its expenses through fund raising events. But, it will need volunteers from the chapters to man these fund raising events. FCR will solicit volunteers from its members through email notices. With respect to permitting, the County is requiring more control of scheduling of events to prevent conflicts, and it wants FOSCP to be a part of that control effort. Much of this is due to the growth of organizations placing demands on County facilities. This also ties in with the potential increase in the cost of insurance, as more events mean more exposure. Although we discussed these subjects in some detail, no conclusions were reached. Several individuals in the County are working on the subject.

Ed Wolfenbarger added his comments that the Carlton is looking great. Debbie Blanco noted that the timbering is completely done. Roller chopping is continuing as part of the program to restore the park to natural conditions. She thought that about 9,000 acres had been restored recently.

Sherm presented Pete with a certificate of appreciation for his services as President.

The meeting ended at 5:45. The next meeting will be February 15th at 4:30.

11/16/2010 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The November 16, 2010 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Beth Branson, Bob Branson, Sally Christiansen, Jim Courtright, Pete Davis, Donna Day, Lisa Fields, Jerris Foote, Eleanor Frazier, Gary Frazier, Lee Ann Harling, Kim Heuberger, Bob Hladik, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Linda Lovallo, Craig McCullough, Carl Schwartz, Jo-Ann Scott, Rick Storsberg, Sally Anne Storsberg, Sherm Stratton, Danny Williams and Ed Wolfenbarger. Kelly Caldwell and family also stopped by.

Pete began the meeting by honoring Rick and Sally Anne Storsberg for ten years of guiding the Park and volunteers. So much was accomplished in the decade of Rick's stewardship, a period in which the Friends of Carlton Reserve came into existence. Pete presented Rick and Sally Anne each with plaques commemorating their service plus a gift certificate to Lock 'N Key restaurant. Sherm also gave them DVD's of the photo gallery that is on our website. Rick was happy to see the completed hay wagon that he had championed just before his retirement. (Everyone was impressed by its quality.) A decorated chocolate and vanilla cake plus other food and drink was enjoyed by all.

After a break, Sherm mentioned that on Monday, December 13th there will be a program in the Carlton from 10 to 2 by Alicia Bartol-Thomas, Science Teacher of the Year. This initial program will include 106 seventh graders. They will be broken into 10 groups with a parent assigned to each group. The groups will follow the blue trail and stop at information stations to learn about aquifers, fossils, and various nature subjects. This is a pilot program that is hoped to be expanded to other grades. Although some County employees have agreed to man certain stops, volunteers will be needed to complete all the stops. An email will be sent out prior to the event.

Linda reviewed some of the volunteer-led events coming up. Because of the empowerment allowed the FCR volunteers, the County is being strict in applying rules and demanding compliance with those rules that are primarily concerned with safety.

Pete noted that our next scheduled meeting would be 12/21, which is in the Christmas week. We agreed to skip the December meeting. At the December meeting, a slate of officer candidates should be presented. Anyone willing to serve as an officer may send an email to our mailbox (focr@me.com).

Jo-Ann Scott thanked the volunteers and County for maintaining the trails out to the Victory Garden in such good condition. Donna Day noted that an educational packet on raptors has been placed in the cabin.

The meeting ended at 5:30, and several people then took a quick hayride. The next meeting will be January 18th at 4:30.

10/19/2010 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The October 19, 2010 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Bob Branson, Steve Christian, Sally Christiansen, Pete Davis, Donna Day, Lisa Fields, Bob Hladik, Russ Johnson, Jeff King, Kenya Leonard, Bill Locher, Linda Lovallo, Bob Oliphant, Phil Peters, Charlie Sample, Carl Schwartz, Jo-Ann Scott and Sherm Stratton.

Pete began the meeting by asking Sherm to bring us up to date on what had happened in the Carlton since our last meeting in April. Sherm said that the major event to happen was the retirement of Rick Storsberg on September 10th. (With respect to a replacement, Debbie added that this was a "gray area". Parks & Rec is trying to fill the position but the position has to be deemed "mission critical" as the County currently has a

hiring freeze.) Sherm said that a tribute to Rick was up on the website and on a DVD in the cabin. The Carlton has retained the tractor, Rick obtained a diesel caddy and some new tools (with guidance from Bob Oliphant); and the fuse panel, a security light and camera have been repaired. With Debbie's help, tractor training was arranged. Carlton sign just off Border Road has just been smashed by a runaway car. Tom Obermeier had worked and led some volunteers in greatly improving the appearance of the entrance to the Carlton. Sherm then highlighted about half-dozen to dozen events in which Carlton volunteers had participated during the summer, the most recent of which was Canter for Cancer (equestrian event) on 10/16.

Lisa Fields from the Canter for Cancer event was present and thanked us for our help in the event. Besides being a well-received outing in a beautiful setting, around \$5,000 was earned for cancer research.

Sherm explained that the Hay Wagon Project was proceeding well. Rick had proposed buying the running gear (metal base & wheels) some time back. FCR purchased the gear and donated it to Sarasota County for liability reasons. Greg Best of Sarasota County has assembled the base and is working on the wooden platform. This will be an agricultural vehicle and not allowed on the road (except as carried on a truck). There is hope that the hay wagon will be available by 11/13 for the Wilson House opening.

Linda covered the Guided Paddles program for Larry Robbins. Larry owns several kayaks himself, and the County has 8. This is shaping up to be a once a month (11/13) event for experienced kayakers. Details are on our website.

Donna covered Serendipity Walks beginning in January. Donna is hoping to have 2 regular hikes plus one private silent walk each month in the cooler weather. Linda talked a little about natural events in Sarasota and the high proportion occurring in the Carlton. In addition to Donna's walks there are:

- Family Bike Hikes – Dave
- Curious about the Carlton Walks – Lee Ann
- Strenuous Bike Rides – Larry
- Strenuous Co-ed Bike Rides – Lori & Pat
- Dragonfly & Damselfly Walks – Don & Kathy
- Bird Walks – Charlie

Debbie brought us up to date on maps. A new Carlton brochure is being developed by the County and is expected to be 11" x 17", full color on both sides and folded (like Deer Prairie). The larger Myakka Wild & Scenic Trails Map was thought to be gone, but Debbie was able to obtain 5 additional boxes from a supply at MRSP. With respect to land management, trails beyond the public area are being mowed; the last of the logging for a few year is happening in the NE corner of the park (1 – 2 months yet); panther biologists from the Florida Wildlife Commission have located 3 expensive cameras in the Carlton, one in Myakka Prairie and one in MRSP (if successful may lead to placing radio collars on panthers); the water plant is working on a pipeline and well and plans to start another well; and a bridge over the ditch has been placed near sign #1 so that hikers can enter the Churchill property (500 acres) to the south. It is expected that one day there will be open land from the Myakka to the Peace River in a general east-west direction.

Linda reviewed volunteer requirements. Due to liability coverage being provided by the County for volunteers, volunteers have to be registered and trained. Some discussion followed. Bob Oliphant noted that he has experience with other agencies, and this has become the normal procedure for all groups today. Linda hopes to have some protocols listed for us.

Sherm added that some helmet fitters are needed for the Sheriff's Appreciation day on 10/30.

The meeting ended at 6 PM. We have changed our monthly meeting date to the third Tuesday Accordingly, the next meeting will be November 16 at 4:30.

4/6/10 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The April 6, 2010 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Bob Branson, Jim Courtright, Pete Davis, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Lee Ann Harling, Nelson Hay, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Rick Storsberg, Sherm Stratton, Stan Teague and Danny Williams.

Pete started the meeting by asking about the plans for the Cowboy Camp Cleanup on Sunday 4/11. It was decided that we would meet at the mule shed at 9:00 AM and then carpool out to the camp. We would work until 3:00, have our meal and afterwards return to our cars. Debbie will have a dumpster at the camp along with a large tractor with a front loader to handle heavy materials. The task is to clean up years of accumulated waste into a burn pile and into the dumpster. Some weed whacking and other maintenance will also be done. Linda was coordinating the pot luck meal items.

Linda and Rick reviewed volunteer policies. Volunteers must be registered with the County. If a volunteer is using medium/heavy County equipment, the volunteer must be certified in its use. Use of the mule, for example, can be approved by Rick after completing a training course. Use of rakes and shovels does not require approval. Use of the tractor requires experience, and currently only Pete has such approval based on his experience on a farm. Approval for use of chain saws is almost never given due to liability issues.

Sherm talked about National Trails Day on Sat, 6/05. FCR's part would be to have an event at the Carlton (walk, bike hike, birding, etc.) prior to the Friends of Legacy Trails event at the Venice Train Station on 6/19. The Carlton participant would then have a completion card from the Carlton that would be used at the FLT event. It was decided (a very preliminary discussion) to tell FLT that FCR was interested in participating.

Rick talked about **Rancho Regatta on Saturday, 6/19 at Lemon Bay and Indian Mounds Parks. This is a public archaeology program that explores the historic and archaeological remains of the Fishing Rancho Period of Florida's past.** FCR was asked to provide volunteers to help with ticket collection and general control. We agreed we would help.

Debbie said that some "No Dogs" signs had been added near the gates off the paved road to the parking lot. Rick thought that the automated entrance gate had been fixed. Debbie thought about adding some "Parking in Designated Areas Only" signs, but decided that the designated areas were not defined yet. Some police patrolling has been observed.

Russ noted that at the end of the "year" we had about \$12,300 in our account, up from \$11,100 at the beginning of the "year".

Linda asked if we should schedule an Open House in November or December – a sufficient lead time is important. A discussion followed, and it was generally felt that a few specific targeted events suited the Carlton better. As Lee Ann Harling summarized, building on the strengths of what had been accomplished in the areas of hikes and walks (with proper publicity) would best match the purpose of the Carlton itself.

3/2/2010 Secretary: Russ Johnson The March 2, 2010 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Debbie Blanco, Bob Branson, Pete Davis, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Bob Oliphant, Ron St. Laurent, Sherm Stratton and Stan Teague.

Pete started the meeting by saying he thought the recent Duathlon was quite a success based on the comments he had received. The number of attendees was less than hoped for, and other than better weather what could have been done to attract more participants. Debbie suggested that placing signs around town announcing the event might help. A competing cycling event in St. Petersburg on the same day hurt. Linda said that pre-registration would have helped to bring people because they already had an investment. It would help with planning for the event. Russ noted that the financial net for the event was just under \$1,200. Sherm passed out a page listing several comments received about the event, and all were very positive.

Sherm reviewed funding for the cameras and related items. There now are six cameras available. The most recent is a video camera donated by Ernie Winn. (Later in the meeting Donna explained that this video camera is tripped by a motion detector and then takes just a few seconds of video in high resolution B&W). On average, each camera uses six D-cell batteries every two months. By buying in very large quantities, a case of 96 batteries can be purchased for \$48. Additionally, backup memory cards, cables and general supplies such as toner cartridges for the printers and copiers plus the annual internet web site fee are needed. We agreed to have Sherm to buy around \$500 of necessary supplies.

Linda asked that anyone willing to help man the booth at the Venice Expo at the Venice Community Center on 3/5 & 3/6 should contact her. She also said that Rick will need some volunteers at Lemon Bay Park to do a demolition job. She will get an email out. We talked about the Open House and agreed to skip a year.

Debbie reviewed the panther sighting incident. Stephanie Green was the person who spotted the cat, but others have found fresh signs of the panther over a 4-week period now. The question as to whether to put a collar on the cat was mentioned. While the information obtained would be important, the cost (on-going monitoring by plane every other week) and the danger of capturing and affixing the collar have caused no action to be taken. Sherm was very active in the publicity of the the incident. It happened that a meeting of Sierra Club at the Hyatt was occurring at the time, and Sherm was able to present some information, participate with the Sierra Club on a trip to Myakka State Park and later bring several members to the Carlton.

Debbie talked about recent "problems" in the park. People are dumping materials, causing vandalism and parking in the road. Signs might be posted to help with the parking problem. Sherm noted that the Sunday work crew often spends the first half of the morning hauling dumped material away. Sherm asked if we couldn't get the Sherriff to come through the park near dusk. Debbie also noted that the automated entrance gates are not working. The solution is hard wiring the mechanism, which is thought to cost around \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Debbie proposed a work day at the Cowboy Camp on Saturday 4/10 to haul away old materials. She would provide the hog roast and we could add other items to the meal.

The next meeting will be April 6, 2010 at 4:30. **2/3/2010 Secretary: Russ Johnson**

2/2/2010 Secretary: Russ Johnson

Our February 2, 2010 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve was attended by Boyce Blackmon, Sally Christiansen, Jim Courtright, Pete Davis, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Lee Ann Harling, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Hans Mooyman, Bob Oliphant, Rick Storsberg, Sherm Stratton and Danny Williams.

Pete started the meeting by asking Rick to bring us up to date on the 2/14/10 Duathlon planning. Rick said that this year he may not have to bring water to the event due to the recent rains. Rick and Sherm have scouted different routes for the run event, the bicycle event and the fun run. Nine full sponsors (\$100 or more donations) plus Sarasota County and FCR are identified on the T-shirts (coming next week per Jim). In addition, several firms have donated items for prizes or the raffle. Final route locations and other preparations will take place in the days before the event.

A review of the various "Guides" work followed. Donna said that her turnouts have been more than she wanted and she has had to turn away people. The recent weather has also dampened the turnouts. Asked about publicity, she said the County and papers have provided good coverage. Sherm noted that despite the rainy weather, serious riders (Larry Robbins group) are still biking long runs in the park. Linda noted that these events are helpful to the County in providing hard data on park facility usage (needed for grants). Rick commented that he had come across a hay wagon running gear kit (hardware but no wood) for around \$1,500. He is checking further into the item.

Linda explained that FCR has been donated a booth at the Venice Expo on 3/5 & 3/6 thought to be worth \$400. An email will be sent to members after the Duathlon asking for volunteers to man the booth. Bob explained that he has organized the tool shed and with Rick's help has gotten the gear in good working order. He could still use some clear plastic shoe-box size boxes and clear jars for nuts and bolts. Rick is leading a "Paddle with Purpose" event on 2/27 at the Palm Island Resort for the Florida Greenways and Trails. The morning is a 3-hour class and the afternoon is a 3-hour paddle. Focus is on problems you might encounter while kayaking and how to deal with them.

Pete reviewed the election of officers, and the current officers were re-elected: Pete Davis as President, Sherm Stratton as Vice-President and Russ Johnson as Secretary/Treasurer. Rick said the County is looking at replacing the diesel and gas utility vehicles with electric vehicles, and Rick was asked to test the Stealth brand model (stealth4x4.com). He was favorably impressed with its ruggedness. Boyce added that he had heard that the vehicles were excellent but pricy.

Donna said that Danny had completed loading the picture data into the database. One immediate observation applied to hogs. In 2006 about 3% of the pictures were of hogs and in 2009 the percentage has increased to 25%. She felt that the hog trapping was not accomplishing its goal. It was suggested that a summary of the data be given to Debbie Blanco. Rick noted that the hog trapper is hauling away more hogs than before, and Boyce added that there was a similar peak of hogs in the 80's that was eliminated by a swine cholera outbreak.

Our next meeting will be at 4:30 on 3/2/10.

1/5/2010 Secretary: Russ Johnson

Fourteen souls braved the cold weather and attended our January 5, 2010 meeting of the Friends of Carlton Reserve. Rick had a fire going in the cabin, so we all moved inside. Attending were Bob Branson, Sally Christiansen, Jim Courtright, Pete Davis, Donna Day, Lee Ann Harling, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Bob Oliphant, Rett Oren, Carl Schwartz, Rick Storsberg, Sherm Stratton and Danny Williams.

Pete started the meeting by asking Bob Branson to bring us up to date on the 2/14/10 Duathlon planning. Bob said he was pleased at the responses he's been getting from bike shops, running stores and running clubs. All agreed to show posters and even provide links to the event on their websites. Bob ordered another 500 flyers due to the demand. Jim Courtright agreed to order the T-shirts with help from Carl

Schwartz on the computer artwork. A discussion followed covering some of the details for the event. We will have our next monthly meeting before the event.

Linda covered the status of volunteer work. Due to the almost flooding and cold, the past Sunday workday was cancelled. The Public Area is pretty well organized (storage areas, attic, supplies and tool shed by Bob Oliphant). Linda hopes the trails will dry out as trail work is needed next. A discussion of the County website followed.

Jim brought us up to date on Friends of Sarasota County Parks. A special meeting was being held Wednesday at Twin Lakes with John McCarthy and the parties updating the FOSCP bylaws to reflect current practices. As Sherm said, this was an effort to reflect that FOSCP and the various Chapters were operating under the "same umbrella".

Donna Day brought us up to date on the Camera Program. Only two are out in the field right now, but two new cameras have been donated and one camera has been repaired (5 good cameras in total now). But the big news is that Danny Williams has almost loaded all the data entries into the database (over 2,000 records now in the database). Donna may be able to generate some reports based on the data.

Sherm brought up the fact that our annual website fee of \$99 is due, and it was unanimously agreed to renew the service.

Pete said that the current officers had agreed to continue on for another year, so the slate of candidates to be voted on at the next meeting will be:

President – Pete Davis

Vice-president – Sherm Stratton

Secretary/Treasurer – Russ Johnson

Rick's work hours have changed, and he will now be working on Sundays in the Carlton. He also said he was unable to get donation boxes (pipe safes) for \$25 each. That very special deal was not available to us, and the real cost was \$300 each. He would continue to think about the subject. He also suggested that someone in FCR might be able to make tree cookies for a revenue source. See the website below.

<http://65.109.144.97/curriculum/Resources/HowToMakeCookies.pdf>

Our next meeting will be at 4:30 on 2/2/10.

12/1/09 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The December 1, 2009 meeting of the Friends of Carlton was attended by Boyce, Blackmon, Bob Branson, Jim Courtright, Peter Davis, Donna Day, Lee Ann Harling, Russ Johnson, Bill Locher, Linda Lovallo, Phil Mygatt, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Belinda Perry, Terry Redman with Dominic Mora, Carl Schwartz, Rick Storsberg, Sherm Stratton and Danny Williams.

Pete started the meeting by asking the Treasurer to report our financial status. FCR has a little over 11-1/2 thousand dollars in the bank.

Terry Redman was asked to give a status report on Friends of Sarasota County Parks. Terry noted that Jim Courtright, Pete Davis, Linda Lovallo and Sherm Stratton at the meeting had all been involved in the effort to revise the bylaws of FOSCP to reflect current practices, and he thanked them for their contributions. The process is proceeding well. The request for a \$47K grant for web site improvements among other needs

was not approved. The County has given the go-ahead to the sponsorship program in which individuals or firms could donate money to name a park, tree, bench or paver. A discussion followed on who has the authority to grant such a "sale", and Terry and Rick explained what the limits and controls on the proposed program will be.

The Rough & Ready, Down & Dirty Duathlon was discussed by Bob Branson and Rick Storsberg. Rick passed out the flyer for the 1/21/06 Duathlon and said he was updating it for this year's event. A date of 2/14/10 (Sunday) was agreed upon for the event. The main race would be a 2.5K run, 10 mile bicycle ride and another 2.5K run. There would be categories for participants, no pre-registration, a low (\$10-\$15) entry fee, man-made obstacles on the course, t-shirts and some raffle items. We voted to spend up to \$500 on shirts, prizes and expenses. Volunteers will be needed for the race itself.

Belinda Perry, Natural Resources Manager, thanked us volunteers for our help with the park – both in providing maintenance and improvements and also in attracting visitors to the park. Belinda's current focus is on the creation of a land management plan for the park. You may see and print the current draft package (65 pages) by going to scgov.net, searching for natural lands, going to the bottom of the chart and clicking on T. Mabry Carlton Reserve (<http://scgov.net/naturallands/CarltonReserve.asp>), and then looking for and clicking on Land Management Plan for the Carlton Reserve. As Sherm commented, it's an impressive document. Comments about the plan can be sent to Linda Lovallo at focr@me.com for forwarding to Belinda. Comments are requested by the end of December for a March approval by Sarasota County.

Donna Day reviewed the progress of the wildlife camera program. Two cameras are active at this time, one is being repaired, and one will not be repaired. Sherm and Linda will donate two new cameras. About 1,359 pictures have been entered into the database and about 3,000 have yet to be entered. Already, though, some trends are being noticed. The most shocking is that of all pictures taken in the Public Area, 79% are of hogs. The hog trapper has not worked that area because of wanting to avoid people who might interfere with the traps. Clearly, some measures must be taken. A discussion about the quality of the cameras followed, and Sherm explained that the newer cameras are less expensive while producing better results. He felt that camera placement was more important than having expensive cameras.

Linda reviewed the accomplishments of the volunteers on the Sunday morning programs. She thanked many individuals for their contributions. Linda wants the volunteers to have fun while working to improve the park.

Bob Oliphant reviewed the work he has been doing in cleaning up the toolshed. The Carlton has lost its key maintenance personnel, and the tool shed has fallen into disorganization and disrepair. Bob has organized much of the equipment, sharpened and repaired much, and asked for some replacement parts from the County (which still is providing necessary equipment). Bob says his effort is a work in progress. He said that he could use some shoebox size storage containers for organization if people had extras.

Jim Courtright talked about the County's volunteer program and in particular its efforts to use computer programs. A discussion of problems followed, and Jim said a team is working to make the programs better.

Our next meeting will be at 4:30 on 1/5/10.

11/4/09 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The November 3, 2009 meeting of the Friends of Carlton was attended by Lori Biagini, Debbie Blanco, Bob Branson, Sally Christiansen, Ann Clark, Jim Courtright, Peter Davis, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Lee Ann Harling,

Russ Johnson, Rick Kellam, Sandy Kellam, Don Kennedy, Ken Kubik, Bill Locher, Linda Lovallo, Liana Martin, Craig McCullough, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Carl Schwartz, Rick Storsberg, Sherm Stratton and Danny Williams.

Pete started the meeting by asking each of us to introduce ourselves. Rick then gave us an overview of changes in Parks & Recreation. Due to budget cuts, the staff that was 280 something has been cut to 80 something. Additionally, personnel are being cross trained to make them more valuable assets. Rick personally has been given 5 parks in addition to the Carlton, and his office has been moved to Lemon Bay Park. (He no longer uses the cabin.) Rick can now only devote up to two half days in the Carlton each week. Priorities at passive parks like the Carlton are at a minimum. Debbie Blanco has been helpful by tackling the maintenance of the road to the parking areas. In addition to adding stones and grading the road, the hydrology of the culverts is being reworked to prevent more damage in the rainy season. Also, Debbie expressed her willingness to help Rick and the volunteers maintain the public area. The County is looking to the volunteers to help with trimming of overhead growth on the trails and otherwise helping with maintenance. Tools, mules and fuel are still available for maintenance purposes.

Russ noted that FCR now has just over \$11,000 in the bank (after the five years since its creation). Rick added that the County, in these economic times, is supportive of Friends groups holding income generating events.

Linda reviewed the online County Registration process. While there still are bugs in the system, County people are working on the problems. The online system is important to the County for two key reasons. The process saves administrative time while improving accuracy. Secondly, many grants are contingent in part on volunteer hours. The online system provides the County with the proof it needs towards these grants. FCR members performing volunteer work in the County are encouraged to record their hours online. In response to a question, Rick explained that there is a State requirement now that all volunteers must pass a level 1 background check. Linda reported that 23 Carlton volunteers have already been approved.

Sherm reviewed the work being done by various Friends Chapters with the (parent) Friends of Sarasota County Parks and the FOSCP efforts to better define their mission. Pete, Jim and Sherm of FCR participated in a brainstorming FOSCP workshop recently. The FOSCP organization has evolved since its creation, and the team was beginning the process of codifying the current operating environment. FOSCP provides the various Chapters with free banking, 501(C)(3) filings and certain insurance. However, the Friends Chapters are not even mentioned in the FOSCP bylaws. The team is continuing its work.

Sherm then reviewed the work already done on setting long range goals for FCR. He pointed out that the Open House made it clear that FCR is providing many services and events, but that we might schedule some of our open house events throughout the year and also have monthly programs. During the summer the officers discussed activities for the upcoming year and shared them with Rick. The resulting list of ideas was emailed to the membership for their input (additions, deletions and comments) about a month before our first meeting. Several members made additions, prioritized them and volunteered for specific activities. At the monthly meeting, it was recommended that a committee of a half dozen or so people be formed rather than have the entire group discuss the creation of a long range plan, Pete asked for volunteers, and Rick Storsberg, Sherm Stratton, Linda Lovallo, Liana Martin, Priscilla Oren and Rett Oren volunteered to be on the committee.

Linda reviewed some of the volunteer events already planned. Donna Day will do her Serendipity Walks, Larry Robbins is planning "strenuous" bicycle rides, TKM Stables is planning equestrian events and Charlie

Sample will do bird walks. Additionally, Sally Christiansen may talk about Plein Air painting, Priscilla and Rett expect to do some intros to bird watching, and Rick said we have an OK to create a Butterfly Garden near the cabin, provided the flowers are native to the Carlton. Rick couldn't commit to Moon Walks or Fitness Walks yet due to the demand on his time. Linda said she wanted to set up some routine work days for volunteers. At present, pre-scheduled Saturday mornings seem the best time. After all volunteers provide their best times for availability, some other time may be selected.

Debbie Blanco noted that timber thinning has been delayed, because in the area selected the ground is still swampy. She would like to follow up on past exotic removals by having volunteers audit the area to be sure exotics have not returned. Road grading is continuing, and some more material is needed. The next meeting will be Tuesday, 12/1 at 4:30.

4/4/09 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The April 7, 2009 meeting of the Friends of Carlton was attended by Lee Arris, Bob Branson, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Russ Johnson, Bill Locher, Linda Lovallo, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Rick Storsberg, Sherm Stratton and Danny Williams.

Linda started the meeting with a review of the successful Open House. Attendance was much better than last year, but it could still be better. We are competing with several other events on the day. However, each of the presentations in the picnic pavilion and each of the hikes/rides had good attendance. Jean-Louis took around 180 pictures of the Open House and put the pictures on a DVD for review. (Note: the Wednesday Venice Gondolier Sun had as the lead article two color pictures of Dominic Mora [Terry Redman's grandson] looking at snakes at the Open House.)

Rick talked about the new policy regarding volunteer checking. If a volunteer works directly with children, the volunteer may be subject to a level #1 background check including recording of social security number. FCR volunteers do not currently work directly with children. Related to this, there is a new software package for recording volunteer hours, and this may affect us.

Rick next talked about the Tram Proposal. After reviewing many kinds of people carriers, Rick felt the kind most useful for the Carlton would be a trailer towed behind the mule or truck. A discussion followed about how such trams would be used. While access to the park for less aerobic individuals was desirable, the park is essentially a wilderness area. Rick hoped to have more information in the Fall.

We set a date for the Pot Luck Dinner: Sunday, 4/19 at 4:30 at the picnic pavilion.

Russ reviewed funding of the parent organization Friends of Sarasota County Parks (FOSCP), a subject first brought up at the previous meeting. An agreement was reached in FOSCP that it would not ask the individual Friends groups for money but would instead have fund raising tents/activities at certain County events. Members of FCR, however, would be asked to help FOSCP at these events.

Linda reviewed the various volunteer "opportunities". An email will be sent out with specifics. The next work trip will be on 4/11 to the Cowboy Camp to clean it up prior to the Poker Run on 4/18.

Rett talked about Least Terns chicks falling off the Water Treatment plant roof. A group is trying to remedy the problem with a fence on the roof or some other method. FCR agreed to contribute up to \$500 towards this effort. Rett will coordinate this.

Sherm talked about Strategic Funds Use. We should have a committee that will recommend spending on various projects. Suitable projects should be consistent with the mandate for the Carlton Park (1994) and with the mission statement for Friends of Carlton Reserve. Since this begins our break time for the Summer, Sherm asked that individuals interested in being on this committee contact him (ShermStra@comcast.net) before the next meeting in the Fall.

3/3/09 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The March 3, 2009 meeting of the Friends of Carlton was attended by Jim Courtright, Donna Day, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Russ Johnson, Rick Kellam, Carolyn Ledbetter, Bill Locher, Linda Lovallo, Mark Matthews, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Terry Redman, Charles Sample, Dawn Schmertmann, Greg Schmertmann, Rick Storsberg and Sherm Stratton.

Sherm Stratton led the meeting by reviewing plans for the Open House on 4/4/09. The planning team has looked at all the participants from last year's Open House plus many new possible entries. Linda has thought about additional people from the County plus organizations affiliated with Friends of Sarasota County Parks. Rick suggested that some foods may be sold at the various barbeque areas in the Public Area. With us at the meeting were the Schmertmanns (Dawn and Greg) from TKM Stables. They will be bringing a horse and possibly a pony for offering rides. (On Saturday 4/18 TKM will be having a Poker Run in the Carlton. Participants collect random playing cards on the way to the Cowboy Camp, and the person with the resulting best poker hand wins a prize. Sherm noted that there is now a windmill producing fresh water for horses near the Cowboy Camp.) Check our website (<http://web.me.com/FOCR>) for the latest information on the Open House (plus new features added by Sherm). Anyone with ideas for the Open House should send an email to Linda.

Sherm noted that there had been a meeting of people interested in cycling in the Carlton. One of the requests was to create a link between the Myakkahatchee Creek Park and the Carlton. (A link from the Carlton to the Jordyn Ranch has been created, and Debbie is working on a link to the Churchill Tract.) The property through which the link to Myakkahatchee Creek would be located is now owned by the County, but the Carlton family still has two years in which cattle may be grazed on the land.

Priscilla and Rett Oren reviewed the Geocaching event. About 70 people attended; Carolyn Ledbetter provided the prizes; of the 12 new geocaching sites the maximum found by any individual was 7; and there are now a total of 18 geocaching sites in the Carlton. Go to www.geocaching.com and type in cache symbols GC1KP3W to read about the event.

Terry Redman explained that there are many grants available to organizations like FCR. If FCR can identify a purpose for funds, both the funds and a grant writer might be available. By combining several grants, it is possible to obtain 100% funding.

Linda reviewed the results of volunteer operations. A mat was placed in the Kayak launch to reduce getting mud on feet during launching and exiting. The mat is a bit slippery, so some addition of sand is being considered. A new single-path bicycle trail has been located and needs work. The previous trail was severely damaged by a wildfire from lightning and by the timber thinning operation. The painting of the cabin windows, trail maintenance and parking lot cleaning are all projects desired prior to the Open House.

Rett Oren said that he was not a full year resident of this area and was not really needed in the job of Treasurer. It turns out that the mechanics of the job favor having the Secretary handle this assignment, and it was agreed that Russ Johnson would be Secretary and also the Acting Treasurer.

A discussion followed on how the parent organization, Friends of Sarasota County Parks, could be funded. Beyond assessments of individual Friends Groups, Sherm proposed that certain major FOSCP expenses might be paid by the County in recognition of the benefit it receives from volunteer hours.

The next meeting will be at 4:30 on April 7th.

2/3/09 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The February 3, 2009 meeting of the Friends of Carlton was attended by Jim Courtright, Jean-Louis Dumaine, Lee Ann Harling, Nelson Hay, Russ Johnson, Rick Kellam, Carolyn Ledbetter, Linda Lovallo, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Charles Sample, Carl Schwartz and Sherm Stratton.

Sherm Stratton lead the meeting by asking Charlie, Priscilla and Rett to review the results of the Bird-A-Thon. There were 4 teams, 12 participants, many volunteers, 42 degrees temperature at the start, a total of 63 species found, two winning teams tied at 49 birds found, and somewhere between \$800 and \$1,000 received (less \$250 prize money) depending on pledges met. All had a good time, and Charlie was impressed by the enthusiasm of the one high school team. Next year the event will be on the last Saturday of January, 1/30/10. Suggestions coming out of this first event included having actual prizes rather than money and identifying long-term goals for spending money earned at such events. A discussion about long-term goals will be included in the agenda for the March meeting.

Rett reviewed planning for the 2/14 Geocaching event. Already 20 teams (about 50 people) have signed up with two weeks yet to go. Twelve new caches will be placed in the park prior to the event. A Chinese auction is planned for after the geocaching itself. Carolyn Ledbetter said that several firms had donated prizes for the event. An email for volunteers will be sent out in the week prior to 2/14.

Linda covered several items, as Rick was leading a walk at the time of our meeting. Trimble training will continue. Debbie Blanco will pick the dates, and an email will be sent out. About 15 trail marker have been painted and located; more need to be painted and located. A tentative date of 3/2 has been set to work on the Kayak Launch. A matting material is to be added to minimize the problems with the muddy river bottom in the launch area. The Walking Events have good attendance and are supported by a County health initiative. Unfortunately, Rick will probably miss the next meeting due to leading hikes on Tuesday evenings. Open House is set for April 4th (first Saturday in April). Linda would appreciate receiving emails about ideas for participants in the Open House. The Full Moon Walk was a success. Apparently the moon was at its brightest in many years. Jim Courtright was able to capture the event in pictures now in the cabin.

Russ explained that our new web site (web.me.com/focr) also includes an area for file storage. Several files of a historical and source nature have been uploaded to the site.

Sherm thanked all the volunteers for the Bird-A-Thon. He noted that Rick is having a meeting 2/11 regarding possible biking events. With respect to the ATV owned by Mike Elswick, Mike plans to locate it in the storage facility near the Water Plant and to obtain approval from the County for volunteers to use it when needed.

Russ read a report from Donna on the Serendipity Walks. Participants are having a good time, and Donna is continuing the walks as well as looking at making some changes.

Priscilla noted that prior to the Bird-A-Thon, an intro to birding class was offered and about 25 people attended.

The next meeting will be at 4:30 on March 3rd.

1/6/09 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The January 6, 2009 meeting of the Friends of Carlton was attended by Debbie Blanco, Bob Branson, Kelly Caldwell, Sally Christiansen, Jim Courtright, Peter Davis, Donna Day, Lee Ann Harling, Russ Johnson, Rick Kellam, Sandy Kellam, Bill Locher, Linda Lovallo, Myra Ninmann, Bob Oliphant, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Bob Prince, Charles Sample, Terry Redman, Rick Storsberg, and Sherm Stratton.

Charlie Sample began the meeting by reviewing the status of the Bird-A-Thon scheduled for 1/31/09. Prizes were set at \$100 for the team with the most points, \$100 for the team with the most pledges and \$50 for the individual with the most points. If there are ties, winners can split the pot or opt for a flip of a coin. In general, the event is moving ahead, and volunteers will be needed to work the event for FCR beginning at 6:30 that day. Prior to the event, Priscilla and Rett Oren have scheduled an introduction to bird watching at 9 to 11 next Saturday.

Pete Davis reviewed the proposed slate of FCR officers for the next year. The proposed slate was unanimously approved as Pete Davis = President, Sherm Stratton = Vice President, Russ Johnson = Secretary and Rett Oren = Treasurer.

Donna Day reviewed the Serendipity Walks scheduled for Thursday afternoons from 3 to 5 in the Public Area of the Carlton. More than just a hike, participants often stop to look at elements of nature in the park.

Rick said that he has contacted several bicycle shops with the idea of scheduling some bicycle events in the Carlton (duathlons, races, guided bike tours). He is trying to work out schedules. PLEASE CONTACT RICK with your ideas for an event. Rick also explained that he had created an aerobic walking program in connection with the County's Wellness Program. It has been well received and is now open to the public. Meet Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:45. The power walk itself is from 5 to 6.

Rick reviewed what's happening in the Carlton. Joe Sipos is out for another 8 weeks or more. Reorganization of County staff has taken away personnel and equipment. However, the work of volunteers has greatly offset the losses, and the park is surviving. Rick himself has been asked to give interpretive talks outside the Carlton. Recently 80 middle-school children toured the Carlton and Water Plant. Work Orders are in for more shell and grading of the road to the parking lots and to fix the bathroom.

Debbie Blanco reviewed the logging program. (These logs are being converted to landscape mulch, reflecting the economy for construction wood and the size of the trees.) This has affected the trails temporarily. Entrances to the areas south and east of the Carlton are in progress. An entrance between markers #3 and #4 into the Schewe property is already open. The large Carlton Ranch area to the east needs a survey and then a fence before that area can be opened. Debbie is working with a PhD specialist from Denison Univ. on screening for pythons (rare so far). And, Debbie still has plans to use volunteers with County GPS units to help in identifying exotics that have not been killed in a past effort.

Sherm reviewed the Web Site project (well received). He reviewed features he wanted in a permanent site. We authorized Sherm to go ahead and commit to the permanent site with the features he described (storage, transfer rate, posting/blogging). It was felt to be around \$100 per year.

Rett said the Geocaching event for 2/14 is on schedule. Plans are to open 10 new caches on that day. New caches are always popular. Advertising is free through geocaching.com. Five teams of people are planning the event.

Rick has added a Sightings Log to the cabin bulletin board. The format allows comments to be added by staff and eventually some sightings uploaded to the web site.

Sherm talked about changes in trail markers and the availability of burn zones on maps. Updating of the trail maps will be made. Debbie said that burning is ongoing. Recently the burns have been small (25 acres), but current priority sites are 800, 700 and 300 acres.

Rick is offering a moonlight walk Saturday night beginning at 6:00 PM. There is expected to be a full moon on the 10th. An additional water tank is coming to the water plant. Charlie had a picture of an albino red tailed hawk taken in the Jelks.

The next meeting will be at 4:30 on February 3rd.

12/2/08 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The December 2, 2008 meeting of the Friends of Carlton was attended by Bob Branson, Jim Courtright, Donna Day, Russ Johnson, Linda Lovallo, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Carl Schwartz, Victor Sim, Rick Storsberg, Ken Stafford and Sherm Stratton.

Sherm Stratton began the meeting by reviewing the By Laws of FCR regarding the election of officers (item # 5 on the agenda). At the January meeting the president (Peter Davis) is to submit a slate of candidates. Sherm also passed around a get-well card to be signed for Joe Sipos (worker at the Carlton who has had back surgery).

Sherm and Linda Lovallo then reviewed a proposal from Debbie Blanco to have volunteers help with the Invasive/Exotics Removal Program. Subcontractors have already removed exotics in certain areas of the Carlton. Now a team of volunteers is needed to review the results to be sure the exotics were actually killed. This is done using a special GPS unit provided by the County that links up to the County mapping system and automatically overlays the findings within the software package. Prior to the volunteers performing the inspections, training sessions will be provided. As part of the grant program, such a review step is necessary. An email will be sent when volunteers are needed.

With regard to the possible Florida Bat Conservancy presentation, Sherm proposed that we combine it with the Open House to be held in April.

Priscilla Oren brought us up to date on the Bird-a-Thon event coming up on 1/31/09. All is on schedule. Could use more sponsors, though.

Sherm covered the progress on creating a new web site for FCR. The present trial site (from Apple computer) is up and running with good reviews. Improvements will add features such as "corners" for Rick Storsberg and Debbie Blanco to make comments, and the addition of more galleries. It was decided to make the site a permanent site (not trial) that can be found via a search engine (Google/Yahoo). Sherm will report further at the January meeting.

Rett Oren described the Geocaching event tentatively scheduled for 2/14/09. Member Carolyn Ledbetter is currently managing 5 or 6 permanent geocaching sites in the Carlton. It's been proposed to add and release another 5 or so sites in the Carlton on the day of the event. Several local geocachers have been notified, and the official web site www.geocaching.com will be used to list the event. Another idea for the event is to hold a Chinese auction (see <http://www.auctusdev.com/auctiontypes.html> for description of a Chinese auction). By using donated objects, the event can help generate revenue.

Sherm provided an update on the three trail cameras. Sherm may create a CD of past photo collections which still need to be added into the database. He is falling behind on the database entering step. Linda is accumulating a list of tasks that need to be done in the Carlton. The need for fencing at the dipping pond is a recent addition, and Rick thinks all the necessary supplies are available.

The next meeting will be at 4:30 on January 6th.

11/4/08 Secretary: Russ Johnson

The November 4, 2008 meeting of the Friends of Carlton was attended by Alison Britten, Sally Christiansen, Peter Davis, Donna Day, Lee Ann Harling, Russ Johnson, Linda Lackmann, Carolyn Ledbetter, Bill Locher, Lindsey Mundt, Priscilla Oren, Rett Oren, Charlie Sample, Victor Sim, Rick Storsberg, Sherm Stratton and Doug Williamson.

Charlie Sample began the meeting by describing a proposed Bird-A-Thon to be sponsored by FCR on Saturday, January 31, 2009 in the Carlton. In a Bird-A-Thon, teams try to locate the greatest number of different birds in a five hour period. Each person in the team is sponsored at so much per bird found. If the minimum sponsorship of \$25 is not achieved, the individual makes up the difference. Revenue from the event goes to FCR. First prize to the winning team is \$100, and the second place team wins \$50. The individual producing the greatest sponsorship also receives a prize. Charlie provided five pages of detailed information about the event. Along with a map of the Carlton, this information would become the promotional packet. After a discussion, the event was approved, and Charlie was authorized to spend up to \$500 on promoting the event. Priscilla Oren is assisting in planning and suggested that FCR offer some intro to bird watching classes prior to the event.

Sherm Stratton then brought us up to date on the camera program. During the summer, Sherm and the program to photograph panthers had been the subject of newspaper and television articles, which had brought notice to the Carlton. However, during the same summer, two of our four cameras had been stolen. Sherm had replaced one of the cameras at his own expense. From the media coverage, Sherm was contacted by a landowner (somewhere south of the Carlton) who has had success photographing panthers. He told Sherm that our cameras had too slow a response time and lacked infrared capability, and we needed to be using better cameras (about \$500 each instead of \$100 each) to capture the fast moving panthers. Sherm wanted to resolve the security issue before investing in more expensive equipment. Sherm was authorized to spend up to \$500 on regular cameras and equipment to keep the program moving forward.

Russ Johnson explained that the County wants to have a FCR representative at the 12/6 Recreation Open House at the Venice Community Center. It was agreed to attend, and Russ will handle this.

Charlie Sample then brought us up to date on the tree removal program taking place in the Carlton. In Charlie's opinion (and many members agreed with his opinion), the "thinning" program is almost "clear cutting". Charlie had sent emails to County Board members and also made a Power Point presentation

describing this problem. In Charlie's opinion, he's getting a "stall" rather than an affirmative response. Rick noted that the County has problems with lack of funding (needs the revenue from the trees), lack of people to supervise the contractors, and conflicts with State Forest personnel. It was decided that the best approach would be to have individuals (as individuals and not as FCR members, since FCR should not take political positions) send emails and letters to County Board members. An email may be distributed to people who might be willing to send such letters or emails.

Rick brought us up to date on Carlton happenings. Someone stole the air conditioning compressor for the cabin including the copper piping to the cabin. A new unit is now in place, and it is surrounded by secure fencing. In addition, two always-on cameras have been installed as additional protection. Rick has picked up some other assignments and wants help coordinating volunteers projects. Linda Lackmann agreed to work on this project. Sherm had provided a five-page write-up of accomplishments of the volunteers during the past years. Rick will be talking at schools (first in North Port) and hopes to recruit some volunteers there.

Due to darkness, the balance of the agenda was carried over to the next meeting – which will be Tuesday, 12/2 at 4:30.