



The Buzzard Bulletin

Notes & Information for CREW Trust Volunteers

December, 2017-January, 2018

Volume 2, Issue 2

Volunteers invited to January trustee meeting honoring David Cooper

Veteran CREW Trust volunteer Dr. David Cooper will be honored at the January 19 CREW Trust trustee meeting.

Dr. Cooper is in his 15th year of volunteer service to the CREW Trust where he has led walks as well as currently serving as a trail steward.



Volunteers are invited to attend the meeting to honor Dr. Cooper. If planning to come, please let Brenda know before Monday, January 8.

The meeting will be held at the Bonita Springs Fire Station on Bonita Grande Drive and will begin at 9 A.M. Directions are below.

Irma debris alters trails, planned events

As Hurricane Irma becomes a distant memory for many people in Southwest Florida, its effects will be felt on the landscape for months to come.

After the storm passed, CREW Trust, FWC and SFWMD staff began evaluating and clearing the trails.

Guided walks and programs this season have been affected by the debris and water with some programs shortened in distance while others have taken new paths.

Unusually high water levels affected general trail conditions, but the levels began decreasing during the month of November.

CREW Marsh Trails: All trails are clear. Aggressive bees had closed the shortcut from the boardwalk to Suzanne's Pavilion, but they have moved on. However, Jessi is working on creating a drier and less muddy alternate trail which will be used for

school field trip adventures in the "Walk through a Watershed" program.

Cypress Dome Trails: The Wild Coffee Trail is impassable and needs extensive work once it dries out. All other areas of the Cypress Dome Trails are good although wet. Conservation Collier is handling the clean-up at Caracara Prairie Preserve.

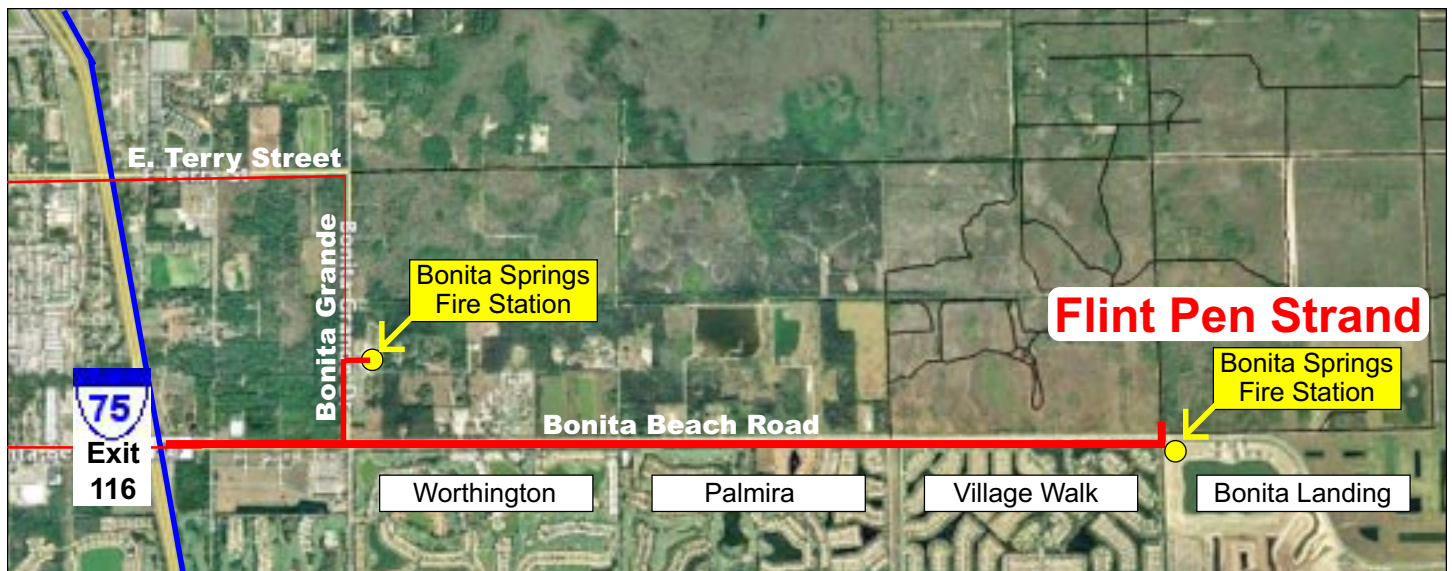
Flint Pen Strand: Late last season, John Larson marked out the first trail. Now, numerous trees are down and the water levels are very high on that trail. Once the water recedes, we will organize clean-ups. The District is still working to complete the restoration project in Southern Critical CREW (Flint Pen Strand) due to delays from the high water levels that began in June.

Bird Rookery Swamp: It received the most damage from Hurricane Irma. Hundreds of trees were blocking
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Directions to Trustee Meeting, Flint Pen Strand from Bonita Beach Road, I-75

to Trustee Meeting: from Exit 116, go east 0.7 miles to Bonita Grande (stop light). Turn left. The fire station is on the right.

to Flint Pen Strand: from Exit 116, go east 3.8 miles. Turn left at the end of Village Walk across from the new fire station.



Biggest fundraiser of year relies on volunteers

The 2017 CREW Concert & Silent Eco-Auction raised over \$32,000 to fund CREW Trust education programs.

The 2018 event is scheduled for Saturday, February 24, from 5 to 9 P.M. at Riverside Park in Bonita Springs. The success of the concert relies heavily on volunteer help.

Volunteers can help in many ways at the concert. Some of the jobs include

- pre-concert set up
- post-concert take down and clean up
- perimeter security
- take tickets at entrance
- silent auction set up
- silent auction greet and patrol
- VIP special dining area security
- CREW Trust merchandise sales

Volunteers who can help during part or all of the concert/silent auction should contact Anne and let her know of the preference for job(s), and please let her know your T-shirt size at the same time.

Staying connected

People

Brenda Brooks
239-229-3948
brenda@crewtrust.org

Jessi Drummond
239-229-1088
education@crewtrust.org

Anne Reed
419-206-8800
anne@crewtrust.org

Web sites

www.crewtrust.org
www.trackitforward.com (hours)
www.crewtrust.org/crew-trust-volunteers (volunteer library—the password is **crew17**)

Good apps for smart phones

bsafe (emergency location alert)
weather bug (radar, lightning)

The Buzzard Bulletin contains notes and information by and for CREW volunteers and is e-mailed six times a year (September, November, January, March, May, July). Dick Brewer, editor.

On the job

A Love Poem for Flint Pen Strand

by John Larson

Writing a poem is seldom a community effort. It's usually the work of an individual trying to harness with words that wild something moving through the soul.

When Brenda Brooks asked me to consider making a trail through Flint Pen Strand, I heard her asking me to write a poem.

"We have a parking lot, but we need a trail, maybe a mile or so, what do you think?"

In that moment, she may as well have been an angel of God asking me to do something I felt born to do.

Even as a boy running in the forests of northern Michigan, it was my love to cut trails.

It was always the solitude of nature that drew me. When Brenda intimated that I would be working alone, it was an invitation into heaven.

"Start at the parking lot..." OK then, she wants a sonnet.

So, I spent the following days getting to know Miss Flint Pen. She had been gouged out, worked over, pushed around, and built upon over the years by countless dreamers carving out their

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Irma affects trails, visitors, walks, programs

the trail and several new washouts crossed the trails. All were visible during an October fly-over survey completed by the District in preparation for clean-up.

Currently, clean-up plans and repair work are being handled by the South Florida Water Management District. It closed the trail on November 6 to allow contractors to clear all of the trees and debris. The project was estimated to last weeks.

With the closing of the trail for safety reasons, visitors, volunteers, and guided walks could not go past the end of the boardwalk so as not to interfere with the contractor's equipment and work crews.



piece of paradise. She carried the scars of so many personal histories it was hard to know how to let her breathe.

Gradually, I began to listen to her as she

pieced these stories together and could see she was beautiful, not because she was pristine, but because she had endured: her beauty was her quiet grace. She allowed so many to change her, yet in her patient surrender, she remained unchanged.

I began my work at the parking lot and walked an erratic line under her pine trees, next to her canals, seeking out her shade, clearing her brush; asking her what she had left to give.

And she surprised me. Her birds were healthy and abundant, her animals wary, yet curious. And it's those times, in a multitude of unexpected encounters, I found myself whispering under my breath, thank you, Brenda — look, another treasure!

And gradually, treasures connecting, word to word and step to step, the Flint Pen trail began to sing her song.



The Bird Rookery Swamp trail presented challenges prior to clearing.

photo: Bill Zaino