



Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

A photograph of a cypress swamp. The foreground shows a body of water reflecting the sky. The middle ground is filled with numerous cypress trees, some with prominent buttresses. The background is a dense forest of similar trees. The overall scene is lush and green, with a slightly overcast sky.

**FRIENDS OF
SIX MILE CYPRESS
SLOUGH PRESERVE**

**ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 22, 2023**

Agenda

**Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve
Annual Meeting - March 22, 2023**

Welcome

Sabine Vandenhende, President

Announcements

Annual Report

Sabine Vandenhende, President

Nominating Committee Report

Theresa Roake, Secretary

Election

General Membership

Introduction of Board of Directors

**Introduction of Rick Bauer, Supervisor Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve
*“State of the Slough”***

Board of Directors

- Sabine Vandenhende **President**
 - Nancy Olson **Vice President**
 - Theresa Roake **Secretary**
 - Sara Maliva **Treasurer**
 - Carolyn Babb
 - Donna Cressman
 - David Minnick
 - Steve Parker
 - Dot Voorhees
-
- Rick Bauer, Lee County Parks and Recreation Liaison

We wish to thank retiring Directors Lyn Brown, Terri Krass and Bud Schopp for your contributions to Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.

President's Message

The Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve provided \$21,600 of support to the Slough and had a very successful year in 2022 with many accomplishments.

Our education program encompassed inspiring guest speakers and offered its first hybrid presentation. This new concept set the stage for our future presentation by showcasing the power and potential of combining virtual and in-person elements. Furthermore, we resumed the popular field trips program after a five-year hiatus.

Besides education, advocacy work is essential to our organization. Our Advocacy chairperson has closely monitored any potential issues the Slough may face. In that same purview, members and donors are influential in helping protect the Slough. The Friends organization's acquisition of DonorSnap, a membership software, is a positive step towards improving and growing our membership and donor program.

The Friends further take pride in supporting the yearly summer camp program. It's a beautiful initiative that makes a difference in the lives of children, promotes the value of nature and instills the importance of preserving it for future generations, and may encourage future environmentalists.

Despite the challenges posed by a devastating hurricane causing a one-month closure of the Preserve, we recorded significant sales in the Friends Nature Store and hosted a well-attended wet walk program.

Last, a complete overhaul of the trailhead signage funded by Friends now welcomes all visitors even more warmly than before.

I thank the Friends board members, Friend members and donors, and the Nature Store volunteers for contributing to the organization's success this year. You are the backbone of the Friends organization. I also thank Rick Bauer, Supervisor of the Slough, and Adrienne Martin, Program Specialist, for their extraordinary cooperation. I greatly appreciate everyone's support and dedication, and I look forward to continuing to work together towards the Friends' goals.

Sabine Vandenhende, President

Camp scholarships
Camp supplies
Camp Counselor

Speakers for Friends
Gatherings

Books for the Cadkin Memorial
Library,
the Slough's research library

Field Trips for members

Rocks added to Rock and Stroll
Garden

Friends Corner sales

Friends Accomplishments 2022

Direct Support to the
Slough of over \$21,600

Photo contest
and first ever outdoor Awards
ceremony

Website updates

Holiday Party

Trail Entrance improvements and
maps installed

Christmas Scavenger Hunt

Slough Bookworms,
the Friends book club

Support for Volunteer
Education

Butterfly garden maintenance
and plantings

Public Outreach at FGCU's
25th anniversary
celebration, local
volunteer fairs and the
Naples Zoo

Public Wet Walks

Over 1,400 hours
=
175 workdays

Address Advocacy issues

Volunteer of the Year

Newsletters

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve
Balance Sheet
December 31, 2022

ASSETS

Bank Accounts

1050 Bank of America Accounts

1050.3 Checking Store 120,139.58

1050.41 Time Deposit CD 8787 10,030.45

1050.42 Time Deposit CD 8826 10,029.91

1050.43 Time Deposit CD 8758 10,031.41

1050.44 Time Deposit CD 0113 25,078.05

1050.45 Time Deposit CD 1023 10,020.79

1050.46 Time Deposit CD 1036 10,021.29

1050.47 Time Deposit CD 1052 10,019.62

1050.48 Time Deposit CD 1065 10,026.94

Total 1050 Bank of America Accounts 215,398.04

Total Bank Accounts \$215,398.04

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve
Balance Sheet
December 31, 2022 (cont'd)

Other Current Assets	
1300 Other Current Assets	
1300.3 Inventory on Hand store	18,026.09
1300.4 Cash on hand bookstore	500.00
Total 1300 Other Current Assets	18,526.09
Total Other Current Assets	\$18,526.09
Total Current Assets	\$238,207.26
TOTAL ASSETS	\$238,207.26
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Total Liabilities	
Equity	
3001 Opening Balance Equity	120,660.20
3010 Retained Earnings	69,321.16
Net Income	48,225.90
Total Equity	\$238,207.26
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$238,207.26

Submitted by Sara Maliva, Treasurer



Trailhead & Boardwalk Project

Total cost: \$23,450

Membership & Donations

We have transitioned to DonorSnap. This cloud-based database provides real-time information about membership, donations and event registrations. Some features of the database are:

- Automatic renewal reminder process – members receive an email prior to their expiration date and a gentle reminder if their membership has lapsed.
- Automatic generation of email personalized acknowledgements.
- Accept membership, donations and event registration online.
- Various reporting capabilities to help us better understand our membership.

Membership revenue for 2022 was \$12,734. Other donations provided an additional \$40,595.

Submitted by Dot Voorhees, Board Member,
Membership Chair



Advocacy

The Advocacy Committee seeks to honor the mission statement of the Friends, which affirms our desire to "preserve, protect and promote" the Slough.

As significant development continues in Lee County, the need to respect and protect the boundaries and intentions of the Slough continues. The Advocacy Committee seeks to do this by staying in communication with our community and political leaders. This past year, there has been some community discussion about increasing the lighting along the stretch of Six Mile Parkway closer to the continuing development near Colonial Boulevard. Changes in lighting along the border of the Slough will impact the routines of birds and wildlife living in the Slough at night. At this time, no changes in lighting have been made.

Communication with other like-minded groups, like the Eyes on 20/20 environmental advocates, continues. Many thanks to Barbara Manzo, Bob Repenning and Pete Cangialosi for their help over the past year.

Submitted by David Minnick, Board Member,
Advocacy Chair



Education

- **Gathering Speakers in 2022** – The Friends Gatherings were held via Zoom and the April meeting in hybrid format, audience in attendance at the Slough Interpretive Center and via Zoom.
 - January – Adrienne Martin, Program Specialist, Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, “Your Florida Panther”
 - February – Dr. Edwin Everham, FGCU, Water School
 - March – Rick Bauer, Supervisor, Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, “State of the Slough”
 - April – Dr. Jose Padilla Lopez, Lee County Bird Patrol, “Birding at the Slough”
- **Field Trips in 2022**- Field trips for Friends Members returned in 2022. We visited Six Mile Cypress Slough North, hunted for wildflowers at CREW, went on a “not so dry walk” out in the Slough, paddled at Bunche Beach, checked out FGCU’s new Water School, looked for birds at Harns Marsh and rode the Ghost Rider at Fakahatchee Strand State Park.
- **Public Outreach** – Friends featured the Slough at FGCU’s 25th Anniversary, local volunteer fairs, and Panther Day at the Naples Zoo.



Education

- **Summer Camp Education Activity assisted by Friends** - Friends members assisted in camp in various positions including teaching crafts and photography skills and guiding wet walks. The Friends also provided \$4,353 in funding for camp counselor salary and supplies for the activities of the campers.
- **Camp Scholarships** – Friends provided five scholarships to worthy campers.
- **Six Reasons Why We Love** – Educational feature started in 2021 for email distribution to members. This year's topics included: Ibis, Rock and Stroll Garden, Wet Walks, Bald Cypress Trees, Dragonflies, Camp by Friends and Camp by Campers, Owls and Mistletoe. Members are welcome to submit suggestions for topics at any time.

Public Wet Walks

Despite the season being cut short due to Ian's destructive visit, the wet walk season was a success as always. Everyone was in awe of the priceless beauty of the Slough.

By the numbers:

13 walks

106 wet walkers

15 new Friends Member registrations

\$1,915 collected in fees and donations

Thank you to our guides Charles O'Connor, David Minnick, Sabine Vandenhende, and Heather Gienapp and our sweeps Billy Holleran, Amber Howell and Nancy Olson for a great season.

We wish to extend a special note of gratitude to Charles O'Connor for decades of leading wet walks in the Slough. Your passion and talent for sharing this special experience are second to none. Charles is retiring as a guide, but keep an eye out, he may make guest appearances from time to time.



Charles O'Connor leading wet walks in the Slough



Friends Corner Nature Store



The Friends Corner Nature Store stocks items that help accomplish our mission of helping to preserve, protect, and educate about nature. We have award winning postcards that showcase the amazing variety of wildlife here in the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve. We have folding guides that help visitors identify the creatures they encounter here. Our store has many children's books that educate and entertain, too! We also have fun reminders of this very special place!



The Friends Corner contributes funds to support the programs here at the Slough, such as children's camp and educational seminars. We are successful largely due to our store staff, 30 volunteers who ring up sales and keep things running smoothly!

Despite being closed one month due to Hurricane Ian clean-up, sales were still very good at \$44,835.25.

Donna Cressman, Board Member, Nature Store Manager

Rock and Stroll Garden

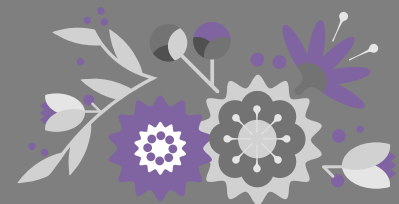
After many years of carefully attending to the Rock and Stroll Garden, Terri Krass stepped down from this responsibility prior to her relocation to South Carolina. The Friends of the Slough Board is grateful for Terri's care and attention to the administration and stewardship of the Garden for many years. One of Terri's last acts in caring for the Garden was, with the help of Viola Weis, to complete a mapping and inventory of the stones in place. Thanks Terri and Vi for helping with this.

In the past year, we have had orders and placement for two stones in the Garden. Regretfully, it appears as if our long-time stone carver has retired. We are currently searching for a replacement stone carver and all requests for stones are on hold. It may be difficult to continue using the large river rocks that line the walkways of the Garden. Different carvers use different types of rocks and stones in their craft. The Board is looking into this at this time.

Much of the beauty and appeal of the Rock and Stroll Garden comes from our Butterfly Garden, where plants have been placed that are especially appealing to butterflies. Fortunately, there was no damage from Hurricane Ian to the Garden. Since Ian's visit in late September, new soil has been placed throughout the garden and pine straw has been added to line the walkway. It is our hope that this additional soil will help the plants in the Garden to thrive.

Special thanks to Donna Cressman and her team of volunteers who assist in caring for the plants of the Butterfly Garden year-round. This year that has included Kelly Bishop, Karen Bledsoe, Jan Grier, Lynda Leach, Claudia Stohler and Margaret Walker.

Submitted by David Minnick, Board Member,
Rock and Stroll Chair



Board Election Nominating Committee Report March 23, 2023

The Nominating Committee proposes the election of the following Board Members for a term of two years:

- **Sabine Vandenhende, President**
- **Sara Maliva, Treasurer**
- **Carolyn Babb, Director**
- **David Minnick, Director**
- **Steve Parker, Director**
- **Dot Voorhees, Director**

Additional nominations may be submitted from the Floor for consideration at this time. The Board may appoint Directors at any time.

