



HIGHTIDINGS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FOREST BEACH OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.
Winter 2021

Dove Street Festival of Lights™ 30th Anniversary – Dove Street, North Forest Beach

By the time you read this, an event which occurred annually on Dove Street between 1990 and 2010 appeared one more time on Dove Street for the entire month of December to recognize a significant milestone. We wanted to celebrate the 30th anniversary but couldn't because of Covid. So we thought, after everyone had been through such a hard patch, that maybe we could be the lights at the end of the tunnel.

A postcard was designed which served to facilitate donations to Deep Well and Island Rec for those who were inspired by the lights. Additionally, the town set up a page on their www.culturehhi.org site for this event with a description and direct donation links.

The Dove Street Festival of Lights™ is a quasi-artistic creation of tiny light strings and displays that squirrel their way through gnarled oak branches hovering over the street only to bury themselves in the bushes below. It began with a small tree decoration in a neighbor's yard celebrating the birth of their daughter and grew to what it is today.



Over the years, the festival has involved countless numbers of family, friends, organizations and businesses. It keeps us all aware of our ability to make small contributions that help others feel good. And just like building sandcastles only to have them wash away with the tide, the lights of Dove Street constantly re-invented themselves. They have never been the same but have always been there to warm the hearts and brighten the spirits of those who choose to walk or drive by. And that is what has made it all worthwhile.

Editor's note. This article was written by Paul Beckler and paraphrased for space. The Forest Beach Owners Association would like to thank Paul and all his neighbors on Dove Street for spreading 30 years of holiday spirit.

North Forest Beach Maritime Forest Project

The objective of the North Forest Beach Maritime Forest project is to educate and bring awareness to residents and visitors about the NFB Maritime Forest, by providing information on native trees, flora, fauna and wildlife, along with its significance to the natural environment and the protections it affords the community and its many inhabitants (humans included). This is an educational community initiative on the Maritime Forest on Hilton Head Island. It fits nicely into an eco-tourism philosophy and destination.

The initiative is a QR code, web based project to readily provide information on the importance of the maritime forest, its inhabitants, and its significant contribution to our shoreline. Anyone with a cell phone can scan the QR code and instantly has access to the webpage. The initial home page has a narrative, which contains basic information and an overview of the Forest. It contains illustrations from Todd Ballantine's Tideland Treasure. Todd's illustrations and narratives are easily understandable and appeal to all ages and they provide a solid foundation. The current website also posts photographs of several birds that can be found in the Forest, including a Barred Owl, Red Shouldered Hawk and a Pileated Woodpecker, courtesy of Bill Pender, a local area bird photographer. The site also contains hyperlinks to additional web pages for more detailed information on Maritime Forests.

(continued on page 2)

North Forest Beach Maritime Forest Project *(continued from page 1)*

The depth and breadth of the project will develop in phases and will include contributions from other subject matter experts, including naturalists and others, in the form of short audio and video presentations available via hyperlink. The digital product is easily edited and updated, scalable and has no negative environmental impact, as with paper informational brochures. QR Code stations will be strategically placed in North Forest Beach.

Sea Turtle Nesting Season 2021

This nesting season saw 283 nests laid; there were 180 false crawls. A false crawl means the mother turtle lumbered up to the dunes but was spooked by something and returned to the ocean without laying any eggs. This is slightly above the average of 250 nests. Almost 50% of the nests had to be relocated by the Sea Turtle Patrol because they were too close to the high tide water mark. There were misorientations of hatchlings due to lighting violations from oceanfront houses. Hatchling success was 70%, emergence success 67.3%. There was some loss during Hurricane Isaias, and one green sea turtle nest was laid but didn't hatch.

The temperature of the nest and position in the nest at around 40 days determine the gender of the hatchlings; the pivotal temperature is 84.2 degrees. Above this temperature the gender becomes female. So...as a result of global warming, many more females than males are hatching, which results in unfertilized eggs. Also because of higher tides and more relocated nests than in years past, we on Hilton Head Island are contributing to this problem with more and more nest relocations. (Temperature in the dunes is higher than on the beach.) Scientists are gathering data on this and will make recommendations.

Nesting season begins again in 2022 on May 1st. Turtle Trackers continue to patrol the beaches for holes, sand structures, and trash left on the beach. They are also educators for anyone who wants to talk. There are 579 Turtle Trackers on the island, to date. There are training and support available. There are also opportunities for working with rental companies, retail operations, learning kiosks, and other community outreach. Turtle Trackers are also a force at town hall to teach awareness and push for ordinances that protect the sea turtles. If anyone would like to volunteer to become a Turtle Tracker for Forest Beach, please contact Debbie Urato at forestbeachturtletrackers@gmail.com.



How Would Fee-Based Parking at Coligny Beach Affect Life in Forest Beach?

Will the town start charging to park in the Coligny beach public parking lot?

The Forest Beach neighborhood is about as diverse as it comes when you look at the amount of retail, restaurants, hotels, timeshares, villas, single family homes, year-round residents, second homes, Airbnbs, and the Low Country Celebration Park. And of course, there is the beach. Forest Beach is a destination within a destination island. Through the years, we have seen commercial building and homes razed and rebuilt at what some think is an alarming rate. We have also seen natural areas disappear as lots are subdivided to build more houses or green space such as where the new park was built. However, we have not seen changes to accommodate the increase in vehicles that come to our south end "power center" for shopping, dining, and/or enjoying the beach.

On a typical summer day, people who drive to the south end to go to the beach need to arrive increasingly earlier as the spaces in the Coligny Beach parking lot fill early. Some take advantage of overflow parking at the college, but

(continued on page 3)

Parking (continued from page 2)

many drive around looking for alternatives and fill the Coligny Plaza parking lot, the Circle Center parking lot, empty church lots, villa parking lots that are not gated, and the Forest Beach neighborhood beach accesses. Many businesses already spend quite a bit of money to hire security to deal with violators; villa properties also either hire security or have installed gates, and post “no beach parking” signs.

But what do we do with all the cars? Is converting the Coligny beach parking lot to a “pay to park” lot going to solve the problem?

The town is once again looking to implement paid parking for the Coligny beach parking lot. At the December 16th Public Planning meeting the committee voted to have the staff issue a Request for Quotes (RFQ) for a company that could define a scope of work as a first step and potentially be capable of implementing a pay to park solution, if that’s where things go. Nonetheless, it was pointed out that this is not a commitment to implement something the committee doesn’t understand today. The candidate also would need to help the town understand the unintended consequences of implementing paid parking.

So what is the positive value to Forest Beach of adding paid parking to the Coligny beach parking lot? How would that address the issues we have today? Do we know what the issues are today?

In general, Forest Beach is a no-parking district. Except for some parking spaces on Lagoon Road and North Forest Beach Drive, there is no on-street parking allowed in the neighborhood. However, we lack enforcement. So if paid parking is implemented in the beach parking lot, we assume that more people would park illegally and nothing would be done about it.

What the Forest Beach Owners’ Association suggests to the town is the following:

1. Create an enforceable parking policy.
2. Design a communication plan to residents and visitors.
3. Designate and empower someone to enforce the policy.
4. Determine how to staff the enforcement positions.
5. Decide whether you would need to collect parking fees.

The Forest Beach Owners’ Association acts as a lobbyist for its members, attending town meetings, discussing issues with council members, and interacting with town staff. Although the board has yet to take a position on converting the Coligny beach parking lot to paid parking, the board understands the pros and cons of paid parking while being cognizant of unidentified and unintended consequences that need to be addressed before a fee could be imposed.

The biggest concern is visitors who will look to alternative areas to avoid fees. This will affect everyone in the Forest Beach neighborhood especially since the town currently has no enforcement for illegal parking.

The Association is asking you to engage yourself on this matter as it will affect everyone. First, we need you to join the association by paying your 2021 annual dues; second, you need to be signed up for our emails so you can stay up-to-date on this and other topics; third, please attend the monthly board meeting held on the second Monday of each month via ZOOM. Finally, you too can be a voice in the conversation. The town’s open town hall platform allows anyone to submit comments on agendas or speak at committee meetings or Town Council meetings.

Still want another way to be heard? Contact members of the Town Council or committee and let your voice be heard on this or any other topic.

Want to reach out to your town council representative?

All contact information can be located on the town council members page <https://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov/town-council/>

2022 Board of Directors		
Name/Position	Term Exp	Email
Jack Daly – President	2023	jackdalyhhi@yahoo.com
Mira Scott – Vice President	2025	mirascott101@gmail.com
Debbie Urato – Sec/Treas	2024	durato@roadrunner.com
Massimo Santangelo	2023	massimo.santangelo@vacationclub.com
Frank Roberts	2022	fxroberts56@gmail.com
Amy Fee	2022	amyd.fee1@gmail.com
John Snodgrass – Exec Dir	N/A	fbassn@gmail.com

Short Term Rentals

The SC legislature passed the Act 176, SC Business License Tax Standardization Act, which will require all rental property owners to obtain a business license starting Jan 1, 2022, regardless of the number of rental properties owned. **Please note, if you do not own a business or a rental property, this announcement does not apply to you.**

If I have a rental property, do I have to apply for a business license? Aren't rental property owners exempt if there is only one property?

The new law mandates that *ALL* rental property owners must have a business license, regardless of the number of properties owned. This includes short-term and long-term rentals.

How do I apply for a business license?

Please visit the website below to obtain business license information for your local office:

<https://hiltonheadislandsc.gov/business/license/>

As a resort area, Hilton Head Island has numerous short-term rental units. The lack of a Short-Term Rental ordinance has led to an imbalance between residential and resort districts and the elimination of some long-term single-family neighborhoods. The Town proposes to craft a Short-Term Rental ordinance to develop a fair, predictable, and balanced approach to manage short-term rental impacts on our neighborhoods, economy, housing stock, public facilities, and the quality of life of our residents and experiences of our visitors.

The Town has hired White & Smith, Planning and Law Group out of Charleston, SC to assist the Town in undertaking this initiative. The firm has extensive experience in the development of effective and durable Short-Term Rental ordinances.

The Town launched an initiative to seek solutions and address concerns related to short-term rentals. As we begin this process, the Town of Hilton Head Island is interested in the community's opinions and concerns. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey: <https://www.opentownhall.com/11440>.

Lock Your Cars

A little over 70% of car break-ins on the island that happened between November 2020 and January 2021 involved unlocked cars, according to recent crime statistics. Don't be a victim – lock your car.

Are You on Our Email Distribution List?

If you are not receiving our emails, it is easy to sign up. Simply go to the Association's web page and click on subscribe to email list. Depending on your device, you may need to click on the three bars "options menu bar" to open the collapsed menu to see the additional items.

Also, follow us on Facebook: *Forest Beach Association – FBA*

Two of the major expenses of the Association are mailing the annual meeting notice and the annual dues notice. In 2021, we plan to eliminate the mailing of the annual meeting announcement and only send notice of the meeting by email. The annual meeting is always the third Saturday of October and is held at 10:00 AM. Therefore, the 2022 meeting will be held October 15, 2022 at 10:00 AM. This year's and future years' annual dues notifications sent in January will continue to be sent via US mail.

ARB Process

The Association maintains an architectural review process. Forms and prices can be found on the Association's website.

Pay Your Annual Dues Online

Don't want to pay your dues by check? The option to pay your dues by credit card is available through PayPal on the Association's website. Annual dues are billed in January for existing property owners, and each quarter for new owners and property transfers.