



HIGHTIDINGS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FOREST BEACH OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.
Winter 2023

Hard Work By Your Forest Beach Association Pays Dividends For All of Us

If you're a new Forest Beach neighbor or maybe an out-of-town owner, you may not know exactly what your Forest Beach Owners Association (FBOA) does. You probably know we maintain the covenants, handle the Architecture Review Board (ARB), the expected things. You may even know about our continuing conservation efforts to protect our trees and dunes – we are Forest Beach after all. But if you're still uncertain of the value of investing in Forest Beach by supporting your FBOA and paying your dues, let me tell you about Lowcountry Celebration Park.

The \$14M Lowcountry Celebration Park is now the centerpiece of our Forest Beach. For years the nearly 15-acre tract was nothing more than beach parking and a dumpsite. The Town blocked many potential beach parking spaces by storing maintenance equipment and dumpsters. The woods and lagoon were a campground for transients. It was an embarrassment, and the Town lacked the vision of what could be.

None of this Town neglect was missed by your FBOA board members who live, work, and play in Forest Beach. Your board got to work. We rallied Coligny business owners who needed parking and off-season commerce. We gathered neighborhood parents who dearly wished their children had a neighborhood park. We collected musicians and artists who craved a signature island amphitheater. We worked with community nonprofit organizations who would wish for a festival events space. We shared our vision with Town Staff and our Town Councilpersons, and they agreed. Our vision for a Forest Beach central park with a destination playground, festival sized community events lawn, and an amphitheater was the clear way forward for Forest Beach and for Hilton Head as well.

Hard work pays off. If you are not a member, please join the FBOA by paying your dues. Your annual dues are put to good work and the value the FBOA brings is outstanding. For further proof, please see the list of 2023 celebrations and special events that happened in your Forest Beach neighborhood park on page 2.



Enhancing Safety in Forest Beach: A Year in Review and Plans for 2024

Your Owners Association is committed to prioritizing your safety, and we are thrilled to share the impactful initiatives undertaken by the Safety Committee in 2023. Together with the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office (BCSO), we have made significant strides in fostering a secure environment for our residents, vacation homeowners, and guests.

Key Achievements in 2023

Community Resources and Website Page – established valuable community resources to address safety concerns. Visit our dedicated webpage with useful links for everyone: www.forestbeachassociation.org

Security Camera Registration with BCSO – provided step-by-step instructions on registering security cameras with BCSO, thereby creating a comprehensive 'neighborhood eyes' matrix to aid in criminal investigations

BCSO Tip Line Communication – disseminated information about the BCSO Tip Line for prompt reporting of any suspicious activity

Criminal Activity Review – conducted a thorough review of recent criminal activities in Forest Beach and assessed BCSO's responses

Addressed Speeding Concerns – on NFB Road, SFB Road, and Pope Ave, and are collaborating with BCSO on mitigation actions to ensure safer roads for everyone

Bike Path Safety Improvements – identified and addressed safety concerns on bike paths, and we are working with the Town on strategic sign placements to enhance awareness and overall safety

Beach Safety Measures – advocated for additional patrols and beach vehicles acquired by the Sheriff's office, and emphasized the need for enhanced patrols during significant events and spring break at Forest Beach

Looking Ahead to 2024

As we enter the new year, we are excited about the continued engagement with Bob Bromage from BCSO. The collaborative efforts between our association and law enforcement have been excellent, and we anticipate even greater achievements in 2024.

Get involved! If you share our commitment to community safety and would like to contribute, consider joining the Safety Committee. We meet monthly to discuss ongoing initiatives and plan future actions. To join, please email us at fbassn@gmail.com.

Thank you for being an integral part of creating a safer and more secure Forest Beach.

2023 Forest Beach Events



Crescendo Songwriter Series (multiple events), Jazz in the Park on Tuesdays and Party in the Park on Thursdays in the summer season

2023 Sea Turtle Nesting and Hatching Season and Beach Report

The 2023 sea turtle nesting season has come to a close. There were **353** nests laid and hatching success was **76%**.

These are good numbers, because nesting females take a two-year break, and in 2019 there were 267 nests laid. Females usually lay 4-6 nests per season, and typically frequent the same beach where they were born (the same beach includes the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia). Each nest averages 120 eggs, but only one out of 100 hatchlings make it to the Gulf Stream to continue the journey to the Azores and one out of 1000 make it to reproductive adulthood (30 years). Most of the nests were laid this year by Loggerhead Sea Turtles, but there were three Green Sea Turtle nests and one Kemp's Ridley nest (the rarest and most endangered of the seven species of sea turtles). This has happened only once before that we know of.

One egg and shell is taken from each nest and sent to Dr. Brian Shamblin at the University of Georgia for DNA analysis. Some of the science obtained includes who the mother is, where she has nested in addition to Hilton Head Island, who her sisters, mother and grandmother are, if any of her hatchlings have nested and how many years she has rested between seasons. Recently, the Sea Turtle Genetics Project at UGA has begun to focus on the males and there is evidence that some of the nests are related paternally, even though the mothers are different. The \$ cost for all of this is \$30,000/year and the Sea Turtle Patrol relies solely on grants and private funding for this research. Nests can be adopted by individual humans to help defray the costs. People can go to the Sea Turtle Patrol website, seaturtlepatrolhhi.org for more information.

Turtle Trackers of Hilton Head Island is a supportive organization of volunteers who help the Sea Turtle Patrol in its mission to save endangered sea turtles. If interested, please contact Debbie Urato at forestbeachturtletrackers@gmail.com.

To protect the loggerhead turtle, an endangered species, remember to turn off oceanfront lights at 10 pm during nesting season, fill in all holes and take home everything you brought with you to the beach.

2023 Forest Committee Accomplishments

Our mission is to preserve the survival of our Maritime Forest, the dunes and tree canopy, that is rapidly vanishing, along with the unique environment and ecosystem it supports. We are actively involved in preservation, reforestation and maintenance. We welcome participation from anyone who is interested in our mission.

1. The Forest Committee, also known as the Tree Preservation Society, has met with Town Staff, discussions include:
 - Expansion of the Forest in Forest Beach: Alex Pinckney, Senior Planner – Environmental, will look into the reforestation of Maritime trees of the Town owned Forest swatch, adjacent to 12 Ibis, that was cleared and grassed by a prior owner.
 - Ongoing and constant efforts to prevent unpermitted tree removals, prevention of unnecessary tree removals, increased mitigation requirements, and protection for canopy trees.
 - New potential Land Management Ordinance (LMO) Proposals: The need to increase protection for trees by decreasing the tree size necessary to receive protection, especially for specimen trees; Maritime trees should be afforded significant protections
2. Met with Beaufort County Open Land Trust (BCOLT) to walk and evaluate the state and condition of Lawton Beach Forest Preserve. BCOLT is providing conservation signage to post, in order to raise community and visitor awareness in order to help protect the conservation area from destruction.
3. Toured the Lawton Beach Forest Preserve with a retired Clemson Extension Agent for insight, observations and feedback on the area; helping to identify native species of the Maritime Forest (trees and shrubs) to properly reforest the area.
4. Cultivated a relationship with Hilton Head Audubon to assist with conservation efforts, protection and fortification of bird habitat and discussed potential for a designation of identified Important Bird Area for Lawton Beach Forest Preserve.

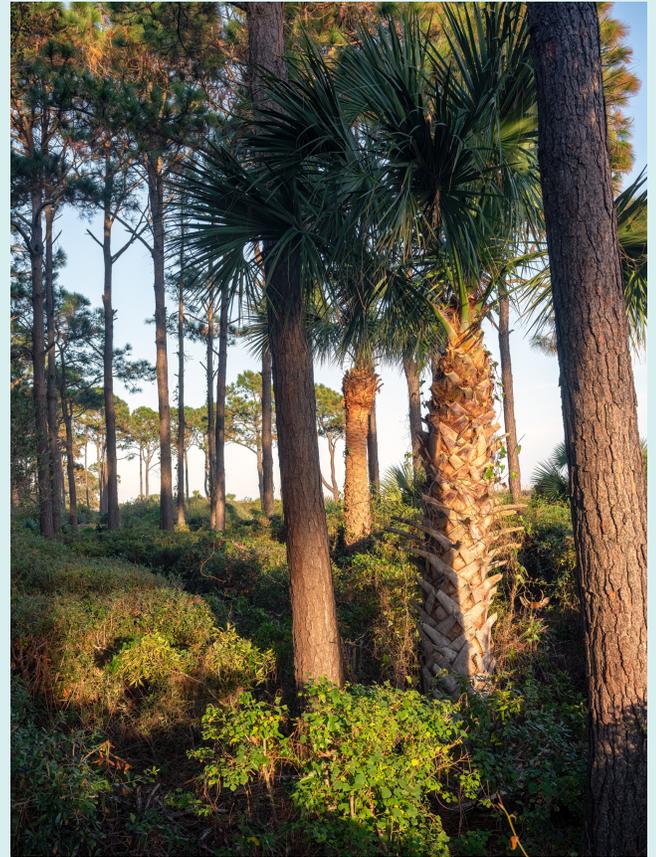


Photo credit: © Cynthia Gladis

Your 2024 Board of Directors (including fun facts)

As of year-end 2023, our Board has a combined residency on the island of **202** years.

Name/Position	Term Exp	Email	Years Residing on HHI
Jack Daly – President	2027	jackdalyhhi@yahoo.com	Since 1993, 30 years
Doug Felton – Vice President	2025	dougfelton@yahoo.com	Since 1999, 24 years
Debbie Urato – Sec/Treas	2024	durato@roadrunner.com	Since 1974, 49 years
Massimo Santangelo	2027	massimo.santangelo@vacationclub.com	Since 2015, 8 years
Frank Roberts	2026	fxroberts56@gmail.com	Since 1976, 47 years
Amy Fee	2026	amyd.fee1@gmail.com	Since 2013, 10 years
Matt Hardt	2025	matthardt@icloud.com	Since 2020, 3 years
John Snodgrass – Exec Dir	N/A	fbassn@gmail.com	Since 1992, 31 years

Lawton Beach Forest Preserve

In South Forest Beach, the Forest Beach Owners Association (FBOA) owns an environmental treasure, historically known as Lawton Beach Forest Preserve. The 30+ acre protective conservation easement, held by the Beaufort County Open Land Trust, (BCOLT) was granted on December 28, 2009, and stretches from Alder Lane Beach Access to Laurel Lane. The FBOA, as land stewards, have a responsibility and obligation to conserve the area. The undeveloped, 1000-foot stretch of beach front property provides a scenic and natural buffer to the community and forms a significant conservation area on Hilton Head Island. It protects the recreational and scenic nature of the beachfront and the founding environmental values of Hilton Head Island.

The land is adjacent to, and provides a buffer for the dune system, and beachfront ecology. This area will continue to accrete if adjacent property owners allow the native vegetation to continue to grow, promoting preservation of the natural ecological character.

The Forest has diverse natural habitats, including sandy areas, mixed forests, open beach and open water, supporting a variety of flora and fauna species. Sea Oats help build dune systems and prevent erosion; native shrubs (sparkleberry, horse sugar and red bay), and well-developed tree root systems (pine, live oak, scrub oak and palmettos) anchor the trees and the land. These fortify the protection from storms and support habitats needed for the many varieties of residents.

This area provides numerous wildlife habitat components such as breeding grounds, nesting sites and has a diverse habitat to support feeding, nesting and roosting areas for migratory songbirds, ground nesting birds and shorebirds. It also supports feeding, breeding and resting areas for native small and large game, such as deer, rabbits, possums, raccoons and larger bird species: Bald Eagles, Osprey, Hawks, Barred Owls and Pileated Woodpeckers. You can also find hummingbirds, cedar wax wings, painted buntings, and other feathered friends!

The Conservation Area affords protection of beachfront habitat and dune systems. It is considered a public priority by the beachfront management laws and regulations of the Town of Hilton Head, The State of South Carolina and the United States Government, and possesses significant ecological and natural resources, water quality protection, open space and scenic value and historic or cultural values and conservation values.

We need your help to protect this natural environment and protective habitat ecosystem. Any tree trimming or pruning in the Lawton Beach Forest Preserve is prohibited without Forest Beach Owners Association permission and a Town Permit. All vendors who wish to work in the Lawton Beach Forest Preserve must provide the FBOA with proof of a business license and insurance, and Dune mowing is NEVER permitted. If you would like to take a role to help preserve, restore and maintain this natural, environmental jewel, please email us at fbassn@gmail.com. We would be glad to hear from you!

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.

Follow us on Facebook... Forest Beach Association – FBA ...and send us your best shot!

A PHOTO CHALLENGE!

Have you captured an awesome shot of nature or wildlife, a sunset, the ocean, or just beautiful scenery? Email us your best shot so we can feature it on our Facebook page. Please do not include photos of friends and family. Email your photo to fbassn@gmail.com.

Be sure you signed up for our emails. It's the easiest way to stay in the loop.

With the increasing use of electronic communications, the Association relies more and more on this method of keeping you informed. If you do not receive at least one email a month from us, your email address is not in our database. The best method to get your email address added is to send us an email at fbassn@gmail.com and use a Subject of "Add My Address" to Email.

Also, please be sure to add our email address to your address book so that these communications do not wind up in your SPAM folder. We can add multiple email addresses for everyone, so send us as many email addresses as you wish us to communicate with.