



Broward County Airboat, Halftrack and Conservation Club

Dedicated to Preserving the Everglades

NEWSLETTER

September 2018

President's Letter

2018-2019 Officers

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(954) 684-4858

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Jim Simon

(954) 553-1989

As I write this message to the Membership it is Labor Day. This is a holiday that honors the hard work of the American workers. It became a National Holiday in June 28th 1887. They do not know exactly who to credit for introducing the holiday, but they have narrowed it down to two people. Who created it is not important, the fact it honors the people who work so hard for all of us, is really what is important. I hope you and your families had a very nice Labor Day. I would also like to honor all of our members whose labor enhances all of our lives.

We had the BCAHCC Annual Awards Banquet at Tropical Acres. Barney McDougall, David "Sparky" Willix, and Jim Catalano were Awarded "Life Membership". This was for 20 years of continuous membership or extraordinary service to our club. The 10 year awards went to: Russell Grubb, Sheryl Ward, Kirk Comanic, Mike Hall and Robert Green. The 5 year awards went to: Bill and Dianne Sirola and Kyle Archacki. The Member of the Year was awarded to Dannielle Suzanne Budau, the President's Award went to Neil Ruddy and the Pioneer Award to Buddy Fine. The award for Conservation Communication was presented to Kiss Radio's own Dena B. Bonani and Ashlee Krantz. The Youth Conservationist was awarded to Shannon McCarthy.

We are grateful to each and every one of you for your service to the Broward County Airboat Halftrack and Conservation Club. I have been thinking about all of our Members who over the years have contributed so much to our Club and to our way of life. The Gladesmen and women who blazed the trails into the Everglades. Whenever I am in my airboat going down a trail, I think about all of the Gladesmen who rode that trail before me over the years. I am sure you and members of your family made those trails and I have benefitted from their time and effort. I hope you and your family are able to spend time in the woods. We send kids to youth camp and they come home and write letters to the club about how much fun they had.

I recently had a father and son on my airboat and took them frogging. We did not get a lot of frogs, but the father took a picture and captioned it "Making Memories". How true... his son had a blast, his dad showed him how to clean the frogs, and he could not have been any happier. I told him if he wanted "Eggs and Legs" for breakfast I would cook them. He wanted to take them home and show his mom and brother. Take time to spend with your kids, as they grow up fast.

Speaking of fast, the September and October meetings are our last General meetings of the year. I really hope you can come to either or both of these meetings. I also want to congratulate three of our members and their families, who had children: Kyle Archacki, James Blank and Ross Hoffman. Congratulations!

The last thing I would like to mention is what was brought up at our last general meeting. It is my desire to get our club members back to wearing red shirts at our meetings and events. These red shirts were our identity, to let people know we are BCAHCC. There was three motions voted on and passed at the last meeting: 1. New members will be given a red shirt; if it is a family membership, they will receive 1 free red shirt an any additional red shirts at cost. Active club members can purchase red club shirts with white lettering at cost. Voted on and passed. 2. Other than Airboat Show, when purchasing raffle tickets, 1 free ticket will be given if any club shirt is worn, and two free tickets will be given if red club shirt is worn. Voted on and passed. 3. E- Board Members can purchase collared white shirt with red lettering at cost, to be worn at Club Meetings. Voted on and passed. I would like to thank everyone who has called and offered to help with this year's agenda. It makes me very proud to know there is an enthusiasm to improve the things we can. Hope to see you Sept. 26th, at the Davie Women's Club for our next General Meeting.

On behalf of your Executive Board, Be safe and we hope to see you soon,

Bruce Ward
President
BCAHCC



September 26th General Meeting 7:00pm
Davie Women's Club, 6551 Orange Drive
Please arrive at 6:30 to get food and be ready.

October 10th E-Board Meeting 7:00pm
Davie Women's Club, 6551 Orange Drive

October 24th General Meeting 7:00pm
Davie Women's Club, 6551 Orange Drive
Please arrive at 6:30 to get food and be ready.

February 9th- 10th Annual Buggy Show

Our Membership Drive will begin at October's Meeting.



Upcoming Youth Hunts

November 2nd - 4th Deer/Hog Hunt at Istokpoga

January 5th-6th Duck Hunt at STA 1W

January 19th-20th Duck Hunt at STA 1W

March 8th-10th Alligator Hunt at A1 FEB

March 22nd - 24th Alligator Hunt at STA 3/4

Interested youths can apply online at
www.myfwc.com select **Hunting** then **Youth Opportunities**

Applicants must have completed Hunter's Safety Course and be Florida Residents to participate.

A story about the Gas Tree or Gas Light Tree

Written by Bruce Ward

Each year during the first week of August, the Broward County Airboat Halftrack and Conservation Club has a Memorial Poker Run. This is held to celebrate the lives of our members who have passed in the previous year. We also induct non-members who we feel have had an impact on our Everglades Lifestyle. Our Club places their names on a plaque that we keep at the Boars Nest Camp. One of the events of the day involves taking an airboat ride around Area 2A.

For many years, there has been a place where we would visit to place a Gladesman's ashes and other artifacts in remembrance. The way you go there is by leaving the Boars Nest Camp and getting on the East-West Trail and driving east 2 miles. There is a trail on the left and it runs in a northerly direction for 6.25 miles. GPS Coordinates N 26°24.4' W 080°26.9'; however you will not need these coordinates, and this is what this story is all about. There it stands, the Gas Tree or Gas Light Tree depending on how old you are.

Many of you still remember Browns Farm and Sportsmen Crossing. For those of you who do not, there was a bridge crossing the canal from area 2A to what was a hunting area known as Browns Farm. The area was known as Sportsmen Crossing and it was a very popular hunting and camping area. Many stories are told about how the guys would be camping there and deer would cross the bridge, literally running through their camps. The area was heavy with deer. During deer season, the levee and SR 27 was littered with hunters. Airboaters and halftrack guys would be running all over the area between the East West Trail and the L-5 levee.

For those of you who have never been north of the East-West Trail, it is a huge area. Well, because there was so much running around up there, they needed to have a place to store extra gas. They needed fuel to stay out and hunt all day, and enough to get back to camp at night. This is where the Tall Cypress tree that sat on the trail back to sportsmen's crossing got its name. The Gas Tree or Gas Light Tree, called by both names, stood tall in all of its majesty with one smaller Cypress Tree next to it. The one thing that made this tree so important was, you could see it and recognize it in just about all of that vast area. It was a beacon to find their way back to camp.

The hunters depended on that tree for gas and to show them the way home. Often times, these guys were getting back as the sun went down or if they had problems with their boats or tracks, at dark. You must also remember, back then there were no lights, or towers or toll booths to navigate by. They would hang a lantern in the tree and whoever was heading back late in the afternoon, would light the lantern. Hence, the name Gas Light Tree, as it was also known by.

So this tree was very important and a life saver to many hunters, because if you were broke down, you had a point of reference to tell your friends where you were. It was also a place to store fuel, so you might get that deer late in the day that would feed your family. This important tree meant so much to some of these Gladesmen that they wanted it to be their final resting place.

I do not know the person whose ashes were the first to be put there, but I do know some of the people who are there. I will also tell you that these Gladesmen meant a lot to each other and when one of them died and was cremated, their brothers went into action. Sometimes welders would make a container to encompass their ashes, weld their name on it and make it so they could mount them on a branch or at the base of the tree. Some of these Gladesmen had other interests which meant a lot to them. For instance, one of the Gladesmen was really into horses, so along with his ashes they placed a saddle out there. One was into dogs, so collars of some of his favorite dogs are with him, another enjoyed frogging, so a gig was placed out there, and another really enjoyed Budweiser Beer, so you guessed it, a six pack of Bud was placed out there.

As you can see this Tree has significance, actually even a spiritual significance. The Gladesmen actually felt as the tree guided them home from hunting, then maybe this tree could be used to navigate them for eternity. I always felt it was like a pyramid to their friends. Well, Mother Nature has a way of changing things. In 2005, Hurricane Wilma came to town with 125 MPH winds. It went right through Area 2A and The Gas Tree was no match for her. The Majestic Gas Tree or Gas Light Tree blew over. But you remember, I told you earlier in this story, that a smaller Cypress tree stood next to it, well Wilma did not get it. So even though the original Gas Tree lies on the ground beside it, its offspring has taken over the cause.

Several years ago, when I was visiting the tree and some of my friends the tree looked different. When I was approaching the tree I could see there was something in the top of the tree. I pointed it out to my wife Sheryl. As we got closer, the large mass in the top of the tree took on a familiar shape. It was the biggest bird's nest I had ever seen. There in the tree was a Bald Eagle with two chicks. We were thrilled and I could not help but think how fitting to see a family of birds that represent freedom, sitting in that tree. Those Gladesmen who are there, and were also known as free spirits, had the best Memorial I could ever imagine.

I was asked to share what I know about the Gas Tree with you. There are some who feel stories like this are being lost as are peers move away or pass away. This is where I will end the story, yes there is some more information I did not put in this story, and you may also have some more information about this tree. If so, send it to me I would love to hear or read it. Heck write a story and we will publish it.

I want everyone who reads this story to know what I know about this Tree. I am telling this story as it has been told to me or I have witnessed. I want to give credit to some of the people who have shared stories about this tree with me: Don Kirk, Gerald Motes and Norm Padgett. God Bless everyone who is out there at the Gas Tree, and all of those who are not.



IN CASE YOU MISSED THE MEETING:



Membership Drawing:

Worth \$50.00

David Archacki was drawn

but not in attendance

Rolled over until next meeting

David Nash

won the 50/50 Raffle

\$95

Congrats to our big winner!

A Special thanks from some club sponsored Campers

Dear Broward County Airboat Club,

My name is Paige Bass, I am 13 years old, and I am a student at Osceola Creek Middle school. This past summer I attended EYCC Summer Camp. It was an awesome experience. I took part in the Mariners program and left the camp grounds, kayaked to Peanut Island and Jonathan Dickenson State Park. My favorite part of my program was when my group and I were snorkeling, and we saw a sea turtle swimming right past us. My favorite part of EYCC all together was when the whole camp sat around the campfire and made s'mores and sang campfire songs. I had a great time and would do it again next year.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for sponsoring me. It was an amazing learning experience and I look forward to going next year, and maybe even becoming a camp counselor one day.

Sincerely,

Paige Bass

Dear BCAC
My name is Sydney Bass. I am 10 years old. Thank you for letting me go to EYCC my most favorite thing to do. My favorite thing was camping out in the woods and being the best camper in my group. Thank you so much for letting me go to EYCC. From, Sydney.

Dear BCAC,

My name is Aiden Bass I am 7 years old. I go to Frontier elementary. Thank you for sponsoring me. My favorite was swimming. I also got a trophy for best camper. I also loved to eat ice cream. I hope I go next year. 🙏🙏🙏

Aiden Bass

If you missed this year's banquet, you missed a great time...



Our newest Life Members



10 year members



5 year members



Conservationist of the Year



Youth Conservationist of the Year



Conservation Communication Award



President's Award



Pioneer Award



Member of the Year



Our Board of Directors



Barney & Anne's Big Thank You



The Basket of Cheer Winner



Our 50/50 Raffle Winner a.k.a the luckiest man in the club

View all of the photos on our Facebook Page or click the link below:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.1343127022490417&type=1&l=ccd78e280c>

Greater Broward Friends of NRA

Broward Airboat, Halftrack & Conservation Club
P.O. Box 291022
Davie, FL 33329

June 28, 2018

Dear Brett:

On behalf of our entire Greater Broward Friends of NRA, thank you for your very generous support of our June 2018, Friends of NRA fund-raiser. Our 2018 event had nearly 400 guests and volunteers and netted just under \$50,000 and still counting. These dollars are being used to fund projects that will help to ensure the future of the shooting sports including firearms safety, youth & women's programs, marksmanship and conservation and education throughout the state in addition to national projects such as ongoing support for the Eddie Eagle Child Safety Program and the National School Shield Program.

While local programs under the control of the Broward School Board are currently not permitted to accept funds from the NRA Foundation, there are many other local groups which can accept including private school JROTC troops, Boy Scouts, Explorers and various other youth programs as well as conservation and range development endeavors.

We are deeply appreciative of your Liberty Sponsorship. We hope you will invite your friends to attend next year and help us to reach out to others willing to provide financial sponsorship and/or donations.

Once again, thank you for your participation and rest assured that we will work tirelessly to preserve the 2nd Amendment and the future of the shooting sports.

Sincerely,



Frank Kirlin
Chairman,
Greater Broward Friends of NRA
1574 NW 179th Ave.
Pembroke Pines, FL 33029
954-885-7799



30TH ANNUAL

February 9th 11am-11pm February 10th 10am-5pm

AIRBOAT SHOW & FESTIVAL

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