

The Propwash Report

Broward County Airboat and Haltrack Conservation Club



President's Message

I would first like to give a round of applause to all of the members who have been working so hard to keep this club strong. Our active members who have volunteered a lot of their time, are greatly appreciated. And the same goes to our members that help behind the scenes due to the fact that they cannot contribute in person. Due to all of this hard work our Youth Hunts have been very successful. The Boars Head Camp looks better than ever, especially with the new observation deck and all of its positive feedback. Also our membership numbers and activity have risen at a great pace.

With that said, we still have a lot of growth to achieve. We need to have more activity from the rest of our members, whether it's volunteering in person or behind the scenes, to showing up at our monthly meetings in person or virtually on Zoom. That also includes staying up to date on your annual dues that keep your status within the club. And don't hesitate to bring in friends and family to join; we welcome anyone who loves the Everglades or supports our efforts.

I'd like to end this with saying thank you to everyone who has helped me make all of this possible and I look forward to the continued guidance and support. I can't wait to see everyone at the Everglades Experience and all of our upcoming events. Let's keep up the good work and have a blessed one!

Cian Campbell
President

In Memory of a Gladesmen Legend:

Ray Rotenberger

May 2, 1930 - September 24, 2025

By Nate Fischer



On December 13, 2025, a group of us gathered to pay our final respects to a man who truly shaped the landscape of the Everglades. I was honored to join Ray's son Stan Rotenberger, along with Bruce Leason, Jim Osborne, Bishop Wright Jr, John Jones, and Andrew Bernet. We met at the Holy Lands crossover and made our way out to the Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area—land that serves as a permanent monument to Ray's legacy.

It is important for our club members to remember that we don't just ride this area by chance; we ride it because Ray fought for it. Long before it was a designated WMA, Ray took a stand against the interests of Big Sugar to save this land from being lost forever. His tireless advocacy is the reason this ground was preserved and eventually named in his honor.

After parking the trucks, we all piled into John Jones's fulltrack for the trek out to Ray's old campsite. It was a beautiful day in the marsh, and the ride was filled with great stories about the history of the area and the formation of the camp where Ray spent so many years recreating.

Once we got the track as close to the campsite as possible, we released Ray's ashes. It was a bittersweet moment to bid farewell to such a legendary Gladesman, but there was a deep sense of peace in returning him to the heart of the wilderness he saved for all of us. Rest easy, Ray.

ValuJet 592 Cleanup

By Mark Smith

I have been asked by several people how the clean-up of the memorial to ValuJet 592 came to be and what drove me to see it completed.

Growing up, I was always interested in most anything transportation related, as most boys are and I was always fascinated by everything about and within the airline industry. Over the years I had come to realize that when tragedy occurs the investigation to determine what exactly happened can take up to several years. However, once completed nearly all the time hard lessons are learned, and measures are put in place to ensure it never happens again.

ValuJet 592 was a flight that departed from Miami bound for Atlanta on May 11th, 1996... but it never made it. Before takeoff in Miami several boxes of oxygen canisters were loaded with the firing pins removed and during the taxi out to the runway the box jostled, canisters ignited, and the fire had already started. The plane was doomed before it even took off. Efforts were valiant, but while attempting to land back in Miami, the plane fell about 20 miles short of the airport and impacted the terrain well within the Florida Everglades, several miles from any firm ground. 110 people lost their lives that day, most of them seemingly travelling home for Mother's Day.

3 years later at the location where most of the recovery process took place a memorial was constructed. However, since it was remote, off the beaten path, and not very well marked it seemed to fall in a state of disrepair, being unkempt, and essentially forgotten. There was only 4 identifiable remains that were recovered. For the rest of the passengers and crew, only fragments were recovered. For that reason, this memorial, however forgotten about it may be, was the closest thing to a headstone that most of them would have.

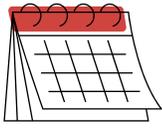
Fast forward to June of 2023, and I coincidentally happened to be in the area of the memorial and wanted to see it in person. While it's beautiful, appropriate, and tastefully done it was obvious that some lawn care, pressure washing, and overall a clean-up was needed. Fast forward another two years to June of 2025 and I happened to come across it again on Google Earth and I felt like a Deja-Vu seeing comments from almost everyone else that had visited stating the same things I did in the paragraph above. It was at the moment a lightbulb came on and immediately I thought I'd attempt to organize a clean-up.

First off, I was able to get the full support of my employer, next was finding a Facebook group for the ValuJet 592 and scrolling through to see if anyone had done something similar. Going back about 3 years I discovered that a group of employers from Jet Blue Airlines had done the exact thing. I had made contact with the organizer of that effort and received many tips and suggestions.

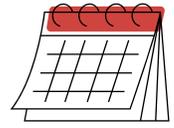
Then the calls, logistics, and more calls, missed calls, and more return phone calls started. I visited the site very briefly in August, took some pictures and my next stop was directly to a local Home Depot where I was able to secure low-cost supplies and lawn equipment that was needed. One of my tips I received was to contact the Miami Dade Fire Rescue and sure enough they were eager to help as needed. The equipment that they supplied was a true game changer. I posted a notice on one of my previous employers Facebook group page and it was forwarded to the Broward County Airboat, Halftrack Conservation Club who also supplied several hardworking individuals and equipment. In addition, the prosecutor for the state of Florida, and a close friend of the captain also attended.

Being able to organize this, have everyone come together as such, and that the memorial looks terrific is one of my proudest and most rewarding moments in life. But for me, the absolute best part and the most satisfying is reading the families comments showing their appreciation and gratitude and knowing that WE (!!) cared enough to honor their lives and they are not forgotten about.

What next? Hopefully our results and a news article that was on a local television channel will bring heightened awareness to the memorial. There is a plan to have at least one light installed and a few more infrastructure plans in the works.



What's Ahead - Upcoming Events



Date	Event	Location
March 21st	Everglades Experience	Bergeron Rodeo Grounds

TBD Date	Event
April	Full Track Run
July 11th	Unity Weekend
August	Memorial Run
August	Banquet



Moments from the Marsh:



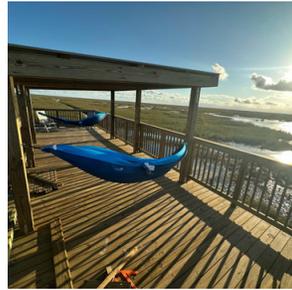
Event Recap

The Youth Hunting Program of Florida was a successful youth hunt! Below are some photos. To view more check out our facebook post linked [here](#). As always, a big thank you to the parents, guides, and BCAHCC members who helped make it happen!





Camp Photos



Glades Conservation Corner

The Everglades ecosystem is threatened by several invasive animal species that disrupt the natural balance of wildlife. Of those several species, these are the top 5 that you may see:

- The Burmese Python - a large snake that preys on native mammals such as raccoons, rabbits, and deer
- The Lionfish - a spiny fish that consumes large numbers of smaller fish and disrupts marine food chains
- The Argentine Black & White Tegu - a reptile that threatens native wildlife by eating eggs of birds and turtles
- The Giant African Land Snail - a mollusk that damages plants and crops while spreading parasites
- The Walking Catfish - a fish that travels across land to new waterways, allowing it to spread quickly and compete with native fish for resources



Glades Safety Tips



Respect the Ecosystem
Follow Leave No Trace principles
Do not remove plants, shells, or wildlife
Dispose of trash properly



Know Water and Boating Safety
Wear a life jacket when boating or kayaking
Watch for shallow water, mangrove roots, and submerged hazards
Check weather conditions before heading out



Meet the Board

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