

# WINGS & THINGS



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE VENICE AREA AUDUBON SOCIETY | [veniceaudubon.org](http://veniceaudubon.org)

Founded in 1965

## 2009-10 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### NOVEMBER

- 7 Felts Audubon Preserve, 7:30 a.m.
- 10 Jelks Preserve, 7:30 a.m.
- 14 Venice Landfill/Venetian River Club, 7:45 a.m.
- 15 Carlton Reserve, 7:30 a.m.
- 17 Conservation Cmte, 3:00 p.m.
- 17 Board Meeting, 5:00 p.m.
- 21 Shamrock Park, 7:30 a.m.
- 24 General Meeting, Venice Audubon Center, 7:00 p.m.

### DECEMBER

- 1 Conservation Cmte, 3:00 p.m.
- 1 Board Meeting, 5:00 p.m.
- 2 Placida Boat Trip, 8:00 a.m.
- 2 Shamrock Park, 7:30 a.m.
- 6 Carlton Reserve, 7:30 a.m.
- 8 Holiday Party Mtg., Venice Audubon Center, 7:00 p.m.
- 10 Myakka River State Park, 7:30 a.m.
- 15 Christmas Bird Count
- 18 Wings & Things deadline for January newsletter
- 19 Deer Prairie Creek Preserve, 7:30 a.m.

### JANUARY

- 2 Celery Fields Trip, 7:30 a.m.
- 9 Carlton Reserve, 7:30 a.m.
- 10 Emerson Point Park, 7:30 a.m.
- 13 Shamrock Park, 7:30 a.m.
- 15 Robinson Preserve, 7:00 a.m.

## IN MEMORIAM

### Barbara L. Sappington

We are saddened to learn of the death of our dear friend and faithful VAAS member, Barbara, on October 1. Although wheel chair bound for several years, she continued to support VAAS by attending meetings. Our sympathy goes out to her husband Walter and daughter Cindy Julius.

## Message from the President – Missy L. Christie

**VAAS.** When you see this acronym what comes to mind? Hopefully, Venice Area Audubon Society. Indulge me for a minute while I present another take on what the VAAS acronym stands for.

**V is for VOLUNTEER.** *Energize Inc.* describes a volunteer as “Someone who contributes time, effort and talent to meet a need or further a mission, without going on the payroll.”

**A is for ATTITUDE.** *Wikipedia* explains, “An attitude is a hypothetical construct that represents an individual’s degree of like or dislike for an item. Attitudes are generally positive or negative views of a person, place, thing, or event—this is often referred to as the attitude object.”

**A is for ACTION.** *Wordnetweb.princeton.edu* states, “carry through: put in effect; carry out a task; execute the decision of the people.”

**S is for STEWARD.** *Yourdictionary.com* describes a steward as “a person morally responsible for the careful use of money, time, talents, or other resources, esp. with respect to the principles or needs of a community or group.”

**Volunteer.** While searching for volunteers to serve on the Board of Directors, one of the most disheartening statements I heard was “Are you kidding? That Board is known for its contentious nature, no way am I going on that.” While at times it feels like there is some truth to that statement, the current Board is fantastic. Just look at the make-up of these great people.

**Attitude.** Over the past few weeks, considerable non productive time and energy focused on items such as irrigation systems and Audubon Adventures. Misinformation appears to be the stem of this movement. These incidents may prove to be an alarm system. Misinformation from sources outside of the board is getting in the way of progress. Rest assured, the Board of Directors hears the alarm and will continue to search for the best way to distribute accurate information.

The Conservation Committee focusing on Green Initiatives for the building, Scrub-jay management, protecting coastal habitat for beach nesting birds, and the development of a second rookery. The Ways and Means group working on a progressive fund raising agenda. The Publicity Director is seeking new and exciting ways to tell the VAAS story. The Program Director is arranging an incredible line-up of speakers. New and exciting field trips are happening. What an incredible list!

**Steward.** Going back to the VAAS acronym, as we know it, the Venice Area Audubon Society has incredibly devoted and dedicated members and **Volunteers with Attitude** willing to take **Action** and strive to be the best **Stewards** of resources. However, all too often, energy is expended putting out

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT VENICE AUDUBON CENTER

### ENDEMIC, INDIGENOUS AND EXOTIC BIRDS OF HAWAII

Nov 24 at 7:00 p.m.

Barry Rossheim, zoology teacher at Venice High School and member of VAAS, will share his recent birding experience on the islands of Oahu and Maui. His presentation will feature the boardwalk area of the Nature Conservancy of Hawaii's Waikamoi Preserve and the difficult to access nesting area of the Laysan Albatross. You will enjoy hearing about Barry's adventures in his quest to see these "once in a lifetime" birds and his beautiful photos will leave us all yearning for a trip to the Aloha State.

### HOLIDAY PARTY

Dec 8 at 6:30 p.m.

The Board of VAAS has planned a festive evening at the Center to share the warm spirit of the holidays. VAAS will provide beverages, cups, plates, etc. Please bring hors d'oeuvres or dessert (finger food to keep it simple) to share for "cocktail hour" while we visit and listen to holiday music. Bring items you would like to donate and/or solicit items from a favorite merchant for a silent auction—a friendly bidding event to obtain Holiday gifts for yourself or others and a fun way to add some funds to our budget. You can bring articles to the November meeting or contact any board member prior to the event so we can include them in our inventory. Help is needed on the Holiday Committee. If you can be a part of making this event happen, call Marty Shirley at 941-496-4494.

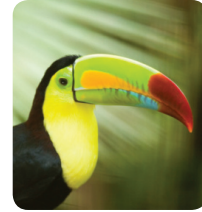
### WINGS IS GOING GREEN

To receive the January edition, we need your current e-mail address. See mailing panel for details.

## VENICE AUDUBON IN PANAMA – Charlie Sample

Eight VAAS Panama trip members had a fantastic time as guests of the Canopy Lodge in El Valle de Antón. We were treated royally, with a short visit to the Canopy Tower, and then in the mountains at the Lodge for nine days.

We enjoyed two birding excursions daily which took us to different Panamanian habitats. There were two all day outings, one to Altos del Maria, located at a higher elevation in the mountains, and the other to the Pacific lowlands and a beach on the Pacific Ocean.



Our birding guides, José and Moyo, amazed us. They heard and located birds in the most difficult places. We were told that the 237 species we saw was a new record for nine days at the Canopy Lodge. The birding was so good, that even our guides bagged a few "lifers!"

We all had a great time and everyone saw all the birds. If anyone missed a bird, José and Moyo made sure to locate the bird again. We can't say enough about the guides and the efforts they made to accommodate us all—the casual and hard-core birders alike.

The food was out of this world. We enjoyed fine dining under a canopy porch with a mountain view next to a rapid flowing stream.

The birds seen on this trip are too numerous to list. If you're interested seeing in a complete list, come to the "Trips" table at the next VAAS general meeting.

The "Panama/Venice Fantastic Eight" are: Virginia Bates, Rhea Guertin, Gail Pigeon, Marian Shern, Norma Sayres, Bill Fairbank, Carolyn Edmunds and Charlie Sample.

## OVERDUE DUES DUE

Bill Fairbank

Annual dues are due by September 1. We have only received 1/3 of the membership dues so far. **We encourage the members who have not yet sent in their dues to do so as soon as possible. There is a renewal form located in the 2009-2010 Trip & Program Guide.** These funds make possible the many activities of Venice Audubon including our educational programs.

Thank you to all members of VAAS who paid their annual dues for their continued support.

We thank and welcome all new VAAS members: Marie Beall, Dan Harris, Joyce Leary, Michael and Carrol Malott, Jeffrey and Jane Parsons, and any other new members that might have missed.

If you have questions call Bill Fairbank at 941-412-1610 or e-mail him at [wgfairbank@hotmail.com](mailto:wgfairbank@hotmail.com).

### UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

**Nov 7** - Felts Audubon Preserve, 7:30 a.m.

**Nov 14** - Venice Landfill and the Venetian Golf & River Club, 7:45 a.m.

**Nov 21** - Shamrock Park, 7:30 a.m.

**Dec 2** - The Placida Boat trip. Lunch at Fishery Restaurant. Registration required, limited space. 8:00 a.m.

**Dec 10** - Myakka River State Park, 7:30 a.m.

**Jan 2** - Celery Fields, 7:30 a.m.

**Jan 10** - Emerson Point Park, 7:30 a.m.

For more details about any of the trips above, please see the *2009-2010 VAAS Trips & Program Guide*.

If you have any comments about any of this season's trips or have suggestions about places to go next season, drop by the Trips table at the VAAS general meeting or contact Bill Fairbank at 941-412-1610 or [wgfairbank@hotmail.com](mailto:wgfairbank@hotmail.com).

fires instead of focusing on the great tasks this group can accomplish. Maybe that is the root of the conflict, "keep the fires stirred" so VAAS cannot achieve its full potential.

Please remember that VAAS is a community of people with a variety of opinions, hopes, fears, expectations, and a desire to achieve great things. The Board of Directors wants to assure you that we are really trying to do a great job for our organization. In addition, although we may choose to do things a little differently from the past, we are trying to be the best we can be...and sometimes we need to change in order to improve.

YOU are the vehicle that keeps all things moving forward. Your constructive support and guidance is needed to increase VAAS's potential. Should you hear something that doesn't sound right, or feel something may be going haywire, please channel it in a productive manner by contacting a Board Member, or asking to address the Board at a Board meeting. In this venue, information will be first-hand and clear. Your knowledge, experience, and insight may be the perfect stimulus to aid in moving a project to great heights.

**VAAS FINANCIAL REPORT**  
**Brenda Bossman**

The Treasurer's April 2009 is too detailed to be printed in this Wings & Things issue. The report in its entirety will be posted at the monthly meeting.

**May 2008 – April 2009**

Income: \$41,760.52

Expenses: \$38,150.18

**Current Assets as of April 30, 2009:**

Checking/Savings: \$21,672.13

Other Assets: \$71,080.80

Total Assets: \$92,752.80

**VAAS AT A GLANCE**

**CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT** The CBC is on Tuesday, December 15. The compiler for the Venice-Englewood count is Rett Oren. If you can help with the count, contact Rett at [rettooren@gmail.com](mailto:rettooren@gmail.com) or 941-486-1424.

**CONSERVATION COMMITTEE** One of our initiatives is to see if we can make a positive impact on global climate change by making the Venice Audubon Center more energy efficient and a model of sustainability. We engaged a volunteer engineer to investigate. We hope our Center can be a demonstration Center for the South Sarasota County area, promoting VAAS's name and conservation mission to the community. We need help finding a name for this initiative. If you have a suggestion, please send it to us at the Venice Audubon Center.

**ROOKERY COMMITTEE** The second rookery preparation is underway. The County has excavated a deeper channel on either side of the island to make it (potential second rookery) less vulnerable to predators and human penetration. The next phase is to remove exotic vegetation and plant native trees.

**AUDUBON ADVENTURES** It has come to our attention that misinformation has been circulating via e-mail from some about the Board's recent decision regarding our Audubon Adventures (AA) program. We'd like to set the record straight.

The Board has decided to continue offering AA to the Girl Scouts and to home-schooled children. Both groups have been fully utilizing the AA materials. Therefore, all donations collected for this year's AA program will support these two groups. The Board decided to discontinue offering Audubon Adventures to the schools. The reasons are as follows: 1) AA materials were not fully utilized 2) costs have increased to \$3,000 and 3) donations collected only totaled 1/3 of the actual cost. The VAAS teacher in the schools and other school educational programs will remain in place.

We'd like to take this opportunity to say that when you have concerns about things that VAAS is doing or any decisions the Board makes, please feel free to contact us directly to discuss your concerns and/or request to attend a Board meeting to present your point of view. We are ready and willing to listen.

This is exactly what Jackie Barrett and Lori Stover did recently. They came to a Board meeting to present their concerns about the Board's decision to discontinue offering AA to the schools and the funds collected for this part of the program. The Board commends Jackie and Lorie for caring enough about the education of school children to present their concerns in a constructive manner to the Board.

**BIRDS IN PARADISE** At the September general meeting, Janie Dancho did a great presentation on the Magnificent Frigatebird! The members present enjoyed the informative and entertaining addition to our meeting and we are looking forward to more. Janie will keep the list of volunteer presenters and will have a sign-up sheet available at meetings. Tell us about your favorite, confusing or unusual bird. Contact Janie at 941-244-0769. For more information on this program refer to the Sept/Oct edition of *Wings & Things*.



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## FINAL NOTICE

### WINGS IS GOING GREEN

The next edition of *Wings & Things* will be sent via e-mail and also posted on our website. It will no longer be mailed. To receive the January edition, make sure we have your current e-mail address.

See Bill Fairbank at the membership table or e-mail him at [wgfairbank@hotmail.com](mailto:wgfairbank@hotmail.com).

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**WINGS&THINGS** is published by the Venice Area Audubon Society (VAAS). As a member of VAAS you receive five editions of *Wings & Things* per year, information on our field trips, chapter meetings and programs. Individual memberships are \$20 per year and family memberships are \$30 per year. A lifetime family membership is \$1500. All membership dues go to the Venice Area chapter of the National Audubon Society.

## Roster

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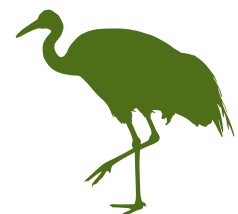
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**Volunteer Coordinator**  
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**Youth Education Coordinator**  
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**OUR MISSION: To promote interest in wildlife and foster the cause of conservation with emphasis on birds and their habitat**