

Pine Island Knotes

Newsletter of the Pine Island Preservation Society
Number 46
June 2024

MANGO HARVEST FESTIVAL - JUNE 22

Don't forget to mark your calendar for our annual Mango Harvest Festival which will take place on Saturday, June 22 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Sams House Nature Center.

--Mango recipe demonstrations and tasting will be held in the screen room. Space is limited, so seats can be reserved to purchase a \$5 ticket. Please call 321 449-4720 for your reservation.

--Local growers will provide fresh mangos and mango delicacies including jams, hot sauces, chutney, relishes, salsa and more.

--Live music by the Steel Drum Man.

--Mango themed raffles baskets and other items will be on the main house porch.

--Vendors will feature baked breads, fresh greens and mushrooms, trees and plants.

--Mango tree air-layering demos by the Brevard Tropical Fruit Club at 1:00 p.m.

--Mango baked goodies for sale in the cabin by Spade & Trowel Garden Club.

--Food trucks including Pita Pyramid, and Country Kettle Korn and Fruity Licks.

And, if you would like to volunteer or take part in the Festival, please contact Shannah Trout at sm.trout@hotmail.com or Darleen Hunt at dhunt125@aol.com. It's Mango Harvest Time!!

This festival was inspired by the heritage of the Pioneer Sams family who were successful citrus and fruit (pineapple), vegetable and sugar cane growers in the late 1800s.

Mango Harvest Festival!

Valencia Pride Carrie Glenn Hayden

Saturday, June 22nd, 2024
10 AM - 3 PM

Sams House • 6195 N. Tropical Trail, Merritt Island

Tastings too! **Recipe Demonstrations**
\$5/Person Donation • Reservations Required for Recipe Demonstrations

Mangos, Mango Delicacies, Local Honey & other items for sale

Fruit Basket Raffles
Vendors
Maps to NMI Fruit Vendors
Food Trucks

Live Music!
12-3 PM

STEEL DRUM MAN
FRANK LUTZ

Call Sams House at (321) 449-4720
for Recipe Demonstration Reservations
Hosted by the Pine Island Preservation Society

Welcome Land Management Specialist Connor Wong!



“I am honored to be the new land management specialist of Sams House at Pine Island. I was born and raised in Merritt Island, so I have a great appreciation for preserving the history and natural areas of my hometown for future generations. While working here at Sams House, I am concurrently pursuing my doctorate in biological oceanography at the Florida Institute of Technology where I received my bachelor's and master's degrees, also in biological oceanography. I have spent much of my academic career on various projects involving Indian River

Lagoon biological diversity and my research has predominantly focused on understanding harmful algal blooms. Having grown up fishing and hiking around many of the same parks I am privileged to work on now, I am elated to contribute my passion for conservation and expertise to the amazing team of staff and volunteers here.” **Connor Wong.**



Kashanian Scholarship Available

This year a \$1445.00 Masoud R. Kashanian Memorial Scholarship will be awarded. **The deadline to apply is June 1.** An application is available on the PIPS Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pineislandpreservationsociety/>. A PIPS committee and Kashanian family will select a winner in late June.

The Scholarship is in memory of the late Sam Kashanian, an avid Pine Island Sams House landscaping volunteer. The award is designed for a graduating Senior High School Student who is furthering their education in environmental or related fields at an accredited college.

Watching Sandhill Cranes Grow at P.I.C.A.

By Shannon Steele, EEL Naturalist

This spring at the 900-acre Pine Island Conservation Area (PICA), EEL staff have had the opportunity to watch two sandhill crane chicks grow from downy orange balls of fluff into long-legged colts. Growing as much as an inch per day, sandhill crane chicks reach their adult size within 3 months. Here are pictures taken of this family of four by naturalist Shannon Steele at 3-week intervals from March through May, 2024.



Sandhill Crane chicks, March 23, 2024



Sandhill Crane chicks, April 13, 2024



Sandhill Crane chicks, May 4, 2024

Turtle Egg Laying Season



Photo and caption by Shannon Steele

Be on the lookout for turtles like this red-eared slider at Sams House. After much-needed rains have softened the ground, female turtles will be on the move looking for places to dig their nests.

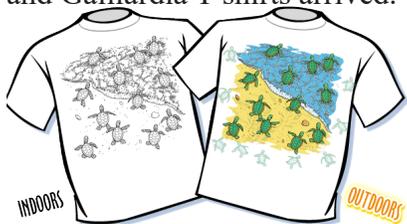


Tour Time at Sams House

In photo to left, Shannon Steele, on left, provides a tour to members of the Women's Friendship Club of Our Savior's Church. "They did a whole Sams family morning adventure, first taking a cemetery tour of St. Luke's and then coming here for the house and cabin tour."

Tiny Cabin Gift Shop Offers Variety of Merchandise

The PIPS Gift Shop is located inside the Sams Cabin. You will find a variety of souvenirs and gifts that are centered around the surroundings and habitat of the Sams House Nature Center. Sales items include walking sticks, T-shirts, earrings, finger puppets, and field guides to name a few. Recently a large shipment of Magic and Gaillardia T-shirts arrived. We carry all sizes for youth and adults from XS to XL. We are currently waiting



Magic T-shirts that turn colors in the sun are popular items in the Cabin Gift Shop.

for an order to restock our Sams House cups that were first offered for sale in February. Be sure to check out the Gift Shop the next time you visit the Sams House Nature Center.

Josie Neal, Gift Shop Manager



Sams Houses with Gaillardia flowers T-shirts were designed by local artist.

Butterfly Walk Held at Sams House

Who doesn't love butterflies...sometimes called flying flowers?

The Merritt Island Wildlife Association held a Spring Butterfly Walk at Sams House in April. Over 30 attended to learn about butterflies from retired Park Ranger Ed Perry. Perry gave a slide presentation and brought two live butterflies that had hatched in one of his containers two hours earlier. They were released in the Pioneer Garden in front of the cabin following the presentation. He and Alex Schilling then led attendees on the nature trails to see how many different species could be spotted.



Yellow butterfly on stick on left is Cloudless Sulphur.

Photo by: Mary Matta

Ed Perry, center, points to butterflies in Pioneer Garden in front of the Sams Cabin while guests record sighting in their checklist booklet.

Photo by: Darleen Hunt

Student Activities for Summer

The 2023-2024 school group season has come to a close, and Sams House Naturalists are gearing up for weekend "drop-in" programs where visitors can pick and choose from a variety of self-guided activities to enhance their visit. Next month's theme will be centered around **Life in the Lagoon**.

The picture on the right is from a "drop-in" program, *Marvelous Migration*, called "Fill the Bill." This is an activity station where students are given tools that represent different bird beaks. The object is to figure out which tool (beak) works best for collecting the different foods. In this picture, the pliers represent birds like cardinals with heavy beaks that can crush the shells or husks to get the high energy seed prize inside.

Shannon Steele, EEL Naturalist



Letter from the Editor...

*One of the things our Pine Island Preservation Society has been lacking for the past few years, is a **Website**. Ours became inactive after our member webmaster moved away. Thankfully we do have a Facebook page managed by Martha Pessaro, but we still are in need an official Website.*

*Michael Richard has volunteered and is in the process of designing one for us. It may take a while, but hopefully by the time the next issue of this Pine Island Knots comes out, we will be able to introduce you to our new **Website**.*

We are also in need of volunteers to staff the cabin and work on landscape projects and special events. Please join us.

Darleen Hunt, Editor

Upcoming Sams House Programs (Please Call for Reservations 321 449-4720)

- **Bring Your Own Kayak- Thurs., June 6, 9:30 am - 12:00 noon** - Meet up at the Thousand Islands Conservation Area for water tour. Registration is required. Meet at 599 Ramp Road, Cocoa Beach.
- **Butterfly Walk - Wed., June 12, 10:00 a.m. to noon**. Explore the butterfly life cycle and importance of native plants. Program begins with a short butterfly basics briefing including differences between skippers, swallowtail, and whites/yellos. Hosted by the M.I. Wildlife Association. All ages welcome. Sign up: <https://www.meetup.com/space-coast-audubon-meetup/events/>
- **Life in the Lagoon - Sat., June 29, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.** Self-guided activities about animals that live in the Lagoon. Recommended for families and children ages 10 and under.
- **Saturday Bird Walks at Sams House - Saturdays 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.** Join the naturalists of Sams House (weather permitting) to look and listen for birds. From beginner to expert, all levels of birders welcomed. Bring binoculars if possible. Meet in front of cabin. *(Due to Mango Festival, there will be no Bird Walk on Sat., June 22.*
- **Scavenger Hunt - Sundays 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Stop by the 1888 house to pick up nature hunt guide and explore the grounds.
- **House and Cabin Tour - Every Thurs. and Sat. at 3:00 p.m.** - Tour inside Brevard's oldest standing home (1875) and the adjacent 1888 Florida Vernacular-style home to learn about the Sams Family.

Contact Information

David DeMeyer, EEL Land Manager for Central Region; Connor Wong, EEL Land Management Specialist; Alex Schilling, Education Center Coordinator, Shannon Steele, EEL Naturalist at Sams House, and Rob Lane, EEL Naturalist can all be reached at (321) 449-4720.
www.facebook.com/eelbrevard
Volgistics, this website which allows volunteers to sign up for shifts or projects online, as well as record volunteer hours, is located...at: <https://www.volgistics.com/vicnet/53695>
The Docent Desk computer is set up for entry as well.
 Website: <https://www.brevardfl.gov/EELProgram/Sanctuaries/SamsHouse>
<https://www.facebook.com/pineislandpreservationsociety/>
www.nbbd.com/godo/sanctuaries/SamsHouse/
 Pine Island Knotes editor: Darleen Hunt, 321 452-8433, dhunt125@aol.com

The purpose of PIPS is to promote conservation, awareness, and appreciation of the Pine Island Conservation Area and to provide assistance to the Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program. PIPS is a private non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are deductible under Sec. 170 of the IRS Code.

Pine Island Preservation Society

Board of Directors

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- Jeff Thompson, Secretary
- Darleen Hunt, Treasurer
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- Shannah Trout
- Elaine Williams



Volunteers, please don't forget to record your volunteer hours at: <https://www.volgistics.com/vicnet/53695>.

President's Thoughts...



Summer has arrived abruptly, not sliding in gently as usual. Rainy afternoons, mosquitos, heat and humidity are upon us. But that's no reason to stay in the great indoors until Autumn arrives. Just reading this issue of the Pine Island Knotes will give you plenty of reasons to get outside and enjoy nature and the activities planned for PICA in the next few weeks.

The headliner, and our largest summer event is the Mango Harvest Festival. Come out and learn all about mangos, or even better, be a volunteer for part of the day.

Did you enjoy reading about the butterfly walk with MIWA in April? Good news! There's another planned for June 12th. Sign up early. Also, there are bird walks every Saturday morning with our naturalists. These, and other fun activities, are listed in the "Upcoming Sams House Programs" section on page three. And while you're here, check out the gift shop in the Sams Cabin. All sales go to support programs and projects at PICA.

If you haven't done it yet, please remember to renew your PIPS dues. Member dues make up a large part of the funding for the support that PIPS provides to the Sams House and Pine Island Conservation Area.

Finally, I would like to welcome Connor Wong to the county staff at Sams House. He's a Merritt Island native and has two degrees (so far!) from FIT. He's a great new asset for PICA. If you happen to encounter him during a visit, please introduce yourself.

Rick English

President, Pine Island Preservation Society

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership is open to any individual or organization willing to support the Pine Island Preservation Society in its activities to assist the Pine Island Conservation Area, including the historic Sams House, and the Environmentally Endangered Lands Program of Brevard County, Florida.

Your contact information will be handled as private data and will not be shared with anyone.

PLEASE PRINT

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

PLEASE CHECK CATEGORY OF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: New Renewal

<input type="checkbox"/> Senior (55+) \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> Student \$10	Corporate Memberships	
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Couple (55+) \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> Family \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Horseshoe Crab \$100	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> Sams Descendants \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> Gopher Tortoise \$250	
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> Barred Owl \$500	
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Couple Supporting \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> Life \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> Eagle \$1000	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Mastodon \$5000	

Please make check payable to Pine Island Preservation Society or "PIPS" and mail check and membership application to:
 Pine Island Preservation Society, Inc., 6195 North Tropical Trail, Merritt Island, FL 32953