



THE Pelican Post

Winter 2006
Vol. 21, No. 4

A quarterly publication - Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation



*"Those who contemplate the beauty of
the earth find reserves of strength that
will endure as long as life lasts."*

- Rachel Carson

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The Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation is a non-profit organization whose members provide assistance and support to the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve's goals and programs.

Cover photo:
 Bald Eagle by Dave Cagnolatti

Design by Kelly Anderson
 www.kellyandersondesigns.com

From the Executive Director...



The sighting of Bald Eagles on several Alabama Coastal BirdFest trips, and the discovery of a new Bald Eagle nest on the shore of Weeks Bay reminds us of the value of protecting habitat. This has been and continues to be a major focus of the Foundation.

I recently attended two meetings that will benefit the Foundation's land conservation efforts. The Land Trust Alliance Rally in Nashville, Tennessee, focused on new tax law changes for conservation and life estate land donations and other land trust topics. I had the pleasure of meeting **Mark Silberstein**, executive director of the Elkhorn Slough Foundation. It is a friends group that supports the Elkhorn Slough Reserve in California. Our Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation was patterned after the Elkhorn Slough Foundation. One of the nice things about the National Estuarine Research Reserve System is that you can borrow good ideas from others.

I also attended the National Estuarine Research Reserve Conference in Huron, Ohio, hosted by Old Woman Creek Reserve. It was interesting to learn that **John Borom** and **Bill Tucker**, who has retired from the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, attended the first NERRA/NERR Conference in 1985 at Old Woman Creek. Weeks Bay Reserve was just a dream at that time, and the NERR System was in its infancy. Today, there are 27 reserves and 19 friends groups (see map on page 9). We discussed fund raising, website development and community involvement during the friends group sector of the meeting.



John Borom, in the red and blue cap, at the first NERR meeting in 1985.



Walter Ernest and Mark Silberstein at the rally

The third Alabama Coastal BirdFest was very successful, and all proceeds will help secure habitat for birds. The Estuaries and Art exhibit at the Eastern Shore Art Center increased awareness of the importance of estuaries. As we work together for conservation, we can help ensure the survival of other species and improve the quality of life not only for ourselves but for future generations. We cannot accomplish these things without your help. Thank you for your support, and enjoy reading this issue of *The Pelican Post*.

Working for Conservation,

Walter



Remember to purchase your 2006 Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation commemorative Christmas ornament! The ornament, depicting a scene on Weeks Bay, may be purchased for \$10 at Fairhope Pharmacy's Christmas 'Round the Corner, Eastern Shore Art Center, Weeks Bay Reserve or by contacting the Foundation office at (251) 990-5004. Previous years ornaments are also available at the Reserve and the Foundation office.

Friend of Weeks Bay

Foundation Board Member **Gaye Lindsey** recently made a generous donation to the Foundation from the proceeds of a real estate sale. The funds will be used by the Foundation to help protect the natural resources of the Weeks Bay watershed. Ms. Lindsey has been a friend of the Foundation for quite some time. In 2001, she donated 20 acres of timberland located in Stockton to the Foundation in memory of *Skipper Tonsmeire, Gaye Lindsey, and Jack Edwards*



Lindsey. It was sold and the proceeds were utilized to protect an environmentally sensitive piece of property on Fish River. She also designed and cast a commemorative ceramic tile for the 20th anniversary of the Reserve. The same type of clay that had been utilized by the potters and brick manufacturers of Baldwin County for many years was used. As a Baldwin County native, Gaye Lindsey realizes the importance of protecting our natural resources. The Foundation is very grateful to her for her generous donation and hopes this gift will encourage others to follow in her footsteps. If you would like to leave a lasting legacy, please contact the Foundation office at (251) 990-5004.

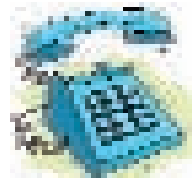
History Detectives Needed

Applied historical ecology is the use of historical knowledge in the management of ecosystems. Twentieth-century trends suggest that disregarding history, the patterns and causes of ecological changes in landscapes, can be perilous. Examples include the emergence of increasingly severe wildfire activity in the western U.S. and accelerated soil erosion in the American Southwest (USGS).



As coastal communities experience rapid growth there is no question that human activities leave an ever increasing footprint upon the landscape. Gathering, integrating and making accessible a historical data set (photographs, narratives, maps, oral histories, etc.) of environmental and social conditions through time will help researchers and managers better understand base conditions and the potential impacts of anthropogenic alterations. Among other things a comprehensive and accessible data set of historical records

will be beneficial for identifying trends and threats, predicting functional thresholds and locating acceptable restoration reference sites.



**If you would like to be a history detective, please contact
Eric Brunden,
Stewardship Coordinator
(251) 928-9792**

Did You Know? by John Borom

A most interesting thing about the eastern oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) is its curious sex changes. An oyster usually begins life as a male, changes to female, then possibly back to male, and so on. This strange phenomenon is known as protandric hermaphroditism. A spawning oyster can definitely be identified as a male or female only after microscopic examination of the sex producing organ (gonad). Presence of spermatozoa in the extract indicates that the oyster is a male, while presence of the eggs, of course, makes it obvious that the oyster is a female. This ability is a natural safeguard against the accidental formation of a cluster of only one sex.

Oysters in our area can be found breeding from April until October and in isolated cases even during the winter months. Breeding oysters are called “milky” because of the milky looking fluid they exude at that time. The “milk” of the female is composed of millions of minute eggs; that of the male of an incalculable number of extremely minute spermatozoa. A large female has been estimated to contain 60,000,000 eggs. This “milk” is released into the estuary where the spermatozoa of the male drifts or swims to the egg and penetrates it. This act of fertilization begins the cycle of oyster life. The fertilized egg divides again and again forming a ball of many tiny cells. After a few hours, small vibrating cilia appear on the developing young oyster, and this keeps it suspended as it



Photo by Rick Wallace

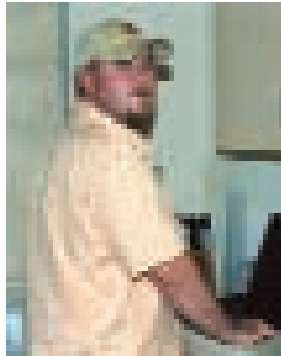
drifts about on the tides and currents. The planktonic embryo develops a pair of tiny shells. These shells grow larger and heavier and finally the young “spat”, as the oyster is called at this stage, drops to the bottom and attaches itself to some hard object and gives up forever its own power of moving from place to place. As the young oysters grow, they cement their shells to those of their neighbors forming a cluster. If this cluster forms on a site where passing currents bring more oyster larvae and a steady supply of planktonic food, it will develop into a reef. The young oyster grows rapidly, and after a few months becomes a tiny male. It does not become a female until the next year’s spawning season and may not even then.

ArcHydro® Workshop

... to be hosted by Grand Bay and Weeks Bay CTP

What occurs in watersheds a hundred miles inland can have a direct impact on sensitive coastal environments. Interactions between climate, weather, society and the environment of a watershed present great challenges to coastal management.

ArcHydro®, a software tool from GIS software group, ESRI (Redlands, CA), analyzes relationships between rainfall, terrain, watersheds, waterways and monitoring points. Understanding of how watershed elements interact across watersheds will allow for better management of these resources and protect water quality. The software is beneficial to anyone interested in water resources applications of ArcGIS®, another ESRI product, especially state, city and county water managers. Grand Bay and Weeks Bay NERRs along with Mississippi State University GeoResources Institute are offering a hands-on workshop at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers computer lab in Mobile. The workshop, scheduled for Thursday, January 25, 2007 from 8am-5pm, will include multiple exercises utilizing data from Alabama and Mississippi. The course is being taught by **John Cartwright** and **Louis Wasson** of the GeoResources Institute. The Coastal Training Program endeavors to raise awareness about the tools available for natural resources management.



John Cartwright, course instructor, works on GIS layers in the study of land use changes.

A Boatload of Plants!

One plant sale customer interrupted her husband's fishing trip and commandeered his boat to transport her plants! The 13th Annual Native Plant Sale at Weeks Bay Reserve was a huge success. We broke all records for gross sales. Several thousand perennials and native trees and shrubs were purchased by area residents to beautify south Alabama yards and parks. Proceeds from the sale will fund Reserve and volunteer projects and workshops.



Outward Bound Discovery

Weeks Bay Reserve recently assisted with the Outward Bound Discovery program for Families in Need of



Outward Bound Discovery Teens and Leaders Survive Canoe Trip in the Delta

Services (FINS). FINS is a program for teens struggling in their home, school or peer environments. The 28-day wilderness program emphasized character development, academic achievement and social responsibility to reduce the risk of dropping out of school, substance abuse and future delinquency. The Reserve provided support for a team building activity on Weeks Bay as well as providing a site for finishing a two-week long outing in Baldwin County. Activities during this program included a canoe trip in the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, community service projects, personal challenge events, survival skills training and camping. The program was a great success and the Reserve looks forward to continuing its support.

Education Update

On October 25th and 26th, thirty-two students from Fairhope High School planted 2,000 sea oats, 500 panic grasses, 50 sea purslane, 50 seashore elders and 100 morning glories. The native dune vegetation was planted on the beach at the Gulf State Park. It is hoped that this native vegetation will help to rebuild the dunes lost during recent hurricanes.



This area of the beach serves as habitat for the endangered Alabama Beach Mouse and serves as nesting grounds for Least Terns and Black Skimmers as well as sea turtles. Funding for the project was provided through grants from Legacy Partners in Environmental Education and NOAA's Community-based Restoration Grants through the Gulf of Mexico Foundation. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Gulf State Park staff along with several volunteers from Weeks Bay Reserve assisted with the project.

Aquatic Exotic Invasive Species

Most exotic (non-native) species introductions are the result of human activity. People have intentionally introduced exotic species for specific reasons such as using water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*), as an ornamental pond plant. Exotics are also introduced accidentally via actions such as exchanging ballast water. Regardless of the mechanism of introduction, once in our waterways exotic plants can proliferate and pose a serious threat to native habitats.

Over time exotic plants may:

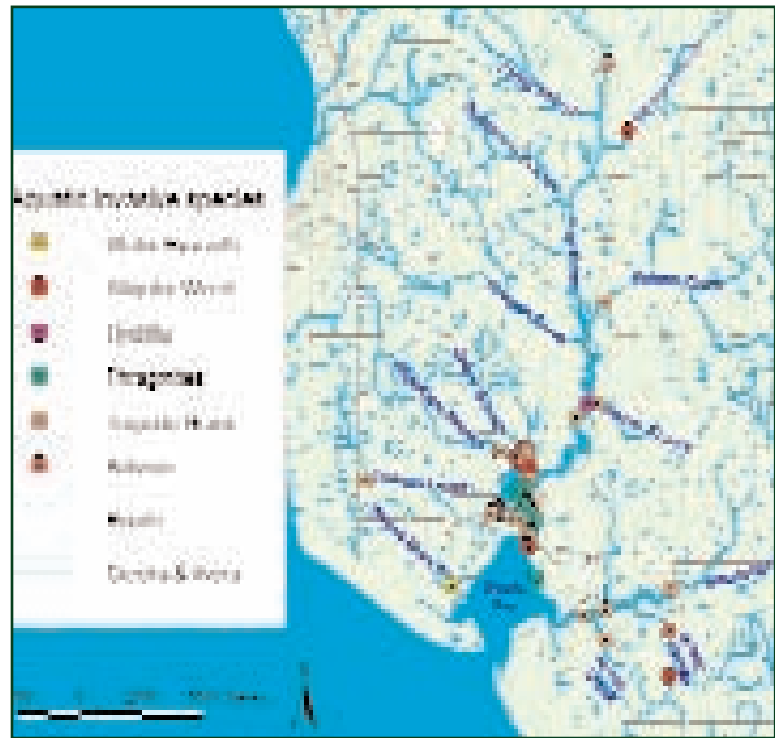
- crowd out sunlight and nutrients from other plants
- crowd out other plants, jeopardizing animals dependent on native vegetation
- overgrow, leading to excessive plant growth which in turn leads to decay and excess oxygen depletion, which results in fish losses
- crowd out navigation channels
- clog machinery

Some of the “big picture” losses for humans from exotic species include:

- high transportation and navigation costs
- reduced food availability for subsistence fishing
- reduced commercial fishing
- reduced sport fishing
- reduced water quality or supply

During the summer of 2006, Stewardship Coordinator **Eric Brunden**, with the assistance of volunteers **Carol Furman** and **Bruce Zimmerman**, traveled the waterways of the Weeks Bay watershed locating and estimating area coverage of aquatic exotic invasive plant species. This data was turned over to **Sarah Johnston**, Weeks Bay Reserve GIS (Geographical Information System) specialist, who overlaid the information onto digitized watershed maps to create an easily interpreted visualization of the variety and extent of invasive coverage.

This information, when combined with periodic future assessments, will assist managers and stewards to identify new threats and prioritize control efforts. Currently the Reserve staff is working to control the spread of hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*) which can be found in abundance within the Barner Branch tributary of Fish River.



Southern Toad by John Borom

The Southern toad (*Bufo terrestris*) is the most common and the most variable toad in the Lower Coastal Plain. The ground color can be gray, brown, red, or nearly charcoal. Dark dorsal spots may or may not be present. If present, each spot often contains one or two warts. Pronounced knobs and high cranial crests give the head a strongly sculptured appearance and when viewed in direct profile, large adults look almost horned. Males have a dark throat and a large, rounded vocal sac and are substantially smaller than females. Males become adults when they reach two to three inches; adult females occasionally exceed four and one-half inches (snout-vent length).

Singing males have been found from mid March to late May. They usually do not sing at temperatures below 70 degrees Fahrenheit and breeding is confined mostly to wet weather periods. They utilize farm ponds, ditches or almost any water-filled depression as breeding sites. The voice is a lovely high pitched, drawn out musical trill. The eggs are laid in strings and may number more than 4,000. The small tadpoles are black above and dark below.

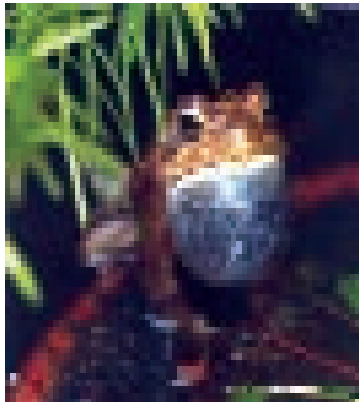


Photo by Leslie Goldberg

To see more creatures that share the Reserve with us go to the Foundation website www.weeksbay.org and click on photo album.

3rd Time's a Charm for the Alabama Coastal BirdFest



The 3rd annual Alabama Coastal BirdFest has been judged a success by organizers. While financial figures are still being tallied, the festival enjoyed its most registrants ever.

“This was our third festival but our first without a hurricane,” said **John Borom**, board member of the Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation and chairman of the BirdFest steering committee. “The weather cooperated, and all of our tours went on as scheduled. Many of them were sold out days or even weeks in advance. We had capacity crowds at both of our evening events and a great turnout of kids and adults at the Saturday Expo.”

According to preliminary reports from BirdFest registrar **Amy King**, outreach coordinator for Alabama State Lands Coastal Section, over 400 registrants came from 18 states and Canada. “Visitors came from as far away as Maryland, California, Utah and Connecticut for BirdFest, and we were thrilled to have our first international visitor this year from Ontario. Birders will travel a great distance for the opportunity to see a new bird and to meet with other dedicated birders.”

Proceeds from the Alabama Coastal BirdFest go toward the preservation and protection of vital bird habitat on the Alabama coast. “We love introducing those from out of state to the beauty of the Alabama Gulf Coast and introducing locals to the wonders of birding,” said Borom. “People always want to know what they can do to help conserve our environment. BirdFest is a good way to do that. It’s fun, it has a positive impact on our local economy, and it aids in the conservation of our environment all at the same time.”

Following the 2004 and 2005 events, BirdFest donated \$30,000 toward the purchase of birding habitat at Weeks Bay Reserve and Dauphin Island Audubon Bird Sanctuaries, Inc. Much of the funding for BirdFest comes from sponsors, including Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources: State Lands Division, The Forum, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, Alabama Power, Baldwin County Commission, Mobile County Commission, Degussa, ConocoPhillips, Mississippi/Alabama SeaGrant, The Nature Conservancy, Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation, Faulkner State Community College, The Talking Phone Book, City of Fairhope, and Mobile Bay Audubon Society.

The 4th annual Alabama Coastal BirdFest is scheduled for Oct. 18-21, 2007. Registration will open on or about June 1, 2007 at www.alabamacoastalbirdfest.com.

Late Breaking News!



On Tuesday, November 21, the Baldwin County Commission presented its 2006 Environmental Achievement Award for Educational Programs to the Alabama Coastal BirdFest. BirdFest Steering Committee chairman John Borom and ‘Nestkeeper’ Fran Morley were on hand to pick up the award. Established in 1998, the Environmental Awards Program recognizes citizens, businesses and agencies that illustrate sound environmental principals.

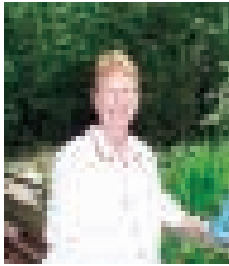




Changing of the Guard

at Weeks Bay Coastal Training Program

The old saying goes: “the more things change, the more things stay the same.” **Cheryl McClary**, Coastal Training Program Coordinator, has decided to devote full-time to pursue a doctoral degree at the University of Georgia. Cheryl did a fabulous job building the program and fully implementing all the necessary requirements of the NERR System. As a result of her dedication, the Weeks Bay Reserve CTP program is integrated into the coastal community and is a partner in the diverse group of federal, state and local entities that offer education to resource managers and decision makers.



Michael Shelton, current Watershed Coordinator, has been tapped to become the new leader of CTP. Mike has been at the Reserve since 2001. He was the Project Coordinator of the Weeks Bay Watershed Project and ushered in the Watershed Program integration as a core sector at the Reserve. Mike has a great deal of experience conducting the types of workshops and technical trainings inherent to CTP. With an experienced individual like Mike at the helm, CTP will continue to mature and bring to the area the best science-based information and training to aid resource managers.



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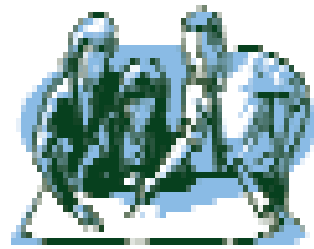
Strategic Plan

for Baldwin County

As many residents of Baldwin County recognize, things they are a changing. The rapid land-use changes seen around the Weeks Bay watershed increase impervious surfaces, degrade habitats, impact water quality and change our quality of life. Some of these changes result in what many call progress; others see these changes as a challenge to conservation of coastal resources. All should agree that future planning is a wise move. Baldwin County has recently drafted a Strategic Plan that will address many of the activities seen ongoing in the county.

Everyone concerned about the future of Baldwin County should review this draft and the impacts it may have on our coastal area, the watershed, and our valuable natural resources and heritage. The draft, which has been made available for public comment, can be found on the county website at www.co.baldwin.al.us.

The plan has many sections or Strategic Issue Statements. Two of these issues, **Managing Growth** and **Environment** are extremely relevant in our watershed management. The Baldwin County Commission should be commended for developing a Strategic Plan for the county.



Shop at The Bog!

Here are just a few of the items available for purchase at The Bog gift shop in the Foundation office. From hats to t-shirts and ornaments, we have the perfect gifts for the nature lover on your Christmas list! Stop by or call (251) 990-5004 for more information.



- Long-sleeved Pitcher Plant t-shirt \$15.00
Green, Caramel, & Gray Colors
Adult and Youth sizes
- Eugenia Foster Watercolor t-shirt..... \$15.00
Adult and Youth sizes
- Long-billed cap with clip \$15.00
Khaki and Olive Colors
- Adult short-billed cap \$15.00
- Youth short-billed cap \$12.00
- Christmas ornaments \$10.00

NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVES

A network of 27 protected areas

Friends groups
NERRA



- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| 1. Pelee, Middle Island, Bassett's Reef | 6. Chesapeake Bay, Virginia | 13. Hackensack Bay, Florida; Hackensack Bay, New Jersey | 20. Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts |
| 2. Mound Bay, Mississippi; Mound Bay, Louisiana | 14. North Carolina, Carolina (Proterozoic) | 14. San Joaquin Bay, Florida; San Joaquin Bay, California | 20. Norfolk Kinship, Chesapeake Bay (Delaware) |
| 3. Mississippi Bay, Mississippi; California for the Protection of Wetlands, CA | 15. North Carolina, Carolina (Proterozoic) | 17. Weeks Bay, Alabama; Weeks Bay Reserve, Louisiana; Weeks Bay Volunteer, Louisiana | 24. Pelee Bay, Washington; Pelee Bay Foundation |
| 4. Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island | 16. ACE Basin, South Carolina; Friends of ACE Basin, South Carolina | 18. Tampa Bay, Florida; Friends of Tampa Bay, Florida | 25. Long Island Sound, New York; Friends of Long Island Sound, New York |
| 5. Hudson River, New York | 17. Mississippi, Mississippi; Friends of Mississippi, Mississippi | 19. Apalachee Bay, Florida; Apalachee Bay, Florida | 26. Florida Bay, Florida |
| 6. Saginaw, Michigan; Saginaw Bay, Michigan | 18. Florida, Florida; Friends of Florida, Florida | 21. Dixon Slough, California; Dixon Slough Foundation | 27. National Estuarine Research Reserve Association (NERRA), Birmingham, AL |

Clyde Chatman Memorial Fund

Earlier this year, the Reserve lost a friend and long-time supporter, **Clyde Chatman**. Clyde worked for the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs and assisted during the early years of the Reserve. He helped with the marking of boundaries and the construction of the Interpretive Center. He also assisted with strategic planning and the reorganization into the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Mr. Chatman lived in the Montgomery area where he retired in 2004. Donations to the Foundation in his memory may be designated to the Clyde Chatman Memorial Fund.



Clyde Chatman, far left, joins other state employees and volunteers at the 1993 annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup

Holiday Giving

Promote conservation and honor a loved one at Christmas by making a donation to the Foundation in their name. When you make a donation of \$20 or more, the Foundation will send your loved one a card announcing your support for the conservation of the Weeks Bay watershed. For more information, call the Foundation office at (251) 990-5004.

Give the Gift of Conservation

This Christmas, give a Foundation membership to your family and friends. The Foundation will send a letter announcing your gift in time for the holidays. In addition, they will receive *The Pelican Post* and other updates about the work of the Reserve and the Foundation during the year. For more information, call the Foundation office at (251) 990-5004.

Tommy Harris

Weeks Bay Reserve is fortunate to have two outstanding friends groups: Weeks Bay Volunteers and Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation. Members of both organizations contribute their time and talents for the benefit of the Reserve. In this final issue of our 20th anniversary series of *The Pelican Post*, we would like to highlight **Tommy Harris**.

Tommy Harris is a member of the Foundation Board of Directors, and he chairs the Foundation's real estate committee. He was born and raised in Baldwin County, and graduated from Auburn with a degree in agricultural business and economics. Tommy followed his father into the real estate business over 30 years ago, and, with his wife and son, he currently works with Coldwell Banker Realty in Daphne.



Jason, Tommy, and Wanda Harris

Tommy has contributed his expertise to the Reserve almost from the time it was first designated. In fact, the Harris family connection actually precedes the Reserve itself. Tommy's father, the late **Larkin Harris**, one of Baldwin County's first agriculture teachers, ran the 1,000-acre Scenic View Ranch for the Delchamps family. This farm originally raised Black Angus cattle to be sold in their grocery stores. Mr. Harris later purchased the property, and with his wife **Ruth**, raised their five children on the farm. The property was purchased by the Damson Group of investors, who eventually sold it to The Nature Conservancy. This is the property that ultimately became Weeks Bay Reserve!

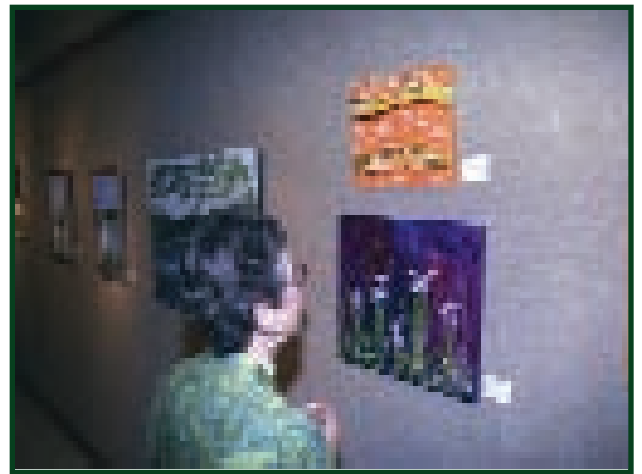
Tommy and his wife, **Wanda**, have two sons, **Dustin** and **Jason**, who share their parents' love of the land. Dustin lives in Birmingham where he is a civil engineer specializing in environmental engineering. Jason currently works with his parents in real estate. He has been employed by the Foundation as a water quality tester, and he is currently a member of the Volunteers and the Foundation.

When asked why he decided to become a member of the Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation, Tommy said, "When you are raised on a farm, the land gets in your blood. I don't know if you could call me an environmentalist, but I love the outdoors. I like to hunt and fish, and want to protect the land and its watershed."

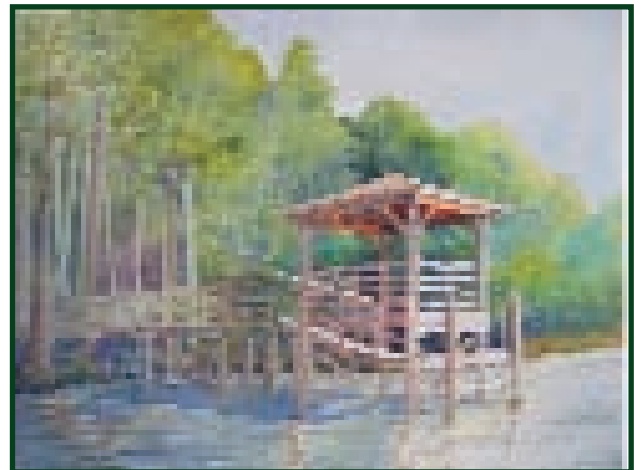
Both of our friends groups play important roles in support of Weeks Bay Reserve, and we are very fortunate to have Tommy Harris and his family as supporters and active members of both groups.

Estuaries and Art

The Foundation, the Alabama Coastal BirdFest and the Eastern Shore Art Center sponsored an art exhibit and hosted a reception during the month of October entitled Estuaries and Art. The exhibit was in recognition of the 20th anniversary of the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. It featured paintings, sculptures and photography that represented the fragile coastal ecosystem. The Foundation is grateful to the artists and all those who participated in the event.



First Friday Art Walk visitor views Estuaries and Art exhibit.



Watercolor by Susie Wallace, wife of Foundation board member, Rick Wallace

Winter Calendar

December 2006

- 6 **Soils, Stormwater and Watershed Protection: Tools for Managing Erosion.** Location to be determined, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information, call (251) 928-9792.
- 7 **Alabama Forever Wild Land Trust Board of Directors meeting.** Five Rivers Delta Resource Center on the Causeway across from Meaher State Park on the west bank of the Blakeley River, 10:00 a.m. For more information call (334) 242-3484. Bring a friend.
- 9 **Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation Board of Directors meeting.** Foundation office, 11401 U.S. Highway 98 (across from the Reserve), 8:30 a.m. Open to the public.
- 9 **Alabama Water Watch Certification.** Water chemistry and e.coli monitoring training for citizen volunteers, Safe Harbor Volunteer Activity Center, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- 12 **Guest Lecture Series.** "Birds of Ethiopia" presented by **John and Beverly Winn.** Government Street Baptist Church in Mobile, 7 p.m. Bring a friend and a plate of your special holiday goodies (finger food only) to share around the Wassail Bowl.
- 14 **Weeks Bay Reserve Holiday Open House.** Open House with refreshments, Interpretive Center, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- 14 **Weeks Bay Advisory Committee Meeting.** Weeks Bay Auditorium, 2:00 p.m.
- 21 **Weeks Bay Reserve Christmas Party.** Interpretive Center classroom, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- 25 **Christmas Holiday.** The Interpretive Center will be closed. All trails and boardwalks will remain open for your walking and sightseeing pleasure.

January 2007

- 1 **New Year's Day Holiday.** The Interpretive Center will be closed. All trails and boardwalks will remain open for your walking and sightseeing pleasure.
- 9 **Guest Lecture Series.** "Five Rivers, Alabama's New Delta Resource Center" presented by **Hank Burch.** Faulkner State Community College Fairhope Campus, Centennial Hall, 7:30 p.m. Bring a friend.
- 15 **Martin Luther King, Jr./Robert E. Lee's Birthday Holiday.** The Interpretive Center will be closed. All trails and boardwalks will remain open for your walking and sightseeing pleasure.
- 17 **Walkable Communities Presentation by Dan Burden.** Baldwin County Trailblazers and the City of Daphne. Daphne Civic Center, 7:00 p.m.
- 18 **Walkable Communities Presentation by Dan Burden.** Baldwin County Trailblazers and the City of Foley. Foley Civic Center, 7:00 p.m.

February 2007

- 5-6 **Baldwin County Water Festival.** Daphne United Methodist Church, Main Street, Daphne, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- 13 **Guest Lecture Series.** "Pascagoula River Audubon Center" presented by **Dr. Mark LaSalle.** Government Street Baptist Church in Mobile, 7:30 p.m. Bring a friend.
- 19 **George Washington/Thomas Jefferson's Birthday Holiday.** The Interpretive Center will be closed. All trails and boardwalks will remain open for your walking and sightseeing pleasure.
- 20 **Mardi Gras Holiday.** The Interpretive Center will be closed. All trails and boardwalks will remain open for your walking and sightseeing pleasure.

Thanks to our donors...

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 - Alabama Power Foundation, Inc.
 - Baldwin County Commission
 - Conoco Phillips
 - Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium
 - Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
 - Mobile County Commission
 - The Forum

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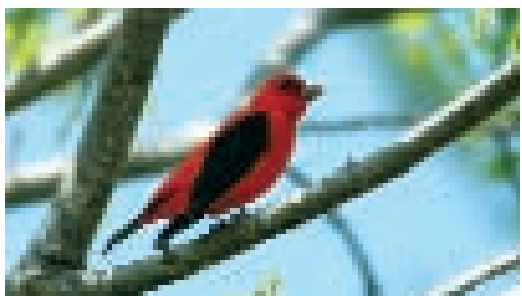


Photo by Mariene Cashen

Scarlet Tanager
 (*Piranga olivacea*)

*“If you want to see birds, you must have birds in your heart.”
 - John Burroughs*