





## President's Message

Dear Friends,

As we try and catch our breath from the holidays and the, "have to get it done in January" chores, I hope we all find the time to plan the important things in our lives for 2007.

In the rest of this newsletter you will read about some of the programs, activities, and successes of 2006/07. But in my letter to you this year I feel that I must break away from the regular pattern of President's Messages, and tell it as I see it.

All is not well in Abaco. Like the rest of the Bahamas, Abaco's environment is under extreme pressure. Sometimes referred to as Mother Nature, the environment is a living, breathing thing. It is forgiving and tolerant to a degree, but has its limits, and once dead, cannot, and will not, return. It would be easy to focus on the big names here in Abaco, but the truth be told, it is all of us, you and me. An accumulation of bad habits, carelessness, and in some cases, just plain abuse, has turned Abaco into one of the "most at risk" places in this part of the world.

Open your eyes, is this the Abaco you remember, and are happy with? Or do you see your hand on it? Do you know where your old battery went? Do you know where your used oil went? Do you know that 8,000,000 (yes - million) "Thank You Bags" a year are used here in Abaco? Do you know that two new creek areas were blocked off in the same year FRIENDS reopened Cross Harbour Creek? YOU have to get involved, YOU cannot leave it to the few who are trying to do it for us all. We all have something to give to the effort of preserving Abaco's environment for the future. What do YOU have to give?

With a staff of four, two focused entirely on education, FRIENDS is making an impact on the future of Abaco. So, as we thank you for your support in the past, and ask you to contribute to FRIENDS in the near future, please do not think of it as a "contribution for them", but rather as a contribution to yourself, and to your family for decades to come. It is time to join your children and grandchildren in the dream of having an Abaco environment that you have reminisced to them about.

Thank you,

### FRIENDS' Annual Environmental Awards

Please submit your nominations for the Awards to be presented at the Reef Ball. List the name and address of your nominee, along with the reasons you think the nominee deserves to be recognized by this award. E-mail or call: Anita Knowles, (242) 367-2721 info@friendsoftheenvironment.org

## FRIENDS Announces New Staff Members

Pictured are d'Shan Maycock, Education Officer, who will oversee FRIENDS school education programs, field trips, and be



a resource to teachers and students. She has a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science, and has worked with the Bahamas Environmental Science and Technology (BEST) Commission.



Olivia Patterson, Program Coordinator, works with FRIENDS' committees to provide research, staff support and coordination. She has a Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology and has worked with the Bahamas Marine Mammal Survey.

These two Bahamian women bring excellent skills to their positions and we are happy to welcome them to FRIENDS as representatives to the schools and community.

## FRIENDS' New Board

Board Officers seated, left to right; Charlotte Dunn, Treasurer, Michael Albury, President, James Richard, Vice President, Lory Kenyon, Secretary.

Directors standing, left to right; Jo-Ann Bradley, Diane Claridge, Cha Boyce, Derek Benjamin, Laura-lee Davis, Bernadette Hall, Tim Higgs, Nan Kenyon and David Knowles.

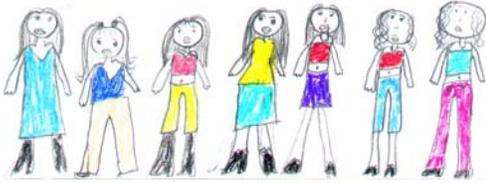


## Reef Ball



Mark your calendar.  
Saturday,  
March 17, 2007

# Kids Corner



# Artificial Reef Ball Project

Special Thanks to the Cable Bahamas Foundation,  
Commonwealth Bank, Lyford Cay Foundation,  
Mactaggart Third Fund and the Reef Ball Foundation  
for Sponsoring this Project



Keith Wisdom of the Cable Bahamas Foundation presents a check to support educational activities. Shanika MacMullan, teacher at Abaco Central High School, receives the donation on behalf of FRIENDS.



Upper level Forest Heights Academy students examine the reef ball made by grade 7 & 8 students the previous day.



Before making a new reef ball, students have to remove the mold from a cured reef ball.



Two Forest Heights Academy students inflate tetherballs to be attached to the reef ball mold. The tetherballs create holes in the reef ball for marine habitats.



FRIENDS' Program Coordinator, Olivia Patterson, describes the process of mixing cement for the artificial reef ball construction to students of S.C. Bootle High School.



Students from Every Child Counts & Cherokee Primary Schools proudly display the artificial reef balls they helped to make.



Todd Barber and Kathy Kirbo of the Reef Ball Foundation demonstrate how to roll a reef ball into the water.



Volunteer, Matt McCoy, removes a buoy from the reef ball. The buoy helps float the ball from the beach to Mermaid Reef.



A reef ball is being investigated as a potential new home by a Sturgeon fish. In addition to providing habitat, reef balls help protect Mermaid Reef from storm and debris damage.

# Birding in Abaco

by Woody Bracey



Bahama Bananaquit picks a Dwarf Poinciana berry.

We humans have a lot to complain about with the increasing strength and frequency of hurricanes, which are seemingly the result of global warming, but we don't have it half as bad as the birds. Their population takes quite a hit after big storms and it is not just because of the high winds and tidal surge. Wilma in Oct.

'05 was a good example of the prolonged effects of a hurricane. It had little rain but had defoliating winds and salt spray that killed a lot of vegetation including the flowers. Hummingbirds had no food and many died. They are a rarity in Treasure Cay this year. West Indian Woodpecker numbers have suffered greatly too. Their familiar raucous call is not heard as often. Not only the fruit eating bird numbers are down but the insectivorous ones as well. Those that live in the pine forest seem to have been better protected and it is from the reservoir populations there that the now scarce species will recover.

Hurricane Floyd in '99 was the most devastating, but Francis and Jeanne back to back in '04 were almost as bad. Birds flocked to nectar feeders after these storms, as they had no source of energy or fresh water. One of the best things you can do to help the birds after a big storm is to put out feeders and keep them filled. Orioles and other migrants, as well as the West Indian Woodpeckers and hummingbirds came in great numbers to drink the sugar water provided. The proper mixture is one part sugar to four parts water brought to a boil to dissolve the sugar and sterilize the solution, then cooled and placed in the feeder or even a shallow dish. This will help some birds survive which otherwise would not have a chance.

# FRIENDS

## Thanks Friends



Please check FRIENDS' website [www.friendsoftheenvironment.org](http://www.friendsoftheenvironment.org) to see those **BUSINESS DONORS** who have so generously given their support this year.

- Cross Harbour Project:** Tom & Erica Asselin
- Crossing Beach Project:** Gavin Daniel, Mark Gonsalves, Steve Kvarnberg, Neil Sealy
- Invasive Plant Removal:** Tony & Elaine Bennett, David & Kitty Donnan, Tom Hazel, Chad Sawyer
- Internal Affairs:** David Price, Attorney at Law
- Moorings Maintenance:** Lambert & Theresa Albury, Troy Albury, Mark Gonsalves, Tim Higgs, JPS Industries
- Newsletter:** Kitty Donnan, Trish Michie
- Newsletter Underwriters:** Abaco Petroleum Ltd., Insurance Management (Bahamas), Van & Sue Lawrence, Phil & Kitty Phillips, Turtle Hill Vacation Villas, Vernon & Madeleine Wells
- Recycling:** Abacays, Willard & Thomas Bethel, 3 D Custom Signs, Freeman Albury, Dean's Shipping, Patricia Higgs, Della Kelly, Matt McCoy, Gavin Russell
- Recycle Locations:** Marsh Harbour; corner near Every Child Counts, Abaco Shopping Center, New Vision Ministries, Forest Heights Academy. Hope Town; Sunshine Park. Man-O-War; Fire Station, town dump. Cherokee town dump.
- Sandy Point Beautification:** Tom & Erica Asselin, Della Kelly

## FRIENDS' Retreat

Board Members and staff joined together for FRIENDS' first strategic planning retreat at the Bluff House in Green Turtle Cay. Two full days were spent planning the direction the organization will take over the next several years. Eleanor Phillips, The Nature Conservancy's Bahamas Program Coordinator, brought the group up-to-date on The Conservancy's accomplishments and plans for the Bahamas.

Retreat attendees narrowed their wide project field to thirteen specific areas of concentration. These projects fall under five main committees: Education, Marine Parks, Terrestrial Parks, Recycling and Internal Development. They range from short-term goals such as the addition of two junior high school students to the FRIENDS' Board of Directors, up to a two-year commitment to restore the Stinky Pond wetland, which is located seven miles north of Marsh Harbour. Participants agreed that the retreat was a most profitable two days, with the added benefit of becoming better acquainted with one another.



## Do YOU Know?

these fish?  
their habitat?



Indo-Pacific red lionfish, *Pterois volitans* (Pisces: Scorpaenidae), new to Bahamian ichthyofauna. Also known as the Turkey Fish, Dragon Fish & Scorpion Fish, they are voracious predators. Native to the tropical Indo-Pacific region, they have now been seen in Abaco, Cat Island, Eleuthera, Exuma, & New Providence.

FRIENDS' members recently captured these beautiful, but deadly, lionfish on the south end of Lubber's Quarters. Specimens will be sent to Ken Banks, Marine Resources Manager for the Broward County, Florida Environmental Protection Department.



## Scholarship Report

I was privileged to receive a one-week scholarship for a teacher's conference at the Island School in Cape Eleuthera. This involved activities such as field trips to mangroves, geological phenomena, caves, scuba diving, kayaking, snorkeling reefs, swimming cuts, tours of sustainable systems and bio-diesel plants. The conference was comprised of lectures held by teachers and guidance counselors from various areas of the United States. There was also time for interaction, the benefits of which were:

- a) Social detoxification, I was able to move from my comfort zone and challenge all of the practices that were a part of my upbringing.
- b) My horizon was widened in many aspects.
- c) My interest in environmental concerns was renewed.
- d) Created in me a desire to work with organizations such as Friends of the Environment.
- e) Allowed me to find my "*La querencia*", my place where the skills and resources I possess can be utilized.

This experience was heightened when I was asked to join the Friends of The Environment Board, and to serve on the Education Committee.

As a result of this opportunity, I have started efforts toward this end:

- Ensure that applications for next year's conference reach a wide range of teachers.
- Convince geography teachers to utilize coastal awareness for competition and GCSE course work.
- Select a student for marine mammal survey work.
- Adopt a site on the bayside to care for.
- Write news articles to educate Abaconians on environmental issues.
- Create a classroom resource center.

Thank you, FRIENDS,

Laura-lee Davis  
Social Studies Trained Teacher, Sherlin C. Bootle High School

## Abaco Students attend UNESCO Sandwatch Symposium

Three Hope Town students, accompanied by the School Principal and a parent chaperone, traveled to Trinidad in December to attend the invitational UNESCO Sandwatch Symposium. Laura Albury, Aly Boyce and Louivenson Etienne traveled to the farthest Caribbean island, along with Candace Key and Cha Boyce. The students were chosen by Mrs. Key for their hard work on the award winning beach reclamation project done through the UNESCO Sandwatch project. They interviewed tourists on the beach about their knowledge of reef etiquette and then designed a brochure to inform visitors how to treat Abaco's popular reefs to sustain them and what to expect to see when snorkeling. They helped replant beach dunes with sea oats after the devastating hurricanes of the past seven years. A comic book about how kids CAN make an environmental difference was written and illustrated.



Principal Candace Key & students, Aly Boyce, Laura Albury & Louivenson Etienne with their Sandwatch display

Students from 14 Caribbean and two South American countries met to compare and share project information. The Abaco group experienced earthquake tremors, enjoyed the beautiful mountains of the tropical rain forest, watched wild parrots and scarlet ibis wing their way over Trinidad, learned and shared with their Caribbean neighbors ways to be effective environmental stewards. A special bonus was meeting, face to face, with students and teachers they have been e-mailing for several years on the SMALL ISLAND VOICE student environmental internet forum. Highlights of the Symposium were enjoying different cultural traditions and food, learning Caribbean dances and practicing speaking another language with new friends.

Thank you very much to FRIENDS for your support. We all pledge to continue to be caring environmental stewards. Laura, Aly, Louivenson, Cha and Mrs. Key

FRIENDS has new t-shirts for sale, designed by Sun-Dried T's

T-Shirts are available in the FRIENDS office, in stores around Abaco and on the website



**A stylish new way to support FRIENDS!**



Dear Friends,

Thanks to your support, 2006 was an amazing year for FRIENDS. As we look forward, I see a number of challenges and opportunities in Abaco for important work to be done. As you consider whether or not to join FRIENDS, or renew your membership, please understand that membership has two equally important components: your donation, which provides important financial assistance to all of the programs you have read about in this newsletter; and your choice to count yourself as a FRIEND of the environment - there is strength in numbers.

The more people who choose to join FRIENDS, the greater power we have to speak together in making Abaco's environment a priority. We all know there is increasing pressure on the environment as more people discover Abaco. The more we are united, the more we can help influence the changes that will occur. I do hope you choose to join with us, and help us spread the word about the work FRIENDS is doing. Give this newsletter to a friend, or contact us and we'll send them a copy. It takes all of us to protect Abaco's environment.

Thanks,

Lindsey McCoy  
Executive Director

**Be a FRIEND - Tell your friends !! NOW is the time - get involved – don't wait until it is too late!**



A monthly email newsletter is being distributed to FRIENDS' members and interested parties. If you would like to receive these updates please send your email address to:  
Lindsey@friendsoftheenvironment.org

### PERC

A donation of \$250 or more is tax deductible in the U.S. through PERC (Preservation, Environment, Restoration, Community), a 501 (c) (3) organization. Please make your check out to PERC in US\$ with a memo that your donation is for FRIENDS. Mail to: Friends of the Environment, AB-20755, Marsh Harbour, Abaco, Bahamas. For further information call (242) 367-2721 or e-mail info@friendsoftheenvironment.org.

**Friends of the Environment  
Post Office Box AB-20755  
Marsh Harbour, Abaco  
Bahamas**

**FRIENDS' Mission: To preserve and protect Abaco's terrestrial and marine environments in order to achieve sustainable living for the wildlife and people of Abaco, Bahamas.**

#### **Board of Directors**

*President*, Michael Albury  
*Vice President*, Jim Richard  
*Secretary*, Lory Kenyon  
*Treasurer*, Charlotte Dunn  
*Directors*: Derek Benjamin, Jo-Ann Bradley, Cha Boyce, Diane Claridge, Laura-lee Davis, Bernadette Hall, Tim Higgs, Lory Kenyon, Nan Kenyon, David Knowles, Ann Pleydell-Bouverie.

#### **Staff**

*Executive Director*, Lindsey McCoy  
*Office Manager*, Anita Knowles  
*Education Officer*, d'Shan Maycock  
*Program Coordinator*, Olivia Patterson

#### **Committee Heads**

*Education*, Jim Richard  
*Internal Affairs*, Michael Albury  
*Marine Parks & Preservation*, Cha Boyce  
*Newsletter/Data*, Nan Kenyon  
*Recycling*, Bernadette Hall  
*Reef Ball*, Cha Boyce  
*Terrestrial Parks & Preservation*, Anita Knowles & David Knowles  
*Website*, Kent LeBoutillier

**FRIENDS is a not for profit Society incorporated under the Bahamas Companies Act of 1991.**

#### **FRIENDS' Contact Information:**

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**Be A FRIEND - Plant Native**

