



U P D A T E

St. Lucie County

November 15, 2007

A Monthly Update of Current Events and Happenings within St. Lucie

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This update is published monthly by the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners' Public Information Office. Direct inquiries to Ja' Net Pentz, Executive Assistant St. Lucie County 2300 Virginia Avenue Fort Pierce, FL 34982 772.462.1453 pentzj@co.st-lucie.fl.us

Board of County Commissioners Special Meetings & Workshops Scheduled

- St. Lucie County offices will be closed Thursday, November 22 and Friday, November 23 in observance of Thanksgiving.
- The Board of County Commissioners November Monthly Informal Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 27 at 1:30 p.m. in Conference Room #3.
- There will be no Board of County Commissioners Meeting on Tuesday, December 25 due to the County's observance of Christmas.
- St. Lucie County offices will be closed Monday, December 24 and Tuesday, December 25 in observance of Christmas.
- St. Lucie County offices will be closed Tuesday, January 1 in observance of New Year's Day.
- There will be no Board of County Commissioners Meeting on Tuesday, January 1 due to the County's observance of New Year's Day.

St. Lucie County Launches New Website

After more than a year of updating and redesigning nearly 4,000 web pages, St. Lucie County's Information Technology Department launched the new St. Lucie County website Nov. 1. The website can be accessed by using the existing URL www.stlucieco.gov. St. Lucie County is using a new content management tool from RedDot Solutions, which gives county departments the capability to make changes to their pages on a daily basis. Due to the large number of web pages that were part of the old St. Lucie County site, some departments are being phased into the new design later this year.

St. Lucie County Parks and Recreation Offering After School Program

There is still room available in St. Lucie County's Parks & Recreation Department's after-school program at the Fort Pierce Community Center. The after-school program, which is open to students in the green zone (north of Midway Road), runs during normal school days, Monday through Friday until 6 p.m., including early dismissal days. The cost is \$40 per week per student, and the program is available for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Pre-registration is required. Parents will need to arrange for transportation through the St. Lucie County School District. The necessary forms are available at the Fort Pierce Community Center. Afternoons will be filled with activities including board games, arts and crafts, sports and more. Students will also receive guided and quiet homework time with support from the Parks & Recreation staff. The Fort Pierce Community Center is located at 600 N. Indian River Drive, Fort Pierce. For more information call the St. Lucie County Parks & Recreation staff at (772) 462-1792.

SLCTV Expands into Southern St. Lucie County

St. Lucie County's government access channel, SLCTV, has expanded its coverage to Comcast subscribers into southern St. Lucie County. Comcast is now providing access to SLCTV in the southern part of St. Lucie County in the unincorporated areas on Channel 20. Comcast subscribers north of Midway Road can still access SLCTV on Comcast Channel 21. However, SLCTV is not being broadcast live within the city limits of Port St. Lucie at this time. Since SLCTV is being broadcast into southern St. Lucie County, the Board of County Commission meetings will no longer be televised on the St. Lucie County School District channel. Residents residing within Port St. Lucie city limits can still watch a replay of the County Commission meetings on PSL-TV Comcast Channel 20. Residents without Comcast cable can watch a live stream of SLCTV on the internet at www.stlucieco.gov/slctv or watch original programs through the county's Video On Demand site.

St. Lucie County Opens Three New Environmental Lands

St. Lucie County's Environmental Resources Department has added three new nature preserves: D.J. Wilcox Natural Area, Indrio Scrub and Paleo Hammock, providing an additional 200 acres of passive recreation for both county residents and tourists.

The D.J. Wilcox Natural Area, located off of Old Dixie Highway, is now completely open to the public, featuring trails, fishing docks and a canoe/kayak launch. Phase 1 of the project was completed in 2006 and consists of a canoe launch and fishing pier. Recently completed Phase 2 consists of a small parking lot, self-guiding nature trail and interpretive trail. The one-mile, self-guiding nature trail contains two loops, winding through hammocks and pinelands. A short interpretive trail describes the 1920s Town of Indrio, and the role Mr. D. J. Wilcox played in building the town. The 10-minute walk identifies the remnants of the Aubrecht homestead, and previous locations of the old Indrio Post Office, train depot and East Coast Land Development Administration Building. The 105-acre site was purchased with funds from Florida Communities Trust and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. D.J. Wilcox Natural Area contains two access points. The canoe dock and fishing pier is located at the end of Wilcox Road, east of Old Dixie Highway just south of Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, while the interpretive trails are located at the corner of Old Dixie Highway and Indrio Road.

Indrio Scrub Natural Area has been recently completed, and is open to the public. The 13-acre site contains a variety of threatened and endangered species of plants found in the scrub ecosystem. A short quarter-mile interpretive trail identifies many of the plants that make scrub a truly unique habitat. Indrio Scrub is located north of D. J. Wilcox and parking is provided along Old Dixie Highway. The site was purchased with the assistance of Florida Communities Trust and St. Lucie County's Environmentally Sensitive Lands Bond.

The Paleo Hammock Natural Area consists of a very old hammock containing swamp hickory, Florida elm, oaks and palms in western St. Lucie County. A one-mile interpretive trail leads to an observation tower overlooking a marsh. Paleo Hammock includes several parcels of historically significant land, and is being restored with amenities to be provided in several phases. Phase 1 of the project is currently open to the public, while Phase 2, which will include two wildlife blinds and two miles of additional trails, is slated to be completed in early 2008. Phase 3 is scheduled to be finished in late 2009, and will include a volleyball court, horseshoe pit, wildlife blind and an additional mile of trails. Paleo Hammock is located four miles south of State Route 70 on Carlton Road, in western St. Lucie County. The site was purchased with funding from Florida Communities Trust and St. Lucie County's Environmentally Sensitive Lands Bond. St. Lucie County's Environmental Resources Department (ERD) has completed 18 of the 24 natural areas projects that have been acquired through the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Bond approved in 1996. Roughly 7,200 acres have been acquired. Upcoming projects include Teague Hammock, Walton Scrub, Queens Island, Captain Hammonds Hammock, Citrus Hammock and Dr. LeStrange Natural Area. These sites are open from dawn until dusk and managed and maintained by St. Lucie County's Environmental Resources Department. For more information call the ERD staff at (772) 462-2525 or visit www.stlucieco.gov/erd.

Upcoming Events at the Oxbow Eco-Center

Guided Hikes ~ Every Saturday at 10 a.m. join an Oxbow naturalist as they lead visitors along a series of trails, discussing the plants and wildlife that live in the different habitats along the North Fork of the St. Lucie River. For more information about all Oxbow Eco-Center events call the staff at (772) 785-5833 or visit www.stlucieco.gov/erd/oxbow.

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