



Down to the Point

An Alligator Point Taxpayers Association Publication
June 2012

President's Report

Jim McCloy

Your association's Board of Directors has been quite busy these past few months. Among issues we are actively participating in:

SOUTH SHOAL DEVELOPMENT AND TOM ROBERTS BYPASS ROAD.

The County has completed the purchase of the final footage needed to open the Tom Roberts bypass road to Alligator Drive to the west end of the Point. They are still negotiating with Capital City Bank for several small lots in the northwest corner of the property, aka Secon lots, to complete the corner turn of the bypass road. The Bank has also filed suit against the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) seeking to force DEP to require the County to remove any and all construction debris from the revetment which protects the coast road from storm damage and abnormally high tides. DEP has requested this removal in the past, but it was never enforced. Bids for removal of the debris were opened at the May BOCC meeting, clearing the way for commence-

ment. The unfortunate result of these actions may be the ultimate abandonment of the current stretch of road at the revetment as it becomes impassable due to shore erosion; leaving the Tom Roberts bypass road the only way east and west from the Point. However, this not a done deal. The County is fighting this possible outcome, and the deadline for FEMA financial assistance is November 2012. In addition, the Tallahassee judge dismissed the Capital City Bank lawsuit this week. Without the lawsuit the outcome of these actions is uncertain. APTA continues to work with all parties to maintain the integrity of Alligator Drive as the road from east to west on the Point.

This brings us to the next issue of concern for residents:

THE BALD POINT TRUST FUND.

Recently, the BOCC asked for APTA's recommendations with respect to the use of approximately \$400,000 in light of a proposal to

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use the funds in the Bald Point Trust to purchase from Capital City Bank approximately five acres as a part of a settlement of the dispute. The funds are managed and controlled by the County, but intended for the benefit of Alligator Point and Bald Point property owners. The APTA Board of Directors unanimously adopted the following resolution regarding the disposition of those funds:

(1) \$200,000 be committed to fire protection. These funds are to be used for a fire station or fire equipment. The committee requests that the fire department find a different location for the station (closer to Bald Point / Alligator Point). If the fire station is to be located at the intersection of CR370 and US98 then residents of Bay North, St. Teresa and Summer Camp should contribute to the cost of the facility and the equipment. However, the fire department should maintain the existing fire station at 1348 Alligator Drive in order to provide fire protection for all property within 5 miles of the station. We recognize that \$200,000 is not enough money to meet our fire protection needs. However, it is provided as seed money to be supplemented with funding from everyone who will benefit from the improvements.

(2) \$100,000 should be reserved for settlement of the issues with Capital City Bank and the DEP. The County Attorney should determine the tax benefit to the bank if the remainder of the bank property is donated to the County. If the \$100,000 is not used in the settlement then it should be added to the fire protection commitment in item 1.

(3) \$100,000 (the remaining balance of the Trust) should be reserved for future capital projects or emergencies.

OTHER MATTERS OF INTEREST

APTA Board members have committed to attendance at every relevant County meeting, including the monthly Board of County Commissioners meetings which are held the first and third Tuesday of each month. County officials have been very responsive to our requests for assistance. Roadside beach access parking is an ever growing problem for residents. The sharp increase in visitors at these access points brings with them equally increasing problems, such as more trash, and lack of bathrooms and security which exceeds available facilities, especially parking. As the number of designated spaces fills on weekends, many visitors choose to park anywhere they can find an

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open space, even on someone's private property and often blocking driveways. Elsewhere herein is a report from Eddie Sosebee, Chair, Security Committee, intended to,

hopefully, find some resolution to this problem. As always, please call or contact me with any comments, complaints or suggestions you may have at 519-4680, email: jmccloy3368@gmail.com.



Alligator Point Water Resources Board Report

Bucky Mitchell—APTA Board Member

As a newly appointed APWRB board member, I wanted to take this opportunity to bring APTA members up to date on happenings at your Water Board. APWRB was created by the Florida Legislature in 1963 as a non-profit special taxing district to provide potable water to Alligator Point and Bald Point residents. Management oversight is provided by a volunteer three member Board made up only of property owners. Other members are Deanna Murphy and Chip Morrison. Among recent changes is a new and improved method for accepting payments. APWRB can now accept payment through regular electronic bank account withdrawal and also via credit card at the APWRD website. These are

optional payment methods in addition to the traditional paper bill you receive each month. For information about enrolling in these payment options, please contact Sarah Hillier, Office Manager, at 349-2274 or visit the APWRD website:

www.alligatorpointwater.com.

Your attendance and participation in APWRD Board meetings every third Saturday at 9 a.m. is encouraged. As the busy summer season approaches, remember: fresh water is a precious resource and should be used conservatively. While lawn irrigation and washing of cars and boats is important, please be conservation minded. For after hours emergencies call 566-0821.



Do You Favor Raising the Annual Fire Assessment?

Alligator Point and Bald Point residents currently pay a Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU) of \$50 per year for fire service for each single family residence. The MSBU assessments paid by Alligator/Bald Point property owners go entirely to your fire department. Please let us know if you would be willing to pay an increased MSBU for needed fire protection improvements and how much you feel would be appropriate.

The fee has not been raised in several years. The St. George Island Fire Service is in the process of requesting their fees be raised from \$50 to \$95 per year. Your fire service would like to do the same.

The Alligator Point Volunteer Fire Department's Public Protection Classification, or PPC, is a six. PPC ratings are set and established by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO). These PPC ratings determine property owners' insurance rates.

What are the reasons for requesting this MSBU increase?

- 1) The ISO requires that any fire department serving an area with three houses over forty feet high have an aerial ladder truck and a fire station in which to house it. The Alligator Point Volunteer Fire Department currently has neither.
- 2) The ISO requires all fire departments to have a reserve pumper truck, which they also do not have.
- 3) These additions will increase fire protection on the Point.
- 4) Without a ladder truck and reserve pumper truck the PPC rating will eventually decline and homeowners' insurance rates may go up.

The proposed new fire station will be located just south of Highway 98 on Alligator Drive. Both of the present fire stations, 1348 Alligator Drive and 28 Bay North Drive, would remain open and continue to provide fire protection.

Send your thoughts to APTA President, Jim McCloy at jmccloy3368@gmail.com, or call him at 850-519-4680

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Area code is 850 unless otherwise indicated

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Ida Elliot, Supervisor of Elections		653-9520	www.votefranklin.com
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Sea Turtle Patrol			Find us on facebook
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Sick or Injured Wild Mammals			www.wakullawildlife.org
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Andy Smith, Executive Director		653-8936	
Point Communities Weather/ Tides/Web Cam/K-Tower			www.apta-fl.org

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Updated 6-20-2011



Membership

Alligator Point Taxpayers Association

Membership Application/Renewal

To Join, Print and Mail this form along with an enclosed check

The Alligator Point Taxpayers Association

P.O. Box 213
Panacea, Florida 32346

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Alligator Point Phone: ____-____-____ Other Phone: (____) ____-____

Alligator Point Address **(required)**: _____

Email Address: _____

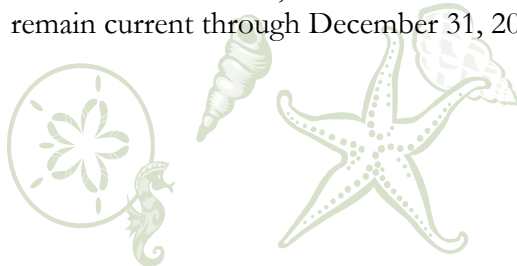
Amount Enclosed: (Make check payable to APTA)

\$_____ \$30.00 Membership annually

\$_____ Donation for Legal Fund

\$_____ Donation for other: _____

Dues paid between October 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011
remain current through December 31, 2012





Trash Pickup

Editorial Comment

Responsibility for beautification of our beaches and roads begins with all property owners. Roadside trash is a continuing issue and source of resident complaints that needs some attention and planning. The Franklin County Solid Waste Department has scheduled a regular pick up during the first week of the month. Residents are asked to put their trash, not garbage, on the road right of way next to their property on the day

before scheduled pickup (i.e., the last day of the month) to avoid a lengthy delay in pickup. The County will not pick up construction debris as dumpsters are required at construction sites. Resident complaints concerning failure to meet this schedule should be emailed to fcsh@fairpoint.net or by calling (850)-670-8167. Also, please send copies of such complaints to contact@apta-fl.org.





Boondocks Boondoggle

Sam Rogers, Sr.

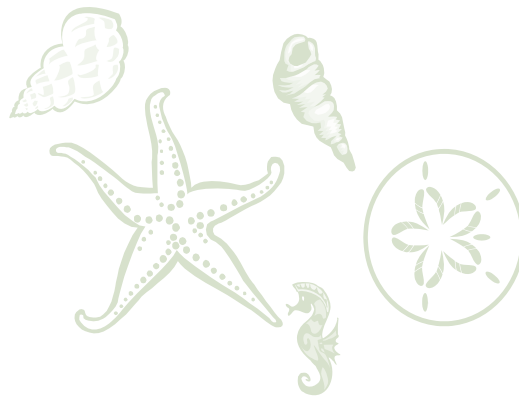
By definition the word “boondocks” refers to a World War II military expression for the woods, jungle or wilderness. A “boondoggle” is a pointless or trifling project financed with public money. Thus it appears from a reading of a May 1st letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to Alligator Point property owners, that there is in the making, a \$6 million boondocks boondoggle.

Once again in less than 10 years the Corps of Engineers is on the hunt for World War II explosives, ammunition and contaminants left in the vicinity of long-since abandoned Camp Gordon Johnston, an amphibious landing training camp. According to the letter potential hazards include live ammunition, rockets, mortar rounds and artillery shells. Aside

from needlessly scaring the devil out of people one would think the U.S. government could find better uses for that taxpayer money; say beach erosion protection or coastal navigation aids, etc. To our knowledge, there is no documented evidence of the need for this “critical” investigation.

To cap it off, the letter encourages residents to sign an agreement holding the government harmless for any damage caused to your property by the government and its agents. The agreement gives the government the right to store, move and remove its equipment and supplies on the property. Any claims for damage are subject to congressional approval sometime off in the dim future.

Fat chance! Enough said.



Alligator Point Parking Improvement Report

Eddie Sosebee—Chair APTA Safety Committee

Persistent and ongoing efforts by APTA have produced some improvement by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners to sensitive public parking areas at access points along Alligator Drive from Carnival Drive to the “S” curve, and at Chip Morrison Drive.

A highly visible sign has been erected to encourage visitors to use free beach access and picnicking opportunities with restrooms and showers at the Bald Point State Park. APTA first initiated this project in the summer of 2010 due to traffic safety hazards created during periods of high usage because of inadequate parking. These access points were originally intended for pedestrian-use-only and did not include enough real estate to support vehicle parking.

After receiving community input, APTA presented a three phase approach as follows:

- 1) Design for construction of parking spaces on available county- owned property adjacent to the beach access points. COMPLETED.
- 2) Installation of a road sign at the turn off from Alligator

Drive to Bald Point informing visitors of beach access at Bald Point State Park.

COMPLETED.

- 3) Installation and enforcement of signage at improved parking spaces limiting parking to only the available spaces. Any vehicle parked in other than designated spaces would be illegally parked. This is NOT COMPLETED, yet.

The Franklin County Sheriff's office and the County Attorney advise no ordinance or other enforceable regulations presently exist prohibiting unauthorized or unsafe parking on county rights of way. A draft ordinance has been prepared by APTA and submitted to the County Attorney for review and action. When adopted this ordinance will provide the Sheriff's office with an enforceable tool to manage and protect the safety and property of citizens and visitors. APTA President Jim McCloy has coordinated this draft ordinance with the Sheriff's office and it has the endorsement of the Chief Deputy.

Stay tuned for developments on this critical phase of the project.

APTA Beautification Project

Barbara Withers—APTA Chair

Your APTA Board of Directors has authorized a project to plant wild flowers along the roadsides from the entrance at Highway 98 all the way to Bald Point on the east and west to the end of Alligator Drive. We are seeking the services and resources of several donors including the Franklin Tourist Development Council, Franklin County BP

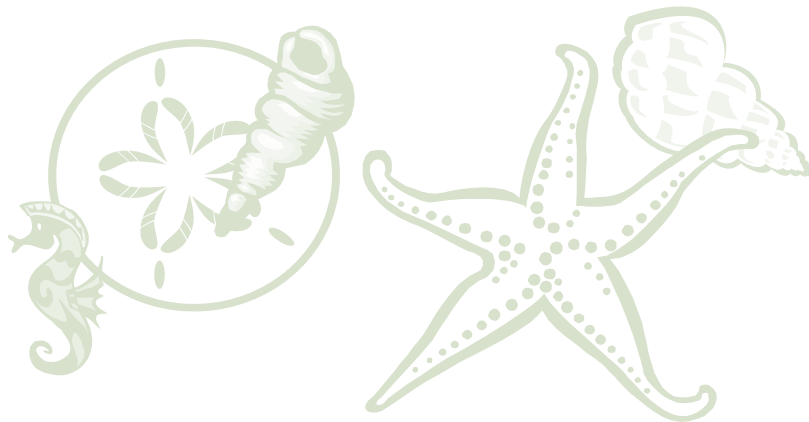
funds, the Florida Department of Transportation and the Florida Park Service. APTA members with experience in planting of wild flowers are encouraged to call me at 893-4080 or email witherscpa@aol.com. We hope to start with planting smaller plots at various points along the road to see how they adapt to the right of way.

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Membership Dues Are Due

Dues for the year 2012 were due December 31, 2011. Many members did not renew this spring. We are in the process of sending out reminders. Please support APTA's effort to maintain the high level of membership, thus our continued effective presence with local government, and improve the quality of life in our

beach neighborhood. We know you care about APTA and its value to members. A recent survey indicates many residents depend on this newsletter and the APTA website as the principal source of information. Members who have yet to renew their membership will shortly receive a friendly reminder letter.



DOWN TO THE POINT

APTA

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