

TOOFAR NEWS

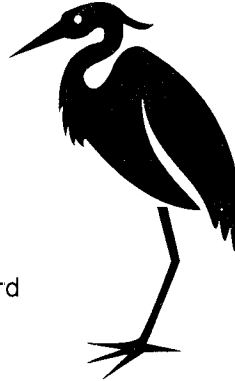
Our Mission Statement

"A grassroots organization dedicated to the best management and conservation of natural resources for present and future generations through public education and interaction with all entities charged with those responsibilities

FEB. 2005

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TOOFAR, Inc.

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MEETING NOTICES

TOOFAR General Meeting:
Feb 24, 2005 7PM
East Citrus Comm. Center
HWY 44 E, Inverness

TOOFAR Board Meeting:
March 3, 2005 6PM at the
TOOFAR office

Tsala Apopka Basin Recreation
& Water Board
Feb. 15, 9am
County Commission Office

Withlacoochee River
Basin Board March. 7
at the Brooksville office

SWFWMD Governing Board
Feb. 25 & 26 9am
at the Brooksville office

Citrus Hernando Waterways
Restoration Council
March. 10th 5pm
at the Lecanto
Government Building

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Marco Wilson

Greetings TOOFAR members,

Are you enjoying this beautiful spring weather. Smelling the flowers? Take a deep breath of that wonderful fresh air, then read on. Maybe that air isn't as fresh as you thought.

Do you know which government agency monitors air quality here in our area? Hmmm. If you couldn't think of anyone, you're smarter than you thought. Pretty much no one does!

We have the second largest power producing plant in the nation sitting in our back yard. The only air quality monitoring stations in Citrus County are those maintained by Progress Energy. According to the DEP Tampa office of air quality Citrus County does not qualify for monitoring due to lack of auto and industrial emissions. Hmmm. What is coming out of those big coal stacks?

We would like some answers. And we are asking our elected officials to get us some. Continue reading (page 3) for the letters we are sending to those officials, in search of help.

Hopefully, Marco

Lake and River Levels as of Feb 1st

River at Hwy 48	40.43	River at Leslie Hefner	40.51	River at Hwy. 44	35.29
Floral City	41.37	Inverness Lakes	39.90	Hernando Lakes	38.76
Lk. Panasoffkee	39.78	River above Wysong	39.53	River below Wysong	36.49

Additional levels: swfwmd.fl.us follow links to custom reports. Select #3 structure report 1

**TOOFAR
Officers & Directors
Save this list.**

(It will only be published quarterly)

President:
Marco Wilson

VicePres.
Larry Hartman

Secretary:
Pat Brady

Treasurer:
Marcia Gallagher

Directors
Bob Adamic

Duane Brooks
Tom Gallagher

Frank Heath

Wayne Sawyer

Carmen Stone

Laylon Wilson

Alternates:
Bud Rust
Jerry Schneider

Howard Stuckman

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Office Manager & Newsletter Editor
Mary Agius

**HI LITES
of January meeting
by Pat Brady**

Our January meeting began with a very successful BBQ dinner served before our usual meeting time. The dinner was followed by the installation of our new officers and directors by new Citrus County Commissioner, Joyce Valentino.

Our guest speaker was Winston Perry, Inverness businessman and founding member of the Homosassa River Alliance, who spoke to our group about the planning for water runoff in downtown Inverness. With the building of the new city hall in Inverness, Mr Perry pointed out the inadequate planning for the additional water run off that will be created by covering more of the land usually aiding with drainage in the area. He also gave an illustrated discussion of the current issues regarding the drainage of street runoff into Little Lake Henderson. It was a thorough and very interesting discussion about the street flooding and lake pollution that could be corrected with proper government planning and permitting. Mr Perry believes that currently the city, water management and county are not properly addressing the issues at a time when it would be most logical to fix them rather than adding to them with a poor plan.

Mr Perry's presentation was followed by an energetic Q & A. One speaker noted that he could not believe that St Rt 44 was widened without putting in sewer and water lines. He pointed out that no road could have been built in New York without these additions. He couldn't understand why our government agencies do not protect our area's most valuable resource - our lakes. Of course none of the rest of us can understand this either.

Frank Heath talked with the group about our upcoming boat trips for members. Laylon Wilson spoke on the spring garage sale and on our membership drive. Though no date has been set for the sale, a trailer is at the TOOFAR office to collect donations for the sale. We were also encouraged to volunteer for the various organization committees.

There were over a hundred people signed in at the meeting.

Dave Becker won the \$60.00 Bullfrog drawing.

Our thanks to Bob & Marilyn Adamic for the goodies they provided. Thank you also to the Schmukals for manning the front table, and to George Sudheimer at the membership table.

Do you have questions for the board members? Let us know. Some of them can be answered here in a Question & Answer column.

**PLEASE RECYCLE YOUR NEWSPAPERS
AT THE TOOFAR OFFICE**

The following are letters I am sending to Senator Nancy Argenziano, Senator Mike Fasano, Representative Charles Dean and US Congresswoman Ginny Brown-Waite. Let's hope they can give us some answers, and even better, some action.

Letter #1:

This is to inform you that as the president of one of the oldest water activist organizations in the state, TOOFAR, each and every day I learn something new, today being no exception. After finding out recently that a city within our county is still allowed to let untreated stormwater run off into our lakes, and that this has been going on for forty or more years, it was no where nearly as shocking as this: that unless there are changes made to existing roads, or a new building erected, they are not mandated to change the status quo. The oxymoron here is that our county and state agencies are spending thousands and thousands of dollars to clean our waters. And after delving further the real kicker is that NO state, county, federal or private agencies seem to be doing water testing for the pollutants that are found in stormwater runoff, which is considered to be far more dangerous than organic pollutants (except for a few point specific sites which are tested) Now I understand that one would not want to waste agencies resources testing every body of lake water and every coastal shoreline, but it does not make sense that there is no mechanism that would give us the scientific data to tell us what truly are the effects of these pollutants and where we need to start changing this grandfathered-in mentality.

Please have your staff look into this. We look forward to a response from you on this matter.

Letter #2:

I would ask you as one of your constituents and a fellow human being who has to breathe air and have clean pottable water, and who may or may not have children, that you consider the following: In recent days I have been made aware that there are no air quality monitoring stations in Citrus County other than what EPA requires Progress Energy to maintain. I have always stood by the motto: "always get a second opinion." I have done due diligence on this and the Florida DEP, Tampa office of air quality states that at this time Citrus County does not qualify, due to lack of auto and industrial emissions etc... My contention is that because we have the second largest power producing plant in the nation at our back door, due to the pollutants from just the coal stacks alone, we could indeed equal if not surpass that criteria. And so I ask for help in getting air quality monitors in our county, so we will have a second opinion, and be able to know for certain if our children and our elderly are seeing a rise in respiratory illnesses due to the above mentioned.

Please have your staff look into this. We look forward to a response from you on this matter.

Sincerely,
Marco Wilson, President TOOFAR Inc.

I hope you are as shocked at these "gaps" in protection of our citizens as I am. I will keep you informed as to the responses we receive.

Marco

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Next Membership Meeting - Feb 24, 2005
SPEAKER - COUNTY COMMISSIONER JOYCE VALENTINO

UPDATE ON BOAT TRIPS

Chassahowitzka

On Friday Jan 28th we were advised that two of the scheduled boats would not be going. Also the weather was unfavorable. A decision was made to cancel the trip.

Laylon & Frank made the calls to approx 80 people involved. Unfortunately some were missed. We sincerely apologize for this!

Because of tides this trip cannot be rescheduled soon. Payments already recieved for this trip will be applied to the next trip, or refunded as wished. Those who were cancelled from this trip get 1st chance on seats for Hernando trip.

Hernando

This trip is scheduled for Sat. Feb 12. Boarding at the boat ramp at 9: am to depart between 9:30 & 10:00 am . Donation of \$7.00 includes lunch which will be served upon return to the park area at boat ramp. We will see the results of the cleanup that has been ongoing for over a year now. Those familiar with the lake say the trans-formation is un-believable. First seats will be given to those who were cancelled from the Chassahowotzka trip.

TOOFAR COOKBOOKS, T-SHIRTS & POLO SHIRTS
AVAILABLE AT ALL MEETINGS & AT THE TOOFAR OFFICE
