

TOO FAR NEWS

Protecting & Conserving Our Water

February 2008 Volume 195



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

“Hooray! Growth slowing down”

This headline is borrowed from the January 17, 2008 column in the Chronicle by my favorite columnist and author, Carl Hiaasen. Born and raised in Florida, in his mid-fifties and still working for the Miami Herald after 32 years, Carl does not hesitate to criticize practices in his beloved Florida. I think much of his column should be repeated.

“The mad stampede of new residents into Florida is finally slowing down... This is a cause for relief, not panic. Any lull in the avalanche of incoming humanity should be eagerly welcomed...”

“A break is long overdue. It is not a crisis but rather an opportunity. At long last, state and community leaders might be forced to confront intelligently the economic blowback from decades of inept planning and greed-fueled runaway growth.”

We are better off than much of Florida but we are on the path of fouling our environment and greedy overbuilding. **“More and more folks are figuring out what serious urban planners have known for a long time: Run-amok growth doesn't pay for itself. Taxpayers always get stuck with the bill for sprawl and also with the hometown ills it brings.”**

In a recent poll **“Respondents were divided evenly when asked whether new people moving into Florida was good or bad. The question is rarely even whispered among politicians, many of whom live in fear of antagonizing the developers, bankers and road builders who bankroll election campaigns.”**

With the elections coming we must be diligent in supporting the politicians that have fought for and protected us. Those wonderful people that have held back the special interests that insisted that we pay for the growth so they can increase their profits. Some candidates, even though they are incumbents, are facing attacks in their own party's primary from newcomers financed, supported and maybe even hired by special interests.

“This is what is known as a message. And, for those who've sold out Florida's future to enrich their campaign coffers, it breaks down like this: Enough.”

Think rain, especially for the Inverness Pool.

Al

HILITES OF THE JANUARY MEETING

By Pat Brady

Thanks to Jerri for the doughnuts and to Jan and Jerri for working the coffee room. Call to Order—Al called the meeting to order and led the Pledge. Larry delivered the Invocation. Minutes of previous meetings as well as Board Meeting minutes are available. The Treasurer's report was accepted as read subject to an audit. Vicki Phillips and June Fisher in attendance.

Speaker – Gary Maidhof, Director of the Citrus County Department of Development Services and Man of the Year in 1998. Gary touched on the major issues including the following: cooperative funding with the water district, partnerships for the creation of a watershed management plan, revisions to the flood maps, and the impact of development creating new flood areas.

Citrus County included springs protection in the comprehensive plan. Two issues that came up were performance based septic systems. Systems must meet a certain standard to protect our ground water.

We are still pulling more water out of the ground that is being put back. It used to rain every day in the summer for ½ hour or so. Doesn't do that any more. Droughts are more frequent. More people in the state - 19 million now. In the early days there was too much water and it was a problem now there isn't enough.

Water conservation – at the urging of the water district the county was pushed to get serious about water conservation such as lawn watering. People move here and want the rose bushes and lawns they had up north. Florida native vegetation should be used in our landscaping.

Environmental Homeowners Guide – on line gives a whole list of things you can do to improve the environment: <http://www.BOCC.citrus.fl.us>.

A Q&A session followed and the topics covered included mine ordinance, quarries, wells, banning fast release fertilizers, water reuse, septic tanks, sewage systems, composting toilets and the fact that Florida is giving its water away. Al thanked Gary and noted his appreciation for all the knowledge Gary shared with TOO FAR members.

Speaker - Winston Perry – Hometown democracy Thanks to Vicki for her vote yesterday. June Fisher our county administrator is doing a great job. Winston read the ballot summary. Very important to take control of our state and stop the steam rolling by builders that has occurred, or at least slow it down. Petition forms are here, expect this to be on the November ballot. Deadline is next month. The developers have a \$65 million war chest to fight this. Send back your letters in their own envelopes, (but not the rescind part.) The green copy is not the right one to sign. If you want to see the county grow the way you want it to you need to take a stand here and now.

Pork Dinner – Feb 28th 6 pm Raffle drawing at that meeting along with auction items. Norman is our great donation getter. Our speaker is Senator Charlie Dean.

Raffle tickets are available. Super raffle fishing trip available \$25 per ticket.

Board is looking at candidates for office and will evaluate them against our mission, and our goals and objectives. More to come on this.

Thanks for all the support from our west coast neighbors. Welcome to our meetings and keep on coming.

Bullfrog Drawing won by Duane Brooks, \$40. Motion to adjourn, 2nd, passed.

Before the February 28 General Meeting join us for BBQ Pork Sandwiches with applesauce, chips, soda and dessert starting at 6 pm.

All for \$5.00

**Don't miss Senator Charlie Dean
Speaker for TOO FAR's General Meeting February 28 at 7 pm.**

Living Florida Friendly with Fertilizer
Author: Rivard Reding
Water Resources Educator/Presenter
For SWFWMD “Know Where It Flows” Program
Reprinted with permission from the author

The question is “Can we live Florida Friendly with Fertilizer?”, the answer is “YES”. But we first need to ask, “Do plants need fertilizer?”, the answer is “NO”. Plants have lived on earth for thousands of years without fertilizer, using only what Mother nature has supplied. So why do people use fertilizer? People have found that if they give plants more of certain nutrients/elements than those plants would normally find in nature, those plants will produce faster, bigger and better. When someone wants more and larger blooms on their rose plant or when they want thicker and greener grass they add fertilizer. Fertilizer enriches the soil. It can be applied to or on top of the soil, or even to the plant itself. Fertilizer can be applied in dry or liquid form. It can be quick release (easily water-soluble) or slow/controlled release. The release of the fertilizer material, so plants can use it, can only take place if fertilizer is in a liquid form. When dry fertilizer is applied and no water is available to it then fertilizer will draw water out of plants it is near. We commonly see this on lawns and we say the fertilizer has “burned” the grass. The grass looks brown and withered like it has been fire burned, but this is because the water has been sucked out of the plant cells and the plant withers, turn brown and dies. When applying fertilizer always read and follow the label instructions. The label is the law. To allow dry fertilizer to release for plants use it usually needs to be watered into the soil. If you water in dry fertilizer use no more than 1/4 inch of water. Fertilizer release depends not only on water but also on the temperature, pH of soil, composition of soil, aeration of soil and even microbial activity within the soil. A fertilizer container must have a three number sequence printed on it that tells the amount of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. An example is 10-0-15. This means that the container labeled 15-0-15 has 15% nitrogen, 0% phosphorus and 15% potassium. This means that a 100-lb. container labeled 15-0-15 contains 15 pounds of nitrogen, 0 pounds of phosphorus and 15 pounds of potassium. A complete fertilizer will also have at least 16 or more minor elements that are needed to maintain plant health.

When you apply fertilizer it is also important that no plant, especially turf, receives fertilizer when it is in a dormant or resting stage. Grass is normally dormant November through March here in Central Florida in Citrus County. It is best to only apply fertilizer twice a year to turf, once in late March or early April and again in September. If a fertilizer is 50% or less slow release then apply 1/2 lb. for every 1000 sq. ft. twice a year, but if the fertilizer is more than 50% slow release you can apply one pound for every 1000 sq. ft. to turf twice. Slow release fertilizer will allow plants to up take it over at least a three-month period or more and fast release fertilizer has an up take period of a month or less. To be Florida Friendly with fertilizer we need to remember that fast and slow release fertilizer applied in the wrong amounts can cause environmental problems to our human water supply here in Citrus County. Always know the application amount for the size of the area you wish to apply with fertilizer.....

Florida is the 5th largest user of fertilizer in the USA. More fertilizer is used on home landscapes than on all the agricultural application here in the State of Florida. Fertilizer has a purpose and when used properly it can be helpful. Fertilizer has a “double-edge”; if used improperly it can be very harmful to each of us as it enters our human water supply system such as our streams, rivers, bays and aquifers. When applying fertilizer we need to keep fertilizer 30 feet away from any surface water body. When we apply fertilizer near hard surfaces, like driveways, sidewalks or roads keep the fertilizer at least five feet away from that hard surface area. If dry fertilizer gets into that hard surface sweep it back onto the soil area so plants can use it rather than adding it to water runoff situations. We all need to keep in mind why, how, when and where we use fertilizer as we live Florida Friendly with fertilizer here in Citrus County. For more detailed information or presentations about Florida Friendly fertilizer practices please contact me at 352-476-4941 or Lifestyles8484@wmconnect.com.

Florida Friendly Landscaping

Florida Friendly Landscaping is a set of nine guiding principles which help protect natural resources and preserve Florida’s unique beauty. If you want more information on how to transform your yard into a beautiful place while protecting our natural resources, visit the SWFWMD website at <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/yards/index.html#start>.

Meeting Notices

TOO FAR Board Meeting
Thursday February 28 at 5 pm
East Citrus Community Center

TOO FAR General Meeting
Thursday February 28 at 7 pm
East Citrus Community Center

Citrus County Task Force
February 11 at 3 pm

Withlacoochee Basin Board
February 14 at 9 am Brooksville

SWFWMD Governing Board
February 26 at 9 am Brooksville

Citrus County Commissioners
February 12 & 26 at 1 pm Courthouse

Sumter County Commissioners
February 12 at 5 pm Gov't. Annex
February 26 at 5 pm
Colony Cottage

Lake Levels as of January 31, 2008

| Structure: | Current |
|------------------------|---------|
| Floral City | 39.66 |
| Inverness | 35.04 |
| Hernando | 34.65 |
| Panasoffkee | 39.70 |
| Wysong Upstream | 39.42 |
| Wysong Downstream | 35.67 |
| Leslie Heifner Outside | 39.76 |
| Leslie Heifner Inside | 39.77 |

All levels are in ft. above sea level.

Wysong Main Gate raised to 39 ft.
Low Flow Gate at 38.7 ft.
229 cfs total flow

Floral City, Inverness and Hernando Pools—
structures are closed.
Leslie Heifner gate open

Please call Mike Bartlett, SWFWMD at 800-423-
1476 ext. 4515 for more information regarding
lake levels and structures.

Al's Response to Sound Off: "Where's TOO FAR?"

TOO FAR did not go out of business! We decided that the rent increase at our route 41 office was too much for us. Our phone number 726-5004, mailing address, E-mail address and website are unchanged.

The next meeting will be Thursday February 28 at the East Citrus Community Center starting at 6 P.M. with pork barbeque dinner for \$5 and Senator Charlie Dean, guest speaker.

GET THOSE RAFFLE TICKETS!

Don't forget to buy your raffle tickets. Tickets are available for our general raffle and all prizes will be awarded at our February 28, 2008 Meeting. General raffle tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5. Grand Prize \$200 cash.

And don't forget our SUPER RAFFLE. Super raffle tickets are \$25 each for a 4 person fishing trip anywhere in Florida—inshore or offshore. Donated by Texas Aquatic Harvesting, Inc. Drawing April 24th at our General Meeting. Only 100 tickets will be sold. Get your tickets at our meetings or call 353-726-5004. Thanks!

TOO FAR Inc

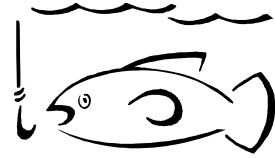
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THE CATCHING REPORT

by Jerry Schneider



Hello fellow fishermen, as always I hope these words find you healthy and happy.

On the Salt -

At this time of the year, it is almost easier to pick a winner in the lottery than tell you where the fish are located. The cold fronts just keep on marching through. The first two were quick and mild and had very little effect. The next two fronts were much worse, with below freezing temps and a very slow warm up. Fish kills were reported as far south as the Everglades. Warmer water is the answer to locating the fish. The Progress Energy discharge canal is a good place to start. Trout, Reds and Snappers should move up close to the springs. The deeper holes in the rivers and creeks should also be checked. On the falling tide, check the mouth of the rivers. The warmer water flushing out should concentrate some fish there. Catching always gets more challenging this time of year.

Getting Fresh -

The cooler weather has really helped the Crappie bite. Some nice size fish are being caught from the Gospel Island Bridge. Spring is the best season for big bass. After a lethargic winter, they should start feeding with gusto, fattening up for the coming spawn. Large females usually do not feed after they start to spawn. They are caught because they are defending their beds. Please return these fish to the water quickly. They are protecting the future of our fishery.

Our president, Al Grubman has been doing well on Lake Henderson. On his last outing, he landed three nice bass and lost two others using Rapala jerk bait.

That is it for now. Try to stay warm. As always I wish you blue skies and tight lines.

Jerry's gone fishin'

Fish Camp Philosophy;

"It is difficult to talk to people who are not particularly interested in the value of a river."

Special Thanks!

TOO FAR extends its heartfelt thanks to our landlords for the 26 North Florida Avenue building we recently vacated. Charlie Strange and Scott Adams have been more than generous in their support of TOO FAR including leasing the property to TOO FAR for a rent far lower than its market value.

We appreciate their support and know the increases in both taxes and insurance are forcing lots of businesses and individual homeowners to make hard decisions regarding their office space and their individual properties.

Thanks Charlie, Scott and Chalk Enterprises.

**TOOFAR INC
PO BOX 2709
INVERNESS, FL
34451**

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**NEXT GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 28, 2008
at 7 pm at the East Citrus Community Center
Speaker: SENATOR CHARLIE DEAN**

**Before the meeting join us for BBQ Pork Sandwiches with
applesauce, chips, soda and dessert starting at 6pm.
All for \$5.00**

**COMING UP
March 27, 2008
Mr. Dave Moore, Director
Southwest Florida Water Management District**