

# TOO FAR NEWS

Protecting & Conserving Our Water

March 2008 Volume 196



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### **“GROWTH: FOR FLORIDIANS, ENOUGH MAY FINALLY BE ENOUGH”**

Using two of the same key words (GROWTH, ENOUGH) that Carl Hiaasen used in his January 17, 2008 column, Craig Pittman of the St. Petersburg Times wrote February 10, 2008 on a similar subject.

“In the future, 2007 may be remembered as the year Floridians finally gave up their faith that growth is inevitable and, on balance, a good thing.

Beset by water shortages and a sputtering real estate industry, the state's residents discovered that much of the booming growth of recent years was based on speculation and mortgage fraud, not actual need. New subdivisions are filled with empty houses with unkempt lawns, tempting targets for vagrants and burglars. Yet some of the state's natural resources, such as wetlands vital to recharging the underground aquifer, were sacrificed by regulators to accommodate this spurious demand.”

“But an even greater threat to the growth business has cropped up. Anger over government's repeated acquiescence to developers fueled a drive to put those decisions in the hands of voters, a drive called Florida Hometown Democracy.

More than half a million people signed the petitions to get the measure put before the voters - not quite enough by the Feb. 1 deadline to get it on this year's ballot, but more than enough to guarantee it will have a spot on the ballot in 2010.”

“Big business and homebuilders' association leaders are horrified by the ramifications of Florida Hometown Democracy, and have been doing everything possible to block it.” In addition to supporting Florida Hometown Democracy, we of TOO FAR must take a stronger position for education, supporting our environment, supporting citizen initiatives and supporting our government officials. Those government officials that support our mission, i.e., “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 these responsibilities” should be supported by us.

TOO FAR, Taxpayers **O**utraged **O**rganization **F**or **A**ccountable **R**epresentation must support the officials that represent and pursue our mission.

Toward that end, the TOO FAR Board of Directors has voted to support individual local candidates when, in the board's majority vote, it is appropriate.

Member views on supporting candidates in general and individual candidates are solicited.

Think rain, especially for the Inverness Pool.

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## **HILITES OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING**

By Pat Brady

Thanks to June & Greg Schmukal and Anne & Norm Provencal for the great pork sandwiches and desserts and 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.

President's comments: As of yesterday water is flowing into the Inverness Pool. Swiftmud has also agreed to investigate the sink hole in Morrison Pool. Al would like to think he had some influence but it was probably more due to our speaker, Senator Charlie Dean. Al welcomed Senator Charlie Dean who was greeted with a loud round of applause from the standing room only audience. Senator Dean opened his talk recalling when Lawton Childes wanted to run for Governor and he put together a meeting over 600 people for him. This was the Senator's first opportunity to advocate for Citrus County water. It has been his privilege to stay focused on water. Nancy Argenziano set the pace and was always concerned about water.

Don't know when he's been more upset than when he read about a meeting between St. John's & Swiftmud regarding water transfer. The Senator had a meeting with Dave Moore and asked why this happened without his knowledge and that he didn't want to have to read about it in the paper. The Senator had a meeting with Dave Moore and made his displeasure known.

Good that the locks are open and that we have had good rain. There are some plans under consideration to use old mines as storage systems. If we start storage we can prevent water transfer. Have to have a better management system and better communication between Districts. Have to have water stored before talking about sharing it.

Looking forward to this year, aware that the budget is the #1 responsibility. Charlie proposed transparency in the budget process and that state agencies file a zero based line item budget. Can't fix things that he can't see. Need to be able to get a copy of these budgets to be able to see the problems. Filed a bill to run this through the Senate in case it doesn't happen without a bill.

Was surprised at the 74% vote to cut taxes and he heard us loud and clear regarding tax cuts. He is working on relief for small businesses and homeowners with 2 homes or two properties.

Q & A sessions covered the following topics: Two Mile Prairie, Suncoast Parkway water line, Villages comprehensive plan and sustainable growth, citizen monitoring State agencies, holding agencies accountable, water district appointments, Florida's sunset review commission, and homeowners' insurance.

Charlie thanked Ron Schultz for his accomplishments and noted that he was very easy to work with. Charlie encouraged TOO FAR members and told them TOO FAR is known statewide and just the name is powerful in discussions. Al thanked Charlie and stated that there was lots of frustration working with government in Florida and that Al was encouraged by the bright light that Charlie was shining on it. Standing ovation for the Senator!

Raffle winners were announced. Super raffle fishing trip tickets are still available at \$25 each. Call the office at 352-726-5004. Motion to adjourn, 2<sup>nd</sup>, passed.

### **Have Some FUN!**

Chinese Auction at TOO FAR General Meeting on March 27, 2008. Doors open at 6:15pm.

Tickets are 15 for \$5.00, additional tickets are 10 for \$3.00

**JOIN US - BRING EXTRA MONEY - WIN PRIZES - HAVE SOME FUN  
HELP TOO FAR RAISE MONEY TO FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT!**

## Meeting Notices

**TOO FAR Board Meeting**  
Thursday March 27 at 5 pm  
East Citrus Community Center

**TOO FAR General Meeting**  
Thursday March 27 at 7 pm  
East Citrus Community Center

**Citrus County Task Force**  
March 10, 2008 at 3 pm

**Joint SWFWMD Governing Board/  
Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply  
Authority Workshop - March 24 at 2pm**  
Ocala Hilton Hotel

**Withlacoochee River Basin Board**  
April 10 at 9 am Brooksville

**SWFWMD Governing Board**  
March 25 at 9 am Brooksville

**Citrus County Commissioners**  
March 11 & 25 at 1 pm Courthouse

**Sumter County Commissioners**  
March 11 at 5 pm Gov't. Annex  
March 25 at 5 pm  
Colony Cottage

## Lake Levels as of February 25, 2008

Structure:	Current
Floral City	39.81
Inverness	35.14
Hernando	34.75
Panasoffkee	39.73
Wysong Upstream	39.43
Wysong Downstream	35.98
Leslie Heifner Outside	39.90
Leslie Heifner Inside	39.91

All levels are in ft. above sea level.

Wysong Main Gate raised to 39 ft.  
Low Flow Gate at 38.7 ft.  
236 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.

Mike is an excellent resource and is always will-  
ing to share his knowledge and experience with  
TOO FAR members. Thanks Mike.

## Why Do We Print the Upcoming Meetings?

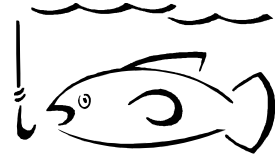
The meetings printed above are listed to encourage members to attend and to voice their concerns regarding our most precious resource — water. Attendance at meetings is important and keeping up with the daily newspapers is an excellent way to learn about the issues coming up for discussion. If you're a computer person, go online and check out the meeting agenda to see if there are issues of interest. If you don't let our elected representatives know your concerns and what you want them to do someone else or something else will get their attention.

Share our agenda with elected officials. Let them know that you are concerned with the protection and conservation of our water including issues like local sources first, water quality, Florida Friendly landscapes, protection of watersheds, fertilizers, high performance septic systems, diversion of water from our rivers, rampant growth, decreasing personal water usage, clean up of lake muck and tussocks, maintaining open water ways, and keeping our lakes and rivers clean. Don't forget to wear your TOO FAR shirt.

We are the guardians for future generations and we must protect our most precious resource — water.

## **THE CATCHING REPORT**

by Jerry Schneider



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

### **On the salt:**

The weather is still having a major effect on fishing on the Nature Coast. The frequent cold fronts have dropped the water temps to the low to mid sixties and the fish are hunting warm water. Mangrove snapper are becoming more plentiful around the warm spring heads. Sea bass and sheepshead can be found around rocks, ledges, docks, and almost any other hard structure in the rivers. The chill has moved most of the trout and reds off the flats. They relocated to the deeper holes in the rivers and creeks. Some very large Snook have been seen in the Homosassa River. That works out well for the Snook because their season is closed. The Grouper went west looking for their comfort zone. They seem to have found it in thirty feet of water.

### **Getting fresh:**

Capt' Mike Steele, owner of Molly McGee's Deli / Bait Shop reports his customers are catching plenty of smaller bass. The weather has extended the spawn so these bass are probably the nest guarding males. Release them as soon as possible. Mike's customers also say the crappie bite has slowed considerably. Greg and June Schmulak fished a bass tournament on the St. Johns River near Palatka. Greg rated their performance as fair since they had no previous knowledge of the area. A bass weighing 11.19 pounds took the big fish pot. As I pen this report our leader Al Grubman is bass fishing at the famous El Salto reservoir in Old Mexico. Tune in next month for all the details.

**That's all there is for now, I wish you blue skies and tight lines. Jerry's gone fishin'.**

### **Fish camp Philosophy:**

**"The solution to any problem – work, love, money, whatever – is to go fishing, and the worse the problem, the longer the trip should be." John Gierach**

### **What are your issues, concerns and questions?**

**Let us know your issues, concerns and questions. Printed in this newsletter is a list of our Officers and Directors. Each and every one is available to you by phone or email. Let them know.**

**Do you have a suggestion for a speaker. Someone who can answer your questions. Give the office a call at 352-726-5004 and let TOO FAR know.**

**Together we can make a difference!**

### **Thanks to all our TOO FAR Members**

**Many thanks to all our generous members who donate pet food. Keep up the good work. Lots of pets call TOO FAR every day to thank you. Bring your donation to our general meetings and leave them in the back of the kitchen. TOO FAR members are truly kind, caring and generous.**

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**NEXT GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY - MARCH 27, 2008  
7 pm at the East Citrus Community Center  
Speaker: Mr. Dave Moore, Executive Director  
Southwest Florida Water Management District**

**Doors will open at 6:15 pm for a Chinese Auction  
Tickets are 15 for \$5, additional tickets are 10 for \$3**

**So come early and join us for the auction.  
And don't forget to bring extra money —win prizes — have fun and  
help TOO FAR raise money.**