

# TOO FAR NEWS

Protecting & Conserving Our Water

March 2010 Volume 220



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Published in the Citrus County Chronicle on March 3, 2010

### Help! My Hero is in Danger

It is not water this time although she became my hero on water issues: the fight to avoid shipping our water away and "Local Sources First." This is about utility rates - electric utility rates. She was a great state Representative. She was even better as a state Senator. Then Governor Christ appointed Nancy Argenziano to the Public Service Commission and later promoted her to chair the commission. Under her leadership and with more support from the Governor, the PSC started representing the people by holding down electric rate increases instead of giving the electric utilities everything they wanted.

We know Nancy is smart, knowledgeable, hard working and effective. We have seen what she has accomplished for water, seniors, children and electric rates. As a bright, self taught, hard worker she has been everything we could hope for. But she did not complete her college degree. We are fortunate because if she had completed her degree, she would be a veterinarian doing a lot of good for animals but less likely to have done as much good for the people of Florida.

Now the power companies and their lackeys in the legislature want to get her. They are putting forward a particularly nasty and disingenuous approach. They have proposed that PSC commissioners must have college degrees so if it passes Nancy will lose her job. It is a little late to say she is not qualified. She has already demonstrated not just competence but excellence.

Please let your legislators know that Nancy Argenziano is the kind of public servant we want and need. Do not let her be thrown out by evil, dishonest trickery.

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Taxpayers Outraged Organization For Accountable Representation

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Check out our website: [www.toofarinc.com](http://www.toofarinc.com)

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!

Snowbirds, let us know if you're heading for points north.

Don't miss one exciting issue of the TOO FAR Newsletter!

Call the office at 352-726-5004

I go to a lot of meetings. One of the most interesting was the February 11, 2010 SWFWMD Withlacoochee River Basin Board meeting which included the following:

1. The Withlacoochee River Watershed Initiative (formerly called the Corps of Engineers Study or model) rumored to be finished is still a year away for testing, trials and verification.
2. Potts Preserve Hydrologic Restoration – removing remaining dikes; Board approved funds subject to weather and permitting. Seems that Charlie Strange/Chester Bradshaw agree with SWFWMD. Will miracles never cease – finally after all those years, hope. The latest info is that the FDEP permit has been issued with only the Army Corps of Engineers permit remaining. After that the work should start if the water is not too high. What great news after all those years and the pleasure of wondering if the water will be too high.
3. Charlie Strange's tie-back Berm at S-353, another long-lasting discussion: SWFWMD accepted responsibility for the long term security of a wall at this location to hold in the Hernando Pool. The proposed solution is a new structure that also connects to a district road in Potts. Proposals for a boat launch and boat slide are included. The board approved \$150,000 for the new construction. Charlie has not announced his reaction. Stay tuned.
4. On February 25, I met again with Bruce Wirth, Deputy Executive Director of SWFWMD. The primary subject was the new procedures for operating the structures to maximize water movement to the lakes from the river, when available. The new approach published this year is a gigantic and welcome change and a meeting of the minds of TOO FAR and SWFWMD. Even though it is just beginning we met to look at improvement. It is a pleasure to report that the meeting was cordial and productive. As long as water is available in the river I expect that we will get more than we would have with the old procedures. The reported figures are about 26 million gallons more water already this year. Maybe not a miracle but close.

I feel we have entered new era; SWFWMD managing our water with us at the table as partners: maybe junior partners, but partners nevertheless. I may be looking for the pony under the pile but I feel hopeful.

Later in the day on February 25, I had another great experience. From finger lickin' good bar-b-que to Gary Bartell (Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners) filling us in on so many things plus he brought his lovely wife. Thanks to all who worked so hard before and during the meeting. Thanks to all who ate and won prizes. It was a great meeting!

Late bulletin March 4; we appeared with a lot of old friends, TOO FAR members and community leaders at The Citrus County PDRB (Project Development Review Board) to object to changing the comprehensive plan from a maximum of 10 houses to 499 RV pads on a beautiful piece of land on Lake Spivey. We were successful and the board recommended disapproval 4 to 1. Thanks to all of you that came out. Hopefully we can convince the commissioners to follow the board's lead.

AI

## **FISHING –N-HOPEFULLY CATCHING**

### **ON THE TOURNAMENT TRAIL:**

All month long Greg (Big Bass) Schmukal and Ron (I'll catch-em) Zarn were singing "Way Down Upon The Suwannee River" getting prepared for the tournament on February 20<sup>th</sup>. They were filled with confidence that they were going to have a great tournament they knew where the fish could be caught. They were prepared. BUT ALAS- due to the ever rising of the river (very close to flood stage) and the thunderous rolling current due gale force winds the tournament had to be rescheduled for another date. After much discussion and thought, the tournament director, Nick Harwell, opted for the safety of the anglers and postponed the tournament. Needless to say, Big Bass and I'll Catch-em were disappointed, but realized it was a SMART and SAFE decision.

The Suwannee tournament is now scheduled for April. I guess we go back to singing.

The next tournament is scheduled for March 20, 2010 on Orange Lake. Big Bass and I'll Catch-em are starting to practice and both anglers like Orange Lake so we are hoping for great things.

We heard from some of our "cub" reporters telling us fish are being caught in the Hernando Pool – not many and not large.

Remember; if you have any fish stories let us know. You to can be a "cub" reporter.

### **CLOSER TO HOME: Fishing report from Captain Mike of Molly McGee's**

**Hello Fellow Fishermen:**

My friends and customers have reported to me, that they are catching plenty of specs off the Wysong Dam (2-3 lbs.). Also this past weekend, they caught many good size specs and a few 6 – 8 lb. Bass in the river.

All around most are doing well, catching many good size specs and having great fun. As you all know there is nothing better and more relaxing then a good day of fishing.

**SO HAPPY FISHING MATES!  
Captain Mike-out**

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**Let us know where you'd like us to send your newsletter.**

**Have a safe trip.**

### Lake Levels as of March 2, 2010

Structure	Current Level	All levels are in ft. above sea level
Floral City	39.72	Wysong Main Gate raised to 38.84 ft.
Inverness	38.28	Low Flow Gate at 34.03 ft.
Hernando	36.46	813 USGS cfs total flow
Panasoffkee	39.59	Leslie Heifner open
Wysong Up	38.69	Floral City open, Golf Course open
Wysong Down	35.61	Moccasin Slough open, Brogden Bridge open
Leslie Heifner Up	40.08	Brogden culvert closed, Bryant Slough closed
Leslie Heifner Down	40.08	Van Ness closed, S353 gate closed

### TOO FAR MISSION

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.

YES, I'll join the fight to protect, preserve and conserve our most precious water resources and to preserve our way of life for future generations.

### TOO FAR Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone 1 : \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Family Size: \_\_\_\_\_  
Snowbird Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Snowbird Months in Florida: \_\_\_\_\_  
What are you willing to do to help? \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Skills: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues are \$20 a year for Family Membership and \$200 for a Lifetime Membership

Mail to: TOO FAR, Inc.  
PO Box 2709  
Inverness, Florida 34451

### Meetings

The SWFWMD Basin Board and Governing Board schedules, agendas and minutes are in alphabetical order on web site <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us> under boards. The two of most interest in Citrus County are Withlacoochee Basin Board and the Coastal Basin Board. Citrus-Hernando Waterways Restoration Council, Citrus County Task Force meetings are at <http://swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/waterways/citrus.php>

## **HILITES OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING**

Minutes by Pat Brady

Call to Order - President, Al Grubman

Pledge & Invocation - Larry Hartman

President's News: Conversion of the Eden Family Farm right on Lake Spivey into a 499 unit RV Park. This came up before and was defeated. Area zoned for 1 home for 20 acres. There is already a sign on the land that the park is pending.

Secretary's Report – Available from Pat or by calling TOO FAR

Treasurer's Report - June Schmukal

Guest Speaker: Gary Bartell, Citrus County Commissioner. He has been on the commission longer than any one else on the board and has been the water matters expert. Last year at the state-wide water meeting, Gary was the leadership for environmental groups leading the defense against the water czar concept.

Thanked Larry for his apt prayer and for the work TOO FAR has accomplished over the years. We've gotten the results. At times it has been confrontational but now they hear you. There have been positive outcomes because of people like the TF members, but issues come back around in different guises.

Some of the hot topic issues in Citrus County:

1. Budget: severe economic down turn in the whole world affects us here. Geoff Greene expects a 5% reduction in tax revenue. County cut 91 jobs last year. Restructured the economic development council to work with existing corporations rather than focusing on bringing new ones in. Lots of road resurfacing with stimulus funds \$17-18M for infrastructure repair.

2. Sewers & Landfills: Need to start looking regional; counties need to band together for these functions.

3. Water issues: A major achievement was to get the District to look at our water differently. They are going to increase the water that comes into our area and into the aquifer as a result. The water czar and state water board keeps coming up and the issue of local sources first. Many groups in the state would like to abolish local sources first as this is the major block to water transfer.

4. Draft of policy for fertilizer industry is coming up and being watched by the industry. They are going to try to prevent local governments from passing ordinances about fertilizers. Conservation: Water supply has to be conserved by all. Cost of water is going to go up dramatically. Need to work towards central sewer on the east side of US 41 which are sensitive areas.

Compliments to Gary for keeping campaign promises after he was elected to the commission. Will he work for getting mitigation funds for our county? Yes, he will address this. Need to get these funds ahead of time or they go somewhere else. Other issues discussed: RV park, wells and septic close to the lake, wells and septic east of 41 as this area is environmentally sensitive, Florida landscaping, fast release fertilizer, and conservation.

Thanks to all who made the pork dinner a success!

Bullfrog drawing. Adjourn.

### **Board of County Commissioners' Meetings**

Citrus County Board of County Commissioners' Meetings are found at  
[http://www.citruscountyfl.org/commissioners/agenda/agenda\\_deadlines.htm](http://www.citruscountyfl.org/commissioners/agenda/agenda_deadlines.htm)

Sumter County Board of County Commissioners' Meetings are found at  
<http://sumtercountyfl.gov/CurrentEvents.aspx#CID26>

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**GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY - March 25, 2010  
7 pm at the East Citrus Community Center  
Speaker: Will Miller  
SWFWMD Land Manager, Lands and Recreation  
Board Meeting at 5 pm**

**SPEAKERS COMING UP**

**April 22—Nancy Argenziano, Chairperson Florida PSC**

**May 27—Mark Edwards, Director Aquatics, Citrus Co.  
Water, Weeds, Attractors ...**

**June 24—Philip Rhinesmith, SWFWMD  
Sr. Environmental Scientist  
Restoration and other projects**