

# Tigertales



## President's Message

Debbie Roddy

The FOT Board had another exciting and very productive year. Here is a summary of our accomplishments:

1. FOT membership is at a record high.
2. Three FOT members are on the Marco Island Beach Advisory Committee - Ken Kubat, FOT Treasurer, Susan Purvis - FOT Board Member and MA Kline.
3. Donated five more new signs to help visitors identify plants and trees at Tigertail Beach.
4. Held three seasonal educational programs at United Church of Marco.
5. Held a FOT Membership Appreciation Event.
6. Participated in the local Farmer's Market to promote the organization and raise funds.
7. Donated to the 2010 Southwest Florida Nature Festival (previously called Birding Festival)
8. Increased the number of internet sites promoting FOT events with the addition of American Towns and Paradise Coast.

9. Met with Friends of Barefoot Beach Board of Directors to discuss experiences and issues in preserving and protecting our beaches.

In addition, FOT continues to be active in community activities.

10. Joined the Collier County Shorebird Partnership (you'll learn more about that in this issue in Susan Purvis' article "Love Is In The Air").
11. Sponsored an award for the 2010 Shell Club Show.
12. Participated in Hideaway Beach's Buddy Day for the Guadalupe Center After School Program (G-A-P).

On behalf of the FOT Board, thank you. We could not be effective without your continuing support.

Looking forward to seeing you at Tigertail!

## Board of Directors 2010-2011

Debbie Roddy — President  
 Burt Robbins — Vice President  
 Susan Kubat — Secretary  
 Ken Kubat — Treasurer  
 Kathy Apy  
 Linda Colombo  
 Susan LaGrotta  
 Susan Purvis  
 Betty Rosa  
 Carole Talkowski

**Saturday, April 10th** - Friends of Tigertail is hosting "Bay Days - Keep Collier Beautiful - Earth Day Event" from 8 a.m. until noon. Bottled water, garbage bags and work gloves will be provided. Contact Susan at 239-394-1470.

Go to: [www.friendsoftigertail.com](http://www.friendsoftigertail.com) for the latest news and information about our upcoming events.

## Love Is In the Air by Susan Purvis, FOT Board Member

Bird nesting season is fast approaching and in mid-April the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission will be posting the nesting areas of Sand Dollar and pre-posting the condo beach area south of Tigertail. If you see nesting birds outside the posted areas, please notify FWC at 863-648-3200. Posting will remain until the end of August.

Many of Florida's beach-nesting shorebirds and seabirds have experienced declines as a result of habitat loss and excessive disturbance at nests and colonies. In response, FWC and a growing network of partners are working to improve protection and management of important nesting locations throughout the state of Florida. Locally, FWC, Rookery Bay, Collier County, City of Marco Island and Friends of Tigertail have formed a Collier County Shorebird Alliance to monitor, manage and protect our nesting birds.

Four species of beach-nesting birds call Sand Dollar and adjacent Tigertail their home. Snowy Plovers, a threatened species, and Wilson's Plovers begin nesting on the north end of Sand Dollar within the federally protected Critical Wildlife Area. The Least Terns, another threatened species, and Black Skimmers, a species of special concern, nest in mixed colonies and have chosen an area just south of Tigertail for their nesting area the past few years.

After the posting is done, everyone needs to keep their distance. The parent birds get agitated and may abandon their nests. The nests are simply small scratches or scrapes in the sand so they are well camouflaged. Abandoned eggs and chicks can be exposed to the sun and predators or be trampled upon by beach walkers.

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**Love Is In the Air by Susan Purvis, FOT Board Member - Continued**

If birds appear agitated, take flight, or swoop at people, the beach goers are too close!

FWC and FOT request your assistance in monitoring our beaches and reporting any observations or disturbances to the FWC at the phone number previously mentioned. If you have any questions, email the FWC at [shorebird@myfwc.com](mailto:shorebird@myfwc.com).

**For Bird Lovers**

To learn about new insights into the feeding, flight and other behaviors of shorebirds that come together in large flocks, go to:

<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/National-Wildlife/Birds/Archives/2010/Birds-of-a-Feather.aspx>

Many thanks to Roy Birkeland, a FOT member, for providing this link.

**FOT Members Appreciation Event**

Our Members Appreciation Event went on as scheduled Feb. 12th despite the horrible weather, including a severe thunderstorm watch. Over 40 members and guests enjoyed the camaraderie, food and beverages. Tony and Martina Smith, of the Tigertail Beach Café, provided a variety of tasty finger foods and flowers to decorate the table.



Left to Right: Collier County Commissioner Fred Coyle, Collier County Parks & Rec Dir. Murdo Smith, Ranger Carole Buckler & Ranger Cindy Kavan (Picture courtesy of Debbie Roddy)



Left to Right: Marco Island City Councilmen Chuck Kiester & Frank Recker (Picture courtesy of Debbie Roddy)



FOT members turned out in spite of the stormy weather (Picture courtesy of Debbie Roddy)

The FOT Board of Directors received the following thank you note from members Fran and Eliot Huxley.

“Hello to all of the hard workers for last night’s Friends of Tigertail get together. We would like to let you know that we very much appreciate all of the hard work that went into this event. Except for the rain, everything was wonderfully done and with thought. It was well organized and ran smoothly. The food was great. I don’t think that people cared that it rained. We were dry and it is always nice to see friends. Thank you again for an enjoyable evening.”

Two FOT Board members, Linda Colombo and Susan LaGrotta, were key to this event’s success and Tigertail looking its best. Linda handled all of the party details plus led the effort to refurbish the Butterfly Garden before the big day. (Continued on Page 3)



A before picture of our butterfly garden. (Picture courtesy of Linda Colombo)



Linda’s helpers - Harriet Tax, Kathy Apy, Sally Moneymaker & Ray Zielinski (Picture courtesy of Linda Colombo)



FOT’s new butterfly garden (Picture courtesy of Linda Colombo)

### FOT Members Appreciation Event - Continued

Susan LaGrotta arranged for an impromptu beach cleanup to help Tigertail Beach look pristine for our members and guests. Many thanks to our volunteers—Emilee Crouse, Taylour Crouse, Fred and Alyce Townsend. They gathered two large bags of trash from the kiosk area, all of the boardwalks, dunes, volleyball area, around the monofilament container, butterfly garden, playground, picnic area, parking lot, as well as the front edge of the lagoon and grasses from the north to South Seas condominiums.

On behalf of the FOT Board and members, a huge “Thank You!” to Linda and Susan for their dedication.

### New Boardwalk & Bathrooms Coming to Tigertail Beach

At the January 19th Marco Island City Council meeting, the council approved Collier County’s request to add another boardwalk and bathrooms to Tigertail Beach. Contrary to what you may have read in the local newspapers, the new boardwalk will not cross over the lagoon, but like the current boardwalks, over mangrove and dune areas. Both the boardwalk and bathrooms will be located at the south end. The purpose of these additions is to provide the public the most direct path possible (within the County’s property) to access the Gulf of Mexico shoreline. This project will provide an ADA-compliant walkway that reduces the distance that beachgoers currently have to walk. The new boardwalk will include an observation area at the end of the walkway that will provide physically challenged visitors visual access to Tigertail’s beautiful natural environment. The FOT Board of Directors requested “compost toilets” be installed in place of the conventional restrooms. However, due to the existing site grade levels the County is limited to constructing the conventional restrooms. The plan is to start construction early 2011, depending on revisions to the FEMA Maps, with completion in six months.

### December 5th Beach Cleanup

Susan LaGrotta, FOT Board Member & Beach Cleanup (Stewardship) Chair reported 20 volunteers collected 8 large bags of debris in spite of the inclement weather cutting into time to collect trash. A number of glass bottles, plastic bottles, bottle caps, shoes, shovel, straws, fishing line, cigarette butts, pieces of plastic and paper were some of the items collected.



Left to Right: David & Allison Bell, out-of-town volunteers, with Susan Purvis, FOT Board Member (Picture courtesy of Debbie Roddy)

David Bell, a volunteer and new FOT member shown in picture, sent the following email:

“I wanted to pass along my thanks to the women who were registering volunteers for the cleanup day at the beach on Saturday, December 5th. My daughter, Allison, lists the few minutes spent at Tigertail Beach as one of the highlights from our family’s recent trip to Marco Island. I agree! We are the two from Brighton, MI (near Ann Arbor) pictured on your website. We actually stopped by this beach while my wife took our son to the Urgent Care center for a sinus infection. Our beach visit made quite the impact. I wrote about the experience in my blog today.”

Here is David’s blog. The Board hopes you enjoy this story as much as we did.

### Stewards in an Unexpected Place: A Personal Story by David S. Bell, FOT Member

I find tremendous examples of stewardship and fundraising in all kinds of places. Recently, I encountered great stewards (and fundraisers, too) on a somewhat remote beach on a rainy Saturday morning. Here’s the story.

I recently presented at a conference held in Marco Island for North American stewardship and fundraising leaders. Fortunately my family accompanied me on this trip. I heard that Tigertail Beach, located a few miles away from our conference hotel, was an excellent shelling area. We did not find time all week to drive to this beach. However, we had a few extra minutes on the morning of our departure. My daughter and I decided to visit this somewhat remote beach. We intended to go shelling for only a few minutes since rain clouds were looming. Plus, we needed to finish packing.

Upon our arrival, more people were at the beach than we anticipated. We soon discovered this particular Saturday morning was a scheduled beach cleanup time. We passed by several locals, but were stopped at the registration area for the cleanup event. Three local women were seated behind the registration table. They represented the Friends of Tigertail Beach, Inc., the non-profit organization hosting the cleanup efforts. The women asked if we were there to help. I knew that we only had a few minutes, so I mentioned that we were just visiting and leaving soon. They encouraged all the more. I told them that we would be on the lookout for debris, but we came mainly as tourists. (Continued on Page 4)

### December 5th Beach Cleanup - Stewards in an Unexpected Place: A Personal Story by David S. Bell, FOT Member - Continued

As we wandered the beach, our eyes gazed through the shallow waters, the squishy sand, and the mangrove edges searching primarily for shells and then for trash. We did find some shells, like the many we had seen on the beach near our hotel. Then, we found various items of trash. Honestly, as we walked longer, it was the trash, like a fabulous pair of jeweled sandals (or were those barnacle-covered flip-flops?), that captured more and more of our attention and imagination. How were these sandals lost? Who was wearing them? Where were they lost? Oh, the imaginative stories that a dad and his daughter can create! Beside the stories, we talked about environmental stewardship. It was a hands-on teaching moment that parents too often miss. I took full advantage. We placed the sandals along with other debris in someone else's garbage bag and headed back to the parking lot. It was time for us to depart.

As we walked back, I thought about these women. I knew that we would see them again. I could now walk by them with my guilt relieved. Yes, I was feeling slightly guilty for telling them earlier that we were just there to *take* from the beach as tourists, instead of *give* back. After spotting those sandals, we became more than tourists. We helped clean up the beach. We were ... well, stewards. I could tell the women that we had done our part.

Sure enough, they were there! Despite the rain clouds, the women were still on the boardwalk. I mentioned to them that we had cleaned up the beach area where we had walked. They immediately thanked both of us. Actually, they politely thanked me and fussed over my daughter. My daughter signed the registration book at their request. The women inquisitively asked us a few questions. One woman, a Board member named Susan, rooted through a notebook and found a certificate of appreciation to present to my daughter. Then, another woman took our picture and told us it would be posted on their website.

In between this scurry of activity, each of them pitched their organization. They shared information about children's educational events, quarterly cleanup days, environmental conservation, the osprey nest, and on and on. Most of all, they shared their passion for this organization and their gratitude for us helping in a very small way to achieve a part of their larger mission. Before our final goodbye, I was handed a pink, two-sided pamphlet. It was a membership application to the Friends of Tigertail Beach, Inc. They asked me to become a member and to make a financial contribution.

I found an excuse—"But, we're just visiting!"

They were prepared - "It doesn't matter. Lots of out-of-towners have contributed. It's a good cause. Your gift, along with other contributions, will help save beaches for your daughter when she grows up and for many future generations. Think about it!"

I folded up the pink, two-sided pamphlet, shoved it in my short's pocket, and headed for the car with my daughter. She was full of smiles and carefully carried her certificate so it would not be bent or wet in the rain.

That certificate is now "on display" in her room with other certificates, pins, and trophies that she has been awarded over her few years of life. That pink, two-sided pamphlet is on my desk next to the computer as I type. Its edges are wrinkled. The crease marks from where I folded it are evident. It looks a little beach worn from being shoved in my pocket. It won't be on my desk much longer. Why? It needs to go in the envelope along with my contribution to the Friends of Tigertail Beach, Inc.

It was just a last minute decision to go on a short excursion to a beach tucked at the end of a dead end street. Yet, it's one of the most memorable experiences from attending a four day professional conference on fund development and stewardship!

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### Update on the Boat Wreck at Sand Dollar

Remember the 28-foot sailboat that ran aground on Sand Dollar during the '09 July 4th holiday weekend? FOT is happy to report that the City of Marco Island Public Works Department removed the boat's remaining pieces and engine from the shoreline mid December. That's one less source of debris we'll need to deal with at our upcoming beach cleanup!

### Cold Weather Leads to Widespread Fish Kills in Florida

As you know, this winter's unusually cold weather has negatively impacted Florida's freshwater and marine fisheries as water temperatures dropped below normal for an extended period of time.

When water temperatures drop, if the fish do not die from cold stress, they may become more susceptible to disease. In addition, to observing dead fish, you may begin to see fish with sores or fungal infections. Warm-water species, including the popular game fish snook, are particularly vulnerable to cold temperatures.

The FWC is asking the public to continue to report dead, dying, or diseased fish to the Fish Kill Hotline by calling 800-636-0511 or submitting a report online at <http://research.MYFWC.com/fishkill/submit.asp>.