

District Notes & News



Established 1923

July 2011

SUPERVISORS

Thomas H. Powell

President

Tom Rice

Vice-President

David Beane

Michael Danchuk

Michael Ryan

STAFF

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DISTRICT OFFICE

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Office Hours

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Monday-Friday

*The Board of Supervisors meets
the third Thursday of each
month at the Jupiter High
School Guidance Office
at 7:30 p.m.*

*Contact the District Office
for an agenda.*

Please Take the Time to Vote!

Ballots for this year's Board of Supervisor's seat will be going out in early August. This year, Tom Powell, who currently serves as president, is running for reelection and Susan Kennedy of Jupiter Farms is running for the first time.

We encourage you to cast your ballot right away so it won't be forgotten and that your interests are represented.

With many elections or referenda, many people do not take the time to vote and as a result, a small percentage of voters may determine the outcome. In many local elections, turnout is often less than 15% of registered voters!

We've included some of the more common questions asked by landowners regarding the basics of voting in the District and have provided the answers.

Q. How is the number of Supervisors set for SIRWCD?

A. As an Independent Special District, the number of supervisors is set by the Florida Legislature, not by the District, the Board of Supervisors, or Palm Beach County.

Q. What if I don't understand something or have a question regarding an election or improvement project ballot?

A. As always, you can contact the District office for clarification if you have a question on a ballot. Call 561-747-0550.

Q. What if I've lost or damaged my ballot? Can I receive another one?

A. Yes. However, the landowner must come to the District's office to receive an official replacement ballot.

Q. What if I change my mind after I cast my ballot? Can I get another one to replace the one already cast?

A. No, by law the first ballot cast is the one that is recorded.

Q. Are referenda for the District conducted differently from those done by the state or municipalities or for other types of elections?

A. The District's referenda are conducted in the same way as any other vote or election,

except that ballots are sent directly to landowners and are then mailed back to the Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections instead of voters having to go to a specific poll location to cast their ballot.

Casting a ballot is the only way to make sure your vote is counted.

If you don't vote, it isn't counted as either a "no" or a "yes". Some believe that not casting a ballot will void a referendum because not everyone in the affected areas cast a ballot, however this is not the case.

A majority of the votes **ACTUALLY CAST**, as is the case with any election, will determine whether a landowner-initiated referendum will pass or fail.

There is no other way the District can know how you want to vote if your ballot is not returned. Since landowner initiatives can impact your tax bill, it is in your best interest to cast your vote.

Q. Does the Board of Supervisors initiate projects such as road improvements or installation of potable water?

A. No. The powers of Supervisors are limited and defined under Chapter 298 of the Florida Statutes and the District's Special Act. In the District, landowners have the right to petition for these improvement projects if they are within the scope of District authority. Currently, the District defines this as a minimum of 35% of the affected landowners for that project.

Remember that election ballots must be received at the Supervisors of Elections office no later than Sept. 15 or may be cast in person just prior to the start of the Annual Landowner's Meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Jupiter High School on September 15.

The District's website and newsletters provide information regarding the issues affecting landowners in the District, including any landowner initiatives such as road improvements, capital improvement projects, the budget, stormwater management compliance and education, and much more. Keep up to date on the issues!

16th Plan of Improvements Financing Update

Financing for South Indian River Water Control District's (SIRWCD) 16th Plan of Improvements has been concluded. The total estimated annual payment per parcel for the Palm Beach County standard asphalt roads is approximately \$869 per parcel for a period of 15 years, which is 11% below the previous estimate.

The total estimated annual payment per parcel for open-graded emulsified mix (OGEM) roads will be approximately \$501 per parcel for a period of 15 years, or 21% below the previous estimate.

If landowners choose to, they may pay in full without financing – estimated at \$9,036 for the asphalt roadways and \$5,208 for the OGEM roadways.

The actual per parcel assessment may be more or less than the estimate. Should the actual cost be less than the estimate, a refund will be sent to those landowners who prepaid. If the actual cost is more than the estimate, an additional billing would be sent to those landowners who prepaid.

The cut-off date for prepayment is August 10, 2011. Please call Holly Rigsby at the District Office at 747-0550 for details.

It is expected that the paving will commence sometime in July.

Palm Beach Country Estates Levee Improvements Underway



Canal E Levee is currently being restored to original design elevations

Manager of Operations Michael Dillon reports that the improvements to bring levees up to their original design elevation in Palm Beach Country Estates are currently underway.

As reported by District Engineer Lennart J. Lindahl at a February 10 workshop meeting, the levees may be impacted by SFWMD's operation of the G-160 structure by the raising of water elevations as mandated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

These levees were improved in 1984 under the *7th Plan of Reclamation*. Since 1984, new design standards have been

developed by SFWMD. These standards and the operation of the G-160 are being studied for the purpose of understanding the potential risks that might occur with increased water surface elevation against the levees.

The Board of Supervisors discussed the need to improve the existing levee to its original design and to present SFWMD with a detailed plan to bring the levees to the standards necessary for the increased water levels.

Meanwhile, the District is proceeding with bringing up any low areas in the levees back to the original design.

GALE ENGLISH HONORED BY FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF SPECIAL DISTRICTS



FASD President Clete Saunier presents Betty English and her daughters Cheryl Smith and Rhonda Gibson with the FASD Lifetime Achievement Award

Former South Indian River Water Control District General Manager Gale English was posthumously honored with the Florida Association of Special Districts' (FASD) Lifetime Achievement Award at their Annual Conference held June 14-16 in Key Largo, Florida.

FASD President Clete Saunier presented the award to Gale's wife Betty English. Betty's daughters, Cheryl Smith and Rhonda Gibson also were on hand at the presentation.

Selected by the Awards Committee, a FASD Lifetime Achievement Award honoree is a member who has sacrificed an extraordinary and exemplary amount of his or her time in assistance to the FASD over several years. The award is not required to be given each year.

In honor of his long-standing commitment and dedicated service to FASD, the award will from this point on be known as the "Gale English Lifetime Achievement Award."

Manager of Operations Michael Dillon, District Engineer Lennart J. Lindahl, District Treasurer Charles Haas, who received the FASD Associate Member of the Year Award, and Terry Lewis and William Capko of the District's law firm also attended the conference.

ANNOUNCING THE WINNERS OF THE DISTRICT'S PHOTO CONTEST



We would like to thank the District landowners who submitted photos for use in our newsletters and upcoming updated website.

First place is awarded to Don Marchetto of Palm Beach Country Estates. A few of Don's dramatic nature pictures are featured here, including the black racer snake, nesting sandhill crane and red-shouldered hawk.

Second place goes to Jupiter Farms resident Lisa Rappa for her close-up picture of a tree frog nestled in a leaf.

Third place is awarded to Dawn Schneiderman of Palm Beach Country Estates for her attractive landscapes, which are shown here.

We'd also like to thank Beverly Bean of Palm Beach Country Estates, who we consider a "design pro", for submitting a number of great nature and equestrian photos, including this scenic view of riders and their horses under a canopy of trees.

We can use even more photos for future issues of the newsletter and for the new expanded website that is currently being designed. Do you have any landscapes, streetscapes, or water shots featuring Palm Beach Country Estates, Jupiter Farms, or Egret Landing? Please e-mail them to us at deninno@sirwcd.org along with your name and where you live in the District.



15600 Jupiter Farms Road
Jupiter, FL 33478

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In this Issue...

- *Remember to Vote!*
- *Gale English Honored by FASD*
- *Annual Budget Meeting July 21, 2011*
- *Annual Landowners Meeting Sept. 15, 2011*

Visit www.sirwcd.org
for news updates!

Two District Employees Celebrate Five Years



David A. Murrell and Matthew E. Ames were recently awarded certificates acknowledging their five years of service with the District.

David joined the District's field staff May 17, 2006 and Matthew on May 22, 2006.

"David and Matthew are valued employees and we greatly appreciate their years of service to the District," said Manager of Operations Michael Dillon.

Florida Stormwater Education Corner Protecting Florida's Water

Thankfully, it has once again started to rain and the drought threat is easing. However, landscape irrigation is still limited to two days per week at this time.

After months of the swales being dry, landowners may begin to see standing water once rainfall totals increase. While some residents call about standing water in swales, this is actually what the swales were designed for.

Nationwide, the use of swales to manage stormwater runoff is increasing because of their many environmental benefits. Decades ago, swales were phased out in many areas in favor of "curb and gutter" to manage stormwater.

Swales are designed to hold and infiltrate rainwater into the ground to provide for filtration of pollutants, such as nitrates and phosphorous from fertilizers and pesticides. Also, swales provide the added benefit of recharging groundwater.

Another reason for standing water in the swales is the amount of development in the District over the last two decades. Years ago, there were many empty lots that were

capable of storing excess stormwater, and now those lots are covered with homes, which causes increased amounts of runoff. The District has varying natural topography with low and high areas, and water will settle in low areas, such as swales.

Stormwater will not move through driveway culverts unless very high water levels are present. Landowners are responsible for maintaining their culverts and some may need to be replaced over time due to age or damage. Culverts should be checked regularly to ensure they function properly. Any blockages in swales and canals should be reported to the District Office so they can be addressed.

ILLICIT DISCHARGE

If landowners witness anyone dumping materials into the District swales or canal system, or Palm Beach County catch basins, please report this to the District Office at 747-0550.