

# THE MARCH ISLANDER

Next meeting March 15, the speaker is Curt Blair, Franklin Co. Tourist Development Council

Social begins at 6:30 p.m., Meeting 7:00 p.m. in the Civic Hall at the SGI Firehouse, 324 E. Pine Avenue

*BYOB and a covered dish*

## Franklin County Extension Service Agent Addresses Civic Club on the Lionfish and the Goliath Grouper

Bill Mahan of the Franklin County Extension Service made a presentation at the February meeting on the proliferation and dangers of the Lionfish and the survey of the recovery of the Goliath Grouper.



**Bill Mahan**

The harvest of goliath grouper was prohibited in U.S. waters in 1990. Since this time, the extent to which goliath grouper have recovered is not clearly u

nderstood, and scientists need help in assessing the recovery of goliath grouper populations in Florida. There is a volunteer-based annual survey of this fish known as the Great Goliath Grouper count, or GGGC. If you would like to be involved contact Angela Collins at [angela.collins@myfwc.com](mailto:angela.collins@myfwc.com).



There are 15 known species of the lionfish worldwide and 2 have been reported in the Gulf. Lionfish are not native to Florida waters and are predatory reef fish that eat native fish. They compete for food with native fishes such as grouper and snapper. They do not appear to have any predators in Florida waters (See *Lionfish*, Page 2)

## Adele Colston Chosen Volunteer of the Year

Adele Colston received the most votes for the St. George Island Civic Club's Volunteer of the Year for 2011. Adele worked tirelessly to make our winter and summer bingo games a great success, adding over \$6,000 to our treasury in 2011. She thanked her volunteers at Bingo for their efforts. She also helps out at the Franklin County Library, the St. George Island Lighthouse Association and



**Adele Colston and Mason Bean**  
So far this year the Winter Bingo games have raised over \$2300.

## Progress Energy plans for St. George Island

The February meeting had a surprise speaker when Bobby Pickels of Progress Energy came to make a (See *Progress*, page 2)

*(Lionfish, from Page 1)*

and they are increasing in number. Lionfish can not only reduce native juvenile fish populations, but can have negative effect on the overall reef habitat, as they can eliminate organism that serve important ecological roles. Lion fish were first reported off Florida's Atlantic Coast near Dania Beach in 1985. In August, 2010, the first report of lionfish off the West Coast of Florida. In the Fall of 2010, a total of 654 lionfish were taken by divers over 3 days in derbies conducted in the Florida Keys. The 2 graphs below show the growth of lionfish from 1985 until February of 2012. There are 2 little red dots next to Dania on the Southeast Coast in 1985.



1985



February 2012

Recently, 2 lionfish were found in St. Joseph's Bay outside Port St. Joe. Lionfish should be handled carefully; they have venom

glands on the dorsal, pelvic and anal spines. NOAA recommends treating a puncture wound by immersing the wound area in hot (not scalding) water for 30 - 90 minutes and seek medical attention as soon as possible. Unless a person is allergic to the venom, lionfish stings are very rarely fatal. Stings can be very painful, cause numbness, swelling and even temporary paralysis.

*(Progress, from page 1)*

presentation and take questions from the members. The Island experienced a loss of power twice recently due to water spouts in the Bay.



**Bobby Pickels (Archive Photo)**

It took several days to provide power throughout the Island. Progress Energy will replace the wooden poles with new ones made out of concrete that will provide a stronger alternative to the ones that now cross the Bay. The new poles will be

adjacent to the existing path across St. George Sound to St. George Island substation. The new line is approximately 5,000 feet to the east of the existing line, in deeper water to avoid oyster beds. The Franklin County Board of County Commissioners passed a resolution urging PE to get the project completed prior to the start of hurricane season June 1. Progress Energy scheduling has the new line completed by then, however, the existing line will still have to be removed, and that could take into the late Summer or Fall. The new poles are being installed and can be seen east of the Bridge. This transmission line project is being done in conjunction with a new distribution project along Gorrie Drive. Together, the two projects will help harden the system against severe weather. The transmission line project replaces wooden poles across St. George Sound with concrete monopoles ranging from 85 to 90 in height above the average low-tide water line. The exception will be the two Intracoastal channel crossing structures which will be approximately 150 feet above the average low-tide water levels.

### ***St. George Island Tour of Homes***

The first-ever St. George Island Tour of Homes on February 4 had over 300 participants and received very positive feedback. The event, sponsored by the St. George Lighthouse Association, Inc., had more interest than expected and raised about \$6,000. Dany and Marty Ray organized the event which included docents at each home and many drivers to ferry visitors to the homes in the Plantation. An associated reception and discussion on island-style interior decorating and external landscaping was at the St. George Island Fire Station the night before. Terry Kemp of the Lighthouse Association said, "The St. George Lighthouse Association thanks homeowners, sponsors, and everyone who contributed, volunteered, or participated for making the first SGI Tour of Homes a great success." Event Co-chair, Dany Ray added, "We had several core chairs, (15) who worked hard to secure the number of needed volunteers. We had over 70 people involved in some form." Vito and Jackie Bell coordinated the 19 drivers needed to get people to and

from the 3 homes and club house in the Plantation and Phyllis Lewis was in charge of the docents who were located at each home. *(Note: limited space in the newsletter prevents the editor from listing all volunteers, but they are listed on the Civic Club website)*

### ***Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue comes to Franklin County***

Sports Illustrated highlights Franklin County in their 2012 Swimsuit edition. The picturesque, historic port scenery of Apalachicola, combined with the 22-mile St. George barrier island, provided just the backdrop **SI** was looking for. Many residents did not know of the photo shoot that took place in October until they saw an article in the Tallahassee Democrat. Residents that knew about the shoot were sworn to secrecy and did a pretty good job of not telling.

***Upcoming Events:***  
***Cape St. George Lighthouse***  
March 8, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET) Watch the Sun set and the Full Moon rise from the top of the Cape St. George Light! Tickets are \$15.00 per person, of \$10.00 for St. George Lighthouse Association members, and include light hors d'oeuvres and a sparkling cider toast to the Full Moon.

After sunset, people are invited to climb to the top of the lighthouse for a breathtaking view of the full moon, as space and time permit. Cost is \$10.00 for the general public and \$5.00 for SGLA members. Because space is limited, reservations are recommended. For reservations or more information, please contact the St. George Island Visitor Center at 850-927-7744 or toll free at 888-927-7744.

### ***SGI Regional Chili Cook-Off & Auction***

This Annual event will take place on the center of the Island on Saturday, March 3. Sanctioned by the International Chili Society, over sixty contestants will square off at the Gulf Coast Regional Chili Cook-off on St. George Island. The winner of what is the largest regional chili cook-off in the nation advances to the world championship and all proceeds benefit the Island Volunteer Fire Department and First Responder Unit. Activities include a golf tournament, 5K Red Pepper Run, Chili Cook-off, Auction and the naming of Miss Chili Pepper and Mr. Hot Sauce. An estimated crowd of 5,000 people attended last year, we invite you to be a part of this great event.

***The 17th annual Camp Gordon Johnston Reunion in Carrabelle***

On March 9th, A Free Canteen will be held at the newly expanded and remodeled Camp Gordon Johnston WWII Museum. All exhibits and displays will be open to greet and welcome veterans, friends, family and the general public. The U.S. Army Heavy Boat Company is currently scheduled to dock the Landing Craft on Marine Street for everyone to see. Also from the Marine Street Pavilion, free Boat tours of Dog Island will be available, if weather permits. That evening, the traditional evening hospitality will be held at Post 82 American Legion at the original Camp Gordon Johnston site, now known as Lanark Village.

March 10th begins with a 7:30 A.M. breakfast at the Masonic Lodge in Carrabelle. At 10:45, the Annual Parade will feature an extensive line-up of vintage WWII vehicles; on Highway 98. The Army Band from Fort Rucker will head the parade, in addition to colorful local and state marchers. A free lunch will then be provided by the City of Carrabelle at the end of the parade route. Tours of the U.S. Army Ocean-going landing craft, docked on Marine Street,

will highlight the afternoon activities. Active duty troops will welcome you aboard. Also tour the Coast Guard Cutter, if in port, at the Coast Guard Station. At 6pm the traditional Dinner/Dance will be held at the Carrabelle City Complex. The always-entertaining “Not Quiet Ready” combo will provide live music for your dancing and listening pleasure. Prizes will be awarded during the evening. The delicious dinner will be catered by Hog Wild Bar-B-Q.

There will be active duty troops in town for this 17th reunion event, in addition to veterans from WWII, the Gulf Wars, Iraq and Afghanistan.

***Apalachicola Second Saturday Celebration***



Saturday, March 10 in downtown Apalachicola Head downtown for our monthly gathering! Shops and galleries will be open late, restaurants will feature fantastic

specials. Visit our stores and have dinner at your favorite restaurant and stroll the sidewalks.

***Eastpoint Charity Rib Cook-Off***



The 11th Annual Eastpoint Volunteer Fire Department Charity Rib Cookoff Saturday March 17th at the fire house in Eastpoint. The event is located at the corner of 6th St and CC Land Rd in Eastpoint, one block north of US Hwy 98. This year's event promises to be the biggest ever with our competitors cooking more ribs than ever. In addition to the cooking competition we will have a Car Show, Silent auction and live entertainment and back by popular demand, the Liars Contest. Rides and face painting for the kids.

The gates open at 9:00 am. BBQ dinners will be served from 11:00 am till it's all gone.

There will be a Silent (See BBQ, page 5)

***(BBQ, from page 4)***

Auction preview and open mike entertainment Friday March 16th from 5:00 till 7:00.

***The Zach Bartholomew Trio at the Dixie Theatre***

Friday, March 16 at 21 Avenue E, Apalachicola. Enjoy the full bodied sound of the Zach Bartholomew Trio when they return with London Arrington to perform traditional yet innovative Jazz. They are masters of authentic & classic while putting their own stamp on the sound they love...check out these cool cats.

***Traditional Irish music on Saturday St. Patrick's Day***

The Ned Divines on March 17 at The Dixie Theater. Back for their 2nd season, the Ned's brought the house down on their last visit. This year they will be here "on the day" so all you Irish blokes, get ready to party at the Dixie.

***Swingin' Harpoon Blues Band***

On Friday, March 30, The Swingin' Harpoon Blues Band delivers a sharp, solid sound and is comprised of some of the area's most talented blues musicians, playing its mix of Detroit blues & jazzy

swing at The Dixie Theatre.

***Apalachicola ArtWalk***

Saturday, March 24. Fine art in all forms will be woven in and around picturesque downtown Apalachicola where artists will be showing, selling and demonstrating their talents from 11:00-6:00 pm. Festivities continue into the afternoon with a progressive wine tasting and hors d'oeuvre from 3:00-5:00 pm. Later in the evening local chefs will prepare special dishes at their restaurants highlighting our fresh local ingredients. At 8:00 pm the Dixie Theatre presents The Dixie Does Nashville Apalachicola annual singer songwriter festival produced by Universal Music Publishing.

***St. Vincent Island National Wildlife Refuge annual Open House***

The St. Vincent Island National Wildlife Refuge will host its annual Open House on Saturday March 30 with wildlife exhibits, nature walks, presentations and tours. Come and spend the day on beautiful St Vincent Island and enjoy the tours and program offered at the Open House. The event is

sponsored by the Supporters of St. Vincent NWR, Inc. St. Vincent Island is located just offshore at the western-most boundary of the Franklin-Gulf County line. For more information, see their website at [www.stvincentfriends.com](http://www.stvincentfriends.com)

***Grant Peeples & the Peeples Republik Band***

On Saturday, March 31 at 8 p.m., our favorite award-winning, left-neck, master songwriter brings his own band to the Dixie stage in the Dylan/Prine/Kerouac style he does so well. We've missed his bold, radical take on life and thrilled he's back!

**Visit our website at:**  
[www.sgcivicclub.org](http://www.sgcivicclub.org)

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