

THE JULY ISLANDER

Next meeting July 19, Speakers are Newt Colston and Gail Riegelmayer

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

SGI Civic Club Facilitates Meeting on the Sale of Water Management

On June 21, the St. George Island Civic Club helped the Plantation Owners Association and St. George Island Forward hold a meeting to discuss the impending sale of Water Management System, Inc. (WMSI) to the City of Carrabelle.

The meeting was held in the Plantation Club House in order to use their better telephone conference equipment.



An email was sent out to members of the Plantation Owners Association, the SGI Civic Club and members of St. George Island Forward notifying them of the meeting and giving out information of how to RSVP or call into the conference call. Ninety seven persons attended the meeting and twenty three more attended by phone. Civic Club president Mason Bean chaired the meeting. Also present to explain the steps taken by the committee set up

during a town hall meeting last month by Franklin County Commissioner Pinki Jackel were Newt Colston and Gail Riegelmayer. Commissioner Jackel was out of town, but called in to go over issues the Franklin County Commission had with the sale. Committee Chair Newt Colston explained the financial situation of WMSI that were gathered from public records. He also said that a LLC has been formed to have one specific group to handle efforts to delay approval of the sale. Gail Riegelmayer spoke of options we have as property owners on the Island. Questions from the telephone participants were emailed and passed onto the speakers by Jane Nipps. Many people from the audience also had questions. The questions ranged from basic questions on how Carrabelle would be able to service the Island to if we can sue to prevent the sale.

Mason, as Civic Club President, submitted an op/ed column to the Apalachicola Times. (This column is reprinted on page 2) An email campaign to State officials was proposed and a letter was sent to members of the Civic Club, Plantation Homeowners Association and *(See Water, Page 2)*

Tropical Storm Debby Wreaks Havoc on St. George Island

On Sunday morning June 24, Island residents awoke to high winds and driven rain as Tropical storm Debby parked herself over the Island before turning inland in Taylor County three days later. The power went out around 8 a.m. Sunday morning as three utility poles were sheared off. Also, sometime Sunday, a barge from Progress Energy broke loose and hit the fishing pier on the Island side knocking out at least two sections of the old bridge.



Wave action prior to the closing of the main Island bridge

Progress Energy, which had already erected and wired the new concrete poles across the Bay elected to move up the connection date rather than repair the old poles. Power was restored by Thursday evening. The Bridge was closed due to high winds by Sunday afternoon, stranding many *(See Debby, page 2)*

(Water, from page 1)

St. George Island Forward. A letter and fact sheet has been sent to Pinki to deliver to Governor Rick Scott asking him to postpone any action by DEP on this loan.

Column by Mason Bean

(Printed on June 21)

The City of Carrabelle is considering the purchase of Water Management Systems Inc. (WMSI) – the water provider for St. George Island. In order to make this purchase, the City has asked for a \$15 million loan from the State Department of Environmental Protection. A Public Hearing has been scheduled for June 29 at 3 p.m. at the City Complex in Carrabelle to discuss and decide on this purchase. It is important that you consider the following points and attend this meeting.

- The true value of Water Management Services Inc. has not been determined. This will not be an easy task. WMSI has outstanding loans for several million of dollars to the State and to Centennial bank.
- The state Public Utilities Commission is currently considering a WMSI rate increase request, and important issues are still open from a preceding rate case that need to be answered.

- According to the latest filing, WMSI needs about \$3 million in upgrades and repairs.
- If a private company were buying WMSI, the State of Florida would require that the true value of the company be established and the sale price would be based on that value. Since the City of Carrabelle is a municipality and not a private company, it is not required to establish this value and can pay a much higher price than the company may actually be worth. Then all water company customers would have to pay for it through their monthly water bills.
- The responsibility for repair and upkeep of the water system falls on all its customers. While this spreads out the cost, do existing Carrabelle water customers want to share the responsibility of upgrading and operating a water system with all the risks associated with providing services on a barrier island?
- Franklin County Commissioners have sent a resolution to the State, expressing their concerns about

the sale and asking the State to slow down the process until more can be learned and understood.

The residents of St. George Island believe that this sale is being rushed forward on an accelerated schedule before all the facts and figures can be collected and analyzed. Our interest is in receiving quality service at a fair price, regardless of the provider, but since St. George will be served by the system, it concerns the residents that we will not have a voice in selecting the members of the water board that governs this utility if the sale proceeds to the City of Carrabelle. We also believe that the people of Carrabelle, as residents of a city that is considering taking on a large debt to fund an investment in a system of uncertain value, should be very concerned. Tell your commissioners at the Public Hearing next Friday that you want to take the time to understand the details and real value of Water Management Systems Inc. before they approve the purchase of this utility. It's just the right thing to do. Mason Bean, President, St. George Island Civic Club

(Debby, from page 1)

residents and renters on either side of the bridge. A curfew was also imposed on the Island from 8 p.m. until daylight through Thursday morning.

(More pictures on page 4)

Fourth of July Parade

With the help of many volunteers, the St. George Island Civic Club again sponsored a float in the parade. The float was ready for any water attacks with 4 barrels of water, many water pistols and cannons and



Adele Colston, Fred Stanley, Marty Ray and Phyllis Lewis get beads ready and water weapons loaded

Richard Saucer's homemade water cannon.

Richard's cannon had an enormous range and no one was safe.

(More pictures on page 4)

Summer Bingo Continues

Summer Bingo is here on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. The week of July 4 is usually the highest attendance of the



year, but this year had to compete with fireworks on the River in Apalachicola. Even so 160 people showed up for Bingo and we made around \$280. It is a lot of fun and at only 25 cents a card per game; it is the cheapest

game in town.

Upcoming Events:

SGI - Enter The St. George Plantation 2012 Photo Contest

June 1st through August 28th.

Rules & Guidelines

· Entrants may submit photographs of St. George Island, Apalachicola or Franklin County, accompanied by a written release form granting St. George Plantation Owners' Association permission to publish your photo.

· Any person identifiable in the photograph must also sign the release.

· A parent must sign the release for any minor pictured.

· Include the following information on a label affixed to the back of the photograph:

Your name, address and phone number

Title of photo or brief description

· Entries must be on disk and professionally printed or in PDF or JPG format of less than 5 MBs.

· Entry must be mailed or emailed to

photocontest10@sgpoa.com by August 28th, 2012 to: Plantation Photo Contest 1712 Magnolia Road St. George Island, FL 32328

· Two entries per photographer.

· Entry fee is \$5.00 per entry with check made payable to SGPOA at the above address.

· Winners will be notified by September 14th, 2012.

PRIZES

· First Place: \$150

- Second Place: \$100
- Third Place: \$50
- People's Choice: \$50

Apalachicola - Local Franklin County Artists will be exhibiting their art at the Center for History, Culture and Art until Saturday, July 28. The

art submitted consists of oil paintings, drawings, pastels, watercolors, acrylic paintings, sculpture of any medium, glass, wood working, photography and textiles.

St. James Bay - First Annual St. James Bay Golf Resort Fisherman's Ball - live music and dancing! July 21, from 6:30 - 11:00 pm St. James Bay Golf Resort's Fountain Room, \$35/couple or \$20/person - includes dinner. Cash bar.



Visit our website at:
www.sgcivicclub.org

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Pictures from Tropical Storm Debby



West Gulf Beach Drive and 12th Street

Fourth of July Parade



Elaine Rosenthal & Uncle Sam (Skip Kemp)



Decorating Team



Richard Saucer ready to go



Before the parade



Kings Richard and James



Civic Club Delta Force



Fred Stanley wearing his Navy veteran's cap



Civic Club Group Soak



Adele having too much fun



Jimmy Lewis toasting the Fourth of July

For pictures that are more clear go to sgicivicclub.org