

Mark your calendars...

- **August 2—Rain barrel workshop at St. Johns County Ag Center. Make your own 55-gallon rain barrel to take home. Cost \$10; space is limited. Call 904-824-4564 to register.**
- **September 22-26—"Exploring Our Environment—from the ocean to the estuary". See story inside for details.**
- **More on back page!**

Concern about marine fisheries

In May, 2003, the Pew Oceans Commission released its report on America's Oceans. This report calls for a national effort to restore and protect the health of the oceans and coasts. In this newsletter, I have tried to summarize some of the information from the Pew Report. You'll also find an update on the state's Clean Marina program. Now that the summer camp season is over, it's time to re-group and start planning more adult programs, like the "Exploring our Environment" day camp for adults which is described inside. Hope to see some of you there! As an addendum to the story on green mussels, which was in the last issue of "aqua-notes", these invasive mussels are now growing in the northern Indian River Lagoon, so keep a lookout for them in north-east and central Florida...



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Monofilament recycling calendars

Calendars (Jan-Dec 2004) featuring the winning artwork from our recent monofilament recycling poster contest will be available for purchase (\$5) starting in September. To order copies, please call April or Maia at 904-824-4564 or e-mail mpmcguire@ifas.ufl.edu or aalexander@co.st-johns.fl.us. Calendars are 8½" x 11" and feature a different piece of artwork for each month. Poster contest winners will receive one calendar each as part of their prize.

Exploring our Environment

The NE Florida Sea Grant Extension Program is proud to announce the first offering of “Exploring our Environment—from the ocean to the river.” This is a week-long adult environmental education program which focuses on the coastal ecology of NE Florida. The program is a joint effort of Sea Grant, the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve, Marineland of Florida and the UF Whitney Lab. The program will consist of a



combination of lectures and hands-on activities, with a large outdoor component, including a day trip on the Intracoastal Waterway on board the pontoon boat “Osprey”. The program will run from 9am-4pm each day, Sept 22-26, 2003. Cost for the program is \$100; participants should bring a bag lunch each day. Space is limited. To register, call April or Maia at 904-824-4564, or download a registration form/flyer from the Sea Grant extension website at <http://stjohns.ifas.ufl.edu/sea/seagrant.htm>.

Clean Marina Update

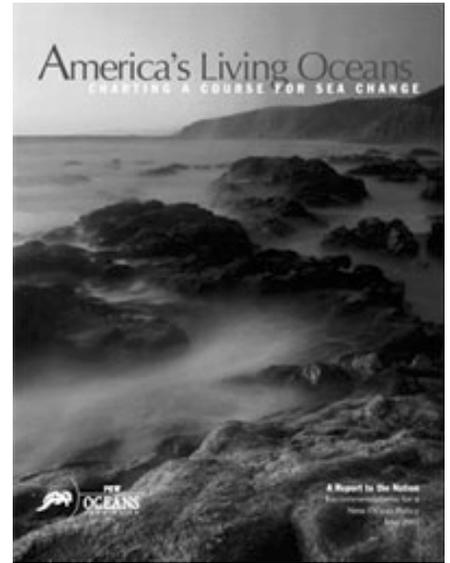
On July 9, 2003, Palm Coast Resort Marina became northeast Florida’s latest Clean Marina. Bill Green, Deputy Director of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s northeast district, presented Debbie Hogan, the marina’s dockmaster, with the Clean Marina flag and plaque. Clean Marina designations are awarded to marinas that take extraordinary measures to help protect the coastal environment. These measures include staff training and boater education. Palm Coast Resort Marina is the tenth Clean Marina in the DEP’s NE District and the first in Flagler County. Its designation also means that every county along Florida’s east coast now has at least one Clean Marina. The other local Clean Marinas are Amelia Island Yacht Basin (Nassau Co.), Lamb’s Yacht Center, Palm Cove Marina, Ortega River Boatyard, Lakeshore Dry Storage (Duval Co.), Oyster Creek Marina, Conch House Resort Marina, Camachee Cove Yacht Harbor (St. Johns Co.) and Whitney’s Marine (Clay Co.). For more information about the state’s Clean Marina program, see the DEP’s Clean Marina website at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/law/Grants/CMP/default.htm>.



Debbie Hogan, marina dockmaster, holds the Clean Marina plaque.

Pew Oceans Commission Report

The 18 members of the independent Pew Oceans Commission include politicians, scientists, commercial fishermen, and members of environmental and educational organizations. They recently spent 2½ years traveling around the US, meeting with coastal citizens and learning about issues affecting the coasts. They published a series of reports on pollution, coastal development, marine reserves, fishing, aquaculture, and invasive species (see www.pewoceans.org to view the reports or to order a printed copy). The commission lists nine major threats to our oceans: nonpoint and point source pollution, invasive species, aquaculture, coastal development, overfishing, habitat alteration, bycatch, and climate change. Some statistics cited in the report:



- As of 2001, only 22% of fish stocks under federal management were being fished sustainably.
- By 1989, populations of New England cod, haddock and yellowtail flounder had reached historic lows. Atlantic halibut are commercially extinct in US waters. Populations of some rockfish species on the West coast have dropped to less than 10% of past levels.
- Worldwide, scientists estimate that fishermen discard about 25% of what they catch; about 60 billion pounds each year.
- Fishing gear that drags along or digs into the seafloor destroys habitat needed by marine wildlife, including commercially fished species.
- A salmon farm of 200,000 fish releases nitrogen and phosphorus roughly equivalent to that in untreated sewage from 20-25,000 people.

The plan of action suggested by the Commission includes

1. Establishing policies and councils to unify marine conservation efforts.
2. Amending current fisheries laws to protect, maintain and restore marine ecosystems.
3. Confronting coastal sprawl to preserve coastal ecosystems and address nonpoint source pollution.
4. Cleaning coastal waters.
5. Developing sustainable marine aquaculture practices.

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More “Mark your calendars”

- September 20—International Coastal Cleanup. To help out with the 2003 coastal cleanup in Jacksonville, contact Clean It Up, Green It Up at 904-630-3420. In St. Johns county, call Chris Benjamin at 904-824-9720. In Flagler county, contact Janet Zimmerman at 904-461-4054 or Dennis Bayer at 386-439-2332. For more information, see www.coastalcleanup.org.
- October 16-18—Florida Association of Science Teachers annual conference, Jacksonville. See www.fastscience.org for details. Deadline to register to present is August 15; deadline for early registration rates is Sept. 15.
- October 15-26—Jacksonville Agricultural Fair. See www.jacksonvillefair.com for information.
- November 12-13—University of Florida sesquicentennial celebration. See www.ufl.edu/150/ for details.

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