



January 2009 Volume 6 Number 1

[www.EnglewoodShellClub.org](http://www.EnglewoodShellClub.org)

**General Meetings—  
January 27  
February 24  
March 24  
Lemon Bay Park  
1:30 P.M.**

### President's Message—

*HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE!* What a great jump-start we had with our Luncheon at Manasota Beach Club. I hope you all had as great a time as I. What a busy rest of the month we have. We kicked off with a beach walk and lunch at Sharky's (a little rain never hurt anyone). Today, January 8, we took down the tree. It was especially lovely this year with all the repairs and addition of a beautiful jingle shell wrap (about 67 feet long) around the entire tree, thanks to Joy Brandt and Rita Stonehouse. I even had an Englewood area artist compliment me on the tree this year—great job and fun! Monday's Carefree Learner should be a great time. Thanks to Marilyn Boyd for pinch hitting for Debbie as leader! Study Group will be at Debbie Freeman's on January 15. The 16<sup>th</sup> we will be having ShellCrafters at Tringali at 1 p.m. January 20 we will be having our board meeting at Rich & Anita Wilson's, followed by our General Meeting on January 27 at Lemon Bay Park..

All our Committee members have been busy firming up our Egmont Key trip, our Sanibel trip and assorted side trips. I'm going to bring up to the Board about a trip to Boca Grande again this year. It's always so much fun. Amie Barnicle will be speaking with you about Outreach and maybe having a kayak program. Jo Ann House will be addressing the club regarding our upcoming merchandising program. Keep those suggestions coming.

Our guest speaker in January will be Linda Powers who will have many shells to show! I'm sure it will prove to be a very informative and interesting meeting.

We will be having our Board Meeting in the meantime, so it should be a very fruitful meeting (with perhaps even more ideas). If you wish to bring a subject to the attention of the Board, please do. We are always open for new suggestions.

Doris Lyons

### Stranges Were Honored—

Carol and Larry Strange, Sanibel, were honored for their many contributions to Englewood Shell Club as they were made honorary members of the club in December. This was one of the highlights of our Club Christmas Party at the Manasota Beach Club on Tuesday, December 9. Seventy eight people attended, according to activity chairman and club president Doris Lyons. A perfect day, sunny but not hot, made the outdoor venue even more enjoyable. As usual the Club Staff outdid themselves to produce a fantastic buffet of entrees, salads, sides, and desserts, which had been preceded with punch and snacks and then a choice of hot or cold table-served soup. A delightful shell-related gift exchange rounded out the festivities. Thanks, Doris, for a great December celebration!



### 2008-09 ESC Officers—

Our officers this year are (left to right) Pattie Mahalik, secretary; Christina Anglin, vice president; Nancy Weborg, treasurer; and Doris Lyons, president.



## Frecks vs Geeks—

If you missed the November club meeting, you missed a light-hearted, informative and truly enjoyable presentation by new member, Charlie Barr. Charlie had us reeling when he shared with us his definition of Geeks and Frecks regarding shell exhibitors. (Be sure to ask him what this means when you meet him if you missed the meeting!)

His scientific and artistic expression exhibits plus his photo collage of shell show exhibits were fascinating. It is no wonder why he is a blue medal winner in both categories from the internationally known Sanibel Shell Show as well as other area shell shows. He pays great attention to detail, but has fun with the exhibits that he makes to please himself. This is one tip he highly recommends - make exhibits to please yourself, not the judges.



Charlie provided a handout listing tips and upcoming area shell shows. One take-away we should jump on right away is to attend a few of our area's shell shows. By attending shows, we will see firsthand the differences between the shell shows. He highlighted some of the differences for us such as the categories used, the most and least popular categories, how newbie entrants are handled, and even cautioned us if we plan to exhibit work in miscellaneous categories. The number one recommendation he shared is to attend a few shows before you create an exhibit to learn which shows you might want to enter and what dimensions or parameters are acceptable at the various venues. Another tip for scientific exhibits was to exhibit a single shell, or one shell variety. His geometric design, fish and flower artistic expression exhibits showed the variety possible. He also suggested placing a hanging piece on a table easel rather than hanging it on a wall, if entrants are given the option.

Charlie noted we have several potential winners in our club after seeing the caliber of work exhibited by a few of our members since he's joined the club. He highly encourages everyone to try exhibiting, even if it is a simple, single shell exhibit, or a single craft entry, as we have great shells and shell designs to share.

Sue Ross

## Upcoming Programs Will Intrigue You—

You are in for a treat at January's club meeting when member Linda Powers gives an enthusiastic presentation about her shelling trip to the Philippine Islands. The shelling trip was attended by some of the world's best shellers, according to their guide, Glenn Duffy. The group of 13 visited two different islands, went snorkeling, wading, and diving for amazing shells. A picture presentation also accompanies Linda's display of prized shells from the trip.

In February, Dr. Jose Leal, Director of the Bailey-Matthews Shell museum, will be presenting "Mollusks 101." This is an introduction to mollusks that he prepared to train the Museum docents and staff. "In my presentation, I will strive to convince the audience that mollusks are an extremely cool group of animals, given their general features, importance in the environments on which they live, and long evolutionary history.", says Dr. Leal.

José H. Leal, Ph.D., was hired as director of The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum in February 1996. His area of specialization is systematics of marine mollusks. Dr. Leal received his B.S. in Marine Biology and M.S. in Invertebrate Zoology both from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He holds a Ph.D. in Marine Biology and Fisheries from the University of Miami. Dr. Leal was a Visiting Professor at the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, in Paris, and Postdoctoral Fellow at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History. Dr. Leal holds honorary faculty positions at the University of Miami and Florida Gulf Coast University. He is also Vice-president of Conchologists of America (COA) (2008-2010), Past-president (2003-2004) of the American Malacological Society, board member of the Florida Association of Museums, and editor-in-chief of *The Nautilus*.

## Another Great Shell Collection—

The Johann Fust Shell collection is a feature of the Boca Grande Library that many members may have missed. Joy Brandt told us about it, and the librarian, Mary Vickers was kind enough to send the attached photo of part of the exhibit. Next time in Boca Grande, stop in to see it.





## Carefree Learner Sails Thrice!—

The first Carefree Learner trip was November 14, so that group had the first really warm trip we have had in a long time! Everyone was counting on that and the boat was full! The tide was forecast to be low, low, but it really wasn't! Wading in calf deep water was nice when it was a warm November day. Scallops were found everywhere; that was the most exciting discovery of the day!

The December trip also fell on a warm day, partially because the trip was rescheduled from Friday, Dec. 12 until Monday, the 15<sup>th</sup>. In addition to live scallops snapping for us and showing their lovely eyes,



we found lots of interacting tulips and lightning whelks, pear whelks, and the most live jingle shells some of us had ever seen. We arrived before low tide and watched the water recede and the freshly uncovered sand literally become a fountain spectacular! Worms, jingles and shells unknown were squirting like mad, creating



a sparkling water show. Some of us thought it looked just like Yellowstone National Park in miniature.

The January trip came after the newsletter was put to bed, so talk to fellow shellers for a full report. Thanks to Debbie Freeman and Rebecca Schopfer, the Sarasota High biologist, for these trips!

## Beach Walks with Brenda Resume—

Beach Walks with Brenda recommenced January 7, when a good-sized group met at Caspersen Beach at 9 A.M. for shelling, conversation and both shell and bird ID. Waves were awesome and some nice shells were found including a lovely turban and white seawhip. Birds were fantastic with roseate spoonbills, skimmers and monk parakeets joining dozens of feeding brown pelicans and most of the common gulls, terns and shorebirds. Sixteen of us went on to Sharkey's for lunch under the tiki roof. We watched a humongous storm move in with tremendous strength and rapidity as the leading edge of a cold front. We quickly learned that palm thatch is not waterproof, but we had finished eating by that time and simply enjoyed the show Mother Nature provided. The next get-together will be in February.

## Upcoming Spring Excursions—

Get all the details and sign up for spring excursions at the January and February meetings, says Ruth Middlebrooks, excursions co-chair. We are definitely taking a bus trip to Fort Desoto where we will board the ferry for a day's shelling on Egmont Key Monday, March 16! The price and other particulars will be shared at the January meeting. Other trips in the works are two types of fossil hunting trips, two (Feb. 21 & April 4) led by Gary Schmelz to a Collier fossil pit, and the second searching for *C. megalodon* shark's teeth and other fossils along the banks of an area river with Mark Renz, noted area author. Details on these and the possibility of a trip to shelling waters off Marco Island are still in the planning stages, according to Marilyn Boyd. We will not use coupons for the spring excursions, said Ruth. Simply sign-up at the meetings.

Members are encouraged to get together and carpool on their own to Florida shell shows. The Space Coast Seashell Festival in Melbourne is Jan. 17-18; Broward's show is Jan.30-Feb. 1; Sarasota Shell Show is Feb. 13-15; St. Petersburg, Feb. 28-March 1; Sanibel, March 5-7 and Marco Island, March 12-14. The Jacksonville Shell Show finishes the season on May 29-31. Contacts and more details are included in the Shell Club Calendar which was included in the November 2008 newsletter and also is updated regularly on our web site.

Don't forget the great field trips offered locally by the various nature centers. Bobby Rodgers offers a fantastic bay wading adventure at Cedar Point Park and Grande Tours has something for everyone.





## See You at Study Group—

The study group learned about augers, which are boring (pun intended), and carrier shells, which are not, according to Debbie Freeman who led the members' investigation on January 15. Barb Myers returned in January to co-chair Study Group and Dick Forbush remains our guru! The group will also meet February 9 and March 9 at 1 P.M. at Debbie's home. Bring your shells and a chair, says Debbie!



## Horseshoe Crabs in Danger—

Horseshoe crabs have survived hundreds of millions of years; they preceded dinosaurs by millions of years. They are in danger now! With their loss, shorebirds who rely on them for food are threatened; red knot populations are spiraling downward because horseshoe crab eggs in the Delaware Bay area are the only food that replenishes their energy on the migratory flight from the tip of South America to the Arctic breeding grounds. Our own lives are less rich,



because horseshoes are used in both pharmaceutical and biomedical research. Some horseshoe crabs have been lost due to habitat loss, but the big culprit now is their use as fish bait. In the last 30 years, the annual harvest of horseshoe crabs for bait along the Eastern USA has climbed from 6,000 to nearly 2.4 million, most sold to International markets, according to Florida state scientists. A female does not mature for a decade, but if not harvested may live 40 years. When you find a washed-up shell, it doesn't mean the animal died; horseshoe crabs molt as they grow larger. Despite its name, the horseshoe crab, *Limulus polyphemus*, is more closely related to spiders, ticks and scorpions and is the closest living relative of the ancient trilobite. Excerpts from *The Palm Beach Post* and *Florida's Living Beaches*.

## ShellCrafters Began Strongly—

A twin bill of crafting projects brought nearly thirty ShellCrafters to Tringali Park Friday, November 21 to create either single stroke acrylic seascape paintings to be decorated with shells or Christmas ornaments. Beth Kugler taught the painting class which was arranged and assisted by Eleanor Langlois.

Painters began with a Jamaican sea wash on their stretched canvas and added colors with names like calypso sky and thunder blue. They learned to dilute with water and soften colors with floating medium. They created interesting effects



by loading corners of a 3/4 inch brush with two different colors of paint and then applying this to add depth to their seascapes. The other group created an unbelievable array of ornaments. Some looked like old fashioned balls hung with beads on each side; the balls were really sea urchins! Poinsettias graced sand dollars; shells decorated wreaths; whelks held miniature bouquets within their openings. Half the ornaments were donated to the club for the tree!

Decorating tissue boxes was the topic for the

December 19 meeting. This session was so close to the Holidays that several members were truly inspired. They created completely different scenes on each side of their box; for example, one person made each side depict a different season of the year! Thanks to Rita Stonehouse who spearheaded this session along with help from Shirley Kastner and Joy Brandt.



ShellCrafter meetings this year are on the third Friday of each month at 1 P.M. at Tringali Park with \$5.00 to defray cost of the room! On January 16<sup>th</sup> jewelry making is in store!! Joy Brandt and Rita Shoemaker will demonstrate and lead members as they create shell jewelry, and Sue Ross will lead seaglass wrapping. February 20 participants will have a choice between making shell-filled beach buckets or shell wreaths. Shell flower demonstrations and making are planned for the March 20 meeting, according to Joy.



## Christmas Tree Decorating—

A large group came to help decorate the Christmas tree at Cedar Point Park on December 4. Joy Brandt and Rita Stonehouse had done an excellent job of refurbishing the decorations over the summer and they spearheaded the ShellCrafter ornament-making activity in November, so the tree looks better than new. For example, a garland made of jingle shells twined the tree to pull the decorations into a whole. There were many new gar scale decorated ornaments and lovely sea urchin and bead antique fantasies. Our President, Doris Lyons, provided refreshments after the tree was decorated, and several members went on to Manasota Beach for great shelling, followed by lunch at Lock and Key. Tree take-down went quickly on January 7, since 10 members took part.



## Seaglass Wrapping at the Park—

Thirty people enjoyed a brisk autumn morning at Lemon Bay Park Pavilion learning to create wrapped seaglass jewelry. The Dec. 2 class was organized by Sue Ross and led by Sue, Rita Stonehouse and Ruth Middlebrooks. Each participant created a multistone piece to wrap later after the glue was fully dry and then practiced wrapping and decorating single pieces of glass. Since the three leaders have different tastes, we saw many different styles of seaglass jewelry. Then as the members viewed each other's creations, even more ideas bubbled forth. Thanks, Sue, for adding a new activity and new venue to the club!

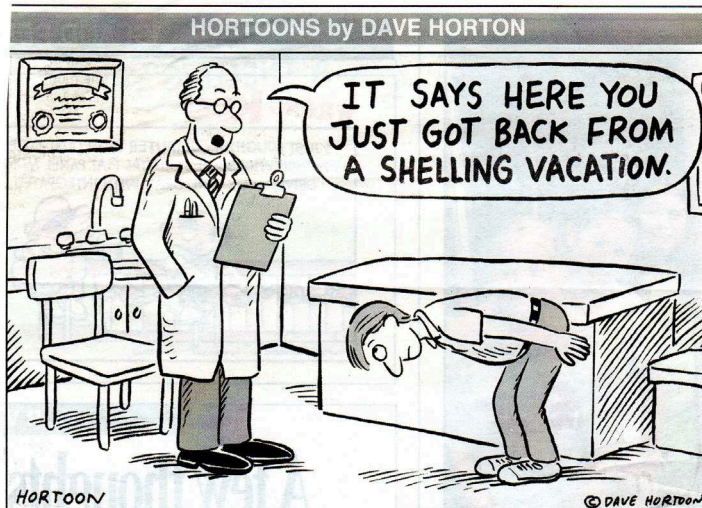


## More International Shelling Trips—

Peggy Williams, Sarasota, has the following trips upcoming. She will lead "Exploring Puerto Rico" April 24-May 1; this exploratory \$1500 trip may include reefs around La Parguera among other places. May 5-12 the bay islands of Honduras will be featured. Chub Cay in the Bahamas will be a snorkeling and beachcombing trip May 22-26 and a Key West Trip June 5-8 is offered for \$1025. Her final spring trip will be to the Pacific Northwest June 20-27. She plans a post-COA trip to Andros, Bahamas, 2-3 weeks in Brazil in September/October and a final trip to the Bahamas in November. More information is available on the web at <http://www.shelltrips.com>. Peggy is also willing to tailor-make a trip for a club or group. Peggy is a lifelong Floridian who has collected shells for 30 years and guided trips for 20. She has won shell show awards and has written books and articles for shelling magazines.

Last issue we featured shell trips this spring and summer with Jim and Bobbi Cordy of Merritt Island. There are many opportunities for those who wish to self-gather shells beyond Florida shores!

BOCA BEACON - August 22, 2008



Thanks to the Dave Horton and the Boca Beacon for allowing us to print this cartoon and to Jo-Ann Carroll for sharing it!

## Sanibel Shell Show Needs Volunteers—

Set up exhibit space - Sunday March 1 - 10:00am to 4:00pm

Receive exhibits - Tuesday March 3 - 9:00am to 1:00pm or 1:00pm to 5:00pm

Pack up - Saturday March 7 - 5:00pm to 7:00pm

If you would like to participate, contact Charlie Barr, co-chair Artistic Division at 941-964-1034 or [c-kbarr@comcast.net](mailto:c-kbarr@comcast.net).



# COA 2009 Convention News – July 19-23

**Come early and enjoy a choice of 5  
shoreside excursions on Saturday, July  
18<sup>th</sup>!**

**First, a Dive Trip:** You will be escorted by Heyward Matthews, a Professor of Oceanography and SCUBA at St. Petersburg College, to some of his favorite dive locations on both the natural and artificial reefs in the Gulf of Mexico. This 8-hour trip is limited to the first 6 people who register for the Convention and pay for this trip. Equipment and refreshments are included.

**Or how about a Fossil Trip:** Your leader for this trip south of the Bay area will be Roger Portell of the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville. You will be fossiling in a pit of the Pleistocene and Pliocene eras 3–5 million years old. Food, water, a hand rake and bucket are all included in this 8-hour trip. You must be at least 18 years old to participate.

**Visit the Florida Aquarium:** You will be treated to an extended “behind the scenes tour” of one of the “best aquariums in the country”. Then you will see the Penguin Promenade, Ocean Commotion, get to touch cownose rays and bamboo sharks, and see the exotic leafy sea dragons from Australia on this 7-hour trip.

**Ever see a Mermaid?** You will on this 8-hour trip to Weeki Watchee Springs State Park where “Live Mermaids” will entertain you in this spring where more than 117 million gallons of fresh, clear water bubble out of subterranean caverns daily. Take the rustic river cruise and enjoy the Bird and Animal Show while you’re there.

**Tarpon Springs/Spongeorama Cruise:** On this 8-hour trip you will be able to experience the old-world charm in the “sponge capital of the world”! Roam the docks and boutiques...then take a cruise down the Anclote River to Anclote State Preserve where you will have time for some beachcombing, swimming or exploring.

**Three more trips are offered Tuesday afternoon and evening!**

**A dolphin-sighting excursion:** This 1-3/4-hour narrated tour aboard the *Island Hopper II* will take you into the dolphins’ natural habitat with a stop at Compass Island for some beachcombing and/or snorkeling (equipment provided).

**Shelling Trip:** Actually, our convention dates were selected to coincide with the minus 0.5 low tide. We will bus you to one of our very prolific shelling areas where the sand bars and grass flats should be high and dry! On this 6-hour trip, we will provide refreshments, a bucket and a flashlight with batteries which you’ll need as the sun sets over the Gulf of Mexico.

**StarLite Majesty Dinner Cruise:** If you just want to kick back and relax over dinner, this is the trip for you! The

*StarLite Majesty* is a sleek, modern dining yacht designed for harbor cruising. You will enjoy your choice of entrees off the menu as you cruise along the scenic waterfront of Clearwater Harbor.

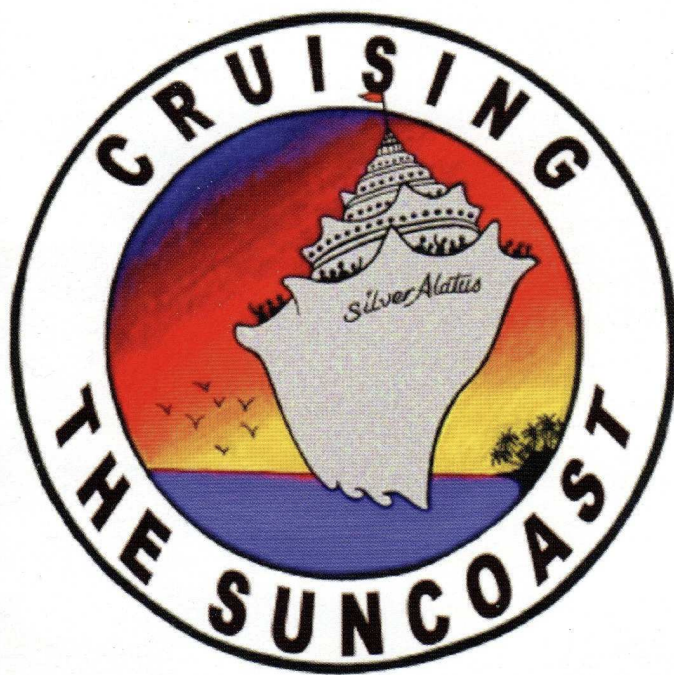
## Enter the Suncoast Silver Spectacular Show

Help us shellabrate our Silver Anniversary in this unique collectible show which will be one of the highlights of Monday’s schedule! You may enter up to 5 items in each of 6 different categories if you’re game. Unique 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place trophies will be awarded in each of these categories:

- 1. Shells-Not Really:** Any item that looks like a shell, but is **not** a real shell!
- 2. Sea Creatures:** Marine animals other than shells and crustaceans -- real or imaginary!
- 3. Snails-Your Favorites:** **No live snails** please!
- 4. Crusty Crustaceans:** Crabs, lobsters, shrimp, etc.
- 5. Silver Sealife:** In honor of our Silver Anniversary, any **silver** or **silver-colored** sea life will shine here!
- 6. Flotsam and Jetsam:** The usual and unusual, **other than shells**, that have been self-collected while beachcombing, wading, snorkeling or diving. Include locality data.

Complete rules and applications are in the December issue of *American Conchologist*.

Questions? Contact us at [COA2009@aol.com](mailto:COA2009@aol.com)





## Periwinkle Facts—

Periwinkles are NOT native to the US and have never been found in prehistoric shell middens. They probably arrived from Europe, via the bottoms of ships; the first American record is 1800 in Nova Scotia. Now periwinkles are found worldwide, except in polar regions.

The name comes from the earlier Elizabethan words “Penny winkle”—a handful of small winkles (whelks) for supper cost a penny at the market!

Periwinkles may remain out of water for a year because they can breathe air. Their gills still must be wetted periodically, so they live at the tide line eating algae. Their breathing apparatus provides a transition between aquatic and terrestrial life.



To clean periwinkles, try placing very wet shells in the microwave on full power for a minute or two; they will pop right out of the shells.

Florida has four species: *Nidilittorina interrupta*, the interrupted periwinkle; *Littoraria irrorata*, marsh periwinkle; *Littoraria angulifera*, the mangrove periwinkle and *Cenchritis muricatus*, the beaded periwinkle. All but the Marsh are found here; the marsh inhabits shores farther north in the state.

—Adapted from *Shell and Tell, the Gulf Coast Shell Club Newsletter* and *Florida's Living Beaches* by the Witheringtons.



Charlie Barr's Art



Beauty from Garfish Scales

Holiday Fun!



***Englewood Shell Club***

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