



## Newsletter Winter 2021

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

**Next meeting:  
Thursday, Jan 21,  
2021, 5:30 PM  
Virtual using Zoom  
Technology**

COVID19 is still having us social distance, wear masks, and avoid large social gatherings, so we are once again going for a Virtual Little Lagoon Preservation Society member meeting using Zoom. Log into the presentation using your computer or mobile device from the comfort and safety of your home and hear about the latest updates in Gulf State Park. You need to provide your own refreshments.

Chandra Wright, Director of Environmental & Educational Initiatives for the Lodge at Gulf State Park, will provide an overview of the Gulf State Park Enhancement project which included building the new Lodge, Interpretive Center, Learning Campus and Woodside Restaurant as well as expansion and enhancement of the Hugh S. Branyon Backcountry Trail and dune restoration. She will include insight on the impacts of 2020 events.

Kelly Reetz, Natural Resource Planner and Lead Naturalist for Gulf State Park will provide an update on Gulf State Park assets including the Campground, Nature Center, Fishing & Education Pier, and management of the Park's natural resources. She will also share struggles from Hurricane Sally, efforts to update and enhance the park, and what is coming in 2021.

To join the Little Lagoon Preservation Society (LLPS) quarterly meeting on 21 Jan at 5:30 PM using Zoom on your computer or mobile device use the following link:

<https://uindy.zoom.us/j/97725035445?pwd=WUxBSit1TGNNMMVJIYmxBSmlweHdBZz09>

### **Little Lagoon Pass Update**

Little Lagoon Pass has remained open and in compliance with the Court Order since Oct. There is some significant shoaling north of the pass bridge in several locations. Shoaling at the mouth of the pass has been intermittent. Predictable shoaling at the pass mouth happens with the easterlies. North winds with frontal passages have kept the pass mouth blown open and in compliance with the court order. Mark Acreman with the City has confirmed his "picture" for the pass is that it is nearing a "trigger" condition north of the pass bridge.

Concerning the Court ordered shoal sand survey at the pass – Dr. Brett Webb recently stated, "We completed a partial shoal survey a couple of weeks ago but experienced an equipment malfunction. We will come back to complete a full survey the first couple of weeks of January, weather permitting and assuming our part arrives. I will email you the latest shoal volumes from 2019 this week. Our January survey will end up being our 2020 value."

## Oyster Gardening Update

In November, Ron, PJ Waters, Greg, and Dennis visited 12 gardening locations and picked up 7,066 oysters which were transported/placed in a restoration location in Mobile Bay. This is a far cry from “normal” seasons like 2019 when we harvested over 54,000 oysters. Certainly, 2020 was not normal considering devastation of our program by Hurricane Sally. Remember, our loss this year was on paper and the oysters are still out there in Little Lagoon (LL) doing their job of filtering the water and providing habitat and ecological value to LL.

Prior to the harvest, LLPS obtained permission from Alabama Department of Public Health and Marine Resources Division to keep a few oysters in the Lagoon past mid-November pick up time for Gulf Shores High School (GSHS) outreach. They gave us permission due to GSHS/Krista Marcum (2020 HS and MS Teacher of the year 😊) student needs. Hurricane Sally “orphaned” oysters were moved to Dennis’s repaired pier so that Krista’s classes could continue with oyster gardening activities. **Kudo’s go out to the Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge, Sheri Hines & Bill Buckley, and Bob Schwartz for donating oysters for the GSHS activities! Laurie & Tom Eberly also donated 8 cages (2 gardens) from their pier which survived Hurricane Sally.** The Eberly pier oysters are being used for Andrew Meza’s oyster garden fauna characterization investigations as part of a STEAM project. The additional 4,000 or so oysters from the Hatfield and Eberly pier would increase the restoration value of oyster gardening for 2020 to over \$10,000.

It is time to start planning for the 2021 Oyster Gardening season. We are hopeful that lots of piers will be repaired/rebuilt and the program can grow again to pre-Sally numbers. **Gardeners need to consider the 2021 season, will they be able to participate, and how many cages do they still have and how many do they need for the season.** Lots of cages were lost and PJ will need to build new cages. Our estimate of cages will be important so PJ can construct them. **Contact Dennis ASAP about your gardening cage needs for this year.**

## Committee Activity Updates

**Watershed Management Plan (WMP)** – The Geosyntec team has cancelled their booking of the Orange Beach Event Center for the next community engagement meeting scheduled for 28 January. Stay tuned for a revised meeting date!

MBNEP has funded two evaluations in the Lagoon by Geo Consultant Marlon Cook and Dr. Alex Beebe from USA Department of Geology. Mr. Cook will conduct an “Assessment of Water Quality, Groundwater Contributions, and Land-Use Impacts in the Little Lagoon Watershed, Baldwin County, Alabama.” Dr. Beebe will perform “Little Lagoon Watershed Nutrient Assessment and Source Tracking.” These studies are the result of a push for possible point source and nutrient plume evaluations as part of the WMP.

**Lagoon Restoration Project- Dan Bond (COGS)**-COGS is working thru funding agreements with State and Federal agencies, plus agreements with Universities on their respective projects. First activity in LL will be Dr. Sparks living shoreline work at Mo’s Landing (summer?). Some circulation improvement work may happen in Lagoon canals (May?) as could data collection by Dr. Webb for hydrodynamic modelling. Prep work could begin on oysters in LL this year, but gardening will likely start next year.

**Laguna Cove- Dan Bond (COGS)** Restarting design phase, which was delayed by virus and funding uncertainty. Once a design is in hand, public meetings will be advertised and begin.

## Outreach

**GSHS Scholarships-** The GSHS Scholarship planning group consisting of Brooke Shinn, Laurie Eberly, and Sherri Hines will work on getting additional funds earmarked for Scholarships for years to come. Goal is to increase the funds from our current funding by Barney and Maxine Gass (\$25K) to \$50,000. We will also set up a separate bank account to earmark current and future scholarship \$\$s.

**Lagoon Clean-up-** The City is on its own for initiating any kind of post-Sally cleanup of LL. FEMA rules have changed since Hurricanes Ivan and Katrina (less \$\$\$ coverage) and the State cannot assume that entire cost. **Anyone around LL that knows the location of any debris that is a hazard, please contact Dennis or Mark Acreman for possible pickup.**

**GSHS Outreach** - Hatfield pier is up and running for GSHS oyster gardening and WQ monitoring classroom activities. Andrew Meza, Ron, and Dennis have conducted 3 sampling trips to the Eberly pier to characterize Lagoon faunal contributions associated with oyster gardens in the lagoon. Significant effort by all. Ron has spent significant time teaching Andrew how to identify, quantify and measure fauna harvested from gardens (**kudos to Ron!**).

**WQ Monitoring** - We are still without all our piers for WQ. Site 2 (Hatfield pier) is up. Site 1 pier in need of repair. Site 3 pier?? Site 4 pier should be up in 6 weeks. Greg has volunteered to conduct a sampling trip with his pontoon boat. Back in business soon thanks to Greg!

**Elections-** The following terms are up for re-election:

Position 2-Steve McMillan (3-year term) (yes to reelection)

Position 5-Brooke Shinn (2-year term) (yes to reelection)

Position 8-Harry King (3-year term) (yes to reelection)

President- Dennis Hatfield (2-year term) (yes to reelection)

Vice President – Greg Bourgeois (2-year term) (yes to reelection)

Treasurer- Deborah Hatfield (2-year term) (yes to reelection)

Secretary-Karen Pera (2-year term) (yes to reelection)

Board voted to reelect current officers. Director elections will occur at the January 2021 LLPS Membership Meeting.

## Financials

October 1, 2020 thru December 31, 2020	
Starting Balance	<b>\$76,264.17</b>
Total Income	\$1,375.00
Total Expenses	\$502.53
Ending Balance	<b>\$77,136.64</b>

**Notable expenses- \$435.04 GSHS Outreach**



Please renew your LLPS membership which is just \$25 and goes towards maintaining and conserving Little Lagoon as a Natural Resource. Membership form is attached or pay Online

[Membership – Little Lagoon Preservation Society](#)

We invite you to be a part of preserving Little Lagoon for generations to come. Your support is crucial if we are to preserve and protect this unique environment. Please join us as a member of Little Lagoon Preservation Society

**Little  
Lagoon  
Preservation  
Society**



Members receive a quarterly newsletter, meeting notifications, and updates regarding special issues.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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*Email allows us to keep our costs down so that a greater percentage of your donation may be applied toward our goals. Your email will be used by LLPS only to distribute newsletters and any important LLPS communications.*

**FAMILY MEMBERSHIP**

\$25    \$50    \$75    other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT MEMBERSHIP**

\$10

**BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP**

\$200    other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Business members are eligible to place a logo on LLPS brochures and a link to their web site on the LLPS site, [www.littlelagoon.org](http://www.littlelagoon.org).*

**Please complete this form and mail it with your check payable to LLPS  
Little Lagoon Preservation Society  
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Gulf Shores, AL 36547**