



# Sun City Center Audubon Club

May/June 2022

## *Ponderings from your prez*

*Dennis Morris*

The April 2nd Audubon Club monthly meeting was a **BLAST!** Club Historian Clara Clancy displayed numerous **posters and photo books of Club memories** through the years. Refreshment Chair Pat Dean coordinated the social hour goodies, including a **huge custom cake** with special napkins and silverware. John Lampkin provided **piano music on the baby grand**, including a chorus of *Happy Anniversary To Us!* All **volunteers were asked to stand** in recognition of their services during the year. Finally, Program Chair Patsie Ginley arranged for Adam Kent, ARCI, who presented a **marvelous Caracaras program**. WOW! If you haven't done so yet, check out the photos emailed on April 9th! If you missed this meeting, **please plan to join us at our next meeting in October**. *Every meeting is special!*



**The 2nd Annual Earth Day at the SCC Nature Trails on April 22nd was a success.** The event was again ably coordinated by Conservation Chair Peter Aluotto. **Attendance was up 35%** over 2021, and the number of **tours offered increased fourfold.** The weather was beautiful, and set-up was completed by 8:30 AM. Nature experts John, Melanie, and Steve each led **multiple 45-minute, small group tours**, aided by timed tickets issued at the registration tent. **The CA provided fruit, water and snacks**, and other freebies were available as well. Folks browsed items for sale, filled in Club Registrations, and visited the raffle ticket table featuring numerous plants. Combined with monies received in the donation jar, our Club has **raised the amount needed for the new Osprey Pole**, which will be installed sometime in June. (More details to follow.) Thank you all for your generosity!

**An Earth Day Committee Luncheon Meeting was held at Fiore's Restaurant** on Thursday, April 28th from 11:45 AM until 1:45 PM. The purpose of the gathering was **to discuss the recent Earth Day** event while it was still fresh in our memories. A total of 29 Earth Day volunteers were invited with 5 days notice, and **75% provided input! Amazing!** 15 volunteers attended, and emailed suggestions were received from 7 folks unable to attend!

*Cont'd page 2*

A total of **31 helpful comments and suggestions were noted**. Peter Aluotto led the lively discussion, recorded everything on large paper pads, and has compiled a report which will be used in future Earth Day planning! **A hearty Thank You goes out to Peter for the extensive time he spent** guiding Earth Day to a successful conclusion!

### **SCC Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC)**

If you recall, the **SCC Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC)** was formed this past Spring to study and make recommendations to the SCCCA Board on how to spend millions of dollars (already in the bank!) to improve Sun City Center.

Over the past couple of months, many of you as SCC Audubon Club members have "voted" for **TRAILS on the LRPC surveys**. It makes sense. WHY? Because for 6 years, our **SCC Audubon Club has faithfully partnered with the SCCCA Board of Directors** to care for, improve, and preserve the SCC Nature Trails. Our Club Conservation Committee was formed specifically to deal with the SCC Nature Trails and our cooperation with the SCCCA Board. Our SCC Audubon Club is the leading organization in Sun City Center that has **invested considerable time, money and effort into the Nature Trails tract**, including trail building and maintenance, signage, fire suppression, canal maintenance, the erection of a new Osprey Pole, and the hosting of an annual Earth Day Celebration for the SCC Community.

**Soooo, did your vote on these surveys matter? You bet it did!**

The results of the Second LRPC Poll are dated April 27th, and were released on the LRPC site on Monday, May 2nd. The results follow:

### The Top Ten Results from the second survey are:

1. New bar/dining area
2. Landscaping and beautification throughout the community
- 3. Walking trails/green space**
4. Additional pool (resort style)
5. Rebuild or complete renovation of Rollins Building
6. Outdoor covered pavilion
7. New building/club space
8. Outdoor music venue
9. Land acquisition
10. Additional pickle ball courts

**WOW!** The above list contains **many worthy ideas** to improve our community. The competition is keen. Being included on such a list is an accomplishment... However, **achieving the #3 position is like being a Bronze Medalist in the Olympics!** It's a broad acknowledgement of the growing importance of trails.

**Thank you for being an SCC Audubon Club member, AND for your vote to raise awareness of the importance of the SCC Nature Trails and all trails.**

**Our next regularly scheduled monthly meeting will be held on Saturday, October 1st. We hope to see you then!**



[www.sccaudubonclub.com](http://www.sccaudubonclub.com)



## Trail Blazing

***“Oh, no! It’s a SNAKE! Run!”***



*A Spicebush Swallowtail caterpillar mimics a snake as it munches away inside of its self-constructed leaf shelter.*

That might be the reaction of a lizard or bird hunting for a meal among the foliage, and for sure this deception has saved the life of many a defenseless Spicebush Swallowtail caterpillar. Those ferocious false eyespots aren’t real, the true eyes are but tiny spots next to the mouth. Caterpillars are non-stop eating machines and since the mother butterfly laid her eggs on the appropriate host plant, the hatchlings have no need for eyes to look for anything—their food is right in front of their proverbial noses, which they don’t have either!

The stages of butterfly caterpillars are called instars, and when the caterpillar outgrows its skin, the skin splits and the next instar emerges, often bearing little resemblance to its former form. Indeed, when spotted on the SCC Nature Trails by an alert participant in our monthly guided walks, the early instar looked like a rather unpleasant gift from a bird, something you would scrape off the bottom of your shoe. Eventually though, the last instar will molt one last time and form a chrysalis where the caterpillar will reinvent itself and emerge as a spectacular butterfly.

When we see scary critters like this on the SCC West Campus Nature Trails, we run! Not away, but closer to get a better look!

The trailhead is located opposite North Lake on Del Webb West between Vincennes and Seton Hall. John Lampkin leads walks on the first Tuesday of each month at 9 am, or by appointment. BTW, today’s column is a milestone, #50!

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*April Field Trip  
Venice Rookery  
April 21, 2022*

*Photos by Charlene Kalczynski*



*Watch for more details  
on upcoming  
Summer Field Trips!*

