Did you know... 
1,500 plastic water bottles are used every second in the United States alone. That adds up to 129,000,000 each day!

EVENTS ON THE HORIZON:

December 11-12
Oyster dome installation at Little Bird Key

January 21
FMAP Workshop

February 15
Project WILD workshop

WE’RE MAKING PROGRESS ON THE
TAMPA BAY WATCH DISCOVERY CENTER

Our second facility at the new St. Pete Pier will open in early 2020

The new St. Pete Pier is close to completion. And as part of this exciting new feature of Tampa Bay, we are thrilled to present a new public face for Tampa Bay Watch that emphasizes public engagement in our local environment. This new facility will elevate awareness of Tampa Bay Watch to our local community as well as tourists from around the world. It’s estimated that The Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center, presented by the Milkey Family Foundation will host over 100,000 visitors in its first year alone!

Located approximately halfway down the pier’s over-water structure, the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center will include an interactive visitor experience showcasing the economic, ecological, and recreational value of the Tampa Bay estuary to residents and visitors as well as an academic component that will expand environmental and educational outreach programs to Tampa Bay area schools, residents, and visitors. Touch tanks, interactive displays, video presentations, and docent-led tours will combine for an unforgettable experience and a newfound respect for our local environment.

The majority of the exterior work is complete, and the focus for the remainder of 2019 will be on the interior and installation of our interactive exhibits. The center will be open year-round. Future plans include a dedicated eco-tour boat offering on-water environmental programming.

We currently have a unique, limited-time opportunity to support the Discovery Center through our Founding Membership Program. This program will support our capacity to grow environmental education opportunities and provide recognition for contributing to the future of the organization. Contact Leanna Jackson at 727-867-8166, x222 or Nina Ardle at 727-867-8166, x249 for more information.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Discovery Center progress
- Great Bay Scallop Search results
- Tampa Bay Guardians acknowledgement
- Guardians feature: Bobby & Elena Bussey
- Savor the Bay recap
- Marine Debris project results
- Fantasy Island restoration
- TBW needs your water bottles

PHOTO BY BRIAN YURASITS ON UNSPLASH
The 25th annual event took place August 24

A grand total of 51 scallops were documented in the 25th annual Great Bay Scallop Search on August 24. We’re pleased with this number since the scallops were widespread throughout Boca Ciega Bay. Scallops live only one to two years and are very sensitive, so the total count is a good sign—especially with all of the summer rain and our red tide in the bay last year. Thank you to all of our volunteer boaters, kayakers, and snorkelers who participated; and the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund and Tampa Bay Estuary Program for sponsoring this important community awareness event with a goal to monitor and document the status of the bay scallop population.

Fantasy Island project results:

1,700 SQUARE FEET OF SHORELINE RESTORED AT FANTASY ISLAND

Thank you to our volunteers who participated in our native salt marsh planting to restore the shoreline of Fantasy Island in Hillsborough Bay on October 16! We restored over 1,700 square feet of shoreline in just a few hours. This project will further stabilize and achieve our goal of a mature natural shoreline. This comprehensive ecosystem restoration plan will slow erosion and provide invaluable habitat and food source for wildlife.

A taste of Tampa Bay to benefit the bay!

SAVOR THE BAY

Guests enjoyed a beautiful evening of food, wine, and fun at Savor the Bay at 400 Beach Seafood & Tap House on September 22.

Chef McClinton delivered a stellar culinary performance perfectly complemented by the delicious paired wines of City Beautiful Beverage Company.

Guests were enlightened on the importance of our shoreline restoration and education initiative—Bay Grasses in Classes—through which we work to restore and improve the ecological health of the Tampa Bay estuary with the help of middle and high school students. A portion of the proceeds from the evening directly benefited this valuable program.

3rd annual Mono Clean-A-Thon

MARINE DEBRIS PROGRAM RESULTS

28 volunteers cleaned a grand total of 60 pounds of fishing line at our 3rd Annual Mono Clean-A-Thon on August 15. The line will be mailed to Berkley Fishing where it will be melted down and repurposed into tackle boxes, artificial fish habitats, and other fishing equipment. Thanks to SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund for funding this important project.

DIGGING IN TO CLEAN UP THE COAST

INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP

61 volunteers participated in our National Estuaries Day/International Coastal Cleanup on September 21! At Bartlett Park, 61 volunteers removed 564 lbs. of trash and at Tampa Bay Watch, 46 volunteers removed 302 lbs. What awesome work for the bay in just one morning! A special thanks to our partners, Ocean Conservancy, City of St. Petersburg, and Restore America’s Estuaries National Estuaries Week.

TAMPA BAY GUARDIANS

Tampa Bay Guardians support Tampa Bay Watch’s mission to restore and protect the Bay with a three-year pledge of at least $1,000 annually. We would like to thank our current Tampa Bay Guardians:

Advocates ($2,500 - $4,999 annually):

- Bobby & Elena Bussey
- Frank and Dana Dalton
- Christopher French
- First Gezen
- James T. Fascia, DDS

Leaders ($1,000 - $2,499 annually):

- Matt & Joanne Bisset
- Pat & Paul Brown
- Peter & Sharon Dagostino
- Janet & Harold Hurwitz
- Frank and Dana Dalton

Focus on Guardians...

BOBBY & ELENA BUSSEY

Bobby and Elena Bussey have been active members of Tampa Bay Watch for over ten years. They show their support by actively volunteering to represent us at community outreach events, attending our fundraisers, and being Tampa Bay Guardians.

Bobby expresses why they have chosen to support Tampa Bay Watch: “As St. Petersburg natives, Elena and I grew up enjoying Tampa Bay. Tampa Bay Watch is a dedicated local organization dedicated to preserving and improving our waters. They allow us to return what for so many years we took for granted.”

Beachgoers delight in this large, black pterodactyl-like bird that soars effortlessly on tropical breezes with hardly a flap, using its deeply forked tail as a rudder.

WINGSPAN: OVER SEVEN FEET
DISTINGUISHING FEATURE: SHARPLY POINTED WINGS AND DEEPLY FORKED TAIL
HABITAT: OCEANS

Source: allaboutbirds.org

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THE EASIEST DONATION YOU’LL EVER MAKE
Help us complete our Pier exhibit!

We need your clean plastic water bottles for our “One Second Wave of Plastic” exhibit at the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center.

The goal of this exhibit is to increase awareness of marine debris/pollution awareness. Since 1,500 water bottles are used every second in the United States alone, we’re collecting 1,500 water bottles to create a plastic wave installation to demonstrate this fact.

Donate your last purchased 16.9 oz plastic water bottle to our exhibit. Labels need to be removed and it needs to be clean and dry. Just drop off at the Tampa Bay Watch Marine and Education Center Monday through Friday between 8:30 AM and 5 PM.

Questions? Contact Rachel Arndt at 727-867-8166, x233.