



Merritt Island

News & Views



You've got a Friend, Ulumay By Vince Lamb

Many people consider Ulumay to be the oldest place name in Brevard. In 1605, Lieutenant Alvaro Mexia, a Spanish soldier from St. Augustine led a mission to map the lands to the south. Mexia found Ais Indians living on Merritt Inland and documented the village of Ulumay. Today, the Ulumay Wildlife Sanctuary represents approximately 430 acres of conservation lands located along Sykes Creek. In July 2008, the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners purchased an additional 295 acres of adjacent land for conservation through the voter approved EEL program.

The *Friends of Ulumay* group was organized late in 2007 to assist Brevard County in the environmental stewardship of the Ulumay Wildlife Sanctuary and the surrounding public lands. The Friends of the Enchanted Forest, a Titusville area group that has operated since the mid nineties, serves as an outstanding model for this new group. David Biega, President of the *Friends of Ulumay*, led the tedious effort to achieve non-profit corporate status as a 501(c) (3). On October 6, 2009, the Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved a Friends Group Agreement that defines the relationship between the *Friends of Ulumay* and Brevard County.

The *Friends of Ulumay* organization conducts monthly meetings at 7 PM on the third Monday of each month at Kiwanis Island Park on Merritt Island. The website www.ulumay.org provides speaker descriptions, scheduled events and other information.

United Space Alliance recently awarded a grant to the *Friends of Ulumay* that will provide supplies for exotic plant removal. The *Friends of Ulumay* participated in the Adopt-A-Shore program offered by Keep Brevard Beautiful. Members conducted several cleanups, and the *Friends of Ulumay* received a Top-Ten award from Keep Brevard Beautiful for our efforts.

During March 2009, the Brevard County Historical Commission erected a historical marker at the entrance to the Ulumay Wildlife Sanctuary. This recognition reflects the leadership of Jack Lembeck, Vice-President of the *Friends of Ulumay*.

The founding members of the *Friends of Ulumay* consider the Ulumay Wildlife Sanctuary and the nearby public lands as "jewels in the rough". As conservation lands, these properties reduce the pollutants that enter the Indian River Lagoon and they provide valuable wildlife habitat in an urban area. However, few trails exist to enable the public to observe the wildlife. Invasive exotic plants, especially Brazilian Pepper, block views of the wildlife and natural areas. Plans are underway to begin the removal of the invasive pest plants. Native species, including mangroves, will replace the removed plants. The *Friends* are planning over the next few months nature hikes, paddling trips and a Christmas bird count for their enjoyment of this historic preservation. Information is available at www.ulumay.org.



David Biega at Ulumay



Receiving KBB Top Ten Award

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Beautiful Property



Perrone Executive Plaza located at 260 North Tropical Trail

On October 13, 2009 the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency Beautification Committee presented a Beautification Award to Perrone Executive Plaza and Prime Bank.



Prime Bank located at 1351 North Courtenay Parkway

Cocoa Beach Open House Time Change

- Commissioner Nelson hosts an Open House in Cocoa Beach
- the 2nd Friday of each month to encourage residents to
- speak to him about community issues. Starting October 23,
- 2009 the meetings will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Please note there will not be an Open House in Cocoa Beach
- in November and December 2009 as these dates fall on
- Holidays but will resume on January 22, 2010.

Food, Fun & Prizes

North Merritt Island Homeowner's Association Annual Picnic
October 24, 2009 · 11 am – 3 pm located at Manatee Cove Park
Menu by Causeway Diner served 12 pm – 2 pm
Tickets \$6 adult, \$4 child · Call Carol Bragg @ 243-8723 or
purchase @ Causeway Diner
Events include local historians, 50/50 drawing, door prizes, tiki carving, Sheriff' Department K-9 demo, hay rides, horses, antique fire truck rides, and children's games.