

## TS Debby Brings Fierce Winds and Rains

The first named 2012 storm developing in the Gulf, TS Debby formed on Saturday, June 23. By Monday the maximum storm surge recorded in Fort Myers had reached 3.09 feet. The storm produced incessant rains and high winds on Captiva Island for several days. Heavy rains and high winds combined with above normal tides and high surf buffeted the Captiva shoreline and cut into the existing sand dunes at some locations.

As the slow moving storm dumped heavy rain, CEPD inspected the beaches to check for erosion damage including loss of beach width and flat berm as well as the size of escarpments. After each inspection, photos of the damage were forwarded to local, state, and federal authorities. By Tuesday afternoon, the high surf had cut far enough into the dune at one location on Captiva Drive that the CEPD, Captiva Fire Control District, Sheriff's Dept., Lee County DOT, and County Emergency Opera-



**County DOT adds boulders to prevent undermining the road at the curve before Jensen's on the Gulf**

tions made the decision to take emergency measures to stabilize the dune to prevent any undermining of the road. As high tide sent water gushing at the dunes, tons of large boulders were pushed up along the face of the dune line. While all Florida beaches are vulnerable to storms, gulf

**(Continued on Page 2)**

## District Responds to TS Debby

The CEPD did not wait until TS Debby passed to begin efforts that would make Captiva's battered beach eligible for state, Army Corps, and FEMA funding assistance. Once Gov. Scott declared a Florida State of Emergency on June 25th, CEPD Administrator Kathy Rooker sought help from the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). The next day the Corps agreed to dispatch a Damage Assessment Team to Captiva. The Team arrived on Saturday,



**Minor erosion and 1-1/2 foot escarpments**

June 30, and along with Ms. Rooker and Lt. Shawn Kilgore of the Captiva Fire Control District, who served as a guide, spent the day assessing the entire length of Captiva's beach. On July 5<sup>th</sup>, the ACOE submitted a request for emergency funding on behalf of Captiva.

At the same time the District sought assistance from the ACOE, CEPD Chairman Jim Boyle and the District's Administrator engaged in conversations with the Lee County Office of Emergency Operations in an effort to receive consideration for FEMA assistance. Lee County had not been declared a Federal Disaster Area but the importance of a Declaration of the County as a Federal Disaster Area became quickly evident. CEPD Chairman Boyle immediately contacted County Commissioner John Manning and asked the Commissioner to intervene at the Federal level in an effort to get the President to declare Lee County a major disaster area. With

**(Continued on Page 4)**

## An Artist's Journey to Captiva's Beach

Unusual circumstances motivated the first brush strokes for artist Marcus Thomas. At the age of 26, Marcus survived a skiing accident that left him paralyzed from the neck down. Six months into his recovery, he took up a paint brush with his teeth and started to create art. That was over twenty-five years ago.

The artist has found what he describes as "priceless satisfaction" creating art. But during the 2012 Ft. Myers Art Fest, Anne Thomas confided to CEPD Administrator Kathy Rooker that her husband longed to enjoy the beach. Unfortunately, as a quadriplegic Marcus could not navigate the soft sand in his specially



Artist Marcus Thomas at Hagerup Beach

equipped wheelchair. Immediately Kathy invited Marcus and Anne to Captiva's Alison Hagerup Beach Park. She described to Anne a beach access solution CEPD had discovered. With the assistance of a grant from the Tourist Development Council and a financial gift from a Captiva beach lover, the District had purchased two wheelchair accessible picnic tables and a Mobi-Mat pathway to one table.

This winter, Anne emailed the CEPD with her thanks and pictures of a Captiva beach visit. According to Anne, it had been over 20 years since Marcus, Anne, and children could all be on the beach together. With the help of an additional grant, the CEPD plans to install a second Mobi-Mat in the fall.

## Blind Pass Update

Delays caused by Tropical Storm Debby and a broken pump motor put the Blind Pass Maintenance Project three weeks behind schedule, but crews started pulling sand on July 9. The dredger, Florida Dredge and Dock, is allowed to work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. By project's end, Lee County Division of Natural Resources expects to have pumped approximately 125,000 cubic yards of sand out of Blind Pass and deposited it south on to the eroding shoreline near Bowman's Beach on Sanibel.

Lee County took advantage of Florida Dredge and Dock being in the area after recently completing the



Dredge working a few yards off Blind Pass Bridge on Aug. 7

Fort Myers Beach renourishment project to get very favorable pricing. The estimate is \$831,250 and is being funded from tourist bed taxes and a grant from the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection.

Steve Boutelle of the Lee County Division of Natural Resources told the CEPD Board of Commissioners at its July 11 Regular Meeting that dredging is scheduled to be done on the Gulf and inland side of the bridge. He estimated that the work would be completed by mid-September.

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(Continued from Page 2)

beaches are extremely vulnerable. In a study released recently by the U.S. Geological Survey, it was reported that 70 percent of gulf beaches are vulnerable to erosion during even the weakest of hurricanes, and 27 percent are likely to be completely inundated.

## New Sign Eases Confusion

Island visitors are often confused about the difference between Sanibel and Captiva. Adding to the confusion was the lack of a sign that would alert travelers they have reached Captiva Island. CEPD Commissioner Harry Kaiser thought it was time to end the confusion. He told fellow Commissioners that years ago a Captiva Island pennant flew from a tall pole just past the Blind Pass Bridge at the entrance to Turner Beach on property owned by Lee County Parks and Recreation. Thanks to the leadership of Harry Kaiser and a partnership between CEPD and Parks and Recreation, visitors to Captiva are now greeted with an eye catching and attractive sign welcoming them to this beautiful island.



Left to right, CEPD Commissioner Harry Kaiser, CEPD Administrator Kathy Rooker, and Parks and Recreation Director Dave Harder

In addition to the sign construction, CEPD had the trees and shrubs in the vicinity of the sign trimmed and the area cleared of debris and weeds. Now colorful drought resistant plants in a mulched bed surround the sign and beckon visitors to Captiva. The sign has already become a tourist stop. Visitors can often be seen taking photos of family and friends surrounding the sign.

### Beach Etiquette

- Golf carts are not allowed on the beach.
- Please remove beach furniture from the beach daily.
- Remove garbage, plastic, & fishing lines.
- When you leave the beach, fill the holes you have dug. They can impede nesting sea turtles and are a hazard to those walking on the beach.
- Dogs are not permitted on county beaches; they must be on a leash in other areas.

## TDC Recommends CEPD Request

At their annual workshop on May 11<sup>th</sup>, members of the Tourist Development Council (TDC) reviewed applications from local government agencies requesting funds for beach and shoreline projects. The funds are made available through the collection of tourist development tax dollars. In 2011, Lee County reported a record high tourist tax collection of \$24.2 million. Interested government agencies are responsible for submitting an application to the TDC with detailed information about their request. The requesting agency is available at the workshop to answer questions TDC members may have about the request for funds.

The CEPD applications requesting \$21,284 for maintenance of the Alison Hagerup Beach Park and a \$23,000 request for the seven-year Captiva Island Beach Performance Survey received the approval of the Council. The funds will support a portion of the CEPD cost for these projects. This approval has now been forwarded to the Lee County Board of Commissioners for consideration at their September meeting.

### The CEPD Budget Process

Each year the CEPD Board of Commissioners holds publicly noticed Tentative and Final Budget Hearings for the fiscal year that begins October 1. Prior to the hearings, taxpayers receive The Notice of Proposed Property Taxes known as the TRIM notice. The millage and budget hearings are open meetings and are the best opportunities for taxpayers to provide input into and ask questions about the coming fiscal year's budget. The hearings are designed to ensure taxpayers awareness of the proposed millage changes, the proposed budget changes, and, if any, the percent of change in the rolled-back rate. Rolled-back rate is the millage rate which provides the same property tax revenue as was levied during the previous year.

#### Schedule of Budget Hearings

Tentative	Sept. 6, 2012	5:01 pm	'Tween Waters Inn
Final	Sept. 20, 2012	5:01 pm	'Tween Waters Inn

## CEPD Has a New Website

CEPD unveiled its new website in April – same address - [www.mycepd.com](http://www.mycepd.com) - but a fresh new look with new features and updated photos and information. Cut and paste the highlighted URL above to take you directly to the site.



Among the new features are: the agenda of the next Board Meeting is posted the Friday before the meeting; the minutes from the previous meeting are added as soon as they are approved; the history of Captiva nourishment projects is described; prior Newsletters and Beach Briefs can be viewed and read in their entirety; the budget process is described and CEPD's current budget is displayed; and links to references and resources are provided.

**Captiva Erosion Prevention District**  
P.O. Box 365  
Captiva, FL 33957

## District Responds to TS Debby

(Continued from Page 1)

photos of Captiva and a damage description provided by CEPD in hand, Commissioner Manning and his Executive Assistant Nan Gonzalez called upon Senators Nelson and Rubio and Representatives Mack and Rooney to assist Lee County and Captiva Island. On July 16, Commissioner Manning was notified by Senator Nelson's office that the Declaration had been made.

On July 6th the FEMA assessment team met on Captiva with Administrator Kathy Rooker as she led them on a survey of Captiva's beach. FEMA has agreed that there is enough damage for Lee County to exceed the Public Assistance threshold. State and FEMA officials met with Lee County staff, CEPD, and other interested parties on July 25 to begin the application process for FEMA Public Assistance

### SAVE THE DATE

9/6/12	Regular Board Meeting	3:00 pm
9/6/12	Tentative Budget Hearing	5:01 pm
9/20/12	Final Budget Hearing	5:01 pm
10/17/12	Regular Board Meeting	noon
11/14/12	Regular Board Meeting	noon
12/12/12	Regular Board Meeting	noon

All meetings are held at Tween Waters Inn, 15951 Captiva Dr., Captiva, FL 33924. The public is welcome.

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