



KEEP MARTIN BEAUTIFUL'S  
**ENVIRONMENTAL**  
**STEWARDSHIP**  
AWARDS

*April 28, 2022*

*Sailfish Point*



KEEP MARTIN BEAUTIFUL  
KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

# *Welcome to the 2022*

## *Environmental Stewardship Awards Ceremony*

Keep Martin Beautiful hosts the Environmental Stewardship Awards as a way to recognize and reward notable efforts within the community to promote environmental stewardship and innovation through education and action. The Environmental Stewardship Awards is Keep Martin Beautiful's key fundraising event.

Keep Martin Beautiful is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit volunteer-based, community action organization founded in 1994. We're excited to celebrate 25 years of preserving and enhancing the quality of life in our community through litter prevention, waste reduction, beautification, community improvement and environmental stewardship education.

These efforts to reduce waste through public/private partnerships and strategic alliances motivate individuals and communities to clean up, beautify and improve their environment, while creating a safer and more livable Martin County.

Keep Martin Beautiful is the local coordinator of the annual International Coastal Cleanup, the Great American Cleanup, the Adopt-A-Road and Adopt-A-Street programs.

Keep Martin Beautiful

1211 SW Sunset Trail, Palm City, FL 34990

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



## *Keep Martin Beautiful Board of Directors 2021-2022*

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Marilyn Gavitt, at large

Troy McDonald, City of Stuart Commissioner

Nicki van Vonno, van Vonno Consulting

Nancy Zappala, Sailfish Point Environmental Committee Chair

### *Event Emcees*

Meghan McRoberts, WPTV Treasure Coast Reporter

Jon Shainman, WPTV Anchor and Reporter

### *Event Staff*

A special thank you to the Firefly Group for the coordination of this evening's event logistics, administration and promotion.



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# THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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**KEEP MARTIN BEAUTIFUL  
2022 Environmental Stewardship Awards Ceremony**

*April 28, 2022*

*6:00-9:00 PM*

*Sailfish Point*

**Agenda**

*Registration*

*Silent Auction Opens/Cocktails*

*Opening Remarks*

*Presentation of Awards/Dinner*

*Closing Remarks*

## 2022 Environmental Stewardship Awards Nominees

**Ashley Monks.** Indiantown Middle School art teacher and Garden Club coordinator Ashley Monks and her students transformed an empty square in the middle of campus into a beautiful school garden with raised garden beds growing vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Through a partnership with the University of Florida IFAS Martin County Extension Family Nutrition Program and 4-H, Ashley teaches students to grow their own vegetables and native plants for Florida gardens.

**Christina Radcliff.** Felix A. Williams Elementary teacher Christina Radcliff spearheads the school's participation in Students4H2O's Plastic Bag Recycling Contest. Her class won the Keep Florida Beautiful Youth Council 2021-2022 Trash or Treat Decoration Contest. This school year she used a grant from the Education Foundation of Martin County to purchase aluminum water bottles for every student and staff member to reduce their use of plastic.

**Christopher Vitale.** The large-scale mural of the House of Refuge that now graces downtown Stuart is the work of Christopher Vitale. While taking a year off from college during the pandemic, he painted images of this iconic location, one that is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

**City of Stuart Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) High Visibility Crosswalks.** The City of Stuart's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) installed 38 high-visibility crosswalks for pedestrians and 14 sharrows to alert drivers of a shared lane environment for bicyclists and automobiles within the East Stuart neighborhood. This project improves pedestrian safety and reduces pedestrian-vehicle crashes.

**City of Stuart Shephard Park.** Thanks to the Shephard Park project, city residents and visitors can now enjoy a canopy of native trees, easier parking, and a delightful walking path through a rain garden. The collaboration between the City and Ocean Research & Conservation Association (ORCA) to install a buffered shoreline is an example of tangible, sustainable improvement opportunities within our community.

**CoLab Farms.** CoLab Farms produces great tasting vegetables using sustainable technologies, including aeroponics and hydroponics. Their innovative techniques protect both land and water resources. Their team of dedicated farmers at their two locations in Indiantown and Stuart are training the next generation of Martin County farmers, who will have environmental stewardship at the core of their growing practices.

## 2022 Environmental Stewardship Awards Nominees

**Ecological Associates, Inc.** Ecological Associates, Inc. (EAI) provides Martin County's Sea Turtle Monitoring and Conservation Program, which improves nesting habitats through nighttime lighting evaluations, marine debris removal, and nesting obstruction documentation and remediation. It has improved the quality of approximately 12.5 miles of sea turtle nesting habitat on Hutchinson and Jupiter Islands.

**Florida Oceanographic Society.** The Florida Oceanographic Society opened its beautiful new Ocean EcoCenter in July 2021. Designed to educate, inspire and engage the community in protecting and preserving our waterways and local ecosystems, the EcoCenter hosts four exhibition spaces. Its interactive displays invite visitors to learn about Florida's coastal ecosystem and take personal responsibility for its stewardship.

**Goldasich Environmental.** Goldasich Environmental is working to restore a mixed wetland and upland forested area within the "Heart of Haney Creek." This project involves removing invasive and exotic vegetation and improving wildlife habitats of many threatened and endangered species. When completed the Haney Creek Watershed Plan will establish greenways for connecting the native lands on the Haney Creek site with the St. Lucie River and the Savannas State Preserve.

**Hani Honey.** Jennifer Holmes and her husband Chris are champions of the local food movement, sustainable beekeepers, and the owners of Hani Honey Company, which employs best practices to produce exceptional raw honey. The business recently expanded to include their farm-to-table cafe and meadery in Stuart, where they serve homemade mead and a menu featuring food from local farms and small, sustainable food producers.

**House of Hope, Growing Hope Production Farm.** House of Hope's Growing Hope Production Farm optimizes 65,000 cubic feet of hydroponic greenhouse growing space to improve the quality of life for thousands of low-income residents in Martin County, using the latest hydroponic and aeroponic techniques to grow 7,368 plants through vertical growing towers, trellises, and nutrient film technique channels. Their new packing house will further improve the harvest-to-pantry processing time and increase their capacity to provide produce to the community.

**House of Hope, Traveling Nutrition Garden.** House of Hope's Traveling Nutrition Garden gives Martin County residents a hands-on opportunity to get excited about where their food comes from and how to grow their own food. Thanks to a colorful trailer that carries a variety of fruit and vegetable plants to schools and events throughout the county, this innovative program helps everyone to improve their knowledge of good nutrition and perhaps will inspire them to start their own garden.

## 2022 Environmental Stewardship Awards Nominees

**Indian Riverkeeper.** A sudden closure of a popular Jensen Beach fishing spot set Mike Conner, the Indian Riverkeeper Executive Director, into action. Working with the Martin County Commission and Department of Transportation, he headed a pilot project to improve the culture of anglers, reduce litter near the Lagoon waters, and increase trash control on public properties. Local fishing guides and tackle shop owners pitched in to help. Thanks to these efforts, the fishing spot is open again.

**Jackie Brownie.** The Pine School science teacher Jackie Brownie raises her students' environmental awareness with outdoor classroom days, field trips, and innovative projects to teach them about recycling and the natural world. Students earned a Trex bench for collecting over 1000 pounds of plastic film in a year, thanks to her inspiration. Jackie has created an Environmental Steward Award at the school to promote student involvement at every age.

**Jane Lawton Baldrige.** Mixed media artist, sailor, and boat captain Jane Lawton Baldrige's most recent project, Oceana Phenomena, educates people about the rising water in coastal towns across the Eastern Seaboard, the increasing damage of water from storms, and the areas at risk in order to influence how we address and prepare for sea level rise and its socioeconomic impacts

**J.D. Parker School Garden, Natalie Parkell.** When J.D. Parker Elementary reached out to UF/IFAS Extension Martin County 4-H Youth Development Agent Natalie Parkell, Natalie was quick to help get the school's garden back in order. She provided valuable gardening knowledge, helped the afterschool Garden Club recruit more volunteers and sponsors, and connected the school with ideas, resources, information, and supplies to ensure the J.D. Parker School Garden's continued success.

**Jensen Beach Garden Club.** The Jensen Beach Garden Club is dedicated to creating and caring for gardens throughout the community, including the butterfly garden at Indian Riverside Park, the vegetable and butterfly gardens at the Children's Museum, the potted plants in downtown Jensen Beach, and gardens at the Hoke Library, the Log Cabin, and the Bocchino Center. The club donates the proceeds of their annual community gardening event to local non-profit organizations.

**Joe Capra.** With 30 years of experience as the Town Engineer for the Town of Sewall's Point, Joe Capra managed the design, funding, and construction of drainage improvements to decrease the risk of flooding and improve water quality by reducing pollution from stormwater runoff to the St. Lucie River. After completion, Sewall's Point residents noticed a huge improvement with water levels during King Tide and heavy rain events.

**Kathy Fitzpatrick.** Kathy Fitzpatrick's work as the County's Coastal Engineer will impact our community for decades to come. During her twenty-five years of service, she has secured our beaches during violent storms and hurricanes, directed renourishment projects to preserve the dune structures, and educated the public about the nature of barrier islands and natural movements of water and sand. Kathy served as the leader of the Martin County Resilience Plan, which will help us protect and preserve our environment in the face of increasing climate change challenges.

## 2022 Environmental Stewardship Awards Nominees

**Kiwanis Park.** The Kiwanis Club of Stuart's renovation of Kiwanis Park in downtown Stuart features a "tot lot" for young children and a separate sensory sensitive garden play area for children with autism, sensory, or physical issues. This area, called "Maddie's Garden" in honor of Maddie Schramm, is a small, quiet area providing space for children with special needs. The Martin County Co-Op Extension Office provided a master gardener to design it.

**Liza Sarinsky.** Palm City resident Liza Sarinsky transformed her Piper's Landing home with eco-conscious improvements including multiple solar panels, a "drip irrigation" system for wastewater usage in her garden, colorful landscaping, and large butterfly gardens. Liza added raised planters for vegetables and landscape lighting powered by Tesla batteries charged by the sun each day.

**Live. Love. Local. Hobe Sound Cleanup.** The Live Love Local project was an invitation to residents of Hobe Sound to take part in community beautification. The Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce and Jenkins Landscape Co. coordinated the cleanup project. More than 100 volunteers, easily identified in their Live Love Local t-shirts, removed trash and debris from the areas surrounding Banner Lake, Bridge Road, and US 1.

**Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative.** The Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative is a project of The Treasured Lands Foundation, in collaboration with The Guardians of Martin County and The Conservation Fund, to preserve the 70,000-acre Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem. This project has statewide significance for wildlife, plant species, enhanced water quality and stormwater management, recreational use, and climate change initiatives. Loxa- Lucie Headwaters Initiative recently achieved its first milestone by acquiring a 138-acre tract key to hydrologic restoration of Kitching Creek.

**Maggy Hurchalla.** Maggy Hurchalla was an ardent environmentalist and a relentless champion for the water, land, flora and fauna of Martin County. For more than five decades, she worked tirelessly to preserve our environment and teach the rest of us how and why we too need to take up this cause. Her efforts for Everglades restoration and preservation of wetlands are legendary. Her impact on our environment and on each of us will endure far into the future.

**Martin County Growth Management.** The Martin County Growth Management Environmental Division provides services to landowners, developers, and residents to ensure compliance with environmental protection regulations and to preserve environmental resources in Martin County. They protect areas along navigable shorelines, freshwater wetlands, upland habitats, and preservation areas throughout the community.

**Martin County Solid Waste & Waste Management, Recycling Roll Out.** The Martin County Solid Waste Department collaborated with Waste Management to roll out a recycling cart program, equipping residents with 44,000 new carts. The informative cart labels teach residents how to properly carry out the process of single-stream recycling, which eliminates the need to sort recyclable materials.

## 2022 Environmental Stewardship Awards Nominees

**Martin County Community Redevelopment Agency, Office of Community Development, Martin County Board of County Commissioners, Mapp Road Town Center.** The Martin County Community Redevelopment Agency, with the support of the Old Palm City Neighborhood Advisory Committee and Commissioner Ed Ciampi, designed, funded, and constructed the improved Mapp Road in Palm City, creating a walkable community space. Palm City Place, the passive recreation area around the stormwater retention pond, is now home to a walking trail, and the Ripple Stormwater Eco-Art Project will connect the new Mapp Road with the river along paths that have natural art elements, two pavilions, and a small pier.

**Martin County Field Operations, Public Works, Saving Orchids.** When a concerned citizen noticed a threatened native orchid near two major roadways, Ken Brower, a Martin County Field Operations employee, marked each orchid to save it from mowing crews. Horticulturist Carly Batts worked with the Martin County Orchid Society to fund a conservation program to propagate the seeds in Florida Atlantic University's specialized lab at Pine Jog Environmental Center. Martin County's Native Plant Society and Master Gardeners also pitched in, and the orchids will eventually be growing on some of Martin County's more than 35,000 acres of environmentally sensitive lands.

**Martin County Mosquito Control, Public Works, Copepod Biological Mosquito Control.** The Public Works Mosquito Control Division of Martin County incorporates an integrated approach to mosquito management including biological control, the use of natural predators to control pests. Copepods, a minute species of crustaceans, were selected to supplement existing control measures and provide a natural, non-chemical alternative for environmentally sensitive areas.

**Martin County Board of County Commissioners, Hobe Sound Scrub Preserve.** The Hobe Sound Scrub Preserve was formed when most of Florida was under the ocean over 100,000 years ago. Volunteers recently cleared the 27-acre property of 4,000 pounds of trash and debris, and the County's Ecosystems and Restoration Management team planted native vegetation. Educational signage, a map, a loop trail, park benches, and a picnic pavilion give visitors an opportunity to take in its natural beauty.

**Martin County Board of County Commissioners, House of Refuge.** The General Services Department of the Martin County Board of County Commissioners is undertaking a comprehensive exterior restoration and preservation of the historic House of Refuge. The current phase involves wood repair and painting; subsequent phases will include replacement of windows and doors, the porch and railings, and the cedar shake roof.

## 2022 Environmental Stewardship Awards Nominees

**Martin County Commissioners and Parks & Recreation, Stuart Beach Seaside Café.** The Seaside Café at Stuart Beach allows residents and visitors to enjoy stunning ocean views, great service, and a spectacular food and beverage menu. Enhancements include stormwater drainage improvements, public restroom renovations, replacement of boardwalks and dune crossovers, landscaping, parking lot expansion, security cameras, and sea turtle-friendly lighting.

**Martin County Sheriff's Office Community Policing Unit.** The Martin County Sheriff's Office Community Policing/Community Programs Units concentrate on community engagement, communication, the improvement of quality of life for its citizens, and bridging the gap between the community and the Sheriff's Office. Projects include assisting homeless individuals with access to resources, outreach events for youth, and a focus on neighborhood-specific issues.

**Monterey Yacht & Country Club Golf Course Staff.** The Monterey Yacht and Country Club's golf course staff is a mighty two-person team. Sid, who recently took the reins as golf course superintendent, and Joe, who has many years of experience in keeping the course beautiful, take classes and apply their knowledge to use the best practices and the most environmentally friendly substances to maintain their course in pristine condition.

**Nancy and John Burke.** This husband-and-wife team is dedicated to improving and preserving our little slice of paradise here in Martin County. Nancy and John Burke have spent countless hours cleaning up local Martin County beaches, ensuring that locals and visitors have clean, litter-free beaches to enjoy. They are selfless stewards of our environment and set a wonderful example of the positive impact of teamwork.

**Natalie Parkell, UF IFAS, Martin County 4-H, Water Ambassador Program.** As a component of the Martin County Water Ambassador Academy stormwater education program, UF IFAS led by Martin County 4-H (Natalie Parkell) and Florida Sea Grant (Lisa Krinsky) created a 6-week Junior Water Ambassador Academy to enhance youth education in stormwater and marine science. The program reached youth from the Martin County Parks and Recreation Summer Camp Program centers and the East 10th Street Community Center.

**Paula Smith, Indiantown Garden.** The Indiantown Community Garden is a welcoming and joyful environment that also helps to reduce food insecurity among Indiantown residents. Master Gardener Paula Smith led the effort to establish the garden, which is sponsored by the Boys and Girls Club of Martin County Indiantown Branch. Paula has helped residents grow healthy food for their families, and the garden now includes vegetable plots for 45 families.

**The Pine School.** In addition to working with local nature centers, state parks, and turtle sanctuaries, the Pine School has broadened its curriculum through its Off-Campus Education Week, during which students learn about the ecosystems of the Everglades and Florida Keys. The school has been recognized with the Green School of Excellence award, Garden Club of America awards, and The Lemelson/M.I.T. Foundation InvenTeam grants award for its environmental programming.

## 2022 Environmental Stewardship Awards Nominees

**Project LIFT, Vehicle Repair Program.** Project LIFT has been celebrated for its approach to delivering mental health services, but its vocational training program also contributes to the environment. In the auto repair shop, donated vehicles are repaired and then donated back to community members in need or teens who have graduated from the program, keeping the vehicles out of the landfill and serving a useful purpose. Project LIFT recently celebrated its 152nd car giveaway.

**River Kidz.** The River Kidz, more than 500 strong, have an astonishing list of achievements: they have lobbied against offshore oil drilling, circulated petitions to limit fertilizer runoff, appeared in a documentary filmed by the Everglades Foundation, attended rallies against Lake Okeechobee discharges, organized a Rally for the Manatees, attended a congressional hearing on the lagoon's health, developed a workbook for elementary school students, and used social media to promote protection of our rivers.

**Steve Burton, Florida Atlantic University (FAU) Harbor Branch.** As Director of the Stranding and Population Assessment team at FAU's Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, Steve Burton and his team research, rescue, conserve, and protect marine mammals, specifically dolphins and whales. The team visits the Indian River Lagoon, from Sebastian Inlet in the north to Jupiter Inlet in the south, to photograph, identify, and assist stranded animals, and they work with Florida Fish and Wildlife in manatee rescue.

**Students4H2O and Martin County School District.** Students4H2O are always thinking of new ways to care for our water resources and educate our community. Most recently they collaborated with Martin County School District on a plastic bag recycling contest. The City of Stuart provided receptacles where plastic bags could be deposited. Students4H2O members and school personnel monitored the collection and facilitated the volunteer network that delivered the bags to the nearest Publix Supermarket for recycling.

**Sunday Piccoli.** Palm City resident Sunday Piccoli not only takes pride in cleaning up the streets of Palm City, but she also drives to Sewall's Point nearly every morning to walk from St. Lucia Beach to the House of Refuge and collect litter. She deposits paper waste at beach receptacles and transports plastic, glass, and metal waste back to her home for recycling. Every night, Sunday hand-paints stones or shells that she finds on her travels and gifts them to others.

**Taryn Kryzda.** Martin County Administrator Taryn Kryzda will retire this summer, having served 12 years in this role. She provided leadership during numerous hurricanes and tropical storms, tackled the challenge of blue-green algae summers, facilitated advocacy efforts in Tallahassee and D.C., and collaborated on major community improvement projects, including Sailfish Splash Waterpark, the Veterans Memorial Bridge, the U.S. Customs Facility, and numerous stormwater treatment and retention area projects.