

Bagdad Waterfronts Florida Partnership, Inc.

Front Porch News

JANUARY 2009

NEWSLETTER

BAGDAD, FLORIDA

Annual Report

This year's significant accomplishments have been the first annual St. Patrick's Day Party, the Bagdad Lighting Program, the Ollinger & Bruce Shipyard Park opening, the Mill Site Park Master Planning process, the third annual Front Porch Art Stroll, and expansion of the Neighborhood Watch Program.

The next twelve months hold a tremendous amount of activity and initiative for improvements needed in Bagdad. Two grants were submitted in October to support Bagdad's ongoing planning efforts and to further its vision goals.

Two grants are currently under review by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coastal Partnership Initiative grant program.

Santa Rosa County submitted a grant to build a boat ramp and pavilion at the Mill Site Park. The Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership submitted a grant to create a master plan for the whole waterfront district and to fund a manager to organize planning efforts.

We hope to report back to you after April with great news that we have received all the funding we requested!

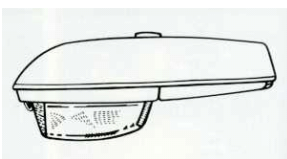
Celebrating Community Success Ollinger & Bruce Park Open For Enjoyment

The Bagdad Waterfronts Florida Partnership has a lot to celebrate as 2009 begins. Last year, we saw completion of the Ollinger & Bruce Shipyard Park. In the last several months, the Partnership completed the third and final phase of developing the waterfront "pocket park" adjacent to the community's busiest boat landing, the Oyster Shell Pile Boat Landing (also known as the Tampa Landing).

Located on Northwest Florida Water Management

District property, the park is located near the site of a former shipyard and freight wharf. The site is about one acre in size and boasts a pavilion and picnic area and a nature trail along the Blackwater River. The project took one year in light of the eradication of aggressive invasive plants. The park will eventually connect with the Bagdad Mill Site Park and the future Bagdad Heritage Trail.

In 2006, the Partnership's Public Access to the Waterfront committee approached Northwest Florida Water Management District about creating a park on the vacant property. It was approved by the Water Management District soon after the request. As a part of the Great American Cleanup in April 2007, volunteers started tackling the overgrown lot, and clearing out massive growth of wisteria, kudzu and Chinese privet. A few weeks later, Help Thy Neighbors Volunteer Center provided 30 volunteers through Clearwire Wireless Corp. to finish clearing the lot and cleaning the debris. Water Management District provided funding for the fence and the picnic pavilion at the site. Santa Rosa County Public Works provided picnic tables and labor for pavilion construction. Other financial support was provided by the Blackwater River Foundation for native tree plantings. The park project is maintained by volunteer support through the Bagdad Waterfronts Florida Partnership, Inc. To find out how you can help, call 981-9915 or email BagdadWaterfronts@gmail.com. ■



Lighting Program Needs Help to Keep Lights On

You may have noticed more street lights in Bagdad. Those lights have been provided for you by the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership through donations by community members like you. The lights have been on for nearly a year, but the bill is due and money is running short. We need your help to keep the lights on! Whether it is \$1 or \$100, any amount will help. To donate, please fill out the form on the back of this newsletter and send any amount of money you can. All donations are tax-deductable and very much appreciated! ■

2008: Year in Review

June 14: Neighborhood Watch "Assist a Neighbor Day"



October 9: Mill Site Park Cleanup



October 16: Bagdad Front Porch Art Stroll



Visit us online at www.BagdadWaterfronts.org

Bagdad Mill Site Park Update



The Bagdad Mill Site Park development is moving forward with plans to install irrigation, plant large trees, and prepare the site for layout and installation of a multiple use trail inside the park that will be known as the Bagdad Heritage Trail. Sand Live Oak, Magnolia, and Cypress trees were purchased from a local tree farm in December and will be delivered by the truckload when the site is prepared. The trees have been supplied through a grant.

The irrigation system is also well under way. The Bagdad Garson Point Water System has located both a 2" and a 3/4" meter on site and both are ready to be connected. Stephen Furman, Santa Rosa County Public Works Engineer, is working with Partnership Vice President Doug Lasater on the irrigation plan which awaits approval from the landowner, the Florida Office of Greenways and Trails. Through a grant, Santa Rosa County has installed a split-rail fence along the water's edge.

An exciting aspect of the progress has been a final decision by Santa Rosa County to remove all of the derelict buildings from the site, a decision consistent with the Bagdad Vision Plan. This decision has allowed for the layout of the multiple use trail so site planning can move forward. As the site prep is completed we will be seeking volunteers to assist with the installation of the irrigation system and the planting of the trees. To find out how you can help, call (850) 981-9915 or email BagdadWaterfronts@gmail.com.

Neighborhood Watch Update



You may have noticed Neighborhood Watch signs popping up throughout Bagdad. They're more than signs. They're a statement. That statement is that Bagdad now has a strong Neighborhood Watch Program coordinated through the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership. In June, more than 20 people participated in Bagdad's first "Assist a Neighbor Day". Participants included Bagdad residents, volunteers from NAS Whiting Field, and the Chipola section from Camp E-Ma-Chamee. The Help Thy Neighbors Volunteer Center coordinated the groups. The volunteers cleared an overgrown right of way on Limit Street that was rumored to host illegal activity. The volunteers also helped two homeowners that day by removing dead trees and clearing overgrown areas on their properties. The Waterfronts committee met with the Santa Rosa Sheriff's Office during the summer to have the abandoned rights of way re-designated as "maintained" properties by Santa Rosa County. In response, the County cleared the remainder of the right of way and additional nearby areas. To see pictures of the cleanup, visit www.BagdadWaterfronts.org.

Additionally, the committee met with the County Roads and Bridges Department who contributed additional posts for the Neighborhood Watch signs. They placed them in chosen locations. Bagdad now has a total of 10 Neighborhood Watch signs – four along Forsyth Street, as well as three signs east and three signs west of Forsyth Street. There is a survey that will be distributed to evaluate improvements over the past year and identify additional needs. Thank you, Susan Creel, for coordinating such a great program!

The next Neighborhood Watch meeting is planned for May 15!

To find out more or how you can help, call (850) 981-9915 or email BagdadWaterfronts@gmail.com.

We need your help!

Everyone welcome. Everyone can help.

To find out more, join us for our monthly meetings held at 6 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Bagdad United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall. Meetings are free and open to the public.

Also, you can reach us by phone at (850) 981-9915 or by email at BagdadWaterfronts@gmail.com.

Bagdad Vision Statement: A beautiful and safe community closely connected to the water, the Village of Bagdad is unique residential community committed to maintaining and enhancing its unique historic character and natural resources. Recreation and cultural opportunities abound, and small businesses complement the natural and historic character of the area. Bagdad residents enjoy a quality of life that fosters pride, welcomes visitors, and encourages families to remain for generations. ~ Adopted by the community in July 2006.



Bagdad Waterfronts Florida Partnership, Inc.
Post Office Box 801
Bagdad, Florida 32530

You can make Bagdad a better home for EVERYONE! MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail address _____ Phone _____

_____ I cannot contribute at this time, but please keep me updated!

Volunteer for a committee!

_____ Public Access to the Waterfront _____ Environmental Protection

_____ Special Events _____ Neighborhood Watch

_____ Cultural Protection _____ Economic Revitalization/Safety

***Make checks payable to Bagdad Waterfronts Florida Partnership, Inc.**

Annual Membership

(Check appropriate level)

- Individual (\$15)
- Non-profit (\$20)
- Family (\$20)
- Business (\$25)
- Sustaining member (\$100, valid for 10 years)
- Other _____

All donations are tax deductible.