

# Arbor Bio

**The Official On-Line Newsletter of the Tampa Bay Reforestation and Environmental Effort, Inc. [treeinc.org/](http://treeinc.org/)**

**Volume 40, Number 3 October 2022 - December 2022**



## **Goodbyes and New Beginnings:**

*It is with regret that I tell you that three valued members of TREE, Inc. have recently left their positions.*

*It is with joy, however, that I tell you that their leaving was for the sake of their own personal and professional growth.*

*Matt King stepped down from his position as Secretary on July 9<sup>th</sup> in order to fulfill growing personal obligations. His timely and thorough work in that position was exemplary and will be sorely missed. A TREE, Inc. Lifetime Member, Matt has agreed to stay on as the organization's web master.*

*Dr. Deb Hilbert, TREE, Inc.'s first Environmental Program Director, steps down from that position effective September 30<sup>th</sup> in order to become the new Executive Director of the Florida Urban Forestry Council. In addition to this major professional accomplishment, Dr. Hilbert also accept an Adjunct Professor position with the University of Wisconsin that she will begin shortly. Deb's stellar work on behalf of TREE, Inc. was amongst the most significant since its founding 40 years ago. She will remain a member and will continue to look for new opportunities for our organization.*

*Marcella DiBrino, TREE, Inc.'s first Intern, will also be stepping down from that position in order to continue to pursue her education at Eckerd College. She hopes to one day earn a Masters Degree and currently plans to be involved in the field of entomology.*

*The very best of luck to three of you and thank you for your wonderful contributions to TREE, Inc.! We hope to still see you at our future plantings and meetings.*

*In closing, I would be remiss to not point out that upon his stepping down as Secretary, Matt King informed me that like Deb Hilbert, he too has a PhD. So here's also wishing Dr. King and his partner Meara Thombre many wonderful years ahead!*

## **A Sad Goodbye - - TREE, Inc. Mourns the Loss of Dr. India Imperatore:**

TREE, Inc. Lifetime Member Dr. India Imperatore of New London, Pennsylvania, passed away suddenly at her home on September 6, 2022.

India was a doctor of veterinary medicine as well as a Lifetime Member of TREE, Inc. and the mother of Lifetime Member and former Public Relations Director Olivia Thompson.

A Canary Island Pine (*Pinus canariensis*) was planted by TREE, Inc. in her memory at the University of South Florida Botanical Gardens in Tampa on September 17, 2022. Olivia also plans to plant a tree in her mother's memory at the family's farm in Pennsylvania.

TREE, Inc. Vice President Bob Scheible most eloquently described the essence of this extraordinary person:

*"...India was a wonderful woman, a delightful person to know. She was brilliant, interesting and fascinating, and of course her generosity was overwhelming. And of course, her love of trees certainly endeared her to all of us. I always thought she should have had an award for "Farthest Distance Traveled to Help Us Plant Trees".*

*We'll miss her immensely..."*

A dedication and photo of Dr. Imperatore is on the last page of this newsletter.



***A Sign of the Times!*** Many thanks go to Deb Hilbert and Marcella DiBrino for their fine work in making this educational set of signs possible at Forrest Bluff Park in St. Petersburg. After much brain storming they came up with the design and copy for the signs. The signs are a part of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program grant that made possible the planting of native trees at this Park on June 11<sup>th</sup>. Many thanks also go to the City of St. Petersburg for providing water, labor and material to keep the trees healthy and for the installation of the signs. Photo courtesy of Bobby Spittle, Parks Operation Foreman with the City of St. Petersburg's Parks and Recreation Department.

## **Projects Pending:**

- **Hillsborough Community College Wetland and Stormwater Enhancement Project, Phase Four, Plant City:**

Deb Hilbert and Marcella DiBrino have also been busy since July 2<sup>nd</sup> with planning a proposed second MetLife Foundation Tree Planting Grant at the Plant City campus of Hillsborough Community College. They conducted a site visit on July 21<sup>st</sup> and devised a Draft Plan on August 28<sup>th</sup>. This second phase would be an expansion of the removal of the campus' invasive Sword Fern and replacing it with native Florida understory trees. If the Grant is awarded, the invasive removal and native understory tree planting event would be tentatively scheduled for January 2023. Many thanks to Deb and Marcella for their work on this, and we will keep you updated on this proposal as events unfold.

- **One Thousand Trees for One Thousand Years:**

This program sponsored by Cherry Lake Tree Farm ([Home - 1000 Trees for 1000 Years \(1000trees1000years.com\)](#)) involves the giveaway of Baldcypress (*Taxodium distichum*) trees to eligible organizations and municipalities. On March 12<sup>th</sup> TREE, Inc. applied for 500 trees that, if awarded, would tentatively be planted at the following locations- Lake Dan Nature Preserve in Hillsborough County; New Tampa Nature Preserve in Tampa; Forest Hills Park in Tampa; and Boyd Hill Nature Preserve in St. Petersburg. The deadline for applications was extended to August 30<sup>th</sup> so hopefully we will know by the in the near future if our application was approved.

## **Make Your Purchases on Amazon Smile and Support TREE Inc!**

*AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible items to T.R.E.E. Inc. when you use it! What better way to buy gifts and support T.R.E.E. Inc. than using AmazonSmile? Link to <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-2350005> to take advantage of this unique offer! ALSO! Don't forget that TREE, Inc. has T-Shirts for \$20.00. Inquire to see if your size is available!*

## **TREE Inc. 4th Quarterly Meeting, Saturday October 8th at 11:30 A.M.**

**Gaspar's Patio Bar and Grille**  
8448 N. 56<sup>th</sup> Street  
Temple Terrace, Florida 33617  
[HOME | gasparspatio](#)

*Food and drink on your own. If you would like a copy of the Meeting Agenda prior to this meeting, please e-mail [treeinctampabay@gmail.com](mailto:treeinctampabay@gmail.com)*

## **Educational Profile:**

### **Loblolly Bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*) (L) J. Ellis – Tea Family (Theaceae)**

This member of the Tea Family (Theaceae) is native to pocosins, bayheads, wet pine savannahs, acidic organic-rich swamps and bay forests from southern Virginia to southeast Texas. In Florida, Loblolly Bay naturally occurs from the Alabama-Georgia borders south to Sarasota and Palm Beach Counties.

Loblolly Bay is a very attractive tree due to its dark green glossy leaves and its white camellia-like blooms. It is, however, somewhat difficult to establish in the home garden due to its exacting conditions for optimal growth. It prefers moist but not wet conditions in exposed soil, as well as organic-rich acidic conditions. Where these conditions can be met, it is a tree well worth using.

The Florida and National Champion Loblolly Bay is the same tree located in Duval County, although the state and national statistics on the tree vary - - The Florida Champion is credited at having a crown of 58' (the national



is 57'), a height of 117' (the national is 86') and a circumference of 145" (the national is 150") -- so make of it what you will!

**Mature Height:** 35' to 70' tall with a trunk diameter of 20".

**Bark:** Medium grey to red brown.

**Crowns:** Columnar or pyramidal, open growth habit with a narrow compact crown of spreading branches.

**Leaves:** Evergreen, dark glossy green with silvery undersides, 2" - 7" long, alternate, simple with serrated margins. Old leaves often turn brilliant red before dropping from the tree.

**Flowers:** White with yellow stamens, 2" - 3" wide bloom from May to October. Buds at the top of the tree tend to open first..

**Fruit:** Is a 0.6" 5 valved capsule with 74 to 8 flat winged seeds. Seed fall starts in October and peaks in December.

**Growth Rate:** Generally slow to moderate (1' to 3" annually).

**Soil:** Loblolly Bay prefers moist acidic soil rich in organic matter.

**Sun:** Loblolly Bay grows in full sun to full shade. In full shade, Loblolly Bay is a strong competitor.

**Drought Tolerance:** Low. Water frequently during drought periods.

**Wildlife Value:** Deer heavily browse on stump sprouts. Flowers attract bumblebees, thrips and hummingbirds.



#### ***Other Florida members of the Tea Family:***

***Stewartia malacodendron- Silky Camellia:*** This is an extremely ornamental plant due its profusion of white spring flowers. It is a large deciduous shrub to small tree, typically up to 15', rarely up to 30' tall. It grows along stream banks, ravines and wooded bluffs from east Texas to southeastern Virginia, as well as from the Alabama and Georgia borders south to Escambia and Leon Counties.

## **Welcome New Members!**

Individual: Jan Allyn, Largo, Florida

## **T.R.E.E. Inc. Board of Directors**

President: **William Moriaty**

Vice President: **Bob Scheible**

Treasurer: **Harvey A. Hunt, P.E.**

Public Relations Director: **Ashle' Baines**

## **Lifetime Members and Founders**

William Moriaty (Founder)

Bob Scheible (Founder)

Greg Van Stavern (Founder)

Greg Howe (Founder)

Nancy Buckley (Honorary Founder)

## **Lifetime Members**

Autumn Eve Anderson  
Sheryl Bowman  
Cliff Brown  
Sydney and Rick Brown  
Debbie Butts  
\* Karen Cashon  
Dade City Garden Club  
\* Alice Earle  
Dr. Sylvia Earle  
Michelle Elrod  
\* Ross J. Ferlita  
Harvey A. Hunt, P.E.  
Hillsborough Soil and Water Conservation District  
Horticultural Alliance, Inc.  
Hugh Gramling  
\*Dr. India Imperatore  
William Jonson  
Keep Pinellas Beautiful  
Matt King  
Brightman Logan  
The Maldonado Macia Family  
Revello Medical Centers  
Denise & Michael Riebe Foundation, Inc.  
Howard and Christina Saytor  
Richard Strickland  
Olivia Thompson  
\* Barbara Waddell  
Wilcox Nursery and Landscape  
Harold Walker, Hyde Park Greenscape  
Dr. Richard Wunderlin  
Brett Youngster  
Richard A. Bailey (Honorary)  
Kathy Beck (Honorary)  
John L. Blechschmidt Jr. (Honorary)  
Kathy Caffentzis (Honorary)  
Dana Carver (Honorary)  
Bob Der (Honorary)  
Steve Graham (Honorary)  
\*Gary L. Henry, R.L.A. (Honorary)  
Susana Thompson (Honorary)  
**\*deceased**

## **Questions? Comments?**

Send us an e-mail to [treeinctampabay@gmail.com](mailto:treeinctampabay@gmail.com)

***If you would like to include your organization's events that will occur between January and March 2023, please e-mail TREE Inc. at [treeinctampabay@gmail.com](mailto:treeinctampabay@gmail.com)  
Please include the type of event, its location, date, time and contact information.  
Deadline for submissions is December 15, 2022.***

*This Issue is lovingly Dedicated in the Memory of TREE, Inc. Lifetime Member Dr. India Imperatore – April 18, 1956 – September 6, 2022*

