



### *Volunteers Help to Restore Oyster Reefs in Lake Worth Lagoon*

On Saturday, December 12, over 150 volunteers gathered at the Town of Lantana's Bicentennial Park to fill more than 1,200 netted bags with 24 tons of fossilized shell. The filled bags were transported across the Ocean Avenue Bridge to the Lantana Nature Preserve where volunteers formed a "bivalve brigade" to place the bags along the shoreline of the Lake Worth Lagoon. The bagged shell will provide a stable base for the development of new oyster reefs, attracting numerous species of fish and invertebrates and filtering the water. This will help create new estuarine habitat and improve water quality throughout the lagoon.

The Lake Worth Lagoon is Palm Beach County's largest estuary, extending about 20 miles from the Village of North Palm Beach to the Town of Ocean Ridge. Oysters are found in several locations and are an important part of a healthy estuarine system. Juvenile oysters attach themselves with a glue-like substance to rocks, shell, or adult oysters. However, the availability of hard surfaces for attachment is limited throughout the lagoon.

This project is the result of the successful collaboration between the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners through its Department of Environmental Resources Management, the Town of Lantana, the West Palm Beach Fishing Club, the Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative ([www.LWLI.org](http://www.LWLI.org)) and local residents. For more information about this project, please contact the Department of Environmental Resources Management at 561.233.2400.



If you're looking for a way to reduce your water bill and ensure that you have water on hand during our region's next drought, rain harvesting with a rain barrel is the perfect solution. A rain barrel is a water catchment system designed to collect and store the rainwater from your roof that is normally diverted to storm drains, lost to evaporation, or restricted to a localized area. By storing rainwater you will also be helping to reduce levels of pesticides and fertilizers in stormwater ponds, streams, lakes and bays. A rain barrel can save ~1,300 gallons of free water during summer months that can be used for a variety of purposes, from watering gardens and landscaping to washing your vehicles. RainLife Rain Barrels cooperates with local dairy farms in recycling used plastic drums into rain barrels. We also donate to many local schools, charities, and non-profit organizations and showcase the artwork of local artists on select barrels, which helps us educate the community about the importance of water conservation. If you are interested in learning more about our rain barrels, please contact Jason or Holly Andreotta at (561) 459-0535 or visit our website at [www.RainLifeRainBarrels.com](http://www.RainLifeRainBarrels.com).





## *Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County Community Service*

I'm sure many of you, as environmentalists, see a lot of the downfalls with landfills, incinerators, and the companies who manage solid waste. As environmentalists we worry about leachates when liners fail to protect our groundwater, decomposing garbage releasing methane and sulfurous gases which add to smog and the greenhouse effect, highly toxic ash produced through incineration, and the environmental impacts many of these issues and more have on us and the wildlife around them. However, this article isn't about what is wrong with these types of solid waste management, this article is about the ways that the companies who manage solid waste are trying to better the environment, through recycling programs, reducing use, partnering with local communities to better neighborhoods, and working with local municipalities and government agencies to improve our environment.

In Palm Beach County, the Solid Waste Authority (SWA) is able to help the environment through the development of a number of recycling initiatives. The SWA sponsors many programs such as the Adopt-A-Spot Program,

Rebuilding Together of the Palm Beaches, Paint Your Heart Out Palm Beach County, the Recycled Paint Program, Litter Abatement Education Programs, efforts to reduce reuse and recycle, and many more.

If you belong to a group that is looking for volunteer opportunities to enhance our environment or if you, family members, and/or neighbors are looking for an opportunity to give back to your community, the Solid Waste Authority's "Adopt-A-Spot" program may be just what you're looking for! Any size group can commit to clean and beautify a specific area at least four times a year. In return for your commitment, the Solid Waste Authority will provide trash bags and gloves for every clean-up, t-shirts, training and litter abatement education, and recognition at an annual appreciation luncheon.

As a member of the Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative (LWLI) the Solid Waste Authority is also encouraging volunteer groups that want to help the environment to consider "Adopting-a-Spot" along Lake Worth Lagoon. There is a role for all interested

residents, community leaders, local government, agencies, universities and schools, organizations, and businesses to play in the LWLI. The benefits of getting involved are numerous and include personal fulfillment, better public decisions that reflect scientific research, local knowledge and a more environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable county. To learn more, visit [www.lwli.org](http://www.lwli.org).

The Recycled Paint Program donates recycled paint to residents in need and non-profit organizations. They donate to community improvement projects and recruit volunteers to help with the painting. They partner with Paint Your Heart Out (PYHO) Palm Beach County and Rebuilding Together of the Palm Beaches for home repairs to help members of our community live safely in their homes.

The SWA has donated 8,000 plus gallons of paint to homeowners, non-profits and community projects. PYHO has painted over 150 homes this year alone with the strength of 4000 volunteers. Rebuilding

Together PB has rehabilitated over 32 homes this year alone. The SWA recycles and reuses everything possible. The paint is recycled and reused, mulch and compost is available at the SWA for donation, and painting supplies are donated and reused over and over again.



And remember, before the sanitary landfill concept came into being in the late 1950's, there were no laws or standard operating procedures for dealing with our solid waste. With the knowledge we have and the initiatives that are now in force, managers for solid waste have become much more environmentally friendly and conscious.

To learn more about participating in these programs please contact the Solid Waste Authority's Customer Information Services Department at (561) 697-2700 or 1-866-SWA-INFO (toll-free from western and southern Palm Beach County), e-mail Joanna Aiken, Community Service Coordinator at [jaiken@swa.org](mailto:jaiken@swa.org), or visit the Solid Waste Authority's web site at: <http://www.swa.org>.

## *Inside Story Headline*