



A message from the GICIA: Full day fishing trip donated to fundraising campaign

Featured News, The News December 18, 2015



SUBMITTED BY THE GICIA – The Gasparilla Island Conservation and Improvement Association (GICIA) is extremely pleased to announce that we have reached \$19 million in

pledges toward the purchase of the Mercabo site. Although the campaign has been an overwhelming success so far, with over 600 contributors from Boca Grande and surrounding communities, we are still \$3M short of our \$22M goal, which includes the \$20.6 M purchase price and \$1.4M to demolish the buildings and begin the restoration process that will return the site to its natural state.

“It is heartwarming to see our community come together to insure that this unique parcel is protected,” said GICIA Executive Director Misty Nichols. In fact, the GICIA is excited to announce that Capt. Jackie Bylaska, a 4th generation local guide who specializes in fishing for snook, redfish and speckled trout, has donated a full day of fishing to be auctioned off to raise money for the Mercabo purchase. Capt. Bylaska will guide the winning angler in his 22’ Aquasport to fish, using light tackle spinning gear or fly-fishing equipment among the shallow grass flats and mangrove islands of Charlotte Harbor and Pine Island Sound.

“It is exciting to have a true local fisherman, who first-hand has seen the effects that overdevelopment of our fragile coastlines has had on our fisheries, want to participate in the protection of this 30-acre parcel” said Lance Isham, GICIA Land Conservancy Chair. “This is a great opportunity for someone to purchase a fishing trip as the perfect

Christmas gift and do their part in this important fund-raising campaign,” said Isham. The auction will begin on Friday, Dec. 18 and run through 5 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 22, with the winner being announced in the Boca Beacon on Christmas Eve. Bids received after 5 p.m. the 22nd will not be considered. So get your bid in today! This will be a silent bid auction, so please email your bids to GICIA@embarqmail.com today. Everyone who emails a bid will be notified of the results by email on Wednesday morning, Dec. 23.

The GICIA’s vision for this property, if we are successful in the acquisition, is to create a preserve by removing the buildings and creating and enhancing, much-needed habitat for native birds, animals and marine life. The goal for the property is to officially add it to the GICIA Land Conservancy holdings and protect them into perpetuity.

To make a pledge, please call the GICIA office at 964-2667 or stop by for a pledge form. You may also visit our website at thegicia.org to print a pledge form. Donors will be asked to honor their pledges in early January, 2016. All donations will be tax-deductible in the year 2016. A custody account has been established to accommodate donations of appreciated stock. The GICIA staff and board wish to thank the Boca Grande community for their tremendous support of this very important acquisition.



POSTED BY [MARCY SHORTUSE](#)

Marcy Shortuse is the editor of the Boca Beacon, and has been with the paper since 2007. She is also editor of the Boca Beacon's sister publication, Gasparilla Magazine. She has more than 20 years of experience writing and editing local newspapers and is originally from the Chicago area.

TAGGED WITH

[Boca Beacon](#)

[Boca Grande](#)

[Gasparilla Island](#)

[Gasparilla Island Conservation and Improvement Association](#)

[Mercabo](#)