



BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

2017

ANNUAL REPORT

Sea Turtle Preservation Society

For an electronic copy, visit our website at SeaTurtleSpaceCoast.org

The Sea Turtle Preservation Society

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Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 HISTORY.....	1
1.2 CORPORATION INFORMATION.....	2
1.3 CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS	2
1.4 MISSION - HELPING SEA TURTLES SURVIVE.....	4
1.5 ECONOMIC IMPACT TO COMMUNITY.....	5
2. OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS	7
3. PUBLIC EDUCATION.....	8
3.1 EDUCATION CENTER.....	8
3.2 PRESENTATIONS AND DISPLAYS.....	9
3.3 TURTLE WATCH/WALK PROGRAM	12
3.4 ADOPT A TURTLE PROGRAM	14
3.5 ATTENTION BOATERS PROGRAM.....	16
3.6 LIGHTS OUT FOR SEA TURTLES PROGRAM.....	16
4. STRANDING AND SALVAGE PROGRAM	18
4.1 STRANDING ACTIVITIES.....	19
4.2 STERP ACTIVITIES.....	21
4.3 SEA TURTLE TRANSPORT PROGRAM.....	22
4.4 BREVARD "SEA TURTLE HEALING CENTER".....	23
5. SEA TURTLE NESTING SURVEY PROGRAM	25
6. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	26
6.1 MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS.....	26
6.2 COMMUNICATIONS.....	27
6.3 BEACH CLEANUP PROGRAM	28
7. FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES	31
8. STPS MEMBERSHIPS	34
9. TOTAL ESTIMATED VOLUNTEER HOURS.....	36

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1. Introduction

STPS is celebrating its 31th anniversary this year (2017) and is proud of its accomplishments that are summarized in the following list:

- Recorded 22,519 volunteer hours which is a 24% increase in volunteer hours over the previous year;
- Participated in 118 events in its educational outreach programs, attended by over 38,000 people;
- Conducted 39 public Turtle Watch/Walk events, attended by approximately 1200 people;
- Responded to 245 strandings thus providing a positive economic impact to the community;
- Rescued over 1500 post hatchlings in the aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria;
- Coordinated efforts of 724 volunteers in beach cleanup efforts at two beaches adopted by STPS in the Keep Brevard Beautiful “Adopt a Shore” Program;
- Continued to support Brevard Sea Turtle Healing Center.

In 2017, STPS contributed approximately **22,519 volunteer hours valued at \$525,368** in volunteer labor provided to the Brevard County community with our volunteer activities. This dollar amount has been calculated using an estimated dollar value of volunteer time derived as by the 2017 Independent Sector Annual Conference. Their estimated dollar value of volunteer time for 2017 is \$23.33 per hour in Florida. See their web site at the following address: independentsector.org/volunteer_time.

The details of how we accomplished these levels are supplied in the following sections of this report.

1.1 History

In the mid-1980's, a local group of citizens concerned about our natural wildlife recognized that Brevard County contains some of the most important natural habitats for marine turtles in the world. The beaches of the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge are prime nesting areas for adult sea turtles, and the Indian River Lagoon is a developmental foraging habitat by juvenile sea turtles. The Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge along Florida's eastern coast is the largest loggerhead nesting area in the world and the largest green turtle nesting area in the Northern Hemisphere.

As a result, this group led by Peter Bandre (honorary lifetime member) banded together to help sea turtles in our area and the Sea Turtle Preservation Society (STPS) was formed. STPS was incorporated within the state of Florida in 1986 and is registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) with a mission statement to “help sea turtles survive.” To confirm the registration status of STPS, check the FDACS online Check-A-Charity tool to find out if a charity is properly registered: <http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Consumer-Resources/Consumer-Protection/Charities-FAQ>.

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

Many of our active volunteers are permitted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to work with endangered and threatened sea turtles. However, STPS is not an enforcement agency.

1.2 Corporation Information

STPS is a registered 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization. It is a “grass roots” organization that is not associated with any parent corporation nor supported by any government funding. STPS generates funding to pay for equipment, supplies, facilities, etc., needed to conduct its sea turtle activities through the proceeds from the gift shop, donations and its various fundraising activities, such as the Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk race and the Night Walk/Watch events. Contributions are tax-deductible as allowable by law. From its corporate origin, STPS was established as an “all volunteer organization.” There are no “stakeholders” or single owner that profits from any fundraising or merchandise sales. As a volunteer organization, STPS relies on the efforts of its dedicated volunteers to accomplish essentially all of its tasks. The only exception to this is the staffing of the office and gift shop. Experience has taught us that for the Sea Turtle House to remain open on a reliable basis the facility needs to be staffed as a paid position. This position requires one person to open and close the facility on a daily basis as well as perform the typical daily activities necessary to conduct business. This position is staffed through a temporary employment agency and is the only STPS position that receives payment for services rendered. Volunteers provide oversight and supplemental office support.

1.3 Corporate Headquarters

STPS named its corporate headquarters “Sea Turtle House”. It is located at 111 South Miramar Avenue, Indialantic, FL 32903. The Sea Turtle House is approximately 1500 square feet and provides multifunctional space for the following:

1. **Office and Gift Shop** - The main entrance to the Sea Turtle House is to the office and gift shop that is staffed Monday through Saturday 11:00 am until 5:00 pm in the spring and summer and 11:00 am to 4:30 pm in the fall and winter. Approximately 5,000 guests visited the Sea Turtle House annually. The staff fields questions from the public and answers phone calls ranging from information about our organization and sea turtles to typical tourist questions about other attractions in our area. We get many calls regarding injured birds and other wildlife. Calls received from the public that are not sea turtle related are referred to the appropriate responders group. The staff supports the fielding of stranding reports and assists with other sea turtle activities.

The office contains materials required to conduct STPS business, outreach programs and permitted activities:

- File cabinets containing legal organizational documents, FWC permits, insurance contracts, forms used for stranding and walks, completed membership and adoption applications,
- Telephones, display counter and cash register,
- Presentation equipment (projectors and laptops),
- Informational posters, brochures and educational displays.

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

The gift shop offers a variety of sea turtle related items: STPS shirts, hats, books, jewelry, photos, magnets and accessories. Proceeds from the sale of these items support the conservation and educational efforts of the STPS. In June the credit card machine stopped working. It was determined to be more economical to purchase an online point of sale system and upgrade to a system that had inventory capability than to purchase a new credit card machine. The results have been rewarding creating more accurate sales, detailed reports, and less time consuming end of day procedures.

On April 15, 2017 an SUV lost control and ran into the front of the Turtle House. There were no human injuries but significant damage was sustained by the front of the building. Four and a half months later, and two weeks before Hurricane Irma hit, custom made hurricane windows and door were installed, along with new carpeting. The store manager and associates began to modernize the gift shop, giving it a new look with more room for merchandise. A much needed improvement and customer compliments were overwhelming.

The following table contains the volunteer staffing information for the Sea Turtle House. These costs are derived by multiplying the number of volunteer hours by the cost per hour and adding the transportation cost.

2017 Sea Turtle House Volunteer Staffing	Number of Hours
Gift Shop Management Committee	100
Modernizing the Store	100
Store Manager Oversight	100
2017 Total Volunteer Hours	300
2017 Value of Volunteer Time \$23.33 x 300 hrs = \$6,999	

2. **Street Window Display** - A full color diorama depicting life-sized replicas of sea turtles nesting on the beach was staged in the front window viewable to inside guests as well as the public walking or driving by from January 1, 2017 through April 14, 2017. After the SUV damaged the building this diorama was not rebuilt.
3. **Education Center** - The Educational Center (which officially opened June 18, 2016) occupies a room adjacent to the gift shop. This space contains a variety of sea turtle educational displays and literature. It also has areas for group projects and one-on-one presentations to small groups.
4. **Sea Turtle Hatchling Drop Off** - A small drop off box is located in the back of the facility where sea turtle hatchlings can be deposited by the public after hours. A phone number is posted for them to call and alert our hotline. A sign on the front of the facility directs the public to the location of the drop box. There is also a drop box located at Lori Wilson Park South.
5. **Onsite Storage Area**
 The area provides storage for the following items:
 - a. Gift shop inventory
 - b. Equipment to support our various permitted activities such as STERP/stranding equipment and nest survey equipment
 - c. Supplies to support our major fundraising event, Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk Race
 - d. Freezer for temporary storage of deceased sea turtles for FWC pickup
 - e. Equipment for transporting live sea turtles to rehabilitation facilities

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

- f. Supplies prepared to support our various special events
- g. Public relations and educational material (brochures, flyers, posters and pamphlets)

6. STPS Sea Turtle Stranding Vehicle

1.4 Mission - Helping Sea Turtles Survive

STPS's primary goal is to help maintain the current sea turtle populations and to prevent a potentially irreversible decline in that population. Our primary effort is focused on educating the public about marine turtles and the environmental niche they occupy. STPS reaches thousands of people each year through presentations/talks, exhibits at area events, our website and Facebook page, our Turtle Watches/Walk events during the sea turtle nesting season and visitors to the Sea Turtle House. STPS's efforts to achieve this goal include the following activities:

- Educating the public about the hazards of nighttime beach activities with the goal of reducing disturbance and harassment of nesting sea turtles;
- Educating the public about the impact of lighting, beach debris, habitat destruction with the goal of increasing hatchling survival rate;
- Responding to reports of dead and injured sea turtles and contributing data to the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN);
- Rescuing hatchlings, post hatchlings and adult sea turtles and transporting them to permitted rehabilitation facilities;
- Conducting a nest survey project in conjunction with the Florida Nesting Survey Program;
- Educating the boating public about marine pollution and the dangers to sea turtles while boating in the river and ocean;
- Participating in Keep Brevard Beautiful, Adopt-A-Beach program by performing monthly cleanup activities;
- Supporting the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge; and
- Supporting the local Brevard Zoo "Sea Turtle Healing Center" by contributing a significant part of the proceeds from the Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk.

Special Projects / High Lites From 2017

- STPS funded two transmitters in the amount of \$7,420 for Dean Bagley's marine turtle research on male green turtles. The turtles were named Spencer and Redfoot. Spencer Moberg was a student at Deerfield Middle School in 2016 and donated \$3,000 to STPS from his project named "Passion Project 8th Grade". Redfoot was named for Bill Redfoot, an integral member of the UCF Marine Turtle Research Group since 1982.
- STPS donated \$5,000 to the Friends of the Carr Refuge for their ongoing fund raiser to support the nest surveys in the Carr Refuge.
- STPS adopted a non-discrimination policy that was added to the By-Laws and posted on the STPS website.

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

1.5 Economic Impact to Community

All sea turtles found in U.S. waters are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). All sea turtles found in Florida are also protected by the Florida Statutes Title XXVIII 379.2431, also known as the Marine Turtle Protection Act. Both acts provide protection to threatened and endangered sea turtles with penalties for violations ranging from misdemeanors to third degree felony. This protection also requires that anyone interacting with sea turtles (dead or alive) must be permitted and properly trained by FWC guidelines. Since there is a large number of sea turtles that frequent the Brevard County waters and beaches, city and county officials must be prepared to address these federal and state requirements when turtles wash up on their community's shores. Currently, the cities rely on STPS to do this job. However, if STPS did not have trained and permitted volunteers to provide this vital function, each city would be responsible for performing this type of permitted support using its own financial resources.

In 2017, the STPS Stranding Team responded to 210 calls in eight of Brevard County cities. This effort required 945 volunteer hours (valued at \$21,452) and \$3,600 in vehicle expenses. The overall value of this effort has been estimated to be \$25,052. (Note, this value does not include volunteer hours for any annual training.) STPS does not charge any fees for conducting stranding activities. STPS conducts stranding activities in all of Brevard County, not just the eight aforementioned cities. Stranding activities are also conducted in the Melbourne Beach area by the University of Central Florida and the University of Florida which are not included in the table.

To illustrate how this effort is a positive monetary impact to Brevard County's beachfront communities we have created the following table. This table shows the number of actual stranding events (that occurred in 2017) for each of eight different cities and the approximate cost that each city would have incurred if they were responsible for stranded sea turtles in their city. The cost data is broken down by volunteer hours to perform the stranding activities and the vehicle cost to transport live turtles to a rehab facility. This estimate does not include the cost of any miscellaneous equipment that may be needed to conduct the stranding or the annual recurring labor cost for training.

STPS 2017 Stranding Calls for Eight Brevard County Cities						
City	Strandings		Volunteer Hours	Value of Volunteer Hours	Average Vehicle Cost	Total Cost For Each City
	Live	Dead				
	Note 1	Note 2				
Cape Canaveral	2	12	56	\$1,271	\$160	\$1,431
Cocoa Beach	10	67	301	\$6,833	\$800	\$7,633
Indialantic	5	45	185	\$4,200	\$400	\$4,600
Indian Harbor Beach	3	1	33	\$749	\$240	\$989
Melbourne Beach (Town & Region)	10	23	169	\$3,836	\$800	\$4,636

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

STPS 2017 Stranding Calls for Eight Brevard County Cities						
City	Strandings		Volunteer Hours	Value of Volunteer Hours	Average Vehicle Cost	Total Cost For Each City
	Live	Dead				
Satellite Beach (City & Township)	4	7	61	\$1,385	\$320	\$1,705
Port Canaveral and Jetty Park	11	4	122	\$2,769	\$880	\$3,649
Patrick Air Force Base	0	6	18	\$409	\$0	\$409
Totals	210		945	\$21,452	\$3,600	\$25,052

NOTES:

1. A typical stranded **live** turtle takes two people approximately 3 volunteer hours each to respond to and complete the stranding process. Additionally, it takes one person an average of 4 volunteer hours to transport the turtle to a rehabilitation facility; depending on the location of the facility. (Example for 10 live turtles: (10x2x3) + (10x1x4) equals 100 hours.);
2. A typical stranded **dead** turtle takes one person approximately 3 volunteer hours to respond to and complete the stranding process (Example for 10 dead turtles: 10x1x 3 hours equals 30 volunteer hours);
3. Labor cost is calculated using the 2017 Independent Sector Annual Conference Estimate for Volunteer labor in Florida which is \$23.33 per hour,
4. Average vehicle expense is calculated at \$80 per roundtrip;
5. Stranded live turtles may be transported to any of the following rehabilitation facilities: Brevard Zoo Healing Center, Ponce Inlet, Juno Beach, Gumbo Limbo Park, Orlando Sea World and Mote Marine-Sarasota.

2. Officers and Board of Directors

The STPS Board of Directors determines its direction as outlined in the bylaws, policies and procedures adopted by the Board. In addition, the Board determines the appropriate course of action for the corporation in areas outside the bounds of its bylaws, policies and procedures. The Board of Directors consists of a minimum of nine (9) and a maximum of thirteen (13) members in good standing. All board members serve as non-paid volunteers.

The Board of Directors elects the Chairperson of the Board each January for a one-year term. The same person can serve multiple terms. The Chairperson compiles an agenda before each Board meeting and presides over meetings of the Board of Directors.

The Treasurer and Secretary are appointed by the STPS Board for an indefinite term and serve according to STPS's policies and procedures. The primary permit holders for the Nest Survey Activities, the Stranding Activities and the Night Walk Activities serve on the STPS Board as appointed positions. The "at large" board positions are two-year terms that expire on alternating years. Elections are conducted at the Annual Membership Meeting held in December. The Board of Directors meets once a month or as otherwise directed in STPS's policies and procedures. The STPS Board members are a "working board" in that the majority of the members take on an oversight role in the various organizational activities.

Name	Term Expires	Position
Vickie Openshaw	Elected by Board	Chairperson
Vickie Openshaw	Appointed	Secretary
Kathy LeBresco	Appointed	Treasurer
Dori Hughes	Appointed	Primary Permit Holder for Nest Surveys
Roger Pszonowsky	Appointed	Primary Permit Holder for Strandings
Craig Konkell	Appointed	Primary Permit Holder for Night Walks
Dave Cheney	2017	At Large Director / Received Primary Permit Holder for Transports in Nov 2017
Cindy Ullmer	2017	At Large Director
Jo-Ellen Mathews	2017	At Large Director
Nikia Rice	2018	At Large Director
Heather Pepe	2017	At Large Director
Sarah Tolson	2018	At Large Director

3. Public Education

STPS believes that educating the public about threats to sea turtles and explaining what the public can do to ensure their survival is the most effective method of accomplishing our mission of helping sea turtles survive. We are very proud of these efforts and consistently receive very positive responses from those who take advantage of them. We consistently try to further our education efforts by integrating it into all of our activities. For example, when we rescue a stranded sea turtle on the beach or in the lagoon, conduct our monthly beach cleanups, or perform our nest surveys, people on the beach are naturally curious about what we are doing. Therefore, we take advantage of the opportunity by explaining what we are doing and why it helps our sea turtles. We also answer any follow-up questions and frequently give them a brochure or flier to take home so they can learn more about our efforts.

STPS developed the following approaches to educate the public:

1. Education Center
2. Presentations and Displays
3. Turtle Watch/Walk Program
4. Adopt A Turtle Program
5. Attention Boaters Program
6. Lights Out for Sea Turtles Program

Learn about each of these in the following sections.

3.1 Education Center

In 2017 there have been several summer camps, science fair interviews, “English as a second language” presentations and various other impromptu groups that have visited our Education Center. Since its inception in 1986, STPS has included educational displays throughout its facility. Since 2016 the STPS Education Center has housed informational posters, brochures and educational displays. Sea turtle related artwork is featured throughout the center from local kids around the state and beyond. In addition, the center contains stations for hands on and interactive education, sea turtle videos, and presentations by reservation for groups of 20-25. The center also has real sea turtle artifacts including skulls, carapaces, and other products that STPS is permitted to display. Additional replicas include a life-sized adult green turtle, a sub-adult loggerhead, a juvenile loggerhead and a juvenile Kemp’s Ridley.

On World Sea Turtle Day (June 16 2017) we instituted a campaign **“to keep the beaches clean, dark and flat for the turtles”** by pledging to do the following:

- Never littering,
- Picking up trash when I can,
- Never using a flashlight on the beaches during nesting season,
- Knock down my sandcastles,
- Fill in any holes in the sand.

We have received over 300 signatures and counting.

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

We also started a **“skip the straw campaign”** to spread awareness and inspire action to stop using plastic straws.

3.2 Presentations and Displays

During 2017, STPS was invited to provide the following talks and displays to various demographics around Brevard County. Approximately 38,000 people attended one or more of the educational outreach events in which STPS participated.

- The presentations were made at schools, libraries, festivals, community organizations and clubs in the Brevard County area. The presentations were of two types: a slide/video show or an informal lecture. Both included a question and answer period.
- The displays generally consist of an educational board, free literature, marine turtle replicas and STPS items that are available for sale. Volunteers answer questions from the public.

The following is a list of the public contacts/events.

STPS Presentations and Displays for 2017							
DATE	DISPLAY TALK HOURS	TYPE	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CITY	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS	VOLUNTEER HOURS
1/4/17	11-1230PM	Presentation	Girl Scout Troop	STPS Education Center	Indialantic	1	2
1/21/17	130-2PM	Presentation	Lego Team	Remote via Skype	Remote Education Center	1	1
2/4/17	1-5	Display	Volunteer Fair	Cocoa Beach Library	Cocoa Beach	16	72
2/5/17	1-5PM	Display	STPS Volunteer Fair	Cocoa Beach Library	Cocoa Beach	20	70
2/7/17	930-1030AM	Presentation	Home School Class	Cocoa Beach Public Library	Cocoa Beach	1	4
2/8/17	6-9PM	Display	Indian River Lagoon Coalition Night	Front Street Civic Center	Melbourne	3	6
2/10/17	930-11AM	Presentation	Classroom Field Trip	Education Center	Indialantic	1	3
2/11/17	10-4PM	Display	Ocean Treasures & Sea Glass Symposium	Barrier Island Center	Melbourne Beach	8	28
2/15/17	1230-230PM	Presentation	Free by the Sea East Coast Sea Glass Club	Melbourne Beach Public Library	Melbourne Beach	1	3
2/16/17	11-1230PM	Presentation	Florida Tech ESL Class Field Trip	Education Center	Indialantic	1	2
2/25/17	830-3PM	Display	Samsons Island Open House	Samsons Island	Satellite Beach	5	19
3/4/17	7-3PM	Display	Celebration of Cars	Wickham Park	Melbourne	5	25
3/11/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Eau Gallie Public Library	Eau Gallie	1	5

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

STPS Presentations and Displays for 2017							
DATE	DISPLAY TALK HOURS	TYPE	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CITY	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS	VOLUNTEER HOURS
3/14/17	12-1PM	Presentation	Junior League of S Brevard	Eau Gallie Yacht Club	Eau Gallie	1	2
3/16/17	11-1230PM	Presentation	Florida Tech ESL Class Field Trip	Education Center	Indialantic	1	2
3/18/17	9-430PM	Display	Pelican Island Wildlife Festival	Riverview Park	Sebastian	9	32
3/23/17	9AM-2PM	Presentation	Elementary Classes	Cape View Elementary	Port Canaveral	1	12
3/25/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Cocoa Beach Public Library	Cocoa Beach	1	5
4/1/17	830-13PM	Display	Cape Canaveral Annual Founder's Day Event	Manatee Sanctuary Park	Cape Canaveral	6	25
4/14/17	10-11AM	Presentation	Lutheran Church group	Lutheran Church of Palm Bay	Palm Bay	1	3
4/15/17	130-430PM	Display/Talk	Ice Cream Social	Exploration Tower	Cape Canaveral	7	23
4/15/17	130-330PM	Presentation	Ice Cream Social Community Event	Port Canaveral	Port Canaveral	1	3
4/19/17		Display/Talk	Earth Day	Eastern Florida State College	Palm Bay	2	8
4/22/17	9-330PM	Display/Talk	Party for the Planet	Brevard Zoo	Melbourne	6	26
4/22/17	830-445PM	Display/Talk	Viera Earth Day	Ritch Grissom Memorial Wetlands	Viera	7	30
4/22/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Suntree/Viera Public Library	Suntree /Viera	3	13
4/23/17	830-245PM	Display/Talk	Viera Earth Day	Ritch Grissom Memorial Wetlands	Viera	5	26
4/26/17	11-1PM	Presentation	Florida Tech ESL Class Field Trip	Education Center	Indialantic	1	3
4/29/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Eau Gallie Public Library	Eau Gallie	1	6
5/6/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Suntree/Viera Library	Viera	1	6
5/8/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Melbourne	Melbourne	1	6
5/19/17	1115-1PM	Presentation	Florida Tech ESL Class Field Trip	Education Center	Indialantic	1	3
5/20/17	9-1PM	Presentation	STERP	Cocoa Beach Public Library	Cocoa Beach	2	12
5/20/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Cocoa Beach Public Library	Cocoa Beach	1	5
5/23/17	345-745PM	Presentation	STERP	Cocoa Beach Public Library	Cocoa Beach	1	6
6/3/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Satellite Beach Public Library	Satellite Beach	1	5
6/3/17	9-1PM	Presentation	STERP	Satellite Beach Public Library	Satellite Beach	1	6

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

STPS Presentations and Displays for 2017							
DATE	DISPLAY TALK HOURS	TYPE	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CITY	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS	VOLUNTEER HOURS
6/8/17	9AM-12PM	Summer Camp	Junior Ocean Rescue Camp	Education Center/Nance Park	Indialantic	1	5
6/10/17	9-1PM	Presentation	STERP	Satellite Beach Public Library	Satellite Beach	1	6
6/10/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Satellite Beach Public Library	Satellite Beach	1	5
6/13/17	11AM-12PM	Presentation	Intermediate School class	Meadow lane Intermediate	West Melbourne	1	3
6/15/17	1115-3PM	Presentation	Newcomers of Central Brevard	The Tides Collocated Club	Patrick Air Force Base	1	4
6/17/17	830-330PM	Display	WSTD	Brevard Zoo	Viera	9	32
6/22/17	11AM-3PM	Summer Camp	Junior Ocean Rescue Camp	Education Center/Nance Park	Indialantic	1	4
6/29/17	11AM-3PM	Summer Camp	Junior Ocean Rescue Camp	Education Center/Nance Park	Indialantic	1	4
7/7/17	1030AM-1130AM	Presentation	Summer camp	Martin Luther Library	Palm Bay	1	3
7/8/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	West Melbourne Public Library	West Melbourne	1	5
7/10/17	630-730PM	Presentation	US Auxiliary Coast Guard	Flotilla Building at Lee Wenner Park	Cocoa	1	2
7/14/17	1030AM-12PM	7 th -9 th grade Summer Camp	Brevard Zoo Conservation Camp	Education Center	Indialantic	1	2
7/21/17	1-230PM	K-5 th Summer Camp	Indian Harbour Montessori	Indian Harbour Montessori	Indian Harbour Beach	1	5
7/22/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Cocoa Beach Public Library	Cocoa Beach	1	5
7/23/17	12-4PM	Display	Backpack Event	Verizon Wireless	Rockledge	4	19
7/31/17	11AM-2PM	Summer Camp	Coral Reef Academy	Education Center	Indialantic	1	5
8/1/17	11AM-2PM	Summer Camp	Coral Reef Academy	Education Center	Indialantic	1	5
8/2/17	11AM-2PM	Summer Camp	Coral Reef Academy	Education Center	Indialantic	1	5
8/5/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Suntree/Viera Public Library	Viera	1	5
8/19/17	1-4PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	West Melbourne Public Library	West Melbourne	1	5
9/17/17	11-12PM	Presentation	Unitarian Universalist Church Guest Speaker	Unitarian Universalist Church	West Melbourne	1	2
9/22/17	11-1PM	Presentation/B ooth	Career Day/Job Fair	Brevard Zoo	Melbourne	2	7
9/27/17	1030-1130AM	Presentation	Monthly Meeting Speaker	Philanthropic Educational Organization		1	2

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

STPS Presentations and Displays for 2017							
DATE	DISPLAY TALK HOURS	TYPE	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CITY	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS	VOLUNTEER HOURS
10/1-31/17	Ongoing	Display	Trashy Turtle	Evans Library	Florida Institute of Technology	1	2
10/27/17	2-3 PM	Presentation	Environmental Literature Class	Florida Institute of Technology	Melbourne	1	2
11/4/17	8-3PM	Display	Founder's Day Festival	Satellite Beach Community Center	Satellite Beach	6	40
11/21/17	12-1PM	Presentation	Rotary Club of Eau Gallie Monthly Speaker	Intracoastal Brewing	Eau Gallie	1	3
12/2/17	9-5PM	Display /Merchandise	Ocean Reef Beach Fest	Pelican Beach Park	Satellite Beach	7	36
12/23/17	10-5PM	Display/Talk	Zoo Partner Event	Brevard Zoo	Viera	5	35
STPS Presentations and Displays 2017 Total Volunteer Hours							766
2017 Value of Volunteer Time \$23.33 x 766 hrs = \$17,871							

Note: Several K-12 School presentations were cancelled in September and October from Hurricane Irma and also to catch back up on the curriculum from missed days.

3.3 Turtle Watch/Walk Program

The STPS offers Turtle Watch/Walk Programs when the loggerhead sea turtle nesting season peaks in Brevard County in June and July. Our Florida State Permit allows us to guide groups to observe a nesting loggerhead sea turtle depositing her eggs. The Walk Team is comprised of many volunteers including Greeters, Presenters and Guides all trained and experienced in their respective roles. Special training, held in the spring, is required for our Guides. Annually, this program offers a great opportunity to educate those attending our watches/walks about the history of the sea turtle, their life cycle, natural predators and human impact, laws that protect them and conservation measures. It also offers information on how the public can help their survival rate.

In 2017, STPS held 39 public turtle watches/walks attended by approximately 1200 people.

There are no guarantees that attendees will see actual nesting, since it is up to the cooperation of Mother Nature and sea turtles. There were eight nights that attendees were not able to observe an actual nesting loggerhead. Most of the failed walked events occurred at the Pelican Park location, where midway thru the walk season, the Army Corps of Engineers contracted to lay an artificial reef off shore of Pelican Park. This project was advance work for a beach re-nourishment project, and used barges with working cranes (to deploy concrete mats that were designed to replicate the reef that was going to be covered), and a towboat to move the barges, which often were anchored overnight within sight of the beach. In order to enhance the chance of providing the attendees the opportunity to witness an actual nesting in and near the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge, we got permission to move the start of walk season into May and we were successful on all 5 of our May walks. The beaches of Brevard County are the largest loggerhead nesting area in the world and the largest nesting area in the Northern Hemisphere for green turtles.

Attendees were first given a forty-five minute Power Point presentation with a question and answer period. Upon completion of the presentation, the group was guided to the beach to await a signal

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

from our scouts. The group was then guided down to the beach and to the turtle to observe the nesting process in such a manner as to not disturb her. Walks were conducted at three different locations, alternating between Satellite Beach, Melbourne Beach and Spessard Holland North beach. Facilities for presenting our Turtle Watch/Walk Program, and thus fulfilling our permit requirements, were graciously provided by:

- City of Satellite Beach
- City of Melbourne Beach
- Brevard County Department of Parks & Recreation

Primary Permit Holder Craig Konkel was the Turtle Walk Coordinator. Two training sessions were conducted for all individuals interested in taking part in the STPS Turtle Watch/Walk Program with two practice walks conducted before the start of the season. For each walk there was a designated Walk Leader, being either the Permit Holder or an appointed Permitted Guide, with both Permitted and Non-Permitted Guides signed up to assist. STPS could not have accommodated the attendees at these events without the able assistance of the 24 Permitted Guides and approximately 36 Non-Permitted Guides that assisted. All of the guides are volunteers. The following tables provide our “best estimate” for the number of volunteer hours contributed by the STPS Walk Team.

Turtle Walk Training (one session required)				
Volunteers Attending		Number of Training Sessions	Length of Session	Estimated Volunteer Hours
Permitted	Non Permitted			
18	38	2	3	168

Actual Turtle Walks				
Walk Staff per Walk		Walk Duration	Number of Walks	Estimated Volunteer Hours
Walk Leader	1	4 hrs	39	156
Greeter	1	1 hrs	39	39
Presenter	1	1 hrs	39	39
Merchandise Sales	2	1 hrs	39	78
Turtle Scouts	12	3 to 4.5 hrs per walk	39	1595
Total Volunteer Hours				1907

2017 Turtle Watch / Walk Volunteer Hours (Includes Training and Actual Walks)	2075
Value of Volunteer Time \$23.33 x 2075 = \$48,410	

A basic summary of the duties, rules and regulations for both the Permitted and Non-Permitted Guides follows:

Duties of Turtle Watch/Walk Guides (Permitted Guides)

Volunteer Watch/Walk Guides are critical to the overall activity. Every guide is required to receive training in the watch procedures. During an actual Watch/Walk event they oversee the registration process, scouting the beach for nesting turtles, assist the group to the beach where the turtle is

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

nesting and are prepared to answer questions from the group with reliable and accurate information about the nesting process and sea turtles in general.

Duties of Assistant Guides (Non-Permitted Guides)

Volunteer Assistant Guides are equally critical for the activity. They perform activities required to set up the equipment for the presentation, sign in the registered guests and learn the functions of the Permitted Guides. They are also prepared to answer questions from the participants regarding all aspects of the turtle walk process.

A summary of Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Imperiled Species Management Section Guidelines follows.

Guidelines for Public Awareness Turtle Watches/Walks

All participants in turtle watches/walks must be informed of the Federal and State of Florida laws protecting sea turtles and their nests. Participants must be informed that conducting turtle watches/walks or contact with sea turtles without permit is unlawful.

- Only loggerhead turtles may be observed by participants.
- Interpretive programs on sea turtle biology and conservation are mandatory. Public awareness turtle watches/walks may not be commercialized. (STPS requests a donation to cover expenses.)
- Age limitations for participants are left to the discretion of the principal permit holder.
- Two scout teams will be utilized to search for nesting loggerheads.
- Participant flashlights are not permitted. Guides and Scouts are encouraged to invite persons who are out on their own to join the group. (STPS encourages beach "pick-ups".)
- Guides and Scouts must exercise great caution when exposing a nest.
- Participants must stay with the group, remain quiet and approach the sea turtle only from the rear.
- Use of flash photography and lights for filming is not permitted.
- Only one nesting turtle shall be observed by the group.
- No more than five turtle watches/walks may be conducted per seven day week.
- A summary of each watch shall be completed on the Turtle Watch Summary form.

3.4 Adopt a Turtle Program

STPS sponsors an Adopt a Turtle Program that helps to make the public aware of the plight of sea turtles survival. Sea turtles face worldwide threats to their survival. Most of these threats are man-made. STPS provides the opportunity for individuals and organizations to do their part to help the survival of such magnificent species. Adopting a sea turtle helps to support the STPS's conservation efforts. The adoption of a sea turtle is purely symbolic. No individual may actually own a sea turtle. Sea turtles are protected by state, federal and international laws.

The number of adoptions in 2017 increased by 87 or double the 86 reported in 2016. This increase is attributed to an option added to the 2017 Turtle Krawl Race registration process. Race participants could select to adopt a hatchling or nest as part of their registration package. These

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

Turtle Krawl Race adoptions exceeded our expectations. Out of 2,089 online registrations there were 104 adoptions, or 5%.

There are three options available from which to choose:

1. **Adopt a Hatchling:** For a fifteen dollar donation, donors can assist STPS nest survey efforts by adopting a hatchling. Each hatchling adoption includes:
 - A personalized certificate of adoption, with choice of name for your hatchling
 - A personalized thank you letter
 - Information on sea turtle hatchlings
 - There were 122 hatchling adoptions in 2017.

2. **Adopt a Nest:** For a forty-five dollar donation, donors can help STPS nest watch/walk efforts by adopting a nest. Each nest adoption includes:
 - A personalized certificate of adoption
 - A personalized thank you letter
 - Information on sea turtle nesting
 - There were 43 nest adoptions in 2017.

3. **Adopt a Stranded Turtle:** For a seventy-five dollar donation, donors can help STPS stranding and salvage efforts by adopting a stranded turtle. Your donation includes:
 - A personalized certificate of adoption
 - A personalized thank you letter
 - Information on sea turtle stranding and disorientation
 - Sea Turtle Preservation Society Sticker
 - There were 8 stranded turtle adoptions in 2017.

2017 Adopt a Turtle Program	Number of Adoptions
Adopt a Hatchling	122
Adopt a Nest	43
Adopt a Stranded Turtle	8
TOTAL Adoptions	173

2017 Adopt A Turtle Volunteer Hours	173
2017 Value of Volunteer Time	\$23.33 x 170hrs = \$3,966

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

3.5 Attention Boaters Program

The STPS Attention Boaters program began in 2011 as a direct response to the Cocoa Beach offshore boat races that were held during the Sea Turtle Nesting Season (May 1 through October 31) in Cocoa Beach, FL. Injuries related to boating encounters account for the highest cause of sea turtle deaths in our area. STPS has used grant funds awarded in 2012 and 2015 from the Sea Turtle License Plate Grants Program to fund this education program. This program is directed toward boaters and increasing their awareness of the threat boats present to sea turtles in our waters.

The program is designed to make boaters aware of the sea turtle population in both the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian River Lagoon and encompasses the following components:

- Water-resistant information cards that provide information related to the special boating precautions necessary when navigating in waters with sea turtles present. These cards were distributed to most of the marine related businesses located in the sea turtle areas of Brevard County and to participants of the Cocoa Beach off shore boat races.
- "Attention Boaters" signs (18"x24") were erected at boat ramps throughout Brevard County including a larger version at Ballard Park in Melbourne. These signs alert boaters to sea turtle activity in the local waters and educate boaters about the threat they may pose to sea turtles. STPS plans to erect more of these signs at other marine parks in Brevard County as funds become available.
- STPS volunteers have assisted as "spotters" in boats, watching for any sea turtle activity along the racecourse.

For 2017, STPS had five volunteers working as spotters in boats during the offshore boat race in Cocoa Beach. Additionally we distributed the information cards to area boat shops and spectators at the race. We also had an educational table with exhibits where we talked with the boat race drivers about sea turtles.

2017 Attention Boaters Volunteer Hours	137
2017 Value of Volunteer Time	\$23.33 x 137 hrs = \$3,196

3.6 Lights Out for Sea Turtles Program

STPS is an active participant in FWC's yearly Lights Out for Sea Turtles campaign. This program is directed toward Florida's businesses, residents and visitors to announce the start of the sea turtle nesting season in Brevard County, FL, which is officially designated as May 1 through October 31.

Lights Out refers to the Florida policy to darken the beach during the sea turtle nesting season. Bright lights shining on the beach can disorient and discourage nesting, egg-laden female turtles and lure newly-hatched baby turtles towards artificial light sources. As hatchlings turn away from the

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

sea to cross into streets and parking lots, they are invariably killed. Sea turtle marine biologists report that darker beaches are safer and more attractive to female turtles and less disorienting for the hatchlings.

STPS contacts the local media to ensure that announcements are published to alert the public of this Lights Out period.

For 2017, we continued to support the Lights Out program with the distribution of the rack cards and the vinyl banners

STPS has used grant funds awarded from the Sea Turtle License Plate Grants Program to purchase materials for our “Lights Out” education program. Our efforts included the development and distribution of the following educational items:

- “Lights Out” rack cards (4”x9”) that describes the effect lights have on nesting females and hatchlings. These cards were distributed at events and dropped off at hotels and local beachside residences.
- A large vinyl banner (32”x72”) similar to the “rack card” that can be mounted on a portable display stand. These banners have been placed in several beachside resort hotel lobbies.

After 9, It’s Turtle Time

Helping get the word out and assisting local businesses in complying with lighting ordinance’s, STPS created a 4”x4”window removable cling that was to be placed on large windows and sliding glass doors to alert guests of the need for dark beaches. The design was borrowed from a Sea Turtle License Plate grantee, Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation.

The cling shows a smiling “cartoon like” turtle standing on a moonlit beach sporting a watch with the caption:

“After 9, it’s turtle time! CLOSE CURTAINS & BLINDS OR TURN OFF LIGHTS”.

The image was shown to several hotels to gauge reaction and then distributed to over 25 locations to be applied. Its cute character reinforces the message of dark beaches for turtles. It is accompanied by a 8 ½ by 11 table top poster located in common areas which prompts guests to ask questions. This program will be continued in 2018 due to its acceptance.

2017 Lights Out Volunteer Hours	110
2017 Value Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 110 hrs	= \$2,566

4. Stranding and Salvage Program

STPS supports the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN), which was established by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Service in the southeastern U.S. and Gulf of Mexico in 1980. The STSSN has since spread to encompass the entire east and gulf coasts of the U.S., from Maine through Texas, as well as parts of the Caribbean. A stranding occurs when sea turtles swim or float into shore and become "beached" or stuck in shallow water. Salvage efforts refer to sea turtles that are dead.

There are over 300 miles of shoreline in Brevard County that includes the Atlantic beach; the shores of the Indian River, Banana River and the Mosquito Lagoon. When a sea turtle becomes stranded, typically individuals from the general public will notice it on one of our beaches and contact the STPS using our emergency phone number. The STPS emergency number is published in a variety of publications in the Brevard County area. Additionally, stranding calls are received at the Sea Turtle House during office hours. These calls, regarding sick, injured or dead sea turtles, result in the activation of our Stranding Team. Volunteers that monitor the phone system get important details about the turtles such as location and condition. Calls from the public, which are left as a voice mail, are converted to a phone text message and an email message. The messages are forwarded immediately to several Stranding Team members. The Stranding Team is on call 365 days a year to rescue and salvage the endangered and threatened sea turtles. When a call is received regarding other wildlife problems (not sea turtles) the volunteer will pass along the information to the appropriate responder group.

All volunteers working "hands on" with sea turtles are required to be named on a permit issued by the Federal and /or state governments. Florida issues this kind of permit to individuals, (referred to as the "primary permit holder") and can have up to 24 additional people named on the permit to assist with the activities. The permit identifies specific activities that can be conducted by the individuals named on the permit. Volunteers identified on the permit must complete a biennial training class held by a Stranding Coordinator from FWC, and the primary permit holder must also attend additional training/meeting sessions. This permit expires at the end of each calendar year.

In conjunction with the STPS Stranding Team, STPS has implemented a Sea Turtle Emergency Response Program (STERP). The purpose of this program is to provide beach coverage to search for and rescue post-hatchling sea turtles that have washed back ashore after a large storm event. This program is designed to increase the number of post hatchling sea turtles that are rescued, rehabilitated and eventually released back into the ocean.

After sea turtle hatchlings emerge from their nest on the beach, they enter the ocean and swim approximately 20 miles to the edge of a large layer of seaweed that circulates offshore. This layer of seaweed is called the Sargasso Sea and is part of the Atlantic Gyre. This is essentially a sea turtle nursery in that it provides nutrients and protection from predators until the young sea turtles reach a size where they can safely venture out into the open ocean or closer to shore.

After large storm events, these small sea turtles can be washed back onto shore along with large amounts of seaweed and algae. These "washback" or post hatchling sea turtles are exhausted,

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

dehydrated and in need of medical attention. If placed back into the ocean they will perish, as they no longer have the energy to swim the 20 miles back to safety.

STPS uses the STERP volunteers to survey the beach “wrack line” searching for washback/post-hatchlings and transport them to a safe holding area. The STERP activities are authorized under the Stranding permit with “letters of authorization” from FWC.

4.1 Stranding Activities

In 2017, Roger Pszonowsky was the primary permit holder in charge of the STPS Stranding Team. The STPS stranding team members were actively involved with the stranding process throughout the year. Additionally, they participated in a variety of training related activities.

In 2017, the team completed 245 stranding reports in Brevard County which is 97 more than last year. STPS continued to assist with transport for the Indian River County. This support is included in the 245 stranding reports.

4.1.1 Stranding/Salvage Training

The annual Florida Marine Turtle Permit Holders Meeting was held in Gainesville, Florida, in February 2017. FWC sponsors this annual meeting to provide the latest research data, announcements and networking opportunities for all Marine Turtle Permit Holders. Attendance is required for primary permit holders. It is open to volunteers and those named on the various permits. STPS had 14 stranding volunteers attend this meeting.

During 2017, the STPS stranding primary permit holder continued work on the development of a training program that focused on training volunteers to be knowledgeable of potential injuries to sea turtles during transport to rehabilitation facilities. This effort has resulted in FWC recognizing the need for a formal FWC Transport Permit. Volunteers who are interested in transporting injured sea turtles are now required to be formally named on a FWC Transport Permit. In order to qualify they are required to take the STPS developed training module. This formalized Transport Training will increase a sea turtle’s survival chances and allow more volunteers the opportunity to take part in hands on activities. Dave Cheney, an STPS Board Member and the Lead for the STERP Activities, was issued the first FWC Transport Permit in November of 2017. See section 4.3 for additional information about this new STPS Sea Turtle Transport Program.

Additionally, 14 STPS volunteers attended a weekend conference at the Marathon Turtle Hospital in December 2017. This is essentially a “kick off” for the upcoming year. The conference activities included necropsies, surgery techniques and networking with Florida and regional turtle rehabilitation experts.

One third of the sea turtles stranded in the Brevard County area are in Port Canaveral where recreational fishing and recreational/commercial boating mix with the natural habitat of young sea turtles and shorebirds. To address “What do you do when finding an injured turtle or shore bird?” STPS hosted (with Florida Wild Animal Hospital and Wild Florida Rescue) three training sessions to teach the “do’s and don’ts” to Port businesses and employees. Of the three classes; one was dedicated to sheriff deputies and another was dedicated to security personnel. Each of the three sessions lasted 3 hours. This type of training is planned again in 2018 to reach those interested employees that missed it. Throughout 2017, deputies expressed their appreciation for the training and knowledge.

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

The Responsible Pier (RPI) Initiative promotes responsible fishing, sea turtle and bird rescue, and recycling of fishing line and provides signage that is in place at many fishing piers in the USA. Program/project managers from The Loggerhead Marinelife Center of Juno Beach Florida came to Cape Canaveral to speak at two of the STPS sponsored “What do you do when finding an injured turtle or shore bird?” training sessions and also assisted with signage. Placement of the signage had to be delayed due to hurricane damage in 2017, but was rescheduled to February 2018. The STPS stranding team responding to calls at this location completes the required FWC stranding form plus the associated paperwork for the RPI studies.

4.1.2 Stranding/Salvage Activity

The following data is extracted from the 2017 stranding documents completed by STPS volunteers and may not include reports by other stranding permit holders in Brevard County.

STPS 2017 Documented Strandings	Number of Turtles
Loggerheads (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	146
Greens (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	70
Kemp’s Ridley (<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>)	1
Leatherback (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	0
Hawksbill (<i>Eretmochelys imbricate</i>)	6
Unknown	22
TOTAL	245

Of the 245 stranded sea turtles, there were 147 live turtles (60%). Of these live turtles, 17 had boat interaction injuries (props or hull) and 7 had entanglement issues. The table below lists the facilities where the live turtles were transported.

Facilities	Number
Brevard Zoo/Sea Turtle Healing Center	132
Sea World Orlando	9
Marine Science Center, Volusia	2
Gumbo Limbo, Boca Raton	2
Mote Marine Labs, Sarasota	1
Florida Aquarium	1

Note: Brevard Sea Turtle Healing Center received post hatchlings that are reported separately.

During 2017, the Stranding Team participated in several turtle releases. There was a planned release of a Sea World patient during the Turtle Krawl event, but the release was rescheduled after hurricane Irma forced the cancellation of the Turtle Krawl Event. Releases are organized by the responsible rehabilitation facility or FWC. Generally, sea turtles that are released are returned to the location of their rescue.

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

2017 Florida Statewide Stranding Data (provided by FWC)

In 2017, Florida had a total of 1802 documented strandings:

- 748 Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*)
- 874 Green (*Chelonia mydas*)
- 146 Kemp’s Ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*)
- 21 Hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricate*)
- 2 Leatherbacks (*Dermochelys coriacea*)
- 11 Unknown

The table below is an estimate of the total number of volunteer hours expended by the STPS StrandingTeam during 2017.

Stranding Activity	Total for Year	Persons	Hours per Stranding, Event or Week	Estimated Volunteer Hours
Dead Strandings	98	1	3	294
Live Rescues (Includes average of 4 hours per transport)	147	2	10	1470
Other Stranding Activities				
Training (does not include STERP)		98	6	588
Rehabilitation Workshop		15	28	420
Permit Holders Meeting		8	30	240
Program Management - (52 Weeks)		2	35	3640
Turtle Facility Consult - (52 Weeks)		1	3	156
2017 Stranding - Total Volunteer Hours				6808
2017 Value of Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 6808 hrs = \$158,831				

4.2 STERP Activities

In 2017, the STPS Sea Turtle Emergency Response Program (STERP) completed its tenth year. The community response for this program continues to be as enthusiastic as when it was initiated.

Workshops were held May 20th, May 23rd, June 3rd and June 10th. A total of 165 individuals completed the workshop presentation. Attendance rosters from each session were sent to Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. We received Letters of Authorization (LOA) for 162 volunteers. Again, this year in order to be on the LOA, volunteers needed to have attended either Turtle 101 or Turtle Talk and be a member of STPS. In the event of a weather alert, the STERP volunteers are notified by an automatic call system known as One Call Now.

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

Following hurricanes Irma and Maria we had both hatchlings and post hatchlings brought into the STPS office by the general public which continued for several days. We did not call an event due to the fact that these turtles were being found on a sporadic basis. In some cases the public brought in hatchlings that should have been allowed to make their way to the ocean on their own.

During this extended period, we had a number of print and television stories covering it. Through the media and Facebook we were able to communicate to the public what to do if they found a hatchling, post hatchling, or exposed nest/eggs. They were also informed on how to transport and where to bring it. We estimated that the public brought in approximately 1500 turtles. As they dropped them off to STPS, we provided some one-on-one education describing what was happening and what we are doing to help the turtles survive. Based on the time the public spent in finding, delivering and being educated we estimated an average of 2 hours per turtle for a total of 3000 hours.

STERP volunteers also assisted with the distribution of literature to beach side condos, hotels and businesses. This literature addressed sea turtles that nest on Brevard County beaches, the Lights Out Program during the nesting season and sea turtle reporting procedures. Volunteers also assisted in distributing Attention Boaters Program cards during the Cocoa Beach Super Boat race in May 2017; and then later to marinas, bait shops and marine related businesses. Several STPS volunteers helped as observers during the Super Boat Race. They were stationed both on the shore and in boats.

The table below is our “best estimate” for the total number of volunteer hours expended by the STPS STERP Team during 2017.

STERP Activity	Hrs.	Volunteers	Estimated Volunteer Hours
Training (STERP and Cold Stun)	3	165	495
Registration/Prep	4	20	80
Hurricane Response	8	30	240
Boat Race Observers	8	7	56
Literature distribution to beach hotels and condos	8	15	120
General Public Hours including educating them (1500 turtles x 2 hrs / turtle)			3000
2017 STERP - Total Hours			3991
2017 Value of Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 3991 hrs = \$93,110			

4.3 Sea Turtle Transport Program

In November 2017, FWC granted Dave Cheney a permit that covers the transporting of sea turtles to and from rehab facilities throughout Florida. This marked the beginning of the STPS Sea Turtle Transport Program. STPS looked to the current STERP volunteers for any interest in this new transport program. To be eligible each volunteer had to attend FWC’s Stranding and Salvage Class and also a special STPS training session on transporting. In all 37 individuals met the criteria. All FWC permits include a Primary Permit Holder plus up to a maximum of 24 additional individuals can

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

be named on the permit. In selecting who would be added to the permit, STPS considered two factors: the individual's availability and where they lived. Based on this, 23 individuals were added to the permit.

To notify the transport team of the need to transport a turtle, Google Mail was set up to send both a text message and email to each team member. They are given the location of the turtle and its designated rehab facility. After each transport, an online Google form is completed that captures the details of the transport. The table below reflects the transports completed from mid November through December 2017.

SEA TURTLE TRANSPORT PROGRAM Activity	
Total Transports	18
Total Miles Driven (includes trips to Whitney Lab & Gumbo Limbo)	1170
2017 STPS TRANSPORT TEAM - Total Hours	72
2017 Value of Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 72 hrs = \$1,680	

Note: It takes one person an average of 4 volunteer hours response time to transport a turtle to a rehabilitation facility; depending on the location of the facility.

Implementation of the STPS Sea Turtle Transport Team with individuals who have been trained on how to safely transport sea turtles has reduced the overall transport time; thus allowing quicker access to needed medical care. In addition to the Transport Team, STPS members of the STPS Stranding and Salvage Team are also allowed to do transports.

4.4 Brevard "Sea Turtle Healing Center"

Brevard County Florida is one of the world's most important natural habitats for marine turtles in the world. Proportionally Brevard County has the largest number of sea turtle strandings in Florida. When STPS rescues an injured or sick sea turtle, a member of the STPS Stranding or Transport Team must transport it to a rehabilitation facility. There are sixteen sea turtle rehabilitation facilities (seven certified for fibropapilloma virus) across the state. The decision as to where a turtle goes is up to FWC and is dependent on several factors including available space, type of sickness or injury and staffing. In some cases, the transport can take up to four hours. Therefore whenever possible we want to transport to the Sea Turtle Healing Center. In some case a turtle may go there for an evaluation prior to being transported to another facility when the Center is full.

In 2013, STPS entered into a three-year partnership agreement with Brevard Zoo to develop Brevard County's first sea turtle medical facility. Its purpose is to provide triage type medical attention to sick and injured turtles. As part of this agreement, STPS committed \$25,000 a year to help fund operating costs. In 2016 we renewed our three year agreement with the same annual contribution of \$25,000.

Brevard Zoo is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facility. Zoo volunteers working under guidance of Brevard Zoo veterinary staff perform the daily operating tasks to maintain the facility. Brevard Zoo, like STPS, relies heavily on volunteers. Many STPS volunteers also work as

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

Brevard Zoo volunteers at the Brevard Sea Turtle Healing Center facility under the supervision of Brevard Zoo staff.

FWC continues to determine where the sea turtle is transported, but having this facility as an available option reduces transportation time and increases sea turtles survivability rate. In addition, STPS transported approximately 1500 hatchlings and post hatchlings (a/k/a wash backs) to the Brevard Sea Turtle Healing Center. During the peak of the event we were making two to three trips a day. Without the availability of the facility, we would have had a serious logistics problem of having to transport to other facilities in Orange and Volusia counties.

5. Sea Turtle Nesting Survey Program

STPS participates in the Florida statewide sea turtle nest monitoring program which is coordinated by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The primary purpose of this program is to use annual survey data to determine the nesting trends of the sea turtles that nest on Florida Beaches.

STPS's first nest survey permit was granted in 1996 to survey a two mile stretch of beach along the Atlantic Ocean, starting at the northern boundary of Patrick Air Force Base to a few buildings north of 10th Street South. In 2009, the survey area was extended north to encompass a total of 4.5 miles.

STPS has conducted these surveys every year with the exception of 2014 and 2015 when our survey efforts were voluntarily put-on-hold due to a beach re-nourishment project. In 2016, STPS restarted the nest surveys covering the original two miles and continued for 2017.

Survey duties include several volunteers walking different sections of the entire survey area every morning from April to September, in which all nests and false crawls are recorded. Recorded data includes the type of turtle (determined by the track and nest characteristics), its location, any signs of depredation, including signs of interference by man and/or animal. Additionally, approximately 20 percent of the nests found are marked via stakes for "evaluation" after the eggs had hatched (approximately 55 days). The criteria we use for marking nests include marking of all "non-loggerhead" nests.

After a nest has either hatched or it is past 70 days old, the nest is excavated and the contents evaluated. Once uncovered, the nest's contents are reviewed to determine the number of hatched eggs, un-hatched eggs, pipped eggs, dead hatchlings, and even the occasional live hatchling, which is usually released immediately into the ocean. (If the hatchling seems weak, it is held by a permitted STPS member for a maximum of 24 hours before release.) All survey results are reported to the Florida Marine Research Institute of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

During the daily early morning nest survey walks along the beach in Cocoa Beach, our volunteers also pick up trash left on the beach and answer questions to curious beach walkers. We separate recyclables from the trash and donate aluminum cans to Habitat for Humanity, and also recycle plastic and glass.

Note the actual nest survey data for 2017 was not available at the time of this publication. We have presented the 2016 data as a typical estimate for this STPS activity.

2016 Nest Survey Volunteer Hours	1274
2016 Value Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 1274 hrs	= \$29,722

6. Community Involvement

Community involvement plays a critical role in helping STPS achieve its primary mission of “Helping Sea Turtles Survive.” In addition to our educational outreach efforts outlined in Section 4 of this document, STPS takes a proactive role in finding ways to educate the public about the dangers our sea turtles face and what they can do to help. At our monthly membership meetings, the public is invited to hear an expert on many topics relating to sea turtles. We are also active in maintaining our social media presence with the STPS website, STPS Facebook page and our Twitter account.

We provide information to various local and regional media outlets (newspapers and television) regarding sea turtle related events including the following:

- The beginning of nesting season,
- Sea turtle recovery,
- Weather related information affecting sea turtles, and
- Events such as the Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk and Night Walks in June and July.

Whenever an STPS volunteer is on the beach performing permitted sea turtle activities, the public almost always shows up and expresses a strong interest in what we are doing. Our volunteers are always prepared with educational literature to distribute and are eager to answer their questions. We consider this a very important method of educating the public because they will remember what they learn since they are simultaneously witnessing an actual sea turtle event.

Lastly, STPS sponsors monthly beach cleanups at two beachfront parks (Coconut Point Park and Cherie Down Park) allowing the public to participate in the cleanup while educating them on the dangers to sea turtles and other wildlife when the public leaves trash and other items on the beach.

6.1 Monthly Membership Meetings

As part of our community outreach efforts, STPS scheduled a variety of speakers for our monthly membership meetings which are held January through May and September through November at the Clubhouse at Pelican Beach Park. The meetings were held on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. These meetings were open to the general public and featured topics related to sea turtles and/or their relationship to our environment. We had an average of 40 attendees per meeting. The speakers for 2017 are identified below:

STPS Monthly Meeting Guest Speakers		
Month	Speaker	Topic
January	Dr. Larry Wood	Florida Hawksbill Project
February	Jonathan Gorham PhD	Inwater Research Projects
March	Nick Sanzone	Satellite Beach Environmental Program Coordinator
April	Keith Winston	Director of Brevard Zoo
May	Paula Berntsen	Brevard County Natural Resources
June, July, August	No Meetings For These Months	
September	Meeting canceled due to hurricane Irma.	
October	Llewellyn Ehrhart, PhD	
November	Dean Bagley	University Of Central Florida Sea Turtle Activities
December	General Election Meeting	

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

2017 Membership Meetings Hours	640
2017 Value Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 640 hrs	= \$14,931

6.2 Communications

STPS utilizes several methods of communication with its members and the public as shown in the following table.

We have been steadily growing our social media presence on Facebook and Twitter. Social media is an important aspect of educational outreach because of the ability to reach such a diverse audience without monetary obligations. In addition, social media allows us to share the many programs our volunteers participate in on a regular basis. Our goal in sharing these activities is to increase community involvement. We now have a considerable following of over 150,000 people on our Facebook page.

STPS Communications		
Item	Contact	Comments
Turtle Talk	Kimberly White, Editor	In 2017, the newsletter was distributed only one time. It was posted on the STPS website and an email notification (with the link to the newsletter) was sent to members. The newsletter link was also posted on the STPS Facebook page.
STPS Website	Sarah Tolson	SeaTurtleSpaceCoast.org
STPS Facebook	Nikia Rice	Facebook.com/SeaTurtlePreservationSociety
One Call Now	Dave Cheney	The One Call Now is an automated phone call system designed to contact Sea Turtle Emergency Rescue Program (STERP) volunteers and zone captains. With just one call or e-mail, they can be contacted for a weather alert event.
Media Relations	Shelia Harnois	We maintain a contact list of print, radio and television media contacts. Meetings, training and other events are sent to this group for public service announcements. Periodically stories are sent to this group and many result in news broadcasts. The broadcast media covered several stories this year including our response to hatchlings and post hatchling (aka "wash backs") during and after hurricane Irma.

2017 Communications Volunteer Hours	750
2017 Value Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 750 hrs	= \$17,498

6.3 Beach Cleanup Program

STPS has adopted two major sections of Brevard County beaches through Keep Brevard Beautiful (KBB) "Adopt-A-Shore" program. This effort helps to keep Brevard County beaches litter-free and non-polluted for its frequent visitors and wildlife. STPS prides itself on its monthly participation at these two sites. Our coordinators and teams organize volunteers and provide them with the equipment to safely walk the beach and pick up the litter on the beach and in the dunes. STPS receives points for each clean up; plus the number of volunteers, bags of trash collected and extra points for taking the recycle products home to their own recycle bins. To read more about the KBB programs go to the following link: <http://keepbrevardbeautiful.org/our-programs/adopt-a-shore>.

The beach cleanup activity not only helps to make our beaches more presentable to the beach goers, it also provides a critical benefit to our sea turtles. Debris on the beach will deter female turtles during their nesting activity and it will also hinder baby hatchlings from making their way to the ocean. Plastic left on the beach that washes into the ocean breaks down into very small pieces that are eaten by turtles as they feed on floating seaweed. This plastic builds up inside the turtle's digestive system and can cause death.

Volunteers meet the first Saturday of each month to clean the beach. In addition, they also participate in the Turtle Krawl 5K Race, Great Coastal Clean Up and Trash Bash events each year. All members share the responsibility for acting as monthly leaders based on their individual availability.

STPS's Adopt-A-Shore beaches are:

1. STPS-South: STPS adopted **Coconut Point Park** in Southern Brevard County at the north end of the Archie Carr Wildlife Refuge on A1A in the early 1990's. Geraldine Burke is the Coordinator with Mike Clark and Gina Myers completing the team. STPS-South continues to be recognized by KBB as one of the top-performing Adopt-a-Shore teams.
2. STPS-North: STPS adopted **Cherie Down Park and Beach** in Northern Brevard County in Cape Canaveral in January 2015. Dave Cheney acted as STPS-North Coordinator for 2017 assisted by team member Everett Tindall. This site was chosen in Northern Brevard County because several STPS volunteers live in that area and wanted the opportunity to help keep their beaches free of litter. In addition, Northern Brevard County has become more populated and is a busier area of the county due to our Cruise Ship and Space industry. As a result, this site has proved to be attractive to many volunteers.

In addition to these sites, STPS members may clean any beach on their own schedule. Individuals can report their activity to a special email address, beachcleanup@seaturtlespacecoast.org. Once received, the details of their efforts are forwarded to KBB to be credited to STPS's monthly totals. There was continuing interest in the individual reporting option in 2017 by newcomers including some students earning community service hours. Two members who continue to make frequent cleanup reports accounted for 75% of the hours reported for this option; in 2016, the number was 98%.

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

Community Service hours have always been available for beach cleanup participants and students have discovered the beach is the perfect place to earn hours. In 2017, tracking of community service volunteer numbers began at both Cherie Down (11) and Coconut Point (88). Some students return regularly to fulfill requirements for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program or coursework requirements. The following high schools were represented: Melbourne, West Shore, Satellite Beach, Palm Bay and Melbourne Central Catholic. Stone and DeLaura Middle Schools were represented as well as Eastern Florida State College.

The following table summarizes the STPS 2017 Beach Cleanup activities and special cleanups. The rough weather experienced in 2017 resulted in the cancellation or disruption of major STPS beach cleanup activities. For the first time, previous yearly continual increases in each category were not achieved.

STPS 2017 Beach Clean Ups					
Date	People	Bags	Recycle Bags	Location/ Comments	Estimated Volunteer Hours
01/07/2017	7	6	1	South	14
	10	1	2	North	20
02/04/2017	5	6	3	South	10
	13	1	2	North	26
03/04/2017	15	13	2	South	30
	20	2	1	North	40
04/01/2017	11	16	2	South/ Trash Bash	22
	52	6	2	North/Trash Bash	104
04/08/2017	20	12	6	South	40
05/06/2017	30	12	1	South	60
	11	2	1	North	22
06/03/2017	10	8	2	South	20
	11	2	1	North	22
07/08/2017	35	29	2	South	75
	11	1	1	North	22
08/05/2017	23	14	1	South	46
	20	2	1	North	40
09/02/2017	14	2	1	South	28
	0	0	0	North/ Not Held	0
09/09/2017	0	0	0	South/Turtle Krawl Not Held due to Hurricane Irma	0
10/07/2017	59	30	4	South /Coastal Clean-up	118
10/07/2017	25	3	2	North/Monthly	50
11/04/2017	20	0	0	South/ Area beaches inaccessible	0
	20	1	1	North	40

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

STPS 2017 Beach Clean Ups					
Date	People	Bags	Recycle Bags	Location/ Comments	Estimated Volunteer Hours
12/09/2017	11	7	4	South	22
	0	0	0	North/ Not Held	0
Various Days	271	84	3	Individual Reporters	348
TOTALS	724	260	46		1219
2017 Value of Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 1219 hrs = \$28,439					

7. Fundraising Activities

All of the STPS activities (including stranding, nest surveys, turtle walks, educational presentations, beach cleanup, fundraising and others) are staffed by non-paid volunteers. STPS still requires funding to support these activities with equipment, supplies and transportation. Several fundraising efforts were held throughout the year to support our many activities and projects. These fundraising efforts include the following:

- Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk;
- Annual membership fees;
- Night Time Turtle Watch/Walks;
- Merchandise sales at the Sea Turtle House and area environmental events;
- Direct donations by organizations or corporations;
- Direct donations by individuals;
- Corporate-sponsored promotions with STPS as the recipient of the donation;
- Adopt a Turtle Program.

Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk

The Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk is the largest fundraiser benefitting the STPS. 2017 marked the eight year STPS volunteers coordinated the race, after it was resurrected by the STPS Board of Directors in 2010. (Brevard Parks and Recreation coordinated the Turtle Krawl “Fun Run” from 2000-2008). Planning this event is a tremendous commitment on the part of the STPS volunteers but it is well worth the effort. The STPS Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk continues to be the largest (and arguably best) 5K race in Brevard County!

Registration opened April 1st and by the week before the race registration had reached close to 2000 runners/walkers for the September 9th Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk race at James H. Nance Park in Indialantic by the Sea, Indialantic, Florida. Race registration was well on its way to exceeding last year’s registrations. But all eyes were on Hurricane Irma and watching where she would be headed as she continued to strengthen. Registrations continued but by the middle of race week it was evident that Irma would impact the entire state of Florida no matter where she made landfall. Irma had become a huge and very dangerous storm. The race director received daily updates and advice from local authorities. On September 6, 2017, based on the projected track of Irma and advice from local authorities, the race director made the decision to cancel the race. The safety of our participants, volunteers and others involved with the race is more important. Final registration at cancellation was 2165. Sea World had tentatively scheduled a sea turtle release directly after the race; however, this also was cancelled for concern of the safety of the turtle and the Sea World staff.

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

A breakdown of race participants by gender is included in the following table.

Gender	Runners	Percent
Male	724	33%
Female	1441	67%
Total	2165	100%

Due to the success of the “**virtual race**” in 2016 the STPS Board of Directors approved it again for 2017. The virtual race, which was not affected by Hurricane Irma, was a huge success for the 2nd year in a row. Registration opened on July 31, 2017 and ran through October 10, 2017 with a total of 980 registrations. Registrations came from 48 of the 50 United States and from Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and members of the US Armed Forces serving overseas.

Between registration fees and sponsorships for the Nance Park race plus registrations for the virtual race, over \$78,000 was raised for the STPS. The STPS Board of Directors has agreed to set aside Turtle Krawl income for a "special projects" fund. 2017 marks the fourth year STPS has presented Brevard Zoo with a \$25,000 check to help financially support the Brevard Sea Turtle Healing Center. This sea turtle rehabilitation facility helps to ensure sea turtles rescued on Brevard County beaches get faster medical attention.

Despite cancellation of the race, Turtle Krawl required numerous hours and hard work by the many volunteers who participated in planning the race, poster hanging, race packet stuffing, and two days of early packet pickup. The race would not be possible without all the wonderful volunteers who give up their time to help sea turtles survive.

Sponsors for 2017 were Port Canaveral, SeaWorld Orlando, Slug-A-Bug, Gatto’s Tire and Auto Service, Absolutely Natural, Blinds of All Kinds, Porter Premier Dermatology, Running Zone, Animal Emergency and Critical Care Center of Brevard, Islands Fish Grill, Launch Federal Credit Union, Home Advisor, Southeastern Honda, Toyota of Melbourne, Turtle Towel, Coastal Health Systems of Brevard, Double Tree, Whittaker Cooper Financial Group, Florida Today, Giant Stride Solutions Inc, Walmart, Natalie’s, CLIF Bar, Clow Chiropractic, B&B Ice, Inc, New Balance, Starbucks, Planet Smoothie, United Rentals, Sea Turtle Real Estate, 95 Rock, Nash FM102.7, Sports Radio 1560am, Virtual Strides, WA1A 107.1FM, Waste Management, and SCR Runners of the Year Series.

Vickie Openshaw, STPS Board was Race Director. An estimate of the Turtle Krawl-related volunteer hours follows:

Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk Activity	Estimated Volunteer Hours
Planning and Preparation	700
Sponsor Acquisition	500

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

Promotion	100
Race Day	0
2017 – Turtle Krawl Total Estimated Volunteer Hours	1300
2017 Value of Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 1300 hrs = \$30,329	

8. STPS Memberships

Membership is a vital component of our organization and has a dual function.

- STPS memberships provide our organization an opportunity to engage the general public and cultivate their interest in local, national and international sea turtles conservation needs and successes.
- Membership revenue is used exclusively for our programs. While volunteers conduct our many and varied programs, membership funds help to supplement the cost of equipment, supplies and fees associated with conducting programs that help sea turtles survive.

Members receive the “Turtle Talk” newsletter two times a year and can receive a 10% discount on all purchases (\$25.00 and above) at Sea Turtle House. Membership is open to anyone who wants to join. In accordance with a 2015 STPS Policy, active volunteers must be members in good standing to participate in all STPS programs; except beach cleanups and the Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk.

Our membership levels and costs follow:

Level	Membership Cost	Subscription Period
Student	\$15 (USD)	1 year
Individual	\$20 (USD)	1 year
* Family	\$30 (USD)	1 year
Contributor	\$50 (USD)	1 year
Lifetime	\$200 (USD)	Life
Endowment	\$300 (USD)	Life
Benefactor	\$500 (USD)	Life
** Honorary Lifetime	Awarded	Life

* Family memberships are limited to members of the same household.

** Honorary Lifetime memberships are awarded (by the STPS Board) to individuals who have made distinguishing contributions to STPS.

The following table shows the 2017 end-of-year numbers for each of the membership levels.

STPS 2017 Membership

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL	ACTIVE
Student	19
Individual	189
Family	138
Contributor	22
Lifetime	189
Endowment	4
Benefactor	28
Honorary Lifetime	19
Total Members	608

2017 Annual Report for the Sea Turtle Preservation Society

Our current members reside in the United States, Canada and Great Britain with 82.5% of the membership living in Florida.

In 2017, STPS membership decreased from 774 to 608, a decrease of 166. This 21% decline was attributed to the non-renewal of free gift memberships (in previous years) that were included with the purchase of some adoptions (Stranded Turtles and Nests) and also included with the Turtle Krawl race registrations. This prompted the STPS Board to revise our membership policies to discontinue the gift memberships with adoptions. This approach has proven successful.

STPS uses Membership Management Software which continues to provide a superior method for logging in new memberships and monitoring existing memberships for pending renewals. STPS members can securely update their own contact information as well as register for training opportunities. STPS Education uses the membership profiles to log and track training completed by members. MMS also automates the membership renewal notice process.

The number of hours our membership management volunteer logged in this effort is shown below.

2017 Membership Management Volunteer Hours	400
2017 Value Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 400 hrs =	\$9,332

9. Total Estimated Volunteer Hours

For 2017, STPS Volunteers have donated more than twenty-two thousand volunteer hours to the organization and the Brevard County community. Given the numerous activities and our many volunteers that support the organization it is difficult to keep track of all of the actual time worked. Consequently the following data is based on our records from actual events (such as; school presentations, stranding, beach clean-up, night walks, nest surveys, etc.), plus estimates from the various directors and supporting volunteers of their time spent on a variety of activities necessary to keep the organization running. Total volunteer hours were up this year with significant increases in the STERP activities (due to Hurricane Irma).

Using these estimates and the 2017 Independent Sector Annual Conference estimated dollar value for volunteer time in Florida (\$23.33 per hour), STPS contributed approximately \$525,368 to the Brevard County community with our volunteer activities. (See the web site for the 2017 Independent Sector Annual Conference; http://independentsector.org/Volunteer_time for details on how this estimate of volunteer hours is derived.)

Document Section	TOTAL ESTIMATED VOLUNTEER HOURS BY ACTIVITY	Estimated Volunteer Hours
-	Board of Directors Meetings	400
-	Financial Management	789
-	Administrative Activities	388
1.3	Corporate Headquarters	300
3.0	Public Education (Includes 3.2, 3.4 thru 3.6)	2113
3.2	Turtle Watch/ Walks	2075
4.1	Stranding Activities	6808
4.2	STERP Activities	3991
4.3	Sea Turtle Transport Program	72
5.0	Nest Surveys (Used 2016 Data)	1274
6.1	Membership Meetings	640
6.2	Communications	750
6.3	Beach Cleanup	1219
7.0	Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk	1300
8.0	Membership Management	400
2017 TOTAL ESTIMATED VOLUNTEER HOURS		22519
2017 Value of Volunteer Hours \$23.33 x 22,519 hrs = \$525,368		

The following table illustrates the annual change in STPS volunteer participation.

Year	Estimated Volunteer Hours	Annual Percent Change	Year	Estimated Volunteer Hours	Annual Percent Change
2010	11127	-	2014	12177	-20%
2011	11707	+5%	2015	15086	+24%
2012	12947	+10%	2016	18251	+21%
2013	15180	+17%	2017	22678	+24%