BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

2014

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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1. Introduction

Brevard County is one of the most important natural habitats for marine turtles in the world. The beaches are prime nesting areas for adult sea turtles, while the Indian River Lagoon is a developmental foraging habitat by juvenile sea turtles. The most concentrated Loggerhead nesting in the Western Hemisphere occurs on our beaches. This area, along Florida's eastern coast, is one of the top two locations for Loggerhead nesting in the world and first for Green nesting within the United States.

The Sea Turtle Preservation Society (STPS), located in Brevard County, is a registered 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization. STPS is a "grass roots" organization that is not associated with any parent corporation. STPS relies on the donations from the public, its membership, and the efforts of its dedicated volunteers. Contributions are tax-deductible as allowable by law. STPS operates ***The Sea Turtle House*** in Indialantic, Florida, that includes both a retail store and an Educational Center. STPS is not supported by any government funding. STPS was incorporated within the state of Florida in 1986 and is registered with the Florida Department of Consumers in conjunction with the State of Florida Charities Gift Givers' Guide. The mission of the STPS is "Helping sea turtles survive".

The title of Honorary Life President is conferred upon Peter Albert Bandre, the founding member of the Corporation. He is entitled to all the privileges of membership.

The purpose of the Sea Turtle Preservation Society is to educate the public about marine turtles and the environmental niche that they occupy. STPS reaches thousands of people each year through lecture/presentations, exhibits at area events, our website and Facebook page, through our turtle watches/walks during the sea turtle nesting season and visitors to The Sea Turtle House. The STPS's goal is to help maintain the current sea turtle populations and to prevent a potentially irreversible decline in that population through:

- Reducing disturbance and harassment of nesting sea turtles by public education about the hazards of nighttime beach activities, habitat destruction, and beach lighting;
- Increasing hatchling survival rate by educating the public about the impact of lighting, beach debris, habitat destruction, and marine pollution;
- Supporting the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge;
- Rescuing hatchlings, post hatchlings, and adult sea turtles and transporting them to permitted rehabilitation facilities;
- Contributing data to the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN);
- Educating the boating public of 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;
- Conducting a nest survey project in conjunction with the Florida Nesting Survey Program; and
- Supporting the local Brevard Zoo "Sea Turtle Healing Center" through the Turtle Krawl 5K Race and other fundraising activities and participate, when practical, in grant opportunities. The STPS Board has committed to use the majority of the proceeds from the Turtle Krawl 5K to support this effort. This financial commitment is currently in the second year of a three-year agreement.

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

These various STPS activities provide a positive monetary impact to the Brevard County beachfront communities. During 2014 STPS's contributed approximately 12,177 volunteer hours valued at $258,639 in volunteer labor to the Brevard County community with our volunteer activities.

See Note 4 in the table below and the table in section 10 of this document for information about how this total was determined.

The following table shows the details of just one of our key volunteer efforts: Stranding Responses in selected areas of Brevard County. It highlights the team's effort in terms of the number of strandings per city. It shows the monetary value of the manpower and transportation costs needed to support the requirements of these endangered animals. Since the sea turtles are under the protection of the federal government, if STPS did not provide this vital function, each city could be responsible for performing stranding activities with employees. STPS does not charge any fees for conducting this activity.

VALUE OF STPS STRANDING RESPONSES IN SELECTED BREVARD COUNTY AREAS IN 2014 (See Notes 4 &5)					
City	**Total Number of Strandings Completed (Live & Dead)**	**Number of Live Strandings**	**Typical Volunteer Hours Needed (See Note 2)**	**Average Transportation Cost (See Note 3)**	**Estimated Total Value Volunteer Hours plus Transportation (See Note 4)**
Cape Canaveral	12	5	71	$400	$1908
Cocoa Beach (City & Township)	26	8	134	$480	$3326
Indialantic	7	3	42	$240	$1132
Indian Harbor Beach	2	0	6	$0	$127
Melbourne Beach (Town and Region)	13 (See Note 1)	1	46	$80	$1057
Satellite Beach (City & Township)	8 (See Note 1)	1	27	$80	$653
Port Canaveral and Jetty Park	18	12	138	$960	$3891
Patrick Air Force Base	*5*	*2*	*29*	*$160*	*$776*
Melbourne	1	*1*	*10*	*$80*	*$292*
Sebastian Area	2	*1*	*13*	*$80*	*$356*

NOTES:

1. Stranding activities are also conducted by UCF and UF and are not included here.
2. A typical dead stranding takes one volunteer approximately 3 hours (responding, paperwork, photos.) A live stranded turtle requires 1 to 2 volunteers (depending on the specific situation) times the typical 3-hour response time plus an additional minimum of 4 hours to transport (for one person) to a rehabilitation facility (Brevard Zoo Healing Center, Ponce Inlet, Juno Beach, Gumbo Limbo Park, or Orlando). That is, 7 to 10 volunteer hours.
3. Vehicle expense for transport averages $80 each trip.
4. Per the 2015 Independent Sector Annual Conference, the estimated dollar value of volunteer time for 2013 was **$21.24 per hour in Florida**. See their web site at the following address. independentsector.org/volunteer_time
5. This table does not include all 2014 strandings responded to by STPS in Brevard County.

2. Officers and Board of Directors

The function of the Board of Directors is to determine direction of the Corporation 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 voting 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 in January of each year 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 positions of Treasurer and Secretary are appointed by the STPS Board for an indefinite term and serve as per the Corporations 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 of each year. The Board of Directors meets once a month or as otherwise directed under the Policies and Procedures of the Organization.

STPS Officers and Board of Directors for 2014

POSITION	NAME	TERM EXPIRES
Chairperson	David Hochberg	Appointed
Treasurer	Buddy Braunlich*/Kathryn Parks	Appointed
Secretary	Vickie Openshaw	Appointed
Monthly Meetings and Open House	Dori Hughes	2015
Primary Permit Holder: Strandings	Roger Pszonowsky	Appointed
Primary Permit Holder: Night Walks	David Hochberg	Appointed
Gift Shop Manager	Cindy Ullmer	2015
Events	Andrea Bergmann	2016
Education	Nikia Rice	2016
Education*/Membership	Pat Rush*/Gina Burnette	2015
Education*/Vacant	Gayle Graves*/Kathryn	2015
Fund Raising/Turtle Krawl	Mark Petrillo	2016
Membership*/Website	Mary Bowman*/Rosalind Conner	2016
Sea Turtle Emergency Response Program (STERP) & Communications Committee	Dave Cheney	2015

3. Public Education

Dissemination of information is one of the best methods to raise awareness and help ensure the continued existence of a sea turtle population. STPS's activities in this area range from manned displays at area events to talks and slide/show presentations at area schools, community organizations and clubs. In addition, STPS conducts Nightly Turtle Walks that provide a presentation and the opportunity to see a real live sea turtle nest on the beach. We also have an Educational Center (The Sea Turtle House) in Indialantic Florida.

3.1 Talks and Displays

STPS was invited to provide the following area displays and talks.

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 talks were made to schools, community organizations and clubs throughout the year. The presentation usually included a slide/video show with a question and answer period

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

Date	Display/Talk Hours	Type	Activity	Location		Volunteer Hours
1/11/14	2-330PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Eau Gallie Public Library	Melbourne	11.1
1/23/14	1015-12PM	Presentation	4th/5th classroom	Holland Elementary	Satellite Beach	3
1/25/14	2-330PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Melbourne Public Library	Melbourne	7.5
2/15/14	2-330PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Suntree/Viera Public Library	Viera	9.1
2/19/14	2-330PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Cape Canaveral Library	Cape Canaveral	11
2/28/14	4-9PM	Display	Dark Sky Festival	Harmony (central FL)	Harmony	22
3/1/14	4-9PM	Display	Dark Sky Festival	Harmony (central FL)	Harmony	22
3/3/14	630-730PM	Presentation	Florida Trail Group	Melbourne Public Library	Melbourne	5.3
3/4/14	12-2PM	Presentation	1st classroom	Sebastian	Sebastian	4
3/8/14	2-330PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Satellite Beach Library	Satellite Beach	5.3
3/9/14	12-1215PM	Turtle Store	Material drop off	Turtle Store	Indialantic	0.25
3/15/14	10-3PM	Display	Pelican Island Festival Pelican Island NWR	Pelican Park	Sebastian	38
3/16/14	2-330PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Melbourne Public Library	Melbourne	7.2
3/22/14	2-330PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Cocoa Beach Library	Cocoa Beach	9.6
4/5/14	2-330PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	West Melbourne Library	West Melbourne	6
4/5/14	10-4PM	Display	FWC Exotic Amnesty	Wickham Park	Melbourne	13
4/10/14	330-430	Presentation	FIT Biology Seminar	FIT	Melbourne	2
4/12/14	10-2PM	Display	Party for the Planet	Brevard Zoo	Melbourne	4
5/2/14	1030-1130	Presentation	Kindergarten	St. Mary's School	Rockledge	2.5
5/5/14	10-1PM	Presentation	Grand Ave Ele	Lori Wilson Park	Cocoa Beach	13.25
5/10/14	11-1220PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk		Melbourne Beach	6
5/16/15	9-12PM	Presentation	Career Day	Cape View Elementary	Cape	4

Date	Display/Talk Hours	Type	Activity	Location		Volunteer Hours
					Canaveral	
5/17/14	8-500PM	Display	Pt Canaveral Races	Port Canaveral	Port Canaveral	40
5/20/14	1130-1PM	Presentation	IHB Sat. Beach New	Crowne Plaza Hotel	Melbourne Beach	4
5/31/14	1-330PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Eau Gallie Public Library	Eau Gallie	9
6/7/14	1-345PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	West Melbourne Library	West Melbourne	4
6/14/14	12-4PM	Display	Cops and Kids Safety	Cocoa Beach	Cocoa Beach	16
6/16/14	ALL DAY	Turtle Store	Open World ST Day	Turtle Store	Indialantic	60
6/20/14	12-2PM	Presentation	ST Kid Talk	Palm Bay Library	Palm Bay	6
6/21/14	1-400PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Suntree/Viera Library	Viera	7
7/22/14	5-800PM	Presentation	Florida Fly Fishing	Cocoa Beach Restaurant	Cocoa Beach	8
8/9/14	930-430PM	Display	Youth Summit	Brevard Zoo	Melbourne	14
8/30-31/2014	10-5PM	Display	Cold Weekend	Brevard Zoo	Melbourne	14
9/10/14	10-4PM	Display	Open House	Brevard Zoo	Melbourne	16
9/20/14	11-1230PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Melbourne Beach Library	Melbourne Beach	10
9/24/14	800-1000AM	Presentation	6th classroom	Sunrise Elementary	Palm Bay	4
9/29/14	9-10AM	Presentation	3rd classroom	Holland Elementary	Satellite Beach	3
10/7/14	5-800PM	Display	Police Night Out	Cocoa Beach	Cocoa Beach	8
10/9/14	12-2PM	Presentation	4th gifted class	Atlantis Elementary	Port Saint John	6
10/16/14	12-2PM	Presentation	6th classroom	Croton Elementary	Melbourne	8
10/16/14	5-730PM	Display	School Science Fair	Harbor City Elementary	Melbourne	6
10/25/14	2-400PM	Presentation	Turtle Talk	Cocoa Beach Library	Cocoa Beach	9
10/27/14	12-230	Display	Splash Homeschool	First Baptist Church	Melbourne	4
11/6-9/14	9-5pm	Display	Native Rhythms Fest	Wickham Park	Melbourne	80
11/7/14	5-630PM	Interview	7th grader	Turtle Store	Indialantic	2
11/11/14	1-400PM	Presentation/cleanup	WOW Brownie	Indialantic Beachfront	Indialantic	10
11/19/14	930-1030AM	Presentation	Garden by the Sea	Indialantic residential	Indialantic	2
12/6-8/14	9-5pm	Display	Ocean Reef Beach	Pelican Beach Park	Satellite Beach	70
	TOTAL HOURS					626.1

Education Volunteer Hours	**626.1**
$21.24 x 626.1 Volunteer labor hours = $13,298 value	

3.2 Turtle Watch/Walk Program

Public turtle watches/walks were conducted during June and July. 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 brought to the beach to await a signal from STPS scouts that a turtle had started to nest. The group was then brought to the turtle to observe the nesting process in such a manner as to not disturb her. Walks were conducted four or five nights a week (weather

permitting) alternating between Melbourne Beach and Satellite Beach. Facilities for presenting our Turtle Watch/Walk Program, and thus fulfilling our permit requirements, were graciously provided by:

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

As Primary Permit Holder, David Hochberg acted as Turtle Walk Coordinator. All permitted guides and scouts were given Turtle Watch/Walk information packets, which included an overview of their duties. Four 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. In 2014 there were 41 "Walks/Watches" conducted for the public with a total of approximately 1250 people attending.

STPS could not have accommodated these people without the able assistance of the 24 Permitted Guides and approximately 34 non-permitted Guides that assisted. All Permitted and Assisted Guides are Volunteers. Thank you to all who participated in the education programs.

The following tables provide an estimate of the number of volunteer hours contributed by the STPS Walk Team.

Turtle Walk Training				
Volunteers Attending		**Number of Training Sessions**	**Length of Session**	**Estimated Volunteer Hours**
Permitted	**Non Permitted**			
24	34	4	2	464

Actual Turtle Walks				
Walk Staff per Walk		**Walk Duration**	**Number of Walks**	**Estimated Volunteer Hours**
Walk Leader	1	4 hrs	41	164
Greeter	1	4 hrs	41	164
Merchandise Sales	2	4 hrs	41	328
Turtle Scouts	8	4 hrs	41	1312
TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER HOURS (TRAINING PLUS WALKS)				2432

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 volunteers)

- Attend at least one training session;

- Be familiar with FWC guidelines and abide by them at all times;
- Be reliable. When you agree to lead a watch, be on time (8:15 p.m.) and prepared to stay until the watch is over;
- Oversee the registration process and watch procedures;
- Arrange signals to let your group know what is happening with the nesting turtle;
- Enhance the education of your assistant guides;
- Stay with the group at the beach, answer questions, and keep the group informed of scouting and nesting progress. Lead guides scout only if there is an extra permitted guide to stay with the group;
- Be sure that accurate, reliable information is being relayed to watch participants. Do not hesitate to say "I don't know" or "Research is still being done..."
- Be sure any donations accepted during the watch are recorded and deposited.

Duties of Assistant Guides (non-permitted volunteers)

- Attend at least one training session;
- Be reliable. When you agree to assist on a walk, be on time (8:15 p.m.) and prepared to stay until the watch is over;
- Sign-in participants, collect the requested donation if the reservation is not marked prepaid, pass out watch information packets, and record all designated guides, assistant guides, and scouts taking part in the Walk;
- Set-up the projector, screen, and chairs. Help to put them away;
- Be receptive. There is much to learn from publications and by listening to the well informed, experienced guides. However, be sure your sources are reliable and based on accepted research information. Knowledgeable researchers say, "There is still a lot we don't know about sea turtles. Don't hesitate to say "I don't know" or "Research is still being done...";
- Do a slide presentation at least once during the watch season;
- Enjoy the watch and take pride in your commitment to this public education project.

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.

1. Only Loggerhead turtles may be observed by participants.
2. Interpretive programs on sea turtle biology and conservation are mandatory.
3. Public awareness turtle watches/walks may not be commercialized. (STPS requests a donation to cover expenses - the donation is not mandatory.)
4. Age limitations for participants are left to the discretion of the principal permit holder.
5. Scouts will be utilized to search for nesting loggerheads if the group size exceeds five (5) participants.
6. Participant flashlights are not permitted.

7. Guides and Scouts are encouraged to invite persons who are out on their own to join the group. (STPS encourages beach "pick-ups ".)
8. Guides and Scouts must exercise great caution when exposing a nest.
9. Participants must stay with the group, remain quiet, and approach the sea turtle only from the rear.
10. Use of flash photography and lights for filming is not permitted.
11. Only one nesting turtle shall be observed by the group.
12. No more than five turtle watches/walks may be conducted per seven day week.
13. A summary of each watch shall be completed on the Turtle Watch Summary form.

3.3 The Sea Turtle House

In the Educational Center, there are life-sized replicas of sea turtles hanging in our front window. These dramatically illustrate the large size of these wonderful animals. Additional replicas include a life-sized adult Green turtle, a sub-adult Loggerhead, a juvenile Loggerhead, and a juvenile Kemp's Ridley.

In addition, the center has artifacts (real and replicas), informational sea turtle related posters, brochures, and educational displays.

The Sea Turtle House offers a variety of sea turtle related gifts, clothing, books and accessories. Proceeds from the sale of these items are used to support the conservation and educational efforts of the STPS.

The office staff supported fielding of stranding reports, assisted in arranging walk reservations and helped with other activities as identified. The staff also welcomed visitors and answered questions about our organization and sea turtles. The center is staffed from Monday – Saturday 11:00 am until 5:00 pm. Depending on season and available volunteers, then Sundays from 12 noon to 3:00pm.

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. By adopting a sea turtle you will help to support the Sea Turtle Preservation Society'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! There are three options available from which to choose:

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
- Your choice of name for your hatchling
- Information on sea turtle hatchlings

Adopt a Nest: For a forty-five dollar donation, donors help STPS nest watch efforts by adopting a nest. Each nest adoption includes:

- A personalized certificate of adoption
- Information on sea turtle hatchlings

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
- Information on sea turtle stranding and disorientation
- One year individual membership
- Sea Turtle Preservation Society Sticker

The number of participants in this program for 2014 is included in the following table.

3.5 Attention Boater's Program

STPS began an "Attention Boaters" Program in 2011. This program was a direct response to the offshore boat races that began in Cocoa Beach in 2010. Since injuries related to boating encounters account for the highest cause of sea turtle deaths in our area, STPS applied to the Sea Turtle Grants Program administered by the Sea Turtle Conservancy for a grant to fund an education program. This program was directed toward boaters and increasing their awareness of the threat boats provide to sea turtles in our waters. STPS was awarded the grant for the amount of $1790, which was used to support our "Attention Boaters" Program.

The program was designed to make boaters aware of the sea turtle population in both the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian River Lagoon. STPS designed and printed water-resistant cards that contain information related to the special precautions necessary to take around sea turtles in the water. These cards were distributed in 2012, 2013, and 2014 to most of the marine related businesses that are located in the sea turtle areas of Brevard County.

STPS volunteers distributed cards to boaters at the annual Super Boat International Race in Cocoa Beach and another High-speed race called. The races were in May and August 2014

In addition, STPS also used a portion of the 2012 Sea Turtle License Plate Grant monies to design 18"x24" signs, based on the "Attention Boaters" cards. Ten of these signs were placed at boat ramps throughout Brevard County. These signs alert boaters to the sea turtles in the local waters. STPS also designed a 36"x48" sign which has the "Attention Boaters" information on one side and lists facts about Loggerhead and Green sea turtles on the other side. This sign is designed to educate boaters about the threat they may pose to sea turtles in the Indian River Lagoon. The sign is located at Ballard Park in Melbourne.

Distribution of cards	105 Volunteer hours
$21.24 x 105 volunteer hours = $2,230.20 value	

3.6 Lights Out For Sea Turtles

Each year STPS contacts local media to announce the start of sea turtle nesting season with a "Lights Out" campaign directed toward visitors and residents alike. May 1 – October 31 is the period recognized
A graphic design created by Rosalind Conner for a newsletter was posted to the STPS Facebook page receiving a tremendous positive response. A nice image would attracts attention, so STPS published a 4x9 inch "rack" card speaking to the effect lights have on hatchlings, distributed them at events and dropped off at hotels and local beachside residences. Then a 32X72 inch banner was printed from the card design and using portable stands the banners were placed in 6 beachside resort hotel lobbies. Resort managers commented positively on the information, quality and attractiveness of the banners helping their guests enjoy their stay. STPS will expand this outreach to our visitors in 2015 having applied for grants specifically for educational publications and displays.

Design, creation, distribution of rack cards and banners	210 Volunteer hours
$21.24 x 210 volunteer hours = $5,090.40 value	

4. Stranding and Salvage

The Sea Turtle Preservation Society supports the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN), which were formally 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.

When a sea turtle becomes stranded, individuals from the general public may notice it on one of our beaches first and contact the STPS using its emergency number. The STPS emergency number is published in a variety of publications in the Brevard County area. Additionally, stranding calls are received at our Educational Center during office hours. The STPS then activates its Stranding Team effort.

An Emergency Pager system (called One Call Now) provides improved communications from the public to our stranding team members using a published hotline number. The volunteers give basic information to callers, get details and locate an available Stranding Team member. Calls from the public are left as a voice mail, which is then converted, to a phone text message and an email message. The messages are forward immediately to several Stranding Team members. The Stranding Team is on call twenty-four hours a day and 365 days a year to rescue and salvage the endangered and threatened sea turtles. There are over 300 miles of shoreline in Brevard County when the shores of the Indian River, Banana River and Mosquito Lagoons are included. Many times information and contact numbers are given for other wildlife groups.

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 single 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 biannual training class held by a Stranding Coordinator from FWC, and the named permit holder must also attend additional training/meeting sessions. This permit expires at the end of the calendar year.

In conjunction with the STPS Stranding Team, STPS has implemented a Sea Turtle Emergency Response Program (STERP) with over 200 trained volunteers in 2014. The purpose of this program is to provide better 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 large layer of seaweed that circulates offshore. This is called the

Sargasso Sea and is part of the Atlantic Gyre. This is essentially a sea turtle nursery in that it provides nutrient 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 with large amounts of seaweed and algae. These "washback" or post hatchling sea turtles are exhausted, dehydrated and in need of medical attention. If accidentally placed back into the ocean they will perish, as they no longer have the energy to swim the 20 miles back to safety. STPS using the STERP volunteers survey the wrack line, search 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 the imperiled species department of FWC.

The annual Florida Marine Turtle Permit Holders Meeting was held in Deerfield Beach Florida in February 2014. This annual meeting is put on by FWC and sponsors to provide the latest data, announcements, and networking opportunities for all Marine Turtle Permit Holders (attendance is required for permit holders). It is open to volunteers and those on the various permits and STPS had more than 20 attend the meetings.

Another training opportunity in 2014 was at the Marathon Turtle Hospital in December where activities included necropsies, surgery techniques, and networking with Florida and regional turtle rehabilitation experts. Seven STPS members attended the weekend workshop.

4.1 Stranding Activities

For 2014, Roger Pszonowsky was the primary permit (MTP 11-169) holder in charge of the STPS Stranding Team. Though 2014 was a less active year for the team, the team completed 115 stranding reports.

The following data is extracted from stranding documents done by STPS volunteers and does not include reports by other stranding permit holders in Brevard County.

STPS 2014 Documented Strandings by Species	Number of Turtles
Loggerheads (Caretta caretta)	40 dead / 18 live = 58 total
Greens (Chelonia mydas)	22 dead / 27 live = 63 total
Kemps Ridley (Lepidochelys kempii)	1 dead = 1 total
Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea)	2 dead / 0 live = 2 total
Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricate)	2 live = 2 total
Unknown	3 dead = 3 total
TOTAL	68 dead / 47 live = 115 total strandings

Overall STPS data included 48 live turtles (72%). Boat interaction injuries (props or hull) were recorded on 23 turtles (20%).

Live turtles (48 initially recovered) were transported to the following facilities:

- Brevard Sea Turtle Healing Center 21
- Sea World Orlando 13
- Marine Science Center, Volusia 1
- Gumbo Limbo, Boca Raton 2
- Mote Marine Labs 1
- Clearwater Aquarium 1
- Handed off to FWC 9

During 2014, the Stranding Team also participated in several turtle releases including the Brevard Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center first release. Releases were organized by the responsible rehabilitation facility or FWC. Generally, the sea turtles that were released were returned to the location of their rescue.

For comparison purposes, the following data summarizes the Florida statewide statistics from the 2014 FWC accounting information. The STPS Stranding Team was responsible for generating the initial reports for more than 10 percent of all the documented sea turtle strandings within the state of Florida.

2014 Florida Statewide Stranding Data (provided by FWC 03/2015)

In 2014 Florida had a total of 1692 documented strandings. This number is about twice the number when documentation first began.

- 798 Loggerhead (Caretta caretta), 23% decrease from 2013
- 846 Green (Chelonia mydas), the highest ever 5% increase over 2013
- 188 Kemps Ridley (Lepidochelys kempii)
- 16 Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricate)
- 8 Leatherbacks ((Dermochelys coriacea)

The table below is an estimate of the total number of volunteer hours expended by the STPS Stranding Team during 2014.

Stranding Activity	**Persons**	**Hours/days/weeks**	**Estimated Volunteer Hours**
115 Strandings	1	3hrs	345
48 live rescues	+1	7hrs	336
Training	40	6 hrs	240
Rehabilitation Workshop	7	28hrs	196
Permit Holders Meeting	20	30hrs	440
Program Management	2	15 hr/wk for 52wks	1560
Turtle Facility Consult	2	2 hr x 52 wks	312
Total Volunteer Hours			**3429 hrs**
Value of volunteer time 3429 hrs x $21.24			**$72,831.96**

4.2 STERP Activities

In 2014, STERP completed its seventh year. The community response for this program continues to be as enthusiastic as when it was initiated.

STPS conducted STERP Workshops on May 20th, May 28th, June 7th and June 14th. A total of 214 volunteers completed the workshop and field training sessions. Attendance rosters from each session were sent to Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and we received Letters of Authorization for 124 volunteers. This year in order to be on the LOA volunteers needed to have attendee either Turtle 101 or Turtle talk plus 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.

2014 was a very quiet season as far as tropical storms. We did have a few storms that we had volunteer monitoring for post hatchlings, but these storms only destroyed a few nests.

Volunteers also assisted with the distribution of literature to beach side condos, hotels and businesses. This literature addressed sea turtles that nest on Brevard Beaches, "lights out" for nesting season and sea turtle reporting procedures. Volunteers also assisted in distributing "Attention Boaters" Program cards during the Cocoa Beach Super Boat race and then later to marinas, bait shops, and marine related businesses.

In 2014 several STPS volunteers helped as observers during two offshore boat races, Super Boat Race in May and the P1 Race in August. They were stationed on the shore and in boats, and one person in a helicopter.

The table below is an estimate of the total number of volunteer hours expended by the STPS STERP Team during 2014.

STERP Activity	Hrs.	Volunteers	Estimated Volunteer Hours
Training (STERP and Cold Stun)	3	214	642
Registration/Prep	20	4	80
Storms – beach monitoring	4	5	20
Boat Race Observers	8	7	56
Literature distribution to beach hotels, condos,	8	10	80
Total Hours			**878**
Value of Volunteer time 878 hrs x $21.24			**$18,648**

4.3 Brevard Zoo "Sea Turtle Healing Center"

Along the US south Atlantic coast and the Gulf of Mexico Coast there are many sea turtle rehabilitation facilities. 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, but there has not been a rehabilitation facility within the Brevard County. When STPS rescues an injured or sick sea turtle, a member of the STPS Stranding Team must transport it to an existing rehabilitation facility that is approximately a 1½ - 4 hour drive. Valuable time is lost in the transport.

In 2013, STPS entered into a 3 year partnership agreement with the Brevard Zoo to jointly develop a sea turtle medical facility that would provide triage type medical attention to injured and sick rescued turtles. As part of this agreement, STPS has committing $25,000 a year to help fund operating costs.

This facility, the Brevard Zoo Sea Turtle Healing Center, is a unique partnership of community resources and vision. It is located on the zoo's property adjacent to their new Brevard Zoo Hospital Facility. In 2014 the facility opened. A $40,000 grant from the Sea Turtle License Tag program helped to fund the construction of a steel roofed building, located adjacent to the recently built modern animal hospital. It has a wall separating two covered sections and includes separate filtration systems for salt water created onsite. The wing for sea turtles will have four tanks for turtles with fibropapilloma tumors and eight additional tanks for other sea turtles. Five of these fiberglass tanks were donated to STPS by Marineland Dolphin Adventure / Georgia Aquarium. This facility is one of only five in Florida that will accept animals infected with fibropapilloma. Surgical procedures will be conducted in the adjacent animal hospital.

Brevard Zoo is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facility. Volunteers working under guidance of the Brevard Zoo veterinary staff perform the daily operating tasks to maintain the facility. The Brevard Zoo, like STPS, relies heavily on volunteers. Many STPS volunteers have work as volunteers at the new facility. They will work under the supervision of the Trevor Zachariah, DVM and several vet-techs.

The facility opened in April 2014.

5. Sea Turtle Nesting Survey

The survey program was inactive during 2014

These surveys are along the Atlantic Ocean starting at the northern boundary of Patrick Air Force Base and currently extend north 4.5 miles into the Cocoa Beach area. Survey duties included several volunteers walking different sections of the entire 4.5 mile stretch every morning from May 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).

After a nest has either hatched or it is past 70 days old, the nest is excavated and the contents are evaluated. Once uncovered, the nest's contents are reviewed to determine the number of hatched eggs, unhatched 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 results are reported to the Florida Marine Research Institute of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

6. Community Involvement

In 2014, STPS participated in a variety of activities designed to promote community involvement.

6.1 Guest Speakers

As part of our community outreach efforts, STPS scheduled a variety of speakers for our monthly membership meetings. The meetings were held the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Melbourne Beach Community Center. Doors opened at 7:00 p.m. for light refreshments. These meetings were open to the general public and featured topics related to sea turtles and/or their relationship to our environment.

6.2 Communications

STPS has several methods of communication with its members and the general public. A list is included in the following table.

Item	Contact	Comments
Turtle Talk	Vickie Openshaw, Editor	The newsletter was distributed three times a year to all of its members. In 2014 it is being distributed electronically to most members with copies mailed upon request.
STPS Website	Mark Petrillo and Nini Conner	SeaTurtleSpaceCoast.org
STPS Facebook	Nini Conner	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	Dave Cheney	In our One Call Now systems 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 we are contacted by various media outlets for stories about our Sea Turtle Population.

6.3 Beach Cleanup

STPS participated in the Keep Brevard Beautiful (KBB), Adopt-A-Beach program with monthly beach cleanups. Our designated site is at Coconut Point Park at the north end of the Archie Carr Wildlife

Refuge off of A1A. The Keep Brevard Beautiful "season" runs from September to September. A 3-member team currently leads Beach Cleanup efforts. All members share the responsibility for acting as monthly leaders based on their individual availability. Team members are Mike Clark, Ron Fischer and Geraldine Burke who is also the liaison with KBB and has responsibility for statistical collection reporting duties each month.

STPS was recognized by KBB for it our cleanup efforts in 2014 as the First Place team in the Adopt- A-Shore Program and was presented with a special plaque. Not only do STPS volunteers meet once a month to clean the beach, they also participated in the Great Coastal Clean Up and Trash Bash every year. STPS received points for clean ups, number of volunteers, bags of trash collected and extra points for taking the recycle products home to their own recycle bins.

STPS members – many who routinely clean the beach on their own schedule—have a means to report their activity to a special email address, beachcleanup@seaturtlespacecoast.org. Once received, the details of their efforts are then forwarded to KBB to be credited to STPS's monthly totals. The most dramatic change seen in 2014 was the increases in the number of individual reporter volunteer activity which reflects most significantly the efforts of one STPS member who faithfully reported each time she did a personal beach cleanup---logging in 108 hours! The following table summarizes the STPS 2014 Beach Cleanup activities and special cleanups. The statistics for 2014 also show increases over 2013 in several other areas: bags collected (+56/29%) and recycles (+29/55%).

STPS 2014 Beach Clean Ups					
Date	**People**	**Bags**	**Recycle**	**Comments**	**Estimated Volunteer Hours**
01/04/2014	16	7	2		32
02/08/2014	32	9	3		64
03/08/2014	34	9	2		68
04/06/2014	21	7	3		42
04/26/2014		5	2	Trash Bash	36
05/03/2014	8	2	1		16
06/07/2014	21	5	2		42
07/05/2014	7	5	2		14
08/09/2014	16	8	1		32
09/06/2014	11	3	3		22
09/14/2014	26	40	18	Turtle Krawl	64
09/20/2014	31	10	7	Coastal Clean-up	98
10/04/2014	34	15	3		68
11/08/2014	21	11	1		42
12/06/2014	17	5	2		34
Various Days	120	110	30	Individual Reporters	123

TOTALS	443	251	82		**797 Hrs**
Value of Volunteer time				**797 hr x $21.24**	**$16,928.28**

7. Fundraising

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

- Annual membership fees
- Direct donations of cash by organizations or corporations
- Direct donations of cash by individuals
- Corporate-sponsored promotions with STPS as the recipient of the donation
- STPS-sponsored fund raising activities.
    - Turtle Krawl - 5K Run/Walk
    - Night Time Turtle Watch/Walks
    - Adopt-A-Turtle Program
- Merchandise sales at our Educational Center and Outdoor environmental events

Turtle Krawl - 5K Run/Walk

The Turtle Krawl 5K Run/Walk was the largest fundraiser benefitting the Sea Turtle Preservation Society in 2014. 2014 marked the fifth year STPS volunteers coordinated the race, after the STPS Board of Directors resurrected it in 2010. Brevard Parks and Recreation historically coordinated the Turtle Krawl from 2000-2008. Planning this event was a tremendous commitment on the part of the STPS volunteers, but was well worth the effort. Nearly 2800 registrants in 2014 made Turtle Krawl the largest (and arguably best) 5k race in Brevard County!

The turnout for this year's race was tremendous, and between registration fees and sponsorships, nearly $60,000 was raised for the STPS. The STPS Board of Directors has agreed to set aside Turtle Krawl income for a "special projects" fund and has presented Brevard Zoo with the first check to help financially support the zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center that opened in April 2014. This facility helps to ensure sea turtles rescued on Brevard County beaches get faster medical attention.

The following is a recap of the 2014 race:

September 13th began with a beautiful sunrise promising to be a perfect day for a 5K. This year surpassed all expectations. We raised more than $60,000 for the organization and continued to be the largest 5K in Brevard County. Almost 2,800 people registered for the event and 2,425 runners and walkers began their 3.1-mile journey through the streets of Indialantic.

STPS presented Brevard Zoo with a large $25,000 check at the awards ceremony supporting the recently opened Brevard Sea Turtle Healing Center located at the zoo.

A fitting surprise ended the morning. SeaWorld brought a sub-adult loggerhead sea turtle for release. The turtle was rescued by a STPS stranding team member on June 4, 2014 and transported to SeaWorld where it received medical treatment for intestinal blockage and anemia. Members of the STPS stranding team and hundreds of runners and walkers gathered on the beach to watch the rehabilitated turtle return back into the ocean. This is what Turtle Krawl is all about and why runners, walkers, volunteers, sponsors, and guests all give up their time to participate in such a worthy cause.

Thousands of photos from the race, plus an aerial video of the race and turtle release filmed by the mayor of Indialantic can be viewed at http://turtlekrawl.com/photos.

Turtle Krawl would not be possible without the numerous hours and hard work the many volunteers who participated in poster hanging, distributing door hangers, race packet stuffing, early packet pickup, baking muffins, race day packet pickup, manning water stops, parking attendants, food/ beverage preparation/serving, course marshals, and finisher medal distribution. The race would not be possible without all the wonderful volunteers who give up their time to help sea turtles survive.

Sponsors for 2014 were Port Canaveral, SeaWorld Orlando, Slug-A-Bug, Absolutely Natural, Animal Emergency and Critical Care Center of Brevard, Gatto's, Porter Premier Dermatology, Running Zone, Bob's Beach Bicycle, Central Life Church, Elevate Bands, Southeastern Honda, Toyota of Melbourne, Bass Pro Shops, Double Tree, Kelly Ford, Launch Federal Credit Union, Set Goals not Limits, Up&Running Fitness, Beachside Physical Therapy, Florida Today, Giant Stride Solutions, Inc., Walmart, Natalie's, Bar CLIF, BB&T, INI Productions, Natural Awakenings, Clow Chiropractic, Adidas, Starbucks, Planet Kid, Planet Smoothie, WFIT 89.5FM, and Space Coast Runners.

A breakdown of race participants by gender and age group is included in the following tables.

Sex	**Runners**	**Percent**
Male	872	31%
Female	1912	69%
Total	**2784**	

Age				
Age Group	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Percent**
8 and	21	21	42	2%
9 – 11	37	47	84	3%
12 – 14	33	39	72	3
15 - 19	39	54	93	3
20 - 24	33	91	12	4
25 - 29	50	132	182	7

30 - 34	78	210	288	10
35 - 39	63	174	237	9%
40 - 44	94	262	356	13%
45 - 49	96	261	357	13%
50 - 54	134	283	417	15%
55 - 59	85	174	259	9
60 - 64	60	96	156	6
65 - 69	31	41	72	3
70 - 74	11	18	29	1
75 and over	7	9	16	1
Totals	**872**	**1912**	**2784**	

Mark Petrillo, STPS Board of Directors member was the race director. An estimate of all of the Turtle Krawl-related volunteer hours follows:

Activity	Estimated Volunteer Hours
Planning and Preparation	500
Sponsor Acquisition	350
Promotion	150
Race Day	200
Total Estimated Volunteer Hours	**1200**

8. STPS Memberships

Membership is open to those who have a sincere interest in supporting the mission of the STPS. Our current members come from 41 different states, Canada , Great Britain, Spain, France and the Netherlands.

In 2014, we continued the use of the online-based membership management system (MMS), which continues to assist us in streamlining many aspects of our organization.

For 2014, the income from STPS memberships increased by 30 percent from the previous year, while the number of members increased across the board. The MMS provides a superior method for logging in new memberships and monitoring existing memberships for pending renewals. In addition, STPS members can now securely update their own contact information with easy to use online access to their profile as well as register for volunteer and training opportunities and sponsored events.

Of all of the features of the MMS, the automatic Renewal Reminder email continues to be one of the most valuable. One month prior and then one week prior (if applicable) to the renewal date, an automated email is sent to the member along with a hyperlink for convenient online renewal. If needed, we also send out a final reminder two weeks after the renewal date has passed. We attribute this, along with our new use of social media to the 2014 success. The new "gifting" ideas passed on to our followers support our mission of "Helping Sea Turtles Survive".

Below are the numbers for the various levels of membership:

Member Statistics at the end of 2014

MEMBESHIP LEVEL	ACTIVE
Student	36
Individual	232
Family	178
Contributor	43
Lifetime	162
Endowment	3
Benefactor	22
Total	**676**

9. Total Estimated Volunteer Hours

STPS Volunteers have donated the following 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 the actually time worked. Consequently the following data has been estimated based on inputs from the lead persons involved with overseeing the primary activities. Total volunteer hours were down for the year as the Survey Program did not operate which historically accounts for approximately 29% of activity hours.

Using these estimates and a conservative estimated dollar value of $21.24 per hour of volunteer time, STPS contributed approximately $258,639 to the Brevard County community with our volunteer activities. (See the web site for the 2015 Independent Sector Annual Conference http://independentsector.org/Volunteer_time for details on how this estimate of volunteer hours is derived.)

Activity	Estimated Volunteer Hours
Adopt a Turtle Program	50
Beach Cleanup	797
Board of Directors Meetings	312
Communications (Includes Facebook, Newsletter, Public Relations, and Website)	750
Education Talks and Displays	941
Financial Management	750
Membership Management	350
Membership Meetings	100
STERP Activities	878
Stranding Activities	3429
Turtle Krawl	1200
Turtle Walks * estimated value	2420
Volunteer Coordination	200
TOTAL ESTIMATED VOLUNTEER HOURS	**12,177**
Value of Volunteer hours $258,639	

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

ANNUAL CHANGE IN VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION		
Year	**Estimated Volunteer Hours**	**Annual Percent Increase**
2010	11127	-
2011	11707	+5
2012	12947	+10
2013	15180	+17
2014	12,177	-20

** Note the 20% reduction in hours in 2014 was due to the Nest Survey Program was inactive.