



BritClub News



VOL 20, ISSUE 6

COMING EVENTS

SBC BOARD MEETING

Next meeting will be on Wednesday, June 10th; it will be a virtual meeting and the time of the meet is to be announced.

All members will receive emailed invitations to the events shown below in due time. Please look out for them in your inbox and be sure to add "Sarasota British Club" to your safe senders list

Save the date!

AGM: Saturday, October 10th.

Guy Fawkes: Thursday, November 5th.

Christmas party: December 12th, 2020 at 6:00pm.

Eventbrite

A gentle reminder: please use the Eventbrite system to let us know that you are coming to our events. Many events require us to notify the venue of numbers attending. At several recent events members have arrived without advance notice, and this causes confusion and seating difficulties.

In future members who have not signed up will be asked to wait until registered members are seated and we hope you will understand that it is only fair that we should give priority to members who have used the system.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER, JUNE 2020

I had an interesting conversation the other day about the 'routine' that we have settled into, and the fact that we now have time to properly relax.

We find ourselves able to simply sit and do nothing, without feeling guilty about it. In fact, the jigsaw puzzle that Diana bought at the beginning of the lockdown is still sitting unopened on the dining room table, as we have not (yet!) felt the need to start it.

Several news outlets have carried pieces about wildlife becoming bolder as traffic and people are less evident.

Not seeing this so much on Siesta Key, with the exception of rabbits, which have suddenly become abundant.

However, we were excited to see this bird's nest in the bushes in front of our house.

If any members have similar pictures or stories to share, please send them to Olga for inclusion in our next issue.



Like many members, we were forced to cancel a trip to the UK, where we were to meet up with my chums from University for a reunion at a pub/hotel near Cambridge. We were disappointed to miss this and fell to reminiscing about holiday trips when we were young.

I am sure many members will recall holidays at the seaside in a caravan, with rain drumming on the roof. Or a week in a chalet at Butlins, with the irrepressible redcoats and wacky games. When we were first married, a package tour to the Costa Brava was the highlight of the year, and later we bought a giant tent and packed it into our Ford Capri and drove to the South of France.

How far we have come, to be trapped now in Paradise here in Sarasota.

Wishing all of you continued safety in these challenging times.

Paul Wilkinson

BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

Précis of the May's Board Meeting

The Treasurer's Report showed a Closing Balance of \$4,373.84 on April 30th, 2020.

Our present total membership is 129.

Future event ideas such as a Cooking Demonstration; Social Night; Movie Night and Bingo are being considered for when our lives return to normal.

*The Sarasota British Club is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year and
We are planning on having a birthday party at the Annual General Meeting in October.*



COMING EVENTS

Open Air Gatherings:

Starting on Wednesday, June 3rd, at 09:00 AM.

Location: Brohard Paw Park in Venice (near Sharky's)

We will make our way individually to the beach, if you have not been there before, you go through the dog park and follow the signed path alongside the lake down to the beach.

Annual General Meeting:

On Saturday, October 10th, at Village des Pins Clubhouse.

Guy Fawkes Beach Party:

On Thursday, November 5th, at Siesta Key beach.

2020 Annual Christmas party:

December 12th, 2020; at 6:00pm.

Heritage Oaks Golf & Country Club, 4800 Chase Oaks Dr. Sarasota, FL. 34241

Watch this space for future announcements!

RECENT EVENTS

May luncheon

From Vivienne Sivak:

Sixteen of us enjoyed lunch in the ballroom at the Grove at Lakewood Ranch. It was great to see everyone and to do some catching up. Following lunch, my husband, Larry gave a presentation including a video of our trip to Antarctica this February.

My plan is to find venues for lunches which will allow us to meet and still maintain social distancing. Please send me your suggestions for restaurants.

Bsivak802@gmail.com







MEDIA MATTERS

Apparently, there are a lot of lockdown viewers using **Netflix**' DVD service, as my top 10 choices are permanently unavailable, so we have been watching my lower rated choices including *The Dark*, a Sean Bean low-budget horror set in Wales on the Gower coast. It was surprisingly well done and made us jump several times.

- We finished the 5th season of **Outlander** (**Amazon**), and thoroughly enjoyed the show.
- We are almost finished with **Game of Thrones** (**HBO**) and found it better this second time around.
- **Bosch** (**Amazon**) is highly recommended

- **Code of a Killer** (**Acorn**) was an exceptionally good tale of the first time that genetic profiling was used.



We started several shows, but bailed out after one or two episodes, there is just so much available that watching some average shows is just a waste of time, here are some we could not get into:

- *White Lines* (**Netflix**)
- *Hollywood* (**Netflix**)
- *Girl/Haji* (**Netflix**)
- *Da Vinci's Demons* (**Amazon**)

A recommendation from Sandra Cherry: **The BritBox**.

Feel free to email or call me with questions – pwilkinson18@gmail.com or 240 432 2851

Paul Wilkinson

COMMUNITY BOARD

This section of the Newsletter is available to members who wish to connect with our community to announce events and seek connections within the community. It is not available for commercial purposes or to advertise events outside the interests of our members. The rules for inclusion are simple: the Newsletter editor has the final call as to whether something is acceptable for inclusion!

Please forward your items to: peter13454@gmail.com

IN MEMORIAM: Richard M. Curtin:

I am sad to report that Richard M. Curtin died May 14th, in Sarasota Memorial Hospital from cardiac issues.

Born in Washington DC, he graduated from The George Washington University with a degree in Electrical Engineering and served in the US Army.

For 30 years he worked for the Army Corp of Engineers at the Washington DC Aqueduct.

Richard is survived by his wife of 27 years, Kathy. They were both original Brit Club members, and from the beginning, have contributed greatly to its success. He loved having a flutter at the Tampa Bay Down outings and loved to dance at our Christmas Parties; on a personal note, at one of our first parties, I especially remember doing the jitterbug/jive with him...he was a great dancer.

On behalf of the Brit Club members, we send our love and condolences to Kathy.

Sandra Cherry

From Christine Green:

INTERESTING TIME FOR REAL ESTATE!

One would have thought that Real Estate would come to a stop during this crazy time, but would you believe that real estate was considered 'Essential Business'? The Pandemic hit over our busiest period for real estate which as you will see on the chart below there has been some decline but, in my opinion, nothing which will affect the market value of properties. I have even put listings on the market over the last two months which have sold within days, a couple even having multiple offers!

We are still getting showings on good properties, by which I mean, well maintained, good location and correctly priced and they are going under contract. Obviously, we have the buyers offering low ball offers hoping that the Pandemic may cause fear in some sellers hoping to get a better deal!

You will see from the chart below which was issued by *the' Realtor Association of Sarasota and Manatee'* which covers the whole County that listings are down, which will keep prices strong over the coming months with the anticipated buyers coming back into town.

In my opinion people who have been cooped up north in the miserable weather during the Pandemic are going to be making some serious life changes. This week alone I have had two lots of buyers who have risked flying in to purchase a home.

Do not worry I was wearing a mask at all times and disinfected everything afterwards!



We may foresee some hard times ahead for homeowners who have lost their income, especially if they had a forbearance from their lender. Unfortunately, not all homeowners are aware that the forbearance is only a short-term fix and the full amount outstanding will need to be paid at the end of the forbearance period. i.e. If you received 3 months forbearance, on Month 4 the homeowner will be expected to pay the 4th months payment as well as the back payments for the last three months. This will be hard to do if they have not received any income! Their credit rating may also be affected. I am not a qualified mortgage broker so please contact your lender for advice and further clarification on this subject.

From John Witton:

When insults had class...

These glorious insults are from an era before the English language got boiled down to 4-letter words.

"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire."

- **Winston Churchill**

"I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure."

- **Clarence Darrow**

"He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary."

- **William Faulkner** (about Ernest Hemingway)

"Thank you for sending me a copy of your book; I'll waste no time reading it."

- **Moses Hadas**

"He has no enemies but is intensely disliked by his friends."

- **Oscar Wilde**

"I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend, if you have one."

- **George Bernard Shaw** to Winston Churchill

"Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second... if there is one."

-Winston Churchill, in response

"He is a self-made man and worships his creator."

-John Bright

"He loves nature in spite of what it did to him."

-Forrest Tucker

"Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go."

-Oscar Wilde

"He has Van Gogh's ear for music."

-Billy Wilder

"I've had a perfectly wonderful evening. But I'm afraid this wasn't it."

-Groucho Marx

From your editor: Burrowing Owls in Cape Coral

A few weeks ago, my friend Jane and I decided to visit the Burrowing Owls in Cape Coral.

We left Sarasota soon after the first light one morning and cheerfully drove south hoping to see some babies and eager to take some photos.

Our first stop was near the Cape Coral Public Library; to my surprise, there were already several cars driving in the area, some people walking with a camera and others sitting on the edge of the road. They appeared to be looking at nothing...but one moment after I steered my eyes to the wooden sticks, slowly, with no rush: I saw them! First the parents and then the chicks; two, three and four little ones, it varied in each nest.

After taking a few shots we kept moving to different streets in the neighborhood and seeing more families, always under the watchful eye of at least one parent.

Some of the nests were located only a few yards from the road and the birds didn't seem afraid of people, actually, they were quite tolerant of our presence...as long as we continued moving on. They didn't even appear to acknowledge the construction going on around.

On the way back, I was having mixed feelings about my experience, on one hand, I was happy to have seen them so up close with such easy access, on the other hand I felt the responsibility of our impact on their fragile habitat.



Jane Ellison 2020

About the Burrowing Owls:

Burrowing owls are an incredibly unique species and they are the only raptor in North America to nest exclusively underground. Their scientific name is *Athene cunicularia floridana*, which comes from the Latin words “*Athene*” for Athena (the Greek goddess of wisdom, known for her love of owls), “*cunicularia*” for burrower or miner, and “*floridana*” for Florida. But it’s much easier to just call them burrowing owls.

Florida burrowing owls can be found throughout the state, but they’re more concentrated in Cape Coral than anywhere else in Florida, with an estimated 1000 nesting pairs.

The owls moved to Cape Coral in the 1950s. They were drawn by the wide-open, flat land left by the city’s developers as they chopped down trees to make room for streets and houses. The drainage of wetlands, although detrimental to many organisms, increases the areas of habitat for the burrowing owl.

While some of the Western Burrowing Owls migrate, the Burrowing Owls in Cape Coral do not migrate. They remain year-round, but often hide in the summer to avoid the hot summer sun.



Jane Ellison 2020



These raptors can fly but they don't live in trees, instead, they spend most of their time underground. Their burrows have a saucer size entrance and a tunnel leading to a nesting cavity as deep as eight feet underground; for obvious reasons, they prefer land that drains well. They often take over holes abandoned by squirrels and other small animals; sometimes they even set up themselves in man made pipes or plastic tubing in the ground.

Breeding and nesting season takes place from February 15th to July 10th, though some owls breed earlier or later. Female owls can lay up to eight eggs in one week and about 28 days later, the newborn owls emerge sporting white feathers.

In approximately two weeks, the chicks can appear outside the nest; in four weeks they are learning to fly and in twelve weeks they are just about able to take care of themselves and leave the burrow to strike out on their own.

Burrowing owls mate for life and they will stay in the same nest if the conditions remain unchanged. But tall grass, nearby development, predators and other factors can make the owls pick up and move their homes elsewhere.





Burrowing owls usually live to about six years, some can even reach to ten years old. However, many of them do not reach old age due to the many threats they face. Their main threat is the continued loss of habitat such as construction activities; harassment by humans and domesticated animals; heavy floods that destroy the burrows, eggs and the young; ground and aerial predators and vehicle strikes.

The Florida Burrowing Owl is classified as State Threatened by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

They are also being looked after by the Cape Coral friends of Wildlife organization (ccfriendsofwildlife.org) for about twenty years.

CCFW is a volunteer organization whose purpose is to preserve and enhance the habitats of protected wildlife species and to educate the community about Cape Coral's wildlife resources.

One of their programs consists of encouraging the neighbors to place a "starter burrow" in their property, offering the following tips:

- Select an open lawn area located between the drainage swale and the front of your house (the best location) or in your backyard. Make sure that spot is safe from pets; away from trees, shrubs and buildings; and not prone to flooding.
- Start a tunnel entrance by digging a hole 8-12 inches deep at a 45-degree angle, using either a hand trowel or a small shovel. Pile the dirt just outside the hole.
- And install a wooden, T-shaped perch to get the owls' attention.

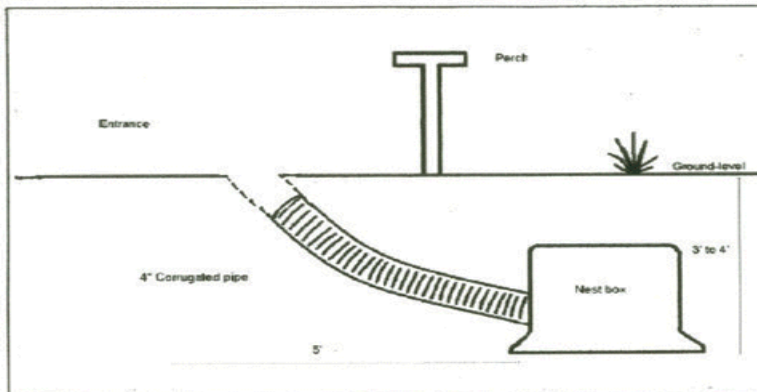
The starter burrows can help replace some of the owls' lost habitat as the city continues to develop. Learn more at ccfriendsofwildlife.org/starter-burrow.

This artificial burrow might be useful in situations where a natural burrow couldn't be sustained:

Artificial Burrow

Nest Box Specifications

The nest box will be buried 3 – 4' deep so there is one foot of soil on top of the box. The soil will insulate the nest chamber from the summer heat and cool weather in winter. A 5ft-long section of 4" corrugated pipe will be inserted into a side of the nest box and gradually incline to the ground surface to form the entrance to the nest box. In addition, we will place a perch nearby to encourage owl use.



Information for this article was obtained from:



CCFW

Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife

ccfriendsofwildlife.org

www.news-press.com

myfwc.com

Wikipedia

Photos by: Jane Ellison and
Olga Stokes



CITY OF CAPE CORAL Burrowing Owl Viewing Etiquette

Cape Coral is indeed fortunate to have the largest population of the Florida burrowing owl of any place in the world. Their burrows are unique in that they are easily accessible via City streets. Although it is wonderful to view these fascinating birds up close, we need to resist the temptation of loving them to death.

To help protect this species of special concern, state and federal laws prohibit the harassment of burrowing owls. This includes throwing rocks at them, trying to catch them, offering food items of any kind, or getting so close that their normal behavior is compromised in any way, especially during nesting season. Nesting season officially runs from February 15th through July 10th.

What many people do not realize, especially since Cape Coral's burrowing owls are so prevalent in established neighborhoods, is that your mere presence can adversely affect the wellbeing of the owls. Although the owls may appear content, or tolerant of your presence, if you are too close, they may be afraid to leave the nest area to hunt for food for their young. If the owls start bobbing their heads, you are already too close. Bobbing their heads is not a way of saying hello, they are getting nervous and want you to back away.

When viewing burrowing owls and taking pictures, you do not stay in the area around them for extended periods of time and maintain a minimum distance of 15-20 feet. Please consider that other people also come from all over the world to view and photograph our burrowing owls. The cumulative effect of too many people, too close, for too long, could be devastating to the young.

Consideration of their needs and wellbeing will help us to ensure that there are burrowing owls for many generations to come. Informational brochures are available at City Hall, the Cape Coral Historical Museum, local veterinary offices, and the Cape Coral Library. For more information please visit the Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife website at www.ccfriendsofwildlife.org.

Finally, please be considerate of residents' property rights and right to privacy when viewing burrowing owls in Cape Coral. Do not park in residents' yards or driveways or block traffic flow in City streets. You may contact the City of Cape Coral at planning@capecoral.net to request a map of recommended burrowing owl viewing locations.

A little reminder before we go:

How to wear a reusable mask



01 Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



02 Ensure the mask is right side out with the part intended for your nose on top.



03 Secure strings or elastic around your ears or behind your head so that mask fits your face without any gaps.



04 Ensure the mask covers your nose and chin.



05 Bend nose fitting to contours of your nose (if your mask has one).



06 Don't touch the mask while you're wearing it.



07 Wash your hands again before removing.



08 Remove from the back without touching the front.



09 Ideally clean in the washing machine before next use.



10 Wash your hands a final time.

Thank you!

The editor wishes to thank Jane Ellison for her photographs, Bernadette from Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife and all the club members who have contributed to this edition.



Olga Stokes 2020.

Sarasota British Club name badges

Please obtain Club badges directly from *Sarasota Trophy, 6601 Superior Ave, Sarasota, FL 34321. Phone 941 921 4339.*

- \$8 plus 56c tax for badge with magnet
- \$6 plus 42c tax for badge with pin (no magnet)

Badges can be collected in person (M – F 8.30 – 5pm, Sat 9am – noon) or shipped to your home for \$3.75.



SARASOTA BRITISH CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2020

President	Paul Wilkinson	240-432-2851
Vice President	Paul Cassidy	248-756-0010
Treasurer	Peter Stokes	941-536-4408
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Director at Large 2	Karen Clayton	941-592-8691
Director at Large 3	Vivienne Sivak	703-626-3562
Director Emeritus	Sandra Cherry	941-921-3162

Don't forget that Sarasota British Club is on Facebook. The Club's logo is the profile picture. Check out numerous photos from recent events.

Why not "friend" us for another way of keeping in touch with the Club and its members; you can add your event photos to the wall.