Dear Shell Club Members,

We started our 15th year in style. Membership is now at 166 great people who share a love of shells, friends, learning and fun.

We’ve had very enjoyable outings and excursions such as Carefree Learner, where we saw large whelks and tulips and a colony of margine- las converging on a single point to feed; Honey-moon Island, where we found numerous tops and turbans; and our February Beach Walk at Boca Grande Lighthouse. It was cool and damp but we found many lovely buttercups, jingles and several baby’s ears.

We had a very interesting survey of arks, cockles and bittersweet clams at our February Study Group and truly appreciate Debbie’s phenomenal shell collection and hospitality for hosting ses-sions at her home. Our Feb. ShellCrafters workshop was well attended and we made many types of shell flowers, butterflies and dragonflies.

We had blue ribbon winners from our club at the Sarasota Shell Show, the Melbourne Shell Show and the Sanibel Shell Show. Photos of the win-ners and their exhibits are inside.

Our speakers this year have been world famous and even had time for book signnings. We are so fortunate to have them share their experiences with us. What a great way to continue our proud heritage. *Christina*

As a child, my father, my siblings and I would pan for gold in the creeks and rivers around Cin-cinnati. I think that was the beginning of my love for adventure and shell-ing has become my ad-venture in Florida.

I began my career as a 4th grade teacher and retired as a School Superintendent near Columbus, OH. Now my husband, Jim, is the love of my life and we have 2 children (by marriage) 8 grand chil-dren, and 1 great grand child on the way.

Thanks to the Englewood Shell Club, shelling has become a passion with me. After the 2nd meeting, fellow Charter members Barb Myers, Etta Crosby and I became “BFFs” and shelled almost every beach in Florida including Sarasota Bay.

I volunteered to work as program chair, trip coordi-nator, shell craft teacher, advisor. Barb asked me to be on the slate for the president in 1999. I helped the Board create our first Constitution in 2001 and the formalized committees such as Study Group, Outreach, and ShellCrafters. I organized and helped plan Caribbean shelling trips to Elu-thera and Bimini, and traveled to Panama, Guan Cay and Margarita Island.

Life has been good to me and shelling has been one of my adventures that has made it a wonderful life, as well as, the people from the Club whom I call my Friends. *Marilyn*
Nominating Committee

This year’s nominating committee is chaired by Ruth Middlebrooks. She is joined by Marilyn Boyd and Eileen Tabone. The committee submitted a slate of candidates for approval at the March 2 General Meeting. The slate consisted of:

- Christina Anglin-President
- Nancy Weborg-Vice President
- Judy Kauk-Secretary
- Eileen Tabone-Treasurer
- Eunice Herr-Director-at-large
- Joy Brandt-Director-at-large
- Richard Eckart-Director-at-large.

Additional nominations from the floor included Brenda Steele for Director-at-large. All nominations were approved by the membership. The annual election is held at our March 23 General Meeting and the newly elected officers are installed at end of this meeting.

Beach Walks

Mar. 09 - Blind Pass Beach
Apr. 13 - Sharky’s Beach

About 15 shell seekers braved the cold February winds to walk the Boca Grande Lighthouse Beach on Tuesday, February 9. Although it was a bit chilly, the sun was bright and it was a delightful morning to be on a beach at last. The shelling was mostly common shells, but there was an abundance of baby’s ears. Kris Barr took the prize for shell of the day with the biggest baby’s ear most of us had seen. After shelling, some of us enjoyed a great lunch at Miller’s Grove, thanks to Carol Genest’s suggestion.

Plan to join us at the beach walk at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 9th at Blind Pass (Middle) Beach on Manasota Key and again at Sharky’s Beach on Tuesday, April 13th. Sharky’s Beach is on Venice Island to the right of Sharky’s On the Pier Restaurant at 1600 Harbor Drive South, Venice, 34285. We’ll meet on the beach by the new pavilion.

Rita Stonehouse

Upcoming Program

It’s time for a program about shell art! And we need the help of members to make this a truly special program about sailors’ valentines. At our March 23 General Meeting, Anita Wilson will give a short history of this art before turning the program over to Ruth Middlebrooks and Debbie Freeman who will discuss valentine design and also give practical tips for construction. Ruth has probably made more sailors’ valentines than any other club member and Debbie recently won a blue ribbon for one of her most recent valentine creations. All members who have made sailors’ valentines are encouraged to bring their works to share with club members; we will have at least two display tables. Please bring a little sign with your name along with your piece so we know who made each beauty!
Communications

The Communications Chair is an open position for the next Club year. The position can be split into several slots: newsletter editor, publicity, and website manager. If you are interested in one or all of the open positions, contact Christina Anglin to apply. You are also welcome to contact me directly for additional details.

Newsletter Update: The next newsletter is due out in Sept. providing we have a new newsletter editor. The newsletter is not set in cement so a new editor can change the format; it can be one page or several pages.

Website Update. We have a new user name and password for the Members Only section of the website. If you don’t have the new ones, please contact me or Christina Anglin.

Publicity Update. Hopefully some of you will see the article about Harlan Wittkopf and S. Peter Dance in the Englewood Sun-Herald. The interview was conducted a few days after our club meeting. We also had coverage of our anniversary by Patti Mihalek for the same newspaper.

Susan Ross

Study Group Schedule

Mar. 17 — Nerites, Nassa and Mud Snails
Apr. 12 — Discussions re: odd shells found on our beaches

Study Group members at the home of Debbie Freeman.

Merchandise Committee

We still have Englewood Shell Club (ESC) T-shirts for sale in all sizes except medium. There are many luggage tags, checkbook covers and calendars available. Our new ESC pins have been delayed and the vendor, Venwood Awards, is projecting a March 11th arrival date which means they will be available at our March 23 General Meeting.

Eileen Tabone

Membership

Mary Lou Belisle of Venice, Fl, is our 150th member! As of March 2, 2010, we have 166 members; 34 new this year and 3 are new honorary members. Linda Powers
“Evolution of the Florida Peninsula and Florida’s Ancient Environments”  

Dr. Gary Schmelz, January’s speaker, made us all want to rush out and look for fossil shells but also gave members the big picture of Florida’s geologic history and implications about today’s global warming weather pattern. His talk was titled “Evolution of the Florida Peninsula and Florida’s Ancient Environments”. Gary pointed out that Florida existed 400 million years ago as part of Gondwana and was snuggled between South America and Africa. Peninsular Florida has been under water more years than above water since then. He brought that message home when he showed a picture of a modern home near Naples that was built 300 feet inland and is now 500 feet out in the Gulf. On the other hand, during the last ice age (Wisconsin glaciations) 20,000 years ago when 400-pound armadillo-like Glyptodonts roamed a temperate Florida, the Florida Peninsula was much larger and wider. Englewood was 300 feet above sea level in the middle of the state at that time!

Highlighting Florida’s geologic history, Gary pointed out that 200 million years ago, Florida was the site of intense volcanic activity. Florida was moving northwest and sinking, becoming a warm tropical sea 125 million years ago. Sediments were laid down and the land arose again; but 70 million years ago the Suwannee Channel developed separating the Florida peninsula from the rest of the country. Outwash from the Appalachian region filled the channel 25 million years ago.

Gary described several of the fossil quarries in Florida starting with Hale Quarry, which is an Eocene formation with 42 million year old protozoa, sea urchins and biscuits. He showed slides of beautiful shells found in each and brought many specimens to show and left one for us to raffle! The Early Miocene Chipola Formation along the Apalachicola and Oak Grove Rivers features shells and corals. He said that by the late Miocene only 8-20% of the shell species found still exist today; the rest are extinct. Sand dollars, 5-inch long barnacles and shark’s teeth are among the features in the 3.8 million old Tamiami formation in Sarasota while the middle Pliocene Sarasota pits have 2.8 million year old corals, worm shells and more urchins. The 1.2 million year old Caloosahatchee formation around LaBelle has 5-inch long ceriths, murex, walrus tusks. He showed a stingray spine from the 500,000-year-old Bermont Formation in Collier County where we have shelled. These shells are even more amazing when one realized that the first people reached Florida only 12-13,000 years ago and the Everglades formed 5-6,000 years ago. Thanks, Gary, for the entertaining manner in which you packed so much fascinating information and for taking time to autograph your books for us after the meeting!  

Anita Wilson
"Of Fabled Shells and Eastern Promise"  S. Peter Dance and Harlan Wittkopf

When S. Peter Dance came to visit from Carlisle, England, we already knew that he was a world-renowned Sheller, author and teacher, but we also learned that he is a first rate artist and a most generous person. Peter asked the audience to guess how many operculi were in one of his slide show photos. We had three winners. He gave one winner an original S.P.D. shell painting which he later signed, a second winner received one of the speakers’ books which he also signed, and a third winner received one of Peter’s favorite shells, the Acteon eloiseae! We were told the operculi in the slide show were gathered, ground, and mixed with frankincense by the women of Oman. The women then burn the mixture and stand over the smoke, allowing the smoke to permeate their voluminous layers of clothing and perfume themselves and their clothing beautifully. What a way to learn about his topic, “Of Fabled Shells and Eastern Promise.”

He describes the Eloise shell on page 28 of Seashells on My Mind, saying “Of the many natural objects I have seen and handled during more than half a century the one that has cast the strongest spell over me….is a seashell scarcely an inch long.” And Peter gave away one of the three he found! This lovely shell, a new discovery, has “bold, black-bordered, orange red blotches arranged in spiral rows on a creamy white background.”

The Eloise was just one of the many shells of Oman and its magical island of Masirah which Peter shared with the Club. We saw the Tent Olive, Oliva porphyria; Murex scolopax; the Precious Wentletrap, Epitonium scalare, gorgeous Cypraea and Babylonia, lovely nerites and so much more. He shared a chapter of his shelling life with us as he described visiting Don and Eloise Bosch in their Omani home and we witnessed the stark desert landscape and rocky seashore where he sought shells new to science. We even learned some “if only” stories when Peter showed a picture of an epitonium that they think may have been an immature Precious Wentletrap, but they were not sure. It could have been a new species, but before investigation was complete, the shell was “misplaced” and has never been found again.

Peter showed us photos of fossil bivalves gathered on top of a 800-foot tall mesa; Haliotis (abalone) shells abandoned on the desert floor after natives finished a meal, and another of burnt remnants from a meal of Terebralia palustris, which live among the mangroves in one part of Oman. He pointed out that so many species are endemics which occur in extremely limited ranges and are highly susceptible to extinction in oil mishaps.

Harlan E. Wittkopf brought Peter to Englewood and spoke both before and after Peter’s talk. Harlan shared his fabulous Alphabet cone brochure and with great humor described their experiences with British and American English. Both Harlan and Peter graciously spent more than an hour autographing books following their talk and the stories and merriment continued when about 35 club members joined them for dinner at Trattoria 13.

Anita Wilson
CONGRATULATIONS! Shown clockwise from the left: Charlie Barr standing with one of two of his blue ribbon scientific exhibits at the Sanibel Shell Show. Carol Christensen reflected in her shell mirror with a blue ribbon award at the Sarasota Shell Show — her first time entering an exhibit. “Peacock” mosaic by Debbie Freeman winning a blue ribbon at the Space coast Shell Festival in Melbourne, FL—Debbie’s first time exhibiting at a shell show at the urging of fellow ESC members. Debbie Freeman standing by her double Sailor’s Valentine also a blue ribbon winner at Melbourne. The sailor’s valentine theme was hearts and flowers. Her double valentine had some of each in both boxes and she thinks this may be why she won the blue ribbon. “Lightning” by Charlie Barr is a drawing made with black and white colored pencil on gray paper from his photograph of a self-collected lightning whelk. “Lightning” has been in three shell shows to date. At Broward Shell Show it received the first place award for paintings & drawings. At the Sarasota Shell Show it received the first place award for paintings & drawings plus the award for Best of Art with Shell Motif. At the Sanibel Shell Show it received a blue ribbon in the multimedia art category. Not shown is Charlie Barr’s Beach Blossoms, a shell picture, that also won an award at the Sarasota Shell Show. Be sure to congratulate our winners when you see them. We have a very talented and creative group and they are very deserving of their awards after their hard work.
Anniversary Luncheon Cruise

The celebration of the Englewood Shell Club’s 15th Anniversary began with a luncheon cruise aboard the Marina Jack II on Friday, January 22, 2010. As members and guests boarded the motor yacht, Ruth Middlebrooks gave them her message in a bottle souvenir. Corsages were given to Founder and Past President, Barbara Myers; Past Presidents Marilyn Boyd, Debbie Freeman, Anita Wilson; and current President, Christina Anglin for their dedicated service.

A scroll of the Club’s history wrapped with raffia adorned with a whelk and a sand dollar pendant was at each place setting as a remembrance of the day. The buffet was delicious and the views were fantastic. It truly was unique dining experience! Captain Dave narrated our tour as we cruised the waters of Sarasota Bay.

I would like to thank Rita Stonehouse who not only made the mementos but donated all the materials for them, Linda Powers who along with helping Rita, beautifully summarized the history of our Club on the scroll, Ruth Middlebrooks for adding her touch, and Marilyn Boyd for all her assistance with checking everyone in. I also want to extend my thanks to all those who offered their assistance and support. **Brenda Steele**

January’s Anniversary Celebration

The Anniversary meeting was a celebration of our club’s success. Cake and sparkling cider were served to members. As chairman of this celebration, I would like to personally thank Sue Rundle and Jackie McLean and all others who helped make this meeting a success. **Nancy Weborg**

View slide shows online from the many great photos taken at our Anniversary celebration at www.englewoodshellclub.org.
Excursions

Marco Island Trip in the Works
Marilyn Boyd reported at the March 2 General Meeting that she is planning another shelling trip to Marco Island in April. The trip will include a boat excursion to a few islands. If the shelling isn’t good at one, the captain has agreed to try another island or two for us. We will need to carpool to Marco Island and lunch together as a group is optional. There is a great shell store on the Island that some shellers plan to visit as well. The boat holds 23 and a sign-up sheet and greater details will be available at the March 23 meeting.

Another Fossil Pit Trip Added
Thanks to the generosity of Gary Schmelz, our January speaker on Florida fossils and upcoming guide for our April fossil trip, Ruth Middlebrooks has scheduled a second fossil dig for Saturday, April 10. The first trip is scheduled on Saturday, April 3. Although both trips are full, wait lists are available and often those on the wait lists are called upon due to cancellations. Details and sign-up sheets are available at the March 23 General Meeting.

Dominican Republic International Trip
Linda Powers announced at our January General Meeting she is working with tour guide Glenn Duffy in planning an international shelling trip to the Dominican Republic this summer. Anyone interested in the trip should contact Linda Powers for the details.

Honeymoon Island
Nearly 50 members braved the cold and rain when they shelled Honeymoon Island in near isolation in February. The shell treasures were found on the northernmost end of the island and many wanted to return in drier, warmer weather.

Fall Home Tour Planned
Another Home Tour is planned for this fall. Marilyn Boyd is working with several volunteers to organize this popular event. Dates and members’ home locations will be announced at our October General Meeting. This was a lot of fun two years ago as you are able to view several private shell collections. It makes for a great day, so make sure you save time for this one when the dates are announced.
Sanibel Shell Show and Bailey Mathews Shell Museum.  Show above are members from the bus trip to the Sanibel Shell Show.  Previous guest speakers, S. Peter Dance (center and standing) and Harlan Wittkopf (front and kneeling), are each holding copies of their books.  Over 50 members attended the Show. The bus trip included a stop at the Bailey-Mathews Shell Museum.

Mote Marine Breakfast and Tour
Members at Mote Marine “Breakfast at Mote.” Trip included a guided tour and Aquarium tickets. They viewed sea creatures during breakfast feeding time before doors were opened to the general public.
**New Member Reception**

All new members who joined Englewood Shell Club this year, from October 2009 through March 2010, are invited to a New Member Reception at the home of Eunice Herr. Eunice’s home is located in Park Forest at 400 Cypress Forest Drive, Englewood. Coffee and refreshments will be served from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m., Thursday, March 25. This is a great way to meet other new members of our club. A signup sheet and directions will be provided at our March 23rd General Meeting. You are welcome to contact Eunice Herr if you have any questions.

**Attention All Crafters**

**Shell Donations Welcome!**

Please bring shells to crafting class for your project. Though we now have our Club's shells available for use at Tringali, we do not have an unlimited supply. Thank you!

**Attention All ShellCrafters**

*Inspire us.....bring the projects you created at ShellCrafters to our next General Meeting for all to admire.*

**Carefree Learner**

Debbie Freeman led another group of shellers on the second Carefree Learner trip. There were great finds and wonderful photos from the day. This is one of the most popular trips the Club offers as you walk flat areas that almost appear as sandbars in low tide in Sarasota Bay. Debbie coordinates this trip through Sarasota High School. The school representative invited her to join his advanced students in Marine Biology in a dredging exercise. They dredge frequently then review and study their catch.
W e had a great turnout for our February crafting session, over 40 members packed their glue guns and joined in the fun making beautiful butterflies and flowers. We have so many creative people in our Club, it is just amazing.

Special thanks to Carol Christiansen and Sharon Craig for their hard work in preparation. They pre-made supply kits and instruction sheets for the butterflies, not to mention bringing beautiful examples for inspiration. Thank you Lucille Eaton for compiling, copying and distributing instruction sheets for flowers and generously sharing your knowledge and examples. Thanks also to Eunice Herr for her instruction to make those beautiful magnolias, Jan Plummer and all of our other veteran crafters for graciously helping out the "newbies" at your table and Ruth Middlebrooks for obtaining the sea shells to hold our flower creations and the starfish for March's project.

**MARCH Craft Project:**
You will learn the technique to make a beautiful COQUINA NECKLACE. There may not be sufficient time during our short session to complete this necklace project but you will be able to get the project started and learn enough to complete your creation at home. If you have "articulated" (connected) coquina shells be sure to bring them along because this project requires both halves of the coquina. We also have plenty of coquina shells for your use. Please bring your glue gun, Elmer's-type white glue or clear E6000-type glue and tweezers. We will provide gold beads to separate the shells on the necklace, if you prefer another bead, ie. pearls, crystals etc., bring those along.

**Two other crafting options in March:**
We will be making "Starfish Bathing Beauties." This idea came from Shirley Kastner and previewed as a big hit at the General Meeting. Also, using an idea suggested by Ruth Middlebrooks, you can make a starfish embellished with sea glass and wire wrapped. The pre-made supply packets for these starfish projects will be available for only $1 each. There will be a sign up sheet at the General Meeting for our MARCH 11th session.

Your crafting fee of $5 helps cover our expense for the use of the crafting room at Tringali. Your cash or check can be paid at the General Meeting or at the door on crafting day. Each month we offer one crafting project included in your fee for no additional charge in addition to an optional crafting project for a nominal supply fee.

Co-chair Shirley Kastner and I certainly had a lot of fun co-chairsing ShellCrafters sessions this year and received a lot of positive feedback. Thank You. **Joy Brandt**
Open Positions

We have several open positions available for serving the Shell Club next season:

Communications - newsletter, web liaison, publicity
Summer Beachwalks
Merchandising
Operations - meeting room setup, lighting, equipment needs

In addition to these leadership roles, you may want to volunteer to serve on some of our other committees. Outreach is always looking for volunteers to assist with programs. The Social/Sunshine committee needs volunteers to manage or work at various social activities such as clean up volunteers for the annual picnic. Other committee chairpersons need help at other times.

Volunteering can be rewarding and fun. Become part of the fine leadership team for the best Shell Club anywhere! Christina

Annual Picnic

Mark the date! Tuesday, April 27 is our annual spring picnic. It is held at the Englewood Gardens Beach Club at 2560 Beach Road on Manasota Key. You can RSVP at the March 23 General Meeting or contact Jackie McLean at 941-474-8011. Sign-up sheets at the March meeting ask you to indicate if you will bring a food dish, supplies, or condiments to share with other club members. Food dishes should serve between 10-12 people. Appetizers are served at 11:30 a.m. and the main meal is served at noon. The club provides hamburgers and soda for everyone. This year we will hold our raffle for the shell house and two shell décor wall plaques. Sales have been robust so don’t forget to purchase your ticket!

Ten volunteers are needed to clean up after the picnic. (We are a neat group so this is relatively easy.) Sign up to help at the March meeting. There is time before and after the picnic for shelling and additional parking is available across the street. Jackie McLean