

TROUT LAKE

NATURE CENTER



For many the New Year represents renewal, fresh beginnings, the cyclical nature of life and encourages reflection and growth. For others, it can just be a chance to party or gather with friends and family. Different cultures celebrate with distinct traditions.

New Year celebrations have been a part of human history for thousands of years. The earliest known New Year's celebration was in ancient Babylon on the first day of spring. The Roman Empire also celebrated the New Year, and the first day of January eventually became the start of the new year in most cultures.

In Spain, 12 grapes eaten at midnight are considered good luck for each month ahead. In the United States, fireworks are used. (Note: Loud and prolonged fireworks can cause problems for wildlife, livestock and people with PTSD.) Noiseless fireworks can be used or drones. Based on recent tragedies, drones if not properly controlled can be problematic.

Another recent tradition is to write down milestone moments throughout the year and place them in a box. Then, on New Year's Eve gather friends and family around to read these special memories and milestone moments.

Each year presents many opportunities and the same is true at the Trout Lake Nature Center. We are continuing Phase 2 of our Education Complex Expansion which will be completed by June 2025 or sooner. This will then open the old parking area for an new building. This building would contain a museum that combines all of our exhibits in one location making viewing easier, add office and storage space, meeting areas and classrooms. It is an exciting time to finally see progress being made on this much needed expansion.

Can you Help us Match?

Today a "Santa" came to TLNC to donate \$5,000. "Santa" wants to grow his donation by making it a matching grant.

We need to receive donations equaling his donation for a total of \$10,000. Can you help us grow "Santa's" impact with his and your dollars?

Photo: Eileen Tramontana, TLNC Executive Director, "Santa" or George Barton and Bob Wexler, TLNC Board member



Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who donated during Giving Week conducted Mt. Dora Community Trust for TLNC. Because we received the most donations, we earned an additional \$40,412. These funds are much needed and only possible because of the efforts of the Giving Week donors.

New Staff is Coming on Board

Claudia Rowe, retired Lake County science teacher and former education contractor with the Lake County Water Authority will be our new part-time Office Manager. Claudia will handle much of the paperwork, scheduling, invoice and so much more. In emergencies, she will be an instructor for our programs. Claudia is well organized, efficient and familiar with TLNC programs, projects and systems.

Rowe begins her job on January 2 and until then has been volunteering so she can start her position running. She will be working during the week from 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Stop by and say hello.

See What's Coming...

Saturday, January 11, 1:30 to 3:30 PM

This is a day when you can get two programs in one afternoon. The first program starts at 1:30 PM and is called Stars of Winter featuring Mike Ryan, our astronomy expert. Learn about what stars are found in the winter sky and receive a star chart to take home and continue learning on your own.

The second program is called Loving our Gopher Tortoises featuring Claudia Rowe and Tripod, TLNC Ambassador gopher tortoise will begin at 2:30 PM. You will learn about the iconic reptile which is found throughout area but faces many survival challenges as the area developed and roads are expanded and added. Hear about their preferred habitats, what they eat, their unique adaptations to survive the Florida weather and more.



Wednesday, January 15, 1:30 to 3:30 PM

We are continuing our watercolor painting classes in the Inspired by Nature series under the expert guidance of Ellen Westerholm. January's program will feature the Southern bald eagle.

Other classes are

- * Saturday January 25, 10 AM to Noon, Fisherman
- * Wednesday, February 5, 1:30–3:30 PM, Roseate Spoonbill
- * Saturday, February 22, 10 AM to Noon, Rabbit
- * Wednesday, March 5, 1:30–3:30 PM, Potting Shed



[Click here for more info and to register!](#)

Wednesday, January 22, 10:30 to 11:30 AM

Nature Sprouts Resumes

Calling all 2 to 5-year olds for our Nature Sprouts program. This program is designed for younger children using age-appropriate activities to engage the children and provide a positive experience in nature.

Each child must be accompanied by an adult, dress to go outdoors and probably get dirty. **Call 352-357-7536 or email TLNC.director@gmail.com.** Your registration is important so we have enough materials for every child.



Saturday, February 1, 10:30 to 11:30 AM

Annual Membership Meeting

The annual membership meeting will be held on February 1 beginning at 10:30 PM. This is a chance for you to learn about what has been achieved in the past year and what the upcoming year will hold. You also have a chance to voice your opinion about what is or isn't happening at TLNC. The TLNC Board of Directors is introduced and new Board members are sworn in.

Saturday, February 1, Starts at Noon

Volunteer and Membership Potluck Picnic

Come one, come all! Volunteers and members are invited to potluck picnic on February 2 starting at noon.

Bring a covered dish or desert. Lawn chair if you want to sit more comfortably. TLNC will provide hot dogs or hamburgers and drinks. R.S.V.P. by calling 352-357-7536, emailing TLNC.info@gmail.com or clicking the button below.

We're Working to Improve

Some people have been concerned when they have come to our property and see the construction taking place to the west of our buildings. No, it isn't a development going in. We are moving our parking area westward, building the required retention ponds and a real maintenance building to hold and protect our equipment from the weather, vandalism and theft while providing a better working space for maintenance staff and volunteers.

This construction will open up the existing parking area for Phase 3 construction of a building to hold a new museum which will allow us to consolidate our exhibits and mounts, classrooms, offices, meeting areas, outdoor bathrooms and screened teaching/dining area.

The open area created by the new parking will allow us to plant wildflowers, provide "edges" for birds and other wildlife, and landscape for butterflies. Although unsightly now (most construction is), it will let us improve our habitat since we are lacking open space.

Our expansion has been in the planning stages for several decades and now we are seeing concrete results of the many efforts volunteers, staff and the Board have made to plan for improvements to meet the area's growing needs.



Trout Lake Nature Center

520 East CR 44, Eustis
352-357-7536

troutlakenaturecenter.com



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