

You're invited to the Santa Fe Lake Dwellers' 18th Annual



# WINTER SOCIAL and Chili & Cornbread Supper

Friday, January 17th

5:30 PM in Parish Hall at Trinity Episcopal  
204 State Road 26 in Melrose

Come help us celebrate the New Year, a New Decade, and *MORE!* Along with our delicious chili/cornbread supper and updates on news from our area, **we have two very exciting projects to share with our community.**

**The first is a land conservation acquisition that your association began working on in 2002.** The Johnson property, on the south end of Big Lake Santa Fe, includes Black Lake, its associated wetlands, and a long, undisturbed shoreline, all of which will play a critical role in protecting the water quality of our entire lake ecosystem. **Charlie Houder, Director of Parks and Recreation Lands for Alachua County,** will be at our meeting to explain all about this fabulous acquisition. He has given us some details about the property: *On December 10, the Board of County Commissioners approved exercising options to purchase a total of 247 acres owned by the Dorothy N. Johnson Life Estate and the Glenn and Dorothy Johnson Family Limited Partnership. The property is being purchased for \$1.95 million with funds from Wild Spaces and Public Places. It includes the Santa Fe Lake frontage surrounding Black Lake, but excludes the house and adjacent lots. A survey and environmental site assessment are getting underway. Closing on the purchase is expected by the end of March.*



**The second project we are celebrating is the development of a water rescue team operating out of the Melrose Fire Department.** The team will also be present at our meeting, and they will bring along the rescue boat for us to see first hand! Following is a brief description from the **Fire Department's Public Information Officer Joshua Florence:**

*In an effort to address a major public safety disparity faced by the citizens of Melrose, this year your Melrose Firefighters undertook a major project to develop a special operations team with advanced water rescue capabilities. Members of our department, on their own time, with their own donations, spent over 200 combined hours training and working to bring a fully functional, rapid-response rescue boat to the town of Melrose. This marks the first time that our area has had a dedicated, professionally trained group of firefighters ready to respond to water emergencies. This effort has been funded entirely by the donations of your own Melrose Firefighters.*

*This boat, referred to by its call-sign "Marine 249", is an AVON SR-4, previously serving the U.S. Army Vessel New Orleans. Our two 55-horsepower Evinrude motors are multi-fuel and submersible, having previously served the United States Air Force's 308th Rescue Squadron. These two units together were acquired through the Florida Forest Service via the Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) and Firefighter Programs (FFP).*

SFLDA is in the process of setting up a Go Fund Me account to help the water rescue team with maintenance and fuel expenses. You can find out how to help in this funding effort at our meeting and soon on our website [www.lakesantafe.org](http://www.lakesantafe.org).