



## **Blind Pass ribbon cutting ceremony and celebration**

Welcome Lee County Commissioners, Brian Bigelow, Bob Janes, Sanibel

Mayor Mick Denham, Vice Mayor Kevin Ruane and Councilman Jim Jennings;

CEPD Commissioners, Doris Holzheimer, Dave Jensen, Harry Kaiser, and Rene Miville.

Representing the TDC & Tweenwaters, Tony Lapi, also TDC staff Tamarra Piggot, Nancy Mc Phee and a hearty welcome to Rick Hayduk of South Seas.

We welcome our friends DEP's Vince George and Alex Reed; Paul Tritac, of the Ding Darling NWR and the great folks from the Bayou Preservation Assoc., the Captiva Community Panel and the CCA.

Welcome citizens, visitors, and friends. Welcome to Captiva! Welcome to our celebration of life: the life of Blind Pass, which has for too long been on the edge.

Blind Pass has opened and closed again for years, ever since the 1920's. But, this time, after an unsuccessful attempt to open in 2001, Mother Nature dug in her heels. Blind Pass shut down until this project finally opened the pass once again in Aug. 2009.

Blind Pass for many of us represents a celebration of life, a renewal. The pass is a symbolic reminder that despite barriers and burdens, life still goes on--- life finds a way. The strong current ripping through the pass is like a strong heart, pumping life into the ecosystem; pushing life into all the outer extremities, the bayous, Roosevelt Channel and Pine Island sound. Life is pumping into our ecology and even to our local economy.

Blind pass is also a memory pump circulating pleasant memories, but also circulating memories which can be bittersweet. When reflecting on the closing of the pass in 2001, I cannot but reflect on the events since then. Who cannot recall 9/11, Hurricane Charley and, very personally, Alison Hagerup, our erstwhile CEPD administrator who died too young in June 2008.