

**MEDIA CONTACT**

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**Hermitage Artist Retreat Presents**

**Fridays @ 5**

**“Red Tide: The History, Causes and Future”**

**A Presentation by Jon Thaxton**

**Friday, March 22, on the beach at the Hermitage**

*Thaxton, director of community investment of the Gulf Coast Community Foundation and a leader in environmental advocacy, will give a comprehensive overview of the history of red tide, its causes, research and possible solutions.*

(Sarasota County) The Hermitage Artist Retreat’s Fridays @ 5 series continues with Jon Thaxton “Red Tide: The History, Causes and Future,” Friday, March 22, 5 p.m., on the beach at the Hermitage Artist Retreat. Thaxton, director of community investment at the Gulf Coast Community Foundation and a leading environmental advocate, will give a comprehensive look at the history of red tide, its causes, research and possible solutions. He’ll share glimpses into old Florida, geographic connections, current science, past politics, and future hope related to red tide. Participants are welcome to bring a beach chair and refreshments. In case of inclement weather, the program will be moved inside. *Reservations for these free programs are required and can be requested at www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org. For more information about the Hermitage, visit* [*www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org*](http://www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org)*.*

“The lecture will take place on the Hermitage beach where, just a few months ago, sea turtles, manatees, and dolphin washed up, victims of red tide,” says Patricia Caswell, Hermitage co-founder and program director. “We can’t think of a better place to get inspired about the health of our Florida waters than here.”

Jon Thaxton creates and implements Gulf Coast Community Foundation’s key strategies for transforming the region’s nonprofit community and providing leadership on emerging issues. A fifth-generation Sarasotan, he is recognized throughout Florida as a leading advocate for protecting the natural environment. Thaxton began his environmental advocacy at Venice High School in 1974 as a founding member of the Ecology Club, and in 1996 was featured in National Geographic for his efforts to protect endangered species.

Award-winning creators of all artistic disciplines are invited to live and work at the Hermitage Artist Retreat in Englewood. During their residencies, they share their talents with the community. Some programs are on the beach; others are in the Palm House. Whether a program is indoors or outdoors, attendees are invited to stay and enjoy the beach afterwards. The Hermitage Artist Retreat Palm House is located at 6630 Manasota Key Road in Englewood.

Executive director Bruce Rodgers explains that these cultural gatherings exist to give the community the rare opportunity to interact with celebrated authors, poets, artists, composers and performers from around the world. “Artists who are invited to be at the Hermitage are asked to give free programs for the community during their stay with us.” He adds that, in addition to programs at the Hermitage, many artists also participate in free outreach programs at area schools, colleges, and in collaboration with regional cultural organizations

All programs are subject to change. Please check the Hermitage website or Facebook page for updated program status. The Hermitage Artist Retreat is located at 6630 Manasota Key Road in Englewood. For more information about Fridays @ 5 or the Hermitage, visit www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

**About the Hermitage Artist Retreat:**

The Hermitage is a nonprofit artist retreat located in Englewood, Sarasota County, Florida. It invites accomplished artists in all disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Its artists, who are asked to interact with the community, touch thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage fellows have included Pulitzer, Tony, Emmy, Grammy and MacArthur Fellowship award winners. The Hermitage awards the $30,000 Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, and the Aspen Music Festival awards the annual Hermitage Prize in Composition. For more information about The Hermitage Artist Retreat, visit www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

**The Hermitage is supported by:**

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