

## **TOM PALMER**

Tom Palmer was born in 1947 in Sanford, Florida. He has a lifelong interest in nature and environmental issues.

He moved to Polk County in 1974, a year after graduating from the University of South Florida with a B.A. in Mass Communications. He worked in Polk County for 42 years as a newspaper reporter, photographer, columnist and blogger. He retired in September 2016.

During his career he was won several awards for his environmental writing. In addition in his spare time he has volunteered to participate in bird, butterfly and plant surveys and to assist in various land management projects on local conservation lands. For the past 14 years he has been a volunteer land steward at Lake Blue Scrub, a 78-acre environmental preserve management by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

His work there has included major trash cleanup, GPSing rare plants and animals, monitoring fence lines and making repairs and working with state and federal officials in locating a suitable site on the property for the introduction of Scrub Lupine as part of an Endangered Species Act recovery project.

He also has worked with land managers and attends regular meetings to keep up with evolving issues pertaining to conservation issues in Florida.

In addition, he has participated in lake cleanups and other activities to raise awareness about the proper stewardship of conservation lands in Central Florida.

Tom Palmer is a Florida native who retired in 2016 after an award-winning career covering government and environmental issues in Polk County for 42 years. He continues to contribute as an environmental columnist for The Ledger and a contributor to the conservation blog at Ancient Islands Sierra Club. He is also a member of the board of directors of Green Horizon Land Trust. He and his wife Renee live in Winter Haven.

## RESUME FOR TOM PALMER

### **Most Recent Position:**

Senior Reporter/Columnist/Blogger, The Ledger, Lakeland, Fla. 1980-2016

### **Education:**

1973: Bachelor of Arts, Mass Communications, University of South Florida, Tampa, Fla.

1971: Associate Arts, Seminole Junior College, Sanford, Fla.

1966: Defense Language Institute, Monterey, Calif., (Indonesian)

### **Fellowships:**

2007: Scripps Howard Institute on the Environment, Florida Atlantic University, Jupiter, Fla.

2000: Duke University, Raleigh, N.C.

### **Awards:**

2016: National Association of the Daughters of the American Revolution Conservation Committee Outstanding Achievement for Environmental Awareness Certificate

2015: Florida Press Club, 1<sup>st</sup> place Environmental Reporting

2015: SPJ Sunshine Awards, 1<sup>st</sup> place, Science/Environmental

2015: FSNE, 1<sup>st</sup> place Online Blog/Commentary

2014: Florida Press Club, 2<sup>nd</sup> place Environmental Reporting.

2013: Florida Press Club, 3<sup>rd</sup> place Environmental Reporting.

2006: Older Volunteers Enrich America Award (Community Champion) Met Life Foundation, Washington, D.C.

2003: Outstanding Conservation Journalism Award, Audubon of Florida.

2003: Richard Coleman Conservation Award, Polk Sierra.

1999: Sunshine State Award, SPJ, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Feature Reporting.

1996: Marjory Stoneman Douglas Award, Florida Lakes Management Society.

1996: Max Wolf Service Award, Haines City Community Theater.

1995: Indigo Writers Award, Florida Sierra Club.

1992: Florida Society of Newspaper Editors, 1<sup>st</sup> Place Public Service.

1992: Kaucher Conservation Award, Ridge Audubon Society

1991: Al Burt Award, 1000 Friends of Florida.\

1983: Chairman's Award, The New York Times

1980: Florida Press Association, 1<sup>st</sup> Place, In-Depth Reporting.

1978: Greater Orlando Press Club, 1st Place, News Photography.

1978: Greater Orlando Press Club, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, In-Depth Reporting.

1976: Greater Orlando Press Club, 1<sup>st</sup> Place, Best News Event Report.

### **Other Publications:**

Florida Field Naturalist

Sida

Guide to the Great Florida Birding Trail (East Section)

Polk County Historical Quarterly

Florida Historical Quarterly

American Forests

The Palmetto

Editor: Snail Kite (newsletter of Florida Ornithological Society) 2004 –2011.

**Social Media:**

Blogs: Polk Commission Watch, Endangered & Drained in Polk County @theledger.com  
bear grass and rosemary ([lakebluescrub@blogspot.com](mailto:lakebluescrub@blogspot.com))

**Affiliations:**

Society of Professional Journalists  
Society of Environmental Journalists  
Florida Ornithological Society  
North American Butterfly Association  
National Wildlife Federation  
Florida Native Plant Society  
Sierra Club  
National Audubon

**Language Skills:**

Native speaker of English, conversational Spanish, some knowledge of French, Portuguese and Indonesian.

**Other skills:**

Photography, including some experience in videography.

**Personal:**

Born: 1947, Sanford, Fla.

Married: 1989. Wife, Renee. No children.

Military: U.S. Army, 1965-69. Honorable Discharge.

Current Address: 1805 26<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Winter Haven FL 33881

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