

Friends of the Randell Research Center

March 2012 • Vol. 11, No. 1

Calusa Heritage Day to be Bigger and Better than Ever

*Something for Everyone at Pineland,
March 10, 2012*

by Cindy Bear

Mark your calendars and plan to spend Saturday, March 10 at Pineland! *Environmental Change* is the theme for this year's event, which takes place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Calusa Heritage Trail, 13810 Waterfront Drive, Pineland. Admission is free for RRC members and children under 12, and for all others admission is \$5. Complimentary parking for the festival will be at the Pineland Marina with handicapped and bicycle parking on-site at the Trail entrance. Please carpool, if possible. Articles throughout this newsletter describe planned activities, including the diverse presentations, exhibits on loan from the Florida Museum of Natural History for this day only, the many artists who will show their wares and talents, and the exhibitors and vendors who will be on hand to share their knowledge and products.

Free water will be available throughout the grounds, and we encourage you to bring your own refillable water bottle, wear comfortable clothing and shoes, and plan to stay the day! Food will be on sale by Pine Island favorites *Little Lilly's Island*



Dick Workman (right) shows how Calusa Indians used locally available plants to make useful containers.
(Photo by Charles O'Connor.)



Deli and Mel Meo's Fish Wagon. Additional information is available by calling us at 239-283-2062 or 239-283-2157 or visiting our website at <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/rrc/>.

Children and Families

■ Storyteller and author **Gerald Hausman** returns for two performances. A Pine Island resident, Gerald is the author of over 70

books of collected folklore, which have been translated into a dozen foreign languages. He will be sharing folktales at the festival at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Over his 35 years as a storyteller, he has entertained children of all ages at such places as the Kennedy Center, Harvard University, and in schools all over the U.S. Of Hausman, Dr. Michael Fox, vice president of the Humane Society of the U.S., says "He awakens not only the poet's skill and sensitivity, but also our own nature, power and inherent divinity..."

■ On-going from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. will be hands-on Calusa-inspired arts and crafts and face painting plus an opportunity to meet live reptiles, courtesy of Lee County Parks and Recreation.



Fresh local food to suit every taste will be available at Calusa Heritage Day.

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Calusa Heritage Day *Continued from page 1*



Young visitor and atlatl, 2011 Calusa Heritage Day. (Photo by Charles O'Connor.)

■ On-going from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., the *Florida Public Archaeology Network* will host atlatl throwing. An atlatl is a very accurate throwing stick, developed long before bow and arrow, which was used by the Calusa and other pre-columbian Florida people. Children and adults will get to try the atlatl for distance and accuracy.

Come By Water: Calusa Heritage Day offers Boat-tour Option

New this year, *Captiva Cruises* is offering a ride from Captiva Island's McCarthy Marina across Pine Island Sound to the docks at Tarpon Lodge. This boat ride provides an effortless way for visitors and others on Sanibel and Captiva — and even south Fort Myers near the Sanibel Causeway — to enjoy a day on Pine Island Sound and also attend Calusa Heritage Day without the hassle of driving.

The boat will depart McCarthy Marina at 10 a.m. Passengers will get a narrated tour of the harbor and its fish shacks and then enjoy lunch at the *Tarpon Lodge* before attending the festival. The lodge is across the street from the festival site. The boat will return passengers to Captiva after a two-hour stay.

Fare for the boat ride, tour, and festival admission is \$45 for adults, \$35 for children; lunch is not included. Reservations are required by calling Captiva Cruises at (239) 472-5300.



At Calusa Heritage Day, you can learn about plants native to southwest Florida and purchase some of your own.

Get on the Water to Learn about Archaeology

Captiva Cruises and RRC will offer a narrated archaeological tour through Pine Island Sound from 12 noon to 1:30 p.m. as part of Calusa Heritage Day this year. Tickets can be purchased at the festival March 10 or in advance. It's \$25 for adults and \$15 for students. You'll board the 45-foot *Santiva*, one of Captiva Cruises' famous touring vessels, at the dock at Tarpon Lodge, across the street from the event after meeting your guide at the information tent at the Calusa Heritage Trail.

This event and partnership between Captiva Cruises and RRC lets Calusa Heritage Day attendees enjoy activities at the event and also to go out and get the feel of Pine Island Sound to learn even more about the Calusa.

Attention Native Plant Lovers: Purchase Plants while Learning about their Uses by Native People

Native plants will be for sale by *All Natives Nursery* of Ft. Myers during Calusa Heritage Day, and prospective buyers can learn about the plants' uses by native people by visiting the Paleoethnobotany Area. There you

will find a variety of native plants with information about how the vegetation was used by people of the past. For example, fermented leaves of wax myrtle were used medicinally for headaches, fevers, and worms.

Archaeological Science for All: From experts to lay people, Event Speaker's Schedule has Something for You!

Whether you're a visitor or resident, a lay person interested in the past or an archeology buff, Calusa Heritage Day has a speaker for you.

The March 10 event features:

- **11 a.m.:** "The Practical and Spiritual Significance of the Lightning Whelk," presented by *Dr. Bill Marquardt*, Director of the Randell Research Center and Curator of Archaeology at the Florida Museum of Natural History at University of Florida, Gainesville.
- **Noon:** "Wetlands Preservation: How Wetlands Preserve Ancient Materials and What Types of Items have been Preserved," presented by *Dr. Robin Brown*, author of several highly regarded books on Florida's past.
- **1 p.m.:** "Future Directions in Southwest Florida Paleoclimatology," presented by *Dr. Joanne Muller*, Florida Gulf Coast University paleoclimatologist.
- **2 p.m.:** "How the Environment Shapes War: Environmental Impacts on Seminole Combat Behaviors," by *Nathan Lawres*, Archaeological Field Assistant for the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Tribal Archaeology Section and M.A. Candidate, University of Central Florida.
- **3 p.m.:** Keynote Speech, "Calusa and Climate," presented by *Dr. Karen Walker*, archaeologist and collections manager at the Florida Museum of Natural History.

To learn more about the study of Pineland's climatic past, go to www.flmnh.ufl.edu/sciencestories/2011/pineland_paleoclimate.htm





Felix Macaguani Rodriguez will be one of many artists on hand at Calusa Heritage Day.

Attention Artists and Art Lovers: Mark your Calendar for Calusa Heritage Day

Artists at Calusa Heritage Day will share interpretations and their work with attendees. *Ancient Hands* makes pottery and other art, including reproductions of works by pre-columbian artisans, and will be on hand to sell and explain their wares. *Felix Macaguani Rodriguez* will display his wood carving and bone implements inspired by early people of the area. *Peter Sottong*, whose information can be found at www.KeyMarcoCat.com, creates museum-quality reproductions of Calusa masks including those unearthed by Smithsonian archaeologist Frank Hamilton Cushing in 1896 on Marco Island. *Dick Workman* will teach how to make cordage from various plants and will be joined by special guests who will

demonstrate basket making. *Olde Tyme Crafts* will be on hand to demonstrate historic-era crafts such as spool knitting, rag rugs, stick weaving, quilting, and knot tying, and will sell kits that will help you get started making your own creations.

Calusa Tastings

From 12:30 to 2:30 you can sample foods eaten by the Calusa,

including papaya, fish, clams, and oysters, flavored with chile peppers if you like. The oldest papaya seeds recovered in North America were excavated at Pineland, and chile pepper seeds dating to about 2000 years ago were unearthed here too. Information about the plants and animals you may sample are included in the free tastings.

Exhibits from the Florida Museum of Natural History

Enjoy exhibits from the *Florida Museum of Natural History* at Calusa Heritage Day without leaving Lee County. Our Gainesville-based parent organization and state museum will loan exhibits for the event. The exhibits will be in the classroom from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and include displays on canoes, zooarchaeology, recent excavations that took place at RRC, and Seminole collections. Each exhibit will include experts to explain the material and some will include hands-on options.

Learn About Southwest Florida History at Calusa Heritage Day

Edison-Ford Winter Estates, Museum of the Islands, Mound House, and other exhibitors will offer information about local history and about their programs throughout the day. *J. N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge* and *The Great Calusa Blueway* will also have representatives on hand. Fort Myers resident *Woody Hanson* will be there to talk about Seminole Indian history, based on his family's extensive collection of documents and photographs. Consider the event one-stop shopping for learning about Lee County's past.



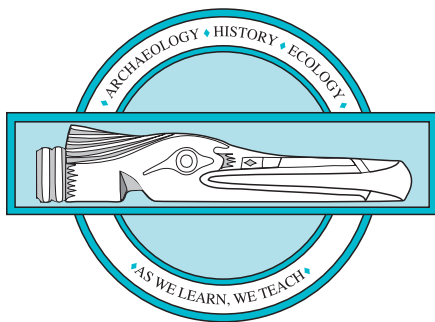
Fresh local seafood is prepared for "Calusa Tastings" by Karen Walker (left) and Margi Nanney at the 2011 event.

Tours of the Calusa Heritage Trail and Off-the-Trail "Nature Tour"

Walk the Calusa Heritage Trail with a trained docent to learn about the Calusa and their ancestors who occupied the site. Tours will be held hourly 10:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. on March 10. Or, at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., take part in an off-the-trail tour to learn more about Southwest Florida plants and ecosystems. These tours are family friendly and walking is involved. 🦋

Guided tours of the Pineland archaeological site will be offered throughout the day.





Friends of the Randell Research Center

Pineland, Florida • March 2012

Phone 239/283-2062

Email: randellcenter2@rancenter.comcastbiz.net

Dear Friend,

You are cordially invited to join, or renew your membership in, the RRC's support society, *Friends of the Randell Research Center*. All Friends of the RRC receive a quarterly newsletter and free admission to the Calusa Heritage Trail at Pineland. Supporters at higher levels are entitled to discounts on our books and merchandise, advance notice of programs, and special recognition. Your continuing support is vital to our mission. It means more research, more education, and continued site improvements at the Randell Research Center. Thank you.

Sincerely,

William H. Marquardt

Director

Randell Research Center



Please check the membership level you prefer, and send this form with your check payable to U. F. Foundation, to:

Membership Coordinator • Randell Research Center • PO Box 608 • Pineland, Florida 33945

- ☐ **Individual (\$30) and Student (\$15):** quarterly Newsletter and free admission to Calusa Heritage Trail
- ☐ **Family (\$50):** The above + advance notice and 10% discount on children's programs
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Photo by A. Bell



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An 800-year-old Mystery

by Bill Marquardt

A few years ago a new house was built on Brown's Complex Mound 4, a part of the Pineland Site Complex that is still in private ownership. In order to build on the shoreline, where winds can sometimes be very strong, the owners were required to have footer holes and trenches dug so that a substantial concrete structure could anchor the house to the shell mound below.

Before the concrete was to be poured, the RRC examined the footer holes and trenches and documented the layers of the shell midden. We were funded by the owners and assisted by RRC volunteers. A report was prepared by John Dietler, and then construction proceeded. The owners offered to have some of the disturbed midden materials dumped at a place of our choosing, and so a truckload was deposited at the Ruby Gill House, our nearby headquarters building.

Since that time, volunteers have gathered weekly to sift the disturbed midden through $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch screen, looking for artifacts. Pat and David Townsend have coordinated the effort, assisted regularly by Polly Eldred, Pat Yourdon, and many others. The artifacts are carefully washed and catalogued in the laboratory by the same volunteers.

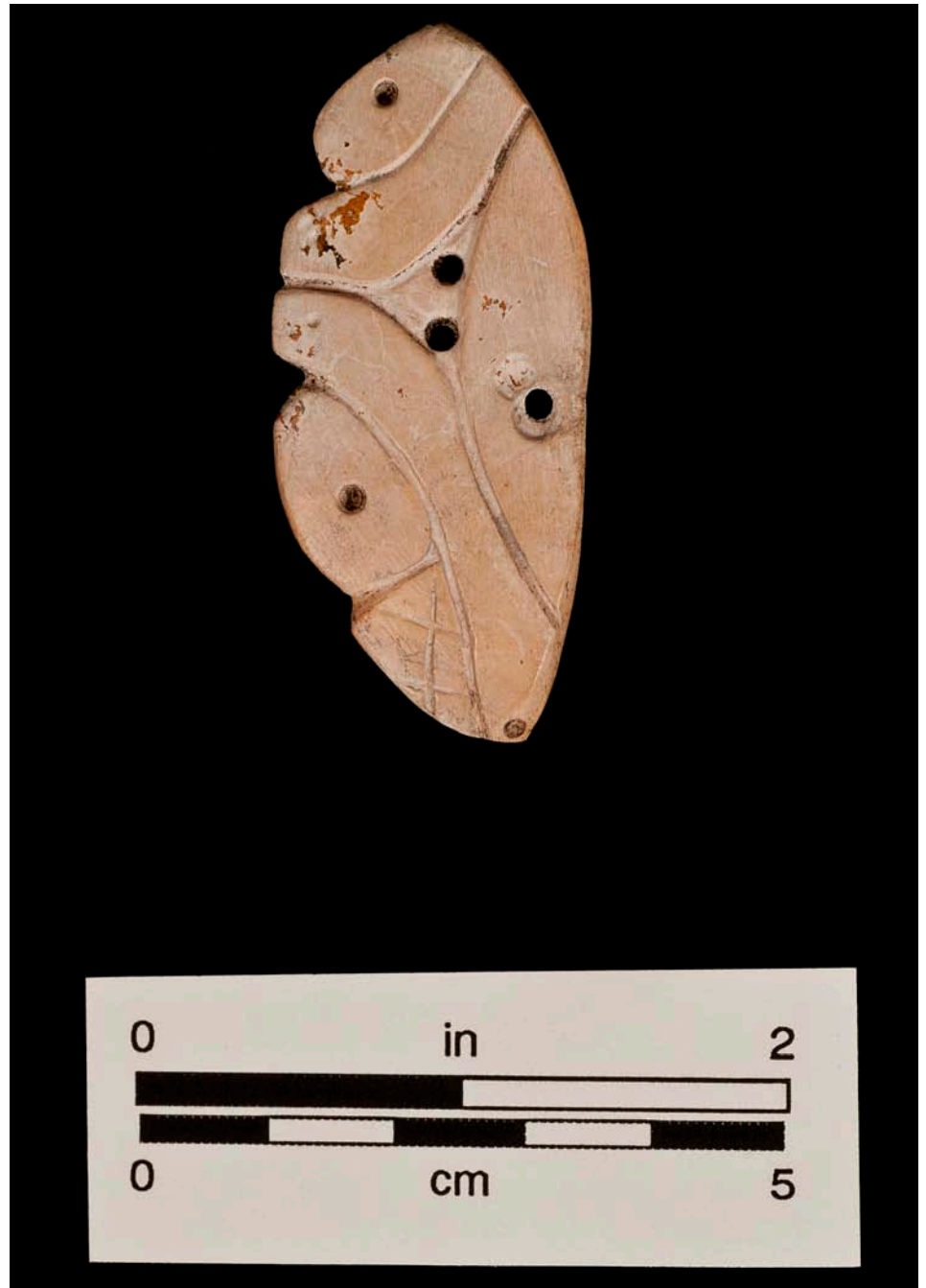
Most of the time, the screens yield pottery fragments, shell tools, and the occasional broken bone tool. The amount of information that we can derive from these finds is limited because their context has been lost. In other words, artifacts by themselves may be interesting, but in order to yield information useful to the archaeologist, they must be excavated carefully and documented meticulously. As Robin Brown likes to say, "It isn't what you find that's interesting, but what you find out." The sifting does provide training for our volunteers, however, and the artifacts they find are very useful for educational programs.

A few weeks ago, new volunteer Lawrence Mazzoli picked a thin, oval

object out of the screen and held it up for the others to see. When it had been dusted off and examined, all agreed it had been carved from shell. Since then, many people have seen the artifact, and many creative interpretations have been suggested. Most people see animals, but there is little consensus about what animals are represented.

What can we say about it? It is a complete engraved shell artifact. The

edges are finished and smoothed. Three carefully drilled holes go all the way through the object, possibly for attaching to an item of clothing. Three other holes do not go all the way through, suggesting that they are part of the intended design. The drilling and engraving (curvilinear lines and the cross-hatching) were probably done using a shark's tooth. The shell used is probably lightning whelk, a marine snail shell



Shell artifact from Pineland, about 500-800 years old. (Photo by Kristen Grace.)




found in Pine Island Sound.

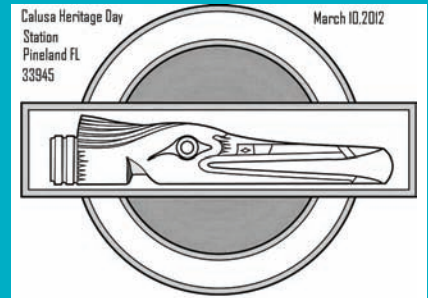
The materials in which the artifact was discovered are out of context, but the part of Mound 4 from which they came dates to the Caloosahatchee III and IV periods, based on pottery identified by Dietler. Therefore, the carved shell artifact is almost surely between 500 and 800 years old. It would be possible to date it directly by AMS radiocarbon dating, but only by drilling into it to extract a small amount of shell.

As for the design, which is in relief, it appears that two or more animals are represented, but what are they? Suggestions so far have included otter, gopher tortoise, manatee, sea turtle, rattlesnake, and crab. Two people have independently suggested that it was once a circular gorget (an ornament worn at the throat), but that it broke and was re-worked into its present form. However, unlike most of the circular gorgets that were so important in the Native American cultures of the southeastern U.S. around 500-800 years ago, our artifact is carved into the

outer, not the inner, surface of the whelk shell, a fact that was brought to my attention by James Brown, a renowned expert on Native American art and symbolism. Dr. Brown added that "it is indeed interesting and very unusual, perhaps belonging to a new form."

So, although all the artifacts that our screeners find are interesting, this one is pretty special. Without context, we cannot say what its function was, or with whom it was associated. Was the artifact associated with a house? inside? outside? Was it the house of a high-status individual, perhaps a leader, or was it in a trash pile? Was it in association with pottery known for a specific time period? with certain animal bones? certain shells? Because that part of Mound 4 was destroyed, none of this information will ever be known. We can only hope that the next time such an unusual artifact is found, it will be in a controlled excavation, and then we will be able to do more than just appreciate its beauty and workmanship. 

Postal Station



Approved by U.S. Postal Service, a new postmark has been created for the annual Calusa Heritage Day. The postmark features the Randell Research Center logo, which is based on a fragment of a bone pin excavated at the site that dates to 800-1,000 years ago. Carved with a shark's tooth knife in deer bone, the tiny implement is about 1 1/2 inches long and is on display at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville.

The postmark can be put on postcards of the Calusa Heritage Trail signage that will be for sale or on other mail.

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November 1, 2011 to February 10, 2012

(Please let us know of any errors or omissions. Thank you for your support.)

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Editor: Bill Marquardt

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Photos by Bill Marquardt
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Production: GBS Productions



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