

# Friends of the Randell Research Center

Vol. 3, No. 2

June 2004

## Native Plants Enhance Pineland Facilities *Community landscaping effort will beautify, educate*

by *Bill Marquardt*

**O**n May 1st, over two dozen volunteers planted native trees and shrubs around the RRC's new teaching pavilion and parking lot. Rick Joyce organized the event, and several local nurseries donated plants for the occasion. Mark Dean of Palmco provided 20 free Paurotis palms, and has agreed to donate coconut palms to restore the historic appearance of the roadway that once led to the citrus packing barn. Soaring Eagle Nursery donated wild tamarinds, satin leaves, and seagrapes. Forestry Resources donated 250 pounds of fertilizer and 100 cubic yards (a semi-trailer load!) of mulch. All-Native Garden Center donated a red mulberry tree. Deep South Native Nursery donated more than 50 plants and lots of labor. Pine Breeze Nursery also donated plants and labor. In addition to RRC volunteers, staff, and students, we were pleased to see several members of the local chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.



By the end of the day, more than 250 plants had been installed, fertilized, mulched, and watered. The native vegetation not only looks attractive, but on the long term, it will be easy to maintain. We intend to continue to work at ridding the site of invasive exotic plants, while encouraging natives. Our hope is that visitors to

Some of the 25 volunteers who showed up on May 1 for planting day at the RRC (photo by W. Marquardt).

the Randell Research Center will enjoy the native plants and also take the opportunity to learn more about them.

## Cubans and Creek Indian People in Southwest Florida

by *John Worth*

**D**uring April, I returned to Cuba to conduct more archival research at the Archivo Nacional de Cuba in Havana, and also to re-visit the Arimao River valley near Cienfuegos during the dry season. Generously funded by Paul F. Miller, Jr. and the Useppa Island Historical Society, the trip resulted in considerable progress toward understanding details of the Cuban fishing industry in Southwest Florida. In addition to finding the first documented reference inside Cuba to Useppa Island's most famous Cuban resident—José María Caldéz—I came across a number of references to the regular transport of Creek Indians back and forth to Havana on Cuban sloops and schooners, beginning at least

as early as the 1770s and lasting as late as 1836. These so-called "Spanish Indians" were cousins of the ancestral Seminole and Miccosukee Indians, whose descendants would not arrive in South Florida until half a century later. The Havana archives are rich in documentation of these people, who ultimately intermarried with the Cubans, but who were expelled from Florida along with most of the Seminoles in the 19th century. Their story complements that of the previous fisherfolk of Southwest Florida, the Calusa, whose destiny was also connected to Cuba. I plan to explore these and other subjects during my summer research trip to Spain.



Author wearing the new RRC hat on its first visit to the Arimao River valley near Cienfuegos, Cuba (photo by J. O'Hear).

# Pits and Postmolds

## *A Glimpse of a 1500-year-old Calusa Home*

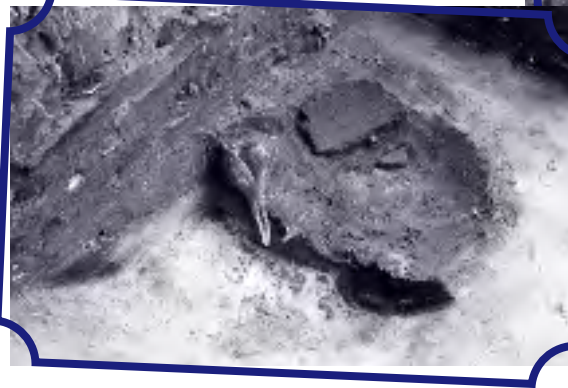
by John Worth

The second season of excavations at Surf Clam Ridge has concluded, exposing a total of 26 sq. meters (31 sq. yards) of early Calusa floor space dating to the late 5th century A.D. Having penetrated and sampled an overlying shell midden and a black sand floor deposit, excavators were rewarded with a wide range of pits and postmolds scattered across the largely artifact-free light gray sand comprising the bulk of the ridge's elevation.

Analysis is still underway, but patterning is evident in the distribution of these features, including a generally linear array of basin-shaped pits, ranging from oval to circular, and normally less than 20" wide and 20" deep. At least two of these pits were used for burning, including an obvious hearth with a central core of ash, an outer ring of partially charred black material, and an upper fill of sand and trash. Other pits were simply filled in with sand and trash. Stains from rotted or burned posts are ubiquitous, including many smaller posts (about 4") and a number of

larger posts (about 6") clustered to the shoreward side of the ridge crest. Detailed analysis should assist in evaluating what kind of structure may be responsible for the patterns observed, and what kinds of activities were carried out there so many centuries ago.

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View of large potsherd (below) and intact whelk shell within hearth during excavation  
(photo by J. Worth).



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Patterns of postmolds (above) underneath the 5th-century floor deposits at Surf Clam Ridge may reveal details of early Calusa architecture (photo by J. Worth).  
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# Operations Report

by John Paeno

This spring was exciting at the research center. Since our last report in March, we had over 1,000 school children and adults tour our site, with a conservative estimate of 500 at the Calusa Festival alone. The Festival featured information booths (Mote Marine, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Ding Darling National Wildlife Reserve, Gaea Guides, Dick Workman, Robin Brown, Irv Quitmyer, Steve Tutko), tours of the archaeological dig, walking tours of the site, Tarpon Lodge restaurant specials, a sunset cruise, door prizes, and previews of the art work that will be on signs along the Calusa Heritage Trail, provided by Synergy Design Group (Merald Clark, Cyndi Moncrief, John LoCastro) (see photos, elsewhere in this newsletter).

We also offered many outreach programs, reaching hundreds more people at sites ranging from libraries to festivals. Our volunteers logged over 1,000 hours this spring for the dig and other activities. In addition to the May Day planting, we completed our bridge over the canal, and

our gravel trails have now been laid. The new fence is almost complete, and we will soon begin building the observation platform on top of Brown's Mound. I hope to see you soon at the site.

Now that we are developing our infrastructure, there are some things that we could use on site such as a golf cart or work cart for maintenance and repairs, a riding lawn mower to keep the grounds around the pavilion trimmed, a portable generator for lights and pumps at excavation sites, and a chipper to be used in exotic plant removal and to produce mulch for our trails. If you wish to donate a piece of equipment, please contact Jennifer Jennings at 239-283-2062.



Visitors to Calusa Festival view displays at RRC's new teaching pavilion, March 21, 2004  
(photo by W. Marquardt).

# In Appreciation

by Bill Marquardt

Our thanks to Randy Wayne White and everyone who helped out at the writer's workshop, including Cutthroat Clams for the delicious clams. We also thank Ed Winn for his kind donation of books and for the new TV and VCR now in use at the center, and to Joyce Mutz for her volunteer help and six new walkie-talkies. We thank the Tropic Star for donations from the Calusa Festival Sunset Cruise and Robin Brown for his donation of proceeds from sale of his book, *The Crafts of Florida's First People*. We thank the Tarpon Lodge for logistical support and help with promoting our first Calusa Festival. Koucky Studios, Firehouse Florist & Gifts, Paradise Gardens, Books & More, Pine Bay Marina & Gifts, A-1 Video, artist Ed Brown, Tropic Star, and Joyce Mutz contributed items for door prizes. We thank Steve Tutko for his gift of magnetic signs for our RRC truck. We thank Arden Arrington for donating a beautifully framed "Year of the Indian" poster, and Debbie Randell Taggart for a painted portrait of her mother, Patricia Crandon Randell.



## RRC Welcomes New Office Manager

by John Worth

We at the RRC are pleased to welcome Jennifer Jennings to our staff. Jennifer is taking over as office manager at the headquarters building, with duties ranging from volunteer coordination and membership database maintenance to scheduling and bulk mailing.

Jennifer has lived on Pine Island for 11 years. During that time she has been a manager at Goff Communications, and she also managed Matlacha Art Gallery and worked at Koucky Gallery & McGowan's Farm. She has been active in the local community, working with the Greater Pine Island Chamber of Commerce and its Mango Mania event from 2002 to 2004. She was crowned

Mango Queen in 2003. She is also a 5th grade volunteer at Pine Island Elementary.

Jennifer's husband Craig is a chef at Rondell's Restaurant in Matlacha. Her son Scott will be attending Ida S. Baker this fall, with daughters Rhea at Diplomat Middle and Jacqué at Pine Island Elementary.

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Jennifer Jennings, 2003 Mango Queen, presents mangoes to Lee County Commissioners. Left to right: Commissioners Bob Janes, Andy Coy, Ray Judah, Queen Jennifer, Commissioners Doug St. Cerny, John Albion (photo by Leoma Lovegrove for the Pine Island Chamber of Commerce).

## New and Renewing Friends of the RRC from February 16 to May 31, 2004

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

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Bonita Bay Group

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# Calusa Festival Snapshots



John Worth answers questions about the dig.



Several organizations and businesses were on hand to greet Calusa Festival visitors, including Gaea Guides, which specializes in guided kayak nature tours.



Merald Clark of Synergy Design Group explains how he does his artist's conceptions of Calusa life.



Author and retired physician Robin Brown explains Florida Indian crafts.



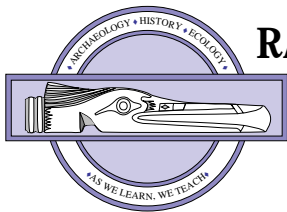
Zooarchaeologist Irv Quitmyer shows how shark teeth are continually replenished.

Photos by W. Marquardt



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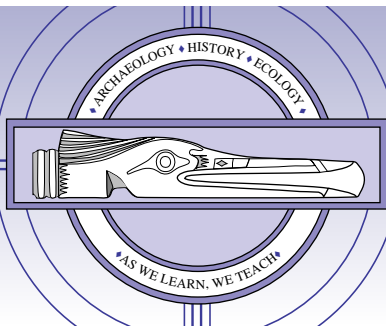
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# Friends of the Randell Research Center

Pineland, Florida • June, 2004  
Phone (239) 283-2062 E-mail: johnneworth@comcast.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*. (Current members can find out when their memberships expire by looking at the address label on their newsletter.)

All Friends of the RRC receive a quarterly newsletter. 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,

John E. Worth, Ph.D.  
Coordinator of Research Programs and Services  
Randell Research Center

**Please check the membership level you prefer, and send this form, along with your check payable to Friends of the Randell Research Center, to:**

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

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- Please use my gift** to obtain matching funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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VHS video, \$19.95



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by Charles Blanchard, illustrated by Merald Clark  
hardcover \$24.95  
softcover \$14.95



### **Fisherfolk of Charlotte Harbor, Florida**

by Robert F. Edic  
hardcover \$ 35.00



### **Culture and Environment in the Domain of the Calusa**

edited by William H. Marquardt  
softcover \$25.00



### **Sharks and Shark Products in Prehistoric South Florida**

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### **The Archaeology of Useppa Island**

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