



Friends of the Randell Research Center

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New Pavilion Passes Test

Structure Stands Firm After Direct Hit From Hurricane Charley

by Bill Marquardt

Phase 1 of our two-phase public interpretation facility survived its first major storm with flying colors. When powerful Hurricane Charley struck Pineland on August 13, very few buildings on northern Pine Island were spared significant damages (see article, page 4). But our newly constructed pavilion and restrooms were virtually unaffected by the 150-mph sustained winds. The total damage? One bolt rattled loose from the door to the men's restroom and fell to the floor.

Designed by Fort Myers architect Jeff Mudgett and structural engineer Bob Rude to withstand just such storms, the pavilion complex is anchored deeply into the ground on large pilings. Not only did local contractor Gatewood Custom Carpentry build to the new Florida building codes, it also worked under strict University of Florida building specifications. The drainage and retention ponds designed by Fort Myers engineer Tim Keene also functioned well, accumulating storm waters and draining them efficiently away from the building.

Some people have asked me, "Why does this building have to cost so much?" The best answer is both true and now evident: "Because it is built to last." We hope to begin the second and final phase of the teaching complex soon, and it will be built to the same demanding standards. But before this can happen, we must raise \$100,000. Here is how it breaks down:

PHASE 1 (parking lot, handicap-accessible inclined walkway, pavilion, restrooms and all pilings)

Cost: \$294,903

Needed: \$0 (completed March 2004)

PHASE 2 (classroom, bookshop, furniture and equipment)

Cost: \$262,310

Funds in hand or pledged: \$161,835

Needed: \$100,475

The needed amount represents less than one fifth of the total building cost. Together we have raised 82% of the \$557,213 needed. Please consider a generous gift to the building fund. Gifts in any amount are welcome and appreciated. Gifts of \$10,000 and above will be acknowledged on the



A direct hit from Hurricane Charley on our partially constructed public facility had virtually no effect. (Photo by J. Worth)

permanent donor recognition plaque in the classroom. The classroom can be named for a gift of \$100,000, the bookshop for a gift of \$25,000.

The Randell Research Center goes beyond the Pineland site, the Calusa Heritage Trail, and our present-day research and education efforts. It is an ideal and a commitment — to learn and teach the archaeology, history, and ecology of southwest Florida. We are investing in the future, and we are building to last. Can you join us? If so, please make your tax-deductible contribution to *Randell Research Center* and mail it to PO Box 608, Pineland, Florida 33945. Help us build a truly lasting learning program that will help us all make good decisions for the future.



Artist's rendering of public facility (classroom is on the right). Only \$100,000 remains to be raised to complete the entire project.

Snapshots: Summer 2004 at the Randell Research Center



John Paeno works on observation platform on top of Brown's Mound, June 15, 2004. The platform is now finished, complete with decking and handrails, and it withstood Hurricanes Charley and Frances in fine shape. (Photo by W. Marquardt)



A sturdy bridge now allows safe passage over the ancient Calusa canal at Pineland. The bridge also links the short and long loops of the Calusa Heritage Trail. (Photo by W. Marquardt)



At the Mangomania education tent, operated by the Randell Research Center, Jennifer Jennings draws the winning raffle ticket from a Calusa-inspired ceramic bowl donated by Andrea Perisho, as John Paeno prepares to announce the winner. The bowl was the grand prize. Proceeds from the raffle went to the classroom building fund. (Photo by K. Walker)



At the Mangomania festival, July 10, Karen Walker explains how the Calusa made use of shark teeth and how their clam shells (in bowl) contain information about past climate. (Photo by W. Marquardt)



At the Mangomania education tent, Rick Tully (second from right) demonstrates basket-weaving from native south Florida materials as eager children prepare to try their hands. (Photo by W. Marquardt)



Calusa Heritage Trail Opens December 10th

Pathway signs will entertain, educate about people and environment

by Bill Marquardt

On December 10th, 2004 at 10 a.m., the Randell Research Center will proudly open the new Calusa Heritage Trail to the public. The Trail is made possible by a generous grant-in-aid from the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources and the services and volunteer efforts of many individuals.

Based on more than 20 years of research in archaeology, history, and ecology, the Calusa Heritage Trail is a 3700-foot interpretive pathway that leads visitors among the mounds, canal, and other features of the Pineland archaeological site. Synergy Design Group of Tallahassee designed the museum-quality signs. Featuring text written by Darcie MacMahon, Bill Marquardt, Karen Walker, and John Worth, new full-color art by Merald Clark, and maps and drawings by John LoCastro, the 13 signs will educate visitors about the Calusa Indians, their environment, and the history of Southwest Florida after the Calusa. The Trail also features two observation platforms atop the site's tallest shell mound, eight benches, a bridge across the ancient Calusa canal, and boardwalks over low-lying areas.

The Trail will be open to visitors daily from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. except Thanksgiving and Christmas. Guided tours of the site will be offered during peak season (January–April) on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. Guided tours may be scheduled at other times by calling the RRC at 239-283-2062. Members of *Friends of the Randell Research Center* will be admitted free. Recommended donations for other visitors are \$7.00 for adults and \$4.00 for children. The income from donations and memberships will be used to help maintain the Trail and site.



Sign #10, 3' x 2', titled "People of the Estuary," is located on top of Randell Mound, facing west. Visible on the distant horizon is Captiva Pass. (Photo by J. Worth)



Sign #11 (above), 7' wide by 2' high, explains changes in settlement patterns, climate, and sea level at Pineland from 2,000 to 1,200 years ago. (Photo by W. Marquardt)



Sign #2 (above), 7' x 2'4", is located at the teaching pavilion. Easily accessible from a wheelchair, it portrays the highlights of Pineland's 2000-year human history and shows events in southwest Florida juxtaposed to happenings elsewhere in the world. (Photo by W. Marquardt)



Sign #13 (right), located on the northern end of the citrus ridge, features events at Pineland since the Calusa lived there. (Photo by W. Marquardt)

In The Eye Of The Storm

Pineland Bears Full Force of Charley, Feels Effects of Frances

by *Bill Marquardt*

On Friday, August 13, northern Pine Island took a direct hit from fast-moving and powerful Hurricane Charley. The path of the eye was North Captiva – Useppa/Cabbage Key – Pineland – Bokeelia – Punta Gorda. Sustained winds of over 150 mph with gusts to 185 mph harmed or destroyed many local homes and businesses, felled countless trees, and stripped almost all of the leaves off the trees that did remain standing. The storm moved through so rapidly that the surge was minimal, about 4 feet, but this was enough to flood some homes on Waterfront Drive. Across from the main entrance to the Pineland site, the Tarpon Lodge was hit heavily and flooded, and the Pineland Marina was destroyed. All RRC staff members were unharmed, but all endured some damage to their homes.

Our headquarters house at 7450 Pineland Road had much of its metal roof ripped away, causing some flooding to the interior. Only one small window was broken, and almost no damage to equipment was sustained. The garage lab was flooded.

John Worth was on the scene first, documenting the landscape at both the headquarters house and the site. Karen Walker and I made our way to Pineland the day after the storm to begin the clean-up. The first priority was



Bent but not broken, our roadside sign serves as a metaphor for the Randell Research Center. Clean-up and rebuilding are proceeding slowly but surely. (Photo by W. Marquardt)



“Where do I start?” Al Woods (above) prepares to tackle the mass of vegetation next to the RRC headquarters house. (Photo by K. Walker)

Winds in excess of 150 mph drove a piece of metal roofing into this coconut tree (left). Our teaching pavilion (background, left) was unharmed. (Photo by W. Marquardt)