

Friends of the Randell Research Center

Vol. 4, No. 3

September 2005

State Grants Matching Funds for Classroom

by Bill Marquardt




The State Legislature has granted matching funds of \$148,000 through the Alec Courtelis Capital Facilities Enhancement Challenge Grant Program. The intent of this program is to provide incentive for private giving toward the construction of state university facilities. Because the Randell Research Center is a part of the Florida Museum of Natural History, which is administered under the University of Florida, the RRC classroom is considered a UF building. What this means is that we have enough money to complete construction of our public facilities at the Pineland site. The classroom will be located at the beginning of the Calusa Heritage Trail.

When completed, the 20-x-32-foot classroom will seat 50 people in an attractive space with exposed beams and ceiling fans. Adjustable louvers will provide ventilation and light control. Built-in projection equipment will enable the showing of slides, computer-assisted

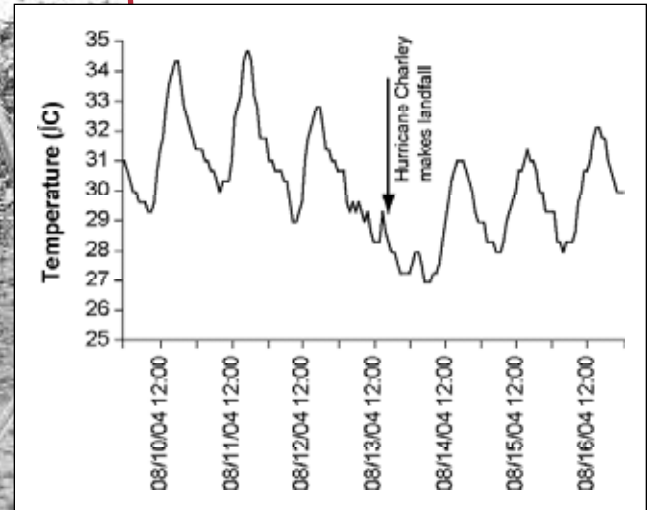
The classroom, book shop, and storage rooms will be built where the pilings now stand, next to the existing pavilion and rest rooms. Construction is expected to begin by late October. (photo by W. Marquardt)

presentations, and videos. The classroom will provide a comfortable learning environment that will serve all our audiences, from visitors to school children. In addition to the main classroom space, we will also offer a 12-x-16-foot book-and-gift shop. Behind the shop there will be two 60-square-foot storage rooms, one for teaching materials used daily by docents, the other for equipment and bookshop stock.

Again, we thank those who have donated to the construction fund – your gifts have been doubled! But without your generosity, there would have been nothing for the state to match. We will report on our progress in future newsletters, and please come visit the site when you can. 

Clams for Climate Change

by Karen Walker and Donna Surge



Donna Surge downloaded the temperature data from the tidbit onto her laptop computer, which she had brought along on the boat. Within a minute, we were able to view a graph of the data. (Photo by K. Walker; graph by D. Surge.)

There were so many sand gnats gnawing at our bare legs and arms that it was difficult to concentrate on locating clams in the exposed, grassy mudflat. Yet, finding a good sample of live, native quahog clams was a major objective of our June 2005 fieldtrip to Pine Island Sound. So, persevere we did, until our count totaled 19. Our team consisted of geochemist Donna Surge and her graduate student Ann Goewert, both from the University of North Carolina, and me, an environmental archaeologist long associated with the RRC. We were ably assisted by Pat Hagle of Pineland, who captained the boat.

Another objective was to retrieve an electronic data logger, called a tidbit, that had been recording water temperatures on an hourly basis since before Hurricane Charley came over Pine Island Sound on August 13, 2004. Here too, we were successful and moreover, fascinated, to see that the tidbit had recorded Charley's signature in the form of a dip in temperatures (see graph).

The shells of our collected clams, the temperature data, and water samples collected previously are all being studied by Donna and Ann in order to better understand the relationships between seasonal changes

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Ann Goewert (right) proved to be proficient at finding clams in this grassy mudflat; Ann later prepared the clam shells at the University of North Carolina for geochemical analyses. (Photo by K. Walker.)

in water conditions and how they are recorded as isotopic/geochemical variation in the clam shells themselves. Then we will apply this understanding to ancient clam shells in order to interpret past climate change at seasonal time scales. For these, I have selected shells discarded by Calusa people at Pineland over a time span from about 400 to 2,000 years ago. By this method, we hope to produce a record of climate variation that relates to the lives of Pineland's original residents while at the same time contributes to the understanding of global climate change for the last two millennia.



Office Manager Update

by Jennifer Jennings

Even though it's summertime, the staff and volunteers here at the Randell Research Center are always keeping busy. In July, we continued to give tours to children in summer camps from the Lee County Parks and Recreation and the Calusa Nature Center. Our own Pine Island Boy Scouts from Troop #20 were out at the Pineland site doing community work to show leadership on Eagle Scout projects, such as Brian Reinhardt's recent project to paint the block house, construct the railing on the second observation deck on Brown's Mound, and help clean up overgrown vegetation. We thank all of you for doing such a great job. We also thank Pine Island Paint & Frame Store for donating the paint for the block house, and J. F. Smith Building Contractor Inc. for donating the wood and hardware for the railing.

We attended Mango Mania this year with John Worth as a special guest speaker in the education tent. Everyone who knows Dr. Worth was anxious to hear him; all seats were full. Our gift shop was run by Rona Stage with RRC t-shirts, caps, and a variety of books on the Calusa Indians, as well as Calusa-inspired bowls made by Chuck Koucky of Koucky Gallery & Gardens right here on Pine Island. RRC Advisory Board member Dick Workman was also there teaching the art of weaving bracelets and baskets out of cabbage palm fronds. I would also like to personally thank the following volunteers for all their help with Mango Mania: Joanne Bielfelt, Joanne Bucaro, David Hurst, Diane Maher, Terry Pierce, and Gina Poppell.

Ongoing and upcoming events include archaeological lab work on Wednesdays as well as docent and greeter training programs on scheduled Fridays throughout the fall season. We are particularly excited about our greeters program, in which trained volunteers sign up for morning or afternoon shifts from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., greeting visitors and answering questions. Anyone interested in becoming an RRC volunteer, please feel free to contact me for an application.



Scouts Grant Conlyn, Shane Reinhardt, Tim Sanboan, and Kasey Davis (top) paint the block house, used for storage of archaeological tools and supplies. (Photo by D. Reinhardt.)

Pictured clearing brush (bottom) from the north end of Brown's Mound are Grant Conlyn, Bobby McDaniel, Shane Reinhardt, and Thomas Mutcher. (Photo by D. Reinhardt.)

New and Renewing Friends of the RRC from June 1 through September 1, 2005

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

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Your Investment in Pineland

by Craig Timbes, RRC Operations Manager

To get a good visual image of how your contributions to the RRC are used, all you have to do is visit the Calusa Heritage Trail. Thanks to operating funds made possible by donations from Friends of the RRC as well as site visitors, we are now well on the way to having the proper equipment to maintain and control the growth along the trail with a 48-inch riding mower, a weed eater, and a leaf blower. Even with this equipment, the 35-acre public portion of the Pineland site needs constant attention (especially in rainy season), and the equipment itself has to be maintained, not to mention the price of fuel these days.



Full-time volunteer Terry Pierce poses next to the RRC's 1965 Ford tractor, which, thanks to Terry's restoration job, looks and works like new. (Photo by C. Timbes.)

The results speak for themselves. The Trail is coming along beautifully. Terry Pierce, who volunteers 40 hours a week, has been my right hand man in getting to where we are today, and with his assistance we have refurbished our good-as-new 1965 Ford 3000 tractor. With a little love and care, it will be around another forty years. The equipment we have is generally residential equipment, which we use to cover a commercial-sized area, causing great strain on what we have. Just as an example, we have had our riding lawn-mower for just over six months and already have over 230 hours on the machine. You would have to mow your yard every weekend for two years to come to 230 hours, and we've done it in six months. Equipment mainte-

nance alone is a major task, but we've found that by learning the seasonal rhythms of the site and its vegetation, we can work together with nature at our wetland paradise in a way that commercial lawn services simply can't imitate.

The contributions of the Friends of the RRC have gotten us a long way, and we appreciate it greatly. Without your support, along with our endowment, grants, and visitorship, we would not have the wonderful trail that we have today. So come out to the trail to catch a sunset and enjoy the fresh Gulf air, and enjoy the fruits of your support. Thank you for helping ensure the future of the Calusa Heritage Trail and the Randell Research Center.

RRC
news

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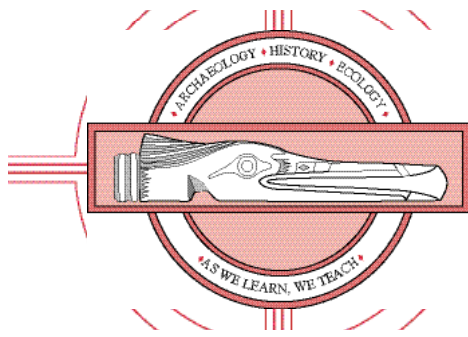
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Friends of the Randell Research Center

Pineland, Florida • September, 2005
Phone (239) 283-2062 E-mail: johneworth@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 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,

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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The Calusa and Their Legacy: South Florida People and Their Environments

by Darcie A. MacMahon and William H. Marquardt
U. Press of Florida, hardcover \$39.95



Culture and Environment in the Domain of the Calusa

edited by William H. Marquardt; Monograph 1, softcover \$25.00

Sharks and Shark Products in Prehistoric South Florida

by Laura Kozuch; Monograph 2, softcover \$5.00

The Archaeology of Useppa Island

edited by William H. Marquardt; Monograph 3, hardcover \$35.00, softcover \$20.00

New Words, Old Songs: Understanding the Lives of Ancient Peoples in Southwest Florida Through Archaeology

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

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The Domain of the Calusa: Archaeology and Adventure in the Discovery of South Florida's Past

VHS video \$19.95

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