

# CALUSA NEWS

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## The Struggle to Save Pineland

by Claudine Payne

Saving Pineland has become a big part of the lives of a lot of people in Lee County these days. The many friends of Pineland raise money, write letters to legislators, attend public hearings, donate their services and goods, and protest impending development, among other things. The shared goal of all these efforts is to preserve and protect as much as possible of the Pineland Site Complex, a cluster of archaeological sites that is all that remains of 2,000 years of life at Pineland.

The first stage in the struggle to preserve Pineland began in the 1970s and 1980s, initiated by Don and Pat Randell who used the simple expedient of buying up property. Over the years, the Randells acquired and lovingly protected 80 acres of the 240-acre site complex. During this time they also became leading advocates for the preservation of Pine Island's unique cultural and environmental heritage.

All the while the Randells were preserving the unspoiled nature of Pineland, southwest Florida was experiencing nonstop population growth. Between 1970 and 1990, Lee County's population tripled, mostly due to migration. The accompanying development threatened to swallow up the fragile remains of southwest Florida's past.

By the beginning of the 1980s, archaeologists had joined the preservation struggle. Concerned that impending development would result

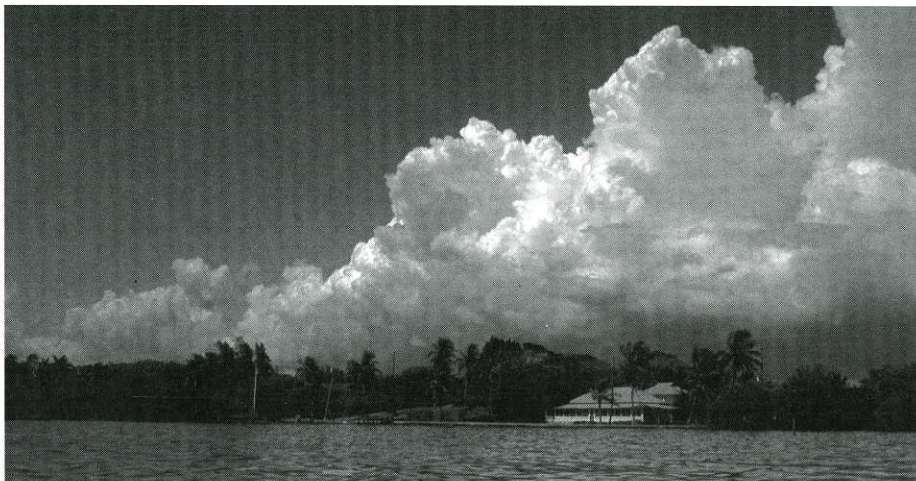


Photo by C. Torrence

*The Pineland Site Complex, viewed from Pine Island Sound.*

in irretrievable loss of information, George Luer began documenting the history of the Pineland Site Complex with help from Don Randell. A few years later, Bill Marquardt and Karen Walker, who had been working in the

Pine Island Sound area, also turned their attention to Pineland.

It soon became clear to Bill that area residents (most born and bred elsewhere) knew very little about southwest Florida's past. Bill knew that

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### 5 Things You Can Do To Help Save Pineland

1. **Send a contribution to the Randell Research Center.**
2. **Spread the word.**  
Tell your friends about Pineland. Pass this newsletter on to a co-worker when you're done. Give your kids' teachers our website addresses.
3. **Write to your state legislators.**  
Encourage them to continue funding the CARL program, and urge them to support CARL purchase of the Pineland properties.
4. **Support continued high ranking in the CARL list for Pineland properties.**  
Even if the highest-priority Pineland properties now on the list are purchased, many other parts of the site complex remain in private hands. You can help ensure continued high rankings of Pineland properties on the CARL list by attending public hearings this fall and lending your support.
5. **Volunteer your time.**  
The Randell Research Center Advisory Board can use your help in preservation and fund-raising activities. Contact Anna Stober at (941) 283-8567.

