

## Friends of the Randell Research Center

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### New Excavations at Pineland

by Melissa Ayvaz and Bill Marquardt

**On May 18,** Melissa Ayvaz began a new excavation on Citrus Ridge at the Pineland Site Complex. The dig is expected to last until June 18. The study is intended to test the hypothesis that about 1700 years ago at least one high-intensity hurricane impacted Pineland's landscape and its people. The results will form a part of Melissa's masters thesis in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Florida, chaired by Bill Marquardt.

The findings from a nearby 1992 excavation suggest that a powerful hurricane hit Pineland around A.D. 300. Storms occur over short time intervals, but – as Pine Islanders who lived here in 2004 well know – they can have both immediate and long-term effects on people's lives. The Calusa were no exception.

Specifically, a thin sandy layer contained surf clam shells (some articulated), sea urchin remains, pen shells, and sea-turtle bones, indicating animals that live in high-salinity habitats. Because the Pineland site is situated in an area of typically lower salinity, we reason that the animal remains must have been swept in from the barrier islands to the west due to a powerful storm surge. Overlying this layer of animal remains is a sand layer that may have been deposited by a



*Melissa Ayvaz uses a brush in the test pit on Citrus Ridge at the Pineland site, May 20, 2011. Looking on are fellow graduate students Andrea Palmiotto and Michael Wylde (foreground, taking notes). (Photo by Bill Marquardt.)*

second surge associated with the same storm. The source of the sand may have been the Citrus Ridge, so the current dig is designed to gain a better understanding of the Citrus Ridge deposits so they can be compared to those from the previous 1992 excavation. Melissa will focus her analysis on faunal and sedimentological assemblages to tease out the subtle signatures that would characterize a storm surge. The excavations will proceed slowly and carefully in order to provide information at a scale and resolution rarely accessible to archaeologists.

The new excavation is located right next to the Calusa Heritage Trail. Visitors are welcome any day, Wednesdays through Saturdays, through June 18. Lab work on Tuesdays at the Ruby Gill House will involve washing and cataloging artifacts, following museum archival standards and guidelines. 🏰

### What is paleotempestology?

Paleo means "old." A tempest is a storm. And "ology" means "study of." So paleotempestology is the study of storms that happened in the past, particularly tropical cyclones, such as hurricanes. Paleotempestologists use a variety of techniques to identify and study the effects and frequency of ancient storms, such as the characteristics of sediments deposited in coastal marshes and lakes, or chemical indications of heavy influxes of fresh water on corals.



*Graduate student Jennifer Haney (left) and volunteers Polly Eldred and Zack Wainey sort through materials captured in the 1/8-inch screen, May 21, 2011. (Photo by Melissa Ayvaz.)*

# Hundreds Attend Calusa Heritage Day

*Images compiled by Cindy Bear and Bill Marquardt*

**About 800 people** attended the sixth annual Calusa Heritage Day on March 12, 2011. On a clear, crisp, spring-like day, our visitors enjoyed archaeological exhibits provided by the Florida Museum of Natural History as well as talks by John Beriault, Robin Brown, Bill Marquardt, and special guest speaker Lee Newsom, who was visiting from Pennsylvania State University. Vendors of native plants, arts and crafts, and food were popular with the crowd, as were information tables provided by local archaeological, historical, and conservation organizations. "Calusa Tastings" was again offered, with free samples of foods eaten by the Calusa Indians, such as mullet, clams, and papaya. Many children enjoyed hands-on activities, and both kids and adults tried their hand at throwing the atlatl, an activity organized by the Florida Public Archaeology Network.



*Carol Mahler, a featured presenter in the speaker's tent, discusses Seminole legends and their origins as depicted by artist Guy LaBree, the topics of her recent book, available at the Gift Shop at the Calusa Heritage Trail. (Photo by Charles O'Connor.)*



*Master Naturalist Pat Owens encourages a close-up look at native plants during a tour that took visitors to seldom-seen areas of the site. (Photo by Melissa Green.)*



*During his presentation in the speaker's tent at Calusa Heritage Day, Robin Brown emphasized the resilience of people of the past to climate change and the challenges being presented by current global warming trends. (Photo by Charles O'Connor.)*



*Graduate student Jennifer Haney shows visitors how the Calusa Indians made cordage and nets from native plant fibers. (Photo by Bill Marquardt.)*



*Basket making using local plant materials is taught by Dick Workman to Rennick Bruno. Rennick has participated in field trips to the Calusa Heritage Trail with his home school group and this was the second Calusa Heritage Day Festival where he participated in hands-on learning events. (Photo by Charles O'Connor.)*



*Karen Walker and Margi Nanney roasted oysters and clams for visitors to the "Calusa Tastings" area of the festival. (Photo by Charles O'Connor.)*



*People of all ages tested their skill at throwing the atlatl, a hunting device used before invention of the bow-and-arrow. Sponsored by the Florida Public Archaeology Network, this activity took place under the shade of the gumbo limbo trees. (Photo by Charles O'Connor.)*





Graduate student Ryan VanDyke shows a young visitor what can be learned from animal bones found in archaeological sites. (Photo by Gladys Schneider.)



Lee Newsom discussed the evidence for a variety of plant uses by the Calusa at Pineland and elsewhere in Florida. Over 100 people heard her outdoor presentation, shown here. She also presented a lecture in the RRC classroom. (Photo by Bill Marquardt.)

Woody Hanson of Fort Myers exhibited objects and photographs from his family's archives and discussed Seminole history and culture with visitors. To Woody's left are graduate students Austin Bell and Amanda Rowe, who were exhibiting Seminole materials from the Florida Museum's collections.. (Photo by Bill Marquardt.)



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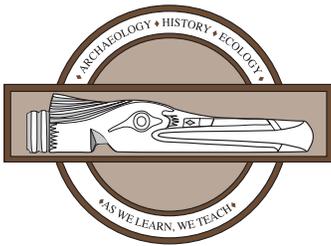
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Cindy Bear (RRC coordinator) and Bill Marquardt (RRC Director) joined archaeology graduate students collecting comparative shellfish specimens from Pine Island Sound. Knowing which kinds of shellfish live in various habitats can help archaeologists interpret where past people were obtaining their food. From left to right, Andrea Palmiotto, Michael Wylde, Cindy Bear, Melissa Ayvaz, Bill Marquardt. (Photo by Karen Walker.)



## Good Questions: What inspired the RRC logo?

by Bill Marquardt

Several visitors to the Calusa Heritage Trail have inquired about the origin of the Randell Research Center's logo. Created by artist Merald Clark, our logo was inspired by a fragment of a bone pin found at the Pineland Site in 1995 during excavations conducted by Jennifer Wallace. Carved in the form of a bird's head, it was first found by volunteer excavator Jim Anholt. It comes from excavation A-11, Stratum 10, and dates to about A.D. 1000-1200. Broken at both ends, it weighs only 1.3 grams and is 42.8 mm long (about 1½ inches). Based on the size and solid nature of the object, it was probably made from the metapodial bone of a white-tailed deer. Etched lines detail the bird's plumage and facial features. To most, it looks like the head of a woodpecker, but some have suggested a merganser duck. The original object can be seen in the Hall of South Florida People and Environments, Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville.



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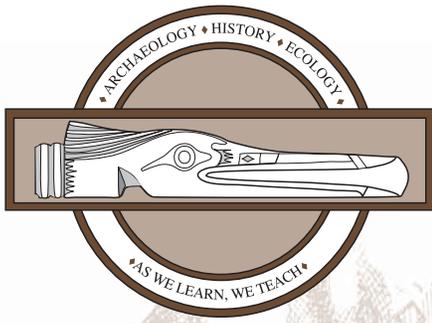
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# Friends of the Randell Research Center

Pineland, Florida • June 2011  
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## 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



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Photo by A. Bell

