



Vol. 24 No. 6

June 2008

## June at SWFAS: Jim Pepe on Lakeside Ranch CERP Excavations: A Glimpse of Early Settlement along Lake Okeechobee

For several years, Janus Research has been conducting archaeological research associated with the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project (CERP). This presentation will focus on ongoing work at Lakeside Ranch, a CERP subcomponent located in Martin County along the eastern edge of Lake Okeechobee.

Investigations here have resulted in the documentation of at least seven Precolumbian and several historic period archaeological sites located on former lake shorelines and other topographic rises. Analysis conducted to date indicates use of this area at least as early as the ceramic Late Archaic period, perhaps as early as 4,000 years ago. These sites seem to have been largely abandoned about or before 1,000 years ago.

Lakeside Ranch provides an interesting glimpse into the early history of Lake Okeechobee and aboriginal adaptation to central southern Florida.

Jim Pepe is the senior archaeologist with Janus Research and teaches archaeological classes at Florida Gulf Coast University. He received his B.A. in English from University of Florida and his M.A. in Anthropology from Florida Atlantic University. He has been conducting archaeological projects in southern Florida for over 15 years.



*Archaeologist Jim Pepe*

## SWFAS July 12 Field Trip to Long Key Interpretive Center in Davie

There will be a SWFAS field trip on July 12 to tour the recently opened Long Key Interpretive Center in west Davie, Broward County.

The Long Key Nature Center and Natural Area consists of 157 acres of magnificent live oak and tropical hardwood hammock surrounded by wetlands, managed by Broward County Parks and Recreation. As recently as 100 years ago, the elevated oak hammock was part of a series of tree islands within the Everglades. Long Key encompasses some of the most significant archaeological, historical, and ecological

resources within the area and was home to the Tequesta and subsequently, Seminole Indians.

Bob Carr, archaeologist, Director of the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy (AHC), and chief developer of the archaeological portion of the Long Key Interpretive Center, will lead the tour through the newly-opened 18,000-square foot facility.

Tour participants are asked to meet at 10 a.m. at the

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## Trail of Florida's Indian Heritage Announces Big Plans for 2009

The Trail of Florida's Indian Heritage, formerly Trail of the Lost Tribes, is in production of a fourth edition of their popular Trail brochure of archaeological sites and resources that are available to the general public thanks to a \$15,500 grant from the Duckwall Foundation of Tampa. The 2009 release of the new brochure will coincide with a third speaker series entitled, "Bringing Florida Archaeology to Life."

The series will include six events introduced by either State Archaeologist Ryan Wheeler or Bill Lees, Director of the Florida Public Archaeology Network's Coordinating Center in Pensacola. The events will feature a number of southwest Florida venues including the Collier County Museum where the Craighead Lab is located.

A tentative list of events and committed speakers is below.



### Trail Talks in 2009

January 9	Indian Temple Mound	Fort Walton Beach
February 21	Charlotte County Historical Museum	Port Charlotte
	Research at Little Salt Spring by Dr. John Gifford	
March 10	South Florida Museum	Bradenton
March 21	Collier County Museum	Naples
March 26	Museum of Florida Art and Culture	Avon Park
	Heritage Artist Christopher Still	
April	Historical Museum of Southern Florida	
	Archaeology of the Bahamas by Robert Carr (Introduction by Jim Miller)	

## Dottie & Jack Thompson Honored with FAS President's Acknowledgements



Patty Flynn, President of FAS, also honored long time SWFAS members Jack and Dottie Thompson for long devoted service to FAS. Jack and Dottie have been members of FAS and SWFAS for approximately 25 years.

During much of that period, Jack and Dottie represented SWFAS at FAS quarterly board meetings. In addition, Jack served as FAS Treasurer for 10 years (1990-2000), followed by two terms as FAS President in 2000-2002. Jack has been involved in much Society business, such as providing vital support to Florida Archaeology Month grants and events.

For many years, Dottie worked tirelessly as Publicity Chair for SWFAS, providing publicity and public notes about SWFAS events and speakers. Jack and Dottie established a steady foundation for FAS and SWFAS and the Society offered its appreciation through this acknowledgment.



## Florida Anthropological Society Chapter Award Named after Art Lee

This past year, the FAS Chapter award was renamed in honor of Art Lee. At the recent Florida Anthropological Society meeting in Ybor City, the first Arthur R. Lee FAS Chapter Award was presented by FAS President Patty Flynn accompanied by Art's widow Lynn Lee and son.

Steve Koski accepted the plaque on behalf of the Warm Mineral Springs/Little Salt Springs Chapter that was recognized for its public outreach, assistance to educational institutions, and support of government and private organizations working together to preserve sites focused around Little Salt Spring and its adjacent slough and upland.



Art was also honored at the meeting through the reading of the following Proclamation:

### *A Proclamation in Honor of Arthur R. Lee*

WHEREAS, Art Lee was a member in good standing of the Florida Anthropological Society (FAS) and the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society (SW-FAS) for approximately 25 years;

WHEREAS, Art Lee was a tireless supporter of FAS and SWFAS and served productively in numerous official capacities, such as FAS President in 1992-1993, SWFAS Newsletter Editor from 1987 to 1997, SW-FAS Chapter Representative to the FAS Board, SWFAS Trustee, and Director of the Craighead Archaeological Laboratory for 14 years (from 1988 to 2002);

WHEREAS, Art Lee took special interest in FAS chapters, serving as Chapter Liaison in 1990 to 1992, aiding the formation of a chapter in Highlands County, and endeavoring to visit and to speak to every chapter during his term as FAS President in 1992-1993;

WHEREAS, Art Lee furthered chapter efforts, such as field work, laboratory analysis, publication of results, and site preservation, including the adoption of

an Historic and Archaeological Preservation ordinance in Collier County in 1991, and encouragement of a similar ordinance in Highlands County in 1995;

WHEREAS, Art Lee was a recipient of the FAS William C. Lazarus Memorial Award in 1992 and an FAS President's Acknowledgement in 1997 for his many achievements and devoted service;

WHEREAS, Art Lee conceived an award to encourage and honor FAS chapters to achieve high goals of preservation and stewardship, which led to the formal adoption by the FAS Board in 1998 of the FAS Chapter Award;

WHEREAS, the FAS Board would like to show its high esteem for Art Lee and wants to honor him posthumously for his achievements and outstanding citizenship;

THEREFORE, the FAS Board voted unanimously on February 9, 2008, to rename the FAS Chapter Award so that it henceforth shall be known as the "Arthur R. Lee FAS Chapter Award."

## FAS

SWFAS is a chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society. FAS is open to persons interested in anthropology, archaeology, preservation and cultural resources and community education.

FAS membership includes a very nice journal, the *Florida Anthropologist*, covering diverse archaeological and anthropological excavations and events in the state, and the FAS Newsletter. FAS members have the opportunity in May each year to attend the annual meeting, held at a different location through the state each year. Papers are presented on a wide range of topics, tours are available at local sites and workshops are offered each year. At the business meeting, members have the opportunity to express ideas and vote on issues.

Membership dues are as follows: \$35 (Regular and Institutional); \$35 (Family); \$40 (Sustaining); \$15 (Student with a valid student ID when applying); \$100 (Patron); \$500 (Life); \$2,500 or more (Benefactor).

## SWFAS Hospitality Committee

A heartfelt thanks to Jeanne Saunders for providing refreshments during SWFAS lectures. She has moved out of the area and, Jeanne, we will miss you!

Jeanne has been our much-appreciated hospitality stalwart. Having refreshments available provides a nice, relaxing opportunity to chat with fellow SWFAS members before the meeting. If anyone would be interested in helping out, please let Theresa Schober or one of the board members know at the next meeting. Any help would be appreciated!

## Lake Okeechobee Archaeological Presentation Packs the House in May

By Theresa Schober

Chris Davenport, although relatively new to Florida, has already experienced parts of the state that make other archaeologists green with envy (at least this one!). With the extensive drought affecting central Florida, water levels in Lake Okeechobee dropped in 2007 to their lowest recorded, exposing vast areas of the lake bottom. Through aerial photo and documentary research, Davenport has established that the lake was fed by a series of rivers - including the Democratic River that ran to the Belle Glade Mound and others that are now gone - and surrounded by a two-mile swatch of pond apples. The Democratic was so named from a 1882 exploration of the Everglades funded by the *New Orleans Democratic Times* newspaper. The sailboat started up the Caloosahatchee, discovered and then cruised down the Democratic, making it to the 10,000 islands. It is hard to imagine that degree of navigability today, although historically the rivers served as a transportation web for regional commerce.

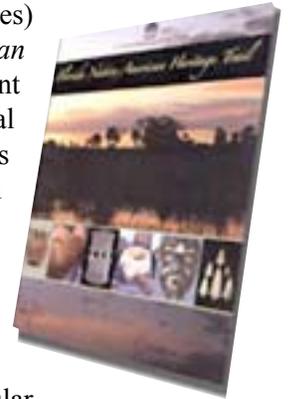
In 1881, Hamilton Disston purchased four million acres at \$0.25/acre intending to drain the area and create arable land. In the process, Disston started the Caloosahatchee, Kissimmee, and 13-mile canals. When he died in 1896, the project remained unfinished. His heirs sold the land back to the state for \$600,000. Furst Clark Construction Company of Baltimore was then contracted to complete the job. At the time, the main industry in the area was the pelt and plume trade where flamingo pelts would fetch \$25 compared to regular \$1 per day wages. From 1900 to 1919, over 30 communities cropped up around the lake. 65-to-85-foot paddle wheelers and steamboats cruised to the lake to deliver passengers to its many hotels. Catfishing was also big business, with 6.5 million tons removed and sent up the Kissimmee River in 1905. First Plant, then Flagler realized the potential with steamboats carrying fresh fish up the Caloosahatchee and 13-mile canals, respectively, then loading it onto railcars and selling it as far north as New York. The boom ended with the 1928 hurricane that created a 16 to 25-foot tsunami,

## Heritage Trail booklet now Online

In 2007, the Trail of Florida's Indian Heritage

(formerly the Trail of the Lost Tribes) produced the *Florida Native American Heritage Trail* booklet with grant funds from the Division of Historical Resources. The booklet provides detailed information by region and county about archaeological sites open to the public and venues with exhibits on Florida's rich heritage.

Recently, the booklet has been made available online where visitors can turn the pages like a regular book as well as take links to other relevant pages and individual site websites. Check it out at: [http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/milesmedia/fl\\_nativeamerican/](http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/milesmedia/fl_nativeamerican/) Copies of the booklet can also be purchased from [www.floridahistoryshop.com](http://www.floridahistoryshop.com)



obliterating the hotels and sinking all of the boats.

It was the remains of some of these boats, cookhouses, and hotels that Davenport discovered when the lake levels dropped last year, as well as Indian artifacts ranging from Belle Glade and Sand-tempered Plain pottery plus limited amounts of other wares; shell hammers, celts, plummets, and a gorget; worked sharks teeth; chert nodules; and some unusual items including a basalt plummet and an Archaic point (Ocala or Bolen). The pedestrian survey has yielded approximately 32 new sites.

The final report on the survey is due to the Bureau of Archaeological Research in 2009. Given the paucity of information on the archaeologically rich interior compared to Florida's coastlines, the drought has afforded the tremendous opportunity that will ultimately yield new insights into how trade networks developed on the peninsula to exploit Florida's raw materials.



# Geology Rules: Making Soil

By Jack Harvey

So where does soil come from in the first place? When we go outdoors we know soil when we see it, but how did it get there and what made it? We have to know this if we are to understand how the Land of the Calusa was made.

Of the 34 definitions in the dictionary, we're talking about "the portion of the earth's surface consisting of disintegrated rock and humus.. Humus is "produced by the decomposition of vegetable or animal matter." Oops. Without humus, we have no vegetables or animals to make humus. But humus isn't actually required for plants to grow; it just helps them grow better and we say the soil is more fertile. In fact, there are species of plants that will grow practically anywhere on the surface of this planet as long as there is liquid water, carbon dioxide from the air, and sunlight to power photosynthesis. This is the bulk of their needs but they also require nitrogen, phosphorus and potash and maybe traces of several other elements.

One of the richest natural sources for these chemicals is volcanic ash. Initially the ash is deadly for life but after a few ice ages, it's ground and kneaded to a rich soil with all the plant nutrients your local garden store offers.

Charles Darwin dug some trenches, counted the earthworms in them, weighed their casts, did some arithmetic, and showed that worms have had time

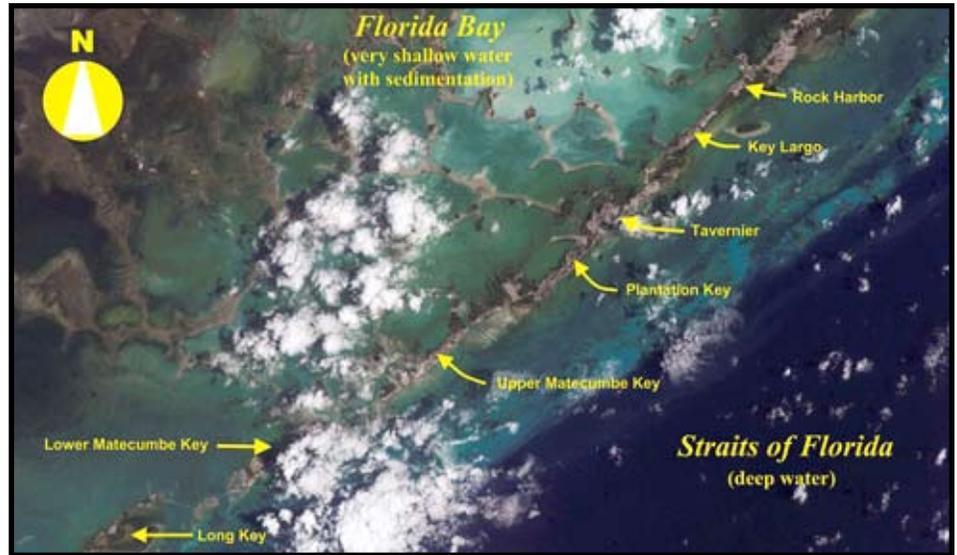


Photo courtesy of NASA

*Florida Bay between the Everglades and Keys* to eat and excrete the outermost several feet of the entire planet several times, creating worldwide topsoil. Volcanoes, ice ages and earthworms: that's all you need to make great soil.

But where does that leave South Florida? We have no volcanoes spouting ash. Ice age sea level changes just dunk us and hang us up to dry. Our poor earthworms must be starving.

Yet South Florida is absolutely covered with greenery. Without the magic chemistry of volcanic ash, how can that be? Recall that liquid water, carbon dioxide and sunlight enable photosynthesis and plant life. South Florida has all these in great abundance and there are plant species that can get along with only very tiny amounts of the

other elements needed for fertile soil.

But how does this get started? Look at the sea bottom between the Keys and the south end of the peninsula itself, the Everglades. This large area known as Florida Bay is very shallow and protected from surf by the Keys and reefs to the south.

Life began in seawater, a weak solution of the natural fertilizer from volcanic ash dissolved by rainwater on distant continents and washed to sea. Protected seawaters such as Florida Bay harbor algae and shell fish in abundance. And recall that soil humus is "produced by the decomposition of vegetable or animal matter." Here is one way to get vegetable or animal matter to make

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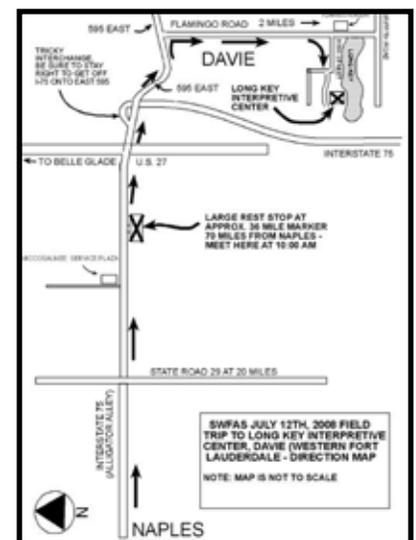
## July Field Trip, continued from page 1

new rest stop between mile markers 36 and 35 along Alligator Alley (Interstate 75), approximately 70 miles east of Naples. You will need to be on the Naples end of Alligator Alley by about 9 a.m., or allow 1.5 hours from Naples. When you arrive at the rest stop, look for John Beriault's silver-grey Chevy Blazer SUV. Leaving the rest area at 10:15 a.m., we will carpool to the Interpretive Center in time for a noon lunch on the grounds.

Please bring a lunch and indicate at the June meeting if you will be attending.

Note: It would be a good idea to have someone in the car with a cell phone, so if you get lost, you can call (number will be provided) for help/directions.

A larger map and more details will be in the July newsletter.



## Geology Rules, continued from page 5

humus in the first place. Shallow protected seawater such as Florida Bay can collect organic sediment containing the remains of all sea life that grew and died there. This includes sea grass and all the seaweeds and kelp that love the latitude. Many kinds of animal life prefer the protected seawater over the surf-lashed ocean south of the keys. The detritus of all this life forms a sediment layer of potential soil on the Bay floor.

But how does this sediment get out of the seawater and onto dry land where cabbage palms and palmettos can grow? The planet will cool a little and more glaciers will form, lowering sea levels worldwide and making the Florida Bay floor dry land. Then earthworms will eat and excrete it a few times and we have South Florida topsoil.

And in the past when the world was warmer, sea levels were higher than today so that the Everglades just north of Florida Bay were under water and perhaps protected by an earlier string of keys and coral reefs. So this method of soil making is driven

largely by the ice age cycle of global warming and cooling.

Another way for soil to get onto South Florida land is blowing in the wind, from Africa and Kansas. Remember 1930s dust storms? Very fine dust from rich volcanic soil on other land masses can be wind-blown across oceans to settle here. Although the amount of soil transferred this way is minute, it can touch the entire land area of South Florida on any day the wind is right. There is no need to wait for the planet to warm or cool, shifting the shoreline.

So the Land of the Calusa has second rate soil. This is likely one of the main reasons they built their most important civic centers on coastal land subject to hurricane storm surges. They probably understood that agriculture could not supply food in the quantities they needed so they wisely stayed near the shore where the sea helped bring food to them. The Calusa had little agriculture because without modern chemical fertilizers, it isn't sustainable in South Florida.

### About SWFAS

#### *The Directorate:*

*President - Theresa Schober  
1st VP - Tom Franchino  
2nd VP - James Oswald  
Recording Secretary - Jo Ann Grey  
Treasurer - Charlie Strader  
Membership Secretary - Charlie Strader*

#### *Trustees:*

*Rebecca Austin, Jean Belknap, John Beriault, Liz Clement, Alison Elgart, Betsy McCarthy, Betsy Perdichizzi, Jack Thompson*

#### *SWFAS Committees:*

*Field - John Beriault  
Lab - Jack Thompson  
Hospitality - Jeanne Sanders  
Newsletter - Karen Nelson*

*If you would like to join SWFAS, please address your check to: The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society; P.O. Box 9965; Naples, FL 34101  
Dues are: Individual - \$20; Sustaining - \$50;  
Family - \$35; Student \$15*

#### *Learn more about SWFAS at:*

**<http://www.explorationsinc.com/swfl-archaeology/index.html>**

*Board meetings are usually held prior to the regular meeting on the third Wednesday of the month at the Bonita Springs Community Hall at 27381 Old U.S. 41 (by the banyan tree). All are welcome. Board meetings begin at 6 p.m. Regular meetings begin at 7:30 (with coffee served at 7).*

## June 2008 Newsletter

**The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society**  
**P.O. Box 9965**  
**Naples, FL 34101**