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September 2010

CSI: Archaeology with Almy Kles on September 15

Maranda Almy Kles, MA, MS. will talk about forensic archaeology in “CSI: Archaeology” at the September 15 SWFAS meeting in Bonita Springs. The meeting begins at 7:30; coffee and snacks are available at 7.

Have you ever wondered how CSI’s “Bones” knows what she knows about skeletal remains? Have you ever wondered if any of it can be applied to archaeology?

So often skeletal remains are collected and minimally analyzed, and then passed over for the pottery and post holes that reveal so much about a culture. The human skeleton records just about everything about us: sex, stature, ancestry, diet, and so much more. The people make the culture.

Understanding their remains can help us better understand the culture.

“CSI: Archaeology” will highlight the different aspects of the biological profile of a human skeleton. In this talk, Kles will also review an archaeological case from Southwest Florida and show how a combination of forensic techniques, archaeology, and historical analysis can reveal some interesting information about Florida’s past peoples. Hopefully at the end you will know what “Bones” knows and see how it can be used with archaeology to examine our past.

Maranda Almy Kles, MA, MS is a PhD student at the University of Florida, studying forensics and bioarchaeology. Her current research looks at biological distance in the



Native American populations that inhabited pre-contact Florida. She has also worked as a Death Investigator for a medical examiner’s office and currently teaches an undergrad class on Forensic Anthropology.

Local News

FPAN Director Leaves for New Position

Steve Archer has resigned as director of the Southwest Florida regional office of FPAN to take a position with the Washington Department of Transportation in Seattle. His new work will involve regulatory duties. Of course we wish him the best of luck at his new position, but we will miss his presence here in Southwest Florida.

FGCU Summer Field School

Florida Gulf Coast University is planning an archaeological field school for Summer 2011. Currently, no decision has been made about when and where this will take place, but

meetings will take place soon to move forward with those decisions. SWFAS members will be among the first to find out the details of their plans, which will probably be ready for our next newsletter. Stay tuned.

RRC Needs Volunteers for Trail Spruce-up

Cindy Bear is the new Shop & Lab Manager and Tour & Events Coordinator for the Randell Research Center & Calusa Heritage Trail on Pine Island. Her kick-off event is a trail clean-up scheduled for September 4 from 9 to noon. If you want to join in on trail and classroom maintenance, give Cindy a call at 239-283-2157 or e-mail her at rrcindy@rancercenter.comcastbiz.net.

Mound Key Private Owner Receives DEP Approval for Dock

Story from the Island Sandpaper in Fort Myers Beach

At Tuesday’s meeting, after a lengthy and sometimes emotional discussion involving the McGee family, representatives from the Lee County Attorney’s office and County Lands, the Board of County Commissioners reached a consensus that they would not file an injunction against the DEP for issuing the McGees a permit for a dock at Mound Key, but rather direct County Manager Karen Hawes to work with the family to try and reach a solution.

The meeting began with the county length of service awards, followed by Public Comment where all speakers were there to comment on the Mound Key dock application.

Wayne Daltry, representing the Audubon Society, went first, saying that the dock would ‘draw people like magnets’ and urging the commissioners to approve the dock only if there was a way to create a public/private partnership with the McGee’s.

Lee County Clerk of Courts Charlie Green pointed out that Mound Key used to be open for everyone, relaying fond memories of digging for artifacts when he was a child.

“I think the opportunity to open it up for a dock is excellent idea,” he said. “We tend to preserve everything to the point where you can’t enjoy it anymore.

All 3 McGee brothers then made presentations, showing the board aerial photographs of the island - dating back to the 40’s – depicting the various ways, including farming, that the land has been used for throughout the years.

“This picture from 1944, shows upland areas that are cleared, a dock and landing, building, cisterns and canals,” he said. “The point I’m trying to make is there’s nothing we can do that hasn’t already been done. Here’s a large area representing 10% of natural resources of island used in construction of 41. This land has been in my family for 93 years, and we’re trying to be good stewards, better stewards.”

“This permit is premature,” said Theresa Schober, representing the Anthropological Society. “Mound Key is the most intact, significant archaeological site in Lee County. Because of its lack of supervision and its relative isolation, (the dock) is a significant threat to the cultural heritage of this community.”

After moving rather quickly through the Consent and Administrative Agendas, the Board discussed the Mound Key dock issue as a walk on item.

“I could have ignored what is being proposed with regards to this dock, but I think this commission does value

it's historical resources, so I felt it incumbent upon myself to raise this issue," said Commissioner Ray Judah, who initially brought the item to the Board's attention at last week's meeting. "We being a county that has comp plan and a land development code with policies that pertain to protecting resources."

"It's just unfortunate that we're in this situation, and I'm not being vindictive to the McGee's, but with this kind of impact to natural resources I'd have to step forward," he continued. "We have been in negotiations with them to purchase this land in the past, but that reached an impasse because the land was assessed at \$500,000, but they were asking us for \$5 million. I hope that we can once again engage in those discussions, I believe that's what this is meant to induce."

"When you look at Mound Key from the 40's and now, you can see how vegetation has repopulated this island. On the other hand, you can see where the McGee's section is severely deteriorated - that doesn't seem like good environmental stewardship to me."

County Attorney David Owen urged the Board not to move forward with an injunction against the permit.

"I must have substantive facts that meet criteria to bring forth this lawsuit," he said. "In this particular case, we're looking at impacts from construction of dock only - not goats nor people on the island. The Florida State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Army Corps of Engineers has initial jurisdiction in determining whether or not meet state requirements, the DEP has reviewed all those matters, and it is the opinion of this counsel that the county not move forward with an administrative challenge."

Commissioner Frank Mann asked whether or not the McGees would also need a permit from Lee County.

"They would need to get a local permit from us, which requires a review by our historic preservation board, and then our staff would issue a permit, by then we will have from the state any additional requirements when they finish their archeological review, but there is no venue for it to come back to the BoCC because it's an administrative process," explained Lee County Community Development Director Mary Gibbs.

Commissioner Brian Bigelow asked the attorney about the possibility of eminent domain, and the attorney said he needed time to look into it.

"The last was offer from them was \$8.6 million and our two appraisals came in at \$500,000 and \$600,000 in 2008,"

said Karen McGuire with County Lands.

Bigelow then addressed Todd McGee directly, asking him if his family was still interested in negotiating a sale.

"In our minds, this property is beyond value, and we would like to see it protected," said Todd's brother Ted after Todd became visibly emotional. "We're not impressed with what the state's done, and we think we are better stewards right now, but we are open to negotiations and it's not all about money."

Bigelow, citing his family's roots, agreed that this property has extreme significant value both for old Florida families and newcomers.

"I'd like to see us work cooperatively on this," he finished.

Judah suggested, based on previous negotiations, to allow Bigelow to work with the McGee's and bring a proposal back to the board.

"My interpreting of the charter is that would be more in the county manager's hands," Bigelow responded.

"I think it was almost inevitable that this discussion would return to a possible purchase," said Mann. "Maybe a commissioner can just sit down and talk with these guys and find a conclusion, but in the meantime we have this application for a dock, which I guess the state would rather let them have a dock then have to walk through state lands to tend their goats."

Mann then cited the McGee's family history, saying that he resented anyone accusing them of being bad stewards of their land. "When I was born in Lee County their family had owned this property for 30 years," he said. "Everyone knows this family, every generation of these McGees and Hansons are the living breathing examples of stewards of our land, and I don't want anything said that would besmirch the character of these wonderful Americans."

Hall agreed, saying that it is the founding families that make our character and culture in Ft. Myers.

"I hope that you don't think we were trying to insinuate that," she said to the McGees.

Judah then asked about the potential of a land swap, and the rest of the board agreed that negotiations with the family needed to be reopened. The meeting ended with Commission Chairman Tammy Hall asking Hawes to engage in conversation with the family and attempt to work out some kind of deal, "be it under 20/20 or some other program."

Keri Hendry

About SWFAS

The Directorate:

President - Annette Snapp

1st VP - Tom Franchino

2nd VP - James Oswald

Recording Secretary - Kathryn Betz

Treasurer & Membership Secretary - Charlie Strader

Trustees: Rebecca Austin, Steve Archer, Matthew Betz,

Liz Clement, Alison Elgart, Betsy Perdichizzi, Theresa

Schober, Jack Thompson. Trustee Emeritus: John Beriault

SWFAS Committees:

Field - John Beriault; Lab - Jack Thompson

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).

September 2010 Newsletter

The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society

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