Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society

A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society
www.cgcas.org

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

May-June 2009

Editor: David Burns

Sunday June 14th

It's Picnic Time

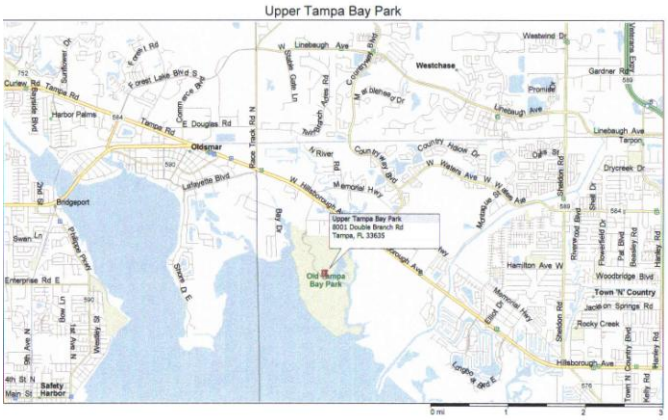
at

Upper Tampa Bay Park
8001 Double Branch Rd.
Tampa, FL 33635

12-4 PM

It is picnic time again and this year it will be held at the Upper Tampa Bay Park in Hillsborough County on Sunday June 14th. There will be a board meeting from 11-12 and then the festivities will begin after that. CGCAS will supply the meat, drinks and buns. Bring family and friends and enjoy the hiking trails, the museum, and the playground for the kids. There is also a kayak and canoe launch if you would like to get out on the water. We will also have a raffle for prizes. Please bring a covered dish to share. It will be a fun afternoon. Due to the distance maybe people could carpool to get there. See you there!

Upper Tampa Bay Park



Upper Tampa Bay Park is a 596 acre peninsula bordered on the east by Double Branch Creek and on the west and south by Old Tampa Bay. It is located at 8001 Double Branch Road in Tampa.

People have been drawn to this area for thousands of years by its biological richness. Indians harvested shellfish in such quantities that the discarded remains can be seen today as shell mounds which lie throughout the park. The arrival of the European man in the 16th Century spelled disaster for the Florida Indians. Over the next 250 years they suffered war, disease, and slave raids which drastically reduced their population. When Florida fell under British rule in 1763, the last remaining natives fled to Cuba with the Spanish. The park property has changed little since those early inhabitants left. Hunters and fishermen have been the most frequent visitors. Cattle grazed here and pine sap was collected for turpentine. Until recently, however the area has received very little attention. As its communities changed from Indian villages to major cities, Tampa Bay has always been an attractive place for people to live because it provided abundant food, recreational opportunities and waterfront living. As a result its shores are now almost completely surrounded by urban development. Recently it has become apparent that some aspects of this development have had a devastating effect on the health of the bay, threatening those very qualities which made it a desirable place to live. Dredging and filling of wetlands and water pollution from sewage and storm water runoff are now known to be major causes of a serious decline in food production and water quality. The site of this park was once to have been a housing development, but recently gained knowledge of the importance of preserving coastal wetlands resulted in its development as a park.

FAS Annual Meeting

The Pensacola Archaeological Society (PAS), in cooperation with the University of West Florida, hosted the 61st annual Florida Anthropological Society meeting in Pensacola on May 8-9, 2009. This meeting was in conjunction with the Celebration of Pensacola's settlement 450 years ago by Don Tristan de Luna y Arellano that will be occurring throughout the year.

There was an excellent slate of speakers as well as the other great activities associated with these Annual Meetings.

CGCAS was well represented at this meeting in spite of the great distance traveled. Thanks to the following members that made the trip this year: Chris Hardy, Dr. Bob Austin, Cheryl Shaughnessy, Jeff Moates, Dr. Brent Weisman, Dr. Tom Pluckhahn, Terry Powell, Sheila Stewart, Dr. Nancy White, Dave Burns, and Phyllis Kolianos.

Congratulations to Bob Austin on being elected President of FAS for 2009-2010.

Slate of Officers and Directors for 2009-2010

The following slate will be present at the annual picnic at Upper Tampa Bay Park on Sunday June 14th.

President: **Bob Austin**
Vice President: **Shanna Drwiega**
Secretary: **Cindy Martin**
Treasurer: **Cheryl Shaughnessy**
Directors: **Linda Allred**
Marcie Connors
Chris Hardy
Karen Lovik
Bart McLeod
Jeff Moates

Robin Van Auken

I was very pleased recently to receive an email from Robin Van Auken. Many of us remember her as the influential person who got us permission to use the Science Center as a lab and office during the Narvaez years. She and her husband still live in Pennsylvania and she is very active in the archaeology of the area. She is operating a public archaeology dig at Muncy Heritage Park and Nature Trail as well as teaching archaeology at Lycoming College. Robin has recently written a book on vintage postcards from the Muncy area detailing the local history there. You can learn more about her project at www.muncyhistoricalsociety.org. I know she would love to hear from those that had the opportunity to know her and work with her. She can be reached at robinvanauken@gmail.com.

Digital Collection of New World Archaeology Being Developed

The University of Alabama Press and University Press of Florida and with six other university presses have received a $282,000 grant to develop the "Archaeology of the Americas Digital Monograph," which would deliver data- and illustration-rich digital editions of cutting-edge archaeological research. The project will give scholars and professional archaeologists the ability to review supplemental data not often contained in conventionally published volumes. Read the April 28 press release from The University of Arizona at http://uanews.org/node/25361

Booker Creek Proposed Walking Trail

A recent issue of the St. Petersburg Times featured an article on Kai Warren and his proposed Booker Creek walking tour that CGCAS will be involved in. Members of CGCAS have volunteered to help write a brief summary for each of the periods encompassing Florida's time-line from the Paleo to the recent. This text and figures will be placed on signs along the trail and allow visitors to learn about Florida's history as the traverse the trail.

You can read more about this project at: http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/article1001322.ece

DIGITAL ARCHAEOLOGY: Digital Schmigital

By Jack Harvey

Clyde Butcher creates masterpiece analogies of Everglades landscapes. His large format cameras form images: Analogies in silver halide chemistry of the scenes before his lenses. The light and dark areas of his darkroom prints are precision analogs of the light and dark areas of Florida scenes. No digital computers required.

But this is true only of Butcher's art gallery quality prints that collectors prize so highly. The irony is that for the beauty he captures to reach millions via newspapers, magazines, the Internet and even most modern coffee table art books, his images must be converted to numbers and processed by digital computers.

Imagine you are examining a Butcher print with a powerful magnifier or microscope. You zoom in on the alligator's eye, then its pupil, then the slit iris, then the bizarre pattern of the iris. As you increase magnification, you reach a point where no finer detail can be seen. The view is all a single shade of gray and you are at the limit of what his large format camera can do, determined by the grain size of his film and the resolution of his lens.

Now measure the single shade of gray, assigning it a number. This is "digitizing", the essence of digital photography. The flatbed scanners many of us own as part of our computer "all-in-one" printers do this well, but to do justice to a Butcher print might require a laboratory-grade scanner.

I picked Clyde Butcher's landscapes as a simple example because they usually are not in color and so a single number describing a gray shade is sufficient. Let a value of zero mean black and 100 mean white. Then 50 is a medium gray and all other gray shades are represented by other numbers between 0 and 100. If we assign the appropriate shade number to every minimum-size area of the landscape, this list of numbers accurately specifies a Butcher image. (And let's call these minimum-size single gray shade areas ***"pixels"***.)

Head of Cushing's well known Marco Cat

Marco cat eye showing pixels

Our ever-present digital cameras, from the tiny ones in cell phones to the professional models used by news photographers simply skip Butcher's silver halide chemistry step and produce numbers directly. However they produce three numbers for each pixel so that the trio of values can also specify its color. Each number shows the amount of red, green or blue light needed to reform the color for our primate eyes. When we buy a digital camera that takes six-megapixel photos, it breaks each image down into six million tiny parts (pixels) and records three numbers for each pixel, or a total of 18,000,000 values.

In the 1880s, Parisian artist George Seurat developed the *pointillism* style of painting where the primary colors are not blended on the palette but applied to the canvas as tiny dots that the eye merges to intermediate colors. His color pixels predated our digital cameras by about a century, but he missed the numbers, so his paintings weren't digitized.

Humans invented numbers to record taxes on crops. They scribed the numbers into clay tablets to record payments, thereby inventing writing. They didn't draw an analogous picture of the crop in the clay; they digitized the amount, recording unambiguously the exact payment.

Terms like light, medium or dark gray don't accurately specify grayness. By assigning numbers to the grayness of tiny areas of a Butcher black and white print, we can unambiguously describe it. Our optical instruments can measure grayness or color, as a ruler measures length, assigning a reproducible number. And reproducibility is one criteria of science. The Hubble Space Telescope along with a long list of other scientific imaging devices are digital cameras.

Perhaps the crucial difference between digitization and analog representation is reproducibility. A slide rule is an analog computer, whereas an adding machine is digital. Two slide rule users often get slightly different answers to math problems but adding machines invariably produce exactly the same result.

Our primate eyes are poor at assigning accurate numerical values to shades of gray or color, but they are excellent at comparison. We can tell if one color is darker or lighter, redder or bluer. A century ago Boston-born Albert Munsell showed how to use this ability to accurately assign numerical values to colors. His scheme defined books of precisely colored chips that our eyes can accurately match with unknown target colors. A color chip identification such as "5P 5/10" effectively "digitizes" the unknown color. *Munsell Soil Color Charts* are still used at Craighead Laboratory to record the exact color of pottery sherds by finding the Munsell number of chips in the book that match. These numbers often appear in Florida Anthropologist articles, providing unambiguous digital information about artifact or soil colors.

Potentially, an image made by your digital camera can be analyzed in your computer to determine its Munsell color number. To do so, you need to include a known white area in the photo. The white background of the centimeter scale frequently included in archaeological artifact photos is often suitable. More about this later.

Digital data isn't new to archaeology. When we count otoliths, we digitize their number. When we put a hammer on a laboratory balance, we digitize its weight. Like crop and tax records in the Fertile Crescent scribed into clay, we are now sending our digitized archaeology data to CD-ROMs and through the Internet for accurate reproduction any time or where.

Send suggestions for topics to:jakharve@earthlink.net

FAS Membership

The Florida Anthropological Society (FAS) is open to persons interested in anthropology, archaeology, preservation of cultural resources and community education. Membership is made up of both professional and avocational archaeologists. Benefits of membership include the journal *The Florida Anthropologist*, the *FAS Newsletter* and participation in the annual meeting in May. More information and membership forms can be found on the web site www.fasweb.org or by writing to the Membership Secretary at P.O. Box 13191, Pensacola, FL 32591. Dues are: Student - $15; Regular and Institutional - $30; Family - $35; Sustaining - $100; Patron - $500; Benefactor - $2500 or more.

CGCAS Officers\Directors

President	Bob Austin	P.O. Box 2818, Riverview, FL 33568	(813)677-2280
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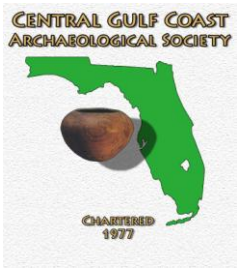
The Society

Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society (CGCAS) is an association of amateur and professional archaeologists and concerned citizens dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Florida's great cultural heritage. CGCAS is a chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society (FAS) and is a state chartered non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.



Central Gulf Coast
Archaeological Society
P.O. Box 1563,
Pinellas Park, FL 33780-1563

Membership

Membership is open to anyone with a sincere interest in the cultural past of Florida and who is dedicated to the understanding and preservation of that heritage

Amateurs, professionals and concerned citizens are welcomed as members. Membership is yearly and all dues are payable in January. Contact Karin Lovik 1225 Jeffords St., Apt 225A, Clearwater, FL.

Dues

Regular	$20.00
Student	10.00
Family	25.00
Life	150.00