

April 2011

FLORIDA PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY NETWORK WEST CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTER

Experience Archaeology

Celebrating Florida Archaeology Month! Focus on Native People, Native Plants

Rae Harper

March was Florida Archaeology Month and we traveled all over our region celebrating this year's theme Native People, Native Plants!

Our weekend events started in February with Discover Lake Manatee. We also celebrated with a couple of our FAS chapters—CGCAS at Weedon Island and Time Sifters at the New College Public Archaeology Lab—on the same weekend! Staff took part in the DeSoto Historical Society's 1st Learn About Florida History Day, the 7th Annual Pioneer Day and 2nd Bar-B-Que Rib Cook Off. Ybor City Museum State Park hosted the 1st Archaeology in the Park event (more on that in the article below). We finished off our Archaeology Month events in April at USF Botanical Garden's Annual Spring Plant Sale.

At each event we had a variety of activities for every age group to get some hands-on experience learning about the connection between native people and the plants they used from their environment. We had a memory game to play using our newly created Florida native plant deck of cards. They illustrate the many plants available in our state and some of the ways they were used for food, tools, dyes, and medicine. We also taught willing participants how to make cordage. A great big thank you to Michele Williams from our Southeast Region for sharing her Calusa Mask coloring page! It was a big hit with the younger children and gave us a chance to talk about the importance of artifact conservation.

Of course we also celebrated Florida Archaeology Month with area students. Staff spent two days at Sebring High School teaching students about interpretation and experimental archaeology through the popular atlatl and Mystery Cemetery activities. We visited Alonzo High School's archaeology class and were invited to hold an Archaeology Merit Badge clinic at MOSI.

We cannot thank everyone enough for volunteering their time and coming out to support all these events!

Archaeology in the Park at Ybor

Jeff Moates and Becky O'Sullivan

On Saturday, March 26, we joined up with the Florida Park Service at the Ybor City Museum State Park to host the first in a series of *Archaeology in the Park* events. March was Florida Archaeology Month, and this year the theme was Native Peoples, Native Plants. In keeping with this theme we decided to highlight not only the history of Ybor City, but also show what this community might have been like "B.C." (before cigars). By pairing an archaeological survey of the block with informational posters and educational activities throughout the Park's courtyard we hoped to get the message across that much still remains of Ybor City beneath the surface.

We're happy to report that Park Rangers and volunteers expressed loads of appreciation for the effort. In all, over 125 people showed up to our event throughout the day. The flow of curious onlookers and participants remained steady and even picked up during lunch hours. We had much for them to see with a series of 5 posters highlighting the specific history of the block where the State Park now sits as well as tables of activities related to Florida Archaeology Month. A native plant card game and cordage activity highlighted the ways Native peoples might have used plants in Ybor "B.C." while our Garbology activity helped visitors learn how to think like an archaeologist.

State Park volunteers added to the fun by setting up historic games for both kids and adults to enjoy. One of the highlights of the day was the State Park volunteers' bolita station. For those of you who've never heard of this Ybor City tradition, bolita was a gambling game popular with the local Latin community. You play by picking a number 1 - 99. Each number is also associated with a name, like a chicken, glasses, a funeral etc. Apparently, people used to pick their numbers based on what they dreamed about the night before. Each number is written on a ball, and the balls are then put in a bag. If your number gets drawn then you are the winner! Our lucky bolita players received FPAN prizes for picking the winning numbers.

In no hurry, we managed to complete just two shovel tests. However, the digging effort proved to be a big draw for the members of the public who really appreciated seeing an archaeology dig take place in the middle of an urban area. We learned that many of them hadn't ever thought that such a thing could occur. Shovel Test 1, located in the community garden area of the state park, and ST2, located along 18th street, resulted in completely different views of what's underneath the ground surface in this urban area.

In ST1, located in the garden behind one of the park's *casitas*, we uncovered a well thought-out drainage system of replaced silt, fill sand, landscape felt cloth, and gravel. No doubt, this is evidence of a site construction plan engineered in preparation for public access to the park. According to Park Ranger Alex, this activity most likely took place in the late 1970s but appeared more extensive than he envisioned.

ST2 resulted in more of what we expected to find. Right away, we encountered a midden that is reflective of a changing historic residential community. The assemblage consisted of a mix of demolition debris in layers of sand of varying shades of grey. Recovered artifacts, including pieces of ceramics, glass, brick fragments and other mostly building-related materials, dwindled in number in the lower layers.

All in all, the experience was great and proved that area residents, young and old, have a great interest in all things Ybor City related. Many thanks go to members of the Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society, a crew of USF applied anthropology graduate and undergraduate students, and Univ. of Florida anthropology student Debby Mullins for participating in the event. They all provided great help in the outreach and shovel testing activities.

In the next few weeks we're planning to open a couple more shovel test units in other areas of the park as outlined in our research design. Keep an eye out on facebook and twitter for when we'll be down in Ybor again taking peeks into the ground. The thrill of discovery is expecting to find one thing but instead running into something completely unexpected! That's what's great about working in a place like Ybor. We never know what we'll find, or what long-time Ybor resident we will run into who will impart new details about what may have occurred on that city block 50 or 75 years ago.

I'm Mayor of WCRC!

Zaida Darley

As a public archaeologist, I have to know what interests the public and try to use that interest to promote archaeology. Since my focus is archaeotourism, I wanted to see how the latest trend could be used to engage the public with archaeology. The trend for the moment is smart phones and the myriad of applications (apps). I am testing out two apps, Foursquare and SCVNGR, to see how they can increase visits to cultural resources in the West Central Region Center (WCRC) and how engaged the public can become with the help of these apps. The goal is to see how effective these apps are in engaging people with archaeology.

If you are not familiar with these smart phone applications, Foursquare and SCVNGR are geographically-centered social media. Generally how it works is that you go to a location, the app uses the GPS-enhancements of your smart phone to locate your position, then you press a "check-in" button at the appropriate address. This action rewards you with points and you can earn more points by taking pictures with your smart phone, or saying something about the place. Some apps have challenges to up your total points even more. The more points you earn, the more badges and rewards you get. In Foursquare, you can also become mayor of your favorite places! So, what's the point to all this?

The Foursquare website states that it "gives you & your friends new ways to explore your city," while SCVNGR is advertised as "a game all about going places, doing challenges and earning points." Both apps are encouraging people to get creative about exploring new places. Checking into a new category gets you more points. For example, if you have never visited a museum then you get bonus points for that. So, the idea isn't to just go to the same place over and over again but to try to diversify your "exploration portfolio" (copyrights to this term are sole property of Zaida Darley). So I thought I could test out people's wanderlust. Since my focus is site-seeing, I decided to test these apps out on FPAN events and our archaeotourism projects.

I added the FPAN WCRC office location to Foursquare and SCVNGR. I am proud to brag that I am now the mayor of FPAN WCRC, and with my new leadership role I plan to...um, I guess continue going to work and checking in since I have no power. Wait, I think I can get Super Mayor status or something, maybe then I can cause change. In the meantime, I will see how many people will go through the trouble of coming to our office. The first challenge is finding the place because we are tucked away in the "time-out" corner of USF...and yes, we are still on campus property. Don't let anyone convince you otherwise.

You can also check-out, or should I say "check-in," to our events. In SCVNGR, if I am at an event then we can do a social check-in for extra points. We have to bring phones to get the points and the phones seek each other's location... I'm kinda freaking myself out talking about this stuff.

As for engaging the public with these apps, I have some concerns. For example, I used these apps during the USF Botanical Garden Spring Sale in April. We had a table tucked away in a quiet corner of the garden, so to drum up business I checked-in to the location and encouraged people to visit the FPAN table. During the process of checking-in to Facebook, SCVNGR, and Foursquare, I found myself becoming disengaged from the actual event. During that time, at least five people came and left the table. Rae and I were both at this event so no one was ignored but I noticed how my attention was taken away. This also happens with Twitter, or just plain texting.

So how much time can someone invest in these apps before it sacrifices interaction with people present? Also, how engaging are these apps? No one came to the table even though I could see that about a dozen people had checked-in. I don't know why people were not acknowledging their presence. This happens at other places as well. For example, a friend that owns a café has his place on Foursquare and offers free drinks by just mentioning that you saw the place on the app. Within the last six months, I was the second person to make this acknowledgement even though my friend could see that people were in fact checking in. So these apps may encourage people to visit new places but not exactly encourage social engagement with new people (unless you make that part of the challenge). Which is kind of ironic if this is social media.

So I begin my social media experiment with excitement and concerns. I will keep people updated on the blog as to the progress of my experiment. And hope that I give up my mayor's crown because of the popularity and effectiveness of this new trend.

Looking for camps for kids?

Several venues offer camps for Spring Break and summer to teach children about Florida history and culture!

[Tampa Bay History Center](#)

[Boyd Hill Nature Preserve](#)

[Weedon Island Preserve](#)

[Historic Spanish Point](#)

(Let me know if you have another for this list so we can share the information, crharper@cas.usf)



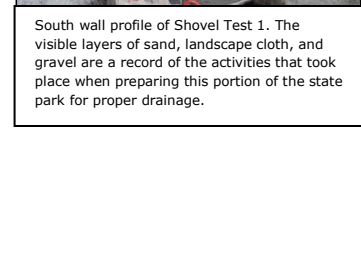
We staged posters and educational activities in the courtyard. The Ybor City Museum State Park is a great place for events.



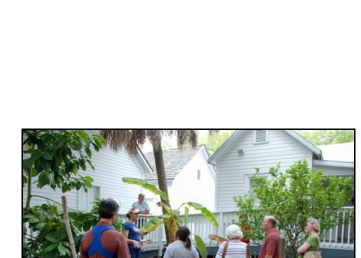
Event attendees wait to hear their numbers called at the bolita game station.



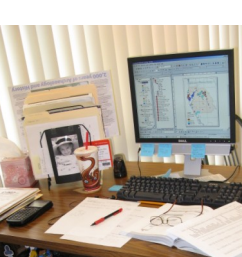
South wall profile of Shovel Test 1. The visible layers of sand, landscape cloth, and gravel are a record of the activities that took place when preparing this portion of the state park for proper drainage.



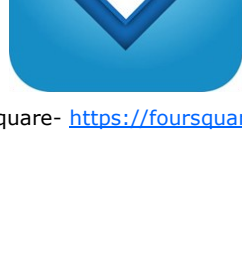
Univ. of Florida anthropology student, Debby Mullins, explains our testing strategy at Shovel Test 1 located in the community garden area of the park.



The Mayor of FPAN's West Central office, Zaida Darley, checking into Foursquare.



Foursquare- <https://foursquare.com>



SCVNGR - <http://www.scvng.com>

Related Links:

[Celebrating Foursquare Day in Tampa, Saturday, April 16th](#)

[MSU's Campus Archaeology Program is on Foursquare](#)

Upcoming Events—April, May, June 2011

For more information and a complete listing, please visit our web site's [Events Page](#)

*Guided hikes available at Weedon Island Preserve, Saturday mornings from 9-11am
Ranger hiked kayak tours at DeSoto National Memorial Park, weekend mornings 9:30—11:30am*

- April 25-29: [Spring Break Camp, Spring into the Saddle](#), Tampa Bay History Center
For kids 8-11, \$135 for members, \$150 for non-members
- April 25-29: [Spring Break aboard the American Victory Ship](#), Channelside
Free admission for Hillsborough County students under 12 with paid adult
- April 28: [3rd Annual Take Our Daughters & Sons to Work Day Event!](#), USF Tampa Campus
USF employees bring their children to experience all USF has to offer!
- May 6-8: [63rd Annual Meeting of the Florida Anthropological Society](#), Orlando
Presentations and posters by center staff on Saturday, May 7th!
- May 18: [Dialogues with Florida's Past](#), Sarasota
Archaeology and the Preservation of History: Speakers John McCarthy (Parks and Recreation, Sarasota County) and Dr. Barbara J. Little (University of Maryland)
- May 20-22: [2011 Florida Marine Science Educators Association Conference](#), Jacksonville
FPAN will be sharing information on underwater archaeology and activities
- May 21: [Wild Florida - Prehistoric Florida](#), Weedon Island Preserve
Learn about megafauna and fossils with a hands-on activity
- May 22: [Florida Conversations Lecture Series](#), Tampa Bay History Center
Thunder on the River: The Civil War in NE Florida, Daniel L. Schafer
- June 16: [Florida Conversations Lecture Series](#), Tampa Bay History Center
Florida: A Target-Rich Environment for Writers, Tim Dorsey
- June 27—July 1: [Archaeology Adventures, Summer Camp](#), Tampa Bay History Center
For kids 8-11, \$135 for members, \$150 for non-members

Contact us:

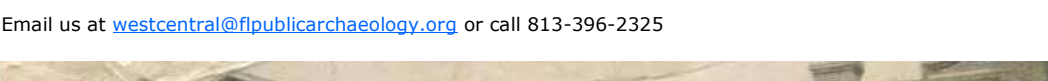
Florida Public Archaeology Network
West Central Regional Center
University of South Florida
4202 E. Fowler Ave., NEC 116, Tampa, FL 33620-6758
Phone: 813-396-2325
Fax: 813-396-2326

Jeff Moates, Director
(jmoates@usf.edu)

Rae Harper, Outreach Coordinator
(crharper@usf.edu)

Zaida Darley, Outreach Specialist
(zdarley@mail.usf.edu)

Connect with us:



To remove your name from our mailing list, questions or comments?
Email us at westcentral@flpublicarchaeology.org or call 813-396-2325

