Working with MacArthur
by Malcolm Wells

The following is an excerpt from an article written by Malcolm Wells and published in the Labor Day, 2006 issue of the Cape Cod Voice. It is published with the permission of the author and Seth Rolbein, Editor of the Cape Cod Voice. The Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park extends its sincere appreciation to Mr. Wells and Rolbein for their kindness.

Billionaires today seem to be almost a dime a dozen, but 40 years ago there were said to be only two or three of them. I met one of the three, John MacArthur, in the early 1960s. All I had ever heard of him was the word “billionaire.” He was said to have come out of the Depression as a Chicago insurance salesman.

You have to sell a lot of insurance to pocket a billion dollars. Here he was in his mid-sixties, living in a modest bungalow on a side street in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. And there I was, about to knock on his green-painted screen door. Parked at the curb was his big Cadillac. I had no idea what it would be like to meet one of the richest men in America. It was 1962 and I was 36 years old.

My knock was answered by a woman who introduced herself as “Catherine.” She led me into the living room where half a dozen men sat in an informal circle of chairs facing a man, who, it became clear, was John MacArthur.

“Here’s Mr. Wells,” she said, turning to leave the room. MacArthur’s response was, “Bring in another plate of that smoked swordfish, Catherine.”

MacArthur was holding court, as he did most mornings, either at a local restaurant or at his house. As various supplicants came and went, I was surprised to see that even the latest arrivals called him “John,” not Mr. MacArthur, in what I took to be pathetically transparent attempts to show that his fabled wealth hadn’t unduly impressed them.

I was an architect from New Jersey. My client, RCA, had made some sort of deal with MacArthur for the construction of a computer facturing plant to be built on part of his vast

Continued on page 5.
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Another Successful NatureScaping Event

By Art Carton, Park Services Specialist

On March 29, over 1,900 visitors attended the Park’s 12th Annual NatureScaping event. For the third year in a row, the Great American Cleanup was included as part of the event. Approximately 100 people scoured the 1.6 miles of MacArthur Beach. At the end of the day, the trash that was collected filled a full size trash dumpster.

This year’s NatureScaping event included 55 vendors and exhibitors, educational speakers, live animal shows, eco-crafts, and music. A kid’s activity—designed by Park Services Specialist, Kathryn Rothenburg—included a passport book with information and logos of six different exhibitors at the event, where kids had their passport books stamped. When all six stamps were collected, they were given a toy turtle.

Along with the always popular live animal shows presented by the Palm Beach Zoo and Busch Wildlife, new vendors and exhibitors included the Resource Depot of West Palm Beach, who had a booth to learn the importance of reusing and recycling; the Palm Beach County Beekeepers Association had a live observation hive and told visitors about the importance of these winged pollinators.

There also were educational talks on Florida-friendly plants, dune restoration, and reptiles. For shoppers, the silent auction had many great deals, including gift certificates, artwork and native plants. At the end of the day, proceeds from the silent auction totaled over $3,400. Thanks to all the local businesses and volunteers who donated items to the auction.

I trust that everyone had a great time at the event and learned something, as well. Park staff and volunteers hope to see everyone back next year. And don’t forget that every day is Earth Day!
Leni Bane Named Environmental Champion

by Art Carton, Park Services Specialist

Leni Bane was honored with the Environmental Champion Award at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park on Saturday, March 29 at 1:00 p.m. during the Earth Day celebration event—NatureScaping 2008.

A passionate proponent of the environment and environmental education, Leni Bane has a long history of public service in Palm Beach County. She was president of the Junior League of the Palm Beaches in 1983. In November 1989, when MacArthur Beach State Park opened, she began working as a Park Ranger and was the first director of the Nature Center. Her influence on the Park and the school children of Palm Beach County was felt immediately. Leni organized and started the school program and summer camp to be implemented at the Park. Both programs are still in use today reaching over 4,000 students annually. Along with Marjorie Gordon, she compiled the Marine Education Resource Bibliography, still in use at the Park and in the school system. Leni co-authored, with Alex Marsh, Life Along the Mangrove Shore, a principal resource for environmental educators in Palm Beach County.

Volunteering is another passion of Mrs. Bane. In 1991, she was awarded the Davis Productivity Award for devising the largest, most comprehensive volunteer program in the Florida State Park System. She is past president and still serves on the Board of Directors of The Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park. She is also the immediate past president of the Nature Foundation.

Leni Bane established and continues to edit The Dune News, the quarterly newsletter for the Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park. Leni is also an active beekeeper and educates the public about the importance of these pollinators.

Leni’s words and actions have touched generations and influenced many to have a positive impact on the environment in Palm Beach County.

60/40 Raffle to Benefit New Educational Ctr.

by Cheryl Houghtelin

Dear Supporter of John D. MacArthur Beach State Park:

The Capital Campaign has raised a little over $1,230,000 of the $2,000,000 needed to begin construction on the new Education and Welcome Center and new Interpretive Exhibits for the Nature Center. Our goal is to raise the remaining $770,000 by the end of September of this year.

Please help us reach our goal by supporting our 64/40 Raffle. Buy your tickets on the Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park website, using your credit card or PayPal: www.macarthurbeach.org/capitalkampaign/raffle.php.

Ticket donations are $10 each or 3 for $25. The more tickets sold, the closer we will be to our goal, and the bigger the “Winner’s Pot” will grow.

Sixty percent of the proceeds will go to the Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park Capital Campaign; 40% of the proceeds will be divided between 3 winners. Our goal is $100,000 worth of tickets donated. This means $20,000 for 1st place; $12,000 for 2nd place; and $8,000 for 3rd place!

The drawing will occur at 5:00 p.m. on June 18, 2008 at the Nature Center. Winners need not be present; notification will be by phone and mail.

For more info about this raffle and the Capital Campaign, visit our Website: www.macarthurbeach.org/capitalkampaign/cc.php; or contact:

Cheryl Houghtelin,
Director of Community Relations
John D. MacArthur Beach State Park
10900 Jack Nicklaus Drive
North Palm Beach, Florida 33408
(561) 776-7221
cheryl@macarthurbeach.org
Working with MacArthur

Gab of the Gifts

A hoy! The fleet is in! Fourteen brand-new kayaks are in the water and ready for rental. Kayak rentals were only slightly higher than in 2006, as were sales in the gift shop. The economy and lower tourism accounted for these small increases. We are looking forward to a much bigger Gift Shop year in 2008. We will keep you posted on our plans.

Avoid the Rush; Buy Your Raffle Tickets Now. The 60/40 Raffle tickets to benefit the Capital Campaign are available in the Gift Shop. Tickets are $10 each or 3 for $25.

The 20% Off Sale Is Here! From May 1-30, members of The Friends of MacArthur Beach, Volunteers, and Staff are entitled to a 20% discount on all purchases in the Gift Shop. This excludes however, kayak rentals, State Park Passports, and raffle tickets.

Membership News: Friends Memberships now total more than 500! Thanks to Donna and the weekend crew, headed by Debra Coyle, for their enthusiasm and hard work.

Miscellany: We have a new credit card machine in the Gift Shop. It makes the ringing of credit sales much faster. Please shop and see the speed with which we can ring up your sale!

Marty

Gift Shop Guru, Administrator, Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park

All profits from the gift shop go to the Park to support the programs and activities that you, your family and your friends enjoy all year long.
Think what you could do with [all those millions] instead of playing with these two-bit projects.

After the RCA job was completed, my stops in Florida were few. Now and then I would get a call from John MacArthur asking me to come down and talk with someone who had just bought some of the Palm Beach Garden land and needed architectural advice. On such trips I would seldom do more than get a local architect started and then turn it over to him. I’d never leave, though, without doing my talk on the environmental crisis. By the mid-sixties my focus was increasingly on earth-covered construction. Its benefits were so rich I had trouble—then and now—understanding why they were so seldom recognized.

Most of my travels were to architectural schools where I lectured to eager students (and unconvincing professors) about the glories of earth-shelter. I was drifting away from the man I’d always called “Mr. MacArthur.” But I did see him one more time. He was into his seventies by then and asked me to stop by on my way home from a Georgia Tech lecture trip.

There he was, diddling with two-bit construction matters on a new motel, still involved in details about color schemes or what to name the place. I was happy to see that he now had Catherine involved and listened to her advice. But I had to smile seeing a big Cadillac parked at the curb—some things never change.

I was then a true believer in underground design. It was what I called gentle architecture. The environmental movement was getting started and an Arab oil embargo had politicians hoping to find alternatives to our wasteful ways. The crisis passed before long, and conservation was largely forgotten but it had evidently moved John MacArthur. He even sat still for my usual scolding talk of energy waste and land destruction. Before, it had rolled off his back, but now I could see he was really concerned. We got into it for an hour or so.

“All those millions, Mr. MacArthur. Think what you could do with them instead of playing with these two-bit projects.”

Maybe I had shut up in time, for a change. In any case it was obvious that I had at last touched this canny old man.

When we shook hands for the last time it seemed that he held on for an extra beat or two. Then I was off into my own world again.

I’d occasionally wonder about John—and Catherine—MacArthur but in time they were forgotten until I heard an NPR broadcast that had been sponsored by a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. You can imagine my surprise when I heard, a few weeks later, that the foundation was giving away $500,000 grants for all kinds of good works.

It was a perfect ending to my MacArthur adventure. It’s why I smile every time I hear those two names. Even though they come from my radio, I can see my MacArthur years in full living color.
## Events

### UP-N-COMING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td><em>Introduction to Kayaking</em> by Adventure Times Kayaks</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Yoga on the Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>7-9 p.m.</td>
<td>MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert: <em>Mary Flower, Blues Music</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Birding at MacArthur Park</td>
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<td>1-5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Yoga on the Beach</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Butterfly Walk</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Recreational Skills: <em>Beach Ultimate Frisbee</em></td>
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### APRIL

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<tr>
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<td><em>Introduction to Kayaking</em> by Adventure Times Kayaks</td>
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<td>04</td>
<td>1-2 p.m.</td>
<td>Recreational Skills: <em>Introduction to Snorkeling</em></td>
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<td>08</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Yoga on the Beach</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Butterfly Walk</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Recreational Skills: <em>Introduction to Snorkeling</em></td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>1-2 p.m.</td>
<td>Volunteer Orientation</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>7-9 p.m.</td>
<td>MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert: <em>Band TBA</em></td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Recreational Skills: <em>Introduction to Snorkeling</em></td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>1-5 p.m.</td>
<td>Bluegrass Music</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Recreational Skills: <em>Cast Netting</em></td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Recreational Skills: <em>Introduction to Snorkeling</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>10-Noon</td>
<td>Guided Reed Tour; Reservations Required</td>
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<td>1-3 p.m.</td>
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*Every Weekend at 11:00 a.m.: Animal Feeding in the Nature Center*
*Every Sunday at 3:00 p.m.: Snake Talk in the Nature Center*
Summer Camps at MacArthur Beach State Park

**Little Turtle Art Camp**  
June 23-27, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.  
Little Turtle Art Camp is designed for children 7 and 8 years old. The camp offers a variety of crafts, games and stories based on a Native American theme. Indoors and outdoors. Snacks will be provided daily. Cost: $80

**Junior Ranger Camp**  
Session 1: June 9-13, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.  
Session 2: June 16-20, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.  
Junior Ranger Camp is designed for children 9 and 10 years old. Campers will explore the beach, maritime hammock, and rock reef in the park and learn about the natural communities in South Florida. Children must be good swimmers. Snorkel equipment is required. Snacks will be provided daily. Cost: $80 per session, one session per child.

**Marine Biology Camp**  
Session 1: June 30-July 4, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.  
Session 2: July 7-11, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.  
Marine Biology Camp offers 11 through 13 year old children a rare opportunity to learn about the marine environment of the park through snorkeling, beach exploration and mudflat walking. Campers must come with an enthusiasm for learning, willingness to explore, and be good swimmers who are comfortable swimming in the ocean. Snorkel equipment will be required. Snacks will be provided daily. Cost: $95 per session, one session per child.

These camps fill up quickly, so register now! For more information call Art Car- ton: (561) 624-6952.