The Right Way to Start the Year

by: Scott Duncan, Park Ranger

It was a gorgeous, sunny new year’s morning at the park and I was taking a quick break on the crossover to gaze at the beautiful Atlantic Ocean. Suddenly, something caught my eye a few hundred feet from shore. I saw water spraying high into the air and a dark shape in the water. My first thought was, of course, dolphins. I kept my eyes peeled and I saw the shape again a minute later. I could not believe my eyes; it was a whale! I quickly ran down onto the beach and began to follow the giant mammal as it swam south. I watched the whale as it came up for air several times and I noticed the distinctive V-shaped blow of the North Atlantic Right Whale, a very rare whale indeed. I continued to follow this magnificent creature and witnessed it do a couple of dives and watched as it raised its hefty fluke high into the air. “I can’t believe I’m seeing this!” shouted the voice in my head. I stayed with the whale for about 45 minutes before it started swimming further out to sea and became more difficult to track. At this point I realized I had wandered all the way to the front of the condos south of the park. And so it was with much reluctance, I started my journey back.

Adults are usually between 35-60 feet in length and weigh between 60-80 tons. At birth calves are usually between 13-20 feet and weigh about a ton. North Atlantic Right Whales can be identified by the lack of a dorsal fin and the V-shaped blow, caused because the whale has two separate blow holes. Individuals are identified by callosities, roughened patches of skin on the head that appears white and are unique to each individual whale.

To give you some idea of the magnitude of my sighting, the North Atlantic Right Whale (Eubalaena glacialis) is one of the most endangered of all whales with an estimated population of 300-400. The North Atlantic Right Whale is in the family Balaenidae which includes 3 species of Right Whales and the bowhead whale. The family got its name because of the baleen plates in the mouth which it uses to filter its food, mainly plankton and krill. During summer months they live and feed off the coast of New England and Canada, especially the Bay of Fundy. During the winter females migrate south off the coasts of Georgia and North Florida to birth their calves. It is not known where the rest of the population migrates during the winter months. They rarely travel this far south.

The common name “Right Whale” was given in the early days of whaling. It was so called because it was the “right” whale to kill because it was slow swimming, stayed relatively close to

continued on page 3
Friends and Members

With our auspicious ‘Right Way’ to start the New Year, I would be remiss if I did not look back on our past achievements and thank some of those responsible. Congratulations are in order for the members of the Capital Campaign Cabinet with special thanks going out to Cheryl Houghtelin. As the former Director of Community Relations for the Friends of John D. MacArthur Beach State Park, Cheryl worked tirelessly in helping to secure the money that enabled us to reach our goal of acquiring an improved Education and Welcome Center and new Natural Science Education Center. Cheryl’s efforts, combined with her sincere warmth and genuine affection for the Park, will stay etched in the thoughts and hearts of Park Staff and Friends Members. While we thank her and wish her luck in all of her new endeavors, we know that Cheryl will always be a part of the Park. Looking forward, we wish to welcome our new Director of Community Relations, Denise Burnside. Denise brings her own special knowledge to the role and will continue with efforts to find every opportunity to showcase the beauty of the Park to the everyday public and to help find ways to further our Endowment Fund so that we may continue to develop the ever-changing potential of the park.

Another special thank you goes out to Vice-President of the Friends Board, Stephanie Pew. It is Stephanie’s endless drive and spirit that is bringing the dream of the new Natural Science Education Center to fruition. Stephanie has heroically chaired our Events Committee throughout the Capital Campaign to present, and is currently working on events to increase our visibility and funding for our Endowment Fund. Without Stephanie, we would not be celebrating the ground breaking ready to take place in the next couple of months.

It is through insightful, hard work and sincere dedication to John D. MacArthur State Park that we will continue to teach and preserve, to enhance and develop and to nurture and inspire present and future generations to come.

Thank you all.

Rebecca G. Doane
President

FRIENDS OF MACARTHUR BEACH STATE PARK, INC.
Membership Application
A not-for-profit Citizens Support Organization

- Benefactor…$500+
- Patron…$499-$100
- Family…$75
- Individual…$40

Name(s): M ____________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________ City, State, Zip: ____________________________

Phone: _____________________________ Email: _____________________________

Please send this application along with your check or credit card information to:
Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park, Inc.
10900 Jack Nicklaus Drive
North Palm Beach, FL 33408

Or join through the web site - www.macarrobturheach.org
For more information regarding the “Friends” please call 561.776.7449.
An Evening of **Ragtime and Dixieland Jazz**

**February 19th, 2010 at 7:30pm.**
World renowned Ragtime Pianist Bob Milne will perform at the PBCC Eissey Campus.

Tickets are $25.00, $35.00 and $50.00 for Preferred Orchestra Seating including post-performance Meet The Artist reception.

Phone the PBCC Ticket Office at 561-207-5900 for reservations or phone the Friends Office at 561-776-7221.

Don’t miss this once in a lifetime performance while helping the Park preserve its resources for present and future generations.

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**Thinking Globally and Acting Locally**
*By Ranger Rob Matriscino*

When I hear the statement ‘Thinking Globally and Acting Locally’, I always think “how can we apply this to John D. MacArthur Beach State Park”? There are many ways that our actions, by park staff, volunteers, or the park visitors can and do to make a difference in the bigger picture.

You may notice larger and increased numbers of blue recycle bins around the park in different spots. We are trying to increase the amount of bottles and cans that we are recycling, while trying to make it easier to participate in recycling here at the park. By doing this we are putting less into the landfill and using fewer plastic bags, which in turn reduces our spending on bags. And boy can those funds be used on other uses for the park! For some time, we only had two monofilament fishing line recycling tubes mounted out on Burnt Bridge (located on A1A). The park has added two more recycling tubes within our park for those using the estuary off our parking lot, and those using the beach as a fishing area. Hopefully more discarded fishing line ends up in the recycling tubes to be used for some other product, rather than being ingested by a bird or some other animal with often fatal results.

Another area which the park has become greener is by making sure we are reducing our power consumption, by adjusting thermostats when buildings are unoccupied and installing energy efficient lighting wherever possible. We also practice powering down lights and computers when not needed and vehicle ride sharing whenever possible.

Other ‘green’ actions that I have noticed that has seemed to have ‘rubbed off’ on others is the use of more metal drink bottles instead of single use water bottles by staff and volunteers. We all know how bad plastic bottles are for the environment. You may have also seen one of the park’s most frequent visitors. I’ll refer to him as ‘beach Mike.’ He is constantly keeping sections of the beach clean and will often collect trash from the beach using shopping bags. If he doesn’t have any bags he will make neat piles for us when we come by on our ATV gator. A big Park Thanks! to him for leaving the beach better than when he got there. And just to add how important to the wildlife it is to have a litter-free beach; just the other day on my way out of the water after surfing I noticed a shorebird trying to eat a piece of Styrofoam cup. The shorebird was unsuccessful and therefore able to fly another day. The bird was unsuccessful because I made sure that particular piece of Styrofoam ended up in its proper place…the ‘garbage’. We can all make a difference if we simply try, especially here at MacArthur Beach.

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**The Right Way continued**

shore, and because of the thick, valuable layer of blubber they usually stayed afloat after they were killed. The whales were not only killed for their blubber Right Whales were hunted commercially along the United States until the 20th century when the species was considered too few to hunt and therefore, commercially extinct. The Right whale were finally protected from hunting in 1935. The whaling industry is the main reason for the low population count today.

What a wonderful experience and a truly magnificent sign of hope for the New Year!

If you spot a whale you are urged to call 1-888-97-WHALE
Manager Matters

The Florida Park Service tends to favor a soft-sell approach when it comes to promoting the great recreational and educational opportunities available throughout Florida. That seems appropriate given the nature of what we do. Well, this year may be a bit different. This year the Florida Park Service celebrates its 75th anniversary and I think it’s perfectly justifiable if we take the opportunity to show off just a bit.

In recognition of the 75th anniversary of the Florida Park Service, Governor Charlie Crist and the Florida Cabinet recently signed a resolution recognizing 2010 as the Year of Florida State Parks. In his comments about this milestone, Governor Crist said “Florida State Parks not only preserve our state’s beautiful natural environment, but also contribute billions of dollars to state and local economies, and promote tourism to our great state. During the last fiscal year, Florida State Parks had an economic impact of nearly $1 billion and served more than 21.4 million visitors, illustrating the importance of these natural treasures to Florida’s residents, visitors, and wildlife, as well as beaches, waterways, and forests that Florida State Parks protect.”

Florida State Parks are also the first and only two-time National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Gold Medal winners. The Gold Medal is awarded to the state park system voted best in the nation by the NRPA.

When we consider all that Florida State Parks have to offer in terms of recreation, education, facilities, and programming, it would be hard to overstate the value of Florida’s State Parks. Where else, for fees ranging from $2.00 to $8.00, can we go to enjoy a full day of swimming, snorkeling, fishing, hiking, kayaking, nature watching, park programs (more than 14,000 statewide last year!), and so much more? Florida State Parks also offer more than 3,400 campsites and 260 cabins for those looking for a more in-depth nature experience.

Finally, when trying to judge our success we can’t forget our incredible volunteers. What better indicator of the importance of Florida State Parks than the desire of our residents and visitors to volunteer their time, energy, and skills in support of our 160 parks? Last year alone volunteers contributed more than 1.2 million hours of service. To me, more than anything else, that’s the kind of recognition that says Florida State Parks are vital to the State of Florida.

Don Bergeron
Park Ranger

Volunteer Spotlight

Get to Know –
Lu Dodson

Volunteer Full Name:
Lu Ellen Dodson

Job Assignments:
Animal Care
Interpretation
Nature Walks
School Tours
Continuing Education
Program Development
Anything that needs done

Occupation:
Full time RVer for 11 years, National Park Ranger in the summers

Special Interest:
Animals in general
Biology
Bicycling and Hiking

Birth Place:
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Years in Florida:
21

How long have you been here at MacArthur:
This will be my 3rd season

Favorite part of MacArthur:
North Beach Area

Looking forward to:
Working with some of the best people in one of the prettiest places around!

Diane Somerville
Volunteer

During my volunteer work at the park, I have witnessed many wonderful happenings but New Year’s Day on the beach tops the list. Mindful of New Year’s resolution to exercise, I was on a vigorous hike on the beach headed North. Just as I got to the curve before Lost Tree heading back, one of the fellows who was out near the dune was on his feet and pointing out to sea, “Look, a whale!” There to my left, I saw this marvelous creature clear the water line as he sped South. Immediately, we started to count, thinking that in 100 seconds we would see the whale come up again for a voluntary breath. We weren’t disappointed when we saw a spout of water rushing out of the blowhole. With the backdrop of the ocean, it was a beautiful sight. The whale was delightful to watch as he surfaced two more times almost as if to entertain the morning beach goers. Two days later, Ranger Scott told me that it was a Right Whale and that there were only 200-300 in the world. This knowledge made the sighting all the more special and gave me cause to reflect on how lucky were to witness this event and to have a park where the environment is preserved for future generations.

Diane Somerville
Volunteer
**NatureScaping Event**

On April 10, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m., the park is hosting the 15th annual NatureScaping event, “a green celebration.” Since 1996, the free event has been educating people on the importance of the use of Florida Native Plants in the residential landscape. This year the event will not only focus on promoting the use of native plants but also on educating people on how to live a greener and more sustainable life. The event is also highlighting the 75th anniversary of the Florida Park Service and their history in promoting a “greener” Florida.

To kick off this year’s event the Native American dance group, the Hitchiti Dancers will be performing in the amphitheater at 11 a.m. If you were lucky enough to see this youth dance group perform at Pioneer Day, you will tell your friends that they are a must see. Each dance is performed in traditional dress, while the history of that dance is told by a narrator. If animals are your special interest, then come and watch Busch Wildlife Sanctuary perform a live animal show at 1:30 p.m. with an alligator, barred owl and some of their other animal friends. While you are up by the Nature Center, don’t forget to visit the theater and check out our guest speakers at noon and 2:30 p.m. This year’s speakers include both locally and nationally known experts talking on the use and construction of green roofs and landscaping with Florida native plants to attract wildlife to your backyard.

After you listen to one of our speakers, walk amongst the vendors, where you can buy anything from local artwork to rain barrels. Also, remember to speak with the exhibitors and learn about prescribed burning, how to control invasive exotic species and how to protect our oceans. Back by popular demand, the Conch Stomp Band will be leading an all day music jam amongst the exhibitors. Before leaving the event, don’t forget to stop by the silent auction tent and help to support our educational programs by bidding on one of this year’s donated items. Last year’s event raised over $8,000, which helped MacArthur Beach State Park educate over 3,000 school children. Some of the donations up for bid at the silent auction will be on display in the Nature Center Theater beginning in March. A few of last year’s most sought after auction items were a surfboard, kayaks and local artwork.

The Park doesn’t lose sight of why the event was started and will again feature one of the largest collections of hard to find Florida native plants for sale, plus a walk thru demonstration butterfly garden. Children can stop by the kid’s pavilion and enjoy making necklaces and dream catchers, while getting their face painted or listening to storytellers.

In 2010 everyone will be asked to think and act “greener” than ever before. Believe it or not, attending NatureScaping will help you to become a “greener” citizen of our planet Earth. Every one of us can make a difference by taking home a Florida native plant or by joining one of our exhibitors in protecting our beautiful resources. Mark April 10 on your calendar and bring the whole family down for an educational, entertaining and inspiring day.

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Doane & Doane, PA  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

**wish to congratulate**

*Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park*

on a successful ‘Bark in the Park’ event.

**Many ‘Yappy’ Returns of the Day**
The Gray in the Green.
The foxes of MacArthur Beach, by Patrick Rash

Sometimes, on one of your hikes on the nature trails, you may catch a glimpse of a bottle brush tail quickly passing by the underbrush. You have just been fortunate enough to catch sight of a Gray Fox. The foxes of MacArthur beach are Gray Foxes, Urocyon cinereoargenteus. The Gray foxes in this area are small; adults usually range from 8 to 15 pounds. Sometimes, confused with the Red Fox which is not native to the park, it is also known as the red sided gray. The Grey Fox can also be referred to as the “tree-fox” as they can scramble up small trees in search of food or to evade predators. They are the only canine in North America that can do this feat! The Gray Fox grasps the tree with its front paws and uses long curved claws on its rear feet to push them up. Once in the tree, the fox can jump from limb to limb in pursuit of prey or to use it as a perch to ambush from above.

The Gray Fox is an opportunistic predator and or to use it as a perch to ambush from above. It will answer your questions!

The Grey Fox are timid and shy. If the Gray Fox knows you are around, they will avoid you at all cost. If they don’t shy away from you, there could be something wrong; like disease or being fed and conditioned by humans. This type of behavior can be dangerous and should be reported to the Ranger Station in the park or the Fish and Wildlife Commission elsewhere. If you happen to see one in the park consider yourself very lucky, stay still and observe this elusive creature in its natural habitat.

The Grey Fox is a nocturnal animal and predates a variety of small mammals and birds. They are also known to eat small reptiles, amphibians, and insects. In other areas foxes face habitat loss, pollution, domestic dogs, coyotes, and larger predators like the Florida panther and of course, man.

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## Up and Coming Activities

### February

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Yoga on the Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Birding at MacArthur Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Learn to Kayak by Adventure Times Kayaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Reading With A Ranger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Bluegrass Music Jam</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Volunteer Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Yoga on the Beach</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Recreational Skills: Introduction to Kayak Fishing</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1:40 p.m.</td>
<td>Bluegrass Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert</td>
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</tbody>
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### March

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Yoga on the Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Learn to Kayak by Adventure Times Kayaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1:40 p.m.</td>
<td>Bluegrass Music Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Volunteer Orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Recreational Skills: Introduction to Surfing</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Yoga on the Beach</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>F.U.N. Program: Seaside Treasures</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1:40 p.m.</td>
<td>Bluegrass Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Birding at MacArthur Park</td>
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### April

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<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Yoga on the Beach</td>
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<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Butterfly Walk</td>
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<td>04</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Learn to Kayak by Adventure Times Kayaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10:40 p.m.</td>
<td>NatureScaping 2010, “A Green Celebration”, Free entry all day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Volunteer Orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Yoga on the Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>8:00 a.m. - Noon</td>
<td>Great American Cleanup</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
<td>1:40 p.m.</td>
<td>Bluegrass Music</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Birding at MacArthur Park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Daily Guided Nature Walks** at 10:00 a.m., also an 11:00 a.m. walk on Saturdays
- **Every Weekend Animal Feeding** in the Nature Center at 11:00 a.m.
- **Every Sunday at 3:00 p.m. Snake Talk** in the Nature Center followed by a snake feeding

### Activity Details

- **Birding** - Learn the names, characteristics and behaviors of the common and rare wading birds that browse the exposed mud flats at low tide.
- **Bluegrass** - Music Listen to some of the best bluegrass music in South Florida; Nathan Rich and Friends will be playing bluegrass music in the amphitheater.
- **Bluegrass Music Jam** - Join us for foot-stompin bluegrass music in the amphitheater. Acoustic musicians are welcome to join in and jam.
- **Butterfly Walk** - Join a staff naturalist on a mile long walk identifying the butterflies that inhabit the park. Reservations recommended.
- **Estuary Exploration** - Explore the Park’s estuary up close and personal! Participants will get wet and dirty, please wear closed-toe shoes and shorts. For ages 8 years old and up, reservations required.
- **F.U.N. Program, Families Understanding Nature: Seaside Treasures** - Explore the beach, identifying and searching for various shells, drift seeds, plants and more. Great for children and families; reservations required.
- **Learn to Kayak** - Adventure Times Kayaks teach the basic skills necessary to safely enjoy the exciting sport of kayaking; instruction on land only. Reservations required.
- **MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert Series** - Join us for a magical night of music; gates open at 6:00 p.m. Concert 7:90 p.m. with a fifteen minute intermission at 8:00 with stargazing on the boardwalk. $5.00 per person; members and children under the age of 10 are free.
- **Pioneer Day** - Join us for a trip back to the era of Henry Flagler and the Barefoot Mailman. There will be a civil war encampment, storytelling, children’s games, wood carver, old time books for sale, palm frond weaving, vendors, guest speakers, food demonstrations, music, native plants for sale and more.
- **Recreational Skills Lessons: Introduction to Kayak Fishing** - Join Park Ranger Bill Wilson and learn the techniques and equipment needed to kayak fish in South Florida. The program is on land and reservations are recommended.
- **Recreational Skills Lessons: Introduction to Surfing** - Park Ranger Rob Matriscino will lead you through the basics of surfing. This program is on land and in the water; good swimming skills are a must; children ages 10 and above may participate with parent supervision. Reservations required.
- **Volunteer Orientation** - Come join our team and help visitors appreciate the importance of preserving this beautiful place by volunteering. Reservations required.
- **Yoga on the Beach** - Certified yoga instructor, Annemarie Phelan, leads one hour yoga sessions on the beach for beginners and experienced participants. Reservations recommended.
Thank you for your membership in the Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park!

All funds raised by the Friends through memberships, the Gift Shop and kayak rentals stay in the Park. YOU assist the Friends to:

- Purchase equipment and supplies for the Natural Science Education Program
- Provide funding to purchase Passenger Trams and other equipment
- Fund volunteer training and recognition
- Provide funding for Picnic Pavilions and Playground
- Purchase and maintain the kayak fleet
- Fund Park printing, supplies and technology needs
- Provide funds for Park Staff Training
- Operate the Gift Shop
- Produce the Park quarterly newsletter, The Dune News

Thanks!