



ARCH CREEK TRUST
A NOT FOR PROFIT CORPORATION
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HISTORIC FEST

Several groups, by joining efforts under the Greater North Miami Historical Society, were able to showcase the rich history of the North Miami area on March 19th. Tables and displays were set up at the Griffing Senior Citizen Center. The two bus tours were very successful, highlighting 20 local historic locations, ranging from Tequesta Indian sites to Biscayne Landing.

PIONEER BBQ

Rather than resting, the groups are planning another historic event on Sunday, April 10th. Robert Burr, organizer of the Redland Tours, suggested having a BBQ in Arch Creek Park. If you are lucky enough to have a copy of Biscayne Country by Dr. Thelma Peters, you have read about the picnics, barbecues, fish fries, political rallies and Easter egg hunts held at the Natural Bridge in the early 1900's.

One of the most unforgettable characters was "Pop Wiggins." He made a living by marginal farming, keeping bees, and raising a patch of sugar cane. "He was also an unofficial scoutmaster for the boys, and a sometimes preacher.. His fame came from being the Best Barbecue Chef in the Whole State of Florida – it was avowed over and over." "In 1909 upwards of five hundred people from all over South Florida attended a barbecue at the Natural Bridge. The occasion was a money-raiser for a library and auditorium for Arch Creek, which never were built. There were also pie-eating contests, foot races, a band concert, and boating and swimming in the creek."

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Robert & Robin Burr
314 ROMANO AV
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At that time “each person paid twenty-five cents for the barbecues meat and cold drinks.” Needless to say, we can’t duplicate those prices. We hope you will come, bring your family and neighbors, and enjoy the beauty and history of the site, as well as the food. As you can imagine, in 1909, people walked or arrived by boat. Since most people will be arriving in vehicles, we encourage parking near the park if possible.

A TRIBUTE

Former United States Representative William Lehman passed away recently. The Miami Herald listed some of his many achievements. Not listed was his support for the preservation of the Arch Creek area. In 1974 he attended an ad hoc committee meeting. It was comprised of local environmentalists and the North End Miami Jr. Women’s Club. They met at the site of the Natural Bridge. Throughout his career, he continued in his support of the environmental efforts in the area.

MORE SOLAR ENERGY

After a recent Letter to the Editor concerning the wide spread use of solar roof panels, FPL stated that they would try panels on 20 roofs. Gov. Schwarzeneger is promoting solar energy in California through his Million Solar Roofs Initiative. According to a Miami Herald article, he hopes to “create a 10 year incentive fund to encourage both residential and commercial buildings to install solar power systems.”

Where is the largest rooftop solar-power system in the United States? On a prison in the San Francisco Bay area. Once the largest energy user of all the government facilities in its county, last year Santa Rita jail installed three acres of solar photovoltaic panels atop 14 of its 18 housing units. The sprawling project is the fourth –largest solar electric system in the world. In its first year, it saved the 2,000 bed facility nearly half a million dollars. The jail won a Department of Energy Green Power Award, according to Sierra Magazine.

And locally a FIU Solar Decathlon team has unveiled the design and has officially begun construction on a new 800 square foot solar-powered house. It is competing with 17 other universities. “Finding reliable sources of renewable energy is one of the greatest challenges for out country”, said FIU President Modesto A. Maidique.

MERCURY POISONING

Several months ago I watched a TV program which concerned a 9 year old boy, who formerly had been very active and had been doing well in school. His parents noticed he no longer wanted to go out to play, he frequently complained of headaches and his school grades were slipping. He also complained of joint pain. Fortunately his symptoms were a sufficient clue and he was diagnosed with mercury poisoning. He was very fond of tuna and often ate it several times a day. Tests showed he had 12 x the allowed amount of mercury. He is slowly recovering. Tuna is the third most purchased item in the grocery store, after sugar and flour.

Although mercury is found naturally, most of the problem is caused by coal-burning furnaces. It then drops into waterways, where microbes transform the metal into something that gets into plants and fish and goes up the food chain until it reaches people.

The Bush administration told the operators of coal-fired power plants to cut mercury emissions by nearly 22% over the next five years. Pollution control experts say the plan offers little real improvement. The rule "sets out a plan where no power plant in the country will have to do anything special," said Sid Nelson Jr., president of the pollution control firm, Sorbert Technologies Corp. of Ohio.

Fortunately, a dozen power plants nationwide have done much better – cutting mercury emissions by as much as 94%.

Mercury is found in fever thermometers, electronic light switches, and other basic equipment. Recently mercury was found in stairwells and corridors of a high school in the nation's capital. The building had to be closed twice for decontamination. The use of mercury in schools is declining. It has been commonly used in science labs. Some schools are finding safe alternatives. Nine states-Florida is not among them, have created programs to speed up the removal of mercury from their schools.

CALENDAR

Sunday, April 10, Pioneer BBQ at Arch Creek Park, 11 to 5. Bring a big appetite.

Monday, April 11, Arch Creek Trust monthly meeting at 7 pm.

The Green Thumb Garden Club will be meeting in the park, April 7th.

Arch Creek Pioneer Family BBQ



Sunday, April 10, 2005 • 11am to 5pm at Arch Creek Park
1855 NE 135th Street, North Miami • 305-944-6111

“Meet Me At The Arch”

In association with Dade Heritage Days, members of the Arch Creek Trust and the Miami-Dade Parks and Recreation staff at Arch Creek Park are planning a special event in April reminiscent of a bygone era at this beautiful natural setting. People have been saying "meet me at the arch" for centuries, referring to this well-known limestone bridge spanning 60 feet over a shady creek within sight of Biscayne Bay.

One hundred years ago, in the emerging settlement of Arch Creek (now North Miami), pioneer families would often gather at the natural bridge for special occasions. Legendary BBQ chef "Pop" Wiggins would begin preparing his fire pit days ahead, slow cooking his famous specialties which would draw large crowds of up to 500 people from miles around.

Award-winning BBQ chef Mark Rogers of Smoke & Spice has been chosen to provide an exceptional BBQ experience. The popularly-priced menu will include a number of his famously delicious smoky and spicy offerings, plus all-American standards such as hot dogs and hamburgers, baked beans and cole slaw, old-fashioned lemonade and iced tea.

**Bring the Entire Family to this Fun Picnic Event
on Sunday, April 10 from 11am - 5pm**

presented by Arch Creek Trust
in association with Dade Heritage Trust
and Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation

Authentic Slow Cooked BBQ • Hamburgers and Hotdogs
Old-Time Lemonade and Tea • Florida Story-Telling
Games and Prizes • Natural and Historic Tours

Arch Creek Park is on NE 135 Street at US1 • Call 305-944-6111 for more information