
Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society

A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society

www.cgcas.org



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

November 2010



Editor: David Burns

November Meeting

Thursday November 18th

at

Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center
1800 Weedon Dr. NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33702

7 – 8 PM.

Thornhill Lake: Hunter-Gatherers, Monuments, and Memory



Jon Endonino, Ph.D., Associate Professor, St. Leo University

Hunting and gathering societies are generally not associated with the construction of monumental architecture, particularly in a world consisting only of other hunting and gathering groups. Yet within the St. Johns River Valley of Florida, and the southeastern United States in general, hunter-gatherers were constructing monuments beginning in the Middle Archaic period, some 6,000 years ago. This presentation will discuss the current debate centering on their level of socio-cultural complexity and the existence of mortuary monument sites with a focus on Thornhill Lake as a case study.

This program, co-sponsored by the Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society and the Weedon Island Cultural and Natural History Center, is free and open to the public. Pre-register for this event by visiting www.pinellascountyextension.org, by clicking the “Online Registration” button, and then on the “Weedon Island” tab. You may also call 727-453-6500.

This Month's Speaker

Jon Endonino has been engaged in archaeological research for more than 16 years, largely in Florida, but also throughout the southeastern United States and the mid-Atlantic region. Among his research interests are the origins of mortuary monumentality among hunting and gathering groups of the St. Johns River Valley (SJR). In addition, Jon researches regional social interactions, notably the exchange of stone tools and lithic raw materials between groups inhabiting the chert-bearing interior uplands of peninsular Florida and those along stone-deprived SJRV and Atlantic coast.

The Thornhill Lake Archaeological Research Project (TLARP) is currently the primary focus of Jon's research. Field work has been completed and data analysis and synthesis are ongoing. Research at other Mount Taylor period mortuary mounds and mound complexes is planned for the future. Additional ongoing research includes the characterization of lithic source areas throughout peninsular Florida and the modeling of the organization of lithic technology in stone-deprived landscapes such as the SJRV.

2010-2011 Lecture Series

The CGCAS Lecture Series for 2010-2011 will present another excellent group of speakers at the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center. The lecture dates are held the third Thursday of the month at 7 pm. They are free and open to the public.

This year more than ever it is important to pre-register so that the number of attendees is accurately recorded by the County!! You can also do so by calling the Center at 727-453-6500 or by visiting www.pinellascountyextension.org, navigating to "Online Class Registration", and choosing "Weedon Island."

Future programs and speakers will include:

● **Thursday, December 16, 2010, 7 - 8 PM**

"A Barren Unsettled Wilderness" to "A Great Place of Trade and Importance": Exploring 19th Century Frontier Florida at the Pine Level Site, DeSoto County, Florida.

Jana J. Futch, Graduate Program, University of South Florida

● **Thursday, January 20, 2011, 7-8 PM**

Geology of Tampa Bay

Al Hines, Ph.D., U.S. Geological Survey

● **Thursday, February 17, 2011, 7-8 PM**

Mexico's Forgotten Coast: Ancient Canoe Trade in the "Mar del Sur"

Stacey Barber, Ph.D., University of Central Florida

● **Thursday, March 17, 2011, 7-8 PM**

Plant Usage by Prehistoric Floridians

Robin Brown, Prehistoric Technologist and Author

● **Thursday, April 21, 2011, 7-8 PM**

Tatsuya Murakami, Ph.D. University of South Florida

TBA

CGCAS Board Meetings

CGCAS holds its board meetings on the second Thursday of the alternate months at Panera's on Ulmerton Road in Pinellas County. However, the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday November 16 at 6:30 PM. This is where society business is discussed and meetings are open to all members. Contact President Karin Lovik at karinlovik@clearwater.edu if

you are interested in attending and learning more about the operations of the society.

Thanks Lou

Lou Claudio, a CGCAS member, has issued many installments of "Lou's Links" to CGCAS members and friends for many months. These links always included interesting current archaeological items occurring throughout the world. He will no longer be doing them and they will be missed. Everyone enjoyed receiving them and we thank Lou for taking the time to prepare them.

It's That Time of Year- Giving and Dues

Friends, it's that time of year again! Yes, along with the upcoming Christmas holiday, it's also time to give that gift of a CGCAS membership to yourself and someone else who loves archaeology or Florida history. For a small tax-deductible membership fee, you can enjoy receiving the CGCAS newsletter (full of information!) every month; have official membership in the CGCAS from January 1 to January 1; participate in field and lab work and public events; and take pride in knowing you are helping others learn about Florida history with monthly meetings that include great lectures on Florida archaeology and history. To join now for the 2011 year, you can go to www.cgcas.org and follow the instructions to renew with PayPal or mail your membership dues to our post office box address: Membership Chair, P.O. Box 1563 Pinellas Park, FL 33780-1563

DIGITAL ARCHAEOLOGY: Data Entry

By Jack Harvey

Computers are great at giving precise numerical answers, right? They calculate our paychecks, carefully taking out tax withholding, FICA, IRA, 401(k) and pension plan contributions. Then they print a check giving us what's left. And somehow, these numbers are all different on another person's paycheck. Amazing.

But there's a nasty little problem called GIGO – Garbage In, Garbage Out. Although the computer never makes an arithmetic error, it must be told exactly what your salary is, how many dependents you have, and what your elective deductions are. If this input isn't right, it's garbage and the resulting computer output is also garbage – GIGO.

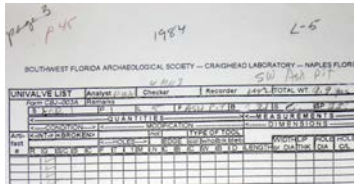
In most cases, GIGO is caused by human error. Anytime data goes into human eyes to the brain where it is converted into motor nerve impulses causing finger movements, typos happen. With all the competing noise that a brain deals with, it's a wonder that what we write or type is ever correct.

This problem has plagued us ever since we invented writing – our writing sometimes doesn't say what we mean. When archaeologists type into a computer they should know that there is a long history of dealing with the Garbage In problem. I'm not talking about archaeological errors such as misidentifying material. We need to know how to spot typos as simple as interchanging digits in a weight. There's a lot of expertise developed for non-archaeological computer applications that can be applied in our field.

Back in the days when most accounting data were punched in tab cards to be fed into the computer, we used a step called *verify*. Data were typed twice – once to punch the card and then again to check that the data equaled the card punches. If the data didn't match, the machine locked and the key punch operator had to resolve the error before continuing.

An important principle was that the two steps were done by different operators. Thus two different people had to agree on interpretation of the raw, often handwritten, input sheets. This greatly reduced the normal human typos that occur when data are typed for use in a computer and our paychecks were usually correct.

But tab card punches and verifiers are long gone. Today we need to rely on *proofreading*. We should print the data we type into the computer and then *another person* should compare what has been put in the computer database with the *original* laboratory identification forms. Where it doesn't match, the database is corrected.



Typical laboratory identification form has erasures, overstrikes and blurs leading to errors entering data into a computer database.

Original lab identification forms are often rather messy and people may want to make clean copies of the originals. This will introduce more Garbage In so it is important that proofreading be done against the originals, not the clean copies.

The proofreading step requires that the computer database be organized similar to the lab forms instead of as summary tables for publishing. A typical way to do this is to build the database as a *list* where each line or row of the list corresponds to a single lab ID form or aggregation. In the case of a spreadsheet computer program like Excel, this means each lab aggregation will be a row with a column for each form datum such as provenience, material, species, MNI, weight, count, etc. It's useful to add a unique page number to each lab ID form and include it as a list column in the database. The page number then ties the row to a particular ID form for the vital proofreading step.

For record-oriented database software such as Access, the same general rules apply with each database record corresponding to a single lab aggregation. After data entry, Access will be used to print a list that can be easily matched with the lab ID forms for proofreading.

What good are these databases that look like the lab data instead of the summary tables you really want? For example, you want to show the total ceramics found by type and test unit. With Access, you will specify a *report* that adds up all the relevant data and displays it in your desired format. With a spreadsheet program such as Excel, you will use the *pivot table*. These summaries will be free of simple human errors (GIGO) introduced if you try to build the wanted table with a pocket calculator. Furthermore, if late data or corrections are added to the database, they can be automatically included in all summary tables you previously specified.

Checking your database using a different eye/brain set than typed it is a fundamental rule handed down from the past that you should follow. But your keyboard is connected to a computer, not a dumb old keypunch. The computer can apply logic rules to entry data. For example, if a spreadsheet column is supposed to contain MNI data, you can enable a warning if you accidentally key in a weight with a decimal point, or a text string identifying species. Learn to use these *data validation tools*. Use the *Help* facility for whatever database software you are

using to learn about them and how to apply them to minimize GIGO.

Ahem. I notice that only two people are still left reading this incredibly boring and tedious saga. Thanks for your patience and be assured that I've been as bored writing it as have the readers. Archaeology is full of delightful Aha! moments when we discover amazing artifacts in the rubble, but we still must fight GIGO. However, there's a bright future. I'll talk about that next when we learn how to eliminate human error.

Volunteering at Tampa Bay History Center



On November 4th the Tampa Bay History Center held a new program series called Home School History Days, designed for home school families in the Tampa Bay region. The first program was titled, "Florida's Indian Heritage: From Tocobaga to Seminole".

CGCAS members Chris Hardy, Cheryl Shaughnessy, Cindy Martin, and Dave Burns represented the society with a table. While turnout was less than expected, those who did come by the exhibits went away with a better understanding of Florida's past. Also attending this event were Roger Block representing The Trail of Florida's Indian Heritage, artist Hermann Trappman, and Zaida Darley from Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN).

2011 FAS Annual Meeting

The 63rd annual meeting of the Florida Anthropological Society will be hosted by the Society's Central Florida chapter in historical Orlando, May 6-8, 2011. The Friday board meetings and reception along with the Saturday general session will be held at the Orlando Shakespeare Theater complex in Loch Haven Park. The Saturday night banquet will be held nearby at the Tap Room at the historic Dubsread Golf Course in the College Park community. The Sunday tour will take place in west Orange County and will feature the Lake Apopka and Oakland area and possibly some of the surrounding historical communities. The Central Florida Anthropological Society is currently in talks with Comfort Inn Suites, which has a hotel within close proximity to Loch Haven Park, to set up a room block for the conference. Jason Wenzel and Kevin Gidusko will serve as conference co-chairs.

FAS Membership

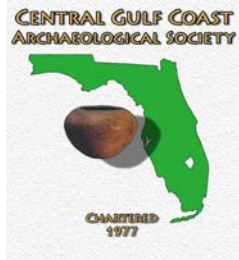
The Florida Anthropological Society (FAS) is open to persons interested in anthropology, archaeology, preservation of cultural resources and community education. Membership is made up of both professional and avocational archaeologists. Benefits of membership include the journal *The Florida Anthropologist*, 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 - \$1000; Benefactor - \$2500 or more.

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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

