



# Shell Museum News

Issue 77 - June 2010

www.shellmuseum.org

Editor: Kathleen E. Hoover

## *Celebrating 15 years!*

It's important to celebrate accomplishments. It pushes an organization to continue to grow. Celebrating achievements sends out a message to the world that you are excited and proud of the outcome of your efforts. Celebration builds energy, and energy creates more success.

There has been a great deal to celebrate over the last few months: year-to-date admissions are up 12%, a very profitable "Under The Sea" fundraiser, American Association of Museums accreditation, the completion and installation of a new exhibit, "MMM . . . Mollusks!", followed by a successful community outreach event and VIP and member's party heralding the opening of the new exhibit.

*"Desire is the key to motivation, but it's the determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal - a commitment to excellence - that will enable you to attain the success you seek."*

—Mario Andretti

*"The secret of success is consistency of purpose."*

—Benjamin Disraeli



### **SHELLEBRATE!**

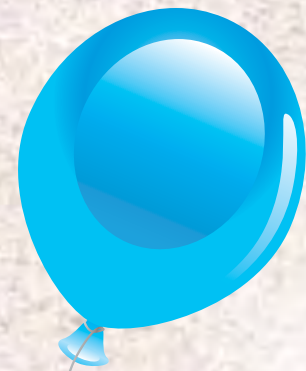
(to the tune of Celebration by Kool and the Gang 1980)

*Shellebrate good times, come on! (Let's shellebrate)*

*There's a party goin' on right here  
A shellebration lasting throughout fifteen years  
So bring your good times, and your laughter too  
We're gonna shellebrate our birthday with you.*

Whether you look backward or you gaze forward there's a lot to shellebrate.

On November 18, 2010, the Shell Museum will turn 15.  
Watch for birthday party shellebration details – coming soon.





## “On Your Mark, Get Set . . . Slurp!”

“On Your Mark, Get Set . . . Slurp!” instructed Oyster Master, Mark Blust, VP of Operations and Marketing for Timbers. Clay Miller, anchor for NBC-2 Fort Myers, led the way with the celebrity heat, instructing fellow slurpers on all of the rules . . . “the use of blenders and other electric devices will lead to disqualification.”

But what about battery powered blenders? Food blenders, you’ve got to be kidding, but these were all serious questions posed by contestants in the last few days prior to the event. That’s when it became apparent that these bivalve-loving islanders were serious about oyster slurping.

With the rules committed to memory it was time for the real fun to begin. Dressing techniques were creative and varied, but lemon juice and Tabasco sauce were the most popular.

As heat one contestants took their seats tension filled the air. The service clubs and shell lovers were the first to belly up, with the Rotary’s own John Carney rumored as the slurper to beat. When the final buzzer rang all hands were to be raised high, mollusks residing in the mouth had to be swallowed and then the counting started 10, 9, 8... So what was this all about? Another rule – whatever went down had to stay down for 10 seconds. After that, well let’s just say, that’s what the colored buckets in front of each contestant were all about!

Now if you thought the dressing stage was creative, the eating techniques were over the top. There were the dainty one-at-a-time slurp-it-out-of-the-shell eaters, drink-them-from-a-glass slurpers, and down and dirty two-fisted “mollusk manglers.” All types were represented when the restaurant/jewelers heat hit the platform. It was clear that they were a force to be reckoned with. Cheers of “girl power” resounded through the crowd. Who would have ever thought that

98-pound Maureen Valiquette could give the likes of John Carney a run for the gold?

Who would leave victorious, that was the question in the minds of many as the bankers, Baileys and Barflys team took to the stage. Right from the start one contestant exuded an air of confidence and he left the stage victorious. Al Marti walked away with the coveted Winged Victory Oyster Trophy.

Timbers Restaurant & Fish Market served as the major sponsor. Over 300 residents and visitors participated along with 16 key sponsors, 14 oyster eaters, nine special donors, 36 key individual supporters, and six celebrity judges all of whom were recognized in an ad placed in both local newspapers a week after the event.

Good business partners - good food - good friends - good fun and a worthy cause - who could ask for anything more? It was a memorable launch for the Museum’s new exhibit, “MMM . . . Mollusks!” Mark your calendars for April 16, 2011, and plan to attend the Second Annual Edible Mollusk Festival and Oyster Eating Contest.

The Committee (Matt Asen, Clair Beckmann (Chair), Mark Blust, Kathleen Hoover, and José Leal) would like to thank the key sponsors:

### Key Sponsors:

The Staff and Management of the Timbers, Lily & Co., Doc Ford’s, Traders, The Jacaranda, The Oyster Crackers, Bailey’s, Times of the Island, Sanibel-Captiva Rotary Club, Tween Waters Inn, Sanibel-Captiva Kiwanis Club, She Sells Sea Shells, Sanibel Captiva Trust Company, Waterman Broadcasting, Sanibel Captiva Community Bank, Suncoast Beverages



Mark Blust



Clay Miller



Evelyn Spencer and Anne Joffe



Cindy Porter



Dan Schuyler



Shahana Shakur



Mary Jo Bunnell, Sherry Henon, and Rodger Bunnell



Matt Asen



Oysters from all over the world flown personally from New York by Matt Asen



José H. Leal



Nicholas Atkinson, Shahana Shakur, Isha Mehraz, and Jacob Atkinson



Community gathering



Clair Beckmann and Clay Miller



Mike and Maureen Valiquette



Oyster eaters in this heat say "Bring it on."



Clay Miller and José H. Leal



Betty and John English



Chowdah, Linda King, Matt Asen, and Mr. Moose



"Oyster eaters"



Gary Schmelz, Al Marti, and Matt Asen



Ron Nixon



Peg Bisignani and Diane Thomas

# Green-Lipped Mussels Hit Of The Party

It's only fitting that the culinary hit of the party celebrating the grand opening of an exhibit titled "MMM . . . Mollusks!" was a mollusk, the green-lipped mussel. On April 21, 2010, a members and VIP reception was held to officially unveil the Museum's new exhibit. The membership, city officials, Board, and media were well represented. Timbers provided the perfect culinary combination of mollusks, champagne, and to top it off, chocolate-covered strawberries! Board President, Dr. Gary Schmelz, and Museum Director/Curator, José H. Leal, provided a historical perspective on the design, fabrication, and installation of the exhibit and recognized exhibit sponsors: James Hartman and Molly Gerlich; Harry G. Lee; Jack Lightbourn; Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs; and Timbers Restaurant & Fish Market.



Francis Bailey and Rodger Bunnell



Sue Ann Pirsch, Betty English, and Anne Joffe



Mark Blust, José H. Leal, and Matt Asen



Charles Sobczak and Diane Orvis Thomas



Hal Pilcher and Tom Risher



Kathleen Hoover and Molly Heuer

## "MMM...Mollusks!" Installation—April 2010



**Exhibit Sponsored by:**

James Hartman & Molly Gerlich

Harry G. Lee

Jack Lightbourn

Florida Department of State,

Division of Cultural Affairs

The Timbers Restaurant & Fish Market

## It's Not Easy Being Green - Or is It?

The color green always brings to mind Kermit, the cute little green frog on Sesame Street, or the Manus green snail, but in this case it refers to the Museum's continued efforts to move toward becoming a green facility. Recycling processes were initiated several years ago. In 2009, the Museum chose a green-certified paper and printer for production of this newsletter. A solar panel was installed in the parking lot in February, 2010. The sun's energy is converted into electricity by a light-sensitive cell and stored in four marine batteries. Each evening the Museum's sign on busy Sanibel-Captiva Road is illuminated with the stored energy. The installation was prompted by the results of the Museum's customer satisfaction survey revealing that many visitors first learned of the Museum when driving by the sign.

The Museum would like to ask members to join in the green initiatives by electing to receive the newsletter

electronically rather than receiving a paper copy via the U.S. mail service. This option would save trees, as well as paper, printing, and postage costs. Members opting for electronic delivery will receive an email with a pdf attachment. The electronic version will be mailed on the same day that the paper version is delivered to the post office. If you would like to receive the newsletter electronically, please forward your request to Mary Jo Bunnell at [maryjo@shellmuseum.org](mailto:maryjo@shellmuseum.org).



## Cat Island Revisited

By Anne Joffe

The week of April 8-15, 2010, twelve shell and nature enthusiasts joined Anne Joffe and Harry Lee on The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum Field Trip to Cat Island, Bahamas.

The group was met at the airport by old friend and guide, Harry King, a man of many talents. He drives the school bus, is fire chief, and serves as a law enforcement officer and the minister for the islands. His school bus is used to transport the tour groups and their luggage to and from the airport and for all-day-island sightseeing tours.

The group stopped at Coma Hill, the highest elevation in the Bahamas, at 232 ft. above sea level. After that stop the group meandered along the beaches and through the straw markets before stopping for a delicious lunch at the Bluebird Restaurant. The first official business of the trip was making Harry, an avid shell collector, an Honorary Member of the Shell Museum.

Once again, the Greenwood Resort served as our home away from home. This wonderful, friendly lodging is located on a beautiful stretch of sandy beach. It is very casual. Our evenings were spent in the dining room or on the outdoor porch, enjoying the delicious local cuisine which included conch fritters, cracked conch, and Bahamian lobster.

The beaches were wonderful venues for discovering shells, as well as observing mollusks and other sea life. New habitats were discovered along the way and both marine and land species were collected. New trip participants displayed incredible enthusiasm for the adventure. The group was blessed with gorgeous weather. Activities included snorkeling, beach combing, and wading but no matter what the activities were, treasures abounded. One of the great things about a group shelling adventure is the sharing. If there was a species of shells that one group member didn't find other members willingly shared. By the end of the week all left the island with wonderful collections of shells.

A week goes by quickly, but the memories linger forever. The best part of travel involving a common passion is the new friendships cultivated and the camaraderie experienced because the adventure is shared.



Alan Gettleman well dressed for beach combing



Anne Joffe and a pile of conchs



Lunch at the Bluebird



# The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum

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Sanibel Florida 33957  
www.shellmuseum.org  
239.395.2233

Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts

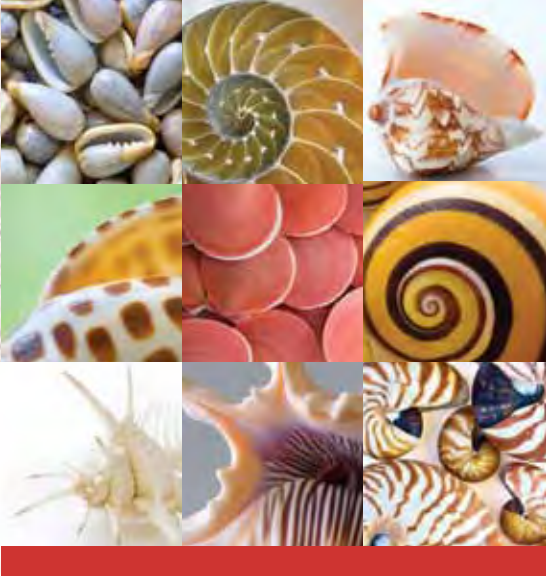
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FOR THE ARTS



Masthead Photos by www.HenryDomke.com



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