

Thank You: An Acknowledgement of Those who Lent a Hand

When I learned that I was awarded this project I called my friend **Bill Friedman**. He lives in Chicago but was born and raised in Tampa. I frequently heard Bill refer to his uncle Mark Shine, owner of Kirby's Menswear and an avid fisherman. The Friedmans and the Shines grew up together just like family. Their mothers were and still are life long best friends. Mark's son Martin now owns Kirby's and shares his father's love of fishing. When I said to Bill I wanted to meet people that have spent years on the river and its surrounding waters, he said call up Martin.

Martin Shine is a gentleman in every way and he hit the bull's-eye when he introduced me to **Capt. Bill Miller** that is Capt. Bill of *Hooked on Fishing*. From there the doors flew wide open. Bill Miller was so kind and generous with his time and he knows everyone in Tampa. I can't say enough. I also learned a valuable piece of fishing etiquette from him. Bananas are bad luck on the boat; one must eat Cuban sandwiches! Capt. Bill introduced me to **Jimmy Craver** who is a retired Tampa Fireman and an unofficial river historian. Jimmy doesn't need a degree; he's lived the Hillsborough. He was always eager to jump in the boat and head on out. Jimmy was my captain and my best buddy. Capt. Bill and Jimmy you were the backbone, I love you both!

A good friend I often call upon when I am exploring Florida's wilds is **John Lohde**. A Florida native he has worked at State and Natural Parks throughout the country. John helped organize the Green Swamp trip with the folks at SWFMD. He asked the questions I didn't know to ask and came along for the hike. At SWFMD thanks to **Melissa Roe**, **Carmen Sanders** and especially **Margaret Blommel** who lead the trek. She was full of energy and knowledge.

Thanks go out to **Jack Coleman** at Dead River Park as well as **Patrick Potts** and **Dave Moulton** at Hillsborough River State Park. Across the street at Two Rivers Ranch and Crystal Springs Preserve, big thanks go out to **Robert Thomas** and his son **Wayne** as well as **Michael Babb**, **Karen Pate** and **Sonya Rose**. I enjoyed learning about your family history on this land as well as the programs at the preserve. I appreciate the help and access you gave me.

Who could forget **Alligator Bob**? We had a lovely day of canoeing and photographing on the river and yes I did try an Alligator Snack Stick. **Nanette O'Hara** you introduced me to Bob, supplied several contacts and when you and your husband **Rick** took me out on the river, you wanted to make sure that we got out when the light was nice. Thanks also to **Syd Gross** who early on in the project went with me to see the river viewed from different neighborhoods. We visited the Plant Museum together and met **Gianna Russo** and **Susan Carter**. Through them I gained insight into the vast Burgert Brothers archive. Thanks to **Gary Mormino** from the Florida Studies Program at the University of South Florida for arranging a lunch meeting with colleagues/scholars who are interested in the river, and Tampa.

Then there was the rainy trip to MacDill AFB. **MSgt Bryan Gatewood** organized and accompanied me along with **Jason Kirkpatrick** from the environmental office in the boat driven by **SSgt. Stevan Sloma** and **TSgt. Caleb Monday**. All got soaked on my account. I am happy to report we got good pictures.

Kyle Pupello when I learned from your father that your family's land had a tributary on it that feed into the river, you followed through and took Capt. Bill and me on a beautiful morning hike.

I must not forget the people with the city and the public art board for their assistance. Lastly **Robin Nigh** and **Melissa Le Baron**, you both are great and you run a valuable program. Hope it is around for years to come. Tampa is a big small town. People know each other and everyone is friendly. In fact, Tampa should receive an award for friendly helpful people; I'm not kidding.