



## EcoAdventures E-Newsletter

### Not Your Average Louie

By Ernie Lynk

Louie Gomez, 72, has a voice like Don Vito Corleone in The Godfather and looks like one of the superheroes from the kids movie Kick Ass. You can find him almost every day at the new water sports rental and lesson center at Matheson Hammock operated by Adventure Sports Miami. If you thought all septuagenarians are one step away from the nursing home think again. Louie will change your idea of what senior citizens are all about. When he's not showing you how to lift kettle weights he's telling you about the joy of jumping with his kite board. That's right- Louie is a serious kite boarder.



His water sports compadre is Ken Murray, 62. "He's on a work release program from the marine industry" cracks Louie. Together they're like a great comedy team. I was waiting for the "your mama" jokes to start at any minute.

The two first met in 2008. Louie was recovering from three surgeries and Ken wanted to help so they began sharing gear. That's how it is in the kiteboarding community. Regulars develop camaraderie. "It's a kamikaze sport with a social side" says Ken. "In kiteboarding, you should always go with someone in case you need someone to save you". "Now Louie believes in God" says Ken. "He crashed once and I heard him say 'God help me God!'. Louie replies, "He really has saved my ass many times. I tried to help save him once but he wouldn't let me. He's too hard headed. I told him I was trying to save his life but if he was going to bitch about it I was going home."

Louie had seen kite boarders for the first time in Geneva, Switzerland where he worked in the banking industry. He thought it looked exhilarating. "I'm not too old, I'm gonna do it" he told himself. And he did. No easy task for someone who had battled cancer (thus the Brando voice), double bypass surgery, and has a titanium knee among other ailments. "A titanium brain too" remarks Ken dryly. They both laugh.

For the rest of the article go to [www.miamidade.gov/ecoadventures/article.asp](http://www.miamidade.gov/ecoadventures/article.asp)

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#### Nature Centers

##### AD Barnes Sense of Wonder Nature Center

3401 SW 72 Ave.  
Miami, FL 33155  
305-662-4124

##### Arch Creek Nature Center

1855 NE 135 St.  
North Miami, FL 33181  
305-944-6111

##### Bill Sadowski Nature Center

17555 SW 79 Ave.  
Palmetto Bay, FL 33157  
305-255-4767

##### Castellow Hammock Nature Center

22301 SW 162 Ave.  
Miami, FL 33170  
305-242-7688

##### Crandon Park Visitors & Nature Center

6767 Crandon Blvd.  
Key Biscayne, FL 33149  
305-361-6767 ext. 112



## Feature Event for September

### **National Public Lands Day**

Sept. 25, 2010  
9:00 AM—Noon

NPLD is the nation's largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance the public lands Americans enjoy. In 2009, 150,000 volunteers built trails and bridges, removed trash and invasive plants, planted trees and restored our water resources.

Once again we're taking part in NPLD and calling for volunteers to help us keep our parks beautiful. Gather your friends and family and then contact one of the sites listed below to register for this fun and rewarding event.



Photo courtesy of National Environmental Education Foundation

**Arch Creek Park**—305-944-6111 or email [archcreek@miamidade.gov](mailto:archcreek@miamidade.gov)

**Greynolds Park**—305-945-3425 / 305-948-2891 or email [greynoldspark@miamidade.gov](mailto:greynoldspark@miamidade.gov)

**Crandon Gardens**—305-365-3018 or email [jking2@miamidade.gov](mailto:jking2@miamidade.gov)

For more information about National Public Lands Day or for sites in other areas go to <http://www.publiclandsday.org/>

## September Calendar of Events

### **ADVENTURE DAY FOR KIDS (ages 6-12)**

Thursday, Sept. 9, 2010

\$25 per child

A.D. Barnes Nature Center, 305-662-4124

Bill Sadowski Park & Nature Center, 305-255-4767

### **NIGHT WALK & CAMPFIRE**

Friday, Sept. 10, 2010, 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

\$6 per person

Bill Sadowski Park & Nature Center, 305-255-4767

## **CRANDON PARK BEACH CLEANUP**

Saturday, Sept. 11, 2010, 9:00 AM—12:00 PM

Crandon Park Visitors and Nature Center, 305-365-3018

## **CRANDON PARK'S SUNSET & MOONLIGHT KAYAK ADVENTURE**

Saturday, Sept. 25, 2010, 6:30 PM—9:00 PM

\$40 per person

Crandon Park Visitors and Nature Center, 305-365-3018

## **NIGHT WALK & CAMPFIRE**

Saturday, Sept. 25, 2010, 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

\$6 per person

Bill Sadowski Park & Nature Center, 305-255-4767

For a full list of events, including **on going programs go to**

[www.miamidade.gov/ecoadventures/home.asp](http://www.miamidade.gov/ecoadventures/home.asp)

**For information on  
customized or group  
tours please contact**

**EcoAdventures  
Office**

4000 Crandon Blvd.  
Key Biscayne, FL 33149  
305-365-3018  
ricaaza@miamidade.gov

## **Kid's Corner**

### **First day of Autumn**

Fall Equinox or Autumnal equinox is the day when the night and day are of approximately equal length. At the autumnal equinox (Sept. 23, 2010, 11:09 P.M. EDT), the Sun appears to cross the celestial equator, from north to south; this marks the beginning of autumn in the Northern Hemisphere.

An equinox happens each year at two specific moments in time (rather than two whole days), when there is a location on the Earth's equator where the centre of the sun can be observed to be vertically overhead, occurring around March 20/21 and September 22/23 each year.

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Questions or comments? Email us at [ecoadventures@miamidade.gov](mailto:ecoadventures@miamidade.gov) or call 305-365-3018

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