Healthy Fun is Just Around the Corner

WALK! TAME TENSION

EXPLORE! HEALTHY AGING

RIDE! GET HEALTHY

MEDITATE. FEEL BETTER

Funding was made possible (in part) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The views expressed in this material do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. A message from the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County.
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There is more than one way to be social at parks. Follow Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. @miamidade_parks

Cover and Crandon Park: Photography by Depuhl
2-FOR-1 SUMMER SPECIAL

Weekdays Anytime • Weekends/Holidays after 12 p.m.
Expires 8/31/17. Offer cannot be combined.

For Tee Times visit GolfMiamiDade.com or call 855-GOLF-305
The summer is a busy time for Miami-Dade Parks. Locals and tourists are enjoying our beaches. Our summer camp programs are full of children ready for an adventure. Our golf courses are busy with both experienced and novice golfers looking to improve their game.

Miami-Dade Parks has a lot of attractions, so come visit us and enjoy our natural resources. Inside this issue, we take you on a tour of beautiful Crandon Park in Key Biscayne, which features a nature center, a marina, a gorgeous beach, the Crandon Park Tennis Center and a world-class golf course, and lots more. Another story we hope you’ll enjoy is about Mahala, a special Florida panther that resides in the new Mission Everglades exhibit at Zoo Miami. Flip the pages of this magazine and discover the healing power of nature and the great outdoors through an initiative of Neat Streets Miami. And find out more about programs available for children and adults with disabilities.

So as the temperature rises, we hope you’ll find some shade in our beautiful parks. This is the time to create lasting summertime memories with your family and friends — and you don’t have to travel far to discover your own outdoor adventure.
A Day of Pets and Putts

In celebration of National Adopt a Shelter Pet Day, the Country Club of Miami hosted the first annual Pets and Putts family event. Miami-Dade County’s Animal Services Department brought their mobile adoption bus and families were able to adopt a four-legged friend.

Get Counted!

Did you know drowning is the leading cause of death in children ages 1 to 4 and Miami-Dade County leads the state in drowning deaths? Despite these numbers, drowning is preventable. Learning to swim is key in helping to prevent drowning. Miami-Dade Parks and the Drowning Coalition have launched the “Every Lesson Counts” initiative to teach and count 1 MILLION lessons by 2018.

For more information visit www.drowningprevention.net.

Zoo Miami Gets Top Mention

Zoo Miami has been recommended by DK Travel Guide as a “Top 10 Miami and the Keys” place to visit (www.dk.com). The zoo will be included in the next highly illustrated and globally distributed Eyewitness Travel Guide with beautiful photos by Ron Magill, Zoo Miami’s Communications and Media Relations Director.
Meet Me at the Park

The National Recreation and Park Association’s (NRPA) Meet Me at the Park initiative inspires communities across the country to get behind a local park project and engage in a social media campaign that uses a resident’s vote — via text or online — to elect a winner. The winner receives $20,000 to help complete, maintain or sustain projects that inspire a healthier lifestyle.

The winner was The Community Garden at Gwen Cherry Park. The project supports healthy living and, once completed, it will provide residents, park patrons and program registrants with interactive education on how nutritious food grows.

The main purpose of the garden will be its integration into the Fit2Lead Parks Internship Program (PIP) curriculum. PIP provides at-risk teenagers with entry-level, part-time paid positions with Miami-Dade Parks. They’ll receive practical work experience, life management skills and health and wellness skills through enrichment courses.

By August, the raised beds will be filled with planting soil and seasonal fruit and vegetable plants that will be planted during a volunteer event. The community garden, gardening presentation and food demonstration event will take place later this year. You can sign up at www.miamidade.gov/parks to receive emails on when these events will take place.

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Catch This Rising Star

In the last issue of Park Life magazine, Cameron “Hollywood” Pineda, 11, was featured in BMX: Fast and Furious. One of his goals is to turn pro and compete for Team USA. Guess what? This superstar racer is making his dreams come true. Stay tuned to his career, which all started at the Miami-Dade Parks’ Pine Ridge BMX Park.

Congratulations, Hollywood!

Tweet, Like, View

Follow us on social media to discover unforgettable park life adventures and find out what’s happening at Miami-Dade Parks.

@miamidadeparks
With its prickly green skin and hefty size, the jackfruit can appear strange at first sight. Indeed, the fruit is something of a wonder to behold: It is the largest tree-borne fruit in existence, commonly weighing up to 100 pounds. While its size alone is impressive, it is the number of ways it can be eaten that is even more remarkable.

The fruit, which is native to south and southeast Asia, is still largely unknown in the United States, with limited production in Hawaii and South Florida. You can discover more than 15 varieties of jackfruit trees, taste seasonal samples and learn more about this amazing fruit – all in the peaceful, idyllic setting of Redland’s Fruit & Spice Park.

Jackfruit has been growing in popularity because of its flavor and high nutrient count – especially with vegans and vegetarians. This is because a young jackfruit’s flavor is mild enough to take on the taste of its seasoning, and its hearty texture resembles pulled meat when cooked, making it well-suited for savory dishes and as a meat substitute. If you are on the lookout for a delicious new vegan dish, try it with barbecue sauce or Tex-Mex style. You can also get in touch with its Southeast Asian roots and cook it with coconut milk and curry spices.

Once jackfruit has ripened, by contrast, it has sweet, golden flesh with a taste that can be compared to a variety of familiar fruits or Juicy Fruit gum. It is a particularly good source of vitamin B and vitamin C. Let that put your mind at ease when you consume its sweet form in juice, ice cream, jam or even one of the exotic dessert preparations of countries like Indonesia or Vietnam.

Once you get your hands on the fruit, make sure to save the seeds for

The flavorful jackfruit can weigh up to 100 pounds. (Top) The flesh of the fruit is a good source of vitamin B and vitamin C.
a healthy snack, as they are rich in nutrients such as potassium, calcium and iron. Even more reason to love jackfruit seeds: They may be the next chocolate alternative source. There is an exciting new finding that fermenting and roasting the seeds of each jackfruit in a specific way may produce a cost-effective substitute for cocoa. This is good news for chocolate lovers everywhere, as cocoa prices continue to increase in response to high demand worldwide.

If you want in on all that jackfruit has to offer, you are in luck. Here in South Florida, jackfruit grows easily and requires little care once mature. However, make sure to leave enough room when planting for a large tree. Jeff Wasielewski of UF/IFAS Extension Miami-Dade County also cautions growers to choose the variety with a texture they will enjoy. “The cultivar differences are more in texture than in taste. Some have soft flesh, some firm,” he says. “Make sure you get the one you like, or you will be sorely disappointed.”

For more information on the Fruit & Spice Park, go to www.redlandfruitandspice.com. To learn more about jackfruit, go to http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg370.

— Emily Mangiaracina

Healthy Happens at Mango Café

Fruit & Spice Park is pleased to introduce new Mango Café meals that meet nutritional guidelines from registered dieticians. This is part of the park’s participation in Healthy Happens Here, an initiative of the Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade. For more information about the initiative, visit www.healthymiamidade.org.

Here are a few of the savory dishes you will find at Mango Café.

**Bistro Egg Salad**
460 calories
Crisp chopped lettuce topped with walnuts, feta cheese and chopped egg with tasty Dijon dressing.

**Chicken Wrap**
550 calories
Grilled chicken breast with zesty slaw and Jack cheese in a wheat wrap.

**Roasted Beef Sandwich**
430 calories
Tender-sliced roast beef with crisp lettuce and juicy tomato on a Kaiser roll, served with a side of horseradish mayonnaise.

**Vegetarian Burger**
350 calories
An all-American classic with a vegetarian twist. Boca burger served with lettuce, tomato and onion on a Kaiser roll.
Our culture tends to function in overdrive. Nonstop noise, activities and stimulation seem to be a regular part of our lives. Some people choose a busy lifestyle. However, many people helplessly find themselves being overworked and overstressed.

When someone complains that they need a vacation, chances are they are not exaggerating. According to the American Institute of Stress (AIS), 73 percent of people regularly experience psychological symptoms caused by stress. Some of the symptoms include: irritability, anger, nervousness and lack of energy. Unfortunately, the repercussions don’t stop there. AIS found that 48 percent of those surveyed said that stress also had a negative effect on their personal and professional lives. The American Psychological Association found that stress caused health problems in 43 percent of adults. The study also reveals stress-related complaints make up 75 to 90 percent of all doctor visits, and can even impair cognitive functioning.

If some level of stress is simply part of this modern era, we owe it to ourselves to find ways to restore our bodies, both physically and mentally. Weekly massages and regular Key West getaways would be fantastic, but they’re not necessarily practical for most people. More than 50 percent of employees are stressed out about personal finances and 45 percent of them cited financial matters as the biggest stressors in their lives, according to a 2016 PwC Employee Financial Wellness survey.

Fortunately, nature is a powerful antidote for stress and it’s free.

**Totally Natural Nerve Tonic**

A number of studies have shown that nature can help us de-stress. For example, researchers from Nippon Medical School found that after subjects gazed at a forest landscape or walked in a forest, their pulse rates, blood pressure and cortisol concentrations significantly decreased. Another Japanese survey found that exposure to forest environments significantly lessens hostility and depression while increasing feelings of liveliness, when compared with exposure to other environments. In a Stanford University study, researchers sent one group of people on a 90-minute walk along a roadway and another into a natural area of the Stanford campus for the same length of time. Questionnaires and brain scans comparing the two groups showed that those walking in nature experienced a decrease in rumination, which in this context was defined as a pattern of repetitive negative thoughts that are related to an increased risk of depression.

Nature also seems to have some positive psychological effects over the long haul. Published in Environment and Behavior in 2003, a study of New York children ages three to five found that those who lived in very natural environments were “buffered” from the impact of stressful life events they experienced, as measured by parents’
evaluations of their children’s distress, and by the children’s own perceptions of psychological well-being. Ultimately, research suggests that nature has the power to heal and strengthen on a psychological level.

**More is More – and Also Less**

When it comes to finding the right spot for natural stress busting, make it as fully natural as possible. A Helfgott Research Institute study comparing people sitting in four different environments with varying degrees of naturalness found that it was in the fully natural environment which people experienced the greatest feelings of restoration. Measurements of cortisol levels showed that the more natural the environment the greater the reductions in body cortisol.

Bottom line: The more nature, the better! While more is better in terms of the environment you choose, less can also be good. As little as five minutes of exposure to nature may deliver the soothingly therapeutic effect you’re craving. According to a 2010 *Environmental Science & Technology* study of people exercising outdoors in nature, the first five minutes yielded the greatest benefits, including an increase in self-esteem.

The other thing to keep in mind is that nature’s calming effect can ripple outward into other areas of your life. When stress levels drop, physical health improves, concentration and work performance increases, and relationships are enriched.

So the next time you find yourself telling someone how badly you need a vacation – or before that thought even crosses your mind – do yourself the favor of heading to the nearest park for a short retreat. You might discover a serenity you never imagined was possible.

— Emily Mangiaracina
In addition to supervising the upkeep of parks and athletic fields, Steven Rivera has trimmed the locks of local athletes for more than a decade.
Steven Rivera remembers when Miami-Dade experienced a growth in graffiti art during the 1990s. You’d see it everywhere—massive murals and bubble tags covering everything from overpasses and warehouse fronts to train cars and neighborhood fences.

“Growing up in the Perrine area, you either played sports, found something that you liked and worked on excelling in or you wound up in jail,” says Rivera, 30, as he reminisces about that era. “I was in middle school, and my passion for drawing and painting led me to take my talents to the streets. It seemed like a good idea at the time, anyway,” he adds.

But one fateful day, while painting his tag name on a wall with his buddies, Rivera’s “artwork” was interrupted by the sound of approaching police sirens. When he looked behind him, he saw that his graffiti partners had run off and a Miami-Dade police car was pulling up. He was caught red-handed with the spray paint.

“Needless to say, the police officer hauled me off to the police station, where I was picked up by my father,” recalls Rivera. “It was in that heart-stopping moment that I realized I was thankful for not being sent to jail, which was not the place that I wanted to be. And from then on, I never vandalized properties again.”

Trimming Teams

Today, the former street artist is a supervisor for the Parks Department’s Sports Turf Management and Landscape Services Division. He has replaced his graffiti bubble tag with the Twitter handle “Scissorhands,” which comes from the movie Edward Scissorhands.

Rivera adopted the name because of his magician-like skills with scissors and clippers that he uses to trim both hair and hedges.

Before he started working for Parks, Rivera became a barber for Miami athletes. More than a decade later, he’s still creating personalized haircuts and fades that include his famous “U-swag” for the University of Miami’s Hurricanes football team, as well as for UM’s basketball, baseball and track teams.

“My love of running has allowed me to enjoy our various parks and see firsthand the role that our Department has in our community.”

Rivera is also going on his third season of barbering Miami Dolphins players. “I provide a mobile barber service to my clients, where I come to them,” he says. “Or we meet up at the Dolphins facility, where there is a barber station in the player’s lounge or at UM where I also have a barber station, which was provided by the UM basketball program as a gesture of their appreciation.”

Keeping Playing Fields in Shape

Beyond keeping players’ locks shorn smoothly, Rivera also trims down hedges, prunes trees, cuts grass and handles other landscaping duties in municipal neighborhoods as part of the Special Taxing District Crew, where he’s worked since he joined the Parks Department eight years ago.

Rivera supervises the maintenance and upkeep of the Parks’ soccer, football and baseball fields as part of the department’s 4C Sports Turf Roving Crew, whose maintenance boundaries encompass 56 acres of athletic fields at 13 parks. Rivera and his crew of five make sure that fields get mowed, fertilized, weeded, sprayed for pests/diseases, aerated and irrigated to ensure that they are safe, playable and aesthetically pleasing.

It takes more than just showing up for work to be an employee in the Sports Turf Management and Landscape Services Division. Employees are offered training to become Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA) Certified Landscape Maintenance Technicians.

This certification is designed to measure the skills of practicing landscape installation technicians. The FNGLA Certified Landscape Maintenance Technician program serves to train, recognize their achievements and raise the standards of working professionals within Florida’s landscape industry.

“The training that I’ve received includes grading, irrigation, heavy machinery equipment, plant identification, tree planting, plan layouts, palm banding and propping, and job evaluations,” adds Rivera. “Thanks to the
off the beaten path

encouragement of our Division Chief Gil Delgado, 95 percent of the employees are FNGLA Certified Landscape Maintenance Technicians.”

Parks Pride
When not working or skillfully styling hair for Miami athletes, Rivera enjoys running in the park after work.

“My love of running has allowed me to enjoy our various parks and see firsthand the role that our Department has in our community,” he says.

He also plans to volunteer his time as a mentor for at-risk teens enrolled in the Parks Department’s Fit2Lead after-school program. Started in 2016, the program utilizes proven strategies to empower at-risk teens, help them realize their potential and build pathways toward a brighter future. Learn more about the program on page 28.

And despite his graffiti-related run-in with the law as a youngster, Rivera says he still uses graffiti style in his hair designs, landscaping projects and in the 100-plus tattoos he has.

“I prefer graffiti. I sketch out my ideas on paper so I can fully develop the concept.” However, when it comes to ink on his skin, “I leave the tattooing to the tattoo artist.” Most of Rivera’s tattoos are about Miami, spirituality and, of course, barbering. “My favorite tattoo is our county’s 305 area code on the back of my neck,” he says.

—Laura Phillips

Did You Know?

Miami-Dade Parks’ Sports Turf Landscape Division maintains 200 acres of athletic fields at 42 parks throughout Miami-Dade County. In some areas, drones are utilized to help assess the condition of fields before and after turf treatments.

Miami-Dade Special Taxing District Division maintains 122 multi-purpose Special Taxing Districts throughout Miami-Dade County. A Special Taxing District is a designated area where a majority of property owners agree to allow our certified FNGLA technicians to levy a special property tax in exchange for a specific service, including fertilizing our turfs, trees, palms, and ornamentals, spraying chemicals for pests such as White Flies (which damage ficus hedges if not treated), irrigation maintenance, and beautifying our focal point entrances by planting annuals and painting columns.

Fight the bite!
Use insect repellent on skin and clothing to keep mosquitoes away while outdoors.

DRAIN.COVER

To report a mosquito nuisance, call 311 or download our free 311 Direct Mobile App.

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Lisa Renton is 12 years old, but she didn’t know how to ride a bike. She recently learned how through the University of Miami Bike-Safe program, presented in partnership with Miami-Dade Parks since 2010.

Many young people like Alisa are hesitant to get on a bicycle and learn to ride because of a previous fall or incident. But give children a properly fitted bike helmet and instruct them on how to use the brakes, and soon they will be pedaling on their own. They can also get some coaching from Parks staff and UM BikeSafe program specialists. The kids often gain a newfound confidence in their knowledge of cycling skills and use of road traffic safety practices, which in turn reduces risks associated with cycling.

“The main lesson we want the children to get from our program is that they are responsible for their own safety. Biking should be a fun and enjoyable activity, but it’s important to protect ourselves and do it in a manner that keeps us out of danger. We teach them many different lessons and skills that can keep them safe and allow them to continue having fun while biking,” says Jonathan Hooshmand, MPH, BikeSafe Program Manager.

Through engaging bike rodeos, evidence-based curriculums and outreach events, middle school-aged students are taught bike safety tips. They learn how to check to see if their tire pressure is within the pounds per square inch range, the proper bike hand signals, how to be visible and predictable and more. During bike rodeos, participants are given a demonstration on a bike lesson, followed by group and one-on-one coaching.

According to Alisa, learning to ride a bike wasn’t that hard once she learned how to maintain balance. Alisa has bike safety tips and information about the health benefits of cycling that will help her grow into a healthy adult cyclist in the future.

For information about how your child or youth organization can participate in Miami-Dade Parks bike rodeos and cycling events, contact Sue Kawalerski at Susan.Kawalerski@miamidade.gov or Victor Jenkins at Victor.Jenkins@miamidade.gov.

—Keith Darby

Rules of the Road

In many states bicycles are considered vehicles and cyclists have the same rights and the same responsibilities to follow the rules of the road as motorists. When riding, always:

Go with the traffic flow. Ride on the right in the same direction as other vehicles – not against it.

Obey all traffic laws. A bicycle is a vehicle and you are a driver, so in the street, obey all traffic signs, signals and lane markings.

Yield to traffic when appropriate. Almost always, drivers on a smaller road must yield for traffic on a major or larger road. If there is no stop sign or traffic signal and you are coming from a smaller roadway (a driveway, sidewalk, bike path, etc.), you must slow down and look to see if the way is clear before proceeding. This also means yielding to pedestrians who have already entered a crosswalk.
Opened in 1947, Key Biscayne’s picturesque Crandon Park remains a favorite escape for residents and visitors of all ages.
Weekend outings to the beach were a big affair growing up in my family. Although we lived in sunny South Florida, our plans didn’t always include beach days. But when we longed for some fun in the sun, our family always ended up at the same spot: Crandon Park.

It became a family tradition, and some of my favorite childhood memories involved a day spent at Crandon Park enjoying the coconut palms, sandy beachfront and native vegetation. We hauled our load and quickly went on search for the coveted picnic table under the shade of a tree. There was a kindred spirit that one could feel as we joined countless other families doing the same thing — it almost felt like an extended family get-together, only they were strangers.
Kiteboarding also offers lessons, summer camps, paddleboard yoga and more, and instructors speak various languages. Visit www.miamikiteboarding.com for more information.

Safety is always important and Miami-Dade Fire Rescue lifeguards are on duty every day at the park’s eye-catching yellow lifeguard stands, built in the South Florida Vernacular architectural design style that encompass all of the buildings throughout Crandon Park.

People with mobility impairments can call 786-336-6982 to reserve a beach wheelchair.

For those who want to make their beach outings a more regular enjoyment, Crandon Park offers beach cabana rentals on a daily, monthly or even annual basis. These enclosed cabanas are ideal for large gatherings or for people who want a more private experience. Call the park office at 305-361-5421 for fees and availability.

Family Amusement Center
Children flock to Crandon's Family Amusement Center for a day of play away from the water where the main attraction is the historic carousel with its jumping horses, crafted of wood and molded aluminum in 1949 by the famous Allen Herschell Company. Other attractions include an outdoor skating rink, playground and tot lot, and a picnic pavilion popular for children’s birthday parties. The Family Amusement Center is only open on weekends and holidays.

Crandon Gardens
Crandon Park was the original site of Zoo Miami (formerly known as MetroZoo), which was located at what is now known as Crandon Gardens. The zoo structures, which were formerly animal enclosures, still exist but are now empty and open to all.
Crandon Gardens is another popular site because of the animals that still live there — not in enclosures, but in the wild. At every turn you’ll find native bird and fowl, including Sandhill cranes, spoonbill cranes, Ibis, various species of ducks and geese, and peacocks, which you encounter equally on the ground or up in a tree as you stroll through the garden.

Various reptile species can also be found including lizards, iguanas and the elusive and non-threatening crocodile. The Gardens also have picnic tables and benches. Insider tip: On most afternoons, people rush to stake their spot at one of the benches along the water to take in the breathtaking scenery after a long day at the office.

Crandon Park Visitor and Nature Center
The Crandon Park Visitor and Nature Center on North Beach is the start of the park’s nature trail through endangered mangroves, tropical hardwood hammock and other native

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**Play Like the Pros**

For two weeks, Miami-Dade Parks’ Crandon Park Tennis Center welcomes international tennis sensations like Serena Williams, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal to compete in the Miami Open presented by Itaú, but the rest of the year it’s open to the public. That’s right, the Crandon Park Tennis Center — site of one of the ATP Masters 1000 Series events, a premier event on the Women’s Tennis Association calendar — is a public facility that’s open to all.

Don’t miss your chance to play where the pros play, regardless of your ability level. Lessons are offered, reservations accepted and the courts are wheelchair-accessible.

**Pro Shop Hours**
8 a.m. – 9 p.m. Monday – Friday
8 a.m. – 7 p.m. Saturday – Sunday

**Tennis Court Hours**
8 a.m. – 10 p.m. Monday – Friday
8 a.m. – 7 p.m. Saturday – Sunday

**Facility Features**
- 21 hard courts including the stadium
- 6 HAR TRU green clay courts
- 13 lighted courts for evening play: 11 hard courts and 2 green clay
- Clubhouse that can be rented for social events and meetings accommodating up to 200 people.
  Tennis-related events only.

**Crandon Park Tennis Center**
7300 Crandon Boulevard, Key Biscayne
305-365-2300
If you prefer to experience Crandon Park from the water, kayak rentals are available on North Beach.
Tee Time

The championship 18-hole Crandon Park Golf Course is the perfect spot to practice your game while enjoying beautiful natural area views, as well as the Miami skyline. Surrounded by water, mangroves and lush, tropical foliage, the Crandon Park Golf Course is the only public golf course on Biscayne Bay, and anyone and everyone can play on it. This beautiful, but difficult par-72 course offers a spectacular seventh hole, which you must experience for yourself.

The gorgeous par-4 hole doglegs to the right and sends your golf ball soaring over crystal waters. The course has been rated among the top ten courses by *Golfweek* and named one of America’s top 75 upscale courses by *Golf Digest*.

From the first hole — a dogleg Par 5 that requires a drive over water and mangroves — to the last — another Par 5 with water on both sides of the fairway — Crandon Park Golf Course is, in many ways, Miami’s signature golf course.

Hours
Monday: 6:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Tuesday – Sunday: 6:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Facility Features
- Pro shop stocked with the latest golf apparel and equipment
- Electric carts/GPS/Titleist club rentals
- Restaurant and bar
- Lighted driving range
- Practice chipping and putting greens
- Ten-court tennis center on-site

Crandon Park Golf Course
6700 Crandon Boulevard
Key Biscayne
305-361-9129

fauna. The nature trail leads you to the boardwalk to Bear Cut Preserve, a designated natural environment study area and home to a fossilized reef.

Miami-Dade Parks’ naturalists are available to guide visitors through the preserve to explore the hammock, ocean and beach communities and see the amazing animals and plants that inhabit South Florida. At the end of the boardwalk, don’t miss the spectacular view of Miami’s skyline and the fragile fossilized reef that can only be viewed from the lookout point.

Crandon Marina
Located two miles south of the Rickenbacker Causeway, Crandon Marina is a first-class, 24-hour marina with boat launching ramps, wet and dry slips, commercial slips and a beautiful Dock Master building.

Also designed in the South Florida Vernacular architecture style, the Dock Master building features offices, a bait and tackle shop, marine store, restrooms, outdoor showers and more.

The marina accommodates vessels up to 80 feet long and also includes charter fishing, freshwater hookups, pump out stations, sailboat moorings, gas and diesel fuel, electric (maximum 50 amps), trailer dry storage, trailer parking, boat rentals and more.

The marina can be accessed by car or by boat. For more information, call 305-361-1281 daily from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. or visit www.miamidade.gov/parks/crandon-marina.asp.

—Edith Torres

Edith Torres is a frequent visitor to Crandon Park and a proud member of the Parks Communications and Marketing Unit. She encourages everyone to live a park life.

Plan Your Visit
6747 Crandon Blvd., Key Biscayne
Open from sunrise to sunset
Park office: 305-361-5421
$7 for weekend parking

Activities include eco-adventure tours, kite board and kayak rentals, bicycle rentals and more. Beach cabanas and beach wheelchairs are also available, as well as restrooms and a concession building. For more information, visit www.miamidade.gov/parks/crandon.asp.
Miami-Dade Parks means something different to everyone. For boaters, it means a place to store or launch their vessels. For the golfer, it’s about the six courses where they can hone their game. For parents, it’s about having peace of mind when their children are being cared for in one of several dozen after-school or out-of-school programs.

But for the children and adults with developmental/intellectual or physical disabilities who participate in Miami-Dade Parks Disability Services’ program, Miami-Dade Parks is a lifesaver — and that’s not an exaggeration.

For Carmen Vega, the Miami-Dade Parks Disability Services’ Adult Day Training Program at A.D. (Doug) Barnes Park has been a “home away from home” for her daughter Lillian, 49, and even an extension of the Vega family.

Lillian — a petite, stylish and well-coiffed woman — was born with Down syndrome. She has been in the program since 1992, half of her life. It’s the place where she socializes with friends, practices life skills and enjoys outings.

Her day sounds like a typical day for just about anyone, and that is exactly what Recreation Leader Avery Coats hopes to accomplish. Coats has spent 19 years teaching life skills to students and he has helped change the public’s perception of people with disabilities.

“We work with each of our participants and teach them life skills based on their ability, all to help move them towards becoming more independent,” Coats said. “From practicing hygiene skills to learning to use the microwave to setting goals to learning to swim, we want to make sure that each participant is as self-sufficient as possible, and along the way hope to change the way the world views people with developmental/intellectual and physical disabilities.”

Building Lasting Connections

In 1993, Miami-Dade Parks created the Disability Services unit, a therapeutic recreation program that uses recreation and other activity-based interventions to guide them toward better psychological and physical health, recovery and well-being.

Today, the program is a national model for other park systems across the nation. The goal is not only to provide accessible accommodations like restrooms and parking spaces, but also to connect people with disabilities to all elements of parks. From single-rider golf carts and beach wheelchairs to accessible beach showers and accessible pathways onto
A Great New Place to Play

Tamiami Park has unveiled the Miracle League of Miami-Dade’s new specially designed ball field for children with disabilities. The field was made possible by the Miami Marlins and the Marlins Foundation, who have been working alongside the Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade to raise $500,000 for the project. (Learn more about the Foundation on page 38.)

“This ballpark is a symbol of Parks’ willingness to make inclusion participation happen for all children,” Parks Director George Navarrete said. “My hope is that children and adults with disabilities will enjoy some competitive fun and experience what it feels like to win and lose, what it feels to support and encourage their teammates and that they will learn that no position is too small and that everyone on the team matters.”

The field is made of a rubberized surface so children with walkers, wheelchairs and other assistive devices have improved access to the field and experience what it’s like to play ball.

The Miracle League is a nationwide program that enables children with disabilities to play baseball and be part of a team. Ranging in age from 5 to 20, these individuals have an array of physical and mental challenges and disabilities that include autism, Down syndrome, cancer and attention deficit disorder.

Miami’s First Wheelchair Slalom Course

Camp Matecumbe will be the site of Miami-Dade County’s first Wheelchair Slalom course, thanks to a conscientious Eagle Scout named John Henry Bowles who chose to build this course for Miami-Dade Parks’ Disability Services program as his Eagle Scout project. With FPL External Affairs and other generous sponsors, Bowles and a team of volunteers — including Wynwood Graffiti artist Alex Lutin, who paints from his wheelchair — built the course in June at Camp Matecumbe, located at 13841 SW 120 St.

The course consists of 15 components uniquely designed and drawn to scale by Hank Bowles, an engineer and John Henry’s father. It will have interchangeable ramps to adjust to the difficulty level desired from beginner to advanced. Miami-Dade Parks’ Disability Services will introduce the Wheelchair Slalom course during its annual Paralympic Experience on Oct. 28 at Tropical Park, followed by a series of teaching clinics that will lead up to a Wheelchair Slalom tournament in early 2018 at Camp Matecumbe.
the sand, a range of resources ensure everyone can experience all that Miami-Dade Parks offers. Programs are available to individuals ages six and up.

As manager of Disability Services, Mary Palacios wants to make sure opportunities are offered for personal growth and development, but that they are also taking advantage of everything available to them.

“All of our participants complete an assessment to determine their unique needs. Some of the personal goals may include increasing socialization, improving frustration tolerance, improving self-esteem or increasing self-awareness, developing life skills and leisure awareness,” Palacios said.

“As we work with our participants and watch them learn and grow, we are not only connecting to the participant who gets to enjoy these experiences and feel fulfilled, but we also become a link to these families by meeting their family’s needs.”

The program is based on Life Skills Development Level 3, Adult Day Training (ADT) services intended to support the participation of recipients in valued routines of the community, including volunteering, job exploration, accessing community resources and self-advocacy, in settings that are age and culturally appropriate. But to many families, it is so much more than that. “This place means everything to Lillian,” Vega said. “We both love the staff, the other participants, the park itself and all the activities she gets to do. I drive an hour and a half each way to bring her here because there is nothing else like it in the city — this is the place that has helped her thrive.”

—Victoria Galan
For many of us, the idea of leaving home without our mobile phone, tablet or laptop is unimaginable. The thought of having no internet connection is even worse. Connectivity is no longer an option; it’s a necessity. But not everyone has access to or can afford Wi-Fi or internet service. That’s why public spaces like libraries and parks are so important.

The Miami-Dade Public Library System (MDPLS) has long offered patrons free access to computers, laptops and tablets, which connect to the internet, and free Wi-Fi at its 50 branches. The Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department offers the same services at many of its parks. And now, thanks to a partnership between MDPLS, Miami-Dade Parks and Miami-Dade County’s Information Technology Department, being connected outdoors at a public park is easier and more convenient than ever.

In an effort to provide residents with improved services and more amenities, free Wi-Fi service from four public library branches — Kendall, Kendale Lakes, West Dade and Palmetto Bay — has been extended into neighboring public parks. This partnership allows people to stay connected to the library while enjoying the outdoors.

“We strongly believe in developing synergies with other County departments such as Parks to provide residents with access to County services in innovative ways,” said MDPLS Director Ray Baker.

Patrons can now leave the office behind and get work done from a park bench with their laptops. If they’re in the mood to kick back, they can read an e-book downloaded from the library on their tablets while sitting on a blanket in the grass. Fresh air can also complement listening to music or watching a movie that was downloaded from the library’s free digital media service hoopla. Patrons can even bring their kids to play at the park while they pay bills online.

This new partnership is about more than convenience: studies show that being outdoors helps relieve stress, creates healthier communities and helps people feel more connected.
to their community, even if they’re on their mobile devices. Wi-Fi access also helps improve public safety and actually brings more people to public places like libraries and parks, something that’s especially important for those who don’t have Wi-Fi or internet connections at home. Libraries play an important role in providing access to information for everyone and that includes being connected. Extending Wi-Fi into neighboring parks is a natural fit.

So the next time you’re thinking of going to a coffee shop or hotel lobby to use free Wi-Fi, consider visiting your local park instead. Let nature inspire you while you share, communicate and connect with the digital world. 🌿

—Leila Khalil

Leila Khalil is the Public Affairs Officer for the Miami-Dade Public Library System.

The Miami-Dade Public Library System (MDPLS), a recipient of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service, serves as a community center and learning place to exchange ideas, learn, share and create. The Library strives to ensure that all residents, regardless of socioeconomic status, will be enriched through access to materials, technology, art and culture, and programs so they may develop the skills they need to create and produce innovations for the 21st century. Through its 50 locations, bookmobiles, Technobus, special services, website (www.mdpls.org) and MDPLS iLibrary app, the library proudly serves more than 7 million annual visitors.
Turning Risk into Reward

Miami-Dade Parks’ Fit2Lead program celebrates one year of helping at-risk youth develop leadership skills and more.

JK is one of the interns in the Fit2Lead program. We’re not using his real name because he has been trying to make a fresh start. When he started in Fit2Lead, JK had been kicked out of his home high school because of fighting and was about to start at an alternative high school. Today, he is a high school graduate and continues to work for Miami-Dade Parks. The Fit2Lead program helped him make positive changes in his life. JK is now a spokesperson for the program and has appeared in several television news interviews.

JK is one of several success stories in the Miami-Dade Parks’ Fit2Lead program, which launched just a year ago. “This year we have seen some struggles and some successes as we continue to fine-tune the program,” says Eric Hansen, Recreation Planning & Program Development Manager. “But despite whatever difficulties we encountered, we are proud of the fact that there were almost 400 youths engaged and involved in the program that not only keeps them safe, but also teaches them life skills. It is especially rewarding for our interns who are working and earning a paycheck.”

Making Kids Fit to Lead
The goals for the Fit2Lead program include:
• Providing intentional and explicit opportunities for at-risk youth ages 12–17.
• Allowing young adults to acquire and practice social and emotional skills through recreational activities and workshops that promote mental and physical health.
• Fostering long-term academic success and positive behavior.

Fit2Lead is made of two different components: Youth Enrichment and Sports (Y.E.S.) initiative, which is designed for young people ages 12–14, and the Park Internship Program (P.I.P.), which serves 15–17 year-olds. Y.E.S. is a free after-school program that provides academic tutoring, sports and enrichment sessions, as well as a healthy

Park Internship Program
The goal of the Park Internship Program (P.I.P.) is to provide jobs for teenagers, effectively keeping them out of trouble, and giving them life skills, a paycheck and diverse companions. A paid internship is also a plus when filling out college applications.

For me, one of the highlights of the P.I.P. is Enrichment Days. One day out of the week, interns meet up with their Recreation Leaders and discuss a range of skills that are pertinent to future success. Enrichment Days allow me to learn new skills — from how to effectively manage stress to how to manage money.

My favorite aspect of Enrichment, however, is bonding with my peers. By participating in Enrichment, I have become less introverted. I enjoy that each intern has a story to tell, individual ideals and dreams, and unique personalities. Everyone in P.I.P. helps to shape the program, and we grow by teaching each other.

The P.I.P. has been one of the most fascinating experiences of my life, and I hope it stays around for a very long time.

—Kovahree Jones
meal. P.I.P. offers entry-level, part-time paid positions that provide teens with on-site practical work experience, a paycheck and enrichment classes. The enrichment classes focus on topics like budgeting, resume writing, communication, stress management, health, goal setting and making positive choices.

**A Perspective on the Program**

Caitlin Alfonso is the Fit2Lead P.I.P. coordinator, and has been involved since the very beginning — even before there were students — so the program’s birthday is very special to her. “I have seen the growth in these interns,” she says. “Some came into the program so shy they couldn’t even stand up and talk in front of their peers. Today, they are vocal and opinionated leaders. We also had interns who struggled with controlling their anger. When they got frustrated, they would have an outburst and leave the classroom. Now, they can identify their feelings and can calm down on their own through breathing techniques we taught them. This last year has been so positive because you can see how their lives have changed in positive ways and their perception of themselves is so much more than what it was when they walked into the program on that first day.”

As the program continues to grow and develop, the staff has been assessing the lessons learned. “We learned what life skills our interns need additional help with,” Alfonso reflects. “We learned how to better structure the curriculum and we will roll out a new version of it in October. We are working on developing relationships with new partners to help get our interns involved in activities that inspire them to tap into their leadership skills.”

For Alfonso, this year has further fueled her passion for helping young people find their voice and their purpose. “There is so much opportunity around the corner, and this first year was truly just the start,” she says. “Fit2Lead has so much potential to impact Miami-Dade youth in a positive way. From teaching them skills that they may not learn at school or at home to earning a paycheck with this program, they can start realizing their dreams.”

—Victoria Galan
Golfers can register for one of the qualifying rounds for your chance at the Mayor’s Cup.

**JULY 16**  Greynolds Golf Course (9-holes)

**JULY 23**  Crandon Golf at Key Biscayne

**AUG 13**  Mayor’s Cup Championship at Crandon Golf at Key Biscayne

**TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR**
Shane Warriner
sw558@miamidade.gov
305-829-8456

**REGISTRATION FEE**
$10
Zoo Miami’s only Florida panther is part of an ongoing conservation effort to save this rare species.

meet
Mahala

Mahala is one of the few remaining Florida panthers and a special addition to Zoo Miami. A car had killed her mother and sibling, and she was found in a bougainvillea bush. After being rescued, she was taken to Lowry Park Zoo in Tampa and then transferred to Zoo Miami, which has become her permanent home. When Mahala was first brought to Zoo Miami in January 2015, the tiny cub weighed only 15 pounds. She was named Mahala by Dr. Mark Brown and Josie Romano Brown, who had given a generous donation to support Zoo Miami’s Florida: Mission Everglades expansion. Mahala means “powerful female” in several Native American languages.

Two-year-old Mahala now resides in the zoo’s new Florida: Mission Everglades expansion, along with several other native Florida animals, and represents a species that is one of the most highly endangered mammals on earth. Not only is Zoo Miami one of South Florida’s leading attractions, but it also serves as a leader in conservation. Zoo Miami’s veterinary staff assists biologists at the National Park Service and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in the Big Cypress National Preserve to conduct monitoring of the resident Florida Panther population in the preserve. Less than 200 panthers remain in Florida and are found in the Big Cypress National Preserve. This ongoing monitoring program helps guide policymakers in managing the population, tracking mortality events and learning about cub survival.

Visit Zoo Miami and experience the rare opportunity to see a Florida panther face-to-face. Hopefully, you will be inspired to learn more about this beautiful creature and the precious habitat she calls home.

If You Go
Zoo Miami
12400 SW 152 St., Miami
305-251-0400 • www.zoomiami.org
Zoo Miami is open every day of the year.
10 a.m. - 5 p.m. (last ticket sold at 4 p.m.)
Thanksgiving Day 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (last ticket sold at 2 p.m.)
Christmas Day Noon - 5 p.m. (last ticket sold at 4 p.m.)

Did You Know?
• The Florida Panther is a subspecies of the cougar.
• The last remaining population only exists in South Florida and occupies less than 5% of its former range.
• To remain viable, the current population would need to at least double in size.
• Problems include: little suitable contiguous habitat remains, female panthers are slow to disperse, habitat destruction and roadway mortality continues and male panthers aggressively maintain territories that are around 200 square miles.
July

July 1 – 4
$10 Days
Zoo Miami is proud to celebrate our nation’s birthday during $10 Days. Enjoy $10 admission (plus tax) and receive goodies from sponsors while enjoying all Zoo Miami has to offer – more than 3,000 animals, lushly-landscaped walkways, wildlife presentations, keeper talks, safari cycles, monorail rides, water play areas, children’s zoo, great food and drinks, and much more.
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; $10
Zoo Miami, 12400 SW 152 St.
305-251-0400
www.zoomiami.org

July 8
Full Moon Vinyasa Yoga
Enjoy the sunset and the ending of the day while welcoming the full moon at one of the most beautiful settings in South Florida. The July session is “Funyasa – Energy in Motion” with Zoe Plasencia.
6:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.; $15, ages 16 and up
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

July 16
Deering Discovery Day
Enjoy a day of family fun including hands-on science activities, a historic overview in the Courtyard, mini canoe tours (for an additional fee) and more. This month, discover the power of play and adventure during Park & Recreation Month. The National Recreation and Park Association is challenging everyone to get their play on with local parks and recreation. #PlayOnJulyGuests
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
$1 admission for ages 4 and up
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

August

August 7
Full Moon Vinyasa Yoga
Welcome the full moon and enjoy the serenity of Deering Estate. This session is “Boxtanga Yoga – Be Stronger” with Yogi Si.
6:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.
$15, ages 16 and up
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

August 26
Summer Cabaret Concert
The Summer Cabaret Concert Series features eclectic and world music artists in the intimate setting of the historic Stone House Ballroom.
8 p.m.; gate opens at 7 p.m.; $25
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org
September

September 2 – 4
MAS STRIPEZ:
Save the Tigers
Learn about the ways to help with tiger conservation. Did you know fewer than 3,200 tigers remain in the wild and their numbers are rapidly declining as a result of poaching and habitat destruction? Aside from educational talks, there will be activities such as face painting, crafts and more, including goodies at a bake sale/lemonade table.
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; included in Zoo Miami admission price
Zoo Miami, 12400 SW 152 St.
305-251-0400
www.zoomiami.org

September 6
Full Moon
Vinyasa Yoga
This yoga session is “Vinyasa Yoga: Flowing around the Moon” with Carlos Bello. Learn breathing and poses while surrounded by the beauty of Biscayne Bay.
6:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m. $15, ages 16 and up
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

September 8
Moonlight Canoe Trip
Take a moonlight canoe tour across Biscayne Bay and enjoy a campfire and s'mores on Chicken Key. Reservations required.
7 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.
$40, ages 18 and up
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

September 9
Quick Start to Kayaking Workshop
Discover how easy and fun kayaking can be on the scenic waters of Biscayne Bay. The workshop will introduce you to the basic skills necessary to begin safely paddling on small, calm bodies of water. Recommended for ages 9 and up. Space is limited.
9 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.; $25
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

September 10
Sunday Canoe Tour
Take a sunrise canoe tour across Biscayne Bay. Visit Chicken Key, a seven-acre mangrove island and bird rookery about one mile off shore. Reservations required.
7:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.; $30 for adults, $20 for children ages 9-14
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

September 13
Nite Hike, Campfire and Flag Retirement
View the woods and its wildlife as it comes to life at night. Visit the Tequesta burial mound and learn facts about the Tequesta Indians. Listen for great horned owls and eastern screech owls along the way. Gather under the stars around a crackling fire by the bay and enjoy complementary s'mores. This month will feature a flag retirement, the dignified way of retiring American flags that are no longer fit to serve the nation.
7 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.; $15, free for military personnel and veterans with proper military ID
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

September 16
Deering Discovery Day
Guests can enjoy $1 admission, as well as hands-on science activities, a historic overview in the Courtyard, mini canoe tours (for an additional fee) and more.
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; $1 admission for ages 4 and up
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

Event dates and information are subject to change. We suggest you contact each venue directly to confirm details.
Ongoing Events

Food Truck Tuesdays at Haulover Beach Park

Tuesdays
Come by for an evening under the stars with a variety of food trucks, music and entertainment the whole family can enjoy.
5 p.m. – 10 p.m.
Bill Bird Marina at Haulover Beach Park, 10800 Collins Ave.
305-947-3525
www.facebook.com/foodtruckstuesday

Deering Estate Summer Camp
June 12 – August 18
Campers ages 6-14 will explore, learn and become environmental stewards. During the weeklong sessions, campers will hike, play and discover how they can contribute to the protection of our natural areas. Activities are nature-based and include hiking, kayaking (ages 9-14), science experiments, arts and crafts, and more.
7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Eco Explorers (ages 6-8):
$165 for a five-day session
Expedition Deering (ages 9-14):
$190 for a five-day session
Please note weekly field trips will be an additional cost, ranging from $5-$12.
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

Sunrise Photography
July 16: 5:30 a.m. – 7:30 a.m.
August 19: 6 a.m. – 8 a.m.
September 23 – 24: 6 a.m. – 8 a.m.
Bring your photography friends to take sunrise photos of Biscayne Bay. The price also includes admission to the Estate during regular hours (10 a.m. – 4 p.m.) on the day of the photo shoot. Please register and pay in advance.
$20
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

Summer Butterfly Walk
July 22; August 26; September 23
The Deering Estate is home to several rarely seen species of butterflies. Guests will explore various habitats in search of Dina Yellow, Dingy Purplewing and Atala butterflies among the nearly 40 species onsite.
11 a.m. – noon; included in Deering Estate admission price
Deering Estate, 16701 SW 72 Ave.
305-235-1668, ext. 233
www.deeringestate.org

Disability Service Activities

After School and Seasonal Camp Programs for Children with Disabilities

Summer camp: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
After school: 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Free
Westwind Lakes Park
For residents ages 6-22
6805 SW 152 Ave.
305-380-9106
bphilli@miamidade.gov

Wheelchair Basketball
For adults with physical disabilities
September – March
Saturday, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Free
1401 Westward Drive
Miami Springs
305-234-1673 or 305-380-9106
jsantia@miamidade.gov or dbonet@miamidade.gov
If you need equipment, please contact for availability.

Contact the parks directly for more information.

Event dates and information are subject to change. We suggest you contact each venue directly to confirm details.
Saturday, August 5, 2017, 10 am - 2 pm
Main Branch, 1500 NW 107 Ave.

Mobile DMV • Mobile Library • Free Snow Cones & Popcorn* • World Explorer Hunt
Rock Climbing Wall • Bounce House...and much more!

dcfcu.org/kids • 305-471-5080

*While supplies last.
With the rainy season upon us, summer is the perfect time to take your landscape from drab to fab by adding plants that attract all types of pollinators: bees, butterflies, moths or birds. Adding plants that bring life via flight will give new delights to your garden. Pollinators bring the delicious, nutritious and healthy fruits and vegetables that we love to eat, like mangos.

It’s important to be aware of this because right now there’s a decline of bees and a loss of habitat for migrating monarch butterflies. In addition, there are also many butterfly species that are rare, imperiled, endangered or on the decline, and are likely to become destroyed or determined to be extinct in South Florida. Miami Blue, the local chapter of the North American Butterfly Association, has 39 imperiled butterflies listed on their website (www.miamiblue.org) as well as larval host plants for 93 butterflies found in Miami-Dade County. In other words, almost half of our local butterflies are threatened.

**What Can You Do to Help?**

First, learn about what plants to introduce into your yard to attract butterflies and other pollinators. Whether you are an experienced gardener or want to get a green thumb, the University of Florida IFAS Extension Office is available to assist you in making the best plant choices for your garden.

One of Florida-Friendly Landscaping’s (FFL) key principles is Right Plant, Right Place, which means choosing the right plant that is suitable for South Florida’s environmental conditions and one that can grow with little pruning, synthetic fertilizers and less irrigation. The right place pertains to the site condition where you plant the plant.

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**Celebrating Winged Wonders**

Butterfly and Bird Day at Castellow Hammock Preserve and Nature Center will be back in the fall, though the exact date is still undetermined. There will be plants, educational presentations, information and interesting butterfly and bird nature walks.

Visit Miami Blue Chapter’s website (www.miamiblue.org) to find out more.

**Castellow Hammock Preserve and Nature Center**  
22301 SW 162 Ave.  
305-242-7688
The University of Florida’s Extension Office is part of the Miami-Dade Parks Department. The Extension is a partnership between state, federal and county governments to provide scientific knowledge and expertise to the public. Thousands of Extension faculty members, scientists, educators, administrative staff and volunteers help provide solutions for your life.

**Want to Grow A Butterfly Garden?**

Here are a few must-have plants:

- **Passiflora superosa**: A small vine or ground cover that is a larval host plant for Zebra Longwing, Gulf Fritillary and Julia Longwing butterflies.
- **Firebush/Hamelia Patens**: A shrub or small tree that provides nectar for hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, berries for birds and a larval host plant for the Pluto sphinx.
- **Butterfly Bush/Varronia bullata**: A medium shrub with small nectar and rich white flowers.
- **Scorpionstail/Heliotropium angiospermum**: Very attractive when planted in groups and grows to approximately four feet. It attracts small pollinators and all butterflies.
- **Red Salvia/Salvia Coccinea**: A medium to tall herbaceous wildflower with scarlet flowers that attracts humming birds and all insect pollinators.
- **Wild Sage/Lantana involucrate**: A medium shrub that’s the preferred nectar source for insect pollinators.
- **Privet Senna/Senna ligustrina**: A shrub-like plant that blooms all year and is the larval host plant for Sleepy Orange and Cloudless Sulphur butterflies.
- **Coontie/Zamia integrifolia**: This small herb-like shrub is the larval host for the Atala butterfly, which is no longer an endangered species but is still listed as a species of concern. Plant at least a dozen Coontie since the Atala travels as a colony: they arrive, lay eggs and new butterflies emerge at one time.
- **Frog Fruit/Phyla nodiflora**: This ground cover plant is considered by many to be a lawn weed, but butterflies love this plant. It’s the larval host plant for Common Buckeye, White Peacock and Phaon Crescent while offering nectar for many other species of butterflies.
- **Pineland croton/Croton linearis**: This small shrub is the larval host for Bartram’s Scrub-Hairstreak and Florida Leafwing Butterflies.

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**Save The Date**

**Saturday, October 21**

**Butterfly & Bird Kids Day**

Walks and talks about nature and birds with lots of fun children’s programming.

Castellow Hammock Preserve and Nature Center

22301 SW 162 Ave.

**Barbara McAdam**

Barbara McAdam is the Urban Horticulture Program Specialist Florida Yards & Neighborhoods at UF/IFAS Extension Miami-Dade County.
The bell rang. School’s out. Now what? Whether it’s after school or during the summer, it’s important to keep kids engaged. All across the country, those critical hours after school are concerns for parents, kids and the community. Underserved families with lower family income levels benefit most from after-school programs. The Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade wants to help these children stay engaged in learning by getting them involved in sports and active play. The Fit2Play™ Scholarship Fund helps underserved children attend the award-winning Miami-Dade Parks’ Fit2Play™ after-school program, which provides children and teens with an evidence-based health and wellness program.

Each session begins with homework help and is followed by Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids (SPARK) activities and EmpowerMe4Life, a nutrition education curriculum grounded in the American Heart Association’s recommendations. With parental permission, pre- and post-biometric and physical aptitude testing is conducted and managed by the University of Miami. The information is processed and the results can serve as valuable insight for pediatricians and parents to successfully manage the health of the child. In April, the program was awarded the Blue Sapphire Award by the Florida Blue Foundation, a branch of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation Inc., and $50,000 was awarded to the Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade to enhance the program.

Under the umbrella of the Fit2Play program is Miami-Dade Parks’ general program camps. The Parks Foundation’s long-term partner AvMed has annually sponsored The Morning Mile® program in all 36 Fit2Play general program camps. The Morning Mile program incentivizes children to start their day with a one-mile walk or run. AvMed sponsors the starter kits, which include boom boxes and CDs to play music while the campers are walking, along with necklaces and charms that each child receives after achieving various milestones. At Miami-Dade Parks’ summer camps, each summer camp session begins with the Morning Mile and after five miles logged, campers receive a charm.

Studies have shown that if kids are alone and not engaged in a supervised program after school lets out, they are at a higher risk of participating in risky behaviors, including juvenile crime or being bullied. Findings from the Harvard Family Research Project indicate that after-school programs help prevent risky behavior. Research also suggests that after school programs lead to academic achievement, social and emotional development, as well as improvement in overall health and wellness in participants. In after school programs, children learn teamwork, time management skills and how to pursue their interests.

The Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade’s Fit2Play Scholarship Fund is working hard to keep kids safe and engaged. To donate or become a corporate partner, visit www.liveaparklife.org.

— Edith Torres

The Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade helps to foster the recreational, educational, environmental and cultural life of the Miami-Dade County community by encouraging and soliciting support for Miami-Dade County’s Parks. Their vision is to enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors by securing dedicated funding to preserve and promote parks and parks programming.
The Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our donors and partners whose support ensures the preservation and enhancement of programs and facilities at Miami-Dade County Parks:

American Forests
Richard Anderson
AvMed
Commissioner Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.
Chairman, Board of County Commissioners
Abbey Chase
Coca-Cola Refreshments
Coconut Grove Bank
John E. Daly & Margaret T. Daly
Representative Jose Feliz Diaz
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Maira Diaz-Giusti
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The Grainger Foundation
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Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan
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Macy's
Miami-Dade Police Department's Law Enforcement Trust Fund
Miami Dolphins Foundation
Miami-Dade County Commission For Women
The Miami Foundation
Commissioner Dennis C. Moss
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The Summer Arts & Science Camps for Kids (SAS-C)
Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs
John Squitero
Katz Barron Squitero Faust
University of Illinois
Alternative Spring Break
U.S Soccer 5, LLC
Walgreens
Lynn Wiener
Wells Fargo Foundation

Visit www.liveparklife.org or call us at 305-755-7804.

The Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to support recreational, educational, environmental and cultural life experiences through the Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department.
We Have A Camp For That

June 12 thru August 11

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