Thursday, January 17, 2013, 7-8 PM
Kathryn Weedman Arthur, Ph.D., University of South Florida
Scraping with Layers of Meaning: Ethnoarchaeological Studies of Stone Scrapers

For the last 15 years, Dr. Arthur has been conducting research in southern Ethiopia focusing on people who continue to make and use stone scrapers on a daily basis. Her presentation will focus on the nature of ethnoarchaeological research and will discuss the results of her research regarding the relationship between a knapper's age, skill, and gender, and how these identities affect tool-size, working-edge, and breakage rates during use, resharpening, and recycling.

Thursday, February 21, 2013, 7-8 PM
Mike Terrell, The Florida Aquarium
The Scottish Chief and the Battle of Ballast Point

The Battle of Ballast Point was the only significant battle in the Civil War to take place in the Tampa Bay area. At the heart of that skirmish was one of Tampa's early mayors, James McKay, and his vessel the Scottish Chief, which he used to run the Union naval blockade to continue trading with Cuba and Europe and get supplies for the Confederate effort during the war. Sunk during the Battle of Ballast Point, the Scottish Chief was preserved on the bottom of the Hillsborough River for over 100 years. Initially discovered by local recreational divers, the Scottish Chief is now a major element in the Florida Aquarium's Tampa Bay Historical Shipwreck Survey. Scientific Divers from the aquarium have been working on the wreck site for over two years, uncovering information about this significant part of Tampa's past.

Thursday, March 21, 2013, 7-8 PM
Ryan Harke, Florida Public Archaeology Network, West Central Region
Stable Isotope Analysis of Busycon sinistrum to Determine Fort Walton-Period Seasonality at St. Joseph Bay, Northwest Florida

Coastal Fort Walton cultures (AD 1000-1500) in the St. Joseph Bay region of northwest Florida emphasized marine and estuarine foraging in sharp contrast with contemporaneous inland Fort Walton societies, who relied on maize agriculture. It is unknown whether coastal groups represent separate hunter-gatherer-fisher populations or seasonal migrations by inland-farming villagers. Stable isotope analysis was used to determine the season of capture of lightning whelks (Busycon sinistrum) from the Richardson's Hammock site and infer season of occupation. The isotopic results suggest that shellfish collecting was relegated primarily to the summer months, producing a scheduling conflict with the primary growing season for maize in northwest Florida. Thus, it is argued that coastal and inland Fort Walton represent separate culture groups.

These programs are free and open to the public. Register at least 24 hours prior by visiting www.pinellascountyextension.org, clicking on the “Online Class Registration” button, and then choosing “Weedon Island”. You may also phone 727-453-6500 to reserve your place.