

Mayor's Remarks

**NPCA Celebration of Biscayne National Park's
40 Years of Marine Heritage**

Deering Estate

Oct. 18, 2008

As Mayor of Palmetto Bay, and on behalf of the Village Council, I welcome you to our wonderful city – home to this remarkable Charles Deering Estate and, of course, Biscayne National Park.

I wish to express how proud we are of the continued commitment of the National Parks Conservation Association. Their unfailing efforts have insured Biscayne Bay's pristine beauty will forever be protected and enhanced for all generations.

As you know, Palmetto Bay is a coastal community and we remain committed to restricting development activities that would damage or destroy coastal resources. Along those lines – and although our only access to Biscayne Bay is the Deering Estate and our newly acquired Thalatta Park – Palmetto Bay specifically included a management element in its comprehensive master plan to ensure preservation of vital shoreline areas.

The value a community places on its parks says so much about that community. On a smaller scale, Palmetto Bay is doing its part to protect and enhance its natural green areas, shorelines, and recreational facilities so that they may be enjoyed by all residents, young and old, now and well into the future.

Palmetto Bay is home to seven recreational facilities, including this beautiful Estate and Bill Sadowski Park, which are managed by Miami-Dade County. The others include Coral Reef Park, Perrine Wayside Dog Park, Palmetto Bay Park, our Bayside Library and Community Center, and Thalatta Park, truly one of the most serene parks in Miami-Dade County.

In an unprecedented effort to preserve an important landmark in South Miami-Dade County, Palmetto Bay purchased the Thalatta property through assistance from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Land & Water Conservation Fund. This neighboring estate includes a beautiful, two-story vintage residence on four acres of vast fields along the shore of Biscayne Bay. By the way, the word Thalatta comes from the Greek word, "thalassa," meaning "the sea." This park offers a habitat for herons, pelicans, marine iguanas, and other plant and wildlife known to reside in mangroves, which adorn the northeast portion of the property.

While planned improvements to the site are presently underway, when it reopens to the public, visitors will find themselves breathless with the splendor of the view of Biscayne Bay.

The value a community places in the preservation of its natural environment also says a lot about that community. Here again, Palmetto Bay remains concerned and determined to do all that we can to preserve and improve our environment. Along those lines, we have planted more than 600 new trees across our city in recent years – and with another 130 planned in the upcoming year – Palmetto Bay will soon receive official designation as an official “Tree City USA” community.

We are also planning to roll-out several key recycling initiatives made possible by a \$100,000 Florida State grant to be used specifically for this purpose.

And in Palmetto Bay, we recognize Earth Day not just one day a year, but one an entire week per year. This past spring, for example, we raised awareness of the importance of conservation during a celebration that included a wide range of activities, including nature and conservation discussions held at the Chinese bridge in the Deering Estate,

neighborhood cleanups, and a lady-bug release in local elementary school yards.

Palmetto Bay remains proud of our efforts and is thankful to the National Parks Conservation Association and commends this outstanding organization for its dedication to protecting this fine gem – Biscayne Bay National Park. We hope to partner with NPCA and Miami-Dade County to continue to do this crucial work.

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