

WILTON MANORS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HISTORICAL NOTES

JULY 2017

M.E. DePalma

Wilton Manors Pioneer - 2017

by Benjamin B. Little

Wilton Manors Historical Society

M.E. DePalma was honored by the Wilton Manors City Commission on May 9, 2017 as a Wilton Manors Pioneer. Nominated for the honor by the Wilton Manors Historical Society, Ms DePalma represented the City of Wilton Manors at the Broward County Historic Preservation Board's Pioneers Day Celebration on May 20, 2017. Broward County has recognized pioneers for over 40 years, honoring longtime residents who have been active in their communities, exemplifying a "pioneer" spirit.

Ms DePalma arrived in Wilton Manors in 1993. In 2004 she led the charge to have Wilton Manors designated as a Certified Wildlife Habitat. She worked with residents and businesses and the City to create spaces which were friendly to native wildlife. This involved planting noninvasive vegetation, limiting the use of pesticides, and creating environments which require minimal water. Due to her efforts and relentless leadership, Wilton Manors was designated as a Certified Wildlife Habitat in 2006. Wilton Manors was the 17th community in the nation so honored. Today there are over 90 designated communities and over 70 currently in the process.



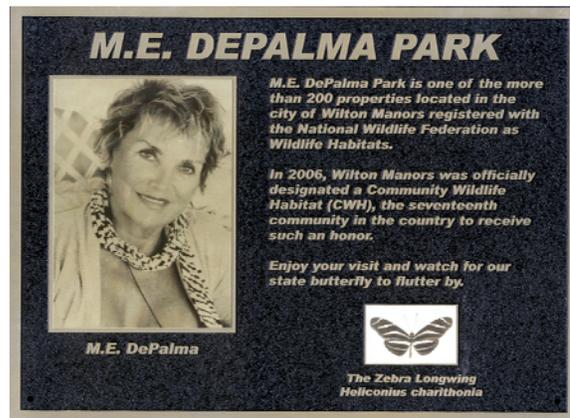
With WMHS Paul A. Kuta and Commissioner Tom Green

She led classes in NatureScaping for adults, students, and city employees, frequently wearing large butterfly wings. She serves on the Broward County NatureScape Board and sat on the Wilton Manors NatureScape Committee. Ms DePalma co-authored the best-selling book *A Garden Diary: A Guide to Gardening in South Florida*.



In 2010, Slash Pine Park at 686 N. E. 20th Drive was renamed M.E. Depalma Park in her Honor. She has transformed it into the consummate butterfly friendly garden. The park contains more than 100 varieties of wildflowers and native plants.

No less important, unless you are a butterfly, she served two terms on the Planning and Zoning Board, and is currently a member of the Community Affairs Advisory Board (CAAB) and the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) for Wilton Manors. Ms DePalma served as Vice President and is a former Board Member of the Eastside Neighborhood Association, serving as Communications Chairman for 7 years. She was on the Board of "Insight for the Blind," owns and actively runs two companies, is an accomplished fly fisherman., and is a former model and private investigator.



Ms DePalma created the first web site for the City of Wilton Manors and in 2003 The South Florida Business Journal recognized her company as one of the top 25 Design and Development companies in South Florida.

She is a two-time winner of "The Emerald Award", Broward counties highest environmental honor, for her work in the community and for her personal garden, a Backyard Wildlife Habitat with National and State recognition.

She has written articles, seminars, and training programs for corporations and for trade journals, and has contributed gardening articles to "Birds & Blooms" Magazine, The Sun-Sentinel, Better Homes and Gardens, and many other publications.

Ms DePalma is much loved by all whose lives she touches, including our feathered residents and local Papilionoidea. She is truly a "Pioneer."

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