

Two Moringa oleifera trees were dedicated today in honor of two amazing men..

The dedication was presented by **Rose Bechard Butman**:

Arthur J. "Skip" Mackey Jr., or as I called him, "Skippy"... was a very smart and interesting person. His life became more interesting when he met M.E. DePalma. The poor guy didn't know what hit him!

Skip, who was an Engineer and the "Voice of N.A.S.A.", got lured and caught by M.E. through her determination to get him to take her fishing. I had the honor of officiating at this "Fishermen's Wedding" and literally had them tie the knot.

In addition to fishing, Skippy got dragged to every garden event that M attended. She even got him to dress up as caterpillar man to her butterfly woman, much to the delight of the children and adults who attended Arbor Day events that I planned and presented over the past several years in Broward County.

Skippy fought a long illness but between chemo treatments M.E. would keep taking him fishing all over the place and that seemed to have kept him going.

His body gave out before his will and before he died, he said "If you want to do something for me when I am gone just take a kid fishing or do something for the environment."

"Skippy", it is an honor to plant this Moringa tree for you today along with your friend David McLean's companion tree.

David McLean

Where can I start? David was definitely a spicy guy!

David & I crossed paths on so many occasions - since we both preached to the same choir and both supported the Lighthouse of Broward's sensory garden. Whenever I saw David's name on a program, a smile would come to my face. I knew that first, he would have me laughing and second, I would actually learn something new! David was a randy raconteur who, at some point, made any topic bring tears of laughter to your eyes. He always had the garden club ladies in a twitter.

There are some people you use as your "go to person. For plant i.d. and diagnostics, I always went to Bob Haehle, for orchids Micky Carmichael and her daughter Gayle, for trees Tom Chancey, and for native plant inquiries it was always David.

David touched so many people. Never inappropriately, but there was always that possibility! Everyone in the green industry knew David. It always shocked me that after

all these years after his retirement from academia, how many young people he still impacted. There is a young lady at Allstate named Holly, who works in mitigation. I was stumped one day on a plant sample. I showed it to her and as soon as she identified it - , it clicked with me. "Yes, that is it! ", I said. Then, she added that she knew the specimen because David McLean had taught her to i.d. it at Secret Woods. David's knowledge is still alive because he shared with young people.

Moringa is the tree that our garden circle is named after. It is a spicy tree with all parts being edible and very nutritious. A wonderful specimen – just like these wonderful men.