

My name is Sandra Yates. I am 77 years old, born in Key West in 1940, on Whitehead St. I would like this read today at your meeting. I am five generations conch. My family were the Saunders (Jack Saunders, state representative). My grandfather was the distinguish Jose Abreu educator of the San Carlos and freedom fighter with his friend Jose Marti. I come from a long line of Cuban and Bohemian people who loved this island because of it's colorful people and it's beautiful trees. I played under many of these trees as a child. I picked its fruit and played in its shade. My memories flow back to the times when this island had more trees than its people. With great sorrow, I have seen my island change. Most of it, not for the good. Since this old conch can not visit as often because it has become a haven where we cannot afford to visit. I want to be the voice of the past. Because without the past there is no present. Please save our trees, so that the little conch children will have the same memories that I had. Thank you for hearing my request. Please save our trees, because with each one, there is a story behind it. Thank you.

Sandra Nelson Yates