

## ALBUM PRIMARY SOURCES FOR "SAVING AMERICAN BEACH: THE BIOGRAPHY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTALIST MAVYNEE BETSCH"

### Album Description

Last week I read Heidi Tyline King's *Saving American Beach: The Biography of African American Environmentalist MaVynee Betsch* and was fascinated to learn this story. After going down my own rabbit hole, I decided to create an album for anyone looking for primary sources to pair with this picture book biography. In the days of Jim Crow, the beaches in Jacksonville, Florida were segregated, so MaVynee's grandfather purchased land and created his own beach, American Beach. After a career as an opera singer, MaVynee returned to American Beach where she fought to save the Beach. Pre K - 2 3 - 5  
Conservation American Beach MaVynee Betsch

**THE MIAMI TIMES. [VOLUME], AUGUST 13, 1949, PAGE PAGE FIVE, IMAGE 5**

**National Baptists, Inc. Starts Interracial Revivals in South '50-'51**

**Letters To Editor**

**Amazingly True!**  
The New Historical Residential Area  
At Beautiful  
**AMERICAN BEACH  
FLORIDA**  
ON BIRM, MIP and LEVELED LOTS  
With Beach, Pool, Tennis, Can, Electric, High,  
Paved, Water, Sewer, Telephone and Mail Box  
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any number of lot subdivisions into business, farming and  
other subdivisions to purchase one of these lots

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ONE 1/2 ACRE LOTS ON THE BEACH  
**\$75.00**  
The Beach, Ocean, Pool, Tennis, Can, Electric, High,  
Paved, Water, Sewer, Telephone and Mail Box Service

**BUT REMEMBER**  
"AMERICAN BEACH" is not a name for a new development, it is a name for a new way of living. It is a name for a new way of life. It is a name for a new way of thinking. It is a name for a new way of feeling. It is a name for a new way of acting. It is a name for a new way of being. It is a name for a new way of living. It is a name for a new way of life. It is a name for a new way of thinking. It is a name for a new way of feeling. It is a name for a new way of acting. It is a name for a new way of being.

**ONLY 25 MINUTES DRIVE**  
From the heart of Miami to the heart of the beach. It is a name for a new way of living. It is a name for a new way of life. It is a name for a new way of thinking. It is a name for a new way of feeling. It is a name for a new way of acting. It is a name for a new way of being.

**At Exclusive Negro Development Owned  
Controlled and Offered only by  
The Afro-American Pension  
Bureau Inc.**  
401 East Ocean Drive, Miami Beach, Fla.

**Leonard's  
FURNITURE STORE**  
144 N. W. 2nd Street, Miami, Fla.

**Reference Link:** <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83004231/1949-08-13/ed-1/seq-5>

Newspaper: The Miami times. [volume] (Miami, Fla.) 1923-current

Newspaper Link: <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83004231/1949-08-13/ed-1/seq-5>

Image provided by: University of Florida

PDF Link: <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83004231/1949-08-13/ed-1/seq-5.pdf>

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### Teaching Notes:

I've been to American Beach on Amelia Island, Florida. There is now a museum at American Beach led by a dear friend of Mavynee Betch (the great-granddaughter of the founder of American Beach). Here is the link to its website: <https://americanbeachmuseum.org/>

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### Teaching Notes:

I have been to Jacksonville before but now must go back to visit the beach and learn more of its important history. Yes, reading Zora Neale Hurston on American Beach seems apropos.

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### Teaching Notes:

Oh wow. Thank you so much for sharing this story of Bruce's Beach. There was a segregated beach and amusement park (Lincoln Beach) here in New Orleans, too. Now I want to look into the history of it. The space is essentially abandoned now. I have some photos from when I snuck onto the property when I was in college--empty swimming pools and abandoned structures. I now want to explore more of the history of that beach, what is happening to that property, is there a plaque or monument?

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### **Teaching Notes:**

Yes! I LOVE Ekua Holmes, too! I was so excited to discover the book and her story. I really want to visit American Beach!

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### **Teaching Notes:**

Such a wonderful album. I love American Beach and when I went there the first time was unaware of its important history. Can't wait to access the interview with Zora Neale Hurston!!! She may be my next "beach read" when I visit again.

## Teaching Notes:



Wonderful album

Soline Holmes! Thanks for the information on MaVynee Betsch and *Saving*

*the American Beach*. We've been following another historic segregation story about a beach in Southern California that has been making the news, Bruce's Beach. I was looking for a connection in the Library of Congress- and with the MaVynee Betsch story, you have found it! It is a different story with the same beginning and end - beaches segregated because of Jim Crow and civil rights activists fighting to save those beaches.

### Bruce's Beach in the News:

- Los Angeles Times -Bruce's Beach can return to descendants of Black family in landmark move signed by Newsom
- Insider: Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a bill returning historic 'Bruce's Beach' land to descendants of Black couple who were run out a century ago.
- NBC News - After California moves to return Bruce's Beach to Black family, a push to recover other seized land
- NPR A Black family got their beach back — and inspired others to fight against land theft

My son lives near there and he sent a couple of pictures of the plaque at the Beach.







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### Teaching Notes:



Soline Holmes I bought this book because I am such a fan of Ekua Holmes, but I was thrilled to learn more about MaVynnee Betsch -- thanks so much for this terrific album!

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## **NPR INTERVIEW ABOUT ZORA NEALE HURSTON VISITING AMERICAN BEACH**

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## **SAVING AMERICAN BEACH: THE BIOGRAPHY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTALIST MAVYNEE BETSCH**

# THE MIAMI TIMES. [VOLUME], AUGUST 13, 1949, PAGE PAGE SIX, IMAGE 6



**Reference Link:** <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83004231/1949-08-13/ed-1/seq-6>

Newspaper: The Miami times. [volume] (Miami, Fla.) 1923-current

Newspaper Link: <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83004231/1949-08-13/ed-1/seq-6>

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## SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE: "BEACH LADY"

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## **NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL 2021: SAVING AMERICAN BEACH**



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## **FLORIDA HUMANITIES "FOR THE LOVE OF AMERICAN BEACH"**



**AMERICAN BEACH MUSEUM**

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## **AUDIO INTERVIEW WITH MAVYNEE BETSCH**

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## **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: MAVYNEE "BEACH LADY" BETSCH**