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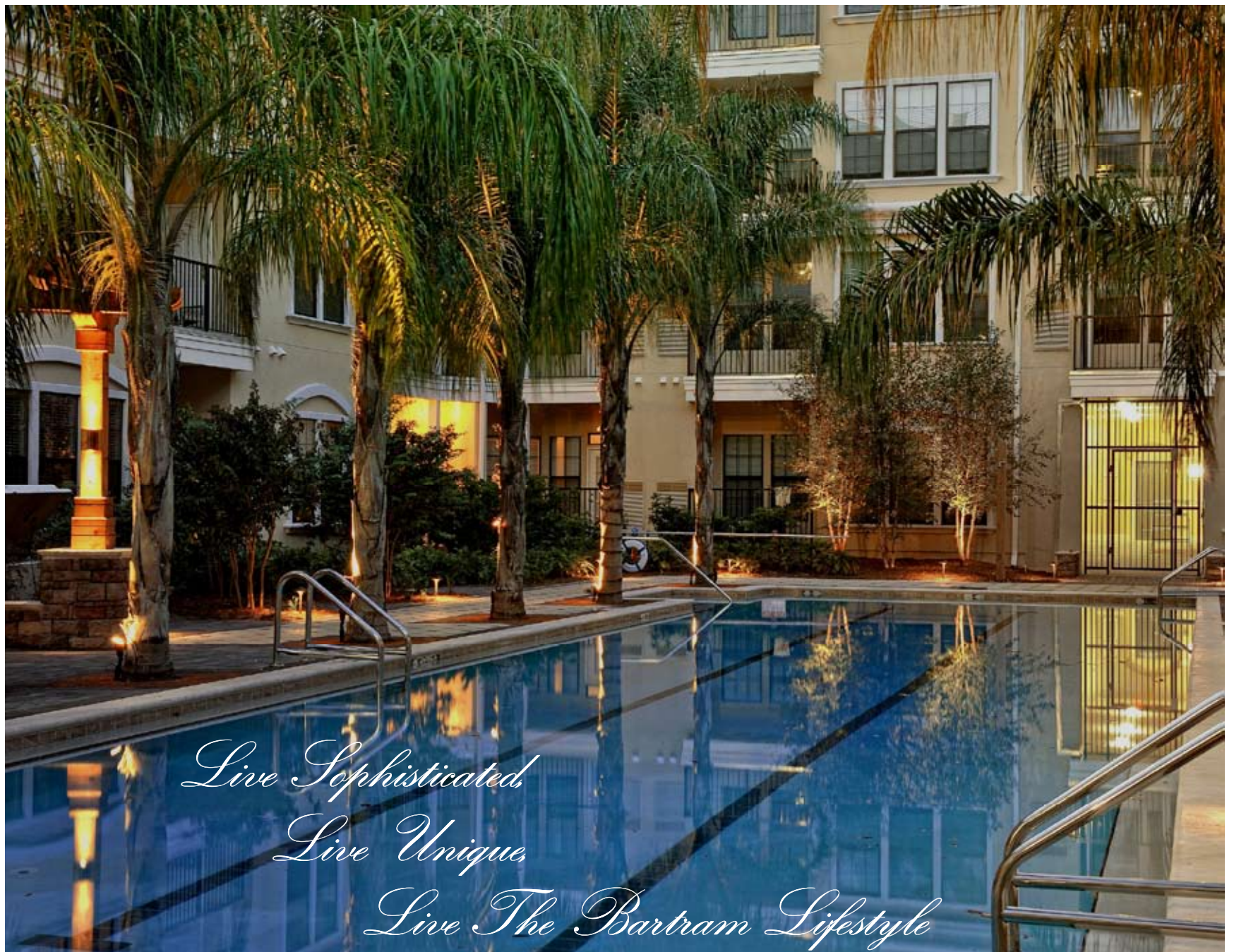


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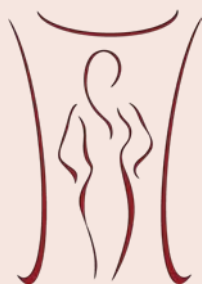
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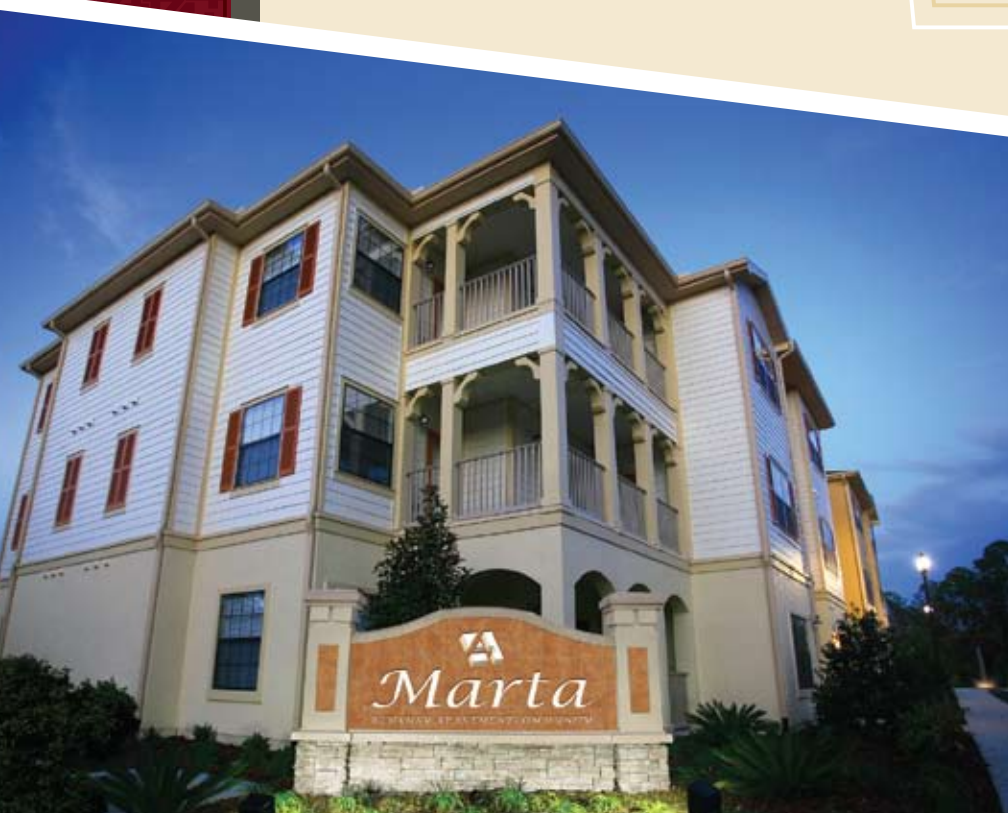
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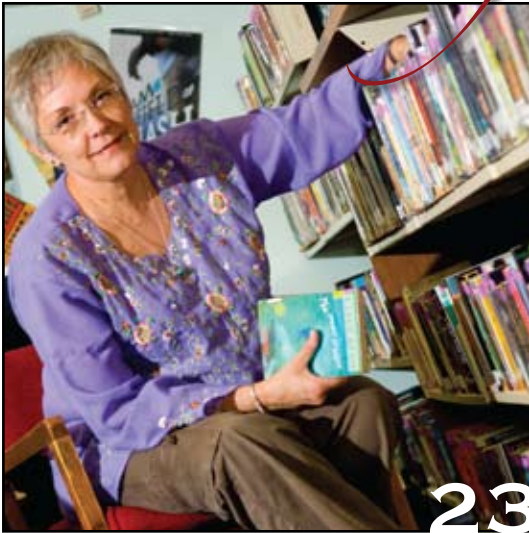
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## *From the Publisher*

This issue begins our annual Back to School/Education Issue. What is important to us is that we maintain our integrity of offering something different and supporting our theme. You will see many articles in this issue relating to education and I hope one (or many) resonates with you. Please feel free to contact us and let us know.

I am especially proud of our cover story this month on Dr. Jackson Sasser, President of Santa Fe College. Dr. Sasser epitomizes all that is good about the Heart of Florida. Dr. Sasser has worked hard to make access to college easier. He has accomplished that by not only growing the main campus, but by expanding into neighboring cities so that it is easier for any student to further their education.

Our Community Impact story introduces an issue that is critical to the well being of our area – high school graduation rates. This is an issue that has ramifications for both our quality of life and our workforce.

One of my favorite sections is the Excellence in Education section, sponsored by O2B Kids. The nine teachers featured were all nominated and are shining examples of the kind of people who will help shape the next generation in a very positive fashion.

We also have a feature on Take Stock In Children – one of the great programs working with the school board as part of the effort to keep students in school and improve graduation rates.

Even our Fashion Corner this issue focuses on education, as we feature local kids modeling clothes fashionable for Back to School.

In Around the Home, we include our Landscape Calendar, which looks at tropical flowers and plants and continue out six-part series on green building with David Melville, the owner of David Melville Contracting Services, Inc.

Business takes a look at Screen Doctors, Howe Development and TCBY. Screen Doctors is a local leader in making your home cooler and more energy efficient with its retractable screen doors. Howe Development, a developer/builder is doing terrific things in residential, office and light commercial construction. Finally, there is a spotlight on Ken Rembert, owner of Bagel Bakery and three local TCBY's. You may remember we featured Davis and Judy Rembert, Ken's parents, on our cover. Like Davis and Judy, Ken is a shining example of a successful local business owner that is dedicated to helping make our community great.

Our Travel Corner is on Jekyll Island – another of those great getaways that are not far from Gainesville. Visiting Jekyll is like stepping back to a different time, walking in the footsteps of the likes of J.P. Morgan, William Rockefeller and Joseph Pulitzer.

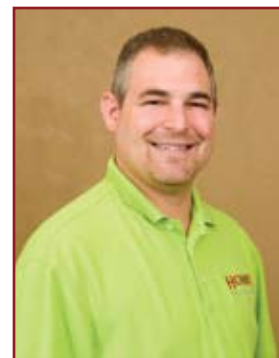
Sports & Recreation includes a feature on our two newest Gator football coaches – Brian White and Scot Loeffler. Brian and Scot are two more examples of why our team is in good hands, as they share Coach Meyer's commitment to helping high school kids grow into responsible young men that will get their degree and maximize their talents. We also have from ESPN Radio's Brady Ackerman a preview to this year's high school football in North Central Florida.

Among our calendar stories are our friends Sister Hazel, the Sebastian Ferrero Foundation's annual fundraising event, Noche de Gala and Child Advocacy Center's Gainesville Gone Nashville. We have also expanded on A Taste of HOME.

I may write this every time, but I really do appreciate your response to HOME, and, as always, I look forward to your input and ideas. Our next two issues are going to be our annual Medical/Healthcare issue and our annual Charity/Non-Profit issue.

*Scott*

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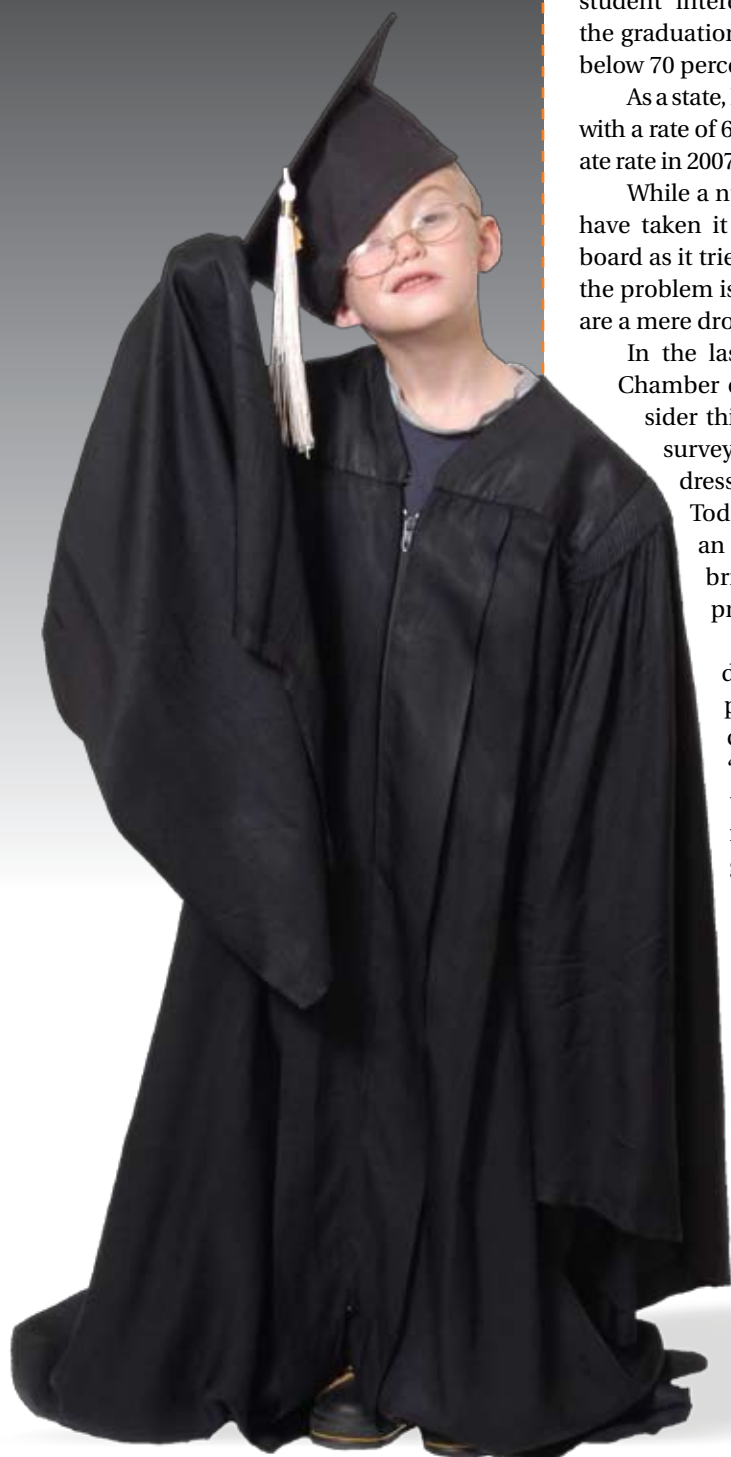
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# ADDRESSING GRADUATION RATES

By David Greenberg  
photograph by Brad Palmer



Given the presence of two outstanding academic institutions – the University of Florida and Santa Fe College – the expectation may be that Alachua County should demonstrate an outstanding high school graduation rate. But a number of factors – including parent involvement, student interest, absenteeism and funding – has the graduation rate in Alachua County hovering just below 70 percent.

As a state, Florida ranks 43rd in on-time graduation with a rate of 62.9 percent. The Alachua County graduation rate in 2007-08 was 68.3 percent.

While a number of individual non-profit groups have taken it upon themselves to help the school board as it tries to improve the local graduation rate, the problem is so massive that these separate efforts are a mere drop in the bucket.

In the last several years, the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce has also started to consider this community issue, initially following surveys of its members that suggested addressing the need for a quality workforce. Today, that involvement has resulted in an education task force, whose goal is to bring ideas and recommendations to improve the community's graduation rates.

"We need workers with high-school diplomas who can assume entry-level positions," said Sonia Douglas, the chamber's vice president and COO. "There is also a community focus here that people should have an opportunity for a first-class quality of life. In order to get that you need, at the very least, to have a high school diploma. As a result, the chamber got involved in work-force development with Florida Works."

Following a chamber-sponsored, intra-city visit where local leaders heard firsthand about the depth of this problem, the group decided to make a focus on education as a community improvement issue.

"That's how the task force started," said Douglas. "To this point we have

been conducting focus-group meetings to learn about some of the challenges that are out there and the resources that exist."

In the research phase, the taskforce has examined a great deal of background information – some of which came from Karen Bricklemeyer, president of the United Way of North Central Florida, who is also a member of the task force. This information, which was already common knowledge for those involved in educational efforts, demonstrated a number of factors come into play when looking at less-than-desirable graduation rates.

"Some of the research shows that the interaction children get from birth to age three plays a huge role for later success," said Bricklemeyer. "The problem is not that students suddenly fall behind at 11th grade. They were behind all along."

Most statistical studies show that poverty plays a huge role in this.

"Parents' ability to provide an optimal experience as a child's first teacher is a critical factor," she said.

Professional parents have much more dialogue with children by age four than in families where poverty is a prevalent issue.

While the school board makes great efforts to increase the graduation rate, there are outside factors that make that challenge difficult.

"Language is the foundation for reading," said Bricklemeyer. "Children who are poor readers in kindergarten finish high school as poor readers."


Mobility is another issue that impacts the quality of education. It is often the case that if a student misses the bus in the morning, there is no other way to get to school. That creates the issue of absenteeism.

While these issues and others like them can be addressed with community support, there are others that cannot.

State funding cuts are directly impacting graduation rates. The state requires that students earn 24 credits to graduate and used to fund a seven-period, high-school day. That allowed students to take up to 28 credits. Now the state funds a six-period day, which only allows for 24 credits. As a result you are looking at no wiggle room. If you fail one class, there is a major challenge to graduating on time.



"If we had full funding for the seven-period day and for summer school, we could definitely increase the graduation rate," said Sandy Hollinger, Alachua County Public Schools deputy superintendent for instruction and student services. "Those programs would make a big difference."





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Also because of state budget cuts, there is no longer summer school either.

"The state's elimination of funding for summer school has had a huge impact," said Alachua County Public Schools spokeswoman Jackie Johnson. "That was a fall back for students. In Alachua County, we have the credit retrieval option program – an online program where students take a lab with a teacher certified in that subject. But that costs money too. We have to be careful how we allocate those slots. Students in the greatest needs of credits will get first shot at those slots."

The FCAT is also a factor in graduation rates. The state used to have a test that showed how FCAT results compared to national standardized testing.

"The state has eliminated the national test," she said. "When we had that test, we were able to see that our results on the 10th grade reading FCAT were equivalent to being in the top 30 percent nationally. There is no longer any way to compare against other students nationwide. We have also had to reduce the number of times students can take the FCAT, which is an additional stumbling block. The state has set the bar very high."

Getting a change in that funding, especially during current economic times, will be a real challenge – especially since Florida has never spent a great deal of money on education.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau Annual Survey of Local Government Finances 2008, Florida ranked 50th in the nation in total public school spending compared to wealth out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The 2009 Quality Counts report produced by Education Week also indicates a lack of serious funding for education. In the category of spending on education, which looks at state expenditures on K-12 schooling as a percent of state taxable resources, Florida's average is 3.1 percent, compared to the national average of 3.7 percent. Florida is ranked 42nd in this category.

So while lobbying the state may create some changes in funding, it would seem that the community would do better focusing on things that could make a difference locally.

Some of the area's non-profit agencies have been doing just that with mentoring and tutoring programs. Among those groups are Junior Achievement, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Reichert House, Girls to Young Ladies, Boys and Girls Club, Girls Place, the United Way's Project Graduation and the Alachua County Public Schools Foundation's Take Stock in Children.

Part of the United Way's program includes targeting students at Eastside High School and two of its feeders – Metcalfe Elementary and Howard Bishop Middle School.

"We are doing a variety of things," said Bricklemeyer. "The students come with a host of family issues. We are looking at mentoring and tutoring, as well as dealing with the issues that create absenteeism."

Take Stock in Children is offering a combination of mentoring, case management and a college scholarship to help each of its students stay on track.

The chamber's task force intends to collect all this information and see if it can play a role it can play in facilitating the effort to improve graduation rates.

"We're still in the research phase," said Douglas. "We're getting input from the business community, and we are hearing from teachers, administrators and the groups working with the schools right now. Hopefully we will be able to pull a group together in a town-hall setting, collaborate with each other and have the greatest impact on improving graduation rates."

Superintendent of Schools Dan Boyd says that is exactly what it will take to make a significant change.

"We appreciate any help we can get from the community in tackling this issue, because there are no easy answers," he said. "Parents, businesses and our community and political leaders all have a role to play. Schools can't solve this problem in isolation. I applaud the chamber for launching this effort, and we'll certainly be working with them." **H**



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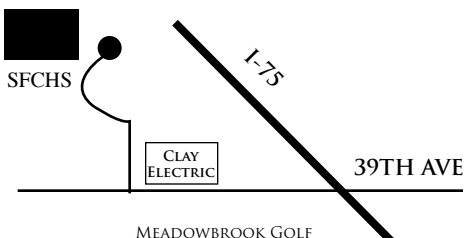
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# Extraordinary Educators

## Cherith Davenport

*Archer Community School*

By Emily Davis  
photography by Brad Palmer

**W**hat's for lunch? Sounds like a simple question to ask your students, but not with Cherith Davenport – her classroom is a little more unique.

In her classroom, children answer this question to discover food chains, source of energy and the biological classification of their favorite meals. This practice remains one of the most popular activities, particularly around lunch time.

How can they do this? As a science teacher at the Center for Gifted and Talented Studies at Archer Community School, Davenport is a trained facilitator for Florida Agriculture in the Classroom.

She got the idea for this approach to science from a colleague.

"I thought teaching agriculture was only for people who farmed. Then, I got interested in teaching agriculture in the classroom because the curriculum is based on science, so I then discovered farmers are scientists, too. I began to learn more and more about what agriculture is," said Davenport.

While incorporating Florida agriculture into science is what makes her unique, Davenport's student-focused approach to teaching is what sets her above the rest.

Davenport describes her teaching style as interactive. To help engage students, she incorporates hands-on activities, field trips and labs into her lesson plan. Using this method along with a low-stress environment, Davenport sees student interest develop as they learn to ask important questions.

"When students ask questions, they contribute to the lesson which makes the lesson more personal for the students and makes the lessons more interesting to me," she said.

This ability to involve and excite students in science does not go unnoticed. She has previously been named Teacher of the Year for Archer Community School and Florida Agriculture in the Classroom Elementary Teacher of the Year, and Florida Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher of the Year for the state of Florida, to name a few.

She has received high praise from several of her co-workers including Dawn Crews, a teacher in the magnet program at Archer Community School.

"Mrs. Davenport is an amazing teacher who provides students the opportunity to learn best by incorporating each child's individual learning styles into her lessons," said Crews. "Whether students are participating in a hands-on lab, working on research or organizing information, they feel free to try because even 'messing up' is not failure."

Davenport looks forward to a new year with her students.

As she has done every year, she will begin with a lesson called "Hopes and Dreams" in which she asks her students what they want to learn in science. These students' hopes and dreams will shape her lessons for the year.

"My favorite part of teaching is what the students bring to my lessons," she said. **H**





By Emily Davis  
photography by Brad Palmer

# Jane McMullen

## *Kanapaha Middle School*

Jane McMullen was looking for something different. She wanted a career that was fun, fast-paced and challenging, and she wasted no time in finding it. In high school, McMullen worked with a special needs student, provoking her excitement for teaching.

Years later, her enthusiasm remains. She began her position at Kanapaha Middle School more than 13 years ago, taking what at the time was a five-year stint to work as a behavior specialist for Alachua County.

Not only has she earned an excellent reputation, McMullen has done so in a unique setting. She currently teaches a self-contained class of physically impaired children, the only one of its kind in the county.

In such a distinct environment, meeting the individual needs of students can be difficult, but McMullen rises to the challenge.

"It's a process. You have to get to know the student," said McMullen, who looks at every aspect of a student.

She has a knack for seeing how they interact with their environment and discovering what they respond to best. McMullen uses this skill to communicate with her class and encourage the individual growth of her students.

Her ability to work with her students allows her to incorporate a lot of variety in the classroom. She feels that a diverse curriculum combined with a structured class style is the best setting for her students. It is this knowledge and an upbeat attitude that makes McMullen a success in a difficult setting.

Never one to shy away from the challenge posed by such a unique classroom, McMullen found the environment for which she was looking. She enjoys getting to know each of her children and their different needs. Meeting these needs is a test she considers fun and exciting.

It is safe to say that if teaching provides McMullen with a sense of achievement, her co-workers agree.

Kanapaha Middle School Principal Jennie Wise said, "She is a master teacher in every possible sense of the word. Her positive attitude and high expectations are what encourage her students."

She was named the Alachua County Middle School Teacher of the Year in 2008.

It is an honor she humbly accepts.

"I think every teacher feels part of their job is rewarding," said McMullen, who hopes her success will continue in the upcoming school year.

She is excited for the year as she finds each group of students fun and interesting to get to know. This year McMullen looks forward to acquainting herself with new students and seeing growth in those returning for another year.

"I hope my students are open to new experiences, new friends, new skills and are ready for a good year," she said. **H**





# Robert Hyatt

## *Duval Elementary School*

By Stephanie Thomas  
photography by Brad Palmer

Every Gator has his or her own traditions. For one of Alachua County's most outstanding teachers, it includes three UF degrees and working with the Gator band.

Robert Hyatt is a Gainesville music veteran. A music teacher at Duval Elementary School, Hyatt was named Alachua County's 2009 Teacher of the Year. He earned this title for his ability to capture his students and expand their interest in music.

A Gainesville High School alum, Hyatt returned to teach at Duval Elementary in 1996. With more than 35 years of teaching experience, he holds three University of Florida degrees and conducted as a graduate assistant for the Fightin' Gator Marching Band.

Previously a band director, Hyatt was introduced to the music teacher position and never looked back. His job is important because he works with every child and prepares each one for a higher level of learning. Their participation and exposure to music instills a lifelong passion for the arts.

"Music and art are part of a basic education for every child," he said.

Two components of Hyatt's class include a fast-paced lesson and liberal amounts of humor. When a student only has music class once a week, "it's important to use that time wisely," he said.

Selected by his peers, Hyatt incorporates academic concepts through his lesson plans, said Jackie Johnson, public information officer of Alachua County Schools. Hyatt stresses the importance of teamwork, cooperation and patience, which are essential in the classroom and life.

"Robert is an outstanding teacher. The kids are so engaged in the classroom," Johnson said.

To set the table for creativity, he uses different voices with the music and has a song, "Throw it Out the Window," with changed nursery rhyme stories. He can capture a kid's attention with the arm trick, a talent he established while watching the late comedian Red Skelton growing up.

His education at the University of Florida trained him in world music and drumming. Hyatt teaches music through African and Caribbean traditions and has two drumming ensembles that perform at different events, such as the World AIDS Day Dinner. Teaching the same basics and standards from a different approach is what sets him apart from the rest.

Once they sharpen their listening skills, students learn how to recognize sounds that complement one another and match a steady beat through live acoustic music and quality recordings.

He and his wife of 13 years, Lou, share a passion for music. She guided him to shift gears in the music world once he had seen her work with kids.

Hyatt experienced his validation as a music instructor when his wife, a music teacher at Idylwild Elementary School, would use his ideas in her lesson plans.

The genesis of Hyatt's music career was playing saxophone as an adolescent. He names his band director, Richard Frye of the old Buchholz Junior High, as his first mentor who passed on the music bug.

When not teaching, the Gator football and baseball season-ticket holder is in the stands cheering on his alma mater. He spends his time connecting with former students on Facebook and enjoys listening to live music. **H**





By David Greenberg  
photography by Brad Palmer

# Billie DeNunzio

*Eastside High School - Institute of Culinary Arts*



When students apply to attend the Institute of Culinary Arts at Eastside High School, they do it with images of the Food Channel in their heads.

They all want to be celebrity chefs, said Billie DeNunzio, the mastermind behind the nationally acclaimed program. But, says DeNunzio, known as Chef De to her students, they are really going into a hospitality program.

"That means they have to learn how to follow rules, and they have to have the discipline to deal with recipes," she said. "That also means they learn science, math and reading."

Last year, the school was recognized by the state for a literacy program developed by DeNunzio and the school's media specialist.

From her magnet program at Eastside, Chef De has been inspiring would-be chefs for 24 years. She has also produced her share of professionals in the wide variety of careers in the food-service and hospitality industries.

When DeNunzio arrived at Eastside, the school had a small home economics program.

"I've grown, and it has grown over the years," she said. "When I first started, we had one student who went on to culinary school. Then I went."

She attended the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY, and Johnson & Wales University in Miami, eventually earning her chef certification.

"Since then we have had more than 60 students go on to culinary school," she said.

It is DeNunzio's enthusiasm for the students and the program that has made it a success and has gotten the community to volunteer time and services. But she says Dr. Dave Edwards, the Alachua County Schools Director of Career and Technology, was pivotal in creating the program.

"It was his inspiration to build the best magnet program he could," she said. "He wrote the grant that got us the commercial facility we have today."

Plus, she said, anyone who walks in the door ends up talking to the students about their real-world experiences.

"From the dietician to the person delivering food or supplies, they all talk to the kids about the real world," she said. "It suddenly expands for them from wanting to be a chef to the possibility of 5,000 different jobs."

The students get some of that real-world experience right here in Gainesville. DeNunzio estimates that this past summer about 25 of her students were working in the community.

That community involvement is a two-way street. Groups come to DeNunzio to work with the students, and many have even taught the students different cooking styles.

"This year, we worked with people from the Indian Festival," said DeNunzio. "They had to teach and then we catered the festival. People are excited about helping."

The program is consistently recognized among the best high school culinary programs in the country, and as a result, many of the students move on to culinary school or college, while some go straight into the industry.

"About 93 percent of our students end up at culinary or hospitality schools," said DeNunzio. "Many of them get scholarships, and they become competitive. Once they get one scholarship, they are always looking for more."

One of those former students is Emily Christenson, who graduated from Eastside in 2006, obtained her associate's degree from the Culinary Institute of America and is now studying hospitality management at the University of Central Florida.

"Chef De has a strong passion for helping kids achieve their dreams," said Christenson. "She taught me the meaning of confidence, strength, determination and ambition. Without her I wouldn't be where I am today, and the best part is, I know I can always go back to her for advice."

The outcome of all this is that DeNunzio has created a program that has high school students enthusiastic about school.

"We're teaching math, science and all those academics," she said. "We're just doing it in a different way." **H**



# Petrina Leggon

## *Joseph Williams Elementary*

By Lauren Gispanski  
photography by Brad Palmer

**A**ugust 1998 marked the beginning of her career. Petrina Leggon had prepared for this moment her entire life because she was following in her mother's footsteps. After introducing herself to 32 petite strangers, the Gainesville native began doing what she loved most – teaching. However, before the lunch bell could sound, Leggon came face-to-face with every elementary school teacher's nightmare – flu season.

While many of the children in Leggon's fourth grade class felt ill, it wasn't until the first child threw up on Leggon that she understood the hands-on approach necessary to succeed in her new career. And like the infamous domino effect, once one child threw up in class, several others followed in such a manner that the school's nurse and principal came to the classroom to check on the novice teacher, who was in need of a change of clothes.

"I had to run around looking for an extra shirt, so I could get back to teaching. It was then I realized that if I could survive this, I could survive anything," Leggon said smiling.

Eleven years after the messiest moment in Leggon's life, she continues to motivate students to achieve at Joseph Williams Elementary. In 2008, Leggon received the Alachua County Teacher of the Year award followed by the Mary J. Brogan "Excellence in Teaching" Award, which recognizes one of the 72 District Teacher of the Year winners who demonstrates "a passion for teaching and a compassion for their students that becomes an inspiration to other teachers."

"Receiving that award was just shocking," Leggon said, "and to have such a supportive staff, I am very lucky."

What makes Leggon such a phenomenal teacher?

"Petrina Leggon sets high expectations for all children and expects all children to succeed," said Kathy Dixon, former principal of Williams Elementary. "She was deserving of the Teacher of the Year for Alachua County because she exhibits the strong desire to provide what is needed for each child to succeed."

Leggon's hands-on approach and contagious passion for learning inspires many of her students. Leggon

believes in teaching children to become life-long learners and active, responsible members of the community.

"Alachua County is my community, and the most beneficial thing I can do for my community is shape the citizens of tomorrow," Leggon said.

Leggon discovered teaching in a way that makes learning the material most enjoyable is the formula to success when educating elementary school students. Leggon created many games that actually expand the students' vocabulary or mathematics skills and keep the students engaged. Within this fun learning environment, students understand and comprehend the most.

"What I love about teaching is that 'Ah-ha' light bulb moment when it all clicks," she said. "To see that moment and to know I helped them to understand while having fun is just indescribable." **H**





By Stephanie Thomas  
photography by Brad Palmer

# Judith Weaver

## *High Springs Community School*

Judith Weaver accepts quarters for lost books. When students can't pay back lost books, they serve as her aides and help out by organizing the shelves or setting up the computers.

Weaver is High Springs Community School's media specialist. The reading projects, book clubs and guest speakers she organizes each year give her students hands-on learning experiences.

Some earn their own money to pay back library fees, either due to hardship or for character value, she said. This honest and laid-back community makes Weaver feel at home. There is great interaction from both the students and families, she said.

"The people in this school and community have made me feel like this is my town," she said.

Weaver, originally from Fairfax County near Washington, D.C., didn't expect to make Florida her home. A family move from Boston to Florida in 1992 led her to utilize her two teaching certifications to find a job. The day before hurricane Andrew struck, she found an opening that led to teaching art at Oakview Middle School, where she stayed for six years.

A member and chair of the Board of Trustees for Alachua County Public Libraries for six years, Weaver knew she always wanted to be a librarian. High Springs' library is a hub of social activity. Located in the middle of two hallways, fifth to eighth grade students bustle around between class changes.

"I finally realized that the positive side of it is that it's a very interactive library," she said.

Weaver takes pride in her school for receiving a grade of an A since the accountability reports have been in effect. Her students stand out with an average of 28.2 books checked out a year per child.



Working at High Springs since 1999, Weaver has brought in multiple speakers that the students look forward to each year. The most recent speaker, deaf writer Ann LeZotte, inspires students who want to be writers. The writers answer students' questions and add another dimension to a student's desire to write.

"They are real people who are doing what the kids want to do," she said.

The projects Weaver organizes in collaboration with other teachers may be a driving factor behind her students' thirst for reading. Her favorite project, called "Survivor," challenged students to read a book related to survival. Ninety-nine participated and experienced an adventure of their choice. Some toured the Santa Fe River in a canoe, others rock climbed and some sharpened their camping skills at Poe Springs. Through grants and donations from the

community, Weaver witnessed that "kids learn better out of the box."

An upcoming project, "Reading with Magic," will encourage students to read stories related to horses. Readers then will interact with miniature horses brought to the school.

Weaver is assisting Katie Gillman, a former student and UF alum who is teaching students through the Peace Corps in Tanzania.

"She really was an inspiration to Katie," said her father, Greg Gillman.

Gillman started her own library and taught high school biology with one chemistry textbook and one blackboard. Weaver received a grant to help fund Gillman's classroom with textbooks.

When not at school or looking for grants, Weaver spends time with her grandchildren. Five grandchildren, including two 15-month-old grandsons, occupy her time and love. **H**



# Donald DeVito

## *Sidney Lanier Center*

By Molly Bruce  
photography by Brad Palmer

**D**r. Donald DeVito is communicating with his student across a crowded cafeteria, but neither of them are speaking.

Instead, they are rapidly drumming intricate beats to each other.

"He plays like a jazz musician," DeVito said about his student, Lyndon Whitell.

They are drumming because Lyndon is 95 percent deaf, cannot speak and has cerebral palsy.

DeVito has taught music at Sidney Lanier, a public school for students with disabilities, for eight years now.

"This is where I want to be," he said.

All grade levels at Sidney Lanier get a music education, and some students, like Lyndon, are on DeVito's drum line. Last year, the drum line competed at Disney World against other schools from across the country.

His students, Emiliano Alza and Mario Lopez were very excited when the Disney trip was brought up. For Emiliano, who came here from Puerto Rico, the trip was his first Disney visit. Both boys played drums for the performance.

"We like Don DeVito because he's teaching us how to play music," they said, completing each other's sentence.

DeVito said he likes organizing trips and competitions like the Disney one.

"That's one of my goals – to show that my students can do what other students do."

DeVito has proved this over and over again. His student, Lyndon, who he communicates with by air-drumming, won the national "Yes I Can!" Award, given by the Council for Exceptional Children. Every year, it honors 27 students who have excelled despite their disability.

Lyndon taught himself how to play the drums on his set at home, DeVito said.

"It's amazing what you can do when you don't know you can't," he said.

Next year, the Sidney Lanier music group will perform with Syracuse University's seniors at Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall. DeVito is currently fundraising for the trip. The program will be called "DIScovering ABILITIES."

DeVito received his PhD from the University of Florida ("I'm a Gator," he said

proudly). He knew he wanted to work with disabled children after he was inspired by a physical therapy office. He used to set musical obstacle courses for the students with disabilities, and he saw the difference it made in their motor skills and development.


He knew disabled students were just as capable of performing music as anyone else, and he likes that he gets to see this at his job.

"My favorite part is just being able to explore what the kids can do every day," DeVito said.

Inquisitive and confident, DeVito's students play all kinds of music. Some, like Lyndon, can improvise beats. Most do not read music.

"The way they interact with music is fascinating," he said.

DeVito plays the flute and percussions himself, and he said the students' favorite instrument is the snare drum.

The Council for Exceptional Students named DeVito Teacher of the Year for its Gatorland Chapter. Nobody is more deserving. 





By Victoria Phillips  
photography by Brad Palmer

## Janine Plavac

### *Gainesville High School - Academy of Health Professions*



Janine Plavac is a giver. Whether she is passing along her nursing knowledge at the Academy of Health Professions, talking to elementary and middle school students about healthcare or organizing summer volunteer opportunities with Shands, Plavac finds joy in taking care of others.

After receiving a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Miami, she moved to Gainesville in 1992 with her husband, Thomas, to practice medicine. He is now practicing medicine out of state. Plavac decided to go into teaching when the opportunity presented itself at the Academy of Health Professions.

The academy is a magnet-health program in Alachua County. It gives high school students interested in pursuing a career in healthcare an opportunity to have an entry-level job coming out of school, she said.

Students can obtain jobs such as certified nursing assistants, certified pharmacy technicians, first responders, phlebotomists, EMTs and EKG technicians.

Plavac said what she enjoys most about her job is inspiring young high school students to go into the health-care field.

"I love being a nurse and want students to see the joy of taking care of others," she said. "It is imperative that as educators we motivate these young people to take advantage of the excellent opportunities, especially in health-care in this community."

Being active in the Gainesville community is extremely important to Plavac. Since moving to Gainesville she has been involved with March of Dimes, Health Occupations Students of America and is very active in her church, Queen of Peace Catholic Community.

"She has been a coordinator for our Wellness Committee at school

and on the county level," said Mary Beth Russo, Plavac's co-worker at the academy. "Our school, with the combined efforts of our staff and students along with the University of Florida Dietetics Program, are one of a select few that obtained a Bronze Certification in the State of Florida."

The reasons why Plavac loves Gainesville are simple. Gainesville is a safe, energetic, stimulating community and offers a myriad of opportunities for young and old, she said.

When she isn't teaching others, Plavac enjoys spending time with her husband, Thomas; daughter, Courtney, 20, a junior at NYU; daughter, Kristi, 17, a senior at Buchholz High School; and Scott, 16, a sophomore at St. Francis Catholic High School.

Living with high school kids has allowed Plavac to better relate to her students, she said.

"I demand accountability, honesty, integrity and punctuality," she said, "But in return I will do anything and everything to have my students not only succeed in the classroom but get into a great post secondary school that fits them."

Russo said she admires Plavac for challenging her students and making them step out of their comfort zones.

"Janine is clearly willing to go the extra mile," she said.

No matter what Plavac does, however, it always comes back to the Gainesville community. She said she has high hopes for continued community growth in Gainesville.

The city needs to grow its own leaders and educators in the health-care field, she said.

"We have too many young people who can become leaders and role models in this community. Why not have them stay in Gainesville, build roots, raise a family and give back to this community?" **H**



# Ed Legare

## Oak Hall

By Stephanie Thomas  
photography by Brad Palmer

This is Ed Legare's 19th year in teaching. But don't presume his experience is just as a physics and chemistry teacher at Oak Hall School. He is an engineer, a musician, a teacher and a cheerleader.

Raised in New England, music was always in the background. Starting at the age of 15, Legare was paid to perform and open for musical acts in the area.

Legare received his college degree in engineering from Lowell Tech Institute in Lowell, Mass. Proficient in keyboard, the bass and vocals, he funded his own tuition by getting jobs with bands.

After Legare's move to Gainesville in 1980s, he switched from engineering to music as his career. He played with musicians such as Frank Sullivan, singer Carol Hahn, and the local jazz-Latin ensemble, Sea Journey.

The founder of Gainesville Guitar Academy, the fundamentals of teaching were calling out to him.

"I've always liked the educational process," he said.

It wasn't until helping his daughter, Suzanne, with her high school chemistry homework of mole ratios and stoichiometry that he realized he could excel as a teacher.

"I thought, I could really do a great job at this," he said.

He names his wife, Linda, as his mentor. She was the one who suggested Legare go back to school. A media specialist at Bronson Elementary, her organization skills and experience as a teacher were an inspiration.

"He has a type A personality. When he's involved with something, he needs to find everything out about it that he can," she said.

Once he received his Masters in Education from the University of Florida in 1992, he started teaching in Clay County at Keystone Heights Junior Senior High School.

Legare learned from his wife that work doesn't end at the end of the school day. It's important to not be afraid to work long hours and take material home, he said.

"She can focus really well. I've watched her do this," he said.

After school, Legare is either helping the band director or tutoring his students.

One important tool Legare applies in physics and chemistry is using the laboratory for experiments as often as he can. He performs "inquiry labs," which involves students solving a problem with skills used in the classroom.

This is where Legare stands back and becomes his students' cheerleader. The inquiry is a process and is a good approach to learning something, he said.

"Most good questions don't always have answers to them but more questions," he said.

Legare has found that his students are comfortable on the Internet and ensures he incorporates technology into his assignments. Students write research and papers online as blogs.

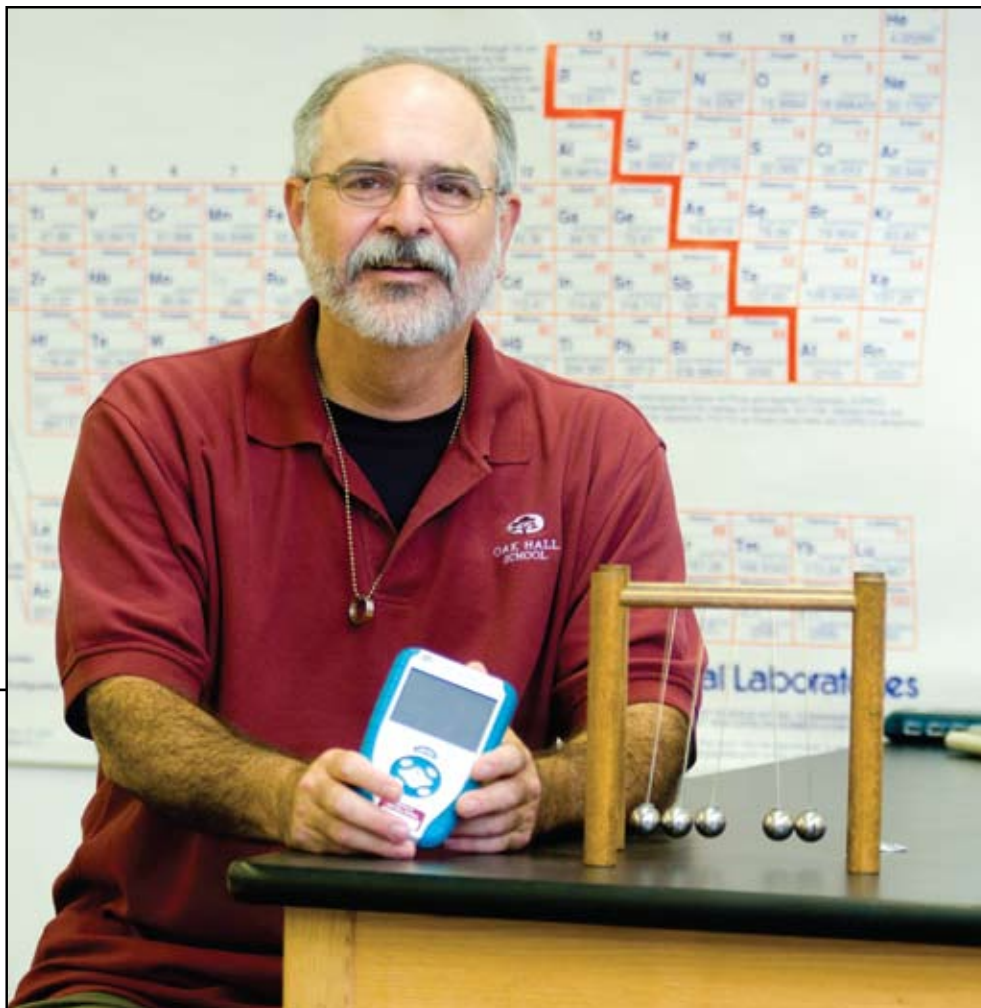
This past year, students used wikis for collaborative assignments, which helps them express themselves and improves professional development.

Legare also involves students by conducting group experiments and having each student answer what happened. He posts the video of the experiment on YouTube so students can view the experiment again.

When not teaching high schoolers, Legare brings his young grandson, Noah, into the lab and teaches him science.

Through his journey, Legare enjoys the path and sees no end in teaching.

"After all these years of teaching, I still enjoy going to work every day," he said. **H**





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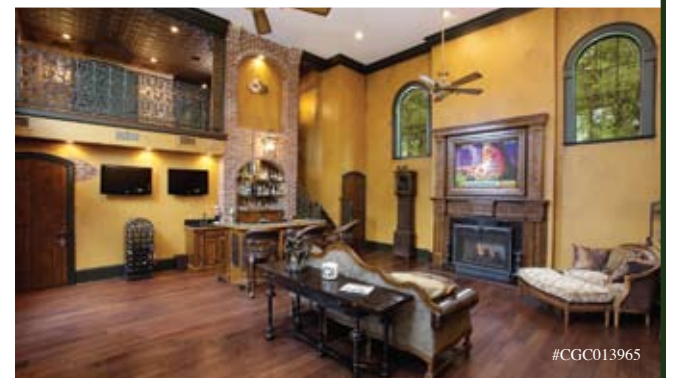
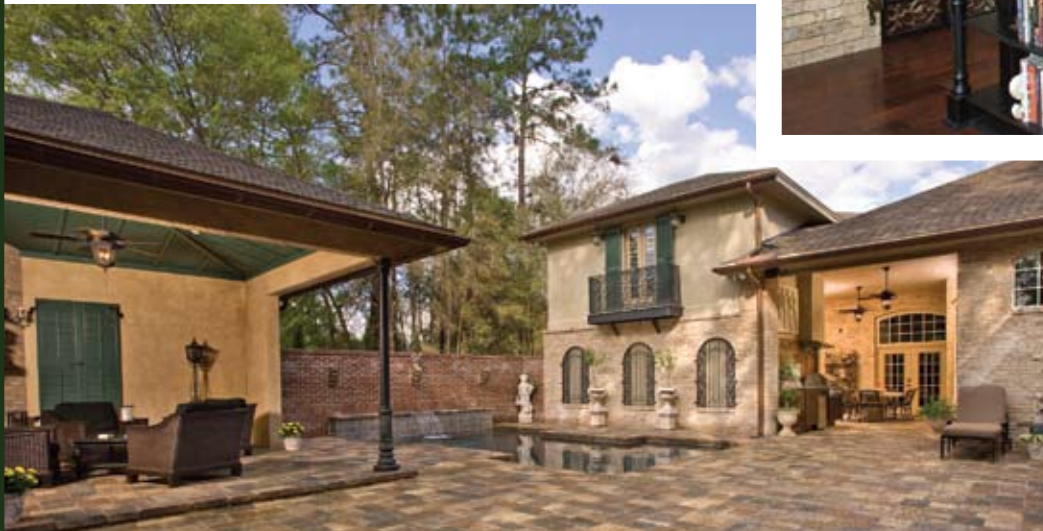


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# 8 Enticing Local Restaurants

by Lauren Gispanski  
photography by Brad Palmer

**L**iquid Ginger in downtown Gainesville approaches Asian cuisine the same way Ben & Jerry's approaches ice cream: with an imagination.

Tucked within the downtown Sun Center off Southeast 2nd Place, this hidden gem features what owner and original executive chef Larry Lam calls "Asian fusion." Every dish on the menu is a Liquid Ginger original as the sauces and ingredients accompanying common dishes are this chef's own recipe.

A favorite among customers is the Spicy Cream Shrimp, batter-fried shrimp glazed with Liquid Ginger's own spicy mayo sauce. The crispy shell and zesty bite kick this dish up a notch.

Liquid Ginger features vegetarian selections as well, proving its wide variety not only accommodates everyone but also satisfies the most particular of palates. Whether vegetable, tofu or noodle based, the vegetarian dishes also feature their own sauces ranging from coconut cream to a Thai red curry made from chilies.





# Gainesville Liquid Ginger

And the signature Japanese Eggplant with Garlic Soy would make even the pickiest of eaters finish their vegetables. A sweet, teriyaki-flavored glaze adds the finishing touch to the eggplant, which is served with onions and green and red peppers.

For those who are adventurous and looking to spice up their experience, Liquid Ginger has Spicy Asian Calamari served with Liquid Ginger's own piquant Sweet Chili sauce. Bite-sized pieces make it difficult to stop reaching for the perfectly breaded calamari, even if your mouth feels like Dante's inferno.

And Liquid Ginger's original recipes do not stop at the entrees! The "Concoctions" menu is filled with specialty drinks. The tropical twist that is the Singapore Sling combines aromatic angostura bitters with cherry brandy, orange liqueur, pineapple juice with a splash of lime and cherry syrup to finish it off. Even the non-alcoholic beverages have their own authenticity. Sourced in Taiwan, Ten Ren Tea is a specialty tea Liquid Ginger prides itself in offering to its customers.

Do not be fooled by the quality of Liquid Ginger's specialty dishes as they also easy on your pockets. With entrees topping off at \$17 and the occasional \$5 Martini night, Liquid Ginger's prices are reasonable, exactly what this economical climate demands.

The overall take on Liquid Ginger is this — you won't find anything like it anywhere else.







## Dragonfly Gainesville

The corner of Southeast Second Avenue and Second Street spotlights one restaurant that has brought a little piece of New York City to Gainesville.

Contemporarily furnished in sensual lighting and typically filled on weekend evenings with customers ready for a night on the town, Dragonfly has become a staple in Gainesville.

This hot spot finds loyal patrons return for more than just the ambiance. Dragonfly is most known for its sushi, which ranges from the standard California roll to specialty rolls such as the Fire Me Up Wasabi roll, a tuna, salmon, crab delight, cream cheese and asparagus roll entirely fried in wonton skin and served on a bed of wasabi aioli.

The Surf 'n' Turf roll may not be on the menu, but regulars routinely request this Dragonfly original.

And why wouldn't they? The crab delight and grilled shrimp with asparagus, scallions and cucumber roll is topped with thin slices of New York strip and finished off with an apple teriyaki cream sauce. You sure can take a bite of out the Big Apple with this one.

Dragonfly also offers just about everything under the sea in sashimi form – sea urchin, conch, surf clam, yellowtail, octopus and more.

But this uptown-modern establishment wants present as well as potential patrons to know it offers warm kitchen dishes as well.

The Nikujaga stewed in soy broth and finished with julienne scallions and sichimi spices is known as “Japanese comfort food” with its meat and potato similarities. The Miso Black Cod paired with sautéed shitake mushrooms and a grilled green tea rice cake tantalizes taste buds with every bite. The verdict with Dragonfly Sushi & Sake Co. – the ultimate dining experience if you're willing to pay the price.



## Buddha Belly Gainesville

It's about time you tried a little taste of Nirvana at the Buddha Belly restaurant off Main Street and Northwest 16th Avenue. With inspiration from India, Thailand, the Caribbean and Africa, Buddha Belly promises to “enlighten your taste buds” no matter what dish you desire.

One Buddha Belly specialty, the Tempeh Cameroon, is an African-style fruit curry. Combining coconut, mango, pineapple and apple, this curry dish can be served alongside either white or brown rice and features locally-made Artie's Tempeh accented with scattered cranberries and golden raisins. The sweet, savory sauce saturates both the tempeh and rice, creating a delightful dish rich in flavor.

Buddha Belly is one of the only places in Gainesville that serves curry as well as burgers — and

the burgers are absolutely divine. Uniquely served on a sub roll rather than the traditional hamburger bun, the beef, turkey or tempeh burgers are cooked to order and topped with ketchup, mustard, mayo, lettuce, tomato, onion and pickles.

Don't forget to substitute your side of traditional French Fries with Buddha Belly's signature Mushroom Fries. Slices of portabella mushrooms lightly covered with panko rice batter are fried in trans-fat free and vegetarian friendly oil, and served with a curry mayo dipping sauce. For a lighter option, try the Asian Spring salad, drizzled with Buddha Belly's homemade ginger dressing.

With all food items made with the freshest of ingredients and priced at less than \$10 each, Buddha Belly offers phenomenal food at outrageously low prices.

The menu satisfies all with its twist on Asian and Americana cuisine, leaving an impact on your taste buds but also leaving some change in your pockets.



## Ichiban Sushi Gainesville

One Gainesville treasure will soon make its debut with a second location on the downtown scene where its simple charm will add balance to the more forward establishments.

Currently located just off Northwest 43rd Street in the Le Pavillion shopping center, Ichiban Sushi's clean-cut, open atmosphere surely contrasts to its adorned, intricate entrées.

The double-sided sushi menu contains more than 50 sushi rolls and 25 sushi sides, explaining Ichiban's 10-year reign on Asian cuisine in Gainesville. Don't forget to try the black raspberry wine Bokbun-jajou as it pairs nicely with both raw fish and sushi.

A favorite roll among regulars is the Volcano Roll. It is crab delight rolled with cream cheese and masago and topped with avocado and hot scallops

that has been heated personally by the touch of the chef's gourmet blowtorch. This roll's display is more than enticing as the chef spends a few extra minutes on the dish, giving it a little something extra that keeps customers coming back for more.

Every chef at Ichiban Sushi approaches a clean plate like an artist does a fresh canvas. As the dish comes to fruition, drizzles of sauce and leaf-shaped wasabi complete the masterpiece.

But Ichiban Sushi offers other Japanese cuisine including teriyaki, tempura (lightly battered) and katsu (deep fried) dishes. The Ichiban Appetizer Special samples a little of each as it comes with teriyaki-glazed chicken skewers, shrimp tempura, Japanese Spring Rolls and Negimaki, carrot and green onion stir-fry wrapped in beef tenderloin.

The take home for Ichiban Sushi – with prices so perfect and dishes so delectable, you'll feel like you've really uncovered a hidden treasure.



## Conestogas Restaurant Alachua

Where do you go to find the World's Biggest Burger? Look no further than Conestogas restaurant on Main Street in Alachua.

The Monster burger is a whopping three pounds. That's right... a three pound hamburger. Eat the whole thing, I dare you... I triple-dog-dare you, or in this case, triple-patty-dare you. I won't tell you how many hours/days it took me, but I did it and loved it.

Melissa, the manager at the restaurant, explained one reason the ground beef in the burger is so moist and unusually flavorful is because they grind their own beef on site from high grade steaks strippings.

Regardless of whether you go with the Monster burger or one of the other burgers offered, you have to try the sweet potato fries with the house dipping sauce. It wouldn't be surprising if you ate three pounds

of these lovely creations before starting on the burger itself. Crispy on the outside and cut thick so they are still a little soft on the inside, they're addictive.

Besides having a very charming old-fashioned atmosphere, the restaurant boasts a large menu that has something for everyone. The grilled shrimp salad is perfect if you are looking for something light on the stomach but full on flavor. The breaded, deep-fried dill pickles are a popular and tasty appetizer. When it comes to steak, almost anyone you ask in the city of Alachua will agree, Conestogas has the best in town.

Some restaurants try to mask their lack of flavor by blinding patrons with huge portions, but not at Conestogas. Their fullness of flavor is every bit as large as their portions. Their food is fabulous, service is supreme, and the atmosphere is amazing. If you don't take advantage of the opportunity, you are missing out on a local dining gem.



## Café Gardens Gainesville

This Gainesville classic, just off the corner of Northwest 17th Street and University Avenue, opened more than 30 years ago. Café Gardens welcomes everyone to enjoy original salads, sandwiches and burgers inside the quaint restaurant or outside on its paradise patio of bamboo vines and brilliant tropical flowers. Reasonably priced entrées average \$6-10 each.

Adding a breath of fresh air to its classic menu is the New Summer Salad. Crisp spring greens and grape tomatoes accented with raisins, walnuts and juicy Mandarin orange wedges are topped with blue cheese crumbles and grilled portabella mushroom slices. With every bite, refreshing bursts from either a grape tomato or an orange wedge perfectly compliment the light tang of aged blue cheese crumbles. Café Gardens finishes this sensational

salad with drizzles of its original balsamic vinaigrette, capturing the very essence of summer's bliss.

The Café Gardens' South of the Border Burger is a six-ounce burger topped with spicy salsa, hot jalapenos and smothered in hot pepper cheese. The fiery flavor tests even the coolest customers, proving if you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen. However, the side of sweet potato fries completes this sweet 'n' spicy dish — making it a customer favorite.

If neither burger nor salad would seem to satisfy your appetite, then try the Chicken Pesto sandwich. A juicy, grilled chicken breast topped with a generous portion of the café's own basil pesto is sprinkled with fresh Parmesan cheese and sits on a browned bun. This twist on the classic chicken sandwich is served with a side pasta salad featuring sliced olives, broccoli bites, artichoke hearts and feta cheese.

So, whether you frequent the café, or you're a first timer, one thing is certain... you're in for a treat.



## Tori's Big Burger Gainesville

Driving east toward downtown Gainesville, its "Home of the 1 Pound Burger" sign catches your eye. And as you glance inside the restaurant, the '50s décor piques your interest. What is that restaurant on the corner of University Avenue and Northwest 1st Street? It's Tori's Big Burger.

Offering a variety of classic Americana dishes at extremely low prices and large portions, Tori's Big Burger can satisfy any diner's taste. The Big Burger, after which the restaurant is named, features two half-pound patties cooked to your liking, two slices of melted American cheese, and optional lettuce, tomato, onion and pickle. Served with lightly seasoned fries, this burger and its toppings are more than a mouthful.

If you prefer a finger-lickin' good entrée, Big Burger offers both wings and ribs. The extremely

meaty wings can be seasoned with hot, medium, mild, barbecue or honey mustard sauce and are served with celery sticks and your choice of dressing. Big Burger's tasty ribs have been grilled and steamed all day long, so the tender meat just falls right off the bone. And if you choose, you can smother your ribs in Big Burger's own barbecue sauce or homemade mustard sauce — a customer favorite.

And while Big Burger also offers fresh salads and crispy quesadillas, the desserts are what complete this restaurant's menu. The homemade whipped cheesecake featuring a brown sugar and pecan crust is made fresh daily and can be topped with cherries, strawberries or blueberries. Finally, the timeless banana pudding made with real bananas and topped with soft vanilla wafers reminds you of those fun summer picnics from your childhood.

Let's just say with Tori's Big Burger — fantastically low prices and lots of food... you just can't go wrong.







## High Springs

# The Great Outdoors Restaurant

While housed in a more than 100-year-old opera house, the Great Outdoors Restaurant is far from outdated. The renovated interior captures the very essence of a luxurious lodge, and the classic Americana dishes all have their own signature savor.

This restaurant's burger selection widens many customers' eyes as the half-pound Bison Burger tops the list. A char-grilled bison patty topped with horseradish mayonnaise, this burger is considerably moist, something nearly impossible to achieve as bison meat has the least amount of fat and cholesterol of any meat including chicken and fish.

Steak lovers, wait until you try the Harris Ranch Cowboy Steak. This tender 16-ounce prime cut tastes just like a slice of heaven topped with roasted garlic butter. As an adaptation of the classic meat and potato entree, the steak is perfectly paired with pan-fried potatoes specialty seasoned with salt, pepper and smoked paprika.



If you want to go with a slightly smaller steak, then the bison steak shouldn't be overlooked. With the tenderness of the filet mignon, this steak may be smaller than the Harris Ranch Cowboy Steak, but it is bursting with flavor. So gentlemen, do not count on any ladies' leftovers.

And for those seeking a lighter yet still satisfying option, the Chop Chop salad should not be overlooked. Sesame-ginger vinaigrette glazes the salad greens that are mixed with grilled corn, red and green onion, cucumber, celery, crispy wontons and tomatoes. Topped with seared Hawaiian Ahi Tuna, this organic alternative's final touch remains its Wasabi cream drizzle. Uniquely fresh with quite the kick, do not underestimate this salad's bite.

The Great Outdoors Restaurant's menu has something for vegetarians as well. The favorite Thai Noodle Bowl features Asian noodles, Shiitake Mushrooms, wok-seared vegetables, baby bok choy and snow peas in a Miso broth sauce. And the coconut-crusted tofu pieces, which top this bowl, add a delightful sweetness to the mellow Miso flavor.

Remember to save room for dessert as you won't want to miss out on "The Blantons" Peanut Brittle Ice Cream Pie. Named after the local woman who personally delivers her freshly roasted peanuts to the restaurant every Thursday, this divine addition to the decedent dessert menu is a one-of-a-kind creation. Mile High ice cream hand-swirled with roasted peanut brittle and hot fudge sits atop a thick Oreo cookie crust. Then covered in roasted peanut brittle and drizzled with both hot fudge and caramel, this rich, creamy slice is easily a dessert for two.

The Great Outdoors Restaurant caters to all occasions as it has a large upstairs conference center, downstairs main dining area, the SpringHouse Tavern and patio seating. Entrees vary in price from less than \$10 burgers to more than \$20 signature steaks.

For the Great Outdoors Restaurant, remember this—the handcrafted culinary creations are well worth the moderate prices. **H**





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# Landscape Calendar

June – July 2009

By Jon George

## TAILGATING IN THE TROPICS



*Jon George is the owner of Cottage Gardens Inc., a Gainesville based landscape design and installation firm. He has been gardening in North Central Florida for more than thirty years. You may contact his staff at [www.TheCottageGardener.com](http://www.TheCottageGardener.com) or at [cottagegardensinc@yahoo.com](mailto:cottagegardensinc@yahoo.com).*

The thrill of football season in North Central Florida brings entertaining to the grill and tailgating parties with friends. Make your home the star of the party with inviting entry plants and poolside tropics. Take a look at these sturdy selections that beat the heat and give years of color and enjoyment.

We gave this classical home in Town of Tioga a makeover by planting two mature Sugar Palms on either side of the front foundation. These clustering palms solved a design challenge of desperately needed height and anchored the dramatic columns of the front porch. The **Sugar Palm**, also known as Arenga Palm, hails from the southern tip of Taiwan and has multiple trunks and arching green fronds. If given light shade and a protected site, this palm with weather our most severe winters with little damage. Fourteen to fifteen feet is the maximum height these palms should reach in our area.



What poolside is complete without a touch of the tropics? Make a splash with colorful bromeliads and native yuccas. Both of these plants need little care and do not shed leaves into the pool. The large sword like foliage of **Yucca Silver Star** stays evergreen year-round and develops an interesting trunk with age. This soft-tipped **yucca** does not have sharp points and is safe around children and pets. Cold-hardy **bromeliads** bloom in different seasons and love the filtered light they get from a pool screen. Both the water and the pool screen help buffer the cold temperatures; however, the planting for this client on the north side of Gainesville will benefit from covering on the coldest nights of winter in order to avoid tip-burn on the bromeliads.







Gracious southern hospitality begins by welcoming guests to the front door. Make your entry more inviting with planters full of **succulents and icicle plants**, both forgiving if you forget to water them. A wrought iron plant stand gives nice lift to the arrangement and turns an ordinary container into a focal point.



We used Bird of Paradise and Hibiscus to lend tropical panache to this poolside planting at a home near Archer Road. With petals that resemble feathers, **Bird of Paradise** is one the few flowers known to contain both orange and blue in the same flower – a real bonus for game-day decorating. On the other hand, **Hibiscus** comes in an array of colors and hybrids and has large unmistakable blooms that last a day or two. Both of these tropical plants are best grown in containers and will need some protection in event of a severe cold snap.

A well-designed landscape with layers of height and texture will add value to your home. With the right selection and placement of plant material you can have low maintenance color in your garden all year long. **H**



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# Reduce Bugs & Energy Bills

by calling Kevin Layne & the Screen Doctors

By Molly Bruce

Swatting bugs, sweating in the heat – sometimes the great outdoors can turn into the great disappointment. Leaving your backdoor open for some fresh air can be a nice alternative, until the mosquitoes find their way in. Wouldn't it be nice to screen in any door, without compromising style?

With Screen Doctors retractable screen doors, your dreams can come true.

"It's nice to be able to leave your doors open without worrying about bugs," said Shane Matthews, former Gator and NFL star and a recent customer of Screen Doctors. He recently had a retractable screen door installed in his home.

While summers in North Central Florida can be anything but cool, enclosing your garage, porch or backdoor with a remote-control power screen or a retractable screen door can really make a difference.

With choices like the super-screen insect mesh, which blocks 35 percent of UV rays, the solar screen mesh, which blocks 85 percent UV rays, and the privacy material, which blocks 100 percent UV rays, you can get exactly the coverage you're looking for.

The retractable screen withdraws into a canister that comes in 10 different colors and has the ability to be custom-colored to perfectly match your home.

"Retractable screens could be for anybody. They're a neat concept to have on your door," said Kevin Layne, owner and founder of Screen Doctors.

The screen used is safe for children and pets, Layne said, because it gives when you push on it.

Not to mention, "they're the only screen door you can have on French doors," he said.

Besides the retractable screen door, Screen Doctors offers its newest product, the remote-controlled power screen, an upgrade from your everyday porch or patio enclosure for an affordable price.

When you want your outdoor dining/sitting/porch area enclosed, you can put the screen down, and when you'd rather look out with an unobstructed view, you can slide them back up – all without lifting a finger (well, maybe just a finger).

Horst Ferrero recently had the power screen installed in his home.

"It was the perfect solution," said Ferrero. "My wife doesn't like the look of screens but likes the benefits of them. So whenever she feels like it, she can just press a button and completely hide it or press it again and use it."

Ferrero was so happy with the process he said he would have another one installed if he had the place for it.

The power screens can even go in front of garages. They move slowly and are very lightweight, so they're safe for children and pets.

Screen Doctors started in 2004 as a re-screening company for pools, patios and enclosures. Now, pressure cleaning, safety fences and volleyball nets for pools are all part of the company as well, in addition to the retractable and power screens. The swimming pool

fences and nets come with a lifetime warranty.

Radio personality Storm Roberts recently hired Screen Doctors to do some work at his home.

"Screen Doctors did a difficult screen repair on our pool. Watching those professionals work – what a show. You could sell tickets to that high-wire act. Pros all the way," Roberts said.

The company consists of three people total, including Layne, who personally checks every project his company completes.

"When people hire Screen Doctors, they're really getting me, and I stand behind my work," he said.

Matthews, who had a retractable door installed in his home, said that it took about a week to get his door and only a few hours to have it installed.

"They did a fine job," Matthews said.

Layne said he has only the one installer, Don Henley, so the work is always consistent.

"It's good, quality work," Layne said.

Screen Doctors makes sure they always leave their customers happy.

"I don't look at customers as customers, I look at them as family," Layne said.

All of Screen Doctors products are covered under warranty. Layne said if a customer encounters a problem, he personally fixes it.

"If a customer ain't satisfied, ain't nobody happy," he said.

Because he deals with customers so personally, Layne said he gets to see the immediate results of his work. He said this is the best part of his job.

"It's a good feeling when someone comes up to you and hugs you and tells you, 'you did a good job.'"

To learn more about Screen Doctors, call (352) 339-3789 or go online to [www.screendoctorsllc.com](http://www.screendoctorsllc.com). **H**







The remote controlled retractable screen raises and lowers at the touch of a button as shown here in the photos





# Building Green

## Starts With a Strong Foundation

By David Greenberg

Editor's Note: This is the second in a continuing series on green building. In the next issue, we will look at HVAC, insulation and energy monitoring in the home.

All of the material in the foundation of a green home are selected with care, as is the case with the metal roof (below) and the flooring, windows, doors and framing (on the next page). Photos by Brad Palmer.

When building a home, the first thought has to be the foundation, and when building a green home that foundation has many more considerations.

David Melville, the owner of David Melville Contracting Services, Inc. (DMCS), is building Gainesville's first LEED Platinum-certified home in Brytan, a mixed-use, traditional neighborhood being developed on Archer Road in southwest Alachua County by Brice Business Group. The 3,300-square-foot home is expected to be completed in the next few weeks.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification is offered by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). It is the highest of four levels in USGBC's program – certified, silver, gold and platinum.

"There are other organizations that certify green building as well – the Florida Green Building Coalition and the National Association of Home Builders," said Melville. "Each uses their own checklist and point system. I use LEED, but the important thing is to make the effort."

When it comes to the structure of the home, Melville says you have to start with the foundation. That includes the material used under the floor, as well as how the foundation is treated.

It starts with the stem wall, the supporting structure used as a way of joining the foundation of a building with the vertical walls constructed on the foundation.

"We poured the stem wall solid," said Melville. "It creates a stronger foundation and makes things more effective for termite treatment. There's a fine line with termite treatment in a green home. We decided to treat the soil, and we use Termguard."

Treatment is done at the perimeter piping and inside the slab at all penetrations, he said.

"Typically, there is spraying at the foundation base," said Melville. "The way we do it, everything is underground. There's no chemical spraying on the surface. It is safer for the person doing the application, for the homeowner and for the environment."

Next, said Melville comes the concrete. He uses a 30 percent, fly-ash mix.

"Since what we use is a by-product of another industrial process, it reduces waste, raw materials and the amount of cement. The minimum you can use in a residential setting is 25 percent. In commercial, it can be as high as 50-to-60 percent. This mix cures slower than regular cement-based concrete, and after 60 days, it exceeds the strength of concrete."

Plus, he says it is easy to finish.

"On this home in Brytan there are no cracks anywhere," said Melville. "That's due to the mix."

For framing, Melville decided not to use FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified lumber.

"FSC means it comes from a federally managed forest," he said. "While that is important, you have to weigh it against other considerations. It increases the cost of the lumber anywhere from 30-to-60 percent. Instead, we were environmentally conscious about our use of lumber. We ended up with very little excess wood."

The walls in the Brytan home come from ZIP Systems, a subsidiary of Huber Engineered Woods.







"ZIP may cost a little more than conventional walls, but the nice thing about it is the waterproofing barrier is in the board itself," said Melville.

The flooring is from Advantech Flooring Systems, another division of Huber.

"The test in flooring comes during construction," said Melville. "When you put on the second-floor deck the house is not yet complete. With our Florida rain, you have puddles on the floor. But the puddles dry, and there is no swelling. It comes with a 50-year warranty and costs no more money than a standard floor."

The entry door is from Therma-Tru and the other doors are from Neuma. Both use Low-E glass and are built with energy savings in mind, and both come with 30-year warranties.

Paradigm Window Solutions provided the windows. The vinyl, double-hung windows come with a lifetime warranty, include Low-E glass and far exceed Energy Star specifications.

Melville chose to use a metal roof on the home for several reasons. The biggest of those reasons is longevity. Metal will far outlast a shingle roof.

"Plus, aesthetically it goes with the look of the house," he said.

Melville selected these products because he sees it as part of building green.

Durability is an essential element in green building," he said. "If you are not having to go back to repair and replace, you are not using up natural resources. The impact is substantial."


As a homeowner who wants to build green all these products and factors come into play, said Melville.

"How green you want to build is up to you," he said. "Extras, whether it is for building green or something else, cost more. The best thing to do is sit down together with your builder and talk about what is important to you. These decisions need to be made together."

Cost is often an overriding factor when it comes to green building.

"For me, it is important to look at payback versus up-front costs," said Melville. "The homeowner has to decide how much more they want to pay up front and how much of that cost is recouped in energy savings."

"The important thing," he said, "is to make the effort. Green building is the future. It is important that all of us – builders and homeowners do what we can."

**To learn more about David Melville Contracting Services, Inc, go online to [www.dmcs-inc.com](http://www.dmcs-inc.com) or call (863) 521-1217. To learn more about the Brytan community, go online to [www.brytan.com](http://www.brytan.com). **





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# Howe Development

## *Ready to Build*

By David Greenberg  
photography by Brad Palmer

With history and experience behind the company, Howe Development can meet any residential and light commercial construction need.

In business since 1997, Howe Development has spent the last several years putting itself into position to build residential, office and light commercial projects. As the economy starts to improve, the timing could not be better.

"We started out strictly as a land development company," said Rick Howe, the owner of Howe Development. "We had the idea that at some point we might get involved in doing the building ourselves. In the last few years, I have learned two things – in order to be successful in today's market, you have to embrace the concept of building green and you have to be able to diversify."

The result is that today Howe Development is developing and building both residential and commercial projects like its energy efficient homes offered in The Cottages at Millhopper Forest and its office buildings in the unique office park of Metro Corp Center in northwest Gainesville.

The day Howe started his business, he already had a great deal of experience, having learned from one of the pioneers in the industry in North Central Florida – his step-father, Alan Squitieri – who developed the Oaks Mall. Howe had been the vice president of development and leasing for Squitieri Associates and brought more than 20 years of experience with him.

"While we had ideas of building for ourselves down the road, the original plan was to bring in a select group of builders for the property we were developing," said Howe. "Now that we are developing commercial property again, it makes perfect sense to handle our own building construction needs in our own projects".

The pace of the move from developer to developer-builder may have come quicker than Howe anticipated, but he has no regrets.

He joined the Builders Association of North Central Florida (BANCf) after he discovered that builders in one of his projects, Millhopper Forest, wanted to participate in the Parade of Homes™.

For a development to be included in the parade, the developer has to enter, and to enter you have to be a BANCf member.

So Howe joined and became involved very quickly.

"I went to my first meeting in 1998 and really liked the people I met," said Howe. "I asked Barry Rutenberg how I could get more involved. He suggested I become a member of the board and I did that, and within a few months, I was put on the leadership ladder."

Because of his participation in BANCf, along with being an active member on the Alachua County Planning Commission, Howe moved up that ladder quickly, and by 2001 he became president.

Howe's work with the builder's association has earned him some prestigious recognition – including the BANCf A.W. Fletcher Service Award for recognition of outstanding service during 2002 and Builder of the Year in 2003. In 2004, Howe Development received the Aurora Award for best subdivision of less than 100 acres presented at the Southeast Builders Conference. The SEBC represents the entire building industry for the 12-state southeastern region. Howe received this award for The Cottages at Millhopper Forest.

Parallel to his association involvement, Howe brought his brother, Chip, in from South Carolina to be the builder at Howe Development. Chip Howe served in that role from 2002 to 2006, when he left for another opportunity.

"Chip's joining us when he did was excellent timing. It gave us the opportunity to get involved in building a finished product within one of our very





own projects," said Howe. "That was when I began to realize the benefits of being both builder and developer."

That's also when he and Howe Development Superintendent Jeff Robeson decided to take the necessary steps to become licensed contractors. Both passed their state tests the first try and now hold Certified Building Contractor licenses, which enable them to build both residential and commercial work. Howe has also been a licensed real-estate broker in the State of Florida since 1979.

In 2006 Howe Development Corporation purchased the 3.5 acres on the corner of Northwest 39th Avenue and 43rd Street from Shands Hospital to venture into the world of commercial construction. With a solid background in commercial development, this high profile site could prove his decision correct to combine the two trades into one business.

"We bought that property from Shands and created the five building site plan we now call Metro 39 Office Park," said Howe. "Since this site was basically an infill site and the last phase of the Metro Corp Office PD, we tried hard to build something that fit aesthetically into the way the area was growing, and based on the feedback, I think we have succeeded."

Primarily offices that are either rented or owned, Metro Corp now boasts the beautifully designed future Gainesville office for Gateway Bank. Howe Development is building the new bank building and expects completion in the Fall of 2009.

Dentist William Embro owns his 1,300-square-foot office at Metro Corp Center.

"I was very impressed after I met with Rick and his partner, Jeff," said Embro. "I knew they would build my office the way I wanted. What attracted me was the way they build here. They build high quality with energy efficiency in mind. The property is also in a great location for the population growth in Gainesville."

Embro said he would have no problem recommending Howe Development.

"I recently had an orthodontist in the office," said Embro. "He was so impressed, and he wanted something similar, so I sent him to Rick."

Embro was also impressed enough himself that he had Howe Development build his home at The Cottages.

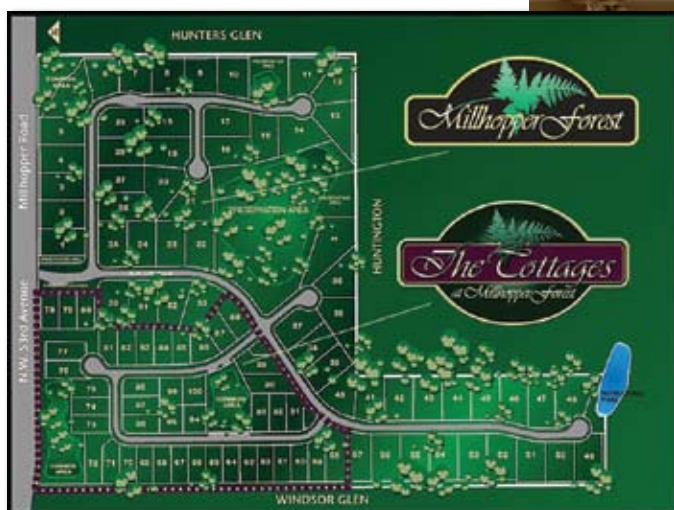
"The way they build, it really made me want to have them build my home as well," he said. "We're very happy with the results."

So today Howe Development prepares for the future with a strong leadership team consisting of Howe, his wife, Leigh, who does much of the company's interior design work, and Robeson. He sees the company taking an active role in development, construction and management. To that end, they are creating a separate company, Howe Building Construction, LLC specifically to deal with building.

"The new company will enable us to build on a site that we do not own and even allow for some remodeling work as well," said Howe. "With our experience and history behind us, we are ready and able to build while we get back to our roots as a developer."

To learn more about the services offered by Howe Development Corp., go online to [www.howedevelopment.com](http://www.howedevelopment.com) or call (352) 367-9192. **H**

Howe Development is equally adept at office and home construction.





# KEN REMBERT: Serving With a Smile

By Chelsey Joyner  
photography by Brad Palmer



**T**he title of businessman, although correct, doesn't seem to fit Ken Rembert, the owner of Gainesville's TCBYs and the Bagel Bakery.

If you ever have the pleasure of running into Rembert in one of his stores, you are likely to find him wearing a baseball cap and having a friendly conversation with regular customers. That's not your average day at the office.

Rembert purchased two of his TCBY stores and opened the Bagel Bakery, located in the Millhopper Shopping Center, in 1999. He later opened a third TCBY location. Today, there are three TCBY stores –in Thornebrook Village, another on Archer Road and Southwest 34th Street and the newest in the Tioga Town Center.

Rembert's relationships with customers and the community have helped him to achieve 10 years of success, and that success has not been taken for granted. Rembert has turned his businesses into opportunities for outreach into the community.

For example, Rembert donates Bagel Bakery's bagels to numerous organizations at the end of the day.

"Different organizations or people who are hosting charitable events call almost every day," said Bagel Bakery employee Melissa Eidam. "We just write down their name and save all the bagels at the end of the day for them to come in and pick up. It's nice to know that the bagels are going to help someone."

Like Bagel Bakery, TCBY has become much more than a yogurt shop to the community. Because it's a healthy alternative to ice cream, TCBY is a campus favorite with University of Florida students. Women, especially, enjoy the benefits. TCBY's popularity is in part due to the fact that it offers low or non-fat yogurt that has minimal calories and sugar content and still tastes great.

Members of the Greek community have also found TCBY to be a huge asset when it comes time to raise money for their respective philanthropies.

Alpha Epsilon Phi was able to raise more than \$100 this year through a TCBY fundraiser for their philanthropy, Phi Hoops, benefiting the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation and Hodgkin's Lymphoma research.

"It was extremely easy to set up," said Alex Schieken of Alpha Epsilon Phi. "All I had to do was select a night. Anyone who came in and purchased something during our time helped out with our fundraising. We earned 20 percent of all proceeds."

TCBY sponsors fundraising nights upon request from many organizations in and around the University of Florida campus.

Employee of five and a half years, Travis Clements, has had the opportunity to be on both sides of Rembert's generosity.

"I remember once I was asked to come into Bagel Bakery an hour early to bake 500 extra bagels. I was not too happy about coming in at 3:30 a.m." Clements said.

Clements later found out that Rembert donated those 500 fresh bagels to an event taking place that morning.

"It's neat to be on both sides," Clements said. "Once, I was a recipient of his generosity while participating in a YoungLife walk-a-thon for high school students. Ken showed up with a giant cooler full of TCBY yogurt for everyone at the event."

Rembert's kindness doesn't stop at the Gainesville city limits. When filling a cup of coffee at Bagel Bakery, a sign featuring the smiling faces of children and families from Guatemala hangs overhead.

The sign reads, "We are partnering with a group of indigenous Guatemalans to purchase coffee directly allowing them to nearly double their income from last year. Our House Blend, Guatemalan, French Roast and flavored coffees are all from this group. By drinking this coffee and taking a few pounds home you are directly helping these wonderful people. – Ken"

The sign only tells half the story.

"I use the money from coffee refills to buy water filters for our partner community in Guatemala," Rembert said. "I visit at least once a year, and through the refill money I am able to put water filters in about 50 homes each year."

Rembert got his business roots from his father, Davis Rembert. After graduating from UF with a degree in Forestry, Rembert worked in forestry for a while before moving into the business world with his father at United Fuels and the Sprint Food stores.

"We were excited and proud when Ken decided to join us," said Davis Rembert. "He was a lot like I was – starting from scratch and learning the business world."

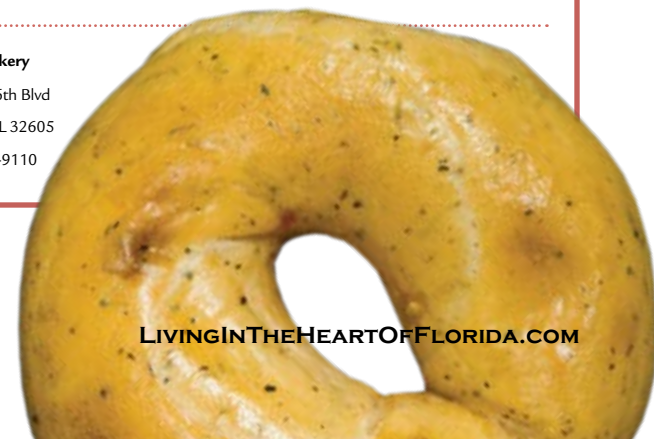
After nine years in different positions, the Sprint Food stores were sold and Rembert started his own business endeavors with TCBY and Bagel Bakery. Today, the stores are a success and a helping hand to the community.

"We couldn't be more proud of the things he is doing now – stepping out of his comfort zone to see others in need and doing something about it," said Davis Rembert. **H**

**TCBY Locations**

Archer Location 3102 SW 34th St Gainesville, FL 32608 352-376-5665	Thornebrook Village 2441 NW 43rd St Ste 24C Gainesville, FL 32606 352-378-1051	Tioga Town Center 12921 SW 1st Rd Ste 103. Newberry, FL 32669 352-332-8896
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**Bagel Bakery**  
4113 NW 16th Blvd  
Gainesville, FL 32605  
(352) 384-9110







Ken Rembert in the TCBY at  
Thornebrook Village



# CAMPUS USA CREDIT UNION

## Breaks Ground



The structural skeleton of the 95,000 square foot headquarters building and a 4,500 square foot branch in Jonesville.



CAMPUS USA Credit Union has begun construction of its new 95,000 square foot headquarters building and a 4,500 square foot branch in Jonesville, just east of Hwy 241 on Newberry Road. Situated on an 11 acre site and scheduled to open in June 2010, the headquarters building will put over 250 people to work during construction over the next 12 months. The free standing branch office, complete with ATMs and drive up tellers, will be completed this year.

"This building is over ten years in the making. Since 1990 the growth of CAMPUS USA Credit Union has stayed on course and we knew we would soon outgrow our current headquarters. We have been actively seeking a new location until finally choosing the Jonesville Business Park." -Larry Scott, President/CEO CAMPUS USA Credit Union

The property's integrated landscape of winding sidewalks and tree canopies, will invite members and employees to enjoy a park like atmosphere, while paying homage to the credit union's celebrated history of over 75 years in Gainesville.

Once complete, the new CAMPUS USA Credit Union Complex will be the home of over 100 employees. These employees will use the surrounding restaurants and businesses bringing additional revenue to the Jonesville area.

CAMPUS USA Credit Union is a not-for-profit financial cooperative with over 60,000 member/owners. If you live or work in Alachua, Clay, Columbia, Lake, Marion or Sumter County, YOU are eligible for membership. Visit [www.campuscu.com](http://www.campuscu.com) or call 352-335-9090 and press 5 for details. **H**

"This building is over ten years in the making"



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# Open Access, Not Open Exit with Santa Fe College and Jackson Sasser

By David Greenberg  
Photography by Brad Palmer

**W**hen Jackson Sasser came to Santa Fe College (SFC) seven years ago he was determined to make a great institution even better. Judging by the results, he has been successful.

“Our goal is to take individuals where they are academically and walk with them forward from that point,” he said. “Faculty members and students take this walk together. The college’s success comes from what happens in the classroom which is defined broadly today. I attempt to open doors for faculty members to do their magic. Faculty and staff walk together to a destination. That’s learning.”

Sasser says access to higher education lies at the heart of Santa Fe College. He said access includes many things but you must begin with a great faculty. From there it includes making the college available to the entire community. When he came to Santa Fe College, which was known as Santa Fe Community College until last year, there were four campuses – the main one in northwest Gainesville, the Andrews Center in Starke, the Kirkpatrick Center in northeast Gainesville and the Blount Center in downtown Gainesville.

Today there are three more locations to increase availability to higher education – the Davis Center in Archer, the Watson Center in Keystone Heights, and the Charles R. and Nancy V. Perry Center for Emerging Technology which is opening in Alachua this fall.

During his tenure Sasser has launched many initiatives to make a great institution better, but he says the most significant accomplishment has been to make sure that Santa Fe College continues to focus on creating an atmosphere where all students and employees can learn.

He also sees two other critical factors in the success of SFC.

One is the continued emphasis on Bradford and Alachua counties, which has been enhanced by the addition of new campuses.

“Once again we return to access, our fundamental mission,” he said. “It is one thing to say you provide access to all, but if people cannot get to a campus, then you are not really providing access. Just looking at Gainesville, we still have two communities here. That’s why the Blount Center in downtown is so important. It is an extensive facility that is close to east Gainesville, and we went further six years ago by inaugurating our East Gainesville Initiative to better serve the community. We do so together by listening to ministers, students, parents, grandparents and guardians.

“Our outreach centers serve a similar purpose,” he continued, “in that they take educational opportunity to the people, especially those who lack transportation or otherwise cannot easily reach our northwest campus.”

SFC President Jackson Sasser surrounded by students, from left: Austin Brinza, Ha Young Kim, Randy Myricks, Kristen Bell, Juliun Kinsey and Cesar Fernandez.







Jackson and Layne sit in the swing located on the front porch of their home, one of their favorite spots to relax.



The second factor for success is internationalizing the entire college.

"In today's world every student regardless of background needs an understanding of international affairs," said Sasser. "In every course we teach there is some discussion of international affairs. This is new. We challenged every program area at the college to deal with some international aspect. How can you teach a business class or for that matter any course today without considering international aspects?"

SFC Board Trustee Tom Mallini, the president and CEO of M&S Bank, suggests that Sasser's effort to internationalize the college is one sign of his commitment to always look for ways to improve the educational experience.

"It starts with the students, but he is also looking at ways to improve things for the faculty, staff and the entire community," said Mallini. "It is important in these global times for all adults to have a broader understating of culture around the world."

Sasser said the goal is to make international matters part of everything at the college rather than limiting them to a few courses and programs. Recognition of the internationalization is illustrated by SFC's winning of a prestigious Heiskell Award for internationalizing the curriculum, Fulbright scholars in from Indonesia and China who taught at the college and the recent announcement that SFC interim provost Ed Bonahue has been named to teach as a Fulbright Scholar in Germany.

The interesting fact about Sasser serving at Santa Fe is that it almost never happened. The president of Lee College in Texas, he was not looking to leave when the SFC position opened up.

"My wife, Layne, and I were very happy there," he said. "As an institution it was very much like Santa Fe with a hard-hitting, well-credentialed faculty."

But, he said, the consultant kept calling.

"Layne saw the Santa Fe president vacancy notice material on our kitchen table and said she had a premonition about it," Sasser said. "I started researching online. I knew that at 52, if I were ever going to move this possibility was a good option."

So he agreed to submit an application and the screening committee invited him to come to Gainesville for an interview that began with a college-wide reception.

"It felt like home," said Sasser. "Several days later I was offered the job and did not accept it until I came back for a second meeting with community leaders and more Santa Fe employees. We fell in love with the college and the community, and our affection for the area has increased."

There have been challenges that tested Sasser since his arrival at SFC. Matters such as the commitment to academic freedom for faculty, the health and welfare of students and employees and the passage of hurricanes required him to take leadership of the college in times of stress.

We fell in love with the college and the community, and our affection for the area has increased.

"Internationalization must include study abroad, and today our students travel to five continents," he said "It entails our faculty relating their experiences abroad and weaving international perspectives into all their teaching. Then we can be confident that hundreds of students in the future will be influenced positively in the classroom."

History Professor David Tegeder says that internationalizing the college is just one way Sasser has shown a commitment to improvement.

"I was really pleased to see him take the lead on that," said Tegeder. "Encouraging faculty and administrators to pursue those opportunities can only make the college better."

Internationalizing the college goes beyond encouraging faculty and students to travel. It includes enrolling hundreds of students from other counties so they can mingle with those from the United States.

"Bring a student from Iraq to sit in class next to a student from Alachua or Bradford Counties," he said. "If all students from every country had that experience, there would be less misunderstanding and acrimony around the world. Some people might say we are a local college and leave that to Yale and Harvard," he added. "I say that access includes access to the world, so, why not begin at Santa Fe?"



(right) President Sasser in his office at Santa Fe College.

(bottom right) Sasser has other passions outside of academics, one of them is his jeep which he recently had restored.





These incidents drew him closer to faculty and staff – creating trust and communication lines that have proved to be beneficial throughout his tenure.

Sasser believes that the strength to make difficult decisions comes from his own beliefs and background. Born and raised in Alexander City, Ala, he grew up within five miles of all four of his grandparents.

“They made immeasurable contributions to my growth as a person,” he said. “My goal was never to disappoint them. I am sure I did.”

Sasser’s father was an accountant for the Russell Corp., and his mother was a homemaker. He and his three siblings attended college, and there was never a consideration that he would not enter higher education. Sasser earned his bachelor’s degree from Jacksonville State University and did his graduate work at the University of Alabama.

“I became a straight A student my senior year after Layne accepted a proposal to marry me,” he said. “We dated for five years before we were married. When I finished the PhD I was intent on getting a law degree, but Layne set me straight. She told me that she hoped my next wife would enjoy that. She was ready for me to go to work. Still if I could manage it, all I would do is attempt to satisfy an insatiable intellectual curiosity by taking classes in higher education.”

Today they have two children. Son, Jackson, lives in Williamsburg and is writing a book and completing a PhD in American Studies at the College of William and Mary. Elizabeth, who teaches and lives in Orlando, is expecting the Sasser’s first grandchild.

Sasser’s first job was as Director of Evening Programs at Calhoun Community College in Decatur/Huntsville Ala.

“That’s when I knew I wanted to work in higher education,” he said. “I never expected I would be a college president. There were a several stops between Alabama and becoming the president at Lee College and ultimately ending up at SFC.”

While successfully reaching his goals regarding access and international activities, Sasser says the most important objective at SFC is to take people where they are academically and prepare them

for the real world, a task made demanding because SFC enrolls many academically gifted students as well as those who need assistance so they can be permitted to take college credit classes.

Sasser said, once again, the key is access to all students. The college takes many students with very good high school records, including valedictorians and salutatorians, and challenges them with an array of offerings that includes an Honors Program. These students receive personal attention as do students who are less prepared.

The commitment to access includes the widespread use of technology – but only to augment and not dominate the teaching and learning experience.

“Because of all the changes in technology, we are experiencing accelerated learning,” he said. “The challenge for us is to embrace this technology to enhance learning. But you still have to have a balance. Learning still has to be interactive, and the faculty member still has to lead the journey.”

Sasser recognizes that some students, who may be less open in a typical classroom, can be the most communicative in an on-line course.

“However the person who leads that class is still the magician – the teacher, the conductor,” he said. “Little is accomplished without them. The challenge is to blend all the changing educational tools and techniques for maximum student learning.”

Students might argue that while the teacher-student relationship is critical, the college can only be as good as its leader.

Kristen Bell was not only a student at SFC, she worked in Sasser’s office.

“I am familiar with other community colleges and how they operate, and you don’t feel the magic personal connection you do here,” she said. “Dr. Sasser creates has an uplifting personality that spreads over the entire school. People are happy to be here. When I worked in his office it was a little intimidating, but he always made me feel comfortable.

“I have served as a student ambassador, and that includes giving tours to perspective students,” she continued. “He is

Jackson Sasser, with Matt Webster of PPI Construction Management, talks over the construction details of the Charles R. and Nancy V. Perry Center for Emerging Technology located in Alachua.





friendly with everyone – not just the people he worked with. I was once giving a tour, and he stopped to talk to those students. I never saw that anywhere else.”

Cesar Fernandez was the 2008-09 student government president. He had the experience of working closely with Sasser, including lobbying together in Tallahassee.

“There are 28 community colleges, and most of my colleagues said it was rare for them to deal with the college president,” he said. “I had almost daily direct contact with him. I was at every cabinet meeting and every board of trustees meeting. I always had great access, but so do all the students. It was great to be part of an institution that never hides anything from you.”

Using all the tools at their disposal, Sasser, his staff and faculty take students who are less prepared and bring them forward on the academic journey. It starts with a program called Academic Foundations, which begins with testing to determine students’ level of preparation. If students are not ready for college-level courses, the transformative work begins with the Academic Foundations faculty.

“As an open access college we admit all kinds of students,” Sasser said. “Once those who are less prepared are here, we are committed to assisting them so they can take college level classes, succeed and graduate.”

Academic Foundations reminds Sasser of the observation he made on his first visit to Gainesville that Santa Fe’s “best partner was the University of Florida and we needed to make that relationship stronger.”

He said that SFC provides Academic Foundations courses and several other services and programs to UF students.

“We’re the underpinning for UF students who may be deficient in math, reading, or writing,” he said. “A person may have a 4.5 GPA yet lack fundamental skills in one of these areas. We respect all students regardless of their academic preparation.”

The college’s close affiliation with UF is seen in other areas. SFC’s Veteran’s Affairs office also serves vets at UF; the college’s East Gainesville Initiative works closely with UF’s programs to renew the area, and the college worked closely with UF to develop courses to educate students for employment in biotechnology and life sciences at the Progress Center near Alachua.

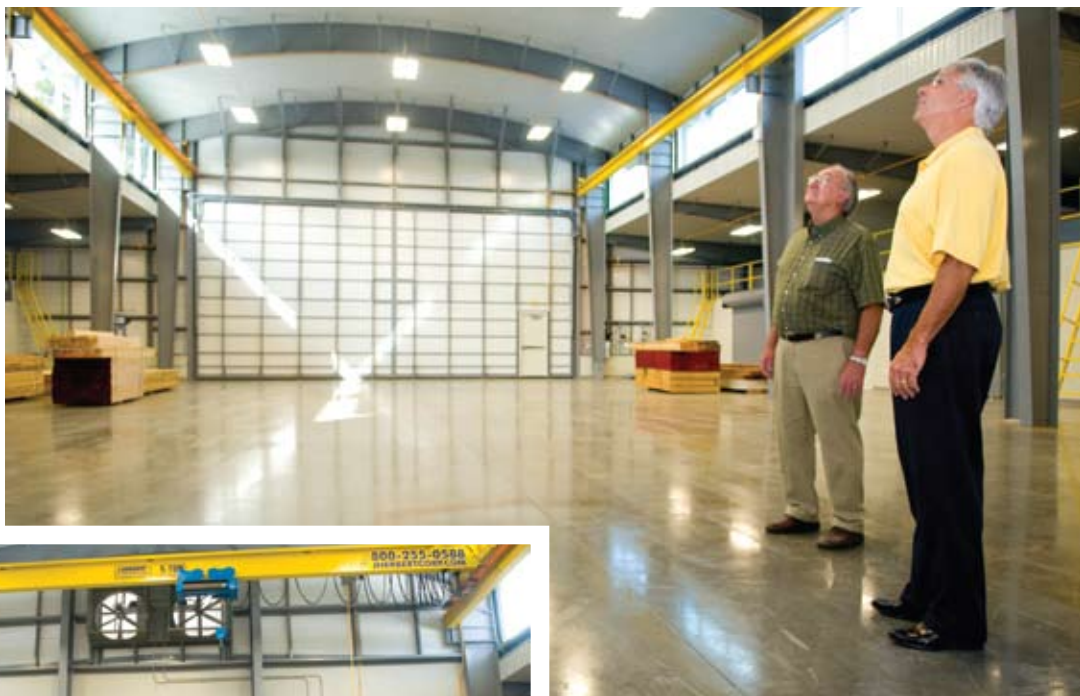
Indeed, almost half of SFC’s professors have degrees from UF.

“Our faculty members are tremendous – off the charts, and much of the credit for that has to go the University of Florida – our partner in this process,” said Sasser. “Forty-seven percent of our faculty members were credentialed at UF.”

The college and university have merged some programs, Sasser said. For example, while Santa Fe students can enter the Warrington Business School at UF if they earn a 3.7 GPA, there is a new way to enter that prestigious business program without those grades.

“Beginning this fall, after completing an associate’s degree in business at Santa Fe, our students can enter the Warrington College as online students with all the privileges like academic advisement, football tickets, Gator Growl, and testing. You cannot separate our two institutions. It is a partnership. The relationship is mutually beneficial. We make each other stronger.”

Regarding the four-year programs now being offered at SFC – bachelor of applied science degrees in health services administration and clinical laboratory science – Sasser says there is a critical need for both, and UF is not offering them.



Sasser, with Wendell Collins of PPI, examines the 10,000-pound crane high over head at the newly opened Charles Perry Construction Institute on campus, used in the construction of disaster-replacement homes.



“I don’t see us offering a bachelor’s degree that is offered at UF,” he said. “There’s no reason to if SFC students have access to UF programs.”


Access at Santa Fe is built upon other partnerships. The dual-enrollment program with the Alachua County Public Schools allows high school students to get a head start on college, providing them with educational and financial benefits.

Groups like the Builders Association of North Central Florida (BANCF) are active members in dual-enrollment, helping with instruction, internships and jobs in the building trades component of the program.

With access as its guide, SFC continues to adjust, expand and grow. As it does, SFC board of Trustees Chair Evelyn Womack says it could not be in better hands.

“The reason we have been so successful on Dr. Sasser’s tenure is that he is the best in the nation,” she said. “He is a people person, and he is student and community oriented. He keeps his ear to the pulse of the community. That’s what we want in our business. He has a gift at seeing beyond the present into the future. We’re not in crisis now because of his planning.”

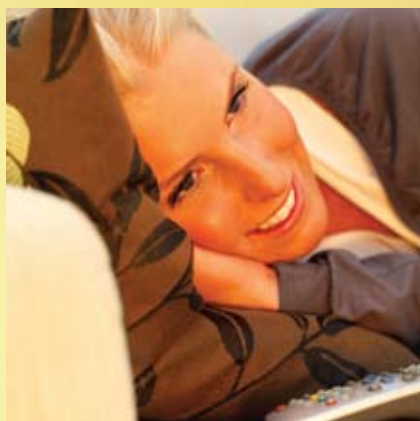
As far as the future goes, Sasser says the most important thing is to remain flexible.

“Colleges like ours need to be nimble but never compromise quality,” said Sasser. “We must respond quickly to the needs of our students and the community. In the end, it is always about doing the best we can to allow faculty to take their students on that journey and prepare them for the real world. We don’t just let them leave after two years. We prepare them. It’s about open access but not open exit. That’s Santa Fe.” 





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# Bobcats



No matter what look you're going for, one thing's for certain: Gainesville stores are ready to come to the rescue for your back-to-school needs.



# Fashion

by Faith Reaves  
photography by Brad Palmer

## Makin' Back to School Very Cool

It can be difficult to leave the summer behind, especially for students. Forced to say goodbye to the lazy days by the pool, extended curfews and days at camp, they have to trade their soccer balls for textbooks. One thing the new school year brings that the summer was lacking — new clothes!

While the current economy may have put a strain on a parent's wallet, Gainesville has plenty of options for nearly every budget. Consignment shops, department stores and boutiques offer clothes from each end of the spectrum.

Stores like Sandy's Consignment Boutique bring you lightly used designer and brand names at an affordable price.

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## LIFESTYLE

etc...boutique, which typically cater to college students and older, can also be a resource for your higher-end needs. It's perfect for those teen girls who just have to stand out!





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# Jekyll Island



Aerial view of the historic Jekyll Island Club Hotel.

By Scott Costello

For more than 4,500 years, Jekyll Island has been a place where people have gone to get away. From Native American hunter-gatherers tribes like the Timucua Indians, to Spanish explorers, English colonists, French privateers and 19th century American titans, Jekyll has been a seasonal retreat – and it still is.

General James Edward Oglethorpe re-named the island from Isla de Ballenas (Island of Whales) to Jekyll Island in honor of his friend Sir William Jekyll in 1734. Sir Jekyll was a member of the British Parliament that played a huge role in financing the Georgia Colony.

Jekyll Island's present-day prominence as a beloved vacation destination originated in 1886, when it became an exclusive winter retreat for some of America's most elite families, known as the Jekyll Island Club. An array of wealthy and well-known figures were members, including J.P. Morgan, Joseph Pulitzer, Williams Rockefeller, Vincent Astor, Marshall Field and William Vanderbilt. These wealthy industrialists desired a place to escape from the hectic life of the big city. The Jekyll Island Club commissioned for a Louis Comfort Tiffany stained glass window to be created for the Faith Chapel in 1921. It is one of only four signed Tiffany windows in the United States.

As soon as you cross the bridge to the island, you feel like you have travelled back to a simpler time. Located midway between Jacksonville and Savannah, this small barrier island is surrounded with moss draped live oaks, marshes and





natural sand dunes. Of the 5,700 acres, it is mandated that only 35 percent can be developed.

Today Jekyll Island has grown, but has developed under the same premise. This is a destination to visit to maximize relaxation, enjoy your family and surround yourself on an island that is a compelling blend of modern comfort and rich history.

There are a number of places to stay on Jekyll Island. It starts with the Historic Jekyll Island Club Hotel. Designed by Charles Alexander of Chicago, the original clubhouse reflects the Queen Anne style, including extensive verandas, bay windows, and ionic columns.

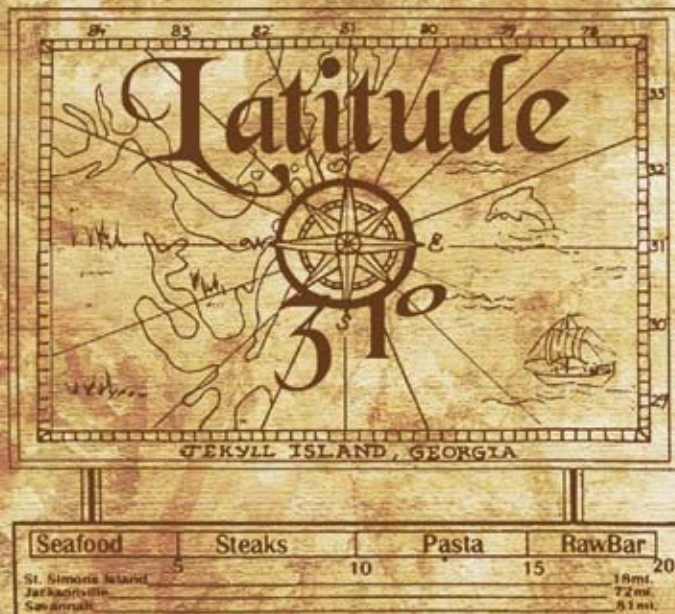
Thirteen winter homes or cottages as they were called, were designed and added to the property between 1888 and 1928 to house entire families. Today, it is preserved as the Jekyll Island Club National Historic Landmark District. As a part of the Jekyll Island Club hotel, three are available as a part of their lodging options at the Jekyll Island Club Hotel as part of its lodging options. These are the Sans Souci, built by J.P. Morgan and one of the first condominiums in our country, Crane Cottage, built by Richard Teller Crane in the style of Italian Renaissance and Cherokee Cottage, constructed in 1904. At the hotel, you can feel the shift in time, participating in daily croquet, enjoying dining in the grand ballroom, or having high tea at 4 p.m. daily in the Riverview Lounge.

For the family looking at an extended stay or coming with a larger group, consider the Villas by the Sea Resort & Conference Center. Each villa is spacious and designed in its own unique style. They have one-, two- and three-bedroom villas with kitchens, dining rooms and breathtaking views. Boardwalks through tropical greenery lead you to their natural beaches. The Villas by the Sea Resort

One of the Latitude 31 signature dishes is the Seafood Crepes topped with a Sherry Leek Cream Sauce, and stuffed with shrimp, crab and scallops.



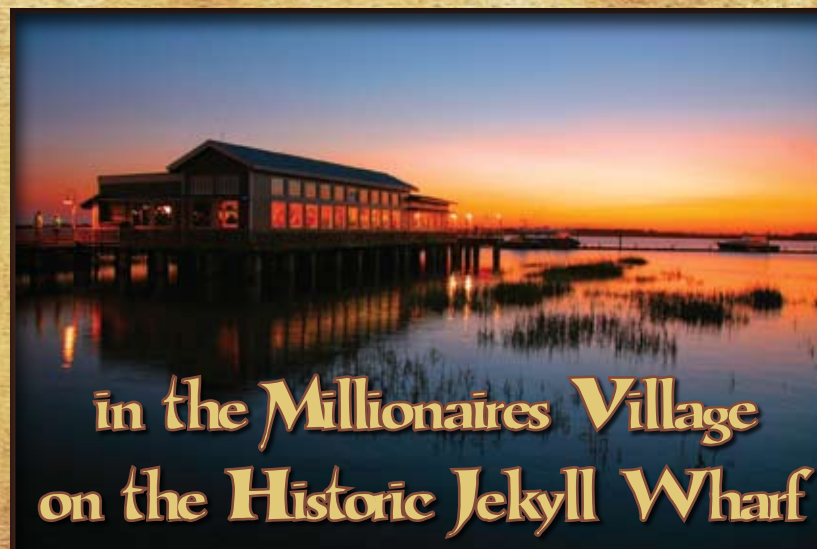




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A perfect alternative to the standard hotel room is the Villas by the Sea Resort. Each two-story villa is spacious and designed in its own unique style.

& Conference Center prides itself in making visitors feel relaxed and taken care of, whether you are staying for a weekend, or an extended stay.

In terms of dining, there are a number of terrific choices. A must for anyone visiting the island is Latitude 31. Located on the Historic Jekyll Wharf, fresh seafood entrees and unique creations surround this menu. Enjoy breathtaking views of the Jekyll River (the Intracoastal Waterway), especially at sunset. Among their signature entrees on the menu are their Seafood Crepes topped with a Sherry Leek Cream Sauce, and stuffed with shrimp, crab and scallops or their Bourbon Peach and Pecan Glazed Pork Tenderloin. Basted and served with a homemade sauce that includes Georgia peaches, this is a meal you cannot miss.

Right next door to Latitude 31 on the Historic Jekyll Wharf is the Rah Bar – known for their famous Low Country Boil, with an abundance of crab legs, shrimp and crawdaddies, served with corn, red potatoes and sausage. They also have a large selection of raw or steamed oysters, u-peel-em, Wild Georgia Shrimp u-peel-em, Crawdaddies and Dungeness crab. If you are in the mood for something other than seafood, try their Dangerous Dan's BBQ, with a homemade Pepper Relish.

You should also look at a new restaurant – the Driftwood Bistro, located at the Villas by the Sea Resort & Conference Center. Taking its name from the neighboring Driftwood Beach, it offers unique variations on old-fashioned dishes, such as the Redneck Rueben.

Attractions on Jekyll Island are varied.

If you are looking to relax and enjoy the views of the island, you might want to saddle up and experience the beach on horseback. Guided tours by Victoria's Carriages and Trail Rides start at the Clam Creek picnic area on Driftwood Beach and take you along the north end of the island, through the forests and along the salt marshes. Their sunset ride is unforgettable. Jekyll Island is a conservation area with natural sand dunes and 10 miles of pristine beaches.

From May through August, you can experience the female loggerhead sea turtles swim ashore and make their way across the sand to dig their nests and lay eggs. The Georgia Sea Turtle Center opened in 2007 and provides group tours.

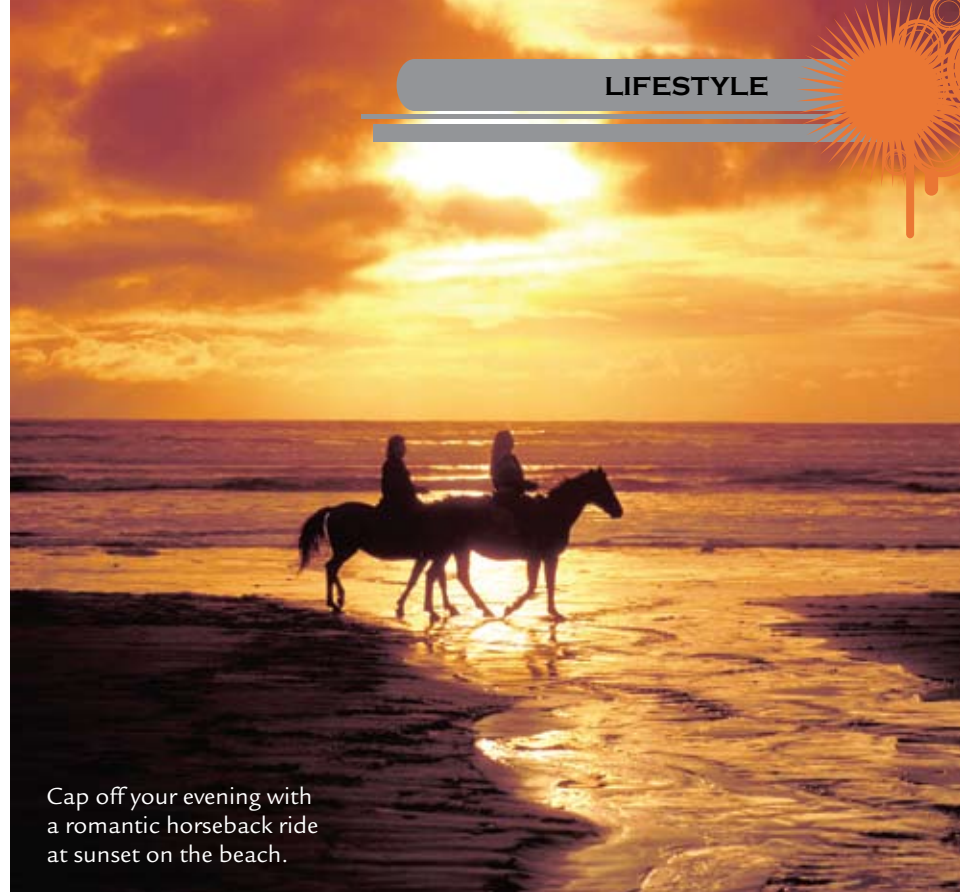
There are also dolphin tours, bird watching expeditions, nature walks, and three 18-hole golf courses.

A must on the trip is to enjoy Summer Waves Water Park, with slides for kids of all ages. Experience the Frantic Atlantic Wave Pool, the Turtle Creek lazy river,



Cool off with the family at Summer Waves Water Park.

## LIFESTYLE



Cap off your evening with a romantic horseback ride at sunset on the beach.

or Nature's Revenge, where you can attempt to survive the twists and turns of Hurricane and Tornado – two furies of nature that curve and drop downward over 330 feet. The water park is a sure way to create family memories. Spending a hot day here will keep kids entertained and parents relaxed.

Beach Music Festival & BBQ Beach Bash, taking place in late August, will get the whole family dancing. All ages are sure to enjoy the bash's free concerts and barbeque competition.

Regardless of what you do or where you stay, the key to a Jekyll Island experience is relaxation. Turn the cell phone off, hide the laptop and enjoy travelling back to an earlier time where comfort is a priority.

To learn more about all the activities available at Jekyll Island, go online to [www.jekyllisland.com](http://www.jekyllisland.com). You can also get up to date information by being a fan of Jekyll Island on Facebook.com and following it on Twitter@jekyll\_island. **H**

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# THE REBEL WITH A CAUSE

by Faith Reaves  
photography by Brad Palmer

Where do you begin with a woman who has done everything? At the age of five, when most people were learning their alphabet, she was playing her first piano recital in Carnegie Hall.

By 22, when most people are graduating from college and beginning their adult lives, she was homeless, struggling to survive on the streets of Los Angeles.

At 57, when most people have traded their careers for slower days, she was hurriedly finishing her dissertation for her doctorate in education.

Marilyn Maple, now 78, is not like most people.

Born to a family of performers, Maple was raised to stand out. Her grandfather sang for the Boston Metropolitan. Her parents were both song and dance people; Maple's father even wrote and copywrote a lullaby for his one and only daughter on the day of her birth.

Maple was especially close to her father, whom she believed recognized a true talent in her.

"He thought he had a Mozart on his hands," she joked, when at age three she sat down to play the wedding march on her family's piano.

Maple sits in her office which overlooks a picturesque lake, something she says inspires her while she is writing.



It was at her father's insistence that she began to study piano and music composition, and eventually voice and dance.

"I was able to do what he couldn't do," she said of her upbringing in the arts.

Although she did not stay exclusively in the arts for her career, she used her artistic background as a foundation for many different experiences.

"I've been able to use all the arts and pull them all together to do my real job," she said.

(left) Maple visits with one of the many families having lunch at St. Francis House.



St. Francis House, where Maple serves on the board of directors, provides meals and shelter for some of Gainesville's homeless.



Maple has approached every job she's had with a unique, creative angle, making her highly successful in fields ranging from public relations to theater.

"I put passion into everything I do," said the woman who has had more jobs than she can count.

Her passion has seen her through both trying and glorifying times.

Although Maple has led an accomplished life, from serving as a reporter during the Civil Rights Movement in Jasper, Ala., to playing the role of queen of the goddesses in "The Tempest" in a Grecian amphitheatre, she has also endured great times of trial.

No matter the challenge, Maple has always found a way to sustain and even learn from her challenges.

Perhaps one of her biggest trials was over 50 years ago, when she was forced to make the streets of Los Angeles her home.

Her husband at the time, a Columbia graduate and war veteran, suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome and was unable to keep a job. Despite

## Maple became homeless, eventually passing out on streets from starvation and miscarrying her first child.

holding multiple jobs to keep her family afloat, the two became homeless, with Maple eventually passing out on streets from starvation and miscarrying her first child.

She drew from the strength of the homeless population in Los Angeles and did not stay down for long.

"My time being homeless made a great impact on my life," she said. "I always loved people, but I absolutely fell in love with them when I became homeless. They were marvelous to me. We helped each other survive by providing faith, stamina and encouragement."

With their support, Maple got back on her feet.

Now, she does the same for others.

She has been an advocate for the rights of the homeless in Gainesville since 1998 and is serving on the board of directors for St. Francis House.

Using her incredible ability to tell a story, Maple has used the issue of homelessness as her foundation in writing a screenplay and a book. The book, called "Profiles in Poverty," tells the stories of several homeless people in Gainesville.

"Because I've experienced so many kinds of living, the greatest thing I have to give is compassion," she said. "I can relate to many people's problems." **H**

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# Invest in *Our Children's* Future

By Molly Bruce

Photos courtesy Alachua County Public Schools Foundation

**B**elkis Plata would not have attended college if it weren't for the Take Stock in Children Program.

"I wouldn't have been able to afford it," she said.

Plata, 23, of Jacksonville, now attends the University of Florida Law School after getting her undergraduate degree in criminology from UF as well.

Take Stock in Children is a qualified non-profit organization dedicated statewide to providing scholarships, mentors and hope to low-income, at-risk children. Every student receives a fully paid college tuition scholarship, a volunteer mentor who meets the child weekly at his or her school and continuous monitoring

Alachua County had a perfect graduation rate; 16 kids started the program six years ago and all 16 graduated in June.

"Most students who participate are the first ones in their family to attend college," said Ellen Gershow, outgoing president of the board for Alachua County, a position she held for the past two years.

Students from every public middle school in Alachua County apply every year, and then, based on an interview process, demonstrated need and recommendations, students are chosen. They then sign a contract to meet with a mentor each week, stay drug and alcohol free, maintain a minimum C average and "stay out of trouble," Gershow said.

Every year when the new class is chosen, the students attend a ceremony to sign these contracts.

Rick Mulligan, the incoming president of the Foundation, said, "The contract signing ceremony with the kids and their parents or guardians is a moving experience. The pride and excitement the family is feeling at that moment is humbling, and the young scholar is on his or her way to helping the family cross a bridge for the very first time. It's a great start, and I think it contributes to the high rate of success we experience."

TSIC is measurably a successful program: students have a 96 percent promotion rate year-to-year, and the students in the program consistently outperform their peers in FCAT Reading and Mathematics, Mulligan said.

Getting a mentor is also an important part of the program. Plata had the same mentor for all seven years she was in the program. This is unusual for most of the participants, since the family or mentor sometimes relocates. Plata was able to develop a strong relationship with her mentor, Mindy Hanna.

"She saw me grow up," Plata said.

Plata said she remembers a time when Hanna helped her with a science project in seventh grade, and it ended up being mentioned in the Florida Times Union.

"Her role was to make sure I was on top of my education," Plata said

Hanna worked for what is now Bank of America, and the company, as a big supporter of TSIC, gave her time off each week to visit and mentor Plata during her lunch hour in high school.

Many years since the science project the two worked on together, Hanna and Plata share a strong friendship. Hanna has met Plata's parents, and Plata has met Hanna's husband.

"Now that I'm older, it's different," Plata said.

Plata's mentor left a positive mark on her life, and now Plata herself would like to become a mentor for children in the TSIC program.

A mentor for the program herself, Ellen Gershow has been with one of her students for seven years.

"Mentoring is an important part of the program," she said.

She said that mentors generally talk to the students about academics and organization skills, but sometimes students also talk with their mentors about family and friend issues.

"Mentors can act as a sounding board and a friend," Gershow said.

In Alachua County, Gershow said the program accepts about 20 students a year, depending on funds.

Students who complete the program are awarded a four-year scholarship, which can be split up as two years at a community college and two years at a university or four years at a university- though the scholarship generally falls short of covering all four years at a university.

"Most students end up with other scholarships, as well," Gershow said.

If students are eligible for Bright Futures as well, they are awarded the remaining monies.

Because of the contractual agreement and mentoring program, Gershow said they lose very few students. She said she wishes they could raise more money to help more students.

"I think it's a really amazing program," she said.

TSIC provides opportunities for students who normally wouldn't be able to attend college.

Hasak-Lowy said, "They say it takes a village to raise a child, and we are part of that village."

Taking stock in our children means ensuring productive citizens for the future. Can you think of a better investment?

For more information on the Take Stock in Children program, go to [takestockinchildren.com](http://takestockinchildren.com). **H**



**The Take Stock Class of 2014 poses together for the first time.**

and intervention services provided by a skilled student advocate and career counseling.

Taal Hasak-Lowy, executive director of the Alachua County Public Schools Foundation Inc., said, "What I love about this program is that we enter these students' lives when they have grand dreams and aspirations for their professional future. We are there cheering them on, telling them repeatedly that we believe in them. When necessary, we are also there to intervene and advocate on their behalf to help them stay on course to reach their dreams."

TSIC has been administered locally through the Alachua County Public Schools Foundation since 1986, when it was started by Don Pemberton. Currently there are 116 TSIC Scholars in Alachua County, attending every Alachua County public middle and high school. The most recent class in





(Top left) A student prepares to meet with her mentor.  
(Top right) Take Stock in Children scholars participate at the Rally in Tally 2008. The annual event honors the program mentors and allows both scholars and mentors to meet with state legislators.

(Below) Take Stock in Children scholars meet with their mentors about once a week.





# Treating Cancer with Compassion

## At North Florida Regional Medical Center

by David Greenberg  
photography by Brad Palmer

When the officials at North Florida Regional Medical Center (NFRMC) decided to bring all their cancer services under one roof, the thought was to go beyond the traditional.

Building an outstanding physical plant with state-of-the-art equipment at a total cost of \$18.5 million was only one part of the goal. The goal in creating the 35,000-square-foot Cancer Center at North Florida Regional Medical Center was to have something that treats the emotional aspects of cancer side-by-side with the treatment of the medical aspects.

That's why those associated with the center want to talk just as much about the Nurse Navigator Program as they do about the CyberKnife® Center. The Oncology Nurse Navigator gives the patient a real person – an oncology-certified nurse, whose role is to assist the patient through the facility. The nurse navigator will help with referrals, resources and services, helping the patient through every step – from diagnosis through treatment.

Treating cancer is extremely high-tech as seen by some of the equipment at North Florida Regional Medical Center's Cancer Center.





On the other hand, the CyberKnife® Center is one of those state-of-the-art pieces of equipment that brings the treatment of cancer forward light years by using a precisely focused beam of radiation to destroy tumors with little or no side effects. It can be used as a substitute for some surgical procedures and can track movements of the patient and adjust to them. The treatment is painless and bloodless. NFRMC is one of only 40 hospitals in the United States to offer CyberKnife® and the only one in North Central Florida.

"This is an extremely innovative center," said Dr. Scott Medley, NFRMC's medical director. "We're most proud of the Nurse Navigator Program. With the nurse navigator we can lead them through the maze of technology. That is critical in cancer care, and it is just as important as the kind of things we can do with CyberKnife®, which will make the treatment of cancer so much better."

But Medley and others associated with the center also talk about the setting itself as part of the treatment program.

"For anyone diagnosed with cancer, it is very frightening," he said. "What we have done with this outpatient center is create something that is comfortable for the patients."

Dr. Jeff Snyder, a cardiovascular surgeon and the chair of the hospital board of trustees, said the successful completion of the cancer center was based on cooperation.

"It is a pleasure to see this building come to fruition," he said during the recent ribbon-cutting ceremony. "It is a result of cooperation between the doctors and the administrators that we can get this type of facility."

Dr. Cherylle Hayes, the medical director of radiation oncology, spoke about the role the center can play in the community.

"Cancer touches every family," she said. "How can you impact the community and the fight against cancer any better than you can with a facility like this? It is a necessary and invaluable piece of what we need to provide care."

While the CyberKnife® Center and the Nurse Navigator may be highlights of the services provided at the center, they are just part of a comprehensive outpatient facility.

In Radiation Oncology, the equipment in the center is specifically selected to provide the best care with a minimal amount of side effects. That includes RapidArc™ – radiation technology that offers fast, precise treatment.

"RapidArc™ is designed to treat the cancer quickly without spreading radiation to other parts of the body," said Dr. Mark Perman, a member of the

radiation oncology staff and the clinical director for CyberKnife®. Whether it is CyberKnife® or RapidArc™, we have equipment that can treat any part of the body. In some cases, we can take what was traditionally a nine-week treatment program and reduce it to five days."

CyberKnife® had a unique origin, said Perman. It was originally designed as equipment used to build Mercedes automobiles, and the targeting capability comes from the technology used to track cruise missiles.

Even in the design of the center careful attention was paid to the needs of cancer patients. There is a pleasing theme of water throughout the facility, and three separate lobbies for the main facility and radiation therapy. The treatment

## NFRMC is one of only 40 hospitals in the United States to offer CyberKnife® and the only one in North Central Florida.

rooms all have nature murals on the ceilings. The center also includes a coffee shop off the common center, a resource library with computers for patient use and even a meditation room for some quiet time.

But NFRMC President and Chief Executive Officer Ward Boston said there is one piece to this center that is even more important than the facility, equipment and programs.

"The only thing that is more important than this cancer center is the doctors, nurses and staff who will be working in it," he said.

Matt Davis, the hospital vice president and COO said the planning of the cancer center came with one thought in mind.

"Everyone knows how prominent cancer is," he said. "This center is the culmination of all the technology and caring we could provide. We are putting it all together in this center."

He said he looks forward to working hand-in-hand with the doctors and staff at Shands new cancer hospital.

"You don't treat cancer with an individualistic care model," said Davis. "We need all the experts from all the facilities."

He said there is one common goal.

"We're here to treat and cure cancer," said Davis. "Our goal is to match the compassion and care of our staff of doctors and nurses with the best equipment and facility. This center is the result of that effort." **H**



The center is also warm and comforting for patients, as seen by this common area.



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# Meet the New UF Football Coaches Moving into *The Swamp*

By Stephanie Thomas

photography courtesy University Athletic Association

**T**he gator Nation is one big extended family, and it just gained two new members.

The Gator coaching staff brings in two new football coaches this season, tight ends and fullback coach Brian White and quarterback coach Scot Loeffler. The two bring different personalities to the staff and have a strong plan for their players this season.

White, the new tight ends and fullback coach, is a man who carries his energy and excitement with him from the field to his family.

The coach's love of sports was instilled by his father, a high school coach and teacher.

"I grew up on the field, idolizing my dad, listening to his halftime speeches and being the ball boy. I just always knew I wanted to coach," he said.

A native of Groveland, Mass, White played college football and received his undergraduate degree from Harvard University. He went right into coaching as a graduate assistant at Fordham University.

White brings energy to both his family and his team. He stays upbeat and enthusiastic while still demanding and sees creative ways to motivate players and different angles to attract students.

Brooks Bollinger, a former player of White's at the University of Wisconsin, who is now a quarterback for the NFL's Dallas Cowboys, said two things made White stand out as a coach. He has great energy every day and a great passion to make his players better, he said. It is the same off the field. You can see it with his kids too.

"He rubs off on all the people around him. It goes a long way for a football team," he said.

Lou Holtz, a former Notre Dame coach who is now an ESPN analyst, taught the pure fundamentals of football from a coaching standpoint.

White brings experience in another key aspect of coaching – recruiting. He says he appreciates the fundamentals of recruiting, and as a people lover, he takes pleasure in traveling to different homes across the country. A great recruiter is always trying to unravel a story behind every person, he said.

"We think we're all individuals, but there are always so many influences that make up who you are. Everyone's got someone they're listening to," he said.

And the person to be listening to is White. A fun person to be around, he is always trying to build up his team and keep a positive attitude. He keeps his door open to his players and gets to know them on a personal level.

White knows the qualities of a great coach include the ability to work hard, be open and honest to your players and be someone that people can trust.

His wife Salli, daughter Cassidy, 12, and son Jackson, 10, follow him on the road. They've already taken two cross country trips together.

The trip to Florida included 10 days together visiting landmarks such as Hot Springs, Ark, and Graceland in Memphis, Tenn. The kids planned the whole trip.

These trips were something the family unexpectedly got to do when making a move for White's jobs.

"As crazy as it sounds, those experiences have kind of been blessings," he said.

His kids cheer him on as football coach and dad. When White brought Jackson to Take Your Kids to Work Day during spring season at Wisconsin, and

Brian White works with a Gator player.



Brian with wife, Salli, daughter, Cassidy, son, Jackson and the family's center of attention.



he thought the best part of dad's job was, "watching football movies all day long."

When dad's not watching "football movies," he cooks a mean beer can chicken and is an avid newspaper collector.

White's new colleague, Loeffler, the quarterback coach, was born into a blue-collar family in Barberton, Ohio. Growing up in a hard working family was a great upbringing, which made him the person he is today. He worked hard when he was a college ballplayer, and he expects the same thing from his players now.

Though he was on the other side of player recruitment today, Loeffler was once a high-profile recruit, receiving offers from Ohio State University, University of Texas, Stanford University and University of Southern California. He attended Michigan for the opportunity to play football and receive a great education. Working there with quarterback coach Cam Cameron and a team with the ability to win a national title also influenced his decision, he said.

"It felt at home," he said.

A shoulder injury cut short Loeffler's playing career. But he stayed on at Michigan as a student assistant – starting his coaching career.

Loeffler has an impressive resume in coaching. Following his stint as an assistant at Michigan, one of the most storied college coaching programs, he moved through college football to coaching in the NFL. He has worked with some well known pro quarterbacks including New England Patriots' Tom Brady, Denver Broncos' Brian Griese and most recently Miami Dolphins' Chad Henne.

Based on all that experience, he believes there is no finer conference in the country than SEC football, he said.

"I think it's the pinnacle of football in my mind. It's competitive, it's passionate and it's somewhat of a religion," he said.

Backup quarterback John Brantley said Loeffler "is teaching us so much and making us better quarterbacks all around. It's really cool knowing he

has those other quarterbacks in his background. He obviously knows what he's talking about. With that record, I'm going to listen to him."

Brantley has a very bright future, Loeffler said. His challenge is to improve, which he will do in tremendous strides.

Important influences impacted Loeffler's life. He names former University of Michigan coach Lloyd Carr as a father figure in his coaching career.

"I was very fortunate as a young guy to be around a bunch of great football coaches that were not only great coaches, but they were good husbands, good fathers and they were terrific mentors," he said.

His role as a leader gives him the opportunity to influence his players through his experiences and ability to recognize a player's outstanding ability.

Out of all of his successful players, the outstanding qualities he has witnessed through each one include great leadership ability and intelligence. His players are tough, both mentally

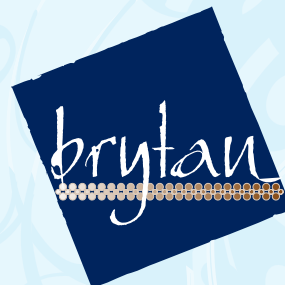
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and physically, he said. These players are trying to be great in every aspect of their lives.

Loeffler says the Gators have a great system. The goal is to concentrate on getting better in all aspects of the game. A true quarterback never arrives and is constantly working to improve.

He sees his role in this team as to better the quarterbacks in every way he possibly can.

Working with the Gators, his goals include getting to the SEC championship and getting the team as far as they can go.

"All I am 100 percent concerned about is how can our quarterbacks help this team win the championship," he said.

While the two bring different coaching styles to the field, they are collectively a great addition to the football staff, bringing the teaching skills that head coach Urban Meyer wants in his coaches, as well as adding to the extend family. **H**

Quarterback Coach Scot Loeffler talks to John Brantley and Tim Tebow.



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# FALL HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PREVIEW

By Brady Ackerman

Photo By Brad Palmer



Left to right Kaleifa Jones, Ryan McGriff, Kevin Nelson and Devonte Davis will be team leaders at Gainesville High School this year.

The 2009 High School Football season will feature new district alignments for many area teams in North Central Florida. The re-classification by the FHSAA is done every two years to achieve competitive balance with the growth on new schools in the state. The Buchholz, the biggest school in the area, will have to play in District 1 with two schools from Jacksonville and one from Middleburg.

This makes it very tough for travel and often favors the home teams. The area school that made it to a state title game in 2008, Ocala Trinity Catholic, Coached by John Brantley, will stay in Class 2B, but the road to Orlando will be much tougher. They are involved in a six team district that includes Newberry and Williston.

Let's begin in Gainesville with Buchholz High School and Coach Jay Godwin. The Bobcats had a solid 2008, but this year could be a rebuilding process. Buchholz split its spring jamborees with Gainesville and Santa Fe. Highlights included big plays from Marquis Noble and Wintrez Thomas. The Bobcats open the season against powerful Eastside.

The Rams were a playoff team a season ago and look to build this season around athlete Saveion Gibson. He had 150 yards rushing in the spring jamboree to catch head Coach Kent Johnson's attention.

Santa Fe is led by former University of Florida defensive back Shea Showers. Showers will lead the Raiders into district 2-2A with strong opponents such as



Glen St. Mary's Baker Country and Jacksonville Raines. Sophomore Raheem Jackson could be a key for Santa Fe's rushing attack in 2009.

The team that may have surprised most in the spring was Gainesville High School Purple Hurricanes led by Coach Ryan Smith. Defense could be the key as GHS has a nice junior in Kaleifa Jones ready to make some plays. Jones was a stat-sheet stuffer in the spring jamborees scoring a defensive touchdown and producing a sack. Quarterback Ryan McGriff will be the man to lead the offense, as the junior quarterback had a very productive spring. Two other team leaders will be linebacker Kevin Nelson and defensive back Devonte Davis, as GHS goes head to head with Ocala power Trinity Catholic to open the 2009 season.

Other schools to keep and eye on in 2009 would be Union County and multi-talented quarterback Chris Alexander. PK Yonge will open the season against Williston with the Blue Wave playing in Class 1-A this season and the Red Devils in Class 2-B.

Ocala's premier team is Trinity Catholic. Coach John Brantley's squad was beaten in the state championship last season. Gone is quarterback Rob Henry (Purdue) and in steps Jeremiah Gates. He had a big spring game against Seminole High and found big time receiver Kadron Boone twice. Boone may be the most sought after recruit in the area with many offers coming in already, including the University of Florida.

Craig Damon's North Marion Colts are a perennial playoff power and look to return in 2009. The Colts have some talented seniors in Terraine McCullough and Brandon Carr. Keep and eye on defensive tackle Courtland Thomas who should have a big senior season as well.

Ocala Forest, under Coach David Hodges, looks to run there way to a state playoff bid. The Wildcats have a strong senior class led by senior quarterback Zach Welch. Tailback Donald Webb will also be a factor for the ground-oriented Cats.

The biggest surprise in Ocala last season was the playoff run by Lake Weir. Coach Hinterthon has rebuilt the Hurricane program, and they have a big time playmaker at linebacker in Antonio Jones. Tracy Curry a two-way star who plays quarterback could be the first big time recruit to come out of Lake Weir since 1990.

Vanguard welcomes back a familiar face with Alex Castaneda returning to the place where he mentored Daunte Culpepper. It is a rebuilding process for the Knights, who may have to shorten the game with an improving rushing attack.

Quinton Hitchcock will take the reigns at quarterback trying to lead Vanguard back to respectability.

The Dunellon Tigers should be strong again with Cody Underwood calling the shots at quarterback. Head Coach Frank Beasley returns eight starters on defense. Belleview looks to return to the playoffs for Coach Mike Bowe. The Rattlers who have been one of the more consistent programs under Coach Bowe returns 11 starters. Outside Linebacker Alex DeLeon will be the one college scouts come to see when Belleview tees it up.

In closing there is some great football in North Central Florida. The new district alignments will give us many different post season looks. Trinity Catholic will have a much tougher road to their fourth state title game. Perennial power Jacksonville Bolles will stand in their way. Dunnellon is in a strong district in Class 3A with area schools like Citrus, Crystal River and Eustis. State playoff teams Eastside and North Marion will lock horns in Class 3A District 5 which also includes Belleview and Vanguard. Both teams with the name Hurricanes will do battle in Class 4A with Lake Weir and GHS. Buchholz is the biggest classification school in the area in 2009.

There's a good bet you can find some great area high school football on any Friday night in North Central Florida.

*Brady Ackerman currently hosts the top AM show with "The Morning Drive" weekdays from 7 to 10 a.m. on the new ESPN radio. Ackerman recently left his post as afternoon drive host on the ESPN affiliate in Orlando to take on his new partnership with Chris Doering. He also serves as a studio pre-game analyst for Sun Sports during college football season. In addition to his studio role, Ackerman serves as the color analyst at Sun Sports for all Florida high school football finals games. He was a running back at the University of Florida from 1987-1991, lettering two seasons. He was a member of the first official SEC championship team in 1991. He received his degree from Florida in May 1992 in Public Recreation.*

H

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# Changing Lives, Changing a Community

By Emily Davis

photography by Brad Palmer

Devotion. It's a simple concept. We all hear of people devoting their lives to work, family, helping others etc. but what does it really mean. Those fortunate enough to visit the Reichert House, a program for the development of youth in our community, have witnessed the true power of devotion firsthand.

It all started with a former Gainesville Police Department Captain Tony Jones and a counselor named Richard Baxter. Together they found that many of the kids in the criminal justice system were repeat offenders.

Jones and Baxter asked the question "why?" They wanted to find out what made these kids tick, what exactly caused them to commit these crimes. Jones

According to Jones, although the initial goal of the program was to keep kids out of jail it has evolved into much more.

"It helps build a secure identity in these young men," said John Alexander, director of operations at the Reichert House. "Many lack identity, so they go out and grab other images."

Reichert House provides its youth with life skills such as leadership, conflict resolution, job readiness and socialization. Additionally they teach simple real world lessons such as financial management, hygiene and even how to buy a car or pay a light bill.

They have taken on the challenge of academics as well.

"Many of the kids were two to three grades behind at first. Now we see an increase in high school diplomas, where before that was not the case," said Jones.

Essentially Reichert House is a teacher when no one else is available.

"We are responsible for the youth of tomorrow," said Byers Hickman, executive director of the Reichert House. "The Reichert House is a vehicle this community has established to provide leadership, guidance, mentorship and academic focus to any young man that will accept it. Let's keep it growing."

To do this for even one person would be no small goal. Reichert House has changed a community by paving the way for a new generation of young men.

In its beginning over 95 percent of young men at the Reichert House had been in the criminal justice system. Now in its 22nd year, less than five percent have been involved in criminal activity.

This would be nothing without the dedication of volunteers and benefactors. Their work proves invaluable to the organization, especially in these trying times.

"Partners that we have are how we continue to survive," said Hickman. "Some good people are showing their kindness, their love, their care for boys that don't look like them."

It is the small kindnesses people show that makes the biggest impact. This is what Reichert House teaches the community everyday.

Just as the Reichert House empowers young men to believe in themselves, they have empowered others to believe in their community. The hope of keeping young men out of the criminal justice system has extended into something much more. The Reichert House teaches everyone. **H**



and Baxter sought to go to the source of the behavior and put an end to crime before it started.

"The goal was to turn tax takers into taxpayers," said Tony Jones, now the interim chief of police for the Gainesville Police Department.

To do this, staff and volunteers have invested themselves in these children's lives.

In a typical day at the Reichert House one can expect to be picked up from school, helped with their homework, allowed to participate in organized sports, and fed dinner. A dinner that to some, may be their last meal of the day.

Yet, Reichert House doesn't stop there.

It seeks to give young men the confidence to succeed in anything they want. It supplies opportunities that they would otherwise never have.







## A Little Bit Country, A Little Bit Fundraiser

**D**ust off those cowboy boots and get ready to lasso in a great evening of western fun.

The Child Advocacy Center is proud to announce their first signature event, "Gainesville Gone Nashville: Kountry for Kids." The event will be Oct. 1, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Canterbury Equestrian Showplace. Tickets are \$75 per person and can be purchased at the Child Advocacy Center.

"This event is going to be one of those signature fundraisers that will ensure ticket price affordability and an evening of fun," said Carrie Lee, an event chair. "The program we are planning includes a saloon with Texas hold 'em tables, a line dancing instructor and

both a silent and live auction with incredible items. We even plan to have a great up and coming country star from Nashville to provide the entertainment. This is one event you will have fun at."

All of the proceeds will go to the Child Advocacy Center (CAC), an organization committed to serving abused children in our area.

"Through the center, social workers, counselors, law enforcement officers, state attorneys, victim advocates, Guardians Ad Litem and medical professionals work as a team to coordinate investigations and interventions for each child abuse case, thus expediting the child's time in the legal

system," said Margot Wilder, the development coordinator for CAC.

"This organization not only simplifies the interview process but also continues to help them and their caregivers with whatever is necessary to give them a safe and secure life," said Jo Wiggins, also an event chair for GGN. "It just seems to me that since abused and neglected children can't be recognized by name, or visually, we need to recognize them with our volunteer efforts in fundraising and service to help CAC help them."

To assist the CAC and participate in Gainesville Gone Nashville, contact Margot Wilder at 352-376-9161 or visit [www.gainesvillegonenashville.com](http://www.gainesvillegonenashville.com). **H**

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## Alachua Habitat Signature Event - From Plans to Homes

By Caroline Miazgowiec

Alachua Habitat For Humanity has built 101 homes for community members in need during the past 23 years, and that number will be recognized Sept. 25 when the group hosts its third-annual Signature Event.

The theme of this year's event is From Plans to Homes. The annual event, which was created as a way to raise recognition and money for Alachua Habitat's efforts, will be held at Sweetwater Branch Inn on East University from 7 to 10 p.m.

Among Alachua Habitat's biggest success stories is Celebration Oaks, a southeast Gainesville community. Volunteers from Alachua Habitat and the University of Florida Habitat affiliate have worked side by side to build the 30-home community.

Community members of all ages come together to build homes every Saturday.

"We love getting new volunteers because it means more building," said Paul Loschak, outgoing president of the University of Florida Habitat for Humanity.

Armed with paint brushes and saws, volunteers are unstoppable on any given build day. However, fundraising and donations are what keeps the paint flowing and the chainsaws running.

The Signature Event will include live music, silent and live auctions and an open bar, and if that is not enough incentive, perhaps a door prize of a 42-inch LCD television donated from Best Buy will encourage participants.

Even during tough economic times Peg Iwata, the interim executive director at Alachua Habitat and Merry Lucas, the committee chair for the annual Signature Event, have been astounded by positive support.

"Everybody that I've talked to has been more than willing to donate," said Lucas.

The physical labor of building a home does more than just strengthen your muscles, it builds relationships.

"You get to know the owners of the home you are building. You get to hear their story," said Lucas about working alongside the future homeowners.

Whether you are hammering a nail or working the cash register at the Habitat store, volunteers are needed and appreciated.

"Pick your talent and come," Iwata said about Alachua Habitat's welcoming all kinds of support.

"Gainesville is such a giving town, from students to people in their 70s," said Lucas of the local outreach.

Providing affordable, sturdy homes for community members in need has been the goal for Alachua Habitat for years. To keep their ambitions alive, bring your friends and family to their Signature Event this September 25 to support such a communally beneficial cause.

With continued funding and volunteer efforts, Alachua Habitat shows no sign of stopping their community efforts any time soon. **H**

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# THE GAINESVILLE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GOLF AND TENNIS TO RAISE MONEY FOR GRADUATION RATES

By David Greenberg

**T**he Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce is taking a successful event and making it even better this year.

The 14th annual Chamber Pro-Ed Golf Classic is becoming the Pro-Ed Golf and Tennis Classic. The event, held Friday, Sept. 25 at the Haile Plantation Golf and Country Club, is adding tennis this year, Martha Kern, the chair of the classic.

"The idea of adding tennis had been discussed before, and we decided to jump on it," said Kern. "It is an awesome opportunity for those who are interested in tennis but not golf to be involved. It is the first time that we are aware of a dual golf and tennis tournament in Gainesville."

Money raised from the event goes to support teachers and students in Alachua County, as well as the chamber's goal to improve graduation rates in Alachua County Public Schools.

Adding tennis does not change some of the grand traditions that have been part of the tournament for many years – including the hole/tee sponsor competition. There may still be some sponsorship opportunities available.

On the golf side people can enter as a foursome or as an individual player. For tennis, registration is as individuals, and there is space for 40 players.

One new addition this year is a 19th hole celebration that will bring participants in both tournaments together at 5:30 p.m. for an award ceremony and silent auction.

*To learn more about the event, sponsorship opportunities or registration, go online to [gainesvillechamber.com](http://gainesvillechamber.com) or call (352) 334-7105 x309.* **H**

## St. Francis Funds Education

By Molly Bruce

**S**t. Francis Catholic High School (SFCHS) has a very simple motto – a Catholic high school education should be affordable for anybody who wants one.

Sherry Houston, development director for SFCHS, said that is Principal Ernest Herrington Jr.'s philosophy, so the school strives to raise money every year for tuition assistance with its annual Celebrate Catholic Education Dinner.

SFCHS started six years ago, and it has held this event every year. This year it is on Friday, Sept. 11 at 6 p.m. in St. Francis Catholic High School's gym.

"It's a fun evening," Houston said.

The Knights of Columbus sponsor the event, and Carrabba's Italian Grill is catering this year. There will be wine and beer, live and silent auctions, entertainment and raffles, Houston said. Students, she said, will serve at the event.

About 275 students attend SFCHS. In the second graduating class, 2009, every student was accepted to at least one college, and one student even achieved National Merit Scholar recognition, a national award based on PSAT scores.

Houston said that about 23 percent of these extraordinary students are non-Catholic.

"It doesn't matter if you're Catholic or not – it's equal opportunity," she said.

Families who wish to send their children to SFCHS fill out a financial aid form that calculates what they can afford to pay.

Last year, about 500 people attended the Celebrate Catholic Education Dinner, which raised about \$100,000.

"We have very generous donors," Houston said.

Their goal this year is to raise \$150,000. Tickets are \$60 per person or \$1,200 for a table of ten with preferred seating.

Storm Roberts will be the master of ceremonies and will facilitate the live auction, which will include donated items like sports memorabilia, dinners, getaways and prizes.

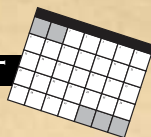
"Storm's just great; he's so philanthropic," Houston said.

All the money raised will help families send their children to SFCHS who ordinarily wouldn't be able to afford it. Houston said it best, "We're giving back to the school because of our kids."

*To learn more about the Celebrate Catholic Education Dinner go online to [www.kofcdinner.sfchs.net](http://www.kofcdinner.sfchs.net).* **H**







# from Heartbreak to Hope

By Faith Reaves

## A New Children's Hospital for Our Community

Few can imagine the pain of losing their child. To rise above such an unthinkable tragedy and turn heartbreak into hope is a rare feat. Gainesville is privileged to have a couple who have done just that.

Horst and Luisa Ferrero lost their happy and healthy three-year-old son, Sebastian, after a series of preventable medical errors during a routine scheduled outpatient test in October 2007. Almost immediately, the Ferreros formed the Sebastian Ferrero Foundation in his honor.



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The foundation is dedicated to advocating and fundraising for a full-service, state-of-the-art children's hospital in Gainesville, while promoting excellence in patient safety and insuring that all families are treated with compassion, courtesy and dignity.

"The loss of a child is the most terrible loss anyone can face. We knew in our hearts that the best way to honor our loving son, Sebastian, and ensure his legacy was through the creation of the Sebastian Ferrero Foundation," said Horst Ferrero.

The immediate and overwhelming support the Ferreros received from more than 150 local pediatricians and pediatric specialists, community leaders and hundreds of parents validated the Foundation's mission.

"We share the foundation with the community and want to prevent other families from living through an unnecessary tragedy like ours. We want Sebastian to be remembered as the little 'hero who brought us all together,'" said Luisa Ferrero.

The Sebastian Ferrero Foundation's annual fundraising event, *Noche de Gala*, began in October 2008. Last year's inaugural sold-out gala was attended by over 700 people and raised close to \$1 million through ticket sales, donations, sponsorships, pledges, silent auctions and the Ferrero's match of all funds raised.

This year's *Noche de Gala* 2009 is scheduled for Oct. 3, from 7 p.m. to midnight, at the spectacular 642-acre Besilu Collection in Micanopy, generously hosted by owners Benjamin and Silvia Leon, Jr. The theme is a Venetian masquerade ball and will feature music, singers, dancers, Paso Fino champions, cigar rolling and exquisite dining. The event, which is black





tie with masks encouraged, will also have a silent auction and catering by Dean Cacciatore. Keith Watson of Keith Watson Productions has been in charge of all preparations.

"Additionally, the Sebastian Ferrero Foundation is honored to have an extraordinary performance by Broadway sensation, Ted Keegan, who recently performed the lead role in the Las Vegas production of "The Phantom of the Opera." Keegan will perform songs from the Broadway show including his signature song "Music of the Night." According to critic reviews, Keegan's performances are emotional and perfectly capture his portrayal of the Phantom. His emotional connection with the audience is astounding - when it's over, you want more. "He really is the best kept secret in American musical theatre," say long-time friends, Keith & Roberta Watson of Keith Watson Productions."

Sponsorship level packages for *Noche de Gala* 2009 are: Gondola, \$1000; Rialto, \$2000; Murano, \$5000; Castello, \$10,000; Gran Canale, \$15,000; Piazza San Marco, \$25,000; Palazzo, \$50,000 and Venezia Presenting Sponsor, \$100,000. Corporate and individual sponsors will be acknowledged through advertising, media, signage, event promotional materials and public service announcements. As with last year's event, Horst and Luisa have generously committed to continue to match all funds raised.

"To maximize the impact of all contributions raised through this year's Gala, Luisa and I have decided to continue our match program, matching dollar for dollar, up to \$1 million dollars," said Ferrero. "The match program is allowing us to dedicate 100 percent of every dollar donated to support the foundation's mission. Our match dollars are paying for the fundraising efforts, such as the gala, patient safety initiatives and educational programs and all administrative expenses."

This year's event chairs are pediatrician Dr. Doug Barrett and his wife, Macky, who have lived in Gainesville since 1980. Dr. Barrett recently retired as the chief administrative and executive officer for the UF Health Science Center and will return to clinical practice and teaching on the pediatrics faculty in UF's College of Medicine. Dr. Barrett has dreamed of a dedicated children's hospital for years.

"The Foundation has galvanized the community and many long-term dreams of UF&Shands' medical and nursing staff. The goal is to transform today's excellent pediatric care into the safest and most outstanding care provided in a world-class Children's Hospital," said Dr. Barrett. "The ripple effects of the foundation's unwavering efforts continue to improve the quality of pediatric care throughout our community. In just its first year the Ferrero Foundation has already had impressive successes achieving some of its goals."

Macky Barrett further commented, "I'm a mother and grandmother, and children and grandchildren are the most precious part of our lives. A facility that specializes in their needs is the last piece of the health care puzzle that already features an amazing world-class pediatricians and nurses here in Gainesville."

The foundation hopes to have at least 1,000 guests at this year's gala.

For more information on how to become a sponsor or purchase individual tickets, please visit [www.nochedegala.org](http://www.nochedegala.org). **H**



Sebastian Ferrero  
FOUNDATION

## Sebastian Ferrero Foundation Successes

- Improvements in Pediatric Emergency Care:** Under the leadership of the Sebastian Ferrero Foundation, a group of local organizations Stop! Children's Cancer, Tyler's Hope, Climb for Cancer and the local March of Dimes chapter have all come together to work with Shands Hospital to improve pediatric emergency care for all children. The new Shands Emergency Room will include a separate pediatric waiting and treatment areas.
- Patient Safety Helpline:** The foundation continues to work, in collaboration with the University of Florida College of Medicine and Shands, to develop and implement a nationally-recognized, comprehensive patient safety program. Early results include a patient helpline called "Condition H," established at Shands so that any patient can reach a rapid response team of healthcare providers available 24/7 to assess patients' concerns. The UF College of Medicine has initiated a national search for a Chief of Clinical Quality and Safety who will lead the Sebastian Ferrero Office of Clinical Quality and Safety.
- Children's Hospital Study:** The Sebastian Ferrero Foundation has been working with Shands to engage an independent national consultant to conduct a needs assessment for a full-service children's hospital.
- Deborah Peebles, New Executive Director, Sebastian Ferrero Foundation:** As of Sept. 1, 2009, Deborah Peebles will join the foundation as executive director. Peebles has extensive non-profit and fundraising experience and was recently recognized as "Professional Fundraiser of the Year 2008" by the Washington D.C. branch of the National Association of Fundraising Professionals. Peebles is a native of Florida, a UF graduate and has maintained ties to the local Gainesville community.





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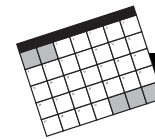
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photo by LeAnn Mueller. Sister Hazel is (from left): Jett Beres, Mark Trojanowski, Ken Block, Drew Copeland and Ryan Newell.





# Sister Hazel Brings It Home

By David Greenberg

**A** new CD is always exciting for musicians, but in the case of Gainesville's own Sister Hazel the excitement is doubled.

In addition to releasing its first CD of new material in three years, the band is coming home to play. The CD will be out Aug. 18, and the band is playing at the Performing Arts Center on Sept. 18 at 7:30 p.m. – the night before the home football game against Tennessee.

We played before the Tennessee game four years ago," said Drew Copeland. "We are hoping to be able to go to the game ourselves, but it depends on our schedule. We made it very clear to our management that we want to be home on Saturday."

Ken Block said that whenever they get to play at home it is special, but on a night like this – especially at this venue – there is something extra.

"Our shows are sometimes a little rowdy for the Performing Arts Center – especially with people standing up and rocking," he said. "But this is a great venue. It is a place where our friends, and family and people who watched us grow up, can come and see us."

Regarding the new CD called Release, Block said it was time for them to do something a little different. But, he says, he thinks Sister Hazel fans will be very happy with the results. Each member of the band – Block, Copeland, Ryan Newell, Jett Beres and Mark Trojanowski – contributed songs to the CD.

"Everyone in the band has a couple of songs on the record," he said. "And each one of us has their own songs from start to finish. If they wrote it, they produced it. The great thing about that is that we are evolving as a band. Each of us had a chance to step out of our comfort zone. But in the end, it is the five of us behind our instruments. It is very much a Sister Hazel CD."

As in all of its original work, in this CD Sister Hazel deals with real-life issues.

"That's not always easy," said Block. "But in the end we package things in a way that leaves you optimistic."

If there is a single on the CD, it is Take A Bow.

"We don't really look for a single," said Copeland. "That's not the way we do things. But there was an eagerness on the part of the people who work with us to put that song on the radio. We listen to the entire body of work, and we think that's the way it is for our fans too."

While some things have changed for Sister Hazel in the last few years, other things have not. The band is still on the road about 120 days a year, performing about 10 concerts a month.

"Four of the five of us have children," said Block. "Family comes first. Sister Hazel comes second. Anything else comes third. Things have to be working well at home for us to work well."

While Sister Hazel may come second, this is a band that has a unique relationship with its fans. As a result, it has to spend a lot of time nurturing that. Whether it is Rock Boat, Lyrics for Life or any of the band's other activities, it remains close to its fans and friends. So close in fact, that band members did something a few months ago, that may not have been done by any other band before them. The band published phone numbers and had a set of cell phones. If you called the number, a band member answered. It was strictly an opportunity to chat and get to know them as real people.

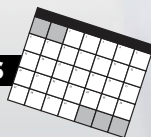
It's all about being Sister Hazel. **H**

The CD will be out Aug. 18, and the band is playing at the Performing Arts Center on Sept. 18 at 7:30 p.m.

photo by Jeff Hackbarth. Sister Hazel performed in Des Moines, Iowa in July.







## Community

### Aug. 15

Family Day  
1 p.m. at Harn Museum of Art  
<http://events.gainesville.com/gainesville-fl/events/show/87759227-family-day>

### Aug. 22

Boys and Girls Club of Alachua County  
Passport to Rio Benefit Gala for Kids  
5:30 p.m. at the Reitz Union  
[www.galaforkids.com](http://www.galaforkids.com)

### Sept. 12

Tioga Town Fair  
4 p.m. at Tioga Town Center  
[www.tiogatowncenter.com/events.php?date=2009-09-12](http://www.tiogatowncenter.com/events.php?date=2009-09-12)

### Sept. 26-27, Oct. 3-4

MCBIA Fall Parade of Homes  
[www.mcbia.org/events?id=211](http://www.mcbia.org/events?id=211)

### Sept. 27

Pride Picnic  
12 p.m. at Westside Park  
<http://events.gainesville.com/gainesville-fl/events/show/85812478-pride-picnic>

### Oct. 1

Child Advocacy Center Gainesville Gone Nashville  
6 p.m. at Canterbury Equestrian Showplace  
Newberry  
[www.gainesvillegonenashville.com/](http://www.gainesvillegonenashville.com/)

### October 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31

Silver Springs Fright Nights  
Silver Springs  
[www.silversprings.com/events.html](http://www.silversprings.com/events.html)

### Oct. 3

Oktoberfest  
Silver Springs  
[www.silversprings.com/events.html](http://www.silversprings.com/events.html)

### Oct. 3

Noche de Gala fundraiser for Sebastian Ferrero Foundation  
Besilu Collection in Micanopy  
[www.nochedegala.org](http://www.nochedegala.org)

### Oct. 3-4

Art Festival at Thornebrook  
Thornebrook Village  
[www.thornebrookart.org/](http://www.thornebrookart.org/)

### Oct. 3-4, 10-11

BANCF Fall Parade of Homes  
[www.bancf.com/events.html#bf\\_calFrame\\_330](http://www.bancf.com/events.html#bf_calFrame_330)



## Theater

### Aug. 1-2

The Great American Trailer  
Park Musical  
5 p.m. at Hippodrome Theatre  
[www.thehipp.org/](http://www.thehipp.org/)

### Aug. 1-9

Peter Pan  
8 p.m. at Vam York Theater  
[www.gcplayhouse.org/](http://www.gcplayhouse.org/)

### Sept. 2-27

Up  
7 p.m. at Hippodrome Theatre  
[www.thehipp.org/](http://www.thehipp.org/)

### Sept. 4-20

Shakespeare in Hollywood  
8 p.m. at Vam York Theater  
[www.gcplayhouse.org/](http://www.gcplayhouse.org/)

### Sept. 10 – Oct. 4

The Pajama Game  
Ocala Civic Theatre  
[www.ocalacivictheatre.com](http://www.ocalacivictheatre.com)

### Sept. 18

Sister Hazel  
7:30 p.m. at the Center for the Performing Arts  
<http://performingarts.ufl.edu/events/2009/sister-hazel-2/>

### Sept. 29

Choreography by Lucinda Childs  
7:30 p.m. at the Center for the Performing Arts  
<http://performingarts.ufl.edu/events/2009/dance-lucinda-childs/>

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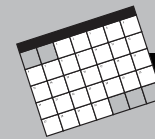
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## Sports

**Aug. 28-29**

Volleyball Campus USA Credit Union Invitational

**Aug. 28**

Soccer vs. FIU  
7 p.m.

**Aug. 30**

Soccer vs. USF  
1 p.m.

Aug. 31 Volleyball vs. Florida State  
7 p.m.

**Sept. 5**

Football vs. Charleston Southern  
Time: TBA

**Sept. 11**

Soccer vs. Duke  
7 p.m.



**Sept. 12**

Football vs. Troy  
Time: TBA

**Sept. 13**

Soccer vs. Colorado  
1 p.m.

**Sept. 18**

Soccer vs. FSU  
7 p.m.

**Sept. 19**

Football vs. Tennessee  
Time: TBA

**Sept. 20**

Soccer vs. Eastern Kentucky  
1p.m.

**Sept. 25**

Volleyball vs. Mississippi State  
7 p.m.

**Sept. 27**

Soccer vs. Vanderbilt  
1 p.m.

Volleyball vs. Alabama

1:30 p.m. O'Connell Center



UF athletic photos courtesy University Athletic Association

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# Where Have We Been

Angels Dinner - photos courtesy Laurel Housden Photography



Embers Ribbon Cutting



Chamber of Commerce Luncheon





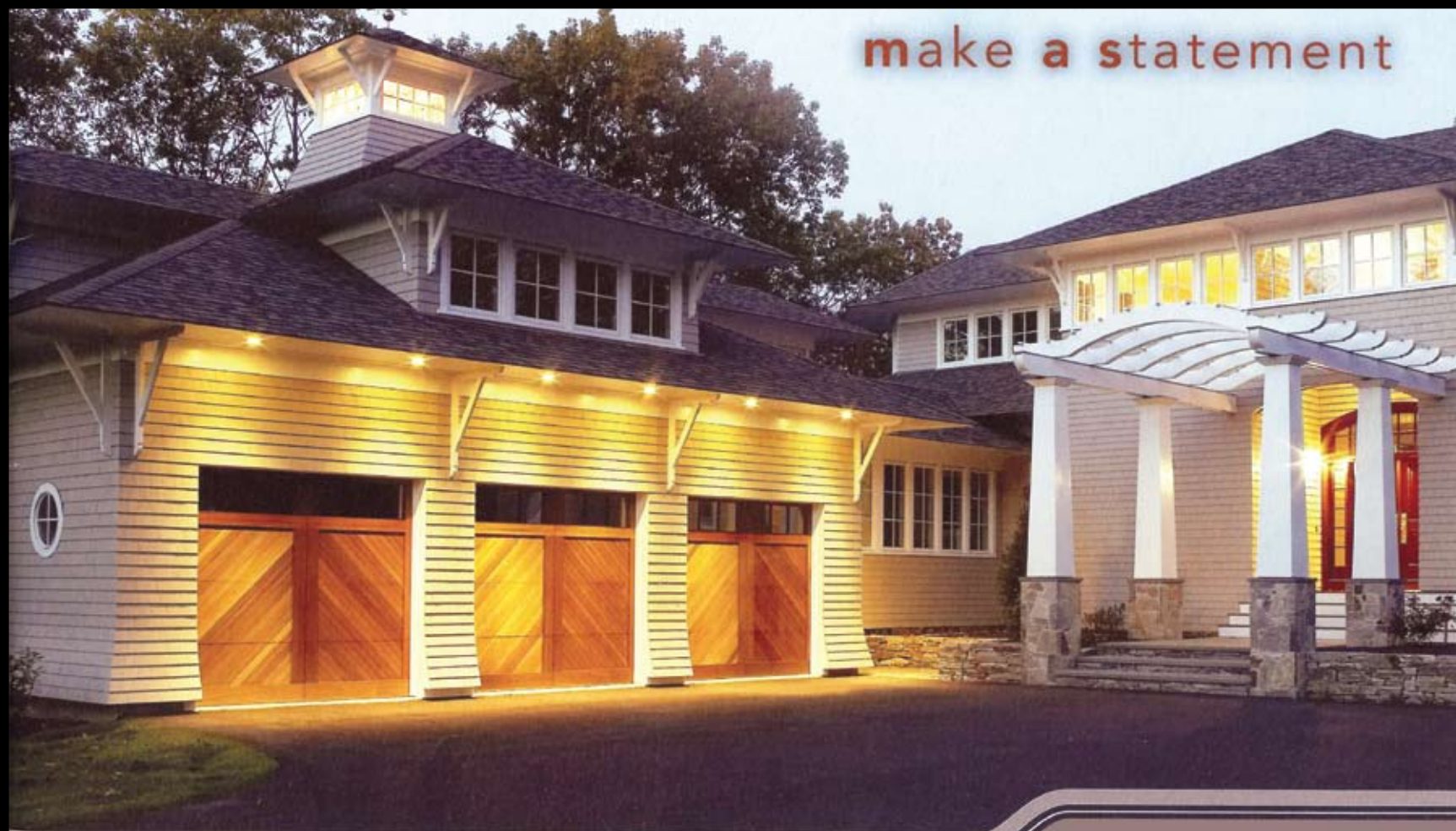
# Jake's Corner

Jake Fuller appears regularly in Advantage Publishing's magazines as our featured political cartoonist.



Originally from Lakeland, Fuller has been living in Gainesville since 1970. He is married to Laura Fuller, probably well-known to many local business leaders. They have two sons, both attending Santa Fe Community College.

His work is internationally syndicated by Artizans.com, and also appears on the websites of Jewish World Review, Irreverent View and AAEC, and in the annual publication "The Best Editorial Cartoons of the Year."



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# Miss University of Florida: Dazzling Gainesville One Step at a Time

By Katy Davis

**P**aige Smith is truly the ideal beauty queen. She is intelligent, eloquent and involved in her community. But Paige Smith is so much more than just a beauty queen. She is a senior honors student majoring in health science. She is a dancer and a lifelong Gator fan. And no one is more proud to represent UF than Smith.

"Gainesville is my hometown, and I was born and raised here," Smith said. "I love the community and being a Gator, so I don't look at being Miss UF as pressure. I look at it as an honor and an opportunity."

Before winning the title of Miss UF, Smith was already a representative for the university, having spent three as a member of the UF Dazzlers dance team. This upcoming year will be her fourth year with the team. This group of young women performs at home basketball games, volleyball matches, gymnastics meets, Gator Growl and other university events.

"Winning Miss UF only added another layer of responsibility," she said. "But it is a responsibility I cherish and am so proud of."

Being Miss UF has a special meaning to Smith. She has one sister who currently attends UF, and her mother, father and two older sisters all graduated from UF. She is a true legacy.

I have danced since the age of four and competed in various dance competitions, but never any pageants.

Before Smith ever entered the pageant, she attended it her freshman year.

"I thought it really looked like a fun experience," Smith said. "I liked the fact that talent was one of the judged categories. I have danced since the age of four and competed in various dance competitions, but never any pageants. I love performing and thought this was a perfect opportunity to showcase my dance ability."

Smith has incorporated her love of dance into her personal platform for Miss UF. She is an advocate for the "Chance to Dance" outreach program.

"This program provides dance instruction and performance opportunity to children in some of our Gainesville schools," Smith said. "Most of these children may not have had the chance to experience a dance class or perform for an audience. Choosing my platform was easy because I think about how dance has impacted my life and all the doors it has opened for me. I can't imagine my life without it."

For the last three years, Smith has taught dance classes to children at Duval Elementary and Rawlings Elementary. The classes culminate with the children performing with The Danscompany of Gainesville in their production of "The Wiz."

"I love getting to know the children," Smith said. "With this program I can help to instill a 'can do' attitude in the kids, build confidence and encourage teamwork."

"Chance to Dance" is only one of the many organizations with which Smith has had the opportunity to work.

"I've had the chance to learn about some great organizations in this community," she said. "I am amazed at how much hard work and dedication people put forth for others. I

have learned how important volunteering is and just how much it means to people. People have no idea how much of an impact a single person can make."

Smith has made many appearances at local charity events and fundraisers including Urban Meyer's Scramble for Kids, Dance Marathon at UF for the Children's Miracle Network, Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse "Mission Makeover" and many others. She even got to film a segment for Gator County Television.

"I also had the chance to spend time with children who are patients at Shands, and their families, during Tim Tebow's and UF Student Government's 'First and 15' Powder Puff Tournament, which raised money for Shands and Uncle Dick's Home, which is an orphanage in the Philippines," Smith said.

Now Smith is getting ready for another big opportunity as she travels to St. Petersburg to compete in the Miss Florida pageant.

"My entire experience as Miss UF has meant more to me than I could possibly convey," Smith said. "I feel so blessed to have had this opportunity." **H**



Paige Smith, Miss University of Florida



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