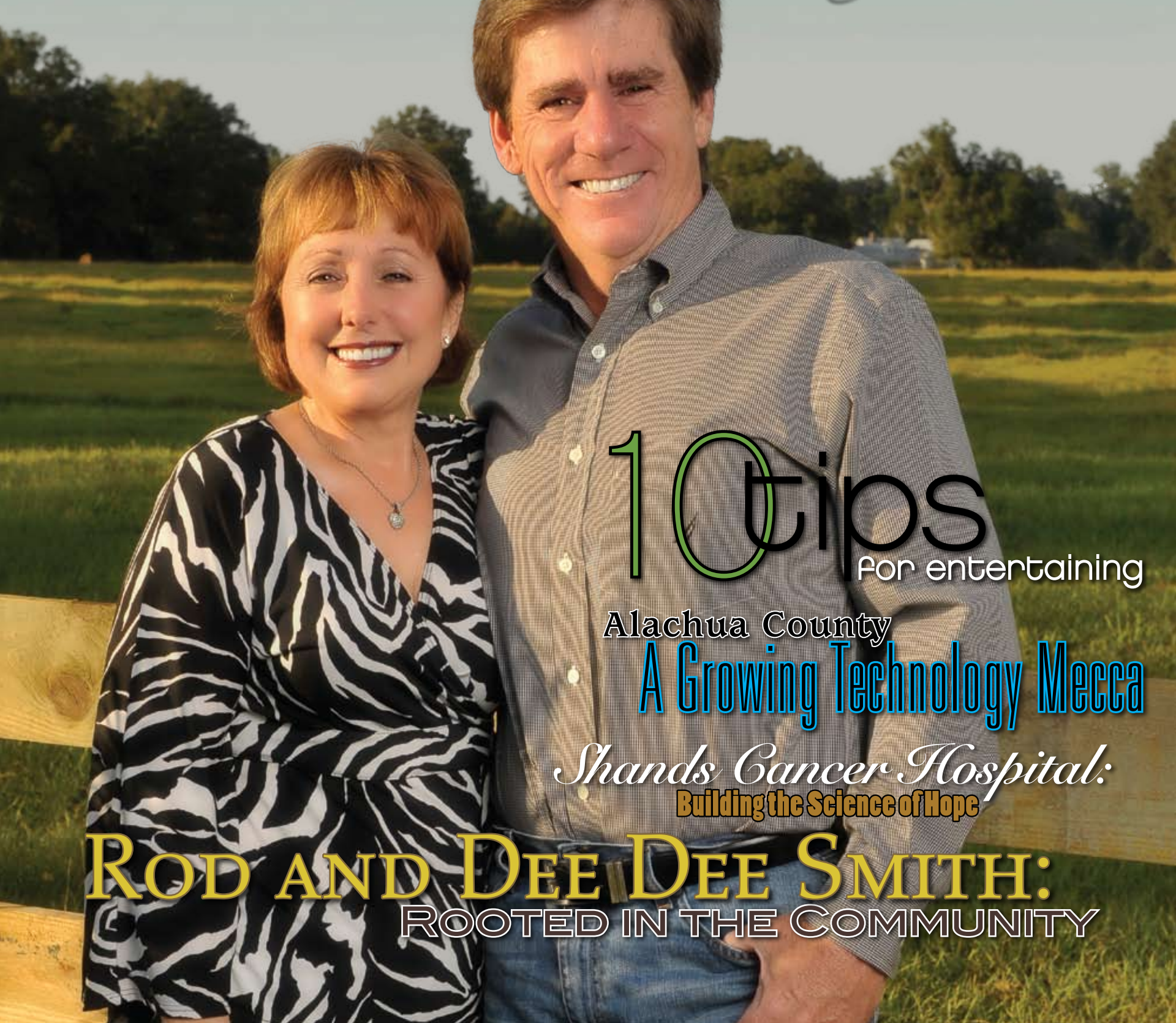


HOME

Living In the Heart of Florida

December/January 2009



10 tips

For entertaining

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Shands Cancer Hospital:
Building the Science of Hope

ROD AND DEE DEE SMITH:
ROOTED IN THE COMMUNITY

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From the Publisher

December/January is a special time of year. When deciding to go bimonthly, this issue helped determine what the timeframe would be. It is the holiday season, heading out of Thanksgiving and into Christmas, Chanukah and the New Year. It is a time to reflect on what has happened this year and look ahead to next. It is a time to revisit goals and set new ones. Hopefully the articles in this issue capture that process.

We start this month with a cover story about one of the most powerful, yet down-to-earth, couples in the Heart of Florida – Rod and Dee Dee Smith. He is the former state attorney, Florida state representative and gubernatorial candidate. She is one of the founders of the Child Advocacy Center. To many, they are seen as one of North Central Florida's "Power Couple's." But for Rod and Dee Dee, the most important thing is family and community. They are truly great representatives of the Heart of Florida, and I am proud to have them on the cover.

In our Around the Home section, we have stories that are geared towards the time of year. This is the time of year you are going into your attic or garage to get out your lights, ornaments and decorations. The end of the year or beginning of the year is usually a time when you could use professional organizers and storage solutions, and we have a feature on that. Our landscape column is on winter gardening. We also have an article on the latest in home automation.

Health and Fitness is always on the brain this time of year. In addition to a great article about the new cancer hospital at Shands, we show you some ways to help with that weight-loss effort/fitness effort. Whether it is Pilates, Zumba, or belly-dancing, there are many opportunities to help you get fit for the New Year.

In Lifestyle, our fashion corner in this issue focuses on evening dresses for the holidays and special events. We also include a shopping guide and some local travel tips.

For local sports, we have a feature on gymnastics coach Rhonda Faehn, and our charity spotlight is on the above-mentioned Child Advocacy Center.

Finally, we remember two legends who have helped shape North Central Florida – Clark Butler and C.B. Daniel. While hearts are heavy with the loss of these two fine gentlemen, their legacies will live on for generations to come.

I hope you all have a very happy and healthy holiday season. May your time be spent with family, friends and loved ones.

Scott Costello

scott@advantagepublishinginc.com



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Letters to the Editor and Corrections:

Home: Living in the Heart of Florida welcomes and appreciates your comments and concerns. Please send them to editor@advantagepublishinginc.com. Comments may be edited for length. Publication of your comments in the magazine is not guaranteed by submission.

Dear Scott:

Thank you for your generosity concerning the ARC Golf Tournament. Thank you again and keep up the great work - we love your publications! Sheila and John Spence Flycaster & Company

Dear HOME:

I wanted to tell you how much I am enjoying your magazine. It is classy looking, the articles are interesting, even the ads are attractive...AND...you have Jake Fuller! What more could anyone want?

Mary Mantsolf
Gainesville

Scott:

Thank you so much for the fantastic article in the HOME magazine. We were overwhelmed. Really, it was great: such wonderful PR for the Child Advocacy Center and our new efforts. It blew us all away! Please thank your staff. We are so grateful!

Sherry Kitchens
Director, Child Advocacy Center
Gainesville

Hello:

I have been meaning to thank you for the awesome article and great issue. It was a pleasure meeting you and having the opportunity to get to know your staff. You truly run a top-notch show. Please let me know if I can ever be of assistance.

Kindest Regards,
Dean Cacciatore,
Owner, Cacciatore Catering
Gainesville

Scott,

I just want to tell you that your HOME magazine is one of the most beautiful magazines I have yet seen. It is top of the line in quality and presentation. The pictures are so crisp and clear that you feel you are there with them. I have always enjoyed National Geographic for their quality presentation, but I rate HOME right along with it, if not even better. I commend you for your hard work in the perfection of this fine magazine. The best to all of you.

Patsy Cook
Premier Mortgage Funding USA
Gainesville

Scott:

I just wanted to send a brief email and let you know how much I enjoyed reading your magazine. I am especially grateful to see an article about one of my neighboring businesses here in Thornbrook Village. The article on etc... boutique written by Erica Blake was very well done, and the photography was beautiful. I am sure my friend, Sara Young, will enjoy this very valuable exposure for her store.

Donnie Blanton
Owner, Brittany's Fine Jewelry
Gainesville

Correction:

In a photo caption accompanying the "Bows and Arrows" story in the October/November issue of HOME, we incorrectly identified Newberry Mayor John Glanzer. In a different caption for the same story, we incorrectly identified an aerial photo of Diamond Sports Park as the site of the new archery center. We are sorry for any confusion caused by our errors.



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Shands at the University of Florida Cancer Hospital:

BUILDING THE SCIENCE OF HOPE

By David Greenberg
Photos by Aaron Bailey

An artist rendering of the hospital
upon completion

Abel Aportela knew the first time he saw the plans that he had to be involved with building the Shands at the University of Florida Cancer Hospital.

“When I came in and saw the plans, I said ‘Wow,’ I had to be a part of this,” said Aportela, the site superintendent for the \$388 million, 500,000-square-foot project. “My father is a cancer survivor, so I know a little about this kind of thing. I thought that it was going to be great, and I get to do it.”

Aportela, who works for Skanska USA Building Inc., the project’s developer, says with so many people touched by cancer, that feeling is prevalent among the construction workers, architects and others working on the hospital.



"I have a lot of experience in construction – medical centers, hotels, jails, schools and more," he said. "But this building means a great deal to a lot of us working on it. We feel like we are doing something for the community, and it is being done right."

Indeed, it seems that nothing was left to chance with the planning and construction of this hospital.

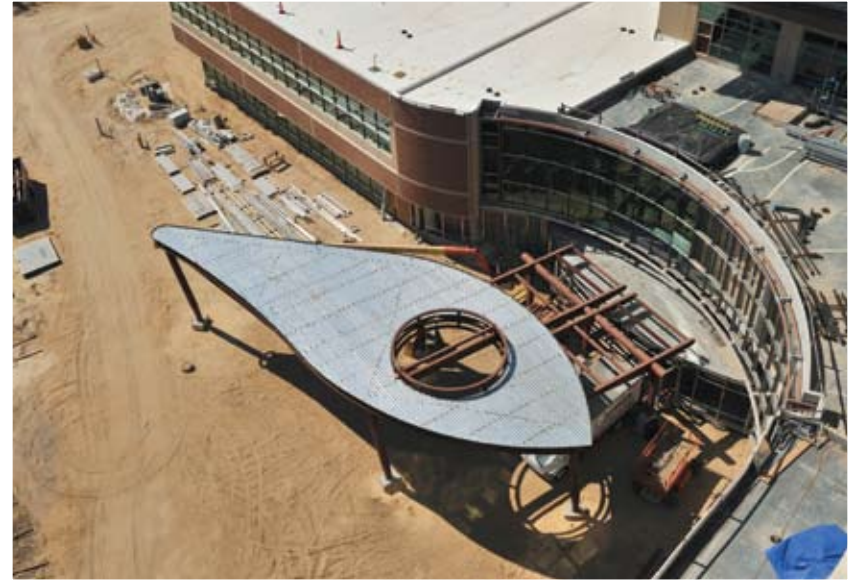
When it is completed in November of 2009, the hospital will house 192 inpatient beds serving a variety of patients, including those receiving diagnostic and therapeutic cancer services. Aportela and Brad Pollitt, vice president of facilities development at Shands, recently shared a behind-the-scenes look of the hospital that is under construction.

Pollitt says that everything on the project is being done to create a positive healing environment.

When completed, the hospital will offer a full range of cancer-related services, operating rooms, an intensive care unit and a critical care center. All patient rooms will be private and will include features to make a patient's stay as comfortable as possible.

"Starting with the architects and designers, the idea was to build a facility that is as comforting and nurturing as possible," said Pollitt. "As an example, the windows in each patient room are as wide as the room itself. That allows for more sunshine and more views of nature. We also are giving the patient control of room lighting and control of the motorized window blind from the bed. Little things like that help create a better healing environment."

Creating that healing environment goes far beyond the individual patient rooms. It actually starts with the atrium in the hospital lobby. The oversized, front glass wall creates a bright and open setting. The visitor



elevators are located directly off the entrance, and the parking garage will be located in the front. Plus, a beautifully designed overhang is being built over the main entrance, so when people are dropped off in inclement weather, they will not get wet.

"Especially as someone comes into the hospital, we want them to experience that light, open environment," said Pollitt. "With our 'Science of Hope' theme, we want people to feel comfortable and confident that their family member is going to be treated well."

Just off the main lobby will be the Cancer Wellness Center, said Pollitt. The

(above both photos) The covering over the portico outside the main entrance of the Shands at the University of Florida Cancer Hospital is not only aesthetically pleasing, it protects patients and visitors during inclement weather.



(above) The tunnel being constructed under Archer Road connects the two hospitals, and provides an easy, private and safe way for patients, families and staff to go back and forth.



Because of new technology in hospital construction, the eight-story cancer hospital is actually taller than Shands' 14-story main hospital across the street.

room will serve as a media center for patients and families to do research. The room will also be able to serve as a space for yoga classes and other activities.

Just above the main entrance is the surgery waiting room.

"It is upstairs – over the atrium," said Pollitt. "It looks out over the atrium, so it gets the benefit of the open atmosphere, but it is private for the waiting families."

Another unique feature of the hospital is the height of each floor. In fact, from the roof of the eight-story building, you actually look down at the 12-story hospital across the street. That's because of new technology and knowledge when it comes to building medical facilities.

"We are taller floor-to-floor here," said Pollitt. "That gives us space for air conditioning duct work, water and medical gases. It is one more part in building a facility where care is the most important aspect."

Another feature that was included with patient care in mind is actually being built under Archer Road. Approximately 550 feet long, a tunnel will connect the main hospital and the cancer hospital.

The concept of the tunnel is to provide a quick and relatively private route for patients and employees to get from one hospital to the other. It is designed with two separate hallways, one for patients and the other for the public.

If a patient has a consultation across the street then it will be no problem getting there and back by gurney or wheelchair. The tunnel is designed to comfortably fit beds and gurneys. When completed, the tunnel will look just like an interior hallway of the hospital. The walls will include art work, there will be benches for pedestrians, and even the ceilings will have interesting designs. It will be accessible from the ground floor of Shands

at UF and from the basement of the Shands at UF Cancer Hospital. People who want to use the tunnel to cross Archer Road will have to enter the hospitals to access the tunnels.

“It is a terrific addition, and very uncommon,” said Aportela. “If you didn’t know it was a tunnel under the street, it would seem like any other hallway. It is one of only a half dozen in the state.”

The plans also include a healing garden, which will be directly across from the main entrance. When completed, it will include a pond, walking path and butterfly garden, and will be landscaped with indigenous, colorful foliage.

And the whole facility will be operated by a power plant located on site – with no visible power lines. Shands partnered with GRU and Skanska to make the power plant a reality.

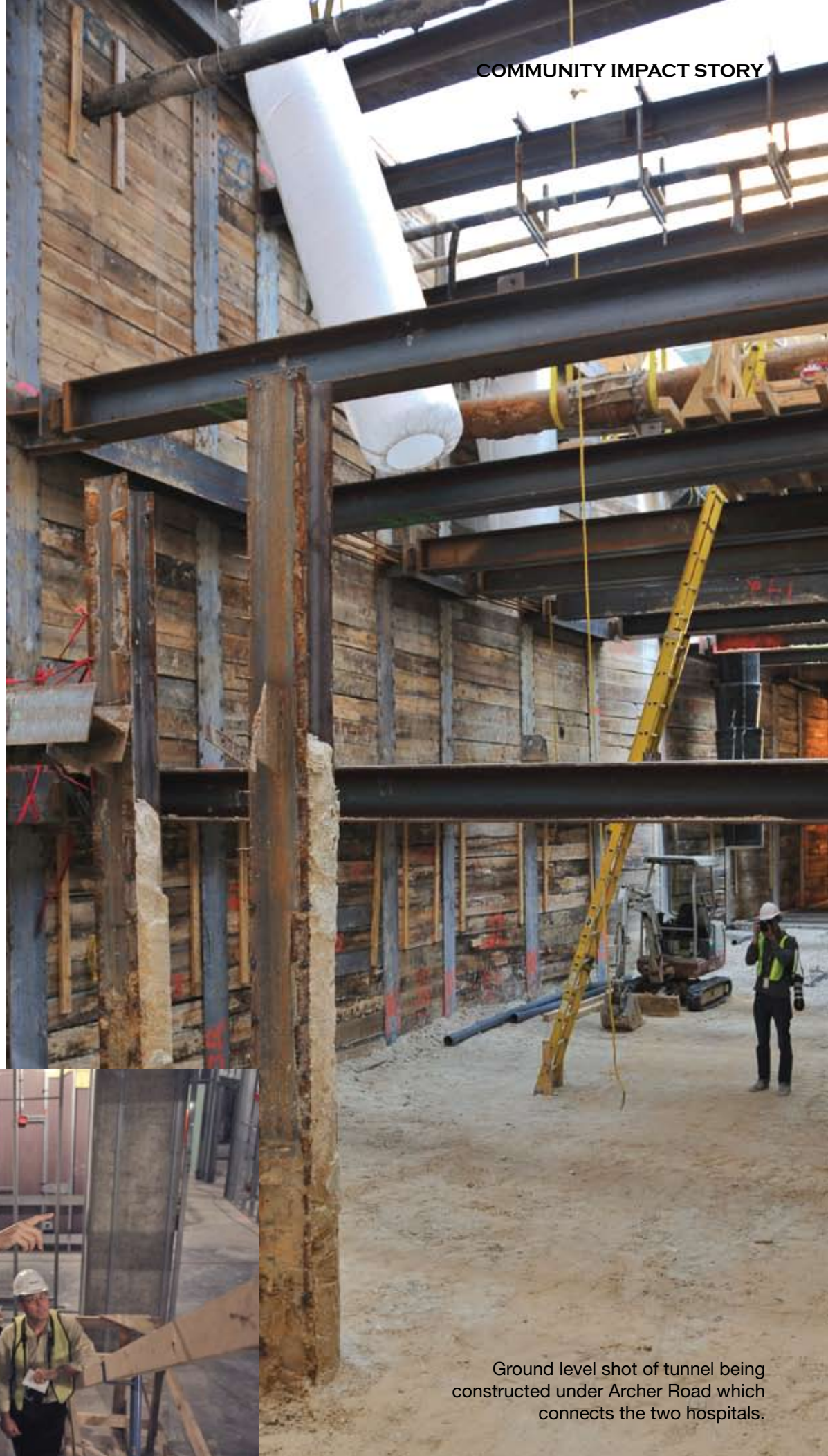
“This is really the first national model of a hospital and power company working together in this fashion,” said Pollitt. “We can generate our own power, and remain totally online in case of a power failure.”

Another important factor for Shands and Skanska is the anticipated LEED designation from the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED is a rating system used to determine green-building practices. There are four levels of certification – a basic certification, followed by silver, gold and platinum.

“We have worked closely with GRU and Skanska to develop a sustainable project,” said Pollitt. “When we planned the facility, we decided to try to get LEED silver certification. In fact, we guaranteed it. Right now, we are in the range for gold certification, and I am almost ready to guarantee that we will achieve that.”

But whether the final LEED certification is gold or silver, one thing will be certain. Shands will have built a cancer hospital that will be considered one of the best. **H**

(below) Brad Pollitt, vice president of facilities development at Shands, explains to a group of media representatives some of the unique construction methods that were used.



Ground level shot of tunnel being constructed under Archer Road which connects the two hospitals.



Futuristic Smart House Technology Saves Money, Is Affordable

by Attiya Anthony



Home theater automation systems can control the screen, lighting, video equipment and even the temperature of the room.

Imagine waking gradually from a deep sleep as your window blinds slowly open on their own, letting in the morning light. At the same time, your stereo automatically begins to play, the volume gradually rising as your favorite wake-up music fills the air. You stretch and catch a whiff of fresh coffee brewing in the kitchen. Your morning is off to a great start, and you haven't even left your bed.

Or picture throwing the ultimate party complete with a variety of party zones: a classy cocktail room, a lounge area for quiet conversation and a dance floor with pulsing lights. You control the music, lights and ambiance of each zone with the aid of a single remote.

With today's technological home invasion, these scenarios are not as futuristic as they sound. Owners of old and new homes alike are taking advantage of innovative automation products that digitally control everything from lighting, security and thermostat to phones, irrigation, music and video systems.



An example of an installed keypad.



Photo submitted by Electronics World

"The possibilities are endless with this technology," said Ken Briggs of Electronics World in Gainesville. "Whatever the homeowner wishes to do, they can do." He anticipates that within the next 20 years, it will not be uncommon for all homes to have a digital component.

In fact, according to Briggs, most new homes today are being built with the wiring configured to support smart house technology.

"In the last five years, most new construction incorporates structured wiring, which brings telephone, television and cable wires to a central location in a home," said Briggs. "So the base for an automation system is already in place and it's just a matter of installing the actual control panels for the system."

Older homes use minimal wiring technology, which utilizes only a few outlets for cable TV, a telephone and internet. Much has changed since 30 to 40 years ago, according to Jeff Richardson of Advanst Technology. "This new technology is bringing people into the future."

Structured wiring might overwhelm the average homeowner, but it is a simple process that seamlessly provides security, luxury, convenience and peace of mind within the home and homeowner. "This technology, like others, is a two-edged sword," Richardson said. "It's not easy to understand at first, but once you get a hang of it, it's not easy to live without."

Of the many benefits associated with incorporating this technology into a home, one of the most attractive is the energy and cost savings that it can help bring about. By coordinating and controlling the use and intensity of home lighting, homeowners can save the Earth and save on their utility bill.

According to Briggs, a simple 10 percent reduction in luminosity could amount to savings on the electric bill. To substantially reduce energy costs, home controls can be programmed to shut off power flow to certain areas at specific times of the day.



Make your kitchen the true heart of your home with a home automation system that controls everything from the dimming of lights for dining to your home's security system.

"You can program a system to turn off all of the lights, the water heater, and other electronic devices when you leave for work, saving power while you're gone all day," said Briggs.

The technology uses a connection center and a computer-like microprocessor to send messages from a main digital system to an electronic device. A licensed engineer replaces the "dumb" switches within your home with "smart" ones and within a couple of hours your home is digitally enhanced. There is no wall removal, dusty messes or remodeling necessary.

"People go wow over this technology," said John Pastore owner of Crime Prevention Security Systems and Custom Home Entertainment. "It's hot on the market because it's probably one of the most affordable home controls out there, and it can fit almost any household using existing wiring."

The technology is scalable, allowing homeowners to build their home's automation bit by bit according to their budget. And, its affordability is enhanced by the fact that it requires very minimal labor.

According to Briggs, the most basic home automation project is usually the entertainment system; linking TV, video, stereo and DVD consoles into one digital entertainment system costs approximately \$300. The cost to automate your whole home typically runs about three to five percent of the home's value, Briggs added.

In 1998, Electronics World automated the first smart home in Gainesville. Since that time, the company has grown, automating a number of homes in the region. And the company has helped outfit the Alachua County Emergency Management Center and the Marion County EMC with Crestron smart technology – the same systems used in the White House and in Bill Gates' home.

Control 4 is the smart technology systems offered by Crime Prevention/Custom Home Entertainment. It runs on central computer; but Control 4 sends its commands over an encrypted internet system. This added bonus gives homeowners the opportunity to control their home from anywhere that's internet accessible.

According to Pastore, Control 4's technology encourages creativity and allows you to take full advantage of today's digital world. You can create party playlists with Rhapsody music, download hundreds of movies from Netflix for your personal theater, and access weather information to remotely close your home's shutters in case of a storm.

"With this technology, our clients can also access their security systems from remote locations, broadcast their voicemail through surround speakers, water the grass in accordance with city codes, and even coordinate lighting and security systems, so in case of a fire or security breach the lights will flash and point towards the nearest exit," said Pastore.

"This is the wave of the future. It makes life a little easier. It's pretty simple to use, saves on energy and improves lifestyle," Pastore said. "I'm an advocate. I even use it in my own home."

For more information on smart home products and installation, contact Electronics World at (352) 332-5608, Crime Prevention Security Systems/Custom Home Entertainment at (352) 376-1499, or Advant Technologies at (352) 332-8185. **H**



photo courtesy of Custom Home Entertainment



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Start the New Year Organized and Clutter-Free

By Alexis Bizares

It greets you every morning when you open your closet to get dressed for the day. It's stacked on your counter and desk, threatening to overtake the kitchen and office. And it has most likely hijacked your garage, making that space uninhabitable for vehicles and people alike.

IT, of course, is clutter and accumulated junk. And the only cure for the havoc it can wreak on the average home is a healthy dose of organization and storage products.

Luckily, there are many companies and individuals out there that offer just such a cure in the form of organizational strategies and innovative storage products. And, with the start of the New Year it's the perfect time to take some organizational action.

If your pantry or closets don't seem to hold what they should, a customized design might be the answer. Located in Gainesville, Dyna-Fit Systems manufactures and installs custom-made closets and cabinets for any room in the house.

"Our most popular projects are walk-in and reach-in closets," said Kurt Sieber, owner of Dyna-Fit.

When designing a custom project, Dyna-Fit focuses on finding dead space and structuring the closet to make use of it.

"Regardless of how tidy or messy a person is, we can always provide more storage capacity," said Sieber. "If you set it up right," he added, "you can even make a closet more fun."

To achieve maximum storage space, the company builds shelves and drawers in any height, width or depth. Standard closets are about seven to eight feet tall, but Dyna-Fit can almost double that height and capacity.

"It's lots of work, but people want it," he said, "and we do it."

Every project begins with a lot of questions. How do you fold your pants? How many pairs of shoes do you own? Which ones do you keep in boxes? Do you like drawers or baskets? These are just a few of the specific questions that Dyna-Fit designer Donna Lansberry will ask to help her understand the customer's needs.

On the first home visit, Lansberry and the customer will develop a plan for a unique closet design that meets those needs, down to the last cubbyhole.

"If you're going to do a closet like this, it's a dream closet," said Lansberry, who has been with Dyna-Fit for three years.

Being able to see the transformation is one of the reasons she loves her job. On her initial visit, she sees a completely unorganized closet. But on her check-up visit a few weeks after the closet is installed, she can see how thrilled the customers are with their new space.

Because the customer helped design it, the finished product fits their personality and their individual thought processes. Clothes can be separated by categories like seasons, occasions or most frequently worn. Belts and ties can have their own hooks and racks. And purses can fit snug in their own shelves.

For customers looking for an organizational strategy instead of a closet makeover, a personal organizer could be the solution. Organizers, like Linda Richards of Organize and More in Gainesville, live by the adage: everything in its place and a place for everything. She works with clients in Gainesville, Ocala and Lake City to help them manage their environment and set up spaces in a way that will make their lives more successful.

Many of the people she works with are frustrated because they can't find things when they need them.



Photo submitted by Dyna-Fit Systems



Photo submitted by PremierGarage



Photo submitted by Dyna-Fit Systems

"Clutter and disorganization can be major problems in people's lives," said Richards. "If people can get their environment under control, they can make better use of their time and do what they want to do in life."

Some of the spaces she helps people organize include family rooms, children's play rooms, garages, closets and offices.

After discussing the project and learning about the person's lifestyle, Richards sits down with the client to tackle the task of sorting through clutter and purging it, a process that could take anywhere from three four-hour visits to all-day, everyday visits for three weeks straight.

Richards said the first thing people always ask is, "What storage bins and organizers do I need to buy before you come?"

But she tells them not to buy anything. After getting rid of the things they no longer want or need, many of her clients find that what they already have on hand can store their belongings perfectly.

Richards' tool box for organization is quite simple: four boxes or laundry baskets for separating items, markers, tape, paper labels and trash bags for junk.

As they carefully purge the clutter, Richards asks her client to put each item in one of the four bins that have been labeled "keep," "give away/donate," "goes elsewhere" and "don't know."

The "keepers" are reorganized back into the closet or cabinet, and the "goes elsewhere" things are brought to their proper room in the house, but where do the give-aways end up?

"Try to recycle anything you can in a safe way," said Richards. The local government has official recycling centers and waste sites.

Or give your things to people who can use them, such as a charity, a needy family or even newlyweds. Richards said she finds that people are more willing to give up their possessions when they feel good about where they're going.

Although her busiest time is usually between February and April, Richards said she does see people asking for help at the beginning of the New Year. She added that some people feel the need to start getting things under control in January after the spending and chaos of the holiday season is over.

Richards offers special services to people with attention deficit disorder and chronic disorganization. She said some of these clients will call for help because they need someone who will take them by the hand, keep them focused and finish the task. She is certified from the National Study Group of Chronic Disorganization.

Richards is the only professional organizer in North Central Florida who is a Gold Circle member of the National Association of Professional Organizers. This title is awarded to experienced organizers who have been in the business for at least five years.

Professional Organizer Linda Richards' Top Tips for Cleaning Up Clutter

Are you drowning in paper clutter? Richards suggests a few simple ways you can tackle this problem on your own.

1. Keep what you need. Trash the rest.

Talk to your CPA or tax handler and ask what you need to keep for legal reasons. If you manage your own taxes, visit www.irs.gov and read "Record Keeping for Individuals."

2. Make some decisions.

Some people have clutter because they just haven't thought about what to do with it. Ask a friend to come over and help you decide.

3. Give it a home.

Whether they are brochures, catalogs or mail, every piece needs a place. Traditional ways of using filing cabinets or alphabetizing may not be for you and your lifestyle, so don't use them. Richards said labeled boxes or plastic storage bags can do the job.

4. Stop it at the door.

Think twice before you bring home freebies from conferences, fairs or shows. Also, stop your junk mail and undesired catalogs.

5. Get into a routine.

Unfortunately, paper doesn't have legs. Set aside a portion of your day, week or month to deal with the paper clutter, make decisions and get things moving. Just remember the longer you wait between sessions, the higher the stacks grow.

6. Ask yourself, "Why am I saving this?"

Richards said more than 75 percent of filed papers are never used again. Before you take the time and energy to organize, make sure you know its purpose.





What about the things you don't want?

Think twice about trashing it. Here are a few places that can help you put your once-loved things to good use:

Give it away:

Junior League of Gainesville Thrift Shop: 352-372-1710

Goodwill, Newberry and Gainesville: 352-331-6889

Peaceful Paths Thrift Store: 352-379-3133

Habitat for Humanity: 352-373-5728

Salvation Army: 352-373-7597

Trade it:

Craig's List: www.Craigslist.org

Recycle it:

Recycle with Alachua County and the City of Gainesville:

Alachua Waste Collection Office: 352-338-3233

Gainesville's Residential Curbside Pick-Up: 352-334-2330

Don't forget to take special care with hazardous waste (chemicals, paint, batteries, etc.):

Alachua County Hazardous Waste Collection Center: 352-334-0440



Gainesville resident Mimi Hoffer met with Richards for the first time two years ago. Her home office was so cluttered she couldn't even find a pen when Richards asked for one.

Hoffer said she and Richards tackled the stacks of paperwork, junk mail, catalogs and magazines after two sessions lasting about five hours each.

"I would like to say it's been life changing in the sense that it gives you more freedom," she said. "And you save so much time and frustration."

Hoffer said she has been able to maintain the organization on her own because she applies the strategies Richards shared with her. For example, she always opens her mail over the garbage can, she never folds her papers and she doesn't force herself to clean everything at one time.

"It's just so nice because I know how to do it now," she said.

Garages can take up to 15 percent of a home's square footage. But, this space is usually the dumping ground of last resort, leading to piles and piles of clutter that have to be dealt with.

But more and more garage organizational services and products are available in the market to help. Several wall-mounted hanging systems are now available at national home improvement retailers. And other companies offer complete garage renovation, complete with floor refinishing and custom cabinets.

One such company is PremierGarage. A national garage remodeler, PremierGarage specializes in floor coatings, custom cabinets and organizing accessories.

Like other organization specialists, they help clients think about what they want from their garage and what things they really need to have stored there.

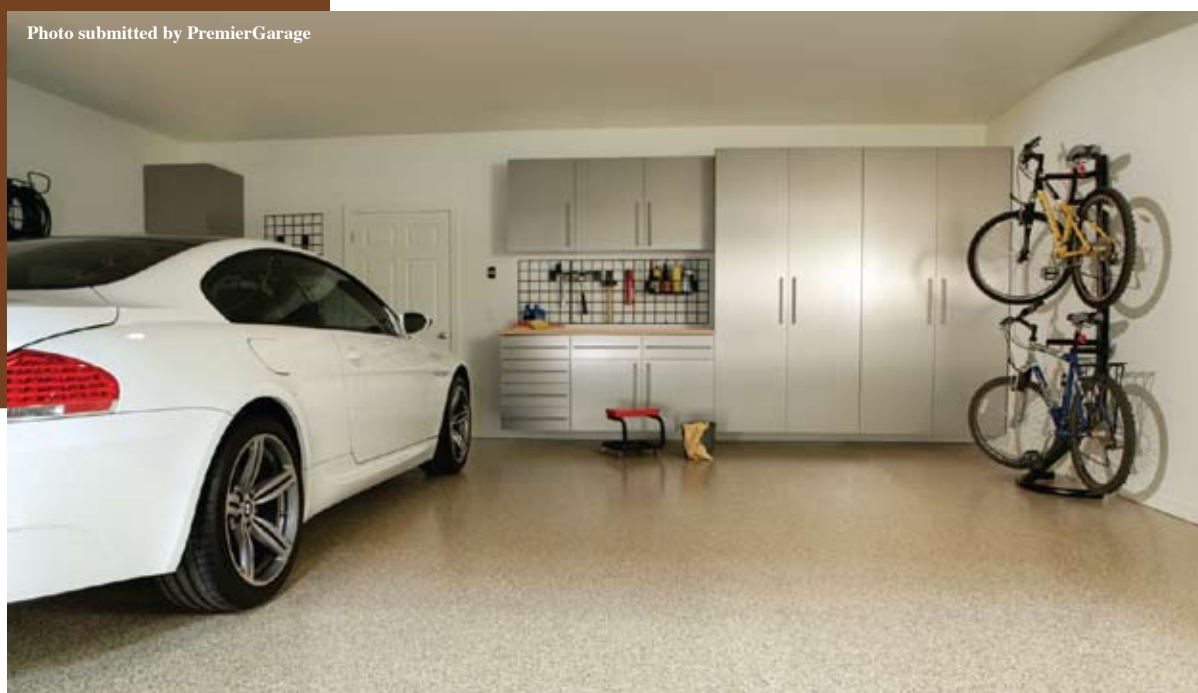
"I encourage people to get rid of or donate at least 25 percent of the contents of their garage," said Katie Lakey, sales and design coordinator of the company's Jacksonville location. "Before the transformation, many garages have piles of junk on the floor and items stored on open shelving. That leaves belongings unprotected from dirt and contributes to the garage's messy look."

The spaces that PremierGarage works with can get pretty messy, agreed Kevin Sherman, owner of the Orlando location.

"At first, you can't even walk in a lot of them."

Sherman added that he had to go out and buy a laser measuring tool because there's often so much clutter in the way that he can't use a regular tape measure.

Photo submitted by PremierGarage





Once the garage is cleaned out and a design approved, cabinets are built onto the wall, with no supports touching the ground. This allows for easy cleaning and easy access for maintenance such as pest control spraying. Lakey added that the wall installation ends about six inches above the floor, which helps protect against damage from flooding due to storms or hurricanes.

When people come to PremierGarage to spruce up their garages, Lakey said they usually opt for the specialty organizers as well. The company features the Schulte line of steel garage organizers – a wall-mounted grid system.

“It’s the modern-day peg board for garages,” said Lakey.

Adjustable steel accessories like hooks, baskets and shelves can be added to the grid to form a customized rack to store everything from bicycles and sporting goods to tools and yard equipment.

If, after cleaning out your house and garage, you are left with piles of stuff that you want to just disappear, you can call 1-800-Got-Junk, a trash and junk removal service.

Their big blue and green trucks can pick up anything from tree branches and soil to couches and tires. You don’t even have to gather your items for the pick-up, said Doug McCray, who owns the Gainesville franchise with his brother Casey.

“You simply have to point to it and we go get it,” he said.

According to McCray, about 60 percent of the collected items are donated to local organizations or are recycled. McCray said his franchise, which serves the entire North Central Florida area, donates reusable items to charities such as the Salvation Army. And things like books and movies go to Gainesville Pet Rescue for its fundraiser yard sale.

For more information on professional organizers and storage solution companies in the Heart of Florida, visit the Home: Living in the Heart of Florida Web site at www.livingintheheartofflorida.com. **H**

Photo submitted by PremierGarage



Photo submitted by PremierGarage

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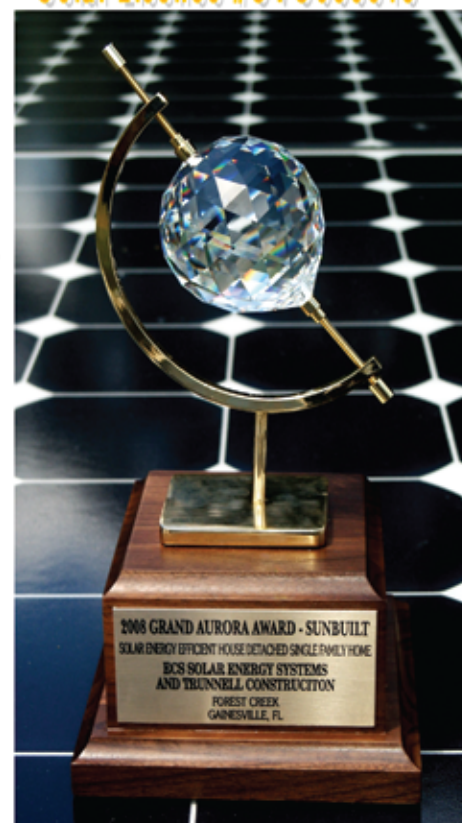
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BUILDING AMERICA'S ZERO ENERGY HOME SEBC SOLAR HOME OF THE YEAR

*In 2008, ECS Solar Energy Systems won the South Eastern Builder's Conference Grand Aurora Award for Solar Home of The Year (picture below). The 1772 heated sq. ft. home with 3150 watts of solar power is being monitored by the Florida Solar Energy Center. During the hottest summer months, the home produced and sold back to the grid as much energy as it used. The solar water heater is producing 98% of the homes requirements and this eliminated 25% of the homes utility bills. Seventy-five percent of the bill was eliminated because of energy efficient features built into the home by Ken Fonorrow, President of Florida Hero and member of the Dept. of Energy Building America Team. Ken used an integrated whole house approach design that enabled the home to be healthy, comfortable, and energy efficient. Normally a 3150 watt system would only produce 20% of a 1772 square foot home's requirement when built to minimum Florida requirements. The solar electric system would have to be over 15,000 watts of power for a 1772 sq. ft. home built to minimum Florida building standards as of 2008. The message is that you can build a Zero Energy Home of 1700 to 2800 square feet heated and cooled with 3200 to 5000 watts of solar electric power and a solar hot water system, if you reduce your home's power requirements. **zero-energyhome.com***

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SOLAR ENERGY:

AROUND THE HOME



Together Local Experts Find Solutions

By Linda Tozer

Difficult times almost always cause us to rethink aspects of our lives. In the midst of an economic downturn, clearly financial issues move front and center for most of us. When that downturn occurs alongside dramatic oil price swings and record-high home foreclosures and unemployment rates, the resulting upside can be innovation.

While solving these complex economic issues requires a variety of diverse, long-term solutions, there is an innovation being championed in Gainesville that could help reduce Florida's dependence on foreign oil, create clean jobs and keep people in their homes. A local team set about to prove this could work.

Assembling the team

Looking to develop a neighborhood featuring energy and resource efficient homes, Richard Schackow of Schackow Realty and Development and builder Chad Kalisk of Trunnell Construction began assembling a team of local experts. Their mission: to work through competing system and component claims to create homes that would be comfortable, healthy, and durable, yet cost-effective for homeowners to live in. Simultaneously, Ken Fonorow, President of Florida HERO (Home Energy & Resources Organization, Inc.) and member of the Department of Energy's Building America Team, canvassed the Gainesville market for a developer/builder team interested in building homes with very low energy requirements. Recognizing that they had similar goals, the three joined forces. Solar expert Tom Lane with ECS Solar Systems rounded out the team, and the rest, as they say, is history.

The first home, completed in the Forest Creek neighborhood, required 80% less energy than a home built to the minimum Florida Energy Code Standard. That's quite an innovation!

How did they do that?

Design Phase: The team's aim was to develop a neighborhood of Zero Energy Homes - or homes designed to produce as much electricity as they use. The team knew that decisions made in the design phase would have a profound impact on how a home performed ultimately, both in terms of energy and comfort. While considerations of orientation, square footage and location of mechanical systems and ductwork were completed, the team also looked for ways to ensure that those energy features worked as expected. For example, establishing a maximum acceptable duct leakage level during the schematic design phase provided an installer with a compliance standard to meet once the heating and cooling system was up and running.

Selecting Systems and Components: A fundamental shift from the "old school" of building construction has shifted focus from the use of individual high-performance components in a home to considering how a home performs overall. Rather than selecting one or two high efficiency products, the secret of this home was in incorporating intelligent conservation measures and solar technologies to achieve a better operating system. These choices were not made in a vacuum, one component at a time, but were considered within an integrated systems approach, using Building America's "Best Practices" as a guideline.

What they found

This breakthrough award-winning home achieved the team's goal of using net zero energy, even during the hottest summer months in 2008. The solar hot water system eliminated 98% of the home's water heating costs, while the solar electric system eliminated the remaining utility expenses. Because of the specific combination of energy features and techniques incorporated into this

home, a 3150-watt solar electric system was all that was necessary to meet the home's energy needs.

The occupied zero-energy home uses less than two watts of power per square foot of floor space. By comparison, a home built to Florida's minimum Energy Code Standards requires about 10 watts per square foot. This lends credence to Fonorow's original calculations which showed that this home, with an E-rating (or energy rating) of 20, should perform significantly better, in terms of energy, than either a standard home (E-rating 100) or a standard Energy Star Home (E-rating 85). These home ratings can be performed on existing homes as well.

What can you do?

Approaching the zero-energy home standard requires that you consider your home and its investment in energy conservation, solar hot water and solar electric power as a way of pre-paying present and future utility bills. This investment can reduce, if not eliminate, your current utility costs and provide you with a hedge against future increases. Even at 12 cents per kilowatt hour, slightly less than the current average electric rate, incorporating energy efficiency and solar technologies can give an astounding eight percent or more return-on-investment - better than most other current options.

Using the concepts touted here, it is possible to design or retrofit homes that produce as much energy as they use annually. These homes not only lower your monthly expenses, but due to their design, they reduce environmental pollution and maintain superior indoor air quality and comfort. Fortunately, as a homeowner or prospective homeowner you do not need to become a building science expert to build or renovate a home and approach zero-energy usage. But, you would likely benefit by using a professional design group to act as system integrators, from conceptual design through final home commissioning. Getting professional assistance provides the ability to select from a multitude of solar and energy efficient choices, customizing systems and components that are most appropriate for your home.

Incentives

The 2008 Florida Legislature reinstated a lapsed solar system property tax exemption to once again make solar equipment and its requisite hardware exempt from local government property taxes. The exemption goes into effect January 1, 2009. Solar equipment and its hardware also are exempt from Florida sales tax.

On the Federal level, Congress extended the Federal Energy Tax Credit for solar electric and water heating systems. So, homeowners who pay taxes will be able to recoup 30% of the cost of their system installations (\$2,000 credit cap on solar water heaters) through their annual tax filing.

Though currently paying in arrears, the state of Florida also provides homeowner rebates for qualifying solar water heater and solar electric installations. Additionally SunBuilt Builders receive a rebate for installing a solar water heater and local utilities - GRU, Progress Energy and Clay Electric - each provide some level of conservation or solar incentives for their customers. To find out which rebates may apply to you or your builder visit our website at AskAboutSolar.com.

Linda Tozer, APR, is the director of marketing and education for the Florida Solar Energy Research & Education Foundation (FlaSEREF) and the SunBuilt Program. **H**



Landscape Calendar

Winter Gardening By Jon George

Jack Frost may be nipping at our noses, but North Florida still has a climate that makes most parts of the country envious. And that's good news for Florida gardeners, as our growing season extends through the winter months.

Now is the time to plant an amazing array of cool season shrubs, flowering plants and trees. If you think that pansies are your only option for this time of the year, consider these flowering garden companions.

Iceland Poppies are the stars of the winter garden. These plants have interesting lettuce-like foliage and crepe paper flowers in bright colors of neon orange, rose pink and sunny yellow. Their fuzzy stems unfurl quickly and seem to pop out overnight, as their name suggests. Plant them in drifts for full effect.

Shasta daisies are perennials that usually bloom in the spring, but we stumbled across a variety that blooms all winter long and doesn't stop until early summer. The 12-inch plants each make a mound of white daisies with yellow centers and make a great focal point in full sun to partial shade.

Camellias have long been cherished as winter bloomers. Cut blooms brought into the house can last for a week or two. Many gardeners will float the blossoms in bowls for a centerpiece on the holiday table. Yuletide is a camellia that sports large, single red blooms with prominent yellow stamens. This small-leafed camellia blooms from November through January.

Many people think that Christmas trees don't grow in Florida, but the Deodora Cedar thrives in humid places that leave other evergreen trees wilted. This rapidly growing tree has a pyramid shape and soft blue green foliage. We suggest combining it with the burgundy color of Loropetalum, known as Ever-Red Sunset, for a stunning contrast in the landscape.

Now is the best time of the year to plant herbs for the kitchen garden. Most herbs enjoy sandy, well drained soil and at least half a day of sunlight. Rosemary, thyme, fennel and parsley are all evergreen and thrive in cool weather. Plant strawberries, lettuce and celery for frost tolerant salad fare.

Planting trees, shrubs and perennials now will allow roots to be established guaranteeing a spring show you will not soon forget. With the right selection and placement of plant material, you can have color and interest in your garden all year long.





Remember that Poinsettias are tropical plants, and they need covering in event of a freeze. Don't over water them or let them sit in water, and they will stay colorful for months in a sunny windowsill.

Who doesn't like getting oranges in their holiday stockings? Citrus trees in the landscape can be ornamental and edible. Careful selection of cold hardy varieties will keep you eating oranges all winter. Originating in the north of Japan, Flying Dragon dwarf rootstock imparts amazing cold hardiness to any citrus variety grafted onto it.

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 30 years. You may contact his staff for questions at cottagegardensinc@yahoo.com. **H**

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Gainesville Regional Airport:

On Time

By David Greenberg

Only one airport in the state of Florida can say that it was the best in the state in on-time performance from July to October – Gainesville Regional Airport.

The on-time figures are measured by the U.S. Department of Transportation. That agency's report indicated that flights were on time an average 88 percent of the time, which placed Gainesville at the No. 1 position in the state of Florida.

Combine that data with several other factors, and Gainesville Regional Airport has become the destination and departure location of choice for many business travelers. Airport officials are working hard to keep it that way and to demonstrate to leisure travelers why local is a better alternative.

One of the other factors that is filling the flights going in and out of Gainesville is that they are now all jets. Delta began operating all jets (CRJ-200) in June. The jet aircraft is faster than the turboprops, and has the ability to fly above inclement weather. Also, the flight time for the jet is approximately 20 minutes less. And the jets connect to the boarding bridges in Gainesville, sheltering passengers from the elements and allowing for easier handicap access to the aircraft.

"All of that is significant – especially for the business traveler," said Michelle Danisovszky, the airport's manager of public relations and government affairs. "Business travelers generally prefer jets. The turboprops may be more fuel efficient, but some business travelers won't fly on them."

The airlines have also improved their schedules over last year, she said.

Business travelers are typically less price-sensitive, weighing cost against convenience.

"Business travelers look beyond fares," said Danisovszky. "They need to get to a meeting, conference, speaking function or event on time. Being the best in the state is a major advantage. You also have to take into account the time saved by not having to travel to another airport, as well as the cost of gas. You have to consider the security lines at Orlando, Jacksonville or Tampa. We have the same security, but with far fewer people going through it. Traveling from any of those other airports is far more difficult."

For Gainesville resident Michelle Watson, all those factors come into play. Watson works for New Jersey-based pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk, and flies back and forth every week.

"I always fly in and out of Gainesville," said Watson. "There are a lot of reasons. One of the most important is the people. Between the airport and airline staff and the TSA staff, they are just wonderful to work with. In addition, it is absolutely imperative that my flights are on time, especially with the connections to New Jersey or back home."

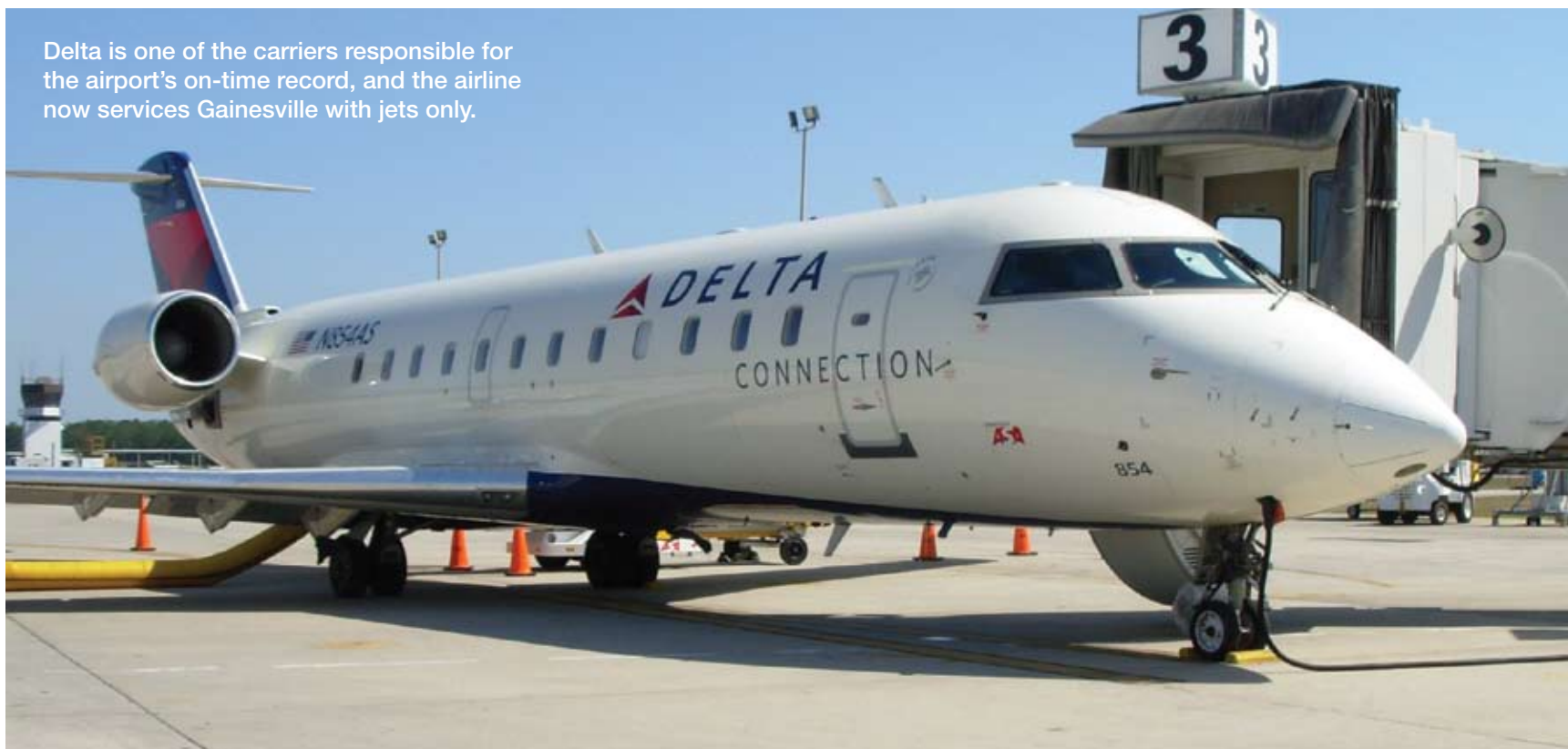
For Watson, the fact that it may cost more is not an issue.

"With the jets, the on-time record, the reliability and the other issues, I would not fly out of anywhere else," she said.

In addition to Delta and US Airways, the airport is also available for charter flights, as is the case with this American Airlines jet.



Delta is one of the carriers responsible for the airport's on-time record, and the airline now services Gainesville with jets only.



Gainesville No. 1 Airport in On-time Performance in Florida*

*Source: U.S. Department of Transportation

July report (May flights): 82 percent (arrivals), 90 percent (departures)

August report (June flights): 87 percent (arrivals), 91 percent (departures)

September report (July flights): 76 percent (arrivals), 86 percent (departures)

October report (August flights): 85 percent (arrivals), 88.8 percent (departures)

While recognizing that leisure travelers have some differing concerns about air travel than business travelers, airport officials are convinced that two of the biggest overlapping concerns are cost and reliability.

"We recognize the importance of the decision-making criteria for business and leisure travelers," said Danisovszky. "Obviously, airfares are a greater factor for leisure travelers. That's why we have initiated the low-fare alert program."

Travelers can sign up to get weekly e-mail alerts on low fares out of Gainesville. Also, on the airports' website there is a form people can use to calculate the additional costs of travel from Orlando and Jacksonville. When you figure in those other factors, the savings on airline fares often disappears.

After some bumps in the road in regards to air service, officials at the airport are determined to build on what has happened over the last several months. Meetings with current air carriers and potential new air carriers, as well as regular analysis of market data, enable airport officials to encourage the airlines to improve schedules and make other changes that create a better travel experience.

"We are really doing well against other airports our size and larger airports," said Danisovszky. "We are going to do what it takes to continue that."

To learn more about the services provided by Gainesville Regional Airport and the airline flight schedules, go online to www.flygainesville.com. **H**

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AIRPORT



An Interview with Larry Scott

President/CEO of CAMPUS USA Credit Union, Gainesville, FL

What is a credit union and who should join?

A credit union is a not-for-profit financial institution owned by its members and is overseen by a volunteer board of directors. The result is a financial institution that exists to benefit its member-owners, not to make a profit; where it's safe and convenient to save and borrow at reasonable rates.

A credit union serves a specific group of people, such as a group of employees or people living in a specific region, called a "field of membership." CAMPUS USA Credit Union's field of membership includes anyone who lives, works or attends school in Alachua, Clay, Columbia, Lake, Marion or Sumter counties. In addition to this group, all employees of Shands Hospitals, faculty and staff of the University of Florida, and members of the Matheson Historical Society are eligible to join.

What's the difference between a credit union and a bank?

- Credit unions are not-for-profit financial cooperatives conducting business for the mutual benefit of their member-owners. Banks are for-profit financial corporations with the objective of maximizing stock price and profits for its stockholders.
- Credit unions promote savings and sound lending strategies to improve member's lives. Banks focus on what generates profit for the bank.
- Most credit unions are locally run, as membership consists of specific communities, employers, churches or schools. Local leadership is rare with a bank, even community banks are frequently sold to larger banks whose home office is seldom in the local community.
- Credit unions are exempt from corporate income tax because they are not-for-profit cooperatives that

return earnings back to members in the form of lower loan rates and higher deposit rates. Credit unions pay property, county, school, municipal and employer taxes. Banks are taxed because they are designed as profit-making corporations. When they disburse profits, it is only to their stockholders.

What services does CAMPUS USA Credit Union offer?

CAMPUS offers a full line of financial products and services including checking accounts, savings accounts, money market accounts, business accounts, certificates of deposits, IRAs, home equity loans and lines of credit, auto loans, credit cards and much more. They even offer investment advice and estate planning through their partners, CAMPUS Investment Services. CAMPUS offers great specials on refinances from other institutions and may be able to save you money on your "bank" loan.

Is my money safe at a credit union?

YES. Accounts are backed by the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund (NCUSIF), a fund maintained by the U.S. Treasury and administered by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA). NCUA coverage is to credit unions as FDIC, or Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, coverage is to banks. Both funds are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government. And now, passage of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 increases NCUA coverage from \$100,000 to \$250,000. The increase is temporary, taking effect October 3, 2008 until December 31, 2009.

Members of CAMPUS USA Credit Union will continue to enjoy, at no cost to the membership, additional insurance coverage provided by Excess Share Insurance (ESI). Excess Share Insurance is a subsidiary of American Share insurance, the nation's largest private deposit insurer of credit unions. This entitles members up to an additional \$250,000 of coverage per account. **H**

Since 1935 CAMPUS USA Credit Union has been providing world class service and best-of-market rates in Alachua County. You can contact CAMPUS at 335-9090 in Gainesville or toll-free at 800-367-6440.



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Remembering Clark Butler: A Gainesville Pioneer

By David Greenberg

Many people in North Central Florida know Clark Butler because of the Archer Road retail development named after him. But if those same people were to assume that Butler Plaza is the sum of the man's work in Gainesville, they would be missing much of what makes Gainesville what it is today.

Former State Attorney and State Senator Rod Smith, who is now a partner in the Gainesville law firm Avera & Smith, says that Butler may have had more influence on the local economy than any other individual in the community.

"There is no telling how many jobs and businesses exist today, and are doing well, based on decisions he made decades ago," said Smith.

Butler came to Gainesville with his brother, Bill, in the 1940s, and they opened what might be described as Gainesville's first convenience store. The brothers sold produce from a stand on Eighth Avenue near Main Street. As the years went by, the stand turned into an enclosed grocery store, and was ultimately destroyed by fire. Rather than starting over, he turned to the building industry.

In the 1960s, he swapped the Eighth Avenue site for acreage on Southwest 13th Street, where he built Lakeshore Towers. At that time, he also started building garden apartments. He entered the shopping center business in Orlando, building the first Butler Plaza there. Later he built the first phase of Gainesville's Butler Plaza on Archer Road. Over the years, and with the input of daughter, Deborah Butler, Butler Plaza has grown into a 1.2 million-square-foot center consisting of three sections, with more than 100 varied tenants. It is often referred to as the Miracle Mile.

Butler Enterprises built Westmoreland Estates, Palm View Estates, Westwood and Sunnybrook, and developed the Millhopper Shopping Center on Northwest 23rd Avenue and 43rd Street. Many of those homes in the area of Northwest 16th Avenue between 34th and 43rd streets, as well as other locations, still stand today. In the early 1960s, he built garden apartments in the Southwest 16th Avenue area. Today, those apartments are filled with students at the University of Florida.

Butler also served as Gainesville's mayor and on the Gainesville City Commission, and was chairman of one of the city's first community banks. While mayor, he helped open Gainesville's first airport terminal and the downtown library. While on the commission, he voted to extend Eighth Avenue. When he cast his vote he said it was for the good of the city, but it cost him dearly because it killed a potential sale of his Eighth Avenue property.

He was also the swing vote in opposition to a proposal that would have sold GRU to another utility company for \$5 million.



U.F. President Bernie Machen thanks Deborah and Clark Butler for their \$1 million donation to the Shands at the University of Florida Cancer Hospital in 2005. Photo courtesy University of Florida.

Over the years, Butler made many decisions that may not have been the best for his business, but helped improve the community.

Butler started buying the land that is now Butler Plaza in 1970, when Archer Road was a two-lane road with no Interstate 75 interchange. The county had plans to expand Archer Road because of growth associated with UF, Shands and the VA. Butler bought the right-of-way along Archer Road and donated it to the county – the first of his many efforts to create public-private partnerships. As a result of his efforts, Archer Road became six lanes and the I-75 interchange was built.


Smith says it was that kind of visionary thinking that has made this community what it is.

"Clark Butler probably taught me more than anyone about the economic relationship between UF and this business community," said Smith. "He recognized the economic engine that the university was. He knew it because he lived it. Back when he owned the grocery store he was delivering groceries to the fraternity houses. He understood what UF's expansion would mean."

Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Brent Christensen described Butler as the epitome of an entrepreneur.

"He was the gold standard of entrepreneurship in Gainesville," said Christensen. "Going from a produce stand to what he termed the Miracle Mile on Archer Road, is a true testament to his business acumen and his vision for this community. As an elected official, his role in the decision to keep GRU was a turning point for this community. To this day, the community benefits from his choices and it will for decades to come."

Butler gave back in a variety of ways. Included in his philanthropy is a \$1 million donation he and Deborah made to the development of the new cancer hospital at Shands.

"He was a person who really lived the American dream," said Smith. "He started with nothing. He became a wealthy man. Became a wealthy man, and gave back to the community, because of his willingness to take risk." 

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Graetz Remodeling & Custom Homes: Making It Right

By David Greenberg



There is one simple philosophy at Graetz Remodeling and Custom Homes, Inc. If it is not right, you make it right no matter what.

For Allan Graetz, who opened the Gainesville-based remodeling company in 2001, that is the golden rule.

"Everyone can say they provide quality work," he said. "And frankly, there are a lot of companies out there doing quality work. What I believe sets us apart is our strong attention to customer relations. That applies to even the simplest thing – keeping a home clean during production."

Graetz Remodeling and Custom Homes specializes in all types of home renovations, including kitchens, baths, additions for all purposes, sunrooms, detached garages and anything else your family desires.

Graetz does commercial work as well. Some of the notable commercial projects completed are the Deb's Hallmark in Hunters Crossing Shopping Center, Eyeglass Express and Cingular Wireless in the Tower Square Shopping Center, Main Street Chevrolet and the Sigma Nu fraternity and Delta Phi sorority houses at the University of Florida.

"We pride ourselves on additions – especially for bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms," said Graetz. "Our goal is that once the project is done, it looks like we have never been there. When you can't tell the difference between the original and the addition that means we have done a good job."

With father, Don, a UF professor for over 35 years, Graetz believes his interest in building goes back another generation to his grandfather, Reuben, and also his high school carpentry teacher.

"Grandpa was a farmer, but he was always building stuff," said Graetz. "I got interested when I saw him doing projects around the house. I've really had a love for building since I was in high school. I took a carpentry class with a teacher who was extremely passionate about the industry. He made it a point to do things right and to have fun while you do it."

Graetz got his professional start in the early 1990s, and has been at it for almost

The additional space in the Lucas home provides a lot more room for entertaining.

BUSINESS FOCUS

two decades. He gained experience working for another remodeler before setting out on his own in 2001.

“We started out getting work from people who knew us,” he said. “My mom, Sue, was a nursery school teacher here for many years. She knew a lot of people, and when they needed remodeling work, she sent them to us.”

And that method has not changed, he said.

“We still get most of our work from referrals,” he said. “The nice thing is that they are not all from my mother. People who have used us, tell their friends, and we get a lot of work that way. We have a good client base and more than half of our business comes from word of mouth. That says something about both our quality and our customer service.”

The pool house was added to the Lucas home in Newberry, and the couple lived there while the rest of the remodeling was done.

One of those clients is Ryan Harvey, who with his wife, Jamie, lives in the Jockey Club. The Harveys enlarged and enclosed the existing rear screen porch area of their home to expand the living room.

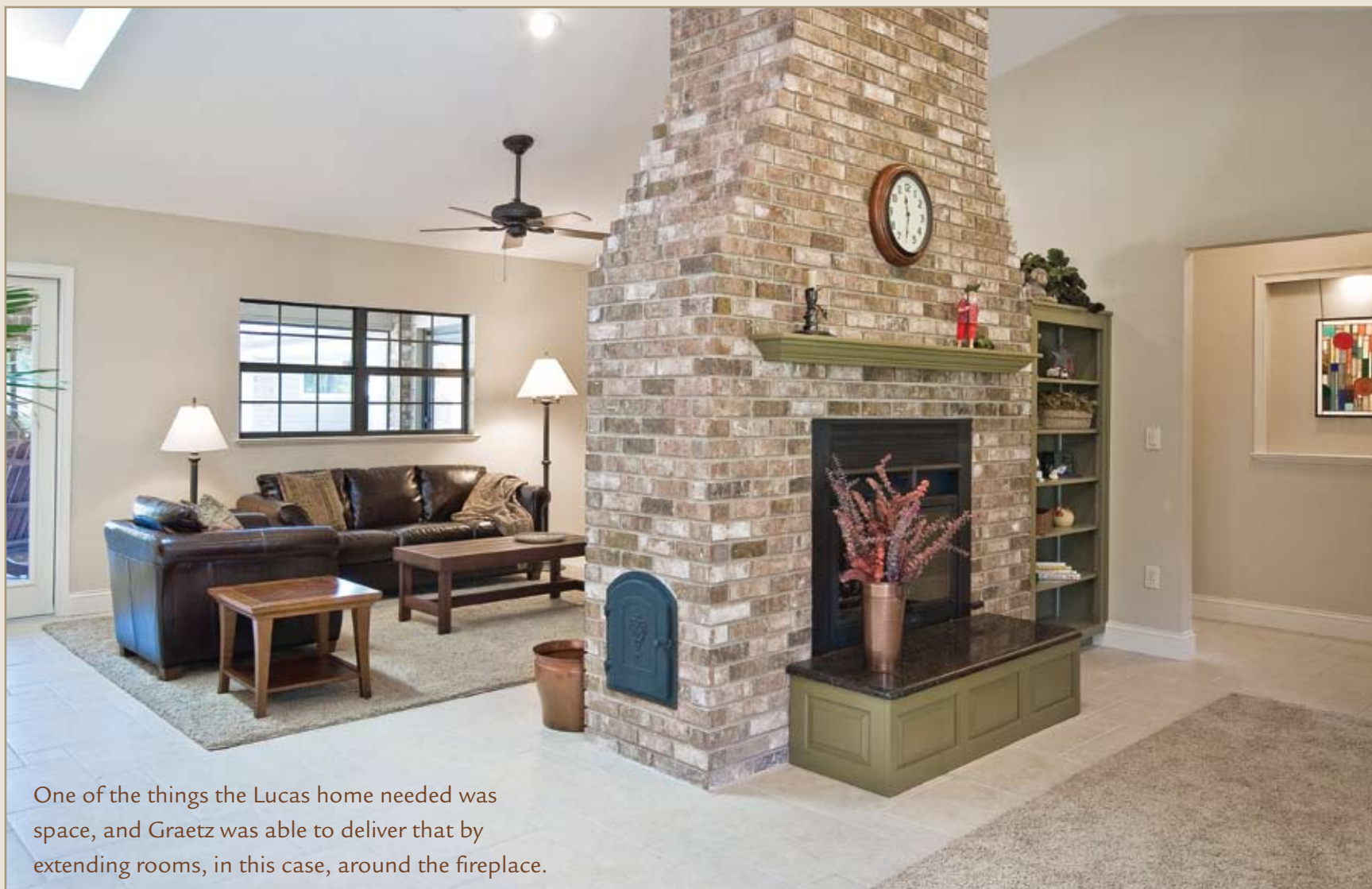
“A friend, a few years back, had been buying, fixing and then selling homes,” said Harvey. “He had used Graetz, and recommended them. I got quotes from Allan and one other person. When I first asked them for a price, I really never intended to use Graetz. I really thought the other contractor I solicited was best choice. I knew he was going to be higher, and was going to do a better job. I just wanted to get the price from Graetz because my friend recommended them. But Allan was so thorough in his preparation, I felt better than I did with the original person. I really felt that he knew what I wanted.”

Harvey says he has no regrets.

It was an entirely positive, fantastic experience,” he said. “I have already recommended them several times. I think they are definitely one of the better contractors I have dealt with.”

For Susan Lucas, finding Graetz was the result of holding on to a business card – for nearly two years.





One of the things the Lucas home needed was space, and Graetz was able to deliver that by extending rooms, in this case, around the fireplace.

"I actually found them at the home show at the O'Connell Center," she said. "One of their designers gave us some ideas, and I kept the business card. When we were ready, I remembered, and called them."

Lucas and her husband, Scott, live in an early 80s ranch-style home in Newberry. They needed additional space.

"I remember that they seemed very sincere when they talked to us," she said. "I liked that, and the fact that they were a relatively small group and operation. I felt like we would get more attention, and I was right. The people who own the business were very involved with the project."

Lucas asked Graetz to look at what they needed done.

"They came out, gave us some ideas and a price," she said. "They told us how long it would take. It was great. They were right on schedule through the whole project. At every step, they told us exactly what to expect. They took the time to introduce us to all the subs. That was good because it meant we were able to communicate with the subs. Not that it was necessary, because the superintendent was at the house every day. Rarely were the subs here without the superintendent."

"The communication lines were completely open," she continued. "They asked me regularly if I had any concerns. If there was ever a question, and that did not happen very often, they were there to answer it and explain."

And the whole project was relatively convenient, said Lucas.

"We built a pool house first," she said. "We lived there while they gutted the rest of the house. We did not have to go through the kinds of things

people have to deal with when they are living at home, and the kitchen is being renovated. For us, it was a really pleasant experience. People warned us about remodeling, but I would have no problem doing it again with Graetz. I have recommended them to several people. In fact, one person called, and I let them come over and take a look at what was done."

Graetz says he appreciates what people are saying about him, but he believes it all goes back to his simple formula.

"The people who work with me really care about what they do, and how the customer is responding to us," he said. "If it is not right, you make it right no matter what. Things go wrong. Mistakes happen. If it's wrong, you have to fix it."

To learn more about the services offered by Graetz Remodeling and Custom Homes, Inc., go online to www.graetz-construction.com, or call (352) 371-7730. **H**

GRAETZ
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REALTOR CORNER



Take Advantage of the Opportunity

By David Greenberg

While the country may be going through trying economic times, there are still great opportunities to buy homes, according to local Realtors.

"While the number of sales has declined, homes are still selling," said Thomas McIntosh of ERA Trend Realty. "Builders have gotten creative with pricing and other incentives. When that happens, the homeowner desiring to sell has to react accordingly. This activity has led to some very good bargains on the market. Anyone with good credit and steady income who desires to own a home should investigate this market. There are some fabulous deals."

Mitch Glaeser, of Glaeser Realty, agrees that the market has become very good for buyers, and he says that people should also be looking at what the current economic conditions mean when it comes to buying that home.

"It really goes beyond what is out there in the market right now," said Glaeser. "If people can picture themselves 10 years from now, looking back, they will be able to see whether they took advantage of the opportunities that exist in 2008 and 2009. Consumer confidence may be at an historic low, but history has taught us that those are the times when there is great opportunity for the creation of personal wealth, and owning a home is a staple. It is a foundation when it comes to the growth of personal wealth."

Glaeser believes that waiting too long to make that home purchase could be a mistake.

"New home sales are at their lowest in 17 years," he said. "That is a clear indication that as we move forward, the current trend of absorption of the existing home market will continue. This historic low production of new housing inventory is a clear signal that we are seeing the beginning of the bottoming out of the housing market that economists keep talking about."

Whether it is in the local market or nationally, it is clear that there is activity across the board in the home market.

"There is certainly activity in the higher price ranges," said McIntosh. "Locally, some very expensive homes have sold recently. Additionally, homes with mortgages backed by the FHA insurance program have become very popular in recent months. Since the maximum loan amount eligible for FHA insurance is \$271,000, homes falling within that criteria remain popular."

Glaeser says that the features in a home are currently playing a significant role in sales. Those features tend to follow the trends we are seeing across the country.

"We are transitioning to a new administration with new ideas," he said. "That creates a window of opportunity for many industries – not just real estate. Moving forward, homes are going to be green and more energy efficient. Our economy is going to be built around how we become energy independent. A lot of design and building going on today pays much more attention to lighting and solar energy and considers features that include minimal use of water, like tankless hot water heaters, toilets and sink faucets. All of these features certainly lend themselves to a transformation in the type of homes in which we will live in the future. This kind of technology is re-energizing the housing industry."

McIntosh says one of the things that will stimulate the economy immediately is for people to take advantage of the opportunities that are before them. Waiting on the sideline because they read about a tight lending market is a mistake, he said.

"There is still credit available for home purchases," he said. "The FHA program is popular for prospective buyers wishing to have a low down payment. The conventional programs are very competitive for potential home buyers who are able to make a 10 percent down payment."

While no one has a crystal ball, both Glaeser and McIntosh believe that things will improve in the coming year and beyond.

"I believe that interest rates will remain relatively low, and the mortgage market will settle down," said McIntosh. "Once this happens, the first wave of buyers will get some really good deals, and others will follow. With the election and all the uncertainty that went with it past us, I expect the financial markets to recover and sales activity in real estate will compare to the levels we saw in 2002. Life happens and people will still have to make housing decisions as a result of that. Job transfers, family additions, changes in marital status – all of these things will cause people to either buy or sell."

Glaeser agrees, and further suggests that what has occurred in the housing market and the economy in the last year will serve as an opportunity as we move forward.

"For the consumer today, there has been significant price compression," he said. "That has offered many more choices in terms of the lifestyles people want to live – far more than there have been in the last 20 years. If you put together low interest rates, price compression and government incentives, this is a unique time. The issue is whether people will look back on it 10 or 20 years from now and say they took advantage of it." **H**



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Alachua County

A Growing Technology Mecca

By Victoria Phillips
Photos courtesy of Sid Martin
Biotechnology Incubator

Traditionally, when you think of places at the forefront of cutting edge biotechnology and research in the Southeast, Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Oak Ridge, TN or the Research Triangle in North Carolina come to mind. However, increasingly you could add Gainesville to the list.

Gainesville and Alachua County have made research and technology a priority and now possess the resources needed to enable remarkable biotechnology breakthroughs and foster start-up companies as they prepare innovations for the marketplace.

As the 17th largest research university in the nation and the second largest research university in the Southeast, the University of Florida has been the catalyst in turning Alachua County into a thriving hotbed for new biotechnology research and corporations.

"Being a university town, with all the arts and culture, is very attractive to tech workers interviewing for companies," said Patti Breedlove, associate director of the UF's Sid Martin Biotechnology Incubator (SMBI). "We are really growing a bioscience cluster here."

Many ideas originate from UF faculty and then go on to be patented by the university and licensed as startup companies.

"UF receives around \$560 million a year in research money, and about 300 inventions are produced each year by faculty," said David Day, director for the Office of Technology Licensing at UF.

After an idea has been both patented and licensed, funding is the next hurdle companies must overcome. Not only do companies have to find someone to pay the initial research expenses for their idea, they also have to be able to fund the five or more years of continued research that will hopefully lead their product to the marketplace.

"Every once in a while, you come up with something that is unique and might one day be commercially useful," said Day. "After we work with them to patent it, you have to find a company that will invest five to 10 times more money than is already in it to get it to the marketplace."

With funds in hand, companies can then apply to an incubator program that will provide them with laboratories, specialized facilities, scientific support services, offices, business development services and business resources.

"Think of us as an incubator for baby bioscience companies," Breedlove said. "We help them meet people that can provide funding and leadership. We also have a wide variety of support centers that are really custom – that other places don't have."

SMBI's range of customized facilities includes 22 wet labs, \$1 million of shared equipment, an animal facility, fermentation facility and a climate-controlled greenhouse. SMBI placed second in an international competition for 2007 Technology Incubator of the Year.

The Gainesville Technology Enterprise Center (GTEC), another local incubator, strives to not only help those in the biotech industry but the entire economy of Alachua County.

"Our goal is to help grow technology-based start up companies in Gainesville and Alachua County to create high skill, high wage jobs and strengthen the local economy," said Booker Schmidt, GTEC's executive director. "Our companies now have 93 people, creating over 80 jobs in the area."

The high percentage of successful companies is due to the ongoing strategic advice and resources GTEC provides, added Schmidt.

"One of the most important things we try to do is discourage people from doing activities that are not going to be beneficial to their company's growth," he said.



Both incubators contain a mix of biotechnology companies that are making waves with their breakthroughs. Starting next year, Pasteuria Bioscience, part of SMBI, will be ridding the world of harmful nematodes, one microscopic worm at a time.

Destructive nematodes are agriculture's largest unmet pest problem, according to Kelly Smith, PhD and chief technical officer for Pasteuria Bioscience. These tiny worms attack the roots of plants and cause an estimated \$100 billion of damage to global crops each year.

"Almost every type of human agriculture has a nematode problem," she said.

Pasteuria's solution comes in the form of a parasitic soil microbe. The company has perfected cost-effective methods to bring their solution to market.

"We figured out how to grow the bacteria in the laboratory," said Smith.

The bacteria, *Pasteuria penetrans*, are lethal to nematodes but harmless to all other plants and animals. It took almost six years of work and research, but the product will be available on the market in 2009.

As a start-up, AxoGen Inc. took advantage of the resources of both SMBI and GTEC, and recently made a successful transition to the marketplace. Founded in 2002, the company manufactures a product that improves peripheral nerve repair and regeneration.

"Peripheral nerves are the communication system for the body," said Karen Zaderej, chief operating officer for AxoGen. "They provide the pathway for both motor and sensory signals between the central nervous system and muscles or organs throughout the body."



Without these peripheral nerves working properly, none of these systems can communicate, Zaderej said.

Usually, when a patient has peripheral nerve damage, another nerve had to be transplanted from somewhere else in the patient's body, creating a second surgical site.

With AxoGen's Advance Nerve Graft system, surgeons have an alternative.

AxoGen uses live tissue to create the nerve graft. The tissue undergoes an extensive process of de-sterilization so there is no immune response or rejection of tissue from the recipient.

"We preserve the inherent growth promoters, and we clear the growth inhibitors," Zaderej said.

The Advance Nerve Graft system was released nationally in Feb. 2008, and it is now in use in about 300 hospitals across the United States.

"All they need to do is pull it out of the freezer, instead of taking it out of a patient's leg," she said.

Whether it's fighting nematodes or improving peripheral nerve repair and regeneration, most of the scientists developing new technology are working for the greater good.

"A lot of people have ideas; it's having the money and the commitment because it's not an easy process," said Day. "There are a lot of places that it can fall apart. These people are very committed, they aren't in this for the money; they are in it to change the world."

And the commitment of Alachua County's research and technology start-ups will pay dividends for the whole community for years to come.

"All the elements are here for the Gainesville/Alachua County area to become the next 'hot spot' for the biotech industry," said Brent Christensen, president and CEO of the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce. "Ten years from now, I think we will be amazed at the progress that will have been made and the number of successful companies that will call this area home." **H**

Remembering C.B. Daniel: Living Life with Passion

By David Greenberg

C.B. Daniel was passionate about everything he did. And one of the people who knew him best, Sam Goforth, said that with an inability to say no, that meant Daniel was passionate about a great many things.

Charlton B. Daniel, known by virtually everyone who crossed his path simply as C.B., touched the lives of many people in and around Gainesville. He passed away at the age of 69 as a result of complications from cancer. But that was only after having a successful heart transplant in 1996.

Professionally, Daniel was executive vice president of First Federal Savings and Loan of Mid-Florida, president of Florida National Bank of Gainesville and First Union National Bank of North Central Florida. When he left First Union, he went to Mercantile Bank, and most recently, was associated with Alarion Bank.

But Daniel's presence in this community goes far beyond that.

From the United Way to the Boys & Girls Club to the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce, Daniel was involved. He was a force behind the development of the Council for Economic Outreach, and he volunteered for the American Heart Association, the March of Dimes, and Rotary. In 1995, Daniel was appointed to a six-year term on the Florida Board of Regents.

When Delta announced it was stopping service in Gainesville, it was Daniel who led the task force that fought to keep the airline here. In another effort, Daniel tried to do something about crime in the community by leading a group called Citizens

for Community Awareness and Action, whose goals were to try to work to create youth groups and summer jobs programs for teens.

Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Brent Christensen said Daniel's influence was evident throughout the area.

"I'm not sure there was a community organization in Gainesville that wasn't touched by C.B. Daniel and his outstanding leadership," said Christensen. "Certainly the chamber benefitted greatly over the years due to his involvement. The community has lost a visionary. He was one of those folks who just got things done, and he will be greatly missed."

C.B. Daniel surrounded by his family



Goforth met Daniel in 1973 and worked closely with him for most of the next two decades.

"We had been in banking together previously," said Goforth, who is now market president for Wachovia Bank. "I joined him again in 1986 at Florida National Bank. We merged with First Union in 1990, and he became the market president. Shortly after that, he became area president. He left in 1995. We were joined at the hip for a long time, and in many ways, he was a mentor to me."

"At the bank," said Goforth, "C.B. was always focused on customer service. He made sure we took care of everyone. He spent a great deal of time making sure our bank was the best it could be. He was driven to be better. If we were not the number one bank, he always had us working in that direction."

Goforth said Daniel was like that about everything.

"He did everything with such passion," said Goforth. "He was always overcommitting himself, and because he did so much for every project or cause he involved himself in, it was exhausting just to watch him. I would try to tell him to set some limits, but he had a very hard time saying no. He always wanted to do good things for this community."

Daniel never would acknowledge that something could slow him down, said Goforth.

"He would never admit it when he was sick," he said. "He never stopped in the 1970s after a heart attack, or in the 1980s after other problems. He finally had to slow down – at least

a little – after the transplant. He never wanted people to know he was sick or on vacation. We were only allowed to tell people he was out of the office."

One of Goforth's fondest memories of Daniel dates back to 1994.

"C.B., Jim Quincey and I followed the Gator basketball team during its 1994 run to the Final Four," he said. "We were with them during every round, and we were in Charlotte for the Final Four. We were together for all of it, and there was a lot of excitement and energy. Then we lost to Duke. C.B. got angry and went home. With the Gators eliminated, the passion in C.B. was ready to move on to something else. That's the way he was." **H**

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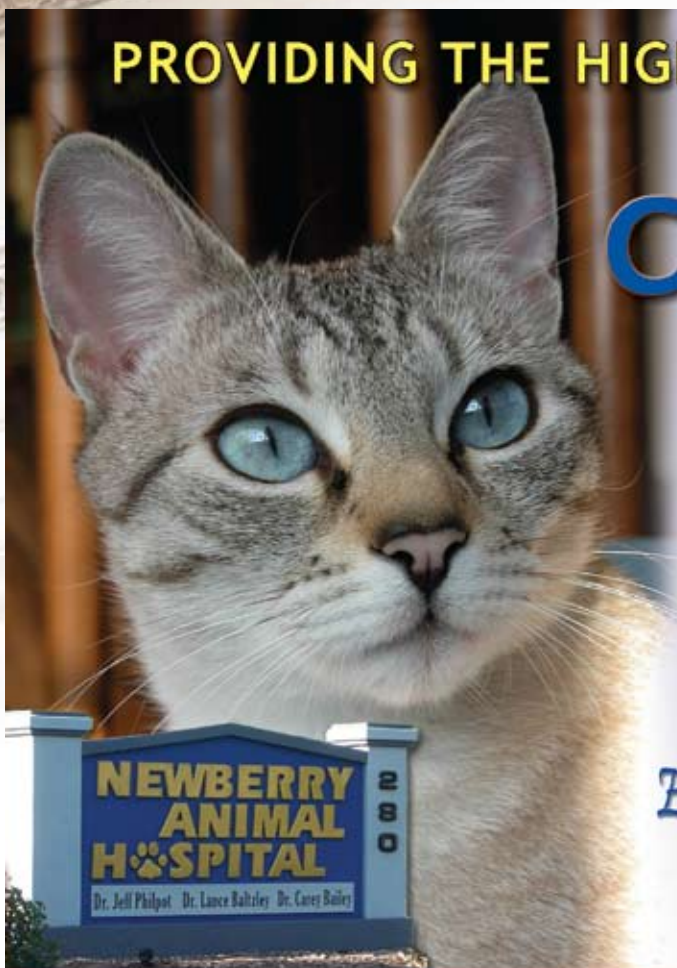
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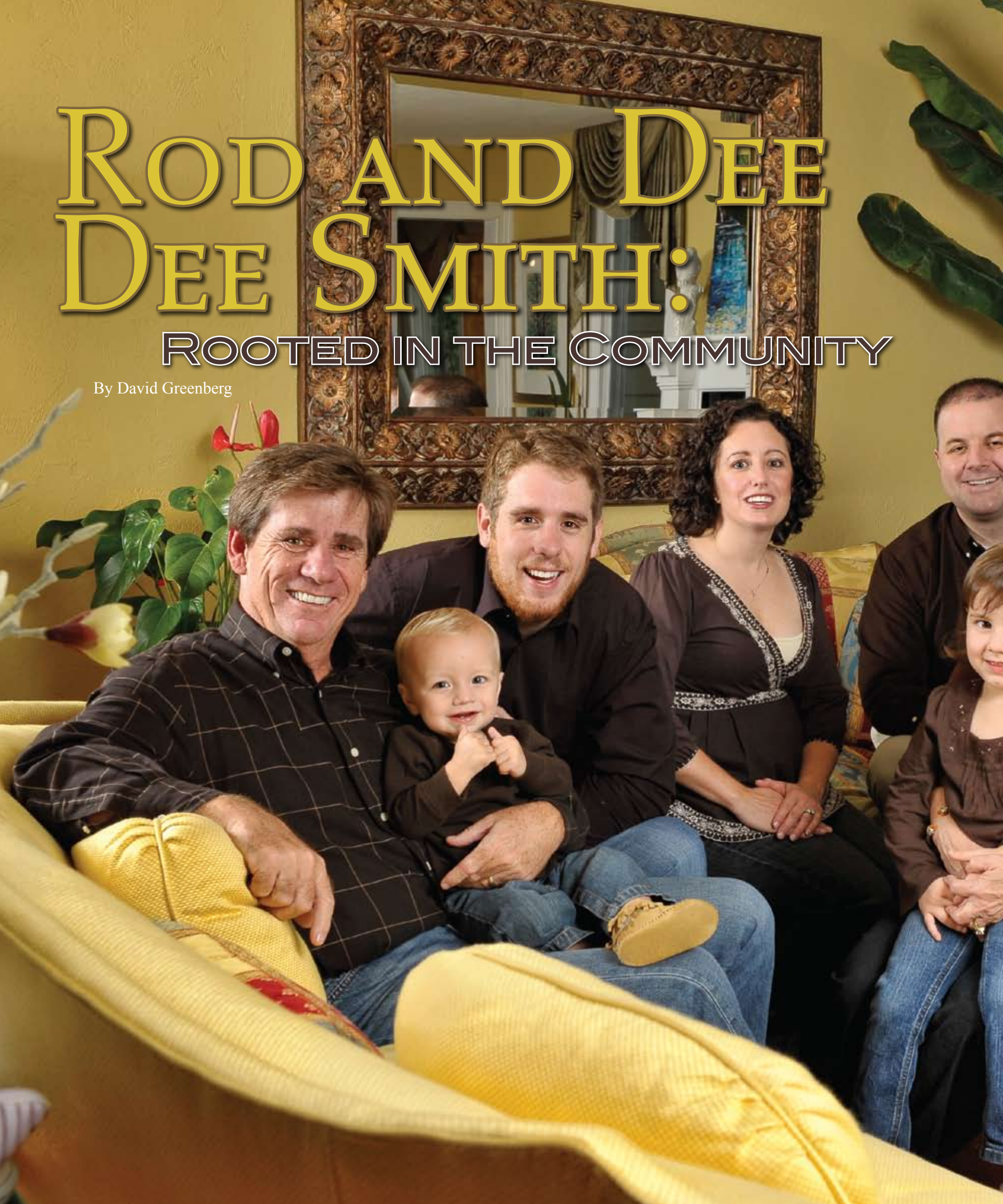
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ROD AND DEE DEE SMITH: ROOTED IN THE COMMUNITY

By David Greenberg





photography by Aaron Bailey

Rod and Dee Dee Smith are about as close as you can get to a North Central Florida power couple.

He recently made a strong run to be Florida's governor and is now a partner in a prestigious Gainesville law firm. She founded a well-known local agency that helps to change the lives of abused children.

Yet to know the Smiths, say many of their longtime friends, is to know one of the most grounded, caring partnerships around.

Both of them came from farming families. Dee Dee was born on a farm in Alachua just north of State Road 441. Rod was born in Oklahoma and grew up on a farm in Loxahatchee. When they talk about how they got to where they are today, it is clear that they believe those similar backgrounds are critical factors in who they are.

"We have both had a great journey," said Rod. "Neither of our fathers graduated from high school. But in one generation, Dee Dee became a lawyer during a period when it was just becoming more common to have women in the field, and I became a credible candidate for governor. This is a great country."

Dee Dee agreed that the journey has been incredible, but she added something to the description.

"It has been a wonderful, but exhausting, experience," she said.

Their rise from humble beginnings has followed a path marked by hard work and dedication, peaks of personal achievement and quite a few twists of fate.

Rod moved to North Florida in 1972 to attend law school at the University of Florida. He lived on the 400-acre ranch his parents, Warren and Elda Lee, had just purchased with plans to live there in the near future. In fact, Rod's parents sold their farm in South Florida and moved to the Alachua farm in 1975.

Upon graduation from law school, Rod worked in Tallahassee for about a year before moving back and opening his own practice in Gainesville. In 1981, he moved his firm to Alachua and concentrated on representing firefighters and law enforcement officers from all around the state.

Dee Dee, who is part of the Julian Cain family in Alachua, met Rod through her family. She had moved back home to Alachua where she owned and managed two real estate offices with her brother. She served as president of the Alachua Chamber of Commerce in 1981.

AN UNEXPECTED TWIST

Rod and Dee Dee were married Oct. 1, 1982.

A decade later, Dee Dee was preparing to go to law school at UF. The plan was to practice with Rod after getting her degree. But, as has happened so often in their life together, a twist in the road appeared, changing those plans and propelling them both higher in their professional and political spheres.

"I tell people that I was the only person who ever went to law school with a job waiting for her when she finished, only to find the job gone when I got out of school," Dee Dee said.

What changed everything for the Smiths was a visit from then-Alachua County Sheriff Lu Hindery.

"He said we needed a new state attorney," said Rod. "I told him I agreed. He said that he had talked to the other sheriffs in the district, and they all agreed that they knew of someone who could beat the incumbent. He said it was me. I was taken aback, but told him I would think about it."

But apparently, some of that thinking got done for him.

"I came to Rod the next day and told him that the paper said he was thinking about running for state attorney," said Dee Dee. "We assume that information came from Lu."

The Smith family gathers at their Alachua home.

COVER STORY

Rod was elected state attorney in 1992, and Dee Dee was out of a job.

"I ended up hiring a lot of her friends from school, but I could not hire her," said Rod citing nepotism regulations.

Rod served as state attorney from 1992 to 2000. Of course, the first few years of that experience were dominated by the Gainesville student murders case.

Smith ran the prosecution and was able to get a conviction of Danny Harold Rolling, who was executed in October 2006. While Rolling dominated the work at the state attorney's office, at least in those early years, Rod looks back at the full term of office with pride.

"It was a magical time," he said. "We had the right people in place at the right time. It was a great team, and many of them have moved on to do other great things. At least seven of them are now judges."

Bill Cervone, who succeeded Rod as state attorney, was part of that team. But Cervone says the real team is Rod and Dee Dee.

"Independent of each other, they are amazingly high-energy people," said Cervone. "They are both passionate about the things they do. That's why they make such a great team. Rod is the most verbal person I have ever known. People don't always understand what he said, but it sounded good. Sometimes, they don't understand that he told them no, but they feel good."

FOLLOWING HER OWN PATH

Meanwhile, the same twist that sent Rod into the state attorney's office set Dee Dee on a different path – one that proved to be beneficial for many people. Soon after starting her legal career, she went to work for Guardian ad Litem, an agency that trains and provides advocates that help steer children through the legal system.

Carole Zegel, who is now executive director at the state attorney's office, was director of the Guardian ad Litem program at the time and hired Dee Dee.

"It was the ideal place for Dee Dee because she could use her law degree to help vulnerable children," said Zegel. "She came in and engaged everyone and was most effective with the volunteers. Her work directing highly contested divorce custody cases saved children from abusive and stressful circumstances. She was well respected by the Guardians ad Litem and the court. She is just a delightful person and lights up any office. She really gained an appreciative understanding of children, and especially the needs of at-risk children. That experience empowered her to start the Child Advocacy Center."

By 1998, with a busy professional career, a husband with a demanding and intense job, the rigors of raising three kids and extensive community involvement, Dee Dee had decided to close her law practice and stay home. But once again, a twist appeared in her path when the development team for the Child Advocacy Center about being its founding director.

"I told them thank you, but no," she said. "They asked me to come to an interview, and I decided to go to tell them no again. I walked away with a job



Rod Smith, second from right. With (from left to right) Davis Rembert, Bernie Machen and Tim Bowen

because I knew that a Child Advocacy Center was so greatly needed for the children in our community."

Dee Dee became the founding director of the Gainesville Child Advocacy Center.

"Because of the CAC there has been a revolution in this community in the way children's cases are handled," said Dee Dee. "But I wasn't there long before Rod decided to run for the state senate."

Liz Jones was one of the people who worked with Dee Dee at the CAC from the beginning. Today, she is president of the Friends of the Child Advocacy – a group that helps with fundraising. Dee Dee serves as vice president of the Friends committee as well as Director Emeritus on the CAC Board of Directors.

"She is really responsible for the center being here," said Jones. "She was absolutely marvelous. She has the ability to get people together to work for her, and she is always gracious about it. Starting a new agency is extremely difficult, especially when it is trying to combine things. What she was doing was asking all these people who have some responsibility to work together for the benefit of the children. I don't know anyone who could have pulled it off besides Dee Dee."

THE ROAD TO STATE OFFICE

For his part, Rod did not really intend to disrupt Dee Dee's professional career again. It just worked out that way when George Kirkpatrick retired due to term limits, and Rod was elected to the Florida Senate.

Dee Dee Smith, second from right with Child Advocacy Center Board of Directors



He served from 2001 to 2006 and was soon known for his ability to bring varied interests together to solve the state's problems.

"I believe Rod's accomplishments in the senate may best be seen through the many awards he received from diverse organizations," said Rick Parker, public defender for the 8th Judicial Circuit, who has spend a great deal of time in Tallahassee representing Florida's public defenders. "They truly reflect his forceful energy and talent for bringing people together to work toward a common ground."

Rod decided to try to bring this energy and talent to the governor's mansion when he ran for Florida's top spot in 2006.

"We did a poll before I announced," he said. "I was at four percent, and the margin of error was five percent. I'm an optimist, so I decided that meant I had nine percent. Now I jokingly tell people that I did really well considering that I was a North Florida guy who started out at negative one percent."

THE PATH LEADS TO FULFILLMENT

After his run for governor, he became a partner at the law firm of Avera & Smith.

These days, their older son, Jesse, is carrying on the family tradition – serving as a prosecutor in the state attorney's office. Dylan, their youngest, is a UF senior majoring in Physics with plans to become a patent attorney. Alison, a former lobbyist, is the one who really surprised them when she came home with Graham Glover, a seminary student who was studying to be a Lutheran minister and also happened to be a Republican.

"I jokingly said that I could never have imagined she would marry a minister, much less a Republican, Lutheran minister," said Rod. "But, of course, we love Graham, who became a Democrat shortly after Alison became a Lutheran."

The couple lives near Savannah, GA, with the Smiths' two grandchildren, Hannah Grace, who is three, and Graham Jr., called Gray, who is one, while Graham is serving in Ft. Stewart as a chaplain in the Army.

"Grandchildren are the best," said Dee Dee. "And while I may be the one who works in children's programs, Rod is the one who really loves kids, and they love him too. When our children were growing up, their friends and cousins practically lived here so they could play sports or go fishing with Rod who is still the biggest kid of them all."

The long list of their charitable and community involvement reveals that the Smiths continue to make North Central Florida children a priority. In addition to the Child Advocacy Center, they co-chaired the American Heart Association's Heart Ball in 2004. Dee Dee served as past president of the Girls' Club and co-chaired its first Hats, Hearts and Handbags event. Rod is on the board of the Sebastian Ferrero Foundation, which is working to bring a children's hospital to Gainesville. He also serves on the state board of the Children's Network, which works in foster care. Among other organizations, they also currently support Haven Hospice, the Pace Center for Girls and Reichert House.

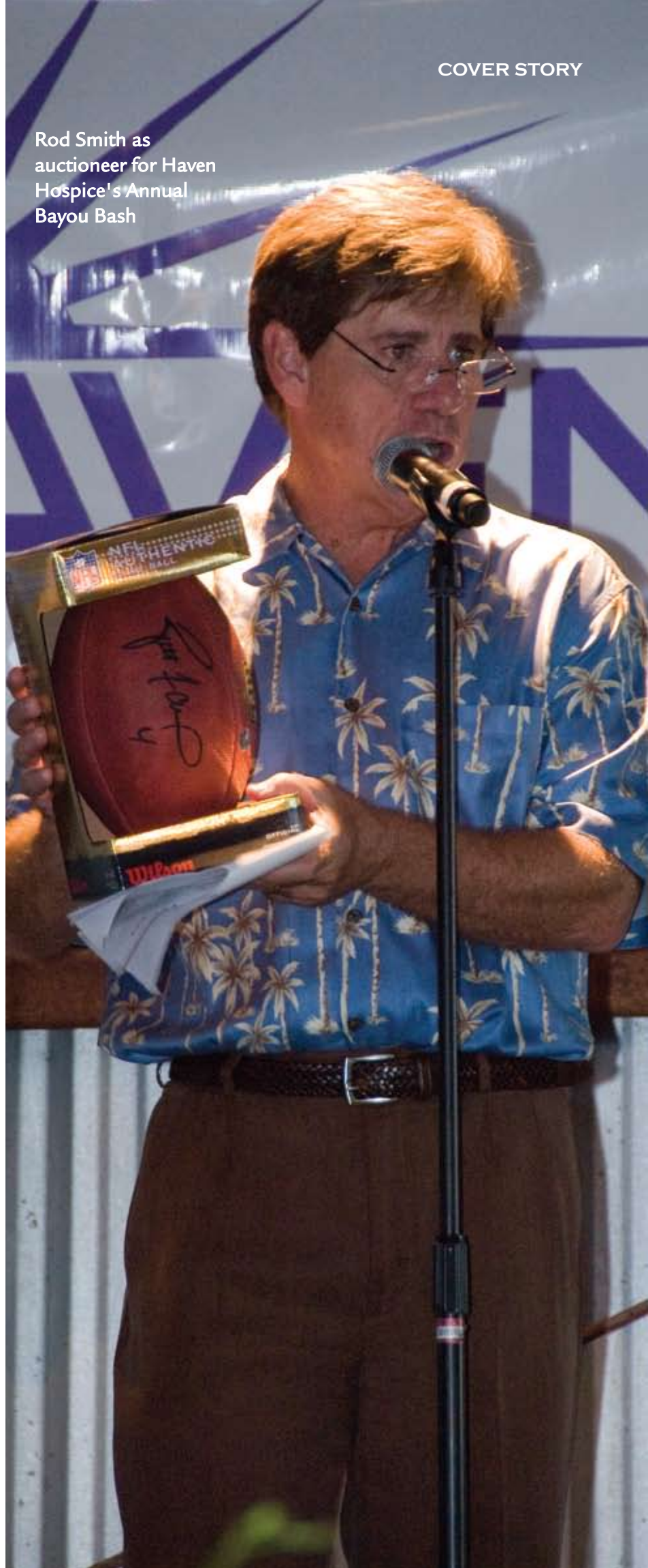
Alachua County Clerk of the Court Buddy Irby may know them as long and as well as anyone. He grew up with Dee Dee and met Rod when he first moved here.

"Really and truly they are just good people who care about other people," said Irby. "They are good salt-of-the-earth people. Rod has a million stories, and he loves to tell them. They truly complement each other."

With all this high-profile activity, they remain close to their roots and their land. They often unwind by sitting on their back porch just looking out at the family farm in Alachua.

"Many of our closest friends are still our friends from the earliest days in Alachua," said Rod. "Looking back, the things we are the most proud of are our kids and community activities. And nothing is better than the grandbabies." **H**

Rod Smith as
auctioneer for Haven
Hospice's Annual
Bayou Bash



Recipes for holiday parties

from chef and professional party planner *Billie Denunzio.*

By May Smith

Tenderloin cranberry and pear salad with honey mustard dressing

Total preparation and cooking time 25 minutes
Yield 4 servings

4
½ tsp
5 oz
1

¼ cup
To taste
¼ cup
¼ cup

Beef tenderloin steaks, 4 oz. each
Coarse ground black pepper
Mixed baby greens
Medium red or green pear, cored and cut into 16 wedges
Dried cranberries
Salt
Pecans, toasted and coarsely chopped
Goat cheese, crumbled

Honey mustard dressing

½ cup
2 tbsp
1 ½ tsp
1 tsp
¼ tsp
1/8 tsp

Honey mustard, prepared
Water
Extra virgin olive oil
White wine vinegar
Coarse ground black pepper
Salt

Whisk dressing ingredients together, set aside.
Cut beef steaks into ¾ inch thick slices and season with pepper.

Heat large skillet over medium heat until hot. Place steak strips in skillet. Cook 7 to 9 minutes.

Divide greens evenly among 4 plates, top with pear wedges and cranberries.

Cut steaks into thin strips, season with salt as desired

Divide steak slices evenly over salads.

Top each salad with chopped pecans and crumbled goat cheese.

Drizzle salads with dressing.

Recipe

Potato Bar

A favorite every time it is served, the potato bar allows guests to have fun with their food and mingle with strangers while adding a vegetarian option, which is always important to Denunzio. "It is versatile and easy while elegant and fun...wow...who thought those words went together?"

Potatoes can be served in several ways...

Potato Ball Bar - scooped with a mini scoop, sear potatoes in a hot oven
Mashed Potato Bar, Baked Potato Bar, Sweet Potato Bar

But always serve this offering in martini glasses. Unexpected and fanciful, guest will have great fun filling the glasses with potatoes and topping. And, they are easy to carry around and limit the amount of food any one guest can take.

Preparation:

Prepare cold toppings ahead. Keep refrigerated and covered until ready to serve.

Prepare hot toppings. Keep hot - above 160 degrees - until served.

Set up no more food than will be eaten in one hour, replenish as needed.

Toppings which have been at room temperature CANNOT be returned to the refrigerator and must be discarded.

Do not add fresh toppings to old toppings; remove the container and serve a new helping.

Denunzio has many favorite toppings that she varies when serving a potato bar at parties. Feel free to add your own to her list:

Alfredo Sauce	Roasted red peppers	Smoked salmon
Avocado slices or chunks	Bacon bits	Beef tips or Stroganoff
Beef, shredded or crumbled ground	Blue cheese	Broccoli florets, partially cooked
Pesto	Butters, seasoned	Cheese sauces
Shredded Cheese, Mozzarella or Monterey Jack	Butter or margarine, or whipped spreads flavored with herbs.	Chopped fresh herbs, such as cilantro or rosemary
Chili	Chipotle sauce	Chives
Mushrooms, sautéed	Guacamole	Nuts, candied
Seafood of any type, shrimp, crab or lobster, in a sauce or alone	Onions, caramelized; try some garlic and shallots too.	Peppers, all the colors you can find - this adds color to the presentation
Mixed grilled vegetables		

Beef Carpaccio

Denunzio is a particular fan of this dish because it is fast and easy, which frees her up to work on other holiday and party activities.

Yield: 4 servings

8 to 10 ounces the roast Beef tenderloin from the tip end of
 1/2 cup Extra virgin olive oil
 To taste Freshly ground black pepper
 To taste Kosher salt
 To taste Lemon juice
 2 cups Arugula or mixed greens
 To taste Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Lightly coat the tenderloin with olive oil.

Heat a skillet over medium heat. Add the tenderloin and sear for 2 minutes on each side. Remove from the heat and cool completely.

Wrap tightly in plastic wrap, place in the freezer and freeze for 1 to 2 hours.

Remove from the freezer, unwrap the tenderloin and thinly slice the beef into 1/8 to 1/4-inch thick pieces.

Place each slice between 2 sheets of plastic wrap. Using a meat mallet, pound out each piece until very thin. Repeat until all of the meat is sliced and pounded thin.

Divide the meat evenly on 4 chilled plates, overlapping slightly.

Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil.

Sprinkle with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Drizzle fresh lemon juice over meat.

Top with mixed greens

Finish with shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Variation:

For a variation on this dish, lay the beef flat on a plate or serving dish. Form a line of salad greens down the middle of the meat. Sprinkle with olive oil, salt, pepper and lemon juice. Top with a spear of asparagus that has been blanched and shaved. Sprinkle on shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese. Roll the beef up tightly and chill. Serve whole or sliced. **H**



Party Like A Party Planner: 10 tips

For entertaining

by May Smith

We all know how stressful the holidays can be. Between shopping, attending social events and planning your own parties, it can be easy to feel lost and overwhelmed. Fortunately, Chef Billie Denunzio, the head of Eastside High School's Institute of Culinary Arts and a professional event planner, has served up her top 10 tips for entertaining in her own home along with some of her favorite, crowd-pleasing recipes.

1. KIS — Keep It Simple. “If you’re trying to decorate and do a theme and make all these different things, you’ll get frazzled and not be able to enjoy your party or entertain your guests,” Denunzio said. “Too many of us try to be Martha Stewart. While she’s great at doing all these things, most of us are not.” She does suggest sticking to a theme, more for cohesion of the dishes than for decorating. “Even if you are the only one who knows the theme, it will help you make sure all the dishes work together.” For example, the theme could be beef or vegetables. She suggests making just a few dishes and taking the time to do them well.

2. Put different food in different places. Denunzio’s goal is to keep her guests moving, so she sets up stations with different food options. “If you put the food in one place, people will pretty much stay around there.” She doesn’t just randomly distribute food; everything is in its place for a reason. For example, she generally puts beverages on the deck so guests have to go outside. Hot food should be near the kitchen so it can be easily replenished.

3. Take shortcuts. Denunzio typically spends her time on one or two signature items. She finds no shame in buying other dishes pre-made and making slight changes so they are more interesting. “Gainesville is so wonderful with all the restaurants and stores where you can buy something and then make it your own. You want to enjoy your party, you shouldn’t spend all your time cooking,” she said.



4. Plan where everything goes ahead of time. Denunzio plans a complete layout for her parties, detailing everything from which dish should be closest to the kitchen to where the napkins and forks should be at each station. “A mistake people make is to leave those arrangements until they’re setting up for the party,” she said. “Then they try to make those decisions at the last minute and end up getting flustered.”

5. Make everything as far ahead of time as you can. Denunzio recommends pre-making and freezing or refrigerating everything you can. This includes beverages. For example, she prepares and freezes enough champagne punch for her party days ahead of time. “This way, if something runs out, you can easily just go to kitchen, pull it out of the freezer and you’re ready to go.”

6. Do everything you can to limit seating. When entertaining, Denunzio does not serve a sit-down meal. “If people sit in one place, they’ll stay there for the rest of the time and not mingle.” To avoid such a stagnant environment, she invites many guests and offers as few seats as possible.

7. Make lists. Denunzio doesn’t make traditional to-do lists. She writes down everything she makes and checks it off as she sets up her different stations. “I can’t tell you how many great salads I’ve left in the refrigerator because I forgot to put them out before the party.” She said. “Many lunches at my house were party dishes I forgot about.”

8. Give guests something to do. Whether it means asking for help with the grill or setting up an interactive potato bar (see recipes next page), Denunzio suggests making the food an activity for guests. “When people are involved with their food, it’s more fun,” she said. Stations where guests assemble their food, such as the potato bar, allow guests to compare their creations and give those who don’t know each other something to talk about.

9. Circulate constantly. “The guest is the point of any party,” Denunzio said. At her parties, she makes sure to visit with everyone. She helps guests get to know each other by pointing out what they have in common and introducing them with interesting details. She also suggests hors-d’oeuvres that she thinks they will enjoy.

10. Fifteen minutes before the party, STOP. It is crucial that you have a little time to relax before a party. Otherwise, you will not be in the proper mindset to greet guests and be a great host. After all, people come to a party to see friends and meet new people, not to eat food made by an absent host. “Anything not done, no one notices,” she said. “If it’s not perfectly decorated, just turn down the lights. People are there to see you.” **H**





LIFESTYLE

Fashion

By Erica Blake
photography by David Johnston

Glitz and Glamour:

Just in time for the festive season, tips for dramatic dressing.

'Tis the season for elegant gatherings, festive holiday parties and fabulous charity events. Whether you are out with friends, celebrating the holidays or supporting your favorite charity, be sure you are ready for the season with these tips.

Forget the little black dress.

Instead of pulling out your go-to little black dress for the next event try a festive new color.

Chelsee Atkins, owner of Allure Boutique in Royal Park Plaza, said "We're seeing a lot more color, especially bold jewel-tones, in this season's designs. Amethyst, ruby red, emerald and sapphire blue are really big this year."

Go feminine and play with girly shapes.

"The emphasis this season is really on accenting the waistline. The look is sexy and classy, with lines that show off the feminine figure," Atkins said.

Mixing a vibrant color with a flattering shape will bring your look together. However, if you are set on wearing a black dress, try pairing it with a textured skinny belt to add shape for a flawless look.

(left) Brite Whitaker, Five Points of Life Program Manager for LifeSouth Community Blood Centers, is wearing the Splash by Landa Designs – a full-length black, white and silver dress complimented by feminine ruffles and embroidered flowers. Her earrings are by Golden Stella.

(right) Jennifer Anchors, executive director for Children's Home Society of Mid-Florida, is wearing a flirty red dress by Suzi Chin. Her earrings are by Sassy South and her shoes are the Egypt style by Helen's Heart.





Sherry Kitchens, president and CEO of Child Advocacy Center of Alachua County, is wearing a classic satin cocktail dress by Suzi Chin. Her necklace and earrings are by Sassy South and her shoes are Johnathan Kayne's Austria.

Don't be afraid to try different lengths.

This time of year, both long and short dresses would be appropriate for formal charity functions.

"We're seeing a lot of great cocktail-length, satin dresses in bright jewel-tone colors this season from such lines as Suzi Chin and JAX," Atkins said. "Paired with some bold crystal or beaded accessories, these dresses would make for a classy, yet glamorous look at community events this season."

If you are looking for something a little more formal, especially for an evening event, try a floor-sweeping dress in a rich pattern or statement color. Look for a long dress that makes you appear taller and a pattern that doesn't break you up into sections. Fluidity is the key.

Fashion should be fabulous, not serious. Play up the glamour.

Have fun with your outfit, but remember the key is to be festive, not tacky. A great way to accomplish this would be to invest in the details.

"The key to dressing for this year's holiday parties is creating a look that's fun and feminine. We're seeing a lot of feminine elements being incorporated in the designs, like ruffles, rosettes, one-shoulder dresses and bubble hems, which are perfect for showing off those legs," Atkins said.

Don't think you have to stick to flowers and bows to play up this season's newest looks.

"Cocktail dresses for New Year's Eve parties should be fun and flirty. Dresses with beading or sequins are always a hit this time of year," Atkins said. "Flapper style dresses with fringe accents have also made several appearances on the red carpet."

Fringe is a huge trend right now, but don't go overboard. A good rule of thumb is to have one piece of your outfit incorporate the style, whether it is your shoes, dress or clutch.

Accessorize. Accessorize. Accessorize.

"Don't underestimate the importance of accessories when dressing for the holiday season. It's amazing what a difference the right accessories can make," Atkins said.

For parties and events this season, choose earrings or necklaces that make a statement. Beaded chandelier earrings or long necklaces can add the perfect finishing touch to your holiday attire. **H**

(right) Lindsay Krieg, community director for North Central Florida March of Dimes, is wearing a stunning silk gown by Tony Bowls Evenings. Her crystal earrings are by Sassy South.



Accessories

Bold is Beautiful:

This season's hottest accessories are bright, patterned and eye-catching

By Erica Blake

Accessories are taking center stage this season.

There is nothing understated about it. Big jewelry is in, and it is easy to add some glam with big cuff bracelets or a sparkly ring.

Turn up the heat in warm oranges, vibrant reds and glowing gold tones that are showing up in everything from hats to scarves to jewelry. Pair these colors with wild animal prints and faux fur for a look that is winter chic.

To go feminine without the frills, look for vests and boots inspired by menswear in rich chocolate browns and smoldering grey tones.

Even your accessories should be accessorized this winter; go for pieces that are infused with big buckles, intricate patterns and dimensional detailing.

Regardless of the occasion, make sure your accessories are taking the lead.



Functional meets beautiful with a print that is unusual enough to stand out in a crowd but has a neutral palate that allows it to blend in with nature.

BROWN LAMINATE AND CANVAS
MINI-STEM PRINT TOTE BAG
BY ORLA KIELY, AVAILABLE
AT DAHLIA BOUTIQUE

Inspired by menswear, this flattering vest is a refreshingly modern twist on a classic look.

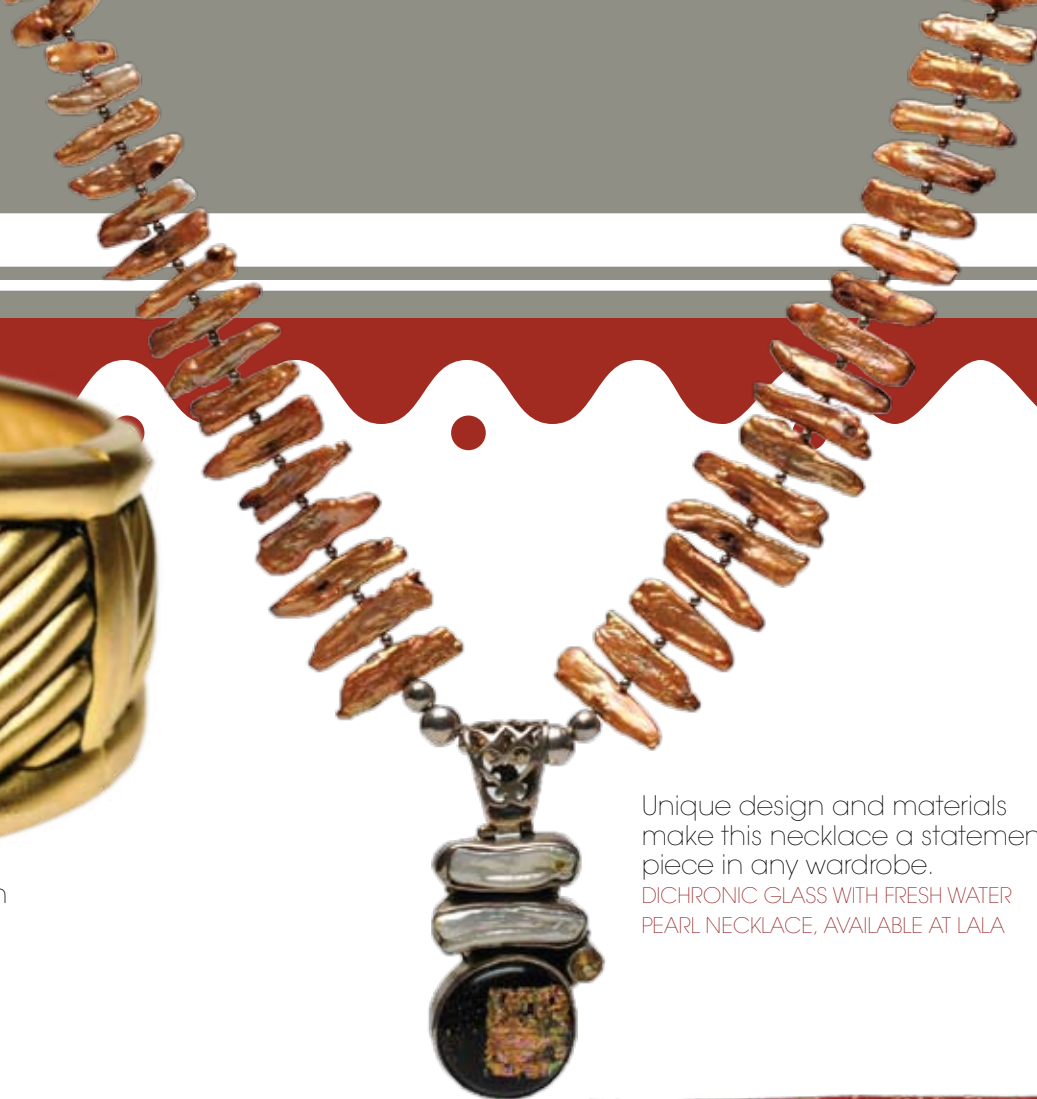
GREY WOOL VEST BY ELLA MOSS,
AVAILABLE AT ETC. BOUTIQUE





Chunky gold bangles are going to bring attention to your outfit in a huge way.

"NOUVEAU" ANTIQUE MATTE GOLD PLATED BANGLE, PREMIER DESIGNS JEWELRY 352-339-0978



Unique design and materials make this necklace a statement piece in any wardrobe.

DICHRONIC GLASS WITH FRESH WATER PEARL NECKLACE, AVAILABLE AT LALA

Embellished with the lyrics to the Beatles 'All you need is Love,' everyone will be singing your praises in this striking scarf.

RED AND GOLD LYRIC CULTURE CASHMERE AND SILK SCARF, AVAILABLE AT LALA

This faux snake skin clutch adds a punch of print and color without being overdone.

RED SNAKE SKIN CLUTCH BY HOBBO INTERNATIONAL, AVAILABLE AT ETC. BOUTIQUE



Accessories



A music inspired style. These felt hats are handmade in limited amounts for every season so you can stand out in a crowd.

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"PIGEON" CREASE TOP WOOL FELT
HAT WITH BOW, AVAILABLE AT LALA



With bold double buckles and a dramatic high heel, this stunning fashion boot is sure to get you noticed.

"HEIDI BUCKLE" DARK BROWN LEATHER
BOOT ADORNED WITH ANTIQUE BRASS
BUCKLES AND STUDS BY THE FRYE COMPANY,
AVAILABLE AT LALA



A big colored stone in a thick setting will send a strong vibe the season.

"ELITE" GOLD AND ANTIQUED SILVER PLATED RING,
PREMIER DESIGNS JEWELRY 352-339-0978



Dripping chandelier earrings add a glamorous romantic element.

"CABARET" CHANDLER EARRINGS
IN ANTIQUE MATTE GOLD PLATED,
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A BALANCING Act

By Holly Christensen
photo by Aaron Bailey

Rhonda Faehn, UF gymnastics head coach, and her husband, Jeremy Bayon, UF men's tennis assistant coach, pose in the gymnastics practice gym with their son Noah, born at the beginning of last season.



As Rhonda Faehn watches her husband and son gently bounce together on one of the trampolines in the UF Gymnastics practice gym, a sweet, contented smile breaks over her face.

"Motherhood is just the greatest thing," said Faehn. "It's the most peaceful feeling. Everything is about him. It's freeing; I'm not as concerned about myself."

Since giving birth to Noah at the beginning of last season, Faehn has grown accustomed to the challenges faced by most working mothers – balancing work and parenting and giving her best to both.

"I'm still learning how to balance everything, and I still find that I take work home," said Faehn. "I'll be thinking about recruiting, how practice went or thinking about routines. At the same time, I'm trying to capture every little moment with Noah. But, I'm very passionate about being the head coach. That hasn't changed with motherhood."

What has changed, or perhaps grown, is her sense of guiding her team both as a coach and as a mother figure.

"When it comes to coaching the entire team, I consider my relationship with the student athletes as their mother away from home," said Faehn. "I help them achieve success in the gym and in the classroom."

"I think what's changed is that I see these athletes a little differently now. I look at them as daughters and see more clearly what their families have contributed toward their being here. I see the total package," Faehn added.

That new perspective and motherly guidance may be especially important in the new season, which begins Jan. 9 at home against Oklahoma.

After coaching her team to an 8-2 regular season record and a fourth place finish in the NCAA Championships in Athens, GA last year, Faehn leads a young team into the 2009 season.

"This year's team is different," said Faehn. "It's a young team with a lot of new faces. I'm excited to see these new athletes and new routines, to see how they adjust to collegiate competition, and to see how they're welcomed to The Gator Nation."

The 2009 Gator gymnasts are: Amanda Castillo, Nicole Ellis, Amy Ferguson, Courtney Gladys, Alicia Goodwin, Corey Hartung, Ashley Kerr, Elizabeth Mahlich, Melanie Sinclair, Maranda Smith, Kailey Tissue and Rebekah Zaiser.

The team returns only one senior, Hartung, and six juniors. Four freshmen and one sophomore round out the squad.

"The juniors and senior account for 10 of our routines," said Faehn. "But we need 24, so you can see how dependent we are on our new members."

"I feel that the talent is wonderful and can make up for the routines that were lost," Faehn added. "We know that every year we have the talent to challenge for the SEC and NCAA title. One hundred things have to go perfectly, but this team is ready for the challenge. I'm excited, and the team's excited. We'll see if they have the same intensity as we had last year."

One thing is already certain; the gymnasts have come together as a team.

"The team has coalesced – they are very close and very focused," said Faehn. "They came up with their own team motto: Stronger By The Dozen – A Team Beats With One Heart."

And, hanging in the practice gym to inspire and motivate them, is a banner with that motto, signed in brightly colored paint with 12 handprints.

For more information on UF Gymnastics or to see the schedule for the 2009 season, visit www.gatorzone.com. **H**

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All the Comforts of Home:

Area Agencies Help Aging Adults Live at Home Longer

By Victoria Phillips



he scenarios are all too common: children or family members grow increasingly concerned about an elderly adult living alone and struggling with everyday household tasks. Or, after an illness or surgery, an older adult lacks the strength or ability to fully care for themselves. Or, out-of-town or busy children worry about the isolation and loneliness of a widowed parent.

A move to an assisted living or nursing home often resolves the situation. But, according to EPM Communications, a marketing research firm, 95 percent of seniors age 75 and older prefer to stay in the privacy of their own homes.

And, with the high cost of hospital stays and assisted living, families are often seeking more moderately priced alternatives and customized care to meet specific needs. Two local agencies, Interim HealthCare and

Comfort Keepers, offer a wide variety of services to help seniors stay in their own homes for as long as they can.

"Our agency offers an alternative to facility placement," said Sherry Mitchell, RN, DHCS, director of healthcare for Interim HealthCare. "We can staff caregivers in the home from two- to 24-hours, depending on their needs."

With more than 40 years of homecare experience nationwide, Interim HealthCare offers a wide range of services to help keep elders independent and safe in their homes.

"Our caregivers will pretty much do anything an individual would do in their home if they were at full functional capacity," said Mitchell. "We pride ourselves on quality caregivers."

Compassion, an innovative approach and a specialized customer focus are at the heart of Interim HealthCare, according to Mitchell. The company pairs caregivers to clients with personality matches that facilitate the bonding process between patient and caregiver.

Interim HealthCare also offers skilled nursing care and various therapies. Nursing services include: at-home medication infusions; wound care and dressing; IV management; sample collection and blood draws for lab tests; and health status assessments. A nurse is on call 24-hours-a-day to help with any concerns or problems that may arise.

Interim also offers support services for daily tasks, such as bathing and household management.

"From helping with the laundry and vacuuming to personal shopping and travel plan assistance, Interim caregivers can be the extra hand or ear that some families need," said Mitchell. "Our main focus is to support and reinforce. And we do it all with a personal touch."

"Our caregivers are trained to encourage the mind to continue to grow and think so that our clients can really use those brain cells and not have them wither away," said Mitchell. "It makes the difference when our caregivers look at the whole picture and are truly interested in our client's experiences."

Comfort Keepers is another local agency that supports families with non-medical elder care services. In business for more than four years, and owned by the mother-daughter team of Lynn Domenech and Jocelyn Holt, Comfort Keepers has been garnering customer services awards since its second year in business.

"My daughter is an occupational therapist - that is how we got into the business," said Domenech. Working with stroke and cardiac patients, Holt found that when it came time to send her patients home, they no longer had the facilities necessary to keep up their health. Many could not stay safe and independent in their own homes and were being sent to nursing homes instead.

"Jocelyn felt that she was supposed to be getting them back to independence and that simply wasn't happening," said Domenech. "That is why we started this company."

In addition to providing support to patients following major medical issues, Comfort Keepers provides respite and support care for caregivers.

"A lot of people get so caught in the sandwich generation - raising teenagers and taking care of moms or grandmothers that they have little time for themselves. Providing a little bit of help often makes a huge difference in someone's life," said Domenech.

"Our mission is to treat them like they are family, like they are our favorite family member," said Domenech. "If we wouldn't put a caregiver in our mothers' homes, then we wouldn't put them in yours."

Keeping seniors active and involved in life and in the community are primary goals of Comfort Keepers' staffers.

"We call it 'Interactive Caregiving' and believe it is the heart of Comfort Keepers," said Domenech. "It's an integral part of how we provide in-home care so seniors can live happy, independent lives. We continually converse with, involve and engage seniors in everyday tasks and activities. We strive to transform routine activities into opportunities to stir memories and provide cognitive exercise. It serves to keep a senior mentally strong, increasing independence and improving their outlook and quality of life."



Lynn Domenech
and Jocelyn Holt

And, according to Domenech, this approach is beneficial for seniors with a wide range of abilities.

"Even those who are struggling with diseases such as Alzheimer's or dementia can feel safe at home with a Comfort Keeper enhancing independence and safety and assisting with daily activities."

For more information on Interim HealthCare's in-home medical care and other services, visit their Web site at <http://www.interimhealthcare.com/gainesville/>. Find out more about Comfort Keepers and their companionship and respite services, contact Lynn Domenech or Jocelyn Holt at (352) 331-7760 or visit the Comfort Keepers Web site at <http://www.comfortkeepers.com/caregivers/546/>. **H**



photo courtesy of Comfort Keepers

FAVORITE THINGS

from the Heart of Florida

By Erica Blake

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➤ *Salon 119*

12921 SW 1st Rd
Newberry, FL 32669
(352) 505-3819

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In support of our local wildlife, we love gold finch feeders for this time of year. This feeder is a great product for the late winter early spring, because the gold finch's activity levels peak at this time.

Home gifts: Indoor and outdoor unique touches.**Kitchen & Spice and Other Things Nice**

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RUNS, REELS, RED CARPET

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When the 2002 Winter Olympics arrived in Salt Lake City, most people around the world had little idea what you could find in Utah, let alone that in this undiscovered world they might find some of the our nations top ski resorts. What travelers discovered was what Hollywood Actors and Independant filmmakers already knew...vacation in Utah where the ski resorts roll out the red carpet for everyone, regardless of status.

Whether you are a ski/snowboard aficionado, or just a novice, one thing is for certain, you want great snow conditions. That's just one reason so many choose Utah as their winter vacation destination. The key is climate and chemistry. Utah is located in a desert climate, which means very little humidity, something we don't experience in Florida. Nestled at the base of the Wasatch mountains are two very large lakes, which aid in the snowfall. The cool/dry storm system clashes with the lake water and creates what is know as "lake effect snowfall." The result is a nice dry flaky snow which creates skiing and snowboarding conditions like know where else.

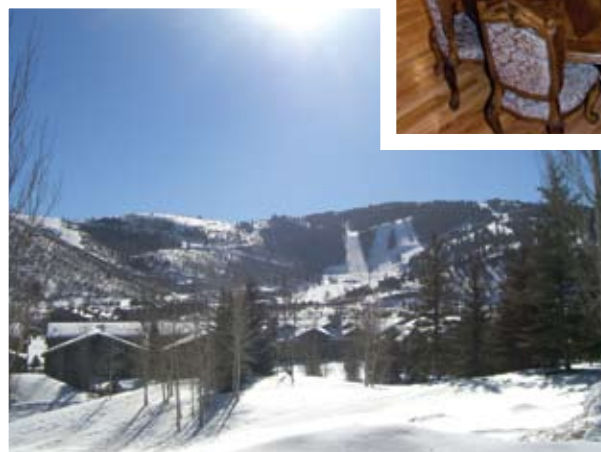
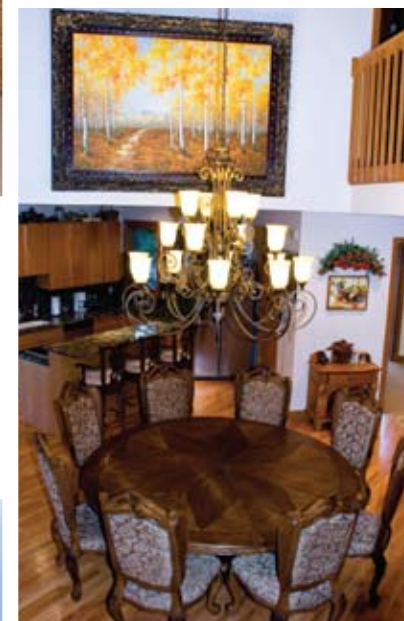
Reason number two people love to ski in Utah is convenience. The SLC International airport is situated right in heart of ski country. Once you are off the plane, there are several resorts that are only a 30 minute drive away, and nearly to a dozen that you can be at in as little as an hour.

The third reason is Red Carpet Treatment. Two weeks of the year during the Sundance Film Festival, when all of Hollywood converges on Deer Valley and Park City, you will actually see red carpet. But, all year round the resorts are notorious for pampering guests and catering to their every need. Deer Valley Resort, which has been voted multiple times as the number one ski resort in North America, seems to do this best. The resort is littered with fine dining, fabulous accommodations, and pampering that even the stars in Hollywood rave about.

The two weeks during the film festival are jam packed with paparazzi, star gazers and celebrities. But, the atmosphere is actually very engaging...if you don't mind crowds. So, if getting caught in a traffic jam, caused by Paris Hilton crossing the street, doesn't sound enjoyable, then choose to visit any other week there is snow. Good snow conditions often extend as late in the year as May or even June, but the best skiing is generally late November through March.

To help you in your adventure we have compiled some information on the area and its activities.





LODGING

There are hundreds of options for lodging in the area, and each has its own price tag. You can go the conservative route and stay at the local Marriott, in downtown Park City. If you are feeling the need to host a Hollywood style party there are 14,000 square foot homes at the top of Deer Valley, complete with six car garage and Olympic-sized hot tubs in the living room. But, they can rent for upwards of \$10,000.00 a day.

A great place to stay is the The Pinnacles, at Deer Valley. This 3700 square foot dwelling provides the best of both worlds. Sleeping up to 12 people comfortably, complete with three master suites, kids bedroom with four bunk beds, pinball machines, pool table room, kitchen/dining room, hot tub, bar-b-que, a breathtaking view, and a reasonable price tag. It's a great location if you want to take children and grandchildren, or even just several of your friends. Go to www.SnowSkiUtah.com for more information on booking, or call the owner direct at (801)309-1055.

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

Info: (435) 658-3456

In 1981, Robert Redford gathered a group of his friends and colleagues in the mountains of Utah to create an environment designed to foster independence, discovery, and new voices in American film. That spring, 10 emerging filmmakers were invited to the first Sundance Institute Filmmakers/Directors Lab where they worked with leading writers and directors to develop their original independent film projects. In the remote natural setting and removed from the pressures of the marketplace, each emerging artist was encouraged to take creative risks and to craft a film true to their own, unique vision. In 1984, the Institute's activities expanded to include development programs for theatre when the Utah Playwrights Conference became the Sundance Playwrights Lab.

Sundance Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to the discovery and development of independent artists and audiences. Through its

programs, the Institute seeks to discover, support, and inspire independent film and theatre artists from the United States and around the world, and to introduce audiences to their new work.

Each year the Sundance Film Festival selects 200 films for exhibition from more than 9,000 submissions. More than 50,000 people attend screenings in twelve theatres in Park City, Salt Lake City, Ogden, and Sundance, Utah. In addition to discovering filmmaking's newest talent through the festival's program of documentary, dramatic, and short film, festivalgoers experience live music shows, panel discussions with leading filmmakers and industry figures, parties celebrating the festival community, and more.

RESTAURANTS

Park City has the largest selection of superb restaurants in the area. One of the most popular in town is Main St. Pizza and Noddle. Their food is excellent, and worth the wait, but its definitely not fine dining. The following is a small list of some of the popular restaurants.

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Grub Steak Restaurant
www.grubsteakrestaurant.com
(435) 649-8060
Windy Ridge Cafe
www.windyridgefoods.com
(435) 647-0880

Chimayo Restaurant
www.chimayorestaurant.com
(435) 649-6222

Cisero's
www.ciseros.com
(435) 649-5044

Mariposa Restaurant
www.deervalley.com
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The Deer Valley-operated Summit Meadows Adventures tours take place on the Garff Ranch (located on Brown's Canyon Road off Highway 248, a five-mile, ten-minute drive from Park City's Main Street). Summit Meadows Adventures has access to more than 7,000 acres of pristine open lands on which to snowmobile. Tours are completely guided and non-intimidating even for beginners.

Transportation to and from Garff Ranch is provided and Summit Meadows Adventures accepts groups as large as 90 guests. One-hour guided tours cost \$99 per person, with a passenger rate of \$20. Two-hour guided tours cost \$124 per person, with a passenger rate of \$25. One- and two-hour tours leave daily at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m., and 5 p.m. Three-hour guided tours that include lunch cost \$149 per person, with a passenger rate of \$35.

Lunch tours depart at 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Children 8 years of age and under ride free with a paying adult. A maximum of two people are allowed on each snowmobile. Lunch cost for a child passenger is \$10. Snowsuits, boots and gloves are available for rent from Summit Meadows Adventures, and protective eyewear or goggles are recommended. Helmets are mandatory and are included in the rental price. Summit Meadows Adventures will operate daily during Deer Valley Resort's upcoming ski season, December 6, 2008, through April 12, 2009, weather and conditions permitting. Reservations are required and may be made by calling 435-649-SNOW (7669) or 800-424-DEER (3337). **H**

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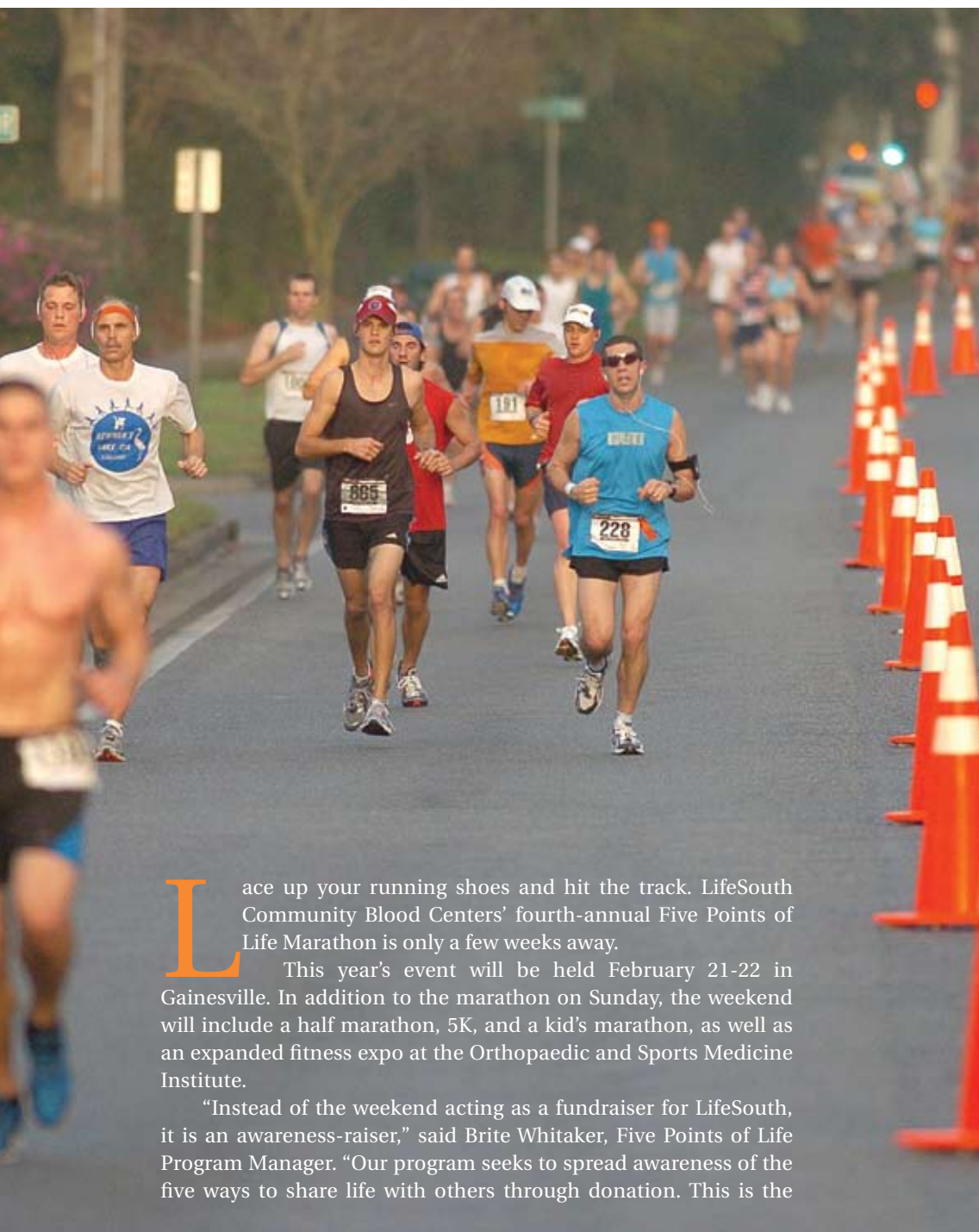
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Popular Marathon Promotes Healthy Lifestyles Community Wide

By Holly Christensen



Lace up your running shoes and hit the track. LifeSouth Community Blood Centers' fourth-annual Five Points of Life Marathon is only a few weeks away.

This year's event will be held February 21-22 in Gainesville. In addition to the marathon on Sunday, the weekend will include a half marathon, 5K, and a kid's marathon, as well as an expanded fitness expo at the Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Institute.

"Instead of the weekend acting as a fundraiser for LifeSouth, it is an awareness-raiser," said Brite Whitaker, Five Points of Life Program Manager. "Our program seeks to spread awareness of the five ways to share life with others through donation. This is the

only awareness program that marries all five ways – blood donation, cord blood, marrow donation, apheresis and organ/tissue donation.

"It's important to focus on all five," Whitaker added, "because they are interrelated. You can't have an organ transplant without blood on the shelf."

The Five Points of Life Program is the brainchild of longtime donor and LifeSouth Board Member, Perry McGriff.

In 1996, on a cross-country bicycle ride, McGriff met a policeman from California who had been terribly wounded while on duty and had only survived with the help of 100 pints of donated blood. The man, Larry Frederick, was on a mission to raise awareness about blood donation. During their time together, McGriff came up with the idea for a bicycle ride where donors and recipients would traverse the country telling their stories at every stop. The first Five Points of Life ride was held in 1997; one followed in 1998, and they have occurred every two years since then.

LifeSouth decided to expand the program with a marathon in 2004. According to Whitaker, a Starbucks employee suggested a marathon to LifeSouth Executive Director Nancy Eckert and some of her running mates after a morning run.

Gainesville had been without a marathon since the early 1980s, and the team at LifeSouth decided that it was an idea worth exploring.

"The marathon is a great way to promote Five Points of Life nationally and to promote LifeSouth locally," said Whitaker. "And, it gives this area a great, world class running event."

The first marathon wound its way through the streets of Gainesville in 2006. The number of participants has grown every year – last year the marathon, half marathon and 5K saw 1,200 runners, and the kid's marathon had more than 500 participants.

The kid's marathon is more than just a kiddie run. Children from kindergarten through eighth grade can register and spend the months leading up to the race running 25 miles. Then on race day, they present their parent/guardian-signed log sheet and run the remaining 1.2 miles to complete their marathon.

"What's great about the kid's marathon is that it promotes the health benefits of being active," said Whitaker. "It's the time of life to set up positive behavior patterns for the rest of their lives so that they can be healthy citizens. It's also a chance to talk about donation, and hopefully they'll grow up to be donors."

Whitaker said that as the Five Points of Life Marathon grows, there are plans to expand the kid's area and develop a school curriculum that can be promoted nationally.

"We want to encourage healthy lifestyles, especially in light of childhood obesity issues," added Whitaker.

The Five Points program already coordinates with area schools to encourage children to register and participate in the kid's marathon.

"It's amazing how the schools have latched on to this idea," said Whitaker. "There was obviously a need."

One Alachua County school that has embraced the program is Talbot Elementary in northwest Gainesville.



Margarita Schwiebert, the physical education teacher at the school, thought the Five Points kid's marathon offered a great opportunity to expand the wellness program already in place at Talbot.

"We saw the kid's marathon as a way we could encourage not just our kids, but their families to make healthy living a priority," said Schwiebert.

Schwiebert and concerned parents had started a Morning Mile program in 2005 as part of an overall wellness initiative. Students could arrive at school early and walk or run around a quarter-mile track laid out on the playground. Parent volunteers helped the children keep track of the miles they covered, and for every five miles, they were awarded a "foot" – a plastic foot charm to wear on a necklace.

These feet soon became coveted items at the school, and the numbers of Morning Mile attendees swelled. Schwiebert also encouraged students by posting classroom totals in the school's cafeteria. For some kids, a little competition was all the motivation they needed.

"My daughter, Carly, wants to go every day," said Missy Rubin, Talbot parent and mother to a fifth and second grader. "She says she wants to do her part to help the class get more mileage."

For the last two years, Talbot has won the award for having the most kid's marathon participants of any school. Miles run at Morning Mile count toward the 25 that children need to participate.

The hope in getting area children so involved, said Whitaker, is that there will be a trickle down effect for their families and their friends.

And that is the case with the Rubins – they have made Morning Mile at Talbot a family affair.

"It's a fun, healthy thing that we can do together as a family," said Rubin. "We are, of course, concerned about our family's wellbeing, and as parents we know that if we are going to talk the talk, we literally have to walk the walk."

And that's exactly the point, according to Whitaker.

"The Five Points of life program is creating a healthier community, which in turn, gives us healthier donors."

For information on the Five Points of Life program, the marathon, half marathon, 5K, Kid's Marathon and fitness expo, or to volunteer or become a sponsor, please contact Brite Whitaker at 352-224-1728. Register online for all races at www.fivepointsoflife.org.

*The fitness expo is free and open to the public on Saturday, February 21 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the UF & Shands Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine Institute. **H***




Participants in last year's event let everyone know their motivation.

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By Molly Bruce

Will Have You Coming Back for More

People of all ages and fitness levels can achieve a more toned body simply by taking off their shoes, concentrating on breathing and moving their bodies around. The process is called Pilates, and if it is done at EnCore Pilates, located at 4140 NW 37th Place, it yields fantastic results.

EnCore's motto is "Creating healthier lifestyles for a lifetime," said owner and instructor Shannon Nicolette. Pilates, which was developed in the 1920's by ex-boxer Joseph Pilates, creates a stronger and more toned body through fluid motions.

As for the name EnCore, Nicolette chose it for several reasons.

"Because it had the word core in it, and that was really important in what you do in Pilates," she said. Also, an encore calls for a repeat, and Nicolette wants her clients to continue doing Pilates throughout their lives. This is easy to do, because with more than 1,000 different exercises, Pilates will never become a bore.

"It's never the same workout twice," Nicolette said.

Pilates, though, should not be confused with yoga. While often grouped into the same category, Pilates and yoga differ from each other.

"Pilates doesn't involve poses; they're more fluid motions," Nicolette said. She described Pilates as a different way of contracting muscles, not contorting bodies into shapes. The muscles then strengthen from the inside out, improving posture and body awareness.

Nicolette's clients experience a wide range of physical fitness improvement.

"Some of my women say 'Well I haven't really lost weight, but my clothes fit differently,'" she said. This is because weight and muscles are shifting inside the body.

"You're really toning up through the middle, flattening the abs," Nicolette added. Posture and body awareness also greatly improve for many Pilates practitioners.

Not all of Nicolette's clients are women though. In fact, many of them do not fit into one distinct category. Men, women, children and teens have all tried her Pilates classes and experienced results. Age varies widely too.

While most EnCore clients are between the ages of 40 and 60, Nicolette said, "My youngest client was 11, and my oldest have been over 80."

People come in to try Pilates for a variety of reasons as well. Back and neck pain are often relieved with Pilates, and Nicolette said many parents have brought their kids in before playing sports to avoid injury.

These people flock to Pilates for many reasons, but they choose EnCore for its reputation and certifications. Nicolette has a background in physical therapy and athletic training, and she is the only GOLD certified Pilates teacher in Gainesville, meaning she can teach first time Pilates users all the way up to the most advanced level. Her clients enjoy her teaching, and she learns from them as well.

"My clients are really good motivation for me," Nicolette said. "I'm trying to keep getting better and always bringing in new ideas."

The best part of EnCore Pilates, besides the results, is the atmosphere.

"Some people like the camaraderie," Nicolette said. Because many EnCore clients come back to the same classes together, they get to know each other. The tranquil music playing in the background and the pleasant scents in the air add to the generally enjoyable atmosphere.



Owner Shannon Nicolette leads a class in exercises. EnCore Pilates' fully equipped studio can help anyone from beginners to the most advanced.

As Nicolette points out, "The most important thing about fitness is that you have to enjoy it." Some cringe at the thought of noisy, smelly, crowded gyms, and EnCore Pilates offers a pleasant, healthy alternative.

Office manager and Pilates devotee, Cathy Leonard, said, "This is a very positive place to work." People turn to Pilates often to heal, she said. In her case, Pilates helped heal a shoulder injury. Her physical therapist recommended Pilates to heal her shoulder correctly and make it stronger.

"I was not only healing the injury, but keeping it healed," Leonard said.

Pilates offers their clients different solutions for different problems, but it uses the same basic principles for everyone.

As Leonard describes, "It is the overall ability, head to toe, to work and align and have everything come together as it was meant to be."

EnCore Pilates improves its clients' body and mind, with the instruction of Nicolette and her other trainer, Cindy Tanner. But Pilates becomes much more than that for many of its practitioners. Pilates affects everyday life by improving the way the body works together as a whole.

"It truly becomes a lifestyle," Leonard said.

Chrissy Bruggeman began training at EnCore and became pregnant a few short months later. Because she was already practiced in Pilates, her doctor told her it was not only safe to continue but beneficial as well.



Shannon Nicolette has fun with some of her clients.

"Anytime you increase your blood flow it's good for the baby," Bruggeman said.

Bruggeman benefited from Pilates before her pregnancy too. She used to have terrible lower back pain.

"Since I've been doing Pilates that's almost completely gone away," Bruggeman said.

Many EnCore clients come to Pilates through recommendation from a physical therapist. Nicolette said Pilates helps with back and neck pain tremendously. Many clients in her 40- to 60-year-old age group come to EnCore for pain reduction, and they end up staying for the other physical benefits.

Right now, EnCore has a special for new clients who want to see what all the Pilates fuss is about. For \$155, first-time clients can receive an initial screening and two private sessions, which is \$50 lower than the usual price.

Nicolette said the initial screening is necessary because it examines each individual's past medical history and helps the staff come up with a personal plan for each client.

"Every Pilates move is not appropriate for every person's body," Nicolette said.

No matter one's fitness level, age or experience, EnCore Pilates offers something for everybody. Pilates benefits mind, body and spirit, and EnCore offers the very best.

For more information on EnCore Pilates, call (352) 377-3305 or visit them on the web at www.encore-pilates.com **H**

SPICE UP YOUR FITNESS RESOLUTIONS WITH THESE UNUSUAL WORKOUTS

By Jennifer Macourek

So once again you've made a New Year's resolution to exercise more, but you're having trouble finding the motivation to hit the gym. It's hard to get excited about static weight training equipment or running the same three feet on a treadmill over and over.

This year, redefine your fitness resolution so that you'll not only exercise more but have fun while you're at it. We've looked around and found a few unusual workouts that will have you smiling while you're sweating.

CRAZY FOR ZUMBA

Zumba is a high energy, invigorating workout class that fuses Latin inspired beats with easy-to-follow dance moves. Offered at all three Gainesville Health and Fitness Center locations, the class has grown in popularity steadily since its debut at the gym in 2003.

The hour-long class is offered several times a week and is taught by a variety of instructors.

"Each instructor brings their own style," said Melissa Lynne, GHFC Zumba instructor. "I use a mixture of popular and Latin music, some use purely Latin music and others prefer just Hip-Hop."

"Zumba is a form of interval training," Lynne added. "The moves vary in pace, which is great for burning calories. The class offers a total body workout in a unique way."

Mary Schmidt, 23 and a Zumba fan, agrees.

"It's lots of fun... like a dance-party. I hate doing cardio, so this is a great alternative."

Schmidt keeps up in this very active class, despite being 18 weeks pregnant with her third child.

"I would recommend it to anyone," she said. "It's easy to do and you'll have a great time."

Cristiane Machado, 39, loved the class so much she decided to become a certified instructor. When she's not instructing, she participates for a good workout.

"I exercise regularly, and I've run marathons, yet I've never gotten the same kind of intense workout that I have with Zumba," she said. "You don't have to know how to dance, just go in and have fun."

Classes generally fill-up quickly, so instructors encourage students to get there 15 minutes ahead of time and be sure to bring a care-free attitude.

"I don't care what you look like, and neither does anyone else in the room," says Lynne. "We're all here to have fun."

To learn more about Zumba, when the class is offered or Gainesville Health and Fitness Center, call (352) 377-4955 or visit www.ghfc.com.

Rock climbing is a popular sport and one that is easily shared with friends.

RESOLVE TO ROCK CLIMB

If you're more of a thrill seeker, perhaps tackling a 26-foot high wall with your bare hands is more your speed.

Rock climbing offers a total body workout, specifically targeting upper arms, back and thighs, according to Robert Easton, owner and manager of the Gainesville Rock Gym in Gainesville.

The Gainesville Rock Gym offers a complete rock climbing package, including a crash course in belaying, climber safety and all the required gear for less than \$20.

If you're afraid of heights it's not a problem, added Easton. Gainesville Rock Gym also offers Boulderling, a series of tunnel-like caves to climb around in, without the necessity of a safety rope. Each cave, as well as the foot of each rock climbing wall, is well padded.

"It's exercising without even realizing that you're working out. That's the best kind of workout," said Easton.

"Bring a partner along to climb," adds Easton. "It's definitely an experience to share with a friend."

In fact, Gainesville Rock Gym can help you find a climbing buddy through their GRG Partners program. Visit their Web site, www.gainesvillerock.com, to learn more.

For more information on rock climbing as exercise, visit the gym at 704 South Main Street, contact Gainesville Rock Gym at (352)335-4789.

DANCE YOUR BELLY AWAY

Maybe you're feeling a little more exotic. Sway and sashay your way to a fitter body with a belly dancing class.

Belly dancing in the United States is inspired by dance styles from places such as Egypt, Morocco, Russia and Spain.

"People often believe that emphasis is placed solely on the isolation of the hips and pelvis, but there is more to this sensual style of dance," said Marjorie Malerk, owner of Ethnic Dance Expressions Studio in Gainesville.

"Belly dancing works your core muscles, but it works your arms and legs too," she said. "It's low-impact aerobics, meaning you're not jumping up and down, but you are moving and getting a workout."

Malerk opened Ethnic Dance Expressions in June 1999. She offers a variety of classes. For those new to belly dancing, she recommends the hour-long technique class, a course that goes over the basic movements needed to belly dance.

Other classes include mother and daughter belly dance, a costume sewing workshop, fitness dance aerobics and belly dancing for overweight and mature women.

Packages start at about \$50 for six classes, with most classes running about an hour-and-a-half.

"With belly dancing you can expect a sense of accomplishment," said Malerk. "You can enjoy your femininity and boost self-confidence."

To learn more about belly dancing, contact Ethnic Dance Expressions at (352) 384-9200 or visit their Web site at www.ethnicdanceexpressions.com. **H**

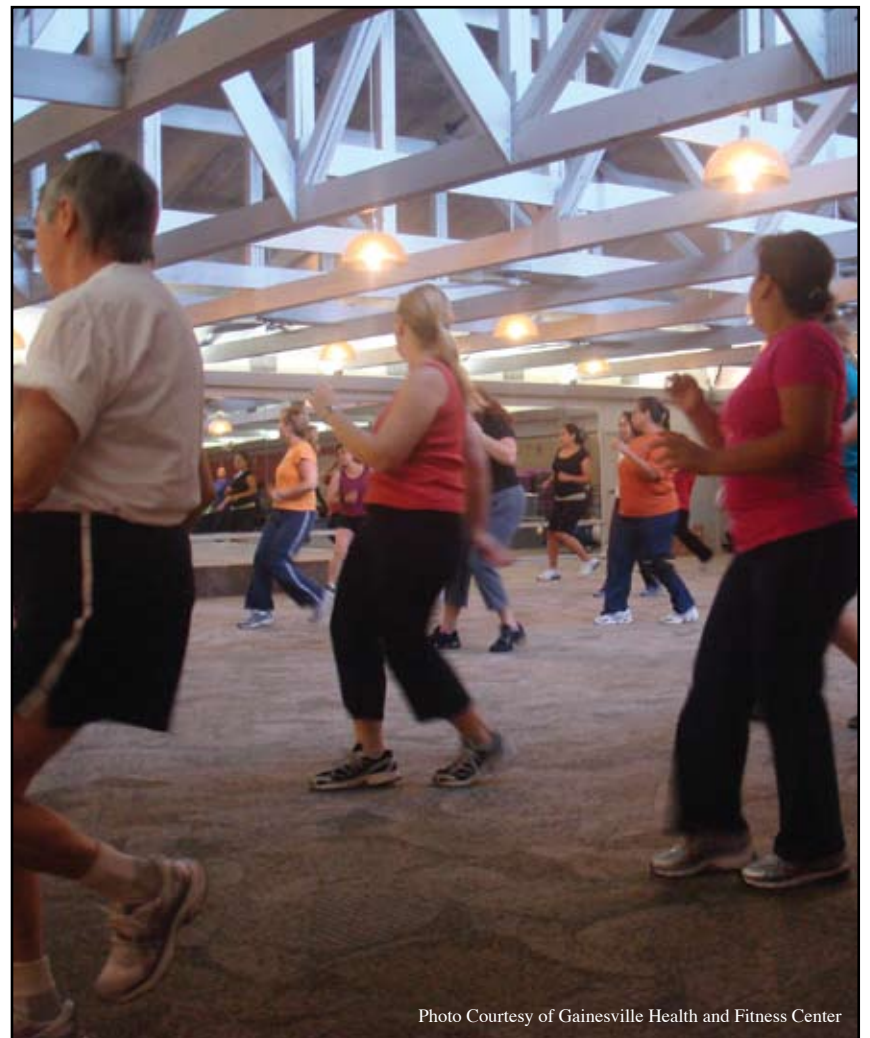
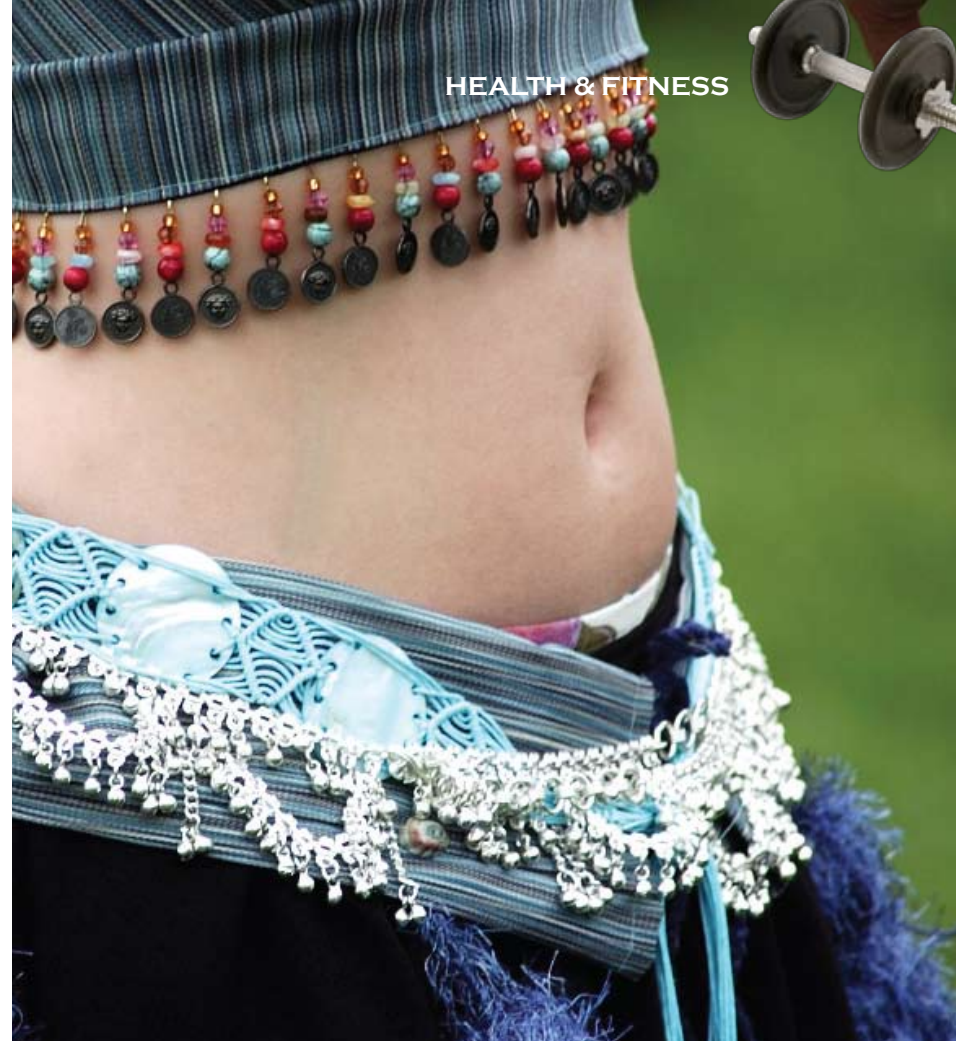


Photo Courtesy of Gainesville Health and Fitness Center

Winter Waterland

by Attiyya Anthony

December and January in North Central Florida may not be a winter wonderland with pure white snow and glistening icicles. But, our area is a veritable winter waterland. With temperate winter weather and an abundance of lakes, rivers and springs, the Heart of Florida is a winter water paradise.

"In Florida, there really is no off-season," said Gary Simpson, sales manager at Tackle Box Fishing. "In fact, some of the very best fishing is in the coldest months. There are several reasons for this, but the biggest one is that it really concentrates the fish."

According to Simpson, in the winter months, it is not uncommon to see fish scrounging for

shrimp, crabs and oysters along the clear banks of shallow rivers. Our area is home to an abundance of fish, from exotic fish such as pacu to tilapia, sunfish, bluegill, catfish and crappie.

"Bass is the number one sought after species," Simpson added. "And Lake George, a tributary of the St. Johns River, has excellent bass fishing. The St. Johns is home to some of the world's best largemouth bass."

Newnan's Lake in Hawthorne, the Sante Fe River in Waldo and the 12,550-acre Orange Lake also provide great bass, black crappie and bluegill fishing.

At Amelia Island State Park, you can combine great fishing with picturesque scenery on the



The Fish Bowl, above, and a view from under water

island's beautiful shores and the George Crady Bridge Fishing Pier. Located north of Jacksonville, the island is strategically situated where the Nassau Sound meets the Atlantic Ocean.

Visitors can indulge in fantastic fishing on the mile-long Crady Bridge Fishing Pier which spans into the Nassau Sound, providing access to one of the best fishing areas in Florida according to park service specialist Eric Steffey. The waters are filled with an abundance of whiting, jacks, drum and tarpon.

On the island, you can stroll the beautiful shores without the worries of the world. You can ride horseback on beautiful sea-shelled crusted beaches and take sunset river cruises deep into the Fernandina Harbor Marina.

"The scenery is gorgeous. It's just beautiful to see the Sound, Talbot Island to the North, and the ocean. It's beautiful," Steffey said. Furthermore, the winter time brings fewer people to the area, making it a more intimate experience for those who chose to visit. "You come to a park, and feel like you have it all to yourself. It's great," he said.

Enjoying Florida's winter waters doesn't just mean seeking out great fishing spots. The water can also provide a great escape.

At Miller's Marina in Suwannee, you can rent luxurious houseboats equipped with a full kitchen, waterslide, grill, sundeck, canopy, shower,



"North Florida's springs are the best during winter," said Lloyd Bailey, owner of Lloyd Bailey's Scuba and Watersports in Gainesville. "It feels like you're jumping right into a hot tub."

With training and proper certification, you can explore underwater wildlife and cave systems at several springs and state parks, including: Fanning, Ichetucknee Springs, Peacock Springs and Manatee Springs. The waters at Peacock Springs State Park boast one of the longest underwater cave systems in the continental United States.

In the little town of Homosassa, you can explore natural underwater wildlife without getting wet. The Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park features a 45-foot deep spring which is home to "The Fish Bowl." A floating underwater observatory, the Fish Bowl allows visitors to view marine life traveling between the head of the Homosassa River and the Gulf of Mexico up close, including, speckled trout, flounder, mangrove snappers, jacks, ladyfish, river otters, snappers and manatees.

"We're a showcase of natural Florida wildlife," Susan Strawbridge, park service specialist at Homosassa said. "The winter is a really beautiful time of year to come and visit. It's a great day, with great photography, and a very nice place for people to get back and spend time with nature." **H**



heating and cooling, and flushing toilet. The boats sleep six to eight adults comfortably for a fun-filled tour of the Suwannee River. From December through February, three-day houseboat rentals start at \$699.

"It's a chance to enjoy the real Florida that people have forgotten about," said Bill Miller of Miller's Marina. "It's something different, something natural. It opens up a new realm of eco-tourism. Every curve of the river brings a different adventure."

The Santa Fe River Canoe Trail is part of Florida's statewide system of greenways and trails. On the Santa Fe, a tributary of the Suwannee River, kayaking and canoeing are popular activities during the winter months. The trail offers beautiful and peaceful scenery, shade from overhanging trees and abundant wildlife.

Of course, the famous springs of North Central Florida provide another winter recreation opportunity. The blue, crystal waters of Fanning Springs State Park produce 65 million gallons of water each day.

Fanning Springs, like most Florida springs, remains at 72 degrees year-round and is a favorite of winter scuba and cave divers.



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Adopting Two Families for the Holidays

By Erica Blake

As you read in our last issue, Advantage Publishing Inc., publisher of Home: Living in the Heart of Florida, has partnered with Children's Home Society of Florida to adopt two families for the holidays. We will be accepting donations for these families through the early part of December, and your contributions would be greatly appreciated.

We are asking for new, unwrapped gifts and donations for our two families. Their wish lists are printed below, and items can be delivered to the Advantage Publishing office located at 4140 NW 37th Place Suite D in Gainesville.

The two families are in great need of our community's support, and

any donation will help to bring the joy of the season to these children and their new families.

If you have any questions about donating, please give us a call at (352)372-5854 or email us at email@advantagepublishinginc.com. H

Family Needs

Teanna

Clothing:

Teanna:
Girl size: 10-12
Girl size shoes: 3
Jackets
Winter clothing

Darlene
Women size: 22
Shoes: 9 1/2

Other Items:

Books
Educational Games
Twin size bed linens
Queen size bed linens
Coffee table lamps
TV

Family Needs

Ernestine

Clothing:

Ernestine:
9-12 months baby size
(Two_ 5 year olds:
Girl size: 5
Children's shoe size: 13
13 year old:
Junior size: 14
Size 12 Shoe
Grandmother:
Womens size: 14
Size 7 1/2 shoe

Other Items:

Pressure Cooker
Sofa
Linens
Living Room Furniture
Towels
Bicycles
Towels
Twim Beds
TV

Child Advocacy Center

Providing a Safe Haven for Abused Children

by Sherry Kitchens

The numbers are hard to take, especially at this celebratory time of year. 4,711 are children were reported to have been victims of abuse in 2007-2008 fiscal year end of June. Of those, more than 2,000 children were confirmed to have been abused. That's more than 2,000 confirmed victims of physical, sexual or neglectful abuse in Alachua County alone.

As president and CEO of the Child Advocacy Center in Alachua County, I see both the physical and mental scars caused by this abuse and also the remarkable bravery shown by these children when they tell us their stories.

Our mission is to meet the needs of abused children. Two goals of the CAC is to increase the prosecutions of child abusers and to provide a safe, child-friendly setting for children to tell their stories of abuse. Our facility allows for all agencies involved in the abuse investigation – social workers, counselors, law enforcement officers, medical professionals, child protective investigators, Guardians Ad Litem, state attorneys office and others – to coordinate information and interventions for each case, thus reducing the child's time in the legal system. This multidisciplinary team benefits each child by limiting the number of times they must repeat their painful story and ensuring that each child has access to the services and appropriate therapy.

The Alachua County CAC is one of 600 across the United States and 20 in Florida. The CAC movement began in Huntsville, Ala. in 1985. Robert E. "Bud" Cramer, an Alabama district attorney who eventually became a congressman, championed a better way to help abused children.

At the time, social services and the justice system were not collaborating on the management of child abuse cases. This led to repetitive, stressful and often frightening processes for children who were already scarred by abuse.

Cramer's approach brought together representatives from every step of the process – from the police officers who respond to the initial reports of abuse to the doctors and counselors who help the child heal.

Soon, Cramer's Child Advocacy Center model gained national attention. His original organization, the National Children's Advocacy Center, provides training throughout the year and hosts the National Symposium on Child Abuse each March.

The CAC of Alachua County was formed in 1998 and was the result of a group of concerned citizens and child protection professionals. This group felt that offenders were not being held accountable for abusing children and that the victimized children were not having their needs met.

Early on, when the CAC development team conducted a feasibility study, they found that abused children were being referred to



many different places for services, sometimes up to 25 different agencies. This was very confusing for the children and a logistical nightmare for their non-offending caregivers. In addition, the study found that referring professionals were not aware of other agencies to which the child had been referred and that there was no coordination among service providers.

The formation of the CAC resolved the chaotic array of services and replaced it with a coordinated process that minimizes the stress on the child victim and their caregivers – most important at an already stressful time.

In addition to reducing the duplication of services and streamlining the child's case management, CAC provides several other services that help children overcome their abuse.

The CAC uses forensic interviewers when getting abused children to tell their stories. These interviewers are specifically trained to work with children and obtain information that can be used not only by law enforcement, but also by medical staff, prosecutors, therapists, family care counselors, and case managers. This minimizes the number of times the child must retell the story.

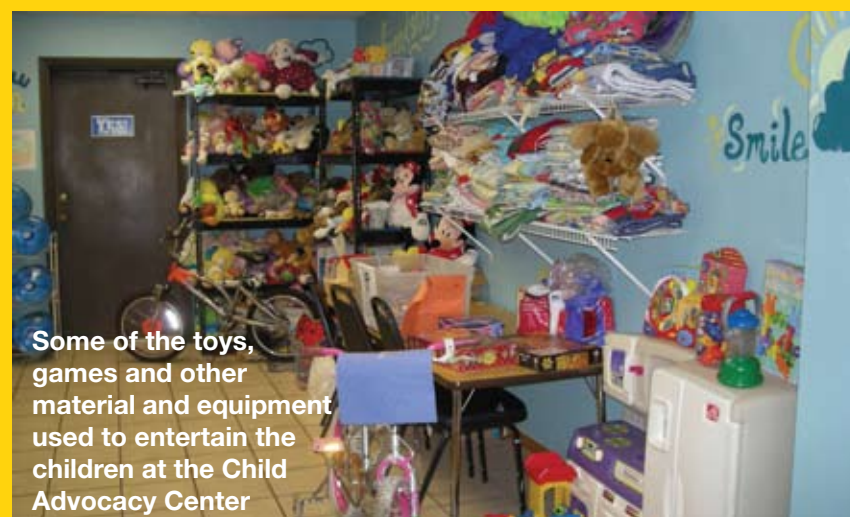
The CAC also works to coordinate the services that a child will need. This coordination, along with regular meetings to review cases and share information with the members of the multidisciplinary team of professionals, helps to improve communication and ensure that children are receiving appropriate services and increases child safety.

Additionally, the therapy program at the CAC specializes in play therapy for abused and neglected children, as well as those who have been exposed to domestic violence. This therapy focuses on the child victim's experiences and trauma and aims to facilitate resolution, decrease abuse related symptoms and increasing coping skills for the abused child.

Non-offending caregivers and siblings also are a focus of the CAC. These caregivers and siblings are also often traumatized by the abusive events. Their responses are critical to the abused child's recovery. Non-offending caregivers are offered group therapy to help them learn how to help the child, talk with them and provide the specific support they need.

The CAC also provides ongoing training and in-service for multidisciplinary team professionals working with abused children in our community. The

These painted hand prints represent some of the youngsters who have been helped by the Child Advocacy Center.



Some of the toys, games and other material and equipment used to entertain the children at the Child Advocacy Center

training is specifically targeted to improve their professional skills and fill gaps in their knowledge base. Training topics have included adolescent development, crisis intervention, preparing a case for prosecution, prevention of child death, identification of human trafficking and dependency court procedures. The CAC also hosts an annual regional conference on child abuse for multidisciplinary team professionals and concerned citizen.

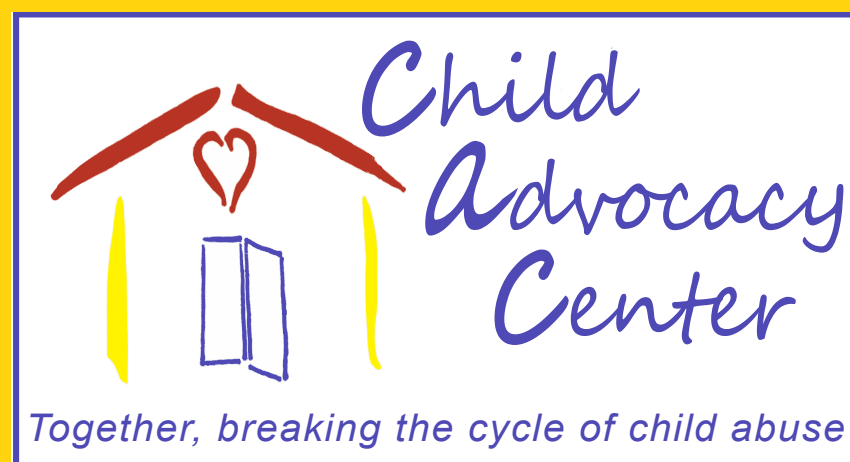
Child abuse is a tough field in which to work. The CAC is fortunate to have an extensive, dedicated, professional staff that strives to change the lives of children in our community. We work each day toward breaking the cycle of abuse one case at a time. And we need to – referrals to the CAC have increased by 91 percent in the past three years.

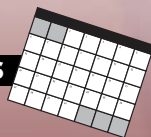
No child should be abused or neglected in our community. But if they are, no child should have to endure additional pain and stress in the system that is supposed to help them.

The Child Advocacy Center needs your help to keep up the important work of providing our children with a safe haven where they can begin to heal the victimized part of themselves and start on a path to a safer, better future.

There are so many ways in which you can help. As a not-for-profit, 501 (c) 3 organization, financial support is always needed. After a flood and unexpected move from our rent-free building generously donated by Davis and Judy Rembert for the past seven years, we have higher operating expenses than ever. Supporting our fundraisers and special events help us survive financially. And, we value our wonderful volunteers that donate their time to help with event planning, office work, public relations, and IT issues. These volunteers keep the center running.

At the Child Advocacy Center, we welcome your support, whether it be monetary or a donation of time. We look forward to your help as we continue the critical work of helping the abused children of Alachua County. **H**





Community Calendar

We've compiled a wide sample of North Central Florida Events for December and January. To have your event included in the next *Home: Living in the Heart of Florida* calendar, email information to editor@advantagepublishinginc.com.

Community:

Dec 6:
Ocala Christmas Parade – A Magical Christmas 5-7 p.m.
Contact: Phyllis Hamm at (352) 595-2446 or (352) 351-3191
Reindeer Run at 4:00 p.m.
Contact: Elizabeth Cannon, Ocala Runner's Club, at (352) 351-8751

Dec 6:
Christmas 2008 Tour of Homes Newberry 5:30-9 p.m.
Tickets are \$15 and are available at most downtown Newberry merchants, Newberry Opera House and Visitors Center. Call (803)276-4274 for info.

Dec. 6:
Dudley Farm Historic State Park Annual Cane Grinding Day
This annual event commemorates donor Miss Myrtle Dudley's birthday and continues the farm family tradition of grinding sugar cane and boiling cane syrup, making this a unique old-time community gathering. Visitors can tour the farm and see other traditional activities and craft demonstrations or enjoy a wagon ride. Children can have fun playing old-fashioned games. Syrup and farm products will be for sale.
<http://www.floridastateparks.org/dudleyfarm/Events.ctm>

Dec. 6:
13th Annual Twilight Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting
High Springs
6:00 p.m.
www.highsprings.com

Dec 12 and 19:
Alachua's Main Street Shop, Dine and Stroll. Holiday shopping, music, buggy rides, raffles and prizes
6-9 p.m. Main Street, Alachua
www.alachua.com

Dec 13:
Hawthorn's 26th Annual Christmas Festival and Parade
Festival starts at 11:00 a.m., Parade starts at 3:00 p.m. and Tree Lighting at City Hall at 6:00 p.m.
Music, Pet Pageant, Food, Arts and Crafts booths, and visits with Santa round out this fun-filled day. For more information, contact Donna Boles at (352) 481-3534.

Dec. 13:
Alachua Annual Christmas Parade
2:00 p.m.
www.alachua.com

Dec. 20:
Holiday with Horses
5-8:30 p.m.
This event, at the Canterbury Showplace in Newberry, will feature several professional horse and dog acts. Proceeds will benefit Therapeutic Riding and the new Horses for Heroes program that offers horseback therapy to help wounded veterans regain balance and coordination.
For ticket and more information, contact (352) 472-6758.

Jan. 24-25, 30-31, and Feb. 1:
23rd Annual Hoggetowne Medieval Faire
Alachua County Fairgrounds
http://www.gvlculturalaffairs.org/website/programs_events/HMF/medieval_index.html

Cultural:

Through Dec. 21:
"A Christmas Carol"
Hippodrome State Theatre
www.thehipp.org

Through Dec. 21:
"A Tuna Christmas"
Hippodrome State Theatre
www.thehipp.org

Through Jan. 4:
"Documenting China: Contemporary Photography and Social Change"
Exhibit explores social change in the most populous nation on Earth.
Thomas Center Main Gallery
For more information, visit www.gvlculturalaffairs.org/website/programs_events/Galleries/tcgallery_china.html.

Through Jan. 25:
"Promises of Paradise: Staging Mid-Century Miami"
Exhibit brings together the architects, designers and urban planners that created mid-century Miami and their contributions to American modernism.
www.harn.ufl.edu

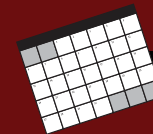
Through May 2009:
"Between the Beads: Reading African Beadwork"
Exhibit focuses on the many ways African beadwork represents a coded language. View approximately 100 works, including masks, personal adornment objects and sculpture.
www.harn.ufl.edu

Dec. 4:
UF School of Music Presents UF Symphony Orchestra
University Auditorium
7:30 p.m.
General admission, \$8. Students are free with ID.

Dec 19-21:
"The Nutcracker"
Dance Alive National Ballet presents this timeless holiday classic at the Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. For tickets and performance times, visit the Phillips Center box office.
<http://performingarts.ufl.edu/tickets/>

(left) *Between the Beads* Yoruba people, Nigeria, 20th century Beaded Crown (adenla), Glass seed beads, fabric, Gift of Rod McGalliard





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec. 20-21:

Sugar Plum Fairy Tea
4:00 p.m.

After the matinee performances of "The Nutcracker," enjoy a festive tea with the Sugar Plum Fairy and other characters from the ballet. Tickets are \$15 and are available through the Phillips Center Box Office.

<http://performingarts.ufl.edu/tickets/>

January 14:

Laughter and Reflection with Carol Burnett: A Conversation with Carol Where the Audience Asks the Questions

7:30 p.m. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Florida www.performingarts.ufl.edu/tickets/

January 26-28:

"Riverdance"

The thunderous celebration of Irish music, song and dance that has tapped its way onto the world stage thrilling millions of people around the globe, will play three Farewell Performances at the Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. 7:30 p.m.

Sports and Recreation

Dec. 5-6:

Florida Women's JuCo Shootout Basketball Tournament
Games begin at 12:00 noon both days
Santa Fe College Gymnasium
<http://inst.sfcc.edu>

Dec. 13-14:

Florida JuCo Shootout Men's Basketball Tournament
Games begin at 12:00 noon both days
Santa Fe College Gymnasium
<http://inst.sfcc.edu>

Dec 20:

Paynes Prairie Rim Ramble
8:00 a.m.
Follow in the footsteps of naturalist William Bartram on this ranger-led walk on a shaded backcountry trail. Enjoy wildlife viewing and sweeping views. For details or to RSVP, call (352) 466-4100.

Jan. 8:

UF Women's Basketball
VS Mississippi State
7:00 p.m. O'Connell Center
www.gatorzone.com

Jan. 10:

UF Men's Basketball
VS Ole Miss
6:00 p.m. O'Connell Center
www.gatorzone.com

Jan. 16:

UF Gymnastics
VS Auburn
7:00 p.m. O'Connell Center
www.gatorzone.com


Jan. 22:

UF Women's Tennis
VS Stetson
5:00 p.m.
www.gatorzone.com

Jan. 25:

UF Men's Tennis
VS Baylor
1:00 p.m.
www.gatorzone.com

Jan. 31:

Santa Fe College Baseball
VS South Georgia College
Santa Fe College 12:00 noon 

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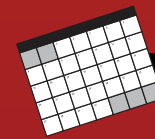
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Holiday with Horses

By Victoria Phillips

Event will Help Wounded Veterans

Winter fun is galloping into Gainesville with the first Holiday with Horses fundraising event on December 20 at Canterbury Showplace in Newberry.

Co-founded by local author Shelley Fraser Mickle and Wendy Low, manager of Canterbury Equestrian Showplace, the event is close to both of their hearts.

"Wendy came to me with the idea of giving a gift to the city for the holidays, and I just couldn't resist," Fraser Mickle said.

Having just published the book for kids, *Barbaro, America's Horse*, the project seemed a natural fit, she said.

The family-friendly show includes profession acts, including horses, dogs and even monkeys. All proceeds from the event will be donated to Therapeutic Riding, specifically focusing on their new program, Horses for Heroes, which benefits wounded veterans.

"Helping veterans returning with a brain injury, or suffering from the traumatic stress of serving in a combat zone is something we all want to do," Fraser Mickle said.

Though it has only recently begun in our area, the Horses for Heroes program is already helping wounded veterans improve their balance, as well as their coordination and emotional well-being.

"New programs can always use help with funding," Fraser Mickle said. "Our donations will go towards helmets, footwear, staff and feed for the horses."

Locally, therapeutic riding programs help more than 100 riders, including children with special needs, stroke victims, and others deemed in need of the benefits of horseback riding. Many therapeutic riders do pay for each lesson, but others require matching funds or scholarships.

"Money should never have to be the reason why someone doesn't participate. If we can raise enough money to help someone pay for their lessons, then it's money well spent," Fraser Mickle said.

The gates will open Holiday for Horses at 5 p.m., with vendors on the grounds for unique holiday shopping. The show itself will begin at 6:30 p.m. and includes a dozen equine and canine acts.

"We are really looking forward to having people join us on this very special night to honor our veterans, reuniting them with their families and communities,"

Fraser Mickle said. "You won't soon forget this evening of fun."

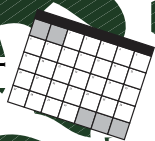
Seating is limited and tickets are currently on sale. Adults are \$18, VIP seating is \$25 and kids up to the age of 15 are \$10.

Tickets are available at Ward's Supermarket, Crevasse's Flowers, Jonesville Tractor Supply, Mel's Tack Shop and Midwest Feeds.

You can also get tickets by calling Canterbury Showplace at 352-472-6758 or by sending your check with a stamped self-addressed envelope to Holiday with Horses, Canterbury, 23100 W. Newberry Road, Newberry, FL 32669.

For more information call Canterbury Showplace at 352-472-6758





Dance of the *Sugar Plum Fairy*

By Victoria Phillips

The Sugar Plum Fairy will dance her way into Gainesville this holiday season with the Dance Alive National Ballet (DANB). Bringing a favorite Christmas classic to life, the touring company will be transforming the Curtis M. Phillips Center for Performing Arts into a real live fairy tale Dec 19 – 21 with three performances of “The Nutcracker.”

“The Nutcracker itself is really just an overall experience,” DANB’s Sally McDonell said. “It’s an experience where grandmothers and granddaughters, mothers and daughters, and even fathers and daughters can have a day to go to the ballet together and enjoy themselves.”

The merriment doesn’t have to end after the show. After the matinees at 2 p.m. Dec 20 and 21 stay for the Sugar Plum Tea at 4 p.m. and get a chance to meet the enchanting Sugar Plum Fairy and her court in the Fackler Foyers.

Festively decorated, the foyers are a backdrop of holiday cheer where children can come in for tea and meet various characters such as soldiers, cavaliers and the Sugar Plum Fairy. Johnston Photography will take photos, but individual photography is also permitted.

“It seems a simple concept but it delights a great many people. What an experience for the little ones to see them dance on stage and then get to look them in the eyes,” McDonell said.

With dancers ranging from young to old, kids can come away inspired from meeting their favorite characters up close.

“We don’t know how many of the younger kids that are starry-eyed come out of

there wanting to dance, but I imagine there are a few of them,” McDonell said.

Also on display for the first time is an extensive collection of unusual nutcracker dolls from all over the world, donated by Gainesville resident Nancy Perry.

A State Touring Program of Florida for 33 years, DANB is listed as one of the most outstanding arts organizations in the South by the Southern Arts Federation. With 15 professional dancers from all over the world, DANB will have another production in March titled “Danscape.”

And if that’s not enough, join DANB for their Chocolate and Champagne Holiday Gala December 20 at 8 p.m. on stage at the Curtis M. Phillips Center for Performing Arts. For \$100 a person you can nibble and drink to your hearts content while participating in a scavenger hunt and browsing silent auction items. All proceeds benefit DANB and their future productions.

Tickets to both the Sugar Plum Tea and performance of “The Nutcracker” are available through the Curtis M. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts box office. Tickets to the Sugar Plum Tea are \$15, while tickets to the show vary between \$20-\$35 depending on seating level.

For more information on both the Sugar Plum Tea and Dance Alive National Ballet’s upcoming events contact their office at 352-392-2787. H



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Sun Country Sports Center has been offering high-quality, healthy programs for over 21 years in Gainesville. This Spring they'll have even more fun for the whole family with the 15,000 square foot expansion of their Jonesville (Tioga) facility. The new building, contains additional areas for gymnastics, cheerleading, dance, and more. Highlights of the expanded space include: a new cheerleading room with an in-ground Tumble Trak for safe skill building; extended gymnastics areas including a new trampoline and in-ground pit; a new, larger dance studio with marley flooring; a workout room to house the new and improved Fit4U Fitness program; two additional party rooms and a designated area for a future outdoor pool. "We are so excited about having more room to spread out! All of the programs are going to benefit from our new space," says Jodi Bennett, Director of Marketing and Operations for Sun Country.

Sun Country offers classes for all ages, including Gymnastics, Cheerleading, Dance, Karate, and Fencing, along with competitive programs in Team Gymnastics, Tramp & Tumble, and Team Spirit Cheerleading. Dance Sun Country is entering its second year offering ballet, jazz, tap, modern, hip-hop and dance team skills classes. Sun Country Dance Theatre (SCDT) is the newly established non-profit performing company of Dance Sun Country. The Sun Country Rocks rockwall has over 2,500 square feet of climbing space open to youth and adults. And, the Funrichment Afterschool, FunFest Summer Camp and Sunny Day Camp programs provides safe and structured youth activities throughout the year. Sun Country Sports Center is also excited to welcome World Martial Arts and all of their customers to their family.

The newly expanded space in Jonesville will better accommodate all of these programs and will support the ongoing growth of Sun Country's classes. Sun Country has grown rapidly since the 2000 opening of its Jonesville facility, and patrons and staff alike are ready and excited for the new space.

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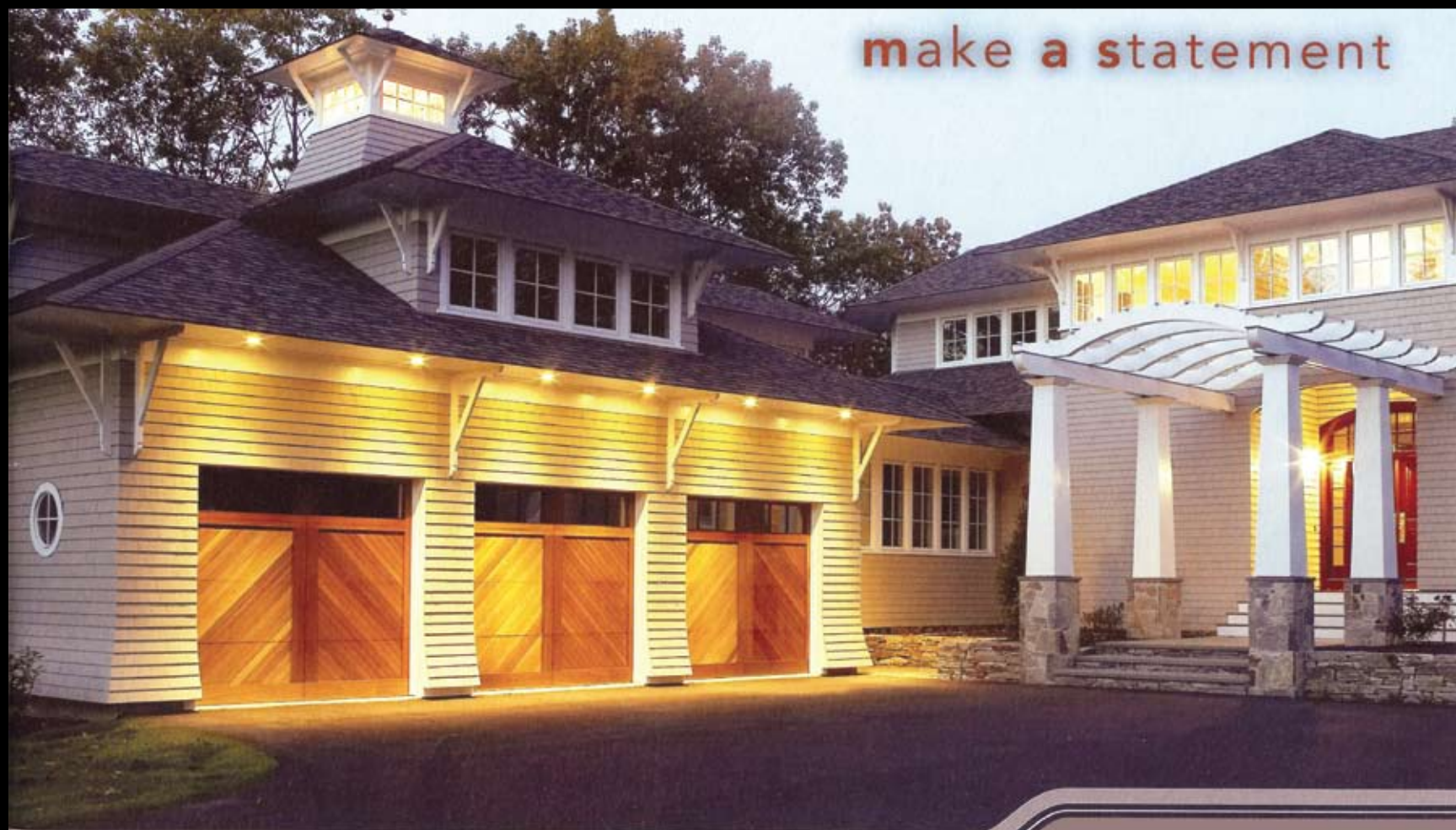
Jake's Corner

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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The Genuine. The Original.



Meet Santa Claus

By David Greenberg

Hugh McDowell's job is pretty much a 24-hour-a-day affair, but he is not complaining. That's because even if you take away the red suit and hat, and pull out the stomach pillow, McDowell is Santa Claus.

For the last six years, McDowell, who works as a research scientist in Ophthalmology at the University of Florida College of Medicine, has donned the red suit, and done something he loves – made people happy. With a full white beard and an ever-present smile, McDowell looks like Santa Claus no matter what he is wearing.

"Honestly, the initial reason was financial," he said. "I was looking for some retirement income. But very quickly, it became a whole lot more than that. You really become Santa. You are everyone's best friend. Kids love you. It's a real high to spread that much joy."

In part because of his appearance, McDowell says he has to be on all the time.

"You can never take the suit off in a way," he said. "There are definitely positive benefits to being on all the time. It makes me a more pleasant person, and I am everyone's friend. I have had people come up to me and talk like they have known me all their life, and in a way, they have – as Santa Claus. If you look the part, you have to play the part all year round. There can never be any unSanta-like behavior."

The whole experience has turned out to be very positive for me," he continued. "It helps me be a lot more outgoing and friendlier. Even if I am depressed about something, there always has to be a smile on my face, and that helps to take away whatever is bothering me."

But it takes much more than looking the part to become Santa Claus. To do it right, you have to go to Santa Claus school.

Early in his career, McDowell attended the Charles W. Howard Santa Claus School in Michigan – the oldest Santa Claus school in America.

"It was an excellent school," he said. "I learned a lot about the craft of being Santa. The first of these lessons was that when we put on the red suit, we are not 'playing' Santa – we are Santa."

In 2006, McDowell went to a meeting in Branson, MO of the Amalgamated Order of Real Bearded Santas.

"There were about 300 Santas there," he said. "We attended classes, exchanged ideas, and made some friends from all over the country. The group will continue to meet every other year, so we can teach new Santas the tricks of the trade."

McDowell is also part of Santa America, a group that works with Hospice all over the country, and with children suffering from post traumatic stress syndrome.

At one point, Santa picked up a helper. His wife, Betty, a former school teacher and the owner of the Learning Path store in Gainesville, now works with him as Mrs. Claus.

"She saw my business card," he said. "It read 'parties, home visits, printwork, commercials.' When she saw it, she said 'Parties? I can do parties.'"

Obviously for McDowell, it is the children that make it special. One of his fondest memories as Santa is one of his earliest ones, when he was at the school in Michigan. He was in a store, and a young boy named Oscar asked if he was the real Santa. Before McDowell could answer, Oscar told him he was, and that he brought the young boy Spiderman gloves the previous year.

"Quickly remembering his manners, he brought his younger sister to me, and told me her name was Autumn," said McDowell. "I gave him an 'I met Santa card.' As I was telling them to be a good boy and girl, being somewhat flustered at my first encounter as Santa I pointed to Oscar when I said to be a good girl and to Autumn when I said to be a good boy. Oscar sweetly pointed out that Autumn would be a good girl, and he would be a good boy. We said our goodbyes, and parted with five beaming faces – Oscar, Autumn, Mom, Dad, and a new Santa."

Santa Hugh can be found on his Web site, www.santahugh.com, by e-mail at SantaHugh32605@yahoo.com, or through Center Stage Costumes and Magic at (352) 374-4334. H

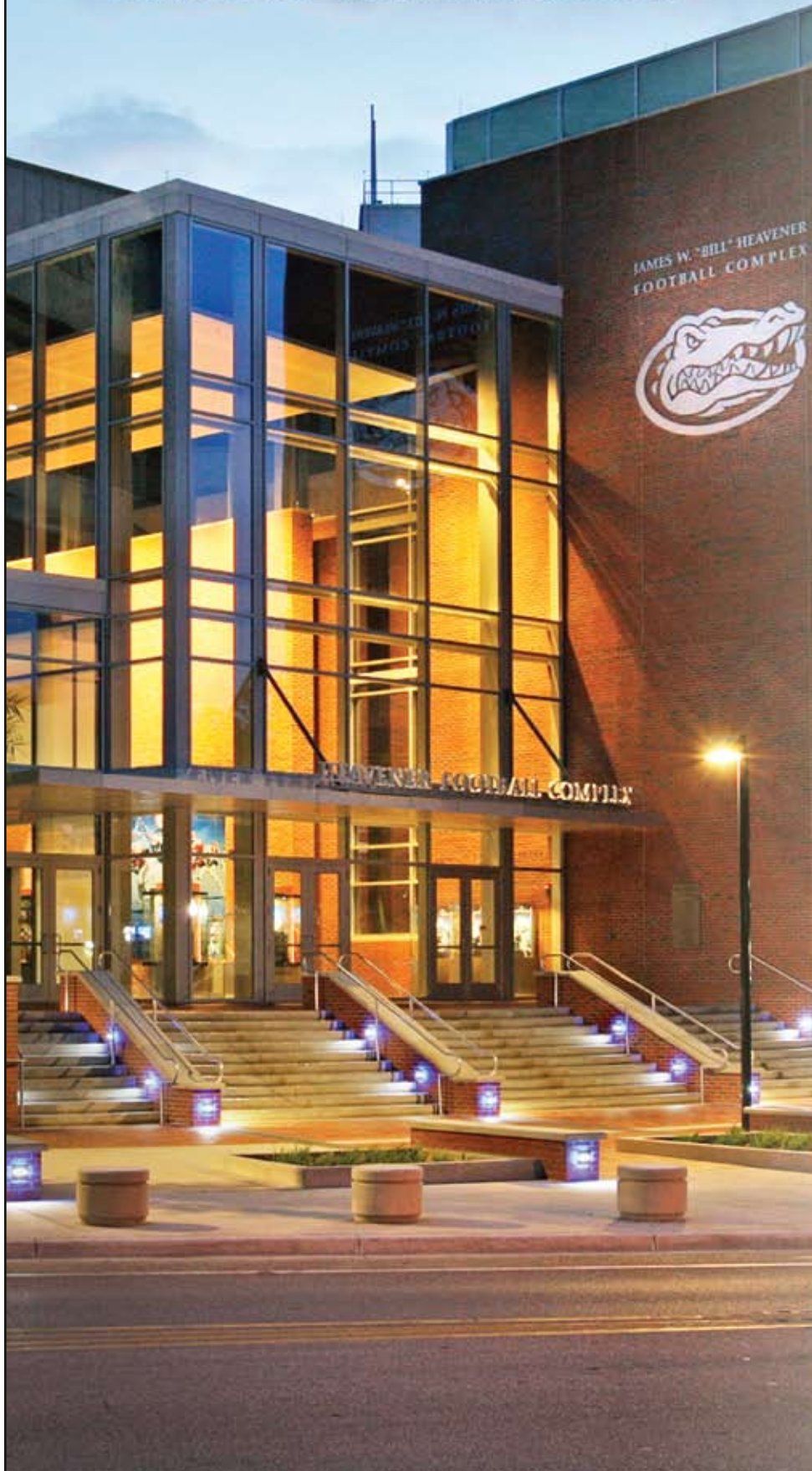


Santa and one of his admirers, Madison.

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