



# dna news

duckpond neighborhood association • NE Historic District • Gainesville Florida • November 2010



## opportunities

See page 5 for opportunities to utilize your interests, talents, and time.

**KEEP UP** on happenings between newsletters! Check out our regularly updated website at [www.HistoricDuckpond.com](http://www.HistoricDuckpond.com)

## general meeting

**Tuesday, November 9, 2010  
7:00—8:30 p.m.**

First United Methodist Church  
419 NE 1st Street  
Room: Fellowship Hall

## agenda

Announcements

Crime watch report

Call for volunteers and committee chairs

Mentoring at local schools

Holiday events

New projects:

Duckpond maintenance

**DNA News** is published 4 times a year, just prior to general meetings. Meeting dates for 2011 will be announced in the next issue. All neighborhood residents are welcome and encouraged to attend meetings.

## Duckpond Park: one student's vision

**How about a** decorative fountain at the Sweetwater Branch outfall on NE 10th Avenue behind the entry feature? Or, dedicated bike paths through "Duckpond Park"? Or, closing the bridges at 6th, 7th and 9th Avenues to cars?

These are just three elements of Jay McLeod's visionary upgrade for Duckpond Park presented at the September meeting of the Duckpond Neighborhood Association (DNA). Jay, a UF grad student in Urban Planning, developed the proposal as part of his coursework. His presentation was accompanied by beautifully detailed graphics and a three page illustrated handout.

Specifically, the proposal consists of five elements:

- Addition of bike lanes surrounding the park, an internal, continuous walking path, more benches, trees, trash cans, doggie bag stands, and pedestrian oriented street lamps.

- Regrading and landscaping the riparian zone to promote a more natural water flow as well as a healthy habitat for aquatic organisms.

- Closing the bridges to automobiles at 6th, 7th, and 9th Avenues, replacing



the asphalt with a gazebo feature, a playground and an orchard at those locations thus creating a true "park" between the boulevards.

- Repaving Northeast Boulevard with ecologically friendly pervious pavement, plugging drains to prevent street pollutants from discharging into Sweetwater Branch, and installing new curbs that would allow storm water drainage into natural, riparian soils.

- Integration of a Duckpond Park bike path with the 6th Street Rail-Trail, the 2nd Avenue Bike-Trail and the Depot Avenue Rail-Trail.

A dream? Possibly. But yet a transformative vision for an even more livable Duckpond for future generations.

*A historical note:* "Duckpond Park" which runs from about NE 10th Avenue and North Main Street, then between the two sides of "The Boulevard" to NE 5th Avenue, and maybe beyond, is shown on a 1945 map as "Highlands Park."

Jay McCleod can be contacted at [jay.w.mcleod@gmail.com](mailto:jay.w.mcleod@gmail.com).

—Submitted by Patrick Rhodes



The purpose of the Duckpond Neighborhood Association is to facilitate communication and exchange of information on issues relevant to the neighborhood. We encourage neighbors to submit articles of interest to our neighborhood, or topics for discussion at our general meetings. Please contact Melanie Barr at 377.4217 or e-mail [mvbarr@bellsouth.net](mailto:mvbarr@bellsouth.net).



**Do you have** an announcement, story, article, or advertisement that you would like to share? If so, please submit your information to **Melanie Barr** at [mvbarr@bellsouth.net](mailto:mvbarr@bellsouth.net) **no later than Friday, January 14**. The next issue of *DNA News* will be published in February 2010. Your submissions are appreciated, and a great way to share information with your neighbors!

# Letter from Commissioner Wells

## Dear Duckpond neighbors,

For the past few years, I have served on the board and as the president of the Duckpond Neighborhood Association (DNA). Together, as a neighborhood, we have accomplished much in that time. Whether it is getting new playgrounds, working with the city on the Sweetwater Branch creek and duck pond issues, or simply keeping neighbors abreast of recent events, DNA has always worked to improve our neighborhood. DNA not only brings residents timely information through newsletters and meetings, it provides an important place for residents to voice new ideas, a conduit for communicating effectively with city staff, and a launch pad for new projects.

In April I resigned from my role as president so that I could serve as your City Commissioner. I want to say thank you for this wonderful experience. Prior to moving to Duckpond I had been involved in many volunteer neighborhood ventures (and adventures). Never before had I been so welcomed and embraced by new and long-time neighbors alike. There have been so many times when neighbors have reached out with a positive idea, a thank you note or word of encouragement. Our neighborhood is at the heart of why I chose to run for City Commission. Now that I

am serving you in a new capacity, I hope you will continue to email or call with your thoughts and ideas for not only Duckpond, but for our city.

I also encourage you to consider how you can chip in and help DNA continue in its efforts over the next year. Melanie Barr has graciously taken on the role as DNA president, and the rest of our board is an enthusiastic, committed group of volunteers. To continue many of the DNA activities, your help will be needed too! Consider helping with one of the following activities—even an hour or two will help:

- Newsletter advertising coordinator
- Crime Watch coordinator
- Duck and goose food at the pond (monitor and purchase duck feed when needed)
- Holiday horse and carriage rides
- *Friends of Metcalfe Elementary*

Do you have an initiative that you would like to see happen in our neighborhood? Bring it to the next meeting to set it in motion!

Sincerely,

**Randy Wells**  
**City Commissioner, District 4**

Contact Randy at **334.5015** or [wellsrm@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:wellsrm@cityofgainesville.org)

## HOLIDAY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>November 6</b>   | <b>Roper Park Yard Sale</b>   |
| <b>November 6-7</b> | <b>Downtown Fall Arts Festival</b>                                      |
| <b>November 9</b>   | <b>DNA Quarterly Membership Meeting</b>                                 |
| <b>December 4</b>   | <b>Lighting of Neighborhood Luminaries and Thomas Center Activities</b> |
| <b>December 31</b>  | <b>Downtown Countdown<br/>New Year's Eve Celebration</b>                |

# Exploring Connections: Sweetwater Branch

**This summer**, 29 young people (ages 8 to 12) and 10 senior citizens (including a number of our neighbors) participated in a week long travelling day camp called *Generation Connection*. The camp spent one day learning about the Sweetwater Creek that flows through our neighborhood (and includes our duck pond). The participants learned how this small, meandering creek plays an important role in our everyday lives.

Historically, Sweetwater Branch was a small, spring-fed stream. As Gainesville grew, the creek was channelized to help control flooding in the city. Sweetwater Branch creek now flows from near the Main Street *Publix* right through the heart of downtown and ultimately into *Paynes Prairie State Preserve* where it goes underground through the Alachua Sink. Once underground, the water from the Sweetwater Branch eventually becomes part of the Floridan Aquifer which is where we all get our drinking water.

The *Generation Connection* first met with senior camper Bill Pepper at Alachua Sink to learn about the history of Payne's Prairie. Next, the group moved upstream on the Sweetwater Branch to meet with Stacie Greco of the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department. Stacie explained the important link between our actions, the health of our creek and, ultimately, the health of our drinking water. Finally the group visited the entrance into the Duckpond on NE 10th Avenue where all the storm water from the Main Street *Publix* shopping center parking lot flows into the creek.

While the water in the creek appears clear and clean, it contains pollutants, such as pet waste, fertilizers, oils and

trash. These pollutants regularly wash off of our yards and streets directly into the creek.

In addition to these pollutants in the water, there are sewage pipes along this creek that sometimes leak untreated sewage into the water. Also, a portion of the creek flows downstream of *Gainesville Regional Utilities* wastewater treatment facility, which has a permit to discharge nearly six million gallons of treated wastewater per day into the creek.

Our everyday actions—whether flushing a toilet or fertilizing our yard—impact the health of our creek—and ultimately our drinking water! Here are some ways we can all help:

- Take care of pet wastes—scoop it, bag it, trash it
- Avoid applying fertilizers
- Plant native plants and build rain barrels to collect rainwater for water conservation
- Please don't litter
- Put cooking oils in the trash instead of down the sink drain
- Conserve water by fixing leaks, irrigating less, and not running water when brushing teeth or washing dishes
- Tell others how they can help too!

To learn more about *Generation Connection* go to **[www.thegenerationconnection.com](http://www.thegenerationconnection.com)**.

To learn more about threats to our environment and how you can help, consider subscribing to *The Wader*, Alachua County Environmental Protection Department's quarterly electronic newsletter. Email **[sgreco@alachuacounty.us](mailto:sgreco@alachuacounty.us)** to get on the mailing list. 🐦

—Submitted by Joel Daunic,  
Stacie Greco and Ondine Wells

## ROPER PARK YARD SALE

The Roper Park Yard Sale will be held on **Saturday, November 6th**, the same day as the Downtown Fall Arts Festival. We would like our fund raiser to be a huge success with several vendors and many donated items to sell. Your friends and relatives can set up and sell for \$15, and, if you pay dues to the DNA, you pay \$10. The sale starts at 8:00 a.m. Call 377.4217 to participate. Come on by, there will be a sea of items for sale!



## CALLING DUCKPOND ARTISTS

Are you or do you know an artist (or performing artist) who lives or works in the neighborhood? We would like to highlight Duckpond artists in future issues of DNA News. Contact **Melanie Barr** at **377.4217** or email **[mvbarr@bellsouth.net](mailto:mvbarr@bellsouth.net)**

### Did you know?

Sweetwater Branch supports several forms of wildlife. Fish species such as the mosquitofish are abundant in most reaches of the creek. Common birdlife includes most of the native songbirds of the Gainesville area, woodpeckers, red-tailed hawks, osprey, and barred owls. Alligators, turkeys, and aquatic turtles are quite common as the stream approaches Paynes Prairie State Preserve.

## DUCKPOND HOLIDAY EVENTS SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4TH

### Thomas Center Events, 6–10 p.m.

Reserve your spot now for a horse-drawn wagon ride during the holiday luminaries' celebration.

(Rain date: Sunday, December 5th, same times.) Each ride will last approximately 15 minutes, leaving from the entrance of the Thomas Center (NE 6th Avenue and 3rd Street), winding down along the Northeast Boulevard and the duck pond, returning to the Thomas Center. For reservations, contact Randy Wells at [conexos@gmail.com](mailto:conexos@gmail.com) or 335.8874. Include number of adults and kids. Price \$6/adult, \$1/child.

Enjoy the arrival of Santa Claus by horse-drawn wagon (expected 6:30 p.m.), and the lighting of the tree by the mayor inside the Thomas Center around 7 p.m. Listen to choral groups both inside and outside the Thomas Center starting at 7 p.m., including performances in the beautiful Spanish Court.

### DNA Holiday Luminaries

9 a.m. set-up and 5 p.m. lighting. Volunteers needed! (Please see sidebar for details on page 5.)



### SOUTHEAST HISTORIC DISTRICT HOLIDAY TOUR OF HOMES, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11TH, 5–8 P.M.

The Southeast Historic District holiday tour features historic homes and Bed and Breakfasts beautifully decorated for the winter season. Please contact the Matheson Museum at 378.2280 or visit their website at [mathesonmuseum.org](http://mathesonmuseum.org) for details.

## Fat Tuscan: neighborhood restaurant

I'd like to start off with good news!

For those of you who don't know, I am happy to report that we have succeeded in our battle with the city. On August 19th, the City Commission voted unanimously to allow our little café evening hours.

Thank you, to all of you, once again, who wrote letters and attended the community meetings supporting us here at the *Fat Tuscan*. I can surely say that without your support, we would never have been able to get the zoning change. Our new hours for evenings will be Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 5

to 10 p.m. We will also be resuming our Friday night happy hour. Please come by. Alejandro will be playing Spanish acoustic guitar music in the courtyard, and drink specials and tasty appetizers will be featured. Candlelight dinners are also resuming, however, they are being temporarily moved to the last Wednesday night of the month to accommodate the Fall football season.



The Fat Tuscan is located at 725 NE 1st Street. Dining is offered indoors or on the patio.

I'm in such a good mood. The wind has been blowing, the temperature is cooler, new recipes are just waiting to be made and tried, and I have been dying to get back in my kitchen. Not even the daily news can bring me down. The flags are flapping in the wind. I can hear the tinkling of the wind-chimes on the second-floor balcony as I write this and I feel nothing but promise for a new day. What can I say, but "Welcome back Fat Tuscan, I am so glad you are still here". 🐦

—Submitted by Michelle Reeves

## New Citizen's Co-op opening near Duckpond

Citizens Co-op is a grocery cooperative located at 435 South Main Street, an easy walk or bike ride from the Duckpond. Two years ago, when Duckpond residents Liz Nesbit and Gretchen McIntyre realized that it was strange that Gainesville lacked the kind of cooperative grocery store that gives similar college towns a vibrant community anchor, they set to work. The result is Citizens Co-op. Our mission is to help grow a community-based food system through a full-service market, offering a bountiful selection of natural foods and products by purchasing first, whenever possible, from local producers and vendors.

If our community supports us fully, we project that we will be able to open our storefront within the next few months. The space is already beautiful, and is in

the process of being renovated with the most eco-friendly fixtures possible. We will have a full range of sustainable, local, and organic grocery items, as well as a café with seating space in the courtyard, paved with 100-year-old salvaged bricks from the Main Street renovation project. We'll strive to provide a community center that enables people from all economic and social sectors to come together in building an improved food culture in our neighborhoods. We have already established a large community garden in the Porters Quarters neighborhood, and have applied to accept food stamps. We believe everyone deserves the chance to eat the freshest and healthiest food available.

Because Citizens Co-op is owned by our consumer, producer, and worker

continued on page 5 >

# Keeping the Duckpond a great place to live!

The Duckpond Neighborhood Association is in need of people who are willing to help out with a few things. We always welcome new board members, but you do not need to be on the board to help! Volunteering for the DNA is a great opportunity to get to know your neighbors, and to get to know what is going on in and around the neighborhood. Below are some of the functions we need people for, the more the merrier!

■ **Wagon Rides Captain** to get volunteers together for the annual holiday wagon rides (*first weekend in December, same night as the Christmas tree lighting and the luminaries*).

■ **Advertising Manager** to help contact new and current advertisers for our newsletter (*four issues per year*).

■ **Web Master** (*or Web Master assistant*) who could help us maintain, consolidate, and automate our websites and neighborhood mailing lists.

■ **Duckpond Island Ranger** to help get volunteers and equipment together every 2–3 months to remove trash in and around the basin, and to manage the weeds on the island; help maintain duck/goose feed station.

■ **Roper Park Chair** to help look into landscaping or other ideas to further improve Roper Park and help make these improvements happen. Similarly, we have an opening for a NE Park Chair.

■ **Membership Chair** to help think of ways to recruit more members, and to get more neighbors to come to the meetings.

■ **Social Event Planner** to organize fun events, such as a neighborhood picnic or a kids' game day.

■ **Metcalfe Elementary School Liaison** to help think of, and help pursue, initiatives to make our public neighborhood school become more attractive (*e.g. international baccalaureate?*).

■ **Crime Watch/GPD Liaison** to arrange forums and events to help prevent crime.

If any of these activities appeal to you, or if you have any other ideas, please contact **Edith Kaan** at [edith.kaan@gmail.com](mailto:edith.kaan@gmail.com), or any other DNA board member. If you'd like to help out with these areas, even if you can't lead them, please contact us anyway! 🐦

–Submitted by Edith Kaan

## Citizen's Co-op (continued from page 4)

members, the Co-op will be run democratically, and members can be as intimately involved as they wish. We currently have over 575 members even before the store has opened, and we welcome new members and investors. The sooner we can get a critical mass, the sooner the storefront opens. Members are given one vote per household, will not have to work, and dividends will be shared according to how faithfully members shop at the Co-op over the course of a year. A family membership costs \$100 for life, is refundable if the member wishes to depart, and will never have to be renewed; we also have low-income and student memberships on request. Investor shares are open

to members, cost \$500, and will return 8% before dividends are paid out at the end of the year. Your investment will stay local and allow us to pay our employees a living wage and benefits. We'd love your help in providing our community with diverse, wholesome, and quality foods, a dependable market for regional growers, and an inspiring model for sustainable business that demonstrates the viability of local investment and cooperation.

For more information about the co-op, including how to become a member or investor, please go to <http://www.citizensco-op.com/about.html>, come to the *Union Street Farmers' Market* on Wednesdays to chat with us, or email **Lauren Groff** at [legroff9@gmail.com](mailto:legroff9@gmail.com). 🐦

–Submitted by Lauren Groff

## HOLIDAY LUMINARIES: REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS

Now that Fall is here, it's time to begin thinking about the holiday season and LUMINARIES.

This annual event is scheduled to take place on **Saturday, December 4, 2010**. Luminary preparation will begin at 9 a.m.

on the eastside of the Boulevard at 7th Avenue. Lighting the luminaries will take place beginning at 5 p.m. that afternoon. We will need lots of volunteers to make this event a success so we hope that you will participate.

This wonderful tradition has been a part of the Duckpond experience for years, and a wonderful way to reconnect with neighbors and bring family and friends together. Put it on your calendar today and we'll see you on the eastside of the Boulevard at 7th Avenue on Saturday, December 4, at 9 a.m.

If you have any questions, please contact **Sue Johnson** at [nbjo@aol.com](mailto:nbjo@aol.com). 🐦

–Submitted by Sue Johnson





View Eleanor's work at [www.EleanorBlairStudio.com](http://www.EleanorBlairStudio.com), or at the Downtown Fall Arts Festival on November 6-7.



## Meet neighborhood artist Eleanor Blair

**Eleanor Blair** came to Gainesville in 1971. Inspired by the town and the Duckpond neighborhood, it didn't take long for her to turn from painting abstracts to painting landscapes. In her early years, she taught classes for the *Gainesville Fine Arts Association* and Santa Fe Junior College. She joined the Artisan's Market (where she had more luck selling crocheted hats than paintings back in the seventies), and has exhibited in the *Downtown Spring Arts Festival* every single year since 1972.

In 1990, she started the *Tench Artist's Studios*, and in 1991 she moved into her current studio next door at 113 South Main Street (open Tuesday-Saturday, 4-7 p.m.). Traveling has become an important part of her work. She has painted in Scotland, Italy, Spain, Austria, Turkey, Morocco, Greece, Portugal, the Azores,



Belgium, Tanzania, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Thailand. In her own words, "It's a beautiful world out there, but no matter what spectacular sights I see on my travels, I am always very glad to come home. My favorite subjects are all right here."

Eleanor Blair can be reached at 352.316.1751, or [eblairstar@aol.com](mailto:eblairstar@aol.com).

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The logo for Windows of Opportunity is a hand-drawn illustration of an open window. The words "Windows of Opportunity" are written in a cursive font above the window. Inside the window, the name "Kristin E. Joos, Ph.D." is written in a bold, serif font. Below the name, the services "Educational, College Admissions, and Career Counseling, Consulting, and Coaching" are listed. The phone number "352.316.9196" is prominently displayed in a large, bold font. At the bottom of the window, the email "Kristin@windowsofopportunity.org" and the website "www.windowsofopportunity.org" are provided. The window is decorated with small flowers and leaves.

The logo for East End Eatery features a stylized "E" inside a circle, with the words "East End" above and "Eatery" below. To the right of the logo are several decorative circles of varying sizes, some containing smaller "E" symbols. A circular badge on the right says "NOW SERVING SUNDAY BRUNCH 10-3!". Below the logo, the hours "Mon. - Fri. • 11 AM - 3 PM" and the phone number "378-9870" are listed. The address "1202 NE 8th Ave. • Gainesville" is at the bottom.

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# duckpond officers and directors



Please fill out and return the form below with your annual membership dues (\$15 per household.) Make your check payable to:

**Duckpond Neighborhood Association**  
**PO Box 233**  
**Gainesville FL 32602-0233**



**President**  
Melanie Barr 352.377.4217 mvbarr@bellsouth.net

**Vice President**  
Open

**Secretary**  
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David Maren 352.381.1985 dkmaren@msn.com

*Currently there are seats available on the DNA Board. If you are curious about the responsibilities and time commitment for being a Board member, please contact any of the Board members listed above. With your help, we can continue to make the Duckpond a great place to live.*

## Stay Informed: Join the DNA Update email list!

To add your email address, e-mail [duckpond+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:duckpond+subscribe@googlegroups.com) to join the e-mail discussion list. DNA updates are typically sent out once or twice a month. DNA will never use your email for solicitation or political purposes.

## Join or renew with the duckpond neighborhood association!

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Annual membership dues (per household) \$15

I would also like to contribute to the following: (optional)

Duck Fund \$\_\_\_\_\_  Roper Park Fund \$\_\_\_\_\_  Holiday Fund \$\_\_\_\_\_  General Fund \$\_\_\_\_\_

Skills and/or resources I would like to make available to the Duckpond Neighborhood Association:

Comments or Suggestions for the DNA: