



dna news

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



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general meeting

Tuesday, March 16, 2010
7:00–8:30 p.m.
First United Methodist Church
419 NE 1st Street
Room: Fellowship Hall

agenda

- 7:00**
Announcements/Reports
Crime Watch
- 7:20**
Update: Koppers Superfund Site
- 8:00**
Planting plan for the Duckpond
- 8:15**
Annual elections for Board Members and Officers

Note: Be sure to check HistoricDuckpond.com for changes and updates to the agenda.

DNA News is published 4 times a year, just prior to general meetings. Meeting dates for 2010 are March 16, May 11, September 14, November 9. All neighborhood residents are welcome and encouraged to attend.

A goose in the Duckpond

You may be wondering why there is a goose in the duckpond. The story goes back to 2002, when the City started renovations to the duckpond and Sweetwater branch. At that time, the pond was populated by 87 ducks, mostly Muscovy ducks. These large ducks were messy, aggressive and prolific. The plans therefore called for removal of these birds and the introduction of a different kind of duck after the renovation. Assisted by some neighbors, duck expert Pearse Hayes removed the Muscovies in the Fall of 2002 and found them a good home. The pond renovations were finished in December 2003.

Introducing new ducks proved to be quite a challenge. Each winter the pond is visited by hooded mergansers and other ducks flying through, but of course we wanted ducks that stayed as well. Funds were collected to purchase ducks, with neighbors contributing more than \$400. With the help of Pearse Hayes, seven Mandarin ducks were introduced in the Fall of 2008 and Spring of 2009. None of them survived, mainly due to the lack of protection from predators. In response to this, neighbors Neil Johnson and Randy Wells built a small shelter for the island and the city was asked not to mow the vegetation.

On December 5th, 2009, Pearse delivered a white male Chinese goose and a female mallard duck. The goose and duck have been raised together, and have acquired the nicknames Mr. Goose and Ms.

Duck. The goose, being bigger and noisier than a duck, helps to ward off predators. The knob on the base of the goose's beak is not a disease, but is typical of its species. Thus far, both animals seem to be enjoying the duckpond. Even the visiting Mergansers seem less skittish than in years past, thanks to the watchful eye of Mr. Goose. They all eat the hydrilla that is growing in the water, and the goose and duck use the island for rest and shelter.

A bin with duck feed has been placed at the south end of the pond. You are welcome to feed the duck and goose with this feed or with bread. We are considering having the City make the steps to the island more like a ramp, and thus better suited to birds' feet than the steep narrow steps currently there. (This may be needed for smaller or, with luck in future, baby ducks to negotiate.) The City will also be placing water plantings around the perimeter of the pond, as originally planned to better support our ducks and other wildlife. Neighbors are invited to assist in sprucing up and planting the island, keeping both beauty and shelter for the ducks in mind. We will also install two beautiful duck nesting boxes built by Neil Johnson on the island. We will then introduce more ducks, with the hope that some will breed and that their offspring be permanently part of our neighborhood. Your continued support and feedback is appreciated!

—Submitted by Edith Kaan

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 Randy Wells at 335.8874 or e-mail conexos@gmail.com.



The next issue of the Duckpond newsletter will be distributed the first weekend in May. Do you have an announcement, story, article, or advertisement that you would like to share? If so, please submit to Randy Wells at conexos@gmail.com no later than **Wednesday, March 31**. Your submissions are appreciated, and a great way to share information with your neighbors!

State of the Duckpond

On January 20th, Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan delivered her final “State of the City” address, and this gave me the idea of doing a “State of the Duckpond,” reflecting on what we have accomplished together in recent years—and highlighting what we hope to see in the future.

I believe the state of the Duckpond neighborhood is strong, and getting stronger. This is evident as I walk, bike, and drive around the neighborhood, and speak to neighbors both new and long-time. You provide abundant evidence of the love that this neighborhood evokes, and the tremendous assets that our neighborhood holds—in the people and places that make this part of town so special.

Our neighborhood association plays an important role in connecting neighbors, providing a forum to discuss issues of concern, and keeping us working in a common direction. Whether it is getting a new playground for our kids, reaching out to our senior citizens, or tackling tough issues like homelessness, we accomplish more by communicating and working together.

Our Neighborhood School

Friends of Metcalfe Elementary was launched last fall, in recognition of the fact that the Duckpond neighborhood (together with nearby areas to the north and east) is now entirely zoned for this elementary school. Please see the article in this issue on *Friends of Metcalfe Elementary* to learn more about what we are doing with Metcalfe, and how you can help!

Our Parks

We are fortunate to have many beautiful parks and green spaces in our neighborhood. In Roper Park, we have spearheaded many improvements including a new playground, 20 new trees, and a drinking fountain. This year, we have asked the

Parks Department to install an information kiosk where residents can post events and information. We have raised some funds for additional improvements to the park and hope to implement these in the coming year. Northeast Park has also received a new playground as well as landscaping improvements, to which the City is now adding repaved and widened bike and walking paths.

The Thomas Center continues to provide a wonderful cultural resource and green space (many thanks to Thomas Center Associates and the City’s Cultural Affairs office). The DNA hosts the horse-drawn wagon rides on the first Saturday in December in conjunction with the city’s annual tree lighting and neighborhood luminaries, helping make this a very popular holiday event.

Our Sweetwater Branch Park has had new landscaping and pet waste bags have been installed to encourage dog owners to pick up. This is definitely an area we can improve upon! If you are a dog owner, *please* use the bags provided (or bring your own) and if you are a neighbor, please provide friendly encouragement for dog owners to “pick up”!

We are also looking forward to plantings in the pond over the next year. The city agreed to provide pond plantings (to be discussed at our next neighborhood meeting) and we invite volunteers to do some landscaping on the island that will provide an attractive habitat for the duck and goose.

A good word is also due to Alachua County Public Schools, who this past year replaced retaining wall and chain link fencing around the west side of the grounds at Kirby Smith Center. Following tree plantings for Florida Arbor Day this past month, the improvements will also include sprucing up of the picnic and play areas.

Our Senior Residents

continued on page 3 >

State of the Duckpond (continued from page 2)

Our Senior Residents

In the past, the association made an effort to get a *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* program going to provide a support system for senior citizens in the neighborhood. We know that many neighbors already do this in an informal way, reaching out to help where needed. Yet we know there are still unmet needs in our community. If you are interested in volunteering to help get *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* off the ground, please contact any board member listed on the back of this newsletter.

Entry Feature

We have completed the gateway sign on NE 10th Avenue, officially marking for the first time the “Historic Duckpond Neighborhood”. This sign was funded entirely by the development of then Eckerd Drugs (now CVS) through a grant earmarked nearly 10 years ago specifically for an entry sign. The design and construction of the structure was completed by neighbor Gary Anglin, and the sign was produced by *Festival Signs* (who also produced the historic district marker on NE 3rd Avenue at 9th Street).

A Duck and A Goose

By now you have all probably had a chance to welcome Mr. Goose and Ms. Duck to the pond. These new residents have brought a lot of joy to neighbors and we are hopeful that they will be here for a long time!



Photo by Duckpond neighbor, Heather Neill.

Annual Activities

In addition to all of these initiatives, the association also does the following:

- produces and delivers quarterly newsletters to 800 households
- maintains a neighborhood email list and website
- hosts quarterly neighborhood meetings
- organizes an annual neighborhood yard sale in Roper Park

Join In!

At our March 16th neighborhood meeting, we will be holding our annual elections to the board. I invite you to take on a role in the association as a member, board member, or volunteer. Even with a modest amount of time, you can contribute tangibly to the health and spirit of our neighborhood. Thank you and here’s to another great year!

**Randy Wells, President
Duckpond Neighborhood Assoc.**

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Neighbor Herman Levy wrote elegantly about our “Gainesville Village, . . . These few blocks [that] offer residents the convenience of the modern city and the tranquility of a village from an earlier day.” I invite you to read the full piece, as published in the Gainesville Sun. For your convenience, a link can be found at <http://HistoricDuckpond.com>.
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FRIENDS OF METCALFE ELEMENTARY

At our Fall DNA meeting, we hosted Felecia Moss, the principal of Metcalfe Elementary, our zoned school. We had a valuable discussion on what parents would like to see at Metcalfe, and how the Duckpond neighborhood can be more involved with the school. As

a result, we started “Friends of Metcalfe”. The Friends group is not limited to parents. In fact, there are many people in our neighborhood who may not have elementary aged children whose talents and energy would benefit Metcalfe.

Already, we have had a boy scout working on an eagle scout project at Metcalfe and neighbors have helped fill food backpacks as part of the United Way Weekend Hunger Backpack Program. (You can donate healthy, non-perishable food that kids would love or make a donation to the Highlands Presbyterian Church Metcalfe Food4Kids Backpack Program.)

In addition, a couple of parents in the neighborhood are working with the principal to develop a proposal for a world cultures enrichment program and resource teacher to build on the fine foundation that exists at Metcalfe. With a first-rate staff and faculty, devoted parents, and students with eager and curious minds, Metcalfe has the potential to develop a cutting-edge program, unprecedented in Alachua County elementary education that will benefit kids of all socioeconomic backgrounds. We will be presenting the proposal to the school board in March, and hope to win their support and funding.

If you would like to know more or help with *Friends of Metcalfe*, please contact **Randy Wells** at conexos@gmail.com or 335.8874.

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 **Randy Wells**, 335.8874 or conexos@gmail.com.

PLEIN AIR ARTISTS AT THOMAS CENTER GARDENS: SATURDAY, MARCH 6

As part of the celebration of the annual *Spring Promenade*, 12 local plein air artists have been invited to create paintings of the historic Thomas Center and its gardens from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 6.

Plein air is a French expression meaning "open air" and refers to the act of painting outdoors with the artist's subject in full view. Plein air artists capture the spirit or essence of a landscape or subject by incorporating natural light, color and movement in their works. The high point of plein air came with the emergence of Impressionism in the mid 1800s.

Attendees will be treated to the unique experience of watching a marathon session of creativity and purchasing a painting wet off the easel to support a worthy cause. Proceeds from the sale of artworks created at the event will be shared with the Thomas Center Associates to support their ongoing mission of restoration and enhancements to the Thomas Center and its gardens.

The following artists will be participating in this event: Frank Barone, Eleanor Blair, Stacy Breheny, Aliye Cullu, Anne Gilroy, Angela Hoppe, Sue Johnson, Scott Lamp, Tim Malles, Julie Robitaille, Peter Senesac and Suza Talbot.

Come by to observe their creations in progress.

Duckpond neighborhood resident honored



Dan Harmeling, a longtime Duckpond resident, was the recipient of this year's *Martin Luther King, Jr., Commission of Florida Hall of Fame Award*. Dan lives on 7th Avenue with his

wife, Kathie.

Dan and his twin brother were born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin in 1941. They learned about racial discrimination early on when their father would often give rides to professional African-American baseball players who were prevented from riding the bus. The family moved to Florida in 1951 and Dan and his brother eventually attended the University of Florida.

In the summer of 1963 while attending UF, Dan and his brother Jim became members of the Alachua County NAACP. They participated in the picketing of segregated restaurants and the local Gainesville movie theatre. Both Dan and his brother canvassed door-to-door in voter registration campaigns. During marches and demonstrations with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the *Southern Christian Leadership Conference* in June of 1964, both brothers were arrested and jailed in St. Augustine. This arrest did not

stop Dan's fight for racial justice.

In January 1965, Dan and his brother helped form the Freedom Party on the UF campus which had the first integrated political party ticket. Four years later, one of the members of this ticket, Samuel Taylor, became the first black president of the student government at UF. In 1963 and again in 1965, Dan was suspended from UF for his activism. Fortunately, sympathetic faculty helped Dan gain reinstatement after both suspensions. However, his official transcript was stamped with "Conduct unbecoming to a Florida student".

Dan has taught math at *Carter G. Woodson Junior High School* in Washington, D.C., and in the Levy County School system. He currently teaches part-time at *Santa Fe College* and at the *Bethune-Cookman University*, Gainesville campus.

The *MLK Commission of Florida* was established in 1984 in Gainesville to promote the elimination of poverty and racism in Alachua County. Since 1984 it has provided community workshops on diversity, restoration of civil rights and other important issues in the community. Each year the commission honors a member of the community for outstanding support of their mission.

Congratulations on your award Dan! 🐦

Spring Promenade in the Northeast Historic District

The Thomas Center Associates present the annual tour of Gainesville's Duckpond homes beginning at 6 p.m. on Friday, March 5, 2010 with a reception and candlelight tour (7-9 p.m.). Tours continue Saturday, March 6, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Friday night and Saturday tours feature seven homes. On Saturday, free activities at the Thomas Center include Plein Air artists painting in the garden

and self-guided tours of the period rooms and gardens.

Reception and candlelight tour tickets are \$15 and can be used for the Saturday tour. Saturday tour tickets are \$10. Tickets may be purchased during the event at the Thomas Center, 302 NE 6th Avenue. Park at the Thomas Center and use the free shuttle to the sites.

Proceeds and contributions benefit the Thomas Center garden makeover. 🐦

If you plant it, they will come . . .



Since moving to Gainesville in 2004 I have kept a record of all butterfly species I see in our garden, as well as in the area in general. Butterflies and moths “are my business,” as I am a curator in the vast collections of Lepidoptera at the McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity at the *Florida Museum of Natural History*. I have been studying this fascinating group of insects since 1949. Since arriving here I have recorded 48 butterfly species in our yard. While some of these have been rarely seen, the most common are the yellow Cloudless Sulfur, the orange Gulf Fritillary, the black-with-yellow-barred Zebra Longwing and the Monarch. Small, wedge-shaped, fast-flying Skippers are tough to identify; but most common among these are the black Horace’s Duskywing and the small orange Fiery Skipper.

While the Duckpond Neighborhood is not as well populated with Lepidoptera as more suburban and rural areas around Gainesville, it is amazing how many butterflies come to our yards. They fly overhead without much notice; and when they find a “friendly” yard or garden they drop down to sip the nectar and, perhaps, lay eggs on food plants if they are present. Some of my neighbors plant annuals and perennials with just such visitors in mind. For food plants, tropical milkweeds attract oviposition by the Monarch and its southern relative, the Queen. Parsley, fennel and dill all attract the Eastern Black Swallowtail to lay eggs. Citrus species are the food plant of our largest species, the Giant Swallowtail. And Cassia and Senna are fed upon by

the big yellow Phoebis sulfurs (three species; but the Cloudless Sulfur is the most common). Blue Plumbago is the food plant of the tiny Cassius Blue butterfly. If you plant the food plant of butterflies that occur in our area, you almost certainly will attract a female to deposit eggs on it. In some cases, as milkweeds, be prepared to have the plant stripped of leaves by the caterpillars.

Most interest, however, is in attracting butterflies to flowers, where they can be seen readily. Some butterfly-attracting perennials include lantana (the orange-and-yellow, “wild type”), plumbago, firespike, firebush, tropical milkweed, and golden dewdrop. Annuals (some of which grow back from the ground after winter kill) include my favorite, red Pentas, and zinnias, mints, sages, phlox, porterweed, sweet almond bush, coreopsis, purple coneflower, and the weedy Spanish needles (white blossom with yellow center). Most of these plants can be purchased at local nurseries, and at the weekend plant sales at the entrance to the *Florida Museum of Natural History* (during warm months). More plants and information about butterfly gardening can be found on the Worldwide Web by entering “Florida butterfly plants” or “butterfly gardening” in *Google* or other browsers. Good books on the butterflies and butterfly gardening are available at the Butterfly Rainforest Shop at the *Florida Museum of Natural History*. Or contact me at covell@louisville.edu if you have questions.



—Submitted by Charlie Covell

DUCKPOND BUTTERFLIES Common and scientific names:

Hesperiidae—Skippers
Long-tailed Skipper—*Urbanus proteus*
Horace’s Duskywing—*Erynnis horatius*
Wild-indigo Duskywing—*Erynnis baptisiae*
Clouded Skipper—*Lerema accius*
Delaware Skipper—*Anatrytone delaware*
Southern Broken-dash—*Wallengrenia otho*
Northern Broken-dash—*Wallengrenia egeremet*
Fiery Skipper—*Hylephila phyleus*
Sachem Skipper—*Atalopedes campestris*
Common Checkered Skipper—*Pyrgus communis*
Tropical Checkered Skipper—*Pyrgus oileus*
Brazilian Skipper—*Calpodetes ethlius*
Monk Skipper—*Asbolis capucinus*
Ocola Skipper—*Panoquina ocola*
Papilionidae—Swallowtails
Pipevine Swallowtail—*Battus philenor*
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail—*Papilio glaucus*
Palamedes Swallowtail—*Papilio palamedes*
Spicebush Swallowtail—*Papilio troilus*
Eastern Black Swallowtail—*Papilio polyxenes asterius*
Giant Swallowtail—*Heraclides crespontes*
Zebra Swallowtail—*Eurytides marcellus*
Pieridae—Sulfurs and Whites
Cloudless Sulfur—*Phoebis sennae*
Orange-barred Sulfur—*Phoebis philea*
Large Orange Sulfur—*Phoebis agarithe*
Sleepy Orange—*Eurema nicippe*
Little Sulfur—*Eurema lisa*
Barred Sulfur—*Eurema daira*
Lycaenidae—Blues, Coppers and Hairstreaks
White M Hairstreak—*Parhassius m-album*
Great Purple Hairstreak—*Atlides halesus*
Gray Hairstreak—*Strymon melinus*
Red-banded Hairstreak—*Calycopis cecrops*
Ceraunus Blue—*Hemiargus ceraunus*
Cassius Blue—*Leptotes cassius*
Nymphalidae—Brushfoots
Eastern Snout Butterfly—*Libytheana carinenta*
Viceroy—*Limenitis archippus*
Pearl Crescent—*Phyciodes tharos*
Phaon Crescent—*Phyciodes phaon*
Question Sign—*Polygona interrogationis*
Common Buckeye—*Junonia coenia*
Red Admiral—*Vanessa atalanta*
American Lady—*Vanessa virginiensis*
Variegated Fritillary—*Euptoieta claudia*
Gulf Fritillary—*Agraulis vanillae*
Zebra Longwing—*Heliconius charithonia*
Hackberry Emperor—*Asterocampa celtis*
Tawny Emperor—*Asterocampa clyton*
Monarch—*Danaus plexippus*
Queen—*Danaus gilippus berenice*

20th Annual Spring Garden Festival: March 20–21, 2010 (10 a.m.–5 p.m.)

Every spring, Kanapaha hosts its annual Spring Garden Festival. The weekend affair features more than 200 booths offering plants, landscape displays, educational materials, arts and crafts, and food. Educational seminars and entertainment are offered throughout and both live and silent auctions offer many bargains on arts, crafts, plants, and gardening supplies. Parking is free and two off-site parking areas are serviced by shuttle buses. Pets are not allowed at these festivals. For more detailed information, visit the Spring Garden Festival website at www.gardenfestival.org.

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Randy Wells

For City Commission District 4
Positive Leadership for Gainesville



I have worked tirelessly for you as President of the Duckpond Neighborhood Association for the last four years, and have enjoyed every minute of it!

Now I ask for your vote March 16th to serve as your commissioner on the issues that matter most to you.
Together we can help make our city the best it can be!

- ★ Effective, Team-Driven Government
- ★ Vibrant Local Businesses & Entrepreneurship
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