



dna news

duckpond neighborhood association • NE Historic District • Gainesville Florida • May 2012



Keep up on happenings between newsletters! Check out our regularly updated website at HistoricDuckpond.com

general meeting

Thursday, May 10, 2012
7:00–8:30 p.m.
First United Methodist Church
419 NE 1st Street
Bethany Room

agenda

GENERAL BUSINESS
Approval of Minutes, Feb. 2011
Treasurer's Report

CRIME REPORT
Gainesville Police Department

GUEST SPEAKER
Wendy Wilbur
Environmental Horticulture Agent
UF/IFAS Alachua County
Extension Service; and
Gainesville Sun columnist

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

DNA News is published four times a year, just prior to general meetings. Meeting dates remaining for 2012 are May 10, September 11, November 13. All neighborhood residents are welcome and encouraged to attend meetings.

Neighborhood Picnic: Sunday, May 20!

Save the date for the annual Duckpond Neighborhood Picnic! Last year's picnic was a great success. About 50 neighbors, young and old attended. The variety of side dishes was astonishing. I was particularly addicted to one neighbor's creation made with bacon and Ritz crackers. If you didn't get a taste, it was probably because I stood by the platter until the hot dogs came off the grill. The bacon and cracker dish was not the only reason I had fun. I got to meet many neighbors for the first time. Your DNA board thought that it was so successful that we decided to try for a repeat. And who doesn't love a good picnic? So to celebrate our wonderful neighborhood, we'll be having a Duckpond neighborhood picnic on **Sunday, May 20** at *Roper Park*. The picnic will start at 4 p.m., and we will have some food ready by 5 p.m. The

Duckpond Neighborhood Association will provide hamburgers, hotdogs, veggie burgers, condiments, and soft drinks. Thanks to the generosity of our neighbors, we will also have a grill set up for everybody to use and maybe even a chef to cook for us. Admission is free, but bring a dish to share, such as potato salad, cole slaw, baked beans, chips, or dessert. You may also want to bring chairs, blankets, and toys or games for kids to increase the fun (no pets, please!). Our treasurer will be present, so if you have not paid your dues for this year, you can pay at the picnic. All residents of the Duckpond neighborhood are welcome! If you wish to help in organizing this event, please contact **Mary Rhodes** at crawley20@hotmail.com. Hope to see you all on Sunday, May 20th! 🐥

—Submitted by Mary Rhodes



2011 Duckpond Neighborhood Picnic



A message from our president

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 boardDNA@googlegroups.com.

Dear Duckpond residents,

Summer is here and many people will be gone for the summer semester. Please keep an eye out on your neighbor's house, and be sure to call **955.1818** if you see anything unusual. If you are leaving for the summer, be sure you have someone pick up your mail and bring in the newspaper. It is a good idea to have someone go inside your house occasionally to check on the interior too.

Please don't forget that elections are coming up on August 14th. If you will not be back by then, be sure to have an absentee ballot mailed to your summer address. Some of the races that we will

vote on that day are for our United States Senator, our Representative in Congress, our State Senator, School Board seats for Districts 2 and 4, and County Commission seats for Districts 1, 3 and 5, among many other races. Please see the Supervisor of Elections website at <http://elections.alachua.fl.us> for more information. When you vote you make your voice known on how you want to see our county and state run. Your vote can make a difference since some of our local elections have been decided by less than 100 votes.

Sincerely,

Melanie Barr, President

About the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation

The Florida Trust for Historic Preservation's mission is to promote the preservation of the architectural, historical and archaeological heritage of Florida through advocacy, education and historic property stewardship.

The Florida Trust for Historic Preservation advocates for legislation and funding in support of historic preservation on behalf of Florida's many historic sites, museums, and parks. It represents Florida's preservation community through public and media outreach, empowers and supports local preservationists by publicizing Florida's Eleven Most Endangered Historic Sites each year, and through a preservation awards program, recognizes exemplary efforts in historic preservation.


Florida Trust for Historic Preservation in Gainesville

The Florida Trust for Historic Preservation last met in Gainesville in 1999 and it was one of the most popular conferences the Trust had with an attendance of nearly 300 people. This year the conference will take place in downtown Gainesville. The *Hampton Inn* will be the base of operations and sessions will be held at the *Thomas Center*, the *Matheson Museum*, and other downtown venues.

The conference begins on Thursday May 17th with the opening session at *Holy Trinity Episcopal* church at 9:30 a.m. The annual meeting luncheon will be at the Jolie banquet hall where the keynote presentation will be on the *Habana Republica* from 1902 to 1940. People attending the Thursday afternoon workshops can choose one of the three sessions that discuss having the right team on board, designing your city, and dealing with environmentally hazardous material. Thursday afternoon tours include a tour of the *Duckpond Neighborhood*, the *Pleasant Street Historic District*, and a density and preservation tour.

The opening reception on Thursday evening will be at the *Matheson Museum*.

Friday morning sessions will include a choice of a hands-on mobile workshop or presentations on Florida's recent past and modern heritage, preserving the future, protection of archaeological sites, and historic preservation tax credits. Friday afternoon workshops will discuss using 3D imaging, sustainable historic preservation, Florida Certified Local Government and Main Street programs, heritage tourism, and how cultural resources invoke memory. The Friday afternoon tours are a tour of mid-century modern buildings, a southeast neighborhood tour, and a tour of the *Historic Haile Homestead*. The 33rd Annual Preservation Award Ceremony will take place at the *University of Florida* auditorium. Tours will be available on Saturday morning for an extra charge. The choices will be a trip to *Dudley Farm*, a tour of the town of Micanopy, and a Cross Creek/Melrose tour.

For more information about the conference please check the website at www.floridatrust.org/annual-conference/ 

—Submitted by Melanie Barr

Urban Farming/Urban Barbecue Downtown

Michael Nabers, a 27-year-old homeowner in the Duckpond neighborhood has been dreaming for years about what he would like 104 South Main Street to ultimately become in commerce. The story started in 2004 in college when *Rue Bar* was opened. This was a spur of the moment investment after owning a car audio and video company in Ocala. “I was 19 and naive and didn’t realize what I was getting myself into at the time,” said Nabers. He was in business school at UF while owning the business, and said it was a tremendous learning experience in the real world of business. “But owning *Rue Bar* was never my passion or ultimately what I wanted to do.” Fast forward six years later, and it was time for a change.

In October 2008, Nabers purchased the property, solidifying the long term position within the location, and guaranteeing that the property needed to reach its highest use. “I firmly believe that the positioning of *Smokehouse* is the greatest value to the community. Offering all-wood smoked, urban barbecue (barbecue styles from the famous U.S. cities), blues and live music, and the most nutritious produce in Gainesville, grown on our roof, seems to be a good niche.”

The restaurant space is 6,000 square feet with excellent attention to detail. The 25 interior tables are made from 112-year-old, repurposed heart pine wood that was reclaimed from the attic. Removal of the wood was necessary to install the sprinkler system. There are also 6 cypress slabs that have been installed throughout the business that are repurposed from fallen trees in local Florida swamps. As far as the concept, there has been great emphasis put on “everything local”, displaying airbrushed historic photos from the 1881–1920 era of downtown Gainesville. The artwork is truly amazing in how closely the airbrush work resembles the actual photos. One of the photos is from the intersection of South Main Street and 1st Avenue, the location

of *Smokehouse* restaurant, with the railroad going down Main Street in front of the buildings. Bourbon is also a part of the barbecue-bourbon-blues theme, so they brought in 28 whiskey barrels from Kentucky, stained them, and displayed them throughout the restaurant. During construction, the kitchen floor was removed before pouring a concrete slab. This was an opportunity to excavate the area and search for artifacts that were buried next to the railroad tracks during 1884–1900 era. Sure enough, coins from the 1800s and 1900s, buttons, ink bottles, and horse shoes were all found in this space. “When time permits, we plan on displaying all these artifacts in a glass case for customers to see, it’s really neat to know the items were from a rich time in Gainesville’s history.”

“As the concept developed, I realized that history from Gainesville’s past and innovation for Gainesville’s future was the direction we were seeking.” Further digging was required. According to research provided by Melanie Barr this building was built in the mid 1900s since it was not in place in 1903, but was here by 1909. The 1909 map shows the east half of the block on SW 1st Avenue and South Main Street occupied by a brick block running from east to west along SW 1st Avenue that included five storefronts facing north. Among the stores in 1909 were a dry goods store, a tin shop, and a grocery store. Eventually the stores were combined and the brick block was opened up on the interior to become one large space. Many of the employees hear noises and footsteps on the wooden floor in the 105-year-old building. Late at night the bathroom toilets flush often unoccupied, and the lights flicker. It must not be their imagination with four of the current *Smokehouse* employees swearing that the place is haunted. It’s okay though. This must be a friendly ghost, even though it is very creepy.

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KUDOS TO GAINESVILLE PUBLIC WORKS AND POND CLEAN UP

Some of you may have seen the flurry of emails in March concerning the waterfowl food vandalism and the dumping of a five gallon paint bucket in the pond. Neighbors were puzzled as to how to remove the unsightly bucket without taking a swim. Within a few hours after a phone call to the City, the bucket was removed from the pond and deposited on the Rhodes’ doorstep. Another result from the emails was the offer of many neighbors to participate in a pond clean up day. **Sunday, May 13** has been designated as “Pond Clean Up Day.” Neighbors who would like to help remove debris from the pond will meet at the south end of the pond at 2 p.m. If you have a long-handled net, please bring it. A reminder will be emailed to all those on the DNA distribution list. If you would like to be added to the distribution list, please see the gray box on the back cover of this newsletter.

COUNTY TALKS ABOUT TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Local news has been full of talk lately about the cost of maintaining roads and providing new transit services throughout the community. A potential sales tax for transportation has been discussed at county commission meetings and combined city/county commission meetings. Future public hearings still need to be held before a referendum for the tax can be placed on the November ballot. Be sure to keep up to date on the latest news on this issue.

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

Let's Go Downtown

Music on the Plaza returns from May to October. The *Bo Diddley Community Plaza* comes alive every Friday night from 8–10 p.m. as local and regional bands and performing arts are showcased under the stars. Grab your blanket and lawn chair and plan to be downtown on Friday nights! The *Lunchbox Café* is open for your beverage and snack desires.

For Families with Children

Check out the *Natural History Museum* website at www.flmnh.ufl.edu/. Their summer camps immerse children into the sciences this summer and investigate natural history through activities and hands-on exploration. Examine fossils, discover ancient cultures and meet some of the most interesting members of the animal kingdom.

Thomas Center Galleries

May 5–June 23, 2012

In a Southern Garden:
Design and Observation

Curated by Tim Malles, "In a Southern Garden" will feature the work of 16 Gainesville-based artists created during two days (March 9–10) of plein air (from the French words for "open air") painting in the enchanting gardens of the historic *Thomas Center* and *Matheson Museum*.

May 26–June 30, 2012

Art Teachers' Exhibit
Mezzanine Gallery

A reception will be held Thursday, June 7.

Urban Farming/Urban Barbecue Downtown (continued from page 3)

Innovation for Gainesville's Future

In 2010, Michael Nabers and Jeb Martin partnered and developed greenhouses in Reddick, Florida. The greenhouses were used for the research and development of techniques in vertical farming. Jeb Martin has worked with hydroponics since the 1980s, and consulted for one of the developers of *Epcot* in the early 90s. The systems they have designed are very effective and proved to grow delicious, fresh produce. "Last year, everyone we gave tomatoes, basil, bell peppers, herbs and spices to said it was the finest in the area," said Martin. The two seem to have their hydroponic systems refined and scalable. Urban farming was an attraction for Nabers and Martin. "We watched many documentaries and films on utilizing unused roof space to grow produce.

It provides cleaner air to the atmosphere and is truly the epitome of local foods." They plan to sell the produce in the restaurant as well as at the downtown farmer's market on Wednesdays, starting this summer. It doesn't get any more local for a restaurant than on the roof, across the street from the farmer's market. They hope to bring imagination and healthy food options to a district that does not have a permanent marketplace. "Who knows, we may end up being your restaurant and grocery store, much like smokehouses and meat market's were run back in the late 1800s." The first roof garden is planted, and will be yielding tomatoes, collards, parsley, cilantro, basil, kale, bell peppers, and lettuces in less than six weeks. 🐦

—Submitted by Michael Nabers

*Note a coupon is in the advertisement section.

Spring Promenade 2012: Showing off our homes

Several *Duckpond* houses and the *Thomas Center* were popular places to visit one weekend last month. On Friday and Saturday, March 9–10, the *Thomas Center Associates* (a volunteer group) held the 2012 Spring Promenade. There was a reception on Friday at the *Thomas Center*, followed by a candlelight tour that night, then a tour during the day on Saturday with events at the *Thomas Center*.

Five houses were on the tour, and one of them (Larry and Jane Fowler's house on NE 7th Avenue) was staffed by volunteers on behalf of *Duckpond Neighborhood Association* (one of the sponsors of the tour). There was a great view of the blooming azaleas in the *Thomas Center* gardens from the Fowlers' front porch. The view was a great reminder that the proceeds from the tour are used by the *Thomas Center Associates* to improve the gardens of the *Thomas Center*. The other four houses on the tour (owned by Karen Adam and Chip Sawyer, Evans Haile, Renee and George Wilson, Susan

Parrish and Ken Dixner) had nice surprises for the visitors, including a greenhouse, an Asian-inspired addition, hidden gardens, a very large formal dining room, and a den paneled in dark wood.

This year's Promenade was a success in many ways. The attendance was the highest so far: close to 500 people, raising over \$6,500 for the garden enhancement. Attendance was so high that more programs had to be printed during the tour! The weather was great, flowers were in bloom, there was interesting art in the gardens, and lots of folks from all over were enjoying our neighborhood. Several of us met new neighbors or got re-acquainted with neighbors we have not seen in awhile. And many folks were getting ideas and inspiration on how they could restore their historic houses. As Jan Scott, a *Duckpond* resident and chair of the Spring Promenade for the past nine years said, "As a resident of an historic home in the *Duckpond* since 1975, I

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Gainesville Pet Finder: Reuniting pets and people

Fellow animal lovers know that our pets become a part of our families. They become our companions, they give us comfort when we need it, and they provide us with that much needed friendly greeting at the end of a long day. When a pet (we like to call them fur-babies) goes missing it can be devastating. Our minds are filled with worst case scenarios. We worry if they are cold, hungry, and lonely. This is what happened to me in March of 2010, when I found out about a Facebook page called *Gainesville Pet Finder*. The page was started by Angela Shore who states: "When I started trying to help people find their lost pets I realized the biggest problem was that people didn't know what to do, where to look or what resources were available. I wanted to fill that gap."

The idea behind GPF is to have one place where many people come together in an effort to make connections which might not otherwise be made. We have fans from Animal Control, veterinarian's offices, groomers, even the *Gainesville Sun*. A flier in a vet's office is only seen by the people who go there. But on Facebook we have a way of getting that lost pet's picture out there to literally thousands of people. Duckpond resident Amie Kreppel writes: "We had seen the lost cat a number of times and had no idea who she belonged to. We even wondered if we should start looking for a home for her. It turned out though that she already had a home and a family that missed her very much. All it took was a posting on GPF to find her family and get her back home." That cat's name was Sophie. I had seen the flier, took a picture of it and posted it on our page.

Duckpond resident Tobin Wagstaff had this to say about GPF: "I was really thankful for *Gainesville Pet Finder* because they found my dog and tracked me down while I was coordinating *Studio Percussion* in the homecoming parade. She was returned home safe. This is a great testi-

mony to the power of the human spirit taking care of each other even if it doesn't seem like a big deal in the grand scheme of the world. Finding Pepper was a big deal to me. She's important to my life. Thank you!"

Another reunion occurred when I was out looking for my own escape artist dog and saw a cat that I did not recognize. I stopped, saw a flier, called the number and followed the cat into a backyard where I was finally able to get him to come to me. As it turned out, the cat belonged to someone who had recently suffered a series of losses, so when Zona went missing it was like the straw that broke the camel's back. We are always happy to help reunite pets with their people but this one seemed to have so much more meaning because we were able to give her something back instead of adding to her grief.

The list goes on. There was Jack the hound mix, a 17-year-old blind lab mix named Piglet, Olive the black and white pit mix, Lucy the black lab, Malcolm the gray and white cat, Oliver the grey tuxedo, Mr. Pips the cat, Daisy the Maltese . . . all Duckpond residents reunited directly or indirectly thanks to GPF.

Being a part of *Gainesville Pet Finder* has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. To be able to take away the anguish of one whose pet is missing satisfies my soul like nothing else can. Many of our regular fans feel the same way. We come together as a community to provide not only help in finding a missing pet but also encouragement and moral support. The free service we offer to our community has meant so much to so many people. I am so grateful for the page and all of our Duckpond fans! If you haven't already, please "like" us on Facebook and join us in our mission to help reunite pets with their people! 🐾

—Submitted by Jennifer Kramel

SPRING CLEANING?

Out with the old and unused is often a ritual of Spring. Consider donating your unneeded items to local animal rescue groups! Your items will provide additional funding towards the care and rescue of animals in need.

Alachua County Humane Society has recently relocated to 4205 Northwest 6th Street (ph: 373.9522). Check out their new facilities, including a larger thrift store.

Gainesville Pet Rescue holds monthly "garage sales" at 5403 Southwest Archer Road (ph: 692.4773). Donations are accepted from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. All profits support GPR's mission of rescuing adoptable cats and dogs from the Alachua County Shelter and providing foster homes and medical care until permanent loving homes are found. Best selling items include jewelry, bric-a-brac, housewares, and decorative items. GPR cannot accept clothing, computer equipment, large appliances, or large furniture. Tax receipts are available for donations.



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Spring Promenade 2012 (continued from page 4)

have personally lived the experience of preservation and restoration and it has been inspiring to have the *Thomas Center* practically in my back yard.” And the tour shows, as Jan said, “the diversity of structures in the area by showcasing an eclectic group in age, style and character.”

Sixteen Plein Air artists created and showed their works of art on the lawn of the *Thomas Center* on that Saturday. Did you miss this, or want to see the art again, or interested in possibly purchasing a painting? There will be an exhibit of the paintings, titled “In a Southern Garden”, at the *Thomas Center* from May 5 until June 23, in the main gallery. Paintings will be for sale; proceeds will go to the *Thomas Center Associates* and the *Matheson Museum*. At least one of the artists is a resident of the Duckpond.

Two historic “new” rooms were officially opened that weekend at the *Thomas Center*: Major Thomas’ Private Office, located on the first floor not far from the stairway, and a conference room upstairs featuring the Thomas family’s formal dining table and cradle. Next time you walk by the *Thomas Center* and it is open, you can step inside to see them.

The *Thomas Center* wishes to express thanks to all of the people (so many!) and organizations involved in this year’s event—especially the owners of the five houses on the tour. And many of us in Duckpond would like to express our thanks to the *Thomas Center Associates*, for running the Spring Promenade and keeping the *Thomas Center* gardens looking great. 🐦

—Submitted by Brian Miller

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If you are curious about the responsibilities and time commitment for being a Board member, please contact any of the Board members listed above by calling, or email boardDNA@googlegroups.com. With your help, we can continue to make the Duckpond a great place to live.

Do you have an announcement, story, article, or advertisement that you would like to share? If so, please submit your information to boardDNA@googlegroups.com. Your submissions are appreciated, and a great way to share information with your neighbors!



Are you or do you know an artist (or performing artist) who lives or works in our neighborhood? We would like to highlight Duckpond artists in future issues of DNA News. Please contact boardDNA@googlegroups.com for more information.



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

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PO Box 5794
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Stay Informed: Join the DNA Update email list!

To join, e-mail your address to boardDNA@googlegroups.com. DNA updates are typically sent out once or twice a month. DNA will never use your email for solicitation or political purposes.

duckpond neighborhood association membership form

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▶ DNA News occasionally lists the names of paying members. Permission to list your name: yes no