



# GAZETTEER

November 2008

## Land Conservation Victories!

**D**URING A STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT IN EARLY 2007, THE BOARD OF ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST CONCLUDED THAT THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT LAND CONSERVATION ACTIVITY ACT SHOULD PURSUE WAS THE RENEWAL OF *ALACHUA COUNTY FOREVER*. ON NOVEMBER 4, 2008, THE *WILD SPACES & PUBLIC PLACES* REFERENDUM PASSED WITH 59,780 (51.5%) VOTING "FOR" AND 56,325 (48.5%) VOTING "AGAINST."

The ½ penny sales tax for two years will raise as much as \$20 million for local land conservation, and an equal amount for park improvements and recreational facilities. Most of the land conservation portion will go to Alachua County Forever, the county program that purchases environmentally sensitive properties, with about 14% going to the City of Gainesville to acquire nature parks.

Before finding its way onto the ballot, the referendum traveled a long and winding road – with discussions starting nearly two years ago, and culminating in a measure that brought together the greenspace and parks advocates. Jack Hughes of the Gainesville Sports Commission chaired the political action committee, and ACT's Robert Hutchinson and Lesa Holder were the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer. The campaign raised over \$50,000, virtually all of which came from Alachua Conservation Trust's donor base. Pegeen Hanrahan, who serves on ACT's Board and is a consultant with *The Conservation Campaign*, was our campaign strategist.

Between the initial ideas and the final form of the Wild Spaces – Public Places referendum, hundreds of people were involved, including advisory boards, high-level city and county officials, and the Chamber of Commerce. More than a dozen organizations endorsed the measure, including the African-American Accountability Alliance, the League of Women Voters, and the Gainesville Sun. There was no organized opposition – unless the daily economic news can be counted.

LandVote.com reports that nation-wide, 88 of 124 land conservation referenda were approved this year, for a record amount of \$8.4 billion in new conservation funds. In Alachua

County, the voting results showed a definite split between the younger and urban voters, whose precincts favored the measure by a 2:1 margin; and older, more suburban or rural voters who were less supportive.

For two months, the ACT office has been the headquarters for the campaign: with volunteers producing signs, flyers, posters, mailers, the website, radio commercials, preparing presentations, and responding to media and citizen requests. The unprecedented voter turnout anticipated in Gainesville, spurred by the presidential election, created both opportunities and challenges.

ACT also proposed an Alachua County Charter Amendment to create a "Registry of Protected Public Places". It passed overwhelmingly, with nearly 75% of the electorate in support, and Robert Hutchinson has proposed that the City of Gainesville follow suit with an identical City charter amendment to be decided during the Spring election in 2009.

A State constitutional amendment also passed which will provide property tax benefits for both permanent conservation easements, and for land temporarily designated as conservation. ACT has already joined with the other land trusts in the State to begin crafting the legislation that will be needed to implement this important change.

While Alachua Conservation Trust as an organization generally steers clear of politics, when the need arises for action that is specifically about our mission of land conservation, we do not hesitate to get involved. For more about the campaign, and to keep track of how the funds are being spent, go to: [www.WildSpacesPublicPlaces.org](http://www.WildSpacesPublicPlaces.org)



Alachua Conservation Trust thanks our many supporters whose generosity makes possible the protection of north Florida's special places. Donors with asterisk (\*) also contributed to Wild Spaces - Public Places

# Hogtown Headwaters: Partnership + Protection = Park

## \$ 50,000 +

John & Anne Shermeyen  
Two anonymous donors

## \$ 10,000 - \$ 49,999

AEC Trust  
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HOGTOWN HEADWATERS IS NOW THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE'S NEWEST NATURE PARK. THIS 70+ ACRE PARCEL IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF HOW A NON-PROFIT LAND TRUST CAN WORK WITH THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS.

The owner of more than 90 acres had been trying to sell their northwest Gainesville parcel for years. Home Depot wanted to purchase a new store site, but only needed 15 acres. The City saw the need for a nature park in this area, and along with environmentalists, wanted to see the creek's headwaters protected. An adjacent business also wanted to expand by a couple of acres.

In 2006, ACT proposed the project to Florida Communities Trust on behalf of the City. Exactly two years later, the project closed, and here's what it looks like: Home Depot has a new store on a site-sensitive footprint of 15-acres. The City has a new park of more than 70 acres, preserving the best environmental features. The adjacent business, Streits MotorSports, will be able to expand onto an old mobile home sales lot that had been trashed – so this existing business will not have to move. And Home Depot donated \$250,000 to the City of Gainesville for initial park development. These funds came from the outparcel sale to Streits, which ACT also negotiated.



*Virginia sweet spire blooming over Hogtown Creek*

Under the terms of the FCT grant, the City was required to provide a 25% match. Because the sale price was \$4.8 million, this would have required the City to come up with \$1.2 million, an impossibility in these lean budget years. So Home Depot agreed to provide the City's share of the match by reducing the purchase price by this amount. ACT negotiated this "bargain sale" by working with Home Depot's real estate team and attorneys.

The transaction involved five parties – each with their legal team – and required at least a dozen drafts of the closing statement to get it right. At the end of the day, the deal was only possible due to the corporate philanthropy of Home Depot (who never

wavered), the creativity of ACT's legal counsel of Phil DeLaney and Robbin Karr (of Scruggs and Carmichael), the problem-solving "Never-say-Never" folks at Florida Communities Trust, the courage of Mike and Marion Jones of Streits (to close on the outparcel prior to receiving approvals from the City), and the commitment of Gainesville's Assistant City Attorney Nicolle Shalley and the Parks staff (particularly Anne Egan and Geoff Parks).

In the early 1990s, Alachua Conservation Trust received a \$3 million grant to create the Hogtown Creek Greenway. It's gratifying to add another piece to the puzzle in protecting Gainesville's beautiful but neglected creeks.



# North Florida Wetlands Conservation Project

WET PRAIRIES ARE SUBTLE, BEAUTIFUL, AND DYNAMIC ECOSYSTEMS, AND ALACHUA COUNTY IS AMONG THE FEW PLACES WHERE THESE LANDSCAPES EXIST IN GOOD CONDITION. WHILE PAYNES PRAIRIE IS THE MOTHER OF ALL WET PRAIRIES, MANY SISTER PRAIRIES STRETCH ACROSS OUR COUNTY'S SOUTHERN BORDER.



Wet prairies are habitat for a wide range of creatures large and small, but are critical for migratory birds. The annual pulse of migration, during which some birds travel down the central Florida flyway from thousands of miles away, is a miracle that we are able to witness in our back yard.

The efforts of many organizations are helping to protect our local steppingstones in this flyway. ACT's contributions include our purchase of Lake Tusawilla with Florida Communities Trust funds and private donations. The corridor

between Pithlachocco (aka Newnans Lake) and Paynes Prairie has also been an ACT focus for decades. Alachua County Forever has acquired thousands of acres in the southern tier of the county that include some of our most pristine wilderness.

In March 2008, ACT received a \$1 million federal grant from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) for our *North Florida Wetlands Conservation Project*, the first phase of a multi-year effort to protect this flyway. The initial year's funding is targeting the acquisition of wet prairies and surrounding uplands in the Tusawilla and Lake Kanapaha basins. In future years, ACT and its partners, The Conservation Fund, Alachua County Forever, The Conservation Trust for Florida, and Florida Communities Trust, hope to extend the grant to include other wet prairies.

It is important to move quickly, as our remaining prairies are being threatened with sod farming, over-grazing, and residential development. One requirement of the federal NAWCA grants is that good bird data, including photos, be available to document the use by migratory birds. With the cooperation of the Audubon Society and both amateur and professional birders, we hope to convince federal authorities to continue supporting our efforts to protect these panoramic wetland prairies. Special thanks to the private individuals who partnered in this application and to 1000 Friends of Florida for co-authoring the proposal.



## \$ 500 - \$ 999

- Thomas & Glenna Carr
- Alison Blakeslee & Rick Fisher\*
- Kathy Cantwell & Julia Thaler\*
- Chris & Bernie Machen
- Mark & Erika Nelson
- David & Carolyn Brown
- Bruce & Paula DeLaney
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- Sally & Josh Dickinson\*
- GIS Associates, Inc
- Doug Hornbeck & Sue Mauk\*
- Jack Hughes\*
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- Warren & Winnie Nielsen\*
- Pandion Systems
- Dan & Molly Pearson\*
- Beverly Sensbach
- Timothy Strauser & Marcy Wilson
- Elizabeth Sugalski
- Tioga Town Center
- James & MaryAnne Wagner
- Youth Soccer, Inc.\*

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- Jane Adair & Albert Matheny
- Eric Amundson & Sherri Boyd Amundson
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- James & Patricia Atchison \*
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- Mike & Monica Carter
- William & Kathryn Castine
- David & Diana Castine

## homestead holidays

### Historic Haile Homestead

at Kanapaha Plantation  
8500 Archer Road (SR 24)

**Sunday, December 7th**  
Noon to 4 PM

Homestead Holidays - A Victorian Celebration. Music, goodies, docents in costume! A real step back in time!

*Free admission*



**Friday, December 12th**  
6 - 9 pm

Candlelight Visits at the Historic Haile Homestead - holiday splendor illuminated by candles as it looked in the 1880s.

*Admission \$10, children free*

(352) 336-9096

[www.HaileHomestead.org](http://www.HaileHomestead.org)



## \$ 100 - \$ 499

Jim Channell & Dorota Haman  
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David Coffey\*  
Matthew Cohen  
Bob & Bhakti Cohen  
Donald & Margaret Collier  
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    Tony Malone\*  
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Fred & Patricia Harden



# Twigs in the Nest

## Conservation Easement in Serenola Forest

The Serenola Forest is a mixed hardwood hammock on a promontory that pokes into the northern edge of Paynes Prairie. Its neighborhoods, including Idylwild, have been fiercely protective of the natural resources in this area for decades – even getting their own special area designation in the City and County comprehensive plans.

Alachua Conservation Trust has been seeking permanent conservation solutions for Serenola Forest, which has been difficult due to the lack of funds available compared to the high real estate values. For instance, one parcel of less than 100 acres sold for \$18 million at the height of the recent real estate boom.



Kate Lee, a retired UF librarian who lives in the middle of the forest, figured out one way to save some land – she donated a conservation easement and a remainder interest to ACT for her beautiful homestead. The transaction was structured so that she first would gain the maximum benefit from the federal tax deductions available for donors of conservation easements. When those benefits have run their course, ACT will then receive the donation of a partial remainder interest in her home and land, while she retains the right to live there with a life estate. This will generate another income tax benefit, while still providing funds in the future for her health care, for her heirs, or for other charities.

An added benefit to Kate is that ACT paid most of the transaction costs and funded a monitoring and enforcement endowment from the future proceeds of our ownership of her property. For Kate Lee, this transaction is more than her legacy of the forested land that she loves; it is her challenge to everybody who seeks a creative way to save their land with their local conservation trust.

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## Gum Slough Conservation Easement

When Tom Ankersen and his law students paddled five hours up to the headspring of Gum Slough, a tributary of the Withlacoochee River, they had no idea they would bump into the owner's daughter, Judy Smith. Their conversation led to UF Conservation Clinic students drafting a conservation easement over her Uncle Wilson Smith's 423 acres. The adjacent land, owned by her father, has an easement that needs updating, and will probably be transferred to Alachua Conservation Trust to consolidate the protection of more than 800 acres of Florida wilderness.

Tristan Harper and John November were the two UF law students assigned to the project, and they drafted an elegant easement that zones the property into various levels of protection, with the goal to limit the impact of future agriculture or forestry on the seven springs the property contains. Tristan has been hired by ACT to draft three more conservation easements, and John November worked with the Conservation Trust for Florida during the summer. In association with ACT, he is also putting together an application for state designation of the *Potano Paddling Trail* in eastern Alachua County.



## Prairie Creek Preserve Expanded – Again

Another 48 acres was added to ACT's Prairie Creek Preserve a few months ago. The land included a long stretch of frontage on the Gainesville-Hawthorne Rail Trail, and was the "hole in our donut." The property has been well-managed, and even though parts of it are young pine plantation, it was never plowed like much of the adjoining industrial forest land. Some of its very nice open marshes are popular with a large number of wading birds and ducks.

The property was acquired using grant funds from Florida Communities Trust, with additional funding from a wetlands mitigation project. The mitigation funding not only helped purchase the land and provide for an endowment, it will be funding extensive re-planting of native groundcover, fire management, and other enhancement activities in the future. The new property has a hiking/biking trail that can be accessed from the Gainesville-Hawthorne Rail Trail at ACT's kiosk on CR 2082. Now is a great time of year to enjoy the fall color of maples, blooming blazing stars, and saltbush.



*ACT's latest purchase along  
the Gainesville Hawthorne Trail*



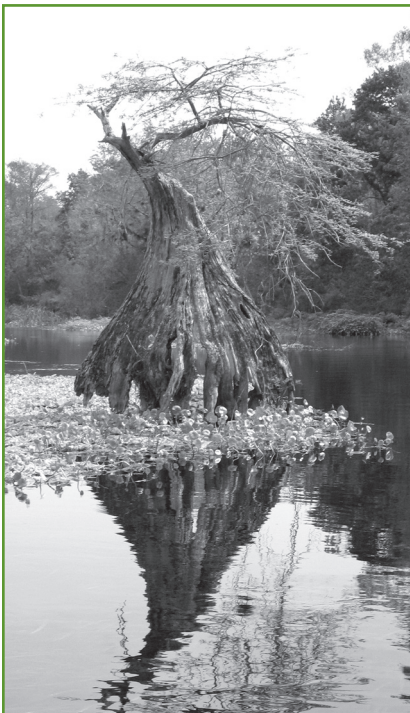
## Blues Creek Ravine/ Fox Pond Addition

In 2002, Alachua Conservation Trust envisioned a project that would conserve exceptionally beautiful land in the Millhopper Road area. It consisted of four parcels: Fox Pond was ultimately acquired as an addition to San Felasco Hammock Preserve, and the Blues Creek Ravine was acquired by Alachua Conservation Trust with a major grant from Florida Communities Trust.

Another piece of the puzzle fell into place with the Governor and Cabinet's recent approval to purchase the Winter family property, which will become part of San Felasco Hammock. This property includes a mature hammock forest on a parcel that is a long, needle-shaped appendage into the Preserve, and was a potential management problem for the Preserve in the future. The Winter family was patient in negotiating the sale of their family's former homestead.

The final parcel for ACT to acquire will provide good public access to our Blues Creek Ravine. A cooperative agreement with the University of Florida's IFAS and Alachua County Forever is being negotiated that will hopefully conserve another 60 acres of karst forest, while providing space for a small parking area and entry trail.

The challenge of saving valuable property on the edge of suburban development is daunting, but the real value is seeing children who now have an accessible wilderness to discover in their backyards.



*Ancient "bonsai" cypress  
on Gum Slough*

### \$ 100 - \$ 499

-  Larry Harris & Kathleen Deagan
-  Tom Harris & Martha Monroe \*
-  Carmen Harris \*
-  Harvest Thyme Café \*
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-  Jack and Marjorie Hauptman \*
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## 2008 Conservation Stewards Awards

**“This saving is hard. There’s hard labor in thrift. But those who listen have been resourceful. Some savings have accumulated and we are richer for tenacious accounting of the living green.”**

*- excerpt from “The Hard Saving” by Sidney Wade*



*Kate Barnes who lead efforts to save Cross Creek, whose advocacy ultimately saved Lochloosa Forest; who served on the Alachua County Commission; and whose artistic vision of north central Florida expresses the essence of our home.*

Hopefully you didn't miss the 2008 Conservation Stewards Awards on March 21<sup>st</sup>. The outdoor BBQ took place at Hickory Ranch, the site of ACT's first major acquisition – 963 acres – now part of Paynes Prairie. More than 450 people enjoyed sunset strolls down to the prairie with cracker cowhunters and Jim Weimer, Preserve biologist, telling stories about Paynes Prairie. Past and present ACT staff showcased the diverse projects ACT has tackled in its twenty year history and shared the long list of important work still on the “must do” list. Conservation Steward Award winners Bruce Delaney, Kate Barnes and Harold Nugent were honored. Crowds of ACT supporters enjoyed a dramatic moonrise, hayrides, and a silent auction that raised \$9000. The celebration was closed with a lyrical and thought-provoking concert by Pierce Pettis.

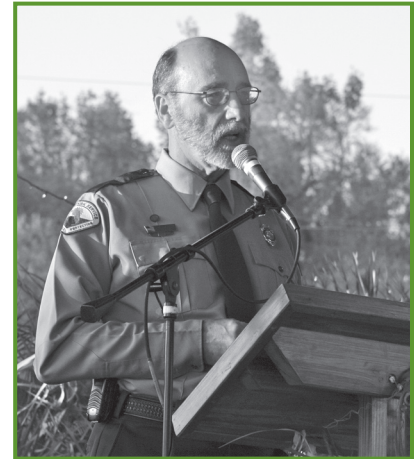
*On behalf of the board, staff, and supporters of Alachua Conservation Trust, please accept our heartfelt thanks for a successful and memorable 2008 Conservation Stewards Awards.*



*Bruce Delaney who also led efforts to save Cross Creek and Lochloosa Forest; who served on the Gainesville City Commission; who lead efforts to protect Gainesville's well-field; who served on the board of Alachua Conservation Trust; and who leads the Florida Natural Resources Leadership Institute.*



*Harold Nugent who is known to students as the Alligator Man; who through a partnership with Paynes Prairie, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and teachers in Alachua and Marion counties has connected thousands of students to our natural resources by using the best prop of all - LIVE alligators.*



*Alachua Conservation Trust thanks  
our 2008 Corporate Sponsors  
for their generosity*

**Salter, Feiber, Murphy,  
Hutson & Menet, P.A.**  
Attorneys at Law

**Fine, Farkash, and Parlapiano**  
Attorneys



**Micanopy Animal Hospital  
Wild Birds Unlimited**

**\$ 100 - \$ 499**

- Jon & Tanya Mickler \*
- David & Susan Mikolaitis
- Jean Larson & William Mitchell
- Christy & Jeff Montgomery
- Jack & Ina Moore
- John Moran Peggie Bowie
- Mimi Moreno
- Franklin & Cynthia Morgan
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- Leslie Peebles
- Susan Pendock
- James & Jennifer Pochurek
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- Peter & Adeline Polshek
- Joe Prenger &  
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- John Scott
- Debra Segal & Bob Knight
- Celeste & Hoch Shitama
- Dale Simpson
- Frederick Smith
- Andrei Sourakov
- Emory & Jennifer Springfield
- Kirk Stage
- The Staiger-Barichivich Family
- Suzanne Stapleton
- Thomas Stevens
- David Stirt \*
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- David Stringer
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- Christine Sutter \*
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Jeanna Mastrodicasa \*
- JulieAnne Tabone\*
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- Ellen Thoms & Brad Stith

Donors to ACT Silent Auctions in 2008

Allison LeBaron \* Cynthia Karle \* Satchel's Pizza \* Diana & Dave Castine of Salon LaDiDa\* Robbie Rucker, Festival Signs \* Linda Blondheim \* Laura Nesmith \* David Etherington & Jeff Dunn \* Melissa Montilla \* Sanctuary Yoga \* Irene Salley \* Tom Glikes \* Joe Durando and Trace Giornelli \* Native Plant Society (Erick Smith) \* Dan Rountree \* Sylvia Scudder \* Wes Corbett \* Linda Pence \* Aliqe Cullu \* Lauren Garber \* Steve Morrison \* Stacey Breheny \* Mary Lisa Kitakis-Spano \* Mike Kemp \* Kate Barnes \* Lily Thoman \* Julie Robitaille \* Jacqui Collette \* Dudley Farms \* Donna Mitchell \* Daniel Long \* Doug Dyer \* Dale Cole \* Cheryl Kirkland \* Brenda Bayne \* Ann Gill \* Tioga Town Center \* Big Trees Plantation \* Sweetwater Coffee \* Michael Drummond \* Kyle Goodwin \* Karen Kirkman \* Dahvi Fradkin \* Jim Weimer \* Larry Korhnak \* Marion Siegal \* Linda Damico \* Doug Hazen \* Alter Ego Fitness \* Liz Fetty, The Strand \* Wine and Cheese Gallery \* ACT \* Buddha Belly \* 2nd St. Bakery \* The Futon Corner \* Angela Hoppe \* Howard & Lisa Jelks \* Vicki Duncan \* Susan Trammell \* Stephen Tabone \* Steve Nash \* Margaret Tolbert \* Margaret Tolbert and Stefan Crucium \* Anne Gilroy \* Eleanor Blair \* Phyllis Saarinen \* Friends of Paynes Prairie \* Dominick Martino \* Liz Fetty \* Steve Robitaille \* Julie Robitaille \* Riley Blicht, Garden Gate Nursery \* Dawn Bone, LMT \* Frank & Winny Ruffino \* Polly Doughty \* Michael Kemp \* John Moran \* Gladys Lane \* Dorn's Liquors and Wine Warehouse \* H.J. Herrera \* Canoe Outpost \* Lars Anderson, Adventure Outpost

*Save the Date!*

**The Tenth Annual  
Conservation  
Stewards Awards  
and Banquet**

Friday, March 20, 2009

Online registrations will be  
accepted beginning in January

Thank You!



# ACT's Friends and Family

A local land trust is a group of people willing to get up and do what needs to be done. In the year since our last newsletter (hey – we've been busy) a lot of folks have been very generous with their time, talent, and money. But first, some brief memories of those we miss . . .

**Susan Wright** and **Jane Walker** – who inspired two beautiful trails at our Prairie Creek Preserve named after them in honor of their courage and civic virtues; **Courtland Collier**, an ACT Conservation Steward in 2000, who kept the “conserve” in conservative, and never saw greenspace that didn't need saving; **Mo Morris**, a Conservation Steward from 2001, for his ferocious defense of Watermelon Pond and environs; **Warren Lane** – staunch supporter of land conservation, supreme dog-lover, and founder of the Women for Wise Growth Auxiliary; and **Bill Sanders**, who is probably telling some tremendous whoppers, with a twinkle in his eye, at his happy hunting grounds.



*Thanks to Santa Fe Community College students for counting birds on Tuskawilla Prairie*

Alachua Conservation Trust has enjoyed tremendous support from the business community this year. Thanks to **Mike and Marion Jones of Streits Motorsports** for the donation of a shiny new Kawasaki Mule for ACT's land management team. Thank you to **The Cofrin Family** for the new tractor – named “Gladys” – and a full complement of implements. As always, you have made a huge difference in this community with your generosity. Thank you to **Larry Ciesla** for the new projector screen. We truly appreciate the generosity of **Koppers** in providing several loads of poles for our boardwalk, and **Prime Conduit** of High Springs for the truck-load of pipe. **Paul, Joni, and Cody of Florence Recycling and Disposal** continue to be our best friend when we're looking up at a mountain of junk that has to go elsewhere. Thank you **Alta Systems**, for the awesome work on all the Wild Spaces campaign mailings, and for your substantial gift for ACT's color insert. As always, **Atlas Screenprinting** really delivers when it comes to printing signs, magnets, and shirts. **Kinnon Thomas**, President of the Chamber of Commerce, has done a great job this year, in addition to producing our Wild Spaces radio spots. **Jeff Montgomery** donated gas cards to use right when our tanks ran dry. **Charles Thompkins** is, no exaggeration, The Computer King. **Max Lind of Max's Paint and Body Shop** donated a primo paint job on our water buffalo's hose reel. The **Florida Division of Plant Industries** confiscated 1600 coontie

plants from somebody who stole them from the wild; ACT is re-planting them on public lands. Go Gators to the UF Law School's **Conservation Clinic** students who have helped on important projects: **Lindy Brounley, John November, Tristan Harper**, and their indomitable leader, **Tom Ankersen**. Thank you **David Menet** for continuing to smile as you sort our title tangles, and **Al Haaker**, our surveyor who knows where all the swamps are now. **Phil DeLaney** made the Hogtown Headwaters deal possible with his problem-solving legal counsel. Kudos to **Richard Hamann** on receiving his Burn Boss certification cum laude for the Prairie Creek fire. He thanks the burn crew: **Howard Jelks, Peter NeSmith, Mike Castine, Doug Hornbeck, Julieanne Tabone, Ivor Kincaide, Jack Putz, Vicent Medjibe, Jeremy Ash, Eric Carvalho, David O'Keefe, Dave Harvey**, and the aptly named **Dozier Hines** for his tractor work. Thanks to **Dawn McInstry, Aubree Hershorin, and Mike Herrington** from **Environmental Services, Cleveland Farnell** from Rogers, Taylor, & Company, and **Barbara Hatchitt** of the SJRWMD for holding our hand as we wade through the swamp of wetlands mitigation. **Susan Marynowski, Sally Morrison, and Nancy Lasseter** of ACT's Rochelle Historic Committee have been inspired leaders of our historic church stabilization project, and in a future newsletter, there may be room to list the volunteers who show up the first Sunday of every month. And thanks to the hundred people who came to the fundraiser which the Hippodrome State Theater hosted where we raised \$8000 for historic preservation. Thank you, **Michelle Foley**, for map-making, big and small, but always in a hurry. Thank you to our Serenola Forest protectors – **Ian Kress, Willa Drummond, Kate Lee**, and the entire neighborhood. We truly appreciate the hard work that **Darrell Hartman** provides to our land management efforts, and **Doug Hornbeck** for all the fire gear and help making and fixing stuff. Thank you to **Lee Crews** for your love of the land, and for outworking all the youngsters around you. And to **Erick Smith**, who is always there with a smile when the job is particularly ugly, stupid, and dirty. “Way To Go” **Freddie Johnson**, for your leadership of our CBI enterprises. Much of what ACT accomplishes could not be done without the cooperation of our favorite land conservation agencies: **Florida Communities Trust**,



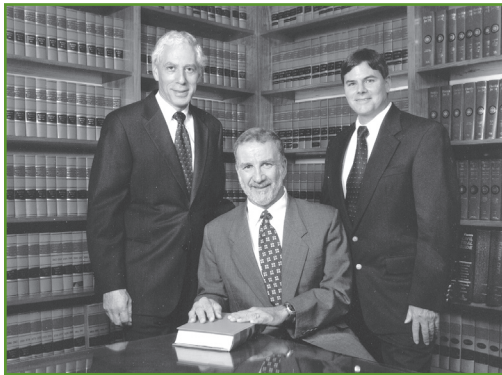
*Michael Wright (left) and Tom Walker cutting the floral ribbon to the Susan Wright Trail and the Jane Walker Trail, both at ACT's Prairie Creek Preserve.*



with **Ken Reecy** at the helm, continues to do great work (despite the four local projects that struck out in this year's grant cycle). ACT is doing two projects with the **Florida Office of Greenways and Trails**, and their staff and council are also helpful and transparent – thanks **Robin Turner and Cindy Radford**. The **US Fish and Wildlife Service** may eventually get tired of holding our hand through the federal acquisition process – but so far, they have shown infinite patience – thank you **David Buie** and **Andrea Grosse**. And **Alachua County Forever** – **Ramesh Buch, Brian Block** and the crew are continuing to acquire good stuff. Folks: don't just look at the map – visit the land and see for yourself. Our last Conservation Stewards Banquet at Paynes Prairie was a magical event, and the site managers were **JulieAnne Tabone** and **Ivor Kincaide**, ACT's intrepid duo, with **Gracy Castine** coordinating the logistics, and **Erika Nelson** coordinating the silent auction. Folks raved about the BBQ of **Teresa Sass** and the **Country Caterers**. Musical entertainment by **Cathy DeWitt, Tommy Clay, and Pierce Pettis** was delightful – thank you to **Randy & Connie Reid** for sponsoring the music, and to **Pete Theokisto of Everyman Sound** for making every man sound good. People are still talking about the **Royal Restrooms** – thank you **Andy Christian**. We appreciate everything that **Meg Niederhofer, Laura NeSmith, Jennifer Mullis, Eliana Bardi, Susie Lyons,** and **Kyle Goodwin** did to help with the event. Our most excellent bartenders were: **John Barrow, Carrie & John Westmark, Christine Housel, Marty Anderson, and Jessica Thorn**. Yippeekaiyay to **Jack Gillan and his Cracker Cowhunters**, and a friendly buzz to **Charlie Covell** for his moth interpretation, and for our entomological crew -- **Dr. Butler, Dr. Klein, and Emily Saarinen**. Prairie volunteers who provided their time and talent included: **Lawrence & Barbara Roth, John & Laurie Shea, Margaret Jensen, Barbara Faircloth, Claudia Jowers, Dominick Martino, Jeanne Bobroff, and George and Lee Edwards**. A huge thank you to **Lauren Day** for not abandoning ship, and to **John Winn** for always taking on the job that nobody wants, and then doing it better than it deserves to be done. Finally, to all who worked on the **Wild Spaces & Public Places** campaign: Do the Wild Thang!

## Attorneys

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**Lauren Day**, *Executive Director* since 2003, has taken a job with the Florida chapter of *The Conservation Fund*. Lauren changed Alachua Conservation Trust from an organization that primarily proposed and brokered land transactions into one that also owns and manages conservation land. During her tenure, 2300 acres -- worth over nine million dollars, were protected by ACT, including Tuscawilla Preserve, Prairie Creek Preserve, and Phifer Flatwoods. Her new employer, *The Conservation Fund*, is a national organization that specializes in complex land transactions, and recently purchased Kanapaha Prairie. Lauren continues to provide her expertise to ACT from her local office just down the hall.

**Robert Hutchinson** was appointed *Executive Director* in January reprising his role as ACT's first director twenty years ago. Hutch brings a range of experience including stints as an elected official, forest certifier, planner, fundraiser, redevelopment director, and video producer. He rejoined ACT in 2005, and has spent the last couple of months sweating over the Wild Spaces -- Public Places campaign.

**Ivor Kincaide** is ACT's full-time *Land Manager*. A native of Gainesville with a BS in Zoology, Ivor teaches popular Birding-by-Ear workshops. Ivor is a licensed residential contractor and is restoring ACT's historic buildings. ACT's land management goal includes providing public access while restoring the land to a naturally more self-maintaining system.

**JulieAnne Tabone** was Assistant Director until she recently returned to graduate school, and is now a part-time Project Manager with ACT. For five years, JulieAnne was the person who brought Paynes Prairie Preserve to life for many people with her interpretative skills and mastery of media. She is now in charge of our websites, kiosks, and other communications.

**Lesa Holder** is ACT's *Office Manager*. Her role as bookkeeper is increasingly complicated due to the number of federal, state, and local grants and contracts we administer, and our many restricted funds. Lesa has worked in administrative positions managing grants for the City of Gainesville, Crone's Cradle Conserve, and with a local legal publisher.

**Elizabeth Binford** recently joined ACT as our in-house *Geographer* and anthropologist. ACT has a back-log of mapping needs that Liz is quickly navigating through. As a warm-up exercise, she produced the map of all conservation lands in Alachua County. Look for more geographic information online in ACT's web atlas coming soon.

**Tristan Harper** was hired by ACT as a *Project Manager* to coordinate a surge of interest in the donation of conservation easements. He is finishing a law degree from the University of Florida, where he worked for The Conservation Clinic. He is the only ACT employee who has worn both a banana costume and a gorilla costume within a thirty day period -- neither being associated with Halloween.

**Matt Smith** is the *Resident Manager* at ACT's Prairie Creek Preserve, where he lives with his wife Sarah, a Paynes Prairie communications specialist, and their newborn son Isaac. Matt is a paleontologist who specializes in fossil preparation and mounting, which he recently started doing for the Florida Museum of Natural History after ten years with the National Park Service.

**Erin Kilgore** is our *Office Assistant* and a freshman at Santa Fe College. She is working on improving ACT's databases of landowners, supporters, and document tracking.



*Land trust professionals must be multi-talented and prepared to handle extraordinary tasks*



# ACT Seeks Accreditation

## -- and you can participate --

Land trusts created a set of “Standards and Practices” to provide guidance and an ethical compass for how we should operate. Alachua Conservation Trust was an early adopter of the S&Ps, which are organized under these categories:

1. Mission
2. Compliance with Laws
3. Board Accountability
4. Conflicts of Interest
5. Fundraising
6. Financial and Asset Management
7. Volunteers, Staff and Consultants
8. Evaluating and Selecting Projects
9. Ensuring Sound Transactions
10. Tax Benefits
11. Conservation Easement Stewardship
12. Fee Land Stewardship

This year, Alachua Conservation Trust is seeking to be accredited by the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission (LTAC), and you can participate. The LTAC is soliciting comments

related to ACT’s compliance with the national standards.

While you can provide general comments about ACT, the process is geared towards answering questions about how we are performing in the specific areas listed above. The entire 24 pages of Standards and Practices are available from ACT, or from the website: [www.LOLT.org/LTStandards.pdf](http://www.LOLT.org/LTStandards.pdf)

You can submit your written comments by using the on-line form at:

[www.LandTrustAccreditation.org](http://www.LandTrustAccreditation.org)  
or mail comments to:  
Land Trust Accreditation Commission  
112 Spring Street, Suite 204  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Your participation in this process will help you better understand how ACT and all land trusts should operate. Thanks!

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Please bring to our attention any inadvertent errors or omissions

# ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST: The Natural Leader

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**Lesa Holder**, Office Manager  
**JulieAnne Tabone**, Project Manager  
**Tristan Harper**, Project Manager  
**Elizabeth Binford**, GIS Technician  
**Matt Smith**, Assistant Land Manager  
**Erin Kilgore**, Office Assistant



The mission of Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) is to protect the natural, scenic, historical, and recreational resources in and around Alachua County, Florida. ACT protects land through purchase, donation, and conservation easement.

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ACT is a 501(c)3 non-profit charity created in 1988. ACT receives no government grants for general operating support, and relies on contributions from private individuals, corporations, and foundations. Donations may be tax deductible, however ACT does not provide tax advice.

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