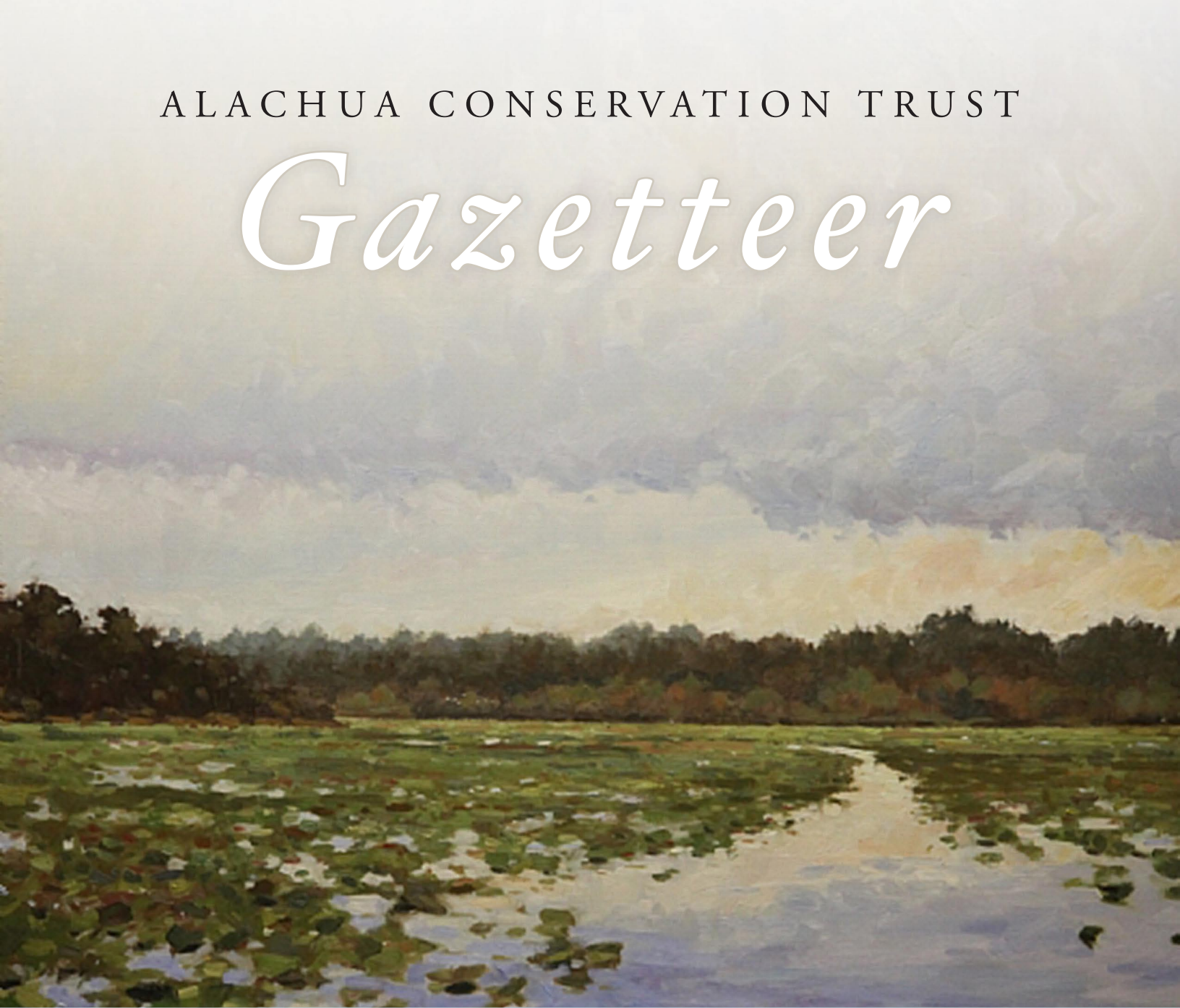


ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST

Gazetteer



“Path to South Lake” by Steve Andrews, learn more about Six Artists-Six Prairies on [page 3](#)

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ACT: FACTS AT A GLANCE

- Created in 1988 as non-profit land trust
- Nominated for protection over 50,000 acres
- Directly participated in the purchase of 16,000 acres
- Currently owns 1400 acres, 3 historic buildings
- Perpetual conservation easements on more than 2700 acres
- Active land conservation projects in 7 counties of north central Florida
- Successfully led 4 public referenda, 2 for funding \$60 million, and 2 for creating Registry of Protected Public Places
- Over 500 active supporters who contribute at least once every 2 years
- Over 2500 volunteer and community service hrs. in the past 12 months
- 1 of only 3 nationally accredited land trusts in Florida
- Achieved 100% Board membership with Land Trust Alliance (3rd year)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 8, 2011

Richard Louv speaking event at Prairie Creek Lodge, sponsored by Alachua Conservation Trust, Santa Fe College and Florida Defenders of the Environment. *Learn more at right.*

Oct. 14, 2011

Oktoberfest at Prairie Creek Lodge, sponsored by ACT and Civic Media Center. *Learn more at right.*

Oct. 19, 2011

TUSCAWILLA LEARNING CENTER- env. ed. programs for kids ages 3-7. For additional information and pre-registration (required), email tuscawillalc@gmail.com

Nov. 6, 2011

Kids' Birding Workshop at Tusawilla, ACT and Alachua Audubon Society.

Nov. 19-20, 2011

SANDHILL STAGE- Jim Hurst Concert & Guitar Workshop at Prairie Creek Lodge.

Nov. 19, 2011

Bird Walk at Tusawilla, Alachua Conservation Trust and Alachua Audubon Society.

Dec. 3, 2011

Rwanda Sustainable Families Fund-raiser at Prairie Creek Lodge.

Dec. 9, 2011

SANDHILL STAGE- John McCutcheon Concert at Prairie Creek Lodge.

Feb. 25, 2012

Six Artists/Six Prairies- Paint Out at Prairie Creek Lodge

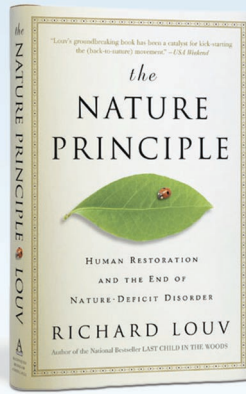
March 2, 2012

SANDHILL STAGE- Still On The Hill Concert at Prairie Creek Lodge

March 21, 2012

SANDHILL STAGE- Acoustic Eidolon Concert at Prairie Creek Lodge.

Richard Louv to speak about "The Nature Principle" at Prairie Creek Lodge



"The future will belong to the nature-smart—those individuals, families, businesses, and political leaders who develop a deeper understanding of the transformative power of the natural world and who balance the virtual with the real. The more high-tech we become, the more nature we need."

—Richard Louv

"Last Child in the Woods" author Richard Louv struck such a chord with the staff and board of ACT that we brought him to Gainesville in 2006 to be the keynote speaker for our Conservation Stewards Banquet. He spoke to over a thousand people that week as we carried him around to any group who would listen, and his message forever changed the mission of Alachua Conservation Trust. His book is a compelling investigation into the implications of raising a generation of children without any meaningful connection or comfort with the outdoors.

Mr. Louv is returning five years later to Gainesville with a new message in his book, "The Nature Principle: Human Restoration and The End of Nature Deficit Disorder." Supported by ground-breaking research, anecdotal evidence, and compelling personal stories, Louv identifies seven basic concepts that can help us reshape our lives. By tapping into the restorative powers of nature, we can boost mental acuity and creativity; promote health and wellness; build smarter and more sustainable businesses, communities, and economies; and ultimately strengthen human bonds. Louv makes a convincing case that we are entering the most creative period in history, that in fact the twenty-first century will be the era of human restoration in the natural world. This encouraging and influential work offers renewed optimism while challenging us to rethink the way we live.

Richard Louv will be speaking and reading at Prairie Creek Lodge on Friday, October 8th in an evening that includes a social hour and dinner. Florida Defenders of the Environment and Santa Fe College are cosponsoring his visit with ACT – please come for an interesting and inspiring evening, but we do require reservations at: fde@FlaDefenders.org or (352) 378-8465.

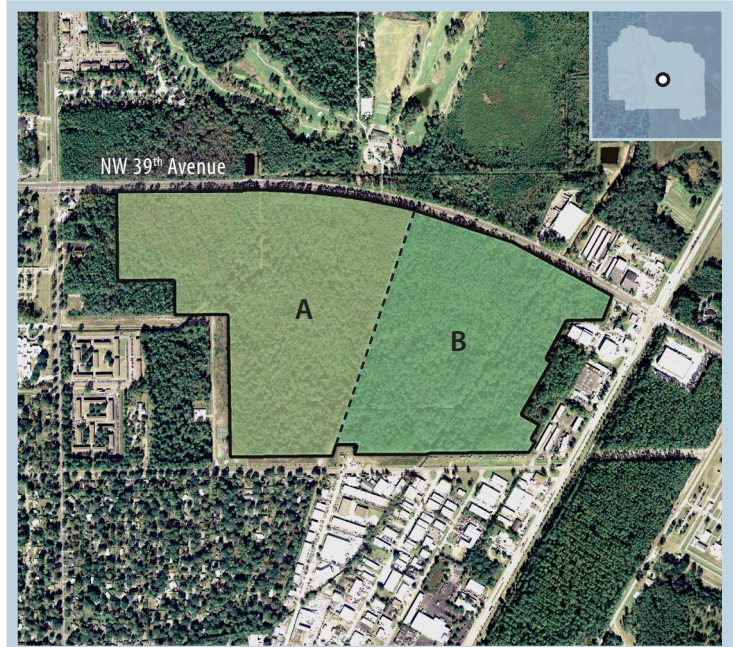
2nd Annual OktoberFest at Prairie Creek Lodge

Celebrate OktoberFest on Friday, October 14 beginning at 5:30 p.m., with plenty of our favorite locally brewed beverage, traditional German food, and the music of troubadour Sam Pacetti. ACT and the Civic Media Center are cosponsoring this celebration of their fifty combined years of work on local environmental and social justice causes. The best fraulein outfit and best lederhosen (or other traditional Bavarian wardrobe) will win a valuable prize! Glasses (ACT mugs) will be provided with your \$15 donation. OktoberFest will be at the Prairie Creek Lodge, 7204 SE County Road 234 – for information or directions call (352) 373-1078.

FLATWOODS ADDITION

The City of Gainesville owns a nature preserve called the Flatwoods, and it will soon double in size. ACT recently signed a purchase agreement for the 87-acre Flatwoods Addition, and then assigned our contract to the City. The property is due south of Ironwood Golf Course, with frontage along 39th Avenue, and is one of the City's highest ranked parcels for conservation. The transaction will be purchased with the Wild Spaces-Public Places funds, and the purchase price is \$425,000, which is less than half of what it was being marketed for.

The land is about half wet flatwoods and swamps, and half uplands. Two species of native azalea and have been found on the property, and Cinnamon Ferns are abundant. The City of Gainesville is in the process of developing their long-term plan for parks and recreation, and part of this public process will be to determine the future uses for this nature preserve. For more information about it, contact the City of Gainesville's Parks Department.



📷 Addition (A) to City of Gainesville's Flatwoods Preserve (B)

SANTA FE RIVER PROJECT UPDATE

ACT recently entered into a purchase contract on a key property along the Santa Fe River in Alachua County, which includes seven miles of abandoned rail corridor. The hope is to link up other linear corridors owned by Alachua County and FDOT to create a rail trail from the outskirts of the City of Alachua into downtown Lake Butler, a distance of 17 miles. The mid-point trailhead, with picnic facilities and hiking trails, would be on high bluffs over the Santa Fe River.

Funding for this nearly million dollar project is being provided by Florida Communities Trust and two family foundations. The project is not yet closed, and there can always be problems with contamination, encroachment, and title issues – but we are working hard to resolve them all, and hope to close before year's end.



📷 Santa Fe River Project (A)

TRAIL DEDICATED TO DR. KATHY CANTWELL AT PRAIRIE CREEK PRESERVE

On September 10, friends of Dr. Kathy Cantwell dedicated a trail to her memory at Prairie Creek Preserve. The mile long Cantwell Trail starts at a new trailhead near Prairie Creek Lodge, and links to the Susan Wright Trail which begins at a Rochelle trailhead along the Gainesville-Hawthorne Rail Trail.

The Cantwell Trail is marked with blue blazes – blue to symbolize her commitment to blue skies and blue springs, and because we are blue that she left us too soon. Her trail traverses several distinct forest types, including a mixed hardwood hammock, pine flatwoods, and a cypress swamp. Remnants of old turpentine trees and pots can be

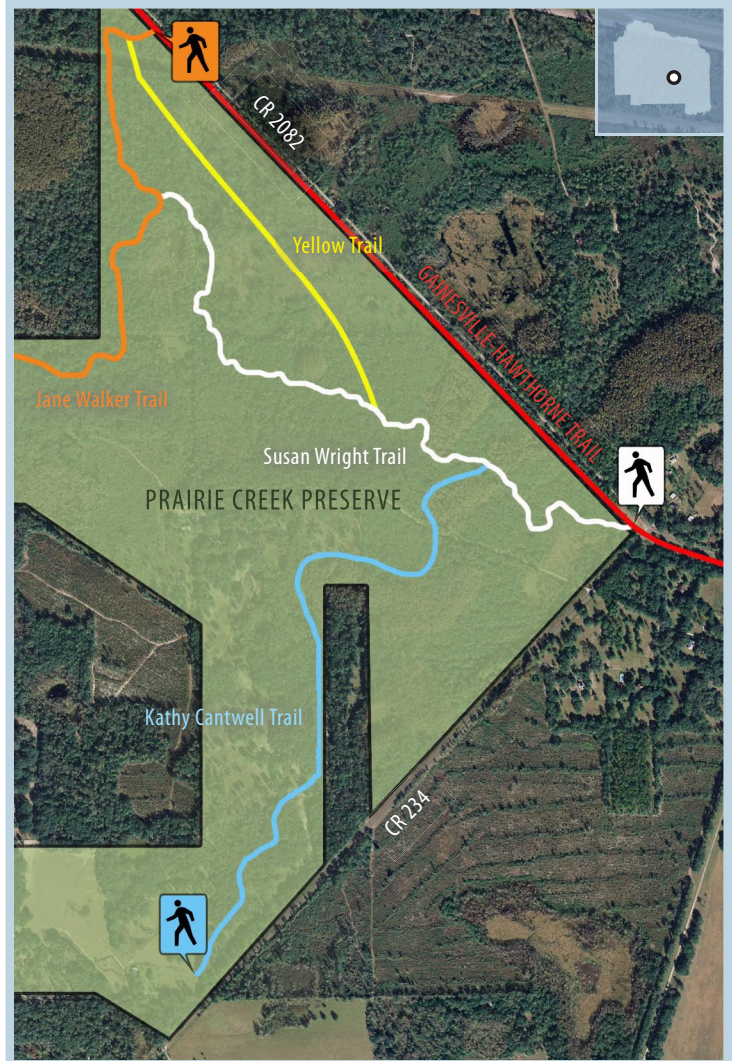
seen in numerous places, and the legacy of former forestry practices and Depression-era drainage projects are evident. We're still looking for funding to complete boardwalks across the wetlands.

Dr. Cantwell was a tireless advocate for environmental causes, with her commitment to land conservation being the last chapter in her career. In 2002, she was recognized by ACT as a "Conservation Steward." Kathy became the unpaid staff of ACT's sister land trust, the Putnam Land Conservancy, and succeeded in getting major land acquisition projects funded and purchased. Her final act was to make sure the Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery was open in time to accept her remains – she was our green cemetery's first customer in July, 2010.



Entrance sign to the Kathy Cantwell Trail

The Cantwell Trail is almost completely shaded, and is open for hikers, bicyclists, and horseback riders. Parking is available at Witness Tree Junction (at intersection of CR 234 and CR 2082) or at Prairie Creek Lodge (7204 SE County Road 234).



Trail system on the eastern side of Prairie Creek Preserve

SIX ARTISTS – SIX PRAIRIES

It can be said that inspiration is the life's blood of our species; without it, we would not have evolved to our current state nor grown together into the varied and unique societies that exist today.

Many things inspire us as individuals – our relationships with one another, our connection to the earth, the balance of nature and the beauty that is all around us. We at Alachua Conservation Trust are always seeking ways to inspire those within our community to a higher love of nature, and are equally pleased to join with others who

endeavor to do the same. That is why we are partnering with Six Artists – Six Prairies in 2011-2012 in its efforts to inspire the community both to appreciate all things artistic, as well as the unparalleled natural beauty and diversity of our local prairies.

Six Artists – Six Prairies itself is a consortium of six professional artists who, over a twelve-month period, have commenced to paint and educate about Fish Prairie, Hopkins Prairie, Kanapaha Prairie, Ledwith Prairie, Paynes Prairie and Tusawilla Prairie. In addition, they are



📷 "Paynes Prairie in the Morning Mist" by Mary J. Volkmann

using their blogspot, sixartistsixprairies.blogspot.com, to promote the mission of ACT, and are planning to hold a paint-out event at ACT's Prairie Creek Lodge on February 25, 2012 (details forthcoming). While the artists themselves – Linda Blondheim, Thom Buttner, Charles Dickinson, Scott Hiestand, Jackie Schindehette and Mary Jane Volkmann – will be selling their works at this event and



📷 "Shady Spot" by Scott Hiestand

throughout the year-long program, they are also donating 30% of their proceeds from painting sales to ACT and two other recipient conservation organizations.

Please support ACT and Six Artists – Six Prairies by visiting their blogspot, viewing their incredible prairie-inspired works/writings, and by attending their paint-out events at Prairie Creek Lodge and throughout the area.

GIVING WAYS

People give in many ways to Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) and other charities. The first is payroll giving, such as through the University of Florida's Campaign for Charities (UFCC). By specifying ACT or other charities from a long list, a donor can direct a portion of their paycheck directly to the cause(s) of their choice. At the end of the year, the UFCC provides a receipt for tax purposes. The UFCC has a rigorous process for pre-qualifying charities, and ACT has been on UF's list for several years. This is the time of year that faculty and staff can sign up for their years' charitable giving through UFCC.

Another method is to designate Alachua Conservation Trust in your will. ACT has been informed of nearly two dozen prospective bequests, and this is the most important way that a person can create a legacy. There is language on ACT's website of various ways to leave a fixed amount, fixed percentage, or the residual of your estate after all other heirs are taken care of. Variations on this include a "life estate", where ACT accepts the ownership

of your real property, but does not take possession of it until your demise. There are considerable tax advantages and peace of mind in setting up these arrangements.

Finally, with real estate and the stock market going up and down, and with future tax rates for capital gains a big unknown, it can make sense to donate some assets to a charity at their appreciated value, while only paying the tax liability based on the value of the original investment. If you have stock, art, real estate or other assets, consider talking with ACT or a financial planner about the tax benefits of donating them to charity.

More than ever, charities are relying on individuals to be able to continue with their mission. Alachua Conservation Trust does not receive any government grants for general operating support, and gifts from philanthropic foundations have slowed down as the return on their investments have faltered. So, if you've got something to give, there's no time like the present! *Contact any ACT Board or staff member for more information.*

PRAIRIE CREEK LODGE: PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Prairie Creek Lodge continues to be a busy place, even as ACT is converting it to a Rural Conference Facility. Many companies and non-profit organizations have their meetings at the Lodge, and we've had numerous weddings, memorial services, anniversary parties, and other private events. University of Florida departments use it regularly as a retreat center, as do other government agencies. With the recent loss of UF's Austin Cary Forest conference facility, the Prairie Creek Lodge has received many of their meetings, which we do for the same rate.

But we envision a higher and better use for the Lodge, and are working on the creation of a school for arts and crafts, a facility for the teaching of alternative medicine, and an eco-tourism hub. This summer, ACT's Executive Director Robert Hutchinson toured Penland School of the Arts and the John Campbell Folk School, both in North Carolina, to get a better sense of their facilities and operations.

Our preliminary plan, which was approved in a recent re-zoning, is to build lodging and classroom/studio space on our fifty acre Prairie Creek campus seven miles east of Gainesville. The lodging will be twelve duplex cabins, a sixteen-bed bunkhouse, and 25 tent sites and 25 RV sites, in addition to the existing lodging. Classrooms and studios will be designed for the types of activities we ultimately decide to focus on. We will have a commercial kitchen and a large organic garden to feed our residents, who will stay an average of one week.


We hope that faculty will be mostly from Alachua County, as we have expert artists and practitioners in most fields. The intent is to run the school from October thru April each year, and to close down in the months when people have the choice to be in North Carolina or other cooler climates.

We hope our facility will employ graduates from the Eastside Culinary School, and will provide employment or extra income to scores of people at all levels. It is possible that we can serve as the hub for eco-tourism companies providing bicycling, paddling, birding, or other tours.

There are numerous financial hurdles to cross. We will be reliant on philanthropy for much of the early development costs, and on loans to complete development and begin operations. We will need professional management familiar with the hospitality industry, and sophisticated marketing to appeal to the demographic we seek – retiring baby-boomers who want a learning vacation in the south during the cooler months, or working practitioners in their fields who seek continuing education.

This is the next logical step in providing a facility to implement part of the vision of Florida's Eden. As Innovation Gainesville moves forward with its agenda of developing high tech centers, we hope to be part of a similar effort on behalf of the creative arts and cultural activities. We need all the assistance we can get in planning this endeavor – please help with your expertise and generosity.



 Prairie Creek Lodge

HISTORIC HAILE HOMESTEAD NEWS

ACT is pleased to announce that the Historic Haile Homestead, located at 8500 SW Archer Road, has broken ground on its much anticipated Visitors' Center, which will provide an essential gateway to this historical treasure: an exhibit and reception area with restrooms to

make visitors and volunteers more comfortable regardless of the weather. It will also allow HHH to host special events such as wedding receptions and meetings to help pay for continuing operations and preservation efforts. Haile Homestead is unique in the nation for its "Talking

Walls,” where over 12,500 words were written by family and friends across the decades. Many thanks are due to the generous donors large and small – particularly members of the Haile-Graham family -who have made this ground-breaking possible, and while all of the exterior, the porches, and fully-functioning restrooms (with air conditioning!) will be finished by the end of this year, another \$75,000 is still needed to complete the building as originally planned.

In other HHH news, trained docents continue



Allen & Ethel Graham Visitor's Center at Historic Haile Homestead
(Architectural Rendering by Bill Warinner)

their excellent work of providing weekend tours of the Homestead on Saturdays 10am-2pm and Sundays 12noon-4pm for a very nominal fee. In addition, the Annual Homestead Holidays tour will take place on Sunday, December 4th – this year, free of charge! Candlelight Visits will also be conducted on Friday, December 9th, 6-9pm for \$10 per adult; children under 12 free. These events feature the Homestead decked out in traditional holiday regalia and the docents dressed in period costume, so don't miss a unique experience that only occurs once a year!

If you are interested in making a donation towards the completion of the Visitor's Center, or in finding out more about Historic Haile Homestead, including upcoming Holiday events, regular guided tours or docent opportunities (we can always use MORE docents!), please contact Karen Kirkman, HHH's Board President and redoubtable Docent Coordinator, at 352-262-5652, by email hailedocent@yahoo.com, or visit the website at www.hailehomestead.org.

PRAIRIE CREEK CONSERVATION CEMETERY

Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery has been operating for just over a year. As of late September, the remains of twenty people and three pets are interred. Burials have included men and women, young and old, black and white, of many different faiths, and from five different Florida counties. The funeral ceremonies are creative, moving tributes to loved ones who have chosen this final connection to the earth.

Natural burials in the cemetery are done without embalming and in containers that are completely biodegradable. Graves are hand dug by volunteers, and markers are simple brass disks flush with the ground. Some people plant trees or wildflowers as additional markers. Funeral homes from around the state are embracing the natural burial movement by publishing a green burial services and price list.

The Cemetery is located on 78 acres next to Prairie Creek Preserve in Rochelle, and a perpetual conservation easement has been placed over the property by Alachua County Forever. PCCC was certified by the international Green Burial Council about six months ago as a “Conservation Burial Ground” – the highest level of certification, and only the fourth cemetery in the nation to receive this recognition.

The work of restoring the Cemetery has begun with removal of invasive exotic plants such as Tropical

Soda Apple (thanks to volunteer Paul Hoffhein!). Historically, the land had been heavily over-grazed and more recently is drought-stricken, so we are letting it recover with little initial intervention to see what wildflowers and shrubs return as volunteers.

Natural burial is the greenest way to go – for more information and to download your “Final Burial Wishes” form, go to: www.conservationburialinc.org, or call (352) 317-7307.



Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery


BARN OWLS GET A NEW HOME AT PRAIRIE CREEK PRESERVE

Barn Owls (*Tyto alba*) are the most widely distributed species of owl in the world, occurring on every continent except Antarctica. However, this fact may be difficult to appreciate if you live in Alachua County, since the species appears to be rare and localized. In Alachua County, the most reliable spot to find Barn Owls is Payne's Prairie, and local birdwatchers estimate that 6-10 individuals reside in and along its margins. Other locations in the county are not well known, and whether this is a result of their elusiveness or rarity has yet to be determined.

Barn Owls need open areas with extensive marsh or grassland for foraging, and use tree hollows or cavities created from other birds for nesting. Like many other cavity nesters, Barn Owls readily move into nest boxes, and we are hoping the fields of Prairie Creek Preserve will soon host a new pair of Barn Owls thanks to the amazing nest box built and installed by Charlotte Loomis and the Florida School of Massage. The construction and placement of the nest box have been designed specifically for

Barn Owls, and though Barn Owls have yet to be observed on the preserve, the new nest box should provide ample incentive for birds to move in.



 New nest box for Barn Owls on Prairie Creek Preserve



 Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) by Jack Rogers/www.pbase.com/paleojack

Alachua Conservation Trust thanks our many supporters whose contributions this year continue to make possible the protection of North Florida's special places.

\$50,000-\$500,000

Anonymous • Anonymous Family Foundation

\$10,000-\$49,999

Bryson Foundation • Conoco Phillips Matching Grant Program • Gladys Cofrin Fund at GCF • United Way Campaign - UF

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LAND MANAGEMENT UPDATE

In spite of the heat, ticks, drought, and other natural barriers to outdoor work in the summer in Florida, ACT continues to make progress on stewardship activities on our preserves that improve the health of the habitat and wildlife populations found within them in addition to creating better access for recreation. Whenever possible, we also work hard to provide educational opportunities for youth who express an interest in learning new skills and knowledge about Florida's outdoors.

At the Prairie Creek Preserve, we continue with our pine flatwoods restoration project with financial assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and on-the-ground assistance from The Nature Conservancy's Resource Management Support Team, especially with the very time-consuming control of encroaching hardwoods.

We also benefitted tremendously from the hard work of six high school students this summer from the Young Entrepreneurs for Leadership and Sustainability (YELS). For an entire month, they removed fences, trimmed trails, pulled exotics, and built picnic benches. In the process, they learned how to use machetes, loppers, bolt cutters, mowers, and were introduced to the biodiversity of Florida ecosystems and how critical a role fire plays in maintaining them. But mostly, they learned a ton about fence removal!

We also hosted our first 4H youth volunteer group this summer during the Florida 4H Congress, which took place in Gainesville in July. These 30 high school students will now always plant trees with confidence wherever they go.

At the time of this newsletter's printing, with help from the Tourist Development Council, we are beginning construction on our Prairie Creek Preserve boardwalk, which fulfills some of our grant requirements to the Florida Communities Trust program.

One accomplishment of the summer, thanks to

dedicated ACT volunteer Doug Hornbeck, we now have a new water buffalo trailer for managing our prescribed burns. This fantastic new piece of equipment, which functions much like a fire engine, can be pulled by a tractor just about anywhere it's needed.

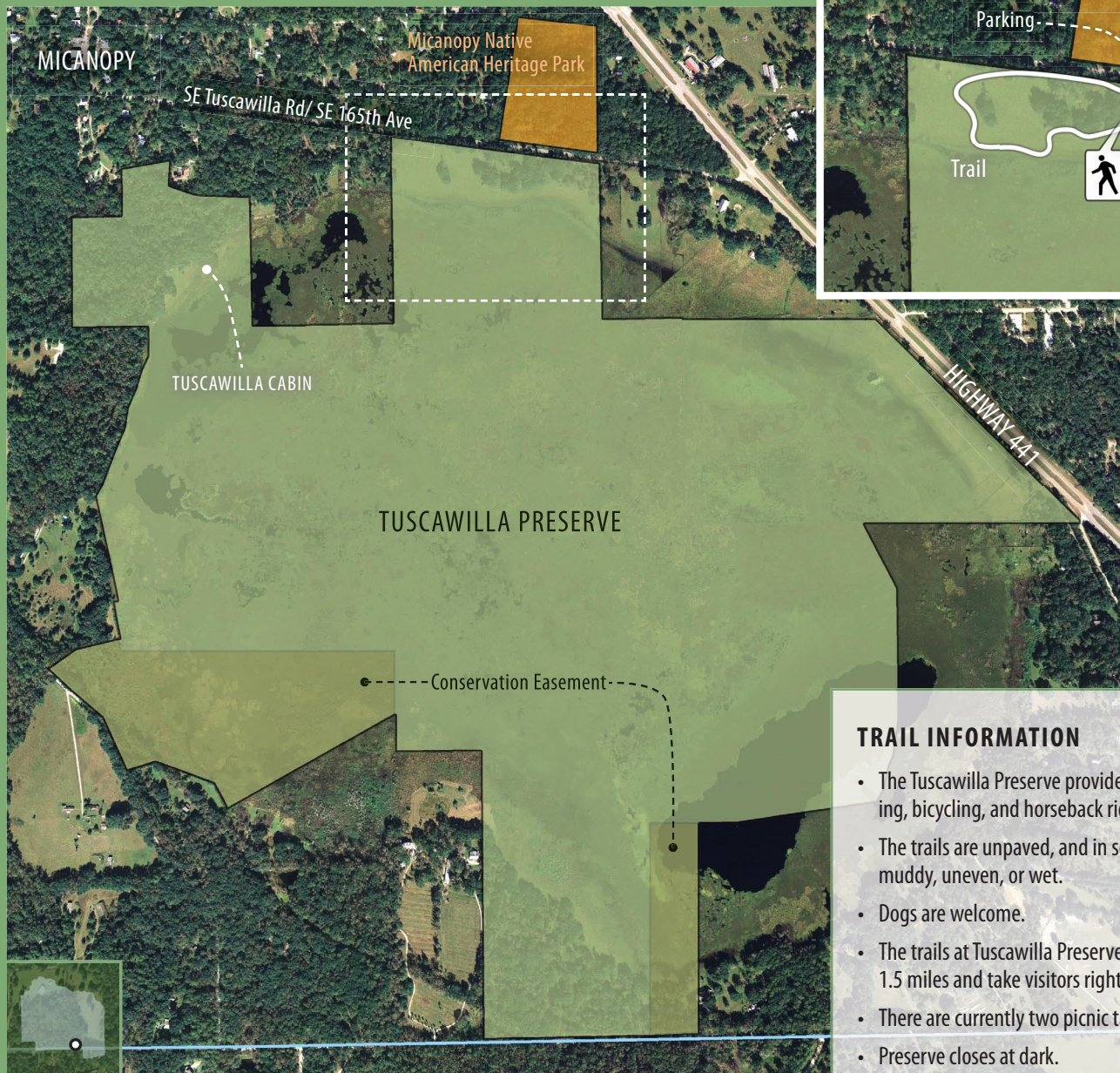
Our primary fall project will be planning, mapping, and on-the-ground preparations for a series of prescribed burns at our Tuscawilla Preserve in Micanopy. The most recent 75 acre acquisition will make our land management work there much easier. Through a combination of burning and mowing, it is our goal to protect the wetland habitats there from encroachment by hardwood trees and to maintain the scenic beauty of the prairie.



📷 Volunteers from the Florida 4H Congress

PRESERVE PROFILE: TUSCAWILLA PRESERVE

Tusawilla Preserve is 600 acres owned by Alachua Conservation Trust that was acquired from six different landowners from 2005 thru 2010. Funding was provided by generous local donors, and from the US Fish & Wildlife Service and Florida Communities Trust. The Preserve has public trails and picnic facilities adjacent to Micanopy's Native American Preserve Park.



TRAIL INFORMATION

- The Tusawilla Preserve provides public trails for hiking, bicycling, and horseback riding.
- The trails are unpaved, and in some places can be muddy, uneven, or wet.
- Dogs are welcome.
- The trails at Tusawilla Preserve total approximately 1.5 miles and take visitors right up to the basin edge.
- There are currently two picnic tables on the trail.
- Preserve closes at dark.



ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST

7204 SE County Road 234

Gainesville, Florida 32641

ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST: THE NATURAL LEADER

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Since 1988, the mission of Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) has been to protect the natural, historic, scenic, and recreational resources in and around Alachua County, Florida. ACT protects land through purchase, donation, and conservation easement.

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

Alachua Conservation Trust's charitable solicitation number is **CH12693**. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free (800) 435-7352. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the State.

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