



**ALACHUA  
CONSERVATION  
TRUST**

# Alachua Conservation Trust

April 23, 2003

## Recognizing the 2003 Conservation Stewards for their outstanding contributions to saving Alachua County's Great Places

A much missed world-renowned ecologist, a nature photographer who recently retired from the Gainesville Sun and a field researcher/forester are three cherished conservationists being honored at the fourth annual Conservation Stewards Awards. This year's keynote speaker, Mr. Al Burt, will give a stunning presentation on Florida's past, present, and future. The honorees include:

### **The Late Howard T. Odum, PhD. (Special Presentation by Joseph J. Delfino, PhD.)**

Howard Thomas "H.T." Odum (1924-2002) was a University of Florida graduate research professor emeritus in the Department of Environmental Engineering Sciences. He founded the fields of ecological economics and ecological engineering. In 1987, Dr. Odum and his brother Eugene received the Crafoord Prize – the equivalent of the Nobel Prize in ecological sciences – from the Royal Swedish Academy. During his six-decade career he pioneered ecosystems research and helped integrate ecology and economics. In the 1960's he developed the concepts for using natural systems for wastewater treatment. His "South Florida Study" included many of the Everglades restoration alternatives that are currently underway. Dr. Odum's research was at the center of many crossroads in Florida's environmental history, including the Cross-Florida Barge Canal and the Fenholloway River management plans. He started the Center for Wetlands and the Center for Environmental Policy at UF. A central idea throughout his research was that natural and human systems must be considered together for mutual benefit. Dr. Odum wrote more than 300 scientific papers and authored 15 books. His most recent book, "A Prosperous Way Down," was co-written with his wife, Elisabeth C. Odum. It discusses society's plan to maintain a prosperous future as supplies of fossil fuels decrease. Dr. Odum influenced thousands of students worldwide and continues to do so through his numerous publications and those he inspired.

### **Mr. John Moran (Introduced by Robert "Hutch" Hutchinson)**

Following a 23-year career as a photographer, writer and editor for The Gainesville Sun, John Moran left the world of daily journalism in 2003 to photograph the best of dwindling natural Florida full time. A University of Florida journalism graduate, Moran's photography has appeared in numerous books and magazines, including National Geographic, Life, Time, Newsweek, Smithsonian, Outside, Sierra, The New York Times Magazine and on the cover of the National Audubon Society Field Guide to Florida. On photographing natural Florida, Moran says, "Truly a universal language, photography can help us better understand and appreciate the many gifts of nature bestowed upon this great state we call home."

### **Mr. Bob Simons (Introduced by Michael Drummond)**

Since his arrival in Florida over 50 years ago, Bob Simons has been instrumental in land conservation in North Central Florida. A graduate of the University of Florida School of Forestry, Mr. Simons is largely responsible for the field work and write-up of the 1987 and 1996 KBN reports, which catalogued and ranked the natural communities in Alachua County. They currently play an instrumental role in the Alachua County Forever land acquisition program. Mr. Simons is a current member of the Alachua County Land Conservation Board.

Dr. Odum, Mr. Moran and Mr. Simons follow a distinguished list of past Conservation Stewards which includes: Doris Bardon (2000), Courtland Collier (2000), John Mahon (2000), Alfred A. Ring (2000), Gladys Cofrin (2001), Robert "Hutch" Hutchinson (2001), David "Mo" Morris (2001), Phyllis & Arthur Saarinen (2001), Dr. Kathy Cantwell (2002), NKwanda Jah (2002) and Mickey Singer (2002).

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## Keynote Speaker: Al Burt

A reporter for the Miami Herald from 1955-1995 and a resident of Melrose since 1974, Al Burt has seen the Florida of his youth transformed into something altogether different. The award winning journalist and author will weave together Florida's past, present and future in a stunning presentation on where we have been and where we are going. His books include *Al Burt's Florida: Snowbirds, Sand Castles, and Self-Rising Crackers* (1997), *Florida: A Place in the Sun* (1974) and *Becalmed in the Mullet Latitudes* (1984). In his honor, 1,000 Friends of Florida created the annual Al Burt Award for Florida journalism.

## More than 600 acres in Conservation for 2002!

The year 2002 was an exciting one for Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT). Following the success of last year's Conservation Stewards Awards, ACT continued to move forward with the acquisition of Blues Creek Ravine, in partnership with the Trust for Public Land and Alachua County. On December 7<sup>th</sup>, ACT and the Trust for Public Land hosted Breakfast at Blues Creek Ravine, an event to introduce the public to this beautiful property and raise funds for management. More than 100 people turned out on a brisk autumn morning to take guided walks of the property and sip hot apple cider. In total, we raised more than \$4000 to manage the 163-acre property. Shortly thereafter, ACT closed on Blues Creek Ravine. Special thanks to the property owner, Mrs. Mildred Bryant, for her vision and perseverance in bringing this project to a close. This public/private partnership is an outstanding example of how ACT can effectively leverage state and county dollars for land conservation, as we received a 100% acquisition grant for the land from the Florida Communities Trust, valued at more than \$1.65 million.

In December 2002, ACT accepted donation of a gorgeous conservation easement of over 450-acres, located west of Gainesville. ACT drafted the easement and negotiated an endowment to make certain the easement is upheld in the future. This easement will ensure that this property will remain in its scenic and agricultural state *forever*.

While ACT was working on its primary mission of protecting our natural and cultural resources, we were also working to strengthen ourselves organizationally. In September 2002, ACT was awarded a Destination Enhancement Grant from the City of Gainesville to design a brochure and launch a website ([www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org](http://www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org)). As we have had neither a professional brochure nor a website in our 15-year history we were very excited! The purpose of the brochure and website are to promote natural and historic areas in and around Alachua County, the protection of which was facilitated by ACT. Through the brochure and website we hope to raise awareness of our natural and historic treasures and make the public aware that organizations like ACT exist to help protect them. We also received a developmental grant from The Land Trust Alliance, our national umbrella organization.

On the personnel side, there have been many exciting developments as well. In late August 2002, ACT hired a new project manager, Lauren Day. Lauren has worked in both the environmental and real estate fields and is very excited to be working in land conservation. She brings an in-depth knowledge of real estate, experience with grassroots organization and enthusiasm for conservation that are a tremendous asset to ACT. In October 2002 ACT opened a new office downtown, at 12 West University Avenue, Suite 201 (above Steve's Café Americain). ACT hosted a Wine & Cheese Mixer to celebrate the event, with more than 80 people attending. Feel free to stop by anytime and see what we're up to!

## What's New in 2003?

In 2003, ACT is working to acquire Fox Pond, 80 acres to the west of Blues Creek Ravine, adjacent to San Felasco State Park.. This property is part of the \$2.8 million dollar grant from FCT that was awarded to ACT in 2001. In addition, ACT is working to assist neighboring communities in taking advantage of programs like the Florida Communities Trust (FCT) and Alachua County Forever. In so doing, we are helping them to implement their land conservation programs and maximizing the amount of state dollars going towards land conservation in Alachua County. In January, Pegeen Hanrahan stepped down from serving as ACT's Executive Director, but stepped up to being on our Board of Directors. Pegeen now leads the Florida Conservation Alliance, a new statewide League of Conservation Voters. We are looking forward to hiring a new Executive Director soon.



*Blues Creek Ravine at a Surficial Spring Seep*  
JEFF RIPPLE

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### **Our Mission**

*The mission of Alachua Conservation Trust is to protect the natural, historic, scenic and recreational resources in and around Alachua County, Florida. Land protection is promoted through purchase, donation, conservation easement, and public advocacy.*



ACT extends a special thanks to volunteers Gracy Castine, Dana Day, Alex Holecck, Doug Hornbeck, Robert Hutchinson, Tony Malone, Phyllis Saarinen, Jason Teisinger, Lisa Cowart, and Steve Williams. Their assistance was crucial in planning this event and other recent projects. Thanks also to musical guests The Weeds of Eden.