



# Alachua Conservation Trust Gazetteer

## 2011 CONSERVATION STEWARDS AWARDS

Join us **Friday, March 18th**, for a low country boil, silent auction, and live music to celebrate three wonderful environmentalists. For more information or to purchase your tickets visit us at [www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org](http://www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org).

## GET OUTSIDE! SPRING 2010

**Birding with Alachua Audubon Society** at Prairie Creek Lodge taught by Ivor Kincaide, April 9. This class will meet at Powers Park at 7:30 to carpool to the Lodge.

**Edible & Medicinal Plants** at Prairie Creek Preserve, April 30th, 9:00am

**Birding by Ear** taught by Ivor Kincaide at Tusawilla Preserve, April 23rd, 8:00 am

**Butterflies of Alachua County** at Prairie Creek Preserve, June 4th, 9:00am

For directions or more information please call (352) 373-1078 or visit [www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org](http://www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org).



## REGISTRY WILL PROTECT OUR SPECIAL PLACES

In 2007, Alachua Conservation Trust worked with attorneys from public agencies and law students with the UF Conservation Clinic to develop a mechanism to ensure that parks could not be sold to finance short-term needs or converted into other non-park uses. After exploring many ideas, we proposed a "Registry of Protected Public Places." Properties could not be sold, swapped, or converted to another use without approval by the voters.

Gainesville and Alachua County voters approved these measures by 81% and 75%, respectively. This March the first properties will be put on the registries. The city's first properties to be included are Morningside Nature Center, Bivens Arm Nature Park, Cofrin Nature Park, and several others.



The Board of County Commissioners will decide whether to approve Alachua County Forever's recommendations for the registry on March 22, 2011. Check online for the BoCC agenda for details - public input is welcome for these important decisions.

## PRAIRIE CREEK CONSERVATION CEMETERY CERTIFIED BY THE GREEN BURIAL COUNCIL

The Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery (PCCC) was recently certified as a "Conservation Burial Ground" by the Green Burial Council. This is the highest level of certification awarded by the GBC, and we are the fourth burial ground in the country to hold such distinction.

"Conservation Burial Ground" certification requires that the cemetery be committed to landscape-level conservation, be owned and operated by a government agency or non-profit organization, and utilize a deed restriction or conservation easement to ensure perpetual protection. PCCC is protected by a conservation easement held by Alachua County Forever.



There have been eight burials at PCCC to date, and pet and cremated remains have also been accepted. If you are interested in more information about PCCC or Conservation Burial, please visit [www.conservationburialinc.org](http://www.conservationburialinc.org).

# MICANOPI VOLUNTEERS LAUNCH THE *TUSCAWILLA LEARNING CENTER*

A random meeting last summer of two strangers at a farmer's market led to the creation of the "Tusawilla Learning Center" (TLC) at ACT's Tusawilla Preserve in Micanopy.

Star Tarrant and Marilyn Kershner, both Micanopy residents, shared a vision for an outdoor classroom at Tusawilla Preserve. Soon two other Micanopy volunteers joined the effort – Lara Colley and Anna Hutson – and the first monthly outdoor class for children ages 3 through 7 took place last November. Dubbed "Third Thursdays at TLC", the program reaches fifteen to twenty homeschool and pre-school children from Gainesville and Micanopy each month, together with their parents.

"Our mission is to inspire curiosity and help our children connect with the natural world," says Tarrant, herself the mother of two boys ages 2 and 4, and an environmental educator. "We want to immerse ourselves in the outdoors, experiencing the natural and changing world of the Tusawilla Prairie. While playing games and engaging in creative activities, the students learn to listen to their surroundings, look closer and deeper, and grasp the inner workings of a specific habitat."

"We want to nurture a love of nature in the next generation of environmental stewards," remarks Kershner, a bookseller and environmental educator.



"This kind of outdoor education for young children is very important to the future of land conservation in Florida because, as someone from the Urban Land Institute observed, 'people will not preserve what they don't understand.' "

Using the beautiful backdrop of the changing landscape at ACT's Tusawilla cabin, programs have to date included The Shapes of Leaves led by UF forestry grad student Lara Colley;

the Deer Family, with help from ACT's Resident Caretaker, Officer Dustin Bonds; and Dirt, Worms and Our Food Supply, singing along to the song "Soil Made My Lunch." Children also experienced the Magic of Migration, wearing sandhill crane face paint while they learned what it means to avoid obstacles during a "migration" to and from Florida. Future topics in the series will include Reptiles and Amphibians with a special visit from Florida Wildlife Care, and Pollination & Germination featuring a visit with a beekeeper.

"This partnership of ACT and Micanopy nature enthusiasts has been both productive and fun and we hope it will continue and inspire new programs at other ACT properties," says the "TLC Team."



If you and your children are interested in participating in a Third Thursday program, please contact the Tusawilla Learning Center by email at [tusawillalc@gmail.com](mailto:tusawillalc@gmail.com) or by phone at (352) 466-3735.

Written by Marilyn Kirshner, photos by Star Tarrant.



## PRAIRIE CREEK RE-ZONING APPROVED

In February, the property containing Prairie Creek Preserve and Lodge was re-zoned by Alachua County as a planned development containing three primary uses: conservation and recreation land, a green cemetery, and a "rural retreat center." Most of the property will continue to be a nature preserve with public trails. The conservation burial ground is a natural burial option that minimizes pollution and raises money for further conservation purchases and land restoration.

Our vision for the "rural retreat center" is that it becomes a place where people might come for a week to learn landscape painting or pottery making, or would enrich their musical skills, or engage in spiritual or intellectual pursuits, with a faculty made up of our many local experts.

Prairie Creek Lodge, when augmented with a bunkhouse, cabins, and camping, might employ graduates of the Eastside Culinary Institute to provide meals that are prepared with food grown on the property. Weddings and funerals could use native wildflowers grown on site. Regional bicycle tours, historical reenactments, and many other events could use the flexible space as a base of operations.



The modest campus we envision would eventually employ ten to twenty people, and average 50-75 guests per week. Most importantly, we want our plans to mesh with those of the community, and want to support nature-based tourism that generates jobs in eastern Alachua County while improving the environment. Most of the pieces already exist and the rest we can create. We would love to hear your ideas about this wonderful place - come visit us at Prairie Creek Lodge!

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## 2010 IN REVIEW

Alachua Conservation Trust is fully participating in this topsy-turvy economic ride. On the one hand, our balance sheet looked so anemic that ACT's staff was furloughed to part-time for the latter half of 2010. But the silver lining is that today's real estate market represents a once in a generation opportunity, and we can't resist participating.

ACT's achievements over the past year include adding significant frontage along the Old Florida Heritage Scenic Highway (US 441) to our 600-acre Tusawilla Preserve. We transferred 500+ acres to Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park, including the most wild and scenic stretches of Prairie Creek. Our Alachua-to-Lake Butler Rail Trail still has funding, and we are working on protecting three important properties along the Santa Fe River. Several private conservation easements are in the works, including major parcels in Alachua, Putnam, Marion, and Levy Counties.

Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery was opened last July and in December we conveyed a conservation easement over the cemetery to Alachua County Forever. Several people have mentioned that ACT is in their will; our "bequest society" has twenty folks whose legacy will include land conservation.

Liz Binford, ACT's Project Manager is moving on, and as our jack-of-all-trades (transactions, proposals, events, geography, graphics, communications, etc.), her creativity and mission-driven focus have been indispensable to the growth of our organization. What ACT can accomplish is only limited by the willingness of our supporters to suggest and contribute to projects. Despite all the changes that are happening around us, and the often discouraging news from environmental fronts, our land conservation mission remains a simple, positive activity that creates tangible benefits which are easy to appreciate and participate in. Think globally, ACT locally!



Tree expert Bob Simons explains oak leaf differences during the Hardwood Trees of North Florida class in January. Photo by Ellie Sommer.



View from above: The Erasables played to a packed house as part of the Sandhill Stage Concert Series at Prairie Creek Lodge.

## BOBCAT SPOTTED ON PRAIRIE CREEK PRESERVE'S YELLOW TRAIL

In January of 2011, Howard and Lisa Jelks visited Prairie Creek Preserve, went for a hike, and came upon a bobcat in the middle of the Yellow Trail! Howard, a wildlife biologist with the US Geological Survey, has served on ACT's Board of Directors since 2005. This isn't the first time a big cat has been seen on the Preserve - a sighting was reported in November but because no photo had been taken it couldn't be confirmed. Other large mammals that have been spotted on ACT property include otters, coyotes, foxes, and black bears. With recent acquisitions, Prairie Creek Preserve will continue to be a haven for Florida wildlife.



### IN MEMORY OF RYAN CROWDER

Thank you to all who donated to ACT in Ryan's name. These contributions will be used to provide early career natural resource professionals with an internship at ACT, so that they might have the same experience that Ryan did.

Randall Brown  
 Cynthia Canning  
 Elaine Cronheim  
 Kathleen Deagan  
 George & Alison Gerencser  
 Robert & Mary Ellen Hanrahan  
 John Anderson & Lesa Holder  
 Sue Mauk & Doug Hornbeck

E.L. Roy Hunt  
 Elizabeth Maloney-Hurst &  
 Thomas Hurst  
 Jelks Family Foundation  
 Nancy Lasseter  
 Jeanna Mastrodicasa  
 Ken & Linda McGurn  
 Robert McPeck

Christy & Jeff Montgomery  
 Rebecca Nagy  
 Jack & Cynthia Niederhofer  
 Kathleen Pagan  
 Mary Jane Angelo & Robert  
 Pedlow  
 Janet & David Quilligan  
 Cynthia Karle & Sam Trickey

# IVOR'S LAND MANAGEMENT UPDATE

In the past year, ACT has made major progress on our flatwoods restoration project at Prairie Creek Preserve. Four prescribed burns were completed totaling about 80 acres. This put us only nine acres short of achieving our 2010 burn goals for Prairie Creek Preserve. Ivor Kincaide, ACT's land manager, completed the Florida Certified Prescribed Burn Manager certification so now we have a burn boss on staff.



Nearly 6,000 longleaf pine tubelings were planted in these restoration zones by dozens of volunteers. With the help of Florida Works, ACT removed thousands of invasive exotic Camphor, Chinese Tallow, Coral ardisia, and air potato plants at the Tusawilla and Prairie Creek Preserves.

ACT was awarded a Partners for Fish and Wildlife Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for \$25,000 for assistance with completing our restoration efforts at Prairie Creek Preserve. This funding will allow us to get thousands more wiregrass plugs and longleaf pine tubelings in the ground.

In January 2010, ACT was also awarded an \$8,500 Tourism Product Development grant for assistance with the construction of a boardwalk and interpretive signs for visitors to the marshes and swamps of the Prairie Creek Preserve.

If you are interested in helping plant trees or native grass, or learning more about ACT's ecosystem restoration efforts, please don't hesitate to contact us!

## ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST IS LOOKING FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS AND STORYTELLERS!

Have you kayaked the Potano Paddling Trail recently? Or hiked to the cypress swamp at Prairie Creek Preserve? Or spied the wildlife at Tusawilla Preserve? ACT would love to hear your stories and see your pictures. We may even use them in future newsletters, on our website, or on Facebook. If you would like to help spread the word about ACT by sending us your stories and photos, please email us at [Info@AlachuaConservationTrust.org](mailto:Info@AlachuaConservationTrust.org).



org, and let us know that we have permission to use your material. Thank you for your support, and for getting outdoors to enjoy our incredible natural environment. Photo by Alison Blakeslee.

Don't forget!  
**The 2011 Conservation Stewards Awards**  
Friday, March 18, at Prairie Creek Lodge  
Get your tickets by calling the ACT office at  
(352) 373-1078 or purchase online at  
[www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org](http://www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org)

## PLANT PROFILE

Latin Name:

*Rhododendron viscosum*

Common Name: Swamp Azalea



There are fifteen species of azaleas that are native to the southeastern United States, but we most often see them in our cities and neighborhoods. Native azaleas can bloom anywhere from mid-March to September and are much more hearty and tough than landscaping varieties. Swamp azaleas attract butterflies and hummingbirds and is often found in wooded wetlands and streamsides. One great place in north central Florida to see wild azaleas this month is O'Leno State Park in High Springs.



**CINEMA VERDE**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL**  
**FILM & ARTS FESTIVAL**  
MARCH 18-27, 2011  
GAINESVILLE, FL  
[www.CinemaVerde.org](http://www.CinemaVerde.org)

**10 DAYS - 25 FILMS**

**Films include:**

*Bananas, Carbon Nation, Earthlings, Plastic Planet, Submission, Tar Creek, and many more*

**ECO FAIR**

March 19 - Green businesses, kids' zone, food, entertainment - Bo Diddley Plaza

**ECO ARTS**

March 22 - Spoken Word - Pride Center  
March 24 - Eco Pechakucha - Volta  
March 25 - Eco Artwalk - Downtown Gainesville  
March 18-27 - K-12 student exhibit - Harn Museum of Art at the University of Florida

**VERDE SPEAK**

Workshops - Expert Speakers - Filmmakers

**VERDE FEAST**

Restaurant Discounts

**ECO TOURS**

Showcasing our region's natural treasures

SNAPSHOTS

ACT's tree planting teams put over 5,000 longleaf pine tubelings in the ground during the month of February. Thanks to Jib Davidson for the donation! From left: Ivor Kincaide, Andrew Slack, Daniel Godwin, Parker Titus, Patrick Mize, Jordan Robitaille, Steve Robitaille, John Bell, Ben Thompson, Robert Hutchinson.



## 2011 CONSERVATION STEWARDS AWARDS

Each year Alachua Conservation Trust celebrates those who have made cultural and environmental protection a priority in their lives. Join us on March 18th as we honor this year's Conservation Stewards.

**Margaret Ross Tolbert** is an internationally acclaimed artist with a studio in Gainesville or wherever the setting inspires – France, Turkey, or the great outdoors. She studied



painting at UF where she received both her BFA and MFA, minoring in linguistics. Her paintings of North Florida springs capture the sense of paradise destination and the exotic in the here-and-now, contrasted with the timeless origins and

journeys of water. Last year she published *AQUIFERious: 12 Florida Springs with Art and Narrative*, blending photography, painting, and writing with the message of conservation of springs and the aquifers that feed them. All of us will be inspired to help save the springs after experiencing her art, writing, and passionate advocacy.

**William C. "Bill" Andrews** has been a Florida boy all his life. Bill finished law school at UF and began practicing law in Gainesville in 1959. He was a member of the Florida House of Representatives from 1966 to 1978, where he served on the Committee on Elections, Committee on Business Regulation, and Subcommittee III (Education) of the Appropriations Committee. He has been a member of the Florida Commission on Ethics, the Florida Education Council, the Gainesville Downtown Redevelopment Agency, and the Alachua County Consolidated Charter Commission. In addition to his political work, Bill helped establish the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings House as the first state park in Alachua County, and Devil's Millhopper as the second. Bill has been on the Board of Directors of Friends of Paynes Prairie since 2006 and was elected president earlier this year.



**John Hintermister** is a lifetime birder who was born and raised in Gainesville. As a small boy, he was introduced to birding at Lake Tusawilla, Lake Alice, and Paynes Prairie-then still a cattle ranch owned by the Camp family. John and his brother grew up birding at Lake Alice and at the age of sixteen he was one of the charter members of the Alachua Audubon Society. In the early 1970s, John worked to standardize the Alachua County Christmas Bird



County; his system dramatically increased participation and is still used today. John is one of the founders of the Florida Ornithological Society and taught birding at Santa Fe Community College. John later worked at Morningside Nature Center and brought his birding classes to a new audience, leading trips as far north as the mountains of North Carolina. John has served as President and Board member of Alachua Audubon and has mentored countless Florida birders.



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Gainesville, Florida 32641

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## ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST: The Natural Leader

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Trey Greer**, President of ACT, Associate Director, University Writing Program - UF

**Janet Wootten**, *Vice President of ACT*, Research Editor - retired

**Alison Blakeslee**, *Secretary of ACT*, Private Investigator - Fisher & Blakeslee

**Mike Castine**, AICP, *Treasurer of ACT*, Senior Planner - Alachua County Growth Management

**Anne Barkdoll**, Ph.D., Biologist - Florida Div. of Recreation & Parks

**Bill Bryson**, Publisher/Business Owner

**Fred Cantrell**, University Business Affairs - retired

**Richard Hamann**, J.D., Associate in Law, Ctr. for Gov't Responsibility - UF

**Pegeen Hanrahan**, P.E., Environmental Consultant

**Nancy Jackson**, Retired - Nationwide Insurance

**Howard Jelks**, Fish Biologist - U.S. Geological Survey

**Laurel Nesbit**, Project Manager - Alta Systems

**Peter NeSmith**, Botanist - Water & Air Research, Inc.

### STAFF

**Robert Hutchinson**, Executive Director

**Lesa Holder**, Office Manager

**Ivor Kincaide**, Land Manager

**Liz Binford**, Project Manager

Resident Caretakers: Parker Titus, Dustin Bonds, John Bell

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.

