

*Prepared for the City Commission, March 17-April 6, 2016*

## City Manager

- ✓ The City of Gainesville elections for the mayor and the district four commission seat were held Tuesday, March 15, and **Commissioner-Elect Adrian Hayes-Santos was elected to the District 4 seat and Mayor-Elect Lauren Poe was elected as mayor.** Both will be invited to participate in a one-day orientation, tentatively scheduled for Monday, April 4. The swearing-in ceremony is Thursday, May 5 at 12 p.m. at the Thelma Boltin Center. For additional information on the March 15 election, please visit <http://VoteAlachua.com>.
- ✓ At the time of this publication, the **following special City Commission meetings/workshops have been scheduled:**
  - Thursday, March 31 at 3 p.m.: Joint City and County Commission Meeting at the Jack Durrance Auditorium
  - Tuesday, April 5 at 6 p.m.: City Commission Telephone Town Hall Meeting
- ✓ **Register to participate in the City of Gainesville's spring 2016 Telephone Town Hall!** The City Commission will host its third Telephone Town Hall, talkGNV, to discuss programs and services provided by the City of Gainesville. The telephone town hall is scheduled for Tuesday, April 5 from 6-7 p.m. A database of approximately 19,000 home telephone numbers (landlines) will be dialed prior to the 6 p.m. call. Residents who are interested in participating should register their telephone number (including cellular numbers) at <http://www.cityofgainesville.org/openGNV/talkGNV.aspx>, or call 352-334-5032 and leave a message with their name and telephone number. Text GNV to 43506 to connect with the City of Gainesville and help us design a government for you! Share your input with the City Commission as they prepare to develop the FY2017 budget at <http://bit.do/gnvSurvey>.
- ✓ The **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program** is a combined effort with the United Way of North Central Florida and the IRS **to help low- to moderate-income working people keep more of their refund and not pay for income tax services.** Many lower-income households are owed a significant refund because of the Earned Income Tax Credit, or EITC. Residents can find out more about the free program, make an appointment and find out what to bring to the appointment by calling United Way's 24-hour information line 2-1-1.

## Capital Projects

- ✓ **Northwest Eighth Avenue:** Section A (between Northwest 40th Drive and Northwest 34th Street) and Section C (between Northwest 23rd Street and Northwest Sixth Street) are substantially complete. Construction of Section B (between Northwest 34th Street and Northwest 23rd Street) started the week of Feb. 22, and is expected to be complete later this summer. Until completion, lane closures and slower traffic may be expected in this segment. For more information, please visit the [project website](#) or contact [Stefan Broadus](#), project manager, at 352-393-8406.
- ✓ **Depot Avenue Segment 2:** The Southwest Sixth Street and Depot Avenue intersection opened March 1. Two-way vehicular traffic will be maintained east of Southwest Sixth Street to South Main Street for local traffic only while the contractor, O'Steen Brothers Inc., completes the final phase of the project. The entire Depot Avenue corridor will open by the end of June 2016. The contact person for the contractor is Don Shackelford, and he can be reached at 352-459-1031. For more information, please contact [Betsy Waite](#), project manager, at 352-393-8405.

## Communications Office

**Communications Office contact: Bob Woods – 352-393-8627**

- ✓ **Gainesville 101: the 2016 Citizens' Academy** began Wednesday, March 9 and continues for seven consecutive weeks. During this reporting period, attendees will meet with representatives from GPD, GFR and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs.
- ✓ Broadcast staff **released the following, newly produced videos:**
  - [352Creates](#): 352Creates at Lot 10 was recently held in downtown Gainesville as part of a community-wide day of artmaking. This collaboration between the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department and the UF Health Shands Arts in Medicine program featured live music, hands-on art activities, spoken word poetry and a community sing-a-long.
  - [City Snapshot-Bike Ride with the Commish](#): The Public Works Department recently kicked off Florida Bike Month with a Ride with the Commish. The three-mile ride showcased the Sixth Street Trail and nearby projects.

## Gainesville Fire Rescue

**GFR Administration and Operations contact: Chief Jeff Lane – 352-334-5078**

- ✓ The City of Gainesville offers **programs to adjust the assessments for fire services**. The **Application for Mobile Home or Recreational Vehicle Park Vacancy Adjustment** is available to each owner of mobile home or recreational vehicle parks. Park owners have the opportunity to demonstrate the vacancy rate in space occupancy within their property and receive a vacancy adjustment to the fire assessment. Additionally, applications for the **2016 Fire Flow Mitigation (sprinklers) Credit Program** are available. Gainesville offers a Fire Flow Mitigation Credit to eligible city property owners whose buildings are subject to the city fire services special assessment. **Applications must be returned to the Gainesville Fire Rescue Department no later than May 1, 2016.** Eligibility requirements and applications for these two programs are available on the Gainesville Fire Rescue website at [www.gfr.org](http://www.gfr.org).

**GFR Risk Reduction Bureau contact: Interim Asst. Chief Steve Hesson – 352-393-8377**

- ✓ **Gainesville Fire Rescue can now be found on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!**
- ✓ **Project Get Alarmed helps those who cannot afford smoke detectors.** Applications are [available online](#) or by calling Risk Reduction Specialist Krista Ott at 393-8461.
- ✓ **Requests for car seat safety checks and installation** should be directed to GFR's Risk Reduction Specialist Krista Ott at 393-8461.
- ✓ GFR continues to host **crowd manager training** to enhance community safety. The cost is \$30 per person. The **next class is Wednesday, April 6 from 2-5 p.m.** at the GRU Multipurpose Room 301 SE Fourth Ave. For information on **Safe Assembly Training classes**, please call 334-5065.
- ✓ Save the date! GPR is participating in the next **Fun 4 Gator Kids Touch-a-Truck Saturday, May 21 starting at 9 a.m.** at the Northeast Complex by Citizens' Field. Admission is free. More information can be found at [www.gatortouchatruck.com](http://www.gatortouchatruck.com).
- ✓ GFR is **accepting applications for the Junior Fire Academy and the ABCs of Safety Summer Camp.** Please visit the [events tab on our website](#) for more information.

**GFR Support Services Bureau contact: District Chief Shawn Hillhouse – 352-393-8459**

- ✓ Gainesville Fire Rescue continues to provide **CPR and related course offerings to the community through its Operation C.A.R.E** or Citizens Aiding in Response to Emergencies. The program is being provided on a fee basis by the City Of Gainesville to increase the number of persons who can perform CPR, first aid and other skills during an emergency until help can arrive. For more information, please visit [gfr.org/community\\_training](http://gfr.org/community_training).

## Public Works

**Public Works contact: Chantel Thomas – 352-334-5070**

- ✓ The **Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) Program** is a volunteer organization made up of community representation from citizens, agencies and groups such as public works, law enforcement, fire departments, school board, health department and many others. The CTSTs are sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation with the mission of helping to reduce crashes and improve safety on area roadways. Through events, information, ongoing programs and education, team members work together to develop solutions to local traffic safety problems. The **Alachua County CTST meets the third Thursday of every month** (excluding July and December). The CTST Program will coordinate the following meeting:

- **Thursday, March 17 at 10 a.m.:** CTST meeting at Santa Fe College Gainesville Technology Entrepreneurship Center (GTEC) (2153 SE Hawthorne Road)

For more information on the group or to submit a traffic safety concern, visit the group website at <http://trafficsafetyteam.com/>.

- ✓ The Solid Waste Division will help sponsor a **Level II Neighborhood Cleanup at North Lincoln Heights** Saturday, March 19. A level II cleanup entails the community coming together to organize a cleanup through Keep Alachua County Beautiful and the Solid Waste Division with volunteers from the neighborhood. The Solid Waste Division furnishes the roll-off boxes, equipment and a Solid Waste inspector to oversee the staging area, which will be at the Church of the Kingdom of God (402 SE 14th St.) from 8-11 a.m. The inspector distributes equipment and oversees the roll-off boxes to make sure there is no contamination or hazardous waste. After the event, the inspector ensures all equipment is returned and coordinates the pickup of the roll-off boxes.
- ✓ On Monday, March 28, **RTS Maintenance will hold a Recruitment Day** at the Corrine Brown Transit Facility, located at 34 SE 13th Road. The event allows those interested in diesel mechanic, vehicle service attendant and other maintenance opportunities to apply and ask questions.
- ✓ Currently, the **2016 Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Board (BPAB) meetings** are on the following Thursdays: March 24, June 16, July 21, Sept. 22 and Nov. 17 (subject to change). The meetings are at 7 p.m. on the second floor of the Alachua County Administration Building (12 SE First St. in Gainesville) in the Grace Knight Conference Room. Stay updated on BPAB information at [www.cityofgainesville.org/bikeped](http://www.cityofgainesville.org/bikeped).
- ✓ The Bicycle/Pedestrian Program is **conducting bicycle/pedestrian safety related presentations** for Expressions Learning Arts Academy Tuesday, March 29 at GFR's Safety City facility, located at 1025 NE 13<sup>th</sup> St.
- ✓ The Bicycle/Pedestrian Program will **present on career and success with the City of Gainesville** **Wednesday, March 30 at Eastside High School**, located at 1201 SE 43rd St.

- ✓ The City of Gainesville Bicycle/Pedestrian Program will **conduct an on-bicycle safety training course “Bike Rodeo” for the public Saturday, April 2 at the 1st Annual Alachua World Autism Day** at Skinner Field (15120 NW 141st St. in Alachua).
- ✓ The City of Gainesville Bicycle/Pedestrian Program will **host an interactive booth at Active Streets Sunday, April 3.** The event will occur along University Avenue’s downtown corridor, and will allow the public to use the roadway as a place to bike, walk, dance, play, exercise and recreate in the way that suits them best. For more information on Active Streets, visit <http://www.activestreetsalliance.org/>.
- ✓ **Consider the [Bicycle/Pedestrian Program](#) for your next meeting, community event or training.** They provide bicycle and pedestrian-related presentations, demonstrations, videos and trainings for toddlers, youth, teens, young adults, adults and seniors. For more information, scheduling a bicycle/pedestrian event, questions or volunteer opportunities, please contact Dekova Batey, bicycle/pedestrian program coordinator, at 352-334-5070 or [bikeped@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:bikeped@cityofgainesville.org), or visit [www.cityofgainesville.org/bikeped](http://www.cityofgainesville.org/bikeped).

## Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs

**Education contact: Ben Dillard – 352-393-8192**

- ✓ Are you looking for a safe and exciting place for your kids (1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) to spend their spring break? If so, look no further than our **Spring Break Camp!** Come explore art, culture, nature, nutrition and much more through a variety of hands-on activities your children will enjoy while learning. The week will culminate with a trip to Chestnut Park (located at 2315 SE 35<sup>th</sup> St.) and an egg extravaganza! The camp is Monday, March 21-Friday, March 25 and is available from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. at two convenient locations: Albert “Ray” Massey Recreation Center and Eastside Community Center. Please note, meals are not provided. The cost is \$50 for city residents and \$74.75 for non-city residents. Proof of residency (GRU bill or voter ID card) is required at time of registration. Register in person at the PRCA Administrative Office (Thomas Center, Building B, third floor) or [register online](#) before March 17.
- ✓ PRCA is happy to offer **several summer camp options for elementary and middle school students. Summer camp registration opens March 21.** For children in 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade, three exciting sessions are available. Each session is action-packed, filled with exciting experiences and focuses on The Six Pillars of Character® program: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Free swimming lessons are included in all sessions. Students in 6<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> grade, three middle school camp sessions will focus on arts, music, video, photography, computers, personal finance, life skills and mentoring. For information on fees, times and scholarships, please visit PRCA’s [camps webpage](#).

**Athletics and Aquatics contact: Jeff Moffitt – 352-393-8732**

- ✓ **Repairs of the Northeast Pool continue.** The new vinyl liner installation is approximately 75 percent complete. Upon completion of the liner installation, crews will begin the lengthy and detailed work of adding all the black racing lines and targets to the bottom and sides of the pool. This work may take up to two weeks to complete. The pool reopening is projected for April 1, 2016. Updates on the status of this repair/replacement project will be posted on [www.CityofGainesvilleParks.org](http://www.CityofGainesvilleParks.org) and the [pool’s Facebook page](#). For additional information, or for any questions or comments, please contact Recreation Supervisor Jeff Moffitt at 352-393-8732, or email [moffittjc@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:moffittjc@cityofgainesville.org).
- ✓ **Baseball for All is a free, adaptive program** is offered through a partnership with the non-profit corporation Noah’s Endeavor, Inc., for children with special physical and developmental needs. The

program teaches children to be comfortable on the field, while they have fun and learn important safety skills. For additional information, please contact Noah's Endeavor at 352-275-9639 or [info@noahsendeavor.org](mailto:info@noahsendeavor.org) or visit their website at [www.noahsendeavor.org](http://www.noahsendeavor.org). Baseball for All is offered at Westside Park, Ball Field #3 (1001 NW 34<sup>th</sup> St.) the following Sundays from 2–4 p.m.: March 20, April 3, April 10 and April 17.

- ✓ **The 2016 biathlon race series starts April 23.** It's time to be challenged! Come participate in six races alternating between [H. Spurgeon Cherry \(Westside\) Pool](#) and [Dwight H. Hunter \(Northeast\) Pool](#). Each race consists of a 5K run and an 800-meter swim. Don't wait—sprint to enter! Save **money on the registration fees** by signing up at **least two days** before the race. The first 25 people to register online or at the Thomas Center two days before the race will receive **super sweet swag** for their participation! To find out more, please visit PRCA's [biathlon webpage](#).
- ✓ The purpose of the **Junior Lifeguard Summer Camp** is to increase self-confidence and promote safe behavior in the aquatic environment. Throughout the course, campers will learn a wide range of skills including first-aid, CPR and rescue techniques. The program, which is developed by the American Red Cross, will encourage campers to take on leadership roles, as well as challenge them mentally and physically. Besides learning the primary responsibilities of a lifeguard, this course is action packed with fun activities, games and free swimming! The cost is \$82.75 for city residents and \$124.25 for non-city residents. [Registration](#) opens March 28.
- ✓ **American Red Cross lifeguarding and safety classes start April 15.** Do you want to qualify for a great summer job? Get certified as a professional American Red Cross lifeguard! For those 15 years and older, the course is \$175 and includes books and materials. Lifeguarding re-certification and adult/pediatrics first aid/CPR/AED classes are offered as well. Please visit PRCA's [lifeguarding and safety classes webpage](#) for more information.

**Environmental Education contact: Sally Wazny – 352-334-3326**

- ✓ Join us at Morningside Nature Center's Living History Farm for an **Old Florida Seed and Story Swap Saturday, March 26 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.**, presented PRCA, in partnership with Forage Farm. This free event focuses on the preservation of our precious agricultural heritage and diversifying your own garden by bringing your seeds to swap with others in our gardening community. Please, no live plants, seeds older than five years or seeds from invasive exotics. No seeds to swap? Come on down anyway and meet fellow gardeners, while enjoying Morningside's historic farm, including the one room schoolhouse, log cabin and barnyard. The Conch, Gainesville's first true storytelling project, will facilitate an hour long round of storytelling from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. The tales won't tell themselves, so bring a yarn to spin in exchange for a free pack of seeds. There will also be hands-on gardening demonstrations in the Heirloom Kitchen Garden and live old timey music by Jay Gimelli and his band, Pure & Simple, to set the mood. Join the [Facebook event](#) for the latest information.
- ✓ **Environmental education programs resume at Morningside Nature Center!** The free, educational and fun-filled programs at Morningside Nature Center start in September and continue through May!
  - C'mon home to the Living History Farm and experience a time when the rooster's crow and the rising sun, not an alarm clock, welcomed a new day! During **Living History Days**, interpreters portray day-to-day life on an 1870 Florida farm. Living History Days take place the first Saturday of the month from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The farm is open to the public from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday all year long. The remaining Living History Days dates are April 2 and May 7. Step back in time, enjoy nature, and experience Florida as it was!
  - Morningside Nature Center has a farm, ee—i—ee—i—oh! On this farm, youngsters (with an adult) can meet and greet farm animals by helping staff with afternoon feeding on the Living History Farm. This program is free, but the animals love donations of carrots, squash, apples,

sweet potatoes, and melons (please give these items to a staff member and not directly to the animals). With a sheep here—and a cow there—learning about heritage breeds is fun! The **Barnyard Buddies Program** takes place Wednesdays at 3 p.m. at the Living History Farm.

- At the **Frogs and Friends Friday** program, children (with an adult) can join a Morningside Nature Center animal caretaker for an exciting and educational program featuring live amphibians and reptiles. Join the fun, get the facts! This free program begins at 2 p.m. in the Education Building. The remaining Frogs and Friends Friday dates are April 1 and May 6.

Morningside Nature Center is located at 3540 E. University Ave., approximately three miles east of downtown Gainesville. For more information, please call 352-334-3326.

**Cultural Affairs contact: Russell Etling – 352-393-8532**

- ✓ **Save the date for Jest Fest!**, Sunday, April 10 from 11 a.m.-6 p.m., another free, fun-filled day of hilarity and derring-do at the Historic Thomas Center. The Flying Wallendas perform daredevil stunts on the high wire, with newcomers the Flying Carrs flying through the air "with the greatest of ease" on the trapeze. Five stages of continuous entertainment feature Broadway and film star Avner the Eccentric, circus star Johnny Peers' Muttville Comix, silent clown Arsene from Paris, illusionist Howard Blackwell, Rick Hubbard's Kazoobie Kazoo Show, The Halls of Mimicry Puppetry & Music and more! Stay up-to-date on the [Jest Fest! Facebook page](#).

- ✓ PRCA, in cooperation with Shakerag Culture Center, Inc., is pleased to announce upcoming **Jewel Box Concerts at the Historic Thomas Center**.

- **Hanneke Cassel & Mike Block (Saint Patrick's Day concert): Thursday, March 17 at 7 p.m. (doors open at 6 p.m.)**. Tickets are \$18 at the door (cash or check only, please) or can be purchased online, in advance, with a credit card for only \$18 at <http://bpt.me/2497507>. Hanneke Cassel (fiddle) and Mike Block (cello/voice) have been playing music together since 2007. Together, these dynamic performers present a diverse and exciting show featuring traditional and original music drawing from their Celtic, Americana and classical backgrounds.

- **Hudost, with special guests Christie Lenée and George Tortorelli: Thursday, March 31 at 7 p.m. (doors open at 6 p.m.)**. Tickets are \$20 at the door (cash or check only, please) or can be purchased in advance online with a credit card for \$18 at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2498507>. These special musicians cast a spell on an audience driven by the incredibly gifted songwriting and vocal skills of Moksha Sommer and magical guitar phrasing of Jamal Wade Hines. Christie Lenée has been capturing a wide audience across the U.S., touring frequently and delivering vibrant energy at every show. Joining her is George Tortorelli/MedicineWind, who is a master bamboo flute designer and player.

The Historic Thomas Center is located at 302 NE Sixth Ave. in Gainesville. For additional information, please contact Russell Etling, cultural affairs manager, at 352-393-8532, or contact Joseph Saccocci, Shakerag Culture Center, Inc. vice president, at [jsaccocci@cox.net](mailto:jsaccocci@cox.net) or 352-373-5514.

- ✓ **Thomas Center Galleries: A STROKE OF BRILLIANCE** is in the Thomas Center's Main Gallery Thursday, March 24-Saturday, May 14. A curatorial treasure hunt yields exquisite gems of painting, poetry and literature from the work and collections of artists and authors. The opening reception is Thursday, March 24 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. and is free and open to the public. **The ALACHUA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS Visual Arts Program Showcase (Secondary)** is in the Thomas Center's Mezzanine Gallery Saturday, Feb. 27 – Saturday, April 2.

**Nature Operations contact: Linda Demetropoulos – 352-393-8445**

- ✓ **Sweetwater Wetlands Nature Park Tours: Introduction to Sweetwater Wetlands are available Saturdays at 9 a.m. and the second Sunday of each month at 5 p.m.** Tours start from the Welcome Classroom Pavilion, and are free with park admission. Participants should wear comfortable shoes and bring water. Please call 352-393-8437 with any questions.
- ✓ **Take the challenge to protect Gainesville’s natural areas!** The Gainesville Greenway Challenge is a year-round effort whose aim is to restore natural habitat in Gainesville by removing invasive non-native plant species that threaten an ecosystem’s health. Join the challenge and help us to eradicate the region’s most aggressive invasive plants in Gainesville’s nature parks! Groups or individuals can sign up for the Gainesville Greenway Challenge by registering on its [website](#). For more information, contact [gnvgreenwaychallenge@gmail.com](mailto:gnvgreenwaychallenge@gmail.com) or call 352-393-8428.
- ✓ **The Gainesville Greenway Challenge volunteer workdays take place the first Saturday of every month from 9-11:30 a.m.** Participants will work in local nature parks, removing non-native invasive plants to restore native habitat for the plants and animals that live there, and for people to enjoy. Groups can also arrange for special dates. Volunteers will work outdoors, and should bring sunscreen, insect repellent, protective gloves and closed-toe footwear appropriate for wet conditions. Pre-registration is required; you may fill out the form [here](#). Groups or individuals can sign up for the Gainesville Greenway Challenge by registering on its [website](#). For more information, email [gnvgreenwaychallenge@gmail.com](mailto:gnvgreenwaychallenge@gmail.com) or call 352-393-8428.

## Economic Development & Innovation

**Economic Development & Innovation: contact Erik Bredfeldt – 352-393-8614**

- ✓ On Wednesday, March 23, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will attend a **meeting of the Alachua County Library Partnership to review city small business procedures/processes/assistance** for those seeking these types of opportunities from the recently incarcerated community.
- ✓ On Wednesday, March 30, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will have a **routine monthly conference call with the Florida Institute for the Commercialization of Public Research.**
- ✓ On Monday, April 4, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will **attend the next meeting of the Minority Owned and Minority Oriented Opportunities Committee.**
- ✓ On Tuesday, April 5, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will **attend the quarterly Entrepreneurial Roundtable meeting.**
- ✓ On Tuesday, April 5, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will **attend a first-step meeting involving a proposed four-story hotel** in the vicinity of Southwest 34<sup>th</sup> Street and the Hull Road extension.

## Gainesville Police Department

**Gainesville Police Department contact: Officer Ben Tobias – 352-393-7525**

- ✓ The [Gainesville Police Department Community Calendar](#) provides information on crime watch meetings and other community meetings, such as the Black-on-Black Task Force. Please view the calendar for meeting dates and locations.

- ✓ The **Police Advisory Council will hold its monthly meeting Thursday, March 24 at 6 p.m.** The meeting location varies each month, so please check [GPD's Facebook page](#) for the location. The meetings are open to all.

*The next report will cover April 7-20, 2016. Items for submission to the report are due to the Communications Office no later than Thursday, March 31. For more information, please contact [Laura Rawson](#) at extension 8740.*