

Prepared for the City Commission, April 7-20, 2016

City Manager

- ✓ **Thank you, Mayor Braddy and Commissioner Wells, for serving the City of Gainesville.** We appreciate the hard work and dedication you gave the city and its residents over the years and wish you the best in your future endeavors! **The last meeting for the outgoing mayor and commissioner, known as sine die, will be held at the regular scheduled City Commission meeting Thursday, April 21.**
- ✓ **The swearing-in ceremony for Mayor-Elect Lauren Poe and Commissioner-Elect Adrian Hayes-Santos 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>.
- ✓ **Share your input by April 25 with the City Commission as they prepare to develop the FY2017 budget** at <http://bit.do/gnvSurvey>.
- ✓ **For two Wednesdays this April, the Thomas Center's east parking lot will feature some of Gainesville's best food trucks!** Join your co-workers and the local community for [Food Truck Wednesdays](#) – delicious mid-week lunch breaks when local food trucks will be in the area and at your service. Two food trucks will be featured at each event, serving fresh lunch from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. The food trucks will be parked just outside the Thomas Center B main entrance, and all city employees and community members are welcome. Come enjoy the springtime sunshine, the Gainesville community and some delicious gourmet food on wheels!
 - April 6: Cilantro Tacos and Soup to Nuts
 - April 20: Humble Pie and Off the Griddle
- ✓ **At the time of this publication, the following special City Commission meetings/workshops have been scheduled:**
 - Monday, April 11 at 6 p.m.: Special City Commission meeting on GRU governance in the City Hall Auditorium
- ✓ **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.

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 Planning & Development Services, GRU, the Economic Development & Innovation Department, the Neighborhood Improvement Department, and the Community Redevelopment Agency. **Graduation for the 2016 Citizens' Academy is scheduled for the April 21 City Commission meeting.**
- ✓ **Broadcast staff released the following, newly produced videos:**
 - [Bo Diddley Plaza Renovation Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony](#): The Bo Diddley Community Plaza recently reopened in historic downtown Gainesville after a year of renovations.

Improvements include a new cafe space, gently-trickling water wall with 250 programmable lights, informational kiosk, and a green room for enhanced performances.

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.

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

- ✓ **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.
- ✓ 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.

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs

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

- ✓ **Summer vacation camp registration is now open. PRCA is happy to offer several summer camp options for elementary and middle school students.** For children in 1st–5th 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 6th–8th 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 are complete and the pool re-opened April 1.** The new vinyl liner was installed in cooperation with city staff and Natara Corporation. Complete spring pool hours are posted on the [pools webpage](#). For additional information, or for any questions or comments, please contact Recreation Supervisor Jeff Moffitt at 352-393-8732, or email 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 or visit their website at www.noahsendeavor.org. Baseball for All is offered at Westside Park, Ball Field #3 (1001 NW 34th St.) the following Sundays from 2–4 p.m.: 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. 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](#) is open now!
- ✓ **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

- ✓ The **Spring Native Plant sale is April 22 and 23.** Take advantage of the largest offering of native plants in north Florida during the 2016 Spring Native Plant sale Saturday, April 23 at Morningside Nature Center. Paint your yard with low maintenance, native plants! An exclusive member's sale is Friday, April 22 from 4:30-6:30 pm, and is open to members of the [Friends of Nature Parks \(FNP\)](#) and the [Florida Native Plant Society \(FNPS\)](#) only. Memberships are available at the gate. Cash, checks and debit/credit cards are accepted. The sale is hosted cooperatively by the City of Gainesville's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department, the [Friends of Nature Parks \(FNP\)](#) and Paynes Prairie chapter of the [Florida Native Plant Society \(FNPS\)](#).
- ✓ **Earth Academy Day Camp registration opens April 18.** [Earth Academy Day Camp](#) awakens your child's innate curiosity, while encouraging an environmental ethic and service appreciation. This nature-based day camp is held at Morningside Nature Center's 416-acre nature sanctuary, and uses hands-on fun to focus attention on natural and cultural history. Instructors are career educators and science professionals experienced in working with children. In addition to a variety of theme-based,

multidisciplinary projects, campers have fun with character development activities demonstrating trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Camp tends to fill quickly and space is limited so be sure to register early! Sign up for our [mailing list](#) to receive updates and reminders!

- ✓ **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 date is 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 date is 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

- ✓ **Join us 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**.
 - **Roosevelt Collier Trio: Friday April 15 at 7:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:30 p.m.)**. Tickets are \$20 at the door (cash or check only, please) or can be purchased online, in advance, with a credit card for only \$18 at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2503448>. Children under 12 years old are free. Soft-spoken by nature, Roosevelt Collier does his hollering on the steel guitar. Raised in the "sacred steel" tradition of his south Florida gospel church, Collier built his reputation alongside his uncles and cousins in The Lee Boys, known for their spirited, soul-shaking live performances. Seated front and center, "The Dr." leaves an indelible mark on listeners, flooring audiences with his lightning-fast slide work. He is a regular special guest at festivals and on tour with other artists, invited to perform across genres with bands from Widespread Panic to Karl Denson's Tiny Universe to Yonder Mountain String Band. No matter the context, when Roosevelt Collier takes the stage, the ear-to-ear grins can't help but be contagious.

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 or 352-373-5514.

- ✓ **The annual meeting of the Evergreen Cemetery Association of Gainesville, Inc. is Sunday, April 17 at 1 p.m.** The meeting will feature several presentations about the association's significant improvements and initiatives as Evergreen Cemetery celebrates its 160th year. Come learn more about becoming a part of this organization to support Evergreen Cemetery, for the historical and cultural enrichment of the entire community. Evergreen Cemetery is located at 401 SE 21st Ave. For more information, please visit www.ThisWondrousPlace.org.
- ✓ **The "Free Fridays" Concert Series kicks off Friday, May 6.** Downtown Gainesville comes alive every Friday night (from May 6 to Oct. 21) from 8–10 p.m. as local and regional bands are showcased under the stars. Each year, thousands come out to enjoy the free, live concerts and shows in a family-friendly environment. This year, "Free Fridays" is returning to its home at the newly renovated Bo Diddley Plaza, which is located at 111 E. University Ave. For more information, please call 352-393-8746, or view the [2016 schedule online](#).
- ✓ **Artist applications are now available for the 35th Annual Downtown Festival & Art Show.** With its blend of art, food and music, the Downtown Festival & Art Show has consistently been recognized as one of the top 200 shows in the nation since 1996. The Downtown Festival & Art Show is currently ranked No. 14 on Sunshine Artist magazine's "200 Best" list of top fine arts festivals in the nation. On Saturday, Nov. 5 and Sunday Nov. 6, 2016, more than 240 artists will display original oils and acrylics, vibrant watercolors, captivating sculptures, dazzling jewelry, decorative ceramics and vivid photography in historic downtown Gainesville. They will compete for \$22,000 in cash prizes and purchase awards. The festival attracts more than 100,000 visitors, who travel the historic streets of Gainesville to purchase one-of-a-kind art work. Visitors can savor local and international cuisine, enjoy live music from four stages, and explore the Community Information Area, featuring 50 nonprofit organizations showcasing their services. Children can enjoy free, hands-on art activities at the Children's Imagination Station. Artist applications for the Downtown Festival & Art Show are available upon request at 352-393-8536 or online at www.gainesvilledowntownartfest.org. The **application deadline is Thursday, May 5, 2016.**
- ✓ **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 ALACHUA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS Visual Arts Program Showcase (Elementary)** is in the Thomas Center's Mezzanine Gallery Saturday, April 9 – Saturday, May 7.

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 gnygreenwaychallenge@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 gnavgreenwaychallenge@gmail.com or call 352-393-8428.

Economic Development & Innovation

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

- ✓ On Thursday, April 7, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will **attend First-Step meetings for two eda** (formerly Eng Denman) **projects**. Both projects are located in the southwest section of the city.
- ✓ On Thursday, April 7, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will **participate in the evaluation team process regarding the Armory Building request for proposals (RFP)**.
- ✓ On Monday, April 11, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will **attend a First-Step meeting associated with a proposed improvement project at the Gainesville Regional Airport** and will **show several properties to an existing federal agency seeking to locate within the city limits**.
- ✓ On Tuesday, April 12, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will **attend the second meeting of the Action Officer Design Group**.
- ✓ On Wednesday, April 13, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will **attend the Citizens' Academy** to discuss economic development projects/priorities. He will also **meet again with the evaluation team regarding the Armory Building request for proposals (RFP)**.
- ✓ On Wednesday, April 20, the Economic Development & Innovation Director will **attend a meeting of Alachua County Emergency Operations Center staff** regarding emergency management activities/responsibilities with respect to the business community in the event of an emergency.

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 next report will cover April 21-May 4, 2016. Items for submission to the report are due to the Communications Office no later than Thursday, April 14. For more information, please contact [Laura Rawson](#) at extension 8740.