

# University Park Neighborhood Association, Inc.

Neighbors serving neighbors

...in University Park, Florida Park and Hibiscus Park | March 2022

President's message...

Welcome to this second edition of our UPNA Newsletter! Several of our neighbors and UPNA board members have done a superb job creating this newsletter to help keep us informed about the many developments and initiatives across our UPNA neighborhoods.

Among other efforts, we're continuing work to promote the creation of new parks, clean our creeks and other natural areas, improve traffic safety, address noise, parking and trash issues, and organize events to bring us together! We also join with other groups to improve policy and governance throughout our city.

This issue also includes a new feature interview with one of our many interesting neighbors. Dr. Nick Dinculeanu, as well as a report on a recent theater productions in our neighborhood. And please mark Sunday. April 3rd on your calendar to join our UPNA Spring Renic, beginning at 3 PM at the Parker School basketball court.

Hope to see you there! Abe Goldman



## MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

a conversation with Ginny Maurer



## Professor Nick Dinculeanu

Nicolae (Nick) Dinculeanu is one of the many fascinating residents in the University Park Neighborhood Association area. Over a steak dinner at his favorite Texas Roadhouse, Ginny Maurer interviewed her dear neighbor to introduce him to his University Park family of neighbors. The conversation was wide-ranging, and his responses are summarized, except where quoted.

People who meet Nick find him to be vibrant, warm, kind, gentle, and intellectually curious. Though 97 years taken a toll on his body, his mind is as keen as even. Nick is excellent company, well-read in current affairs, and he cares greatly about others.

Nick was born in 1925 in Romania, where he lived for 50 years. A fascinating journey brought Nick to Gainesville. For more than 30 years, Nick and his wife, Ninette, hosted dinners and parties until her passing in 2014. Nick still lives in their home at the southwest corner of NW 22nd Street and 6th Place.

**Ginny**: "Nick, you and Ninette (Elena) built and moved into your house in 1978. What attracted you to our neighborhood?"

**Nick**: We bought land and built here for several reasons. Since I was a professor, we wanted to live close to the University. We liked the neighbors, who were welcoming and friendly toward us. And Ninette saw the opportunity to garden and create beauty out of the wooded lot. We left most of the trees and she created a garden that is both natural and cultivated. Ninette was a wonderful gardener and she also loved to cook and entertain. Eventually we had many great friends in Gainesville. Many people still are kind to me and I have been able to keep an appointment for lunch every Friday with dear friends.

**Ginny**: "What brought you to Gainesville?"

**Nick**: I was a professor of mathematics at the University of Bucharest in Romania, and Ninette taught chemistry. Romania was under Soviet Union suzerainty from 1947 until the revolution in 1989. From 1965 it was led by the President and General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, Nicolae Ceausescu. By 1975 the reins had become tight; I had invitations to speak in several countries, including Japan, India, Turkey, and the US, but I was not permitted to travel abroad.

We came to UF every year since 1971, and liked Gainesville. After our last trip, we ventured west around the world: Japan, southeast Asia, India, Pakistan, Iran, the Arab middle east, the eastern Mediterranean, and back to Bucharest. We concluded that without freedom to participate internationally in my discipline, it was time to move. So we drove to East Germany, obtained a US visa at the embassy and accepted a position at UF. The major attraction, beside the climate, was the opportunity to teach graduate classes and do research with Professor James Brooks in the mathematics department. I had a good stay at UF and was able to accept invitations to speak, teach, and collaborate in research internationally.

**Ginny**: Why mathematics?

**Nick:** Well, you see, I was born to very poor parents. I could not go to high school so I went to a military boarding school for eight years and then joined the Romanian Army. Briefly. I was commissioned one day before the World War II armistice! After a short period, I was kicked out of the Army and entered the University of Bucharest to study engineering. I became more and more interested in mathematics, however, and ended up with degrees in both. I also met my wife in the chemistry department, whom "I could not resist" and we married in 1957.

**Ginny**: "What made you an internationally-sought after mathematician?"

**Nick**: In 1959 I published a textbook on calculus that was widely used in high schools and colleges. It was quite successful. I think that was it.

Ginny: "What made it different from other calculus texts?"

**Nick:** "It had spirit! It was at a high level, precise, and stressed exactness." It was aimed at the use of mathematics in science. One day I received a call to meet with President Ceausescu, who knew of me through the book. He engaged me to tutor him in math, and eventually I tutored his son and daughter, who became a mathematician. I came to know them very well and advised him on various matters involving science and math. When I left, however, I was just another citizen to him.

**Ginny**: "Please tell me the professional honors you have valued most."

**Nick**: Undoubtedly, my election to the Romanian Academy of Sciences, and being named a Son of Romania even after I had left the country and was living in America.

**Ginny**: "Nick, what do you do for recreation? Do you garden?"

**Nick:** No! I read mathematics, keep up with news, watch films, walk my little dachshund Liberty four times a day. But my favorite activity is lunch every Friday with Dave Wilson and the friends with whom we have at Bageland for many years.

**Ginny**: "What would you say about the current situation between Russia and Ukraine?

**Nick**: "I don't like either one of them because both of them have occupied territories that belonged to Romania and are inhabited by Romanians."

## Meet the 2022 UPNA Board

Terry Alford
Jeff Carney
Pamela Clark
Bob Cohen
Richard Doty, Vice-president
Byron Flagg
Susan Gamble

Abe Goldman, President Frank Green, Treasurer Aaron Hoover Jeffrey King Carol Lippincott Kit MacDonald, Secretary Brian Marchman Virginia Maurer Dean Mimms Don Monk Nicole Neal Glenn Terry Scott Wasman Dave Wilson

## **UPNA Parks Initiative**

Last fall, UPNA board members **Byron Flagg** and **Glenn Terry** met with Mayor Poe and five City officials who were receptive to the idea for additional parks in the University Park and Florida Park areas. Three locations were discussed and both, city and the County, promote the purchase of creek-side land for the public good as building in flood zones should be discouraged.

#### • Rattlesnake Woods

Approximately two acres on the south-side of Hogtown Creek at the west end of NW 14th Avenue and east of NW 22nd Street

#### Creekside Property

Approximately a ½ acre currently on the market at the north end of NW 14th Place

#### Parker Park

Approximately three acres west of Parker Elementary on NW 5th Avenue; currently a playground, open to the public after 5pm

#### **GOAL**

To create two parks in

### Florida Park & University Park





### **FUNDING** possibilities

- Wild Spaces/Public Places
- Gainesville's Tree Mitigation Fund
- Stormwater mitigation funding, grants, donations
- Gainesville General Fund

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- To formalize plans to present to funding sources
- To propose our requests to:
   WSPP and the city's tree mitigation committees

For additional information, please contact:

Byron Flagg at bflaggesq@gmail.com Glenn Terry at bettermiami1@yahoo.com

## Peace, Quiet & Noise

Since last Halloween 2021 and through MLK Day 2022, many neighbors have experienced large and loud student parties of 50-60 students. Neighborhood residents have observed and heard parties continuing into the early hours of the morning. For those neighbors who have attempted to talk with the partiers requesting to turn-down the volume, several have been told the party has been approved by the purchase of a \$200 permit.

In recent weeks and months, an exchange of emails and information with **Captain Robert Fanelli** of the GPD about the problems of loud parties in our area have been ongoing. Captain Fanelli has clarified, among other things, that student-alleged "party permits" are not meant to be issued for student parties on private property. Additionally, the City of Gainesville has specified limited sound levels for all residents which do not include outdoor speakers and bands.

On January 31, 2022, a Zoom meeting with **Captain Fanelli and Kendal Lambert**, GPD staff specialist, as well as several UPNA board members who were able to attend, was held to discuss these issues. For more information on this progress, please visit our website at www.upnagnv.org.

In conversations with UF students we have learned that Fraternities and Sororities have consciously moved their parties off-campus as a result of new UF regulations on the consumption of alcohol on campus (https://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/2019.pdf).

If you observe such an event, **please report it to GPD at 1-352-955-1818**. Be sure to get an incident number so follow-up action may be taken. Photos, notes, or important information can be forwarded to Dave Wilson (dcwswamp@yahoo.com). Working together with GPD and UF, we can curtail this behavior, so our neighborhoods remain peaceful.

**Dave Wilson** has had a few useful discussions with **Nora Kilroy**, UF's Director of Off Campus Life. She has provided a link to the UF Student Code Incident Report online form. https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php? UnivofFlorida&layout\_id=0. Several items to include on the report:

- Contact information for the person reporting
- Any student names involved in the incident
- Pictures
- Narrative of the concern
- GPD incident reports and/or call reports

The hope is the Incident Report will be used for large-scale parties, especially where Greek organizations may be involved. Ms. Kilroy is available to answer questions about how and what to submit at **nkilroy@ufl.edu** or **352-392-1207**.

Our goal is to ensure a safe and pleasant environment for our families and for renters in the area. Though the UF break is on the horizon, if you observe more of these events taking place, please keep track of the address or at least the general location of the event and its time span, if possible. It would be helpful to GPD if we could provide a list of recent events to document their dates, approximate times and locations.

Please provide this information to **Dave Wilson at dcwswamp@yahoo.com**.



"A good neighbor is found treasure"

## ImagineGNV: The Comprehensive Plan

Cities in Florida are required regularly to update their Comprehensive Plans. Gainesville's recently issued draft Comprehensive Plan, titled "Imagine GNV," is an extensive revision of previous plans, and it includes a strong emphasis on addressing aspects of racial and other equity in the city. The plan is a legally binding document that "guide[s] decisions and investments affecting nearly every aspect of life in Gainesville."

The general website for the plan is below, followed by the website for drafts of the ten chapters that focus on education, culture, transportation, environment, health, employment, government, housing, and growth. Each of the draft chapters may be downloaded as a pdf file at the second website below:

https://imaginegnv.konveio.com

https://imaginegnv.konveio.com/comprehensive-plan-drafts

Neighborhood groups, including UPNA, as well as others have raised questions about aspects of this draft plan. One issue noted by the Golfview Neighborhood Association in addition to UPNA is the inclusion in Chapter 10 ("How We Build") of a map that shows a "Sample of Subdivisions with Racial Covenants" in Gainesville. However, that map is more than 50 years out of date, does not depict current conditions and does not include the large majority of Gainesville areas that had racial covenants in the past. Instead, five of the 10 depicted areas are currently part of UPNA and, as a result, UPNA, Golfview, and the other depicted areas appear to be singled out as specifically deserving of policy remedies for past discrimination.

More broadly, each chapter of the plan is structured around three or four main objectives (labelled "Outcomes") and an extensive series of specific policy goals and actions to achieve those. With only a few exceptions, those broad objectives appear either unrealistically ambitious or beyond the scope of city government to achieve or, in most cases, both. For example, the third objective in Chapter 4 on transport is: "Gainesville will have no traffic-related deaths or severe injuries" by 2040. Another objective in this chapter is that "All Gainesville residents... will be less reliant on cars...." While both objectives might be worthy visions, they are highly unlikely to be achievable, at least in these absolute terms, nor do they necessarily express the objectives of most of Gainesville's residents. Note that this is a legal document, and these are typical examples of the scale of objectives throughout the draft plan.

In addition, there are no identified priorities or method of prioritization among the many objectives and strategies in the draft plan, nor are there any cost estimates, overall financial limits or even any fiscal objectives. With respect to housing and growth, the first of three objectives in Chapter 10 is: "All Gainesville residents can enjoy living in equitable and complete communities." This section includes many proposed strategies that would radically revise or eliminate current zoning policies, including to: "Disallow the adoption of zoning districts which only allow single-family dwellings." Recent and previous City Commission meetings and comments about these and related policies have raised many concerns about the process, scope, and potential impacts of these and other wide-ranging policies. Most have either had little public input or have been heavily criticized by public response. A particular concern has focused on how the policies seem to encourage developers, often real estate investors based elsewhere, to construct large multi-unit rental buildings in residential neighborhoods. Since UPNA areas are so close to UF, we are a particular target for such development. Other strategies in this section similarly encourage large-scale commercial developments in and near residential areas throughout the city with little or no attention to public input or to potential negative impacts.

These are among the many concerns that have already been raised in response to the city's draft Comprehensive Plan. In its current form, this draft Comprehensive Plan has the potential to result in numerous consequential impacts particularly, though certainly not only, in UPNA neighborhoods. It would be worthwhile for residents here and elsewhere to read the draft chapters and respond to their potential impacts and implications.

## The Front Yard Theater

Last November live theater came to Florida Park in the spacious yard of **Glenn and Francesca Terry**. On a lighted stage, nestled under a graceful oak canopy, a theatrical performance of "In Splendid Error" took the stage. Dozens of socially-distanced theater lovers watched and learned about an important part of history while enjoying refreshments and good company.

"In Splendid Error", a play by William B. Branch, was first staged in New York City in 1954. It portrayed the relationship between abolitionists Frederick Douglass and John Brown. Their differing views on ending slavery were brought to the stage in this spare, but eloquent production. The play's title was derived from Douglass finding it hard to support Brown's plan to raid the Harper's Ferry arsenal, one that had little chance of success. In retrospect, Brown's misadventure succeeded "in splendid error."

The production starred our county's poet laureate, **E. Stanley Richardson**, **Shadrock McShane**, and **Pamela Marshall-Koons**. After the performance, the cast took questions from audience, there shining light on today's world.

The audience's donations went to "Artspeak", a local non-profit supporting poetry and the dramatic arts. Let's hope for more 2022 productions "under the stars!" in the University/Florida Park neighborhood.





Frederick Douglass & John Brown

# In Splendid Error



## April is for picnics & Gator football!





# Spring Picnic

Start the new season with your neighbors at our UPNA Spring Picnic. Early April is the perfect time for fun and conversation in our beautiful Parker Park. We've had an exciting year. No shortage of topics to discuss. Nibbles, drinks, and watermelon will be provided. Outdoor activities for the kids will include soccer, basketball, and hula hoop. While our event is free, donations and new memberships will be gratefully accepted.

## We Look Forward To Seeing You!

Sunday, April 3rd, 2022

3:00 - 6:00 PM

Carolyn Beatrice Parker School Basketball Court

NW 5th or NW 7th Ave Entrance

Gainesville, Florida

WHEN? WHERE?

WHAT? UF Gator spring football game Thursday, April 14th @ 7:30 PM The Swamp.... Admission is free!

## **UPNA** Membership

Support your neighborhood association with membership dues of \$20/year.

Please email **Carol Lippincott**, UPNA Membership, at **lippincott.carol@gmail.com**, if you'd like to verify your last payment.

Dues fund various activities including the annual picnic, candidate forums for City elections, as well as neighborhood improvements such as the Hope Beautification Award.

Mail a \$20 check made payable to University Park Neighborhood Association. Include your name, address, email and phone number and mail to:



Quarterly Quote ...

"Love that is within you is also flowing through the hearts of your neighbors and friends."

- Dr.Debasish Mridha

American physician, philosopher, poet-seer and author. A seeker of the deepest truth that affects human destiny

