

VOLUME XI, ISSUE III

thefineprintmag.org

SUMMER 2019



FREE

THE FINE PRINT

**How former inmates of a
North Florida correctional
facility are building systems
of support, p. 24**

*Photo story on the circus arts in
Gainesville, p. 16*



from the EDITORIAL DESK

When I started my first assignment for The Fine Print — a piece on the labor coalition I was asked to finish after another writer dropped it — Gainesville felt much larger to me than it does now. I was a freshman at UF, bereft of a bike or car. Exploring the city beyond University and 13th meant walking through humid heat, sweat sticking my t-shirt to my back and leaving lines in the makeup on my face.

Gainesville was really much smaller, though. This was 2015, the interregnum between the demolition of beloved bars and the construction of new apartments. Even then, there was a sense that the places I was brave enough to go — by which I mean Karma Cream, when its walls were still lime green — had to be protected at best, and at worst, remembered.

Time is tangible in these inky pages. Leafing through past issues sparks memories I want to hold onto forever: tabling at the farmers market, wind,

rain or shine; scribbling down notes at a protest in between sneezing from the spring pollen; biting my fingers at my first editors meeting, in awe of the two women who were working hard to keep this paper alive.

And then, for a while, it was my turn to subsume myself in service of the paper. I've done everything for this paper (except illustrate). The Fine Print came to be my identity: I can't count how many times people have referred to me as The Editor.

That's why it's hard to admit it's time to move -- but it is. The next issue of The Fine Print is going to be the work of a new group of talented, dedicated and empathetic editors. Already, I am heartened by the connections they've made with each other. I can't wait to see where they take the magazine next; I hope Gainesville supports them the way it supported me. •

Molly
Minta



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THE FINE PRINT

Published with support from the Gainesville community.

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The Fine Print accepts freelance writing, photography and illustration. Submissions should be sent to editors@thefineprintmag.org.

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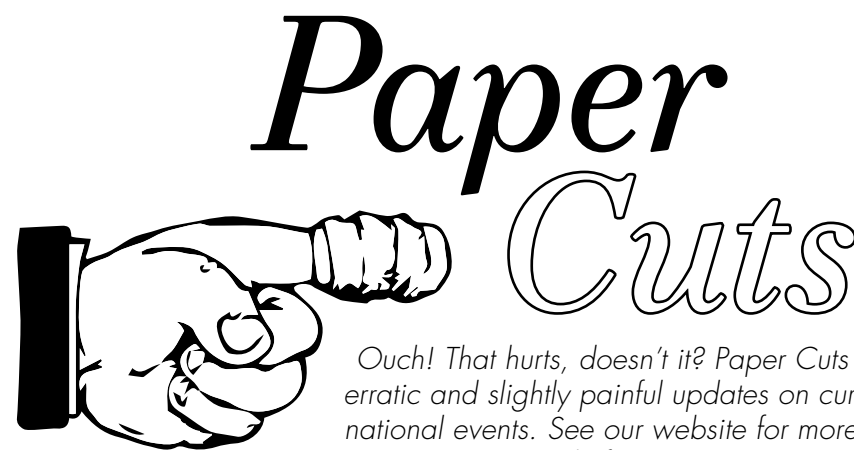


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Alachua County Prosecutors serve disjustice. Illustration by Maria Morales.

FEATURED STAFFER — Noah Davalos —



Noah Davalos is a photographer born and raised in Miami Beach, Florida. He's currently studying journalism at the University of Florida. Some of his favorite moments behind the camera include taking photos at Ill Points Music Festival as well as Leon Bridges's show in St. Augustine. Check out his pictures on pg 10.



Ouch! That hurts, doesn't it? Paper Cuts are our short, erratic and slightly painful updates on current, local and national events. See our website for more Paper Cuts at thefineprintmag.org.

ADMISSION OF GUILT

IN EPISODE FOUR, season three of “Desperate Housewives,” mother of four Lynette Scavo, played by Felicity Huffman, just wants her son to do better at Little League baseball. So she slips a \$50 bill to the other team’s pitcher with the agreement he’ll throw a slow ball slow next time her son is up to bat.

It’s only after her son has hit his first ball that the coach notices the money in the pitcher’s pocket. When confronted, the pitcher points straight to Lynette.

On April 8, prosecutors announced that Huffman, along with 12 other parents, would plead guilty to cheating and bribing their kids into the nation’s top universities. Among the most salacious findings of the FBI investigation – nicknamed “Operation Varsity Blues” – were pictures of kids photoshopped to look like water polo stars and a 36-year-old former tennis player who was paid to take the SAT. The parents face up to 20 years in prison.

Yet, even as this investigation put the college admissions process under the microscope, wealthy members of society continue to benefit from a more socially acceptable form of bribery. The irony is Huffman and the other parents could have avoided legal consequences -- and still gotten their children into top schools like the University of Southern California and the University of Texas at Austin -- if they had just taken the usual route.

Prestigious universities have a history of favoring students whose parents make donations or pitching in for campus

buildings. In October 2018, John Hughes, a lawyer for Students for Fair Admissions, released a series of emails between admissions officers and administration officials at Harvard that referenced the “Dean’s Interest List” of prospective students. There was a strong overlap between that list and the list of top donors.

“I am simply thrilled about the folks you were able to admit,” David Ellwood, the former Dean of the Harvard Kennedy school, wrote in an email. “[Redacted] and [redacted] are all big wins. [Redacted] has already committed to a building.”

Some may say that you can’t put a price on the value of an education. But it turns out you can – if your pockets are deep enough.

By Brianna Moya.

#BLACKLIVESMATTER

A NUMBER OF local activists connected to Black Lives Matter have died in disturbing ways since the death of Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager who was shot by white police officer Darren Wilson, ignited protests in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014.

In November 2014, DeAndre Joshua, 20, was found dead in a torched car blocks from the protest. Two years later, Darren Seals, 29, was found in almost identical condition. Police in St. Louis County vowed to look into whether there is a link between the two deaths, but they still haven’t identified a suspect. In 2017, Edward Crawford, 27 -- who had been photographed throwing a tear gas canister that had been fired at protesters -- was found shot to death in the back of a car.

Police ruled Crawford’s death a suicide, drawing skepticism from the black community. According to a 2017 article by Jason Johnson, the politics editor at The Root, two women were sitting in the front of the car at the time of his death. “Why would Crawford, a father of four who, according to his family, appeared to be in high spirits after getting a new job, just kill himself in his car,” Johnson asked.

Then a year later, Danye Jones, 24, was found hanging by a sheet on a tree in his mother’s backyard. Police again ruled his death a suicide, even though his family members noted that Jones would not have been able to make the knots required to tie the sheets and, furthermore, they didn’t even recognize the sheets. “They lynched my baby,” Jones’s mother wrote in a Facebook post.

Police say they have no evidence linking white supremacists to these deaths, which some experts in turn contend are simply the result of the harsh living reality for people of color. But local activists call B.S., pointing out that there is a long history of police labeling black death as suicide “so as not to tug too hard on the strings of violent white supremacy that hold communities together.”

“Something is happening,” said Cori Bush, a frequent leader of the Ferguson protests. Her car has been run off the road, home has been vandalized and in 2014 someone shot a bullet into her car, narrowly missing her daughter, who was 13 at the time. Living under constant threat is exhausting, she said, but she won’t give in. “They shut us up and they win,” Bush said.

By Elizabeth Townsend.



BY TERRI L. BAILEY

I am Terri L. Bailey. I am the founder of The Bailey Learning and Arts Collective, Inc. (aka BLAAC – pronounced black). We are a community-based outreach and education organization, promoting activism and a recommitment to the arts. Our tagline is BLAAC2BASICS. Our mission is to help build knowledgeable, socially responsible communities and leaders through grassroots ideology, low and no-cost activities and arts promotion and instruction. Our goals are to offer events that promote individual and community activism and empowerment; to provide organizing expertise to individuals and organizations for community outreach efforts; and to promote cultural, visual and folk-art education through conferences, workshops and community celebrations.

I am a child of grassroots organizing. My aunt is Rosa B. Williams, a community mother, organizer and civil rights veteran. I followed her around and inadvertently participated in integration efforts, political activism and forums where ideas were formed and movements were born. In addition, my best friend’s mom is Bylye Avery, one of the founding mothers of the Black women’s health movement. Her organization, the Black Women’s Health Imperative, went from an idea at the kitchen table in Gainesville to a campaign empowering women in the heart of Atlanta’s West End. Its current home is in Washington, D.C., where its influence continues to grow. These women showed me that even if you don’t have a lot of money, you can make an impact on your community.

I returned to Gainesville from Atlanta in 1997 and was shocked at how much it had changed. I had spent a decade working in women’s reproductive health and had pretty much seen the gamut of social and economic issues. I thought I was prepared for anything, but I was not ready for the level of gentrification on my beloved Fifth Avenue, the rapidly growing number of HIV cases in Gainesville or the lack of art activities that I was so used to growing up. While Gainesville could never have been called a liberal or progressive city, it was certainly a lot better before I had left.

In 2009, I attended the Urban Initiative for Reproductive Health in Atlanta. The primary focus of the conference was on reproductive health and justice, but there could not be a conversation about those issues without discussing health disparities and gentrification in southern communities. I couldn’t believe it! I was in the middle of a conference with hundreds of people complaining about the same issues I was. These activists were making big changes and

helping people at the community level with the hopes of eventually effecting change at the policy level. That night, the Bailey Learning and Arts Collective was born.

BLAAC organizes from the ground up by getting out and talking to other community organizers and bringing together local organizations and leaders to maximize our outreach efforts with the minimal resources available to us. We have partnered with organizations such as M.A.M.A.’s Club and institutions such as the University of Florida. We are an incubating company at the Santa Fe Center for Innovation and Economic Development, which allows us to always have access to a venue. BLAAC hosts numerous events every year with no formal budget or money in the bank.

I have been accused of having high ideas and uppity ways that lead to impossible, unreachable goals. I have been admonished for a mission that seems too broad and could never be accomplished. Doubters and haters had to step aside as we partnered with local organizations to provide a venue for a teach-in that eventually led to the removal of the confederate statue. They couldn’t believe it when we helped organize Gainesville’s first holiday parade in 40 years. It went down the middle of Fifth Avenue and entertained more than 1,000 people without incident or injury. In February, we worked with the city for Black History Month and hosted a program featuring black artists and poets as well as a children’s dance and storytelling event. All of these events were offered at low or no cost. In May, we offered a free business seminar for visual artists and writers that was co-sponsored by Queenchiku Ngozi Art Gallery, Inc., Visit Gainesville, Gainesville Fine Arts Association, Deepwell Studios and Third House Books.

I am excited to do this work. I hope that anyone reading this will consider making a donation and attending our events. We are raising funds for a 501(c)(3), looking for a city-owned building that we can occupy in the Pleasant Street area and hoping to expand our programming. We are looking to partner with other organizations to bring programs to people that are politically informative, culturally relevant and creatively inclined. •

**TO DONATE OR GET
MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT TERRI AT
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7132 OR AT
BLAAC2BASICS1@
GMAIL.COM.**

IT'S A COLD TOWN



Angry about 21 Savage? Here's what you can do on the local level to #abolishICE.

BY CASSIDY HOPSON
ILLUSTRATION BY TIFFANY BUCKNOR

In early February, ICE arrested and detained 21 Savage, less than a month before he was scheduled to perform at the O'Connell Center. Like many students who woke up early and stood in line for hours to get my ticket, I was angry at ICE's decision to detain the rapper.

On social media, students and fans expressed frustration in different ways. Some rightfully pointed out that under the Trump administration, ICE was attempting to make 21 a scapegoat for illegal immigration. Most of the outrage could be found on the Facebook page "Swampy UF memes for top ten public teens." One of the memes posted to the page depicted stock images of white people. In the first panel, a smiling group is giving a collective thumbs up under the words "white people when young children are dying in ICE detention centers." In the second, they're screaming under the words "white people when their 21 savage concert gets canceled because of ICE."

This meme was hilarious and right, but we need to take our anger a step further. 21 is just one of the thousands of immigrants who have been detained by ICE. As rapper Offset pointed out on Twitter, "All the memes and shit ain't funny when somebody going through some ... successful black man they always try some way to bring us down."

Behind 21's story is that of other undocumented migrants whose stories are never heard. The rapper

was held on lockdown for 23 hours a day -- with no outside communication besides a daily 10-minute phone call -- at the Irwin County Detention Center, "one of the worst immigration detention centers" in the U.S. located in Georgia. According to reports from detainees, solitary confinement is common occurrence at the facility, and officials often ignore reports of sexual abuse. Furthermore, while 21 was only released from custody after posting bond, that's a luxury many migrants can't afford.

Across the country, eight deaths occurred as a result of substandard care in ICE custody from December 2015 to April 2017, according to a Human Rights Watch report. ICE has also separated children from their parents at the border and prevented pregnant women in custody from receiving abortions. Individuals have reported being sexually and physically assaulted by guards at the detention centers.

The federal government has also enacted policies that help ICE target immigrant communities, particularly in Florida. Secure Communities is a deportation program used by ICE to collect and maintain biometric data on anyone who is arrested in order to identify undocumented immigrants. The program was passed under Bush in 2008 and expanded by Obama in 2011 only to be discontinued by the secretary of Homeland Security three years later. But Trump restarted Secure Communities via executive order in 2017, forcing communities across the country to again spend millions on the program. For example, Miami-Dade County spent more than \$1.1 million in jailing detainees under the program from 2009 to 2011.

Other programs such as Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA), which increased penalties for undocumented immigrants and laid the groundwork for mass deportations, and the Criminal Alien Program (CAP), which gives ICE access to state and local jails, are in full effect in Florida.

We'd like to think Gainesville is more sympathetic to the plight of undocumented immigrants than other cities because we became the first "welcoming city" in Florida in 2016.

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But the past year has shown there's just as much work to be done to make this city safe for immigrants as anywhere else. In April 2018, a Guatemalan woman called the Gainesville Police Department to report that her boyfriend had kicked and hit her to prevent her from leaving their apartment. After GPD officers searched the apartment and discovered that the woman and nine others living at the apartment were undocumented, the officers reported them to ICE. In late February, the week 21 Savage was scheduled to play, ICE arrested six undocumented workers at a local nursery.

While Mayor Lauren Poe and other city officials have written Facebook posts

and made comments to the press pledging to fix city policies, the city commission has taken no action to change them. This means we need to take matters into our own hands by pressuring the city to follow through on its word and reaching out to local organizations that are already working against ICE.

Gainesville's Interfaith Alliance for Immigrant Justice is a network of local religious communities, student groups, organizations and leaders who are working toward a solution to the immigration crisis. The Interfaith Alliance provides a bridge connecting local religious communities with the U.S. immigrant justice movement. They meet the second Monday of every month at 6 p.m. at the Mennonite meeting house at 1236 NW 18th Ave.

The Florida Immigrant Coalition (FLIC) is a statewide coalition of over 65 member organizations, of which Gainesville's Interfaith Alliance is a part of. The FLIC works for the fair treatment of all people, including immigrants. More specifically, their mission is "to amplify the power of immigrant communities to impact the root causes of inequality, defending and protecting basic human rights, including the right to live without fear." FLIC actively opposed the Secure Communities program in 2008. They call for a roadmap to citizenship that keeps families secure and protects the rights of all workers.

Chispas is the only student-led organization on campus fighting for immigrant rights. The organization has partnered with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers each year for its Boot the Braids Campaign, an effort to kick Wendy's off college campuses across the country for its refusal to implement policies that would make it safer to be a farmworker and raise wages.

Madres Sin Fronteras (Mothers Without Borders) is another Gainesville-based organization that believes migration is a human right for all. To support the group, you can email them at msfgainesville@gmail.com. They aim "to create policy at the local level to protect our community from any and all anti-immigrant actions and to prevent deportations through the creation of deep and lasting solidarity." •

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READ UP,



CHOW DOWN

Here's the scoop on Karma Cream.

BY LAUREN ROUSSEAU AND PHOTO COURTESY OF KYLE FICK

Eating vegan in Gainesville is as easy as (vegan) apple pie. It was a different story 10 years ago, when vegan options were sparse and most recipes lacked flair. That's all changed, due in part to Karma Cream, an all-in-one vegan ice cream parlor, coffee shop and bakery on the corner of University and SW sixth street.

Fresh air breezes into the bakery through the usually open front door and natural light brightens mint-green walls that are decorated with framed paintings of butterflies, cows and skulls. But the real treat is the pastry display case, an olio of desserts from fudge brownies and rich tiramisu-frosted cupcakes to shortbread, sweet caramel apple babkas and donuts oozing with strawberry jelly and glazed with Earl Grey icing. The line up changes daily, but there's one thing you can count on -- it's all organic and vegan. If you haven't gathered, that's Karma Cream's signature.

Co-owner Kyle Fick opened Karma Cream in 2009 as an organic ice cream shop but soon expanded its menu to include more eco-

friendly, vegan options. Most restaurants buy products from one vendor, but from the beginning Karma Cream cherry-picked its ingredients from organic, vegan and eco-friendly distributors across the country to ensure that Karma Cream has a carefully tailored menu. "We wanted something for everybody," Fick said. The shop evolved in 2011, when Fick brought on Emily Schwartz as the head baker. Schwartz, a life long vegetarian with a sweet tooth, had frequented Karma Cream in its early days when she moved to Gainesville for college. "Next thing I know I was starting to run the show," she said.

Initially, Schwartz drew recipe inspiration from all over -- the internet, other bakeries, travelling and the staff at the shop. Challenges laid in substituting animal fats and byproducts for plant-based ingredients that mimicked the same taste and textures, particularly when it came to tricky yeast-based desserts like puff pastries and croissants. But now recipe creation is

instinctual as she strives to create flavors you can't find anywhere else in Gainesville and wouldn't think to make yourself. "There is that pressure where every day I'm like, 'Okay, what's next,'" she said. "It's always, 'What's next?'"

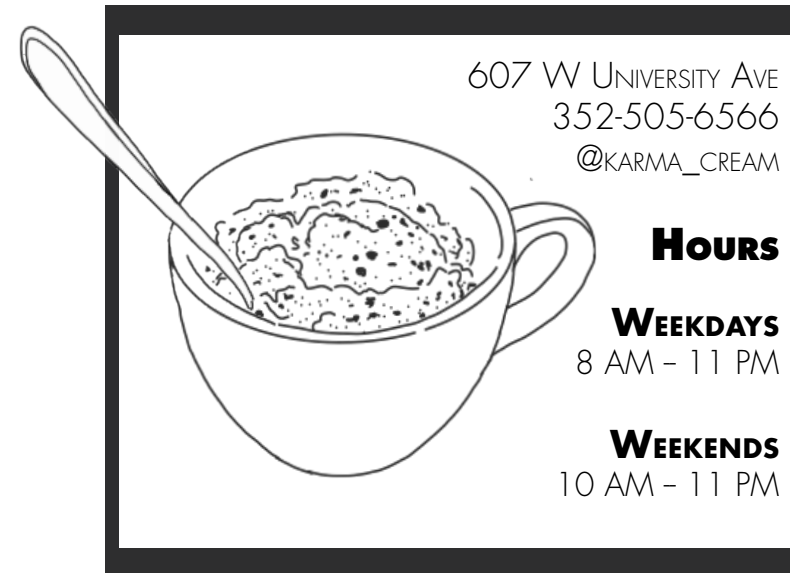
While she pushes Karma Cream to maintain a premiere selection of vegan baked goods, Schwartz is excited it's become easy to be vegan in Gainesville. She's optimistic it will only get even easier.

"I'm just really glad there's more and more options out there," she said. "Like, even if it's not us, if it's other people. Join the gang. The more the merrier." •

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
KATHERINE MCGUINNESS



KARMA CREAM



— READ UP, CHOW DOWN —

almond raspberry tea cookie

INGREDIENTS

(gluten & soy free)

Cookie:

+ 16 Ounces Almond Meal
+ 1 Cup Coconut, Shredded
+ 1/4 Teaspoon Salt

Raspberry preservative:

+ 1 Cup Agave
+ 3 Tablespoon Canola Oil
+ 1 Teaspoon Vanilla Extract
+ 1/2 Teaspoon Almond Extract
+ Raspberry Preserves

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix dry ingredients together.
2. Add wet ingredients except preserves and mix by hand to combine.
3. Chill the dough in the refrigerator for at least an hour until firm.
4. Roll out dough to about 3/4 of a centimeter thick and cut out with round cookie cutter.
5. Place on cookie sheet that has been lined with parchment paper.
6. Imprint divot into each cookie with thumb. Add dollop of preserves.
7. Bake 17-18 min at 325 degrees Fahrenheit.
8. Optional decoration: Sift tops of cookies with powdered sugar.

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Hae-Yang Chang of ZEROSUM. Photo by Noah Davalos.

FOR THE RECORD

Showcasing local bands, the next big thing and all your friends.

ZEROSUM

HAE-YANG CHANG (LAPTOP AND DJ CONTROLLER)

LAB Experiment 012: Fallout



Hardcore Libra techno

RELEASED MARCH 22, 2019

RECORDED IN AN UNDERGROUND RAVE

SOUNDS LIKE BOYS NOIZE,

GESAFFELSTEIN, AMELIE IEN

INSPIRATION ALESIA, MADAME

KEY TRACKS "WALK BACK,"

"MAYDAY," "I FINK YOU FRECKY"

WHERE TO GET IT Mixcloud

UPCOMING SHOWS THE ARCADE

BAR - TBA

WHEN HE WAS 5 YEARS OLD, Hae-Yang Chang -- aka ZEROSUM -- discovered a CD in his dad's bootleg library of electronica. He popped it into the family's boombox, kickstarting a lifelong fascination with the genre.

Any time he had access to a computer, Chang would listen to hours of mixtapes and sets on YouTube, drawn to sounds that were frenetic yet washed out and ethereal, like the beat of dripping water or the woosh of a door closing -- but made by a computer.

"I love electronic music so much. It's essentially limitless because it's digital," Chang said. "It lets you create sounds that are not possible in nature ... sounds that are not real. Sounds that people have never heard before."

Chang grew up studying classical piano, but he first dipped into the world of music production after downloading a free trial of Ableton Live, a music sequencer. The 22-year-old self-proclaimed DJ and producer's current musical endeavor is industrial music, a subgenre of electronica that can be recognized by beats that sound a bit like metal bars crunching and clanging in a factory. At his live performances -- which you can catch at various venues across downtown Gainesville

like Arcade Bar and the Atlantic, as well as secret, invite-only warehouse raves -- Chang's rapid-fire, fluttery, warping techno beats are typically paired with colorful, futuristic visuals that can transport even the most sober clubgoer to the fourth dimension. While his soundscapes are designed to evoke ambiguous emotions lyric-based music sometimes can't, Chang's main goal is simple: to make you dance.

"It just really feels like a big old party for everyone," he said.

These days, Chang mainly plays a digital keyboard, DJ controller and laptop, but he still applies the core tenants of music theory -- rhythm, timing and composition -- to electronic music.

"When creating music that doesn't have vocals or lyrics, you have to rely on the chord progressions and melodies that really stick with us," said ZEROSUM. "You have to rely on good melodies and rely on making infectious beats."

By Ashley Lazarski.

POBLANO

DANIEL SKELLY (DRUMS, KEYBOARDS, TAMBOURINE), LEVI BRADFORD (GUITARS, VOCALS, BASS), RILEY HAWKINS (BASS AND GUITAR)

Dad of the Year



Pouchy punk rock

RELEASED MARCH 19, 2019

RECORDED IN DIY STUDIO

SOUNDS LIKE The Front Bottoms,

AJJ, Modern Baseball

INSPIRATION The Gainesville Indie

Scene, Bon Iver, Terry Gross

KEY TRACKS "Bird Bucket," "Talk

Radio," "Smokes, Let's Go"

WHERE TO GET IT Bandcamp,

Spotify, Apple Music, Discogs,

Killer Robot Music

UPCOMING SHOWS N/A

"DAD OF THE YEAR" is ostensibly a 19-minute celebration of fatherhood, but Poblano's latest release is actually a sardonic commentary on the unreliability of family. And in a Freudian twist, it's not even about a dad. It's about a brother.

Until a few years ago, frontman Levi Bradford and his brother were in lockstep and key with each other, quite literally: The pair grew up making music together, but an especially bad falling-out shattered that fraternal intimacy. Bradford channelled his pain into "Dad of the Year" to cope.

"A 'dad' is the archetype for the person you look up to your whole life and they let you down pretty severely," he said.

Poblano isn't afraid to put their own spin on the tried-and-true traditions of indie and punk music, like the alternating soft and loud song structure reminiscent of mid-era emo bands like Mineral. But where Mineral juxtaposes muddled vocals with crisp imagery, Bradford intelligibly delivers heart-wrenching lyrics whose ambiguity threatens to consume the album entirely.

"Your sentences were clear / Your lessons lived in plain sight / But did such a simple life drive you

insane?" Bradford sings on "Yeats," the opening track, over guitar strumming.

Throughout the album, drummer Daniel Skelly, the audio engineer, layered Bradford's vocals over an identical vocal track that's

an octave lower in order to create texture and evoke the tumult of lost family and the struggle of moving on.

"The voice below is my older brother's presence in my life -- always very critical of me," Bradford said.

Like the down-octave vocal track, the traumatic omnipresence of estranged family haunts nearly every song on "Dad of the Year." But in "Hanging Over," the voice that represents Bradford's older brother drops out completely, leaving him alone with the harmony.

"The songs we wrote together are now just mine," Bradford said.

By Fred Pohl.

JEN MASSIMIN, JUSTIN PLEMMONS, AND RICHIE SCHNELLBACHER

People That Love You



Nail-biting garage punk

RELEASED JANUARY 10, 2019

RECORDED IN Golden Tone Studios

INSPIRATION Guided by Voices,

Robert Pollard

KEY TRACKS "8AM Coffee,"

"Still Sad"

WHERE TO GET IT Spotify, Apple

Music, Bandcamp

UPCOMING SHOWS TBA

YOU'RE FIGHTING with your partner. One of you crosses that unspoken boundary, cracking a verbal slap in the face. Reverberating in the silence between you could be the sustained electric guitar at the start of the first track on "People That Love You," Articles' 2019 release. It's all about learning how to get by on your own in a world of worry, anxiety and existential crisis.

"Read the room if you're dumb enough to catch it," lead singer Richie Schnellbacher sneers midway through "Write Like Pollard," the opening track. "You could always learn a second language / so you'll never be alone."

Most of the lyrics in "Write Like Pollard" are references to the titles songs from Guided By Voices. On the track, upbeat guitar noodling is layered over a quick, steady drum pattern and offset by fuzzy amplifiers. This sets the tone for the rest of the EP. For Schnellbacher and his bandmates, Jen Massimin and Justin Plemmons, punk is the best tonic for anxiety. It can be a vehicle through which one can learn from the woes of social anxiety rather than be crippled by them.

"I've always been kind of fascinated with people who may have difficulties with social interaction," Schnellbacher said.

Articles came together a little over a year ago after Schnellbacher's 30th birthday party. At the party, the lead singer ran into Massimin, whom he had played with in bands in South Florida about a decade ago. Impressed by the music Schnellbacher was working on, Massimin, who worked with Plemmons at a pathology lab, got the three of them together, and they hit it off instantly. "We're all really thoughtful people," Plemmons said. "We all deal with regular stuff like everybody, but we internalize it a bit."

Initially, the three planned to play together for one night only. But several invites and four releases later, the band has amassed a dedicated following. This year, Articles will play FEST for the first time.

"When we're playing, it feels like we're putting in a really good community effort and blowing off a lot of steam," Plummons said.

By Olivia Trejo.

I CAN'T BELIVE IT'S NUT DAIRY!

TEXT BY SARAH LIU
ILLUSTRATIONS BY ABBY SOMMER

IT MIGHT SEEM LIKE NON-DAIRY milk is a recent fad for health nuts—pun intended. But history shows us that, actually, humans have consumed plant-based milk for centuries. Almond milk was used in Europe in the eighth century as a substitute during religious holidays (talk about the opposite of holy cow). Soy milk, served hot as breakfast, has been popular in China since the 14th century.

And while cow milk has nutritional benefits, it also contains fats, sugars, possible antibiotics and hormones that are not healthy additions to the human diet. Plus, did you know humans are actually the only species that drinks milk produced by other animals into adulthood? Isn't that ... nuts? Nut milks, on the other hand, are vegan, environmentally friendly, udderly delicious and easy to make at home. •



HOMESTEAD, INSTEAD

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 1 cup nuts (almonds, cashews, hazelnuts) or another plant source (sunflower seeds, oats, etc.)
- 2-3 cups filtered water
- Sweetener (optional)
- Vanilla extract (optional)
- Milk strainer/milk bag/cheesecloth
- Can be found at most convenience stores or online.
- You can also use Swiss voile cloth—100% polyester is ideal—from the fabric store.
- High-speed blender

STEPS

1. Soak nuts in room-temperature filtered water. Soak times vary based on the type of nut. Almonds and hazelnuts require at least 8 hours. Rice and cashews require 2-4 hours. The general rule of thumb is the softer the nut, the shorter the soak time.
2. Combine two to three parts water with one part nuts and blend for about one minute or until the mixture reaches the desired consistency. Vary the amount of water added based on personal preference.
3. Filter the milk through a cheesecloth for a silky smooth texture. If you like it chunky, feel free to skip this step.
4. Jazz it up with a touch of your favorite sweetener and/or fun pops of flavor, such as cinnamon or vanilla.
5. Chill the milk in the fridge, and enjoy it with oatmeal, a cup of the ole joe, or your favorite cereal. You can go nuts with the combinations!

TIPS AND TRICKS

- The pulp from the straining process can be repurposed as body scrubs or used in other recipes.
- Freshly made nut milk can last up to three days in the fridge. If there are any leftovers, freeze the milk in an ice tray for an extra boost in drinks or smoothies.

THOM HARTMANN
7 A.M.

DEMOCRACY NOW!
WITH AMY GOODMAN
8 A.M. & 1 P.M.

MUSICA EN
ESPAÑOL
VICTOR PEREZ
12 P.M.

JAZZVILLE
ROBBIE STEVENS
6-8 P.M. FRIDAY
8-10 A.M. SATURDAY
8 - NOON SUNDAY



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D.J. LUTRA

DOUG CLIFFORD

KEN STEARNS

GARGS ALLARD

PHIL SCHRADER

MANU

(AND OTHERS !)

be PrEP -ARED



HIV prep – what it is, who should take it and how to get it.

BY ELIZABETH TOWNSEND
& GABRIELA CANO UCHOFEN
ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRYCE CHAN

On Oct. 11, 1988, about 1,000 activists surrounded the headquarters of the Food and Drug Administration in Rockville, Maryland. About half wore white lab coats stained with red handprints. Others were lying down in rows on the concrete, propping makeshift tombstones above their heads painted with epitaphs like “killed by the system” and “dead from lack of drugs.”

The protest, organized by the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), was one of the most significant in the first two years of the AIDS activist movement. Days after, the FDA met with protestors; a few months later, it agreed to increase early access to potentially life-saving experimental drugs.

But it would take the FDA nearly a decade to approve the first protease inhibitor, part of highly antiretroviral therapy, which stops the HIV virus from making copies of itself in the body. Research for a cure is still ongoing: In 2012, the FDA approved a drug called Truvada, also known under the generic names emtricitabine (FTC) and tenofovir (TDF). The drug can be taken as part of HIV treatment, but its main purpose is as what’s called “pre-exposure prophylaxis,” or PrEP.

PrEP is a kind of medical prevention for people who

LOCAL RESOURCES



Area 3/13 HIV/
AIDS Program
Coordinator

352-334-7900



313HIV
@flhealth.gov



Planned
Parenthood
Gainesville

352-377-0881



Primary Care of
Gainesville

352-505-0255

are at a high risk for HIV. By taking these drugs daily, you can lower your chances of getting infected and, if you come into contact with HIV, prevent it from taking hold and spreading throughout your body. According to the CDC, daily PrEP can lower your risk of getting HIV from both vaginal and anal sex by more than 90 percent and through injecting drugs by more than 70 percent.

Just over 77,000 people in the U.S. are currently taking PrEP, but the CDC estimates that approximately 1.1 million people could benefit from the treatment. But more than thirty years after ACT UP’s FDA protest, access to PrEP is still patchy. Some doctors may not be knowledgeable about PrEP. For those without insurance, the medication can be costly to maintain. According to NPR, Truvada can cost close to \$2,000 for a 30-day supply while its manufacturer, Gilead Sciences, annually rakes in billions of dollars off the drug.

The website preplocator.org can help you find nearby health offices that provide PrEP. In Alachua County, the Florida Department of Health (FDHA), Planned Parenthood and Primary Care of Gainesville offer assistance getting on PrEP, but the UF Infirmary was not able to provide any information when contacted by The Fine Print.

The FDHA offers assistance no matter if you have insurance. Though the cost of PrEP, on the other hand, depends on the your insurance, copay and medication pay. Gay Koehler-Sides, the Area 3/13 HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator, said not having insurance will not affect whether you receive the medication.

PrEP candidates may also have access to Gilead’s PreP Medication Assistance Program (MAP), which purports to make the medication financially accessible, but it depends on your income and you must be 18 years old to receive the assistance.



Is PrEP for me?

Anyone can take PrEP regardless of their gender expression or sexual orientation. Project Inform, an organization that is dedicated to improving the health of and empowering individuals with HIV and hepatitis C, recommends consulting a medical provider about starting PrEP if your partner is HIV-positive, and if you or your partner has been treated in the past year for non-oral STDs like chlamydia or gonorrhea, been in prison or does sex work. As well, if you feel as though you are at risk of contracting HIV, you should consult a medical provider about the possibility of starting PrEP.



What are the side effects?

PrEP can be 99% effective if you take seven pills per week, but it is not a replacement for contraception or other STI prevention methods. Both the FDHA and Project Inform recommend seeing a doctor at least every three months for routine care and HIV testing. This is important because while the odds of contracting HIV on PrEP are low, the medication cannot be used to treat HIV.

PrEP is generally safe for and well tolerated by most users. The main side effects are nausea, headaches and weight loss. Most users reported these side effects subsided or went away after the first few weeks of use.

“[PrEP] is a prevention,” Koehler-Sides said. “We want people to know about it and we want people to get on it if they think they are at high risk.” •



CENTER OF THE RING

Gainesville Circus Center is where locals go to learn the circus arts.

BY JULIA MITCHEM & PHOTOS BY MARCELO RONDON

One after another, their bodies slip and weave in a fluid motion above and below a triple trapeze about 15 feet off the ground. Their strength propels their glittering black and gold bodies through a blur of acrobatic twists and turns to gasps and applause from the audience at the TEDxUF 2019 Conference.

Among the performers are Corey Cheval and Eva Rowland from the Gainesville Circus Center, a studio and training center near Depot Park that specializes in the aerial arts. The center was started in 2007 by Cheval and was originally named S-Connection Aerial Arts after the 35-year-old returned from studying performance art in Brazil, where she had been introduced to the circus arts. She realized there was a gap in the formal circus opportunities offered in town.

“I grew up in Gainesville, so it’s really special to me to be able to create something that I think has had a positive impact on my community,” Cheval said.

A year after Cheval started S-Connection, she met Lynn Polke, a former dancer and aerialist who had settled down in Gainesville after working with the Ringling Brothers off and on

for 25 years and traveling the world with the L.A. Circus. Polke had set up rigging in her backyard—which she refers to as the “Circus Church”—and started teaching aerial skills to folks in town, including Cheval. The two women hit it off; Polke is now an integral part of Cheval’s vision for her business.

Polke said her favorite part of the circus arts is seeing her students, particularly young women, grow physically and mentally confident. “Women in the circus have always been strong,” she said.

Cheval said the circus arts have taught her discipline and patience; some skills have taken her a decade to achieve. “Even if you are training every day or as regularly as you should, some things just take a long time,” she said. “And that’s okay.”

Cheval now manages nine staff members, including Rowland, who started training at the center when she was in ninth grade. Now 16 years old, Rowland teaches children’s and beginner classes, including one on silks and another on Lyra, which is a circular steel hoop that hangs from the ceiling.

“I’d like to do [circus arts] professionally, hopefully,” Rowland said. “... [The circus arts] are a really fun, creative way to work

PHOTOSTORY



Opposite page: The Circus Center offers both classes and open gym throughout the week.

Current page: (top right) Stretching crucial at the Circus Center. (bottom left) The Circus Center offers both classes and open gym throughout the week.



The Circus Center offers both classes and open gym throughout the week.



PHOTOSTORY



out.”

Cheval wants the center to be a safe environment where all types of people are welcome to explore their creativity, build strong, healthy bodies and collaborate with a diverse community. You don't have to be flexible or strong to try the circus arts, Cheval said. The first step is coming to class.

“This is something that will challenge you mentally and physically,” Cheval said. “Challenge is good for growth.” •



(top right) Stretching crucial at the Circus Center. (bottom left) The Circus Center offers both classes and open gym throughout the week.

(top right) Stretching crucial at the Circus Center. (bottom left) The Circus Center offers both classes and open gym throughout the week.

(top right) Stretching crucial at the Circus Center. (bottom left) The Circus Center offers both classes and open gym throughout the week.

(top right) Stretching crucial at the Circus Center. (bottom left) The Circus Center offers both classes and open gym throughout the week.





This turtle was lost in the Sunrise neighborhood off Tower Road a year ago. He was eventually reunited with his family.

That night, Shore got to thinking: When pets go missing in Gainesville, what do people do? Where do they look? Who do they call?

For six months, Shore did her research. On her lunch breaks at her work in UF Health's IT Department, Shore called every number on every flier she had stumbled across. Every time an advertisement was placed in the local newspaper, she called. Vets, rescues, law enforcement and Animal Services -- Shore called them all to learn the role they played in the recovery of Gainesville's lost pets, taking note of the methods that worked.

Then, in January 2010, Shore brought her newfound resources together in one place. The Gainesville Pet Finder Facebook page was born.

Today, due in part to one lost dog, Shore's page has helped find over 20,000 local lost pets.

"I never envisioned what this turned into," Shore said. "I had no idea I would end up being in the middle of it all, constantly interacting with people and helping them find their lost pets. It's really taken a life of its own."

When a pet goes missing in Gainesville, it can take anywhere from five minutes to five months to recover them if they can be found. Animal Services is required to hold the animal for three days, but if no owner comes forward during this time, the pet is spayed or neutered (if not already), vetted, vaccinated and put

up for adoption.

Nicole Healy, an administrative coordinator at Alachua County Animal Services, said the staff checks the Gainesville Pet Finder page every day and that there have been numerous times they have been able to reunite pets with their owners using the page.

"Having more places for these animals to be posted and the community to be involved is a great help," said Healy.

It took Shore about a year to get the Pet Finder page established. In that time, she did everything to raise awareness: She would scour Facebook, the Gainesville Sun, and flyers around town for missing pets to let the owners know about her page. She printed 1,500 cards and made bumper stickers and posters that she passed out to vets, rescues, groomers and local businesses. Shore wanted her page to be the only place people posted.

The way it works is that anyone can post a



Pokemon is a grey cockatiel. Shore is still searching for him.

picture of a lost or found pet to the page along with the pet's name, where it went missing, and contact information in case the pet is found. Shore will then share the post onto the main page. Posts are also categorized in albums depending on how recently the pet went missing and if it was found.

Shore will also post if an animal is found deceased.

"It is just as important for families to know if the animal is dead and so ... they can know what happened," she said. "Not knowing is the worst."

Surely and steadily, Shore's page grew. It now has a following of over 17,500 people; on average, about 20 lost and found pets are reported to the page each day, ranging from cats and dogs to ferrets, cows, foxes, skunks and guinea pigs. Shore can get up to 45 texts or phone calls a day

"I didn't do this for the recognition. I just wanted to help Gainesville residents reunite with their pets."

SPOTLIGHT



This is Kevin. He was found on Thanksgiving morning 2018.

from people with information about lost and found pets in Gainesville, the surrounding counties or sometimes as far away as New York.

One time, a little girl even contacted Shore about her lost stuffed bunny. "Surprisingly, we were actually able to find it after it had fallen off the family's car roof," she said.

Kelly Hicks was also reunited with her lost companion through the Facebook page. A year ago Hicks lost her black cat Padfoot when she climbed through a window in her home. Her family was desperately searching for Padfoot when one of her friends suggested using the Pet Finder page. Hicks contacted Shore, who immediately responded.

Shore advised Hicks to go outside around 3-4 a.m. when it's very quiet and call her name and shake her food. She explained that a lot of times, cats are more comfortable coming out at night when they can easily hear their owner's voice.

"I immediately heard a meow, and a minute later she came up to me from where she was hiding," said Hicks. "I woke my son up that morning to the best news ever and got to see the relief of having his cat home and safe."

As the page has grown, so has its effectiveness. Shore said the page has facilitated

up to 10 reunions per day and has developed a dedicated following of people who will go out looking for lost animals that have been spotted.

"Once I had 20 people show up to pick up an animal," Shore said.

Shore also has a group of people who voluntarily help with overnight reunions because they know that she is unavailable after 8 p.m.



Beckham, above, is currently missing. He was last seen on NE 15th Terrace.

Shore calls this group of people her "Twilight Barkers," a reference from 101 Dalmations, where information is passed from one dog to another during the late night hours.

Not only do these volunteers help Shore out, but most of the vets, rescues, groomers, law enforcement, animal services and community also check the page to stay updated on lost or found pets. Even animal service officers will watch the page and will go looking for the dog or lost animal and keep Shore in the loop.

Animal Services even offered Shore a job to run the page because they were worried that she would stop doing the Facebook page, but she declined the offer.

"I didn't do this for the recognition," Shore said. "I just wanted to help Gainesville residents reunite with their pets."

On March 23, Shore set out in search of a chihuahua in Hampton, a tiny town about 30 minutes northwest of Gainesville. But when she got there, she realized that the people who had found the small dog had no intentions of returning it to its owner.

So, in an hour and a half, Shore had covered the town in flyers. The chihuahua, named Princess, was reunited with her rightful owner, a 70-year-old woman who had adopted the dog after her husband died in 2010.

"Almost all of the time, somebody is looking for the dog you've found," Shore said.

Shore said that some of the hardest animals to find are cats and ugly dogs, since people usually assume they are feral or strays. On weekends, Shore will often look for them, prioritizing the ones she doesn't think people are looking for.

"There are pets that went missing in 2010 that I am always looking out for and still hope to one day reunite," she said.

In her remaining free time, Shore cares for two dogs and three cats: A Papillon named Walter with white fur and big ears, a Jack Chi named Stewert, a Siamese brother-and-sister pair named Ozzy and Harriet, respectively, and an orange tabby named Bohdi, whom she adopted after he showed up at her door as a feral kitten.

Though running the page is a lot of work, Shore sees herself sticking with it for at least another five years. She won't leave if there isn't someone to take the reins.

"I'm not going anywhere," she said. •

LAY OF THE LAND

Here's your definitive guide to who owns what land in Gainesville.

BY BRIANNA MOYE

It's no secret Gainesville is developing at a rapid clip. Favorite restaurants and shops have fled University Avenue, that reliable parking lot downtown is slated to become a hotel and luxury student apartments keep popping up like cockroaches you just can't stamp out of your old home.

But what is a secret is that which we can't see: the people and corporations who own the land we rent on, buy iced coffee on, get drunk on. That is, until now.

This issue, The Fine Print pored over public records, data from the Alachua County's property appraiser and newspaper clips to bring you the first-ever look into who owns what in Gainesville. We found that individuals mostly owned residential housing and that many of them, like Robert Lusnia, who owns residential property in Archer, have been accused of renting their properties like slumlords. It's also no surprise that corporations own more land in Gainesville than even the city does.

THE MEN WITH THE MOST

In rural Alachua, over 600 acres of land belong to a religious group called Temple of the Universe that runs a yoga and meditation center. Temple of the Universe is headed by one man: Mickey Singer.

If you were watching Oprah in 2012, you might have caught Singer on the Super Soul Sunday series. But before he was advising Oprah and her viewers, Singer had been federally charged with conspiracy and fraud for inflating the earnings of his company, Medical Manager Corp (the charges were dropped in 2010). He's also curiously the donor of the Monet painting "Champ d'Avoine" in the Harn Museum.

Singer is unique, though, because most individual landowners in Alachua County own residential property, like homes and condos.

Another notable male landowner is Robert Lusnia, a real estate agent based in Archer who once served as the president of the town's Chamber of Commerce. Lusnia owns almost entirely residential properties, most of which are mobile

homes, as well as a parcel of agricultural land, a vacant lot and an office building. But in 2012, Lynn Paden, a resident in one of Lusnia's home, started a Change.org petition accusing him of being a slumlord. Paden wrote that the house was infested with "small scorpions." She also alleged Lusnia sexually harassed his female tenants and offered to exchange sex for rent. "He is a disgraceful excuse for a human being," she wrote.

IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY

In 1985, E.R.J. Hilgendorf owned a storefront on Archer Road, across from where Butler Plaza is today. Then, he sold it to his wife, Betty Hilgendorf, for was a staggering \$10.

Though Betty is now deceased, she was a real estate agent and one of the top landowning individuals in Alachua County. Technically, she still is — the land is still listed as owned by a Betty Hilgendorf trustee.

But Betty's 16 parcels aren't much compared to the land owned by the Turlington family. While most land-owning families buy property in just

DAVID & GAIL HODGE

The Hodges own 12 parcels of agricultural land and a grove in Newberry. They've own Hodge Farms — home of the Newberry Corn Maze — where they grow tobacco, green beans, blueberries and watermelons on 1,200 acres of land, since 1919.

KHANH DINH

Dihn is one of the largest landowners in the county. He owns numerous properties accumulated his wealth through his copper heat pipe technological invention.

THOMAS DANIEL

Thomas is the fourth largest landowner in Gainesville and a graduate of the Levin College of Law.

BETTY HILGENDORF

Hilgendorf owns Campus Outfitters, which previously housed the last Ben and Jerry's in Gainesville. The property was owned by Hildgendorf's husband until 1985 when he sold it to her for \$10. Hilgendorf passed away in November 2017 at the age of 94.

SYED HASSAN

Hassan, the seventh largest landowner in Gainesville, owns many of the mobile homes in lakeshore homesites.

THE WEYERHAEUSER COMPANY

The Weyerhaeuser Company owns nearly 200 parcels of rural land in the area between Alachua and LaCrosse.

MELVIN V. LAUDERDALE

Lauderdale is tied for number ten of the top ten individual landowners in the county. He owns Los Avina.

MAP BY INGRID WU

one town (or even one part of one town) or two, the Turlingtons own land all across Gainesville as well as in LaCrosse, Micanopy and Newberry.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

About 12.64 percent of the land in Alachua County is owned by corporations. That might not seem like such a daunting figure, but, for reference, the city of Gainesville owns is less than one percent of the land.

The Weyerhaeuser Company owns nearly 200 parcels of land in the rural

area between Alachua and LaCrosse. According to its website, it's "one of the largest private landowners in the United States." In 2015, Weyerhaeuser bought Plum Creek Timber Corporation, which had been planning a 6,000-acre urban development in east Gainesville.

Prior to the merger, the plan was met with opposition from residents. It was ultimately voted down at a county commission meeting.

D.R. Horton, Inc. is, by volume, America's largest homebuilder. It owns the entire neighborhoods of Chestnut

Village in unincorporated Alachua County and Bailey Estate in High Springs. Its speciality is in building family homes.

D.R. Horton has faced class action lawsuits in other states and has already been found at fault for its Florida homes. It was found negligent in a 2016 case surrounding the building of Jacksonville's Heron's Landing neighborhood. Among the issues in the condos development were cracked stucco and leaky roofs. •

FEATURE

FROM THE OUTSIDE IN

Current and former inmates from Lowell Correctional Institution are creating solidarity through social media.

BY ALEX DELUCA
ILLUSTRATIONS BY INGRID WU

Each morning, Debra Bennett woke up in her bunk and ticked another day off her nearly 20 year sentence. On a particularly bad morning, halfway through her sentence, she etched the number 3,561 into her forearm -- it gave her hope.

In 2002, the Palm Beach Gardens native had gotten hooked on painkillers after multiple surgeries and health complications. By the time her doctor revoked her prescription, Bennett was addicted and desperate enough to seek out opioids in other ways. After a few months, she was arrested for drug trafficking. She fought her case for almost six years before she wound up at Lowell Correctional Institute in Marion County, where she would stay for the rest of her sentence.

But March 1, 2018 was a new morning; Bennett was finally a free woman. The petite 51-year-old sported a pair of red Converse and a standard-issue gray-and-blue uniform as she was escorted to the prison gates. A friend greeted her on the other side.

Bennett, a tough woman -- far tougher than her slim frame and disarming smile would lead a stranger to believe -- worked as a law clerk, a teacher's aid and a landscaper throughout her incarceration. But still,

none of her odd jobs prepared her for life outside prison. After 20 years, she was estranged from most of her family. Given her status as a drug felon, she wasn't eligible to apply for food stamps. With only \$50 to her name, she needed to find a job, fast.

Unlike many convicted felons, Bennett was able to find a job in her hometown after only 17 days. In search of people to connect with, she began documenting her transition back to society over Facebook.

"Left for the bus stop in P.B.G. @ 5:45 a.m. so I can be at work in Lake Worth by 10:00 a.m.

Am I mad.....not at all...it's my 1st day of WORK," she wrote in one of her first posts.

Bennett started receiving friend requests on Facebook from all different types of people from her past -- high school friends, distant family and formerly incarcerated women across Florida. She watched as her two worlds merged online, and friends from prison commented back and forth with her friends from high school.

Eventually, she caught word of a Facebook group for former Lowell inmates. She quickly joined, eager



"People were hungry to find out about Lowell."

to reconnect with the only people she felt could understand her trauma, her daily struggles, and her simultaneous amazement and confusion at the latest technology. She also wanted to keep tabs on the ongoing inside the prison, which are notoriously brutal.

But after reading a few posts, Bennett realized former inmates were almost outnumbered in the Facebook group by family members and friends. She wanted to find a way to connect with women on the inside.

"The girls who were on there, you could tell they wanted something more," Bennett said. "People were hungry to find out about Lowell."

Lowell Correctional Institution, a gray compound that lies quietly between I-75 and sprawling green pastures, is just a forty minute drive south of Gainesville. Opened in April 1956 as the first women's prison in Florida, Lowell is one of the largest women's prisons in the country today, housing around 3,000 inmates.

For incarcerated women in Florida who often bounce from one facility to another as they await sentencing, Lowell's reputation precedes it. For years, the prison has been affiliated with reports of inhumane conditions, such as inmates being forced to beg for basic necessities like toilet paper or menstrual products, scrub floors covered in raw sewage, and paint over mold on walls.

"All of the prisons are really, really bad," Bennett said. "But Lowell -- it's the exception."

Bennett had heard of Lowell's reputation as she awaited sentencing in county jail, but when she got to the prison in 2006, it was still a reality check. During her time, she said that basic necessities like toilet paper, as well as eggs, milk and fruit, were not regularly provided to inmates, though the Florida Department of Corrections press secretary wrote the opposite in an email.

Over the years, Bennett watched as state funding for prisons was cut or outsourced to private, for-

profit companies. As a result, programs that make prison bearable and life outside survivable for inmates were winnowed. These included programs that treat substance abuse and mental health, as well as resources, like makeup, for Lowell's cosmetology classes -- which former inmates say officers are not keen on encouraging women to attend.

"They fought us on it," said Tracy Golly, who got her cosmetology license at Lowell in 2003. "They would say that we couldn't go to class because an inspection was coming and they needed all inmates to clean up... They'd have us scrubbing things and cleaning on our hands and knees."

And then there was the abuse. In 2015, more than 36 former and current inmates at Lowell spoke to the Miami Herald about sexual abuse and misconduct they had experienced at the hands of correctional officers. They also reported officers spitting in their face, slamming them into walls, destroying personal items like family pictures, and pouring coffee or bleach on them. Even more angering: In subsequent Herald reports, Lowell officials could not produce any protocol for disciplining guards who were accused of abuse. Instead, officers were simply transferred to other facilities. Complaints were dismissed without investigation.

But inmates who reported abuse were punished. According to the Herald, the retaliatory tactics at Lowell crystallized into a clear pattern over the years: Inmates who spoke up for themselves were transferred, sent to confinement, met with violence.

One former inmate, Rachel Kalin, said she was put in solitary for 165 days after reporting a sexual assault by a guard.

"They called me a liar, and then my mail to my family was being thrown away," she said at a Department of Justice meeting in August 2018. "I have friends who are still there who are afraid to speak up because they're afraid their parents aren't going to get their mail."

In 2013, the FDC received grant funding to purchase additional cameras statewide. That year, cameras were installed around Lowell to help with the reporting of crimes, Prison Rape Elimination

"There is no safe way to report anything in that prison."



Act (P.R.E.A.) issues and abuse of public funds. Inmates were provided with a tip line they could call to report these matters. But the women quickly became skeptical once they realized they were being watched, and as long as that was the case, retaliation was possible.

"There is no safe way to report anything in that prison," Bennett said.

Adjusting to life on the other side, Bennett saw that Facebook could be a valuable tool for holding Lowell accountable. So in August 2018, five months after she left Lowell, Bennett created a Facebook group to exchange information about the prison, advocate for women on the inside and support former inmates on the outside. She named it "Soldiers on the INSIDE a force on the OUTSIDE."

Today the page has over 500 members.

"It's a great networking system," Bennett said, "but more than that, it's a safe place for us to go."

On a daily basis, Bennett is in touch with around 70 current inmates, whom she calls her "prison children," via a system called JPay. While the technology is a rudimentary form of e-mail that isn't connected to the larger internet and requires a fee to use, it allows inmates to exchange messages, videos and photos with others on the outside.

Through the group, Bennett has connected with a network of other prison reform activists who have ties to Lowell. Kim Lawrance, whose 19-year-old daughter is currently at Florida Women's Reception Center directly across the road from Lowell, also runs a Facebook group for incarcerated women and their families. She said the page is useful because it allows her to relay information her daughter tells her about other inmates to families that don't have access to the inside.

"It's like a big dark space in there," Kim Lawrance said.

"It's like [Lowell] just wants to be left in the dark, but we need to know what's going on in there."

Many of the women currently incarcerated in Lowell try to participate in Bennett's advocacy work from the inside by sending photos and videos for rallies and prison reform events and by passing on intel. But they do so at great risk, because correctional officers still regularly use violence, despite the ongoing Department of Justice investigation.

"They want to do so much," Bennett said. "There's lots of people who want to be involved in the advocacy, but they're going to be retaliated against. So we have to watch what we say, because they will be shipped."

Still, Bennett is optimistic her work is paying off. In February, she got word that two correctional officers, Adrian Puckett and Kurtis Mitchell, had thrown an inmate to the ground, knocking out three of her upper teeth and slicing her bottom lip in half. A report approved by Puckett justified the use of force because the inmate was "physically resisting him, attempting to and subsequently breaking his grasp and not complying

with his lawful orders."

But Bennett was skeptical -- she immediately contacted reporters and an attorney for the woman. The correctional officers were investigated. It was uncovered the attack was premeditated: Mitchell had stated the inmate "needs to have an accident" and that she "disrespected a captain and needs to fall."

"Lowell cops Puckett & Mitchell were arrested in the last 2 hours," Bennett posted in her group a few days after the incident. "A reporter just called and told me."

Former inmates commented on the post in droves. The general reaction was hopeful disbelief. "I think they went so long without anything happening that they think they're untouchable," one person commented. "It's good to see they're not."

"Bingo," Bennett replied.

Crystal Chisholm, 27, knows firsthand the value of an advocate on the outside. When she was an inmate in Lowell, she wrote back and forth with a pen pal, using code words to talk about what was really happening inside the prison. "I don't want what's going on in there to be forgotten," Chisholm said. "I gotta be that support for somebody else."

Since her release last June, Chisholm has started focusing on helping women who struggle with substance abuse and addiction. She started attending programs and workshops, and joined Bennett's group to connect with other inmates who are also interested in advocacy.

"You can't get through it alone," she said.

Bennett spends her time immersed in her prison reform work when she's not working the graveyard shift at IHOP or answering phones at a call center. But over a year on the other side, she is still getting used to freedom. The nearly 20 years in prison took their mental toll: She still gets surprised when her phone talks to her or she sees a TV mounted on the wall. At home, she stockpiles soap and toilet paper, forgetting she can buy more when she wants. "You become institutionalized," she said.

But she's doing small things to remind herself that she is on the outside. Every two weeks, she paints her nails a different color chosen by women inside Lowell, because they're not allowed to paint their nails on the inside. Right now, her nails are pink and black.

Bennett hopes to one day open up her own transition home for formerly incarcerated women in Florida. She's found that while there are countless halfway homes across the state for men, there aren't as many options for women. She knows just how difficult it is to build a new life from scratch, and how drastically that quality of life can improve with the help of others.

"We were one in there, but we're more than one out here," she said. •

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BY ROWAN MCCARTY

"This is why women don't come forward."

*More victims report rape in Alachua County each year. But what happens when cases reach
the Eighth Circuit State Attorney's Office is raising questions in Gainesville's criminal
justice community.*

BY MOLLY MINTA
ILLUSTRATION BY MARIA MORALES



ON A SUMMER EVENING IN 2017, NICOLE* DROVE TO HER PARENTS’ HOME IN ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA, TO PICK UP HER TWO CHILDREN AFTER DINNER. “I NEED TO TELL THEM,” THE 32-YEAR-OLD THOUGHT AS SHE WIPED AWAY TEARS.

She disclosed to her family that she had been abused many years earlier by her mother’s ex-husband, Bryant. Her disclosure led to an investigation by the Alachua County Sheriff’s Department, who filed a probable cause statement against Bryant, which was obtained by the Appeal through a records request. However, prosecutors ultimately dropped the case and declined to press charges. To maintain their privacy, the family requested that their real names not be used.

The probable cause statement reflects allegations of an extended period of abuse. In 1992, Nicole, her mother, Lynn, and Bryant, Lynn’s husband at the time, lived in a trailer park in southwest Gainesville. Most nights, Lynn would leave for her shift at a local law enforcement agency. It was then, the statement alleges, that Nicole said Bryant would come into her bedroom and touch her. The abuse eventually worsened, and Nicole said Bryant later raped her. She said the abuse didn’t even stop after Lynn and Bryant got divorced when she was around 10 years old. Nicole also remembered that when she visited Bryant at his Miramar home, he entered the living room where she was sleeping and, after covering up a digital clock to darken the room, touched her vagina. The probable cause narrative also states that Nicole never told anyone about the abuse because she said Bryant told her that if she did, he would hurt her mother.

But in 2016, Nicole learned that Bryant was back in Alachua County and had racked up criminal charges that included DUIs and domestic violence by strangulation. Then she saw him working at a Gainesville store. Nicole said she tried not to think about Bryant, but the fear of running into him again gnawed at her for the rest of the year.

By the summer of 2017, Nicole knew she had to say something.

Walking into her parents’ house that summer night, she took a deep breath. She spotted John, her new stepfather, outside grilling. Shaking violently, she asked him if he had a moment to talk.

“I could finally breathe,” Nicole said. “I felt

like this whole weight lifted off my shoulders.”

Lynn was concerned that the abuse Nicole described happened long ago. “I knew it would be hard for the prosecutor,” Lynn said. “But I think if they got [Nicole] on the stand, the jury would have believed her.” Lynn encouraged Nicole to file a police report. She was confident the legal system that she had dedicated her life to as a patrol officer could bring her daughter justice, especially because there’s no statute of limitations on child sexual abuse in Florida.

On Oct. 13, 2017, Alachua County Sheriff’s Department detectives filed their probable cause narrative, alleging that “by his actions, the defendant did intentionally sexually batter his adopted daughter.” Detectives wrote that Nicole “could not say how many times she was sexually abused because it happened so often” but could describe specific incidents: she said she “was digitally penetrated in his (Bryant’s) van while he would be driving, and (he) had her sit with him so that this could be accomplished.” The narrative noted that Bryant denied abusing Nicole, but that “he did however classify himself as an alcoholic, and stated that he routinely drank in excess while he was living with the victim. When asked, he also estimated that several times a week, he would drink to the point that he would not remember some of the night before.” The narrative also states that Julia, Nicole’s sister, and Nicole’s cousin also alleged that Bryant had molested them.

On Aug. 23, 2017, the probable cause statement shows, Julia confronted Bryant on a call recorded by detectives from the Alachua County Sheriff’s Office. During the call, Bryant said “I don’t recall doing that.” In an Oct. 13 interview with detectives, he denied the abuse ever occurred but said he drank heavily several times per week which led to gaps in his memory.

On October 17, 2017, detectives filed a sworn complaint against Bryant. The Appeal attempted to view the sworn complaint but was told by the Alachua County clerk’s office that it could not be released due to Marsy’s Law which heavily restricts the disclosure of records related to victims in criminal cases.

Nicole never got the chance to testify in the case, nor did Julia or Nicole’s cousin. On Jan. 31, 2018, Daniel Owen, a prosecutor with Florida’s Eighth Judicial Circuit State Attorney’s Office, declined to charge Bryant.

Multiple attempts were made to obtain a

comment from Bryant regarding the abuse allegations against him but The Appeal was unable to reach him. Mike Sawyer, an attorney who represented Bryant in an unrelated case, wrote in an email that Bryant did not wish to be interviewed and has no comment other than “there is no substance behind the allegations.”

FROM DECEMBER 2015 TO DECEMBER 2018, Alachua County prosecutors with the Eighth Circuit office closed 236 sexual battery cases. 92 cases were closed by plea deal and 115 cases—nearly 50 percent of the total number of closed sexual battery cases during this time period—were dropped, mostly due to “insufficient evidence to sustain conviction,” according to data obtained by The Appeal via public records requests. Only 3 percent—or seven cases—made it to trial, a rate significantly lower than the national average of 7 percent. The data reviewed by The Appeal includes only Alachua County, not all sexual battery cases brought by the office, which also covers Baker, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, and Union counties.

The 115 dropped cases included allegations like rape and child sexual abuse, and included DNA evidence, victims who immediately reported to law enforcement, witnesses who encountered victims immediately after an assault and could corroborate their account, and even confessions, according to public records.

Yet 93 of the 115 cases, including Nicole’s, were filed under the “insufficient evidence” code by prosecutors, meaning that the state did not believe there was enough evidence to prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt. “‘Insufficient evidence?’ What does that mean?” said Teresa Drake, director of the University of Florida law’s school’s Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Clinic, who also worked as a prosecutor in the Eighth Circuit office for nine years. “And what does that mean to a victim that says, ‘I’m evidence, and I’m willing to testify.’ That’s basically saying to a victim, ‘You’re not good enough, and nobody’s going to believe you.’”

After The Appeal contacted the Eighth Circuit office for comment on Owen’s charging decision in Nicole’s case, chief assistant state attorney Jeanne Singer said that she would answer questions on behalf of the office. Over the course of two interviews, Singer discussed the charging decisions made by her office in multiple cases,



the office’s prosecution rate as well as criticism from victim advocates and the sheriff that her office wasn’t properly involving victims. She dismissed criticisms of the office as a “naïve misunderstanding of what prosecutors do.”

She also said that because of the high burden of proof in criminal cases, prosecutors are ethically bound to ask tough questions or speak harsh truths to victims.

Meaghan Ybos, a founder of People for the Enforcement of Rape Laws, said that when prosecutors are criticized, they often respond by saying that people simply don’t understand their job. Though prosecutors have a duty not to file charges unless they believe they have sufficient evidence to convict, Ybos said, “it’s sounding like there have been cases in [Alachua County] where there was enough evidence to convict someone beyond a reasonable doubt but the state attorney’s office just didn’t pursue those cases. That’s a valid concern.”

FROM 2013 TO 2017, THE NUMBER OF rapes reported in Alachua County rose from 93 to 194, a 109 percent increase, according to public records. So in October 2016, after it obtained a grant from the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence, the Gainesville Police Department held a training for all law enforcement agencies in the county, including the Eighth Circuit office, on “forensic experiential trauma interviewing,” an investigative technique meant to make the process of recalling information about an assault less traumatizing for victims. Advocates including Laura Kalt, director of Alachua County’s Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center, say the training has resulted in better investigations and evidence-gathering.

But despite such improvements, victims and

The Eighth Circuit State Attorney’s Office on University Ave. Photo by Marcelo Rondon.

*Names have been changed to protect the identities of victims and their families.

“How could he say that? My mom’s not a bad mom. It just kept repeating itself in my head. ... My heart felt like it was going to come out of my chest.”

advocates like Kalt say that the Eighth Circuit office is still “operating on an old mentality.”

“They just don’t see that they’re out of touch with the current standards,” Kalt added.

Singer said the data on sexual battery prosecutions—specifically the low trial rate—indicates that her office is actually doing a better job on these cases. “That doesn’t offend me at all,” she said. “In fact that’s a positive for our community. You don’t want to have all these cases litigated because the chances of getting a conviction is slim.”

But victims told The Appeal they believe that prosecutors bring charges in sexual assault cases that are not reflective of the elements of the offenses committed in their cases. One victim said she was raped on Oct. 31, 2016, during a party she attended with friends, one of whom said she witnessed the defendant on top of her. The witness told detectives that she told the defendant the victim was “too intoxicated to consent” and that the defendant had “stated that he understood.” According to a police report, the defendant “forcefully performed oral sex” on the victim and bit her, “causing her pain and leaving a visible bite mark. The mark was later observed and documented by the SAE (sexual assault examination) nurse.” During a call with the victim the next day recorded by Gainesville Police Department detectives, the defendant “apologized for biting” her and acknowledged that she was “too drunk to consent” and “kept pulling away from him during the act.” He was arrested for sexual battery, but the Eighth Circuit office ultimately offered him a plea deal for felony battery which he accepted.

In February 2018, Rachel reported that she was raped by a tech specialist in her Gainesville office where she worked as a property manager. The man was there to train her and a co-worker on new technology, but after he said the training was just for Rachel, her co-worker went home. Rachel then locked the door, which she later told detectives was a normal procedure to prevent people from interrupting training.

That’s when he moved his chair next to Rachel’s and began “making advances,” according to a sheriff’s report. He initially stopped after she told him “it made her uncomfortable and she did not want to.” When Rachel rebuffed him a second time, he told her he normally carried a gun. He then kissed Rachel and grabbed her by her arms,

pulled her pants down, pushed her onto the desk, and raped her.

The man was arrested for sexual battery. Despite DNA evidence implicating him in the assault, after speaking with his defense attorney, prosecutors charged him with aggravated assault with intent to commit a felony, the charge to which he pleaded. In Florida, this is a lesser offense than sexual battery because it doesn’t require that the defendant actually touch the victim.

While Rachel initially supported the idea of a plea deal if it meant she wouldn’t have to testify at trial, she later objected to the deal when she learned prosecutors planned to charge her assailant with a non-sexual offense.

“This is why women don’t come forward,” Rachel told The Appeal. “Why go forward when they see cases get plea deals when they should not be offered? I was raped in my office. There wasn’t an intent to commit a felony. There was a felony.”

In October 2018, Alachua County Sheriff Sadie Darnell criticized the Eighth Circuit office’s charging decision in Rachel’s case in open court. “To say that I’m frustrated about how this case progressed is an understatement,” Darnell said, “I’m horrified. The victim’s statement regarding the plea was made known to the state prior to the plea being offered, and yet the state went forward with a plea on a case, a crime that meets the elements of a rape but they submitted a plea again, without the victims support and with her objection known to come forward to the court of an aggravated assault.” The Florida constitution, Darnell further noted, provides the right for a victim to be heard and informed about their case but that “the victim survivor in this case was not informed.” And Darnell said that when she met with prosecutors from the Eighth Circuit office, she was told that this was a “typical plea.”

Darnell said that Rachel’s case made her concerned there was a “systemic problem” at the office.

“I continued to be very bothered by that case,” Darnell told The Appeal. “It was handled terribly, it was a horrific injustice, and to this day it remains inexplicable to me.”

“There’s some [prosecutors] over there that are very passionate about what they do,” said Jody Cail, the Alachua sheriff’s detective who worked on Rachel’s case. “And there are some over there that are just processing cases.”

In an interview with The Appeal, Singer denied that her office did not inform Rachel of the plea

deal before it was ahead of it being offered.

And despite the sheriff’s concerns, the judge accepted the plea, telling the court he was constrained by the charge filed by the prosecution.

NICOLE, HER PARTNER, AND MEMBERS of her family met with Owen, the prosecutor who dropped her case, hoping for an explanation. They said Owen told them he didn’t think he could prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt. He insisted that because the abuse happened so long ago, there was no evidence, even though there were three victims willing to testify.

Owen also said that because Lynn never noticed anything was wrong with Nicole, a jury might not choose to convict Bryant because they would think she was a “bad mom.”

Nicole said that she felt retraumatized by the statement. On the drive home that afternoon, she thought, “How could he say that? My mom’s not a bad mom. It just kept repeating itself in my head. ... My heart felt like it was going to come out of my chest.”

Singer, the chief assistant state attorney, told The Appeal that Owen’s “bad mom” comment was “probably a truthful statement under the facts of that case.” She added that “we have to do a lot of the bad-news telling” to accusers.

“The idea that it implied that this was the mother’s fault I think is something that they generate from the situation, not what is told to them,” Singer said.

Advocates at the Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center told The Appeal that Owen has a “harsh bedside manner” and often jokes about his “brutally honest” demeanor before asking questions like what a victim was wearing the night she was raped.

Lynn and Julia said they were never formally interviewed by Owen, though Singer wrote in an e-mail that her office did take testimony from “four female witnesses/victims” connected to the case.

DATA DEMONSTRATES WHY VICTIMS AND law enforcement may be frustrated by the Eighth Circuit office’s handling of sexual battery cases: from December 2015 to December 2018, the office declined to prosecute nearly 50 percent of sexual battery cases and Owen declined to prosecute 20 of the 36 sexual battery cases he worked, according to public records.



Jeanne Singer, the chief assistant state attorney. Photo from sao8.org.

Brian Rodgers, a former prosecutor in the Crimes Against Women and Children unit, dropped 46 out of 135 cases; prosecutor David Byron, also in the unit, dropped 16 of 29.

“We do all this work, all this training, all this investment, and then the case goes to the state attorney’s office, and they shut the door on all of that,” said Sheriff Darnell.

Regarding the office’s prosecution rates, Singer said that charging decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

Soon after Owen closed Nicole’s case in January 2018, a private investigator on an unrelated case uncovered a fourth possible victim of Bryant in Lakeland, outside of the Eighth Circuit office’s jurisdiction. But by that time, Owen had moved to the gun crime unit at the Eighth Circuit office. The family asked Sean Brewer, the division chief who oversees the Crimes Against Women and Children unit, to review Nicole’s case, but he declined to reopen it. Singer said that because the Eighth Circuit office didn’t receive a new case for the potential fourth victim, “there is no way I can opine on whether the older case would be reopened.”

Lynn, Nicole, and their family are still trying to move on from the experience.

“I was angry and disappointed in the system I’ve worked for, for now 27 years,” Lynn said. “I felt let down, I felt like a victim. ... I felt betrayed by the system. I don’t know how else to describe it.” •

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

farmville

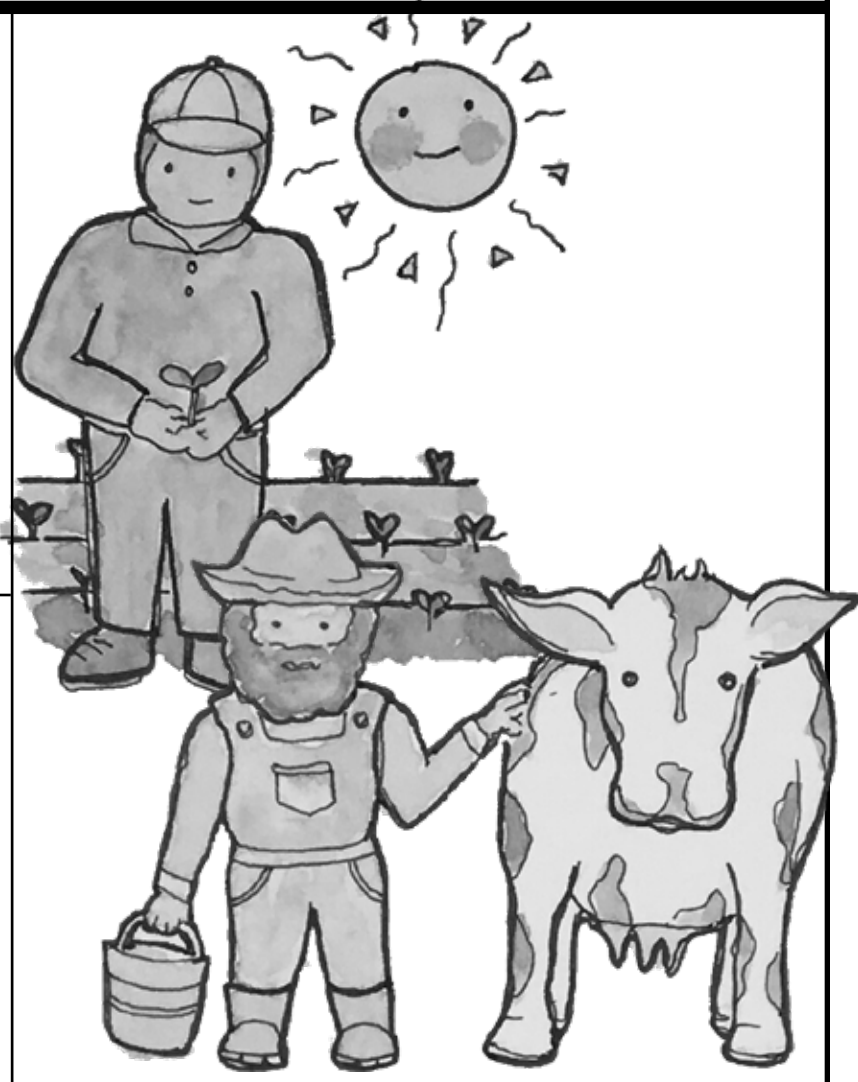
BY MARIA SOBRINO
ILLUSTRATION BY JAMIE ANG

We get that eating healthy and local sounds hard. You may not have time to make the weekly grocery run fresh produce requires, and it's pretty difficult to beat cravings for a stack of french fries. But The Fine Print's here to tell you that the optimism with which you bought that bag of spinach (you know, the one that sits unopened and liquifying in your fridge) doesn't have to be short-lived. In Gainesville, you've got access to a plethora of co-ops -- something you've probably heard of -- as well as community-supported agriculture (CSA), programs in which you can pay a membership rate for fruits and vegetables that can be picked up or delivered weekly. Sorta like Blue Apron, but local. •

Siembra Farms

2033 SE 23RD PLACE
352-327-5027

Siembra is a small, family-owned farm located in southeast Gainesville with a philosophy of inclusion. They believe in food accessibility, meaning everyone has the right to nutritious food, regardless of economic status, race or gender. Siembra's prices are low compared to other local CSAs, and they also offer a program in which you can get fresh produce in exchange for volunteering on the farm on Saturdays. The cost is an annual start-up fee of \$50 plus \$30 for a weekly share. Pick up your share at the Haile Plantation Farmers Market, the Union Street Farmers Market, the Alachua County Farmers Market, and at Siembra Farm on Wednesdays and Fridays.



The Family Garden

1655 SE 23RD PL.
352-214-5871

This is the only Food Justice Certified farm in the South. Among other things, this certification ensures that employees make livable wages and have rights that are often denied to farm workers. Family Garden also partners with other local farms to include "add-ins" in their weekly share, such as eggs, roasted coffee and vegetable-raised pork. Plans vary but are paid for once a year, and the cost ranges from \$690 to \$1,750 for the most food. The Family Garden offers pick-up at The University of Florida, College of Medicine, Micanopy, Tonewood Family Music, the Alachua 441 Market, or on the Farm in Southeast Gainesville.

Florida Fresh Meat Company

13770 S HIGHWAY 475, SUMMERFIELD, FL.
352-214-5871

Florida Fresh Meat Company has been providing fresh, quality meats of all sorts -- from quail to chicken to alligator -- to the Gainesville community since 2008. According to its website, the farm is the first local company in nearly 20 years to produce fresh meat directly for the public under USDA inspection. Membership costs \$100 per year, and you receive 10 percent of all proteins produced all year long. Florida Fresh Meat delivers to your door (that costs extra) or the Haile Plantation Farmers Market on Saturday Mornings. To sign up call Jan Costa at 352-229-5613.

Swallowtail Farms

17603 NW 276TH LANE, ALACHUA.
NOAH SHITAMA AT (352) 327-1175

Swallowtail Farm is designed and operated with a focus on sustainability and conservation, which means they don't use synthetic fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides. Their goal is to reconnect people with their food. Healthy eating isn't the only thing you have to gain from this place -- check out their flowers. The veggie full share includes 30 weeks at \$40 per weekly bag; egg full shares include a dozen eggs each week for 30 weeks at \$7 per week. The farm also offers a variety of flower and dairy product shares. You can get food weekly or every other week, depending on the share, and it's enough food to feed about 4-6 individuals weekly. Pick up at the Union Street Farmers' Market, Thornebrooke Village, Swallowtail Farm, Haile Village Farmers Market.



Florida Fields to Fork

1200 COREY ROAD, MALABAR, FL.
321-431-7259

Vegans, vegetarians and omnivores alike can join this "members-only" CSA. Florida Fields to Fork works to champion the natural growth of produce and cattle by using natural feed techniques, irrigation and organic soil. They offer CSA shares of anything from lamb and Cornish Cross chickens to artisan cheeses and raw milk products. Though the farm is located in Malabar, they offer a drop-off at the Alachua County Farmers Market. The cost is \$35 for a one-time membership fee plus the price of the shares based on weight. Off-the-farm delivery is \$50. You can pick up food weekly at the Alachua County Farmers Market.



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THE ANATOMY OF SHADOWS

BY MORGAN SPRAKER

You run.

Your feet hit coarse sand as you sprint, lungs ablaze, your friend racing next to you. He is fast, and you're faster, but your shadows are winning, coasting along a string of shallow water. The beach is a special place at night. The shore was blazed for you, you alone, and silver moonlight stripes the sea.

You exhale as you stop, as you win.

Your friend, he claps your back and rejoins the others, but you find your shadow and say hello. It greets you with familiarity. Not enough people take time to mingle with shadows, let alone their own, because they fear the realm where only blacked-out silhouettes exist. Perhaps they're justified in their fear—shadows seem to be of another world, one where physics has its own ideas of even the most indisputable of laws and rules.

You observe.

People are here with you, friends and friends of friends, but they're all the same in shadow. Laughter floats up, sparks, and settles down, embers, in waves. You've always thought bonfires on the beach are strange and poetic—the ocean swells feet away, yet people build flames. There's intentionality involved in that, and hubris, too, but control is a drug. Everyone delights in it. Your friends throw powder into the fire; it causes the fire to burn blue, pink, green, purple, white, causes it to flash brightness against the inky night. They laugh. You do too, but you want more. You want more colors, want to know the in-betweens of the spectrum, want to answer an impossible question.

What happens when fire burns black?

A black flame, even one chemical-born, would only be a shadow. Would it be hot? Would it burn and cause blisters? Would it exist if you couldn't see it? Fire burns with color, but this flame would burn with nothingness. It would bend reality's rules, it would be an exception and a defiance and a creature across worlds.

You wonder how its shadow would appear—an orange flame has a liquid shadow, mere suggestions of shapes rendered in distorted brushstrokes. It would have to have a shadow, because everything does. People like to forget that. Only artists seem to acknowledge that another realm lives in tandem with our own; only they seem to care enough to learn the anatomy of shadows—their movement, their formation, how even if one is not fully present, you recognize a shadowed gaze. They've earned a terrible reputation, too, of things of nightmares, but you know a shadow is not to be feared. Beautiful things can blossom in darkness; terror can take over in the purest sunlight.

You know that.

Do the others?

Do they know they're seeing reality and unreality tangled together? They don't seem to, with their laughter and drinks and races, but that's okay. You know it enough for everyone; you watch as two people sit together, as they talk in low voices, as their shadows brush together on the ground, as they lean closer to the fire. You grin, happy just to be there, to watch.

The black flame burns in the sand alongside its orange twin. •



Wicker Series: Mississippi House, BY MONTANA WILSON

Est. 2008

