Our Fields of Dreams

How a love affair with sports shapes life in Florida

MEET THE WOMAN WHO INSPIRED A TICKER-TAPE PARADE

DIGGING THE ROOTS OF FLORIDA SOUL

HOW WILLIAM BARTRAM IS RESTORING THE FORTUNES OF ONE FLORIDA TOWN

INSIDE ONE FAMILY’S MINORCAN COOKING TRADITION

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Chances are you were not born in Florida. Only a little more than a third of us were, placing Florida at the top of the list of states with the smallest percentage of native-born residents. By contrast, if you lived in Georgia, six out of 10 of your neighbors would be Georgia born. In Alabama and Mississippi, more than 70 percent were born in the state, and in Louisiana, that number reaches 80 percent.

It’s a lot easier intuiting your sense of place when you, and most of those around you, have for generations called the same place home.

But perhaps we should not think of being a vast state with a large and transitory population as a challenge, but as a strength. With our diversity comes a relentless energy to recreate ourselves as Floridians. We are part of an ancient tradition of creating something new here. Floridians adapt and adopt.

For decades, FORUM magazine and the Florida Humanities Council have tried to build an understanding of Florida — of its people, places, culture and history. Through the process of telling our stories of human experience, we better learn to understand ourselves and each other. And isn’t that the fundamental goal of the humanities; to tie us together and to the wisdom of the past?

My family moved here in the 1950s from Minnesota because Dad had a chance to work in the area’s new aerospace industry. My folks adapted to this world of sand and ocean and heat and growth, and ultimately adopted Florida — its food, history, literature, religion, music, and culture. They brought their significant skills to this state and died as Floridians. You don’t have to inherit a sense of place; you can develop one.

And this brings me to the primary theme of this FORUM edition, Hometown Teams.

Adopting your town often means you passionately embrace its teams. And as historian Steven Noll explains in his wonderful essay, there is a depth of Florida history seen through the lens of our obsession with our hometown teams.

And it's not always football and basketball. In my Largo hometown, for example, we celebrated our state championship cross-country team and award-winning high school "Band of Gold" as enthusiastically as any more traditional sport.

Here is the truth: A significant number of us are not from Florida, yet we learn to love it here. We invest in this state with our time and treasure, with our hearts and minds. The humanities, with all its reach and depth, can help us build Team Florida.

Steve Seibert

We would like to acknowledge the generous support of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.
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Dunedin’s Crisman twins were part of the winning “Peggy’s Girls” softball team in the late 1930s and ’40s. Replicas of the team’s uniforms are part of the Dunedin History Museum’s local collection on display as part of the Smithsonian’s “Hometown Teams” exhibit touring the state. Photo courtesy of Dunedin History Museum.

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At the risk of sounding like an Academy Awards speech, I feel both amazed and thankful to be writing this, my first letter as the new editor of FORUM magazine. Amazed, thankful, and exceptionally aware of the gem that has been entrusted to me.

My first introduction to FORUM came years ago. As I flipped through its pages, I slowed down in surprise. This seemed a treasure trove, each page rich with thoughtfully told stories of our state’s history, culture, life; of the deeper Florida glowing beneath the surface of the more superficial version.

I am one of those “almost” lifelong Floridians whose understanding and appreciation of my state has evolved over time. When I was young, I considered myself a displaced New Yorker, though not yet two months old when my family permanently decamped to Miami Beach, where my great-grandparents had long spent winters.

I grew up amid coconut palms and pink sidewalks and bathing suit-clad tourists and glitzy hotels with names straight out of the French Riviera. My hometown felt somehow untethered from real life — this was not Dick and Jane’s America, as depicted in my elementary school primers. Where were the snowmen and the red sleds? We had miles of sandy beaches, but not a flake of longed-for snow.

I finally began to appreciate the magic of my own sun-dazzled childhood when I went north for college. How the technicolor zest of Miami life, enriched by waves of immigrants, was a vibrant part of America’s unfolding story.

Slowly, a beautifully complex Florida began to reveal itself to me. And that’s the Florida I saw reflected in the pages of my first FORUM magazine.

For the last 16 years, Barbara O’Reilley has built a legacy as the highly respected editor of FORUM, beloved by contributors and readers alike for her writing, meticulous and sensitive editing, and graciousness as an individual.

When Barbara retired, I was honored to be given the opportunity to follow her in the editor’s role.

Gainesville has been my home since graduating from the University of Colorado, and it’s where I’ve spent my career at The Gainesville Sun as a writer, features editor and managing editor for 14 years. And it’s where I’ve had the priceless privilege of serving as editor of Gainesville Magazine since its inception almost 15 years ago.

Hard to say goodbye. But I strongly believe in the Florida Humanities Council and its role connecting Floridians with our diverse culture, traditions and history, and by extension, each other.

It will be a joy to serve the council’s mission, through FORUM, to tell the story of Florida and its people as part of an incredible team of scholars, photographers, writers, designers, and amazing staff.

I believe the best publications serve as public squares, creating a sense of place that reminds us of how interconnected we are. And that’s what we hope to continue at FORUM.

Here in our spring issue, we celebrate the Smithsonian’s “Hometown Teams: How Sports Shape America” exhibit, now touring Florida, with a cover story examining how sports have at once shaped and reflected our young state.

We also introduce new features: Decoding Democracy, meant to help us become better participants in democracy; Heritage Kitchen, sharing stories of Florida’s culinary traditions through the families that are passing them on; State of Wonder, a photographer’s take on the, well, wonder, of Florida; Insiders’ Florida, exploring cities and towns with help from those who know them best and the FHC’s walking tour app, and A Florida Life, conversations with some of our state’s intriguing people.

I hope you enjoy this issue. I’d love to hear from you — your ideas, stories, experiences, and visions of Florida and for FORUM. My email is jlevine@flahum.org.

Thank you, and happy spring.

Jacki Levine
FORUM Contributors

Susan Cerulean, of Tallahassee and Indian Pass, is author of Coming to Pass: Florida’s Coastal Islands in a Gulf of Change, winner of a Florida Book Awards gold medal in nonfiction. Her memoir, Tracking Desire: A Journey after Swallow-tailed Kites (University of Georgia Press, 2005), was named Editors’ Choice by Audubon magazine. She directed the Red Hills Writers Project and edited Between Two Rivers: Stories from the Red Hills to the Gulf, and Unspoiled: Writers Speak for Florida’s Coast.

Betty Cortina-Weiss is a South Florida writer who believes salsa, the kind eaten and the kind danced to, makes the world a better place. She specializes in food and lifestyle stories, and her work has appeared in Saveur, People, O, The Oprah Magazine, Latina and Miami’s INDULGE, where she served as founding editor-in-chief for four years.

Ron Cunningham, a University of Florida graduate, is a former editor-in-chief of the Independent Florida Alligator. He was a reporter at the Fort Lauderdale Sun Sentinel, higher education reporter at The Gainesville Sun, and Tallahassee bureau chief for The New York Times Florida Newspapers, before serving as editorial page editor at The Gainesville Sun until 2013. He lives in Gainesville.

Bill DeYoung is the author of Skyway: The True Story of Tampa Bay’s Signature Bridge and the Man Who Brought It Down and Phil Gernhard, Record Man. Nationally recognized for his music journalism, he was a writer and editor at various Florida and Georgia newspapers for more than three decades.

Liz Joyner is the founder and CEO of The Village Square (https://tlh.villagesquare.us/), a Florida-based nonprofit devoted to building conversations across the partisan divide. The Village Square offers a range of ideas to start your own conversations, like Lunch Across the Aisle (https://tlh.villagesquare.us/blog/lunch/), The Jefferson Dinner (https://jeffersondinner.org), and Local Color (http://localcolors.us/), a project supported by the Florida Humanities Council.

Steven Noll is a master lecturer in the department of history at the University of Florida. Dr. Noll’s work focuses on Florida history and environment, and the history of disability. He has won numerous teaching awards at the departmental, university, and national levels. His work with the Florida Humanities Council includes speaking on Florida waters and environmental history around the state and to K-12 teachers and high school students.

Jon Wilson is a communications consultant for the Florida Humanities Council. He retired as a reporter and editor after 36-plus years with the St. Petersburg Times and Evening Independent.
FLORIDA Humanities Today

A uniquely Florida voice: Tampa Bay writer wins Lifetime Achievement Award

Jeff Klinkenberg, author and longtime journalist celebrated for capturing the essence of Florida and its people, has won the 2018 Florida Lifetime Achievement Award for Writing.

Klinkenberg, 68, was chosen by an independent panel from among 20 nominees for the annual award, now in its ninth year. He has written several books about Florida and, for nearly 40 years, was a popular columnist for the St. Petersburg Times, now the Tampa Bay Times. The award will be presented in April in Tallahassee.

Klinkenberg will present his perspective on Florida in talks around the state sponsored by the Florida Humanities Council’s Speaker Series. His three main topics: “The Most Interesting Floridians I have Known,” “Books That Every Floridian Should Have on the Shelf,” and “Alligators in Florida Culture.” “There’s more about Klinkenberg’s life and career at youtube.com/watch?v=gQjKwHXYmnQ. To learn more about the Speaker Series, visit Floridahumanities.org/speakers.

Remembering Dr. Sara Snyder Crumpacker

The Florida Humanities Council mourns the loss of beloved board member Dr. Sara Snyder Crumpacker, who passed away on Dec. 23, 2017, at home in Melbourne. She is survived by her husband, Peter Crumpacker.

Dr. Crumpacker, who held a doctorate from the University of Virginia, was a true Renaissance woman whose accomplishments were vast and varied.

In addition to a career in the private sector, Dr. Crumpacker was a consultant in the Office of the Vice President, Al Gore, where she planned and implemented customer service initiatives for the President’s Management Council and the National Performance Review. As consultant to James Lee Witt, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, she designed and implemented a customer service program for more than 3,000 employees.

Additionally, she was a writer, speaker, teacher, owner of a residential design firm, and a philanthropist. Her volunteer service and positions on numerous national, state, and local boards reflected an interest in everything from literature to the arts, to diabetes research, and to helping homeless animals.

“Sara had been on our board for about a year, but few have had such an impact in such a short time,” says FHC Executive Director Steve Seibert.

“She would send lovely personal notes on handmade cards one day and then call the next to urge greater focus on fundraising or Board member engagement. Sara was kindly pushing us all to be better; to serve more effectively. She was a force for good, and we all cared for her. I learned much from her — our entire staff did — and we will miss her greatly.”

A celebration of Dr. Crumpacker’s life was held Jan. 27 at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Rockledge.

What we’re watching:
Looking for something to watch tonight? The Florida Humanities Council’s archives are full of must-see documentaries that will captivate and inform you about the state’s history and culture: floridahumanities.org/documentary

The Florida Dream traces our state’s transformation since World War II through a rich trove of photos, film clips, insights of scholars and memories of those who lived through those days.

¡Buen Provecho! explores the 500-year history of Hispanic influences on Florida cuisine. Hosted by award-winning chef/ restaurateur Michelle Bernstein, the documentary examines culinary inspirations of the earliest Spanish explorers to today’s most popular chefs. Hungry yet? Bernstein takes to the kitchen to create a “not-your-typical” Cuban sandwich, a lime-infused mixed seafood ceviche and more.

Preserving Our Waters shines a light on efforts to protect the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve and establish it as Florida’s first estuarine preserve. The efforts became a blueprint for the Florida Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975 and the statewide aquatic preserve system.

What we’re reading:
In each issue, FORUM will celebrate the joy of reading by offering a favorite book to consider. To suggest a book of your own, please email jlevine@flahum.org.

This issue, Tyler Tarrant, FHC program coordinator, recommends The Razor’s Edge by W. Somerset Maugham (published in 1944).

“It’s the true account of one person’s decision to ignore the pull of everyday society and search and eventually find happiness in the last place anyone thinks to look — inside themselves. “It is a humanities book among humanities books — looking at the human condition through various approaches to life. It also happened to plant a seed within me when I was 20 that would blossom some years later and be a huge personal game-changer.”
Uncovered treasure: Behind the scenes at the creation of Bok Tower Gardens

When his grandmother advised young Dutch immigrant Edward W. Bok to “make the world a bit better or more beautiful because you have lived in it,” he took her words to heart, going on to become a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, editor, humanitarian, and environmental and peace activist.

In Florida, he may be best remembered for the Bok Tower Gardens he created in 1929 at his winter retreat in Lake Wales. The Singing Tower and its gardens, constructed on one of Florida’s highest elevations, have attracted visitors from all over the world.

Today, Floridians can take a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the 60-bell carillon tower, thanks to journals recently donated by the descendants of builders Horace Burrell and his son, Edward.

Bok Tower Gardens designed a traveling exhibit, “Creating an Icon: The Way We Worked on the Singing Tower,” based on the Burrells’ handwritten journals, scrapbooks, and photographs.

Sponsored in part by a grant from the Florida Humanities Council, the exhibit will be on display at the Lake Wales Public Library, May through July; Polk County History Center, September through November; Tampa Bay History Center, January through March 2019, and the Lake Wales Museum and Cultural Center, May through July 2019.

Meet the new members of the FHC board

The Florida Humanities Council Board has elected four new board members who will serve three-year terms:

**Frank Biafora** (St. Petersburg) is dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. He chaired the university’s strategic planning and expanded study abroad initiatives after a Fulbright Fellowship to Vietnam. Biafora was previously Arts and Sciences associate dean at St. John’s University in New York. He chaired the Pinellas County Urban League and was an American Council on Education Fellow.

**Dabney Park Jr.** (Coral Gables) is an adjunct professor in languages at the University of Miami and in history at Florida International University. He has served as board chair of The Prologue Society, an organization dedicated to stimulating public interest in history. Park is a founding partner of Performance, a management consulting firm, and served as the Historical Museum of Southern Florida’s vice president for development. Park is fluent in Spanish and Italian, and has reading knowledge of Latin and French.

**Jose Garcia-Pedrosa** (Miami) is a Harvard Law School graduate who has served as city manager of Miami and Miami Beach. He is currently general counsel of Farm Stores Franchising. The Anti-Defamation League gave him its Jurisprudence Award in 1995 and he has won Lawyer of the Year and Public Official of the Year honors from the Latin Builders Association. Garcia-Pedrosa is a frequent guest on Spanish-language news and commentary shows. He is the author of America’s Casablanca, a novel about Miami.

**Michael Urette** (Tampa) is the founder and CEO of Great American Corporation, a real estate construction, management, and development company. He was board chair of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota. Active in community cultural organizations, Urette received the 2010 Impact Award from Tampa Bay Businesses for Culture & the Arts. A West Point graduate, he also holds master’s degrees in operations research and economics.

Interested in joining the board? The Florida Humanities Council accepts nominations for board members year-round.

If you’d like to learn more, please visit floridahumanities.org/BOD.
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NOW IN PAPER

BOOKS for SPRING
The compassionate collector

For Martin Margulies, real estate success fuels a life as one of world’s top art collectors — with a heart for the needy and homeless

By Jacki Levine

It was as a South Florida real estate developer that Martin Z. Margulies made his fortune over more than four decades, moving up from building single-family homes to putting his stamp on the skyline with luxury waterfront condominiums.

But when people talk about Margulies today, it’s more likely for the double passions his wealth has fueled — as one of the world’s most prominent art collectors who, long before Art Basel, put Miami on the art world map; and as a generous philanthropist, dedicated to art, art education, and the dispossessed.

Every year since 1990, Margulies has been named to ARTnews’ The World’s Top 200 Collectors list for his expansive collection of European and American 20th and 21st century sculpture, video, painting, photography, and installations. Familiar names include Willem de Kooning, Joan Miro, Andy Warhol, and hundreds of others.

When his collection outgrew his Key Biscayne home, Margulies created the nonprofit Margulies Collection at the Warehouse in Miami’s Wynwood Art District, in 1999. The 45,000-square-foot former garment warehouse showcases up-and-coming and established artists and provides art education to students and visitors. The bonus? Fees raised through the collection fund Margulies’ beloved Lotus Village, the Miami residential facility that offers a new chance for more than 500 homeless women and children. While Margulies has retired from commercial real estate, this project may be his most meaningful of all.

Where it began:

Margulies was born in Yonkers, New York, the son of grocers with stores in Harlem and the Bronx. He earned a finance degree at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Finance.

His start:

“I was drafted, and while waiting for my Army officer’s training to begin, I worked for a developer — a very, very big-time tycoon in the New York market named Marvin Pratter. I was basically an office boy. I drove him home and picked him up. He liked the idea of having a Wharton grad get lunch and sit in on his business meetings. I gained a tremendous amount of experience from him. A brilliant man.”

His South Florida sojourn begins after the Army, when he joined his parents who had retired there:

“I got my contractor’s license and started building houses, then apartments. As I gained more experience, I acquired a site on Treasure Island and built an eight-story building.”

Hitting the big time:

“I was very ambitious, wanting to make my way in the world. My partner and best friend, Jack, was a good Irish Catholic. We bought a building that used to be Kenilworth Hotel, where (1950s radio and TV personality) Arthur Godfrey broadcasted from. Everybody was trying to get this property. So we went to see the owner, a big-time white-shoe attorney in Washington. We said to him, ‘We’re ready to give you a check for 10 percent. You write the contract any way you want it — we trust you.’

“And we got it. We gave him a check and I said to Jack, ‘Where are we going to get the money?’ And Jack said, ‘I thought YOU had the money.’ We imploded the hotel and built the Kenilworth condo. It was 18 stories.

“This was the 1970s and my first foray into building on the ocean. If you built on the ocean you were getting there. It was very successful.”

How does a real estate developer become one of the world’s top art collectors?

“I met a young lady who lived in San Francisco and had studied in Europe. We were just friends. She said to me ‘You ought to do something with your life other than sports and chasing women.’ I said yes, and I bought a print.

“Twenty-five years later I get a letter from her. ‘It’s Lynn, remember me? I read your name in an art magazine.’

“I thought there was something besides doing real estate and business, that learning and educating myself and collecting was something I’d enjoy.

“‘There was something spiritually that led me to collecting. I went to galleries and I liked the way people talked and were educated. This is the kind of world that I wanted to be in. I started collecting with the modest resources I had. That was in the 1970s.

“You seize the moment and everything leads to you building up what you want to do as far as collecting is concerned.”
Martin Z. Margulies photographed at his 45,000-square-foot Margulies Collection at the Warehouse. Margulies is a winner of the American Art Award from the Whitney Museum of American Art.

How did you decide what type of art to collect?

“You try to isolate what is your particular liking. I’m not a French Impression or a Renaissance man, these particular works are for different types of people. … It didn’t fit my vision or my aesthetic. My collection starts post-World War II. It’s the era I live in. It’s art of the times.

“I look at art and it’s about your feeling about it. The more exposure and more education you get, you understand it better, determine what you like and what you don’t like … what is pleasing to your aesthetic taste and fits into your collection.”

Talk about Lotus Village, the Miami facility for homeless women and children in need of a new start. Why is that project so important to you?

“Years ago I built a facility, the Overtown Youth Center, with a basketball court, classrooms, after-school activities. It’s one of the poorest communities in the country. Then I turned it over to (NBA Hall of Famer) Alonzo Mourning, the co-founder. That was about 15 years ago.

“The woman behind Lotus Village, Constance Collins, was an attorney and real estate developer who gave it up to devote herself to helping homeless women. She’s my ex-wife and best friend. Saying she’s my best friend only means something to me. What she means to homeless people is giving them a new life.

“We’ve probably worked together on this for 12 years. Lotus House was five or six buildings that were almost slums. We improved them with new windows, different floorings, new bathrooms.

“We decided to demolish the buildings and build a shelter that would be a national model. It’s now called Lotus Village, a five-story facility built with private money.

“It has space for 525 women and children. We call it a village because there are so many holistic aspects — child care, a dining facility that serves 1,300 meals a day, a children’s wellness center, training people for jobs. They stay for a year. We are giving them back their dignity and helping make them people that value themselves.”

Why Miami?

“I felt the opportunities in Miami when I arrived were much better for a younger person. Bottom line — it’s a great place to live. I like the many, many cultures here. I’ve got one of my four children living here. I go to basketball games — I still love sports. It’s easier living here than many other places. And that’s why you have thousands of homeless people living here.”

Are you reading something you’d recommend?

“Tell Me Something Good, a series of artists’ interviews published over the last 20 years in the Brooklyn Rail. It’s a history of 30 artists and their philosophy on life. It’s interesting to see how they developed their work, how certain things became turning points in their life.”

What mark would you like to leave on the world?

“The mark you make is when you’re living. I don’t need a legacy. You live life the way you live it now. Other people want buildings named after them. I recognize myself and I’m happy for what I do for other people.”

To learn more, visit margulieswarehouse.com
Discovering the heart of Tallahassee

Whether you’re a visitor or longtime resident, this capital city may surprise you

By Susan Cerulean

On a bitter January night in 1982, I motored north from Gainesville to begin a new life and a dream job in Tallahassee. I traveled in a yellow Volkswagen Thing, a quasi-military vehicle my dad thought I’d find useful in my new position as staff biologist for Marjorie Carr’s Florida Defenders of the Environment.

The Defenders’ offices were in the refurbished attic of a historic home on North Gadsden Street, owned by Bud and Kitty Chiles. Today, that house sits close to Stop 5 on a new Florida Stories walking tour of the city, created by the Florida Humanities Council and the Historic Capitol Museum’s executive director Tiffany Baker. Recently, I revisited my personal history in Tallahassee, guided by the Florida Stories app. Though I’ve lived and worked here all of my adult life, the tour surprised and fascinated me with much I had never learned before about my adopted city’s history.

What I have long appreciated about Tallahassee is that it offers a place to live, work and visit that defies the tourist’s stereotype of Florida. A vibrant trio of universities and colleges; rich historical roots; and a setting equidistant from the rolling red hills of Georgia and the necklace of coastal islands and marshes to the south have created a city that isn’t an attraction: it’s the real deal.
The Florida Stories walking tour, one of 17 city walks on the free downloadable app, begins at a place many Tallahasseeans consider the new heart of the town: Cascades Park. An amphitheater, walking trails, an interactive play fountain for children, and an enormous, wide-open sky draw people to picnic, attend festivals, and recreate. It’s a marvelous community space.

Just as we do today, the Apalachee and other tribes cherished the area. Listen to these words from writer Julie Hauserman in her essay, “Florida’s Last Waterfall — Cascades Park,” published in Between Two Rivers: Stories from the Red Hills to the Gulf: “Imagine it: a bubbling stream through deep green woods, and then a waterfall, cascading twenty to thirty feet through the wet air into a deep pool, perfect for swimming. It was right downtown. Locals called it the ‘Cascade’ … and it flowed near the hillside where the Capitol is now.”

In 1823, the governor of Florida assigned two men to search for a state capital between Pensacola and St. Augustine, and they chose this very location. But over time, and for reasons unknown, the city built a coal gasification plant atop the beautiful cascades. Tar and toxic byproducts were dumped into the free-running stream, and eventually, it was converted into the town dump.

For many decades, the Cascades languished as an EPA brownfield, fenced from public use. Although the area will never return to its original, native beauty, it has been restored as a beloved commons, and truly, the heart of the city.

Just north of Cascades Park is the white, three-story Bryant Building, the central office of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, where I was employed in the mid-1980s, again as a biologist.

How many times did I enter and leave that huge white building, never knowing that on that very site, a
Above: An easy 25-mile-drive south of Tallahassee, the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge is home to abundant wildlife and geological features, as well as the picturesque St. Marks Lighthouse. Completed in 1842, it is the second-oldest lighthouse in Florida.

Right: Tallahassee's 24-acre downtown Cascades Park proves itself a child magnet with its walk-in fountain with 73 water jets.
vibrant African-American community stood, until its people were forcibly relocated by land developers in the 1960s? Smokey Hollow was its name, and on a bit of the land where 600 residents once lived, a small park commemorates and evokes a sense of what has been lost.

In the 1950s and ’60s, Tallahassee civil rights demonstrations added momentum to the national struggle to end segregation and inequality. I didn’t live here then, but on the walking tour, I was able to imagine McCrory’s dime store at the corner of Pensacola and Monroe streets where courageous young Florida A&M University (FAMU) students and many others staged lunch counter sit-ins and a citywide bus boycott. You can trace their footsteps at Stop 9, the Civil Rights Heritage Walk.

As you wend your way back to Cascades Park, do not fail to take the elevator to the top floor of the new capitol building. From spacious observation decks, you will find your best perspective of Tallahassee’s location in space and time, and you will appreciate that no city can exist without landscape and fresh water to support it.

On a very clear day, you can look south across the Cody Scarp and the verdant Apalachicola National Forest, all the way to St. Marks Lighthouse. To the west, you’ll see the hilltop of Mission San Luis. You’ll have to imagine the magnificent Red Hills to the north, and the western boundary of Tallahassee’s bioregion, the Aucilla River, to the north and west, but it is worth a try.

If you have time on your visit, dig deeper into some of my favorite venues and events. Attend one of the Tallahassee Bach Parley’s periodic concerts at St. John’s Episcopal Church. You couldn’t be more moved by sight and sounds were you in Paris, I promise. For a more down-home, but equally professional musical experience, catch a bit of a nightly performance, a beer, and a bowl of beans and rice at the Blue Tavern. Do you know of another mellow listening room with its own anthem (written and sometimes performed live by the city’s beloved Velma Frye)?

And do not miss Railroad Square, tucked between FAMU and Florida State University, and somehow saved from downtown redevelopment. Walk the loop of this art park, especially on a First Friday, and you’ll have a hard time choosing between the Mickee Faust playhouse, a climbing gym, vintage shops, a coffeehouse in a caboose (one of several great hangouts), the galleries and studios of many artists, and Proof, Tallahassee’s largest brewery.

First Friday at Railroad Square

If you really want to know Tallahassee and its rich ecology, history, and culture, venture out to the following sites not included on the tour. All are wonderful places to enjoy with children.


Mission San Luis. This living history museum is the site of the principal village of the Apalachee; in the late 1600s, it also served as Spain’s westernmost religious and administrative capital.
2100 W. Tennessee St.
Open Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Lake Jackson Mounds State Archaeological State Park Nature trail and ancient Indian mounds. From 1000-1450 AD, this site was a large ceremonial center for Native Americans.
3600 Indian Mounds Road.
Open from 8 a.m. to sundown 365 days a year.

Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park One of the world’s largest and deepest freshwater springs. Nature trails, swimming, boat tours, and historic hotel.
Ten miles south of Tallahassee.
Open from 8 a.m. to sundown, 365 days a year.

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge Seven-mile wildlife drive, extensive walking and biking trails, historic lighthouse on Apalachee Bay.
25 miles south of Tallahassee. Fees vary.
Open year-round, sunrise to sunset.

When you go:

Download the Florida Humanities Council’s free Florida Stories app on your phone from Apple or Google Play. The app is adding more Florida walking tours continuously. FLStories.org

On the three-hour, 2.5-mile Tallahassee walking tour (or at your own pace and schedule), you will be treated to the fascinating history of the city. The app guides you to 11 stops, each enlivened by 4- to 6-minute narratives.
Our Fields

From Florida’s earliest days, sports have boosted our fortunes, bonded our communities, and reflected — and sometimes healed — our divides

By Steven Noll

Life can be hard in the communities surrounding Lake Okeechobee. The towns of Pahokee and Belle Glade, in western Palm Beach County far from the glitz and glamour of Worth Avenue and Mar-a-Lago, are among the poorest places in America. Workers, mostly black and increasingly immigrants, harvest the sugar cane that feeds the American sweet tooth.

But something else rises in these towns in the fertile muck of the Everglades. Pahokee and Belle Glade export more football players per capita than any place in the United States. College and pro football rosters, past and present, are filled with players from these communities, looking for a way out of the poverty that hangs like a pall over both these towns. Among them are Anquan Boldin, Reidel Anthony, Fred Taylor, Santonio Holmes, Louis Oliver, and Johnny Rutledge.

Football, in the words of a 2013 New York Times article, “is salvation itself, a fleeting window of escape from a place where prison or early death are real and likely outcomes.”

Every year for almost 40 years, just before Thanksgiving, the Raiders of Glades Central High School, representing Belle Glade, and the Blue Devils of Pahokee High School play a game as important to those communities as the Super Bowl itself. It even has its own name: the Muck Bowl. This year, Pahokee was victorious, 33-27 in overtime on the Raiders’ home field.

Complete with a glittering trophy for the school and rings for the players, the Muck Bowl is more than just a game; it represents the importance of sports to these two small towns. Former Pahokee head coach Blaze Thompson put the game in perspective in 2014.

“Selfishly, in the back of your mind, you put (beating) Glades Central ahead of a state championship,” Thompson said. “It’s by far the more emotional, pride-filled game. Losing that game is like losing to your brother. You have to deal with it every single day.”

The Muck Bowl is a microcosm of the critical place sports has played throughout Florida history.

Did you know? The first Florida high school football teams were Ocala High School, Summerlin Academy in Bartow, Lakeland High, Hillsborough High in Tampa, and Duval High in Jacksonville. They began playing in 1907.
Of tarpons and tourists: How sport fishing sparked a Florida boom

Florida in the years after the Civil War was a far cry from the bustling state we know today. Poor, rural, and sparsely populated, the state was a region where wealthy Northern entrepreneurs saw an opportunity to make money exploiting Florida’s untapped natural resources. Some developed the turpentine industry, some mined phosphate, and others, such as Henry Flagler and Henry Plant, built railroads to knit the state together and connect it to the rest of the nation.

The key to Florida’s development — then and now — was tourism. Tourism started in Florida with sport fishing, specifically for tarpon, known for their mammoth size — ranging up to 350 pounds and 8 feet long — and fighting spirit.

In 1885, a wealthy New York architect named William Wood and his Florida guide, John Smith, caught a tarpon off the southwest coast of Florida. This was important because, according to University of Florida historian Jack Davis in his book *The Gulf*, “catching one was like going deep-sea fishing without going out to sea.”

This led to Florida’s first tourist boom, one centered on sport fishing for the moneymaker leisure class. By 1900, the Florida Gulf Coast south of the burgeoning port of Tampa was dotted with hotels, all catering to the sporting crowd. At a time when American masculinity was being confronted by the Industrial Age, according to Davis, “tarpon challenged you [and] renewed a faith in your physical self.” The obsession with tarpon and sport fishing made Florida the focus of saltwater sport fishing in America for much of the 20th century, catering to such iconic figures as Theodore Roosevelt, Zane Grey, Ted Williams and “Papa” himself, Ernest Hemingway.

Here’s Hemingway writing to his editor, Maxwell Perkins, in April 1928 from Key West: “Caught the biggest tarpon they’ve had down here so far this season — 63 lbs. The really big ones are just starting to come in.”
History in black and white: Life in on the field reflected society’s struggles

As Floridians moved into the 20th century, the state struggled with modernity as it continued to cling to the separatist traditions of the Jim Crow South. Sports remained an integral part of that world, as a growing number of high schools and colleges used sports to develop a community identity, encourage school spirit, inspire patriotism, and reinforce racial and gender norms.

The contrasting stories of Polk County natives James Van Fleet and Ken Riley, both athletic standouts, personified those ideas that still held throughout much of the 20th century. As a student at the all-white Summerville Institute in Bartow, Van Fleet was captain of the 1910 football team. He went on to the United States Military Academy, where he played fullback for three years, including in the iconic 1912 loss to Carlisle Indian School (led by Jim Thorpe) and as a member of the undefeated 1914 team. After serving in the Army during World War I, Van Fleet returned to Florida in 1921 to become head of the University of Florida’s ROTC department. While at UF, he served two years as head football coach of the Fighting Gators, in which he had a winning percentage of .737.

During his years growing up in Bartow and playing football for Summerville Institute, Van Fleet would never play with or against African-American players.

The black football tradition in Bartow only began in the 1920s, when the Union Academy, the only black school in Polk County, opened a high school division. Its most famous football graduate was Ken Riley, named to the Florida High

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

Did you know? Holly Neher is the first known female to start at quarterback in Florida high school history. In 2017, the 5-foot-2 Neher made her starting debut for Hollywood Hills by throwing touchdown passes of 85 and 67 yards.

Ken Riley practicing with his team at Florida A&M University in 1986, the year he became head coach.
Hometown Teams:
Smithsonian’s Museum on Main Street exhibit, now in Florida, celebrates and explores our love of the game

By Jacki Levine

There’s nothing more typically American than our love of sports. Everywhere you travel in this state and country, its importance is clearly interwoven into the fabric of our daily lives, from playgrounds to mammoth arenas, from gatherings around big screen televisions, to cheering in high school bleachers.

Its influence extends far beyond the games themselves: It is reflected in our zest for life; in how our communities come together; the way we learn to play by the rules and to consider the good of the team before ourselves.

In celebration of the impact of sports in the U.S., the Smithsonian Institution created “Hometown Teams: How Sports Shape America,” traveling to 180 small towns in 30 states — including six sites in Florida — as part of a six-year-long touring exhibition. It is part of its Museum on Main Street program (MoMS), which brings museum-quality exhibits to rural areas throughout the country. The exhibit will be in the state until the end of 2018, sponsored in part by the Florida Humanities Council.

Not only does the exhibit, which began touring in 2014, feature sports-related objects, images, videos and personal stories from the Smithsonian’s vast collection, it highlights memorabilia and stories collected from the communities themselves.

Dunedin History Museum, one of the six Florida sites chosen, is ready to welcome the exhibit with an impressive collection of artifacts of its own.

“Dunedin has a great tradition of baseball history that goes back to the 1880s,” says Vinnie Luisi, the museum’s executive director and a commissioner on Tampa Bay’s Vintage Baseball League. The city has been the spring training home of the Toronto Blue Jays since 1977 and hosts the Florida State League Advanced Class-A affiliate Dunedin Blue Jays.

“We have a rich history, including women’s teams, Little League and even military baseball, during the 1940s, when the Marines were here practicing in their amphibian tanks and would play ball for R and R,” Luisi says.

Dunedin’s “Peggy’s Girls” women’s softball team of the late 1930s and ‘40s was the town’s pride, coming in third in the 1939 World Series of Softball in Chicago.

The team was named after the co-owner of the Clearwater newsstand that sponsored it. “Her husband said ‘pick a name’ and that’s what she chose,” Luisi says.

Among the team standouts, Myra and Mary Crisman, Dunedin twins who were also part-time models. “They were excellent ball players,” says Luisi, “and were part of the team that went to Chicago.”

A military baseball team during the 1940s, when the United States Marines were stationed in Dunedin training in amphibious tanks.

The team continued for several years, but disbanded with the start of World War II, Luisi says, “because the girls had to go to work.”

The sisters later married and moved away, but visited Dunedin every couple of years until their deaths several years ago, gifting the Dunedin History Museum with photos from the team’s heydey.

Reproductions of the Peggy’s Girls team uniforms will also be on display in Dunedin.

In the living history realm, the museum will host exhibition games of the Vintage Baseball League, demonstrating how the game was played in 1860 and 1880.

The other five Florida sites include Amelia Island, Chipley, Dade City, Fernandina Beach, and Fort Myers.

Hometown Teams:
How Sports Shape America

March 17–April 28
Pioneer Florida Settlement & Museum
15602 Pioneer Museum Road
Dade City

May 5–June 16
Dunedin Historical Museum
349 Main St.
Dunedin

June 23–Aug. 4
Southwest Florida Historical Society
Exhibit venue: Alliance for the Arts building
10091 McGregor Blvd.
Fort Myers

Aug. 11–Sept. 22
Amelia Island Museum of History
233 South 3rd St.
Fernandina Beach

Sept. 29–Nov. 10
Washington County Public Library
1444 Jackson Ave.
Chipley

Nov. 17–Dec. 29
Northwest Regional Library
110 Library Drive
Port St. Joe
School Athletic Association (FHSAA) All-Century football team, who gained fame as a quarterback at Florida A&M and as a cornerback with the Cincinnati Bengals in the 1970s and ’80s. Because of Florida’s rigid segregation laws, Riley, one of nine Union Academy players to play in the NFL, never competed in organized football against white players until he became a professional. Van Fleet and Riley represent both Florida’s vibrant sports heritage and its past reality of racial segregation.

Jackie Robinson’s gift: What happened here changed America

If Florida tourism started with tarpon fishing, it truly flourished with baseball. As early as the late 1880s, major league baseball teams came to Florida for spring training in what came to be known as the Grapefruit League. But it was not until the 1910s that Florida cities actively pushed for teams to spend six weeks in February and March getting ready for the upcoming baseball season.

Led by such community boosters as Tampa mayor D.B. McKay and St. Petersburg businessman Al Lang, Floridians extolled the virtues of sunshine, warm weather and inexpensive lodging to entice teams to train in the Sunshine State. By 1929, 10 of the 16 major league teams called Florida home for spring training.

That tradition continues. Many Florida towns and cities are associated with major league baseball as the hometown of the team itself. Dunedin becomes a southern outpost of Canada each spring as the Toronto Blue Jays (and fans) take over the town. This spring, Lakeland hosted the Detroit Tigers for the 82nd year, the longest continuous relationship between a team and a Florida locale.

When the Dodgers left their Dodgertown training facility in Vero Beach in 2009 for Arizona, it sent economic and social shock waves through the small coastal community.

“J%e Dodgers left more than just a simple complex behind in Vero Beach,” said author Noah Frank in a March 2017 article. “Dodgertown’s history runs deeper than any other such site, its traditions evoking laughter and introspection from those who lived them.”

Part of Dodgertown’s legacy in Florida is its place in America’s civil rights history. When Jackie Robinson broke baseball’s color barrier as a member of the Dodgers in 1947, it was not in Brooklyn, then home of the Dodgers, but in Daytona Beach, where the Dodgers were training. On March 17, 1946, Robinson took the field at Daytona’s City Island Park (renamed after Robinson in 1989) as a member of the Montreal Royals, the Dodgers farm team, in a game against the Dodgers. It was a game that changed both the sport and the nation.

Robinson’s Florida legacy inspired a young Ed Charles, “the Glider,” who played third base for the champion “Miracle Mets” in the 1969 World Series. As a youngster growing up in segregated Daytona Beach, Charles found purpose in Robinson’s breaking of the color barrier. In the words of author Ed Hoyt, seeing Robinson play as a teenager “he knew what the moment meant — that to have aspirations, to succeed, to prosper, to merely be accepted as a human being, was suddenly a rational notion, because fulfillment of those aspirations had moved into the realm of the possible.”

Did you know? Many of Florida’s largest cities played in the Florida International baseball league from the late 1940s to the mid ’50s. Miami, Miami Beach, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, Key West, St. Petersburg, Tampa, Lakeland, and Tallahassee played in the Class C, later Class B minor league — along with the Havana Cubans.
As Charles recalled years later: “I was just a kid, and I was awed by it all, and I prayed for him. I would say, ‘Please, God, let him show the whites what we can do so that we can excel like they can.’”

Spring training still thrives in Florida, despite the competition from Arizona’s “Cactus League.” 2018 saw 15 teams play their spring games in the Sunshine State, with an anticipated state economic impact of almost $1 billion.

In the swing of things: Golf and tennis meccas sprout in the sunshine

While Florida encouraged Northern tourists to follow their home baseball teams to spring training, it also marketed its climate and beaches to participants in individual sports.

Today, Florida has more than 1,200 golf courses, the most of any state. Sarasota can lay claim to the title of “Cradle of Golf” with the development of Scottish immigrant John Gillespie’s 4-hole golf course in 1886. Through the Golden Age of American golf in the 1920s and ’30s, famous Americans, among them Warren Harding, Al Smith, Babe Ruth, and Babe Zaharias, played on Florida’s courses, encouraged by such marketing ploys as famed Miami developer Carl Fisher’s use of Rosie the Elephant as a caddy for his course in Miami Beach.

Florida’s climate makes the state a mecca for tennis enthusiasts. Tennis academies, from IMG Academy in Bradenton to ProWorld Tennis Academy in Delray Beach, cater to some of the world’s best junior players.

The Sunshine State is also associated with three of the most important female tennis players of all time: Shirley Fry, Althea Gibson, and Chris Evert. Gibson, born in South Carolina in 1927, came to Florida A&M University in 1949 on an athletic scholarship. There she became the first black player to participate in the U.S. National Championships (now the U.S. Open).

“No Negro player, man or woman, has ever set foot on one of these courts,” wrote journalist Lester Rodney in 1950. “In many ways, it is even a tougher personal Jim Crow-busting assignment than was Jackie Robinson’s when he first stepped out of the Brooklyn Dodgers dugout.” Gibson, honored with an endowed scholarship and a historic marker at FAMU, later went on to break color barriers on the LPGA golf tour.

Did you know? The Jacksonville Ribault High School girls basketball team has won 12 state championships and a national title since 1988.

On July 6, 1957, Althea Gibson won the women’s singles tennis title at Wimbledon and became the first African American to win a championship at London’s All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club.

Early Miami real estate developer Carl Fisher pulled out all the stops marketing his Miami Beach golf course, even boasting an elephant as a caddy. Today, such use of an elephant would raise strong concerns over its welfare.
A generation after Gibson blazed the trail, Fort Lauderdale’s Chris Evert (the daughter of a tennis pro who came to Florida after World War II), popularized the game of women’s tennis in the ’70s and ’80s and was ranked No. 1 in the world seven times.

The backyard pool is almost as important to a Florida home as air conditioning. In the 1920s, swimmers competed for the national championships in the indoor pool of the Alcazar Hotel in St. Augustine. Since 1965, Fort Lauderdale has been home to the International Swimming Hall of Fame, developed by Buck Dawson, who transformed his adopted hometown into a world destination for swimmers and swim teams. Today, you cannot imagine Florida without a pool, a tennis court, or a golf course. They are as much a part of the state as orange groves and Disney World.

The most important man in Florida football:
Jake Gaither’s transformational triumph

Florida boasts many successful college and professional football coaches. Bobby Bowden, Howard Schnellenberger, Don Shula, Jon Gruden, and Steve Spurrier are examples of coaches who have won national championships or the Super Bowl. Yet, arguably, none of them are as important to the sports world or Florida itself as Alonzo “Jake” Gaither. Gaither coached football at FAMU from 1945 to 1969, amassing a record of 204-36-4, winning six black college national championships in the process.

In 1969, his Rattlers defeated the University of Tampa 34-28 in the first game in the South between a black college and a white one.

It was a transformational moment for Florida sports, one that set the stage for the powerhouse teams at UF, FSU, and Miami (all of whom had only begun to integrate their football teams at the time of the game). With this game, Gaither remembered, he set out “to prove to myself that it could be done in Florida — the deepest state in the Deep South. And we did it.”

To his players, Gaither was, in the words of author Samuel Freedman in his book Breaking the Line, “coach, teacher, preacher, father. He bought them shoes when they had none, paid for the dentist when they couldn’t afford it….”

And 42 of his players went on to the NFL, among them “Bullet” Bob Hayes, the only person ever to win an Olympic gold medal, a Super Bowl ring, and be inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Gaither recruited Hayes from the segregated Gilbert High School in Jacksonville. At the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, Hayes won the 100-meter dash and anchored the gold-medal winning U.S. 4x100 relay in a performance hailed by many as the greatest race of all time.

Gaither became the face of FAMU. For him, winning a football game was about “proving black equality, black capacity, black excellence.” Gaither retired after that 1969 season, just as the major schools in the state began to integrate their teams.

In 1984, he was named a “Great Floridian” by the Florida Department of State, in recognition of his importance to both Florida sports and Florida history.

Did you know? James Weldon Johnson, a poet who wrote the Negro national anthem, Lift Every Voice and Sing, also was an excellent baseball pitcher who in 1886 played for the Jacksonville Roman Cities in the Southern League of Colored Base Ballists.
Flipper and the rise of pro sports: (With special thanks to Broadway Joe)

Florida was late to catch on to the pro sports game. The AFL Miami Dolphins were Florida’s first pro team, playing their inaugural season in 1966. The Dolphins put Florida pro sports on the map, going to three Super Bowls in the early 1970s, winning two of them, and capping the 1972 season with a perfect record. The Dolphins let everyone in America know they were a Florida team by having Flipper the dolphin in a tank behind the end zone when they played in the old Orange Bowl.

Today, the state has three professional football teams, two baseball teams, a basketball team, two pro soccer teams (one men’s and one women’s), and two pro hockey teams. Floridians often tie their identity to these franchises, although snowbirds and recent migrants often insist on loyalty to teams in their former locations — just go to The Villages adult community and look at all the accessories on all the golf carts.

Florida has also hosted America’s most important civic holiday — the Super Bowl — more times than any other state. In the most important one of all, Super Bowl III, held on January 12, 1969, Joe Namath of the New York Jets boldly guaranteed a victory over the Baltimore Colts and then backed it up in a 16–7 win. For Florida, however, it was where Namath made that boast that was so valuable: In the middle of winter, newspapers across the nation showed images of “Broadway Joe” lounging poolside in a bathing suit in Miami.

But Florida’s Super Bowls could also be problematic. In 1989, on the eve of Super Bowl XXIII, Miami boiled over in racial tension after the shooting of a black motorcyclist by a Miami policeman. The rioting clouded Miami’s image for years. Sports, even pro sports, were not just a distraction from society, but a reflection of it.

Did you know? The most popular high school sports nicknames in Florida are Eagles (62), Panthers (35), Bulldogs and Lions (27 each). Want something with a bit more panache? Try these: Lakeland Dreadnaughts. Apopka Blue Darters. Daytona Beach Sea Breeze Sand Crabs. Tarpon Springs Spongers. Fort Lauderdale Flying L’s. Poplar Springs Atomics. Key West Conchs. Miami Stingarees. Laurel Hill Hobos.
How home teams bring the community together

Attendance at sporting events, whether small-town Friday night football games, Saturday afternoon university extravaganzas, or frenzied Lightning hockey match-ups in Tampa, offer a sense of shared identity and common purpose.

Florida sports are also exemplified by those local contests in which communities turn out to cheer for teams like Brandon High School’s wrestling squad, which won 27 state championships and an incredible 459 straight dual meets. Or by the Cedar Key girls and boys basketball teams, representing a community with the smallest enrollment of any public high school in Florida, who consistently have the support of the entire town.

“Sports brings the community together and gives folks a chance to cheer for their kids and neighbors,” says Lenny Cimador, retired after a career as varsity baseball coach at Pasco High School.

Former University of Florida Gators football player Cornelius Ingram knows this well. He’s now the varsity football coach at his alma mater, Hawthorne High School.

“The Hornets are the center of this community,” Ingram says. “We are a small town and high school sports...help us see the importance of working together for the benefit of everyone.”

The passage of Title IX legislation in 1972, which prohibits the discrimination on the basis of gender by any institution benefiting from federal financial assistance, opened the doors for female participation in high school and college athletics, and generations of young women are taking that opportunity.

If sports are about competition, they are also about fitness. With a growing number of Floridians of retirement age, sports and fitness are key elements in an active lifestyle.

People with disabilities are also participating, as Special Olympics reaches out to provide opportunities to athletes who otherwise would not be able to compete. A flag football game between unified teams from UF and FSU (including athletes with developmental disabilities from both communities) has been a part of the UF-FSU football weekend since 2015.

Floridians take justifiable pride in their long and storied sports history. The state has produced eight Heisman Trophy winners, dozens of Olympic medalists, Super Bowl, World Series, Stanley Cup, and NBA championship winners, and NCAA championships in football, baseball, basketball, men’s and women’s track and field, tennis, golf, and women’s softball. Innumerable athletes, both men and women, have competed on the national and international scene.

Parallel lives: The story of two All-Americans

The story of Florida sports, in all its positive and negative aspects, can best be told by the account of two iconic football players who played football in Florida in the 1950s: Willie Galimore from St. Augustine and Rick Casares from Tampa.

Both players made the FHSAA All-Century football team as running backs and then attended Florida colleges. Casares went to UF and Galimore to FAMU. But because of Florida’s racial policies at the time, they never got to play against each other, either in high school, from which Casares graduated in 1950 and Galimore in 1952, or college.

But finally, they did: Both played pro football for the Chicago Bears and were members of Chicago’s 1963 championship team. Galimore is still the all-time leading rusher in FAMU history; Casares’ rushing record for the Bears was finally broken by the legendary Walter Payton.

A faded 1958 photograph shows them in the prime of their lives, two Florida superstars who lived parallel lives in the Sunshine State, working out together for an important Bears’ game against the then-Baltimore Colts. This picture illustrates how sports can both reflect the existing social order and work as a catalyst of change to improve it.
Strike up the band

Almost 100 years after Browné Greaton Cole became the ‘Mother of School Bands,’ the tradition she began is alive and growing

By Jon Wilson

Florida’s first high school band thrilled Ocala in 1922. That early 15-member combo, heavy on the brass, evolved into a pioneer marching band — and a female bandmaster called the cadence.

When Browné Greaton Cole, known as the “Mother of School Bands,” convinced school administrators almost 100 years ago to let her start a boys band, she began a movement that has spread throughout Florida.

Nowadays, marching bands are as much a part of hometown sports as the teams. More than 300 Florida high school bands step out in parades, competitions, and at sports events, says Cathy Kersten, who directs the annual Florida Marching Band Tournament. She estimates at least 15,000 youngsters participate.

Bartram Trail High School in St. Johns County boasts one of the state’s largest bands, with 220 members, a number that may reach 260 next year, says Jason Duckett, Bartram’s bandmaster. The community involvement goes far beyond that of the musicians. His band members’ commitment is about four hours a week. “I’m pretty respectful of their time,” he says of his musicians. “It’s one reason my band is as large as it is.”

But, as is typical, the parents pitch in, too. Band boosters contribute money, cook food, move equipment, chaperone for road trips, and do such mundane chores as attaching plumes to hats. Bartram Trail’s band parents have even put on a fundraising 5K race. A bandmaster for 27 years, Duckett attended Ocala Forest High School, where Browné Greaton Cole began a revered tradition.

A virtuoso cornet artist, Cole started her teaching career at age 47 after she and her husband retired to Florida from Illinois. She gave music lessons to youngsters and organized a school orchestra, a glee club, a male quartet, and a minstrel show — all in her first year in Ocala. Then she cajoled the Marion County School Board into approving a boys’ band for Ocala High School (later renamed Ocala Forest).

With that, Cole became not only the first female band director in the state, but the first band director, period. Cole’s given name at birth was Brownie, a handle she thought lacked dignity. So she dressed it up by dropping the “i” and adding an accent mark to the “e”. Her bands showed equal imagination and flair.

As more schools developed bands, Ocala’s consistently earned first prizes and individual medals in statewide competition. Girls soon joined. In 1933, Ocala became the first high school band to participate in Tampa’s Gasparilla Parade. It also became a feature at football games, pleasing fans and perhaps more importantly, school authorities. Other high schools were quick to join the fun, fielding bands, showcasing them at games, and entering them in competition.

Beloved college bands have followers as devoted as their teams’ enthusiasts. The dashing performances of Florida A&M University’s “Marching 100” has won the school a national reputation. FAMU’s band began in 1946 with 16 members and director William P. Foster, credited with re-creating the worldwide image of college marching bands. Foster also wrote Band Pageantry, considered the standard textbook about crowd-pleasing pomp and splendor.

For young musicians, marching bands provide an entertaining, high-profile activity, as well as a chance to expand their musical skills. And, of course, there is the social aspect.

“The most important part of marching band for me is the people I get to meet,” says Lorenzo S. Phrasavath, who played French horn in the St. Petersburg High School band and is now with the University of Florida’s “Pride of the Sunshine.”

“Throughout high school and now into college, the vast majority of my close friends are from marching band. It’s really cliché ... but marching band really is like a family,” Phrasavath says.

It’s also a path to self-development.

“Marching band is a big time commitment, and it really teaches you hard work and discipline, especially when you get to college and are juggling a million other things. Overall, I think being in marching band has helped me become a really well-rounded person,” Phrasavath says.

For Lorenzo S. Phrasavath, mellophone player with the University of Florida’s “Pride of the Sunshine,” participating in marching band teaches discipline and fosters close friendships.

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Florida seniors are not just watching sports, they’re playing in ever-greater numbers

By Jon Wilson

THE VILLAGES — Pickleball. Come on, is that a serious sport? In a word: Very.
 But what a name. More on that in a minute.
 First, consider the racket game’s prodigious popularity.
 The Sports and Fitness Industry Association estimates up to 2.8 million people play nationwide. In The Villages, a central Florida retirement community, thousands play. Pickleball is a genuine hometown sport there.

The game’s governing body, the USA Pickleball Association (USAPA), conducted its annual national championships in November 2017. Nearly 1,400 players from 42 states competed.

“We’re seeing the transition of a game to a sport,” says Justin Maloof, USAPA’s executive director.

The number of participants nationally has leaped 425 percent during the past five years, Maloof says, and the number of locations where pickleball is played grows at a rate of 92 per month.

“Until you start playing it, you don’t appreciate how addictive it can be,” says Drew Wathey, USAPA’s director of recreational programs.

Pickleball has flourished in Florida. USAPA lists more than 30 major centers scattered from the Panhandle to Key West.

The Villages is a stronghold, which is no surprise. The community, with an estimated population of 115,000, is renowned for its athletes and the variety of sports they play. Think softball, golf, swimming, track and field, archery, and tennis, for starters. There are many more .

“We even have cheerleaders,” says Glenn Kaye, a resident recently inducted into the Broward County Sports Hall of Fame, honoring his 50 years as a swim coach. For two of those years, he coached The Villages Aquatic Swim Team.

Steve Richter teaches pickleball there. “Villagers pride themselves on being and staying in shape, and sports play a major role in allowing and promoting them to do so,” he says.

John Rohan, The Villages recreation director, agrees. “With our ... weather, residents get to play their favorite sport all year long.”

Softball, for example: More than 200 teams play on 10 fields scattered around the community. Traveling teams find competition nationwide.
The Florida Senior Games is geared toward athletes who are at least 50 years old. In the statewide competition held late last year, The Villages contingent snagged 418 individual medals, including 168 in swimming and 59 in track and field. Some athletes were in their 80s and 90s.

At The Villages, you can watch polo or learn to play the equine sport through lessons.

And there's pickleball.

Thousands of the community's residents play it, Rohan says. “We have over 180 courts and growing.”

Resident Dennis Sarlo has been playing about 10 years, which coincides with the length of his residency in The Villages.

“I never heard of the game until I came down here. I just started like anyone else, more curious than anything else,” says Sarlo, 70. Now he plays every day.

“It just became so exciting, it's just a fantastic sport,” he said.

Pickleball originated a half-century ago on Bainbridge Island, Washington. Three men, including former U.S. congressman Joel Pritchard, devised the game. The trio wanted to play badminton, but couldn't find the equipment. So they improvised with ping-pong paddles and a perforated plastic sphere known to generations of Americans as the Wiffle Ball. And whack! The game was afoot.

It caught on fast.

Friends and neighbors of the original three started making their own paddles, using jigsaws and plywood. They set up courts in their driveways and backyards.

Anybody could play. Grandmas took on their 9-year-old grandsons. Middle-aged cousins four times removed got reacquainted on the courts.

The courts, by the way, are about half the size of a tennis playing area.

Word spread. USAPA organized in 1984 to advance the game nationally. By 1990, it was being played in all 50 states. Curious aerobics devotees and hardcore badminton players saw this upstart sport in community centers, the local YMCAs, and even in phys ed classes.

They watched the bright yellow orb, three inches in diameter, an ounce in weight, and still looking like the old-school Wiffle Ball. It wasn't long before they wanted to smack it.

“The play is pretty mesmerizing at times,” Wathey says.

According to the USAPA website, the sport is exploding worldwide. International clubs are sprouting, and national governing bodies have been established in Canada and India. There is a movement to introduce to youngsters what has been viewed as a retiree's pastime. The game is regarded as not as fast or strenuous as tennis, but quick enough to keep you moving and requiring laser-like focus. You don't have to be a great athlete to play. Good hand-eye coordination and decent footwork are helpful. And it doesn't take long before a newcomer can play comfortably.

“I can take a raw beginner and in 30 minutes they are successfully hitting the ball back and forth, sustaining a rally,” said Richter, the instructor.

It's also relatively inexpensive to get started. You can get a serviceable, new paddle for $30 or less (although the best models can cost $100 or more). A three-ball pack might run you 10 bucks.

As for the origins of the name? Two narratives compete. The most widespread (and popular) says the game was named for Pickles, a cocker spaniel belonging to the Pritchard family.

But family members have said Pickles did not arrive until two years after Joel Pritchard and friends started the game. Joel's wife, Joan, wrote a newspaper story some years ago in which she said the name actually came from a maritime term: the pickle boat.

In the sport of rowing and in a herring fishing fleet, the pickle boat is usually the slowest. In humorous fashion, Joan Pritchard seemed to suggest the early players were reminiscent of those aboard such craft.

Whatever the truth, pickleball is a great name — and those who play today love their great game.
St. Petersburg greeted hometown hero Shirley Fry with a ticker-tape parade after her singles-championship win at Wimbledon.
St. Petersburg rejoiced when Shirley Fry, its hometown hero, won the tennis singles championship at Wimbledon in 1956. So proud was the city that officials threw Fry a ticker-tape parade down Central Avenue, the only such celebration in St. Petersburg’s history. The city also gave her a 1956 Chevrolet, held a banquet, and presented her with the title to the municipal pier, the latter perhaps only partly in jest.

The Coast Guard station in town wanted to name one of its helicopters “Whirley Shirley” as a nod to the champ, who was surprised by all the attention.

“Shirley was always a minimizer of her talents and accomplishments and always remembered St. Pete’s reaction to her win as something she was maybe not worthy of,” says daughter Karen Mahoney.

Fry, now 90, lives quietly in a Naples retirement center, where she moved a year ago to be closer to her children.

Her competitive fire has continued to burn. At her previous senior community, Village on the Green near Orlando, she won 13 championships in such sports as pool, bocce, and horseshoes. Her last was a pool championship at age 89.

Fry wasn’t purely St. Petersburg. The Akron, Ohio, native originally had come to Florida to attend Rollins College. In 1954, she landed in St. Pete, intending to retire from professional tennis at age 28. An aching elbow seemed to have derailed her career.

Her memory is fading about events more than 60 years ago, but Mahoney helped open a chapter of her mother’s life.

“She thought it was time to retire, especially since her doubles partner, Doris Hart, had retired,” Mahoney says.

Dan Sullivan, a veteran St. Pete coach, thought otherwise. He began mentoring Fry and he helped her get a job as a copy clerk at the St. Petersburg Times.

“After some time at the newspaper, her elbow felt better and she really missed tennis,” Mahoney says. “She began to play local Florida events, and realized she was still good enough to make a run at Wimbledon.”

Fry’s subsequent comeback took her to Wimbledon’s famed Centre Court in England, where she swamped England’s Angela Buxton in two consecutive sets taking just 50 minutes.

After winning tournaments in Dusseldorf, Germany, and River Forest, Illinois, Fry returned to Florida.

An Eastern Airlines Constellation landed her at Tampa International Airport at 1:27 p.m. on a Friday. A crowd and a tumultuous “welcome home” awaited her. When Fry stepped off the plane, her mouth dropped open in an astonished “Oh!” according to newspaper accounts.

“Shirley Conquers the City in Love Sets,” said the Times headline, which also referred to the day of the week as “Fryday.”

The parade left Central Avenue awash in ankle-deep ticker tape, the newspaper said.

Two months later, Fry won the United States singles title over Althea Gibson in Forest Hills, New York. In 1957, she won the Australian Championships title by beating Gibson again. She also became engaged to tennis official Karl Irvin, marrying him in Sydney.

She never played in another major tournament. The International Tennis Hall of Fame inducted her in 1970.

But Fry never forgot St. Petersburg.

“It was so hard to beat an English girl in the finals of Wimbledon, and she was so thankful that St. Pete stepped up and supported her as its adopted daughter,” Mahoney says.
Meccas of memorabilia draw the devoted

Florida sports museums cater to fans for whom no detail is too small

By Jon Wilson

For many ardent sports fans, dedication to their favored pastime runs deeper than simply engaging in or watching it. No, these devotees want to be immersed in the details, the memorabilia, and the trivia of their beloved sport. For these zealous souls, Florida is a sports mecca, replete with museums that cater to their every interest, from drag racing to polo playing, golfing to water skiing. And did we mention synchronized swimming? Here are 10 of the many around the state.

Florida Sports Hall of Fame. Founded in 1961 to honor Florida’s greatest sports figures, the 2017 inductees include former Florida State and NFL star Warrick Dunn; retired PGA commissioner Tim Finchem; Atlanta Braves great Chipper Jones; Florida Gators quarterback and Heisman Trophy winner Tim Tebow; and the late Colleen Walker, LPGA standout. Memorabilia is at Central Florida’s Visitor Information Center at 101 Adventure Court in Davenport, which is in the Lakeland-Winter Haven area of Polk County. flasportshof.org

Ted Williams Museum and Hitters Hall of Fame. Named for the Boston Red Sox star, the museum contains pictures and artifacts of baseball’s greatest hitters, including such superb swatters as Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle, Willie Mays, Babe Ruth, and Ty Cobb. The museum is at Tropicana Field. 1 Tropicana Drive in St. Petersburg. tedwilliamsmuseum.com

World Golf Hall of Fame. It’s more than a tribute to the game and its greatest stars. Visitors compete to win prizes and try some of the world’s great courses — think St. Andrew’s and the Firestone Country Club — on a golf course simulator. There is also an 18-hole putting green, a 299-seat IMAX Theater, and a special space to watch any of the more than 50 episodes of Shell’s Wonderful World of Golf television show. 1 World Golf Place in St. Augustine. worldgolfhalloffame.org

Don Garlits Museum of Drag Racing. It opened in 1976 and features nearly 300 cars, both modern and classic. It also includes the International Drag Racing Hall of Fame. Known as “Big Daddy,” the Tampa-born Garlits is considered the father of drag racing. 13700 SW 16th Ave. in Ocala. garlits.com

International Swimming Hall of Fame. The museum, library, and archive contain the world’s largest collection of aquatic memorabilia and the single largest source of aquatic books, manuscripts, and literature. More than 40 exhibits and...
displays illustrate the history of swimming, diving, water polo and synchronized swimming.

_1 Hall of Fame Drive in Fort Lauderdale. ishof.org_

**Motorsports Hall of Fame of America.** Recently relocated from Michigan, the new headquarters is at Daytona International Speedway. The museum covers the entire motorsports world, offering exhibits relating to aviation, drag racing, motorcycles, open-wheel cars, sports cars, power boats, and stock cars.

_mshf.com_

**Polo Museum and Hall of Fame.** The world’s only museum dedicated to this equestrian sport honors legendary players and ponies. It offers an archive featuring documents, works of art, historic trophies, artifacts, books, statistics, periodicals, films, videos, recordings, and other memorabilia.

_9011 Lake Worth Road in Lake Worth. polomuseum.com._

**Water Ski Hall of Fame.** Heading the list of more than 75 honorees is Richard Pope Sr., who, in 1950 sponsored the first water-skiing world championships held in the United States. His own skiing career dates to the 1920s. He earned the nickname “Swami of the Swamp” for establishing Cypress Gardens, a major tourist attraction, on the edge of a bog near Winter Haven. The museum is currently closed pending completion of a new building, expected to be ready by spring 2019 in Auburndale.

_usa-wwf.org_

**Elliott Museum.** This eclectic museum covers baseball, regional history, and Florida maritime history, to name a few of its attractions. It also offers classes, field trips, a summer art camp — and quite a bit more. It is named after prolific inventor Sterling Elliott, who came up with a knot-tying machine, the pneumatic tire, and 123 other instruments, tools, and appliances that received patents.

_825 NE Ocean Blvd. in Stuart. elliottmuseum.org_

**Man in the Sea Museum.** Just to get your feet wet: You can climb through a submarine, examine old and new diving helmets, learn about an experimental underwater habitat, and see armor-like diving suits, one of them dating to 1837. There is much more; the entire place is dedicated to underwater activities.

_17314 Panama City Beach Parkway in Panama City Beach. maninthesea.org_
A testament to one Florida city’s impact on America’s favorite pastime is expected to open soon.

Tampa Baseball Museum, the newest among Florida’s array of sports halls, will celebrate the long and loving relationship between baseball and the Cigar City, which has sent more than 80 of its sons to Major League Baseball teams. Three are in baseball’s Hall of Fame: Al López, Tony La Russa, and Wade Boggs.

“It’s a little bit of a surprise that Tampa became a baseball town, not a soccer town,” said Chantal Hevia, president and CEO of the Ybor City Museum Society, pointing out that many early immigrants came from Spain, Italy, and eastern Europe, where soccer is king.

But baseball became Tampa’s hometown game thanks in large part to a Cuban connection and the gentlemanly Al López, whose stellar career in the sport spanned five decades. (See related story)

So it’s fitting that the museum is housed in López’s childhood home, a classic 1905 bungalow that was moved away from an interstate highway project to the heart of Ybor City, Tampa’s historic ethnic enclave. The house, now at 203 N 19th St., underwent $350,000 worth of rehabilitation. Fire and termites had taken a toll.

The museum is still in development with fundraising continuing for educational exhibits.

More than 1,500 artifacts — balls, bats, gloves, and jerseys, for example — wait in storage to fill the museum’s 1,200 square feet. A “discovery trail” through the museum tells Tampa’s baseball story, starting with organized teams from cigar factories and social clubs and continuing through minor league clubs like the Tampa Smokers, and on through high school and college teams — and of course the Tampa Bay Rays.

There’s even a home plate from the Little League World Series won in 1977 by the team representing West Tampa.

West Tampa neighborhoods gave La Russa his start in baseball. He began at age “6 or 7,” he said, moving up in youth leagues before playing for perennial powerhouses Jefferson High School and American Legion Post 248.

Tampa “has a rich baseball history going way back to Al López and it remains as strong as ever,” said LaRussa, a law school graduate who as a Major League manager led his teams to 12 division titles, 6 pennants, and 3 World Series championships.
Alfonso Ramón López became the first Tampa native to reach the Major League and the first to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. Seventh among nine children of Spanish parents who migrated to Tampa via Cuba, López was among many Hispanic players who shaped the city’s baseball heritage, and indeed, the state’s.

Most of the Hispanic players who pass through Florida as minor leaguers or through spring training come from the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Cuba, or Puerto Rico. They often are crowd-pleasing athletes, whether major or minor leaguers, and naturally are a big draw for Hispanic fans. There has been some heightened interest because of efforts to improve relations with Cuba.

“The real passion for baseball came to town with the Cubans,” says Chantal Hevia, director of the Tampa Baseball Museum, set to open this summer in López’s family home. Known as “El Señor” as a nod to his gentlemanly demeanor, López was known to lead his players with patient instruction rather than cursing at or berating them.

He began his baseball career in 1924 with the minor league Tampa Smokers. He was a catcher, perhaps the toughest job on the team. When he played Major League ball, he set a durability record at the position, playing 1,918 games, and was twice named to all-star teams. His Major League career included stints with the Brooklyn Robins (later called the Brooklyn Dodgers), the Boston Bees, the Pittsburgh Pirates, and the Cleveland Indians.

During his managerial career, he led the Indians to an American League pennant in 1954 and the Chicago White Sox to one in 1959.

López died in 2005 at age 97. His legacy includes a baseball stadium named Al López Field and a public park, named for him, that also includes his statue. The park and the field are both near Raymond James Stadium in Tampa.

By Jon Wilson
It’s one of the state’s oldest stories, steeped in history and heritage: how a group of 1,000 indentured servants from the island of Minorca, off the coast of Spain, was brought to northeast Florida in 1768 by Scottish speculator Andrew Turnbull, who named the colony he founded there New Smyrna after the Greek birthplace of his wife. The group toiled in unspeakably harsh conditions. Their task was cultivating indigo, highly prized at the time, but survival became their biggest challenge, as disease and malnutrition proved fierce enemies, and their employer failed to deliver on the rights they had been promised. Only 300 survived and, less than a decade after having arrived, they fled on foot to British-controlled St. Augustine, where they were granted parcels of land to resettle. Through it all, remarkably, the Minorcans clung to their identity, their ways and especially their food, a delicious blend of Mediterranean tradition and technique with New World ingredients and adaptations.

Frank Usina knows both the story and the flavors well. One of about 20,000 living descendants of the original Minorcans in the area, his family has been cooking in

The Usinas gather at Aunt Kate’s restaurant. The family has been cooking on this land since 1900, when ancestor Catherine Usina prepared a bowl of oysters for legendary Florida railroad man Henry Flagler. From left, Betty and Frank Usina, grandson Jake Usina, nephew Robert Usina, seated, son Ken Usina, and grandson Tyler Usina.

A taste of history

250 years after the first Minorcans arrived on Florida’s shores, we look at the vibrant food and traditions they’ve kept alive — and meet a family still doing so today.

By Betty Cortina-Weiss
Photos by Michael LeGrand Photography

Heritage Kitchen looks at Florida’s culinary traditions shared through generations of families.

Catherine “Aunt Kate” Usina
St. Augustine since the year 1900, when legend has it his grandmother, Catherine, cooked up a bowl of oysters for Henry Flagler and his friends. The Usinas haven’t stopped feeding people since, and today the family owns and operates a restaurant on the very same land where that historic oyster bowl was concocted.

Aply named Aunt Kate’s (how most of the Usina clan referred to grandma Catherine), it’s a casual seafood eatery perched on the banks of the Tolomato River, where the menu features typical Florida seafood fare alongside a handful of Minorcan classics, such as spicy Minorcan clam chowder and a succulent composed rice dish called pilau (pronounced per-low). Such specialties, the 85-year-old Usina said, are a matter of pride. “For years, being Minorcan was considered being a second-class citizen, especially after they fled the failed plantations and came to St. Augustine,” he recalls. “By the time I was growing up, there was more interest in our story.”

Now, he adds, the family continues to keep that interest alive. His son, Ken, runs the restaurant, which he owns in partnership with his sister and three Usina cousins; a few of the Usina grandchildren bus and serve tables; and in the kitchen, Usina family recipes still swirl around. “The menu reflects who we are as a family,” 57-year-old Ken says, noting his relatives have been in the same location for five generations. “Those aren’t just dishes we serve at the restaurant. Like many local Minorcan families, we make chowders and pilaus at home. And I make pilau for dinner on a regular basis — as told to do so by my children!”

The Usinas, of course, aren’t alone in preserving the foodways of their ancestors. Today, 250 years after the Minorcans first set foot on Florida soil, the community continues to influence cuisine throughout St. Augustine. Their signature dishes speak to their history — their self-sufficiency, reliance on nearby waterways and the scarcity so many were forced to live through. The pilau, for example, is made with tomatoes, spices and just about any protein at hand — and was once an ingenious way of stretching limited ingredients. The trademark Minorcan datil pepper, brought centuries ago from Cuba and planted almost exclusively in northeast Florida, was an ingredient used both to preserve and punch up the flavor of everything.

While contemporary interpretations of Minorcan food abound, they are no longer emblematic of shortages but rather a delicious display of cultural pride. And while you won’t find an actual Minorcan restaurant in St. Augustine, you can easily spot dishes inspired by the culture on many menus — everything from datil pepper hot sauces and muffins to omelettes and stews spiced with Minorcan twists. In the following recipes, however, we focus on the classics, the dishes that have endured the test of time and that continue to tell the improbable Minorcan story. Anyone from the community will attest that there are as many versions of these recipes as there are Minorcan families, so adding your own spin is also part of the tradition.
MINORCAN CLAM CHOWDER

Closer to the classic Manhattan clam chowder than to the Boston one, the Minorcan version is spiked with the trademark datil pepper. Served in many restaurants throughout St. Augustine, it’s simple enough to make at home.

- 1 1/2 pounds hardshell clams, such as littleneck or cherrystone
- 4 ounces bacon or salt pork, finely chopped
- 1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
- 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 datil pepper, cored and finely chopped
  (remove seeds if you prefer it less spicy)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried marjoram
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 cup clam juice
- 3 cups fish stock
- 1 pound waxy potatoes, peeled and cut into half-inch pieces
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1. Start by preparing the clams. In a large pan over medium heat, add clams to 1/3 cup of water and cook, covered, for about 10 minutes, or until the clams open. Drain, discarding any unopened clams. Let cool. Once cool enough to handle, remove the meat from the shells and roughly chop. Discard shells and set aside clam meat.

2. Sauté the bacon or salt pork in a large stock pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onion, celery, green bell and datil peppers, and garlic. Sauté until tender and golden.

3. Add clam juice and fish stock and simmer for 30 to 40 minutes. Add diced potatoes and cook another 20 to 25 minutes, or until potatoes are tender. Add the chopped clam meat and cook for an additional 5 to 10 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

SHRIMP PILAU

Pronounced “per-low,” this composed rice dish can be made with just about any protein. Shrimp is one of the classics, given the Minorcan reliance on nearby waters. Replace the shrimp with sausage for a flavorful twist.

- 3 slices of bacon, chopped
- 1 large onion, finely diced
- 2 stalks celery, finely diced
- 1 green bell pepper, finely diced
- 1 datil pepper, cored and finely diced
  (remove seeds if you prefer it less spicy)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 15-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- ¼ teaspoon dried thyme
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 pound shrimp, medium to large, peeled and deveined
- 2 cups rice
- 3 ½ cups chicken stock or water

1. In a large pot or Dutch oven, over medium heat, cook the chopped bacon until fat is rendered. Add the chopped onion, celery, green bell and datil peppers, and garlic. Sauté until tender and golden.

2. Add crushed tomatoes, bay leaves, allspice, thyme, salt and pepper. Cook until sauce reduces and thickens slightly.

3. Gently stir in shrimp, rice and broth or water. Bring to a boil, and turn down heat to low. Cover and let simmer for 15 minutes. Remove from heat, stir gently and cover tightly. Let stand for an additional 15 to 20 minutes, or until rice is fully cooked. Serves 6 to 8.

Here, we share three vintage Minorcan dishes that, to this day, are made in family kitchens throughout St. Augustine. The chowder and pilau recipes are inspired by ones served by the Usinas at Aunt Kate’s. And the cheese tarts, called fromajardis, are adapted from various traditional versions.
MINORCAN FROMAJARDIS (CHEESE TARTS)

Years ago, these tasty oven-baked cheese tarts were handed out to singers who serenaded the old St. Augustine neighborhoods on spring nights, celebrating the anniversary of the Minorcans’ arrival in Florida. Today, the serenading continues during the week after Easter.

For the Dough

1 1/4 cups flour
8 tablespoons butter, cold
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
2 tablespoons ice water

For the Filling

8 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, grated
4 large eggs, beaten
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon datil pepper hot sauce
(or substitute with cayenne pepper)
A pinch of fresh grated nutmeg
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees, and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Make the dough: In a large bowl, whisk together flour, nutmeg and salt. Cut in butter with a pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse cornmeal. Sprinkle with ice water, tossing lightly with a fork until dough is moist and begins to hold together. Form into a ball, cover and refrigerate at least 1 hour.

2. Meanwhile, make the filling: In a medium bowl, stir together the grated cheese, eggs, salt, datil pepper sauce or cayenne pepper and nutmeg. Set aside.

3. Assemble the tarts: on a lightly floured surface, roll out pastry to 1/8-inch thickness. Use a 3- to 6-inch cookie cutter to cut circles from the dough. (It should make 12 to 18 circles.) Place a heaping teaspoon of filling on one side of each circle, then fold the dough over to make a half-moon shape. Pinch edges together with moistened fingers, and crimp with a fork.

4. Brush the pastries with melted butter. Cut two 1-inch slashes in the tops to make a cross, and place them on the prepared baking sheets. Bake until cheese begins to ooze out of cross and pastry is golden brown, or 15-20 minutes.
Soul music is the sound of love, faith, righteousness, and redemption. It's the sound of pain, passion, the passage of time — and a few dozen other things — all rolled together.

Along with its cousins rhythm 'n' blues, funk, and disco, soul music was born of the African American experience — there's a direct line from church singing and gospel to the richly emotive vocalizing on the classic soul records of the 1960s and '70s. The structure of the music itself is drawn from jazz and blues.

Author and historian John Capouya discovered that a number of soul singers, writers, musicians, and producers came from Florida — some were born in the state, while others arrived later in life. Whether Floridians by nature or nurture, they all made memorable contributions to one of America's most treasured indigenous genres of music.
Still, there was never a definitive “Florida Sound” — the music, and its creators, were all over the place, both literally and figuratively. “I can’t say ‘There’s something in the water, and that’s the secret,’” says Capouya, whose book Florida Soul: From Ray Charles to KC and the Sunshine Band, lays the state out like a road map of music.

In the mid 20th century, Florida’s densely populated urban centers and expansive rural areas — all of them segregated — provided fertile ground for the growth of black music. According to Capouya, soul blossomed via a fortuitous coming-together of climate, opportunity, and luck. “The fact that Ray Charles’ mother brought him here from Georgia, when he was 6 years old, is complete happenstance,” he says. “I mean, she had her reasons, but if she had not, we wouldn’t be talking about this in the same way.”

Charles’ dues-paying years, as a singer and pianist with journeyman jazz, blues, and pop combos in Jacksonville, Orlando, and Tampa in the 1940s, are extensively chronicled in Florida Soul.

The business of making music

Capouya also profiles Henry Stone, the white, Bronx-born entrepreneur who moved to Miami after World War II. Stone was a record distributor and self-taught producer (he recorded a young Ray Charles performing his song “St. Pete Florida Blues” in 1951). Stone established TK Records, one of the most successful independent labels of the 1970s.

In the 1970s, Stone and TK Records introduced the world to George McRae (“Rock Your Baby,” 11 million records sold), Gwen McRae (“Rockin’ Chair”), Anita Ward (“Ring My Bell”) and Bobby Caldwell (“What You Won’t Do For Love”). TK Records ruled the airwaves and the dancefloor in the disco era, with KC and the Sunshine Band (five No. 1 singles, including “Get Down Tonight” and “Shake Your Booty”).

Another label, small but enormously influential Deep City Records, was based in Miami’s Liberty City district. Johnny Pearsall and Willie Clarke met as students at Florida A&M University, and along with songwriter and producer Clarence Reid they recruited and recorded just about all of the hot local acts of the 1960s.

Based out of a back room of Pearsall’s record shop, Deep City — considered the first black-owned label in Florida — gave voice to regional hitmakers Willie “Little Beaver” Hale, the Moovers, and Helene Smith. Deep City was in business from 1964 to 1968.

Subsequently, Reid and Clarke wrote and produced “Clean Up Woman” for 17-year-old Miami soul singer Betty Wright. The single — a million-selling, Top Ten hit in 1971 — appeared on Alston, Henry Stone’s pre-TK Records label.

Capouya interviewed numerous Florida-bred legends, including the Panhandle’s James and Bobby Purify (“I’m Your Puppet”), adopted Miamian Timmy Thomas (“Why Can’t We Live Together”), and Miami native Sam Moore, of the million-selling duo Sam & Dave (“Soul Man,” “Hold On, I’m Coming”).

Moore grew up in Overtown, Miami’s historically black neighborhood. It was “just across the railroad tracks” from populous, white Miami Beach, but it might as well have been a thousand miles away.

“Folks like Nat King Cole, Dinah Washington, and Billy Eckstine..."
could play at the Miami Beach hotels and clubs,” Moore told Capouya, “but they were not allowed to stay there.” After their performances in the white venues, for white audiences, these “crossover” stars would retire to black hotels in Overtown.

During the era of segregation, black entertainers who did not have the across-the-race appeal of a Cole, a Washington, or an Eckstine were not welcome in the white clubs, let alone the white hotels.

**The rise of a ‘parallel universe’**

And so a sort of parallel universe developed. The Sunshine State was the southernmost stop on the so-called Chitlin’ Circuit — a series of swanky nightclubs, boxy theaters, and dirt-floor dance halls exclusively for black audiences, the circuit provided steady income for black entertainers from Florida, and all over the country.

Between 1957 and 1959, for example, Mississippi’s B.B. King played 126 Florida gigs, more than in any other state.

“With the exception of Texas, Florida had the longest string of such clubs,” Capouya says. “Florida was very popular for that reason, because touring musicians knew that you could make a lot of money starting in Pensacola and working your way down to Miami, and back again. You could get very steady employment.”

City folks would get dressed up to go to classy venues like the Two-Spot in Jacksonville (where the dancefloor allegedly had a capacity of 2,000), the Apollo in Tampa, El Morocco in Fort Lauderdale, or the Knightbeat and the Harlem Square in Miami’s Overtown district.

Overtown had so many black clubs that some out-of-state performers, including Hank Ballard (who was allegedly inspired to write “The Twist” after a club show in Tampa) and Little Willie John, maintained winter homes in the area.

At the other end of the spectrum were the more rural, informal clubs, the off-road juke joints that catered to the state’s agricultural workers.

For musicians from the north, accepting Florida gigs during the warm winter months was a no-brainer.

One of the most revealing interviews in *Florida Soul* is with Gainesville-born singer Linda Lyndell, one of the few white performers to regularly appear on the Chitlin’ Circuit. Lyndell toured the clubs as a featured performer with Jacksonville’s Lavell “Mr. Knockout” Kamma and his 100-Hour Counts Orchestra.

St. Petersburg native Frankie Gearing remembers the Manhattan Casino as the center of the city’s black community. As a member of the groups the Glories and Quiet Elegance, Gearing performed all over the country in the 1960s and ’70s, with the likes of James Brown, Little Richard, and Al Green.
Lyndell was 6 years old when she started walking, alone, to the Bethel AME church near her parents’ subsistence farm. She went there, she tells Capouya, “because I wanted to sing.”

And sing she did, in a warm and safe environment, where an enthusiastic white child was seen as non-threatening and welcomed into the choir. “Even then, I had a voice,” Lyndell recalls. “We didn’t have microphones; you just had to belt it out, so I learned to sing loud and strong.”

That ability to belt it out made her a favorite during those long and sweaty nights on Chitlin’ Circuit stages. Lyndell’s presence was something of a curiosity, but the band members looked out for her — and the audiences, for the most part, loved and respected her. “Linda told me it was very, very rare to see a white person in these clubs,” Capouya says, “either onstage or in the audience.”

With the Civil Rights Act of 1964, legal segregation ended in the United States. “Ironically, that meant the end of the Chitlin’ Circuit,” Capouya says. “Because when black patrons could go to a formerly whites-only clubs, they did. And they also went to businesses that they couldn’t patronize before. So in a way, as several people in my book say, desegregation was the beginning of the dissolving of the black neighborhoods.”

The music, of course, endures.

In *Florida Soul*, 31-year-old Fort Lauderdale rapper Urban Mystic, who re-interprets greats including Sam Cooke, Johnnie Taylor, and Otis Redding on his album *Soulful Classics*, acknowledges a great debt to those who came before. “Soul music grabbed me from a toddler and sunk into me,” he explains. “I just took it and grew with it.”

“There’s not a whole lot of difference, Mystic says, between old school and new school. “Music is one of the most powerful forces on earth. So whatever we can do — if it’s just a beat or a melody that can heal the people — we need to do it.

“And I’m definitely gonna keep playing my part, trying to keep soul music alive.”

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**Singer, songwriter and keyboard player Benny Latimore (center) and his Miami-based band the Kinfolk, including drummer Freddy Scott, lower left, and bassist George “Chocolate” Perry, upper right. Latimore, as he was professionally known, scored three Top Ten R&B hits between 1974 and ’76.**

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**Little Jake Mitchell, center, performs with his doo-wop group Blenders at Sarah’s Place in Gainesville, circa 1960. Mitchell went on to cut soul records, and toured the country as part of Tampa’s legendary “Harlem in Havana” Revue.**
On the trail of William Bartram

Almost 250 years after the famed naturalist extolled its beauty, Palatka’s wilderness may soon reclaim its place as a top ecotourism destination.

On a “fine, cool” May morning in 1774, William Bartram navigated his tiny craft up a broad stretch of northeast Florida’s St. John’s River and nosed toward the western shore.

“I suddenly saw before me an Indian settlement, or village,” he wrote. “Some of the youth were naked, up to their hips in the water, fishing with rods and lines, whilst others, younger, were diverting themselves in shooting frogs with bows and arrows.”

Four months later, Bartram — artist, explorer, map maker and botanist — would return to the village to partake of the tribe’s watermelon fest.

“We were received and entertained friendly by the Indians, the chief of the village conducting us to a grand, airy pavilion in the center of the village,” he wrote. “Here being seated or reclining ourselves after smoking tobacco, baskets of the choicest fruits were brought and set before us.”

It was as fine a welcome to Palatka — or what would eventually become Palatka — as a Quaker from far off Philadelphia could hope for.

This gentle stranger who would become known to the Seminoles as Puc-Puggy: Flower Hunter.

Nearly two-and-a-half centuries later, Sam Carr sits in Palatka’s gleaming new St. John’s River Center and ponders the relationship between America’s first naturalist and Carr’s beloved hometown.

By Ron Cunningham
“When you read Bartram’s writings, his heart becomes our heart,” says Carr, a retired Ford Motor Co. executive, avid fisherman, and homespun conservationist. “He was more concerned about how man took care of God’s creations. He was the first to see the relationship between our wetlands, the river, the wildlife, the seasons.

“This guy belongs to Palatka. He’s ours.”

Carr is not so much a Bartram enthusiast as a Bartram evangelist. For the past several years he has lived, breathed, and expounded upon Bartram’s writings and explorations — to just about anybody who would listen.

From his home in nearby Satsuma, just south of Palatka, Carr can see Murphy Island, which Bartram described as “1,500 acres more or less of good swamp, and some hammock.” And last year, when Palatka hosted for the first time the national, annual Bartram Trail Conference, Carr took conferees on a journey up river to sulfurous Satsuma Springs to experience that “prodigious large fountain of clear water of loathsome taste.”

“There were people with tears in their eyes to realize it’s really here as Bartram described it,” he says.

His book *Bartram’s Travels* was wildly popular in young America. And partially as a result, “people were coming here to find that this was indeed what he called a creator’s garden. They came to see the springs, the river, the flowering plants and all that creates Palatka.”

—Sam Carr

PHOTO COURTESY OF SAM CARR

"There were people with tears in their eyes to realize it’s really here as Bartram described it."

—Sam Carr
The rise of Palatka

And this is where William Bartram and his legacy may come in. Bartram’s travels up and down the American east coast are well recorded. And his two Florida explorations (1765 and 1774) covered more than 300 miles of the St. John’s as well as to points as distant as St. Augustine, Cape Canaveral, Alachua County’s Paynes Prairie, and the Suwannee River.

But Bartram mapped more sites, 32 of them, in what is now Putnam County than anywhere else on the river. And for the past few years, Carr and other members of Palatka’s ad hoc Bartram Committee — with financial backing from the city, county and the Florida Humanities Council — have been locating and marking Bartram’s sites with colorful information kiosks. They have also mapped a growing network of greenways (biking), blueways (kayaking), and hiking trails with the intention of once again establishing Palatka as the ecotourism center of Florida. Maps will lead modern explorers from Palatka to Welaka, Port Royal, Georgetown, and points in between.

Where Bartram once set foot, others can now follow. “Putnam County’s assets are amazing,” Carr says. “We have a huge amount of public lands and the river. We can be the bike trails hub, the river hub.”

Sam Carr and others hope that Bartram’s legacy will become integral to this river city’s very sense of place. In addition to hosting last year’s Bartram Trail Conference — drawing scholars and enthusiasts from as far away as London — Palatka now sponsors an annual “Bartram River Frolic,” which offers visitors historical re-enactments, riverboat tours, concerts, food and drink, and art displays.
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“This is the headquarters for Bartram recreational trail,” Carr says. “Go through the Bartram exhibit, get the brochure, the maps. Figure out whether to hike, bike, boat, or drive. It takes about four days to see everything and it’s rather unique.”

Another Bartram Committee member, Linda Crider, recently converted her two-story historic home near the river into the Bartram Inn. “What I really wanted to do was promote adventure tours and wrap it around our Bartram efforts,” she says. “On the second floor I have on the walls all the kiosk panels that explain who he is. Every room has a brochure. I have bicycles available to do Palatka’s historic homes and murals tour.

“The Bartram Inn is probably Palatka’s first tangible business-commercial connection,” she says, “but I think it’s going to grow. Who knows where it might lead?”

Puc-Puggy surely knew. He sailed up this great river to discover a “boundless apartment of the Sovereign Creator … inexpressibly beautiful and pleasing” yet “equally free to the inspection and enjoyment of all his creatures.”

For more information:
William Bartram in Putnam County
bartram.putnam-fl.com
St. John’s River Center
palatka-fl.gov/256/St-Johns-River-Center
The Bartram Trail Conference
bartramtrail.org
Technological innovation has added to the quality of our lives in countless ways, but it might have obliterated the conversation of democracy. With the punch of a button we can summon a virtual amen chorus for anything we want to believe — a deeply human impulse, but one that’s proving combustible for the most basic underpinnings of Western civilization.

We’ve experienced low-tech versions of this problem before. In the early 1800s, America’s first legislators lived in like-minded regional boarding houses and came to work “in the spirit of avowed misunderstanding, without the smallest wish to agree,” as British naval Captain Basil Hall wrote in *Travels in North America*. Then-President Thomas Jefferson’s solution was to gather feuding lawmakers around his table for dinner. He specifically avoided talk of political differences, but helped them come to know each other as human beings.

One of Jefferson’s collegial dinners is said to have led to the Compromise of 1790, known as the “dinner table bargain.” There, Jefferson brought together then-Secretary of State Alexander Hamilton and Congressman James Madison, who reached a final accord on the federal assumption of the national debt and siting of the U.S. Capitol, a compromise historically credited with helping preserve our young republic.

Turns out Jefferson was a capable student of human nature. A couple of hundred years later, New York University psychologist Jonathan Haidt introduced “Moral Foundations Theory.” Haidt argues we make our decisions using intuition more than rationality. In other words, all those times when we come in hot for a debate — armed with facts, figures, and position papers — we’re accidentally getting the order of things backward. If I don’t want to agree with you, there is no set of compelling facts that will ever change my mind. Instead, it’s the small acts of humanity, like sharing a meal or working side-by-side at a task, that make us want to understand “the other” and leads us to naturally (even easily) stretch toward them.

In our work at The Village Square — where we’re devoted to building community across partisanship — we’ve got a decade of proof that Haidt (and Jefferson) got it right. In our experience, the biggest hurdle to bridging these seemingly intractable differences is that we’ve got to want to bridge them enough to seek the company of people who don’t see the world the way we do. British philosopher John Stuart Mill wrote that “such communication has always been... one of the primary sources of progress.” Ultimately our goal won’t be to achieve agreement — because we won’t and in a healthy democracy we shouldn’t — but to disagree and keep right on talking.
Thomas Jefferson had his own problems with people he disagreed with. He and John Adams, having suffered through an ugly presidential race as political foes, spent much of their lives estranged. Adams began their late-life conversation “…you and I ought not to die until we have explained ourselves to each other.” The two founders ultimately died friends — having given history the gift of their final correspondence — on the same day, July 4, 1826, 50 years after the nation they built was born.

Ours is a legacy of explaining ourselves to each other, and it has shined a light in the world for almost 250 years. So let the conversations of democracy resume.

**Tips to conversing across divisions**

- **Ask questions.** Showing interest in another’s perspective may lower defenses on both sides.
- **Assume good intentions by others.** Just because someone doesn’t agree with you doesn’t mean they either hate America or hold bigoted views.
- **Use of the wrong words is allowed.** Don’t dismiss people just because they used a word that seems insensitive to you. Seek instead to understand their heart.
- **Be present and go with the flow.** Too many conversations get derailed when we try to make them conform to a pre-existing agenda and talk past each other. Let the conversation go where it goes — it’s more fun and more likely to become a recurring event.

- **The world is a complex place, so try to learn something new.** The beauty of speaking with a political foe is they usually see things our political tribe has become blind to. To understand the world in its broad complexity, we’ve got to break out of groupthink.
- **Keep out of the weeds — facts and figures rarely persuade.** We tend to assume people make decisions by rationally adding up a series of facts. But you’ll be more persuasive if you appeal to their better angels rather than their inner statistician.
- **Don’t pontificate, it doesn’t win converts.** We all know this at a human level and yet we seem to persist in pontificating.
- **Insulting people is never persuasive.** It’s a sign of our times that this has to make the list.
- **Temporarily overlook offense:** If we go into every political conversation ready to be offended, is it any wonder our conversations are so awful? Set a high bar for personal offense.
- **Your goal isn’t to agree, it’s to disagree and keep talking:** If our culture has a chance of breaking out of our feuding tribal camps, there will have to be a lot of conversations. We need to get back to valuing talking over valuing agreeing.

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**This is your FORUM.**

So please tell us what you think. Your ideas are important to us, and so is your feedback. Take our quick online survey at FloridaHumanities.org. Together we grow better.
Awaiting the moment at Dennis Creek

By Clyde Butcher

Cedar Key is a rare area in Florida. The island itself is a fun place, complete with restaurants and shops and boats for hire, but surrounding it is wilderness filled with beauty at every turn. Dennis Creek is one of those scenes.

Due to my recent stroke, I can’t stand for very long, so I took my walker out along the bridge over the creek and sat down, set up my camera, and waited for the right light.

Folks who slowly drove past me must have thought I was crazy to be sitting on a walker on a bridge like that, but finally the image and the light came together and I was able to capture the scene. This is one of the first photographs I captured after my stroke.

A selection of Clyde Butcher’s photographs will be on exhibit through April 30 at the Cedar Key Arts Center, in a show supported in part by a grant from the Florida Humanities Council.

For more than 50 years, photographer Clyde Butcher has been chronicling his personal bond with the natural environment through his black and white photography. Working with large-format cameras and long exposures, his techniques capture the detail and intricacy of Florida’s landscape.

To learn more, visit clydebutcher.com.
FLORIDA AND THE CARIBBEAN
OPEN BOOKS SERIES

The LibraryPress@UF, an imprint of the University of Florida Press and the University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries, is proud to announce the Florida and the Caribbean Open Books Series. This series makes available for free 39 books related to Florida and the Caribbean that are regarded as “classics.” It is made possible by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation as part of the Humanities Open Book Program.

Books in the series highlight the many connections between the Sunshine State and its neighboring islands. They show how early explorers found and settled Florida and the Caribbean. They tell the tales of early pioneers throughout the region. They examine topics important to the area such as travel, migration, economic opportunity, urban development, and tourism.

Read books in the series for free at http://ufdc.ufl.edu/openbooks.
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