

City of Gainesville presents



A Very GNV Holiday Parade

sat., Dec. 2
2023





City of Gainesville

Office of Cynthia Moore Chestnut
City Commissioner At-Large, Seat B

December 2, 2023

Dear Friend and Sponsor,

Along with giving thanks and gifts, perhaps the most cherished tradition of this season is the simple act of gathering as a community, as family and neighbors, to celebrate together.

Due to your generosity of spirit, this year the City of Gainesville is able to join with you in presenting to our community the 2023 A Very GNV Holiday Parade. On behalf of the Gainesville City Commission, our approximately 1,500 community builders, and the wonderful neighbors that we serve, I offer a simple and heartfelt note of gratitude for the joy your donation brings.

“This is a season when the whole world wants to smile. The hearts of all are open, and simple charity brings its pleasure to many.

Let us seek to preserve these customs, as we would the face of a long departed friend; make them a season of enjoyment and cheer.”

Every good thing that imagination can conceive, we wish for you this festive season.

With deepest gratitude,

Cynthia Moore Chestnut
Commissioner At-large
2023 Holiday Parade Champion

PO Box 490 • Station 19 • Gainesville, Florida 32627-0490
352-334-5016 • www.GainesvilleFL.gov

City of Gainesville Holiday Festivities



- 10:30 a.m. **Dignitary Brunch**
Santa Fe Blount Center, 530 W. University Ave.
- 11:45 a.m. **Pre-Parade Entertainment: Smooth Flava**
Bo Diddley Plaza, 111 E. University Ave.
- 12 p.m. **A Very GNV Holiday Parade**
W. Sixth Street to 620 E. University Ave.
- 3 p.m. **Holiday Kids Dance Party**
Bo Diddley Plaza, 111 E. University Ave.
- 5:30 p.m. **Holiday Lights Celebration**
Thomas Center Gardens, 302 NE Sixth Ave.

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Gold Sponsors

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Silver Sponsors

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RADDSports
Weyerhaeuser Company

*Special thanks to our brunch sponsors
- Santa Fe College and the Community
Foundation of North Central Florida!*

Thank you to our sponsors!



Sapphire Sponsors

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For the first time in many years, the City of Gainesville is ushering in the holidays with a parade. The seasonal celebration, complete with marching bands, motorcycle riders, shiny convertibles, dancing groups and more, has attracted more than 90 official entries.

The 2023 A Very GNV Holiday Parade with Grand Marshal Steve Spurrier, former head coach of the Florida Gators football team and 1966 Heisman Trophy winner, begins at W. University Avenue and W. Sixth Street and travels approximately one



mile, ending at the Alachua County Public Schools Administration Building at 620 E. University Avenue.

The Gainesville City Commission is quick to note this event is made possible through the support of sponsors across our community. Donors have pledged more than \$60,000 to cover the costs of the parade as the city tightens its belt in the wake of significant budget reductions in all departments but public safety.

“As we look back over the year, we have had a tough time,” said parade organizer and At-large City Commissioner Cynthia Chestnut while announcing sponsors at the Oct. 26 Gainesville City Commission meeting. “A smile on a child’s face, or a neighbor’s, when I say we are going to have a holiday parade, makes it all worthwhile. We – the commission, staff and community partners – are a team, and working together, we can do almost anything.”

The 2023 A Very GNV Holiday Parade came to life behind the scenes thanks to a mix of community financial support, planning by city staff, and the contents of an old downtown warehouse.



The warehouse held a bit of holiday luck in the form of a parade float, parked and waiting since its last public appearance at the city’s 150th anniversary celebration in 2019. Constructed to resemble local iconic structures including the Hippodrome Theatre and the Seagle Building, the float is well-preserved and perfectly suited to dress up in garlands, wreaths and ribbons.

A 40-foot Regional Transit System (RTS) bus also will appear in the parade, decorated with decals of holiday gifts and candy canes. Joining it along the route will be emergency response vehicles from the Gainesville Police Department and Gainesville Fire Rescue, a bucket truck from Gainesville Regional Utilities, and dozens of dance troupes, walkers, bands, cars and floats representing organizations and groups from across the community.

Enjoy the parade!

The **City of Gainesville Police Department** leads the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade* with an appearance by officers of the motorcycle unit. They are also joined by members of the Alachua County Sheriff's Office and the City of Alachua Police Department.

The **Eastside High School Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps** marches as the parade color guard. Please join us in standing for the Presentation of the Colors.

Grand Marshal Coach Steve Spurrier's life in Gainesville began in 1963 when he came to the University of Florida as a quarterback from Johnson City, TN. He won the Heisman Trophy as a senior in 1966 before being selected in the first round of the 1967 NFL Draft by the San Francisco 49ers. Spurrier rejoined the Gators as head coach in 1990, winning their first Southeastern Conference title in 1991. Named SEC Coach of the Year five times, he led the Gators to six conference titles and its first national title. Florida Field was renamed Steve Spurrier-Florida Field in his honor.

Alachua County Sheriff Emery Gainey is a Sapphire Level sponsor of today's parade. Sheriff Gainey appears with a group of Sheriff Explorers. The Sheriff's Office is committed to serving the community by building and developing relationships with people across Alachua County to enhance personal safety and quality of life.

Representative Yvonne Hayes Hinson, our democratic lawmaker from Gainesville, was first elected to the District 20 seat in the Florida House of Representatives in 2020. Representative Hinson graduated from the University of Florida, served on the Gainesville City Commission from 2012 to 2015, and previously spent 14 years as an elementary school principal.

The **Gainesville City Commission** performs duties, such as passing the city's budget and approving the ordinances and resolutions, and are committed to bettering the quality of life for all neighbors. The commissioners are responsible to the neighbors of Gainesville. Our commission consists of Mayor Harvey Ward, At-Large Commissioner Cynthia Chestnut, At-Large Commissioner Reina Saco, District 1

Commissioner Desmon Duncan Walker, District 2 Commissioner Ed Book, District 3 Commissioner Casey Willits and District 4 Commissioner Bryan Eastman.

The **City of Gainesville A Very GNV Holiday Float** was first built for the 150th anniversary of the city's founding, and features some of our famous landmarks. Riding the float are Sapphire Level sponsors Gainesville Fire Rescue Chief Joe Dixon and Gainesville Police Chief Lonnie Scott, along with University of Florida mascots Albert and Alberta. Walking beside the float are the UF Cheer Team and Dazzlers.

Miss Gainesville Alexandra de Roos is a 20-year-old alumna of the School of American Ballet in New York City and a current student at the University of South Florida. She has attended summer ballet intensives at the School of American Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Next Generation Ballet and the Rock School for Dance Education. Miss de Roos believes, "anyone who wants to dance should have the opportunity to, and my mission is to make that dream a reality."

Tamari Davis is a graduate of Oak Hall and four-time AAU Junior Olympic Games winner who qualified for her first U.S. World team at the USATF Outdoor Championships, clocking a time of 10.99 seconds to finish third in the women's 100m final.

UF Health is a Title Sponsor today, and we're grateful for their support and participation in the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*. Their Mobile Stroke Treatment Unit is the first and only response vehicle of its kind in Florida. It is specially equipped with a portable CAT scanner on board and can diagnosis and treat stroke on scene.

The Visionaires – a local civic club – was established in 1938 by eight local African American women who wanted to enhance the cultural and educational opportunities for the African American community in Gainesville. Eighty-five years later, the organization is still thriving. The Visionaires provide financial support for community-based organizations, award annual scholarships to college-bound students, raise awareness for important community issues and support the local performing arts scene.

Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church was founded on July 16, 1867, with the Reverend Isaac Davis serving as the first pastor. This is the oldest

Black congregation in Gainesville, and holds its place in history as a social and religious center for the Pleasant Street neighborhood. Settled at the same time as the city, the Pleasant Street neighborhood is approximately 150 years old and contains an important element of Gainesville's urban and cultural history.

The **Pleasant Street Neighborhood Association** was established in the 1980s to keep the neighborhood a wonderful place to live. Representing Gainesville's oldest, most intact, comprehensive African American neighborhood, this association includes families who have lived in the Pleasant Street area for decades. Its historic structures include Friendship Baptist Church, the Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church, and the old Mount Carmel Church along with the A. Quinn Jones Home and School.

The **352 Marching Band** is a community marching band that specializes in bringing music and spirit to parades and other cultural events. The marching band is open to members of the community and all musicians are welcome. Today they appear in the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade* along with banner attendants and flag corps.

Larry Rovak is a member of the Florida Antique Bucket Brigade, and brings to our parade his antique fire engine. The Florida Antique Bucket Brigade is a statewide group of firefighting history enthusiasts, many of whom have their own their own fire trucks spanning from the early hand-drawn days to modern response vehicles.

Zion Soldierz Riding Club is a non-profit organization committed to building a ministry of motivated members. This motorcycle group serves others by combining their deep faith with love of riding to support the community and give back.

Morgan & Morgan is a Gold Level sponsor of today's 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*, and we would like to thank them for their generous support. Morgan & Morgan is America's largest personal injury law firm with over 900 trial-ready attorneys and thousands of capable support team members. They are located in all 50 states and have recovered over \$15 billion for their clients.

The **Sugarhill Homecoming Reunion** banner is carried by Ms. Cynthia Williams and Val Jenkins. Both are native Sugarhillians who now

reside with their own families in other areas. Each year this group comes together for three days to share memories of growing up on the hill. Sugarhill is located between SE Fourth Avenue and Waldo Road intersection, near Evergreen Cemetery. This small section of Gainesville is celebrated each year as residents remember their ancestors and celebrate their shared history.

The **Sugarhill Homecoming King and Queen** are Mr. Curtis Rowe and Mrs. Mildred Dewberry. Mr. Row is 93-years-old and Mrs. Dewberry is 83-years-old. Mr. Rowe, who is now retired, worked many years for Curtis Newsome and Mrs. Dewberry is a well-known musician who has traveled as a gospel singer.

The **Dazzling Black Hat Divas** are a society of women who support all women. They promote family, friends, community, travel and fun. Though all members are queens, they are under the leadership of Queen Number One, Mrs. Susie Mosley and Vice Queen Sherrian Thomas. This chapter, which began 14 years ago, is part of a nationwide organization.

The **Town of Micanopy** is here today with town commissioners riding in the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*. Elected officials include Commissioners Judy Galloway, Jiana Williams, Ginny Mance, Kevin Putansu and Ken Wessberg. Earlier this year, the Town of Micanopy was named one of "The 10 Best Small Towns in Florida" by *Travel and Leisure Magazine*.

The **Santa Fe College Student Builders Association** has provided this playhouse float, built by students in the program. Aboard is Santa Fe College President Dr. Paul Broadie, the fifth president of this institution, wishing all of us a happy holiday season. Earning a salary for on-the-job training and graduating debt-free are just two of the many benefits for students in the construction trade apprenticeship programs at Santa Fe College.

The **Patricia Hilliard Nunn Sankofa Legacy Dancers and Drummers** are a West African dance and drum group that performs traditional West African dances. The members are wearing African attire with musicians playing two types of drums, djembe and doudou. Dr. Patricia Hilliard Nunn was a UF faculty member and the foremost scholar on African American studies in the region. She died in 2020. This group performs as part of her legacy.

The **Real Rosewood Foundation** is a historical foundation committed to advancing public interest in the history around Rosewood, its legacy, and the communities that call it home. The work is propelled by research, education, and immersive public programs. Lizzie Robinson Jenkins is CEO and founder of the Real Rosewood Foundation. You can hear her weekly on the Queen Lizzie Podcast recorded in Steve Spurrier's Podcast Room.

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority—both the Delta Sigma Zeta Chapter and the Mu Epsilon Chapter – are walking in the parade. For 103 years, the women of Zeta Phi Beta have upheld their founders' vision, setting themselves apart as an organization built on the ideals of scholarship, service, sisterhood and finer womanhood. Finer womanhood celebrates the standards, morals, customs and attributes all women strive to possess.

The **Latina Women's League** is empowering women and community in Gainesville. Founded in 2005, the Latina Women's League is a nonprofit organization dedicated to contributing to Hispanic and Latinx culture and art. Dressed in folkloric outfits from Colombia, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Peru and other nations, they are a colorful entry in the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*.

The **Manhood Youth Development Foundation** is a local mentoring program created in 2010 to give young Black boys the support needed to finish school and go on to college and a career. The idea is to transform the present and lead young people to a brighter future. The Manhood Youth Development Foundation is here with a group of these impressive young people walking in the parade.

The **Star Center Children's Theatre**, performing under the direction of Ms. Poinsetta Green and appearing here with the Special Events School of Performing Arts, brings a group of baton twirlers along with the Flag Corps. This theater is a nonprofit organization providing arts education and performance opportunities to area youth and their families for more than 20 years.

Gainesville Health & Fitness is here with garlands, candy canes, gingerbread men, and the Grinch in a sled—all to celebrate a healthy holiday season. Gainesville Health and Fitness is a community staple built on the foundation of helping everyone feel comfortable and familiar with the daily commitment to moving your body and being fit.

Chestnut Funeral Home is a Sapphire Level sponsor for today's parade and we are grateful for their support. This is one of Gainesville's oldest businesses. Since 1914, four generations of Chestnuts have owned and managed the business, touching thousands of families across a timeline that spans more than a century. Many Chestnut family members have been elected to local, county and state office, advancing causes from integration to education. Today, Charles "Chuck" Chestnut IV is an Alachua County Commissioner and Cynthia Chestnut is a Gainesville City Commissioner and the champion behind the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*.

The **Alachua County Supervisor of Elections Office** is here with patriotic and holiday themed colors. The Supervisor of Elections is Kim A. Barton, elected in 2016 as the first Black person to serve in this role in Alachua County. The Supervisor of Elections and her staff are chiefly responsible for administering elections and voter registration across the county.

The **Alachua County Public Schools** are represented by this cheerful gingerbread school with candy accents. Dedicated to giving students the knowledge, skills and personal characteristics to be lifelong thinkers and independent learners, the district is led by a board consisting of Chair Diyonne McGraw, Vice Chair Leannetta McNealy, and members Tina Certain, Sarah Rockwell and Kay Abbitt. The Superintendent of Alachua County Public Schools is Shane Andrew.

The **Alachua County Public Schools Transportation Department** is here in a big yellow school bus. The department director is Dr. Dontarrius Rowls, and the mission of all Alachua County school bus drivers is to provide safe, efficient and effective student transportation to and from school. The school bus is truly an extension of the classroom and a vital part of our schools. The department says, "We are committed to the success of every student!"

Alachua County Emerging Leaders is a resource for and about young people. Their vision is for this community to become an increasingly desirable place for diverse, talented young people to flourish. They work to connect young leaders at social and professional events, inform Alachua County residents of issues and opportunities, and involve young professionals in projects and initiatives to help them grow professionally.

The **Boy Scouts of America** are camping on a flatbed trailer for the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*. The mission of the Boy Scouts is to prepare

young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes. As you know, a scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent.

The **P.K. Yonge Marching Band**, known as the Blue Wave Marching Band, is an award-winning competitive band program. Their mission is to create an environment through music and the arts that will foster, challenge, motivate, develop and demand the students to become responsible and mature young adults in all facets of their life.

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority's Eta Phi Sigma Chapter is accompanied by its Philo and Rhoer affiliates. This historically Black sorority was founded by seven educators in 1922 at Butler University in Indianapolis, IN, and is a member of the National Panhellenic Council. Their mission is to enhance the quality of life for women and their families in the U.S. and globally through community service, civil and social action. Their motto is "Greater Service, Greater Progress," and they are accompanied today by their mascot "The Poodle."

The **City of Gainesville Police Department** is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. This full-service, community oriented police department is committed to partnering with neighbors to make Gainesville one of the most livable cities in the United States. Here you see a recruiter vehicle along with some of the officers who daily prevent crime, enforce the law and enhance our quality of life.

The **Eastside High School Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps** is a program that assists young people who are interested in joining the military later in life. Students can take NJROTC as a class during the day or afterschool and they participate in numerous competitions throughout the year. Archery, rifle skills, drill team, honor guard and knowledge-based competitions hone the skills of the cadets.

Communication Workers of America Local 3170, known to most locally as CWA, is a workers' union that proudly represents and serves employees of the City of Gainesville, Gainesville Regional Utilities, the Gainesville Housing Authority and the Alachua County Library District.

GFL Environmental is a Gold Level sponsor of the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*, and we are thankful for their support. GFL is the

only major diversified environmental services company in North America offering services in solid waste management and liquid waste management. We are grateful for the work GFL Environmental does to keep our community clean and healthy and to encourage greater environmental responsibility through safe, accessible and cost-effective solutions.

Joyce Vinson Family Daycare Home, where learning is fun, is open 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week. Joyce Vinson's daycare is contracted by Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County and Early Learning Coalition of North Florida. She works with children up to 12-years-old in her afterschool program and says children are her passion.

Greater Bethel AME Church appears today with a float decorated as a nativity scene. The mission of the African Methodist Episcopal Church is to minister to the social, spiritual and physical development of all people. Pastor Ron Rawls, leader of Greater Bethel AME Church, was this year's recipient of the Thomas A. Wright Leadership Award from the Alachua County branch of the NAACP.

Phillip and Sons Funeral Home, founded by Bernard Phillip II, strengthens the sense of connection and community among the families it serves. Having begun his career at Chestnut Funeral Home before pursuing a degree in mortuary science, Bernard Phillip worked for a number of prestigious funeral homes on the way to establishing this Melrose business. The traditions surrounding burial in the Black community continue to survive today thanks to leaders like Phillip and Sons.

The **Neighborhood Housing and Development Corp.** strongly believes that each individual and family unit deserves an equal opportunity to live in decent, affordable housing. To make this a reality, NHDC has initiated housing development and rental property services, provides helpful tools including budget and financial counseling, and helps first-time homebuyers navigate the process more smoothly.

Cumbia Collective is a traditional Colombian Cumbia group that is sponsored by the owners of Abuela's and Flaco's. They are costumed in traditional Christmas colors representing their cultural heritage. Cumbia Collective members represent a tradition of carnival parades from all over South America, but specifically Barranquilla, Colombia.

The **Alachua County Branch of the NAACP** was chartered on June 11, 1945, and serves to advocate for and protect the civil rights of our community. Members of the NAACP make a difference every day in the fight for social justice and civil rights in Gainesville and across the country.

MARC Radio is a Title Sponsor of the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*. We are most appreciative for the support. MARC Radio has stations in the Gainesville-Ocala area, Orlando, Melbourne and in Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas. Their mission is to reimagine new and legacy media to connect with and super serve the community.

The **Urban Yachting Club** has a holiday rhyme: He was a mean one – Mr. Grinch, but he had a change of heart. He heard about the Holiday Parade, and now he’s taking part. But the Grinch is not like me and you, he prefers a boat parade. But he will make this one do, so you need not be afraid. The Grinch joined the Urban Yachting Club, which really made things happen. He formed a crew of Max and Cindy Lou Who, and he made himself the Captain. He won’t steal your tree or take your roast beast, but a green pirate he is now. So I think some good advice is—best not to cross his bow.

LifeSouth Community Blood Centers is the sole supplier of blood products to the hospitals in Gainesville and the surrounding communities. LifeSouth will be celebrating its 50-year anniversary in 2024.

Florida Horse Riders are a popular attraction at any parade. The group was founded under Douglas Green in 2001. It consists of 15 riders who actively participate monthly. They love parades, trail riding and helping others ride. So come and join them - “Can I get a ‘yee haw?’”

Oelrich Construction, established in 2004, has grown into a trusted construction management company with more than 30 professional team members. Oelrich is a Sapphire Level sponsor of today’s parade, and we’re grateful for their contribution. With offices in the Gainesville and Orlando, Oelrich works on a diverse array of education, government, commercial, healthcare and civil and public infrastructure.

Buchholz High School Cheer Team represents the Bobcats at athletic events and school functions. The Buchholz High School mission is to help

all students attain personal, academic and career goals while striving for excellence in all areas.

Gainesville Street Rods is a club for those who love, collect and restore classic automobiles. The cars are exhibited at annual car shows in the area, and some of these owners signed up to show off their vehicles in today’s parade.

Gainesville Regional Utilities is bringing holiday joy to the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade* with very useful trucks that keep our utilities running. GRU is a multi-service utility owned by the City of Gainesville, and is the fifth largest municipal electric utility in Florida. GRU provides electric, water, wastewater, natural gas and telecommunication services to its customers.

Eastside High School Marching Ram Band performs as a marching band at all Eastside High School home football games, the University of Florida Homecoming Parade, the Santa Fe High School Showcase of Bands and the FBA Marching Performance Assessment, along with school functions. The Ram Band is proud to represent Eastside High School. Senior Drum Major Hope Armstrong leads the 90-member band.

The **Gainesville Housing Authority** is a Sapphire Level parade sponsor, and we’re very grateful for their support. They appear today with a GHAVille float that mirrors the theme of Dr. Seuss’ Who-ville with a few lucky youth participants appearing as little Whos and some of the wonderful GHA staff. The Gainesville Housing Authority is an advocate and provider of affordable housing for families in Gainesville.

Expressions Learning Arts Academy promotes academic achievement by incorporating the arts, particularly the performing arts, into their curriculum. A typical daily schedule focuses on vigorous academic components in the morning and the rotating arts components of music, drama, dance and visual arts in the afternoon. They thank their faculty, staff, families, friends, and wonderful students for believing and working to make learning exciting, successful, creative and fun!

Choreograph Gainesville is a resort-style, 55-and-over community situated in the heart of Celebration Pointe. It’s all about taking the next step in life, dancing to your own rhythm, and finding friends and neighbors to share activities, festivities and interests—just like Snoopy, Charlie Brown and Woodstock.

RADDSports is a Silver Level sponsor of the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*. We thank them for their support. This competitive cheerleading team represents RADDSports in today's festive parade. RADDSports is a Florida-based sports facility design and management company that focuses on sports tourism. They are the group behind the Alachua County Sports and Events Center at Celebration Pointe.

Keep Alachua County Beautiful, with its precision litter-picker-uppers, is a nonprofit affiliate of Keep America Beautiful. The group follows a practical approach that unites citizens, businesses and the government to find solutions that advance the core issues of preventing litter, reducing waste and beautifying communities.

Premier Moms supports working moms and those in school. The group coordinates and supports opportunities for training, mentoring, coaching and networking.

The **Foxx Family Reunion** is appearing in the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*. Matriarch Mrs. Evelyn Foxx moved to Gainesville 30 years ago after marrying Gainesville native George Foxx, who grew up in the historic Porters community. The family is happy to come together to usher in the holidays with this joyous celebration.

RTS stands for **Regional Transit System**. This is the bus system run by the City of Gainesville to offer affordable, convenient public transportation to our neighbors. The mission of the many incredible drivers, mechanics and staff of RTS is to enhance the quality of life in our community by providing safe, courteous, equitable and energy-efficient transportation services. This bus was specially wrapped for the holidays by Transit Community Service Specialist Tom Idoyaga.

CDS Family and Behavioral Health Services Inc. has provided counseling and residential services to Gainesville and north Florida families for over 50 years. CDS is currently building a new, state of the art, 20 bed shelter in Gainesville in order to continue providing the best care and residential counseling services for youth and families in need. All services are provided at no cost to families. In the 1956 Ford Thunderbird are CDS Board President Tommy Lane, Chief Operations Officer Cindy Starling and Regional Shelter Director Sabriena Williams.

Gainesville Roller Rebels is a roller derby league that empowers

its members to realize their full potential both on and off the track and to promote the wonderful sport of roller derby in the Gainesville area. Founded in 2007 by Catherine Seeman (aka Ms. Rebel), GRR was incorporated as a Florida non-profit organization in June 2008. In January 2013, GRR became a full member of Women's Flat Track Derby Association. The core values of GRR are athleticism, community and empowerment.

The **Alachua County Democratic Party** is the official Democratic Party organization representing the 87,000 democrats in Alachua. They work to meet voters in their communities year-round, having conversations about the issues that matter to them and organizing grassroots volunteer opportunities to help those interested serve where they are most needed.

The **Pride Community Center of North Central Florida** is a safe space for the LGBTQ+ community. This nonprofit charitable organization serves to foster and enhance the wellbeing and visibility of people of all gender expressions and sexual orientations with inclusivity for all. Committed to providing education and resources in a supportive environment, today the Pride Community Center brings together allied LGBTQ+ organizations marching with parade banners for a rainbow holiday season.

Eden Park at Ironwood Apartments is celebrating its 20th anniversary and is a Sapphire Level sponsor of today's parade. This is one of the first affordable housing complexes in Gainesville to provide low-cost internet in what has swiftly become a digital world. Eden Park has 104 affordable apartment homes and a childcare facility on site that offers free head start services.

98.9 Jamz is proud to bill itself as the number one station for classic hip-hop and R&B in Gainesville. Owned by the Gillen Broadcasting Corporation, 98.9 Jamz airs an urban contemporary format. Additional programming includes the Steve Harvey Morning Show, the DJ Rham Show and D.L. Hughley.

At the Wellness Network, Inc. is an internet, radio and TV media outlet that focuses on holistic health and wellness. Through truth and healing, its goal is to end racism and discord. Programming is led by Pamela D. Marshall-Koons, whose philosophy states that lack of forgiveness is the kink in our souls that prevents the flow of peace and healing.

Upper Room Ministries is a set of outreach ministries led by the Upper Room of Greater Gainesville Church of God in Christ. For 23 years, Upper Room has offered support, mentoring and guidance. Led by Pastor Pearlie Shelton and Superintendent Karl Anderson, Upper Room Ministries offer programs aimed at helping all members of the community. Today's parade entry focuses on young people and the Youth Impact Ministry.

The **Infamous Diamonds of Gainesville** are a majorette dance team founded in 2016. Their routines are always the highlight of any event. This competition team consists of dancers of all ages, sizes and backgrounds. They perform complex steps, acrobatic flips, choreographed tricks, and make our day here even more special. The Diamonds have performed at multiple University of Florida events, including the Homecoming SoulFest and parade, the UF Black Student Assembly and the annual Florida International Step Show.

The **Invictus Fencing Club** is dedicated to the ongoing development and growth of fencing and parafencing programs, athletes and coaches in a safe, inclusive and affordable environment. No equipment or experience is necessary. Fencing was originally a form of military training and started to evolve into a sport in the 14th or 15th century in both Germany and Italy.

The **Alachua County Library District** is celebrating the season with a library cart drill team. These staffers are walking with the carts used to shelve books, festively decorated, doing short weaving and formation routines. The Alachua County Library District is an independent special district and the sole provider of public library services to approximately 271,000 citizens in urban and rural communities. There are 12 branch locations and two bookmobiles.

Whitaker Wellness Spa specializes in person-centered therapy creating individualized wellness plans that treat the mind and body. They offer on-site and virtual life coaching sessions and custom massage therapy services to help create a positive sense of well-being. Whitaker Wellness Spa: creating a better YOU, inside and out.

The **Ministries of Expressive Song and Dance**, created by Elois Waters, is a nonprofit affordable dance company for children and adults. Created in 1995, the studio teaches many styles including ballet, gospel, hip-hop, lyrical and modern dance. Today the students of this dance ministry are

walking and performing to wish all the very best of this festive season.

Caring and Sharing Learning School is a place where every child can learn. Caring and Sharing is a 2010 National Title 1 Distinguished School, a 2017 National High Flying School, and a 2017 National Blue Ribbon School. The vision is to provide the best academic and personal education for students in an environment that promotes achievement, personal excellence and a sense of pride.

Touching Hearts at Home offers an array of home care services for seniors, people living with medical conditions or disabilities, those in transition from hospital to home, and those who need support from a professional caregiver. Today they bring a 1954 candy apple red classic Chevy truck decorated for the holidays.

Mainstreet Daily News is a Sapphire Level parade sponsor. This local, independent news outlet is dedicated to telling the story of Gainesville and its surrounding area. Its mission is to inform, engage and inspire readers to make a difference in the communities and neighborhoods it serves.

Siatech MYcro School is a tuition-free public charter high school where student ages range from 14-24. The curriculum is a blend of cutting-edge educational software and in-person instruction in math, English as a second language, English, reading, science and social studies. Class sizes are small, and students work at their own pace with face-to-face support from certified teachers.

Bartley Temple United Methodist Church began with a small group of worshippers who met for prayer on Sundays. The church was constructed in 1950, and named after the Reverend Henry Bartley Jr., who helped raise the funds needed and supported the worshippers until the doors opened. The congregation is led by the Reverend Mary L. Mitchell and the Reverend Milford Griner.

WPZM PRAIZE 107.5 FM is a Sapphire Level sponsor and we're grateful for the generous support. The radio station is part of the Community Praise Center, which was founded by Dr. Shirley Watts in 1994 to bring restoration, deliverance and healing without denominational barriers. The center has served as a Supplemental Educational Service Provider for the Florida Department of Education and has partnered with Florida

Works to provide job search support, training, and GED assistance to adults.

The **Jingle Bell Crawl** benefits the Children's Weekend Hunger Backpack Program through Catholic Charities. The program provides backpacks of food to children in our local schools. For many, this is all they have over the weekends and school holidays. The Jingle Bell Crawl supports this effort by selling tickets for an annual Jingle and Mingle tour that takes you through Gainesville's finest establishments, imbibing a holiday-themed drink at each. The event is Dec. 9, 2023, and information is available online.

Dr. Sinn's Freak Island Musical Sideshow bills itself as your favorite hometown clown band. Today, for the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*, Dr. Sinn is presenting the "Clown Marching Band." This is a zany group of local clowns being silly to celebrate the holiday season! It involves a marching contingent of kazoo players, a color guard of hula hoops, stilt walkers, ribbon wands, a drum major playing rubber chickens and a poodle in a tuxedo!

Alexandra Book is a stilt walker, dancer and aerialist. Archaeological evidence suggests that stilt walking began in ancient Egypt and China around 3,500 years ago. In those days, stilts were used for doing work like navigating marshy areas or working in flooded fields.

Gainesville Dollz is a group of majorettes and drill team for boys and girls. The mission and vision is to instill a great love of dance while inspiring self-confidence, discipline and respect.

Gainesville Fire Rescue is an all hazards response organization. These firefighters do more than put out flames. They also specialize in emergency medical services, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, confined space rescues, and stand ready to respond to any threat to the safety of the Gainesville community. Today GFR has brought an aerial and command vehicle for the 2023 *A Very GNV Holiday Parade*.

The **Santa Fe High School Cheer Team** includes committed coaches, supportive parents and most of all the amazing cheerleaders! These year-round scholar-athletes cheer on their school sports teams, participate in clubs and perform at school functions and events. Moreover, they are a competitive team that aims to be the best of the best.

Matchmaker Realty of Alachua County serves the community in and around Gainesville. With this festive trolley, the folks at Matchmaker have the experience and expertise to help homebuyers and sellers navigate the north Florida home market. This team understands that buying or selling a home is a major life event and are here to help any time of year.

The **Concrete Rose Foundation** is a nonprofit organization that provides advocacy and assistance to minority youth through targeted mentorship. The goal is to minimize the risk factors faced by adolescents in underserved communities. The Concrete Rose Foundation serves youth in Alachua County.

The **University of Florida Gator Band** was the first college marching band in the state of Florida, and is finishing its 110th year of service to the university, city, state and country. Having led every UF Homecoming Parade through downtown Gainesville, the band has also represented the United States at the 2012 Olympics, the 2022 St. Patrick's Day Festivities in Ireland, and will represent the U.S. at the 80th Anniversary of D-Day in Normandy, France next June. The group will perform numerous UF, pop and holiday songs along the parade route.

To end the parade, the wonderful **Gainesville Fire Rescue** brings a firetruck with the guest of honor!

Thank you for joining us today!

Downtown Refresh

Commissioner Ed Book invites you to keep Gainesville beautiful by volunteering for the upcoming Gainesville Downtown Refresh!

Date: Saturday, Dec. 16

Time: 8:30 a.m.–12 p.m.

What: Painting, planting, recycling, cleanup

Location: Meet us at Lot 10 – 100 SW First Ave.

You're also invited to join us for a meal together afterward. Thank you for helping keep Gainesville clean and green!

A very special thank you to our partners & community builders!

We are grateful for the help and support of City Manager Cynthia W. Curry and Executive Chief of Staff Cintya Ramos, who led community builders across all City of Gainesville departments in the work that made this parade possible. The Public Works staff prepared the route. The Communications staff produced the parade artwork and videos. The staff from Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs assisted with logistics. The manager of the Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area spearheaded the volunteer squad. The team from Government Affairs & Community Relations connected with dozens of participants and made them ready for parade day. The Gainesville Police Department and Gainesville Fire Rescue are appearing in the parade while staying ready to respond to any emergency.



Kathleen Kauffman
Historic Preservation Planner

A very special thank you goes to Historic Preservation Officer Kathleen Kauffman. A longtime organizer of the Junior Orange Bowl Parade in Coral Gables, Kathleen stepped into the lead role in mid-November. She has spent countless hours engaged in tasks that ranged from selecting the grandstand bleachers to walking the proposed staging area in the rain while imagining how it would look filled with floats and bands waiting to turn that corner and begin the parade.

City of Gainesville

Gainesville City Commission

Mayor Harvey Ward

District 1 Commissioner & Mayor Pro-Tem Desmon Duncan Walker

District 2 Commissioner Ed Book

District 3 Commissioner Casey Willits

District 4 Commissioner Bryan Eastman

At-Large A Commissioner Reina Saco

At-Large B Commissioner Cynthia Moore Chestnut

*From our City of Gainesville family
to yours, we wish you a very
happy holiday season.*

City of Gainesville A Very GNV Holiday Parade



Eighth Ave.

NW Sixth St.
Staging Area

N. Main St.

VIP Seating

Alachua County Schools

W. University Ave. Start

End

Parade Route

