

life

GREEN UP YOUR YARD

Readers have many questions about growing grass **Garden Q&A, E-2**



MOVIE NEWS

There are a few good films among the flops **Story, E-2**

A 'painting event' raises funds for Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens

By Charlie Patton
charlie.patton@jacksonville.com

For 37 local and regional landscape artists, this week will provide a chance to create their art in a spectacular natural setting in front of an audience.

The occasion is "A Brush with Nature: A 'Plein Air' Painting Event," a fundraiser for the Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens.

The Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens is one of Jacksonville's hidden treasures. For years, the property, owned by the city, went unused except as a buffer for a water reclamation facility on Millcoe Road off Monument Road near the Florida 9A overpass.

The 120 acres that make up the Arboretum were owned from 1941 to 1961 by the Humphries Gold Mining Co., which strip-mined the area for zircon and other minerals used to



Provided by Gail Beveridge of Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens Plein Air

Marsha Hatcher paints at the Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens. She'll be one of the artists at this week's "A Brush with Nature" event.

ARTISTS IN THEIR HABITAT

make titanium.

When the mining operation ended, what was left behind were rolling sand dunes.

For the next half-century the land was mostly left alone, except for the occasional invader who came to dump trash there.

That gave the site the chance to revert to a natural state, one that encompasses 13 distinct ecosystems. As a result, "the landscape within the arboretum contains almost all the natural beauty the First Coast offers in one location, from marshes to xeric rosemary scrub uplands," said Rachel Sulkers, a senior scientist with Environmental Services Inc., who serves on the arboretum's board and leads guided tours there.

A non-profit board was established and leased the land from the city in 2006 with the idea of creating an arboretum. Volunteers went to work, cleaning up the garbage that had been dumped and creating six trails through the grounds. Those trails range from 800 feet to one mile.



NATURE continues on E-6

Randy Pitts' painting of Lake Ray at the Arboretum is featured on all posters for "A Brush with Nature."



Provided by Gail Beveridge of Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens Pain Out

Lyn Asselta works on her art at the Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens.

NATURE

Continued from E-1

The arboretum is now open to the public at no charge during daylight hours seven days a week. Dogs are allowed as long as they are kept on a leash.

Beginning Thursday, the participating artists will fan out throughout the grounds and begin painting. Participating artists include Randy Pitts, whose oil on linen panel painting of the arboretum's Lake Ray is featured on all event posters, Lyn Asselta, Jim Draper, Paul Ladnier, Kristin Hosbein, Marsha Hatcher and Larry Davis.

From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, the artists will be painting in the arboretum. Visitors can watch them work; attend artists' demonstrations and lectures; enjoy live music and food offerings; and watch children being taught to paint "en plein air." Once a painting is completed, it will be available for sale at a price set by the artist.

The event will climax on Saturday with a gala from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Riverplace

Tower Plaza.

All works of art produced during the event that haven't previously been purchased will be for sale, with proceeds benefitting both the artists, most of whom are expected to attend, and the arboretum. This gala will feature

music by Joe Williams and food by Pastiche.

Admission to the arboretum is free. Tickets to the gala are \$50 per person and can be purchased through the web site, www.abrushwithnature.org.

Charlie Patton: (904) 359-4413

SLYLOCK FOX AND COMICS FOR KIDS By Bob Weber Jr.

When a bicycle was stolen from Rachel Rabbit's porch, there were no electric lights on, no shining moon, and only one star visible in the sky. But Slylock Fox says Rachel said she clearly saw Shady Shrew swipe the bike. How was that possible?

Answer -- The bicycle was stolen in broad daylight. The one star visible in the sky was the sun.



HOW TO DRAW a clown



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