

DR. JOHN M. DEGROVE

A Florida Icon



1924-2012

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printed on recycled paper

Front cover:
Watercolor artwork:
Dawn McMillan
Photo Courtesy of the
Palm Beach Post

1000 FRIENDS OF FLORIDA

Honors the Life of
DR. JOHN M. DEGROVE
A Florida Icon

1924-2012



John in the early 2000s.
1000 Friends of Florida

FAREWELL

By Charles G. Pattison, FAICP

to a Florida Icon

How do you say goodbye to a friend and mentor who has meant so much to so many people? Dr. John DeGrove subscribed to a fierce conviction that Florida could grow and prosper, enjoy a high quality of life, and have a robust economy and healthy natural environment if it would just embrace the principles he imbedded into the 1985 Growth Management Act. His efforts and inspirations to that end live with us today, and his legacy will be felt by the many generations that follow.

This special edition of *Foresight* is a thoughtful series of short essays about the man and his impacts, both in Florida and across the nation. Some of his colleagues, students, contemporaries and admirers have contributed their insights, shedding light on one of Florida's true icons. He touched us with a wit and charm that is so rare these days, a characteristic that was always part of his pursuit for a better Florida. Rarely saying no to new growth and development, he instead worked toward creative solutions to guide growth to the right place at the right time. But he did more, inspiring planners and decision-makers to make better, more informed choices that took a long-term perspective, as opposed to short-term choices that plagued Florida in the past.

His ability to bring together adversaries and believers remains unmatched, as witnessed by the many diverse commissions and committees he either chaired or directly influenced. From a country boy during the Depression in Palm Valley to a nationally recognized planning expert, he never lost sight of his humble beginnings and the importance of citizen service. That trait always stood him well, especially when dealing with elected officials. He had that special quality that one experienced every time you spoke with him, a sense that you were in the presence of a unique personality. That feeling was the same whether you were a young planner or a seasoned county or city commissioner. I know I felt that as a planner working for him down in the Florida Keys in an ongoing program that is part of his legacy.





As did many others, I found his persistence and enthusiasm for doing the right thing was the motivation needed to stay the course on typically complex planning issues. An early visionary, he saw the linkages between environmental protection and economic development, long before others. He was generous with encouragement and praise to a fault, especially with his students and planners in the trenches. It was my privilege to work with him at both the Florida Department of Community Affairs and 1000 Friends of Florida. And when things got tough as they invariably do, I took great comfort in applying the lessons he so earnestly gave in both deed

and word. It was as simple as asking, "What would Dr. DeGrove do?"

The passing of a great man is always difficult for the ones left behind, and memorials and tributes are to be expected. However, we know that John's extraordinary spirit will remain with us, and that the legacy he created means a better Florida for us all.

Charles G. Pattison, FAICP, has served as President of 1000 Friends of Florida since 1998. Previously, he served as Director for the Division of Resource Planning and Management at the Florida Department of Community Affairs, and opened and ran the DCA Keys Field Office in Key West, serving as Monroe County Planning, Building and Zoning Director and as the first Executive Director of the Monroe County Land Authority. He also served as a Field Representative for The Nature Conservancy's Virginia Coast Reserve.

above: Charles Pattison (l) and John present Eugenia Noel with 1000 Friends' Community Steward Award in 1999.
1000 Friends of Florida

left: John's grandfather, Florida Legislator William DeGrove (front row, right), on the steps of the Capitol in Tallahassee in 1917.
Florida Photographic Collection

John as a child with (l to r) Uncle Russell DeGrove, Aunt Birdy (Mary Birdy DeGrove Faver), and father John Morton DeGrove, in 1927.
DeGrove Family



CONSCIENCE *of the Community*

By Cynthia Barnett

Thirty years ago, when John DeGrove moved to Tallahassee to serve as Secretary of the Department of Community Affairs, lawmakers bent on destroying the agency were planning an attack.

The incoming president of the Florida Senate took him aside to ask a question: “John, why would you want to become captain of the Titanic just before it sinks?”

Dr. DeGrove answered with the plucky high-mindedness that defined his fifty-year career leading Florida and the nation to the wisdom we call growth management. “Because you’re there, and I expect you to see that nothing like that happens,” he told the senator. “And that’s not all. I want to see that we get some adequate funding in DCA so that we can start doing our job.”

And so it was.

For Dr. DeGrove, political blitzkriegs were minor compared with the real one he’d fought at age 20 in the bombed-out streets of Cherbourg, France, which killed thousands of his fellow Army Infantrymen during World War II. He returned home decorated in medals, with a hunk of shrapnel in his wrist, and pneumonia that turned into tuberculosis.

His next battle: Four years in TB hospitals, first in Denver then in Central Florida. He did not think he would survive. He spent the years reading “everything in the world.” When he was released, he enrolled in Rollins College and became the serious student he’d never been as a boy growing up during the Depression in Northeast Florida’s Palm Valley.

At Rollins, he met his wife, Gail, and set upon his often-crusading path. As student body president, he led a revolt against the actual one, and saw him fired. Senior year, he wrote a research paper that got him thinking “how it’s better to grow some ways than others.” He was so drawn to the emerging field that he followed it through a master’s degree at Emory, then a doctorate at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.



photos left to right:
John (r) with his Beasley cousins in the 1930s.

DeGrove Family

John (standing, center) with DeGrove uncles and cousins in 1939.

DeGrove Family

John (l) with a Navy buddy in Georgetown in 1943.

DeGrove Family

His blend of brains and folksy charm—surely the only PhD who regularly used the word “crap-a-roo”—stirred many to advise him to enter politics rather than study political science. He disagreed: “I ended up always exercising my influence in politics through people who were elected.”

His outsized personality pedaled an influence all its own. As an academic, Dr. DeGrove was founding director of the FAU/FIU Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems. He wrote numerous articles and books, served on gubernatorial and presidential commissions, and mentored hundreds of students who continue his smart-growth legacy across the country. But his unwritten claim to fame was being able to out-good-old-boy lawmakers and developers who mistook him for “a carpetbagger, at first, who came down from North Carolina or probably some place worse than that.”

They were often shocked to learn the professor with big spectacles was a 5th-generation Floridian who grew up shooting ducks and coots at the Guana River. Next thing they knew, they’d be hammering out a conservation land-buy, or, in the case of phosphate executives, agreeing to greater land reclamation than the law required.

The most famous results of his common-sense work toward common goals were Florida’s landmark environmental laws of 1972 and their growth-management descendants of 1985 and 1993. But while Dr. DeGrove had a rare gift to bridge left and right, growth and environmental protection, old and new Florida, he was not a compromiser. He had an unrelenting commitment to a sustainable Florida – and a sharp tongue for non-believers.

One admiring adversary called him “the conscience of the community.” That conscience lives within all of us who care about the future of Florida, just as his battlefield-won courage and “incorrigible, incurable optimism” remind us of the strengths we will need to continue his legacy.

In 2001, journalist and author Cynthia Barnett interviewed Dr. DeGrove over two days on behalf of the University of Florida’s Samuel Proctor Oral History Program. The quotes in this story are from that interview, transcribed at <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UFO0005488>.



AN ENDURING *Legacy*

By Senator Bob Graham

Life is filled with what are apparently small events that later prove to be transformative.

I first met John DeGrove in the spring of 1958 at the Plaza of the Americas on the University of Florida campus. A graduate student from the University of North Carolina, he was researching and writing his doctoral dissertation on Florida water policy.

With his signal intensity and southern charm, he asked if I would arrange an introduction to my father, former Florida State Senator Ernest R Graham, who in 1949 had been instrumental in the creation of the Central and Southern Flood Control District. I was pleased to do so; and thus began a life-long friendship.

Eight years later, with a strong interest in environmental policy, I was elected to the state legislature. The dramatically reapportioned legislature seemed to be receptive to these ideas. It was payback time for the now Dr. John DeGrove. My particular interest was in growth management and urban planning. John, now

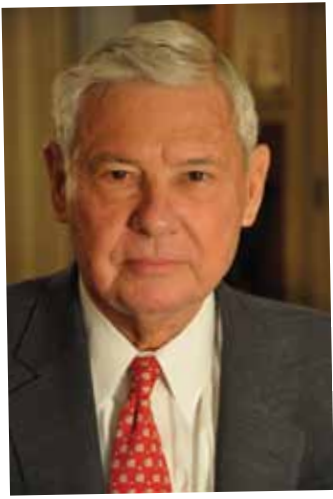
chair of the political science department at Florida Atlantic University, joined by a colleague from the University of Florida, Dr. Ernest Bartley, became my tutors.

Four years later another unanticipated event occurred. The Everglades caught fire. For weeks smoke and muck soot billowed from Homestead to Hobe Sound. Floridians began asking the right questions: What had gone wrong? What can we do about it? And, most important, what kind of Florida do we want to live in? Newly elected Governor Rueben Askew turned to John to find the answers.

At a 1971 fall conference convened by Governor Askew, John led 150 concerned and knowledgeable Floridians to the recognition that the Everglades fires were more than an isolated event. Rather, they were the consequence of the breakdown of a web of natural systems, and that the “what can we do about it question” would have to focus not on the Everglades fires, rather these systemic failures. The lengthy catalog of recommendations developed at the conference was handed off to a gubernatorial appointed task force chaired by John, on which I was also honored



The 1985 Florida Legislature and then-Governor Bob Graham passed and signed into law the landmark Growth Management Act. *Florida Photographic Collection*



to serve. The task force was charged with converting the conference recommendations into detailed legislative proposals; the commission came to the challenge from different regions of the state, political parties, personal

backgrounds and values. Through John's leadership, in less than six months the most comprehensive set of land, water, environmental financing and institutions creating legislation in the history of Florida was drafted, submitted to and adopted by the 1972 legislature. In November, by an over two to one margin, the citizens of Florida approved a constitutional amendment authorizing the financing of the various environmental programs. Throughout this process, John served both as the intellectual leader and as an uncommonly deft political strategist and tactician.

John also contributed to a redefinition of what is Florida. Prior to the Everglades fires, Florida was treated as a commodity. The Everglades was the prime example of our state being seen as without intrinsic value—it was man's mission to convert it to something useful. When the drainage of the Everglades commenced in the early 1880's, the goal of was to make the river of grass look and function like central Pennsylvania.

John had a different definition. Florida was a treasure, unique, creating an inter-generational bond. Floridians had the opportunity to live in this blessed place and with that came the responsibility to hand it off to future generations no worse, and ideally better, than when we inherited it from our parents.

For a brief period John returned to his academic loves—teaching and research. He established the Urban and Environmental Center of Florida Atlantic University in the new academic Tower in Ft. Lauderdale. Students flocked to learn from the master. The master also employed Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer technique. He granted the honor and privilege to his friends and associates, including one new state Senator, to supplement him in the classroom.

But his public service was not over. In 1983 I persuaded John—and it was not heavy lifting—to return to Tallahassee as the Secretary of Florida Department of

Community Affairs, one of those institutions created by the legislature eleven years earlier. It was an assignment for a specific purpose: to complete the final piece of Florida's growth management architecture by drafting and securing the passage of what came to be the 1985 Growth Management Act and the State Comprehensive Plan. Together they established the standards for county and city planning and the relationship of local government to the state.

I was there as John sought and considered expert advice, built a coalition of support and instructed or intimidated legislators to vote for his creations. It took three years to finish the building, but Florida now had the most comprehensive growth and water management policies and institutions in the nation.

John would spend the next twenty years surrounded by a loving family and his teaching and research. It was during this period John focused much of his scholarship on evaluating Florida growth management policies. He wrote over a score of articles and books on the subject of growth management. In 2005, he published his seminal book, *Planning Policy and Politics: Smart Growth and the States*. The occasional instances in which we were together were golden moments.

It seemed to me and many other Floridians that the transition from Florida as a commodity to Florida as a treasure had been completed.

But as we now know, it is a struggle which continues. While recent years have seen damaging retreats from what John DeGrove dreamed for Florida, his spirit will persist. Out there among us are Floridians he touched who strive to extend his vision, talent, and resolve to recapture his treasured Florida. And we will succeed. This will be John's most enduring legacy.

Bob Graham was raised on a cattle and dairy farm in the deep Everglades of what is now Miami-Dade County. One of the most accomplished politicians in Florida's history, he never lost an election for office in more than four decades of public service at the local, state and national level. As first a state legislator, then governor and finally a three-term U.S. Senator, Graham has had a role in nearly every major public policy issue in modern Florida history.

THE FATHER OF GROWTH MANAGEMENT *in Florida*

By Jim Murley

As far back as I can remember, the six word phrase “father of growth management in Florida” has been linked historically, professionally and personally to my late mentor and friend, Dr. John M. DeGrove. While John’s professional accomplishments as an academic, civic leader, and public official are well documented, those of us who knew him well repeat that phrase in silent admiration for a man who lived a full and meaningful life.

At his core he was a fifth generation Floridian with roots in Palm Valley, and a vision of how Florida should retain its natural and community values as millions more came to live in our state. He believed that public institutions had a responsibility to work with the private sector to develop rules that could be understood no matter which community you lived in. He maintained that people who benefitted from public actions should reciprocate by making investments in the public interest. He also believed that individuals should always retain the right to seek redress when they believed their livelihood was negatively impacted by public decisions.

John believed that state government was obligated to create a legal structure within which public agencies, local governments and private citizens could make growth management decisions in the short term through land use regulations, and in the long term by making sure that all development was consistent with comprehensive plans. He firmly believed that the Governor of Florida, by law the Chief Planning Officer of the state, needed to be a forceful leader on matters of growth management.

While Secretary of the Department of Community Affairs, John worked diligently with the leadership of the Florida Legislature to enact the laws and authorize the rules that would actualize his vision of a statewide growth management structure. A student of public administration and policy, he was always careful to show respect for statewide elected officials while reserving the right to respectfully disagree.

He never assumed that we would get it right the first time, and encouraged state leaders to convene American Assemblies and similar study groups in order to collect the facts and arrive at consensus on better ways to move forward. He firmly believed that the state should have sufficient oversight to insure greater than local issues were addressed in properly conducted administrative hearings, and that appropriate sanctions could be imposed.

Every father has regrets about things that don’t quite turn out the way he had hoped.

John pushed hard for the state to enact a state comprehensive plan and other guidance documents that addressed water, land and transportation. He was disappointed that these plans failed to have lasting effect, although he took solace in the fact that the Florida Constitution now speaks to the need for a state plan. His greatest disappointment was the failure of the state to provide sufficient revenues to pay for the impacts of growth.

John was proud of the specific funding commitments eventually dedicated to protecting environmentally sensitive lands and providing Floridians greater



John and his mother,
Edythe Beasley Chambers,
in Jacksonville in 1944.

DeGrove Family

John in Germany in 1945.

DeGrove Family





access to affordable housing. He believed that growth management was more than plans, rules and regulations. It was equally important to fund the infrastructure, health and educational needs of current and future residents of the state.

The father of growth management was a superb teacher, academic administrator and mentor for numerous students who went on to professional careers carrying forth his message of sound planning and fiscal responsibility. As a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration and American Planning Association, and a Board member of the Lincoln Land Institute, he shared his experiences with other national and international experts.

Armed with his yellow pad, he traveled frequently to speak at conferences, disarming audiences with his southern charm. He took great pleasure when other states studied the Florida experience and then enacted their own customized versions. John help guide the states of Georgia and Washington to enact Growth

Management Acts modeled after Florida's, and watched with pleasure when the State of Massachusetts enacted laws to plan and regulate regional projects and critical areas located on Cape Cod and the Islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket.

As founder of the Florida Atlantic University/ Florida International University Joint Center for Environmental Problems, he relished engaging Center staff and affiliated faculty and students in the realities of community planning. Joint Center publications documented the annual progress of growth management throughout the state. He played a lead role in promoting the Florida Institute of Government as a university service provider to government officials and private practitioners who needed professional education credits and practical updates.

Without question, John personally impacted how Florida managed its ongoing growth for over three decades. His legacy will be carried forth by those who knew him and were fortunate enough to be guided by his wit, foresight and his love of Florida.

Joining the staff of the Florida Department of Community Affairs in 1983, Jim Murley helped draft and gain passage of Florida's landmark 1985 Growth Management Act. He went on to serve as 1000 Friends of Florida's first Executive Director, Secretary of the Department of Community Affairs, and Director of the FAU/FIU Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems. Jim currently serves as Executive Director of the South Florida Regional Planning Council.

above: John (I), Steve Seibert, and Jim Murley, each of whom served as Secretary of the Florida Department of Community Affairs, at 1000 Friends' legislative reception.

Joint Center for Urban and Environmental Problems.

John and his mother at the Tuberculosis Sanitarium in 1946.
DeGrove Family



GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Evolves

By Bob Rhodes

Any program that aims to manage new growth in one of the most diverse, expanding states must necessarily be allowed to evolve. Think about it: the grist for the program, growth, is projected, not known. Management tools and managers often are untested. And the public policy goals and expectations driving a program are subject to and often do change.

John De Grove fully understood the evolutionary nature of growth management and appreciated the need to periodically review, assess, and if needed, constructively modify programs. I shared his advocacy for public commissions to take on the assignment.

Public commissions reflecting fair representation of interests can provide valuable assistance to policy makers because they generally operate under the crowded political radar screen, offer different expertise and perspective, and are not time pressed to complete work on complex subjects. They can provide a public forum for vetting and thoroughly studying issues and the relationship between policies and expected results and effects. Commissions also can harmonize competing interests and build consensus, support and champions for proposals before and after elected officials act.

John and I served together on the Second and Third Environmental Land Management Study Committees (ELMs). Both groups produced outstanding work products. ELMs II poured the foundation for Florida's Growth Management Act. ELMs III recommended many positive refinements to the Act.

John was a muse for the first ELMs group, which, in the early 1970's, recommended mandatory local planning legislation and placed Florida in the forefront of "the quiet revolution in land use control." He was engaged full bore in ELMs II as an advocate, philosopher, agent provocateur and, when needed, mediator. He was an alter ego for me.

John and I had a ritual. Almost every morning before an ELMs II meeting, we would take a walk. Our walk allowed me to enjoy some exercise and prepare for the meeting. It was John's time to proselytize, brainstorm and yes, sometimes fulminate. I recall John's observations and guidance frequently began with "Now look here, Bob..." followed by colorful verbiage. He was a master at stringing together adverbs and adjectives to make a point, re-make the point and then hammer home the point. John used these walks to craft and clarify many of the positions he was to successfully argue to the Committee and then the Governor and Legislature.

John set an exceptionally high bar for himself and for others and would not hesitate to express his feelings if one didn't clear the bar.

Regrettably, the recent legislature did not heed his advice to establish another ELMs group to comprehensively review and assess our state growth management program. And I expect John's animated and critical reaction to the ad hoc, incremental growth management "reform" produced by recent legislative action would begin with an energetic: "Now look here," As usual, he would be right.

Bob Rhodes administered Florida's growth management program and chaired the ELMs II Committee. He served as The St. Joe Company's executive vice president and general counsel and held similar positions with Arvida Corporation and the Disney Development Company. Bob practiced law with Steel Hector and Davis and Foley and Lardner, LLP, and lives in Jacksonville.

A TRANSFORMATIVE *Floridian*

By Vicki Tschinkel

John DeGrove believed in the essence of Florida. He saw the state as it is, with all its problems, true. But through his eyes Florida became a southern temperate and subtropical paradise, complete with palmettos, grasslands, beaches, long leaf pines, everglades and sand hills. This paradise would be inhabited by contented, educated, productive citizens who were brought together by the vision he was convinced everybody shared. Or at least was convinced that everyone could be convinced to make it happen.

He was a champion of looking at living, working, agricultural and natural spaces together. He was a champion of the Water Management Districts and Regional Planning Councils for their ability to see beyond a single unit of government. And he always thought that local governments must plan with their natural resources up front, or Florida would be lost.

Although I had known John for a very long time, and cannot imagine when I did not know him, we did serve in Tallahassee at the same time. He was Secretary of Community Affairs and I was the Secretary for Environmental Regulation during the Graham Administration. We both had the happy opportunity of sitting on the Committee that established the rankings of lands to be bought for conservation and historical purposes. This was an orderly process because so much was essential to buy, funds were limited, and high rankings were carefully studied by all staff, debated by us, and fought for.

One day (and this may be more metaphor than accurate), John jumps up and shouts, "We have to buy the Guana River!" He was beside himself at the prospect that Gate Petroleum wanted to sell this unimaginably important and pristine land, pronto. He convinced us all to jump into a van and go see it. We never went together before or after to do an on-site visit. We had "A Process." But that day we lost our pomp, circumstance, and dignity, and we didn't think twice about it.

It was the kind of day where another member, Elton Gissendanner, handed me an armadillo by the tail, wanting me to scream. So I just smiled and held it. It was the kind of day where we all got chiggers, and it was worth it for the opportunity to see the habitat, many archeological sites, and don't forget the five miles of pristine beach. The ultimate Florida, brought to you by John DeGrove.

Of course the state bought it, all 12,000 acres. Fast. It remains the best opportunity to see nature along the East Coast of Florida.

I think John liked my work, but once in a debate he wanted to ask the legislature for the moon and I thought we should try for about two sentences amended into existing law. He looked at me in his usual friendly and open way, "Vicki, you are an incrementalist!"

Nobody could say that about him. John DeGrove was transformative.

Vicki Tschinkel served as Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation under Governor Bob Graham, is past state director of the Florida Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, was senior consultant with the law firm of Landers and Parsons, and is a member of the board of directors of Phillips 66. She handles much of the day-to-day administration of the newly created Florida Conservation Coalition. But for her tenure at TNC, she has been a member of the board of directors of 1000 Friends of Florida since 1987 and currently serves as its chairman.

AN ADVOCATE *for Affordable Housing*

By Jaimie Ross

I was a law student in my twenties when I first heard of John DeGrove. He was then Secretary of the Department of Community Affairs, and had just secured Florida's role as a national leader in growth management by ushering in the landmark 1985 Growth Management Act, a comprehensive and progressive law intended to guide future development in a way that would protect Florida's natural resources and create a built environment that was sustainable. At the time, John had finished his work in Tallahassee and was on his way back to academia in South Florida, but not without putting into motion the creation of a statewide growth management watchdog organization, 1000 Friends of Florida. Little did I know that he would champion my career in housing for years to come.

It would be six years later, when I joined the staff of 1000 Friends, that my life was personally and professionally enriched by John. For a land use lawyer, the chance to work in range of John was akin to an actor having the opportunity to work with Paul Newman; each preeminent in his field, charming to a fault, and forever the family man.

But I digress from the reason I was honored with the opportunity to contribute to this memorial newsletter: John's determined promotion of affordable housing as an integral component of smart growth. Protection of Florida's natural habitat and its essential resources, such as water, were clearly the impetus for Florida's growth management laws. But protection of Florida's "human habitat" as Jim Murley, the first executive director for 1000 Friends of Florida, likes to call it, was just as much a mandatory element of comprehensive planning as the transportation and conservation elements. And John was insistent that state, regional, and local planning efforts include the production and preservation of affordable housing.

John believed that a mix of home types to meet the needs of all income levels, located in areas where existing infrastructure would support the people living in those homes, was part and parcel of smart growth. He was particularly pleased and proud that 1000 Friends of Florida initiated the coalition that spearheaded passage of the William E. Sadowski Affordable Housing Act, creating a dedicated revenue source for affordable housing in Florida.

Those who knew the Father of Growth Management know that John was emphatic that growth management be funded. The Sadowski Act raised the monies that local governments would use to implement the housing elements of their comprehensive plans. And like most of the Growth Management Act, it worked well until the political sea change in the Governor's office launched a decade of relentless efforts to unravel what had been a tightly knit program that showcased Florida as a national leader.

Beginning in 2002, in the face of those efforts to eliminate the Sadowski Act, John would say to me at each 1000 Friends board meeting, "Jaimie, darlin', give 'em hell."

Jaimie Ross has served as 1000 Friends of Florida's Affordable Housing Director since 1991 and president of the Florida Housing Coalition since 1992. She initiated and continues to facilitate the Sadowski Coalition which successfully advocated passage of Florida's dedicated revenue source for affordable housing. A nationally recognized expert in affordable housing, she serves on the board of the Innovative Housing Institute in D.C. and is the founder of the Florida Community Land Trust Institute.



John (seated, front row, right) and Gail Gearhart (in plaid jacket) at Rollins College in 1950. *DeGrove Family*

right: John and Gail in 1954. *DeGrove Family*

far right: John in the 1960s, possibly while serving on President Johnson's Douglas Commission. *Tampa Bay Times*

The Bond Between the “FATHER OF GROWTH MANAGEMENT” *and a Developer*

By Roy Rogers

John was my mentor and friend. I will miss him deeply.

Our paths crossed in the early 1980's when John was already an established legend and I was part of the Arvida team responsible for the development of Weston, a 10,500 acre mixed use community in Broward County that John had actively resisted for seven years before I arrived in 1985. My title was senior vice president and I was responsible for entitlement.

I offered a helicopter tour to the Florida Atlantic University staff to tour the site and understand the vision of this future community, and they accepted. Although located at the edge of the Everglades, the vision contained the conservation balance that overcame the concern of urban sprawl. John and his staff provided input as Weston developed over time to incorporate smart growth best management practices.

From the first John accepted me as both a developer and an environmentalist. “If the development of this huge community was essential to meet the demand for homes, then let's make sure it serves as an example as a great community,” John would say. Currently, Weston is the number one community in the nation for preserved property value.

As a token of respect and appreciation of his wonderful input, support and encouragement, Arvida funded the Dr. John De Grove eminent scholar chair at Florida Atlantic University.

Roy Rogers is the C.E.O of Roy Rogers Associates and a Special Consultant for IBI Group (Florida), Inc. He served as senior vice president of planning for Arvida, and was a member of the team that developed the community of Weston in Broward County. Over the years Roy has been active in groups ranging from the Florida Audubon Society to the Broward Economic Development Board. He also is on the Emeritus Council of The Nature Conservancy.



SCHOLAR, RESEARCH MASTERMIND *and* *Growth Management Therapist*

By Frank Schnidman

I was asked to contribute to this tribute to John by providing personal remarks and by highlighting the array of writing and research he did or managed at FAU and the Joint Center.

However, we must begin at the beginning, with his Ph.D. thesis at the University of North Carolina, *Approaches to Water Resource Development in Central and South Florida, 1945-1957*. His first conversation with Bob Graham on the University of Florida (UF) campus to discuss water management in Florida—while he was there for a teaching interview in the fall of 1957—started a life-long friendship and began the process of public engagement and service that would prove so beneficial to Florida.

In 1958 he came to UF to teach in the Political Science Department. During his six years at UF he researched and wrote about Florida Flood Control Districts, politics, negro voting, and the budgetary process. Then, in 1964 he left UF for the brand new Florida Atlantic University (FAU) Boca Raton Campus as Chairman of the Department of Political Science.

John was appointed to the National Commission on Urban Problems (Douglas Commission), and was the author of four chapters in their 1969 Report to Congress and President Johnson. That same year, he participated in the American Assembly on *The States and the Urban Crisis*, and wrote the background paper, *Help or Hindrance to State Action? The National Government*. He was enamored with the American Assembly format, and took this concept back to FAU. Through the Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems and the Institute of Government, he ultimately organized more than 50 assemblies, with all reports still available in the FAU DeGrove Research Library.

John's sustained burst of energy and enthusiasm included teaching and regular speaking engagements across the nation and overseas, as well as fostering significant research and education projects implemented through the Joint Center, established in 1972 with John as its Director. The Joint Center was dedicated to helping communities resolve complex issues raised by rapid growth and its impacts, and hundreds of government agencies and non-profit groups engaged or benefited from the Center's work. And it was John who made sure that each and every project focused on informing decision-makers and the public of options available for preserving natural systems, while



accommodating future growth and ensuring a strong economy.

Housed with the Joint Center was the FAU Social Science Research Lab, run by Dr. Lance deHaven-Smith, which conducted public opinion surveys, demographic studies and growth management surveys. In addition, the FAU Institute of Government (IOG), established in 1982, was an affiliate of the Joint Center, and under current Director Sarah Shannon, continues to forge close government/university ties to address information and training needs of state and local government.

From my first meetings with John in 1976, to my first seminar organized for John and the Joint Center (*The TDR Game: An Innovative Learning Opportunity Created Especially for Planners, Public Officials, and Developers*, January 13, 1978), to our annual American Law Institute-American Bar Association Land Use Institute, to our wonderful adventure addressing platted lands problems in Florida, to helping him teach *Politics of Planning and Growth Management*, I had a 35-year friendship with a man that was a great thinker, great academic, and when it came to state and local government, a great growth management therapist.

An attorney with 40 years of experience in land policy and land use regulatory issues as both a practicing attorney and as an academic, Frank Schnidman serves as Director of the Center for Urban Redevelopment Education (CURE) at Florida Atlantic University. He has also taught at the University of Virginia, George Washington University, the University of Miami and served for two years as a Visiting Scholar at Harvard Law School. In 1984 he was named a ULI Fellow.

Frank Schnidman and John at the Joint Center.
Joint Center for Urban and Environmental Problems

The phone rings. The course of life shifts. Such it was on a spring day in 1987 when John DeGrove rang, suggesting, rather strongly, that I send him my resume. He said that the Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems at Florida Atlantic University needed an economist planner on staff, leaving out exactly “why”—there were some ground-breaking, court challenged and complicated projects in his hand.

It is never wise to dismiss such a call, especially from such a man. So, in my hero worship and hopefulness, I signed on for a career that would expand my perspective and knowledge beyond what I had dared dream. John’s leadership and vision were compelling—to me, to Florida, and as I quickly learned—to the nation.

John was a figure on the national stage of planning and growth management. As a fifth generation Floridian he had a speaking style that was part folksy drawl, part preacher and always commanding. We called him the “father of growth management,” not just for Florida but as a circuit rider throughout the U.S.

The Joint Center staff whimsically toyed with the idea of listing “DeGrove sightings” in the monthly newsletter for he was so often on the road—taking his message of wise planning to other states, prodding them to determine where growth and development should go and should not, and then pass laws to direct it. Upon his return, he preached to us about what he learned on the road, whom he had met, and what was happening around the land.

At his invitation, leaders and creative thinkers from all over would show up to lecture at Florida Atlantic University, and then hang out at the Joint Center or at his home to discuss the national planning agenda, or lack thereof, over Apalachicola Bay oysters or Florida stone crabs. Staff got to hobnob with the most innovative leaders from around the country—those brave souls who cared about our natural resources and were willing to fight for responsible growth. They learned about our work and our management of Florida’s lands, and we learned about theirs. John was their inspiration and their champion, as he was ours.

He’d teach at Vermont Law School one summer; lecture at the University of Hawaii at other times, then traipse off to Caribbean nations for they heard his siren call



as well. His influence spread over the continent—from Florida to Alaska, Hawaii to Maine and parts beyond.

In admiration of his leadership, passion and commitment to what he believed in, the nation turned to him. In 1967 he was appointed by President Lyndon Johnson to the Douglas Commission—a national group formed to review and advise the President on urban problems. John spoke of that appointment fondly, especially in times when states’ growth management laws were under siege. And when he was accused of being a “communist,” he took that as proof that he was on point and that his critics would soon come to the table and learn differently, for optimism was his hallmark.

In 2006 John was inducted into the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners—the profession’s highest award. He set the standard for what the FAICP designation should mean. The nation’s planners mourn his passing. Rubbing shoulders with greatness doesn’t come often; I’m sure glad that when I picked up that phone in 1987, I said “yes.”

Marie L. York, FAICP, is the President of York Solutions LLC, located in Jupiter, Florida, and Board Director of the 41,000 member American Planning Association. She began her FAU career at the Joint Center as a Senior Research Associate in Economics and concluded as Associate Director in 2009, serving as Acting Director during the summer months when DeGrove retreated to his North Carolina home to write (and grow apples).

John and Marie York.
Marie York

HIS LEGACY *as a Professor*

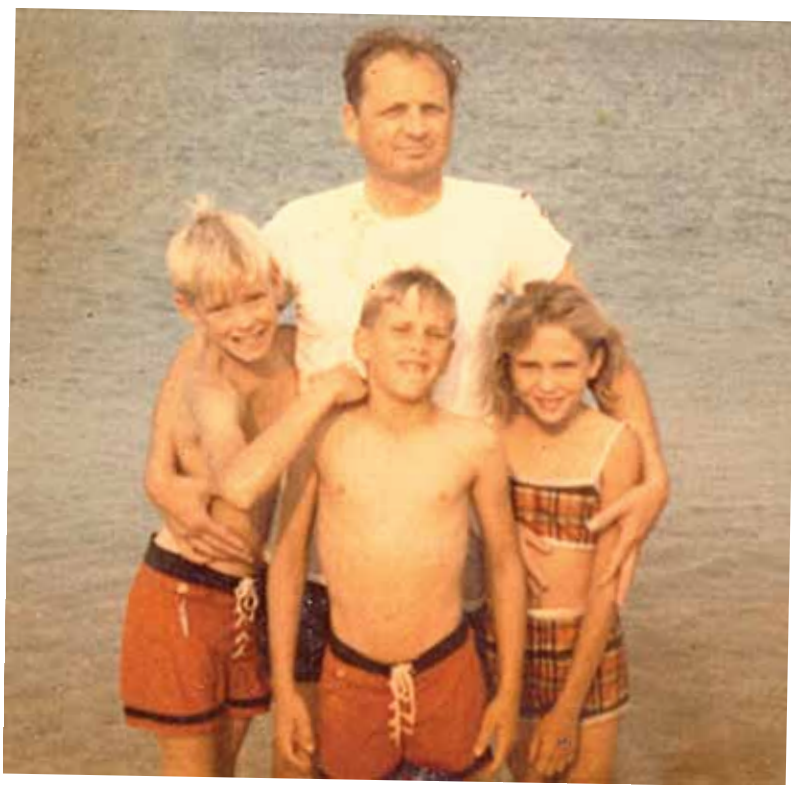
By Sheri Coven

I first met Dr. John DeGrove as a newly hired research assistant at the FAU/FIU Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems, where he was Director. I was working toward a Master's Degree in Political Science, with no future plans in mind. Dr. DeGrove encouraged me to consider a career in growth management, and directed me toward several of his classes. I gave them a try and I was hooked. From that point forward, Dr. DeGrove not only became my professor, but also my mentor and my friend.

I took every substantive growth management-related class offered by FAU. During my two years at the Joint Center, Dr. DeGrove counseled me on those course choices and ultimately agreed to chair my thesis committee. I finished my coursework and began writing my thesis, but as sometimes happens, life got in the way. My husband and I had a baby and relocated to Tallahassee. Upon leaving, I promised Dr. DeGrove that I would finish my thesis. I became a planner at the Department of Community Affairs and in spite of Dr. DeGrove's best efforts, the thesis moved down my priority list.

After several years at the Department, I was given the opportunity to staff Governor Lawton Chiles' Commission for a Sustainable South Florida. Among the Commission's many esteemed members was none other than Dr. John DeGrove. I will never forget the first meeting of the Commission. Dr. DeGrove walked into the room, gave me a big bear hug, took my hands, looked me square in the eye, and asked for my thesis. As his students knew, Dr. DeGrove could be very persistent, but he sounded more like a dad you didn't want to disappoint rather than a demanding professor. Over the life of the Commission, I couldn't walk into a meeting without handing him another draft. Seven years and one semester after I first enrolled at FAU, I walked across the stage, and Dr. DeGrove was there to present me with my diploma.

Over the years, he continued to check on me. He would often call to talk about state politics and the latest happenings in state government. When I answered the phone, I would ask him how he was. He often replied,



John and his children (l-r)
Andy, Jim and Kim, at Boca
Beach in 1966.
DeGrove Family



“Darlin, I’m fine as frog’s hair” – just one of his many famous southernisms.

When I was Executive Director of the American Planning Association’s Florida Chapter, I had the honor of escorting Dr. DeGrove and his lovely wife Gail to San Antonio, Texas, where he was inducted as a Fellow into the American Institute of Certified Planners—the highest honor a planner can achieve. That’s the last time I saw him face to face.

I was but one of many students whose lives were touched by Dr. DeGrove and I’ve heard from many of them in the past few weeks. He gave our professional lives direction and meaning and helped us understand the importance of balancing growth and the environment.

Due to his guidance, teachings, and interest in our lives, we are better planners and better people.

Sheri Coven is Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for the Florida Regional Councils Association. Previously, she was Director of Intergovernmental and Public Affairs for the Florida Department of Community Affairs and then the Agency for Workforce Innovation. She has also served as Executive Director of the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association, staffed Governor Lawton Chiles’ Commission for a Sustainable South Florida and the Florida Greenways Commission, and served on the Urban Land Institute’s Florida Committee for Regional Cooperation.

above: Sheri Coven with John at her graduation.
Sheri Coven



John and Gail (r) at the Salzburg Seminar in American Studies in Urban Planning in the mid-1970s.
DeGrove Family

John while Secretary of the Florida Department
of Community Affairs from 1983-1985.
Florida Photographic Collection



FOUNDING 1000

Friends of Florida

By Earl Starnes

My dear friend, John DeGrove, was the heart and soul of growth management in Florida. Beginning with precedent-setting 1972 and 1973 legislation, John played an instrumental role in the establishment of water management districts, state planning, and wall-to-wall regional planning agencies in our state. When tapped by Governor Bob Graham to serve as secretary of the Department of Community Affairs, John helped shepherd through to passage the Omnibus 1985 Growth Management Act for which he is most known.

Always restive, John wanted to make certain that public and private institutions were in place to plan for and protect Florida's urban and environmental resources for the well-being of present and future Floridians. When approached about creating a new "watchdog" organization to protect Florida's fledgling growth management process, John jumped at the opportunity.

Nathaniel Reed, John and I, among others, had numerous conversations with Henry Richmond who headed up 1000 Friends of Oregon. With his oral permission to use the name, we began the process of forming the second of what would become many 1000 Friends organizations around the nation.

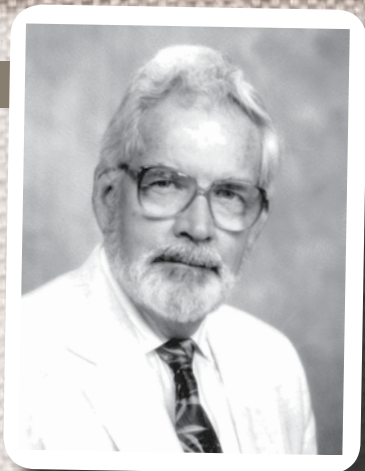
During numerous meetings with Al Hadeed, attorney and executive director of The Southern Legal Council, the founding board of the new nonprofit was nominated, including John, Nathaniel, Reubin Askew, Buddy MacKay, Carl Feiss and me. 1000 Friends of Florida was officially incorporated on the 9th day of September in 1986, with the understanding that it would serve in part as a public interest law firm, initiating or joining legal proceedings on behalf of individual citizens.

The decision made to establish an office in Tallahassee, Nathaniel and John tapped some foundations to encourage their generosity, thus providing much needed financial support. John led the board in its search for leadership and, happily, Jim Murley was selected as the first executive director. John served as 1000 Friends' president and then president emeritus for many years, continuing to work with subsequent directors Patti McKay and Charles Pattison.



The Board of Directors of 1000 Friends of Florida meeting at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables on October 18, 1988. Bottom (l to r): Lenore McCullagh, Mary Kumpe, Carol Rist, Ane Deister, Victoria Tschinkel. Top (l to r): Robin Gibson, Harry Adley, Stanley Hole, Nathaniel Reed, Jerry Sokolow, John DeGrove, Phil Lewis.

Mike Shapiro



Without John's participation and leadership, many of the financial and policy goals of 1000 Friends would not have been accomplished. Over the years, 1000 Friends of Florida has championed dozens of major administrative and appellate growth management legal cases with statewide significance, was instrumental in passage of the William E. Sadowski Act generating dedicated revenue for affordable housing, helped develop and promote Preservation 2000 and its successor, Florida Forever, which have resulted in the protection of more than 2.4 million acres of environmentally sensitive lands, and launched Florida Greenways and Waterfronts Florida.

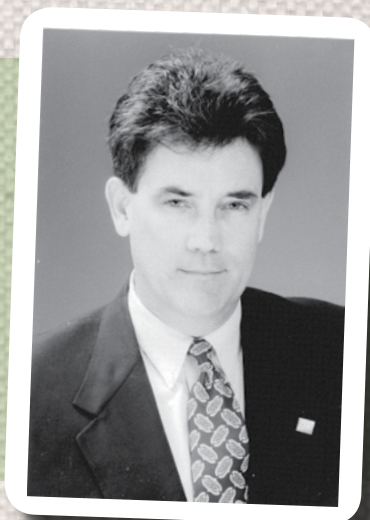
From award-winning manuals to numerous workshops and conferences, 1000 Friends has educated Floridians on how to be effective advocates for sustainable growth. Understanding the need to recognize those who make a difference, since 1989 1000 Friends has presented more than 150 awards to individuals, organizations, public-private partnerships, local governments, agencies, and/or projects that have enhanced the quality of life in their communities.

John leaves a tremendous legacy. He was a great Floridian, a wonderful teacher and a profound inspiration for those of us who love Florida and were able to share his presence and intellectual generosity.

Earl Starnes is a planner and Professor Emeritus of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning in the University of Florida. He served as State Planning director and as a Dade County Commissioner. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners, and a Fellow with the American Institute of Architects. A founding member of 1000 Friends of Florida's Board of Directors, Earl continues to serve as a Board Member Emeritus.

above: Earl Starnes

left to right: 1000 Friends of Florida directors Jim Murley (1988-1995), Patti McKay (1995-1998) and Charles Pattison (1998-present).



A CHALLENGE *for* *Florida's Future*

By Nathaniel Pryor Reed

Florida has lost a visionary leader, an eminent scholar, and a great man. I have lost a dear and trusted friend and fine compatriot.

John once described himself as an “incorrigible, incurable optimist.” As one who worked closely with him for decades I can attest to this description, and add a few more. He also was one of the most tenacious individuals I ever met, working ceaselessly to better his beloved Florida. At the same time he was incredibly pragmatic, recognizing that meaningful change requires both time and patience. Disarmingly charming yet down to earth, he never aspired to public office, preferring instead to influence generations of political leaders and planners to do the right thing.

Convinced that Florida's population would and should continue to grow, John intuitively understood the many interconnections in managing that growth in a sustainable manner. Before sprawl and smart growth even joined the nation's lexicon, he was one of the first to articulate that workable urban policy was essential to protect natural and agricultural lands. Early on he stressed the importance of creating great urban places, complete with affordable housing, effective transportation systems, a strong sense of place, and sufficient funding to achieve those goals. Recognizing the nexus between growth and water management, John was a forceful advocate for sound water policy. Decades ahead of his time, he maintained that Florida's natural and agricultural lands had intrinsic value, and that protecting the environment was, in fact, protecting Florida's economy.

As challenging as things look now for the future of Florida, it was even more daunting in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Political corruption over land deals were rampant, the Everglades burned, untreated sewage flowed freely into the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico, and the concept that developers should pay their share of costs for new infrastructure was revolutionary.



John with his beloved dog,
Annie, in 1996.
DeGrove Family

John receiving a proclamation honoring his distinguished career, presented by then-Attorney General Bob Butterworth on behalf of Gov. Jeb Bush and the Cabinet in 2001.

1000 Friends of Florida





I can assure you that, despite recent setbacks, Florida is still light years ahead of those “bad old days.”

John was instrumental in the development, passage and evolution of Florida’s major growth management, natural resource and water management initiatives. While these programs have taken a recent hit, I prefer to take a page from John’s book. Perhaps a legacy of being hospitalized for four years to recover from injuries sustained during the Second World War, the man never gave up. Anyone who knew John will remember his determination when faced with a setback. “They don’t know who they’re dealing with,” he’d

chuckle. The next day he’d be back at work, strategizing on new ways to reach his goal.

John firmly believed that growth management should be an evolving process, building on the foundation of the past. I throw down the gauntlet. Now is the time for a new generation of leaders to continue to build on John’s extraordinary foundation. Florida is worth it.

Florida has lost a champion and I have lost a great friend!

A founding member of 1000 Friends of Florida, Nathaniel Pryor Reed served as the organization’s chairman and then chairman emeritus. He served as Chairman of the Florida Department of Air and Water Pollution Control and as Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior. He chaired the Commission on the Future of Florida’s Environment which recommended Preservation 2000, the most ambitious land acquisition effort in our nation’s history. Along with Senator Bob Graham, Nathaniel recently co-founded the Florida Conservation Coalition.



above: Nathaniel Reed and John.
1000 Friends of Florida

Gail and John with cousin Bruce
DeGrove at 1000 Friends’ 2005
legislative reception.
1000 Friends of Florida

Sheri Coven, Gail and John DeGrove, and Kim
Glas-Castro at John’s induction as a Fellow of the
American Institute of Certified Planners in 2006.
Sheri Coven





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The DeGrove Family

has suggested that

contributions in Dr. John M. DeGrove's memory may be made to 1000 Friends of Florida's Dr. John M. DeGrove Memorial Fund. Contributions will support efforts to educate citizens and leaders on growth management in Florida and how to be effective participants in the process.

Dr. John M. DeGrove
Memorial Fund
1000 Friends of Florida
P.O. Box 5948
Tallahassee, FL 32314-5948



John and Gail at Rollins College
in the early 1950s. *DeGrove Family*