

Local Artist Turns Passion for Springs Into Planting Trees

August 3, 2020



Margaret Tolbert, at OSFR headquarters Rum 138 in 2019.

Photo by Jim Tatum

Margaret Tolbert shared with us her love, appreciation and understanding of the springs hidden beneath the dam waters. This is reflected not only in her words, but in her unique artwork and by her physical interaction with the cold, clear waters emerging from our aquifer. No one else can capture the beauty and essence of these unique Florida phenomena as does she. [This from our earlier post "Lost Springs" presentation by Margaret Tolbert.](#)

Kudos to Margaret Ross Tolbert for her work in helping to restore the Santa Fe River to a healthier state. Credit goes also to the Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) for their important work.

Margaret is well known to conservation and environmental groups and also for her efforts to restore the Ocklawaha River and its submerged springs. She appears on many panels and fora and also in films.

She is also a unique spokesperson for Florida's springs by way of her outstanding and prolific paintings of water and springs which are known internationally.

The following is from the latest ACT newsletter, August 2020.

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*Comments by OSFR historian Jim Tatum.
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– A river is like a life: once taken,
it cannot be brought back © Jim Tatum*

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For many of us in North Central Florida, springs are a way of life. That could not be more true for Margaret Ross Tolbert, a world-renowned artist and author, who has made springs -and their protection – her life's work.

Margaret is best known for her breathtaking abstract paintings of springs in Florida and around the world. But as her art

transformed over time to reflect the degradation that she was seeing occur at her beloved springs, Margaret began to think of ways in which she could take direct action to protect them. Knowing that restoring land to its most natural state could help improve water quality to nearby waterways, Margaret is now focusing a part of her efforts on protecting land as a way to protect the springs.

From August-December of this year, Margaret is donating a percentage of the proceeds from sales of her original artwork to ACT to help plant longleaf pine trees at ACT's Santa Fe Springs Preserve. Then, Margaret will invite her supporters out to the preserve to plant the very trees that they helped fund and to learn more about how land conservation can protect our springs and aquifer. Thank you, Margaret, for your support and your life-long dedication to teaching others about the importance of protecting Florida's water!+