

## Editorial: Cheers (not jeers)

*Published: Saturday, December 19, 2015 at 6:01 a.m.*

We've jeered plenty of politicians over the past year, along with other folks needing to be needed.

Maybe the holidays are making us soft, but we've decided to stick with only cheers today as Christmas fast approaches. With the state legislative session looming and local elections also right around the corner, we'll be overloaded with jeers again soon enough.

**Cheer:** All of the Gainesville and Alachua County groups collecting gifts and food this holiday season, for making Christmas brighter for children and others in need.

A steady stream of these groups has graced the pages of The Sun over the past few weeks, showing the care and generosity throughout our community. They include the Education Foundation of Alachua County, the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association, the Gainesville Junior League, the Gainesville Police Department, Haven Hospice, Lanard Perry and the Partnership for Strong Families.

We're surely leaving a number of organizations and individuals unmentioned, so give your own cheer to all the others engaged in these efforts.

**Cheer:** USR Systems and those who attracted the company here, for bringing quality jobs to our community.

The New Jersey-based software firm announced Wednesday it has decided to open a development center in Gainesville. The company expects to make 140 hires over the next three years for jobs paying an average annual wage of \$55,000.

Credit also goes to Mindtree, which came here in 2012 and helped bring fellow information technology companies Mobiquity and now USR Systems here. The three companies will have created a total of 800 local jobs if they meet their goals.

Others deserving of cheer for assisting in the recruiting effort include CareerSource North Central Florida, the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce and the Gainesville and Alachua County commissions.

**Cheer:** Alachua County farmers and officials, for helping promote agritourism and other activities helping rural landowners thrive.

The Sun recently reported that the county land code technically prohibits special events on rural properties, but county staff has worked with landowners on temporary permits. Commissioners will be considering a land-use amendment to officially allow these kind of activities.

They include a country music concert at a cattle ranch near Archer, weddings at a ranch along the Santa Fe River and the Farm to Family music festival that had taken place near High Springs and is now planning to move closer to Gainesville.

If these events can help small farmers make ends meet while showcasing our area's natural beauty to residents and visitors, the more the better.

**Cheer:** Former University of Florida soccer star Abby Wambach, for a storied soccer career that included a World Cup championship and two Olympic gold medals.

On Wednesday, Wambach captained the women's national team for an exhibition game in New Orleans that was the last game of her playing career. During that career, she was named six times as U.S. women's soccer player of the year and the world player of the year in 2012.

While at UF, Wambach helped the team win its first championship and led it to another final four. It's great to see a Florida Gator become one of the faces of soccer and an inspiration to both female as well as male athletes.

**Cheer:** Gainesville city commissioners, for unanimously voting Thursday to approve a review of the actions of city employees described in a Florida Department of Law Enforcement investigation.

We've written extensively about this issue over the past three weeks, so we won't belabor those points here. Instead we'll laud the commission for appropriately, if somewhat belatedly, taking action to ensure openness and transparency in the matter.

Copyright © 2016 Gainesville.com — All rights reserved. Restricted use only.