

Sponsored Links



Login | Register | Subscribe

search Go

HOME NEWS SPORTS COMMUNITY ENTERTAINMENT LIVING HEALTH CAMPUS CARS JOBS REAL ESTATE MARKETPLACE

Local News State National World Business Weather Obits Opinion Special sections Archives Forums

Alachua Free-Net dialup service soon to end

ANTHONY CLARK
Sun business editor

Alachua Free-Net was the first portal for many in Alachua County to enter the World Wide Web when it launched in September 1994, but the run comes to an end on April 30 when the nonprofit organization stops its dialup service.

Founders said the free community service run by hundreds of volunteers over the years has run its course. From a peak of more than 10,000 users several years ago, that is down to about 400. Dave Pokorey, an AFN founder and board member, said it is costly to maintain dialup servers for so few users.

Founder and board member Bruce Brashear said users have gravitated to broadband, DSL, satellite and cable uplinks that provide faster and better access.

AFN will continue to host existing Web sites, and those with e-mail accounts can keep their addresses but will need an alternate dialup service.

At least one person, who could not be reached for comment Friday afternoon, expressed concern on a community chat room about the lack of free service and the "digital divide" separating low-income residents from opportunities.

Juno and NetZero offer free dialup service but, unlike AFN, display advertising and have limited free hours. Web surfers can also get free online access at Alachua County public libraries.

Pokorey contacted GRUCom, which is offering AFN subscribers dialup for \$4.95 per month for one year. After that, the cost is the regular price of \$11.95 per month.

AFN's computer recycling program will continue through the Dignity Project, which provides refurbished computers to poor residents.

AFN launched with 3,000 preregistered users at a time when the World Wide Web, then in its infancy, was only available in Gainesville at the University of Florida, which has been connected for 20 years. With support from UF, volunteers secured 72 servers, provided technical expertise, solicited donations and equipment. Local governments provided funding and expertise.

Commercial dialup services were available in Gainesville within months.

Tallahassee Free-Net, in operation since May 1,

March 17, 2007 6:01AM
Font Size: 10

- PRINT THIS
- DISCUSS THIS
- EMAIL THIS
- SUBSCRIBE TO US

ADVERTISEMENT

**Proudly Serving Gainesville,
Alachua and Surrounding
Counties Since 1979.**

**HORIZON
REALTY OF ALACHUA
INC.**

Discuss this story

[Start or join a forum on this topic.](#)

From the forums

Latest posts:

- [Meeting!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!...](#) - johncena
- [Chris Leak](#) - biggiep (2)
- ['Sheriff struts her stuff,' a sexist hea...](#) - sfcwoodret (4)
- [Homelessness and finding work](#) - Vinividi (10)
- [Gun Nut.](#) - zip (8)

Most Read Stories:

- [House OKs bill requiring waiting time, ultrasound before abortions](#)
- [Around the Region](#)
- [Two women killed in fiery crash after leaving bar](#)
- [Area schools tackle cell phone hassles](#)
- [Man accused of stabbing girlfriend after](#)

Sponsored Links

[Gators National Champs](#)
Commemorative Championship Balls Football & Basketball set - \$375
www.hamsterdirect.com

[Florida Gators Ringtone](#)
Send this ringtone to your phone right now!
RingRingMobile.com

[Law Office of S.W. Hanson](#)
Patent Attorney in Gainesville, FL
Patent, Trademark & Copyrights
www.hansoniplaw.com

[Florida Gators Final Four](#)
2007 Florida Gators Final Four Tee Shirts, Hats, & Polos.
www.FootballFanatics.com

1993, helped start AFN. TFN will go completely out of service May 31. Naples still has a free-net service.

The community free-net movement began in Cleveland in the late 1980s as a dial-in to a hospital network for people to ask medical questions.

The Internet was very different in 1994.

"It was considered bad Internet etiquette to use the World Wide Web for commercial matters," Brashear said. "In those days, not a lot of people were using e-mail. I had a lot of people tell me this was a toy and a fad. Every day, in what I do, I depend on e-mail and I suspect most people do."

argument

Other Headlines:

- [**No county whipping boy here, please**](#)
- [**Banishing cell phones?**](#)
- [**Wii makes a splash by getting gamers involved**](#)
- [**Area schools tackle cell phone hassles**](#)
- [**Sheriff struts her stuff for fundraiser**](#)
- [**County's adult businesses booming**](#)



▼ ADVERTISEMENT ▼

Sponsored Links

[**Autism and Asperger's**](#)
Evaluation and Recommendations for the Gainesville, Florida area
www.scottpsychology.com

[**U of Florida Auto Emblem**](#)
High-end chrome Florida auto decals and hitch covers. Free shipping.
www.chromeemblems.com

[**Florida Gators Ringtones**](#)
10 Complimentary Ringtones No Credit Card Required.
www.ReliableRingtones.com

Copyright 2007, The Gainesville Sun. The information contained in the Sun Online news report may not be published, broadcast or redistributed without the prior written authority of The Gainesville Sun.



2 BR 11/2Ba
Townhouse, 1100 sq
ft, Carpet, Central
heat & air, new

3BR 2BA split plan
Florida rm, curb of
appeal, quiet,
cul-de-sac,

Life is Grand it!

PRE-CONSTRUCTION
PRICES AVAILABLE
TODAY!

BEAUTIFUL LAKE
HOUSE In
Hawthorne on
CLEARWATER LAKE
2BR 1BA high

GREAT LOCATION!
MILE RUN 1BR / 1B
960 sq. ft. Lg Floria
rm and rear

Beautiful house for
sale. 2.5 miles from
UF. 3BR 3.5BA, 240
sq ft,

[**View all top home**](#)



[Contact Us](#) | [Help Desk](#)

© Copyright 2007, The Gainesville Sun, Reproduction without consent is prohibited.