The Shape of Wekiwa



8/02/00

It-is-impossible-to-convey-in-words-the-continuity-fluidity-and-constancy-of-the-flow-of-the-Wekiva-River-from-everywhere-in-this-world-to-the-place-where-you-keep-it-confined-in-your-mind---and-your-mind-itself-a-flow-through-thing-some-talk-about-as-having-

stream-of-consciousness-while-the-river-can-never-convince-you-she-is-the-only-way-to-think-but-your-.....

problem-with-the-stream-is-that-it-never-seems-to rest-or-stop-and-even-though-you-wish-you-could-.....

always-get-non-stop-flights-to-wherever-you-fly-and-or-drive-the-results-of-never-landing-would-be-.....

catastrophic-for-your-mind-which-thinks-it-needs-a-regular-rest-you-want-things-in-their-place-neatly-.....

the-tree-in-its-bark-the-cloud-in-its-high-sky-the-swamp-percolating-into-the-aquifer—with-no-sense-of-the-

yo-yo-of-the-river-and-no-mind-of-transpiration-up-the-sky-to-meet-the-clouds-on-winds-of-dew-over-deserts-

and-oceans-to-fall-into-ice-and-wobble-the-planet-and-even- in-Antarctica-to-move-as-glacier-or-subsheet-flows-toward-the-penguin-dotted-waves-

on-currents-to-carry-Magellan-(himself-a-river)-to-sail-from-

.....main-to-mainland-all-to-

.....match- a-path-that

-may-return-on-butterfly-wings-like-the-

girl-on-a-Japanese-silk-screen-touring-across-the-skieson-silver-winged-vapor-trails---no-doubt-you-aretired-now-of-river-and-constancy the-mad-dashes-of-ligatureand-non-stop-flight.

Okay, I will give our eyes and minds space for words, if you will promise to remember that in spite of the periods and blanks, this stream is non-stop. Of course, the problem with the dashes is that they create a train of teeny consciousness cars. Whereas in the river, everything tends to dissolve so that the letters of these words should be spinning off into multiple currents and not leaving a simple or single track. And in fact, have you thought about how

each word is a temporary stoppage for thought? Take the word *Wekiva*, now, and watch how it swells and flows through these pages and into your sense of community. Sometimes it refers to the basin, sometimes to the mainstream, sometimes to all the people and plants and animals together, sometimes to the spiritual force of the

place and its history among us. When you think *WEKIVA*, think a state of mind and freedom and community.

The plants and animals and people of central Florida have a global ancestry and a global future, one grand

flight through history. Take some single sense of it—let's say *otter*—and go along on your flight until you

encounter the animal in your thoughts and don't use the six-letter word, but keep on having thoughts of the

critter for as long as you can, all the while depriving yourself of the word-stop *otter*. It is nice to know we can talk

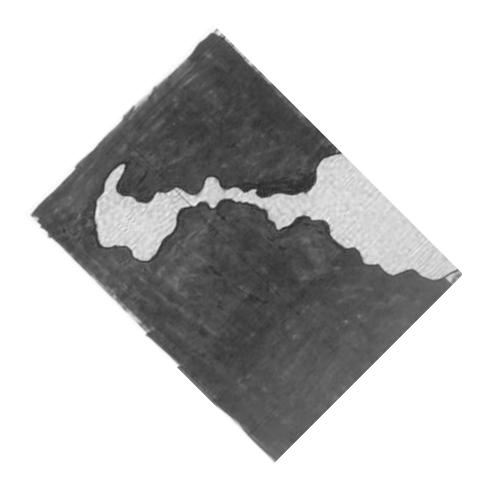
about it by using the common word of our language, but the thought swims around without stopping, whether

the word is said or the plane lands or the train chugs to a halt at the depot. Even a particular otter with a name, say Grindle, stands for non-stop-flight, a rising against all gravity, circling backward as well as forward into spirals and

asymmetries, floods and cell-soup until the pressures all balance and the rush of life is becoming.Wekiva is a joyful, un-state of mind. Each of the

fallowing varietions on it will take you for and wide
following variations on it will take you far and wide
across the landscape of nature and ideas and our human part
in it all. Wekiva runs through all the departments
of knowledge in the general education of the
global university system. It reaches
out with equanimity to all the cultures of the globe
but especially to the artists and writers of America and
Florida who have helped us to understand our river ecology
My hope in this flight of fancies is to kindle in the residents
of America and especially of central Florida an undying pride and caring for the
Wekiva
River basin that makes such a national example of how
to build a watershed community. But for those of you living
far from Wekiwa Springs and Rock Springs, there is a river of your
own home place to follow, to yield to, to enjoy and
protect. The vision is the same, an archetype
of who and how we are
leave now the double pool of Wekiwa Springs
and come with me down the meander of
stream banks and snags that drop.
from them
the pace of the river
is slower
than writing than reading
as long as you don't paddle at all let yourself go and
spend lots of energy in eye-ways
and hear-rings from the woods or
in the stream left and right
down and up across and through
the hydric hammock the cypress
watch the patterns of
light fall
the reflections of green inside the surface unsmooth
making cubes of ovate or lanceolate palmate or
oblong each cross-branch reaching to banks beyond
or settling to a creek bottom throwing up to the sun
light and river combined in the upright the leaves of
the snags growing denser each day
the water goes by steadily the light a new solar flash
each instant only the snag stays the same holds
its head up makes a right
angle becomes the static figure in a kayak

not dug out set sideways for us to climb or sit and sun to leap off in frolic or fright to swing from by tail or silk and best of all to slither over and under touching each twig and the road abanfeeling each pattern of bark doned over midstream a preparation and a stance toward baptism and migration a limpkin's soap box for harangues against the destroyers of the snail world the float pace the holy congestion of the bank trees the million little damlets holding ground and apple snail eggs. Listen in Wekiva to the long curve of her beak the fine tune of her gargle to discover your proper motion to earth.



An Aerial View of Wekiwa Springs, Tilting to Show North

This poem is dedicated to Pat and Fred Harden on the occasion of their last official meeting on the Board of the Friends of the Wekiva River, Dec. 2, 2004. God speed in your new life ventures.