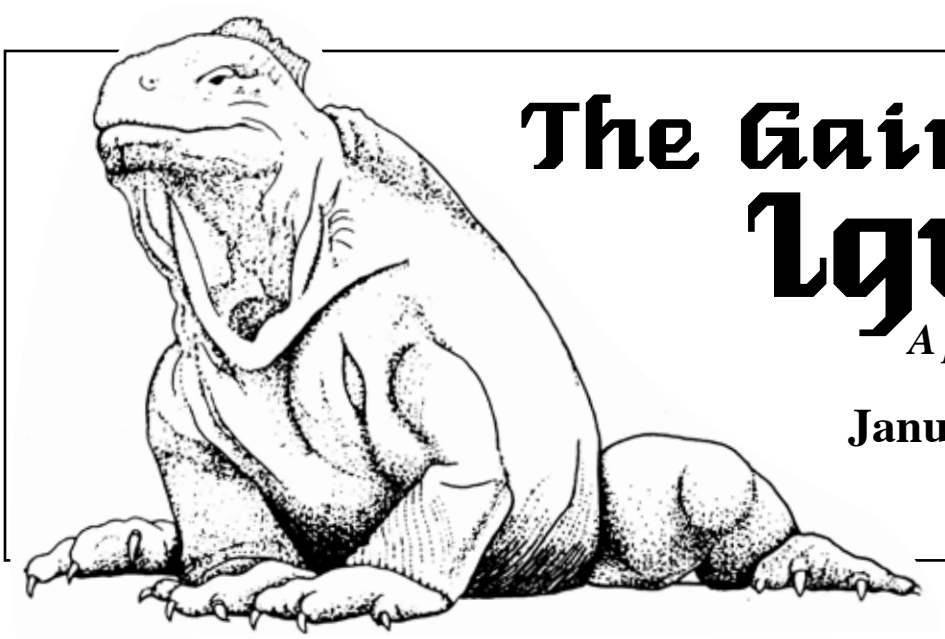

The Gainesville Iguana

A progressive newsletter

January/February 2021
Vol. 35, Issue 1

Biden's Who's Who

The federal government is complex, and these are the people who will be trying to pick up the pieces and get things moving in better directions. We wish them luck, and we hope the public will not go to sleep, but let their representatives know what is important to them.

by Joe Courter

From the New York magazine Intelligencer *Jan. 7, 2021:*

Despite President Trump's inability to accept his election loss, the Biden transition team forged ahead, announcing its picks for many cabinet spots and other major positions over the past few weeks. With a slim Senate majority secured following the runoffs in Georgia, Biden should be able to fill the cabinet as he sees fit. Below is a running list of who will be joining the executive branch come January, assuming the nominees clear the Senate confirmation process.

White House Chief of Staff: Ron Klain

Biden's first order of business was to name a chief of staff to keep the vetting and transition processes from getting bogged down in the face of Trump's recalcitrance. The chief of staff for Joe Biden when he was vice president, Ron Klain was also the Obama administration's Ebola-response coordinator during the outbreak in 2014 and 2015 — vital experience to have in a pandemic that has killed more than 350,000 Americans.

Treasury Secretary: Janet Yellen

On Nov. 23, The Wall Street Journal reported that former Federal Reserve chair Janet Yellen was Biden's pick for Treasury secretary. As the Journal noted, Yellen will not only be the first woman to lead the Department of the Treasury but the "first person to have headed the Treasury, the central bank and the White House Council of Economic Advisers,"

See BIDEN, p.16

Covid: a mental health crisis

The U.S. mental health system was already in tatters. Then came the pandemic.

by Hannah Faris, In These Times

Funding for public health has been on the decline for over a decade, eroding prevention and weakening responses to health threats. This is particularly true in state mental healthcare systems, and the harm of this disinvestment is widespread.

In Chicago, over half of city-run mental health clinics closed in 2012 alone — leaving hundreds of patients without care. This penny-pinching budget cut, which made little difference in the city's then-$8.2 billion budget, shifted patients en masse from community mental health centers to emergency rooms and correctional facilities.

Prior to 2020, one in six U.S. adults could not afford profes-

See COVID, p.20

REGULAR FEATURES

From the Publisher 3
Editors' Picks 9
And the Good News is . 10
In Memoriam 15
Oral History 18-19
Directory 21-23

Residents, Native Americans fight proposed Micanopy Dollar General

The proposed commercial building would trample on historic Native lands

by Homer "Jack" Moore

Micanopy residents showed up in force at a recent meeting of the Alachua County Development Review Committee to contest the planned construction by Concept Companies of a 9,000 square foot Dollar General convenience store at the intersection of Tuscawilla Road, the town's southern entrance off U.S. Highway 441.

Native Americans representing the American Indian Movement and the Florida Indigenous Rights and Environmental Equality organization were also in attendance. The proposed commercial building would trample on historical Native lands and portions of the battlefield of the Second Seminole War (1835-1842).

Micanopy was founded in 1821 and was contiguous with the Seminole village of Cuscawilla. Cuscawilla was the village home of Cowkeeper who is the revered founder of the Seminole Nation. But in December 1835, Seminoles objecting to forced relocation to Oklahoma and theft of their cattle began carrying out skirmishing attacks against US military targets and settlements in the area. The Battle of Micanopy taking place on June 9, 1836, was one of the largest of these: 250 Seminole warriors under the command of Chief Osceola attacked Fort Defiance in Micanopy. The Fort Defiance attack was repulsed after an hour and twenty minutes of fierce fighting.

Micanopy Town Commissioner Ginny Mance informed the DRC that the Town Commission had unanimously objected to the planned Dollar General construction. She especially noted the historical significance of the proposed development property dating from 1774 when William Bartram, an early explorer, chronicled the village of Cuscawilla. In fact the 16-acre Micanopy Native American Heritage Preserve adjoins the development property, and a Native American burial mound is within 500 yards of the planned Dollar General building.

Osceola's southeastern front at the Battle of Micanopy stands on the very ground where Concept Companies now proposes to build the commercial retail store for lease to Dollar General. This property fronts US Highway 441, a Florida Scenic Highway designated as the Old Florida Heritage Highway.

It is also adjacent to the Alachua Conservation Trust's Tuscawilla Nature Preserve. The Tuscawilla road, which leads into Micanopy, is canopied by trees. Many trees would be lost to construction.

A "Wildlife Crossing" sign presently stands at approximately the location of the proposed driveway entrance to the Dollar General.

The area is potential habitat for 10 threatened species including the gopher tortoise and the Florida sandhill crane. Flatwoods Consulting Group, an environmental survey company "... that assists clients in navigating complex environmental regulation ..." and retained by the developer concluded that the likelihood of occurrence of these species on the proposed development site would be low due to "lack of suitable habitat."

This assertion was frankly contradicted by photographs presented to the DRC of sandhill cranes and bald eagles taken within Tuscawilla Preserve. Indeed, some years before, a whooping crane had also been captured in the Preserve and transported to a breeding facility in Louisiana.

In correspondence to Alachua County Commissioners, Micanopy Mayor Joe Aufmuth pointed out that the property in question was intended to revert to a Rural Agricultural designation in a revised Alachua County Comprehensive Plan. But, because of County oversight, it was incorrectly zoned as Highway Commercial. Thus the developer was able to dodge any requirements for approval by the County Commission. Mayor Aufmuth recommended a moratorium on development along the 441 Old Florida Heritage Highway. Additionally, the DRC received a citizens' petition with over 4,000 additional signatures against the project.

Dressed in Native costume, State Seminole leader Martha Tommie seemed visibly overcome as she attempted to speak at the DRC meeting. She could only ask that the Committee show respect to her people and her ancestors. A beating drum and Native singing from outside the building was clearly audible.

Citing deficiencies in the plan proposal, Committee Member Forrest Eddleton moved for denial. But with only one other voting member present, Eddleton's motion died for lack of a second and was not accorded any further discussion.

Research the following day revealed that DRC Committee member, Beth Dodd, Eddleton's counterpart on the DRC who failed to second, was formerly employed by CHW Engineers, the engineering firm retained by the developer and the actual applicant!

Dodd worked for CHW for 3 years and 8 months before being hired by Alachua County. Dodd has worked for the county for 11 months. With Eddleton and Dodd in opposition to one another, further motions could not be sustained. Chairwoman Ivy Bell temporarily passed the gavel to Eddleton in order to offer a motion for acceptance of the development plan on condition of otherwise unspecified engagement of the developer with unspecified Micanopy stakeholders. Dodd seconded the motion to approve. The motion carried 2-1 with Eddleton dissenting.

At the DRC meeting, Micanopy residents pointed out that Dollar General was in effect expropriating Micanopy's neighborhood roads as part of its business plan. It seems here that through a process of regulatory capture and governmental misfeasance, if not malfeasance, outside developers have now once again succeeded in ripping off the citizens of Florida, not to mention the members of the Seminole Nation.

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We thank you very much!

From the publisher

Fear mongering

Joe Courter

They don't want everyone to vote. They engineer the system, and will make alterations to the system, so that the folks they don't want to vote have a harder time, or simply can't vote. Or if they can vote, they can not, as an unfavored interest group, win. That is what gerrymandering and voter suppression is all about. Blatantly in the beginning of this country, no women, no Blacks when it came to voting. They even tried to have voting restricted to just property owners (themselves). Maybe that is still what it is all about. The rich, the corporations, they are the owners. They want to stay in command.

What we are seeing with the red-baiting going on now is not new. These tactics were used against the New Deal and the concerted effort to help poor folks after the Depression. Roosevelt was too popular for their tastes, and not in their financial interest. Later, organizers who wanted to empower Black folks to vote in the fifties and sixties, who wanted to break the segregation and economic oppression, and who were using the power of the vote to do that, had to be put down. Even into the universities, as with the University of Florida with the notorious Johns Committee, created to track down those who would dare advocate for social and economic justice, who believed in civic rights for all – those people were seen as a threat to "their" system. Root them out, vilify them. Call them Communists or Socialists

This fear of the evil Left is culturally entrenched in the way it is talked about historically, internationally, and especially as the lurking monster of a totalitarian future ("... the end of America"). How far that can drive people over the edge was just seen on Jan. 6 in D.C. In the service of a delusional authoritarian trying to whip up a coup, an organized mob action invaded the Capital Building. Perhaps coincidentally but significantly in my book, as they first entered the doors at one point, a visible sign read "The Real Invisible Enemy is Communism." People are conditioned to hate taxes and hate big government. There is a libertarian mentality of not giving anyone a free ride, that they just need to work harder. Systemic racism, systemic poverty and lack of opportunity is off their radar of concern. Programs that use government money to help people are abhorrent to them. Thing is, programs that help people who need help are popular with both people who need help AND the people who prioritize trying to get those people help. And there are a lot of those people, and if they were to all vote, well ... there's the problem they worry about.

I am on the side of those folks who have and are leading the fight to help the poor, to increase human and civil rights, to have disenfranchised people step up, organize in their own interests, and yes, to vote. To my mind, that is the participatory part of participatory democracy. The way I understand the Constitution, it gives us the opportunity, maybe even the obligation, to work for our betterment as a society. Many aspects of our electoral system right now are not optimal. We do not get the best candidates in that it pre-selects those that can succeed in that hugely expensive electoral process, either by raising tons of money or having tons of money. That goes for both getting elected and staying there. Many are quite insulated from the struggles of the poor and disadvantaged, and the ranks of the those people is growing by leaps and bounds with the onset of the pandemic. And unfortunately many of the disadvantaged have been seriously deluded and confused by both corporate media and unhinged from reality due to a social media phenomena which has trumped science and rational thought. The election is over, but the polarized instability remains. Yet there is a great window for organizing, because we need to help one another in this period of pandemic stress.

The victory of Biden/Harris, and getting control of the agenda in the Senate (thank you Georgia!) are a start in a transition to saner policies. Whether it becomes transformational is not on them, it is on us, to try and push to create a more just society. The forces of fear will not be going away. We have just seen first hand how fragile this democracy is. Replacing fear with hope, and arrogance with empathy, is part of the task that lies ahead. Stay healthy, be smart, see you in March.

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Update on Seminary Lane: Judge's final order/ruling

by Janice Garry

In the last *Iguana*, I wrote that a group of citizens was involved in dissenting against a Gainesville city approval of a multi-building, multi-parking garage development for student apartments in the center of the Seminary Lane neighborhood.

We had filed an Administrative Hearing Appeal. Of note, this neighborhood was where African Americans had businesses, a school, mostly single-family homes and a thriving cultural epicenter.

A series of events, capped by the demolition of affordable housing in 2009 diminished the vibrancy of the neighborhood. A promise of rebuilding affordable housing was not kept. In 2020, the city approved a plan for student housing. A group of Seminary Lane residents and concerned citizens took the city and the developer to court, citing breaches in the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code.

We opined that the project did not fit the character of the neighborhood and broke specific criteria pertaining to traffic control, building access and architectural features. Hearings took place. We awaited the judge's ruling.

On Dec. 29, 2020, the Administrative Hearing Officer, aka, judge, produced her Final Order. There were wins and losses for both sides.

The development project was approved with modifications. The largest building is required to have modifications to entrances on each side for public access. Architectural details must be included.

A smaller building, next to the historic district on the south side of the development, was dismissed. However, the developer may re-submit modified plans to meet the criteria for bordering a historic district.

There are differing thoughts in the Seminary Lane leadership group on how hard those two changes will be to make, but the re-design of the smaller building seems prohibitive and likely would decrease the number of rental units allowed, thus decreasing profitability.

Our hope is that the cost of redesign, the decrease in profitability, the current over-built student housing market and the increased cost of construction due to coronavirus repercussions would dissuade the project.

On the other hand, in its current state, the developer could go ahead with building those parts of the project that were approved, if the entrances to the large building were made. Only time will tell. Fingers crossed.

Yesterday leadership of the Seminary Lane appeal met to discuss the ruling and plans going forward.

We recognized that Seminary Lane is one project in a line-up of large, mostly student projects that involve a process with lack of citizen notification or opportunity for input.

Back in 2017, then City Manager Anthony Lyons changed the approval process so that if a project did not require exception to the Land Development Code, it could be approved by city staff, within the confounds of their office, without input from interested parties or citizens.

The Seminary Lane project was approved by that process. Codes, like so many things, are subject to interpretation. But there is no opportunity for discussion under the current process. Anonymous stamps of approval are made in the Office of Sustainable Development, signed off by the director, and voila! A massive four building complex with two parking garages is born in the belly of a quiet neighborhood.

Our attorney tells us that Gainesville is virtually the only city in Florida to have such an amputated system. Alachua County has a process for input. The current system is a part of the heritage of city management that favored developers over citizens. Going forward, it is our quest to return to citizen input for livability and compromise for new projects.

Adding to the unfairness of the current

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system, the city has spent over $100,000 during this appeal. Citizen donors have contributed over $15,000 for the appeal. The ONLY opportunity for meaningful citizen input was the appeal process. We've also spent from March 2020 through December 2020 providing input that could have happened in a pre-project approval city meeting with government and citizens in a discussion. When there are so many needs, this is a disappointing use of time and resources.

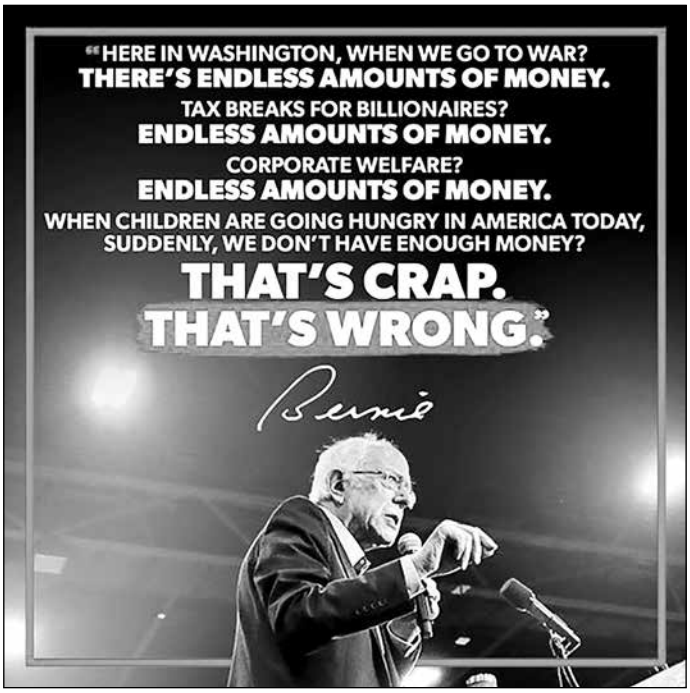
What's democracy to do? We intend to keep our watchful eyes on the Seminary Lane project should it move forward. We're going to follow the review process for changes required by the judge. We're going to voice our opinion if the building changes do not, in our view, meet the Land Development Code criteria. We're going to keep local citizens informed. We're going to talk with city commissioners about the need for process changes that can be written into the current review of the Comprehensive Plan for future projects. We're going to ask for a process that stipulates that projects over a specified size must have opportunity for citizen input.

We call on the Gainesville City Commission to reform its process so that residents have a meaningful ability to participate in all decisions affecting the future of their community.

What are you going to do? In the context of an abhorrent, national assault on democracy, it is my belief that we must each step forward and be involved in our communities, in our democracy.

We are grateful to John Lewis to put it so succinctly "Democracy is not a state, it is an act." Ambivalence to each other and our government is part of what got us in this condition. Attention to the needs of our fellow citizens and involvement in our communities will get us out.

We have over 140 interested citizens who receive periodic updates on the Seminary Lane project. We will need folks to send emails to local officials, attend occasional meetings, stay informed and be willing to act when necessary. At this time we do not need funds. If you would like to be a part of this effort, contact Janice Garry at janice.garry@gmail.com. Thank you so much for caring.



Updates from the Civic Media Center

by Joe Courter

The Civic Media Center is still in a holding pattern awaiting the ability to safely open up.

The Free Grocery Store is still using the space for their food distribution twice a week. JoJo Sacks, our coordinator, has been doing a great job with setting up various online events, handling the sales of Slingshot Organizers, as well as working with and helping keep the CMC Board informed as to what's going on.

Various fundraising efforts have also been successful using social media such as Facebook for birthday fundraisers. Big thanks to *Iguana* subscribers who have been generous, as subscriptions/donations over $20 are split 50/50 with the CMC.

Support the 501(c)3 nonprofit CMC; we still have rent and utilities to pay. Use the CMC PayPal at paypal.me/cmc4ever or good old snail mail with a check to CMC, 433 S. Main St., Gainesville, FL 32601. Future and past events are on our Facebook page.

On Zoom, we have upcoming volunteer meetings on Jan. 14 and 28 at 5:30pm, and a program on DIY Art Spaces at 7pm on Monday, Jan. 18. Email coordinators@civicmediacenter.org with any questions.

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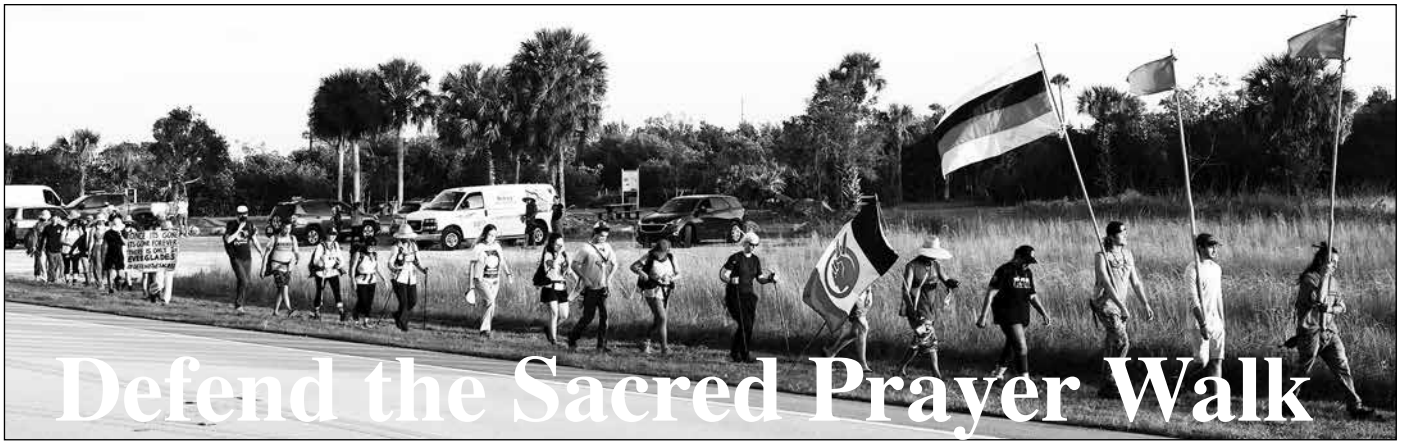

Defend the Sacred Prayer Walk

Photo by Lisette Morales

by Vickie Machado

Saturday, Jan. 2 proved to be a clear Everglades morning as a handful of participants gathered by the Trail Indian Baptist Church at the east entrance to Loop Road off Tamiami Trail.

By 8am, the few people soon grew into a crowd of several dozens — all with masks, keeping their distance — but with the specific purpose of praying for the land and defending the sacred. Organized by Betty Osceola, a grandmother in the Panther Clan, the event was a prayer walk that would span two days and 36 miles.

While walkers were intent about praying for the Everglades, many had a particular issue on their mind. Weeks earlier, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced it would transfer regulating and permitting power to Florida's Department of Environment Protection through the State's assumption of the federal Clean Water Act section 404 permitting authority. In other words, dredging and filling permits — the same that paved over much of the wetlands throughout the state, replacing the sawgrass with concrete — would be in the State's control. As many environmentalists note, this is the same State that failed to fully address issues concerning red tide and cyanobacteria among other concerns like Everglades water flow and springs restoration.

One Florida journalist called this an early Christmas present for developers, who would benefit tremendously from DEP's lax oversight. (*See Journalist Craig Pittman's Florida Phoenix commentary "EPA boss plays Santa for Florida developers" (December 24, 2020). https://www.floridaphoenix.com/2020/12/24/epa-boss-plays-santa-for-fl-developers/)*

The issues surrounding this transfer of power did not stop at permitting. According to organizers of the walk, Florida's 404 Assumption redefines the definition of Indian Territory/Country at the objection of the Indian Tribes in Florida. Such actions prove incredibly harmful to both the land and those deeply connected to it. A transfer of power like this undermines tribal sovereignty while diminishing the size of tribal lands. Taking away the land takes away the history, culture, and ultimately, the people who find their identity intricately woven into the Everglades.

With the weight of these power transfers heavy on their hearts, Osceola gathered the walkers in a circle — roughly 60 people in all — to collectively pray for the journey ahead.

Following the lead flags positioned at the front of the line, five dozen walkers lined up two by two with specific instructions: to be open to the world around them. Some carried signs or donned bandanas that read "defend the sacred" or "protect the land, proteger la tierra," while those camping opted for backpacks full of camping supplies.

Walkers proceeded in silent prayer heading west on Tamiami Trail, all for the sake of the Everglades and to collectively oppose Florida's 404 Assumption.

Like other prayer walks, it was important to keep the line tight, evenly spaced, and orderly in an effort to promote the flow of good energy and maintain the strength of the flag bearers.

Along the way, Osceola educated the group about specific areas — most notably a "temporary road" to Raccoon Point Oil Well that has been around for over 50 years. Such accounts make many think twice about when the State starts or approves a project in the glades. Eventually by mile ten, shoes came off and a handful of the walkers took to walking barefoot, grounding themselves in the earth while being attentive to the sights and sounds around them.

While the total number of walkers fluctuated, the entire event attracted close to 100 people over the course of the weekend. With such support, this walk was more than a protest. It was an invitation to join a conversation — a form of solidarity with those who live on the land and a way to recognize the physical as well as the spiritual importance of the river of grass.

Ultimately, the walk was a reminder that as residents of Florida, we are connected to the glades, and most of all, we are connected to each other.

For those of you willing to take action, please consider vocalizing your opposition to Assumption 404 by emailing the EPA at 404Assumption-FL@epa.gov, Florida Commissioner Fried at Nikki.Fried@FDACS.gov, or contacting your senators and congresswomen/men.

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Food Not Bombs Gainesville re-organizes in solidarity with community

by Food Not Bombs Gainesville

Food Not Bombs Gainesville, an all-volunteer movement that receives donations and recovers food that would otherwise be discarded, re-organized in December and is now sharing fresh and prepared food with folx in and around downtown Gainesville on a weekly basis.

FNB is rooted in three principles:

1. the food we share is always vegan or vegetarian and free to everyone, and especially unhoused, marginalized and vulnerable folx
2. our local chapter is fully autonomous and makes decisions using the consensus process
3. FNB is not a charity and is therefore dedicated to social change in alignment with radical mutual aid theory and practice

GNV FNB's core values demand justice for all. We tolerate no discrimination towards any race, gender or sexual identity, actively work on our own internalized biases, and help educate one another through a call-in culture rather than call-out culture.

As FNB in Gainesville continues to mobilize, each weekly food share will be announced on our Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/foodnotbombs.gnv.fl) before distribution. A food share will be scheduled each week and we advise the community to visit our Facebook page for our weekly schedule. Volunteers are always welcome to cook a vegetarian/vegan dish that can be shared and/or dropped off on distribution day. Prospective volunteers can contact organizers via Facebook or by email (foodnotbombsgnv@gmail.com) and discuss immediate needs as well as discuss FNB's commitment to following critical COVID-19 protocols.

Further, FNB is always collecting donations of herbs, spices, bulk rice, beans, dry goods (no animal products, please!), to-go-containers, face masks, gallon-size bags, socks, travel-size hygiene items (e.g. soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, hand sanitizer, sunscreen, lip balm), menstrual products, condoms, blankets, hand warmers, and cash donations for various supplies. Please message/email us to coordinate delivery.

Food Not Bombs was born nationwide in May 1980 specifically to protest the Seabrook Nuclear power station in New Hampshire. The first full meal was shared outside the Federal Reserve Bank on March 26, 1981 during a stockholders meeting of the Bank of Boston to protest the exploitation of capitalism and investment in the nuclear industry. In Gainesville, where FNB has been active since at least the 2000s, the chapter is dedicated in resisting racist and oppressive systems manufactured to systematically exploit black, brown, and other oppressed folx - a system that further denies the same folx access to food security. Our vision is to empower our community to take bold action, exercise control, implement mutual aid, and create dual power outside the non-profit and governmental systems that cannot be depended on as part of the solution.

Come join us as we share food and solidarity for and with all!

The Gainesville Free Grocery Store is a mutual aid project hosted by the Civic Media Center.
We aim to provide healthy and accessible food to our community and to support food justice in the greater Gainesville area.

For more info:

Facebook: freegrocerystore
Web: https://www.facebook.com/GNVFGS
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GRACE Marketplace integrates Animal Welfare Program, co-sheltering into regular shelter operations, programs

by Pete Monte, Animal Welfare Coordinator, GRACE Marketplace

January 2020 marked the beginning of a two-year demonstration project funded by the Wagmore Foundation to establish infrastructure, policy, and procedure to make GRACE Marketplace the first "animal-friendly" low-barrier homeless shelter in the region.

A community partnership of local non-profit organizations including St. Francis Pet Care, the Humane Society of North Central Florida, and the Home Van Pet Care Project have joined GRACE with the common goal of improving access to services for people without housing and their companion or assistance animals.

Co-sheltering people and animals is an emerging practice at the intersection of social services and animal welfare, founded on the principle that the human-animal bond is valuable and worth preserving through times of homelessness.

Studies on this relationship highlight positive impacts such as physical, psychological, and social support for people and their animals. As a result, commitment to their animals ultimately leads people experiencing homelessness to put the needs of their animals, who most view as family, before their own. Animal related barriers to ending homelessness are not limited to basic needs but exist throughout many aspects of life and require a comprehensive and coordinated approach in navigating or eliminating them altogether.

The Co-Sheltering and Animal Welfare Program compliments regular shelter services at GRACE by providing animal accommodations for people entering emergency shelter. Overnight and day-use kenneling in addition to a food and supply bank are meant to meet many basic and immediate needs for our guests.

A monthly on-site veterinary clinic is provided by St. Francis Pet Care to provide basic veterinary care including examinations, vaccinations, deworming, microchipping, preventive medication and more.

The Humane Society of North Central Florida provides similar services off-site and includes emergency veterinary care. Both organizations provide spay/neuter services and receive significant support from PetSmart Charities, the largest financial supporter of animal welfare in the United States.

Among practitioners of co-sheltering, dedicated staff is a unique program feature. At GRACE, the Animal Welfare Coordinator is responsible for coordinating all animal services, providing oversight of animal welfare, and ensuring the health and safety of staff, guests, and visitors. Additionally, the Animal Welfare Coordinator offers outreach and education including counseling on topics such as nutrition, behavior, and responsible ownership.

As more communities experiment with co-sheltering and begin to challenge the "no pets allowed" culture within social services, GRACE has committed to adopting the model after less than a year.

General outcomes of the Co-Sheltering and Animal Welfare Program for 2020 include dozens of people accessing critical shelter or housing and many more receiving supportive services. Thousands of pounds of pet food have been distributed and upwards of 100 animals have received veterinary care or some beneficial intervention. There were many contributing factors to a successful first year, but this endeavor and its impacts would otherwise not be possible without the generous support of the Wagmore Foundation.

All inquiries contact the Animal Welfare Coordinator at:
pmonte@gracemarketplace.org

Editors' picks: News that didn't fit

- **A progressive wish list for 2021**
  by Bill Lueders / *The Progressive* / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1159
  There is reason to be optimistic that 2021 will present opportunities for progressive change. Americans who support progressive ideals should make specific demands of Biden, including no pardons for Trump, eliminating the Electoral College, ending endless wars, and reforming the criminal justice system.
- **Bernie Sander's five-year war**
  by Matt Karp / *Jocobin* / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1160
  The Sanders project was among the most significant left political events of the twenty-first century, linking for the first time minimal but foundational socialist demands to a base of millions in the nerve center of global capitalism. This (long) article discusses how and why Bernie Sanders lost the Democratic primary, and where we can go from here.
- **How Biden should investigate Trump**
  by James Fallows / *The Atlantic* / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1145
  Trump's misdeeds and destructive acts are legion. The new president should focus on these three: A crimes commission, time for triage, and corruption vs. corrosion.
- **Interview with Edward Snowden (video)**
  by John Stossel / *Stossel TV* / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1154
  Stossel once was unsure if Edward Snowden -- who leaked documents showing that the NSA spied on Americans -- was a hero or a traitor who had made us all less safe. His decision? Snowden's a hero.
- **Iran in the crosshairs: Tracing overt and covert action**
  by Eric Walberg / *CovertAction Magazine* / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1148
  The assassination of Iran's top nuclear scientist complicated efforts to normalize relations with Iran under a new administration. Walberg contrasts the republican and democratic positions toward Iran while tracing historical and recent events.
- **On not meeting Nazis halfway**
  by Rebecca Solnit / *Literary Hub* / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1147
  Why is it so hard for Democrats to act like they actually won?
- **Ron DeSantis is TNR's 2020 Scoundrel of the year**
  by Jeb Lund / *The New Republic* / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1146
  As an heir to Trumpism, the Florida governor has concealed the severity of the coronavirus pandemic and fomented a depraved indifference to human life.
- **The case against industrial animal argiculture in 10 statistics**
  by Dayton Martindale / *In These Times* / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1158
  The pandemic has slowed the growth of meat consumption. Scientists say we need to keep that trend going. No industry, perhaps excluding fossil fuels, has done more damage to the Earth and its inhabitants than animal agriculture. It is the largest single devourer of land; a polluter of air, water, and soil; and – from swine to avian flu – a regular source of illnesses.
- **The upcoming battle over U.S. student debt cancellation**
  by Eli J. Campbell / *Open Democracy* / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1157
  On the first day of his administration, Biden can issue an executive order to immediately cancel 92 percent of student debt. Yes, Biden has the legal authority to liberate 42 million people and their families from the burden of student debt with the stroke of a pen. If he refuses, organized debtors are preparing to strike.
- **We underestimate the far right at our own peril**
  by Benjamin L. McKean / *The Atlantic* / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1155
  The Jan. 6 riot of Trump supporters at the US Capitol will likely be a radicalizing event for the far right. We shouldn't underestimate their ability to cause more death and destruction in the aftermath.

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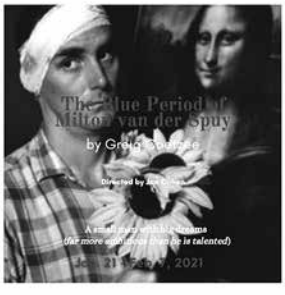

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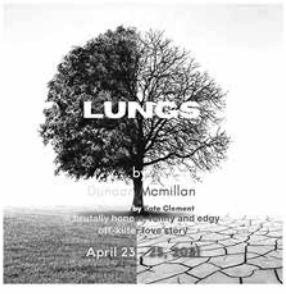

And the good news is ...

'We did it, sisters': Argentina Senate votes to legalize abortion

by Nicolás Misculin

This article was originally published by Reuters on Dec. 30. See more at reuters.com.

Argentina's Senate voted on Wednesday to legalize abortion, a first for a big country in Latin America and a triumph for women's rights campaigners achieved over the visceral objection of the Catholic Church.

Abortion is extremely rare in a region where the Church has held cultural and political sway for centuries. Previously, it was allowed on demand only in Communist Cuba, tiny Uruguay and parts of Mexico.

The fiercely contentious vote was held at 4:00 a.m. after a marathon debate that lasted through the night. In a vote of 38-29 with one abstention, the Senate backed the government proposal to allow terminations through the 14th week of pregnancy. The lower house had already approved it this month.

As the result was read out, a crowd of thousands of people who had supported the bill erupted in cheers outside the Senate building in Buenos Aires, waving the green flags that represented their campaign. Green smoke rose in the dawn light above the crowd.

"This has been a struggle for many years, many women died. Never again will there be a woman killed in a clandestine abortion," said Vilma Ibarra, the author of the law and legal and technical secretary for the presidency, who wept as she spoke to reporters after the result.

"We did it sisters. We made history. We did it together. There are no words for this moment, it passes through the body and the soul," tweeted Monica Macha, a lawmaker with President Alberto Fernandez' center-left ruling coalition.

Fernandez himself reacted moments later: "Safe, legal and free abortion is law. Today we are a better society that broadens rights for women and guarantees public health."

But Pope Francis - himself an Argentinian - reflected the Church's opposition in his own tweet sent on Tuesday before the Senate debate: "The son of God was born discarded to tell us that every person discarded is a child of God."

After the vote, thousands of the bill's opponents dispersed, wiping away tears as a speaker from a makeshift stage told them: "We are witnessing a defeat of life. But our convictions do not change. We are going to make ourselves heard."

One of them, Sara de Avellaneda, told Clarin newspaper: "I came because I had to be here. We are not invisible. Not everything is a green tide. This law is unconstitutional and its implementation is not going to be easy."

The ruling could set the tone for a wider shift in conservative Latin America where there are growing calls for greater reproductive rights for women.

"Adopting a law that legalizes abortion in a Catholic country as big as Argentina will energize the struggle to ensure women's rights in Latin America," said Juan Pappier, a senior Americas researcher at Human Rights Watch.

"Although there will certainly be resistance, I think it's fair to predict that, as it occurred when Argentina legalized same sex marriage in 2010, this new law could have a domino effect in the region."

Until now, Argentine law had allowed abortion only when there was a serious risk to the health of the mother or in cases of rape. Pro-choice groups argued that criminalizing abortion harms women from the most vulnerable groups. Argentina's Health Ministry says more than 3,000 women died from illegal abortions from 1983 to 2018.

The Catholic church argues that abortion violates the right to life.

Rise from the ashes of 2020 with Florida Coalition for Peace & Justice

by Kate Ellison

Everyone is asking, plotting, and planning what's next. It's a new year, we have a new president, and a vaccine to push back the virus that has nearly paralyzed us for months.

Astrologically, the Age of Aquarius finally dawned on Winter Solstice 2020. In 2021 we will be able to gather together, not to go back to normal, but to move forward with new vision and renewed determination.

The Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice has long hosted annual gatherings of movement groups from throughout the Southeast (and nationally) to plan actions, provide education, and support smaller groups in activities they are creating. FCPJ is ready for everyone to hop off Zoom and meet in person!

FCPJ has been a leading peace and justice organization since 1982, linking activists across the state. Born in Orlando, the organization moved around for nearly a decade, networking and participating in actions. Then, in 1994, the Geiger family generously donated 14 acres of their land in Bradford County as a meeting facility for peace activism and youth.

Their intention was always to provide space for peace education – a place for kids to learn the essential skills of peaceful conflict resolution and respect for each human being and the planet.

Before the pandemic, FCPJ hosted a Peace Camp for children of the Immokalee farm workers, many of whom came back year after year as they grew up. We are envisioning new peace camps (perhaps this summer) utilizing the 2100 square foot meeting hall and kitchen, indoor and outdoor showers, plenty of space for games.

Even during the pandemic, we recently hosted a memorial for Karen Smith, suddenly taken from her prison resistance actions. About 50 people were able to safely gather outside, share a meal and a bonfire, and find the inspiration to move forward without her.

Because we are land-based, the value of protecting the environment is central. Climate justice has to be the foundation for all forward movement. No more toxic prisons, no cancer alley, no lead pipes for drinking water, no polluted neighborhoods, no Nestle. Obviously.

FCPJ is growing and building community. We have always had tent camping for events, and now we offer a few RV hookups for short visits or staying for the winter. Movement groups can rent the space for gatherings of up to 100 people. There are two eco-friendly homes on the land, where residents live, garden, and work on FCPJ projects. See Florida4peace.com.

National coalition of 551 groups urges Biden to stop throwaway plastics that kill, injure marine life

With plastics pollution rising and recycling in decline, a coalition of 551 environment and health groups called on President-Elect Joe Biden Tuesday to shut down production of throwaway plastics, from single-use water bottles to foam, take-out food containers.

In an eight-point "Presidential Plastic Action Plan" unveiled in an online conference Tuesday, the Plastic Pollution Coalition urged the incoming administration to stop expansion of plastic production facilities and make use of up-to-date science and technology to assess the safety of plastic products in the environment and for humans.

It also calls on Biden's team to direct the federal government, one of the nation's largest consumers of products, to stop buying single-use plastic items such as disposable water bottles, disposable shopping bags, plastic straws and polysterene foam containers, and to stop subsidizing producers of plastics. The coalition wants to promote widespread use of reusable and refillable containers, such as cloth shopping bags and durable water bottles.

The coalition, organized under the hashtag #PlasticFreePresident, includes several groups based in or with chapters in Florida, including the Center for Biological Diversity, Riverkeepers, and Surfrider Foundation.

"President Biden can use today's plan as a blueprint," said Julie Teel Simmonds, senior attorney with the Arizona-based Center for Biological Diversity, adding that Biden and his team have signaled support for the goals. "The petrochemical industry is not taking responsibility but instead is pushing a massive expansion."

"The problem is getting much worse very quickly," said Oregon U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, sponsoring legislation to "Break Free From Plastics." "Our planet cannot afford inaction." Only 8 percent of plastics are recycled, while the rest is burned in incinerators, buried in landfills, or is floating free in the world's oceans, Merkley said.

Angela Howe, legal director of California-based Surfrider Foundation, said 11 million metric tons of plastic waste reach the oceans every year and do not decay there. Another 12.6 million kilograms of plastic trash is exported to Malaysia, said environmental engineer Jan Dell, founder of Last Beach Cleanup based in California. Each American generates n average about 216 pounds of plastic waste each year, Dell added.

Sharon LeVigne of Louisiana and Dianne Wilson of Texas said plastics plants pollute the air and water of neighboring poor, minority communities in which they typically are built, and the pollution sickens residents, they said.

Pete Myers, adjunct professor at Carnegie Mellon University and founder/chief scientist of Environmental Health News, said most plastics have not been adequately tested for long-term effects on human health, while some contain ingredients found to disrupt male hormones and decrease sperm count.

Florida, with 1,350 miles of coastlines along the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean, could play a big role in one of the recommendations: to reduce the amount of plastic fishing line and other plastic fishing waste that resides in nearshore waters and often chokes or ensnares marine animals and sea birds.

According to an analysis by Oceana, an ocean-advocacy group, Florida and its neighboring states find plastic trash in more dead and maimed marine animals – chiefly rare manatees and sea turtles — than any other region of the country.

Recreational, monofilament fishing line is the top culprit, according to data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Like the Plastic Pollution Coalition, Oceana is calling on the Biden administration to reverse key cutbacks in air-quality and water-quality regulations ordered by President Trump and to vigorously enforce the Endangered Species and Marine Mammal Protection acts.

"We're really just asking President Biden to enforce the laws that we have," Simmonds concluded. "It's been backwards too long and I'm optimistic this administration can set us on the right course."

The speakers acknowledged that Florida state government has not acted to ban single-use plastics but has prohibited local governments concerned about plastics pollution from adopting local bans.

Future generations are not going to ask what political party you were in. They are going to ask what did you do about it, when you knew the glaciers were melting.

- Martin Sheen

House for Rent in Community

Eco-friendly home on the Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice land (14 acres), ECO 1 will be available Feb. 1st. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath. Rent is affordable, with the requirement of 5 hours of work per person per week on FCPJ projects.

Contact Shawna Doran, 352-871-1995 or write to us:
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The Chicago 7 vs. Aaron Sorkin: Not a Netflix movie

by Gary Gordon

In 1969 the Federal government put eight men on trial and those eight men put the Federal government on trial. The eight men, officially "David Dellinger et al.," were anti-war protestors charged with conspiracy to cross state lines to incite riots at the Democratic Party Convention in Chicago in 1968.

To the prosecutors, it was a criminal trial. To the defendants and their lawyers it was a political trial: they were there to put the war on trial as they had been in Chicago to challenge the Democratic Party's support for the war.

Recently, Netflix produced an Aaron Sorkin movie "The Chicago Seven." I read about the trial as it happened and have studied it since. I was hoping, given the transcripts, news footage, books and contemporaries (like Rennie Davis and Bobby Seale) still available to interview that Sorkin would get it right.

He didn't.

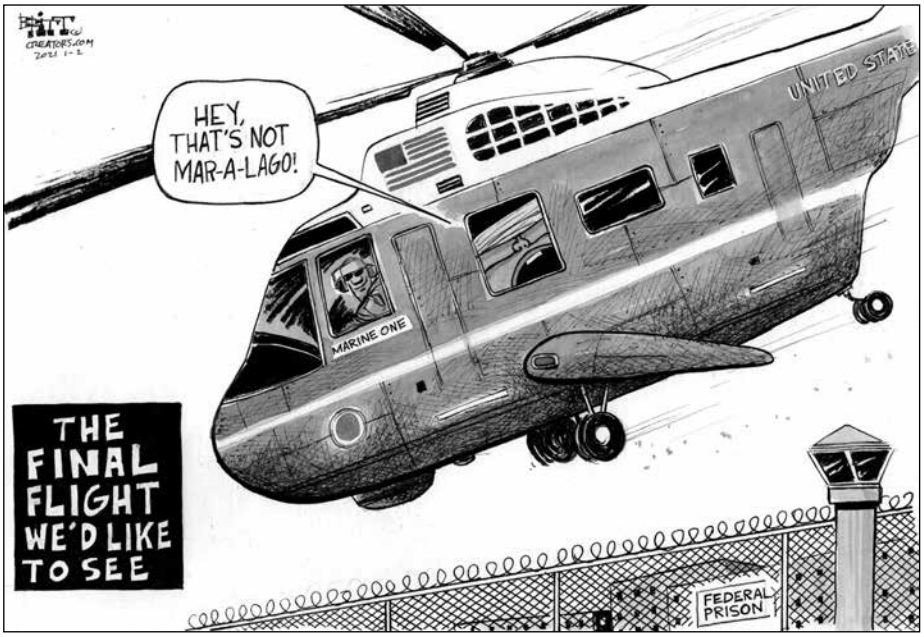
Falsehoods abound. And while no "based on a true story" movie is ever entirely true, the choices Sorkin made simply aren't justifiable.

Near the beginning of the trial, defendant Bobby Seale, Chairman of the Black Panther Party, is ordered bound and gagged by Judge Hoffman for days as he kept protesting that he was not represented by counsel. While Sorkin focuses on this — it's good drama — he short circuits it to appear as if the punishment lasted only one day.

Within his focus on Seale, Sorkin places the young Chicago Black Panther Party leader Fred Hampton at the trial coaching Bobby and confronting some defendants before he was murdered by the Chicago police. The implication is Hampton's coaching of Seale led to his murder. This is false on two counts: Hampton wasn't at the trial, and the Feds and local police were after him because he was effectively bringing together white, brown, and black poor and working-class people into an organization.

Sorkin invents a blonde female undercover agent whom we are led to believe seduced defendant Jerry Rubin then "told the truth" about what he and co-defendant Abbie Hoffman "were really up to." This character is fictional. And unnecessary: Sorkin could've used the testimony of the undercover police from the transcripts but chose not to.

Part of putting the war on trial included demonstrating to the jury and world the values of the counter-culture, so several cultural heroes including Allen Ginsberg, Arlo Guthrie, "Country" Joe McDonald, Paul Krassner, Pete Seeger, and Judy Collins testified for the defense. Collins started to sing "Where Have All the Flowers Gone" and Ginsberg sought to demonstrate his crowd-calming "ohmmm" chant: both were ruled out of order by Judge Hoffman. Guthrie's testimony turns into a version of "Alice's Restaurant"—



Sorkin left out all of these movie moments in exchange for false inventions.

Thousands of ordinary people, not members of the National Mobilization Committee to End the War (The Mobe) or the Yippies (The Youth International Party) came to Chicago to protest in 1968, and many were beaten in what a subsequent Presidential Commission concluded was a "police riot." Some of these people testified. None of this makes it into Sorkin's movie

Sorkin gives Abbie Hoffman a brief moment on the stand but chooses to concentrate on strategic differences within the anti-war movement using Hayden and Hoffman as his dramatic pawns for this confrontation when the real confrontation was between those on trial and the Federal government — those against the war and those for it.

Although Sorkin does include some of Abbie Hoffman's and Rubin's antics (coming to court wearing judge's robes), he leaves out the substance of Hoffman's and Davis's multi-day testimonies as to why they organized for people to come to Chicago: Hoffman worked to promote a Festival of Life in contrast to the Democrats "Festival of Death," and Davis worked to organize anti-war demonstrations. This is the meat of the confrontation, the meat of the story, but it's ignored or served as a vague side dish.

Sorkin invents a scene where the lifelong pacifist Dellinger hits a U.S. Marshal. There is no truth to this, and one of Dellinger's daughters, who was turned into a son by Sorkin, was among the many furious with the scene.

There are numerous other errors and offenses, all unnecessary as the confrontation in the courtroom between the establishment and the anti-war counter-culture was real and needed no dramatist to fictionalize it in order to heighten it.

Sorkin, according to defendant Tom Hayden's son Troy, spoke to Tom about the trial for his research. He didn't talk with Davis, Seale, Froines, or Weiner. He's said in interviews he had no idea who the Chicago 7 were when Steven Spielberg suggested he do a movie about the trial. He was 8 in 1969.

Perhaps because he was not of the era and perhaps because he didn't do his research, he conveys no appreciation for any of the

primary defendants and the amount of time each of them put into civil rights, social justice and anti-war work—all of which is why the government put them on trial in the first place. (Only Froines and Weiner were randomly selected as a message to those who simply participate.)

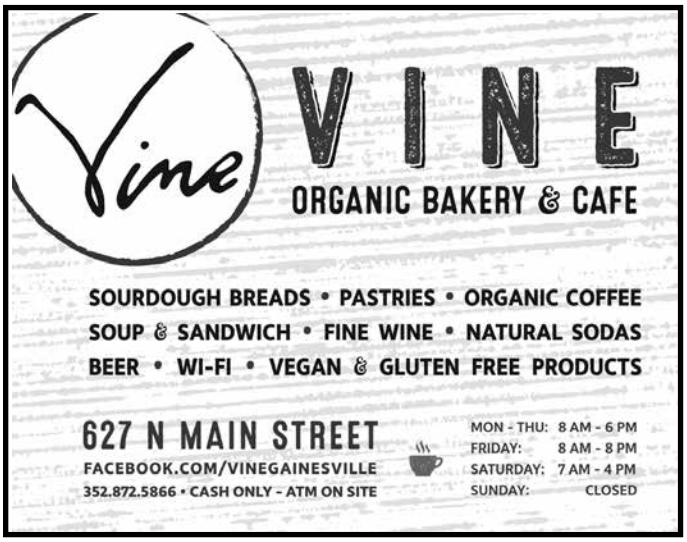
Instead, Davis, who had traveled with Dellinger to Hanoi to work on POW releases and who was the chief organizer of some of the largest anti-war demonstrations in the country, comes off as if he's just graduated from high school. Hayden, who was beaten in McComb, Mississippi, doing civil rights work, doesn't come off as being a longtime activist and the brilliant author of the revolutionary Port Huron Statement and a founder of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The others are portrayed with less than their bios deserve.

There are two movies that do a much better job with this subject: "The Chicago 10" (2007) and "The Chicago 8" (1987). The first includes animation for the courtroom scenes intercut with great news footage of the protests, riots, and speeches; the second is a strict courtroom presentation based entirely on the transcripts.

Why is this important? You might as well ask why history is important. This government puts political dissidents on trial, but it doesn't always win: ultimately the Chicago 7 were innocent, the Gainesville 8 were innocent, and American Indian Movement leaders Dennis Banks and Russell Means were innocent.

Gary Gordon attended the 1973 Contempt trial when the Chicago 7 and their attorneys returned to Chicago to be sentenced for contempt: the contempt charges were thrown out. He also attended the Means-Banks "Wounded Knee" trial in '74 in St. Paul and was there when the judge chastised the FBI and prosecutors for lying.

Gordon will teach his Dissent on Trial and Trials of the Century classes through Santa Fe College on ZOOM in January and February. *See page 21 for details.*



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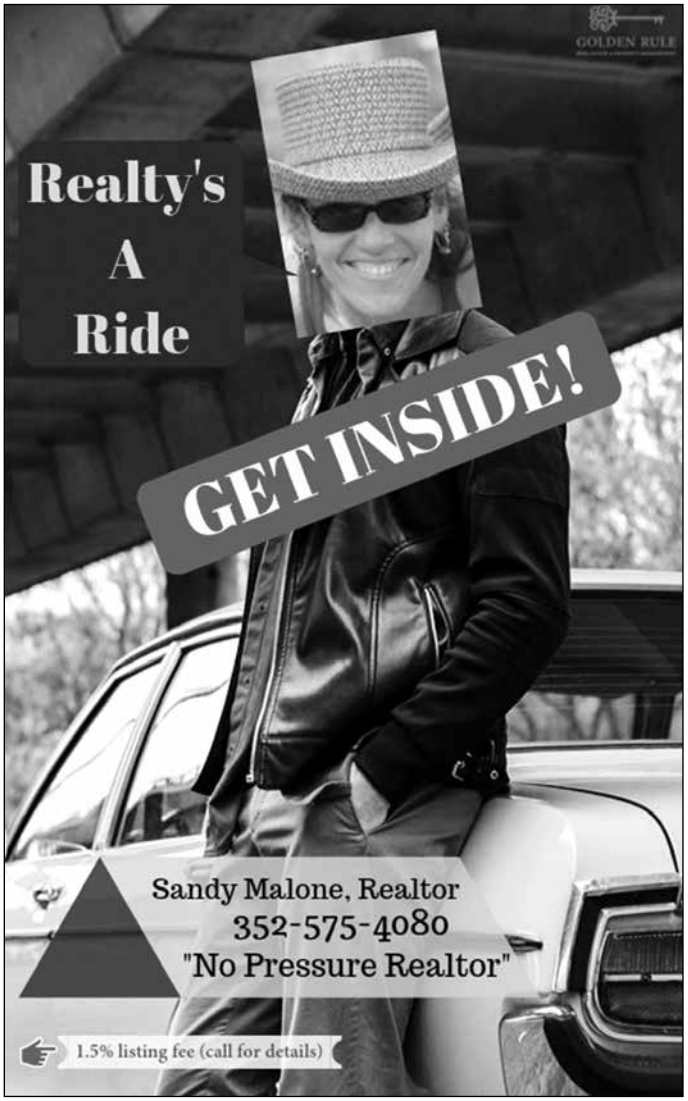


Launching the Alachua County African and African American Historical Society, Inc.

by Jacob U'Mofe Gordon, Ph.D.
President, ACAAAHS

In 1994 the State of Florida Legislature passed Statute 1003.42 which mandated the teaching of African American History in all public schools in Florida. The statute was in response to the lack of an inclusive curriculum which recognized the presence and contributions of African Americans to the state's history and development. This comprehensive law required that courses be taught in African American history, Women's history, Hispanic history, and the Holocaust.

A state-wide African American History Task Force was established and funded by the Florida Commissioner of Education to support and promote the implementation of the statute in all Public Schools. It is important to note that prior to 1994 concerned Gainesville community leaders were already engaged with the Board of Education of Alachua County Public Schools in including the African American Experience in the curricula.

Several years ago, a group of concerned citizens organized the Black History Task Force. Among its leaders were: Ms. Carol Thomas, Mr. Kali Blount, Dr. Patricia Hilliard-Nunn, Ms. Faye Williams, and Dr. Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons. These efforts led to the establishment of the Alachua County African American History Task Force.

This Task Force has forged productive collaborative relationships with the administration and teachers in Alachua County Public Schools to comply with the State Law. A course in African History began at Eastside High School in the Fall of 2017 with 19 students.

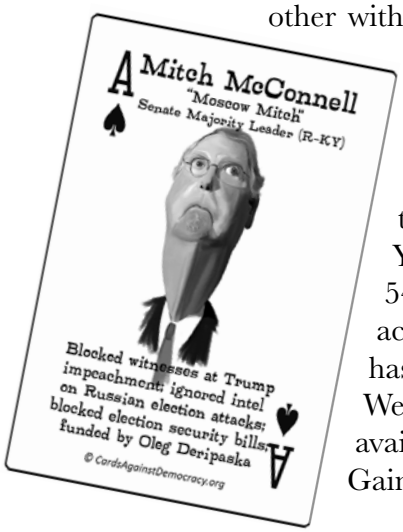
By the following year, the student demand was great enough to offer additional sections in African and African American History both semesters. In Fall of 2019, all seven high schools in Alachua County Public Schools offered a course in these subjects. In addition, "infusion" of such information in all courses from kindergarten through 12th grade has begun. ACPS is applying to the State Task Force for Exemplary Status which would confirm its compliance with the law. As Sam Cooke sang, "It's been a long time coming, but a change is gonna come."

The Alachua County AA Task Force has now established a Historical Society to build upon the past accomplishments in the schools and to expand its efforts to serve the broader community. The purpose of the Alachua County African and African American Historical Society, Inc. is "to promote the study, teaching, research, and preservation of African & African American History and Diaspora Studies in Alachua County." It is registered as a Non-Profit Corporation in Florida. The Society will work with other Cultural and Historical Institutions to document and disseminate the considerable History of the Black Experience in Alachua County.

Membership in the Society is open to all. We want your input and ideas. For additional information, contact: Dr. Jacob U'Mofe Gordon at jgordon07@gmail.com

Cards Against Democracy

In the midst of overwhelming corruption and unethical behaviors it is easy to get lost and discouraged. It is difficult to know what to do to affect meaningful change for good. The path of self-education and enlightenment can be challenging. Along the way it is important to stop, take a breath and not get too bogged down. Therefore, we have presented these cards to be informative with a comical face in the hopes of strengthening each other with a laugh as we move forward. Please share your knowledge, vote, write editorials, and communicate. We can make this world better for all.



Go to **CardsAgainstDemocracy.org** to order our first deck of collectable cards. You'll get a deck of playing cards featuring 54 individual characters with a historically accurate note relevant to the role each person has played during their time in office or related to the Trump administration. We will not forget. The decks are $10 each plus shipping, bulk deals available. Free delivery within Gainesville city limits using PROMO code: GainesvilleOnlyFreeShip.

Karen Smith: Rest in Power

by Joe Courter

In a year that took so many beloved people away, the death of Karen Smith in the early morning hours of Nov. 29 was a shocking and profound loss to so many in our community and beyond. At 46 years old, with a full plate of meaningful responsibilities and passions in her life — her kids, her extended family of friends and co-workers, her commitment to the cause of prison abolition and connections to the many prisoners she corresponded with, and the fellow activists in the cause who she inspired with her dedication and relentless positive attitude — gone in an instant of crashing metal in a single car accident on Waldo Road.

She was around the Civic Media Center a lot, but I can't say I ever had much of a conversation with her; she would be busy, focused on her task(s). Laptop open, phone at hand, maybe pen in hand, or in conversation with others. She was a volunteer with the Free Grocery Store, which the CMC has been hosting during the pandemic. A person who worked with her a lot was Panagioti Tsolkas. He wrote the following in the blog *Antistasis Project* on Dec. 1, shortly after her death:

• • •

It's hard to describe what organizing alongside Karen Smith was like in a way that won't sound hyperbolic on account of her absence, but I'm gonna go for it anyway. Movement circles can get bogged down and organizers often get overwhelmed by the magnitude of what we face.

It's inevitable, yet Karen Smith figured out how to manage it all with a rare style and grace. She dodged the obstacles, confronted the bullshit and stayed focused on her two-pronged mission of supporting prisoners and attacking the prison system, relentlessly. All while being an amazing mother of two and stellar friend to so many.

Since her passing, several of us who had the fortune of organizing closely with her have noted the feeling of disbelief stemming from a view of her as invincible, unstoppable … a supernatural creature walking among muggles. The organizational energy that she could harness in planning protests, conferences, bail funds, social events is unmatched. She could motivate and focus a group without it feeling pushy, and she could host a killer party without seeming stressed, and then totally chill out and relax without seeming all high-strung from pulling these things together.

She was also an incredible example to me as a parent, and countless other future parents, that people with kids can balance movement responsibilities and commitments to their children.

She could get wild as hell, then pull it all together to show up for media interviews, professional appointments, her job as a waitress, etc. When she had to step back to handle work or family matters, she didn't make commitments she couldn't keep and drop the ball.

When our crew held a campout out in front of prison work camp for 10 days, Karen would come after a late work shift to sleep at the camp, roll out of a tent first thing in the morning with a bullhorn in hand to yell raw, unfiltered rage at guards and shout encouragement to prisoners, then drink some coffee and head back to town to the Sunday brunch shift at 706, where she worked for the past 15 years, till they closed for COVID-19.

I know, I told you, it sounds like the kind of things you say to kiss someone's ass after they're gone. And she would surely be annoyed by praise like this, but ask around, these are the stories you'll hear over and over, from people who met her once and people who knew her for decades.

So many times over the past several years I watched in awe at her ability to connect with people and inspire them to action, in many cases just with a paper, pen and stamped envelope.

At prison demos, when we were close enough to establish that those inside could hear our bullhorns, she would often say "this is Karen Smith, call us, write our PO Box. Let us know how we can work together." And they would.

On the occasion where someone made the unwise decisions to write something sexist or disrespectful, Karen would tell them firmly to cut that shit out. And they listened. She could command respect like that, even from someone she never met in person.

Photo by Sarah Senfeld

At any given point in a day, she might step away from a conversation with you to take a phone call, and come back having coordinated a legal defense strategy with someone sitting in solitary. By the end of the day there would be a phone zap going to support their fight for law library access, better sanitary conditions in the kitchen or getting moved out of solitary…

Being in her presence had the feeling of working alongside a legend, those who got letters from her on the inside will say the same. Perhaps the highest compliment to her work is knowing so many wardens and prison staff across Florida and beyond have cursed her name, surely wondering themselves if she was a real person or some fictitious, omnipresent force out to "kick their ass."

• • •

Walking back from a hastily called memorial at Depot Park on Dec. 2 with friend and activist Ellen Allen, she pointed out the similar community loss we had when Zot Szurgot was killed in a vehicle accident in the fall of 2016. Another vibrant, dedicated organizer, active and loved in a number of different circles, and likewise gone in an instant.

I stopped by the CMC and there on the desk in the day's mail was a letter addressed to Karen Smith from one of her incarcerated pen pals. Me and the volunteer there just stared at it, grief magnified to another level.

Strength to all who knew and were touched by Karen. Somehow we all must carry on, find our work and calling, and do it.

From BIDEN, p. 1

the three most powerful economic positions in the nation. In recent months, Yellen has expressed a willingness to use fiscal measures to stimulate economic recovery in a nation with a poverty rate above 11 percent. "This is not a good time to have fiscal policy switch from being accommodative to creating a drag," Yellen said in October. "That's what happened [last decade], and it retarded the recovery."

On Nov. 30, when Biden officially announced Yellen's nomination, he also said he intends to nominate Adewale Adeyemo — who served as a senior economic adviser in the Obama administration and is the current president of the Obama Foundation based in Chicago — as deputy Treasury secretary

Attorney General: Merrick Garland

Garland, whose nomination to the Supreme Court was blocked by Mitch McConnell in 2015, will finally get his day before the Senate. On Jan. 6, *Politico* reported that the U.S. Circuit Judge will be nominated to lead the Justice Department.

Secretary of Defense: Lloyd Austin

On Dec. 8, Biden published an op-ed in The Atlantic announcing that his Defense Secretary would be Lloyd Austin, a four-star general who retired from the Army in 2016. In addition to Senate confirmation, Austin, who has served on the board of Raytheon, will need a congressional waiver in order to nullify the seven-year waiting period between active-duty and government service.

Secretary of State: Antony Blinken

Biden selected his longtime aide Antony Blinken for secretary of State, unveiling his pick on Nov. 23 along with other members of his national security team. Biden's national security adviser when he was vice-president and President Obama's deputy secretary of State from 2015 to 2017, Blinken's nomination suggests a return to the multilateralism of the Obama administration.

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator: Michael S. Regan

On Dec. 17, Biden picked North Carolina's environmental chief since 2017, Michael S. Regan, as his choice to lead the EPA, one of the cabinet departments impacted most by the Trump administration.

Special Presidential Envoy for Climate: John Kerry

On Nov. 23, Biden announced that he would appoint John Kerry as special presidential envoy for climate, a new Cabinet-level role in which the former secretary of State will "persuade skeptical global leaders, burned by the Trump administration's hostility toward climate science, that the United States is prepared to resume its leadership role," according to the New York Times.

White House Climate Czar: Gina McCarthy

The Washington Post reported on Dec. 15 that former Environmental Protection Agency chief and National Resources Defense Council president Gina McCarthy will serve as Biden's climate czar, coordinating environmental policy throughout the administration.

Secretary of the Interior: Deb Haaland

On Dec. 17, Biden announced that New Mexico Representative Deb Haaland would be his pick for Interior Secretary, becoming the first Native American to lead the department that determines policy for federally-owned natural resources, as well as tribal lands.

Labor Secretary: Marty Walsh

On Jan. 7, *Politico* first reported that Boston Mayor Marty Walsh would be Biden's pick to lead the Department of Labor. Walsh had previously served as the head of the Boston Trades Council, an umbrella group of construction unions, and his nomination was supported by the two largest affiliates of the AFL-CIO.

Commerce Secretary: Gina Raimondo

On Jan. 7, the New York Times reported that Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo would be nominated to lead the Department of Commerce, the wide-sweeping government agency that oversees technology regulation, the census, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Secretary of Homeland Security: Alejandro Mayorkas

Biden announced on Nov. 23 that Alejandro Mayorkas, the deputy secretary of the Department of Homeland Security under Obama, would serve as the department's head, becoming the first Latino and the first immigrant to do so. As the director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services under Obama — a role he held prior to becoming DHS deputy secretary — Mayorkas, who was born in Havana, led the implementation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, a policy that Biden has declared his intention to restore.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs: Denis McDonough

Denis McDonough, Obama's White House chief of staff, was tapped to lead the Department of Veterans Affairs on Dec. 10. It's "a sprawling agency that has presented organizational challenges for both parties over the years," as the AP put it. "But he never served in the armed forces, a fact noted by a leading veterans organization."

Secretary of Transportation: Pete Buttigieg

Biden introduced Pete Buttigieg as his pick for Transportation secretary on Dec. 16. If confirmed, Buttigieg will be the first openly LGBTQ person to serve in the Cabinet. Buttigieg first came to national prominence when he came out as gay in 2015 while serving as the mayor of South Bend, Indiana, before going on to run for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2020.

Secretary of Energy: Jennifer Granholm

Politico reported on Dec. 15 that Biden will name former Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm as the leader of the expansive Department of Energy. Her experience in Lansing from 2003 to 2011 is an asset as Biden works to speed-up the transition to electric cars, among other green energy priorities.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations: Linda Thomas-Greenfield

Biden named Foreign Service veteran Linda Thomas-Greenfield to the U.N. ambassador position on Nov. 23 and said he will reestablish the role in the cabinet after his isolationist predecessor demoted it.

Director of National Intelligence: Avril Haines

Biden named Haines — the deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency from 2013 to 2015 — his director of national intelligence on Nov. 23. If confirmed, she will oversee the 17 agencies that make up the nation's intelligence community, becoming the first woman to fill the role.

National Security Adviser: Jake Sullivan

Jake Sullivan, who was Biden's national security adviser when he was vice president, will serve as national security adviser in the new administration.

Office of Management and Budget Director: Neera Tanden

Biden nominated Neera Tanden — the frequent Twitter user and president of the Center for American Progress think tank, a center-left think tank — to be his OMB director. The Princeton University labor

economist Cecilia Rouse will serve as the chair of the Council of Economic Advisers.

White House Press Secretary: Jennifer Psaki

Biden announced that veteran Democratic spokeswoman Jennifer Psaki will serve as White House press secretary. Psaki, who served several communications roles in the Obama administration, including White House communications director, will lead the first all-female presidential comms team. "These qualified, experienced communicators bring diverse perspectives to their work and a shared commitment to building this country back better," Biden said on Nov. 29.

Top White House Economic Adviser: Brian Deese

Biden tapped BlackRock executive Brian Deese for his top White House economic adviser. Before his time in the financial sector, Deese served under Obama, working on policy for the auto bailout.

U.S. Trade Representative: Katherine Tai

Katherine Tai, the top U.S. Trade Representative lawyer on China during the Obama administration, was announced as Biden's pick for U.S. trade representative on Dec. 10.

Surgeon General: Vivek Murthy

On Dec. 3, *Politico* reported that the former U.S. surgeon general for President Obama would reprise his role in the Biden administration under what are now dire circumstances. Murthy, the co-chair of Biden's COVID advisory board, is expected to play a much more public role than previous surgeons general, acting as the "top medical expert and public face of the [pandemic] effort." The transition formally announced Murthy's nomination on Dec. 7.

Health and Human Services Secretary: Xavier Becerra

On Dec. 7, Biden named California Attorney General Xavier Becerra as his Health and Human Services secretary. If confirmed, Becerra will be tasked with reshaping the department amid the pandemic and in the wake of infighting this past year between Trump appointees and public health officials.

White House Domestic Policy Council Director: Susan Rice

Susan Rice will lead the White House's Domestic Policy Council, overseeing how the administration handles issues such as immigration, health care, and racial inequality. It's a shift for Rice, who has spent her career in foreign policy, previously serving as Obama's national security advisor and ambassador to the United Nations.

Secretary of Agriculture: Tom Vilsack

Tom Vilsack has been tapped to lead the Department of Agriculture again after he did so during the Obama administration, according to *Axios*. Vilsack, a former Iowa governor, was a prominent supporter of the president-elect in the presidential caucuses.

Housing and Urban Development Secretary: Marcia Fudge

Representative Marcia Fudge of Ohio was selected to lead the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Fudge had lobbied Biden to become the nation's first Black secretary of agriculture, but the job went to Tom Vilsack.

Education Department Secretary: Miguel Cardona

On Dec. 22, the transition team announced that Miguel Cardona, the top education official in Connecticut — and a staunch advocate for in-school learning during the pandemic — will lead the Education Department and Biden's push to return kids to school within his first 100 days.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director: Rochelle Walensky

On Dec. 7, the transition announced that Rochelle Walensky, the chief of infectious diseases at Massachusetts General Hospital, would run the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and will take a pivotal role in helping to stop the spread of the pandemic.

Coordinator of the COVID-19 Response and Counselor to the President: Jeff Zients

Jeff Zients, who previously led the HealthCare.gov tech surge in 2013 and oversaw the "Cash for Clunkers" fuel-efficiency program, will head the federal government's COVID response, "including managing safe and equitable vaccine distribution, the pandemic supply chain, and coordination across federal agencies and state and local governments," per the transition's press release. Natalie Quillian, a former White House and Pentagon senior adviser who helped coordinate the Obama administration's response to the opioid epidemic, will serve as deputy coordinator.

Chief Medical Adviser on COVID-19: Dr. Anthony Fauci

The best known and most (maybe only?) trusted member of the federal government's current pandemic-response team will be staying on to advise Biden. The transition announced on Dec. 7 that Fauci will continue in his role as director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, a position he has held since 1984, in addition to serving as "chief medical adviser on COVID-19 to the president" in the Biden administration.

Deputy Chief of Staff: Bruce Reed

The transition announced on Jan. 5 that Bruce Reed, a longtime Biden adviser who served as the vice president's chief of staff from 2011 to 2013, is heading back to the White House as his deputy chief of staff.

History and the people who make it:
Chinua Achebe, James Baldwin, Francis Bebey

Leading African-American author James Baldwin [JB] and African authors Chinua Achebe [A] and Francis Bebey [FB] spoke at the University of Florida's African Literature Association conference in April 1980, introduced by Mildred Hill-Lubin [H] and questioned by various anonymous audience members [U]. This is the 64th in a series of transcript excerpts from the UF Samuel Proctor Oral History Program collection.

Transcript edited by Pierce Butler. [Trigger warning for the N-word!

H: I am very happy to introduce our three honored guests. Francis Bebey, a Francophone African writer from the Cameroons, who is also a recording artist musician who plays the guitar. In the center is the outstanding black American writer, Mr. James Baldwin, who has written quite a number of works. His most recent is *Just Above My Head*, but many of us know him for earlier books, particularly *Go Tell It On The Mountain*, and several other books of essays. On the other end is Mr. Chinua Achebe, a foremost Anglophone African writer, who has written several novels: his first, *Things Fall Apart*, and several others—*A Man of the People*; *No Longer At Ease*; and *Arrow of God*.

U: What are the similarities between African writers and Black American writers?

A: What is literature about? Literature is about people. It is a work of people about themselves. People who are attempting to create themselves anew. If you accept that definition, it stands to reason that Black America — which is really Africa in diaspora — should have the same fundamental concerns as Africans. We are both engaged in the process of creating ourselves again, after we had been shaped by others. We are in the same enterprise.

JB: I can hardly add to that, except to say that when I read *Things Fall Apart* — which takes place in another continent under conditions hard for a Black boy from Harlem, to imagine — I recognized everybody in that novel.

The novel was for me, in one way, about my father. When Chinua talks about the diaspora, something very important has to be suggested. We have been divided. We have been dispersed. Have been under the control of others for hundreds of years. Economically, and for the most part politically, we still are.

But, one is engaged in an endeavor nothing less than excavation of a buried and denied history. A history never written down. He and I are from different tribes, for example, let us say when we got here, we got here together, chained together.

I couldn't talk to him and he couldn't talk to me. If we could have talked to each other, slavery might not have lasted so long, and it was forbidden to teach us how to read or write. This was a western conspiracy called white supremacy. And it has seen its day. It is over.

FB: What we usually call "diaspora," is not a mere physical thing. You, my brothers in America, are considered the diaspora. But we have different kinds of diaspora. The physical one, you have had in your lives, since you left Africa, four to five hundred years ago, is one thing.

But we in Africa have had another kind of diaspora, a mental and spiritual diaspora. We have been taken out of ourselves while being in Africa. We have been colonized, which means that our minds have been changed by foreigners. Our minds have been in a diaspora for centuries, too.

This, in my opinion, is what relates African writers and black American writers, much more than anything else. We have been given the same bad treatment, in the past, and we have suffered from similar treatment — you, here, and we at home. We've been staying at home, but taken away from ourselves while at home, which is even sometimes more dangerous.

JB: I wouldn't disagree with that for a moment. I'm always very cautious when I try to talk about Africa, which is an enormous continent, and a tremendous — I don't know what the word would be, but let's say for the moment, "mystery." That is why we're here.

You had to come through the missionary schools. I had to survive an elementary school in Harlem. I was born, in effect, in a fantasy created by white people — by which I mean, I was told that I was a nigger. And that black people never contributed anything to civilization. I had absolutely no way of proving otherwise, and I believed it. The terrible thing which you're talking about, if I understand you — and I think I do — is that, first of all, the judgment is outside.

The world calls you a nigger. Then later, the judgment is inside. You call yourself a nigger. And, to move beyond that —

FB: And become a man. Yeah.

JB: — and become a man. Thank you. You know, that's the journey. But we made that journey. So our children, or even our younger brothers, are not born with the necessity of overcoming an image of Tarzan, or Africa, the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Production. My younger brothers and sisters and my children do not believe, and haven't got to go through, what I had to go through to try to become a man. That's what unites us, no?

FB: Sure. We have same problems. And we felt that in same way.

JB: And found each other again. [Laughter]

LN [Lee Nichols, Voice of America]: Could I ask a question of you — all you gentlemen, whoever cares to answer?

You've spoken very eloquently about the coming together of Africa and America in Blacks in literature after four hundred years — which I presume you were speaking of a metaphor for all Black writers and not just yourselves. Is there an aspect of universality to this?

Is this a racial exclusionary thing or is it blending with the universal in some fashion?

A: Well, I'm not afraid of "anti-racist racism," you know, that phrase, whoever coined it.

JB: Ronald Reagan. [Laughter]

A: Yeah. [Laughter] Seriously, it's not

racism. It's not exclusivism. It is precisely what we said before — we are trying to recreate the world to the advantage of humanity. The world that has been corrupted. We did not introduce these problems into the world, and we have a chance. We have a responsibility, an obligation, to recreate ourselves. If we do that, we will not be guilty of racism. We will be guilty of restoring mankind to his original condition.

JB: May I add to that? Let me make the shocking contention. The human race is one thing, and we are all, by definition, connected. What happens to one, happens to the other.

I want to suggest that one of the disasters of this century, one of the disasters of European history, is the creation of white people. Because there are no white people. It's not possible to be white. You were [whatever you were] before you got here — Italian, or Dutch, or German, or Greek, whatever.

White became a metaphor for safety and for power. A whole civilization destroyed a real morality in order to preserve its power, and the proof of this is those people who think of themselves as white — bear in mind that Malcolm said, "White is a state of mind."

That means that you're as white as you choose to be. That means that white is a moral choice. I know some Black men and women paler than anyone in this room who are legally Black. Now, if that is so — and that is so — we're talking about a moral dilemma which has very grave consequences.

So, when Achebe says what he just said, it is not "racism in reverse." It is not racism at all. White people may not know, but I know. Not all my grandfathers were black men. White people know very well. They've done this to their own children, knowing perfectly well this boy, this girl, was the issue of their loins; have slaughtered them, castrated them, burned them, knowing perfectly well what they were doing. Now that is something for any civilization to get beyond. I'm talking about that. Chinua says we are trying to restore the world; I'm talking about that.

A: Twenty-three years ago, I first encountered Jimmy Baldwin, and I've known him intimately and well since then — although I only met him yesterday. [Laughter] When I read *Go Tell It on the Mountain* in 1958, I knew: here was a brother. And so, I immediately proceeded to the American Information Service in the city where I lived, in Enugu, to borrow some more books by Baldwin.

Unfortunately, there was no book by Baldwin or by anybody like him in that library. So, I asked a few questions: how come there is no book by Baldwin in this library? And I must say in the defense of the people concerned, they moved, and that situation was changed. Well, this was 1958; a lot has happened in that time.

When I hear "dialogue," my mind goes to conversation, not to two speeches. I had hoped that this would, in fact, be a conversation. But we'll become victims of our technology, and I'm told that somehow this thing which is rigged up here will not permit that kind of discussion. So, I'm asked to make an opening statement, and Jimmy will make another opening statement, and we will take it on from there.

Now, the topic of African aesthetic is one of which I am very diffident—about this. If, by aesthetic, we mean those qualities of excellence which a culture discerns from its works of art, then I would accept it. We do have an aesthetic. We had it, and we have it. [Applause]

Our art is based on our morality. Perhaps it sounds old-fashioned to you. But, it is not to us. The earth goddess among the Igbo people — Ani or Ala — she is the goddess of creativity. Of art. She is the one who orders that festival that I told you about. Art is in her portfolio. She is also the goddess of morality. An abomination is called an abomination against the earth. So you see, in my aesthetic, you cannot run away from morality. Morality is basic to the nature of art.

JB: I don't quite know how to follow my friend, but I'll try, since we are here trying to do something of a certain seriousness. One would say that my buddy whom I met yesterday, my brother whom I met yesterday, who I have not seen for four hundred years, it was never intended that we meet. [Applause]

After all, this is a dialogue not simply between Achebe and Baldwin, but between all of us, and him, and me. I think when Chinua talks about the aesthetic, beneath that word sleeps fatally the word "morality"; and beneath that word, we are confronted with the way we treat each other.

[A voice, sounding as if on a radio, comes in through Baldwin's microphone; most of the words are indecipherable. The audience laughs — presumably in part from Baldwin's startled expression.]

Radio voice: You cannot be up there to tell us that; don't let him try to get away here. We've kind of got to look to take it back.

A: The thing has come alive! [Laughter]

JB: I don't quite know what that interference is. [Laughter]

Radio voice: Now cut it out, Mr. Baldwin. We can't stand all this kind of talk.

JB: Mr. Baldwin is nevertheless going to finish his opening statement. And I will tell you now, whoever you are — and if you assassinate me in the next two minutes, I am telling you this: it no longer matters what you think. The doctrine of white supremacy on which the Western world is based has had its hour, has had its day. It's over!

A full transcript of this talk can be found by entering "Defining the African Aesthetic" at https://ufdc.ufl.edu/oral.

The Samuel Proctor Oral History Program believes that listening carefully to first-person narratives can change the way we understand history, from scholarly questions to public policy. SPOHP needs the public's help to sustain and build upon its research, teaching and service missions: even small donations can make a big difference in SPOHP's ability to gather, preserve, and promote history for future generations.

EARTH BOUND

Laurie Wilkins, formerly of Alternatives has launched a new website for Earth Bound, a non-profit volunteer-run org that works with indigenous and women's organizations on micro-enterprise, marketing, sales and education with regard to products and projects that empower artisans.

www.earthboundinc.org.

From COVID, p.1

sional help when experiencing emotional distress, and over half of U.S. counties lacked access to a single psychiatrist.

This mental health crisis has been exacerbated by the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. Fears of contracting the virus, isolation, and the ever-increasing death toll (over 302,000 dead in the U.S.) have been compounded by the stressors of job loss, financial strain and uncertain futures. This has led over one in three Americans to show clinical signs of anxiety or depression, disproportionally appearing in women, Black and Latinx Americans.

Without intervention, the long-term consequences of this untreated crisis will be devastating. Experts warn that suicides, substance abuse and overdose deaths will continue to rise.

While the CARES Act has allocated $425 million for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, many say it's not nearly enough. According to Paul Gionfriddo, CEO of Mental Health America, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting mental health, even a 10 percent increase in demand for behavioral health services in 2020 and 2021 could cost the healthcare delivery system upwards of $25 billion.

Some say only a universal, single-payer program like Medicare for All can address the ballooning physical and mental health needs during this crisis. As Colette Shade writes in Jacobin, "Simply implementing Medicare for All would drastically improve mental health outcomes in the United States." However, Shade argues that more must also be done to address social determinants of health. "Access to health care does not fully address the root causes of this country's mental health epidemics. Mental health outcomes are deeply influenced by economic and political policy choices."

The following numbers offer a glimpse into the dire state of the U.S. mental health system, evidence of the radical intervention needed on behalf of our lawmakers.

891 percent more calls were received by the U.S. suicide hotline this March than last March.

40 percent of Americans have reported a pandemic-related mental health condition, according to a June CDC survey

49 percent of survey takers aged 18–24 reported anxiety symptoms and **26 percent** had seriously considered suicide

22 percent of survey takers who are essential workers had considered suicide, compared with 7.8 percent of nonessential workers

4 times as many people reported possible depression this June compared with last June

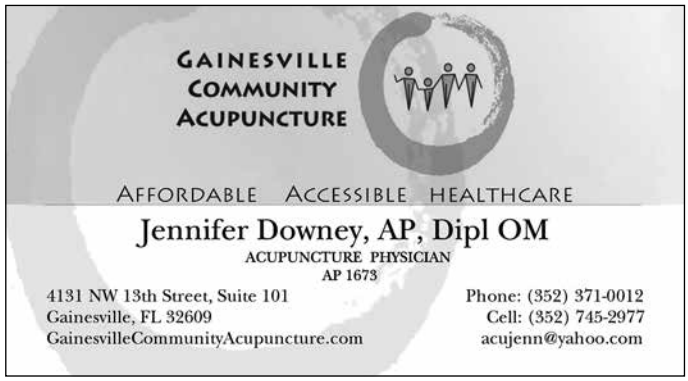
22.3 percent of all adults with a mental illness this year were not able to receive treatment because they lacked insurance or resources

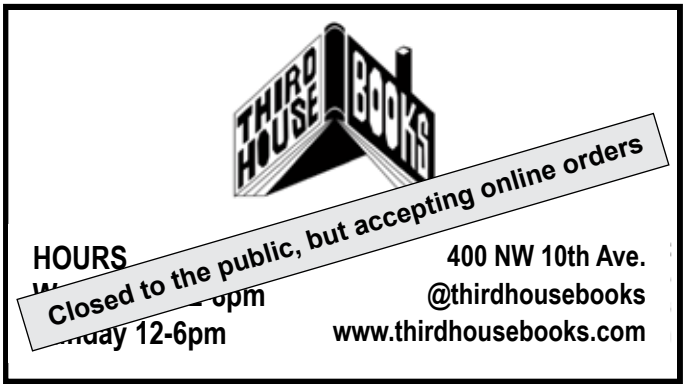
89 percent of adults struggling with substance use did not receive professional help in 2019

41 percent of Black Americans were experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depression one week after the murder of George Floyd, up from 36 percent prior to his murder, according to the Census Bureau

$87.1 Billion was requested to fund the Department of Health and Human Services for 2020, a 4 percent decrease from 2019 (excluding Covid-19 emergency relief)

0.01 percent of the federal money approved for Covid-19 emergency relief was designated to address mental health concerns.





THE REPURPOSE PROJECT

1920 NE 23rd Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32609
Inside and outside open!
Tues-Sat 10am to 6pm
Sun noon to 5pm
Masks required

Community ed classes on political trials

DISSENT ON TRIAL - THE 70s
The class will focus on three political trials: The Chicago 8 and The Gainesville Eight and the trial of American Indian Movement leaders Dennis Banks and Russell Means; all were tried for conspiracy stemming from the political work.
Tues & Thurs, 1/26 and 1/28, 6pm - 7:15pm. On ZOOM - Course fee: $29

TRIALS OF THE CENTURY - THE DEATH PENALTY
This class will focus on three death penalty cases: Sacco & Vanzetti for robbery and murder, Ethel & Julius Rosenberg for espionage, and Caryl Chessman for kidnapping and murder.
Tues & Thurs. 2/2 and 2/4, 6pm - 7:15pm. On ZOOM - Course fee: $29
Instructor: Gary Gordon
To register, follow this link http://bit.ly/Community_Ed_Registration or www.sfcollege.edu/communityed or 352-395-5193

Iguana Directory

Call 352-378-5655 or email gainesvilleiguana@cox.net with updates and additions

Readers: If there is inaccurate information here, please let us know. If you are connected to an organization listed here, please check and update your listing so others can be accurately informed. Readers should confirm times of meetings with individual organizations as they may be cancelled due to the pandemic. Unless otherwise noted, all phone number are in the 352 area code.

Alachua Conservation Trust, Inc. has been protecting North Central Florida's natural, scenic, historic and recreational resources for over 25 years. 373-1078 / www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org

Alachua County Greens is part of a worldwide movement built out of interrelated pillars that support its politics: the peace, civil rights, environmental and labor movements. Meetings are the 1st Sunday of the month @4pm, contact for location: 871-1995 / alachuagreens@gmail.com / https://gainesvillegreens.webs.com

Alachua County Labor Coalition organizes to support local labor and advance the Medicare for All and a living wage campaigns. Meets monthly on the 4th Tuesday at 6pm on Zoom. 375-2832 / info@laborcoalition / http://laborcoalition.org/

Alachua County Organization for Rural Needs Clinic is a not-for-profit in Brooker providing low-cost, high-quality dental care for people with and without health insurance to Alachua, Bradford and Union County residents. The Clinic fulfills its mission with the help of volunteers. 485-1133 / http://acornclinic.org

American Civil Liberties Union has no Alachua County chapter. For info on forming a new chapter, or for ACLU info, contact the Northeast Chapter at firstcoastaclu@gmail.com / http://northeastflorida.aclufl.org.

American Promise Association is a cross-partisan, citizen-powered endeavor to amend the US Constitution to ensure We The People - not big money, corporations, unions, or wealthy special interests - govern the United States of America. https://americanpromise.net

Avian Research and Conservation Institute is a non-profit research group working to stimulate conservation action to save threatened bird species in the southeast. 514-5606 / www.arcinst.org

Black Graduate Student Organization helps UF Black graduate and professional students foster meaningful and lasting relationships that aid in academic achievement and success. bgsoatuf@gmail.com / facebook: UF BGSO

Central Florida Democratic Socialists of America is a chapter of DSA focusing on local social and political activism issues to better our community. Meetings are the 4th Monday of the month on Zoom. centralfldsa@gmail.com / Facebook: North Central Florida DSA

Citizens Climate Lobby builds awareness and lobbies for sensible climate policies. 214-1778 / btancig@gmail.com / https://citizensclimatelobby.org/chapters/FL_Gainesville/

Civic Media Center is an alternative reading room and library of the non-corporate press, and a resource and space for organizing.
433 S Main St., Gainesville / 373-0010 / coordinators@civicmediacenter.org / www.civicmediacenter.org

Coalition of Hispanics Integrating Spanish Speakers through Advocacy and Service is a UF student-run group focusing on immigrant rights and immigrant advocacy.
chispasuf@gmail.com / www.chispasuf.org / Facebook: chispasUF

Code Pink: Women for Peace Women-led grassroots peace and social justice movement utilizing creative protest, non-violent direct action and community involvement. Join our Facebook group at: Codepinkgainesville / CodePink4Peace.org

The Community Weatherization Coalition, an Alachua County coalition whose mission is to improve home weatherization and energy efficiency for low-income households through education, volunteer work, and community-building, welcomes volunteers. 450-4965 / cwc@communityweatherization.org

Conservation Trust for Florida, Inc. is a Gainesville non-profit land trust working to protect Florida's rural landscapes, wildlife corridors and natural areas. 376-4770 / info@conserveflorida.org / www.conserveflorida.org

Democratic Party of Alachua County meets monthly on the second Wednesday at 6pm on Zoom. 352-373-1730 / www.alachuadems.org

Divest Gainesville advocates divesting City financial assets from fossil fuel industries and educating on racial justice and climate change. youngersn@outlook.com / www.facebook.com/DivestGainesville

Divest UF is a student-run organization and a loose collective of Gators seeking to divest the university from fossil fuels, the prison industry, and arms and surveilance companies.
www.divestuf.org, Facebook: @Divest UF

Goddsville Dream Defenders is a socialist, feminist abolitionist organization in Gainesville, organizing to dismantle institutions and be a safe space for people of color.
Facebook: Goddsville Dream Defenders

Edible Plant Project is a volunteer-run, non-profit Gainesville collective aiming to create positive alternatives to the unsustainable food system in this county.
www.facebook.com/groups/edibleplantproject

Families Against Mandatory Minimums works to reform Florida's sentencing laws and restore fairness to Florida's criminal justice system. PO Box 142933, Gainesville, FL 32614

Continued on next page

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/ gnewburn@famm.org / 682-2542 / FAMM.org

Final Friends, run by volunteers, helps families learn how to accomplish legal home funeral care as an alternative to a commercial funeral home. 374-4478 / final.friends.org@gmail.com / www.finalfriends.org

The Fine Print is a quarterly magazine based in Gainesville providing political, social and arts coverage through advocacy journalism. http://thefineprintmag.org

Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice provides space for meetings, retreats, workshops, camps, and educational activities that promote peace, human rights and social justice awareness, conflict resolution, self-empowerment programs and environmental discovery and awareness. 352-603-3680 / florida4peace.org.

Florida School of Traditional Midwifery is a clearinghouse for information, activities and educational programs regarding midwifery. 338-0766 / info@midwiferyschool.org www.midwiferyschool.org

Florida Defenders of the Environment works to protect freshwater resources, conserve public lands and provide quality environmental education. 475-1119 / floridadefenders@gmail.com / https://fladefenders.org

Florida Prisoner Solidarity is a carceral abolitionist collective with members inside and outside of prisons. Efforts are focused around the needs of all incarcerated individuals, their care networks and the pepole in community with them. P.O. Box 358439, Gainesville, FL 32635 / 850-895-1505 / flprisonersolidarity@gmail.com / www.flprisonersolidarity.org/ facebook.com/FLAbolition

Gainesville Area AIDS Project is a program of Pride Community Center of North Central Florida that provides toiletries, household cleaners, hot meals, frozen food at no cost to people living with HIV/AIDS. 377-8915 / info@gaaponline.org

https://gainesvillepride.org/gaap/ www.facebook.com/GAAPONLINE/

Gainesville Citizens for Alternatives to Death Penalty works to abolish the death penalty. Join vigils when Florida has an execution. 378-1690 / mark1343@juno.com / www.fadp.org.

Gainesville for All The Gainesville Sun's GNV4ALL initiative is an effort to identify and address problems related to inequities and racial injustice in our community. See Facebook for online activities. GNV4ALL@gmail.com / www.facebook.com/GNV4ALL

Gainesville Interfaith Alliance for Immigrant Justice organizes faith communities to work together for immigrant justice. Meetings are the second Monday of the month on Zoom. Richard@371-6772 / Gainesvilleiaij@gmail.com / www.gainesvilleiaij.blogspot.com

Gainesville National Organization of Women focuses on six issues: reproductive rights; ending sex discrimination / constitutional equality; promoting diversity and ending racism; economic justice; stopping violence against women; lesbian rights including marriage equality. For NOW meeting info, contact Lisa@450-1912 / info@gainesvilleNOW.org / www.gainesvillenow.org.

Gainesville Peer Respite is a non-profit, non-clinical mental health community providing sanctuary and support to those experiencing emotional distress. A peer support warmline is available along with wellness activities and support groups over Zoom. Warm-Line: 559-4559 / business line: 278-0529 / www.gainesvillerespite.org

Gainesville Quakers work peacefully for social justice and share a way of life, rather than a written set of beliefts. Values include simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality and stewardship. Request info on virtual worship on Zoom using the "contact us" link on website or call 372-1070 / www.GainesvilleQuakers.org

Gainesville Roller Rebels, a women's Flat Track roller derby team, needs skaters and volunteer assistance. join@gainesvillerollerrebels.com / https://gainesvillerollerrebels.com

Graduate Assistants United Union represents UF grad assistants by fighting for improved working conditions, community involvement and academic freedom. 575-0366 / organizing@ufgau.org / www.ufgau.org

Grow Radio, a non-profit podcast station provides opportunities for community members to create and manage engaging, educational, locally-generated programming to promote musical/visual arts and humanities for enrichment of Gainesville community. 219-0145 / BRYSON66@gmail.com / http://growradio.org.

The Humanist Families of Gainesville aims to raise ethical, secular children in a religious, moral environment. Meetings include children, based on members' interests. Facebook: Humanist Families of Gainesville (leave a message).

Humanist Society of Gainesville are people who believe that the problems of the world can only be solved by responsible human actions based on rational analysis and decision-making free of dogma or the guidance of imaginary supreme beings. They meet to discuss and promote secular, humanist, atheist and agnostic social influences. gainesvillehumanists@gmail.com / www.gainesvillehumanists.org / www.facebook.com/humanistsocietyofgainesville

Ichetucknee Alliance focuses on ensuring the restoration, preservation and protection of the ecosystems along the 5.5-mile length of the Ichetucknee River, including its associated springs. Meetings are on the 4th Tuesday every other month via Zoom. 386-454-0415 / ichetuckneealliance@gmail.com http://ichetuckneealliance.org/

Indivisible Gainesville seeks to build an inclusive commnity fostering diversity and encouraging citizen action, and to educate and inform the people of Florida's 3rd Congressional District in order to increase voter turnout and participation in the civic process. projectmanagement@indivisiblegnv.org https://indivisiblegnv.org

Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) Gainesville General Membership Branch Union represents all workers, regardless of industry, trade, job, or employment status. gainesvilleiww@gmail.com / https://iww.org

League of Women Voters of Alachua County Nonpartisan grassroots political group of women and men who have fought since 1920 to improve our system of government and impact public policies such as fairness in districting, voting and elections, through citizen education and advocacy. info@lwv-alachua.org / http://www.lwvalachua.org

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteers to join advocates who protect elders' rights in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, family care homes. Training and certification provided. 888-831-0404 / LTCOPInformer@elderaffairs.org http://ombudsman.myflorida.com

Madres Sin Fronteras (Mothers Without Borders) is a local grassroots immigrant-led organization working to protect the rights of immigrants' families in our community and to ensure all are treated with dignity and respect. msfgainesville@gmail.com www.facebook.com/MSFGainesville/

MindFreedom North Florida is a human rights group for psychiatric survivors and mental health consumers, working to educate the public about harmful psychiatric practices and about humane alternatives to those harmful practices. 328-2511 / Facebook: MindFreedom Florida

Move to Amend, Gainesville is an organization dedicated to amending the US Constitution to establish that money is not speech, and that only human beings have constitutional rights. Contact Alachua County Green Party for information. www.facebook.com / MoveToAmendGainesvilleFL/

National Alliance on Mental Illness / Gainesville offers support, education and advocacy for families and loved ones of persons with mental illness and/or brain disorders. 320-0457 (information) / 335-7770 (helpline) / www.namigainesville.org

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare works to promote and preserve threatened programs for senior citizens and to keep seniors independent and productive. Our.Circle.Of.Care@gmail.com / http://www.ncpssm.org

National Lawyers Guild consists of lawyers, law students, legal workers and jailhouse lawyers who use the law to advance social justice, support progressive social movements. gainesvillenlg@gmail.com / www.nlg.org

National Women's Liberation is a feminist group for women who want to fight back against male supremacy and win more freedoms for women. Inequalities between women and men are political problems requiring a collective solution. 575-0495 / nwl@womensliberation.org / http://womensliberation.org

North Central Florida Association for Women In Science is an advocacy organization championing the interest of women in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) across all disciplines and employment sectors. ncfawis@gmail.com / https://sites.google.com/site/ncfawis

Occupy Gainesville is about engaging local people in grassroots, participatory democracy, diversity and dialogue; we stand in solidarity with the Occupy Wall Street Movement and the rest of the people peacefully occupying public space across this county and the world. www.facebook.com/occupygainesville

Our Revolution North-Central Florida, inspired by Bernie Sanders, bringing progressive voices into the Democratic party. contact@ourrevncfl.com www.facebook.com/OurRevNCFL/

Our Santa Fe River is a non-profit composed of concerned citizens working to protect the waters and lands supporting the aquifer, springs and rivers within the watershed of the Sante Fe River. 386-243-0322 / https://oursantaferiver.org

PFLAG Gainesville is a local chapter of Parents and Families of Lesbians and Gays, the nation's foremost family-based organization committed to the civil rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Monthly meetings are the3rd Tuesday at the Fellowship Hall of the United Church of Gainesville (1624 NW 5th Ave.) at 7 pm. Confidential helpline: 340-3770 / info@pflaggainesville.org / http://pflaggainesville.org

Planned Parenthood Clinic at Gainesville Health Center is a full-service health center for reproductive and sexual health care needs. Offering pregnancy testing and options counseling. 914 NW 13th St., Gnv / 377-0881 https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1150

Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery promotes natural burial practices that conserve land and re-unite people with the environment. 352-317-7307 / info@prairiecreekconservationcemetery.org / prairiecreekconservationcemetery.org

Pride Awareness Month is a planning committee for spring's UF Pride events, to celebrate the history and identities of the LGBTQ+ community through events centering on marginalized sexualities and genders. ufpridemonth@gmail.com / https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1152 (Gator Connect)

Pride Community Center of North Central Florida has resources for the LGBT+ community, open M-F, 3-7, Sat. noon-4. 3131 NW 13th St., Suite 62, Gnv / 377-8915, www.GainesvillePride.org

ty values every citizen's right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and believes that the best government comes through an open and respectful exchange of ideas. For info on volunteer activities call Fran Rossano @ 475-3012 / https://www.putnamdems.org/index.php/

Repurpose Project, a nonprofit junk shop /community center, diverts useful resources from the landfill, redirects these items to the public for art and education, inspires creativity, and helps us all rethink what we throw away. Let's all help protect the planet and buy used. Check website or call for hours. 1920 NE 23rd Ave, Gnv / 363-8902 / info@RepurposeProject.org / www.repurposeproject.org

River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding provides solution-based innovative ways to resolve conflicts, and provides services including mediation, communication skill building and restorative justice. 234-6595 / info@centerforpeacebuilding.org • www.centerforpeacebuilding.org

Rural Women's Health Project is a local health education organization that develops materials promoting health justice for migrant and rural women. Robin or Fran @ 372-1095 / info@rwhp.org / www.rwhp.org

Samuel Proctor Oral History Program focuses on story-telling, social justice research, social movement studies, oral history workshops. http://oral.history.ufl.edu

Suwannee-St. Johns Group Sierra Club is a local group within the nation's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, representing 14 North Central Florida counties. 528-3751 / www.ssjsierra.org

Sister City Program of Gainesville links Gainesville with sister cities in Russia, Israel and Palestine, Iraq, and Haiti. 376-8600 / steve@gnvsistercities.org / http://www.gnvsistercities.org

Stand By Our Plan informs the public on critical differences between the Comprehensive Plan and Plum Creek's proposal, which we do not support. Alachua County's Comprehensive Plan is the best blueprint for future growth in the county's unincorporated areas; it protects valuable wetlands. standbyourplan@gmail.com / http://standbyourplan.org

Student Animal Alliance UF-based group that promotes animal rights through education, volunteering and social events. https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1149 facebook: student animal alliance/ instagram @studentanimalallianceUF

Student/Farmworker Alliance is a network of youth organizing with farmworkers to eliminate sweatshop conditions and modern-day slavery in the fields. billy@sfalliance.org / brett@sfalliance.org / http://www.sfalliance.org/ Facebook: Gainesville Student/Farmworker Alliance

Sunday Assembly Gainesville is a secular congregation celebrating life. There is a talk, music, sing-alongs, discussion and fellowship. Meetings and events are on Zoom. / sundayassembly32601@gmail.com http://SAGainesville.weebly.com/

UF College Democrats is the official voice of the Democratic party on UF campus. 407-580-4543 / president@ufdemocrats.org / www.ufcollegedemocrats.org / Facebook.com/UFcollegedems

UF Pride Student Union is an LGBT+ group open to queer folk of all sorts, including students, non-students, faculty and staff, that educates and provides a safe space for those of marginalized sexualities and gender identities. ufpridesu@gmail.com / www.facebook.com/ufpsu/

United Faculty of Florida, UF chapter is run by and for faculty and represents over 1600 faculty and professionals at UF. UFF's origins lie in efforts by faculty to protect academic freedom, defend civil liberties, and end racial discrimination at UF. 519-4130 / officemanager@uff-uf.org / www.UFF-UF.org

United Nations Assn., Gainesville Chapter works to heighten citizen awareness/knowledge of global problems and the UN's efforts to deal with them. www.una-usagainesvillefl.org/ facebook.com/UNAUSAGainesvilleFlChapter/

United Way Information and Referral is a human-staffed computer database for resources and organizations in Alachua County. 332-4636 or simply 211 / uw211help@gmail.com http://www.unitedwayncfl.org/21

Veterans for Peace Gainesville Chapter is an anti-war organization that raises awareness of the detriments of militarism and war, as well as seeking peaceful and effective alternatives. 375-2563 / http://vfpgainesville.org/ www.facebook.com/VFPchapter14/

Wayfaring Painter is a local nonprofit working to engage communities with visual art instruction that promotes openness, problem-solving and visual literacy through a variety of high quality, accessible classes, at-home kits and workshops. www.facebook.com/wayfaringpainter

WELLS Healing and Research Collective explores and promotes the liberation and wellness of Brown, Trans, and Queer folx.WELLS stands for: wellness, equity, love, liberation and sexuality. www.facebook.com/wellshrcollective/about

WGOT-LP 100.1 FM is a community low-power radio station operating as part of the CMC. info@wgot.org / www.wgot.org

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has been promoting peace since 1915. Donate or join the at-large Jane Addams Branch. Local info: juned@stevelittler.com / http:// wilpfus.org

Women's March Gainesville is an extension of the national group, and organizes the yearly Women's March to show our strength, power and courage. wmw@hearourvoicegnv.org / https://m.facebook.com/wmflgnv / www.facebook.com/groups/wmflgnv / Instagram.com/womensmarchgnv / Twitter.com/WMFL_Gnv /

World Socialist Party of the United States welcomes anyone wanting to know more about Marxian socialism and our efforts to transform the dog-eat-dog – Devil take the hindmost world created by capitalism into a democratically arranged world society of equality at boston@wspus.org. / htttp://wspus.org.

WGOT: Community radio in the COVID age

By Fred Sowder, WGOT Financial Coordinator

It's certainly been a long year at your community radio station. Despite having a studio at the Civic Media Center, we've only been able to use it sparingly, limiting it to only a few broadcasters on a regular basis.

Playing smart by sanitizing mic screens between each shift and practicing other safety measures have kept us almost 100 percent virus free. That said, our fundraising efforts have been thrown into uncertainty with this new world of remote operation and lack of live events.

Much like the yearlong postponement of Fest 19 (our biggest annual source of income), our lucky 13th birthday bash at The Atlantic that would normally happen this month also had to be put on hold.

Because of that, we could certainly use the help of listeners becoming sustaining members through our Patreon campaign (patreon.com/wgot) as well as underwriting support through the sponsorship of our programming by local small, independent businesses. Thanks for your consideration in either or both of these areas. We're all unpaid volunteers, so rest assured that your support goes directly towards the bottom line on things like utilities and tower rent.

Perhaps more importantly, however, is our need for technical assistance. Are you familiar with Linux? Are you moderately proficient in server maintenance or administration? By donating a mere couple hours of your time each week at most, you can be a tremendous asset.

We're always looking for new show hosts, but our greatest needs remain those who can work away from the microphone. If you can help us in any of these areas, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@wgot.org.

Between fulltime jobs, kids, and other responsibilities, so many of us don't have the time we'd like to make WGOT better, so any and all help is appreciated.

Another frustrating thing about the pandemic is our lack of personal interactions that are vital to foster volunteerism at WGOT. We're looking at ways we can resolve this issue, but we hope to have a virtual open house soon via Zoom. Please like us on Facebook (@wgotlp) to keep up with any news on that front.

Finally, the good news: did you know many of our local programs are produced at our hosts' homes in much the same way that podcasts are created? If you're a local podcaster, consider contacting us to find out how you can expand your reach by having your program on an entirely different media platform.

Especially with recent developments in our nation's capital elsewhere, it looks like 2021 is going to keep us talking about solving our problems for months to come.

Overall, it's been a tough year, but with everyone's help, WGOT will adapt, improvise, and otherwise overcome whatever these challenging times may come our way. Thanks for your continued help as always.

The Gainesville Iguana

Gainesville's progressive newsletter

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P.O. Box 14712
Gainesville, FL 32604

Established 1986

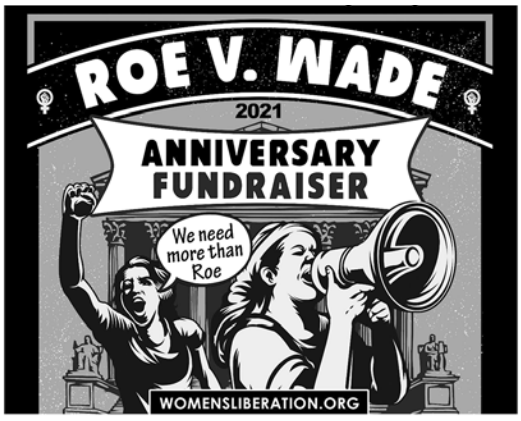
Comments, suggestions, contributions (written or financial) are welcome. To list your event or group, contact us at:
(352) 378-5655 or GainesvilleIguana@cox.net

www.gainesvilleiguana.org
facebook.com/gainesvilleiguana

Articles from current and past issues since 1996, and PDFs since 2012 are available at www.gainesvilleiguana.org

Roe v. Wade Anniversary & NWL Speak Out

Roe Was Just The Beginning



Join National Women's Liberation (NWL) for eight days of posts on feminist movement wins & testimony on the fight for reproductive freedom. Testimony starts Jan 22, 2021. We hope the stories you read will inspire you to donate to NWL.

To follow the eight day fundraiser find us on Facebook, Instagram, or check our website. You can donate now at womensliberation.org