



The Gainesville Iguana

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A school board seat is vacant: what now?

by David Kaplan, Julie Crosby, and Sarah Rockwell

In August 2020, Alachua County residents cast their ballots for two seats on the School Board of Alachua County, among other positions. When the votes were counted, Dr. Leannetta McNealy was re-elected to represent District 4, becoming Chairwoman of the Board, and Dyonne McGraw was elected to represent District 2.

The election was a historic event for Alachua County, as Dr. McNealy and Ms. McGraw joined board member Tina Certain to create, for the first time, a Black majority on the five-person board with a strong public commitment to educational excellence and equity. The same election saw several other progressive, Black, and female candidates win seats in this County-wide election.

As has been widely reported, while Ms. McGraw's registration for candidacy in District 2 was made using her home address and accepted by the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections, review of precinct and district maps seven months after she was sworn into office, showed her residence to be a few hundred feet outside of District 2, calling her election into question. Multiple legal actions ensued, both in support of and against Ms.

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Education under fire



Joint Statement on legislative efforts to restrict education about racism in American history (June 2021)

The American Association of University Professors, the American Historical Association, the Association of American Colleges and Universities, and PEN America have authored a joint statement stating their "firm opposition" to legislation, introduced in at least 20 states, that would restrict the discussion of "divisive concepts" in public education institutions. It is not possible to address

divisions that exist, however, without an honest reckoning with their histories.

"The clear goal of these efforts is to suppress teaching and learning about the role of racism in the history of the United States," the letter states. Education proceeds from exploration, facts, and civil debate. "These legislative efforts," on the other hand,

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DeSantis vetoes civics bill unanimously passed in House, Senate

‘... this is part of a larger political agenda to demonize our universities, demonize education’

by Divya Kumar

This article was originally published by the Tampa Bay Times on June 30. See more at tampabay.com.

Last week, high school students in the Civic Fellows Program at the University of South Florida's St. Petersburg campus were welcomed with a brief video message from Gov. Ron DeSantis.

"This first in the nation initiative, in partnership with USF, is certain to provide you all a great head start to your college careers," DeSantis said in the 2020 video. "I applaud you for your desire to research important public policy issues and to learn more about how our legislature, judiciary and executive branches work."

But this week, DeSantis vetoed a bill centered around civic literacy education that would have developed a civic literacy practicum and established the existing program at USF St. Petersburg as the Citizen Scholars Program, providing high school students with college credit for their participation.

While the governor signed a series of bills last week intended to improve civic literacy in the education system, late Tuesday night he vetoed SB 146 — a bill that had unanimously passed in both the House and Senate.

The bill called for establishing a practicum for high school students, allowing them to "evaluate the roles, rights, and responsibilities of United States citizens and identify effective methods of active participation in society, government, and the political system."

In his brief veto letter, DeSantis wrote that his administration has done much for improving civics education.

"The proposed bill seeks to further so called 'action civics' but does so in a way that risks promoting the preferred orthodoxy of two particular institutions," he wrote.

But what the "preferred orthodoxies" are remains unclear.

Last week, at a Board of Governors meeting, Senate President Wilton Simpson called Florida's universities "socialism factories" and Speaker of the House Chris Sprowls warned that universities were becoming spaces where one viewpoint is pushed.

The week before, the National Review,

a conservative magazine, published an opinion piece calling for DeSantis to veto SB 146, calling it a way to insert Critical Race Theory into the curriculum, and pointing to the YMCA's "Unlearning Systemic Racism" tab on its website. It claimed the bill would give credit to students for participating in protests.

The bill's sponsor, Sen. Jeff Brandes, R-St. Petersburg, said he was "shocked" that the bill was vetoed and that the governor's rationale was "amorphous at best."

"I don't understand what that means," he said. "I think it's purposely opaque."

Rep. Ben Diamond, D-St. Petersburg, who sponsored the House version of the bill, said he had been told the bill would be signed and he had been asked to provide the Governor's office with a statement. Instead, he found out last night it had been vetoed and wished there had been an opportunity to address concerns if the governor had them.

"I think this is part of a larger political agenda to demonize our universities, demonize education," Diamond said. "I just don't get it. I'm sort of speechless. ... I'm stunned that the Governor would put his own political agenda ahead of the students in the state of Florida. I'm stunned and saddened by that. I think his veto really undermines public confidence in government and elected leaders' ability to do what's right for the people they serve."

The program started at USF in 2016 as a partnership between the university and the Florida YMCA, with much input from the legislature. It was intended, Brandes said, to give young people who were curious about government a way to understand how to tackle problems in their community.

Judithanne Scourfield McLauchlan, a USF political science professor and founding director for the Center of Civic Engagement, leads the yearlong program that includes a weeklong residential portion at the St. Petersburg campus. She said the high school juniors and seniors selected for the program come from across the state and include those who identify as Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians and with No Party Affiliation.

"Our approach has always been to be bipartisan, to be exposing students to a variety of viewpoints," McLauchlan said. "There's workshops on communication and working

with people with different views."

This year, participants attended a school board meeting, sat in on city council and county commission meetings and met Mayor Rick Kriseman. They also met with Lt. Gov. Jeanette Nunez, Rep. Chris Latvala and House Speaker Chris Sprowls.

Sprowls said the important thing to keep in mind is that the funding for the program remains intact.

While funding was vetoed for during COVID, the program received \$300,000 for this year.

Sprowls said nothing in the program's curriculum was a cause for concern to him, but he understood where the governor was coming from.

"I think the governor has concerns, which I share, about a lot of different organizations that are engaged in the civics space about becoming very ideologically driven and pushing a specific ideology out, even if that ideology is well outside the mainstream," he said.

He also said he thought this should be a cautionary tale for national organizations like the YMCA that have become "increasingly radicalized" and have wide-reaching consequences for locally run YMCAs.

Lynne Wilcox, CEO of the Florida State Alliance of YMCAs, said the Y has run a Youth in Government program since 1957, even prior to partnering with USF, and many of its graduates now hold public office. This, she said, is just a bump in the road.

"It's important to us that kids understand civics and they run for office and they run for their school boards and we show them there's avenues to be a change maker," she said.

Sprowls said he still supports the program.

"I think those kids are more prepared to talk about the big issues and not get offended because somebody doesn't agree with them," he said.

All the veto does, he said, is create additional accountability in making the institutions seek funds each year.

Brandes, who also spoke with students last week, said there's a civics lesson for students to be learned here too: a bill can have unanimous support, but governors have veto powers. 🐼

From the publisher ...

The great awakening

Although people were not thrilled to hear it, in early 2020 experts were saying this pandemic could take a year and a half to wind down. And here we are. As we look around the globe, it is troubling to see the lag time, and kind of disgusting to see the US stockpiling (like we couldn't make more) vaccines when other nations don't have any. It has been nice to see faces and share hugs, but stay cautious and don't throw out your masks.

Speaking of other nations, it was good to see the US not being represented by the former White House occupant on the recent international trip. And I must say, that trip, and watching the international football (soccer) competition of the Euro and Copa Cups, and the Olympics, remind me of the reality of the wider world. This nation is but one of many, all going about the business of building and maintaining their own version of a functioning society.

And speaking of a functioning society ... does this country still fit that classification?

What we are seeing in Washington and around the States is an anti-democratic pro-authoritarian tendency that more and more to me feels like a slow motion coup by the rich and powerful. Limiting and suppressing voting is a huge warning sign, but only one of many. The power of right wing corporate media has been growing for decades, and has now reached new levels with social media silos purporting outright lies, anti-science quackery, all the way to the "stop the steal" Capital attack on January 6. Gerrymandered Republican state legislatures submit cookie cutter reactionary bills pre-written for them by mega-wealthy pro-corporate interest groups. And now the latest hysteria over "Critical Race Theory" invading the classroom and poisoning young minds with ... what, actual history? Really?

I was pleasantly surprised when Juneteenth was made an official holiday, and with that declaration coinciding with the centenary of the burning of 1921 Tulsa's thriving Black downtown, it added more significance. It brought to mind our own area's town burning out west of Archer, in Rosewood. That was another thriving black community attacked by racist white folks. What was true for Rosewood and elsewhere was former enslaved people, once freed, were also free to use their knowledge to work their own land, and work together, and build successful towns. Resentment of this success, coupled with their racist beliefs, fueled the white mobs that burned these two, and many other Black communities following Reconstruction.

It's telling that being "woke" is seen as bad by the Right. They would much prefer to keep us sleeping as they have their way with us. There is great fear of all the awareness that has blossomed in the past year; this next generation may be much more awake and aware than any in many decades. And well they should be, as their future is clouded by lack of opportunity, student debt, the climate crisis, intolerance toward their LGBTQ friends and allies, etc., etc. And we more seasoned people must be right there with them.

What seems to be happening is a blatant effort at ideological control with regard to teaching in schools and universities, to keep history that reflects poorly on this country (however truthful it is) from being spoken of. They want the retention of Myth America. For example: "Best health care system in the world" ... right.

Look, if we care about "being better" we must face who we are as a nation, recognize the systemic racism here that has affected generations, and the catastrophic exploitation of other nations in this hemisphere, in order to understand why we have such inequity here, why there are migrants coming here from their home countries we directly helped destabilize. Otherwise it is just more of the same, and that same has been going on way too long. Latin American liberator Simon Bolivar said in 1829: "The US appears to be Destined by Providence to Plague the Americas with Misery in the Name of Freedom." Yes, 1829.

Definitely uncertain times ahead but do what you can to make a better world. We hope that by September's Iguana we will have a calendar of events again, as things seem to be opening up. Thanks for reading, support us if you can. 🐢



Joe Courter

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Dollar General: The final victory of systemic racism

by Homer Jack Moore

What does a Dollar General convenience store planned for the scenic Tuscawilla Road into Micanopy have to do with systemic racism?

Plenty, it turns out. Understanding how racial exploitation now achieves a crowning moment in the form of a Dollar General convenience store lies in the history of Florida itself. And the history of Florida is a long one.

The Spanish came in the 1500s bringing smallpox, measles, Christianity, and slavery. Disease decimated the Timacua Native population. Spaniards later established cattle ranches on emptied lands in the interior. A large one was headquartered by the Chua, so-named in Timacuan dialect, a swallet on the north rim of, now, Paynes Prairie. By 1700 the Hacienda de la Chua failed. Abandoned Spanish cattle ran off into the impenetrable savannah. Attracted by feral cattle, splinter groups of Creeks started to move in. The Spaniards called them “Cimarrones,” wild ones.

In 1774, a Quaker explorer and natural-

ist named Bartram traveled to the Florida interior to the village of Cuscawilla on the northern rim of what we now call Tuscawilla Prairie. The Natives there were by this time called “Seminoles.” Bartram was hosted by Cowkeeper, a Chief revered today as Father of the Seminoles. Cowkeeper’s son was Payne. The trail Bartram traveled along is now Tuscawilla Road, the place where Dollar General wants to put a convenience store.

In those days nothing was ever well in Florida. Georgia’s ban on black slavery had been lifted and plantation slaves soon outnumbered their white owners. Escaped slaves often made it to Florida to become vassals under the Seminoles. Georgia slave owners were paranoid about a slave revolt. Spanish Florida, as a magnet for runaways—and the Seminoles in particular as their protectors—fueled unrelenting Georgia anxiety. Constant raiding by Georgia slavers earned the enmity of Natives. It was a violent lawless land. Still, settlers from the US did continue to trickle in, looking for a foothold and a new start. Like the Natives before them

they took advantage of feral cattle. They cracked whips to move herds; they were called Crackers.

In 1812 a bunch of adventurers from Georgia invaded Spanish Florida with hopes of starting a settler uprising as a pretext for a US takeover. This was the so-called Patriot’s War. A Georgian named Newnan imagined he would just go in and take over the Seminole Alachua territory. He was met head on by Chief Payne not too far from the lake now bearing his name (Newnan). Payne was killed. Newnan got his comeuppance. The Patriot War fizzled out. Payne was succeeded by his brother Bolek. Bolek died in 1819 and Payne’s grandson, Micanopy, became principal Chief.

1812 was also the year that the US declared war on England for infringements by the Royal Navy. The Brits and the French had been duking it out for years. Both sides, and the US as well, had recruited Natives to their causes. Brits sided with Red Stick Creeks who, under the influence of Tecumseh, were resisting US settler expansionism. Andrew Jackson,

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a charismatic and violent man, led Tennessee militiamen against the Red Sticks. Remnants of defeated Red Sticks including a mixed-race boy and his mother fled to the Seminoles in Florida. The boy's name was Osceola.

Trouble in Florida continued with constant raids and skirmishes against Natives and their Black Seminole allies. Jackson, himself a slave owner, hated Seminoles as much as he hated Red Sticks. In 1817 he invaded Spanish Florida from the west, uprooting a Seminole settlement on the Suwannee along the way. A young Seminole-Black mixed race boy fled south with his mother. That boy's name was John Horse; his nickname was Gopher John.

In the meantime Spain granted a large tract of land in the Alachua territory to a man named Arredondo and his son on condition that they bring in settlers and pacify the place. The Arredondos made a deal with a man named Edward Winton to set up a trading post at Cuscowilla to service settlers and interface with Natives. The trading post was named Micanopy to curry favor with the Seminole Chief. It opened for business in 1821.

Spain finally ceded Florida to the US since they couldn't control it, and it was a hell house to boot. In 1823 the new US regime met with the Seminoles at Moultrie

Creek on the St. Johns River and presented a deal the Seminoles couldn't refuse: Abandon the Alachua territory entirely and move south, confining themselves to the interior of the Florida peninsula, and be let alone. Or else. With the Patriot War and the Jackson experience behind them, the Seminoles assented. US forts were built in the Alachua Territory for its defense including one at Micanopy called Fort Defiance.

But the Treaty of Moultrie Creek was a crooked deal. Slaver raids continued. Then in 1830 the US Congress passed the Indian Removal Act to effect an ethnic cleansing of the entire southeast United States.

Black Seminoles were hardly thrilled about a return to US slavery and they were instrumental in inspiring a Seminole resistance. Fighting broke out in the Alachua Territory in 1835 and settlers from burned out plantations fled to Fort Defiance for shelter. In June 1836 Osceola, Gopher John, and a force of 250 warriors challenged the fort. US troops garrisoned there were ravaged by malaria and only 70 troopers and dragoons were in any fighting condition. A running battle under a sweltering sun took place along the length of Tuscowilla Road culminating at the very place where we are now to have a Dollar General. The Seminoles were re-

pulsed by the inferior US force. The US press picked up the story as a great victory, spinning it as indicative of Native cultural inferiority. US resolve was bolstered in what up to that point had been a dismal and discouraging experience. The US persisted for seven more grueling years at enormous cost including the loss of a full ten percent of its fighting force. Osceola, Gopher John, Micanopy, and other Seminole chiefs were treacherously taken prisoner under a flag of truce and imprisoned at St. Augustine. Gopher John and Chiefs Wild Cat and Alligator pulled off an incredible escape. Osceola was too ill to go. He died in prison and his head was stolen as a trophy.

Many Seminoles including Micanopy were banished, ultimately to become the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma. But the Seminoles in Florida never surrendered. The Second Seminole War finally fizzled out. The Native residual is now the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

The racist impulses that are the historical facts in the founding of the United States and the state of Florida are what they are. They cannot be changed. But the greatest racist impulse is to pave them over with asphalt and concrete, sell beer and cigarettes to the Cracker descendants, and erase all memory of what actually happened. 🐾

‘But we are the light. Nobody can put us out.’

They asked me to tell you what it was like to be twenty and pregnant in 1950 ...

from “Words Are My Matter” by Ursula K. Le Guin

They asked me to tell you what it was like to be twenty and pregnant in 1950 and when you tell your boyfriend you're pregnant, he tells you about a friend of his in the army whose girl told him she was pregnant, so he got all his buddies to come and say, “We all f*cked her, so who knows who the father is?” And he laughs at the good joke....

What was it like, if you were planning to go to graduate school and get a degree and earn a living so you could support yourself and do the work you loved — what it was like to be a senior at Radcliffe and pregnant and if you bore this child, this child which the law demanded you bear and would then call “unlawful,” “illegitimate,” this child whose father denied it ... What was it like? [...]

It's like this: if I had dropped out of college, thrown away my education, depended on my parents ... if I had done all that, which is what the anti-abortion people want me to have done, I would have borne a child for them, ... the authorities, the theorists, the fundamentalists; I would have born a child for them, their child.

But I would not have born my own first child, or second child, or third child. My children.

The life of that fetus would have prevented, would have aborted, three other fetuses ... the three wanted children, the three I had with my husband — whom, if I had not aborted the unwanted

one, I would never have met ... I would have been an “unwed mother” of a three-year-old in California, without work, with half an education, living off her parents....

But it is the children I have to come back to, my children Elisabeth, Caroline, Theodore, my joy, my pride, my loves. If I had not broken the law and aborted that life nobody wanted, they would have been aborted by a cruel, bigoted, and senseless law. They would never have been born. This thought I cannot bear.

What was it like, in the Dark Ages when abortion was a crime, for the girl whose dad couldn't borrow cash, as my dad could? What was it like for the girl who couldn't even tell her dad, because he would go crazy with shame and rage? Who couldn't tell her mother? Who had to go alone to that filthy room and put herself body and soul into the hands of a professional criminal? — because that is what every doctor who did an abortion was, whether he was an extortionist or an idealist.

You know what it was like for her. You know and I know; that is why we are here. We are not going back to the Dark Ages. We are not going to let anybody in this country have that kind of power over any girl or woman. There are great powers, outside the government and in it, trying to legislate the return of darkness. We are not great powers. But we are the light. Nobody can put us out. May all of you shine very bright and steady, today and always. 🐾

From EDUCATION, p. 1

“seek to substitute political mandates for the considered judgment of professional educators, hindering students’ ability to learn and engage in critical thinking across differences and disagreements ... Americans of all ages deserve nothing less than a free and open exchange about history and the forces that shape our world today.”

In total, 130 organizations (including UF’s own United Faculty of Florida) have co-signed onto the statement, printed below. See the full list of signers at <https://www.historians.org/divisive-concepts-statement>.

June 16, 2021

We, the undersigned associations and organizations, state our firm opposition to a spate of legislative proposals being introduced across the country that target academic lessons, presentations, and discussions of racism and related issues in American history in schools, colleges and universities. These efforts have taken varied shape in at least 20 states; but often the legislation aims to prohibit or impede the teaching and education of students concerning what are termed “divisive concepts.” These divisive concepts as defined in numerous bills are a litany of vague and indefinite buzzwords and phrases including, for example, “that any individual should feel or be made to feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological or emotional distress on account of that individual’s race or sex.” These legislative efforts are deeply troubling for numerous reasons.

First, these bills risk infringing on the right of faculty to teach and of students to learn. The clear goal of these efforts is to sup-

press teaching and learning about the role of racism in the history of the United States. Purportedly, any examination of racism in this country’s classrooms might cause some students “discomfort” because it is an uncomfortable and complicated subject. But the ideal of informed citizenship necessitates an educated public. Educators must provide an accurate view of the past in order to better prepare students for community participation and robust civic engagement. Suppressing or watering down discussion of “divisive concepts” in educational institutions deprives students of opportunities to discuss and foster solutions to social division and injustice. Legislation cannot erase “concepts” or history; it can, however, diminish educators’ ability to help students address facts in an honest and open environment capable of nourishing intellectual exploration. Educators owe students a clear-eyed, nuanced, and frank delivery of history, so that they can learn, grow, and confront the issues of the day, not hew to some state-ordered ideology.

Second, these legislative efforts seek to substitute political mandates for the considered judgment of professional educators, hindering students’ ability to learn and engage in critical thinking across differences and disagreements. These regulations constitute an inappropriate attempt to transfer responsibility for the evaluation of a curriculum and subject matter from educators to elected officials. The purpose of education is to serve the common good by promoting open inquiry and advancing human knowledge. Politicians in a democratic society should not manipulate public school curricula to advance partisan or ideological aims. In higher education, under principles of academic freedom that have been widely endorsed, professors are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject. Educators, not politicians, should make decisions about teaching and learning.

Knowledge of the past exists to serve the needs of the living. In the current context, this includes an honest reckoning with all aspects of that past. Americans of all ages deserve nothing less than a free and open exchange about history and the forces that shape our world today, an exchange that should take place inside the classroom as well as in the public realm generally. To ban the tools that enable those discussions is to deprive us all of the tools necessary for citizenship in the twenty-first century. A white-washed view of history cannot change what happened in the past. A free and open society depends on the unrestricted pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.

Signed,

American Association of University Professors
American Historical Association
Association of American Colleges and Universities
PEN America

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A new way forward for the Pride Community Center of North Central Florida ...

After more than two decades, LGBTQ+ center re-envisioning itself

*by Tamara Perry-Lunardo
PCCNCF President*

On September 13, 2000, the local LGBTQ+ community came together to establish the first Pride community center in the area. The community approved the bylaws, selected the name "Pride Community Center of North Central Florida," and elected the first Board of Directors in February 2001. In April 2002, we opened the doors of our first location at NW 6th Street in Gainesville, and in September 2007, we moved to the larger facility we still occupy at 3131 NW 13th St.

In January 2008, the Pride Center merged with Pride Celebration of Gainesville and began producing Gainesville Pride Days, which includes the annual Pride Parade and Festival. In 2018, we merged with the Gainesville Area AIDS Project (GAAP) and began providing direct services to people with HIV/AIDS.

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit in early 2020, we temporarily closed the center to the public and canceled in-person programs and events, shifting to virtual engagement where possible, and GAAP switched from hosting weekly lunches at the center to providing a drive-up service so we could continue providing meals and personal hygiene items to HIV/AIDS clients.

Then in April 2020, we suddenly lost our decades-long leader when founding member and Co-President Terry Fleming passed away unexpectedly of natural causes. Terry was a driving force behind the Pride Center's programs, events and services from its inception, and when he died, we lost much of the institutional knowledge he had. Terry had myriad strengths; sharing a heavy load was not one of them.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, the Pride Center has worked to keep the LGBTQ+ community connected as much as possible despite the limitations and challenges we've faced. In addition to continued GAAP services, we resumed hosting free, confidential HIV testing provided by Well Florida and allowed small groups to meet with Covid precautions in place. We produced our annual Pride Guide, created "Together With Pride" t-shirts, tote bags and facemasks, published print and digital versions of our newsletter, hosted a virtual LGBTQ+ Mental Health Chat, created a Kids' Pride Storytime video series and vir-

tual Pride Pet Parade, and partnered with the City of Gainesville to bring people together in a cathartic and healing gathering for Terry Fleming Day on April 28.

As Covid cases continued to decrease and vaccinations increased, we cautiously started resuming in-person events this June. People were anxious to come together after more than a year of pandemic restrictions, so during Pride month, we co-hosted a Pride Prom for All with TranQuility Transgender Community Group, which included performances, food trucks, local progressive organizations tabling and an estimated 300 prom-goers in attendance at Bo Diddley Plaza. We also held a community meeting at Westside Park and invited local LGBTQ+ people and allies to determine the needs of the community and, thereby, the direction of the Pride Center for what we see as our next chapter.

As with any non-profit organization, the Pride Center must not exist for itself, but for its mission. Although we've evolved the language of our official mission statement over the years, its heart has remained: We exist for the well-being of the LGBTQ+ community. What that needs to look like now contains elements from twenty years ago, but there's no doubt it's a different picture, and the community meeting helped us crystallize that.

At the community meeting, we focused our discussions on the areas the Board felt were most important: leadership, facilities, programming and events. From the initial full-group brainstorming session, which included at least 50 people, we broke out into groups based on interest. Together they dug into needs and plans for fundraising; groups for arts and crafts, sports and outdoor activities, youth, queer parents and senior citizens; the Pride Parade and Festival; and programming for education and trans issues.

When we reconvened toward the end of the two-hour meeting, we had self-formed committees to work on the areas they were passionate about, new people involved for the first time, long-time community members re-engaged, and a fresh energy in the air.

The Pride Center's job now is to harness that energy by connecting and empowering the committees to do their work, to hold fast to the mission without holding too tightly to the past, and to be humble, flexible and brave. The pandemic and the loss of Terry forced the Pride Center to an unexpected juncture, and while that has brought grief and uncertainty, it has also brought opportunity. We see this as a time to regroup, reimagine and move forward — together, with Pride. ✨

Tamal

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One Colombian's view from Minnesota to Gainesville

by *Didier Bolanos Gonzalez*

Here you will find my personal short journey into activism as a Colombian immigrant in the US.

I remember when I saw George Floyd in Conga Latin Dance Club my last days in Minneapolis before moving to Gainesville, in north Florida. It was probably on a Friday after 10 p.m. and he was the main bouncer at the entrance. It is ironic that he was protecting everyone all night and a couple months later on May 25, 2020, a terrifyingly cruel arrest by the Minneapolis police ended his life.

As an international graduate student I was advised by the University of Minnesota to not participate in protests. That May 2020 while in Gainesville, I decided to support the demonstrations without fear. Injustice was clear to me and I decided to walk with people wearing mainly black and yelling "Black Lives Matter" around gentrified neighborhoods in Gainesville. My thoughts about Mr. Floyd were, "Could I stop his murder if I had been there?" However, it was too late for Mr. Floyd's life and the Puerto Rican owners of the Conga club who had lost a dear friend.

Bad news did not stop there. A classmate from my MDP master degree, Soren Stevenson, lost his eye in Minneapolis days later in a demonstration. At the hospital, in a Facebook message Soren said to us not to be worried about him. Instead, worry about ending systemic racism in the US. He was right. News media focused purposely on the tip of the iceberg, namely protests that are the expression of last resort to call for actions. As an international student I have been witness to injustice against Americans several times. Now injustice is knocking on my door.

Trump's policies of denying work permits to immigrants during Covid cost me one year living on my savings. They were policies meant to protect American jobs. However, my job was not taken by an American until now so that I will be able to come back to work at the same position. I don't have the right to protest about it. Meanwhile, in April 2021 the Colombian finance ministry presented a new tax reform to recover credit scores at the expense of the middle and poor class in Colombia. In this case I have the right to speak up. I decided to connect and organize with Colombians in Gainesville and accompanied hundreds more in the US. Fortunately, I am not alone in Gainesville.

I was able to establish connections after the 2020 US presidential race. While I was waiting for my work permit, I was listening to an NPR radio report that was denouncing that the Colombian government and Russia were publicly endorsing US presidential candidates. During the US presidential race in 2020 Colombian officials were holding public events endorsing Mr. Trump. I was wondering if those officials knew how many migrants were affected by Trump's policies.

I reached out through social media to find Colombians speaking out against those power abuses. I found them. Now, I know Colombians in Gainesville, Jacksonville, Tampa, Orlando and Miami. The intended intrusion of democracy by the current Colombian right-wing government demonstrated how far the government can go to reach its goals. As a consequence, progressive Colombians and pro-democratic activists united in the current protests. We are breaking the stereotype of a single conservative pro-republican Colombian community. It is positive progress for a healthy democracy.

Thousands of Colombians have been mobilizing since April 28 locally and internationally. The accumulation of injustice stressors, especially from my country, has pushed me to continue my activism in Gainesville. Among Colombian youth we organized expressions of discontent against my government and denounced police brutality. For example, we commemorate the Colombian victim's day in Depot Park, we organized a light vigil for the current murders during protest in Colombia at Bo Diddley Plaza, I participated in a virtual University of Florida talk about Colombia, and finally we painted a mural on 34th Street with big S.O.S. letters. Again, protest or any kind of expression is the last resource of a deeper problem: injustice.

One year of intermittent quarantine due to COVID-19 has made us think about what is really valuable in our global society. Colombia endured decades of conflict due to governmental policies, civil war and in impact of international drug trade. Finally there were negotiation to end the civil war, but Colombia has not returned to its more care free days of soccer, big carnivals, and peace. Instead, more than 7 million victims of the Colombian civil war waiting for the implementation of the peace agreements, amid the continuous murdering of social activists. This past June 28 this the third

month of mass protest in Colombia. and the focus of the protesters demands has shifted to police brutality. The level of repression has surpassed Human rights violations in Colombia. Even, the government blocked for several weeks an international Human right delegation at the end of May. To keep informed about the current human rights violations by the police, I recommend you to check a detailed report by Human Rights Watch published on June 9 reporting a total of 68 credible death cases since the protests began. <<https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1240>> Colombia has the highest number of human rights defenders killed in Latin America (UN, 2019) and a 42% poverty rate (Forbes, 2021). There are starving households, illegal groups including remnants of active contra paramilitary, communist guerrilla dissidents, and hopeless Colombians youth that don't trust the government (unemployment rate 14.2% and 49% job informality (Colombian statistics)).

Unfortunately, the peaceful protest of thousands has been interfered by vandalism that has taken advantage of the mobilization to destroy public and provided goods. Violence has escalated dramatically. It includes citizen on citizen violence. 6,402 of dead citizens falsely represented as guerrillas have been exposed. All of those cases were confirmed by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) in 2021. This horrid scandal occurred during the presidency of former president Alvaro Uribe and his policy of rewarding military forces for combating guerrillas by number of deaths. This happened at the same time when the US Plan Colombia financed the war on drugs.

Plan Colombia granted 10 billion US dollars to reduce coca crops by half before 2010. Instead, coca crops are flourishing with record cultivated areas and suspicious environment and human rights atrocities caused by the aerial use of Roundup (Glyphosate, a weed killer). Basically the same idea as the "Agent Orange" used in Vietnam, but legally in the forest and mountains of Colombia. A coca crop farmer suggested to the Colombian government that with the same amount of money wasted in the chemical control of coca, they could create a small agribusiness with less money than what they were using to eradicate his coca crop. I don't know why the government does not find this as a common sense idea.

Today, there are hopes for those victims of current state-sponsored terror as the Colombian government has finally allowed

entrance to the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights to witness and confirm what is happening.

Not all is lost here in the US for us as activists. On May 14 Representative James P. McGovern and 55 US Representatives sent a letter to the US secretary of state suggesting restrictions on US military assistance to Colombia. Unfortunately, none of the representatives are from Florida, the state with the second most Colombians in the US. First steps are on the way here in Florida to dissident from mainstream politics. Recently, the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission has publicly called for a stop of human right violations in Colombia with a little impact. The Biden administration asked for \$453 million and the new approval by the Subcommittee on Appropriations for Foreign Operations was for \$461 million in aid to Colombian police and national army's counter narcotics budget <<https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1241>>.

If there is any sense of empathy from your part, Colombians will thank you if you could call or write to your representatives in the US legislation and suggest to the current Biden administration to reconsider its geopolitics with the current government of Colombia. Most progressive Colombians are tired of the US supporting some oppressive outdated US-Colombian policies with very poor results.

I will continue organizing activities to create public awareness about what is happening in Colombia. Any of your actions will help us in this journey of activism against injustice.

Contact me at didiering1@gmail.com. 🐢

Gainesville Community Redevelopment workshops

The city of Gainesville has been on a real building boom, both with the larger projects evidenced by the huge cranes that have appeared on skyline, and also with a lot of infill projects coming into neighborhood with at times shocking impact to the residents of those neighborhoods. If you live in or if you care about those who live in neighborhoods such as Porters or Pleasant Street, the Community Redevelopment Agency posted these upcoming meetings. Here is your invite to collaborate. Check their website for more information.

- July 16 & 17, 8-11 am: Porters Infill Housing Collaborative Design Workshop, 405 SW 5th Ave
- July 20, 5:30 pm: GCRA Advisory Board Monthly Meeting
- July 30 & 31, 8-11 am: Pleasant Street Infill Housing Collaborative Design Workshop, 414 NW 5th Ave
- August 17, 5:30 pm: GCRA Advisory Board Monthly Meeting 🐢

"And the good news is ..." will return next issue

Editors' picks: News that didn't fit

🐢 Five things to know about Florida's new 'intellectual diversity' law

by Divya Kumar / *Tampa Bay Times* / June 26 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1230>

The portion of the bill that generated most opposition among faculty calls for the allowance of recording in classes; faculty worry it will have a chilling effect on students' willingness to speak up.

🐢 Florida legislature, longtime enemy of conservation funding, OKs creating wildlife corridors

by Craig Pittman / *Florida Phoenix* / June 10 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1228>

As usual, a lot of bad stuff passed the Legislature this year. For example, one bill tells Key West voters they have no right to make decisions about the environmental impact of cruise ships on their city's own port. But they did one good thing: They passed the "Florida Wildlife Corridor Act."

🐢 Floridians are defying Ron DeSantis's Jim Crow voter suppression law and it's very inspiring

by Blue Tuesday / *Daily Kos* / May 31 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1243>

Florida's legislature and governor try to suppress voting rights - but the people fight back

🐢 How Rumsfeld deserves to be remembered

by George Packer / *The Atlantic* / June 30 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1226>

Rumsfeld was the worst secretary of defense in American history. Being newly dead shouldn't spare him this distinction. He was the chief advocate of every disaster in the years after September 11. His fatal judgment was equaled only by his absolute self-assurance.

🐢 Key Assange witness recants – with zero corporate media coverage

by Alan MacLeod / *FAIR* / July 2 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1227>

Sigurdur Ingi Thordarson ("Siggi the Hacker"), a convicted felon, pedophile and diagnosed sociopath, admitted his entire testimony is false, a revelation that could be the death knell for US attempts to prosecute Wikileaks founder Julian Assange.

🐢 Republicans call decency "woke" because they're indecent

by John Pavlovitz / *Stuff that needs to be said* / May 5 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1225>

When you are devoid of decency, you need to vilify it and somehow turn that decency into a threat. That's what we're seeing right now in America.

🐢 Where does the bizarre hysteria about 'Critical Race Theory' come from? Follow the money!

by Isaac Kamola / *Inside Higher Ed* / June 3 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1244>

There are numerous well-documented examples of wealthy right-wing and libertarian donors using their wealth to transform higher education in their own image. 🐢

Pine Ridge community canvassing report

Long-time tenants must vacate within 30 days, under threat of legal action

by Dmitry Podobreev, Paul Ortiz and
Sheila Payne

Alachua County Labor Coalition

On July 2, the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC) helped organize with members of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship and members of the Pine Ridge community to go door-to-door to talk to residents of the Pine Ridge community in NW Gainesville with the aim of organizing resistance to their displacement by a new landlord. Twenty community members joined with 20 Pine Ridge residents in solidarity to defend the Pine Ridge residents' rights to not lose their housing. This was after a Zoom meeting where Pine Ridge residents told what was happening to their community.

Key City Capital, a Texas based investment firm, purchased 83 units in Pine Ridge in 2020, including a beloved community center building which provides the neighborhood children with programs and activities. The company says they are renovating the apartments and will raise the rents by almost \$400. Current residents, many of whom have lived there for over a decade, some for over 25 years, were put on a month-to-month lease and are being told to leave their homes within 30 days with no guarantee of another place to stay. Residents are receiving letters from the management company stating, "You are advised that your tenancy and/or lease if applicable will not be renewed. You must vacate the premises no later than 7/31/21. In the event that you do not vacate the premises by said date, legal action may be taken in which you may be held liable for holdover (double) rent, damages, court costs and attorneys' fees."

Living conditions in the neighborhood have long been sub-standard. Many of the apartments suffer from leaky roofs with concurrent mold and clogged plumbing



Alachua County Labor Coalition members meet with Pine Ridge Community members on July 2 during a canvassing event. Photo by Paul Ortiz.

among many deficiencies. When residents asked the property managers to live up to their responsibilities, perform maintenance, and deal with the glaring health and safety problems at the properties, they are ignored. Worse yet, one resident says, "I was told by the new owners that no one would be receiving their security deposits."

Despite all the issues, Pine Ridge residents cherish their bonds with each other and the community they've built. "We have worked to build our own community center here where our children have healthy activities to do after school. We will lose all of this if we are kicked out of our homes," one resident said.

"Pine Ridge people are lower-income but we are tight-knit. We look out for each other and keep our children safe from all of the violence in this city. If we are dispersed from this development, many of us have nowhere to go."

Another resident at risk of losing their home said they expect to be homeless if they are kicked out from Pine Ridge, "because there is no affordable housing in Gainesville."

The primary emotion that Pine Ridge residents expressed was incredible stress and horror at losing their home and community.

Key City Capital and Jacksonville based Suncoast Property Management, the company hired to manage the units, are destroying the community, displacing people, pricing them out of future residency, and furthering the housing crisis in this city.

Especially because of the pandemic, many residents do not have first and last month's rent, security deposit money, and are fearful of not finding another place to rent.

Almost 100 residents signed the petition to the City of Gainesville and Alachua County Commissioners asking for their help. Three Rivers Legal Services is offering their assistance, as is Alachua County Support Services.

ACLC is meeting with the residents at the community center next week to plan further actions, tell them about community resources including moving assistance and monetary assistance with deposits. We want the residents to stay in their community, but are planning for mutual aid assistance.

We are asking people to call the city and county commissioners to ask for help to stop these evictions. We are demanding that this wealthy corporate investment company give the residents their security deposits back and are demanding that they give residents longer than 30 days to find other homes.



Quitting tobacco isn't easy. Finding help should be.

If you are ready to quit, join our next Tools to Quit Tobacco group on Tuesday, July 13 from 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm virtually via Zoom. This FREE one time, two-hour group will give you tips on how to deal with triggers, withdrawal symptoms and prevent relapse. You will also receive up to 4 weeks of FREE nicotine patches, gum or lozenges. This group more than doubles your chance of quitting for good. Pre-registration is required. Call 866-341-2730 to reserve your spot. 🐾

Health care for some, help for adults who need insurance

by Diane Dimperio

Every year it gets worse! Politicians elected to represent the citizens of Florida are following the agenda provided by the donors who fund their campaigns. In return for their likely re-election our lawmakers are governing according to the dictates of wealthy conservatives. One glaringly consistent Republican policy has been its virulent antagonism toward the Affordable Care Act (ObamaCare). When the ACA first passed into law in 2010, the negative messaging by Mitch McConnell and his cronies was effective in turning people against it but over the decade it has been in place families have seen the benefits and attitudes have shifted. There are many benefits of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) but the best known is improved access to health insurance for adults between 19 and 64 years of age. The ACA envisioned two options to make health insurance affordable. Medicaid, which has no cost to participants, was to be available for very low-income adults and, people with low and moderate incomes could purchase subsidized insurance through an online portal called the "Marketplace." Two issues interfered with the implementation of the ACA. Insurance offered through the Marketplace was put in the hands of private sector insurance companies, which are profit driven, and were more expensive than many could afford. Then the Supreme Court made Medicaid Expansion (MedEx) optional so states were free to accept or reject it. Many Republican dominated states initially rejected it but now only 13 states, including Florida, have denied its citizens access to this life saving health coverage.

The rejection of MedEx during the 2021 Legislative session was especially horrendous. The economic and health consequences of the pandemic created a perfect storm of devastation for many of our residents. Data from the scientific literature and the experience of other states prove MedEx improves the financial and health status of participants, communities and state economies. In addition, the Biden administration even sweetened the deal by offering an extra \$3.5 billion in federal funds to Florida if our legislators would expand Medicaid. But the Republicans, who control the legislative process, had their orders from their out-of-state masters, and ignored program benefits and survey data showing the majority of both Democrats and Republican voters support expansion. They shamelessly rode roughshod over attempts by the Democrats to pass enabling legislation.

The only good news for uninsured adults comes from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This Act, developed and passed by the Biden Administration, offers a safety net for millions of Floridians. The Administration is doing what it can, within the law, to make insurance offered through the Marketplace more affordable. The ARPA increases subsidies that reduce the monthly premium. For example, an individual making between \$13,000 and \$19,000 and a family of four making between \$26,500 and \$39,000 are eligible to enroll in a "Silver Plan" with no monthly premium. The Silver Plan offers comprehensive coverage and lower co-pays than other choices. The ARPA also increases subsidies for people with higher incomes. Everyone who is eligible to apply for a Marketplace plan will find insurance is more affordable. For example, a single person making \$30,000 will pay \$85 per month instead of \$195 and a family of four with an income of \$50,000 will pay \$67 per month instead of \$252.

Adults with very low incomes, less than \$12,880 for a single person or \$26,500 for a family of four, are not eligible to enroll

in the Marketplace unless they received unemployment in 2021. Anyone who received unemployment benefits in 2021 can enroll in a Marketplace plan with no monthly premium until, at least, the end of this year.

The Biden administration has also opened Marketplace enrollment and will accept applications until August 15, 2021. To help people make decisions on a complicated issue, the Administration has restarted the Marketplace Navigator Program. Navigators offer free, personal, one-to-one counseling to help people understand what plans they are eligible for and how much they cost. When learning about plans be sure to ask about deductibles and co-pays. Navigators can also tell you which doctors are enrolled in which plans. If you, your friends or family, are unable to afford health insurance you/they can go to Healthcare.gov or call the Suwannee River AHEC Navigator program at 386-230-9400. They can help you find out what you are eligible for and how much it will cost.

In addition to increasing the subsidies for health insurance, the ARPA has added funding for community-based services like Federally Qualified Health Centers and Behavioral Health. So, if you cannot qualify for insurance through the Marketplace, call around to see if the services you need are available directly from the providers like Meridian Behavioral Health.

The Biden administration has done what it can to help uninsured Floridians gain access to health care. We know their policy experts will be thinking of ways to help improve access to health care for the hundreds and thousands of Floridians who are not eligible for Marketplace plans and still in need of health care. 🐢



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Dion Dia events

Saturday, July 17 (10pm-2am):

Dion Dia at the Teal Haus
SE 4th St. and 4th Ave.

Silent Disco/House Show to raise
money for upcoming Dion Dia
concerts

Thursday, August 19 (6:30pm-
8:30pm):

Dia Days at Bo Diddley Plaza

Live concert at Bo Diddley Plaza
featuring a popular LA-based RnB
singer, Amindi, and local talent
including RAKHU, raph, Valleyz,
FARO, Jeremiah Ludicrous, Casey
Jones II, etc.

Thursday, August 19 (11pm-2am):

**Dia Days Afterparty at Samurai
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Afterparty with live DJs and extra
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-Ralph Nader

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<https://wmbt901.com/listen-live/>

Nonprofit coalition helps residents reduce utility bills

by Alane Humrich, Program Director
Community Weatherization Coalition

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, local Gainesville nonprofit, the Community Weatherization Coalition (CWC), found new ways to continue to bring utility savings to low-income Alachua County residents. CWC volunteers have helped reduce utility bills for over 1,200 families since operations started in 2008. With an innovative, new Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Home Energy Tune-up Program launched last year, the CWC upheld their mission to help their neighbors save energy and water and reduce their utility bills, by engaging volunteers, building community, and learning together.

In March of 2020, the CWC halted its in-home, volunteer-led, Home Energy Tune-up Program out of caution around the global pandemic. Last summer, the CWC rolled out the DIY Home Energy Tune Up service, which taught Alachua County renters and homeowners how to perform a tune-up on their own homes, while protecting our community from the spread of COVID-19.


CWC's DIY program equips energy-burdened Alachua County residents with the supplies and steps to save water, energy, and money. The free service also works to maintain our community's health and respects any accommodations that clients may need: tune-up kits are checked out in a safe, socially distanced manner for a scheduled period. DIY tuneup kits include a step-by-step checklist, instructional diagrams, a tutorial video playlist, and virtual coaching for DIY-ers as needed. The kit teaches participants ways to improve the efficiency of their appliances and how simple retrofits can save them water, energy, and money. To date, 70 local households have taken part in CWC's DIY Tune-up Program.

After 15 long months of the suspension of in-home services and

careful consideration, the CWC is preparing to resume volunteer-led home energy tune-ups. The CWC is eager to serve the community in person again, while reengaging their volunteer Energy Coaches, to help local families recover from an extraordinarily difficult year.

In an era where we all might be looking to save more money, the CWC's DIY and volunteer-led Tune-up Programs help residents with high utility burdens live more sustainably while lowering utility expenses. Applications for both programs are free and available to both renters and homeowners on the CWC's website, communityweatherization.org. Interested persons may also call (352) 450-4965 for more information or to request an application by mail. 🐾

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Gainesville Veterans for Peace announces scholarship winners

Gainesville Veterans for Peace Chapter 14 is excited to announce the recipients of VFP's seventh annual Peace College Scholarship awards.

Kyra Powell

Kyra Powell is enrolled as a Pre-Med student at Florida A&M University. She is the fundraising chair of the Black Women in Medicine Club at Florida A&M. Kyra has been a longtime volunteer organizer with the NAACP and was active in the Black Lives Matter and Black Voters Matter movements in 2020.

Patrick Warren

Patrick Warren is graduating from Loften High School and he plans to attend Santa Fe College. He volunteers regularly at the North Central Florida Public Charter school with at-risk and drop-out recovery students in Alachua County.

Javari Marquis Seabrooks

Javari Seabrooks is a senior at PK Yonge Developmental Research School. He plans to attend Santa Fe College in the fall. He has volunteered at the Ronald McDonald House, St. Frances House Emergency Shelter, Gainesville Community Ministry and the Tech Team Ministry with his church.

For more information about Gainesville Veterans for Peace Chapter 14 as well as our Peace Scholarship program see the VFP website at: <http://www.vfpgainesville.org/> 🐾



JULY

- 2 Jimmy Young & Passion (R&B)
- 9 Phillip "JazzDad" Thomas & The Forever Miles Band (covers with a smooth jazz twist)
- 16 King Eddie & Pili Pili (reggae)
- 23 Blackbird Morning (original rock)
- 30 Johnson and Burns (classic covers)

AUGUST

- 6 De Lions of Jah (reggae)
- 13 Pre-Existing Conditions (60's - 90's covers)
- 20 Royce Lovett (soul, hip hop)
- 27 N'Vyzion (R&B)

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Florida needs state constitutional amendment for rights to clean water

by David W. Moritz, Director,
North Florida Region, Florida Rights of Nature Network

Florida's water woes are no secret, but now there is something that we, the people, can do about that. If enough of us sign petitions, we can put a state constitutional amendment on Florida's ballot in 2022—an amendment that will secure the Right to Clean Water for both people and natural systems such as our freshwater springs.

From north to south, Florida's once-pristine waters are suffering. Springs and rivers in North Florida are polluted and have lost flow. Closer to Central Florida, the Indian River Lagoon is dying and manatees are starving to death. Farther south, polluted discharges from Lake Okeechobee to both coasts feed red tide and blue-green algae. All of these problems are accompanied by the financial losses that inevitably accompany ecocide, in a state where tourism is the lifeblood of our economy.

It's clear from these worsening water conditions that Florida's water management system—from Governor DeSantis to the Department of Environmental Protection to the directors and staff members of our water management districts—is failing us. And if you think “ecocide” is too strong a word to use for Florida's situation, a recent report from a politically independent educational nonprofit organization, the Florida Springs Council, might change your mind.

The Council analyzed state spending on water cleanup projects for Outstanding Florida Springs and came to the conclusion that at the rate things are going now, it will take 84 years to remove enough nitrogen to reach water quality goals at Rainbow Springs, 391 years at the Santa Fe and Ichetucknee rivers, and 2,215 years at Silver Springs. And that's only for pollution prevention! The state's plans to restore lost flow to those water bodies assume a 20-year recovery time, but we may not have the luxury of waiting 20 years. Some of those already-impaired systems could collapse sooner than that.

There's a beacon of light in all this darkness because of what happened down in Orange County in the 2020 elections. There, 89% of voters approved a county charter amendment that

recognized a Right to Clean Water (RTCW) for both people and natural systems. With that charter amendment now in place, Orange County is the seat of the first rights-of-nature challenge to development (proposed for a wetland) in the United States. And the Florida Rights of Nature Network (FRONN), which mounted the successful Right to Clean Water campaign in Orange County, is taking its efforts statewide.

Putting an amendment to Florida's state constitution on the 2022 ballot would enable Florida voters—we, the people—to vote “yes” for a secure water future, not only for our drinking water but also for our beloved springs, rivers, lakes, estuaries, lagoons and oceans. In courts of law, rights-based laws in state constitutions trump other state laws, including preemptions of local laws imposed by the Florida legislature and the governor.

Mounting such a petition drive is a monumental effort, and FRONN needs help in order to reach our goal of close to 900,000 signatures statewide by the end of November 2021. If you are a registered Florida voter, here is what we're asking (and if you're not yet registered, we hope this effort will inspire you to register).

First:

- Visit the website fl5.org and sign up to be emailed a packet that will contain the RTCW petition and four companion petitions. Those companions involve: protection for wetlands; protection for Florida's iconic species (black bear, panther, manatee, Key deer, scrub jay, bald eagle, red-cockaded woodpecker, bottlenose dolphin, right whale and marine turtles); a captive wildlife hunting ban; and a prohibition on construction or expansion of toll roads on conservation and rural lands.
- Make sure the petitions you sign are completely filled out, dated, and signed with the signature and address you used when you registered to vote.
- *Immediately* after you sign, mail the signed and dated petitions to the Maitland address shown on the petition.

Second:

- Visit <https://fl5.org/join-us> and sign up to be trained as a communications ambassador for this effort. Ambassadors receive training on specific talking points and help by gathering petitions and/or by writing and posting about this effort on social media and in local news media.
- Tell two friends or family members about the RTCW petition campaign, ask them to sign petitions and ask them to tell two other people.
- Spread the word via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or other social media outlets you use.
- Talk to your neighbors, co-workers, church and civic group members about the petition campaign.
- Volunteer to help locally by emailing dwmoritz@gmail.com, with “Volunteer RTCW” in the Subject line.

In the absence of effective state action, it's time for we, the people, to take a stand for rights to clean water. Please help us! 🐾

HELP! Protect and Save our Rivers and Springs



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Learn Your Part. Do Your Part



The Fellowship of the Springs: a documentary series

Florida's springs are much more than places for people to cool off in the summer.

In this documentary film, we delve into the essence of these natural pools — educating viewers about what the springs are, how they function, and why they are critical to the well-being and sustainability of Florida's growing populations.

We will explore how nature and industry can co-exist and thrive in north Florida, and what that partnership represents for the whole state.

The film will also compare north Florida's water challenges to other parts of the world dealing with aquifer management issues such as Northern India, Namibia, California and Northern China.

Explica Media will produce a 60-minute educational documentary film, a virtual reality video and a series of shorter videos on the issue.

Airing on WUFT in Gainesville and surrounding areas on July 21 and 28 at 10pm.

For more information, visit floridasmagicwaters.com. 🐸

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Alachua Conservation Trust awarded \$5,000 for ADA accessible trail at Serenola Forest Preserve

by Heather Obara,
Associate Director, Alachua Conservation Trust

Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) has been awarded a \$5,000 grant from REI Co-op in support of the nonprofit land trust's effort to install an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessible Trail at Serenola Forest Preserve in Gainesville.

Opened in 2019 in partnership with Alachua County and the Florida Communities Trust, Serenola Forest Preserve is a 111-acre nature preserve owned and managed by ACT. The preserve is located in the Idylwild neighborhood near Idylwild Elementary School and the Oak Hammock Retirement Community. Not only does the preserve provide a critical wildlife corridor, it also provides public recreational opportunities for hiking, biking, and nature observation along a 1-mile trail system.

With support from REI as well as additional partners, ACT plans to install a .75-mile ADA accessible trail that connects to the existing trail system as well as to a picnic area. Currently, ACT is working to install a parking area with handicap parking spaces for individuals with disabilities. This parking area will be located near the proposed location for the ADA trail and will link directly with the trail. This trail and parking area will increase accessibility for individuals with physical disabilities and create opportunities for these individuals as well as their

family and friends to enjoy the outdoor recreational activities offered at the preserve.

"Through this project, we will be able to expand access to our preserve and ultimately to nature for individuals in our community that are living with disabilities," said ACT community outreach coordinator, Heather Obara. "We are excited to partner with REI on this important project to create greater access to nature and promote healthy living in the Gainesville community."

As a member-owned co-op, REI invests deeply in the outdoors focusing on efforts to create equity in nature, promote health in the outdoors, and address the effects of climate change. As a 2021 grant recipient, ACT will partner with the staff at REI Gainesville over the next two years to promote local conservation efforts. "

At REI, our goal is to inspire life outside for everyone," said Wendy Green, REI Gainesville store manager. "We are proud to work with organizations like Alachua Conservation Trust who are creating access to outdoor places in our community."

To learn more about REI's investment, visit www.rei.com/h/philanthropy.

For more information about Alachua Conservation Trust and the Serenola Forest Preserve ADA Accessible Trail Project, call (353) 373-1078 or email info@alachuaconservationtrust.org.



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In memoriam: Frederick Pratt (1956-2021)



by Robert Karp

Is it possible for one person to squeeze so much out of life in 65 years on this earth? Frederick Pratt sure put it to the test.

Fred was born on January 20, 1956 in Pittsburgh PA. He grew up with spina bifida and relied on a wheelchair for mobility. In those days, the only schools available to him were for special education students with learning disabilities. He was not one of them. So in the 1960s he moved to St Petersburg, FL, to live with his grandparents and attended a school there that did accommodate students with wheelchairs. Wheelchair accessibility was just starting to become more common, but not prevalent in most places.

He ended up graduating high school and then attended University of South Florida in Tampa from 1977-1980 to complete a political science degree. It was at this time that he realized a second major life challenge—dealing with persistent and widespread homophobia, much of it undisguised and meant to hurt.

In the Samuel Proctor oral history series (which the Iguana published in 2014), Fred describes his gradual coming-out process in the 1970s as well as the rampant homophobia at USF and other places. Like so many other LGBTQ young people, he felt isolated and searched for supportive groups at USF, of which there were none active at the time.

After moving to Gainesville, in the 1980s, he obtained employment as a public assistance specialist with the state Department of Children and Families to administer Medicaid, food stamps and other programs. He described Gainesville as a much more tolerant environment, but that would be tested in future years.

The first time many people came to know Fred was from volunteering for phone banks

at Democratic Party headquarters or through a local Democratic candidate's campaign. It was a position he enjoyed doing, and he was very good at it. He also helped found the Alachua County Democratic Party's Disability Caucus. He also served on boards for the Pride Community Center of North Central Florida, the Human Rights Council of North Central Florida, Stonewall Democrats and the Center for Independent Living.

Fred was notoriously independent, and took pride in driving himself to many events, be it a campaign fundraiser or volunteering for LGBTQ and AIDS support organizations. He worked assiduously for disability rights, and was the go-to guy to learn about any aspects of the landmark 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). He attended many state and national events as well, one of which included a Stonewall 25 commemorative march in New York City where, by chance, he encountered a film crew. Later it turned out he would see himself as a cameo in the 1994 movie "Jeffrey".

Fred worked hard to help pass the landmark ADA law, but he knew that laws only go so far. You have to hold folks' feet to the fire. Famously, when he attended the 1996 Democratic Party Convention in Chicago, he was provided a special place on the convention hall floor up front to view the proceedings. Instead, he encountered a scrum of reporters in front of him. Clearly this was not going to work. He proceeded to politely, but firmly, notify the DNC chain of command that he needed to sit with the Florida delegation. After ratcheting up the pressure, the DNC built

a platform with the Florida delegation so he could have an unobstructed view.

Fred was a part of all the LGBTQ rights struggles in Alachua County since the early 1990s. Because he was so easily identifiable in photos and on TV, he was the target of harassing, hateful phone calls, often times called out as "that crippled queer." He described this abuse and outright threats as taking a mental toll on him, but ultimately he was in it for the long haul on any human rights issue, whether it be disability, LGBTQ rights, women's rights, or Black Lives Matter.

Fred was an early advocate for HIV/AIDS awareness and volunteered at the North Central Florida AIDS Network and co-founded the Gainesville Area AIDS Project.

In the last years of life, he faced multiple challenges to his health. Yet, through it all, long-time friend Carol Gordon described it as Fred teaching her how to have an "attitude of gratitude" for life. She and other close friends shared that attitude right up to the day he died on June 8.

How much can one person squeeze out of a life? A lot it turns out. Fred showed us all how to do that, no matter what cards life has dealt you from the start, or even along the way.

For an oral history interview with Fred Pratt, check out <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1242>.



Update: Maura Brady Community Garden

As of now, the petition drive to rename McRorie Community Garden after Maura Brady, one of its principle founders, could still use some signatures. The garden is at the edge of the Power District on SE 4th Ave.

The past two issues of the *Iguana* have talked about her and her positive impact in our community. Many kind words were heard at her memorial on May 22, attended by over 150 people.

If you live within the city of Gainesville, please get in touch and add your name at wethepeopletheater@gmail.com. Thank you. 🐾

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History and the people who make it: Carnell and Jettie Henderson, and Henry Jones



Hawthorne resident Rev. Carnell Henderson [CH], his wife Jettie Henderson [JH], and their neighbor Henry W. Jones [J] were interviewed by Anna Brodrecht [B] and Hawthorne Branch Library manager Memree Stuart [S] on June 8, 2010. This is the 67th in a series of transcript excerpts from the UF Samuel Proctor Oral History Program collection.

Transcript edited by Pierce Butler.

CH: I was born December 2, 1926. It was out in the country, the town called Corn Crossing, about five miles from here. We had plenty of food: 'coon, opossum, you name it. Squirrels, gophers. Then we moved into Hawthorne.

JH: We lived there until we moved. Nineteen years old.

J: Some sixty years ago, through unfortunate circumstances, I moved to Hawthorne, but they turned out to be beautiful because of the people I met. So, I'm very happy, and I salute the community of Hawthorne.

B: What year were you born?

J: [Laughter] I'll let you figure it out. I was born one year exactly behind the birth of Dr. King.

I was born in St. Petersburg, and I moved to Hawthorne. For a while, I lived in the beautiful city of Campfield. I don't even know if it exist anymore. They drafted me into the Service when I was nineteen. I spent two years in the Korean conflict, and from there on I didn't get a chance to come back, just for short term to see my mother-in-law. I married a young lady from Hawthorne, Irma Purdy, and we moved to Jacksonville, and to St. Pete, where I taught for thirty years. She passed away in [19]99 and I moved back to Hawthorne to bury her, and got all the land and everything straightened out. Then I moved back to St. Pete for a while. For some reason, I'm right back in Alachua

County again! I married another young lady, Peaches, who is Elvira Thomas. We do very well. I met Rev. Henderson when I was about seven years old; he and his brothers got me started in Sunday school at Galilee Baptist Church.

CH: We just loved Corn Crossing. Here's a railroad going at a pretty good pace. What we called hobos — I guess they would slow it down for them. So, when they get by the house, they can get off, and Momma just giving them all our food! Momma kept plenty food for hobos or whoever came by was hungry. I became a fishing guide down through the years, and I just love fishing. And the sports I love: basketball. They say, "Y'all had the best basketball team in the whole state of Florida." They beat everything local, and went to the state. This team, I believe they was from Tampa, they beat us by one point.

J: They were grown men playing a bunch of kids! In 1953, I came out of the Korean conflict, and we applied — a friend of mine, Wesley Jenkins Jr., who has passed on now — we applied to the University of Florida, and we were asked to go to Florida A&M University, which we did. He went on to be a contractor in West Palm Beach. They hired me out of A&M to teach in St. Petersburg at Gibbs High School. That's where I eventually did the thirty years. So, it all turned out good. It was just that time. And America has been constantly getting better. Some of the finest people I ever met were right here in Hawthorne, and they happened to be White. I could get any favor I wanted from Sid Martin or his sister, who ran the store down the street. I worked for them. When I went to A&M, she sent a note with me to her brother so I would have a job.

B: The situation of segregation—did that ever frustrate you?

J: Yes. At night, I would walk from the basketball game home about three miles out in the country, and I was always afraid of what might happen to me from the Klan. If I saw a car coming, I quickly hid myself till the car went by. I always had this feeling within me, that, "Hey, you better get over there and—!" So, here I am today, eighty years old!

B: Was fear a big part of your life growing up?

J: To some extent. Now, I always was kind of brave. I'd take some big chances. I get in a boat with Rev. Henderson. And the boat leaking! [Laughter]

S: Rev. Henderson, when did you start being a fishing guide?

CH: Oh, that was way on after moving to Hawthorne. See, when we come near them where we can smell them a little bit, then we do a little bit of easing in there, paddling, and what have you. Chester Shell, heading the Boy Scouts, they'd take us over to somewhere near Jacksonville. We'd be looking for hogs, the fat ones? We'll stay on after killing them, dress them, and could cook anything, and stay out there all night. That was a whole lot of joy out of that.

Hawthorne years ago was one big family. If you went over to Uncle Otis Terrell's, he and Earnest Ivory, made sure that you worked. We picked beans, we stacked hay, we did whatever was to be done. We would kill hogs on the first cold day, and we shared whatever we had with everybody in the neighborhood. Black, White, whatever; you got a chance to share it. But I think that day has gone.

B: When did you notice that it started changing away from that? What changed?

J: The people. "Ah, Jesus," I said, "you need to go into all the world and teach about Him," and we fail to do that. So consequently, we're paying for it. A lot of this stuff is political, and I never been interested in politics. They tried to get me to run for city councilman after Rev. Henderson had served many years.

CH: Eighteen. I didn't run, though. All I did, went up and signed up for it.

B: So, you must have liked it.

CH: Yeah, I enjoyed; a part I didn't enjoy, but I stayed there.

B: What did you enjoy and what did you not enjoy?

CH: Much of the changes that went about, especially over the concern about our elderly people. We found out that if you look out for somebody, somebody going to look out to get you out of the way, if it going cut them down from that greed that they have.

B: Tell us more about the community being a family, and sharing.

J: We didn't mention the Homecoming. Now, it probably has been in existence for — sixty years? The last Thursday in June of every year. The crowd that had gone away would come back for what is now known as Hawthorne Homecoming.

CH: Let me ask Sister Henderson to interject some thoughts there.

JH: Well, the families come together. Some solicit funds for the vegetables and what not, and the meat, and they buy. And there's a volunteer group, we cook the food and serve. People who've been away from home for a long time come back home to visit.

J: Last time I was there, they probably fed close to a thousand people.

B: Wow, that's a big party!

J: I worked in Gainesville until I went in the Service. I was a garbage man. I can tell you how much I made: thirty-six sixty-four. Per week! [Laughter] That was big money.

CH: We contracted, hauling pulp wood, and I would go out ahead of them and cut down trees. We didn't have chainsaws like now. We had a push saw, with a long, big blade on it, and we'd cut them logs. It's a wonder it didn't kill us. We did this for many, many years. Different times, men wouldn't come to work. I'll jump in and work myself on the loading, and unload. And I was a mechanic when the truck broke down. I say, "I'll get it fixed." I don't understand how I did it myself. I took that transmission out, and had the clutch put in, and had it put back in the next morning.

I got out of the pulpwood and we went picking fruit down to Winter Haven. I was saving up money to build a house of our own. Later, I became a school bus driver. I didn't drive very long; they wasn't paying nothing much for it. I put in at Sunland Training Center. They found out I could cut hair, so, they put me in the barber shop. Then we had two barber shop. Later, I became supervisor over all of the barbers until I retired. Different ones kept up, "But he ain't got no license." "Anytime you see my clippers in my hand, that's my license." [Laughter]

S: Miss Jettie, are you from Hawthorne also?

JH: I was born in Gordon Chapel, about six miles [from Hawthorne].

B: What was it like?

JH: Well, we had a nice quiet lifestyle.

My father was much older than my mother. I remember her working a lot out of the house, for different families here. And we done a lot of field work, on the farms of other people, picking beans, or hoeing.

B: What year were you born?

JH: I was born in 1931. We had a good family life. And I got married young. We celebrated our 63rd wedding anniversary week before last.

B: Oh, congratulations! Tell us how you guys met.

JH: We were both in high school. We were childhood sweethearts. So he decided he wanted to marry me and not go to college. [Laughter] I got married before I finished high school. Yeah, I finished after I got married. We had five boys. That kept me busy. When we got married, he was working for the city of Gainesville, bringing home about twenty-seven dollars a week. That was what we had to live out of. So I went to work at what was Florida Farm Colony. Then it changed to Sunland Training Center. Now it's Tacachale.

S: So y'all both worked at Tacachale at the same time.

JH: I started in [19]57, and worked until [19]93.

B: That was a home for, was it Black and White people all together?

JH: They integrated — well, they built a facility for Blacks, and opened it in [19]56. Before then, it was for Whites only. The part for the White, it must have opened back in I guess [19]21 or [19]22.

B: Do you know when they integrated the whole center?

JH: They started in the late [19]60s to early [19]70s. There was some controversy, yes. Some Whites did not want to work with Black children. Some Blacks did not want to work with White children. Some of them resigned, and come back and ask for their job back. [Laughter]

CH: Tell them about that trip you went.

JH: I like to travel and he doesn't. I've been attending the Baptist World Alliance. It's held every five years in different countries. I went to Argentina, Buenos Aires. And I enjoyed it. Got a chance to see some of the country, and looked over at the snow-covered Andes Mountains. It was in August when we went down there, and it was real cold, three degrees below zero. That was in [19]90? In [19]95, we went to Australia.

B: Rev. Henderson, why don't you like to travel?

CH: It's just not for me. It's stressful. I just love Hawthorne.

JH: Well, I like Florida. And I like Hawthorne. I love Hawthorne. This is my home.

S: What words would you like to pass on to future generations?

CH: I been confronting different ones about the basic thing is to have a foundation, and that comes directly from the words that Jesus left. "Honor thy father, thy mother;" that's good, all of that is good. But when it come to "thou shalt love the lord our God with all our hearts, soul, mind and strength, then thy neighbor as thyself," to me that's the foundation right there. The basic thing is that love, irrespective of race, creed, or color; even love your enemies. Now, that's not easy, but love.

JH: Well, the only thing I can say is, "Love conquers all," so we can put God first, because God is love.

Search for "Carnell Henderson" at <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/oral> for the recording and full transcript of this interview.

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. ✨

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From SCHOOL BOARD, p. 1

McGraw maintaining her seat, and on June 17, Governor DeSantis declared the seat “vacant,” allowing him to fill the seat with an appointee of this choice. Several lawsuits are currently ongoing over the Governor’s executive order (EO) and are not the focus of this article. Instead, we ask a simple question: what should happen next?

Should McGraw fail in her bid to regain the seat, Governor DeSantis can honor the spirit and intent of the 31,000+ Alachua County voters who participated in last August’s election by keeping a few key considerations in mind when selecting an appointee:

- 1) ensure that the appointee resides in District 2 and represents the motivations and intent of local voters;
- 2) select an appointee who supports continuation of the progress made during Ms. McGraw’s tenure, with special consideration of the need to intelligently, equitably, and transparently use \$90 million in Federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds, which must be spent by 2024.

It is no doubt a challenge for the top state-level executive to carefully and knowledgeably select a local appointee who meets these criteria, which may explain the Governor’s delay in filling Ms. McGraw’s seat. As such, a review of the Governor’s options and possible outcomes may be helpful.

Currently, the seat is vacant, and the Governor could choose to leave the seat vacant for an undetermined period of time. This leaves an even-numbered board of four members, which makes all new business vulnerable to dead-locked 2-2 votes. Indeed, the four-member board has met twice so far, with two major votes on important staffing needs. The first vote failed after a 2-2 deadlock, and the second vote took over 3 hours of contentious debate to yield a 3-1 outcome that approved only half of the Superintendent’s list of new and revised job descriptions, hamstringing the school District with less than five weeks until the start of the new school year: not an auspicious beginning.

Restoring a five-member board is preferable if the County wishes to continue progress toward school improvements, so the “keep the set vacant” option is clearly a detriment to our children, teachers, and community.

As a second option, the Governor could choose to appoint a party-line choice or loyal local supporter who will conform to his platform. School board seats are intended to be non-partisan, but a direct Governor appointee, particularly of a close supporter or party representative, has the potential to be very potentially political. Selecting a political ally or supporter, particularly one whose educational experience and goals were out of line with Ms. McGraw’s, would be bad for the voters who elected McGraw, and for the idea of home rule more broadly. This option would be a bad precedent for Alachua County, the state of Florida, and the Governor himself.



Regarding a third path that honors the will of the voters, the Governor has a few options. First, the Governor could appoint someone in line with Ms. McGraw’s stated philosophy and voting record. This choice would respect the voters’ wishes and maintain the flow of progress in Alachua County Public Schools (ACPS).

Another option would be to allow Ms. McGraw, who owns other properties in District 2, the opportunity to move into the District and immediately re-appoint her to the seat. This good-faith gesture would maintain the spirit of home rule, respect the choice made by voters last August, and most importantly, provide the best potential for academic achievement and success for the students in the ACPS.


Regardless of which option the Governor selects, it is imperative that he support and respect Alachua County Supervisor of Elections officials in their efforts to clarify precincts and districts. County voters, candidates, Ms. McGraw, and the students of Alachua County deserve no less. 🌱

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Spotlight on ... Pride Community Center



The Pride Community Center of North Central Florida offers safe spaces, resources, services and events to foster and enhance the well-being and visibility of LGBTQ+ people in North Central Florida. Visibility changes people's minds. Here in North Central Florida, LGBTQ+ people deserve access to safe spaces where they can not only express themselves, but where they can also be a part of a community. Come join us. Visit gainesvillepride.org for more information.

Iguana Directory

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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.org / <http://laborcoalition.org/>

Alachua County Organization for Rural Needs Clinic is a not-for-profit in Brookier 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. 485-2772 / <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 firstcoastclu@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. centralfdsa@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](https://www.facebook.com/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/](https://www.facebook.com/Codepinkgainesville/) [CodePink4Peace.org](https://www.facebook.com/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 / info@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 surveillance 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 / 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

Continued on next page

Continued from preceding page
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
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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 people 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 beliefs. 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 community 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

Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America is a grassroots organization working to end gunviolence by electing gun sense candidates, advocating for policies that save lives, and educating parents on responsible gun storage. For events in Alachua County, go to
https://momsdemandaction.org/events/

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.ncpsm.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.
gainesvillennlg@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 Santa 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 the 3rd 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 reunite 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 LGBTQ+ 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 / <http://www.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/>

The Climate Reality Project Gainesville Area Chapter is the local chapter of Climate Reality Project, an international nonprofit group dedicated to accelerating urgent action globally on the climate crisis. Join the chapter for email news, action alerts, meeting alerts at <https://www.climateRealityproject.org/apply/chapters>.
climateralityprojectgnv@gmail.com,
<https://www.facebook.com/ClimateRealityProjectGainesvilleFlorida>
<https://climateralityprojectgnv.wordpress.com/blog/>

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](https://www.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/UNAUSAGainesvilleFICchapter/

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://vfp Gainesville.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 folk. 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@stevellittler.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/](https://www.instagram.com/womensmarchgnv/) / [Twitter.com/WMFL_Gnv/](https://www.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. / <http://wspus.org>. 🐉

Update from the CMC

by Alex Hernandez, CMC Intern

Hello CMC friends!

The Civic Media Center is thrilled to announce that we plan to reopen in August. We're still keeping a careful eye on the local and national COVID numbers, but with vaccinations now widely available, we think it's the right time to get ready to welcome you all back in person.

We hope to have the library open for limited hours before the end of August, and we're putting our heads together to come up with some great events for you. Stay tuned for specific dates, and details about how we will maintain social distancing and safety precautions at events.

In the meantime, you can find the CMC at a number of tabling events, in our online programming including our book club, and you can get involved by joining our volunteer meetings.

We recently hosted our very first in-person volunteer meeting in the CMC courtyard in over a year. With such a strong turnout we are hopeful that our slow transition to in-person operation in August will be supported and safe.

For now, volunteer meetings will be every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 5:30 pm in the courtyard. Details can be found on our LinkTree: <https://linktr.ee/civicmediacenter>. Masks and social distancing are required, but if you have any other questions feel free to reach out to us.

As we continue to organize and push forward, volunteers are beginning to develop some programming ideas to re-energize the community and raise funds. Ideas include bike maintenance day, self-defense classes and an outdoor music show.

We are always looking for more people to plug in and get involved, so we encourage you to join a volunteer meeting or get in touch through email or social media.

Summer is a slow time for the CMC, and we welcome any donations to help us pay rent and allow us to continue providing a space for important organizing. If you'd like to get more detailed updates, sign up for our bi-weekly email newsletter using the link above.

We hope to see you soon. 🐢

Women's growing political clout

*Friends of Susan B. Anthony
to celebrate Women's Equality Day 2021*

The Friends of Susan B. Anthony will celebrate Women's Equality Day (Aug. 26) with their annual festivities via Zoom on Saturday, Aug. 28 at 1 pm. This event, which began as an informal birthday party for Susan B. Anthony over forty years ago, is now held in conjunction with the anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment which gave women the right to vote.

Each year a local woman is recognized who exemplifies the spirit of Susan B. Anthony. This year, Jayne Moraski, director of Family Promise, will be honored for her community work in expansion of the sheltering program that assists families with children and helps them find their own homes.

The featured speaker will be Dr. Susan MacManus, University of South Florida Distinguished University Professor Emerita (Political Science) and nationally known political analyst. Her presentation will focus on "Women's Growing Political Clout: Focus on Florida."

For further information, and instructions on how to access the Zoom celebration, please check our website: www.fosbagainesville.com, or contact June Littler at 371-6944. 🐢

**Want to get your article, ad, event
or PSA in the Iguana?**

Save the date!

September issue:

Deadline for all content is August 25

*The Community Calendar will be returning for the
September issue after over a year on hiatus.*

*Submit your events, content, and any questions to:
gainesvilleiguana@cox.net*



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The Gainesville Iguana

Gainesville's progressive newsletter and events calendar

Gainesville Iguana, P.O. Box 14712, Gainesville, FL 32604

*Comments, suggestions, contributions (written or financial) are welcome.
To list your event or group, contact us at:*

(352) 378-5655

www.gainesvilleiguana.org

GainesvilleIguana@cox.net

facebook.com/gainesvilleiguana

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