

The Gainesville Iguana

A progressive newsletter

November/December 2021
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Take action: Demand UF lead and not COP out

Fossil gas energy plant ignores viable solutions to climate crisis

by David Hastings

As world leaders gather in Glasgow for COP-26, the UN climate summit, the challenges they face are huge. The outcome will to a large extent determine how we will survive on a hotter planet and whether even worse levels of warming can be averted.

Here in North Central Florida, we are witnessing our own climate drama at one of our most respected educational institutions, the University of Florida. UF recognizes its mission to educate, inform and be a good global citizen.

According to University of Florida's website, UF is "working toward major institutional changes to reach its goal of carbon neutrality by 2025." The recently updated UF Campus Action Plan 2.0 states that "UF has a special imperative to explore bold innovative solutions that address the environmental, social and economic risks posed by climate impacts."

Then why is UF proposing a new 34 MW fossil gas-fired Central Energy plant to produce electricity and steam? While the price of solar energy has fallen nearly 90

See GAS ENERGY PLANT, p. 14

Gainesville City Commission at-large seat election, Nov. 16

by Joe Courter

On Tuesday, Nov. 16, the special election to fill Gail Johnson's at-large City Commission seat will take place.

Early voting will be on Friday, Nov. 12, through Sunday, Nov. 14, from 9am to 6pm at the elections office (515 N. Main St.) and at the Millhopper Branch Library (3145 NW 43rd St.). On Election Day, vote at your precinct.

All registered voters in the city of Gainesville are eligible to vote.

There are numerous forums available to watch or read online if you are so connected. League of Women Voters, Women for Wise Growth, Alachua County Labor Coalition, Gainesville Chamber of Commerce, and the *Gainesville Sun* are five.

This election is a race marked by a big contrast between the two strongest candidates in their views and levels of experience in Gainesville. Cynthia Chestnut is steeped in Gainesville politics as a multi-time elected official and very active in Gainesville Demo-

See ELECTION, p. 14



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Open letter to the global media by Greta Thunberg, Vanessa Nakate

Dear media editors around the world,

Melting glaciers, wildfires, droughts, deadly heatwaves, floods, hurricanes, loss of biodiversity. These are all symptoms of a destabilizing planet, which are happening around us all the time.

Those are the kind of things you report about. Sometimes. The climate crisis, however, is much more than just this. If you want to truly cover the climate crisis, you must also report on the fundamental issues of time, holistic thinking and justice.

So what does that mean? Let's look at these issues one by one.

First, the notion of time. If your stories do not include the notion of a ticking clock, then the climate crisis is just a political topic among other topics, something we can just buy, build or invest our way out of.

Leave out the aspect of time and we can continue pretty much like today and "solve the problems" later on. 2030, 2050 or 2060. The best available science shows that with our current rate of emissions, our remaining carbon budget for staying below 1.5°C will run out before the end of this decade.

Second, holistic thinking. When considering our remaining carbon budget we need to count all the numbers and include all of our emissions. Currently, you are letting high income nations and big polluters off the hook, allowing them to hide behind the incomplete statistics, loopholes and rhetoric they have fought so hard to create during the last 30 years.

Third, and most important of all, justice. The climate crisis isn't just about extreme weather. It's about people. Real people.

And the very people who have done the least to create the climate crisis are suffering the most. And while the Global South is on the frontlines of the climate crisis, it's almost never on the front pages of the world's newspapers. As Western media focuses on wildfires in California or Australia or flooding in Europe, climate-related catastrophes are ravaging communities across the Global South, but receive very little coverage.

To include the element of justice, you cannot ignore the Global North's moral responsibility to move much faster in reducing their emissions. By the end of this year, the world will have collectively burned through 89 percent of the carbon budget that gives us a 66 percent chance of staying below 1.5°C.

That's why historic emissions not only count, but are in fact at the very heart of the debate over climate justice. And yet historical emissions are still being almost completely ignored by the media and people in power.

To stay below the targets set in the Paris Agreement, and thereby minimize the risks of setting off irreversible chain reactions beyond human control, we need immediate, drastic, annual emission reductions unlike anything the world has ever seen. And as we don't have the technological solutions that alone will do anything close to that in the foreseeable future, it means we have to make

fundamental changes in our society. This is the uncomfortable result of our leaders' failure to address this crisis.

Your responsibility to help correct this failure cannot be overstated. We are social animals and if our leaders, and our media, don't act as if we were in a crisis then of course we won't understand that we are. One of the essential elements of a functioning democracy is a free press that objectively informs the citizens of the great challenges our society faces. And the media must hold the people in power accountable for their actions, or inactions.

You are among our last hopes. No one else has the possibility and the opportunity to reach as many people in the extremely short timeframe we have. We cannot do this without you. The climate crisis is only going to become more urgent. We can still avoid the worst consequences, we can still turn this around. But not if we continue like today. You have the resources and possibilities to change the story overnight.

Whether or not you choose to rise to that challenge is up to you. Either way, history will judge you.

- Greta and Vanessa

Greta Thunberg is a youth climate strike leader in Sweden.

Vanessa Nakate is a Ugandan climate-justice activist and founder of the Rise Up Movement. 🐘

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Letter to Gainesville Iguana readers

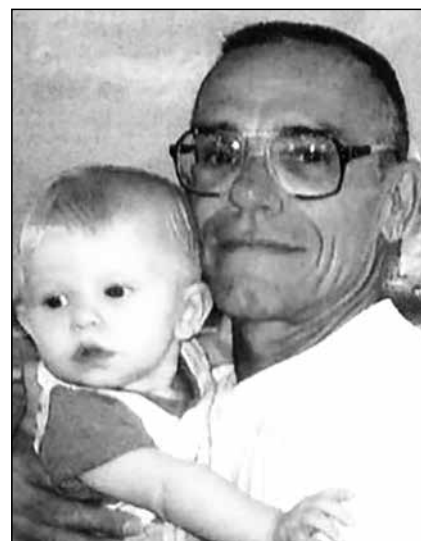
We received this email, and relay it to you here:

Dear Friends,

My pen friend Joe Hopkins, serving a life sentence in Florida, is gravely sick with cirrhosis of the liver and stuck in a prison where he is not receiving the care he needs and is also at risk of assault. At his request I am launching an online petition for his immediate transfer to a prison with better medical facilities. For more info go to <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1319>.

Joe is a great fan of the *Iguana* and has been receiving it in prison for years. He has often sent it to me. Here is a photo of him holding his granddaughter.

Best wishes,
Stephen Shenfield 🐘



From the publisher ...

Unraveling illusions

Now I do not intend to go all matrix-*ie* here, I want to stay out of the shadows and the speculative, but address real issues, because these are challenging times, and shining a light is both necessary and can be uncomfortable.

What first caught my attention was a BBC interview I heard early in the morning on Oct. 29 with youth activists at the COP 26 conference. A young woman used the phrase “fantasy present,” referring to the ignoring of science and the illusion that there are actually steps being taken to solve the climate crisis. Or in Greta’s words, “Blah, blah, blah.” Corporations knew they were doing damage, but hid it, and so much time was lost by their creating this illusion. Politicians made pronouncements and promises that were not fulfilled.

We are seeing more and more that our vaunted free and fair elections are being subverted, and the illusion that this is a well-run system is fading as the realities of blatant gerrymandering, closing voting precincts, and purged voter rolls have their effect. Add to that the fact that a losing candidate has created a self-serving myth of a stolen election and almost pulled off a coup. And it has been said, an unpunished coup is a rehearsal. Do we harbor an illusion that this country can’t have a coup? Some of us will go so far as to say the mega-rich have already had their coup, a Wall Street coup set in motion in the ‘80s.

The history of this country seems to be exposed as fraught with illusions, and shining a light on it is upsetting a lot of people. Examples: The early propagation of white supremacy, the effects of redlining, the staggering mistreatment of native people. To leave out the impact of these policies is a toxic illusion.

The brilliant slogan Black Lives Matter is a simple acknowledgment that for a long while and in many ways, they haven’t mattered. The strong push back on teaching hard truths is now a new political strategy employed in Virginia, and no doubt will be amped up in our state’s politics very soon. Illusions with mass appeal can be dangerous.

Here in Gainesville, at the University of Florida, illusions abound. I suppose a big illusion many people may have is that a university, a “Top Five” university, is an independent citadel of knowledge, geared toward truth and bettering society. Events of the past week have shown it to be a tool of the ruling Republican establishment with heavy loyalty to its overwhelmingly conservative Board of Trustees and following the mandates (pun intended) of our reactionary governor.

Large corporations and institutions don’t like controversy, and the best way to prevent it is to control information and image management; maintain the illusion that everything is okay. Censorship is nothing new here, they just don’t usually get caught with their pants down like this. And as we get close to press time, serious backpedaling is in progress by the UF administration, nothing like blundering in serial fashion to draw attention to yourself and get national media on the case ... blood in the water. (*See story on pages 8-9.*) My high school motto was “Knowledge is Power.” UF’s seems like “Knowledge Serving the Powerful.”

Speaking of the powerful, here we come, 2022. I hope we can continue out of our Covid shells and start doing things together. Political organizing this year is paramount! We are in our Blue Bubble here in Alachua County, but huge statewide races are opportunities. Knock out Rubio. Knock out DeSantis. More locally, Knock out Cammack.

Overcoming measures of voter suppression should be a motivator. Voter education is so important. Maybe sensible people should start attending school board meetings, and defend science and history. The current rise of the Right is no illusion; this is authoritarian populism being cultivated. Those followers are being led by professional illusionists, using the modern tools of illusion creation via social media to both fear monger and raise false hopes. It is a tangled web they’ve woven with their lies. They need to be faced and challenged, and their false illusions unraveled with truth and actual programs to change people’s lives. ✨



Joe Courter

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The Gainesville Iguana is Alachua County’s independent progressive newsletter.

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Gainesville Iguana

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Hey Gainesville!

Enforce your housing discrimination ordinance

by Renz Torres
Alachua County Labor Coalition

"They sent us a collection letter for \$16,000," said A, one Collier tenant. She is being sued for \$16,000 in damages after Collier stopped accepting COVID-related housing assistance.

"Your staycation is over," said a property manager to K, another Collier tenant. She was served a lease non-renewal because her property manager received her ERAP funds late.

We hear about stories like these often at the Alachua County Labor Coalition, where tenants are losing their housing because corporate landlords like Collier refuse to accept housing assistance money. Last year, the City of Gainesville passed Ordinance #190814 to extend protections against discrimination to those paying rent with vouchers and other rental assistance. Yet despite almost one-and-a-half years of the ordinance's passing, we're still hearing about unresolved tenant discrimination.

"I ended up in the hospital because of all the stress," said A. Even after leaving the hospital and sending medical documentation to the property managers, they filed an eviction against her earlier in mid-2021. Ultimately the eviction was served, and she had to leave in September 2021 with \$16,000 in damages against her.

K came down with COVID in her nursing work, making her eligible for ERAP. Her property managers took the ERAP but then suddenly told her they stopped accepting ERAP. "I could have taken the payment from ERAP in my name and relocated," K said, "but I had no idea up to the last minute they wasn't going to renew my lease." Now she has to find a new home for her household as she works two nursing jobs.

"I don't want to be homeless with my family."

...

"Hey Hey, Ho Ho, Collier has Got To Go!"

We held an action on Oct. 21 at the Collier office to protest their refusal to accept housing vouchers. "Now [Collier is] saying that they accept housing vouchers," Sheila Payne, ACLC co-chair said, "but they're saying they don't sign HUD paperwork." Collier has been circumventing



Community members and organizations protest housing discrimination outside the Colliers Companies office. Photo by Adolfo Romero, ACLC.

the City's source-of-income protection with their internal policy of not signing third-party paperwork.

"Because of their financial status ... their upbringing ... they are denied adequate housing," said a pastor, one of the many community voices of the protest. He was speaking to 60 people crowded on N Main Street and NW 2nd Avenue sometimes drowned out by supportive honks and shouts from rush hour traffic passing by.

Community-wide implications reverberate from the refusal to accept housing vouchers, ERAP, and similar programs. "We often talk about homelessness like it's about mental health issues, substance abuse issues," Bryan Eastman, co-chair of GRACE Marketplace, said, "[but] the vast majority of homelessness [is] a mother who's trying to figure out how to get someone to accept her housing voucher, a young man trying to keep his job while he sleeps in his car." Housing vouchers, he continued, work to keep people in place, to prevent people from moving, to have some stability.

One renter assures, "We will not stop fighting until justice is won,"

...

One major problem with Ordinance #190814 is the City's lack of enforcement. For example, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program is structured so that the landlord has to consent to participating in the

program. In other words, a landlord's "no" can mean someone is on the street. Even with the Ordinance's precedent to make landlords accept ERAP, lease non-renewals continue to be served, such as in K's case.

To corporate landlords, a tenant receiving ERAP, Section 8, etc. is a risky investment. Affordable housing is a landlord's game—risky tenants are easily replaced. Since the end of the federal eviction moratorium, Collier has been responsible for 25 percent of all Alachua County's evictions. Landlords like Collier have no reason to accept housing vouchers willingly, so we have to turn to the City to enforce.

We ultimately are asking for the City to do more to protect low-income tenants. We are demanding proactive enforcement of the Ordinance. The City's current mechanism of enforcement is the Office of Equity and Inclusion but they have only seen three complaints in a year with regard to source-of-income, far less than what we field in a week. We demand the City proactively make it impossible to not accept ERAP and housing vouchers to keep current tenants housed, and that the City facilitate making discrimination complaints easier to file with the Office of Equity and Inclusion through targeted outreach.

We demand proactive action to protect tenants' rights against corporate landlords because we believe that Housing is a Human Right. ✊

Environmental book club comes to Gainesville in January

by David Vaina

Our Santa Fe River is organizing an environmental book club for concerned citizens in the north Florida community.

The thrust of the book club is to bring together people of all ages who have a diverse range of interests in both local and global environmental issues, most notably climate change and climate justice; water pollution and access; race, class, gender and its intersection with the environment; environmental justice and the city; rights to nature; sustainable agriculture; protest and community praxis; and more.

Everyone is welcome to join us outdoors at First Magnitude Brewing Company in Gainesville on Sundays from 2-3pm. Depending on CDC and Alachua County Department of Health recommendations, masks and social distancing will be encouraged. The dates and readings for the first seven book club meet-ups are as follows:

Jan. 16: *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Feb. 20: *A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold

March 20: *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate* by Peter Wohlleben

Apr. 24: *Poisoned Water: How the Citizens of Flint, Michigan, Fought for Their Lives and Warned the Nation* by Candy J Cooper

May 22: *As Long as Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice, from Colonization to Standing Rock* by Dina Gilio-Whitake


June 26: *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis* by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson (first half)

July 24: *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis* by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson (second half)

Event details and brief descriptions of the book will be published on Our Santa Fe River's Facebook page.

Our Santa Fe River, an all-volunteer non-profit based in north central Florida, encourages readers to purchase or obtain books at a local bookstore, at a public library, as an ebook, or from a socially-responsible online book retailer such as thriftbooks.com or libro.fm.

For more information, please contact David Vaina at david.vaina@gmail.com. Happy reading! 🐾



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Healthcare navigators provide open enrollment assistance to North Central Florida residents

Residents of North Central Florida are again able to get health insurance from the federal Health Insurance Marketplace and can start signing up now for insurance plans that can begin as soon as Jan. 1.

Open enrollment began nationwide on Nov. 1 and continues until Saturday, Jan. 15. For those needing coverage beginning Jan. 1, consumers must enroll by Wednesday, Dec. 15.

Healthcare Navigators are a group of nationally recognized health professionals that assist consumers in gaining healthcare coverage. These services are offered at no cost to consumers.

Locally, Suwannee River Area Health Education Centers (SRAHEC) is part of the Covering Florida program, where navigators deliver free outreach and enrollment services to any Floridian that needs to enroll in health care coverage in the Federal Health Insurance Marketplace. Assistance is provided to consumers through telephone, in-person, or virtual consultations.

SRAHEC also provides education, outreach, and enrollment services throughout Central and Northern Florida. Their navigators are trained and certified to help consumers as they shop for their health coverage options through the Marketplace, including completing eligibility and enrollment forms. SRAHEC navigator services are free to consumers and provided to their entire 15-county service area (Alachua, Bradford, Citrus, Columbia, Dixie, Gil-

christ, Hamilton, Hernando, Lafayette, Levy, Marion, Putnam, Sumter, Suwannee, and Union counties).

SRAHEC has several Spanish-speaking navigators available to assist consumers in their first language. Services in other languages are also available through translators working directly with the Marketplace.

"We began working with the navigator program in 2013," said Sarah Catalanotto, executive director of SRAHEC. "We are excited to have the team and resources to help people in our community get the health insurance they need."

Because of the interest in making affordable health insurance available, the federal government has allotted more funding for navigator programming. SRAHEC has 11 navigators working to assist people in finding insurance that works for them.

The pandemic has resulted in a tremendously increased level of need for services, and anyone impacted can find out what their coverage options are now. Contact SRAHEC today to allow their team of experts to help you with the specifics of your situation.

For those who wish to talk with a navigator face-to-face, in person appointments can be made with a navigator for one-on-one meetings at local libraries in the counties SRAHEC serves. Additionally, in December, a SRAHEC navigator will be available on the first three Wednesdays from 1pm to 5pm at the Civic Media Center at 433 S. Main Street in downtown Gainesville for in-person consultations.

To contact SRAHEC, call (386) 230-9400 or email Navigator@srahec.org for more information. ✨



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

For more info:

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And the good news is ...

Class action on behalf of juveniles under solitary confinement gets OK to proceed

■ *Attorneys allege violations of civil rights, Americans with Disabilities Act*

This is a condensed version of an article by Issac Morgan published in the Florida Phoenix on Oct. 27. See the full article at <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1271>

A federal judge has ruled that a group of young offenders can sue the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice over its use of solitary confinement in its detention centers, policies civil rights groups call cruel and harmful to juveniles' mental health.

U.S. District Judge Robert Hinkle in Tallahassee on Friday approved a class action by minors "who are or will be placed in solitary confinement" and those with disabilities, allowing the case to proceed on its merits.

Class actions allow the courts to decide cases filed by multiple plaintiffs raising common claims and seeking common remedies — in this case, an end to the solitary confinement

policies. All three factors apply in this case, Hinkle concluded.

"The plaintiffs challenge practices that are consistently applied to children in department facilities across the state," Hinkle wrote. "It is undoubtedly true, as the department asserts, that children are placed in solitary confinement for different reasons and, if properly placed there at all, can properly be kept there ..." 🐢

Lego to remove gender bias from its toys after findings of child survey

■ *Research reveals harmful stereotypes still hindering girls, boys and their parents*

This is a condensed version of an article by Helen Russell published in the Guardian on Oct. 10. See the full article at <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1273>

Lego has announced it will work to remove gender stereotypes from its toys after a global survey the company commissioned found attitudes to play and future careers remain unequal and restrictive.

Researchers found that while girls were becoming more confident and keen to

engage in a wide range of activities, the same was not true of boys.

Seventy-one per cent of boys surveyed feared they would be made fun of if they played with what they described as "girls' toys" — a fear shared by their parents.

"Parents are more worried that their sons will be teased than their daughters for playing with toys associated with the other gender," said Madeline Di Nonno, the of the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media.

"But it's also that behaviours associated with men are valued more highly in society," said Di Nonno. "Until societies recognise that behaviours and activities typically associated with women are as valuable or important, parents and children will be tentative to embrace them."

The study found that parents still encouraged sons to do sports or STEM activities, while daughters were offered dance and dressing up or baking. 🐢

National parks nominee pledges to ramp up workforce, improve staff morale

■ *Charles F. Sams III would be first enrolled tribal member to lead National Parks Service*

This is a condensed version of an article by Jacob Fischler published in the Florida Phoenix on Oct. 19. See the full article at <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1269>

President Joe Biden's choice to lead the National Park Service told a U.S. Senate panel Tuesday he would work to rebuild the agency's workforce, which has shrunk even as park attendance hits new records.

Charles F. Sams III, of Oregon, would be the first enrolled tribal member to lead the

National Park Service. He is an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

If agreed to by the full Senate, he would also be the first confirmed head of the National Park Service since January 2017.

He faced members of the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, who asked for his commitment to improve specific parks and other NPS sites in their states.

Sams said he would work to increase the workforce and improve morale, including adding housing. In addition, he would prioritize recruitment to boost staffing numbers.

Sams would also work to improve the federal relationship with tribes, saying they should expect an open conversation with the federal government ahead of decision-making, "not after the fact." 🐢

Same-sex partners, spouses finally eligible for Social Security survivor's benefits

■ *Called 'a historic development with immense implications': benefits equally available to everyone*

This is a condensed version of an article by Nick Visser published in the Huffington Post on Nov. 1. See the full article at <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1303>

Social Security survivor's benefits are now available to same-sex spouses and partners after being denied to them for years based on old bans on gay marriage.

The Department of Justice and the Social Security Administration on Monday dropped federal appeals against two class-

action lawsuits over the benefits, which allow surviving partners to access government payments.

Thousands of same-sex couples, however, were refused the benefits amid requirements that they be married for a minimum of nine months.

The group Lambda Legal filed two class-action suits on behalf of surviving spouses and partners, saying many Americans were unable to marry because of bans on gay

marriage or they weren't able to be married for the nine-month period after marriage equality laws were passed.

"This is a historic development with immense implications: survivor's benefits are now equally available to everyone, including potentially thousands of same-sex partners who could not marry their loved ones and may have thought it was futile to apply," Peter Renn, Lambda Legal's counsel, said. 🐢

UF restricted five other professors' participation in legal cases against the state

by Ana Ceballos and Mary Ellen Klas

This article originally appeared in the Miami Herald on November 3. Read more at: <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1315>. This is a developing issue as we go to press, so keep your eyes out for updates.

Last year, four University of Florida law professors who wanted to sign a “friend of the court” brief in a lawsuit challenging a new felons voting law were told that they could not identify themselves as university faculty members in the filing because it involved “an action against the state.”

In August, university officials told a UF professor of pediatrics that he couldn't work on two cases challenging the state's ban on mask mandates because participating in lawsuits against Gov. Ron DeSantis' administration would “create a conflict” for the university. And on Monday [Nov. 1], UF announced that three political science professors can be allowed to provide expert testimony in a voting access case against the state only if they do it without pay.

These actions show how the University of Florida has gradually moved toward suppressing the voices of its scholars who want to offer legal or subject-matter expertise in cases that challenge the policies advanced by the governor or Legislature. In addition to these eight professors, the *Miami Herald/Tampa Bay Times* has learned of other faculty who are reluctant to come forward.

‘BIG BROTHER MANAGEMENT’

For the faculty at the state's flagship university, the episode has Orwellian overtones. Kenneth Nunn, a 32-year professor of law who was barred from using his UF affiliation to sign an amicus brief in the felons voting case, said it was odd the university all of a sudden started to track professors' outside work and require them to ask for permission before they could participate in activities.

“I thought that it was strange and frightening that there would be that kind of Big Brother management to these types of things that we were doing,” Nunn said. “I'm supposed to be lending my expertise to people who are out there trying to petition their government for change in one way or another or force change in one way or another,” he said. “I just don't see why that's viewed as being a conflict of interest

when in my view, it's the very core of what university faculty should do.”

Jeffrey Goldhagen, a 28-year professor and chief of the Division of Community and Societal Pediatrics at the University of Florida College of Medicine in Jacksonville, was denied involvement in two separate mask cases, including one representing the Disability Independence Group in Miami. “It was difficult for me personally, not to come forward,” he told the *Herald/Times* on Tuesday. He said he broke his silence because he considers the conflict “a critical, defining issue” for academic freedom and First Amendment rights. “I don't think it is hyperbole when I say this is how totalitarian regimes unfold,” Goldhagen said. “If you deny science and you deny the universities the critical role they play in American society, then you truncate free speech, academic freedom and the dissemination of information.” The fallout has been immediate. The agency that sets the accreditation for UF said this week it is investigating whether “academic freedom” and “undue political influence” standards were violated, and the union representing faculty has threatened legal action if the university does not back down.

In a letter to UF President Kent Fuchs on Tuesday [Nov. 2], 10 Democratic members of Florida's congressional delegation urged him to reverse course “and allow these professors to participate with compensation in this voting rights lawsuit.” UF did not immediately respond to requests for comment about the additional five professors who have been restricted.

SHIFT IN POLICY

A UF spokesperson said the university changed its policy in November 2020, but emails obtained by the *Herald/Times* indicate faculty were being rejected for involvement in cases against the state months earlier. UF Levin College of Law Dean Laura Ann Rosenbury wrote in a July 9, 2020, email to Nunn and other UF officials that signing the amicus brief in the felons voting case was a “potential conflict of interest” because it would be challenging a state position.

If they wanted to sign it, she said, they would need approval from the university and would need to “clearly” indicate the law school and university were not affiliated with the action. The brief, filed

Aug. 3, 2020, in the federal district court of appeals in Atlanta, was signed by 93 professors from across the country. Only four did not have their name affiliated with their university: UF professors Nunn, Sarah K. Wolk, Teresa Jean Reid and Mark Fenster.

On July 10, 2020, Nunn sent an email to the law school dean, Rosenbury, asking: “Can you inquire whether the university considers participation by any professor in a lawsuit of this kind against the state to be a conflict of interest?” Rosenbury did not directly answer. Instead, she said: “I have confirmed that the university will approve this activity so long as you participate solely in your individual capacity. You may not participate in your capacity as an employee of the University of Florida or on behalf of the Levin College of Law or the University of Florida.”

The law professors signed the brief, but in a series of footnotes, each is identified as “signing in his [her] personal capacity and any law school or university affiliation is for identification purposes only.” By contrast, Florida State University professor Mark Schlakman, the only other Florida professor to sign the document, signed the brief and named his school. Goldhagen, the doctor, said UF's Conflict of Interest office did not ask whether his expert testimony would be paid or unpaid in the mask mandate case, but said he was never planning on taking money for the work. He also said he had always planned to disassociate himself from the university while working in the case. Gary Wimsett, UF's assistant vice president for conflicts of interest, told Goldhagen in an email that because “UF is an extension of the state as a state agency, litigation against the state is adverse to UF's interests” and therefore, he could not participate in the lawsuit. When Goldhagen asked how he could appeal the decision, Wimsett responded firmly: “There is no mechanism for appealing disapprovals.”

Goldhagen defied the university and participated in the mask mandate lawsuits, anyway. He took part in two cases not by testifying but by filing a declaration as a primary expert in the legal proceedings. “I went ahead and did it,” he said. “I had never really experienced personal conflict, turmoil, anxiety as I did through that

period of time because I've never not done what's in the best interest of children and what's in the best interest of families."

POLICY TIMELINE

Before the policy change, professors were not required to ask for permission to offer their expertise in outside cases. Expert testimony from academic experts in their fields has long been seen as "a way of translating academic knowledge into practical knowledge for the common good," said George Justice, a professor of English at Arizona State University and an expert on academic freedom issues. Until recently at UF, professors only had to file a conflict-of-interest report once a year and permission for expert testimony was almost never rejected, several professors told the *Herald/Times*.

That's how things worked in 2014, when the State of Florida needed an expert on political science to testify about why the court should uphold its redistricting maps, and it hired University of South Florida political science professor Darryl Paulson. He was hired to testify in support of the Florida Legislature's maps in a case in which University of Florida political science professor Dan Smith was hired by the plaintiffs. The shift in UF's policy has Paulson and other professors warning that the decision will do irreparable harm to the tradition of using academic expertise in often controversial and pivotal legal cases, even if their testimony embarrasses government officials who write laws and set university budgets. "Someone has to have the chutzpah and political integrity to say this is not right," said Paulson, now retired, in an interview with the *Herald/Times*. "Nobody wants to work in a political environment full of fear, and that is what is going to happen at UF if they don't deal with this. The good professors that you have will look elsewhere for employment, and the young hires won't see it as conducive to free speech." After initially rejecting the professors and providing no explanation, UF has modified its position.

"If the professors wish to testify pro bono on their own time without using university resources, they are free to do so," wrote Fuchs and UF Provost Joe Glover in an email to the campus community late Monday. They also said they would convene a task force "to review the university's conflict of interest policy and examine it for consistency and fidelity." However, emails obtained by the *Herald/Times* show none of the rejected requests indicated that the professors' service would have to be pro

bono. "How many people hire an expert and then ask them well, you really don't expect to be paid for your services? We expect that for a reason," Paulson said. "Most universities are delighted that their faculty members are in demand and highly respected for the information that they possess." Justice, the academic freedoms expert, said UF's pivot to suggesting that the professors can testify as long as they don't get paid was "a face-saving measure" aimed at influencing public perception. "Because when they tell the public that these overpaid, lazy professors are getting extra money for testifying against our elected representatives that plays into a stereotype of pampered academic who barely teaches their classes and goes off and moonlights for extra money on the side," he said.

He added that because "anybody in higher education can see through that," they may not "think it would ever happen to them." But what could have long-term damage is the perception that the university officials meddle in academic expression on issues such as public health, voter suppression, redistricting and related issues. "What would bother me is the sense that the university's president and administration, and not only in this instance but in previous instances as well, particularly over the coronavirus issues, university administration kowtows to a Trumpian governor," Justice said. "That would give me potential pause if I were coming from a university where that didn't seem to be the issue."

TIGHTENING GRIP

For the past year, university faculty have chafed at what they say has been an increasing injection of politics into academic life. "A lot of faculty just do their work and burrow down in their own little bubble. But the whole COVID thing brought to light how much the university has been co-opted by state politics," said Mark Hosteler, a professor at UF's Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. For instance, medical experts from the University of Florida were the ones who recommended a mask mandate for Alachua County Public Schools.

The advice was at odds with the DeSantis administration, which has moved to punish local school districts that impose mask mandates. Charles Gallagher, the lead attorney in the case challenging the mask mandate ban on behalf of parents, said Goldhagen was not the only Florida academic scholar who had trouble participating in the case. "We found great difficulty

in finding medical institutions, some affiliated with state universities, that would allow their doctors to serve as experts in our school mask case against the governor and education commissioner," Gallagher said. "In the end, the lion's share of our medical experts came from non-Florida university affiliated medical institutions." Paulson said that the conflict of interest policy emerged not to regulate faculty members who were providing expert testimony, but to prevent "individuals who started up their own consulting business and they were looking out to improve their own economic interest and not really representing anyone else but themselves." According to the UF policy, a conflict of interest can occur "when a university employee's financial, professional, commercial or personal interests or activities outside of the university affects, or appears to affect, their professional judgment or obligations to the university."

Justice points to the American Association of University Professors' 80-year-old statement that is still in use today. It states that research done for "pecuniary return"—that is, in exchange for money—"should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution." UF is now trying "to avoid accusations of exercising prior restraint" or censorship, he said, and warns it is a "big threat" to academic freedom. "It would be a high bar for the University of Florida to jump over to claim that these faculty members would be violating their commitment to their research and their students by offering their expert testimony for this particular case," he said. Paulson is a former Republican who was a pivotal player in the 1992 redistricting fight when he was hired by the NAACP to testify against the Democrats, who then controlled the Legislature. The NAACP, working with the Republican Party of Florida, prevailed in that case and the court drew three majority-minority congressional districts that set the stage for three decades of GOP control of the Legislature. Although Paulson's testimony contradicted that of the party that controlled state government, university officials did not require him to testify for free, he said. They instead sent him notes of commendation "thanking me for my service and the prestige that was accruing to the campus. It was all positive."

On Monday, Paulson sent a note to Smith and Michael McDonald, two of the UF political science professors at the center of the controversy. "I told them, keep fighting the good fight," he said. 🐘

Colin Powell, moral weakling . . .

by Ted Rall

This article was originally published by CounterPunch on Oct. 20. See more at counterpunch.org.

If Colin Powell's life has meaning, it is as a cautionary tale about the perils of going along to get along.

Rarely has history offered such a stark example of a human being offered a clear existential choice between right and wrong. Hardly ever has so much hung in the balance for humanity and for an individual's soul, as when then-secretary of state Colin Powell spoke to the United Nations to make the case for war.

It would be impossible to overstate the import of Powell's February 2003 speech, in which he claimed that the United States had amassed a stockpile of evidence that proved that Iraq had retained chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction in violation of its commitments under the 1991 Gulf War ceasefire.

Iraq's government, Powell argued forcefully, presented such a clear and present danger to its neighbors that the international community—led by the U.S.—had a right, even a duty, to remove it with an invasion. President George W. Bush and his co-conspirators had spent the better part of the previous year working to convince Americans to support a second war against Iraq over WMDs. Polls showed that voters remained unconvinced.

Possibly in preparation for a 2004 White House run—hard to imagine in these polarized times, but the ex-general had long been considered a top presidential prospect by both major political parties—the even-tempered Powell had previously distanced himself from his fellow cabinet members, dominated as they were by neo-

conservative hotheads, throughout the first two years of his term. Powell's credibility towered over everyone else in American politics to an extent rarely seen before and certainly never since.

When you join a gang, you're required to prove your loyalty. "You've got high poll ratings," Vice President Dick Cheney told Powell as he ordered him to support the push for war. "You can afford to lose a few points."

Which is why Bush and Cheney sent him to the U.N. They knew that Powell alone could close the deal with a public made recalcitrant by historical precedent: the U.S. had never before launched a full-out war without a pretext that made some sort of sense. And where the president had failed the prestigious Powell succeeded brilliantly, with the American public as well as with key allies like Great Britain and Australia. Seconds after he stopped talking, TV talking heads told us what we already knew: the fate of a million Iraqis was sealed. We were going to war.

There is an alternative universe in which Powell takes to the podium and tells the truth: there was no credible evidence that Iraq still had WMDs. I have often imagined the stressed-out secretary of state, music swelling Hollywood-style, beginning to read the litany of lies about anthrax, chemical decontamination trucks, falsified Iraqi death certificates and cooperation between Saddam and Al Qaeda—an alliance that not only was not true but could not have been true—before tearing up his prepared remarks. The statesman stares into the camera and speaks the words that would have saved a million lives, assured his place in history as a Profile in Courage™ and gotten him elected president by a landslide:

"They told me to come out and lie to you. I will not. I swore to protect the Constitution of the United States, not the President of the United States, so help me God, and there is no evidence that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction."

Powell's defenders blame Bush. They say Powell was lied to, conned.

Powell fed the rube narrative in his 2012 memoir. "I am mad mostly at myself for not having smelled the problem. My in-



Colin Powell, U.S. Secretary of State, 2001-2005

stincts failed me," he wrote, referring to the intelligence report he used for his U.N. speech that contained false evidence of supposed Iraqi WMDs. Powell never apologized.

Actually, Powell's instincts were on point. His conscience went missing.

He knew it was all a lie.

At the time.

The weekend before his speech, Powell exploded in frustration as he read the manufactured intel reports he had been given by the Bushies. "I'm not reading this. This is bullshit!" he shouted, throwing the cherry-picked documents in the air. Then he picked himself up, took a deep breath and went out and lied the world into a war that would forever soil America's reputation.

Weakness was baked into Powell's personality early on. As a young officer serving in Vietnam, Powell played a minor, but telling role in covering up a soldier's report about war crimes and other atrocities committed by U.S. troops during the same period as the My Lai massacre. Rather than investigate the allegations, which were accurate, Powell smeared the whistleblower as a coward. The whistleblower's career faltered as Powell's soared.

Powell's memoir made clear that he understood the gravity of his shilling for the Iraq War. "It was by no means my first, but it was one of my most momentous failures, the one with the widest-ranging impact," he wrote. "The event will earn a prominent paragraph in my obituary."

Ted Rall, syndicated writer and the cartoonist for ANewDomain.net, is the author of the book "Snowden," the biography of the NSA whistleblower. ✉



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UF SG fall elections: Challenging the entrenched system

by Alfredo Ortiz

When people hear news about the University of Florida's Student Government (SG), they usually dismiss it as yet another example of pervasive inactivity and corruption. Very few students are inspired to participate in SG because students are generally uninformed of the power that SG holds at the local, state, and national levels.

However, not everyone fails to recognize SG's influence. For decades, a coalition of fraternities and sororities have used SG as a launchboard for their political careers. The most recent of these examples was the use of student funds to finance a Trump re-election event after the Student Body President's father had maxed out contributions to Trump's campaign, which we protested vigorously.

My name is Alfredo Ortiz. I am the president of the Communist Party, which participated in the recent SG elections. I first became involved in SG because my federal work study permit was revoked after qualifying for a Bright Futures scholarship.

In 2017, I arrived in Florida from Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria and qualified to receive Bright Futures. Though I was not receiving Bright Futures due to paperwork issues, it was still counted as income and disqualified me from obtaining a federal work study permit. I hoped that SG would be able to remedy this by extending financial aid to those similarly affected by Hurricane Maria.

Tokenization has always been a problem in SG's two-party system, which exercises frequent rebrands to create the illusion of change. It was perhaps only because of my appearance and origin story that both political parties contacted me. The minority party reached out first and taught

me about the majority party, which was dominated by the Greek coalition known as the System.

The minority party told me that they were the party of inclusivity. I was accidentally put in touch with the majority party when I requested assistance from the Cuban Student Association (CSA) in hosting the Vice President of the Puerto Rican Independence Party.

CSA's President put me in touch with the Student Body Vice-President, himself Cuban, who told me that his party represented the Hispanic community. Needless to say, I was confused. I decided to remain unaffiliated so that I could promote bipartisanship in the Senate and work with everyone to pass my financial aid legislation.

Nonetheless, I was firmly against the System. Taking inspiration from a Puerto Rican constitutional provision that granted parties proportional representation to avoid fixed two-party control, I was convinced that this was the key to breaking the System's entrenched power.

When I presented my idea to the minority party, they disrespected me and opted to continue advocating for a doomed online voting strategy. This was futile because online voting was banned by the Student Supreme Court twelve years prior and was kept on the platform purely as an attention-getter for elections. With nowhere else to go, I started my own party in 2020.

Problems started immediately. SG laws are designed to decrease student participation. Notably, election codes prohibit campaigning outside of the month-long election season, and Student Supreme Court decisions have outlawed the initiatives process that has been used to pursue reforms like online voting.

The majority party largely ignored us, but the minority party engaged in a coordinated sabotage effort against us and other prospective parties. For example, they have registered the name of an opposition party that had been announced so that they would not be able to participate in the election.

They also filed a police report dismissed as frivolous against one of my coalition members and manipulated an audio recording taken without my knowledge in order to defame me during the campaign. Other minority party tactics have locked us out of our party Gmail and destroyed our campaign materials.

These struggles are far from over. In the last election, an opposition party registered our intended name "Socialist Party" to prevent us from running under that name. We made the choice to continue as the Communist Party, as we have learned that activism that exposes the extent of conservative influence in SG is a greater threat to the System than electoral defeat.

Though this emphasis on activism may put us at odds with repressive Florida laws like HB 1, it is the strategy we feel the need to follow. The Communist Party overcame the aforementioned sabotage attempts, earning around 10 percent of the vote in the last election. Even as the state government represses speech through bills like HB 233, we are committed to acting as a bulwark for student rights on campus. ✊

*Injustice anywhere
is a threat
to justice everywhere.*

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

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New petition seeks to save Maguire/University Village South, asks to reinvest, not replace historic graduate housing villages

by the Save Maguire/UVS Team

UF is still trying to bulldoze our homes, but we are not giving up!

Since October, a new online petition has called for the permanent protection of the 348 affordable apartment units of UVS/Maguire Village Graduate and Family Housing at the University of Florida, as UF seeks to demolish them in 2023. (Go to www.change.org/SaveUFGradHousing, or scan the QR Code at the end of this article to access it.)

For a couple years, UF has falsely claimed that these homes have no value or are becoming worn out, but nothing could be further from the truth.

These desirable, peaceful, culturally diverse communities and the 27 acres of trees and serene nature are one of UF's greatest assets. Protecting these family-friendly villages and incredible green spaces for future generations of Gators is in the best interest of the university and the graduate students who will utilize them for years to come.

Specifically, the petition asks that UF:

1. Immediately reverse the decision to close Maguire/UVS.
2. Open up all apartments there to new residents, investing as necessary to make all units fully safe and habitable.
3. Provide all non-disclosed documents related to the premature closure decision, and conduct a transparent third-party public appraisal to determine their long-term viability and the investment needed to maintain these treasured buildings.
4. Investigate campus housing policies and staff for misrepresentation of facts, which led to the hastily made closure decision, to ensure this never happens again.

According to residents, these are the

best apartments in Florida and deserve saving, so it is shameful to think that UF would completely demolish both villages, removing almost 40 percent of all graduate housing without any public (and graduate student) input, but that is indeed the case—but there is still hope.

The UF Board of Trustees, and subcommittees that help make recommendations to them, can still reverse the decision by a simple vote (as they did with the McCarty Woods amendment to the Campus Master Plan in June 2021). This is our immediate request, because the longer they wait, the more stress it puts on students currently living there, and those hoping to move in.

Likewise, the City of Gainesville and Alachua County commissions have a say in the final approval of the updated Campus Development Agreement (CDA) with UF (which includes the revised maps that put Maguire/UVS on the chopping block), so we ask that these bodies DO NOT APPROVE IT without first requiring the removal of that section.

Even asking that UF make grad housing a “priority” is not enough, and actually detrimental, because it gives UF cover to continue with their plans to replace our homes with alternatives that are not wanted.

There is no harm if these commissions simply postpone their final vote until UF complies, because the existing CDA will simply remain in effect. UF has yet to produce a shred of evidence that these changes are absolutely necessary, and in some cases, has outright lied.

It is unclear when it started, but UF has kept many would-be residents from moving in for a couple years, despite the units being safe, clean, and recently renovated. Furthermore, UF Housing leadership has refused to respond to legitimate inquiries

into their decision making, and never considered the opinions of graduate students when promoting the closure of these villages (slated for Spring 2023).

These administrators have repeatedly misrepresented facts regarding the quality and benefit of these units, and never fully produced any credible evidence for their closure at this time.

In this way, the people who should be looking out for the well-being of students and advocating against closing our campus housing options are instead fighting against the students who most need protecting.

These pompous administrators have chosen to shirk their responsibilities, causing harm to vulnerable students, and because of that, we demand an investigation into their actions and that those responsible be fired.

Furthermore, the two main reasons given for the destruction of these buildings are both flawed, namely: (1) that they are not economically feasible to maintain, and (2) that putting empty recreation fields in their place will somehow “improve the student experience.”

The second flawed point is easily rebuffed by noting that the UF body representing ALL students (undergrads and grad students, totaling more than 50,000 people) unanimously passed a resolution decrying the destruction of these villages in 2021. Indeed, students see more value in keeping these as homes than in adding a couple more soccer fields (in an area already full of other fields).

No detailed evidence has been provided to justify the first flawed point either, despite numerous inquiries.

As a place of rigorous academic standards, we are asking simply for the housing administration to “show their work.”

In the absence of proof, they have failed the University's students, staff, faculty, and governing bodies, and should be held accountable. And even if it is shown that it will cost some amount of money to maintain these buildings, we ask that UF make that investment, as is being done with numerous other campus buildings, including new undergraduate dorms.

If UF wishes to attract and maintain top talent, they need to consider undergraduate and graduate students alike. Destroying almost half of grad

Letters from an American

This is one of the smartest daily reads out there.
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<https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/>

housing while spending hundreds of millions on new undergrad housing is not a balanced approach.

We would be remiss if we did not also mention that the carbon footprint of the decision to destroy 44 apartment buildings and hundreds of trees would be immense, and could be reason in and of itself to save this ecologically important area.

These spacious villages with large patios and balconies provide a needed respite for graduate students, and we demand they be saved. In no instance should the entire natural area be cleared of all trees, nor should the value or history of these buildings be considered interchangeable with off-campus living.

These are not just buildings, but homes, and if they are lost, a big part of UF's culture will be lost, as hundreds of families' lives will be disrupted immediately, and thousands of hearts of former residents broken.

Please help save Maguire/UVS. There is no substitute.

To learn more about the organization behind the petition and this article, visit www.SaveUFGradHousing.com or email saveufgradhousing@gmail.com. 🐢



To sign the petition, scan this QR code with a phone or other device, or go to www.change.org/SaveUFGradHousing.

*Conservation
is humanity
caring for the future*

- Nancy Newhall

The Wilder Heart of Florida: Conservation conversations with authors

As part of Alachua Conservation Trust's Keep Florida Wild Virtual Series, we invite you to join us on Nov. 18 from 6 to 7:30pm for an engaging presentation on conservation and literature.

During this webinar, we will hear from the authors and editors of *The Wilder Heart of Florida*.

Following the presentation, there will be a question and answer session with our speakers. Speakers include Gianna Russo, Margaret Ross Tolbert, Leslie Poole, and Jack E. Davis.

This is an online event via Zoom Webinars with both audio and visual components.

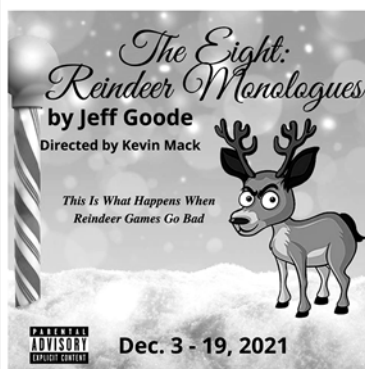
We recommend viewing the event online to access all visual components of the presentation.

Online access information will be provided upon approval of your registration request.

Only one person per household needs to register unless you will be using separate devices to access the webinar.

Registration is required for this free event. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1317> to register.

For more information, see <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1318>, or contact Alachua Conservation Trust by phone at 352-373-1078 or email info@AlachuaConservationTrust.org. 🐢



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From ELECTION, p. 1

cratic Party politics. She is endorsed by Gail Johnson as her replacement to carry on with a development moratorium and an emphasis on equity issues and neighborhood defense. As one friend put it, she has both roots and memory.

Matt Howland is a young newcomer to politics, but he hit the ground running with signs and a vigorous door-knocking campaign. He has been a teacher locally, but also worked in the nonprofit sector while in DC in recent years. He gives very good answers and seems a positive energy, good guy.

I have people I know and trust supporting one or the other candidate for various valid reasons.

This is a city in transition. The rather shocking boom in infill construction in the downtown and University area has eliminated many iconic pieces of Gainesville. A few years ago it was Burrito Brothers replaced by the towering "Standard" at 13th and University. Before that, Nathan Collier took over the funky "Student Ghetto" and built apartment buildings just north of campus.

And now? Entire blocks taken over near campus and downtown.

It is called infill, on the alleged premise that it prevents sprawl. By introducing high density, it affects the surrounding area.

Lately it has been invading neighborhoods such as Porters Quarters. Yes, it makes sense to cut back commuter traffic, and the former housing can house a different demographic, but lately neighborhoods are feeling run over. Who benefits, and who is being ignored?

With Cynthia you get a known person with a long track record. This is good and not so good. With Matt you get a new person with no track record in elected office, or for that matter that much life experience. This can be good and not so good, too, but you find out later.

I can't get past the feeling that a seasoned Black woman who knows this community should be the replacement for Gail Johnson, for the needed perspective she would bring. But whichever person gets the seat, it is not an easy time to move into it. Vote Chestnut. 🐿

From GAS ENERGY PLANT, p. 1

percent over the past decade, the cost of fossil gas has doubled over the past year, and continues to climb.

Many energy experts predict that the price of fossil gas will never be as low as they have been in the past, making the proposed gas plant a financial blunder as well as contributing to the climate crisis.

Susan Glickman, Florida Director for Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, says that this is like "buying an 8-track cassette player to power the school," meaning it is outdated technology.

It's not just a bad idea, it's a financial boondoggle known as a stranded asset, which is a growing concern as climate becomes increasingly more relevant. A stranded asset is something—like a power plant—that once had value but no longer does, due to an external change, such as the climate crisis. Imagine paying \$200 for an 8-track cassette player, and then finding out two years later that music is no longer produced for your machine. Bad purchase. These days, I'm streaming my music. And so are you.

Five or ten years ago, when the idea for a more efficient combined cycle gas plant was conceived, it probably seemed like a good idea. Optimistic estimates are that the system will be 25 percent more efficient than the older system. But now, the cost of solar has plummeted, battery storage is a reality, and solar integrated with grid scale storage from 50 MW and up to 300 MW is being built by utilities in Florida and across the US. These combined systems reduce the need for additional fossil fuel generation, increase resilience and serve as a viable alternative.

With President Biden's recent proposal to develop large-scale wind farms along much of the US coastline, and taller, more efficient wind turbines with associated price drops, we can expect that in the next decade or less, offshore wind power will be an important part of the energy mix. The Biden administration aims to have 30 GW of offshore wind in the next decade.

Why so much concern about burning gas? Ten and twenty years ago, it was considered a "bridge fuel" to replace coal until renewables were ready. Methane, the primary component of natural gas, is a

fast-acting greenhouse gas; in the first 20 years after it is released methane is 80 times more effective as a heat trapping gas than carbon dioxide. There are methane leaks at every stage of the natural gas production and transportation process. According to a major recent UN report, in order to tackle climate change, natural gas has got to go. Rapidly! Clean energy alternatives are ready.

How have other similar institutions dealt with the challenge of disruptive technologies in the energy sector? In 2015, Stanford University replaced their gas-fired power plant and the traditional network of underground steam and chilled-water pipes with grid-sourced electricity, two-thirds of which comes from renewable sources. As electricity from the grid becomes increasingly from renewable and carbon-free sources, Stanford is no longer locked into outdated, expensive, polluting energy. Stanford also signed 25-year power purchase agreements for new on- and off-campus solar projects to supply over half of their electricity. The innovative facility yields compelling results: greenhouse gas emissions are slashed by 68 percent, fossil fuel use reduced by 65 percent. Why can't UF develop a similar innovative system?

While science tells us that climate change is irrefutable, science also tells us that it is not too late to take action to avoid or reduce the worst impacts. If we are going to come close to meeting our climate targets, fossil gas must be rapidly phased out. And yet, UF has plans to build a gas-powered power plant to produce heat and steam, rather than develop innovative solutions. If UF goes ahead with their plan, they will be stuck with a stranded asset, and saddled with a debt burden long before the lifespan of the gas power plant has passed.

The consequences of the climate crisis are beyond dispute. We need to move beyond so called "bridge fuels" which were mediocre alternatives 20 years ago, and won't satisfy our climate goals. UF can have a gas-fired energy plant OR it can be true to its climate commitment. It cannot do both.

Send a customizable letter (<https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1316>) to UF President Dr. Kent Fuchs about this misguided action by the Board of Trustees.

Dr. David Hastings is a climate scientist and member of the Sierra Club Suwannee-St. Johns (SSJ) Executive Committee. This article was published in the November 2021 SSJ newsletter. 🐿

70%

**OF STUDENTS GRADUATING FROM
FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES
LEAVE WITH DEBT**

Signs of the times:

Plaques acknowledge Gainesville's troubling past

by Joe Courter

Gainesville is the only city in Florida to drop Columbus Day in favor of honoring Indigenous Peoples Day. A plaque was installed in the city hall square with the following words:

*We remember them with compassion
Naebahiono manta nahiabotanicano*

Gainesville is part of the traditional homelands of the Potano people, a Timucua-speaking society. The Timucua people lived here since time immemorial.

Indigenous peoples from other nations long inhabited the area around what is now called Gainesville, and made innumerable contributions to the region.

By the end of the 18th century, most of the Timucua people were obliterated by disease, violence and warfare. May this marker

remind us to perpetually seek ways of mirroring the regenerative lifeways of the original Indigenous stewards of this land.

Also in downtown Gainesville at S. Main Street and University Avenue, just 100 feet from the slab where the Confederate statue used to stand, is a two-sided plaque put up on October 25 in conjunction with the Equal Justice Initiative and the Alachua County Community Remembrance Project. One side is devoted to Reconstruction-era lynching in Gainesville and the other side to lynching in America.

It is good to see these permanent memorials erected to acknowledge the previously downplayed or ignored parts of the area's and country's history. 🐢

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Richie Floyd wins St. Pete City Council District 8 race

His grassroots campaign relied on small donations, volunteer power

by Justin Garcia

This article was originally published on Nov. 2 by Creative Loafing Tampa Bay. See more at cltampa.com.

Richie Floyd, a teacher, community activist and political organizer has won the race for St. Pete's City Council District 8.

In a race where every vote counted, Floyd pulled in 51 percent of the vote, with his opponent, former District 8 City Councilman Jeff Danner taking 49 percent. As Florida Politics points out, Floyd's margin of victory is just outside recount territory. With all precincts reporting, Bay News 9 says Floyd's margin of victory was just 833 votes.

Floyd is a Democratic Socialists of America member who led a grassroots campaign, relying on small donations from working class people and volunteer power. He prioritized working families and increasing political engagement in the community.

Floyd aims to work with city officials and the community more broadly to bolster the city's public transit system, expand affordable housing, improve support systems for the city's houseless population, and uplift movements for environmental justice and fair wages for workers.

Floyd gained endorsements from unions, progressive organizations and city council members. Amy Foster, who currently represents District 8, also endorsed Floyd. Brazilian Twitter supported him, too.

After the August primary, City Council candidates Richie Floyd and Danner became the top two contenders for District 8, advancing to the general election.

Floyd showed his political strength in the August primary, earning 51.81 percent of the total vote in District 8, equivalent to 3,087 votes. Danner took second place with about 27 percent of the vote, or 1,605 votes.

Danner is a former City Council member in District 8 (2005-2014) whose campaign focused on addressing houselessness, along with investing in the arts. Danner also wanted to get more participation from local businesses in city matters.

Danner was endorsed by the Tampa Bay Times, St. Petersburg Council Chair Ed Montanari, a Republican, as well as two former city council members.

Floyd's campaign had canvassers hitting the streets for months knocking on doors to earn votes. Even though he collected mostly small donations, Florida Politics reported that Floyd outraised Danner by a significant amount, collecting \$109,000 for his campaign while Danner had raised around \$39,000 as of earlier this month.

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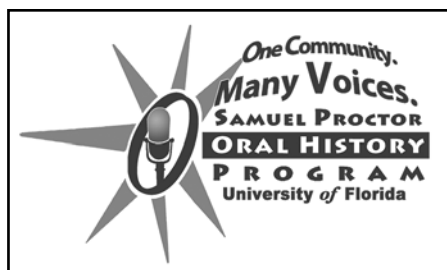
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Editors' picks: News that didn't fit

- 🦎 **A Florida worker applied to 60 jobs to show employers are driving US 'Labor Shortage'**
by Chris Walker / *Truthout* / Oct. 20 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1308>
A former food service worker applied to 58 jobs he was qualified for, but only was invited to one interview for a part-time job at \$8.65/hr. A union official said that the real reason behind labor shortages is not due to a lack of workers, but due to "worker oppression, poverty wages and poor working conditions."
- 🦎 **A rift in the gun world (podcast)**
by Lisa Hagen and Chris Haxel / *On the Media* / WNYC Studios / Oct. 29 / <https://tinyurl.com/iguana1312>
On the Media takes a deep dive into the "No Compromise" gun rights movement whose members see the NRA as too amenable to gun control measures. Hagen and Haxel aim to understand how three brothers used a network of Facebook pages to grow their following with some startling results.
- 🦎 **Chomsky: Build Back Better fiasco exposes how both parties serve corporate power**
by C.J. Polychroniou / *Truthout* / Nov. 1 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1298>
In an interview, Noam Chomsky assesses the ongoing drama in Congress over President Biden's spending bills and the political ramifications of the Democrats failing to carry out sweeping social and climate reforms.
- 🦎 **Chomsky: 'It doesn't have to be this way'**
by Stan Cox / *Jacobin* / Oct. 27 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1307>
In this interview, Noam Chomsky argues that a livable future free of catastrophic climate change is possible – we just have to take on the billionaires standing in the way.
- 🦎 **Democrats have a choice: Embrace progressive populism or suffer a Trumpian fascist future**
by Thom Hartmann / *Common Dreams* / Nov. 3 / <https://tinyurl.com/iguana1313>
Neoliberalism is a wounded, dying animal. America is returning to populism, whether our politicians want it or not: the big question is will it be progressive or fascist populism?
- 🦎 **Florida advocates disappointed to devastated by exclusion of paid family leave in Biden plan**
by Issac Morgan / *Florida Phoenix* / Oct. 29 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1288>
President Joe Biden's massive federal spending package for social programs left out 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave, a key initiative that many Democrats had pushed to provide financial support to new parents and caregivers. Removing the provision was a disappointment among healthcare advocacy groups in Florida.
- 🦎 **How thousands of Black farmers were forced off their land**
by Kali Holloway / *The Nation* / Nov. 1 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1295>
Black people own just 2 percent of farmland in the United States. A decades-long history of loan denials at the USDA is a major reason why.
- 🦎 **Take this job and love it: Worker cooperatives offer an alternative to keeping power and profits in the hands of a few rich people.**
by Jaisal Noor / *The Progressive* / Oct. 20 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1300>
By 2017, rideshare drivers were earning less than half what they made four years earlier. Meanwhile, executives at Lyft and Uber have raked in tens of millions of dollars in compensation. Now New York City drivers are becoming their own bosses by joining worker co-ops, allowing them to make a living wage and participate in workplace democracy.
- 🦎 **The laughing stock of the world: Why the world pities us and fears us**
by Michael Moore / *Michaelmoore.com* / Nov. 1 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1289>
We are the laughing stock because we refuse to take care of our own people – and no one around the world can understand why we force our old people to suffer and why we put our own children last.
- 🦎 **Unraveling UF's ultimate decision-makers: The Board of Trustees and its lack of diversity**
by Aysia Gilbert / *The Alligator* / Nov 2, 2020 / <https://tinyurl.com/iguana1311>
Perhaps the most influential authority over decisions at UF is not the president, but the 13 members of the Board of Trustees, the majority of whom are white males who do not work in academia and who donate to conservative causes, according to this research from a year ago. No wonder there are white supremacist speakers on campus, and racist and homophobic building names.
- 🦎 **Whistleblowers are exposing top EPA officials with pro industry agenda**
by Mike Papantonio / *The Ring of Fire* / Sep. 26 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1281>
EPA whistleblowers are exposing how the agency turns a blind eye to hard science in order to appease big business.
- 🦎 **With reconciliation hacked in half, Sanders warns US democracy is in danger**
by Sharon Zhang / *Truthout* / Oct. 28 / <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1309>
The cuts made to the reconciliation bill are drastic, slashing the \$3.5 trillion price tag in half, eliminating popular proposals like free community college, paid leave, and tax hikes on corporations and the wealthy. The prognosis appears bleak for progressives. Sen. Bernie Sanders says the very fabric of American democracy is in danger. 🦎

History and the people who make it: Ilena Rotundo Camilo



Ilena Rotundo Camilo [C], the Founding Mother of Gamma Eta Sorority, Incorporated, who worked on creating a more inclusive and diverse community on the University of Florida Campus and beyond, was interviewed by an unknown interviewer [U] on July 15, 2018. The sorority was founded in 1995.

Transcript edited by Donovan Carter.

This is an excerpt from the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program – Latinx Diaspora of the Americas Project (LDAP) Collection, and the 69th in a series from the SPOHP collection.

U: What gave you the idea to create a sorority on campus?

C: Well, at the time, the Hispanic population was not as noticeable at the university. I heard over and over that all the Latina girls want to try to fit in somewhere, but it was a bit difficult, and because it was something new and there were more of us than there were before, people weren't as welcoming as all the other ladies. There wasn't anything where Hispanic women would fit in.

I don't know why, I guess, I was just bored at that time — I said, "Why don't we do something ourselves and just start a Hispanic sorority?" That's where the whole idea started coming along.

U: Where does the name Gamma Eta come from?

C: I did a lot of research because I wanted to reflect the Hispanic background. I went in the library, and I tried to figure out what each Greek letter meant. I found that Gamma Eta meant "Ray of Light."

If you come from a Hispanic background, we all come from heat and sun and positive things and sunshine, and that's how it came about it, it kind of reflected what we were, you know, our background and as women. We were a ray of light at that moment.

U: When you were going through this

process, was there any faculty or staff that you asked for any advice?

C: I know that the Casita had staff members from the university that were gonna support us, but we needed to come [up] with a plan before we actually got their support.

I know there was some people in the sorority—well, the beginning of the process—that were trying get some staff from the university to support us and back us up, but some of them wanted us to have a more complete idea of what we wanted to do, and then they kind of led us.

They told us what we needed to do. I remember having several meetings in the Casita, and, if some of the Hispanic faculty was there, they would guide us. There's not one specific that I could remember, at this point.

U: What about the larger administration?

C: We needed to be recognized for them to actually consider us anything. So at that point we had no support. Pretty much, we started like a club. That's the only way we could have gotten into the university as a registered activity for students.

So we began as a club, because we had no history. We started volunteering in activities, we started doing fundraisers, and during Christmas we bought toys for kids who were underprivileged. We started as a service club.

U: Were there any other sort of things that you all tried to do?

C: We tried to start putting together the full sorority, but most of the things we did were service. For example, we volunteered at the Disney Marathon. We were there very early, and we led people—the runners—to different places.

We decided because I had a very close friend—one of my roommates, actually—had lost her mom, we decided that breast cancer awareness was going to be our philanthropy. We started doing some activities for that. We did fundraisers. We collected toys, but pretty much that's what we did, mostly service, but in the short time period that I had.

U: Was there anything that helped you to take such a leadership role?

C: I've always been very involved in service since high school—I was class treasurer. I was very active, and if I believe

in something that is needed, I never back down, and I try to put it together even if I don't finish it. And that's been since high school, college, and now through my career.

It's something that has always been me, and like I said, I felt that it was something that we needed at that time at the university to have something that we felt that we were a part of and not be discriminated against or felt like we weren't going to fit in because they didn't have the same background as we had.

I just said, "You know what, let's do this," and it was something that came natural to me, and still does. It's something that I'm very proud of, because it's still continuing, and the girls just keep going strong, so it's amazing. I'm happy to hear that it's still going on, because I was very afraid that it would have been just, I left and that was it, but no, everybody that was with me that started continued it, and they did an amazing job.

U: I was doing some research, and there's a handful of chapters at other schools around the southeast. How does that make you feel?

C: It feels great, and if you were to look at their websites or even their Facebook pages, it's all about diversity, which is what I always wanted. Even if we were all Hispanic women—it was not necessarily that, it was about if you felt that you didn't fit in a specific category and you needed somebody to be there for you because of who you are not because of where you're from, that's what I wanted as a sorority, and that's how we started it.

Even though we were all Hispanic, we were all from different backgrounds. Some were born in our countries, some of them born here in the U.S. And seeing the growth and seeing the diversity, that for me is super great—that's amazing.

You know, that it's not a specific group of people, it's just a variety and diversity and different cultures coming together and forming a group of amazing women that are strong and hopefully career oriented and moving forward.

U: How has the time creating the sorority helped you professionally?

C: I was the president of three organizations after [I] moved from UF. They were more geared towards my beliefs. For example, I'm a special education teacher, I'm a speech therapist, so I was the

president of two special education organizations in my university, because that's what my degree was when I moved to Puerto Rico, and I recently was the principal of a charter school that I and a friend of mine founded.

I've always [kept] moving forward, because it created that support and understanding that if you believe in something and you want to push it forward, you just have to work for it, and it will become something, you know?

Every year when I see a new chapter and when I see pledges, it's just amazing, because that's what I wanted, and it keeps going. I'm really happy to see that.

U: I know that UF had tried to make it a point to include, make diversity a focal point. If there is anything, that you would like to say about your time here at the university or what the sorority, you kind of talked about what the sorority really meant to you.

C: I would say that even though it was the [19]90s and that's a long time ago, it doesn't matter the time period or where we are—you know, if it's the [19]90s or 2018—it's what you make of your experience and

how you want to portray yourself as a person, what is more important.

Being part of a group of ladies at that time period that were behind me 100 percent because they had the same belief I had, and still to this day they still have the same belief that I had that diversity is very important, that we need to value our culture and our backgrounds and let other people know that we are not less or, we're the same as everybody else, that's what it was all about, you know, that we're people.

We're not a race or a color or a size or anything, we are just people, we are women that we wanted to move forward, be recognized for our achievements, not for anything else.

That's something that still to this day, through different events or activities I tell Gamma Eta sorority girls that have contacted me about that, and I say, "When I started it, my idea was to have a group of women that were strong in their beliefs, that were from a diverse background, and we were willing to make a difference and show that we can make a difference, not a group of girls that were just there to be

pretty and that was it, no, we were there to show that we can in so many different ways, as leaders, as students, and as future people, women, in the work force."

That's what my goal was, and that's what is still going, and that's what I like to see. Every time I see all the graduates and their degrees and how they're getting jobs and being recognized and moving forward, that's basically what I wanted to see, and that's what I see every year every time there's a graduation class from the Gamma Eta Sorority.

Search for "Ilena Rotundo Camilo" 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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Dr. Paul Ortiz to speak at Sunday Assembly:

"Defending history: The struggle to tell historical truths in the United States"

Dr. Paul Ortiz, director of the award-winning Samuel Proctor Oral History Program, will be the guest speaker at Sunday Assembly, on Sunday, Nov. 21, at 11am.

The title of his talk will be "Defending History: The Struggle to Tell Historical Truths in the United States."

The event will be held at the Pride Center in the Liberty Center, 3131 NW 13th Street, Gainesville.

Masks are required for those not fully vaccinated.

For more info, contact:
SundayAssembly32601@gmail.com ✉

Question:

What do these 7 countries have in common?

- Marshall Islands
- The Federated States of Micronesia
- Nauru
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Tonga
- The United States

Answer: These are the only countries *in the world* that don't provide paid leave for new parents.

Source: <https://bloom.bg/3ENdkzB>

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Spotlight on ... Florida Coalition for Peace and Social Justice



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

The organization was founded in 1982 in Orlando, and the Geiger family donated land located in Bradford County in the 1990s to serve as a meeting facility for peace activism and youth.

The land serves as a location for meetings, demonstrations, workshops, and retreats sponsored by the Coalition including annual summer peace camps for youth and young adults.

The Coalition's annual meeting will take place on Nov. 13 at 10am at 10665 SW 89th Ave., Hampton, FL, 32044.

For more information, visit florida4peace.org or call 352-603-3680. ✨

Iguana Directory

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

Readers: If there is inaccurate information here, please let us know. If you are connected to an organization listed here, please check and update your listing so others can be accurately informed. Readers should confirm times of meetings with individual organizations as they may be cancelled due to the pandemic. Unless noted, all phone numbers 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 firstcoastaclu@gmail.com / <http://northeastflorida.aclufl.org>.

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

Avian Research and Conservation Institute is a non-profit research group working to stimulate conservation action to save threatened

bird species in the southeast. 514-5606 / www.arcinst.org

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Community Weatherization Coalition's mission is to help their neighbors save energy and water and reduce utility bills by engaging volunteers, building community, and learning together. info@communityweatherization.org 450-4965 /

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, workshops, and educational activities that promote peace, human rights, social justice awareness, conflict resolution, self-empowerment and environmental awareness. 352-603-3680 / florida4peace.org.

Continued on next page

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

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

Florida Prisoner Solidarity is a carceral abolitionist collective with members inside and outside of prisons. Efforts focus around needs of incarcerated individuals and their care networks. 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 reproductive rights; ending sex discrimination and 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 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.

facebook.com/humanistsocietyofgainesville / gainesvillehumanists@gmail.com / www.gainesvillehumanists.org /

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. <https://indivisiblegnv.org> / projectmanagement@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 gun violence 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 preserve these threatened programs for senior citizens and families. Local volunteers are needed. Our.circle.of.care@gmail.com / 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 Sante Fe River. 386-243-0322 / <https://oursantaferiver.org>

PFLAG Gainesville is a local chapter of Parents and Families of Lesbians and Gays, the nation's foremost family-based organization committed to the civil rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Monthly meetings are 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. 317-7307 / prairiecreekconservationcemetery.org / info@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>

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

Quaker Meetinghouse Quakers have a 350-year tradition of working peacefully for social justice. Silent, unprogrammed worship Sundays at 11, followed by potluck. Visitors welcome. 702 NW 38th St. Facebook/GainesvilleQuakers for events or request Meetinghouse space at www.GainesvilleQuakers.org

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.rwbp.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, <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1149> facebook: student animal alliance/ instagram @studentanimalallianceUF

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

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

The Climate Reality Project Gainesville Area Chapter is the local chapter of 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>. <https://www.facebook.com/climateRealityProjectGnv@gmail.com>, ClimateRealityProjectGainesvilleFlorida <https://climateRealityProjectGnv.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

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/

UF Young Democratic Socialists of America is a student-run socialist organization dedicated to organizing students to fight for the needs of workers and students while building the capacity to fight radical and structural changes. Weekly meetings. @uf_ydsa / ufydsa21@gmail.com

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

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

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

Veterans for Peace Gainesville Chapter is an anti-war organization that raises awareness of the detriments of militarism and war, as well as seeking peaceful and effective alternatives. 375-2563 / <http://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 / 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. <http://wspus.org>. 🐉

CMC Soft Reopening

by Joe Courter

We tried back in August entertaining the notion of slowly reopening the Civic Media Center as a public space, but then Delta showed up and we went back into our shell, with just Free Grocery Store, Books for Prisoners, bi-weekly volunteer meetings and occasional other meetings.

But recently the collections committee has resumed meeting, and of course we had our anniversary program Oct. 18 with an intentionally small in-person audience of volunteers for Sandra Parks and the "Stetson Kennedy, A Life of Purpose" program. That was streamed on Zoom and Facebook, and can still be seen on the CMC Facebook page.

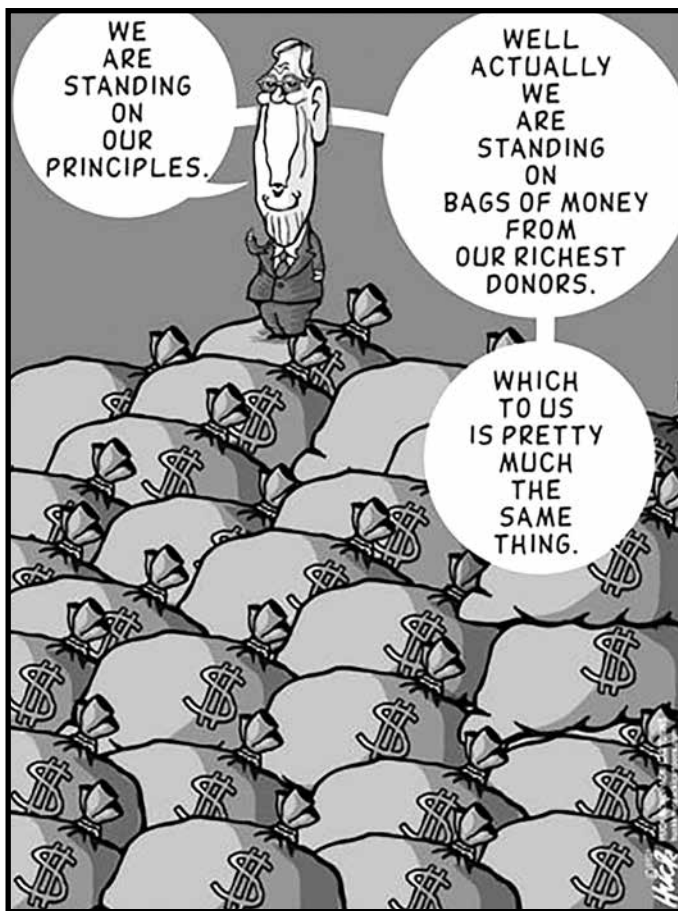
Well, here we go again. Saturday, Dec. 4, and the following two Saturdays from 1 to 5 we will be open to the public, where people can come say hi, browse the collection, check out books and perhaps have an informal celebration of coming out (or at least approaching) the other side of Covid. We will strongly request masks and reasonable distancing to be practiced, but the space is clean and ready. Tamal will be open next door for food; they are trying to get back going again, too.

Our volunteers, many of whom have never been around an active and open CMC, are also itching to open, and they will be maintaining some sort of hours on Wednesdays to be determined in the near future.

Year end support for the 501(c)3 CMC would be more than welcome; it is needed. There was a great streak of generosity early in the shut down when those stimulus checks went out, and actually got us ahead, but now things have slowed down donation wise, and we need to start doing the work needed to pay our coordinator, and our rent and utilities. Checks and snail mail work, sent to the Civic Media Center, 433 S. Main St., Gainesville, FL 32601, or at [Paypal.me/CMC4ever](https://www.paypal.com/CMC4ever), or on Venmo@CMC4ever. Thank you to all who have ever supported the CMC, and let's look forward to 2022. ✨

Want to get your article, ad, event or PSA in the *Iguana*?
January/February 2022 issue: Deadline for content is Jan. 12
Submit your events, content, and any questions to:

gainesvilleiguana@cox.net



A paradox . . .

There is something drastically wrong in America when the same political party that tries to take away Voting Rights, Civil Rights, Human Rights, Religious Rights, Social Rights and Constitutional Rights encourages people to take up arms in the fear that "government is taking away our rights."

- author unknown



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The Gainesville Iguana

Gainesville's progressive newsletter

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

- (352) 378-5655 • GainesvilleIguana@cox.net • Instagram: [gnv_iguana](https://www.instagram.com/gnv_iguana)
- www.gainesvilleiguana.org • [facebook.com/gainesvilleiguana](https://www.facebook.com/gainesvilleiguana)
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