

The Gainesville Iguana

A progressive newsletter

January/February 2022
Vol. 36, Issue 1/2

UF students need to fight Tallahassee's political grip

"UF works for the Republican party and their corporate donors, not for the faculty ... not for the students"

by Allan Frasheri, President, UF YDSA

"Every single thing we do — as a board, as an administration, as faculty, as University of Florida employees and officials — Everything MUST have our students as our number one priority. Our job is to give our amazing students a top-five university education."

This is how Mori Hosseini, chair of UF's Board of Trustees, started the Board of Trustees meeting on Dec. 3. He continues, "Unfortunately, we learned a couple years ago, that we had a small number of faculty members who were not carrying out the responsibilities of their jobs here. They were not putting the students first. In fact, they were using

university time, resources, and sometimes even our students to benefit outside jobs and positions from which the faculty were personally profiting directly."

A few hours prior, outside of Emerson Alumni Hall, I and several other members of the Young Democratic Socialists of America (a student organization at UF) and the College Democrats joined Dr. Paul Ortiz, president of UF's chapter of the United Faculty of Florida, in leafletting the union's demands to members of the Board of Trustees, the Provost, and members of UF's Presidential Cabinet as they walked into the meeting. We were there to have our voices heard directly by administration and the trustees and for

there to be no misunderstanding in the fact that we, the students of UF, stand in solidarity with the faculty.

See FIGHT TALLAHASSEE, p. 18

City election runoff, Jan. 25 Vote Chestnut

by Joe Courter

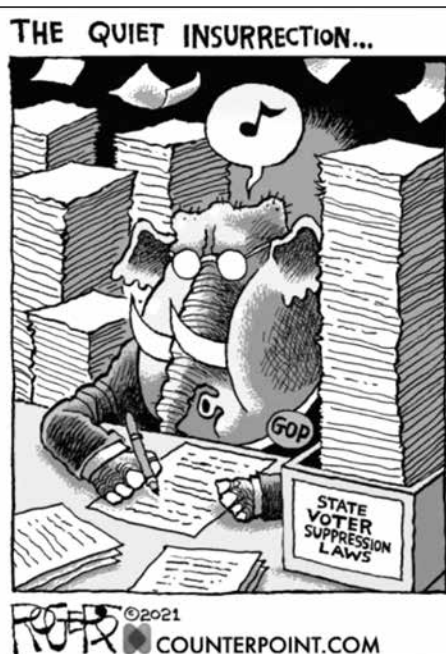
Oh well, with ranked choice voting this would all have been done, but so it goes.

The Nov. 16 special election for the seat on the City Commission abandoned by Gail Walker came down to a runoff between Cynthia Chestnut and Matt Howland.

Early voting for the seat will take place on Jan. 21 and 22, and Election Day is Tuesday, Jan. 25.

We see all the rapid development in town, displacing familiar blocks with six-story boxes at a shocking rate. Neighborhoods are being encroached, even trampled with new multi-residential buildings. This is the path the current commission has set us on.

See ELECTION, p. 18



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Dr. James Thompson finally gets that PhD

In October 2021, the Iguana ran a moving testimonial to James Thompson following his untimely death. What follows, written by his brother John, relates the moving and profound awarding to James his posthumous doctorate at the UF graduation ceremony in December.

by John Thompson

My late brother James Thompson left something undone. He ran a race with a fierce pace, but then stopped at the finish line and refused to cross. There are stories we craft to protect ourselves. They are grand stories, some that even elevate us around those that admire and love us. Woven in the fabric seamlessly, they become badges.

James was a PhD candidate at the University of Florida in the late '90s and early '00s. For reasons equal parts personal and political, James never paid UF a technical fee to file his dissertation and receive his diploma. After James's death in August, it was decided by his friends, family, and former advisers that he should receive, posthumously, the diploma he had earned while he was living. At the ceremony, I would walk the stage on his behalf.

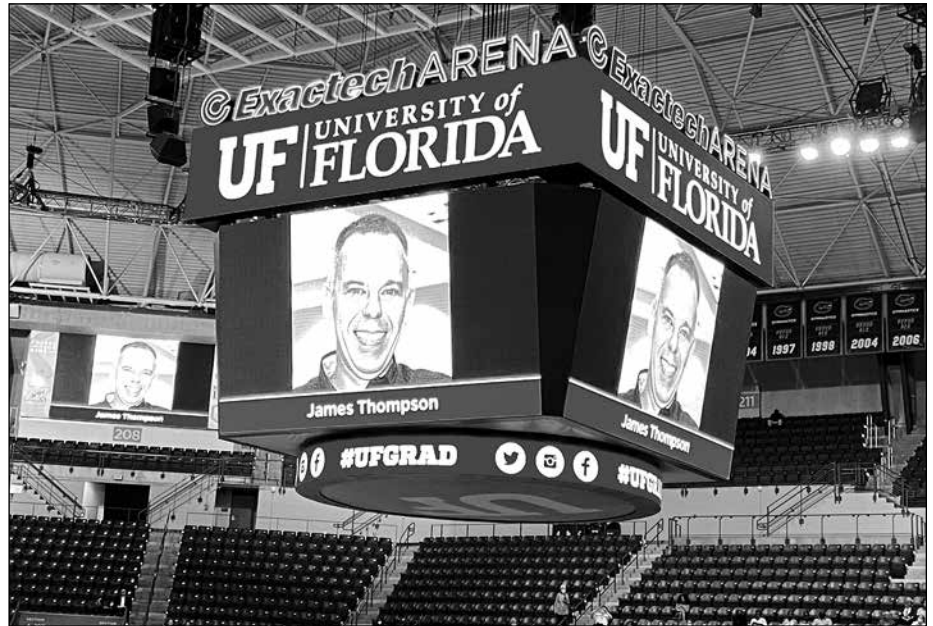
His adviser, Dr. McMahon, who traveled from California to walk the stage and hood me, offered, as we sat down, that James was his brightest student.

I said he had such creativity in the way he read and spoke about text. He added that James was an amazing teacher too, that he connected with the undergrads as a TA, and inspired them with his love of history. He said James could have easily had a career as a historian.

James went as far as defending his dissertation to his committee, and passed. I have the paper with all the signatures. I

“Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.”

- H.G. Wells



James Thompson on the O'Dome's jumbotron as his brother John receives his PhD posthumously on his behalf. Photo by Jenn Powell.

remember that night because he called me with such elation.

I was so proud of him, so proud of all the obstacles he conquered to rise to that point. It inspired me to know that two white trash South Texas boys could make something of themselves despite coming from a broken home. So it came as a big shock when he refused to pay a few more fees to receive his PhD.

He spoke of his disdain for academia and the unfairness of having to pay more money for something he had already achieved. And he may have been partly right. This was the myth.

Years later my brother lived with me for a spell, and I asked him if he could still receive the accolade. I even offered to pay for it. I thought if I could get him across that line, then he'd see his opportunities were limitless.

He understood and appreciated my offer, and then spoke the bedrock truth — he lived with a numbing fear of success. Genius comes with blind spots.

James spent the rest of his days using his wonderful mind and his endless heart to fight for social justice. He ran local campaigns for county seats and school boards, wrote text for new laws that would be passed and copied by other municipalities, organized regular everyday working folk on issues that affect all.

You name it in politics in Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida — and James's fingerprint was on it. You'd probably never find his name listed as a campaign manager or as a candidate. I think he held a seat for a hot second on a Democrat party committee (although he hated being called a Democrat).

He refused to be paid for his work. It was about making the world a better place, especially for the kids.

He was always pushing other people across finish lines. So in December, I pushed him across his finish line. In the way that he carried people, I carried him. So put some respect on his name — James Thompson, PhD.

On the following day, we carried James one more time, spreading his ashes on the lake where we laid our mother's remains decades ago. It was a wonderful, honest sharing of how much we loved and miss James.

It was also a reminder that the void his absence left must be filled by our actions in daily life.

We carry the fire.

*“You can blow out a candle
But you can't blow out a fire
Once the flames begin to catch
The wind will blow it higher.”*

- Biko, Peter Gabriel 🐢

From the publisher ...

Moving forward into 2022

Years ago I saw a play called *Rhinoceros* at the Hipodrome Theater downtown that really stuck with me. Written by Eugene Ionesco in 1959, it centers around the disturbing nature of group think, as the lead character experiences his fellow citizens slowly transform into rather disturbing people resembling rhinoceros with horns and greenish skin, and not quite like they used to be. While it expressed the playwright's dark satire of the acceptance of authoritarian power in his native Romania in pre-WWII and in post-WWII France, I can't help but feel like its premise is alive today.



Joe Courter

I was reminded of this play when listening to Gov. Ron DeSantis deliver his State of the State address, opening the 2022 legislative session. It made me feel like I live in an alternative reality with my values virtually opposite to what I was hearing. The jingoistic use of "free," the dismissive and arrogant tone regarding police reform and teaching actual history, the Fauci and mandate bashing — it was a tough listen. And then that evening, as I was playing pool at Palomino, I was joined by a guy from Pennsylvania. Nice guy. We shared small talk while playing, but then out came his rhinoceros side: COVID was manufactured, the election was certainly stolen, masks don't do anything. He just felt the need to share. I politely disagreed and moved on.

I have seen these rhinoceros transformations in friends on Facebook through what they post and in comments made. I see the Trump signs still up. I read the statistics on Big Lie believers ... the mere fact that 70 million voted for him in spite of all that is known. The solid Senate unwilling to break ranks. And the rather blatant vilification of liberals and the Left in general. The Biden bashing. The very undercutting of our democratic system of voting.

What are we on the Left doing to fight back against the fear mongering and slander of things we value and hold dear? It feels so overwhelming, and we don't have that strong Labor movement of the past to galvanize us. We have such a richness of distraction coming through our screens, movies, games, amusing little videos on Tik-Tok and You Tube. Real in-depth news coverage is reduced to a parade of chattering heads arguing in a construct of false objectivity, bombast and a-historical opinion. People are trapped in debt and insecurity, and coupled with COVID concerns and precautions, we have become isolated from one another.

Our Editors' Picks on page 10 has some real gems in it, and we hope you will make use of all the links there to be explored. Fellow *Iguana* worker Pierce Butler found an intriguing one, "Insurrection, One Year On," from a retired intelligence professional who publishes at Stonekettle.com addressing the Jan. 6 insurrection anniversary and those who participated, in particular military veterans, but not just limited to them. Read the whole thing at: tinyurl.com/Iguana1331. It is rough, plain speaking, but a powerful perspective. But this:

"It has often been said that for evil to triumph, good men need do nothing.

And that is true.

But it's more than that.

For evil to flourish, good men forget who they are. They forget the ideals they once swore to give their very lives for. They come to believe that they are aggrieved, that justice, liberty, and democracy are zero sums and that they have been diminished by the rising freedom of others. They come to see education and intellect as 'elitism' and they begin to regard duty and the obligations of civilization itself as oppression. They raise up ignorance, hate, and especially violent rage as strengths and sneer in contempt at compassion, charity, and selflessness." - Jim Wright, Stonekettle Station

This type of warped attitude is fed by Talk Radio and countless other sources.

Let's make 2022 a productive year... things are more fragile than they seem, be it the changing climate, our rights, or our democracy itself, and time is running low on how we can try and turn things around, or at least stop the hemorrhaging. Best of luck to us all in the New Year. Do what you can—to cope and to make change. 🦄

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

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The Iguana has been published monthly or bimonthly by volunteers for over 30 years. Circulation for this issue is 4,500.

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Cover drawing of iguana by Daryl Harrison.

Printed on recycled paper.

WGOT presents 24-hour fundraising Omicronathon

by Fred Sowder
WGOT Station Coordinator

The pandemic has greatly affected a lot of individuals and organizations financially. WGOT, the Civic Media Center's community radio station, is no different.

Each year around this time, 100.1FM WGOT has celebrated its birthday with a fundraiser at The Atlantic with a full slate of some of the best local musical talent Gainesville has to offer.

With that venue now converted to an arcade, we've lost that option for our 14th anniversary. That, combined with a peak spread of the omicron variant of COVID-19, prompted us to undertake a think-outside-the-box event.

That is what led us to Omicronathon: a 24-hour live broadcast from our Civic Media Center studios beginning at noon

on Saturday, Jan. 22 and running through noon on Sunday.

You, the WGOT financial supporter, will power this live fundraising event. For every \$10 donation via GoFundMe, you'll be able to request a song. You may request as many songs as you wish. (Yes, that means you could control about an hour of our programming for about \$100 or so — just remember to keep it clean.)

If you're missing music from your favorite local band, how about requesting their song so we can play it on the air?

When managing a college radio station in South Florida, WVUM 90.5FM, I participated in similar fundraising weekends (back then coordination was very heavy on logistics and required a lot of postage) and they often proved fun and successful, so we figured we'd give it a try here.

At the beginning of each year, WGOT faces a myriad of expenses involving musical licensing for both its broadcast and streaming services. We're also a Pacifica radio station, which requires membership dues. And there are those pesky monthly expenses like tower rent, electricity, and internet.

So, if great national programs like Democracy Now! and The WoodSongs Old Time Radio Hour are important to you, we'd appreciate your support.

If you value fine local programming such as The Red Pony Music Hour, On the Rail, and Wake Up, Gainesville, your financial contribution would help a great deal in keeping your community radio station strong.

Thanks in advance for helping WGOT during this difficult time. Be sure to tune in to 100.1 on your FM dial in western Alachua County and streaming online at wgot.org everywhere else in the world during this marathon event that will further encourage our COVID-related insomnia.

Even if you are reading this after the fact, you can still support us financially by going to gofundme.com or patreon.com and searching for WGOT.

Oh, and coffee would be fantastic. Thanks again. ☕

Letters from an American

One of the smartest daily reads out there.
Great analysis and observations from a historian.
No BS, no hype. Read it.

<https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/>



INDIE & OLDER ROCK, ELECTRONIC, PUNK, AMERICANA, RAP, TALK AND MORE!

INFORMATIVO PACIFICA

MUSICA LATINA
MON-FRI: 6AM

THOM HARTMANN

MON - FRI: 7 AM

DEMOCRACY NOW!

AMY GOODMAN
MON - FRI: 8 AM and 1 PM

HARD KNOCKS RADIO

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MARKUS ALEXANDER
BRIANNA
(and others!)

**WE ARE GAINESVILLE'S COMMUNITY RADIO STATION
CELEBRATING 13 YEARS ON AIR!**

New Year

This statement originated on Facebook from Margaret Randall, who shared the words below of Eduardo Galeano, one of the greatest writers and leftists of Latin America in the 20th century. She translated it from the original Spanish.

by Eduardo Galeano

I like greeting people around what is beginning rather than what is ending. I like hope more than melancholy. I like projects better than failures. I like to think there is more life ahead of us.

Every year we say the same thing: December isn't an easy month. We run around, we are anxious, it's all too much, there are conflicts of loyalties, those who are no longer with us, those who are alone, those who are with someone but badly, those who must be with those they don't want to be with.

And some, the more serious and frugal, who understand how things are: who don't try to force things, don't try to feign a happiness they don't always feel, who know not to play with the love of those for whom they care simply because they can't raise their glasses with you at midnight on the 31st.

Rather, let's think about beginnings, about the new notebook, about the clothes we're wearing for the very first time, about ridding ourselves of that which isn't useful, that which takes up space.

The world changes rapidly, sometimes so rapidly we cannot understand it. But it's a good opportunity for us to change along with others. To get together to think, to make, to give, to love. To rebel against injustice, to be a bit freer, to consider others more, to respect and be more inclusive, show more solidarity, open our minds, and think differently. Look at how much we can do together. The world is changing, yes. Don't ask if for better or for worse. It's not apart from you. You are part of it, and you will be part of the changes. It will be made of the loves and relationships that you want to construct, the friends you choose, the causes for which you work, the time you take for yourself. Don't walk so fast, you won't have more time. On the contrary, time will pass without you experiencing it.

So, these days, when everyone runs to the supermarket and the malls, spend some time in the park, walk slowly, look at the sky, listen to the birds, observe those around you. And welcome what is new. It is your debut. Always. ✨

The GOP playbook, since Reagan:

1. Run up the debt with tax cuts.
2. Blame socialism for the debt.
3. Wait for a Democratic president.
4. Blame them for the debt.
5. Block their attempts to fix it.
6. Call them failures.
7. Use it to win next election.
8. Repeat.

— from Twitter, @trom771

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Yes, there were 10 good things about 2021

It was, indeed, a disastrous year, but we do have some reasons to cheer

*This article originally appeared on
CommonDreams.org on Dec. 28.*

by Medea Benjamin

This year, 2021, began with a huge sense of relief as Trump left office. We hoped to emerge from the ravages of COVID, pass a hefty Build Back Better (BBB) bill, and make significant cuts to the Pentagon budget. But, alas, we faced a January 6 white nationalist insurrection, two new COVID mutations, a sliced-and-diced BBB bill that didn't pass, and a Pentagon budget that actually INCREASED!

It was, indeed, a disastrous year, but we do have some reasons to cheer:

1. The U.S. survived its first major coup plot on January 6 and key right-wing groups are on the wane.

With participants in the insurrection being charged and some facing significant jail time, new efforts to mobilize — including September's "Justice for J6" rally — fizzled. As for Trump, let's remember that in early 2021, he was impeached again, he lost his main mouthpiece, Twitter, and his attempt to build a rival social media service seems to have stalled. QAnon is in decline — its major hashtags have evaporated and Twitter shut down some 70,000 Q accounts. We may still see a resurgence (including another Trump attempt to take the White House), but so far the insurrection seems to have peaked and is being rolled back.

2. Latin America is undergoing a massive shift toward progressive governments.

Gabriel Boric, a young Chilean progressive who campaigned for broad reforms, including universal healthcare and a higher minimum wage, won a landslide victory in December. His victory follows the victories of Xiomara Castro in Honduras in November, Pedro Castillo in Peru in June, and Luis Arce in Bolivia in October 2020. In Brazil, former president Lula da Silva may soon return to the presidency via next year's elections. All of this bodes well for policies that benefit the people of Latin America and for greater solidarity with Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua and other nations in the U.S. crosshairs.

3. The struggle for racial justice and accountability saw wins in 2021.

Former police officer Derek Chauvin was found guilty on all 3 charges related to the murder of George Floyd and has pled guilty in the federal civil rights version of the case. The three Georgia men who killed Ahmaud Arbery for the crime of going out for a jog were also convicted. Progressive District Attorneys in cities and counties across this country are fighting to end cash bail and no-knock warrants, mass incarceration, and mandatory sentencing minimums. We see a backlash against these DAs, such as in Los Angeles and San Francisco, but they have strong community support.

4. U.S. troops left Afghanistan, winding down a deadly 20-year intervention.

Some of us were against this U.S. invasion to begin with, and pushed for 20 years for our troops to leave. The exit was carried out in the same shameful, chaotic way as the 20 years of war, and the U.S. is once again targeting the Afghan people by freezing the billions of dollars of Afghan money held in overseas banks. That's why we have joined the effort to #UnfreezeAfghanistan. But we do recognize that the U.S. troop withdrawal was necessary to give Afghans the chance to shape their own future, to stop spending \$300 million a day on a failed war, and to roll back U.S. militarism.

5. COVID has returned with a vengeance, but we have been winning battles against other deadly diseases.

Malaria, which kills half a million people a year, mostly in Africa, might be vanquished thanks to a groundbreaking vaccine, the first ever for a parasitic disease. On the HIV front, a new vaccine has shown a 97 percent response rate in Phase I clinical trials. Almost 40 million people were living with HIV in 2020, and hundreds of thousands of people die from AIDS-related illnesses each year. While the vaccine is still in Phase I trials, it is an extremely hopeful sign for 2022.

6. The U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted in 2017, went into effect this year after fulfilling the requirement that it be ratified by at least 50 countries.

The U.S. and the world's other nuclear

powers have not signed the treaty and it has no enforcement mechanism but, for the first time in history, nuclear weapons are illegal under international law. With 86 signatories so far, the treaty helps to delegitimize nuclear weapons and reinforce global norms against their use. At a time when the outcome of the nuclear talks with Iran are uncertain, and when conflicts with Russia and China regarding Ukraine and Taiwan are intensifying, such a reminder is critical.

7. In the U.S., workers are actually gaining power amidst the ravages of COVID.

Wages are going up and unions are starting to re-emerge. With millions of workers quitting their jobs from burnout or re-evaluation of life goals (dubbed the "Great Resignation"), the resulting labor shortage has given workers more space to push for better wages, benefits and working conditions. There were over 300 strikes from hospitals to coal plants to universities—many of them successful. Starbucks workers in Buffalo, New York, succeeded in forming the first union at a Starbucks store in the US. Amazon workers in Bessemer, Alabama, lost their attempt to form the first Amazon union, but the National Labor Relations Board has ordered a new election due to management's improper conduct. So 2022 may well be a banner year for worker's rights and unions.

8. While not nearly enough, there were some key environmental gains, with Biden starting his term by re-entering the Paris Climate Accords.

The COP26 meeting put a spotlight on the urgent need for revved up environmental action, with environmental activists worldwide pressuring their own governments to step up. Some 44 nations are now committed to ending the use of coal, and the G7 countries vowed not to fund coal plants any more. Here in the U.S., thanks to sustained environmental activism, the Keystone XL and PennEast pipelines were officially canceled and the Biden administration nixed oil and gas drilling on federal land. Renewable energy installations are at an all-time high and wind farms are planned along the entire U.S. coastline. Another major polluter, China, is building the largest energy installation in history, a whopping 100 gigawatts of

wind and solar power (the entire capacity, as of 2021, of U.S. solar energy), and plans to plant a Belgium-sized area of forest every year going forward.

9. Yes, there have actually been some advances for women's choice this year.

When we look beyond the outrageous anti-abortion law in Texas that empowers private citizens to sue abortion providers, we see that many countries in the rest of the world are moving in the opposite direction. In 2021, abortion was legalized in South Korea, Thailand, and Argentina, while safe access increased in New Zealand, Ecuador, and Uruguay. A major victory in a very Catholic country came in September, when Mexico's Supreme Court decriminalized it. Isn't it ironic that, prior to *Roe v. Wade*, thousands of women from U.S. states along the Mexican border would cross into Mexico to get (illegal) abortions? Now, they might again be going, and this time for legal abortions.

10. Another reason to celebrate: 2021 is over.

And 2022 may actually be the year we conquer COVID and move forward on a full agenda of pressing issues, including pushing Congress to pass a version of the Build Back Better bill; pressing for passage of the voting rights legislation that will stop the outrageous statewide voter suppression; mobilizing against the far right — and a return of Trump or Trump-lite; stopping the Cold War with China; preventing a military conflict with Russia in Ukraine; and cutting the outrageous Pentagon budget to invest in the health of our people and planet.

If we could make gains in a year as bad as 2021, just think what we can accomplish in 2022. 🐾



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The CAC: It's all about culture, arts and coalition building by the Environmental Ambassadors Youth Group

by Carol Mosley

If you don't know of the Cultural Arts Coalition (CAC), you've been missing out on a whole lotta good news about dedicated youth and hope for the future. Cofounder and Executive Director NKwanda Jah is a dynamo who collects children under her wings and lets them know this beautiful world is full of wonder just waiting for them to find their niche.

The CAC was founded in 1983 and is housed at the Wilhelmina Johnson Resource Center in Gainesville. Emery "Chucky" Carter, a participant in this year's Kwanzaa celebration, reflected on the importance of the programs at WJRC in his youth. Chucky said the WJRC gave the kids a place to get off the streets and was "a place to go where somebody would pat you on the back and say, 'Hey, you're a good kid' versus a lot of what we heard out in the streets. I don't think I would be the person I am if it wasn't for those times I spent [at WJRC]."

For more than 40 years, the CAC has put on the annual 5th Avenue Arts Festival, which will be held April 25-26, 2022, so mark your calendar. What started as a small, local event continued to grow, and hosted 20,000 visitors in its most outstanding year. The CAC even holds a spot in the Library of Congress and is listed in the Florida Black Heritage Trails.

In 2020, the CAC obtained what has now been transformed into the Science Bus. It travels to schools and community locales where the Science Club shares experiments and exhibits, and offers a microscopic view of things. The STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) project has the students examining the requirements and impacts of being human on a fragile planet with essential finite resources. Too few humans understand how matter cycles and energy flows, even though it's basic ecology. The Science Club wants to change that by making science fun.

The CAC marks the 32nd year of engaging Environmental Ambassadors, ages 15-18, who set out on a summer of listening, learning and sharing, as true ambassadors do, with other community groups. But the program is much more than a summer camp. These young people are on a mission.



Environmental Ambassadors of the Cultural Arts Coalition kayak on the Matanzas River with the Sierra Club. Photo courtesy of Carol Mosley.

How Things Work

The group had a session to learn how industrial power gets generated and distributed to our homes and also visited a solar farm to find out about alternative sources of energy.

Siembra Farm offered a day of working in the gardens learning about regenerative agriculture, turning the compost pile, and enjoying fresh organic produce. Another day was spent learning about grazing rotation and other ranching activities at third generation Butler Cattle Ranch.

Water, Water Everywhere

To better understand Florida's precious water the group went swimming down the Itchetucknee River, boating on the Silver River where they counted 100 turtles sunbathing, kayaking on the Matanzas with Sierra Club, and swimming at Butler Beach, developed by Black entrepreneur Frank Butler as a resort to be enjoyed by African Americans prior to integration.

The Environmental Protection Department led the environmental stewards on a tour of local neighborhood creeks to investigate the flow patterns from Sweetwater Branch, then Duckpond area and Depot Park (a former brownfield), ultimately connecting to Paynes Prairie to recharge our precious Floridan aquifer.

What a Waste

But it wasn't all sweet water and salty sea. There was a reality tour of the Leveda Brown Transfer Station to see where all of our trash, recycling and toxic waste is collected and sorted before being sent "away" to a landfill, recycled, or specially treated as toxic waste.

And speaking of reducing the waste stream, a tour of the Repurpose Project showed how everything from corks to architectural oddities can be saved from a landfill and turned into something useful or artful.

Planning for the Future

Using notes from their journals and calling on their experiences, the Ambassadors got together with Young Leaders of Wild Florida for a shared round-table discussion of the most pressing environmental issues and actions the youth can take to make a better future. The Environmental Ambassadors program teaches job skills, teamwork, and community service while exposing the youth to sustainable employment options. It seems like our role as elders might be to hear their vision of the world they want to live in and help them usher it in.

Before wrapping up the summer's activities with a final ceremony, the Ambassadors

made a heartfelt gesture of putting together “love bags” for 50 people who found themselves without a home or access to basic needs. No judgment; just kindness. Some of these young people come from difficult circumstances themselves, and show empathy beyond their years.

A severe cut to funding from Children’s Trust for fiscal year 2022 has presented a new challenge to keep the program operating at its peak performance and not deny access to any youth who have an

interest. The CAC is carrying on in faith that “enough” will somehow manifest through grants and individual donors, and is hopeful Children’s Trust will see the value added by funding these programs.

It’s easy for us oldies but goodies to think that the worst we see of our young people represents most. That isn’t so. Perhaps we just don’t get enough of young folks in our lives today, or don’t pay close enough attention to them, to realize their creative vision for tomorrow. If that’s the case,

then get out of your seat and lend a hand.

For the Environmental Ambassadors from the Cultural Arts Coalition, their greatest work of art is the way they live their lives each and every day. And, that’s a beautiful picture of tomorrow.

This article was updated from a previous version printed in Hawthorne-based The Chronicle. Look for your copy at local stands or email Becky for a subscription, thechronicle.fl@gmail.com. ☼

Is water food? Well, there is a debate ...

This is a transcript from a program that aired on Jan. 11. See more at tinyurl.com/Iguana1335

by World Ocean Radio

Welcome to World Ocean Radio ...

I’m Peter Neill, Director of the World Ocean Observatory.

Is water food? There is a debate; many certain that it is not because it does not embody biotics or nutrients essential to food; others maintaining it is, so labeled, regardless. Water, is of course, essential to human health, to the hydration of our physical, hence psychological systems, without which in certain amounts we cannot survive. Is water food? Of course, it is, food for the soul.

We study and govern water as a singular entity; we have eminent scholars and centers for water research; we have national departments and international agencies that address water only as fresh, separate from salt, drawing an administrative limit at the salt line; we have conferences on water where the word “ocean” is never mentioned as if that is another, disconnected system, another responsibility without relation.

The freshwater/ocean continuum is undeniable. The water cycle represents the penultimate system of distribution for a resource that nurtures us from the mountain-top to the abyssal plain. That continuum determines climate, circulates pollutants and poisons, and connects the world in myriad ways to affect our health, energy, exchange, governance, community, and cultural traditions. We are mostly water, every one of us. We are a water planet, some 70 percent of which by area or volume contains the elements by which we live.

Water cleans our waste. Water enables

manufacture. Water irrigates our fields. Water is so precious that any drop poisoned or sacrificed to irrelevant consumption or other less compelling needs is a crime against our bodies, against humanity. The commodification of water is anathema. To privatize its value is an affront to equity, justice, and civilization. Water must be a universal right, accessible to all, profitable for everyone.

If water itself has no nutrient value, then what it carries most certainly does. Water distributes food everywhere, from the skies, across vast ocean space, up and down the water column to feed marine species in every form. Water carries seed, plankton, and upland deposits through steams and lakes to great rivers to empty into coastal and deep sea habitat. Water feeds us through the senses, through touch and sound; water cools our bodies and quiets our minds; water heals as a symbol and system of belief and redemption. What is more pure and clear and essential than a sip of cool water, of hot water, when, for whatever reason, we are thirsty for calm, for healing.

Is water food?

Water is the penultimate net-zero standard. Water is the primary goal for sus-

tainable development. Water is the tool for bio-regional planning. Water is the true source for value and service in a global economy.

We live in a hydraulic society, enabled by water in every aspect of our lives, and to be indifferent to that fact and to ignore it as an organizing principle on which to base transformation and regeneration is to choose to starve, to die from indifference, ignorance, and fear of change. To manage growth, to assert a new paradigm to conserve and sustain Nature for ensuing generations, we must start with water as our first principle against which every initiative, invention, and action taken must be first measured. Water is the unifying principle for prosperity. Water is the medium in which we will culture food, medicine, and art. Water is a process for integration and collaboration. Water is the physical dynamic by which to shape our world. Water is power. Water is peace. Water is food for thought.

We will discuss these issues, and more, in future editions of World Ocean Radio. ☼



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Editors' picks: News that didn't fit

- 🦎 **After 7 years anti-war group that fed the hungry wins fight with Fort Lauderdale**
by Kenny Stancil / *Common Dreams* / Jan. 5 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1330
President Biden will continue a pandemic-spurred break on student loan repayments until May 1.
- 🦎 **Biden extends student loan repayment pause three more months**
by Jacob Fischler / *Florida Phoenix* / Dec. 22 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1327
President Biden will continue a pandemic-spurred break on student loan repayments until May 1.
- 🦎 **Biden is finally confronting Trump's Big Lie – but there's much left to do**
by William Rivers Pitt / *Truthout* / Jan. 6 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1320
President Biden found his mettle and delivered the most important, and perhaps the best, speech of this entire political career.
- 🦎 **Chomsky and Pollin: Protests outside of COP26 offered more hope than the summit**
by C.J. Polychroniou / *Truthout* / Nov. 22 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1321
Noam Chomsky and Robert Pollin discuss what transpired last fall at COP26, The United Nations Climate Change Conference, ending with a disheartening 'compromise' deal on the climate after 2 weeks of negotiations with diplomats from more than 190 nations.
- 🦎 **Correcting an 'Abomination of justice,' the Goveland Four were finally exonerated 72 years after being wrongfully accused of raping a white woman**
by NewsOne Staff / *NewsOne* / Nov. 22 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1325
Seventy-two years after four Black men were falsely accused of raping a white woman in Florida, a state circuit court judge issued a ruling clearing them of the alleged crime in a rare correction of a Jim Crow-era injustice.
- 🦎 **DeSantis: Parents could sue if kids are taught 'critical race theory' in Florida public schools**
by Danielle J. Brown / *Florida Phoenix* / Dec. 15 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1326
Gov. Ron DeSantis railed against "critical race theory," promoting legislation allowing parents to sue if their kids are taught CRT in public schools. "The Governor wants to issue a chilling effect on what educators are able to discuss while providing cover for those who are uncomfortable learning the truth about the history of race relations in the United States," said State Sen. Randolph Bracy.
- 🦎 **FDA increases abortion pill access, Now what?**
by Jenny Brown / *The Call* / Dec. 22 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1332
Decades of abortion rights organizing led to the FDA's recent decision to loosen regulations on abortion pills. Now we have to organize to protect these gains and fight for more.
- 🦎 **Florida Dept. of Ed removed LGBTQ resources from website; Nikki Fried fills info gap**
by Danielle J. Brown / *Florida Phoenix* / Dec. 21 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1328
Following the removal of anti-bullying resources from the Florida Department of Education website, including information regarding LGBTQ students, Florida Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried is providing that information instead.
- 🦎 **Gubernatorial candidate Charlie Crist wants to tackle Medicaid expansion in Florida to help seniors**
by Isaac Morgan / *Florida Phoenix* / Jan. 5 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1329
As part of his campaign for unseating Gov. Ron DeSantis, Crist's proposal for seniors includes additional dollars from Medicaid expansion to fully fund services such as Meals on Wheels for seniors and homoe care services.
- 🦎 **Insurrection, One Year On**
by Jim Wright / *Stonekettle Station* / Jan. 6 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1331
A retired military intelligence officer in the Panhandle casts a penetrating eye on the US political crisis (with prolific raw language)
- 🦎 **Nobel Peace Prize 2021**
by Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov / *The Nobel Prize* / Dec. 10 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1333
Transcript of the Nobel Lecture given by Nobel Peace Prize laureate 2021 Maria Ressa in Oslo on Dec. 10.
"Every day, I live with the real threat of spending the rest of my life in jail just beause I'm a journalist. When I go home, I have no idea what the future holds, but it's worth the risk."
- 🦎 **The top 25 most censored stories of 2021**
Project Censored / tinyurl.com/Iguana1323
Project Censored lists important under-covered stories from last year, including rarely-reported angles on climate, health, Yemen, voting, police, economics, the (violated) rights of women, labor, Palestinians, immigrants, and environmentalists. What you don't know can hurt you.
- 🦎 **White supremacist prison guards work with impunity in Florida**
by Jason Dearen / *AP* / Nov. 19 / tinyurl.com/Iguana1324
White supremacist gangs in the worst places: APNews reports on Kluxers and other racists working in Florida state prisons – with "corrections" officials turning a blind eye.🦎

United Campus Workers of Florida comes to UF

by United Campus Workers of Florida (UCW UF)

After decades of not having a voice, and nearly two years of working through a global pandemic, staff and adjuncts of the University of Florida have formed a union. We are proud to announce the creation of United Campus Workers of Florida (UCW UF) as a chapter of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), one of the largest unions in the United States. Now we will be speaking for ourselves. A top 5 university needs a top 5 union to represent the interests of the people who make such an exalted standing possible, the workers. We are seeking greater fairness and equity in all aspects of our jobs, from hiring and retention to benefits and pay.

At a time when inflation and housing costs are on the rise, UCW UF's first public campaign urges the university to address issues of pay. Some of us never left campus, and the rest of us have returned to campus to offices and in-person instruction, without mask or vaccine mandates to protect us. We never let UF down; we showed up. The 3 percent merit raise does not keep pace with inflation and was not offered to OPS employees at all. UF has stated that providing competitive market and merit-based compensation is a part of their strategy to maintain their status as a top 5 research university; all we are asking is that UF responds to the market and makes good on that pledge, and raises pay to meet the increasing demands of these difficult times. We deserve to be compensated fairly.

We also demand greater transparency across UF as a whole, and a commitment to do away with practices such as fast-tracking politically convenient candidates in the hiring process or wage disparity across units. We should be treated according to our job performance, not on who we know or how powerful we are.

UCW UF is growing daily and calls on the UF administration to voluntarily meet with our union, and looks forward to working with other unions on campus to make UF a top 5 university to work for. UF employees who are not eligible for a different union are eligible to join us. Joining a union is the best way to make UF a better place to work, which would benefit our whole community. If you're not eligible, you can still encourage your friends to join, follow and boost us on social media, and sign our petition for paid hurricane days for OPS employees.

Email: uniteduf@ucw-cwa.org

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The fight continues to save Maguire Village/ University Village South graduate housing

by Save UF Grad Housing

It perhaps was overshadowed by all of the other crises UF is facing, but at December's UF Board of Trustees meeting, several graduate representatives spoke out against the awful plan to destroy Maguire/UVS graduate-family housing. Despite this, UF officials are still ignoring the ultimate request—not to “replace” our wonderful apartments with others off campus, but to reinvest in what we have and maintain Maguire/UVS for years to come!

On the local governing front, to all of those concerned citizens out there who wrote, called, or showed up to recent Gainesville City and Alachua County Commission meetings and expressed

opposition to UF's terrible Campus Development Agreement proposal, we thank you. Unfortunately, despite all the comments against the harmful plan, which calls for complete destruction of an international community of vulnerable graduate students and the 27 acres of trees and historic brick buildings known as Maguire Village and UVS, the councils still voted (after some postponing and bad advice from staffers) to ultimately approve UF's plan. This was a huge disappointment, especially because UF officials continued to lie and provide only vague, empty promises to get approval, but our fight for economic justice and human rights is far from over.

This spring semester, we are looking to expand our push to get UF to change its plan by mounting external pressure and making this a national issue. To do so, we need volunteers who are artists, journalists, social media experts, or community organizers to help us create eye-catching work that will bring more attention to our plight. We also need experts in fundraising and petitioning. If you think you can help, please contact SaveUFGradHousing@gmail.com to join our efforts.

Not to mince words or overexaggerate, we truly feel that these homes, these places of significant history and love and peace, qualify as one of the greatest accomplishments that humankind has ever produced. Where else on Earth are so many people of varied religious, economic, and ethnic backgrounds able to live together peacefully in the name of advancing knowledge for our species (i.e., grad school)? Where else can these students, many who are half a world away from their families, have the peace of mind, security, and beautiful bosky setting to work and study? Even if there are other such places, why would we choose to destroy this one?

The only “reason” UF has been able to give so far is that the buildings need work and that UF is unwilling to pay. Well, UF has yet to produce any such evidence, and residents can tell you that they are fine enough as they are. Furthermore, there are 44 different apartment buildings, so it is impossible that they all simultaneously need to come down due to falsified maintenance issues. To do so would be a disaster economically for UF and the future residents who could have used that affordable, on-campus space, and we demand that UF invest as needed to keep them functional.

At the moment, UF is also continuing with the unjust policy of preventing new residents from moving in, despite the final closure date being slated for the end of Spring 2023, more than a year away. Today, more than 70 percent of the apartments are artificially empty, with no transparency as to why, and we believe keeping that cruel policy in place is a criminal offense. We believe nearly all of the leadership at UF's Department of Housing have got to go, for this and other repeated mistreatment of students.

As was said at the local governmental meetings, there is not, and never can be, a substitute for Maguire/UVS. They are the best apartments in Gainesville for grad students by far, and although they are also considered “affordable,” that does not mean they are slums. They have much left to give to future generations, and we need that message of preservation to get through. UF, its graduate students, and the local population cannot “afford” to take a 348-unit loss to its “affordable” housing inventory. Please Save Maguire Village and University Village South, and visit SaveUFGradHousing.com to learn more and to sign our petition. 🐾



“I have a foreboding of an America in my children's or grandchildren's time -- when the United States is a service and information economy; when nearly all the manufacturing industries have slipped away to other countries; when awesome technological powers are in the hands

of a very few, and no one representing the public interest can even grasp the issues; when the people have lost the ability to set their own agendas or knowledgeably question those in authority; when, clutching our crystals and nervously consulting our horoscopes, our critical faculties in decline, unable to distinguish between what feels good and what's true, we slide, almost without noticing, back into superstition and darkness...

The dumbing down of American is most evident in the slow decay of substantive content in the enormously influential media, the 30 second sound bites (now down to 10 seconds or less), lowest common denominator programming, credulous presentations on pseudoscience and superstition, but especially a kind of celebration of ignorance”

— Carl Sagan, *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark*

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Matheson History Museum Exhibition

We're tired of asking: Black Thursday and civil rights at the University of Florida

Researched and curated by University of Florida graduate Alana Gomez, "We're tired of asking: Black Thursday and civil rights at the University of Florida" follows one slice of African American history in Gainesville, but certainly not all of Gainesville's Black history.

The goal in this particular exhibition is to show the Civil Rights movement in Gainesville, Florida, from the 1960s until the early '70s and how that affected the University of Florida's racial atmosphere.

The online exhibition will debut on the museum's website on Wednesday, Jan. 19 (www.mathesonmuseum.org/current-exhibitions). Two weeks later the physical exhibition will open at the museum on Wednesday, Feb. 2.

It wasn't until the desegregation of the University of Florida in 1957 that Black people began gaining access to public spaces with White people. The issue of civil rights was pushed even further with the partial integration of Alachua County's public schools in 1964. Even with these seemingly large strides toward equality, however, social status and lifestyle remained largely unchanged for Black people in Gainesville.

In a great show of strength on April 15, 1971, Black students decided to take a stand in a protest at Tigert Hall on the UF campus. Their interaction with President Stephen O'Connell would change the course of the University of Florida forever.

For more information, visit www.MathesonMuseum.org. ☘

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Zero Waste Week 2022, Jan. 23-29

Join us for Zero Waste Week 2022, presented by by Zero Waste Gainesville, The Repurpose Project, and Life Unplastic, to celebrate the collaboration that makes Zero Waste successful.

There are many ways to participate. Sign up for our daily newsletter, peruse online content, learn about the partnerships that make Zero Waste a reality, and attend our in-person event.

When: Jan. 23-29

Where: zerowastegainesville.com for online content
Keep an eye out for an in-person event at Reuse Planet (The Repurpose Project's sister store).

Register here to receive a daily newsletter during Zero Waste Week: tinyurl.com/Iguana1334

Topics to be covered during the week:

City of Gainesville Zero Waste Ordinance, Reusables to-go, Rescuing Edible Food, Composting, Reuse and Repurpose

Zero Waste Partners:

The City of Gainesville, Alachua County, Beaten Path Compost, Sierra Club Suwannee - St. Johns Group, We Are Neutral, NAACP ECJC, Working Food

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I will aid and abet an abortion in Florida. Sue me.

We oppose and defy the Florida legislature's threat to pass FL HB 167, "The Florida Heartbeat Act," and FL HB 5. HB 167 is a Texas-style anti-abortion law that would expose anyone helping someone get an abortion to a lawsuit, and HB 5 is a Mississippi-style 15-week abortion ban. Their chilling effects would likely close clinics across Florida, as they already have in Texas and Mississippi.

We must let Florida lawmakers know that we won't be intimidated, and we won't stop fighting for abortion rights.

Sign the pledge to defy HB 167 and HB 5 — we will #AidAndAbetAbortion, no matter what.

I helped someone in Florida get an abortion or I will do so in the future. Sue me.

That means I did or will do any or all of these acts:

- gave my friend or a stranger a ride to a clinic
- gave them money to fund it
- said words of encouragement in person, on the phone, or in writing
- supported an organization doing any of the above
- donated to a Florida abortion fund
- gave someone the abortion pill that was prescribed for me
- shared websites that provide the abortion pill in the mail
- more actions of "aiding and abetting" someone to get an abortion that are too numerous to list

If Florida legislators and the governor have their way, this list may some day include helping someone get birth control. But not yet. **Let's fight back!**

Sign the Pledge



3 Ways to Sign:

scan the QR code above

visit:

womensliberation.org/sue-me

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What NWL is organizing for*:

- Easy access to the abortion pill:
- Get rid of the restriction imposed on the abortion pill by the FDA requiring unnecessary additional certifications for healthcare providers and pharmacies
- Reproductive freedom, full access, no coercion
- Abortion and birth control free through a system of national health care
- Childcare, free like the public schools, and paid family leave

*Several of these demands are drawn from Women Strike, January 20-21, 2017. womenstrike.org

State legislation to ban abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis expressed support for new state legislation that would ban abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

Several bills on the issue were filed Jan. 11 by Republican state representatives. In July, the governor signed onto an amicus (friend of the court) brief to support a Mississippi law that bans abortions after 15 weeks.

Florida Planned Parenthood Action called the governor's stance on abortion "dangerous for the people of Florida."

A challenge to Mississippi's law filed by the Jackson Women's Health Organization has reached the U.S. Supreme Court. (UPI - Jan. 12) 🐢



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Hopeful political signs from Central and South America

This article was originally published as an opinion piece by the Boston Globe on Jan. 1. See more at [bostonglobe.com](https://www.bostonglobe.com).

by Marcela García

Two recent presidential elections in Latin America resulted in important milestones: Xiomara Castro is poised to become the first female president of Honduras, while Gabriel Boric, 35, will be Chile's youngest president.

Beyond those historic occasions, there's another remarkable dimension to the two victories: They represent a huge

win for the Latin American left—both in the richest and in one of the poorest countries in the region. And while the politics of these distant countries may seem irrelevant to the United States, they mirror many concerns here, including the basic act of conceding an election.

"If Chile was the cradle of neoliberalism, it will also be his grave," Boric famously said at a campaign rally. A former student activist turned leftist congressman, Boric is more of a European type of Social Democrat than a follower of Hugo Chávez-style socialism. The president-elect has

vowed to fight Chile's growing and notorious income inequality. He wants to reform Chile's free-market economic model and favors expanding social protections for the poor, raising taxes on the wealthy, canceling student debt, and overhauling the nation's private pension system to replace it with one run by the state.

Boric's opponent was José Antonio Kast, a far-right extremist and a defender of the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship. Kast ran a polarizing and xenophobic campaign, singling out Haitian and Venezuelan migration as crime drivers. Naturally, Kast was often compared to Donald Trump. But in a break from the Trump model, Kast conceded defeat before the ballot count had ended.

After Kast tweeted a photo of himself congratulating Boric in a phone call, Kast was the object of widespread praise, even here in the United States. It was jarring to see because Kast was doing only the bare minimum. A candidate conceding an election is a sad reminder of how low the political standards have fallen thanks to Trump.

In 2019, a wave of intense social protests rocked Chile to demand more equal access to education and health care. The next year, Chileans overwhelmingly voted to rewrite the Pinochet-era Constitution, a move that Kast opposed.

To that end, the country elected a conventional constitution assembly with gender parity, the first of its kind.

It's clear Chileans are serious about realizing progressive democratic change, especially since the coronavirus pandemic worsened income inequality. Still, some feared the left and what it might bring to Chile, namely that leftist policies would end up killing Chile's economic prosperity and that Boric's calculated alliance with the Communist Party would backfire.

But many observers argued, convincingly, that Kast and his brand of extremism would have been far more destabilizing for Chile than a Boric presidency.

Castro's leftist win in Honduras is similarly significant. And it has more direct US foreign policy implications. In a country that has pushed hundreds of thousands of its citizens to migrate north because of rampant poverty, violence, and corruption, voters categorically rejected the incumbent political party that had ruled the small Central American country for 12 years. That party came into power after a

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Free screening and panel discussion of Emmy Award-winning documentary, *The Fellowship of the Springs*, about Florida's springs and waterways, on Feb. 8, 5:30pm, University of Florida Reitz Union Auditorium

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US-backed coup in 2009 ousted then-president Manuel Zelaya, a leftist who was trying to change the Constitution to abolish presidential term limits and who made the United States nervous because of his ties to Hugo Chávez.


Castro—and you can't make this up—is married to Zelaya.

Another head-scratcher: A few years after current president Juan Orlando Hernández was elected in 2013, he changed the Constitution anyway, ran for reelection in 2017, and won, although his reelection was marred by fraud allegations. Hernández is deeply unpopular because he has been an unmitigated disaster. Under his watch, government corruption has increased, poverty hasn't subsided, and public money has been swindled. He is under investigation by US federal prosecutors; his brother was convicted of drug trafficking.

In a recent article in *The New Yorker*, Jon Lee Anderson wondered why a president's involvement in drug trafficking wasn't a bigger scandal, particularly if it's the leader of a country that receives billions in US foreign aid and an American ally. "When I asked a US official with extensive experience in the region how Hernández got away with it, he replied bitterly, 'Because we let him. We looked the other way,'" Anderson wrote.

Hondurans voted overwhelmingly for the potential they saw in Castro. She supports relaxing the country's strict abortion laws and, crucially, bringing back an international anti-corruption commission that had been dissolved by Hernández.

The victories of Castro and Boric mark a new day for democratic socialism in Latin America—and US politicians should pay attention. Chilean voters sent a compelling and urgent mandate, one that's hard to disagree with: Something different must be done to treat crippling income inequality. Hondurans, exhausted and burdened by widespread poverty and institutionalized corruption, have also had it. Chileans and Hondurans want to live in "a more-just society for everyone," as Boric said the night he won. Don't we all? 🐾



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Local in-person events...

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Starred* entries have multiple events going on. Find them online to see details and what else they are doing.

Many other events, not listed here, are being held via Zoom. Keep in touch with your favorite organizations to find out what's going on.

We will get through this!

Thursday, Jan. 20–Sunday, Jan. 23

@ Hippodrome Cinema, 25 SE 2nd Place, various times
New Joaquin Phoenix movie *C'mon C'mon**

Thursday, Jan. 20

@ Bo Diddley Plaza, 6:30-8:30pm
Music GNV Concert Series Live and Local (see page 20)

Friday, Jan. 21

@ Fox Lounge, 109 S. Main St. (new place since Covid):
Live music*

Saturday, Jan. 22

@ Prairie Creek Preserve, 9am-1pm
Alachua Conservation Trust tree planting*

Saturday, Jan. 22–Sunday, Jan. 23

@ On air and internet, beginning at noon
24-hour WGOT marathon (see page 4)

Sunday, Jan. 23

@ Harn Museum, 3259 Hull Rd., 3pm
Book talk by Paul Ortiz, *Emancipation Betrayed**

Tuesday, Jan. 25

City of Gainesville election: GO VOTE (see page 1)

Friday, Jan. 28

@ Various downtown locations, 7pm
Downtown ArtWalk

Friday, Jan. 28

@ Loosey's Downtown
No More, You Vandal, others*

Saturday, Jan. 29

@ Hardback Cafe, 8pm
The DEN Experiment music series kickoff*

Friday, Feb. 5

@ How Bazar, SW 2nd Ave., Main to 2nd St.
Huge evening Downtown Pop Up*

Sunday, Feb. 6

@ UF Hilton, 5pm (auction begins), 6:30 (dinner)
Democratic Party Lawton Chiles Gala and Silent Auction (\$\$)
Registration deadline Jan. 23, 352-870-7013

Tuesday, Feb. 8

@ UF Reitz Union Auditorium, 5:30pm
The Fellowship of the Springs documentary film (see page 16)

Friday, Feb. 11

@ Bo Diddley Plaza: Music GNV Concert Series (see page 20)

Friday, Feb. 11

@ Civic Media Center, 6-10 pm
Queer Art Show, Support local makers!*

Saturday, Feb. 19

@ A. Quinn Jones Center, 1108 NW 7th Ave., 5:30-7:00pm
Expressions of Black Love*

Friday, Feb. 25, 26

@ Heartwood Soundstage, 619 South Main St.
Heartwood MusicFest* 🐾

From FIGHT TALLAHASSEE, p. 1

Earlier that semester, the university administration prevented three political science professors from testifying as expert witnesses in a lawsuit against the state by several voting rights organizations over a recent Florida law, which they claim discriminates against voters of color and violates the Voting Rights Act by limiting mail-in and drop box voting.

The administration's rationale was that "outside activities that may pose a conflict of interest to the executive branch of the State of Florida create a conflict for the University of Florida."

The professors went to the faculty union for recourse. The union initially wanted to resolve the matter internally and warned the administration of the negative attention the university would receive if they didn't reverse their action and if the matter went public.

The administration didn't heed the union's warning and news of the grievance and the UFF's demands went public. News of the university infringing on academic freedom, the first amendment rights of the faculty, and due process, wasn't well received by the public. Now, the university faces an investigation by its accreditor and a congressional investigation by the House Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Liberties.

The administration claimed that their only qualms were with the professors receiving payment for their testimony and that they would allow them to continue if they testified pro-bono.

However, news then came forth that five other professors, four from the law school

and one from the medical school, were also prevented from providing expert witness in other cases.

The medical professor was a pediatrician who was prevented from providing pro-bono testimony, never asking for compensation, on cases relating to mask mandates for children. The administration provided the same rationale about conflict of interests and when asked for clarification stated, "As UF is a state actor, litigation against the state is adverse to UF's interests."

The administration eventually reversed its decision but didn't accept the UFF's other demands for an apology, an independent audit of the decision and external political influences on the university, and a commitment to not interfere in the free speech of its professors and to continue serving the public good and its mission independent of political interests of the State.

A few days later, more than 50 students protested the administration's actions with the faculty union on the corner of W University and 13th Ave and signed a petition demanding the administration accept the UFF's demands.

At the Board of Trustees meeting, the Chair tried to pit the students against the faculty, stating that the actions of the professors engaging in outside activities "is disrespectful to the students who depend on their professors' full attention and commitment."

Chair Hosseini, one of Florida's largest real estate developers and who donated over \$100,000 to DeSantis's election campaign, tried to dispel notions that the

members of the Board, who are appointed by DeSantis and who collectively donated over \$600,000 to his campaign, are under the political influence of the Governor.

"As a board" he says, "we are fiduciaries – meaning that we put our students' interests ahead of our own and we hold a position of trust to always do what is best for the university and its mission."

However, it's not clear how, by damaging the integrity of our university and therefore the value of our degrees, the administration is acting in our best interests.

Chair Hosseini also stated that UF's job is to provide its students with a "top-five university education" and "[To] expose them to a wide range of ideas."

However, only several days prior, news came out the University prevented two professors in the College of Education from teaching courses on Critical Race Theory, courses which were specifically requested to be taught by the college's students.

An associate provost told the professors that they need to rename their courses or not offer them as to not jeopardize the college's relationship with the State. According to the associate provost, the President and Provost are not in the position to protect the college as their jobs are in venerable positions.

Hosseini's claim that the University is independent of the Governor's political interests is all the more ridiculous with news of his email request to the President of UF Health to speed track the hiring of Dr. Joseph Ladapo, known for his outspoken criticism of mask mandates and long quarantine periods, to the College of Medicine, immediately prior to him being appointed Surgeon General by Gov. DeSantis.

It's becoming all the more apparent that UF works for the Republican party and their corporate donors, not for the faculty, not for the broader community, and definitely not for the students.

Recent developments at UF, in combination with increasing attempts by the Florida legislature to control K-12 education, points to how much our academic and educational freedoms are at risk.

Continuing into this semester, the YDSA is working with the UFF and other organizations at UF to fight back against and counter Tallahassee's hand. It's time for students at UF to take notice of how their education is under attack and do something about it. 🐢

From ELECTION p. 1

Gail stepped away out of stress and concern that she was a cog in something that was ignoring or paying lip service to issues she felt deeply about. She felt she could do better outside the system.

So we are here at the choice we were at in November, with the lesser candidates winnowed out. Cynthia has that longer view of Gainesville, its history, its struggles, and power dynamics. She knows how productive governing should take place.

Her opponent is an unknown in so many ways. Contrary to his signs, we DON'T know Matt, and nothing has changed our opinion since November. In fact, I'll stick with what I said in the November/

December *Iguana*, and emphasize that in a runoff, often with lower turnout, your vote is even more important.

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.

Please vote Chestnut. 🐢

UF and the future of U.S. public higher education

University cited as disturbing example in *Science*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*

This article was initially sent to the Board of Trustees, then published as a guest column in the Gainesville Sun on Jan. 11. See more at Gainesville.com.

by Carmen Diana Deere and 12 others

Early in fall 2021, the University of Florida was celebrated and honored to be designated as one of the five leading public universities in the U.S. Unfortunately, soon afterward, UF managed to achieve the negative distinction of becoming the leading example in the U.S. of political interference and subservience to partisan political interests by a large and distinguished American public university.

Currently, it is the latter distinction for which UF is most widely known nationwide and beyond. UF has recently been cited, often repeatedly, as a disturbing example in *Science*, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *USA Today* and other national as well as state-level publications. In addition, UF's actions and policies have resulted in legal proceedings and a continuing inquiry into the university's accreditation by the regional accrediting authority.

The board of directors of the Retired Faculty of the University of Florida (RFUF) is dismayed by this largely self-inflicted damage that UF's administration and its trustees have brought on our valued university. Moreover, the example UF has set threatens not only to tarnish its reputation, but also to erode and potentially undermine the critical roles that public universities nationwide play in fostering broad-based higher education and world-leading research, as well as embodying positive American values.

Three main areas have emerged of apparent politically based interference in academic activities and the academic mission of UF, each of which alone would have raised serious concern. Together, they have and should generate alarm. These include:

- 1) Asserted restrictions by the university on the ability of UF faculty members to cite their expertise in public and legal fora, particularly when the implications of that expertise may contradict the preferred viewpoints of political authorities;
- 2) Attempts to restrict or control the intellectual content of courses as well as the conduct and dissemination of research when the implications of that educational instruction and/or research may contradict the preferred viewpoints of political authorities; and
- 3) Political interference in university hiring decisions and potentially also in decisions on retention and/or promotion. The most glaring example of this in 2021 was the politically promoted and inordinately rushed hiring of a senior medical faculty member whose scientifically unsupported views on the most important medical issue of this decade would ordinarily have called for further scrutiny had the appointment not been viewed as coinciding with the policies and views of political authorities.

Among the many negative outcomes of these policy decisions has been a widely cited climate of apprehension and self-censorship, notably by untenured faculty and researchers but also among tenured faculty and most glaringly and consequentially by high-level university administrators themselves.

Statements and actions by a range of UF administrators indi-

cate that fear of financial or employment retribution by state-level political authorities has begun to pervade decision making across multiple arenas. This spreading debilitation threatens to restrict the free expression of viewpoints and involvement in research, teaching and public commentary across much of the UF community.

It does not require much historical imagination to recognize that should such conditions be allowed to persist and become a model across this state and nationwide, that the internationally admired system of first-class public universities in the U.S. could devolve into the politically constricted educational institutions that characterize authoritarian states of both the left and right.

As retired faculty who represent the extraordinarily wide range of disciplines at UF, we feel that it is extremely important that these policies of political coercion and their underlying rationalizations be explicitly rejected and decisively reversed.

Moreover, in order for UF to attract a new president with high stature in 2022, it will be essential that the university's administration, faculty and board of trustees make it absolutely clear that political influence on and interference in research, teaching, employment and the dissemination of expertise will play no role at UF and are inconsistent with academic and broader political freedom in the United States.

Carmen Diana Deere (IFAS), is the 2021-2022 president of the Retired Faculty of the University of Florida. This piece was co-signed by 12 other members of the RFUF:

*President-elect Saeed R. Khan (Medicine)
Past president Abraham Goldman (CLAS)
Secretary George J. Hochmuth (IFAS)
Treasurer R. Hunt Davis Jr. (CLAS)
John Foltz (IFAS)
Alison Gerencser (Law)
Pushpa S. Kalra (Medicine)
James L. Kurtz (Engineering)
Richard Phillips (Libraries)
Robin Poynor (Arts)
Harry B. Shaw (CLAS)
Ann P. Smith (Nursing). ✨*



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In memoriam:

Ernest Lee, rest in power



Ernest Lee. Photo courtesy of www.ernestleeart.com

by Joe Courter

It was my pleasure to spend some time talking with artist Ernest Lee at the Thornebrook Art Festival this Fall, and it was sad to read of his passing on Nov. 27. Born in 1962 in North Carolina, he

had an early touch with painting that grew later in life to a life passion after hearing of the famous Highwaymen and meeting one of them, S. M. Wells, who encouraged him to devote himself more to his art after seeing a painting Ernest had done when he was 15.

In addition to his own works, bright colors capturing the houses and landscapes of rural Florida life, he was a man generous with his time teaching and mentoring others, both in high schools and at Santa Fe College. Scholarships are being set up in his name so that his legacy will continue with future artists.

He participated in art shows and has art work that is exhibited in many galleries throughout the United States. In 2019 he was a winner of the Awards of Merit at the Santa Fe Spring Art Festival. In 2012 and 2013 he received an "Honorable Mention" in the Long Wood Arts Festival. In 2013, Ernest received the Stetson Kennedy Foundation Fellow-

man, Mother Earth Award as well as the Award of Excellence at the Old Florida Celebration in Cedar Key. His wife Gloria Lee will be showing his works at the annual Pine Castle Pioneer Days in Orlando this February 26 and 27, an event always attended and supported.

He was a warm and loving man who embraced life fully with his love of art and history. He made a positive and lasting impression on those he met. A sudden heart attack may have taken him, but those memories and his art remain. Packs of his cards are available at Ward's grocery store

The will be a major show commemorating his life and work at the main gallery at Santa Fe College in May and June 2022.

To learn more about Ernest Lee, visit his website at <https://www.ernestleeart.com/>. Those interested in buying his art can contact gloriabass61@yahoo.com to arrange purchase. 🐾

LIVE & LOCAL
GNV CONCERT SERIES
Bo Diddley Plaza musicgnv.com/liveandlocal

Thursday 6:30-8:30pm
January 20
Ricky Kendall
Wild Pines

Friday 7:00-9:00pm
February 11
Showtime

Thursday 6:30-8:30pm
March 17
Dion Dia Showcase

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BO DIDDLEY PLAZA
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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:

Facebook: [freegrocerystore](https://www.facebook.com/freegrocerystore)

Web: <https://www.facebook.com/GNVFGS>

Email: fgsgnv@gmail.com

Leave message at: 352-388-1586

Spotlight on ... Florida Defenders of the Environment



The nonprofit organization Florida Defenders of the Environment (FDE) has worked to protect freshwater resources, conserve public lands, and provide quality environmental education since 1969.

It was cofounded by pioneering environmentalist Marjorie Harris Carr and is currently headed by her daughter Jennifer Carr.

The group publishes a periodic newsletter "The

Monitor," which can be seen at fladefenders.org/the-monitor-newsletter/.

Recent emphasis has been on restoration of a free flowing Ocklawaha River and the critical situation facing Florida manatees.

You can keep current with their activities on their Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/Floridadefenders/> 🐾

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. centralfdsa@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.

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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@rwbp.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.climateactproject.org/apply/chapters>. <https://www.facebook.com/climateactprojectgnv> / climateactprojectgnv@gmail.com, ClimateRealityProjectGainesvilleFlorida <https://climateactprojectgnv.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>. 🐾

Civic Media Center update

by JoJo Sacks

We've been busy at the Civic Media Center programming safe ways for our community to get together, including through outdoor meetings and events, which we are in the process of planning.

Gainesville organizers have been amazing throughout this pandemic, including Free Grocery Store and Free Store, two projects housed under our roof that feed and supply clothing and household items to the folks who need it.



Get involved with Free Grocery Store at Civic Media Center

The Free Grocery Store (FGS) is a food-based mutual aid project hosted by the Civic Media Center.

The FGS seeks to challenge the commodification of food that has led to unequal food access and address the food waste inherent in our current food systems. To do so, we distribute free, sustainable food to members of the community.

We're currently packing and delivering free food to a total of 314 individuals across 101 households every two weeks. We also maintain a garden space at the McRorie Community Garden, which provides fresh veggies for us to share with community members.

As we grow and increase the number of community members we are able to serve, we will need help with packing, driving, and gardening, along with other tasks involved in organizing our efforts. To help, you can find and message us on Instagram @gnvfgs, sign up/donate online using our linktree at linktr.ee/fgsgnv, or email us at fgsgnv@gmail.com to get in touch. 🐢

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

March 2022 issue: Deadline for content is Feb. 23

Submit events, content, and any questions to:

gainesvilleiguana@cox.net

Books to Prisoners sends lots of books into facilities all over Florida two times a month, while we have other volunteers working on our huge collections of books each week.

We are opening to the public on Wednesdays from 2 to 6pm and Saturdays from 1 to 5pm. (Wear a mask, please.) We've got volunteer meetings every 2nd and 4th Thursday at 5:30pm, book club Wednesday nights at 7pm, and lots of other ways to plug in.

We are going to be part of ArtWalk Friday, Jan. 28, and we are having another Queer Art Market outside in our courtyard on Friday, Feb. 11, from 6 to 10pm — come support local makers!

Lots of great events are in the works, so keep an eye out for updates on our Facebook (click on the first entry for updated pages) and Instagram pages throughout the month. As always, email coordinators@civiciamediacentor.org with questions. 🐢



Reuse Planet is now open!

The Repurpose Project has opened a second location featuring used furniture, appliances, cabinets, and more.

Reuse Planet • 1540 NE Waldo Road

Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10am-6pm,
Sunday noon-5pm, Monday closed
reuseplanet.org • 352-647-5112

Repurpose Project • 1920 NE 23rd Avenue

Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10am-6pm,
Sunday noon-5pm, Monday closed
repurposeproject.org • 352-363-8902



Established 1986

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)
- P.O. Box 14712, Gainesville, FL 32604

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