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# The Gainesville Iguana

September 2023  
vol. 37, issue 9

# Hope out of Ohio

*Ohio's defiant embrace of democracy gives Floridians a reason to organize*

by Diane Roberts

*This article was originally published by the Florida Phoenix on Aug. 14. See more at [floridaphoenix.com](http://floridaphoenix.com).*

Let's talk about Ohio. No, really.

Seven presidents were born in Ohio, all Republicans, two of whom were assassinated.

Ohio has produced a number of dubious politicians, including the shouty Rep.

Jim Jordan and the faux-billy Sen. J.D. Vance, who sometimes pretends he's from Kentucky.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis sometimes pretends he's from Ohio, but he isn't. Still, he claims it as his spiritual home: "I was geographically raised in Tampa Bay," he says in his memoir, "but culturally my upbringing reflected the working-class communities in western Pennsylvania and northeast Ohio — from weekly church at-

tendance to the expectation that one would earn his keep. This made me God-fearing, hard-working, and America-loving."

Obviously, they don't work, fear God, or love America in the decadent fleshpots of Pinellas County.

Nevertheless, Ohio has much to be proud of: brilliant writers such as Toni Morrison; renowned actors, including George Clooney

*See OHIO, p. 26*

## Why March 4 is the right trial date for Donald Trump

*Opinion by Dennis Aftergut and Jeffrey Abramson*

*This op-ed was originally published by CNN Newsource Aug. 29.*

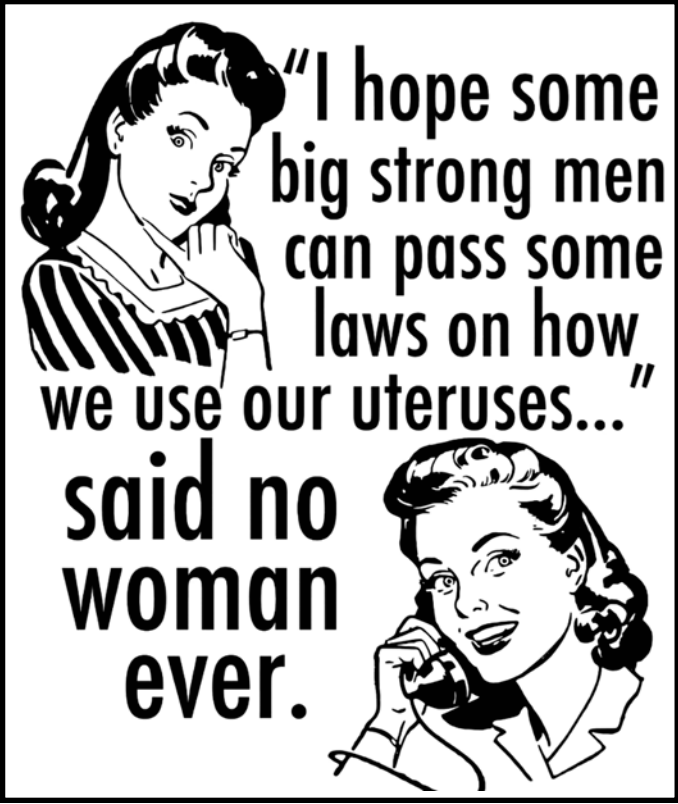
On Aug. 28, US District Judge Tanya Chutkan set a March 4 start date for former President Donald Trump's federal criminal trial on charges of conspiring to overturn the 2020 election. "The public has a right to a prompt and efficient resolution of this matter," Chutkan said.

She is correct. There are also many other reasons why the date she chose is the right one, and why Trump's proposal to set his trial for April 2026 was preposterous.

Most obviously, with Trump as the current leading contender for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, Americans deserve to know before they vote in the general election if a jury of his peers finds him innocent or guilty of having tried to end the lawful transition of power after the 2020 election.

As a *Politico* Magazine/Ipsos poll reported on Aug. 25, 3 in 5 Americans favor a trial of Trump on the charges in the case

*See TRUMP, p. 27*



"I hope some big strong men can pass some laws on how we use our uterus..."  
said no woman ever.

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*The Cotton Club Museum and Cultural Center is an organization dedicated to enriching the experiences of all who wish to grow in knowledge and appreciation of the history and culture of African-derived cultures, highlighting those in Gainesville and North Central Florida. ✨*

## Letter to the editor

Dear Editor:

Recent policies and controversies over the teaching of the College Board AP course in African American Studies, the new African American History Standards, Gender Identity, Woke, Multicultural Education, Diversity and Inclusion, and Critical Race Theory (CRT), demand immediate attention and action.

A central issue in the controversies is the assertion by blindly ambitious politicians and ill-informed academics that "slavery provided beneficial skills to the enslaved and how mob violence against Black people included acts of violence perpetuated against and by African Americans."

Such revisionist attempts by self-proclaimed historians in American History is not only silly but irresponsible. If what appears to be a trend is allowed to remain unchecked, it will create irreparable damage to our educational system.

We must avoid the miseducation of our youth and the American people; and indeed the global community. Thus, the Alachua County African American History Task Force strongly condemns the new Florida Department of Education policies and the apparent attempts to hijack our educational system for political gains.

We, the People must not allow this assault on our educational institutions. We urge all Floridians and all Americans of "good will" to stay woke to prevent the repetition of the mistakes in our past. We can do it again!

Respectfully submitted,

*Dr. Jacob U. Gordon, Chair*

*Alachua County African American History Task Force ✨*

*From the publisher ...*

# Hope? Yes hope...

The past two headlines of the *Iguana*: “Well that sucked” and “Horrors,” both reflected the Florida legislature ramming their agenda through. I realize wrong feelings might have been conveyed. Yes it’s about what they are doing, but it needs to imply what *we* can do. Not having hope is a block to living a meaningful life. Finding purpose and committing to it is a key, whatever path you choose.



*Joe Courter*

Although fair elections are under attack, we still have the vote, and it is up to us to organize and make our greater numbers count. In state after state, as the Right tries to criminalize women's healthcare, ballot measures to resist these efforts have been winning; not just Ohio, as the cover story says, but California, Michigan, Vermont, Kansas, Kentucky and Montana. Coming up in 2024 are Maryland and New York, as well as maybe seven others, including Florida (*see pg. 26*).

Remember, although DeSantis convincingly won here last time, it was Democrats staying home, not a big Republican turnout that gave him the big win. Given hope and purpose, we can win elections.

Another cause for hope? The lower courts and judges. Extreme measures on restricting abortion and LGBTQ+ rights are often being blocked in the courts. Lawyers are successfully arguing cases and judges are siding with them. And now as the cases against Donald Trump start reaching courtroom stages, there seems to be a very wise strategy playing out ... yes painfully slowly, but there seems to be coordinating as to when they are brought forward. Positive rulings on unfair redistricting cases are occurring as well.

Yes, the evidence of climate change continues to grow and manifest in unusual weather patterns, but it is becoming more accepted as real. Can we reverse it? Probably not, but denial may be displaced by the reality that we both need to adapt and be ready to deal with the negative consequences of our rather excessive energy consumptive lifestyle.

There was a very real court victory in Montana, where thanks to a state law regarding the protection of the environment, the court found that young people have a constitutional right to a healthful environment and that the state must consider potential climate damage when approving projects. (*See “In Praise of Montana’s Climate Kids by Bill McKibben at tinyurl.com/Iguana1675*)

This is where a lot of my hopes are based, the young people who are looking ahead to their very future, taking pages from the past, and reinvigorating the labor movement. Springing off another youth lead endeavor, the Occupy Movement, which created the concept of the 99%, we saw a huge bloom of youth activism when Bernie Sanders ran for President in 2016. He talked directly to their future, their needs and desires, and inspired so many. There were huge campus rallies, including here in Gainesville. They did not go away when the Democratic Party did not embrace Bernie's campaign. They found other ways to contribute – some I know became union organizers. I attended the Central Labor Council's Labor Day breakfast today, and there they were, central people in the Communication Workers and the Electrical Workers union and in the CLC itself. Unions were decimated under Reagan, and overall membership is down, yes. But polling show unions with a 3/4 positive rating. Under Biden the NLRB is enacting many improvements to the ability of unions to organize (*see pg. 14*).

It is not just through unions that young people are acting on public good. I see it at the Civic Media Center, with direct actions for food assistance and other solidarity being organized with poor and disadvantaged people. I see the shedding of societal prejudice and negative feelings against the LGBTQ+ community, and a deep embracing of our diversity. The repression advocated by leaders like DeSantis, the academic censorship and attacks on teachers and professors is being seen and resisted, likewise in Tennessee with the public's resistance to not acting against gun violence. We all need to call out the BS with them, organize, and move forward, in whatever ways we can. 🐸

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# Florida Rights Restoration Coalition fights for voting rights for formerly convicted felons

by Jack Kulas

In early August, a three-judge panel of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Mississippi's lifetime voting ban for felons who committed certain enumerated crimes violates the Eighth Amendment's prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment.

In the decision, the judges wrote, "Mississippi denies this precious right to a large class of its citizens, automatically, mechanically, and with no thought given to whether it is proportionate as punishment for an amorphous and partial list of crimes."

They added: "It is an especially cruel penalty as applied to those whom the justice system has already deemed to have completed all terms of their sentences. These individuals, despite having satisfied their debt to society, are precluded from ever fully participating in civic life. Indeed, they are excluded from the most essential feature and expression of citizenship in a democracy — voting." [See end of story for link to decision.]

The case had been brought in 2018 by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and others who represented six Mississippi convicted felons who had lost their voting rights.

Another more recent, related Mississippi lawsuit challenging the lifetime voting ban claimed the ban violated the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection clause. That lawsuit was finally decided in late July when SCOTUS did not take up an appeal of the Fifth Circuit's ruling.

That ruling had decided against the plaintiffs on the grounds

that the plaintiffs failed to demonstrate the relevant provisions in the state constitution were motivated by discriminatory intent and that any "racist taint" had been "cured" by amendments to the provision.

The five-year delay in the August-decided case was apparently the result of the Fifth Circuit awaiting a ruling on the other Equal Protection case. Mississippi's Attorney General Lynn Fitch said the state would seek a rehearing of the SPLC, et al. lawsuit before the full Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Florida's lifetime voting ban for anyone convicted of felonious murder or sex offence remains in place, as do such lifetime bans in the 13 other states that have them. As of this writing no Florida group, or group from any of those other states, has filed a comparable lawsuit to have that particular lifetime ban expunged.

In late July the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition (FRRRC, <https://floridarrc.com/>) filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court Southern District of Florida against State officials related to Amendment 4 passed in 2018.

The intended goal of that amendment was to restore "the voting rights of Floridians with felony convictions after they complete all terms of their sentence including parole or probation ... [excepting] those convicted of murder or sexual offenses."

You may recall that at its first opportunity the Florida Legislature in the 2019 session passed implementing legislation that put sig-

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nificant hurdles in the way of felons who wanted to register to vote by requiring them first to “pay all fines, fees, and restitution” related to their conviction.

The July FRRC lawsuit contends “the defendants have created and perpetuated a bureaucratic morass that prevents people with felony convictions from voting, or even determining whether they are eligible to vote.” The lawsuit’s principal relief would require the defendants to “establish a reliable state-wide database that allows individuals with prior felony convictions to determine if they have outstanding LFOs [legal financial obligations]; the amount of any outstanding LFOs; the jurisdiction to which they owe any outstanding LFOs; and where payment may be made to satisfy any outstanding LFOs.”

The lawsuit points out that “the State of Alabama also disenfranchises U.S. citizens convicted of a wide array of felony offenses until they have completed all

terms of their sentence, including outstanding fines, fees, restitution, probation, parole, and any other type of community control. But, unlike Florida, Alabama has established a centralized state data repository and unified process run by the Bureau of Parole and Pardons that advises any applicant within 44 days if the applicant is eligible to register to vote, and provides specific details explaining the basis for any denial ...

If Alabama can create a process to confirm the eligibility of its voters, Florida should be able to do so too.”

Read the Fifth Circuit’s Cruel and Unusual Punishment ruling at [tinyurl.com/Iguana1639](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1639)

Read the FRRC lawsuit at [tinyurl.com/Iguana1640](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1640) ✈



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09/22  
Film Florida Natural History Museum  
6:00-8:30PM  
*¿Que culpa tiene el tomate?* (Argentina, 2009)

09/23  
Family Film  
HeadQuarters Library / 2:00-5:00PM  
*Encanto* (2021)

09/24  
Film Smathers library / 3:30-5:30PM  
*Bacurau* (Brazil, 2019)

**Films & Events**

09/14  
Film Harn Museum / 6:00-8:00PM  
*A Brudiah's Mind* (Brazil, 2021)

09/15  
Film Florida Natural History Museum / 8:00-8:30PM  
*In the Heights* (USA, 2021)

Dance Night Bo Diddley Plaza / 6:00 PM  
Gainesville Hispanic Heritage Month

09/16  
Family Film HeadQuarters Library / 2:00-5:00PM  
*Coco* (2017)

Salsa Concert Bo Diddley Plaza / 8:00-10:00PM  
TROPIC

09/17  
Film Smathers Library / 3:30-5:30PM  
*Between Fire and Water - Entre fuego y agua* (Colombia, 2020)

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[gainesvillelatinofilmfestival.com](http://gainesvillelatinofilmfestival.com)

## Online blogs/resources

### Marcy Wheeler – emptywheel.net

Donald Trump's four indictments guarantee over a year's overload of courtroom reports and legal analysis stories. Investigative journalist and attorney Marcy Wheeler, at her blog emptywheel.net, provides in-depth coverage of many background details for those who want to get "into the weeds" (though not the summaries and overviews needed for intros to the multiple cases already underway).

### Michael Moore – michaelmoore.com

Michael Moore—film director, producer, screenwriter and author—frequently addresses globalization, capitalism, assault weapon ownership and large corporations from a progressive point of view. Known for his "fiery left-wing populism," he has been named as one of *Time* magazine's "world's most influential people."

### Robert Reich – robertreich.substack.com

Robert Reich, formerly Clinton's Secretary of Labor and currently a professor of Public Policy at Berkeley, is a political commentator. His "Inequality Media" produces videos, interviews to educate the public about the implications of the widening inequalities of income, wealth, and political power. His daily newsletter exposes where power lies—and how it's used and abused. 🐸

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*Preparing for the  
2024 election cycle ...*

## Election worker orientations scheduled

*by Supervisor of Elections Office*

With the 2024 Presidential Election cycle beginning in less than a year, the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections is recruiting election workers to serve their community at county polling places and early voting locations.

The office is seeking new election workers and thus will host an election worker orientation session in September, October and November. Space is limited.

Orientation sessions are open to anyone interested in serving as an election worker, will be held on the first floor of the Josiah T. Walls Building in Gainesville at 515 N. Main St. Times are listed below.

Attendees will learn what being an election worker involves, including the responsibilities for each position (clerk, assistant clerk, deputy, etc.). They will also be provided an overview of elections equipment.

All orientation sessions will cover the same information, so it is only necessary to attend one. Prospective election workers will not be paid for attending orientation, but they are paid for attending trainings and working on Election Day.

People interested in attending should RSVP by completing the form at [tinyurl.com/Iguana1638](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1638) or by emailing Yvette Carreras at [ycarreras@alachuacounty.us](mailto:ycarreras@alachuacounty.us).

### Worker orientations:

Thursday, Sept. 21, 10 a.m.-noon

Tuesday, Oct. 3, 2-4 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 1, 10 a.m.-noon 🐸

## Letters from an American



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

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*Without funding for next year, the award-winning program will end in November*

# GRACE's street outreach saves lives

*by Jon DeCarmine*

*Executive Director, GRACE Marketplace*

There is perhaps no program that has a bigger impact on the quality of life—in housed and unhoused people alike—in Gainesville than GRACE's street outreach program.

This five-person team meets people where they are, literally, to provide services, housing, and other support to people who can't, or won't, seek shelter.

The program launched in 2021, intent on capturing the spirit of the HOME Van, a long-standing Gainesville institution.

The HOME Van was a legendary mobile soup kitchen and free store that visited homeless camps with volunteers committed to working with people as equals.

GRACE's street outreach team picks up where the HOME Van left off, with staff and volunteers helping to connect people with housing and making sure they have what they need to survive while living outdoors.

GRACE's street outreach distributes condoms to sex workers, safe use equipment to substance users, food and medications to the elderly, and bus passes to help people who are stranded here get back to their own communities.

We give out cold drinks on hot days, and warm food on cold ones. We are a community harm reduction program that has had unprecedented success.

GRACE's street outreach team was the first in town to focus on housing—the only solution to homelessness. Since June 2021, the five-person team has moved 248 people off the streets and into housing.

Last year, we added a psychiatrist to the team once a week to provide mental health treatment, support, and medications. From the very beginning, we positioned the team as an alternative to law enforcement responses, and have handled more than 60 calls that the Gainesville Police Department would have otherwise responded to.

This has moved our community closer to a world where we are responding to human suffering with compassionate, supportive responses, rather than the threat of arrest if someone isn't willing or able to move along.

This incredible team is at risk of losing its funding.

At the Aug. 28 joint City/County Commission meeting, City commissioners acknowledged that they cannot afford to fund the program due to massive budget cuts related to the Tallahassee takeover of Gainesville Regional Utilities.

County Commissioners, on the other hand, acknowledged that they support and value the program, but would be unwilling to provide funding unless their staff takes control of the program and claims it as a County program.

Without \$350,000 of funding for the next year, the program will end in November.

In 2005, and again in 2009, Gainesville was named one of the 10 meanest cities in the country based on its treatment of people without housing.

Since that time, we've built GRACE, an award-winning collaborative response that has reduced local homelessness, developed new national best practices, and reenergized the community's response to homelessness, leading to massive reductions in total and unsheltered homelessness.

We have had two major, visible encampments in the past five years—Dignity Village, and the Fire Station camp on South Main Street. This outreach team, in both instances, developed a solution that not only solved the problems, but did so by moving more than 170 campers into permanent housing instead of just bulldozing the encampments and arresting the occupants.

GRACE has extensive experience and demonstrated success tackling the most complex homeless services problems in our community, and a track record of delivering services in a respectful, effective, and efficient way.

County government is too bureaucratic to provide the flexible, on-the-ground solutions street outreach demands. If the street outreach program were struggling, and not delivering in terms of housing placements or other outcomes, a takeover by the government might be warranted.

Initiating a government takeover of a thriving local program is something we'd expect to see out of Tallahassee, but never from our local leaders. 🐾

## GRACE's successes

In its first two years, the GRACE outreach team has accomplished:

- 248 housing placements
- 1,445 case management visits
- 4,364 instances of “contact”—the initial work of engaging with people on the streets, building rapport, and seeing how we can help
- Helped 233 people secure the documents they need to sign a lease (ID, birth certificate) or obtain income (social security card)
- 252 psychiatric visits (in the one year since we've added a psychiatrist to the team)
- Responded to 65 referrals from law enforcement, ensuring we solve social service problems with social services, and not law enforcement
- Six referrals from business owners and other community members
- 59 referrals from local government, including staff on the Downtown Plaza
- 60 referrals from social service agencies
- Nearly 100 referrals from the local Continuum of Care. 🐾



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# Gainesville's battle over heritage oaks

by Angela Wilson with Arbor Conscious Tree Service

Gainesville is a Tree City. With 60 percent canopy cover, our city has one of the most cohesive canopies in Florida, but even a Tree City must provide adequate sidewalk spaces for its citizens. Recently, four heritage oak trees—two Live Oaks and two Shumard Oaks—have sparked a conversation around town about the public sidewalk space we all share.

Early in the summer of 2023, after a trip and fall lawsuit was filed, an investigation revealed the sidewalks along SE 1st Ave. and SE 1st St. were not up to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility code. The ADA code states all sidewalks must be at least 36 inches wide to provide an accessible route. The ADA code supersedes the Gainesville City Code of Ordinance that protects heritage trees within the city limits with permitting and resident notification. Certainly, these sidewalks were built originally up to code, so what had happened to prompt this lawsuit?

During the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, many restaurants were closed and some even shut down due to the strict Centers for Disease Control guidelines. To alleviate the strain, the City of Gainesville encouraged more outdoor seating. The businesses along SE 1st Ave and SE 1st St took this opportunity to expand into the surrounding sidewalks and created decorative border walls.

The trees were not notified and continued to grow with roots expanding out of their planters. The roots and the walls put a squeeze on the sidewalk space and reduced the width, creating a trip hazard.

In light of the trip and fall lawsuit, the City of Gainesville sprang into action and declared the Public Works Department will remove the trees and their imposing roots immediately. This swift action did not please the citizens of Gainesville.

To the people of Gainesville, these trees were a welcome relief from the obtrusive heat and the trees' Heritage Tree status gave them more protection. A Heritage Tree is a native species with a diameter at breast height of 20 inches or more. A call to action was sent out and many citizens responded.

On March 23, Gainesville held a City Commission meeting and opened the floor to public comment on the issue. Many people stood up and spoke for the trees. The final decision was to prune the roots of two trees, and remove and chop up the other two. This ruling was better than removing all four oaks, but the tree-people of Gainesville were still not done.

On March 31, a candlelight vigil was held for the two trees destined for the wood chipper. An anonymous individual pinned a poem to the trees writing "... Maybe for the first time maybe for the last. Thank you for the shade on Florida's sunny days..."

As a visual protest, a local legend and former city arborist chained herself to the trees as hundreds of concerned Gainesvillians protested the destruction of these beautiful trees. For now, the City of Gainesville has decided not to remove the trees. There has been a root prune and an asphalt edge has been added to widen the sidewalk. This is only a temporary solution as the trees will continue to grow, but I hope that we can grow as a community along with these magnificent trees. 🌳



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# Editors' picks: News that didn't fit

## Florida city fights its own citizens over clean water

*Titusville repeatedly thwarts voters' approval of anti-pollution referendum*

by Craig Pittman | *Florida Phoenix* | June 15 | [tinyurl.com/Iguana1644](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1644)

Last fall, Titusville voters approved, by an 83 percent margin, making a right to clean water a part of their city's charter. However, the city council refused to certify the election results, even after a judge ruled for the citizens. They are still fighting the measure.

## Gainesville Eight anti-war activists honored 50 years after historic local trial

by Ron Cunningham | Aug. 31 | *Gainesville Sun* | [tinyurl.com/Iguana1652](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1652)

A half-century ago, eight young men erupted in celebration after learning that their jury declined to send them to prison after being accused of plotting to disrupt the 1972 Republican National Convention in Miami Beach. They took a celebration photo on the steps of Gainesville's federal courthouse. Recently, the five surviving defendants of the "Gainesville Eight" returned for a group photo at the same location.

## How Colonialism contributed to the Maui wildfires

*Unsurprisingly, the disaster may be worse because of actions by US colonists*

by Henry Carnell | *Mother Jones* | Aug. 11 | [tinyurl.com/Iguana1649](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1649)

The wildfires on Hawaii's Maui Island are the second deadliest in United States history. Reports suggest climate change is partly to blame; the other culprit is the widespread, nonnative grasses that have taken over parts of the island. These grasses were introduced by 19th century settlers who forcibly shifted the land away from indigenous resource management practices and toward large-scale agriculture, such as cattle ranching and plantations like the Dole Pineapple Company. When plantations were abandoned, non-native grasses spread, unmanaged, creating fuel for wildfires.

## I moved to Florida to teach despite right-wing censorship. Here's why.

*Levenson is confident the faculty union can fight back against DeSantis's war on education*

by Zachary Levenson | *Truthout* | Aug. 19 | [tinyurl.com/Iguana1645](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1645)

Levenson relocated in order to teach at a Florida public university, his third university where free speech, tenure and public-sector unions are under threat. He wanted to fight these policies "on the frontlines," rather than to "hide out" in less terrifying arenas. He explains his rationale.

## The case for negotiating with Russia

*A Russia analyst is asking Ukraine and its allies to consider how much worse the war could get*

by Keith Gessen | *The New Yorker* | Aug. 29 | [tinyurl.com/Iguana1648](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1648)

Every day, on the front lines of the biggest war in Europe since 1945, young men and women lose their lives. Many more will before this is over. Samuel Charap, a Russia analyst at the RAND Corporation, a think tank that has been doing research for the U.S. military, worries that the Administration is being too cautious about starting work on a diplomatic solution. The risks of not trying are higher than the risks of trying, he says.

## The other 9/11

*Why many in the third world and elsewhere are skeptical that the US's motivation is to promote a 'just and peaceful world order'*

by Paul Cantor | Aug. 18 | *CounterPunch* | [tinyurl.com/Iguana1651](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1651)

On Sept. 11, 1973, President Salvador Allende of Chile was overthrown in the "bloodiest coup d'état in Latin American history." The author's friend, Charlie Horman, a journalist, was arrested and shot because of the information he gathered about the US's direct involvement in the coup.

## The Tampa Five: An assault on free speech

by Stephen F. Eisenman | *CounterPunch* | Aug. 25 | [tinyurl.com/Iguana1646](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1646)

On March 6, a small group of protestors, mostly women from the University of South Florida chapter of Students for a Democratic Society, marched to the university president's office demanding to meet with her about higher black enrollment and the proposed banning of diversity initiatives. Although they were only "armed" with a banner stating "we want increased Black enrollment," a megaphone and water bottles, cops grabbed them, pinned a couple of them to the floor, and attempted to chokehold another.

## 'Toxic': DeSantis push to transform university drives out students, faculty

MSNBC | Aug. 30 | [tinyurl.com/Iguana1650](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1650) (video)

Less than a year after Ron DeSantis appointed a new board of trustees to remake New College of Florida in the image of DeSantis' 'war on woke' political stunt, nearly 40 faculty members have left the small school, along with many students, whom the board is trying to replace with lower standards and athletic scholarships.

## US Postal Service to unveil stamp honoring Ruth Bader Ginsburg

by Miranda Nazzaro | *The Hill* | Aug. 24 | [tinyurl.com/Iguana1647](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1647)

In October, the U.S. Postal Service is unveiling its new "forever" stamp honoring late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg who served on the Supreme Court for 27 years. She was referred to as "a respected jurist ... a passionate proponent of equal justice and an icon of American culture." 🦋



# Climate Summit to build Climate Action agenda, Sept. 30

by Alachua County Branch NAACP,  
Environmental and Climate Justice  
Committee

The ongoing extreme weather events we are witnessing should serve as a loud wake-up call to Planet Earth. We have been hitting the snooze button too many times; it is time to roll out of bed, put our feet on the ground, and get to work addressing the climate emergency unfolding outside our windows.

We can no longer ignore the clear evidence that continuing business as usual will create unmanageable problems for all present and future generations. We must act now, and act effectively, to avoid the consequences of having powered our civilization by burning fossil fuels for more than two hundred years.

The Alachua County Branch NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Committee, the United Church of Gainesville, and the Wagmore Foundation, in collaboration with a broad diversity of environmental and community groups, believes it is time we gather as a community to review our progress and plan our next steps. We also believe we need to expand the conversation to be more inclusive. We

invite all members of the community to be a part of the solution by joining us on Sept. 30, as we convene a Climate Summit to build a Climate Action agenda for Alachua County.

Be sure your voice, your concerns, and your interests are included in the process. We need you to become actively engaged in the planning and implementation of our community's response to this global crisis.

People attending the Summit will hear a summary of the "Critical Infrastructure and Land Use Climate Vulnerability Analysis" commissioned by our Alachua County Board of County Commissioners at the request of the County Environmental Protection Department.

Our keynote speaker will be Jacqueline Patterson, founder and executive director of The Chisholm Legacy Project, a resource hub for black frontline climate justice leadership.

Participants will do more than listening, however. We will draw on local talent to invent a more livable community. We will engage in a dialogue led by local leaders who have a solid understanding of the obstacles we will encounter. We will focus

on food production, energy generation, public health, and water security issues while exploring how to meet Justice40 objectives to deliver at least "40 percent of the overall benefits" to disadvantaged communities. Together, we will chart a course to a more sustainable community supporting all its members.

As space is limited, we ask that people interested in being a part of this dialogue register by going to [bit.ly/3O9OGRc](https://bit.ly/3O9OGRc), by calling 352-214-1778, or by emailing [naacpecjgenv@gmail.com](mailto:naacpecjgenv@gmail.com). Deadline to register is Sept. 25. Full details on the time and location of the event will be available upon registration.

We can't just hope for the best, thinking some future, as-yet-undeveloped technology will save us. We can't choose to just hunker down and pretend it's every person for themselves (and the devil take the hindmost). We can't throw our hands up in the air and say we are powerless to influence future outcomes. We certainly can't resign ourselves to the realization that our current political environment will never produce "leaders" capable of meeting the challenges of climate disruption.

What we can do is apply the knowledge

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climate scientists have developed through rigorous research and, aided by the creativity of our inventors and engineers, take measures to accelerate our transition to a clean energy future. Many groups and government departments have been working on this issue. Much good work has been done. Nevertheless, to avoid the disaster of an increasingly warming world, we need to act with more urgency.

The climate crisis is surely a global crisis, but, as has been said for generations, we need to “think globally, act locally.” We must begin to implement a local response to this global crisis in every community if we are to overcome the challenges ahead.

We share one planet and will experience a shared fate. Every one of us needs to join the fight to stop this unfolding catastrophe in its tracks. Every one of us needs to decide what our role will be in creating a safer, more sustainable future. But we also need a coordinated plan of action. If we don’t all pull together, we won’t reach our desired future.

For far too long, climate misinformation and denial have dominated the public discourse and prolonged our slumber. Stop hitting the snooze button and join us in this community effort to create a better world starting right here, at home, in Alachua County. Please don’t be absent as we plan our future. We need your input and your energy to make it happen. 🐸

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# Future of Gainesville's open container ordinance

by Danny Hughes, Loosey's Downtown

I remember the first time I said it out loud at a special planning meeting with the city.

It was late April 2020, when COVID-19 was in full swing. Businesses, especially in the restaurant industry, were STRUGGLING. And my restaurant, Loosey's, was certainly no exception. The day after Florida officially hit the panic button regarding COVID-19 I laid off all but four of my staff of 22.

This was bad. We hoped that "two weeks to stop the curve" was true, but after a few weeks it became obvious that there was not relief in the form of reopening inside coming anytime soon and we had to make a change. Adapt or die.

"We should repeal Open Container and let the restaurants operate outside." The rest of the restaurant folks in the room agreed, the two people from UF agreed and most of the staff from the city agreed. I saw a lot of restaurants on social media moving into their adjacent street spaces and people safely congregating and dining outside.

I knew that dissent was likely, there was no question about that. There's never a shortage of people that for reasons of their own, will reject the idea that alcohol can be consumed outside the confines of a bar or restaurant walls, but on the contrary, the geographical location of one's drink should not affect its potency, right? With the rise in breweries and 'brewery culture' over the last few years, we have seen proof of concept—where

consuming craft beer is something we can do as a family activity. They have kid spaces and pet spaces, food trucks and events, festivals, outdoor music and more—so why not us?

Right around this time a nearby bar started selling daiquiris to go. It was \*technically\* against the law, but we all were doing what we could to get through the lockdowns, and so they went for it.

A few weeks later the government's Alcoholic Beverage and Tobacco regulators shut down the neighbor's daiquiri operation only to be told the very next day that to-go drinks would be legal during the COVID pandemic.

And just like that, we were all back in business.

Everyone and I mean EVERYONE started selling "just add ice" cocktails to-go, package liquor backstock of hard-to-find brands like Blanton's were going for oodles of money above retail and six-packs of beer were moving off our shelves nearly as fast as some Quick Stops. Did we just become a liquor store that serves burgers? The ever resilient, hard-nosed, sharp-knuckled restaurant lifers were figuring out a new way to keep ourselves going. Again.

To-Go Service became the new model while we were working to move forward on repealing the Open Container Ordinance. There was a surge in business, but it wouldn't be sustainable in the long term. Our laid-off staff was running out of unemployment, our PPP money was dwindling, and we were getting tired.



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I would spend nights at work alone or with one other person prepping large format meal service for first responders, the jail, and even a bunch of truck drivers a time or two. The co-owners at Loosey's would work open-to-close-doubles for tips to shave down labor numbers. We were open for two services a day, but it just wasn't enough. Repealing the Open Container Ordinance and filling outdoor spaces had to be next.

It took a few more months to get there, but in September 2020, with the help of UF, city planners, GPD, and the city commission, I stood in the middle of University Avenue and Main Street, in full view of two GPD officers and upended a 3oz shot of tequila at 12:01am. I was legitimately proud of the work that we had done and the folks that had a hand in making this happen.

We were able to talk down the naysayers and make the best of our new reality. A long existing Blue Law, lingering from another time, was finally a thing of the past.

It's important to remember that it wasn't that long ago, 2012 in fact, that we couldn't sell package drinks at all, and bars couldn't serve until 1pm on Sundays. Blue Laws are, without question, religion-based legislation that is meant to limit or ban certain activities on any day including religious (Christian) holidays and Sundays. With your tongue firmly implanted in your cheek, you may be able to call a Blue Law "imperialistic," but that might be a stretch, so let's call it, for this purpose, legislated morality.

Open container ordinances are Blue Laws. You can turn it any which way you like, but it is morality legislation and that is not how this is supposed to work.

There is no shortage of municipalities of all sizes that allow consumption of alcoholic beverages in public spaces with little incident, but somehow public consumption of alcohol frequently becomes a scapegoat. I have heard countless times, "But we don't want to become New Orleans!" First of all, if only. But seriously, we are realistically decades away from even coming close to a Frenchman Street-like atmosphere, much less the world-famous Bourbon Street.

Over the past three years since Open Container was repealed, we have grown into this outside space, and as a culture and a city we have become very accustomed to that freedom. Last year's Art

Festival is a fantastic example of the embrace our community has for what we've accomplished. The How Bazaar has been hosting bi-monthly night markets that can only be described as a micro-incubator for small businesses, local makers, and programmers.

The Bull has all but converted their entire operation into a mid-sized outdoor concert venue that is almost always free and the new restaurants on 1st Avenue, like the forthcoming Capone's, are excited to participate in the programming and embrace the outdoor space in their adjacent street. And did you see Loosey's during Fest last year?

Now we face a new challenge. You have probably seen reports of a few unfortunate incidents of late-night gun violence downtown. In response, GPD is putting pressure on the city commission to revert to the pre-COVID Open Container Ordinance as the solution to curb that violence. There is no guarantee that will work, but I can guarantee you that it will cost jobs and negatively affect some of the businesses along 1st Avenue and possibly beyond.

There must be a more equitable answer that gives GPD the tools they need to control the crowds and gives the citizens of our community the latitude that they have been provided for the last few years. Rolling back these policies now will hurt the businesses, the community, and the vision of future Gainesville and Downtown.

Please take the time to email your commissioners and/or be present at the meeting on September 14. We need community voices to speak up and help keep us on the street. Ask your commissioners to rewrite the open container ordinance in conjunction with local businesses to maximize its usefulness in each section of Gainesville and mitigate potential violence at pop-up parties.

With the help of our community and its local businesses we can, as one unit, bring on an entirely new and highly prescriptive ordinance that will embrace what we have built and limit the negative side effects. Ask the commissioners to represent their districts and vote accordingly.

I'm confident that there is a solution for everyone. 🍻



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)  
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# Thanks to NLRB's Cemex decision 'union-busting just got a lot harder'

by Jessica Corbett

This article was originally published by *Common Dreams* on Aug. 25. Read more at [commondreams.org](http://commondreams.org).

The National Labor Relations Board on Friday announced a new framework for determining when companies must bargain with unions without an election—a policy that supporters said will make union-busting much more difficult.

Following the NLRB's decision in *Cemex Construction Materials Pacific*, when workers ask an employer to voluntarily recognize a union as their bargaining representative, the company can voluntarily do so and begin good-faith negotiations.

Alternatively, the company may file a petition seeking an election, and as long as it does not commit unfair labor practices, one will be held. However, if a company does engage in such violations—or refuses to voluntarily recognize a union and fails to file a petition—the NLRB will now order the employer to recognize and bargain with the union without an election.

In other words, “union-busting just got a lot harder,” More Perfect Union said on social media. “This brings the board’s position closer to the old *Joy Silk* doctrine, which held that if a majority of workers signed union cards, there didn’t need to be an election at all and bosses just had to recognize the union and bargain in good faith.”

The *Joy Silk* doctrine came from a 1949 NLRB decision and was replaced by the *Gissel* doctrine in a 1969 U.S. Supreme Court case.

As VICE reported Friday:

NLRB General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo issued a memo earlier this year demanding that the board revive *Joy Silk*, something that labor activists have been fighting for since it was overturned. The *Cemex* decision issued on Friday is a partial step in that direction.

“What this new decision does is, it’s a compromise,” said Eric Blanc, an assistant professor of labor studies at Rutgers University. “It’s not a return to ‘card check,’” the unionization process in the 1930s and ‘40s that said if a majority of workers signed cards stating they wanted a union, the company was obligated to recognize and bargain with them—which *Joy Silk* had upheld.

“If there’s intense illegal union-busting, as is very often the case, the NLRB can force the employers to immediately recognize the union rather than have to go through another union election,” Blanc said. “But it’s far short of what many union organizers were hoping for. By not making ‘card check’ the norm, [it] still opens up the process to all sorts of legal appeals and delays, which is ultimately one of the main tactics of employers—to delay the union first and then hold things up in endless appeals. This unfortunately doesn’t avoid that dynamic, but it does get the NLRB more powers to require employers to recognize unions, and that should be at least a partial deterrent on employers’ willingness to break the law.”

Brishen Rogers, a professor at Georgetown University Law Center, said on the social media platform X that “*Cemex* may be the most important NLRB decision in a generation.”

It is “hard to say if it will survive review,” Rogers added. “But labor and the state can use it to change power alignments right now through organizing—which in turn would \*help\* it survive review.”

In the case of *Cemex*—a U.S. subsidiary of a multinational that provides ready-mix concrete, cement, and aggregates to the construction industry—the NLRB “found that the employer engaged in more than 20 instances of objectionable or unlawful misconduct during the critical period between the filing of the election petition and the election,” the agency said in a statement. “Accordingly, the board found that the employer was subject to a bargaining order under both the Supreme Court’s decision in *NLRB v. Gissel Packing Co.* and under the newly announced standard, applied retroactively in this case.”

NLRB Chair Lauren McFerran connected the *Cemex* decision and the board’s Thursday rollback of policies established under the Trump administration that dragged out union elections—a move also welcomed by workers and labor rights advocates.

“Today’s decision, along with the board’s recently issued final rule on representation, will strengthen the board’s ability to provide workers across the country with a timely and fair process for seeking union representation,” McFerran said. “The *Cemex* decision reaffirms that elections are not the only appropriate path for seeking union representation, while also ensuring that, when elections take place, they occur in a fair election environment. Under *Cemex*, an employer is free to use the board’s election procedure, but is never free to abuse it—it’s as simple as that.”

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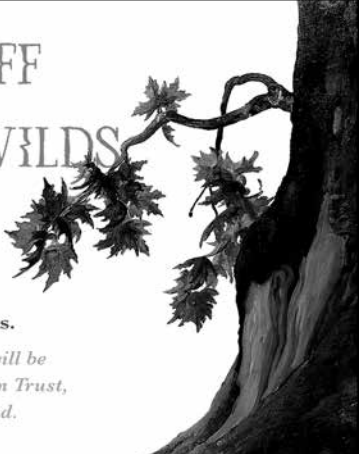
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# Gary Gordon to teach at SFC this fall

## 1763-1815: American Revolution / Screenwriting Feature-Length

As part of Santa Fe College's fall community education classes, Gary Gordon—author, musician, and former Gainesville City Commissioner—will teach “1763-1815: American Revolution” and “Screenwriting Feature-Length.”

### 1763-1815: American Revolution

Revolution, Declaration, Constitution, Union ...

Many people think of the American Revolution as the Boston Tea Party, the battles at Lexington and Concord, the Declaration of Independence, Valley Forge, and the British surrender at Yorktown. They think of Washington and Jefferson and maybe John Adams and Benedict Arnold. But there's more to it than that.

This course, starting years before the Boston Tea Party and covering material after adopting the Constitution and Washington's presidency, focuses on what may be familiar, but emphasizes information usually left aside. It's less about battles and more about people and decisions. We'll start with who settled where in the Eastern seaboard and why that's important and touch on the “French and Indian War” and other events leading up to the Declaration. You'll learn about the arguments in

the formation of the colonial, then state and national governments, including fierce post-war disagreements over the reasons for the war, the nature of self-government, and who has what power.

Lectures will include some discussion of The Federalist Papers — a strong or weak central government; the Whiskey Rebellion, the Alien and Sedition Acts, the lead-up to the War of 1812, and its immediate aftermath, after which the United States began to be recognized as a nation among nations. And regardless of the ongoing national discussion of the American Experiment, this isn't a course on current events—unless the class decides it wants to include that during the last class — but only if points are made with civility and are related to the class material.

### HIS0039.1F1

**No. of Weeks:** 5    **Days:** Tuesdays

**Starts:** Sept. 12    **Time:** 6-8pm

**Course Fee:** \$64, no lab fee

**Location:** The Village @ Gainesville Flex Room, 8000 NW 27th Blvd, Gainesville

Bring note-taking materials if you wish.

### Screenwriting Feature-Length

In this class you'll learn the basics of writing a feature-length screenplay. You'll learn to think about your protagonist and antagonist, screenplay format; you'll learn screenplay structure and how to avoid some of the classic mistakes made by beginning screenplay writers. You may achieve writing your first 10-15 pages or the first act. Screenwriting concepts will be illustrated with portions of movies. You'll read scripts. Writing and participation will be encouraged. Discussions and evaluation of submitted material is part of the class.

### ENG0053.1F6

**No. of Weeks:** 5    **Days:** Mondays

**Starts:** Sept. 11    **Time:** 6:30-8:45pm

**Course Fee:** \$69, no lab fee

**Location:** SF-NW Campus B-005, 3000 NW 83rd St, Gainesville

Bring a laptop or tablet, a paragraph to a page about your favorite movie: what it is and why, and any screenplay writing you've done or have started.

To register, go to [SFCollege.edu](http://SFCollege.edu) and look for Community Education, then the class you want, or call 352-395-5193. Registration is open. 🐾

## Healthy Adults Needed for Study

The University of Florida Neurocognitive Laboratory is studying the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in adults who have *not* been hospitalized as a result of COVID-19

Eligible adults would:

- Be between the ages of 65 and 80
  - Be in good physical health
- Have at least 10 years of education
  - Currently drink alcohol
- Have not been previously hospitalized with COVID-19

The research study examines the effects of COVID-19 related stress on health and mental well-being in older adults who have not been hospitalized as a result of the virus. Participants complete 3 annual visits to the laboratory and periodic phone interviews. Volunteers may be compensated up to \$425.

For more information call (352) 294-4920



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This study is conducted by:  
Sara Jo Nixon, Ph.D.  
University of Florida,  
Department of Psychiatry

**UF** UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

# Acrosstown Repertory Theatre kicks off 42nd season in new home

by Chelsea Wilson, Treasurer,  
Acrosstown Repertory Theatre

The Acrosstown's new location, Suite O of the Creekside Mall, is on the southwest corner of West 34th Street and University Ave.

Surrounded by restaurants and shopping, the Board of Directors is excited to bring a new energy to this location in the heart of west Gainesville. The space, formerly a yoga studio, was converted into a 50-seat theater by a team of volunteers in just two months' time.

The Acrosstown Repertory Theatre (ART) is Gainesville's only remaining independent black box theatre. The unique space

allows for intimate performances and a special theatre experience.

Founded in 1980, the ART develops new talent, plays, audiences and ideas while also celebrating and revivifying the great plays of the past.

The 2023–2024 season continues this tradition by providing the community with a wide variety of plays and musicals. The upcoming production of *Sweeney Todd* is a challenging and radical musical that encourages viewers to question the meaning of justice.

*Twelfth Night* plays on contemporary issues of cross-dressing and classism within a timeless Shakespearean text, and *Lit-*

*tle Women* is a new adaptation of a classic novel from a young female playwright and will be a regional premiere.

The ART will also continue the successful Gainesville Homegrown Local Playwrights' Festival, which develops new plays by local writers that have gone on to be professionally produced across the country.

"We worked hard to make sure the Acrosstown wouldn't become a victim of the double whammy that was the pandemic and rising operating costs. It's more important now than ever that our community has access to art and other forms of expression," says board member Jennifer Hutton.



Forced to close its physical location in late 2022, the ART operated as a nomadic troupe while searching for a new venue. The ART partnered with the City of Gainesville to produce Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Rehearsed at public parks, this show provided free and accessible performances at the Historic Thomas Center and Bo Diddley Plaza. This zero-budget production drew in hundreds of viewers of all ages and featured incredible local talent.

For 43 years, the ART has provided a safe place where people of all ages, genders, races, socio-economic backgrounds, and beliefs can participate in the performing arts.

The first show in the new space, *No Exit*, by Jean-Paul Sartre, opened just a year after the last show closed at the old location. Previously performed in 2018, this show helped bridge the gap between old and new and brought in an audience of nearly 250 excited viewers.

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The ART is a non-profit, volunteer-run community theater, and relies heavily on a seasonal gala fundraiser to support the season productions. The new location represents both an exciting new chapter for the ART and a 40 percent increase in operating costs. This year, the gala will be held on Saturday, September 9; this event will showcase the upcoming shows for the season, and fundraise through a silent auction of local goods and services.

“The outpouring of community support for this event has been nothing short of incredible,” said Chelsea Wilson, ART treasurer. “We have received donations worth more than \$9,000 of art, jewelry, and certificates for experiences all around Gainesville for our patrons to bid on at the gala.”

Both professional and amateur artists have honed their craft at the ART and seen their visions realized. The ART provides a safe place where people of all ages, genders, races, socio-economic backgrounds and beliefs can create unsafe theatre — theatre that transforms.

The full season and show dates can be found on <http://www.acrosstown.org/> or call the box office at 352-BE IN ART (352-234-6278). 🐘

## Florida Free Speech Forum events: 9/11, 10/9

Janet Coats, Managing Director of the Consortium of Trust in Media and Technology will be the Florida Free Speech Forum speaker on Monday, Sept. 11, at 11:30am.

Coats has been at the forefront of the seismic shifts in journalism and information culture over the last 25 years. She’s led large multimedia news organizations, done groundbreaking work in civic engagement and reader outreach, and built her own consulting company focused on engagement and sustainability strategies for non-profit and entrepreneurial news organizations. She is the Managing Director of the Consortium on Trust in Media and Technology, UF College of Journalism.

It is too late to reserve lunch for the September meeting, but entry is free if not eating.

The speaker for Monday, Oct. 9, is Nathan Crabbe. His presentation will be on “Communicating about climate change: Informing the public about the threats we face—and what to do about them.”

Nathan Crabbe is editor of *The Invading Sea*, a website featuring news, commentary and educational content about

climate change and other environmental issues affecting Florida. The website is managed by Florida Atlantic University’s Center for Environmental Studies.

Nathan previously worked for *The Gainesville Sun* from 2005 to 2022. He served most of that time as the paper’s opinion and engagement editor. He also covered the University of Florida and environmental beats as a reporter.

Before that, he investigated wrongful convictions for the Innocence Institute of Point Park University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and covered the environmental and county beats as a reporter for the *Napa Valley Register* in Napa, California. He lives in Gainesville with his wife and two children.

FFSF forums are held at the Aloft Hotel, 3743 Hull Road (behind the Hilton UF Conference Center). Please arrive at 11:30 for lunch. The talk begins at noon.

Please register by Monday, Oct 2. Lunch is \$20/person, payable at the door (cash or check only). No charge to attend if not having lunch (special seating section only).

More info can be found at [floridafreespeechforum.org/](http://floridafreespeechforum.org/). 🐘

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Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door. Kids 12 and under get in FREE. Pick up tickets from Loosey's at 120 SW 1st Ave. in Gainesville or purchase them online at Brown Paper Tickets.

Follow Gainesville Roller Rebels on Facebook or Instagram for information about upcoming events.

Doors open at 6pm and the action starts at 6:30pm. Food and drink will be available for purchase. There will also be a raffle with proceeds going to a local charity.

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# The Hippodrome Cinema reopens after renovations

by Matthew Cugini, Hipp Cinema Program Manager

The Hippodrome Cinema, still located right in the heart of downtown Gainesville, has undergone a remarkable transformation, thanks to the support of the Wild Spaces & Public Places sales tax. With a rising number of residents in town and the further development of the historic downtown area, this project could not have come soon enough.

The revitalization project funded by the Wild Spaces & Public Places sales tax was much needed. The Hippodrome Cinema, an iconic cultural hub in North Florida, had been essentially left as it had been when it was first created. With this generous funding, the cinema has been brought up to the modern era, both in being more inviting and more accessible to differently abled patrons.

The old cinema seats were removed, and replaced with brand new seating, actually allowing for more capacity than before. The films will be looking extra vivid and crisp on the new projection screen. The sound system in the cinema has been

expanded and upgraded, ensuring that every sound, from whispers to explosions, is crystal clear. These factors allow for a more immersive, dynamic experience.

The renovations were not limited to the screening room. The City of Gainesville took the opportunity to upgrade the restrooms, making them accessible and in compliance with ADA standards.


What sets the Hippodrome Cinema apart is its dedication to offering a diverse array of films. As Gainesville's only art-house cinema, it goes beyond mainstream blockbusters. From independent films that push boundaries to hard-hitting documentaries addressing critical issues, from internationally acclaimed world cinema to beloved classics that evoke nostalgia, the programming of the Hippodrome Cinema caters to a wide range of tastes.

Beyond these staples, the Hippodrome Cinema hosts a variety of signature programming throughout the year. This includes film festivals celebrating specific genres or themes, as well as screenings accompanied by insightful discussions. For up-to-date information on showtimes and current screenings, visitors can check the cinema's website at [www.thehipp.org](http://www.thehipp.org).

The reopening of the Hippodrome Cinema marks a new chapter in Gainesville's cultural landscape. With its refreshed look, improved facilities, and commitment to presenting films that challenge, entertain, and inspire, the Hippodrome is set to become a cultural cornerstone once again. So, grab your popcorn, sink into those comfy seats, and prepare for a cinematic journey unlike any other. 🍿

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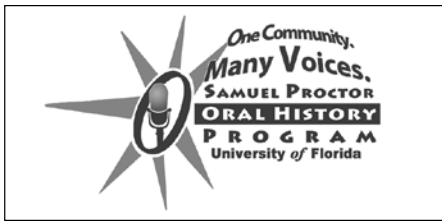
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# History and the people who make it: Sophia Threat (part 2)



*This is part 2 of a 2017 interview with Ms. Sophia Threat (T) of Groveland, Florida, by Deidre Houchen (H). It provides insight on how history is remembered, on the role that race plays within the carceral system, and the ways history can better be respected. Transcript edited by Donovan Carter.*

**H: What are your memories of growing up in Groveland other than workin' in the groves?**

**T:** For me it was good. We were back in the [19]70s, but for me it was good.

**H: By good, you mean you enjoyed your childhood, you have happy memories?**

**T:** Oh yeah, oh yeah. Happy memories.

**H: What did you do after you graduated high school?**

**T:** I started working at Walt Disney. I worked there for a while and then at McDonald's and Lake County Sheriff's Office, that's where I retired from.

**H: What did you do at Lake County Sheriff's Office?**

**T:** I was a correction officer at the Lake County Jail.

**H: How many years did you work there?**

**T:** Twenty-six and a half.

**H: That's a long time. Congratulations on retiring.**

**T:** Thank you, I'm enjoyin' it.

**H: Good for you. How was that? Working for Lake County Sheriff's Office, which is at the heart of the Groveland case.**

**T:** Um-hm. But McCall was no longer there. But, you still have that atmosphere a little bit.

**H: What kind of atmosphere?**

**T:** Like you still knew your place and don't step out of it, you know, just do your job and that was it. When I first started, it was like that. Then it shifted a little bit because times was changing a little bit, but you could still tell. I mean, even today.

**H: So it was a predominantly white,**

**or definitely white-run sheriff's office when you started?**

**T:** Um-hm. They were startin' to hire a few Blacks when I started.

**H: But the sheriff was still white? And the deputies? Those are still majority white?**

**T:** Oh yeah, yes. Even today. I don't think they have any, maybe one or two, in the whole department out there on the road right now. Um-hm. That's why I said it really hasn't changed. Now the jail part, it's a little different. There's more Blacks working there, on the hiring part.

**H: What about the way people are treated by the sheriff's department now?**

**T:** Some are treated fairly and some are not treated fairly.

**H: Something must stand out in your mind when you say some are not treated fairly. Do you want to tell me more about that?**

**T:** No.

**H: Okay, I understand. I'm asking based on the Groveland story and how terribly those four were mistreated. Do you still see that kind of treatment going on?**

**T:** Not as in your face, but it still happens. Not on a large scale.

**H: There are many things that happened in that Groveland case I mean there was outright beating. Would you say that kind of behavior still happens?**

**T:** When I first started, yes. But then it subsided. At the beginning of my career it was like that.

**H: Was it only Blacks who were beaten when you first started?**

**T:** The majority, yes.

**H: How'd you deal with that?**

**T:** I had to look deep and say "Hey, you can't do that around me. It's not right, please don't do that." It's hard because I know my job and that's not part of my job. Care, control, and custody is my job. If the situation warrants where you have to go in on someone, then yes 'cause I'm not getting hurt, I don't want you to get hurt and I don't my other officers to get hurt. So it kind of depends—if I see someone that's getting out of control I stop 'em—things like that.

**H: I'm hearing you saying you had to walk a fine line between making sure that you, fellow officers, et cetera were**

**safe and protected by inmates who might be potentially violent.**

**T: Oh yeah. Well that's what it's all about pretty much.**

**H: But then there was also an awareness that police brutality was not okay.**

**T:** Yes. And because of what my uncle went through. And I was working for the sheriff department, the same sheriff department that did that. So I had to be careful of what I said and how I said it. And my momma always told me, "Don't say anything. They don't know, they don't need to know unless they asked you."

**H: Who you are?**

**T:** Um-hm 'cause no one knew. I mean, even, well they know now, but even until I retired. No one knew.

**H: And that was on purpose?**

**T:** I never said anything. I never had a reason to say anything.

**H: Why do you think your mom told you not to tell them?**

**T:** 'Cause she was scared for me. Of what might happen. The same thing that happened to my uncle. If I opened my mouth and said something or ... She knows I can get very boisterous on certain things, so she'd always tell me, "Don't say anything, just do your job. They don't need to know, just be careful what you say." And that's what I did. I always went to work with that awareness.

**H: And that awareness kept you safe?**

**T:** Yeah. It did keep me safe. And being able to talk to people and communicate with the ones who were in there kept me safe.

**H: You're talking about the inmates?**

**T:** Yes.

**H: And talk to 'em and communicate with 'em—**

**T:** As a person, not as an inmate. They already know they're an inmate so you talk to them just like you'd talk to anybody else. They have problems, we all got problems. It's communicatin' and talking to 'em and treatin' 'em like a human being, which they are. And that keeps you safe. But you're still aware of where you're at too, and you're still aware that they are an inmate, but you treat 'em like a human being. You don't degrade 'em or things like that 'cause they already feel bad 'cause they're locked up, they're away from their families and stuff, the

kids, they don't need that. So it makes it better for you and better for them.

**H: What did that show you about white and Black life in Groveland in that area?**

**T:** You can get along. There's no difference. We all go through the same thing, we all have problems, we have to deal with the same thing, there's no difference. It's just our skin color.

**H: Do you think it would be helpful, for people to remember?**

**T:** I think so. Maybe people could see that it was wrong and what happened 'cause, you know, kinda like all you hear is what people say or don't say and if there was something in the history of Groveland that they could actually go and look at and see it and it's in writing and it actually happened. That they could say, "Wow, that was wrong."

**H: I mentioned to you before that one of the ways that could possibly happen is some kind of public marker like what happened in the Rosewood community, there's a public marker there that says what happened with Rosewood massacre. Now it's a Florida historical landmark. Do you think that would be appropriate in Groveland?**

**T:** That would be appropriate, but I don't see it happening ... because you still have animosity from this trial that happened so long ago.

**H: Who has animosity?**

**T:** People in Groveland. They don't want to remember that. They don't want to bring that up because of what happened and how it happened.

**H: Do you think that's whites and Blacks alike?**

**T:** Both. Because it was just a tragedy. Groveland was on fire, they were burnin' everything. That included the Ku Klux Klan so that was off-limits to talk about.

**H: The story that I heard was that a lot of people left.**

**T:** Um-hm, a lot of people left Groveland after that, or during that time. They were trying to get away from the fires and the Ku Klux Klan and the shooting so they just loaded up their car and took off or caught the bus out or walked out.

**H: Where did they go?**

**T:** Away from Groveland. I don't know, they just left, they just getting' away from that.

**H: But your family didn't leave?**

**T:** No.

**H: And your family was safe?**

**T:** Somewhat, yes.

**H: I've heard stories that say that their parents, your grandparents, were also beaten. Did you hear that growing up?**

**T:** I heard that. Through the grapevine.

**H: Have you ever asked your parents?**

**T:** I don't want to know that.

**H: I understand. Do you know how they protected themselves at that time?**

**T:** They hid.

**H: Any other thoughts about that time and all that violence that happened?**

**T:** I don't know if I could survive that. I really don't know if I could survive that because that's hard, even thinkin' about it now.

**H: How do you think they survived it, Ms. Sophia?**

**T:** Prayer. Prayer and God watching over them, and hiding.

**H: What's the best case scenario for Groveland now?**

**T:** That they acknowledge that it happened. Even putting a plaque on some wall that states what happened and then renouncing that it was wrong. Public acknowledgement. For everyone to see, not just the ones in Groveland.

**H: When you say not just the ones in Groveland, you're alluding to the proclamation. But you are interested in something that might stand the test of time?**

**T:** Yes. Something that people can go and see and read and look at. Most people don't even know what happened 'cause nobody talks about it, so it's not in the history, but that could be something they could be teaching. That actually happened in Lake County that they can discuss.

**H: So kids who are growing up today?**

**T:** No idea. No clue that anything like that ever happened in Lake County. Things have relaxed a little bit in Lake County, but it has not changed a great deal 'cause you still have the racism, but it's a different racism.

**H: How is it different?**

**T:** It's not as prevalent as it was. It's still there but they do it a different way, to try and keep you down.

**H: Just what makes you feel that way about the way things are now?**

**T:** Because I can still see it, even in my job I could see it. The way they talk to

you, still, little things they say or do that you can see. They still try to degrade you, but in a different way, like a nice-nasty way. It has not changed that much.

**H: This community you live in now is integrated?**

**T:** Yes.

**H: And it is comfortable to live here?**

**T:** Oh my god I love it. I love this area. My little community, I love it. But I do want things to change because my grandkids are interracial, so it really really needs to change. I tell my grandson, "You still have to be careful, Tarius, 'cause your skin is darker, it's not whiter." And he goes, "I know, granny, I know."

**H: Does he know? The story, the family story?**

**T:** We've be telling him, yeah. He's fifteen, so I think he can handle it now 'cause he's in high school and he's able to grasp things a lot better. Yeah, he knows, he's been reading the book and things we tell him.

**H: Do you feel like you're worried for his safety in the same way your mom was worried for—**

**T:** Yes. Because he is Black. His skin is darker, so he's considered Black. Some places he go, things he say, he has to be careful still because there is racism. It's still racism.

*Read the entire interview at the UF Digital Collections at [tinyurl.com/Iguana1654](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1654).*

*Learn about how the Groveland Four have been honored and posthumously exonerated in 2021 at [tinyurl.com/Iguana1655](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1655)*

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*"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor."*

*- Desmond Tutu*

## In memoriam:

# Robbie Robertson, 1943-2023, rest in power

by David McLeod

I met Robbie Robertson many years ago in 2003, thanks to Tina Keeper, who introduced me to him at the Aboriginal Achievement Awards at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. He was iconic, I was thrilled to have a brief conversation with him, he signed my CD (I carried with me if the occasion arose), "In Unity" denoted a special purpose and meaning.

I would like to share some of Robbie's contributions as an Indigenous artist. [Robbie passed away on Aug. 9.]

Robbie was born in Toronto on July 5, 1943, to his mother, Rosemarie Dolly Chrysler, who was Mohawk and Cayuga, he grew up in homes in Scarborough and Cabbagetown neighbourhoods. His father, Alexander Klegerman, died in a roadside accident before Robbie was born.

It was while visiting relatives on the Six Nations of the Grand River near Brantford, Ontario (south of Toronto), that he became entranced by the music played by his uncles and older cousins and was given advice by Elders he kept close to his heart as he progressed early in his career. "Be proud you are an Indian, but be careful who you tell." shared Robbie during an on camera interview,



referencing the racism he may encounter in city life.

Robbie is best known in mainstream for the classic songs he wrote for the Band, including "The Weight," "Up on Cripple Creek," "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down," "The Shape I'm In" and "It Makes No Difference." The Band formulated a new genre often referenced as "Americana", but within the nucleus of this genre is Mohawk soul. This is partially explored in his story with The Band, captured in the wonderful 2019 documentary "Once Were Brothers."

Within his later career outside of solo projects and movie soundtrack work (much with Martin Scorsese), Robbie focused years exploring his Indigenous heritage, particularly in traditional music and connecting to artists within the community.

In 1994 he composed the soundtrack for the documentary *The Native Americans*, which then became an album, *Music from The Native Americans* and featured the Red Road Ensemble. One track that received much fanfare was "Mahk Jchi (Heartbeat Drum Song)" with Ulali, (Pura Fé, Soni Moreno, Jennifer Kreisberg). A timeless classic.

Robbie pushed towards a sound that was far removed from music previously known to older fans of The Band. In 1998, he

released *Contact From The Underworld Of Red Boy*. He collaborated with DJ/producer Howie B, the albums sound is a sonic mix of techno with Indigenous sound. He searched for inspiration for the album in traditional recordings as the 1942 Library of Congress recording of Leah Hicks Manning was sampled for the opening track of, "The Sound Is Fading," and included experiences from taking part in ceremony.

Indigenous voices included those like the Six Nations Women Singers, and the peyote singers Verdell Primeaux and Johnny Mike – appeared on tracks co-produced by Marius De Vries (Björk, Massive Attack) and DJ remixer Howie B.

Over the dark mysterious groove of "Sacrifice," Robbie offered a platform for activist Leonard Peltier to speak on the phone and be recorded from prison about the pain and politics of his two consecutive life sentences for the accused 1975 slayings of two federal agents on the Pine Ridge Reservation, in South Dakota.

It could be debated that tracks like "Peyote Healing" and "Stomp Dance" connect more with spirituality than with musical technology.

Also in 1998, a PBS documentary *Making A Noise: A Native American Journey with Robbie Robertson* centered on his visit to his home territory on Six Nations, exploring his musical influences, family, and connection to the Indigenous community, a young Derek Miller is seen jamming outside as is local radio celebrity, Elaine Bomberry.

In 2018, PBS produced *NATIVE AMERICA*, a four-part series that premiered on PBS nationwide. The premise weaves history and science with Indigenous traditions, it was narrated by Robbie; each hour explores Indigenous nations and reveals sacred stories and history long hidden in plain sight.

Chi Miigwetch Robbie, you certainly journeyed through a creative web of life that fortunately clung to the most important part of who you are ... a Mohawk man with a bundle to offer the world yo.

His family asked that donations be made to Six Nations Woodland Cultural Centre. 🐾



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*In memoriam:*



**Sinéad O'Connor / Shuhada' Sadaqat  
1966-2023**

## 'A true she-punk'

*by Vivien Goldman*

"My intention is to live a long life, and keep diaries this time so I won't forget," O'Connor stated, poignantly, in her typically revealing 2021 memoir, *Rememberings*. Her creativity was mesmerizing, all the more haunting for being haunted. Was there ever a more naked, vulnerable and still innately political artist?

A true she-punk, her mission scoffed at fame; counterintuitive to the general thrust of the music industry, she did everything—the music, the family, the life choices—her own way.

It seemed as if in her combat with the patriarchy and the world's corruption, she repeatedly performed Easter by serially rising in new spiritual guises: embracing Irish goddess worship, the priesthood, Rastafarianism and, ultimately, Islam.

The title of her 1990 album *I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got*, however, reads quintessentially Buddhist and remarkably, her memoir evidences compassion even for her scary mother who brutalized her in several ways—no help with Sinéad's later diagnoses, including PTSD.

One can only wonder: did Sinéad manage to find that same compassion for herself? Yet there was a toughness within. In a 1997 interview, I asked if she had advice for female musicians starting out.

Her reply: "Learn how to say no straight off. You don't have to look like the makeup artist wants. Trust your instincts. You will have to sever professional relationships with people, and you've got to learn not to feel like a bastard. At the end of the day, it's your name on the thing and it's down to you.

"Luckily, the first word my daughter learned to say was no." No one compares 2 Sinéad O'Connor.

*Vivien Goldman, journalist, interviewed O'Connor for Rolling Stone in 1997. Sinéad/Shuhada died on July 26. ☘*

# Stop gun violence! Justice for AJ Owens

*by Nelida Esther Jean-Baptiste Pellot*

In June, AJ Owens, a Black woman, was shot by a white neighbor in Ocala after the neighbor threw a roller skate and swung an umbrella at Owens's two sons (ages 10 and 12) for reportedly being too loud.

When Owens attempted to confront the neighbor by knocking on her door, she was shot through the door in the chest and died from her injuries.

Owens's family is pushing for hate crime charges, but currently the charges stand at manslaughter with a firearm (in addition to culpable negligence, battery, and assault.

Gainesville gathered to honor Owens on Aug. 2, and the text below is a reflection on that gathering and the plague of gun violence.

In the vast expanse of human existence, one undeniable truth emerges: the specter of gun violence has cast a long shadow across our history in Gainesville, in the United States and beyond. On Aug. 2, the Gainesville community came together to honor Ajike "AJ" Owens, a mother, a soul taken like so many by guns, white supremacy, and hatred.

We were led by Moms Demand Action, M.A.M.A.s Club, Against All Odds Movement, Duval Neighborhood Association, and more. There were truly too many organizations tired of the fragile future that awaits our youth, particularly Black and brown children, should we continue without action.

We joined in art, song, and words that will surely reverberate across time in that sanctuary that was the Gainesville Bridge. Power was felt through movement, vignettes of lives, and stories told that truly made our collective breaths heavy.

But what can we learn from the stars above about this conundrum? Just as celestial bodies are bound by the laws of physics, so too are societies governed by the laws of cause and effect. To unravel the complexities of gun violence, we must employ the tools of science and reason.

Scarcity, racism, lack of resources, lack of youth mentors, mental health resources, exposure to constant violence in music, television, and games are all root causes named, but the truth will come in how we are able to come together and take accountability, action, and solve this problem in the same way we convene to mourn those who pass.

Let us remember that we are not just stardust, but stewards of our own destiny able to shape the future for those who follow. Individually we may not be able to prevent tragedies like the one befallen on the Owens family via racism and stark hatred, but in community we can change our course entirely. Let us be a model for others to follow.

*For background on the case, see [tinyurl.com/Iguana1678](https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1678). ☘*

# Gainesville area events

## WEEK OF SEPT 3-9

- Tue 9/5 4:30-5:30pm, **Yoga for Everybody** every Tues & Thurs at Florida Springs Inst (23695 W US Hwy 27, High Springs), BYO mat, \$14; register at: [tinyurl.com/Iguana1656](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1656)
- Wed 9/6 8pm, **Veterans for Peace** resumes 1st Wednesday meetings, call 352-375-2563 for details; [vfpgainesville.org](http://vfpgainesville.org)
- Fri 9/8 4-8pm, **Current Problem's Source-to-Sink Event** at Cypress + Grove Brewing (1001 NW 4th St) with artwork, live music, environmentalists; free
- Fri 9/8 6pm, **El Club de Escucha+ Gainesville** meets 2nd & 4th Fridays of most months at Curia on the Drag (2029 NW 6th St); [tinyurl.com/Iguana1657](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1657)
- Fri 9/8 6pm, opening night for **POTUS: Or, Behind Every Great Dumbass Are Seven Women Trying to Keep Him Alive**, The Hipp (25 SE 2nd Pl), for mature audiences (17+), runs through Oct 1, \$55; [thehipp.org/potus/](http://thehipp.org/potus/) - see pg 19
- Sat 9/9 2-4pm, **Sarah [Matheson]'s Birthday Bash** at Matheson Museum (513 E Univ Ave), live music & food truck, free (bring blankets or chairs); [tinyurl.com/Iguana1658](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1658)
- Sat 9/9 6pm, **Acrosstown Repertory Theatre's 42nd Season Annual Gala & Silent Auction** at 3401 SW 2nd Ave, Suite O, \$50; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1659](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1659) - see pg 16
- Sat 9/9 7-9pm, The Lowly Worm, Trustfall, Hannah Harber at **"Live & Local" concert series**, Bo Diddley Plaza (111 E Univ Ave), free; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1660](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1660)

## WEEK OF SEPT 10-16

- Mon 9/11 11:30am-1pm, **Fla Free Speech Forum** at Aloft Hotel (3743 Hull Rd), Janet Coats (of Consortium of Trust in Media & Technology) speaks on future of media, talk free, lunch \$20; pre-register at [tinyurl.com/Iguana1661](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1661) - see pg 17
- Mon 9/11 5-8pm, **Lauren Groff** novel *The Vaster Wilds* launched at Superette (1511 NW 2nd St) - see pg 14
- Thu 9/14 9am-5pm, **Conflict Coaching Workshop** (for Gvl residents only; continues 9/28) by River Phoenix Ctr for Peacebuilding at 326 SW 4th Ave, free; [centerforpeacebuilding.org](http://centerforpeacebuilding.org)
- Thu 9/14 4-5:30pm, **Cornel West & Robert George** on "Truth-Seeking and Democracy", UF Library East, Room 100
- Thu 9/14 5:30pm, **Constitution Trivia Night** at UF Pugh Hall Ocora, free; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1662](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1662)
- Thu 9/14 6-8pm, **Hispanic Heritage Month movie A Bruddah's Mind kicks off Latino Film Festival**, Bo Diddley Plaza (111 E Univ Ave), free - see [tinyurl.com/Iguana1668](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1668) & pg 5
- Thu 9/14 7 & 9 pm, jazz bassist **Christian McBride** & friends play 2 shows at UF Phillips Ctr (3201 Hull Rd), 7pm \$50/9pm \$35/UF students\$12; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1663](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1663)
- Fri 9/15 5-8pm, **Human Rights Coalition of Alachua County fundraiser** kickoff at Superette Wine & Provisions (1511 NW 2nd St), partial proceeds from each glass of wine sold through 9/24 go to HRC; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1664](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1664)
- Fri 9/15 7-9pm, **Nat'l Hispanic Heritage Month Dance** w/ Latina Women's League, Bo Diddley Plaza (111 E Univ Ave), free
- Sat, 9/16 10am-4pm, **League of Women Voters** tables at downtown library (401 E Univ Ave) for Nat'l Voter Registration Day (actually 9/19); [my.lwv.org/florida/alachua](http://my.lwv.org/florida/alachua)
- Sat, 9/16 2-5pm, **Gainesville Free Store**, Civic Media Ctr (433 S Main St), free clothes & home goods (masks required)
- Sat, 9/16 8-10pm, **Tropix** (salsa, merengue, bachata) plays Bo Diddley Plaza (111 E Univ Ave) for Hispanic Heritage Month, free

## WEEK OF SEPT 17-23

- Sun 9/17 11am, Brett Buell of Gvl Opportunity Ctr speaks at Sunday Assembly (Pride Ctr, 3850 NW 83rd St) on **"The Clubhouse Model: The Best Kept Secret in Mental Health,"** free; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1665](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1665) (see link for Zoom access)
- Sun 9/17 1-4 pm, **"Viva Museum"**, Nat'l Hispanic Heritage Month exhibit at Fla Museum of Natural History (3215 Hull Rd) with scientists & dance lessons, free & bilingual; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1666](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1666)
- Tue 9/19 6pm, **School Board** meets 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 620 E Univ Ave; [sbac.edu](http://sbac.edu)
- Wed 9/20 7pm, **"Early Cuban Exiles"** talks at Matheson Museum (513 E Univ Ave), free with registration at [tinyurl.com/Iguana1667](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1667)
- Fri 9/22 7-10pm, **"Boogie Woogie Rock 'n' Roll Dance Party"** at Cotton Club Museum & Cultural Ctr (837 SE 7th Ave), \$25; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1669](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1669) & pg 2
- Fri 9/22 7 pm (also 9/23), **CircusPalooza** at UF Phillips Ctr (3201 Hull Rd), \$20 adv/\$25 door; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1670](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1670)
- Sat 9/23 9am-2pm, **Veterans Benefits Bonanza** at Milam (22405 W Newberry Rd, Newberry) presents services & resources to vets
- Sat 9/23 11am-2pm, **Nat'l Public Lands Day Picnic** by Alachua Conservation Trust at Rockwood Park (2221 NW 2nd St), bring food & blanket; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1671](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1671)



## WEEK OF SEPT 24-30

Mon 9/25 11am-2pm, **Radical Rush** at UF, also 9/26 at SFC

Mon 9/25 8pm, **Folk punk w/ Rent Strike, Rancho La Chua, CMC**, \$10

Tue 9/26 6pm, **Alachua County Labor Coalition** meets, Emmanuel Mennonite Church (1236 NW 18th Ave); <https://laborcoalition.org/>

Fri 9/29 7pm, **Gainesville ArtWalk** on last Fridays, book swap at Civic Media Center - see pg 11

Fri 9/29 7 & 9 pm, **Kat Edmonson** sings 2 shows at UF Phillips Ctr (3201 Hull Rd), 7pm \$50/9pm \$35/UF students\$12; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1672](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1672)

Sat 9/30 (time & location tba), Alachua County **NAACP Climate Summit** - see pg 10

Sat 9/30 11am-3pm, **Young Leaders for Wild Florida Fall Fest** at 4th Ave Food Park (409 SW 4th Ave) with live music, games, face-painting, vendors, & Michi the Mermaid Manatee; free; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1673](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1673)

Sat 9/30 2-4pm, **Dance for UNICEF** at Oak Hammock (5100 SW 25th Blvd), \$?; [una-usagainesvillefl.org](http://una-usagainesvillefl.org)

Sat 9/30 7pm, **Queer the Fest** fundraiser, location tba, possibly at CMC (433 S Main St), [civicmediacenter.org](http://civicmediacenter.org)

## WEEK OF OCT 1-7

Wed 10/4 4-5:30pm, **WaPo tech reporter Drew Harwell** on AI, UF Pugh Hall Ocora, free; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1674](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1674)

Thu 10/5 5:30-9pm, 22nd Annual **Guest Chef Gainesville** fundraiser for **Peaceful Paths** at Oak Lane Weddings & Events (7827 NW 170th St, Alachua), \$85 single, \$160 couple; [peacefulpaths.org/events](http://peacefulpaths.org/events)

Fri 10/6 **UF Homecoming** (public schools & University Ave closed), football vs Vanderbilt, etc

Fri 10/6 2-3 pm, **Frogs and Friends Friday**, 1st Fridays at Morningside Nature Ctr (3540 E Univ Ave), free (kids must bring adult)

Fri 10/6 4-9 pm, **First Fridays Food Truck Festival** at Thornebrook Village (2441 NW 43rd St), w/ live music, retail pop-ups

Sat 10/7 10am-5pm, **Antarctic Dinosaurs** exhibit opens at Fla Museum (3215 Hull Rd), runs through 4/21/24, \$9 Fla residents, \$7 ages 3-17; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1675](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1675)

Sat 10/7 6pm, **Gvl Roller Rebels All-Stars** vs Swan City Roller Derby at MLK MP Ctr (1028 NE 14th St), \$12 adv/15 door; [tinyurl.com/Iguana1676](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1676) - see pg 20 🐸

### Recurring events:

#### Monday Farmers Market

4-7pm: Cypress & Grove

#### Thursday Farmers Market

4-7pm: Heartwood Soundstage

#### Thursday evening Poetry Jam

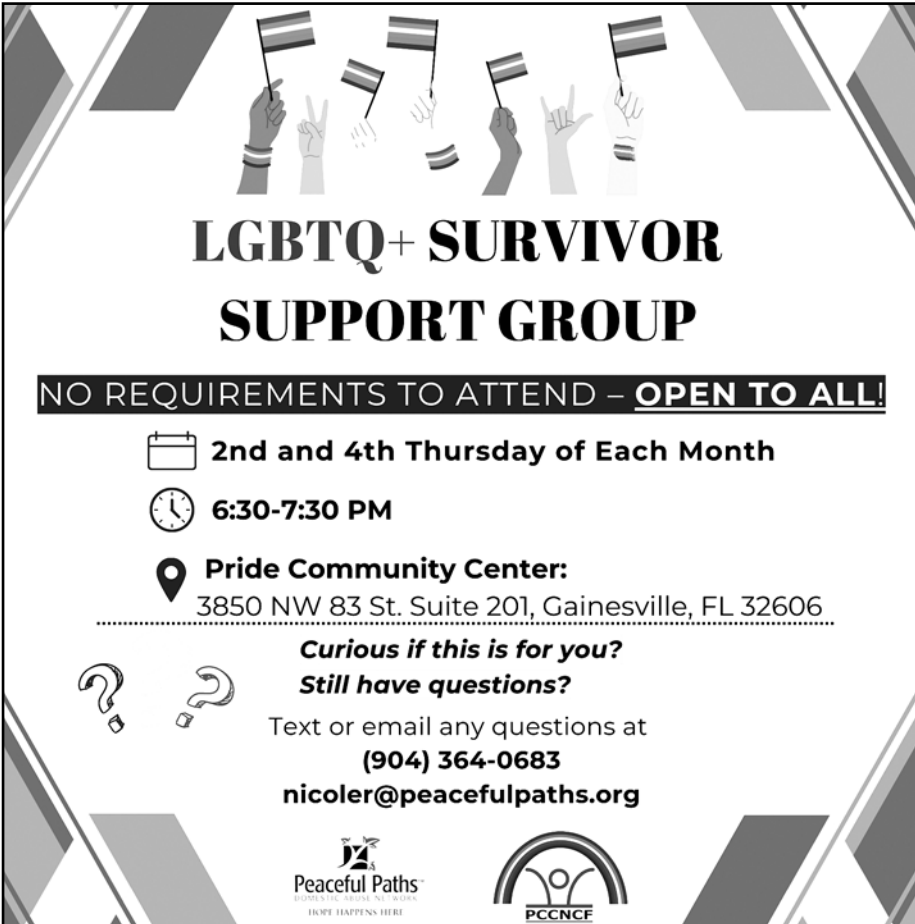
8pm at CMC

### Other Options

🐸 Please support GNV live music venues, they all have calendars: Boca Backyard, Cypress & Grove, First Magnitude, Heartwood Soundstage, Loosey's, One Love Café, Satchels, the Wooly, Wormhole, etc.

🐸 See [visitgainesville.com/events](http://visitgainesville.com/events) for a weekly event list, updated Thursdays; also try [352arts.org](http://352arts.org); and don't forget [civicmediacenter.org](http://civicmediacenter.org)

🐸 Support live music, theater, and festivals! Get out into nature! Leave the freakin' house and have fun! 🐸



The poster features a top section with several hands holding rainbow pride flags. Below this, the title "LGBTQ+ SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP" is written in large, bold, black letters. A black banner with white text reads "NO REQUIREMENTS TO ATTEND - OPEN TO ALL!". The event details are listed with icons: a calendar icon for "2nd and 4th Thursday of Each Month", a clock icon for "6:30-7:30 PM", and a location pin icon for "Pride Community Center: 3850 NW 83 St. Suite 201, Gainesville, FL 32606". Below the address, there are two question mark icons and the text "Curious if this is for you? Still have questions?". Contact information includes "Text or email any questions at (904) 364-0683" and "nicoler@peacefulpaths.org". At the bottom, there are logos for "Peaceful Paths" (with the tagline "WHERE IT HAPPENS HERE") and "PCCNCF".

**From OHIO, p. 1**

and Paul Newman; and the great funkster Bootsy Collins.

Now we can add Ohio's defiant embrace of democracy to the list of good stuff from the Buckeye State. On Aug. 8, voters in this allegedly red state rejected Issue 1, a Republican-backed measure to make it harder for citizens to amend their constitution.

The "No's" prevailed: 57 to 43 percent.

Unlike Florida, where 60 percent must approve a ballot measure, in Ohio the standard is 50 percent plus one. Terrified that an amendment giving women — not Gilead Republicans — control over their reproductive health would pass in November, Ohio's right-wingers figured they'd change the rules in the middle of the game.

**'Special interests'**

Nobody bought the Republicans' story that the state constitution should be held sacred, touched only by gerrymandered legislators and not amended willy-nilly by a rabble of ordinary folks laboring under the delusion that the government should work for them.

Republicans charged out-of-state "special interests" with funding the campaign to beat Issue 1: more than \$14 million from voting rights groups, teachers' unions, and others.

Of course, proponents of Issue 1 also got that sweet out-of-state special-interest cash, too, including \$4 million from

the Illinois container magnate Richard Uihlein and his wife.

They're reactionary super-donors and supporters of both Donald Trump and Alabama's Roy Moore, those noted connoisseurs of teen pulchritude.

But this is not about the integrity of the state constitution. It's about abortion.

Some politicians pretended otherwise, but Ohio's Republican Secretary of State Frank LaRose said the quiet part out loud: "It's 100 percent about keeping a radical pro-abortion amendment out of our constitution."

Ohio bans abortion after six weeks which, since you rarely know you're pregnant at that point, amounts to a total ban.

**Cruelty**

As has been pointed out over and over, for Republicans, the cruelty is the point.

In 2022, a 27 year-old man raped a 10 year-old Ohio girl and got her pregnant. She had to travel to Indiana to get medical attention. Ohio Republicans wondered if it was even possible for a 10-year-old to get pregnant. Congressman Jim Jordan suggested the story was fake. If it wasn't fake, well, that rape was part of God's plan.

And why didn't the media report that it was some undocumented guy who attacked her? Surely that was the important part of the story.

Voters in Michigan, California, and Vermont have chosen to put reproductive rights in their constitutions. Voters in Kansas and Kentucky rejected mea-

sures saying their state constitutions forbade abortion.

Anti-choicers figured they'd better move fast in Ohio, before citizens even had a chance to vote on the abortion amendment. They scheduled the special election on Issue 1 for August, when people were on vacation, college students not yet back for fall semester, and it would be so hot everybody'd be concentrating on surviving that Chinese hoax, not thinking about politics.

Thing is, women (and plenty of men) get pretty motivated when it comes to their own bodies. Despite Republicans' best efforts, turnout was high — or comparatively high: 38 percent.

Obviously, nobody can predict what will happen when Ohioans vote on the pro-choice constitutional amendment in November. But, given this result, sanity might prevail and Ohio women will be protected from the creepy people who want to get all up in their uteruses.

A breakdown of the vote shows that 15 counties that went for Trump in the 2020 election voted "No" on Issue 1. A decent number of Republican women also favor reproductive freedom.

**In Florida**

Here in Florida, there's a petition drive to pass a similar constitutional amendment. It says, "No law shall prohibit, penalize, delay, or restrict abortion before viability or when necessary to protect the patient's health, as determined by the patient's health care provider."

Organizers have said they've collected nearly half a million signatures they need to put the proposal on next year's ballot.

To pass here, the measure needs the approval of 60 percent of voters. That is tough, but things could get worse in the future.

Some Republicans want the threshold raised to 66.67 percent. A bill mandating that change be put to a constitutional vote died in committee this past legislative session; however, like so many very bad ideas cherished by the venal dolts who claim to represent us, it is likely to be back next year.

Still, there's reason to hope. Ohio's state government, like Florida's, is entirely owned by Republican extremists. But the abortion issue may slow their plans to turn America into a white Christofascist autocracy.

Women are angry. Women are motivated. Watch this space. 🍷



*A non-profit junk shop focused on salvaging valuable resources left behind by traditional reuse markets*

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

**Reuse Planet**

- 1540 NE Waldo Road, Gainesville
- Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10am-6pm, Sunday noon-5pm, Monday closed
- reuseplanet.org • 352-647-5112

**Repurpose Project**

- 1920 NE 23rd Avenue, Gainesville
- Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10am-6pm, Sunday noon-5pm, Monday closed
- repurposeproject.org • 352-363-8902

**From TRUMP, p. 1**

before Chutkan ahead of the 2024 election. A post-election start date, as Trump wanted, would drain a jury verdict of its crucial value as citizens cast their ballots on who shall lead the country.

In addition, the March 4 date leaves room, if exigencies arise, for moving the start date back a couple of months and still finishing before the GOP's July nominating convention. Indeed, a date later than March 4 would have posed the serious risk of the trial eventually being moved into the heat of the summer and fall election campaign.

Having a trial at the peak of the presidential race would allow Trump to scream even louder about being a victim of a justice system trying to interfere with his campaign. Of course, we'll hear that anyway, but the earlier the trial, the less force that message will have since ample time for campaigning would remain after the trial.

What American democracy cannot afford, and what Chutkan would not allow, was for Trump to run out the clock to try to win the election in the absence of a conviction. Such a scenario would allow him to order his administration's attorney general to dismiss the case, as well as the other federal case that special counsel Jack Smith is bringing over his alleged misuse of classified documents. Trump has asserted his innocence in all four criminal cases against him.

There's another reason why March 4, the day before the Super Tuesday primary contests, works well: It sits in the middle of two other scheduled 2024 trials.

On Jan. 29, an important civil fraud trial is set to begin against Trump by investors accusing him and his company of promoting a pyramid scheme. Trump has denied any wrongdoing. And March 25 is the date scheduled for jury selection in the Manhattan trial related to "hush money" payments to adult film star Stormy Daniels. Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg has signaled that he would accept a delay in that start date if needed to accommodate the federal trial in the election interference case.

Last among the reasons supporting the March 4 date is that seven months between the date of the indictment and start of a trial protects Trump's right to have adequate time for his lawyers to prepare.

Trump's attorneys attempted to justify a two-year delay on the grounds that they needed that much time to review the volumes of documents in the case. The claim was frivolous. Any experienced judge or litigator knows that modern digitalized search methodology makes locating and reviewing the central written evidence in a case easily doable in a period of months.

Trump's lawyers also argued that their timeline was consistent with the average time for conspiracy cases generally to go to trial as well as the Jan. 6 prosecutions of participants. Smith rebutted their statistics by showing that they had skewed the timelines by including periods where Covid-19 had delayed trials, periods of extended plea negotiations and periods after trial until sentencing, which can be many months.

For his part, Smith had aggressively sought a Jan. 2 trial date. But Chutkan rejected that date, adding two months to ensure sufficient prep time for Trump and his lawyers.

Now that it looks like Trump's attempt at an extended delay is failing, we can expect him and his allies to unleash another strategy: disdaining jury verdicts—2024's equivalent of dismissing the 2020 election results as "rigged" even before they occurred.

History tells us that we, and our system of justice, need to stand up for both the integrity and timing of Trump's jury trials.

Regrettably, some Trump supporters' disrespect of jury verdicts is already happening. We saw Trump's acolytes fall into line on the Republican primary debate stage in Milwaukee. Six of eight Republican presidential candidates chose to "trash the trial by jury," as a *Washington Post* opinion headline put it, by raising their hands to say that a jury's guilty verdict would not change their support for Trump if he were the party's presidential nominee.

Dismissing the jury system undermines an extraordinary inheritance that was hard-won over centuries. Thomas Jefferson, months before the signing of the US Constitution, wrote how the jury system embodies democracy in America: "(T)he opinion of 12 honest jurymen gives still a better hope of right."

Trial by jury, secured in Article III of the Constitution and the Sixth Amendment, ensures that judgments of innocence and guilt are tied to the conscience of the community.

Every citizen who hopes to keep our constitutional republic should applaud a judge and judicial system that aims to avoid delaying justice until it is denied and to preserve our ability to vote with the information we need. To accomplish that double purpose, Chutkan chose exactly the right start date for Trump's most pivotal federal trial. 🐸

Want your article, ad, event or PSA in the next Iguana?  
**Deadline is Wednesday, Sep. 27**  
Submit events, content, questions to:  
[gainesvilleiguana@cox.net](mailto:gainesvilleiguana@cox.net)

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# Spotlight on ... *Floridians Protecting Freedom*



Floridians Protecting Freedom (FPF) is a statewide campaign of allied organizations and concerned citizens working together to protect Floridians' access to abortion as reproductive health care and to defend the right to bodily autonomy.

FPF recognizes that all Floridians deserve the freedom to make personal medical decisions, including about abortion, free of government intrusion.

Their citizen-led ballot initiative, the "Amendment to Limit Government Interference with Abortion," seeks to create a constitutional amendment that would protect Floridians' freedom to access abortion, stating: No law shall prohibit, penalize, delay, or restrict abortion before viability or when necessary to protect the

patient's health, as determined by the patient's healthcare provider. This amendment does not change the Legislature's constitutional authority to require notification to a parent or guardian before a minor has an abortion.

This statewide organization is working to get abortion rights on the 2024 ballot. The petition drive is in full swing; volunteers are needed. For more information locally, contact Laura at 617-767-6664. Learn more at [floridiansprotectingfreedom.com](http://floridiansprotectingfreedom.com). ✨

## Iguana Directory

Call 352-378-5655 or email [gainesvilleiguana@cox.net](mailto:gainesvilleiguana@cox.net) with updates and additions

*Readers: If there is inaccurate information here, 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.*

**Alachua Audubon Society's** mission is to foster appreciation and knowledge of birds and other native wildlife, to protect and restore wildlife populations and their habitats, and to promote sustainable use of natural resources. We offer free birding field trips open to all, college internship experiences, birding for kids, conservation activism, volunteer opportunities. [AlachuaAudubon.org](http://AlachuaAudubon.org) | [facebook.com/AlachuaAudubon/](https://facebook.com/AlachuaAudubon/)

**Alachua Conservation Trust, Inc.** has been protecting North Central Florida's natural, scenic, historic and recreational resources for over 25 years. 352-373-1078 | [AlachuaConservationTrust.org](http://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; for location contact 352-871-1995 | [alachuagreens@gmail.com](mailto:alachuagreens@gmail.com) | [GainesvilleGreens.webs.com](http://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. 352-375-2832 | [info@laborcoalition.com](mailto:info@laborcoalition.com) | [LaborCoalition.org](http://LaborCoalition.org)

**Alachua County Organization for Rural Needs Clinic** is a not-for-profit in Brooker providing low-cost, high-quality dental care for people with and without health insurance to Alachua, Bradford and Union

County residents. The Clinic fulfills its mission with the help of volunteers. 352-485-2772 | [acornclinic.org](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](mailto:firstcoastaclu@gmail.com) | [northeastflorida.aclufl.org](http://northeastflorida.aclufl.org)

**Alachua NAACP** – With 2+ million activists across the country, we work to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all people and to eliminate racial hatred and discrimination. Everyone invited to join. [Facebook.com/alachuaNAACP](https://facebook.com/alachuaNAACP) | [NAACPacb.org](http://NAACPacb.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. [americanpromise.net](http://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. 352-514-5606 | [arcinst.org](http://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](mailto:bgsoatuf@gmail.com) | [facebook: UF BGSO](https://facebook.com/UFBGSO)

**Central Florida Democratic Socialists of America** is a chapter of DSA focusing on local social and political activism issues to better our community. Meetings are the 4th Monday of the month on Zoom. [centralfldsa@gmail.com](mailto:centralfldsa@gmail.com) | [facebook.com/NCFloridaDSA](https://facebook.com/NCFloridaDSA)

**Citizens Climate Lobby** builds awareness and lobbies for sensible climate policies. 352-214-1778 | [btancig@gmail.com](mailto:btancig@gmail.com) | [citizensclimatelobby.org/chapters/FL\\_Gainesville](http://citizensclimatelobby.org/chapters/FL_Gainesville) | [facebook.com/CitizensClimateLobbyGainesvilleFL](https://facebook.com/CitizensClimateLobbyGainesvilleFL)

**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 | 352-373-0010 | [civicmediacenter.org](http://civicmediacenter.org) | [coordinators@civicmediacenter.org](mailto:coordinators@civicmediacenter.org) |

**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 (see website) for news, action alerts, meeting alerts. [ClimateRealityProjectgnv@gmail.com](mailto:ClimateRealityProjectgnv@gmail.com) | [facebook.com/GlobalClimateEducation](https://facebook.com/GlobalClimateEducation) | [ClimateRealityProjectGNV.wordpress.com](http://ClimateRealityProjectGNV.wordpress.com) | [ClimateRealityProject.org](http://ClimateRealityProject.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](mailto:chispasuf@gmail.com) | [chispasuf.com](http://chispasuf.com) | [facebook.com/chispasUF](https://facebook.com/chispasUF)

**Code Pink: Women for Peace** is a women-led grassroots peace/social justice movement utilizing creative protest, non-violent direct action and community involvement. Facebook.com/CodePINKgainesville | CodePink4Peace.org

**Community Spring** is a local organization to help people get a step up on re-entering society after incarceration with financial and housing assistance as a means of overcoming structural poverty. 352-363-1259 or info@csgnv.org

**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 | 352-450-4965 | communityweatherization.org

**Conservation Trust for Florida, Inc.** is a Gainesville non-profit land trust working to protect Florida's rural landscapes, wildlife corridors and natural areas. 352-376-4770 | info@conserveflorida.org | conserveflorida.org

**Current Problems** cleans up waterways across north Florida, removing over 1,000,000 pounds of trash (& recycling/reusing 63% of it) since 1993, and finding ways to reduce pollution sources; volunteers welcome. 352-222-6727 | currentproblems.org

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

**Divest Gainesville** advocates divesting City financial assets from fossil fuel industries and educating on racial justice and climate change. youngersn@outlook.com | 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. Divestuf.org | facebook.com/DivestUF

**Goddsville Dream Defenders** is a socialist, feminist, abolitionist organization in Gainesville, organizing to dismantle institutions and be a safe space for people of color. goddsville@gmail.com | facebook.com/UFDreamDefenders

**Edible Plant Project** is a volunteer-run, non-profit Gainesville collective aiming to create positive alternatives to the unsustainable food system in this county. 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, 32614 | gnewburn@famm.org | 352-682-2542 | 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. 352-374-4478 | FinalFriends.org@gmail.com | FinalFriends.org

**The Fine Print** is a quarterly magazine based in Gainesville providing political, social and arts coverage through advocacy journalism. TheFinePrintUF.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

**Florida School of Traditional Midwifery** is a clearinghouse for information, activities, educational programs regarding midwifery. 352-338-0766 | info@MidWiferySchool.org | midwiferyschool.org

**Florida Defenders of the Environment** works to protect freshwater resources, conserve public lands, provide quality environmental education. 352-475-1119 | FloridaDefenders@gmail.com | FlaDefenders.org

**Florida Prisoner Solidarity** is a carceral abolitionist collective with members inside and outside of prisons. Efforts focus on incarcerated individuals' needs and their care networks. P.O. Box 358439, Gainesville, FL 32635 | 850-895-1505 | FLPrisonerSolidarity@gmail.com | facebook.com/FLAbolition | FLPrisonerSolidarity.org

**Floridians Protecting Freedom** is a campaign of allied organizations and concerned citizens working together to protect Floridians' access to abortion as reproductive health care and to defend the right to bodily autonomy. Contact Laura at 617-767-6664 or go to floridiansprotectingfreedom.com.

**Gainesville Area AIDS Project**, a program of Pride Community Center of North Central Florida, provides toiletries, household cleaners, hot meals, frozen food at no cost to people living with HIV/AIDS. 352-377-8915 | info@GAAPonline.org | Facebook.com/GAAPonline | gainesvillepride.org

**Gainesville Area Chapter of Climate**

**Reality Project** addresses the climate crisis for future generations. The chapter mobilizes people to become powerful activists and push for aggressive climate action. The hope is to transform society and to change the world. climateralityprojectgnv@gmail.com | @climateralityprojectgnv | climateralityprojectgnv.wordpress.com

**Gainesville Citizens for Alternatives to Death Penalty** works to abolish the death penalty. Join vigils when Florida has an execution. 352-378-1690 | 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 | 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 | gainesvilleiaij.blogspot.com

**Gainesville National Organization for Women** focuses on reproductive rights, ending sex discrimination, constitutional equality, promoting diversity, ending racism, economic justice, stopping violence against women, lesbian rights including marriage equality. Contact Lisa@352-450-1912 for meeting info | info@gainesvilleNOW.org | facebook.com/gainesvilleNOW

**Gainesville 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., Gainesville | 352-372-1070 | GainesvilleQuakers.org | facebook.com/GainesvilleQuakers

**Gainesville Residents United** educates, advocates, negotiates, and litigates issues of community concern – currently the State takeover of Gainesville Regional Utilities. www.GRUnited.org

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

**Gainesville Stamp Club**, established in the 1960's, is open to all interested in philately. Auction held every meeting. Advanced level program occasionally

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included. Under 18 must be accompanied by adult. First and third Tuesdays starting at 7:30pm; no meetings in December/holidays. For meeting locations and info, call 352-371-1991 | Stamps4Laffs@yahoo.com

**Graduate Assistants United** union represents UF grad assistants by fighting for improved working conditions, community involvement and academic freedom. 352-575-0366 | organizing@ufgau.org | UFGAU.org

**Grow Radio**, a non-profit podcast station, provides opportunities for the community to create/manage engaging, educational, locally-generated programming promoting music, visual arts, humanities for enrichment of the community. 352-219-0145 | Bryson66@gmail.com | growradio.org

**Humanist Families of Gainesville** aims to raise ethical, secular children in a religious, moral environment. Meetings include children and are based on members' interests. facebook: Humanist Families of Gainesville

**Humanist Society of Gainesville** folks believe that the world's problems can only be solved by responsible human actions based on rational analysis and decision-making free of dogma or guidance of imaginary supreme beings. They promote secular, humanist, atheist and agnostic social influences. Facebook.com/humanistsocietyofgainesville | gainesvillehumanists@gmail.com | gainesvillehumanists.org

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

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

**Institute for Tropical Ecology and Conservation** is an academic nonprofit that provides undergraduate field courses in tropical marine and terrestrial ecology, hosts biology-based study abroad programs, provides a venue for researchers, conducts conservation and community service programs. 352-367-9128 | itec1@itec-edu.org | itec-edu.org

**League of Women Voters of Alachua County** Nonpartisan grassroots political group of women and men who fight to improve our system of government and impact public policies such as fairness in districting, voting and elections, through citizen education and advocacy. info@lww-alachua.org | LWValachua.org

**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 | 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. 352-328-2511 | facebook: MindFreedom Florida

**Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America** is a grassroots organization working to end gunviolence by electing gun sense candidates, advocating for policies that save lives, educating parents on responsible gun storage. Alachua County events listed at 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. 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. 352-320-0457 (information) | 352-335-7770 (helpline) | namigainesville.org

**National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare** works to preserve these threatened programs for senior citizens and families. Local volunteers needed. Our.circle.of.care@gmail.com | 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. gainesvillengl@gmail.com | 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. 352-575-0495 | nwl@womensliberation.org | 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 | leanin.org/circles/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. Facebook.com/occupygainesville

**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 | oursantaferiver.org

**Paynes Prairie Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society** promotes the preservation, conservation and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida. paynesprairie.fnpschapters.org | facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064434411932

**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. 352-340-3770 | info@pflaggainesville.org | 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. | 352-377-0881 | plannedparenthood.org (enter Gainesville FL in "find a health center" box)

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

**Pride Community Center of North Central Florida** has resources for the LGBT+ community, open Sat. 2-4pm: and by appt. 3131 NW 13th St., Suite 62, Gnv |

352-377-8915 | pccncf@gainesvillepride.org | GainesvillePride.org

**Repurpose Project**, a nonprofit junk shop/community center, diverting useful resources from landfill and redirecting items to the public for art and education, inspiring creativity, and rethinking what we throw away. Help protect the planet and buy used. Check website for hours. 1920 NE 23rd Ave, Gnv | 352-363-8902 | info@RepurposeProject.org | repurposeproject.org

**River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding** provides solution-based innovative ways to resolve conflicts, and offers related services such as mediation, communication skill building and restorative justice. 352-234-6595 | info@centerforpeacebuilding.org | 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 @ 352-372-1095 | info@rwHP.org | www.rwHP.org

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

**Sister City Program of Gainesville** links Gainesville with sister cities in Russia, Israel and Palestine, Iraq, Haiti. 352-376-8600 | Steve@gnvsistercities.org | http://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 | StandByOurPlan.org

**Student Animal Alliance** is a UF-based group whose purpose is to educate and bring fellow animal lovers together to better the lives of the animal around us. StudentAnimalAllianceUFL@gmail.com | facebook.com/SAAatUF | 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 or brett@sfalliance.org | facebook.com/sfalliance

**Sunday Assembly Gainesville** is a secular congregation celebrating life

with talk, music, sing-along, discussion, fellowship. Meets the 3rd Sunday of the month. SundayAssembly32601@gmail.com | SAGainesville.weebly.com

**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. ssjsierra@gmail.com | sierraclub.org/florida/suwannee-stjohns | 561-707-4565

**UF Black Student Union** strives to create, cultivate, and challenge all minority Gators to be better citizens of the Gator Nation. Facebook.com/groups/BlackStudentUnionUF

**UF College Democrats** is the official voice of the Democratic party on UF campus. 407-580-4543 | president@ufdemocrats.org | facebook: UF College Democrats | UFcollegedems.org

**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 | facebook.com/ufpsu | plaza.ufl.edu/jsoto19/PSU

**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. ufydsa21@gmail.com | facebook.com/ufydsa

**United Faculty of Florida, UF chapter** is run by and for faculty, and represents over 1600 faculty and professionals at UF. Its origins lie in efforts by faculty to protect academic freedom, defend civil liberties, end racial discrimination at UF. 352-519-4130 | officemanager@uff-uf.org | www.UFF-UF.org

**United Nations Association - Gainesville Chapter** works to heighten citizen awareness/knowledge of global problems and the UN's efforts to deal with them. facebook.com/UNAUSAGainesvilleFICChapter | UNA-USAGainesvillefl.org

**United Way Information & Referral** is a human-staffed computer database for resources and organizations in Alachua County. 352-332-4636 or simply 211 | UW211help@gmail.com | unitedwayncfl.org

**University of Florida HealthStreet** is

a community engagement program that employs community outreach practices to reduce disparities in healthcare and research. Free services include medical and social service referrals, health screenings, Narcan Nasal Spray Kits, clothing/toiletry items, health education, events, support groups. 352-294-4880 or healthstreet.program.ufl.edu/

**UF Un-PAC** is a non-partisan organization working to reform our democracy and get big money/lobbying out of politics. Our Youth Power Campaign works to make UF work better for students to participate in and understand our democratic system, including demands such as voter registration at Freshman Preview, classes cancelled on election days, and more transparency on how our tuition money is spent on lobbying and political influence. Go to: un-pac.org, @un\_pac\_uflorida, or email un.pac.uf@gmail.

**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. 352-375-2563 | Facebook.com/VFPchapter14 | vfp Gainesville.org

**WGOT-LP 100.1 FM** is a community low-power radio station operating as part of the Civic Media Center. info@wgot.org | www.wgot.org

**Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) at UF** aims to foster the success of women, non-binary folks, other underrepresented genders in science and engineering. People of all genders are welcome. uf.wise@gmail.com | Facebook.com/UFWiSE | wise.group.ufl.edu/about-wise

**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 | wilpfus.org

**Women's March Florida - Gainesville/Ocala Chapter** is a grassroots progressive mobilization network inspired and created by the women who brought about the Women's March on Washington. facebook.com/wmflgnv

**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 that's been created by capitalism, into a democratically arranged world society of equality. wspan.org. 🌟

# Civic Media Center turns 30 in October

by Joe Courter

*A quick update on the Civic Media Center as it approaches its 30th (!) anniversary on Oct. 18 ...*

While not doing as many public events post-COVID, it is host to a lot of organizing and many folks are plugging in to advance social justice work.

Dozens of people help with Free Grocery Store on Tuesdays. Evening events include Books 2 Prisoners, anti-incarceration organizing, the weekly poetry jam, and occasional live music.

The Collections Committee keeps the library organized, adding, sorting, and developing ways to present the collection better.

Book clubs and meetings take place regularly. Stetson Kennedy would be proud.

Got CMC memories? Stories, experiences; how did CMC touch your life?

Send quick (or longer) notes to: [GainesvilleIguana@cox.net](mailto:GainesvilleIguana@cox.net), and the *Iguana* will use them in its CMC feature in the October edition. 🐢



*The Thelma Boltin Recreation Center, at 516 NE 2nd Ave. in Gainesville, is slated to be torn down, despite its status as a State Heritage Site and part of a National Register Historic District. Photos courtesy of Melanie Barr, Friends of the Thelma Boltin Center.*

## Save the Thelma Boltin Recreation Center

First built in 1943 as the Servicemen's Center, the Recreation Center was later named after Thelma Boltin, who founded the Florida Folk Festival and the Gainesville Community Playhouse. Boltin, an English and drama teacher at Gainesville High and a program director at the Center, booked local rock groups there, including future Rock and Roll Hall of Fame musicians Stephen Stills, Bernie Leadon and Don Feldner. Tom Petty attended dances to listen to these musicians.

The Gainesville City Commission recently voted to demolish the building, even though it's a State Heritage Site

and part of a National Register Historic District, with a historical marker that was out front. (The City recently had it removed.) Although the building is in need of repairs, funds are available.

The Friends of the Thelma Boltin Center are fighting to save the building. They ask that you attend the Thursday, Sept. 21 City Commission meeting to ask that the building be saved, and reach out to your commissioners.

For more on the history of the building and the fight to save it, see [tinyurl.com/Iguana1679](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1679) and [tinyurl.com/Iguana1680](http://tinyurl.com/Iguana1680). 🐢



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Submit events, content, ads and questions to: [GainesvilleIguana@cox.net](mailto:GainesvilleIguana@cox.net) or 352-378-5655

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Articles from current and past issues since 1996, and PDFs of print issues since 2012 are available at [www.gainesvilleiguana.org](http://www.gainesvilleiguana.org)