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The Gainesville Iguana

August 2024 - vol. 38, issue 8

‘a soapbox for Alachua County activists’

NOVEMBER ELECTION



Progressives mobilize for Harris

‘Our coalition was critical to defeating Trump in 2020,’ said one organizer. ‘We’re ready to do it again in 2024.’

by Julia Conley

Announcing their endorsement of U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris in the 2024 presidential election, three of the country’s largest progressive organizations announced Thursday their plan to mobilize their hundreds of thousands of members to reach out to millions of swing state voters about Harris’ fight for abortion rights, the climate, and democracy.

The Center for Popular Democracy Action (CPD), the Working Families Party (WFP), and People’s Action pledged to knock on more than five million doors in states including Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Nevada, and Arizona, where they will tell voters about the key role Harris played in passing far-reaching climate action and jobs legislation in the Inflation Reduction Act, her strong support for abortion rights, and her commitment to delivering on President Joe Biden’s housing agenda.

“Our coalition was critical to defeating [Republican presidential nominee Donald] Trump in 2020. We’re ready to do it again in 2024,” said Maurice Mitchell, national director of the Working Families Party. “This election is bigger than any one person. It’s



As VP, Kamala Harris played a key role in passing far-reaching climate action and jobs legislation, and is a strong supporter of abortion rights.

about the kind of country we want to be and whether we will let the rights and freedoms our ancestors spent generations fighting for—the right to participate equally in our democracy, to organize our workplaces, and to control our own bodies — be taken away from us. Over the next four months, we’ll be mobilizing voters in key states to elect Kamala Harris and build our ranks of WFP champions up and down the ballot.”

See **HARRIS**, p. 24

AUGUST ELECTION



Guide to local elections, Aug. 20

by Joe Courter

Here’s your Primary election guide for the August 20 voting. I will ignore the Republican ballot, don’t expect too many of you are reading this; this is the Democratic side. These races will include some that are not on every ballot, due to districts in the city, county, and state. I’ll just list most of the Alachua County area ones.

US Senate: This is statewide for the right to face off against the awful Senator Rick

Scott. Debbie Mucarsel-Powell is the establishment Democrat, but there is an alternative of interest, **Stanley Campbell**, who could surprise and going head to head would give Rick Scott fits. He’s a scientist with an IT background and has endorsement from the AFL-CIO and the Black Caucus. Look him up. We say Campbell.

Florida House District 22: We like **Amy Trask** here, as a woman with great communication skills, who is more electable than her opponent, whose brashness will

not probably work in this pretty conservative district. Winning in November here, as above, is important.

Alachua County Sheriff: Since Clovis Watson bailed out of the job, our dear governor got to appoint a Republican, Emory Gainey, to the job, and now he is on the ballot for November. Democrat **Chad Scott** has a well-organized campaign and would do a good job and could stand a

See **GUIDE**, p. 25



Restore FULL County Commission representation *Vote Yes on At-Large Districts*

by Susan Bottcher

Notice anything different on your primary ballot? In previous Presidential election years, every Alachua County voter would

have seen three County Commission contests on their ballots. This is because three commissioners are up for re-election every Presidential election year. But now, thanks to a new change to the county charter that moved us from At Large Districts (ALD) to Single Member Districts (SMD), there will be only one race for county commission for you to vote on. Or maybe none, depending on the district you live in.

A referendum on Single Member Districts was placed on the 2022 ballot by Republican Rep. Chuck Clemons. Thanks to a cleverly orchestrated disinformation campaign funded by dark money, it passed by a very narrow margin of 51 percent - 49 percent — or 2,557 votes.

This changed who can vote for which commissioners. As the name indicates, you now only vote for the one representing your single district.

See YES, p. 24



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The Iguana mission:

We believe in advocacy journalism and strive to deliver grassroots progressive news written by those on the ground. We aim to engage readers, get them thinking critically, and ultimately join the activists who fill our pages in the fight for a more just, equitable world. We’re also a community calendar, promoting cultural events, because we believe having fun and enriching the heart and soul are as important as engaging the mind when it comes to community building and solidarity.

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From the publisher ...

New ball game for 2024

What a relief to have the “will he or won’t he” settled! Boom, that quick, and Biden drops into the background and Kamala Harris hits center stage. I am happy, enthused; I feel really good about better chances to be able to set back the authoritarian MAGA movement.

Coming after the RNC, with Trump-Vance locked together in a bro-fest, there is Kamala Harris ready to pounce, with a, for now, united Democratic party. There seems to be a recognition of the over-riding necessity of defeating Trump, and her rollout has been really inspiring!

For now, because breaking that unity will be the goal of the Right and there will also be destabilizing propaganda from abroad. There are also residual feelings about her from her prosecutor days and things said and done back then.

And then of course, the elephant in the room, the understandably outraged mass of people rightly horrified by the genocidal assault Israel is waging on the people of Gaza with U.S. weapons and U.S. tacit agreement and support.

Seeing Harris shaking hands with Netanyahu this morning [July 26] about made me puke. Credit to the members of Congress who boycotted his speech. More credit to Rashida Tlaib for going with a sign saying “Guilty of Genocide” and “War Criminal.” And big credit to Bernie Sanders for releasing a strong 21-minute indictment of Netanyahu and of the Republican Party members who invited him the day before Bibi’s visit (read or listen here: tinyurl.com/iguana2041).

Harris is unfortunately inheriting decades of U.S complicity in regard to Israel’s repression of the Palestinian people, and Israel’s gamesmanship in forestalling any plans for a Palestinian state (see “For years, Netanyahu propped up Hamas. Now it’s blown up in our faces” in *The Times of Israel* at: tinyurl.com/Iguana2042). I think Harris has a much better position on the need for a real ceasefire and permanent solution than Biden, and good grief, Trump would be much worse for the Palestinian people: I think he sees the Gaza Strip as a potential real estate development opportunity!

As of now, I am fully on board with Kamala Harris, and we will need to work on her to make her and her administration better AFTER we get her elected.

Again I will say, voting is not about your feelings, it is about math. It is about outcomes that may lead you to a better opportunity to enact the changes you want to see.

In my heart I am a Bernie Sanders person. In both 2016 and 2020 I felt the Democratic Party really screwed me, screwed Bernie. Yeah, I endorsed and supported Clinton and Biden, I held signs, but like so many times before in my life (Mondale, Dukakis, Bill Clinton, Kerry, Gore), my heart wasn’t fully in it. As of now, my heart is in this one. She ain’t perfect, but I think she is a good person, self-possessed, smart, quick-witted. She is such a counterpoint to the self-righteous con man she is headed up against.

Last issue I reflected on 1968 and its parallels to today. There’s a song that was written in 1968, which became number one in 1969: the Rolling Stones’ “You Can’t Always Get What You Want.” This became an election song for me when Iguana co-founder Jenny Brown and I were in the car, kinda bummed, driving home after futilely holding signs at NW 13th St and 23rd Ave for Walter Mondale on election day in 1984.

Reagan, of course, thumped him, but that song came on the radio, and we both looked at each other, and our perspective changed, lightened because, as the song goes, “sometimes, you get what you need.” Harris may be just what we need. She would be a nightmare for Trump to debate. She is exciting voters. And fundraising is through the roof.

Let’s hope this 3-day-old (at press time) magic can hold for a bit over 3 months. Lots more can happen, but massive organizing for a huge voter turnout will be the ultimate verdict on Trump that his legal shenanigans kept from being passed over the past years.

Yes, it is a new ballgame, and we the people are coming up to bat! 🍀



Joe Courter

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Insecurity ...

'it sure can mess things up for a lot of people'

by Larry Dansinger

Welcome to Outside the Box...woo hoo.

Today's topic is: Insecurity

About 15 years ago, I did a series of Outside the Box features on "the root of all evil," suggesting things like the love of money, violence, power, fear, and even assumptions. Now, one more you probably would not think of: insecurity.

Well, maybe not all evil, but it sure can mess things up for a lot of people.

People often work at jobs they don't like because of the insecurity of not having in-

come for basic needs. They feel they are held hostage by their debts and a lack of financial security, forcing them to do what they have to do instead of what they want to do. Being jobless or homeless can make us insecure, nervous, and hard to be around.

Feeling unsafe can make us, and our country, do things we would not otherwise have to do, like wasting billions on weapons we should never use. It can make life miserable.

There's a theory that those with wealth and power, the aristocracy, whether intentional or not, support an economic system

that maintains insecurity for most people, because the wealthy benefit from cheap labor and someone else doing society's hard and dirty jobs.

For example: insecurity results from debt at high interest, no student loan cancellation, expensive real estate, taxes that advantage the wealthy, minimal safety net benefits, and costly health care.

That means middle and lower income people feel forced to stay in the economy, often earning low wages, to keep from falling further into more insecure situations. Fear of losing a job, or housing, or opportunities for an education, or health care, or income, or all of the above keeps people in the work force or in particular jobs when they would rather not be there.

Security also has a huge impact on the behaviors of countries. Look at two of the most tragic conflicts right now — Gaza/Israel and Ukraine/Russia. Insecurity has played a huge part in creating and maintaining both of these horrendous conflicts.

Wherever there is political violence or upheaval, famine, economic and social inequality, and other problems, insecurity is a major reason for them.

In this country, almost as much of every individual income tax dollar we pay goes to the Pentagon, in the name of national security, as the entire rest of the federal budget. Whether we actually feel insecure (I don't), as opposed to being told that we are by politicians, our budget priorities create insecurity for those with low incomes, for children that need daycare but don't get it, for our endangered environment, for a struggling economy, and for every other problem that gets short shrift because the money is spent for soldiers and weapons.

Maybe you agree with me that Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs makes sense. Right after basic needs (Maslow calls them physiological) like food, shelter, a livable environment, warmth, rest, and other real basics comes safety and security. That can include economic stability, good mental and physical health, some amount of freedom, and the potential to live a productive life.

If we don't feel secure, it's harder to tackle the more positive needs in our life. Those can include psychological

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needs like friends, loving relationships, and community, self-esteem needs like prestige, respect from others, a feeling of accomplishment, and, finally, self-fulfillment thru being creative and achieving our full potential.

But, we can have the security we all need and want. Franklin Roosevelt noted Freedom from need and from want as two of his Four Freedoms Speech in 1941 and an accompanying Economic Bill of Rights in 1944. FDR's list of economic rights included the right to a job, to food, clothing, and recreation, to adequate income, to a decent home, to quality medical care, to a good education, and to protection from economic fears and insecurity.

Examples of these abound today, despite

pushback from opponents. There are now many projects providing a Guaranteed Income. Unions are organizing for living wages among those with the lowest incomes. The U.S. may one day have universal health care similar to what Canadians and Europeans have now. Some states offer virtually free higher education. More treatment programs for mental health and substance use disorder are being provided to victims of economic insecurity. Some governments are taking leadership in creating better safety net programs and affordable housing projects, attempting to turn basic needs into human rights.

A Pew Charitable Trust survey in 2015 found that more than nine of ten people care more about financial security than having greater wealth. Are you one of the

nine of ten who prioritizes economic security?

I'm Larry Dansinger, lucky enough to have usually had economic security.

This episode of "Outside the Box," Dansinger's weekly radio show on WERU in Maine, first aired on June 18. Listen to more at <https://archives.weru.org/category/outside-the-box/>. 🐘



Your homework assignment: Beyond Project 2025

by Joe Courter

In the July 22 issue of the New Yorker, Jonathan Blitzer profiles the Center for Renewing America, one of about two dozen new right-wing groups that are extremely well-funded and networked by the organization that helped bring them into being, the Heritage Foundation. HF was formerly just a think tank like many others in DC, but has now metastasized into varied organizations geared to implementing the goals of Project 2025.

From the article:

"C.R.A. and its constellation of groups, most of which are nonprofits, raised nearly two hundred million dollars in 2022. The organization has bought up some fifty million dollars' worth of real estate in and around Washington, including multiple properties on the Hill. A mansion on twenty-two hundred acres in eastern Maryland hosts trainings for congressional staff and conservative activists."

Project 2025 is not just a book. This is how the implementation will be done. I

don't bring it up to scare or depress, but just to suggest that slowing them down by beating them at the polls in November will at least buy time. This "American Experiment" is under threat by the growth of authoritarian tendencies, but like England and France recently, we can organize and resist. Those who would overturn our government for some Christian Nationalist state have entered the game, and we need to get ready. We are at an "if you can keep it" period in our nation's history. Forewarned is forearmed. 🐘

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Complex reality of local school grades, education

by Sarah Rockwell
Alachua County School Board member

In a recent press release, Alachua County Public Schools (ACPS) announced significant improvements in student performance on state assessments and in school grades. However, school grades offer just a glimpse of a very complex and nuanced picture. A closer examination of the data suggests deeper systemic issues that urgently need to be addressed.

Celebrating success amidst broader challenges

There have been some notable achievements within the district. For instance, Lincoln Middle School received an A grade, a milestone not achieved by any middle school in the district for nearly a decade. We should also celebrate the achievements of several of our elementary schools, including Idylwild and Terwilliger which maintained C grades, and Lake Forest and Shell which rose from D to C. Newberry and Metcalfe made even more significant gains, rising from C to A and F to C respectively, but the principals who led those schools during these significant improvements were both moved this summer.

Unfortunately, these admirable successes are part of a more complex and sobering reality. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the Florida Department of Education has changed the criteria for school grades annually and introduced the new FAST test, making comparisons across years incredibly difficult. The state has simultaneously increased resources and supports for private and charter schools, culminating in the passage of universal vouchers in 2023 and further complicating the educational landscape.

The importance of school grades

School grades significantly influence local government decisions, including real estate prices, millage rates, and resource allocation. Therefore, accurate representations and interpretations of these grades are crucial for the community. The achievement gap, particularly between white and black students, has been a hot-button issue in Alachua County since Tina Certain defeated April Griffin in the 2016 school board race. Over the past eight years, this issue has dominated school board races and led to changes in district leadership. Unfortunately, the data indicate that the achievement gap has worsened, underscoring the need for more effective interventions.

Even more concerning is the fact that Alachua County, once consistently above the state averages, has now fallen below them in several key areas. This decline reflects broader challenges in the public education system, exacerbated by the political landscape in Tallahassee.

Misleading claims and the harsh reality

The district's claim that our lowest quartile made "spectacular learning gains" is misleading. In reality, for learning gains among the lowest 25 percent of students, Alachua County ranks 55th out of 67 districts in Florida for English Language Arts (ELA) and 53rd out of 67 for Math. These rankings highlight the broader struggles faced by many students. Improvements in school grades aren't always made by improving outcomes for all students. The focus should be on supporting all students in need, not just those whose improvement will most move the needle on school grades. In reality, resources are often focused on those students who are close to proficiency and can be easily raised up to that level.

The grades themselves can also hide significant problems. While it is accurate that our district maintained its B, this grade obscures the fact that our district is performing below state averages in many key areas.

Comparative performance data

A deeper dive into the data reveals that ACPS is performing below state averages in several key areas, shown below. The first set of numbers represents grade levels.

- **3-5 ELA:** 53% for Alachua vs. 54% for Florida
- **6-8 ELA:** 51% for Alachua vs. 52% for Florida
- **9-10 ELA:** 53% for Alachua vs. 53% for Florida
- **3-5 Math:** 53% for Alachua vs. 58% for Florida
- **6-8 Math:** 55% for Alachua vs. 59% for Florida
- **9-12 Algebra 1:** 31% for Alachua vs. 33% for Florida
- **9-12 Geometry:** 46% for Alachua vs. 47% for Florida

Even more concerning is the district's underperformance in learning gains compared to state averages in most categories:

- **3-5 ELA:** 3% for Alachua vs. 3% for Florida
- **6-8 ELA:** 3% for Alachua vs. 4% for Florida
- **9-10 ELA:** 2% for Alachua vs. 5% for Florida
- **3-5 Math:** 1% for Alachua vs. 2% for Florida
- **6-8 Math:** 4% for Alachua vs. 4% for Florida
- **9-12 Algebra 1:** 3% for Alachua vs. 4% for Florida
- **9-12 Geometry:** -8% for Alachua vs. 6% for Florida (a 14% gap!)

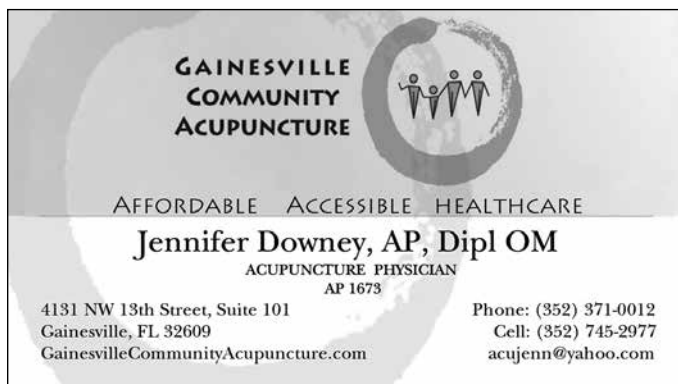
The Persistent Achievement Gap

The achievement gap has become a frequent topic in political discourse. While the concern over the achievement gap is justified, the school district needs to better explain the underlying factors contributing to this disparity. Despite the creation of an Equity Director position, the district has struggled to address the root causes of this issue.

The achievement gap between white and black students remains alarmingly wide, with little progress over the years. In elementary schools, this gap has increased to 39 percent in ELA and remains static at 40 percent in Math. Eight out of 21 elementary schools have less than half of their students proficient in ELA, highlighting the urgent need for targeted supports and interventions.

Moving Forward: A Call for Transparency, Accountability

As a community, we must demand transparency and account-



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ability from our district leaders. It is crucial to have honest communication about what is and isn't working. We must demand that evidence-based interventions like UFLI be implemented with passion and fidelity. We must demand robust data-driven decision-making. We must demand that data and the nuanced picture it paints be shared in user-friendly ways with the entire community.

We must also commit to putting our limited resources where they will most impact student outcomes. That means investing in highly qualified teachers and education support

professionals (ESPs). Instead, our teachers and ESPs continue to fight for better compensation while a recent significant raise and retirement boost were given to the superintendent. We cannot continue to fund new initiatives without investing in full implementation of existing initiatives by highly effective teachers and experienced ESPs.

The path forward requires a strategic effort to address the systemic issues within our district, prioritize student success, and ensure that all children in Alachua County have the opportunity to thrive academically and in life. ✨

State marker to be unveiled at historic Cotton Club building

*by Vivian Filer, Executive Director
Cotton Club Museum and Cultural Center*

Historical markers, also known as commemorative plaques, are important because they educate, commemorate, and create community history by sharing stories of significant places, people, and events in a tangible way.

Erecting historical markers is also a crucial step in helping to tell a more complete story of our nation's history as individuals and communities petition states to honor many omitted by traditional history books. The more than 195,000 historical markers in the United States today offer a glimpse into the past, marking a moment or place of significance worth remembering. The historic Cotton Club building, located at 837 S. E. 7th Avenue here in Gainesville, is such a place.

The Board of Directors of the Cotton Club Museum and Cultural Center (CCMC) will unveil a State of Florida Historic Marker at the Cotton Club building on Sunday, Sept. 8 at 4 p.m. This opportunity to establish the significance of the structure that houses the museum is a great milestone for the governing board, the City of Gainesville, Alachua County, and North Central Florida.

The Cotton Club building, constructed in the early 1940s, has served several purposes. The first was during World War II at Camp Blanding in Starke, Florida. There the building served as the Post Exchange (PX), a gathering place for the soldiers. There they socialized, called home, and purchased snacks and personal items.

Once the war ended, the building was purchased and brought to Gainesville's Springhill community where it housed a movie theater known as the Perry Theater.

After that, it became the Cotton Club, a big bands club named

for the Cotton Club in Harlem. During those years, it was major entertainment spot for Blacks in Gainesville and surrounding communities. The Cotton Club hosted several entertainers who went on to become famous, including B. B. King and Bo Diddley.

Following the closure of the Cotton Club, the Blue Note Club was operated in the building before it was used as the Badcock Furniture warehouse. In 2019 the building officially opened as the Cotton Club Museum and Cultural Center.

The CCMCC Board of Directors applied for and received historic status for the Cotton Club building from the State of Florida in 2019. The designation was granted based on the criteria stated here:

"To qualify as a Florida Heritage Landmark a building, structure or site must be at least 50 years old and have regional or statewide significance in the areas of architecture, archaeology, Florida history or traditional culture, or be associated with an event of statewide or national significance that took place at least 50 years ago."

The placement of the marker serves as a reminder of the building's historic significance but it is also a symbol of our commitment to continuing the legacy.

The public is invited to participate in this once in a lifetime event that establishes the building's permanence as a historic site.

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Alachua County divested from war profiteers, Gainesville should too

by Jewish Voice for Peace

More than nine months into Israel's unrelenting bombing campaign against the Gaza Strip, more and more Americans are acknowledging our governments' complicity in these atrocities. Human rights groups, national and local governments, international agencies, and grassroots activists have banded together to demand an end to Israel's siege and to our governments' support of it.

To protest the violence, cities and counties across the country have divested from war-profiteering corporations involved with Israel.

In solidarity with this movement, Alachua County has recently divested from all corporations. The County's actions followed a grassroots movement composed of local organizations, small businesses, University of Florida student and faculty groups, and community members calling for the county to pass a cease-fire resolution.

The county initially refused, citing a position of neutrality.

The Gainesville chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace exposed the hypocrisy of the County's position by revealing its substantial investments in war-profiteering corporations.

Divesting from all corporations was a circuitous way for Alachua County to divest from war profiteers involved with Israel. Florida's anti-BDS laws prohibit local governments from divesting for anything but financial reasons, including divestment on the grounds of ethical, environmental, or humanitarian causes.

Moreover, the laws exert harsher punishments for explicit divestment from Israel. The state of Florida's prohibition of ESG divestment contradicts its supposed focus on freedom, which includes the right to use money to oppose companies that profit from war.

Some of the primary targets for divestment include Caterpillar, Lockheed Martin, L3Harris, and RTX. Alachua County formerly held investments in many of these corporations, and the city of Gainesville continues to do so. Gainesville is a long-term investor in Caterpillar, a company that supplies Israel with D9 (armored) bulldozers. Israel uses these bulldozers to illegally destroy Palestinian homes across Gaza, occupied East Jerusalem, and the occupied West Bank. As of September 2023, Gainesville's pension plan held 1355 shares of Caterpillar, currently valued at over \$450,000.


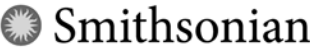

Destroying homes using Caterpillar bulldozers is part of Israel's ongoing strategy to usurp land from Palestinians and pave the




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way for Israeli settlements, which are illegal under international law. According to the Israeli Committee Against Housing Demolitions, Israel has demolished 56,500 homes in occupied Palestine (including Gaza) since 1967. In 2003, Rachel Corrie, an American member of the International Solidarity Movement, was crushed to death by a D9 bulldozer while attempting to prevent the destruction of a home in Gaza.

In June of 2024, Norway's largest private pension fund, KLP, announced divestment from a \$69 million stake in Caterpillar. A KLP representative offered the following justification: "Around 100 Caterpillar D9R bulldozers were reported to be used in Gaza ... Israeli forces were accused of using bulldozers to bury alive civilians outside the Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya in Gaza following a nine-day siege. The NGO Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor has demanded an investigation into the allegations."

The city of Gainesville's investment in Caterpillar and other war-profitteering corporations flies in the face of the city's motto of "citizen centered, people empowered."

Alachua County, along with Richmond and Hayward, CA, have paved the way for other local governments nationwide to join the divest movement. Moreover, Alachua County's recent actions show that divestment is both possible, in spite of Florida's anti-BDS laws, and desired by its people. So what is Gainesville waiting for?

Join us on Thursday, August 15th to call upon the Gainesville City Commission to follow Alachua County's example and divest from all corporations! We will gather at City Hall at or around 1 pm — please follow @jvp_gnv on instagram or email jvp_gnvpod@gmail.com to join our email list for updates on the exact time to show up! ✨

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Federal courts spike piece of DeSantis ‘Stop Woke’ law

A separate challenge surrounding how the anti-woke policies apply to colleges and universities is still under appeal

by Andrew Atterbury

A federal judge permanently shut down a significant piece of Florida’s so-called Stop Woke Act on Friday, delivering a devastating blow to a signature law pushed by Gov. Ron DeSantis to restrict workplace trainings about race.

Passed by the GOP-dominated Legislature in 2022, it expanded state anti-discrimination laws to target lessons over subjects like “white privilege” by creating new protections for workers. But Florida has never been able to enforce the “anti-woke” law for businesses, since it was quickly sued and ultimately determined by two courts to violate free speech rights protected by the Constitution.

“Today’s decision serves as a powerful reminder that the First Amendment cannot be warped to serve the interests of elected officials,” Shalini Goel Agarwal, special counsel for Protect Democracy, which represented businesses that sued Florida, said in a statement.

Florida’s “anti-woke” policies targeted schools and companies,

saying that lessons or trainings that would make a person “feel guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress” due to their race, color, sex or national origin were illegal under the law, FL HB7 (22R).

In response, a group of businesses — honeymoon registry technology company Honeyfund.com and a Florida-based Ben & Jerry’s franchisee Primo Tampa, along with workplace diversity consultancy Collective Concepts and its co-founder Chevara Orrin — challenged the law, claiming it forced them to censor themselves “on important societal matters” and “from engaging employees in robust discussion of ideas essential for improving their workplaces.”

Attorneys for the DeSantis administration, representing Attorney General Ashley Moody and the Florida Commission on Human Relations, however, have contended that the “anti-woke” law restricts no speech and only regulates that employers can’t force employees to listen to “certain speech against their will” at the risk of losing their jobs.

The law was initially blocked temporarily in August 2022 by Chief U.S. District Judge Mark Walker, who criticized its policies as “bordering on unintelligible.” That ruling was upheld by the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in March as a three-judge panel slammed the “anti-woke” law for penalizing “certain viewpoints — the greatest First Amendment sin.”

The DeSantis administration hinted at a possible appeal to the Supreme Court and disagreed with the rulings for determining that “companies have a right to indoctrinate their employees with racist and discriminatory ideologies.”

Attorneys for the state, though, did not oppose a motion by the group of businesses seeking a permanent injunction against the “Stop-WOKE” act, which Walker granted on Friday.

DeSantis officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the order.

A separate challenge surrounding the how the policies apply to colleges and universities is currently awaiting a ruling in appeals court.

This article was originally published by Politico on July 26. See more at politico.com. ✨



Three non-profit stores building a reuse economy diverting useful resources from the landfill and redirecting these items to the public

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Civic Media Center Book Club:

“An Unfinished Love Story”

Thursday, Aug. 8

6pm -7pm

The Lynx Books, 601 S Main St

Join Joe Courter for a Civic Media Center book club hosted at The Lynx. We’ll be discussing “An Unfinished Love Story” by Doris Kearns Goodwin.

Books can be purchased at The Lynx at a 15 percent discount.

DeSantis guts arts statewide, Gainesville feels the cut

From a Facebook post by Gainesville City Commissioner Bryan Eastman

Here is the local impact of Ron DeSantis' veto of culture and arts funding in June. \$1.5 million in funds for the Harn, the Hippodrome, Sequential Artist Workshop, Gainesville Circus Center and more.

Our arts organizations are still struggling after the pandemic, and this unexpected veto is hurting them more. Go see a show, visit the museum, and make a donation, they could really use it right now:

Cultural and Museum Grant Applications

	Original Panel Recommendation
Annasemble Community Orchestra of Gainesville, Inc.	\$4,990
Cade Creativity Labs, Inc.	\$150,000
City of Gainesville	\$150,000
Dance Alive!, Inc.	\$107,254
Florida Museum	\$150,000
Gainesville Chamber Orchestra, Inc.	\$25,000
Gainesville Circus Center, Inc.	\$65,000
Gainesville Environmental Film and Arts Festival, Inc.	\$33,967
Gainesville Fine Arts Association, Inc.	\$40,000
Gainesville Community Playhouse	\$40,000
Gainesville Youth Chorus, Inc.	\$12,224
Good News Arts, Inc.	\$25,000
Harn Museum of Art	\$150,000
Matheson History Museum	\$51,484
Sequential Artists Workshop	\$25,000
Shands Teaching Hospital and Clinics, Inc.	\$90,000
The Hippodrome State Theatre, Inc.	\$150,000
UF College of Arts	\$62,000
University of Florida Performing Arts	\$150,000
TOTAL	\$1,481,919

“63 percent [of U.S. adults] say abortion should be legal in all or most cases”

- Public Opinion on Abortion by the Pew Research Center



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.

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Abolish DeSantis GRU Authority, vote YES on Local Public Utilities to keep Gainesville local

by Susan Bottcher

Here we go. Again.

Once more we are fighting to protect home rule: We want GRU, our local public utility, to be governed by the people it serves.

Your November ballot will be long and towards the bottom will be several local referenda. Among them, for Gainesville

voters, will be titled "Local Public Utilities." **We urge you to vote YES.** Why do we need to vote for YES on Local Public Utilities? Read on for a bit of background.

This is fifth time the Republicans in Tallahassee, at the direction of Sen. Keith Perry and Rep. Chuck Clemons have meddled with GRU.

It all began in 2014 with their first bill,

then again in the 2015 legislative session. Both those bills failed in committee. Then in 2016 one bill, HB1355, made it through the committees but was vetoed by then-Governor Rick Scott.

Not satisfied with three strikes, Clemons tried again in 2017 with HB759. He was in luck. That bill was signed into law, which resulted in a referendum being placed on the 2018 Gainesville ballot. This referendum asked to amend the city charter and change how GRU is governed. It asked Gainesville voters whether they wanted an unelected, unaccountable GRU Authority to control GRU. Clemons lost once again as the community came out strongly in opposition. HB759 was defeated by a whopping 20 point-margin (60 percent to 40 percent)!

We thought this would settle the issue once and for all. The people had spoken, and their collective voices were loud and clear: Leave our local public utility alone!

But here we are again. Not one to take repeated "No's" for an answer, Clemons resorted to an arcane method of circumventing the normal procedures that require the normal, democratic referendum model in 2023. Specifically, he used a "local" bill to amend our city charter without asking us pesky voters!

Clemons knew if he put another referendum on the ballot, the voters in Gainesville would hand him another decisive defeat. So, he resorted to the "local" bill, HB1645, which passed and was signed into law by DeSantis. These actions automatically amended our charter and circumvented a local vote.

There was strong opposition from city leaders, community organizations, and citizens every step of the way. We wrote emails, called Clemons and his committee members, and traveled to Tallahassee on multiple occasions to testify against what they were doing.

But they did it anyway. They passed HB1645, the governor signed it, and in less than a year GRU was under the control of a five-member board appointed by DeSantis. They created a system for utility governance that does not exist anywhere else in the USA. They made it all up with a sloppily written law and it's not working in your best interest.

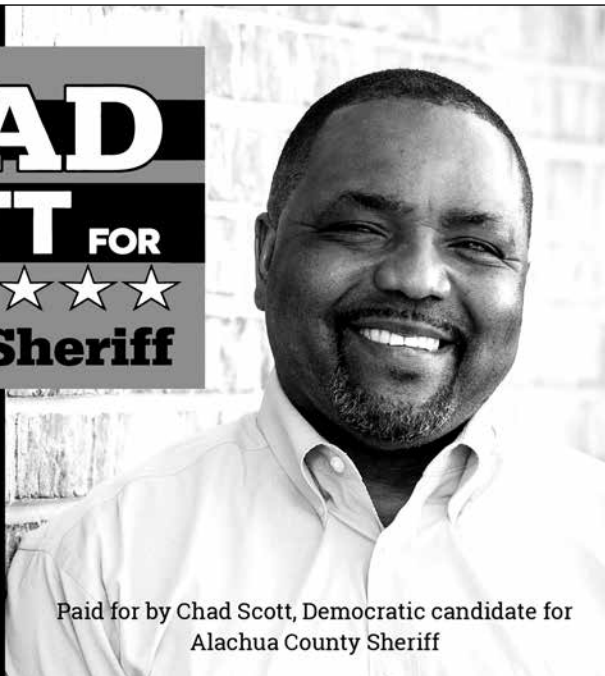
The grassroots group, Gainesville Resi-

" I am a math teacher and data nerd who believes decisions about our children and our tax dollars should be transparent and data-driven.



Paid for by Thomas Vu, Non-Partisan Candidate for Alachua County School Board District 2

CHAD SCOTT FOR Alachua ★★ ★ County Sheriff



Paid for by Chad Scott, Democratic candidate for Alachua County Sheriff

dents United, Inc. was formed to fight back. They raised money to hire attorneys and multiple lawsuits were filed.

Right out of the gate, DeSantis totally fumbled the required public notice and appointment requirements that were dictated by the law. This is the first example of why it's a bad idea to have Tallahassee controlling a municipal utility!

GRUnited Inc. filed a suit and the judge agreed with their claims. This resulted in the entire DeSantis-appointed Authority having to resign. Those positions had to be readvertised, and new appointments had to be made.

A new Authority was appointed, with two former members being reappointed. The chaos continued. Lousy agenda management, items being discussed and voted on that were not publicly noticed (as is required by sunshine laws) and an obvious disregard and outright disdain for the public has been on full display.

Case in point: In a discussion on the Government Services Contribution (GSC), formerly called the General Fund Transfer, the Authority debated how much to cut from what the utility contributes to the City in lieu of paying taxes. When staff reminded them that the cuts directly impact how the city is able to deliver services to the public, Member James Haslam shared his opinion. He said that since he didn't need to worry about being elected that he "couldn't care less" how it impacts people.

So, there you have it. They don't care. Why should they? Like Authority member Halsam said, you did not elect them. You can't un-elect them. They are not accountable to you. They answer only to DeSantis.

At a subsequent meeting, they summarily and without notice, fired GRU General Manager (GM), Tony Cunningham. Authority member and disgraced former GM Ed Bielarski then resigned as a board member so he could be appointed as the new General Manager, and permanent one to boot! They bypassed a national search, as is the custom with a high-level management position in a utility. Meanwhile, they are back to having only four members on the board, and there's no sign that DeSantis even knows he needs to appoint a replacement to that vacant seat.

The Authority's disdain for citizens is not going to fade. Their disregard for how a public entity like GRU is supposed to be governed is not going to change. The chaos is not going to abate.

That is, unless We The People change it.

You have the power to make that change. You can help restore local control by voting YES on the Gainesville charter amendment titled "Local Public Utilities."

You can also help the campaign get the word out by making a contribution online to Let The Voters Decide at www.keeppnvlocal.com or by sending a check to 235 S. Main Street # 206, Gainesville 32601. Your contribution will help with mailers, social media ads, and yard signs.

Help be a part of abolishing the DeSan-

tis-appointed GRU Authority. Help hand Clemons his fifth defeat. Help restore home rule for GRU. Vote YES for Local Public Utilities and please donate today.

Susan Bottcher is a community activist and has played a role in Gainesville, county, state, and national politics for over two decades, including a term as a city commissioner, work on the Alachua County Democratic Executive Committee, and being elected as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 2008. ✨

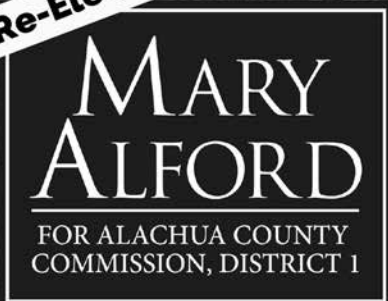
"It's time we had a pair of work boots on the City Commission" - James Ingle



VoteJamesIngle.com Paid for and approved by James Ingle for Gainesville City Commission District 2

Let's Re-Elect Mary To the Alachua County Commission!

Re-Elect



Paid for and approved by Mary Alford, Democrat for Alachua County Commission District 1



A local abortion rights activist coalition celebrates walking door-to-door, talking to voters in Alachua County and across the state at a “Super Saturday” event on June 22. For the proposed state constitutional amendment 4, “Amendment to Limit Government Interference with Abortion,” to pass into law, 60 percent of voters need to vote Yes on Amendment 4 on the Nov. 5 Florida presidential election ballot. Photo by The How Bazar staff, downtown Gainesville.



Yes on 4 and abortion in the State of Florida: Alachua County organizing updates

by the Gainesville Radical Reproductive Rights Network

In the November 5 general election, Floridians will have the chance to enshrine abortion rights into the Constitution of the State of Florida by voting yes on Amendment 4. The government should not interfere with anyone’s right to access health care and abortion is health care.

In May 2023, Floridians Protecting Freedom, a coalition of reproductive rights organizations and sponsor of the proposed Amendment to Limit Government Interference with Abortion, began the process of collecting 1.4 million petitions. On April 1, 2024 the Florida Supreme Court approved the language of the amendment and officially placed Amendment 4 on the November 2024 ballot. 11 months after sponsoring the proposed amendment, Floridians Protecting Freedom launched its Yes on 4 campaign, to ensure that 60 percent of voters vote YES for the Constitution to be amended. However, when the Court approved Amendment 4’s lan-

guage, they also upheld the 15-week abortion ban passed in 2022. In turn, that put a 6-week ban, passed in 2023, into effect on May 1, 2024. While the Court gave Floridians the chance to vote for their rights in November, it took away those same rights until November. It is important to put in the work now to ensure the amendment passes.

In cities across Florida, volunteers with the Yes on 4 campaign have been hosting Super Saturdays every month to train volunteers on canvassing, door knocking, and phone banking, together with a virtual, statewide option. In addition to Super Saturdays, the campaign conducts weekly phone bank training on Thursday evenings, and will also start online training for writing letters to the editor.

The next Super Saturday will be August 24 and will focus on either door knocking or canvassing. Attending a Super Saturday event can get you plugged in with local organizers and trained on how to talk to Florida voters, including friends and

family, about the importance of voting yes in November.

Yes on 4 is also mobilizing activists statewide to open hubs to provide resources to volunteers to distribute campaign literature and swag, such as stickers, bumper stickers, church fans, palm cards, and post card kits. Commit-to-vote cards can be completed and mailed to the campaign. Studio TM Ceramics, in northeast Gainesville, will serve as a Gainesville hub, with others likely to open. Supplies will become available within the next two weeks.

For those wanting to get involved in the Alachua County area, there is a coalition of activists from local organizations, such as National Women’s Liberation - Gainesville Chapter, League of Women Voters of Alachua County and its University of Florida campus group, and the Santa Fe College and University of Florida chapters of Planned Parenthood Generation Action, which organizes canvassing at local events, as well as door knocking, to engage in discussions with Alachua County

voters, gauge support for Amendment 4 and collect their commitment to vote.

Abortion—like all essential health care—is a deeply personal topic and patients should be empowered to navigate their abortion however they see fit. The ban is an extreme measure of control for a procedure that should be accessible to all pregnant people, without apology. To this end, patients should consider at-home health care as an option. Plan C is an invaluable resource for learning about self-managed abortions. Their website (plancpills.org) contains educational information, resources for accessing abortion pills as well as other critical abortion-related resources, specific to your state, and a vetted list of organizations that sell abortion pills. Aid Access (aidaccess.org) is another resource. The GRRR! Network is currently working on a virtual Self-Managed Abortion: Safe and Supported (SASS) training with Progress Florida. Details to come!

Additionally, to provide direct aid, GRRR! is collaborating with Florida Access Network (FAN) to build and distribute “repro kits,” containing reproductive health essentials. The kits are free to anyone who needs one and include period maintenance products such as tampons, pads and cups, as well as sexual health items, like condoms and dental dams, pregnancy tests and Plan B. They are delivered to places around Gainesville, including the Civic Media Center, and passed out at tabling events.

Amendment 4 is a reaction to the local and national political climate. It is important to stay informed and organize locally to fight for our fundamental human rights.

Learn more about Amendment 4 from Floridians Protecting Freedom here: <https://www.floridiansprotectingfreedom.com>

View upcoming events in Florida and register for your local or online Super Saturday event here: <https://www.mobilize.us/yes4florida/>

To stay up-to-date or get involved, follow the GRRR! Network

at <https://www.instagram.com/thegrrrnetwork> and National Women’s Liberation-Gainesville Chapter at <https://www.instagram.com/nwlgainesville> 🌸

Ursula K. Le Guin: on the power of reproductive choice

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

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

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

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

The life of that fetus would have prevented, would have aborted, three other fetuses ... the three wanted children, the three I had with my husband — whom, if I had not aborted the unwanted one, I would never have met ... I would have been an “unwed mother” of a three-year-old in California, without work, with half an education, living off her parents ...

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

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

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

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- Sept. 13 - Dionysus (Astrojazz)
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- Sept. 27 - Savants of Soul (Soul)

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And the good news is ...

Biden administration announces new rule to protect workers from heat-related illnesses

Senior Biden administration officials announced a proposed rule to prevent heat-related illness in the workplace, as climate change brings hotter temperatures

around the nation. Depending on the heat index, the rule would require employers to monitor workers' heat exposure, provide cool-down areas, and provide man-

datory cool-down breaks.

From an article by Lia Chien in the Florida Phoenix on July 2. See the full story at tinyurl.com/2003

Build-up begins to get Medicaid expansion on the ballot in Florida

Petition signature-gathering has begun with an eye toward 2026

More than 653,000 Floridians lost their Medicaid coverage over the past year because the state determined they were ineligible. Florida Voices for Health is a nonprofit advocacy group that is work-

ing on multiple health issues including expanding Medicaid; it is touting its new push to get Florida to join the majority of states that have already expanded the program. Florida Decides Healthcare is the

new political entity created to get Medicaid expansion on the 2026 ballot.

From an article by Mitch Perry in the Florida Phoenix on July 3. See the full story at tinyurl.com/Iguana2017

DeSantis signs bill providing \$20 million to compensate Dozier School for Boys victims

Gov. Ron DeSantis has approved a measure that will finally provide reparations for hundreds of men who as children were beaten and raped for decades while in the custody of the state.

will divide \$20 million in compensation between those who attended the Arthur G. Dozier School for Boys in North Florida between 1940 and 1975, as well as the Okeechobee School, another state-based institution known for its abusive nature. According to a bill analysis, there were

reports of children being chained to walls in irons, brutal whippings, and peonage at Dozier as early as 1901.

From an article by Mitch Perry in the Florida Phoenix on June 21. See the full story at tinyurl.com/Iguana2025

The law (HB 21) signed by the governor

Governor OKs bill allowing veterans' spouses to reside in VA nursing homes in Florida

Gov. Ron DeSantis recognized the sacrifices of veterans' spouses during a signing ceremony for a bill allowing those spouses to reside in nursing homes managed by the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. The state operates eight

nursing homes for veterans, but DeSantis' approval of HB 725 expands the eligibility for residency to spouses and widows of people who served in the military. "It's just the right thing to do when you have a surviving veteran and the spouse, you

know, we want to keep them together." DeSantis said.

From an article by Jackie Llanos in the Florida Phoenix on June 20. See the full story at tinyurl.com/Iguana2009

New Florida law puts an end to releases of lighter-than-air balloons

Gov. Ron DeSantis has signed legislation prohibiting the intentional release of balloons filled with a gas lighter than air. Exceptions include weather balloons and hot air balloons. Violating the law will mean

a \$150 fine for people older than 6. The Ocean Conservation Society estimates that more than 100,000 marine animals die from entanglement and starvation caused by plastic debris and lists balloons

as the biggest cause of death from ocean debris for birds.

From an article by Jay Waagmeester in the Florida Phoenix on June 25. See the full story at tinyurl.com/Iguana2015

Oklahoma Supreme Court just rejected nation's first religious public charter school

The creation of a Catholic public school violates the separation of church and state, Court rules

In a win for the separation of church and state, the Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled that Oklahoma's approval of the nation's first religious public charter school violates the state constitution and

charter-school statute, as well as the U.S. Constitution. The decision affirms what we already knew: A religious school can't be a public school, and a public school can't be religious.

From an article by Heather L. Weaver and Daniel Mach in ACLU.org on June 25. See the full story at tinyurl.com/Iguana2018

Turtle nesting record broken in Manatee County after 42 years

A 42-year record for sea turtle nests was shattered on July 2. Manatee County's Anna Maria Island Turtle Watch and Shorebird Monitoring volunteers counted 2024's 546th nest, exceeding the 2019 record of

544 nests for the whole season. The sea turtle nesting season extends from May 1 to Oct. 31, but began early. Executive Director Kristen Mazzarella said that Turtle Watch volunteers have been putting in extra hours

on the beach and painting nest stakes to mark the new nests.

From an article by Leslie Lake in the Anna Maria Island Sun on July 8. See the full story at tinyurl.com/Iguana2019

Voting rights groups call on Florida elected officials to combat election disinformation

With concerns about election dis- and misinformation coursing through the election cycle this year, a group of Florida voting rights and social justice groups are calling on every state and county elected official to be aware of election laws and

communicate that information accurately to their constituents. More than two dozen groups — led by All Voting is Local Florida, the NAACP Florida State Conference, Common Cause Florida, and the ACLU of Florida — have written a letter

to state legislators and county commissioners stressing the critical role that they play in combating bogus information.

From an article by Mitch Perry in the Florida Phoenix on June 25. See the full story at tinyurl.com/Iguana2021

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Editors' picks: News that didn't fit

Biden to pardon vets discharged for same-sex relationships

by Ashley Murray ~ Florida Phoenix ~ June 26 ~ tinyurl.com/Iguana2005

President Joe Biden will pardon U.S. military veterans who were discharged or convicted under military law for consensual same-sex relations, the administration announced. They estimate thousands were convicted over several decades and may be eligible. The convictions were enforced under a military law that prohibited certain types of sex from May 1951 to December 2013.

'Challenges our authority': School board in Florida bans book about book bans

by Douglas Soule ~ USA Today Network - Florida ~ June 11 ~ tinyurl.com/Iguana2030

School officials in Indian River County have banned a book about book banning. The book, "Ban this Book" by Alan Gratz, is a children's novel about a fourth grader who creates a secret banned books locker library after her school board pulled a multitude of titles off the shelves. Board members said they disliked how it referenced other books that already had been removed from schools and accused it of "teaching rebellion of school board authority."

Five truly awful things you may have overlooked about 'Trump v. United States'

by Bill Blum ~ The Progressive Magazine ~ July 11 ~ tinyurl.com/Iguana2027

The ruling in Trump v. United States clears the way for the establishment of an imperial presidency that can operate above the law and will go down in history as one of the most regressive in the Supreme Court's history. The opinion gives presidents a license to commit crimes, opens the door to criminal conspiracies, and guts the Constitution's impeachment judgment clause.

Inside the Trump plan for 2025

by Jonathan Blitzer ~ The New Yorker ~ July 15 ~ tinyurl.com/Iguana2031

The Center for Renewing America is a conservative policy shop whose most recent annual report emphasized a "commitment to end woke and weaponized government." The Center is one of roughly two dozen right-wing groups that have emerged in Washington since Trump left office, united through a wealthy network based on Capitol Hill called the Conservative Partnership Institute, which many in Washington regard as the next Trump Administration in waiting.

Julian Assange is finally free — but should not have been prosecuted in the first place

by Kenneth Roth ~ The Guardian ~ July 1 ~ tinyurl.com/Iguana2032

Julian Assange's lengthy detention has finally ended, but the danger that his prosecution poses to the rights of journalists remains. As is widely known, the U.S. government's pursuit of Assange under the Espionage Act threatens to criminalize common journalistic practices. Sadly, Assange's guilty plea and release from custody have done nothing to ease that threat.

The 'Trash School': Officials knew a Gainesville school sat on a former dump

by Georgia Gee ~ The Intercept ~ June 4 ~ tinyurl.com/Iguana2033

Where children played, the ground bubbled. Birds swarmed, feeding on trash. At one point, a pile of 20 dead dogs and cats were dropped in the yard of the elementary school, just 100 feet away from classrooms. Yes, in the 1950s, the City of Gainesville chose the backyard of a school, in the predominantly Black part of town, for a dump. Sixty years later, the site is overgrown grassland, but contamination at the school still poses a large risk to students' health.

UNC professor's contract not renewed after University recorded classes without notice

by Ananya Cox ~ The Daily Tar Heel ~ July 7 ~ tinyurl.com/Iguana2034

Larry Chavis' contract at the University of North Carolina was not renewed after his classes were recorded and reviewed without his knowledge during the University's 2024 spring semester. The clinical professor of strategy and entrepreneurship has worked at the Kenan-Flagler Business School for 18 years. Chavis was given no explanation why his classes were secretly recorded or why he was terminated, although he wrote administration's concerns likely stemmed from his using an email exchange with his dean as a class example of how not to build an inclusive environment in an organization.

When free speech rights collide

by Bill Lueders ~ The Progressive Magazine ~ July 2 ~ tinyurl.com/Iguana2028

After Facebook and Twitter shut down President Donald Trump's accounts due to incendiary rhetoric and disinformation, Florida and Texas passed laws making it harder for Internet platforms to keep "dangerous lunatics" from posting whatever they want. The companies sued in response, insisting on their right to remove content that violates their policies. The key question: are social media platforms more like newspapers and magazines — free to decide what they publish, or more like telecommunications companies, which are required to transmit everyone's messages?

Who's a bigger threat to democracy — immigrants, or billionaires

by Sonali Kolhatkar ~ Independent Media Institute ~ July 19 ~ tinyurl.com/Iguana2035

We may think of elections in terms of one person, one vote. But, not only do undemocratic structures such as the electoral college dilute our votes, the money that elites flaunt places a hefty thumb on the scales of who represents us. Yet, we hear more about the threat of, say, immigrants than the threat of billionaires, to our democracy. 🐸



SCAN ME

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UF dean unilaterally kicks out pro-Palestinian protester for three years, withholds her degree

by the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression

The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression is demanding the University of Florida overturn its disproportionate and unreasonable punishment of a student who was suspended from school for three years just days before her graduation.

Keely Gliwa was set to graduate with a master's degree in biochemistry and molecular biology in May. On April 29, Keely attended a peaceful pro-Palestinian protest at the campus's Plaza of the Americas, where some students were sitting in lawn chairs playing Uno.

UF police broke up the protest to arrest the students sitting in lawn chairs. In video of the incident, Keely can be seen consoling a student who had a panic attack when the police arrived, urging the student to leave with her after the police ordered everyone to disperse. As a result, Keely was arrested for failing to immediately comply with the dispersal order.

UF immediately placed Keely on interim suspension and charged her with four violations of the student code of conduct for "disruptive conduct," "violation of law,"

"failure to comply with directive," and "violation of university policy."

After reviewing video evidence and witness statements corroborating Keely's account, the University Officials Board overseeing her conduct hearing concluded Keely did not willfully ignore the dispersal order. The Board recommended two years of probation based on Keely's spotless record and the outpouring of letters attesting to her good character.

Shockingly, however, Dean of Students Chris Summerlin unilaterally overturned the board's recommendation, finding Keely responsible on all four charges and suspending her for three years.

"A three-year suspension is an expulsion in all but name," said FIRE attorney Jessie Appleby. "It's a shockingly disproportionate punishment to mete out to a student with no disciplinary history, on the whim of a single dean."

As FIRE's letter to UF President Ben Sasse notes, public colleges and universities may establish restrictions on the time, place, and manner of expressive activity in outdoor areas of campus, and punish students who violate them. But under the First Amendment, the rules must be reasonable,

and enforcement must be consistent and viewpoint-neutral. UF administrators cannot restrict or punish the speech of student-protesters more harshly than they would other students simply because they object to the content of their speech.

But ample evidence suggests that's exactly what happened.

Lawn chairs are allowed (and quite common) in outdoor campus spaces at UF. And UF policy and Florida law specifically notes that "a person who wishes to engage in an expressive activity in outdoor areas of campus may do so freely, spontaneously, and contemporaneously as long as the person's conduct is lawful and does not materially and substantially disrupt the functioning of the public institution of higher education or infringe upon the rights of other individuals or organizations to engage in expressive activities."

On the second day of the pro-Palestinian demonstrations, however, UF rushed out flyers overnight threatening a three-year banishment from campus for a list of vaguely-defined prohibited activities and items, including chair sitting. As FIRE wrote in its letter to UF, the significant departure from existing university policy and the last minute rule change "strongly suggest UF

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adopted the rules specifically to restrict the pro-Palestinian demonstrations.”

“The rules were unreasonable, the enforcement was unreasonable, and then Dean Summerlin unilaterally imposed an unreasonable punishment, overruling the officials who actually heard the case,” said Appleby. “That suggests the University of Florida just wanted to make an example of the protesters, regardless of the facts and the law.”

UF’s unusually harsh and unwarranted punishment of Keely came after months of pressure from politicians and state officials to subject pro-Palestinian protests to heightened scrutiny. In October, State University System of Florida Chancellor Ray Rodrigues went so far as ordering Florida schools to derecognize all chapters of the Students for Justice in Palestine. Rodrigues’ order dubiously claimed that SJP was guilty of “material support for terrorism.” As FIRE warned UF in a letter, the cited activities were all constitutionally protected political speech.

Ultimately, Rodrigues backed down after no Florida schools obeyed the unconstitutional directive — reportedly because administrators realized they would personally be on the hook for damages for knowingly violating the law. UF administrators should back down this time around, as well.

“President Sasse speaks often about how he wants the University of Florida to be a leader in respecting student’s First Amendment rights,” said Appleby. “Now’s the time for him to act and ensure administrators walk the walk and live up to that vision.”

This article was originally published on July 11 by the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE). The demands outlined were submitted by FIRE in a letter to the University of Florida on July 3. See the full letter at: tinyurl.com/Iguana2039



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Beau of the Fifth Column

Beau is a YouTube journalist based in NW Florida. He posts short pieces every day covering foreign policy, education, security, politics, and human rights. He can be ironic, dead serious, a bit whimsical, and/or analytical. He also produces longer form videos.



Check him out at:

youtube.com/BeauoftheFifthColumn

The Point

Daily Roundup from WUFT News

WUFT at the University of Florida has created a portal to news that comes to your email box five days a week. It has items from multiple sources to click on for local, regional, and national coverage. It is useful and free. Go to WUFT.org/theptpoint and enter your email.

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In memoriam:

Bernice Johnson Reagon, Civil Rights Activist and Founder of Sweet Honey in the Rock, Dead at 81

by Jodi Guglielmi

Bernice Johnson Reagon, civil rights song leader and co-founder of The Freedom Singers who later started the a capella ensemble Sweet Honey in the Rock, has died at the age of 81.

Reagon's death was confirmed by Courtland Cox, the chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's Legacy Project, according to NPR. No cause of death was given.

In the sixties, Johnson Reagon was a central part of the African American struggle for civil rights, starting her work in her hometown of Albany, Georgia, while enrolled in college, where protests and marches were often accompanied by mass arrests. She found inspiration in the songs elders would sing at meetings and community gatherings.

"As a singer and activist in the Albany Movement, I sang and heard the freedom songs and saw them pull together sections of the Black community at times when other means of communication were ineffective," she said on NPR's Fresh Air. "It was the first time that I knew the power of song to be an instrument for the articulation of our community concerns."

Reagon was jailed in 1961 for participating in a civil rights demonstration and was kicked out of college for her activism. She went on to co-found the Freedom Singers in 1962, an a capella group that was part of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, alongside Rutha Harris, Charles Neblett, and Cordell Reagon.

The group began touring in December of that year to raise money for SNCC and officially became the first group of freedom singers to tour nationally. The group chronicled SNCC activities through songs, including "They Laid Medgar Evers In His Grave," about a leader's funeral.



Bernice Johnson Reagon performs with Sweet Honey in the Rock in Michigan, 1977. Photo by Diane Davies, courtesy of Smithsonian Center for Folklife & Cultural Heritage.

She later married Cordell Reagon, with whom she had two children before divorcing in 1967.

In 1966, Johnson Reagon founded the Harambee Singers, which were associated with the Black Consciousness Movement. While serving as the Vocal Director of the Black Repertory Theater at Howard University (where she got her Ph.D. after returning to school following her divorce), she formed Sweet Honey in the Rock, an all-women, African American a capella group that sought to affect change and portray the Black experience through their voices.

Johnson Reagon served as director of Sweet Honey in the Rock from 1973 until 2003. Following a performance at a 1975 University of Chicago festival, Flying Fish Records signed the group, and they went on to find great success. Their debut album was self-titled Sweet Honey in the Rock. Other works include *In This Land*, *Sacred Ground*, and *The Women Gather*. The group was nominated for Grammy Awards three times.

In 1993, Johnson Reagon wrote the book *We Who Believe in Freedom: Sweet Honey in The Rock, Still on the Journey*, which detailed the history of the group.

Along with her musical pursuits, Johnson Reagon joined the Smithsonian in 1974, where she worked in the Division of Performing Arts/African Diaspora Project as a Cultural Historian. There, she developed two major projects: "Wade in the Water: African American Sacred Music Traditions," a radio series, and "Voices of the Civil Rights Movement: Black American Freedom Songs, 1960-66." Johnson Reagon won the Peabody Award for "Wade in the Water."

Article reprinted from the July 17 Rolling Stone. For more on Bernice Johnson Reagon's life, see the obituary in the July 19 New York Times. ✨

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In memoriam:

Rest in Power, U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee

On July 19, longtime U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas) died at the age of 74 after a long battle with pancreatic cancer. She is celebrated for her leadership in protecting women from domestic violence and recognizing Juneteenth as a national holiday.

Sheila Jackson Lee's initiatives for women will remain significant. We honor her as a woman in politics who upheld constitutional freedoms for everyone.

PBS News reports:

The Democrat had represented her Houston-based district and the nation's fourth-largest city since 1995. She had previously had breast cancer and announced the pancreatic cancer diagnosis on June 2.

"The road ahead will not be easy, but I stand in faith that God will strengthen me," Jackson Lee said in a statement then.

Jackson Lee was "a towering figure in our politics," President Joe Biden said in a statement Saturday. "Always fearless, she spoke truth to power and represented



Sheila Jackson Lee, 1950-2024

the power of the people of her district in Houston with dignity and grace."

Biden said Jackson Lee's spirit was unbreakable.

Adapted from Ms. Magazine roundup article on July 26. 🐾

Election dates

State primary, local non-partisan races

Aug 5-17: Early voting

Aug 8: Absentee ballot request deadline

Aug. 20: Election day

General election

Oct. 7: Registration deadline

Oct. 21-Nov 2: Early voting

Oct. 24: Absentee ballot request deadline

Nov. 5: Election Day



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From HARRIS, p. 1

The three groups' joint announcement of their endorsement of Harris comes four days after the vice president launched her campaign following Biden's decision to step aside under pressure from Democrats, due to concerns about his age, health, and sinking popularity among voters.

Since Sunday, the gun violence prevention group March for Our Lives has also announced its first-ever presidential endorsement of Harris, and the vice president has secured support from at least four national climate action groups.

"We see an unprecedented surge of enthusiasm on the doors and from our members about Vice President Kamala Harris," said Marta Popadiak, movement governing director of People's Action. "The Biden/Harris administration created real momentum toward an economy that puts working people before billionaires and a democracy that protects hard-won freedoms for everyone. We need to build on that momentum."

People's Action has utilized "deep canvassing," an organizing tactic that eschews the brief, scripted conversations typical in traditional phone-banking and door-knocking operations in favor of longer discussions and open-ended questions aimed at developing an understanding of voters' beliefs, priorities, and values.

"We are mobilizing tens of thousands of volunteers to have deep conversations about why voting for Harris is a vote for a future in which our families and communities will thrive," said Popadiak.

People's Action expressed hope that a Harris presidency could initiate a shift in the Biden administration's "disastrous support" for Israel.

DaMareo Cooper and Analilia Mejia, co-executive directors of CPD, called on progressives to "rally behind Vice President Harris to build upon" the achievements of the Biden administration, including strengthening the U.S. economy following the coronavirus pandemic and canceling student debt for nearly one million Americans.

"Vice President Kamala Harris is a strong candidate who will beat Donald Trump, preserve our democracy, and drive our country forward," said Cooper and Mejia.

The WFP noted that 95 percent of its members and delegates voted this week to endorse Harris as the Democratic nominee, and said the organization plans to knock on two million doors in key states including North Carolina and Georgia.

The organizing push is kicking off as Sen. JD Vance (D-Ohio), the Republican vice presidential nominee, faces blistering criticism for comments he made in 2021 in which he described Harris and other Democratic leaders as "childless cat ladies," and for his support for a nationwide abortion ban and call to track people who cross state lines to obtain abortion care. On Wednesday, the Harris campaign warned voters about Trump's promise to oil tycoons that he would ensure they can continue drilling for planet-heating fossil fuels if they gave him \$1 billion in campaign donations.

Nic O'Rourke, a member of the Philadelphia City Council who represents the WFP, said that a Harris victory in November would ensure "the best conditions possible for activists as they join with and empower their communities" to fight for economic, racial, climate, and reproductive justice.

Unlike Harris', said O'Rourke, "the GOP's vision for America doesn't hold space for the righteous demands of the constituents I serve and the people I come from."

This article was originally published by Common Dreams on July 25. See more at commondreams.org.

From YES, p. 2

And if you live in a county commission district where no seat is up (i.e., Districts 2 and 4 won't be up for consideration until 2026), then you are not able to vote for anyone.

The intended effect of SMD is to mute your voice, to reduce your voting power for electing county commissioners from all five to just one. This reduction in representation is theft. 4/5s of your representation was stolen from you.

We are fighting back because we know more representation is better than less. This November will be your opportunity to overturn SMDs. Everyone's ballot will have a referendum asking whether you want to return to electing county commissioners using the ALD model. We urge a YES vote on At Large Districts in November.

You can join the fight to restore ALD by visiting OneAlachua-County.com and supporting our campaign. You can donate online or by sending a check to: One Alachua County P.O. Box 358986, Gainesville, 32635

As with any campaign, we are raising funds for mailers, social media ads and yard signs. Any donation is greatly appreciated and will go a long way to return to ALD voting, reclaiming your voice and strengthening democracy!

Susan Bottcher is a community activist and has played a role in Gainesville, county, state, and national politics for over two decades, including a term as a city commissioner, work on the Alachua County Democratic Executive Committee, and being elected as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 2008.

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August 20th

- ✓ Amy has written legislation to protect women's health data and privacy
- ✓ She gained national recognition for her work with Harvard Safra Center for Ethics in de-escalation, conflict resolution, and constructive disagreement
- ✓ She was the only candidate to defend home rule in Tallahassee, women's rights across the state, and equality and education through PEN America workshops, school board meetings, and as co-chair on the DAC

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From *GUIDE*, p. 1

chance in what will be a tough race. He also has AFL-CIO support. Latrell Simmons is pretty good, too, showing especially good at the League of Women Voters forum, but has little money or much of an active campaign. Again, November matters. Vote Chad Scott.

County Commission District 1: Mary Alford is by far our favorite. Been in there, been tested, and is very good. And note, due to Tallahassee meddling, our commissioner races are single district for the first time, not countywide. If you like her but can't vote for her, send her some campaign support.

Alachua County School Board District 1: Thomas Vu is a new face and would be a great addition to the Board. He has support from the teachers union and would be an improvement over current board member Dyonne McGraw.

Alachua County School Board District 4: Keep Leannetta McNealy without a doubt; she's great, and her opponent is an oddball Abraham Lincoln role player. Again, vote Leannetta.

Gainesville City Commission At-Large: James Ingle without a doubt. Great guy, committed union member who loves this town.

From *HOPE*, p. 32

son makes me ponder how a generation committed to systemic change and social mobilization can be so numb. Apathy is the enemy of hope, it's a haven for those too comfortable to be bothered with 'abstract issues.' Apathy is the default for those without *courage*. To be a young citizen of the United States and choose political apathy is an injustice to the honor of voting and disrespectful to the democracy-powered nation we are fighting to maintain. This election IS the time to be courageous and not shy away from hard conversations and confrontations. Yes, we are tired, but that gives us all the more reason to stay awake. Let us, the generation with the possibility to catalyze exuberant degrees of change, choose not to be complicit in the face of broken systems because it is the easy way out. Nothing worthwhile is easy.

On the other hand, individuals with views that are not reflected in political candidates' choosing not to vote further prevent social progress. May I remind you that choosing not to vote automatically ensures the views you support are not reflected in your government? Furthermore, is it not part of democracy to compromise for the greater good of our community?

AUGUST ELECTION



Iguana Picks for the Aug. 20 Democratic Primary

Cut this out and take it into the voting booth. For more details on our picks, see the article on page 1 of this issue.

U.S. Senate: Stanley Campbell

Florida House District 22: Amy Trask

Alachua County Sheriff: Chad Scott

County Commission District 1: Mary Alford

Alachua County School Board District 1: Thomas Vu

Alachua County School Board District 4: Leannetta McNealy

Gainesville City Commission At-Large: James Ingle

Gainesville City Commission District 1: Michael Perkins

Note: Not every candidate here is on every ballot due to district boundaries

Gainesville City Commission District 1: Michael Perkins would give SE Gainesville a boost in representation over the cur-

rent commissioner; he is actively involved in helping human needs, including homelessness, food, and education.✪

Yes, ethically it may be true that some issues should not be compromised on, however, if democracy is the practice of citizens electing officials that reflect personal political views, is it not appropriate to have candidates that encompass views that cater to a larger demographic of people?

It is also important to note we do not solely vote for names we see on the ballot. Specifically when voting for the president, we are also voting for cabinet appointees, potential Supreme Court nominations, and an executive body that may lead a country through unprecedented times like global pandemics. Thus, when filling out our ballots, the notion that compromise is a natural aspect of democracy must remain at the forefront of our minds. This compromise is a good thing; it keeps the democratic process flowing and in check.

Lastly, I would like to address women specifically: do not forsake the women who came before us, and remember the generations of struggle women endured for our right to cast our ballots. Exercising the right to vote is our DUTY as women, not only for the future of our nation but for paying homage to the women in the United States who were never granted

the opportunity to vote, and to the women around the world who remain barred from participating in elections. We wear the legacies of our mothers and grandmothers. We carry the hope for our daughters when we enter that ballot box. Ladies, it is the moment our rights are for granted when our progress in the perpetual mission for equality is jeopardized.

Aug. 20 and Nov. 5 is our time as Gen-Z Floridians to rise to the occasion of defending our democracy. Never discredit the power your vote has, never discredit your voice in the democratic process, and certainly never discredit that your passions can be reflected in government.

How do we find hope for tomorrow's America? We VOTE.

For a trusted source of information about ballot choices this election season, visit to the League of Women Voters site VOTE411! at lww.org/elections/vote411

To hear what Alachua County Candidates have to say, watch the Bob Graham Center's and League of Women Voters of Alachua County Primary Candidates Forum at: tinyurl.com/Iguana2037 ✪

Gainesville area events

WEEK OF JULY 29-AUG 3

- Thu 8/1 **“Imagining Your World through Comics”**, 5-8pm, Cotton Club Museum (837 SE 7th Ave), Afrofuturism, Black superheroes, zine workshop, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9035
- Thu 8/1 **Poetry Jam**, 8-11pm, Civic Media Ctr (433 S Main St), poetry readings every Thurs, free; civicmediacenter.org
- Fri 8/2 **Food Pantry**, 10am-4pm, UF HealthStreet (2401 SW Archer Rd), free, best choice available Mons & Thurs (health interview requested for repeat membership); 352-294-4880 & facebook.com/UFHealthStreet
- Fri 8/2 **Recovery Through the Arts**, 8am-4pm, UF Malachowsky Hall, Nvidia Auditorium (1889 Museum Rd), exhibit & talk on art, AI, & Afrofuturism, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9036
- Fri 8/2 **Free Fridays Concerts**, 7-9pm, Bo Diddley Downtown Plaza (111 E Univ Ave), every Fri through 9/27 (tonight: bluegrass from Patchwork Plus), free; see pg 16 & tinyurl.com/iguana9020
- Fri 8/2 **“The Lightning Thief”**, 7-9pm, Acrosstown Repertory Theatre (3501 SW 2nd Ave), “The Percy Jackson Musical”, \$27.25-\$16.75; acrosstown.org
- Sat 8/3 **Community Open House**, 10am-1pm, UF Health Urgent Care Ctr (457 SE 20th St [off Hawthorne Rd west of GTEC]), with games, food, activities, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9037
- Sat 8/3 **Rhonda Vincent & The Rage**, 7-10pm, Univ Aud (333 Newell Dr), bluegrass, \$40-60; hogtownopry.com

WEEK OF AUG 4-10

- Mon 8/5 **First Day for Early Voting**, 8am-6pm, multiple locations; tinyurl.com/iguana9038
- Tue 8/6 **Parents & Friends of Lesbians And Gays (PFLAG)**, 7-8pm, Pride Ctr (850 NW 83 St, 2nd floor); pflaggainesville.org
- Thu 8/8 **Artist Meetup**, 5:30-7pm 2nd Thurs, Gvl Fine Arts Ass’n (1314 S Main St), exhibit & conversation, free; gainesvillefinearts.org
- Thu 8/8 **CMC Book Club**, 6-7pm, The Lynx Books (601 S Main St), Joe Courter hosts Doris Kearns Goodwin’s *An Unfinished Love Story*, free; see pg 10 & thelynxbooks.com/events
- Fri 8/9 **Clubes de Escucha**, 6-8pm, Curia on the Drag (2029 NW 6th St), segundo y cuarto Viernes de cada mes; clubesdeescucha.com
- Sat 8/10 **Lucky Seven Anniversary Party**, 2-10pm, Cypress & Grove (1001 NW 4th St); cypressandgrove.com

WEEK OF AUG 11-17

- Sun 8/11 **“In the Heights”** final performance, 2pm, Gvl Community Playhouse (4039 NW 16th Blvd), musical by Lin-Manuel Miranda, \$12-24; gcplayhouse.org
- Mon 8/12 **Author Mesha Maren**, 6-7pm, The Lynx Books (601 S Main St), author of *Shae*, free; thelynxbooks.com/events
- Tue 8/13 **West End Park Plan meeting**, 6:30 pm, UF/IFAS Extension Office (22712 W Newberry Rd, Newberry), county seeks public’s ideas for new 75-acre park, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9039
- Thu 8/15 **Gvl City Commission** meets, 1 pm, corporate divestment on agenda, free; see pp 8-9
- Thu 8/15 **Lynx Banned Book Club**, 6-7pm, The Lynx Books (601 S Main St), Carmen M Machado’s *In the Dream House*, free; thelynxbooks.com/events
- Fri 8/16 **Quique and Mayda**, 7pm, St Patrick’s Catholic Church (550 NE 16th Ave), 3rd Friday Concert with music from Puerto Rico, free?; tinyurl.com/iguana9040
- Fri 8/16 **Jazz Bandits**, 7pm, Cypress & Grove (1001 NW 4th St), free; tinyurl.com/iguana9041
- Sat 8/17 **Last Day for Early Voting**, 8am-6pm; tinyurl.com/iguana9038
- Sat 8/17 **1st Mag 10th Anniversary Party**, 1pm, First Magnitude Brewing (1220 SE Veitch St), live music on 2 stages, special brews, more, free? (not the beer, nor “VIP Experience”); tinyurl.com/iguana9042
- Sat 8/17 **Free Store**, 2-5pm, Civic Media Ctr (433 S Main St), free stuff for all on 3rd Saturdays (masks required); see pg 22 & civicmediacenter.org

WEEK OF AUG 18-24

- Sun 8/18 **Sunday Assembly**, 11am, Pride Ctr (3850 NW 83rd St, 2nd floor), Susan Bottcher & Wes Wheeler on public utilities (see pg 12), free; sagainesville.weebly.com
- Sun 8/18 **“Roots of African Music”**, 2-3 pm, Millhopper Library (3145 NW 43rd St, Room A); multimedia talk series begins with Delta blues (9/17 covers Chicago blues), free; tinyurl.com/iguana9043
- Sun 8/18 **“Ain’t No Shame”**, 5-11pm, The Wooly (20 N Main St), benefit for Bread & Roses Women’s Health Ctr, \$?; facebook.com/TheWooly & breadroses.com
- Tue 8/20 **Local and Primary Election**, statewide, free; see pg 32 & votelaachua.gov
- Sat 8/24 **Women’s Equality Day Luncheon**, 11:30am, Best Western Gateway Grand (4200 NW 97th Blvd), Gvl City Mgr Cynthia Curry on “Leading in Challenging Times” + Linda Bassham receives Friends of Susan B. Anthony Award, \$32 (21 & under \$18) [reservations required]; see pg 28 & facebook.com/FoSBAnthony

- Sat 8/24 **Acrosstown Rep Annual Gala**, 6-9pm, Acrosstown Repertory Theatre (3501 SW 2nd Ave), previews, silent auction, more, \$50; acrosstown.org
- Sat 8/24 **Abortion Rights canvassing**, 10am-noon, countywide, “Super Saturday” campaign for Amendment 4, free; see pg 14 & tinyurl.com/iguana9044

WEEK OF AUG 25-31

- Sun 8/25 **Mammoth Market**, 1–5pm, The Woolly (20 N Main St); facebook.com/TheWoolly
- Thur 8/29 **Author Jasmin Graham**, 6-7pm, The Lynx Books (601 S Main St), scientist on her new *Sharks Don't Sink*, free; thelynxbooks.com/events
- Fri 8/30 **Artwalk**, 7-10pm last Fridays, various venues around town, free; see pg 16 & artwalkgainesville.com
- Fri 8/30 **“Perfect Arrangement” opens**, 8pm?, The Hipp (25 SE 2nd Pl); comedy/drama of closeted State Dept workers during “Red Scare”, thru Sept 20, \$40-50?; thehipp.org/perfect-arrangement
- Sat 8/31 **UF football vs Miami**, 3:30-6:30pm, BHG Stadium, traffic warning

WEEK OF SEPT 1-7

- Mon 9/2 **“Incredible Insects” exhibit final day**, 10am-4:30pm, Fla Museum of Natural History (3215 Hull Rd), Fla bugs & bug scientists, \$6.50 Fla residents, \$4.50 ages 3-17, free w/ Gator 1 Card; tinyurl.com/iguana9045
- Sat 9/7 **“Plant for Pollinators”**, 12-3pm, Millhopper Branch Library (3145 NW 43rd St), learn about native flowers and get one free, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9046
- Sat 9/7 **“Democracy Explorers”**, 3-4pm, Matheson Museum (513 E Univ Ave), last day for traveling Smithsonian exhibit on US democracy [see also “Voices and Votes: Alachua County” exhibit by League of Women Voters & County Supervisor of Elections through “early 2025”], free; tinyurl.com/iguana9047
- Sat 9/7 **UF football vs Samford (who?)**, 7-10pm, BHG Stadium, traffic warning

RECURRING EVENTS

Monday Farmers Market, 4-7pm at Cypress & Grove

Wednesday Community Nights, 6-9pm at Heartwood (622 SE 1st St); music and varied events

Saturday Farmers Market, 8:30-noon, 5920 NW 13th St

Thursday evening Poetry Jam, 8pm at Civic Media Center

Free Fridays Concert Series, 7-9pm at Bo Diddley Plaza downtown (111 E Univ Ave); pg 16 & tinyurl.com/Iguana9020

Civic Media Center volunteer meetings, 1st & 3rd Wednesday, at CMC (433 S Main St) & via Zoom

Democratic Women’s Club meets 3rd Mondays, 11:30am (except Dec & Jan), B’Nai Israel (3830 NW 16th Blvd); gvilleddoris@hotmail.com

PFLAG meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7pm at the Pride Center, 3850 NW 83rd St, second floor.

GAINESVILLE OPEN MICS

Gainesville is a talent-rich town, and open mics are a great way to have an evening of varied entertainment out of the house. These Open Mics offer a variety of music genres and other entertainment. Also, of course, you performer-types can go perform. Each venue has its own character.

The Bull: Monday, 7pm, sign up at 6:30

Mai Kai: Monday, 8:30pm, sign up at 8pm

“The Reverend Angel Dust’s Tabernacle of Hedonism Hosted by Tom Miller” at the **University Club (UC)**: Every Monday (until December), 10:30pm, sign up at 9

How Bazar: 3rd Wednesday of the month, 8-10pm, DM to sign up

Satchels: first Wednesday of the month, 6-9pm, sign up at 5:30pm

“Front Street” at **Boca Backyard**: 4th Wednesday of the month. 7:30-11pm

Swamp Head Brewery: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 7-9pm, sign up at 6:30pm

The Midnight: every Tuesday, 8pm-?, sign up at 7:30

OTHER EVENT LISTINGS

Please support Gainesville live music venues, they all have calendars: Heartwood Soundstage, Satchel’s, Loosey’s, Boca Backyard, the Woolly, Wormhole, One Love Café, Cypress & Grove, etc.

See visitgainesville.com/events for an event list, updated Thursdays; also try 352arts.org; and don’t forget civicmediacenter.org. 🐊

Iguana Directory

Call 352-378-5655 or email 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 internships, birding for kids, conservation activism, volunteer opportunities. AlachuaAudubon.org | 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

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 | 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.org | 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

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 | 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 | 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

Avian Research and Conservation Institute

Spotlight on ...



It's time Gainesville takes our local utilities back from Ron DeSantis and the state. On Nov. 5 the residents of Gainesville have the chance to fight back and keep Gainesville local. We are a group of community organizations that are urging residents to vote YES on "Local Public Utilities" on the November 2024 ballot.

The GRU Takeover was passed by party-line vote with no say from Gainesville residents. This DeSantis appointed board answers to no one but the Governor.

Government works best when it answers to the people, not statewide politicians with no connections to Gainesville. This Gainesville Regional Utilities Authority has the power to raise rates, increase debt, sell public land, hurt pensions, and eliminate jobs, with no oversight or say from our local community. It remains a part of the City of Gainesville, so any mistake it makes our taxpayers have to pay.

Learn more, get involved, and donate to the cause at keepgnvlocal.com. 🐢

Women's Equality Day luncheon, Aug. 24

Organized by the Friends of Susan B. Anthony

Saturday, Aug. 24, 11:30 a.m.

Best Western Gateway Grand

4200 NW 97th Blvd., Gainesville

Featured Speaker: Cynthia Curry, Gainesville City Manager

Cynthia Curry was one of the first students to attend integrated schools in Palatka. She holds an MA in Politics and Public Affairs from the University of Miami and spent many years in management positions in Miami-Dade County, guiding the county through its response to Hurricane Andrew. She has also worked for Florida International University as well as the Diversity Officer at the Everglades Foundation. As city manager, she continues to advocate for equity issues. She will discuss "Leading in Challenging Times."

2024 Recipient of Friends of Susan B. Anthony Award: Linda Bassham

Each year a local woman is recognized who exemplifies the spirit

of Susan B. Anthony. This year, Linda Bassham will be honored for her tireless and long activism on behalf of human rights and equality for all. She was founder of the first Women's Center, has served on the Human Rights Council, the board of the Pride Center and NAACP, and many other community organizations.

Tickets for the luncheon are available on our EventBrite Page (tinyurl.com/Iguana2038).

Make your reservation before the registration deadline on Aug. 15.

Lunch Details: Luncheon selections include Chicken Marsala or Eggplant Parmesan, both served with salad, rolls, and dessert.

Ticket Prices: Adult ticket: \$32, Youth ticket (21 and under) \$18. Reservations will be required. There are no ticket sales at the door. Donations and sponsorships are accepted and encouraged. A full sponsorship is \$50 or more and includes recognition in the program.

Questions? Contact 352-378-6447 or visit our webpage, fosba.com. 🐢

is a non-profit research group working to stimulate conservation action to save threatened bird species in the southeast. 352-514-5606 | arcinst.org

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

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

Citizens Climate Lobby builds awareness and lobbies for sensible climate policies. 352-214-1778 | btancig@gmail.com | citizensclimatelobby.org/chapters/FL_Gainesville | 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 | 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 | facebook.com/GlobalClimateEducation | ClimateRealityProjectGNV.wordpress.com | 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 | chispasuf.com | 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 & 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

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@fam.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

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. climaterealityprojectgnv@gmail.com | @climaterealityprojectgnv | climaterealityprojectgnv.wordpress.com

Gainesville Books to Prisoners is a volunteer-run, donation-based organization that sends hundreds of books monthly to incarcerated people in Florida. We pack books at the CMC on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month, 6-7:30pm. We also need brown paper grocery bags and packing tape. Instagram: @gnvbooks2prisoners. Donate funds at paypal.com/gnvb2p.

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

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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@gainesvillrollerrebels.com | gainesvillrollerrebels.com

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

Generation Action UF, a student organization dedicated to promoting reproductive justice and health care on campus provides UF students with free contraceptives, Plan B, and other key reproductive health care materials. through The Brown Bag Project <3. UF students can discreetly request and receive condoms, internal condoms, dental dams, pregnancy tests, and Plan B. Instagram @ppgenactionuf.

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

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

Jewish Voice For Peace in Gainesville was inspired by the JVP actions nationwide calling for ceasefire in Gaza. JVP envisions a world where all people live in freedom, justice, equality and dignity. jewishvoiceforpeace.org/resource/our-vision | Instagram: @jvp_gnv | jvpgnvpod@gmail.com

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@lwv-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.

Marion.Co.Fl.1590@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.gainesvillnlg@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 | https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1952

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 landfills and redirecting items to the public for art and education, 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 Peace-building 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 | gnvsistercities.org

Stand By Our Plan informs the public on critical differences between the Comprehensive Plan & 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 animals 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

The Majorie is Florida's independent reporting outlet dedicated to the critical intersection of social justice and the environment. themajorie.org

The Party for Socialism and Liberation - Gainesville pre-branch exists to carry out the struggle for Socialism inside the U.S. | Linktr.ee/psl_gainesville | psl_gainesville@proton.me | pslweb.org/join

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 Students for Justice in Palestine: In stark recognition of the failure of modern society to produce a just and reasonable solution to the Palestine-Israel conflict, Students for Justice in Palestine promote public awareness and activism in our community. We promote international law, human rights, and justice for all affected by this conflict. We welcome a diverse membership from all faiths and nationalities who believe in the attainability of peace. sjpuflorida@gmail.com

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/UNAUSAGainesvilleFIChapter | 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/understand our democratic system, including demands such as voter registration at Freshman Preview, classes cancelled on election days, 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. wspus.org. 🌐



Hope is found where ballots are cast

By *Stefanie Gadalean*,
*UF League of Women
Voters Founder & President*

In the recent months, two things have become increasingly apparent to me. The first is a generalized sense of hopelessness for the upcoming four years. The second is young people's increased polarization between political apathy and extreme partisanship. The amalgamation of hopelessness, apathy, and unforgiving partisanship has led many young people to leave their ballots blank. I am writing

to plead to my fellow Gen-Zs that not voting will only perpetuate their political grievances.

In addressing the first revelation, when I feel the bombardment of hopelessness in the sphere of politics, it often concerns the top of the ballot. Fortunately, there is more to voting than voting for the commander-in-chief. In Florida, abortion rights are on the ballot (VOTE YES ON 4!), school board elections prove vital in preserving Americans' right to education, and Gainesville community mem-

bers' right to affordable utilities banks on the city commission elections. That being said, elections on the local level are equally, if not more so, as vital as state and federal elections. How hope is instilled in citizens, peers, and ourselves is through the reminder of the power we each hold in local government. Local politics is where we connect the dots between passion and change. On June 23, I had the privilege of co-hosting a primary candidate forum alongside the Bob Graham Center and the League of Women Voters of Alachua County for Alachua County candidates; let me tell you, each of those candidates held sincere concern for our community and made the effort to listen to their potential constituents and what they had to say. THAT is politics.

As a student, the tactical carelessness I witness going into this vital election sea-
See HOPE, p. 25



2024 PRIMARY ELECTION

Election Day is
Tuesday, August 20

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.



Election Day is your last opportunity to cast your ballot in the Primary Election!

On Election Day, you must vote at your assigned precinct. Please check your voter information card or visit VoteAlachua.gov to find your polling place.

QUESTIONS?
CALL 352-374-5252 OR VISIT
VOTEALACHUA.GOV

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