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The Gainesville Iguana

'a soapbox for Alachua County activists'

Nov/Dec 2026 ~ vol. 39 ~ issue 11/12

Midterm Elections

What happened and what's next

by North Central Florida Central Labor Council

As we all witnessed, election night in Florida was a very mixed bag of nuts. The high-water mark of progressivism seen elsaewhere didn't quite find its way to Florida. All of our statewide candidates came close but fell short, and we will now also have to deal with the fallout of Amendment 3 on our communities.

However, there was also light for anyone looking to see it, and most of that light could be found in the local struggles taking place across our state. The supermajority in our legislature was broken one campaign at a time, community by community. The importance of this long-sought, hard fought development—which means that anti-working family legislation can no longer be rammed through without any input whatsoever from the minority party—is hard to overstate. We also beat back DeSantis's attempts to further skew our Congressional representation through his newly-gerrymandered maps.

And perhaps most importantly, we showed what is possible when we begin to step up, organize, and fight back. We made Florida a swing state again, and anyone with any sense and resources had better take note if they want to make further national gains in 2028.

See pages 3-7, 16, 17 for more election coverage

The outcomes for our Central Labor Council-endorsed candidates were similarly mixed:

Jason Bellamy-Fults waged a valiant struggle but was not able to overcome the steep partisan divide in the gerrymandered Senate District 6. However, in a district

See ELECTIONS, p. 5



Senator Bernie Sanders came to Gainesville on Oct. 18 in support of Angie Nixon's campaign for the U.S. Senate seat held by Ashley Moody. The line to get into the UF University Auditorium zig-zagged through campus for hundreds of yards all the way to Tigert Hall. With the auditorium at capacity, rather than send people away, organizers marshaled the overflow crowd of a couple of thousand people to assemble outside the auditorium, where Sanders and Nixon came out and speechified the crowd for 20 minutes before rejoining the main event inside. Photo by John Moran.

Women's rights, Plan C access under attack in FDA court cases

By Roxy Nightshade

Since Roe vs Wade was overturned in 2022, the attack on a woman's right over her own body continues to intensify in conservative states. Next on the chopping block is mifepristone, one of the two drugs in the abortion pill, Plan C. A court case in Louisiana — Louisiana v. FDA — is currently seeking to eliminate mifepristone prescription by TeleHealth and shipping by mail.

Medication abortion — a two drug combination of mifepristone and misoprostol — is the most common form in the USA accounting for greater than 60 percent of abortions each year. It is approved by the FDA for up to 10 weeks of pregnancy, but has been shown to work up to 12 weeks, and is approved by the World Health Organization for up to 12 weeks.

Decades of scientific evidence prove mifepristone to be a safe and effective

See WOMEN'S RIGHTS, p. 25



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Want your article, ad, event or PSA in the Jan/Feb Iguana?
(Due to come out Monday, Jan. 18)

Deadline is Saturday, Jan. 9

Submit events, content, questions to:
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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.

Iguana Readers Celebration

Saturday Dec. 5, 1-4 pm
First Magnitude Brewery

This will be a celebration of and for all of you, dear readers.

The next Iguana, Jan/Feb 2027, will begin Volume 40 (!); 40 years since we started as a small newsletter.

We will take this opportunity to make available a new run of the Pub Notes 2012-2025 book, which came out in October, 2025, and sold out the first two runs of a hundred each.

DJ Wax Atom will be providing music, Five Star Pizza will provide pizza, and First Magnitude has all kinds of great beer and cider, as well as house made kombucha and seltzer, plus craft sodas and non-alcoholic beer.

Come be with the community of Iguana readers you are part of. See old friends, make new friends; young and old; we have built a family that does not know one another - let's change that.

See you there.

Five Star Pizza

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Hey, Readers!

We are now accepting both Venmno (gnv-iguana) and PayPal (gainesvilleiguana@cox.net) donations.

Links to both can be found on our website:

www.GainesvilleIguana.org

Publisher Notes

Yes, Yea! And some hope!
(but now the work starts)

We in the Blue Dot areas of Florida watched our allies in much of the rest of the country enjoy what can only be seen as a rejection of MAGA. Special congrats to Amy Trask, whose team worked their butts off and won House District 22 west of Gainesville! Congrats as well to Hunter Miller in the School Board runoff and Ken Cornell, re-elected to the County Commission. Merrillee in District 10 and Jason in Senate District 6 faced uphill battles but came up short. Huge thanks to them and all who helped them. Articles on their experience are on pgs. 6 and 7.



Joe Courter

What a crop of winners came through around the country!

El-Sayed in Michigan, Talarico and Hinojosa in Texas, Bottoms and Ossoff in Georgia, Andrews in South Carolina, Jackson in Maine, and Mississippi has now turned Blue, too, with Scott Colom. Wow! So much diversity winning across the country! But now what?

The newly empowered Democratic Party needs to turn up the heat and start producing results to maintain this momentum; go for as much as they can, craft bills for a higher minimum wage, Medicare for All, stopping the ICE kidnappings and deportations, and an end to the rampant corruption.

FDR was bold and got the support and backing to do what he did ... We need to expand the Supreme Court, as he did in the '30s. Pass popular stuff and dare Trump to veto it. There's about a hundred weeks until 2028, and both investigations AND legislation need to be done in an effective way.

Angie Nixon!! Oh, what we could have had if donors and the Democratic Party had just stepped up, but she is staying active; she's a community organizer and is planning to stay engaged. On election night she pledged to continue to build voter registration efforts, work to support fully funding public schools, and work for affordable healthcare. She reminded people that Ashley Moody would be on the ballot again in 2028, as this election was just to fill the rest of Marco Rubio's interrupted term after Trump brought him into his administration. Let's hope her grassroots campaign has future impact much as Stacey Abrams did in Georgia and Beto O'Rourke did in Texas. We have an open invitation to help make that happen.

Please be aware this election does not signal a permanent change; it is a respite, an opportunity. Disgust with corruption, with ICE, with the war and high gas and food prices all played a factor in the victory margin. Yes there was a big youth-driven vote, but also independents and probably disaffected Republicans wanted change, too. There needs to be tangible results by the Democrats, and not a rerun of lost opportunities with halfway measures and too much compromise.

2027 is a ticking bomb of economic hits, Medicare cuts nationwide and in Florida Amendment 3, which is really going to hit small towns and the counties they reside in when the more well-off get a property tax break.

January 3 at noon will be the Congressional swearing in; we have stormed the Capital in our own way, with orderly transitions the way the Constitution provides.

We beat back their money and lies with great candidates, effective campaigns, and a little luck with a Trump administration that so many have grown sick of.

Our own organizing with No Kings protests drawing out and connecting people, a growing independent media people are paying attention to, and using our people power to go out and knock on doors in strategic ways all added up. Some have said that it wasn't just a Blue Wave, it was a Rainbow Wave; so many sectors of society had a stake in making positive change and turning things around.

When we do the work, we win. And we as a nation just did.

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is Alachua County's independent progressive newsletter.
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Historic Firsts of the 2026 Elections

Based on reported and projected results from the Nov. 3, 2026, election, checked Nov. 5; not final certification.

GOVERNORS

1. **First Black woman elected governor in U.S. history:** Keisha Lance Bottoms (D), Georgia. Also Georgia's first woman and first Black governor.
2. **First Native American woman elected governor:** Deb Haaland (D), New Mexico. A member of Laguna Pueblo and former U.S. secretary of the interior.
3. **First Black Republican elected governor of a U.S. state:** Byron Donalds (R), Florida. Also Florida's first Black governor.
4. **First Black governor of Wisconsin:** David Crowley (D).
5. **First Black governor of Nevada:** Aaron Ford (D). Also the first Black governor elected in a state west of the Mississippi.
6. **First Latina elected governor of Texas:** Gina Hinojosa (D). Also the first Democrat elected governor of Texas since 1990.
7. **First Latino elected governor of California:** Xavier Becerra (D). California previously had a Latino governor, Romualdo Pacheco, who assumed office in 1875 through succession.
8. **First woman elected governor of Ohio:** Amy Acton (D). Also Ohio's first Jewish governor. Nancy Hollister briefly served as governor through succession in 1998–99.
9. **First woman elected governor of Minnesota:** Amy Klobuchar (D).
10. **First woman elected governor of Tennessee:** Marsha Blackburn (R).
11. **First Black woman elected governor of a U.S. territory:** Stacey Plaskett (D), U.S. Virgin Islands.
12. **First all-women-of-color governor–lieutenant governor ticket elected in U.S. history:** Deb Haaland (D) and Stephanie Garcia Richard (D), New Mexico.
13. **First all-woman governor–lieutenant governor ticket in New York:** Kathy Hochul (D) and Adrienne Adams (D). Adams will also be New York's first Black woman lieutenant governor.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

23. **First Generation Z woman elected to Congress:** Melat Kiros (D), Colorado's 1st District. Also the first Black woman elected to Congress from Colorado.
24. **First Native American woman elected to Congress from New York:** Claire Valdez (D), 7th District.
25. **First Latina elected to Congress from Nebraska:** Denise Powell (D), 2nd District. Also the first Democratic woman elected to the U.S. House from Nebraska.
26. **First Muslim elected to Congress from New Jersey:** Adam Hamawy (D), 12th District.
27. **First openly gay person elected to Congress from Michigan:** Jeremy Moss (D).
28. **First openly LGBTQ+ person elected to Congress from Indiana:** JD Ford (D).

U.S. SENATE

14. **First Muslim elected to the U.S. Senate:** Abdul El-Sayed (D), Michigan.
15. **First Native American woman elected to the U.S. Senate:** Peggy Flanagan (D), Minnesota. A citizen of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe.
16. **First openly gay man elected to the U.S. Senate:** Chris Pappas (D), New Hampshire.
17. **First state represented simultaneously by two women of color in the U.S. Senate:** Illinois, with newly elected Juliana Stratton (D) joining incumbent Tammy Duckworth (D).
18. **First time three Black women will serve simultaneously in the U.S. Senate:** Juliana Stratton (D), Illinois, will join Angela Alsobrooks (D), Maryland, and Lisa Blunt Rochester (D), Delaware, in 2027.
19. **First woman elected to the U.S. Senate from South Carolina:** Annie Andrews (D). Also the first Democratic woman to represent the state in the Senate.
20. **First Republican woman elected to the U.S. Senate from Louisiana:** Julia Letlow (R).
21. **First Democrat elected to the U.S. Senate from Kansas since 1932:** Adam Hamilton (D).
22. **First Democrat elected to the U.S. Senate from Texas since 1988:** James Talarico (D). Also the first Democrat to win a statewide election in Texas since 1994.

STATE LEGISLATURES

29. **First openly Black trans person elected to a state legislature in U.S. history:** Jaelynn Scott (D), Washington's 37th Legislative District. Also Washington's first openly transgender state legislator.
30. **First openly transgender or nonbinary state legislators elected in five states:** Bentley Hudgins (D), Georgia; Joanna Whaley (D), Michigan; Allison Montgomery (D), Alabama; Jaelynn Scott (D), Washington; and Dina Nina Martinez-Rutherford (D), Wisconsin.

ALSO NOTABLE

- **Five Black governors will serve simultaneously for the first time in U.S. history:** Keisha Lance Bottoms (D), Georgia; Byron Donalds (R), Florida; David Crowley (D), Wisconsin; Aaron Ford (D), Nevada; and reelected Wes Moore (D), Maryland.
- **A record 17 women** are expected to serve as governors in 2027, up from 14 before the election.
- **Democrats** regained control of both chambers of Congress in the same midterm election for the first time since 2006.
- **Hakeem Jeffries** (D), New York, is positioned to become the first **Black speaker** of the U.S. House of Representatives. The House must elect its speaker in January 2027.

Sources: Associated Press, Reuters, Center for American Women and Politics (Rutgers University), and other election reporting.

From ELECTIONS, p. 1

with 50 percent Republicans, 27 percent Democrats, and 21 percent no-party-affiliation voters, he pulled in 41 percent of the vote running as a working families Democrat, a good showing for a first-time candidate with only a six-month campaign and hopefully setting the stage for a future District 6 challenge when the incumbent is term-limited out in four years.

The biggest upset in our area, and perhaps one of the biggest upsets statewide, was Amy Trask's impressive defeat of the incumbent Chad "Cracker" Johnson in the House District 22 race. Rep. Johnson had an abysmal record on working family issues and we are so excited to see him replaced with one of our own. We know that Amy will be an amazing state rep. And we now have at least two legislators on the Alachua County delegation, Amy and Jackie Randall, that we are optimistic will move things forward for our community and our state.

At the county level, incumbent Ken Cornell raced to an easy reelection here in Alachua County and we're excited to have his leadership for another term. In Putnam County, where Republicans outnumber Democrats by more than 2.5 to 1, first-time Democratic candidate Joshua Florence made an impressive showing and won 31 percent of the vote. Though he didn't win his race, Joshua was a great candidate and we're optimistic that he'll continue to have a bright future in public service.

Now that the afterglow of this historic election has begun to fade, it is important to recognize that we are entering a moment of great precarity. The oligarchs were momentarily humbled, but we very nearly lost our democracy these past two years and the forces that want to take it from us are not going to leave quietly. Indeed, we have a vanishingly small window of time to demonstrate an alternate path for our nation's future and to organize to make it happen.

From our perspective, that looks something like this:

- Real material gains for working families. Address the economic pains people are experiencing, both chronic and acute. End the war on Iran. Reduce inequality and expand access to healthcare, affordable housing, childcare, quality education, and living wages, among others.
- Wage a holy war on corruption and broken elections. End gerrymandering and voter suppression. Get money out of politics. Reform the courts. Prosecute the shit out of the Epstein class, very publicly and without exception.
- Release the Kraken! We want the right to union representation for all workers in this country. Working people know best what working people need: give us back the power to stand up and fight for ourselves. Organized labor built this country, cultivating democracy and the strongest middle class in the history of the world. And we can build it back. Indeed, we are key to building it back.

Obviously this can't all be accomplished in the next two years, particularly with the obstacles still in place. But we better see some serious down payments. We'll be watching. Those that deliver will be rewarded with an army of volunteers and voters in 2028. Those that don't had damn well better get out the way.

Onward!



Thanks, Bernie

Thank you, Bernie Sanders, for blazing the trail and showing an entire generation what it means to fight for working people, economic justice, and a fairer future. You spent decades challenging the establishment, speaking truth to power, and proving that progressive ideas deserve a place at the center of American politics.

And now, the next generation is ready to carry that fight forward. Zohran Mamdani, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, James Talarico, and Abdul El-Sayed are among the voices bringing fresh energy, courage, and new ideas into the movement.

They represent a generation that refuses to accept politics as usual and believes government should work for ordinary people, not just the wealthy and powerful. Bernie helped build the foundation, inspired countless people to get involved, and made it easier for these leaders to imagine a different kind of politics.

The torch is being passed, but the mission remains the same. Thank you, Bernie. The trail you blazed is becoming a road for the next generation.

From Raza Samo, Facebook, Nov. 8. Image is AI generated. Also see "'Thank you Bernie': Organizers credit progressive leader for 'Long Game' that paid off" in Editors' Picks on page 17.

Political system breakdown in District 10

by Merrillee Malwitz-Jipson,
Candidate for Florida State House District-10, 2018 (NPA), 2026 (Dem)

The 2026 election results have settled, and the harsh reality of a broken political system has landed right here in North Central Florida. Following a hard-fought race for the District 10 State House of Representatives' seat, our community has elected a candidate with well-documented extremist ties. Despite a national spotlight exposing a platform centered on seceding Florida from the Union, integrating a hyper-specific religious agenda into public policy, and hunting down "evildoers," partisan loyalty carried him to victory.

At the podium, my opponent spoke directly to fear and division. By all appearances, he is driven by unresolved personal conflicts better suited for a mental health professional than a seat in the Florida Legislature. Running for public office should turn a candidate inside out, exposing their true character so voters know exactly who is representing them. Instead, critical thinking was largely abandoned by voters who simply bubbled in for a party line.

This blind partisanship allowed a toxic campaign strategy to succeed. The social media vitriol originating from my opponent's camp was a constant, malicious distraction from the actual issues facing North Central Florida. I have the verified identities of at least eight individuals who relentlessly targeted me with language that easily crossed into libel and slander. Shockingly, one of those digital perpetrators was a local mayor. We live in dangerous times when public officials believe they can unleash targeted harassment with zero accountability. Throughout the campaign, I faced bullying and intimidating situations too numerous to count. While I fought to keep the discussion on a constructive legislative platform for Tallahassee, his campaign remained twisted around ominous, dark themes.

Many voters are left wondering how a candidate with his background even qualified with the State Election Office. Because Florida does not perform comprehensive background checks on prospective lawmakers, the burden of research falls entirely on the electorate. Had voters dug just beneath the surface of my opponent's rhetoric, they would have found deep, troubling current history.

Our newest State House Representative, Marshall Rawson, has been identified as a member of League of the South, now operating as the Southern Nationalist League. He was present at the infamous "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia — choosing to bring his partner into a violent arena after hostilities had openly broken out the night before, arriving shortly before a member of his cohort drove a car into a crowd of peaceful counter-protesters. His obsession with secession is deeply rooted in the archaic rhetoric of States' Rights and the "Lost Cause" myth. As for the protecting statutes on display in town squares, he must have been indoctrinated by a member of the Daughters of the Confederacy to be advocating for revisionist history.

This pattern of deception extends to local issues. He publicly claimed credit for successfully removing The Gainesville Iguana periodical from a public library because he disliked its contents. Yet, according to both the Three Rivers Regional Library System's Director and the Bradford County Lead Librarian, the publication was never removed from the shelves. He fabricated a culture-war victory out of thin air simply to pound his fist at the podium.

A Florida State House term lasts only two years. Because of his volatile extremism, this man will step into Tallahassee as an isolated, functional lame duck, entirely unable to build the coalitions necessary to pass meaningful legislation for our district. An analysis of his donor list continues to reveal Neo-Nazis, white nationalists, and more dangerous extremists, including those proclaiming to be Christians, but preaching hatred and violence.

I love Florida, and this is a deeply somber moment for our region. I truly believed better of our community, but the rigid two-party, gerrymandered machine stacked the odds against a unifying, independent vision. Even so, I am proud of the work we did to bridge the divide, engaging with residents across all political affiliations to plan a real future for District 10.

The work does not stop with one election cycle. If we want to restore integrity to our representation, we must begin organizing immediately. If you are a qualified leader who cares about all people and is interested in stepping up to run for this seat in the next cycle, I urge you to reach out to me today. Let us start building a better future for North Central Florida together.

James Talarico's victory speech after historic Texas Senate flip

The following is from Senator-elect James Talarico's victory speech to his supporters on Nov. 3.

"But the billionaires who own the social media algorithms, who own the cable news networks, who own the politicians fighting on our screens, they want us at each other's throats.

"They want us focused on how we're different instead of on how we're the same. They want us looking left and right at each other instead of looking up at them. The real fight in this country is not left versus right. It is top versus bottom.

"The people at the top work so hard to keep us angry and divided because our unity is a threat to their wealth and their power. We saw it in this race. We saw it in every billionaire funded attack ad.

"The people at the top divide us by party, by race, by gender, by religion, by culture, so we don't notice that they are picking our pockets, that they are defunding our schools, that they are glutting our health care, that they are raising taxes on all of us while they cut taxes for themselves. It is the oldest strategy in the world, divide and conquer.

"But tonight [election night] we sent a crystal clear message to the people at the top, we will not be conquered."

Read the transcript of the full speech at tinyurl.com/iguana2618

A thank you, a recap, some next steps

Jason ran as a Democrat for State Senate in tricky District 6. He fought a good fight, but unfortunately did not win. These are his thoughts on the campaign and going forward.

by Jason Bellamy-Fults

As y'all are undoubtedly aware, we did not unseat the incumbent. The partisan divide was simply too steep and we weren't able to penetrate deep enough into the strong Republican majority in this district to achieve our win number. These are the voter registration numbers we were facing district-wide: 50 percent Republican, 27 percent Democrat, 21 percent no-party affiliation (NPA).

Overall, we won nearly 86,700 votes, or 41percent of the electorate. That means that, assuming people mostly voted along party lines, we picked up somewhere around 2/3 of the NPA vote. And though she was never foolish enough to face us publicly, we did force Bradley to campaign, as evidenced by her campaign expenditures; expenditures that could have been invested elsewhere in the state.

I'm also confident that we contributed to some other wins and near-wins along the way. Leroy Edwards, who we campaigned alongside in Clay County, won his race for County Commission, no small feat. Together, we brought Clay County's Democratic turnout up by 20 points from where it was during the last midterm election.

We also worked very closely with Representative Amy Trask throughout the campaign and I feel particularly enthusiastic about that victory. Lastly, while neither the statewide races nor Amendment 3 came out the way we wanted, I know that we helped raise the margins on those, as we made it a point to discuss the entire "slate" with people anytime we were out and about.

And though it was definitely heartbreaking to watch the Florida results come in alongside what was happening in the rest of the country, I know that together we made a strong case that it's time for the national establishment to invest in Florida again. They simply must do this, and soon. We're too big of a state to leave on the table and, as we saw on election night, we are definitely still in play.

I have quite a few developing thoughts on what's next for our state, our country, and our movement in the coming months, and I hope to share those with you and hear your own as we continue to build together.

But for now, I'll just focus on the personal.

No, I do not have any plans to run for office again. That being said, if you'd asked me that question eight months ago, I'd have said the same thing.

What I do plan to do is to get back to work with my beloved Community Weatherization Coalition. I also want to invest myself more deeply in building our labor movement in this state. We're going to be in a dark place on that front these next couple of years, and don't be surprised if things get significantly worse before they get better, but I do believe there is a way forward and I hope to be a part of that conversation. I'll be discussing all this on the Facebook page (tinyurl.com/iguana2610). Feel free to join us there if you're not already.

And lastly, I'm looking forward to getting back to gardening, healing my body from a little neglect while on the campaign trail, some recreational reading, spending more time with my family, and renewing my marriage vows with my amazing wife in just a few days. She has been such a fantastic co-conspirator through this entire experience and I couldn't have done this without her.

I'll close on that cheery note, for now. Let's keep the light on for each other.

With love, hope, and solidarity,
Jason Bellamy-Fults (and fam)

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When the safety net snaps:
Family homelessness, collective survival, and the winter ahead in Alachua County

by Leigh Scott
Director of Community Engagement,
Family Promise of Gainesville

Seven months ago, when St. Francis House shuttered its doors, a tremor ran through Alachua County's social safety net.

For decades, local residents were accustomed to the idea — however strained — that an institutional buffer existed for parents and children who lost their housing. But when that door locked for good, the buffer vanished.

Overnight, Family Promise of Gainesville was left as the sole full-time agency addressing family homelessness in our community. Fortunately, we stood up to get 8 of the families being exited from Saint Francis house into housing… But that left hundreds more with nowhere to go

Let's be clear about why we are in this mess.

We have spent the last two decades building Gainesville for the students and left everyone else out of the equation from working class single parents, rural Alachua County communities, the east side and people of color have all been left out of the conversation.

We have a raging debate every time we talk about affordable housing. "What is affordable housing? Is it an affordable new home? Where should we build it? Why are we concentrating all the poverty on the east side? "

These are all the questions that come up when we talk about affordable housing. When it comes to luxury student living … Those apartments go up overnight crushing landmarks like Leo's or affordable two-bedroom homes on 5th Ave. We never debate those. They just get built.

There's no way for us to dress this up … We're at DEFCON five when it comes to family homelessness.

According to the school district's McKinney-Vento data, more than 1,000 public school students and their family members in Alachua County are experiencing homelessness.

These are not abstract statistics.

They are third-graders trying to finish homework in the backseat of a sedan parked under the glaring lights of a Walmart parking lot.

They are parents working 50 hours a week at service jobs at LESS than living wages across Gainesville, watching every dollar swallowed by skyrocketing rents, medical debt, and grocery bills, only to find themselves one broken transmission away from sleeping in a tent off Hawthorne Road or a cheap unsafe motel room

Across Florida and the country, we are witnessing the cascading collapse of safety net systems under the weight of ideological austerity. From aggressive legislative attacks on (DEI) initiatives that have gutted vital institutional support pipelines or the ability to report vital social determinants of health data, to the clawbacks and deregulation promised under federal initiatives like DOGE, to the cascading fiscal aftermath of state constitutional shifts like Amendment 3, public resources for human needs are being strangled. Municipalities and service providers are being forced to do the impossible: absorb surging poverty with evaporating funds, while public policy criminalizes they very people we are trying to serve.

In Alachua County, where we pride ourselves on community consciousness and solidarity, we have to ask ourselves: What happens when the institutional safety net completely snaps? We now know the answer to that after the closing of St. Francis House.

We catch each other, or no one does.

Family Promise has been anchored in this community since 1998, originally founded as the Interfaith Hospitality Network. For over two decades, our model relied on a deeply communal, rotational network of faith communities.

Thirteen local congregations across Gainesville would open their fellowship halls and classrooms, taking turns hosting four families at a time for one week each. In turn our staff would get them housed. Our families stay housed after 1-year, 95% of the time because we continue to work with them once they are housed.

Then came COVID-19.

In the wake of that rupture, we worked to build a more permanent anchor. We acquired and began renovating The Promise Center, located off North 13th Street. When fully realized, this center will safely shelter nine families at a time, including two fully accessible units specifically designed for parents or children living with disabilities. But major structural renovations take time, capital, and permits—and winter waits for none of those things.

Hoping to revive the rotational shelter model to meet this year's surging crisis, we spent months reaching out to dozens of congregations across the county.

The goodwill was palpable; nearly everyone we spoke with expressed a desire to help. But when we convened an emergency interfaith summit to secure hard commitments, the hard realities of congregations, insurance constraints, and limited volunteer bases set in: only four churches were able to commit fully to opening their physical doors to host families.

Four weeks out of a twelve-week cycle cannot sustain a family through to permanent housing.

With cold weather descending on North Central Florida, we cannot afford to wait for ideal conditions. We have had to pivot quickly.

When freezing temperatures strike Gainesville, parents with children under 18 face unthinkable choices. We

want to prevent families from freezing in cars and encampments.

We have found the space. A downtown church has generously stepped forward, offering to lease an attached school building that was recently vacated. The facility is secure, centrally located, and well-suited to provide dignity and warmth to unhoused families when the thermometer drops below freezing.

Now, the burden of execution falls directly on our community.

Family Promise operates with a core staff of just eight people. Every one of us works relentless hours, but eight people cannot run emergency intake, manage casework, maintain regular shelter operations, and staff an overnight cold-weather facility alone. We need the progressive community of Gainesville to mobilize with us:

- The Meal Brigade: We need community members, neighborhood groups, and student collectives willing to prepare hearty, freezable meals — a pan of lasagna or a bagged lunch or a nutritious casserole — label them, freeze them, and deliver them so our overnight staff can simply heat and serve warm food when cold night shelter is called.
- Overnight and Evening Volunteers: We need compassionate, reliable volunteers willing to undergo rapid training to assist with evening hospitality, family check-in, keeping watch overnight
- Financial Solidarity: We need grassroots contributions to bridge the funding gap so that lack of cash does not leave a six-year-old out in the frost.

If you have a freezer to store a meal, an evening to give, or resources to contribute to our Promise fund, step forward now. Visit our website at familypromisegainesville.org to learn more, or email our Director of Community Engagement, Leigh Scott, directly at leigh@familypromisegainesville.org.

Let us ensure that when winter arrives, no family is left out in the cold.



Florida Free Speech Forum presentations

on December 14, 2026

Maya Henson, research analyst from SPLC, "Extremism and the attack on Universities, Students and Public Education."

on January 11, 2027

Lyrissa Lidsky, Professor in the UF Levin College of Law, "Editing the first draft of History, Presidential leverage, Press vulnerability and the weaponization of defamation."

More at floridafreespeechforum.org.

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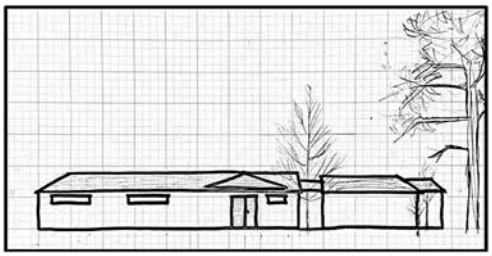
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Lame-duck session quacks of a Social Security 'fiscal commission'

Call Congress to say: 'Vote NO'

by Mary Savage

Well, friends. Here we are. The House and Senate convened for the lame-duck session of the 119th Congress on Nov. 9. One of their main tasks before adjourning for the Winter holidays will be passing appropriations legislation. This legislation provides funding for day-to-day operations of the federal government. Some examples are the Social Security Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services, but not Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid benefits.

The current authority to spend under a Continuing Resolution (CR) expires on Dec. 11. If Congress fails to act by then, there will be a government shutdown. But thankfully, experts in-the-know do not think this will happen. Yet concerns remain.

Advocates are actively engaged in the appropriations process "to help ensure that agencies and programs important to seniors are adequately funded for all or part of the remainder of fiscal year 2027," according to a statement from the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare's Government Relations and Policy Director Dan Adcock.

"Our concern is that a senator or representative may attempt to attach legislation creating a fiscal commission to a must-pass appropriations bill. Such a commission could be used to cut Social Security and, potentially, Medicare.

Examples of this type of legislation include S. 4979, the PROMISE Act; H.R. 9187, the Bipartisan Social Security Commission Act; and H.R. 3289/S. 4012, the Fiscal Commission Act. The National Committee opposes this legislation, or similar bills and we would oppose any effort to include them in a larger package during the lame-duck session."

"Lame-duck sessions can be particularly troubling because retiring or defeated incumbent members of Congress will not face voters again and therefore have less political accountability for their actions," he said.

Because of the expected depletion of the Social Security Trust Fund by 2032 that would mean benefit payouts reduced by 22-25 percent, advocates of Social Security warn that unscrupulous elected officials will attempt to privatize Social Security, impose means-testing or raise the retirement age with the excuse that Social Security contributes to the national debt. But it does not.

What is needed to solve the Trust Fund depletion is raising, and even eliminating, the FICA wage cap to make the wealthy pay their fair share into the fund.

Advocates and supporters of these vital benefits earned by American workers and their families call fiscal commissions "death panels" for Social Security and Medicare for good reason. To find out more, read the NCPSSM's position paper about the dangers of a Social Security fiscal commission: The Fiscal Commission Act: Greasing the Wheels to Cut Social Security and Medicare Without Political Accountability - NCPSSM (tinyurl.com/iguana2617).

CALL TO ACTION: The White House switchboard phone number is 202-456-1414. Everyone should make three calls: two calls to each of your U.S. Senators and one call to your Congressional Representative. Tell them to vote NO on any fiscal commission, especially one that may be sneaked into an appropriations bill.

(You might want to tell them: "QUACK NO!")

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Community members celebrated the grand opening of the new Pride Community Center at 1204 NW 10th Ave. on Saturday, Nov. 14. Beginning Thursday, Nov. 19, the center will be open to the public Thursdays through Saturdays from 2:30 to 7:30pm. Photo by Tom Miller.

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"We must fight for a world where the lottery of birth does not determine the quality of one's life."

~ Raoul Martinez, "Creating Freedom"

Tim Snyder interviews: Watch them!

Tim Snyder, who wrote the bestselling book "On Tyranny," is one the best watchdogs on the rise of authoritarianism. He is doing a series of interviews with Democratic members of Congress titled Now WE Act. They are informal, about 20 minutes of free flowing conversations, that I am sure will be available on his free YouTube channel.

Seeing these people in that format is important, because they will be doing important work as the party in power; we should know them better and lean on them.

I watched Sen. Chris VanHolland with Tim and he would be great replacing Schumer. He's the Senator who went to El Salvador to get the freedom for Abrego Garcia, and he has also been to GAZA as well.

Snyder's interviews are a real service to our democracy. Please check them out.

- Joe Courter

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And the good news is ...

Empiricists strike back: Midterms propel scientists and physicians to Capitol Hill

by Steve Benen ~ MS Now ~ Rachel Maddow Show ~ Nov 6 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2599

Undoing the White House's war on science wont be easy. But having new Democratic scientists and doctors in Congress will be a big step in the right direction. The Washington Post labeled it a "STEM wave," adding that "a record number of Democratic doctors, nurses, scientists and engineers" were elected this year, and when they arrive on Capitol Hill, they're "expected to help shape a new health care agenda for the party and scrutinize Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s tenure."

Federal court strikes down ICE's courthouse arrest policy nationwide

by American Civil Liberties Union ~ ACLU ~ Oct. 1 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2600

A federal judge struck down the Trump administration's policy allowing immigration agents to conduct civil arrests at immigration courthouses, finding it unlawful. The nationwide ruling prohibits ICE officers from conducting civil immigration enforcement actions in or near immigration courthouses except under limited circumstances. Immigrant-rights advocates celebrated the decision as a major victory for people seeking access to justice without fear of arrest simply for appearing in court.

Florida Legislature gets its first DSA member in Ashley Herrmann

by Mitch Perry ~ Florida Phoenix ~ Nov. 4 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2601

A Democratic Socialists of America-backed candidate on the ballot in Hillsborough County, Fla. — Ashley Herrmann — upset Republican incumbent Danny Alvarez in the House District 69 race, winning 52%-48%. She's a climate activist who ran on a platform opposing data centers, holding developers accountable, and raising teacher pay. She was the only candidate on the ballot in Florida who had been endorsed by the DSA. She joins St. Petersburg City Council member Richie Floyd as the only elected DSA-backed candidates serving in Florida politics.

Latino voters singled out by top Democrat for credit in congressional victories

by Ariana Figueroa ~ Florida Phoenix ~ Nov. 9 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2602

The chair of the campaign arm for U.S. House Democrats said that the midterm elections resulted in an overwhelming blue wave because of Latinos. Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chair Suzan DelBene said majorities won in the House and the Senate by Democrats couldn't have happened without Latino voters. She said Democrats were only able to win competitive seats in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Pennsylvania and Texas because of the Latino vote.

School board members can be deposed for removing library books, federal court rules

by Jay Waagmeester ~ Florida Phoenix ~ Oct. 19 ~tinyurl.com/iguana2603

A federal appeals court ruled that Escambia County school board members can be questioned under oath about their decisions to remove books from school libraries. The decision rejected board members' claims that legislative privilege shielded them from depositions in a lawsuit brought by publishers, parents and PEN America. Although the underlying censorship challenge remains unresolved, the ruling represents an important victory for transparency and accountability in Florida's book-ban battles.

Supreme Court denies Trump administration request to withhold health care from incarcerated transgender people

by American Civil Liberties Union ~ ACLU ~ Oct. 21 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2604

The U.S. Supreme Court rejected the Trump administration's request to suspend a lower court injunction protecting access to gender-affirming health care for transgender people in federal prisons. The ruling prevents the Bureau of Prisons from enforcing a policy that would eliminate medically necessary treatment, including hormone therapy, while litigation continues. The ACLU and Transgender Law Center celebrated the decision as an important victory for the constitutional rights and medical needs of incarcerated people.

The blue tsunami sweeps the US, as Democrats land huge gains in Congress

by Jacob Fischler ~ Florida Phoenix ~ Nov. 4 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2605

Voters across the country administered a sharp reprimand to President Donald Trump and Republicans who hold majorities in Congress, with Democrats gaining comfortable majorities in the Senate and the House. By the day after the elections, Democrats had notched 54 Senate seats to control that chamber and 228 House seats, clearing the thresholds needed to win majorities in each chamber as the party swept virtually all of the races that were expected to be competitive. Those wins included Senate contests in states Trump won by double digits just two years ago, some of which had not elected Democrats in decades: Iowa, Kansas, South Carolina, Ohio and Texas.



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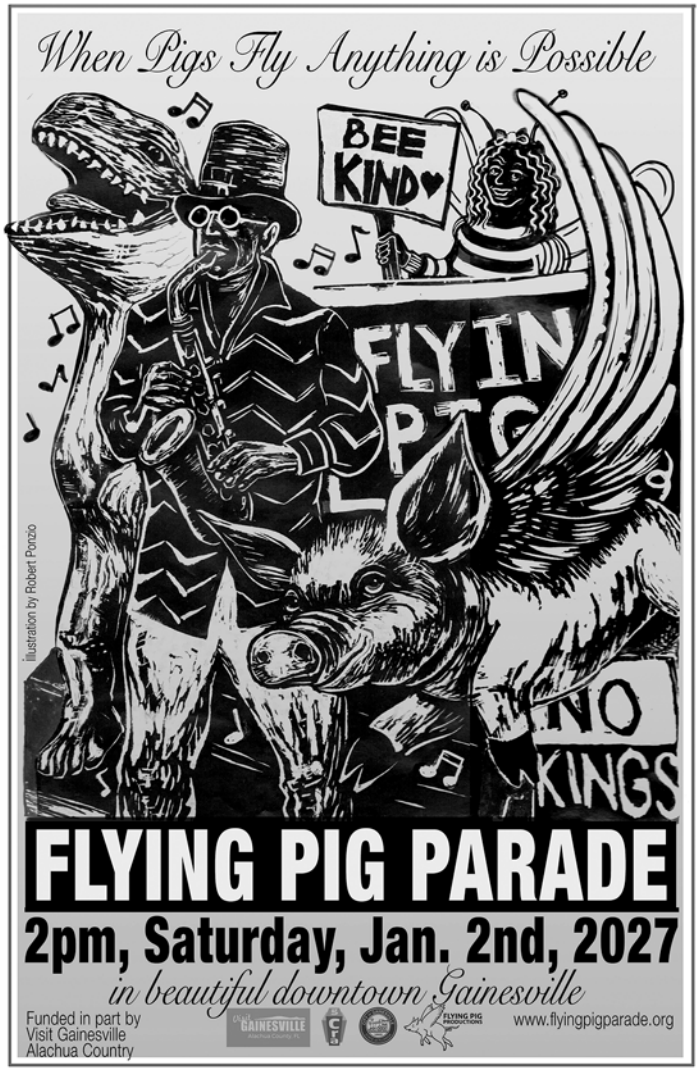
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Editors' Picks: News that didn't fit

Bernie Sanders: Winning the midterms is not enough. Here's what we must do

by Bernie Sanders ~ Common Dreams ~ Nov. 5 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2616

Bernie: The American people understand that the economy today is rigged and that we cannot continue the 'same old, same old' establishment politics and establishment policies. Together, we stood up to authoritarianism and a president who does not believe in the Constitution or the rule of law. And we won. With Democratic control over the Senate and the House, we will now—finally—be able to hold Donald Trump accountable. That is a big deal. But as important as it is, it is not enough. We have got to do more.

Bernie Sanders to Democrats: No more excuses. The Democratic majority must deliver real change for American People

by Bernie Sanders ~ Black Star News ~ Nov. 9 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2607

Following Democrats' sweeping victories in the midterm elections, Sen. Bernie Sanders argues that voters have demanded fundamental change, not more empty promises or establishment politics. He calls on the new Democratic majority to deliver Medicare for All, a $20 minimum wage, higher taxes on billionaires, expanded Social Security, immigration reform, and bold action on climate change, military spending and corporate influence. Sanders insists that these policies are not radical but widely supported reforms that would make government work for ordinary Americans rather than the wealthy few

Collections are coming for millions of student loans in default

by Tim Henderson ~ Florida Phoenix ~ Nov. 13 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2619

More than 9 million Americans have defaulted on federal student loans totaling $234 billion, and millions more are behind on payments. With pandemic-era protections expired, borrowers could face wage garnishment and seizure of tax refunds beginning next year, threatening to deepen financial hardship for people already struggling with crushing student debt.

Florida wildlife agency put a homebound dementia patient under surveillance

by Craig Pittman ~ Florida Phoenix ~ Oct. 29 ~tinyurl.com/iguana2608

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has accessed the personal records of 49 environmental activists and their relatives, including a 67-year-old homebound woman with Alzheimer's disease whose son criticized the agency for failing to protect endangered Florida panther habitat. The agency justified its surveillance as a response to threats against officials, although released records showed that none of those threats came from the people investigated. Activists are considering lawsuits over alleged privacy and First Amendment violations.

Heather Cox Richardson on America's political history & 'Letters from an American'

The Daily Show ~ Nov. 12 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2615 (video 12:30)

"We really can change the direction of our country if we choose to participate in it." Historian Heather Cox Richardson chats with Desi Lydic about her work on the political state of America and her most-read Substack politics newsletter, "Letters from an American." The two discuss how the historic 2026 midterms compare to past eras of American political change, how the Democrats' road to progress requires holding corrupt leaders accountable, and historical figures (dead or alive) Richardson would invite to a hypothetical dinner party with her and Donald Trump.

Hegseth's failed impeachment was a warning to Democrats. Where will they go from here?

by Domenico Montanaro ~ NPR ~ Nov. 14 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2622

Democrats' first major test since their sweeping midterm victories ended in embarrassment when 11 House Democrats missed a crucial vote that could have advanced impeachment proceedings against Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.The failure raises questions about Democratic leadership and the party's ability to balance demands for accountability from the Trump administration with voters' expectations for action on the economy and the Iran war.

How to stop Trump from burning down the house

by John Feffer ~ Common Dreams ~ Nov. 15 ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2621

Despite Democrats' sweeping midterm victories, President Trump still has two years to inflict potentially devastating damage at home and abroad. Trump's obsession with winning and cementing his legacy could lead to dangerous military adventures and further attacks on democratic institutions. Democrats must use congressional investigations, lawsuits and political resistance to constrain Trump while rebuilding democracy from the grassroots up.

Scammers are stealing millions from food stamp recipients. Congress could fix it - but won't.

by Eli Hager ~ Pro Publica ~ Oct. 13 ~ tinuyurl.com/iguana2609

Looking for fraud in all the wrong places: Vice-Pres. J.D. Vance now leads a task force which has thrown hundreds of thousands of people off SNAP benefit programs - while the federal government has done virtually nothing to stop theft of their accounts by international crime rings (and has even shut down its own and state-level prevention efforts).

'Thank you Bernie': Organizers credit progressive leader for 'Long Game' that paid off

by Julia Conley ~ Common Dreams ~ tinyurl.com/iguana2614

Bernie Sanders' decades-long effort to build a working-class political movement paid off in the 2026 midterm elections, with at least 18 progressive candidates winning congressional races and 42 more winning down-ballot contests. Organizers credit Sanders' presidential campaigns, relentless advocacy for economic justice and nationwide rallies with inspiring a new generation of progressive leaders who are challenging corporate power and championing Medicare for All, affordable housing and workers' rights.

SCAN ME

Scan this code for a full list of Editors' Picks with easy links to the articles.

UF planning to cut down 200+ trees around football stadium

by Savannah Green

While the University of Florida football team has had its ups and downs this season, you might think it is premature to consider "removals" — but UF isn't waiting. UF just announced what is going on the chopping block, and it isn't administrators, coaches, or players.

As part of the "UAA-62 Ben Hill Griffin Stadium Facility Upgrades" project, UF is proposing to cut down 202 trees of at least a dozen different species, covering every side of the stadium, including 37 heritage-sized trees, most of which are live oaks.

You might be thinking, if they are putting in more buildings, then obviously some trees will need to go, but other than a small "broadcast compound" to the west, that is not the case. The vast majority of these trees, especially those in the north lawn next to University Avenue, are being removed because the construction crews simply want more space for their "Staging Area."

To reiterate, instead of simply asking contractors to work around the dozens of heritage-sized trees at the main entrance to UF's prestigious stadium, they are contemplating allowing these crews to flatten everything, losing all value these trees provide such as shade for tailgaters, habitat for animals, and flood control.

Over summer, UF cut down the entirety of historic Graham Woods in the heart of campus, which consisted of over 1,000 trees and an endangered species, all without final state permits. The local environmental non-profit Friends of Natural Areas, Inc., is challenging UF's attempts to get that permit in Administrative Court, and could use your help to provide scientific or legal expertise [email SaveGrahamWoods@gmail.com] or financial support <tinyurl.com/iguana2611>.

The Stadium Project made one of its first public appearances seeking approval on Nov. 5, when it was presented to the UF Lakes, Vegetation, and Landscaping (LVL) Committee. There, the Committee, along with a few reporters and members of the public (who are being required to show up in person since UF unethically put a crack-down on allowing the public online access to the Zoom meeting) heard the proposal to remove 200+ trees, and voted to postpone the final decision until at least their next meeting on Dec. 3. <tinyurl.com/iguana2612>).

LVL Committee Chair Adam Dale suggested that nearby parking lots could be used for staging and that many trees slated for removal had "reached a point of environmental benefit," which would take 30+ years to restore. LVL Member Prof. Ryan Klein pointed out that many of the trees could be relocated and brought back later, avoiding the need to kill them at all, and allowing for the area to be restored after construction.

Members and the public also pointed out that the $141,000 mitigation proposed to "offset" damages was an undervaluing of these trees. The PowerPoint presentation <tinyurl.com/iguana2613> given to the LVL Committee undercounts the quantitative value according to UF's own tree mitigation policy For instance, a 32" live oak slated for removal should cost $3,500 to mitigate, but the proposal only says $2,500.

NV5 Vice President Laurie Hall stated that there was not enough "room or time" to relocate trees, which is flat-out false. UF is planning at least three years for completion of the $1.45 billion project, so they have time, and for sure have enough money. They just need the pressure from the public and alumni.

It is believed that other UF committees, including the Parking and Transportation Committee, have met to discuss the Stadium Project, but many have done so with no regard for the Sunshine Law, which grants citizens a right to access public meetings. They have not posted agendas, materials, or minutes online. They have stopped sharing online meeting access. They have shut down information listservs. All of these actions are illegal, as these committees are where decisions begin at UF, where real project-voting happens. But over the last couple years, UF has systematically been gaslighting the public (and committee members) about what their roles actually are.

This is wrong, but to stop it, we need more awareness and brave community members willing to speak out. Please demand UF spend the effort to save these trees, and stop ruining our environment by turning campus into an endless construction zone.



Nobel Peace Prize honors Navi Pillay for lifelong commitment to human rights, justice, accountability



by Amnesty International, USA

Reacting to the news that South African international jurist and human rights defender Navi Pillay has been awarded the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize, Amnesty International's Secretary General, Agnes Callamard said:

"We pay tribute to Navi Pillay whose commitment to international law, unwavering independence and guiding moral light have made her one of the most respected human rights figures of our time. Not only does this award honor an extraordinary individual, it also comes at a time when everything Navi Pillay stands for is coming under increasing attack, as powerful states attempt to hollow out the rule of law and jettison fundamental international rules and norms.

"This award is recognition that international justice is the cornerstone of any lasting peace in the world. As the International Criminal Court (ICC) comes under renewed attack with further sanctions imposed by the United States today, this award should remind world leaders of the vital role that the ICC and other international criminal tribunals have to play in seeking justice, truth and reparation for crimes under international law and human rights violations that are being perpetrated every day from Palestine to Sudan, Myanmar to Ukraine.

"From her early days as a young lawyer fighting apartheid in South Africa, Navi Pillay showed a courage and humanity that should inspire us all. Her life's work has been a powerful challenge to impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide — most recently while leading the landmark UN inquiry that found Israel responsible for genocide in Gaza.

"Navi Pillay's richly deserved award is a collective win for those on the frontlines in the fight for human rights, who continue speaking out and standing up for justice, accountability and the rule of law."

Background

Navi Pillay started her career as a defense lawyer for anti-apartheid activists and was the first woman to open a law firm in what was then known as the Natal province in 1967. She went on to be appointed an acting judge in the High Court in South Africa in 1995 and in the same year was elected by the UN General Assembly to be a judge on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where she served for eight years as president. She also served as an International Criminal Court judge from 2003 to 2008. In 2008, Navi Pillay was appointed as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. In 2021, she was appointed chair of the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory. She oversaw the UN report which found that Israel was committing genocide in Gaza.

This statement was released by Amnesty International USA on Oct. 9. See more at amnestyusa.org.

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Oral History Program

History and the people who make it: Hassan Mohamed Safda



This interview excerpt is from a continuing series of transcripts from the collection of the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program at the University of Florida.

Hassan Mohamed Safda was interviewed by Esam Alhadi on July 17, 2011. Safda, who is from Saudi Arabia, talks about the differences between American and Saudi Arabian societies, the meaning of freedom, and some of the tenets of Islam.

Transcript edited for length and clarity by Beth Grobman; a full transcript of this interview is available at tinyurl.com/iguana2598

Alhadi: Tell me about your background.

Safda: My name is Hassan Mohamed Safda. I am from Saudi Arabia, the State of Jeddah. I have a number of brothers and sisters. I am the fifth one among them. I had my elementary education at Almansouriya Elementary School in Jeddah, then EL Farouq Middle School, then Elfalah High School, and later I joined the King Abdulazia University in Jeddah.

Alhadi: What was your field of study?

Safda: Geology and chemistry.

Alhadi: Is your wife American?

Safda:: Yes.

Alhadi: Is your wife a Muslim?

Safda: First, she showed some interest to know about the Islamic religion. I began to tell her after we came to know each other. After one year of study here, we developed a relationship. After I returned to Saudi Arabia, I had to get permission to go forward with my marriage plans. After obtaining the permission, I came here and had our marriage completed. When I was still there, she proceeded with her plans of converting to Islam. She went to Tampa and declared that she is a Muslim.

Alhadi: You know that prophet Mohamed said, "If a person is behind converting another person to the right path, this will ultimately be better for him than acquiring all the material fortune in the world."

Safda: Yes, and I never forced her. I told her that in Islam, we don't force a person to become a Muslim. We just show them the way and leave it up to them.

Alhadi: Do you agree with me that the aforementioned statement by prophet Mohamed is a great one?

Safda: Absolutely. When I came here and began to teach, I used to receive people here and I advised them it is not necessary to convert to Islam, but it is important that they should know about Islam first. They need to know that Islam is not about terrorism. It is, on the contrary, a religion of peace. Islam spread to Arabic and African countries through peaceful means, through trading and good treatment. Reflecting true religious values depends on the way you treat others.

Alhadi: How long have you been residing in Florida?

Safda: I came here around 2002-2003. In 2001, I was back home for a break. One of my sons was driving me crazy. He was hesitant between coming and going. It is the typical nature of teenagers.

Alhadi: How many children do you have and what level of education are they in now?

Safda: God's will is that I don't have children of my own. For that reason, I adopted children. One of them is now in the last year of high school, the other one dropped out while he was in middle school. His entire attention was focused on girls and cars, and this is what he saw that Americans care about in movies. He gave me too much of a hard time. I sent him back to Saudi Arabia.

Alhadi: Did you adopt him from here or from Saudi Arabia?

Safda: From Saudi Arabia. The adoption system in Saudi Arabia is different. It is more of a foster home system.

Alhadi: Mr. Safda, what role do you and the mosque members play towards other communities and groups?

Safda: We introduce Islamic culture and Islamic religion. We try to show that Islam does not mean extremism or show-off or terrorism. We try to show them that Islam means peace and it doesn't advocate war or anything of the like. We try to show them that in Islam there is mercy for everything including animals.

We narrate the story mentioned by Prophet Mohamed that a woman will be thrown into hell on the account that she didn't feed her cat, nor let it go free. We also tell them of the other story that one person took a chick from a nest. The mother bird came to Prophet Mohamed and complained. Prophet Mohamed asked, "Who annoyed this bird?" That person answered, "It is me," and vowed to take the chick back to the nest.

We have been instructed to have mercy on animals and all creatures regardless of religious affiliation. Prophet Mohamed instructed us to be considerate of neighbors, even the Jews or whatever their religion might be. When Prophet Mohamed's Jewish neighbor died, he went by himself to convey his condolences. One day, the Prophet Mohamed stood up for a funeral procession. When he was told that the funeral was for a Jew, his reply was, "He is a human like us."

Alhadi: But, do you think that American society accepts the different vision, views, religion, and cultures?

Safda: Some people accept Islamic religion. They are eager to know about Islam. I learned that after 9/11 many people here became more willing to know about Islam. This means that Americans were living in isolation from the outside world and they were completely manipulated by media and TV. It was a true brainwash. They [Americans] are very kind people. However, a small group, which is the government, controls everything.

I reiterate that Americans are really kind people. When I first came here, an elderly lady was greeting me in a very friendly way. However, they listen to the media which keeps telling them that the Arabs and Muslims are terrorists.

Alhadi: You lived part of your life in

Saudi Arabia and another part here in America. When you compare life systems in the two regions, which one do you think tends to be better?

Safda: Everybody has a feeling of longing for his homeland. We came from an environment that is impacted by religion, integration, and cooperation where neighbors and brothers care about each other.

There, if you needed something, you will find a brother ready to pay for you. Here the society is disintegrating. Brothers don't care about each other and their relationship is not more than greeting each other. No one will be ready to give financial help to others, even to their own father.

I saw it here in my wife's family when I noticed that caring about others is nothing more than a verbal expression of sympathy such as, "I feel sorry for you." You don't find something such as the Arabic generosity, love to help, and nobility here.

One case I know is that of a fellow doctor who was fired from his work and was put on trial. When he needed money to cover his costs, I gave him the money. When he wanted to pay me back, I rejected and told him that we are brothers. This is because of my Islamic background. We don't just talk the talk, but we walk the walk. We help others to overcome their difficulties.

The Islamic tradition is that, "He who eases a believer's difficulty, God will ease his difficulties on the day of judgment."

Alhadi: What do you feel America has given you, and what did you give in exchange?

Safda: When I first came here I heard everybody talking about freedom. I asked what freedom you have that you are talking about?

If it is for the freedom of speech, I do talk. I recall the Egyptian saying that, "You don't pay tax on talking." On the surface, it appears that you are free to move. However, there are limits. If you talk about the country's sovereignty, you will be stopped.

This is not freedom in the full sense of the word. The government knows how many rooms you have in your house or how much you have in your bank account. Whatever you do is under surveillance. The Congress had even legalized eavesdropping on people's phone conversations. My question is, "Where is the freedom?" Freedom is limited here.

In the Arab countries, there is also no freedom. If they are truly Islamic regimes, there will be will freedom. In Islam, no one will enter your house without your consent. Here, they don't need permission. According to Prophet Mohamed's tradition that no one should come knock on somebody's door at night on the account that you may scare them. Prophet Mohamed used to pray that, "May God protect us from those who knock on a door at night."

Alhadi: Then do you think the claim that America has given us freedom is not right?

Safda: I believe we have freedom, but it has a limit. As Mandela has said, each country has its own definition for freedom. You can't apply freedom and democracy in all countries. This is what Nelson Mandela means by his statement.

Alhadi: We have just been talking about freedom, and now we are following the news of all these revolutions in Arab countries such as Egypt specifically and also in Yemen and others. Do you think this is part of people's search for freedom? What do you think is behind these movements?

Safda: In Arab countries, we try to copy America. The Islamic prophecy told us that, "We will follow the footsteps of those who came ahead of us." The problem we have is those young people who are educated, but they are not religiously knowledgeable. They think this is freedom.

It is true that in Egypt you will find injustice, but the way they approach freedom is very superficial. I stand in support of the Arab revolutions and no one should accept injustice. However, I am afraid that in the name of freedom, other misdoings may be conducted.

Alhadi: Does that mean you think the outcome of these revolutions will not be as expected?

Safda: If they take the right path, then their outcome will be positive. Only God knows what will happen. I recall the case of that Saudi young man who was always playing Michael Jackson's song and when I asked him if he understands what these songs say, his answer was no, and he said he listens only to show that he is up-to-date with the style.

In Saudi, you will find young men wearing fashionable clothing on the account of searching for freedom and copying the West. This is a blind imitation which will eventually be harmful. We should take the good things and leave the rest. We should stand in support of freedom, change, and justice for all. We will get there if we follow and apply Islam literally. Those who govern may come and claim that he is applying freedom, but he ends up conducting unfair acts.

Alhadi: I wish you health and long life, and that we all conclude our lives by doing good.

Safda: We came here to help. I told Sheikh Zafir that I am ready to help with any Arabic language or religion teaching. It is important to teach our children before they forget their religion. This is our responsibility. We came here for peace, not for terrorism or things of the like.

Alhadi: Thank you very much for this good interview and for these good words.

Samuel Proctor Oral History Program believes that listening carefully to first-person narratives can change the way we understand history, from scholarly questions to public policy. SPOHP needs the publics help to sustain and build upon its research, teaching, and service missions: even small donations can make a big difference in SPOHP's ability to gather, preserve, and promote history for future generations.

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In memoriam:

Karrie Kay Ford, rest in power



by Jimmy Schmidt

Karrie Kay Ford died by suicide on August 13, by jumping off a building in downtown Gainesville. She was 38 years old. She was an organizer, artist, poet, needleworker and cat lover. She worked a variety of jobs over the course of her life, but in recent years had been employed primarily as an in-home health aid for elderly and disabled people.

Karrie was a fighter, a survivor of childhood abuse and trauma, homelessness and addiction. Despite her personal struggles, Karrie believed in and fought for a better world. She was a grassroots organizer who worked with her friends, comrades, and people of all stripes to make the world a better place, building community and inspiring others to take action for positive social change. Karrie organized and agitated on a variety of labor, environmental, and social justice issues. She was arrested for doing direct action civil disobedience to try to stop the dangerous, ecosystem-wrecking Sabal Trail natural gas pipeline. She was passionate about supporting and fostering solidarity with people incarcerated in jails and prisons. A practicing believer in the power of mutual aid, she was a core member and supporter of the Gainesville Free Store.

Karrie was a radical — she believed in getting to the root of problems, and was quick to tie lived personal experience in to her ever-growing, evolving understanding of how systemic forces such as capitalism, male supremacy, white supremacy, and queer-phobia impact our daily lives in this society. She fought her personal demons the best ways she knew how while never losing sight of the big picture, striving always to build a beloved community of fellow freedom fighters.

Karrie was almost two years into her journey of sobriety, working hard on recovering from alcoholism, when a cascading mental health crisis took over her life.

Within less than a year she lost her job, her home in her native West Virginia, and her three beloved cats. After having moved away for a couple of years to try to reconnect with her WV roots and build a new sober life there, she came back to seek help from the community she had cultivated over the course of 10 years of living in the Gainesville area.

Friends who loved her dearly did all that they knew how to help her find mental health support, medication, jobs, and housing. Despite this, she kept ending up on the street as her illness made it increasingly difficult for her to maintain relationships and navigate the system. In the end, she made a choice to end the pain and suffering that overwhelmed her. Even in the extremity of her struggle, her core values and warrior spirit shone through: even when she was on the street, and despite the depths of her illness causing her to fear and lash out at those closest to her, she maintained her sobriety to the last.

Karrie, we who knew you will forever be blessed by your intelligence, your wit, your wisdom, your sharp and clear eyed perspective on right and wrong, your fabulous creativity, and your fierce determination to fight for what is right, against all odds.

Friends, comrades and community members who knew and loved Karrie are invited to join us at 10a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 5 at Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery as we celebrate the life of this one-woman force of nature, mourn her loss together, and lay her ashes to rest.

Talk to someone now. You're not alone

Free 24-hour crisis lines for anyone experiencing emotional distress.

- National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988
- Alachua County Crisis Line - (352) 264-6789



Dolores Huerta—¡Presente!

Statement on the Passing of Dolores Huerta, Founder and President, DHF

The Dolores Huerta Foundation (DHF) thanks every one of our Vecinos, youth, community members, online supporters, and donors for the love and support you have shown in honoring Dolores's extraordinary life and legacy. Our founder and president, Dolores Huerta, passed away on Oct. 28 at the age of 96, after dedicating her life to advancing social justice.

Today, the hearts of the DHF staff are filled with profound sorrow, but even more so with enduring gratitude, purpose, and resolve. As we mourn the passing of our visionary founder, mentor, and guiding light, we are deeply moved by the overwhelming outpouring of love, stories, and support from across the world. This global embrace is a powerful testament to Dolores's unique gift: her ability to make every single person feel seen, valued, and essential.

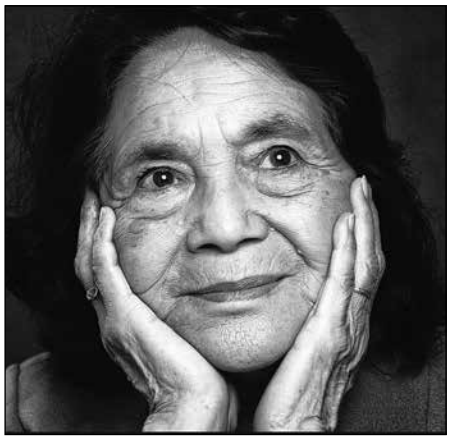
Dolores always reminded us of a fundamental truth that shapes everything we do: history is not written by the wealthy and seemingly powerful, but rather by everyday people who recognize their own power and take collective action to make changes in their lives, their communities, and the world.

To the world, "¡Sí, se puede!" is an iconic rallying cry that has mobilized and inspired generations. But to us, her staff, it was the daily reflection of her eternal optimism and her steadfast belief that what seems unachievable will transform the moment people awaken the internal power that Dolores recognized in all of us. In her eyes, there were no passive onlookers; every person she met was a leader and a potential organizer. She recognized our inherent power, and in turn, inspired us to believe in our own capacity to achieve true change and the liberation of all people.

When we gathered as a staff yesterday, we allowed our tears to flow freely. We shared our grief and held space for the immense void her physical absence leaves. But as we sat together, we were also crystal clear about what Dolores would say at the conclusion of our meeting:

"Get up, grab your materials, knock on every door, and make sure all eligible voters get out and vote!"

Dolores taught us that real power doesn't lie with billionaires or the political elite; it lies within each person who is empowered and willing to make their voice heard.



As we navigate this turbulent landscape, we proudly carry her spirit, her joy, and her fierce determination forward. The work does not stop; it grows stronger. We will honor her life by staying on the frontlines, organizing our communities, and building a future of justice and dignity.

Dolores, humilde servidora de tu pueblo, gracias por darnos tu ejemplo. Y claro, siempre… ¡Sí, se puede!

For more on Huerta's amazing life and legacy, check out https://doloreshuerta.org/in-memory-of-dolores-huerta/.

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https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com

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David Sirota is the founder and editor-in-chief of **The Lever**, a reader-supported investigative outlet exposing corporate corruption.

levernews.com/author/david-sirota/

Florida Phoenix

FloridaPhoenix.com, a free, nonprofit news site, covers Florida government and politics with in-depth stories on the latest events, editorial cartoons, and progressive commentary. Many stories focus on emerging innovative ideas or report on the people who are trying to help solve problems and shift policy for a more compassionate world.

Lawyer Oyer

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THE LEFT HOOK

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thelefthook.substack.com

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• Trita Parsi • Gil Duran • Katie Phang • Jess Craven
• Qasim Rashid • Jim Acosta • Allison Gill • Zeteo

Robert Reich *writes at* robertreich.substack.com



An emeritus professor of public policy at UC Berkeley and former Secretary of Labor in the Clinton administration writes a daily newsletter "not just to inform (and occasionally amuse) you, but also to arm you with the truth — about how the system works and doesn't, where the power is located and where it's lacking, and the myths and lies used by those who are blocking positive social change."

From WOMEN'S RIGHTS, p. 1

pharmaceutical procedure, and 7.5 million pregnant people in the USA have utilized it since it was approved in 2000. It is effective at ending pregnancy greater than 95 percent of the time, and studies show that 99 percent of patients have no serious side effects.

Telehealth prescription is a lifeline for patients in a multitude of situations — those who live far away from clinics in rural and medically underserved areas, women who can't leave work or caregiving to travel to a clinic, women with disabilities, and women in states with bans who obtain care from doctors in states with shield laws

A quarter of all abortions — which is a twofold increase since Roe vs Wade was overturned — are now provided via Telehealth.

In 2023, the FDA performed a Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Stategy (REMS) of mifepristone, and this removed the in-person dispensing requirement and permitted certified pharmacies to dispense mifepristone, including by mail. Research shows mifepristone to be prescribed just as safely via Telehealth as in person with a provider.

Louisiana v. FDA is one of several court cases, along with those in Texas, Florida and Missouri, brought by abortion ban states that are attempting to restrict access to mifepristone in the US. This case was filed by the anti-rights group Alliance Defending Freedom on behalf of the state of Louisiana and an individual woman, against the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in October 2025.

The Texas, Florida and Missouri cases could go even further, by calling for the withdrawal of mifepristone altogether, or by finding that the Comstock Act prohibits the mailing of all abortion pills.

The Comstock Act is a series of federal laws passed in 1873 that prohibits the use of mail to transport medications and obstetrical supplies intended for use in unlawful abortion care. It was a "zombie law," meaning it remained on the books but was not enforced.

In December 2022, after Roe v. Wade was overturned, the Department of Justice released a legal memo making clear that the Comstock Act does not prohibit mailing of medication abortion, unless the sender intends the drugs to be used unlawfully. But now, anti-rights activists are attempting to revive the Comstock Act to indicate otherwise.

Currently, the Trump administration is conducting its own po-



litically motivated "review" of the safety of mifepristone.

In January, the FDA asked the court to hold the case until the administration is finished with the review. The request was granted in April, thus pausing the case. The Supreme Court has allowed continued access to mifepristone via mail and at pharmacies as the case is paused.

The FDA was required to file a status report on its review of the REMS for mifepristone on Oct. 7. The status report's timeline puts the FDA's study results after the Nov. 3 election, with the FDA expecting results by mid-December and a written report no later than March.

The FDA must refuse political pressure to restrict mifepristone access, and continue to abide by evidence-based research and what is best for patients. The courts and politicians should not invoke antiquated laws like the Comstock Act as the grounds to restrict this safe and effective abortion method.

National Women's Liberation in Gainesville asks folks to advocate and call or e-mail the FDA and urge them to keep Telehealth access to providers for mifepristone prescription and to allow mail prescription delivery. Call 855-543-3784 — FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. Email druginfo@fda.hhs.gov.

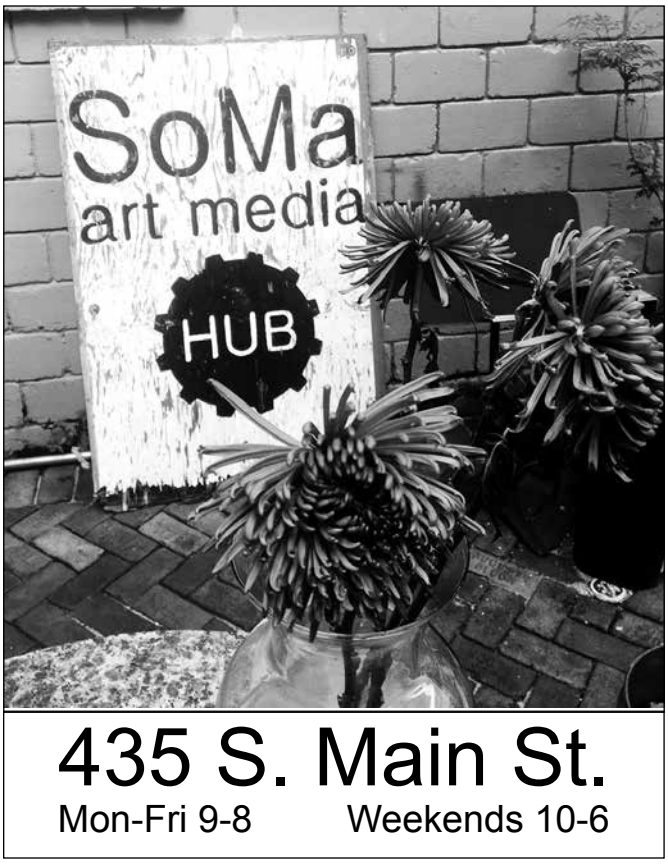
For information on Plan C and how to access it in Florida, visit plancpills.org.

From DYSTOPIAN, p. 32

mission's Zero Waste Grant ($40,000) and a very generous anonymous donor ($35,000). Thank you for your support! The opening of Dystopian Dollar would not have been possible without it!

Dystopian Dollar is located next door to The Repurpose Project and directly behind Renovator Reuse at 1820 NE 23rd Ave in Gainesville, Florida, 32609. Our newly opened donation center (for the entire organization) is also located in that building. Both Dystopian Dollar and the donation center are open seven days a week from 10am-6pm.

The Repurpose Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to innovating reuse infrastructures and systems to build a robust reuse economy. To learn more about The Repurpose Project, Reuse Planet, Renovator Reuse and Dystopian Dollar, visit: www.repurposeproject.org or Instagram: @dystopian.dollar.



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Gainesville area events

Please notify the Iguana of upcoming events at: gainesvilleiguana@cox.net

WEEK OF NOV 15 - 21

Wed 11/18 "B-Roll", 7pm, Matheson Museum (513 E Univ Ave), author & filmmaker Dr Steve Robitaille on his career & works, free w/ registration; mathesonmuseum.org/events/

Thu 11/19 "Born In Flames", 5pm, UF Pugh Hall Ocora (296 Buckman Dr), Pulitzer finalist Dr. Bench Ansfield on the business of arson & tenant organizing in the '70s, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9973

Thu 11/19 Meet the Author, 6-8pm, A. Quinn Jones Museum (1013 NW 7th Ave), Lizzie Jenkins, author of "A History of Alachua County", free; tinyurl.com/iguana9974

Fri 11/20 "A Place for All" opens, 6pm (through 2/28/27), A. Quinn Jones Museum (1013 NW 7th Ave), dance, performance, & nore for poster exhibition from Smithsonian African American Museum, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9975

Fri 11/20 Transgender Remembrance Day, 6–9pm, Pride Ctr (1204 NW 10th Ave), neverless, they persevered, free

Fri 11/20 "Frozen: The Broadway Musical", 7:30pm (through 12/13), Gvl Community Playhouse (4039 NW 16th Blvd), two sisters & a tough winter, $15 (12 & under) -25; tinyurl.com/iguana9976

Sat 11/21 High Springs Artwalk, 12-5pm, 18587 Main St (High Springs), local artists & craftspeople, free entry; tinyurl.com/iguana9977

Sat 11/21 Cane Boil & Fiddle Fest, 10am–3pm, Morningside Nature Ctr (3540 E Univ Ave), food, music, & life from 1870s, free (no pets); tinyurl.com/iguana9979

Sat 11/21 Amy Trask swearing-In ceremony, 5pm, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gvl (4225 NW 34th St), celebrate our new state Representative, free

Sat 11/21 "Ratatouille", 8–10pm, Bo Diddley Plaza (111 E Univ Ave), animated Disney-Pixar movie, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9980

Sat 11/21 UF Football, "all day", BHG Stadium, vs Vanderbilt, traffic advisory

Sat 11/21 Gvl Free Store, 2-5pm 3rd Sats, Civic Media Ctr (433 S Main St), free stuff for all (masks required & provided); civicmediacenter.org

WEEK OF NOV 22 - 28

Sun 11/22 The Bad Plus, 7:30-9:30pm, Santa Fe College (830 W 83rd St), veteran jazz quartet, $25-35; tinyurl.com/iguana9981

Mon 11/23 FMNH Re-opening, 10am-5pm, Fla Museum of Natural History (3215 Hull Rd), expanded & refreshed, various rates; tinyurl.com/iguanaa9982

Sat 11/28 "MADE: Art Market", 11am-5pm, Gvl Fine Arts Ass'n (1314 S Main St), 27 local artists + food & live music, free entry; gainesvillefinearts.org/made

Sat 11/28 Old Time Pickin' Party, 6-9pm, Heartwood Soundstage porch (619 S Main St), all-acoustic open jam, free;tinyurl.com/iguana9983

WEEK OF NOV 29 - DEC 5

Wed, 12/2, Mama's Broke 7pm Heartwood Soundstage (619 S. Main St), fiery dark-folk duo + Nathan Evans Fox, $25 adv/$31 door; tinyurl.com/iguana0004

Thu 12/3 "Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley" opens, 8pm, Acrosstown Rep (3501 SW 2nd Ave), "Pride and Prejudice" 2 years later, $11.30 on 12/3, later $21.80-27.05; acrosstown.org/

Fri 12/4 Artwalk, 7–10pm, downtown Gvl, free; artwalkgainesville.com

Fri 12/24 "Once on This Island" opens, 8pm–midnight through 12/20, Star Center Theatre (11 NE 23rd Ave), romance vs Caribbean gods, $20–22; starcentertheatre.org/

Sat 12/5 Carrie Kay Ford burial, 10am, Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery (7204 SE County Rd 234), see pg 22 & prairiecreekconservationcemetery.org/

Sat 12/5 Living History, 9:30am-1:30pm, Morningside Nature Ctr (3540 E Univ Ave), 1st Sats through May, re-enacted pioneer life, free (no pets); tinyurl.com/iguana9984

Sat 12/5 Holiday Market, 9am-4pm, Gvl Garden Club (1350 NW 75th St), local artisans, plants, & elves, free (pls bring shelf-stable food items); tinyurl.com/iguana9985

Sat 12/5 A Very Gvl Parade, noon-1pm, W 6th St–620 E Univ Ave, floats, live bands, family fun, kids' dance party, lights celebration, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9986

Sat 12/5 "A Christmas Carol" opens, 2pm through 12/20, The Hipp (25 SE 2nd Pl), Dickens story w/ music, $20-45; tinyurl.com/iguana9987

Sat 12/5 "A Twistmas Carol" opens, 1pm through 12/21, The Hipp (25 SE 2nd Pl), updated & twisted Dickens story, $35; tinyurl.com/iguana9988

Sat 12/5 Iguana Readers Celebration, 1-4pm, 1st Magnitude Brewing (1220 SE Veitch St), 40 years! w/ pizza, beer, DJ Wax Atom, free entry; pg 2 & gainesvilleiguana.org

WEEK OF DEC 6 - 12

Sun 12/6 Glam Craft Show, 10am-5pm, 1st Mag (1220 se Veitch St), crafts from local makers, free entry; pg 11

Sun 12/6 Perspectives in the Parks, 1-2pm (1st Suns), Hogtown Creek Headwaters Nature Ctr (1500 NW 45th Ave), details tba, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9989

Sun 12/6 Gvl Humanists meet, 1:30-2:30pm, Millhopper library meeting room A (3145 NE 43rd St), free; gainesvillehumanist.com/meetings

Sun 12/6 Sensory Friendly Circus, 2-3pm, Gvl Circus Ctr (1925 NW 2nd St), lights/sound/pacing adjusted for comfort, $5; tinyurl.com/iguana9990

Sun 12/6 Jazz @ the Star, 7pm, Star Center Theatre (11 NE 23rd Ave), Dr David Smith & ensemble, $20; starcentertheatre.org/

Tue 12/8 Springs Advocacy, 12-1pm, Fla Springs Inst (18645 Main St, High Springs), learn how to speak up for fresh water, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9991

Tue 12/8 Free Grocery Store, 3-5:30pm, Civic Media Ctr (433 S Main St), food for all, free; pg 12 & gnvfgs.org

Sat 12/12 "Celebrating Peace, Connecting Community", 10am-2pm, MLK Ctr (1028 NE 14th St), hot catered meal, free haircuts, clothing, groceries, DJ, community resources, free; tinyurl.iguana9992

Sat 12/12 Fix It Clinic, 11am-2pm, Gvl Hackerspace (4101 NW 6th St), 2nd Saturdays appliance repair-if-possible workshop, free (2 items max); tinyurl.com/iguana9957

Sat 12/12 Evergreen Holiday Pop-up, 12-5pm, AUK Market (2031 NW 6th St), art,ccrafts, planets, & ore, free entry; tinyurl.com/iguana9993

Sat 12/12 "The Art of Peace", 6-10pm, The Wooly (20 N Main St), River Phoenix Ctr for Peacebuilding's FUNdraising gala w/ Sh•tty Beatles, desserts, silent auction, $100 (after 11/30, $120); pg 22 & tinyurl.com/iguana9994

WEEK OF DEC 13 - 19

Sun 12/13 ACT Holiday Mingle, 2-5pm, Alachua Conservation Trust (7204 SE CR 234), light food & cheer, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9995

Sun 12/13 Hoggetowne Bronze, 4pm, Matheson Museum (513 E Univ Ave), handbell concert of classics, free; mathesonmuseum.org/events/

Sun 12/13 The Listening Room, 6-8pm, Cypress & Grove (1001 NW 4th St), 2nd Sundays acoustic shows (tonight: Mike Robinson), free; cypressandgrove.com/calendar

Mon 12/14 Fla Free Speech Forum, 11:30am, Eastside High School Inst of Culinary Arts (1201 SE 43rd St), SPLC research analyst Maya Henson on extremist attacks on education, free with reservation by Dec 7, 6pm ($ for lunch); floridafreespeech.org

Mon 12/14 CLC Spaghetti Dinner, 6:30pm, Senior Rec Ctr (5701 NW 34th Blvd), for all friends of labor, free (accepting donations of new, unwrapped toys); pg 23 & tinyurl.com/iguana9996

Thu 12/17 Holiday Vendor Market, 5:30-9:30pm, S. Main Station (619 S Main St), artisans, sweets, Santa (till 7:30), tree lighting, free entry; tinyurl.com/iguana9997

Thu 12/17 Meet the Author, 6-8pm, A. Quinn Jones Museum (1013 NW 7th Ave), Terri Bailey, author of "Gainesville Prosper", free; tinyurl.com/iguana9998

Fri 12/18 CMC Music Show, 7-10pm, Civic Media Ctr (433 S Main St), Train But Home 4 the Holidays Tour (4 bands) (masks required) (bring ear protection), $?; civicmediacenter.org

Fri 12/18 "Joy to the Holidays", 7:30pm (& 1/19 3pm), 1st United Methodist Church (419 NE 1st St), Voices Rising Community Chorus, free; pg 10 & vrccgainesville.org/

Sat 12/19 High Springs Artwalk, 12-5pm, 18587 Main St (High Springs), local artists & craftspeople, free entry; iguana9999

Sat 12/19 Gvl Free Store, 2-5pm 3rd Sats, Civic Media Ctr (433 S Main St), free stuff for all (masks required & provided); civicmediacenter.org

Sat 12/19 Winter Solstice Concert, 7pm, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (4225 NW 34th St), 40th annual Vets for Peace seasonal highlight, $25-50; vfpgainesville.org/

WEEK OF DEC 20 - 26

Sun 12/20 Sunday Assembly, 1pm, Pride Ctr (1204 NW 10th Ave), holiday potluck, free w/ dish; sagainesville.weebly.com/

WEEK OF DEC 27 - JAN 2

Thu 12/31 Sparks in the Park, 5-7pm, Depot Park (874 SE 4th St), family-friendly dance party, fireworks starting 6:30pm, free; tinyurl.com/iguana0005

Thu 12/31 Downtown Countdown, 8pm-12:30pm, Bo Diddley Plaza (111 E Univ Ave), 3 live bands, free; tinyurl.com/iguana0001

Fri 1/1 Quilts & Fiber Arts Exhibition opens, reception time tba, exhibiton through 4/30, Alachua County Admin Bldg (12 SE 1st St), quilts, embroidery, weaving & more, free

Sat 1/2 Flying Pig Parade, 2pm, starts at Bo Diddley Plaza (111 E Univ Ave), freaky, fun, free; pg 16

WEEK OF JAN 3 - 9

Sun 1/3 Perspectives in the Parks, 1-2pm (1st Suns), Hogtown Creek Headwaters Nature Ctr (1500 NW 45th Ave), details tba, free; tinyurl.com/iguana0002

WEEK OF JAN 10 -17

Sun 1/10 American Dream Survivors album release, 4pm, Heartwood sSoundstage (619 S Main St), 4pm, with Whiskey & Co, Confession Kids, & Wax Wings, $15 adv/$20 door; tinyurl.com/iguana0003

Mon 1/11 Fla Free Speech Forum, 11:30am, Eastside High School Inst of Culinary Arts (1201 SE 43rd St), UF Prof Lyrissa Lidsky on presidential pressure on press, free with reservation by Jan 4, 6pm ($ for lunch); floridafreespeech.org

Fri 1/14 "Marjorie Prime" opens, 8pm through 1/31, Acrosstown Rep (3501 SW 2nd Ave), science fiction play of memory and forgetting, $11.30 on 1/14, after $21.80–27.05; acrosstown.org/

RECURRING EVENTS

PROTESTS

Sundays, People's Progressive Agenda, 2-4pm, NW 13th St, north of 23rd Ave

Sundays, ICE Out of Everywhere, 2-4pm, West Park, NW 34th St & 8th Ave

Tuesdays, Peace Picket, 4:30-5:30pm, corner of NW 42rd St & NW 16th Ave

Fridays, Visibility Brigade, 3:30-5:30pm, I-75/39th Ave overpass

Saturdays, Badass Feminists Gvl,10am-noon every Sat, Oaks Mall (6419 W. Newberry Rd)

FARMERS MARKETS/ FOOD PANTRIES

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

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

Saturday Haile Farmers Market, 8:30am-noon, Haile Village Ctr (5213 SW 91st Terr)

Food Pantry, Tue/Wed/Fri 10am-4pm Mon/Thu 12-4pm, UF HealthStreet (2401 SW Archer Rd), free, best choice available Mons & Thurs (health interview requested for repeat membership); 352-294-4880 & facebook.com/UFHealthStreet

Free Grocery Store hosts a walk-in (no IDs or appointment required) pantry of perishable and nonperishable food at the Civic Media Center (433 S Main St) every 2nd Tuesday of the month, 3-6pm, and another at the Cone Park Library branch (2801 E University Ave) every last Thursday of the month, 2-5pm, while supplies last.

MEETINGS & MEET-UPS

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

Gainesville official and public meetings: tinyurl.com/iguana9830

County official and public meetings: tinyurl.com/iguana9871

Alachua County Democratic Party meets 3rd Tuesdays, 6pm, LifeSouth (4039 W Newberry Rd)

Democratic Progressive Caucus, 4th Mondays, 5:30pm, LifeSouth (1221 NW 13th St)

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

Democratic Women's Club of Santa Fe Springs meets 4th Sunday 3-5pm (except Dec & July), High Springs Women's Club; dwcosfs@gmail.com, Facebook.com/dwcsfs

Stonewall Democrats, 2nd Thursdays, 5:30pm, ACDEC office (901 NW 8th Ave)

Artist Meetup, 5:30-7pm 2nd Thurs, Gvl Fine Arts Ass'n (1314 S Main St), exhibit & conversation, free; gainesvillefinearts.org

Clubes de Escucha, 6–8pm, Curia on the Drag (2029 NW 6th St), primer y tercer Viernes de cada mes; clubesdeescucha.com

PFLAG meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7pm, for now at United Church of Gvl, 1624 NW 5th Ave.

Post-Incarceration Peer Support Group, 4-5:30pm (2nd Fridays), Downtown Library (401 E Univ Ave), for anyone 19+ released in last five years, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9873

MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT

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

Art House films: thehipp.org/cinema

Basement Sessions, 7pm, The Hipp Basement (25 SE 2nd Pl), mostly jazz, $10 sliding scale

"Bobo a Gogo: the Nacho Clowns Extremes' Strange and Lovely Variety Show" starring Auntie Bobo, open stage every Monday (sign up by 8pm) at University Club (18 E Univ Ave)

Drag Bingo, 7-9pm last Thursdays, 1st Mag (1220 SE Veitch St)

Jazz on the Green, 7-9pm on 2nd Saturdays, Celebration Pointe (4225 Celebration Pointe Ave), free

Live Community Music, Wednesdays, 8pm Heartwood Soundstage inside & out

Living History Saturday, 9am-1pm (1st Sats, Sept-May), Morningside Nature Ctr (3540 E Univ Ave), farm life of the past re-enacted, free; tinyurl.com/iguana9312

MusicGNV Facebook local music news (updated Thursdays)

Thursday evening Poetry Jam, 8pm at Civic Media Center

OPEN MICS

(List may be out of date - check w/venue) Gainesville is a talent-rich town, and open mics are a great way to have an evening of varied entertainment out of the house. Each have their own character.

"Bobo a Gogo: the Nacho Clowns Extremes' Strange and Lovely Variety Show", open stage every Monday (sign up by 8pm) at University Club (18 E Univ Ave)

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

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

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

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

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

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

OTHER CALENDARS

- Alachua Community Collective (on Facebook & Instagram)
- Civic Media Center (civicmediacenter.org)
- Gainesville Blue Activism Hub (linktr.ee/gnvbluehub),
- The Lynx Books (thelynxbooks.com/events)
- Visit Gainesville (visitgainesville.com/events), updated Thursdays

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 & knowledge of birds & other native wildlife, to protect & restore wildlife populations & their habitats, & 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. is a non-profit land trust protecting North Central Florida's natural, historic, scenic & recreational resources for over 36 years. 352-373-1078 | AlachuaConservationTrust.org

Alachua County Democratic Party (Alachua County Democratic Executive Committee - ACDED) is the official organization representing over 70,000 Democrats in Alachua County, whose mission is to elect Democrats. Get involved if you want to join like-minded people ready to fight to restore democracy & electing Democrats. Alachuademparty.com | 901 NW 8th Ave, Suite A-3, Gvn | 352-373-1730 | comms@alachuademparty.com.

Alachua County Labor Coalition organizes to support local labor & advance the Medicare for All & A Living Wage Campaigns. Meets monthly on the 4th Tuesday at 6pm at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 1236 NW 18th Ave, Gnv | info@laborcoalition | 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 in Alachua, Bradford & Union County with & without health insurance. 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 DSA is part of the largest socialist organization in the U.S., The Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). They have organized to build working-class democracy & power in workplaces, neighborhoods, local governments, & throughout Alachua County. They are member-funded & member-run. alachuadsa@gmail.com | www.instagram.com/alachuadsa.

Alachua NAACP - With 2+ million activists across the country, we work to ensure the political, educational, social, & economic equality of rights of all people & to eliminate racial hatred & 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 & Conservation Institute is a non-profit research group working to stimulate conservation action to save threatened bird species in the southeast. 352-514-5606 | arcinst.org

The Awesome Foundation exists to forward the interests of awesomeness in the universe. The Gainesville chapter awards $1,000 grants on a quarterly basis throughout the year. Projects must benefit our greater Gainesville community of Alachua County. To donate, learn more or apply for a grant for YOUR awesome idea, go to awesomegainesville.org

Badass Feminists protest against the Trump administration every Saturday morning. If you are looking for a way to take action, please join the Facebook group Badass Feminists Gainesville.

Baker Interfaith Friends Volunteers visits people in immigration detention in Baker County, volunteers welcome! Contact: bakerinterfaithfriends@gmail.com or on Facebook.

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

Citizens Climate Lobby builds awareness & 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 & library of the non-corporate press, & a resource & space for organizing. 433 S Main St., Gainesville | 352-373-0010 | civicmediacenter.org | coordinators@civicmediacenter.org |

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 at https://tinyurl.com/mwkwetyb for news, action alerts, meeting alerts. ClimateRealityProjectgnv@gmail.com | facebook.com/groups/climaterealitygnvgroup

Coalition of Hispanics Integrating Spanish Speakers through Advocacy & Service is a

VETERANS FOR PEACE

War is a Racket

veteransforpeace.org

Spotlight on: Touch Grass Alachua



This new organization, led by a 17-year-old student, just won a $1,000 grant from Awesome Gainesville. Touch Grass Alachua strives to get young folks out from behind their screens and out in nature.

They promote youth wellness, nature connection, and environmental leadership with activities including conservation, science, and art, doing events out in natural areas of Alachua County.

See https://touchgrassalachua.org/ or check them out on Instagram @ touchgrassalachua.

UF student-run group focusing on immigrant rights & 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 & 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 | info@csgnv.org

Community Weatherization Coalition's mission is to help neighbors save energy & water, & reduce utility bills by engaging volunteers, building community, & 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 & 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, & 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

Democratic Socialists of America believe the economy & society should be run democratically to meet human needs, not to make profits for the wealthy. Check out the local chapter at alachuadsa.org or contact alachuadsa@gmail.com.

Democratic Women's Club of Santa Fe Springs meets @ 3-5pm on the 4th Sunday monthly, except Dec & July, in High Springs. Contact: dwcosfs@gmail.com | facebook.com/dwcsfs

Divest Gainesville advocates divesting City financial assets from fossil fuel industries & educating on racial justice & climate change. youngersn@outlook.com | facebook.com/DivestGainesville

Divest UF is a student-run organization & a loose collective of Gators seeking to divest the university from fossil fuels, the prison industry, & arms & surveillance companies. Divestuf.org | facebook.com/Divest UF

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 & restore fairness to Florida's criminal justice system. PO Box 142933, Gainesville, 32614 | gnewburn@famm.org | 352-682-2542 | FAMM.org

Final Friends, run by volunteers, helps families learn how to accomplish legal home funeral care as an alternative to a commercial funeral home. 352-374-4478 | FinalFriends.org@gmail.com | FinalFriends.org

Flipping the System is a non-profit organization dedicated to eradicating sexual violence on campuses. Through educational programming & events, FTS believes that a future free of sexual violence is possible. www.flippingthesystem.org | info@flippingthesystem.org | @flippingthesystem | 954-589-7626

Florida Coalition for Peace & Justice provides space for meetings, workshops, & educational activities that promote peace, human rights, social justice awareness, conflict resolution, self-empowerment & environmental awareness. 352-603-3680 | florida4peace.org

Florida Free Speech Forum is a lecture series that provides a place for open & constructive dialogue. The group advocates, protects & defends freedom of speech through open dialogue. floridafreespeechforum.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 & outside of prisons. Efforts focus on incarcerated individuals' needs & their care networks. P.O. Box 358439, Gainesville, FL 32635 | 850-895-1505 | FLPrisonerSolidarity@gmail.com | facebook.com/FLAbolition | FLPrisonerSolidarity.org

Free Grocery Store is an all-volunteer mutual aid food pantry & garden in Gainesville supporting the right to healthy & nutritious food by distributing free food through delivery & in-person services, & by growing some of the food. The in-person pantry is on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the CMC (433 S. Main St., Gnv.) with sign-ups beginning at 2pm & the pantry opening around 3pm til 5:30pm while supplies last. More info + info on home delivery at gnvfgs.org.

Friends of Susan B. Anthony, Gainesville recognizes local women who exemplify some of the qualities of Susan B. Anthony, that is, concern for full enfranchisement of women & minorities & equal rights for all citizens. fosba@fosba.com | fosba.com

Friends of the Library is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in Gainesville. We support the Alachua County Library District & literacy programs throughout Alachua County. Accepting donations of books, art, records, puzzles, games, etc. We have a huge sale every April & October. 430 N. Main St. | 352-375-1676 | www.folacld.org | Facebook | Instagram @FOLACLD

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 & push for aggressive climate action. The hope is to transform society & 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 & 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. 352-278-4342 | mark1343@juno.com | www.fadp.org

Gainesville for All - GNV4ALL is the Gainesville Sun's initiative to identify & address problems related to inequities & racial injustice in our community. See Facebook for online activities. GNV4ALL@gmail.com | facebook.com|GNV4ALL

Gainesville Humanists, a chapter of the American Humanist Association, is an activist group of humanists, atheists, agnostics, & free thinkers. Meets first Sunday of the month at 1:30pm to discuss & plan actions that promote humanist values, such as resisting Christian Nationalism & resisting authoritarianism. Check website or meetup for venue gainesvillehumanists1@gmail.com | meetup.com/gainesville-humanists | gainesvillehumanists.com | Facebook: https://tinyurl.com/Iguana2379

Gainesville Interfaith Alliance for Immigrant Justice organizes faith communities to work together for immigrant justice. Meetings are the second Monday of the month on Zoom. Richard @ 371-6772 | Gainesvilleiaij@gmail.com | gainesvilleiaij.blogspot.com

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

DIRECTORY continued on next page

DIRECTORY from preceding page

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, & 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 & volunteer assistance. join@gainesvillerollerrebels.com | gainesvillerollerrebels.com

Gainesville Stamp Club, established in the 1960s, is open to all interested in philately. Auction held every meeting. Advanced level program occasionally. Under 18 must be accompanied by adult. First & third Tuesdays starting at 7:30pm; no meetings in December/holidays. For meeting locations & info. call 352-371-1991 | Stamps4Laffs@yahoo.com

Gainesville Women for Democracy, previously Gainesville Women for Harris, are a group of women whose focus is to build coalitions with like-minded groups & individuals for the purpose of strengthening our communities, including surrounding rural counties, & preserving our democracy. Contact Julie Thaler via Facebook Messenger.

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

Generation Vote is a youth-led, intersectional movement that fights for our right to vote & a just democracy for all. The UF chapter aims to be a reliable, nonpartisan local resource year-round to empower Gen-Zers to get out the vote. See the national website www.genvote.org, or follow the local chapter on Instagram @genvoteuf

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

Greater Gainesville International Center celebrates & elevates our diverse international community by serving as a hub between cultural, economic, educational & governmental partners, to unlock the full potential of our unique global city. Programs include 10 sister cities & refugee resettlement. Lauren Poe | poe@gnvic.org | 352-871-0895

Ichetucknee Alliance focuses on ensuring the restoration, preservation & 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 & Conservation is an academic nonprofit that provides undergraduate field courses in tropical marine & terrestrial ecology, hosts biology-based study abroad programs, provides a venue for researchers, conducts conservation & 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 & dignity. jewishvoiceforpeace.org/resource/our-vision | Instagram: @jvp_gnv | jvpgnvpod@gmail.com

League of Women Voters of Alachua County is a nonpartisan grassroots political group of women & men who fight to improve our system of government & impact public policies such as fairness in districting, voting & elections, through citizen education & 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 & to ensure all are treated with dignity & respect msfgainesville@gmail.com | facebook.com/MSFGainesville

McRorie Community Garden is a community garden where local residents can grow vegetables & learn how to do so. It is at 615 SE 4th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32601 Volunteer Day is on the last Sunday of every month. mcroriegarden@gmail.com

MindFreedom North Florida is a human rights group for psychiatric survivors & mental health consumers, working to educate the public about harmful psychiatric practices & 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 gun violence 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

National Alliance on Mental Illness | Gainesville offers support, education & advocacy for families & loved ones of persons with mental illness &/or brain disorders. 352-320-0457 (info) | 352-335-7770 (helpline) | namigainesville.org

National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare works to preserve these threatened programs for senior citizens & families. Local volunteers needed. Marion.Co.Fl.1590@gmail.com | ncpssm.org

National Lawyers Guild consists of lawyers, law students, legal workers & jailhouse lawyers who use the law to advance social justice, support progressive social movements. gainesvillenlg@gmail.com | nlg.org

National Women's Liberation is a feminist group for women who want to fight back against male supremacy & win more freedoms for women. Inequalities between women & 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 & math (STEM) across all disciplines & employment sectors. ncfawis@gmail.com | leanin.org/circles/ncfawis

Our Santa Fe River is a non-profit composed of concerned citizens working to protect the waters & lands supporting the aquifer, springs & rivers within the watershed of the Santa Fe River. 386-243-0322 | oursantaferiver.org

Paynes Prairie Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society promotes the preservation, conservation & restoration of the native plants & native plant communities of Florida. paynesprairie.fnpschapters.org | https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1952

People's Progressive Agenda is a grassroots, working-class, member-led group organizing against the harmful impacts of Trump-era policies on our families & communities. peoplesagendax@gmail.com

PFLAG Gainesville is a local chapter of Parents & Families of Lesbians & Gays, the nation's foremost family-based organization committed to the civil rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender people. info@pflaggainesville.org | pflaggainesville.org

Planned Parenthood Clinic at Gainesville Health Center is a full-service health center for reproductive & sexual health care needs. Offering pregnancy testing & 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 & reunite people with the environment. 352-317-7307 | info@prairiecreekconservationcemetery.org | prairiecreekconservationcemetery.org

Pride Community Center of North Central Florida has resources for the LGBTQ+ community. 3850 NW 83rd St, 2nd floor, Gnv. Pccncf@gainesville.pride.org | GainesvillePride.org. Library & community room open Mon-Thu 9am-7pm, Fri 9am-5pm (unstaffed).

Repurpose Project, a nonprofit junk shop/community center, diverting useful resources from landfills & redirecting items to the public for art and education, rethinking what we throw away. Help protect the planet & buy used. Check website for hours. 1920 NE 23rd Ave, Gnv |

352-363-8902 | info@RepurposeProject.org | repurposeproject.org

The Resist Network: In order to prevent an authoritarian takeover, the U.S. must execute a peaceful, strategic Resistance. The RESIST Network supports the Alachua County Resistance through dissemination of messages that suggest meaningful & doable pro-democratic activities. The Network messages promote boycotts, buycotts, social justice, fact-based decision making, free speech. Messages will oppose voter suppression, disinformation, & corruption. Messages sent via email once or twice a month. To join, email theresistnetwork@gmail.com

River Phoenix Center for Peace-building provides solution-based innovative ways to resolve conflicts, & offers related services such as mediation, communication skill building & 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 & rural women. Veronica or Adriana @ 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

Sandhill Chapter, Florida Trail Association is the local organization to develop, maintain, protect, & promote the Florida National Scenic Trail, a 1,500 mile federally designated trail beginning at big Cypress National Preserve & ending at Gulf Islands National Seashore. 352-378-8823 | Floridatrail.org/Sandhill | Facebook.com/SandhillChapterFTA

Sister City Program of Gainesville links Gainesville with sister cities in Russia, Israel & Palestine, Iraq, Haiti. 352-376-8600 | Steve@gnvsistercities.org | gnvsistercities.org

Student Animal Alliance is a UF-based group whose purpose is to educate & 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 & 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

Sierra Club, Suwannee-St. John is a local group within the nation's largest & most influential grassroots environmental organization, representing 14 North Central Florida counties. ssjsierra@gmail.com | sierraclub.org/florida/suwannee-stjohns | 561-707-4565

Sunrise Movement Gainesville is a UF student-led organization focused on environmental justice through political engagement & community organizing. Instagram: @sunrisemvmtgnv.

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

The Party for Socialism & 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

UCW Florida (CWA Local 3165) is a union of Florida public sector higher education workers open to unrepresented employees at UF. Part of a national union, the Communications Workers of America is home to a network of higher education workers, United Campus Workers, across the Southeast & Southwest fighting for social & economic justice in our institutions & communities. UCWFL.org | uniteduf@ucw-cwa.org.

UF Black Student Union strives to create, cultivate, & 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 (students, non-students, faculty, staff) that educates & provides a safe space for those of marginalized sexualities & gender identities. UFPridesu@gmail.com | facebook.com/ufpsu | plaza.ufl.edu/jsoto19/PSU

UF Students for Justice in Palestine: In recognition of the failure of society to produce a just & reasonable solution to the Palestine-Israel conflict, SJP promotes public awareness & activism. We promote international law, human rights, justice for all affected. We welcome a diverse membership from all faiths & 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 & students while building the capacity to fight radical & structural changes. Weekly meetings. ufydsa21@gmail.com | facebook.com/ufydsa | @uf_ydsa

United Faculty of Florida, UF chapter is run by & for faculty, & represents over 1600 faculty & 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 & the UN's efforts to deal with them. facebook.com/UNAUSAGainesvilleFlChapter | UNA-USAgainesvillefl.org

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

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

UF Un-PAC is a non-partisan organization working to reform our democracy & 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. un-pac.org | @un_pac_uflorida | un.pac.uf@gmail.com

Unspoken Treasure Society empowers, uplifts, & advocates for the well-being, equity, and rights of the LGBTQIA+ community. Meetings are held the third Thursdays of the month at 7pm at 3850 NW 83rd St, Suite 201 in Gainesville. unspokensociety.org | 352-377-0384

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 | vfpgainesville.org

Voices for Common Ground focuses on issues, not political parties, and members are united by a shared commitment to civil rights (reproductive rights, anti-racism LGBTQ+ rights, voting rights). tinyurl.com/Iguana2153 | voicesforcommonground@proton.me.

WGOT-LP 100.1 FM, a community low-power radio station, operates as part of the Civic Media Center, with progressive talk like Democracy Now!, Thom Hartmann, Ralph Nader, and eclectic music from bluegrass to punk. 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. All genders welcome. uf.wise@gmail.com | Facebook.com/UFWiSE | wise.group.ufl.edu/about-wise

Women's International League for Peace & Freedom has promoted peace since 1915. Donate or join the at-large Jane Addams Branch. Local info: juned@stevelittler.com | wilpfus.org

World Socialist Party of the United States welcomes all wanting to know about Marxian socialism & 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.

$$$ Dystopian Dollar $$$

A clearance thrift store opens on NE 23rd Ave.

by Sarah Goff, Executive Director and Co-Founder, The Repurpose Project

The Repurpose Project has announced the recent opening of Dystopian Dollar, its fourth reuse store, featuring clearance items. This low-cost thrift store will serve as an affordable resource for the community and aims to be a material market for upcyclers, resellers, fixers, and DIYers to help expand the circular economy.

Don't let the rough exterior scare you off! The satirical marketing in our store (don't miss our inside displays) and on our social media is intended to spark conversations about the very real and very dark issues caused by overconsumption. But at our core, we are the opposite of scary. This store will serve as a major charitable giving hub for The Repurpose Project, a nonprofit organization building a reuse economy to help people and the planet.

Capitalism has brought a tremendous number of material goods into existence. It has also created incredible income inequality. Dystopian Dollar intends to address these issues by being a resource that helps our community members access this overabundance with bargain basement prices. Prices are low: $1 clothing, 4 for $1 glassware, and unbelievable fill-a-bag sales.

Beyond making goods affordable for personal use, another goal is promoting startup circular economy initiatives by providing access to low-cost bulk materials. Dystopian Dollar carries electronics in need of repair, along with large quantities of clothing and housewares waiting for the right person to mend or upcycle them.

And last, but not least, Dystopian Dollar will serve as a charitable giving hub. We are happy to give items away to people in need. For years, we have partnered with many local nonprofits and community organizations to collect and deliver items from their wish list. We are excited to have a store that can focus more on these efforts and open up our charitable giving and affordability initiatives to a larger population.



Dystopian Dollar, a new clearance thrift store under the auspices of The Repurpose Project, is now open behind Renovator Reuse at 1820 NE 23rd Ave. It accepts community donations for resale or reuse and offers donation pickup services. Pictured here is a dump trailer load of $1 clothing being dropped off on opening day. Don't let the rough exterior scare you off — it's intentional! Photo courtesy of Sarah Goff.

Dystopian Dollar is the latest effort in The Repurpose Project's plan to build a network of reuse stores to create a comprehensive reuse economy model. Overconsumption has become a major problem and threatens the health and well-being of our planet and life on it. Expanding reuse is essential to reducing the problems brought on by overconsumption, including natural resource depletion, animal habitat loss, and pollution from mining, harvesting, manufacturing, packaging, and shipping material goods.

Environmental degradation caused by resource extraction is resulting in catastrophic harm to the natural world and the animals and people who live here. Habitat loss is contributing to an alarming decline in biodiversity and the collapse of animal populations. Solutions must be found to protect the delicate balance of Earth, and expanding reuse opportunities is one of them.

As The Repurpose Project approaches its 15 year anniversary, we are extremely grateful for the continued support of our community. The incredibly generous outpouring of monetary donations for the Reuse Planet Building Fundraiser changed our trajectory in 2021. Support from private lenders in 2021 and 2024 to purchase our properties, along with continued support from our customers, has allowed for the rapid expansion of our local circular economy.

The renovations of Dystopian Dollar were also made possible through support from the Alachua County Board of County Com-

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The Gainesville Iguana

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