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## About Town

The Gainesville Sun

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Editor's note: The Guardian no longer accepts fliers as information for events that appear under "About Town."

### More Stories

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The information must be typed out and sent via email.

Please include the following: type/name of event, date, time, location, speakers, theme and cost, if any, and who to contact for more information.

Send via email to [guardian@gainesville.com](mailto:guardian@gainesville.com) (The new email address — now in effect — to send announcements/information and to request coverage).

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The deadline is noon Fridays for publication the following Thursday.

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For more information, call 352-337-0376.

### 100 Voices

100 Voices of Florida will host a free concert billed as "Celebrating Duke Ellington's Birthday: Songs from the Heart Benefit" to be held at 4 p.m. Saturday on the lawn of the Cade Museum, 811 S. Main St.

### Reach dreams

Faith Mission invites families who are living paycheck to paycheck to learn about Circles Gainesville.

Circles, in over 70 locations around the U.S., helps empower people who are struggling financially to pursue their dreams providing by a network to connect families with new opportunities, new jobs, more education and encouraging support. We will be recruiting Circle Leaders until at least the end of May.

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If you or someone you know is ready to journey to a thriving life, please email [Circles@TrinityGNV.org](mailto:Circles@TrinityGNV.org), call 352-416-3051 or stop by Faith Mission, 3701 NE 15th St. across from the Fernside Center, and ask to speak to Clair Carter.

### Let's eat

Let's Eat! Community Cookbooks of the Matheson will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday via a virtual program.



The program will feature Curator of Collections  
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Kaitlyn Hof-Mahoney and Matheson friend Katie Kelly

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giving a cooking demonstration of recipes from a few of the many Florida cookbooks in the Matheson's collection. Registration is free at <https://bit.ly/2RvBkUr> and will be streamed live via the Matheson's Facebook page.

### **Free admission**

The Florida Museum of Natural History will offer free admission to all fee-based exhibits for active-duty military personnel and their families from Armed Forces Day, May 15, through Labor Day, Sept. 6, as a part of the nationwide Blue Star Museums initiative.

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The museum requires masks at all times and asks guests to practice social distancing.

For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/3n94aWC>.

### **Food drive**

Santa Fe College and the Association of Colleges will host a food drive for SF College's Food Pantry from 10 a.m.-noon Thursday in the parking lot across from the SF College Police Department at the Northwest Campus, 3000 NW 83rs St.

The food collected will go to the SF College pantry to benefit students and the SF College community.

For more information, call 352-381-3660.



## Conference

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Alachua County Library District and Partnership for Strong Families in collaboration with community partners will present the fifth Re-Entry Partnership Conference from May 10-13 virtually and in person and the Community Job and Resource Fair May 24 at the GNV Commons downtown.

Participants can register for the conference at [www.aclib.us/reentry](http://www.aclib.us/reentry). Registration for in-person spots is open until those seats are filled. Registration to participate virtually is open until May 6 to allow the organizers to send emails and information to anyone who registers online.

### Vaccines for Vets

Eligible veterans can get COVID-19 vaccines through the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System under the Saves Lives Act.

To receive a vaccine, veterans should go to [www.va.gov/covid-19-vaccine](http://www.va.gov/covid-19-vaccine) to register and stay informed on the VA's vaccine rollout process. Veterans who are currently enrolled and receive health care from the VA can bypass the registration process and call 352-548-6000, ext. 103755 to schedule an appointment.

For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/3ahA4uK>.

### Tai Chi



Free Tai Chi classes for arthritis patients will be held at 9 a.m. through June 10 every Tuesday and Thursday at Butler Plaza in partnership with Elder Options.

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The classes will be held on the greenspace across from P.F. Chang's restaurant, and registration is mandatory and can be done at [longstreeta@agingresources.org](mailto:longstreeta@agingresources.org).

### **Sponsors**

The NAMI Walk and Mental Health Festival is looking for sponsors.

It will be held from 8 a.m.- 4 p.m. May 22 in Cuscowilla Park in Micanopy. The festival will include dance exhibits, children's activities and games, live music, food trucks, mental health and services exhibits and more.

For more information, email [2021walkfest@namigainesville.org](mailto:2021walkfest@namigainesville.org).

### **Pace benefits**

The 21st Annual Mary Wise Golf Scramble for Pace is right around the corner.

Sessions will be held at 7 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. on Friday at the University of Florida's Mark Bostick Golf Course. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Pace Center for Girls Alachua. Registration can be done at [pacecenter.org/alachuagolf](http://pacecenter.org/alachuagolf). Registration is \$150 per player, and sponsorship opportunities range from \$250-\$5,000.



For more information, visit [facebook.com/pacegolf](https://www.facebook.com/pacegolf).

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## Hotspots

Alachua County residents can check out mobile hotspots from the Alachua County Library District.

The new WiFi2Go pilot program has 100 hotspots available for checkout. Hotspots check out for seven days and can connect up to five devices to the Internet. Service depends on the availability of the T-Mobile network where the hotspot is used. The hotspot devices are available at all branches in the district and through the online catalog.

Call your library branch for more details or call 352-334-3909.

## Book festival

The National Antiracist Book Festival will be a virtual program with Paul Ortiz, director of the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program, leading a panel on Latinx Activism with Professor Johanna Fernandez, author of "Young Lords: A Radical History."

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It will be held from noon-1 p.m. Saturday. For tickets and information, visit [bit.ly/2021antiracistbookfest](https://bit.ly/2021antiracistbookfest).

## Tournament



The Alzheimer's Association will host its inaugural  
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Collegiate Brain Busters Tournament, a trivia

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competition to test participants' knowledge of Alzheimer's, dementia and brain health.

It will be held at 6 p.m. Thursday. To prepare, there will be videos available as of Monday. Participation in the tournament will be limited to current college students in Florida. To sign up, visit [www.AlzProgramsAnytime.org](http://www.AlzProgramsAnytime.org) and register to watch educational programs.

### **Vaccine transportation**

Florida Medicaid will take you to get the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost.

All you need to do is set up a time to get your vaccine. Next, let your Medicaid plan know you need a ride and they will take care of the rest. If you are not enrolled in a plan, call the Medicaid Helpline at 1-877-254-1055 to find out the name and phone number for a transportation service.

If you are in a health plan, call your plan provider to get the name and telephone number for your transportation service.

### **SWAG medical services**

SWAG, in partnership with the Alachua County Health Department and the UF Medical Guild, has funding to provide basic physicals and dental checkups/services for children.



These services are for children only, and must be scheduled through the Alachua County Health

Department. Services will be performed at the SW Health Clinic in the Linton Oaks neighborhood.

To schedule appointments, call 352-334-7910 or 352-334-8839.

### **Rental assistance**

The Alachua County Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) is accepting applications.

ERAP is a federal grant intended to assist households who can't pay or are having difficulty paying rent and/or utilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It can assist eligible households with the payment of late rent and/or utilities and may also assist with rent payment in advance. Payments will generally be made only to landlords/property managers and/or utility companies, not the households themselves. Alachua County is distributing over \$8 million in ERAP funds. Each household is limited to a maximum of \$15,000 in assistance.

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The application link is available on the county's website and Facebook.

We recommend that those interested in applying click on the link below and read the program's information page and the FAQ page. This will allow you to be prepared with what you need to expedite the application process.





The link is <https://bit.ly/3vp3903>.

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For more information, call 352-264-6979 or email [msexton@alachuacounty.us](mailto:msexton@alachuacounty.us).

## **Haircuts**

McDougle Technical Institute (MTI) will offer \$5 haircuts and services during the entire month of March.

Located at 2635 NW 13th St., this is MTI's second location sponsored by former Jacksonville Jaguars and Miami Dolphins offensive lineman Stockar McDougle and his wife Octavia McDougle. For information and/or appointments, call 352-554-4900.

## **Jobs**

The Walmart Distribution Center in Alachua is hiring various positions at \$21.75 per hour and other positions starting at \$18 per hour.

For more information, visit [careers.walmart.com](https://careers.walmart.com).

## **Survey**

The City of Gainesville will mail out its 2021 Neighbor Survey to gather feedback from neighbors about city programs and services.

Now in its second year, the annual survey is scheduled to arrive in the mailboxes of 7,000 randomly selected residences within the city's four commission districts. Copies of the survey in English and Spanish are being mailed out, along with a postage-paid return envelope.



The survey should not take more than 20 minutes to complete, and responses remain completely anonymous.

For more information, email [stetsonjn@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:stetsonjn@cityofgainesville.org).

### **Free tax prep**

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program will offer free income tax preparation through April 15 at local libraries and at the Alachua County Senior Center.

Taxpayers may register online at <http://taxaidegnv.wordpress.com> or by calling 352-448-7445 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Monday-Thursday. Service at all sites will be by appointment only, with absolutely no walk-ins. Face masks will be required for all clients and volunteers. Most returns will require two visits, and a limited number of one-day appointments will be available.

### **NAMI classes**

NAMI Gainesville will offer classes to help parents of children and teens that have extreme behavior or attitude issues, mental health challenges or have been diagnosed with mental illnesses.

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The course runs through April 8. Classes will be held via Zoom from 6:30-9 p.m. NAMI has a limited number of laptops to lend to those that need one to participate in the free classes.



Interested parents/caregivers can email  
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info@namigainesville.org or  
radha@namigainesville.org.

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### **Free tax prep, filing**

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, or VITA, program will again this year prepare and file tax returns for free at several locations in Gainesville or through your computer.

VITA is an IRS-sponsored program that works with United Way of North Central Florida and other community partners. You can schedule an appointment by calling 211 or 352-332-4636.

### **Snacks, suppers**

The Alachua County School District's Food and Nutrition Department applied for and was granted permission to begin distributing snacks and suppers at 19 pick up sites throughout the district to all Alachua County kids age 0-18 .This is in addition to the free breakfasts and lunches they're already providing. In east Gainesville, Duval, Rawlings, and Williams Elementary schools are already providing snacks and suppers, while Lake Forest Elementary School will start providing snacks and suppers on March 16.

For more information, call 955-7539.

### **Edible groves**



The city of Gainesville this month unveiled its Edible Groves project in an effort to increase access to healthy food.

Staff has begun planting a variety of fruit- or nut-bearing trees at two City parks — Smokey Bear Park on Northeast 15th St. and Fred Cone Park on East University Ave. Plans for a third site in an area known as Bountiful Boulevard, located along the 4200-4300 block of SW 40 Blvd. will be planted in the coming months. Trees planted to date include chestnut, kumquat, loquat, mulberry, orange, nectarine, persimmon, peach, pear, pecan, and tangerine. When completed, Smokey Bear Park will be home to more than 70 specimens, with an additional 50 trees at Fred Cone Park.

For More information, call 352-393-7842 or email [passanitir1@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:passanitir1@cityofgainesville.org).

## **Quilting**

The Alachua County Library District invites quilters to share their stitch works for the 2021 Virtual Quilt Show by Monday.

Participants can submit up to two quilts or quilted items made in 2020. Submissions must be made electronically as a PDF, JPEG or PNG file with a completed entry form. Email [sgrainger@aclib.us](mailto:sgrainger@aclib.us) for entry forms and submission instructions or call 352-334-3941. Two photos of each entry (one photo of the whole piece and one detail photo) may be submitted.



Quilts will be displayed on the Library District's [Home](#) [Local](#) [Crime](#) [State](#) [Subscribe](#) website and social media in April.

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### **Alzheimer's series**

The Alzheimer's Association, in partnership with UF Health Central Florida and VITAS Health, has launched a new virtual series called, "First Steps: Living Well with Cognitive Impairment." The six-part series will focus on topics addressed by health experts paired with lively discussion among peers and care partners. Series' segments will be held at 10 a.m. on the first and third Thursdays in March, April and May. The series is free to attend, though registration is required. To register, contact the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at 800-272-3900 or Connie Storms at [csstorms@alz.org](mailto:csstorms@alz.org).

### **Museum event**

"Outdoor Museum in the Park" for kids in kindergarten through 6th grade will be sponsored by the Florida Museum of Natural History

The event series will explore local Florida wildlife and give participants a special look at museum collections.

The series explores the Devil's Millhopper Geological State Park, Payne's Prairie Preserve State Park and San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park.

Registration is required. All youth must be accompanied by a ticketed adult. Tickets are \$12 per adult/child pair and include a day pass to the park. Early registration is recommended, as spots are



limited. For more information about the events,  
[Home](#) [Local](#) [Crime](#) [State](#) [Subscribe](#)  
visit [www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/kids/museum-in-the-parks](http://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/kids/museum-in-the-parks)

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## Exhibit

The Survival of the Slowest exhibit will be on display through Sept. 12 at the Florida Museum of Natural History, 3215 Hull Road, during the hours of 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Saturday and 1-5 p.m. Sunday.

Guests get an up-close look at a live sloth, tortoise, iguana and other creatures to learn about the unique adaptations some animals developed to survive, despite being slow, small or weak.

For more information, visit [www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu](http://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu) or call 352-846-2000. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$9, Florida residents, seniors and non-University of Florida college students, \$7 for ages 3-17 and free to museum members and UF students with a valid Gator 1 Card. Complete admission pricing is available online at [www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/visit/plan](http://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/visit/plan).

## NAMI courses

NAMI Gainesville has three free courses starting soon that require advance registration and are expected to fill up quickly.

- Peer to Peer is an eight-week class for adults that identify as peers (adults living with a mental illness)..



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Family to Family is an eight-week class for people that have a family member living with a mental illness.

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• NAMI Basics is a six-week course for parents and caregivers of children or teens that live with mental illness.

Courses will be held online on Zoom. For more information, visit

<https://www.namigainesville.org>.

### **Girl Scouts**

Girl Scout entrepreneurs from North Florida to the Panhandle are needed to sell cookies in safe, creative and socially distant ways, including through the organization's first-ever national delivery services collaboration with Grubhub.

Enter your zip code into the Girl Scout Cookie Finder at [www.girlscoutcookies.org](http://www.girlscoutcookies.org) to purchase from a local Girl Scout troop online for shipment to your door or to donate cookies to first responders and local causes.

### **Head Start**

Alachua County Head Start added new centers in East Gainesville for children ages 3-5. They are located at ECS 4 Kids at 530 Waldo Road; Hagios Learning Center, 1132 NE 16th Ave.; Oak Tree Center, 1414 NE 23rd Ave. For more information, call 452-240-6533.

### **ACCEPT**



Alachua County Continuing Education for Parenting  
Teenagers (ACCEPT) program has survived staff cuts

and is now under the System of Care department led  
by Veita Jackson -Carter.

The ACCEPT program provides an opportunity for  
pregnant and teen parents attending Alachua County  
Public Schools to continue their education while also  
benefiting from prenatal/postnatal health and  
parenting classes in addition to child care.

For more information, call System of Care at 352-955-  
7671, Ext. 1604

### **Exhibit**

“Trailblazers: 150 years of Alachua County Women,”  
an online exhibition at the Matheson History Museum  
highlights the lives and accomplishments of 11 women  
from Alachua County. It can be found at  
<https://adobe.ly/2AGNS3q>. They women featured in  
the exhibit are Sarah Hamilton Matheson, Dr. Sarah  
Lucretia Robb, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Marjorie  
Harris Carr, Vivian Washington Filer, Daphne Duval  
Williams, Judith Brown, Margaret Tebeau, Clara Floyd  
Gehan, Mary Etta Cubberly and Emmaline Buchholz.

To view the exhibit online visit  
<https://adobe.ly/2AGNS3q>.

### **Cade camp**

Afternoon Adventure Camp at the Cade Museum will  
be available from 2-5 p.m. Wednesdays at the museum  
at 811 South Main St..





The camp is focused on challenges that boost kids' creativity and imagination. Cade Museum educators

help children ages 5-11 engage in a broad range of hands-on STEAM experiments and activities that include exploring and improving skills in 3D design, coding, robotic, and more. Educators will also be available to help children in Kindergarten through 5th-grade with homework.

For more information, call 353-371-8001 or visit [www.cademuseum.org](http://www.cademuseum.org)

### **Matheson Museum**

The Matheson Museum wants Alachua County residents to help document the community's experience with digital submissions of photographs, video clips, stories or anything else county residents think helps tell their story.

Please submit items to [curator@mathesonmuseum.org](mailto:curator@mathesonmuseum.org).

### **NAMI computers**

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) will be offering classes online and via Zoom and if you don't have access to a computer, NAMI Gainesville has a limited number of computers you may borrow to facilitate your participation.

NAMi Gainesville has an array of programs including NAMI Family-to-Family or NAMI Basics, this fall. There is no charge to take these evidence-based courses that are available to youths and adults.



For more information,  
Home Local Crime State  
<https://www.namigainesville.org>.

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## **Coping tips**

Carla Schmidt, Ph.D., BCBA-D, a clinical assistant professor in the University of Florida College of Education, through a video interview will provide tips for parents on how to deal with the new normal for their families this school year, including those whose children have neurological developmental disabilities or special needs. To access the video, visit <https://bit.ly/2FtxtBN>.

## **Art gallery**

The Artisans' Guild Gallery has a new home at 224 NW Second St. in the Pleasant Street neighborhood. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday-Saturday.

Established in 1970, the gallery is among the oldest continuously running artist cooperatives in the country and features fine arts and fine crafts by 50-plus local artists. Guidelines to keep artists and customers safe are in effect.

For more information, call 352-378-1383 or visit [artisansguildgallery.com](http://artisansguildgallery.com).

## **Free computer use**

Computer and printer use re-opens this week at Alachua County libraries.



Machines are available once a day per person, and you must make an appointment by phone with your

individual branch. To avoid spreading COVID-19, all technology will be sanitized between uses, and users must wear a face mask, maintain social distance and complete a health screening, according to Rachel Cook, library public relations and marketing manager.

One-hour computer appointments are open at 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., and 15-minute printer appointments are from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday at every location.

### **Caregiver training**

Free Savvy Caregiver virtual training classes geared toward caregivers of those caring for someone with dementia will be offered from 6-8 p.m. on Mondays.

For more information or to register, email [hornec@agingresources.org](mailto:hornec@agingresources.org) or call 352-692-5226.

### **KACB needs volunteers**

Keep Alachua County Beautiful is looking for volunteers willing to help with socially distanced tasks.

Measures are in place, including guidance and sanitized supplies, to help maintain the county's appearance despite the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a news release from the nonprofit organization.



The group needs volunteers to help pick up litter, paint over graffiti, plant trees, shrubs, flowers or vegetable gardens and to pull invasive plants, the release said.

To get involved, call 352-371-9444 to set up an appointment to get an assignment and pick up supplies.

All equipment is sanitized and can be borrowed for up to two weeks. For questions or assistance, call the number above, or visit [www.kacb.org](http://www.kacb.org).

### **Cade Museum**

The Cade Museum is producing Cade at Home content for children of all ages during quarantine and Cade at Night content for adults ages 21 and older featuring recipes for fun drinks and foods from local Gainesville restaurants.

For Cade at Home, visit

<https://www.cademuseum.org>, for Cade at Night, visit <https://www.cademuseum.org/cade-at-night.html>.

### **Vegetable gardening**

The UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences will be offering tips on how to grow food at home.

It will share information on vegetable gardening during upcoming classes and how to contact your county's UF/IFAS Extension Office. Topics include fruits and berries, backyard chickens and beekeeping.

For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/2KM6xwo>.



## Studies

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The University of Florida Department of Epidemiology is recruiting participants for two studies.

The department is recruiting adults 18-65 and older to participate in online interviews about cocaine, marijuana and alcohol use.

Participants' names and data will be kept confidential and compensation will be provided.

Participants must have used cocaine in the past 30 days, alcohol or marijuana in the past 30 days, and have access to a phone, computer or tablet.

To participate and see if you qualify, call 352-246-5913 to talk to the study team. If you qualify, you will be asked to do Zoom interviews with the study staff about your drug and alcohol use. At the end of each interview, you will receive a \$25 gift card.

The department is also recruiting adults ages 65-89 to participate in a phone screening to determine eligibility for a brain and memory improvement study.

Participants must meet the age criteria, be healthy, and willing to take an MRI, a medical imaging technique used in radiology to form pictures of the anatomy and the physiological processes of the body..

To see if you qualify and for more information, call 352-246-5913 to talk to the study team.

### **Matheson Museum**



The Matheson Museum is asking Alachua County residents to share their COVID-19 experiences.

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The coronavirus pandemic is a historic event of worldwide significance and the Matheson Museum wants to preserve the community's stories with a goal to create a COVID-19 Community Archive that will be shared digitally over the next few weeks and in exhibitions down the road.

The museum urges Alachua County residents to help the museum document the community's experience by providing digital submissions of photographs, video clips, stories or anything else residents think will help tell their story.

Submissions and questions should be emailed to Matheson Museum Curator of Collections Kaitlyn Hof-Mahoney at [curator@mathesonmuseum.org](mailto:curator@mathesonmuseum.org)

For more information, call 352-378-2280.

### **Free classes**

Williams Temple Church of God in Christ's Family Ministries will begin offering free English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes three days a week.

Classes will be held from 6-7:30 p.m. on Mondays, 6:30-8 p.m. on Tuesdays and 4:30-6 p.m. on Wednesdays at the church at 628 MW Seventh Ave.

You can register on site or you may download the registration form from [www.wtcogicfl.com](http://www.wtcogicfl.com).



For more information, call or text 352-575-0746 or  
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email [wtcogicfl628@gmail.com](mailto:wtcogicfl628@gmail.com).

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## **Support groups**

The Alachua County Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center provides free and confidential support groups throughout the year led by trained and skilled facilitators. Groups are offered in a variety of modalities that include counseling and discussion, equine assisted, yoga combined with counseling and discussion and art and mindfulness. These groups allow survivors of sexual violence to connect and begin exploring ways to heal in a safe and supportive environment.

Groups that are offered include the following: Female survivors of sexual violence; adult survivors of childhood sexual violence, male survivors of sexual violence and LGBTQ+ survivors of sexual violence.

For more information, call 352-264-6760.

## **Fitness**

The public is encouraged to attend Afro-Fitness workouts that involve working out intensely to rhythmic drums and music.

Workouts will be held from 5-6 p.m. every Thursday (except 5th Thursdays) at the Cone Park library, 2801 E. University Ave.

For more information, call 352-334-0720.

## **Nonprofits**



The city of Gainesville will be accepting applications for nonprofits to award funds to from an approximated \$235,000 in Community Development Block Grant and \$139,000 in Home Investment Partnerships Program funding.

Applications will be accepted from eligible organizations for fiscal year 2020-2021 for eligible activities, including housing, homeless assistance, job training/employment and assistance, nutritional support and programs that serve disadvantaged or at-risk youth or elderly persons. The grants are to benefit very low, low and moderate income residents.

A full description of applicant and project eligibility requirements are included in the CDBG/HOME application packet online at [www.cityofgainesville.org](http://www.cityofgainesville.org).

### **Award**

The Greater Gainesville Chamber has partnered with the University of Florida Inspiring Women Leaders Conference to honor a Greater Gainesville Chamber business member who has created a workplace culture that exemplifies diversity and inclusion.

Organizations that showcase exemplary insight and determination in the area of workplace diversity are encouraged to apply at <https://bit.ly/2NKasvL>. The award covers excellence in all areas of diversity, including age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, race and religion, as well as highlighting diverse employers and employees across a variety of sectors,





including housing, public, private, charity and education.  
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## Scholarships

The Family Empowerment Scholarship, or FES, which was signed into law on May 9, provides opportunities for low- and middle-income families to receive vouchers to attend private schools of their choice. The maximum voucher value for 2018-2019 is \$7,122.

For more information, including income and other eligibility requirements, visit <https://bit.ly/2kHvwas>.

## 'Science Surprises'

The Florida Museum of Natural History is going outside the museum walls to offer a science outreach program for underserved children.

Alberto Lopez, school outreach coordinator for the Florida Museum, said “Science Surprises” is a hands-on program designed for children in kindergarten through fifth grade that offers flexibility and is tailored to participants. The program is offered in a four-part series with classes that are usually one-hour long. He said the purpose is to instill an interest in science and help children become better problem solvers by using creativity and communication skills. Lopez said the program, which kicked off in January, has been offered in east Gainesville at Cone Park Branch Library, Caring and Sharing Learning School, the Boys and Girls Club of Alachua County and other places.



For more information and to inquire about having the program taught at your site, call 352-294-6950 or email [alopez@flmnh.ufl.edu](mailto:alopez@flmnh.ufl.edu).

## **BASE**

Black AIDS Services and Education Inc., a local nonprofit organization that provides HIV/AIDS education, is seeking new members.

Meetings, which are open to the public, are held from 6-7 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month at Santa Fe College Center for Innovation and Economic Development (CIED), 530 W. University Ave. Those interested in joining should email [Blackaidservicesandeducation@gmail.com](mailto:Blackaidservicesandeducation@gmail.com)

For more information, call 352-231-6383.

## **County wants art**

Alachua County invites local artists to submit art for loan and display in the Jack Durrance Auditorium on the second floor of the Alachua County Administration Building, 12 SE First St.

The "Art in the Jack Durrance Boardroom Program" is part of the Alachua County Public Arts Ordinance. Those wishing to participate by submitting art for loan and display should review and complete the program application and agreement.

For more information, contact Assistant County Manager Gina Peebles at 352-374-5204 or [gpeebles@alachuacounty.us](mailto:gpeebles@alachuacounty.us).



## Farmer's Market

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The Farmer's Market Nutrition Program WIC Clinic Market with the freshest produce at affordable prices is open now through October.

The market, which is a collaboration between the Alachua County Health Department, the WIC program and local farmers, is open from 8 a.m.–1 p.m. Fridays (weather permitting) in the main parking lot of the Alachua County Health Department at 224 SE 24th St.

### Volunteers needed

The Alachua County Crisis Center is seeking volunteers to become Crisis Line counselors.

Training continues for six weeks on Tuesday and Thursday from 6:30-9:30 p.m. There is no fee for training, and applicants do not need to possess any specific degrees or certification. Training is held at the Alachua County Crisis Center, 218 SE 24th Str. After training is complete, the Crisis Center asks for a commitment of 24 four-hour shifts.

Volunteers learn active listening, crisis intervention, suicide prevention, community disaster response and more. Volunteering is an opportunity to impact the lives of fellow community members and gain life-enhancing communication skills.

For more information, call 352-264-6782.

### Scholarships



Saint Leo University is offering scholarships to Florida Catholic High School students.

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Beginning in the fall, the Catholic Promise Scholarship will award eligible Florida students who have attended four years at a Catholic high school with an annual scholarship of \$14,000 toward their tuition at Saint Leo University.

For more information, visit <https://www.saintleo.edu/campus-scholarships>.

### **Career, job programs**

If you are interested in a well-paying and exciting career that doesn't require years of college, then you're in luck because Santa Fe College has career and technical education programs that can be completed in one year or less.

There are certificate programs available in such areas as business, construction, education, biotechnology, health, dental, nursing, information technology, emergency medical services and more.

For more information, visit [www.sfcollege.edu](http://www.sfcollege.edu) or call 352-395-5000.

### **Scholarships**

The University of Florida and its IFAS College of Agricultural and Life Sciences offers scholarships to transfer students with associate of arts degrees from state colleges in Florida.



The “Florida Pathways to Success: A Research  
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Partnership to Enhance Retention and Diversity of Transfer Students” is funded through the National Science Foundation Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics program.

The scholarships are available to transfer students majoring in microbiology and cell science in the UF/IFAS College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

Requirements include having an associate degree from a Florida public college, demonstrated financial need and a minimum 2.5 grade point average. The average annual scholarship award per student is \$6,500, renewable for two academic years. The scholarship is available to UF online and on-campus students who are full-time, which means carrying a 12-credit hour course load.

To apply, visit <https://bit.ly/2ZvipZl>.

For more information, email [microsstem@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:microsstem@ifas.ufl.edu)

### **Blount Center**

Whether you are looking to earn a degree, improve your job skills or launch a new startup, the Santa Fe College Blount Center Campus is ready to meet your needs.

Located at 401 NW Sixth St., the Blount Center offers daytime and evening classes in a small-school quality education environment.



The center also offers adult education programs, and one-stop student services for such things as

admissions and advisement, financial aid assistance, tutoring, open computer lab, math studio and more.

For information, call 352-395-5647 for student services, 352-395-4496 for adult education and 352-395-5647 for college credit programs.

### **Bingo**

The VFW Post 2811 will expand its Bingo Play to include games every Sunday and Wednesday.

The Sunday games will start at 1 p.m. and the Wednesday games will start at 5:30 p.m. at the post at 1150 NE Waldo Road. The games are open to the public.

Free coffee, water and snacks will be available, and door prizes will be given away. The kitchen will be open to serve low-cost menu items.

For more information, call 352-256-3066.

### **Food**

A food truck operated by Country Baptist Church will be in the parking lot of VFW Post 2811 at 1150 NE Waldo Road from 3-4 p.m. every first and third Saturday of the month to distribute food.

A \$5 donation will be appreciated, and you should bring your own box or basket for food items.

For more information, call 352-376-7660.



## Abandoned vehicles

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The city of Gainesville Code Enforcement will now handle all abandoned vehicles in the city, regardless of location.

Previously, Code Enforcement was only responsible for abandoned vehicles on private property and the Gainesville Police Department handled those on roadways and public right of way.

An abandoned vehicle is defined by city code as any vehicle that appears to be incapable of safe operation under its own power on public streets and/or any vehicle not having a current motor vehicle registration tag properly attached.

All illegally parked vehicles on roadways and public right of way that do not fit the definition of an abandoned vehicle will continue to be handled by GPD.

For more information, call 352-393-8460 or email [lookjs@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:lookjs@cityofgainesville.org).

### Street lights

Gainesville Regional Utilities is asking customers to help keep the community safe by reporting streetlights that are out, broken, dim, flickering or lit during the day.

Customers will need to describe the problem and provide either the five-digit identification number



mounted on the pole or give the location by using  
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nearby streets or addresses.

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To report problems, call 352-334-3434 or fill out the form at [www.gru.com/streetlights](http://www.gru.com/streetlights).

### Preventing mosquitoes

The Florida Department of Health in Alachua County is encouraging citizens to help prevent the spread of mosquito-borne illnesses.

To prevent mosquito-borne diseases, do the following:

- Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots, or any other containers where sprinkler or rainwater has collected.
- Discard old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances, and other items that aren't being used.
- Empty and clean bird baths and pets' water bowls at least once or twice a week.
- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water. Maintain the water balance (pool chemistry) of swimming pools. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use. Repair broken screens on windows, doors, porches, and patios.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and long sleeves. Those who must be outside when mosquitoes are active must cover up.





•Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing.  
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Always use repellents according to the label.

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Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, and IR3535 are effective. Use netting to protect children younger than two months.

## **Health clinic**

In need of medical care?

If so, the RAHMA Mercy Clinic provides free health care to individuals and families without health insurance and income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

The clinic is open from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. every Saturday in the rear of the Hoda Academy at 5220 SW 13th St. There also is a voucher program for lab work and medications.

For more information, call 352-792-8324 or visit [www.rahmamercyclinic.com](http://www.rahmamercyclinic.com).

## **Housing repair funds**

So, you need major home repairs you just can't afford.

Well, if you are a homeowner, then you may be eligible to have your home repairs done at no cost to you through the city of Gainesville Housing Rehabilitation Program, which is accepting applications.

Repair assistance is available on a first-come, first-served basis.



Applications are available from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday at the Housing & Community Development Division at the Thomas Center, Building B, Room 245, located at 302 NE Sixth Ave.

Development Division at the Thomas Center, Building B, Room 245, located at 302 NE Sixth Ave.

Priority will be given to homeowners and households with special needs, in addition to eligible homeowners.

For more information, call 352-393-8568.

### **Court service**

The Alachua County Clerk's Office has a new service to assist those who choose to represent themselves in legal matters.

Called TurboCourt, the service is similar to TurboTax. Users are asked a series of questions and the needed paperwork is made available for filing.

TurboCourt is now available for divorce, domestic violence, small claims, and eviction cases.

For more information, call 352-374-3636.

### **Support group**

Alachua County Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center is starting a support group for adults who were sexually abused as children.

The group will meet for 10 weeks on Thursday afternoons/evenings. There is no cost, but participants must register. The start date will soon be determined (participants must call for more information).



Support groups allow room for survivors of violence to  
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openly discuss what happened to them and how it

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continues to affect their lives. It also provides tools to process what they've survived.

To register and for more information, call 352-264-6765.

### **Energy assistance**

Elder Options is offering energy assistance through its Emergency Home Energy Assistance for the Elderly Program.

Help is available to those 60 and older, with income guidelines, who are having problems keeping their home warm during the winter or cool during the summer and are in an energy crisis.

An energy crisis means electricity has been shut off or is due to be shut off, and there is a lack of fuel, fans, wood, blankets and heaters, and the heating/cooling system is broken.

The following will be provided: Electric bill payment, purchase of energy-related supplies, and repair of heating/cooling systems.

To apply, call 800-262-2243 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday or leave a voicemail after hours.

### **Caregiver funds**

The Elder Options Home Care for the Elderly Program has funds available for qualified caregivers.



The program provides a monthly payment of \$106 to help caregivers take care of low-income elders around the clock. The funds can help with the cost of food, housing, clothing, medical care and supplies.

The caregiver must live with the person full time and provide care. The person being cared for must be 60 or older and must meet financial eligibility.

To apply and for more information, call the Elder Helpline at 800-262-2243.

### **Cancer support group**

Are you or someone you care about in need of a cancer support group, transportation for medical treatments or financial assistance with prescription drugs?

Locate resources for these needs and more on the website [www.CancerResourceGuideNCF.org](http://www.CancerResourceGuideNCF.org). The Cancer Resource Guide of North Central Florida is a public service of North Central Florida Cancer Control Collaborative, the WellFlorida Council and the Florida Department of Health Cancer Control Program.

The Cancer Resource Guide of North Central Florida lists support groups, community and caregiver resources, financial support services and tobacco cessation activities throughout the region. The online guide also includes a wide range of cancer-related resources, such as summer camps for children with cancer, sources for breast prosthesis and wigs, and medical assistance for individuals who are uninsured or under-insured, including low cost/no cost mammograms.



And, the website is continuously updated.

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To learn more, visit

[www.CancerResourceGuideNCF.org](http://www.CancerResourceGuideNCF.org).

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## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH FOLLOWS 'INCREASE IN CHILD ABUSE CASES' IN ALACHUA COUNTY

By Natalie Cabral

🕒 April 26, 2021 📍 Florida Good

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This April's Child Abuse Prevention Month has perhaps never been more needed. According to a Gainesville advocacy center, the pandemic caused an increase in child abuse while limiting the ability for it to be recognized and reported.

At the Child Advocacy Center in Gainesville, professionals work together to coordinate investigations and interventions for child abuse cases. Their goal is to provide a safe and supportive environment for neglected and abused children.

According to the center's website, in 2020 they helped 3,235 people affected by child abuse, including 1,895 child victims. Of this group of children, 55 were victims of human trafficking and 15 were victims of child pornography.

Human trafficking is a larger issue in Alachua County than residents might think.

Sabrina Harris, development director at the Child Advocacy Center, said that because of the massive gamedays at the University of Florida and many people coming into the city, traffickers can fall under the radar. Gainesville's proximity to the highway only makes it easier for traffickers to have success in the city.

"It's more prevalent than people may realize," Harris said.

But one of the biggest impacts on child abuse has been the coronavirus pandemic. Abuse often occurs when there are mounting pressures and financial stress in the home.

Harris said during the pandemic, there has been an increase in child abuse cases because these children are being trapped in tension-filled homes.

Moreover, the inability to go to school makes some of these child abuse cases undetectable.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in 2018, over 60% of reports alleging child abuse and neglect came from professionals — police officers, teachers, lawyers and social services staff. Of those reports, over one in five came from education personal.

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Remote learning effectively cut off the best chance a child has of their abuse being recognized and reported.

“An abuser is not going to report themselves,” Harris said.

The Child Advocacy Center works in tandem with an emergency pediatrician at Shands Hospital, and they treat children who have been abused. According to Harris, the child abuse cases seen at the hospital during the pandemic have been far worse than anything they have ever seen.

Harris said that the things people did to those children were “unimaginable.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that the pandemic may also have interfered with children getting healthcare treatment for injuries resulting from abuse; child abuse-related emergency department visits decreased, but the percentage of such visits resulting in hospitalization increased, compared with 2019.

This is not a distant issue – it’s occurring in our backyard. Harris said that child abuse affects roughly 10% of children in Alachua County, with over 5,000 cases reported annually. And those are only the reported cases.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in 2019, there were 1,840 child fatalities due to abuse and neglect. Additionally, they estimated in 2018 that the victim rate for child maltreatment is more than 9 victims per 1,000 children in the population.

This month, the Alachua County Library District partnered with Partnership for Strong Families to put a pinwheel display outside select locations to highlight Child Abuse Prevention Month.



*The pinwheels were chosen as a symbol of childhood fun and innocence for Child Abuse Prevention Month. (Natalie Cabral/WUFT News)*





Pinwheels were chosen as a symbol because they represent the innocent fun often associated with children.

"It translates really well into the message that we are trying to send in Child Abuse Prevention Month," said Jacob Clore, the community engagement specialist at Partnership for Strong Families.

The goal of these displays is to increase community awareness and involvement. Clore hopes that when people see the pinwheels and notice the signs, they will want to learn more about what they can do to protect these children and families.

"When it comes down to it, this kind of initiative is really geared towards raising community awareness and showing the community that it really is a community effort to protect abused children," Clore said.

The Alachua County Library District partners with hundreds of organizations in the community to increase involvement and awareness.

"The library is the heart of the community," said Rachel Cook, the library district's public relations and marketing manager. "So, it is important for us to be connected with our community partners and provide support to the things that matter to our community."

The pinwheel displays are not only advocating for Child Abuse Prevention Month, but also for a strong and healthy childhood for all children. Partnership for Strong Families emphasizes the importance of having suitable foster care homes for neglected children.

In Alachua County, there are 292 children in out-of-home care and approximately 55 foster homes, according to Clore.

"We want to make sure that when children are removed from their home that they are being placed in a home that has some degree of familiarity for them," Clore said.

Both the Child Advocacy Center and Partnership for Strong families participated in the Amazing Give, which allows them to acquire donations to support their efforts.

Harris said that without donations they could not offer the services they do. These services include therapy for neglected children, financial services to parents and informational presentations provided to the community.

Partnership for Strong Families participated in the Amazing Give to help them fundraise for extracurricular resources and activities for foster care.

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"Every Florida citizen is responsible," Harris said. "If they suspect any child abuse, they are responsible to report it."

