



September 2026
Volume 51 Issue 1

RFUF Newsletter

OFFICERS

2026-2027

President:

Rick D'Alli

President-Elect:

Mike Conlon

Past President:

Pushpa Kalra

Secretary:

George Hochmuth

Treasurer:

Hank Frierson

DIRECTORS

Vivian Filer

Stan Kaye

Regina Bussing

Paul Gibbs

Pradeep Kumar

Jacque Basha

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Communications:

Steve Lodle

Membership:

Susan Cooksey

Data Base Coordinator:

John Foltz

Summer Activities Coordinator:

Barbara McDade Gordon

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM RFUF PRESIDENT RICK D'ALLI

Welcome back, all, to RFUF's 52nd year and to the academic year 2026-2027, after enduring the hottest July and August in the contiguous United States since record keeping began! And hot may likely describe UF and its community this Fall, not meteorologically, but structurally, culturally, athletically, and politically, as we welcome UF's new President, Dr. Stuart Bell, head football coach Jon Sumrall's opening season, and the approaching mid-term elections! We may get a glimpse of UF's evolving environment from President Bell when he opens our fall meetings on September 8. Please see the enclosed, complete and exciting RFUF Speakers Schedule for Fall 2026, assembled with extraordinary effort by President-Elect Mike Conlon.



Speaking of effort, we are in debt to Past President Barbara McDade Gordon who put together another round of inspirational and stimulating summertime activities despite the heat. In recognition of her indefatigable work, I've asked Barbara to accept and chair a newly created position on the Board of Directors called the Summer Activities Coordinator to ensure that these experiences are a permanent part of the RFUF catalog of member benefits. This year's summer activities ended memorably with what will now become a regular RFUF tradition, the Kanapaha Botanical Gardens End-Of-Summer Picnic, this time almost single handedly put together by Immediate Past President Pushpa Kalra.

And speaking of Pushpa, we owe her tremendous gratitude for guiding RFUF through a turbulent (at least behind the scenes) 2025-2026 year as President, having to manage multiple organizational and functional challenges, orchestrate changing meeting venues twice, and switching meeting days midstream. I will return the favor of her support of my taking on this second term as RFUF President (unheard of) by pestering her routinely for ideas and assistance. Much appreciation and many thanks are due to last year's President-Elect Robin Poynor, whose very personal decision to decline automatic transition to become RFUF President we deeply respect. Robin put together a year's worth of fascinating and extraordinarily well attended meeting seminars, the core of RFUF's mission of member life-long learning. No doubt Robin will continue to be an energetic member of RFUF. To my relief, George Hochmuth has returned to his inimitable

role as RFUF Secretary, without whose photographic memory and archival storage skills the evolving history of RFUF would be lost! Our Treasury is under the very capable and well-organized control of Hank Frierson, a colleague who always has the answers to my every question.

As mentioned briefly in Pushpa's last Spring 2026 Newsletter, Board of Directors member Paul Gibbs, previous Treasurer Bram Hartzema (who recently married, CONGRATULATIONS!), and I initiated a call for new activities to increase socialization among RFUF members. This concept quickly evolved into an announcement of the launch of **RFUF Interest Groups**. Such groups can be found in other retired university faculty organizations around the country. The dozen RFUF Interest Groups for continuing growth and development this year are as follow: **Forget-Me-Not Support Group** (social support of friends/partners/spouses with declining cognitive or memory abilities), **Galloping Gourmet Group** (sampling, reviewing, and discussing local restaurant fare), **Outdoor, Backyard, and Gardening Group** (self-evident), **Movie Group** (attending, discussing, and reviewing current films), **Music Group** (attending, discussing, and reviewing local concerts of all kinds), **Theater and Dance Group** (attending, reviewing, and discussing local plays, dance troupes, or similar events), **Technology Group** (self-evident), **Investment and Wealth Management Group** (discussing financial health and wellbeing), **Local History Group** (self-evident), **Travel and Photography Group** (self-evident), **Sports Group** (viewing, discussing, or attending live or televised sports, especially the UF Gators teams), and **Charitable Activities Group** (self-evident). Meetings of select groups have already begun, several at the beautiful home of Paul Gibbs and his wife Chris. Some groups are in need of organization and internal leadership. We hope that all these groups will expand and thrive this year.

Executive committee activities this past spring included an April 6, 2026, meeting of Pushpa, George, Barbara, and I with Joe Glover in his capacity as Interim Provost. We discussed assurance that the important fiscal support from his office, initiated by Provost Emeritus Scott Angle to help defray the expense of meeting and parking on UF properties, would continue. He agreed that it would. In addition, Barbara asked for a one-time grant to help fund UF's hosting of the 2026 international meeting of the Association of Retired Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE), which Provost Glover eventually agreed to provide (see the update on the October 6-8 AROHE Conference at the UF Hilton). When I asked the Provost about three aspects of other faculty retirement organizations at top tier universities, namely, a campus office and address, a recognized presence in university organizational hierarchy, and a presence on the Faculty Senate, his responses were that no space he controlled was remotely possible, that RFUF has no official role at UF, and that he has no connection with the Faculty Senate. His suggestions were that we may search all we liked for the first, we could present to him a formal written proposal to address the second, and we were free to explore a solution to the third.

On April 24 Pushpa, George, and I attended the spring social of the United Faculty of Florida-University of Florida (UFF-UF), a union associated with the AFL-CIO and AFT. The major challenge facing this union is low membership, in part potentially attributed to its dues amounting to 1% of a member's base salary and in part because of lack of departmental representation, perhaps related to disinterest among several Colleges, perhaps due to lack of appreciation of the value of union membership. No discussion about any RFUF participation with this union ensued other than to invite a member of their leadership to share information with our membership at some unspecified time in the future.

As I raised with the Provost and mentioned when Pushpa handed the gavel back to me at the end of our spring luncheon, one of my goals this year would be to find, after 51 years, an on-campus office that RFUF could call home. It gives me pleasure to announce that last month with the enthusiastic backing and courtesy of Interim Dean of the George A. Smathers Libraries Patrick

Reakes we now have a home! Dean Reakes, who took over from former Libraries Dean Judy Russell, a new RFUF member, assigned us a wonderful 4th floor small conference room in Library West with one windowed wall overlooking the Plaza of the Americas and full AV services to call our own at no cost to our treasury. The room seats 20 around a square of tables, perfect for Board meetings, small events (such as small Summer Activity lectures), and other administrative activities. We even have a new mailing address c/o Library Administration. My deepest thanks to Pat and Judy for their genuine support of this seemingly improbable ask that is now conveniently close to all the historical RFUF archives.

In casual conversations over the summer, President-Elect Mike Conlon and I have discussed beginning work on exactly what Provost Glover suggested, a concrete evolutionary (not revolutionary) proposal to bring RFUF into a position within the UF hierarchy so that we can actively make good on our Founders 1974 basic goals for existence, namely, (a) to maintain an active, reciprocal communications channel between retired faculty and University administrators for discussions of matters of mutual importance; and (b) to maintain effective and efficient pathways whereby retired faculty can continue to contribute to University programs and activities. We invite anyone who is interested and compelled to help us with such a proposal to let us know as soon as possible. Whoever is interested or compelled to consider finding a way to be engaged as a representative to the Faculty Senate, also let us know.

Regarding the start of our 2026 meetings on September 8, we return with stability to the UF/IFAS Straughn Professional Development Center, 2142 Shealy Drive, every Tuesday morning apart from one Monday morning meeting and one field trip (please see the RFUF Speakers Schedule, Fall 2026). Protected parking is again ensured by a TAPS attendant. In addition, we must continue the 9:30 am pre-meeting refreshment service (and social gathering) begun by our volunteer *Coffee and Carb Angels*, namely, Regina Bussing, Barbara Rothstein, Anne-Marie Rizzo, Pushpa Kalra, Susan Cooksey, Dave Pokorney, Churchill Roberts, Jane Brockmann, Paul Duncan, Jo Stepp-Greany, Lynne Holt, and David & Joanne Auth. We are looking for new (or return) volunteer Coffee and Carb Angels to buy (always covered by Hank and the Treasury) and prepare morning refreshments for our 2026 and 2027 meetings. Regina Bussing volunteered to be our first 2026 Angel. **On September 8 I will pass around a sign-up sheet on which to agree to Angelship of one's choice for any of the Straughn fall meetings.**

As a reminder, annual RFUF membership dues for the 2026-2027 academic year are \$35 per person and as noted in our Bylaws payable by September 30. Treasurer Hank Frierson appreciates payment by check only made out to RFUF and either given to him personally or mailed to Retired Faculty of the University of Florida, PO Box 141592, Gainesville, FL 32614. No cash, please. Also, if you need a name tag for the first time or need to replace a lost one, please let Hank know at hfrierson@ufl.edu. Please try to order name tags by September 30. The cost for a name tag is \$20. Our annual Fall Luncheon is scheduled at The Village at Gainesville on Tuesday, September 22, beginning at 11:30 am. This year, due to rising costs for everything, we will need to charge \$30 per person to attend the luncheon.

Finally, two rounds of applause to John Foltz, our tireless Data Base Records Coordinator, keeping us all up to date with broadcast emails alerting us to information at a moment's notice, and to Steve Lodle, our fearless Communications chair, who makes this Newsletter possible!

Again, welcome back, **please wear your name tags to each meeting**, and Go Gators!

Rick

RFUF Speakers Schedule: Fall Semester 2026

UF/IFAS Extension Straughn Professional Development Center, 2142 Shealy Drive
Tuesdays (note one exception*), social gathering at 9:30 am with coffee and pastries
All talks begin at 10:00 am sharp

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| September 8 | Stuart Bell , President of the University of Florida |
| September 15 | Pamela S Soltis , Distinguished Professor and Curator and Director, UF Biodiversity Institute: <i>Tree of Life</i> |
| September 22 | Fall Luncheon at The Village with musical accompaniment |
| September 29 | Sevan Terzian , Professor, UF College of Education School of Teaching and Learning: <i>The History of American Public Education</i> |
| October 6 | Jamin Wells , Associate Professor and Director, Samuel Proctor Oral History Program, UF Department of History: <i>The Sam Proctor Oral History Program</i> |
| October 13 | Christine E Schmidt , Endowed Chair and Distinguished Professor, UF J. Clayton Pruitt Family Department of Biomedical Engineering: <i>Promoting Nerve Regeneration</i> |
| October 20 | Field Trip: Erik Deumens , UF IT Senior Director, Research Computing: <i>Visiting the HiPerGator Supercomputing Cluster</i> |
| October 27 | Benjamin K Johnson , Associate Professor and Director, STEM Translational Communication Center, UF Department of Advertising: <i>Making Scientific Research More Accessible</i> |
| November 3 | Naibi Marinas , Associate Instructional Professor, UF Department of Astronomy: <i>The Search for Extraterrestrial Life</i> |
| November 10 | Brent A Berthy , Clinical Professor, UF Warrington College of Business: <i>Training Entrepreneurs: The UF Entrepreneurship Program</i> |
| *November 16
(Monday) | Veronica Hinman , Professor of Biology and Director, UF Whitney Laboratory for Marine Bioscience: <i>Starfish Regeneration</i> |
| December 1 | Amy L Stein , Cone Wagner Professor and UF Research Foundation Professor, UF Levin College of Law: <i>AI and Sustainability</i> |
| December 8 | Chimay Anumba , Dean and Distinguished Professor, UF College of Design, Construction, and Planning: <i>Sustainable Construction</i> |

It's almost here!

The Association of Retiree Organizations in Higher Education

(AROHE) chose UF and Gainesville for its first biennial in-person national conference since 2018 (post-COVID). Over 100 members of retiree organizations and expert speakers from across the United States and Canada will convene **October 6-8, 2026**, at the **UF Hilton & Conference Center**. The theme, *The Joy of Connection: Wellness, Wisdom, and Wonder!* speaks directly to AROHE's objectives.

Conference sessions, each morning beginning with a keynote address given by a leading UF researcher in aging, go on to address topics that enhance our personal and professional lives:

- What does "staying well" mean at each stage of retirement--and how to maintain wellness.
- Framing aging not as diminishment--but as opportunity for travel and new exploration.
- How to use AI as a tool to enhance learning and physical renewal.
- Refocus aging from decline to emergence of a deeper purpose.
- "Death be not proud"--reimagining the dimensions of mortality and legacy.
- Keeping fit and protecting independence.
- Write Your Memoir--you've got a lot to say!

N.B. RFUF members may register online

at: <https://www.arohe.org/2026-Conference>

For more information, contact Barbara McDade Gordon

at: bmcdade07@gmail.com

2026 RFUF Kudos

“Kudos” highlights any and all members who have recently received special recognition or awards from professional or private organizations for their service.

Routledge Press recently published **Carmen Diana Deere’s** new book *First-Wave Feminism and Women’s Civil and Political Rights in South America*. Available in hardback, paperback, and eBook, this excellent work is a study of how women obtained stronger property rights and suffrage across seven Spanish-speaking South American countries during the first half of the twentieth century. Critics rave “...*A truly impressive achievement.*” “...*essential to understand the relationship between feminist demands, maternalism, and social, political and economic contexts.*” Check it out on <https://www.routledge.com> and search for Carmen Diana Deere.

Routledge Press also released recently the advanced textbook in paperback, hardback, and eBook *Foundations of Bayesian Statistics for Data Scientists With R and Python* whose first author is **Alan Agresti**. Critics only last month say that this text will make “...*Bayesian methods accessible to conventionally trained students and reveal important connections between inferential traditions.*” Perhaps not for bedtime reading, but for those intrigued data scientists, check it out on <https://www.routledge.com> and search for Alan Agresti. Alan also recently received the Distinguished Achievement Award from the University of Wisconsin School of Computer, Data & Information Sciences. He has also been away from Gainesville presenting the invited presidential keynote address to the mid-July 2026 33rd International Biometric Conference in Seoul, South Korea, as well as invited short courses in Cagliari and Rome, Italy, and Athens, Greece.

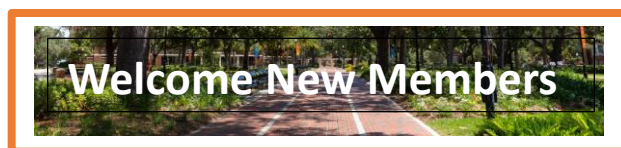
After spending over 3 decades building *SKDesign & Consulting, LLC*, while in his academic roles, **Stan Kaye** is merging his theatre systems, rigging and lighting business with New York-based *Lighting Design Group*, expanding his technical, production, and administrative resources toward growing a Florida-based LDG office. Retirement from UF has never been “brighter”, excuse the pun, for Stan.

LibraryPress@UF has just released a new eBook edited by **Jacob U. Gordon** titled *African Americans in the Making of Alachua County, Florida: Past, Present, and the Future*, easily accessible at <https://ufl.pb.unizin.org/aainalachua/>. Jake and his wife **Barbara McDade Gordon**, have both contributed chapters to this highly informative 240 page read. A printed version is in the works.

IN MEMORIAM

We regret to announce the passing of these esteemed,
retired colleagues. We extend our deepest condolences to
their family and friends.

Name	Institution	Department	Passed
Louis Block	UF CLAS	Mathematics	15 Jan 2026
Wayne D. Bottom	UF Medicine	School of Physician Assistant Studies	5 Jan 2026
R Bruce Curry	UF IFAS	Agricultural & Biological Engineering	26 Jan 2026
Robert T. DeHoff	UF Engineering	Materials Science and Engineering	7 Jan 2026
Maarten Drost	UF Veterinary Medicine	Large Animal Clinical Science	19 Jan 2026
Willa H. Drummond	UF Medicine	Pediatrics	2 May 2026
David Fox	UF IFAS	Urban Forestry	27 Jun 2025
Andrew D. Hanson	UF IFAS	Horticultural Sciences	31 Aug 2025
Richard H Hiers	UF CLAS	Religion	6 Aug 2026
Walter Judd	UF CLAS	Biology/Botany	4 Jan 2026
Floyd Benjamin Mather	UF IFAS	Poultry Science	26 Feb 2026
Guenakh Mitselmakher	UF CLAS	Physics	28 Jan 2026
S. Michael Plaut	University of Maryland	School of Medicine, Psychology	28 Aug 2025
Ramachandran Ramani	UF Medicine	Anesthesiology	26 Apr 2026
Stephen A. Saxon	UF CLAS	Mathematics	8 Jan 2026
George Terrell Singleton	UF Medicine	Otolaryngology	31 Jan 2026
Herrick H. Smith	UF Design, Construction & Planning	Landscape Architecture	11 Apr 2026
Patricia Ann Thomson	UF Law		2 Aug 2026
Thomas J Walker	UF IFAS	Entomology	8 Apr 2026
Zelma Suzanne Zam	UF Medicine	Ophthalmology	11 Jun 2026



Name	Institution
Cynthia L. Figueroa	UF Nursing
Victoria Hoge	St. Johns Water Management District
Judy Russell	UF Smathers Libraries

LINKS OF INTEREST

Past and present RFUF weekly lectures:

<https://retiredfaculty.ufl.edu/meetings/>

Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR), based at Oak Hammock at UF:

<https://www.oakhammock.org/ilr>

Senior Recreation Center of Gainesville:

<https://eldercare.ufhealth.org/senior-recreation-center/>

Sister City Program of Gainesville, Inc.:

<https://steve4994.wixsite.com/sistercityprogram/>

United Nations Association-USA, Gainesville chapter:

<https://www.una-usagainesvillefl.org/>

RFUF Weekly Zoom Meetings:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/99476690144?pwd=1qpyOQ9XSaS41qiOEmlZf2CJcHFtDw.1>

RFUF Website

Retired Faculty Organization | University of Florida

<https://retiredfaculty.ufl.edu>

Highlights from Summer 2026 Activities

Ten activities were scheduled this summer. We ventured to the IFAS Plant Science Farm in Citra and the Appleton Museum in Ocala. Space Plants Lab tour filled up fast. The Honey Bee Lab was also a popular site. **New** this summer: innovative Malachowsky Hall and a celebration of “America at 250” at Matheson Museum. Finally: **Our 3rd Annual Picnic at Kanapaha Gardens.**

IFAS Plant Farm, Citra 	Harn Museum Tour 	Harn Museum Tour 
Historic Haile Homestead 	Appleton Museum, Ocala 	Honey Bee Lab 
Malachowsky Hall 	Malachowsky Hall 	America at 250 
Patti Anderson Fun Songs 	Ed Kellerman Rocks Guitar 	RFUF Members at Picnic 

