



LIFetimes

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Happiest of Holidays to all of you!

It's been a busy fall. We've had great programs, thanks to our Curriculum Committee, some pretty awesome LIFE Trippin' events and best of all...we have been back to the Pegasus IN PERSON! For those of you who have been watching online, I hope that in 2022 we will see you in person. We've missed you!

This issue of LIFetimes has lots of fun information that might be of interest to you, so peruse the (virtual) pages and enjoy! -Gail



Hello LIFE Members! As I write this, we are almost through our FALL 2021 semester and what a semester of firsts and great presentations we have had. A long-held dream of the LIFE Board leadership was to be able to "Live Stream" and "Record" lectures so that as many LIFE members as possible could actively participate each week....and this became a reality this

Fall! We experienced a few glitches along the way as we and the SU learned how to use the technology, but our production team of Leslie, Abby, Sallyrose, Sue and Marcia, as well as the technical staff of the UCF Student Union made it all happen. We even had a first of a kind live stream of a presentation into the Pegasus Ballroom from Sedona, Arizona, Wow! The Spring 2022 schedule is almost complete and as you may have seen, we start off the semester with a bang by having UCF President Alexander Cartwright as our first speaker. We are working to hopefully confirm another wonderful surprise presenter for the second semester, so keep watching those emails for an announcement. For the speaker sessions through October 26th, the overall "Enjoyment" average rating by those who completed the evaluation survey was 82% and the "Total Value" average rating was 88% with 9 presenters getting average ratings over 90%. Again, based on those who completed evaluation surveys, 69% said they participated "In Person" at UCF while 31% said they participated either on the "Live Stream" or "Youtube Recording." Keep completing the evaluation surveys as they are very helpful to the Curriculum Committee in planning future speakers. I hope everyone has a wonderful Thanksgiving and the rest of the Holidays. See you in January.

Stuff Worth Knowing!



Leslie received this very nice email from Joan Thomas. She and I thought it very worthy of passing along to LIFE members.

Dear Ms. Collins,
Please remind members that UCF is a beautiful location to walk on weekend mornings. Sometimes we see ten or fewer people during our walk (of course that is 9a.m. to 10ish). It's like having a large urban park with outdoor art all to ourselves! Of course we use our parking pass and the John T. Washington Center restrooms are usually open in the mornings.
Many thanks for all your do.



Looking for Children's Books?

Grandchildren coming to visit? Like to have books to share when you visit friends with children? Know a child with a love of reading and learning? Volunteering with a local child care center which has a reading program? Need books for these or other activities but prefer not to buy them until you know an author or topic has become a favorite?

The UCF **Curriculum Resource Center**, located on the **first floor of the College of Education and Human Performance** building (down the hall to the left as you face Einstein Bagels). Designed to help future teachers identify books and other media to integrate in their classes, their extensive collection is open to all UCF faculty, staff and students, including LIFE at UCF students. Their librarians are ready to help you make a selection. For more information contact Head Librarian Amy Dovydaitis at amy.dovydaitis@ucf.edu or whomever is on duty when you visit.



Continuing info on books... You're invited to join the UCF Alumni Book Club! In this online community, UCF alumni and friends can connect and enjoy books through online discussions, virtual gatherings, and events. There is no cost to participate - you just have to get a copy of the book to enjoy. For November-December, the book club is reading ***The Guncle*** by Steven Rowley. The group will meet virtually via Zoom on Thursday, January 6, 2022, at 7 p.m. EST to chat about the book.

Zoom Registration Link: <https://ucf.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMtf-ugqzosH9BVgl6lNA5NkGdStw6Swt4T>

Can't make the meetup? Visit the [UCF Alumni Book Club Facebook group](#) to participate in discussion questions starting Monday, December 6. Questions will be posted Mondays at 5 p.m.

For more information about the UCF Alumni Book Club and to join, visit our website: <https://ucfalumni.com/alumnibookclub>

December 2021

Curriculum Committee

-Rich Sloane

We have a great schedule of speakers lined up for the spring semester. Bone up on your singing of “Hail to the Chief” as we have UCF President Alexander Cartwright joining LIFE as the first speaker of the new year. This is one you’ll want to attend in person. The following weeks will continue with outstanding presentations by notable subject matter experts on topics of great interest, so be sure to plan your Tuesday mornings around the LIFE schedule. Remember, you can access the schedule of speakers on the LIFE website at [“life.ucf.edu”](http://life.ucf.edu) clicking the “Curriculum” tab and hitting “Class Schedule.” You may also suggest a speaker at the same time by hitting “Suggest A Speaker” (imagine that!). We’re always on the lookout for speakers you may have heard and enjoyed at other organizations or events. Some of our most interesting and entertaining speakers have been brought to us by LIFE members who’ve heard someone present elsewhere. Now, repeat after me; “Please silence your cell phone.” See you on January 18 when we’ll hear from President Cartwright.

BEST DRIVE EVER! Thank you LIFE members!

LIFE members donated:

\$3,095- which is our largest cash donation yet!

442 lbs food

(minus 5 lbs expired food)

Toiletries and business clothes

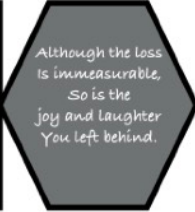


KnightsPantry.org





Sam Shutt was my friend. Perhaps you didn't know him personally, but I bet he put a smile on your face more than once. Ever since I accepted the position of editor of the LIFetimes, Sam had been a contributor, sending me emails filled with funny sayings, photos and comics. Some of the ones he sent caused me to Laugh Out Loud... and umm... admittedly, some of the bawdier ones did not appear on the pages of our newsletter, but those, and the ones we did include, more than earned him the headline and byline of the monthly "LOL, LIFE Out Loud." Sam died last month and I will miss him! He was my friend!



UCF Graduations.... Here...There...and Everywhere

-Diane Wink

The date was Sunday June 14, 1970, the hour 3 PM, the location, *Orlando Municipal Auditorium* (now *Bob Carr Center for the Performing Arts*), the speaker Astronaut John Young, the event the ceremony to award degrees to the first 423 graduates of *Florida Technological University*. No question, this was the start of something BIG as graduations took place in a wide array of venues over the years to come, but not without some problems along the way

The Florida heat was an issue at many early graduations. A 1971 commencement was in the *Orlando Sports Stadium* which was not air conditioned. It was a very hot day and very hot inside. Luckily, stadium vendors were open but that caused complaints about folks walking back and forth to get refreshments as the ceremony progressed.

Florida's heat remained an issue when commencement moved in 1972 to the drained *UCF Reflecting Pond* which had seats were set up in and around it. Those ceremonies are most remembered for how hot it was even early in the day. Faculty reported creative approaches to what they wore (or did not wear) UNDER their robes in an effort to not totally dehydrate in the heat. President Nixon's campus visit was a reflection pond ceremony and early faculty remember shaking his hand. Lucky graduates during the "Reflection Pond" era graduated at two indoor ceremonies - one at the *Winter Park High School* auditorium (1975) and the other at *U.S. Naval Recruit Training Center Field House* (1976).

Things got cooler in 1981 when UCF's *College of Education (COE) Complex Gymnasium* opened. On graduation day it became a commencement site with chairs on the floor and bleacher seating. Faculty and students did need to get creative the year when bats living in the building crashed the ceremony. No bats were awarded diplomas but the COE's Dean did

explore having the bats counted as students so the college could get credit for them when enrollment was totaled.

In Spring 1992 UCF decided to try something very different - have all majors graduate at once at the then new *Orlando Arena*. Students went directly to assigned seating areas, after which the ceremony proceeded as usual. Unfortunately, with 2,320 graduates, the ceremony ran close to 3 hours and huge numbers of students, their families and friends left early. The ceremony was moved back to the COE gym.

In 1994 graduations moved to the newly opened *UCF Arena* located at the north, as yet undeveloped, part of campus. Seating for faculty and graduates filled the arena floor and graduates' families and friends entered by a huge curved stairway on the front of the building to get to the retractable seating on each side. In the final graduations, attendees had to navigate through a construction site as the new arena, "Towers" housing, retail space and new garages emerged. Graduation ceremonies were moved to the "new" *UCF Arena* in 2007.

In 2020 UCF graduations went virtual - broadcast on zoom with a mix of pre-recorded and live components. For the first one, UCF's newly appointed president, Dr. Alexander Cartright, College deans and other officials digitally congratulated graduates and awarded degrees. The commencement speaker at the first of these ceremonies were Shaquill and Shaquem Griffin, (UCF graduates and NFL football players).

December 2021

Graduates could come to campus and enter some buildings in order to take pictures. The *GRAD WALK* was held in the Pegasus ballroom not the arena, allowing students to walk across a graduation stage, hear their names called and have photographs taken by family, friends and professional photographers.

This November, all UCF students who had virtual graduations were invited to a “make up” in-person commencement ceremony. The speaker was Darin Edwards, a three-time UCF graduate who had a major



role in creating Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine. Each attendee crossed the stage as Pomp and Circumstance played and their name was read.

Graduations fully return to the *Additions Arena* on December 17th with four ceremonies over two days, all still under UCF's COVID recommendations.

A podcast with Dr. Edwards is available at <https://www.ucf.edu/news/knights-do-that-podcast-with-darin-edwards/> and a story about his experiences as the vaccine was developed is in the most recent issue of Pegasus magazine <https://www.ucf.edu/pegasus/covid-19-big-shot/>

Information on the Fall 2021 graduation and the *Grad Walk* experience is available at <https://commencement.ucf.edu/2021/fall/notice>

N'awlins. The Big Easy. The Crescent City. Birthplace of Jazz

-Deb Barton

New Orleans is a Louisiana city on the Mississippi River, near the Gulf of Mexico

Known for its food, music and history. A melting pot of French, African and American culture. And for its annual celebrations and festivals, most notably Mardi Gras.

Collin Makamson spoke to us about the World War II Museum in January 2020. His talk generated a lot of interest in New Orleans. Here are some of my favorite things



French Quarter. Jackson Square. St Louis Cathedral. Beignets at Cafe du Monde. Shops and art on Royal and Chartres Streets. The French Market. Madame Laveau's House of Voodoo. The Carousel Bar in the Hotel Monteleone.

Ride the Street Car up St Charles. Through the Garden District. Past the big beautiful homes, past Tulane, Loyola, Audubon Park. Ride to the end and then come back. Look for Mardi Gras beads hanging in the moss draped trees.

Ride the Creole Queen Paddleboat. Down the Mississippi. Listen to music and learn about the history of New Orleans.

Eat and drink your way around town. Gumbo, jambalaya, poboys, oysters, beignets, snowballs. Classic restaurants like

Napoleon House. Peche. Felix's Oyster Bar. So much food. And then there is Bourbon Street. With New Orleans' open container law, you can walk around drinking alcohol. Day and night! Listen to music 7 nights a week and during the day. Pat O'Brien's famous piano bar serving Hurricanes. Explore the museums. National WWII Museum. New Orleans Museum of Art. Ogden Museum of Southern Art. Mardi Gras World. Audubon Zoo. The Aquarium.

Take a walking tour in the French Quarter. A ghost tour at night. Or a carriage ride during the day to learn about history and architecture. Visit a cemetery. Sports. The Saints. The Pelican's. Gambling at Harrah's, soon to be Caesar's, Casino. Take an airboat ride. See alligators, herons and hawks. In Jean Lafitte, LA. Airboat Adventures

New Orleans is a walking city. And when you need a coffee - find French Truck Coffee, with multiple stores around the city.

Laissez les bon temps Rouler. A French Cajun phrase. Let the Good Times Roll.

And as my best friend Tim always tells first time visitors - no falls, no hospitals, no arrests.



25 LIFE members took Second Harvest Food Bank by storm in October. We were broken into two groups, "Frozen Meat" and "Dry Goods." Second Harvest depends on donations and contributions from individuals, corporations and charitable foundations. In Central Florida, every dollar helps. Each dollar can secure and distribute twenty-eight pounds of food and groceries to individuals and families in need, right in our area!

Deb Barton set up our semi-annual Food Drive for the UCF Knights Helping Knights Food Pantry which occurred the same week as a speaker from Second Harvest Food

Wanting to be on the bandwagon, the LIFE Trippin' Committee organized this public service event so LIFE members could continue to give back to the community! Publix and Kroger donate all manner of food stuff, at a previous visit, I helped sort over 13,000 lbs of fresh produce from Kroger. This week most of the items came from Publix, but Kroger was present, also. The Dry Goods LIFers sorted 8,724 lbs and the Frozen Meat sorters did 15 pallets of chicken, beef, pork and a few more exotic meats, which weighed in at 6,870 lbs. Some of the meat had semi-defrosted went into a bin for donation to "wolves and tigers." Not much goes to waste! In fact, only 4% of all fresh foods go to waste! There is a "Pig Guy" who comes in and gets donated scraps for his animals and there is a "Worm Guy" who loves to pick-up the "rotten stuff" for his worm farm! ...and of course, all paper and plastic are recycled. Second Harvest is an amazing place in which to volunteer. I guarantee you'll leave tired, but the exhilaration of being a small part of something so immensely important to the Central Florida community makes those few hours of aches and pains so worth it!

Should you wish to volunteer, go to the site:

https://www.feedhopenow.org/site/SPageServer/?pagename=ways_involved_volunteer



**Using the link below,
SIGN UP NOW!**

**Leu Gardens Private Tour
January 13, 2022
10am-11:30am**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/life-trippin-harry-p-leu-gardens-tour-tickets-221751202817>

LIFE Trippin' with the Birds of Prey

On December 2nd, 20 LIFE members convened in Maitland at the Audubon Birds of Prey Center that offers rehabilitation and homes (for those raptors that can not be returned to the wild.) Two groups were educated by wonderful tour guides.

Don't forget to see below for upcoming Trippin' Events!

On the previous page click the link to signup for the private Leu Gardens tour on January 13th.



LIFE Members get Exclusive Tour of Acclaimed Wildlife Conservation Center in March 2022.

Mark your calendar for March 10, 2022 when LIFE members will be Trippin' to Yulee, Florida for a private tour of White Oak Conservation.

White Oak, which is a part of Walter Conservation, is a one-of-a-kind center for conservation. With 17,000 acres in northeastern Florida, it has long been dedicated to the conservation and care of endangered and threatened species, including rhinoceros, okapi, bongos, zebras, condors, dama gazelles, and cheetahs. Located on the banks of the St. Marys River, 30 miles north of Jacksonville, Florida, White Oak is a beautiful, natural home of hardwood hammocks, pine forests, and tidal wetlands.

White Oak Conservation, established in 1982, is one of the world's premiere wildlife conservation facilities. It is not open to the public. LIFE members will get up close to many species being protected there. Look for the official sign ups to begin in January.



Upcoming Tours to Watch For!
Steinmetz Theater Tour, Feb, 2
White Oak Conservation, March 10
Orange County Courthouse Tour, March 24