

CANAL GATOR TALES

January 2023

Fall Oral History Campaign

Happy New Year! It is wonderful to start the new year with some great news regarding our fundraising campaign for the Oral History Program. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we are thrilled to report that we raised almost \$20,000 in a 10-week period in the Fall!

As you'll recall, our mini-campaign kicked off on October 10th to mark the tenth anniversary of the PCMC at UF. Our goal for the Fall campaign was to raise \$10,000 in a 10-week period because we wanted to match the incredible \$10,000 raised by the 2022 Silent Auction, which was held by the Friends of the PCMC and their group of amazing volunteers at the Panama Canal Society Reunion in Orlando. It's so exciting that we not only achieved our goal, but almost doubled the target amount!

A special thank you to Albert and Jane Nahmad, who donated \$15,000 during the mini-campaign. The Nahmad family had previously provided funding that helped establish the [Nahmad Panama Canal Gallery](#) at UF, which opened in 2017 and is dedicated to Al Nahmad's classmates in the Balboa High School Class of 1958. The family has continued to provide support for our exhibits program over the past five years, so it is very generous for Al and Jane to also support the Oral History Program in this way.

In addition to the Nahmads, we also want to thank Kathy Egolf, Dr. Carol Meyer, and Joe and Bev Wood, who led the charge with their significant contributions to the mini-campaign. To date, we have raised more than \$155,000 for the Oral History Campaign overall, and these funds are already being used to record, transcribe, and promote oral history interviews documenting the American era of the Panama Canal. Please visit pcmc.uflib.ufl.edu/oralhistory to learn how you can support our campaign and help us to continue to document stories of life in the Canal Zone and Panama.

2023 Exhibition on Engineering

The 2023 exhibition in the Albert H. Nahmad Panama Canal Gallery will examine the engineering of the Panama Canal's original construction, specifically looking at its planning, design, and execution, as well as the innovations in materials and

technology that enabled the U.S. to complete a project of monumental scale in a time frame that many thought impossible. The exhibition also will explore the engineering aspects of alternative and new canals across Panama that were proposed throughout the 20th century, as well as the new locks and expansion completed in 2016. The exhibition will open to the public on April 22 during the Panama Canal Society/Friends of the PCMC Spring Luncheon at Smathers Library in Gainesville. We hope you can join us! As always, we will create an online version of the exhibition and post it at pcmc.uflib.ufl.edu/exhibits.

Silent Auction 2023

The Friends of the PCMC will hold their annual silent auction at the Panama Canal Society Reunion in Orlando in 2023 in order to raise funds to support the collection. We are fortunate that volunteers have once again stepped forward to donate their time and energy to coordinate every aspect of the auction. Of course, we still need your help. First, please consider donating items for the auction. We accept everything from clothing and jewelry to art and decorative objects. Second, please consider volunteering your time to help at the auction with set-up and clean-up and everything in between. If you are interested in donating your time or your items, please contact Mickey Walker Fitzgerald (mickeyftz@aol.com), Carole Miller (czmiller345@gmail.com), or Kathy Egolf (Pankee@aol.com).

Friends Memberships

If you haven't done so already, now is a good time to renew your membership in the Friends of the Panama Canal Museum Collection at UF. If you are not a member already, please consider joining!

The funds collected are used to support education and research through the preservation, conservation, digitization, and processing of the collection. Funds also support the creation and development of local, traveling, and online exhibits that increase awareness about the collection, the Panama Canal, the Canal Zone, and its people.

We maintain these efforts through the support of friends like you when you join or renew your membership. Dues and donations qualify for tax deductions. Thank you for your continued support of the PCMC at UF. To join or renew membership in the Friends of the Panama Canal Museum Collection visit <https://apps.uflib.ufl.edu/pcmmembership/> or call 352-273-2505 for more information.



SAVE THESE DATES

April 22, 2023

Panama Canal Society/Friends of the PCMC Spring Luncheon at Smathers Library, Gainesville. Join us for the Spring Luncheon with the Panama Canal Society in Gainesville at the Smathers Libraries starting at 11am. We will open the new exhibition in the Nahmad Panama Canal Gallery which will focus on engineering. Also, if you have any items you would like to donate to the 2023 silent auction, you can bring them to the Luncheon.

July 5-9, 2023

Exhibit, Auction and Cultural Seminar at the Panama Canal Society Reunion at the Shingle Creek Resort, Orlando, FL. Please contact Mickey Walker Fitzgerald (mickeyftz@aol.com), Carole Miller (czmiller345@gmail.com), or Kathy Egolf (Pankee@aol.com) if you have items to donate or if you want to volunteer to help out.