



Vol. 13 Number 6

June, 2021

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From the President's Desk:

By *Mary Lou Ambrose*



Mostly I write here about the terrifying action and inaction of the Former Guy and his group of crazies. But I decided that this month I would concentrate on the talent we have in the Democratic party. This is a difficult time in American politics, in fact, in American History. Until recently there were no Democratic candidates to talk about. Things are

now starting to change.

We are seeing good Democrats stepping up. More will follow. I decided to use this column to go over with you the people who have declared their candidacies. My reason for this is to encourage those of you who really want to help make a difference in these dangerous times, but do not know how to get started. The best way to "get involved" is to sign on with a candidate or an issue you like. One you

believe can make a difference in this crazy political world. Then you work hard.

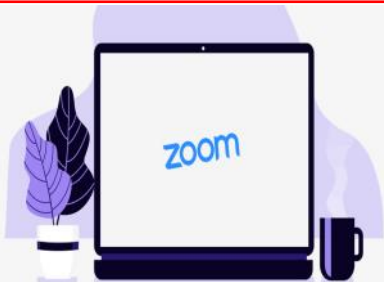
On the National side, many were delighted to hear that **Val Demings** had decided to run against Marco Rubio. I have been personally excited to see this. Years ago, when she came to the Largo Club to speak, I had dinner with her. I felt that there was something really special about her. The excitement I saw then became obvious when Val was chosen by Nancy Pelosi to serve on the first Impeachment panel. She was ready for big

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time. She got a lot of favorable publicity when she showed up on Joe Biden's "short list" for VP. Jim Johnson did her a big favor by trying to take her on during a House session. She verbally de-

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ZOOM meeting

June 21 7:00 P. M.

Speakers:

Congressman Charlie Crist

Eric Lynn, Candidate for CD-13

[See page 4 for more information](#)

MLA from Page 1

stroyed him, and their argument was featured on MSNBC and CNN repeatedly for a couple of weeks.

Marco Rubio is a lousy Senator. He reminds me of a dandelion, blowing in the wind until he turns to dust and votes the way we knew he would vote

all along. Marco does a great job of making it seem as though he cares, but one soon finds out that he cares only for "Little Marco." What a great replacement for Rubio Val will be.

Then there is **Charlie Crist**. I admit to being surprised that he is willing to give up a relatively safe House seat in DC to run for Governor against a Republican who is,

sadly, exceedingly popular here in Florida. Charlie is a great politician and an outstanding Administrator. We need those administrative skills in Tallahassee. As a Republican Governor he was willing to put his job on the line to support President Obama. We need him in Tallahassee.

Since Charlie is leaving his House seat behind, several local candidates have thrown their hats into the ring. **Ben Diamond** and **Eric Lynn** are running for Charlie's seat.

Ben has been involved in politics since he was Special Council to Alex Sink when she was Florida's Chief Financial Officer. He is cur-

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THOUGHTS ON D-DAY 2020

Opinion by the Editorial Board –The Washington Post
June 5, 2020 at 2:03 p.m. EDT

THIS DAY used to be commemorated regularly on newspaper editorial pages: the day when Allied forces invaded Europe and began the long, bloody march to Germany. In time, the custom faded, but still the papers would receive letters to the editor every year complaining about the absence of a tribute on June 6, letters mostly from the dwindling number of people who remembered that day all too well.

Today, it's worth reviving the custom, if only because of the lesson it contains about leadership and its obligations — a lesson that seems to have been largely forgotten by many of our leaders. In June 1944, Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme Allied commander, faced a harrowing choice about whether to proceed with the invasion of Normandy. The weather was terrible, the prospect of huge casualties all too real. But to delay any longer would be disastrous, Eisenhower believed. He made the decision to go ahead.

"During the somber lull between the decision and the invasion, Ike scribbled a quick note and stuffed it in his wallet, as was his custom before every major operation," writes Tim Rives, deputy director of the Eisenhower presidential library. Chances are you have read it before, but it's worth another look; it has special meaning this D-Day. Eisenhower intended it to be made public in the event the invasion was repelled. It read simply:

"Our landings in the Cherbourg-Havre area have failed to gain a satisfactory foothold and I have withdrawn the troops. My decision to attack at this time and place was based upon the best information available. The troops, the air and the Navy did all that Bravery and devotion to duty could do. If any blame or fault attaches to the attempt it is mine alone."

"Ike disdained pomposity in word and manner," writes Mr. Rives. "He disliked the 'slick talker' and the 'desk pounder.' The histrionic gesture or declamation just wasn't in him." But in the last sentence of a hastily written note 76 years ago, the future president said all that needed to be said about the essence of leadership and the locus of responsibility, in words that are not heard often today, and never from our president when fault or blame is to be assigned. (Ed note: this was written last year; thankfully President Biden doesn't blame others for his decisions.)

MLA from Page 2

rently State House Representative for District 68 (St Petersburg.) He has been a popular House member and was slated to become minority leader. Ben has a way of quietly making his point without anger. That ability is needed.

Eric Lynn has been running for the US House seat since Charlie Crist announced for Governor. He was a congressional aide and became a National Security Advisor to the Obama Campaign in 2009. After Obama won, Eric became an advisor to the Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates. You have heard from Eric at Club meetings.

Many people were surprised when St Petersburg's popular Mayor, Rick Kriseman, formally announced that he would not run for the House seat. He is termed out as Mayor, and there have been no further announcements. We will see.

Ben Diamond's announcement left open the District 68 State House seat and **Lindsey Cross** announced that she would run for that seat. Lindsey is an Environmental Scientist (Imagine a Scientist in Tallahassee!) who ran previously against Jeff Brandes for the Florida Senate. Lindsey had a lot going against her in that

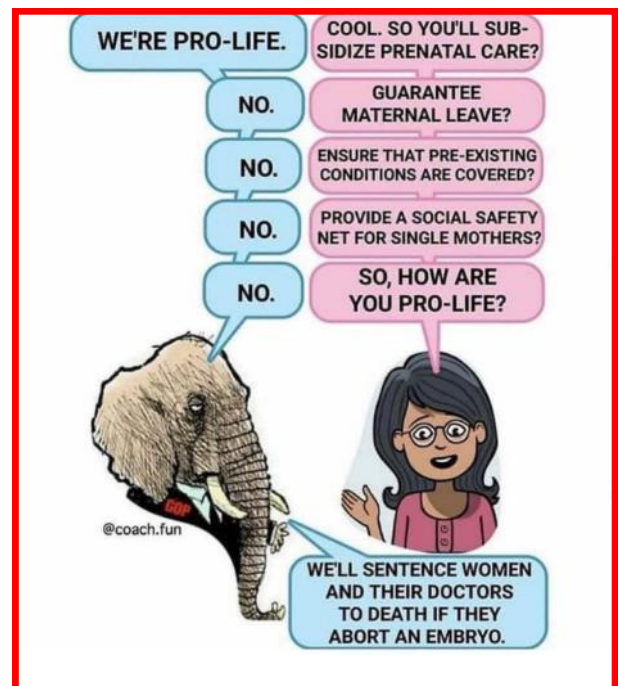
race. She stepped in late after the initial candidate dropped out. Lindsey had little time for fund-raising or to make herself known against a well-known opponent. This time she is the first in the race and the seat is open.

So, as of this writing, that is where we are here in Pinellas County as far as upcoming candidates are concerned. If you want to make a difference in the political mess the Republicans have created, now may be the time to join one of these candidates' Campaign. Help a candidate win and knock out a Republican.

And yes, this really is a serious mess that Republicans have wrought. Back when the Former Guy was nominated, there was talk of damage to our democracy. How could a moron like him damage our Democracy? It had been around for more than 200 years after all and had survived the Civil War. What could be worse than that? Now we know. He really is a moron, but powers within the party had been waiting for a President like him. One they could maneuver with flattery. They had

worked for years, dumbing down the Republican electorate, making less educated Americans afraid of people whose skin was a different color or who came from a different country. The white men in power worked to keep women out and set a different standard for them. They got their true believers into State Houses and School Boards. This is their opportunity to take over and destroy our Democracy and mortally wound this country.

Well, the fact is that now is our time to step up, challenge them with the truth, and stop them cold by rescuing this 200-year-old Democracy. It starts here with Democrats winning all over the country, each displacing a dangerous Republican. 🏆



Upcoming Speakers

JUNE SPEAKERS:

Congressman Charlie Crist, CD 13. Candidate for Governor of Florida in 2022 and

Eric Lynn, Candidate for CD 13



Bay News 9—May 4, 20201

By Mitch Perry

The St. Petersburg-based Democratic Congressman gave a speech shortly before noon [on May 4] in front of supporters in South St. Pete, where he lambasted Gov. Ron DeSantis and the GOP-controlled Florida Legislature.

“This is a governor who doesn’t listen, doesn’t care, and doesn’t think about you- unless you can write a campaign check,” he said. “He sees our state’s wonderful diversity as a threat, not a strength we all celebrate.”

The 64-year-old Crist (he’ll be 65 in July) has already served as governor of Florida – when he

was a Republican (2007-2011), sandwiched between the Jeb Bush and Rick Scott eras. Crist narrowly lost to Scott when he ran as a Democrat in 2014.

The former Republican is running on a progressive agenda. He said in his speech that he supports legalizing recreational marijuana, raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour and banning assault weapons.

And he said he would name a **Chief Climate Change Officer** to tackle what he calls the “existential threat” that a heating planet means to Florida’s future.

Crist supporters say his brand of moderate politics can play well in such a time of tumult.

“This has been a really divisive few years, for Florida and for our country and it’s really important that we get beyond this and focus on the issues for the people of Florida and I don’t know anyone better than Charlie Crist whose been able to do that,” said longtime Crist supporter Susan McGrath after his speech.

Crist is one of several Democrats who will enter the primary for 2022. Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried made it pretty clear after today’s Cabinet meeting that she will soon be filing to run, saying as the top-elected Democrat in Florida, “it makes absolute sense for me to be running for governor,” adding that such an an-

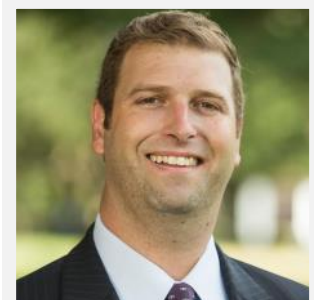
nouncement would not take place today.

The jockeying for who will succeed Crist in Florida’s 13th Congressional District began did on Monday, when the GOP nominee in 2020, 31-year-old Air Force Veteran Anna Paulina Luna, became the first name Republican to enter the race.

When it comes to Democrats, the most frequently invoked names by politicians to get into the race is St. Petersburg-based state Rep. Ben Diamond and former Obama administration official Eric Lynn. St. Petersburg Mayor Rick Kriseman has declined to run for this seat.

Excerpted from: <https://www.baynews9.com/fl/tampa/politics/2021/05/04/us-congressman-charlie-crist-major-announcement>

Eric Lynn first Florida Democrat to jump into race to replace Charlie Crist



Con’t - LYNN next page

Upcoming Speakers

From Prior Page—LYNN

*From Tampa Bay Times - May 5
by Steve Contorno*

This will be one of the most competitive congressional races in the country.

Eric Lynn, a national security adviser from St. Petersburg, made official on Wednesday his long-rumored plans to run for the District 13 seat.

“My view is the people of Pinellas deserve someone who understands the challenges we face in our communities and the complexities of working in congress,” Lynn told the *Tampa Bay Times* on Wednesday.

Lynn previously worked as a congressional aide and served as national security adviser to President Barack Obama’s 2008 campaign. He then joined the administration as an adviser to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates.

Lynn lives in St. Petersburg with his wife and three kids. 🍷



**Commissioner
Eric
Gerard**

earned a Bachelor of Science in

Journalism from Ohio State University. Professionally, Commissioner Gerard was Reporter for the Tampa

JULY SPEAKERS:

Eric Gerard, Commissioner City of Largo and Darden Rice, Candidate for Mayor of St. Petersburg

Tribune and the St. Petersburg Evening Independent, Principal of E. Gerard Advertising, Inc and BIG-Gross.com, LLC, and Vice President of Operations of ePush, LLC . Commissioner Gerard has a wife, Pat, daughter, Sarah and son-in-law Patrick.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

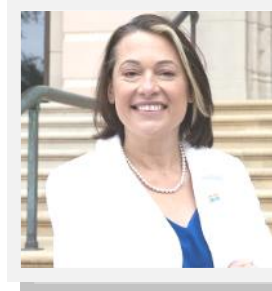
In 2020, Commissioner Gerard was elected to serve on the City of Largo Commission.

CIVIC BACKGROUND

Graduate of Largo Citizens Academy, Pinellas Sheriffs Citizens Academy, Member and Vice-Chair of Largo Planning Board, Past President of the Greater Largo Library Foundation

Awards

Recipient of the Partners N Progress for the Arts; President’s Award; Tonne Award; Greater Largo Library Foundation Volunteer of the Year



**Councilmember
Darden
Rice**

was the first openly gay person to run for office

in Pinellas County, Florida. First elected to St. Petersburg City Council 2013, Darden was re-elected in 2017 with over 72% of the vote. She is the current Chair of Forward Pinellas, the county’s land use and transportation planning agency, and an executive member of the Board of Directors for Tampa Bay Water, the regional water supply utility.

Darden previously served as the president of the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area and as chair of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority, as well as the Chair of City Council. Before being elected to City Council, Darden was the Florida Director of Healthy Gulf, an anti-pollution non-profit focused on protecting our coastal waters, a Senior Associate with Sierra Club Florida, and the Health Care Policy Director for Progress Florida, a non-profit dedicated to promoting progressive values throughout the state.

Councilmember Rice created the Wage Theft Prevention ordinance, was the driving force behind universal curbside recycling, and founded the council

[Con’t RICE next page](#)

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Upcoming Speakers

Con't RICE from prior page

committee on the environment which spearheaded the city's most ambitious and comprehensive approach to measurable environmental progress. She has been a champion for increasing affordable housing, creating stronger neighborhoods, improving transportation, historic preservation, and supporting our local small businesses.

Darden lives in St. Petersburg with her wife Eve. 🍷



AUGUST SPEAKERS:

FL HD 70 Representative Michelle Rayner and friend of the Club Jennifer Webb



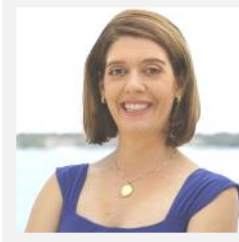
Michele Rayner, a local civil rights attorney, represents District 70 in the Florida House. Rayner is among the first openly LGBTQ women of color elected to Florida's Legislature.

"It really has been a people powered campaign," said Rayner, who said she sees her victory as "pushing back on patriarchy."

"We ran with integrity. We ran with transparency and we ran with accountability."

"I'm proud because this win represents a new day," said Rayner in a news release after her victory.

"We've run a campaign focused on putting people over politics and that's rooted in a commitment to working with and for residents until the change they seek is a reality," said Rayner in the news release. "This win proves that this community is ready tired of business as usual and ready for change, and I'm so grateful and humbled that the voters of District 70 have elected me to represent them in Tallahassee to move us closer to the change we all deserve." 🍷



Jennifer Necole Webb is an American politician from Florida. She served

one term in the Florida House of Representatives, representing House District 69, coastal southwestern Pinellas County, from 2018 to 2020. Webb was elected in the general election on November 6, 2018, winning 53 percent of the vote.

She has a BA from the Louisiana State University and an MA from the University of South Florida.

Webb is President and Founder at Think Tampa Bay, Founder, Managing Partner at Omni Public, a progressive global strategy, public affairs and public relations firm that specialize in helping companies introduce and deploy new technologies, concepts and ideas into the market place and engage with government, media and industry, and Director of Community Partnerships at USF Office of Community Engagement & Partnerships

She was the first out lesbian to serve in the Florida legislature. She lives in Gulfport with her wife Cynthia Wurner. 🍷

SPOTLIGHT ON: Robert (Bob) Glass



Comments from our club president.....

When I became President of the Largo Club, I was only one person with a lot of balls in the air. It was initially overwhelming. Several Board Members offered their help and experience, including Bob Glass. Bob is one person I can always depend on for help or for a rational assessment of whatever I am trying to do. Bob never makes a big deal of what he does, he does it quietly and very efficiently. He tracks membership and is the person always in the back of the room, greeting people and being helpful. He makes calls every month to newly registered voters, inviting them to a Club meeting. We would not have had years of successful picnics without Bob. He takes care of getting the venue and resolves any problems with the City of Largo. He buys the food and supplies, and (with the help of his wife, Delores,) gets things set up. If we are short a cook, he volunteers. If we run out of something, he goes to the store. I am very fortunate to have Board Members who work hard to make the Club successful. However, whenever I need something

done, Bob is the first person I think of. I am most grateful for his help and support.

thank you to Delores and Bob for the following.....

Bob and his family moved to Seminole Florida in 1988. He always held an interest in politics and joined the PCDEC in 2004. He quickly got immersed in the KERRY Campaign for president. He organized Meet and Greet meetings through the MoveOn organization and participated in various roles at the Pinellas Park Kerry field office. That year he attended the State Delegate Meeting and had the chance to meet with candidate Kerry.

He continued his involvement in the PCDEC as a precinct captain working on local campaigns. He soon realized that being involved with candidate campaigns was the thing he liked doing. In time he met Janet Long and maintained a close friendship with her which continues today. During that time, he worked on her numerous campaigns, doing phone banking, canvassing, installing signs and working with other volunteers.

Bob got interested in the Jim Davis' 2006 campaign

for Governor and was excited to meet one on one with him in Tampa. Although they failed to get Jim Davis elected it was another learning experience.

He also realized that there were other important issues facing the party that could make a difference in winning elections. That would be registering new voters,

getting out the vote and gathering signatures on petitions to secure democratic candidates on the ballot. Bob became active in all of these activities.

About 2008 Bob joined the Obama campaign and later joined the Largo Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club and eventually became a board member. He has maintained an

active role in the Club ever since. In 2012 President Obama visited the City of Seminole and Bob was a volunteer at the SPC Seminole campus site where Obama was to speak. He spent the night with many other volunteers erecting stands and stages in preparation for the President's visit. Later that day he had the opportunity to speak with Sen Bill Nelson and Charlie Crist.

In 2009 he accepted the opportunity to work in Patricia Plantamura's Seminole City Council campaign. Everyone worked on an aggressive campaign and she,

against all odds, won her seat. She was the only Democrat out of an eight-member board.

In 2010 Bob got involved in the Alex Sink gubernatorial campaign and worked almost every day in her Seminole office. At a rally in Feather Sound Bob had a chance to have a conversation with MD Rep. Steny Hoyer. During that time, he joined a group of activists called Seminole Goes Green, promoting environmental sustainability by recycling. The group participated in the annual Seminole Pow Wow parade with a float of the old Seminole water tower.

He also played an active role in the Mary Lou Ambrose, Lorena Grizzle, and Alex Herren D66 campaigns.

He was asked to become the treasurer of Jack Killingsworth's SOE campaign effort in 2012 and worked with Jack on a second campaign a few years later.

In 2016 he was elected District 66 Chair. Prior to that he served as vice chair of district 51 (which later became D66). Dennis Port was the district chair and Bob

felt that he learned a lot of valuable lessons from him.

Currently Bob continues to enjoy being active in the LMPDC and playing an active role in Democratic campaigns. ♣

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PLEASE DON'T FORGET YOUR DUES!



YOUR Democratic Club



Click on
LINK



Dues are \$15 per year, payable in January of each year. Dues paid in the last quarter of 2020 carry forward into this year.

If you have not already paid you can pay online at:

<https://www.largodemocrats.org/get-involved>

Or mail a check to

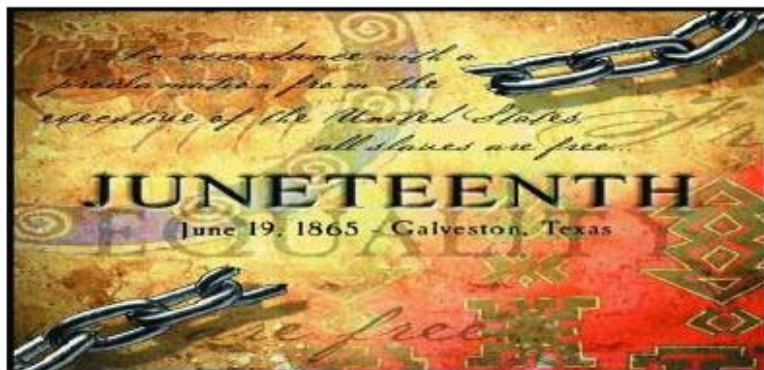
Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club

P O Box 1242

Largo, FL 33779

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Friends of Ridgecrest



**FRIENDS OF RIDGECREST
AND
GREATER RIDGECREST CRIME WATCH**

**2021 JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION/FISH FRY
&**

**2021 High School/College Grad Celebration
10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM**

**FREEDOM DAY BIKE RIDE/WALK
Starting @ 7:30 AM**

SATURDAY – JUNE 19, 2021

**Greater Ridgecrest YMCA
1801 119TH STREET N
LARGO, FL**

ALL EVENTS FREE – Fish Fry Donation: \$8.00

Contact: Wanda McCawthan 727 488 4441 or Vernon Bryant 727-224-6775 for additional information

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Friends of Ridgecrest

JUNETEENTH **FREEDOM DAY**



BIKE RIDE/WALK

JUNE 19TH/7:30 A.M.

Greater Ridgecrest YMCA

1801 119th Street, N. Largo, FL 33778

DISTANCE – 10 mile ride/5 mile walk

Pinellas Trail

Juneteenth Fish Fry \$8.00

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

CELEBRATING FREEDOM



CONTACT US

2250 1st Avenue North
St Petersburg, FL 33713

Office hours vary based on volunteer availability. Please call or email for more information.

office@pinellasdemocrats.com **727.327.2796**

OUR VALUES

“ Democrats believe that cooperation is better than conflict, unity is better than division, empowerment is better than resentment, and bridges are better than walls. ”



“ Democrats are the party of inclusion. We know that diversity is not our problem—it is our promise. We do not merely seek common ground—we strive to reach higher ground. ”

“ Despite what some say, America is and has always been great—but not because it has been perfect. What makes America great is our unerring belief that we can make it better. ”



Party Platform



DEMOCRACY NEEDS YOU

Take Action Today

The 2020 election will be the most important in a generation, and Florida is vital to the outcome. Your help will make a crucial impact in our fight to flip Pinellas County blue.

Get Involved

KEEP IN TOUCH

Sign up for the newsletter and follow us on social media

[https://
pinellasdemocrats.org/
newsletter/](https://pinellasdemocrats.org/newsletter/)





Guest Speakers

**Mary Lou Woods and Marie Garnes,
DWCF Grassroots Campaign Chairs,
Via ZOOM, Mon. June 28th @ Noon!**

**ANNOUNCING
THE NEW AND IMPROVED WEBSITE FOR
THE DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF
UPPER PINELLAS:**

DWCUP.COM

*Thank you to Marleen Salo, Webmaster,
For her incredible work in making this possible.*

This site is secure for your use!

As you know, Governor DeSantis is running around the state bragging about the \$1000 bonus checks that "he" is giving to first-responders, teachers, and principals. He is omitting the fact that the bonuses were only made possible by the \$10.2 billion sent to Florida from the American Rescue Plan (ARP)--the plan that Democrats passed without one single Republican vote!

It is past time that we all send letters-to-the-editors of our local newspapers to remind bonus recipients and the public that it is President Biden and Democrats in Congress we should thank, not the Governor. After all, it was DeSantis who told reporters on March 8, 2021 (WCJB, Tallahassee) that the ARP was designed to "basically bail out the poorly governed states." Yet he accepted the money and now turns around and takes credit for helping those who stood strong during the pandemic. It is so typical of his deceptive and non-transparent style of governing. Don't let him get away with it.

Thank you,

Jean Siebenaler, DWCF Legislative Chair

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Why are we not meeting in person you ask, well, why rush it?

I know it feels like we should, but if you just wait, it will be worth it. **We will come back in September with a bang. We will be**

celebrating with a Reunion at the Dunedin Country Club on September 29, 2021. Then in October, we'll resume meeting at the Clearwater East Library.

I am asking you all to put Sept 29th on your calendar and join us for a wonderful

reunion celebration. Yes, we made it through the pandemic and we deserve to celebrate that fact!

Now I know that this past year has been frustrating with not being able to meet in person--no live rallies, no sign-waving and no live Tally Days. Well, get off the couch and start exercising because we need to be ready for next year. Next year could be the most important election year since 2016 and the one most important thing is getting rid of Ron DeSantis. It may seem unimaginable but there could be a Trump – DeSantis ticket in the near future.

So everyone start helping our organization now by working on getting Democrats elected, especially women, inviting friends to join

our club so that we can reach that 100-member mark I'm hoping for.

Lastly, I want to remind you that this is an election year for the DWCF and that means for our club also. Please give it some thought. We need you to think about running for an office. We will need a new President, First Vice-President and Treasurer. Being a Board member will bring pride to you and new faces and energy to our leadership.

Mary Freeman

President,

Democratic Women's Club of Upper Pinellas

Opinions/ Letters



Steve Schmidt

Follow @SteveSchmidtSES

1.42M followers

12m, 15 tweets, 3 min read

Lincoln's martyrdom enshrined his greatness in our collective memory. Less discussed is the epic tragedy caused by the loss of his singular wisdom, goodness, pragmatism and deft political hand at shaping the post-Civil War world. The years that followed the Civil War are key to understanding who we are as a nation and facing the great national myth that at long last demands a full reckoning. The American Civil War was the first industrialized war in history. It killed 2.5 percent of the population and if it was fought today, adjusted for population. It would have killed 7 million people. The war wasn't just inevitable; it was predestined by the presence of the evil of human slavery on American soil. The war was just, necessary, brutal, tragic and unfinished. The idea of a separate slave nation in the Northern Hemisphere was forever ended but the culture that held the ambition to create one was not defeated. With peace, a traumatized nation moved forward and tried to heal. It was this desire that

fueled the great lie in our American story.

The great lie was that there was honor and virtue in the Southern cause and that the war was about things other than slavery. It was entirely about slavery. The eight times wounded, fighting professor from Maine who spoke seven languages, Joshua Lawrence Chamberlin, was given the honor of accepting the Confederate surrender. He called the Union Army to attention as the vanquished Confederate soldiers lay down their battle flags and went home. Honor was a very different societal concept in 1865. The South lost the war but the victors allowed the fiction to root that the evil cause could accommodate Honor and Virtue within it.

The Confederate Army went home, defeated, but carrying the racial malice of the Confederacy in their hearts. There were two racial massacres in 1866. One was in Memphis and the other in New Orleans. The Memphis massacre began when white cops and Confederate veterans attacked freed slaves and

Black Union Army veterans. The New Orleans massacre similarly was an attack by a white mob of Confederate soldiers against peaceful black citizens and Union Army veterans. These attacks were instrumental in helping pass Civil Rights legislation in 1866, the 14th Amendment and the election of the self-styled Radical Republicans who put the South under military occupation and sought to break the culture of the defeated slave nation. Reconstruction ended in 1877 with corrupt political horse trading.

Jim Crow followed and another 85 plus years of full on racial terror and injustice until the Jim Crow South fell. The truth is that the South needed another generation of occupation. The defeated South built their new Confederacy on the shattered dreams and hopes of freed slaves who saw slavery give way to a new tyranny. There are no virtues to celebrate in the life of Robert Lee of Virginia. He was a traitor and a cruel slave master. The Confederacy was an evil cause that blights us still. Whitewashed history weakens the nation. This

argument about the past is important because the main point is that the same people who are fighting to restrict liberty, freedom and dignity for people on the basis of skin color today are the same people who venerate an evil cause with nostalgic delusions about its nobility. Freedom means freedom for everyone. The Tulsa Massacre of 1921 and other white attacks should be used in gauging the intent behind the building of Confederate Memorials of that era. Most of the debates taking place around these monuments leave out the important context of their construction.

They weren't built as symbols of remembrance to the awful price of war. They were mostly built in the 1920's as symbols of white supremacy. They were markers of oppression and lighthouses in the night to remind Black Americans about their subjugation. The 100 plus years of racial terror that followed a war fought over slavery deserve a couple chapters in American History Class. We have nothing to fear by facing injustice. It is necessary and overdue. It will help us become what an embrace of our highest ideals tell us we can become. 🙏

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Opinion/Letters

Humanity is More Important Than Bipartisanship

MAY 25, 2021 [By John Pavlovitz](#)

For months I've been hearing about pursuing a bipartisan America; about this nation needing to forge a new spirit of political collaboration if we ever hope to bridge the massive divides here.

I'm tired of hearing that.

We all know how we got here.

- * We've all lived through the past five years.
- * We saw the "both sides" rhetoric in Charlottesville.
- * We saw the George Floyd murder.
- * We saw the violence against the BLM protests.
- * We saw the support for Kyle Rittenhouse.
- * We saw the conspiratorial pandemic denials.
- * We saw the anti-mask defiance.
- * We saw the legislative attacks during the election.
- * We saw the terrorism at the Capitol.
- * We saw the lack of response by the Government.

We can't apologize for seeing it and we can't be gaslit into thinking that we didn't see it and we can't be guilted into forgetting that we saw it.

The divides here in this country are not arbitrary and they are not meritless.

They exist for a reason.

They are here because some of us simply refuse to tolerate racism and sedition and the systematic extermination of diversity here, and we need to remember that.

This is not blind tribalism, this is our shared decency rejecting something so very indecent.

We need to stop talking about bipartisanship in America and start talking about humanity before it's too late.

The idea of bipartisanship suggests that there are two very different but equally valid sides represented at a given moment. This is inaccurate in this version of America.

Knowingly perpetuating a dangerous lie of election fraud, is not a valid side.

Fighting a thorough, objective examination of the deadly attack on Congress intended to overturn an election, is not a valid side.

Legislatively cancelling the votes of people of color is not a valid side.

Justifying the murder of unarmed people of color by law enforcement, is not a valid side.

Voting unanimously against COVID aid while opposing masks and vaccines in the wake of 500,000 deaths, is not a valid side.

Taking away the rights of women to have autonomy over their own bodies, is not a valid side.

Demanding that teachers no longer teach about racism in America, is not a valid side.

Elevating such positions by implying that they deserve an equal seat at the table is simply reckless. To claim a desire to work with the violent lunacy of Marjorie Taylor Greene or the nonsensical, ignorant gun lust of Lauren Boebert or the unabashed sedition of Josh Hawley or the blind obstructionism of Mitch McConnell—is at best disingenuous and at worst, moral complicity. Throughout our history there have been moments when une-

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Opinions/Letters

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quivocal stands against an existential threat need to be made. That's where America is right now.

For months, Democrats have been begging Republicans for a bipartisan investigation of the January 6th terrorist attack on the Capitol, and they have steadfastly refused. This is because the attack itself *was partisan*. That was the whole point: to overthrow democracy and deny the voice of the majority and silence an entire group of Americans.

Since the moment the halls of Congress were breached, Republicans have laughably declared the real culprits to be BLM, ANTI-FA, and the "Radical Left." If they really believed this to be true, they'd be loudly demanding an investigation right now—but they are refusing it.

The only reason for a political party to resist documenting information about the Capitol attack, is because they planned, supported, participated in, and stood to benefit from it—period. Had the coup attempt been successful and the last guy was still president and Republicans now had the majority in Congress, do you really think they'd be talking about bipartisanship? Of course not.

There are no false equivalencies to be made here at this place and

time in the history of this nation. This abomination of a political party is now nothing more than a death cult whose sole platform is appeasing, pleasing, and defending a wannabe despot. To elevate them to something worthy of partnership is political treason and theological heresy.

To entertain conspiracy or abide terrorism or enable bigotry in the name of some ceremonial both sides-ism makes a mockery of the costly battles so many vulnerable communities have fought before us, in order to make this a place where blind nationalism does not rule the day and where a minority of extremists cannot have their way.

I don't care about bipartisan-ship, I care about protecting humanity.

If the fight for that humanity places me on one side of a partisan political line, that likely points to the inhumanity on the other side of it. 🍷

Republicans gerrymander too

I completely agree with Eric Zorn "Why 'fair' maps aren't fair" (May 19). Until there is a nationwide plan to end gerrymandering that every state has to abide by at the same time, Illinois' Democrats would be foolish to give up their advantage in drawing our new voting districts.

Yes, Illinois' Democrats control the Illinois House, the state Senate, the Governor's Mansion and 13 of Illinois' 18 congressional seats. But as Eric points out, 57% of Illinois' voters voted Democratic in 2020.

Compare that to Republican-controlled Florida.

Republicans have controlled the Florida House since 1997 and they currently hold a 78-42 seat advantage.

Republicans have controlled the Florida state Senate since 1994 where they currently hold a 24-16 seat advantage.

Every governor of Florida since 1999 has been a Republican.

And Republicans hold 16 of Florida's 27 congressional seats.

But the hard part to figure out is how Florida's Republicans manage those advantages when the Florida Department of State/Division of Elections state as of March 31, 2021, there are 109,264 more active registered Democratic voter in Florida than there are active registered Republican voters in Florida. How does that happen?

Republican super-gerrymandering. So save your Sunday school lecture on using computer algorithms to redistrict fairly. Either the same system is implemented in every state at the same time or "I'll do it, *after* you do it."

— Don Evans, Barrington

Contact your Federal Representative!

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For the most up-to-date information on your Federal, State, and County representatives including all contact information, Go to :

<https://www.votepinellas.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=R9k4r7jkBB4%3d&portalid=72>

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All of the officers were elected March, 2021. Next election is March, 2023

Additional contact information is available on

Why Join the Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club?

The club provides a variety of ways to stay informed and involved in local, county, state and national political discussions. But we're not just about talk. We will be part of the action in finding the best candidates and getting them elected, as well as supporting the most important causes. We will write letters, make phone calls, knock on doors, register voters, and whatever else it takes to bring change to our communities, our county and our state. But, just as important, we also want to make time to enjoy each other's company and celebrate each other's efforts at social events throughout the year. Grassroots politics is effective and fun!

As a member of the Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club you can:

- Meet other active Democrats
- Meet and get to know your elected officials and potential candidates
- Raise funds and work for candidates
- Participate in community service projects
- Hear speakers and discuss issues of local, state and national importance
- Attend special events and monthly meetings.

