

argo/Mid-Pinellas emocratic Club



From the President's Desk:

By Mary Lou Ambrose



Are you suffering from an overdose of chaos coming from the White House? Are you deeply concerned that the Departments which are responsible for making our government work are being "deconstructed?" (Steve Bannon's phrase). Are you worried that Trump is following in the footsteps of that other Fascist, Adolph

Hitler, when he calls the free press "Fake News" and when he demonizes a particular group of people as a danger to the country? When you see the red TRUMP

shirts at his rallies, do you instead see Brown Shirts in your mind's eye? Are you sick and tired of incompe-

tency in the White House as you see dozens of the appointed people (whom he promised would be the "Best People") quitting or being fired? Are you frightened when you see the refusal of the President to act to block Russia from interfering with, even tak-

ing
over,
our
election
process?
Join the
Club
called
Rational Peo-

ple.

The first piece of

Women's March

turned women into

than that, it turned

activists. Even better

thousands of women

into CANDIDATES!

good news is that the

We have two of the most important elections this

Volume 10, Number 2 February, 2018

country has ever held coming up in 2018 and 2020. What are we doing to replace the Republicans in Congress, in Governor's mansions, in State Legislatures and County Commissions? Can we as Democrats learn to get on message and stay there?

It hurts me to say that 53% to 43% of college educated women voted for Donald Trump. It was worse with women without a degree, 62% to 34%. (These numbers come from a recent TIME Magazine article.) You remember Donald – the guy who bragged on an open

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meeting

| February 2018 | | | | | | |
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Our speaker for February, Rene Flowers,

Chairperson, was elected to the School Board on November 6th, 2012, to complete the term of deceased School Board Member Lew Williams. Ms. Flowers is a native of St. Petersburg, attended Howard University and University of South Florida, is a graduate of Eckerd College and is currently working on her Masters Degree In Public Administration through Capella University.

She formerly served as a member of the City Council of St. Petersburg, serving as Vice Chairperson in 1999 and 2006 and as Chairperson for two consecutive terms, 2000 through 2002. Ms. Flowers also served as President of the Florida League of Cities from 2006-2007. Ms. Flowers has served or is presently serving on a number of com-

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microphone that he assaulted women and got away with it because he was a "Star." He is also the guy who stands on the side of other sexual abusers against the women involved.

The first piece of good news is that the Women's March turned women into activists. Even better than that, it turned thousands of women into CANDIDATES! The following numbers are from the same TIME Magazine mentioned above. 79 Women are exploring running for Governor in 2018. That is twice the number in 1994 which up until now was the highest year for women considering running for Governor. Emily's List, the group which helps women run for office reported that the number of women contacting them in 2016 for information about running for the US House was 41. In 2018 that number expanded by +350%! In all, 26,000 women have reached out to Emily List in 2018 to explore running for offices from Municipal and County Commissions to Governor to State and Federal Offices. That is four times the number in 2016. Also, experienced women have stepped forward to help, independent of Party affiliations.

You may have heard me say this before, but in Virginia, Democrats won the Governor's Office and Attorney General's Office. More importantly, despite extreme gerrymandering very similar to what we have here in Florida, 15 Democrats were elected to the

House of Delegates. Of those 15 winners, 11 were women! (I will not discuss the stupid way they broke the tie which would have made Democrats more powerful than Republicans in that House.) My favorite was the Trans woman who defeated the "bathroom bill" guy. Across the country, Democrats of all types, religions and colors were elected to State offices.

Here in Florida, Annette Tadeo won a State Senate seat she was expected to lose, and just this week Margaret Good won in a red district against the son of well-known Republican Congressman Buchanan.

In both those races, as well as the St Petersburg Mayor's race, people from all over Florida were working the phones and going door to door for the candidate. If we keep that up, we will win all over the country because the same phenomena occurred in many places. Democrats stepped up and did what needed to be done.

One last positive – President Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder are working together against gerrymandering. They have targeted specific areas where they believe they can change the status quo and have been working behind the scenes. One other thing: Eric Holder has said that he is considering running for President in 2020.

So, there is hope for 2018 and 2020. We all need to work hard to destroy the disaster in the current White

Contact your Federal Representative!

Senator Bill NelsonWashington, D.C. United States Senate 716 Senate Hart Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Phone: 202-224-5274 Fax: 202-228-2183 Tampa Sam Gibbons Federal Court House 801 N. Florida Ave., 4th Floor Tampa, Florida 33602 Phone: 813-225-7040 Fax: 813-225-7050

Senator Marco Rubio United States Senate, 284 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Main: (202) 224-3041, Toll free: (866) 630-7106 Fax: (202) 228-5171, TTY: (407) 254-5548 Tampa: 5201 West Kennedy Boulevard Suite 530 Tampa, FL 33609 Phone: (813) 287-5035 Call: (813) 977-6450

Rep. Charlie Crist - 13th District http://crist.house.gov/ Washington, DC Office 427 Cannon HOB Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-5961 Fax: (202) 225-9764 District Offices Seminole District Office 9210 113th Street Seminole, FL 33772 (727) 394-6950 (727) 394-6955 (fax) St. Petersburg District Office 696 1st Avenue North, Suite #203 St. Petersburg, FL 33701 Phone: (727) 318-6770

Rep. Kathy Castor - 14th District Washington Office 205 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202)225-3376 Fax: (202)225-5652 Tampa Office 4144 N Armenia Ave Suite 300 Tampa, FL 33607 Phone: (813)871-2817 Fax: (813)871-2864 Office Hours: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm St. Petersburg Office University of South Florida – St. Pete Williams House 511 Second St. S. St. Petersburg, FL 33701 Phone: (727)873-2817 Office Hours: Please call in advance. Note: Please mail all items to the Tampa District Office address.

Rep. Gus Bilirakis - 12th DistrictWashington, DC Office 2112 Rayburn HOB Washington, DC 20515 PHONE: (202) 225-5755 FAX: (202) 225-4085 New Port Richey Office 7132 Little Road New Port Richey, FL 34654 PHONE: (727) 232-2921 FAX: (727) 232-2923 Tarpon Springs Office 600 Klosterman Road Room BB-038 Tarpon Springs, FL 34689 PHONE: (727) 940-5860 FAX: (727) 940-5861 Wesley Chapel Office 5901 Argerian Drive Suite 102 Wesley Chapel, FL 33545 PHONE: (813) 501-4942 FAX: (813) 501-4944_

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UPCOMING SPEAKERS

February, 2018—Cont. from Page 1

ganizations, i.e., Former PSTA Board Member for four years, formerly with the City of St. Petersburg Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, CDBG Committee, The National Council of Negro Women, member of the St. Petersburg Branch NAACP and the MLK Day of Service Committee, a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Zeta Upsilon Omega Chapter, Member of SCLC, Legislative Liaison to FSBA for Pinellas County Schools and Chair of the Advocacy Committee for the Florida School Board Association.

March, 2018

Candidates Forum

We will get a chance to hear more from our candidates & ask questions. Ryan Torres (Attorney General), Robert Tager (CD 12), Carl Zimmermann (PC School Board). Meet & know your candidates before the August primaries.

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

https://
www.votepinellas.com/
Portals/Pinellas/Documents/
pdf for Website/
Voter Information/2017%
20Citizens%20Guide.pdf

She is a member of the St. Petersburg Democratic Club, The South St. Petersburg Democratic Club and the Greater Pinellas Democratic Club. Ms. Flowers also has volunteered for over the past 13 years to speak to youth in the school system about health education and making positive choices. Ms. Flowers is active in her church; and, has three adult children and two grandchildren.

Also hear from Alex Heeren, a lifelong Seminole resident who is running for office because he believes Pinellas County deserves better representation in Tallahassee. He has dedicated his life to public service as an Eagle

April, 2018

• Representative Ben Diamond

Fresh off the close of the 2018 session, Rep Diamond will fill us in on what happened in Tallahassee—the good and the bad. (This is tentative depending upon the birth of his twins)



Scout, a teacher in our public schools, and now as a candidate for **District 66** for the Florida House of Representatives.

Alex believes in bringing civil discourse to the state house, and doing what's best for the community. He will work towards ending the micromanagement of our local governments by politicians, standing up for free, fair, and well-funded public schools, and protecting the environment. Alex is excited to serve his constituents and will never stop fighting for those in need.

Stay Alert: Florida Legislature is in Session!

The Florida Legislature is in full swing with the Feb. 27 deadline for most committee meetings fast approaching followed by the scheduled end of the session on March 9. Here's an update on a few key issues.

Education: possibly the absolute "worst of the worst" proposal under consideration this year is HB 7055 which is an education bill that combines numerous oth-

er bills, some of which have not been vetted through assigned committees. This House bill, favored by Speaker Richard Corcoran, includes all of these items: revises provisions relating to Commissioner of Education, DOE, school districts, school district superintendents, statewide, standardized assessments, charter schools, educational scholarship programs, principal autonomy pilot

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program initiative, dual enrollment, FLVS, & private schools. The Senate has some of these same proposals but in separate bills that can be voted on individually. Call your local Florida House or Senate representative and tell them to vote against this omnibus bill.

Fracking: The Senate bill to ban fracking has seen some movement lately but there is little chance the House will pass its version. Speaker Corcoran is opposed.

Sexual Harassment: It's funny how the issue that was all over the news in Tallahassee (and elsewhere!) before the session started has now faded from view. SB 1628 in the Senate and HB 1233 in the House would create a Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Misconduct and prohibit public officers, qualified candidates, agency employees and lobbyists from sexually harassing individuals. At this point the Senate bill has only made it through one of three committees and the House bill hasn't been heard before any committees. While you are emailing or calling your representatives about the Education bill, ask why the sexual harassment bills aren't getting heard.

Land Acquisition Trust Fund: SB 370, which would require an annual appropriation to the Florida Forever Trust Fund, has passed the Senate, but is not showing any movement in the House. This possibly will turn into a bargaining chip in a few weeks when the two Houses try to reconcile differences in their budget proposals. **Definitely an issue to keep an eye on.**

Affordable Housing Trust Fund: The House's version of the budget for next year once again sweeps money out of the affordable housing trust funds and uses it to plug budget holes and fund other priorities. Their budget takes \$182 million, or more than half of the money in the trust funds. The Senate's budget proposal spends all of the money for affordable housing, citing urgent needs in the Florida Keys after Irma and in Central Florida with Puerto Rican arrivals. This also could get resolved as the House try to agree on a budget. Likely to become an important issue in the Midterm Elections so another situation to watch.

Key takeaways from this session? We MUST NOT let Richard Corcoran get elected Governor of Florida! We MUST go all out to elect more good Democrats all over the state in November!

DISTRICT 66 REPORT

by Ginny Nelson, Chair

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YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR
DEMOCRATIC DISTRICT 66 "
BUILD THE BASE"
SOCIAL/FUNDRAISER EVENT ON
SUNDAY MARCH 18, 2018
3:00 - 5:00 PM

RAFFLE ITEMS:

CHEF-COOKED MEAL
COUPONS GOOD AT LOCAL BUSINESSES
SPECIALTY BASKETS

RAFFLE TICKET \$1 OR 6/\$5 BEER: \$1.50 WITH FOOD

AT THE:

SEABREEZE FAMILY RESTAU-RANT 6864 SEMINOLE BLVD SEMINOLE, FL 33772

THIS EVENT IS HOSTED BY THE **TUESDAY MORN-ING GAME CHANGERS** TO RAISE MONEY TO FUND OUR ACTIVITIES SUCH AS OUTREACH TO VOTERS, DEEP CANVASSING TO BUILD OUR BASE, FINDING, EDUCATING, AND TRAINING PRECINCT WORKERS, ASSISTING AT FOOD DISTRIBUTION EVENTS, PARTICIPATING IN MARCHES AND LOCAL PARADES, AND BUILDING OTHER ALLIANCES WITH OUR NEIGHBORS.

MEET NEW FRIENDS

MEET LOCAL CANDIDATES AND ELECTED
OFFICIALS

Volume 10. Number 2

Highlights from January Meeting

Thanks to all who attended, to hear Rich Piper speak. We had standing-room-only! We counted 104 attendees, including 15 guests. That is a new attendance record!







SUMMARY OF RICH'S PRESENTA-TION: Will we see a Blue Democratic Wave

election in November 2018? The 2017 elections were sufficient to provide hope to Democrats; in Florida, in Virginia, in New Jersey, in New York City, and Democrats won most mayoral races, including Mayor Kriseman's re-election in St. Petersburg. The Democrats won an Alabama U.S. Senate seat for the first time in 25 years. The Republicans held onto all of their U.S. House seats in special elections in 2018. In sum, it will take a blue tidal wave in 2018 to give Democrats a chance to gain control over major institutions and really impose major checks on the powers of the worst President of our lifetimes. The factors that may prevent Democrats from making major gains in the 2018 elections are:

Extreme gerrymandering by Republicans in a majority of states.
 The U.S. Senate elections in 2018 (1/3 of the seats up for election to six-

year terms) will see Democrats seeking to defend 26 of their seats to the Republicans trying to defend only 8.

- The economy is relatively strong and is likely to remain so through 2018. The Republicans are claiming credit.
- 4. As the incumbent ruling party, the Republican Party and its candidates and allied PACs and Super PACs will likely be able to outspend the Democratic Party.
- 5. Democratic voters have been less likely than Republicans to vote in most non-presidential elections. The major factors that point toward a Democratic wave in 2018 are as follows:
- 1. The President's party has lost congressional seats in all but two midterm elections in the past century, with the average loss being 33 seats in the House and two in the Senate.
- 2. Every national public opinion poll over the past several months has indicated that likely voters prefer Democrats over Republicans by a margin of 5-18%.

- 3. The tax reform bill that gives 83% of the tax cuts over the next 10 years to the top 1% of the population and raises taxes on everyone else. Most polls show large majorities of the population oppose this measure
- 4. The Mueller investigation outcome, and the congressional responses to it, remain uncertain.

Will there be a blue Democratic wave in the 2018 elections? It is too soon to say with certainty, but it appears that these factors together indicate that the prospects are good for at least a substantial blue surge that will lead to more victories than in 2016. Let me close with one of my favorite quotations from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose birthday we celebrate today: "Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. . . Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifices, suffering and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals." In the end, our broadest goals must include the quest for justice.

9th Annual Politics in the Park

WE are looking for SPONSORS.

The proceeds from this picnic go directly into the LARGO/MID-PINELLAS PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL COMMITTEE, from which we make donations to our State, County and Local candidates. The Political Committee is a way for our members to bundle donations to Democratic Candidates. **Sponsorships range from \$50 to \$500.** If you would like to help sponsor the Picnic, contact Mary Lou Ambrose.



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Constitution Revision Commission Hearing in St. Pete on March 13 submitted by Peggy Tucker, Issues Committee

Editor's Note: Please make an effort to attend the Florida Constitution Revision Commission's (CRC) public hearing in St. Petersburg on Tuesday, March 13. The hearing will be held at USF St. Petersburg, 140 USFSP Harborwalk, from 1 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Compiled from information from News Service of Florida and the Florida League of Women Voters. After considering more than 100 proposals in committees, the Florida Constitution Revision Commission has moved into its next phase, which started with a public hearing on Feb. 6 in Fort Lauderdale.

The scheduled six-hour hearing was the first of five public hearings that will be held across the state by the 37-member commission, which meets every 20 years and has the ability to place constitutional amendments on the 2018 general election ballot.

After Feb. 2, which was the last scheduled day for committee hearings, some 37 proposals have been forwarded to the full commission. Another 30 proposals were withdrawn, and will not be considered again, and 27 proposals were rejected in committee votes. Under commission rules, a rejected proposal could be revived by a majority vote of the full commission.

Another nine so-called "shell" proposals, which are void of specific language but pertain to

general areas like education or local government, are pending in the committees. Those measures could be advanced to the floor, where they could be amended with specific proposals.

After the last of the five public hearings, which is scheduled March 13 in St. Petersburg, the commission's Rules and Administration Committee, chaired by Commissioner **Tim Cerio** of Tallahassee, will begin setting a calendar for floor sessions that will start sometime in March.

Proposals on the floor must receive at least a majority vote to advance to the commission's Style and Drafting Committee, chaired by Commissioner **Brecht Heuchan** of Tallahassee. Proposals approved there will return to the full commission where they must receive at least 22 votes from the 37-member group to be placed on the November 2018 ballot.

Those proposals placed on the ballot will need support from at least 60 percent of the voters to be enacted.

The Constitution Revision Commission has a May 10 deadline to finish its work.

Here is a brief look at some of the proposals, some of which also are legislative proposals currently before the Florida Legislature. The League of Women Voters Florida has named each of these to its "Worst of the Worst" list and we will want to keep an eye out for them if they appear on the November ballot.

Proposal 4 - Delete the No Aid provision from the Florida Constitution's "Religious Freedom" protections and open the door to Floridians' tax dollars potentially funding religious indoctrination, proselytizing, and discrimination.

Proposal 29 - Require mandatory use of the error-prone E-Verify program, potentially denying thousands of authorized immigrant and even citizen workers the ability to work without any meaningful avenue to seek redress.

Proposal 43 - Mandate term limits for local school board members rather than letting voters in the school districts decide how long a member can serve their community. Florida Legislature is considering similar proposals.

Proposal 45 - Give tax dollars to private schools through school vouchers including religious schools - creating a system of publicly funded education separate from our free public schools.

Proposal 71 - Take sole control of charter schools away from local school boards and allow decisions about local education needs to be made at the state level.

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Proposal 72 - Tie the hands of future elected leaders and severely limit Florida's ability to invest in public education, mental health care, affordable housing, roads and bridges, parks, beaches and workforce training programs by requiring a supermajority vote of the Legislature to raise taxes or fees. Bills that would also require this supermajority vote are currently under consideration in the Florida Legislature, also as a constitutional amendment.

Proposal 96 - Needlessly claiming to protect victims of crime while not providing any meaningful benefit to victims, interfering with the rights of the accused, and making it more difficult for the state to convict criminals.

Proposal 97 - Make it close to impossible for the constitution to be changed by initiative, by the Legislature or by any commission in the future.



Club, Election and Legislative Calendar

Monday, Feb. 19

Largo/Mid-Pinellas Dems Club Meeting 7 p.m.

/ μ.π.

Acropol Family Restaurant—Largo

Thursday, Feb. 22

Pinellas DEC meeting

7 p.m.

Clearwater Marriott 12600 Roosevelt Blvd. N.

St. Petersburg

Tuesday, Feb. 27

50th day of Florida Legislative Session Last day for regularly scheduled committee meetings— Tallahassee

Monday, March 5

District 67 Meeting 6 p.m. 2195 Wrens Way—Clearwater

Friday, March 9

Last day of Florida Legislative Session (we hope!) - Tallahassee

Tuesday, March 13

Municipal Elections

Belleair, Belleair Beach, Clearwater, Gulfport, Indian Rocks Beach, Kenneth City, Madeira Beach, Pinellas Park, Redington Beach, Safety Harbor, South Pasadena, Treasure Island

Tuesday, March 13

Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC) Hearing
1 p.m. – 7 p.m.
USF – St. Petersburg
140 USFSP Harborwalk
St. Petersburg

Sunday, March 18

Tuesday Morning Game Changers Fund Raiser Seabreeze Family Restaurant 3 p.m. – 5 p.m. 6864 Seminole Blvd. Seminole

Monday, March 19

Largo/Mid-Pinellas Dems Club Meeting Acropol Family Restaurant 7 p.m. Largo

Thursday, March 22

Pinellas DEC meeting 7 p.m. Clearwater Marriott 12600 Roosevelt Blvd. N. St. Petersburg

Saturday, April 7

Largo/Mid-Pinellas Dems Picnic 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Taylor Lake Park, Shelter 4 Largo — tickets \$10.00

Saturday, May 5

District 66 Meeting 10 a.m. - noon Grosse Point Estates Clubhouse 9900 Ulmerton Road Largo

Tuesday, Aug. 28

Statewide Primary Elections

Tuesday, Nov. 6Mid-term Elections

Find more events at $\underline{www.pinellasdemocrats.org.}\;$ or

www.floridadems.org.

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PUBLIC SERVICE

Announcement

CLEARWATER HIGH

We are gearing up for our 6th annual \$10k hole in 1 Golf
Tournament on Saturday April 14,
2018. We are requesting your
help as a 501c3 organization trying
to raise funds by letting your
community know about the event
to help us gain more golfers to golf
in the tournament and businesses
to sponsor it.

If you know anyone that golfs please share the brochure with any and all of them to come golf with us. This tournament is A LOT of fun golfers get lots of freebies and food not to mention all the great prizes we have. There will be trophies for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and even prizes for last place.

Please let know if you need any further details or information. You if you want to participate, contact Kyminda Lehman at 727-403-4516



Businesses take advantage of free advertisement by placing your coupons and/or product samples in the goodie bags for 100 plus golfers..

The Clearwater Football team are the 2015 & 2016 District Champions! Our players receive a solid moral foundation and a strong set of values they will take with them throughout life. Respecting others and recognizing proper behavior are instilled at all levels of the football program. All proceeds are used to support the entire football team so that every child's safety, security, and well-being of all students who participate in the Clearwater High School Football Program are enhanced. Tornado Strong Football Club is a 501(c)3 entity; your prize donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support!

Sponsorship deadline is March 30, 2018.

Please visit our Website at: http://www.TornadoStrong.org for event information and updates.

Please contact 727-222-3479 or email <u>tornadostrongfootball-</u>club@gmail.com with any questions or to pick up donations.

Remember it is all about the kids and ways we can all help to enhance their experience and safety in the sport!

Ratings Changes in 21 Districts (Excerpt)

By David Wasserman February 8, 2018

The first two months of 2018 have given both parties reasons for optimism. Republicans have cut Democrats' lead in the FiveThirtyEight average of generic congressional ballot polls in half, from roughly 12 points in December to about six points today. As debates over unpopular health care and tax bills have subsided, news of strong economic data and record-high



Map from The Cook Political Report of 2018 US House Districts.

<—Want to follow the 2018 election scorecards?</p>

Here are some websites to help you follow the bouncing balls:. —->

https://insideelections.com/ratings/ senate

http://www.centerforpolitics.org/ crystalball/2018-senate/

https://www.cookpolitical.com/ratings/senate-race-ratings

https://fivethirtyeight.com/politics/

stocks (at least until late last week) has likely aided the GOP. ...

This week, we're shifting our ratings in 21 races towards Democrats. If anything, that still understates Democrats' potential in individual races. If Democrats win the national House vote by six points (as today's polls indicate), House control would be a coin flip. But according to our new ratings, if each party were to win an even number of Toss Up races, Democrats would only win 13 or 14 seats — ten shy of the 24 they need.

Read the full article at https://www.cookpolitical.com/analysis/house/house-overview/ratings-changes-21-districts

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All of the officers were elected March, 2017. Next election is March, 2019
Additional contact information is available on <u>www.largodemocrats.com</u> – click on Opinions and Letters

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.

Stating in membership year 2017 our dues will be \$15.00 per year. This is the first increase in dues since our founding in 2009.

