



Vol. 12 Number 10

October 2020

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<https://www.facebook.com/Largodemocrats/>
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From the President's Desk:

By *Mary Lou Ambrose*



A few months ago, I wrote about the turnout all over the country for Black Lives Matter. After George Floyd was murdered, I was hopeful that we were finally beginning to move on from hate and bigotry. I believed that the rise in acceptance of the LGBTQ community was a forerunner of our finally beginning to come to grips with the stain of slavery. I thought that these huge marches meant that we were finally getting past the hate Donald Trump brought to the

forefront. Since then we have experienced a rise in hate. As a country we can make this fundamental change. If the visible deterioration of our democracy brought on by Trump and his cohorts is not enough, then the threat to Obamacare, Social Security and Medicare/Medicaid must be. Here in Florida, seniors, the majority of whom historically voted Republican, seem to have made the change. Trump helped a lot by saying that the virus is not a real threat to anyone but old people, whom by inference were disposable. He followed that with introducing his new virus specialist, a radiologist of all things. He has given Trump an out for his lack

of action - let the virus win. Donald Trump has emphasized the subculture of White Supremacy in this country and has given them full rein. From his remarks in Charlotte to his charge of "Stand Back and stand ready." Trump has brought hate and discrimination to the forefront. He refuses to call them out because he is one of them.

The end of this election period is getting close. Please do not get depressed when the race gets closer, as it most likely will. I wish I thought that the numbers we are seeing now will hold, but I do not believe they will. The real fight will be in our forcing Trump to adhere to the Constitution.

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meeting

**VIRTUAL
MEETING**

October 19, 2020

7:00 pm

Invitations to the ZOOM meeting will go to members who have paid their dues for 2020 .

MLA from Page 1

Republican Senators, by standing behind Trump, have lost all ideas of morality. It is hard to believe how loyal they are to Trump, knowing that loyalty will help Trump destroy this democracy. That loyalty to

Trump is a disloyalty to the people who put them in office. Trump-like greed and selfishness seems to have taken over the Republican Party. In fact, since the Goldwater loss in 1964, the Republicans have worked toward what we are seeing now. Through the years they have infiltrated School Boards and local State and County offices. They have raised huge amounts of money and refused to back any candidate who did not join and model his or her campaign and way of thinking with ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council). This powerful organization is responsible for the terrible conservative legislation that is coming out of State Houses all over the country. ALEC has a lot of money and only backs

candidates who belong to their organization and vow to follow their programs. ALEC prepares draft legislation that follows their thinking and gives the finished product to people like our State Republicans who drink their Kool-Aid. These Republican puppets

We find ourselves in the unenviable position of living in a state with ALEC Republicans who claim to represent us. They care only about the benefits of being ALEC stooges.

then pass these far-right bills without care for how the people who elected them will suffer as a result. This is how we end up with terrible laws like Stand Your Ground and other far-right legislation.

We find ourselves in the unenviable position of living in a state with ALEC Republicans who claim to represent us. They care only about the benefits of being ALEC stooges. We have an up-hill fight and winning this election is only the first step in turning this country around. We need to win not only the White House, but keep and improve on our House numbers, replace a minimum of five Federal Senators, and build our State and local Democratic Representation. This includes our County offices as well as State Senators and Representatives.

Locally, the Republicans have poured tons of money to defeat our State Legislators. I am running out of space, so I will be sending out some information I think may be helpful to you. I do believe you vote Democratic right through the ballot. Make sure you pass on your beliefs to everyone you know. We have excellent candidates for every office and the State will be well-served if they are elected. It is important that we change the Sheriff's department and remove the Rick Scott appointed Sheriff who has moved farther and farther to the right during his tenure. He has done little or nothing to improve the Sheriff's department which still does not require body cameras. Since these cameras protect the officers from false accusations as much as they protect the citizens from illegal harm, one cannot help wondering why the Sheriff has never accepted them.

We all expect that the time between Election Day and January 20th will be a dangerous time for this country. The President has much to lose. Cyrus Vance, Jr,

and the Southern District of New York are sitting in wait for the time when Trump is no longer protected by the Presidency. The Mueller Report brought to light many possibly illegal actions in his businesses which are still within the statute of Limitations. At a minimum, Trump will be spending a lot of time and money defending himself in Court. It is feasible that he could be imprisoned. He can beat it all by being reelected and beating the Statute of Limitations. Being pardoned for his crimes will not affect charges from the Southern District of NY.

Hang in there, Vote, and do all you can to encourage and enlighten everyone you know. 🙏

November 3 General Election Info

<u>Register to Vote</u>	Voter Registration Deadline October 5, 2020
<u>Request a Mail Ballot</u>	Deadline to request a ballot be mailed: October 24, 2020 5:00 PM
<u>Ballot Mailing Schedule</u>	Military & Overseas voters: Sept. 18, 2020 Domestic: Sept. 29, 2020
<u>Track my Ballot</u>	https://www.votepinellas.com/Mail-Ballots/Check-My-Mail-Ballot-Status
<u>Ballot drop-off locations (25!)</u>	Office locations Drive-through locations October 19 – November 2 (Hours Vary by Location)
<u>5 Early Voting Locations</u>	https://www.votepinellas.com/Election-Information/Early-Voting October 19 – November 1 (7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.)
Important VBM dates:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 19 - completed ballots not mailed back by this date should be dropped off at SOE sites October 24, 5 p.m. - deadline to request ballot be mailed to voter November 3, 7 p.m. - SOE must receive completed ballots from stateside voters November 5, 5 p.m. - deadline to cure ballots November 13 - SOE must receive completed ballots from overseas voters



The greatest difference between these two men is not the color of their skin, but the content of their character.

[Voting by Mail: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Turnout Quick View

As of 10/16

ACTIVE ELIGIBLE VOTERS: 711,170

TOTAL BALLOTS CAST: 142,694

PERCENT TURNOUT: 20.06%

Total Ballots by Party

Chart of absolute values Chart of percentage values Table of values

Party	Ballots Cast	Percent of Ballots Cast
Democrat	68,288	47.86%
Republican	44,227	30.99%
No Party Affiliation	28,598	20.04%
Other	1,579	1.11%



For additional information, go to

Click on LINK



BALLOTPEDIA

Six statewide ballot measures were certified for the [ballot](#) in [Florida](#) in [2020](#).

- [Four citizen initiatives](#) are on the ballot. Amendment 1 would state that only citizens can vote in Florida; Amendment 2 would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2026; Amendment 3 would establish top-two open primaries; and Amendment 4 would require constitutional amendments to be passed twice
- [The Florida Legislature](#) referred two constitutional amendments concerning property taxes to the ballot.

2020 Florida Amendment Guidance

Amendment 1 • Citizen Initiative

Adds to the state constitution that only U.S. citizens can vote in federal, state, local or school elections.

Pinellas Democratic Party Recommends: NO

Amendment 2 • Citizen Initiative

Increases the state minimum wage to \$15 by 2026.

Pinellas Democratic Party Recommends: YES



Amendment 3 • Citizen Initiative

Establishes a top-two open primary system for state office primary elections.

Pinellas Democratic Party Recommends: NO

MORE →

Amendment 4 • Citizen Initiative

Requires voter-approved constitutional amendments to be approved by voters at a second general election.

Pinellas Democratic Party Recommends: NO

Amendment 5 • Legislative Initiative

Increases the period during which a person may transfer "Save Our Homes" benefits to a new homestead property from two years to three years.

Pinellas Democratic Party Recommends: YES



Amendment 6 • Legislative Initiative

Allows a homestead property tax discount to be transferred to the surviving spouse of a deceased veteran.

Pinellas Democratic Party Recommends: YES



Election 2020: what to know

The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

from the trail, in your inbox three days a week.

[Click on LINK](#)

[The Fix](#) - Analysis
October 16, 2020

Coming up: Trump and Biden are scheduled to debate one more time this fall; [here's what to know about the 2020 presidential debates.](#) 🍷



In the latest Washington Post-ABC News poll, Democratic nominee Joe Biden leads President Trump, with 54 percent of likely voters favoring him vs. 42 percent for Trump.

How to vote: Find out the rules in your state. Some states have already started sending out mail ballots; see how to make sure yours counts. Absentee and mail ballots are two terms for the same thing, mostly used interchangeably. Barring a landslide, we may not have a result in the presidential election on Nov. 3. Are you running into voting problems? Let us know.

MAGA LOGIC	REALITY
"The left wants to bring communism to the U.S."	We want Americans to enjoy fair wages and guaranteed healthcare .
"They hate police."	We want to end deadly state violence against unarmed Black people.
"They want to kill babies."	We trust women to make ethical decisions about their own reproductive health.
"They want to rewrite history."	We want to include voices from history that white historians have ignored .
"They hate America."	We want America to live up to its principles of liberty and justice for ALL .

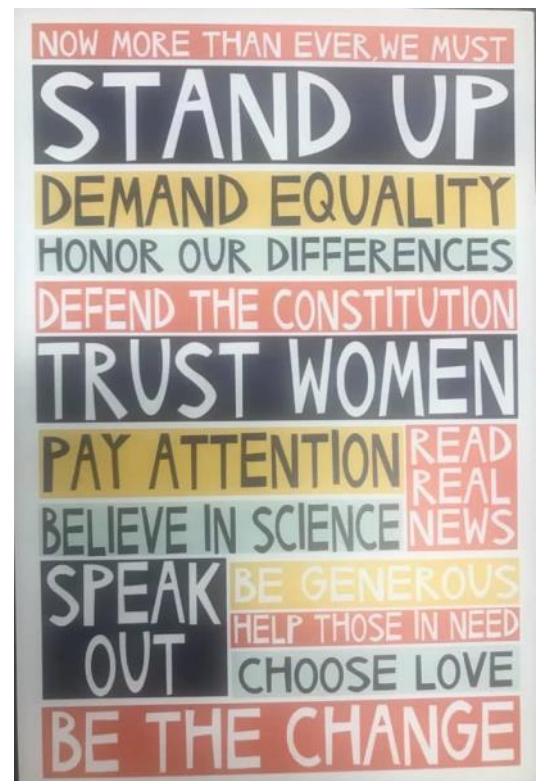
[Click on LINK](#)

Electoral college

map: Who actually votes, and who do they vote for? Explore how shifts in turnout and voting patterns for key demographic groups could affect the presidential race.

Policy: Where Biden and Trump stand on key issues defining the election.

Battlegrounds: These are the 50 political states of America. Dive in- to Michigan, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Florida, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Arizona, Georgia, Texas and Ohio, and sign up for The Trailer and get more states, plus more news and insight


[Click on LINK](#)

Take action with Pinellas County Democrats

Check out these ways to get involved!

THE PDP INVITES YOU
2020 Party To Win

Don't spend Election Night 2020 by yourself. Spend Nov. 3 with Pinellas Democrats as we offer up political analysis, up-to-date info and a sense of community. You can even host a party of your own and get a direct line to our Election Night HQ.

[Get Tickets](#)

Barbara Scott
PDP Exec Chair

Johnny Boykins
PDP Vice Chair

YOUR PARTY
Your Home

2020
PARTY TO Win

A Virtual, At-Home Election Night Party

[Click on LINK](#)

2020 PARTY TO WIN

Spend Election Night with us as we analyze results, relay updated info and foster community. [Event Details](#)

[Get Tickets](#)

[Click on LINK](#)

Filter events by

Official campaign event

Get out the Vote

Latinx community

Education

Official Florida Canvass

Events near you

Daily @ Multiple times available

Make Calls to Get Out the Vote in Clearwater & Largo!

Hosted by Florida 2020 Victory

Virtual event · Join from anywhere

[See details](#) →



Do anytime between 9:30am – 8:30pm EDT

D67 Dawn Douglas Texting

Virtual event · Join from anywhere

[See details](#) →



2020 campaign activity



Click on image



CONTACT US

2250 1st Avenue North

St Petersburg, FL 33713

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

Jill Biden at GOTV Drive-in Rally—St. Pete



Dr. Jill Biden—keynote speaker

some masked wandering was allowed. People were told to arrive beginning at 4 for the event that was due to start around 6 (speakers began later than that) to allow for thorough secret service clearance of all attendees and vehicles, preceded by temperature checks and brief questioning about possible symptoms.



Stage



Greeters at the entry point

In most ways, the rally was a lot like others I've attended over the last dozen years. Like the first rally I attended for Obama in 2008, visibility of the speaker was difficult for some attendees but the stage was televised on a large prominently placed

the screen, and the presentation started with music, first recorded, then a live performer, followed by several opening speakers. At this rally, the opening speaker was St. Petersburg's mayor Rick Kreisman, followed by his deputy. They and the other speakers spoke about the importance of the election and voting early.

Other speakers included retiring Commissioner Ken Welch, State House Representative and candidate Ben Diamond, Congressman and candidate Charlie Crist, and our only state-wide Democratic official, Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried, who talked about how narrow her margin of victory

had been (in a year when there were multiple recounts) and how important every vote is.

As at all rallies, the final speaker was the featured guest, former second lady and future first lady Jill Biden. She began speaking

Con't next page

October 16

Story and Photographs by Heidi Sanchez

Late Friday afternoon, the weekend before Early Voting was due to begin in Pinellas, Jill Biden starred at a GOTV (Get out the Vote) rally at the Gibbs Campus of St. Petersburg College. It was an invitation-only COVID-safe drive-in rally with cars of one to four passengers parked at social distances from each other in a large student parking lot (I estimate a couple hundred cars, probably fewer than 1,000 guests). The speakers and attendees were masked, encouraged to stay in or near their vehicles although



Charlie and Judithanne

screen (this time, because people remained in or near their cars, the audio was also available by radio). As usual, there was a raised platform area set up for members of the press. At some rallies, signs not provided by the event organizers have been prohibited, but this time, all displays of support were encouraged, and many cars were well decorated with signs and banners. Placards and water bottles are often provided and were here as well; the placards were **Battle for the Soul of the Nation Florida**, and **Florida for Biden Harris** (both with text message information).

As at other rallies, there were campaign messages shown on



Disability Rights Car



Campaign bus

Jill Biden at GOTV Drive-in Rally—St. Pete

From prior page

shortly after sunset, with the stage well-lighted for the benefit of the attendees and press. She gave what is probably her regular campaign speech, talking about how critical this election is and how important our votes are. (As we know all too well, Pinellas is one of the most critical parts of Florida, a large bellwether county where we almost always vote for the electoral college, but not always the popular vote, winner; in 2000, we voted for the popular vote, but not the electoral college, winner.) She, like the earlier speakers, was frequently praised with some clapping and a lot of horn honking.

Unlike other rallies, there was no working the crowd or hand-shaking; we had to be satisfied with waves and satisfaction of being able to share with a lot of other people our hope and excitement for the changes that may be underway. As I write this on Saturday morning, almost 150,000 people have already turned in their ballots in the county (close to half are Democrats) and well over three million people have voted statewide, almost half of them Democrats. To win, we have to keep it up, and having a major campaign figure come to our county for a rally as Early Voting is due to begin is a good way to keep up our enthusiasm. 🍷



Congressman Charlie Crist



PCBOCC Commissioner Ken Welch



FL Agriculture Secretary Nikki Fried



FL HD 68 Representative Ben Diamond



Mayor Rick Kriseman

GET INVOLVED!

[Click on IMAGE](#)

VOTE NOW

WHAT: A coordinated series of street rallies around Pinellas County to promote & encourage *early voting*.

WHEN: Starting Monday, October 19, 4:30-6:30 pm.

WHERE: A location of your choice or join an existing rally around Pinellas County.

WHO: Defeat 45, North Pinellas Democratic Club, Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club, and Indivisible Safety Harbor will be joined by other clubs, caucuses, organizations, and candidates who may have their own locations or ask their membership to join a designated location.

STREET SIGN RALLIES

Bring your organization's signs as well as signs promoting EARLY VOTING and Biden/Harris.

Non-partisan organizations can join the "get out the vote" effort to defeat Trump by joining an existing rally or coordinating their own location with us to maximize visibility and awareness in Pinellas.

GET INVOLVED!

RIDEN WITH BIDEN IN NORTH PINELLAS

FLORIDAVICTORY2020

VOTE NOW Riden' with Biden Caravan in North Pinellas County

Community Event · Volunteer organized for 2020 Victory

SIGN UP — CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW TO JOIN THE CARAVAN

About this event

[Click on LINK](#)



Mon, Oct 19 @ 4:30pm EDT

VOTE NOW Riden with Biden Caravan in North Pinellas County

Volunteer organized for 2020 Victory

Largo, FL 33770

Join us for our contactless Riden with Biden Caravan on the first day of Early Voting in North Pinellas! We will drive past a number of Biden sign-waving events to amplify each other's efforts and get people excited to VOTE NOW!!!

GET INVOLVED!

FORWARD FLORIDA ACTION

Election Day is right around the corner and we still need poll monitor volunteers across the state to help protect the right to vote. If you are able, we are asking volunteers to sign-up for a four-hour poll monitor shift on Election Day.

[Click on LINK](#)

If you are interested in volunteering for a poll monitor shift, [please sign up for one of our upcoming poll monitor trainings](#). If you can't serve as a poll monitor, but would like to help us recruit poll monitors in one of our upcoming text banks, use the same link to sign-up today.

Thank you,
Ryan Hurst
Executive Director, Forward Florida Action



Charlie Crist ✓

@CharlieCrist

US House candidate, FL-13

Pinellas, starting next Monday you can drop your ballot in 25 ballot boxes across the county! Like Snoop says, "Drop it in the Box!"



The Democrats ✓ @TheDemocrats · Oct 12

Thanks to @SnoopDogg for helping us remind voters they can drop their ballots in their local dropboxes and be an #OctoberVoter. IWillVote.com



12:22 PM · Oct 13, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

OUR CANDIDATES!



2020 Democratic Candidate Slate



IN IT TO WIN IT!

**Joe Biden for President
Kamala Harris for VP**



Charlie Crist
Representative CD 13



Kimberly Walker
Representative CD 12



Darryl Rouson
State Senate District 19



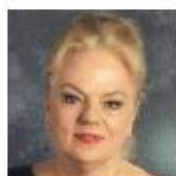
Jessica Harrington
House District 64



Kelly Johnson
House District 65



Patricia Plantamura
House District 66



Dawn Douglas
House District 67



Ben Diamond
House District 68



Jennifer Webb
House District 69



Eliseo Santana
Pinellas County Sheriff



Joe Saportas
Pinellas County
Tax Collector



Trevor Mallory
Pinellas County
Property Appraiser



Dan Helm
Pinellas County
Supervisor of Elections



Janet Long
Pinellas County
Commission District 1



Charlie Justice
Pinellas County
Commission District 3



René Flowers
Pinellas County
Commission District 7

This is the Slate Card that the Pinellas Democratic Party has printed for distribution to our Democratic Voters.

If you want to help spread this message to your voters, please contact your district chair for "lit drop" schedules.

If you didn't see a full write-up for a candidate, please visit the [Pinellas Democratic Party website](https://www.pinellasdemocrats.com) from there you can link to the candidate's websites for additional information.

Click on LINK

District Chair 64

Malanda Schmitz

District64@pinellasdemocrats.com

District Chair 65

Bill Norsworthy

District65@pinellasdemocrats.com

District Chair 66

Bryan Beckman

District66@pinellasdemocrats.com

District Chair 67

TBD

District67@pinellasdemocrats.com

District Chair 68

Sharon Loughry

District68@pinellasdemocrats.com

District Chair 69

Tony Meredith

District69@pinellasdemocrats.com

District Chair 70

TBD

District70@pinellasdemocrats.com

FiveThirtyEight 2020

Like real political, we junkies follow Nate Silver's 538 Politics for unsurpassed statistical analysis. HOWEVER—we are wise enough to know that the polls can't take into consideration last-minutes shenanigans (E.g. Comey) or Trumpian/Russian tricks. So GOTV like we're 10 points behind!

Latest news

OCT. 16, 2020

President Trump is running out of time. Joe Biden leads by double digits in [national polls](#), and [state-level polling](#) is only slightly closer. In fact, Biden's lead is so large, traditionally red states like Georgia, Iowa, Ohio and Texas [might now go blue](#). We've still got a little over two weeks to go before Election Day, and Trump needs the race to tighten during that time — we're way past [normal polling error territory](#) for Trump to close the gap. Still, Trump has

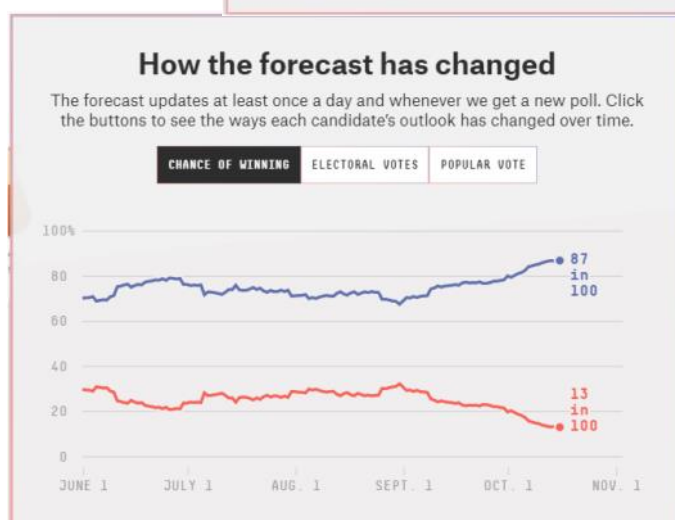
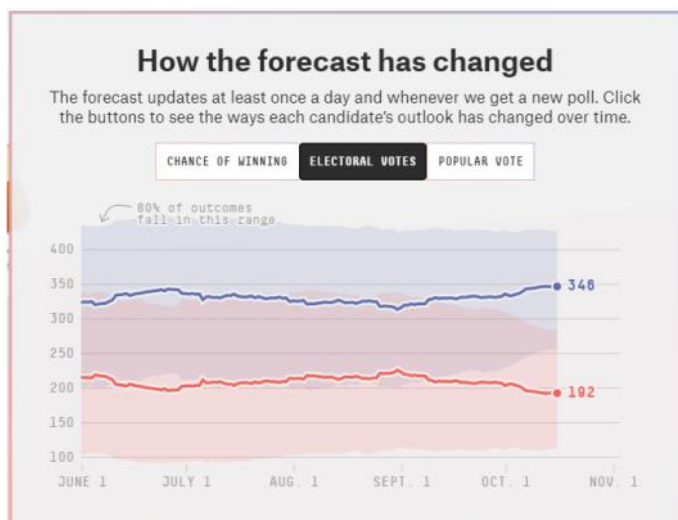
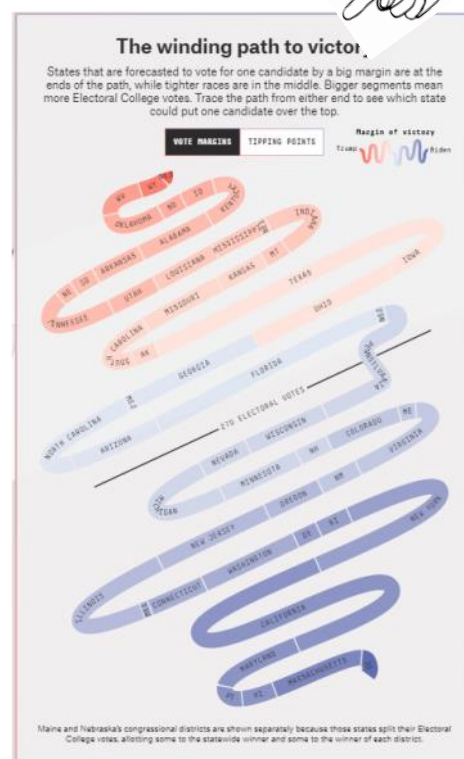
a meaningful chance per our forecast — a little worse than the [chances of rolling a 1 on a six-sided die](#) and a little better than the chances that it's raining in downtown Los Angeles. And remember, it does rain there. (Downtown L.A. has [about 36 rainy days per year](#), or about 1 in 10 days.)

Should you trust the polls this year? Yes. But we understand that many people have lingering questions after 2016, even though Trump was just [a normal polling error behind Hillary Clinton](#). So here's what [15 pollsters told us they've changed since 2016](#) (a *lot* weight by education now) and what still worries them about 2020.

Democrats are [modest favorites to win the U.S. Senate](#). But even if they do take control of the upper chamber, they're most likely to end up with only the slimmest of majorities. There is the chance, however, that Democrats build up a bigger Senate majority in 2020, and, [as Perry](#)

[Bacon Jr. wrote](#), that chance largely comes down to states like [Kansas](#), [Montana](#) and [Alaska](#), where Democratic candidates are underdogs but still have a meaningful chance of pulling off upsets. 🍷

Click on IMAGE



PLEASE DON'T FORGET YOUR DUES!



YOUR Democratic Club



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

If you have not already paid, and since the OCTOBER meeting will be online for members only, 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

Tuesday Morning Game Changers

A Personal Perspective

by Ginny Nelson,
Tuesday Morning Game Changers

I am a Democratic volunteer.

In 2020 some of my preferred activities for contributing to a Democratic win have been to volunteer for phone banks, postcard writing, sign waving, and lit drops. I believe they all are worthwhile activities, but they are mostly performed alone, not with a group. We know all too well that Covid-19 has changed our usual experiences as volunteers into mostly solitary work. In this presidential election year what is sadly missing is the campaign office, the usual hub of our election activities. Missing, too, are the friendships and relationships that were built from that office. A shared sense of responsibility kept a whole bunch of us Democrats headed in the same direction. We built a team. Who could know how much it would be missed when we couldn't have it?

This year, I think that, in a good way, the "hub" has been replaced by the grassroots. Along the way as I volunteered, I met dedicated people who accepted team responsibility on their own. Here are three examples of the many that I found:

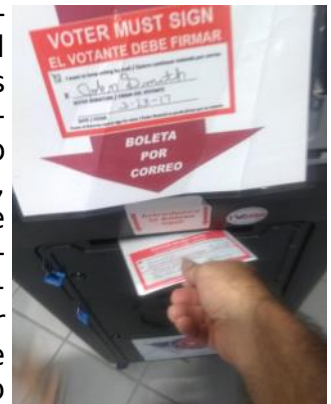
#1 I met a nearby neighbor with extraordinary organizing abilities. She is building a 3-precinct wide team of



activists. Step by step she identified left-leaning voters, organized a neighborhood car parade, and built a team to get out the vote.

#2 I found out that a friend was willing to step up and take responsibility for the organization and management of a local sign waving event. She was someone willing to stand up and give our candidates "visibility" in our own neighborhood.

#3 And when I was doing a lit drop I met a couple that I didn't know before. They were already standing up and speaking up for voter's rights with their neighbors. Their leadership convinced their neighbor, a man who moved here from Ohio, was a convicted felon for a drug offense, and who had never voted before, that he should make his dream to be a voter come true. He submitted the application and received his 1st ballot ever about 10 days later.



Casting his very first ballot!
So happy to be a voter!!!

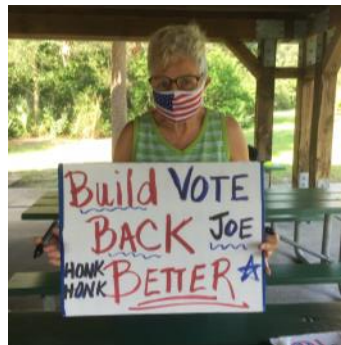
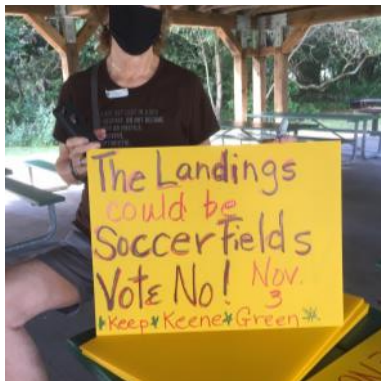
We don't know the 2020 results yet. But I do know that in spite of Covid 19, we are a grassroots team.

District 67 News

District 67 volunteers have been enthusiastic about creating and waving their signs for Biden-Harris and local issues!

Here is just a sample of their efforts!

A group (socially distanced, etc) met at Eagle Lake Park to make signs.





From the Chair's Desk

Dear Democrats,

Thanks to your hard work, we are continuing to build our lead on the Republicans in Vote-by-Mail registrations and returns. You can find more information about these numbers below.

What a week this has been! It was wonderful to host Joe and Jill Biden for multiple events in South Florida on Monday and to watch Kamala Harris shine on the debate stage on Wednesday.

Yet, hundreds of thousands of Floridians remain unemployed, small businesses are struggling to stay open, and people are facing eviction — and the President is refusing to work with Democrats to pass a deal that would help every American. Donald Trump and Republicans care about one thing, pushing their Supreme Court Nominee through and ripping health care away from millions of Americans.

We will be reminding voters of the real Republican agenda, and why we must elect Joe Biden and our entire Democratic Sun-

shine Slate, every day until November 3! Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication throughout every part of the state.

It's full speed ahead!

Forward!

Meet the Sunshine Slate

To introduce voters to our new Sunshine Slate, we have launched a weekly "Meet the Candidates" series. Join us **Thursday, October 15 at 6 p.m. ET** for our event featuring candidates in Northwest Florida. Stay tuned for updates, and use our [Meet the Candidates Social media Toolkit](#) to help us spread the word.

FDP Personal Voting Guides

The 2020 FDP personal voting guides are live on [Sunshine.Vote!](#) These voting guides allow voters to enter their voting address to see a full list of Sunshine Slate Democratic candidates appearing on their specific ballots!

Please help us spread the word about this fantastic tool so we can elect Democrats up and down the ballot. Just copy and paste this message to Facebook and Twitter:

"From a livable wage to a livable environment, Florida Democrats are fighting to ensure the Sunshine State shines bright. View your personalized Democratic Voting Guide today <https://sunshine.vote/> "



Vote by Mail

Our Vote by Mail (VBM) enrollment margin continues to grow! As of Friday, 2,545,584 Florida Democrats (46.5%) are enrolled in VBM compared to 1,763,007 Republicans, expanding our historic VBM enrollment lead to 782,577! And 707,505 Democrats have returned their ballots while only 396,495 Republicans have returned ballots! Of the FL Democrats who already voted, 60,470 of them did not vote in 2016 or 2018.

By comparison, 28 days out from the election in 2016, 113,811 voters had voted and Republican returns were ahead of Democrats by about 3,000.

Keep up the great work and [continue to enroll our supporters to VBM](#), educate these new enrollees on how to successfully VBM, and work to turn out every allied voter.



Run for Something: Unapologetically Progressive in Florida

[Run for Something](#) is hosting [Unapologetically Progressive in Florida](#) - a virtual event to highlight some amazing Florida candidates running for local offices on **Tuesday, October 20 at 8 p.m. ET**.

Join [Ricky Junquera](#) for FL HD 118, [Ben Marcus](#) for FL HD 16, [Nancy Metayer](#) for Coral Springs Commission Seat 3, and [Luisa Santos](#) for Miami-Dade County School Board District 9 to discuss Florida politics, the importance of down ballot elections, and how you can help Democrats win big in November!



FDP News Digest

[Florida voter registration won't be extended; judge rips state](#)

[Democrats propose plan to improve Florida's unemployment benefits, process](#)

[What the potential death of the Affordable Care Act means for Florida](#)

[Florida ruled felons must pay to vote. Now, it doesn't know how many can.](#)

[Timeline: Pence's Florida Visits During Coronavirus Pandemic](#)

[Will women voters turn Seminole blue in a presidential year?](#)

[Florida Dems Chair Slams Trump for Ending Relief Negotiations as Floridians Struggle](#)

[Florida Democratic Party Statement on Voter Registration Website Failure on the Day of the Deadline](#)

Opinion & Letters

By Doris Weatherford

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Back in April, when the legislative session was about to end and thoughtless Republican legislators – most of that young frat boys – were patting themselves on the back about their budget? A reporter who was paying attention to the world outside of Tally asked one about the budgetary effect of the new virus. “I hadn’t thought about that,” he replied. I wrote about it at the time, but it’s time to review from another angle.

If he had thought about it, he doubtless would have dismissed the pandemic as a Democratic hoax that would stop at the shores of the Atlantic. After all, Der Fuhrer repeatedly said that. State budget writers had no need to consider the possibility of record unemployment, record loss of tax revenue, record expenditures to keep people alive. To say nothing about actual sickness and death.

Now we know that Dear

Leader lied. He did know that this virus was deadly. He did know and deliberately dismissed it in public, misleading not only millions of Americans, but also the tens of thousands of elected officials who plan our communal spending. Florida’s fiscal year doesn’t begin until October 1, but legislators in Tallahassee finalize it in May or at least early June, when Trump encouraged them to believe nothing would go wrong.

Florida’s legislature has been dominated by literal bullies for a long time, and it’s not coincidental that we are one of the few states that never has had a woman as Speaker of the House. Minions pass whatever the leadership wants and get out of town -- especially in election years. Indeed, rushing seems to be a goal in itself, and they take pride in adjoining early. And in not coming back, even as this year has shown a great need for budgetary realism and revision.

Nor have we had Cabinet meetings, as Governor Ron DeSantis emulates Trump in avoiding open discussion of real data and hard numbers. A few national Republican lead-

ers have rejected Trump and adhered to the party’s traditional talk about fiscal conservatism, but no one here in Florida. The deluge will come to frat boys who “hadn’t thought about it.” Unfortunately, most will get reelected, and it’s probably in vain that I hope they see whose denial and deliberate lies got them into this mess.

DIGGING UP THE PAST – LITERALLY

A grandson of Nan Britton, the well-known mistress of President Warren Harding, has gone to court to exhume the body of his presumable grandfather. Harding, a Republican, was elected president of the United States almost exactly a century ago, in November 1920. He had no legitimate children, and his lateral family is objecting to the exhumation only because they say they already have acknowledged the illegitimate side of the family. They argue that there is no need for DNA evidence to prove the genetic connection because they agree with the plaintiff’s basic claim. I’m looking forward to the case, however, because he also asks for more attention to his grandmother in the Ohio museum that honors

Warren Harding.

Of course, he was from Ohio. After the Civil War, plutocrats there (especially political manipulator Mark Hanna) persuaded national Republicans into nominating a disproportionate number of its native sons. I knew this, but was surprised myself when I checked the facts: during presidential elections between 1868, with Ulysses S. Grant, and 1920, when Harding won, eight of the 14 Republican nominees – or more than half – were from Ohio. (The others were from New York and Indiana.) It’s notable, too, that until recently, Grant and Harding were our most corrupt presidents. Ask any historian.

But I want the exhumation for a different reason. Like a number of other historians, I suspect that Florence Harding poisoned her husband, and even a century later, it is possible that forensic scientists could prove or disprove that. Warren Harding lacked principles and was completely unqualified to be president – which is what his puppet masters wanted. A former news-

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man, he spent his time in the White House playing poker and entertaining women, especially Nan Britton. Florence Harding also had a background in journalism. That means she was smart: unqualified women didn't get those jobs in those days.

She had every reason to be embarrassed and angered by his scandals, both sexual and financial, and by 1923, I think she decided to put him out of her misery. Warren died after a trip with Florence to Alaska. Newspapers said he ate some bad salmon, but no other travelers were similarly sickened. He was buried without an autopsy and with what some saw as unseemly haste and "odd comments" from the widow. Upon returning to Washington, she took bundles of his papers from the White House and burned them.

She died herself soon thereafter, and the mystery never has been solved. Maybe an exhumation would do it. My takeaway: Scandals, both sexual and financial, are not new; and husbands should be careful about humiliating their wives.

THE RICH AND THE REST

I know I talk a lot about income inequality, but it is THE neglected issue of our times. The Rand Corporation – which has a long history with defense industries and certainly is not an agent of the left – said in a recent report: "if income distribution had merely held steady in the decades since 1975, some \$50 trillion would have gone to ordinary workers rather than the nation's oligarchic leaders – enough to pay every working-class American an additional \$1,144 a month."

Please note "since 1975." The next year, a Republican Hollywood actor would defeat a Democratic Sunday School teacher from Georgia for president – with the votes of a lot of blue-collar workers who should have known better. I guess they were more comfortable with Bedtime for Bozo than with the Naval Academy's nuclear scientist. Reagan and his handlers, however, put the plutocratic machine into motion, steadily breaking unions and lowering real wages.

Warren Harding and other Republican presidents in the 1920s did same, oblivious to the evidence that farmers and factory workers

were sliding down the economic scale while Wall Street soared. Then came the crash into the Great Depression, which too many people today have forgotten. It was the Democratic New Deal that pulled us out of that abyss, with Franklin Roosevelt's guarantees of Social Security, minimum wages, and other protections we now take for granted.

It was this relative economic equality and its ability to fund their future that motivated the Greatest Generation to fight in World War II. Our troops knew that the New Deal would not allow Grandma to go hungry and that manufacturers' excess profits would be taxed to the max. They could expect that the GI Bill would provide them with college tuition and affordable housing, so they fought on to victory. I doubt if that would be the case with today's young people -- and for reasons that make sense.

The Green New Deal could go far to provide them hope while they struggle for a foothold in today's economy. It will offer many new jobs, especially as we transition from oil and coal to sustainable energy sources. It's easy to

mock young AOC, but thinking through how to modernize the financial world is hard, and getting it done is even harder. My recommendation is that Elizabeth Warren take over monetary matters. Then we'll see reforms that will close the staggering division between the rich and the rest of us.

NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON RACE

Back during the Clinton administration, I hoped for a national discussion on race. He and I were young Arkansans when other whites violently fought the 1957 integration of Little Rock's Central High School. We saw that play out, and over the decades, we saw Arkansas and other states of the once "Solid South" switch from the Democratic Party to the Republican. The trend began with Richard Nixon's "Southern Strategy" in 1968, and by the end of the century, Arkansas was akin to other former Confederate states in having few to no Democrats in top offices.

Because of Black Lives Matter and other organizations, the national conversation on race that Bill Clinton proposed finally is tak-

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ing place – but I want to remind you of how very long it took. I especially want to trace Florida's transition from domination by conservative Democrats to conservative Republicans. There are a few other factors in this pattern, but race is the main one. Black Floridians began to go to the polls after they were protected by the 1965 Voting Rights Act. The vast majority of them voted Democratic because of Roosevelt's New Deal, Harry Truman's Square Deal, and the Kennedy/Johnson push for civil rights. In response, millions of white Floridians re-registered as Republicans, often saying "I didn't leave the Democratic Party; it left me."

Hubby and I moved here in 1972 – almost two decades after the Supreme Court ruled in 1954 that segregated schools were inherently unequal – but Hillsborough schools were only beginning to integrate. The Hillsborough Democratic Executive Committee (DEC) still included a lot of supporters of segregationist George Wallace, who ran for presi-

dent that year. He ran as a Democrat, but his followers were indeed racist. Their Confederate heritage meant that they rejected the national party's reforms at raucous conventions in 1964 and 1968. Republicans held quieter conventions, saying in effect that no liberals need apply.

Locally, the DEC remained quite important. Indeed, the late historian Leland Hawes said that prior to the 1970s, no governmental decision that was opposed by the DEC had any chance of passage. And until progressive Democrat Betty Castor won a seat on the County Commission in 1972, all major elected officials were white men. Although the national party had rules that should have given women a voice, women's primary purpose within the county DEC was to decorate campaign headquarters and serve post-meeting cookies.

So in 1974, Hubby went door to door trying to defeat our precinct's committeeman and committeewoman, who were avowed racists allied with Wallace. (I didn't go with him; we had a new baby and I stayed home.) Unfortunately, because we were newcomers and unknown to the DEC's progressives, the Classroom

Teachers Association also ran candidates, and in a three-way race (with voting at the actual polls), the conservatives won.

It wasn't until 1976 that Hubby and I prevailed, the same year that Georgian Jimmy Carter won the Democratic nomination and the general election. Yet in 1978, when I was employed by the DEC, I still had to deal with some alleged Democrats who refused to sit next to African Americans at meetings. In a weird way, I was grateful for the 1980 Republican victory. Its "Reagan Revolution" made it clear who was on which side, and today's national conversation on race is clarifying that even more.

The fuzziness and equivocation and "both sides" excuses are almost gone. I'm especially happy to

report that my brother in rural Arkansas, a machinist who previously seemed to believe that God registered as a Republican in 1980, now is volunteering to build a church for an African-American congregation. He and his wife like the preacher and may even move their Baptist membership. That's progress.

doris@dweatherford.com



Contact your Federal Representative!

Senator Rick Scott Washington, D.C.
United States Senate 83 Russell Senate
Office Building Washington, DC 20510
Phone: 202-224-5274
Email: help@rickscott.senate.gov

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

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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!

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- Hear speakers and discuss issues of local, state and national importance
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