



March 2025

Membership Meeting

Monday, March 31, at 12PM

Door opens/Social time 11:30AM

Location: Clearwater East Library
2465 Drew St. on SPC campus

Speaker



Alayne Unterberger, Ph.D. Immigration in the State of Florida

Dr. Unterberger is the Executive Director of the Florida Institute for Community Studies, Inc. Her research focuses on public health and social exclusion, with a focus on the United States and Latinx populations. She has a Ph.D. in medical anthropology from the University of Florida. Unterberger works to help the immigrant community in Tampa Bay. Besides working at the FL Institute for Community Studies, she has several projects under the heading 'Wellbeing across the lifespan,' across diverse communities with refugees, asylees, im/migrants and minorities.

Note

Monthly meeting date changes
in March and May

March 24 moved to March 31
(last Monday)

May 26 moved to May 19
(due to Memorial Day)

Save May 5 for the next Dem
Women's Nite Out

DWCUP President's Remarks



I am utterly appalled and totally disgusted by the new administration shifting our country's alliances from Ukraine and Europe to the thug, Putin. Our current president has no sense of history or loyalty. He has given America away to the highest bidder and worst dictator in the world. How are we supposed to tolerate that?

No longer are we the leader of the free world and a friend to fellow democracies. Our federal government is in chaos, abetted by firings of hard-working, dedicated civil servants throughout our nation. We do not recognize this perverse manner of leadership.

I have no easy answers, and I haven't heard any from anyone. But I know we won't be silent or still. We will resist and persist in words and deeds. Within this newsletter you'll see more information about protesting, sign-waving, phoning, texting, postcarding and more. We will continue to work on local elections and special elections in Districts 1 and 6. We'll prepare for the midterm elections, when significant changes can be made.

When you're down, reach out to like-minded voters. Every afternoon, you can help at the North Pinellas Democratic Outreach office at 1402 MLK Jr Ave. in Clearwater. Please don't isolate yourself. These are frightening times. Stay strong and stay active!

DWCUP Recap of February Meeting

Monday, February 24, 2025

Pouring rain didn't keep dedicated Democrats at home! Over seventy members and guests came in person and several more on Zoom, as we recognized Black History Month and spoke of the current chaos in our government.

The theme of the day was Action! What actions can we take to show how we feel about the state of our nation?



Dr. Rene Flowers wasted no time diving into 'What the Hell is Wrong with the United States?' She outlined the historical perspective that brought us to the current state of affairs, starting with the Seven Mountains Mandate. First formed in 1975, this long-term extremist strategy plotted ways to insert the influence of white nationalist beliefs and ultra-conservative religion on all areas of American life, leading directly to the development of Project 2025. The ultimate goal is the ending of all our civil rights.

What we see happening now is the culmination of the long-range plan begun working against the 'browning of America.' These efforts have included attacks on women's wages, professions, credit, and bodies. Commissioner Flowers encouraged us in efforts to push back, to keep our 'foot on the gas,' and work as a coalition based on humanity. Efforts must include reaching out to the Democrats who either didn't vote in the last election or didn't vote down ballot, leading to widespread losses. Our minority status throughout government is empowering the far right to make radical changes for the worse.

In keeping with the theme of action, Karl Cieslak, Vice-Chair of the Pinellas County Democrats Executive Committee (PCDEC), introducing himself to our club. The Pinellas Democrats will do their utmost to reenergize our local party. Many events are being planned to keep Democrats engaged and win elections. Karl brings new enthusiasm and leadership to our efforts.

Members shared actions taking place nationally and locally, such as the Economic Boycotts (beginning on Feb. 28), picketing at the Pinellas office of Congressperson Luna on Tuesday, March 4, using the app 5Calls to call Washington, an upcoming postcarding project, making signs ready for March 4 and other actions, and working at the North Pinellas Democratic office, which is staffed by local activists.

Actions are being developed daily. Keep checking our Facebook page and Mobilize for details.

DWCUP Notes from Dr. Rene Flowers Presentation

We were unable to display at the meeting the presentation Dr. Flowers wished to share and have summarized the notes here.

- Who are the 'puppet masters' behind the puppet masters plan (Project 2025)

The Seven Mountain Mandate was organized in 1975 by Lauren Cunningham and Frances Schaffer, leaders of a conservative Christian group. The seven mountains are family, religion, education, media/arts and entertainment, business, and government.

Their belief is once Christians have established dominion over these seven areas of society, they will be able to establish the kingdom of God on earth – and, as some tell it, bring about the end times. Speaker Mike Johnson and Paula White-Cain are a part of this group. Paula White-Cain is an American televangelist and apostolic leader in the Independent Charismatic movement. White was chair of the evangelical advisory board to Donald Trump's 2016 campaign. White delivered the invocation at his 2017 inauguration. Paula White-Cain is returning to the White House as a Special Government Employee and Senior Advisor of the newly created White House Faith Office.

The New Apostolic Reformation Movement is also known as the White Christian Nationalists. Founded by C. Peter Wagner, they acknowledge the "Appeal to Heaven Flag." In colonial times, the flag featured an eastern white pine and soon signified resistance to Britain. General Washington chose the tree as a further symbol of independence. He believed that although the colonists were going against a tremendous military force, an even greater power sustained them. They could directly appeal to heaven without an intercessor. The Appeal to Heaven flag draws its meaning from the British philosopher John Locke's "Second Treatise on Civil Government." Written in 1690, the work was a collection of two treatises refuting the belief in the divine rights of monarchs. Today the flag is popular among Republicans and as a symbol of Christian nationalism, often flying on the National Day of Prayer. The flag was flown at events attended by various far-right groups including a Christian nationalist strand of Donald Trump's "Stop the Steal" movement.

They operate out of biblical literacy and their desire is to create a theocracy over democracy. They went after Obama with the birtherism issue; they also said that Dwight D. Eisenhower was a communist. They promote election denialism. They are the true Puppet Masters pulling the levers of the puppets who are carrying out Project 2025. While Elon Musk is not an original member, he is carrying out the focus on controlling government departments.

Trump signed 73 executive orders in his first 30 days in office, with 68 published and in effect.

Restoring freedom of speech and ending federal censorship.

Ending radical and wasteful government DEI programs and preferencing.

Withdrawing the United States from the World Health Organization.

Restoring the death penalty and protecting public safety.

Defending women from gender ideology extremism and restoring biological truth to the federal government.
Ending illegal discrimination and restoring merit-based opportunity.
Declassification of records concerning the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Emergency measures to provide water resources in California and improve disaster response in certain areas.
Enforcing the Hyde Amendment.
Reinstating service members discharged under the military's COVID-19 vaccination mandate.
Protecting children from chemical and surgical mutilation.
Ending radical indoctrination in K-12 schooling.
Expanding educational freedom and opportunity for families.
Withdrawing the United States from and ending funding to certain United Nations organizations and reviewing United States support to all international organizations.
Keeping men out of women's sports.
Eradicating anti-Christian bias.
Establishment of the White House Faith Office.
Elimination the Federal Executive Institute.
Ending procurement and forced use of paper straws.
Implementing the President's "Department of Government Efficiency" workforce optimization initiative.
Protecting the meaning and value of American citizenship.
Keeping education accessible and ending COVID-19 vaccine mandates in schools.

Executive orders can be signed but they are not law and can be challenged in court, which is what we see. We see challenges to deportations, firings, layoffs, DEI roll backs. Several of Trump's executive orders have faced legal challenges and have been temporarily blocked by federal judges. Executive orders are directives from the president to the government, but they cannot supersede federal laws.

We have work to do right now. Don't take your foot off the gas pedal.

Support our local elected Dems in office. Be dogmatic when addressing issues in our state legislature.

Support those candidates running for office in other states where Republicans have vacated office or where a Democrat vacated office and we need to keep that seat.

Dr. Rene Flowers
Pinellas County Commissioner, D7
rflowers@pinellas.gov

DWCUP Stands with Ukraine

Members have reacted vigorously against the despicable actions by the current President and Vice President to dishonor and disrespect Ukrainian President Zelensky and by extension the brave people of his country. Much has been written since, but this letter taken from a Facebook post is especially relevant.

Former President of Poland Lech Walesa wrote the following letter to Trump.

Your Excellency, Mr. President,

We watched the report of your conversation with the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, with fear and distaste. We find it insulting that you expect Ukraine to show respect and gratitude for the material assistance provided by the United States in its fight against Russia. Gratitude is owed to the heroic Ukrainian soldiers who shed their blood in defense of the values of the free world. They have been dying on the front lines for more than 11 years in the name of these values and the independence of their homeland, which was attacked by Putin's Russia.



We do not understand how the leader of a country that symbolizes the free world cannot recognize this. Our alarm was also heightened by the atmosphere in the Oval Office during this conversation, which reminded us of the interrogations we endured at the hands of the Security Services and the debates in Communist courts. Prosecutors and judges, acting on behalf of the all-powerful communist political police, would explain to us that they held all the power while we held none. They demanded that we cease our activities, arguing that thousands of innocent people suffered because of us. They stripped us of our freedoms and civil rights because we refused to cooperate with the government or express gratitude for our oppression. We are shocked that President Volodymyr Zelensky was treated in the same manner.

The history of the 20th century shows that whenever the United States sought to distance itself from democratic values and its European allies, it ultimately became a threat to itself. President Woodrow Wilson understood this when he decided in 1917 that the United States must join World War I. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt understood this when, after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, he resolved that the war to defend America must be fought not only in the Pacific but also in Europe, in alliance with the nations under attack by the Third Reich.

We remember that without President Ronald Reagan and America's financial commitment, the collapse of the Soviet empire would not have been possible. President Reagan recognized that millions of enslaved people suffered in Soviet Russia and the countries it had subjugated, including thousands of political prisoners who paid for their defense of democratic values with their freedom. His greatness lay, among other things, in his unwavering decision to call the USSR an "Empire of Evil" and to fight it decisively. We won, and today, the statue of President Ronald Reagan stands in Warsaw, facing the U.S. Embassy.

Mr. President, material aid—military and financial—can never be equated with the blood shed in the name of Ukraine's independence and the freedom of Europe and the entire free world. Human life is priceless; its value cannot be measured in money. Gratitude is due to those who sacrifice their blood and their freedom. This is self-evident to us, the people of Solidarity, former political prisoners of the communist regime under Soviet Russia.

We call on the United States to uphold the guarantees made alongside Great Britain in the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, which established a direct obligation to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity in exchange for its relinquishment of nuclear weapons. These guarantees are unconditional—there is no mention of treating such assistance as an economic transaction.

Signed, Lech Wałęsa, former political prisoner, President of Poland

DWCUP Florida Legislative Report

Jean Greenawalt
March 1, 2025

As Legislative Liaison to the Democratic Women's Club of Florida (dwcf.org) my task is to attend weekly Zoom meetings, report to you what the positions are on the bills, and pass on any alerts asking for us to contact our senators and representatives. These meetings are held during the regular session, which runs March 4 through May 2.

This link can be used to view weekly update videos on Fridays, and has videos of proceedings:
thefloridachannel.org

Per DWCF Zoom training sessions, other good information sources are:

Bill Track 50: www.billtrack50.com

Digital Democracy Project: <https://digitaldemocracyproject.org>

Fast Democracy: <https://fastdemocracy.com>

Florida Education Association - (FEA): <https://feaweb.org>

legislative updates: fewer.org/session

or text [edaactivist](https://www.adaaactivist.com) to 22394

To support the liaison task, I have written a program to scrape the websites and create a spreadsheet of the bills. These are the websites: flsenate.gov and flhouse.gov

This is my spreadsheet:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/12e2Djmgps4n398AadXHCXwL5uwxVnnVq/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=105103654553308080498&rtpof=true&sd=true>

I have prioritized and commented on many of the bills on my own. I would appreciate any comments you might have. I can relay any concerns you may have during the DWCF zoom meetings.

There have been three special sessions - 2025 A, 2025 B, and 2025 C. These are also captured in the spreadsheet.

The primary focus of the special sessions was immigration. It seems that there was a power struggle with Desantis, but it was ultimately resolved in Session C. Major decisions must be made unanimously by a panel and not just the governor or a single cabinet member.

The new law includes:

- Coordination between state and federal immigration agencies, both enforcement and training
- Grants, includes "bonuses" for law enforcement
- Sublet detention beds to ICE
- Ban local government "sanctuary policy"
- Provide unauthorized alien transport, to be reimbursed by the federal government
- Enhanced criminal penalties for unauthorized aliens, including death sentence for capital felony
- No in-state tuition waivers for Dreamers

As of Feb 24 meeting, 983 bills had been filed for the regular 2025 session. Highlights include:

Democrat:

Gun safety, transgender rights, reproductive rights, state preemption (locally, crane regulation re hurricane damage to crane in St. Pete, local plastic bag regulation), elections (make state responsible for data relating to felon voter eligibility, national polar vote for president, no funding for state to campaign for/against amendments), bird flu, health (maternal health, heat illness prevention), education (universal free breakfast and lunch, salary increases, roll back the culture war), criminal rehabilitation, renter protections, address construction impacts to small businesses, and address wastewater treatment.

Republican:

More guns, more culture war (no municipal pride flags, ban weather control, ban DEI from med schools, fund faith-based counseling, establish office of Faith and Community, rename Gulf of Mexico), more state preemption (no local control of Trump presidential library), invest public funds into Bitcoin, make it harder to complain against law enforcement, and questionable health insurance coverage for farm workers.

Neutral:

No golf courses in the state parks, affordable housing, condominiums, rural community support, consumer protection, insurance, patient protection, building resilience, and a study on eliminating property taxes.

The above describe bills that have companion bills, which means they are more likely to be heard and voted on.

As of February 28, 1822 bills have been filed! This report does not cover the new ones since our meeting. See the spreadsheet in the link for the latest.

DWCUP Announcements and Action Alerts

1. Special Elections in Florida – April 1st

Gay Valimont (<https://gayforcongress.com/>) is the candidate for CD1 (Matt Gaetz's old seat) and Valimont events may be found on [Mobilize](#).

Josh Weil (<https://www.joshweil.us/>) won the Democratic primary in CD6 (Mike Waltz's old seat) and his campaign has opportunities to phone bank as well as canvassing events. Help Josh through [Mobilize](#).

2. Use 5 Calls - <https://5calls.org/>. 5 Calls makes it easy to reach your members of Congress and make your voice heard. The issues, scripts, and phone numbers for their offices are ready for you to select and call.

3. Many North County Dems have answered the need for contributions to keep the North County office open by making dedicated contributions earmarked for the rent. You can donate at this link.

<https://secure.actblue.com/contribute/page/pcdecnorthoffice>

4. District Chairs welcome volunteer help. D58 Chair Kathleen Keohane (kathleen.keohane@pinellsdemocrats.com), D59 Chair Greta Finney (great.finney@pinellasdemocrats.com). District 57 Chair is not yet elected.

5. Keep informed about upcoming events. In Pinellas, <https://mobilize.us/dashboard/pinellascountydec/events/>
Indivisible events: <https://www.mobilize.us/indivisible/>
50501 Movement rallies: www.fiftyfifty.one/ to subscribe to emails.
6. Bryan Beckman, Chair of the Suncoast Sierra Group, invites you to a special event they are hosting on March 18th. It is intended to help people with options for repairing your home with resiliency and energy efficiency in mind. Refreshments will be provided. Bring your own cup!

Register: <https://tinyurl.com/March18SuncoastSierra>

A FREE special edition Info & Social on Tuesday, March 18, at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church in Clearwater. Join us for an informative session dedicated to enhancing home resilience against storms. Explore eco-friendly and energy efficient strategies to help protect your property while reducing your environmental footprint. Hear firsthand accounts from a panel of homeowners including a local City Council Member and environmental advocates affected by the 2024 hurricanes.

Presenters & Panelists Impacted by Hurricanes Helene & Milton include:

- Kim Shaw Elliott, Belleair Beach City Council
- Bryan Beckman, Suncoast Sierra Club Chair
- Mike Zabel, Retired Navy Captain
- Brooke Alexander, Organizing Manager, Sierra Club Florida

Special Presentation: Tampa Bay Times reporters Max Chesnes and Colleen Wright will be presented with the 2024 Sierra Club Florida Indigo Award. The Indigo award is presented to writers/journalists who have contributed greatly through research and knowledge to uncover specific issues impacting the environment, environmental injustice or environmental policy in the state of Florida.

DWCUP Connections

DWCUP Website
DWCUP.org

Club Email
DWCUP727@gmail.com

Instagram
[@DWCUP727](https://www.instagram.com/DWCUP727)

Facebook
facebook.com/groups/DWCUP

Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
DWCF.org

National Federation of Democratic Women
www.nfdw.com

Florida Democratic Party
Fladems.com

Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee
Pinellasdemocrats.com

DWCUP Who We Are

The DWCUP is one of 66 Democratic Women's Clubs of Florida, begun by women in Pinellas County on September 9, 1940, forming the Democratic Club of Upper Pinellas County. Today, DWCUP carries on their goals.

The Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc. (DWCF, Inc.) began in 1956, on May 24, the day chosen by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt as Democratic Women's Day, with the aim to unite all Democratic Women's Clubs in Florida by providing a forum for discussion of public matters, supporting qualified candidates for public office, and encouraging qualified Democratic women to seek elected positions. In the 1980's, DWCF became a full member of the National Federation of Democratic Women (NFDW). DWCF is a separate entity from the Florida Democratic Party but DWCF is recognized as the Florida Democratic Women's Caucus because DWCF maintains full membership in the NFDW.

DWCF members and clubs support campaign activities. The DWCF recruits women to run for political offices. The DWCF Political Committee which disseminates money to DWCF-endorsed candidates. The Legislative Chair and Legislative Liaisons of the DWCF, Inc. serve as the grassroots legislative advocacy arm of the DWCF, to monitor and lobby for or against legislation that has a dramatic impact on the lives of the citizens of Florida.

DWCUP MEMBERSHIP

DWCUP Annual Membership Dues: \$25

Your DWCUP membership includes becoming a member of the Democratic Women's Club of Florida. Go to the DWCF website, www.dwcf.org, and register, create a password and review the activities of the state organization, what's going on with other clubs in the state, the Florida Democratic Party, and so much more!

Get the best deals with a tiered membership!

PLATINUM MEMBER: 3 Years for \$70

SILVER MEMBER: 5 Years for \$100

GOLD MEMBER: Member for Life \$250

Pay your membership dues here:
dwcup.com/donate

DWCUP OFFICERS & CHAIRS

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