



Democratic Women's Club of Upper Pinellas

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Membership Meeting

Monday, March 27, 2023 at 12pm

St Petersburg College, Clearwater Campus Library
2465 Drew St., 12 pm
Snacks Available

Guest Speaker: Rob Lorei



Rob Lorei is one of the founders of WMNF 88.5FM and the host of Florida This Week on WEDU TV. Since 1979 he's interviewed numerous people for his radio and TV shows including Senator Bob Graham, Governor Jeb Bush and President Jimmy Carter. He's moderated several statewide and local candidates' debates for public television. . He has two daughters who attended public schools in Hillsborough County. After graduating from college (BU and FSU) they moved to NYC and he hopes that in the next few years we'll create a state that has more reasons for his daughters to return to Florida.

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DWCF.org

Nation Federation of Democratic Women

www.nfdw.com

Florida Democratic Party

Fladems.com

Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee

Pinellasdemocrats.com

President's Rant



Just as I was about to start writing my rant for this month, I received the newsletter of the Largo/Mid-Pinellas Dems and read the message from that club's president, Mary Lou Ambrose, also a member of our club. Rather than reinvent the wheel, I'll share much of what she said. "During each month, I try to keep up to date on what is happening here in Florida, in the States, and in the world. I try to keep informed, as most of you do. I also then choose an issue

to put into this newsletter. This month it was easy to choose.

"February 15 th was the 46 th day of 2023. On that day we suffered the 67 th mass shooting of the year. That is insanity! Within those 46 days, Republican members of the House, led by Lauren Bobert, pushed to allow members of Congress to carry weapons concealed or open carry wherever they want. Ms. Bobert believes that everyone has the same Constitutional right under the wrongly-decided Second Amendment. That group is clearly unlikely to pass gun safety regulations.

"She is not the only one. Here in Florida, our DeSantis-owned Republican legislature is working on a bill that will allow everyone to carry a concealed weapon without a license or a background check. No restrictions. If that does not frighten you, I do not know what will.

"We all know that the reason these Congresspeople support guns rather than supporting our people, especially our children, from gun violence. It is not the guns they really love, it is the millions of dollars the gun lobby gives them. Gun money gives them the power they love. Gun money and NRA approval allowed them this week to brush off the deaths of three great college students, a wonderful athlete, a possible future leader, and a young woman wanting to be a pediatrician. I am certain Republicans do not even consider the students still hospitalized, whose futures are forever altered....

"Elected Republican politicians sometimes send their 'thoughts and prayers' to victims, when the only thing that will stop this carnage is their VOTE! Unfortunately, Republican votes go to the NRA."

Contrast that with the list of school shootings since 2000. I looked it up and was sickened as I recalled Columbine (I was still teaching high school then), Newtown, Marjorie Stoneman Douglas, Uvalde, and so many more.

“While shootings in schools are on our minds right now, we cannot forget those killed or injured in stores, churches, places of entertainment, and workplaces.” The suffering never seems to end....And I don't want to hear that it's about mental illness. There are mentally ill individuals in every land on Earth. It's about **TOO MANY GUNS IN THIS COUNTRY!**

What can be done? Here are a few suggestions.

- Where background checks are required, laws allow guns to be given to the buyer if a response isn't received in a few days. Instead, no matter how long it takes, do not deliver a gun until the background check is complete.
- Never deliver a gun to a buyer on the same day as purchase.
- All guns must be registered and licensed.
- All guns must be insured. After all, they are as lethal a weapon as an automobile, and we have to insure those!
- Any conviction involving a gun crime negates that person's right to ever own a gun again.
- Enforce red flag laws.
- Ban assault weapons in civilian hands.

I know most gun owners are responsible and secure training. They don't want guns used illegally. But there is no excusing American excess in its idolatry of firearms.

--Donna Dennis with great thanks to Mary Lou Ambrose!

DWCF Legislative Team Members,

Please click on this link -- [Petition · Floridians say: Stop Florida's Permitless Carry Law! · Change.org](#) -- and sign the online petition against Permitless Carry legislation that has been developed by members of the Palm Beach County DWC. They plan to print out the names and deliver them to Sen Passidomo, Speaker Renner, and Gov DeSantis' offices March 6-9 as part of the Moms Demand Action lobby day which coincides with their DWCF Region visit for Tally Days.

Please share the link widely in your DWCs and let's help our PerSisters get to over 1000 names!

Thank you,

Jean Siebenaler

LEGISLATIVE CHAIR, DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF FLORIDA





Honors **President Jimmy Carter**



The DWCUP sends its deepest respect to President Jimmy Carter as he rests in the arms of his family and prepares for the end of life. We thank him for all he has given to his country. He's a wonderful role model to all!

Recap of DWCUP Meeting of February 27, 2023

We had a great meeting this week! I want to highlight some of the main ideas that came out.

- Jennifer Webb is helping renew our belief in the future of the Democratic party in Florida. She talked about how our Democratic legislators in Tallahassee are doing the very best job possible even with all the nonsense and VERY bad bills coming from the other side. Be Proud to be a Democrat!
- Our democracy was downgraded to 26th in the world, due to the Insurrection, treatment of women and people of color, and partisan divisiveness.
- We're encouraged to find a person of the opposite viewpoint who we can talk to about how much we have in common, ie. Our shared values. Let's use our words instead of fists and guns.

- A program is beginning in April featuring webinars and trainings to facilitate improving our Democracy and keeping our elections free, fair, safe and secure. Contact Jennifer Webb at JW@omnipublic.globalor 727-320-6275.
- We have a new Legislative Liaison, Jean Greenawalt, who gave an excellent report on current legislative issues. For those who wish to receive the legislative update from the DWCF (Democratic Women's Club of FL), email Donna at DWCUP727@gmail.com to be added to the list.
- Several members of our club will be lobbying and meeting with legislators next week in Tallahassee.
- Donna needs help for the club to serve its members as well as possible. Can you help with helping set up hybrid meetings (adding the Zoom component)? Can you help with meeting set-up, bringing snacks and banner to meetings? Can you help with social media? Would you consider running for an office at the end of this year? If so, contact Donna or Mary Freeman, maryf1969@verizon.net. We will mentor you, coach you and help you every step of the way!
- If you're interested in attending the DWCF state convention in Orlando, April 27-30th, contact Donna before the end of March.
- Clearwater residents are urged to contact their council members or attend the city council meeting on Thursday, March 2nd at 6pm at the Main Library to voice their views about the needs to make Drew St safe for all, the need for affordable housing in the area, or any other significant issue. Thanks to Beth Davis for updating us on those issues!
- Go to www.VotePinellas.com and request a mail-in ballot. All previous requests before Jan. 1, 2023 are obsolete. Make sure you follow all the steps and receive an email confirmation that the process has been completed.

---donna dennis

EVENTS

- ★ **DWCUP Executive Board Meeting**
 - **March 15th**
 - 11 am
 - Contact Donna at DWCUP727@gmail.com for location
- ★ **DWCUP Membership Meeting**
 - **March 27, 2023**
 - St Petersburg College, Clearwater Campus Library
 - Zoom
 - 12 pm
- ★ **[Tally Days-Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Reg VIII](#)**
 - [March 6-9, 2023 \(Tallahassee\)](#)
- ★ **[Municipal Elections](#)**
 - [March 14, 2023](#)
- ★ **Democratic Women's Club of Florida, 67th Convention**
 - April 27-30, 2023
 - The Rosen Center, Orlando, FL
- ★ **MORE EVENTS:**
 - **Click Here:** <https://www.mobilize.us/>

DWCUP TUESDAYS

@ North Pinellas Democratic Outreach Center
Sign Up to Join Us @
1402 North MLK Ave. Clearwater
Come in and volunteer!
Open Mon-Fri
12-4pm
Sat
10am-12pm.
Info:
Office@pinellasdemocrats.com
727-327-2796

Toiletries: DWCUP collects unused toiletries at each in person meeting for local charities. Please look for the PINK basket to drop off your donations.

Household Batteries:

DWCUP's Jessie Forcan takes household batteries (not rechargeable) to recycle in Pasco County.

**THE NATIONAL
FEDERATION of
DEMOCRATIC WOMEN**
proudly presents


WOMEN IN BLUE
2023
A Virtual Event



*Women Making
History*

MARCH 8, 2023
2PM TO 5PM EST

Join the 2023 Women in Blue virtual
Legislative Day to advocate Members
of Congress for voting rights and
NFDW's legislative priorities.

All Democratic Women are invited to attend.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED



SCAN OR CLICK TO REGISTER

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE, 2/28/23

by Jean Greenawalt and Jean Siebenaler, Legislative Liaison

- 1) HB 952 Employee Coverage of Gender Dysphoria (Reverse Woke Act) - They call it the "Reverse Woke Act". Employers will have to provide reverse dysphoria treatment no matter what.
- 2) TBD Codification of ban on gender-affirming therapies for minors - parental consent is not required because they consider it child abuse. q: can parents sue Desantis for not getting the care they need? A: Legislature has immunity but perhaps they could sue the state.
- 3) TBD DeSantis' anti-immigration proposal. E-verify is expensive and does not work very well. 13.5 million per year. 36% of businesses are immigrant-owned. my thought: ask them to verify cost impact. A comment was made that your ID may not match your appearance if transgender.
- 4) HB 991/ SB 1220 - Defamation, False Light, and Unauthorized Publication of Name or Likenesses / Defamation and Related Actions - a license to hate. Can't call out racism. one-way attorney fees. New York Times vs Sullivan decision - referring to proving actual malice... Clarence Thomas is looking for something like this. Could become a test case.

5) HB 555, SB 450 Jury Recommendations in Death Penalty Cases - specifying that a jury recommends a death sentence if at least eight jurors recommend a death sentence. FL has a high rate of getting it wrong.

6) New rule that further suppresses free speech in and around the Capitol - Have to get permission to assemble. Must "align" with the "mission" of the state. Loop hole - press conference. DWCU can do this but spontaneous youth won't. You could be arrested. Do not resist. ask - Am I free to go?, then go. If not, ask Am I arrested? Why? Check in with family and friends so they know where you are. If recording, hold the phone horizontal. Do Not Disturb on. Be silent so that you have a good recording of the police. Don't post unless you have the target's permission. If not available, ask organizer (League of Women Voters, for example). Do not involve minors because the organization could be charged with a crime. Warn and possibly dissuade minorities because they may be treated more harshly by the police.

7) HB 3 Government and Corporate Activism - financial decisions can't use ESG (Environmental, social, governance) ratings. Means no "woke" companies. Ramifications could be bad - best company could have a good ESG rating. Desantis wanted to invest in Russia. anti-green, pro fossil fuel. ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) is behind this.

8) HB 999 Public Postsecondary Educational Institutions - no diversity, equity, inclusion in all colleges. No core class can present American history contrary to a founding narrative "based on universal principles stated in the Declaration of Independence." All state colleges and universities must remove Women's & Gender Studies from the list of available majors and minors. No major or minor can exist if it is deemed to be "derivative" from the "belief system" of "Critical Race Theory." Hiring faculty will be under the control of the state.

9) HB1069 Removes School District discretion over sex-ed in favor of state level mandates; bans teaching about STDs before 6th grade and avoids acknowledging LGBTQ identities; expands the book banning process for anyone in the county to object an instructional material because it "depicts or describes sexual conduct". Q: will girls learn about having periods? A: may not.

10) HB1223 - newly filed, not in the spreadsheet. Expands "Don't Say Gay". You cannot use the student's preferred pronoun. Q: what happens when a student is overheard talking about her two mommies? A: parent can complain and sue.

11) HB 305/SB 222 Protection of Medical Freedom - means you don't have to register your vaccinations or even get them. This bill is filled with contradictions and inconsistencies.

12) HB 1197/ SB 1240 Land and Water Management. This was not included in the spreadsheet. It is poorly written.

Other comments:

We are losing our 1st amendment rights - censorship, LGBTQ, guns, reproductive rights.

Who is writing these bills? A: ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council); red states are doing the same things and “learning” as they go.

Participant mentioned that 60% of polled people like HB1 School Choice. I prefer to call it Public Funding of Private Education.

Jean does not think all bills will pass. They want us to run around. “Distraction” politics.

By Jean Greenawalt

Did You Know?

The Democratic Women’s Club of Upper Pinellas is one of the oldest Democratic Women’s Clubs in the United States. September 9th we will celebrate our 83rd Anniversary.

The DWCUP is one of 66 Democratic Women’s Clubs of Florida. The DWCF is part of the National Federation of Democratic Women. We are the Democratic Women’s Caucus of Florida.

On September 9, 1940, women had only had the right to vote for 20 years. A group of women in Pinellas County gathered together at the home of Mrs. Ralph Richards actuated by a desire to bring into closer co-operation the women of Upper Pinellas. The organization formed, henceforth, to be known as the Democratic Club of Upper Pinellas County. By September 30th they had 75 members. Today that same organization has 102 members.

On August 18, 1920, the Tennessee General Assembly, by a one-vote margin, became the thirty-sixth state legislature to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Senator Smith of South Carolina opposed giving women the right to vote, he said, because to allow it would induce "sectional anarchy."

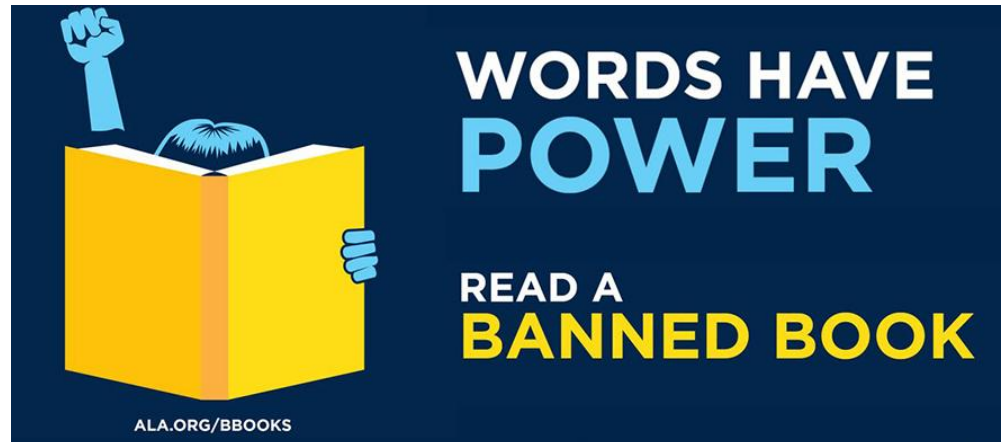
Florida was not one of the states that ratified the Nineteenth Amendment during 1919-1920. In fact, neither house of the Florida legislature had even voted on the measure. Though the legislature would pass a law in 1921 that provided the vote to all residents, it was not until 1969 that it symbolically

ratified the Nineteenth Amendment, which was passed by Florida's Senate and House of Representatives on May 13, 1969, and approved on May 22 without the signature of Governor Claude Kirk.

So as that group of women gathered together with no prior examples to follow, they accomplished the unimaginable, that today in the year 2023 their small group would still be here providing a platform for Democratic Candidates to get their message out. Enlightening, informing and educating women in Democratic politics.

And now you Know!

By Mary Freeman



Florida is also now in the process of banning books in school libraries. As it's Black History Month, I simply want to recommend a wonderful, insightful highly-banned author, Toni Morrison. Take some time to month to read one of her oft-banned books: The Bluest Eye, Beloved, Song of Solomon.

- donna dennis

Note: This was inadvertently left out of the Feb newsletter, but these books are great reads any time of year!

In Memoriam—Gerald Goen



Gerald Ray Goen was born September 28, 1934, in Selma, Indiana. He passed on January 2, 2023, and is survived by his wife, Janet, a former DWCUP and DWCF President. He and Janet were married 66 years, and have 2 daughter, 2 grandchildren and 2 great grandsons. Gerald attended Purdue University and was an Indiana educator and president of the Indiana Teachers' Union. He was a lifelong Democrat and helped found the Tarpon Springs Democratic Club and served as its president until they moved to Ft Myers. In the DWCUP, he served as Parliamentarian, Sgt-at-Arms, and guest speaker. He was deeply concerned about the environment and education. He and Janet loved to dance and help elect Democratic candidates. *He will be greatly missed!*

**DWCUP Annual Membership Dues:
\$25.00**

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<https://dwcup.com/donate>

**Your new or updated membership will be valid through
January 31, 2024.**



Next Meeting

**St Petersburg College, Clearwater Campus Library
Speaker: Rob Lorei
12pm-1:30pm**

**Meeting after Next:
April 24, 2023**

**St Petersburg College, Clearwater Campus Library
12pm-1:30pm**

Tally Days
March 6-9 2023

Democratic Women
EDUCATE
LEAD
PERSIST

SAVE THE
DATE

**The DWCF 67th Annual
Convention and
PerSisters Rally**

April 27-30, 2023

Rosen Centre Hotel Orlando
Florida

