



# Democratic Women's Club of Upper Pinellas

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1940

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## Club Representatives

### President

Donna Dennis  
313-443-2587  
[DWCUP727@gmail.com](mailto:DWCUP727@gmail.com)  
[Donnis802@gmail.com](mailto:Donnis802@gmail.com)

### 1st Vice President

Ruthann Richwine  
727-734-7591  
[RuthanRichwine@gmail.com](mailto:RuthanRichwine@gmail.com)

### 2nd Vice President

### Recording Secretary

Diane Lebedeff  
727-266-2911  
[DLebedeff@gmail.com](mailto:DLebedeff@gmail.com)

### Treasurer

Karen Miracle  
813-503-7777  
[Karen-MiracleLaw@hotmail.com](mailto:Karen-MiracleLaw@hotmail.com)

### Regional Rep.

Cora Kostka  
727-201-7863  
[CFKostka@gmail.com](mailto:CFKostka@gmail.com)

## Membership Meeting

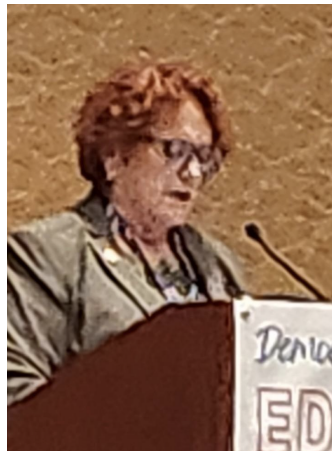
Monday, May 22, 2023 at 12pm

Location: Clearwater East Library, 2465 Drew St.

**Snacks Available**

## Guest Speaker: Merl Forte-Namuj

### EXTRA! EXTRA!



The DWCUP meeting of Monday, May 22nd has been changed. Due to legislative issues and changes in voter registration, we're going to feature our new DWCF President, Mary Forte-Namuj, who will discuss the ballot initiatives on clean water and abortion. This will be the official kickoff of our effort this year to get enough signatures to place these issues before the voters of Florida. We'll have everything you need and answer your questions. Please plan to attend! We're back at the Clearwater East Library, 2465 Drew St., on the SPC campus at Noon.

See you there!

### Legislative Liaison

Jean Greenawalt  
727-442-2923  
[jeanegreeawalt@gmail.com](mailto:jeanegreeawalt@gmail.com)

### Parliamentarian

(Open)

### Sergeant-At-Arms

Jasmina Forcan  
727-692-3472

### Publicity Chair

Margie Murphy  
727-281-2525  
[Margie@PurplePaw.net](mailto:Margie@PurplePaw.net)

### Newsletter Editor

Donna Dennis  
Kristen Mann

### DWCUP

[DWCUP.org](http://DWCUP.org)

### Twitter

[@DWCUP727](https://twitter.com/DWCUP727)

### Instagram

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

### Facebook

[facebook.com/groups/DWCUP](https://www.facebook.com/groups/DWCUP)

### Email

[DWCUP727@gmail.com](mailto:DWCUP727@gmail.com)

### DWCF, Inc.

[DWCF.org](http://DWCF.org)

### Nation Federation of Democratic Women

[www.nfdw.com](http://www.nfdw.com)

### Florida Democratic Party

[Fladems.com](http://Fladems.com)

### Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee

[Pinellasdemocrats.com](http://Pinellasdemocrats.com)

## April DWCUP Meeting Recap

4/24/23

We were inspired by the presentation by Amy Weintraub on the abortion ban and women's reproductive rights issues here in Florida. At the end of her presentation, she told us of the upcoming ballot initiative that a coalition of groups including the League of Women Voters is attempting to put on the Florida ballot in 2024. (See breaking news article.)

Donna Dennis

### May 8<sup>th</sup>--BREAKING NEWS:

## ABORTION ACCESS BALLOT INITIATIVE

Floridians Protecting Freedom is a coalition of many organizations which support abortion access. Over 2/3 of Floridians polled say they support a woman's right to choose. This amendment, if approved by 60% + 1 of Floridians voting in the 2024 election, would be added to the Florida constitution.

We will go into details about this effort at our May meeting. In the meantime, go online to <https://flfree.link/volunteer>. We know that the North Pinellas Democratic office on MLK N in Clearwater will be one of the hubs for distributing and collecting these petitions. Our goal is ONE MILLION SIGNATURES!

*LET'S GET STARTED NOW!*

### President's Report

We've all heard the expression, "Man plans and God laughs." This month it was my turn to have great plans that came to nought. The day before the Democratic Women's Club of Florida state convention, I came down with a nasty respiratory virus (not COVID). I was so lethargic that it was three days before I unpacked my suitcase!

Anyhow, the convention I was very much looking forward to went on without me. That is, of course, life itself. None of us is indispensable.

One of the best speakers at the convention was Andrew Warren, the former Democratic state attorney of Hillsborough County who was fired by the governor and has a lawsuit against him being heard soon in federal

court. In addition, our dear friend, Rep Anna Eskamani of Orlando, rocked the room when she spoke to the delegates. There were lovely tributes to our out-going DWCF President, Monica Readus, who has led us courageously through so much. We are graced with some exceptional Democratic leaders!

The big news was the election of new state officers of the DWCF. We wish to congratulate the new officers who will serve for the next two years:

- President—Meri Forte-Namuj
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President—Jean Siebenaler
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President—Francine Julius Edwards
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-President—Jane Schlechtweg
- Treasurer—Pamela Mirelson
- Recording Secretary—Jill Lewis-Daggs

We look forward to working them as we plan for the campaign of 2024. We know it has already begun and it's going to be a rough road ahead. But that doesn't scare us, we're Democrats!

- donna dennis



*Patty Cohn, new Region VIII Chair, with Shelby and Mary Freeman, our delegates*



Convention delegates including our Cora Kostka, with Monica Readus, Nikki Fried and Carlos Guillermo Smith



Some Region VIII delegates with new DWCF President Meri Forte-Namuj and Andrew Warren



*Democratic Women's Club of Florida*  
*67<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention*  
*April 27-29, 2023*  
*Rosen Centre, Orlando, Florida*

The PerSister Rally was held Thursday evening. It was a joyful evening getting together with old and new friends, great speakers and to top it off we were entertained by a Drag Queen show.

Friday morning's Board Meeting was a time for Officers to give their reports.

Several educational workshops were held in the afternoon.

On Saturday morning, the Officers wrapped up their reports. Candidates for office were introduced. The Election was held after adjournment.

Saturday lunch Speaker was Former States Attorney, Andrew Warren. His speech was great and everyone was yelling "Run Andrew Run." I'm sure he has a great future ahead.

The winners of the Baskets were announced as well as the 50/50. The afternoon offered more workshops and at 3:00 pm the new Officers were announced.

**They are:**

President – Meri Forte-Namuj

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Jean Siebenaler

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Francine Julius Edwards

3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President – Jane Anne Schlechtweg

Region VIII Chair – Pat Cohn, Hillsborough Democratic Women's Club

Saturday night's gala was fabulous as usual. Many awards were given out, Officers were installed and State Rep. Anna Eskamani arrived to accept the Legislative Advocacy Award on behalf of Representative Dotie Joseph.

**- By Mary Freeman**

## Legislative Liaison Report Jean Greenawalt 5/07/23

Legislative Liaison Report Jean Greenawalt 5/7/2023 2023 Legislative session ended May 5. These links can be used to review all bills and analyses:

[flsenate.gov](https://flsenate.gov)

[myfloridahouse.gov](https://myfloridahouse.gov)

There are many bills. Some good bills have been worked on in the area of the Environment and Women, children, and Family. This report highlights many of the bad bills discussed in our weekly legislative liaison zoom meeting. Cultural war, LGBTQ rights, immigration, guns, abortion, and state takeover of local government are all areas of great concern.

### **Signed by the Desantis:**

- SB 300 Pregnancy and Parenting Support: Near total abortion ban
- HB 543 Public Safety: Permitless Carry • HB 1 School Choice / K-12 Education: Public funding of private education
- HB 837 Civil Remedies: Tort reform making it more difficult to sue businesses
- SB 450 Death Penalty: 8/12 jurors can recommend death penalty
- HB 3 Government and Corporate Activism: Bans using socially conscious factors when making investment decisions

### **Ready for Desantis signature:**

#### **Human Rights & Immigration**

- HB 1617/SB 1718 Immigration: punishes businesses and people who aid immigrants, impacts ID cards, invalidates immigrant out-of-state drivers licenses, pays for flights
- HB 1521/SB 1674 Facility Requirements Based on Sex: Anyone can challenge the gender of anyone in the bathroom
- HB 1421/SB 254 Treatments for Sex Reassignment: Denies gender affirming care for minors and impedes access for adults
- HB 1319/SB SM 1382 United States Military Meritocracy: Urges Congress to stop diversity, equity, inclusion practices in the military

### **Criminal Justice, Legal**

- HB 1423/SB 1438 Protection of Children: Bans drag shows, Pride festivals are at risk.
- HB 1495/SB 161 Public Records/Transportation and Protective Services: Shields Desantis' travel details and who visits him at the Governor's mansion  
HB 1285/SB 1392 Florida State Guard: Desantis militia, increase 400 to 1500 people.
- HB 637/SB 712 Dealer Bill: Make it illegal for manufacturers to sell cars directly

### **Economy, Infrastructure**

- HB 133/SB 494 Fees in Lieu of Security Deposits: Landlords could offer non-refundable fee instead of requiring a security deposit
- HB 125/SB 194 Utility System Rate Base Values: Encourages corporate takeover of public water utilities
- HB 1267/SB 580 Consumer Finance Loans: Predatory installment loans

### **Education**

- HB 225/ SB 308 Interscholastic and Intrascholastic Activities: Places FHSAA under Desantis' control
- HB 1445/ SB 256 Employee Organizations Representing Public Employees: Makes it harder to be in a union except for police, firefighters, prison guards.
- HB 1069/SB 1320 Education / Child Protection in Public Schools - Don't Say They LGBTQ expansion, bans use of preferred pronouns
- HB 999/SB 266 Higher Education: No diversity, equity, inclusion allowed

### **Environment**

- HB 1191/SB 1258 Use of Phosphogypsum: Study to allow radioactive material in roadbeds

### **Gun Safety**

- HB 221/SB 214 Sales of Firearms and Ammunition: Merchant category codes cannot be assigned for gun stores

### **Health & Safety**

- HB 1403/SB 1580 Protection of Medical Conscience: License to discriminate in healthcare

### **State Preemption Bills**

- HB 1515/SB 170 Local Ordinances: Empowers businesses to sue local government for losses due to local ordinances
- HB 359/SB 540 Local Government Comprehensive Plans: Discourages citizens' groups fighting sprawl
- HB 1281/ SB 1256 Preemption Over Utility Service Restrictions: Local governments can't restrict appliances like gas stoves
- HB 1417/SB 1586 Residential Tenancies: State takes control over landlord-tenant relationship
- HB 382/SB 346 Public Construction: Limits local government ability to fund infrastructure necessary for rapid growth • HB 439/ SB 1604 Land Use and Development Regulations: Local governments can't deny proposed land-use plan change even when infrastructure not there to support it. Also related to actions against Disney.
- HB 1645 Gainesville Regional Utilities authority: Members to be appointed by governor instead of city commission • HB 1383/SB 1579 Specialty Contractors: local government cannot require a certain license as a prerequisite for contractors to submit bids

### **Voting and Elections**

- HB 7067/SB 7050 Elections: Voter suppression - hurdles for voter registration organizations, Desantis can run for President without resigning
- HJR 31/SJR 94 Partisan Elections for Members of District School Boards
- HB 411/SB 444 District School Board Elections: Candidate does not have to live in the district until elected
- HB 477/ SB 110 Term Limits for District School Board Members: 12 to 8 years

### **Women, Children, & Family**

- HB 721/SB 670 Paid Family Leave Insurance: Allows insurance companies to sell paid leave policies, which discourages businesses from providing paid leave
- HB 1409/SB 1416 Dissolution of Marriage: More difficult to be awarded alimony



## Words of Encouragement

### **Democratic Women's Club of Upper Pinellas Words of Inspiration for April 2023**

On Memorial Day, we remember our fallen soldiers, knowing that we are the land of the free because our heroes and heroines made the ultimate sacrifice for this country, and we recognize how much their lives mattered.

"This is the day we pay homage to all those who didn't come home. This is not Veteran's Day, it's not a celebration, it is a day of solemn contemplation over the cost of freedom." (Tamra Bolton)

On Memorial Day, we also consider the events of today and of the future, not only the past. As former Speaker Nancy Pelosi observed: "Freedom is secured every day by our men and women in uniform. We must build a future worthy of their sacrifice."

As Democratic women, on Monday, May 29th, we will take time to treasure our democracy and to honor the memory of those who sacrificed to protect our country's values and freedom with a moment of silence and gratitude, as befits Memorial Day.

Diane Lebedeff  
DWCUP Recording Secretary

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## EVENTS

★ **DWCUP Membership Meeting**

- **May 22, 2023 at noon**
- Clearwater East Library, 2465 Drew St.
- Zoom
- **June 26, 2023**

★ **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.

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### **Household Batteries:**

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





## 10 CLASSIC BANNED BOOKS BY WOMEN AUTHORS

<https://www.literaryladiesguide.com>

*[Editor's note: I want to feature some older titles this month and give you a more contemporary list next month. It's time to plan your summer reading!]*

The books below include coming-of-age books, women being disruptive, women exploring their sexuality, racism, anti-semitism, and outright horror. Take a look and head to your local library!

1. *Frankenstein*—Mary Shelley
2. *The Awakening*—Kate Chopin
3. *The Well of Loneliness*—Radclyff Hall
4. *Gentlemen's Agreement*—Laura Z. Hobson
5. *Letty Fox: Her Luck*—Christina Stead
6. *The Lottery and Other Stories*—Shirley Jackson
7. *To Kill a Mockingbird*—Harper Lee
8. *A Wrinkle in Time*—Madeleine L'Engle
9. *Harriet the Spy*—Louise Fitzhugh
10. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*—Maya Angelou

--Suggestions by donna dennis

# I'M WITH THE BANNED



# ***MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PERKS!***

All members of the DWCUP are also members of the DWCF (Democratic Women's Club of Florida). Please go to the website, [www.dwcf.org](http://www.dwcf.org), and get registered, create a password and take a look at all the features of the organization. There is a special members section as well. Get an idea of what's going on with other clubs in the state, the Florida Democratic Party, and so much more!

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

**Get the best deals here:**

**TIERED MEMBERSHIPS:**

- PLATINUM Member:**  
**3 years for \$70.00 ✓**
- SILVER Member:**  
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\$250.00 ✓**

**Make your dues payment here:**

**<https://dwcup.com/donate>**

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



**Next Meeting**

**Clearwater East Library, 2465 Drew St.  
Speaker: Deb Anderson  
12pm-1:30pm**

**Meeting after Next:  
June 26, 2023**

**Clearwater East Library, 2465 Drew St.  
12pm-1:30pm**