

DWC JULY 2024 NEWSLETTER



DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF MANATEE COUNTY FLORIDA

WWW.DWCManatee.com

Due to the extreme heat, Breakfast on the Beach has been moved to an inside location this year. We will not have a meeting, but just a fun get-together for all of our members



**Sage Biscuit Café
6656 Cortez Road
Bradenton, FL 34209
Thursday, July 11th, 2024
9:00 A.M.**

In order to let the restaurant know the approximate number of people attending, if you will be attending, please email, text, or call

**Marilyn Bias at
durf1211@gmail.com
or
734-776-6023**

When you arrive, ask the hostess for the ladies breakfast table.

We are the Democratic Party

We're fighting for a brighter, more equal future: rolling up our sleeves and organizing everywhere to build a better America for all.

The DNC is dedicated to building on our wins from 2020 and 2022. We're working hard to elect Democrats up and down the ballot by empowering grassroots activists, mobilizing voters, and organizing in every ZIP code.

July President's Letter

A children's book, called *Ban This Book* has been removed from Florida bookshelves.

An Indian River County School board voted to remove *Ban This Book* from its shelves, reversing its own district's book review committee's decision to keep it. This is a children's book about a fictional fourth grader who creates a secret banned books locker library after her school board pulled a multitude of titles off the shelves. School Board members said they disliked how it referenced other books that have been removed from schools. They accused it of "teaching rebellion of school board authority." When interviewed by *USA Today*, the author Alan Gratz, said "they banned this book because it talks about the books that have been banned. It feels like they know exactly what they're doing and they're somewhat ashamed..." So a word of caution to all writers of children's books, never, put the word "ban" in a children's book title.



Joanie LeBaron

Majority of Americans in new poll say Trump should be criminally charged for role in the Jan. 6 Capitol riot



A majority of Americans in a new poll by *Ipsos* and *ABC News* said former President Donald Trump should be criminally charged for his role in the January 6, 2021, Capitol riot.

Fifty-eight percent of respondents said Trump bore a "good" or "great" amount of responsibility for the Capitol attack, and the same number said he should be charged with a crime.

The survey was conducted just after the third public hearing from the House select committee investigating the riot.

The percentage favoring criminal charges for Trump was slightly higher than that in a poll by *ABC News* and *The Washington Post* in January 2021, when 54% of respondents said Trump should be charged "with the crime of inciting a riot."

An April survey by *ABC News* and *The Post* found 52% of respondents said Trump should be charged with a crime. The April and June surveys, unlike the one in January 2021, didn't specify a crime and asked respondents whether Trump "should be charged with a crime for his role in this incident".

In the committee's third public hearing, it detailed the pressure on Vice President Mike Pence to obstruct the electoral count on January 6, 2021, *Insider's* Grace Panetta reported.

Greg Jacob, Pence's former chief counsel, and a retired judge, J. Michael Luttig, testified that they advised Pence as he denied Trump and his attorney's efforts to get him to intervene in the electoral process. Luttig said during the hearing that unduly declaring Trump the winner of the election would have "been tantamount to a revolution within a constitutional crisis in America."

He also warned that Trump and his allies might attempt an election coup in the future and "succeed in 2024 where they failed in 2020."

"The former president and his allies are executing that blueprint for 2024 in open and plain view of the American public," Luttig said.

By: Katie Balevic, *Business Insider*

Florida Gov. DeSantis vetoes \$32 million in arts and culture grants from 2025 budget

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis last week vetoed over \$32 million in arts and culture grants from next year's budget, a move that could cripple institutions across Tampa Bay and greater Florida, the *Tampa Bay Times* reported.

The vetoes are part of nearly \$1 billion in line-item cuts that DeSantis made before signing a \$116.5 billion spending plan.

At a press conference in Tampa during which he signed the budget, DeSantis did not specifically explain why he slashed the state's arts and culture grant programs. He did, however, mention a general desire to reduce spending and avoid funding items he deemed "inappropriate for state tax dollars."

Michael Tomor, director of the Tampa Museum of Art, told the *Times* that the vetoes were a sign of diminishing faith in Florida's arts and culture institutions and said it was "a huge disappointment and a quandary." The museum expected \$570,500 (including \$500,000 for expansion and \$70,500 for education programs). It will now receive nothing.

Margaret Murray, the chief executive of the Tampa-based arts non-profit Creative Pinellas, told the *Times* that small organizations, such as local

music and theater groups, youth programs, and art festivals, will struggle the most to recover.

"To completely decimate the cultural funding ... I've never experienced that in my lifetime as an arts professional in Pinellas County, or anywhere," she said.

Among those who will immediately feel financial pressure are the Freefall Theater, a nonprofit theater company in St. Petersburg which expected \$105,000 from the state, and Zoo Tampa at Lowery Park, which planned to use its \$500,000 share of state grants for a manatee rescue habitat that is part of a \$125 million expansion. Both organizations said that, while they do get grants and donations from other sources, the budget cuts mean they will have to find other streams of revenue to fund their projects.

Some Democrats, including Florida state representative Anna Eskamani, criticized the vetoes. Eskamani said in a statement that "cutting this funding undermines the economic vitality of our state and disregards the significant contributions of our cultural institutions."

The veto was also criticized by leaders from the arts and advocacy organization the Florida Cultural Alliance, who called the move "unprecedented in the history of [Florida's] grants program."

Daniel Cassady, *Arts News*



Florida medical marijuana patients get an unexpected email praising DeSantis

Florida has more than 700,000 medical marijuana patients and Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis — who is battling a proposal to allow recreational use of marijuana — wants them all to know what a great job he's doing. The Department of Health last week sent a blast email to its medical marijuana patient list boasting that DeSantis signed the state budget.

Reaction — "Nothing in the email mentions medical marijuana, and patients and advocates say that the DeSantis administration violated their privacy by using the patient list to promote policy. "That is really such a misuse of power and information," said state Rep. Kelly Skidmore, the ranking Democrat on the House Health Policy Committee.

By: Brenda Farrington, *Associated Press*

Florida just got its first LGBTQ+ Latino state senator

LGBTQ+ advocate Carlos Guillermo Smith just became the first out Latino to join the Florida state Senate.

“My heart is full of gratitude for this community who has entrusted me with the responsibility of serving as their state senator,” Smith said.

The Orlando Democrat filed for an open seat last year. When Florida’s qualification deadline for state candidates passed at noon on June 14, he remained the only candidate filed for Florida Senate District 17. That means he will take office on Nov. 6 following this year’s general election.

“I love the Orlando community, and promise to defend our values, to put people over politics, and to inspire hope for a better, brighter future for our state. A future where families aren’t forced out of their homes or out onto the streets due to soaring rents and property insurance rates; where teachers can earn a living salary; where every student is protected and every family is respected; where people living with disabilities get the services they deserve to live and work in their communities; where families can live safe from gun violence; where Floridians can love who they want to love or be their authentic selves without harassment and intimidation; and where Floridians have the freedom to make private medical decisions without political interference,” Smith said.

“That’s the Florida we deserve and that we are fighting for.”

Smith ran on a number of kitchen table and economic issues, but in a statement on his victory acknowledged the historic nature of his victory.

“It’s also important to acknowledge and celebrate the significance of our election for

Florida’s LGBTQ community, who have been relentlessly attacked and demonized by the majority party in this Legislature over the past few years.” Smith said.

Smith will be only the second out state senator in Florida history. He will share the 40-member chair now with Florida Sen. Shevrin Jones, who in 2020 became the first gay man elected to the chamber.

“I am thrilled that the Florida Senate LGBTQ caucus is no longer a membership of one,” said Jones, a Miami area Democrat. “What excites me even more is that Carlos is more than a member of the LGBTQ community; he is a true champion for the people of Florida and his district. In today’s world, merely having a seat at the table should not suffice as a symbolic gesture. We need individuals who are not only willing to sit at the table but also prepared to overturn it when the well-being of Floridians is endangered by extremists. Carlos is the perfect advocate for this cause, and I am ecstatic about his presence.”



Smith’s run seems all the more remarkable given that just two years ago, he lost re-election to the Florida House in a Florida red wave. The LGBTQ lawmaker’s defeat was seen at the time as the biggest legislative win by Florida Republicans, and his defeat took place the same night Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis won a landslide election on an agenda steeped in anti-LGBTQ rhetoric and policies. But less than two years later, DeSantis has gone from prominent warrior to failed presidential candidate, and state Republicans failed to field a candidate in 22 legislative districts.

“The tide is turning in Florida, DeSantis’ extreme anti-LGBTQ agenda is crumbling in the courts, and LGBTQ Democratic representation in Tallahassee will only continue to increase,” Smith said. “Happy Pride!”

By: Jacob Ogles, *Advocate*



Juneteenth goes unobserved by Florida state government

June 19, or “Juneteenth,” commemorates the end of slavery in the defeated South. The date reflects the timing of the announcement by Union General Gordon Granger in Galveston, Texas, the day after he’d arrived to occupy the city.

A similar announcement had already happened in Florida’s capital city on May 20, 1865 — the different timing reflecting the uncertainties surrounding the end of the Civil War and difficulties of communications as rebel states fell under federal control.

Per an account on the website of the State Archives and Library of Florida:

“In Florida, the process began in May 1865. Union General Edward M. McCook arrived in Tallahassee to receive the surrender of Florida’s Confederate troops on May 10th. On May 20th, McCook formally announced President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation from the steps of the Knott House, effectively ending slavery in the state. As a result, many Floridians celebrate May 20th as Emancipation Day.”

The Knott House sits on Park Avenue in Tallahassee, about an eight-minute walk from Florida’s Old Capitol, then the seat of government and now a museum.



President Joe Biden signed legislation in 2021 recognizing Juneteenth National Independence Day as a federal holiday.

However, state workers did not receive the day off, not even as an unpaid day of commemoration, although it does mark Robert E. Lee’s birthday on Jan. 19, Confederate Memorial Day on April 26, and Jefferson Davis’s birthday on June 3.

Abraham Lincoln’s birthday on Feb. 12 is not a paid holiday but Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday on Jan. 15 is.

Gov. Ron DeSantis issued a proclamation in 2020 recognizing Juneteenth but hasn’t done that since then.

By: Michael Moline, *Florida Phoenix*

Donald J Trump will be sentenced on July 11th after being convicted of 34 felonies. As a show of support for the rule of law and America's criminal justice system, please wear orange on July 11th.



GOP Senator hit with brutal fact-check after ad about family's IVF

No one has more audacity than Rick Scott.

The only thing Rick Scott is better at than bad timing is hypocrisy. The Republican senator and Earthworm Jim lookalike released a campaign ad touting his support for in vitro fertilization on Friday—less than 24 hours after voting against the Right to IVF Act.

The caption for the poorly timed campaign ad reads, “Each of my seven grandkids is a precious gift from God. But sometimes families need help. You can count on this grandpa to always protect IVF.” In the ad, the Florida senator mentions that his youngest daughter is receiving IVF treatments and that “she and I both agree IVF must be protected.”

Senate Democrats have attempted to pass legislation to codify access to contraception and IVF



into federal law, with Senate Republicans voting opposed and killing the bill each time. Senate Republicans, meanwhile, have offered a much weaker bill in support of IVF that would withhold Medicaid funding for the procedure and released a signed letter stating their support for IVF hours before voting down protections. Their softball bill was rejected, with Senator Patty Murphy calling it a “PR tool, plain and simple.”

The effort to codify access to IVF and contraception comes ahead of an increasingly fraught general election season. The Southern Baptist Convention voted to oppose IVF on Tuesday, with Trump ramping up support for their cause. He provided a pre-taped appearance for the SBC’s anti-abortion forum hosted by a group that describes abortion as “child sacrifice.” Trump praised the extremist group, promising they would “make a comeback just like no other group.”

By: Talia Jane, *The New Republic*

Two years since Roe v. Wade was overturned: How things in Florida have changed

Two years ago today, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, ending the constitutional right to an abortion and leaving it up to the states to decide whether to restrict access.

It’s been a fierce fight in the state of Florida since then. Abortion was legal throughout the U.S. for 49 years before Roe was overturned on June 24, 2022.

Since then, at least 14 states have eliminated nearly all abortion services. Seven states, including Florida, have restrictions in place limiting access to an abortion. The state of Florida now has a six-week abortion ban, bringing restrictions down from the previous 15-week ban.

We know limited abortion access promotes more out-of-state travel, which has certainly been the case here at home.

Just last month, Planned Parenthood in West Palm Beach told WPTV it’s had to turn away

dozens of patients seeking abortion care after the six-week mark to other states like North Carolina or Virginia.

For local right to life anti-abortion organizations, they are motivated to continue advocating “No On Amendment 4,” which is against the constitutional right to an abortion before fetal viability.

Come November, Florida voters could overturn the six-week ban if more than 60% of voters support it.

On June 24th, a nationwide women’s strike occurred, and the Biden Campaign said it held more than 50 events to rally supporters around the historic day.

By: Brooke Chau, *WPTV, West Palm Beach*



Ethics watchdogs sound alarms as Gov. DeSantis signs legislation limiting complaints

Government watchdogs are criticizing a revision in Florida ethics laws signed by Gov. Ron DeSantis.

“This law undermines the will of the people and will allow corruption to go unchallenged,” said Amy Keith, Executive Director of Common Cause Florida.

The controversial measure (SB 7014) passed in the Senate on a 26-4 vote and in the House on a 79-34 party-line vote.

Born in the Senate Ethics Committee, the legislation purportedly seeks to limit time frames for investigating ethics complaints. It also requires public complaints be based entirely on a filer’s personal knowledge of wrongdoing, which sponsors said was to discourage “frivolous” complaints.

“I believe that state and local ethics boards should be able to spend their time investigating serious violations of our ethics laws, not politically motivated public relations stunts designed to generate headlines,” said Senate President Kathleen Passidomo in a statement when the bill passed. “All too often the current process is weaponized by bad actors.”

But critics say the bill will gut ethics enforcement completely, eliminating the ability to file anonymous complaints or tips that lead to investigations and uncover legitimate wrongdoing.

“Let’s be clear: This has never been about minimizing frivolous complaints; this is about making complaints almost impossible,” Keith said.

“If this was truly about minimizing frivolous complaints, then these changes to Florida’s ethics

laws could have been introduced in committee and the public provided with the opportunity to be part of the deliberative process. Instead, these changes, which are designed to paralyze ethics complaints against public officials who have violated the public trust, were introduced at the last minute.”

Jose Arrojo, Executive Director of the Miami-Dade Ethics Commission, voiced concerns in February to the *Miami Herald* that the new law could limit means of even bringing ethics concerns to the attention of officials.

“No more anonymous whistleblowers. No more employees referring information to us,” Arrojo said.

Keith said the measure threatened transparency by putting hurdles and rapid time frames in place.

“The Governor and Florida Legislators who voted in favor and signed off on this new law failed to protect the integrity of our democracy. Instead, they chose to hide from accountability and silence the voices of Floridians who are trying to uphold our collective values,” she said.

“Governor DeSantis says he believes that Floridians deserve protection from corruption, but his actions today speak otherwise. Common Cause Florida will continue to defend and strengthen the core democratic structures and tools that enable the people of Florida to mobilize and hold their leaders accountable.”

By: Jacob Ogles, *Florida Politics*





Climate change, it's happening so fast! In the last 13 months it has been hotter than any other recorded year in history, and we as humans are responsible for it all. Everything from the exhaust of our cars to the pollution billowing from factory smoke stacks, greenhouse gas emissions blanket the earth. They trap the sun's heat, which leads to global warming and climate change. The sea levels are rising and oceans are becoming warmer. Longer, more intense droughts threaten crops, wildlife and freshwater supplies. From polar bears in the Arctic to marine turtles off the coast of Africa, our planet's diversity of life is at risk from the changing climate. How can we combat climate change? We must reduce carbon pollution and prepare for the consequences of global warming, which we are already experiencing.

We must advance policies to fight climate change by making noise to our elected leaders and promoting businesses to reduce carbon emissions. Try to use renewable energy in your home, invest in energy saving appliances, reduce water consumption, and if possible purchase a fuel efficient car. Even though we are already experiencing climate change, if we work together we can help save the planet for our children.

Mary Bass, Environmental Chair



REMEMBER THOSE LESS FORTUNATE

Please remember to bring any donations that you can to our summer breakfast. Our charities are **The Daily Bread**, which needs our food contributions, such as dried beans, oatmeal, canned meats, vegetables, cereal, and more. **Healthy Start** needs baby supplies for struggling mothers such as diapers, formula, powder, and infant size clothing. **The Bethesda House** is in need of toiletries for both men and women such as deodorant, tooth paste, and feminine products. Please be generous to these wonderful organizations by bringing your donations to our luncheon.



Corruption is a cancer: a cancer that eats away at a citizen's faith in democracy, diminishes the instinct for innovation and creativity; already-tight national budgets, crowding out important national investments. It wastes the talent of entire generations. It scares away investments and jobs.

— Joe Biden

The Fourth of July holiday provides us with a wonderful opportunity to pause and think about our tremendous American heritage. *Mr. Red White and Blue* was written and sung by Coffee Anderson for a young veteran named Craig Carp that served our country and for all of our heroes that serve our country, for the families that miss them, and for those currently serving now. What's a Fourth of July without fireworks? Watch this wonderful fireworks display to the background music of *America The Beautiful*, performed by Ray Charles.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH MR. RED WHITE AND BLUE](#)

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE FIREWORKS](#)



DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF MANATEE COUNTY OFFICERS/LEADERS 2024 - 2025

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Brian Heavrin	blh3011@gmail.com
2nd VP (Membership)	
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Carol Nicoletti	cjnicoletti@hotmail.com
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	Manatee County Democratic Website
	Democratic Women's Club of Florida

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PLACE
 STAMP
 HERE

The Manatee County Democratic weekday office hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, Noon to 4:00 p.m. Saturday hours 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. To check status, times, dates of events and club meetings, please visit our Manatee County Democratic website at www.ManateeDemocrats.com.

Elected Officials

CONTACT OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS	<u>OUR FLORIDA SENATORS</u>
<u>PRESIDENT</u>	
Joseph Biden (switchboard) (202) 456-1111 www.whitehouse.gov	Jim Boyd (R-Distr. 21) (850) 487-5026 Boyd.Jim.web@flsenate.gov
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