

DWC

OCTOBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF MANATEE COUNTY FLORIDA

WWW.DWCManatee.com

Jules Rayne is the Manatee and Sarasota Community Organizer for Equality Florida, the largest LGBTQ civil rights organization in Florida. She is also the founder and executive director of the Florida Transgender Alliance, which provides information, resources, and peer-support to the transgender community. Jules earned her undergraduate degree in history, a Master's in education, and is a former high school social studies teacher with a passion for education, advocating for LGBTQ+ rights, women's rights, fighting book bans, and participating in progressive causes at the local, state, and national levels. In addition, she serves on the board of directors for several local social justice organizations.



Jules Rayne

During the 2025 legislative session in Tallahassee, Jules organized volunteers to testify for LGBTQ rights in House and Senate committee meetings, met with lawmakers to advocate for pro-LGBTQ legislation, and marched on the Capitol in Florida to demand progressive change. When she's not being active in the community, Jules enjoys spending time with her daughters, reading, calligraphy, and performing as a musician on various instruments.

Jules will be speaking on the challenges the LGBTQ community is facing under the Trump and DeSantis administrations.



**NATIONAL
COMING OUT
DAY**
October 11

DWC Luncheon Is October 9, 2025

11:30 AM

Peridia Golf & Country Club

4950 Peridia Blvd E, Bradenton, FL 34203

***Please make your reservations
and meal choice by
October 5, 3:00 p.m.***

***Reservation Information and
Meal Choices Are On The Next Page***

Cost is \$20

President's Letter

Here it is 2025 and now we must worry about vaccines. I'm not talking about the Covid vaccine, but about such fundamental vaccines given to children – mumps, measles and the rubella vaccine and even the polio vaccine. As a child I remember a friend who had polio and spent months in an iron lung. Two children have recently died because they were not vaccinated against measles, with many new cases appearing everyday. Thanks to Donald Trump and Robert Kennedy Jr., a noted vaccine critic, and to Florida's own incompetent surgeon general, Joseph Ladapo, I worry these childhood illnesses will return. Will Medicare pay for your vaccines? Will we need prescriptions from our doctors? Currently CVS and Walgreens do require a prescription for a Covid booster. Now, let's address the Covid vaccine and the fact that these people have recommended against giving the vaccine to children and older adults. I know for a fact that an elementary school in Kansas City had to shut down because so many of its students were infected with Covid. So where does that leave us – a sicker nation than it was in 2024 and for decades before that?



Joanie LeBaron

DWC Manatee County President

PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATION AND MEAL CHOICE FOR THE OCTOBER 9 DWC MEETING

Email, call, or text Marilyn Baiz for reservations

durf1211@gmail.com

or

734-776-6023

Deadline to register is Sunday, October 5, 3:00 p.m.

Please select one of these meal selections:

1. Chicken souvlaki wrap: Marinated chicken, shaved romaine lettuce, diced tomatoes, dice red onion, feta cheese and house made tzatziki sauce in a spinach tortilla, served with pub chips
2. Pulled pork BBQ with onion strings and cheddar, served on a Hawaiian roll with pub chips and coleslaw
3. Cheese-filled ravioli w/ marinated grilled portobello mushrooms and a tomato, basil-cream sauce

All meals come with rolls, butter, a non-alcoholic.

No-shows will be billed.

Medicaid protects 1 in 5 Americans — but that's about to change. Here's who will lose access due to Trump's Big Beautiful Bill

Medicaid was signed into law back in 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson. It began as a program to help states fund access to health care insurance coverage for Americans in financial need.

Throughout the decades, Medicaid has expanded from practically an afterthought to a program that provides health care coverage to approximately 1-in-5 people across the country.

The combined federal and state spending on Medicaid totals around \$880 billion each year. It also represents nearly \$1 in every \$5 spent on health care in the U.S.

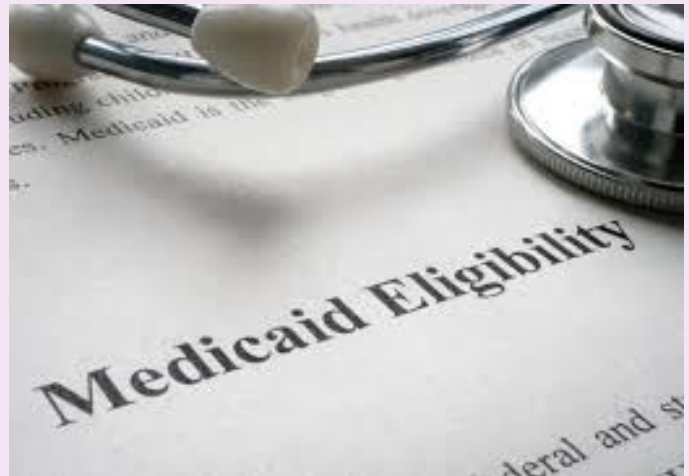
However, after President Donald Trump signed the Big Beautiful Bill Act into law on July 4 2025, the Congressional Budget Office estimated in August the number of uninsured would increase by 10 million over a decade, the bulk from Medicaid.

Medicaid's growth had been partly due to more expansive eligibility that Congress enacted over time. But the basic financial framework of the program, which involves federal assistance funds being spent to support state-run Medicaid programs, is another reason.

"Every state was able to sign on and to negotiate issues like coverage," Keith A. Waloo, a professor of history and public affairs, told *The Wall Street Journal*. "That flexibility also allowed states to, in some ways, tailor the system to their population."

And as states expanded eligibility over the years, the federal government would often follow their lead. In the beginning, Medicaid only provided coverage for the poor. But over time, that eligibility went on to include the disabled, pregnant women in poverty, children and single working adults with lower incomes, according to *The Journal*.

"These were incremental changes to try to leverage the program to help fill in the gaps for individuals that had no other access to insurance



coverage," Robin Rudowitz, director of the Program on Medicaid and the Uninsured at Kaiser Family Foundation, told *The Journal*.

As of April 2025, more than 71 million people were enrolled in Medicaid.

The Congressional Budget Office had previously estimated Medicaid provisions in the bill could cut federal support by about \$800 billion over a decade. Such a steep cut could lead to states re-evaluating their budgets and possibly cutting services, including to health care programs.

Some of the changes to the program under the Big Beautiful Bill Act include imposing stricter eligibility requirements — including 80-hour monthly work requirements for many adults on Medicaid.

States will be required to verify these individuals meet the criteria, which can pose administrative challenges. Some of those unable to find work or are retired may also be out of luck.

"Imposing work requirements doesn't actually lead to additional employment, but does create these barriers for people being able to maintain their coverage," Rudowitz said.

While it's clear the Big Beautiful Bill will make a sweeping impact on the health insurance landscape in America, many changes will be on a state-by-state basis. How it will impact your bottom line may vary. As states adapt to this new reality, dig into the details of how this legislation will impact your Medicaid program to find out if you or your loved ones are still eligible or if the coverage changes.

By: Sarah Sharkey, *Moneywise*

Election of the Democratic Women's Club board members for 2026 will be held at our November meeting

The Board of Directors of the Democratic Women's Club recommends the following people be elected to serve at our November meeting.

President – Lori Rogge

First Vice President for Programming – Brian Heavrin

Second Vice for Membership – Carol Plant

Treasurer – Wini Meier-Oakes

Recording Secretary- This position is open

If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else for any of these positions, please contact Joanie LeBaron, joanielebaron0108@gmail.com.

Elections will be held in November, and the new officers will take over at the end of the December meeting.

National Coming Out Day is October 11, 2025

On this October 11, National Coming Out Day will continue to raise awareness for individuals within the LGBTQ+ community, and champion the idea that homophobia thrives in silence. On this day, many people who identify as LGBTQ+ will “come out” (a term stemming from the phrase “come out of the closet”) to friends or family about their sexuality, which is a very big moment! Beyond this, the history of the LGBTQ+ movement is a beacon of light — its champions are honored, and it underlines the personal being political. It's also a chance to celebrate the liberation spirit — many do this by waving flags associated with LGBTQ+ groups or donning pins.

National Coming Out Day was inspired by a single march. 500,000 people participated in the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights on October 11, 1987, generating momentum to last for four months after the march had ended. During this period, over a hundred LGBTQ+ identifying individuals gathered outside Washington, DC, and decided on creating a national day to celebrate coming out — this began on the first anniversary of their historic march.

It was Rob Eichberg and Jean O'Leary who first proposed the idea of NCOD. Eichberg founded a person growth workshop, The Experience, and at the time, O'Leary was the head of National Gay

Rights Advocates. Eichberg, who would later die in 1995 of complications from AIDS, had said the strongest tool in the human rights movement was to illustrate that most people already know and respect someone in the LGBTQ+ community, and NCOD helps these people come to light.

Over the last 15 years, the Human Rights Campaign has chosen a theme for every National Coming Out Day — 2014 and 2013 were both themed “Coming Out Still Matters,” and the earliest theme (1999) was “Come Out To Congress.” For 2025 there is no specific theme; however, some are referring to it as “Rooted in Dignity.” There have also been different spokespeople for each NCOD. Some notable names include “Frasier” actor Dan Butler and Candance Gingrich, half-sister of Newt Gingrich, in the 1990s.

NCOD gains popularity and participants every year. Since its inception, countless public figures and celebrities have openly identified themselves as LGBTQ+, and yearly share messages of support and hope for those still in the closet. Notable celebrities who tweeted in support of NCOD in 2019 include Olympic figure skater Adam Rippon and actress and advocate Sara Ramirez. The event plans to continue its efforts to eradicate hate and homophobia with friends and family coming out to dispel stereotypes.

Source: *National Today*



DeSantis launches gun and ammo tax holiday, pushes for open carry despite GOP resistance

Gov. Ron DeSantis has rolled out Florida's first-ever Second Amendment sales tax holiday, exempting firearms, ammunition, and outdoor gear from sales tax through the end of 2025.

The move marks a new chapter in Florida's gun policy, as the governor simultaneously pressed lawmakers to go further in weakening restrictions.

"Today, I'm proud to announce the beginning of our Second Amendment sales tax holiday," DeSantis said at a Plant City press conference. "That is a big deal for a lot of people."

The holiday — which runs from Sept. 8 through Dec. 31 — applies to pistols, rifles, shotguns, bows, crossbows, holsters, optics, cleaning kits, tents, rods, reels, and other hunting and camping supplies.

While celebrating the tax break, DeSantis also revived a push for open carry, a policy that has stalled in Tallahassee despite Republican super-majorities.

"We've got almost a three-to-one majority in the Florida House of Representatives. Thirty-eight states have open carry," DeSantis said. "It's not something that's controversial. The sky isn't falling on any of those. Why not pass that out of the Florida House of Representatives? ... They should just follow through, and I think they should do what they promised the voters they would do."

Lt. Gov. Jay Collins echoed the message: "We should be an open carry state... we'll continue to fight for those freedoms and those rights each and every day until we get them all back."



But top Republicans have signaled reluctance. Senate President Ben Albritton in March argued open carry could damage Florida's image:

"The way I view it, there is no real distinction between being able to carry concealed without a permit and being able to carry openly. If you legally can carry in Florida, you can do it. You just have to have it in a concealed way. To me, that is essentially the same," Albritton said. "Florida is a very diverse state... how that would be accepted, how society would accept [open carry], would vary widely across the state. And then lastly,

we're a tourism state, and that matters."

Attorney Kirk Evans, president of U.S. Law Shield, believes the tax holiday is a national first.

"I believe Florida is the first one to do a complete no-sales tax on guns and ammo," he said. "It's a

great benefit for hunters, outdoorsmen, sportsmen, folks who like guns."

But Evans emphasized the exemption is temporary: "This is a specific statute that will only apply this year... it's not something that's just going to be easy to do every year. I think the appetite [to make it permanent] would be phenomenal, but obviously there was some back-and-forth negotiation, and they said, let's try it this year and see what happens."

He also cautioned new buyers that Florida's current permitless carry law doesn't remove legal responsibilities.

"All the new folks who might run out and this will be their first time might hear the term constitutional carry and assume that means they can carry whenever, wherever, however they want, and there's a lot more to it than that."

By: Forrest Saunders, Fox WFLX



RFK Jr. wants to "make America healthy again." So he's doing that by dismantling federal health agencies and firing the people who inspect our food, track infectious diseases, and research life-saving treatments and vaccines. Do I have this right?

—Robert Reich

Trump said he'd lower grocery prices on day 1: see where they stand now

During President Donald Trump's campaign before winning the 2024 presidential election, he promised on his first day of office to "immediately bring prices down, starting on Day One" for groceries — but that hasn't happened so far.

Average food prices in the United States have increased by 2.9% in the 12 months ending July 2025, according to U.S. inflation calculator. It's a few ticks higher than the 2.7% inflation rate across all categories. The Federal Reserve's preferred core inflation metric shows a 3.1% year-over-year increase, since it doesn't include volatile food and energy prices. Trump has done well with energy, as those prices have dropped by 1.6% year-over-year.

He's shown an ability to follow up on promises and even has lower energy prices, but grocery prices still remain elevated. There are a few reasons why that's the case, and some of them are connected to Trump's policies.

Tariffs Are a Key Component

After some false starts and negotiations with trading partners, tariffs are now in effect, and they have been contributing to higher food prices. Grocery stores like Walmart and Whole Foods have to hike their prices to keep up with the tariffs.



Although critics may question why Walmart, a global retailer that reported more than \$7 billion in consolidated net income in Q2 FY26, has to raise prices, it makes sense. Despite Walmart's vast retail presence and high profits, the company only operates on a 2.5% to 4% net profit margin, depending on the quarter. If prices go up by 10%, Walmart has to respond to the higher prices to preserve a positive profit margin.

The Tax Foundation projects that nearly 75% of all U.S. food imports will be affected by Trump's tariffs. If tariffs linger or get higher in the future, it can lead to a short-term price hike in food prices. That short-term price hike would only decrease if some tariffs got negotiated away or the U.S. produced enough food to balance the supply-

and-demand dynamics.

Beefy Price Hikes

The grocery bill looks different for each person based on what they buy, but if you like to eat beef, grocery inflation will show up more for you.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) found that retail beef and veal prices increased for the seventh month in a row from June 2025 to July 2025. Beef and veal prices increased by 2.5% month-over-month and are up by 11.3% year-over-year. The USDA anticipates beef and veal prices going up by 9.9% in 2025. Tight supplies of beef and veal are playing a role in the elevated prices.

By: Marc Guberti, *Yahoo Finance*

Did you know you can access the minutes from the Manatee County Commissioner's meetings?

Here's an easy way to keep up with what's going on in Manatee County. No need to go to the County Commissioner's meetings, unless you want to voice your opinion.



**[CLICK HERE TO VIEW
COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S
MINUTES](#)**

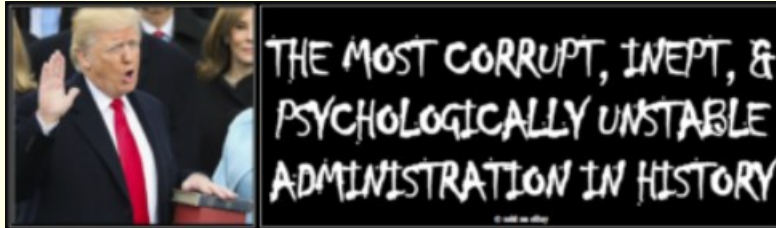
Major conservative host says Trump activity 'seems like corruption'

Ex-Fox News host Tucker Carlson, who was once in the conversation to be Donald Trump's running mate, suggested this week the president is engaging in "corruption."

On his "*Tucker Carlson Show*," the right-wing commentator was talking to conservative podcast host and former Navy Seal Shawn Ryan, who expressed reservations with the Trump brand's dealmaking in Mid-east countries the president just visited on official business.

"F*ck it, I'm gonna get blasted for this, but you know, I see all these negotiations going on in the Middle East and then, I don't know when these buildings were approved or when these deals got done, but then I also see like, oh, there's a brand new hotel going up in Dubai or Abu Dhabi, and another one going up in Doha."

"I'm like, did these, like, just get done also with



the deals that just happened over there, or was this earlier?" he asked. "You would probably know."

"No, I don't know," Carlson responded. "I've not made one dollar in the Middle East. Not one."

Ryan said Carlson was a "lot more on the inside," which Carlson dismissed by declaring, "I'm just a visitor and a traveler and a watcher."

"That stuff kind of worries me," Ryan continued.

"Well, it seems like corruption, yeah," Carlson said.

The Trump administration's acceptance of a free \$400 million Air Force One replacement from Qatar that will wind up in the Trump library has piled on to ethical concerns around Trump. His family has recently forged large-scale business deals in the countries he just visited on a Mideast swing. The ventures include a Trump complex in Dubai, a golf resort in Doha and a tower in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

By: Ron Dicker, *Huffpost*

Florida abruptly loses another factory as layoffs spike

The bad news keeps piling up in Florida.

Fresh off a string of painful and embarrassing factory closures that have rocked the state, now another employer is downsizing.

Mizkan America (which makes a variety of bottled vinegars) just closed its bottling plant in Lake Alfred.

So not only is production shifting elsewhere – which is embarrassing enough for a state that prides itself on being very employer-friendly – but it comes at the cost of 57 jobs too.

More bad news for Florida – and unfortunately with the economy wobbling from trade war impacts, there's no reason to think things are about



to get better.

(In fact, given the facts that the Fed has started cutting rates, unemployment is increasing, and many close trade partners and allies have started boycotting American goods...things could be about to get a whole lot worse.)

By: Staff Writer, *The Coconut Mama*



The importance of staying aware of local water and environmental issues cannot be overstated. It is unfortunate that some residents don't understand the different local governing bodies. For instance, when we hear of a spill of raw sewage in Manatee River, many immediately get upset with Manatee County. The most recent sewage spill of 1.7 million gallons in September 2025 was through the city of Bradenton, as an overflow at the wastewater plant. There are ongoing upgrades on the city's aging water systems, initiated due to a lawsuit settlement with environmental group Suncoast Waterkeeper. Much of these upgrades took two years just to get permits approved before construction could begin. Please follow and support *The Bradenton Times*, the online publication, as their reporting is accurate and well researched. The Executive Director of Suncoast Waterkeeper is Dr. Abbey Tynna, who will be the speaker at Manatee Democratic Environmental Caucus meeting on Thursday, Oct. 9th, 6 to 7 PM at Manatee County Democratic Party headquarters at 435 Cortez Rd. W. All are welcome.

Ruth Lawler, Environmental Chair

IT'S TIME!



DON'T DELAY, RENEW
YOUR MEMBERSHIP
TODAY!

Consider paying your 2026 membership dues of \$35 now. You can pay at any of our meetings or you can mail your check payable to Democratic Women's Club to our Treasurer.

Wini Meier-Oakes

3607 AVENIDA MADERA UNIT A

Bradenton, FL 34210



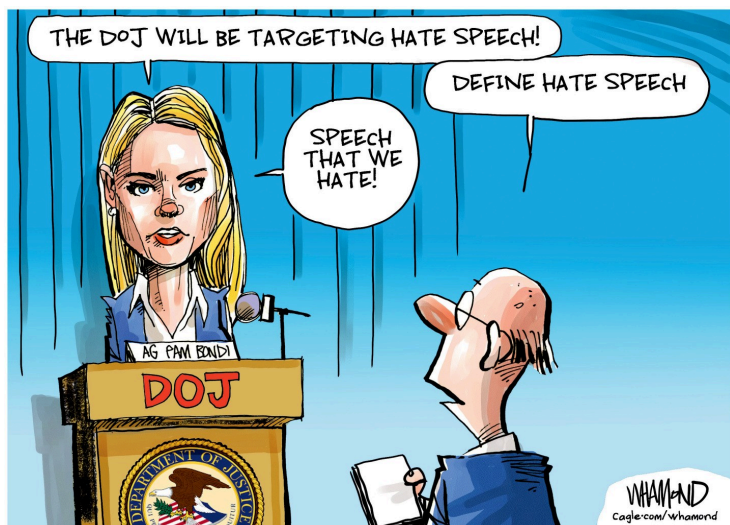
We need you to step up! The new year is fast approaching and we still need a Recording Secretary for our club. It's a very easy job; you would basically take notes at our board and general meetings to create a perminate record for our files. If interested please let Joanie LeBaron at

joielebaron0108@gmail.com

October 11 is National Coming Out Day, when many closeted gay people decide to let their families and the world know that they are gay. While many who make that monumental decision are greeted with unconditional love and understanding from their family and friends, that is not always the case. For many, they are disowned by their families and rejected by their friends. Among young LGBTQ people in the U.S. (ages ~18-25), about 30% report that they have attempted suicide in their lifetimes. Now the Trump Administration has disbanded the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline's LGBTQ Youth Specialized Services program. The first video is that of a young man who was shunned by his family and actually contemplated suicide titled "It Doesn't Get Better...Immediately." "Thank You For Disowning Me" is another coming-out story by Levi Greene, who expresses this thoughts five years after his family cut all ties with him after coming out.

**[CLICK HERE TO WATCH
IT DOESN'T GET BETTER
IMMEDIATELY](#)**

**[CLICK HERE TO WATCH
THANK YOU FOR
DISOWNING ME](#)**



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

ELECTED OFFICERS

President

Joanie LeBaron joanielebaron0108@gmail.com

1st VP (Programs)

Brian Heavrin blh3011@gmail.com

2nd VP (Membership)

Carol Plant carolplant@optonline.net

Recording Secretary

Lori Rogge lrogge52@icloud.com

Treasurer

Wini Meier Oakes winimo3@gmail.com

Regional Representative

Pat Benson pattybeenutty@gmail.com

Website Links

[DWC of Manatee County Website](#)
[Manatee County Democratic Website](#)
[Democratic Women's Club of Florida](#)

OTHER OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Fund-Raising

Pat Benson
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Marilyn Baiz
 durf1211@gmail.com

Candidate Search

Vicki Waters
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Parliamentarian

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Corresponding Secretary

Open

Bylaws Chair

Anne Marie Keane
 Keaneanne20@gmail.com

Manatee County Democratic Women's Club
6403 Heritage Lane
Bradenton, FL 34209



PLACE
STAMP
HERE

The Manatee County Democratic weekday office hours are Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 10 - 2. 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

PRESIDENT

Donald Trump (switchboard) (202) 456-1111
www.whitehouse.gov

U.S. SENATORS

Rick Scott (R)
help@rickscott.senate.gov (202) 224-5274

Ashley Moody (R) (202) 224-3041
www.moody.senate.gov

U.S. REPRESENTATIVES

Vern Buchanan (R-Distr. 16) (202) 225-5015
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GOVERNOR

Ron DeSantis (R) (850) 717-9337
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OUR FLORIDA SENATORS

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