

DWCC

JUNE 2026 NEWSLETTER



DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF MANATEE COUNTY FLORIDA

WWW.DWCCManatee.com

Tamika Lyles has built a reputation as a dedicated community advocate, veteran leader, and trailblazer committed to public service and civic engagement. She demonstrated her leadership by becoming the founding president of the Osceola County Democratic Black Caucus and later the founding Vice-President of the Osceola County Democratic Veterans Caucus, while also serving on the Board of the Florida Democratic Black Caucus. Through these roles, Tamika has worked to expand voter participation, strengthen community outreach, and ensure that diverse voices are represented in the political process.



**Tamika
Lyles**

A proud advocate for veterans, working families, and underserved communities, Tamika has consistently focused on issues that directly impact everyday Floridians, including affordable healthcare, economic opportunity, education, and equal access to resources. Tamika is running for election to the U.S. House to represent Florida's 16th Congressional District and will be giving us her vision as to how to represent citizens in district 16.

Sari Lindroos-Valimaki, who is running for County Commissioner in District one, was born in Finland and now a proud Floridian for over 40 years, Sari is a wife, a mother and resident of Manatee County since 2018. Her professional career spans nearly three decades in IT and cybersecurity, where she has been responsible for enhancing network security and leading high-performing teams in complex projects. She has extensive experience in IT and Cybersecurity, focusing on community's digital safety in information and operational technology particularly with Florida Municipalities and non-profits. Sari built and lead a team of Network Operations Center and Security Operations Center engineers for a Managed Service provider, protecting the confidentiality, integrity and accessibility of client data, and is an advocate for transparent and inclusive governance through professional roles and community involvement.



**Sari Lindroos-
Valimaki**

Both Tamika and Sari will be presenting their vision of their views and plans of representing constituents in Manatee County.



JUNE 6, 2026

DWC Luncheon Is June 11, 2026

11:30 AM

Peridia Golf & Country Club

4950 Peridia Blvd E, Bradenton, FL 34203

**Cut-off date for your reservations
and meal choice must be made by**

June 7, 3:00 p.m

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

Cost is \$25

President's Corner

Social media is a part of everyday life for many people, but it can be a powerful way to share who Democrats really are and the good work they are doing. Many of us often post about the harmful actions and the negative impact of Trump and his followers, and that remains important. I've seen many Republicans and anti-Democrat voices share memes criticizing us. We could respond by spreading positive, values-driven messages that highlight what Democrats are doing for our communities. If we want to reach more people, we need "social media warriors" who will highlight the positive work Democrats are doing through positive public posts on social media.



Lori Rogge

I recently had the opportunity to attend the Democratic Women's Club of Florida annual convention in Orlando, where Pam Keith delivered an inspiring presentation on this very need. As an attorney and advocate for equal access to health care, workers' rights, and other important issues, she made a compelling case for using social media to amplify positive Democratic messages. Many people are especially skilled at creating engaging posts and videos on a wide range of topics, often using music and other creative elements to reach audiences effectively. It would be helpful if the Democrats with such skills can create and share pro-Democratic social media posts and train others as well.

We have many ways to reach voters, including canvassing and phone banking. Adding more pro-Democratic social media posts to that list would strengthen our outreach before the November election.

Lori Rogge, President

Democratic Women's Club of Manatee County

PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATION AND MEAL CHOICE FOR THE JUNE 11 DWC MEETING

Email, call, or text Carol Plant for reservations

carol.plant@gmail.com

or

914-260-2980

Deadline to register is Sunday, June 7, 3:00 p.m.

1. Fried chicken breast with marinara, mozzarella, and parmesan over pasta with vegetable
2. Corned beef with sauerkraut on rye and thousand island dressing with pub chips
3. Pasta Primavera vegetables tossed with penne pasta in a light alfredo sauce

All meals come with salad, rolls, butter, a non-alcoholic drink, and dessert.

No-shows will be billed

Cost \$25

What is Juneteenth

Juneteenth, short for “June Nineteenth,” marks the day when federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, in 1865 to take control of the state and ensure that all enslaved people be freed. The troops’ arrival came a full two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Juneteenth honors the end to slavery in the United States and is considered the longest-running African American holiday. A federal holiday since 2021, Juneteenth occurs on Friday, June 19, in 2026.

Although Confederate General Robert E. Lee had surrendered at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, in April 1865, slavery had remained relatively intact in Texas. That is until U.S. General Gordon Granger stood on Texas soil and read General Orders No. 3: “The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free.”

The Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, had established that all enslaved people in Confederate states in rebellion against the Union “shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free.”

But in reality, the Emancipation Proclamation didn’t instantly free any enslaved people. The proclamation only applied to places under Confederate control and not to slave-holding border states or rebel areas already under Union control. However, as Northern troops advanced into



the Confederate South, many enslaved people fled behind Union lines.

In Texas, slavery had continued as the state experienced no large-scale fighting or significant presence of Union troops. Many enslavers from outside the Lone Star State had moved there, as they viewed it as a safe haven for slavery.

After the war came to a close in the spring of 1865, General Granger’s arrival in Galveston that June signaled freedom for Texas’s 250,000 enslaved people. Celebrations broke out among newly freed Black people, but emancipation didn’t happen overnight for everyone. In some cases, enslavers withheld the information until after harvest season. That December, slavery in America was formally abolished with the adoption of the 13th Amendment.

In 1866, freedmen in Texas organized the first of what became the annual celebration of “Jubilee Day” on June 19. In the ensuing decades, Juneteenth commemorations featured music, barbecues, prayer services and other activities. As Black people migrated from Texas to other parts of the country, the Juneteenth tradition spread.

In 1979, Texas became the first state to make Juneteenth an official holiday. Several others followed suit over the years. Decades later, in June 2021, Congress passed a resolution establishing Juneteenth as a federal holiday; President Joe Biden signed it into law on June 17, 2021.

By: Elizabeth Nix, *History*

Environmental Facts

1. The world has over 3.04 trillion trees in the world. However, 27,000 of them are cut down daily to make toilet paper. This translates to about 9.8 million trees annually. One single recycled edition of the *New York Times* newspaper could save 75,000 trees.

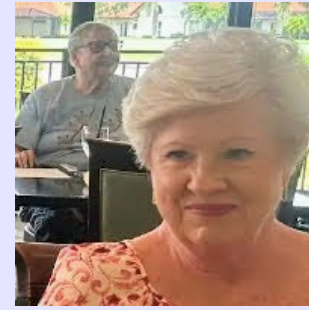
2. Seventy-eight percent of marine mammals are at risk of accidental deaths, such as getting caught in fishing nets. Plastic bags and other plastic garbage that ends up in the ocean kill

over 1,000,000 sea animals every year.

3. Styrofoam is not biodegradable. Switching to single use options will help cut down on Styrofoam pollution.

4. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is a twisting and turning vortex composed of trash and waste. It is twice the size of continental America and contains about 100 million tons of garbage. It stretches from the West Coast of North America to Japan along the Pacific Ocean.

By: Rico Fleshman, *Keep Price William Beautiful*



You won't want to miss our June meeting!



President Donald Trump is facing backlash after posting an AI generated \$100 dollar bill with his face plastered on it.

The photo shows a portrait of the 47th commander-in-chief on the front of the bill, and another noticeable change is the swapping of the "In God We Trust" insignia, customary on U.S. currency, to "God Bless Donald Trump."

Other noticeable changes include Trump's signature on the bottom left corner of the

bill, replacing the Treasury secretary's. Vice President JD Vance's signature is below Trump's.

By: Athena Dawson, US News Reporter



Florida sheriff pulls out photo of MAGA influencer arrested in human trafficking sting posing with Trump and Don Jr

The sheriff of Polk Co., FL, pulled out a photo of a “MAGA influencer” posing with President Donald Trump and Donald Trump Jr. when discussing arrests in a major human trafficking sting.

Sheriff Grady Judd highlighted several suspects of the 266 people arrested, two of whom had Trump ties.

“Then there’s Craig Long arrested, on April 22, 2026.” Judd said at a press conference Friday. “He’s 41. Some of you may recognize him — he’s an influencer. He also owns Craig Long Fitness in Tampa. He was seeking the services of a prostitute.”

When recounting Long’s social media followers, the sheriff neglected to add “hundred thousand” after the numbers.

“Did I tell you that he’s married, that he’s got 125 followers on instagram, 568 followers on TikTok? Well, I’m going to give him some content



for social media today. He was a previous felon who straightened up — really what we want to see in life. Now he’s an influencer. You know, he moves in big circles, even with the president,” Judd said, when slamming the photo on the dais.

“This is a photograph with the president and his son not long ago,” he continued. “Now, we’d like to see people who make mistakes early in life — and he had a long history — straighten up. We like the fact that he likes the cops. Heck, he liked them so much, he got caught up in a sting and got to be up and real close with the cops. We asked what his attitude was, and he said, ‘oh he had a great attitude. He appreciates law enforcement.’ Well, there you go— got arrested in a human trafficking sting. Influence that for a while.”

Long’s attorney entered a plea of not guilty.

By: Jennifer Bowers Bahney, *Mountain View*

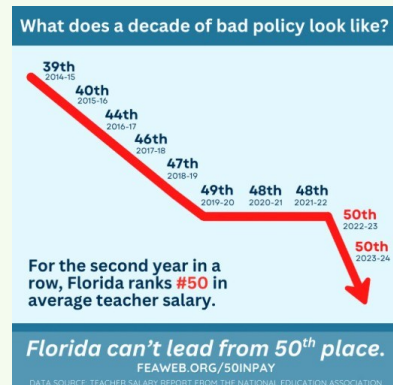
[CLICK HERE TO WATCH SHERIFF GRADY’S NEWS CLIP OF CRAIG LONG’S ARREST](#)

Florida stuck at 50th in teacher pay for third year in a row as state leaders continue legacy of failure

- For the third year in a row, Florida ranks #50 in the nation for average teacher salary out of all 50 states and D.C.
- Florida is the third-largest state with 2.86 million students in 2024/2025, but ranks 41st in estimated per-pupil spending.
- While the average K–12 ESP salary increased from \$33,342 in 2023/2024 to \$34,645 in 2024/2025, Florida’s living wage for a family of one adult and one child to have a modest but adequate standard of living is \$63,853.

While higher education salaries at a public four-year institution rose slightly, they remained the same for public two-year institutions, and there remain large discrepancies in the salaries of HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) versus non-HBCUs.

Source: *Florida Education Association*



Trump's Religious Liberty Commission takes aim at the separation of church and state

For Americans who expect the government to remain neutral on matters of faith, leaving religious decisions to Americans without political interference, Donald Trump's second term has been unsettling.

Federal agencies are pushing overt Christian messaging to the public while inundating federal workers with religious communications. Powerful cabinet secretaries have abandoned all subtlety in their embrace of Christian nationalism. Republican officials at the state level have passed laws to impose the Ten Commandments in public schools.

The vice president has insisted that the United States is a "Christian nation," raising unavoidable questions about whether people of minority faiths or no religious beliefs have been relegated to second-class citizenship. The president, who has claimed the ability to inform the public about God's wishes and who has implored Americans to gather in groups of 10 to hold weekly prayers ahead of the celebration of the nation's 250th anniversary, recently used his social media platform to promote an image that appeared to present himself as some kind of American Jesus.

If it seems as if Team Trump and its allies are opposed to the separation of church and state, it's probably because it's been quite explicit in its rejection of the constitutional principle. My *MS NOW* colleague Ja'han Jones highlighted the final hearing of the White House's Religious Liberty Commission, which didn't appear focused on religious liberty.

To give you a sense of the tone, the commission's chairman, Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, went on a rant, at a hearing on President Trump's Religious Liberty Commission, calling the separation of church and state 'the biggest lie that's been told in American since our founding.' Each speaker after him parroted a similar line, framing

liberals as some kind of threat to free religious expression.

To be sure, for those familiar with the religious right political movement and the rhetoric of the radical televangelists who helped create the movement, the lieutenant governor's comments were certainly familiar. Assorted radicals and extremists have peddled the same line for years.

The separation of church and state, however, is not a "lie"; it's a bedrock principle of our system of government. In fact, I'd refer Patrick to the First Amendment, which states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."



According to Thomas Jefferson, those 16 words created a "wall of separation between church and state" — and he's a bit more credible in this area than the Texas Republican.

But taking this one step further, the question for Trump's commission members is simple: If Patrick and other Republican officials reject the idea of church-state separation, and want to excise the principle from our legal system, what exactly is their alternative?

If GOP policymakers are against the idea of government neutrality on matters of faith, it's incumbent on them to elaborate on their preferred model. Do they envision a theocracy along the lines of Iran? Do they support a governmental system in which politicians base policy decisions on their interpretations of religious doctrines? Should those who are not religious or are members of minority traditions expect to be penalized by their own government?

These need not be rhetorical questions. If the White House's so-called Religious Liberty Commission wants to flaunt its opposition to the First Amendment, it should be prepared to offer its proposal for what should come next.

By: Steve Benen, *MS Now*



Trump will reportedly profit off of newly renamed Donald J Trump International Airport

Within that lane, DTTM Operations LLC has full control. It can sell airport-branded merchandise anywhere it wants (online, in other locations, or through other parties) and keep all the profits. Airport retailers selling on-site must buy any branded merchandise from vendors DTTM picks. DTTM also has 30-day approval rights over all logos, brand guidelines, and any use of Trump's image, likeness, or biographical information in airport marketing.

The license is perpetual. The county can only exit if the FAA denies or revokes approval, or if state lawmakers change the law. The rebranding is projected to cost \$5.5 million. The county is asking the state to pay for it.

County Attorney David Ottey defended the vendor clause as quality control. He acknowledged the approved retailers have not yet been identified.

The U.S. has eight other commercial airports named after presidents.

JFK was renamed in honor of Kennedy after his 1963 assassination. Ronald Reagan Washington National was renamed in 1998, nine years after Reagan's second term ended. George Bush Intercontinental came after the presidency. Gerald R. Ford International, Abraham Lincoln Capital, Bill and Hillary Clinton National, Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National, and Dickinson Theodore Roosevelt Regional were all named after their namesakes left office or after their deaths. None were renamed while the president was still in office. In none of those cases did a private family business own the name or hold approval and vendor rights as part of the deal.



By: Jennifer Bowers Bahney, *Mediaite*

'Disgrace': Horror as red state's new history course calls slavery a 'necessary evil'

A red state sparked backlash after announcing that it will offer an alternative version of advanced history classes meant to combat the "woke."

Historian Kevin Kruse warned on Bluesky that Sunshine State students could have "to suffer through the Florida Man version" of Advanced Placement U.S. History, and called out a curriculum that frames Florida as always having been Christian, anti-slavery and on the right side of history.

The *Tallahassee Democrat* reported that Florida will start offering the alternative course as a pilot program in the fall. The state-developed course will offer credit at Florida colleges and universi-



ties to compete with the AP course, which offers credit at colleges and universities across the country.

Commentators like Kruse pointed out that the curriculum will describe slavery as a "necessary evil," frame Plessy vs Ferguson as a result of "the failure of Reconstruction" after the Civil War, and credit federal law that counted slaves as three-fifths of a person for "decreased slave power representation."

"Yes, allowing slave states to count their slaves for the purposes of political representation and thereby gain additional power was an anti-slavery measure," Kruse sarcastically said. "Yes, no questions there."

Others similarly reacted with alarm. "It begins," Nicole Shuman wrote on Bluesky.

By: Bennito L. Kelty, *Raw Story*



Personal choices matter in protecting the environment. What we eat has a huge effect environmentally. By eating less meat and poultry, it is healthier for us and for the planet. The raising, slaughter and transport of animals causes pollution, and a high use of water and energy, which is much greater than a plant based diet.

Choose a plant-based diet rich in fruits and vegetables. Whenever possible, buy locally grown produce to reduce the environmental impact of transporting food long distances from places like California and other faraway locations. Choosing organic foods can also help limit exposure to harsh chemicals and pesticides used in farming. These choices are healthier for you and better for the environment.

Ruth Lawler, Environmental Chair



LBJ was once asked why white poor republicans repeatedly vote against their own best interests, and his response was: “If you can convince the lowest white man he’s better than the best colored man, he won’t know you’re picking his pocket. Hell, give him someone to look down on and he’ll empty his pockets for you.”

— Lyndon B. Johnson

World Environmental Day

World Environment Day 2026 takes place on June 5, 2026. This year’s global commemoration is hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku.

The official campaign focuses heavily on Climate Action. It highlights the urgent environmental signals our planet is sending (like rising seas and extreme heat) and emphasizes the solutions we must deploy in response (such as renewable energy, reforestation, and sustainable cities).

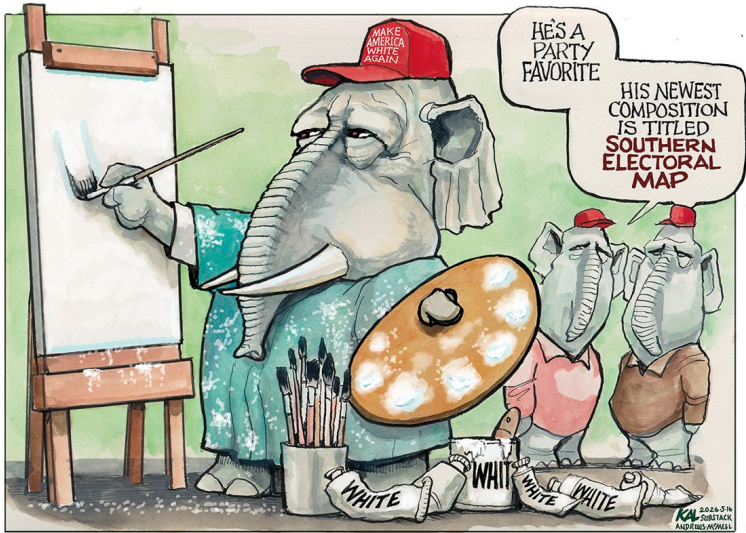


[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 2026](#)

As the world observes World Environment Day on June 5, attention continues to focus on one of today’s most urgent environmental challenges: water pollution. In the video “The Great Pacific Garbage Patch,” TJ Watson explores the devastating impact of plastic waste on marine ecosystems, with a close look at the massive accumulation of debris known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. The video also explains how microplastics are entering the human food chain and highlights practical ways individuals can help, including reducing plastic use and supporting environmental organizations working toward cleaner oceans. Later in the month, communities across the nation will commemorate Juneteenth on June 19, honoring the day in 1865 when enslaved African Americans in Galveston, Texas, finally learned of their freedom. The announcement came more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation and marked a defining moment in American history. The video “What is Juneteenth,” created by AI.com, provides a thoughtful and engaging explanation of the history and significance of Juneteenth and why its message continues to resonate today.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH GREAT PACIFIC GARABAGE PATCH](#)

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH WHAT IS JUNETEENTH](#)



DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF MANATEE COUNTY OFFICERS/LEADERS 2026 - 2027

ELECTED OFFICERS	
President Lori Rogge	lori4dems@gmail.com
1st VP (Programs) Brian Heavrin	brianhwithdwc@gmail.com
2nd VP (Membership) Carol Plant	carolplant@optonline.net
Recording Secretary Anne Marie Keane	Keanneanne20@gmail.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 pattybeenutty@gmail.com
Hospitality/ Calling	Marilyn Baiz durf1211@gmail.com
Candidate Search	Vicki Waters vwaters@earthlink.net
Parliamentarian	Open
Web Master	Lori Rogge lori4dems@gmail.com
Newsletter and Directory	Brian Heavrin blh3011@gmail.com
Environmental	Ruth Lawler ruthlawler@att.net
Legislative Liaison	Open
Corresponding Secretary	Open
Bylaws Chair	Anne Marie Keane Keanneanne20@gmail.com



The Manatee County Democratic weekday office hours are Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 10 a.m. to 2 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>			
Donald Trump	(switchboard) (202) 456-1111	Jim Boyd (R-Distr. 20)	941-742-6445
www.whitehouse.gov			850-487-5020
<u>U.S. SENATORS</u>		Boyd.Jim.web@flsenate.gov	
Rick Scott (R)	(202) 224-5274	Joe Gruters (R-Distr. 22)	941-378-6309
rickscott.senate.gov/contact			850-487-5022
Ashley Moody (R)	(202)224-3041	gruters.joe.web@flsenate.gov	
www.moody.senate.gov		<u>OUR FLORIDA REPRESENTATIVES</u>	
<u>U.S. REPRESENTATIVES</u>		Michael Owen (R-Distr.70)	850 717-5070
Vern Buchanan (R-Distr. 16)	(202) 225-5015	MichaelOwen@myfloridahouse.gov	
buchanan.house.gov/contact	(941) 747-9081	Will Robinson (R-Distr. 71)	(941) 744-5097
<u>GOVERNOR</u>		Will.robinson@myfloridahouse.gov	
Ron DeSantis (R)	(850) 717-9337	William "Bill" Conerly (R-Distr.72)	(941) 327-0150
www.flgov.com/email-the-governor		BillConerly@myfloridahouse.gov	