



BALLOT BOX

MAY 2024

Florida Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis to speak in May



There is a lot to learn about the duties of the State of Florida's Chief Financial Officer, and some of them may surprise you. All will be revealed when the current Florida CFO, Jimmy Patronis appears as the featured speaker at Belleair Women's Republican Club luncheon on May 3.

Florida's CFO serves as one of three elected State Cabinet Members and oversees the state's accounting and auditing functions, which includes monitoring investment of state funds and management of Florida's deferred compensation and risk management programs. The CFO also handles insurance consumer service, including fraud investigations, and his office is responsible for the licensing and oversight of insurance agents and agencies.

All of the above seems obvious, but here's some of the surprising elements of the CFO's scope of

responsibilities. He also oversees funeral homes and cemeteries, and he serves as Florida's State Fire Marshall. As the latter, the CFO provides various fire-related services throughout the state. These can include assisting local fire departments and training for citizens at one of the fire-training colleges in the state. As a Cabinet Member, the CFO helps govern such things as the purchase of state lands, veteran's affairs, tax collection and clemency issues.

Jimmy Patronis was appointed to be Florida's CFO in June of 2017 by then Governor Rick Scott after Jeffrey Atwater resigned. He was then elected to serve a full, four-year term in November 2022. Prior to being CFO, the Panama City native, served three terms in the Florida House of Representatives, 2006 to 2014. After terming out, he was appointed to the Florida Public Service Commission

where he served until being appointed to be Florida's CFO.

Patronis' public service career began with being an intern in the Florida Senate and in the United Kingdom's House of Commons. Following his graduation from Florida State University with a degree in political science, he was appointed by then Governor Lawton Chiles to the Florida Elections Commission. He was later reappointed by Governor Jeb Bush. He has also served on the Florida Constitution Revision Committee, which meets every 20 years to propose changes to the governing document.

Throughout his political career, Patronis has remained a partner in his family's business, the well-known Panama City Restaurant Capt. Anderson's, which has been in existence more than 50 years. He is married, and he and his wife Katie have two sons.

MAY MEETING INFORMATION

Friday, May 3

**Belleair Country Club
1 Country Club Lane
Belleair, FL 33756**

Luncheon Fee: \$37

**Registration & networking
begin at 11:30am.**

**Event begins
at 12 pm**

**To RSVP:
A \$37 check made
payable to BWRC is
due by April 17.**

**Mail check to:
BWRC
P.O. Box 1117
850 E. Lime Street
Tarpon Springs, FL 34688**

**If paying at the luncheon,
please no \$100 bills.**

**Alternate meal must
be requested
with your RSVP.**

**No substitutions
may be made
the day of the luncheon.**

**Reservations required.
Please ,no walk-ins.**

MAY MENU INFORMATION

House Salad

**Lettuce, toasted almonds
dried cranberries, feta cheese
w/ balsamic vinaigrette dressing**

++++

Mediterranean Chicken

++++

Potatoes Au Gratin

Green Beans Almondine

++++

Rolls & Butter

+++

Bread Pudding

+++

ALTERNATE VEGETARIAN PLATE

Mushroom Tortellini Salad

**w/ broccoli, arugula,
fried cubed tofu
and a Thai chili drizzle**

+++

BWRC is privileged to host meetings and social events at Belleair Country Club. Members and guests must comply with BCC's dress and conduct code. Dresses, skirts, blouses, dress slacks and pantsuits are appropriate for women. Men must wear shirts with sleeves and remove caps in the dining room. Blue jeans are not permitted.



FROM THE BWRC PRESIDENT

Well, never let it be said that Belleair Women's Republican Club doesn't know how to throw a perfectly wonderful party! The club's celebration of the 60th anniversary of its founding at the April luncheon was simply spectacular. Congratulations to the event's co-chairs Corinne Steinhardt and Candace Gardner and to all other Board Members and other individuals who had a hand in creating such a special day for such a special occasion.

Balloons and other beautiful decorations set a festive backdrop for what would be a highly memorable day. The gigantic birthday cake was utterly amazing, not to mention delicious. Also setting the festive tone was lovely piano music provided throughout the event by the Belleair Country Club pianist, who, of course, played "Happy Birthday" as everyone sang along after the cake's candles were lit. And what would a birthday party be without presents, so each guest had a Republican-red pen embossed with the club's name and contact information along with an American flag pin.

Two special ladies were recognized during the 60th Birthday event. The first was Josephine "Jo" Houck, the oldest, but still young at heart, BWRC member, who was preparing to celebrate a birthday of her own, her 100th on April 18. Jo, who has been a member of BWRC for many years took the microphone to amuse the crowd by saying, among other things, "You know, when you get to be 100 years old, you can get away with doing almost anything. You can flirt with whomever you want to and their wives don't get upset."

The second recognition was the announcement of the recipient of the 2024 BWRC Outstanding Member Award. Anticipation built as Award Committee Members Carol Abernathy, Jessica Reed and Debbie Whisenand came to the podium to proclaim former BWRC President Deborah Walker as this year's honoree and present her with a one-of-a-kind, engraved piece of art. There were cheers and loud applause as Deb is a very deserving winner and a highly liked and respected club member and leader. My sincere congratulations to Deb! I also send sincere thanks to the Award Committee members for their diligent, caring and careful handling of this year's award selection. I never had to worry that the process wasn't in capable hands.

So, with the club's past properly and perfectly celebrated, it's time to look to the future. Onward and upward to the 70th, 75th and beyond! I have no doubt Belleair Women's Republican Club will continue to be a force for good and celebration-worth in all the year's to come.

Dianne Blum
BWRC President



BWRC OFFICERS

President
Dianne Blum

First Vice President
Sara Mollo

Second Vice President
Claudia Walker

Treasurers
Jessica Reed
Louise Davis

Hospitality
Candace Gardner

Ways & Means
Corinne Steinhardt

Corresponding
Secretary
Jessica Reed

Recording Secretary
Carol Abernathy

Historian
Deb Walker

Chaplain
Patricia Wagner

Parliamentarian
Renatta Cochran

And the 2024 BWRC Outstanding Member is...

Deborah Walker

At the April luncheon, BWRC Past BWRC President Deborah Walker was announced as the recipient of the 2024 BWRC Outstanding Member Award. The selection was kept secret until the exciting reveal was made with great fanfare.

Jessica Reed, BWRC Treasurer and Award Committee member, first explained the award is given every two years to a BWRC member who has gone above and beyond to enhance the work of the club. She said the Award Committee had commissioned a one-of-a-kind art piece by Belleair Bluffs rising artist Tina Konstantatos, the daughter of BWRC member Cathy Goocher, to be the physical award presented to the 2024 recipient.

Carol Abernathy, BWRC Secretary and Award Committee member then proceeded to make the big reveal, saying, "The recipient of this award is a dedicated natural leader. She has led our club by example, educating its members regarding important political issues, assisting candidates in their campaigns and encouraging BWRC members to participate in flag waving and in attending school board and county commission meetings."

Carol added, "The 2024 recipient continues to be one of the most selfless and engaged members of BWRC. She is always willing to step in and lend her guidance, political savvy and fair judgement to our club. It is with great pleasure I have the honor to present the 2024 BWRC Outstanding Member Service Award to the one and only, Mrs. Deb Walker!"

As audience members applauded enthusiastically, Deb Walker said she was surprised, delighted and honored to be chosen, taking the moment to once again encourage everyone to get involved and take action on behalf of Republican issues and candidates.



Deborah Walker, third from left, is presented with flowers and a one-of-a-kind mirrored, engraved art piece by members of the 2024 BWRC Outstanding Member Award Committee, from left, Jessica Reed, Carol Abernathy and Debbie Whisenand. The honoree said she was surprised and humbled to be selected to receive the 2024 award.



Five past BWRC Outstanding Member Award recipients were present at the April luncheon. They are shown above, from left, Debbie Whisenand, Norma Stalions, Claudia Thomas, Lee Hooper and Dianne Blum.

PICTURES FROM THE APRIL BWRC 60TH BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON



MORE PICTURES FROM THE APRIL BWRC 60TH BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON

