

The Democrat

A roundup of events, ideas, and opportunities
for area Democrats and their friends.

Monthly Newsletter

Consolidated Series I, Issue# 6, June 2017

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A word from the chair

June has proven to be another busy month for local Democrats. All clubs and caucuses met this month. In addition, several of our members attended Leadership Blue in Hollywood, Florida where we were able to hear Joe Biden speak. It was an exciting 3 days. We learned a lot and will be sharing the information with as many of you as possible.

Three of our members, Danielle Neetz, Barbara Grimm, and I were able to attend the meeting of the *National Federation of Democratic Women* in Atlanta, Georgia. What an exhilarating experience. We also participated in an excursion to visit many of the civil rights landmarks in the Atlanta area. We learned a lot on the trip.



On Saturday night, our Young Democrats Club hosted their state president. It was a well-attended event and we enjoyed meeting Jake Sanders. He gave a very motivational speech.



The big event to end the month was our DEC meeting. We met at 6:00 PM to elect a new vice-chair, Les Thackston. At 7:00 PM, we had Bob Graham as our speaker. An awesome evening with about 150 in attendance.

Sincerely,

Jewel Dickson, Chair
Volusia County DEC

Editorial

Title

Wayne Dickson

In *Exodus 20*, God tells the Hebrews:

Thou shalt not kill.
Thou shalt not steal.
Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

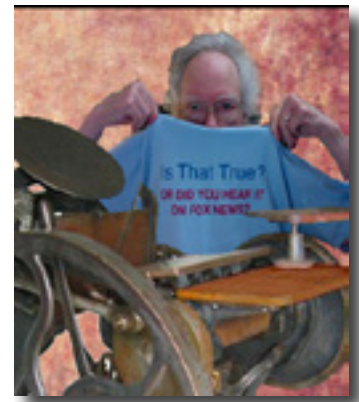


Then, in *Joshua 6*, He tells them:

I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof....

[So they] utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

When I was a kid, this kind of thing used to drive me nuts. First God says to this tribe



we know as the Hebrews that they're not allowed even to covet. Then the very same God says to the very same nomadic tribe that they're allowed—indeed, ordered—to steal an entire city-state, and while they're at it to kill everyone's wife, servants, children, oxen, and more.



I'm not sure what contemporary scholars have to say about such issues, so I'll restrict myself to what's patent in the *KJV's* Shakespearean English: the first passage tells you how you must treat your "neighbors," the second how you may treat those who are not your neighbors.

Imagine if that principle were to govern today. The more people we saw as neighbors, the more peace we would have and the less violent acquisitiveness.

It's not coincidental that in current political terms, liberals encourage Americans to see more and more others as neighbors; conservatives to see fewer and fewer others as neighbors. The social consequences can be profound.

For example consider what [Republicans have been saying](#) about healthcare:

- Idaho Rep. Raul Labrador: In the U.S., “Nobody dies because they don’t have access to healthcare.”
- Utah Rep. Jason Chaffetz: “Americans have got to make a choice. [M]aybe, rather than getting that new iPhone ... they should invest in their own health care.”
- At a town hall a woman voiced concern that Republicans’ desire to kill Medicaid expansion would leave her son, who works in the service sector, dangerously underinsured. Ohio Rep. Warren Davidson’s callous response? That her son should get a better job.
- Alabama Rep. Mo Brooks: Charging Americans with preexisting conditions much higher premiums “reduces the cost to those people who lead good lives. They’re healthy, they’ve done the things to keep their bodies healthy.”
- Director of management and budget Mick Mulvaney insisted that the U.S. is under no obligation to “take care of the person who sits at home, eats poorly and gets diabetes.”

Hearing such disgusting things repeated so often by Republican congress persons, I’m reminded of the lyrics of *Hair*, the 1960s Broadway musical. (If you too remember the play or the movie based on the play, then like me you may be what Roy Zimmerman calls a “psychedelic relic.”)

*How can people be so heartless
How can people be so cruel
Easy to be hard
Easy to be cold*

...

*How can people have no feelings
How can they ignore their friends
Easy to be hard
Easy to be cold
Easy to be proud
Easy to say no*



How can people be so hard and cold and proud in what they say and do to their neighbors? (Actually, for a majority of Americans it’s not that easy.) Complicated question, but a key part of the answer is simple: they don’t see the persons they’re treating so shamefully as

neighbors. Rather, they see those persons as “other,” “different,” and most important of all as morally inferior to themselves.

So how does it happen that one certain group begin to feel different from and superior to another group? I’m sure you could find answers in any respectable introduction to social science textbook. I’ll stick to just a couple of suggestions that may be relevant.

De-individuation.

(Sorry. The word’s awkward, I know, but that’s the term sociologists use.)

Back in olden times, before I retired, when I asked students for definitions, I recommended they consider taking the Aristotelian approach, providing *genus* followed by *differentia*: the general class to which something belongs followed by the features that distinguish it from all other members of that class.

That’s individuation, the process of recognizing more and more of the features that distinguish this individual as different from others and eventually as unique. Oh, de-individuation? The opposite, of course. Just follow the same process—but in reverse.

Stereotyping.

Meaning: “creating a preconceived and oversimplified notion of characteristics typical of a person or group.”

Dehumanizing.

Apply the process of de-individuation, and you get a stereotype; exaggerate and distort features of the stereotype, and you get a caricature; associate the caricature with immoral, disgusting, even subhuman features, and you’ve arrived at what we’re talking about.

Go back and read the comments above made by Republicans. During the healthcare “debates,” listen to other Republicans on the news shows. You may be surprised at how often you recognize parts of the de-individuation, stereotyping, dehumanizing process we’ve been looking at. When you do encounter it...

- Make sure you’re not looking in a mirror! We’re all subject to the same forces and temptations, and sometimes we need to make a few “attitude adjustments.”
- Learn to look for examples of these forces “on the fly,” as you’re reading or hearing others discuss these issues—and don’t forget to attend to those who agree with you as well as to those who disagree.
- Don’t waste time trying to penetrate a brick wall using your own skull as a battering ram. For example, you’re not going to get anywhere arguing with a psychopath like Trump or a deaf and blind ideologue like Paul Ryan, whose brain has been eaten by Ayn Randian zombies.
- Instead, look for those you know to be decent, reasonable people with whom you happen on this issue to disagree.

Featured Event

Volusia Democrats at Leadership Blue

Dana Dunmire

Several Volusia Democrats gathered at the Diplomat Hotel in Hollywood, Florida over the weekend of June 16-18 for “Leadership Blue.” They enjoyed a range of activities including listening to inspirational talks by party leaders, fundraising, party business, and training in a variety of areas needed to insure Democratic victories in 2018 and beyond. The Florida Democratic Party estimated that 1300 people attended the event and that over \$1 million were raised to support Democratic candidates.

Volusia County’s delegation included Maritza Avila-Vazquez, Noel Bickford, William Bliss, Jewel Dickson, Dana Dunmire, Jim Gangitano, Barbara Grimm, Danielle Neetz, Laura Rioz, Sarah Schmeid, Les Thackston, and Ozzie Zapien. We were honored to be joined by Representative Patrick Henry, our Florida House of Representatives member from District 26, and Nancy Soderberg, a former ambassador who is contemplating running for Congress in District 6. It was great for our DEC members to meet with them and hear about their plans.

Two of the highlights for Volusia Democrats were former Vice President Joe Biden’s speech at Saturday night’s Gala and the Gubernatorial Forum on Saturday afternoon, which featured all three Democratic candidates for Florida Governor. *For video of the forum, click —>*[here](#).

Vice President Biden was introduced by US Senator Bill Nelson, who is likely to face Republican Governor Rick Scott in 2018. Biden had high praise for Senator Nelson saying he would return to Florida to campaign for Nelson as often as Senator Nelson wanted.



Some of the Vice President’s most interesting comments related to the need of the party to reach out to working people, arguing that Democrats don’t have to give up progressive values to appeal to that segment of the voters: “We can’t get bogged down — I hope don’t offend anybody here — in this phony debate going on in the Democratic Party. The Hobson’s choice we have been given is do we become less progressive and focus on working folk, or forget about working folk and become more

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF VOLUSIA COUNTY

progressive. There is no need to choose. They are not inconsistent.”

Another of the highlights was the forum for three Democratic candidates running for governor in 2018: Mayor of the City Tallahassee Andrew Gillum, former Congresswoman Gwen Graham, and Orlando businessman Chris King. The forum was sponsored by the Democratic Progressive Caucus of Florida. The candidates’ remarks were wide-ranging and detailed, and cannot be easily summarized, but a video of the forum can be found at this link. Each of the candidates acquitted themselves very well—all of them cited creating economic opportunity and protecting public education and the environment as key issues.

The excellent training at the forum ranged from using *Robert’s Rules of Order* to expedite

meetings, through resisting retrograde Republican policies, recruiting candidates for office, and talking to people about being a Democrat.

Volusia Democrats were also front and center in addressing official Florida Democratic Party business as well. Democratic Executive Committee (DEC) Chair, State Committeeman Jim Gangitano, and DEC Treasurer Noel Bickford participated in the deliberations of the Central Committee. Gangitano also represented Volusia ably on the Ad Hoc Committee on Rules and Bylaws as that committee worked to update the Florida Democratic Party’s antiquated bylaws. Les Thackston joined the Campaign Committee meeting to discuss upcoming campaign strategy. In all, the weekend included a lot of hard work and was a lot of fun for the Volusia Democrats who attended.



Moderator former State Representative Keith Fitzgerald and Democratic Candidates for Governor Andrew Gillum, Chris King, and Gwen Graham (left to right)

Club News

Editor: Dana Dunmire

Democratic Club of Northeast Volusia County

NOVODEMS

Novo Democrats always have fun at the meetings of the Democratic Club of Northeast Volusia. At the June club meeting, Florida House District 27 candidate Tyran Basil and City of Daytona Beach Director of Leisure Services Percy Williamson joined us and shared a laugh in the meeting room at the Daytona Beach Red Lobster.

Novo Democrats were out at the Juneteenth Celebration in Daytona Beach, registering voters and collecting signatures on petitions to restore voting rights. Pictured is Democratic Club of Northeast Volusia County Board Member Josephine Pope who tells visitors to visit the booth about Democratic values.



Novodems meet at 7 pm, the 3rd Tuesday of every month, at the Red Lobster Restaurant meeting room, 2625 W International Speedway Blvd, Daytona Beach. The room is open from 5:30 pm for dining, drinks, and socializing.

Democratic Club of Northwest Volusia County

June has been a busy month for the Democratic Club of Northwest Volusia. We are concentrating on voter registration and had a successful outreach event over the Memorial Day weekend at DeLeon Springs Park. We will also be there July 1st, 2nd and 4th. If you want to volunteer please contact Lynn Hoganson or Sylvia Perkins.



We are looking for someone to help us with our Website. If you have any experience and could volunteer a few hours a month it would be greatly appreciated. We need to be ready with

media to reach people to ensure we take back seats from the Republicans in 2018.

The next meeting of the Northwest Club will be at 7pm on July 27, 2017 at the Knights of Columbus at 230 E. International Speedway Blvd. in DeLand.

Democratic Club of Southwest Volusia County

The June 1 meeting of the Southwest Democrats was an enjoyable one. Daytona Beach Attorney Ray Donadio provided an excellent overview of county political issues. Jewel Dickson, our Democratic Executive Committee Chair, gave us an overview of the countywide voter registration contest. We laughed at Samantha Bee's "Full Frontal" segment on a very serious subject: restoration of voter rights for ex-felons who have paid their

debt to society. Each member present agreed to get at least five people to sign the petition to restore voter rights for ex=felons.

Southwest's President, Dana Dunmire, traveled to the Hollywood, Florida, Leadership Blue event with other Volusia Democrats. She especially enjoyed the training on communications.

Southwest is gearing up for voter registration and for getting "restoration of rights" petitions signed at each of Deltona's free summer concerts and at Deltona and DeBary's Fourth of July Celebrations.

Our meetings are the first Thursday of every month with the next one coming up on July 6. Join us at the DeBary IHOP at 6 p.m. for dinner and at 7 p.m. for the meeting. If you need additional information, contact Dana Dunmire at dunmirede@gmail.com.



NOVODEMS hard at work and enjoying it.

Review

All the President's Men

Wayne Dickson



Director: Alan J. Pakula

Writers: Carl Bernstein & Bob Woodward (book), and William Goldman (screenplay)

Stars: Dustin Hoffman, Hal Holbrook, Robert Redford, Jason Robards, Jack Warden, et al.

Cinematographer: Gordon Willis



Everyone knows *All the President's Men* is about the *Watergate* break-in and the subsequent cover-up and its consequences, right?

Wrong!

The movie is actually about the investigative journalism that brought those events to public and, eventually, even congressional awareness... and ultimately to a president's resignation. The four (and a half?) key players are the reporters, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward; the Washington D.C. local editor, Harry Rosenfeld; the editor-in-chief, Ben Bradlee; and, of course, the mysterious whistleblower, "Deep Throat."

Each plays a crucial part in digging down to the dark heart of the mystery. Change or remove any one of them, and the story would have ended differently—perhaps radically so. The two

reporters are as diametrically different as Oscar and Felix in *The Odd Couple*, yet they prove to complement one another symbiotically. The editors give them the trust and support need to nurture that symbiosis to the benefit of all.

As long as I'm this close, I'd be remiss not to draw attention to the essential part played in all this by Katherine Graham, the owner of the newspaper. True, she is never heard or seen—but that's the point. As owner, she maintains a solid wall between management and news, allowing neither to interfere with other.



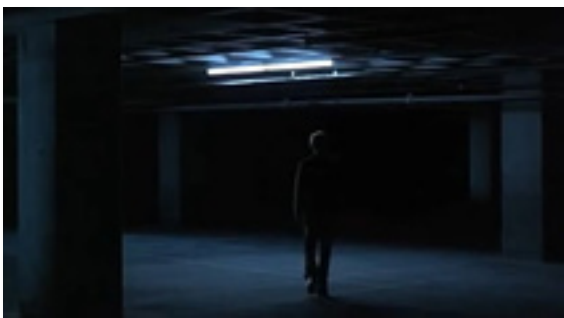
I've focused here on character and plot, but before concluding I want to add a word about time and place, plus the one technical element through which we experience both: cinematography. The movie was shot by the late Gordon Willis, master of creative focus, lighting, and camera angle.

A dramatic example is the extended shot in the *Library of Congress* which starts with a close

shot of “WoodStein” rifling through call slips and ends with a wide angle shot of the entire interior of the reading room as seen from the top of the dome.



A much more subtle example is the shot covering the entire newsroom. At the far end of the room, in sharp focus, a group of staffers gather round a small TV watching the day’s revelations unfold. At the closest end of the room, diagonally, are the two reporters plus the editors who are planning their next move in uncovering the story the other group will be watching tomorrow. They too are in sharp focus, wordlessly suggesting the connection between the two groups.



Overall the film is shot with contrasting schemes: a daylight or brightly lit scheme for the news gathering and editing, and a film noir type darkness contrasted by very bright lights for the dangerous world of night. It is, after

all, a kind of detective story involving serious danger and the highest of stakes.

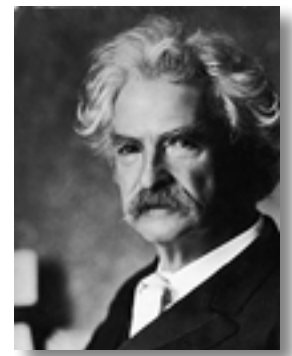
Every day we read and hear comparisons between that earlier “Nixonian” crisis and the “Trumpian” moment through which we are suffering right now. For a quick refresher on the story behind the story of that earlier event, you couldn’t find a more entertaining, more provocative source than *All the President’s Men*.



Blast from the Past

Mark Twain

The War Prayer



Editor's note

Immediately following the cruise missile attack on the airfield from which the Syrian planes carrying the sarin gas had purportedly taken off, the U.S. media responded like so many of Pavlov's dogs. I was reminded of a scene in Orson Welles's film *Citizen Kane*.

Charles Foster Kane is publisher of a major New York newspaper. Immediately after the sinking of the battleship *Maine* in Havana's harbor, he sent a reporter to cover the war.

Immediately after arriving, the reporter calls in to say, "Mr. Kane, there is no war!"

Kane replies, "Don't worry. You supply the reporting, and I'll supply the war!"

And he does.

Another war, another film: Vietnam as depicted in Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. An Air Mobile unit has attacked a village controlled by the Viet Cong. Standing amidst the death and destruction, Col. Kilgore gazes at a line of palms where U.S. planes are dropping their bombs.

"I love the smell of napalm in the morning," he says, wistfully. "It smells like...victory."

Forget the fiction now, and turn to real reporting of a real...“conflict”? Brian Williams on MSNBC:

We see these beautiful pictures, at night, from the decks of these two U.S. Navy vessels in the eastern Mediterranean,” Williams said during a Thursday night broadcast. The anchor went on to quote a line from a Leonard Cohen song, “I am guided by the beauty of our weapons.

Things were not so beautiful at the other end of those missiles' trajectory. Seven to nine military personnel were killed, plus nine civilians—including five children.

President Trump said he was moved to bomb Syrians by the sight of “those beautiful babies” who had been “cruelly murdered.”

Do you think he would have been equally moved by the sight of the beautiful Syrian babies so cruelly murdered by his own orders?



The War Prayer

by Mark Twain

It was a time of great and exalting excitement. The country was up in arms, the war was on, in every breast burned the holy fire of patriotism; the drums were beating, the bands playing, the toy pistols popping, the bunched firecrackers hissing and spluttering; on every hand and far down the receding and fading spread of roofs and balconies a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun; daily the young volunteers marched down the wide avenue gay and fine in their new uniforms, the proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheering them with voices choked with happy emotion as they swung by; nightly the packed mass meetings listened, panting, to patriot oratory with stirred the deepest deeps of their hearts, and which they interrupted at briefest intervals with cyclones of applause, the tears running down their cheeks the while; in the churches the pastors preached devotion to flag and country, and invoked the God of Battles beseeching His aid in our good cause in outpourings of fervid eloquence which moved every listener.

It was indeed a glad and gracious time, and the half dozen rash spirits that ventured to disapprove of the war and cast a doubt upon its righteousness straightway got such a stern and angry warning that for their personal safety's

sake they quickly shrank out of sight and offended no more in that way.

Sunday morning came — next day the battalions would leave for the front; the church was filled; the volunteers were there, their young faces alight with martial dreams — visions of the stern advance, the gathering momentum, the rushing charge, the flashing sabers, the flight of the foe, the tumult, the enveloping smoke, the fierce pursuit, the surrender!

Then home from the war, bronzed heroes, welcomed, adored, submerged in golden seas of glory! With the volunteers sat their dear ones, proud, happy, and envied by the neighbors and friends who had no sons and brothers to send forth to the field of honor, there to win for the flag, or, failing, die the noblest of noble deaths. The service proceeded; a war chapter from the Old Testament was read; the first prayer was said; it was followed by an organ burst that shook the building, and with one impulse the house rose, with glowing eyes and beating hearts, and poured out that tremendous invocation:

God the all-terrible! Thou who ordainest,

Thunder thy clarion and lightning thy sword!

Then came the “long” prayer. None could remember the like of it for passionate pleading and moving and beautiful language. The burden of its supplication was, that an ever-merciful and benignant Father of us all would watch over our noble young soldiers, and aid, comfort, and

encourage them in their patriotic work; bless them, shield them in the day of battle and the hour of peril, bear them in His mighty hand, make them strong and confident, invincible in the bloody onset; help them crush the foe, grant to them and to their flag and country imperishable honor and glory —

An aged stranger entered and moved with slow and noiseless step up the main aisle, his eyes fixed upon the minister, his long body clothed in a robe that reached to his feet, his head bare, his white hair descending in a frothy cataract to his shoulders, his seamy face unnaturally pale, pale even to ghastliness. With all eyes following him and wondering, he made his silent way; without pausing, he ascended to the preacher's side and stood there waiting. With shut lids the preacher, unconscious of his presence, continued his moving prayer, and at last finished it with the words, uttered in fervent appeal, "Bless our arms, grant us the victory, O Lord and God, Father and Protector of our land and flag!"

The stranger touched his arm, motioned him to step aside — which the startled minister did — and took his place. During some moments he surveyed the spellbound audience with solemn eyes, in which burned an uncanny light; then in a deep voice he said:

"I come from the Throne — bearing a message from Almighty God!" The words smote the house with a shock; if the stranger perceived it he gave no attention. "He has heard the prayer of His servant your shepherd, and will grant it if such be your desire after I, His messenger,

shall have explained to you its import — that is to say, its full import. For it is like unto many of the prayers of men, in that it asks for more than he who utters it is aware of — except he pause and think. "God's servant and yours has prayed his prayer. Has he paused and taken thought? Is it one prayer? No, it is two — one uttered, and the other not. Both have reached the ear of Him who heareth all supplications, the spoken and the unspoken. Ponder this — keep it in mind. If you would beseech a blessing upon yourself, beware! lest without intent you invoke a curse upon your neighbor at the same time. If you pray for the blessing of rain on your crop which needs it, by that act you are possibly praying for a curse on some neighbor's crop which may not need rain and can be injured by it.



"You have heard your servant's prayer — the uttered part of it. I am commissioned by God to put into words the other part of it — that part which the pastor — and also you in your hearts — fervently prayed silently. And ignorantly and unthinkingly? God grant that it was so! You heard the words 'Grant us the victory, O Lord our God!' That is sufficient. The whole of the uttered prayer is compact into those pregnant words. Elaborations were not necessary. When you have prayed for victory you have prayed for many unmentioned results which follow

victory — must follow it, cannot help but follow it. Upon the listening spirit of God fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen!

“Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth into battle — be Thou near them! With them — in spirit — we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe. O Lord our God, help us tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended in the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames in summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it —

For our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet!

We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts. Amen.

(After a pause.) “Ye have prayed it; if ye still desire it, speak! The messenger of the Most High waits.”

...

It was believed afterward that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said.



Quiz

Geography in the News



- A. _____ Afghanistan E. _____ Pakistan I. _____ Turkey
B. _____ Iran F. _____ Saudi Arabia J. _____ Yemen
C. _____ Iraq G. _____ Somalia
D. _____ Jordan H. _____ Syria





Quiz



Dates



Links

1. B
2. E
3. A
4. I
5. H
6. C
7. D
8. F
9. G
10. J

See the [web page](#).