

# The Democrat

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

Monthly Newsletter

Consolidated Series 2, Issue #7\_ July 2018

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## Congratulations all!

- Win or lose, our candidates brought out the best in each other and raised the Democratic presence in Volusia County to a new high.
- Despite the intense heat (and occasional verbal abuse from fellow citizens), our clubs provided literature and assistance at all our early voting sites.
- By sharing experiences, we learned how to be even better prepared for the main election.

## “If you build it, they will come!”

The better the turnout, the more likely Democrats will win. So our job is to...

- Register potential voters.
- Convince them to become actual voters.
- Help them to become informed voters.

- Help them to vote by mail, vote early, or get to the polls.

## How can you help?

In general, you name it, we need it: office help, phoning, canvassing, attending to booths or tables, hosting/helping fundraising socials.... In addition, individual clubs have particular needs. See the contact info on the next page.



## Campaign Headquarters

DEC and North East Club	547 S. Ridgewood Daytona Beach	386-281-3384	Ellen Roy	ellenroy915@gmail.com
North West Club	855 W. New York Av., DeLand	386-279-0284	Barbara Grimm	barbaragrimm@brighthouse.com
South East Club	201 S. Ridgewood, Edgewater	(386) 410-5955	Laura Smith	smittysproshop8@gmail.com
South West Club	1200 Deltona Blvd., Deltona	(301) 346-8822	Dana Dunmire	dunmirede@gmail.com

***BTW, if your time is limited, please consider a monetary gift to the DEC!***

Your DEC needs your help and support in order to mail Voter Guidelines/slate cards as we did during the primary election.

**According to the FDP and Lisa Lewis, we had the highest primary voter turn out since 1978!**

We believe this was due to the hard work of the clubs and of course the mailing of our

voter guidelines/slate cards to all VBM (Vote by Mail) and Warm Democratic Voters (those who .

Hope to see you all at the **DEC meeting on September 24th at 7:00 PM Daytona State College/UCF Building.** All Democrats are welcome!

Jewel

*Be sure to check out Wayne Dickson's personal, unofficial, unendorsed Blue Wave blog. The blog is aimed specifically at Volusia County. Readers, contributors, and commenters are all welcome:*

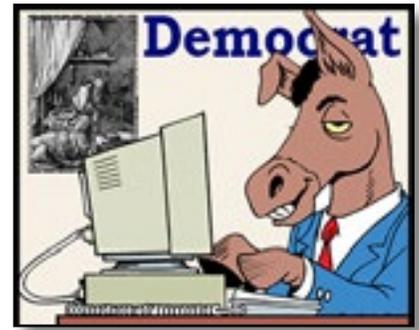
<http://babbino.org>



# Editorial

## Elections: KISS

Wayne Dickson



### As the cliché says, folks, it isn't rocket science!

To win an election, you need to get more votes than your opponent. There are basically two ways to make this happen: (a) Increase the number votes you receive. (b) Decrease the number of votes your opponent receives.

These days, to increase your own vote count illicitly is referred to as *voter fraud*. It's extremely rare. (Not always, but in most cases, the extra vote you'll add if successful will make little difference; while the prison term you'll face if you're caught is significant.) The offenders are both Democratic and Republican.

To decrease your opponent's count illicitly or unethically is referred to as *voter suppression*. It's a massive continuing problem, comprising such obvious tactics as caging, elimination of early voting and voting by mail, reducing the number of polling places, reducing the hours the polls are open, requiring voter I.D., "cross-checking," disenfranchising felons who have fully paid their debt to society, etc. In other words, it's either fully legal or in the fuzzy zone extending either side of the line.

It's practiced almost exclusively by Republicans, and one of the most notorious states where it's been practiced is the one where I was born and have spent my entire life. That would be

the state where almost everything rotten about our voting system came together in 2000 to put "George the Lesser" in the White House. You know, the state where his brother, the governor, controlled the voting. Yeah, this state. Florida.



The first time I personally recognized one of these stunts locally was in a primary election about 4-6 years ago. Just before the vote a nasty mailing went out. It was directed against a Democratic candidate and was filled with lies, half-truths, and distortions. Most people assumed it had come from the candidate's Democratic primary opponent.

But had it? Who had really paid for that mailing (6 x 8 glossy cards)? Well, the disclosure line said it had come from an organization no one recognized, something meaningless like “Committee to X” or “Friends of Y.” I hadn’t the resources to peel back enough layers to identify the ultimate source, but I did discover (by comparing phone numbers, zip codes, and mail boxes) that the ad had been created and mailed by a Republican campaign advertising company located in Tallahassee.

So why would Republicans spend money surreptitiously to intervene that way in a Democratic primary?

- To help the weakest, most easily defeated Democrat win the primary.
- To weaken local Democratic organizations by sowing dissension among them.
- To encourage Democratic and independent voters to feel so disgusted by what they wrongly believed were Democratic dirty tricks and dirty politics that they would just give up and stay home on election day.
- Etc.

Compared to the situation we face today that was kid stuff. For example, the burgeoning of engagement with social media (anti-social media?) has made it easy for anyone to play dirty tricks anonymously. I haven’t space here to pursue this, but think about it this way. The tricks and techniques used by Russia’s FSB (successor of the KGB) are now being emulated by born and bred American organizations of the radical right.

## What should we be on the lookout for?

The same sort of dirty tricks using direct mail and other advertising means have already been used in the lead-up to Tuesday’s election. Before you take advertising claims seriously, make sure you know clearly which individuals or organizations have paid for it.

- When it comes to social media, do not accept—let alone forward—either a positive or a negative claim until you’ve fact-checked it and made certain who sent it.
- Don’t allow “trolls” to spread rumors, stir up dissension, get your knickers in a knot, or waste your time in fruitless exchanges. (Remember, “It ain’t what you don’t know that gets you in trouble. It’s what you do know that just ain’t so.” Even if you know what web trolling means—or even if you do!—check below to make sure.)

Extend the list using your own common sense.

## How should we deal with it?

- Remember that you’re not trying to convince yourself. Instead, you’re trying to convince a person who experiences and reacts to the world quite differently from you.
- Accept the fact there are some arguments, just as there are some games, you simply cannot win. As poker players say, “You gotta know when to hold ’em, and know when to

fold 'em!" Let's face it, folks, Charlie Brown will never kick that football.

- Remember that you're not going to change another's values or beliefs. Rather, you should think of ways of showing that your position on a particular issue is consistent with—if not mandated by—her or his existing values.

- Liberals are impressed by data and statistics. Conservatives are not. Remember Kellyann Conway's comment about "alternative facts"? Remember Rudy Giuliani's saying, "You have your truths and I have mine"?

*This is the kind of troll that lives under a bridge and eats goats.*



*This is the kind of troll that slowly drags a lure to catch fish.*



*This is the kind of troll that makes obnoxious comments on websites merely for the fun of getting liberals riled up and tricks them into wasting time on a fruitless exchange of insults.*

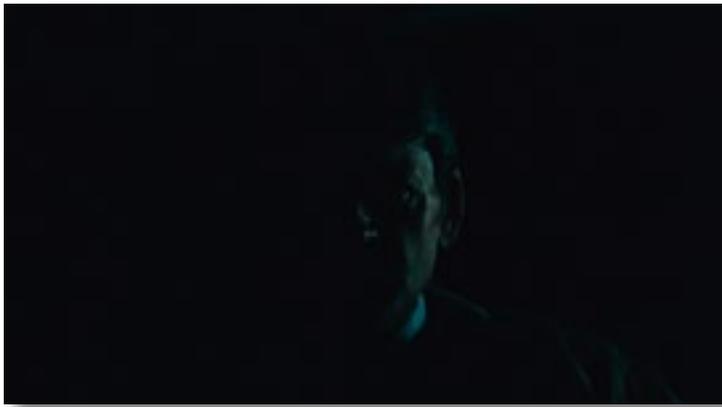


# Review

## All the President's men

### Bob Woodward & Carl Bernstein

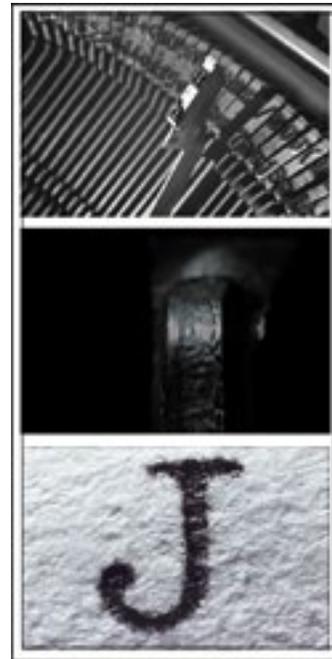
We need to keep in mind that *All the President's Men* is not really about the evils Nixon and his men had practiced in getting him elected and later reelected; rather, it's about the role of the *Washington Post* and its two young reporters in discovering and exposing the **cover-up** of those events.



In retelling that story director Alan Pakula and his cinematographer, the great Gordon Willis, use light both dramatically and symbolically. The mystery and danger are presented almost in a color version of *film noir*. For example, every scene involving “Deep Throat,” Woodward’s deep background anonymous source, are shot at night in the near total darkness of a deserted parking garage. In contrast, most of the moments of insight, and all but one of the moments of decision, are shot in the harsh light of a newsroom or diner.

Three of my favorite shots encapsulate this principle perfectly. The movie opens with an almost microscopic close-up shot in black and white. It shows the fibrous whiteness of a blank

sheet of paper. There’s a flash of movement, a loud plosive noise, and a large capital “J” appears on the screen. Wow! That woke me up! And it kept me awake, too. Because, after all, the paper was still there; another character was coming, and it had to be important!



The second shot occurs early on. One of the key themes of the film is the way various seemingly unrelated threads are gradually seized and woven together. Two threads in this scene are the ongoing reelection campaign and the digging Woodward is doing in Washington.

The scene is set in the newsroom. In several shots we see a subtle but highly significant phenomenon: Facing us in the foreground we see Woodward in sharp focus; behind him, in the far background, we see in equally sharp

focus a group gathered to watch a television set up on the wall; between, we see a woman working at her desk. Ho hum, yawn, right? Wrong! The woman in the middle is in soft focus!



Symbolically, this tells the viewer in strictly visual terms that there's a significant connection between what's happening in the background and what's happening in the foreground. That's obvious. What's not so obvious is the way this effect was achieved. (Remember, this was 1976.) The answer is that Willis had a special lens or lens attachment made (I forget which), one that divided the area of sharpest focus.

The third scene that really impressed me featured what's called a "pull-back" shot. The camera focuses on something like a close-up or two-shot, then starts pulling away. The setting here is the enormous domed reading room of the Library of Congress. The effect starts with a two-shot of Woodward and Bernstein at a reading desk on the ground floor—then it starts pulling up and back...and up and back...and up and back.... It doesn't stop until it ends up at what seems to be the very top of the dome.

[For the record, to making this shot was an amazing technical, logistical, and diplomatic feat. After all, the Librarian of Congress was

responsible for protecting the structure, the patrons, and the books.]



OK. I hope you'll forgive my momentary distraction there. The main thing to remember is that this movie is primarily about the drudgery, doggedness, physical and moral courage, and eventually the rewards of our nation's free press. We must never take that for granted. We must never, ever casually accept a would-be dictator's efforts to discredit and crush our free press.



# Quiz

## Watergate!



Given the many similarities between the two, it's inevitable that we'll encounter lots of references comparing Nixon's cover-ups and obstruction of justice with Trump's. The following quiz will provide a start on refreshing memories. Some of the options are tricky, but fair, and some will give you a chuckle (I hope!).

By the way, the film *All the Presidents Men*, based on Woodward and Bernstein's book, is both a good movie and an enjoyable way to add to your knowledge.



1. What was *Watergate* at the time of the break-in?
  - A. combination office-residential complex.
  - B. congressional office building.
  - C. public housing.
  - D. combination yacht club and exclusive condo complex.
2. Who was the retired *C.I.A.* agent who recruited the Watergate break-in burglars. He used all the following pseudonyms: John Baxter, Gordon Davis, Robert Dietrich, David St. John.
  - A. Bernard Barker.
  - B. Howard Hunt.
  - C. Gordon Liddy.
  - D. James McCord.
3. Who accepted blame for erasing part of the Nixon tapes:
  - A. Herbert Butterfield.
  - B. James McCord.
  - C. Rose Mary Wood.
  - D. Martha Mitchell.
4. What does "rat f\*cking" refer to in the Nixon context?
  - A. Retribution on "rats" who make plea deals to testify against superordinates in organized crime organizations.
  - B. Destroying "little guys" in a criminal organization to send a message to their bosses.
  - C. Minor conspiracies among members of rival criminal organizations.
  - D. Playing all sorts of dirty tricks to damage one's opponents.
5. Post reporter Bob Woodward called a confidential informant close to the *White House* "Deep Throat." What was Deep Throat's real name and occupation?
  - A. Mark Felt, high level *FBI* agent.
  - B. John Dean, *White House* Counsel.
  - C. Jeb Magruder, high level Nixon aide.
  - D. Katherine Graham, Bob Haldeman's private secretary.

6. Which of the following did NOT resign or get fired in “Saturday Night Massacre”?
- Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox.
  - Attorney General Elliot Richardson.
  - Deputy Attorney General William Ruckleshouse.
  - Solicitor General Robert Bork.
7. When the grand jury indicted the “Watergate Seven,” whom they also identify as an unindicted co-conspirator?
- President Richard Nixon.
  - Attorney General John Mitchell.
  - Assistant to the President John Erlichman.
  - Head of the “Plumbers” unit G. Gordon Liddy.
8. Who said/wrote this? “He is humorless to the point of being inhumane. He is devious. He is vacillating. He is profane. He is willing to be led. He displays dismaying gaps in knowledge. He is suspicious of his staff. His loyalty is minimal.”
- The *Chicago Tribune*, writing about Richard Nixon,.
  - The *Chicago Tribune*, writing about Donald Trump, .
  - A “deep background” source, speaking about Richard Nixon, quoted by Woodward and Bernstein in *All the President’s Men*.
  - A “deep background” source, speaking about Donald Trump, quoted by Bob Woodward in his book *Fear: Trump in the White House*.
9. The issue of access to the tapes recorded in the Oval Office went to the *United States Supreme Court*. On July 24, 1974, in *United States v. Nixon*, the *Court* ruled by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_ that claims of executive privilege over the tapes were void. (Then-Justice William Rehnquist had recused himself.)
- 5-3.
  - 6-2.
  - 7-1.
  - 8-0.
10. Politically, the so-called “Smoking Gun” tape destroyed Nixon, turning even Republicans in the *Senate* against him. The tape revealed a conversation between Nixon and Haldeman, where Nixon revealed that \_\_\_\_\_?
- The *Watergate* burglars had been paid from a slush fund managed directly by Nixon and top aides.
  - He had fired the special prosecutor specifically to protect himself from being tied to the *Watergate* burglary.
  - He had nominated Rehnquist for the *Supreme Court* specifically because of his views on investigating or indicting a sitting president.
  - Haldeman explained his strategy for covering up *White House* responsibility for the *Watergate* burglary.



## Answers

1. **A**
2. **B**
3. **D**
4. **C**
5. **A**
6. **D**
7. **A**
8. **A**
9. **D**
10. **D**

Re #5

Martha Mitchell was Attorney General John Mitchell's wife. Worth reading about her role in the *Watergate* tragi-comedy.

Rose Mary Wood tried to say she erased the tape accidentally while reaching around to answer the phone. She could not replicate that stunt for the court. Nixon himself is the prime suspect.

Deep Throat is the title of a porn movie starring Linda Lovelace and Harry Reems. The phrase has been resuscitated for White House "leakers."

Re #9

How do you suppose Kavanaugh would have voted?

