

The Delray Democrat

January 2024 (# 65)

Chill

Michael K. Cantwell

I'm talking about the coming election, not the weather. Biden may not win in the landslide he deserves, but he'll win – whether or not Trump is on the ballot.

Republican hostility to women and love affair with autocrats will propel turnout, as it did in 2022, when polls wrongly predicted a red tsunami. Equally important, however, Biden will win on the economy.

Biden added 14.2 million jobs in 35 months. Economists predicted a recession in 2023, but instead he added over 2.6 million jobs. In his *best* year, Trump failed to add even 2.3 million jobs while Biden's annualized *average* is just shy of 5 million.

Unemployment has fallen from 6.4% when Biden was inaugurated to 3,7%. For context, the last time unemployment was that low Richard Nixon was president.

The major black spot, inflation, has been tamed. Year-over-year inflation fell from 9.1% at its height in June 2022 to 3.1% at the end of November. It is approaching the target set by the Fed, and three interest rate cuts are projected for 2024, which will propel more economic growth. .

Some prices are actually falling. Toys were down 3% and sports equipment down 2% this holiday season compared to 2022; washing machines cost 12% less than a year ago, and the price of eggs are down 22% over a year ago.

Consumer confidence surged in November – economists were expecting a modest increase amounting to 1.8%. Instead, consumer confidence rose 13.2%.

Republicans will do everything they can to wreck the economy—it's what they do best—but my guess is that Biden will play Mike Johnson the way he played McCarthy, and if there is a government shutdown Republicans will pay at the polls.

The bottom line: don't worry, but don't be complacent, and never stop fighting..

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Upcoming Meeting

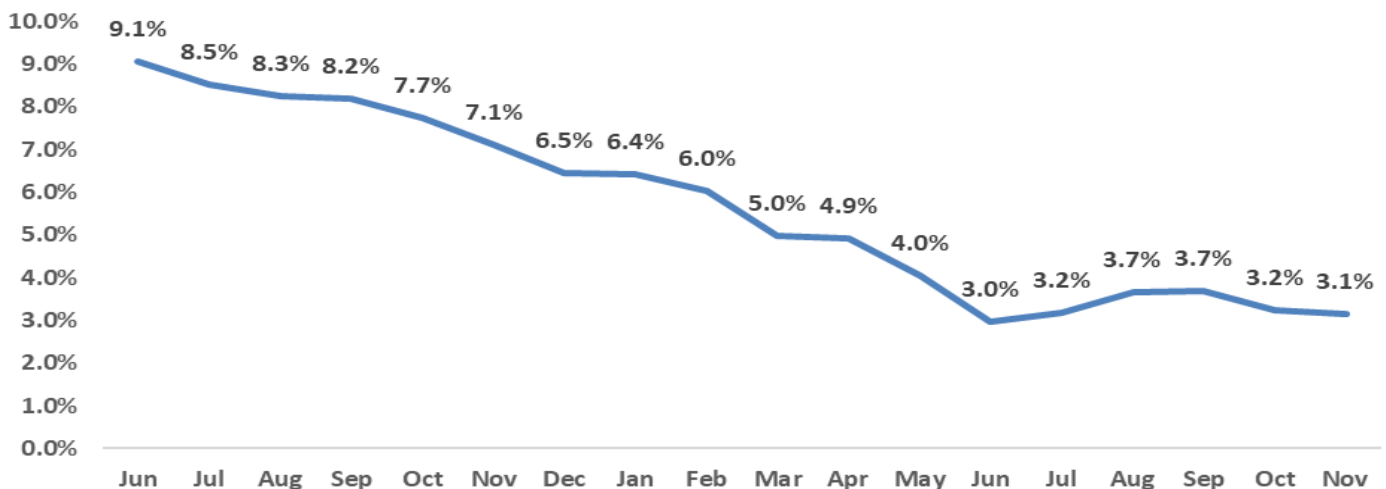
Municipal Elections
Candidates' Forum
January 18, 2024
Pompey Park

How to Re-enroll in Vote by Mail

Phone: (561) 656-6208
Fax: (561) 656-6230
In person: click [here](#) for
locations of SOE.
Or scan the QR code



Year-Over-Year Inflation Continues to Fall



Talking Inflation

Michael K. Cantwell

The spike in inflation between June 2021 and June 2023 caused a good deal of pain, but for Republicans it was a godsend. It was the only economic indicator they could attack. All others were performing at historically unmatched levels . . . and continue to do so.

Inflation now appears to have been tamed, but the cloud it cast over Biden's stewardship of the economy must be debunked and dispersed. Here are some facts that will help: .

- Runaway inflation resulted from a perfect storm, and Biden had little control over the elements. The rightwing media deliberately ignored the numerous other contributory factors, and the So-Called Liberal Media buried them deep in their coverage.
- Biden's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was a supporting but minor player in inflation. ARPA totaled \$1.9 trillion, far less than Trump's two COVID packages, which amounted to \$2.9 trillion. ARPA reduced child poverty by 35% in 2021 whereas Trump's CARES package was called the "biggest fraud in a generation."
- Historically high levels of savings during the pandemic was a major factor in driving inflation. Household spending was severely curtailed by social distancing during the pandemic, which led to savings rates far above historical norms. That in turn created a good part of the excess demand that fueled inflation.
- Republicans caused the shift in demand from services to goods, and that was the principal driver of inflation. After a year of being cooped up, Americans were looking forward to spending on vacations and eating out again. Republican lies

about the danger of vaccines delayed the opening of the economy, leading demand to shift from services to goods. Instead of going on vacation, they ordered new living room sets.

- The sudden demand for goods, as opposed to services, strained supply chains, delayed deliveries, and drove up prices.
- The Russian invasion of Ukraine drove up fuel prices.
- Corporate greed was a major contributor to inflation. Once it became clear inflation was not a temporary blip, corporations got in on the act. As one CFO put it on an earnings call, his company was "not leaving any pricing on the table." Waiting for a COVID shot, I watched a Publix employee putting new stickers on candy—what was \$3.25 became \$3.75. And oil company's profits soared. There was nothing Biden could do about that.

Biden cannot be blamed for the perfect storm that hit the world economy, and he deserves much credit for the calm and effective manner in which he responded.

Biden's job creation machine enabled the economy to survive **11** interest rate increases without falling into the recession that economists declared was both inevitable and "necessary." Biden's investments in American jobs allowed us to achieve a "soft landing"

Finally, American workers are now recovering the purchasing power that had been lost to inflation. Between June 2022 (when inflation began to fall) and November 2023, **wages have outstripped inflation by 8.1%.**

Worth Quoting

"You want to know what this was really all about? The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. You understand what I'm saying? We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did." John Ehrlichman on the "Drug War" launched by Richard Nixon, quoted in 2017 in "[Legalize It All](#)," by Dan Baum of Harpers.

The simple reality of the past year or so is that America has accomplished what many, perhaps most, economists considered impossible: a large fall in inflation without a recession or even a big rise in unemployment. If you don't trust me, listen to Goldman Sachs, which on Wednesday issued a report titled "The Hard Part Is Over," noting that we're managing to combine rapid disinflation with solid growth, and that it expects this happy combination — the opposite of stagflation — to continue. Paul Krugman on [What History Tells Us About the Feel-Bad Economy](#):

Fun Facts

Michael K. Cantwell

About Consumer Confidence

If you blinked, you missed this. On December 8, 2023, the *Wall Street Journal* [reported](#) that “The University of Michigan’s consumer-confidence index surged from 61.3 to 69.4, surpassing economists’ expectations of a 62.4 reading.” Not a word about this in *The New York Times*, the flagship of the So-Called Liberal Media.

Instead, I found a piece by *The Times*’s numbers cruncher, Nate Cohn, asking whether “[vibes](#)” from Fox et al. or actual economic data are responsible for consumers’ sour view of the economy. There was not an inkling of understanding that the SCLM is equally culpable. One person commenting on the article captured this [perfectly](#):

Trump and the Republican propaganda machine just lie about the economy and many people believe them. The supposedly liberal media add to this by searching in vain for explanations based on real economics. Those explanations do not exist.

About Immigration

Like many who demonize immigrants, Ron DeSantis claims that *his ancestors* emigrated legally, but that doesn't tell the whole story.

According to [genealogist](#) Megan Smolenyak, there were few restrictions on immigration when his great-great-grandmother Luigia Colucci set sail. Only 2 percent of arrivals at Ellis Island were turned back.

Luigia was 8 months pregnant and en route to join her husband, who’d emigrated 13 years earlier, in 1904. While she was at sea, the Immigration Act of 1917 passed. It imposed literacy requirements and “was intended to limit undesirable southern and eastern European immigrants.” Luckily for Luigia, it did not take effect until after she’d arrived,

Luigia still had cause to worry, however. Medical reasons were the principal cause immigrants were turned back, and she was 8 month pregnant.

She was initially detained for a week at Ellis Island and then released. She was reunited with her husband, and her “anchor baby” was born shortly thereafter.

About Immigrants and Crime

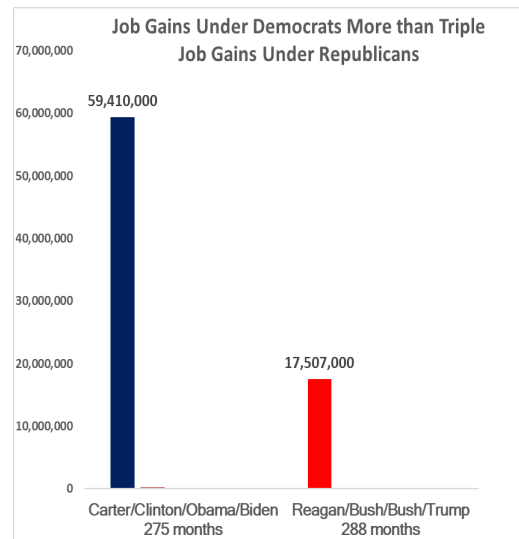
Immigrants commit [fewer crimes](#) than native Americans. US-born citizens are more than twice as likely to be arrested for violent crimes, 2.5 times more likely to be arrested for drug crimes, and over 4 times more likely to be arrested for property crimes.

About Job Growth

Obama created 1.6 million more jobs during his final three years in office than Trump created in his first three. (before the pandemic). Obama’s monthly average was 219,833 while Trump’s was 175,278.

Meanwhile **Bidenomics** has created an average of **416,857 jobs every month**. Biden is on schedule to create more jobs in his first term than Ronald Reagan created in two full terms. And when he completes his second term (yes, “second term,” you doubters) he will have surpassed Bill Clinton

The last four Democratic presidents created **more than three times as many jobs** as the last four Republican presidents.



About Red State Murders

In every year between 2000 and 2020 the [murder rate](#) in states that voted for Donald Trump exceeded the rate in states that voted for Joe Biden.

Walking the Line

Michael K. Cantwell

Jamelle Bouie, *The New York Times*'s invaluable columnist, recently reported that "Joe Biden became the first sitting American president to walk a picket line."

President Biden walked the line and spoke with striking members of the United Auto Workers at a General Motors plant during their six-week strike against the Big Three auto manufacturers.

The strike ended earlier this month, with workers achieving record gains, including a 25% pay increase over 4 years, increased pay for temporary workers, reinstatement of cost-of-living increases, and improved retirement benefits. The union is now targeting Tesla and non-union plants in the South.

According to [The Wall Street Journal](#), there were more than 20 major work stoppages in 2023, many of them lasting weeks or months. In addition to the 40-day UAW strike were those by Hollywood writers and actors, which lasted 118 and 148 days, respectively.

The strikes, and threatened strikes, led to significant gains for workers, both in salaries and benefits. The Culinary and Bartenders union secured the largest wage increase in its union's 88-year history

That in turn led to a chorus of complaints that higher wages would drive inflation, causing one reader to wryly comment, "I take it that the discussion is not about your wages." Another commenter wrote:

On one hand, Republicans complain when wages don't keep up with inflation.

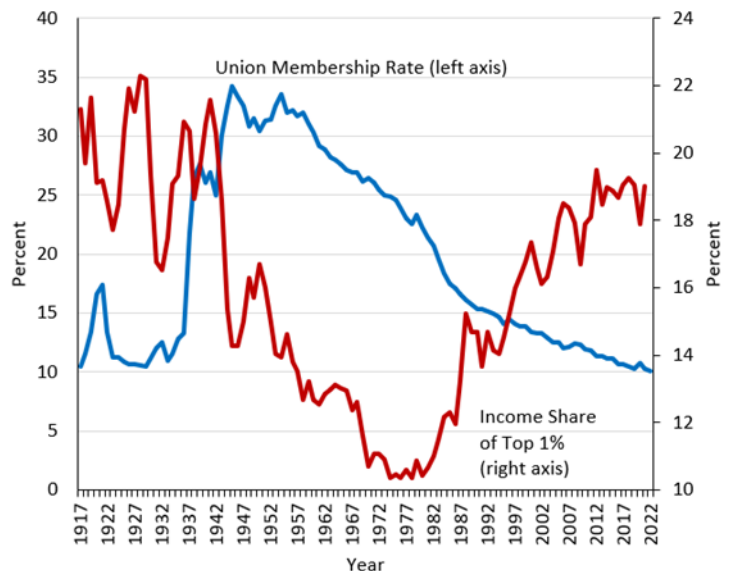
On the other hand, Republicans complain when wages keep up with inflation.

It's like grandpa Abe yelling at the sky.



Actually, unions help *all* workers, whether or not they belong to one. Biden's Treasury Department recently released a chart that vividly demonstrates the inverse relationship between union membership and income inequality.

As union membership (blue line) was soaring from 10% at the time FDR's National Labor Relations Board was established in 1935 to more than 30%, the income share of the top one percent (red line) fell from over 30% to around 1% (reflective of their percentage of the population). That began to change in the early 1970s, when the gains of the prior decades started to be rolled back.



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We're also always looking for writers (remember, you don't have to live in Delray Beach to read or write for *The Delray Democrat*. Send submissions to editor@thedelraydemocrat.com.

December Democratic Club of Delray Beach Meeting Recap

Michael K. Cantwell

Congresswoman Debbie Mucarsel-Powell

Debbie Mucarsel-Powell was the featured speaker at the December meeting of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach. She's the first Ecuadorian American elected to Congress and we believe she'll become the first elected to the U.S. Senate. Click [here](#) to watch her, and I think you'll agree.

In Congress, Debbie chaired the women's Hispanic Caucus, she is "a proud Latina for choice, and I will not allow politicians like Rick Scott to be making decisions for my daughters, to take away the same rights I've had coming to this incredible country."

Scott has three advantages – he's White, he's male, and he's rich. But as Debbie pointed out:

He's never run in a presidential election, he's never run by more than a percentage point, he was only able to beat Senator Bill Nelson by putting in \$64 million of his own money and only won by ten thousand votes, he's never run against the millions of women that are going to come out to protect their rights when we have that abortion ballot initiative in November 2024, and he's never had to confront a woman like myself, a Latina that knows exactly how to communicate with my community down in South Florida and with Floridians all over the state.

Scott is vulnerable. He may be the most odious and disliked member of the senate, despite the strong competition from Josh "Watch Him Run" Hawley and "Cancun Ted" Cruz. Even Mitch McConnell can't stand him.

And if Scott thinks that having presided over a company that entered into what was then the largest settlement for healthcare fraud in U.S. history, his attempt to "sunset" Medicare makes it an issue now. The man whose company defrauded Medicare now wants to take away your Medicare.

Debbie is feisty and dynamic but thoughtful and poised. She won't let Scott get in her face, and she'll get in his.



Daniel Eisenger, Chief Assistant to Palm Beach County Public Defender Carey Haughwout

Among those who came to hear Debbie was Daniel Eisenger, who has worked at the Palm Beach County Public Defender's Office for virtually the entirety of his 20-year career as an attorney. He is currently Chief Assistant to Carey Haughwout, our beloved Public Defender, who is retiring next year. As Dan is running to succeed Carey, I asked him to say a few words.

It's not the first time Dan has spoken to our Club. Back in November 2019, he and Jessica Younts (then Vice President of the Federal Rights Restoration Coalition), briefed us on the joint effort of the FRRC and the offices of Palm Beach County Public Defender, State Attorney, and Clerk to prevent Republicans from eviscerating Amendment 4.

In 2018, Amendment 4 was passed by 64.6% of Florida voters. It provided a path for persons who had been disenfranchised due to a prior felony conviction to automatically recover their voting rights upon completion of their sentences. For those interested, a video of that is available [here](#).

Republicans tacked on a provision that required these "Returning Citizens" to first pay the court costs involved in their original trials, an amount the State was unable to determine. The workaround adopted by Palm Beach County offices was to take the court costs out of the sentencing paperwork. In this fashion, they were able to restore the voting rights of some 500-600 Returning Citizens. Dan headed up the effort at the Public Defender's Office.

Dan told us he tried everything from death penalty cases to misdemeanors, but what makes him "so happy to be there is working with our young lawyers . . . who just want to do good, they want to help the underserved, they want to help the less fortunate, and I've been really proud to work with them." That's what it's all about.

Thank Joe Biden

The American Rescue Plan Act begins the recovery from the Trump Depression:

- Local governments provided \$360 billion to keep front line public workers on the job and paid.
- Expanded and extended unemployment payments protect workers until the economy reopens.
- Over 200 million Americans are vaccinated against COVID in first 100 days, thanks to \$160 billion funding for supplies and vaccines.
- Investments in Affordable Care Act allowed more than 18 million Americans to obtain health insurance, savings tens of thousands from premature, preventable deaths.
- Increased and expanded Child Tax Credit cut child poverty by 35% in 2021.
- Helped create more jobs (6.7 million) during the first year of any presidency.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passes with 17 Republican senators voting in favor. Florida's senators vote against the bill, although they and our governor are happy to take credit for the money and services it provides.

- The largest investment in infrastructure in over a decade.
- The largest investment in clean drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in U.S. history.
- The largest investment in clean energy transmission and EV infrastructure in U.S. history.
- The largest investment in public transit in nearly six decades.
- The largest investment in bridges since the construction of the interstate highway system.
- More than 40,000 projects already off the ground.

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act is the first gun safety legislation in nearly three decades.

The PACT Act is the biggest expansion of veterans' benefits in over three decades. The Act has already sparked \$200 billion in private investments in the United States.

The Inflation Reduction Act is the greatest investment in green energy in U.S. history. It reduces the deficit by authorizing Medicare to negotiate with drug companies, closing tax loopholes, and providing \$80 billion to the IRS for additional tax enforcement.

The CHIPS Act invests in microchip production to make America more competitive with China and reduce our reliance on foreign sources for a vital component used by the defense industry. The Act has already sparked \$200 billion in private investments in the United States.

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Editorial Board: Michael K. Cantwell (Editor), Char Lane (Managing Editor), Sandra Elaissen-Cantwell, David Kulick, and June Neal.

Letters from Our Members and Friends

Writing to newspapers can influence NPAs and give aid, comfort, and information to Democrats. Here is the latest crop from local Democrats. And if we've missed one of your letters, please send it to us and, with your permission, we'll include it in the next issue!

The national media is making a horse race out of what should be a slam-dunk election by obsessing on inflation and Joe Biden's age while ignoring a historic presidency.

Biden has done far more than help the country recover from the economic and moral train wreck of the Trump presidency. He's the first president to effectively challenge Ronald Reagan's disastrous trickle-down economics. He has done more with less than any of his predecessors because his age is an asset, not a liability.

He's been around the block much longer than Bill Clinton and Barack Obama were when they were elected, and it shows in his ability to manage Republicans in a manner reminiscent of how Reagan managed Democrats. His age would be an asset in a second term as it was to Reagan.

Biden's "middle out, bottom up" economy has been a major success in terms of the number and quality of jobs created. It's why the economy has weathered 10 interest rate hikes without the recession predicted by many so-called experts.

A focus on average Americans was the basis of FDR's New Deal, a social contract that presidents in both parties followed for a half century before it was replaced by Reagan's "raw deal." It built a middle class that was the envy of the world.

A race between Biden and Trump should be a no-brainer. New Deal or Raw Deal? Continue to plunder American workers (since Reagan, it's estimated that some \$50 trillion has shifted from the bottom 90% to the top 1%) or end the class war reparations? Resurrect our democracy, or give up on the grand experiment of America?

Michael K. Cantwell, *Sun-Sentinel*, November 27, 2023

Thanks to Sun Sentinel columnist Fred Grimm for calling out Republican Party hypocrites, especially Bridget Ziegler, co-founder of Moms for Liberty, who has admitted to three-way trysts, and her husband Christian Ziegler, the deposed chairman of the Republican Party of Florida, who's accused of rape.

We wouldn't care about these people except that their phony moralism has done such damage to our state and our public education. Thanks to Moms for Liberty, Gov. Ron DeSantis and the Republican-supermajority Legislature, Florida is plagued by a litany of racist, homophobic and xenophobic laws that erased the existence of LGBTQ+ kids, dismissed Black Americans' and Hispanics' struggles as "woke" and claimed that slavery had "benefits." Our teachers work in fear, state college and university professors fight gag orders, and hundreds of important books have been banned.

I decided to fight back by giving students the books their government stole from them and teaching them to defend their liberties. Join us! Come to the big Read Banned Books Corp. rally at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 20 at the Countess de Hoernle Theatre at Spanish River High School, 5100 Jog Rd., Boca Raton.

Our amazing guest speakers include Renee O'Connor, a history teacher who left the classroom in protest of DeSantis' whitewashed curriculum, because, as she said, "I will not tell lies." She was one of four finalists out of 18,000 people nominated for Miami-Dade Teacher of the Year and helped draft the College Board's highly praised AP African-American History course that DeSantis rejected as too "woke." For more information, write to readbannedbooksusa@gmail.com.

June S. Neal, Delray Beach, *Sun Sentinel*, December 20, 2023

Democratic Club of Delray Beach Officers and Directors

Michael Cantwell, President; Char Lane, Vice-President; Mary Fader, Secretary; David Kulick, Treasurer; Robert Averack, Parliamentarian; Janet Zweibach, Recording Secretary; Peter Camacho, Jack Goldstein, Charlie Holbrook, June Neal, Directors; Sandra Elaisson-Cantwell, Director Emerita; and John Ramos, Director Emeritus.

2024 Membership

Char Lane

Now that 2023 is over and the General Election is less than a year away, it's time to get to work.

It's also time to renew your DCDB membership for 2024. Membership is on a calendar year basis and your dues help provide funding for operational projects, such as *The Delray Democrat*, our meetings, other operational supplies, and signage for our sign waving events. Meetings are at 7 PM on the third Thursday of each month at the Palm Beach County Democratic Party office, located in the Congress Office Park, 220 Congress Park Drive, Suite 140, in Delray Beach. Our meetings are hybrid so you can also join via zoom. Meeting notices are sent out in the weeks before the meetings, and include Zoom links to register for and/or join the meetings and links to our various websites.

Our goal is to educate people as to the importance of voting, why they should vote Democratic and why they should use Vote-by-Mail as a critical tool in support of this goal. With all that's been going on we'll have to work exceptionally hard to help keep our democracy intact and protect it from being decimated by Trump and his cohorts.

Getting out the vote is our most important mission. You can help by making phone calls, texting, writing postcards, canvassing, or becoming a precinct leader. You can register people to vote and help people sign up

or reenroll to vote by mail. You can volunteer for projects to benefit the community. There's so much to do between now and November 2024.

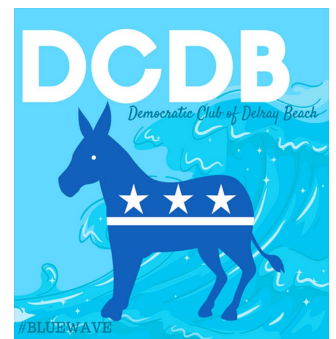
If you're a member of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach, please renew for 2024. If you're not a member of the Club, please consider joining.

Please visit us at www.demclubofdelray.org. Read our monthly publication *The Delray Democrat* at www.thedelraydemocrat.com. Visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/992741928168620>.

Become a member of the DCDB by completing and mailing the below Membership application or going to <https://www.demclubofdelray.org/membership> or by clicking on the QR code below. You can also give me your membership application/renewal at our meetings.



Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2024 Membership Application and Renewal



Date _____ New _____ Renewal _____

Name/names of household members _____

Address _____

E-mail Address _____ Phone number _____

(E-mail addresses are shared with the Palm Beach County Democratic Party so our members will be kept abreast of the latest County Democratic Activity. If you do not wish to receive this information, please initial here _____ and we will not share your E-mail address.)

Preferred method of contact: E-mail _____ Mail _____ Phone _____ Text _____

Send newsletter by: E-mail _____ Hand delivery _____ U.S. Mail _____

I/we are in South Florida from _____ to _____ each year or are a permanent resident _____.

Payment: Individual \$25 _____ Household \$35 _____ Donation _____

Please make checks payable to Democratic Club of Delray Beach and mail to P.O. Box 8224, Delray Beach, FL 33484. Thank you and welcome to our Club.