

The Delray Democrat

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September 2022

Why the November Election Is Once Again “The Most Important Election of Your Life”

Michael K. Cantwell

The last three federal elections were billed as “the most important in our lifetime.” It is not crying wolf or hyperbole to apply the same label to the upcoming midterms.

In 2016, Americans ignored the threat posed by a pathological liar, grifter, and sociopath. Only by taking back the House in 2018 were we able to preserve America as a constitutional republic. Imagine what would have happened if the Republican cowards and crypto-fascists in Congress continued to give Donald Trump free reign during the final two years of his presidency. Imagine what would have happened if Trump had been actually rather than chimerically reelected two years ago.

Trump doubles down when he loses, as does the Republican Party. Trump launched an insurrection that came close to stealing the 2020 election. When that failed, Republicans passed voter suppression laws in 41 states designed to allow them to seize power “not by breaking laws but by making them,” as *The New York Times* put it. Election Deniers committed to rejecting the popular vote are on the ballots in Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, and Pennsylvania, a chilling prospect for 2024.

Unlike the Republicans, we don’t get mulligans. The failure to adequately back Hillary Clinton led to Neil Gorsuch, Brent Kavanaugh, Amy Coney Barrett, the death of *Roe v. Wade*, and the specter of more than a half century of freedoms being reversed by the troglodyte majority on the Supreme Court. The failure to hold the House and Senate – and dispatch the Election Deniers – this November sets the stage for making the 2024 presidential election the last free election America holds.

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Godspeed Merrick Garland and DoJ

Rob Resnick

It is simply impossible to make up a better story. I hope the Trump team and Trump Congressional enablers keep talking. Tuesday night's DoJ filing completes the picture.

Despite negotiations with the National Archives, negotiations with DoJ, subpoenas from DoJ and a grand jury, etc., Trump refused to return the government documents he wrongfully took from the White House, documents that belong to the government and American people. And as we know, numerous documents were incredibly sensitive for national security and national defense, clearly marked as Top Secret/SCI, Top Secret, Secret, Confidential, etc. These documents were not secured at Mar-a-Lago.

We can now confirm that the Trump team lied multiple times in their negotiations and representations to DoJ and the court. They said they

had returned all documents and had conducted a diligent search to confirm all documents were found and returned. We now know those were lies. They neither did a proper search nor returned anywhere close to all government and classified documents. In fact, they hid numerous documents in various places, concealing their existence from law enforcement, and clearly demonstrating the fact that Trump knew he was not supposed to keep them and yet was planning to do so.

There seems to be ample evidence to support at least some charges. Trump, and others working with him, committed wrongful acts in taking, hiding, misrepresenting, improperly storing, and refusing to return numerous government documents. There is evidence of their wrongful intent by the knowing and intentional dishonest statements they repeatedly made to authorities. The efforts to conceal so as to prevent

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disclosure and seizure of the documents demonstrates the necessary criminal intent. The documents were clearly marked, at least more than enough of them were, so there is no claim of lack of knowledge.

The hard part is the decision to prosecute a former president. No president deserves it more than Trump because of his ongoing criminality both in and out of office and his demonstrated belief that he is above the law. Trump, in malignant narcissistic fashion, believed that he himself was the state and possessed all power, being accountable to no thing and no one. The rule of law, our founding principle, dictates otherwise. No one is above the law. Everyone, including the president, members of Congress, etc., is accountable to the people and to the law. MAGA threats of violence should not factor into the decision. Perhaps to the contrary, they should support moving forward.

Attorney General Garland has an extremely sensitive and difficult decision to make here. This is truly a precedent setting moment. Trump deserves to be prosecuted and saving democracy begs for it. But there is one chance to get this right. There are other possible criminal cases as well. Whichever may go first, it must succeed. The evidence is there, but so will be Trump's defense team in the courtroom, in Congress with his MAGA enablers, and in right wing media. To go forward, the case must be overwhelming and airtight. There are no guarantees, but there needs to be every confidence of victory. If Trump gets lucky and somehow wins (it is certainly possible he can confuse or convince just a few jurors, some of whom may possess MAGA bias), it is game over. Losing the first case makes any future cases all the more perilous and subject to claims of politics. It would empower Trump and his minions in a dangerous way.

Godspeed Merrick Garland and DoJ.

If Mikhail Gorbachev Had Had a Real Partner

Michael K. Cantwell

Shortly before Mikhail Gorbachev came to power, Richard Barnett (co-founder of the progressive think tank Institute for Policy Studies) debated Ronald Reagan's nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, the execrable and unqualified Ernest Lefever.

Like Florida's senior senator, the ridiculous Marco Rubio, Lefever played the "soft on communism" card, claiming that Barnett had heaped praise on the Soviet system while referring to the rights guaranteed by the American system as "meaningless."

Barnett responded, "You have misquoted me before, and I have corrected you, and yet you continue to misquote me." Lefever's neck seemed to disappear as Barnett went on to explain (as best I recall):

What I said is that Russia guarantees certain economic rights to its citizens – the right to a job, an education, and healthcare whereas America guarantees procedural rights, which I hold very dear, such as freedom of speech and religion and assembly, but that ultimately one without the other is meaningless.

Unfortunately, Gorbachev's "partner" in ending the Cold War was the barely sentient Ronald Reagan, a man who once claimed that if Medicare was enacted, "you and I are going to spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it once was like in America when men were free."

Instead of a world in which the Soviet Union adopted our Bill of Rights while the United States adopted an economic Bill of Rights, both countries began dismantling the very rights that Barnett had admired. Gorbachev was succeeded by oligarchs and mafiosi who stripped Russians of their wealth and birthrights. On our side of the Atlantic, Reagan unleashed crony capitalists and replaced FDR's New Deal with the Raw Deal.

American workers have barely treaded water for decades while plutocrats and billionaires multiply like roaches. At the same time, the very personal and procedural rights admired not only by Barnett but by the rest of the world have come under attack.

Yet while Gorbachev spent the last three decades being reviled in Russia, a well-oiled Republican disinformation machine was transforming a mediocre president whose average approval rating was 53% into "St. Ronnie."

If only Gorbachev had arrived on the world stage several decades earlier than he did, he would have found his true partner in Franklin Delano Roosevelt. And if only FDR had lived more than 4 months after he proposed a "Second Bill of Rights" in a national address, Americans might today be enjoying the economic rights later cited by Barnett and currently available to citizens of most countries in Europe..

What to Tell the NPAs—Republicans Are the Real Extremists

Michael K. Cantwell

Republicans win elections by falsely labeling Democrats as extremists, but the true threat to our values, our democracy, and our planet is the Republican Party itself.

Long before Trump's Big Lie of a stolen election, Republicans were accusing Democrats of election fraud, but their efforts to prove such fraud have always ended in failure. The DOJ investigation ordered by former President George W. Bush found no evidence of organized voter fraud that could affect an election. The commission Trump created to "prove" he won the popular vote in 2016 disbanded without finding any evidence of voter fraud, and the lawsuits he filed challenging the 2020 election were dismissed as frivolous. The nail in the voter fraud coffin is the Heritage Foundation's "Election Fraud Database" that trumpets "1,371 proven instances of voter fraud." The database covers more than 20 years, and thus amounts to one instance of voter fraud per state per year.

Following Trump's failed but deadly effort to reverse his 2020 loss through violence and mayhem, Republicans used the original Big Lie of voter fraud to continue passing federal voter suppression laws. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, 41 states controlled by Republicans now have such laws. As *The New York Times* succinctly explained, Republicans were advancing the goals of the January 6 rioters "not by breaking laws but by making them."

The law that the Brennan Center dubbed Florida's "omnibus voter suppression bill," SB 90, was opposed by the supervisors of election in all 67 counties and was enacted "with the intent to discriminate against Black voters," according to the judge who held the law unconstitutional in part. If "voter fraud" includes fraud perpetrated *upon* as well as *by* voters, Republicans are the serial fraudsters, and they are preparing to commit an even graver assault on our democracy than the one committed by the insurrectionists on January 6, 2021.

Similarly, Ron DeSantis's false, ad nauseam jeremiads about schoolchildren being indoctrinated in "Critical Race Theory" have it backward. CRT is a graduate-level discipline and has *never* been taught in Florida's public schools. On the other hand, DeSantis is hard at work attempting to turn Florida's public schools into reeducation camps through his Orwellian-titled "Civic Literacy Excellence Initiative."

Teachers who attended a recent three-day training session complained about being subjected to Christian and conservative ideology and attempts to whitewash the history of slavery in America. Attendees were instructed that "the colonies didn't buy nearly as many enslaved people during the transatlantic slave trade as has been portrayed" because "most enslaved people in the country were born into slavery" – as if claiming ownership over the children of people one has purchased and holds in bondage is somehow less despicable than the act of purchasing them in the first place.

The most recent and odious example of Republican extremism was their assault on a woman's right to choose, a right supported by a substantial majority of Americans and one that was judicially protected until five radical, activist troglodytes shamed and disgraced the Supreme Court on which they sit by overruling a half-century of precedent and a quarter century of precedent on precedent.

And Republicans are still not satisfied. They are pushing nationwide bans on abortion and defending laws that make no exceptions for rape or incest. Autonomy over one's body is a universal human right, one that Republicans are violating.

The midterms will be decided by voters who identify with neither major party. For the sake of our democracy, it is critical they understand and then choose the one that best represents American values.

Democratic Club of Delray Beach Officers and Directors

Michael Cantwell, President; Char Lane, Vice-President; Cheryl Perry, Secretary; David Kulick, Treasurer; Robert Averack, Parliamentarian; Peter Camacho, Mary Fader, Charlie Holbrook, June Neal, and Robert Resnick, Directors; Sandra Elaissen-Cantwell, Director Emerita; and John Ramos, Director Emeritus.

Charlie Crist Will Be Florida's Joe Biden

Michael K. Cantwell

A year ago I suggested that Charlie Crist could be Florida's Joe Biden. A month ago the claim would have been greeted with howls of laughter, and perhaps will be so greeted even today. It would be "the laughter of fools."

The parallels between Biden and Crist are obvious and many, the most fundamental being that both are decent, competent men running against cruel, incompetent megalomaniacs. Stated more simply, the contest is between a mensch and a miscreant.

Donald Trump mocked a reporter with a physical disability. Ron DeSantis bullied a schoolchild whose mother was immunocompromised into removing his mask. Trump's colossal incompetence in responding to COVID killed hundreds of thousands of Americans needlessly. DeSantis's refusal to push vaccinations and his ridiculing of masks killed tens of thousands of Floridians needlessly. His refusal to expand Medicaid kills thousands of Floridians every year. And the megalomania displayed in his "Top Gov" campaign ad makes him a subject of ridicule.

Crist's humanity was on display when he granted clemency to 155,000 Floridians permanently disenfranchised by the Post-Civil War provision in the Florida Constitution that was subsequently revised by Amendment 4. It wasn't in Crist's political interest to do so, since he was a Republican and those he re-enfranchised were disproportionately people of color and thus unlikely to vote for a Republican.

In his single term in office, Charlie re-enfranchised twice as many Floridians as did Jeb Bush and 50 times as many as Rick Scott, each of whom served two terms. He also re-enfranchised more Floridians than any *Democratic* governor. Decency. Humanity.

Both Biden and Crist were labeled losers. Biden had failed twice in bids for the Democrat nomination for president, and after leaving the governor's office and the Republican Party in 2010, Crist twice failed to win statewide elections. Yet Biden was not only

nominated but elected president in 2020. And in 2016, Crist flipped a Congressional district that had been Republican for 60 years. They did more than "fail better." They succeeded.

Joe Biden entered office in the midst of the worst financial collapse since the Great Depression and the greatest public health crisis in over a century. Democrats held a scant 5-seat majority in the House, and the Senate was split 50-50, with the histrionic Kyrsten Sinema and the grandstanding Joe Manchin being Democrats in name only.

Biden promised that bipartisanship was not dead, but right out of the gate Republicans made clear that they were sticking to their playbook from the Obama era — monolithic, malevolent opposition. Putting party before country, not a single Republican in Congress voted for the American Rescue Plan Act. The year before, Democrats put country before party when not a single Democrat in Congress opposed Trump's \$2.2 trillion CARES Act.

Despite the odds being stacked against his accomplishing anything, within six weeks of his inauguration, Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act, saving the country from a second Great Depression and propelling the economy to a record increase in jobs and an unemployment rate not seen since 1969. Earlier this month, he signed legislation that was not only America's largest investment in combatting climate change but also will substantially reduce the price Americans pay for pharmaceuticals.

In between, he made good on his promise to pass bipartisan legislation: he signed an infrastructure bill that had eluded his two predecessors, the first gun safety legislation in nearly three decades, the biggest expansion of veterans' benefits in over three decades, and an investment in microchip production that will make America competitive with China and decrease our reliance on foreign suppliers.

I expect great things from Charlie. You should too.

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

Thank a Democrat

1964 Civil Rights Act	Food Stamp Act	National Science Foundation Act
1965 Voting Rights Act	Freedom of Information Act	National Voter Registration Act (a.k.a) Motor Voter Act
Affordable Care Act	GI Bill of Rights	Social Security Act
AmeriCorps	Medicare and Medicaid	Unemployment Compensation Act
CDC	Minimum Wage Act	Workers Compensation Act
Family and Medical Leave Act	National Labor Relations Act	

American Rescue Plan Act, Signed March 11, 2021

- Provided \$1400 to every taxpayer and each of his or her dependents
- Expanded coverage and reduced premiums under the Affordable Care Act for 9 million Americans.
- Expanded and extended unemployment benefits.
- Increased SNAP benefits
- Increased and expanded Child Tax Credit
- Made largest investment in child care assistance since World War II
- Increased the Earned Income Tax Credit for frontline workers who helped their communities through the COVID crisis
- Invested \$160 billion to provide supplies and vaccines to combat COVID's heavy toll
- Distributed \$360 billion in emergency funding for local governments to help keep front line public workers on the job and paid
- Provided emergency grants and loans to hard-hit small businesses
- Established a special sign-up period for the Affordable Care Act, adding 800,000 previously uninsured to the ranks of the insured.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Signed November 15, 2021

- Makes the largest federal investment in public transit ever
- Makes the largest federal investment in passenger rail since the creation of Amtrak
- Makes the single largest dedicated bridge investment since the construction of the interstate highway system
- Makes the largest investment in clean drinking water and waste water infrastructure in American history, delivering clean water to millions of families
- Ensures every American has access to reliable high-speed internet
- Helps us tackle the climate crisis by making the largest investment in clean energy transmission and EV infrastructure in history; electrifying thousands of school and transit buses across the country; and creating a new Grid Deployment Authority to build a resilient, clean, 21st century electric grid

Inflation Reduction Act, Signed August 16, 2022

- Invests \$369 billion in energy security and fighting climate change
- Invests \$64 billion to extend Affordable Care Act subsidies
- Authorizes Medicare to negotiate with drug companies and expands Medicare benefits, capping costs and out-of-pocket drug expenses
- Provides \$80 billion for modernization and tax enforcement, which is estimated to reduce the deficit by recovering as much as \$203.7 billion from tax cheats
- Closes tax loopholes by imposing a 15% minimum tax payment on companies with over \$1 billion of income and a 1% excise tax on stock buybacks.
- Expands Medicare benefits: provides free vaccines (2023), caps insulin costs at \$35/month (2023) and caps out-of-pocket drug costs to an estimated \$4,000 or less in 2024, settling at \$2,000 in 2025
- Provides \$4 billion for drought resiliency in western states

Congratulations to Our Outstanding Statewide Candidates

Val Demings—U.S. Senator

Charlie Crist—Governor

Karla Hernandez-Mats—Lieutenant Governor

Adam Hattersley—Chief Financial Officer

Aramis Ayala—Attorney General

Naomi Blemur—Agriculture Commissioner

Letters by Our Members

Writing to local papers influences NPAs gives aid, comfort and information to Democrats. Here are the latest:

David Kulick, Delray Beach, August 25, 2022

Like most of us, I really can't cheat on my taxes, because all of my income information is sent directly to the IRS. I even use the free online services to do my taxes. I applaud the Democrats for finally getting the IRS sufficient money to hire staff capable of going up against the tax dodging real estate developers and other corporate tax cheats.

When Republicans tell you that armed agents are going to be knocking at your door, this is nonsense. The money will go for auditors and better computer systems to track tax cheats. None of this is a threat to honest Americans. I understand that the IRS funding is the least popular part of the Inflation Reduction Act but it will prove to be money very well spent.

DeSantis As Nixon, Part 2

Michael K. Cantwell

Actions such as the removal of state attorney Andrew Warren is the latest indication that it's a mistake to characterize Gov. DeSantis as merely a Donald Trump clone. He's not just our "Pint-sized Trump in Tallahassee" or "Trump with a Brain" or "Trump with Table Manners."

Yes, he's all of those, except maybe the table manners one, but there's another politician DeSantis resembles even more closely than Trump. Like Richard Nixon, DeSantis is smart, shrewd, vindictive, and thin-skinned; he also comes from a modest background, has a mean streak, and bristles with resentment for "liberal elites."

Decades before Donald Trump was bankrupting companies, Nixon coined the term "silent majority"

and began using dog-whistle racism and phony culture wars to propel him to a landslide reelection in 1972. Like Icarus of Greek myth, however, Nixon's hubris carried him too close to the sun, melting the wax on his wings and plunging him into disgrace less than two years after his landslide victory.

DeSantis may think he's flying high today, but the new "silent majority" in Florida consists of independents who are sick and tired of phony culture wars manufactured in order to induce them to vote against their economic interests.

The wax on DeSantis's wings is ripe for melting. And Charlie Crist is the guy to do it.

From Little Ronnie Reagan to Little Ronnie DeSantis

Michael K. Cantwell

“I used to think of him as ‘little Ronnie Reagan, not because he was short, he wasn’t, he was tall and well-built. The ‘little’ was for his acting talent.”

Bette Davis

As much damage as Trump has done to American democracy and discourse, no president has been worse for American workers than Ronald Reagan.

Reagan opened his 1980 campaign with a dog whistle appeal to state’s rights in the Mississippi county where Goodman, Schwerner, and Cheney were brutally murdered.

His presidency was littered with racist tropes of “Cadillac-driving welfare queens” and “strapping bucks using food stamps to buy T-bone steaks.” He may have been a grade B movie star, but a grade B movie star is still a better skill than most politicians.

Reagan used racism to get the white working class to trade the New Deal for his Raw Deal. They have yet to recover, nor has America.

Like Reagan, Trump is tall but hardly “well-built” and was only a grade B reality tv star (perhaps reflecting the devolution of American culture). Trump traded Reagan’s dog whistle for a bullhorn through which to spew his racism, much to the delight of those I refuse to call “deplorables” because that would insult truly deplorable people.

Unlike Reagan and Trump, Ron DeSantis is not tall, at least judged against past American presidents. He is the same 5 feet, 9 inches as the man Trump dubbed “Little Marco Rubio.”

Harry Truman was also 5'9" but before him you have to go back to 1850 and Millard Fillmore to find a president as short as DeSantis would be. But even were he as tall as Trump, the judgment pronounced by J.K. Rowling on Trump would apply with equal force to DeSantis: “You tiny, tiny, tiny little man.”

And if you look at his recent photos, DeSantis is getting a little fat. Not as fat as Chris Christie, but if there’s one thing Americans like less than short, it’s fat. DeSantis may think he’s eating the “radical Left,” but it looks as if he’s been eating too many pizzas and drinking too much Kool-Aid.

DeSantis may not himself be a racist, but as Andrew Gillum once pithily observed, “racists believe he’s a racist” (which is actually worse). Like Reagan and Trump, DeSantis will ride that racism straight to the White House unless we stop him. And a good place to start is with ridicule. Practice saying the name: Little Ronnie DeSantis.

What We’re Reading

Democrats Should Make a Much Bigger Deal of the Threat Posed by Trump, John Nichols, *The Nation*: Republicans recognize that the fundamental issue of the 2022 midterm elections is whether the United States will continue as a constitutional republic or warp into an authoritarian state where the rule of law and the will of the people are casually disregarded. The question is whether Democrats understand that this is what the election is about, and whether they will fight as hard to defend democratic norms as Republicans are fighting to dismantle them.”

Heather Cox Richardson, *Letters from an American*, August 27, 2022: “In a speech Thursday night, President Joe Biden called out today’s MAGA Republicans for threatening ‘our personal rights and economic security.... They’re a threat to our very democracy.’ When he referred to them as ‘semi-fascists,’ he drew headlines, some of them disapproving. A spokesperson for the Republican National Committee called the comment ‘despicable,’ although Republicans have called Democrats ‘socialists’ now for so long it passes as normal discourse. Just this week, Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) called Democrats ‘radical left-wing lunatics, laptop liberals, and Marxist misfits.’”

Anthony Ornato, Top Secret Service Agent Sought By Investigators for Role in Jan. 6, Retires Unexpectedly, Ken Klippenstein, *The Intercept*: “Anthony Ornato, a top Secret Service official embroiled in the January 6 investigation, retired today, just two days before his planned interview with January 6 investigators . . . Ornato has indicated that he still intends to attend the interview, according to an email obtained by The Intercept, but since Ornato will be a private citizen, investigators won’t have testimonial subpoena authority to compel his cooperation.”

2022 Membership Char Lane

If you're not a member of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach, please consider joining. If you're already a member of the Club and haven't yet renewed, please renew for 2022.

Membership is on a calendar year basis and your dues help provide funding for operational projects, such as *The Delray Democrat*, our meetings, other working supplies and signage for our sign waving events. Meetings are the second Thursday of each month, currently via zoom but we hope to resume live meetings as soon as it's safe to do so.

Our goal is to educate people as to why they should vote Democratic and use Vote-by-Mail as a critical tool in support of this goal. We need your help with our sign-waving, phone calling, postcard writing, canvassing and participating in other projects. We'll have to work hard to help keep our democracy intact and protect it from the manifesting lunacy.

We plan to help turn Florida BLUE by replacing Little Ronnie DeSantis with Charlie Crist and NRA Whore Marco Rubio with Chief Val Demings.

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 going to <https://www.demclubofdelray.org/membership> or filling out and mailing the application below or clicking on the QR scan below:



Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2022 Membership Application and Renewal

Date _____ New _____ Renewal _____

Name/names of household members _____

Address _____

Community/Condo Name _____

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.

