

# The Delray Democrat

## Random Thoughts<sup>1</sup>

*David Kulick*

There are many thoughts flying through my head while I contemplate writing an article for *The Delray Democrat*. For all the disappointment of the election, particularly in Florida, the main thing is that we beat Donald Trump. That was no small accomplishment.

Some of you may have known my mother, Mariane Kulick. She and her partner Sam Lender founded the Democratic Club of Delray Beach many years ago, and she restarted it the day after Donald Trump was elected. Mom was not given to rash pronouncements or wild conspiracy theories so when she said that if Trump were re-elected we would never have another election, it was impossible to ignore. She very well might have been right and hopefully we'll never know because we beat him and maybe he'll go to jail.

Let's give the Republicans credit; they ran a brilliant campaign. As always, they played on the fears of people and we gave them plenty of ammunition. I come from the era of Vietnam protests and we knew that the people yelling "kill the pigs" and calling soldiers "baby killers" were likely agent provocateurs, trying to discredit an entire movement to Middle America.

So when I saw the violence at peaceful BLM protests, I figured the same thing, but with the addition of agents of Russia spreading hatred and anger. We know that's what they did in 2016 and we were told they would do it again. They did. I don't have the computer skills to track Facebook groups to the source, but I'll bet many of those BLM protesters were reading Russian bots.

When I saw the ongoing protests, and they showed mostly the violent ones, I figured we had just handed Trump the election. I was stunned that the polls didn't show what I feared would happen. Sending in federal troops was terrifying to many of us as a preview of what Trump could do, but apparently was soothing to many on the right and middle. Again, the polls showed nothing.

The other big thing was Corona. Trump played a perfect young/old war, asking why we would shut down the country when only old people and people with underlying conditions were likely to die. Why should they not be able to go to bars and clubs? Playing it as economic rather than a health crisis was smart; I can see Steve Bannon's hand in this. A real package to allow companies to pay their employees while things were shut down would have worked, but we didn't get that, and it missed all the gig workers anyway.

But why didn't any of this impact the polls? Actually, I think only one senate race was really off, the others were pretty much within the margin of error and all went the other way. The reason is that people who really never vote, who aren't even reachable by pollsters, did vote, and they voted for Trump. I was fooled by the number of young people who aren't afraid of the word "socialist." But lots of older people are. Their positions may in fact be socialistic, Medicare for All and \$15

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<sup>1</sup> *The Delray Democrat*, November 2020, p. 3.

minimum wage in particular, but Democrats didn't fight back because too many oppose those things or won't fight for them.

We don't have the right-wing communications network either. Air America was all we had and the few wealthy "leftists" let it die. You can go to any small town in America and hear an AM hate radio station. I can't find even a single news radio station anywhere near Miami, much less a progressive one.

In Florida, we didn't have a single piece of literature to hand out that wasn't just Vote By Mail. Well, we did VBM, overwhelmingly so. But once again it wasn't enough. The Democratic Club of Delray Beach produced our own literature explaining WHY someone should vote for Democrats. But as far as I can tell, it was just us. The other clubs, the county, the state party, nothing. I guess they feel that everyone watches MSNBC or listens to Progress on Sirius. They don't. They watch Fox and listen to hate. Listening in Florida, climate change should have been the number one issue. It wasn't.

Still, for all that, we beat Trump. Some things made an impact. I think the Lincoln Project did get through to some Republicans but they voted for Biden and then Republicans down ballot. Look, I thought the 2016 election was over when Trump mocked a disabled reporter, I mean how much more of a creep can you be? When vote totals were so high this year I figured we had it in the bag, who would vote for Trump who didn't vote for him four years ago. Well, as it turns out, plenty of people did.

The good news going forward is that Trump will not be on the ballot in Georgia in January and it's possible that his cult will not turn out if he isn't in power. The other good thing is Stacey Abrams and that may just be enough.