

# The Delray Democrat

April-May 2019

## Come Together, Right Now!

Among the many elements that created the perfect storm that blew Trump into the White House was his ability to sow division and depress voter turnout.

Our Democratic field is large and diverse. Every one of our candidates towers above Trump, a man who is morally, temperamentally, psychologically, and intellectually unfit for any office, much less our highest. And while they propose different solutions for dealing with the most important problems facing us today, every one of them is proposing a more humane, just, and equitable society.

It is thus critical not only that we stand behind whoever prevails, but that we avoid demonizing any candidate and keep the debate on the issues on which they are divided. We don't want to see Republican ads next year that feature Democrats bashing one another.

Toward that end, we ask our members, our colleagues, our friends, and our candidates to take the [Indivisible Pledge](#):

- *Make the primary constructive. We'll make the primary election about our hopes for the future, and a robust debate of values, vision and the contest of ideas. We'll remain grounded in our shared values, even if we support different candidates.*
- *Rally behind the winner. We'll support the ultimate Democratic nominee, whoever it is—period. No Monday morning quarterbacking. No third-party threats.*
- *Do the work to beat Trump. We're the grassroots army that's going to power the nominee to victory, and we'll show up to make calls, knock doors, and do whatever it takes.*

Add your exclamation point to the dream of the late, much lamented John Lennon and "Come Together, Right Now!"

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## Upcoming Meetings

- June 13 – Senator Lori Berman*  
*July 11 - Working meeting: write to voters*  
*TBA – Parkland Father Fred Guttenberg*

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## Arming Teachers Promotes Gun Sales, Not Safer Schools

*Rob Resnick*

In large part as a response to the horrendous tragedy last year in Parkland, the Florida Legislature is plowing ahead with legislation not just allowing, but potentially mandating, teachers carrying guns in school. The original legislation left it to individual school systems to determine whether and how to allow teachers to arm themselves; however, current efforts attempt to remove any input from local school boards. While some teachers would accept the opportunity to be armed, most teachers, parents, and

*(Continued on page 4)*

# It Is Class Warfare, and They've Won

Michael K. Cantwell

If you complain that the superrich aren't paying their fair share, you're accused of class warfare. Well, it *is* class warfare and it has been going on for decades now.

Even before the recent tax cuts, those in the top thousandth, hundredth, or tenth of a percent were already grossly **undertaxed**, as is evident from the [IRS data](#) for the ten-year period from 2006 to 2015:

Percentage	Number	Average Income	Effective Rate	Contribution to the Treasury if taxed at 30% Buffet Rate
0.001%	1,353	\$133,701,082	20.25%	\$176,048,673,500
0.01%	13,534	\$30,778,498	22.19%	\$325,307,440,200
0.1%	135,339	\$6,413,976	24.07%	\$512,800,045,723
1%	1,353,387	\$1,296,106	24.37%	\$975,054,598,391

Notice that the tax rate *increases as the income decreases*. So that the top 1% are actually being screwed by the top tenth of a percent and the top tenth by the top hundredth, while the top thousandth are screwing everyone.

Consider, also, that the Social Security tax paid by even the poorest of the above folks is a vanishing number, since it is only assessed on the first \$128,400 of income. That means that someone in the top 1% pays 0.61% while someone in the top thousandth ends up paying 0.00595%. Anyone on salary who earns less than \$128,400 pays the full 6.2%.

And that's why Warren Buffet famously claimed that he paid a lower tax rate than his secretary. The average salary of an executive secretary to a CEO is [\\$79,144](#), resulting in an effective tax rate of 16.8%. Add 6.2% and that's a higher tax rate than the top hundredth or top thousandth pays.

## They Say Cut Back, We Say **Fight Back**

\$1.9 trillion - [estimated increase](#) in deficit from Republican tax "cut"

\$1.9 trillion - [proposed cuts](#) to Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security in Trump's budget

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**Editorial Board:** Michael K. Cantwell (Editor), Sandra Elaissen, David Kulick, Mariane Kulick, Alan M. Milner, and Rob Resnick.

**Address for submissions and letters:** editor@thedelraydemocrat.com; letters@thedelraydemocrat.com or by snail mail to *The Delray Democrat*, 15127 Jog Road, Suite 101, Delray Beach, FL -1251.

## **Precinct Management: What Is It and Why Is It important?**

*Bob Averack Palm Beach County Democratic Party, Zone Leader for Zone 8*

In addition to my role as Vice President of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach, I am also one of two “Zone Leaders” with the Palm Beach County Democratic Party, with my region of shared responsibility being the City of Delray Beach and the Town of Gulf Stream. Within these two municipalities, there are 40 electoral “precincts”. A precinct is a contiguous group of streets and residences whose registered voters are assigned to a specific polling location by the county’s Supervisor of Elections. Across these 40 precincts, there are currently 49,095 registered voters, and they are broken down by party as follows: 21,830 Democrats, 12,796 Republicans, 572 members of various “third” parties, and 13,897 voters who are not affiliated with any party (NPAs for short, the majority of whom support Democrats when they vote).

This is where Precinct Management comes into play. In the ideal world, each of the 40 precincts in Zone 8 would be covered by a Precinct Leader (PL). A PL is the Democratic Party’s ambassador to the precinct’s registered Dems. In that role, the PL is there to assist with matters of concern to the voters where information and/or advocacy is needed, and the PL is there to help in the matter of voting during all elections that occur, i.e. primary, municipal, state, national. Help might include education on candidates and issues, enrollment in Florida’s Vote by Mail program, direction on early voting and Election Day polling locations, rides to the polls, etc.

And of course, the PL might also assist with the registering of new voters or necessary changes to a current voter’s information. These and other activities are designed to establish constituency and relation-

*In a state like Florida, where major elections are often decided by fractions of a percent, and with Florida’s 29 Electoral Votes being the third highest among the 50 states, Precinct Management plays a pivotal role in fostering Democratic voter turnout.*

These numbers might lead one to believe that Delray Beach and Gulf Stream (code named “Zone 8”) are Democratic Party strongholds. And to a certain extent, this is true, with the vast majority of local and state elective offices held by registered Democrats. However, reality suggests otherwise. Zone 8 Democrats have not turned out at the levels needed to adequately support statewide and presidential candidates in the face of the significant advantage that Republicans have in 58 of Florida’s 67 counties (our counties of strength are Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Orange (Orlando), Hillsborough (Tampa), Pinellas (St. Pete/Clearwater), Alachua (Gainesville), Duval (Jacksonville) and Leon (Tallahassee)).

In the 2018 midterms, only 60.3% of Zone 8’s registered Dems actually voted (which is ostensibly equal to the Republican turnout of 60.4%). It was in part due to this low turnout that James Bonfiglio (D, Ocean Ridge) lost last year’s election in Florida House District 89 to current Rep. Michael Caruso (R, Delray Beach) by a mere 32 votes.

ships that ultimately yield increased Democratic voter turnout.

In a state like Florida, where major elections are often decided by fractions of a percent, and with Florida’s 29 Electoral Votes being the third highest among the 50 states, Precinct Management plays a pivotal role in fostering Democratic voter turnout. And therefore, Precinct Management can literally decide whether America is condemned to endure four more years of criminal and despotic rule by Donald Trump and the Republican Party.

However, at this time, only 26 of Zone 8’s 40 precincts are covered by a PL. So yes, we are actively searching for new Precinct Leaders who can help us move toward full coverage and increased Democratic turnout in 2020. For more information about how you can help with Precinct Management, feel free to contact Bob Averack at [Bob.Averack@gmail.com](mailto:Bob.Averack@gmail.com) or (203) 980-3558.

(Continued from page 1)

gun safety organizations oppose arming teachers, believing this practice would lessen their children's safety, not enhance it.

There is one powerful group pushing for the legislation – the NRA, and in few states does [the](#) NRA carry more influence over legislators than in Florida. Republican legislators seem

Imagine the grief of a teacher who accidentally shoots a student or law enforcement that accidentally shoots a teacher (or student). Concerns of accidents are valid. There have been instances where guns were accidentally left in a bathroom or on a desk. Teachers performing their duties are mobile and focused on multiple students, black/white boards, and sometimes leave the classroom. How secure will their weapons be during the school day? Ironically, instituting proper weapon security measures may result in a

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more concerned with ensuring their ongoing, large donations from the NRA than keeping our children safe in schools. The NRA's primary mission is to promote and increase gun sales in Florida and across the nation with outright, fervent opposition to even the most reasonable and popular (supported by 80-90% of the American people) safety measures, such as universal background checks and military assault weapons bans. There is one highly noticeable commonality with the scourge of mass shootings, including school shootings, and that is the use of the AR-15, a military style assault weapon with no valid hunting, recreational, or home protection utility.

Parents, teachers, and law enforcement agencies all raise valid serious concerns about arming teachers in schools. First is training. Weapons training, which would of course be secondary to their official duties, can only go so far and would not adequately prepare teachers to act in such an emergency. As someone with 25 years of active military service, including a combat tour during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, I can clearly attest that even the best training is never like the real thing. Parents are right to be concerned that teachers may lack the ability to identify and hit the "bad guy" amidst the chaos of a school shooting. Law enforcement is right to be concerned whether they can immediately identify the "bad guy" with teachers as well as shooters holding and potentially firing weapons. The Parkland shooting was over in under 4 minutes. Would an armed teacher wielding a handgun against a military assault rifle have made much difference?

slower response time by teachers who must react to the stimulus, identify the threat, and retrieve their secured (hopefully) gun. Parents have weighed the difficult question concerning whether to move their children to classes The legislation intentionally omits any provision addressing the right of parents to move their children to classes without armed teachers to avoid the potential for a tragic accident. Insurance companies are contemplating not writing policies to indemnify schools because of their own concerns about the risk of accidental or mistaken action.

No duty is more important duty than keeping our children safe, and no place should be safer than our schools. The NRA and [Republican](#) legislators seem more interested in responding to a shooting whereas parents, teachers, and safety advocates strive to prevent them. Responding is too late as there will often already have been casualties. Prevention avoids casualties and the trauma that follows all survivors for the rest of their lives. The best means of prevention is to remove access to the assailant weapon of choice – military assault rifles. The best means of prevention is to institute an effective universal background check system to keep weapons out of the hands of those who should be disqualified from possessing them. The best means of prevention is to keep weapons out of the hands of those with mental illness that pose any danger. The NRA and their Republican allies are only interested in selling more guns and fighting any attempts to limit access.

# Make America Great Again?

Michael K. Cantwell

Donald Trump has managed to *Make America Hate Again*. Racism is back and unapologetic, vulnerable populations are demonized, and hate crimes against Muslims, Jews, and African-Americans have risen sharply since his inauguration.

He's also working hard to *Make America Broke Again*. His "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act" is projected to add nearly \$2 trillion to the cumulative deficit while doing little for average Americans.

Ironically, he's also (unwittingly) delivering on his promise to Make America Great Again.

**He's energized activists and awakened disengaged Americans.** The turnout in last year's midterms was the [highest in over a century](#) and up more than one third from the 2014 midterms. If one measure of a democracy's greatness is the engagement of its citizens, Trump has helped set America on the road to being great again.

**The high turnout in the midterms allowed Democrats to recapture the House and return the gavel to the greatest**

**He promised to replace Obamacare with "something beautiful,"** a plan that would provide "insurance for everyone." He not only failed to do so but made insurance unaffordable for millions of Americans by eviscerating the Affordable Care Act's Individual Mandate, causing insurance costs to spike.

**He promised to protect people with pre-existing conditions,** but now argues in court that insurance companies should be relieved of this obligation. In short, many of his supporters have moved from voting against their economic interests to voting against their lives. Call it suicide by ballot.

**He promised he wouldn't cut Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid.** Yet his budget calls for \$1.9 trillion of cuts in such safety-net programs. That figure is roughly equivalent to the revenue loss resulting from his "tax reform" bill. The only thing preventing him from forcing elderly, poor, and working class Americans to fund tax cuts to billionaires is that Democrats now control the House.

*Realizing the radical promise of our founding document to create a government that treats all persons as equal and as being endowed with inalienable rights is the ultimate measure of our "greatness."*

**Speaker of the modern era.** During her original tenure, Nancy Pelosi prevented George W. Bush from privatizing Social Security and then spearheaded the passage of the Affordable Care Act. The ACA brought health insurance to 20 million previously uninsured Americans, saving tens of thousands of lives. If another measure of a country's greatness is the way it treats its most vulnerable citizens, having Nancy Pelosi in the Speaker's chair is certainly making America great again.

**Trump is also making America great again by opening the eyes of at least some of his working class supporters to the fact that they were played for suckers.** He promised that he'd cut their taxes, but 80% of the benefits in his tax bill go to the top 1% of taxpayers and 60% go to the top 0.1%.

**He promised that he'd eliminate loopholes** enjoyed by multimillionaires that are unavailable to working stiffs, and yet his tax "reform" left these loopholes intact. Multimillionaires will still pay a lower tax rate than their executive secretaries and perhaps even the night manager at a Burger King.

Last and certainly not least, revulsion with Trump has allowed Democrats to reclaim one third of [the seats](#) lost in state legislatures during President Obama's tenure. They have also picked up seven governorships and now hold the majority of state attorneys general.

This is significant because when Republicans had even greater statehouse gains in 2010 they used them to engage in widespread gerrymandering and voter suppression. That enabled Republicans to retain their House majority in 2012 despite receiving [1 million fewer votes](#) nationally, and to be overrepresented in the House in every subsequent election.

Gerrymandering and voter suppression are not only antithetical to democracy but are anathema to that radical promise of our founding document to create a government that will treat all people as equal and endowed with unalienable rights. And if realizing America's original promise is the ultimate measure of our greatness, the best way to "Make America Great Again" is to consign the Republican Party to the dustbin of history in 2020.

## Foreign Wars Hurt You

*David Kulick*

We marched to “End the Draft”, and we succeeded. It was a pyrrhic victory though because once random kids (excluding Trump) weren’t being inducted, it made permanent war easy for the general population to ignore. We know that we’re in wars all over the world, but it’s remote without our kids having to go.

We no longer even have a clear definition of “war”. Once it was simple; we declare war, send the troops, and it ends. Now? We bomb, we kill with drones, and we use cruise missiles. We fight wars by proxy and with mercenaries, supplying the arms and cash to other groups. There’s no declaration of war and there’s no end.

A famous old sage, Marine Corps Major General Smedley Butler, wrote a pamphlet called “War is a Racket” – [look it up, it’s even on YouTube](#). Simply put, war benefits the few at the expense of the many. As hard as it is for decent people to believe, one major reason for war is that it is tremendously profitable for our ruling class.

But doesn’t it keep us safe? No, of course not; no one is going to invade the US. How about “terrorism”? Our actions around the world, supporting the profits of the ruling class, generate far more potential terrorists than they stop. Outside of giving up every scrap of privacy, there’s no way to guarantee safety. These wars create terrorists.

Our “defense” spending is greater than the next nine countries combined, and that includes China and Saudi Arabia. Russia only comes in fourth. Those hundreds of billions of dollars per year cost us our healthcare, education, infrastructure, and our future. The Iraq war, which destabilized the entire Mideast, cost us around three TRILLION dollars. It did, however, pay huge dividends to the wealthy stockholders in “defense” companies.

There’s also a huge moral cost. We have no right to the moral high ground when the major thing our country is good at is producing weapons. I’m just stunned when I hear our talking heads saying that Iran can’t be allowed to influence other countries. Why not? They don’t go around starting wars all over the world like we do. Why is it ok for Saudi Arabia, the home of Jihad, to have one of the biggest “defense” budgets in the world, but we say that Iran is the problem? Saudi Arabia is the problem. Our billionaires make a fortune on Saudi Arabia’s arms’ purchases.

Eisenhower warned us about the power of the military-industrial complex, and it has grown far beyond that because they now own the media as well. This linking of the industrial and military and media has created a monster that feeds on fear, on the threat of war, and on war itself. The only way to fight this enemy is to understand that our military power is the biggest danger that we, and the world, face.

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## What Is a Democrat?

*Robert Resnick*

As we look towards 2020, the Democratic Party must campaign on its core values. Strong candidates will fit their respective districts and the priorities of their voters, but also must connect to national strategy based on these core values that unite Democrats across the nation.

Democrats have been the champions of Social Security and Medicare. While some people tire of this campaign message, imagine a world without

programs that provide such crucial protection to enable seniors to live with dignity and the care they deserve. Republicans continue to threaten these programs through privatization, diverting funds, or reducing eligibility. Democrats will protect Social Security and Medicare.

Democrats believe health care is a right for all Americans, not a luxury for those who can afford ever increasing premiums. Republicans not only continue

their efforts to take away coverage from so many families who benefited from the Affordable Care Act (ACA), they are working with the insurance industry to continue rising costs and lower coverage. Democrats will fight to restore or maintain the benefits of the ACA while continuing to expand coverage for all people.

**Democrats stand for a living wage.** Americans have never been afraid of hard work and want to earn a living through honorable work. Democrats will fight so that working Americans can support their families. Republicans support big corporations eroding workers' protections and care not that individuals may have to work two or three jobs to provide basic necessities for their families.

Climate change poses an existential danger to our future. and the harm of continued environmental mismanagement is an evil perpetrated against the next generations. Democrats will push for clean,

Reasonable gun control laws are critical to protect the innocent in schools, malls, and walking down the street. Democrats support common sense measures such as banning military style weapons, bump stocks, high capacity magazines, and ensuring proper background checks so that those who should not possess firearms do not gain access. Republicans distort the truth, scaring people with propaganda that the government is coming to take away their guns. Democrats respect the 2d Amendment. The Constitution does not guarantee the right to own military style weapons, nor are such necessary to protect one's home or go hunting.

Democrats will continue to stand for individual rights and give voice and power to those facing discrimination for race, gender, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation. Those who discriminate in housing, employment, and public commerce should be held accountable. Republicans will continue their silence and appease those who preach intolerance.

*Democrats believe the economy needs to work for all Americans, not the privileged few ...Republicans stand for a class of elite owners with little concern for average Americans . . . Democrats stand for much more than just opposing President Trump. Democrats stand for a better America and better tomorrow for the next generation.*

renewable energy and sustainability. Clean air and clean water are basic human rights. Republicans will continue supporting coal and oil, opposing sensible and necessary environmental protection. Democrats understand that the economy of the today and the future depends on clean energy and that sensible regulations help, not hurt, American business.

Democrats stand with our men and women in uniform. We need a strong defense to protect and defend the nation, but we do not need wasteful spending. Republicans push billions to the defense industrial complex on expensive systems that often do not meet standards and come in over budget. Democrats demand that the nation that sends our service members to war must then ensure they are properly cared for when they return. The decision to go to war must always be the last resort when other measures fail.

Democrats believe the economy needs to work for all Americans, not the privileged few. Opportunity should be available to those willing to work hard to achieve success. Republicans stand for a class of elite owners with little concern for average Americans. Education is the great equalizer and Democrats believe talented students should have to ability to go to college without bankrupting their families and sacrificing the future they strive to build due to insurmountable debt.

Democrats stand for much more than just opposing President Trump. Democrats stand for a better America and better tomorrow for the next generation.

Democrats stand for a society of respect and equality.

Democrats stand for all of us and our families.

We need to stand with them.

# Take the (Indivisible) Pledge

## THE 2020 CANDIDATE PLEDGE.

**We must defeat Donald Trump. The first step is a primary contest that produces a strong Democratic nominee. The second step is winning the general election. We will not accept anything less. To ensure this outcome, I pledge to:**

**Make the primary constructive.** I'll respect the other candidates and make the primary election about inspiring voters with my vision for the future.

**Rally behind the winner.** I'll support the ultimate Democratic nominee, whoever it is – period. No Monday morning quarterbacking. No third-party threats. Immediately after there's a nominee, I'll endorse.

**Do the work to beat Trump.** I will do everything in my power to make the Democratic Nominee the next President of the United States. As soon as there is a nominee, I will put myself at the disposal of the campaign.

### Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2019 Membership Application

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 \_\_\_\_\_

Send newsletter by: E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Mail \_\_\_\_\_

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

Payment: Individual \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ Household \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ Donation \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to Democratic Club of Delray Beach and mail to 15127 Jog Road, Suite 101, Delray Beach, FL 33446-1251. Thank you and Welcome to our Club.